Primary Literacy Assessment
Teacher Information Guide
2017

Prince Edward Island
CANADA

Education, Early
Learning and Culture

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Introduction

The purpose of this Teacher Information Guide is to provide teachers with information about the Primary Literacy Assessment.

The Primary Literacy Assessment will be administered to Grade 3 students in May 2016. It is a multi-session assessment of reading and writing outcomes as described in the Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum Guide: Grades E-3. The assessment will include fiction and non-fiction reading passages and one writing task - a transactional writing assignment or a narrative writing assignment.

What is the purpose of the assessment?

The purpose of the assessment is to obtain valid and reliable information about student achievement in the school board and in the districts. This information will help guide and improve learning, teaching and professional development. Knowledge gained will help districts/boards plan resources and support, as well as help the Department of Education, Early Learning and Culture monitor student learning and target areas for improvement through curriculum redesign or program initiatives.

When will the assessment be administered?

The assessment will be administered **within a two-week time frame from May 15th to May 26th.**.

To better reflect assessment practice in the classroom, schools are given the autonomy and the flexibility to choose which days the assessment will be administered within the designated two week period.

Reminder that all grade 3 students must write on the same days **within your school** to ensure a uniformity of the administration of the assessment.

Who is eligible to write this assessment?

All Grade 3 students will participate in this assessment. Students who have documented Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) and/or documented Modified Programs who do not follow the prescribed Grade 3 curriculum will not participate in this assessment. Students who require adaptations in their regular schoolwork will participate with their documented adaptations in place. Details regarding exemptions/adaptations will follow in this guide.

How is the assessment designed?

Some of the specific curriculum outcomes included in the Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum Guide: Grades E-3 lend themselves quite readily to this type of assessment, while others do not. As a result, the assessment addresses only those selected outcomes associated with the reading, viewing and writing domains.

The assessment was developed by Grade 3 teachers under the direction of the Department of Education, Early Learning and Culture.

Curriculum Links – Reading and Viewing

The Primary Literacy Assessment is based upon the Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum Guide: Grades E-3. Below are the General Curriculum Outcomes and Specific Curriculum Outcomes explicitly addressed by the assessment.

General Curriculum Outcome – Reading and Viewing

(GCO 4)
Students will be expected to select, read and view with understanding a range of literature, information, media and visual texts.
(Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum Guide: Grades E-3, p. 27)

Specific Curriculum Outcomes – Reading and Viewing

(SCO 4.3)
Students will be expected to use pictorial, typographical and organizational features of written text to determine content, locate topics and obtain information.
(Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum Guide: Grades E-3, p. 27)

(SCO 4.4)
Students will be expected to use and integrate, with support, the various cueing systems (pragmatic, semantic, syntactic and graphophonic) and a range of strategies to construct meaning. (Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum Guide: Grades E-3, p. 28-29)
- identify main idea and supporting details of a text
- identify principles of order in text (time, cause and effect, space)
- interpret figurative language
- use clues from the text and personal experiences to gain an understanding of character
- recognize different emotions and empathize with literary characters
- recognize the elements of a story or plot
- make connections between what they read and their own experiences and knowledge.

General Curriculum Outcome – Reading and Viewing

(GCO 6)
Students will be expected to respond personally to a range of texts.
(Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum Guide: Grades E-3, p. 30)

Specific Curriculum Outcomes – Reading and Viewing

(SCO 6.1)
Students will be expected to make personal connections to texts and describe, share and discuss their reactions and emotions. *(Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum Guide: Grades E-3, p. 30)*

General Curriculum Outcome – Reading and Viewing

(GCO 7)
Students will be expected to respond critically to a range of texts applying their knowledge of language, form and genre.
(Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum Guide: Grades E-3, p. 31)

Specific Curriculum Outcomes – Reading and Viewing

(SCO 7.2)
Students will be expected to identify some different types of print and media texts.
- recognize some of their language conventions and text characteristics

(Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum Guide: Grades E-3, p. 31)

(SCO 7.3)
Students will be expected to respond critically to texts.
(Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum Guide: Grades E-3, p. 31)

- formulate questions as well as understandings

- identify the point of view in a text and demonstrate an awareness of whose voices/positions are and are not being expressed.

Text Types: Rationale

In keeping with the direction of the Atlantic Canada Language Arts Curriculum Guide: Grades E-3, the reading portions of the Primary Literacy Assessment are comprised of fiction and non-fiction texts.

Question Types: Rationale

The Primary Literacy Assessment will include a variety of question types. These include selected-response (multiple choice), open-response and sequence questions. In keeping with fair assessment practices, a variety of question types allow students to communicate their understanding of what they have read using different response methods. A balance between recognizing a response and constructing a response was achieved for this purpose.

Cognitive Levels

Reading Comprehension is the process of constructing meaning from text. Cognitive level is determined by the mental process the student must engage in to answer the question.

Bloom's Taxonomy identifies six levels involved in learning within the Cognitive Domain. Bloom's Taxonomy includes far more than reading comprehension and does not include those specific processes involved in the understanding of a text.

In 1978, Herber tried to relate Bloom's categories to three levels of reading comprehension.

• **Literal Comprehension** – understanding information that is directly stated

• **Inferential Comprehension** – understanding ideas which are not directly stated but are implied

• **Evaluative Comprehension** – analyzing information and forming conclusions about information

The Primary Literacy Assessment includes a representative sample of the three levels of reading comprehension.

Curriculum Links – Writing and Other Ways of Representing

The Primary Literacy Assessment is based upon the Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum Guide: Grades E-3. Below are the General Curriculum Outcomes and Specific Curriculum Outcomes explicitly addressed by the assessment.

General Curriculum Outcome – Writing and Other Ways of Representing

(GCO 8)
Students will be expected to use writing and other forms of representation to explore, clarify and reflect on their thoughts, feelings, experiences and learning; and to use their imaginations.
(Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum Guide: Grades E-3, p. 32)

Specific Curriculum Outcomes – Writing and Other Ways of Representing

(SCO 8.1)
Students will be expected to use writing and other forms of representation:
- to generate and organize language and ideas
- to discover and express personal attitudes and opinions
- to express feelings and imaginative ideas
(Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum Guide: Grades E-3, p. 32)

General Curriculum Outcome – Writing and Other Ways of Representing

(GCO 9)
Students will be expected to create texts collaboratively and independently, using a variety of
forms for a range of audiences and purposes.
(Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum Guide: Grades E-3, p. 33)

Specific Curriculum Outcomes – Writing and Other Ways of Representing

(SCO 9.2)
Students will be expected to demonstrate some awareness of purpose and audience:
- make choices about form for a specific purpose/audience
- realize that work to be shared with an audience needs editing
(Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum Guide: Grades E-3, p. 33)

General Curriculum Outcome – Writing and Other Ways of Representing

(GCO 10)
Students will be expected to use a range of strategies to develop effective writing and media products to enhance their clarity, precision, and effectiveness.
(Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum Guide: Grades E-3, p. 34)

Specific Curriculum Outcomes – Writing and Other Ways of Representing

(SCO 10.2)
Students will be expected to use some conventions of written language:
- punctuation and capitalization
- use capitals for proper names, titles, places, days, months, holidays, beginning of sentences
- use question marks
- use periods at the ends of sentences and for abbreviations
- language structure
- use pronouns appropriately
- spelling

(Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum Guide: Grades E-3, p. 35)

Writing Task

The writing task, transactional or personal expressive, will be written in response to a writing prompt. This writing task (transactional or personal expressive) will reflect the type of classroom writing that students practice regularly.

Transactional writing is done to convey factual information or to argue the validity of a point of view with evidence. Transactional writing is typical of the language of science, business, reporting, persuasion, argument and debate: signs and notices, messages, announcements, about the author pages, reports, rules, procedures, charts and graphs, maps, directions, want ads, recorded observations ... Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum Guide: Grades E-3.

Personal expressive is intended for the writer's purpose – reflecting the writer's immediate thoughts, feelings and observations: personal journals, diaries, response journals, learning logs, personal narratives, personal letters ... Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum Guide: Grades E-3.

Writing Assessment Criteria

Transitional Writers *(from the APEF Outcomes Document)*

Transitional writers understand and value the role that writing plays in life and learning. They are able to use a growing variety of structures and forms for a range of purposes and audiences. They are becoming more sophisticated in their use of prewriting, revising and editing strategies. They demonstrate an increase in their knowledge of spelling patterns and strategies, and they spell many words conventionally.

Definitions

Criteria for Writing Rubric
(using the Language of the Transitional Stage of Writing and Other Ways of Representing)

Ideas – demonstrates awareness of audience and purpose, generates ideas to develop and sustain the topic (idea) of the writing task to communicate information, and/or record experiences, and/or express feelings, opinions or imaginative ideas.

Organization – organizes ideas in a form or manner that communicates information (ideas are in logical order) with an awareness of audience and purpose.

Conventions – demonstrates awareness of audience and purpose by using some conventions of written language such as a variety of simple and more complex sentences, capitals for proper names, titles, places, days, months, holidays, beginning of sentences, periods at the end of sentences and for abbreviations, spell many words conventionally, use pronouns appropriately, and subject/verb agreement.

Correlations Between Outcomes and Criteria

Ideas
8.1 – generate and organize ideas
8.1 – to inform, communicate information
8.1 – to record experiences

Organization
8.1 – generate and organize ideas
8.1 – to inform, communicate information
8.1 – to record experiences
9.2 – demonstrate some awareness of audience and purpose

Conventions
8.1 – to express feelings, opinions and imaginative ideas
9.2 – demonstrate some awareness of audience and purpose
9.2 – realize that work to be shared with an audience needs editing
10.2 – use some conventions of written language
  • use a variety of simple and more complex sentence structures
  • punctuation and capitalization
  • capitals for proper names, titles, places, days, months, holidays, beginning of sentences
  • use periods at the ends of sentences and for abbreviations
  • use question marks
  • spell many words conventionally
  • use pronouns appropriately
  • subject/verb agreement

Administration of the Assessment

Security

The Primary Literacy Assessment is a secure form; therefore,
- no part of the assessment, including student work, is to be photocopied
- non-grade 3 students in combined classes will not have the option to participate in the assessment.
- there will be no copies of the assessment provided for the teacher's use
- every copy of the assessment sent to the school must be returned to the Department of Education, Early Learning and Culture.

Why must the assessment remain secure?

Making this, and subsequent, year's assessments secure will allow us to equate forms year over year and will allow us to perform longitudinal studies on student performance. Embedding "baseline" pieces in subsequent years will allow for comparability.

Student Practice

Student samples will be provided for the reading comprehension component. Introducing students to the samples allows students to become familiar with the format of the assessment.

Department of Education, Early Learning and Culture Common Assessment Program – Exemptions and Adaptations

Definitions

IEP (Indivdualized Education Plan)
A written record that documents the collaborative process for the development of an individualized plan for a student with special educational needs. This planning is a continuous and integrated process of instruction, assessment, evaluation, decision-making and reporting. The IEP outlines support services and educational program adaptations and/or modifications.
(Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, 2005, p. 75)

Modified
A process which changes the prescribed curriculum to meet a student's special needs. Modified courses do not provide the same credit as a prescribed course. Details of the modified course must be documented and included in the student's file and the student's record or transcript should indicate that the course has been modified.
(Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, 2005, p. 75)

Adapted
A documented process that allows a student with special needs to participate in a prescribed
curriculum (course) with changes in format, instruction strategies and/or assessment procedures that retain the learning outcomes of the curriculum. This adaptation may include alternate formats, instructional strategies and/or assessment procedures. Full credit will be granted for such courses but adaptations used will be documented and kept on the student's file and/or transcript.
(Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, 2005, p. 73)

Guidelines for Identifying Students Eligible for Total Exemptions, Partial Exemptions, Adaptations/Accommodations and EAL

Total Exemptions

Total exemptions from the assessment should be considered for those students who have a cognitive deficit, multiple handicapping conditions or a learning disability to such a degree as would render the assessment inappropriate and/or emotionally harmful.

Exemptions will be allowed for students who have been identified with exceptionalities and have an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or Modified Program in place as of December 1, 2016. The entire booklet for those students must be returned to the Department of Education, Early Learning and Culture with documentation attached, i.e., a photocopy of the first two pages of the IEP/Modified Program.

Exemptions (Other)

Specific circumstances may prevent a student from participating in the assessment. Such circumstances may include:

• **Long-term illness** – student was unable to write the assessment during the designated time frame.
• **Bereavement** – student was not able to participate during the designated time frame, due to a significant loss.
• **Other** – student was unable to participate due to some other circumstance not listed above. The nature of the circumstance must be specified in written format and attached to the student's assessment booklet before returning to the Department of Education, Early Learning and Culture.

Partial Exemptions
Partial exemptions from the assessment should be considered for those students currently identified with exceptionalities and have an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or Modified Program. These students would be identified as children who are able, with adaptations/ accommodations, to attempt a specific component of the assessment. Adaptations used to support the student during instruction should be provided during the assessment, if such adaptations do not compromise or alter the validity of the assessment, as it is important that the results of the assessment accurately reflect the **independent** abilities of the student. Appropriate documentation must be attached to the assessment booklet, i.e., a photocopy of the IEP/Modified Program and completed Adaptation/Accommodation form, before returning to the Department of Education, Early Learning and Culture.

Adaptations

Adaptations used to support the student during instruction should be provided during the assessment, if such adaptations do not compromise or alter the validity of the assessment, as it is important that the results of the assessment accurately reflect the **independent** abilities of the student. Photocopies of that documentation must be attached to the assessment booklet before returning to the Department of Education, Early Learning and Culture. Students currently working with adaptations are not eligible for exemption.

English Additional Language (EAL)

EAL students **are expected to participate in the assessment**. Appropriate adaptations/ accommodations, if required, should be provided and documentation of adaptations/ accommodations must be attached to the assessment booklet before returning to the Department of Education, Early Learning and Culture.

Note: Though it is expected that the English As An Additional Language student participate in the assessment, if the student's English language skills are not sufficiently developed, then a school-based decision involving, at minimum, the student, the student's parent or guardian, the student's teacher and principal at the school may be to exempt the student from participating in the assessment.

Please indicate EAL Exemptions for Reading Comprehension and/or Writing on the Exemptions and Adaptations form at the back of the student booklet **only if the student is exempt** from writing the assessment.

Acceptable Adaptations/Accommodations

Additional Time

Students for whom "additional time" is a documented adaptation may require more than the additional time given to the entire class during the assessment.

Verbatim Scribing

* Teachers with students who will use a scribe to complete the assessment this year will need to complete an application form prior to the assessment administration.

The scribe application request can be directed to:

Linda MacDonald – English Literacy Achievement Leader, Department Of Education, Early Learning and Culture

- **Please note – Scribing pertains to the reading comprehension component of the assessment only.**

Students with a visual or physical impairment, injury or learning disability and for whom "verbatim scribing" is a documented adaptation

If a scribe is required, the scribe writes exactly what the student dictates. Scribes do not edit or proof-read student responses, nor do they advise, suggest or imply that changes are required. The student is required to indicate where punctuation and capitalization are to be inserted.

Verbatim Reading

Students who need instructions or prompts read to them by the teacher or communicated through sign language.

Only verbatim reading of directions or prompts should be used. Reading comprehension passages and questions accompanying them may not be read out loud to students.

Alternate Setting

Students for whom "alternate setting" is a documented adaptation.
Students placed in alternate settings must complete the assessment independently. Ideally, the assessment should be supervised by the student's teacher, even in the alternate setting. However, if this is not possible, and someone other than the student's teacher is supervising the assessment, this supervisor must know the parameters of the assessment, and the integrity of the assessment must be maintained. The name and the role of the supervisor must be noted on the photocopy of the documented adaptation that is attached to the student's assessment booklet when the booklet is returned to the Department of Education, Early Learning and Culture.

Assistive Technology

Students with a visual or physical impairment, injury or learning disability, for whom "assistive technology" is a documented adaptation.

Students may use assistive technology in the writing portions of the assessment, if such assistive technology does not compromise or alter the validity of the assessment. Such assistive technology, therefore, should not include such features as cueing systems or grammar or spell-checks, as these would compromise the validity of the assessment. The type of assistive technology (and software) used must be specified on the documented adaptation that is attached to the student's assessment booklet when the booklet is returned to the Department of Education, Early Learning and Culture.

NOTE: Chrome Books do not have the ability to shut of the spell check or cueing system.

Personal FM System

Students who require a personal FM system during a regular school day.

English/Foreign Language Dictionary
ESL students are permitted to use an EAL dictionary (paper or electronic).