

Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT)

Students in English-Language
Schools, 2023–2024

A large, stylized graphic of the acronym 'OSSLT'. The letters are rendered in a bold, sans-serif font. Each letter is composed of two overlapping shapes: a dark blue shape and a light blue shape. The 'O' is a dark blue circle with a light blue vertical bar on its left side. The 'S's are dark blue shapes with light blue curved sections. The 'L' is a light blue vertical bar with a dark blue horizontal bar at its top. The 'T' is a dark blue horizontal bar with a light blue vertical bar at its base.

Highlights of the Provincial Results

Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT)

The Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) is an agency of the Government of Ontario that contributes to the quality and accountability of Ontario's publicly funded education system. EQAO develops and administers large-scale assessments that produce objective and reliable information to support student success. EQAO data act as a snapshot that shows whether students are meeting curriculum expectations in reading, writing and mathematics at key stages of their education.



Context

EQAO is reporting for the third consecutive year on the student achievement results of the online provincial assessments. Results from the previous two school years are provided along with those from 2023–2024 to show trends in achievement and attitudes from year to year. Such analyses of results contribute to a better understanding of student learning over time.¹

Considerations

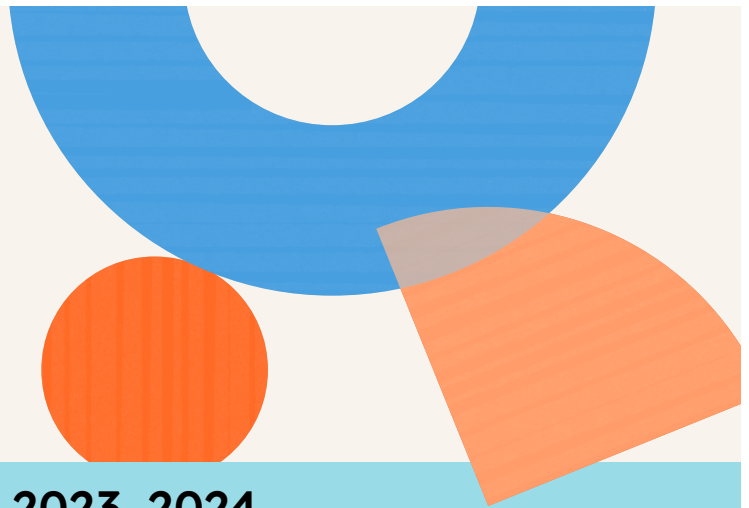
The OSSLT is a linear test design computer assessment that measures whether students are meeting the minimum standard for literacy across all subjects according to *The Ontario Curriculum*. First-time eligible students typically take the test in Grade 10.

The OSSLT comprises two sessions containing selected-response and open-response questions. Each session is designed to be completed in approximately 60 minutes. The e-assessment model allows for schools to administer the OSSLT over a longer administration period: in 2023–2024, the OSSLT was administered in fall and spring for a total of approximately nine weeks.

¹ In 2021–2022, for the OSSLT, EQAO introduced an online mode of delivery and a new assessment model (linear test design), which differ from those of the prior paper-based assessments. In addition, new trendlines and new baselines were set. Additionally, the introduction of a new language curriculum in 2023 required a redesign of certain components of the test.

Assessment Results

Overall success rates on the OSSLT are high, showing stability in students' acquisition of the literacy knowledge and skills stated in *The Ontario Curriculum*.



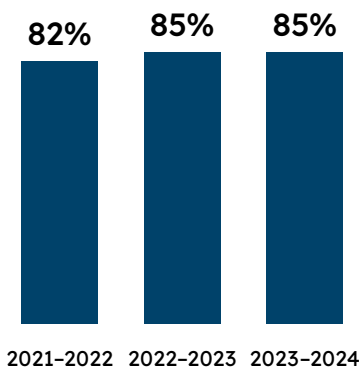
All Participating Students in 2023–2024

156 281

students fully participated in the OSSLT.

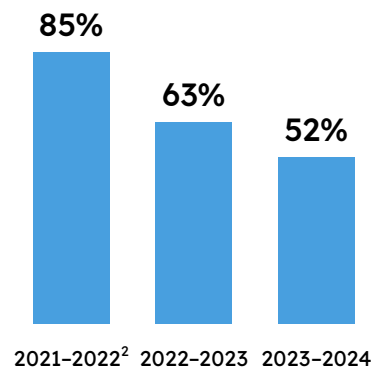
Note: Students benefitted from the opportunity to attempt the test a second time in the spring if they were not yet successful in the fall.

Of the **132 172** first-time eligible students who wrote the OSSLT, **85%** were successful.



The results are **the same** as those from the previous school year. The three-year trend shows **an increase** in success rates.

Of the **24 109** previously eligible students who wrote the OSSLT, **52%** were successful.



This is a **decrease** from the previous school year. The three-year trend shows a **decrease** in success rates.

² In 2021-2022, the number of Grade 11 and non-graduating Grade 12 students who were previously eligible to take the OSSLT was greater than usual due to the paused assessments in 2019-2020 and 2020-2021. When comparing the 2023-2024 results with those of the 2018-2019 cohort, which is a better comparison, the 2023-2024 results represent an increase (from 50% to 52%).

Students Enrolled in Academic and Applied Courses

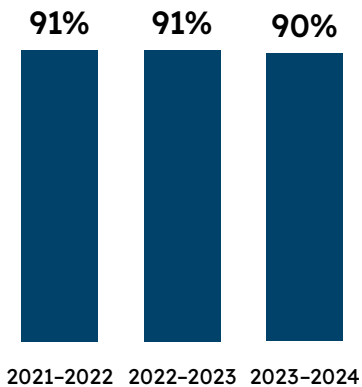
Academic

Of the

112 318

first-time eligible students who wrote the OSSLT and were enrolled in the **academic English course**,

90% were successful.



This is a **decrease** from the previous school year. The three-year trend shows that success rates **have decreased** but remain high.

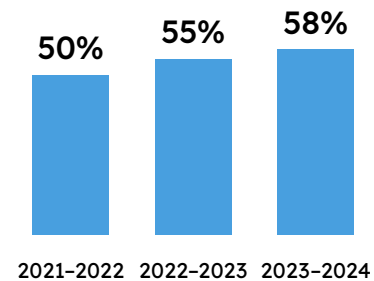
Applied

Of the

15 114

first-time eligible students who wrote the OSSLT and were enrolled in the **applied English course**,

58% were successful.

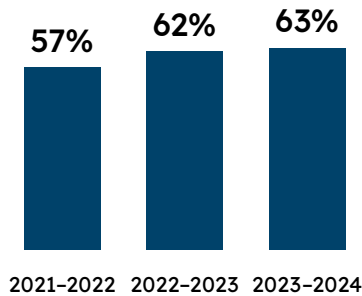


This is an **increase** from the previous school year. The three-year trend shows an **increase** in success rates.

It is encouraging to note that the achievement gap in success rates of students taking the applied course and those taking the academic course has been steadily narrowing over the past three years, although the achievement gap remains an area of concern.

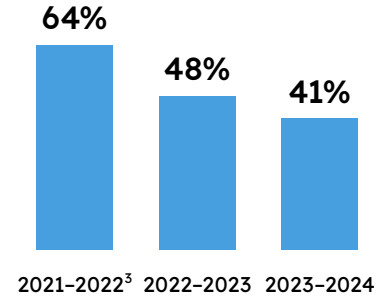
Students with Special Education Needs

Of the **24 957** first-time eligible students who wrote the OSSLT and were identified as having **special education needs** (excluding gifted), **63%** were successful on the test.



This is **an increase** from the previous school year. The three-year trend shows **an increase** in success rates.

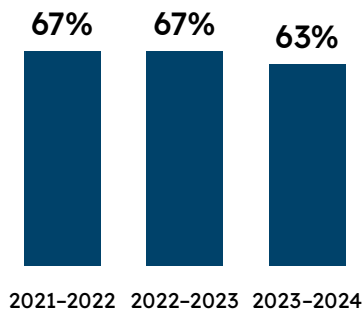
Of the **8225** previously eligible students who wrote the OSSLT and were identified as having **special education needs** (excluding gifted), **41%** were successful on the test.



This is **a decrease** from the previous school year. The three-year trend shows **a decrease** in success rates.

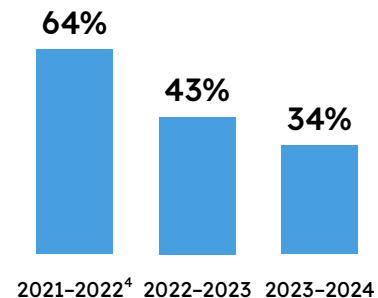
Students Who Are English-Language Learners

Of the **4270** first-time eligible students who wrote the OSSLT and were identified as **English-language learners**, **63%** were successful on the test.



This is **a decrease** from the previous school year. The three-year trend shows **a decrease** in success rates.

Of the **3046** previously eligible students who wrote the OSSLT and were identified as **English-language learners**, **34%** were successful on the test.



This is **a decrease** from the previous school year. The three-year trend shows **a decrease** in success rates.

^{3,4} In 2021-2022, the number of Grade 11 and non-graduating Grade 12 students who were previously eligible to take the OSSLT was greater than usual due to the paused assessments in 2019-2020 and 2020-2021.

Learners' Context

EQAO's student and educator questionnaires are completed voluntarily during the test administration and offer valuable attitudinal and contextual information about students' experiences and perceptions with respect to literacy. This type of information is important and should be considered alongside assessment results and data from other sources to build a full understanding of student learning in Ontario.

Overall, 80% of fully participating students completed the Student Questionnaire, 189 teachers completed the Teacher Questionnaire, and 292 principals completed the Principal Questionnaire.

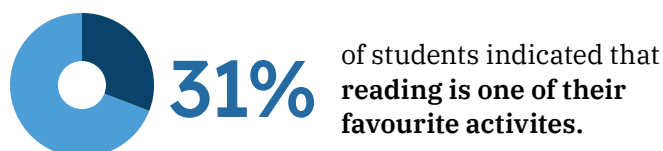
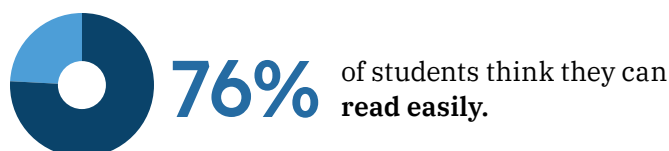
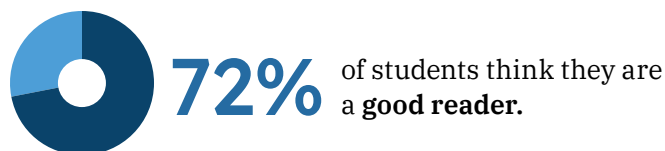
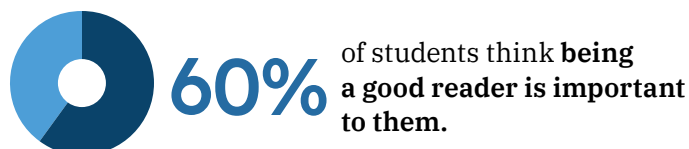
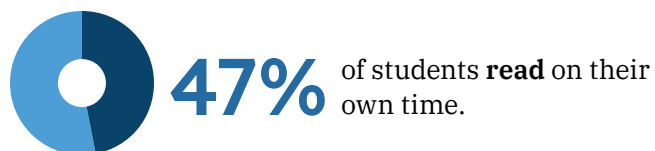


Interest and Confidence in Literacy⁵



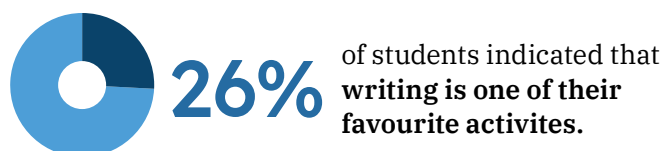
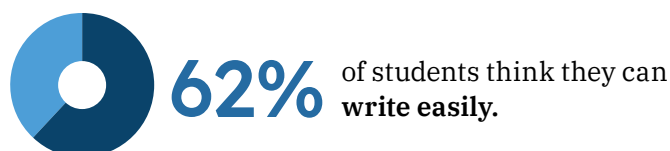
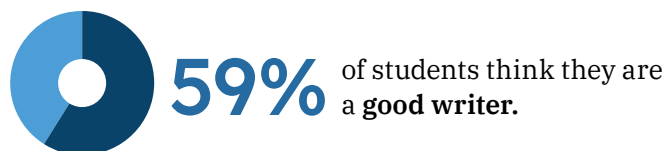
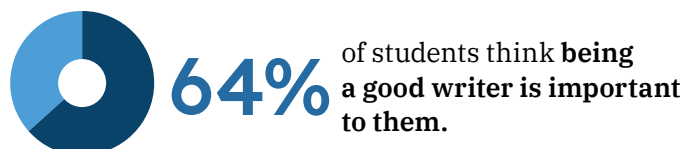
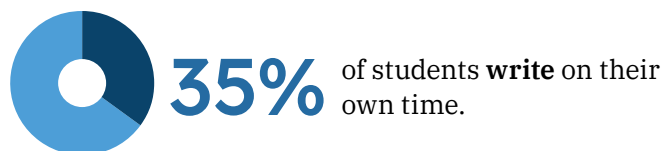
Reading

Overall,



Writing

Overall,



⁵ First-time eligible students' and previously eligible students' data are combined.

Technological Access and Savviness⁶



Overall,

88%

of students indicated that they have a **strong Internet connection** at home to complete their school work.

83%

of students indicated that they use **technology** to improve their knowledge and skills.

Self-Directed Learning and Collaboration⁷



Overall,

75%

of students indicated that **they keep trying** if they make a mistake or if something is difficult.

78%

of students indicated that **doing their best** at school is important to them.

65%

of students think that **learning in groups** is a good way to learn.



^{6,7} First-time eligible students' and previously eligible students' data are combined.

Teaching Transferable Skills



Overall,



of teachers indicated that they incorporate student development of transferable skills such as **communication** (e.g., speaking, writing, listening) into their general practices.



of teachers indicated that they incorporate student development of transferable skills such as **digital literacy** (e.g., evaluating information sources, privacy and security) into their general practices.

Use of EQAO Data



Overall,



of principals indicated that they plan to use this year's EQAO data to identify how well students are meeting **curriculum expectations**.



of principals indicated that they plan to use this year's EQAO data to inform **program planning**, **resource allocation** or **teaching practices**.

EQAO's data are an important indicator of student learning that adds to the available knowledge about how Ontario students are doing. These data also help Ontario's education sector with improving student achievement and well-being at the individual, school, school board and provincial levels. EQAO data, alongside information from other sources, can strengthen conversations about student learning across the province.

To explore additional EQAO data, please visit [School, Board and Provincial Results Interactive EQAO Dashboards](#)

