



# 2016 Student Achievement

## Literacy Planning Resource: Grades 7-12

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Knowing and responding to learners  
who need additional support in literacy





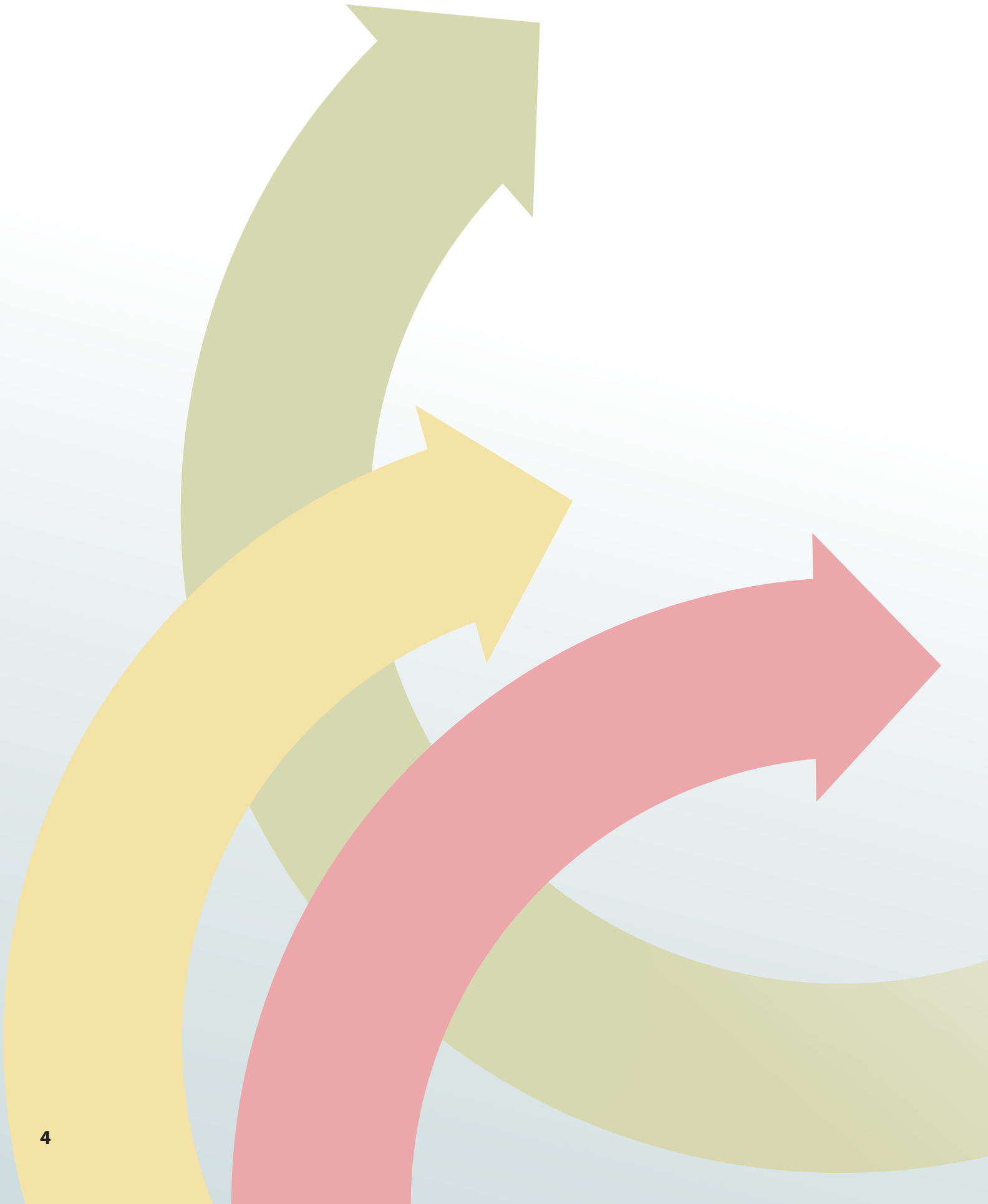
**Literacy is a shared responsibility. It involves all learning and teaching partners – including students, parents and classroom teachers, early childhood educators, school leaders, professional learning facilitators and system**

**leaders as well as members of the broader community. While a focus on literacy goes beyond reading and writing, it builds on the fundamentals to nurture a deep knowledge and appreciation of language. As we move toward a thorough understanding of literacy, we work together to motivate students to become critical and creative communicators and responsible and respectful participants in world communities.**



***Paying Attention to Literacy, 2013, p. 4***

**Note:** The *Student Achievement Literacy Planning Resource* will be reviewed and revised regularly to reflect the most current Ontario data and successful practices. Student Success Leaders will receive updated versions to share with teams focused on students who need additional support with literacy



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# Introduction

Literacy is a shared responsibility involving all learning and teaching partners, including students, parents<sup>1</sup>, educators and members of the broader community. Effective literacy programming begins with informed understanding of what it means to be literate in today's world.

## What is literacy?



Literacy is...the ability to use language and images in rich and varied forms to read, write, listen, speak, view, represent, discuss and think critically about ideas. Literacy enables us to share information and to interact with others. Literacy is an essential tool for personal growth and active participation in a democratic society.

Literacy involves the capacity to:

- Access, manage, create and evaluate information
- Think imaginatively and analytically
- Communicate thoughts and ideas effectively
- Apply metacognitive knowledge and skills
- Develop a sense of self-efficacy and an interest in life-long learning

The development of literacy is a complex process that involves building on prior knowledge, culture and experiences in order to instil new knowledge and deepen understanding.

*Paying Attention to Literacy, 2013, p. 3*

Literacy continues to evolve as the world changes and its demands shift and become more complex. Literacy is not only used for reading and writing, but also to increase one's understanding of the world.

*Adolescent Literacy Guide, 2016, p. 4*

<sup>1</sup>Throughout this resource, the word "parent" refers to parents, guardians and caregivers.

## Why focus on literacy?

Literacy is foundational to students' wellbeing, success and participation in society as lifelong learners. Teaching literacy skills must go beyond traditional concepts such as print-based reading and writing so that students acquire "valuable, higher-order skills like critical thinking, communication, innovation, creativity, collaboration and entrepreneurship" (*Achieving Excellence*, 2014, p. 3).

Students are expected to demonstrate the learning outlined in the Ontario curriculum's overall and specific expectations. Literacy skills are embedded in the expectations for all subjects. As students meet these expectations, they acquire transferable literacy skills that enable them to "think, express and reflect" effectively in various contexts (*Adolescent Literacy Guide*, 2016, p. 19).

Adolescent literacy is particularly important because literacy demands such as vocabulary acquisition and accessing and managing information become more complex across subjects and disciplines in the intermediate grades. At the same time, the adolescent student population is diverse, with learners in Grades 7-12 demonstrating a broad range of development, autonomy and out-of-school literacy practices — all of which have an impact on their literacy skills.

Because literacy skills are required for all subjects, they affect quantitative measures of student success, including pass rates, credit accumulation and mark distribution. As indicated in Appendix A, Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) results show that:

- The overall pass rate on the OSSLT has remained relatively stable for the past six years, but there is a gap between the success rates of students in academic and applied courses.
- The pass rate on the OSSLT for specific groups of students (e.g., those in applied courses, students with special education needs and boys) is lower than the overall pass rate.

## How can Student Success board and school teams help improve literacy achievement?

All educators work together to support students facing literacy challenges, but Student Success Leaders (SSLs) and Student Success Teachers (SSTs) have specific responsibilities for "students who are struggling with their secondary program and are at risk of not graduating" (*Ontario Schools, Kindergarten to Grade 12: Policy and Program Requirements*, 2011, p.33).

To support these students, boards and schools receive targeted ministry funding from the

Student Achievement Division to build leadership and instructional capacity for literacy. SSLs and SSTs regularly monitor student progress to assess the impact of supports and interventions, offering flexible responses as needs change. They collaborate with parents and the school community to mobilize knowledge, innovation and a vision for literacy. They may also assist with the policy requirement to help students who do not complete the OSSLT successfully.

School boards are required to provide remedial assistance for students who do not complete the test successfully. This remedial assistance should be designed to help the students improve their skills so that they are better prepared to retake the literacy test. For example, a board could offer a credit course on learning strategies. . . or one on literacy skills. . . for these students.

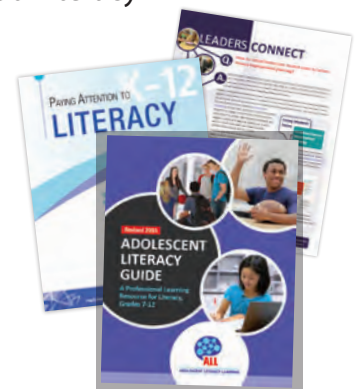
*Ontario Schools, Kindergarten to Grade 12: Policy and Program Requirements, 2011, p. 58*

## What is the *Student Achievement Literacy Planning Resource*?

The *Student Achievement Literacy Planning Resource* is a tool that supports the collaborative efforts of SSLs, system and school leaders and teams (e.g., Special Education, literacy and English as a Second Language) to plan for and implement deep, precise and targeted actions that support literacy instruction and achievement.

The resource consolidates effective practices from Ontario boards, schools and classrooms for identifying and addressing the needs of students facing literacy challenges — some of whom may need additional support to meet the secondary school literacy graduation requirement.

This resource extends the “good-for-all” board and school literacy planning anchored in resources such as *Paying Attention to Literacy*, the *Leaders Connect* series and the *Adolescent Literacy Guide*. It is meant to help teams use data and assessments to determine the specific needs of students who require additional literacy support. It will also help educators identify and implement targeted resources, strategies and professional learning that builds their capacity to assess and respond to the specific literacy needs of these students.

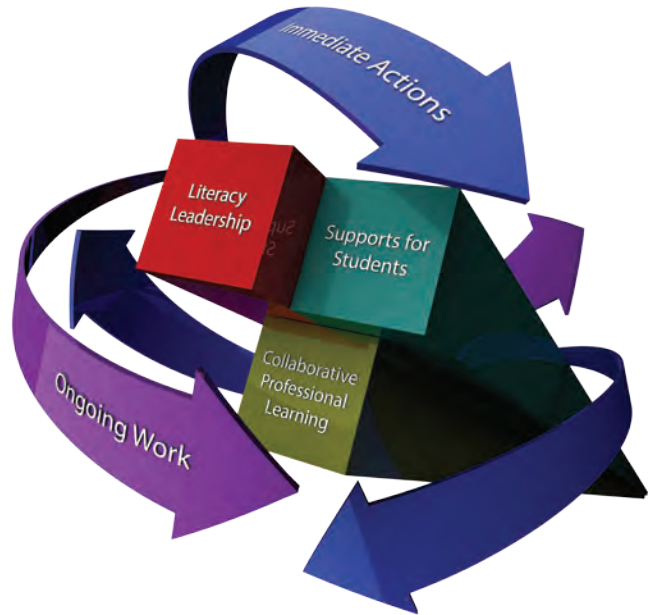




Effective literacy practices in this resource are organized under three headings:

- **Literacy leadership**
- **Collaborative professional learning**
- **Supports for students**

For each of these, the practices that support board and school planning for improving student achievement in literacy are classified in terms of immediate actions and ongoing work:



**Immediate actions** address the literacy needs of Grade 10 students who have been assessed as needing support to meet the literacy graduation requirement through the OSSLT (e.g. those in applied courses and those who scored below the provincial standard on the Grade 6 EQAO), and students who have been previously unsuccessful on the OSSLT.

Immediate actions include:

- Providing these students with targeted supports and interventions
- Building educator capacity to assess and respond to these students' specific needs, with a focus on the skills required for the OSSLT



**Ongoing work** addresses the literacy needs of students in Grades 7-12 who need additional support with literacy with a focus on those in Grades 7, 8 and 9.

Ongoing work includes:

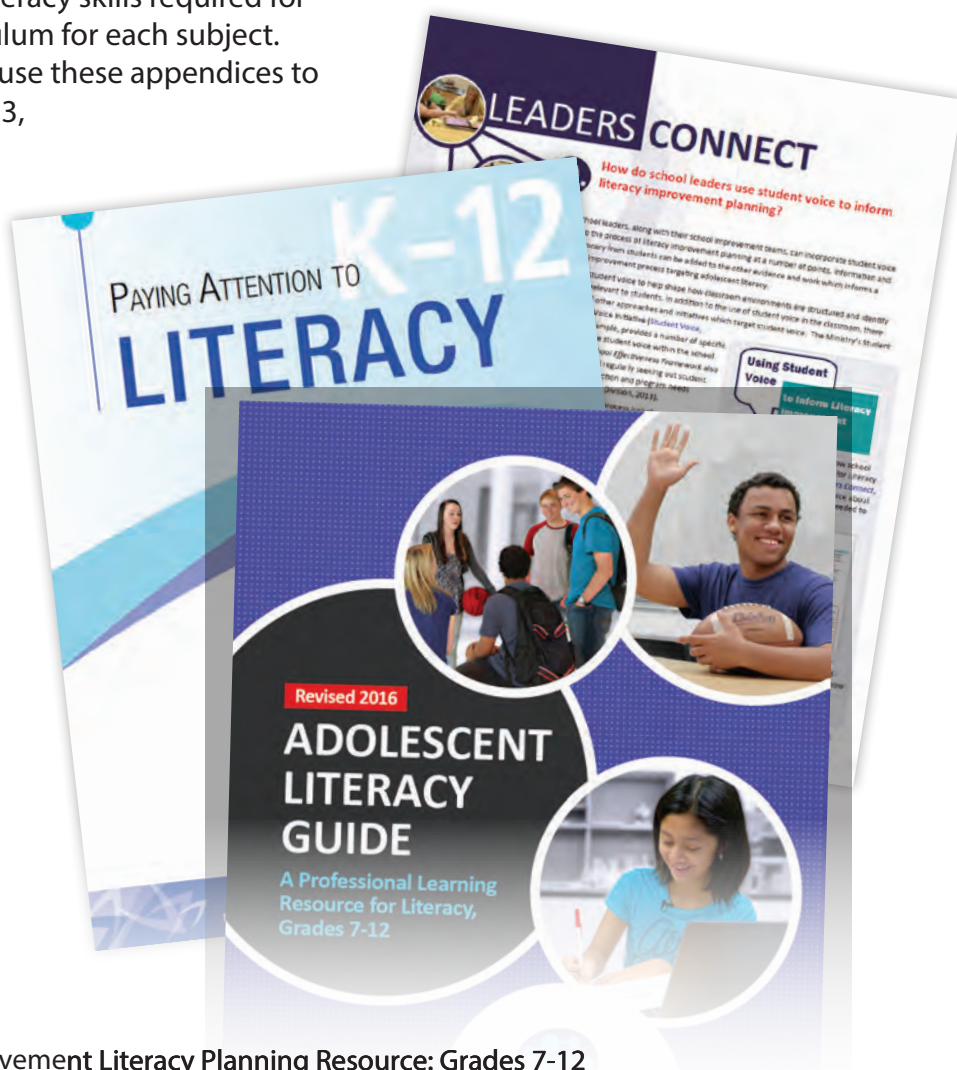
- Creating a continuum of supports and interventions across the intermediate division to address their assessed needs
- Supporting capacity building for leadership, effective assessment and differentiated literacy instruction

## Suggestions for use

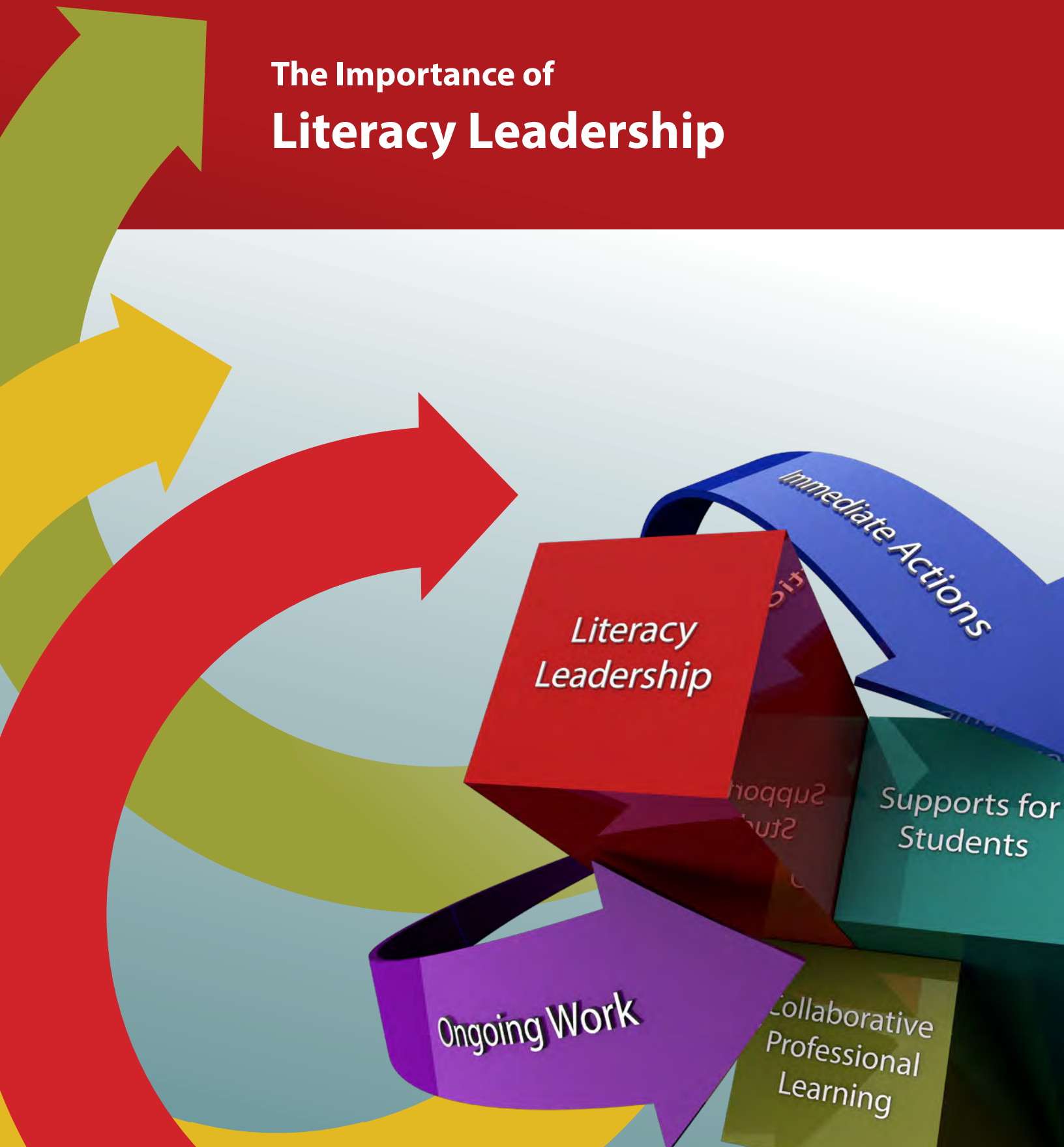
The *Student Achievement Literacy Planning Resource* can be used for a variety of audiences and purposes. Student Success and board leaders (e.g., in Special Education and literacy), superintendents of education, principals, professional learning facilitators and classroom teachers may refer to the resource as they:

- Reflect on board, school and student data, profiles and action plans.
- Discuss and assess the impact of current leader and classroom practices.
- Identify areas for continued attention that align with board and school improvement plans for literacy.
- Develop cross-panel professional learning and targeted student supports for literacy.
- Facilitate the alignment of initiatives, resources and teams.

Appendix B and Appendix C help educators and students make connections between the literacy skills required for the OSSLT and those in the curriculum for each subject. Cross-panel transition teams may use these appendices to build an understanding of Grades 3, 6 and 10 Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) tests, assessment criteria and student achievement data, map cross-panel literacy skills, and identify areas for professional learning and student supports. Working with the scoring codes will increase educator and student knowledge of assessment criteria for reading and writing.



# The Importance of Literacy Leadership



# The Importance of Literacy Leadership

Improving student achievement in literacy requires leaders who hold high expectations and believe that all students can develop the literacy skills for success in school and life. Effective leaders inspire educators to share responsibility for literacy assessment and instruction. They mobilize resources to create supports and conditions for a board- and school-wide emphasis on literacy across all grades and subjects. Strong literacy leaders articulate the urgent need to assess and address the needs of students who are at risk of not meeting the literacy graduation requirement. These leaders create a call to action.

School and system leaders set direction and develop a collaborative vision and plan of action with respect to the learning and teaching of literacy.

*Paying Attention to Literacy,*  
2013, p. 8



## Immediate actions for literacy leadership

Ministry and system leaders provide literacy leadership in collaboration with school administrators and teams (e.g., Literacy, Special Education and English as a Second Language). They take immediate actions that help students in Grade 10 who need support to meet the literacy graduation requirement, as well as students who have been previously unsuccessful on the OSSLT. Literacy leaders use a cyclical process, such as the Professional Learning Cycle, that focuses on:

### Knowing the learners

System and school leaders:

- Use a range of provincial and classroom assessments (e.g., Grade 6 and 9 EQAO data, Steps to English Proficiency [STEP], student work, OSSLT practice tests) and other evidence (e.g., conversations, observations, Individual Education Plans [IEPs], report cards, credit accumulation and demographics) to identify and determine the needs of students at immediate risk of not meeting the literacy graduation requirement.



- Use Individual Student Reports (ISRs) and Individual Item Results (IIRs) from EQAO to assess the need for interventions — including the Ontario Secondary Literacy Course (OSSLC) — for students who were unsuccessful on the OSSLT.

## Responding with supports and interventions

System and school leaders:

- Facilitate the collaborative development of a profile and plan to inform interventions and instruction for each student requiring literacy support.
- Engage teachers in developing and using individual student profiles and response plans to increase the precision of literacy instruction. (See The Importance of Collaborative Professional Learning in this resource.)
- Provide for literacy-focused courses such as Learning Strategies (GLS/GLE), Literacy Skills: Reading and Writing, Grade 10 (ELS 2O) and English as a Second Language (ESL). (See p. 34 of *Ontario Schools, Kindergarten to Grade 12: Policy and Program Requirements, 2011 (OS)* for timetabling strategies — available at: [edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/policy/os/ONSchools.pdf](http://edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/policy/os/ONSchools.pdf).)
- Review and update accommodations required for students with IEPs and Transition plans, as well as special provisions for English language learners (ELLs) adhering to the EQAO *Guide for Accommodations, Special Provisions, Deferrals and Exemptions for English Language Learners and Students With Special Education Needs* — available at: [www.eqao.com/en/assessments/OSSLT/assessment-docs/accommodatons-guide-osslt-2016.pdf](http://www.eqao.com/en/assessments/OSSLT/assessment-docs/accommodatons-guide-osslt-2016.pdf). (See Appendix D of this resource for excerpts.)
- Engage parents and students in understanding the literacy graduation requirement's importance and the lifelong need for literacy skills. (See resources available at: [www.eqao.com/en/assessments/OSSLT/parents/Pages/Parents.aspx](http://www.eqao.com/en/assessments/OSSLT/parents/Pages/Parents.aspx).)
- Invite students who have previously met the literacy graduation requirement to partner with and mentor students who need support.
- Align classroom and human resources with literacy priorities and goals to differentiate supports based on assessed school needs.
- Coordinate literacy interventions and supports across all divisions and departments, including Special Education and ESL.
- Mobilize knowledge from ministry literacy sessions and resources, including the Ontario Provincial Literacy Leads, to learn about literacy and share effective board and provincial strategies.



## Monitoring impact

Board and school leaders:

- Review Student Success board and school immediate action plans and results for literacy in terms of student progress and help refine as necessary.
- Track students in the Taking Stock report and connect their literacy needs with its deliverables (e.g., individualized timetables, education and career life planning, strength-based profiles, and caring adults).

## LEADERS CONNECT

Leaders Connect is a series of resources created to help board and school leaders with effective literacy programming. The resources are available at:

[www.edugains.ca/newsite/literacy/schoolleader/leaders\\_connect.html](http://www.edugains.ca/newsite/literacy/schoolleader/leaders_connect.html).

### SAMPLE PRACTICE — Immediate leadership actions

A school's literacy team — which included the principal as co-learner and representatives from math, Student Success, library and Pathways — met to review data (e.g., Grade 6 and 9 EQAO and report card grades, student work) and information gathered from staff and students. The team identified reading for meaning as the literacy need and developed a precise and targeted school response plan that included a range of student supports and professional learning options for staff. The team then proposed a school-wide literacy focus question for the year: "What does it mean to read for meaning?" This question was refined with students to become, "How do we know we understand what we read?" Each class developed success criteria for applying reading comprehension skills to subject-specific course material. Professional learning opportunities (e.g., expert speakers and collaborative inquiry) connected to the annual focus question.

To support students taking the OSSLT, the literacy team organized a schedule that identified one literacy skill from the test each month as an instructional focus. The skill was taught contextually in Grade 10 courses. At monthly meetings, the Grade 10 educators followed a protocol for analysing student work on this skill. The literacy leadership team met frequently to review evidence of learning, as well as staff and student reflections about the impact of various strategies. The responsiveness of the leadership team resulted in a more precise annual literacy plan with more targeted and strategic supports and interventions (e.g., peer tutoring by previously successful students).



## Ongoing work for literacy leadership

### Further to immediate actions...

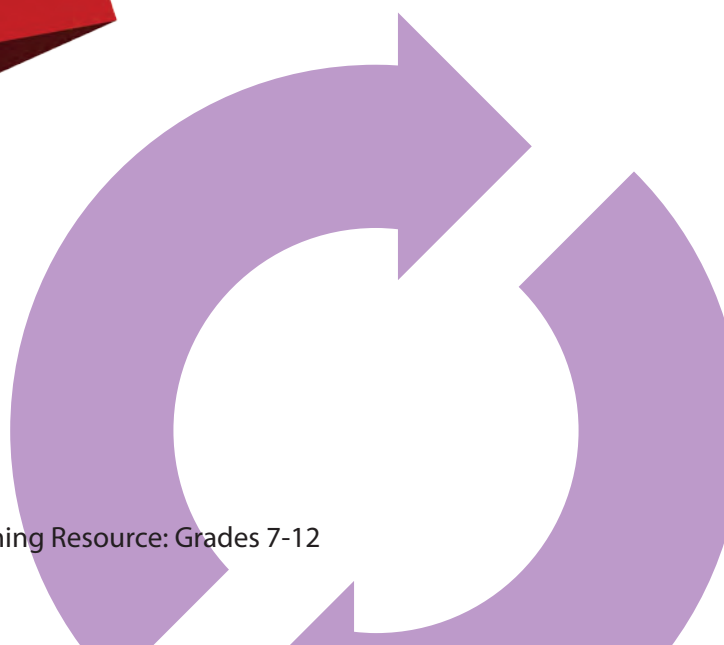
Student Success, system and school leaders collaborate with all staff in ongoing, targeted work to support students in Grades 7-12 who need literacy support, with a focus on those in Grades 7, 8, and 9. The literacy leaders:

- Articulate explicit literacy goals and strategies, including clear statements in board and school plans, and monitor results closely.
- Coordinate cross-panel, interdepartmental and subject-specific work on literacy to create a continuum of supports and interventions from grade to grade and school to school.
- Build a shared understanding of how literacy skills are used in the community and the workplace and how important students' literacy skills are to their post-secondary career and life goals.
- Facilitate purposeful and strategic staffing and supports for literacy (e.g., coaches).
- Include student voice and EQAO attitudinal data in the cyclical process of identifying and responding to the needs of schools and families of schools.
- Involve students as researchers who contribute to the inquiry on how to close literacy gaps and as partners in taking responsive action.
- Align and leverage literacy-related ministry and board policies and initiatives.
- Provide for a review of existing classroom resources, including technology tools that support literacy, to assess their relevance and effectiveness and help acquire current, research-based materials as appropriate.
- Encourage the use of the Individual Pathways Plan (IPP) as a tool to help students gather and document evidence of their literacy skills.
- Support cross-panel professional learning that focuses on the use of engaging, challenging strategies and resources, and in measuring their impact on literacy skills. (See The Importance of Collaborative Professional Learning in this resource.)
- Facilitate sharing of practices that have had a positive impact on students' literacy achievement (e.g., through multi-level networking and sharing of artefacts and processes).

- Engage parents, students and the community in understanding what it means to be literate in today's world.

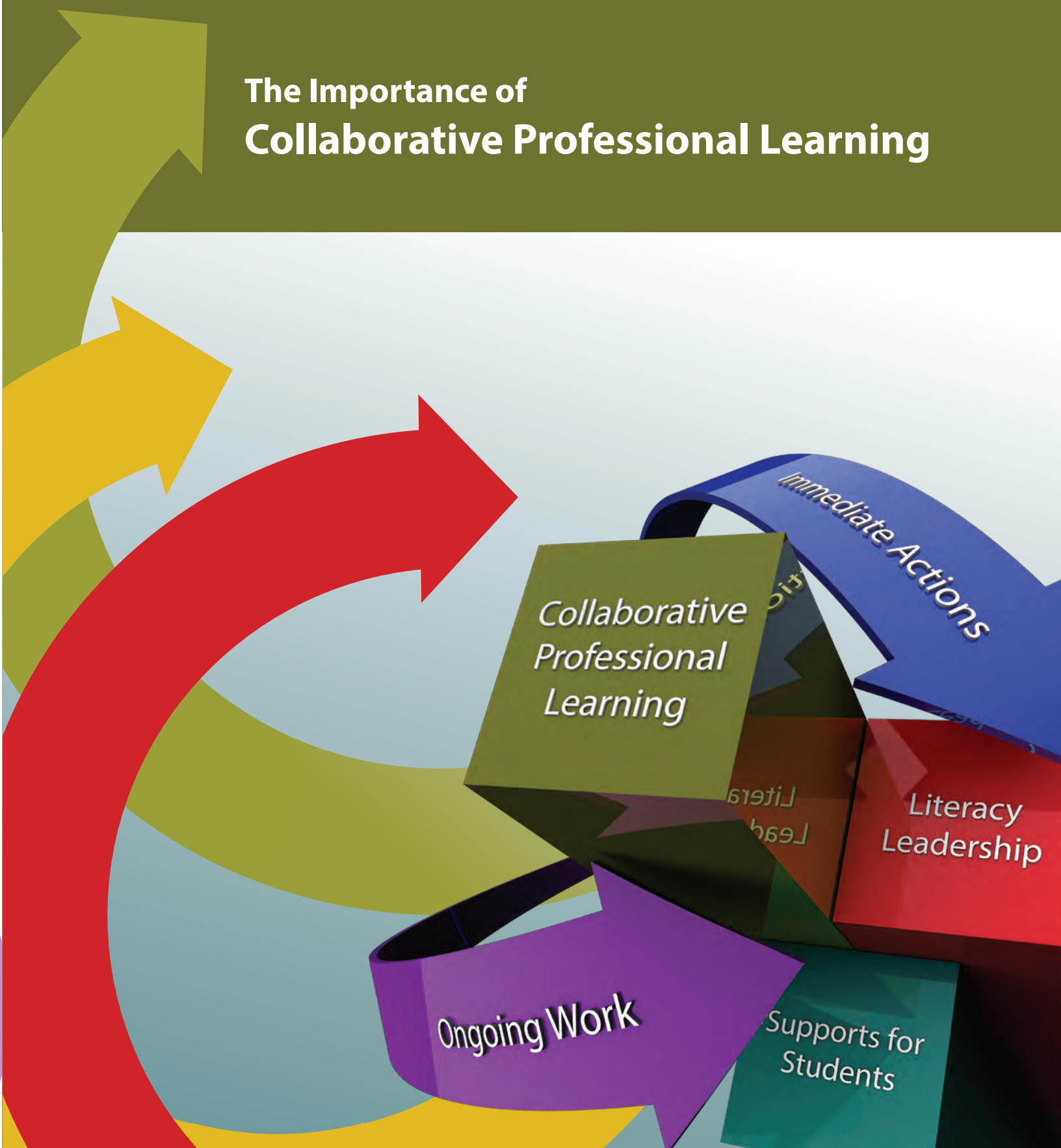
### SAMPLE PRACTICE — Ongoing literacy leadership

At one of their regular meetings, Student Success teams from across a board identified the development and use of student profiles and plans as inconsistent in cross-panel transitions. They collaborated across departments to study various profiles (e.g., Special Education, strengths-based Student Success) and created a sample template that consolidated the information and accommodated all of the plans and profiles in use. Next, they proposed a process for teacher teams in families of schools to test the template and refine how they integrate literacy information into a profile and use it as a basis for developing student-specific literacy action plans. Families of schools (Grades 6-10) adapted the template for use in their context and learned more about how to assess students' literacy needs and respond through the use of specific strategies. Teams continued to refine the process for passing information from grade to grade and for including students in the development and use of profiles. The literacy leadership resulted in more purposeful use and ownership of the profiles by both educators and students.





# The Importance of Collaborative Professional Learning



# The Importance of Collaborative Professional Learning

Professional learning grounded in inquiry and discussion builds understanding of curriculum, pedagogy and adolescent development — all of which are essential to comprehensive literacy programming and effective instruction. Collaborative professional learning occurs whenever educators share practice, examine evidence of student learning to determine needs, access opportunities to build assessment and instructional skills and reflect upon how their work impacted student achievement.

When professional learning is job-embedded and inquiry-based, it contributes to a culture of ongoing learning for classroom educators and students alike and builds the capacity of the entire system for change and innovation.

*Paying Attention to Literacy,*  
2013, p. 9



## Immediate actions for collaborative professional learning

Boards and schools offer collaborative professional learning, prioritizing Grade 10 teachers, particularly those who teach applied courses and students who have been previously unsuccessful on the OSSLT. This professional learning provides opportunities for educators to:

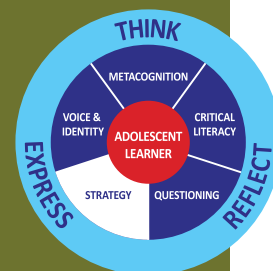
- Build understanding of specific literacy skills and success criteria for the OSSLT/ literacy graduation requirement, how those skills connect with their subject and how to assess and teach them. The skill areas are:
  - o Reading skills: understanding explicit and implicit messages and making connections (see Appendix B in this resource)
  - o Writing skills: developing a main idea, organizing information and using conventions (see Appendix C in this resource)

- Increase precision in gathering and analysing data and evidence (e.g., conversations, observations and products) to assess student literacy skills and determine needs.
- Focus on explicit and differentiated literacy instruction informed by the student's profile and plan.
- Prioritize implementing the Strategy component of the *Adolescent Literacy Guide* (pp. 45-52) and the ALERTS recommended for addressing immediate needs in reading and writing, as well as using EQAO rubrics and samples with students. (See Appendix B and Appendix C of this resource.)

**STRATEGY** is a component of adolescent literacy that is closely linked to success on the OSSLT.

"Strategy refers to students purposefully selecting and using techniques and processes to construct and communicate meaning."

*Adolescent Literacy Guide*,  
2016, p. 45



- Access ministry Provincial Literacy Leads to build board and school leader and facilitator capacity.
- Choose from a range of continuous and differentiated professional learning about literacy (e.g., coaching, collaborative inquiry, additional qualification [AQ] courses in reading and writing).

### SAMPLE PRACTICE — Immediate professional learning

New Grade 10 teachers were conscious of the need to prepare students for the OSSLT but wanted to integrate literacy skills authentically into course work. In response to student needs in reading, they worked with a literacy coach to learn more about assessing and teaching the three reading skills on the OSSLT. (See Appendix B.) They learned about the five types of texts on the test (e.g., dialogues and graphics), the format of the reading questions, and how student answers are scored.

Each teacher selected an upcoming piece of text from their course (including graphics) and developed related questions that would allow the demonstration of the three reading skills. The teachers read each other's texts, using a strategy called "talk to the text" to think through and record on sticky notes what they did to understand the texts (i.e., using metacognition). As a result, each teacher emerged with a sample

reading lesson to refine and use with their class. At the next meeting, they analysed examples of how their students applied “talking to the text.” One teacher described how he “makes thinking visible” by posting the student samples on the classroom walls for them to examine and discuss. The teachers noticed that students generally used “before reading” strategies (e.g., predicting) well. Based on the evidence from the samples, they decided to delve deeper into how to improve students’ “during reading” skills and how to increase the use of technology-enabled learning.



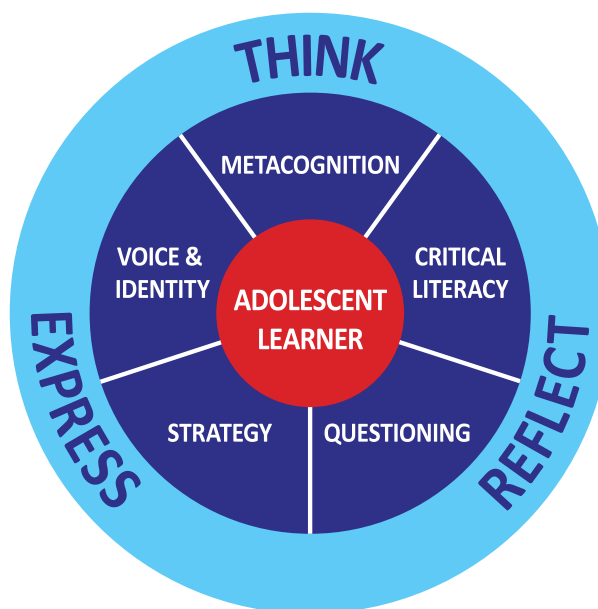
## Ongoing work for collaborative professional learning

### Further to the immediate actions...

Boards and schools offer professional learning for educators of students in Grades 7-12 who need literacy support, with a focus on those in Grades 7, 8, and 9. These ongoing learning opportunities provide cross-panel, cross-curricular and subject-specific options for educators to:

- Determine their own professional learning needs to increase understanding of:
  - o Adolescent development
  - o Strengths/needs assessments of adolescents requiring literacy support
  - o Differentiated literacy instruction that is responsive to assessment
- Review the literacy skills required for their subject in the Ontario curriculum and deepen their understanding of how to assess and address these skills.
- Make connections among the literacy skills in their subject, the skills required on the OSSLT and the multiple literacies required in current post-secondary destinations.
- Engage with all departments (e.g., Special Education, program, information technology [IT]) in working together to precisely assess students’ literacy strengths and needs and respond using strategies that are specific to the needs.
- Use asset models of learning that encourage administrators and teachers to consider themselves learners of literacy pedagogy — and, together, to practice and openly explore ways of teaching literacy.

- Make flexible, adaptive use of adolescent literacy resources, including differentiated instruction (DI) materials, the *Adolescent Literacy Guide*, *ALERTs*, *Think Literacy*, *Leaders Connect*, and technology-enabled learning. (See Appendix B and Appendix C.)
- Include all components of adolescent literacy in all subjects to advance students' ability to think, express and reflect.

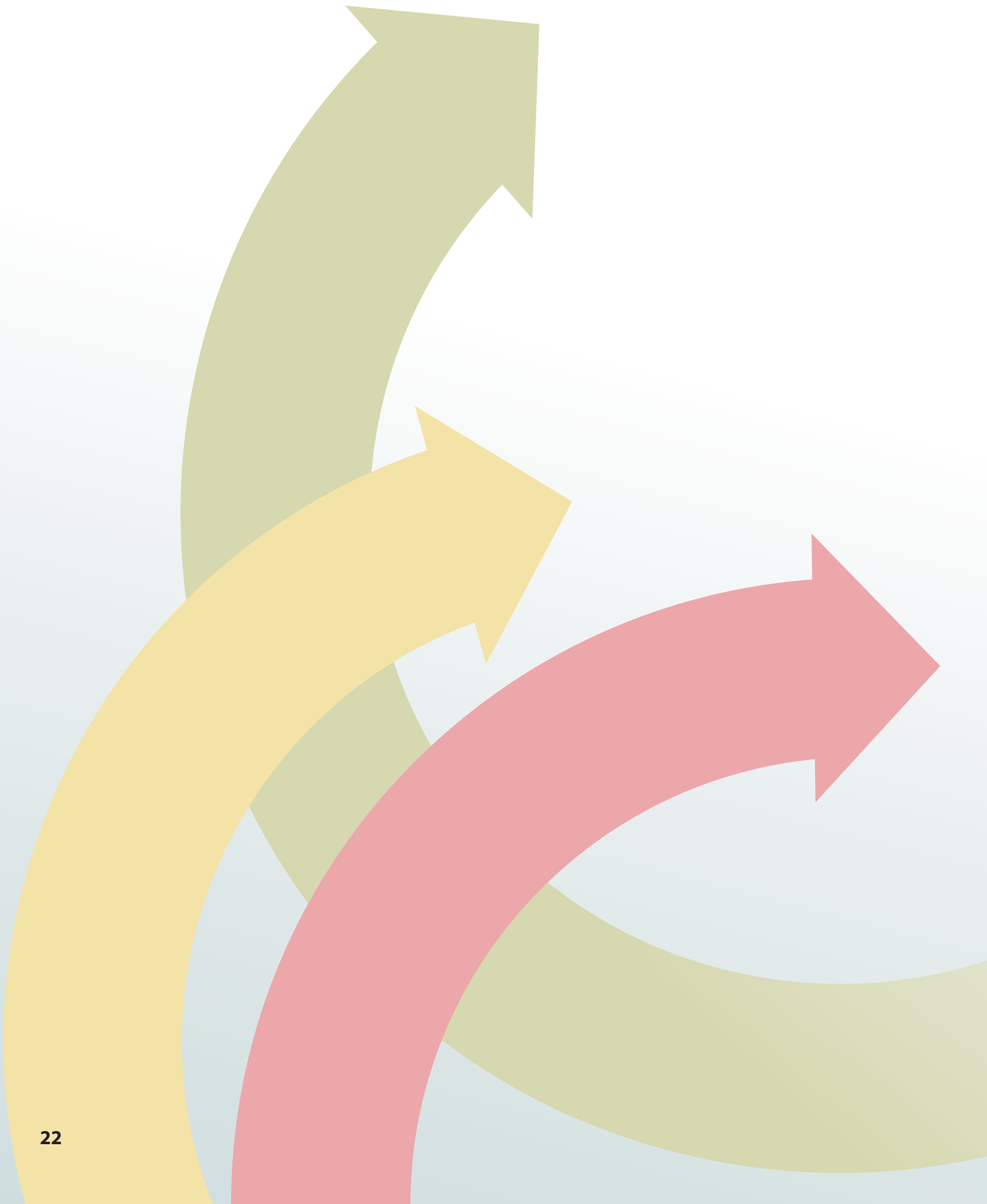


### SAMPLE PRACTICE — Ongoing professional learning

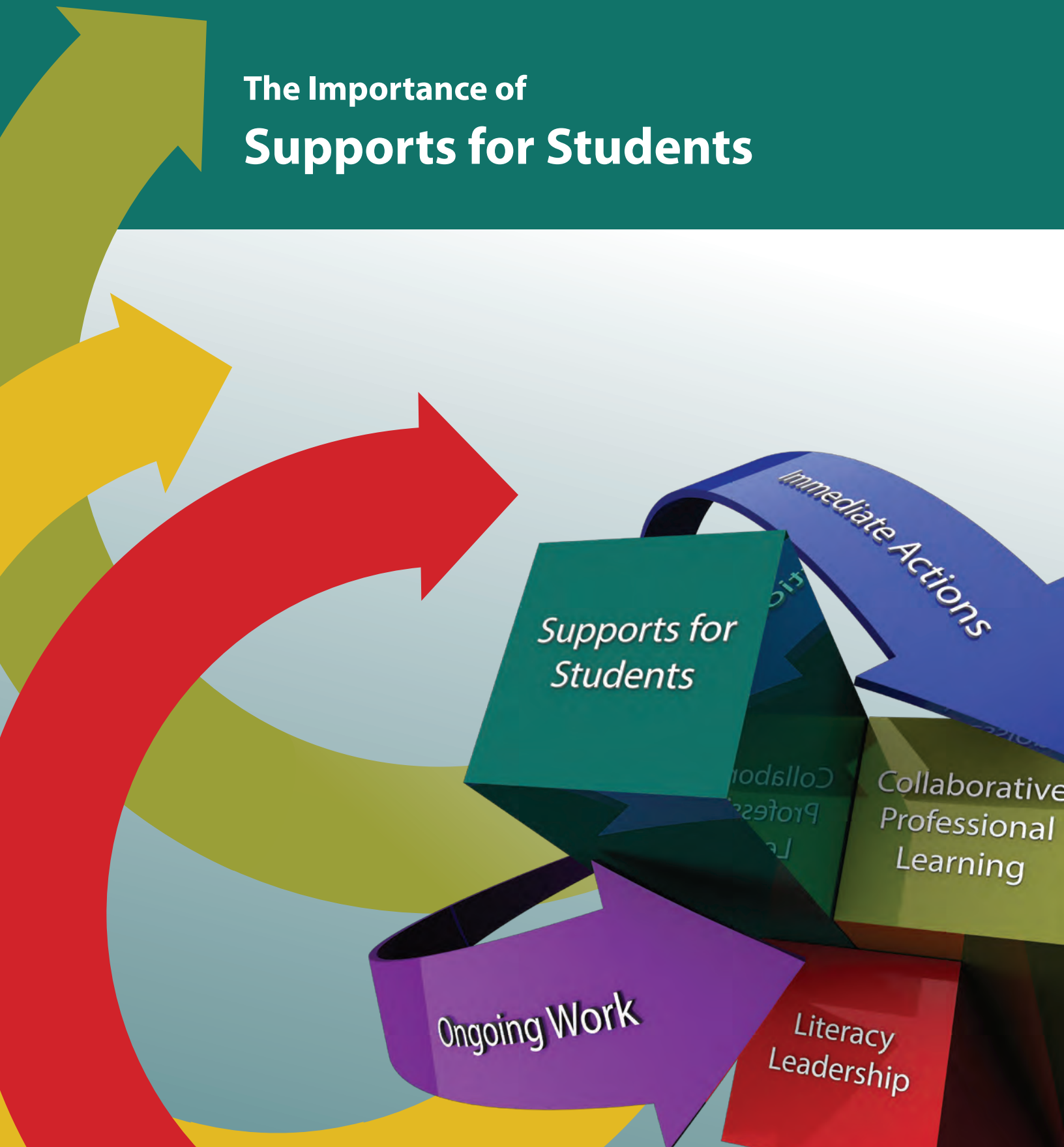
Grade 6-10 educators (including the SST) from a family of schools met regularly to refine their cross-panel continuum of literacy supports and interventions through an inquiry process. Every year, based on analyses of EQAO data, oral and written student products, and conversations with staff and students, they selected a target group of students from each grade who needed additional literacy support.

Once they had specified the unique literacy needs of the target groups in their respective classes, they identified their own learning needs as educators to be able to respond effectively. They planned their professional learning using a variety of options for accessing literacy- and subject-specific expertise (e.g., through webinars, co-teaching or coaching). The professional learning focussed on differentiating instruction for students who require additional support to meet the curriculum expectations for the subject (e.g., gathering, organizing and analysing information; drawing conclusions). The team tracked the progress of students at team meetings and members shared their experiences with new strategies for teaching literacy skills.

At the end of the school year, the team reviewed each student's progress while updating profiles and plans. Central to this process were conferences with the students themselves. The selected students went over their individual literacy learning strengths and plans with one or more of the next year's teachers. The involvement of students, teamwork and professional learning resulted in more seamless academic and social transitions between the grades and from elementary to secondary school due to more consistent, personalized and effective assessment and instruction throughout the family of schools.



# The Importance of Supports for Students





# The Importance of Support for Students in literacy

Providing direct support to students allows for differentiation to address the unique interests, strengths, needs and learning preferences of each learner. There is no “one-size-fits-all” solution. To become literate lifelong learners, students must be actively engaged in developing and reflecting on their literacy skills, setting goals for improvement and taking actions to extend their learning.

Educators and students are co-creators of a responsive literacy learning environment in the classroom and the school. Together they engage in inquiry, reflection, dialogue, and the sharing of ideas in all subject areas across the day.

*Paying Attention to Literacy, 2013, p. 6*



## Immediate actions to support students

Leaders, teachers, and teams put supports in place for students in Grade 10 who require additional support to pass the OSSLT (e.g., students in Grade 10 Applied classes), and those who were previously unsuccessful on the OSSLT. Immediate supports for these students include:

- A range of literacy supports and interventions including tutoring, individualized timetables and literacy-based courses
- Multiple and varied occasions to learn about OSSLT success criteria, deconstruct sample answers, complete practice tests and get feedback in order to build test-taking skills and confidence (Online Sample Test available at: <https://ontariotest.com/Practice/EQAOen#> and Sample Answers at: <http://www.eqao.com/en/assessments/OSSLT/Pages/example-assessment-materials-2015.aspx#releasematerials>)
- Differentiated programming and instruction informed by the literacy profile and plan for each student, including the accommodations required by students with IEPs
- Peer support from previously successful students (e.g., mentoring or tutoring)



- Adaptations and supports to meet the needs of English Language Learners including ESL and English literacy Development courses (See Appendix D.)
- Access to Ontario Software Acquisition Program Advisory Committee (OSAPAC) licensed software and explicit instruction on how to use it
- Frequent contact with individual students to discuss progress, increase agency in their literacy development and respond to changes in needs
- Collaboration with students and their parents to build an understanding of the investment required to meet the literacy graduation requirement
- Review of the ISR and the IIR, and a conference with each student who has not succeeded on the OSSLT to develop a plan for remediation (i.e., additional support for taking the test again or an opportunity to take the OSSLC)

## **SAMPLE PRACTICES — Immediate supports for students**

### **Sample practice 1**

When the results of a writing assessment in one school indicated that a group of students was having difficulty with the writing skill of developing a main idea with sufficient supporting details, Grade 10 teachers of applied classes learned new ways of teaching the skill. They had students create and present a main idea with supporting details, using infographics. Student understanding increased when they visually represented the skill. Next, in small groups, students examined EQAO OSSLT sample answers for this writing skill and ranked them from “excellent” to “poor.” They reviewed and discussed the EQAO scoring codes with their teacher and used descriptors from the scoring guide to help co-construct success criteria. The small groups offered suggestions for “bumping up” each sample answer. Students went on to apply the skill of developing a main idea with supporting details in their class work.

### **Sample practice 2**

In one school, at the beginning of each school year, every Grade 10 student (as well as students who were unsuccessful on the previous OSSLT) was assigned to a small group (six to eight) for literacy support. Teachers interested in facilitating a group were released to meet with their group eight times before the OSSLT in March. The focus of the small group learning was on applying metacognition to literacy strategies across

the curriculum. The staff found that personal interactions in small groups shed light on the achievement data (e.g., Grade 6 and 9 EQAO scores and credit accumulation in Grade 9) as well as attitudinal data for this cohort and engaged students in deeper thinking about what helps or prevents them from succeeding in literacy.

In January, more intensive support was offered to targeted groups of students based on the results of a mock OSSLT test. Each one was paired with a previously successful student who was able to act as a mentor. This peer support was one of the activities coordinated by a school club made up of students who want to improve the school's literacy skills. The immediate supports helped increase the confidence of the students and their ability to articulate their specific literacy strengths and needs.



## Ongoing work to support students

### Further to the immediate actions...

Leaders, teachers and teams offer ongoing direct assistance to students in Grades 7-12 who need additional support in literacy, with a focus on those in Grades 7, 8, and 9. These supports include:

- A continuum of literacy supports and interventions, including transition plans for students when they move from grade to grade and school to school
- Active participation of students in co-creating their learning based on their strengths and goals, including information from their IPP and/or Individual Education and Transition Plan(s)
- Creative and strategic use of literacy programs and courses (e.g., peer tutoring, Homework Help, summer programs, literacy-focused learning strategies {GLS and GLE} courses)
- Differentiated literacy learning and teaching strategies, required accommodations for students with special education needs and supports for English language learners, based on current research and informed by student profiles
- Provision for multiple ways of thinking, communicating, and demonstrating learning, including a wide variety of technology-enabled tools that support literacy teaching and learning (e.g., Mindomo, online collaborative tools)

- Opportunities to experience how literacy skills are used in the workplace and make connections to careers and pathway planning
- Scaffolding literacy learning to enable students in confidently and independently demonstrating intended learning as supports are reduced

## **SAMPLE PRACTICES — Ongoing supports for students**

### **Sample practice 1**

An annual summer program provided all Grade 8 students with the opportunity to take a “reach ahead” credit course at their secondary school to help them prepare for the transition from elementary school. Students used math and literacy skills during the course, and their strengths and needs were identified and addressed. Student Success, Special Education, math and literacy resource teachers co-taught the course; they collaborated to assess and respond to student needs and build positive relationships with them. Targeted instruction was provided for students who required additional literacy support and the profiles and action plans for these students are refined for use in the fall. The students involved in the summer program indicated that they were doing better in Grade 9 as a result of having participated in the summer program.

### **Sample practice 2**

A group of students who successfully used technology to support their literacy skills was asked to share their expertise in a small group setting of their peers and teachers. They demonstrated how they used brainstorming and mind-mapping tools (e.g., Mindomo and Smart Ideas) to help generate and organize their ideas. They showed how these tools help them create written and media materials as well as prepare for class discussions. One student showed the power of speech-to-text (e.g., Dragon Naturally Speaking) software and another demonstrated how word prediction software (e.g., wordQ) helped him generate a written product. Teachers also saw how software (e.g., Xpresslab) could be used to develop oral skills. Board personnel facilitated this student-to-student learning session and provided further explicit instruction as needed. Teachers were encouraged to continue their learning to support the specific learning needs of their students, creating a rich learning environment and embedding technology-enabled learning into daily practice.

## Applying the learning

When Student Success Leaders, teams and teachers collaborate with students, parents and other educators to help students who need additional support in literacy, we move towards both improved academic achievement and a deeper understanding of what it means to be literate in today's world. An MSAC student from 2015-2016 expressed this understanding, saying:



*When I hear the word “literacy,” I think not only of writing and reading or my language class, but also about education as a whole. Everything I learn. For me, literacy is “the key” to success in all my courses and also in my life outside school.*

— MSAC student (translated from French) 2015



## Appendix A: EQAO OSSLT Data

ONTARIO SECONDARY SCHOOL LITERACY TEST (OSSLT), 2009-2016 % Successful First-Time Eligible Fully Participating English-Language Students								
	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
All	85	84	83	82	82	83	82	81
Results by Gender								
Females	88	88	87	86	86	87	86	85
Males	82	81	80	78	78	78	78	77
Results by Course Type								
Academic	96	95	95	93	94	94	93	92
Applied	62	60	55	53	51	50	50	47
Locally Developed	21	19	15	14	12	10	13	11
Results for Students with Special Education Needs and English Language Learners								
Special Education	55	54	52	52	51	51	54	53
English Language Learners	66	63	68	66	72	75	73	71

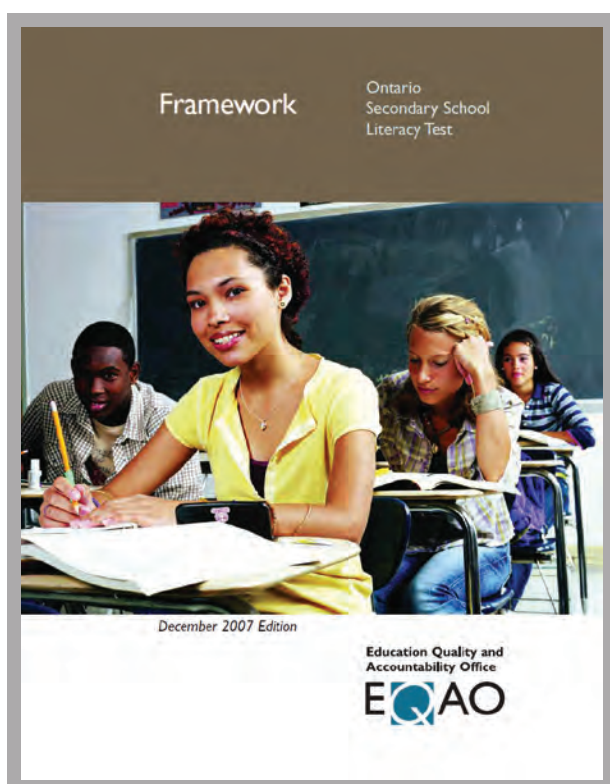
### Notes:

- The percentage of first-time eligible students enrolled in Grade 10 Academic English who take the test is increasing (to 78% in 2015-2016).
- An increasing number of students are taking the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Course (OSSLT) as a way to meet the literacy graduation requirement.

## Appendix B: READING - Ministry and EQAO Resources

Appendix B includes an overview of reading skills required for the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) and a corresponding summary of reading tasks and raw score points on the test. Suggestions for using Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) sample materials and generic rubrics for open-ended reading tasks are provided, followed by a list of Ministry learning resources for addressing reading skills immediately and in ongoing work.

For the purposes of the OSSLT, EQAO defines reading as “the process through which the reader actively makes meaning for a variety of written texts that students are expected to understand according to the expectations in the Ontario Curriculum across all subjects up to the end of Grade 9” (*Framework - Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test*, p. 15). The narrative, informational and graphic reading selections in the OSSLT focus on three reading skills.



EQAO Reading Skill 1	EQAO Reading Skill 2	EQAO Reading Skill 3
Understanding explicitly stated information and ideas	Understanding implicitly stated information and ideas (i.e., making inferences)	Making connections between information and ideas in a reading selection and personal knowledge and experience (i.e., interpreting reading selections by integrating the information and ideas in a reading selection with personal knowledge and experiences)
Sample Sub Skills	Sample Sub Skills	Sample Sub Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Predict what the text will be about / what might be learned by reading it</li> <li>• Skim for structure and organizational elements (e.g., titles and subtitles)</li> <li>• Use visual features (e.g., photos) and knowledge of organizational structures to build understanding</li> <li>• Use content knowledge and decoding skills to determine meaning of unfamiliar and technical vocabulary</li> <li>• Use grammar and punctuation as cues (e.g., quotation marks)</li> <li>• Select relevant details</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify why the author created the text</li> <li>• Identify the author's point of view and possible biases</li> <li>• Distinguish fact from opinion</li> <li>• Identify and understand how persuasion works</li> <li>• Watch for figurative language and double meanings</li> <li>• Consider whose point of view may be missing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activate prior knowledge before reading</li> <li>• Ask questions about the text while reading</li> <li>• Identify ideas that connect to knowledge and experience</li> <li>• Think of movies, experiences or other readings that have similar ideas</li> <li>• Develop opinions about the text based on personal experiences</li> </ul>

## OSSLT Reading Tasks

Reading Tasks by Selection Type	Reading Questions and Raw Score Points
Read and respond to questions related to understanding of an information paragraph	Six multiple-choice and one open-response reading questions = 9 score points or 11% of total literacy score
Read and respond to questions related to understanding of a news report	Five multiple-choice and one open-response reading questions = 8 score points or 10% of total literacy score
Read and respond to questions related to understanding of a dialogue	Five multiple-choice and two open-response reading questions = 11 score points or 14% of total literacy score
Read and respond to questions related to understanding of a real-life narrative	Nine multiple-choice questions = 9 score points or 11% of total literacy score
Read and respond to questions related to understanding of a graphic text	Six multiple-choice questions = 6 score points or 7% of total literacy score
	Total reading raw score points = 43 or approximately 53% of total literacy score



## Ministry Professional Learning Resources to Support Immediate and Ongoing Instruction in Reading

The resources suggested for immediate use are most closely linked to the reading skills on the OSSLT. The resources for ongoing use help educators more comprehensively assist students who need additional support in reading.

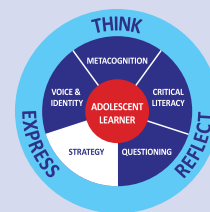


### For Immediate Use

#### Adolescent Literacy Guide

Strategy Component (Pages 45-52)

[http://www.edugains.ca/resourcesLIT/AdolescentLiteracy/Strategy/Strategy\\_8X11.pdf](http://www.edugains.ca/resourcesLIT/AdolescentLiteracy/Strategy/Strategy_8X11.pdf)



#### Adolescent Literacy: Engaging Research and Teaching (ALERTs) to Support Reading Instruction

Make Room for Building Knowledge of Text Structures

[http://www.edugains.ca/resourcesLIT/AdolescentLiteracy/AL\\_Resources/ALERT\\_TextStructures\\_Spring2014-letter.pdf](http://www.edugains.ca/resourcesLIT/AdolescentLiteracy/AL_Resources/ALERT_TextStructures_Spring2014-letter.pdf)



ADOLESCENT LITERACY:  
ENGAGING RESEARCH AND TEACHING

Make Room for Inferring During Reading

[http://www.edugains.ca/resourcesLIT/AdolescentLiteracy/AL\\_Resources/ALERT\\_Inquiry\\_Fall2015-Letter.pdf](http://www.edugains.ca/resourcesLIT/AdolescentLiteracy/AL_Resources/ALERT_Inquiry_Fall2015-Letter.pdf)

Make Room for Evaluating Perspectives and Biases

[http://www.edugains.ca/resourcesLIT/AdolescentLiteracy/AL\\_Resources/PerspectivesBiasesALERT\\_Fall2013.pdf](http://www.edugains.ca/resourcesLIT/AdolescentLiteracy/AL_Resources/PerspectivesBiasesALERT_Fall2013.pdf)

Necessary for Some: How to Help Students Who Struggle with Reading

[http://www.edugains.ca/resourcesLIT/AdolescentLiteracy/AL\\_Resources/ReadingALERT\\_8X11.pdf](http://www.edugains.ca/resourcesLIT/AdolescentLiteracy/AL_Resources/ReadingALERT_8X11.pdf)

Make Room for Making Connections to Deepen Understanding

[http://www.edugains.ca/resourcesLIT/AdolescentLiteracy/AL\\_Resources/ALERT\\_MakingConnections\\_Winter2016-Letter.pdf](http://www.edugains.ca/resourcesLIT/AdolescentLiteracy/AL_Resources/ALERT_MakingConnections_Winter2016-Letter.pdf)

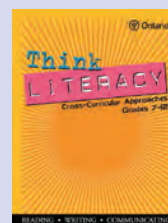
Make Room for Thinking Metacognitively

[http://www.edugains.ca/resourcesLIT/AdolescentLiteracy/AL\\_Resources/ALERT\\_Metacognition\\_Winter2016-Letter.pdf](http://www.edugains.ca/resourcesLIT/AdolescentLiteracy/AL_Resources/ALERT_Metacognition_Winter2016-Letter.pdf)

## Think Literacy

Before, during and after reading strategies

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/studentsuccess/thinkliteracy/library.html>

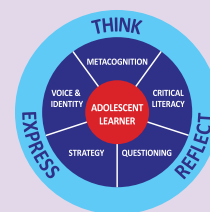


**For Ongoing Use**

## Adolescent Literacy Guide

All components: Critical Literacy, Metacognition, Questioning, Strategy, Voice and Identity

[http://www.edugains.ca/resourcesLIT/AdolescentLiteracy/Vision/AdolescentLiteracyGuide\\_Interactive.pdf](http://www.edugains.ca/resourcesLIT/AdolescentLiteracy/Vision/AdolescentLiteracyGuide_Interactive.pdf)



## Adolescent Literacy: Engaging Research and Teaching (ALERTs)

Complete Series

[http://www.edugains.ca/newsite/literacy/professional\\_learning/alert.html](http://www.edugains.ca/newsite/literacy/professional_learning/alert.html)



**ADOLESCENT LITERACY:  
ENGAGING RESEARCH AND TEACHING**

## Steps to English Proficiency User Guide

[http://www.edugains.ca/resourcesELL/Assessment/STEP/STEPUserGuide\\_January2012.pdf](http://www.edugains.ca/resourcesELL/Assessment/STEP/STEPUserGuide_January2012.pdf)

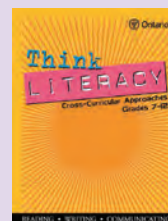
## The Ontario Curriculum for English Second Language and English Literacy Development

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/secondary/esl912currb.pdf>

## Think Literacy

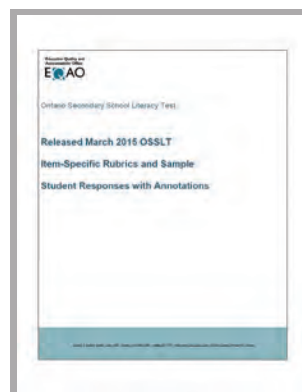
Before, during and after reading strategies

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/studentsuccess/thinkliteracy/library.html>



## EQAO Support Resources for Reading Skill Assessment and Instruction

The Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) provides sample materials for students and educators to deepen their understanding of specific literacy skills required for the test. Students can use sample booklets to become familiar with the format and types of reading passages and questions. They can practice answering sample questions. Students and educators can use the scoring codes to assess sample answers from EQAO or their own answers. Together, they can deconstruct answers to clarify what is meant by terms such as “vague” or “considerable” and to create success criteria for reading and writing tasks.



Sample Test Materials – Question and Answer Booklets

<http://www.eqao.com/en/assessments/OSSLT/Pages/example-assessment-materials-2016.aspx#releasematerials>

*Item Specific Rubrics and Sample Student Responses with Annotations*

<http://www.eqao.com/en/assessments/OSSLT/assessment-docs/OSSLT-scoring-guide-2016.pdf>

OSSLT Generic Rubric for Open-Response Reading Items	
<b>Blank</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>nothing written or drawn in the lined space provided</li> </ul>
<b>Illegible/ Off topic</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>response is illegible, off-topic, irrelevant or incorrect</li> </ul>
<b>Code 10</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>response indicates minimal reading comprehension</li> <li>response provides minimal or irrelevant ideas and information from the reading selection</li> </ul>
<b>Code 20</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>response indicates some reading comprehension</li> <li>response provides vague ideas and information from the reading selection; it may include irrelevant ideas and information from the reading selection</li> </ul>
<b>Code 30</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>response indicates considerable reading comprehension</li> <li>response provides accurate, specific and relevant ideas and information from the reading selection</li> </ul>

## Appendix C: WRITING – Ministry and EQAO Resources

Appendix C includes an overview of writing skills required for the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) and a summary of writing tasks and corresponding raw score points on the test. Suggestions for using Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) sample materials and generic rubrics for writing tasks are provided. These are followed by a list of Ministry professional learning resources recommended for addressing writing skills immediately and in ongoing work.

For the purposes of the OSSLT, EQAO defines writing as “the constructive process of communicating in the written forms in which students are expected to write according to the expectations in the *Ontario Curriculum* across all subjects up to the end of Grade 9” (*Framework, Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test*, p. 15). Through multiple-choice questions, two short and two long, open-response writing tasks, the OSSLT focuses on three writing skills:

EQAO Writing Skill 1	EQAO Writing Skill 2	EQAO Writing Skill 3
Developing a main idea with sufficient supporting details	Organizing information and ideas in a coherent manner	Using conventions (i.e., spelling, grammar, punctuation) in a manner that does not distract from clear communication
Sample Sub Skills	Sample Sub Skills	Sample Sub Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify topic, audience and purpose for writing</li> <li>Use pre writing strategies for generating ideas for writing (e.g., brainstorming, mindmaps)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand various ways to structure a piece of writing (e.g., news reports, supported opinion)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand the function and use of punctuation conventions (e.g., commas)</li> </ul>

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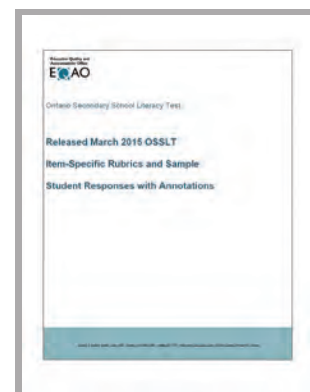
Sample Sub Skills	Sample Sub Skills	Sample Sub Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use strategies for gathering ideas and information from sources</li> <li>• Support ideas with specific and relevant details</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use appropriate strategies to organize ideas and information into writing (e.g., sort ideas into categories, create an outline with topic sentence, body and conclusion)</li> <li>• Express a thoughtful progression of ideas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand grammar conventions (e.g., tenses)</li> <li>• Use appropriate strategies to edit written work (e.g., re-read what you've written to detect errors)</li> <li>• Check for accuracy</li> </ul>

## OSSLT Writing Tasks

OSSLT Writing Tasks	Writing Prompts, Questions and Raw Score Points
Write short responses to two prompts	Two short prompts = 10 score points or 12% of total literacy score
Write a series of paragraphs expressing an opinion	One long-writing prompt (Opinion) = 10 score points or 12% of total literacy score
Write a news report	One long-writing prompt (News Report) = 10 score points or 12% of total literacy score
Respond to questions related to structuring content, organization of ideas and using conventions when writing	Eight multiple-choice questions = 8 score points or 10% of total literacy score
	Total writing raw score points = 38 or approximately 46% of total literacy score

## EQAO Support Resources for Writing Skill Assessment and Instruction

The Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) provides sample materials for students and educators to deepen their understanding of specific literacy skills required for the graduation requirement. Students can use sample Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) booklets to become familiar with the writing formats and types of prompts, and to practice developing responses. Students and educators can use EQAO scoring guides to assess sample responses from EQAO or their own responses. Together, they can deconstruct sample answers to clarify what is meant by, for instance, terms like “vague” or “considerable,” and to create success criteria for reading and writing tasks.



### Sample Test Materials – Question and Answer Booklets

<http://www.eqao.com/en/assessments/OSSLT/Pages/example-assessment-materials-2016.aspx#releasematerials>

### Item Specific Rubrics and Sample Student Responses with Annotations

<http://www.eqao.com/en/assessments/OSSLT/assessment-docs/OSSLT-scoring-guide-2016.pdf>

### **OSSLT Generic Rubric for Short Writing Tasks - Topic Development**

Blank	Nothing written or drawn in the space provided
Illegible/ Off topic	Response is illegible, Response is off topic or irrelevant to the prompt
Code 10	Response is not developed or is developed with irrelevant ideas and information
Code 20	Response is developed with vague ideas and information ; it may contain some irrelevant ideas and information
Code 30	Response is developed with clear, specific and relevant ideas and information

<b>OSSLT Generic Rubric for Short Writing Tasks - Use of Conventions</b>	
Code 10	Errors in conventions distract from communication
Code 20	Errors in conventions do not distract from communication

<b>OSSLT Topic Development Rubric for Writing a News Report</b>	
Code	Descriptor
Blank	The page is blank with nothing written or drawn in the space provided.
Illegible	The response is illegible or irrelevant to the prompt.
Off topic	The response is off topic.
Code 10	The response is related to the headline and/or photo but is not a news report OR The response is a news report related to the headline and or photo. It identifies an event but provides no supporting details, or provides details that are unrelated to the event. There is no evidence of organization.
Code 20	The response is related to headline and/or photo but only partly in the form of a news report. OR The response is a news report related to the headline and/or photo, but the focus of an event is unclear or inconsistent. There are insufficient supporting details: too few or repetitious. There is limited evidence of organization.

Continued on next page

### OSSLT Topic Development Rubric for Writing a News Report

Code 30	The response is a news report related to the headline and the photo with a clear focus of an event. There are insufficient and/or vague supporting details or the connection of the details to the event is not always clear. There is evidence of organization, but lapses distract from overall communication.
Code 40	The response is a news report related to the headline and photo with a clear and consistent focus on an event. There are sufficient supporting details; however, only some are specific. The organization is mechanic and any lapses do not distract from the overall communication.
Code 50	The response is a news report related to the headline and photo with a clear and consistent focus on an event. There are sufficient specific supporting details to develop the news report. The organization is logical.
Code 60	The response is a news report related to the headline and photo with a clear and consistent focus on an event. There are sufficient supporting details, which are thoughtfully chosen to develop the news report. The organization is coherent demonstrating a thoughtful progression of ideas.

### OSSLT Topic Development Rubric for Writing a Series of Paragraphs Expressing an Opinion

Code	Descriptor
Blank	The pages are blank with nothing written or drawn in the space provided.
Illegible	The response is illegible, or irrelevant to the prompt.
Off topic	The response is off topic.

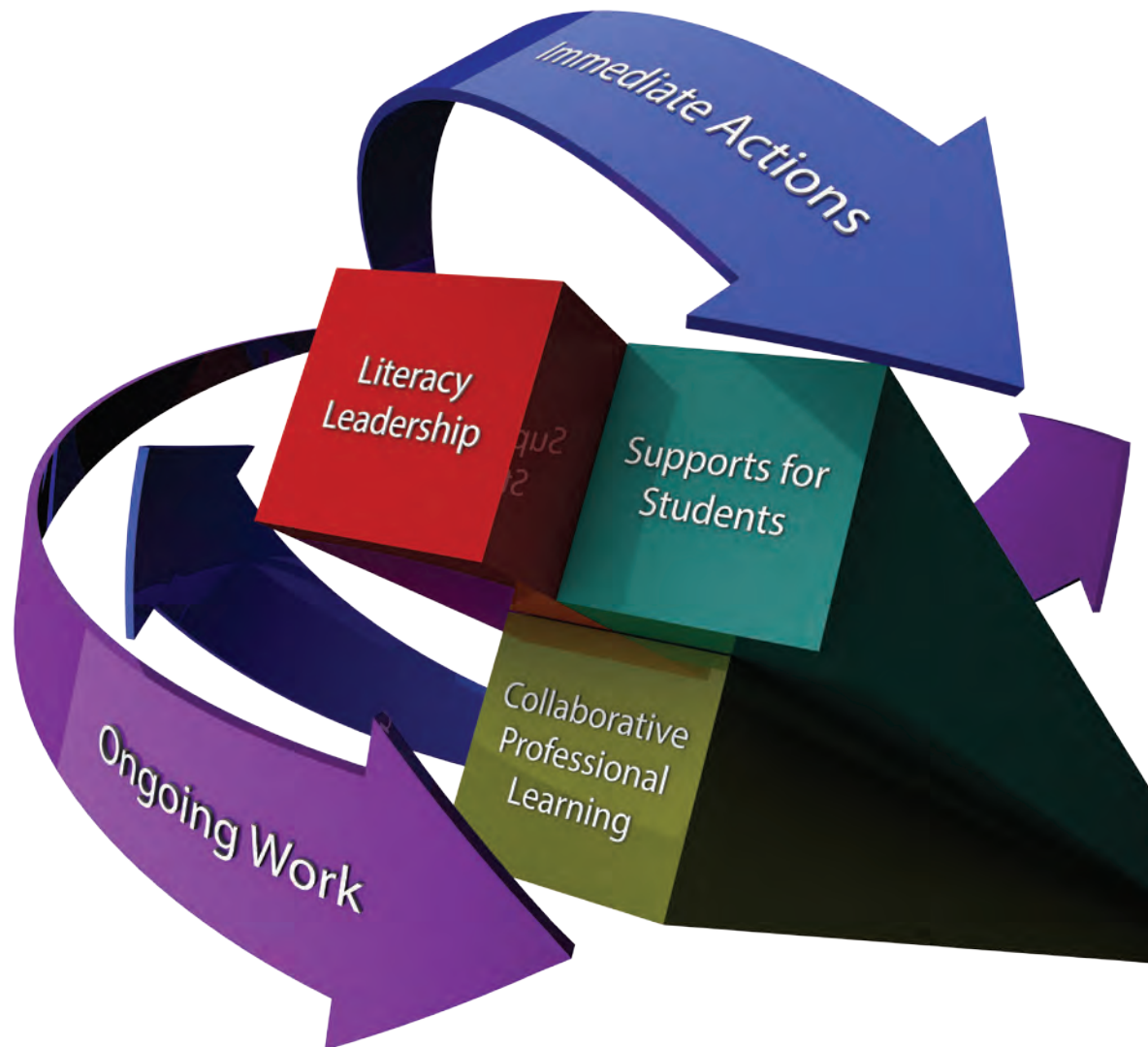
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<b>OSSLT Topic Development Rubric for Writing a Series of Paragraphs Expressing an Opinion</b>	
Code 10	The response is related to the prompt but does not express an opinion. OR The response expresses an opinion with no supporting details or provides details unrelated to the opinion. There is no evidence of organization.
Code 20	The response is related to the prompt, but only part of the response supports and opinion. OR The response is related to the prompt, and expresses and supports an opinion, but the opinion is unclear or inconsistent. There are insufficient supporting details: too few or repetitious. There is limited evidence of organization.
Code 30	The response is related to the prompt and expresses a clear opinion. There are insufficient and/or vague supporting details or the connection of the details is not always clear. There is evidence of organization, but lapses distract from overall communication.
Code 40	The response is related to the prompt. A clear and consistent opinion is developed with sufficient supporting details; however, only some are specific. The organization is mechanical and any lapses do not distract from overall communication
Code 50	The response is related to the prompt. A clear and consistent opinion is developed with sufficient specific details. The organization is logical.
Code 60	The response is related to the assigned prompt. A clear and consistent opinion is developed with sufficient supporting details that are thoughtfully chosen. The organization is coherent demonstrating a thoughtful progression of ideas

**OSSLT Use of Conventions Generic Rubric for News Report and Series of Paragraphs Expressing an Opinion**

Code	Descriptor
Code 10	There is insufficient evidence to assess the use of conventions. OR Errors in conventions interfere with communication.
Code 20	Errors in conventions distract from communication.
Code 30	Errors in conventions do not distract from communication.
Code 40	Control of conventions is evident in written work.



## Ministry Professional Learning Resources to Support Immediate and Ongoing Instruction in Writing

The resources suggested for immediate use are most closely linked to the writing skills on the OSSLT. The resources for ongoing use help educators more comprehensively assist students who need additional support in writing.

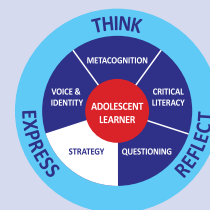


### For Immediate Use

#### Adolescent Literacy Guide

Strategy Component (Pages 45-62)

[http://www.edugains.ca/resourcesLIT/AdolescentLiteracy/Strategy/Strategy\\_8X11.pdf](http://www.edugains.ca/resourcesLIT/AdolescentLiteracy/Strategy/Strategy_8X11.pdf)



#### Adolescent Literacy: Engaging Research and Teaching (ALERTs) to Support Reading Instruction

Make Room for Building Knowledge of Text Structures

[http://www.edugains.ca/resourcesLIT/AdolescentLiteracy/AL\\_Resources/ALERT\\_TextStructures\\_Spring2014-letter.pdf](http://www.edugains.ca/resourcesLIT/AdolescentLiteracy/AL_Resources/ALERT_TextStructures_Spring2014-letter.pdf)

[http://www.edugains.ca/resourcesLIT/AdolescentLiteracy/AL\\_Resources/ALERT\\_TextStructures\\_Spring2014-letter.pdf](http://www.edugains.ca/resourcesLIT/AdolescentLiteracy/AL_Resources/ALERT_TextStructures_Spring2014-letter.pdf)

Make Room for Developing Subject Specific Vocabulary

[http://www.edugains.ca/resourcesLIT/AdolescentLiteracy/AL\\_Resources/VocabularyALERT\\_8X11.pdf](http://www.edugains.ca/resourcesLIT/AdolescentLiteracy/AL_Resources/VocabularyALERT_8X11.pdf)

Necessary for Some: Helping Students Who Struggle With Writing

[http://www.edugains.ca/resourcesLIT/AdolescentLiteracy/AL\\_Resources/ALERT\\_GapClosingWriting\\_Fall2014-letter.pdf](http://www.edugains.ca/resourcesLIT/AdolescentLiteracy/AL_Resources/ALERT_GapClosingWriting_Fall2014-letter.pdf)

Make Room for Thinking Metacognitively

[http://www.edugains.ca/resourcesLIT/AdolescentLiteracy/AL\\_Resources/ALERT\\_Metacognition\\_Winter2016-Letter.pdf](http://www.edugains.ca/resourcesLIT/AdolescentLiteracy/AL_Resources/ALERT_Metacognition_Winter2016-Letter.pdf)

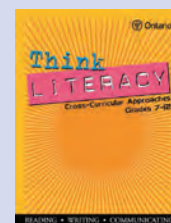


**ADOLESCENT LITERACY:**  
ENGAGING RESEARCH AND TEACHING

#### Think Literacy

Before, during and after writing strategies

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/studentsuccess/thinkliteracy/library.html>



## Building Capacity Monograph

Non Fiction Writing for the Junior Student

[http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/literacynumeracy/inspire/research/Non\\_Fiction\\_Writing.pdf](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/literacynumeracy/inspire/research/Non_Fiction_Writing.pdf)

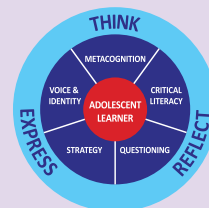


For Ongoing Use

## Adolescent Literacy Guide

All components: Critical Literacy, Metacognition, Questioning, Strategy, Voice and Identity

[http://www.edugains.ca/resourcesLIT/AdolescentLiteracy/Vision/AdolescentLiteracyGuide\\_Interactive.pdf](http://www.edugains.ca/resourcesLIT/AdolescentLiteracy/Vision/AdolescentLiteracyGuide_Interactive.pdf)



## Adolescent Literacy: Engaging Research and Teaching (ALERTs)

Complete Series

[http://www.edugains.ca/newsite/literacy/professional\\_learning/alert.html](http://www.edugains.ca/newsite/literacy/professional_learning/alert.html)

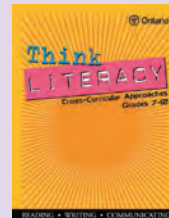


ADOLESCENT LITERACY:  
ENGAGING RESEARCH AND TEACHING

## Think Literacy

Before, during and after writing strategies

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/studentsuccess/thinkliteracy/library.html>



## Steps to English Proficiency

[http://www.edugains.ca/resourcesELL/Assessment/STEP/STEPUserGuide\\_January2012.pdf](http://www.edugains.ca/resourcesELL/Assessment/STEP/STEPUserGuide_January2012.pdf)

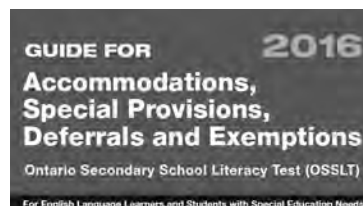
## The Ontario Curriculum for English Second Language and English Literacy Development

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/secondary/esl912currb.pdf>

# Appendix D: Support for English Language Learners and Students with Special Education Needs

The supports for English Language Learners and Students With Special Education Needs are outlined in the EQAO *Guide for Accommodations, Special Provisions, Deferrals and Exemptions for English Language Learners and Students With Special Education Needs* <http://www.eqao.com/en/assessments/OSSLT/assessment-docs/accommodatons-guide-osslt-2016.pdf>.

The guide delineates the role of the principal in providing supports and lists the Ministry resources upon which the guide is based:



## Role of the Principal

The principal is responsible for:

- Making decisions about the student participation;
- Ensuring that all accommodations, special provisions, deferrals and exemptions are provided and
- Documenting the relevant information in the Student Data Collection (SDC) system according to the instructions in this guide

Sample letters are available on the secure section of the EQAO website, [www.eqao.com](http://www.eqao.com)

## Ministry of Education Resources

- *The Individual Education Plan (IEP): A Resource Guide* (2004)
- *English Language Learners : ESL and ELD Programs and Services: Policies and Procedures for Ontario Elementary and Secondary Schools, Kindergarten to Grade 12* (2007)
- *Ontario Schools, Kindergarten to Grade 12: Policy and Program Requirements* (2011)

## Permitted Accommodations for Students with Special Education Needs

The EQAO *Guide for Accommodations, Special Provisions, Deferrals and Exemptions for English Language Learners and Students With Special Education Needs* states that accommodation needs must be:

- Based on the student's IEP;
- Consistent with regular classroom practice, including assessments;
- Consistent with the EQAO guide for the current year;
- Made prior to the test;
- Made for each student individually and
- Made in consultation with the student and parents or the adult student, and with the appropriate teaching staff.

Specific details about accommodations are provided on pages 2-4 of the guide and page 5 provides information on Requests for Special Consideration of Accommodations.

## Special Provisions for English Language Learners

The EQAO *Guide for Accommodations, Special Provisions, Deferrals and Exemptions for English Language Learners and Students With Special Education Needs* quotes section 2.9.3 of the Ministry of Education policy document ( *English Language Learners, ESL and ELD Programs and Services*) that states "English language learners should take the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test when they have acquired the level of proficiency in English required for success." (p.29) <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/esleldprograms/esleldprograms.pdf>

The EQAO guides states that special provision decisions are to be made:

- Prior to the test
- For each student individually and
- In consultation with the student and parents or the adult student and the appropriate teaching staff (p.7)

**NOTE:** An English language learner's assessed level of academic language proficiency (e.g., *Steps to English Language Proficiency* -STEP) must be considered when determining whether he/she will participate in the OSSLT. It is recommended that a student be at **STEP 4 and above** before they take the OSSLT. The readiness to participate for a student at STEP 3 should be carefully considered. A student may demonstrate a high level of competent social language use but academic language is required for success on the OSSLT.

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**For more information on deferrals and exemptions see pages 8-9 of the EQAO** *Guide for Accommodations, Special Provisions, Deferrals and Exemptions for English Language Learners and Students With Special Education Needs* <http://www.eqao.com/en/assessments/OSSLT/assessment-docs/accommodatons-guide-osslt-2016.pdf>

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## Definitions

Modification: changes to the content of the test. These are not permitted, because they affect the validity and reliability of the test.

Accommodations: changes in the way the test is administered or the way in which a student with special education needs responds to its components. These do not alter the content of the test or affect validity or reliability.

Special Provisions: changes to the setting and/or timing for writing the test for English language learners. These do not affect the validity or reliability of the test.

Deferrals: decisions to postpone the writing of the test until the following year for students who are working toward an Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD).

Exemptions: decisions for students whose Individual Education Plan (IEP) states they are not working toward an OSSD.

## Appendix E: Additional Ministry Literacy Supports for Boards

### Professional learning

Professional learning opportunities are available for classroom educators, professional learning facilitators and school leaders to improve student achievement in literacy and build awareness of how to use resources and take effective actions in their roles. For information about upcoming professional learning opportunities, and for archived materials, visit: [www.edugains.ca/newsite/literacy/index.html](http://www.edugains.ca/newsite/literacy/index.html).

### Learning materials

Print, electronic and video materials are available to support ongoing professional learning in adolescent literacy. Learning materials support specific professional learning needs of classroom educators (ALERTs), literacy leaders (Leaders Connects), and professional learning facilitators. All materials are posted at [www.edugains.ca/newsite/literacy/index.html](http://www.edugains.ca/newsite/literacy/index.html).

### Provincial Literacy Leads

Provincial Literacy Leads are available to support boards in aligning literacy goals for Grades 7-12 with targeted evidence-based strategies. They work directly with boards to build adolescent literacy leadership and instructional capacity, facilitate networking opportunities and provide resources for literacy leaders and coaches.

### Education Program Other (EPO) funding for Gap Closing in Literacy Grades 7-12

District school boards may apply for EPO funding to support educators working collaboratively to precisely address and respond to the literacy learning needs of one or more of the following groups:

- students in Grade 10 who require additional support to prepare for the OSSLT
- students who were unsuccessful on the OSSLT and have not yet met the literacy graduation requirement and or
- students in Grades 7, 8 and 9 who require additional support in literacy

### Learning Opportunities Grant – Literacy and Math Outside the School Day Allocation

This funding is for additional supports to enhance the literacy and math skills of students at risk of not meeting the curriculum standards and the requirements of the Grade 10 literacy test. These programs may be provided during the summer and during the school year outside the regular school day.



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