

This content is also available in French. The *Charter of the French language*, its regulations and the **ministerial directive** govern the **consultation of English-language content**.

Guide for Parents

MINISTERIAL EXAMINATION

English Language Arts
Elementary 6

514-600

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INTRODUCTION

This guide is designed to inform parents about the Elementary 6 ministerial examination in English Language Arts. It presents the structure of the exam and the administration procedures, as well as sample documents from a past exam.

The [Information Document](#) is also a recommended resource. It provides complementary information as well as the most recent version of the rubrics.

SECTION 1 MINISTERIAL EXAMINATIONS

NATURE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE EXAMINATIONS

The Elementary 6 ministerial examinations are set by the Minister of Education in order to monitor candidates' learning more closely at an important point in their education. These examinations take place in June.

Each ministerial examination is designed to evaluate the learning set out in the [Québec Education Program](#) and is based on the [Framework for the Evaluation of Learning](#) and the [Progression of Learning](#).

As everyone enrolled in any given exam session must write the same examination, the dates and times indicated in the [official schedule](#) must be respected. Only the Minister may authorize changes to the set schedule.

CONDITIONS FOR ADMINISTERING THE EXAMINATIONS

Educational institutions are the main entities responsible for making the necessary arrangements for the exams to take place (e.g. providing examination rooms), regardless of the education model (teaching provided at school or homeschooling).

To ensure equity and justice, the exam conditions must be the same for all candidates in Québec who write the exams. For this reason, the individuals designated to administer the examinations are given precise instructions to follow.

These individuals cannot explore the examination topics with the candidates, help them analyze the texts included in the exam or produce written or multimedia documents to help prepare them. Examinations where a staff member has overstepped the boundaries of their role may be declared invalid by the Ministère.

Measures that adapt the conditions for administering ministerial examinations may be taken to enable candidates with specific needs to demonstrate their learning. In order to request special measures, please communicate with the educational institution responsible for administering the examination at the beginning of the school year or, in the context of homeschooling, when setting up the learning project. The educational institution will analyze the candidate’s needs and determine which adaptive measures will be permitted, if any.

SECTION 2 OVERVIEW OF THE EXAMINATION FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

EVALUATION OF COMPETENCIES

The Elementary 6 English Language Arts examination is designed to evaluate the following competencies:

- Competency 1, *To read and listen to literary, popular and information-based texts*
- Competency 2, *To write self-expressive, narrative and information-based texts*

Competency 4, *To use language to communicate and learn*, is not evaluated, but is called on throughout the examination.

SUMMARY OF THE EXAMINATION

The examination is built around a topic and has three separate parts. The first two parts are used to assess the reading competency (Written Response to Literature task) and the last part is used to assess the writing competency (Narrative Writing task).

	Part	Steps
Reading	Initiation task (approx. 1 h)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities to introduce the exam topic • Group discussions
	Reading of the illustrated literary text and Written Response to Literature task (approx. 2.5 h)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Viewing of the book cover, followed by a brief discussion • First reading of the illustrated literary text • Second reading of the text and note-taking • Discussion in small groups, followed by note-taking • Additional reading and note-taking • Writing a response to the text
Writing	Narrative Exploration task and Narrative Writing task (approx. 3.5 h)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities to prepare for the narrative writing • Planning the text • Writing the draft • Discussion about the draft with a partner • Revising the draft • Writing the final version

AUTHORIZED AND UNAUTHORIZED MATERIALS

Authorized materials

Only the materials listed below may be brought to the examination and used.

- Standard English dictionary
- Bilingual dictionary (English and another language)
- Thesaurus

Candidates may bring their own reference materials or use those provided by the educational institution. It is forbidden for candidates to lend any materials to other candidates or to borrow materials from them.

Unauthorized materials

The following materials are not authorized.

- All homemade documents (class notes, grammar book prepared by the school or at home, etc.)
- All digital tools (electronic dictionaries, word-processing software, etc.), unless their use has been planned in conjunction with the educational institution responsible for administering the examination¹

Candidates are also strictly forbidden to have **in their possession** any personal mobile device (smartphone, wireless headphones or earbuds, smartwatch, etc.).

SECTION 3 STEPS IN THE EXAMINATION FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

READING

To demonstrate their competency in reading, candidates must write a text that presents a response to an illustrated literary text. This task lasts approximately 3.5 hours and is carried out at different times in the order presented below.

Initiation task

The examiner presents the topic addressed in the examination.

Next, each candidate receives an examination booklet called *Student Booklet*. In order to become familiar with the topic addressed in the examination, the candidates carry out activities (for example, they may explore an idea board and watch a video) and are invited to take part in group discussions.

The *Student Booklets* must remain in the examination room. Therefore, the examiner collects them at the end of each part of the exam and returns them to candidates at the start of the next part.

¹ The use of certain digital tools (electronic dictionaries, word-processing software, etc.) could be authorized under certain conditions but must be planned in conjunction with the educational institution responsible for administering the examination at the start of the school year or, in the case of homeschooling, when the learning project is implemented.

Reading task

In this part, each candidate receives a *Literature Booklet*, which includes an illustrated literary text of approximately 1 000 words.

- First, candidates view the book cover and have a brief discussion.
- Then, candidates independently read the text without taking notes.
- Next, they read the information about the task and the instructions in their *Student Booklet*, and read the literary text again, this time taking notes in the space provided in the booklet.
- In the next step, they are invited to discuss the text in teams. During the discussion, they are not permitted to take notes, but they can do so afterwards.
- Next, candidates review the Guidelines for Written Response to Literature (see example on page 8).
- Then, working alone, they can read the text a third time and add ideas, impressions and questions to the notes in their *Student Booklet*.

Written Response to Literature task

In this part, candidates demonstrate their reading comprehension by individually writing a text in which they present their response to the text.

Excerpts from a Written Response to Literature task are presented on pages 6 to 8.

Marking

The corrector will mark the response using the rubric provided by the Ministère. This rubric can be found in Appendix I.

WRITING

To demonstrate their writing competency, candidates must write a narrative text for a target audience of their peers. This task lasts approximately 3.5 hours.

Narrative Exploration task and Narrative Writing task

First, candidates carry out activities to get ready for writing their narrative text. These activities vary from one examination to another. For example, candidates may watch a video, do quick writes, have a discussion with their peers or carry out any other activity that allows them to collect more information about the exam topic to improve their narrative text. Excerpts from preparatory activities are not included in this guide, as the types of activities change from one examination to the next.

To prepare to write their narrative text, candidates refer to the Guidelines for Narrative Writing provided in their *Student Booklet* (see example on p. 9). The examiner presents these criteria to candidates and leads a discussion to ensure that they understand them well.

Next, candidates plan their text in the space provided in the *Student Booklet*.

In the last part, candidates write a narrative text. To do so, they use their knowledge of the structures and features of narrative texts as well as the conventions of written language and use them to entertain their target audience. They also once again refer to the Guidelines for Narrative Writing provided in their *Student Booklet* (see example on p. 9). Candidates write the draft of their text on the loose-leaf paper provided by the examiner. After revising and editing their texts, candidates write the final version in the space provided in the *Student Booklet*. **Only the text written in the designated space of the *Student Booklet* will be marked.** Candidates must therefore plan their time carefully to finish writing their text in the designated space within the allotted time.

Marking

The corrector will mark the text using the two evaluation tools provided by the Ministère. These tools are provided in Appendices II and III.

SECTION 4 EXCERPTS FROM A MINISTERIAL EXAMINATION FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

EXCERPTS FROM A WRITTEN RESPONSE TO LITERATURE TASK

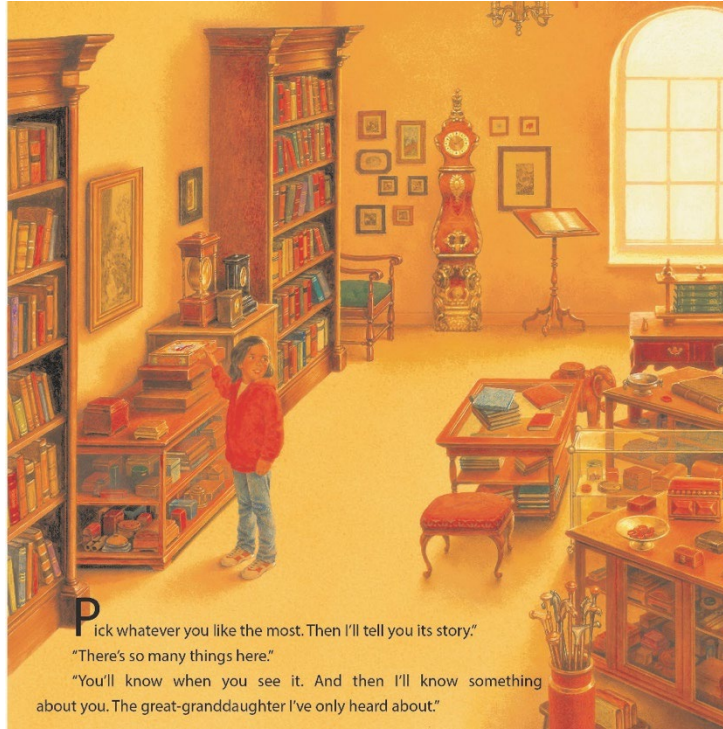
Instructions

Written Response to Literature

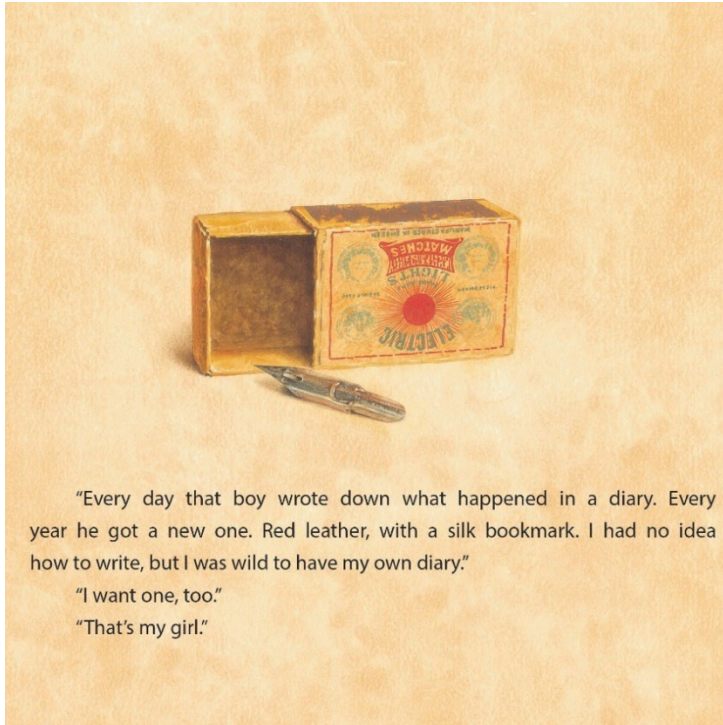
The reading response task requires that you read the story and use your knowledge, experiences and ideas to draw meaning from the text and illustrations.

- Reread the story. Think critically about the ideas in the text and illustrations, what the author’s messages might be, and your own reactions, feelings, connections and opinions. Refer to the Guidelines for Written Response on p. 7 to help you.
- On p. 8, make notes about the text in the way that is most useful for you. Your notes will help you to organize the ideas that are important for your response.
- Discuss your ideas and reactions to the text with a small group.
- You can refer to your notes when you are sharing ideas. You may want to add ideas to your notes after the discussion.
- Reread the story one more time, adding any new ideas before you write your response.

Excerpt from an illustrated literary text



Pick whatever you like the most. Then I'll tell you its story."
"There's so many things here."
"You'll know when you see it. And then I'll know something about you. The great-granddaughter I've only heard about."



"Every day that boy wrote down what happened in a diary. Every year he got a new one. Red leather, with a silk bookmark. I had no idea how to write, but I was wild to have my own diary."

"I want one, too."

"That's my girl."

Source: THE MATCHBOX DIARY. Text copyright © 2013 by Paul Fleischman. Illustrations copyright © 2013 by Bagram Ibatoulline. Reproduced by permission of the publisher, Candlewick Press.

EXAMPLE OF GUIDELINES FOR THE WRITTEN RESPONSE TO LITERATURE TASK

Guidelines for Written Response



EXAMPLE OF GUIDELINES FOR THE NARRATIVE WRITING TASK

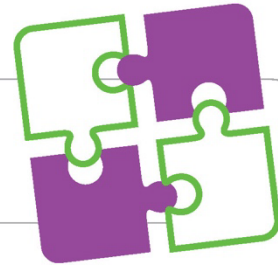
Guidelines for Narrative Writing

These are some of the elements you should consider throughout the writing process.



The narrative is organized and easy to follow, and the ideas make sense.

The events, actions and characters fit together from beginning to end.



Interesting details paint a clear picture for an audience of your peers.

The narrative demonstrates your voice and style (a sense of the person behind the words).



The narrative uses well-chosen words and sentences, descriptive language, dialogue, etc.

The narrative has been revised (parts have been changed or added to improve the story).



The narrative has been edited for proper grammar, spelling, punctuation, capitalization and paragraphing.

APPENDIX I RUBRIC FOR SCORING WRITTEN RESPONSE TO LITERATURE

APPENDIX I RUBRIC FOR SCORING WRITTEN RESPONSE TO LITERATURE												
LEVEL 5 – ADVANCED The reader draws comprehensive meaning from the text.			LEVEL 4 – THOROUGH The reader draws clear meaning from the text.			LEVEL 3 – ACCEPTABLE The reader draws general meaning from the text.			LEVEL 2 – PARTIAL The reader draws limited meaning from the text.		LEVEL 1 – MINIMAL The reader draws little or no meaning from the text.	
Determine the profile level that best describes the student’s overall performance and assign the corresponding score.												
NB Not all criteria need to be present in the response.												
Score	CRITERIA											
	The reader examines the concepts and ideas in the text, making perceptive inferences and drawing on key ideas to support their own interpretation(s). Personal understanding is integrated in light of ideas in the text. Ideas are justified with insightful reasoning and references to the text. Through perceptive connections, the reader integrates personal experiences and/or other sources, enhancing their understanding of the text. The reader’s connections and ideas may suggest a world view. Meaning is drawn from subtle cues in the text. An explanation is provided of how structures and features enhance the reader’s understanding of the text. The effectiveness of the text is examined and personal insights are offered that go beyond the text and apply to life in general.			The reader explores the concepts and ideas in the text, attending to underlying ideas to support their own understanding, offering personal opinions. Ideas are justified with sound reasoning and thoughtful references to the text. The meaning of the text is extended by clearly connecting personal experiences and/or other sources to ideas in the text. The reader makes inferences from cues in the text and shares how structures and features contribute to understanding. The text is evaluated, a personal opinion is offered and thoughtful conclusions about the text are drawn.			The reader identifies and addresses relevant concepts and ideas in the text; understanding of the text is supported with a personal opinion, a logical explanation and/or reference(s) to the text. Meaning of the text is supported by connecting personal experience(s) and/or other sources to the text in a general way. The reader identifies structures and features, making general inferences that loosely support their understanding of the text. The reader reacts to the text, offering logical opinion(s) and drawing general conclusions about it.			The reader draws limited meaning from the text and shares some ideas that may suggest a literal understanding of it. References to the text are unclear and/or illogical. Connections are superficial in nature, providing minor support to the reader’s understanding of the text. The reader alludes to structures and features. The reader offers a mundane opinion about the text that reflects the obvious.		The reader lists minor details from the text. The ideas presented are uncertain and references to the text, if any, are confusing. Connections mentioned are irrelevant and may not link to the text. The reader comments on the text and may indicate preferences about it.
	5+	5	5-	4+	4	4-	3+	3	3-	2+	2	1
	100%	95%	90%	85%	80%	75%	70%	65%	60%	55%	50%	35%

APPENDIX II RUBRIC FOR SCORING NARRATIVE WRITING

		LEVEL 5 – ADVANCED The writer demonstrates comprehensive understanding of narrative writing.	LEVEL 4 – THOROUGH The writer demonstrates clear understanding of narrative writing.	LEVEL 3 – ACCEPTABLE The writer demonstrates general understanding of narrative writing.	LEVEL 2 – PARTIAL The writer demonstrates limited understanding of narrative writing.	LEVEL 1 – MINIMAL The writer demonstrates little understanding of narrative writing.							
Determine the profile level that best describes the student's overall performance and assign the corresponding score.													
CRITERIA	Organization and Ideas	The writer sustains a solid focus on unfolding events to create the story. Carefully selected details enrich development and lend authenticity to the story. Crafted transitions guide the reader to a strong conclusion, appearing effortless.	The writer sustains a clear focus on unfolding events to create the story. Interesting details enhance development and lend originality to the story. Effective transitions lead to a sound conclusion.	The writer sustains a logical sequence of unfolding events for the most part to create the story. Relevant details support development and convey a story that occasionally sparks interest. Transitions connect parts of the story and lead to an adequate conclusion.	The writer's story requires further development; story elements are loosely connected. Details are strung together. Transitions lead to a simple conclusion.	The writer's ideas are disjointed and confusing. Details are disconnected and/or random.							
	Voice	The writer speaks to the audience in a memorable and compelling voice that contributes to the narrative, revealing a strong sense of purpose.	The writer speaks to the audience in an expressive voice that lends clarity to the narrative, revealing a clear sense of purpose.	The writer speaks to the audience in a discernible voice that holds attention at times, revealing an occasional sense of purpose.	The writer addresses the audience unevenly and fails to connect with the reader. An indistinct sense of purpose is evident through the writer's voice.	The writer disregards the audience for the most part; voice is flat or absent. A sense of purpose and direction is lacking.							
	Structures and Features	The writer uses narrative structures and features in a deliberate manner. Effective use of plot, setting, characterization and other structures and features enriches the narrative. The writer displays a unique style.	The writer uses narrative structures and features in a sustained manner. Thoughtful attention to plot, setting, characterization and other structures and features elaborates the narrative. The writer experiments with style.	The writer uses narrative structures and features in a wavering manner. Inconsistent attention to plot, setting, characterization and other structures and features may lessen the effectiveness of the narrative at times.	The writer uses narrative structures and features through a simple sequence; attempts to use plot, setting and characterization are insufficient or confusing.	The writer suggests a series of loosely connected events or actions that allude to the story. Use of narrative structures and features is, for the most part, lacking.							
	Score	5+ 100%	5 95%	5- 90%	4+ 85%	4 80%	4- 75%	3+ 70%	3 65%	3- 60%	2+ 55%	2 50%	1 35%
	Language Conventions	When considering the writer's control of language conventions, refer to the <i>Descriptors for Scoring Written Language Conventions</i> on page 12.											

APPENDIX III DESCRIPTORS FOR SCORING WRITTEN LANGUAGE CONVENTIONS

The writer must demonstrate sufficient control of written language conventions, as detailed in the [Progression of Learning](#).

ADVANCED CONTROL

The writer demonstrates solid control of language conventions (i.e. spelling, punctuation, capitalization, syntax, paragraphs and sentence structure). They are applied consistently, guiding the reader smoothly through the text. Errors in language conventions rarely occur and do not interfere with meaning.

ACCEPTABLE CONTROL

The writer demonstrates acceptable control of language conventions (i.e. spelling, punctuation, capitalization, syntax, paragraphs and sentence structure). They are applied consistently. Errors in language conventions may occur and rarely interfere with meaning.

PARTIAL CONTROL

The writer demonstrates partial control of language conventions (i.e. spelling, punctuation, capitalization, syntax, paragraphs and sentence structure). They are neglected or applied inconsistently. Frequent errors in language conventions impede meaning overall.

NB If the use of language conventions is scored as **Partial**, the overall writing task **cannot be scored higher than Level 3- (60%)**.

