

# The Reading Tasks

The reading selections include the following: an information paragraph, a news report, a dialogue, a real-life narrative, and a graphic text (i.e. a diagram). They vary in length from a single paragraph to the equivalent of two pages.



## Responding to the Readings: What are the questions asking me to do?

### Your response should:

- include examples from the text AND your own ideas,
- provide evidence/proof directly from the reading to support your writing (**GO BACK** to the reading and scan for the ideas and proofs you're looking for),
- remain on topic and ensure that you have answered all questions based on the topic, and,
- identify the main idea before you begin writing



The **main idea** is the purpose of the reading task. It is the most important thought about the topic. To figure out the **main idea**, ask yourself this question: What is being said about the person, thing, or idea (the topic)?

## Tips for answering the Open Response and Multiple Choice Questions

- Read the questions BEFORE you read the passage so you know what to look for
- Underline main points/ideas WHILE you read
- ALWAYS, ALWAYS, ALWAYS refer back to the reading when answering (do not just rely on your memory)
- Eliminate answers you know are wrong. This improves your odds of success because you may have narrowed your choice down to two choices, leaving you with a 50/50 chance at the correct response
- When answering multiple choice questions on the OSSLT, there is no pattern . . . so do not look for one
- ALWAYS answer all of the questions even if you are unsure. As a last resort, guess if necessary. Never leave a multiple choice question blank. You have at least a 25% chance of being right
- The numbers on the side/margins of the reading selections indicate the line or paragraph numbers - use these numbers to help you find your answers when appropriate



**Make sure you write all your answers in the Answer Booklet. Nothing you write in the Question Booklet will be scored.**

# The Writing Tasks

For all of the writing tasks it important to follow the instructions to ensure you write in the required form. Be sure to organize information and ideas in a clear manner. Make sure your work stays on topic and is written in complete sentences. Always read over your answers to correct any spelling, punctuation, grammar or even content errors.

## The News Report



- Focus ONLY on **the headline and picture** provided on the OSSLT
- Begin by identifying **who, what, when and where; then explain why and how** it happened
- As a journalist/news reporter you **must** write in the **3<sup>rd</sup> person** (he, she, it, they, him, her, them, his, her, hers, its, their, and theirs)
- You must **NOT give your opinion!!!** As a journalist – focus ONLY on the facts
- Be sure to include at least 2 quotations from someone involved in the incident

## A Series of Paragraphs Expressing an Opinion

- Write **at least 3** paragraphs
- Be sure to indent at the beginning of each paragraph
- **Introductory Paragraph:** Introduce the topic and give your opinion
- **3 Body Paragraphs:** Provide at least 3 details/examples to support your opinion
- **Concluding Paragraph:** Restate your opinion and briefly summarize your points
- Use 3<sup>rd</sup> person and put part of the question in your opinion statement

Begin your paper with something interesting about your topic, and then narrow the focus to lead into the thesis statement for the paper. MLA papers should have one-inch margins and be double-spaced with Times New Roman, 12 point font. The beginning of each paragraph will be indented half an inch with the body of the text flush left. The thesis statement should be the last sentence of your introductory paragraph.

Body paragraphs will provide detailed information that supports the thesis statement. Information from sources can be offered here as well. Each paragraph should have a topic, analysis, and conclusion/transition sentence(s).

**Indentation**

**OSSLT EXAMPLE:** Do you think that students should be required to complete community service hours as part of their graduation requirement?

**OPINION:** Students should be required to complete community service hours as part of their graduation requirement.