

Writing Short Answer

Introduction

This guide is intended to be a resource for students, teachers and parents.

It has several sections covering what to expect, how these questions are marked, examples of good and bad answers with explanations for why.

Throughout the guide there are suggestions, tips and hints.

You can jump from section to section or go through the guide in order.

We recommend visiting this guide more than once.

OSSLT-speak

Decoding the OSSLT:

The OSSLT has its own special terminology. It's important to know what their terms mean.

Selection: A “**selection**” is the thing they have you read...it might be part of a book, a story from a magazine, something from a website, but basically it's the thing you need to base your answers on.

Prompt: The “**prompt**” is basically the question. For a Series of Paragraphs Expressing an Opinion the “prompt” will be the topic they want you to write about.

Response: Your “**response**” is your answer; what you write about the “**selection**” in answer to the “**prompt**.”

Scoring: “**Scoring**” is the word they use for marking or grading. Your score on each question is called a Code. So if you get 30 they call it a **Code 30**.

Conventions: Spelling, grammar, sentence structure and punctuation.

Writing Questions

Types of Questions

There are three types of writing questions on the OSSLT:

Long-writing tasks
Short-writing tasks
and Multiple-choice questions.

Long Writing tasks

There are two Long-writing tasks:

The news report
and “a series of paragraphs expressing an opinion.”
(which is really an essay.)

The following are examples of actual OSSLT questions from past tests. We're just going to give you a idea of what they look like in this guide. There is a specific guide for each kind of question that goes in to much more detail. Links to all the other guides are at the back of this presentation.

Writing Questions

This is an example of a Short Writing Task

Section III: Writing

Short Writing Task (Answer in full and correctly written sentences.)

- 1** What would be the ideal job for you? Use specific details to explain your choice.

The most obvious difference between this and the Open Response

Reading questions is there is nothing to read first.

The next big difference, which is not obvious, is the way it's marked.

Short Writing "tasks" are marked the same way as Long Writing tasks - for both Topic Development and Conventions - just on a smaller scale.

Instead of **60/40** (TD/C) for 100 points they are **30/20** for 50 points.

Writing Questions

Scoring: Topic Development

“Topic Development” is basically WHAT you write. It’s your ideas, the information you use and the facts and details you bring to your answer to back that up.

On these questions you want to make sure you restate the question, so you stay on topic and use at least two examples/details to explain or back up what you’re saying.

You are marked out of 10, 20 or 30 for Topic Development so if you give them what they want (use all 6 lines) you shouldn’t have a problem getting 30/30.

If you don’t give them what they want, you run the risk of getting zero...which is not good.

Writing Questions

Scoring: Topic Development

There are three (3) ways to get a zero (0)

Blank	The page is blank with nothing written or drawn in the space provided. (If you don't write anything, there's nothing to mark.)
Illegible	The response is illegible or irrelevant to the prompt. (Your answer is too hard to follow or isn't an answer.)
Off topic	The response is off topic or irrelevant. (A typical off-topic response is not related to the topic of a job. A typical irrelevant response comments on the topic (e.g., I don't want to work.) or simply restates the question without any reasons why.)

This is a
Code 10

2 What would be the ideal job for you? Use specific details to explain your choice.

~~The ideal job for me is to be a large company of world wide company
and for industry.~~

The owner of a world wide company and/or
Industry

All this answer does is name a job. (and who
wouldn't want that job?)

2 What would be the ideal job for you? Use specific details to explain your choice.

my ideal job would be to work in a
place that helps people, interesting,
and always learning new skills. I
would love to either work at a
resturant or a clothing store.

This one is a little better because it names two possible jobs (*work either at a resturant or a clothing store*). But the explanation isn't really clear enough. (*helps people, interesting, always learning new skills*). They're asking the reader to figure out the connection between the reasons and the jobs. Those reasons could apply to any job so they don't help all that much.

real. The student obviously knows something about what they're talking about.

You are much better off saying **you want to be a plumber because that's the family business, you like to work with your hands and you can make a lot of money than you are saying "I want to be a billionaire (so freaking bad.)"**

2 What would be the ideal job for you? Use s

The ideal job for me is to one day become a social worker.

I believe that this job is meant for me because of all the experience that I've had. I come from a country where abuse is really high, and I've seen people getting hurt physically and mentally and I've always wanted a job where I can help people feel better and

Writing Conventions

Code	Descriptor
Code 10	errors in conventions distract from communication

This comes down to either you did it or you didn't do it....so do it!



Code	Descriptor
Code 10	Errors in conventions distract from communication
Code 20	Errors in conventions do not distract from communication

It's either a **Code 10**: there are too many mistakes to easily follow what you're trying to say...or a **Code 20**: there aren't too many mistakes, we're good!

FAIL!

2 What would be the ideal job for you? Use specific details to explain your choice.

My ideal for a job will be a computer Engineer
a like to become the one who makes the computer
and people come and buy my computer. Why do I
went to by a computer Engineer because I like to
know a lot about other thinks about computer
Engineer.

This is a **Code 10** because there are too many mistakes in it. We're talking errors in: sentence structure, punctuation, usage, and spelling. (Run-on sentence at beginning, missing question mark and periods, "a" for "I", "thinks" for "things", "by" for "be"). And the last sentence doesn't make sense.

Not a
FAIL.

This is a **Code 20** because even though there are a couple of mistakes in it, *spelling (absolutly, when ever)*, *pronoun agreement (child, they)*, and *the run-on sentence over the last four lines (!)*, the mistakes don't get in the way of understanding the answer.

2 What would be the ideal job for you? Use specific details to explain your choice.

The ideal job for me would have to be anything working with children. I absolutly love Kids!

And I've noticed when ever I'm with a child, they seem to like me, which is also why I think it would be a good job because I enjoy them and they enjoy me.