

Scoring Open-ended Questions

Teacher Resource for Understanding Rubrics

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Logos



The Key: A quick overview of the essence of what is asked for in each open-ended question.



“Opportunity”: Dr. Don suggests ways that you might use to expand students’ awareness as a result of questions in the Practice Test.



A reminder that **unexpected** or extraordinary answers should be accepted.

A. Language/Reading

On the next page is the Generic Reading Rubric provided by the Ministry of Education, and used by EQAO officials to create the specific rubrics for the open-ended questions on the EQAO test.

After the generic rubric, you will find several pages of examples of possible answers to the specific questions in the Prep4Success Primary Division Practice test. Of course, Dr. Don has used the same generic rubric in developing the scoring rubrics for the open-ended questions on our EQAO Practice Test.

Generic Reading Rubric for EQAO Assessment

B	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• blank: nothing written or drawn in the space provided
I	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• illegible: cannot be read; completely crossed out/erased; not written in English• irrelevant content: does not attempt assigned question (e.g., comment on the task, drawings, “?”, “!”, “I don’t know”)• off topic: no relationship of written work to the question
10	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• response does not refer to ideas and information from the reading selection• response indicates a significant misunderstanding of the reading selection; ideas and information from the reading selection are inaccurate
20	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• response addresses only part of the question• response is developed with limited support; ideas and information from the reading selection are minimal, vague and/or irrelevant
30	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• response addresses the complete question• response is developed with some accurate, specific and relevant ideas and information from the reading selection; some ideas and information are inaccurate, vague and/or irrelevant
40	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• response addresses the complete question• response is developed with accurate, specific and relevant ideas and information from the reading selection

Let's see if we can simplify these rubrics for you.

B	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• blank: nothing written or drawn in the space provided
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This is easy: B stands for “blank.” The student has given no response. The mark is zero.



Students should be encouraged to attempt every question. Some students who feel that they don't know the “whole” answer are reluctant to give a partial response. As you will see from the scoring rubrics, almost any response to a question, even a very poor response, earns a score of 10.

Encourage your students to use Dr. Don's strategy of underlining the key words in the question as a method of getting started on an answer.

I	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• illegible: cannot be read; completely crossed out/erased; not written in English• irrelevant content: does not attempt assigned question (e.g., comment on the task, drawings, “?”, “!”, “I don't know”)• off topic: no relationship of written work to the question
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While the EQAO markers will make every effort to decipher poor handwriting, in the end they can't mark what they can't read.



There are numerous handwriting practice units available for free on the internet. Encourage parents to do some homework with their child.

10-40

For the scoring rubrics 10-40, think *poor* (10), *fair* (20), *good* (30), *excellent* (40). This terminology is not used by EQAO, but I feel you'll find it quite helpful, especially when communicating with parents. It's amazing how this "easy to use" mindset ends up being very reliable.

Being an experienced teacher, you can review an answer to a question and usually quickly determine if it's a poor answer that doesn't answer the question well, or an excellent answer that fully answers the question.

And with a little experience and practice, you could do this quite reliably, even without the formal descriptors.


The descriptors in the scoring rubrics will guide you in determining if an answer is "better than poor" (that is, *fair*), but not quite excellent (and so, *good*).

Dr. Don has provided a series of sample answers for most of the open-ended questions on the Primary EQAO Practice Test. It is important to remember that they are sample answers, and not models for comparison to the acceptability of student responses.

Dr. Don's Suggested Procedure For Scoring

1. Evaluate the students' answers on a "per story" basis. For example, do question 7 about "Oak Island," and score the whole class before moving on to questions about other stories.

This will mean that you'll have to handle each booklet many times. However, the trade-off is that you can focus on the one story, and quickly become attuned to suitable answers, thus finding it easier to determine whether an answer merits a score of 10 (poor), 20 (fair), 30 (good) or 30 (excellent).

2. Before you begin marking, you should:
 - a) read the story twice;
 - b) read the question and formulate your own answer;
 - c) review the  key information;
 - d) study the descriptors.

3. **A word of caution**

The descriptors might give the impression that in-depth answers are required, but keep in mind that the size and format of the test booklets tends to restrict students' answers to two or three sentences – an almost impossible challenge to present "full" support for a concept or rationale within the allotted space.

If in doubt about scoring, favour the student.

Specific Rubrics

Oak Island

Question 7. What evidence has been found that the "treasure pit" was at least partly made by humans?



The key to this question is that the student understands the concept of evidence and uses the whole passage to find examples.

- 10 poor** poor understanding of evidence such as "some say human remains"
- 20 fair** a partial understanding of evidence but only provides minimal support
- 30 good** response indicates an understanding of evidence and provides some accurate and relevant support from the passage
- 40 excellent** includes support and examples from all parts of the passage

Me

Question 8: Explain why the grandmother asks at the end of the poem whether the speaker wants to be seven years old again.



This question requires an understanding of the poem by the student. A successful response requires the student to identify with the eleven-year-old child.

10 poor A response which is mostly a rephrasing of the question accompanied by a statement

20 fair A response of why the student would or would not like to be seven again. Response provides vague support from the poem.

30 good The response indicates support for the student's position from both the poem and the student's own experience. "An eleven-year-old can ride a bike and stay up late."

40 excellent This response would indicate that the student can identify with the author's thinking as a seven-year-old and as an eleven-year-old.

Question 9: Think about the experiences the speaker tells about. When the speaker becomes a grandparent what might the speaker do with grandchildren?



The key is for the student to project him/her self as a grandparent.

10 poor Response attempts to answer the question but fails to give answers from the poem... "I would play with my grandchildren."

20 fair Response answers the question and gives vague or limited support.

30 good The response would contain both physical activities such as climbing a tree and non-physical activities such as talking and becoming friends.

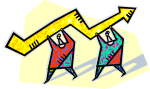
40 excellent The response would go beyond the activities in the poem and include ideas from the student.

A Stitch in Time

Question 19: Explain what the phrase, "sprang into action" means in paragraph 5. Use information from the story as well as your own ideas.



The student needs to know that "sprang into action" is a metaphor for sudden, quick movement.



Review the meaning and use of metaphors and similes.

10 (poor) Response attempts to answer the question, but indicates a minimal understanding of the metaphor.

20 fair Response shows a partial understanding of the metaphor but fails to include an explanation of Mr. Donovan's actions.

30 good The student indicates an understanding of the metaphor and gives one or two examples with explanation.

40 excellent The student relates the quick action of Mr. Donovan to the need expressed by the Prime Minister.

Question 21 Explain why Joan O'Malley felt proud as she watched the new Canadian flag for the first time.



The student needs to understand what it is to be "proud" and then identify with Joan O'Malley

10 poor The response would tell what Joan did -- "sew the flag" -- but not why she was proud

20 fair The student indicates a partial understanding of being proud with some vague support: "Her father asked her to sew the flag."

30 good Response indicates a full understanding of "proud" and why Joan felt proud... "watching the flag fly for the first time."

40 excellent The response would connect the work of Joan O'Malley to the timely delivery of the prototype.

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland

Question 7: Explain why “Alice's Adventures in Wonderland” is a work of fiction. Use information from the text and your own ideas in the answer.



The student needs to know that fiction is make-believe, where anything can happen, such as animals talking.



Review the differences between fiction and non-fiction

- 10 poor** Response identifies the passage as fiction, but provides little or no support.
- 20 fair** Response identifies the passage as fiction and states why... “make believe” and/or “animals talk” but doesn't provide examples from the text.
- 30 good** Indicates a good understanding of fiction and provides some support from the text
- 40 excellent** Response includes a excellent explanation of fiction and accompanying examples from the text... a rabbit talking, dialogue by Alice.

A Class Election

Question 7: Explain how Ravi, Ann, Mark and Josie each felt when they heard about the opportunity to become classroom representative. Support your ideas using information from the reading selection.



The key is to locate each speaker's response in the selection

- 10 poor** An incomplete answer, missing some of the speakers and/or some of their responses.
- 20 fair** Identifies each speaker but vague on how they felt.
- 30 good** Response includes all speakers and their reactions, plus some relationship to how they felt.
- 40 excellent** The student not only identifies the action of each speaker but also relates to the actions such as "grimace on her face" as a unwillingness to enter the race.

B. Language/Writing

Evaluating Writing: Open-Ended Response

This will be quite different from evaluating the reading of open-ended questions because there isn't any text to send the student to for answers or ideas. The students will be given different types of prompts to create their responses.

There are three types of prompts in EQAO open-ended writing questions:

- a) Logic... for example: "why the school needs new computers;"
- b) Imagination... for example: "the interesting bottle;"
- c) Memory ... for example: "what I did last summer."

Remember the evaluation is not about the level of creativity of the work but rather the **form and structure of the response**.

For these questions, you'll be giving two scores.

The first scoring scale, from B to 40, will be for **Topic Development** and the second, from B to 30, is for **Use of Conventions**.

Again, different from the reading evaluation, you will not need or use specific scoring rubrics for each question. Instead, the generic Ministry model will be enough to guide you.

Topic Development - Generic Rubric

Blank	Blank: nothing written or drawn in the space provided
Illegible/ Off topic	<p>Illegible: cannot be read; completely crossed out/erased; not written in English</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Irrelevant content: does not attempt assigned prompt (e.g., comment on the task, drawings, "?", "!", "I don't know")</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Off topic: no relationship of written work to assigned prompt</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Errors in conventions prevent communication</p>
Code 10	Response is not developed; ideas and information are limited and unclear. Organization* is random with no links between ideas. Response has a limited relationship to the assigned task.**
Code 20	Response is minimally developed with few ideas and little information. Organization* is minimal with weak links between ideas. Response is partly related to the assigned task.**
Code 30	Response has a clear focus, adequately developed with ideas and supporting details. Organization* is simple or mechanical with adequate links between ideas. Response is clearly related to the assigned task.**
Code 40	Response has a clear focus, well-developed with sufficient specific and relevant ideas and supporting details. Organization* is logical and coherent with effective links between ideas. Response has a thorough relationship to the assigned task.**

Let's simplify

B - I ... as in reading, a blank or "cannot read or understand" (illegible, irrelevant) rates a zero.

For the rest, I suggest you continue with the informal rating scale of poor (10), fair (20), good (30) and excellent (40)

Keep in mind that you are evaluating topic development...thus a very "dull" account of the interesting bottle (writing 1 question # 15) but well formatted etc. should earn high marks.

If you need some practice before tackling your students' responses feel free to go to the Appendix. I've included some examples from pass tests and the marking schemes.

Conventions – General Rubric

Conventions refer to grammar, usage, spelling and punctuation.

Here's the EQAO's generic rubric. It is based on a B to 30 scale.

Blank	Blank: nothing written or drawn in the space provided
Illegible/ Off topic	Illegible: cannot be read; completely crossed out / erased; not written in English OR Errors in conventions prevent communication
Code 10	Errors in conventions interfere with communication OR Insufficient evidence to assess the use of conventions
Code 20	Errors in conventions do not interfere with communication
Code 30	Conventions are used appropriately to communicate

Clarification of Descriptors for Conventions

1. PREVENT...Too many errors prevent a clear understanding. The reader cannot determine what the piece of writing is saying.

2.INTERFERE...Reading rhythm is constantly stopped. There is so much re-reading that the reader has difficulty recalling what the piece of writing said overall.

3. INSUFFICIENT EVIDENCE...The student has not written enough to assess his/her use of conventions. A minimum of two sentences is required.

4. INTERFERE...Reading rhythm is not interrupted. There may be errors but they do not often slow down the reader. The errors do not impede the reader.

Let's simplify

B – I (I means illegible or irrelevant) ...as in all rubrics, rates zero

And for the rest...

There isn't any formula, such as, 5 spelling mistakes rates a score of 20 and 12 mistakes a score of 10. The degree that the errors influence the reading and understanding of the student's work is how the piece should be evaluated. That is READABILITY.

Dr. Don suggests that you use the informal scale of below average (10) average (20) and above average (30)

Keep in mind that some errors, such as its for it's, will rarely slow down the reader and thus should have a minimal impact on the marking.

If you read the students piece and

- a) You need to stop the flow of the reading to interpret words (spelling) or understanding the meaning or reread a sentence...this would be rated below average or 10.
- b) There are errors in spelling, punctuation, grammar and/or usage that tend to slow down the reader but not stop the reading and in the end generally communicate the student's ideas. This would be rated as average or 20.
- c) The use of convention, especially punctuation and/or usage, that adds to the clarity of the students ideas and allows the reader to smoothly read and understand what is written from beginning to end would be rated as above average or 30.

A couple of exceptions:

1. Length in itself is not a criteria, however the student's work must be of sufficient length to demonstrate knowledge of conventions. EQAO suggests a minimum of 2 sentences. Dr. Don thinks you'll find that three will be for most students the minimum.
2. If a reader pauses because of the content of the work, this is not to be rated as a negative.

For example, the sentence..."Wayne Gretzky isn't the greatest hockey player who ever lived, its my mother." ... will likely cause most readers to pause and think. Here the pause is a result of creative writing and not errors in conventions. Dr. Don expects that most readers would not have noticed the error of *its for it's*.

Practice scoring grade six writing open-ended questions

Here's the question: "Write instructions that explain how to prepare for school"

Here are some students' answers for you to evaluate (**Practice scoring chart** is found after these seven sample responses; refer to the generic rubrics on previous pages for guidance.):

EXAMPLE A

**Scoring Guide for Short Writing Topic Development
Instructions (Preparing for School) Question 13**

Code
20

Write your instructions here.

First, you should pack your lunch box
with lots of food. Second, you put your
lunch box (or bag) in your backpack
and wait for the bus, drive, walk or
bike to school.

EXAMPLE B:

Scoring Guide for Short Writing Topic Development
Instructions (Preparing for School) Question 13

Code
40

Write your instructions here.

Start by checking the homework that the teacher gave you and put it inside your backpack. Prepare a healthy lunch and put it in a lunchbag or in a plastic bag. Bring a bottle of water to school so you don't have to go up to the drinking fountain lots of time. Also bring a toy (if you want to) for recess. Bring an extra pencil so you don't have to waste time sharpening it. Now you're ready for school.

EXAMPLE C:

Scoring Guide for Short Writing Topic Development
Instructions (Preparing for School) Question 13

Code
10

Write your instructions here.

When I prepare for
school I prepare my close
and prepare my things.
for school. Then I get
ready.

EXAMPLE D:

Scoring Guide for Short Writing Topic Development
Instructions (Preparing for School) Question 13

Code
30

Write your instructions here.

- ① I get up from bed then I have a shower.
- ② Then I put on my cloths on.
- ③ When I am done putting my cloths on I brush my teeth.
- ④ After that I have breakfast and watch tv.
- ⑤ Again I brush my teeth after breakfast.
- ⑥ Then I go into the hallway and get my bag.
- ⑦ After that I put on my coat and my shoes.
- ⑧ Then I walk to school till the bell rings.
- ⑨ Then go in your class room.

EXAMPLE E:

Scoring Guide for Short Writing - Conventions
Instructions (Preparing for School) Question 13

Code
20

Write your instructions here.

First I wake up.
Next go down stairs get
breakfast go up stairs
get dressed brush teeth
then I watch tv. and play
video games go to my Nannys
watch more tv.
finally I go outside and
play then at 8:30 I usually get
on the bus.

EXAMPLE F:

Scoring Guide for Short Writing - Conventions
Instructions (Preparing for School) Question 13

Code
10

Write your instructions here.

fort wake up and get drate
for shoole. go down sarge and
eat bread. Get all your safe
for shoole for you. You can
be rade for shoole. vand wake
to shoole of you bowt you
will not get to shoole.

EXAMPLE G:

**Scoring Guide for Short Writing - Conventions
Instructions (Preparing for School) Question 13**

Code
30

Write your instructions here. This is 9 things that you do before school
First, wake up and get out of bed. Next, go to the kitchen and
get breakfast. Then, when you finished your breakfast, go
go brush your teeth. Next, brush the inside and outside of your
teeth. Then, get changed out of your p.j.'s and brush your
hair. Next, get your shoes and sweatshirt on. Finally go
out for the bus. These are the 9 things to in the
morning before school.

Practice Scoring chart

Topic Development

Score (poor - excellent) and (10-40)

Example A score _____

rationale _____

Example B score _____

rationale _____

Example C score _____

rationale _____

Example D score _____

rationale _____

Use of conventions

Score (below average-above average) and (10-30)

Example E score _____

rationale _____

Example F score _____

rationale _____

Example G score _____

rationale _____

EQAO Ratings

Topic Development:

EXAMPLE A: Scored 20 by EQAO (fair)

Annotation:

Response is minimally developed with few ideas and little information (e.g., ...*pack your lunchbox; ...put your lunch box (or bag) in your backpack*). Organization is minimal.

EXAMPLE B: Scored 40 by EQAO (excellent)

Annotation:

Response is well developed with sufficient specific and relevant ideas and supporting details (e.g., *Bring a bottle of water to school so you don't have to go up to the drinking fountain lots of times.*). Organization is logical and coherent (e.g., *Start by...; Bring...; Also bring...*).

EXAMPLE C: Scored 10 by EQAO (poor)

Annotation:

Response is not developed; ideas and information are limited (e.g., *I prepare my close and prepare my things.*)

EXAMPLE D: Scored 30 by EQAO (good)

Annotation:

Response is adequately developed with ideas and supporting details (e.g., *I get up from bed then I have a shower. Then I put my cloths on.*). Organization is simple and mechanical with adequate links between ideas (e.g., ...*1 I get up...; 2 Then I...; 3 When I...; 4 After that I...*).

Use of Conventions:

EXAMPLE E: Scored 20 by EQAO (average)

Annotation:

Response has errors in conventions (e.g.; misspelled words: *breakfast, vidieo, ushualy*; omission of capitals at the beginning of sentences: *first...; next...then l...*; run-on sentences) that do not interfere with communication.

EXAMPLE F: Scored 10 by EQAO (below average)

Annotation:

Response has errors in conventions (e.g., misspelled words: *fort, drate, sarse, wake*; omission of capitals at the beginning of sentences: *go all...; vand...*; letter reversals: *bowt*) that interfere with communication.

EXAMPLE G: Scored 30 by EQAO (above average)

Annotation:

Response uses conventions appropriately to communicate (e.g., capitals and end punctuation; proper placement of commas in sentences: *First, wake up...; Then, when...;* variety of sentences).