

# Tips for Students — Writing

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The writing tasks are intended to allow you to demonstrate your writing skills. There is a writing task in each one of the four test booklets. The four tasks are of different types that represent the range of writing required in school and daily life: a **summary**, a **series of paragraphs expressing an opinion**, a **news report** and an **information paragraph**.

- All writing tasks must be written in **complete sentences**.
- The purpose and audience for your writing are indicated in the instructions preceding each writing task. You will notice that the audience is always an adult. This indicates that the language in your writing should be standard Canadian English and your ideas should be appropriate for an adult audience. Offensive or inappropriate language and ideas are not acceptable.
- Each writing task is different. It is important to **follow the instructions** for each task. For example, the information paragraph must be written in a single paragraph. The series of paragraphs expressing an opinion asks for a minimum of three paragraphs. You may write more than three, but do not write fewer than three paragraphs.
- Paragraph divisions must be clear. You may choose to use indentations or to leave an extra line between paragraphs.
- Be sure to write on the given topic in the form required by the task instructions.
- Writing that is off-topic or not in the specified form will receive a failing mark. **Note:** The series of paragraphs expressing an opinion is the **only** writing task that focuses on your opinion.
- To help your reader follow and understand your written work, organize your ideas clearly. Use transitions to link your ideas.
- The space provided for your written work indicates the approximate length of the writing required. Your writing skills cannot be assessed if you have not written enough.
- Make sure your handwriting is clear. Make changes to your writing as neatly and clearly as you can. Illegible handwriting cannot be marked.
- Use correct spelling, grammar and punctuation, so that your ideas are communicated clearly.

# Writing 1 — Writing a Summary

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A summary is a concise version of an original text; **do not include your personal opinion.** The task on the OSSLT requires you to reduce a text of approximately 200 words to **fewer than 100 words**. Limit your summary to the number of words specified.

## These tips will help you write a summary.

### Before you begin to write

- While reading the original text, underline, circle or highlight important words.
- Find the main idea of the text and at least two important details that support it. Take into account the whole text.
- Plan your summary using the Rough Notes space provided beside the text you are summarizing.

### When you write

- Write your summary in **complete sentences** in the lined space provided.
- You can reduce the number of words in several ways. These include leaving out nonessential information and unnecessary words, using one general word to substitute for several specific words and reducing the number of examples.
- Organize your ideas clearly to help your reader follow and understand your summary. Use transitions to link your ideas.
- Use correct spelling, grammar and punctuation, so that your ideas are clearly communicated.
- Make changes to your writing as neatly and as clearly as you can.

## Writing a Summary

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<b>Task:</b>	Write a <b>summary</b> of the selection printed below. Include the main idea of the original selection and at least two important details that support it.
<b>Purpose and Audience:</b>	an adult who is interested in finding out how well you understood the selection
<b>Length:</b>	fewer than 100 words

### Student Entrepreneurs Take Fries on the Road

This summer you might end up savouring the fried creations of Alison and Jonathan Whitehead. With help from the Ontario government's summer program, part of Ontario Summer Jobs, 2000, these enterprising students are operating a thriving french fry business.

Alison, who will be entering her second year of university in the fall, said, "Lord of the Fries is a business whose success depends upon the effort I put into it."

With her younger brother Jonathan, who is a high school student, Alison manages and staffs the chip wagon in the parking lot of a local gas station on a busy corner, catering to vacationers. The pair pride themselves on the quality of their service and their fries, which they make fresh daily, peeling, cutting and frying the potatoes themselves.

With their family's encouragement, and the Ontario government's summer program, Alison and Jonathan developed a business plan and opened the Lord of the Fries truck, the sides of which were painted by Jonathan, who is an aspiring graphic artist.

Both Alison and Jonathan had worked in the fast food industry, and now enjoy the challenges and rewards of being their own boss. "When you have a customer who comes back because they really like the service, or someone compliments you on your product, you can't help but feel pride because their reaction is something you inspired yourself," Alison said.

"There is nothing quite as rewarding as being your own boss," Jonathan added.

### Rough Notes



# Writing 2 — Writing a Series of Paragraphs Expressing an Opinion

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This task asks you to express your opinion on a given topic. It is the longest piece you will write. The three lined pages indicate the approximate length of the writing expected. Be sure to divide your written work clearly into **at least three paragraphs**, including an **introduction, a body and a conclusion**. Paragraph divisions must be clear. You may choose to use indentations or to leave an extra line between paragraphs.

## These tips will help you write a series of paragraphs expressing an opinion.

### Before you begin to write

- Determine your opinion on the topic question and consider your reasons for thinking this way.
- Form a plan. Below the instructions, you will find a space for Rough Notes.

### When you write

- Write your series of paragraphs in **complete sentences** on the lined pages provided.
- In the **introductory paragraph**, clearly present your opinion; your opinion is your main idea.
- In the **body paragraph(s)**, include supporting details (proof, facts, examples, etc.) that explain and give reasons for your opinion. In order to include enough supporting details, each body paragraph requires several sentences.
- In the **concluding paragraph**, summarize your opinion.
- Organize your ideas clearly to help your reader follow and understand your opinion. Use transitions to link your ideas.
- Use correct spelling, grammar and punctuation, so that your ideas are clearly communicated.
- Make changes to your writing as neatly and as clearly as you can.

## Writing a Series of Paragraphs

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<b>Task:</b>	Write a <b>series of paragraphs</b> (a minimum of three) expressing an opinion on the topic below. Develop your main idea with supporting details (proof, facts, examples, etc.).
<b>Purpose and Audience:</b>	an adult who is interested in your opinion
<b>Topic:</b>	<b>Is it a good idea to have a part-time job before graduating from high school?</b>
<b>Length:</b>	The lined space provided for your written work indicates the approximate length of the writing expected.

### Rough Notes







## Writing 3 — Writing a News Report

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A news report is an **objective** and **factual report** about an **event**. For this task, you have to make up the details of an event based on the picture and headline provided. Your news report may be written for a community, national or international newspaper. It should not be an advertisement, a personal story or an interview and **should not include your personal opinion**.

### These tips will help you write a news report.

#### Before you begin to write

- Study the **headline and picture** to get ideas about an event that you will make up for your news report.
- Plan your news report. Think of some specific facts and information that answer the questions Who? What? When? Where? Why? and How? Remember, you have to make up the facts and information. Jot down your ideas in the Rough Notes space.

#### When you write

- Write your news report in **complete sentences** in the lined space provided.
- Write enough to ensure that your reader will feel fully informed about the event.
- Include quotations from participants in the event or bystanders.
- Organize your ideas clearly to help your reader follow and understand your news report. Use transitions to link your ideas.
- Use correct spelling, grammar and punctuation, so that your ideas are clearly communicated.
- Make changes to your writing as neatly and as clearly as you can.

## Writing a News Report

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**Task:** Write a **news report** based on the headline and picture below. You will have to make up the facts and information, answering some or all of the following questions: Who? What? Where? When? Why? How?

**Purpose and Audience:** to report on an event for the readers of a newspaper

**Length:** The lined space provided for your written work indicates the approximate length of the writing expected.

### Fireworks End Celebration



### Rough Notes



## Writing 4 — Writing an Information Paragraph

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An information paragraph is an **objective** presentation of facts and information on a given topic. The topic could be a person, a place, an event, an activity, an accomplishment, a career or a scientific phenomenon, for example.

Usually, you must gather information on a topic in order to write an information paragraph. In this writing task, the information has been gathered for you. You will be given a list of 18 pieces of information about the topic. You must use **at least four points** from the list to support the main idea of your paragraph.

For the OSSLT, your information must be written in **a single** well-structured paragraph. Do not write more than one paragraph.

### **These tips will help you write an information paragraph.**

Canadian inventor Reginald Aubrey Fessenden will be the topic of your information paragraph.

#### **Before you begin to write**

- Read the entire list of 18 points.
- Underline or check off **at least four points** that you think can be grouped together because they are about one specific aspect of the topic. This aspect will become the unifying **main idea**.
- For example, you might use **one** of the following aspects as the main idea:
  - Fessenden’s impressive career
  - Fessenden’s inventions
  - Fessenden’s talents
- Do not use the topic Reginald Aubrey Fessenden as the main idea of your paragraph.
- If you choose one of the listed points for a main idea, you must choose four **additional** points from the list to support it.

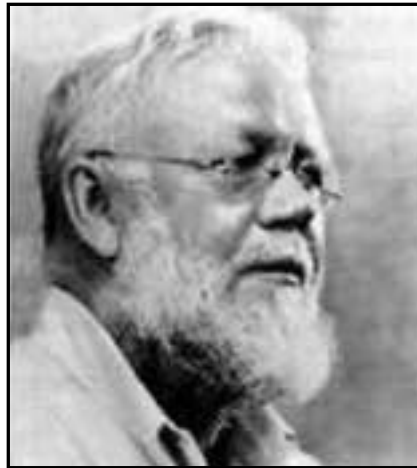
## **When you write**

- Write your information paragraph in **complete sentences** in the lined space provided.
- In your **topic sentence**, clearly state your main idea about the specific aspect of the topic. For example, an effective topic sentence is “Reginald Aubrey Fessenden had a very impressive career.” On the other hand, “This paragraph is about Reginald Aubrey Fessenden” is not an effective topic sentence, because it does not use a specific aspect as its main idea.
- In the body of the paragraph, include at least **four supporting details** from the list to develop the main idea that you have expressed in your topic sentence.
- In your **concluding sentence**, summarize your main idea. For example, “Because of Fessenden’s amazing career, he deserves to be recognized as a Canadian hero.”
- Organize your ideas clearly to help your reader follow and understand your information paragraph. Use transitions to link your ideas.
- Check your spelling, grammar and punctuation to make sure that your ideas are clearly communicated.
- Make changes to your writing as neatly and as clearly as you can.

## Writing an Information Paragraph

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<b>Task:</b>	Write a well-constructed <b>information paragraph</b> (one paragraph only) on one aspect of the topic below. This aspect will become the main idea of your paragraph.  From the 18 points below, choose at least four as supporting details to develop your main idea. In your paragraph, include a topic sentence, supporting details and a concluding sentence. You must use information from the list.
<b>Purpose and Audience:</b>	to provide information to an adult on one aspect of the topic
<b>Topic:</b>	<b>Reginald Aubrey Fessenden</b>
<b>Length:</b>	The lined space provided for your written work indicates the approximate length of the writing expected.



- played violin in first public radio broadcast
- his dream: transmitting words without wires
- inventor of fathometer, measuring ocean depth
- childhood spent in southern Ontario
- built the first power-generating plant at Niagara Falls
- in 1927, obtained patent for early version of the television
- born October 6, 1866, in Quebec
- died July 22, 1932
- in 1900, first transmission of voice without wires
- improved Edison's electric lightbulb
- at age 10, witnessed Alexander Graham Bell's experiments
- excellent in mathematics, language and music
- first public broadcast on radio in 1906
- over 500 inventions patented
- six years of work to realize his dream
- inventor of microphotography
- invented early version of the radio
- created basic concept of radar

Photo of R.A. Fessenden: Source untraceable.

