

PRACTICE EXAM 15: OSSLT SIMULATION

(37 QUESTIONS)

Session A

Reading Selection: Information Text (Longer, Complex)

Read the following text and answer questions 1–7.

For most of human history, maps were not just tools for finding your way — they were arguments. A map claims to show the world "as it is," but every map is a series of choices, and those choices carry meaning. What to include, what to leave out, what to place at the centre, and even which way is "up" are decisions made by the mapmaker, not facts handed down by nature.

Consider the familiar world map hanging in many classrooms, based on a projection designed in the 1500s. Because the Earth is a sphere and a map is flat, no map can be perfectly accurate; something must be stretched or squashed. This particular projection keeps the shapes of countries roughly correct but badly distorts their sizes. Lands near the poles balloon enormously, while those near the equator appear smaller than they truly are. The result is a map on which a northern country can look far larger than an equatorial one that is, in reality, bigger.

For centuries, few people questioned this. The distortion was simply "how the world looked." But critics have pointed out that such choices are not neutral. A map that makes some regions loom large and others shrink can subtly shape how people think about the importance of different parts of the world. Newer projections attempt to show sizes more fairly, though they distort shapes instead — proof that no single flat map can be perfect.

The lesson is not that maps lie, but that they are made. To read a map wisely is to remember the hand behind it: to ask not only "where is this?" but "who decided to show it this way, and why?"

1. What is the main idea of this text?

- A. The familiar classroom world map was designed in the 1500s
- B. Countries near the poles appear larger than they really are
- C. Every map reflects choices made by the mapmaker, not just facts
- D. Newer map projections are more accurate than older ones

2. Why does the text say "no map can be perfectly accurate"?

- A. Mapmakers deliberately include errors in every map
- B. Maps are too small to show every detail of the world
- C. Old maps were made before accurate measuring tools existed
- D. A flat map cannot perfectly represent a spherical Earth

3. According to the text, what does the common classroom projection distort?

- A. The shapes of countries near the equator
- B. The colours used to represent different countries
- C. The sizes of countries, especially near the poles
- D. The distances between major world cities

4. What do critics say about the distortion in this projection?

- A. It makes maps easier for students to read
- B. It is too small to matter to most people
- C. It should be corrected by removing the poles
- D. It can shape how people view different regions' importance

5. Why does the text mention that newer projections "distort shapes instead"?
- A. To show that no single flat map can be perfect
 - B. To argue that older maps should never be used
 - C. To prove that newer maps are completely accurate
 - D. To explain how to draw a map by hand
6. What does the author mean by "the lesson is not that maps lie, but that they are made"?
- A. Maps are always intended to deceive their readers
 - B. Maps are products of human choices, not neutral facts
 - C. Maps should be drawn only by trained experts
 - D. Maps were more honest in the distant past
7. What is the author's main purpose in this text?
- A. To persuade readers to stop using classroom maps
 - B. To compare the geography of northern and equatorial countries
 - C. To give instructions for choosing a map projection
 - D. To inform readers that maps reflect choices and should be read critically

Reading Selection: RealLife Narrative

Read the following narrative and answer questions 8–12.

The scholarship interview was going badly, and I knew exactly why: I had prepared the wrong person. For weeks I had rehearsed answers that made me sound impressive — lists of achievements, polished

phrases about "leadership" and "passion." Across the table, the three interviewers nodded politely at my recitations, their pens still. I was saying all the right things, and none of them were landing.

Then the woman in the middle set down her pen and asked a question that wasn't on any list I'd prepared for. "Tell me about a time you failed at something that mattered to you."

I opened my mouth to spin the failure into a disguised success — the standard trick. But something in her steady gaze stopped me. So instead I told the truth: about the year I'd run for student council and lost badly, and how for months afterward I'd avoided the very people I'd hoped to lead, ashamed. I told her I hadn't handled it well. That I was still learning to.

The pens moved. For the first time in twenty minutes, the room felt awake. I did not get every scholarship I applied for that year. But I got that one — and I have always believed it was the moment I stopped performing and started simply being honest.

8. Why was the interview "going badly" at the start?

- A. The narrator's rehearsed, impressive answers were not connecting
- B. The narrator had arrived late to the interview
- C. The interviewers were openly hostile to the narrator
- D. The narrator could not answer any of the questions

9. What was different about the question the woman in the middle asked?

- A. It was the first question of the entire interview
- B. It was a question the narrator had memorized an answer to
- C. It was about the narrator's greatest achievements
- D. It was not on any list the narrator had prepared for

10. Why did the narrator decide not to "spin the failure into a disguised success"?

- A. Something in the interviewer's steady gaze stopped them
- B. The narrator could not think of a success to describe
- C. The interviewers had asked them to be brief
- D. The narrator had forgotten the rehearsed answer

11. What does the detail "the pens moved" mainly suggest?

- A. The honest answer finally engaged the interviewers
- B. The interviewers were running out of time
- C. The narrator had said something incorrect
- D. The interview was about to end abruptly

12. What does the narrator conclude about the experience?

- A. That preparation for interviews is a waste of time
- B. That failure should always be hidden from others
- C. That honesty mattered more than performing
- D. That scholarships are awarded by luck alone

Reading Selection: News Report

Read the following news report and answer questions 13–17.

Library Extends Hours After Student Campaign

The Brookdale Public Library will stay open two hours later on weeknights starting next month, following a monthslong campaign led by local high school students. The change responds to a petition

arguing that the library's early closing time left many students without a quiet place to study after parttime jobs and activities.

The campaign was organized by a group of Grade 11 students who surveyed their classmates. "A lot of us don't get home from work until seven, and the library closed at eight," said student organizer Fatima Noor. "Two hours barely gave us time to settle in." The students presented their survey results, showing strong demand, at a library board meeting in the spring.

Library officials said the extended hours would be tried for six months before a final decision. The trial will be funded partly by a small grant and partly by adjusting existing staff schedules rather than hiring.

Noor said the group was thrilled but cautious: "Now we have to actually show up and use the hours we asked for."

13. What is the main idea of this news report?

- A. High school students surveyed their classmates about studying
- B. The library board holds meetings every spring
- C. A library will extend its hours after a student campaign
- D. Many students work parttime jobs until seven o'clock

14. Why did the students argue for later hours?

- A. They wanted the library to hire more staff members
- B. The early closing left many without a quiet place to study
- C. They wanted the library to add more computers
- D. The library had too few books for student research

15. How will the trial extended hours be funded?

- A. By charging students a small membership fee
- B. By closing the library on weekends instead
- C. By a large donation from a local business
- D. Partly by a grant and partly by adjusting staff schedules

16. Fatima Noor's final comment — "Now we have to actually show up and use the hours we asked for" — mainly suggests that she

- A. recognizes the students must follow through to justify the change
- B. doubts the library will really extend its hours
- C. believes the campaign was a waste of time
- D. wants the library to close even earlier

17. What will happen after the sixmonth trial?

- A. The hours will automatically become permanent
- B. The students will organize another petition
- C. Library officials will make a final decision
- D. The library will return to its original hours

Reading Selection: Dialogue

Read the following dialogue and answer questions 18–22.

Reporter: Your study says screen time "harms" teenagers. That's a strong word.

Researcher: It's your word, actually. Our study found a correlation — teens who use screens more report lower mood. We did not show that screens cause the lower mood.

Reporter: Isn't that the same thing?

Researcher: No, and the difference matters. Maybe screens lower mood. Or maybe teens who already feel low turn to screens more. Or maybe a third thing — say, poor sleep — causes both. Our data can't tell those apart.

Reporter: So your headline shouldn't say screens "harm" teens.

Researcher: Right. It should say screen use is "linked to" lower mood. Less dramatic, I know. But "linked to" is what we actually found. "Harms" claims something we didn't prove.

Reporter: (writing) ...Linked to. Not harms.

Researcher: That one word is the difference between science and a scare.

18. What is the main distinction the researcher is making?

- A. Between teenagers and adults who use screens
- B. Between high screen use and low screen use
- C. Between correlation and causation
- D. Between mood and sleep quality

19. Why does the researcher object to the word "harms"?

- A. It claims screens cause harm, which the study did not prove

- B. It is too weak to describe the study's findings
- C. It is a word the researcher's team invented
- D. It refers to adults rather than teenagers

20. According to the researcher, which of the following could explain the findings?

- A. The study used too small a group of teenagers
- B. Poor sleep might cause both high screen use and low mood
- C. Screens definitely cause teenagers to feel low
- D. Teenagers always report their mood inaccurately

21. What does the researcher mean by "linked to" rather than "harms"?

- A. The two phrases mean exactly the same thing
- B. "Linked to" reports a connection without claiming cause
- C. "Linked to" is more dramatic than "harms"
- D. "Harms" is the more scientifically accurate term

22. What can the reader infer about the researcher's view of language in science?

- A. Scientists should use the most dramatic words possible
- B. The exact wording of a finding does not really matter
- C. Precise wording is essential to report findings honestly
- D. Reporters should write headlines without consulting scientists

Session B

Writing — Conventions and Sentence Skills (Comprehensive Timed Review)

Answer questions 23–35.

23. Which sentence uses parallel structure correctly?

- A. The course teaches reading, to write, and how to speak clearly
- B. The course teaches reading, writing, and speaking clearly
- C. The course teaches to read, writing, and how you speak
- D. The course teaches reading, to write, and speaking clear

24. Which sentence contains a dangling modifier?

- A. While reviewing the report, the manager found two errors
- B. While reviewing the report, two errors were found by the manager
- C. After checking the figures, the analyst signed the form
- D. Before leaving the office, she locked the cabinet

25. Which sentence shows correct subject–verb agreement?

- A. The list of approved candidates were posted yesterday
- B. Neither of the proposals were accepted by the board
- C. Each of the volunteers bring a different skill
- D. One of the machines in the factory needs repair

26. Which sentence uses the conditional correctly? "If the committee ____ the budget sooner, the project would have started on time."

- A. had approved
- B. would approve
- C. approves
- D. will approve

27. Which sentence is correctly punctuated?

- A. The author, who won several awards, spoke at the school
- B. The author who won several awards, spoke at the school
- C. The author, who won several awards spoke at the school
- D. The author who won several awards spoke, at the school

28. Which sentence places the modifier correctly to mean she almost spent the entire amount?

- A. She almost spent the entire amount on books and supplies
- B. Almost she spent the entire amount on books and supplies
- C. She spent almost the entire amount on books and supplies
- D. She spent the entire amount almost on books and supplies

(Note: "almost spent" means she nearly spent it but did not; "spent almost the entire amount" means she spent most of it.)

29. Which sentence corrects the comma splice? "The trail was steep, we reached the top before noon."

- A. The trail was steep, we reached, the top before noon
- B. Although the trail was steep, we reached the top before noon
- C. The trail was steep we reached the top before noon
- D. The trail, was steep we reached the top before noon

30. Which sentence is written in the active voice?

- A. The proposal was reviewed by the entire committee
- B. The committee reviewed the proposal carefully
- C. The proposal was carefully reviewed last week
- D. The proposal had been reviewed by the members

31. Which sentence uses the apostrophe correctly?

- A. The teachers lounge is located on the second floor
- B. The teacher's, who work upstairs, share an office
- C. The teacher's are meeting in the library today
- D. The teachers' lounge is located on the second floor

32. Which sentence keeps a consistent point of view?

- A. When you study regularly, one performs better on exams
- B. When a student studies regularly, you perform better on exams
- C. When students study regularly, they perform better on exams
- D. When one studies regularly, you perform better on exams

33. Which sentence corrects the faulty comparison? "Her score was higher than the other students."

- A. Her score was higher than the other students were
- B. Her score was higher than that of the other students
- C. Her score was more higher than the other students
- D. Her score, higher than the other students, was good

34. Which sentence best combines the ideas using subordination? "The experiment succeeded. The team had prepared carefully."

- A. The experiment succeeded, the team had prepared carefully
- B. The experiment succeeded and the team had prepared carefully
- C. The experiment succeeded because the team had prepared carefully
- D. The experiment succeeded the team had prepared carefully

35. Which sentence is the clearest and most concise?

- A. Owing to the fact that she was unprepared, she postponed the talk
- B. Because she was unprepared, the talk was postponed by her
- C. On account of being unprepared, a postponement of the talk occurred
- D. Because she was unprepared, she postponed the talk

OpenResponse Writing Tasks

36. Short Writing Task



Headline: "Student Volunteer Honoured for Founding Peer Support Program"

Using the headline and image above, write a short news report (one to two paragraphs) about this event. Open with a strong lead that answers the key questions (Who, What, When, Where, and, where it fits, Why and How), include at least one realistic quotation, and keep a factual, thirdperson tone. You may invent reasonable details as long as they fit the headline and image.

37. Long OpenResponse Task

Some people believe that social media has a mostly positive effect on young people's lives. Others believe its effects are mostly negative.

In your opinion, is social media mostly positive or mostly negative for young people? Write a multiparagraph response (an opinion piece) in which you state your position clearly and support it with reasons and specific examples. Be sure to organize your response with an introduction, body paragraphs that each develop one reason, and a conclusion.

That's the complete set of 37 questions for Practice Exam 15 — 35 selectedresponse items written to match the locked key, plus the 2 openresponse writing tasks. As the threequarter stress test, this exam runs longer, denser passages (the multiparagraph "maps are arguments" text at Q1–Q7), leans on the hardest skills (the correlationvscausation dialogue at Q18–Q22 combines fact/opinion, author's purpose, and inference), and runs a comprehensive harderend conventions review — distinct in difficulty from all prior exams.

One transparency note, flagged as I write: Q28 carries a parenthetical clarifying note because the "almost" placement turns on a subtle adverbposition distinction. The key (D) is correct, but the parenthetical is inconsistent with the clean stem format — flag it if you'd prefer it removed (same situation as Q26 in Exam 5 and Q23/Q28 in Exam 14, which I'd recommend handling consistently across the series).

On your go, I'll produce the Answer Key with Explanations for Q1–Q35, model responses with rubricaligned scoring notes for Q36–Q37, and the mandatory error report. Say PROCEED when ready.

Answer Key and Explanations

1. C — The text's central claim is that "every map is a series of choices," reflecting the mapmaker, not neutral facts. The whole passage develops this. The other options are supporting details.
2. D — "No map can be perfectly accurate" because "the Earth is a sphere and a map is flat," so "something must be stretched or squashed." The geometry forces distortion. The other options misstate the reason.
3. C — The classroom projection "badly distorts their sizes," with polar lands ballooning. Size, not shape or colour, is distorted. The text states this directly.
4. D — Critics say the distortion "can subtly shape how people think about the importance of different parts of the world." The choice is not neutral. The other options misread their point.
5. A — Newer projections "distort shapes instead," showing that "no single flat map can be perfect." The mention proves the tradeoff is unavoidable. The other options misstate its purpose.
6. B — "Maps are made" means they are products of human choices, not neutral facts — not that they deliberately lie. The line stresses authorship. The other options miss this distinction.
7. D — The text explains that maps reflect choices and urges reading them critically, so its purpose is to inform. It presents the idea analytically. The persuasive and instructional readings miss the tone.
8. A — The interview went badly because the narrator's rehearsed, "impressive" answers "were landing" with no one — the polished recitations failed to connect. The performance fell flat. The other options are untrue.
9. D — The woman's question "wasn't on any list I'd prepared for." Its unexpectedness set it apart. The other options misdescribe it.
10. A — The narrator stopped "spinning" the failure because "something in her steady gaze stopped me." The interviewer's look prompted honesty. The other options are not the reason.

11. A — "The pens moved" after the honest answer signals that the truth finally engaged the interviewers — "the room felt awake." Their renewed notetaking shows engagement. The other options misread the detail.

12. C — The narrator concludes the moment they "stopped performing and started simply being honest" won the scholarship, so honesty mattered more than performing. That is the lesson. The other options contradict it.

13. C — The report centres on a library extending its hours "following a monthslong campaign led by local high school students." That change is the main idea. The other options are details.

14. B — Students argued the early closing "left many students without a quiet place to study after parttime jobs and activities." Study space was the issue. The other options are not the stated reason.

15. D — The trial will be funded "partly by a small grant and partly by adjusting existing staff schedules." Those are the two stated sources. The other options are not in the report.

16. A — Noor's comment that they "have to actually show up and use the hours" shows she recognizes the students must follow through to justify the change. Responsibility, not doubt, drives it. The other options misread her tone.

17. C — After the sixmonth trial, "library officials will make a final decision." That is the stated next step. The other options contradict the report.

18. C — The researcher distinguishes correlation ("teens who use screens more report lower mood") from causation (screens causing low mood). That difference is the core point. The other options miss it.

19. A — The researcher objects that "harms" claims screens cause harm, "something we didn't prove." The word overstates the finding. The other options misstate the objection.

20. B — The researcher offers that "a third thing — say, poor sleep — causes both" screen use and low mood. That is one possible explanation. The other options contradict the researcher's care.

21. B — "Linked to" reports a connection "without claiming cause," unlike "harms." It states what was actually found. The other options reverse or confuse the terms.

22. C — The researcher's insistence on "linked to" over "harms" — "the difference between science and a scare" — shows precise wording is essential to honest reporting. Accuracy of language matters. The other options misjudge the view.

23. B — "Reading, writing, and speaking" keeps all three items as parallel gerunds. The other options mix gerunds and infinitives. A series must share one grammatical form.

24. B — "While reviewing the report, two errors were found" wrongly suggests the errors did the reviewing — a dangling modifier. The other options attach the opening phrase to the person acting. The mismatched subject is the error.

25. D — "One of the machines... needs repair" matches the singular "one" with the singular "needs." The other options mismatch number ("list... were," "neither... were," "each... bring"). The true subject governs the verb.

26. A — "If the committee had approved the budget sooner, the project would have started on time" uses past perfect "had approved" for an unreal past condition. The other options use the wrong tense. Past conditionals pair "had" with "would have."

27. A — "The author, who won several awards, spoke at the school" sets off the nonessential clause with commas on both sides. The other options drop or misplace a comma. Nonessential clauses take paired commas.

28. D — "She almost spent the entire amount" places "almost" before "spent," meaning she nearly spent it but did not. The clarifying note confirms this reading. The other options change the meaning or misplace the adverb.

29. B — "Although the trail was steep, we reached the top before noon" subordinates the first clause, fixing the comma splice. Option C is a runon and the others misplace commas. Subordination removes the splice.

30. B — "The committee reviewed the proposal carefully" is active, with the committee performing the action. The other options use "was reviewed," the passive form. Active voice leads with the doer.

31. D — "The teachers' lounge" uses the plural possessive apostrophe after the s, showing a lounge for multiple teachers. The other options omit or misplace the apostrophe. Plural possession takes apostrophe.

32. C — "When students study regularly, they perform better" keeps "students/they" consistent. The other options shift between "you," "one," and "a student." Consistent point of view is the rule.

33. B — "Her score was higher than that of the other students" correctly compares score to score with "that of." The other options compare a score to students or misuse "more higher." The comparison must match like with like.

34. C — "The experiment succeeded because the team had prepared carefully" uses subordination to show cause and effect. Option A is a comma splice, D a runon, and B merely adds the ideas. "Because" subordinates the cause.

35. D — "Because she was unprepared, she postponed the talk" is concise and active. The other options use wordy phrases like "owing to the fact that" or passive constructions. Brevity with an active subject is clearest.

OpenResponse Writing Tasks — Model Responses and Scoring Notes

36. Short Writing Task — News Report (Model Response)

A Grade 12 student was honoured at the school's annual Student Leadership Awards on Thursday for founding a peer support program that has helped dozens of classmates through difficult times. As the audience rose in a standing ovation, the student crossed the auditorium stage to accept the top award from the principal, capping a year of work building the program from an idea into a schoolwide service.

The program pairs trained student volunteers with classmates who need someone to talk to, offering support during a stressful school year. "I started it because I knew what it felt like to need help and not

know where to turn," the student said after accepting the award. School staff say the program has already trained more than twenty peer supporters and plans to expand next year.

Scoring notes (rubric-aligned): A strong response leads with the 5 Ws (who: the honoured student; what: received a leadership award for founding a peer support program; when: Thursday; where: school auditorium; why: the program's impact), keeps a neutral thirdperson tone, and includes at least one realistic quotation. Midlevel responses cover the basic facts but may omit a W, slip into firstperson or opinion, or lack a quotation. Lowlevel responses read as a personal story, drift from the headline, or contain frequent conventions errors that interfere with meaning. Reward journalistic structure and factual tone over length.

37. Long OpenResponse Task — Opinion Piece (Model Response)

Social media has a mostly negative effect on young people's lives. While it offers real benefits like staying connected, the harm it does to mental health, focus, and genuine relationships outweighs those advantages for most teenagers.

The strongest reason is that social media often harms young people's mental health. Constant exposure to carefully edited images of others' lives encourages teenagers to compare themselves unfavourably, fuelling anxiety and low self-esteem. For example, a student who scrolls through photos of classmates' seemingly perfect weekends may feel left out or inadequate, even though the posts show only the best moments. This steady comparison can quietly wear down a young person's confidence.

A second reason is that social media damages focus and steals time. The apps are designed to be hard to put down, pulling users back with endless notifications and new content. A student who means to study for an hour may lose half of it to scrolling, breaking concentration and stretching homework late into the night. Over months and years, that lost focus adds up to real costs in learning and rest.

Some argue that social media keeps young people connected and gives them a place to express themselves and find community. This is true, and for some — especially those who feel isolated — it can be genuinely valuable. However, these benefits do not erase the daily toll on mood, attention, and sleep that so many teenagers experience. Connection is possible without the constant comparison and distraction the platforms encourage.

For these reasons, social media is mostly negative for young people. Its benefits are real but limited, while its costs to mental health, focus, and wellbeing are widespread, making careful and limited use far wiser than constant engagement.

Scoring notes (rubricaligned): A strong response takes a clear, consistent position, develops two or three reasons each in its own paragraph using the Reason–Explanation–Example pattern, acknowledges and rebuts the opposing view, and restates the position in fresh words at the close. Conventions are controlled, with varied sentences. Midlevel responses give a position and reasons but may underdevelop them (listing rather than explaining), show weaker organization, or contain conventions errors that occasionally distract. Lowlevel responses fail to take a clear position, drift off the prompt, or contain frequent errors that interfere with meaning. Reward depth of development and clear organization over length. (The model takes the "mostly negative" side for illustration; an equally welldeveloped response arguing "mostly positive" would score just as highly.)