

# PRACTICE EXAM 16: OSSLT SIMULATION

## (37 QUESTIONS)

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### Session A

#### Reading Selection: Information Text (DetailDense)

Read the following text and answer questions 1–7.

The honeybee waggle dance is one of the most remarkable forms of communication in the animal world. When a foraging bee discovers a rich source of food, it returns to the hive and performs a precise series of movements on the honeycomb to tell the other bees where to go. The dance has two main parts. In the "waggle run," the bee moves in a straight line while rapidly shaking its body from side to side. It then circles back to the start and repeats the run, tracing a figureeight pattern over many cycles.

Hidden in this dance is surprisingly exact information. The direction of the waggle run, measured against straight up on the vertical honeycomb, tells the other bees the direction of the food relative to the sun. The length of the waggle run signals the distance: a longer waggle means the food is farther away. Even the energy and number of repetitions can indicate how rich the food source is. Other bees crowd around the dancer, touching her with their antennae to read the message in the darkness of the hive.

Scientists who first decoded the dance found it hard to believe an insect could convey such precise directions. Yet experiments confirmed it again and again: bees told of a food source by the dance flew, on average, to exactly the area described. The waggle dance remains a powerful reminder that complex communication is not the property of humans alone.

1. Which of the following is the best summary of this text?

- A. The honeybee waggle dance communicates the direction, distance, and quality of food to other bees
- B. Honeybees perform a figureeight dance on the honeycomb inside the hive

- C. Scientists were surprised that insects could communicate at all
- D. Bees touch the dancer with their antennae in the darkness of the hive

2. According to the text, what does the direction of the waggle run indicate?

- A. How rich the food source is
- B. How far away the food is located
- C. How many bees should go to the food
- D. The direction of the food relative to the sun

3. What does the length of the waggle run signal?

- A. The richness of the food source
- B. The direction of the food source
- C. The distance to the food source
- D. The number of bees needed

4. Which detail is least important to a summary of how the dance conveys information?

- A. The direction of the run shows the food's direction
- B. Bees touch the dancer with their antennae in the dark
- C. The length of the run signals the distance to the food
- D. The energy of the dance can indicate the food's richness

5. Why did scientists find the dance "hard to believe" at first?

- A. They could not see the bees dancing in the dark hive
- B. The bees flew in the wrong direction during tests

- C. No other animal had ever been observed dancing
- D. It seemed impossible that an insect could convey such precise directions

6. What is the main point of the final paragraph?

- A. Scientists needed many years to decode the dance
- B. Bees sometimes fly to the wrong food source
- C. Experiments confirmed the dance gives accurate directions
- D. The dance is performed only by foraging bees

7. What is the author's main purpose in this text?

- A. To persuade readers to take up beekeeping
- B. To compare bees with other communicating animals
- C. To inform readers about how bees communicate food locations
- D. To warn readers about the dangers of disturbing hives

***Reading Selection: RealLife Narrative***

**Read the following narrative and answer questions 8–12.**

When I was fifteen, my grandfather taught me to fish, though he barely spoke the whole time. We would sit in his small boat for hours, lines in the water, saying almost nothing. As a teenager hungry for conversation, I found the silence unbearable at first. I filled it with questions he answered in single words, until I gave up and went quiet too.

It was in that surrendered silence that something shifted. I began to notice things: the way the light moved on the water, the particular call of a loon, the slow drift of the boat. My grandfather, I realized,

was not being unfriendly. He was teaching me something he had no words for — how to be still, how to pay attention, how to be content with company that did not need to be filled with noise.

We rarely caught much. That, I came to understand, was never really the point. The fish were an excuse; the silence was the lesson. He was giving me, in the only way he knew, the gift of his presence and the rare skill of quiet.

He has been gone many years now. But when my own life grows too loud, I find a quiet place and sit, lines in the water or not, and I am fifteen again, learning the thing he never said aloud.

8. Why did the narrator find the silence "unbearable at first"?

- A. The narrator was afraid of being out on the water
- B. As a teenager, the narrator was hungry for conversation
- C. The grandfather refused to teach the narrator to fish
- D. The boat was too small for both of them to sit comfortably

9. What did the narrator begin to notice once they went quiet?

- A. That the grandfather was being deliberately unfriendly
- B. That the fish were not biting on their lines
- C. Details like the light on the water and the loon's call
- D. That the boat was slowly drifting toward shore

10. According to the narrator, what was the grandfather really teaching?

- A. The proper technique for catching large fish
- B. How to repair and maintain a small boat

- C. The names of the birds that lived on the lake
- D. How to be still and content with quiet company

11. What does the narrator mean by "the fish were an excuse; the silence was the lesson"?

- A. The grandfather did not actually know how to fish
- B. The real purpose of the trips was the shared quiet, not the catch
- C. The narrator disliked fishing but enjoyed the boat
- D. The grandfather wanted to catch fish but rarely succeeded

12. What does the narrator do now when life "grows too loud"?

- A. Calls a friend to talk through the problem
- B. Returns to the same lake to catch fish
- C. Avoids quiet places that remind them of the past
- D. Finds a quiet place and sits, as the grandfather taught

***Reading Selection: News Report***

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

**Volunteers Restore Historic Town Clock**

The clock atop Millbrook's old town hall is ticking again for the first time in twenty years, thanks to a group of local volunteers who spent eight months repairing it. The clock, installed in 1908, had fallen silent in the early 2000s when its mechanism wore out and repair funds ran short.

The restoration began when retired engineer Harold Singh offered to lead a volunteer team. "This clock kept time for three generations of this town," Singh said. "It felt wrong to let it just sit there, frozen." The team raised money through community events and tracked down rare replacement parts, some of which had to be custommade by hand.

Hundreds of residents gathered in the town square last Saturday to hear the clock chime for the first time in two decades. Many older residents said the sound brought back childhood memories of the bustling square.

The volunteers now hope to restore the stainedglass windows of the same building, which have also fallen into disrepair.

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

- A. Volunteers restored a historic town clock that had been silent for twenty years
- B. The town clock was originally installed in the year 1908
- C. Retired engineer Harold Singh once worked on town buildings
- D. Older residents have many memories of the town square

14. Why had the clock fallen silent?

- A. A storm had damaged the clock tower beyond repair
- B. The town decided the clock was no longer needed
- C. Its mechanism wore out and repair funds ran short
- D. The volunteers removed it for safekeeping

15. How did the volunteers obtain the parts they needed?

- A. They bought all the parts from a local hardware store
- B. They borrowed parts from another town's clock
- C. The town council purchased the parts for them
- D. They tracked down rare parts, some custommade by hand

16. Why does the report include Harold Singh's quotation?

- A. To explain exactly how the clock mechanism works
- B. To convey why restoring the clock mattered to the town
- C. To list the community events used to raise money
- D. To describe the stainedglass windows of the building

17. What do the volunteers hope to do next?

- A. Restore the building's stainedglass windows
- B. Install a brandnew clock in the town square
- C. Repair clocks in neighbouring towns
- D. Hold an annual festival in the town square

### **Reading Selection: Dialogue**

**Read the following dialogue and answer questions 18–22.**

**Editor:** Your article is 1,200 words. The space we have is 600.

**Writer:** I can't cut it in half. Every part matters.

**Editor:** Everything feels essential to the person who wrote it. Let me ask you one question: if a reader remembered only one thing from this, what should it be?

**Writer:** That the new bus route leaves the east side without service.

**Editor:** Then that's your article. Everything that doesn't serve that one point is something you love, not something the reader needs.

**Writer:** But the history of the bus system, the interviews, the budget details—

**Editor:** Are context. Keep the few lines that sharpen your one point. Cut the rest, however good. A tight 600 that lands beats a baggy 1,200 that wanders.

**Writer:** (slowly) ...So I'm not cutting the article. I'm finding it.

**Editor:** Now you're an editor.

18. What is the writer's main objection at the start?

- A. The writer believes every part of the article is essential
- B. The writer thinks the article is already too short
- C. The writer disagrees with the article's main point
- D. The writer wants to add more interviews to the article

19. What question does the editor use to help the writer focus?

- A. How long did the article take to write?

- B. Which interviews were the most interesting?
- C. What is the history of the bus system?
- D. What one thing should a reader remember?

20. According to the editor, what should the writer do with material that doesn't serve the main point?

- A. Cut it, however good it is
- B. Move it to the beginning of the article
- C. Keep all of it as important context
- D. Expand it into a second article

21. What does the editor mean by "a tight 600 that lands beats a baggy 1,200 that wanders"?

- A. Longer articles are always better than shorter ones
- B. The writer should add 600 more words to the article
- C. Word count is the most important measure of an article
- D. A focused short piece is more effective than an unfocused long one

22. What does the writer realize by saying "I'm not cutting the article. I'm finding it"?

- A. The article cannot be shortened without ruining it
- B. The editor does not understand the article's value
- C. Trimming to the core point reveals the real article
- D. The article should be left at its original length

## Session B

### Writing — Conventions and Sentence Skills (Conciseness and Eliminating Wordiness)

Answer questions 23–35.

23. Which sentence is the most concise?

- A. At this point in time, we are currently ready to begin the project
- B. We are ready to begin the project right now at this moment
- C. Currently, at the present time, we are ready to begin now
- D. We are ready to begin the project

24. Which revision best removes the redundancy? "She returned back to the same place where she had been before."

- A. She returned back to the place she had been
- B. She returned to the place she had been before
- C. She returned back again to the same place
- D. She went back and returned to the place

25. Which sentence eliminates unnecessary words?

- A. Due to the fact that it was late, we decided that we should leave
- B. Owing to the lateness of the hour, a decision to leave was made
- C. Because it was late, we decided to leave
- D. In light of the fact that it was late, we made the choice to go

26. Which sentence is free of wordiness?

- A. The reason why he was late is because he missed the bus
- B. He was late because he missed the bus
- C. The cause of his lateness was due to him missing the bus
- D. He was late, and the reason for this was a missed bus

27. Which revision trims the filler while keeping the meaning? "In my opinion, I personally think that the plan is a good one."

- A. I think the plan is good
- B. In my opinion, I think the plan is a good one
- C. Personally, in my own view, the plan is good
- D. I personally think, in my opinion, the plan is good

28. Which sentence is the most concise and clear?

- A. There are many students who feel that the test was difficult
- B. It is the case that many students felt the test was difficult
- C. Many students who exist felt that the test was a difficult one
- D. Many students felt the test was difficult

29. Which sentence removes the redundant phrase? "The two twins shared an identical, matching appearance."

- A. The two twins shared a matching, identical appearance
- B. The twins shared an identical, matching look exactly
- C. The twins looked identical
- D. The two identical twins matched each other exactly

30. Which sentence is the tightest version?

- A. The meeting, which was held in order to discuss the budget, lasted two hours
- B. The meeting to discuss the budget lasted two hours
- C. The meeting that was held for the purpose of discussing the budget lasted two hours
- D. The meeting, held with the purpose of a budget discussion, lasted two hours

31. Which revision eliminates wordiness? "He made the decision to postpone the trip until a later date."

- A. He made the decision to postpone the trip to later
- B. He decided to postpone the trip
- C. He made a decision that the trip would be postponed
- D. He decided to make a postponement of the trip

32. Which sentence is the most concise?

- A. The report was completed ahead of the scheduled deadline
- B. The report was completed in advance of the deadline that was scheduled
- C. The report reached completion prior to its scheduled deadline date
- D. The completion of the report occurred ahead of the scheduled deadline

33. Which sentence removes the unnecessary repetition? "The final outcome of the game was a tie at the end."

- A. The final outcome of the game was a tie at the very end
- B. The game ended in a tie
- C. The outcome at the end of the game was finally a tie
- D. The game's final ending outcome was a tie

34. Which sentence is the clearest and least wordy?

- A. It is absolutely essential that we must finish the work today
- B. It is essential that we should finish the work today without fail
- C. We absolutely must finish the work today, it is essential
- D. We must finish the work today

35. Which revision best tightens the sentence? "The teacher gave an explanation of the assignment to the students in the class."

- A. The teacher explained the assignment to the class
- B. The teacher gave the students in the class an explanation of it
- C. An explanation of the assignment was given by the teacher
- D. The teacher provided an explanation of the assignment to them

### OpenResponse Writing Tasks

36. Short Writing Task



**Headline: "School Hosts First Blood Drive, Exceeds Donation Goal"**

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 students should be allowed to use calculators in all math classes. Others believe students should learn to solve problems without them first.

In your opinion, should students be allowed to use calculators in all math classes? 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.

## Answer Key and Explanations

1. A — The best summary captures the text's central point: the waggle dance conveys the direction, distance, and quality of food. It covers the whole passage, not one detail. The other options state single facts, not the main idea.
2. D — The text states the direction of the run, measured against straight up, "tells the other bees the direction of the food relative to the sun." Direction signals direction. The other options name what other features convey.
3. C — "The length of the waggle run signals the distance: a longer waggle means the food is farther away." Length maps to distance. The other options confuse it with direction or richness.
4. B — Bees touching the dancer with antennae describes how they read the dance, not how the dance encodes the location, so it is least essential to a summary of the information conveyed. The other three are core to the encoding. The incidental detail is the answer.
5. D — Scientists found it hard to believe because "an insect could convey such precise directions" seemed impossible. The precision strained belief. The other options misstate the reason.

6. C — The final paragraph's main point is that "experiments confirmed it again and again": the dance gives accurate directions. Confirmation is its focus. The other options are minor or untrue.
7. C — The text explains how bees communicate food locations, so its purpose is to inform. It presents the science neutrally. The persuasive, comparative, and cautionary readings miss the tone.
8. B — The narrator, "a teenager hungry for conversation," found the silence unbearable at first. The craving for talk caused the discomfort. The other options are unsupported.
9. C — Once quiet, the narrator "began to notice things: the way the light moved on the water, the... call of a loon." Sensory details emerged. The other options misstate what was noticed.
10. D — The grandfather was teaching "how to be still, how to pay attention, how to be content with company" — quiet contentment. That was the real lesson. The other options are not the point.
11. B — "The fish were an excuse; the silence was the lesson" means the real purpose was the shared quiet, not the catch. Fishing was a vehicle for stillness. The other options misread the line.
12. D — Now, when life grows loud, the narrator "find[s] a quiet place and sit[s]," as the grandfather taught. The practice continues. The other options contradict the text.
13. A — The report centres on volunteers who "restored a historic town clock" silent for twenty years. That restoration is the main idea. The other options are supporting details.
14. C — The clock fell silent when "its mechanism wore out and repair funds ran short." Those two causes are stated. The other options are not in the report.
15. D — The team "tracked down rare replacement parts, some of which had to be custommade by hand." That is how they got the parts. The other options contradict the report.

16. B — Singh's quotation — "It felt wrong to let it just sit there, frozen" — conveys why restoring the clock mattered to the town. It expresses the project's meaning. It does not explain the mechanism or list events.

17. A — The volunteers "now hope to restore the stainedglass windows of the same building." That is the stated next goal. The other options are not mentioned.

18. A — The writer objects that "every part matters" — believing the whole article is essential. That conviction is the obstacle. The other options misstate it.

19. D — The editor asks "if a reader remembered only one thing... what should it be?" to find the core. The question forces a single focus. The other options are not what the editor asks.

20. A — The editor says material that doesn't serve the main point is "something you love, not something the reader needs" — so cut it, however good. Trimming is the advice. The other options reverse it.

21. D — "A tight 600 that lands beats a baggy 1,200 that wanders" means a focused short piece is more effective than an unfocused long one. Focus, not length, wins. The other options misread the line.

22. C — "I'm not cutting the article. I'm finding it" means trimming to the core point reveals the real article. The cutting uncovers the essential piece. The other options miss this insight.

23. D — "We are ready to begin the project" removes all the redundant time phrases ("at this point in time," "currently," "right now"). It states the idea once. Concise writing avoids piledup filler.

24. B — "She returned to the place she had been before" removes the redundant "back" (already in "returned") and "same." The other options keep doubled words. Trimming the repetition fixes it.

25. C — "Because it was late, we decided to leave" replaces wordy phrases like "due to the fact that." It states cause and action plainly. Brevity without losing meaning is the goal.

26. B — "He was late because he missed the bus" avoids the wordy "the reason why... is because." It states the cause directly. The other options pad the sentence.

27. A — "I think the plan is good" trims the redundant "in my opinion," "personally," and "a good one." Each repeats the same idea of personal belief. One clear statement suffices.

28. D — "Many students felt the test was difficult" removes "there are... who" and "it is the case that." It states the idea directly. The other options add empty filler.

29. C — "The twins looked identical" removes the redundancy: "two," "twins," "identical," and "matching" overlap. Twins are by definition two, and identical and matching repeat. The trimmed version says it once.

30. B — "The meeting to discuss the budget lasted two hours" trims "which was held in order to." The infinitive phrase conveys purpose concisely. The other options pad the sentence.

31. B — "He decided to postpone the trip" replaces "made the decision to" with the verb "decided" and drops "until a later date" (postpone already means to a later date). The other options keep the wordiness. The verb is tighter than the noun phrase.

32. A — "The report was completed ahead of the scheduled deadline" is the tightest version. The other options pad with "in advance of," "prior to... date," or a noun construction. Brevity makes it clearest.

33. B — "The game ended in a tie" removes the redundant "final outcome" and "at the end." A tie is the ending result, so the extra words repeat it. The trimmed version is concise.

34. D — "We must finish the work today" removes "it is absolutely essential that" and doubled emphasis. The modal "must" carries the necessity. The other options pile on redundant stress.

35. A — "The teacher explained the assignment to the class" replaces "gave an explanation of" with the verb "explained" and trims "students in the class" to "the class." The verb is tighter than the noun phrase. The other options stay wordy.

## **OpenResponse Writing Tasks — Model Responses and Scoring Notes**

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

Riverside Secondary School hosted its first-ever blood drive on Wednesday, collecting more donations than organizers had hoped for. The school gymnasium was transformed into a clinic for the day, where students of eligible age, teachers, and community members reclined in chairs as visiting nurses collected donations, guided by student volunteers at the registration table.

The drive was organized with a regional blood services agency to address a seasonal shortage of donations. "We set a goal of fifty units and ended up well past it," said student organizer Daniel Park. "People kept showing up." Organizers say the strong turnout has encouraged them to make the blood drive a yearly event at the school.

Scoring notes (rubric-aligned): A strong response leads with the 5 Ws (who: Riverside school/students and community; what: first blood drive exceeding its goal; when: Wednesday; where: school gymnasium; why: address a blood shortage), 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)**

Students should not be allowed to use calculators in all math classes; they should first learn to solve problems without them. While calculators are useful tools, relying on them too early weakens students' understanding, their mental math skills, and their ability to catch their own errors.

The strongest reason is that doing math by hand builds real understanding. When students work through a calculation step by step, they learn why a method works, not just how to press buttons. For example, a student who learns to do long division on paper understands what division actually means, while a student who only enters numbers into a calculator may get the answer without grasping the idea behind it. That understanding is the foundation for harder math later.

A second reason is that calculators can weaken mental math skills that students use every day. Quick estimation — figuring out a tip, checking change, or judging whether an answer is reasonable — depends on being able to compute in your head. A student who reaches for a calculator for every small sum loses the practice that keeps these skills sharp. Learning without a calculator first keeps that ability strong.

Some argue that calculators save time and let students tackle more advanced problems without getting stuck on arithmetic. This is a fair point, and at higher levels calculators are genuinely valuable. The solution, however, is not to allow them in all classes from the start but to introduce them once students have mastered the basics by hand. That way, students gain the benefits of the tool without losing the understanding beneath it.

For these reasons, students should learn to solve problems without calculators before being allowed to use them freely. The understanding, mental math, and error-checking skills built by working without a calculator are worth far more than the time a calculator saves early on.

Scoring notes (rubric-aligned): 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 conventional 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 "learn without first" side for illustration; an equally well-developed response arguing for full calculator use would score just as highly.)