

PRACTICE EXAM 21: OSSLT SIMULATION

(37 QUESTIONS)

Reading Selection 1 — Real-Life Narrative

The Borrowed Coat

I started my first winter job at sixteen, stacking crates in a warehouse where the loading doors never fully closed. Nobody had told me how cold it would be. On my second shift, my teeth were chattering so hard a supervisor named Glenn noticed from across the floor. Without a word, he disappeared into the break room and came back with a heavy canvas coat that smelled of motor oil and someone else's cigarettes.

"Bring it back when you've got your own," he said, and walked off before I could thank him.

I wore that coat every shift for two months. When my first real paycheque finally let me buy my own, I washed Glenn's coat, folded it carefully, and left it on his chair with a note. He never mentioned it. But a few weeks later I saw a new kid shivering by the same doors, and I understood what the coat had really been: not a gift to keep, but something to pass along.

I went to the break room and found a spare on the hook where I'd learned to look.

1. What does the narrator come to understand about the coat by the end?

- A. It was the warmest coat available anywhere in the entire warehouse
- B. It had originally belonged to the supervisor named Glenn himself
- C. It was meant to be passed along to the next person who needed it
- D. It should have been returned to Glenn much sooner than it was

2. Glenn's instruction "Bring it back when you've got your own" suggests that he

- A. doubted the narrator would stay at the job through the cold winter
- B. expected to be paid for lending the coat to a new employee
- C. wanted the coat returned only after it had been professionally cleaned
- D. saw the loan as temporary help until the narrator could manage alone

3. The final sentence, in which the narrator goes to find a spare coat, mainly shows that he

- A. was still too cold to finish his shifts without extra clothing
- B. had lost the coat Glenn originally lent to him that winter
- C. has decided to continue the kindness by helping the new worker
- D. needed to return Glenn's original coat to its proper hook

4. Which statement best summarizes the narrative as a whole?

- A. A teenager learns that warehouse work is harder and colder than expected
- B. A small act of kindness teaches a young worker to help the next person in need
- C. A supervisor lends a coat and is repaid when the coat is finally returned clean
- D. A new employee struggles through a difficult first winter at a cold job

5. The detail that Glenn "walked off before I could thank him" mainly emphasizes that he

- A. was too busy with his own work to speak with the new employee
- B. regretted lending out a coat that did not actually belong to him
- C. disliked the narrator and wanted to avoid any further conversation
- D. did not want recognition or thanks for the help he had given

Reading Selection 2 — Information Paragraph

Why Bridges Have Gaps

If you have ever driven across a long bridge, you may have heard a rhythmic thump and noticed metal teeth interlocking in the road surface. These are expansion joints, and they exist because materials change size with temperature. Steel and concrete expand when heated and contract when cooled; over the length of a large bridge, this movement can add up to several centimetres between a hot afternoon and a freezing night. Without somewhere to go, that expanding material would push against itself and eventually crack or buckle. Expansion joints leave deliberate gaps that open and close as the bridge breathes with the temperature, allowing the structure to move safely instead of tearing itself apart. The teeth you see simply let vehicles cross the gap smoothly while the joint does its quiet, constant work.

6. What is the main idea of this paragraph?

- A. Long bridges are more dangerous to drive across in hot weather
- B. Steel and concrete are poor materials for building large bridges
- C. Expansion joints make a thumping sound that drivers can hear
- D. Expansion joints let a bridge change size safely with temperature

7. According to the paragraph, what would happen to a bridge without expansion joints?

- A. It would become too slippery for vehicles to cross in winter
- B. The road surface would wear down far more quickly over time
- C. The expanding material could push against itself and crack or buckle
- D. Drivers would no longer hear the rhythmic thump as they crossed

8. The phrase "as the bridge breathes with the temperature" is used to

- A. warn that bridges release harmful gases when they are heated
- B. suggest the bridge is alive and aware of the weather around it

- C. explain why bridges must be inspected every single morning
- D. describe how the bridge expands and contracts in a steady rhythm

9. Which sentence would best continue the paragraph?

- A. Most drivers never think about these joints, yet they cross dozens of them each year.
- B. Concrete was first used in construction by the ancient Romans long ago.
- C. The colour of a bridge can affect how warm its surface becomes.
- D. Traffic on long bridges tends to be heaviest during the morning rush.

Reading Selection 3 — News Report

Town Reopens Historic Pool After Flood

MILLBROOK — The town's beloved outdoor pool reopened Saturday, two years after a spring flood left it buried under mud and debris.

The 1948 pool had been a summer fixture for generations of Millbrook families before the flood cracked its basin and destroyed the pump house. Early estimates suggested repairs would cost more than the town could afford, and council briefly considered filling the pool in for good.

That changed when residents formed the "Save Our Pool" committee. Over eighteen months, volunteers organized fundraisers, applied for heritage grants, and donated thousands of hours of labour. A local engineering firm offered its services at a reduced rate.

"This pool raised three generations of swimmers," said committee chair Lorne Webb. "We weren't about to let one flood end that."

The restored pool features a repaired basin, a new pump house built on higher ground, and an accessibility ramp that the original lacked. Council says the project came in slightly under its revised budget.

10. What is the central idea of this news report?

- A. A spring flood caused severe and lasting damage across the town of Millbrook
- B. Community effort saved and restored a historic pool that nearly closed for good
- C. The town council made a costly mistake by considering filling in the pool
- D. A local engineering firm completed the pool repairs at a reduced rate

11. Which of the following best summarizes the sequence of main events?

- A. A flood damaged the pool, residents organized to save it, and the restored pool reopened
- B. The town built a new pool in 1948, a flood struck, and council closed the old one permanently
- C. Volunteers built an accessibility ramp, raised money, and then a flood damaged the basin
- D. Council filled in the pool, residents protested, and a new pool was built on higher ground

12. The report suggests that the "Save Our Pool" committee was

- A. organized and persistent in its effort to fund the restoration
- B. uncertain whether the pool was worth saving at all
- C. opposed by most of the town's longtime residents
- D. funded entirely by a single local engineering firm

13. Why does the writer include Lorne Webb's quotation about "three generations of swimmers"?

- A. To explain exactly how the cracked pool basin was repaired
- B. To convey the pool's deep value to the community over time
- C. To list the names of the families who used the pool most
- D. To criticize the council for nearly filling in the pool

14. Which detail shows that the restored pool is an improvement over the original?

- A. The pool reopened on a Saturday two years after the flood occurred
- B. The 1948 pool had been a summer fixture for many generations
- C. The new pool includes an accessibility ramp the original lacked
- D. A local engineering firm offered its services at a reduced rate

Reading Selection 4 — Dialogue

The Group Project

TARA: We have three days left and we haven't picked a topic. Three days.

JAMAL: I keep sending ideas to the group chat. Nobody answers.

TARA: Because your ideas are all huge. "The history of space travel"? That's a textbook, not a slideshow.

JAMAL: Okay, fair. So we go smaller.

TARA: One mission. One. We pick a single space mission and tell its story well.

JAMAL: (slowly) That's... actually good. Why didn't you say that two weeks ago?

TARA: I did. You were too busy planning the history of everything.

JAMAL: (laughing) Then I owe the group chat an apology.

TARA: You owe me a coffee. Apologize to the chat for free.

15. What is the main source of tension between Tara and Jamal?

- A. Jamal has refused to do any work on the group project at all
- B. Tara wants to change topics while Jamal wants to keep the old one
- C. Jamal's project ideas have been too large to complete in time
- D. Tara and Jamal disagree about who should present the slideshow

16. Tara's comment "That's a textbook, not a slideshow" mainly means that Jamal's idea is

- A. too broad to cover in a short presentation
- B. too boring to interest the rest of the class
- C. better suited to a written essay than a talk
- D. already covered thoroughly in their textbook

17. When Jamal asks, "Why didn't you say that two weeks ago?" Tara's reply reveals that

- A. she had suggested the idea before, but he had not been listening
- B. she only thought of the focused topic at the last possible moment
- C. she had been deliberately keeping the best idea to herself
- D. the group chat had failed to deliver her earlier messages

18. The exchange about the coffee and the apology mainly shows that

- A. Tara is still genuinely angry about Jamal's earlier behaviour
- B. the two can resolve their friction with humour and stay friendly
- C. Jamal refuses to take any responsibility for the delay
- D. Tara expects Jamal to complete the entire project alone

19. Which statement best summarizes the outcome of the conversation?

- A. The pair give up on the project after failing to agree on a topic
- B. The pair agree to narrow their focus to a single space mission
- C. Jamal convinces Tara to attempt the broad history of space travel
- D. The two decide to ask the teacher for a deadline extension

Reading Selection 5 — Graphic Text

Infographic: "Where Your Recycling Really Goes"



Figure 20.2

20. According to the infographic, what happens immediately after recycling is collected?

- A. Materials are separated by type during the sorting stage
- B. Clean materials are baled and then sold to manufacturers
- C. Materials are turned directly into new bottles and cans
- D. Bins are emptied into trucks for the first time that week

21. Based on the pie chart, which cause accounts for the largest share of contamination?

- A. Wrong items placed in the recycling bin
- B. Wet paper that was not kept dry by residents
- C. Food residue left inside containers
- D. Items rejected during the processing stage

22. The call-out bar about "one dirty item" is included mainly to

- A. explain how the sorting facility separates different materials
- B. encourage readers to rinse and dry containers before recycling
- C. show how recycled materials are turned into new products
- D. list the four numbered stages of the recycling process

23. Which statement is best supported by the infographic as a whole?

- A. Most recycling is rejected before it ever reaches the sorting facility
- B. Proper preparation by residents helps keep recycling from being wasted
- C. The processing stage produces more contamination than any other stage
- D. Trucks deliver recycling directly to manufacturers after collection

24. What is the best overall summary of the infographic's message?

- A. Recycling trucks should be emptied more frequently to reduce waste
- B. The recycling process is too complicated for most people to understand
- C. Recycling moves through clear stages, and clean items help it succeed
- D. Contamination is unavoidable no matter how carefully people recycle

Grammar, Conventions & Sentence Skills

25. Choose the option that corrects the error: "The list of approved supplies are posted on the bulletin board."

- A. The list of approved supplies is posted on the bulletin board.
- B. The list of approved supplies were posted on the bulletin board.
- C. The list of approved supplies are post on the bulletin board.
- D. The list of approved supplies being posted on the bulletin board.

26. Which revision best combines these sentences? "Rosa finished her shift. She went straight to the library to study."

- A. After Rosa finished her shift, she went straight to the library to study.
- B. Rosa finished her shift, she went straight to the library to study.
- C. Rosa finished her shift she went straight to the library to study.
- D. Rosa finished her shift; and went straight to the library to study.

27. Which sentence is punctuated correctly?

- A. My cousin who lives in Halifax is visiting us next week.
- B. My cousin, who lives in Halifax is visiting us next week.
- C. My cousin who lives in Halifax, is visiting us next week.
- D. My cousin, who lives in Halifax, is visiting us next week.

28. Choose the sentence with the correct pronoun use.

- A. The prize was shared between Dana and I after the contest ended.
- B. Dana and me worked together to finish the project before the deadline.
- C. The prize was shared between Dana and me after the contest ended.
- D. Her and Dana worked together to finish the project before the deadline.

29. Which word correctly completes the sentence? "The weather will ___ our plans for the outdoor concert."

- A. effect, since the storm has already arrived in the area
- B. affects the way that everyone feels about going outside
- C. effects a change in the schedule that we cannot avoid
- D. affect, depending on whether the forecast holds tomorrow

30. Identify the sentence that is correctly written.

- A. Running down the hall, the locker door caught the corner of my backpack.
- B. The locker door caught the corner of my backpack as I ran down the hall.
- C. Down the hall running, my backpack was caught by the locker door corner.
- D. The corner of my backpack, running down the hall, was caught by the door.

31. Which sentence uses commas correctly?

- A. We packed sandwiches, juice and, a blanket for the picnic.
- B. We packed sandwiches juice and a blanket, for the picnic.
- C. We packed sandwiches, juice, and a blanket for the picnic.
- D. We packed, sandwiches, juice, and a blanket for the picnic.

32. Choose the correctly spelled option: "The coach gave us some ___ advice before the final game."

- A. valuble
- B. valueable
- C. valubel
- D. valuable

33. Which sentence uses the apostrophe correctly?

- A. The childrens' coats were left in the gym after the assembly.
- B. The childrens coats' were left in the gym after the assembly.
- C. The childrens coats were left in the gym after the assembly.
- D. The children's coats were left in the gym after the assembly.

34. Which is the clearest and most concise revision? "At this point in time, we are currently in the process of reviewing the application."

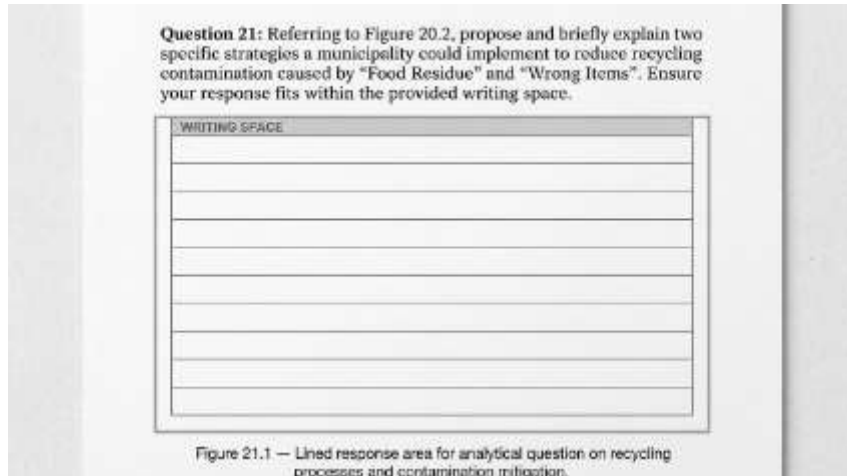
- A. At the present moment, the application is currently undergoing our review process.
- B. We are reviewing the application.
- C. In the process of reviewing, we are currently looking at the application now.
- D. The application, at this time, is in the process of being reviewed by us.

35. Choose the option that best corrects the sentence fragment: "Because the bus was late and the rain would not stop."

- A. Because the bus was late and the rain would not stop, we waited under the awning.
- B. Because the bus was late, and the rain would not stop.
- C. The bus was late. Because the rain would not stop.
- D. Because the bus was late and the rain would not stop?

36. Short Writing Task — Paragraph

Some schools are replacing printed textbooks with tablets and digital materials. Write a paragraph (6–8 sentences) explaining whether you think this is a positive change. Support your opinion with specific reasons or examples.



37. Long Open-Response Task — Opinion Piece

Your community is deciding whether to convert an empty downtown lot into either a public park or a parking garage. Write a multi-paragraph response (about 3–5 paragraphs) stating which option you support and why. Support your position with clear reasons and specific examples, and organize your ideas with an introduction, body, and conclusion.



Answer Key and Explanations

1. C — Meant to be passed along. Seeing the new kid shiver by the same doors, the narrator realizes the coat was "not a gift to keep, but something to pass along." That recognition, not its warmth or ownership, is the insight.

2. D — Temporary help until he could manage. "Bring it back when you've got your own" frames the coat as a loan to bridge the gap until the narrator can buy his own — practical, no-strings help, not doubt, payment, or a cleaning condition.

3. C — Continuing the kindness. Going to the break room for a spare coat shows the narrator stepping into Glenn's role to help the shivering new worker, repeating the cycle of kindness rather than seeking warmth or returning a coat.

4. B — A small kindness teaches him to help the next person. The whole arc moves from receiving help to passing it on, making the lesson of paying kindness forward the best full-text summary. The other options capture only single details.

5. D — Did not want thanks. Walking off before he can be thanked shows Glenn gave help without seeking credit or recognition — not that he was busy, regretful, or unfriendly.

Reading Selection 2 — Information Paragraph

6. D — Bridges change size safely with temperature. The paragraph's central point is that expansion joints let a bridge expand and contract without cracking. The thumping sound and material criticism are minor details, not the main idea.

7. C — It could crack or buckle. The text states that without somewhere to go, expanding material "would push against itself and eventually crack or buckle." The other outcomes are not mentioned.

8. D — Expands and contracts in a rhythm. "Breathes with the temperature" is a figurative way to describe the bridge steadily expanding and contracting, not a literal claim that it is alive or releases gases.

9. A — The note that drivers cross dozens of joints unaware fits the paragraph's tone and topic, extending its point about the joints' quiet, constant work. The other sentences drift to unrelated facts.

Reading Selection 3 — News Report

10. B — Community effort saved a historic pool. The report centres on residents organizing to fund and restore a pool that nearly closed. The flood, council's mistake, and the firm's discount are supporting details, not the central idea.

11. A — Flood → residents organize → reopening. This sequence matches the actual order of events in the report. The other options scramble the timeline or invent events that did not happen.

12. A — Organized and persistent. The committee spent eighteen months running fundraisers, applying for grants, and donating labour — clear evidence of organization and persistence, not doubt, opposition, or single-firm funding.

13. B — Conveys the pool's deep value over time. Webb's "three generations of swimmers" quote shows how meaningful the pool has long been to the community, which is why people fought to save it. It does not explain repairs or list families.

14. C — The new accessibility ramp. The restored pool "features... an accessibility ramp that the original lacked" — a clear improvement. The other details describe timing, history, or cost, not an upgrade.

Reading Selection 4 — Dialogue

15. C — Jamal's ideas are too large. The friction comes from Jamal proposing topics too big to finish in time ("a textbook, not a slideshow"), while the deadline looms. He is not refusing to work or fighting over presenting.

16. A — Too broad for a short presentation. Calling "the history of space travel" a textbook means it is far too large in scope for a slideshow, not merely boring or already in the book.

17. A — She had suggested it before, unheard. Tara says "I did. You were too busy planning the history of everything," revealing she raised the focused idea earlier but Jamal wasn't listening — not that the chat failed or she withheld it.

18. B — Friction resolved with humour. The teasing about coffee and the apology shows the two settling their disagreement playfully and staying on good terms, not lingering anger or dodged responsibility.

19. B — Narrow to a single space mission. The conversation lands on telling the story of one mission well, which is the agreed outcome. They neither give up nor pursue the broad topic nor seek an extension.

Reading Selection 5 — Graphic Text

20. A — Sorting comes next. The flow diagram shows Stage 1 Collection followed immediately by Stage 2 Sorting, where materials are separated by type. Baling, new products, and first emptying are not the immediate next step.

21. C — Food residue (40%). The pie chart lists food residue at 40%, the largest share, ahead of wrong items (35%) and wet paper (25%). "Items rejected during processing" is not a pie-chart category.

22. B — Encourage rinsing and drying. The call-out warns that one dirty item can spoil a batch and tells readers to rinse containers and keep them dry — a preparation message, not a description of sorting, products, or stages.

23. B — Resident preparation reduces waste. Across the diagram and call-out, the infographic shows that clean, well-prepared items keep recycling from being rejected. Contamination occurs at sorting (up to 25%), not before collection or mostly at processing.

24. C — Clear stages, and clean items help. The best summary captures both the staged process and the message that clean items help recycling succeed. The other options overstate failure or complexity.

Grammar, Conventions & Sentence Skills

25. A — The subject is "list" (singular), so the verb is "is posted." The prepositional phrase "of approved supplies" does not change the subject's number; "were," "post," and "being" are all incorrect.

26. A — Subordinating with "After" turns two sentences into one correct complex sentence. Option B is a comma splice, C is a run-on, and D misuses a semicolon with "and."

27. D — The clause "who lives in Halifax" is non-essential extra information, so it takes a comma on both sides. The other options omit one or both commas.

28. C — After the preposition "between," the object pronoun "me" is correct ("between Dana and me"). "I," "me worked," and "Her... worked" all misuse case.

29. D — "Affect" is the verb meaning to influence, and the conditional clause about the forecast fits logically. "Effect" as used in A and C is wrong, and B changes the verb's form incorrectly.

30. B — Only this version attaches the introductory action to the correct doer ("I ran down the hall"), avoiding the dangling modifier that makes the locker door or backpack do the running.

31. C — A clean series takes commas after each item except the last, with the serial comma before "and." The other options misplace commas within or before the list.

32. D — "Valuable" is the correct spelling. "Valuble," "valueable," and "valubel" are all misspellings of the word.

33. D — "Children" is already plural, so the possessive is "children's." "Childrens'" and "childrens" are incorrect plural forms, and B misplaces the apostrophe on "coats."

34. B — "We are reviewing the application" removes all the redundant filler ("at this point in time," "currently," "in the process of") while keeping the meaning. The others stay wordy.

35. A — Adding an independent clause ("we waited under the awning") completes the dependent "Because..." fragment into a full sentence. The other options leave the fragment unresolved or add a comma or question mark without fixing it.

Open-Response Model Responses & Rubric Notes

36. Short Writing Task — Model Response

Replacing printed textbooks with tablets is, on balance, a positive change for schools. A single tablet can hold every subject's material, which spares students from carrying a backpack heavy enough to strain their shoulders. Digital texts can also be updated instantly, so students are not stuck learning from a science book printed a decade ago. Features like adjustable font size and read-aloud tools make the material easier to use for students who struggle with small print or reading. There are real concerns, of course, such as screen fatigue and the cost of replacing broken devices. Still, with reasonable rules about screen time, the advantages outweigh these drawbacks. For a generation that already lives online, learning from a tablet feels natural rather than strange. That is why I see the shift to digital materials as a sensible step forward.

Rubric note (EQAO-aligned): Topic Development — clear opinion sustained with specific, relevant reasons (weight, updates, accessibility) and a brief counterpoint that is addressed. Organization — controlling idea, logical progression, concluding sentence. Conventions — varied sentence structure, accurate grammar and spelling. Upper-level performance. A mid-level response would offer an opinion with thinner or repetitive support; a lower-level response would drift off topic or rely on vague claims.

37. Long Open-Response — Model Response

The empty downtown lot should become a public park rather than a parking garage. While a garage would address the real problem of limited parking, a park offers benefits that reach far more people and last far longer.

A park would give the downtown something it currently lacks: a free, open space where anyone can gather. Families could bring young children to play, workers could eat lunch outdoors, and the town could host markets or summer concerts. A parking garage, by contrast, serves only those who arrive by car, and it sits empty and uninviting outside business hours.

A green space also improves the area around it. Trees and grass cool the surrounding streets, absorb rainwater that would otherwise flood storm drains, and make nearby shops more pleasant to visit. Studies of other towns have found that businesses near a well-used park often see more foot traffic, which suggests a park could help the downtown economy more than a garage would.

Supporters of the garage will point out that drivers struggle to find parking, and that is a fair concern. However, the town could address parking through smaller measures, such as better signage to existing lots or shuttle service from the edge of downtown, without giving up a rare chance to create lasting public space.

For these reasons, I believe the lot should become a park. It would serve the whole community, improve the environment, and support local businesses — value that a parking garage simply cannot match.

Rubric note (EQAO-aligned): Topic Development — clear position stated in the introduction and held throughout, developed with distinct reasons (public access, environmental benefit, economic effect) and a counterargument that is acknowledged and answered. Organization — strong introduction, separate body paragraphs each with one main idea, and a conclusion that reinforces the position without merely repeating it. Conventions — sentence variety, accurate punctuation, appropriate vocabulary. Upper-level model. A mid-level response would take a position but develop fewer reasons with looser organization; a lower-level response would list unsupported opinions or stray from the prompt.