

# PRACTICE EXAM 25: OSSLT SIMULATION

## (37 QUESTIONS)

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### Session A

#### Reading Selection: Paired Passages (Read Together)

Read both short texts below, then answer questions 1–7.

##### Passage 1: The Case for YearRound School

The long summer break is a relic of a farming past that no longer fits our lives. Studies show that many students lose months of learning over the summer — a "summer slide" that teachers must spend weeks reversing each fall. A yearround calendar, with shorter breaks spread through the year, would keep knowledge fresh and reduce that loss. It would also help working families, who often struggle to arrange care and activities during the long break. Shorter, more frequent breaks are easier to manage and give students rest without letting their skills fade.

##### Passage 2: In Defence of the Summer Break

The long summer is not wasted time; it is when much of childhood's real learning happens. Away from desks, children attend camps, take jobs, travel, read for pleasure, and simply rest from the pressures of the school year. This unstructured time builds independence, creativity, and wellbeing in ways no classroom can. The "summer slide" is real but modest, and it falls hardest on students who lack summer resources — a problem better solved by funding summer programs than by shortening everyone's break. Rest is not the enemy of learning; it is part of it.

1. What is the main argument of Passage 1?
  - A. Summer camps teach children more than classrooms do
  - B. A yearround school calendar would reduce summer learning loss
  - C. The school year should be made longer overall

D. Working families enjoy the long summer break

2. What is the main argument of Passage 2?

A. The summer slide does not exist at all

B. Yearround school would help working families most

C. Schools should eliminate all summer breaks immediately

D. The long summer break supports valuable, unstructured learning

3. On which point do the two passages AGREE?

A. That the summer break should be shortened for everyone

B. That children learn nothing during the summer

C. That the "summer slide" is a real phenomenon

D. That yearround school would harm working families

4. How do the two passages DIFFER on the "summer slide"?

A. Passage 1 denies it exists, while Passage 2 proves it

B. Both passages claim the summer slide is imaginary

C. Both passages agree it is the most serious problem in schools

D. Passage 1 sees it as a key problem; Passage 2 sees it as modest

5. How does Passage 2 propose to address the summer slide?

A. By funding summer programs rather than shortening the break

B. By adopting a yearround calendar for all students

C. By extending the school day into the evening

D. By ending summer jobs and camps for students

6. Which statement best captures the disagreement between the two passages?

A. They disagree about whether students ever attend school

B. They disagree about whether teachers should be paid more

C. They disagree about whether shorter breaks would harm families

D. They disagree about whether the long summer break should be kept

7. A reader who valued both keeping the summer break AND reducing learning loss would most likely support

A. funding summer programs while keeping the long break

B. eliminating the summer break entirely

C. removing all breaks from the school calendar

D. making the summer break even longer than it is now

### **Reading Selection: Information Paragraph**

Read the following paragraph and answer questions 8–11.

The deepest part of the ocean, the Mariana Trench, is so far below the surface that if Mount Everest were dropped into it, the mountain's peak would still be more than two kilometres underwater. At these depths, the pressure is crushing — more than a thousand times the pressure at the surface — and no sunlight reaches the bottom. Yet life persists even here. Strange creatures, many of them found nowhere else on Earth, have adapted to the darkness and pressure. Scientists have explored this region less thoroughly than the surface of the Moon, a reminder that some of the planet's greatest mysteries lie not above us, but below.

8. What does the paragraph use Mount Everest to illustrate?

- A. The extreme depth of the Mariana Trench
- B. The height of the world's tallest mountain
- C. The pressure at the ocean's surface
- D. The amount of sunlight reaching the deep ocean

9. According to the paragraph, what is the pressure like at the bottom of the trench?

- A. About the same as at the surface
- B. Slightly higher than at the surface
- C. More than a thousand times the surface pressure
- D. Too weak to affect living creatures

10. What does the paragraph say about life in the trench?

- A. No living thing can survive at such depths
- B. Only plants can grow at the bottom
- C. Strange, specially adapted creatures live there
- D. The same animals found at the surface live there

11. The comparison to "the surface of the Moon" mainly emphasizes that

- A. the deep ocean remains largely unexplored
- B. the Moon is closer to Earth than the trench
- C. scientists prefer studying space to the ocean
- D. the trench and the Moon look exactly alike

## Reading Selection: News Report

Read the following news report and answer questions 12–17.

### Two Schools' Joint Survey Reshapes Bus Routes

Students from Hillcrest and Valleyview Secondary Schools combined the results of separate transportation surveys to convince the regional transit authority to redesign two bus routes, cutting travel times for hundreds of students. Working independently at first, each school had surveyed its own students about commuting difficulties.

"We each had useful data, but on its own it wasn't enough," said Hillcrest student Amara Osei. "Together, the two surveys showed a pattern the transit authority couldn't ignore." The combined results revealed that students from both schools faced long waits and indirect routes through the same congested area.

The transit authority reviewed the joint findings and agreed to adjust two routes and add an earlier morning service. Officials said the students' combined data made a far stronger case than either survey would have alone.

The two schools now plan to keep sharing transportation data each year.

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

- A. One school surveyed its students about bus routes
- B. Two schools combined surveys to get bus routes redesigned
- C. The transit authority added an earlier morning service
- D. Students at Hillcrest faced long waits for the bus

13. Why was combining the two surveys important?

- A. Each school had surveyed the wrong group of students
- B. The transit authority required two separate surveys
- C. One school's survey contained serious errors
- D. Together they revealed a pattern neither showed alone

14. What did the combined results reveal?

- A. That only one school faced transportation problems
- B. That students from both schools faced waits in the same congested area
- C. That the buses were too small for the number of students
- D. That most students preferred to walk to school

15. Amara Osei's quotation mainly explains that

- A. the survey took longer than expected to complete
- B. the transit authority was unwilling to help
- C. the combined data was stronger than either survey alone
- D. the two schools disagreed about the results

16. According to officials, why did the students' case succeed?

- A. The students protested outside the transit office
- B. A local politician pressured the transit authority
- C. The combined data made a far stronger case
- D. The transit authority had extra money to spend

17. What do the two schools plan to do next?

- A. Keep sharing transportation data each year
- B. Stop surveying students about transportation
- C. Merge into a single larger school
- D. Buy their own buses for students

### **Reading Selection: Dialogue**

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

Tariq: I read two reviews of the new phone. One says the battery is great, the other says it's terrible. One of them must be wrong.

Lena: Or they're both right. Did you check what each reviewer was doing with it?

Tariq: ...The first one used it for calls and texting. The second was gaming for hours.

Lena: There it is. Heavy gaming drains any battery fast. Light use barely touches it. The reviews don't actually contradict each other — they're testing different things.

Tariq: So I can't just pick the review I agree with.

Lena: Right. You read them together. The real takeaway is: great battery for normal use, weak for heavy gaming. Neither review alone tells you that. Both of them together do.

Tariq: Two halfpictures making one whole one.

Lena: Exactly. One source rarely gives you the full story. Put them side by side and the gaps fill in.

18. What confuses Tariq about the two reviews?

- A. Both reviews praised the phone's battery equally
- B. Neither review mentioned the phone's battery
- C. The reviews were written by the same person
- D. One calls the battery great and the other terrible

19. What does Lena suggest explains the difference between the reviews?

- A. One reviewer was paid to praise the phone
- B. The reviewers tested an entirely different phone
- C. One review was much older than the other
- D. The reviewers used the phone for different tasks

20. According to Lena, what is the "real takeaway" from reading both reviews?

- A. The phone's battery is reliable for every kind of use
- B. The battery is good for normal use but weak for heavy gaming
- C. Both reviews are unreliable and should be ignored
- D. The phone should not be purchased at all

21. When Tariq says "Two halfpictures making one whole one," he means that

- A. combining both sources gives the complete picture
- B. each review is only half finished

- C. the reviews are both completely wrong
- D. he should read only half of each review

22. What is Lena's main point by the end of the conversation?

- A. Online reviews should never be trusted
- B. The newer review is always the correct one
- C. Reading sources together fills in the gaps a single source leaves
- D. Gaming phones are better than ordinary phones

### **Session B**

Writing — Conventions and Sentence Skills (Connecting and Relating Ideas)

Answer questions 23–35.

23. Which sentence correctly uses the correlative conjunction "not only... but also"?

- A. The trip was not only educational but it was fun also too
- B. Not only the trip was educational, also it was fun
- C. The trip was not only educational but also enjoyable
- D. The trip was educational not only, but also it was fun

24. Which transition best shows a contrast between two ideas? "The first plan was cheaper. \_\_\_\_\_, the second plan was far more reliable."

- A. Similarly
- B. For example
- C. In addition

D. However

25. Which sentence uses the correlative conjunction "neither... nor" correctly?

- A. Neither the manager or the staff were informed of the change
- B. Neither the manager nor the staff was informed and also told
- C. The manager neither nor the staff were informed of the change
- D. Neither the manager nor the staff was informed of the change

26. Which transition best signals that two ideas are alike? "The first study found a small effect. \_\_\_\_\_, the second study reported similar results."

- A. Likewise
- B. However
- C. In contrast
- D. Nevertheless

27. Which sentence joins the two related ideas most clearly?

- A. The bridge is old, the bridge is also unsafe for heavy trucks
- B. The bridge is old, and unsafe, for the heavy trucks it carries
- C. The bridge is both old and unsafe for the heavy trucks it carries
- D. The bridge old and unsafe for the trucks that are heavy on it

28. Which transition best introduces a contrasting second point? "Supporters praise the plan's low cost. \_\_\_\_\_, critics question whether it will work."

- A. Furthermore
- B. On the other hand

- C. As a result
- D. For instance

29. Which sentence uses "both... and" correctly?

- A. The recipe calls both for flour and also sugar in it
- B. The recipe calls for both flour and sugar
- C. Both the recipe calls for flour and sugar in it
- D. The recipe calls for both flour also sugar together

30. Which sentence relates the two ideas with the clearest connection?

- A. Because the first method failed, the team tried a second approach
- B. The first method failed, the team a second approach was tried
- C. The first method failed and so the second the team tried it
- D. Failing, the first method, a second approach the team tried

31. Which transition best shows that the second idea adds to the first? "The new policy saves money. \_\_\_\_\_, it reduces paperwork for staff."

- A. However
- B. In addition
- C. On the contrary
- D. Instead

32. Which sentence combines the two findings using a comparison correctly?

- A. The city report and the school study, both, they agreed on the cause
- B. The city report agreed with the cause, the school study did also too

- C. Both reports, the city and the school, they agreed on the same cause
- D. Both the city report and the school study identified the same cause

33. Which transition best signals a conclusion drawn from two ideas? "The data was consistent, and the method was sound. \_\_\_\_\_, the results can be trusted."

- A. However
- B. Nevertheless
- C. Therefore
- D. In contrast

34. Which sentence uses correlative conjunctions in parallel form?

- A. She not only wrote the report but also presented it to the board
- B. She not only wrote the report but she presented it also
- C. Not only she wrote the report, but also presenting it
- D. She wrote not only the report but also she did present it

35. Which sentence connects the contrasting ideas most clearly?

- A. The morning was warm, the afternoon, it turned cold suddenly
- B. Although the morning was warm, the afternoon turned cold
- C. The morning was warm although the afternoon it turned cold then
- D. The morning warm, the afternoon cold, it turned out that way

### **OpenResponse Writing Tasks**

36. Short Writing Task



**Headline: "School Hosts Regional Science Fair for the First Time"**

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 it is better to be a specialist who knows one subject deeply. Others believe it is better to be a generalist who knows a little about many subjects.

In your opinion, is it better to be a specialist or a generalist? 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. B — Passage 1 argues that "a yearround calendar... would keep knowledge fresh and reduce that loss." Reducing summer learning loss is its central claim. The other options misstate or reverse it.

2. D — Passage 2 argues the long summer is "when much of childhood's real learning happens," supporting valuable unstructured time. It defends the break. The other options misstate it.
3. C — Both passages treat the "summer slide" as real — Passage 1 calls it a loss to reverse, and Passage 2 calls it "real but modest." They agree it exists. The other options describe disagreements or false claims.
4. D — Passage 1 sees the summer slide as a key problem to fix, while Passage 2 calls it "real but modest." They differ in how serious they judge it. The other options misstate each view.
5. A — Passage 2 proposes "funding summer programs than by shortening everyone's break." Targeted funding, not a shorter break, is its solution. The other options contradict it.
6. D — The core disagreement is whether the long summer break should be kept: Passage 1 would shorten it, Passage 2 would preserve it. That is the dividing question. The other options name issues neither disputes.
7. A — Someone valuing both the break and reduced loss would favour "funding summer programs while keeping the long break" — Passage 2's compromise. It serves both goals. The other options sacrifice one or the other.
8. A — Mount Everest illustrates "the extreme depth of the Mariana Trench" — its peak would still be kilometres underwater. The image conveys depth. The other options misread its purpose.
9. C — The pressure is "more than a thousand times the pressure at the surface." That is the stated figure. The other options understate it.
10. C — "Strange creatures, many of them found nowhere else on Earth, have adapted" — specially adapted life exists there. The other options contradict the text.
11. A — Comparing the trench to "the surface of the Moon" emphasizes that the deep ocean "has been explored less thoroughly" — it remains largely unexplored. The comparison stresses mystery. The other options misread it.

12. B — The report centres on two schools combining surveys "to convince the regional transit authority to redesign two bus routes." That joint effort is the main idea. The other options are details.

13. D — Combining mattered because together the surveys "showed a pattern the transit authority couldn't ignore" that neither showed alone. Synthesis revealed the pattern. The other options misstate it.

14. B — The combined results revealed "students from both schools faced long waits and indirect routes through the same congested area." Both schools shared the problem. The other options misstate the finding.

15. C — Osei's quotation — "Together, the two surveys showed a pattern" — explains that the combined data was stronger than either alone. Synthesis made the case. The other options misread it.

16. C — Officials said "the students' combined data made a far stronger case than either survey would have alone." The merged evidence won. The other options are not the stated reason.

17. A — The schools "now plan to keep sharing transportation data each year." That is the next step. The other options contradict the report.

18. D — Tariq is confused because "one says the battery is great, the other says it's terrible." The conflicting verdicts puzzle him. The other options misstate the situation.

19. D — Lena explains the reviewers "us[ed] it for different things" — one for calls, one for hours of gaming. Different uses explain the gap. The other options are not her explanation.

20. B — The "real takeaway" is "great battery for normal use, weak for heavy gaming." Both reviews together yield this. The other options misstate the conclusion.

21. A — "Two halfpictures making one whole one" means combining both sources gives the complete picture. Each alone is partial. The other options misread the phrase.

22. C — Lena's main point — "Put them side by side and the gaps fill in" — is that reading sources together fills the gaps a single source leaves. Synthesis completes the picture. The other options misstate it.
23. C — "The trip was not only educational but also enjoyable" places "not only" and "but also" before parallel adjectives. The other options break the parallel structure or add redundant words. Correlatives must join matching elements.
24. D — "However" signals the contrast between a cheaper plan and a more reliable one. The other transitions show similarity or addition, which do not fit. Contrast calls for a contrasting connector.
25. D — "Neither the manager nor the staff was informed" pairs "neither" with "nor" and agrees with the nearer singular "staff." The other options misuse "or," add redundancy, or misplace the words. Correlatives must be paired correctly.
26. A — "Likewise" signals that the second study's results are alike to the first. The other transitions show contrast, which does not fit. Similarity calls for a similarity connector.
27. C — "The bridge is both old and unsafe for the heavy trucks it carries" joins the two qualities with "both... and." The other options are comma splices or broken structures. Correlatives link the related ideas cleanly.
28. B — "On the other hand" introduces the critics' contrasting point against the supporters'. The other transitions show addition, cause, or example. A contrasting second point calls for a contrast connector.
29. B — "The recipe calls for both flour and sugar" places "both... and" before the two parallel nouns. The other options misplace the words or add redundancy. Correlatives join matching elements.
30. A — "Because the first method failed, the team tried a second approach" relates cause and response clearly. The other options are scrambled or spliced. "Because" makes the connection explicit.
31. B — "In addition" signals that the second benefit adds to the first. The other transitions show contrast. Addition calls for an additive connector.

32. D — "Both the city report and the school study identified the same cause" uses "both... and" with two parallel subjects and one clear verb. The other options add redundant pronouns or break the structure. Correlatives join the subjects cleanly.

33. C — "Therefore" signals the conclusion drawn from the consistent data and sound method. The other transitions show contrast. A conclusion calls for a result connector.

34. A — "She not only wrote the report but also presented it" places the correlatives before parallel verbs. The other options break the parallel form. "Not only... but also" must join matching elements.

35. B — "Although the morning was warm, the afternoon turned cold" subordinates one clause to show the contrast clearly. The other options are comma splices or scrambled. "Although" connects the contrasting ideas cleanly.

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

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

Maplewood Secondary School hosted the Regional Science Fair for the first time on Saturday, welcoming dozens of student scientists from schools across the area to its transformed cafeteria. Rows of trifold display boards filled the hall as students presented projects ranging from waterquality studies to robotics, explaining their findings to a steady stream of teachers, parents, and judges.

The school took on hosting duties to give its own students a chance to take part close to home and to build ties with neighbouring schools. "Hosting meant a lot of work, but seeing this many curious kids in one room made it worth it," said event coordinator and teacher Janet Wu. Organizers say the fair drew a record number of entries and that the school hopes to host again next year.

Scoring notes (rubricaligned): A strong response leads with the 5 Ws (who: Maplewood school/student scientists; what: hosted the regional science fair; when: Saturday; where: school cafeteria; why: firsttime host bringing schools together), 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)

It is better to be a specialist who knows one subject deeply than a generalist who knows a little about many things. While broad knowledge has its uses, deep expertise offers greater value, more opportunities, and the ability to solve the hardest problems in a field.

The strongest reason is that specialists can solve problems no one else can. The most difficult challenges in any field — a rare illness, a complex bridge design, a tricky legal case — require deep, focused knowledge that a generalist simply does not have. For example, when someone faces a serious heart condition, they want a cardiologist who has spent years mastering the heart, not a doctor who knows a little about everything. That depth of skill is what truly hard problems demand.

A second reason is that specialists are highly valued and harder to replace. Because deep expertise takes years to develop, those who have it are in demand and can command respect and opportunity. A person who is the best in their region at a particular skill will rarely struggle to find work, while someone with only shallow knowledge of many areas may find that others can do each task as well as they can. Expertise creates lasting value.

Some argue that generalists are more flexible and can adapt to a changing world, connecting ideas across many fields. This is a fair point, and broad knowledge does help people see the big picture and work across disciplines. However, even generalists are most useful when they have at least one area of real depth to anchor their work. The ideal is to specialize deeply in one area while staying curious about others — but if a choice must be made, depth wins.

For these reasons, it is better to be a specialist than a generalist. The ability to solve hard problems and the lasting value of deep expertise outweigh the flexibility of broad knowledge, and true mastery of one subject opens doors that surface familiarity never could.

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 "specialist" side for illustration; an equally welldeveloped response arguing for the generalist would score just as highly.)