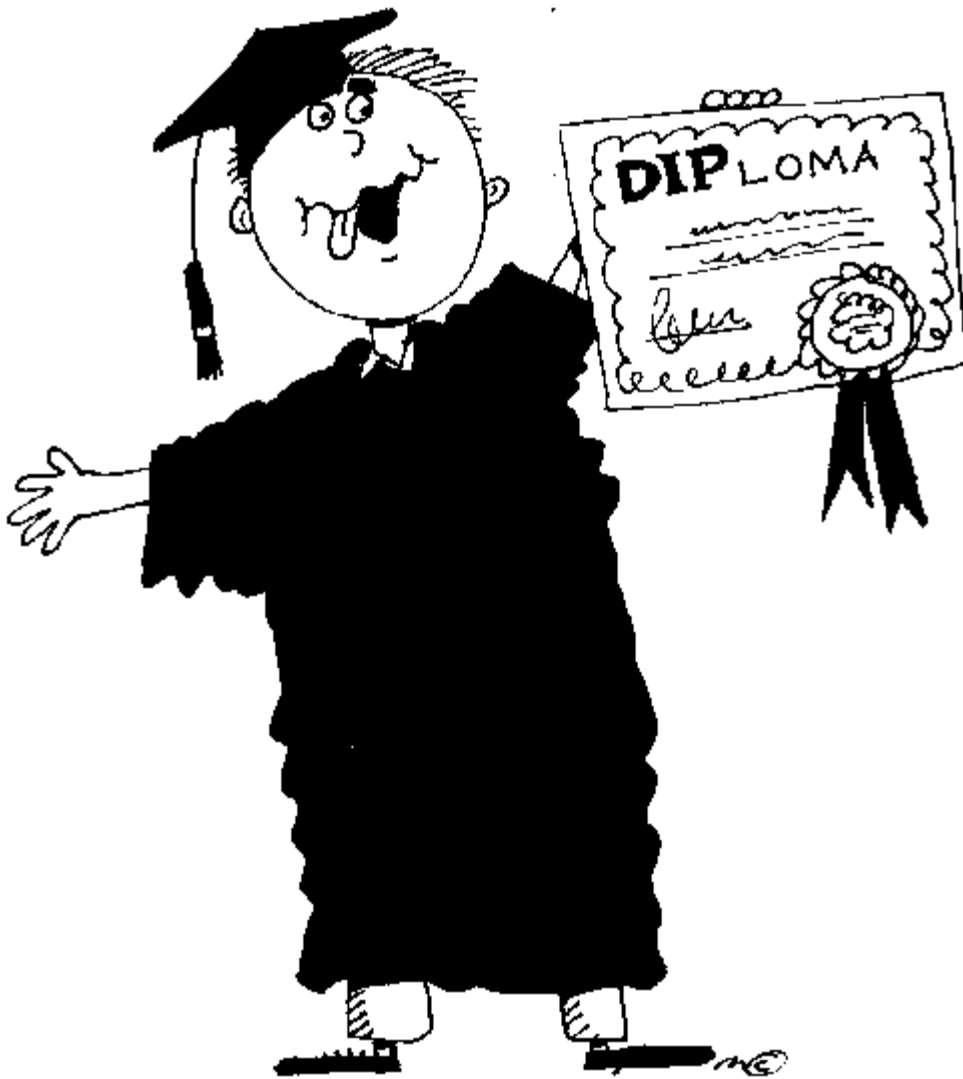


A Stepping Stone towards Your Graduation Diploma – the OSSLT



(school.discovery.com/clipart/clip/diploma.html)

Hints on How to Be Successful

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OSSLT REVIEW FOR TEST DAY - LITERACY, NOT IQ TEST

Introductory comments to teacher:

- below are some suggestions teachers can use to help students review for the OSSLT - each teacher knows what's best for his/her students and is free to use these suggestions as s/he feels fit
- the enclosed review activities are based on proven pedagogical research to improve student performance in reading and writing
- the activities have been created with the reluctant reader/writer in mind, therefore they centre on easily remembered processes
- invite students to complete all the steps and to resist the urge to skip steps
- to benefit the dependent learner and the English language learner by focusing the eye on one piece of information at a time, it is suggested that if information is presented on the overhead only one nugget at a time be revealed

How to Use this Package:

- use page 1 to page 14 for a slowly paced in-depth review
- use pages 15 to 17 for a day-of blitz review

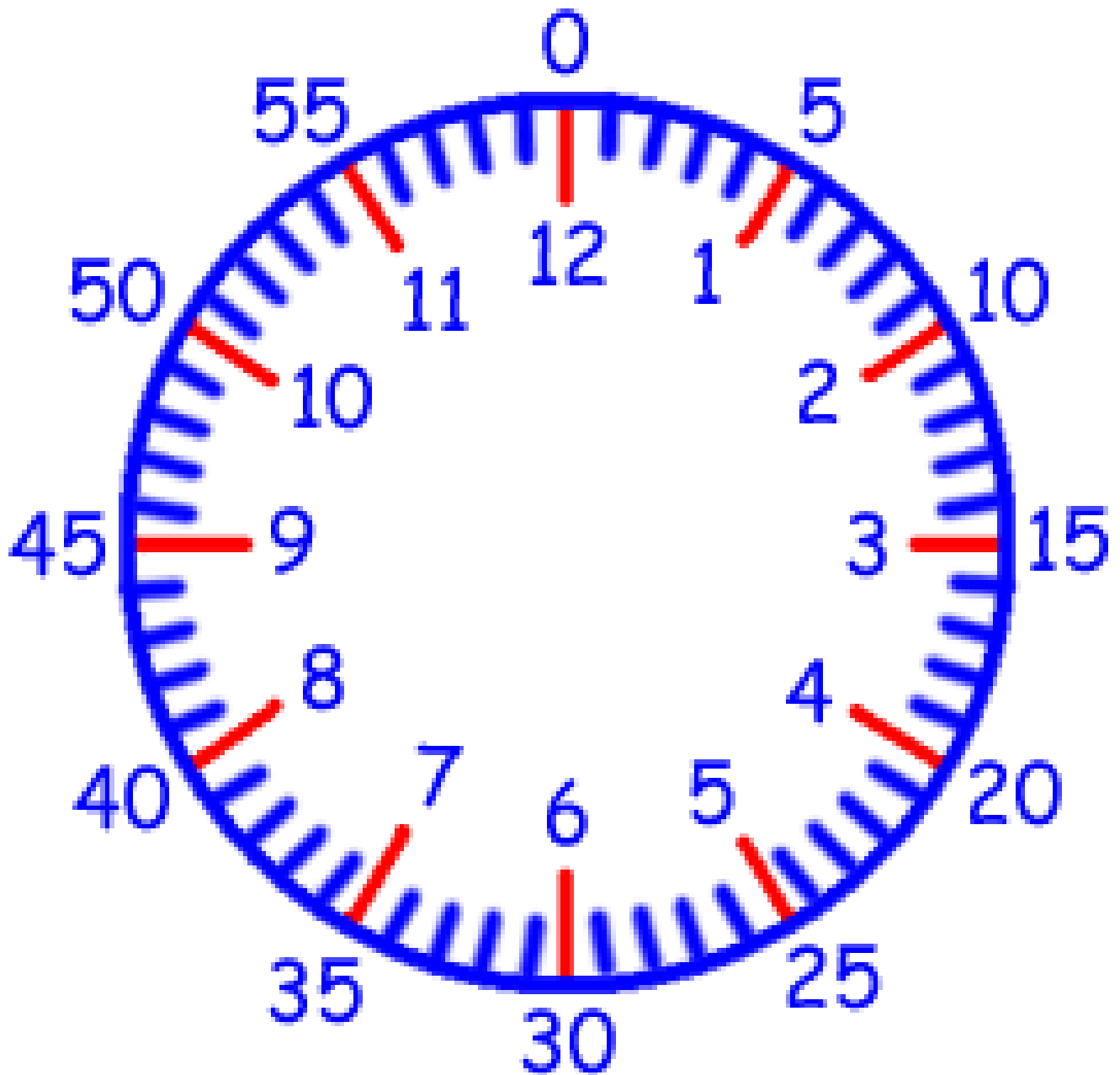
Begin by addressing time:

-show the students how to budget their time (see attached clock-face) - **THEY HAVE 75 MINUTES PER BOOKLET - five activities:**

1. one long writing question
2. three reading selections with multiple choice and/or six-line written answers
3. one page of grammar and syntax questions in a booklet

This means **about** 15 minutes per activity (perhaps a bit less on the shorter readings and a bit more on the long written response) - draw the full face of one clock and the quarter face of another on the board or on the overhead to show the division (or use the illustration below). Hold up a sample booklet (**not on the test day**) and show each selection as you refer to the time aspect.

WHAT DOES ONE HOUR AND FIFTEEN MINUTES LOOK LIKE



http://www.arcytech.org/java/clock/about_clocks.html

1. Long Writing Prompts

- complete these first
- there is one in each of the two booklets
- one booklet will require you to write a news report
- the other booklet will require you to write a series of paragraphs expressing an opinion (a type of essay)
- you can write anywhere on the test booklets, BUT the work you leave in the "Rough Notes" will **not** be marked

a. How to Tackle the News Report

- highlight important words in the task bar

REMEMBER – look at both the headline AND the photograph

You are writing for newspaper readers, not for tabloid readers, so no slang, cursing or text messaging

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

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

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

You won't know the people in the picture, but you must give each (if there is a small group, probably not for a team) a first and a last name

You are writing for a newspaper, NOT for a TV news show

This is important – you do NOT have to fill in all the lines – just answer the question

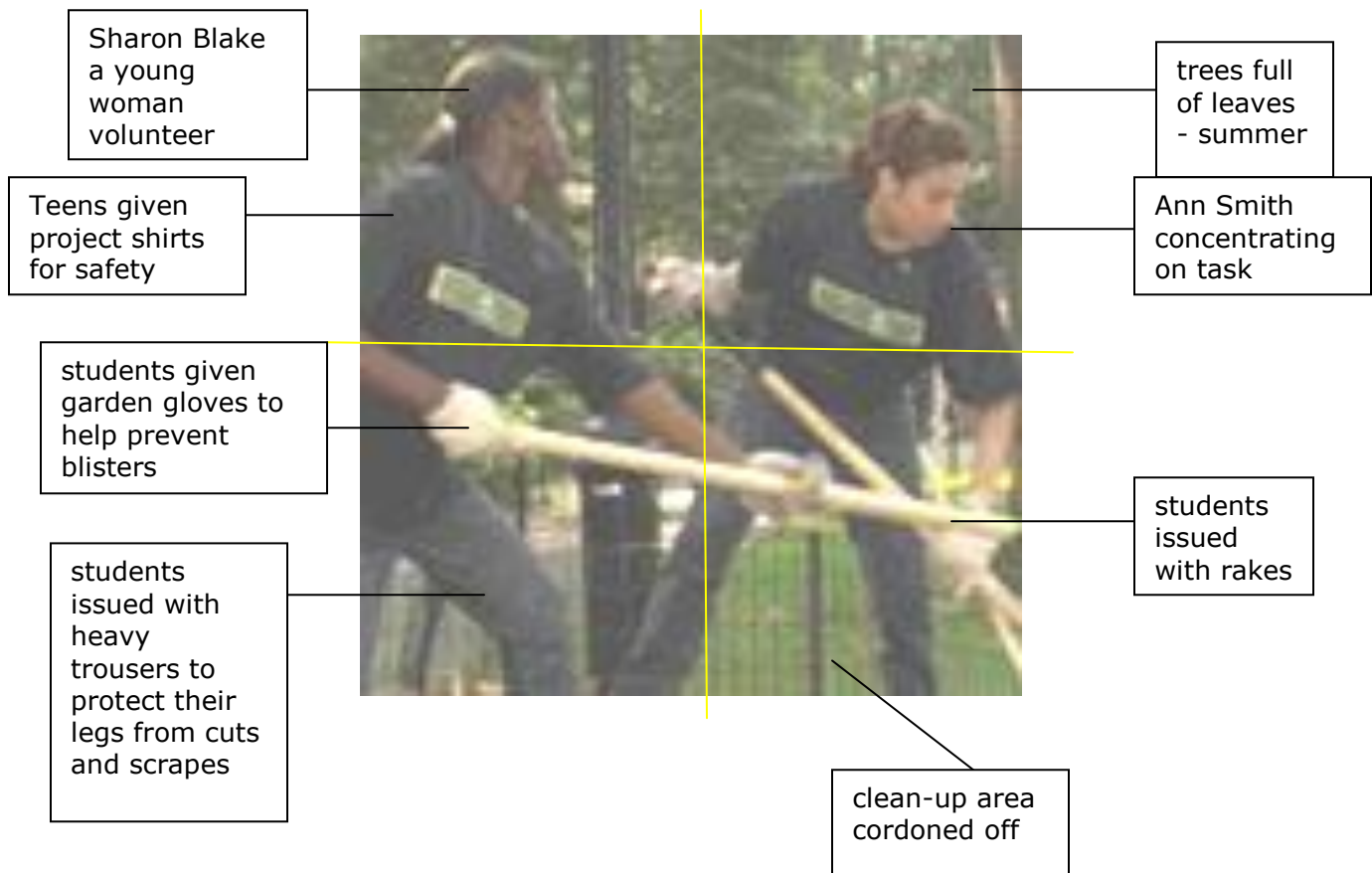
The Headline

- draw an oval around the headline
- draw four spokes from the oval
- at the end of each spoke jot down what you think you're going to read about in the article - there is no wrong answer



The Photograph

- draw a plus sign on the photograph dividing it into four equal parts
- label everything you notice in each rectangle
- your labels will provide you with content for your news report



Using the Predictions and Labels

-use your headline predictions and your photograph labels to create your 5W list

- when --- Yesterday,
- who --- Sharon Blake and Ann Smith
- what --- participated in the clean-up of their neighbourhood park
- where --- Mississauga or Brampton
- why --- want to make the park safe for all kids to enjoy
- how --- equipment provided by the Department of Parks and Recreation

-complete the template below

-transfer your newspaper report to the lined page

When, ...who....

Where What....

Why Quotation

Suggested Newspaper Report:

Clean up of Park by Local Students

Yesterday, when Sharon Blake and Ann Smith got up, they put on a special uniform of dark t-shirt and trousers.

Then the two girls headed to their local park in Brampton to join a group of other teens who had volunteered to clean the park of litter, broken glass and any other pollution.

The girls chose to spend a sunny day using all their energy raking and collecting litter so that local children could have a safe place to play. Sharon Blake said, "It was hard work dragging the rake around, but I felt good to be doing something for all the little kids in the neighbourhood."

The only place you can have "I" is in a quotation.

b. How to Tackle the Series of Paragraphs Expressing an Opinion

-highlight important words in the task bar

3 (THREE) means: 1 = introduction; 2 = supporting body paragraph; 3 = conclusion (reworded introduction)

Task: Write a series of paragraphs (a minimum of three) expressing an opinion on the topic below. Develop your main idea with supporting details (proof, facts, examples, etc.)

Purpose and audience: an adult who is interested in your opinion

Length: The lined space (three lined pages) provided for your written work indicates the approximate length of the writing expected.

No cursing, swearing, slang, or text messaging

You can use "I," or "you," or any of their forms

Choose an idea you can support - you will be shown an example in a few minutes

This is important - you do NOT have to fill in all the lines - just answer the question

c. How to Use the "Rough Notes" section of the page

-use the "ROUGH NOTES" section of the page (this is what it looks like in a sample test booklet)

-agree or disagree with the question

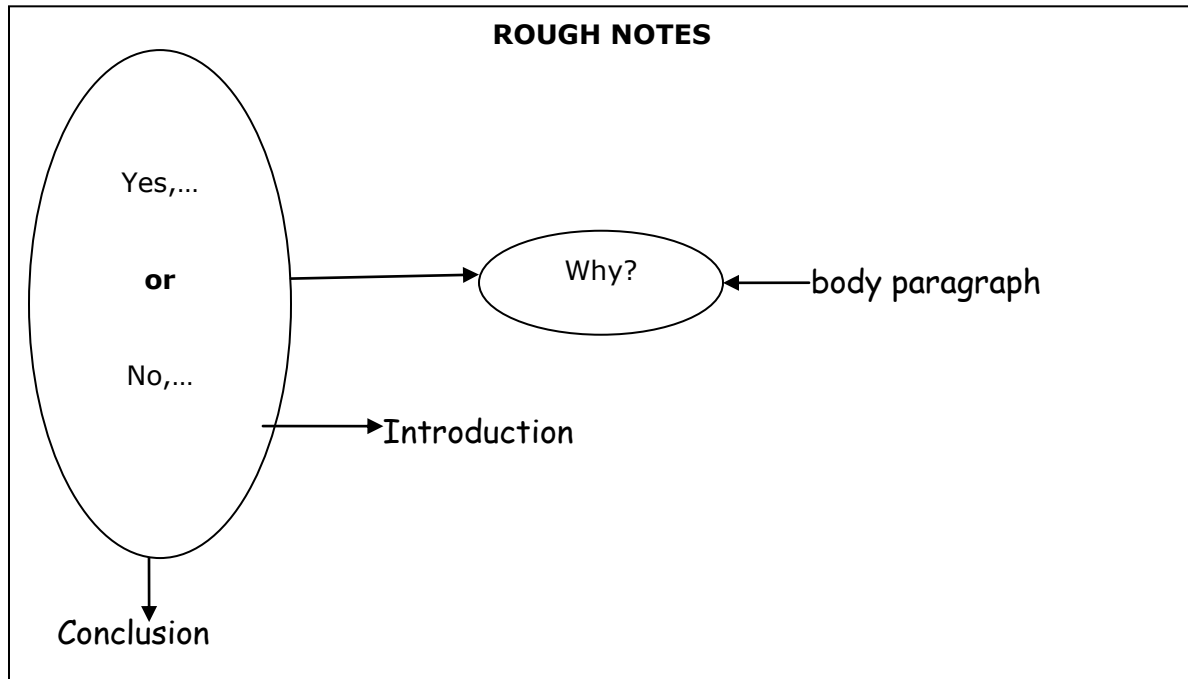
-draw a large oval at the side of the page

-in the oval write, "Yes, I agree with..." or "No, I don't agree with ..." (this will be the topic of the essay/series of paragraphs) - choose a side as it is easier to argue in limited time

-draw one (or more) smaller oval(s) in the space adjacent to the large oval

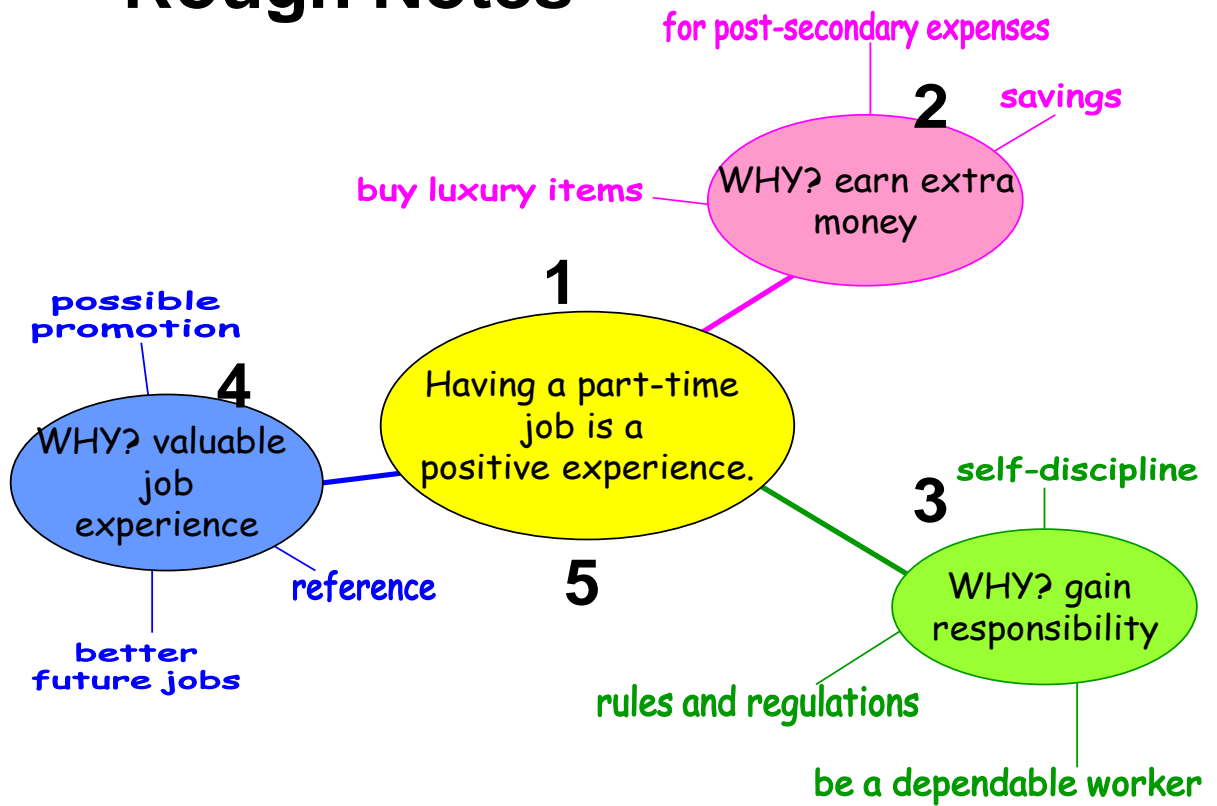
-ask yourself one (or more) "Why?" questions about the position you have adopted in the central oval

- in point form answer the "Why?" question(s) with facts and examples
- the central oval becomes the introductory paragraph to the essay
- the central oval, slightly reworded, becomes the conclusion of the essay
- each of the "Why?" ovals becomes a supporting paragraph of the essay



-you can always write more than three paragraphs if you like;
however, do not skip the web-step which you can see below

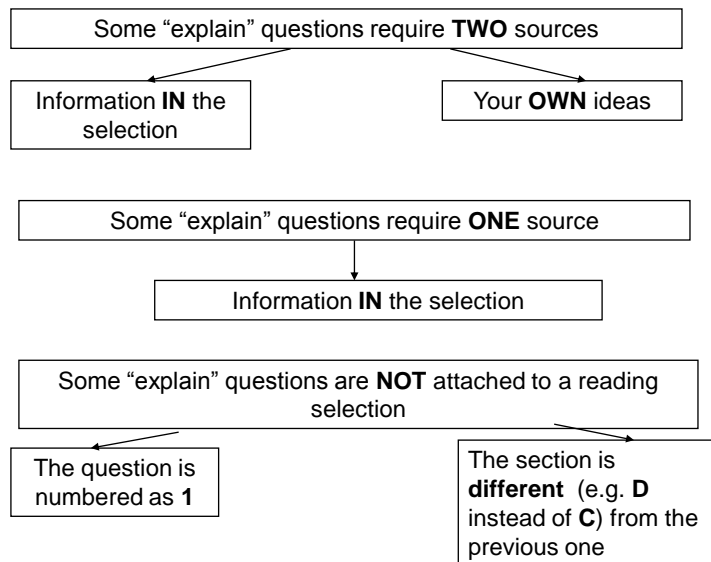
Rough Notes



(Developed in association with St. Martin's teachers)

2. Short Writing Tasks: How to Tackle the Questions Calling for Six-line Answers

-what you should notice about the “explain” questions



How to Answer the “explain” Question

-turn the question into a statement, so:

What is your favourite time of the year? Explain why.

becomes

“My favourite time of the year is spring (summer, autumn, winter - you must pick **ONE**) for many reasons.” = **TOPIC SENTENCE**

-begin your next sentence with “One reason is” and give a reason (One reason is because I can play my favourite sport street hockey again.)

-begin the next sentence with “Another reason is” and give a reason (Another reason is the weather is warmer and I don’t have to wear clothes that make me look like the Michelin tire man.)

-begin your last sentence with "Clearly" and reword your topic sentence (Clearly spring is my favourite season.)

-for a question which asks you to explain how two "things" are similar:

-turn the question into a statement, so:

"Explain how a train can be similar to a bear. Use information from this selection and your own ideas to support your answer."

becomes

"A train can be similar to a bear for a number of reasons." =
TOPIC SENTENCE

-this paragraph question has an extra requirement. The word "similar" means you need to show how things are the same. To do this:

-draw two columns

-head one with the one object or idea that needs similarities to be found and the other with the second object or idea that needs similarities to be found

-in the one column list what is easily noticeable about the object or idea

-in the corresponding space in the column of the other object or idea list any matches you can find (in the article) or can think of (if the question asks you to)

-the two columns could look like this:

Train - the reading selection	Bear - my knowledge
big	big
strong	strong
rides over rough terrain	can travel over ice because of its non-retractable claws

-the resulting paragraph could look like this:

A train can be similar to a bear for a number of reasons. First, they are both big: the one as a form of transport, the other as an animal. They are also known for their strength. Trains can haul heavy cargo, while a bear can swat a human like a fly. Besides these character traits, trains and bears can ramble just about anywhere. Clearly trains and bears can be seen as similar.

-remember to link your sentences with transition words like:

- first
- second
- also
- then
- finally
- clearly

3. Reading Selections

-you will be reading three types of reading selections:

- narrative (like a story, a biography, an autobiography)
- informational (like your textbooks, or your magazines)
- graphical (like bus schedules, web-pages, time-lines, charts, bar graphs, pie charts)

a. Reading a Narrative

- there's a beginning, a middle and an end
- there's a problem and a resolution
- there could be dialogue (quotation marks when characters speak)
- it could be written like a script, like this:

[Enter NATASHA and FATHER. They are playing a game like hide and go seek.]

NARRATOR:

These two, are a family. . . A small family, but a happy family all the same.

[FATHER exits, and returns with a tea set.]

FATHER:

Natasha, I have some news about our family.

NATASHA:

Yes father?

FATHER:

Well, it has been a long time since mother died and we both miss her very much, but there are some things around here that only a mother can do. That is why I have decided to remarry.

NATASHA:

You mean I'll have a new mommy?

FATHER:

Yes, *(thoughtful)* a new mommy.

Enter STEPMOTHER.

<http://www.storiestogrowby.com/script.html>

b. Reading Informational Text

- mainly facts
- could have a series of steps
- could be cause and effect
- could be a definition (even quite a long one)

c. Reading Graphical Text

- you probably will not have to read all of it
- read the questions first to help you scan for information
- you do not have to read from left to right, or top to bottom as you do for the narrative and the informational selections
- you can read just to answer the questions

4. Your First Steps When You Read

a. Reading Selections with a TITLE

- draw an oval around the title: write jot notes predicting what you'll be reading about (no wrong answers)
- this will prepare you for what you will be reading about
- draw a cross on any picture: label what you see
- think of the connections between the picture and the title
- your thinking will prepare you for what you will be reading about

b. Reading Selections without a TITLE

-read the first sentence

-read the last sentence

-nothing else yet

-highlight the words that are the same or very similar in both the first and the last sentence

-write those words as a sentence: that is probably what you are going to be reading about

c. How to Help Yourself Understand the Words You Read

-if you can make sense of a sentence, skip words you don't know ("even your teacher does this at times," says Cris Tovani)

-if you are asked for the meaning of a word of which you are unsure, try this:

- see if there are smaller words in it that you recognize
- see if the words around it help you to make sense of it
- see if there are prefixes [think of your science (trifoliate), math (triangle), and religion (trinity) lessons] that can help you understand

Day-of Blitz Review

-highlight the important words in the long writing task bars:
newspaper report and series of paragraphs expressing an
opinion

Newspaper report:

-be Catholic, draw a cross on the news report photograph and
label what you see

-use the labels to create your 5Ws and "how"

-begin with "Yesterday,"

Series of Paragraphs Expressing an Opinion:

-draw a large oval in the "Rough Notes"

-take up a position: either agree or disagree with the topic:
write that in the large oval

-draw a smaller oval to the side of the large one: in it write one
reason why you agree

-use the information in the large oval as your introduction

-use the information in the smaller oval as your body paragraph

-reword the information in the large oval as your concluding
paragraph

Six-line Questions - Explain

- for your first sentence rewrite the question as a statement
- for your second and third sentences write a reason
- begin your last sentence with "Clearly ..."

Six-line Questions - Summarize

- read the entire paragraph (or article)
- remember writers repeat what they want us to know
- highlight the words that are the same or very similar in both the first and the last sentence
- assemble those words into a sentence: that will be the main point the paragraph
- find one idea in the paragraph that supports the main idea and you will have answered the question

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Remember

-take deep breaths

-relax

-God bless