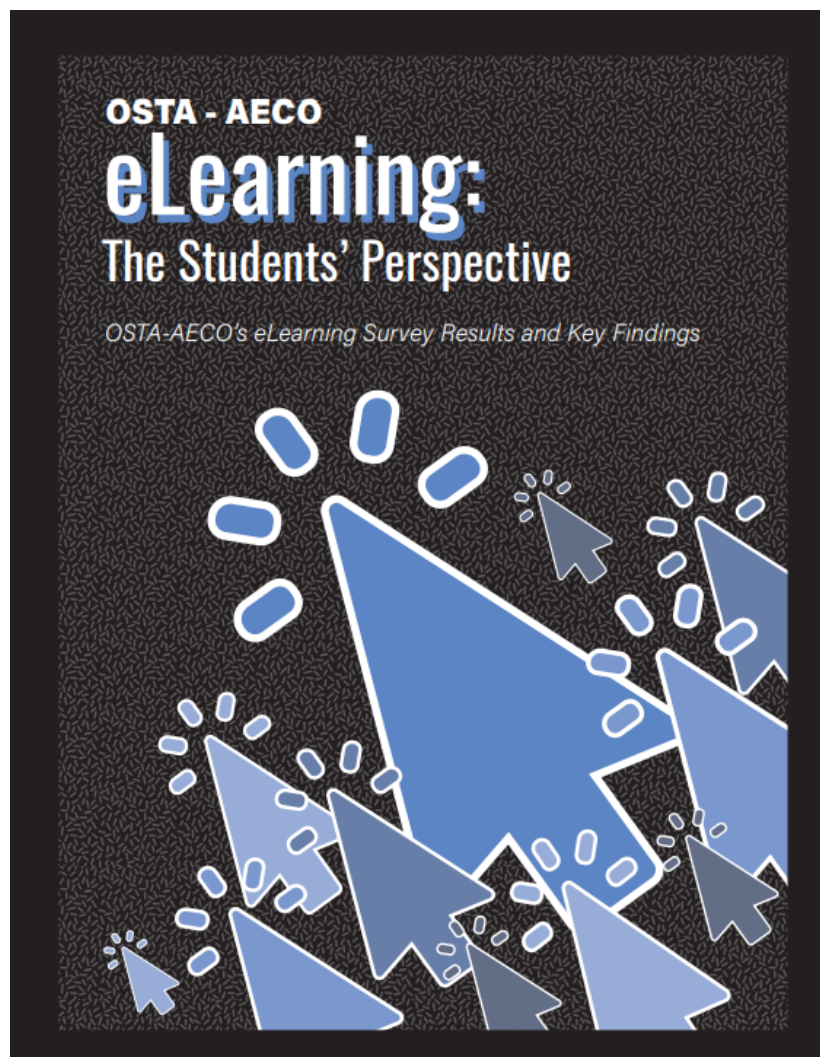


Literacy Skills

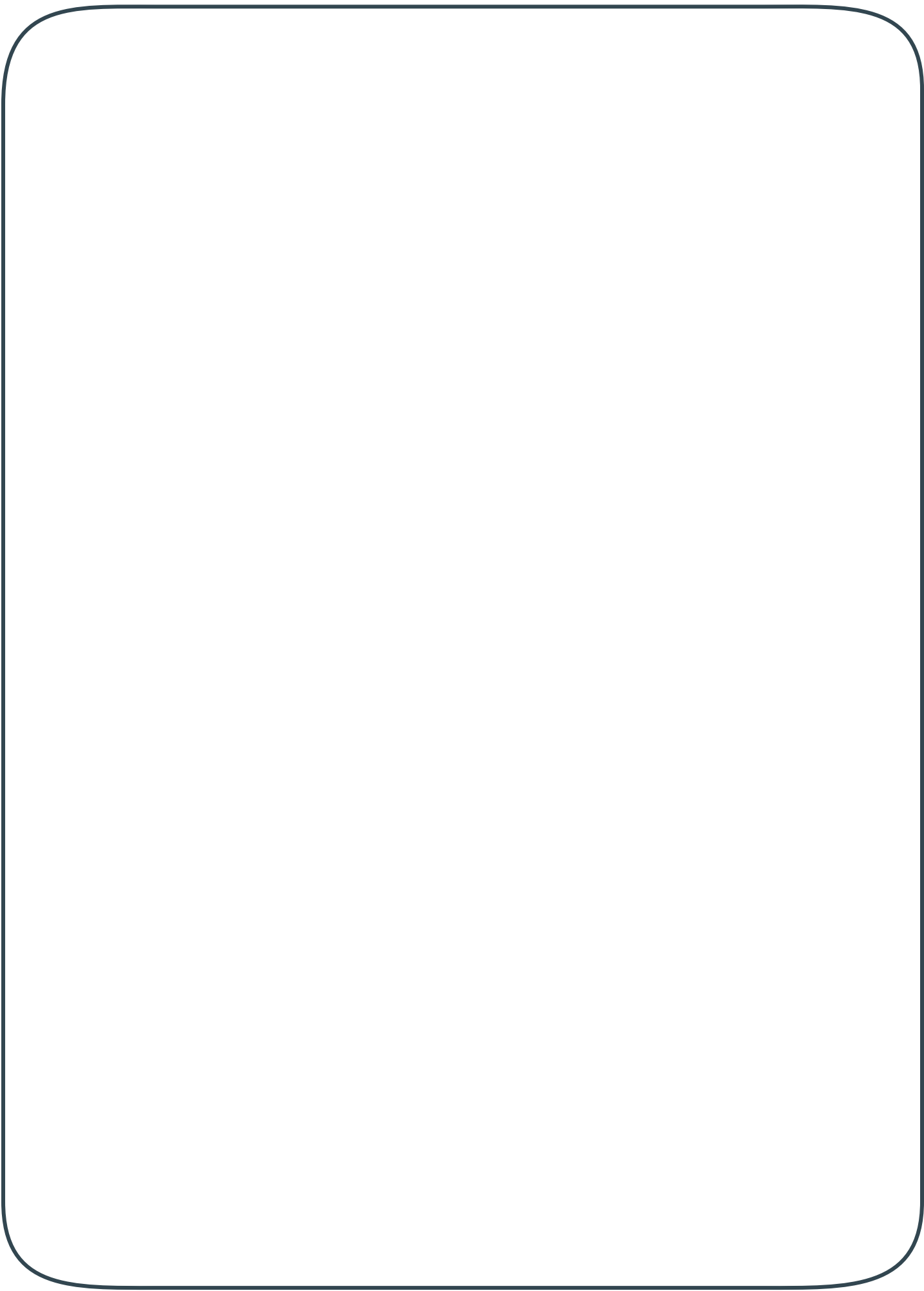
Preparation Materials

A Free Resource for Ontario Public Education Workers
First Edition



OSSTF Toronto

Toronto Teachers' Bargaining Unit



About this Edition

©2019 OSSTF Toronto.

These lessons have been written for OSSTF Toronto and are intended for non-commercial educational use by Ontario public school teachers. As such, the included materials and Black Line Masters may be freely copied for non-commercial, educational use only.

Written by Michael Barltrop

Michael is a teacher at Western Technical-Commercial School. He has acted as a department head of English, as well as a curriculum leader of School-Wide Literacy.

Edited by Katherine Pearce

The Literacy Skill descriptions, long-response tips, and some additional materials were originally published on WhatBinder.com and are ©M.Barltrop. They are used here with permission.

OSTA-AECO eLearning: The Students' Perspective Citation

OSTA-AECO Executive Council, eLearning: The Students' Perspective. (Toronto: Ontario Student Trustees' Association, 2019)

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION TO THIS PACKAGE. 1

INFOGRAPHICS 3

DETERMINING IMPORTANCE 3

Multiple Choice Response 3

READING TASKS 5

SUMMARIZING 5

Summarize this page of text 5

QUESTIONING..... 6

Literal Questions..... 6

Inferential Questions..... 7

Evaluative Question..... 8

WRITING TASKS 9

SYNTHESIZING..... 9

Writing a Newspaper Article..... 9

Multiple Choice Questions 12

CONNECTING 13

Express Yourself 13

Five-Paragraph Opinion Essay..... 14

COMPARING 17

Multiple Choice Response 17

ANSWER KEY..... 18

NOTES 19

Introduction to this Package

Students across Ontario are facing a new paradigm in education. With increased class sizes and decreased funding, the government has made a move towards mandatory eLearning as a requirement for graduation.

As of November 2019, the Ontario government has moved from their stance that students must take four eLearning credits to graduate from high school, mandating that students complete two eLearning credits.

While this change may seem positive, a reading of *OSTA-AECO eLearning: The Students' Perspective* highlights the negative impact that even those two mandatory eLearning credits can have on student success rates.

Due to lack of technology alone, “[a]n estimated ... 90 000 students of Ontario’s 2 million currently-enrolled student [may] not be able to obtain their Ontario Secondary School Diploma ... if eLearning is mandated for all students” (eLearning: The Students’ Perspective 5).

When making decisions that impact the education system, we understand that changes need to be made through the lens of **shared leadership** which is predicated on the belief that a top-down decision-making structure is harmful for all stakeholders.

Educators have made their feelings about eLearning known, pointing out the impact it will have on equity-seeking groups, but the most important voice is that of the students who will be subject to the shifting educational landscape.

It is for that reason that one should not ignore the fact that “94.8% [of the 6087 surveyed] respondents disapprove of the new eLearning mandate” (5).

Putting this Package into Practice

This package includes all necessary materials to prepare students for success on Literacy Tests across the province. There are a wide variety of assessments included that will allow students to focus their own thoughts and feelings, while building a strong foundational knowledge about the potential impacts eLearning may have on their education.

Assignments can be completed **individually**, or as part of a **multi-part assessment**. Additionally, students may be given the entire package as a **practice test**, preparing them for upcoming evaluations.

Fast Facts

The fast facts listed below are the key findings from the eLearning survey released to students in grades 8-12 by the Ontario Student Trustees Association / l'Association des élèves conseillers et conseillères de l'Ontario (OSTA-AECO). The survey was conducted from May 2019 to June 2019, and garnered 6087 responses.

1 in 4 respondents said they had a hard time contacting their eLearning teachers.



35.2%

of respondents who have taken eLearning reported experiencing moderate to severe challenges with utilizing the eLearning software.

Approximately

60%

of all survey respondents who took eLearning feel that their learning styles were not adequately accommodated.

Out of the 6087 survey respondents used in this sample, 5772 respondents -- or

94.8%

of all respondents -- disapprove of the new eLearning mandate.

An estimated ceiling of

90,000

of Ontario's 2 million currently-enrolled students would not be able to obtain their Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD), if eLearning is mandated for all students.



3 in 10 respondents had difficulty understanding their eLearning course lessons.

Infographics

Infographics are visual representations of information and data. Readers must be able to parse the visuals to **Determine Importance**, selecting and identifying main and supporting details.

Determining Importance

When we determine importance, we are identifying both the **Main Details** as well as specific **Supporting Details**. The Main Detail is the focus of the text. It is the strong idea that presents itself throughout the entire piece. It is strengthened by Supporting Details that answer “how”, “what”, “when”, or “where”. The Main Idea is presented early on in your text, and reinforced throughout. The more specific details that follow are the Supporting Details.

Multiple Choice Response (Circle the **most** correct answer.)

1. In this **infographic** the word **respondent** means
 - a. people who disagree with eLearning.
 - b. people who have read the survey results
 - c. people who answered the survey.
 - d. People who want to know more about eLearning
2. Which of the following statements are **true** based on the **infographic**?
 - a. The number of people who responded to the survey was 5772.
 - b. 60% of respondents feel that eLearning will adequately address their learning styles.
 - c. 90 000 students may not be able to obtain their OSSD if eLearning is mandatory.
 - d. The majority of students had a hard time contacting their eLearning teachers.
3. What do the **stick figures** represent?
 - a. Most of the responses were made by male students.
 - b. The shaded figures represent the percentage of people who responded in a certain way.
 - c. The difference between students and teachers.
 - d. The number of students who feel eLearning should not be mandatory.
4. In this **infographic** the word **severe** means
 - a. A great undesirable amount of.
 - b. A low amount of.
 - c. A high number of success.
 - d. An unknown amount of.
5. What **percent** of respondents disagree with the eLearning mandate?
 - a. 5772
 - b. 6087
 - c. 94.8
 - d. 15.2

SECTION 1:

eLearning Today

Understanding Online Learning

In the present day, eLearning's methods of instruction can vary between Ontario's school boards, but is primarily directed through district-based programs^[1] or platforms. To access an eLearning course, students log in to a learning management system (LMS), such as Desire2Learn (D2L) or TVO's Independent Learning Centre, using their board-provided information to navigate to appropriate course content. Students are not limited to accessing these platforms at school. eLearning's format allows students to use these platforms anytime, from any location. Students then have the option to view course content and lessons on the course website in a variety of formats. Face to face interaction is highly uncommon in an eLearning environment. Students are required to complete and submit work to a dropbox on the platform that closes automatically on a set date. If students have questions, comments, or concerns, most educators ask that they be reached out to via email or through the platform's instant messaging software^{[2][3]}.

Although eLearning software is not an uncommon educational tool, the recent mandate requiring each secondary student to complete four eLearning courses is entirely unique in North America. Although five US states -- Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Michigan, and Virginia^{[4][5][6][7][8]} -- have a requirement in place to complete one online course, nothing of this scope has been previously implemented. Due to the unique nature of this mandate, OSTA-AECO is unable to determine the specific magnitude and types of effects that a program of this size will have on Ontario's education system.

The concept behind eLearning is to serve a broad and diverse student populace, regardless of socioeconomic or enrolment situations. Therefore, many of the questions outlined in the eLearning survey aim to provide a cross-section of who eLearning's users are and their rationales for enrolling in online courses.

Summarizing

Summarize this page of text (Write **one** concise paragraph)[illegible]

[Reading Tasks]
Page 5 of 19

Questioning

There are three main types of questions – *Literal*, *Inferential*, and *Evaluative*. **Inferential** questions require one to use personal knowledge, combined with knowledge from the text to answer them.

Evaluative questions ask for personal opinions, which must still be supported by specific examples from one's life. **Literal** questions require one to restate, in full sentences, information that has been directly stated in the text.

Literal Questions (Circle the **most** correct answer.)

1. What US States mandate **two** or **more** eLearning courses for graduation?
 - a. Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Michigan, and Virginia.
 - b. Alabama and Virginia.
 - c. Washington, Florida, and North Dakota.
 - d. None.
2. Which of the following **are examples** of Learning Management Systems?
 - a. Wordprocessors and Spreadsheets.
 - b. Your principal's office, and the Staff Room.
 - c. Desire2Learn and TVO's Independent Learning Centre.
 - d. Grading software, and Search Engines.
3. What is true about **face-to-face** interactions in eLearning classes?
 - a. They are mandatory for success.
 - b. They are highly uncommon.
 - c. They are only used for final exams.
 - d. They are commonly used to increase student success.
4. What is the intent of eLearning?
 - a. To serve a broad and diverse student poplace.
 - b. To negatively impact students based on socioeconomic situations.
 - c. To save the government money by reducing classroom teachers.
 - d. To increase student teacher interactions, leading to increased success.



UnSplash - @jeshoots (License: CC0)

SECTION 1:

eLearning Today

Understanding Online Learning

In the present day, eLearning's methods of instruction can vary between Ontario's school boards, but is primarily directed through district-based programs^[1] or platforms. To access an eLearning course, students log in to a learning management system (LMS), such as Desire2Learn (D2L) or TVO's Independent Learning Centre, using their board-provided information to navigate to appropriate course content. Students are not limited to accessing these platforms at school. eLearning's format allows students to use these platforms anytime, from any location. Students then have the option to view course content and lessons on the course website in a variety of formats. Face to face interaction is highly uncommon in an eLearning environment. Students are required to complete and submit work to a dropbox on the platform that closes automatically on a set date. If students have questions, comments, or concerns, most educators ask that they be reached out to via email or through the platform's instant messaging software^{[2][3]}.

Although eLearning software is not an uncommon educational tool, the recent mandate requiring each secondary student to complete four eLearning courses is entirely unique in North America. Although five US states -- Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Michigan, and Virginia^{[4][5][6][7][8]} -- have a requirement in place to complete one online course, nothing of this scope has been previously implemented. Due to the unique nature of this mandate, OSTA-AECO is unable to determine the specific magnitude and types of effects that a program of this size will have on Ontario's education system.

The concept behind eLearning is to serve a broad and diverse student populace, regardless of socioeconomic or enrolment situations. Therefore, many of the questions outlined in the eLearning survey aim to provide a cross-section of who eLearning's users are and their rationales for enrolling in online courses.

Inferential Questions (Circle the most correct answer.)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>1. When students are mandated to take eLearning courses they will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. face no challenges taking eLearning courses. b. face the same amount of challenges completing eLearning courses as they do completing in-class courses. c. find an inviting environment in which to express themselves. d. face challenges while taking eLearning courses. | <p>2. The mandated eLearning courses will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. offer students a chance to express their full creativity. b. be isolating, cutting students off from their peers and their teacher. c. allow for meaningful discussion between both students and teachers. d. allow for experiential learning and engaging field trips. |
|--|--|

Evaluative Question: Would you rather take eLearning Courses, or in-class courses with a teacher & peers? (Write one concise paragraph)

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
R1.5 Text-to-World, -Self, and -Text connections offer LIMITED enhancement of textual understanding. (Did you connect your own opinions to the information in the source text?)	R1.5 Text-to-World, -Self, and -Text connections offer SOME enhancement of textual understanding. (Did you connect your own opinions to the information in the source text?)	R1.5 Text-to-World, -Self, and -Text connections offer CONSIDERABLE enhancement of textual understanding. (Did you connect your own opinions to the information in the source text?)	R1.5 Text-to-World, -Self, and -Text connections offer A HIGH DEGREE OF enhancement of textual understanding. (Did you connect your own opinions to the information in the source text?)

Writing Tasks

Writing tasks require you to provide **specific details**. You are marked for **both** your ideas **and** your **writing ability** (**spelling, grammar, paragraphing**, etc.)

Synthesizing

Readers **combine** ideas from the text, with ideas from additional texts, as well as with their own prior knowledge. Through this process they develop a new, fuller understanding of a topic. Synthesizing combines knowledge from varied sources, creating new insights into a topic.

Writing a Newspaper Article

Task:

Write a five paragraph **Newspaper Article** responding to the **headline** and **picture** below.

Ensure your article **contains...**

- The **Who, What, Where, Why, and When** in the **lead** (first) **paragraph**.
- At least two **Specific Facts** in each of the five paragraphs
- Three **quotations** from **experts**
 - Experts often include police, witnesses, people involved
- **Transitions** between paragraphs

Ensure your article **does not** contain...

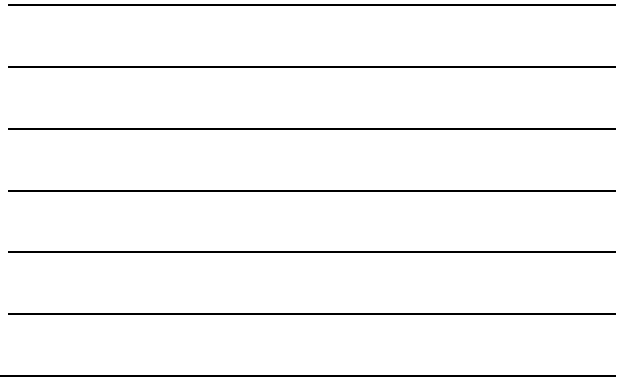
- “For more information please...”
- **Informal voice** (“I think...”, “You should...”)
- **Questions** for the reader

Headline and Image

Government Refuses to Let Students Graduate without Two eLearning Credits



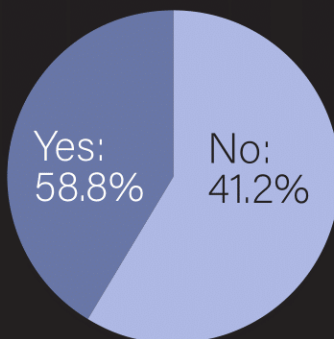
UnSplash - @PuntTim (License: CC0)

[illegible]

With only 11.4% of respondents feeling certain that their learning style is going to be accommodated in the facilitation of eLearning, course content delivery must be improved. Teachers, facilitators, and platform developers must be more aware of how to diversify content. This can take the shape of having more interactive lessons, video lectures, Skype interviews, or other alternatives^[25] to reflect the differing learning styles of students in Ontario. Catering to different learning styles has been previously shown to improve a student's retention of course material for students not used to independent learning and can be conducive to expanding learning opportunity^[26].

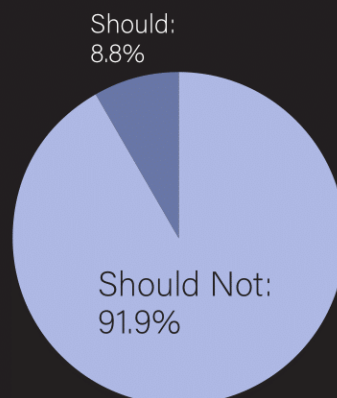
Students who have taken or are taking eLearning:

Based on your experience, would you take an eLearning course again?



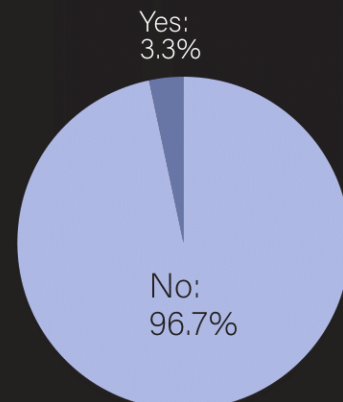
Students who have taken or are taking eLearning:

Based on your experience, do you think all students should have to take eLearning courses in order to graduate?



Students who have not taken or are not taking eLearning:

Do you think that all students should have to take eLearning courses to graduate?



As demonstrated by our data, the vast majority of respondents (94.8% of all survey respondents) believe that eLearning courses should not be mandatory for all students, regardless of their history with an eLearning platform. In addition, optional written respondent feedback suggested broad concerns about the scope of this mandate for secondary school students, and how the mandate would influence the province's path in adopting 21st century learning skills. The clear results from this question in our survey assert OSTA-AECO's view that eLearning is not compatible for students, and that under the status quo, eLearning will continue to be inaccessible to select student populations.

Multiple Choice Questions (Circle the **most correct answer.)**

1. **Most** students feel that
 - a. Their learning style is not going to be met through eLearning.
 - b. eLearning is the best way for students to learn in the twenty-first century.
 - c. eLearning should be expanded.
 - d. eLearning suits their individual learning styles.
2. Which of the following statements is **true**?
 - a. Most students who took eLearning courses would not take them again.
 - b. Most students who would take eLearning again do not feel it should be mandatory.
 - c. Most students support eLearning.
 - d. eLearning should not be optional.
3. The **91.9%** number indicates
 - a. the number of students who would take eLearning courses again.
 - b. The number of students who have taken eLearning courses who think eLearning should be mandatory.
 - c. The total number of students who think eLearning should not be mandatory.
 - d. The number of students who have taken eLearning who do not think eLearning should be mandatory.



UnSplash - @PuntTim (License: CC0)

Connecting

There are three main types of connections: *Text-to-Text*, *Text-to-World*, and *Text-to-Self*. A text can be – but is not limited to – a book, an article, a song, a video game, a painting, etc. A **Text-to-Self** connection requires you to draw specific links between the text, and your own personal life. Specific examples must be used from both sources when expressing a textual connection.

Express Yourself: Text-to-Self Connection

Task:

Write **one** paragraph that answers the following **prompt**.

Prompt:

What is **one of your favourite things** about school that would **not** be possible in an **eLearning** classroom? Ensure that you express how **not having access** to that thing would **negatively** impact your educational experience.

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
W1.3 Uses LIMITED specific details to support ideas. (Did you use specific details from your own experience?)	W1.3 Uses SOME specific details to support ideas. (Did you use specific details from your own experience?)	W1.3 Uses CONSIDERABLE specific details to support ideas. (Did you use specific details from your own experience?)	W1.3 Uses A HIGH DEGREE OF specific details to support ideas. (Did you use specific details from your own experience?)
W3.1, .3, .4 Demonstrates LIMITED adherence to spelling rules. (Did you ensure the use of proper spelling, grammar, and punctuation?)	W3.1, .3, .4 Demonstrates SOME adherence to spelling rules. (Did you ensure the use of proper spelling, grammar, and punctuation?)	W3.1, .3, .4 Demonstrates CONSIDERABLE adherence to spelling rules. (Did you ensure the use of proper spelling, grammar, and punctuation?)	W3.1, .3, .4 Demonstrates A HIGH DEGREE OF adherence to spelling rules. (Did you ensure the use of proper spelling, grammar, and punctuation?)

Five-Paragraph Opinion Essay

Task:

Write a five paragraph **Opinion Essay** responding to the **prompt** below.

Ensure your Opinion Essay...

- Expresses a **clear opinion**.
 - You **must** agree **or** disagree. You **can not** argue both sides.
- Uses **five** strong **paragraphs** to fully explore the prompt.
- Fills all blank lines that are provided for your response.
- Includes **at least** two specific facts in **each** paragraph.
- Supports each **fact** with additional **specific details**.
- Uses strong **transitions** between paragraphs.
- Demonstrates adherence to **spelling, grammar, and punctuation** rules.

Ensure your Opinion Essay **does not**...

- **Repeat** the same **vague** details from paragraph to paragraph.
- **Argue** both in favour **and** against the prompt.
- Ask **questions** of the reader.

Essay Prompt

Should students be required to take two eLearning courses in order to graduate High School?

Use this space to record **Rough** planning notes.

Reason One	Agree / Disagree	Reason Two
	Reason Three	

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

[illegible]

Comparing

When you compare **like** or **unlike** things, ideas, or concepts you are identifying details in each of them. Those details offer the reader a better understanding of the compared things. By knowing both what it is like, and what it is not like, the reader is better able to focus and direct their thoughts.

Multiple Choice Response (Circle the **most** correct answer.)

1. **All** students have access to the same level of **technology**.
 - a. True.
 - b. False.
2. Mandatory eLearning will impact students in **urban** and **remote** areas in the same way.
 - a. True.
 - b. False.
3. Mandatory eLearning will offer the **same** educational experience as in-class teaching.
 - a. True.
 - b. False.
4. Groups that may be **negatively** impacted by eLearning are
 - a. low income earners.
 - b. students in schools with limited access to technology.
 - c. people in remote areas without access to high-speed internet.
 - d. students who require in-class accommodations to be successful.
 - e. All of the above.
5. In-class **teachers** can modify their teaching on the fly to meet the needs of their individual students.
 - a. True.
 - b. False.



UnSplash - @AlexisRBrown (License: CC0)

Answer Key

Page 3

1. C
2. C
3. B
4. A
5. C

Page 6

1. D
2. C
3. B
4. A

Page 8

1. D
2. B

Page 12

1. A
2. B
3. D

Page 17

1. False
2. False
3. False
4. E
5. True

[illegible]

