

## First Nations Reading and Writing Assessment

**This assessment is intended to assist Thompson Rivers University, Open Learning (TRU-OL) to recommend the TRU-OL English course best suited to your needs. It is not a test. Complete and submit the assessment to TRU-OL.**

NAME	PHONE
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STREET ADDRESS

CITY / PROVINCE / POSTAL CODE

EMAIL ADDRESS

ENGLISH IS MY FIRST LANGUAGE    YES     NO

PLACE (INSTITUTION) I COMPLETED MY LAST ENGLISH COURSE	DATE COMPLETED
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LEVEL OF LAST ENGLISH COURSE COMPLETED	GRADE OBTAINED
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MY EDUCATIONAL GOALS (WHY I WANT TO REGISTER IN A TRU-OL ENGLISH COURSE)

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**TRU-OL USE: RESULTS WILL BE FORWARDED USING THIS FORM**

PART I (ENGLISH USAGE)	MARK OUT OF 10
PART II (SENTENCE STRUCTURE)	MARK OUT OF 5
PART III (PUNCTUATION)	MARK OUT OF 5
PART IV (READING COMPREHENSION)	MARK OUT OF 12
PART V (ESSAY)	LEVEL
PART VI (BUSINESS LETTER)	LEVEL
RECOMMENDATION	

## **DIRECTIONS**

- There is no time limit. You need not complete the assessment in one block of time.
- Do the assessment at a time and in a place where you can give it your full attention.
- You may wish to use a pencil to make changes more easily.
- The reading selections in Part IV become more difficult as you work through the assessment. If a time comes when you do not understand what you are reading, feel free to stop and go on to Part V.
- Please supply your own paper for Parts V and VI. Make sure you put your name on your writing samples.
- Mail the completed assessment to:

Thompson Rivers University, Open Learning  
Tutor Support  
BC Centre for Open Learning, 4th Floor  
Box 3010, 900 McGill Road  
Kamloops, BC  
Canada V2C 5N3

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## PART I: ENGLISH USAGE

### Instructions

**Nine of the ten** sentences below have one error in English usage. Place an **X** beneath the underlined segment that contains the error. If a sentence is correct, circle the sentence number.

1. He did not know that he had attempted an impossible when he set out to build himself a boat.
2. Its not difficult to learn to ride a horse if it is gentle and responsive to commands.
3. According to a magazine I was reading, soccer is one of the most popular spectator sport in the world.
4. The volunteers who were searching for the lost child spreaded out across the hillside where he had last been seen.
5. If she hadn't loss her textbook, she would have done much better on the exam.
6. At the banquet they served fish, though I would much rather prefer chicken or steak.
7. When I was young, I was lucky enough to have had the opportunity to work with my father.
8. If she had of been a bit more friendly, I think I would have asked her to the party tonight.
9. The character in this story displays a caring in that he offered to help find his friend a job.
10. There was no reply to my letter so I resolved myself to the fact that I must have had the wrong address.

## PART II: SENTENCE STRUCTURE

### Instructions

**Four of the five** sentences found below contain **one** error in sentence structure, such as:

- An incomplete sentence
- A dangling or misplaced modifier
- A faulty or ambiguous reference of a pronoun
- An incomplete comparison, or
- Faulty parallel structure

Place an **X** beneath the underlined segment that contains the error. If a sentence is correct, circle the sentence number.

1. When the fire alarm sounded, he jumped up suddenly, hit his knee against the table and broke it.
2. You won't find essay writing so hard once you discover what is expected and having had more practice in writing compositions.
3. Coming out of the coffee shop, a dusty, and battered Volkswagen drove up and a man in cut-off jeans got out.
4. I realize now that when the time comes for me to support myself, my style of living will not be as luxurious as my parents.
5. As I have often told him, most of the problems he has had to face in his life are the result of his own mistakes.

## **PART III: PUNCTUATION**

### **Instructions**

In each group of three sentences below, **one** is punctuated **correctly**, while the other two contain punctuation errors. Place an **X** to the left of the **one** sentence that is **correctly** punctuated.

### **GROUP 1**

The call came in about ten o'clock on Saturday night, two villagers were lost on the mountain and we would have to go to look for them.

The call came in about ten o'clock on Saturday night; two villagers were lost on the mountain and we would have to go to look for them.

The call came in about ten o'clock on Saturday night, two villagers were lost on the mountain, and we would have to go to look for them.

### **GROUP 2**

The part of Canada which he likes best is the North, but he seldom gets a chance to go there any more.

The part of Canada, which he likes best, is the North, but he seldom gets a chance to go there any more.

The part of Canada which he likes best, is the North; but he seldom gets a chance to go there any more.

### **GROUP 3**

I will tell you what really caused the problem—the weather in March and April was much colder than usual.

I will tell you what really caused the problem; the weather in March and April was much colder than usual.

I will tell you what really caused the problem: the weather in March and April was much colder than usual.

### **GROUP 4**

Under these conditions (she was not well and was not able to study) it is not surprising that she had to drop the course.

Under these conditions, she was not well and was not able to study, it is not surprising that she had to drop the course.

Under these conditions (she was not well and was not able to study), it is not surprising that she had to drop the course.

### **GROUP 5**

Apples, pears, peaches: these are fruit best grown in a temperate climate.

Apples, pears, peaches—these are fruit best grown in a temperate climate.

Apples, pears, peaches, these are fruit best grown in a temperate climate.

## **PART IV: READING COMPREHENSION**

### **Instructions**

Read the following writing selections looking for the **subject** and **main idea** (the claim or thesis). Then answer the questions.

### **SELECTION 1: AN ESSAY READING (one mark)**

Geographically, British Columbia is Canada's third largest province, after Quebec and Ontario. It covers 948,956 square kilometres, and one way of grasping just how much land this is, consider the following. British Columbia has 35 cities, 47 district municipalities, 13 towns, 48 villages, and 28 regional districts, each of which has some

form of local government. What is remarkable is that all of these cities, towns, municipalities, villages, and districts taken together cover only one percent of the total landmass of the province. The remaining 99 percent of the province consists of unorganized territory that does not have local government, but is administered by the provincial government in Victoria.

**Question**

Which of the following best defines the **subject** of the above paragraph?  
Circle the number to indicate your answer.

1. Local government in British Columbia.
2. The size of British Columbia.
3. The size of local government in British Columbia.
4. The provincial government's role in running British Columbia.

**SELECTION 2: AN ESSAY READING (one mark)**

(1) Thirty years ago, Canadian First Nations art was not well known. (2) It was best known in the communities that made it. (3) Today it is much better known. (4) Many native communities have worked hard at their traditional arts. (5) They have also worked to keep alive their languages, their legends, and their religious beliefs. (6) Today, many Native artists are well known, both throughout Canada and in other countries. (7) There is now a wide public interest in the art of Canada’s aboriginal peoples.

**Question**

What is the claim or thesis sentence of the above paragraph? Identify the sentence by the number.

**Answer** ( )

**SELECTION 3: AN ESSAY READING (two marks)**

Being a weather forecaster in Canada is not easy. There are no large deserts or tropical climates where the weather is the same day after day. In Canada people still say, “If you don’t like the weather, wait around for a few hours until it changes.” What is worse, the public now expects perfection of weather forecasters. At one time, Canadians were pleased with an occasional correct forecast. Today, this is not good enough. People want to know not only whether it will rain or snow—which can be sometimes difficult to predict—but exactly when, precisely where, and how much.

**Questions**

1. What is the **subject** of the above paragraph?

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2. What does the writer **say about** this subject?

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#### SELECTION 4: AN ESSAY READING (three marks)

- (1) The sea was the source of life to the peoples of the Northwest Coast of British Columbia. Their villages were oriented to it; food was sought within its depths and along its shoreline. The waters of the sea were the familiar highways they travelled in their strong canoes.
- (2) Of all the products of the sea, salmon was the most eagerly sought. Abundance of salmon determined the pattern of all life. The elaborate ceremonial and social entertainments so important to the people of this region were made possible by the surplus of dried and smoked fish, which could be stored for the future. Abundance of salmon meant that the hard work of the fishing season could provide months of leisure time in which everyone could enjoy the entertainment of winter ceremonies.
- (3) As salmon was the basic food, so was cedar basic to the material culture invented by the people of this coast. The clean, easily worked grain of the cedar made it the most versatile of materials. From this wood, Natives produced large houses, strong canoes, domestic utensils, and massive carvings. From the rootlets of the cedar tree, women wove a never-ending variety of baskets and textiles.

1. Write out the claim sentence in paragraph (1).

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2. Paragraph (2) has two central ideas. Using **complete sentences**, identify the two ideas found in this paragraph.

(a)

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(b)

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3. Paragraph (3) has one claim and two supporting ideas. Using **complete sentences**, identify the claim and the two ideas found in this paragraph.

(a) (claim)

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(b) (supporting idea)

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(c) (supporting idea)

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## **SELECTION 5: AN ESSAY READING (three marks)**

- (1) First Nations peoples in Canada traditionally enjoyed self-government long before Europeans arrived in the land. They have always had their own governments. Because there are so many different Native peoples, these governments were diverse. They were most often an integrated part of other social and economic arrangements but they still did the things and provided the services that the people wanted.
- (2) First Nations governments have been looked upon in a variety of ways. Canada has attempted either to deal with, absorb, limit, change, or replace Native governments, but it has never been able to ignore or do away with them. Today, many Native governments are stronger than they have been in recent history, Native people are asserting with renewed vigor their wishes and efforts to govern themselves. Their goal is clear. It is self-government in the fullest sense of the term. It is the use of their own government to make their lives better as they see fit.
- (3) Just as in the past, Canada's goal is not clear. Neither the federal nor the provincial governments have been able to decide how they will accommodate themselves to the reality of Native self-government. Instead, these governments want Native peoples and their governments to accommodate themselves to the existing provincial-federal framework, but they are unsure how this will take place. Although this has slowed down the establishment of Native self-government, Native self-government is a fact that must be understood and dealt with.

(Selection 5 continues on the next page.)

Each of the three paragraphs in Selection 5 has at least two ideas about the subject of Native self-government. Using a **complete sentence** in every case, clearly identify the two principal ideas found in each paragraph.

Paragraph 1 (a)

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(b)

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Paragraph 2 (a)

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(b)

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Paragraph 3 (a)

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(b)

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## **PART V: WRITING AN ESSAY**

### **Instructions**

Write an essay of several paragraphs using **one** of the topics listed below. Remember to make a clear claim and provide good evidence to support it.

Please supply your own paper for this writing exercise. Make sure you put your name on your writing sample.

### **Choice of Topics**

1. My community
2. A job I would like
3. Favourite food
4. Problems
5. Friends
6. School

## **PART VI: WRITING A BUSINESS LETTER**

### **Instructions**

Using the situation outlined below, write an appropriate business letter. The body of your letter need only be about fifty words long. Be sure to include in your letter the following customary parts:

- Your own address
- Address of the person you are writing to
- Date the letter was written
- Formal greeting or salutation
- Formal closing
- Your signature

Please supply your own paper for this writing exercise. Make sure you put your name on your writing sample.

### **SITUATION**

A friend has told you that the Outback Hotel (200 Riel Street, South Timmins, Ontario, P6N1A4) may be hiring additional summer help in the near future. Write to Charles Rodgers, the hotel's personnel manager, requesting information regarding the type of jobs that might be available and asking him how you might best apply.