

English 12

Provincial Exam Preparation Package



Contents

Section 1:	An Introduction to the English 12 Provincial Exam	3
Section 2:	Pre-test and Key	9
Section 3:	Tips for Studying, Reviewing, and Test Writing	41
Section 4:	Types of Text	47
Section 5:	Responding to Multiple-Choice Questions	51
Section 6:	Answering Written Response Questions	61
Section 7:	Preparing for Part A: Reading Comprehension —Stand Alone Text.	71
Section 8:	Preparing for Part B: Reading Comprehension —Synthesis Texts 1 and 2	73
Section 9:	Preparing for Part C: Analysis of Synthesis Texts 1 and 2.	75
Section 10:	Preparing for Part D: Composition	79
Section 11:	Post-test Sample Provincial Exam	83
Section 12:	Glossary of Terms	111
Section 13:	An Introduction to Scoring Guides	135

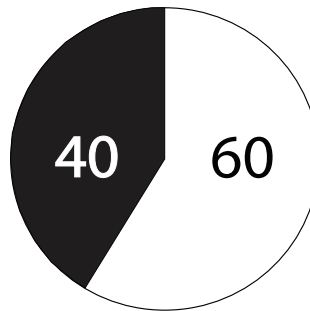
Section 1

An Introduction to the English 12 Provincial Exam

The English 12 Provincial Exam

Your final grade in English 12 is based on your:

1. Course grade (60% of final grade)
2. Provincial exam mark (40% of final grade)



The provincial exam is a significant part of your final grade. Therefore, properly preparing for the English 12 Provincial Exam is important.

Many Grade 12 students make the mistake of thinking that this is the one exam for which they do not have to study or practise. While there is no need to cram a long list of facts and figures into your memory, there is still the need for thoughtful and methodical preparation.

This *Provincial Exam Preparation Package* offers a step by step way to get ready; if you work through this guide page by page, then when you sit down to write the real exam you will be confident, prepared and at ease.

■ Part A: Reading Comprehension: Stand-Alone Text

In this first section you will have to read one short text (approximately two pages). It will take the form of a fact-filled informational text, a poem or a literary story. You will then be required to answer seven multiple choice questions that will consider both the reading and how a number of literary devices and techniques are at work in that text.

Then you will be required to write a unified and coherent paragraph of at least 150 words. Responses should use effective sentences and adhere to the conventions of standard written English. You will be provided with one topic only.

■ Part B: Reading Comprehension: Synthesis Texts 1 and 2

In the next section you will have to read two texts and respond to multiple-choice questions on both. These readings will be informational text, poetry or literary prose and will not be alike in form (e.g., you will not get two poems, two stories, two articles). However, the two texts will share in some thematic elements. The multiple choice questions that follow each reading will consider both the reading and how a number of devices and techniques are at work in that text.

This section is in preparation for Part C, which considers the same two readings in depth.

■ Part C: Reading Comprehension: Analysis of Synthesis Texts 1 and 2

The first part of this section requires that you answer two multiple-choice questions about how the two synthesis texts are comparable. These two questions will set the tone for one written-response question that will ask you to consider both Synthesis Texts 1 and 2.

In answering the written-response synthesis question, you will write a multi-paragraph essay of at least 300 words. In this essay you will need to have a clear central idea that is supported with specific details, features and information from the texts.

Students will be provided with **one** question.

■ Part D: Composition

In this section you will write an original multi-paragraph composition of approximately 300 words on a general topic to demonstrate skills relating to written expression. These skills include the ability to:

- sustain focus on a topic while developing supporting ideas related to the topic's thesis.
- compose effective sentences.
- effectively use transitions between sentences and paragraphs.
- apply the standards and conventions of written English (spelling, grammar, punctuation and syntax) to your writing.

You may draw upon personal experience or course/exam readings to develop the topic. You may develop the topic using expository, informative, narrative, or descriptive methods, or a combination.

SECTION 2: PRE-TEST SAMPLE PROVINCIAL EXAM

PART A: READING COMPREHENSION: STAND-ALONE TEXT

7 multiple choice questions

Suggested Time: 25 minutes

1 written response question

Value: 23%

Instructions: Read the following selection, “Violence in Media Entertainment,” and answer the multiple-choice questions. For each question, select the best answer and record your choice in the space provided.

Violence in Media Entertainment

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- 1 Between 2000 B.C. and 44 A.D., the ancient Egyptians entertained themselves with plays re-enacting the murder of their god Osiris. The ancient Romans were given to lethal spectator sports as well, and in 380 B.C. Saint Augustine lamented¹ that his society was addicted to gladiator games and “drunk with the fascination of bloodshed.”
- 2 Violence has always played a role in entertainment. But there’s a growing consensus that something about media violence has changed. For one thing, there’s more of it.
- 3 Laval University professors Guy Paquette and Jacques de Guise studied the programming of six major Canadian television networks over a seven-year period. The study found that between 1993 and 2001, incidents of violence increased by 378 per cent. TV shows in 2001 averaged 40 acts of violence per hour. (Paquette and de Guise also found that over 80 per cent of the TV violence aired in Canada originates in the U.S.) Overall, 87.9 per cent of all violent acts appear before 9 p.m., and 39 per cent air before 8 p.m.—at a time when children are likely to be watching.

Violence without Consequences or Moral Judgment

- 4 The notion of violence as a means of problem solving is reinforced by entertainment in which villains and heroes resort to violence. The Center for Media and Public Affairs (CMPA) reports that the “good guys” commit nearly half of all violence. Less than 10 per cent of the content analyzed contextualized the violence or explored its human consequences. The

¹ Expressed grief or disappointment about something



Figure 1

7. With reference to Figure 1, what does the cartoonist rely on to convey humour?
- a. stereotypes
 - b. irony
 - c. hyperbole
 - d. pun

()

**PART C: READING COMPREHENSION:
ANALYSIS TEXTS 1 AND 2**

Written–response question:

1. Contrast the importance of the titles in “The day we escaped with our lives” and “Carapace.” You must refer to both passages in your essay.

KEY:

In the “The day we escaped with our lives”

The title is a “clue” to (indicator of) a series of significant events from the speaker’s childhood, and the number of “escapes” he (and his brothers) had—that seem to build in intensity (from the boys’ perspective) toward the final escape.

The speaker remembers the trees threatening to pull his brothers and him from the car.

- The speaker remembers the incident on the road with the neighbour’s truck.
- The speaker remembers the tree house that he and his brother escaped to as kids and how they weren’t caught stealing the leftover birthday cake from the freezer.
- The speaker remembers the close encounter with the cougar itself and how this encounter could again threaten their return to the city.
- The poet uses the title to set the mood for the poem/create suspense.
- The poet uses the title to engage the reader.
- The poet uses the title to indicate time/past memory—past tense verb in title.

NOTE: Other responses are possible.

In “Carapace”

- A carapace is a protective shell.
- Images of shells, protective structures, and creatures with shells abound in the story, representing Shane’s inability to get outside himself and connect with others.
- Shane sticks his neck out of the car and pulls it back in at the checkpoint, like a turtle.
- Shane’s back tenses and his ribs itch, as though he is growing a shell.
- Miranda has a collection of crab shells (it is significant that the shells are empty).
- Beth huddles for warmth in her sweatshirt.

PART D: COMPOSITION

1 written response
Value: 30%

Suggested Time: 35 minutes

Instructions: In the space provided, using standard English, write a coherent, unified, multi-paragraph (three or more paragraphs) composition of approximately 300 words on the topic below. Write in ink. In your composition, you may apply any appropriate method of development, including exposition, description, persuasion and/or narration.

3. Write a multi-paragraph composition on the topic below. In addressing the topic, consider all possibilities. You may draw support from the experiences of others or from any aspect of your life: your reading and your experiences. Remember, you do not have to accept the basic premise of the statement.

Topic:

The choices we make have an impact on those around us.

Use the Organization and Planning space to plan your work.

WRITING ON THIS PAGE WILL NOT BE MARKED

Section 3

Tips for Studying, Reviewing, and Test Writing

In this section, you will find general tips that will make studying and preparing for the English 12 Provincial Exam easier.

Study Tip #1—Have a Study Plan

“Plan your work for today and every day, then work your plan.”

—Norman Vincent Peale

A smart way to start to prepare for the provincial exam is to create a realistic study plan for yourself. Grab a calendar or daytimer and circle the day of the exam. If you are not certain about the day and time of the exam, an exam schedule is available online at

<http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/exams/handbook/schedules.htm>.

Now, count the number of days you have until the exam. From there, create a plan for when, where, and how you will read this exam package, and practise at least three exams. Two are provided in this package.

Here is a sample study plan:

Section 4

Types of Text

On every English 12 Provincial Exam you will have to read three texts. Each of those texts will be different—typically there will be an informational text, a poem and one literary prose reading (a story). There is no set order in which each type of text will be included. Your first reading could be a poem, a story or an informational article. Each test will be different.

To be properly prepared for the test you need to have a sense of how best to comprehend and respond critically to each type of reading passages.

Informational Text

Informational text readings will be approximately two pages in length and could include a newspaper or magazine article, something from an Internet website, or a text that might be more scientific or technical. Whatever the type of reading, it will likely be current, topical, factual, and informative—an expository text.

Here are some general tips for success when reading informational text:

- Scan the passage quickly to see how it is organized. Are there headings? How a passage is organized can help you find information quickly when answering questions.
- Look ahead and read the written response *topic* before you read the text.
- Now read the passage carefully. Don't skim the reading the first time through. You can skim later when you're looking for specific information for an answer.
- Read with a pen in your hand. Underline or circle any words or passages that stand out to you. These marks will make it easier for you to find the details you are looking for when you go to answer the questions.
- Notice the stylistic and persuasive techniques used. See the glossary at the end of this guide for a complete list of all the devices that an author might use to achieve his or her purpose.
- Read the questions carefully and respond. (Go back to Section 3 in this booklet and look at the tips for answering multiple-choice questions.)

Poetry

Many students do not read poetry regularly, and so they are not especially familiar with how poems may be read. However, when you write the provincial exam you are still expected to be able to demonstrate your understanding of a poem's content, structure, and style, including the use of literary and poetic devices.

Here are some general tips for success when reading poetry:

- Pay attention to the title. You may find a clue to the theme or meaning.
- If a context statement is provided, read it carefully. It will be important to your understanding of the poem.
- Read the questions, including the written response topic if there is one, before you read the poem. This will help to focus your reading.
- Don't skim or scan the poem the first time through. You can do this later when you're looking for specific information.
- Take the time to read the poem twice, as this will help you to understand it better. Poems are generally short, so you will have the time to do this. Pay attention to:
 - Diction—the language that the poet uses
 - Structure—how the poem is organized (e.g., stanzas)
 - Form—what kind of poem it is (e.g., free verse)
 - Poetic devices—figurative language the poet uses (e.g., imagery, metaphors, sound devices, etc.)
- Read with a pen in your hand. In general, the test is yours to mark up, so underline, or make note of key lines or sentences.
- Read the questions carefully and respond. (Go back to Section 3 in this booklet and look at the tips for answering multiple-choice questions.)
- Remember, if you have a planning page for your written response, use it!

Section 5

Responding to Multiple-Choice Questions

Go back to the pre-test to review the reading selection and your answers. Then read the strategies outlined below to better understand how to select responses to the multiple-choice questions.

PART A: READING COMPREHENSION— STAND-ALONE TEXT

1. What is the purpose of paragraph 1?
 - a. to begin the article with a light-hearted tone
 - b. to present historical incidents as essentially false
 - c. to express the writer’s overall opinion on his/her topic
 - d. **to set a historical context for the subject of the article**

Commentary: The key word in the question is “purpose.” In looking at the first paragraph more closely, a series of historical facts are presented. This eliminates two choices immediately. These historical statements are not presented as false, but rather to set a context for the rest of the article and draw the reader in.

2. What method of development is primarily used in this article?
 - a. compare and contrast
 - b. expert opinion
 - c. chronological order
 - d. **research data and evidence**

Commentary: “Method of development” refers to the way that the ideas are presented in the article. In this case, there is no compare and contrast at work. The next two choices, expert opinion and chronological order, are at work in some places in the article. But the only method of development used throughout is the presentation of research data.

Section 6

Answering Written-Response Questions

Writing About the Stand Alone Text

Read the following exemplars and commentary to better understand the expectations of written-response questions. You may find it helpful to review the “Scoring Guide for Stand Alone Text” in Section 11.

Stand Alone Text Response Exemplar #1:

The objective point of view is important. The essay has a point of view about media. The information in the essay tells us to be careful with TV and video games. There are heading's to tell us which section we are reading and to make it easier to find the information. The sections all talk about violence and youth. Even Websites and online homework can be dangerous, lots of kids are seeing violent stuff everyday. I once accidentally came across some wierd stuff about how to make a bomb. I couldn't believe it. The objective point of view helps us to understand how much risk there is.

Commentary: This is a low-level response, and while there is an attempt to address the topic, the overall response is inadequate. It would receive a “2” or maybe a “2.5” out of 6. In short, the writer misunderstands the task. First, there is a weak beginning to the response. The point of view of the article is never explained, which is important in demonstrating to the marker that the writer understands what is important in beginning this type of response. Second, there are no direct quotes used for support. While there are references to the informational text, these references serve as a kind of random summary. Proper use of direct quotes is important in order to achieve a higher score. This writer does not do this. Third, the overall response is disorganized. There appears to be little time taken to adequately plan. In an exam situation, the planning is crucial to success (even though it is not marked). Proper planning helps a writer to avoid wandering off topic or formulating a disjointed written response. Fourth, there are a number of writing errors, ranging from careless spelling errors (e.g., “wierd”), to run-on sentences, to choppy syntax, to punctuation errors (e.g., the unnecessary apostrophe in “heading's”). Like the scoring guide states, “errors are

distracting and recurring.” While a strong paper need not be error-free, frequent and careless errors point to a writer not taking the time to proofread and edit written work. Again, like the planning, the proofreading and editing of written work is very important on an exam. When you think about the expectations for a student writing the English 12 Provincial Exam, you begin to see how this particular response falls short.

Stand Alone Text Response Exemplar #2:

In the informational text, “Violence in Media Entertainment,” the objective point of view where no emotionally laden scare tactics or inflammatory words are used, makes the reading seem an even more credible source of valuable information. From the organizing headings, to the direct presentation of the facts and statistics, to the recurring admissions that media violence is a serious concern, the article maintains its emotional distance like an objective piece should. This is not to say that the text is not without its stylistic flourishes; it does begin with a short history lesson, “the ancient Egyptians entertained themselves with plays re-enacting the murder of their god Osiris.” There are also moments when a reader cannot help but be persuaded by some highly persuasive language. Words like “disturbing” and “graphic violence” and “difficult task” do evoke an emotional response but the article itself always remains neutral, giving fact after fact in a straightforward manner. For example, “TV shows in 2001 averaged 40 acts of violence per hour” plainly puts forward the information that readers need to have in order to make reasoned choices about how to handle media violence. In an informative article like this one, the objective point of view is really the only most readers will consider reliable.

Commentary: This is an upper-level response and would receive a “6.” The writer clearly understands the task and addresses the topic in an insightful and sophisticated manner. The introductory sentence is “catchy” and addresses the topic given on the exam in a straightforward way. This is always important on a short written response. The overall writing is also strong, with a variety of sentence types, complex vocabulary, and proper integration of direct quotes. As well, supporting quotes are carefully selected and used judiciously. It should be clear from this response that the writer has not only planned the response, but has edited and revised it as well. What the writer also does well is discuss the significance of the point of view itself. The writer connects the point of view to the effectiveness of the text, namely the credibility of an informative text like this one. In relation to the previous response, which reads like an incomplete summary, this response is insightful, and the writer appreciates some of the

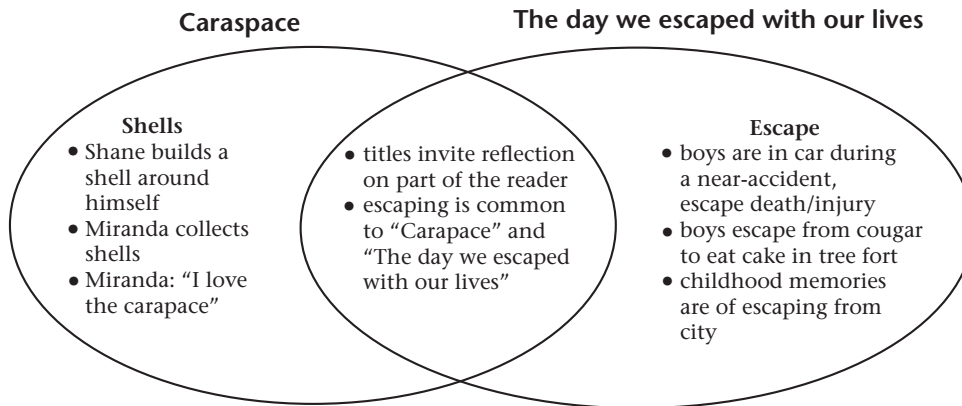
Section 8

Preparing for Part B: Reading Comprehension —Synthesis Texts 1 and 2

This section is mostly about reading and reading well. This is the section in which you can really come to understand the synthesis texts 1 and 2 before you get to Part C, where you will have to demonstrate your understanding with a written comparison of the two.

1. **Start by reviewing your literary terms.** Be prepared to recognize them and how they work within a piece of text. See the glossary at the end of this guide for the complete list. You might want to change these into flash cards to study from if you struggle to keep all the terms straight.
2. **Know what reading strategies work for you.** Consider some of these: breaking the passage into three sections. At the end of each section take a moment to make certain you can answer the 5 W's—Who What, Where, When, Why and How, underlining and/or circling key words as you read, reading carefully at least two times. There are many more strategies. The important thing to know is that you need to figure out what works best for you.
3. Remember and practise the **process of elimination**. This section is primarily multiple choice!

You may also find it useful to organize your ideas using a Venn diagram. An example comparing and contrasting “Carapace” and “The day we escaped with our lives” is included below.



The two most common ways to organize a compare and contrast essay are item by item and point by point.

Item by Item (or text by text)

Begin by saying everything you have to say about the first text you are discussing, then move on and make all the points you want to make about the second text. If you used the comparison chart to pre-organize your ideas, then this style of essay has you consider your chart column by column.

Each text will likely take at least one or two paragraphs to consider. This style of organizing a compare and contrast paper is generally the simplest to organize but can still be done with sophistication.

SECTION 11: POST-TEST SAMPLE PROVINCIAL EXAM

PART A: READING COMPREHENSION; STAND-ALONE TEXT

7 multiple choice questions

Suggested Time: 25 minutes

1 written response question

Value: 23%

Instructions: Read the following selection, “Why is Information Privacy an Issue?” and answer the multiple-choice questions. For each question, select the best answer and record your choice in the space provided.

Why is Information Privacy an Issue?

Adapted from “Why is Information Privacy an Issue?” © 2006 Media Awareness Network,
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- 1 Privacy is a fundamental human right and a cornerstone of a democratic society. It lies at the foundation of the rule of law, the secret ballot, doctor-patient confidentiality, lawyer client privilege, the notion of private property, and the value our society places on the autonomy of the individual.
- 2 So why is privacy one of the most contentious issues of the early 21st century?
- 3 With the development of new information and communication technologies, the ability of the state and the private sector to collect, record, and “mine” personal information has grown exponentially. As early as 1996, Bruce Phillips, then Privacy Commissioner of Canada, warned, “We are in fact buying and selling large elements of our human personae. The traffic in human information now is immense. There is almost nothing the commercial and governmental world is not anxious to find out about us as individuals.”
- 4 Since then, stories about the unintended consequences of this traffic have been legion:
 - A candy company got hold of the names of people in a weight watchers program, and sent them chocolate bars.
 - Part of a Toronto woman’s medical record was printed on the back of real estate flyers which were delivered to hundreds of mailboxes.
 - Participants in a medical research study reported an increase in difficulties getting employment and insurance after they gave genetic samples to the researchers.

1. What stylistic device is used in paragraphs 2 and 3?
 - a. cause and effect
 - b. question and answer
 - c. compare and contrast
 - d. pro and con argument ()

2. What is meant by the phrase “social sorting” (paragraph 6)?
 - a. a form of spying
 - b. a way of socializing
 - c. a type of computer code
 - d. a method of organizing people ()

3. Why are our online habits valuable to Internet companies?
 - a. These habits build a profile that can help in marketing.
 - b. The government requires this information to be collected.
 - c. This information is too difficult to compile and be of practical use.
 - d. This information is important as it cannot be bought from other companies. ()

4. What is the difference between cookies and spyware?
 - a. Cookies inhabit email messages.
 - b. Neither application can function with the other.
 - c. Web bugs allow for easier Internet surfing.
 - d. Spyware can collect information from a user’s computer. ()

5. What does the term “spyware” (paragraph 17) imply?
 - a. loss
 - b. integrity
 - c. deception
 - d. willingness ()

6. With which statement would Alan Westin most likely agree?
 - a. Information privacy is not an inherent right.
 - b. State security takes precedence over civil liberties.
 - c. The computer technology used to collect personal data should be illegal.
 - d. Controls should be put on the communication of personal information. ()

ENGLISH 12

SCORING GUIDE FOR STAND-ALONE TEXT

This is a first-draft response and should be assessed as such. The use of paragraph structure is assessed holistically with reference to the clarity of expression and organization.

6

The six response is **superior** and may draw upon any number of factors, such as depth of discussion, effectiveness of argument, or level of insight. It exhibits an effective writing style and a sophisticated use of language. Despite its clarity and precision, the response need not be error-free.

5

The five response is **proficient** and reflects a strong grasp of the topic and the text. The references to the passage may be explicit or implicit and convincingly support a thesis. The writing is well organized and demonstrates a strong command of the conventions of language. Errors may be present, but are not distracting.

4

The four response is **competent**. The assertions tend to be simplistic; there are no significant errors in understanding. References are present and appropriate, but may be limited to only part of the text. The writing is organized and straightforward. Conventions of language are usually followed, but some errors are evident.

3

The three response is **barely adequate**. Understanding of the topic and/or the text may be partially flawed. Support may consist of long references to the text which are not clearly connected to a central idea or may be meagre or repetitive. The response may show some sense of purpose, but errors may be distracting.

2

The two response is **inadequate**. While there is an attempt to address the topic, understanding of the text or the task may be seriously flawed. Errors are recurring, distracting, and often impede meaning.

1

The one response is **unacceptable**. It does not meet the purpose of the task or may be too brief to address the topic. There is a serious lack of control in the writing.

0

The zero response reflects a complete misunderstanding of the text and/or the task, is written in verse, is off-topic, or is a restatement of the question.

*Any zero paper must be cleared by the section leader.

NR

A blank paper with no response given.