

# A Composition About a New Canadian

## The Task

Students were asked to conduct a brief interview with an immigrant to Canada, asking at least ten questions. They were then to write a short, structured, chronologically organized composition describing the person's life and explaining why his or her story is important to them. (The term "composition" is used in the expectations for the Writing strand of the course, and denotes a group of sentences focusing on a particular topic.)

## Expectations

This task gave students the opportunity to demonstrate achievement of the following selected expectations from the Writing strand.

*Students will:*

1. write in a variety of forms, with teacher guidance;
2. use some simple sentence patterns and key conventions of standard Canadian English to write about classroom topics and activities;
3. write short, structured compositions of personal relevance;
4. write simple assertive, interrogative, and imperative sentences;
5. use simple verb tenses, plurals, pronouns, count nouns, adjectives, and basic prepositions, with teacher guidance;
6. use capitals at the beginning of sentences and for frequently occurring proper nouns (e.g., names, countries, months);

7. use periods and question marks at the end of sentences, and apostrophes in commonly used contractions;
8. spell frequently used words from classroom and personal word lists.

## Prior Knowledge and Skills

To complete this task, students were expected to have some knowledge or skills relating to the following:

- asking simple questions in English in the present and past tenses
- using regular and irregular verb forms in the simple past tense
- writing simple plurals and pronouns
- using connecting words to enhance chronological order (e.g., *next, after, then*)
- using subject–verb agreement
- writing brief, structured compositions (introduction, body, conclusion), using models provided by the teacher
- making short, point-form notes of answers to simple questions

*For information on the process used to prepare students for the task and on the materials, resources and equipment required, see the Teacher Package reproduced on pages 30–37 of this document.*

## Task Rubric – A Composition About a New Canadian

Expectations*	Criteria	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
<b>Knowledge/Understanding</b>					
<b>The student:</b>					
5	– demonstrates knowledge of simple verb tenses in English (past, present, future)	– demonstrates knowledge by using a few verbs accurately	– demonstrates knowledge by using some verbs accurately	– demonstrates knowledge by using most verbs accurately	– demonstrates knowledge by using all or almost all verbs accurately
<b>Thinking/Inquiry</b>					
<b>The student:</b>					
1, 2, 3	– orders information in the composition chronologically	– orders information chronologically with limited accuracy	– orders information chronologically with some accuracy	– orders information chronologically with considerable accuracy	– orders information chronologically with a high degree of accuracy
<b>Communication</b>					
<b>The student:</b>					
2, 4	– writes sentences that are complete and correctly formed	– writes a few complete and correctly formed sentences	– writes some complete and correctly formed sentences	– writes a considerable number of complete and correctly formed sentences	– writes sentences that are all or almost all complete and correctly formed
3	– effectively communicates the personal relevance of the subject's story	– communicates the personal relevance of the story with limited effectiveness	– communicates the personal relevance of the story with some effectiveness	– communicates the personal relevance of the story with considerable effectiveness	– communicates the personal relevance of the story with a high degree of effectiveness
<b>Application</b>					
<b>The student:</b>					
4, 5, 6, 7, 8	– uses language conventions accurately (spelling, capitalization, use of periods)	– uses language conventions with limited accuracy	– uses language conventions with some accuracy	– uses language conventions with considerable accuracy	– uses language conventions with a high degree of accuracy

\* The expectations that correspond to the numbers given in this chart are listed on page 14.

*Note:* A student whose overall achievement at the end of a course is below level 1 (that is, below 50%) will not obtain a credit for the course.