



# Getting Ready for the OSSLT

## Reading Graphic Texts: Some helpful tips

Text forms created with key **visual features** to communicate information, in a condensed format, and to show how details are connected to one another can be referred to as *graphic texts*. Specialized vocabulary, design elements, and organizational patterns are used to make ideas clear and easier to understand.

### Examples of key visual features:

- **Print:** bullets, titles, labels, and captions
- **Layout:** legends, keys, and tables of contents
- **Design:** colour, shape, line, and placement
- **Organizational Patterns:** sequential, categorical, and explanatory

### Before Reading:

- Set a purpose for reading. Ask *why* someone might read this particular text.
- Look over the text to determine what type it is and which elements are used.
- Examine the titles, headings, captions, and images. Start with the title. The title tells what the graphic is about. The captions may also use words and phrases from the text to show how the graphic is related to the information in the written text.
- Recall what may already be known about the topic or subject.
- Record some possible questions about the information presented.

### During Reading:

- Read all the labels and examine how they are related to the graphic. Each label has a purpose. The most important labels may be CAPITAL letters, **bold** type, or larger font.
- Follow the arrows and lines. They may be used to show movement or direction, or connect to the things they name.
- Look for the use of **colour** or symbols to emphasize important words and information. Some graphic texts have a legend for a key to explain the meaning of specific symbols or colours.
- Study the image carefully. Look for the details in the image. Read the text near the picture to find an explanation of the information in the graphic. Use the figure number or title and key words to find and read the related information in the written text.
- Identify relationships among the visuals and information presented.

### After Reading:

- Interpret the information conveyed in any of the graphics (e.g. diagrams, charts, graphs, maps). Ask why this information may be important.
- Rephrase information orally or in writing. Imagine explaining the graphic to someone who has not read it.
- Create another graphic text (e.g. graph, map, diagram, table, flow chart) to represent the important information.