



## Smithers Secondary School Growth Plan 2025/2026

**SD #54 Mission** - To empower all learners to live the challenges of a diverse and changing world.

**School Culture** - What does it mean to be a Gryphon?

**School Focus** - Literacy/Numeracy

**Goal** - to create a network of understanding and knowledge for students to make relevant, meaningful personal connections to themselves and the world around them.

- Quality assessment of literacy and numeracy at all levels
- How do we help students become more comfortable with risk/discomfort in problem solving?
- Common/shared vocabulary - community understanding
- Explicitly teaching strategies that support literacy and numeracy: persistence, confidence, new applications, independence, resilience, meta cognition.
- Explicitly teaching reading, writing, vocabulary building, problem solving and specific mathematical applications

### **Maintenance of Past Goals (Maintain strategies and continue learning)**

*To educate students how to make good decisions that positively impact their mental and physical health.*

- ❖ *To increase the amount of Witsuwit'en culture and language.*
- ❖ *To provide the students with skills / tools to be life-long learners.*

### **NOIIE - Three-year Inquiry.**

Our 3-year NOIIE Inquiry brought about new opportunities for professional learning: Over the course of the year, we rethought our CLE and CLE courses for BVLC and Interdisciplinary studies.

We collaborated as a team with BVLC, SSS and ABED and learned more in depth about our community, our land, and our place so that tasks are meaningfully connected to students' experiences and place. We had to increase our knowledge of our community, services, and instructional practices and to plan and to facilitate events like an employer living library and a health services scavenger hunt. Also influenced by the goals and rationale in the Career Education rationale. We explored the following new learning as a team:

- Transition planning tools - for example - <https://findsupportbc.com/timeline/>
- Digital portfolios that students use to document their learning journeys and become a tool that they can use after graduation.
- Ways to facilitate place-based learning experience.
- Taking time as teachers and individuals to develop a sense of place. Building local knowledge of the historical and current connections between our communities in and beyond the Bulkley Valley.
- We applied the seven learning principles from the conclusion of The Nature of Learning in the overall planning of this three-year project. They are all reflected through the 3 main elements of this project: the instructional approach and the curriculum design, the planning and delivery of the experiences, and students' personal transition plans.

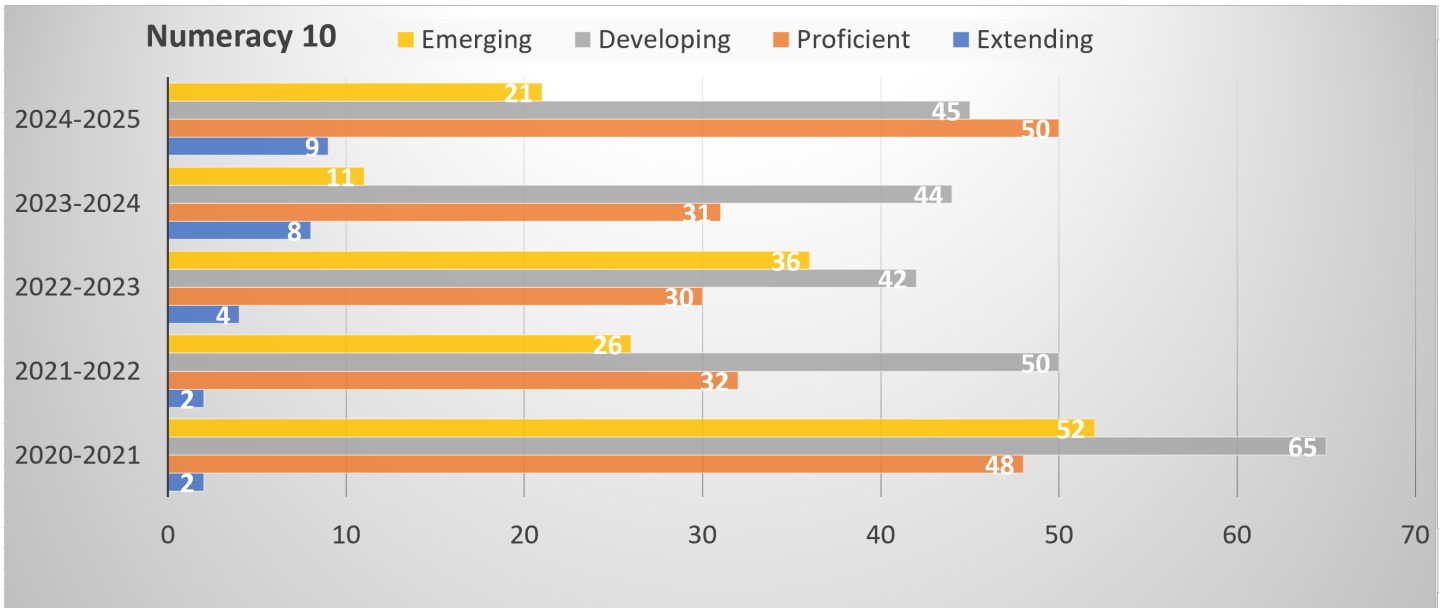
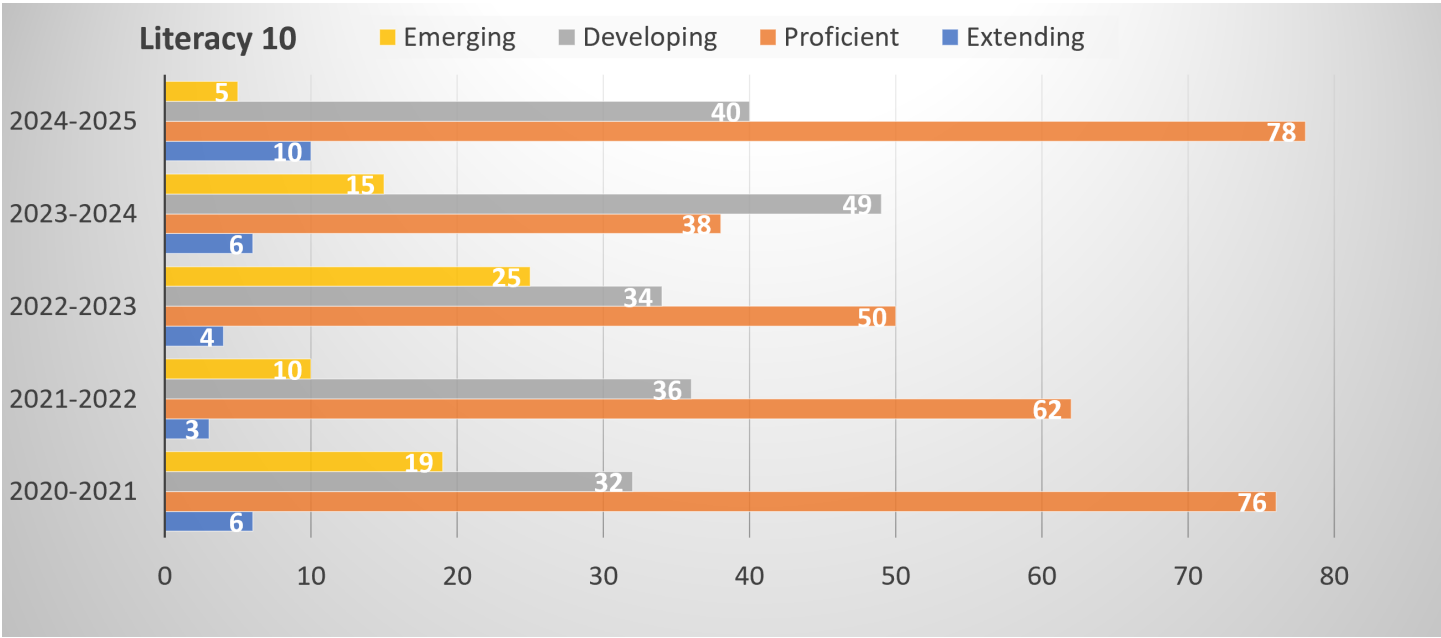
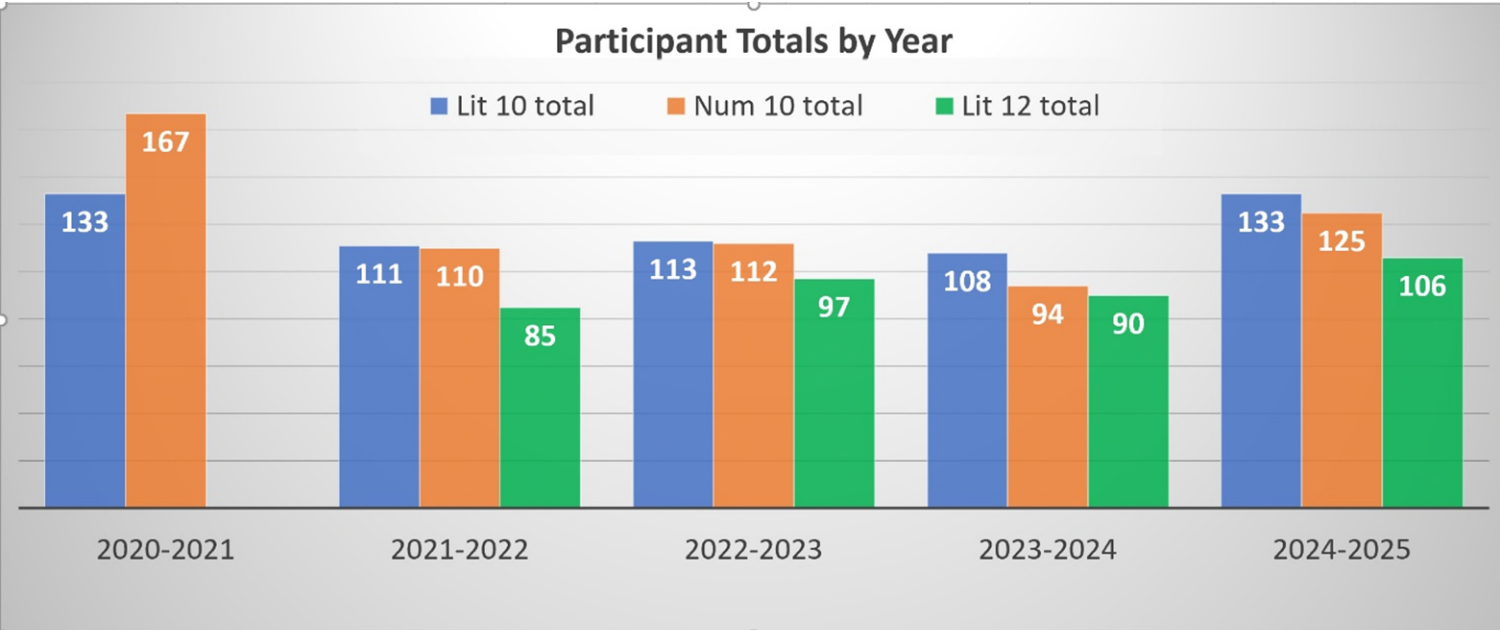
We noticed that many of our students who live off reserve in Smithers and Telkwa and are in vulnerable living situations (poverty and homelessness) work hard to graduate, but once they graduate, they do not have an independent plan that they can follow to become productive and connected citizens in their communities.

We surveyed the students and used the information provided by them to help plan our project and activities.



Evidence

Literacy and Numeracy 10 - Assessment results (2020-2025)



Student Interviews - June 2025 - these were completed with grade 10-12 students (approx. 60) and the student feedback was analyzed and discussed on our planning day in September 2025.

# Literacy & Numeracy Assessments:

How did our students feel?

What went well?

What was difficult?

How could we change things to make the experience more successful?

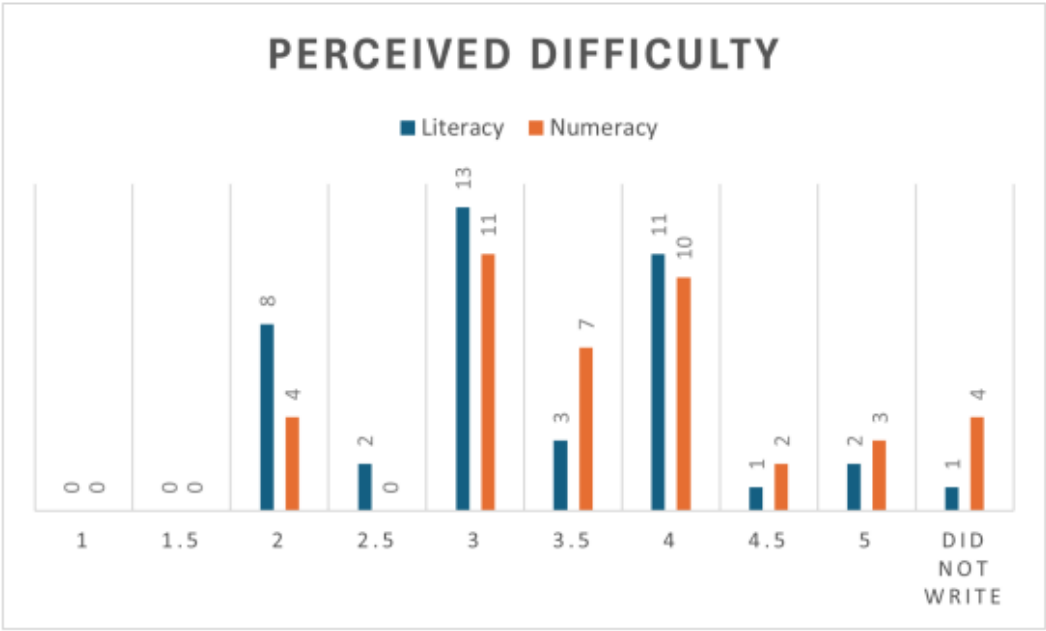
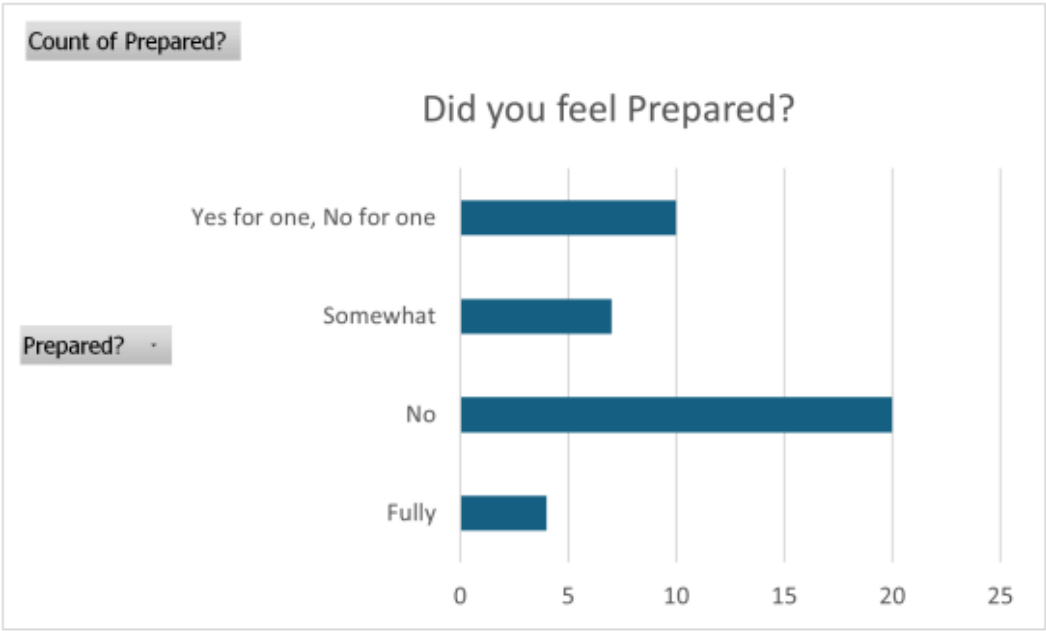
## Overview:

41 students surveyed in personal interview format. Some in small groups, most individually. Responses kept anonymous and in interviewer’s handwriting.

## Demographics:

Gender	Count of Gender
M	23
F	14
U	4
Grand Total	41

Grade	Count of Grade
10	36
12	3
11	2
Grand Total	41



1 = easy 5= extremely difficult

## Staff noticed:

- A correlation between participation and proficiency
- Numeracy assessment is more stressful for students
- We need to help students feel comfortable in discomfort and practice resiliency specifically with test situations.
- Students need more preparation and practice.
- We need to work on problem solving.
- We need more model lessons - how to do it well.
- Students need to clearly understand the purpose of the assessments.
- Seniors reported the assessments to have a high degree of difficulty.
- Students are still expressing frustration on the difficulty with longer/higher level tasks - multi-paragraph written sections and word problems.
- Better communication has resulted in students taking the assessments more seriously.
- Assessment results were positively changed for the first time in 5 years.

- Staff was more aware of specific needs and adaptations.
- We need to continue to communicate with parents and students about the significance of the assessments and ways to support students.
- Students felt that more preparation is needed - vocabulary - what is the question asking me to do?
- Need more explicit teaching of vocabulary - especially for the numeracy.
- We need to do the *Grade 12 Literacy* the same way.
- We need to make sure that all students get practice opportunities.
- Students would like more time to decompress after each assessment.
- Maybe begin later to give everyone a chance to wake up and continue with both in the same week.
- We should work in teams to develop tasks from *Grade 8-12* - focus on common vocabulary, approaches and tasks.
- Lean into Numeracy a bit more this year - in all classes.
- We need to integrate the necessary skills into our day-to-day learning tasks.
- Use our classroom assessment to help students become more resilient.
- Continue the changes we made last year.



Survey Data 2025:

Grade	Gender	Lit ranking	Num ranking	Prepared?	Well?	Difficult?	Advice?	Change?	Two in same week?	Other:
12	F	5		No	Multiple choice	Multiparagraph writing	Practice before & take your time	More breaks	No - either 1 per semester or 1 week apart	Headphones for listening to voice-to-text, print stories to highlight/underline on paper
10	M	3	3.5	Fully	Personal choice - got to pick the option that made more sense to me	Written part of numeracy	Practice before	Wouldn't make changes	Yes	
10	M	3		No	Multiple choice	Don't remember	More reminders of when it will happen	More preparation/explanation	Ok but shouldn't be only option	
10	M	3	4.5	Somewhat	Literacy felt better than Numeracy; more confident when able to connect to content	Written part of numeracy	Focus more on the area you feel less confident in	Wouldn't make changes; well-organized and made sense	Yes	Wish I knew about split screen so I didn't have to switch back and forth between pages
10	M	4	3	Yes for one, No for one	Written portions	Small detail questions	More practice on long questions and writing	Start later in the day - no classes afterwards	Yes	
10	F	4	5	No	Reading	Understanding what the questions were asking	Practice before; Ask for help/clarification	Have them scheduled 1 week apart	Yes	Liked the question about crops - could connect to the content and felt confident
10	M	4	2	No	Reading level was good	Multiparagraph writing	Try your best	Start later in the day - no classes afterwards	Yes	Different people felt very differently about it - some felt stressed, some felt it was easy
10	M	4	2	No	Understanding the big idea	Solving problems	Bring snacks & tools to support your thinking	Start later in the day - no classes afterwards	Yes	Hard to really know what we were getting into
10	F	3	4.5	No	End of Lit when you could write from your head rather than from what you read	All of Numeracy, especially word problems. Hadn't had experience with that type of question.	Know your percents and ratios, formatting of word problems, and how to convert them into a problem you can solve	More preparation/explanation & Start later in the day	Yes	
12	U	5		No			Take your time & read through everything		Yes	
10	F	3	4	Fully	Questions where I could draw things out or use M/C to help find answers	Inference (find something without info given)	Bring snacks & tools to support your thinking; treat it like an assignment - the idea of it being a test is more difficult than it actually is	Wish it was on paper - computer glitches & uncomfortable screens	Ok but shouldn't be only option	
10	F	3.5	3.5	No	Multiple choice	Written responses		Have them scheduled 1 week apart	Ok but shouldn't be only option	Maybe schedule them farther apart in the same week
10	M	2	4	Fully	Written portions	Getting correct info out of Num questions	Practice before	More specific preparation ahead of time (e.g. word problems)	Yes	Good to get them over with
10	M	3	3	Yes for one, No for one	Analysis	Getting correct info out of Num questions	Practice before	More specific preparation ahead of time (e.g. word problems)	Yes	Computers were sometimes glitchy

10	M	3	2	Somewhat	Personal choice - got to pick the option that made more sense to me	Word problems - dealing with lots of input/info	Practice before	More specific preparation ahead of time (e.g. word problems)	Yes	Makes sense to have both in one week, but it's really tiring too
10	M	3	3	No	Literacy felt better than Numeracy	Certain questions on Num	Don't beat yourself up over it - doesn't affect your grade	Wouldn't make changes	Ok but shouldn't be only option	It makes sense to write both if you're in both courses at the time, but it might be harder in a semester where you weren't taking Math or English
10	M	2	4	Yes for one, No for one	Literacy felt better - nothing surprising	Layout and wording of Num was hard to understand	Bring snacks & practice before	"Maybe calling it a test would help people prepare better."	Rather have them 1 week apart	Print out the results so we can know how we did; make sure we get a halfway break
10	M	3	4	Fully	Literacy felt better - nothing surprising	Vocabulary - if you didn't know a word, you couodn't do the question	Practice before		Rather have them 1 week apart	How much time you need depends on your strengths; felt like it took more than Gr 9 math (which is what we were told)
10	U	2	3	Yes for one, No for one	Creative writing	Decoding - what are they trying to ask me?	Practice before	It was nice to write in our familiar classroom	Yes	Prefer paper over computer
10	U	3	4	Yes for one, No for one	Written portions	Wasn't clear what they were asking for	Practice before & know how to show your work	Not enough snacks	Rather have them 1 week apart	Lots of deal with on a screen - maybe print part? Sometimes couldn't see the whole thing
10	F	2.5	3.5	Somewhat	Written portions	Analyzing infographic in terms of mathematics	Don't over think it b/c it doesn't really impact your future and you'll get to write another one in Gr 12	More advance notice	Yes	Maybe get rid of the day in between
10	M	4	5	No	Written portions	Huge amount of text to built into an equation	Know that there are mostly word problems	More advance notice	Indifferent	Heard that chromebooks didn't work well for split screen so people had to switch between tabs
10	M	2	2	Somewhat	Understanding the instructions	Poorly worded/confusing questions	Work on time management - don't rush but don't take too long on each question	Separate into semester when you have Math or Eng	No	This felt so much longer than anything else
10	M	3	3	Yes for one, No for one	Multiple choice	Some of the choices were different difficulty (perceived unfairness)	Practice before	Smaller class groups	No	We need to be prepared better for long tests
10	M	4	4	No	Multiple choice	It was too long	Don't worry too much - the Grade 12 one is more important	Make logging in clearer - some computer issues got in the way	No	More drinks
10	M	4	3	No	Getting info from the paragraphs	Multiple choice on Numeracy	Pay attention in class	Needed more preparation in class	Yes	It felt really long
10	F	2.5	4	No	Multiple choice on Numeracy	Essay writing	Practice ahead & try to connect to what you already know	Needed more preparation in class	Yes	It felt really long
11	M		3.5	No	Multiple choice	Reading & typing		Start later in the day - no classes afterwards	Yes	Stressful but good to get it all over with at once

12	U	4		Somewhat	None	Reading & how long it takes		Start later in the day - no classes afterwards	Yes	Make it more accessible for people with dyslexia
10	M	2	4	No	Literacy was easier	Writing paragraphs	Pay attention to when it is happening	Do it in sections so the teachers can focus and 'those guys can't cheat'	Yes	Makes sense to get it over with
11	M	2	4	No		Picking through what information you were supposed to use	Practice ahead & know what types of questions you'll see		Ok but shouldn't be only option	It's really hard when you're doing both
10	F	3.5	3.5	No	Don't remember	Didn't like any of it		don't know	Yes	It was good to get it over with. [Our teacher] made sure we had snacks and I got to listen to music.
10	M	4	3	No	Multiple choice	Written responses	Take your time & read through everything		No	I had another test the same week
10	M	4	3	No	Using a calculator	So much going on [on the screen] that it was hard to keep track	Double check your answers & use the highlighter	Work on how to understand the questions more clearly.	Ok but shouldn't be only option	Be better to have them 1 week apart
10	M	4	3	No	Written portions	Multiple choice vocabulary and strange/unclear wording	Make sure you understand the questions	Help us manage our time between Part A & B so you don't run out of time on one	No	The practice test was just another thing to do
10	F	2	4	Yes for one, No for one	Multiple choice	Paragraph writing	Practice ahead	It was a lot	Yes	Felt more prepared for Lit because we do more of that
10	F	3	5	Yes for one, No for one	Multiple choice	Writing on paper sections for Numeracy	It's fine to finish when you finish - don't rush		Yes	Did some practice for Lit in one class
10	F	3	3	Yes for one, No for one	More confident in Literacy than 'math'; easier to read and write opinions.	Harder to read and answer specific questions; time limit pressure is hard; felt some pressure to 'enhance' work to make sure it's good enough	Practice ahead & don't second guess yourself	Either get more time or help to manage our time b/c I wasn't sure how much time I had left and didn't want to run out of time	Yes	It went pretty smoothly
10	F	2	3	Somewhat	None	Expressing personal opinion over writing about fact. Couldn't tell which was expected and didn't know how to blend them.	Prepare more for numeracy - go back over basic concepts from grades 6-9; take two of each practice exams - once all the way through, and then take notes, and then take the second one all the way through.	Schedule them with 1 week in between so you don't miss two days in the same week.	Yes	Knew what to expect but was surprised that we had a section of writing on paper for numeracy

10	F	4.5	3.5	Somewhat	Numeracy felt better than Lit; Short Answer and Multiple choice better than long answer	Written responses - hard to take indirect references and prove your ideas without being able to use other searches or resources	Go through full practice of each exam; don't practice the simple questions too much but do a full write of the long ones; take your time	Optional break between Parts A and B	Yes	We were fairly well prepared but should have spent more time preparing for the harder (end) questions since these are harder than most of our assignments; having them both in the same week meant we missed a lot of the same class
10	F	3.5	3.5	Yes for one, No for one	Multiple choice	Written responses on Num - had to get a lot down and not sure if you're doing it right	Practice ahead	Lots of confusion about who was going to which room	Yes	Because you could make different choices, the difficulty level seemed harder with some [perceived unfairness]