

<b>Guidance Document</b>	Assent Letter
<b>Effective Review</b>	Delegated & Full Board
<b>Version Date</b>	July 6, 2016

Legend
Blue text: Guidance and/or instructions
Black text: Suggested wording and/or example
Red text: Language that should not be included

An Assent Form should be used for the following:

- For children between the ages of 7 to 12 years, 12 months who are not legally competent to consent on their own behalf but who have the capacity to assent.
- For incompetent prospective participants who are 13 years and older and capable of assent, but who cannot read the main Letter of Information and Consent form.
- For incompetent adult-aged participants who are capable of assent, but of course references to children in the template will have to be amended.

When writing the assent, please remember:

1. The participant must be provided with a copy of the Assent form and this should be stated.
  - **E.g.**, “This letter is for you to keep” OR “You will be given a copy of this Assent Form once it has been signed.”
2. The only identifiers accepted on the consent form are the participant’s name and initials (initials are not required).
3. Use the term “participant” instead of “subject” in all instances to emphasize the voluntary nature of participation.
4. All Assent forms should be printed on institutional letterhead.  
[http://communications.uwo.ca/comms/western\\_brand/vis\\_toolkit/templates.html](http://communications.uwo.ca/comms/western_brand/vis_toolkit/templates.html)
5. **PROOFREAD** before submitting to the REB.
6. Keep the footer simple and short; it should only include the version date (dd/mm/yyyy) and pagination (“Page x of y”) on every page.
7. Do not state “This study has been approved by the research ethics board...” as this may appear to offer a guarantee of safety.

### **Project Title**

Enter the full title of study exactly as it appears on the Western Protocol / Romeo Form.

### **Document Title**

Add particular study subgroups to the document title, as applicable. This enables everyone to differentiate between consent forms and groups within a study (e.g., student group, teacher, parent).

**E.g.,** Assent Letter – Student

### **Principal Investigator + Contact**

Enter the Principal Investigator's name, with title and telephone number.

**E.g.,** **Principal Investigator**  
Dr. John Doe, PhD, Psychology  
Western University, X80000

### **Additional Research Staff + Contact (optional)**

You may choose to enter names and titles of Additional Research Staff, but this is not required. Please note: if you do enter names and titles, it will be necessary to submit a revised Consent Form and Western Protocol for review and approval any time personnel changes.

**E.g.,** **Additional Research Staff**  
Dr. Mary Jones, PhD, Anthropology  
Dr. James Wright, MA, Ivey

### **1. Why are you here?**

Introduce the research and why this research is being done in very basic terminology.

**E.g.,** Dr. Miller wants to tell you about a study that will look at why children like to play. She wants to see if you would like to be in this study. Other researchers will also work with Dr. Miller on this study.

### **2. Why are they doing this study?**

Explain in very basic terminology why you are doing this study.

**E.g.,** Dr. Miller and her researchers want to see if certain things, more than others, make you like to play.

### 3. What will happen to you?

Explain in very basic terminology what will happen to the participant should they decide to participate.

- E.g.,** If you want to be in the study, two things will happen:
1. Every XX months while you are in grade 4, Dr. Miller will ask you some questions about how you like to play.
  2. You will go on a field trip to the museum.

### 4. Will there be any tests?

Reassure the participant he/she will not have to go through any tests, and participating will not affect his/her grade.

- E.g.,** There will not be any tests or marks on the report card for this study.

### 5. Will the study help you?

Indicate in very basic terminology whether or not the participant will receive any benefit.

- E.g.,** This study will not help you directly, but in the future, it might help children who do not like to play.

### 6. Do you have to be in the study?

Let the participant know they do not have to be in the study if they do not want to be, and can change their mind at any time.

- E.g.,** You do not have to be in the study. No one will be mad at you if you do not want to do this. If you do not want to be in the study, tell Dr. Miller or your parents. Even if you say yes, you can change your mind later. It is up to you.

### 7. What if you have any questions?

Let the participant know who they can contact if they have any questions.

- E.g.,** You can ask questions at any time, now or later. You can talk to the teachers, your family or Dr. Miller.

## 8. Assent

**Include this section with the rest of the LOI document, but on its own page.**  
Keep the assent portion very simple

**I want to participate in this study.**

**Print Name of Child** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Age** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of Person Obtaining Assent** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Person Obtaining Assent** \_\_\_\_\_