

**Alberta Provincial  
Achievement Testing**

**Assessment  
Highlights  
2015–2016**

**GRADE  
9**

**Knowledge and Employability Social Studies**

*Alberta*  Government

This document was written primarily for:

Students	
Teachers	✓ of KE Social Studies
Administrators	✓
Parents	
General Audience	
Others	

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The [Alberta Education website](http://education.alberta.ca) is found at education.alberta.ca.

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## *The 2016 Grade 9 Knowledge and Employability Social Studies Achievement Test*

This report provides teachers, school administrators, and the public with an overview of the performance of those students who wrote the 2016 Grade 9 Knowledge and Employability Social Studies Achievement Test. The examination statistics that are included in this document represent all writers, both French and English. If you would like to obtain French-only statistics or English-only statistics that apply to your school, please refer to your detailed reports, which are available on the Extranet. This report complements the detailed school and jurisdiction reports.

### **How Many Students Wrote the Test?**

A total of 1 323 students wrote the 2016 Grade 9 Knowledge and Employability Social Studies Achievement Test.

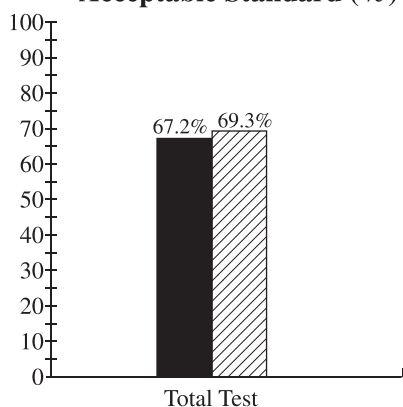
### **What Was the Test Like?**

The 2016 Grade 9 Knowledge and Employability Social Studies Achievement Test consisted of 50 multiple-choice questions based on two topics: Governance and Citizenship, and Canada and the United States: An Economic Relationship.

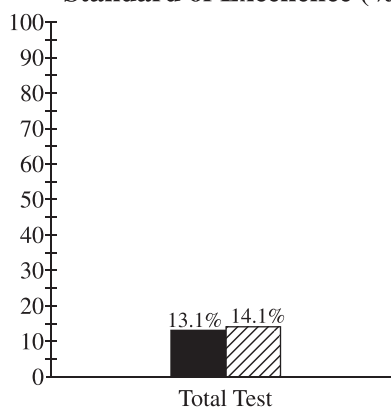
### **How Well Did Students Do?**

The percentages of students meeting the acceptable standard and the standard of excellence in 2016 compared with 2015 are shown in the graphs below. Out of a possible total score of 50, the provincial average on the test was 30.8 (61.6%).

**Percentage of Students Meeting the Acceptable Standard (%)**



**Percentage of Students Meeting the Standard of Excellence (%)**



■ 2015 Achievement Standards: The percentage of students in the province who met the acceptable standard and the standard of excellence on the 2015 Grade 9 Knowledge and Employability Social Studies Achievement Test (based on those who wrote).

▨ 2016 Achievement Standards: The percentage of students in the province who met the acceptable standard and the standard of excellence on the 2016 Grade 9 Knowledge and Employability Social Studies Achievement Test (based on those who wrote).

## ***Multiple-Choice Component—2016 Test Blueprint and Student Achievement***

In 2016, 69.3% of students who wrote the Grade 9 Knowledge and Employability Social Studies Achievement Test achieved the acceptable standard, and 14.1% of students who wrote achieved the standard of excellence.

The blueprint below shows the reporting categories and test sections (curricular content areas) by which 2016 summary data are reported to schools and school authorities, and the provincial average of student achievement by both raw score and percentage.

<b>TOPICS</b>	<b>Reporting Category</b>		<b>Provincial Student Achievement (Average Raw Score and Percentage)</b>
	<b>Knowledge and Understandings</b>	<b>Skills and Processes</b>	
<b>Canada: Governance and Citizenship (9.1)</b>			
Students examine the relationship between Canada’s political and legislative processes and their impact on issues pertaining to governance, rights, citizenship, and identity (Canada’s federal political system, Canada’s justice system, Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, immigration).			<b>17.7/29 (61.0%)</b>
<b>Canada and the United States: An Economic Relationship (9.2)</b>			
Students examine and explore issues of economics and their impact on quality of life, citizenship, and identity in Canada and the United States (market and mixed economies, consumerism, quality of life, political decision-making).			<b>13.1/21 (62.4%)</b>
<b>Provincial Student Achievement (Average Raw Score and Percentage)</b>	<b>11.9/20 (59.5%)</b>	<b>18.9/30 (63.0%)</b>	<b>Total Test Raw Score 30.8/50 (61.6%).</b>

**Knowledge and Understandings** – Knowledge includes social studies facts, events, information, concepts, evidence, ideas, opinions, and terminology as identified in the Grade 9 Knowledge and Employability Program of Studies (2007).

**Skills and Processes** – Skills include specific social studies skills of critical and creative thinking, historical thinking, geographic thinking, decision making and problem solving, the research process, and media literacy as identified in the Grade 9 Knowledge and Employability Program of Studies (2007).

## ***Multiple-Choice Component—Commentary on 2016 Student Achievement***

The following is a brief summary of the areas where most students experienced difficulties and demonstrated strengths on the 2016 Grade 9 Knowledge and Employability Social Studies Achievement Test.

### **Students demonstrated relative strength in their abilities by being able to:**

- analyze information to identify a point of view presented in a political cartoon;
- analyze information to summarize the main idea presented in given news articles;
- analyze information to draw a conclusion related to social programs;
- recall and identify a role of the justice system.

For multiple-choice question 29, students had to analyze information to draw a conclusion related to social programs. Approximately 78.1% of students who met the acceptable standard and 95.2% of students who met the standard of excellence answered this question correctly.

*Use the following information to answer question 29.*

**Statement W:**  
Immigrants now make up 20% of Canada's population.

**Statement X:**  
The largest percentage of new immigrants currently comes from Asia and the Middle East.

**Statement Y:**  
A recent census reveals that more than 200 different languages are spoken in Canada.

**Statement Z:**  
Immigrants come to Canada because Canada's education system is the best in the world.

29. Which of the following statements is **best** supported by the information above?

- A. Canadian-born citizens have a negative attitude toward immigrants.
- B. Canada is a mixture of many cultures because of immigration.
- C. Canada's immigration policies are influenced by the media.
- D. Canada is an unpopular destination for immigrants.

11.9% of the students chose A

71.5% of the students chose B (correct answer)

13.0% of the students chose C

3.6% of the students chose D

**Students experienced relative difficulty with:**

- analyzing given information to make a generalization related to an advocacy group in Canada;
- synthesizing information to make a generalization related to consumers in a market economy;
- recalling and identifying responsibilities of Canadian citizens;
- synthesizing information to make a comparison related to points of view;
- analyzing given information to make an observation related to the views of political parties.

For multiple-choice question 37, students had to synthesize information to make a comparison related to points of view. Approximately 43.5% of students who met the acceptable standard and 67.9% of students who met the standard of excellence answered this question correctly.

*Use the following information to answer question 37.*

<b>Exploration of Natural Resources</b>	
<b>Speaker I</b>	“The government needs to encourage exploration of natural resources. Providing incentives to companies will lead to more private investment.”
<b>Speaker II</b>	“Exploration of natural resources brings people, industry, and problems to a community. More people means increased traffic and the need for more services, which results in higher taxes.”
<b>Speaker III</b>	“Exploration of natural resources can lead to environmental damage, which can affect wildlife, farm animals, and people in the surrounding area.”
<b>Speaker IV</b>	“Exploration of natural resources brings prosperity to a community. We now have many new businesses and a better standard of living.”

**37.** Which of the following pairs of speakers have a point of view that is **most similar**?

- A.** Speaker I and Speaker II
- B.** Speaker I and Speaker III
- C.** Speaker II and Speaker III
- D.** Speaker II and Speaker IV

14.5% of the students chose A

17.1% of the students chose B

44.3% of the students chose C (correct answer)

24.0% of the students chose D



For multiple-choice question 45, students had to analyze given information to make an observation related to the views of political parties. Approximately 49.4% of students who met the acceptable standard and 77.0% of students who met the standard of excellence answered this question correctly.

*Use the following information to answer questions 44 and 45.*

<b>Political Party Platforms</b>	
<p><b>Political Party W</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limit government spending</li> <li>• Decrease government-sponsored pension plans</li> <li>• Partner with private business to provide funding for low-cost child care</li> </ul>	<p><b>Political Party X</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase government funding to income-assistance programs</li> <li>• Increase funding to the Canada Pension Plan</li> <li>• Ensure seniors receive support from government</li> </ul>
<p><b>Political Party Y</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase funding for health-care programs</li> <li>• Lower the GST</li> <li>• Increase the length of prison sentences for violent offenders</li> </ul>	<p><b>Political Party Z</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide support for pollution control programs</li> <li>• Increase funding to the Canada Pension Plan</li> <li>• Extend Employment Insurance benefits</li> </ul>

- 45.** A supporter of reducing government costs would **most likely** support
- A.** Political Party W
  - B.** Political Party X
  - C.** Political Party Y
  - D.** Political Party Z

46.1% of the students chose A (correct answer)  
 14.7% of the students chose B  
 29.1% of the students chose C  
 9.8% of the students chose D

# *Achievement Testing Program Support Documents*

The Alberta Education website contains several documents that provide valuable information about various aspects of the achievement testing program. To access these documents, go to the [Alberta Education website](#). Click on one of the specific links to access the following documents.

## **Achievement Testing Program *General Information Bulletin***

The [General Information Bulletin](#) is a compilation of several documents produced by Alberta Education and is intended to provide superintendents, principals, and teachers with easy access to information about all aspects of the achievement testing program. Sections in the bulletin contain information pertaining to schedules and significant dates; security and test rules; test administration directives, guidelines, and procedures; calculator and computer policies; test accommodations; test marking and results; field testing; resources and web documents; forms and samples; and Provincial Assessment Sector contacts.

## **Subject Bulletins**

At the beginning of each school year, subject bulletins are posted on the Alberta Education website for all achievement test subjects for grades 6 and 9. Each bulletin provides descriptions of assessment standards, test design and blueprinting, and scoring guides (where applicable) as well as suggestions for preparing students to write the tests and information about how teachers can participate in test development activities.

## **Examples of the Standards for Students' Writing**

For achievement tests in grades 6 and 9 English Language Arts and Français/French Language Arts, writing samples are designed for teachers and students to enhance students' writing and to assess this writing relative to the standards inherent in the scoring guides for the achievement tests. The exemplars documents contain sample responses with scoring rationales that relate student work to the scoring categories and scoring criteria.

## **Previous Achievement Tests and Answer Keys**

All January achievement tests (parts A and B) for Grade 9 semestered students are secured and must be returned to Alberta Education. All May/June achievement tests are secured except Part A of grades 6 and 9 English Language Arts and Français/French Language Arts. Unused or extra copies of only these Part A tests may be kept at the school after administration. Teachers may also use the released items and/or tests that are posted on the Alberta Education website.

## **Parent Guides**

Each school year, versions of the [Alberta Provincial Achievement Testing Parent Guide](#) for grades 6 and 9 are posted on the Alberta Education website. Each guide answers frequently asked questions about the achievement testing program and provides descriptions of and sample questions for each achievement test subject.

## **Involvement of Teachers**

Teachers of grades 6 and 9 are encouraged to take part in activities related to the achievement testing program. These activities include item development, test validation, field testing, and marking. In addition, arrangements can be made through the Alberta Regional Professional Development Consortia for teacher in-service workshops on topics such as interpreting achievement test results to improve student learning.