

**Alberta Provincial
Achievement Testing**

**Assessment
Highlights
2014–2015**

**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 2015 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 2015 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 1 261 students wrote the 2015 Grade 9 Knowledge and Employability Social Studies Achievement Test.

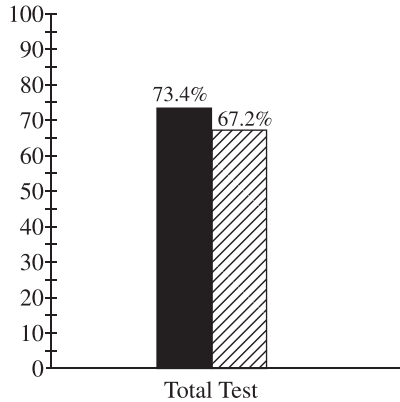
What Was the Test Like?

The 2015 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.

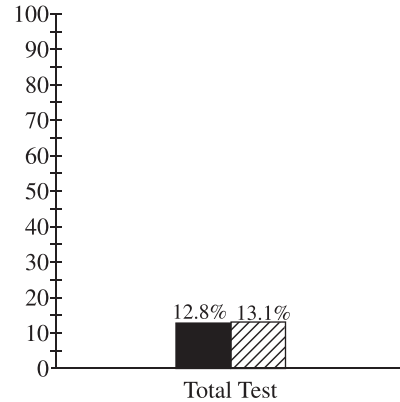
How Well Did Students Do?

The percentages of students meeting the acceptable standard and the standard of excellence in 2015 compared with 2014 are shown in the graphs below. Out of a possible total score of 50, the provincial average on the test was 31.0 (62.0%).

Percentage of Students Meeting the Acceptable Standard (%)



Percentage of Students Meeting the Standard of Excellence (%)



■ 2014 Achievement Standards: The percentage of students in the province who met the acceptable standard and the standard of excellence on the 2014 Grade 9 Knowledge and Employability Social Studies Achievement Test (based on those who wrote).

▨ 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).

Multiple-Choice Component—2015 Test Blueprint and Student Achievement

In 2015, 67.2% of students who wrote the Grade 9 Knowledge and Employability Social Studies Achievement Test achieved the acceptable standard, and 13.1% of students who wrote achieved the standard of excellence.

The blueprint below shows the reporting categories and test sections (curricular content areas) by which 2015 summary data are reported to schools and school authorities, and the provincial average of student achievement by both raw score and percentage.

TOPICS	Reporting Category		Provincial Student Achievement (Average Raw Score and Percentage)
	Knowledge and Understandings	Skills and Processes	
Canada: Governance and Citizenship (9.1)			
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).			18.5/29 (63.4%)
Canada and the United States: An Economic Relationship (9.2)			
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).			12.5/21 (59.5%)
Provincial Student Achievement (Average Raw Score and Percentage)	11.2/19 (58.9%)	19.8/31 (63.9%)	Total Test Raw Score 31/50 (62.0%)

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 2015 Student Achievement

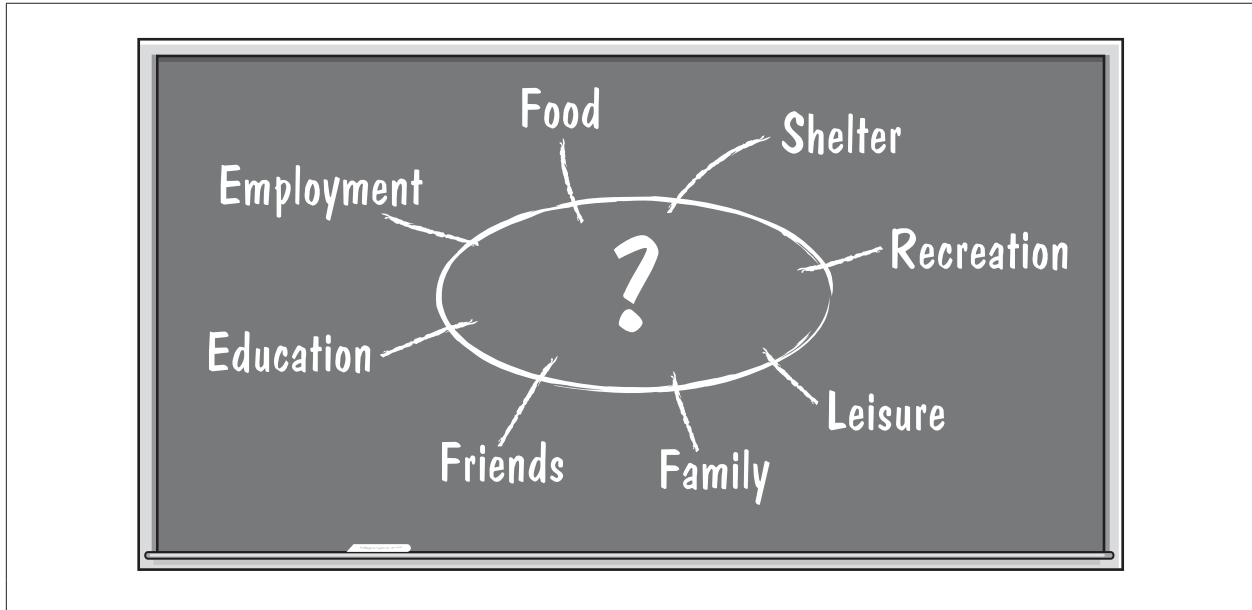
The following is a brief summary of the areas where most students experienced difficulties and demonstrated strengths on the 2015 Grade 9 Knowledge and Employability Social Studies Achievement Test.

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

- Interpret information from a historical map in order to make a generalization
- Analyze information to identify an example of how citizens can responsibly influence the political system
- Interpret information to identify the main idea of a political cartoon related to federal politics
- Identify a given definition of a consumer
- Analyze information in order to identify the main idea as it relates to quality of life

Question 33 required students to analyze information to identify the main idea as it relates to quality of life. Approximately 86.7% of students who met the acceptable standard and 94.5% of students who met the standard of excellence answered this question correctly.

Use the following information to answer question 33.



33. Which of the following titles would be **most appropriate** for the diagram shown above?
- A. Quality of Life
 - B. Political Freedoms
 - C. Economic Choices
 - D. Spending by Government

79.8% of the students chose A (correct answer)

7.2% of the students chose B

8.7% of the students chose C

4.0% of the students chose D

Students experienced relative difficulty with:

- Recognizing and identifying a role of members of the executive branch of Canada's federal political system
- Analyzing information to draw a conclusion related to quality of life indicators
- Recalling and identifying a characteristic of an underground economy
- Synthesizing information from a historical map in order to identify the sequence of given historical events

Question 6 required students to recognize and identify a role of members of the executive branch of Canada's federal political system. Approximately 46.3% of students who met the acceptable standard and 63.6% of students who met the standard of excellence answered this question correctly.

6. Individuals who are appointed by the prime minister to manage specific government departments are called
- A. Supreme Court judges
 - B. cabinet ministers
 - C. lobbyists
 - D. senators

13.5% of the students chose A

43.9% of the students chose B (correct answer)

13.8% of the students chose C

28.7% 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 at education.alberta.ca. 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 have been designed to be used by 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 presents answers to frequently asked questions about the achievement testing program as well as 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.