

Alberta Provincial
Achievement Testing

Assessment
Highlights
2009-2010

GRADE
6

Social Studies



Government
of Alberta ■

Alberta ■

Freedom To Create. Spirit To Achieve.

This document is an assessment highlights report on the 2010 Grade 6 Social Studies Achievement Test.

The assessment highlights report provides information about the test overall, test blueprints, and student performance on the achievement test that was administered in 2010. Also provided is commentary on areas of strength and weakness in student performance at the acceptable standard and the standard of excellence on selected items (from the 2010 achievement test). This information is intended for teachers and is best used in conjunction with the multi-year and detailed school reports that are available to schools via the extranet. Assessment Highlights reports for all achievement test subjects and grades will be posted on the Alberta Education website every year in the fall.

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The Alberta Education Internet address is education.alberta.ca.

This document was written primarily for:

Students	
Teachers	✓ of Grade 6 Social Studies
Administrators	✓
Parents	
General Audience	
Others	

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The 2010 Grade 6 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 2010 Grade 6 Social Studies Achievement Test.

How Many Students Wrote the Test?

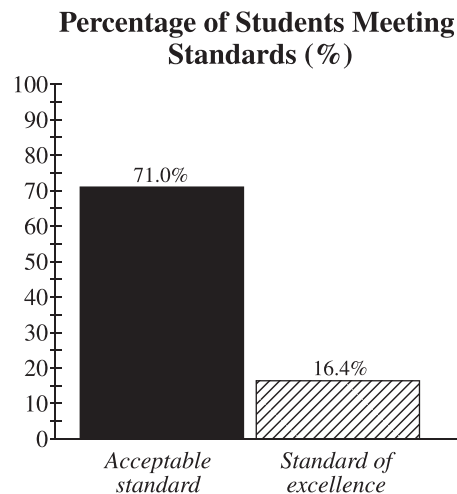
A total of 39 395 students wrote the 2010 Grade 6 Social Studies Achievement Test.

What Was the Test Like?

The 2010 Grade 6 Social Studies Achievement Test consisted of 45 multiple-choice questions based on two social studies topics: Citizens Participating in Decision Making and Historical Models of Democracy – Ancient Athens, Iroquois Confederacy.

How Well Did Students Do?

The percentages of students meeting the *acceptable standard* and the *standard of excellence* in 2010 are shown in the graph below. Out of a total score of 45 on the test, the provincial average was 30.4/45 (67.6%). The examination statistics that are included in this document represent all writers: both French and English. If you would like to obtain English-only or French-only statistics that apply to your school, please refer to the detailed reports that are available on the Extranet.



■ 2010 Achievement Standards: The percentage of students in the province who met the *acceptable standard* and the *standard of excellence* on the 2010 Grade 6 Social Studies Achievement Test (based on those who wrote).

2010 Test Blueprint and Student Achievement in Multiple Choice

Student achievement on the 2010 Grade 6 Social Studies Achievement Test averaged 30.4 out of a total score of 45 (67.6%).

The blueprint below shows the reporting categories and test sections (curricular content areas) by which 2010 summary data are reported to schools and school authorities, and the provincial average of student achievement by both raw score and percentage.

Multiple Choice: 45 Questions

		Knowledge and Understanding	Skills and Processes	Provincial Student Achievement Average (Raw Score and Percentage)
Citizens Participating in Decision Making	Democratic Principles and Ideals			5.5/8 (68.75%)
	Structure and Function of Local and Provincial Government			6.7/10 (67.0%)
	Individual, Group, and Community Involvement			5.7/9 (63.3%)
Historical Models of Democracy	Ancient Athens			6.2/9 (68.9%)
	Iroquois Confederacy			6.2/9 (68.9%)
Number (Percentage) of Questions		9.6/15 (64.0%)	20.8/30 (69.3%)	30.4/45 (67.6%)

Commentary on 2010 Student Achievement

The following discussion addresses specific areas of strength and weakness demonstrated by students who wrote the 2010 Grade 6 Social Studies Achievement Test. Sample questions from the 2010 Grade 6 Social Studies Achievement Tests are provided to highlight these areas for students meeting the *acceptable standard* and for those meeting the *standard of excellence*. These questions are no longer secured and will not be reused on future achievement tests.

Multiple-choice question 21 was a Skills and Processes question and is found in the **Citizen's Participating in Decision Making: Individual, Group, and Community Involvement** reporting category.

21. Which of the following statements from the sources is an opinion?
- A. "The trio of University of Alberta business students will be scrounging whatever food they can."
 - B. "The government of Alberta has created an Alberta Affordable Housing Task Force."
 - C. "The first stop for the task force will be Grande Prairie."
 - *D. "Wages in Alberta have to increase."

This question was fairly easy, with 76.1% of all students answering correctly. Students needed to analyze various quotes from a number of provided sources and determine which one represents an opinion as opposed to a fact. Option **A** was chosen by 9.4% of students. Option **B** was chosen by 8.5% of students. Option **C** was chosen by 5.9% of students. Approximately 81.7% of students who met the *acceptable standard* were able to answer this question correctly. Approximately 95.9% of the students who met the *standard of excellence* chose the correct response.

Multiple-choice question 36 was a Knowledge and Understanding question and is found in the **Historical Models of Democracy: Ancient Athens** reporting category.

36. Which of the following statements identifies a similarity between ancient Athenian democracy and present-day Canadian democracy?
- A. People who do not pay taxes cannot vote.
 - B. A majority of the people in the country vote.
 - *C. Citizenship is necessary for a person to vote.
 - D. People who do not own property cannot vote.

This question was slightly more challenging, with 68.2% of all students answering correctly. Students needed to demonstrate knowledge of the influence that ancient Athenian democracy has had on Canadian democracy. Option **A** was chosen by 5.3% of students. Option **B** was chosen by 19.7% of students. Option **D** was chosen by 6.7% of students. Approximately 70.4% of students who met the *acceptable standard* were able to answer this question correctly. Approximately 88.9% of students who met the *standard of excellence* chose the correct response.

Multiple-choice question 42 was a Knowledge and Understanding question and is found in the **Historical Models of Democracy: Iroquois Confederacy** reporting category.

42. If a chief from one of the Iroquois Confederacy nations was frequently absent without good reason or did not represent the views of his clan, he would be
- A. given a warning by the Mohawk chiefs
 - B. required to report to the Onondaga chiefs
 - *C. removed from the position by the clan mother
 - D. banished from the longhouse by the clan mother

This question was easier than the previous example, with 79.3% of all students answering correctly. Students were required to recall the power and influence of clan mothers within the structure of the Iroquois Confederacy. Option **A** was chosen by 8.1% of students. Option **B** was chosen by 6.3% of students. Option **D** was chosen by 6.2% of students. Approximately 84.8% of students who met the *acceptable standard* were able to answer this question correctly. Approximately 97.3% of students who met the *standard of excellence* chose the correct response.

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. From the home page, follow this path: *Teachers > Provincial Testing > Achievement Tests*, and then click on one of the specific links under the *Achievement Tests* heading 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 and directives; test accommodations; field testing; resources and web documents; calculator and computer policies; test marking and results; samples, forms, and letters; and Learner Assessment 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 3, 6, and 9. Each bulletin provides descriptions of assessment standards, test design and blueprinting, and scoring guides (for grades 3, 6, and 9 English Language Arts and Français/French Language Arts) as well as suggestions for preparing students to write the tests and information about how teachers can participate in test development activities.

Examples of Standards for Students' Writing

For achievement tests in grades 3, 6, and 9 English Language Arts and Français/French Language Arts, writing samples have been posted and can 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 *Part A: Writing* achievement tests. The writing samples documents contain sample responses with scoring rationales, student self-assessment checklists, and scoring categories and criteria for the writing assignments.

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 3, 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 *Parent Guide to Provincial Achievement Testing* for grades 3, 6, and 9 are posted on the Alberta Education website. Each guide presents answers to frequently asked questions about the achievement testing program; descriptions of and sample questions for each achievement test subject; and excerpts from the *Curriculum Handbook for Parents* identifying what students should know and be able to do in each subject by the end of grades 3, 6, and 9.

Involvement of Teachers

Teachers of Grades 3, 6, and 9 are encouraged to take part in a variety of activities related to the achievement testing program. These activities include item development, test validation, field testing, and marking. In addition, regional consortia can make arrangements for teacher in-service workshops on topics such as Interpreting Achievement Test Results to Improve Student Learning.