

Alberta Provincial Achievement Testing

Assessment
Highlights
2010-2011

GRADE
9

Knowledge and Employability **Social Studies**



Government
of Alberta ■

Alberta ■

Freedom To Create. Spirit To Achieve.

This document was written primarily for:

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

For further information, contact

Ray Shapka, Assessment Standards Team Leader, at
Ray.Shapka@gov.ab.ca

Ken Marcellus, Director, Achievement Testing, at
Ken.Marcellus@gov.ab.ca, or

Assessment Sector: (780) 427-0010
Toll-free within Alberta: 310-0000.

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

Copyright 2011, the Crown in Right of Alberta, as represented by the Minister of Education, Alberta Education, Assessment Sector, 44 Capital Boulevard, 10044 108 Street NW, Edmonton, Alberta T5J 5E6, and its licensors. All rights reserved.

Special permission is granted to **Alberta educators only** to reproduce, for educational purposes and on a non-profit basis, parts of this document that do **not** contain excerpted material.

Contents

The 2011 Grade 9 Knowledge and Employability Social Studies Achievement Test	1
Multiple-Choice Component—2011 Test Blueprint and Student Achievement	2
Multiple-Choice Component—Commentary on 2011 Student Achievement	3
Achievement Testing Program Support Documents.....	8

The 2011 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 2011 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 1 324 students wrote the 2011 Grade 9 Knowledge and Employability Social Studies Achievement Test.

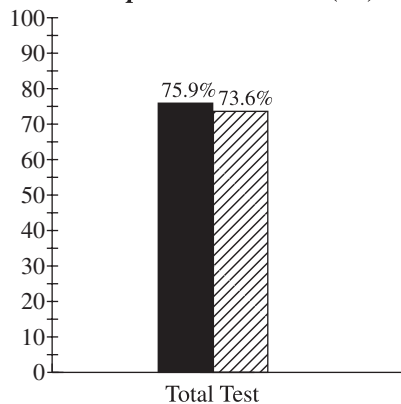
What Was the Test Like?

The 2011 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.

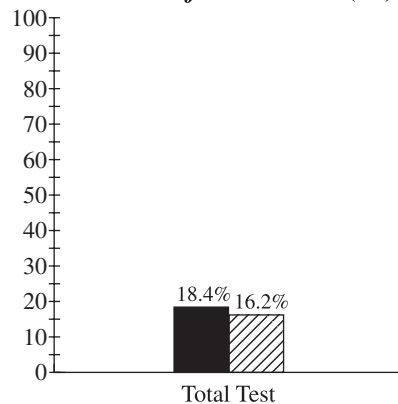
How Well Did Students Do?


Student achievement in 2011 is shown in the graphs below. Out of a total score of 50, the provincial average on the test was 33.3 (66.6%).


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



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



 2010 Achievement Standards: The percentage of students in the province who met the *acceptable standard* and the *standard of excellence* on the 2010 Grade 9 Knowledge and Employability Social Studies Achievement Test (based on those who wrote).

 2011 Achievement Standards: The percentage of students in the province who met the *acceptable standard* and the *standard of excellence* on the 2011 Grade 9 Knowledge and Employability Social Studies Achievement Test (based on those who wrote).

Multiple-Choice Component—2011 Test Blueprint and Student Achievement

The blueprint below shows the reporting categories and test sections (curricular content areas) by which 2011 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 Process	
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).			18.4/28 (65.7%)
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).			14.9/22 (67.7%)
Provincial Student Achievement (Average Raw Score and Percentage)	12.8/19 (67.4%)	20.5/31 (66.1%)	Total Test Raw Score 33.3/50 (66.6%)

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, research process, and media literacy as identified in the Grade 9 Knowledge and Employability Program of Studies (2007)

Multiple-Choice Component—Commentary on 2011 Student Achievement

The following is a brief summary of the areas where most students experienced difficulties and demonstrated strengths on the 2011 Grade 9 Knowledge and Employability Social Studies Achievement Test.

Students demonstrated relative strength by being able to:

- Analyze information to identify an example of how citizens can responsibly influence the political system
- Identify criteria required in order to vote in a Canadian federal general election
- Analyze information from a cartoon to draw a conclusion related to quality of life
- Analyze information to draw a conclusion related to an environmental issue
- Analyze information from a source to identify the main idea
- Interpret information to identify a fundamental freedom illustrated in a given source

Question 12 required students to identify criteria required in order to vote in a Canadian federal general election. Approximately 89.2% of students who met the *acceptable standard* and 95.8% of students who met the *standard of excellence* answered this question correctly.

- 12.** In order to vote in a Canadian federal general election, a person must be 18 years of age or older and must be a
- A.** Canadian citizen
 - B.** Canadian taxpayer
 - C.** Canadian property owner
 - D.** member of a Canadian political party

85.1% of the students chose A (correct answer)

6.9% of the students chose B

3.4% of the students chose C

4.6% of the students chose D

Question 27 required students to interpret information to identify a fundamental freedom illustrated in a given source. Approximately 80.1% of students who met the *acceptable standard* and 83.6% of students who met the *standard of excellence* answered this question correctly.

Use the following information to answer question 27.



27. Which of the following fundamental freedoms from the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms is shown in Source I?
- A. Freedom of thought, belief, opinion, and expression
 - B. Freedom of conscience and religion
 - C. Freedom of peaceful assembly
 - D. Freedom of association

73.5% of the students chose A (correct answer)

5.3% of the students chose B

6.6% of the students chose C

14.7% of the students chose D

Students demonstrated relative difficulty with:

- Analyzing information to identify the final step a bill goes through to become law
- Interpreting information to identify a generalization based on the information presented
- Analyze information presented to identify characteristics similar to those of Canada's mixed economy
- Identifying that social programs are established by government for the well-being of citizens
- Identifying who makes decisions about what goods are produced in a market economy

Question 29 required students to identify who makes decisions about what goods are produced in a market economy. Approximately 54.9% of students who met the *acceptable standard* and 85% of students who met the *standard of excellence* answered this question correctly.

- 29.** In a market economy, decisions about which goods are produced are made **mainly** by
- A.** lobby groups
 - B.** union leaders
 - C.** business owners
 - D.** elected politicians

14.9% of the students chose A

15.8% of the students chose B

53.7% of the students chose C (correct answer)

15.5% of the students chose D

Question 46, required students to recall that social programs are established by government for the well-being of citizens. Approximately 62.3% of students who met the *acceptable standard* and 85.5% of students who met the *standard of excellence* answered this question correctly.

- 46.** In Canada, government-run social-assistance programs are intended to ensure that
- A.** individuals can own a home
 - B.** people are provided with basic needs
 - C.** companies can afford to expand production of goods
 - D.** businesses receive profits with which to pay employees high wages

11.1% of the students chose A

58.6% of the students chose B (correct answer)

17.5% of the students chose C

12.5% 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](http://education.alberta.ca) 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 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 3, 6, and 9. Each bulletin provides descriptions of assessment standards, test design and blueprinting, and scoring guides as well as suggestions for preparing students to write the tests and information about how teachers can participate in test development activities.

Writing Samples

For achievement tests in grades 3, 6, and 9 English Language Arts and Français/French Language Arts, and grades 6 and 9 Social Studies, 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 writing samples documents contain sample responses with scoring rationales that relate student work to the scoring categories and scoring 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 have been 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.