

**Alberta Provincial  
Achievement Testing**

**Assessment  
Highlights  
2010-2011**

**GRADE  
6**

# Social Studies



**Government  
of Alberta ■**

*Alberta* ■

Freedom To Create. Spirit To Achieve.

This document is an assessment highlights report on the 2011 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 2011. 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 2011 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](http://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 2011 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 2011 Grade 6 Social Studies Achievement Test.

## How Many Students Wrote the Test?

A total of 39 395 students wrote the 2011 Grade 6 Social Studies Achievement Test.

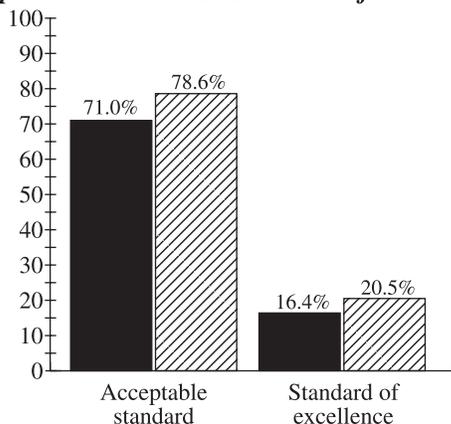
## What Was the Test Like?

The 2011 Grade 6 Social Studies Achievement Test consisted of 50 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 2011 are shown in the graph below. Out of a total score of 50 on the test, the provincial average was 34.2/50 (68.3%). 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.

**Percentage of Students Meeting the  
Acceptable Standard & 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 6 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 6 Social Studies Achievement Test (based on those who wrote).

## ***2011 Test Blueprint and Student Achievement in Multiple Choice***

Student achievement on the 2011 Grade 6 Social Studies Achievement Test averaged 34.2 out of a total score of 50 (68.3%).

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.

### **Multiple Choice: 50 Questions**

		<b>Knowledge and Understanding</b>	<b>Skills and Processes</b>	<b>Provincial Student Achievement Average (Raw Score and Percentage)</b>
Citizens Participating in Decision Making	Democratic Principles and Ideals			<b>6.1/9</b> <b>(67.6%)</b>
	Structure and Function of Local and Provincial Government			<b>7.1/11</b> <b>(64.9%)</b>
	Individual, Group, and Community Involvement			<b>6.8/10</b> <b>(67.9%)</b>
Historical Models of Democracy	Ancient Athens			<b>7.2/10</b> <b>(71.6%)</b>
	Iroquois Confederacy			<b>6.9/10</b> <b>(68.9%)</b>
Number (Percentage) of Questions		<b>12.6/20</b> <b>(63.2%)</b>	<b>21.5/30</b> <b>(71.7%)</b>	<b>34.2/50</b> <b>(68.3%)</b>

## Commentary on 2011 Student Achievement

The following discussion addresses specific areas of strength and weakness demonstrated by students who wrote the 2011 Grade 6 Social Studies Achievement Test. Sample questions from the 2011 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 8 was a Skills and Processes question and is found in the **Citizens Participating in Decision Making: Democratic Principles and Ideals** reporting category.

Use the following information to answer question 8.

“I got a speeding ticket last month while responding to an emergency situation in my family. I will appear in court in three weeks to present my case before a judge.”

8. Which of the following rights or freedoms contained in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms is demonstrated in the speaker’s comments?
- \* A. Legal rights
  - B. Democratic rights
  - C. Freedom of association
  - D. Freedom of peaceful assembly

This question was a little challenging, with 65.8% of all students answering correctly. Students needed to identify the right from the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms being demonstrated by a speaker. Option **B** was chosen by 14.2% of students. Option **C** was chosen by 10.9% of students. Option **D** was chosen by 8.9% of students. Approximately 65.3% of all students who met the *acceptable standard* were able to answer this question correctly. Approximately 83.0% of all students who met the *standard of excellence* chose the correct response.

Multiple-choice question 39 was a Knowledge and Understanding question and is found in the **Historical Models of Democracy: Ancient Athens** reporting category.

39. Which of the following statements **best** illustrates direct democracy in ancient Athenian government?
- \* A. All citizens were required to attend and vote at the Assembly.
  - B. Citizens could serve on Council only twice in their lifetime.
  - C. Any citizen could be chosen to be on a jury for a trial.
  - D. Council members represented the Athenian citizens.

This question was quite challenging, with 52.5% of all students answering correctly. Students needed to identify an example of direct democracy in ancient Athens. Option **B** was chosen by 15.0% of students. Option **C** was chosen by 15.2% of students. Option **D** was chosen by 17.2% of students. Approximately 50.4% of all students who met the *acceptable standard* were able to answer this question correctly. Approximately 77.6% 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. Which of the following statements reflects how the wampum belt illustrates the collective identity of the nations of the Iroquois Confederacy?
- A. The clan mother is the head of a clan.
  - B. All members of a clan live in one longhouse.
  - \* C. The five nations are joined under one peace agreement.
  - D. Each of the five nations can make its own decisions about issues within the nation.

This question was considerably easier than the previous one, with 73.0% of all students answering correctly. Students needed to recognize a wampum belt as an example of collective identity. Option **A** was chosen by 8.2% of students. Option **B** was chosen by 7.5% of students. Option **D** was chosen by 11.2% of students. Approximately 80.3% of all students who met the *acceptable standard* were able to answer this question correctly. Approximately 92.3% 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](http://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 directives, guidelines, and procedures; calculator and computer policies; test accommodations; test marking and results; field testing; resources and web documents; forms and samples; 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 (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 3, 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 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 as well as descriptions of and sample questions for each achievement test subject.

## **Involvement of Teachers**

Teachers of grades 3, 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.

