

**Alberta Provincial  
Achievement Testing**

**Assessment  
Highlights  
2013–2014**

**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 2014 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 2014 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 1 266 students wrote the 2014 Grade 9 Knowledge and Employability Social Studies Achievement Test.

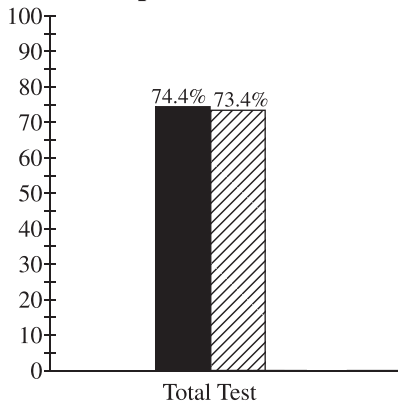
### **What Was the Test Like?**

The 2014 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.

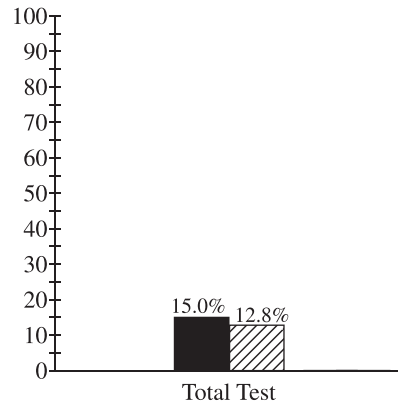
### **How Well Did Students Do?**

The percentages of students meeting the acceptable standard and the standard of excellence in 2014 compared with 2013 are shown in the graphs below. Out of a possible total score of 50, the provincial average on the test was 32.8 (65.6%).

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



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



■ 2013 Achievement Standards: The percentage of students in the province who met the acceptable standard and the standard of excellence on the 2013 Grade 9 Knowledge and Employability Social Studies Achievement Test (based on those who wrote).

▨ 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).

## *Multiple-Choice Component—2014 Test Blueprint and Student Achievement*

The blueprint below shows the reporting categories and test sections (curricular content areas) by which 2014 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>18.9/29 (65.2%)</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>13.9/21 (66.2%)</b>
<b>Provincial Student Achievement (Average Raw Score and Percentage)</b>	<b>11.9/18 (66.1%)</b>	<b>20.9/32 (65.3%)</b>	<b>Total Test Raw Score 32.8/50 (65.6%)</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 2014 Student Achievement***

The following is a brief summary of the areas where most students experienced difficulties and demonstrated strengths on the 2014 Grade 9 Knowledge and Employability Social Studies Achievement Test.

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

- Recognize and identify one way in which citizens can participate in Canada's justice system
- Recognize and identify a main objective of the Youth Criminal Justice Act
- Recall and identify a definition of immigration
- Analyze given information to draw a conclusion related to the views of political parties
- Recall and relate that one purpose of taxation is related to social programs

**Question 29** required students to recall and identify a definition of immigration. Approximately 83.7% of students who met the acceptable standard and about 93.2% of students who met the standard of excellence answered this question correctly.

*Use the following information to answer question 29.*

      ?: the process of people permanently settling in a country that is not their native country.

**29.** Which of the following words **best** replaces the question mark in the definition above?

- A.** Consumerism
- B.** Immigration
- C.** Governance
- D.** Citizenship

6.4% of the students chose A

75.1% of the students chose B (correct answer)

5.7% of the students chose C

12.8% of the students chose D



**Question 37** required students to analyze information to draw a conclusion related to the views of political parties. Approximately 86.4% of students who met the acceptable standard and about 98.1% of students who met the standard of excellence answered this question correctly.

*Use the following information to answer question 37.*

<b>Political Party Policies</b>	
<p><b>Party W</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increase funding to universities</li><li>• Increase support to public education</li></ul>	<p><b>Party X</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increase military defence spending</li><li>• Hire more border patrol guards</li></ul>
<p><b>Party Y</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide tax relief to small-business owners</li><li>• Decrease business taxes</li></ul>	<p><b>Party Z</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Strengthen environmental regulations</li><li>• Create new national parks</li></ul>

37. Based on the information above, which political party would **most likely** support passing legislation to improve airport security?
- A. Party W
  - B. Party X
  - C. Party Y
  - D. Party Z

6.9% of the students chose A  
77.6% of the students chose B (correct answer)  
9.4% of the students chose C  
5.9% of the students chose D

**Students experienced relative difficulty with:**

- Recognizing the Elizabeth Fry Society as an organization involved in Canada’s justice system
- Analyzing information to identify the main idea of given information
- Interpreting information to identify how members of Parliament and senators are selected
- Analyzing given information to distinguish opinion from fact
- Comparing differences between mixed and market economies to complete a statement

**Question 7** required students to analyze information to identify the main idea of given information. Approximately 53.2% of students who met the acceptable standard and about 81.5% of students who met the standard of excellence answered this question correctly.

*Use the following information to answer question 7.*

<b>Title:</b> _____ <b>?</b> _____
<b>Action W</b> Vote in an election
<b>Action X</b> Join a lobby group
<b>Action Y</b> Participate in an election campaign
<b>Action Z</b> Write letters to the prime minister

7. The title that **best** represents the information above is
- A. “Citizen Involvement in Government”
  - B. “Responsibilities of Canadian Citizens”
  - C. “Citizen Involvement in Advocacy Groups”
  - D. “Responsibilities of Members of Government”

49.8% of the students chose A (correct answer)  
19.3% of the students chose B  
15.1% of the students chose C  
15.7% of the students chose D

**Question 30** required students to compare differences between mixed and market economies to complete a statement. Approximately 47.7% of students who met the acceptable standard and about 73.5% of students who met the standard of excellence answered this question correctly.

30. *When compared to a mixed economy, a market economy has \_\_\_**i**\_\_\_ government control and consumers have \_\_\_**ii**\_\_\_ influence on the production of goods.*

The statement above is completed by the information in row

<b>Row</b>	<b><i>i</i></b>	<b><i>ii</i></b>
<b>A.</b>	less	less
<b>B.</b>	less	more
<b>C.</b>	more	less
<b>D.</b>	more	more

- 6.0% of the students chose A  
48.4% of the students chose B (correct answer)  
35.0% of the students chose C  
10.4% 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](http://education.alberta.ca). From the home page, follow the path *Teachers > Provincial Testing > Provincial Achievement Tests (PAT)*, and then 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 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.