

**Alberta Provincial  
Achievement Testing**

**Assessment  
Highlights  
2015–2016**

**GRADE  
6**

# **Social Studies**

*Alberta*  Government

This document is an assessment highlights report on the 2016 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 2016. 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 2016 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](http://www.education.alberta.ca) website 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 2016 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 2016 Grade 6 Social Studies Achievement Test.

## How Many Students Wrote the Test?

A total of 42 876 students wrote the 2016 Grade 6 Social Studies Achievement Test.

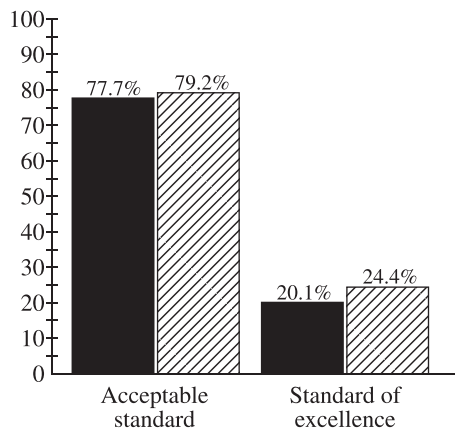
## What Was the Test Like?

The 2016 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 and the Iroquois Confederacy.

## How Well Did Students Do?

The percentages of students meeting the acceptable standard and the standard of excellence in 2016 are shown in the graph below. Out of a total score of 50 on the test, the provincial average was 33.8/50 (67.6%). The examination statistics that are included in this document represent all writers. 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 (%)**



- 2015 Achievement Standards: The percentage of students in the province who met the acceptable standard and the standard of excellence on the 2015 Grade 6 Social Studies Achievement Test (based on those who wrote).
- ▨ 2016 Achievement Standards: The percentage of students in the province who met the acceptable standard and the standard of excellence on the 2016 Grade 6 Social Studies Achievement Test (based on those who wrote).

## ***2016 Test Blueprint and Student Achievement in Multiple Choice***

Student achievement on the 2016 Grade 6 Social Studies Achievement Test averaged 33.8 out of a total score of 50 (67.6%).

The blueprint below shows the reporting categories and test sections (curricular content areas) by which 2016 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>
<b>Citizens Participating in Decision Making</b>	<b>Democratic Principles and Ideals</b>			<b>5.7/8 (71.3%)</b>
	<b>Structure and Function of Local and Provincial Government</b>			<b>7.0/10 (70.0%)</b>
	<b>Individual, Group, and Community Involvement</b>			<b>7.4/11 (67.3%)</b>
<b>Historical Models of Democracy</b>	<b>Ancient Athens</b>			<b>6.4/10 (64.0%)</b>
	<b>Iroquois Confederacy</b>			<b>7.2/11 (65.5%)</b>
<b>Number (Percentage) of Questions</b>		<b>14.1/21 (67.1%)</b>	<b>19.6/29 (67.6%)</b>	<b>33.8/50 (67.6%)</b>

## *Commentary on 2016 Student Achievement*

The following discussion addresses specific areas of strength and weakness demonstrated by students who wrote the 2016 Grade 6 Social Studies Achievement Test. Sample questions from the 2016 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.

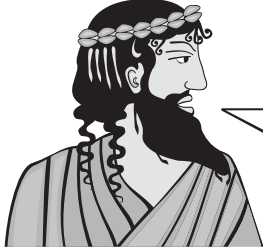
Multiple-choice question 7 was a Knowledge and Understanding question and is found in the **Local and Provincial Government** reporting category.

7. The person who gives royal assent to a bill if it is passed in the Legislative Assembly is the
- A. premier of Alberta
  - B.\* lieutenant governor
  - C. Speaker of the House
  - D. leader of the official Opposition

This question was straightforward, with 75.1% of students answering correctly. Students needed to recall a duty of a specific member of provincial government. Option **A** was chosen by 13.3% of students. Option **C** was chosen by 7.0% of students. Option **D** was chosen by 4.6% of students. Approximately 79.5% of students who met the acceptable standard were able to answer this question correctly. Approximately 96.2% of students who met the standard of excellence chose the correct response.

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

*Use the following information to answer question 36.*



**Erikos:**  
I am happy that the councillors, many of whom have to give up their jobs to serve on the Council of 500, get paid for being on Council. This means that many of my less wealthy friends will be able to serve on the Council.

36. The information in Erikos' statement is an example of how the Athenian government attempted to ensure
- A.\* equity
  - B. justice
  - C. freedom
  - D. representation

This question was quite challenging, with 59.4% of students answering correctly. Students needed to recognize an example of equity in ancient Athens. Option **B** was chosen by 18.0% of students. Option **C** was chosen by 10.7% of students. Option **D** was chosen by 11.8% of students. Approximately 61.9% of students who met the acceptable standard were able to answer this question correctly. Approximately 82.3% of students who met the standard of excellence chose the correct response.

Multiple-choice question 50 was a Knowledge and Understanding question and is found in the **Historical Models of Democracy: Iroquois Confederacy** reporting category.

50. At Men's Council meetings and Women's Council meetings, members of the Iroquois Confederacy
- A. met with a representative of the governor
  - B.\* were able to voice their opinion on any issue
  - C. were required to follow the decision of the chief
  - D. discussed only issues related to their own nation

This question was somewhat challenging, with 64.0% of students answering correctly. Students needed to recall the decision-making processes within the Iroquois Confederacy. Option **A** was chosen by 6.7% of students. Option **C** was chosen by 12.8% of students. Option **D** was chosen by 16.3% of students. Approximately 66.7% of students who met the acceptable standard were able to answer this question correctly. Approximately 90.0% 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](#). 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 are designed for 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 answers frequently asked questions about the achievement testing program and provides 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.