

**Alberta Provincial  
Achievement Testing**

**Assessment  
Highlights  
2014–2015**

**GRADE  
6**

# **Social Studies**

*Alberta*  Government

This document is an assessment highlights report on the 2015 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 2015. 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 2015 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 2015 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 2015 Grade 6 Social Studies Achievement Test.

## How Many Students Wrote the Test?

A total of 42 675 students wrote the 2015 Grade 6 Social Studies Achievement Test.

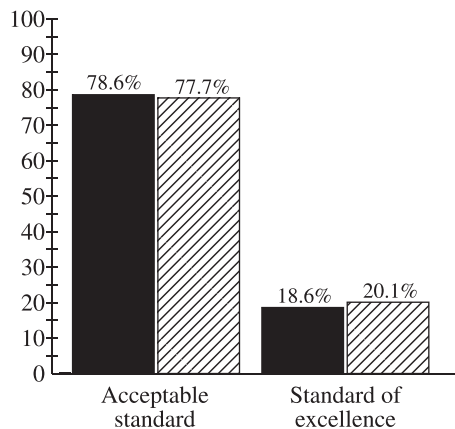
## What Was the Test Like?

The 2015 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 2015 are shown in the graph below. Out of a total score of 50 on the test, the provincial average was 32.9/50 (65.8%). 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 (%)**



- 2014 Achievement Standards: The percentage of students in the province who met the acceptable standard and the standard of excellence on the 2014 Grade 6 Social Studies Achievement Test (based on those who wrote).
- ▨ 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).

# *2015 Test Blueprint and Student Achievement in Multiple Choice*

Student achievement on the 2015 Grade 6 Social Studies Achievement Test averaged 32.9 out of a total score of 50 (65.8%).

The blueprint below shows the reporting categories and test sections (curricular content areas) by which 2015 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>6.7/10</b> <b>(67.0%)</b>
	Structure and Function of Local and Provincial Government			<b>7.0/10</b> <b>(70.0%)</b>
	Individual, Group, and Community Involvement			<b>5.5/9</b> <b>(61.1%)</b>
Historical Models of Democracy	Ancient Athens			<b>7.3/11</b> <b>(66.4%)</b>
	Iroquois Confederacy			<b>6.5/10</b> <b>(65.0%)</b>
Number (Percentage) of Questions		<b>13.1/20</b> <b>(65.5%)</b>	<b>19.8/30</b> <b>(66.0%)</b>	<b>33.1/50</b> <b>(66.2%)</b>

## *Commentary on 2015 Student Achievement*

The following discussion addresses specific areas of strength and weakness demonstrated by students who wrote the 2015 Grade 6 Social Studies Achievement Test. Sample questions from the 2015 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 9 was a Knowledge and Understanding question and is found in the **Citizens Participating in Decision Making: Democratic Principles and Ideals** reporting category.

9. When individuals cast votes in an election, they are
- A. participating directly in government
  - B. sharing their ideas with the public
  - C. representing a political party
  - D. obeying a law

This question was somewhat challenging, with 59.7% of students answering correctly. Students needed to recall the way that citizens may participate directly in democracy in Canada. Option **B** was chosen by 11.5% of students. Option **C** was chosen by 11.5% of students. Option **D** was chosen by 3.4% of students. Approximately 60.5% of students who met the acceptable standard were able to answer this question correctly. Approximately 81.3% of students who met the standard of excellence chose the correct response.

Multiple-choice question 19 was a Skills and Processes question and is found in the **Citizens Participating in Decision Making: Structure and Functions of Local and Provincial Governments** reporting category.

**Kindler Voter Registration Card**

I, Jane Smith of Box 2, Kindler, Alberta T9E 5E9  
(Name of Elector) (Street address or mailing address and postal code)

I am eligible to vote in this election because

- I have not voted before in this election.
- I am 18 years of age or older.
- I am a Canadian citizen.
- My place of residence is in the Voting Ward on Election Day.
- \_\_\_\_\_ ?

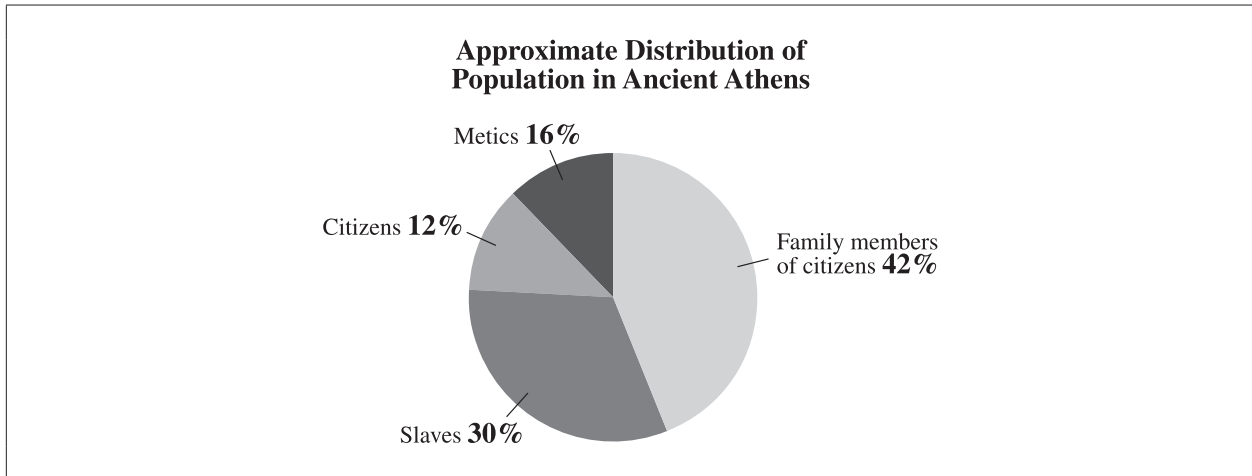
Jane Smith  
(Signature of Elector)

19. Which of the following statements replaces the question mark (?) in the information above?
- A. I pay taxes in Alberta
  - B. I own property in Alberta
  - C. I am a member of a political party in Alberta
  - D. I have lived in Alberta for a minimum of 6 months

This question was easier than the prior example, with 76.2% of students answering correctly. Students needed to identify the missing requirement for voting in a municipal election. Option **A** was chosen by 01.6% of students. Option **B** was chosen by 7.1% of students. Option **C** was chosen by 6.0% of students. Approximately 78.7% of students who met the acceptable standard were able to answer this question correctly. Approximately 92.0% of students who met the standard of excellence chose the correct response.



Multiple-choice question 40 was a Skills and Processes question and is found in the **Historical Models of Democracy: Ancient Athens** reporting category.



40. Based on the information in the chart, what percentage of the population was **most likely** born outside ancient Athens?
- A. 28%
  - B. 42%
  - C. 46%
  - D. 54%

This question was moderately challenging, with 64.5% of students answering correctly. Students needed to use a chart, and their knowledge of the structure of society in ancient Athens, to calculate the foreign-born population of ancient Athens. Option **A** was chosen by 12.2% of students. Option **B** was chosen by 16.8% of students. Option **D** was chosen by 6.3% of students. Approximately 67.6% of students who met the acceptable standard were able to answer this question correctly. Approximately 89.8% 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. All of the nations of the Iroquois Confederacy represented themselves at Grand Councils **except** the
- A. Seneca
  - B. Mohawk
  - C. Tuscarora
  - D. Onondaga

This question was also moderately challenging, with 69.7% of students answering correctly. Students needed to recall the nations that were represented at Grand Councils of the Iroquois Confederacy. Option **A** was chosen by 8.0% of students. Option **B** was chosen by 11.4% of students. Option **D** was chosen by 10.8% of students. Approximately 72.5% of students who met the acceptable standard were able to answer this question correctly. Approximately 88.0% of students who met the standard of excellence were able to answer this question correctly.

# *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). 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 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.