

Grade 9

Assessment Highlights

Knowledge & Employability

Science

Alberta Provincial Achievement Testing 2018–2019

This document was written primarily for:

Students	
Teachers	✓ Grade 9 KE Science
Administrators	✓
Parents	
General Audience	
Others	

Alberta Education, Government of Alberta

2019–2020

Grade 9 Assessment Highlights
Knowledge and Employability Science

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Contents

<i>2019 Grade 9 Knowledge and Employability Science Provincial Achievement Test</i>	2
Test Blueprint and Commentary on 2019 Student Achievement	3
Commentary on 2019 Student Achievement	4
Provincial Achievement Testing Program Support Documents	6

You can find [provincial achievement test-related materials](#) on the Alberta Education website.

Additional topics of interest are found in the [General Information Bulletin](#).

This document contains assessment highlights from the *2019 Grade 9 Knowledge and Employability Science Provincial Achievement Test*.

Assessment Highlights provides information about the overall test, the test blueprint, and student performance on the provincial achievement test that was administered in 2019. Also provided is information on student performance at the acceptable standard and the standard of excellence on selected items from the *2019 Grade 9 Knowledge and Employability Science Provincial Achievement Test*. This information is intended for teachers and is best used in conjunction with multi-year and detailed school reports that are available to schools via the Stakeholder File Exchange (SFX). **Assessment Highlights** for all provincial achievement test subjects and grades are **posted on the Alberta Education website every year** in the fall.

The examination statistics that are included in this document represent both French and English writers. If you would like to obtain English-only statistics or French-only statistics that apply to your school, please refer to your detailed reports, which are available on the Stakeholder File Exchange (SFX).

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2019 Grade 9 Knowledge and Employability Science Provincial Achievement Test

This report provides teachers, school administrators, and the public with an overview of the performance of those students who wrote the *2019 Grade 9 Knowledge and Employability Science Provincial Achievement Test*. It complements the detailed school and jurisdiction reports.

How many students wrote the test?

A total of 1 302 students in Alberta wrote the *2019 Grade 9 Knowledge and Employability Science Provincial Achievement Test*.

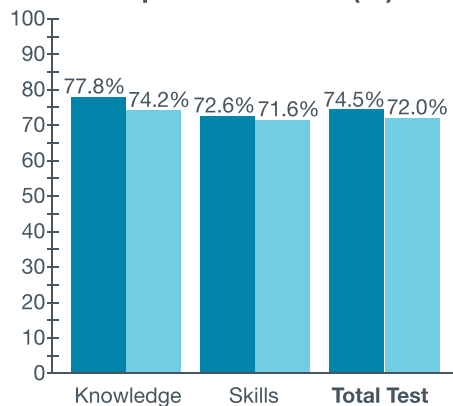
What was the test like?

The *2019 Grade 9 Knowledge and Employability Science Provincial Achievement Test* consisted of 50 multiple-choice questions based on five science topics: *Biological Diversity; Matter and Chemical Change; Environmental Chemistry; Electrical Principles and Technologies; and Space Exploration*.

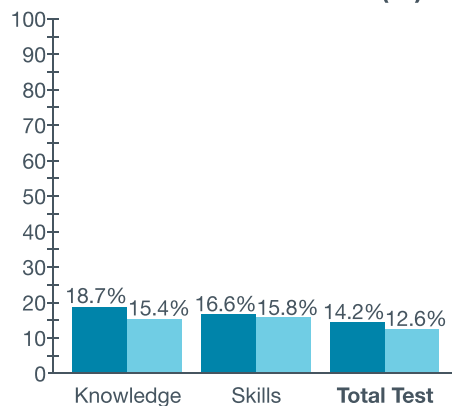
How well did students do?

The percentages of students meeting the acceptable standard and the standard of excellence in 2019 are shown in the graph below. Out of a possible total score of 50, the provincial average on the test was 30.0 (60.0%).

Percentage of Students Meeting the Acceptable Standard (%)



Percentage of Students Meeting the Standard of Excellence (%)



2018 Achievement Standards: The percentage of students in the province that met the acceptable standard and the standard of excellence on the *2018 Grade 9 Knowledge and Employability Science Provincial Achievement Test* (based on those who wrote).

2019 Achievement Standards: The percentage of students in the province that met the acceptable standard and the standard of excellence on the *2019 Grade 9 Knowledge and Employability Science Provincial Achievement Test* (based on those who wrote).

Test Blueprint and Commentary on 2019 Student Achievement

In 2019, 72.0% of students who wrote the test achieved the acceptable standard on the *Grade 9 Knowledge and Employability Science Achievement Test*, and 12.6% of students achieved the standard of excellence.

The blueprint below shows the reporting categories and test sections (curricular content areas) by which 2019 summary data are reported to schools and school authorities, and the provincial average of student achievement by both raw score and percentage.

Test Section	Content Reporting		Provincial Student Achievement (Average Raw Score and Percentage)
	Knowledge	Skills	
Biological Diversity			6.3/10 (63.0%)
Matter and Chemical Change			5.9/10 (59.0%)
Environmental Chemistry			5.7/10 (57.0%)
Electrical Principles and Technologies			6.0/10 (60.0%)
Space Exploration			6.0/10 (60.0%)
Provincial Student Achievement (Average Raw Score and Percentage)	13.2/21 (62.9%)	16.8/29 (57.9%)	30.0/50 (60.0%)

Commentary on 2019 Student Achievement

The following is a brief summary of the areas where most students experienced difficulties and demonstrated strengths on the *2019 Grade 9 Knowledge and Employability Science Provincial Achievement Test*. Sample questions are also provided to highlight some of these areas. These questions are no longer secured and will not be reused on future provincial achievement tests.

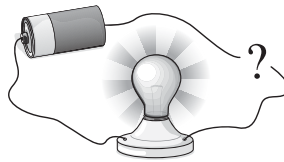
Students demonstrated relative strength by being able to:

- identify the impact of human activity related to the extinction of a species;
- distinguish between heritable and non-heritable characteristics;
- analyze information to make an inference related to given information;
- identify an example of an electrical conductor;
- interpret information to draw a conclusion related to a given planet's distance from the Sun.

For **multiple-choice question 38**, students had to identify an example of an electrical conductor. Approximately 86.7% of students who met the acceptable standard and 97.6% of students who met the standard of excellence answered this item correctly.

Use the following information to answer question 38.

Josie is experimenting with a circuit. She connects the free ends of the two wires to an object she is testing. The light bulb lights up.



38. Based on the above information, which of the following objects did Josie use to complete the circuit?

- A.** A plastic bottle cap
- B.** A rubber band
- C.** A nickel
- D.** A rock

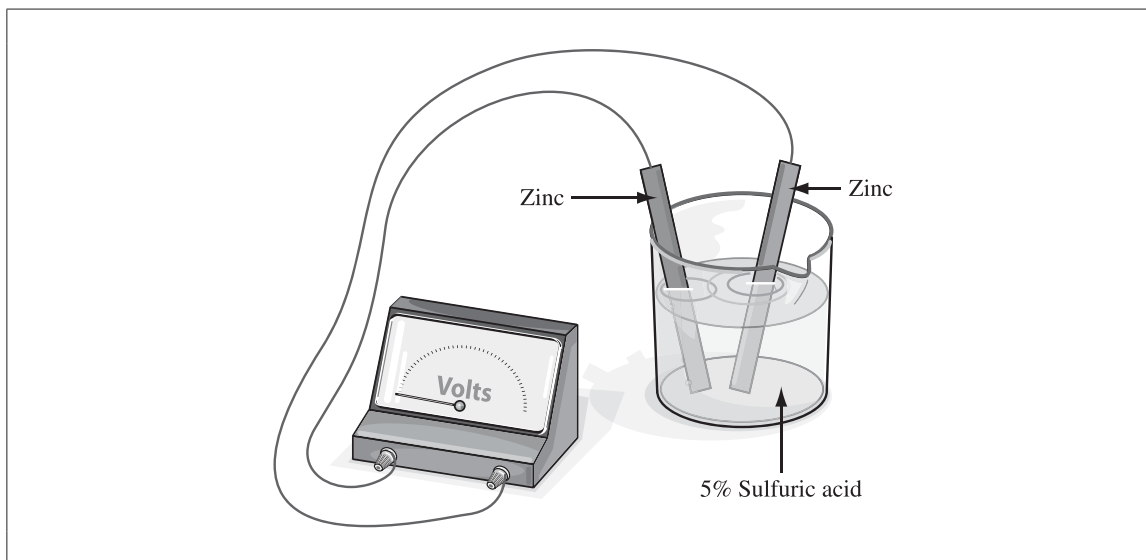
6.5% of the students chose A
10.1% of the students chose B
79.5% of the students chose C (correct answer)
3.5% of the students chose D

Students experienced relative difficulty with:

- analyzing information to draw a conclusion about a science-related issue;
- recalling and identifying the definition of an element;
- analyzing information in a diagram to identify a problem related to electrical current;
- analyzing information to draw a conclusion about the motion of objects in space;
- identifying the product in a given chemical reaction.

For **multiple-choice question 40**, students had to analyze information in a diagram to identify a problem related to electrical current. Approximately 52.9% of students who met the acceptable standard and 73.8% of students who met the standard of excellence answered this item correctly.

Use the following information to answer question 40.



- 40.** Which of the following statements **best** explains why the wet cell above would **not** conduct electricity?
- A.** The electrolyte is too strong.
 - B.** The electrodes are not conductive.
 - C.** The electrolyte is not strong enough.
 - D.** The electrodes are made of the same type of metal.

7.5% of the students chose A
23.8% of the students chose B
19.4% of the students chose C
48.7% of the students chose D (correct answer)

Provincial Achievement Testing Program Support Documents

The Alberta Education website contains several documents that provide valuable information about various aspects of the provincial 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.

Provincial 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 Provincial Achievement Test 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 provincial 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 provincial 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. The exemplars documents contain sample responses with scoring rationales that relate student work to the scoring categories and scoring criteria.

Previous provincial achievement tests and answer keys

All January provincial achievement tests (parts A and B) for Grade 9 semestered students are secured and must be returned to Alberta Education. All May/June provincial 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 Provincial Achievement Test Program and provides descriptions of and sample questions for each provincial achievement test subject.

Involvement of teachers

Teachers of grades 6 and 9 are encouraged to take part in activities related to the Provincial Achievement Test 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 provincial achievement test results to improve student learning.