



Grade 9  
Assessment Highlights  
Social Studies

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Alberta Provincial Achievement Testing 2018–2019

This document was written primarily for:

Students	
Teachers	✓ Grade 9 Social Studies
Administrators	✓
Parents	
General Audience	
Others	

Alberta Education, Government of Alberta

2018–2019

*Social Studies 9 Assessment Highlights*

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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 Social Studies Provincial Achievement Test*.

Assessment highlights provide information about the overall test, the test blueprint, and student performance on the provincial achievement test. Also provided is information on student performance at the acceptable standard and the standard of excellence on selected items from the 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. Assessment highlights reports 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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# The 2019 Grade 9 Social Studies Provincial Achievement Test

This report provides teachers, school administrators, and the public with an overview of the performance of all students who wrote the 2019 Grade 9 Social Studies Provincial Achievement Test. It complements the detailed school and jurisdiction reports.

## How many students wrote the test?

A total of 42 336 students in Alberta wrote the 2019 Grade 9 Social Studies Provincial Achievement Test.

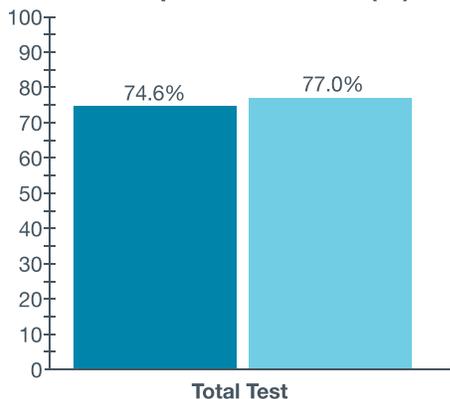
## What was the test like?

The 2019 Grade 9 Social Studies Provincial Achievement Test consisted of 50 multiple-choice questions based on specific outcomes (SOs) within each of the two general outcomes (GOs) in the 2007 Grade 9 Social Studies Program of Studies: GO 9.1 Issues for Canadians: Governance and Rights and GO 9.2 Issues for Canadians: Economic Systems in Canada and the United States.

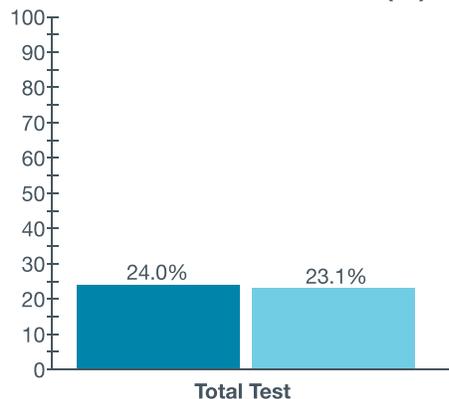
## How well did students do?

The percentages of students meeting the acceptable standard and the standard of excellence in 2019 are consistent with 2018, as shown in the graphs below. Out of a total possible score of 50 on the test, the provincial average was 32.7 (65.4%).

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



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



-  2018 Achievement Standards: The percentages of students in the province that met the acceptable standard and the standard of excellence on the 2018 Grade 9 Social Studies Provincial Achievement Test (based on those who wrote)
-  2019 Achievement Standards: The percentages of students in the province that met the acceptable standard and the standard of excellence on the 2019 Grade 9 Social Studies Provincial Achievement Test (based on those who wrote)

# Test Blueprint and 2019 Student Achievement

In 2019, 77.0% of all students who wrote the *Grade 9 Social Studies Provincial Achievement Test* achieved the acceptable standard on the test, and 23.1% of all students who wrote achieved the standard of excellence. Student achievement on the *2019 Grade 9 Social Studies Provincial Achievement Test* averaged 32.7 out of a total possible score of 50 (65.4%).

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 (Curricular Content Area)	Reporting Category		Provincial Student Achievement (Average Raw Score and Percentage)
	Knowledge and Understanding <sup>1</sup>	Skills and Processes <sup>2</sup>	
<p><b>The Political and Judicial System (9.1.4, 9.1.5)<sup>3</sup></b> Students examine the structure of Canada’s federal political system and analyze the role of citizens and organizations in Canada’s justice system by exploring and reflecting on questions and issues regarding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how federal laws are passed</li> <li>• branches of the federal government</li> <li>• selection of MPs and senators</li> <li>• accountability of MPs and senators</li> <li>• the role of federal political parties</li> <li>• the role of media in political issues</li> <li>• lobby groups and government decisions</li> <li>• how political and legislative processes meet the needs of Canadians</li> <li>• participation in Canada’s justice system</li> <li>• citizens’ legal roles and responsibilities</li> <li>• the Youth Criminal Justice Act</li> </ul>			<p><b>7.8/11 (70.9%)</b></p>

<sup>1</sup>**Knowledge and Understanding**—the breadth and depth of information, concepts, evidence, ideas, and opinions fundamental to decision making as identified in the Grade 9 Social Studies Program of Studies

<sup>2</sup>**Skills and Processes**—the application of critical and creative thinking, historical thinking, geographic thinking, decision making, problem solving, and media literacy to relevant situations as identified in the Grade 9 Social Studies Program of Studies

<sup>3</sup>Bolded numbers in parentheses refer to specific outcomes in the Grade 9 Social Studies Program of Studies to which the reporting categories are cross-referenced.

Test Section (Curricular Content Area)	Reporting Category		Provincial Student Achievement (Average Raw Score and Percentage)
	Knowledge and Understanding <sup>1</sup>	Skills and Processes <sup>2</sup>	
<p><b>Individual and Collective Rights (9.1.6, 9.1.7)</b><sup>3</sup> Students critically assess the impact of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms on legislative processes in Canada and how increased demand for recognition of collective rights has impacted legislative processes in Canada by exploring and reflecting on questions and issues regarding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• recognition of individual rights</li> <li>• exercising individual rights</li> <li>• conditions in the workplace</li> <li>• rights and responsibilities of citizens</li> <li>• recognition of collective rights</li> <li>• the needs of Francophone minorities</li> <li>• the needs of Francophones in Québec</li> <li>• the rights of official-language minorities</li> <li>• how the Indian Act recognizes the status and identity of Aboriginal peoples</li> <li>• Treaty 6, Treaty 7, and Treaty 8</li> <li>• legislation and Métis cultures and rights</li> </ul>			<p><b>7.4/11</b> <b>(67.3%)</b></p>
<p><b>Immigration (9.1.8)</b><sup>3</sup> Students critically assess how legislative processes address issues of immigration by exploring and reflecting on questions and issues regarding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• factors influencing immigration policies</li> <li>• changes to Canadian policies on immigration and refugees</li> <li>• immigration and Aboriginal peoples</li> <li>• provincial immigration policies</li> <li>• immigration policies in Québec</li> <li>• immigration policies and the Charter</li> <li>• how Canada benefits from immigration</li> </ul>			<p><b>5.2/8</b> <b>(65.0%)</b></p>

<sup>1</sup>**Knowledge and Understanding**—the breadth and depth of information, concepts, evidence, ideas, and opinions fundamental to decision making as identified in the Grade 9 Social Studies Program of Studies

<sup>2</sup>**Skills and Processes**—the application of critical and creative thinking, historical thinking, geographic thinking, decision making, problem solving, and media literacy to relevant situations as identified in the Grade 9 Social Studies Program of Studies

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Test Section (Curricular Content Area)	Reporting Category		Provincial Student Achievement (Average Raw Score and Percentage)
	Knowledge and Understanding <sup>1</sup>	Skills and Processes <sup>2</sup>	
<b>Economic Decision Making (9.2.4)<sup>3</sup></b> Students analyze principles and practices of market and mixed economies by exploring and reflecting on questions and issues regarding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• principles of a market economy</li> <li>• government intervention</li> <li>• Canada’s mixed economy</li> <li>• consumers in market and mixed economies</li> <li>• consumer individual and collective identity</li> <li>• the economic impact of labour unions</li> <li>• government intervention in the economy in Canada and in the United States</li> <li>• the basic economic problem of scarcity</li> </ul>			<b>4.7/8 (58.8%)</b>
<b>Consumerism, Quality of Life, and Political Decision Making (9.2.5, 9.2.6)<sup>3</sup></b> Students critically assess the relationship between consumerism and quality of life in Canada and the United States and the interrelationship between political decisions and economic systems by exploring and reflecting on questions and issues regarding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• indicators of quality of life</li> <li>• individual consumer behaviour</li> <li>• how marketing affects consumerism</li> <li>• consumerism and quality of life</li> <li>• consumerism as a power of a collective</li> <li>• consumerism and economic growth</li> <li>• values underlying social programs</li> <li>• economic platforms of political parties</li> <li>• political party philosophies and platforms</li> <li>• the underground economy</li> <li>• environmental issues and quality of life</li> </ul>			<b>7.5/12 (62.5%)</b>
<b>Provincial Student Achievement (Average Raw Score and Percentage)</b>	<b>12.7/19 (66.8%)</b>	<b>20.0/31 (64.5%)</b>	<b>Total Test Raw Score = 50</b>

<sup>1</sup>**Knowledge and Understanding**—the breadth and depth of information, concepts, evidence, ideas, and opinions fundamental to decision making as identified in the Grade 9 Social Studies Program of Studies

<sup>2</sup>**Skills and Processes**—the application of critical and creative thinking, historical thinking, geographic thinking, decision making, problem solving, and media literacy to relevant situations as identified in the Grade 9 Social Studies Program of Studies

<sup>3</sup>Bolded numbers in parentheses refer to specific outcomes in the Grade 9 Social Studies Program of Studies to which the reporting categories are cross-referenced.

# Commentary on 2019 Student Achievement

The following is a discussion of student achievement on the *2019 Grade 9 Social Studies Provincial Achievement Test*. Sample questions from the test are provided to highlight the achievement of students who met the acceptable standard, students who met the standard of excellence, and students who did not meet the acceptable standard. For each question, the keyed answer is marked with an asterisk.

Together, the first three blueprint categories encompass outcomes contained in General Outcome 9.1 Issues for Canadians: Governance and Rights, wherein students are expected to analyze Canada's political and legislative processes and their impact on issues pertaining to governance, rights, citizenship, and identity. In the **Political and Judicial System** blueprint category (composed of 11 questions), students were expected to examine the structure of Canada's federal political system (Specific Outcome 9.1.4) and analyze the role that citizens and organizations play in Canada's justice system (Specific Outcome 9.1.5) by exploring and reflecting on questions and issues pertaining to:

- How are laws passed in the federal political system? (SO 9.1.4)
- What is the relationship between the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of Canada's federal political system? (SO 9.1.4)
- What processes are used to determine members of Parliament (MPs) and senators? (SO 9.1.4)
- To whom are members of Parliament and senators accountable? (SO 9.1.4)
- To what extent do political and legislative processes meet the needs of all Canadians? (SO 9.1.4)
- How do citizens and organizations participate in Canada's justice system (i.e., jury duty, knowing the law, advocacy, John Howard Society, Elizabeth Fry Society)? (SO 9.1.5)

Students who achieved the acceptable standard were able to demonstrate a basic understanding of the roles and responsibilities of members of the executive and legislative branches of Canada's federal political system, the power of a majority government in the legislative branch of Canada's federal government, and the influence of advocacy groups in Canada's criminal justice system. Students who met the standard of excellence additionally demonstrated strengths in exploring issues regarding the extent to which members of the executive and legislative branches of Canada's federal government are accountable to Canadians, assessing the extent to which the legislative branch of Canada's government upholds democratic principles in the enactment of legislation, and evaluating viewpoints regarding the extent to which Canada's criminal justice system serves the interests of Canadians. Students who did not achieve the acceptable standard were generally able to recognize some components of the legislative and executive branches of Canada's federal political system, but many of these students struggled with questions pertaining to the scope of political power exercised by the legislative and executive branches of Canada's federal government and demonstrated a limited awareness of how citizens and organizations participate in Canada's federal justice system. The following question illustrates some of these differences in student achievement on the *2019 Grade 9 Social Studies Provincial Achievement Test*.

In question 9 (blueprinted as a **Knowledge and Understanding** question), students were required to know the role played by advocacy groups in Canada's judicial system (SO 9.1.5).

9. Which of the following phrases would correctly replace the question mark in Source I?
- A. Jurors and judges
  - B. Jurors and members of the John Howard Society
  - C. Members of the Elizabeth Fry Society and judges
  - \*D. Members of the Elizabeth Fry Society and the John Howard Society

Of all students who wrote the test, 81.7% chose the keyed response (option **D**). These students were able to recall the role played by advocacy groups, such as the John Howard Society and the Elizabeth Fry Society, in Canada's justice system. Option **A** (selected by 11.9% of all students) acknowledges the presence of jurors and judges as part of Canada's judicial system, but their roles are distinct from that of advocacy groups. Option **B** (selected by 3.3% of all students) and Option **C** (selected by 3.0% of all students) each correctly identifies either the John Howard Society or the Elizabeth Fry Society as an advocacy group, but each option incorrectly identifies either jurors or judges as members of advocacy groups. Of those students who met the acceptable standard, 87.5% answered this question correctly. Of those students who met the standard of excellence, 98.1% chose the keyed response. Of those students who did not achieve the acceptable standard, 51.5% selected the correct answer.

In the section of the *2019 Grade 9 Social Studies Provincial Achievement Test* blueprinted for curricular content pertaining to **Individual and Collective Rights** (composed of 11 questions), students were required to assess, critically, the impact of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms on legislative processes in Canada (Specific Outcome 9.1.6) and assess, critically, how the increased demand for recognition of collective rights has impacted legislative processes in Canada (Specific Outcome 9.1.7) by exploring and reflecting on questions and issues regarding:

- How does the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms support individuals in exercising their rights? (SO 9.1.6)
- In what ways has the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms fostered recognition of individual rights in Canada? (SO 9.1.6)
- In what ways has the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms fostered recognition of collective rights in Canada? (SO 9.1.7)
- In what ways does the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms meet the needs of Francophones in minority settings? (SO 9.1.7)
- To what extent should federal and provincial governments support and promote the rights of official-language minorities in Canada? (SO 9.1.7)
- How does the Indian Act recognize the status and identity of Aboriginal peoples? (SO 9.1.7)
- How does legislation such as Treaty 6, Treaty 7, and Treaty 8 recognize the status and identity of Aboriginal peoples? (SO 9.1.7)

Students who met the acceptable standard were able to recognize some of the ways in which the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms protects the fundamental freedoms of individuals, acknowledge provisions in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms that guarantee minority-language educational rights, and identify aspects of the Indian Act and Treaty 6 that guarantee the collective rights of Aboriginal peoples. Students who achieved the standard of excellence were additionally able to appreciate the challenges faced by the federal government in balancing measures to promote national security with the protection of individual rights and freedoms in Canada, assess the extent to which minority-language educational rights have been guaranteed to official-language communities in Canada, and evaluate the extent to which legislation such as the Indian Act and Treaty 6 acknowledges the status and identity of Aboriginal peoples. For students who did not meet the acceptable standard, questions that required addressing issues arising from the restriction of rights contained in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms in the interests of national security, examining the applicability of minority-language educational rights to individual cases in Canada, or synthesizing information related to differing viewpoints regarding recognition of the collective rights of Aboriginal peoples frequently proved challenging. Some of these differences in student achievement on the *2019 Grade 9 Social Studies Provincial Achievement Test* are demonstrated in the following question.

In question 19 (blueprinted as a **Knowledge and Understanding** question), students were required to know a feature of the Indian Act that has had an impact on the status and identity of First Nations peoples in Canada (SO 9.1.7).

19. Which of the following phrases would correctly replace the question mark under “Some Features of the Indian Act (1876)” in Source I?
- A. Respected the diversity of First Nations peoples
  - \*B. Originally intended to assimilate First Nations peoples
  - C. Indicated that Indian Agents on reserves were to be elected by First Nations peoples
  - D. Initially provided First Nations peoples with the authority to administer treaty rights

Of all students who wrote the test, 60.9% were able to acknowledge that an original intention of the Indian Act of 1876 was to assimilate First Nations peoples, and chose the keyed response (option **B**). Option **A** (selected by 14.9% of all students) presents the idea that the Indian Act of 1876 aimed to preserve the diverse cultures and languages of First Nations peoples, an intention that would be in opposition to the intended goal of assimilation. Option **C** (selected by 8.8% of all students) incorrectly presents the idea that the Indian Act stipulated that Indian Agents on reserves were to be elected by First Nations peoples; in actuality, the Indian Act required that Indian Agents on reserves were to be appointed by the government of Canada. Option **D** (selected by 15.3% of all students) presents the mistaken idea that the Indian Act of 1876 granted First Nations peoples the authority to administer treaty rights; in reality, the authority to administer treaty rights under the Indian Act was to be held by the government of Canada. Of those students who met the acceptable standard, 62.0% answered this question correctly. Of those students who met the standard of excellence, 92.0% chose the correct answer. Of those students who did not achieve the acceptable standard, 27.3% selected the correct response.

In the **Immigration** blueprint category (composed of 8 questions), students were expected to assess, critically, how legislative processes attempt to address emerging issues of immigration

(Specific Outcome 9.1.8) by exploring and reflecting on questions and issues related to:

- What factors influence immigration policies in Canada (i.e., economic, political, health, security)? (SO 9.1.8)
- How are changes to Canadian policies on immigration and refugees a reflection of world issues? (SO 9.1.8)

Those students who achieved the acceptable standard were able to identify the main principles underlying Canadian policies on immigration and refugees that determine Canada's responses to international refugee crises and recognize factors related to the eligibility of economic-class immigrants to Canada. Students achieving the standard of excellence could also examine the indelible impact of Canada's efforts to resolve refugee crises throughout the world as well as appreciate the benefits of immigration in strengthening Canada's economy. Students who did not meet the acceptable standard sometimes had difficulty formulating conclusions with regard to Canada's policies on immigration and refugees from details presented as well as with the acknowledgement of conflicting viewpoints related to the extent to which Canada's immigration policies serve the interests of Canadians. Such differences in student achievement on the *2019 Grade 9 Social Studies Provincial Achievement Test* are shown in the following question.

In question 25 (blueprinted as a **Skills and Processes** question), students were required to analyze a timeline in one source to determine the events that identify circumstances similar to a situation described in another source (SO 9.S.1).

- 25.** The circumstances faced by the Syrian refugees in Source III are **most similar** to those faced by refugees in Source II who were admitted to Canada in
- \***A.** 1979–1980 and 2006
  - B.** 1979–1980 and 2008
  - C.** 1999 and 2006
  - D.** 1999 and 2008

The keyed response (option **A**) was selected by 57.0% of all students who wrote the test. These students were able to analyze events in a timeline in one source in order to identify how the circumstances faced by refugees admitted to Canada in 1979-1980 (who fled “the rise to power of a dictatorial communist government in Vietnam”) and 2006 (who fled “violence at the hands of the military government”) are most similar to circumstances faced by refugees in an international crisis in 2011 (who fled the “Assad regime’s violent crackdown on peaceful protesters”) documented in information from a Government of Canada website in another source. Option **B** (selected by 13.4% of all students) correctly identifies circumstances faced by refugees admitted to Canada in 1979-1980, but incorrectly identifies dissimilar circumstances faced by refugees admitted to Canada in 2008 (who faced “persecution based on their Nepalese cultural heritage”). Option **C** (selected by 23.1% of all students) correctly identifies circumstances faced by refugees admitted to Canada in 2006, but incorrectly identifies dissimilar circumstances faced by refugees admitted to Canada in 1999 (who were “airlifted to Canada from war in Kosovo”). Option **D** (selected by 6.4% of all students) incorrectly identifies dissimilar circumstances faced by refugees admitted to Canada in 1999 and 2008. Of those students who achieved the acceptable standard, 57.0% chose the correct answer. The majority of students who achieved the standard of excellence (84.2%) chose the correct answer, while only 29.7% of students who did not meet the acceptable standard correctly answered the question.

The final two blueprint categories encompass outcomes within General Outcome 9.2 Issues for Canadians: Economic Systems in Canada and the United States, in which students are required to demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of how economic decision making in Canada and the United States impacts quality of life, citizenship, and identity. With regard to curricular content in the blueprint category related to **Economic Decision Making** (composed of 8 questions), students were required to compare and contrast the principles and practices of market and mixed economies (Specific Outcome 9.2.4) by exploring and reflecting on questions and issues pertaining to:

- What are the principles of a market economy? (SO 9.2.4)
- Why do governments intervene in a market economy? (SO 9.2.4)
- Why is Canada viewed as having a mixed economy? (SO 9.2.4)

Students who met the acceptable standard were able to recognize basic principles that distinguish a mixed economy from a market-oriented economy and were able to identify differences in how market-oriented and mixed economies address the three basic economic questions that arise from scarcity. Students who achieved the standard of excellence were additionally able to form generalizations regarding the far-reaching economic impact of government intervention in the economy and assess the extent to which government intervention is beneficial to the economy. Students who did not achieve the acceptable standard were often challenged by questions that required an interpretation of indicators of economic production in Canada or the exploration of differing beliefs regarding the extent to which government should intervene in the economy. The following question illustrates some of these differences in student achievement on the *2019 Grade 9 Social Studies Provincial Achievement Test*.

In question 33 (blueprinted as a **Skills and Processes** question), students were required to identify what a graph in one source reveals about the economic impact of a government program described in another source (SO 9.S.1).

- 33.** The graph in Source III reveals that, by the third quarter of the year in which the Home Renovation Tax Credit described in Source II was implemented,
- \***A.** sales of goods and services increased
  - B.** the unemployment rate remained unchanged
  - C.** fewer unemployed individuals received government aid
  - D.** the amount of wealth generated by economic activity decreased

The correct answer (option **A**) was chosen by 52.6% of all students who wrote the test. These students were able to examine the answers to “Frequently Asked Questions” about the “Home Renovation Tax Credit (HRTC)” in one source to determine that the impact of the federal government’s effort to “encourage spending and boost the economy during an economic downturn” was evident in a graph in another source by the third quarter of 2009, when the economic growth rate increased significantly and the unemployment rate declined. Evidence of how the HRTC “stimulated the economy” by the third quarter of 2009 is incorrectly identified in Option **B** (selected by 13.6% of all students) in relation to the misinterpretation that the unemployment rate remained unchanged. Option **C** (selected by 13.6% of all students) mistakenly suggests that the economic impact of the HRTC by the third quarter of 2009 is evident in how the number of unemployed individuals who received government assistance

decreased, but such information is not shown in the graph. Option **D** (selected by 20.0% of all students) mistakenly suggests that the economic impact of the HRTC by the third quarter of 2009 is evident in how the amount of wealth generated by economic activity decreased, but such information is not shown in the graph. Overall, the correct answer for this question was selected by 51.1% of those students who achieved the acceptable standard, 78.4% of those students who met the standard of excellence, and 30.3% of those students who did not achieve the acceptable standard.

In the blueprint category that encompasses questions that involve **Consumerism, Quality of Life, and Political Decision Making** (composed of 12 questions), students were expected to assess, critically, the relationship between consumerism and quality of life in Canada and the United States (Specific Outcome 9.2.5) and assess, critically, the interrelationship between political decisions and economic systems (Specific Outcome 9.2.6) by exploring and reflecting on questions and issues regarding:

- What are the indicators of quality of life? (SO 9.2.5)
- How does marketing impact consumerism? (9.2.5)
- How do the economic platforms of political parties differ from one another (i.e., Democrat versus Republican, Liberal versus Conservative)? (SO 9.2.6)
- How is a political party's philosophy reflected in its platform (i.e., social programs, specific taxes, taxation model)? (SO 9.2.6)

Students achieving the acceptable standard were able to identify indicators of quality of life, recognize factors that guide consumer behaviour, and acknowledge basic features of the economic platforms of the Democrat and Republican political parties in the United States. Students who achieved the standard of excellence could also delve deeply into the implications of annual income as an economic indicator of quality of life, were able to evaluate the impact of marketing on consumerism, and could appreciate the impact of Democrat and Republican policies on the provision of social programs in the United States. Those students who did not meet the acceptable standard often had difficulty interpreting data on annual income, determining the motivation underlying consumer actions, and recognizing the differing perspectives of the Democrat and Republican political parties with regard to the provision of social programs in the United States. Some of the aforementioned differences in student performance are evident in the following question taken from the *2019 Grade 9 Social Studies Provincial Achievement Test*.

Question 42 (blueprinted as a **Skills and Processes** question) required students to draw a conclusion regarding the question that the information contained in three sources would be used most appropriately to answer (SO 9.S.4).

42. The information contained in all three sources would be used **most appropriately** to answer which of the following questions?
- A. How does scarcity of resources affect quality of life?
  - \*B. What do economic factors indicate about quality of life?
  - C. How does the ability to meet basic needs impact quality of life?
  - D. What impact does the availability of luxury items have on quality of life?

Of all students who wrote the test, 69.4% were able to synthesize information in a list of “Some Indicators of Quality of Life” in one source, a map showing “Average Annual Income per Household in Canada, 2014” in another source, and a bar graph showing “Distribution of Individual Income in Alberta, 2014” in a third source in order to conclude that the information contained in all three sources would be used most appropriately to answer a question regarding what “economic factors indicate about quality of life” and chose the keyed response (option **B**). Option **A** (selected by 7.5% of all students) presents a question that is related to how scarcity of resources affects quality of life, option **C** (selected by 18.0% of all students) presents a question that is related to how the ability to meet basic needs impacts quality of life, and option **D** (selected by 5.0% of all students) presents a question that is related to how the availability of luxury items affects quality of life, but such information is not contained in any of the three sources provided. Of those students who met the acceptable standard, 73.3% answered this question correctly. Of those students who met the standard of excellence, 92.2% chose the correct answer. Of those students who did not achieve the acceptable standard, 37.4% selected the correct response.

Overall, student achievement on the *2019 Grade 9 Social Studies Provincial Achievement Test* was strong. Most students (77.0%) were able to achieve the acceptable standard, and 23.1% of all students achieved the standard of excellence. Of all students who wrote the test, 23.0% did not achieve the acceptable standard.

# 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.