Grade 9
Subject Bulletin
Knowledge & Employability

Alberta Provincial Achievement Testing 2019–2020

Alberta

This document was written primarily for:

Students		
Teachers	✓	Knowledge & Employability
Administrators	✓	
Parents		
General Audience		
Others		

Alberta Education, Government of Alberta

2019–2020

Knowledge & Employability Subject Bulletin

Distribution: This document is posted on the Alberta Education website.

Contents

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

Additional topics of interest are found in the *General Information Bulletin*.

Preface

Knowledge & Employability Provincial Achievement Testing

Provincial achievement tests are administered annually in English and French Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. The purpose of the Achievement Testing Program is to assess what students know and are able to do at given points in their schooling, to use that information to inform instruction, and to report to Albertans how well students are learning relative to provincial standards. The Knowledge & Employability provincial achievement tests have been designed with this purpose in mind.

The Knowledge & Employability courses include, among others, programs of study for English Language Arts 8–9, Mathematics 8–9, Science 8–9, and Social Studies 8–9. (See the *Knowledge & Employability Courses Handbook* posted at education.alberta.ca.) The Knowledge & Employability provincial achievement tests reflect the Grade 9 outcomes in these programs of study. All of the provincial achievement tests will be administered according to the same schedule as the regular Grade 9 provincial achievement tests. Grade 9 students who are receiving instruction in a Knowledge & Employability program of study are expected to write the achievement test for that course.

Purpose of this Bulletin

The purpose of this bulletin is to outline key features of the Knowledge & Employability provincial achievement tests and the reports that will be issued. It is also intended to inform school-system administrators and teachers about the administration of the provincial achievement tests that will occur in January and June 2020.

Key Features

Test design elements

Each of the Knowledge & Employability provincial achievement tests is designed to assess what students know and are able to do in relation to those learning outcomes that are measurable using paper-and-pencil test questions.

Test format

The *Grade 9 Knowledge & Employability English Language Arts Provincial Achievement Test Part A: Writing* is described in more detail later in this document. The Knowledge & Employability Science, Social Studies, and ELA *Part B: Reading* provincial achievement tests are each composed of 50 multiple-choice items. The Mathematics test is composed of 45 multiple-choice items and 5 numerical-response items. Student responses will be recorded on a machine-scorable answer sheet.

Administration times

ELA *Part A: Writing* consists of one writing assignment designed to be administered in 80 minutes. Students have up to 160 minutes to complete the test. Each of the Knowledge & Employability multiple-choice provincial achievement tests is designed to be administered in 75 minutes. Students have up to 150 minutes to complete each multiple-choice test.

French translations

Translated forms of the Knowledge & Employability Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies provincial achievement tests will be available for students receiving their instruction within Francophone or alternative French-language programs.

Accommodations

Test accommodations will be available for the Knowledge & Employability provincial achievement tests. These accommodations will be granted following the policies and processes outlined in the Provincial Achievement Testing Program's *General Information Bulletin*.

Test Administration

Eligibility to write

To be eligible to write a Knowledge & Employability provincial achievement test, a student must have received instruction in the Grade 9 Knowledge & Employability program of study for that course.

Administrative framework

All the Knowledge & Employability provincial achievement tests will be administered following the directives and policies of the Provincial Achievement Testing Program. Further information about the Provincial Achievement Testing Program directives and policies is provided in the *General Information Bulletin*, which may be accessed through Alberta Education's website at education.alberta.ca.

Testing dates

The Knowledge & Employability provincial achievement tests will be administered according to the same schedule as the regular Grade 9 provincial achievement tests, in January and June.

Scoring and reporting

Results reporting

Each year, Alberta Education produces course- and grade-specific provincial achievement test summary results reports for each school and school authority. Separate reports are issued for students who write the English and French forms of the Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies provincial achievement tests. All of these school and school-authority reports contain local and provincial results and are made available in late August.

In late September Alberta Education makes available two copies of the Individual Student Profile (ISP) of each student to the staff of the school where the student wrote the provincial achievement tests. ISPs of students who are excused or absent from the assessment, and students whose results have been withheld, will be annotated *not available*. The school must keep a copy of the ISP with the student's records, and **must** provide the student's parents or guardians with access to a copy of the ISP.

School and school-authority summary reports and ISPs will be produced for the Knowledge & Employability provincial achievement tests.

Test Design Details

Overview

Characteristics of Knowledge & Employability courses

Collectively, the Knowledge & Employability courses focus on the development and application of reading, writing, and mathematical literacy as well as on the development and application of essential employability skills. To best meet the needs of the students for whom these courses have been designed, all of the Knowledge & Employability learning outcomes reflect academic and occupational skill standards that have been deemed necessary for success by workplace representatives.

In addition to being organized around a set of grade-specific disciplinary concepts and themes, each of the Grade 9 Knowledge & Employability programs of study emphasizes the development and application of a common set of essential skills. These common essential skills include critical thinking, creative thinking, decision making, problem solving, and meta-cognition.

The Grade 9 Knowledge & Employability provincial achievement tests have been designed to reflect the academic and occupational skill standards in the English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies programs of study. Thus, each test will assess outcomes related to the concepts, themes, and essential skills specific to that particular program of study.

Allowable student and classroom materials

The design of a provincial achievement test takes into account all of the conditions under which it will be administered. These include any support resources that students might access while writing the test. Knowledge & Employability provincial achievement tests are designed to be administered without the use of any support resources, with the following exceptions. When writing the Mathematics test, students may use calculators and manipulative materials (for example, algebra tiles or a circular protractor). Conversion tables (both metric and imperial) will be included with the Mathematics test.

Notes (in any form), papers, graphic organizers, informal dictionaries, or books related to the test may not be brought into the test room. Classroom materials that could provide any assistance to a student in a particular test must be removed or covered (for example, a list of definitions of terms, a multiplication table, or formulas).

Grade 9 Knowledge & Employability English Language Arts Provincial Achievement Test

General description

The *Grade 9 Knowledge & Employability English Language Arts Provincial Achievement Test* consists of two parts—*Part A: Writing* and *Part B: Reading*.

Part A: Writing general description

ELA *Part A: Writing* consists of one writing assignment designed to be completed in 80 minutes; however, students have up to 160 minutes to complete the test should they need it. For the first 10 minutes, students may discuss the assignment with classmates in groups of two to four, or think alone about the writing prompt. Students will engage in this discussion time without teacher participation. During this discussion time, students may record their ideas on the "Planning" page provided.

Those students for whom a dictionary is a familiar tool are encouraged, but not required, to use a dictionary during the editing phase of their writing. Use of a dictionary throughout the writing test may interfere with a student's ability to complete his/her writing.

Students may use print versions of commercially published dictionaries, bilingual dictionaries, and commercially published thesauri when completing Part A only.

Students may do their writing using a computer. For information about using word-processing technology to complete the written component of the provincial achievement test, see the *General Information Bulletin*.

Part A: Writing requires students to write for a specific audience and to fulfill a specified purpose within a given context. Students are asked to respond to a given situation in the form of a persuasive essay. Students whose writing is unrelated to the prompt will be awarded a score of **Insufficient**. Students whose writing shows no evidence of an attempt to address the task presented in the assignment, and students who have written so little that it is not possible to assess Content, will be awarded a mark of **Insufficient**.

The booklet for *Part A: Writing* includes a page labelled "Planning," as well as lined pages for the students' writing. Students are asked to produce only one copy of their work. They are encouraged to make revisions and corrections directly on this copy. Because of the limited testing time, students benefit most from spending their time composing and revising their work rather than from perfecting a "good copy."

Blueprint for *Part A: Writing*

The blueprint below shows the scoring/reporting categories by which student writing is assessed and by which summary data will be reported to schools and school authorities.

Reporting Category	Description of Writing Assignment	Standard
Content* (selecting ideas and details to achieve a purpose) Students respond to a given topic by writing an essay. Students establish their purpose, select ideas and supporting details to achieve the purpose, and communicate in a manner appropriate to their audience. **Organization*** (organizing ideas and details into a coherent whole) Students organize their ideas to produce a unified and coherent essay that links details, sentences, and paragraphs, and that supports the purpose. **Sentence Structure** (structuring sentences effectively) Students control sentence structure and use a variety of sentence types, sentence beginnings, and sentence lengths to enhance communication. **Vocabulary** (selecting and using words and expressions correctly and effectively) Students choose specific words and expressions that are appropriate for their audience and effective in establishing a voice/tone that will help to achieve their purpose. **Conventions** (using the conventions of written language correctly and effectively) Students use conventions accurately and effectively to communicate.	The writing assignment requires students to respond to a prompt that provides a given context (situation) and a collection of materials that students may use, if they wish. These materials may include graphics, quotations, and short literary excerpts. Students may use ideas from previous experience and/or reading. Students are to respond by writing a persuasive essay.	Student achievement in each reporting category will be described according to the following descriptors: Excellent Proficient Satisfactory Limited Poor INS (insufficient)

*Content and Organization are weighted to be worth twice as much as each of the other categories.

Local marking

Classroom teachers will be able to mark students' writing, using scoring guides such as those in this bulletin, before returning the tests to Alberta Education. All papers will be marked centrally in Edmonton in July.

Locally awarded marks submitted to Alberta Education will be used as the first reading of a student's response. Local markers are to use the **For Teacher Use Only** section on the back of the *Part A: Writing* test booklet to record their marks by filling in the appropriate circles. The "School Code" and "ACCOMMODATIONS USED" sections should also be completed (see accommodations in the *General Information Bulletin* for more information). If a teacher wants to know how his or her locally awarded scores compare with the scores that the tests received when scored centrally then he or she must create a three-digit identification number and enter it in the section labelled "**ID No.**" on the back of each student booklet. It is important that no two teachers from the same school create and use the same identification number. No other marks are to be made on the test booklet by the teacher.

To facilitate fair and valid assessment of all students during both local and central marking, **teachers must not** mark or write in student booklets.

To assess locally those students with special test-writing needs, specifically a scribed response (test accommodation 5) or a taped response (test accommodation 10), teachers are to refrain from scoring **Conventions**.

Teachers have approximately one week to return the tests to Alberta Education. The papers will then be scored centrally by Alberta Education as the second reading. Both marks contribute to the student's final mark. In the event of a discrepancy between the two marks, papers will be adjudicated by a third reading, which will determine the final mark that the paper is awarded. In this way, valid and reliable individual and group results can be reported.

Papers that are not marked locally by teachers will be marked centrally only once. At least once a day, all central markers mark a copy of the same paper for inter-rater reliability.

After central marking has been completed and school reports have been sent to the schools, teachers who submitted their marks with an identification number will receive a confidential report on their marking. This Local Marker Report includes the locally awarded score, the centrally awarded score, a third-read score if applicable, and the final scores assigned.

To support local marking, Alberta Education provides, along with the test materials, samples of student writing that exemplify the scoring criteria and levels of student achievement. These exemplars are not to be shared with students and must be returned to Alberta Education with the tests.

The mark for *Part A: Writing* is worth 35% of the total mark for the *Grade 9 K&E English Language Arts Provincial Achievement Test.*

Essay writing

To determine a student's mark, convert the word descriptors to the following numeric values:

Excellent = 5

Proficient = 4

Satisfactory = 3

Limited = 2

Poor = 1

Use the following information to assign the score for each student's test:

1. Assign a score of 1 to 5 for each of *content*, *organization*, *sentence structure*, *vocabulary*, and *conventions*.

2. Multiply the scores for *content* and *organization* by 2 as these categories are worth twice as much as the other categories.

Maximum score possible for Narrative Writing = 35

Information for teachers participating in central marking

Provincial Assessment Sector staff will contact superintendents in the spring for their nomination of markers. The teachers selected will reflect proportional representation from the various regions of Alberta.

To qualify for nomination by a superintendent, a prospective marker must satisfy ALL the following conditions:

• have a valid permanent Alberta Professional Teaching Certificate

• have taught the course within the past three years

• be currently employed by a school authority or private school

• be available on all scheduled days

Markers will be contacted in May, and the list of markers will be finalized no later than June 15. Group leaders will meet the day before the marking session for training.

Each year, many more teachers are nominated to mark than are needed. There must be a balance of first-time and experienced markers; regional representation by zone, school authority, and school; and gender balance when markers are selected. Unfortunately, not everyone whose name is submitted is selected.

Because the time allotted for marking is limited, markers are often asked to mark on Saturday and Sunday. The marking floor is open from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and markers are expected to be available to mark during those hours.

Knowledge & Employability Scoring Guides for 2019–2020

Content

When marking **Content** appropriate for the Grade 9 Knowledge and Employability Essay Writing Assignment, the marker should consider how effectively the writer

- explores the topic
- establishes a point of view
- chooses ideas
- supports the response
- holds the reader's interest

Excellent E	• The writer's exploration of the topic is insightful and/or discerning. • The writer's point of view, whether stated or implied, is deliberate. • The ideas presented by the writer are engaging and/or carefully chosen. • Supporting details are precise and/or are original. • The writing is confident and/or interesting and captures and holds the reader's interest.
Proficient Pf	• The writer's exploration of the topic is adept and/or logical. • The writer's point of view, whether stated or implied, is intentional. • The ideas presented by the writer are thoughtful and/or sound. • Supporting details are relevant and specific. • The writing is purposeful and/or clear and draws the reader's interest.
Satisfactory S	• The writer's exploration of the topic is clear and/or plausible. • The writer's point of view, whether stated or implied, is evident. • The ideas presented by the writer are appropriate and/or direct. • Supporting details are relevant but general. • The writing is straightforward and occasionally captures the reader's interest.
Limited L	• The writer's exploration of the topic is superficial or simplistic. • The writer's point of view, whether stated or implied, is vague. • The ideas presented by the writer are superficial and/or ambiguous. • Supporting details are imprecise and/or vague. • The writing is uncertain and/or incomplete, lacks appeal, and infrequently captures the reader's interest.
Poor P	• The writer's exploration of the topic is minimal and/or irrelevant. • The writer's point of view, whether stated or implied, is incomprehensible. • The ideas presented by the writer are overgeneralized and/or underdeveloped. • Supporting details are irrelevant and/or lacking. • The writing is confusing and/or undeveloped and does not interest the reader.
Insufficient INS	• The marker can discern no evidence of an attempt to address the topic presented in the assignment, or the writer has written so little that it is not possible to assess **Content**.

Note: **Content** and **Organization** are weighted to be worth twice as much as the other scoring categories.

Student whose work is unrelated to prompt will be awarded a score of **Insufficient**.

Organization

When marking **Organization** appropriate for the Grade 9 Knowledge & Employability Essay Writing Assignment, the marker should consider how effectively the writing demonstrates

- introduction
- coherent order
- connections between ideas and/or details
- conclusion

Excellent E	• The introduction is engaging and skillfully establishes a focus that is capably and consistently maintained. • Ideas and/or details are developed in paragraphs in a logical order, and coherence is consistently maintained. • Transitions fluently connect ideas and/or details within sentences and between paragraphs. • The conclusion is effective and enhances the focus.
Proficient Pf	• The introduction is purposeful and clearly establishes a focus that is capably maintained. • Ideas and/or details are developed in paragraphs in a sensible order, and coherence is generally maintained. • Transitions clearly connect ideas and/or details within sentences and between paragraphs. • The conclusion is appropriate and reinforces the focus.
Satisfactory S	• The introduction is functional and establishes a focus that is generally maintained. • Ideas and/or details are developed in a discernible order, although coherence may falter occasionally. • Transitions tend to be mechanical and are generally used to connect ideas and/or details within sentences and between paragraphs. • The conclusion is adequate and may be related to the focus.
Limited L	• The introduction lacks purpose and/or is not functional; any focus established is not maintained. • The development of ideas and/or details is not clearly discernible, and coherence falters frequently. • Transitions are lacking and/or ineffectively used to connect ideas and/or details within sentences and between paragraphs. • The conclusion is unrelated to the focus and may be random and/or haphazard.
Poor P	• The introduction, if present, is obscure or ineffective; no focus is established. • The development of ideas and/or details is haphazard and incoherent. • Transitions are absent and/or inappropriately used to connect ideas and/or details within sentences and between paragraphs. • The conclusion is ineffectual or missing.
Insufficient INS	• The writing has been awarded an **INS** for **Content**.

Note: **Content** and **Organization** are weighted to be worth twice as much as the other scoring categories.

Sentence Structure

When marking **Sentence Structure** appropriate for the Grade 9 Knowledge & Employability Essay Writing Assignment, the marker should consider the extent to which

- sentence structure is controlled
- sentence type and sentence length are effective and varied
- sentence beginnings are varied

Proportion of error to length and complexity of response must be considered.

Excellent **E**	• Sentence structure is effectively and consistently controlled. • Sentence type and sentence length are consistently effective and varied. • Sentence beginnings are consistently varied.
Proficient **Pf**	• Sentence structure is consistently controlled. • Sentence type and sentence length are usually effective and varied. • Sentence beginnings are often varied.
Satisfactory **S**	• Sentence structure is generally controlled, but lapses may occasionally impede meaning. • Sentence type and sentence length are sometimes effective and/or varied. • Some variety of sentence beginnings is evident.
Limited **L**	• Sentence structure often lacks control, and this may impede meaning. • Sentence type and sentence length are rarely effective or varied; run-on sentences and/or sentence fragments, if present, often impede meaning. • There is little variety of sentence beginnings.
Poor **P**	• Sentence structure lacks control, and this often impedes meaning. • There is no variation of sentence type or sentence length; run-on sentences and/or sentence fragments, if present, severely impede meaning. • There is no variety of sentence beginnings.
Insufficient **INS**	• The writing has been awarded an **INS** for **Content**.

Vocabulary

When marking **Vocabulary** appropriate for the Grade 9 Knowledge & Employability Essay Writing Assignment, the marker should consider the

- accuracy of the words and expressions
- effectiveness of the words and expressions
- appropriateness and effectiveness of the voice/tone created by the writer

Proportion of error to length and complexity of response must be considered.

Excellent **E**	• Words and expressions are consistently used accurately and effectively. • Well-chosen words and expressions are used to enhance the writer's position. • The voice/tone created by the writer is consistently engaging throughout.
Proficient **Pf**	• Words and expressions are often used accurately and appropriately. • Well-chosen words and expressions are often used to support the writer's position. • The voice/tone created by the writer is frequently distinct.
Satisfactory **S**	• Words and expressions are generally used accurately and appropriately. • General words and expressions are used to support the writer's position. • The voice/tone created by the writer is discernible but may be inconsistent.
Limited **L**	• Words and expressions used generally convey only vague meanings. • Imprecise words and expressions predominate; specific words, if present, may be awkwardly used to support the writer's position. • The voice/tone created by the writer is not clearly established or is inconsistent.
Poor **P**	• Words and expressions used are vague and/or sometimes inappropriate or ineffective. • Overgeneralized words and expressions predominate; specific words, if present, are frequently misused and/or are repeated to support the writer's position. • The voice/tone created by the writer is not evident or is inappropriate.
Insufficient **INS**	• The writing has been awarded an **INS** for **Content**

Conventions

When marking **Conventions** appropriate for the Grade 9 Knowledge & Employability Essay Writing Assignment, the marker should consider the extent to which the student has control of

- mechanics (spelling, punctuation, capitalization, etc.) and usage (subject–verb agreement, pronoun usage, consistent verb tenses, etc.)
- clarity and flow of the response

Proportion of error to length and complexity of response must be considered.

Excellent **E**	• The quality of the writing is enhanced because it is essentially error-free. • Any errors that are present do not reduce clarity and do not interrupt the flow of the response.
Proficient **Pf**	• The quality of the writing is sustained because it contains only minor convention errors. • Any errors that are present rarely reduce clarity and seldom interrupt the flow of the response.
Satisfactory **S**	• The quality of the writing is sustained through generally correct use of conventions. • Errors that are present occasionally reduce clarity and sometimes interrupt the flow of the response.
Limited **L**	• The quality of the writing is weakened by frequently incorrect use of conventions. • Errors often reduce the clarity and interrupt the flow of the response.
Poor **P**	• The quality of the writing is impaired by consistently incorrect use of conventions. • Errors severely reduce clarity and impede the flow of the response.
Insufficient **INS**	• The writing has been awarded an **INS** for **Content**.

Part B: Reading general description

Part B: Reading of the *Grade 9 Knowledge & Employability English Language Arts Provincial Achievement Test* requires students to read selections that include a variety of informational, narrative, and poetic texts with implicit ideas and details. In total, there are 50 multiple-choice questions based on the readings.

Part B: Reading (multiple choice) is designed to be completed in 75 minutes; however, students have up to 150 minutes to complete Part B should they need it.

The test consists of 50 multiple-choice questions based on reading selections from fiction, nonfiction, drama, poetry, and visual media.

Part B: Reading has one booklet that contains both the reading passages and the corresponding questions. Students record their answers on a tear-out, machine-scorable answer sheet.

If a word that warrants definition is used on a test, it will be defined on the page on which it appears.

Blueprint for *Part B: Reading*

The blueprint below shows the reporting categories and language functions by which questions are classified and reported to schools and school authorities. The number of questions in each reporting category is approximate.

Reporting Category	Language Function		Number (Percentage) of Questions
	Informational	**Narrative/ Poetic**	
Identifying and Interpreting Ideas and Details	8	8	**16** (32%)
Interpreting Text Organization	4	4	**8** (16%)
Associating Meaning	4	4	**8** (16%)
Synthesizing Meaning	9	9	**18** (36%)
Number (Percentage) of Questions	**25** (50%)	**25** (50%)	**50** (100%)

Grade 9 Knowledge & Employability Mathematics Provincial Achievement Test

General description

The *Grade 9 Knowledge & Employability Mathematics Provincial Achievement Test* consists of approximately:

• 45 multiple-choice questions, each worth one mark;

• 5 numerical-response questions, each worth one mark.

The test is designed to be completed in 75 minutes; however, students have up to 150 minutes to complete the test should they need it.

Students record their answers on a tear-out, machine-scorable answer sheet.

> Calculator use is recommended but not required; however, graphing calculator use is prohibited. Students may also use manipulative materials (for example, algebra tiles, a protractor, or a ruler). The manipulative cannot perform the mental conversion or provide the solution to a problem (e.g., multiplication table). Conversion tables (both metric and imperial) will be included with the mathematics test. See *Using Calculators & Computers* in the *General Information Bulletin* posted at education.alberta.ca.

Blueprint for Mathematics

General Outcomes	Reporting Category		Number (Percentage) of Questions
	Knowledge	Skills	
Number	5	12	**17** (34%)
Patterns and Relations	2	4	**6** (12%)
Shape and Space	7	13	**20** (40%)
Statistics and Probability	3	4	**7** (14%)
Number (Percentage) of Questions	**17** (34%)	**33** (66%)	**50** (100%)

Grade 9 Knowledge & Employability Science Provincial Achievement Test

General description

The *Grade 9 Knowledge & Employability Science Provincial Achievement Test* consists of 50 multiple-choice questions, each worth one mark.

The test is designed to be completed in 75 minutes; however, students have up to 150 minutes to complete the test should they need it.

Students record their answers on a tear-out, machine-scorable answer sheet.

Blueprint for Science

The blueprint below shows the topics and reporting categories under which questions are classified. The number of questions in each reporting category is approximate.

Topic	Reporting Category		Number (Percentage) of Questions
	Knowledge	Skills	
Biological Diversity	4	6	10 (20%)
Matter and Chemical Change	4	6	10 (20%)
Environmental Chemistry	4	6	10 (20%)
Electrical Properties and Technologies	4	6	10 (20%)
Space Exploration	4	6	10 (20%)
Number (Percentage) of Questions	**20** (40%)	**30** (60%)	**50** (100%)

Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) 2015

As of the 2019–2020 school year, any WHMIS pictograms that appear on provincial assessments will be WHMIS 2015 pictograms. The Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) has been used in Canada since 1988 for labelling and classifying hazardous workplace chemicals. Countries around the world are adopting the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS) to enable a consistent international chemical classification and labelling system. WHMIS 1988 in Canada was amended in February 2015 to incorporate the GHS. The new system is called WHMIS 2015.

WHMIS 2015 includes changes to:

• pictograms

• labels

• hazard classes and categories

• safety data sheets

• education and training

Further information on these changes can be found at Science (7-9) Program Supports under the heading "Health and Safety in the Science Classroom."

Pictograms

WHMIS 2015

Flame	Flame Over Circle	Gas Cylinder
For fire hazards	For oxidizing hazards	For gases under pressure

Exploding Bomb	Biohazardous Infectious Materials	Corrosion
For explosion or reactivity hazards	For organisms or toxins that can cause diseases in people or animals	For corrosive damage to metals, as well as skin, eyes

Exclamation Mark	Health Hazard	Skull and Crossbones
May cause less serious health effects	May cause or suspected of causing serious health effects	Can cause death or toxicity with short exposure to small amounts

Grade 9 Knowledge & Employability Social Studies Provincial Achievement Test

General description

The *Grade 9 Knowledge & Employability Social Studies Provincial Achievement Test* consists of 50 multiple-choice questions, each worth one mark.

The test is designed to be completed in 75 minutes; however, students have up to 150 minutes to complete the test should they need it.

Students record their answers on a tear-out, machine-scorable answer sheet.

Students may **not** use a dictionary, a thesaurus, or other reference material.

Blueprint for Social Studies

The blueprint below shows the reporting categories and topics by which questions are classified. The number of questions in each reporting category is approximate.

Topic	Reporting Category		Number (Percentage) of Questions
	Knowledge	Skills	
Canada: Governance and Citizenship	10	18	28 (56%)
Canada and the United States: an Economic Relationship	8	14	22 (44%)
Number (Percentage) of Questions	18 (36%)	32 (64%)	50 (100%)

Details of the 2019–2020 Provincial Achievement Test Administration

Overview

Four provincial achievement tests, which reflect outcomes in the Grade 9 Knowledge & Employability programs of study, will be administered in 2019–2020. In general, these Knowledge & Employability provincial achievement tests will be administered following existing Provincial Achievement Testing Program directives, policies, procedures, and schedules, about which further information is provided in the *General Information Bulletin*. This bulletin may be accessed through Alberta Education's website, at alberta.ca/provincial-achievement-tests.

Specific details of the 2019–2020 administration are presented below.

Eligibility to write

Instructional requirements

To be eligible to write a Knowledge & Employability provincial achievement test in 2019–2020, a student must have received instruction in the Knowledge & Employability program of study for that course.

Ordering test materials

In Alberta, Grade 9 students are registered by year rather than by course. For this reason, Alberta Education will not know whether a student is receiving instruction from a Knowledge & Employability program of study or from a regular program of study, and therefore will not know whether the student should receive a Knowledge & Employability provincial achievement test or a regular provincial achievement test for a given course. Please refer to the Ordering Test Materials information in the Administration Directives, Guidelines, and Procedures section of the *General Information Bulletin*.

Special-format practice tests

To give students an opportunity to practise provincial achievement test-style questions and content in Braille, audio, large print, or coloured print versions, Alberta Education produces special-format practice tests for all subjects that have a provincial achievement test. Alberta schools with registered Alberta K–12 students may place orders for these tests. Braille versions are available in English and, by request, in French. All tests are provided free of charge, but limits may be placed on order volumes to ensure access for all students.

For the greatest benefit, special-format practice tests should be written under conditions similar to those of the corresponding provincial achievement test. The same rules regarding the use of resources and devices should be followed.

Braille versions must be returned to Alberta Education after use.

For more information or to place an order, contact

Laura LaFramboise
Distribution Coordinator, Examination Administration
780-641-9116 or Laura.LaFramboise@gov.ab.ca

Test administration

Schedules

The Knowledge & Employability provincial achievement tests will be administered in January and June 2020, following the same schedule as the regular provincial achievement tests.

Please refer to the Provincial Achievement Test Administration Schedule in the *Schedules and Significant Dates* section of the *General Information Bulletin*.

Security

All Knowledge & Employability test materials are secured and all copies, used and unused, must be returned after administration according to the schedule in the *Schedules and Significant Dates* section of the *General Information Bulletin*.

Preparing for the provincial achievement tests

A goal of the Provincial Achievement Testing Program is to obtain valid and reliable information about student achievement. How and what educators communicate to students and parents about the tests and the manner in which students are prepared for the test experience affect how well this goal is met.

Students who will be writing one or more Knowledge & Employability provincial achievement tests in 2019–2020 should be prepared in the same manner as students writing other provincial achievement tests. More information on this topic is provided in the *Introductions & Revisions* section of the *General Information Bulletin*.

Scoring and reporting

Alberta Education will provide answer keys to enable local scoring of the Knowledge & Employability provincial achievement tests prior to the return of the test materials to Alberta Education.

Individual and aggregated results reports will be available following the administration of these provincial achievement tests in 2019–2020.

Opportunities to Participate in Test-development Activities

Field testing

All provincial achievement test questions are field tested before use. By "testing" the test questions, students who write field tests have an opportunity for a practice run at answering questions that could be used on future provincial achievement tests. As well, the teachers have an opportunity to comment on the appropriateness and quality of the test questions.

Through the online field-test request system, teachers can create and modify field-test requests and check the status of these requests. Information regarding the field-test process and the request system is available at Provincial Achievement Tests.

Once the completed requests are received by the Provincial Assessment Sector, classes will be selected to ensure that a representative and sufficiently large sample of students from across the province take part in the field test. Every effort will be made to place field tests as requested; however, because field tests are administered to a prescribed number of students, it may not be possible to fill all requests.

*NEW Working groups

Teacher involvement in the development of provincial achievement tests is important because it helps to ensure the validity and appropriateness of the assessments.

Teacher working groups are used throughout the test-development process to create raw forms of test questions and to review and revise draft forms of provincial achievement tests. These working groups usually meet for one or two days, two or three times per year. Occasionally, these meetings are held on weekends.

To be eligible to serve on a test-development working group, a teacher must currently be teaching the course in question or must have taught the course within the past three years.

Teachers participating in working groups are selected from the working-group nominees approved by superintendents of school jurisdictions. The call for nominations usually occurs in September. However, we will accept further nominations throughout the year. In some subjects, more teachers may be nominated for working groups than are needed. When teachers are selected, there must be a balance of first-time and experienced working-group members and regional representation by zone, school authority, and school. Unfortunately, not everyone whose name is submitted will be selected.

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