Information Bulletin
English Language Arts 30–2

Diploma Examinations Program **2026–2027**

Alberta

This document was primarily written for:		
Students		
Teachers	✓	of English Language Arts 30–2
Administrators		
Parents		
General Audiences		
Others		

2026–2027 English Language Arts 30–2 Information Bulletin

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Please note that if you cannot access one of the direct website links referred to in this document, you can find diploma examination-related materials on the Alberta Education and Childcare website.

Introduction

The *English Language Arts 30–2 Diploma Examination* is designed to reflect the English Language Arts 10–12 Programs of Study, which outline a variety of specific learning outcomes organized under five general outcomes in six language arts: listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing, and representing. Because of the interconnected nature of the five general outcomes, both *Part A* and *Part B* of the diploma examination will assess, at least indirectly, all the general outcomes. The specific outcomes that will be assessed are indicated on the blueprints and scoring guides.

Diploma exams will be weighted at 30%, and the school-awarded mark will constitute 70% of a student's final mark.

Teachers are encouraged to share the contents of this bulletin with students.

For further information about program implementation, refer to the Alberta Education and Childcare website.

Examination Security

All diploma examinations will be held secure until they are released to the public by the Minister (i.e., no longer confidential). No secure diploma examination is to be previewed until it is released to the public by the Minister. No secure diploma examination is to be previewed, discussed, copied, or removed from the room in which the examination is being written. However, for the January and June administrations only, teachers will be allowed to peruse the diploma examination for review purposes 1 hour after the examination has started.

For mathematics and science diploma examinations, all diploma examinations must be kept secure before, during, and after administration, without exception.

For humanities diploma examinations, the humanities *Part A: Written Response* examinations in the January and June administrations must be kept secure until after they are administered. All other humanities *Part A: Written Response* examinations, and all humanities *Part B* examinations, must be kept secure before, during, and after administration, without exception.

For more information about teacher perusal and examination security, please refer to the Administering diploma exams web page.

Time Limits on Diploma Examinations

All students may use extra time to write diploma examinations. This means that all students have up to 6 hours to complete the *English Language Arts 30–2 Diploma Examination*, if they need it. The examination is nevertheless designed so that the majority of students can complete it within 3 hours. The examination instructions state both the designed time and the total time allowed.

Although extra time is allowed for diploma examinations in all subjects, the total time allowed is not the same in all subjects. For more information about accommodations and provisions for students, please refer to the Administering diploma exams web page.

Equating to Maintain Consistent Standards over Time on Diploma Examinations

A goal of Alberta Education and Childcare is to make scores achieved on examinations within the same subject directly comparable from session to session, to ensure fairness to students across administrations.

To achieve this goal, the examination has a number of questions in common with a previous examination. Common (anchor) items are used to find out if the student population writing in one administration differs in achievement from the student population writing in another administration. Common items are also used to find out if the unique items (questions that have never appeared in a previous examination) differ in difficulty from the unique (non-anchor) items on the baseline examination that sets the standard to which all students are held.

A statistical process called equating adjusts for differences in difficulty between examinations. Examination marks may be adjusted depending upon the difficulty of the examination written relative to the baseline examination. Therefore, the resulting equated examination scores have the same meaning regardless of when and to whom the examination was administered. Equated diploma examination marks are reported to students. More information about equating is available on the Administering diploma exams web page.

Because of the security required to ensure fair and appropriate assessment of student achievement over time, *English Language Arts 30–2 Diploma Examinations* will be fully secured and will not be released at the time of writing.

Diploma Examinations: Multiple Forms

Some subjects may have two distinct forms (versions) of diploma examinations during major administrations (January and June). Like all other diploma examinations, the two forms are equated to the baseline examination to ensure that the same standard applies to both forms. Both forms adhere to the established blueprint specifications and are reviewed by a technical review committee.

To facilitate the analysis of school-level results, each school receives only one examination form per subject. In subjects offering a translated French-language examination, both forms are administered in English and in French.

For more information, contact the following:

Diploma exam format, content, confirming standards, marking, and results reporting
Diploma.Exams@gov.ab.ca

or

Diploma exam security, diploma exam rules, scheduling, and policy issues
Exam.Admin@gov.ab.ca

How to Get Involved

High-quality diploma examinations are the product of close collaboration between classroom teachers and Alberta Education and Childcare. Classroom teachers from across Alberta are involved in many aspects of diploma examination development, including the development of items; the building, reviewing, administering, and marking of field tests; the reviewing and validating of diploma examinations; the reviewing of support documents; and the marking of diploma examinations.

The development of test items from when they are written until when they appear on an examination takes at least one year. All items on the *English Language Arts 30–2 Diploma Examinations* are written and/or validated by English Language Arts 30–2 teachers from across Alberta. After provincial implementation of the program of studies, items are field tested to ensure their reliability and validity. Diploma examinations are reviewed by editors and validated by working groups that consist of classroom teachers and curriculum staff.

Alberta Education and Childcare values the involvement of teachers and annually asks school authorities for the names of teachers who are interested in being involved in any of the development processes for diploma examinations. Teachers who are interested in developing items, constructing field tests, or reviewing and validating examinations are encouraged to talk to their principals about how they can submit their names for approval to be involved in these processes. Although the call for submissions for working groups occurs each fall, teachers are welcome to have their names submitted at any time.

Teachers may also be nominated by their school authority to mark written-response assignments for humanities and mathematics diploma examinations. The call for nominations of markers occurs in early September (for January and April marking) and again in February (for June, August, and November marking). Teachers who would like to be nominated to mark diploma exams are encouraged to talk to their principals.

Field Testing

Field testing is an essential stage in the development of fair, valid, and reliable provincial examinations. Field testing is a process of collecting data on questions before the questions become part of a diploma examination. Potential diploma examination questions are administered to students in field tests for diploma courses throughout the province to determine the difficulty and appropriateness of the questions. Each field test requires a large student sample to provide the examination developers with reliable information (i.e., statistical data and written validation comments from teachers and students).

How do field tests help teachers and students?

Teachers receive each student's score promptly, gaining useful information about their students' performance. Students benefit from writing a test that duplicates some of the experience of writing a diploma examination. Field tests provide students and teachers with examples of the format and content of questions that may appear on diploma examinations. Finally, because of field testing, students, teachers, and parents can be reassured that the questions on diploma examinations have undergone a rigorous development, improvement, and validation process.

How are field test data used?

The data received from field tests indicate the validity, reliability, and fairness of each question. Questions that meet specific standards are selected for use on future diploma examinations.

Some questions or sets of questions may not initially perform as well as we require. These questions may be revised and tested again in field tests. Revisions are influenced by the written comments of students and teachers, who provide valuable advice about the appropriateness of the questions, the adequacy of writing-time limits, test length, text readability, artwork/graphics clarity and suitability, and question difficulty.

Humanities field tests

Humanities field tests are available in digital format on the digital assessment platform.

Teachers are provided with data on how their students performed. Test items address learning outcomes in the program of studies, which allows teachers to use field test results to learn more about their students' strengths and areas for improvement.

The security of field test items remains vital to the administration of diploma examinations. Participating teachers must commit to maintaining the security of field test items.

More information about field test registration deadlines, administration, and security is available in the *Field Testing Guide 2026–2027* on the Teacher participation in provincial assessments web page.

How can teachers schedule field tests?

Field tests are offered digitally on the digital assessment platform. To schedule a field test, teachers must have a digital assessment platform teacher account.

For information about how to schedule and administer a field test, please refer to the *Field Testing Guide 2026–2027* on the Teacher participation in provincial assessments web page or contact Field.Test@gov.ab.ca.

Detailed instructions for how to schedule a field test can also be found on the digital assessment platform Help web page.

For more information, contact the following:

Diploma exam format, content, confirming standards, marking, and results reporting
Diploma.Exams@gov.ab.ca

or

Diploma exam security, diploma exam rules, scheduling, and policy issues
Exam.Admin@gov.ab.ca

Practice Tests

To give students an opportunity to practise answering questions similar to those used on diploma examinations that address learning outcomes in the program of studies, Alberta Education and Childcare produces practice tests for subjects that have a diploma examination. Students can access these practice tests using Alberta Education and Childcare's digital assessment platform.

Special-format Practice Tests

To give students an opportunity to practise answering questions similar to those used on diploma examinations that address learning outcomes in the program of studies in Braille, large print, or coloured print versions, Alberta Education and Childcare produces special-format practice tests for all subjects that have a diploma examination. 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 diploma examination. The same rules regarding the use of resources and devices should be followed.

Braille versions must be returned to Alberta Education and Childcare after use.

For more information or to place an order, contact Field.Test@gov.ab.ca.

Audio Descriptions

A support document, *Examples of Descriptions Used in Audio-enabled Versions of Humanities Diploma Exams,* has been developed to assist teachers and students planning to use an audio version during the administration of a humanities diploma examination.

A Grade 12 Practice Test (machine scored) and humanities *Part A* (written response) practice tests with text-to-speech enabled can be accessed on Alberta Education and Childcare's digital assessment platform.

Assessment Standards and Practices for English Language Arts 30–2

Weightings	The **diploma examination mark** constitutes 30% of a student's final mark, and the **school-awarded mark** constitutes 70% of a student's final mark in English Language Arts 30–2.		
Examination Format and Weightings	The *English Language Arts 30–2 Diploma Examination* is made up of two parts: ***Part A: Written Response* (50%)** and ***Part B: Readings and Questions* (50%)**.		
Part A: Written Response Assignments, Scoring Categories, and Weightings	**Visual Reflection (10%)** • Ideas and Impressions (5%) • Presentation (5%)	**Literary Exploration (25%)** • Thought and Support (10%) • Form and Structure (5%) • Matters of Choice (5%) • Matters of Correctness (5%)	**Persuasive Writing in Context (15%)** • Thought and Support (10%) • Writing Skills (5%)
Part B: Readings and Questions	The *Part B: Readings and Questions* component is an assessment of students' abilities to read a variety of literary texts closely. Critical reading and thinking skills; understanding of vocabulary; appreciation of tone, figurative language, and rhetorical devices; understanding of the purposes and effects of writers' choices; and appreciation of human experience and values reflected in literature will be assessed. **Text types** include excerpts from **extended texts**—novels; book-length nonfiction; modern and/or contemporary drama (including television or radio scripts or screenplays)—and **shorter texts**—poetry (possibly including song); short story; visual texts (including photographs, advertisements, posters, cartoons, photographic compositions); persuasive, personal, expository, biographical, and autobiographical essays; and popular nonfiction (including news stories, feature articles, reviews, interviews, technical writing). Some questions will be **linked** to more than one reading selection; that is, they will ask students to consider two or more readings connected by technique, context, and/or theme.		
Time Limits on Diploma Examinations	All students may have up to 6 hours to complete the *English Language Arts 30–2 Diploma Examination,* if they need it. **The examination is still designed so that the majority of students can comfortably complete it within 3 hours.** The examination instructions state both the original time and the total time now available. Extra time is available for diploma examinations in all subjects, but the time limits of other examinations may differ. For more information about accommodations and provisions for students, please refer to the *General Information Bulletin*.		

Suggested Word-count Range

All Part A humanities written-response assignments contain a suggested word-count range. Students can use the suggested word-count range, along with the suggested time limit, as a guideline when responding to the assignment. The range is not a cap, and students who handwrite will not be expected to hand-count their words.

The suggested word-count ranges below are based on various sources, including the student exemplars chosen for the *Examples of the Standards for Students' Writing*, and on discussions with psychometricians and curriculum staff. They also reflect discussions with teachers during exam development regarding the expectations for each written-response assignment.

Written-response assignment suggested word-count range

- English Language Arts 30–2 Assignment I: Visual Reflection: 300–700 words
- English Language Arts 30–2 Assignment II: Literary Exploration: 400–900 words
- English Language Arts 30–2 Assignment III: Persuasive Writing in Context: 300–600 words

Release of Examination Materials

English Language Arts 30–2 examinations have been designed to support the English Language Arts 10–12 Programs of Study. *Part A: Written Response* and *Part B: Readings and Questions Practice Tests* are available on the digital assessment platform. These practice tests offer insights regarding the knowledge and understanding, as well as skills and processes, students are expected to demonstrate when writing the *English Language Arts 30–2 Diploma Examination*.

Part A: Written Response for January and June 2027 administrations will be released immediately following the writing of the examination.

Part B: Readings and Questions **will be secured, without exception,** for the January and June 2027 administrations.

Part A: Written Response and *Part B: Readings and Questions* **will be secured, without exception,** for the November 2026, April 2027, and August 2027 administrations.

Student Assessment

Because many types of assessment are suited to classroom situations only, teachers should ensure that their assessment of student progress reflects the full English Language Arts 30–2 Program of Studies.

Diploma exams are designed to match the program of studies of each subject, but what the diploma exams measure may not be the same in scope as what teachers measure. Diploma exam marks and teacher-awarded marks should reflect the same standard, however, because both assess students based on the same program of studies (curriculum). Alberta Education and Childcare works with teachers to set and maintain the standards of achievement for diploma exams. This information bulletin is intended to assist teachers in understanding the provincial standards for English Language Arts 30–2.

Other Support Documents

A Guide for Students Preparing to Write the English Language Arts 30–2 Diploma Examination and *Examples of the Standards for Students' Writing* from various administrations of the *English Language Arts 30–2 Diploma Examination* are posted on the Writing diploma exams web page.

Blueprints

The blueprints for Part A and Part B of the *English Language Arts 30–2 Diploma Examination* are on pages 15 and 28 of this bulletin, respectively.

Part A: Written Response

Description

Part A: Written Response, worth 50% of the total diploma examination mark, consists of three assignments:

- Visual Reflection Assignment
- Literary Exploration Assignment
- Persuasive Writing in Context Assignment

Part A: Written Response allows students to demonstrate reading, thinking, and writing skills in response to these three distinct writing tasks.

A *Part A: Written Response* practice test, which provides an example of all three English Language Arts 30–2 assignments, is available on the digital assessment platform.

Authorized references

A dictionary and a thesaurus are available in *Part A: Written Response* examinations on the digital assessment platform for students to use during the administration of Part A.

The following print dictionaries are also authorized for students to use while writing *Part A: Written Response*:

- *Collins Paperback English Dictionary*
- *Collins-Robert Paperback French Dictionary*
- *Gage Canadian Dictionary*
- *Harper-Collins French Dictionary (French-English)*
- *Le Petit Robert 1*
- *Merriam-Webster's School Dictionary*
- *The Canadian Oxford High School Dictionary*
- *The Concise Oxford Dictionary*
- *The Houghton Mifflin Canadian Dictionary of the English Language*
- *The Oxford Dictionary of Current English*

Students writing *Part A: Written Response* are also allowed to use the following print references:

- *A Canadian Writer's Guide* (J. Finnbogason and A. Valleau), **2nd edition only**
- *A Canadian Writer's Reference* (D. Hacker)
- *Checkmate: A Writing Reference for Canadians* (J. Buckley)
- *English Language Arts Handbook for Secondary Students* (Alberta Education)
- *Fit to Print: The Canadian Student's Guide to Essay Writing* (J. Buckley)
- *The St. Martin's Handbook for Canadians* (A. Lunsford et al.)
- *The Writing Process* (Q. Gehle et al.)

With the exception of *A Canadian Writer's Guide*, any edition of these texts is acceptable for use.

Students and supervising examiners must remove any extraneous material from print references.

Assignment I: Visual Reflection

This assignment requires students to read visual text(s) and then respond to the question, “What ideas and impressions does the visual text suggest to you?”

Students are required to choose a prose form that enables them to clearly communicate and effectively develop their ideas and impressions. Students are encouraged to use the designated space provided in the response area for planning prior to beginning the Visual Reflection Assignment.

Value: 10% of total examination mark (Part A and Part B combined)

Scoring: Scores contribute to the total examination mark in the following proportions:

Ideas and Impressions	5%
Presentation	5%

Assignment II: Literary Exploration

This assignment directs students to read a text selection and respond to a given thematic topic. Students are required to discuss a character from a literary text studied in class.

Students should write well-supported, carefully constructed compositions. They must develop their responses by exploring how the experiences of the chosen character relate to their ideas regarding the assigned topic. Students should reflect upon their own prior knowledge and/or experience and/or the reading selection provided in the examination.

Students who choose to retell the details of the provided excerpt, summarize the plot of a text studied in class, or write on a topic that is different than the one in the examination will receive a score of zero.

Students are encouraged to use the designated space provided in the response area to explore their reasons for choosing to discuss a particular character (or characters) in order to clarify their ideas prior to beginning the Literary Exploration Assignment.

Value: 25% of total examination mark (Part A and Part B combined)

Scoring: Scores contribute to the total examination mark in the following proportions:

Thought and Support	10%
Form and Structure	5%
Matters of Choice	5%
Matters of Correctness	5%

Assignment III: Persuasive Writing in Context

This assignment requires students to write a letter or speech in order to persuade a given audience to accept or reject a hypothetical proposal.

Students have the choice to write either a letter or a speech and are expected to provide the introduction appropriate to their use of form.

This complex assignment tests students' skills in sorting, evaluating, synthesizing, and organizing information, as well as their ability to adjust content, tone, and diction to fit a specific purpose, audience, and situation. Specific details in support of chosen arguments can come from the sources provided, as well as from a student's own knowledge and/or outside experience. Some sources can be used to support either position and may also be related to one another. For example, one source may clarify or provide specific details that support the argument made in another source. Students are encouraged to use the designated space provided in the response area for planning prior to beginning the Persuasive Writing in Context Assignment.

Value: 15% of total examination mark (Part A and Part B combined)

Scoring: Scores contribute to the total examination mark in the following proportions:

Thought and Support	10%
Writing Skills	5%

Illustrative examples

The *Examples of the Standards for Students' Writing* documents available on the Writing diploma exams web page are from previous examinations and are a valuable teaching resource. They demonstrate the standards for first-draft writing expected of students by the end of their English Language Arts 30–2 course in the context of a timed test. Note that the sample responses in these documents have been provided for illustrative purposes only. If students use sections from these responses when writing Part A of the diploma examination, they are guilty of plagiarism and will be in breach of examination regulations.

A *Part A: Written Response* practice test, which provides an example of all three English Language Arts 30–2 assignments, is available on the digital assessment platform.

Blueprint purpose

The *English Language Arts 30–2 Diploma Examinations* are designed to reflect the English Language Arts 10–12 Programs of Study. The blueprint on the following page of this bulletin outlines the design of Part A. It presents the relationship between the requirements of the writing assignment and scoring of assignments as well as the headings and subheadings used to organize the specific learning outcomes in the program of studies.

As well, the blueprint delineates the categories used to report summary data to school authorities and high schools and the percentage that each section of the examination contributes to the total examination mark.

English Language Arts 30–2 Diploma Examination Part A: Written Response Blueprint

Description of Writing Assigment	Reporting Category (Scoring Category)	Cross-reference to Program of Studies	PROPORTION OF TOTAL EXAMINATION: Reporting Category	PROPORTION OF TOTAL EXAMINATION: Section
Assignment I: Visual Reflection The student is required to explore ideas and reflect upon impressions that are suggested by the visual text(s) and to provide relevant support.	**Ideas and Impressions** The student is required to consider the context of the visual text(s) and to provide support for ideas that explore, and for impressions that reflect upon, the visual text(s).	2.1 2.2 2.3 4.1	5%	10%
	Presentation The student is required to select an appropriate and effective prose form—to convey impressions, to explore ideas, and to create a strong unifying effect and voice—and to communicate clearly.	3.1 3.2 4.1 4.2	5%	

(Continued on the next page)

Description of Writing Assigment	Reporting Category (Scoring Category)	Cross-reference to Program of Studies	PROPORTION OF TOTAL EXAMINATION Reporting Category	Section
Assignment II: **Literary Exploration** The student is required to respond to a thematic idea based on a literary text from a personal and a literary perspective.	**Thought and Support** The student is required to develop relevant and supported ideas by reflecting upon prior knowledge and/or experience in order to explore the choices and motives of a character (or characters) in literature.	2.1 2.2 2.3 3.2 4.1 4.2	10%	25%
	Form and Structure The student is required to develop a coherent, unified composition by choosing an appropriate method and shaping the discussion to create a unifying effect. A controlling idea may be presented either implicitly or explicitly within the composition.	2.2 3.1 4.1 4.2	5%	
	Matters of Choice The student is required to demonstrate a repertoire of stylistic choices and vocabulary in a deliberate, precise, and controlled manner.	4.2	5%	
	Matters of Correctness The student is required to write clearly and correctly, while appropriately applying the rules and conventions for written language.	4.2	5%	
Assignment III: **Persuasive Writing in Context** The student is required to adopt and defend a position on a specific issue.	**Thought and Support** The student is required to identify the audience and purpose for writing and to identify which sources support the position chosen. The student is expected to form generalizations and synthesize ideas by integrating provided information with prior knowledge and to support the position that has been adopted with relevant and consistent detail.	2.1 2.2 2.3 3.1 3.2 4.1 4.2	10%	15%
	Writing Skills The student is required to communicate clearly, effectively, and correctly in writing.	4.2	5%	
Proportion of Total Examination Mark			50%	50%

Scoring Categories and Criteria for Assignment I: Visual Reflection for 2026–2027

Ideas and Impressions

(5% of total examination mark)

Cross-reference to the English Language Arts 30–2 Program of Studies: 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 4.1

When marking **Ideas and Impressions**, the marker should consider the

- quality of the ideas generated by the student to explore the visual text(s) and the impressions that the student has formed to reflect upon the visual text(s)
- effectiveness and consistency of the **support** provided
- appropriateness of **development** and **unifying** effect to prose form

Excellent **E**	The student's perceptions are insightful and carefully considered. Support is precise, purposefully chosen, and strongly connected to the student's ideas and impressions. The response is skillfully developed.
Proficient **Pf**	The student's perceptions are thoughtful and considered. Support is relevant, detailed, and clearly connected to the student's ideas and impressions. The response is coherently developed.
Satisfactory **S**	The student's perceptions are appropriate but may be generalized. Support is adequate and generally connected to the student's ideas and impressions. The response is generally clearly developed.
Limited **L**	The student's perceptions are superficial and/or uncertain and/or inadequately explored. Support is imprecise, unclear, and/or vaguely connected to the student's ideas and impressions. The response is unclearly and/or ineffectively developed.
Poor **P**	The student's perceptions are incomprehensible and/or unexplored. Support is absent and/or of questionable logic in relation to the student's ideas and impressions. The response is underdeveloped and/or incoherent.
Insufficient **INS**	**Insufficient is a special category. It is not an indicator of quality.** Assign insufficient when • the marker can discern no evidence of an attempt to fulfill the assignment **OR** • the writing is so deficient in length that it is not possible to assess Ideas and Impressions

Presentation

(5% of total examination mark)

Cross-reference to the English Language Arts 30–2 Program of Studies: 3.1, 3.2, 4.1, 4.2

When marking **Presentation**, the marker should consider the

- **effectiveness of voice** and its appropriateness to the intended audience of the prose form that the student has chosen
- quality of language and expression

Consider the complexity of the response in terms of its context and length.

Excellent **E**	The student's voice is engaging and confident. Stylistic choices are precise and effective.
Proficient **Pf**	The student's voice is distinct and well considered. Stylistic choices are specific and frequently effective.
Satisfactory **S**	The student's voice is matter-of-fact and appropriate. Stylistic choices are adequate and occasionally effective.
Limited **L**	The student's voice is inconsistent and/or inappropriate. Stylistic choices are imprecise and often unclear.
Poor **P**	The student's voice is ambiguous and/or incoherent. Stylistic choices are ineffective and/or impede communication.

Scoring Categories and Criteria for Assignment II: Literary Exploration for 2026–2027

Because students' responses to the Literary Exploration Assignment vary widely—from philosophical discussions to personal narratives to creative approaches—assessment of the Literary Exploration Assignment on the diploma examination will be in the context of Louise Rosenblatt's suggestion:

… the evaluation of the answers would be in terms of the amount of evidence that the youngster has actually read something and thought about it, not a question of whether, necessarily, he has thought about it the way an adult would, or given an adult's "correct" answer.

Rosenblatt, Louise. "The Reader's Contribution in the Literary Experience: Interview with Louise Rosenblatt." By Lionel Wilson. *English Quarterly* 14, no.1 (Spring, 1981): 3–12.

Thought and Support

(10% of total examination mark)

Cross-reference to the English Language Arts 30–2 Program of Studies: 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3.2, 4.1, 4.2

When marking **Thought and Support**, the marker should consider how effectively the

- student's **ideas** reflect an understanding of the topic
- **literary example** relates to the student's ideas
- **support** explains and/or clarifies the response

Excellent **E**	An insightful understanding of the topic is demonstrated. The student's ideas are perceptively explored. The literary example is related effectively to the student's ideas. Support is precise and effective.
Proficient **Pf**	A well-considered understanding of the topic is demonstrated. The student's ideas are thoughtfully explored. The literary example is related competently to the student's ideas. Support is specific and relevant.
Satisfactory **S**	A defensible understanding of the topic is demonstrated. The student's ideas are appropriately and straightforwardly explored. The literary example is related adequately to the student's ideas. Support is relevant but tends to be general.
Limited **L**	An understanding of the topic is evident but is only partially demonstrated or is not always sustained. The student's ideas are incompletely or unclearly explored. The literary example is lacking or does not relate adequately to the student's ideas and/or to the topic. Support is overgeneralized, inconsistent, and/or marginally relevant.
Poor **P**	A minimal understanding of the topic is demonstrated. The student's ideas are underdeveloped, unexplored, and/or incomprehensible. The literary example is absent and/or unrelated to the student's ideas and/or to the topic. Support is deficient and/or irrelevant.
Insufficient **INS**	**Insufficient is a special category. It is not an indicator of quality.** Assign insufficient when • the marker can discern no evidence of an attempt to address the topic provided in the examination **OR** • the writing is merely a plot summary of a text; no explicit discussion of the topic is evident **OR** • the writing is so deficient in length that it is not possible to assess Thought and Support

Form and Structure

(5% of total examination mark)

Cross-reference to the English Language Arts 30–2 Program of Studies: 2.2, 3.1, 4.1, 4.2

When marking **Form and Structure**, the marker should consider how effectively the student's organizational choices result in

- the development and maintenance of a **controlling idea** or **unifying effect**
- the creation of a **coherent**, **shaped**, and **concluded** discussion in response to the assignment

Excellent **E**	A focused controlling idea or unifying effect is skillfully sustained throughout the response. Development of ideas and explanations is smooth and coherent.
Proficient **Pf**	A controlling idea or unifying effect is sustained throughout the response. Development of ideas and explanations is coherent.
Satisfactory **S**	A controlling idea or unifying effect is evident, but unity may falter on occasion. Development of ideas and explanations is generally clear and coherent.
Limited **L**	A controlling idea or unifying effect is evident, but unity falters frequently. Development of ideas and explanations is uncertain and/or unclear.
Poor **P**	A controlling idea or unifying effect is absent or is not sustained. Development of ideas and explanations is deficient, ineffective, and/or incoherent.

Matters of Choice

(5% of total examination mark)

Cross-reference to the English Language Arts 30–2 Program of Studies: 4.2

When marking **Matters of Choice**, the marker should consider how effectively the student's choices enhance communication. The marker should consider

- **diction**, including connotative language, imagery, idiomatic expressions, and dialect
- **syntax**, including such choices as parallelism, balance, inversion, sentence length, and variety
- the contribution of stylistic choices to the creation of **voice**

Excellent **E**	Diction is precise and effective. Many sentences have been successfully structured for effect and are sometimes polished. Stylistic choices contribute to the creation of a convincing voice.
Proficient **Pf**	Diction is specific and generally effective. Many sentences appear to have been purposefully structured for effect. Stylistic choices contribute to the creation of a competent voice.
Satisfactory **S**	Diction is appropriate but may be general rather than specific. Sentence structures are generally straightforward and clear. Stylistic choices contribute to the creation of a clear voice.
Limited **L**	Diction is imprecise and/or inappropriate. Sentence structures are frequently ineffective and/or awkward. Inadequate stylistic choices contribute to the creation of an uncertain or unclear voice.
Poor **P**	Diction is inaccurate and/or overgeneralized. Sentence structures are misused to such an extent that clarity suffers. A lack of stylistic choices contributes to the creation of an ineffective voice.

Matters of Correctness

(5% of total examination mark)

Cross-reference to the English Language Arts 30–2 Program of Studies: 4.2

When marking **Matters of Correctness**, the marker should consider the correctness of

- **sentence construction** (completeness, consistency, subordination, coordination, predication)
- **usage** (accurate use of words according to convention and meaning)
- **grammar** (subject–verb/pronoun–antecedent agreement, pronoun reference, consistency of tense)
- **mechanics** (punctuation, spelling, capitalization)

Consider the proportion of error in terms of the complexity and length of the response

Excellent **E**	This writing demonstrates confident control of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics. The relative insignificance of errors present is impressive considering the complexity of the response and the circumstances.
Proficient **Pf**	This writing demonstrates competent control of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics. Minor errors in mechanics, grammar, and/or complex language structures are understandable considering the circumstances.
Satisfactory **S**	This writing demonstrates control of the basics of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics. There may be occasional lapses in control of sentence construction and usage and/or minor errors in grammar and mechanics. The communication, however, is clear.
Limited **L**	This writing demonstrates faltering control of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics. The range of sentence construction problems and errors in usage, grammar, and/or mechanics blur the clarity of communication.
Poor **P**	This writing demonstrates lack of control of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics. The unclear and incorrect sentence constructions and jarring errors in usage, grammar, and mechanics impede communication.

Scoring Categories and Criteria for Assignment III: Persuasive Writing in Context for 2026–2027

Thought and Support

(10% of total examination mark)

Cross-reference to the English Language Arts 30–2 Program of Studies: 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3.1, 3.2, 4.1, 4.2

When marking **Thought and Support**, the marker should consider

- how effectively the student has addressed the **significance** and **complexity** of the issue
- the **persuasiveness** and **consistency** of the argument(s) presented
- how well the supporting evidence is **integrated**, **synthesized**, and/or **developed** to support the student's arguments
- awareness of **audience** and effectiveness of **voice**

Excellent **E**	A perceptive and thorough understanding of the issue is demonstrated. The student's arguments are adept and convincing. Support is well defined and purposefully chosen to reinforce the student's ideas in a deliberate and judicious way. The voice is confident.
Proficient **Pf**	A thoughtful and competent understanding of the issue is demonstrated. The student's arguments are well considered and sound. Support is accurate and occasionally purposefully chosen to reinforce the student's ideas in a logical and clear way. The voice is competent.
Satisfactory **S**	A sufficient but generalized understanding of the issue is demonstrated. The student's arguments are appropriate and straightforward. Support is relevant but general and may be occasionally lacking in persuasiveness and consistency. The voice is clear.
Limited **L**	A superficial and/or incomplete and/or confused understanding of the issue is demonstrated. The student's arguments may be oversimplified, inconsistent, and/or inadequately explored. Support is unclear, contradictory, inappropriate, or largely a repetition of what is provided in the examination. The voice is uncertain or unclear.
Poor **P**	An inaccurate or minimal understanding of the issue is demonstrated. The student's arguments may be of questionable logic and/or unrelated to the issue under discussion. Support may be irrelevant, overgeneralized, or absent. The voice is ineffective and/or inappropriate.
Insufficient **INS**	**Insufficient is a special category. It is not an indicator of quality.** Assign insufficient when • the marker can discern no evidence of an attempt to fulfill the assignment **OR** • the writing is so deficient in length that it is not possible to assess Thought and Support

Writing Skills

(5% of total examination mark)

Cross-reference to the English Language Arts 30–2 Program of Studies: 4.2

When marking **Writing Skills**, the marker should consider the extent to which the writing demonstrates control of

- **syntax**
- **diction**
- **grammar**
- **mechanics**

Consider the proportion of error in terms of the complexity and length of the response.

Excellent **E**	The selection and use of words and structures are effective. This writing demonstrates confident control of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics.
Proficient **Pf**	The selection and use of words and structures are frequently effective. This writing demonstrates competent control of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics.
Satisfactory **S**	The selection and use of words and structures are occasionally effective. This writing demonstrates basic control of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics.
Limited **L**	The selection and use of words and structures are generally ineffective. This writing demonstrates faltering control of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics.
Poor **P**	The selection and use of words and structures are ineffective. This writing demonstrates lack of control of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics.

Part B: Readings and Questions

Description

Part B: Readings and Questions is worth 50% of the total diploma examination mark and consists of 70 machine-scored questions based on short texts and excerpts from extended texts.

Part B: Readings and Questions is an assessment of students' ability to read a variety of literary texts closely. Critical-reading and thinking skills; understanding of vocabulary; appreciation of tone and literary and rhetorical devices; understanding of the purpose and effect of writers' choices; and appreciation of human experience and values reflected in literature will be assessed at the level of challenge appropriate for graduating English Language Arts 30–2 students.

Readings

Texts *will* include the following:

- Modern drama—may include television or radio scripts or screenplays
- Poetry—may include song
- Nonfiction and response to nonfiction
- Fiction and nonfiction readings representing a broad selection of literary texts, which includes persuasive, personal, expository, biographical and autobiographical essays, and visual texts

Reading selections will reflect the minimum one-third Canadian texts requirement in the English Language Arts 10–12 Programs of Study and will also reflect a variety of cultural perspectives.

Often, at least one reading will be **linked** to another, usually different, type of text.

One set of questions is based on a draft composition written by a hypothetical student. The passage that precedes the student's composition inspires the student's writing topic. The questions require the English Language Arts 30–2 student to make decisions about revisions and corrections to the draft relative to topic, purpose, audience, and presentation.

Questions

The questions on *Part B: Readings and Questions* progress through each selection in a manner intended to assist students with their reading. For this reason, and with the inclusion of linked readings and questions, students should read the passages and answer the questions in the order in which they appear in the examination.

Visual texts may be presented within a text to enhance students' reading or may be presented independently as a reading selection with questions. Students will be asked to identify how elements of a photographic composition, photograph, cartoon, poster, advertisement, or work of art convey meaning, relate to the purpose of the text, or contribute to the total effect of the text.

Linked passages and questions

Each examination typically contains one linked passage set. A linked passage set consists of two or more texts that are thematically linked, and the connection between the texts creates a specific reading context. Each text within the linked passage set is accompanied by its own set of questions.

Following the questions on the final text in the set are several questions that require students to consider one or more of the texts in relation to the others. These questions may ask students to identify the significance of a quotation from one text in the context of another text or to identify similarities or contrasts between the multiple texts.

Sample readings and questions

A *Part B: Readings and Questions* practice test is available on the digital assessment platform.

Blueprint

Part B: Readings and Questions is designed to reflect the English Language Arts 10–12 Programs of Study. The blueprint for Part B is on the following page of this bulletin.

English Language Arts 30–2 Diploma Examination Part B: Readings and Questions Blueprint

Reporting Category*	A. Form Literal Understandings	B. Infer, Apply, and Analyze	C. Assess and Form Generalizations	Total Items***
1. Construct meaning from content and context, and engage contextual knowledge **(2.1)****				**30–40 items**
2. Relate textual forms, elements, and techniques to content, purpose, and effect **(2.2, 2.3.3)**				**20–25 items**
3. Connect self, culture, and milieu to text and text creators **(2.3.1, 2.3.2)**				**10–15 items**
Total Items	**15–25 items**	**30–40 items**	**10–20 items**	**70 items** (50%)

* Texts used to assess learner outcomes are chosen for their literary merit and represent the reading standard expected of English Language Arts 30–2 graduates.

Text selections will reflect the minimum one-third Canadian texts requirement in the English Language Arts 10–12 Programs of Study. **Text types** include excerpts from **extended texts**—novel; book-length nonfiction; modern and/or contemporary drama (including television or radio scripts or screenplays); and **shorter texts**—poetry (possibly including song); short story; visual texts (including photographs, advertisements, cartoons, posters, photographic compositions); persuasive, personal, expository, biographical, and autobiographical essays; and popular nonfiction (including news stories, feature articles, reviews, interviews, technical writing). Some questions may be linked to more than one reading selection; that is, the questions will ask students to consider two or more readings connected by context and/or theme.

** Numbers in parentheses refer to headings and subheadings from the English Language Arts 10–12 Programs of Study to which the reporting categories are cross-referenced.

*** Numbers of items and percentages are approximate and will vary depending on the readings chosen. Part B is worth 50% of the total *English Language Arts 30–2 Diploma Examination* mark.

Student Achievement on *English Language Arts 30–2 Diploma Examinations*

These comments are intended to provide classroom teachers with general impressions relating to students' approaches to the three writing tasks as demonstrated on previous administrations of the *English Language Arts 30–2 Diploma Examination*. Information provided here is best used in conjunction with school and/or school authority reports, and with information gleaned by the classroom teacher concerning student strengths and weaknesses displayed as part of ongoing classroom assessment. By reviewing results on past diploma examinations, classroom teachers may be able to strengthen their instructional programs and enhance student success.

To view examples of student responses to the writing assignments, *Examples of the Standards for Students' Writing*, refer to the Writing diploma exams web page.

Part A: Written Response

The three writing assignments in the *Part A: Written Response* are unique and not thematically connected. They are meant to assess a student's skill in written English within a variety of contexts. The Visual Reflection Assignment allows students to respond to a visual prompt using prose, including creative, philosophical, and/or personal forms. The Literary Exploration Assignment provides students with a writing topic that they must explicitly address through a discussion of a character from literature or film studied in their English Language Arts 30–2 class. The Persuasive Writing in Context Assignment poses a hypothetical proposal to the Prosper Town Council or to the Prosper High School Administration or School Board about which students must form an opinion and then argue persuasively, whether to accept or to reject the proposal.

Since the 2017–2018 school year, all students have had access to the extra-time provision. This provision has not changed the expected standard that markers apply in scoring the written-response assignments. Anecdotally, markers have reported a significant range in the length of student responses for all three assignments; however, the majority of responses fall into the suggested word-count ranges. Markers have noted that many students show evidence of having used some of their time to plan out their responses. Overall, the extra-time provision allows students the flexibility to engage with the material and to take time to plan their approach to the writing tasks more thoroughly.

Assignment I: Visual Reflection

This assignment is an open-ended one: students are asked to examine a visual and discuss ideas or impressions suggested. Some students take a philosophical approach, using specific details from the photograph as a starting point from which to widen their perspective and discuss issues and ideas that are universally relevant. Some students choose to draft a personal or narrative response, using elements from the visual either to craft creative responses or to relate a personal anecdote from their own experience. Some students use an analytical approach, where the student analyzes the visual for compositional elements such as use of colour and camera angle, often theorizing larger symbolic meanings behind these artistic choices. Some students include more than one of these approaches in their response. While each of these prose forms have their own inherent characteristics, the selection of a particular prose form does not necessarily indicate a student's level of performance.

Stronger responses, regardless of approach, focus on an idea or impression, which becomes the responses' unifying effect. All support, regardless of where it comes from—the visual, personal experience and/or knowledge, philosophical musings, etc.—must be in service of that controlling idea. Weaker responses often only describe the visual's composition, present a superficial claim, or provide a list of multiple different possible ideas revealed by the visual, without any exploration or development.

The assessment of these responses focuses on the quality of the ideas or impressions generated by the student, the effectiveness of the support provided, the appropriate development of a unifying effect, the effectiveness of voice, and the quality of language and expression. Teacher-markers are instructed to take into consideration the prose form chosen by the student and the expected associated features when scoring papers.

Assignment II: Literary Exploration

Markers continue to indicate how important it is for students to have a confident and accurate understanding of the key words and phrases of the topic question. Doing so will help ensure that students explicitly address the topic within their response and that students do not resort to a mere plot summary or write on a topic other than the one provided in the examination.

While students are required to discuss a character from literature or film studied in their ELA 30–2 class, they may reflect upon their own knowledge and/or experience as well as the provided reading selection. Stronger writers will recognize the ways in which specific elements from the reading selection and/or from their own personal experiences support their controlling idea. Weaker responses tend to provide a mere plot summary of the reading selection provided and/or include details from the student's life that are too brief, marginally relevant, or overgeneralized. While students are not required to address either the reading selection or describe their own experiences to fulfill this assignment, they are expected to demonstrate the ability to maintain their controlling idea throughout the discussion of the supporting evidence they choose to provide.

Weaker responses are characterized by writers who simply restate the topic question and then identify plot details or character details in their chosen text(s) without explaining or discussing a connection to the topic. In stronger responses, students have established a controlling idea that clearly addresses the topic question and incorporate specific evidence throughout the response in discussion of that controlling idea.

Assignment III: Persuasive Writing

This assignment provides students with source material they can synthesize and use to formulate their argument(s). In addition to an overview of the hypothetical proposal contained within the portion of the assignment labelled "The Situation," students are provided with several pieces of source material relating to the proposal. These sources may take any of several forms and may be text-based (such as a blog post, scientific journal excerpt, or social media conversation) or more visual in nature (such as graphs, charts, advertisements, and maps). These sources are carefully balanced to ensure that some provide clear reasons to support the proposal while others provide clear reasons to reject it. Other sources are intentionally created to be more open to interpretation based on students' perspectives. Some sources are intended to be used together to synthesize an argument; some sources may appear to be one step removed, implying an indirect connection to the proposal; while others may stand on their own. While a student is not required to use the source material in crafting their persuasive argument, writers who choose to incorporate source details as a part of their own arguments rather than simply quoting the sources as self-evident arguments tend to craft stronger persuasive arguments.

Because the student is given a persona to adopt for this assignment, markers have noted that some students choose to craft a background for this "character" that includes details pertinent to their argument. For example, some students give their persona personal life experience, family dynamics, or social realities that allow them to create arguments of their own regarding the issue under discussion. This approach does not automatically lend strength to the student response and can be used with varied degrees of success to craft a persuasive argument. It is central to the task, however, that the student adopt and maintain this persona when writing to the audience to which the exam directs them.

Part B: Readings and Questions

Students are required to demonstrate their ability to apply knowledge specific to English Language Arts 30–2 such as the use of figurative language and rhetorical devices, an understanding of grade-appropriate vocabulary, as well as specific knowledge related to the process of editing and revision. As well, students are expected to demonstrate the ability to comprehend and interpret print texts from various genres that have multiple levels of meaning. Students who meet the acceptable standard are able to draw inferences from the personality traits, roles, relationships, motivations, attitudes, values, and narrative arcs of characters presented in both straightforward and complex texts. The most difficult questions tend to be ones that require students to consider multiple quotations and determine the nature of the relationship between them, questions that ask students to make an evaluative judgment by applying a specific directing phrase such as "most likely" or "most strongly," and questions that require students to consider a connection between two readings. More proficient students are able to identify the text creator's intended main idea, especially when such themes are implied rather than stated explicitly, as well as recognize the function of more difficult concepts such as irony and paradox.

Classroom Assessment

The **nature** of classroom situations permits teachers to assess students using a broad range of assessment instruments that reflect the Alberta English Language Arts Kindergarten to Grade 12 Program of Studies.

A Guide for Students Preparing to Write the Diploma Examination: English Language Arts 30–2 and *Examples of the Standards for Students' Writing* are posted on the Writing diploma exams web page.

Website Links

Alberta Education and Childcare

Curriculum and Programs of study

General Information Bulletin
contains specific directives, guidelines, and procedures of diploma examinations

Diploma exams

Writing diploma exams
contains Guides for Students, exemplars, and other support documents

Digital Assessment Platform
contains practice questions and questions from previous diploma examinations

Help page
contains guides to help users of digital assessments access and administer secured tests and exams

Teacher participation in provincial assessments
contains information about marking, field testing, item development, and examination validation

Contacts 2026–2027

Provincial Assessment

Provincial Assessment,
Alberta Education and Childcare
44 Capital Boulevard
10044 108 Street NW
Edmonton AB T5J 5E6

Alberta Education and Childcare website: alberta.ca/education-and-childcare

Provincial Assessment

Diploma exam security, diploma exam rules, scheduling, and policy issues
780-427-1857
Email: exam.admin@gov.ab.ca

Results statements and rescores
780-427-1857
Email: exam.admin@gov.ab.ca

Special cases, accommodations, and exemptions
780-415-9242
780-427-4215
780-427-9795
Email: special.cases@gov.ab.ca

Field testing
Email: field.test@gov.ab.ca

Diploma exam format, content, confirming standards, marking, and results reporting
Email: diploma.exams@gov.ab.ca

Digital Assessment
780-641-8987
780-415-0824
Email: online.assessment@gov.ab.ca

***myPass* Access**
Alberta Education and Childcare Help Desk
780-427-5318
Email: AE.helpdesk@gov.ab.ca

Inquiries about transcripts, credentials, detailed academic reports, and rewrite fees
780-427-5732
Email: studentrecords@gov.ab.ca

Inquiries about student enrollment and marks and mature student status
780-422-9337
Email: studentrecords@gov.ab.ca

For a toll-free call to any Alberta government office, dial 310-0000 followed by the 10-digit phone number of the office that you would like to reach.

When contacting Alberta Education and Childcare, please include your name, title, school name, school code, and, if referring to a student, include the student's Alberta Student Number.

Contacts 2026–2027

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