



Grade 9 Subject Bulletin Knowledge and Employability

Alberta Provincial Achievement Testing **2026–2027**

This document was written primarily for

Students

Teachers ✓ Knowledge and Employability

Administrators ✓

Parents

General Audience

2026–2027 Knowledge and Employability Subject Bulletin

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



Preface

Knowledge and Employability Provincial Achievement Tests

Provincial achievement tests are administered annually in English and French Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. The provincial achievement tests serve three purposes: to determine if students are learning what they are expected to learn in grades 6 and 9; to report to Albertans how well students have achieved provincial standards at given points in their schooling; and to assist schools, school authorities, and the province in monitoring and improving student learning.

The Knowledge and Employability provincial achievement tests have been designed with this purpose in mind.

The Knowledge and Employability courses include programs of study for English Language Arts 8–9, Mathematics 8–9, Science 8–9, and Social Studies 8–9. (See the [programs of study](#) and the [Knowledge and Employability Courses Handbook](#)). The Knowledge and 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 and Employability program of studies are expected to write the provincial achievement test for that course.

Purpose of this bulletin

The purpose of this bulletin is to outline key features of the Knowledge and Employability provincial achievement tests and the related reports. It is also intended to inform school-system administrators and teachers about the administration of the provincial achievement tests.

Scoring and reporting

Test scores will be available to teachers after students submit their tests on the digital assessment platform. Teachers are expected to record and report the raw scores achieved on the test by their students to parents.



Key Features

Test design elements

Each of the Knowledge and 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 written test questions.

Test format

The *Grade 9 Knowledge and Employability English Language Arts Provincial Achievement Test Part A: Writing* is described in more detail later in this document. The Knowledge and Employability Science, Social Studies, and ELA *Part B: Reading* provincial achievement tests are each composed of 50 questions of various formats supported by the digital assessment platform, each worth one mark.

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. All of the other Knowledge and Employability provincial achievement tests are designed to be administered in 75 minutes. Students have up to 150 minutes to complete each test.

French translations

Translated forms of the Knowledge and 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 and Employability provincial achievement tests.

Test Administration

Eligibility to write

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

Testing dates

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

Test Design Details

Overview

Characteristics of Knowledge and Employability courses

Collectively, the Knowledge and 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 and 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 and 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 and 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 and 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). A calculator and digital tools will be available on the digital platform. Conversion tables (both metric and imperial) will be included with the Mathematics test. When writing the English Language Arts *Part A: Writing* test, students may use print versions of commercially published dictionaries and thesauri. A dictionary and thesaurus will be available within the digital assessment platform.

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).

It is important to remember that one test cannot measure all the components within the learning outcomes in the Program of Studies.

Grade 9 Knowledge and Employability English Language Arts Provincial Achievement Test

General description

The *Grade 9 Knowledge and 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 in the “Planning” space provided.

Those students for whom a dictionary is a familiar tool are encouraged, but not required, to use a dictionary during the writing 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: Writing* only. A dictionary and thesaurus will be available within the digital assessment platform.

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**.

Students are encouraged to make revisions and corrections to their work.

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	Standards
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.	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
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.		Poor
		INS (insufficient)
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.		

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

Local marking

Classroom teachers are encouraged to assess students' writing, using the scoring guides contained in this bulletin. Exemplars and rationales provided will be from the 2026 PAT. Teachers who mark locally will be required to apply the standard using the previous year's exemplars. All papers will be marked centrally in Edmonton in July with exemplars for the 2027 test.

Locally awarded marks submitted to Alberta Education and Childcare will be used as the first reading of a student's response. Information regarding local marking is provided on the digital assessment platform.

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

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

Tests 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 will receive a confidential report on their marking on the digital assessment platform. 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 and Childcare provides, along with the test materials, samples of student writing that exemplify the scoring criteria and levels of student achievement. Throughout the school year, teachers may use the exemplars that are posted on the Alberta Education and Childcare website.

The mark for *Part A: Writing* is worth 35% of the total mark for the *Grade 9 Knowledge and Employability 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 Essay Writing = 35



Information for teachers participating in central marking

Provincial Assessment will contact superintendents in the spring to nominate 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; and
- 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 and Employability Scoring Guide

Content

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

- explores the topic
- establishes a point of view
- chooses ideas
- supports the response
- considers the reader

Excellent E

- The student's exploration of the topic is insightful and/or discerning.
- The student's point of view, whether stated or implied, is deliberate.
- The ideas presented by the student are engaging and/or carefully chosen.
- Supporting details are precise and/or original.
- The writing is confident and holds the reader's interest.

Proficient Pf

- The student's exploration of the topic is adept and/or plausible.
- The student's point of view, whether stated or implied, is intentional.
- The ideas presented by the student are thoughtful and/or sound.
- Supporting details are relevant and apt.
- The writing is considered and draws the reader's interest.

Satisfactory S

- The student's exploration of the topic is clear and/or logical.
- The student's point of view, whether stated or implied, is evident.
- The ideas presented by the student are appropriate and/or direct.
- Supporting details are relevant but general.
- The writing is straightforward and occasionally draws the reader's interest.

Limited L

- The student's exploration of the topic is uncertain or simplistic.
- The student's point of view, whether stated or implied, is vague.
- The ideas presented by the student are superficial and/or unclear.
- Supporting details are imprecise and/or ambiguous.
- The writing is incomplete and infrequently draws the reader's interest.

Poor P

- The student's exploration of the topic is minimal and/or marginally relevant.
- The student's point of view, whether stated or implied, is convoluted.
- The ideas presented by the student are overgeneralized and/or underdeveloped.
- Supporting details are inappropriate and/or lacking.
- The writing is undeveloped and does not interest the reader.

Insufficient INS

- The marker can discern no evidence of an attempt to address the task presented in the assignment, or the student 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 work must address the task presented in the assignment. Responses that are completely unrelated to the topic and/or prompts will be deemed **insufficient** in **Content**.

Organization

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

- focus
- coherent development
- connections between ideas and/or details
- closure

Excellent E

- The introduction is engaging and skillfully establishes a focus that is consistently maintained.
- Ideas and/or details are developed in a judicious order, and coherence is maintained.
- Transitions fluently connect ideas and/or details within and/or between sentences and/or paragraphs.
- The closure 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 a sensible order, and coherence is generally maintained.
- Transitions clearly connect ideas and/or details within and/or between sentences and/or paragraphs.
- The closure 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 and/or between sentences and/or paragraphs.
- The closure is adequate and related to the focus.

Limited L

- The introduction lacks purpose and/or is not functional; any focus established provides little direction.
- The development of ideas and/or details is not clearly discernible, and coherence falters frequently.
- Transitions are lacking and/or awkwardly used to connect ideas and/or details within and/or between sentences and/or paragraphs.
- The closure is unrelated to the focus and/or random.

Poor P

- The introduction, if present, is obscure and/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 and/or between sentences and/or paragraphs.
- The closure is ineffectual or missing.

Insufficient INS

- The response has been deemed **insufficient** in **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 and 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.
- 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.
- There is no variety of sentence beginnings.

Insufficient

INS

- The response has been deemed **insufficient** in **Content**.
-

Vocabulary

When marking **Vocabulary** appropriate for the Grade 9 Knowledge and 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 tone created by the student

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

Excellent

E

- Words and expressions are used accurately and effectively
- Well-chosen words and expressions are used to enhance the student's position.
- The tone created by the student is convincing.

Proficient

Pf

- Words and expressions are often used accurately.
- Well-chosen words and expressions are used to reinforce the student's position.
- The tone created by the student is distinct.

Satisfactory

S

- Words and expressions are generally used appropriately.
- General words and expressions are used to support the student's position.
- The tone created by the student is discernible but may be inconsistent.

Limited

L

- Words and expressions generally convey only vague meanings.
- Imprecise words and expressions predominate; specific words, if present, may be awkwardly used to support the student's position.
- A tone created by the student is not clearly established or is inconsistent.

Poor

P

- Words and expressions are inappropriate and/or ineffective.
- Overgeneralized words and expressions predominate; specific words, if present, are frequently misused to support the student's position.
- The tone created by the student is not evident or is inappropriate.

Insufficient

INS

- The response has deemed **insufficient** in **Content**.
-

Conventions

When marking **Conventions** appropriate for the Grade 9 Knowledge and 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 use, 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/or 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/or seldom interrupt the flow of the response.
Satisfactory S	• The quality of the writing is sustained through generally correct use of conventions. • Errors occasionally reduce clarity and/or 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 clarity and/or interrupt the flow of the response.
Poor P	• The quality of the writing is impaired by the consistently incorrect use of conventions. • Errors severely reduce clarity and/or impede the flow of the response.
Insufficient INS	• The response has been deemed insufficient in Content.

Part B: Reading general description

Part B: Reading of the *Grade 9 Knowledge and 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.

Part B: Reading 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 questions of various formats supported by the digital assessment platform, each worth one mark, based on reading selections from fiction, nonfiction, drama, poetry, and visual media.

Part B: Reading contains reading passages and corresponding questions.

If a word that warrants definition is used on a test, it will be defined by the passage in 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 and Employability Mathematics Provincial Achievement Test

General description

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

- 50 questions of various formats supported by the digital assessment platform, 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.

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 following pages). A calculator and digital tools are included on the digital assessment platform.

Any *Written-response bilingual blank paper* needed for rough work must be provided to students by the supervisor and collected by the supervisor at the end of the provincial achievement test administration and securely shredded.

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%)

Metric System of Measurement

Conversion Table

Length
1 centimetre (cm) = 10 millimetres (mm)
1 metre (m) = 100 centimetres (cm)
1 kilometre (km) = 1 000 metres (m)

Capacity
1 litre (L) = 1 000 millilitres (mL)
1 cubic metre (m ³) = 1 000 litres (L)

Volume
1 cubic metre (m ³) = 1 000 000 cubic centimetres (cm ³)

Mass
1 gram (g) = 1 000 milligrams (mg)
1 kilogram (kg) = 1 000 grams (g)
1 tonne (t) = 1 000 kilograms (kg)

Area
1 square kilometre (km ²) = 1 000 000 square metres (m ²)

Imperial System of Measurement

Conversion Table

Length
1 foot (ft) = 12 inches (in)
1 yard (yd) = 3 feet (ft)
1 mile (mi) = 5 280 feet (ft)

Capacity
1 pint (pt) = 20 fluid ounces (fl oz)
1 quart (qt) = 2 pints (pt)
1 gallon (gal) = 4 quarts (qt)

Volume
1 cubic yard (yd ³) = 27 cubic feet (ft ³)

Mass
1 pound (lb) = 16 ounces (oz)
1 ton (t) = 2 240 pounds (lb)

Area
1 square foot (ft ²) = 144 square inches (in ²)
1 square mile (mi ²) = 640 acres (ac)
1 hectare (ha) = 2.47 acres (ac)

Grade 9 Knowledge and Employability Science Provincial Achievement Test

General description

The *Grade 9 Knowledge and Employability Science Provincial Achievement Test* consists of 50 questions of various formats supported by the digital assessment platform, 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.

Any *Written-response bilingual blank paper* needed for rough work must be provided to students by the supervisor and collected by the supervisor at the end of the provincial achievement test administration and securely shredded.

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 Principles 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

Any Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) pictograms that appear on provincial assessments will be WHMIS 2015 pictograms. 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 about 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  For fire hazards	Flame Over Circle  For oxidizing hazards	Gas Cylinder  For gases under pressure
Exploding Bomb  For explosion or reactivity hazards	Biohazardous Infectious Materials  For organisms or toxins that can cause diseases in people or animals	Corrosion  For corrosive damage to metals, as well as skin, eyes
Exclamation Mark  May cause less serious health effects	Health Hazard  May cause or suspected of causing serious health effects	Skull and Crossbones  Can cause death or toxicity with short exposure to small amounts

Grade 9 Knowledge and Employability Social Studies Provincial Achievement Test

General description

The *Grade 9 Knowledge and Employability Social Studies Provincial Achievement Test* consists of 50 questions of various formats supported by the digital assessment platform, 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 may **not** use a dictionary, a thesaurus, or other reference material.

It is important to remember that one test cannot measure all the components within the learning outcomes in the Program of Studies.

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		
	Knowledge	Skills	Number (Percentage) of Questions
Canada: Governance and Citizenship	10	20	30 (60%)
Canada and the United States: an Economic Relationship	10	10	20 (40%)
Number (Percentage) of Questions	20 (40%)	30 (60%)	50 (100%)

Preparing Students for the Provincial Achievement Test

Suggestions for preparing students

The best way to prepare students for writing the provincial achievement test is to teach the curriculum well and to ensure that students know what is expected. Many of the skills and attitudes that support test writing are, in fact, good skills and strategies for approaching all kinds of learning tasks.

Note that the questions on the science test are placed in real-life contexts.

Teachers are encouraged to familiarize their students with the types of questions that will appear on the test. [Released materials](#) from previously secured tests are available on the Alberta Education and Childcare website.

[Practice tests](#) are available on the digital assessment platform. These practice tests include accommodations such as text-to-speech, coloured overlays, and a zoom feature for increasing the size of the font.

Teachers are also encouraged to share the following information with their students to help them prepare for the Grade 9 Knowledge and Employability provincial achievement tests.

Special-format practice tests

To give students an opportunity to practice provincial achievement test-style questions and content in Braille, large print, or coloured print versions, Alberta Education and Childcare 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 and Childcare after use.

More information about special format practice tests can be found in the *General Information Bulletin*. To order special format practice tests, complete this [form](#).

Suggestions for answering questions

- Before you begin, find out how much time you have.
- Ask questions if you are unsure of anything.
- Find out how many questions there are, and plan your time accordingly.
- Answer the easier questions first; then go back to the more difficult ones.
- Do not spend too much time on any one question. Flag any questions you have difficulty with, and go back to them if you have time.
- Read each question carefully, underline or highlight key words, and try to determine an answer before looking at the choices.
- Read all the choices and see which one best fits the answer.
- When you are not sure which answer is correct, eliminate any choices that are wrong and then select the best of the remaining choices.
- If time permits, recheck your answers.
- Double-check to make sure that you have answered all questions before submitting the test.
- Read the information given using the strategy that works best for you. You should either
 - look at all the information and think carefully about it before you try to answer the question**OR**
 - read the questions first and then look at the information, keeping in mind the questions you need to answer
- Make sure that you look at all forms of the information given. Information may be given in words, charts, pictures, graphs, or maps.
- When information is given for more than one question, go back to the information before answering each question.
- Check your work when you calculate an answer, even when your answer is one of the choices.
- When answering “best answer” questions, be sure to carefully read all the choices before selecting the answer that you think is best. These questions will always include a boldfaced qualifier such as **best**, **most strongly**, or **most clearly** in their stems. More than one of the choices may be, to some degree, correct, but one of the choices will be “best” in that it takes more of the information into account or can be supported most strongly by reference to the information.

Opportunities to Participate in Test-development Activities

Field testing

All provincial achievement test questions are field tested before use. Field testing is a critical process in assessment design with the objective of testing the test items before they appear on a provincial assessment. Field testing ensures that Alberta Education and Childcare provincial assessments are fair, reliable, and valid. Teachers and students can be reassured that the items on provincial assessments have undergone a rigorous process of development, improvement, and validation.

Field tests provide benefits for teachers and students by exposing them to examples of the style and content of items that may appear on provincial assessments. Through the field-testing experience, students experience provincial assessment rules and procedures, as well as a conventional large-scale standardized writing environment. This exposure and familiarization have the potential to reduce test anxiety.

Teachers can sign up for field testing on the [digital assessment platform](#). A [user guide](#) to signing up for field testing has been developed to answer any questions you may have.

All of the rules and procedures that are specified in the [General Information Bulletin](#) apply to the administration of field tests. Prior to participating in field testing, school staff will be required to attest to a declaration related to assessment confidentiality.

Detailed information can be found in the [Field Testing Program: Rules and Guide](#).

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 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.

Appendix 1

Example of Grade 9 Knowledge and Employability English Language Arts Writing Instructions Page

Grade 9 Provincial Achievement Test
Knowledge and Employability
English Language Arts
Part A: Writing

Description

Time: 80 minutes. You have up to 160 minutes to complete this test should you need it.

Part A: Writing contributes 35% of the total Grade 9 Knowledge and Employability English Language Arts Provincial Achievement Test mark and consists of one assignment:

- **Assignment: Essay Writing**
This section describes a situation to which you must respond in the format of a persuasive essay.

Before beginning to write, you will have 10 minutes to talk with your classmates (in groups of two to four) about the writing assignment or to think about it alone. During this time, you may record your ideas by using the planning space provided.

Instructions

- The assignment and resources can be navigated by clicking on the appropriate selection button on the left side of the screen.
- You **may** use the following **print** references:
 - a dictionary (English and/or bilingual)
 - a thesaurus
- Record your ideas and/or make a **plan** before you write by using the planning space provided.
- Complete and revise your response to the writing assignment using the word processor provided in this test.
- To submit your **final** response, click “Submit” on the left side of the screen and confirm “I want to submit my assessment” when prompted by the pop-up.
- You will **not** be able to return to the test once the test is submitted.

Do not include your name anywhere in your response.

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Appendix 2

Example of Grade 9 Knowledge and Employability English Language Arts Reading Instructions Page

Grade 9 Provincial Achievement Test
Knowledge and Employability
English Language Arts
Part B: Reading

Description

Time: 75 minutes. You have up to 150 minutes to complete this test should you need it.

Part B: Reading of the 9 Knowledge and Employability English Language Arts Provincial Achievement Test mark and consists of 50 questions.

- The questions are based on information that must be **read** or **viewed** before you answer the question.
- To help you answer the questions, every fifth line of the selected reading passages is numbered.

Instructions

- The readings and questions can be navigated by clicking on the appropriate selection button on the left side of the screen.
- You may **not** use a dictionary, a thesaurus, or other reference materials.
- Read each question carefully and choose the **correct** or **best** answer.
- If you change an answer, your test will be automatically updated.
- Answer every question.
- To submit your **final** answers, click “Submit” on the left side of the screen and confirm “I want to submit my assessment” when prompted by the pop-up.
- You will **not** be able to return to the test once the test is submitted.

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Appendix 3

Example of Grade 9 Knowledge and Employability Mathematics Instructions Page

Grade 9 Provincial Achievement Test Knowledge and Employability *Mathematics*

Description

Time: 75 minutes. This test was developed to be completed in 75 minutes. You have up to 150 minutes to complete this test should you need it.

This test has 50 questions each worth 1 mark.

The conversion tables can be viewed by clicking the Resources icon  at the right side of the screen.

Instructions

- You may use a calculator, a ruler, a protractor, and manipulatives.
- You may **not** use a dictionary, a thesaurus, or other reference material.
- Read each question carefully, and choose the **correct** or **best** answer.
- Answer every question.
- If you change an answer, your test will be automatically updated.
- If an answer is a value between 0 and 1 (e.g., 0.25), then be sure to record the 0 before the decimal place.
- To submit your **final** answers, click “Submit” on the left side of the screen.
- You will **not** be able to return to the test once the test is submitted.

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Appendix 4

Example of Grade 9 Knowledge and Employability Social Studies Instructions Page

Grade 9 Provincial Achievement Test Knowledge and Employability *Social Studies*

Description

Time: 75 minutes. You have up to 150 minutes to complete this test should you need it.

The Grade 9 Knowledge and Employability Social Studies Provincial Achievement Test consists of 50 questions.

Instructions

- The sources and questions can be navigated by clicking on the appropriate selection button on the left side of the screen.
- You may **not** use a dictionary, a thesaurus, or other reference materials.
- Read each question carefully and choose the **correct** or **best** answer.
- If you change an answer, your test will be automatically updated.
- Answer every question.
- To submit your **final** answers, click “Submit” on the left side of the screen and confirm “I want to submit my assessment” when prompted by the pop-up.
- You will **not** be able to return to the test once the test is submitted.

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Appendix 5

Example of Grade 9 Knowledge and Employability Science Instructions Page

Instructions

Grade 9 Provincial Achievement Test Knowledge and Employability *Science*

Description

Time: 75 minutes. This test was developed to be completed in 75 minutes. You have up to 150 minutes to complete this test should you need it.

This test has 50 questions, each worth 1 mark.

Instructions

- You may use a calculator, but it is not necessary.
- You may **not** use a dictionary, a thesaurus, or other reference material.
- Read each question carefully, and choose the **correct** or **best** answer.
- If you change an answer, your test will be automatically updated.
- Answer every question.
- To submit your **final** answers, click “Submit” on the left side of the screen.
- You will **not** be able to return to the test once the test is submitted.

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Provincial Assessment Contacts

Provincial Achievement Tests Help Desk

Email: ECC.PATS@gov.ab.ca

Examination Administration (for test security, rules, scheduling and policy issues)

Email: exam.admin@gov.ab.ca

Online Assessment (for technical assistance)

Email: online.assessment@gov.ab.ca

Provincial Assessment mailing address

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

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