

Grade 9

Assessment Highlights

# Social Studies

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Alberta Provincial Achievement Testing

2017–2018

This document contains assessment highlights from the 2018 Grade 9 Social Studies Provincial Achievement Test.

Assessment highlights provide information about the overall test, the test blueprints, and student performance on the 2018 Grade 9 Social Studies Provincial Achievement Test. Also provided is commentary on student performance at the acceptable standard and the standard of excellence on selected items from the 2018 provincial achievement test. This information is intended for teachers and is best used in conjunction with the multi-year and detailed school reports that are available to schools. **Assessment highlights reports** for all provincial achievement test subjects and grades are **posted on the Alberta Education website every year** in the fall.

**Every second year, a complete test** for all provincial achievement test subjects and grades (except grades 6 and 9 Français/French Language Arts and Grade 9 Knowledge and Employability courses) is posted on the Alberta Education website. A test blueprint and an answer key that includes the difficulty, reporting category, and item description for each test item are also included. These materials, along with the program of studies and subject bulletin, provide information that can be used to inform instructional practice.

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The Alberta Education Internet address is [education.alberta.ca](http://education.alberta.ca).

This document was written primarily for:

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

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# The 2018 Grade 9 Social Studies Provincial Achievement Test

This report provides teachers, school administrators, and the public with an overview of the performance of all students who wrote the 2018 Grade 9 Social Studies Provincial Achievement Test. It complements the detailed school and jurisdiction reports.

## How Many Students Wrote the Test?

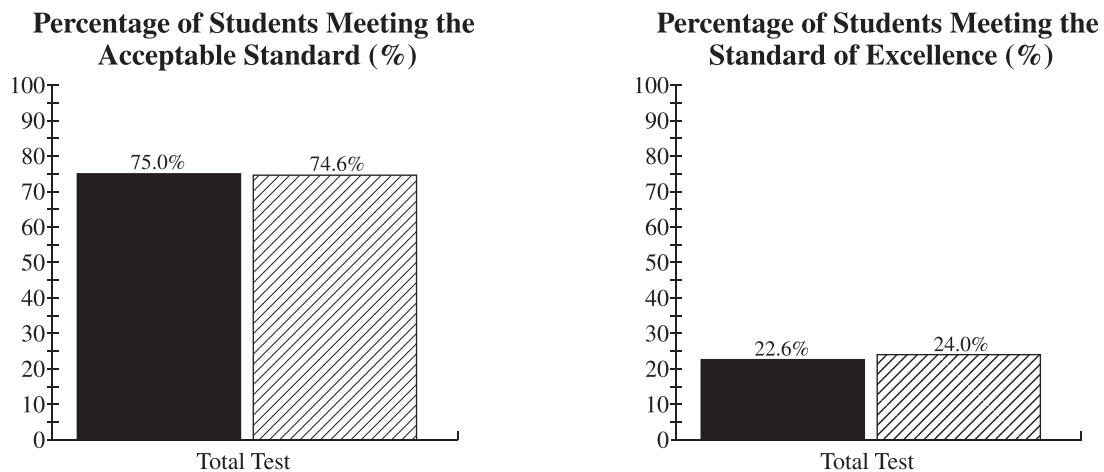
A total of 41 902 students wrote the 2018 Grade 9 Social Studies Provincial Achievement Test.



## What Was the Test Like?

The 2018 Grade 9 Social Studies Provincial Achievement Test consisted of 50 multiple-choice questions based on specific outcomes (SOs) within each of the two general outcomes (GOs) in the *2007 Grade 9 Social Studies Program of Studies*: GO 9.1 Issues for Canadians: Governance and Rights and GO 9.2 Issues for Canadians: Economic Systems in Canada and the United States.

## How Well Did Students Do?

The percentages of students meeting the acceptable standard and the standard of excellence in 2018 are consistent with 2017, as shown in the graphs below. Out of a total possible score of 50, the provincial average on the test was 33.7 (67.4%). The results presented in this report are based on scores achieved by all students who wrote the test, including those in French-immersion and Francophone programs. Detailed provincial assessment results that provide English-only statistics or French-only statistics that apply to individual schools are contained in school and jurisdiction reports.



-  2017 Achievement Standards: The percentage of students in the province who met the acceptable standard and the standard of excellence on the 2017 Grade 9 Social Studies Provincial Achievement Test (based on those who wrote)
-  2018 Achievement Standards: The percentage of students in the province who met the acceptable standard and the standard of excellence on the 2018 Grade 9 Social Studies Provincial Achievement Test (based on those who wrote)

# 2018 Test Blueprint and Student Achievement

In 2018, 74.6% of all students who wrote the Grade 9 Social Studies Provincial Achievement Test achieved the acceptable standard, and 24.0% of all students who wrote achieved the standard of excellence. Student achievement on the 2018 Grade 9 Social Studies Provincial Achievement Test averaged 33.7 out of a total possible score of 50 (67.4%).

The blueprint below shows the reporting categories and test sections (curricular content areas) by which 2018 summary data are reported to schools and school authorities, and it shows the provincial average of student achievement by both raw score and percentage.

Test Section (Curricular Content Area)	Reporting Category		Provincial Student Achievement (Average Raw Score and Percentage)
	Knowledge and Understanding <sup>1</sup>	Skills and Processes <sup>2</sup>	
<b>The Political and Judicial System (9.1.4, 9.1.5)<sup>3</sup></b> Students examine the structure of Canada's federal political system and analyze the role of citizens and organizations in Canada's justice system by exploring and reflecting on questions and issues regarding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how federal laws are passed</li> <li>• branches of the federal government</li> <li>• selection of MPs and senators</li> <li>• accountability of MPs and senators</li> <li>• the role of federal political parties</li> <li>• the role of media in political issues</li> <li>• lobby groups and government decisions</li> <li>• how political and legislative processes meet the needs of Canadians</li> <li>• participation in Canada's justice system</li> <li>• citizens' legal roles and responsibilities</li> <li>• the Youth Criminal Justice Act</li> </ul>			<b>8.3/11 (75.5%)</b>
<b>Individual and Collective Rights (9.1.6, 9.1.7)<sup>3</sup></b> Students critically assess the impact of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms on legislative processes in Canada and how increased demand for recognition of collective rights has impacted legislative processes in Canada by exploring and reflecting on questions and issues regarding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• recognition of individual rights</li> <li>• exercising individual rights</li> <li>• conditions in the workplace</li> <li>• rights and responsibilities of citizens</li> <li>• recognition of collective rights</li> <li>• the needs of Francophone minorities</li> <li>• the needs of Francophones in Québec</li> <li>• the rights of official-language minorities</li> <li>• how the Indian Act recognizes the status and identity of Aboriginal peoples</li> <li>• Treaty 6, Treaty 7, and Treaty 8</li> <li>• legislation and Métis cultures and rights</li> </ul>			<b>7.9/11 (71.8%)</b>
<b>Immigration (9.1.8)<sup>3</sup></b> Students critically assess how legislative processes address issues of immigration by exploring and reflecting on questions and issues regarding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• factors influencing immigration policies</li> <li>• changes to Canadian policies on immigration and refugees</li> <li>• immigration and Aboriginal peoples</li> <li>• provincial immigration policies</li> <li>• immigration policies in Québec</li> <li>• immigration policies and the Charter</li> <li>• how Canada benefits from immigration</li> </ul>			<b>5.0/8 (62.5%)</b>
<b>Economic Decision Making (9.2.4)<sup>3</sup></b> Students analyze principles and practices of market and mixed economies by exploring and reflecting on questions and issues regarding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• principles of a market economy</li> <li>• government intervention</li> <li>• Canada's mixed economy</li> <li>• consumers in market and mixed economies</li> <li>• consumer individual and collective identity</li> <li>• the economic impact of labour unions</li> <li>• government intervention in the economy</li> <li>• the basic economic problem of scarcity</li> </ul>			<b>4.9/8 (61.3%)</b>
<b>Consumerism, Quality of Life, and Political Decision Making (9.2.5, 9.2.6)<sup>3</sup></b> Students critically assess the relationship between consumerism and quality of life in Canada and the United States and the interrelationship between political decisions and economic systems by exploring and reflecting on questions and issues regarding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• indicators of quality of life</li> <li>• individual consumer behaviour</li> <li>• how marketing affects consumerism</li> <li>• consumerism and quality of life</li> <li>• consumerism as a power of a collective</li> <li>• consumerism and economic growth</li> <li>• values underlying social programs</li> <li>• economic platforms of political parties</li> <li>• political party philosophies and platforms</li> <li>• the underground economy</li> <li>• environmental issues and quality of life</li> </ul>			<b>7.6/12 (63.3%)</b>
<b>Provincial Student Achievement (Average Raw Score and Percentage)</b>	<b>12.8/19 (67.4%)</b>	<b>20.8/31 (67.1%)</b>	<b>Total Test Raw Score = 50</b>

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

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

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

# Commentary on 2018 Student Achievement

The following is a discussion of student achievement on the 2018 Grade 9 Social Studies Provincial Achievement Test. Sample questions from the test are provided to highlight the achievement of students who met the acceptable standard, students who met the standard of excellence, and students who did not meet the acceptable standard. For each question, the keyed answer is marked with an asterisk.

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

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

Students who achieved the acceptable standard were able to demonstrate a basic understanding of the role of the executive branch of Canada’s federal political system, the power of a majority government in the legislative branch of Canada’s federal government, and the influence of advocacy groups in Canada’s criminal justice system. Students who met the standard of excellence additionally demonstrated strengths in exploring issues regarding the extent to which Canada’s political and legislative processes meet the needs of all Canadians, assessing the extent to which the legislative branch of Canada’s government upholds democratic principles in the enactment of legislation, and evaluating viewpoints regarding the extent to which Canada’s criminal justice system serves the interests of Canadians. Students who did not achieve the acceptable standard were generally able to identify the three branches of Canada’s federal political system, but many of these students struggled with questions pertaining to the scope of political power exercised by the legislative branch of Canada’s federal government and demonstrated a limited awareness of how citizens and organizations in Canada’s federal justice system participate in the rehabilitation of criminals. The following question illustrates some of these differences in student achievement on the 2018 Grade 9 Social Studies Provincial Achievement Test.

In question 3 (blueprinted as a **Skills and Processes** question), students were required to identify the speaker whose comments in one source are most directly related to the information presented in another source (SO 9.S.1).

3. The comments of which individual in Source III are **most directly** related to the information presented in Source II?
- A. Newsie7
  - B. Politico15
  - C. InfoSource
  - \*D. ActiveCitizen

Of all students who wrote the test, 75.5% chose the keyed response (option **D**). These students were able to determine that the information contained in a chart—documenting the “Operating Expenses of the Office of the Governor General of Canada, Budget Year Ended March 31, 2015”—in Source II is most directly related to the viewpoint of “ActiveCitizen” in Source III regarding how “Flying the governor general around the world is a shameful waste of money that needs to go to social programs for Canadians.” The viewpoint of “Newsie7” in option **A** in Source III (selected by 5.8% of all students) presents ideas regarding how this “ceremonial” but “politically neutral office could still serve an important purpose if a national crisis were to occur.” The viewpoint of “Politico15” in option **B** in Source III (selected by 11.9% of all students) presents ideas regarding how the governor general “acts on

behalf of all Canadians” and “meets and comforts the family of every fallen soldier.” The viewpoint of “InfoSource” in option C in Source III (selected by 6.6% of all students) presents ideas regarding how the governor general of Canada “gives out Order of Canada awards and meets with royals and diplomats.” Each of these three viewpoints presents ideas related to the political role of the governor general but the ideas presented are not directly related to the expenses associated with the Office of the Governor General of Canada identified in Source II. Of those students who met the acceptable standard, 80.0% answered this question correctly. Of those students who met the standard of excellence, 95.8% chose the correct answer. Of those students who did not achieve the acceptable standard, 47.4% selected the correct response.

In the section of the 2018 Grade 9 Social Studies Provincial Achievement Test blueprinted for curricular content pertaining to **Individual and Collective Rights** (composed of 11 questions), students were required to assess, critically, the impact of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms on legislative processes in Canada (Specific Outcome 9.1.6) and assess, critically, how the increased demand for recognition of collective rights has impacted legislative processes in Canada (Specific Outcome 9.1.7) by exploring and reflecting on questions and issues regarding:

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

Students who met the acceptable standard were able to recognize some of the ways in which the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms protects the rights of individuals, acknowledge provisions in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms that guarantee the rights of Francophones in minority settings, and identify aspects of the Indian Act and Treaty 6 that guarantee the collective rights of Aboriginal peoples. Students who achieved the standard of excellence were additionally able to appreciate the societal implications of the Canadian government’s promotion of the rights of individuals, assess the extent to which minority-language educational rights have been guaranteed to official-language communities in Alberta, and evaluate the extent to which legislation such as the Indian Act and Treaty 6 acknowledges the status and identity of Aboriginal peoples. For students who did not meet the acceptable standard, questions that required an understanding of how rights contained in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms are interpreted when applied to individual cases, making connections among historical events related to official-language rights in Alberta, or synthesizing information related to differing viewpoints regarding recognition of the collective rights of Aboriginal peoples frequently proved challenging. Some of these differences in student achievement on the 2018 Grade 9 Social Studies Provincial Achievement Test are demonstrated in the following question.



In question 18 (blueprinted as a **Skills and Processes** question), students were required to draw a conclusion regarding the question most appropriately answered by the information presented in two sources (SO 9.S.4).

18. The information in these two sources would be used **most appropriately** to answer which of the following questions?
- A. Should Alberta become an officially bilingual province?
  - B. Should Francophones have the right to govern their own schools in Alberta?
  - \*C. To what extent should federal and provincial governments support and promote the rights of official-language minorities in Alberta?
  - D. To what extent should federal and provincial government programs be directed at encouraging Francophones to live and work in Alberta?

Of all students who wrote the test, 68.3% were able to analyze “Some Events Related to Recognition of Francophone Rights in Alberta” in Source I and four viewpoints regarding minority-language rights in Alberta in Source II to determine that these two sources would be used most appropriately to answer a question that addresses the extent to which “federal and provincial governments [should] support and promote the rights of official-language minorities in Alberta,” and chose the keyed response (option C). Option A (selected by 17.5% of all students) presents a question that asks if Alberta should “become an officially bilingual province”—a question related to a detail in the timeline in Source I regarding Alberta’s becoming “an officially unilingual English province” in 1988 as well as the comments of Speaker X in Source II regarding how “Alberta is an officially English unilingual province.” Option B (selected by 5.3% of all students) presents a question that asks if Francophones should “have the right to govern their own schools in Alberta”—a question related to a detail in the timeline in Source I regarding Alberta’s recognition of “the right of Francophones to govern their schools” in 1993. Option D (selected by 8.8% of all students) presents a question that asks if “federal and provincial government programs [should] be directed at encouraging Francophones to live and work in Alberta”—a question related to the comments of Speaker Y regarding government funding for programs to support Francophone events in Alberta. However, the narrow scope of each of these three questions does not fully encompass the other information in Source I and the viewpoints in Source II pertaining to the central issue that addresses the promotion of minority-language rights in Alberta. Of those students who met the acceptable standard, 70.6% answered this question correctly. Of those students who met the standard of excellence, 90.7% chose the correct answer. Of those students who did not achieve the acceptable standard, 42.5% selected the correct response.

In the **Immigration** blueprint category (composed of 8 questions), students were expected to assess, critically, how legislative processes attempt to address emerging issues of immigration (Specific Outcome 9.1.8) by exploring and reflecting on questions and issues related to:

- What factors influence immigration policies in Canada (i.e., economic, political, health, security)? (SO 9.1.8)
- How are changes to Canadian policies on immigration and refugees a reflection of world issues? (SO 9.1.8)
- How are provincial governments able to influence and implement immigration policies? (SO 9.1.8)
- To what extent does Canada benefit from immigration? (SO 9.1.8)

Those students who achieved the acceptable standard were able to identify the main principles underlying Canadian policies on immigration and refugees that determine Canada’s responses to international refugee crises and demonstrate a basic understanding of the role that provinces can play in nominating immigrants under the Provincial Nomination Program. Students achieving the standard of excellence could also examine the indelible impact of Canada’s efforts to resolve refugee crises throughout the world as well as appreciate the benefits of immigration in strengthening Canada’s economy. Students who did not meet the acceptable standard sometimes had difficulty formulating conclusions with regard to Canada’s policies on immigration and refugees from details presented as well as with the acknowledgement of conflicting viewpoints related to the extent to which Canada’s immigration policies serve the interests of Canadians. Such differences in student achievement on the 2018 Grade 9 Social Studies Provincial Achievement Test are shown in the following question.

In question 27 (blueprinted as a **Knowledge and Understanding** question), students were required to identify a feature of the Provincial Nomination Program (SO 9.1.8).

27. Which of the following phrases correctly replaces the question mark below Feature V in Source I?
- \*A. Encourages immigrants to settle where their expertise is in demand
  - B. Enables immigrants to reunite with members of their family
  - C. Provides funding for educational programs for immigrants
  - D. Guarantees immigrants access to health-care services

The keyed response (option **A**) was selected by 60.8% of all students who wrote the test. These students were able to recall how provincial governments are able to influence and implement immigration policies through the Provincial Nomination Program and identify how this program encourages economic-class immigrants “to settle where their expertise is in demand.” Option **B** (selected by 14.9% of all students) incorrectly suggests that this program emphasizes reuniting immigrants “with members of their family,” which is an emphasis of the family-class immigration category. Option **C** (selected by 13.4% of all students) incorrectly suggests that this program funds “educational programs for immigrants,” which reflects a misunderstanding of the criteria for the selection of economic-class immigrants. Option **D** (selected by 10.8% of all students) incorrectly suggests that this program ensures that immigrants have “access to health-care services,” which reveals a mistaken understanding that the Provincial Nomination Program is responsible for the provision of social programs. Of those students who achieved the acceptable standard, 62.1% chose the correct answer. The majority of students who achieved the standard of excellence (92.5%) chose the correct answer, while only 28.2% of students who did not meet the acceptable standard correctly answered the question.

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

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

Students who met the acceptable standard were able to recognize basic principles that distinguish a mixed economy from a market-oriented economy and were able to identify the impact of government regulation on consumers in market and mixed economies. Students who achieved the standard of excellence were additionally able to form generalizations regarding the far-reaching economic impact of government intervention in the economy and assess the competing values inherent in the dual role of government in preserving the economic freedom of consumers while providing for the public good through product safety regulations. Students who did not achieve the acceptable standard were often challenged by questions that required an interpretation of indicators of economic productivity in Canada or an awareness of how the interests of consumers are protected by government regulation of the economy. The following question illustrates some of these differences in student achievement on the 2018 Grade 9 Social Studies Provincial Achievement Test.

In question 38 (blueprinted as a **Skills and Processes** question), students were required to form a generalization regarding the issue to which the information contained in three sources is most closely related (SO 9.S.4).

38. Taken together, these three sources contain information that is **most closely** related to the extent to which
- A. scarcity affects consumer choices
  - B. advertising impacts consumer purchases
  - C. consumers are able to influence government decisions
  - \*D. government should play a role in protecting the interests of consumers

The correct answer (option **D**) was chosen by 55.3% of all students who wrote the test. These students were able to determine—from Source I (a diagram titled “Characteristics of a Market Economy”), Source II (a cartoon depicting consumers who are questioning the quality of a product purchased), and Source III (a chart identifying “Key Features of the Canada Consumer Product Safety Act, 2011”)—that these three sources contain information that is most closely related to an issue pertaining to the role of government in “protecting the interests of consumers” in mixed and market-oriented economies. Option **A** (selected by 10.9% of all students) suggests that the information in the sources addresses the impact of “scarcity” on “consumer choices,” but this choice reflects an inaccurate interpretation of the sources, none of which addresses the basic economic problem of scarcity. Option **B** (selected by 11.9% of all students) suggests that the information in the sources addresses the impact of “advertising” on “consumer purchases,” but this choice fails to recognize that none of sources addresses the impact of advertising on choices made by consumers. Option **C** (selected by 21.7% of all students) suggests that the information in the sources addresses the ability of consumers to “influence government decisions,” but this choice fails to recognize that none of sources directly addresses the impact consumers may have on government legislation. Overall, the correct answer for this question was selected by 55.3% of those students who achieved the acceptable standard, 88.9% of those students who met the standard of excellence, and 23.8% of those students who did not achieve the acceptable standard.

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

- What are the indicators of quality of life? (SO 9.2.5)
- What societal values underlie social programs in Canada and the United States? (SO 9.2.5)
- How does the underground economy impact the federal and provincial tax base and social programs (i.e., tax evasion, black market)? (SO 9.2.6)

Students achieving the acceptable standard were able to identify indicators of quality of life, recognize differing values regarding the provision of social programs in Canada and the United States, and acknowledge the impact of the underground economy on public revenue. Students who achieved the standard of excellence could also delve deeply into the implications of annual income as an economic indicator of quality of life, were able to evaluate the extent to which social welfare is enhanced by social programs in Canada and the United States, and could appreciate the far-reaching societal implications of individual participation in the black market. Those students who did not meet the acceptable standard often had difficulty interpreting data on annual income, distinguishing differences in the provision of publicly funded and privately funded health care, and recognizing that the provision of social programs is dependent on income acquired by government through taxation. Some of the aforementioned differences in student performance are evident in the following question taken from the 2018 Grade 9 Social Studies Provincial Achievement Test.

Question 44 (blueprinted as a **Knowledge and Understanding** question) required students to identify a feature that is characteristic of a market economy (SO 9.2.5).

- 44.** Which of the following statements would be correctly added to the list of characteristics of Economic System X in Source I?
- A.** All people’s basic needs are met.
  - B.** Property is shared by all members of society.
  - C.** Production surpluses are distributed equally among workers.
  - \*D.** Consumer demand determines prices for goods and services.

Of all students who wrote the test, 74.0% were able derive from aspects of Economic System X (regarding how health care is “privately funded,” how “individuals pay fees for services,” and how “individualism” is valued) that this is a market-oriented economy—in which “consumer demand determines prices for goods and services”—and chose the keyed response (option **D**). Both option **A** (selected by 11.3% of all students) and option **B** (selected by 5.3% of all students) present ideas consistent with the principles of a mixed economy, comparable to those of Economic System W in Source I rather than Economic System X. Option **C** (selected by 9.2% of all students) presents the idea that workers are able to equally share production surpluses, but such a practice is inconsistent with aspects of Economic System X. Of those students who met the acceptable standard, 79.9% answered this question correctly. Of those students who met the standard of excellence, 97.5% chose the correct answer. Of those students who did not achieve the acceptable standard, 40.2% selected the correct response.

Overall, student achievement on the 2018 Grade 9 Social Studies Provincial Achievement Test was strong. Most students (74.6%) were able to achieve the acceptable standard and 24.0% of all students achieved the standard of excellence. Of all students who wrote the test, 25.4% did not achieve the acceptable standard.

# Provincial Achievement Test Program Support Documents

The Alberta Education website contains several documents that provide valuable information about various aspects of the Provincial Achievement Test program. To access these documents, go to the [Alberta Education website](#). Click on one of the specific links to access the following documents.

## **Provincial Achievement Testing Program *General Information Bulletin***

The [General Information Bulletin](#) is a compilation of several documents produced by Alberta Education and is intended to provide superintendents, principals, and teachers with easy access to information about all aspects of the Provincial Achievement Test program. Sections in the bulletin contain information pertaining to schedules and significant dates; security and test rules; test administration directives, guidelines, and procedures; calculator and computer policies; test accommodations; test marking and results; field testing; resources and web documents; forms and samples; and Provincial Assessment Sector contacts.

## **Subject Bulletins**

At the beginning of each school year, subject bulletins are posted on the Alberta Education website for all Provincial Achievement Test subjects for grades 6 and 9. Each bulletin provides descriptions of assessment standards, test design and blueprinting, and scoring guides (where applicable) as well as suggestions for preparing students to write the tests and information about how teachers can participate in test development activities.

## **Examples of the Standards for Students' Writing**

For Provincial Achievement Tests in grades 6 and 9 English Language Arts and Français/French Language Arts, writing samples are designed for teachers and students to enhance students' writing and to assess this writing relative to the standards inherent in the scoring guides. The exemplars documents contain sample responses with scoring rationales that relate student work to the scoring categories and scoring criteria.

## **Previous Achievement Tests and Answer Keys**

All January Provincial Achievement Tests (parts A and B) for Grade 9 semestered students are secured and must be returned to Alberta Education. All May/June Provincial Achievement Tests are secured except Part A of grades 6 and 9 English Language Arts and Français/French Language Arts. Unused or extra copies of only these Part A tests may be kept at the school after administration. Teachers may also use the released items and/or tests that are posted on the Alberta Education website.

## **Parent Guides**

Each school year, versions of the [Alberta Provincial Achievement Test Parent Guide](#) for grades 6 and 9 are posted on the Alberta Education website. Each guide answers frequently asked questions about the Provincial Achievement Test program and provides descriptions of and sample questions for each Provincial Achievement Test subject.

## **Involvement of Teachers**

Teachers of grades 6 and 9 are encouraged to take part in activities related to the Provincial Achievement Test program. These activities include item development, test validation, field testing, and marking. In addition, arrangements can be made through the Alberta Regional Professional Development Consortia for teacher in-service workshops on topics such as interpreting Provincial Achievement Test results to improve student learning.