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# Grade 6 Subject Bulletin Social Studies

Alberta Provincial Achievement Testing **2025-2026**

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**This document was written primarily for**

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Students

Teachers                    ✓        Grade 6 Social Studies

Administrators            ✓

Parents

General Audience

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***2025-2026 Social Studies 6 Subject Bulletin***

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# Contents

<b>Grade 6 Social Studies Provincial Achievement Test</b> .....	<b>1</b>
• General description	1
<b>Description of Grade 6 Social Studies Provincial Assessment Standards</b> .....	<b>2</b>
• Scoring and reporting	2
• Test blueprint	3
<b>Preparing Students for the Grade 6 Social Studies Provincial Achievement Test</b> .....	<b>4</b>
• Suggestions for preparing students	4
• Special-format practice tests	4
• Suggestions for answering questions	5
<b>Opportunities to Participate in Test-development Activities</b> .....	<b>6</b>
• Field testing	6
• Working groups	6
<b>Appendix 1: Example of the Grade 6 Provincial Achievement Test Instructions Page</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>Appendix 2: Examples of Descriptions Used for Text to Speech on the Grade 6 Social Studies Provincial Achievement Test</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>Provincial Assessment Contacts</b> .....	<b>13</b>

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



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# Grade 6 Social Studies Provincial Achievement Test

## General description

The *Grade 6 Social Studies Provincial Achievement Test* is based on the two social studies general outcomes in the [Social Studies Program of Studies](#):

- General Outcome 6.1: Citizens Participating in Decision Making
- General Outcome 6.2: Historical Models of Democracy: Ancient Athens and the Iroquois Confederacy.

Knowledge and understanding and skills and processes are integrated into the test. In the knowledge and understanding category, students are tested on their ability to understand generalizations, concepts, related facts, and content. The skills and processes that students are expected to use when answering questions include critical and creative thinking, historical and geographic thinking, decision making and problem solving, research skills, written literacy, and media literacy.

Values and attitudes outcomes are best assessed in the context of the classroom.

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

The test consists of 50 questions of various formats supported by the digital assessment platform, each worth one mark.

The test is developed to be completed in 60 minutes; however, students have up to 120 minutes to complete the test.

Students may **not** use a dictionary, a thesaurus, or other reference materials when writing the test. If a word that warrants definition is used on a test, it will be defined on the page on which it appears

For the 2025/26 school year, classes in schools choosing optional implementation of the new curriculum for Social Studies 6 will not be required to write the Grade 6 Social Studies PAT. Those classes in schools **not** choosing optional implementation will be required to write the PAT in June 2026.

# Description of Grade 6 Social Studies Provincial Assessment Standards

The following statements describe what is expected of Grade 6 students at the acceptable standard and the standard of excellence, based on outcomes in the [Grade 6 Social Studies Program of Studies](#). These statements represent examples of the standards against which student achievement is measured. It is important to remember that one test cannot measure all the outcomes in the Grade 6 Social Studies Program of Studies.

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<b>Acceptable Standard</b>	<b>Standard of Excellence</b>
<p>Students who meet the acceptable standard in Grade 6 Social Studies have a basic understanding of the concepts, generalizations, and skills fundamental to the program. They are able to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• define or identify the fundamental principles of democracy</li><li>• recognize the rights and responsibilities of citizens in a democracy</li><li>• recognize how citizens are able to actively participate in a democratic society</li><li>• describe the structure and function of both local and provincial governments</li><li>• describe the structure and function of specific historical models of democracy</li><li>• use maps, graphs, tables, and charts to find essential relevant information</li><li>• demonstrate the use of various media-literacy skills when examining current-events topics</li></ul>	<p>Students who meet the standard of excellence in Grade 6 Social Studies have internalized most, if not all, of the concepts and generalizations fundamental to the Grade 6 Social Studies program. The students are confident learners who demonstrate a clear and accurate understanding of how citizens participate in a democracy, and of the influence of historical models of democracy. They are able to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• apply knowledge and/or provide examples of the fundamental principles of democracy</li><li>• demonstrate a clear and accurate understanding of the rights and responsibilities of citizens in a democracy</li><li>• provide specific examples of how citizens can effectively participate in a democratic society</li><li>• analyze the structure and function of both local and provincial governments</li><li>• analyze the structure and function of specific historical models of democracy to demonstrate an understanding of democratic principles</li><li>• interpret and analyze maps, graphs, tables, and charts to make inferences and draw conclusions</li><li>• consistently apply media-literacy skills when examining current-events topics</li></ul>

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## 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.

## Test blueprint

The following blueprint identifies the reporting categories and test sections (curricular content areas) by which questions are classified and reported to schools and school authorities. The number of questions in each reporting category is approximate.

		Knowledge and Understanding	Skills and Processes	Number (Percentage) of Questions
<b>Citizens Participating in Decision Making</b>	<b>Democratic Principles and Ideals</b>	3	7	10 (20%)
	<b>Structure and Function of Local and Provincial Government</b>	3	7	10 (20%)
	<b>Individual, Group, and Community Involvement</b>	3	7	10 (20%)
<b>Historical Models of Democracy</b>	<b>Ancient Athens</b>	3	7	10 (20%)
	<b>Iroquois Confederacy</b>	3	7	10 (20%)
<b>Number (Percentage) of Questions</b>		<b>15 (30%)</b>	<b>35 (70%)</b>	<b>50 (100%)</b>

**Knowledge and understanding** includes ideas, information, and concepts identified in the Grade 6 Social Studies Program of Studies.

**Skills and processes** include critical and creative thinking, historical thinking, geographic thinking, and media literacy as identified in the Grade 6 Social Studies Program of Studies.

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# Preparing Students for the *Grade 6 Social Studies Provincial Achievement Test*

## Suggestions for preparing students

The best way to prepare students for writing the provincial achievement test is to teach the Grade 9 Social Studies Program of Studies well and to ensure that students know what is expected. Many of the skills and attitudes that support test writing are, in fact, effective skills and strategies for approaching all kinds of learning tasks.

Teachers are encouraged to familiarize their students with the types of sources and 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 backgrounds, and a zoom feature for increasing the size of the font.

## 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.
- Skim through the whole test before beginning. 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 alternatives.
- Read all the alternatives and see which one best fits the answer.
- When you are not sure which answer is correct, eliminate any alternatives that are wrong and then select the best of the remaining alternatives.
- 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 many forms, such as words, charts, pictures, graphs, maps, or cartoons.
- When information is given for more than one question, go back to the information before answering each question.
- 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.

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# 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 on the digital platform 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](#).

**For the 2025-2026 school year, all field tests offered for Social Studies 6 will be for the new curriculum.**

## 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 the *Grade 6 Provincial Achievement Test* Instructions Page

## Grade 6 Provincial Achievement Test *Social Studies*

### *To the Teacher*

Read this page to your students.

### *Description*

**Time: 60 minutes.** You have up to 120 minutes to complete this test should you need it.

This test consists of 50 machine-scored questions, each worth 1 mark.

### *Instructions*

- Review the “Try the Tools” instructions.
- You may use a ruler when answering map questions.
- 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** responses, 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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Duplication of this test in any manner or its use for purposes other than those authorized and scheduled by Alberta Education and Childcare is strictly prohibited.

The personal information collected through the Provincial Achievement Testing Program is for the purpose of administering the program as well as support programs, policy evaluation, and measurement. This collection is authorized by section 4(c) of the *Protection of Privacy Act*. For questions about the collection of personal information, email [EDC.PATS@gov.ab.ca](mailto:EDC.PATS@gov.ab.ca) or by mail to 6th floor, 44 Capital Boulevard, 10044 108 Street NW, Edmonton, Alberta T5J 5E6.

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## **Appendix 2: Examples of Descriptions Used for Text to Speech on the *Grade 6 Social Studies Provincial Achievement Test***

This appendix has been prepared by Provincial Assessment, Alberta Education and Childcare. The purpose of this appendix is to provide school staff with examples of the descriptions of diagrams, illustrations, and other visuals used in provincial achievement test text to speech versions, which are available to students as an accommodation. These examples are neither exhaustive nor prescriptive. Test content is shown in black text and descriptions in blue text.

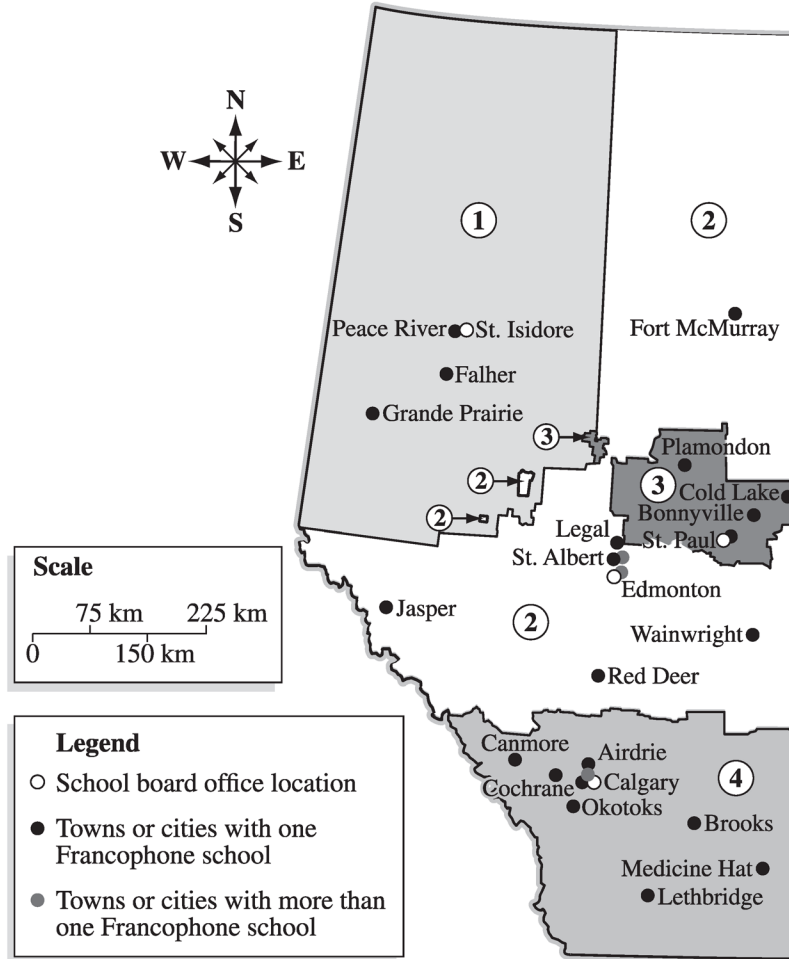
For students who are enrolled with a school, and who typically use audio for their coursework, no application is required to receive this accommodation when writing provincial achievement tests.

Scripting notes are written to describe sources that contain more than just text. Visual sources are described to maintain fairness for all students. However, some visual sources are not scripted, as students may be required to visually analyze a source to determine trends or extrapolate a conclusion. In these situations, the scripting notes would instruct students to examine the printed or digital version of the test booklet.

The following assignment is a reproduction of how the actual pages from a provincial achievement test were read. The blue text is read, in addition to the black text on the page, as supplemental information for students.

Use the following information to answer questions 7 to 10.

### Alberta Francophone Education Regions



Region Number	Education Region	Number of Schools	School Board Office Location
①	Northwest Francophone Education Region No. 1	3	St. Isidore
②	Greater North Central Francophone Education Region No. 2	19	Edmonton
③	East Central Francophone Education Region No. 3	5	St. Paul
④	FrancoSud Education Region No. 4	14	Calgary

All students please refer to the printed or digital version of the test to answer questions seven to ten.

There is a map titled “Alberta Francophone Education Regions” that has a legend with the following information: A white dot on the map means school board office location.

A black dot on the map means towns or cities with one Francophone school. A gray dot on the map means towns or cities with more than one Francophone school.

There is also a table with four columns. The first column is labelled Region Number. The second column is labelled Education Region.

The third column is labelled Number of Schools.

The fourth column is labelled School Board Office Location.

The table also has four rows beneath the headings.

Row one reads: Region Number one; Education Region Northwest Francophone Education Region Number one; Number of Schools three; School Board Office Location Saint Isidore.

Row two reads: Region Number two; Education Region Greater North Central Francophone Education Region Number two; Number of Schools nineteen; School Board Office Location Edmonton.

Row three reads: Region Number three; Education Region East Central Francophone Education Region Number three; Number of schools five; School board Office Location St. Paul.

Row four reads: FrancoSud Education Region Number four; Number of Schools fourteen; School Board Office Location Calgary.

(Read all of the questions as they appear.)

Use the following information to answer question 27.



27. Which of the newspaper headlines **most clearly** reflects media bias?

- A. Newspaper W
- B. Newspaper X
- C. Newspaper Y
- D. Newspaper Z

There is a picture of four newspapers.

Newspaper W The Times Headline: "Old museum may be declared historic site"

Newspaper X The Daily Headline: "Over one hundred citizens attend meeting about fate of old museum"

Newspaper Y The Herald Headline: "Tearing down old museum would be huge loss to the community"

Newspaper Z The Leader Headline: "Two million dollars needed to keep old museum building in working order"

Question 27:

27. Which of the newspaper headlines **most clearly** reflects media bias?
- A. Newspaper W  
which reads “Old museum may be declared historic site”
  - B. Newspaper X  
which reads “Over one hundred citizens attend meeting about fate of old museum”
  - C. Newspaper Y  
which reads “Tearing down old museum would be huge loss to the community”
  - D. Newspaper Z  
which reads “two million dollars needed to keep old museum building in working order”

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# Provincial Assessment Contacts

## Provincial Achievement Tests Help Desk

Email: [EDC.PATS@gov.ab.ca](mailto:EDC.PATS@gov.ab.ca)

## Literacy and Numeracy Screening Help Desk

Email: [litnumscreening@gov.ab.ca](mailto:litnumscreening@gov.ab.ca)

## Provincial Assessment mailing address

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](http://alberta.ca/education-and-childcare)

## Online Assessment (for technical assistance)

Email: [online.assessment@gov.ab.ca](mailto:online.assessment@gov.ab.ca)

Office hours:

Monday through Friday, 8:15 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.