

At Home Prep: Provincial Achievement Tests

Leading up to the exam...

1. Be consistent with study time; a little each day will be much better than trying to cram everything into one long session. In addition, consider developing a glossary or collection of note-cards for vocabulary review in each class. Many students find that preparing for an individual class for 60-90 minutes per day, five or six days per week, will leave them well-prepared at exam time. All-nighters simply don't work for most people, and students experience declining returns on their efforts when they attempt to study for four and five hours straight.
2. Do not multi-task while studying. Set aside time to study in advance and then follow through. For most people, that means leaving your room and turning off visual/auditory distractions, including iPods, Facebook, and music with lyrics.
3. Complete a mock test. Why not set aside a review assessment and time yourself. Try to answer these questions on paper without using your notes? If you complete a mock test 3-4 days before an exam, you'll then know where to focus your studying. You may also combat pre-test jitters by demonstrating to yourself what you know. For the humanities, try answering a couple of potential essay questions on a timed, closed book basis and see how you do. Another simple way to conduct a mock test is to ask a friend or classmate to give you an oral quiz based on concepts in the textbook or in either of your notes.
4. If you have outstanding questions, go see your teacher, tutor or parent at least three days before the exam. If you've given yourself a mock test in advance, you'll be able to go to the school with an agenda.
5. Think about what written questions might be on the exam; outline each potential essay as a form of pretesting and practice.
6. Consider studying with a group of dedicated students. A group study session is an ideal time to review and compare notes, ask each other questions, explain ideas to one another, discuss the upcoming exam and difficult concepts, and, when appropriate, delegate study tasks. Be sure to set an agenda and a specific time frame for your group study session, so that your work stays on track.

... the above tips have been selected from

<http://www.stlawu.edu/academic-support/how-should-i-prepare-tests-and-final-exams>

Test Taking Tips...

Before the Test Tips

1. Get a good night's sleep and eat a high protein breakfast. Drink plenty of water.
2. Practice guided imagery, visualizations of succeeding on the test, mentally "going where the information is stored in your brain", or breathing techniques.
3. Don't study right before the test. Concentrate on being calm and mentally accessing the information you have already studied.
4. Get to the test a little early.
5. Don't engage in negative talk with other students before the test, such as "I'm so nervous – I don't know if I studied enough."
6. Eliminate negative thoughts or self-talk by replacing them with a positive affirmation, like "I am prepared for the test and I will do well" or "I am smart – I can do this."
7. Ask your teacher if you can use a blank piece of paper during the test (be sure to ask or it may look like you are cheating). Use the paper for "brain dumping" or "mind mapping" during the exam.
8. Make a decision to ignore students who finish the test before you. Research shows that students who leave early usually don't score as well as those who take more time.
9. Sit as close as possible to the area where you learned the information in class.

Multiple Choice Test Tips

1. Read the directions carefully.
2. Read the sentence stem, think of the answer, and then find it in the choices.
3. Pay careful attention to negative words (underline them) in the stem and these are distractors.
4. Read all the options, before choosing.
5. Don't dwell on the ones you don't know. Close your eyes and tell yourself, "the answer will come," mark the question, and then move on to questions you know. Go back to the one(s) you marked and try again – the answer has probably come to you.
6. Go back to the questions you were unsure of. If the answer hasn't come to you, use one of the strategies below to help you answer the question.

During the Test Strategies

1. Look for the one that is grammatically correct.
2. Look for similar words in the question and answer.
3. Look for the longest and most specific answer.
4. Try the "True or False" technique.
5. Stick to the subject matter of the course.
6. Watch out for negatives and extreme wording.
7. Numbers in the middle range are usually correct.
8. If two options are opposite, the answer is probably one of them.
9. Research shows the most commonplace answer is "C" followed by "B".
10. "None of the above" is seldom correct. 11. "All of the above" is often correct if the answers are very specific.

Essay Exam Tips

Plan Before You Answer:

1. Read the exam carefully.
2. Read all the questions. Note how much time you should allot to each question.
3. Jot cues as you read. Use the “mind map” or “brain dump” technique.
4. Start with the easiest questions.
5. Number parts of a multi-part question (list these as part of your answer).

Answering:

1. Understand the question completely (see #5 above).
2. Strive for a complete answer (see #5 above).
3. Briefly outline your answer in the margin of your paper.
4. Use facts and logic.
5. Avoid giving your opinion, unless specifically directed to give it.
6. Be concise.
7. Write legibly.
8. Reread your answer for clarity.

Melting “Brain-freeze” Techniques

1. Recreate the testing scene. Get practice tests from your teacher, or create your own, and take the test in the same time frame you are given in class with the same kind of distractions.
2. Focus your attention on breathing. Concentrate on the air going in and out of your lungs – long, deep breaths will calm you and send oxygen to your brain. Do this for two minutes.
3. Hear your negative thoughts and mentally yell: “Stop!” Then, mentally repeat an affirmation such as, “The answers will come” or “I am smart – I can do this”, several times.
4. Discover where the tension is in your body. Tense and release the muscles in this area and become aware when relaxation occurs during the release. Focus on the relaxation and recreate the sensation whenever you choose during the exam.
5. Use guided imagery. This works best if you practice before the test. Close your eyes and see yourself in your favorite, most relaxing place – a beach or forest are good examples. Feel everything about this place, including sights, sounds, and smells. Once you are proficient, you can take this quick fantasy trip right during the test. When you are there, mentally tell yourself “Go to the place where the answers are.” Take a deep breath, open your eyes and begin writing.

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<https://www.usu.edu/asc/studysmart/pdf/TestTakingTips.pdf>

Quick Facts for Parents

<http://schools.cbe.ab.ca/b620/pdfs/PAT-Quick-Facts-for-Parents-and-Guardians.pdf>

Dates for Provincial Achievement Tests (PAT)

June 2017		
Friday, June 16	9:00 – 10:00 A.M.	Grade 6 Français/French Language Arts Partie B
Monday, June 19	9:00 – 10:00 A.M.	Grade 6 English Language Arts Part B
Tuesday, June 20 *NEW	9:00 – 10:15 A.M.	Grade 6 Mathematics Part(ie) A and B**
Wednesday, June 21	ABORIGINAL DAY	No Tests Scheduled
Thursday, June 22	9:00 – 10:00 A.M.	Grade 6 Social Studies
Friday, June 23	9:00 – 10:00 A.M.	Grade 6 Science
	9:00 – 10:15 A.M.	Grade 9 Français/French Language Arts Partie B
Monday, June 26	9:00 – 10:20 A.M.	Grade 9 Social Studies
	9:00 – 10:15 A.M.	Grade 9 K&E Social Studies
Tuesday, June 27	9:00 – 10:15 A.M.	Grade 9 English Language Arts Part B
	9:00 – 10:15 A.M.	Grade 9 K&E English Language Arts Part B
Wednesday, June 28	9:00 – 10:30 A.M.	Grade 9 Mathematics
	9:00 – 10:15 A.M.	Grade 9 K&E Mathematics
Thursday, June 29	9:00 – 10:15 A.M.	Grade 9 Science
	9:00 – 10:15 A.M.	Grade 9 K&E Science

Writing the PAT

Grade 6 PAT Parent Guide: - Video, guides and FAQ for parents to understand PATs

https://education.alberta.ca/media/3386086/23-grade-6-parentguide-2016-17_20161103.pdf

Grade 9 PAT Parent Guide: - Video, guides and FAQ for parents to understand PATs

https://education.alberta.ca/media/3386087/03-grade-9-parentguide-2016-17_20161103.pdf

PAT Practice for Students

Quest A+

Quest A+ is Alberta Education's digital testing solution. This application contains released tests for various subjects. Quest A+ can be accessed from <https://questaplus.alberta.ca/>

Solaro

An online resource created by *Castle Rock* (same company that creates *The Key*)

Available for grades 3-12 in the subject areas of Language Arts, Math and Science.

The program contains practice questions for students as well as review material.

There is a fee associated with the program; however students can access the program for free through the Edmonton Public Library if they have a library card! www.epl.ca

Go to www.epl.ca --> Digital Content --> e-learning-->**Solaro** ...create new account

ExamBank

ExamBank is an online website where students can write online practice exams in core subjects for all grade levels from Kindergarten to Grade 12. The questions are prepared by subject area teachers that pertain directly to Alberta's curriculum. There is a fee to access this site.

<http://exambank.com/>

Eduquest

A free comprehensive JH science site with various student learning resources www.eduquest.ca

Alberta Education Released PAT Items

English Language Arts 6

https://education.alberta.ca/media/1089094/ela6_released-2009-english.pdf

English Language Arts 9

https://education.alberta.ca/media/563612/06-ela9-released_2012.pdf

https://education.alberta.ca/media/3531863/01-ela9-releaseditems-2014_20170327.pdf

Science 6

https://education.alberta.ca/media/3115169/05-science-6-released-2012_20160427.pdf

<https://education.alberta.ca/media/1089147/03-science-6-released-2010.pdf>

Science 9 https://education.alberta.ca/media/563636/05-science-9-released-2012_20150930.pdf

https://education.alberta.ca/media/1089146/03-science-9-released-2010_nolabel.pdf

Math 6

<https://education.alberta.ca/media/1089158/07-math6-released-2011-2012.pdf>

https://education.alberta.ca/media/563634/math6_released_2013.pdf

<https://education.alberta.ca/media/3273137/01-math6-pat-a-samplequestions.pdf>

https://education.alberta.ca/media/3522297/0-math6-pat2017-a_instr-for-posting_20170214.pdf

Math 9

<https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/7e1d01e5-15ec-4edd-b257-736589cbb2cf/resource/edb3757f-6d7e-441a-886b-191472891405/download/Released-2013-Achievement-Test-Math9.pdf>

Social Studies 6

https://education.alberta.ca/media/563611/06-ss6-2013pat-released_20150401-1.pdf

<https://education.alberta.ca/media/1224606/04-ss6-2009-released-items.pdf>

Social Studies 9

https://education.alberta.ca/media/3531864/05-ss9-2014-released-items_20170327.pdf

https://education.alberta.ca/media/563910/07-ss9-2012-released-items_20150401.pdf

<https://education.alberta.ca/media/1224575/05-ss9-2010-released-items-signoff.pdf>