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# Test Specifications

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## **Test Specifications for *English Language Proficiency Assessment and Reassessment* Grades 9, 11, and 12**

### **Overview**

The *English Language Proficiency Assessment and Reassessment (ELPA/R)* is an assessment of students' reading skills based on the *Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum Outcomes (Grade 8)* and the *New Brunswick Provincial Achievement Standards in Reading (end of Grade 8)*. This aligns with the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) definition of functional literacy. Data obtained from the ELPA/R provide information about individual student achievement and school, district, and provincial trends.

### ***English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPA)***

The *English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPA)* is written by all students in Grade 9 and assesses reading comprehension. It is a graduation requirement unless an exemption is obtained. Students must attain the *Appropriate Achievement (AA)* level to meet this requirement. The *ELPA* is administered annually during the January high school examination period.

### ***English Language Proficiency Reassessment (ELPR)***

The *English Language Proficiency Reassessment (ELPR)* is identical to the *ELPA* and is written by students in Grades 11 and 12 who previously scored *Below Appropriate Achievement (BAA)* on the *ELPA* or *ELPR*. The *ELPR* is also administered during the January high school examination period.

### **Waivers**

Credentials obtained from high school provincial literacy assessments from other provinces may be considered. Appropriate documentation must be forwarded to the Assessment, Analysis, and Design Services Branch for approval. Literacy credentials from outside Canada will not be considered.

## Reading Comprehension

The *ELPA/R* consists of 50 multiple choice items based on a selection of literary and information texts. Students read the passages and indicate their responses in their test booklets, which are subsequently scanned electronically. Students have 90 minutes to complete this component with an additional 90 minutes if required. Texts and items for the assessment are selected by a committee of New Brunswick educators and are based on the *English Language Arts Curriculum Outcomes (Grade 8)* and the *Provincial Reading Achievement Standards (end of Grade 8)*.

The provincial standards outline two specific categories of text: literary and informational. Three levels of comprehension response are detailed within these standards: literal, inferential/interpretive, and personal/critical/evaluative. Item selection committees choose questions that measure students' abilities to respond to both categories of text on all these levels. This allows individual results to be reported based on achievement in each genre and level of response as well as overall achievement.

The table titled "*ELPA/R* Test Specifications: Reading Comprehension" on page 3 presents a breakdown of the assessment by text categories and comprehension responses. This table also indicates the number of questions assigned to each category and comprehension response level.

The *ELPA/R* aligns with the *Provincial Reading Achievement Standards (End of Grade 8)*; however, not all aspects of these standards can be measured effectively in a selected response format. The table titled "Provincial Reading Achievement Standards (End of Grade 8) Appropriate for Multiple-Choice Item Format" on pages 4-5 specifies the standards that are appropriate for this assessment format. It should be noted that on-going classroom assessment is not limited to selected response questions such as multiple-choice. Regular and consistent formative assessment in the classroom continues to be an effective measure of all aspects of the *Provincial Reading Achievement Standards*.

The *Administrative Protocols and Procedures* document provides detailed information on the administration of the *ELPA/R*. For information on accommodations and exemptions, please refer to *Protocols for Accommodations and Exemptions*.

Teachers can access these documents on the ONE Collaborative site at:  
<https://collabe.nbed.nb.ca/res/Pages/PROVINCIAL-ASSESSMENT-PROTOCOL-ACCOMODATION-EXEMPTIONS.aspx>

Parents can access the *Protocols for Accommodations and Exemptions* at:  
<http://www2.gnb.ca/content/dam/gnb/Departments/ed/pdf/K12/eval/ProtocolsForAccommodationsAndExemptions.pdf>

## ELPA/R Test Specifications: Reading Comprehension

	Literary Texts		Informational Texts	
	Continuous Prose (2 passages)	Non-Continuous Prose and Poetry (2 passages)	Continuous Information Text (2 passages)	Non-Continuous Information Text (2 passages)
Literal Responses (20%)	5 items		5 items	
Inferential/Interpretive Responses (60%)	15 items		15 items	
Personal/Critical/Evaluative Responses (20%)	5 items		5 items	
Total	25 items		25 items	

### Literary Texts

**Continuous Prose** may include short stories, myths, legends, drama, etc.

**Non-Continuous Prose and Poetry** may include poems, song lyrics, comics, excerpts from graphic novels, etc.

### Informational Texts

**Continuous Information Text** may include articles, descriptive reports, short biographies, etc.

**Non-Continuous Information Text** may include charts, graphs, maps, recipes, schedules, advertisements, graphic hybrid texts, etc.

For further information about **Text Complexity** and the characteristics of **Literary Text and Informational Text**, please refer to the Provincial *Reading Achievement Standards (End of Grade 8)* at:

<http://www2.gnb.ca/content/dam/gnb/Departments/ed/pdf/K12/curric/English/ReadingAchievementStandards-Grade8.pdf>.

**Provincial Reading Achievement Standards (End of Grade 8)  
Appropriate for Multiple-Choice Item Format**

<b>Comprehension Responses (Appropriate Achievement)</b>	<b>Comprehension Responses (Strong Achievement)</b>
<p><b>Literal Response – “Reading the Lines”</b></p> <p>Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Respond accurately to most literal questions; skim large amount of text in search of information, locate literal information from a variety of texts</li> <li>B. Identify key story elements (setting, characters, events, problem/resolution, theme/lesson) of a narrative text; explain how events are related to the theme</li> <li>C. Distinguish between main ideas and supporting details; concisely summarize key information</li> </ul>	<p><b>Literal Response – “Reading the Lines”</b></p> <p>Students demonstrating strong achievement respond to questions/tasks described at the appropriate level with overall accuracy and precision. They also</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>D. Distinguish between important and unimportant details</li> </ul>
<p><b>Inferential/Interpretive Response – “Reading Between the Lines”</b></p> <p>Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Make logical inferences about multiple complex characters (motivations, traits, feelings or personality), and story events; describe relationships among characters and effect on the plot or overall theme</li> <li>B. Interpret relationships among ideas to draw conclusions (e.g. plot, sequence, cause/effect, problem/solution) or make comparisons</li> <li>C. Use context clues and prior knowledge to explain the meaning of new vocabulary/technical terms; interpret subtle shades of meaning, and figurative and descriptive language; interpret symbols (objects, events, motifs) used by the author to convey meaning</li> </ul>	<p><b>Inferential/Interpretive Response – “Reading Between the Lines”</b></p> <p>Students demonstrating strong achievement respond to questions/tasks described at the appropriate level with overall accuracy and precision. They also</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>E. Demonstrate a solid understanding of how story events are interrelated</li> <li>F. Provide thoughtful inferences (i.e., inferences that require more thoughtful engagement with the text)</li> </ul>

<p>D. Interpret/use text features to understand the text (headings and subheadings, cutaways, legends, diagrams, maps, graphs, glossaries, captions, charts, feature boxes, sidebars); make general inferences using this information</p>	
<p><b>Personal/Critical/Evaluative Response – “Reading Beyond the Lines”</b></p> <p>Students</p> <p>A. Make personal connections: compare/contrast with relevant prior knowledge and make logical text-to-text, text-to-world comparisons; connect characters within and across texts/genres by circumstances, traits, or actions</p> <p>B. Explain how the different elements of an author’s style/techniques (e.g., dialect, descriptions, figurative language, flashbacks, foreshadowing, symbolism) create meaning and reaction</p> <p>C. Respond critically to texts: recognize language used to manipulate, persuade, or control; detect prejudice, stereotyping and bias</p> <p>D. Evaluate purpose, structure, and characteristics of a variety of text forms (e.g. short story, ballad, report, explanation, persuasive, autobiography, science fiction, fantasy)</p>	<p><b>Personal/Critical/Evaluative Response – “Reading Beyond the Lines”</b></p> <p>Students demonstrating strong achievement respond to questions/tasks described at the appropriate level with overall accuracy and precision. They also</p> <p>E. Make insightful and sometimes sophisticated connections</p>