

# English Language Proficiency Assessment

## BLUEPRINT

**Department of Education and Early Childhood Development**

**Assessment, Analysis, and Design Services Branch**

P.O. Box/C.P. 6000, Fredericton, NB, E3B 5H1

Tel. (506) 453-2744 Fax (506) 457-6906

**Updated September 2023**



# Blueprint for English Language Proficiency Assessment Grades 9, 11, and 12

## Overview

The *English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPA)* 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*, which are aligned with the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) definition of functional literacy. Data obtained from the *ELPA* provide information about individual student achievement and school, district, and provincial trends.

The assessment is administered to all students in Grade 9 and assesses reading comprehension. It is a graduation requirement unless an exemption has been granted. Students must attain the *Appropriate Achievement (AA)* level to meet this requirement. The *ELPA* is administered annually during the January high school examination period. In response to the global pandemic, in 2020-21 and 2021-22, the *ELPA* was administered in the spring.

## When Students Do Not Attain Appropriate Achievement

The *English Language Proficiency Assessment* is readministered to students in Grades 11 and 12 who previously scored *Below Appropriate Achievement (BAA)* on the *ELPA*. The rewrite is administered during the January high school examination period. In response to the global pandemic, in 2020-21 and 2021-22, the *ELPA* was administered in the spring.

## Waivers

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

## Reading Comprehension

The *ELPA* consists of 50 selected-response items based on a selection of literary and information texts. Students read the passages and respond to all items through the online assessment platform. Students have 90 minutes to complete the assessment with an additional 90 minutes offered as a universal accommodation. 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*.

New Brunswick provincial standards outline two specific categories of text: literary and informational. Additionally, three levels of comprehension response are detailed within these standards: literal, inferential/interpretive, and personal/critical/evaluative. Item selection committees design items that measure students' abilities to respond to both categories of text with all three levels of comprehension. This allows individual results to be reported based on achievement for each text form and level of response, as well as overall achievement.

On page 3, the table titled "ELPA Reading Comprehension Assessment Targets" presents a breakdown of the assessment by text categories and comprehension response types. This table also indicates the number of questions assigned to each category and comprehension response level.

The *ELPA* aligns with the *Provincial Reading Achievement Standards - End of Grade 8*; however, not all aspects of these standards can be measured effectively through the selected-response format. The table titled "Provincial Reading Achievement Standards - End of Grade 8 Appropriate for the Selected-Response Item Format" on pages 4-5 specifies the standards that are appropriate for this assessment format. It should be noted that ongoing 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*. For information on accommodations and exemptions, please refer to *Protocols for Accommodations and Exemptions*.

Teachers can access these documents on our Provincial Assessment Hub at:  
<https://nbed.sharepoint.com/sites/ProvincialAssessments20/SitePages/Accommodation-and-Exemption-Requests.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 Reading Comprehension Assessment Targets

	Literary Texts		Informational Texts	
	Continuous Prose	Non-Continuous Prose and Poetry	Continuous Information Text	Non-Continuous Information Text
<b>Literal Responses</b>	10%		10%	
<b>Inferential/Interpretive Responses</b>	30%		30%	
<b>Personal/Critical/Evaluative Responses</b>	10%		10%	
<b>Total</b>	50%		50%	

### 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/ReadingAchievementStandard-Grade8.pdf>.

**Provincial Reading Achievement Standards - End of Grade 8  
Appropriate for the Selected-Response 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</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>subtle shades of meaning, and figurative and descriptive language; interpret symbols (objects, events, motifs) used by the author to convey meaning</p>	
<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>