

## **Context Statement**

### *Social Context*

British Columbia has a population of approximately 4 million people. Eighty-six per cent of the population lives in urban areas, the largest portion of which is concentrated in the Greater Vancouver region. The province promotes student achievement for all students, regardless of their background.

### *Organization of the School System*

Approximately 600,000 students are enrolled in the public school system, 60,000 in independent schools, and over 4,000 in home schools. The province has 59 school districts and the Conseil scolaire francophone. Most 13-year-old students are in grade 8 or 9, while most 16-year-olds are in grade 11 or 12.

### *Language Arts Teaching*

The BC curriculum for K-12 Language Arts is published in Integrated Resource Packages (IRPs), available in both English and French and consists of the provincially prescribed curriculum (learning outcomes), suggested ideas for instruction, a list of recommended learning resources (books, videos, electronic resources, etc.), and possible methods for teachers to use in evaluating students' progress.

British Columbia has also developed a set of performance standards in reading, writing, numeracy, and social responsibility for voluntary use in schools. Focusing on performance assessment, these standards are used as a resource to support ongoing instruction and assessment. They exemplify a criterion-referenced approach to student assessment and enable teachers, students, and parents to relate student performance to provincial expectations.

The provincial curriculum integrates the six broad areas of language arts (reading, writing, listening, speaking, viewing, representing) on three main levels: among the curriculum strands, across the curriculum, and in life outside the school. Learning outcomes (what students should know and be able to do) are grouped according to three curriculum organizers: Comprehend and Respond, Communicate Ideas and Information, and Self and Society.

BC students are required to take language arts from kindergarten to grade 12. Grade 11 offerings in English include English 11 and Communications 11; francophone students take Français langue première 11. In grade 12, successful completion of English 12, Communications 12, or Technical and Professional Communications 12 satisfies the provincial graduation requirements. Programme francophone students must successfully complete either Français langue première 12 or Communication professionnelle et technique 12 to meet provincial graduation requirements.

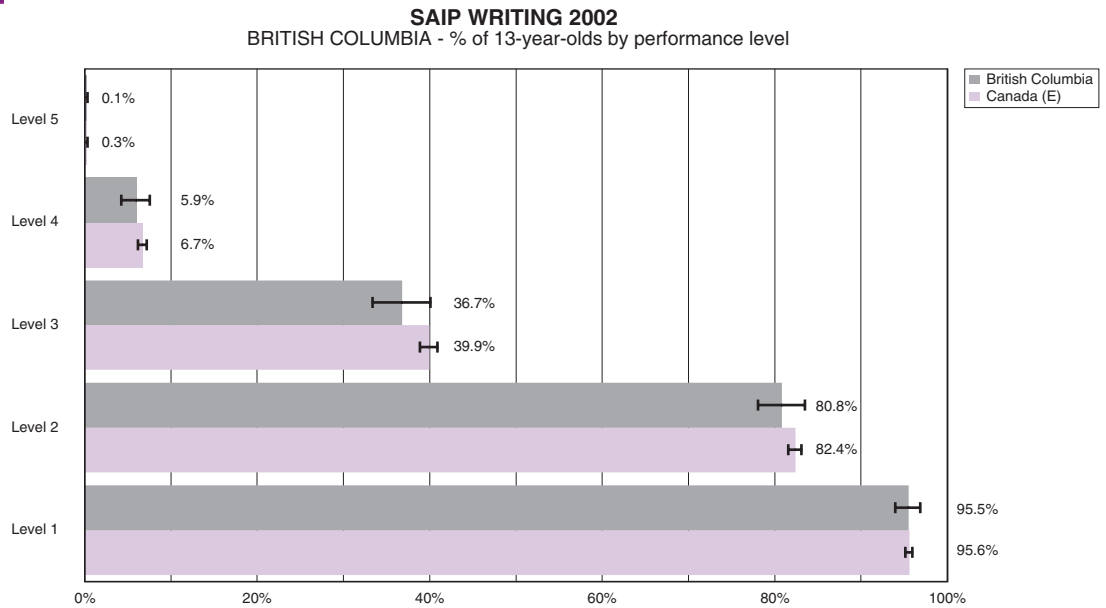
In addition to participating in national (SAIP) and international (PISA) assessments, British Columbia assesses all students in grades 4, 7, and 10 on an annual basis in reading comprehension, writing, and numeracy through the Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA). The FSA provides schools with information to use in planning to improve student achievement at the school level. It also gives teachers, students, and parents an external source of information about an individual student's performance in these important skill areas.

## Results for British Columbia

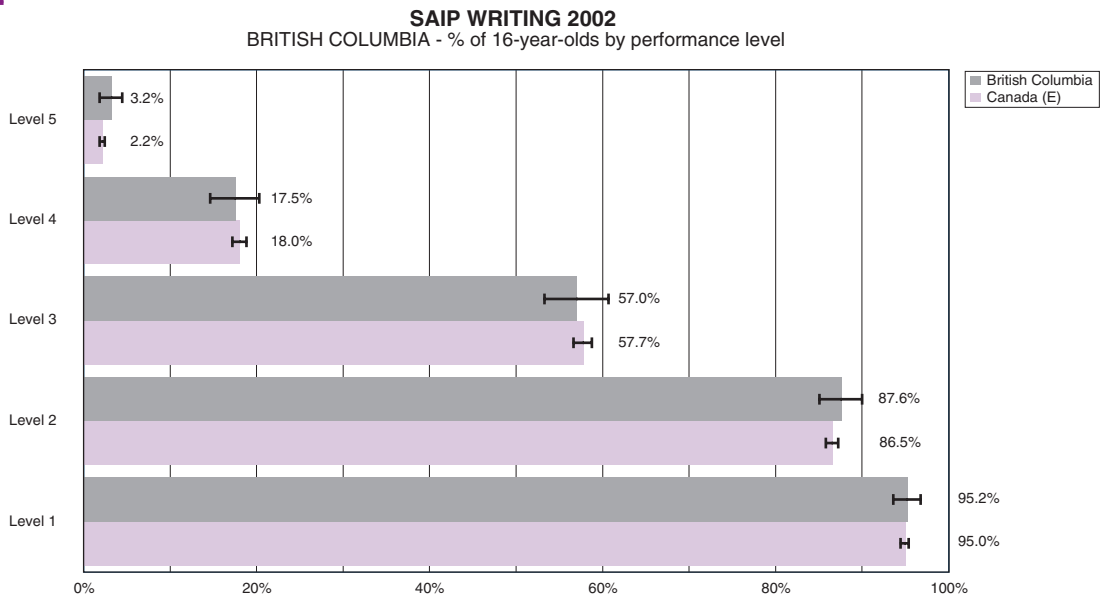
There are no significant differences between this jurisdiction's performance and the Canadian English performance at any level for either age group. Over 80% of 13-year-olds have at least some control of the elements of writing (level 2), and almost 40% produce writing that is generally integrated with a clear perspective (level 3).

Almost 60% of 16-year-olds have control of the elements of writing (level 3), and almost 20% write with effective control (level 4) or better.

**CHART BC1**



**CHART BC2**



## Context Statement

### *Social Context*

Alberta has a multicultural population of approximately 3 million people. All children are required to attend school from the age of 6 to 16. The provincial government has the primary responsibility for education in grades 1 through 12 and shares this responsibility with local school boards.

### *Organization of the School System*

In the 2000 – 01 school year in Alberta, 591,553 students were registered in 2,101 schools. Of these students, 71% attended public schools, 21% attended separate schools, and the remaining 8% attended a variety of private, charter, provincial, and federal schools. About 3,200 students (0.5%) were enrolled in French-first-language programs offered by the five francophone authorities.

Nearly all 13-year-old students (99.2%) were enrolled in junior high school. There were 5.8% in grade 7, 65.4% in grade 8, and 28% in grade 9. All students, regardless of program, enrol in English language arts in each grade. All students registered in francophone programs enrol in Français (French first language).

The senior high school English language arts program has three course sequences: English Language Arts 10-1, 20-1, 30-1; English Language Arts 10-2, 20-2, 30-2; and English Language Arts 16, 26, 36. English language arts is currently under revision. In September 2003, English Language Arts 30-1 and 30-2 will replace English Language Arts 30 and 33 respectively, completing the implementation process.

The senior high school Français program, which is designed for francophone students, also has three course sequences: Français 10, 20, 30; Français 13, 23, 33; and Français 16, 26, 36. The 10, 20, 30 sequence has been under revision. In September 2002, the provincial implementation of the revised Français 30 took place to complete the implementation of the revised 10, 20, 30 sequence. The current Français 13, 23, 33 sequence will be replaced by the new curriculum in September 2003. Français 16, 26, 36 is a new program developed for French-first-language students, and provincial implementation takes place in September 2003.

The French language arts program, which is designed for immersion students, has three courses: French Language Arts 10, 20, 30. In September 2002, the implementation of the revised French Language Arts 30 took place to complete the implementation of the revised French Language Arts 10, 20, 30 sequence.

The first sequence listed in both English language arts and Français is designed for students in academic programs; the second sequence is for general program students; and the 16, 26, 36 sequence is for students enrolled in the Integrated Occupational Program. Students may transfer from one course sequence to another. English as a Second Language (ESL) is offered to students who have a first language other than English.

For the 2000–01 school year, 16-year-old students completed the following English language arts and Français courses (the bracketed figure is completion as a percentage of the 16-year-old student population):

English 10-1 (5%)	Français 10 (0.04%)	English 10-2 (7.1%)	Français 13 (0.10%)	English 16 (1.0%)
English 20-1 (40.9%)	Français 20 (0.17%)	English 20-2 (15.5%)	Français 23 (1.10%)	English 26 (1.1%)
English 30-1 (16.8%)	Français 30 (0.07%)	English 30-2 (7.1%)	Français 33 (0.02%)	English 36 (0.1%)
English as a Second Language (0.8%)				

### *Language Arts Teaching*

Alberta schools provide a variety of learning experiences so that students can read for information, understanding, and enjoyment and also write and speak clearly, accurately, confidently, and appropriately for the context.

The following principles provide the framework for the English Language Arts program.

- Language skills are applied throughout life.
- Language enhances the development of thinking skills, enabling students to reflect on and control their own thinking and learning processes.
- The six language arts — listening and speaking, reading and writing, viewing and representing — are interrelated and interdependent. Facility in one strengthens and supports the others.
- Literature plays an integral part in the language-learning program.
- Language is used to communicate understandings, ideas, and feelings and to assist social and personal development.
- Language skills are essential throughout the entire curriculum.
- Language is closely interwoven with experiences in all learning situations. Print and other media present ideas in diverse and characteristic ways.
- Language skills expand with practice.

In the case of French-first-language students, the development of language skills goes hand in hand with the development of one's francophone identity. The following principles provide the framework for developing French language arts to French-first-language students.

- Language is a communication tool.
- Language is seen in its totality.
- Numerous opportunities are available to use language, especially in interactive situations.
- Students are exposed to a wide variety of presentations and texts/passages and to excellent language models.
- Learning is geared toward finding meaning.
- Risk-taking is encouraged in a climate of trust.
- Learning situations are meaningful and interactive.
- Learning situations take into consideration student interests and needs.
- Learning situations allow students to make choices.
- Learning situations allow for diversity in learning styles and forms of intelligence.
- Numerous contacts are made with the francophone community/world and with its linguistic and cultural diversity.
- Evaluation methods reflect and support the above-mentioned principles.

The new English language arts curriculum has five general outcomes and numerous specific outcomes that students are to achieve by the end of each grade level. The outcomes are interrelated and interdependent, and each is to be achieved through a variety of listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing, and representing experiences.

The new Français programs of study reflect the current curriculum and also make explicit the planning, monitoring, and evaluation strategies used by effective communicators.

New student and teacher language arts resources were selected and authorized. Programs of study, authorized resources, and other materials related to the provincial education system are found on the Alberta Learning Web site, <http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/> and in French at <http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/french/>.

### *Language Arts Assessment*

Since 1982, student achievement has been monitored through a provincial achievement testing program for grades 3, 6, and 9. As well, provincial diploma examinations, which count for 50% of a student's final mark in selected grade 12 courses, have been administered since 1984. The language arts achievement tests and diploma examinations include an extensive written component. The achievement tests and diploma examinations are based on provincial standards and provide information on the degree to which students in the province have met these standards.

The province has developed Classroom Assessment Materials (CAMP) for use by teachers in grades 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, and 11. This award-winning set of materials provides examples of student work that illustrate the grade-level standards. The program includes extensive and varied oral, collaborative, writing, and self-assessment materials.

Alberta Learning has published a set of comprehensive French Language Performance Models (for Français langue première and Français langue seconde – immersion) that includes samples of student work at the grades 1 to 6 levels. These illustrate acceptable and excellent standards of performance in the four language arts areas of listening, reading, speaking, and writing. Similar materials for grades 7 to 12 were published in the spring of 2000.

## Results for Alberta

There are no significant differences between this jurisdiction's performance and the Canadian English performance at any level for either age group except for level 2 for 16-year-olds. Over 80% of 13-year-olds have at least some control of the elements of writing (level 2), and 40% demonstrate writing that is generally integrated with a clear perspective (level 3).

Almost 60% of 16-year-olds demonstrate control of the elements of writing (level 3), while more than 20% write at the higher levels of performance (levels 4 and 5).

CHART AB1

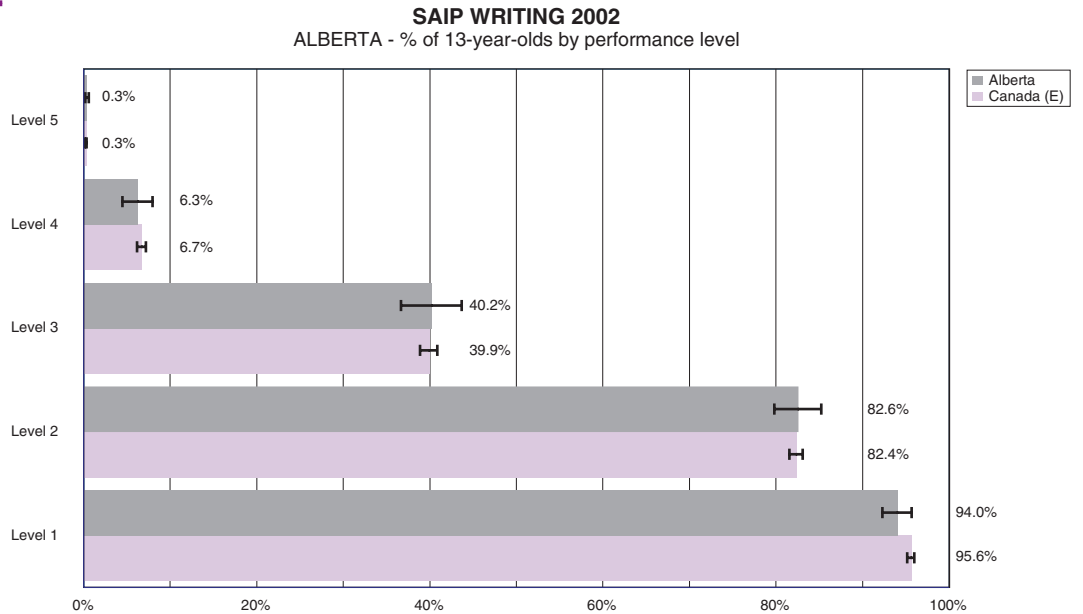
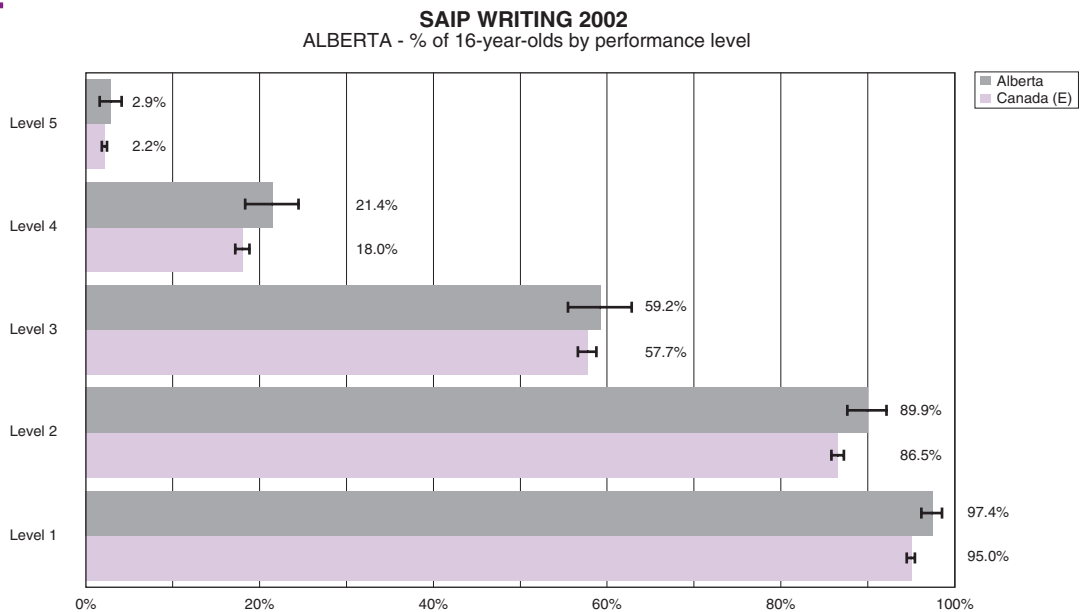


CHART AB2



## Context Statement

### *Social Context*

Saskatchewan has a population of approximately one million spread throughout a vast geographic area. About half of Saskatchewan's population lives in towns, villages, and rural municipalities or on Indian reserves, giving a strong rural influence in the province. Agriculture, potash and uranium mining, oil production, and forestry are major industries. Saskatchewan has a diverse cultural and ethnic heritage, including a large and growing Indian and Métis population. Saskatchewan has approximately 181,000 kindergarten to grade 12 students in 784 provincially funded schools.

### *Language Arts Curricula*

Over the past decade, Saskatchewan has devoted considerable effort to renewing its curricula. In English Language Arts, curricula first introduced in 1992 were renewed during 2000–02. New curricula for grades 6 to 10 were made available in 1997, and for grades 11 and 12 in 1999. Curricula in Language Arts were developed concurrently with the development of the Curriculum Framework for English Language Arts under the Western Canadian Protocol and are consistent with that framework.

In 1989, Saskatchewan undertook a complete redevelopment of its French curricula. Curricula were developed for immersion and francophone schools and for use in K-12 French-as-a-second-language classes in anglophone schools. These curricula are aligned with the French Second Language and French First Language curriculum frameworks of the Western Canadian Protocol and have now been implemented in Saskatchewan schools.

The Western Canadian Protocol agreement and the associated curriculum framework projects are a joint effort of the ministries/departments responsible for K-12 education in Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Northwest Territories, and Yukon in cooperation with teachers and other educators from these provinces and territories. This collaborative effort resulted in the identification of common educational goals and student learning outcomes designed to prepare students to listen, speak, read, write, view, and represent so that they can

- explore thoughts, ideas, feelings, and experiences;
- comprehend and respond personally and critically to oral, print, and other media texts;
- manage ideas and information;
- enhance the clarity and artistry of communication; and
- celebrate and build community.

### *Language Arts Teaching*

The purpose of all English Language Arts curricula is to guide the continuous growth and development of students' listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing, representing, and thinking abilities from kindergarten to grade 12. An integrated, resource-based approach to instruction aims to develop students' understanding and appreciation of language and literature. The ultimate aim is to graduate individuals who can use language confidently and effectively to meet life's various intellectual, social, and vocational challenges.

The general goals of Saskatchewan's English Language Arts curricula, kindergarten to grade 12, are to

- encourage enjoyment of and develop proficiency in listening, speaking, reading and writing, viewing, and representing;
- develop appreciation of and responses to literature;
- develop students' English language abilities as a function of their thinking abilities; and
- promote personal growth and social development by developing students' knowledge and use of the English language.

The purpose of the French First Language Curriculum of Saskatchewan is to guide the growth and development of the francophone student's skills, knowledge, and attitudes in the different domains of language use: oral communication, reading, and writing. These three domains integrate the student's work while developing his or her communicative, strategic, and cognitive competencies. In addition, a fourth domain, Culture and Identity, nourishes the previous three and is integrated throughout the curriculum.

From kindergarten to grade 12, in a progressive approach, Fransaskois students learn to plan, regulate, and evaluate their learning while respecting the following goals:

- learning the French language through linguistic and cultural experiences
- using the French language for learning, thinking, communicating effectively and understanding the different functions of language
- better understanding the French language, including its grammar, syntax, semantics, and all that permits speaking, listening, interacting, reading, and writing
- studying regional, provincial, national, and international francophone literature
- studying the French language as an expression of identity and culture

The francophone students of Saskatchewan, in terms of their secondary studies, must be competent in their language, conscious of their identity, and capable of contributing significantly to ensure the vitality of their community.

The purpose of all French Language Arts curricula for French Immersion kindergarten to grade 12 is to develop the ability of all students to understand and to use the French language for communicating and for thinking in the various situations they will encounter in their daily lives.

The general goals of Saskatchewan's French Language Arts curricula for French immersion, kindergarten to grade 12, are to

- develop the students' interest in and appreciation of oral and written French;
- develop the students' ability to use the French language for communication and for interaction — to understand and to express themselves in a variety of oral and written situations;
- develop the ability of the students to use the French language for thinking — hypothesizing, problem-solving, and acquiring new language;
- develop the students' appreciation of the French culture;
- promote the students' personal and social growth through their language development.

### *Language Arts Assessment*

Classroom teachers in Saskatchewan are responsible for assessment, evaluation, and promotion of students from kindergarten through grade 11. At grade 12, teachers are responsible for at least 60% of each student's final mark, and those teachers accredited in language arts are responsible for assigning 100% of the grade 12 final mark.

Students are assessed on the full range of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values they have been using and developing during instruction. Teachers are encouraged to develop diversified evaluation plans that reflect the various instructional methods they use in adapting instruction to each class and to each student.

In 1994 and 1996, student learning in English reading and writing was provincially assessed at grades 5, 8, and 11. In 1998, student learning in listening and speaking in English was provincially assessed.

Randomly selected schools participated in both assessments. Individual students were assessed in reading or writing, and students in groups of three or four during the listening and speaking assessment. The results of these assessments were interpreted against provincial standards to provide information on how well students in the province are performing in English language arts.

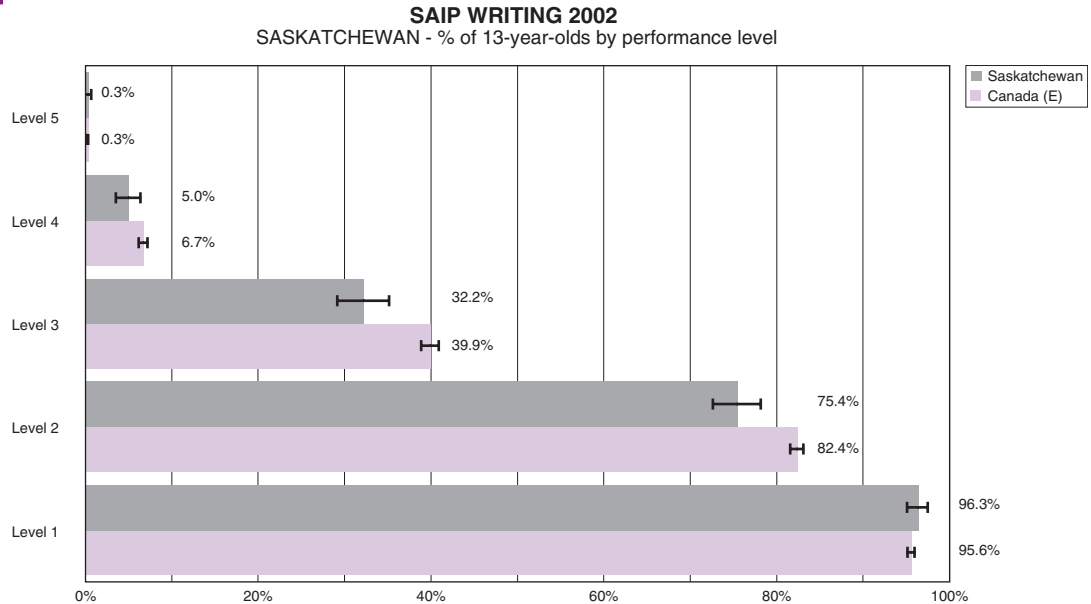


## Results for Saskatchewan

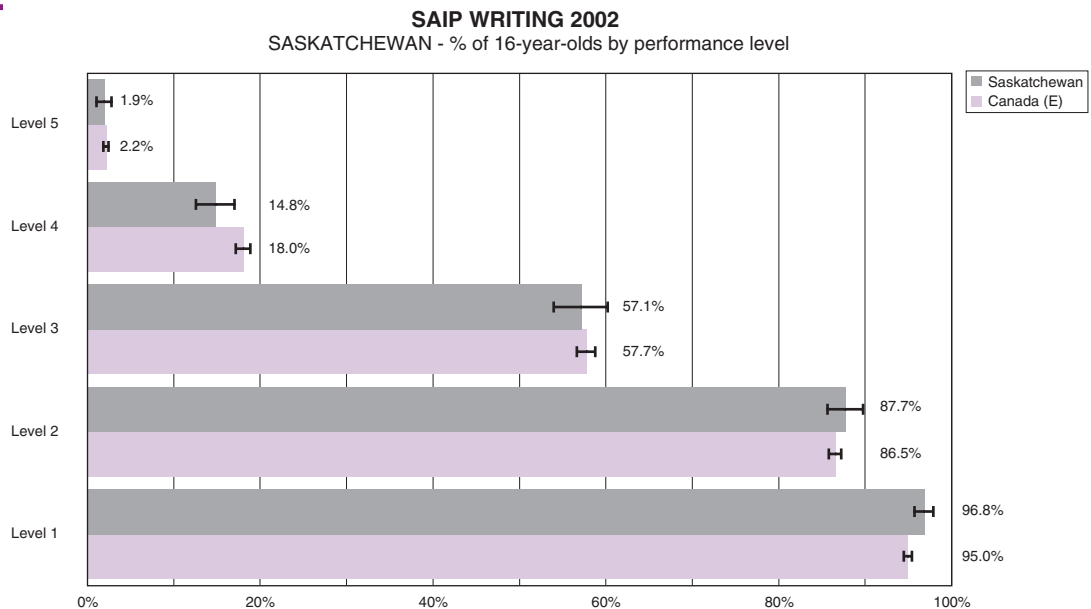
There are significant differences between this jurisdiction's performance and the Canadian English performance at levels 2 and 3 among 13-year-olds. Over 75% of 13-year-olds demonstrate at least some control of the elements of writing (level 2). More than 30% demonstrate control of the elements of writing (level 3 or better.)

There is a significant difference between this jurisdiction's performance among 16-year-olds and the Canadian English performance at level 4. Almost 60% of 16-year-olds demonstrate writing that is at least generally integrated, maintained throughout, expressing a clear perspective (level 3).

### CHART SK1



### CHART SK2



## Context Statement

### *Social Context*

Manitoba has a population of approximately one million, 60% of whom reside in the capital city of Winnipeg. Manitoba must meet the educational needs of a wide range of ethnic and cultural groups. English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) instruction is provided for immigrant students. There is a strong Franco-Manitoban community in the province with students enrolled in the Français Program. The French Immersion Program is chosen by about 9% of students. In addition, there is a notable representation in public schools of the Aboriginal community in urban and rural/remote regions of the province. Manitoba has a broad and diverse economic base.

### *Organization of the School System*

Manitoba's school system enrolls over 200,000 students in kindergarten to senior 4 (grade 12). It employs about 13,500 teachers in 46 school divisions, 8 districts, and over 60 funded independent schools. For program delivery purposes, schools are encouraged to group grades according to early years (kindergarten to grade 4), middle years (grades 5 to 8), and senior years (senior 1 to 4). Students may choose courses from four school programs — an English Program, Français Program, French Immersion Program, and a senior years Technology Education Program. The students selected to participate in the SAIP Writing assessment were either 13 or 16 years of age. Most 13-year-old students were in grade 8 or senior 1 (grade 9), and most 16-year-old students were in senior 3 (grade 11) or senior 4 (grade 12).

### *Language Arts Teaching*

From 1996 to 2000, Manitoba Education, Training and Youth introduced its new language arts curricula (English and Français). The Manitoba Curriculum Framework of Outcomes and Standards in English language arts was developed based on the Common Curriculum Framework for English Language Arts, Kindergarten to grade 12. The curriculum *Les résultats d'apprentissage manitobains en français langue première (M-S4)* was developed based on the document *Cadre commun des résultats d'apprentissage en français langue première (M-12)*. Both projects were initiated under the Western Canadian Protocol for Collaboration in Basic Education.

The language arts curricula identify outcomes and standards of performance for Manitoba students from kindergarten to senior 4. The English language arts curriculum includes five general learning outcomes that serve as the foundation for identifying the knowledge, skills and strategies, and attitudes that students are expected to demonstrate with increasing competence and confidence. These general outcomes are interrelated and interdependent. Each outcome is to be achieved through a variety of listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing, and representing experiences.

The Français langue première curriculum is constructed around four domains: culture and identity, oral communication, reading, and writing. Each of these domains defines the skills, knowledge, and attitudes required by the students so that, at the end of their secondary school years, they are able to use the French language to communicate effectively in everyday situations, to think, to learn, to build their identity, and to create their cultural environment.

### *Language Arts Assessment*

In the 2001–02 school year, following the introduction of the language arts curricula, province-wide standards tests were implemented for senior 4. All senior 4 students were required to write the standards tests for senior 4 English language arts, Français langue première, and Français langue seconde – immersion. The tests were marked locally by teachers in marking sessions organized by trained local marking coordinators. Test results count for 30% toward a student's final mark.

Standards tests assess student performance in relation to the established student learning outcomes and standards. Test results provide information to improve programs and student learning.

Prior to the introduction of the standards tests, starting in 1996, senior 4 students were required to write the senior 4 provincial examinations in English language arts and in Français langue première.

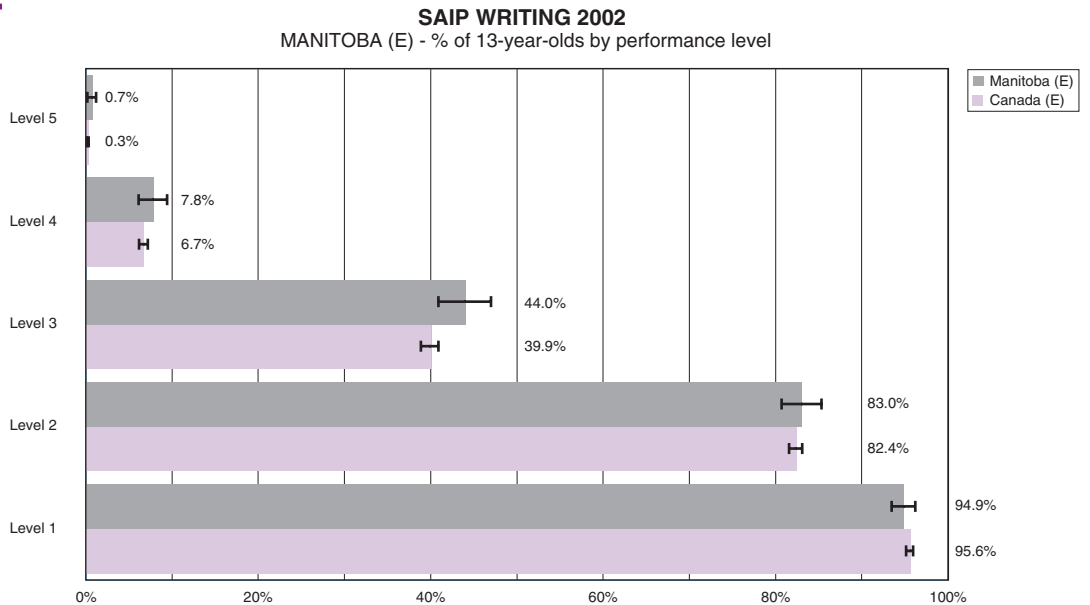
Classroom teachers are responsible for language arts assessment from kindergarten through senior 4. Provincially developed grade 6 language arts standards tests are also offered to school divisions and schools as an optional assessment activity.

## Results for Manitoba (English)

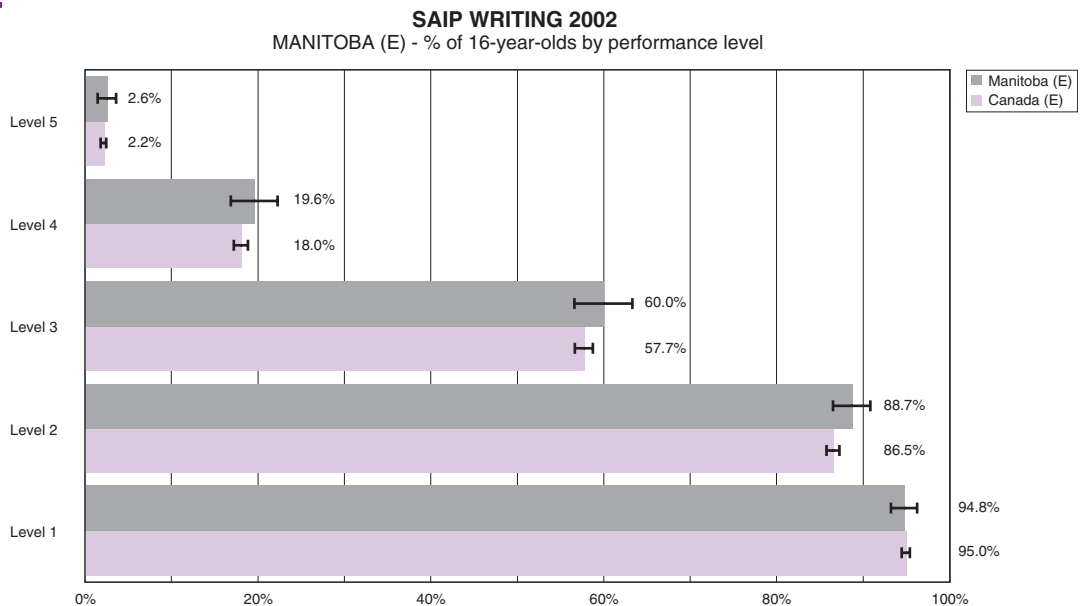
There are no significant differences between this jurisdiction's performance and the Canadian English performance in either age group. Over 80% of 13-year-olds demonstrate at least some control of the elements of writing (level 2). More than 40% demonstrate level 3 performance or better.

Among 16-year-olds, 60% demonstrate writing that is at least generally integrated with a clear perspective (level 3). Almost 20% perform at the higher levels of effective writing (levels 4 and 5).

**CHART MB(E)1**



**CHART MB(E)2**



## Results for Manitoba (French)

Writing performance for 13-year-olds differs from the Canadian French performance at levels 2, 3, and 4 and at all levels for 16-year-olds. The difference in 2002 for 13-year-olds at levels 3 and 4 is notably less than it was in 1998. As well, 75% of 13-year-olds demonstrate some control of writing elements with some integration (level 2). Almost 30% demonstrate level 3 performance or better.

Almost 80% of 16-year-olds demonstrate some control of writing elements with integration (level 2), while more than 40% demonstrate generalized functional writing with a clear perspective (level 3).

CHART MB(F)1

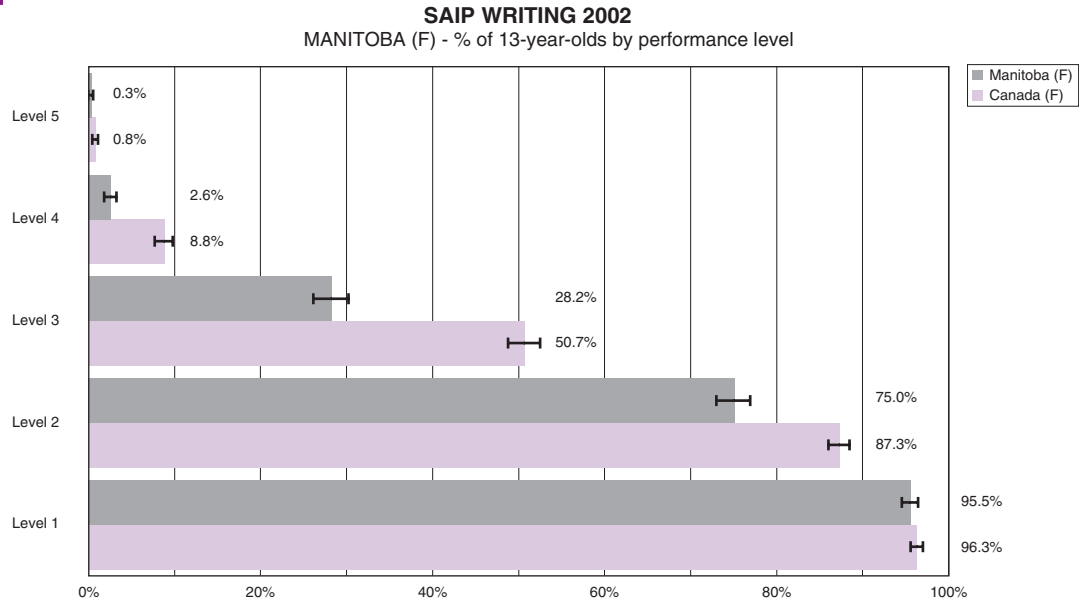


CHART MB(F)2

