

What is the School Achievement Indicators Program (SAIP)?

Canadians have long been interested in how well their schools are meeting the needs of students and society. To provide information in this regard, the provinces and territories, through the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC), have developed SAIP, a pan-Canadian assessment program in mathematics, reading, writing, and science.

What assessments have been conducted to date?

Mathematics assessments were administered in 1993, 1997, and 2001. Reading and/or writing assessments were administered in 1994, 1998, and 2002. Science assessments were administered in 1996 and 1999. A third assessment of science will take place in 2004.

What is the purpose of SAIP assessments?

Each province and territory has its own system of education, and school programs differ from one part of the country to another. Nevertheless, all Canadian students learn reading, writing, mathematics, and science. Provinces and territories collect data on their own student achievement. SAIP provides a standard measure of academic achievement in these subject areas for 13- and 16-year-old students across Canada.

In addition, the cyclical nature of SAIP allows the tracking of student achievement over time. Questionnaires that are included in the assessment generate valuable information about factors that influence student achievement. SAIP also provides a basis for determining whether students are meeting

public expectations in terms of academic achievement.

Decision makers can use all of this information when making policy decisions that affect the education of Canadian students.

Who will participate in the science assessment?

A random sample of Canadian students who were 13 or 16 years old as of August 31, 2003, will participate in the science assessment.

What will participating students do?

Students will take part in a written assessment of their knowledge of science concepts, the nature of science, and the relationship of science to technology and societal issues.

Students will answer questions to demonstrate their levels of performance and will also respond to a questionnaire asking for information related to their interests, attitudes, and classroom activities. The entire assessment will take approximately two and a half hours.

Special-needs students will be accommodated as they would be in their regular school environment.

Do students need to prepare for this assessment?

Students are not required to study for this assessment as they would for a school test. Well before the administration dates, schools will receive information bulletins describing the assessment. Parents, teachers, and students will be able to review sample questions, if they wish.

Will the results affect student marks?

The results will not affect an individual student's academic record in any way. Results will be reported for provinces and territories only, not for individual students, schools, or school districts.

Will the assessment be fair to all students?

This assessment is designed to give all students an opportunity to demonstrate their competencies in science. The assessment has been field tested across Canada. Educators from all provinces and territories have participated in the development and have reviewed the assessment materials to ensure that they are fair, appropriate, and free from cultural, gender, and stereotyping bias. Students were also given an opportunity to comment on the exercise.

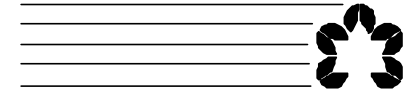
More information on the Science III Assessment is available at www.cmec.ca/saip/indexe.stm

A Personal Note to Students

Thank you, in advance, for your participation in SAIP Science III.

The aim of this assessment is to improve education for students across Canada. Its success depends on your cooperation.

Please do your best!



**SCHOOL
ACHIEVEMENT
INDICATORS
PROGRAM
(SAIP)**

Science III Assessment

**Information for
Parents and Students**

**Council of Ministers of
Education, Canada**

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