

Kópavogur, 28th January 2020

Grade 9 National Examinations 2020

Dear Grade 9 student,

Students in Grade 9 are expected to take the National Examinations, to be held this coming 10th to 12th March. **The Icelandic test is scheduled for Tuesday 10th March, the mathematics test for Wednesday 11th March, and the English test for Thursday 12th March.** The time at which each test starts will be decided by the headteacher of your school, and will be communicated to you and to your parents.

All Grade 9 students take the National Examinations, regardless of where in Iceland they live. You will be taking each of the tests on a computer. On the day of the test, you will log in using a code given to you by the teacher.

All students who take the National Examinations will be able to take advantage of both the standard examination time of 150 minutes and an additional examination time of 30 minutes, for a total of 180 minutes, which should be sufficient. Most students are able to complete each test in about 60 to 90 minutes, although this can vary considerably between individuals. Some students need less time, others a little longer. It is not a good idea to race through the test. Instead, you should read each question and response option carefully. We are confident that you will do fine on the examinations, but sample tests are available online if you want to become familiar with the examination system. The sample tests contain examples of questions from previous tests which you can use to practise your answers. We encourage you to try it out—it's both fun and useful!

The tasks (questions) that will appear on the test are based on the curriculum and the learning objectives outlined in the National Curriculum Guide. The emphasis in the National Curriculum Guide is on students' knowledge, competence and skills rather than on specific learning material. For this reason there will be no list of material to be covered. Instead, the test will consist of a wide range of tasks requiring different kinds of knowledge and skills.

The **Icelandic** test will include tasks that measure both shallow and deep reading comprehension. Shallow reading comprehension means reading with precision, while deep reading comprehension relies on reading between the lines and on interpreting and drawing conclusions from the text. In addition, the tasks will assess comprehension of individual words and phrases, and of literary terms such as *imagery*, *mood* or *point of view*. There will also be tasks that assess linguistic skills and knowledge of grammar and spelling.

The **mathematics** test will include tasks from the fields of arithmetic and operations; geometry and measurements; patterns and algebra; and ratios and percentages. You will be expected to solve problems taken from these fields. You are allowed to use the calculator integrated in the examination system and/or your own calculator.

The **English** test will include tasks that measure both shallow and deep reading comprehension. Shallow reading comprehension means reading with precision, while deep reading comprehension relies on reading between the lines and interpreting the text. In addition, the tasks will assess comprehension of individual words and phrases. There will also be tasks that assess linguistic skills and knowledge of grammar and spelling.

A good strategy is to answer all of the question and try to spend sufficient time on each of them. Don't worry if you don't know all the answers, and don't rush to complete your answers even if the other students have finished the test. The test is not intended in any way as a competition, and each individual works at a different speed.

We wish you good luck, and remember that the goal is to find out how well you master certain aspects of the three subjects: Icelandic, mathematics and English. The tests are mostly for your own benefit, and there is no reason to worry about them a lot. Simply try your best and you will be perfectly fine.

If you have any questions the best thing is to talk to your teacher and your parents or guardians.

For the Directorate of Education,

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