



Your **opinions** are personal, highly subjective and shaped by your experiences, values, knowledge and feelings.

Each individual has a unique **worldview**, which is an overall perspective with which one sees the world and interprets events on a daily basis. Your worldview relates to your **values**, which are your principles or standards of behaviour and priorities in life.

Your perspectives can be formed by listening to other people whose opinions you respect, researching an issue or idea, having discussions with parents/guardians, elders and peers and thinking seriously about what matters most to you in order to come to your own conclusions.

A **political ideology** is a set of shared **ideals** or **beliefs** about how politics and government should function. Like a personal ideology, a political ideology requires one to critically examine their core beliefs and worldview.

The **political spectrum** is a means of characterizing beliefs, values and priorities, and provides a conceptual

framework to view and evaluate political parties and public policies. People who find themselves on the **left** or **right** side of the spectrum usually have opposing views on a range of socio-cultural or economic issues.

Individuals or parties who are left-leaning often favour social equality and progressive views, social equality and social services, and embrace government intervention in the economy. Individuals or parties who are right-leaning often favour conservative views and traditions and embrace individual liberty, free markets and lower taxes.

Elections create a political direction for our democracy for the next four years and provide an opportunity for citizens to discuss and debate issues and potential solutions. It is up to you to decide what issues are most important, which parties and candidates align with your priorities and which will be the best at addressing your concerns.

While it is important to question each other's viewpoints, we must also be sure to respect the opinions of others. It is the resulting discussions and debates that form the basis of our democracy.

LESSON 5: VALUES, ISSUES & PERSPECTIVES

BIG IDEA

The political world is filled with controversial issues and polarizing arguments and it is important to question each other's viewpoints while also respecting the opinions of others.

LEARNING INTENTIONS

Upon completion of the lesson, students are expected to know the following:

- That different worldviews lead to different perspectives and ideas about developments in society; and
- The basic political spectrum.

Students are expected to be able to do the following:

- Understand issues in provincial politics in B.C.;
- Explain how different worldviews shape perspectives on political issues; and
- Develop their own worldview and identify where they stand on major issues.

RESOURCES

- Slide Deck 5: Issues and Perspectives
 - Video: Get Ready to Vote
 - Handout 5.1: The Basic Political Spectrum
 - Activity Sheet 5.2: Where Do You Stand?
 - Activity Sheet 5.3: In The News (Graphic Organizer)
- (Videos, slide decks and digital versions of the activity sheets can be found at www.studentvote.ca/bc)

ACTIVITIES

 **Hook: 25-30 min**

1. Tell students to imagine that their school has been given a sum of money to improve or expand the schoolyard. Lead a class brainstorming session on different ideas on how the money could be spent. Record ideas on the blackboard, chart paper or Smartboard.

2. Group similar ideas together so that there are four to six main ideas. Help students form groups based on their interests. Ask each group to discuss their ideas in more detail and record reasons why their ideas should be considered. Ask each group to put together a one-minute pitch to share with the class.

3. After the pitches, debrief as a class. Did any group make you want to re-consider your preferences for improving the schoolyard? Why or why not?

 **Essential Concepts: 10-15 min**

Use Slide Deck 5 to review the following key terms and concepts: opinions, values, perspectives, worldview, political ideology, political spectrum, left-leaning, right-leaning (if appropriate).

 **Discussion: 5-10 min**

How would you persuade someone who disagreed with you, or had different views, to understand your viewpoint? How do you show respect for someone else's opinion even if you disagree? Why is this important?

 **Action: 20-30 min**

1. Review Handout 5.1 as a class for a basic review of the political spectrum.

2. Read out a statement from Activity Sheet 5.2 and ask students to vote by raising their hands if they agree or disagree. Ask two or three students to explain their choices. After each student defends their opinion, give the other students the chance to change their opinion, if they were persuaded.

Teacher Note: Consider organizing this activity inside, or outdoors, as a four corners debate, with different areas labeled as "Agree" and "Disagree" along with "I agree, but..." and "Convince Me." Read out a statement and ask students to vote with their feet by walking to the area that fits with their opinion.

3. After each student defends their opinion, give the other students the chance to change their opinion, if they were persuaded.

 **Extensions:**

A. Invite students to share what they see as the top challenges facing British Columbia. You can create the list as a class or ask each student to share one or two issues. As a class, review the challenges listed and come to a consensus around the most important issues. In what way can or should the government be involved in addressing these issues? Have each group share their ideas with the class.

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B. For the duration or remainder of the campaign, organize an ongoing media activity focused on the local candidates and issues. Create a schedule for one or more students to bring in an article about the provincial election every day. Using a graphic organizer (Activity Sheet 5.3), ask students to cover the basics in terms of *who, what, where, when, why* and *how*. Subsequently, encourage students to share their opinions about the issue, parties and candidate(s). Post the articles on an 'election wall' in your classroom.

C. Ask students to engage family and friends in a conversation about local and provincial issues in this election. Students can create a short take-home poll, or simply record the views of their family and friends based on a few specific questions. Have a follow-up discussion the next day. Do students share the same opinion as their parents? What are the reasons for shared or differing opinions? Did you learn anything from the conversation?

Teacher Note: Kahoot (or another survey tool) can be used to engage parents in the discussion.

D. Ask students to imagine they are premier of British Columbia. What are the three most important issues you would address and why? Students could record their responses in writing or a visual recording.



Reflection: 5 min

Have a closing discussion about issues and perspectives. Alternatively, ask students to write a reflection for their election scrapbook or learning log (see *Assessment Opportunities*).

- What (or who) do you think has had the largest impact on your own personal opinions and why?
- What issue(s) do you want this provincial election to focus on?
- How can you learn more about the issues impacting your community or the province?
- How does the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* relate to holding and sharing perspectives? What responsibility comes with our fundamental right to free speech?

EXTERNAL RESOURCES

- Candidate information/literature (candidate websites, social media sites, campaign flyers)
- Vote Compass B.C. — www.votecompass.ca