

# WELCOME

Thank you for leading the Student Vote program for the 2020 provincial election.

This is going to be a unique and challenging school year, and we are grateful to be working with you and your students.

It is our hope that Student Vote presents an opportunity to help students understand the importance of being an informed, caring and contributing member of society. The program is an exercise in deeper learning, exploration and connectedness, and in allowing students to practice the habits of engaged citizenship. Student Vote teaches students that the role of a citizen is a critical one if our democracy is to thrive and succeed. The publication of the Student Vote results allows students to feel that their voice matters and helps them understand that they are part of something larger than their school.

A 2019 program evaluation conducted by Abacus Data found that participating in Student Vote had a positive impact on students' knowledge and understanding of government and elections, on their sense of civic responsibility and likelihood to vote in the future.

The program also provides families with opportunities to learn about elections and politics, with students taking their newfound knowledge home and engaging in conversations about the parties and candidates with their family. Where possible, we encourage you to amplify these teachable moments and turn the program into a family affair.

## CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

This resource fulfills the current provincial curriculum learning standards for Social Studies 9 through 12.

### Competencies:

- Use Social Studies inquiry processes and skills to ask questions; gather, interpret, and analyze ideas; and communicate findings and decisions (Grade 9, 10, 11, 12)
- Assess the significance of people, places, events, or developments, and compare varying perspectives on their significance at particular times and places, and from group to group (Grade 10)

- Assess the significance of people, places, events, phenomena, ideas, or developments (Grade 11)
- Assess the significance of political issues, ideologies, forces, decisions, or developments, and compare varying perspectives on their significance at particular times and places, and from group to group (Politics 12)
- Assess the credibility and justifiability of evidence, data, and interpretations (Grade 11)
- Analyze political data and assess the reliability of sources (Politics 12)
- Assess the justification for competing accounts after investigating points of contention, reliability of sources, and adequacy of evidence, including data (Grade 10)
- Assess how underlying conditions and the actions of individuals or groups influence events, decisions, or developments, and analyze multiple consequences (Grade 10, Politics 12)
- Explain and infer different perspectives... (Grade 9, 10, 11, Politics 12)
- Make reasoned ethical judgments... (Grade 9, 10, 11, Politics 12)

### Content:

- discriminatory policies, attitudes, and historical wrongs (Grade 9)
- government, First Peoples governance, political institutions, and ideologies (Grade 10)
- environmental, political, and economic policies (Grade 10)
- discriminatory policies and injustices in Canada and the world (Grade 10)
- advocacy for human rights (Grade 10)
- current issues in local, regional, national, or global politics as represented in mass media (Grade 11)
- systems of power and governance in global cultures (Grade 11)
- rights of individuals in Canada (Grade 11)
- structure and function of Canadian and First Peoples political institutions (Politics 12)
- major ideologies and political systems (Politics 12)
- election processes and electoral systems (Politics 12)
- methods used by media, governments, or political groups to influence public opinion (Politics 12)

## ADDITIONAL SUPPORT OR QUESTIONS?

If you have any questions or suggestions, please feel free to contact us at 1-866-488-8775 or by email at [hello@civix.ca](mailto:hello@civix.ca).

Please be sure to visit the project website for additional resources: [www.studentvote.ca/bc](http://www.studentvote.ca/bc)

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Student Vote is the flagship program of CIVIX.

CIVIX is a non-partisan registered charity dedicated to strengthening democracy through civic education.

In partnership with Elections BC, the Student Vote program is being offered free to British Columbia schools for the 42nd British Columbia general election.



## **Resource Development Team**

We would like to thank the countless educators who, over the years, have contributed their ideas and feedback to the development of this activity resource.

## **Copyright Notice**

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE</b>	<b>4</b>	
<b>COVID CONSIDERATIONS</b>	<b>5</b>	
LESSON 1: <b>GOVERNANCE AND DEMOCRACY</b>	<b>6</b>	
LESSON 2: <b>RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN A DEMOCRACY</b>	<b>16</b>	
LESSON 3: <b>GOVERNMENTS IN CANADA</b>	<b>23</b>	
LESSON 4: <b>THE MEDIA</b>	<b>33</b>	
LESSON 5: <b>VALUES, ISSUES AND PERSPECTIVES</b>	<b>38</b>	
LESSON 6: <b>ELECTIONS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA</b>	<b>44</b>	
LESSON 7: <b>OPINION POLLING</b>	<b>51</b>	
LESSON 8: <b>THE VOTING PROCESS</b>	<b>54</b>	
LESSON 9: <b>POST-ELECTION ANALYSIS</b>	<b>59</b>	
<b>ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES</b>	<b>64</b>	

# HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE

This resource is intended to improve civic literacy, introduce the concepts of government and democracy, increase awareness about provincial government and teach students how to effectively participate in the election process.

The lessons build upon each other, but they can also be used as stand-alone lessons depending on the needs of your classroom and schedule. You will find a brief description of the different features of each lesson below.


**Background Information for Teachers:** This section provides an introduction to the lesson and includes definitions and explanations of various concepts. It has been included to support educators in understanding the subject matter and to assist with instruction. Important key words used in the lesson are highlighted in bold.


**Big Idea:** The key concept that students are expected to understand in each lesson.


**Learning Intentions:** Concrete knowledge and competencies that students are expected to have acquired from the activities completed in each lesson.

**Resources:** A list of supporting tools, such as Student Vote slide decks, videos, handouts and activity sheets developed to aid in the implementation of the activities. Many are included in this resource and others can be found on the Student Vote project site ([www.studentvote.ca/bc](http://www.studentvote.ca/bc)).

**Activities:** Each lesson has been broken down into smaller activities and offer a variety of options to provide flexibility in instruction and student engagement based on your classroom's needs. You are encouraged to pick and choose the tools and activities that would work best in your classroom and within your available time frame.

 **Hook** – An opening activity, meant to pique interest in the topic and lesson and bring forward questions to frame the lesson.

 **Essential Concepts** – Summary of key terms and concepts that students should become familiar with and reinforced through suggested activities and dialogue.

 **Discussion** – Questions and discussion topics for students to think critically and inspire an exchange of ideas within the classroom.

★ **Action** – A proposed main activity that helps students understand or apply the essential concepts and key competencies.

✚ **Extensions** – Several activities are suggested to apply or extend student learning. The hope is that at least one or more of the activity ideas will suit the needs of your classroom.

💡 **Consolidation and Reflection** – Concluding questions to summarize and reflect on what was learned throughout the lesson. One or more of these questions can be used for further debate in class or assigned as a written reflection.

**External Resources:** This section includes additional resources and websites you may find useful. Titles are provided so you can find them easily with a search engine.

**Activity Sheets and Handouts:** You will find the corresponding activity sheets, such as graphic organizers, information charts and analysis questions, as well as handouts with background or summary information following each lesson.

Following all of the lessons, you will find additional *Assessment Opportunities*.

**Digital Literacy:** The ability to evaluate information has become an essential skill of citizenship. CIVIX has developed a variety of resources that aim to equip young people with the skills needed to identify false and misleading information, and build a habit of relying on credible sources. Visit [newsliteracy.ca](http://newsliteracy.ca).

# COVID CONSIDERATIONS

We realize that the COVID-19 pandemic is resulting in significant changes to the way schools operate and your own teaching practices.

In preparation for the 2020 Provincial Election, CIVIX has put together some considerations for implementing the program activities. Due to some uncertainty around what safety protocols will be in place, and when, we have consulted with teachers on some of the expected limitations and how best to overcome them.

## CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

Below is a list of reminders and possible accommodations for you to keep in mind when delivering the learning activities.

- Full-class discussions can be held in place of work in pairs or small groups.
- Online tools, such as Google Docs or Google Jamboard, and other messaging apps can be used for collaborative work and discussions.
- Take advantage of video resources to facilitate distance learning, if needed. Activity sheets to accompany each video can be found on the project website ([studentvote.ca/bc](https://studentvote.ca/bc)).
- Digital templates are available for all of the student activity sheets found in this resource, including Word and Google Docs/Forms versions ([studentvote.ca/bc](https://studentvote.ca/bc)).
- Ensure enough materials are available to reduce the need for sharing between students.
- All outputs can be produced digitally. This reduces the need for paper and allows the finished products to be shared online with the rest of the class.

## CAMPAIGN EVENTS

Instead of in-person meetings or debates with candidates, consider holding a virtual event or asking candidates to submit written or video answers to student questions.

Rather than holding a school wide assembly, consider using videos or morning announcements to increase awareness about the program and the upcoming provincial election.

## THE VOTING PROCESS

Below are some considerations for holding your vote. An online voting option will be provided if you are uncomfortable or unable to vote with paper ballots.

- Hold the vote within classrooms to minimize contact with other students in the school.
- Be sure to practice physical distancing if using a stationary voting station.
- Have students use their own pencils or pens to mark their ballot.
- Consider having students vote at their own desks to limit movement or contact.
- Teachers can count the ballots, or election officials can be limited to a small group of students.
- Use gloves when counting ballots and/or wait several hours before handling them.

Be sure to check with your school district and school administration to ensure that all activities are being conducted in accordance with the most up-to-date health and safety requirements.

If you have any questions or concerns about how any materials or activities could be adapted to meet the specific requirements at your school, please contact our team.

This is a difficult time for everyone, but our hope is that we can still engage as many students as possible in the democratic process this fall.



# GOVERNANCE AND DEMOCRACY



**Governance** is the system of practices and processes that a community or group uses to organize themselves and make decisions. Governance models determine who has authority or a voice in making decisions, how decisions are made and who is accountable for them.

There are several different governance or leadership styles, such as autocratic, democratic and laissez-faire.

**Autocratic** governance, also known as authoritarian leadership, is characterized by one person having complete control over all decisions with minimal input from other group members. **Democratic** governance involves collective decision-making and the sharing of tasks and responsibilities, and leadership changes regularly with participation from many group members. **Laissez-faire** is the absence of an organized leadership style; there is no authority and group members are responsible for all community goals and decisions.

A **government** is made up of the people and institutions put in place to lead or manage the affairs of a country, nation, province or community. The role of government is to create and enforce laws, provide services and make decisions for the benefit of the people living within its borders.

Various types of government exist in the world and they make rules and decisions for their people in different ways. Governments can be distinguished from one another by their decision-making model, the number of people who have access to power and the rights and freedoms granted to citizens.

A **dictatorship** is a type of government where one person or a ruling group has complete political power. In this system of government, the dictator or ruling group exercises power through control of a mass movement, political party or the military. Dictatorships often come to power through a military takeover (also known as a coup d'état). Power is then maintained without the consent of the people through a one-party state where political opposition is forbidden. Dictatorships generally restrict individual civil and political rights. There is usually a heavy military presence with no independent media.

The term **authoritarianism** is sometimes used to describe dictatorships. Authoritarian governments exercise forceful control over the population, with no particular concern for their preferences or for public opinion. Similarly, an **autocracy** is a type of government where political power is concentrated in the hands of one person who rules without restriction. An autocracy can be a dictatorship or an absolute monarchy.

## LESSON 1: GOVERNANCE AND DEMOCRACY

A **democracy** is a type of government where a majority of the people are included in political decision-making and citizens elect political representatives to make decisions on their behalf. Citizens are also free to run for political office. In democratic countries, citizens have protected civil and political rights such as freedom of speech and religion, freedom of association and the right to participate in free and fair elections. There are many different types of democracies around the world.

A **monarchy** is a form of government where a monarch (king or queen) or royal family holds political power that is inherited and usually lasts until death. The power of ruling monarchs can vary; in an **absolute monarchy**, a monarch (or dictator) retains full political power over a state and its people, whereas in a **constitutional monarchy**, it is more symbolic.

In a constitutional monarchy, the authority of the monarch is limited by a **constitution**, which includes the basic principles and laws of a nation or state that define the powers and duties of the government and guarantee certain rights to the people living within it. A constitutional monarchy has a democratically elected government with a government leader, while the monarch remains the head of state and performs ceremonial duties.

A **republic** is a sovereign state, country or government without a monarch where the democratically elected government holds all political power (e.g., The United States, France). Similar to a constitutional monarchy, the government exercises power according to the rule of law and often has a constitution.

Canada's system of government is a **parliamentary democracy**. We elect members to represent us in our federal parliament and our provincial and territorial legislatures, and the political party with the most representatives forms government. Canada is also a constitutional monarchy and the British Monarch, the Queen, is our head of state. Every act of government is done in the name of the Queen, but the authority for every act comes from the Canadian people through the Constitution. The Constitution of Canada is the highest legal ruling in the country and includes laws, decisions by judges, agreements between federal and provincial governments, traditions and our civil and political rights (the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*).

A **consensus democracy** uses a consensus decision-making model while developing legislation and aims to be more collaborative and inclusive by taking into account a broad range of opinions, as opposed to decisions made by majority rule. The Northwest Territories and Nunavut both have **consensus governments** where a group of individuals without any political party affiliation share political power.

### BIG IDEA

Governments are made up of the people and institutions put in place to run or govern a country, nation, province or community and make decisions on behalf of citizens.

### LEARNING INTENTIONS

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

- The purpose of government;
- The various forms of government and decision-making models; and
- The guiding principles of a democracy.

Students are expected to be able to do the following:

- Evaluate how factors, forces, events or people influence developments, outcomes or decisions;
- Assess different forms of government and decision-making models and their role in societies; and
- Evaluate the health of our democracy.

### RESOURCES

- Slide Deck 1: Governance and Democracy
  - Video: Government and Democracy
  - Video: Democratic Principles
  - Activity Sheet 1.1: Space Survival – Ranking Chart
  - Handout 1.2: Space Survival – Ranking of Items by Experts
  - Activity Sheet 1.3: Comparing Different Government Types (Graphic Organizer)
  - Handout 1.4: How Should We Decide?
  - Handout 1.5: The Principles of Democracy
- (Videos, slide decks and digital versions of the activity sheets can be found at [www.studentvote.ca/bc](http://www.studentvote.ca/bc))

# LESSON 1: GOVERNANCE AND DEMOCRACY

## ACTIVITIES

### Hook: 25-30 min

*Space Survival* – You are a member of a lunar exploration crew originally scheduled to rendezvous with your mother ship on the lighted surface of the moon. Due to mechanical difficulties, your ship was forced to land at a spot some 320 km from the rendezvous point. During re-entry and landing, much of the equipment aboard was damaged and, since survival depends on reaching the mother ship, the most critical items available must be chosen for the long journey. Your task is to rank these items according to their importance in aiding you to reach the mother ship, starting with “1” for the most important, to “15” for the least important. You should assume that your crew is your class, you have agreed to stick together and that all 15 items are in good condition.

1. Ask each student to take a few minutes to decide their own rankings. Using Activity Sheet 1.1, students will record their choices in the left-hand column.
2. Divide students into groups and ask them to discuss their individual choices and refine their rankings based on the collective thoughts of the group. They should record the group rankings in the second column (group rankings).

*Teacher Note: Alternatively, you could assign each group a particular governance model (autocratic, democratic or oligarchic) and evaluate the process, outcomes and feelings developed within the group.*

3. Display a list of ‘expert’ rankings compiled by a team of scientists and engineers at NASA (Handout 1.2) on a slide deck or photocopy. Have students compare their individual and group answers with the correct answers and determine a score. For each item, have students mark the number of points that their score differs from the NASA ranking and then add up all the points. Disregard plus or minus differences. The lower the total, the better the score.

4. Have a follow-up discussion: How did your group determine the rankings? Was it consensus, majority-rule or did some group members take greater control? Did you ensure all group members had a voice? How did your individual score compare to your group score? What are the strengths and limitations of working alone versus with a group?

### Discussion: 5 min

What types of rules and decisions are needed for people living in a community (e.g., education/schools, roads and traffic laws, healthcare/hospitals)? Who makes these rules and decisions? What would happen if there was no government responsible for creating laws and providing support to citizens?

### Essential Concepts: 20 min

Use Slide Deck 3 and the ‘Government and Democracy’ video to review the purpose of government, different government types and decision-making models. Key terms: autocracy, dictatorship, oligarchy, democracy, monarchy, constitutional monarchy, republic, consensus, parliamentary democracy.

### Action: 30-35 min

1. Ask students to fill out a graphic organizer (Activity Sheet 1.3) to compare different types of governments.

Suggested categories include:

- Political power/authority (one, few, many);
- Leadership process (how are they determined?);
- Citizen involvement in decisions;
- Rule of law;
- Constitution; and
- Rights and freedoms.

2. Divide students into pairs or small groups and ask them to compare how they completed Activity Sheet 1.3. What are the similarities and differences in the information they included? What do they think is the most important difference between various types of government?



## LESSON 1: GOVERNANCE AND DEMOCRACY

### Extensions:

A. Assign Activity Sheet 1.4 to explore the use of an autocratic, democratic or consensus style of decision-making in a range of scenarios. Discuss the answers as a class and debate the choices where applicable. Afterwards, review the strengths and limitations of each decision-making model and where they work best.

B. Use media and news stories to discuss global struggles to participate in free and fair elections (e.g., overcoming violence or intimidation, long lines at voting stations, election fraud, voter suppression tactics). In pairs or groups, have students choose a story and share it with the class. Suggested follow-up discussion questions include: What do these struggles signify? How do they compare to voting in Canada?

C. Divide the class into groups and provide each with a different country or nation to represent (choose from different continents and regions, including First Nations within Canada). Ask students to research the system of government for each and share their findings to the class. *The Economist* has rated countries around the world using its 'Democracy Index' ([www.economist.com](http://www.economist.com)), which may be a good place for students to begin their research.

D. Using the 'Democratic Principles' video, Slide Deck 1 and/or Handout 1.5, explain to students that there are several guiding principles that act as the foundation of a democracy. In pairs or small groups, have students co-create criteria to rank the principles in order of importance and justify their decisions. Debrief and debate as a class.

E. Ask students to select a song or image that represents the democratic principles. Ask students to write a short reflection that uses specific examples from the selected medium to articulate how it embodies democratic principle(s) and why it is significant to them.



### Reflection: 5-10 min

Have a closing discussion about governance and democracy. Alternatively, ask students to write a reflection in their election scrapbook (see *Assessment Opportunities*).

- Why do we need government?
- What does democracy mean to you?
- Do you think it is important for citizens to be involved in political decisions?

## EXTERNAL RESOURCES

- "Our Country, Our Parliament," *The Library of Parliament* — [www.parl.gc.ca](http://www.parl.gc.ca)
- "Government Type," *CIA World Factbook* — <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/>
- "Queen and Canada," *The Official Website of the British Monarchy* — [www.royal.uk](http://www.royal.uk)
- "Democracy Index," *The Economist* — <https://www.eiu.com/topic/democracy-index>

## ACTIVITY SHEET 1.1: SPACE SURVIVAL – RANKING CHART

Rank these items according to their importance in helping you to reach the mother ship.

ITEMS	STEP 1 Individual Ranking	STEP 2 Group Ranking	STEP 3 Expert Ranking	STEP 4 Difference Ranking [1-3]	STEP 5 Difference Ranking [2-3]
Compass					
First aid kit					
Flares					
Solar-powered radio receiver-transmitter					
Food concentrate					
Heating unit					
Map of the moon					
Matches					
Dehydrated milk					
Oxygen					
Parachute					
Pistols					
Raft					
Nylon rope					
Water					
<b>Total the absolute differences of Steps 4 and 5</b> (the lower the score the better)					
				<b>Your Score</b>	<b>Group Score</b>

## HANDOUT 1.2: SPACE SURVIVAL – RANKING OF ITEMS BY EXPERTS

Review the list of items and how they have been ranked by an expert team of scientists and engineers at NASA.

Oxygen	1	Fills respiration requirements
Water	2	Needed for replacement of tremendous liquid loss on the light side
Map of the moon	3	Principal means of finding directions
Food concentrate	4	Efficient means of supplying energy requirements
Solar-powered radio receiver-transmitter	5	Distress signal transmitter, possible communication with another ship
Nylon rope	6	Useful in scaling cliffs, tying injured together
First aid kit	7	Oral pills or injection medicine available
Parachute	8	Shelter against the sun's rays
Raft	9	CO <sup>2</sup> bottle in military raft may be used for propulsion, helpful in carrying heavy objects
Flares	10	Distress call when line of sight possible
Pistols	11	Self propulsion devices could be made from them
Dehydrated milk	12	Bulkier duplication of food concentrate
Heating unit	13	Useful only if party landed on dark side
Magnetic compass	14	Probably no magnetized poles, therefore useless
Matches	15	Little or no use on moon, since there is no oxygen on the moon to sustain combustion

### SCORE EVALUATION:

<b>0 – 25</b>	Excellent. You and your crew demonstrate great survival skills!
<b>26 – 32</b>	Good. Above average results. Yes, you made it!
<b>33 – 45</b>	Average. It was a struggle, but you made it in the end!
<b>46 – 55</b>	Fair. You made it, but only just!
<b>56 – 70</b>	Poor. Sadly not everyone made it back to the mother ship!
<b>71 – 112</b>	Very poor. Oh dear, you did not make it off the surface of the moon!

## ACTIVITY SHEET 1.3: COMPARING DIFFERENT GOVERNMENT TYPES (GRAPHIC ORGANIZER)

Fill out the graphic organizer below to compare different government types.

Republic						
Constitutional Monarchy						
Absolute Monarchy						
Oligarchy						
Dictatorship						

# ACTIVITY SHEET 1.3: COMPARING DIFFERENT GOVERNMENT TYPES | TEACHER COPY

	Dictatorship	Oligarchy	Absolute Monarchy	Constitutional Monarchy	Republic
<b>Political power</b>	A single dictator or ruling group has complete power.	The rule of the few; power rests with a small number of privileged people.	A monarch (or dictator) retains full political power over a state and its people.	Power is shared by all the people. Citizens have access to power and can run for office. The monarch is head of state but authority is limited by the constitution.	Power is shared by all the people. Citizens have access to power and can run for office.
<b>Leadership process</b>	Dictator/ruling group often comes to power through a military takeover (or coup d'état) or control of a mass movement.	Rulers often determined based on family lines or wealth.	Leaders often inherit their role through their family line.	Free and fair elections; democratically elected government with a government leader. The monarch is head of state and not elected.	Free and fair elections; all members of government are elected (including the head of state).
<b>Citizen involvement in decisions</b>	No concern for public opinion or for their preferences. Citizens not involved in political decision-making.	No concern for public opinion or for their preferences. Citizens not involved in political decision-making.	No concern for public opinion or for their preferences. Citizens not involved in political decision-making.	Citizens concerns valued and taken into consideration through various democratic processes and practices.	Citizens concerns are valued and taken into consideration through various democratic processes and practices.
<b>Rule of law</b>	Rulers are held above the rule of law.	Rulers are held above the rule of law.	Monarchs are held above the rule of law; citizens must obey.	Existence of rule of law; all people and institutions are subject to and accountable to laws that are fairly applied.	Existence of rule of law; all people and institutions are subject to laws that are fairly applied.
<b>Constitution</b>	Usually do not have a constitution; authority is not restricted by any constitution.	Usually do not have a constitution; authority is not restricted by any constitution.	Usually do not have a constitution; authority is not restricted by any constitution.	Existence of a constitution, which includes basic principles and laws, defines the duties of the government and guarantees certain rights to the people.	Existence of a constitution, which includes basic principles and laws, defines the duties of the government and guarantees certain rights to the people.
<b>Rights and freedoms</b>	Individual and civil rights are restricted.	Citizens have some rights and freedoms.	Citizens are not guaranteed rights and freedoms.	Individual and civil rights are protected.	Individual and civil rights are protected.



## ACTIVITY SHEET 1.4: HOW SHOULD WE DECIDE?

Which of these decision-making models would work best in the following scenarios?



**AUTOCRATIC:** one person decides for the group



**DEMOCRATIC:** everyone has a say or vote, but the final decision is determined by what is most popular



**CONSENSUS:** group members discuss options and all must come to an agreement to support a decision in the best interests of the entire group

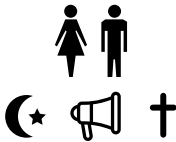





- a) You have been assigned to a team to complete a group science project. The group must build a bridge out of popsicle sticks. Each member will be evaluated on their participation.
- b) You are babysitting your siblings. It is bedtime, but no one wants to go to sleep. Your parents will be home shortly.
- c) You and your friends decide to throw a surprise party for another friend who will arrive soon. Time is running out and there is no plan for decorating or work getting done.
- d) The basketball game is tied with time running out in the fourth quarter. The team only has seconds to decide the next play.
- e) It is movie night with your family and you need to figure out what to watch. Luckily, there are many good choices.
- f) Skateboards and longboards are being ridden on the sidewalk in your neighbourhood. Recently, there have been a few accidents with skateboarders running into small children. Some people want the boards to be banned from sidewalks.
- g) Your school is organizing a fundraiser on Halloween. A decision needs to be made about which charity will receive the money.



**DEBRIEF:** What are the advantages and disadvantages of each decision-making model?

## HANDOUT 1.5: THE PRINCIPLES OF DEMOCRACY

There are several guiding principles that act as the foundation of a democracy.

 <p><b>HUMAN RIGHTS AND EQUALITY</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All people living in a democracy have guaranteed rights, such as freedom of opinion and expression, freedom of religion, and the right to organize and take part in peaceful protests.</li> <li>• In most democracies, individuals are valued equally regardless of race, religion, ethnicity, language, gender or sexual orientation.</li> <li>• In Canada, our fundamental freedoms and equality rights are protected by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, part of Canada's Constitution.</li> </ul>
 <p><b>FREE AND FAIR ELECTIONS</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adult citizens have the right to vote in elections to choose their political representatives.</li> <li>• Adult citizens also have the opportunity to run for political office.</li> <li>• There are no obstacles to voting and no threats made to citizens before or after an election.</li> <li>• In Canada, there must be elections to choose a federal government every five years or less.</li> </ul>
 <p><b>ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elected representatives are accountable for their actions. They must perform their duties according to the wishes of those they represent, not for themselves or other interests.</li> <li>• In a democracy, the press holds government to account and aims to keep citizens informed.</li> <li>• In Canada, elected representatives participate in activities like Question Period to be held to account for their actions and respond to questions from the opposition parties, and engage in meetings with the public.</li> </ul>
 <p><b>THE RULE OF LAW</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Laws are enforced equally, fairly and consistently. This means that everyone, including government officials, the police and members of the military, must obey the law.</li> <li>• It also means that governments cannot punish people unless they have broken the law.</li> <li>• All Canadians have a responsibility to respect the laws of the land, even if they disagree with them.</li> </ul>
 <p><b>POLITICAL TOLERANCE</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Society is comprised of people with different cultural backgrounds, who practice different religions, come from different racial and ethnic backgrounds, who have different gender identities or sexual orientations. The voices of these different groups are valued.</li> <li>• Democratic societies strive to be politically tolerant and the rights of minorities are protected.</li> <li>• Those who are not in power must be allowed to organize and share their opinions.</li> </ul>
 <p><b>CITIZEN PARTICIPATION</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Citizen participation in government is more than just a right – it is a responsibility.</li> <li>• Participation includes voting in elections, being an informed citizen, debating issues, attending community meetings, paying taxes, serving on a jury and protesting.</li> <li>• Citizen participation builds a stronger democracy.</li> </ul>



# RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES IN A DEMOCRACY

All citizens living in a democracy have guaranteed **rights** and **freedoms**, which are usually articulated in a legal document as part of a constitution, such as a bill of rights.

A right is a legal entitlement or something that we are morally or legally allowed to do or have. The rights and freedoms of citizens are vital to a thriving democratic nation. Rights are often fought for and claimed (in courts or even violently) and less often simply granted.

In Canada, our rights are protected by the **Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms**. The Charter contains seven sections: fundamental rights, democratic rights, mobility rights, legal rights, equality rights, official languages rights and minority language education rights. Canada's Charter is widely admired around the world and is the constitutional document most emulated by other nations.

Our **democratic rights** include the right for every Canadian citizen, aged 18 and older, to vote in a federal election. Elections are the process by which our elected representatives and government are chosen.

With all rights come **responsibilities**. A responsibility is a duty or obligation. It is something you should do in order to respect, promote and maintain certain rights. For

example, the right to vote comes with the responsibility to cast a ballot in an informed and purposeful manner.

The right to vote in Canada has not always been universal. It has been withheld from many groups throughout history based on gender, race, religion and even occupation.

**Universal suffrage** is the extension of the right to vote to all adult citizens, including the removal of property ownership requirements and restrictions against women, First Nations and Inuit and ethnic and religious minorities.

Women in Canada eventually gained the right to vote following years of persistent protest. Manitoba was the first province to pass suffrage legislation to include women in January 1916, and women in British Columbia received the right to vote and run for office provincially on April 5, 1917. By 1918, women in Canada could vote federally and gained the right to run for federal office in 1919.

Even though Canadian women achieved suffrage, it was not applicable to all women. Women and men of several ethnic and racial minorities, such as Canadians of Chinese and Japanese origin and Indigenous peoples, were still disenfranchised for several decades. First Nations men could only vote if they gave up their treaty rights and

## LESSON 2: RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES IN A DEMOCRACY

registered Indian status. First Nations peoples were not given the right to vote in British Columbia provincial elections until 1949. Universal suffrage was not achieved until 1960.

Despite moving beyond these injustices, electoral participation has been on the decline in Canada over the past several decades. In particular, low voter turnout is disproportionately concentrated among young Canadians. The *National Youth Survey Report*, commissioned by Elections Canada, identified several reasons why youth do not vote. These barriers include a lack of political interest and knowledge, not knowing where or how to vote and a lower sense that voting was a civic duty.

### BIG IDEA

All citizens living in a democracy have guaranteed rights and freedoms. The right to vote comes with the responsibility to cast a ballot in an informed and purposeful manner.

### LEARNING INTENTIONS

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

- The political and civil rights articulated in the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*; and
- The history of voting rights and discriminatory policies in Canada.

Students are expected to be able to do the following:

- Assess the responsibilities that come along with rights and freedoms in Canada;
- Reflect on past injustices with respect to voting rights; and
- Determine appropriate ways to support and celebrate universal suffrage.

### RESOURCES

- Slide Deck 2: Rights and Responsibilities
- Video: The Right to Vote
- Video: History of Voting Rights in British Columbia
- Handout 2.1: Highlights from the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*
- Handout 2.2: History of Voting Rights in Canada
- Handout 2.3: History of Voting Rights in British Columbia
- Handout 2.4: Provincial Election Voter Turnout by Age Group

(Videos, slide decks and digital versions of the activity sheets can be found at [www.studentvote.ca/bc](http://www.studentvote.ca/bc))

### ACTIVITIES

 **Hook: 15-20 min**

1. Discuss the concept of a 'right' and ask students to brainstorm a list of rights they have at school. Some examples include:

- The right to an education;
- The right to freedom of thought and expression;
- The right to a clean and safe space;
- The right to be treated fairly and respectfully; and
- The right to make your own friends.

2. Review your school's code of conduct or essential agreements. Link the specific expectations back to the list of rights created by students, adding to the list where necessary. Reinforce the concept that rights come with responsibilities.

3. Ask students to brainstorm a list of expectations that could be added to your school's code of conduct or essential agreements. Encourage students to share this information with your school administration through a discussion, multi-media presentation or letter-writing activity; for example, the principal and/or vice principal could be invited to visit the class for a discussion on the current rules and potential changes.

 **Essential Concepts: 20 min**

Use Slide Deck 2 and the 'Right to Vote' video to review the following key terms and concepts: right, freedom, the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, fundamental freedoms, democratic rights, responsibility, universal suffrage, women's suffrage. Handouts 2.1 and 2.2 can also be used for more detailed information.

 **Discussion: 5-10 min**

Voter turnout in Canada has declined over the last three decades. In the 2017 British Columbia provincial election, 57.7 per cent of eligible voters cast a ballot. Why do you think fewer people are voting? Do you think it is disrespectful to those who fought for the right to vote? Are there legitimate reasons to not vote?

*Teacher Note: Be sensitive to issues at home that may challenge perspectives around voting, such as religious reasons or traditions followed by certain groups.*

## LESSON 2: RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES IN A DEMOCRACY

### ★ Action: 20-30 min

1. Using Handout 2.3 and the 'History of Voting Rights in British Columbia' video, review the evolution of suffrage within the province.

2. Ask students to create a visual campaign or visual timeline to depict the path of other minority groups to suffrage. In small groups or independently, students should design one or more media products (e.g., poster, video, article/blog, social media posts) to illustrate the history of voting rights and to emphasize our right and responsibility to vote.

3. Students should share the promotional materials and creative multi-media presentations throughout the school leading up to your Student Vote Day. Productions can also be submitted to CIVIX by email or shared through social media.

### ✚ Extensions:

A. Divide students into five groups and provide each with a section from Handout 2.2. Ask students to create a dramatic or multi-media presentation to inform the rest of the class about the pathway to universal suffrage. A particular focus could be placed on the history of Indigenous peoples in Canada and how they gained the right to vote. Handout 2.3 can also be referenced.

B. Typically, voter turnout among youth is much lower than older age groups. Using Handout 2.4, examine voter turnout rates by age group at the provincial level and initiate a class discussion.

- Which age group usually has the highest voter turnout? Which group usually has the lowest?
- What is the impact of the varying rate of voter turnout among different age groups? How does it influence the results of an election? Which age groups are politicians more likely to want to speak with?
- Consider possible reasons for these differences. What does it say about different age groups? What does it say about our election process?

C. Ask students what words or images come to mind when they think of civil and political rights. Students should incorporate quotes from historical sources or from current politicians in an essay about the significance of living in a country with protected rights and freedoms. Alternatively, students can create a poster or acrostic poem using the word 'democracy' that promotes or illustrates their rights and freedoms in Canada.



### Reflection: 5 min






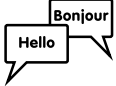

Have a closing discussion about the right and responsibility to vote. Alternatively, ask students to write a reflection for their election scrapbook (see *Assessment Opportunities*).

- How would you feel if you were denied the ability to share your views or opinions?
- Why is it valuable to strive towards similar participation rates among all groups and demographics? What happens if they are not balanced?
- Will you vote when you become eligible? Why or why not?

## EXTERNAL RESOURCES

- "Electoral History of BC," *Elections BC* — [www.elections.bc.ca/resources/electoral-history-of-bc](http://www.elections.bc.ca/resources/electoral-history-of-bc)
- "Voting in Canada: How a Privilege Became a Right," *CBC Digital Archives* — [www.cbc.ca/archives/topic/voting-in-canada-how-a-privilege-became-a-right](http://www.cbc.ca/archives/topic/voting-in-canada-how-a-privilege-became-a-right)
- "A History of the Vote in Canada," *Elections Canada* — [www.elections.ca/content.aspx?section=res&dir=his&document=index&lang=e](http://www.elections.ca/content.aspx?section=res&dir=his&document=index&lang=e)
- "Women's Right to Vote," *Telling Times Documentary* — <https://www.cpac.ca/en/programs/telling-times/episodes/21252966/>
- "Aboriginal Peoples and the Fight for the Franchise," *The Canadian Encyclopedia* — [www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/aboriginal-peoples-and-the-fight-for-the-franchise](http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/aboriginal-peoples-and-the-fight-for-the-franchise)
- "Indigenous suffrage," *The Canadian Encyclopedia* — [www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/indigenous-suffrage](http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/indigenous-suffrage)
- "Right to Vote," *The Canadian Encyclopedia* — [www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/franchise](http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/franchise)



	HIGHLIGHTS	EXAMPLES
 <b>FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You have the freedom to pray and worship in your own way, or not to pray or worship at all.</li> <li>You have the freedom to shape your own opinions.</li> <li>You have the freedom to express your opinions.</li> <li>The media is free to report on anything in Canada.</li> <li>You can hold rallies to express your disagreements.</li> <li>You can choose your own friends.</li> </ul>	<p>You cannot be punished for your religious beliefs.</p>
 <b>DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If you are a citizen and 18 years old, you can vote in elections.</li> <li>If you are a citizen and 18 years old, you can compete for the job of a politician.</li> <li>The rule that governments must have elections every five years or less.</li> <li>The rule that elected governments must meet at least once every year.</li> </ul>	<p>You can run for political office and vote when you turn 18.</p>
 <b>MOBILITY RIGHTS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You can live and work in any province or territory in Canada.</li> <li>You can leave and come back to Canada when you want.</li> </ul>	<p>You can visit another country and come back when you choose.</p>
 <b>LEGAL RIGHTS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If you are arrested, you must be told of your option to see a lawyer.</li> <li>If needed, you must go to court in an amount of time that is considered fair.</li> <li>You must be considered innocent until proven guilty.</li> </ul>	<p>You will receive a fair trial if you are accused of a crime.</p>
 <b>EQUALITY RIGHTS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You cannot be treated unfairly for many reasons. This includes your race, background, religion, gender, age, or mental or physical ability.</li> </ul>	<p>An employer cannot use your race or religion as a reason not to hire you</p>
 <b>OFFICIAL LANGUAGES OF CANADA</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You can talk or write to the federal government in English or French.</li> </ul>	<p>You can send a letter to your Member of Parliament in English or French.</p>
 <b>MINORITY LANGUAGE EDUCATION RIGHTS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You may be able to go to school in English or French if you meet certain criteria.</li> </ul>	<p>You can attend a French high school in some English regions of Canada, if you went to a French elementary school.</p>

## HANDOUT 2.2: HISTORY OF VOTING RIGHTS IN CANADA

The following outlines some important events regarding the history of voting rights in Canada.

### British North America – Only Affluent Men May Vote (1758-1866)

In the beginning, only wealthy men could vote. To be able to vote, you had to own property or pay a certain amount in yearly taxes or rent. Only a small number of people met these requirements. Women and most religious and ethnic minority groups were not allowed to vote.

### Extending the Right to Vote to Women (1867-1919)

Starting in the 1870s, women campaigned with petitions, speeches and public protests for the right to vote. Even though politicians were uncooperative and many people disagreed, these women received the support of powerful organizations and managed to have bills introduced in provincial legislatures. When the bills were defeated, they persisted and had them reintroduced over and over until they were successful. Manitoba was the first province to extend the vote to women in 1916 and other provinces followed shortly thereafter, including British Columbia in 1917. By 1918, women had gained the right to vote in federal elections.



*Nellie McClung, activist for women's suffrage and one of Canada's first female elected politicians.*

### Making the Vote Universal (1920-1960)

The right to vote became widespread with the 1920 *Dominion Elections Act*, but unfairness remained. Indigenous peoples and Canadians of Chinese origin were still unable to vote. Canadian citizens of Japanese origin were also denied the right to vote, even if they had served in the Canadian military. Indigenous peoples could only vote if they gave up their treaty rights and registered Indian status. Various religious groups were also treated unfairly. The last restrictions for these groups were removed in 1960, after much political debate.



*Prime Minister John Diefenbaker oversaw the extension of the right to vote to Indigenous peoples in 1960.*

### Accessibility for All (1961-1997)

A variety of steps were taken to make voting easier and more accessible to all voters:

- Employers were required to provide their staff with enough time off during the workday to vote.
- Voting hours were extended.
- Advance voting and voting by mail were introduced, at first on a limited basis but ultimately made available to any voter. Voting by mail is used by students living away from home, travelling vacationers, business people, incarcerated electors, and those temporarily living outside the country (including members of the Canadian Forces and public servants).
- Access for people in wheelchairs was provided at voting places and accessibility criteria were developed for the selection of voting places.
- New voting tools and services were offered to meet the diverse needs of Canadians, including magnifiers to help read ballots, tactile and braille voting templates, large-print lists of candidates, braille lists of candidates and sign language interpretation.
- Mobile polls were introduced to visit various institutions (including colleges and universities) to collect votes.
- Voter information was made available in both official languages and in some Indigenous and ethno-cultural languages. Additionally, information programs were put in place to make the referendum and election processes better known to citizens, particularly those persons and groups most likely to experience difficulty in exercising their democratic rights.

### Charter Challenges (1982 to 2004)

Following the adoption of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, several groups challenged the *Canada Elections Act* to receive the right to vote.

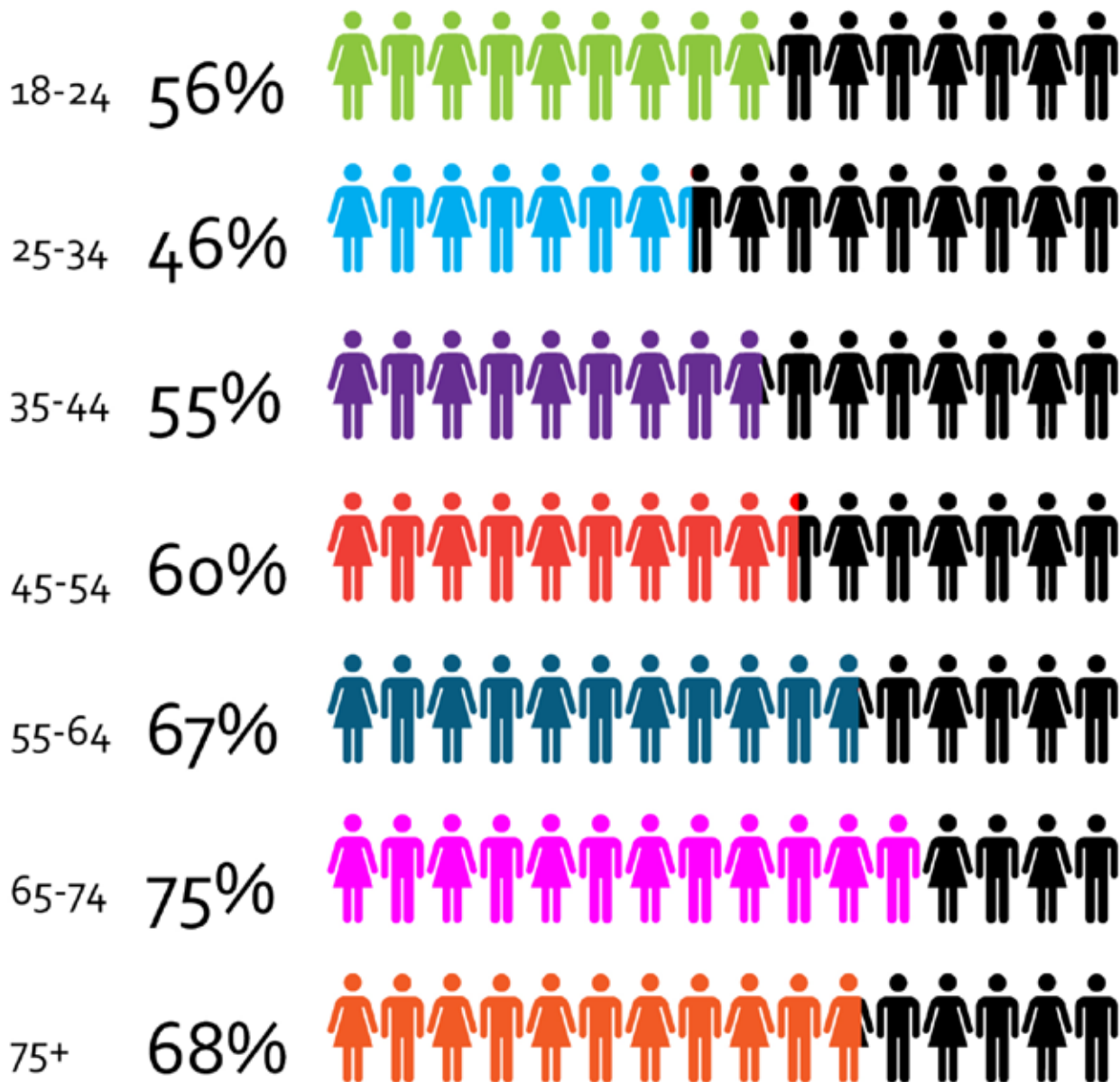
- About 500 federally appointed judges became eligible to cast ballots in federal elections in 1988, after a court determined that their exclusion was in conflict with the Charter's guarantee of the right to vote.
- In 1988, the Canadian Disability Rights Council argued in a Charter challenge that election laws should not disqualify people who have a mental illness. It was not until 1993 that Parliament removed this disqualification.
- Since 1982, inmates of several penal institutions have relied on the Charter to argue that they should be able to vote. In 1993, Parliament removed the disqualification for prisoners serving sentences of less than two years. Although the legislation has not been amended for prisoners serving longer sentences, the Supreme Court of Canada in 2002 ruled that prisoners serving terms of more than two years could not be disqualified from voting. Therefore, they have been able to cast ballots since 2004.

Source: *History of the Vote*

## HANDOUT 2.3: HISTORY OF VOTING RIGHTS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

1871	First general election in province of British Columbia.
1872	Chinese and First Nations peoples disenfranchised (lose the right to vote).
1876	Property qualification for voting dropped.
1878	School teachers prohibited from voting or campaigning.
1883	Prohibition against school teachers lifted.
1893	Persons residing in a Provincial Home are disqualified from voting.
1895	Japanese disenfranchised.
1899	Provincial civil servants disenfranchised.
1900	Civil servant disenfranchisement repealed.
1907	South Asians disenfranchised.
1916	Clergy no longer prohibited from running and sitting as MLAs.
1917	Franchise extended to women.
1931	Doukhobors disenfranchised.
1939	Persons residing in a Provincial Home are no longer disqualified from voting.
1945	Members of prohibited groups, if otherwise qualified, allowed to vote if they served in World War I or World War II.
1947	Persons without an adequate knowledge of English or French are disqualified from voting.
1947	Prohibition against Chinese and South Asians removed.
1947	Canadian citizenship recognized as qualification in addition to being a British subject.
1948	Mennonites and Hutterites no longer ineligible to vote.
1949	Status Indians, namely Aboriginal individuals recognized and registered under the <i>Indian Act</i> , and Japanese prohibition removed.
1952	Voting age changed to 19.
1952	Doukhor prohibition removed.
1979	Blind voters able to mark own ballots by means of templates.
1982	Persons without an adequate knowledge of English or French are no longer disqualified from voting.
1985	“British subject” dropped as qualification to vote.
1985	Persons detained in a provincial mental health facility or other mental institution by court authority are disqualified from voting.
1988	Persons who have been convicted of an indictable offence and have been released on probation or parole and are not in custody are no longer disqualified from voting.
1992	<i>Elections Amendment Act</i> lowers the voting age to 18 from 19 and eases restrictions on voting day registration.
1995	Persons imprisoned in a correctional institution serving a sentence of less than two years are no longer disqualified from voting.
1995	Persons detained in a provincial mental health facility or other mental institution by court authority are no longer disqualified from voting.
1995	Chief Electoral Officer and the Deputy Chief Electoral Officer are disqualified from voting.
2003	Persons imprisoned in a correctional facility serving a sentence longer than two years are no longer disqualified from voting.

## HANDOUT 2.4: PROVINCIAL ELECTION VOTER TURNOUT BY AGE GROUP



Percentage of registered voters who voted in 2017



# GOVERNMENTS IN CANADA



Canada is a **parliamentary democracy**. We elect members to represent us in our federal parliament and our provincial and territorial legislatures.

With the exception of Northwest Territories and Nunavut, most federally and provincially elected representatives are affiliated with a **political party**. A political party is a group of like-minded individuals with a shared vision and political ideology whose intention is to achieve power and create meaningful political change.

If the governing party has more than half of all the seats, they will have a **majority government**. If they have less than half, they will have a **minority government**.

In a parliamentary democracy, the dominant political party or the party with the most members in the parliament or legislature usually determines the leader of the government. Citizens do not vote for the leader directly.

In a parliamentary system, there are three branches or divisions: legislative, executive and judicial.

The **legislative branch** is responsible for debating, amending and passing laws. At the federal level, the legislative branch is made up of an upper and lower

house: the **Senate** includes 105 appointed Senators and the **House of Commons** is made up of elected **Members of Parliament (MPs)**. There are currently 338 MPs and each represents a different geographic area called an **electoral district** or **constituency**.

At the provincial level in British Columbia, the legislative branch is termed the **Legislative Assembly** and the elected representatives are called **Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs)**. There are currently 87 MLAs across the province, each representing an electoral district.

The **executive branch** is responsible for implementing laws and consists of the monarch, the leader of the government and the cabinet. The monarch is represented by the governor general at the federal level and the lieutenant governor at the provincial level. The leader is called the prime minister at the federal level and a premier at the provincial level. The prime minister and the premier both appoint several elected members, usually from their own party, to head the departments or ministries of the executive council (known as the cabinet). Each minister is in charge of one (or more) of the government responsibilities and acts as an advisor to the leader of the government and the legislative body in their area(s) of expertise. The executive branch implements and enforces laws, rules and regulations, with the support of the public service.



## LESSON 3: GOVERNMENTS IN CANADA

The **judicial branch** is responsible for overseeing and administering the law. Federally, the judicial branch is headed by the Supreme Court and nine appointed judges. At the provincial level, the judicial branch is led by the Chief Justice of British Columbia. The judicial branch interprets the law and punishes those who violate established laws, rules and regulations, and operates independently and separately from the executive and legislative branches of government.

The federal and provincial/territorial governments handle different areas of responsibility. The division of powers is based on the principle of **subsidiarity**, in which the government closest to the issue governs it. The distribution of responsibilities is found in Sections 91–95 of the *Constitution Act*, 1867.

The **federal** government takes responsibility for the whole country and matters of national and international concern, such as the armed forces, relations and trade with other countries, currency, fisheries and oceans, criminal law and public safety.

**Provincial** and **territorial** governments are responsible for their own province or territory and regional matters including education, healthcare, social welfare and transportation.

There are also policy areas where the federal and provincial governments share jurisdiction, such as the environment, taxation, agriculture and natural resources. This is called **concurrency**.

Other forms of government exist in Canada and they are responsible for more local issues, but they also work collaboratively with the federal, provincial and territorial governments.

**Local governments** take responsibility for their city or town and community matters such as water and sewage treatment, libraries, roads and bridges and local parks and recreation. The local government system in B.C. includes municipal governments, regional districts and improvement districts, and they acquire their responsibilities from the provincial government. Each municipal government has an elected council made up of local **councillors**. The leader of the council is called a **mayor** and they are elected by the people.

There are also other forms of government in some Indigenous communities or First Nations reserves. **Indigenous governments** often share certain responsibilities with the government of their province/territory and the federal government.

The term **self-government** refers to a First Nation, Métis or Inuit community with control over its own affairs. The level of autonomy varies, but federal and provincial laws still apply and the other levels of government will often work together for the benefit of all community members. Self-governing First Nations have the ability to sign treaties (formal agreements) with the various levels of the Canadian federal government (referred to as Crown). Comprehensive land claims agreements (modern treaties) between Canadian governments and First Nations often result in Indigenous peoples having greater autonomy to choose their own method(s) of representation and decision-making.

### BIG IDEA

Canada has several levels of government, each with its own elected representatives and areas of responsibility. Governments make decisions and pass legislation that impact the lives of citizens.

### LEARNING INTENTIONS

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

- The development, structure and functions of political institutions in Canada; and
- The power relationships that exist between citizens, government and other groups.

Students are expected to be able to do the following:

- Assess which level of government in Canada is responsible for different issues; and
- Understand the impact of government on the lives of citizens.

### RESOURCES

- Slide Deck 3: Governments in Canada
  - Video: The Levels of Government
  - Video: Parliamentary Democracy in British Columbia
  - Handout 3.1: Government Responsibilities
  - Activity Sheet 3.2: Investigating Government
  - Handout 3.3: History of Indigenous Self-Government
  - Activity Sheet 3.4: First Nation Profile
  - Provincial Ministry Descriptions (available online)
  - Political Trivia *Jeopardy!* (available online)
- (Videos, slide decks and digital versions of the activity sheets can be found at [www.studentvote.ca/bc](http://www.studentvote.ca/bc))

## LESSON 3: GOVERNMENTS IN CANADA

### ACTIVITIES

#### Hook: 10-15 min

1. Test your students' current knowledge of governments in Canada. What are the different levels of government in Canada? What is the title given to the leader at each level? Which individuals are in these positions today?
2. Write down the levels of government on the board. Ask students to consider the elected representative(s) from which level of government they would contact in the following scenarios:
  - a) You and your friends would like a skate ramp added to the local park.
  - b) You think there should be more financial aid available to help youth pursue post-secondary education or skills and training programs.
  - c) The streetlight near your home is broken and needs to be replaced.
  - d) You are traveling to a foreign country and need to find out if there are any travel advisories.
  - e) The hospital in your town is in need of a new X-ray machine.
3. Reflect and debrief – How much do you know about government? Why is it important to understand government and politics? What do you want to learn about government in Canada? Ask students to respond to one or more of these questions in a short written reflection.

#### Discussion: 5-10 min

Why is it important to know the roles and responsibilities associated with each level of government? Why is it important to know who your elected representatives are?

#### Essential Concepts: 20 min

Use Slide Deck 3, the 'Levels of Government' video and the 'Parliamentary Democracy in British Columbia' video, review the key terms and concepts regarding the levels of government in Canada: federal, provincial/territorial, local, Member of Parliament, Member of the Legislative Assembly, councillor, parliament, prime minister, premier, mayor, subsidiarity, concurrency, self-government.

#### ★ Action: 20-25 min

1. Review the list of responsibilities for each level of government (Handout 3.1).
2. Divide students into small groups and assign each a different provincial government ministry. Give each group the task of researching their assigned ministry. This activity can be completed using online resources and government websites, or information from the list of *Provincial Ministry Descriptions* (available online) can be distributed.
3. Each group will create a short presentation or skit on the role and responsibilities of their ministry (e.g., What type of programs or services do they offer? How do they aim to help people? What are some recent announcements or legislation? Are responsibilities of this ministry shared with other forms of government in the region?).

#### ✚ Extensions:

A. Using online resources, ask students to fill out Activity Sheet 3.2. This could be completed in a computer lab or assigned for homework. Use the following links as a starting point:

- Governor General of Canada — [www.gg.ca](http://www.gg.ca)
- Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia — [www.ltgov.bc.ca](http://www.ltgov.bc.ca)
- Parliament of Canada — [www.parl.gc.ca](http://www.parl.gc.ca)
- Elections Canada — [www.elections.ca](http://www.elections.ca)
- Elections BC — [www.elections.bc.ca](http://www.elections.bc.ca)
- Legislative Assembly of British Columbia — [www.leg.bc.ca](http://www.leg.bc.ca)

*Teacher Note: As an alternative to Activity Sheet 3.2, students could work together to co-create a quiz for other students based on what they determine to be the critical information from the above links. Once completed, students could swap what they have created.*

B. Learn more about Indigenous self-government in Canada by reviewing Handout 3.3 with your class. Use the First Nations Map and other resources on the Government of Canada website (<https://geo.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/cippn-fnpim/index-eng.html>) and other resources to locate the First Nations or Métis communities or reserves closest to your school. As a class or in small groups, have students select a First Nation and complete Activity Sheet 3.4.

C. Play a game of political trivia (e.g., What is the title given to the leader of our country? Who holds this position? Which party do they represent?). You can use or modify the Political Trivia *Jeopardy!* game available online or create your own list of questions and answers. Activity Sheet 3.2 could also be used for reference.

## LESSON 3: GOVERNMENTS IN CANADA

*Teacher Note: Kahoot (or another survey tool) can also be used to create a game of political trivia.*

D. Invite a person from a local or nearby First Nation or Indigenous community who is knowledgeable about self-government issues to speak to the class. A First Nations Elder, an Indigenous politician or a member of a band council could be invited. If your school has an Aboriginal Advocate or liaison, connect with them to see if they have information about the local Indigenous community and its government to share, or you can contact a Friendship Centre or a First Nation organization for suggestions (e.g., Assembly of First Nations, Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs, BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres).

E. The British Columbia provincial government presents an annual budget every February. The budget is an estimate of expected provincial government revenues and expenses for the next fiscal year, and often sets the annual economic agenda for the government. In the lead-up to an election, the governing party will sometimes use the budget to introduce policies in an attempt to attract voters. Review the most recent budget documents online ([www.bcbudget.gov.bc.ca](http://www.bcbudget.gov.bc.ca)), or a summary of the highlights, for a breakdown of where the province gets its money and where it plans to spend it. Discussion questions: Are you surprised by the breakdown of the government's revenues and/or expenditures? Where do you think the provincial government should spend more or less? Should the government increase or decrease any of its revenue sources?

F. Compare the parliamentary system of government in Canada to the presidential system of government in the United States. What are the similarities and differences? What are the strengths and limitations of each system? Which system do you prefer and why?



### Reflection: 5-10 min

































Have a closing discussion about governments in Canada. Alternatively, ask students to write a reflection for their election scrapbook (see *Assessment Opportunities*).

- What have you learned about governments in Canada?
- How involved should governments be in the lives of their citizens?
- Why might Indigenous peoples prefer their own system of self-government?

## EXTERNAL RESOURCES

- "How Canadians Govern Themselves," *Parliament of Canada* — [lop.parl.ca/about/parliament/senatoreugeneforse/home/index-e.html](http://lop.parl.ca/about/parliament/senatoreugeneforse/home/index-e.html)
- "Discover Canada," *Citizenship and Immigration Canada* — [www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/publications-manuals/discover-canada.html](http://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/publications-manuals/discover-canada.html)
- Elections BC — [www.elections.bc.ca](http://www.elections.bc.ca)
- Legislative Assembly of British Columbia — [www.leg.bc.ca](http://www.leg.bc.ca)
- Parliament of Canada — [www.parl.gc.ca](http://www.parl.gc.ca)
- Government of Canada — [www.gc.ca](http://www.gc.ca)
- Indigenous Services Canada and Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada — [www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca](http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca)
- First Nation Profiles Interactive Map — [geo.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/cippn-fnpim/index-eng.html](http://geo.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/cippn-fnpim/index-eng.html)
- First Nations in B.C. Knowledge Network — [www.fnbc.info](http://www.fnbc.info)
- "Guide to Indigenous Organizations & Services," *Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation* — [www.gov.bc.ca/arr/services/guide.html](http://www.gov.bc.ca/arr/services/guide.html)

## HANDOUT 3.1: GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

FEDERAL	PROVINCIAL	MUNICIPAL
 <b>Citizenship and passports</b>	 <b>Colleges and universities</b>	 <b>Animal control</b>
 <b>Criminal law</b>	 <b>Drivers' licensing and highways</b>	 <b>Fire protection</b>
 <b>Currency</b>	 <b>Education</b>	 <b>Land use planning (zoning)</b>
 <b>Federal taxes</b>	 <b>Healthcare</b>	 <b>Libraries</b>
 <b>Fisheries</b>	 <b>Municipalities</b>	 <b>Local police</b>
 <b>Foreign affairs and trade</b>	 <b>Natural resources</b>	 <b>Property taxes</b>
 <b>Indigenous lands and rights</b>	 <b>Property and civil rights</b>	 <b>Parks and recreation</b>
 <b>National defence</b>	 <b>Provincial law and courts</b>	 <b>Public transportation</b>
 <b>Official languages</b>	 <b>Provincial taxes</b>	 <b>Streets and sidewalks</b>
 <b>Postal service</b>	 <b>Social services</b>	 <b>Waste management</b>
 <b>Veterans affairs</b>		 <b>Water supply and treatment</b>

## ACTIVITY SHEET 3.2: INVESTIGATING GOVERNMENT

In the table below, answer the questions for each level of government in your community.

Question	Federal	Provincial	Municipal
<p>What is the official title of the person who represents the sovereign at this level?</p> <p>Who currently holds this position?</p>			
<p>What is the official title of the elected members at this level of government?</p> <p>How many members are there?</p> <p>Who currently holds this position for your geographic area?</p>			
<p>What is the official title of the leader at this level of government?</p> <p>Who currently holds this position and which party do they represent?</p> <p>How many seats did the governing party win in the last election?</p>			
<p>Where does this level of government meet?</p> <p>(Include the name of the building and city)</p>			
<p>What are three or more responsibilities at this level of government?</p>			



## ACTIVITY SHEET 3.2: TEACHER COPY – INVESTIGATING GOVERNMENT

Question	Federal	Provincial	Municipal
What is the official title of the person who represents the sovereign at this level?	Governor General	Lieutenant Governor	
Who currently holds this position?	Julie Payette	Janet Austin	
What is the official title of the elected members at this level of government?	Member of Parliament (MP)	Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA)	Councillor
How many members are there?	338	87	<i>Answers will vary</i>
Who currently holds this position for your geographic area?	<i>Answers will vary</i>	<i>Answers will vary</i>	<i>Answers will vary</i>
What is the official title of the leader at this level of government?	Prime Minister	Premier	Mayor
Who currently holds this position and which party do they represent?	Justin Trudeau Liberal Party of Canada	John Horgan BC NDP	<i>Answers will vary</i>
How many seats did the governing party win in the last election?	157	41	
Where does this level of government meet?	House of Commons, Parliament Buildings	British Columbia Parliament Buildings	Council chambers
(Include the name of the building and city)	Ottawa	Victoria	<i>Answers will vary</i>
What are three or more responsibilities at this level of government?	Global affairs, citizenship and immigration, national defence, currency, public safety, fisheries and oceans	Education, social welfare, health care, transportation and highways	Waste management, water and sewage, community services, local parks and recreation

## HANDOUT 3.3: HISTORY OF INDIGENOUS SELF-GOVERNMENT

The following provides an overview of the history of Indigenous self-government in Canada.

### The First Treaties (1500s-1700s)

Before Europeans arrived in North America, Indigenous peoples organized themselves as independent nations. Each nation had its own way of life, political organization, culture, economy, language, laws and control over the land and resources within its territory. Europeans explored and settled in the territory, bringing with them different customs, languages, technology and cultures. Relationships between Europeans and Indigenous peoples varied across the territory and changed over time. For example, during the early days of European contact, some of these relationships were based on fur trade agreements and/or military alliances, and were mutually beneficial. In most cases, Indigenous peoples continued to govern themselves independently and the rights to their lands and resources were respected. However, at other times, Europeans and local Indigenous people clashed violently and left a legacy of mistrust. As Europeans began to settle in North America more permanently, more formal agreements were initiated.



*Potlatch in Alert Bay, British Columbia (c. 1897).*



*Tsimshian village in Metlakatla, British Columbia (c. 1890).*

### British Colonization (1763)

After defeating the French in the Seven Years War, the British government issued the *Royal Proclamation of 1763*, which set out the terms and rules for transferring Indigenous land to the British. Indigenous people became official subjects under British terms, which expanded Britain's legal authority across the continent. Not all First Nations agreed to sign treaties, but those who did were promised particular legal rights. Some treaties set up reserved territories and guaranteed traditional rights, such as hunting and fishing. Many of these treaties broke traditional alliances, while other promises and legal protections were unfulfilled by future Canadian governments. In all cases, the balance of power in these relationships systematically favoured the British.

### Assimilation and the Indian Act (1867-1876)

The *British North America Act* of 1867 (known today as the *Constitution Act, 1867*) established the exclusive power and control of the federal government of Canada over Indigenous peoples and their lands. In 1876, the Canadian government put in place the *Indian Act*, a law that governs First Nations in regard to their status, their land, and their system of governance. Among other legislation, the *Indian Act* gave the Canadian government the legal authority to replace traditional Indigenous governance systems with an imposed system of elected chiefs and band councils. It also banned many traditional Indigenous practices, such as the potlatch, meaning 'to give' in the Nuuchah Nulth language, a gift-giving feast ceremony performed in British Columbia. The *Indian Act* also introduced the residential school system across Canada, which forced children between the ages of 3 and 15 to attend boarding schools and assimilate (forcibly integrate) to Canadian society. Thousands of children were taken from their families and were often subjected to abuse. During this time, the majority of lands and resources that had once belonged to the Indigenous population came under the authority of the Canadian government. First Nations were put on small parcels of land, called reserves, could not own businesses, houses, or territories as they were, and still are today, considered subjects of the Crown.

### Negotiating Citizenship (1950s-1960s)

While Indigenous people fought for Canada in both world wars, it was only in 1951 that the restriction on pursuing land claims was removed from the *Indian Act* and in 1960 that Indigenous peoples, specifically Status Indians (those registered under the *Indian Act*), could vote federally without losing their treaty rights or registered Indian status. In 1969, the *White Paper* put forth the federal government's 'Aboriginal policy' and proposed eliminating the *Indian Act*, abolishing the

## HANDOUT 3.3: HISTORY OF INDIGENOUS SELF-GOVERNMENT

federal department of Indian Affairs and transferring responsibilities to the provinces. Indigenous peoples widely opposed these policies (believing them to be another form of assimilation) and argued for the respect of historical treaties and the protection of their distinct cultures. In response, the *Indian Act* remained intact and the federal government retained its responsibility to oversee Indigenous affairs.

### Comprehensive Land Claims, Self-Government Agreements and Recognition (1973 onwards)

The Canadian government (referred to as the Crown) negotiated 11 land agreement treaties, called the 'Numbered Treaties', between 1871 and 1921 across the country. Treaty 8, which covered Northern Alberta, the North West of British Columbia, and parts of Southern North West Territories, was signed in 1899 to give the federal government freedom over the exploitation of the newly discovered minerals and resources over the area. No treaties were signed after this period until 1973. The Crown outlined the new policies in 1951, but it took 20 years before the first treaty was signed (the 1975 James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement signed between the James Bay Cree and the Government of Québec). The current treaties, referred to as modern treaties, are more comprehensive than the Numbered Treaties, and seek to improve living conditions in communities and to share or transfer rights to natural resources in the territories concerned. The negotiations of these modern treaties show a willingness to settle or renegotiate past treaty rights violations, such as the unlawful taking of lands.



Map of modern treaties in British Columbia.

In 1995, the federal government undertook a process to negotiate practical arrangements to make Indigenous self-government a reality. Today's land claims agreements are intended to respect self-government as an Indigenous right under the Canadian Constitution and recognize First Nations' rights to make decisions on matters relating to their own communities, cultures, traditions and languages. The *Constitution Act*, 1982 has recognized existing Indigenous and treaty rights under Section 35 and has defined the Aboriginal (or Indigenous) peoples of Canada as including First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. However, many agreements or treaties remain unsettled or are currently in the negotiation process.

In 2008, the Government of Canada apologized for the assimilation agenda of the residential school system and the trauma it caused and continues to cause Indigenous peoples. Following the apology, a Truth and Reconciliation Commission was put in place to uncover the events and offered suggestions on how to move forward while recognizing the significance of the past. In May 2016, Canada adopted the *United Nations' Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* after several years of opposing it, and is working toward its implementation.

Sources: "A Brief History of Our Right to Self-Governance: Pre-Contact to Present" (Centre for First Nations Governance, [www.fngovernance.org](http://www.fngovernance.org)), "Governance" (Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, [www.aadnc.gc.ca](http://www.aadnc.gc.ca))

### THE NISGA'A TREATY: AN EXAMPLE OF SUCCESSFUL SELF-GOVERNANCE IN B.C.



The Nisga'a settled in northern coastal British Columbia thousands of years ago, and have lived there since. In the late 1800s, the Nation attempted to negotiate a land ownership treaty with the federal government, but was forced to abandon its pursuit because, for nearly thirty years, laws forbade Indigenous peoples from raising money to advance land claims. When the laws were repealed in 1951, the Nisga'a Tribal Council was created to begin treaty negotiations, first with the federal government, and in 1990, with the British Columbia government as well. The Nisga'a treaty came into effect in 2000 and included a \$196 million settlement, over 2,000 square kilometres of land and granted self-government to the Nation.

The autonomous Nisga'a government, which represents Nisga'a people who live both in and outside the territory, is aligned with Nisga'a values and traditional systems of governance. It also respects Canada's interest, its constitution and the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. The Nisga'a government has principal authority over matters of membership, language, culture and land, although all its policies must align with federal and provincial laws.

The Nisga'a Treaty is the most important and comprehensive modern-treaty land claim agreement signed in British Columbia and has transformed the process of settling land claims across Canada.

The Government of British Columbia put in place, in 1993, the B.C. Treaty Commission, an independent organization that oversees the treaty-making process in the province, and ensures that all parties involved, and their demands, are respected and taken into account.

## ACTIVITY SHEET 3.4: FIRST NATION PROFILE

Fill in the chart below as you research the First Nation that is located closest to your school, or another British Columbia First Nation or the Métis Nation of B.C.

Name of First Nation (if possible, also add the Indigenous spelling):

Location of reserve/settlement/community:

Population on reserve/settlement/community:

Population (off-reserve/settlement/community):

Language(s) spoken:

Who governs the First Nation? Research how they are selected and share any of your findings.

Does the First Nation belong to a Tribal Council or Band? If so, which other First Nations are members of the same Tribal Council?

Is the First Nation a signatory to any Treaties or Agreements in Principle? If so, which one(s)?

Is the First Nation currently undergoing treaty negotiations? (If so, describe what they are negotiating about).

List some of the services the First Nation provides for its members, and if possible, which organization provides these services:

What are some of the strengths and limitations of self-government? Why might a First Nation prefer to govern its members more independently of the Canadian or British Columbia governments?





# THE MEDIA

People increasingly get their news and information about the world online. There is so much information online; it can be hard to process everything we see. It is not always clear who has produced the content or for what reason, and whether it can be trusted.

We are facing a problem called ‘**information pollution**,’ which refers to the quality of our information environment. Historically, people did not worry so much about the reputation of the media they relied on, since those sources were limited and considered authoritative.

Today, everyone is both a consumer and producer of information. This means there is a lot of information out there that is not very reliable.

One way to ensure we get the highest-quality information available is to look at professional news sources. These sources don’t always get it right, but they have standards and strive to be accountable to their audiences. So what sets journalism apart from other information?

**Journalism** consists of gathering, assessing, presenting and/or commenting on news and information.

Journalists play a critical role in our democracy. They hold governments and other sources of power to account, help

inform citizens about events and developments, foster debate about issues and give people a voice.

During an election, journalists provide news and perspectives about the parties, candidates and issues, fact-check the statements of leaders and candidates, and place the campaign’s events in context. Without journalists, citizens would miss an invaluable resource to help them decide when politicians are telling the truth or acting in the public’s best interest.

**Journalism** can take different forms and have different purposes. It is helpful to analyze the purpose so that we can assess credibility and potential bias.

**Fact-based journalism** focuses on the reporting of events, issues or developments with the goal of informing people. While it may include analysis or assessment, it is based on facts and not opinion.

**Opinion journalism** provides a viewpoint about an event, issue or development. The purposes of opinion journalism can vary; sometimes it is meant to critique, praise, interpret or persuade. Examples include editorials, columns and commentary. Columnists at professional news organizations are paid to put current events into perspective in order to help readers form their own



## LESSON 4: THE MEDIA

opinions. This type of journalism is not meant to be impartial — it is based on the values and beliefs of the individual presenting the information.

Distinguishing between fact and opinion is a fundamental skill of news and information literacy. When we mistake opinion for news reporting, it can impact how we understand issues and events.

Fact-based journalism involves research, assessment and verification where the central goal is to produce an accurate and fair representation of the facts.

To determine if a report is journalistic and credible, you can assess it through some fundamental standards:

- Sourcing: Does it include multiple reliable sources?
- Accuracy: Have the facts been sourced and verified?
- Research: Are there secondary sources? Have statistics been cited, and if so, from where?
- Context: Does the story go beyond the news event to include history or background?
- Fairness: Is neutral language used to describe the people and issues?

These standards set fact-based journalism apart from other information that may not have the same level of research and rigour.

Professional newsgathering organizations have their own standards for verification and accountability. In contrast to many online information sources, the reputations of these organizations depend on being accurate and reliable. They are transparent and have a procedure for acknowledging and correcting mistakes when they are made. These measures help them earn the public's trust.

### BIG IDEA

A healthy democracy requires journalists to keep those in power accountable and to inform citizens. In identifying reliable sources of information, we can look to organizations and individuals that adopt professional standards, and are accountable for mistakes.

### LEARNING INTENTIONS

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

- How the problem of information pollution allows false and misleading information to spread;
- That journalism plays a key role in democracy; and
- The difference between fact-based journalism and opinion journalism.

Students are expected to be able to do the following:

- Distinguish between factual and opinion-based news coverage;
- Analyze news articles and stories; and
- Assess the credibility of multiple sources and the adequacy of evidence used to justify conclusions.

### RESOURCES

- Slide Deck 4: The Media
  - CTRL-F: [newsliteracy.ca](http://newsliteracy.ca)
  - Video: Information Pollution
  - Video: Why Journalism?
  - Video: Journalistic Standards
  - Video: Disinformation
  - Activity Sheet 4.1: News Bank
  - Activity Sheet 4.2: News Analysis
- (Videos, slide decks and digital versions of the activity sheets can be found at [www.studentvote.ca/bc](http://www.studentvote.ca/bc))

### ACTIVITIES

#### Hook: 15-20 min

1. Have a class discussion about news consumption.
  - If you heard from a friend that there was a meteor crash in your city/town, how would you confirm this story?
  - What are your main sources of news and information and why?
2. Introduce the concepts of information pollution, **misinformation** and **disinformation**, using the 'Information Pollution' video.
  - Why do we have information pollution?
  - Why is it hard to identify trustworthy or reliable information?

#### Discussion: 10 min

How often do you share news with your friends through social media or messaging apps? Do you ever check to see if the news you receive is coming from a reliable source?

#### Essential Concepts: 10-15 min

1. Review the role of journalism and journalistic standards by watching the 'Why Journalism?' and 'Journalistic Standards' videos.
2. Using Slide Deck 4, explain to students that one of the most fundamental distinctions to make when consuming news is to determine whether a news story is fact-based or opinion-based.

## LESSON 4: THE MEDIA

- a) Start by addressing the difference between **fact** and **opinion**.
- A fact is a statement that can be proven or checked (e.g., Canadian Confederation took place on July 1, 1867).
  - An opinion is a statement based on individual perspectives or beliefs. It cannot be proven or checked (e.g., Drake is better than Shawn Mendes).
- b) Review fact-based news coverage compared to opinion journalism.
- **Fact-based journalism** focuses on the reporting of events, issues or developments with the purpose of informing people. While it may include some analysis, it is based on facts and not opinion. It is referred to as a “news report” or “straight reporting.”
  - **Opinion journalism** provides a viewpoint about an event, issue or development. The purposes can vary; sometimes it is meant to critique, praise, interpret or persuade. This type of journalism is not meant to be impartial — it is based on the values and beliefs of the individual who is presenting the information. Examples include editorials, columns and commentary.
- c) Explain the concept of **media bias** (Slide Deck 4).
- When people refer to a news source as biased, they mean that it favours one point of view over others or how it aligns with a political ideology.
  - Media bias may result from many factors, including the ownership of a media organization, its level of diversity, the audience it is trying to cater to, and the opinions it chooses to publish through columnists or op-eds, or broadcast as commentary.
  - A media organization may be referred to as politically “right-leaning,” “left-leaning,” or “centrist,” depending on the answers to some of these questions.

### ★ Action: 20 min plus ongoing assignment

1. Review example articles ([studentvote.ca/bc](http://studentvote.ca/bc) > Classroom Resources > Lesson 4) and have students assess whether an article is fact-based or opinion journalism. This can be completed in pairs or small groups. Ask students to share their decision and provide evidence or a reason behind their thinking.

2. Ask students to create a news bank dedicated to the election (Activity Sheet 4.1) incorporating both news reports and opinion pieces. For each news story, they will need to write a summary (Activity Sheet 4.2) and respond to the consolidation questions.

### ✚ Extensions:

A. Disinformation is false or misleading information that is shared deliberately to cause harm. Learn about how disinformation producers use knowledge of human emotions and technology to spread disinformation by watching the ‘Disinformation’ video. A digital activity sheet is available online at [studentvote.ca/bc](http://studentvote.ca/bc).

B. At election time, the ability to evaluate the reliability of news and information is more important than ever. Use CIVIX’s *CTRL-F: Find the Facts* module to teach students about simple digital literacy strategies. The CTRL-F module is structured around three strategies purpose-built for assessing information online: investigate the source, check the claim, and trace information to find the original context. To access free video tutorials and practice activities, visit [newsliteracy.ca](http://newsliteracy.ca).

C. Create a classroom social media account (e.g., Twitter) to track news coverage about the election. You can follow major news outlets and particular journalists or pundits. Each day you can review the news coming through a personalized or classroom Twitter feed.

D. For the duration or remainder of the campaign, build a news wall or bring in a news story each day with information about the provincial election candidates and issues. You could also create a schedule for one or more students to bring in an article or item about the election every day. Ask students to read or summarize their articles to the class. Debrief as a class afterwards.



### Reflection: 5-10 min

Have a closing discussion about the media and news consumption. Alternatively, ask students to write a reflection for their election scrapbook (see *Assessment Opportunities*).

- What is the role of journalism in democracy?
- Why should we assess the credibility of different media sources?
- Why is it important to rely on multiple news sources?

## ACTIVITY SHEET 4.1: NEWS BANK

Over the course of the provincial election campaign, you will create a digital news bank related to the provincial election to help you prepare for Student Vote Day.

You can select news articles or broadcast stories about the following topics:

- The different parties and leaders and their platform announcements;
- The local candidates running in your electoral district;
- Election issues that matter to British Columbians;
- Important campaign events, such as leaders' debates.

By the end of the election, you need to gather and analyze a minimum of **8 news articles or broadcast stories**.

Your news articles/pieces should come from at least **4 different news organizations**, and include both online, print and broadcast media (TV or radio).

### CHECKLIST:

You must also ensure that you have covered the elements on the following checklist:

- ☐ 3-4 news reports from 3 different sources
- ☐ 3 opinion pieces from 3 different authors/sources
- ☐ 2 news stories from different sources about the same campaign event, issue or development

### JOURNALISTIC STANDARDS:

For any of the fact-based news reports, evaluate the presence of journalistic standards.

- Are there multiple credible sources?
- Is there evidence that the reporter has taken steps to ensure the report is accurate?
- Does the story provide context about the issue?
- Is there supporting research, like reports, or statistics?
- Is the story fair? Is the language used to describe people and issues neutral?

### FINAL QUESTIONS:

After you have completed your news bank, please respond to the following questions:

- Which two news sources do you find most credible? Provide reasons to support your choices.
- Were you able to detect any bias or political leanings from the sources? Explain with evidence.
- Did any news stories influence your views about an issue, party or candidate? Explain.

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## ACTIVITY SHEET 4.2: NEWS ANALYSIS

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For each news story, please fill in the following table.

---

**DATE**

---

**NEWS SOURCE**

---

**TITLE**

---

**AUTHOR/JOURNALIST**

---

**NEWS REPORT VS OPINION**

Is it a news report or an opinion piece? How do you know?

---

**SUMMARIZE THE STORY.**

Who, what, where, when and how?

---

**ANALYSIS**

**News Report:** Can you identify the presence of journalistic standards? Explain.

**Opinion Piece:** How were the facts in the opinion piece used? Did they support the author's argument? Did you find them persuasive?



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.

Common ideologies include **liberalism**, which favours individual liberty but acknowledges the need for some form of government intervention in the economy, and

**conservatism**, which advocates for the preservation of society and opposes radical changes. **Socialism** favours a political and economic system in which the means of production, distribution and exchange are owned by the community collectively, usually through the state, while **libertarianism** advocates for minimal state intervention in the lives of citizens.

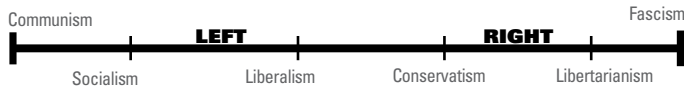
Other ideologies include **communism**, which promotes the establishment of an egalitarian and classless society based on common ownership and control of the means of production and property, as well as **fascism**, an authoritarian political ideology, usually headed by highly nationalistic or militaristic one-party states.

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.



## LESSON 5: VALUES, ISSUES & PERSPECTIVES

A linear spectrum is represented by a horizontal line, with parties on the left embracing social equality, social services and government intervention in the economy, and parties on the right favouring individual liberty, free markets and lower taxes.



The political spectrum can also be viewed with two intersecting scales: one for economic/fiscal policies and one for social/personal policies. This creates a quadrant with four areas.

The political spectrum can also be constructed with one or more dimensions, where each dimension represents a distinct set of issues. One common method is to have one dimension (or axis) for economic policies and one dimension (or axis) for social policies, which creates a quadrant.

Individuals who are left-leaning on economic issues tend to support higher taxes and more government spending, more government involvement, and more social services. Individuals who are right-leaning on economic issues tend to support low taxes and less government spending, less government intervention, and the free market.

Individuals who are progressive on social issues tend to support policies that advocate the promotion of social justice issues by changing established practices and institutions. An example of such a policy could be addressing inequities by giving preferential treatment to disadvantaged groups.

Individuals who are conservative on social issues tend to support policies that advocate the preservation of traditional values and established institutions. An example could be ensuring that everyone follows the same established rules and has equal access.

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.

### BIG IDEA

Politics is rife with controversial issues and opposing 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:

- The major ideologies and political systems;
- That different worldviews lead to different perspectives and ideas about developments in society; and
- Where they fall on the political spectrum, and its significance.

Students are expected to be able to do the following:

- Identify political ideologies and their impact on the development of public policy;
- Understand issues in provincial politics in British Columbia; and
- Explain how different ideologies and worldviews shape perspectives on the same political issue and information.

### RESOURCES

- Slide Deck 5: Campaign Issues
  - Video: Get Ready to Vote
  - Handout 5.1: Views on the Political Spectrum
  - Activity Sheet 5.2: Evaluating Provincial Issues
  - Activity Sheet 5.3: Understanding the Issues
- (Videos, slide decks and digital versions of the activity sheets can be found at [www.studentvote.ca/bc](http://www.studentvote.ca/bc))

### ACTIVITIES

 **Hook: 15 min**

Using the *Vote Compass* online survey, ask students to discover where they fit in British Columbia's political landscape. *Vote Compass* was developed by political scientists and uses a series of issues-based questions to assess which party is most closely aligned with the views of the user. Have students visit the *Vote Compass* website ([www.votecompass.ca](http://www.votecompass.ca)) during the campaign to take the survey.

*Teacher Note: Due to the complex nature of individuals, the results of a political spectrum survey will not be completely accurate in pinpointing a precise political standing. It is also important to note that people's views may be different depending on the topic. For example, you may be more left-leaning on some issues and right-leaning on others. The goal is to encourage students to reflect on their beliefs and values.*

## LESSON 5: VALUES, ISSUES & PERSPECTIVES

### Essential Concepts: 10-15 min

Use Slide Deck 2 to review the following key terms and concepts: opinions, values, perspectives, political ideology, liberalism, conservatism, libertarianism, political spectrum.

### Discussion: 10 min

Why is it important to respect the opinions of others? Is it important to consider values and perspectives other than those of your friends and family?

### ★ Action: 20-30 min

1. 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.

2. Divide students into groups (one for each chosen issue) and ask them how they would solve their challenge as active citizens. Additionally, ask students how the provincial government would play a role in their proposed solutions. In what way can or should the government be involved in or direct these ideas?

3. Have each group share their ideas with the class.

4. Afterwards, debrief on the activity and reflect on the political process.

- Did each group have several different ideas or did they support one single proposal?
- What is the purpose of elections?
- How will you follow your top issue, and the debate surrounding it, during the campaign?

### Extensions:

A. Ask students to engage family and friends in a conversation about issues of concern at the provincial level. Using Activity Sheet 5.2, students can record the views of their family and friends based on several questions. Alternatively, students could create a short take-home poll with a specific set of questions. Have a follow-up discussion the next day. Do students share the same opinions as their parents? What are the reasons for shared or differing opinions?

B. Organize students into groups and assign each a provincial political issue they believe to be important (e.g., the economy, taxes, natural resources, education, health-care). For the duration of the election campaign, ask students to find news articles to research different public and political opinions on the issue or what policies and/or solutions are being suggested. Students can track the information they find using Activity Sheet 5.3, and share their findings with the class.

C. Have a class discussion about the impact of geography on your perspectives and priorities. Questions to consider: Does someone from Vancouver care about the same issues as someone from Kamloops or Fort St. John? Are people living in rural regions or on reserve dealing with the same issues as people from urban areas? What geographical, cultural or socio-economic differences might there be between these regions? How might these differences affect the values and priorities of the people in these communities?



### Reflection: 5 min

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

- Did you find yourself solely on one side of the political spectrum? Is it possible to like ideas from both sides of the spectrum?
- Which people and experiences do you think have had the largest impact on your own worldview and why?
- What issue(s) do you want this provincial election to focus on?
- How would you try to convince or persuade someone who had different political opinions than you?

## EXTERNAL RESOURCES

- Newspaper and media websites
- Vote Compass B.C. — [www.votecompass.ca](http://www.votecompass.ca)

## HANDOUT 5.1: VIEWS ON THE POLITICAL SPECTRUM

People who find themselves on each end of the political spectrum usually have opposing views on a range of social or economic/fiscal issues. Below is a general summary of views based on a two-dimensional political spectrum.



### ECONOMIC/FISCAL ISSUES

Individuals who are **left-leaning** most often believe that:

- Government should play a role in managing the economy and creating jobs, as opposed to simply letting the private sector be responsible for creating jobs.
- A large gap between the richest and poorest parts of society should be avoided as much as possible.
- Wealthier individuals and corporations should pay a greater share of taxes than poorer individuals.
- There is good value in government services, such as education and healthcare, and higher taxes and government debt may be necessary to ensure these services are sufficient.
- Policies and regulations that may be considered inconvenient for businesses but are intended to alleviate social or environmental problems are important for the greater good.

Individuals who are **right-leaning** most often believe that:

- Government should avoid direct intervention in the economy and instead support businesses and individuals as much as possible in order to create jobs, wealth and innovation.
- It is not fair to penalize people for making more money. People who are financially successful are being rewarded for their contributions to society.
- Smaller government is the best approach, which means less government influence on the economy and fewer government services.
- Taxes should be as low as possible and the government should avoid going into debt.
- Regulation on businesses is not necessary because the free market provides sufficient incentives for businesses to pursue important social and environmental outcomes.



### SOCIAL ISSUES

Individuals who are **left-leaning** most often believe that:

- Society is not bound by tradition.
- Social conditions should change as needed and promptly when necessary.
- It is sometimes necessary to address inequities by giving preferential treatment to disadvantaged groups.
- Active efforts are needed to protect every individual's rights under all circumstances.

Individuals who are **right-leaning** most often believe that:

- Traditions should be respected because they provide society with stability and security.
- Change should be slow and careful when it comes to social conditions.
- Preferential treatment is not necessary; everyone should follow the same established rules and receive equal access.
- In making decisions about society as a whole, it is not always possible to protect everyone's rights.

If you are at either end of the spectrum, you will feel most strongly about the views mentioned. People who are closer to the **centre** may feel less strongly about some issues, or only support some views.

## ACTIVITY SHEET 5.2: EVALUATING PROVINCIAL ISSUES

Engage your family and friends in a conversation about public policy issues.

1. Rate each of the following areas of policy at the provincial level.			
	EXCELLENT	SATISFACTORY	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
Healthcare			
Services and support for families and children			
Indigenous relations and reconciliation			
Early learning and K-12 education			
Jobs and skills training			
The economy			
The environment			
Natural gas development			
Energy and electricity			
Infrastructure			
Affordable housing			
Electoral reform			
2. Within the above categories, which issues present challenges or concerns to you, your family or community?			
3. How could the provincial government help address or solve these challenges or concerns, and their impact on your life?			
4. How might these issues impact your vote in the upcoming provincial election?			

**ACTIVITY SHEET 5.3: UNDERSTANDING ISSUES**

Select four issues and compare the different political opinions or proposed policies on each topic.

<b>Opinions/Policies</b>					
<b>Issue 1:</b>					
<b>Issue 2:</b>					
<b>Issue 3:</b>					
<b>Issue 4:</b>					



# ELECTIONS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA



**Elections** are contests of leadership, ideas, politics and power. They provide citizens an opportunity to decide on their next government and the future direction of their country, province or community.

An individual who seeks public office or competes for the job of elected representative is called a candidate. At the federal level and the provincial level in British Columbia, most candidates are affiliated with a political party.

There are many different systems used around the world to determine which parties and candidates are elected and who will lead the government.

An **electoral system** is the way citizens' choices, expressed as votes, are translated into legislative seats. British Columbia uses a system called **Single-Member Plurality** or **First-Past-The-Post** (FPTP).

The province is divided into 87 **electoral districts** (also known as ridings), which are defined geographic areas. Each district is represented by one Member of the Legislative Assembly (single-member districts). The size of electoral

districts is determined by factors such as population size, demographic make-up and geography. Urban electoral districts are often smaller and more populous, while rural electoral districts are larger with less dense populations.

In FPTP, voters are only allowed to choose a single candidate on the ballot (categorical or exclusive ballot) and the candidate with the most votes wins. The successful candidate does not need more than 50 per cent of the vote; they only require one more vote than any of the other candidates (**plurality**).

A political party is a group of like-minded individuals with a shared vision and political ideology whose intention is to achieve power and create meaningful political change. Political parties are made up of interested members of the general public. Anyone above the required age (usually 14 years old) can be a member of a political party. Party members choose their party's leader and local candidates, and help them get elected.

Most local candidates are party members selected through a nomination process by the local riding association, unless they are running as an independent or are not affiliated with

## LESSON 6: ELECTIONS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

any party. The party selects the person they feel has the greatest chance of success as their candidate. Candidates and parties use a communications strategy that incorporates all three types of media (paid, earned, owned) to share their platforms through announcements, advertising and events, and to gain support from constituents.

During an election, an organized course of action is taken by a political party, its candidates and campaign team with the intention of spreading its message and ideas to secure constituent support. A political platform is a series of declared principles and policies on jurisdictional issues concerning government and the public.

Under British Columbia's parliamentary system, the party that elects the most number of representatives (wins the most seats in the Legislative Assembly) usually forms government and their leader becomes the premier.

### BIG IDEA

Political parties bring together people with similar political ideals and goals who are seeking to effect change by being elected.

### LEARNING INTENTIONS

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

- The development, structure and function of Canadian political institutions;
- British Columbia's electoral system and how it works; and
- Their local electoral district and the candidates running for election.

Students are expected to be able to do the following:

- Understand how to research the parties and candidates running for election;
- Analyze party platforms and positions on specific issues;
- Compare the candidates running for office; and
- Recognize the relationships between citizens and governments.

### RESOURCES

- Slide Deck 6: Elections in British Columbia
  - Video: Parliamentary Democracy in British Columbia
  - Handout 6.1: 2017 Provincial Election Results
  - Activity Sheet 6.2: Getting to Know the Parties
  - Activity Sheet 6.3: Evaluating the Leaders' Debate
  - Activity Sheet 6.4: Election Candidate Profile
- (Videos, slide decks and digital versions of the activity sheets can be found at [www.studentvote.ca/bc](http://www.studentvote.ca/bc))

### ACTIVITIES

#### Hook: 10-15 min

1. Watch the 'Get Ready to Vote' video with students to review the key steps involved in preparing to cast your ballot.
2. Find your school's electoral district on a provincial electoral district map. Ask students if they notice any differences between their electoral district and others across British Columbia (e.g., size, shape). Ask them to consider why there are differences and what those differences might be (e.g., population density, demographic make-up, geography, landmarks).
3. Show students an individual map of the school's electoral district on the Elections BC website ([www.elections.bc.ca/index.php/maps/](http://www.elections.bc.ca/index.php/maps/)). Ask students the following questions:
  - What are the boundaries of the electoral district?
  - What major landmarks or attractions are included in the electoral district?
  - What makes the electoral district unique?
  - What issues do you expect people in your electoral district to be talking about?
  - What promises or commitments do you expect the local candidates to make?

#### Essential Concepts: 20 min

Use Slide Deck 6 and the 'Parliamentary Democracy in British Columbia' video to review the key terms and concepts regarding the election process in British Columbia: electoral system, candidate, electoral district, Single-Member Plurality/First-Past-the-Post, premier, political party, party leader.

#### Discussion: 5 min

Using Handout 6.1, review the results of the 2017 British Columbia provincial election. Which party formed government? How did the Student Vote results compare to the general election results? What events followed after the last election? Which party eventually formed government and how?

## LESSON 6: ELECTIONS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

### ★ Action: 50-120 min

1. Review the list of candidates running in your school's electoral district. These can be found on the Elections BC website ([www.elections.bc.ca](http://www.elections.bc.ca)).

2. Organize students into groups and assign each group a candidate/political party or allow them to choose one. Ensure that each candidate/party in your electoral district is represented by a group.

3. Using candidate and party websites, online resources and campaign literature, each group should conduct research into the following:

- Who is the local candidate? Are they affiliated with a political party?
- What does the political party stand for? Who is the current leader of the party? (If applicable)
- What are the party's or candidate's logos, slogans, posters and advertisements? What are the key messages?
- What are the party's or candidate's main priorities or policy ideas (platform)? What is their vision for B.C.?
- Where does the party or candidate sit on the political spectrum?

4. Ask each group to prepare a short multi-media presentation about their political party/candidate and their platform. Students should incorporate an audio-visual component that includes the party's logo/brand, campaign elements and images or video clips of the leader and/or the local candidate. Students can take notes during each presentation using Activity Sheet 6.2. Afterwards, have students vote on the political party they like best – excluding their own party.

### ✚ Extensions:

A. The leaders' debate is an opportunity for the major party leaders to share their platforms, criticize their opponents' ideas and perform in front of the electorate. Plan a viewing of the leaders' debate for your class or ask students to watch it with their friends or family/guardians. Afterwards, have students evaluate the performance of each leader using Activity Sheet 6.3.

B. Create a list of three to five pertinent questions to ask the local candidates. Email the questions to each of the candidates or contact them through social media (e.g., Twitter, Facebook) and give them a few days to respond. Students should compare the responses received and reflect critically while deciding with whom they agree most strongly. Alternatively, students can use Activity Sheet 6.4 to conduct research on each candidate.

C. Have students engage in a mock debate to immerse themselves in the issues and gain a better understanding of the role of a local candidate. In small groups, select one student to represent each candidate in your school's electoral district. The rest of the group will be that candidate's campaign team and will help research and prepare the candidate. Ask students to examine candidate websites, social media platforms, newspapers and other campaign literature for their candidate as well as their opponents. Using the research collected, the campaign teams should prepare key talking points that could be used during the debate to strengthen the candidate's position and weaken their opponent's viewpoints.

D. Political parties use various types of advertising and media to promote themselves and garner votes. Some of these ads are positive and speak to their own party's platform, while others are negative and focus on attacking the other leaders or platforms. Compare the advertising campaigns of several political parties and encourage students to analyze the strategy of each party's campaign. Discussion questions: What messages are the parties trying to get across? What methods are they relying on most? Who are the parties targeting with their advertising? Which party's ads are most effective and why? Is election advertising useful in securing the support of voters?



### Reflection: 5 min

Have a closing discussion about political parties and local candidates with your class. Alternatively, ask students to write a reflection for their election scrapbook (see *Assessment Opportunities*).

- What advantages or disadvantages might there be for a person who runs as an independent or without an affiliation to a party?
- Should candidates be forced to follow the party's stance on some issues, or every issue?
- What are the strengths and limitations of each candidate in your electoral district? Who do you feel will most effectively serve the community?
- Which party or candidate's platform do you most agree with?

## EXTERNAL RESOURCES

- Provincial electoral district maps — [www.elections.bc.ca/index.php/maps](http://www.elections.bc.ca/index.php/maps)
- Candidate information/literature (candidate websites, campaign flyers)
- "Electoral Systems," *Parliament of Canada* — [www.parl.gc.ca](http://www.parl.gc.ca)
- British Columbia political parties — [www.elections.bc.ca](http://www.elections.bc.ca)

## HANDOUT 6.1: 2017 PROVINCIAL ELECTION RESULTS

Registered Political Parties	GENERAL ELECTION RESULTS		
	Candidates Elected	Valid Votes	Popular Vote
BC Liberal Party	43	796,672	40.4%
BC NDP	41	795,106	40.3%
Green Party of BC	3	332,387	16.8%
Independent	0	20,956	1.1%
Other affiliations*	0	28,793	1.4%

Source: Elections BC

Registered Political Parties	STUDENT VOTE RESULTS		
	Candidates Elected	Valid Votes	Popular Vote
BC NDP	60	65,205	38.9%
BC Green Party	14	47,641	28.5%
BC Liberal Party	12	42,651	25.5%
Independent	1	3,626	2.2%
Other affiliations*	0	8,156	4.9%

\* No affiliation, Libertarian, BC Conservative Party, Communist Party of BC, Christian Heritage Party of B.C., Your Political Party of BC (YPP), The Vancouver Island Party, BC Cascadia Party, BC Refed, BC First, Land Air Water-The L.A.W., 4BC, BC Social Credit Party, BC Action Party, Republican Party, BC Citizens First Party.

## ACTIVITY SHEET 6.2: GETTING TO KNOW THE PARTIES

Using a variety of sources, gather information about the political parties campaigning in the election.

Political party details	Campaign slogan and key messages
<b>Name:</b>  <b>Leader:</b>  <b>Website:</b>	
<b>Name:</b>  <b>Leader:</b>  <b>Website:</b>	
<b>Name:</b>  <b>Leader:</b>  <b>Website:</b>	
<b>Name:</b>  <b>Leader:</b>  <b>Website:</b>	
<b>Name:</b>  <b>Leader:</b>  <b>Website:</b>	



## ACTIVITY SHEET 6.3: EVALUATING THE LEADERS' DEBATE

After watching the party leaders' debate, complete an evaluation of each leader's performance and reflect on their key messages. The following rating scale may be used as an evaluation framework.

1 – Very poor

2 – Poor

3 – Satisfactory

4 – Good

5 – Very good

Party Leader	Knowledge	Public Speaking	Messaging	Rebuttals	Etiquette	Score (Out of 25)
a)						
Key messages:						
b)						
Key messages:						
c)						
Key messages:						

## ACTIVITY SHEET 6.4: ELECTION CANDIDATE PROFILE

Create a profile for a candidate running in your electoral district.

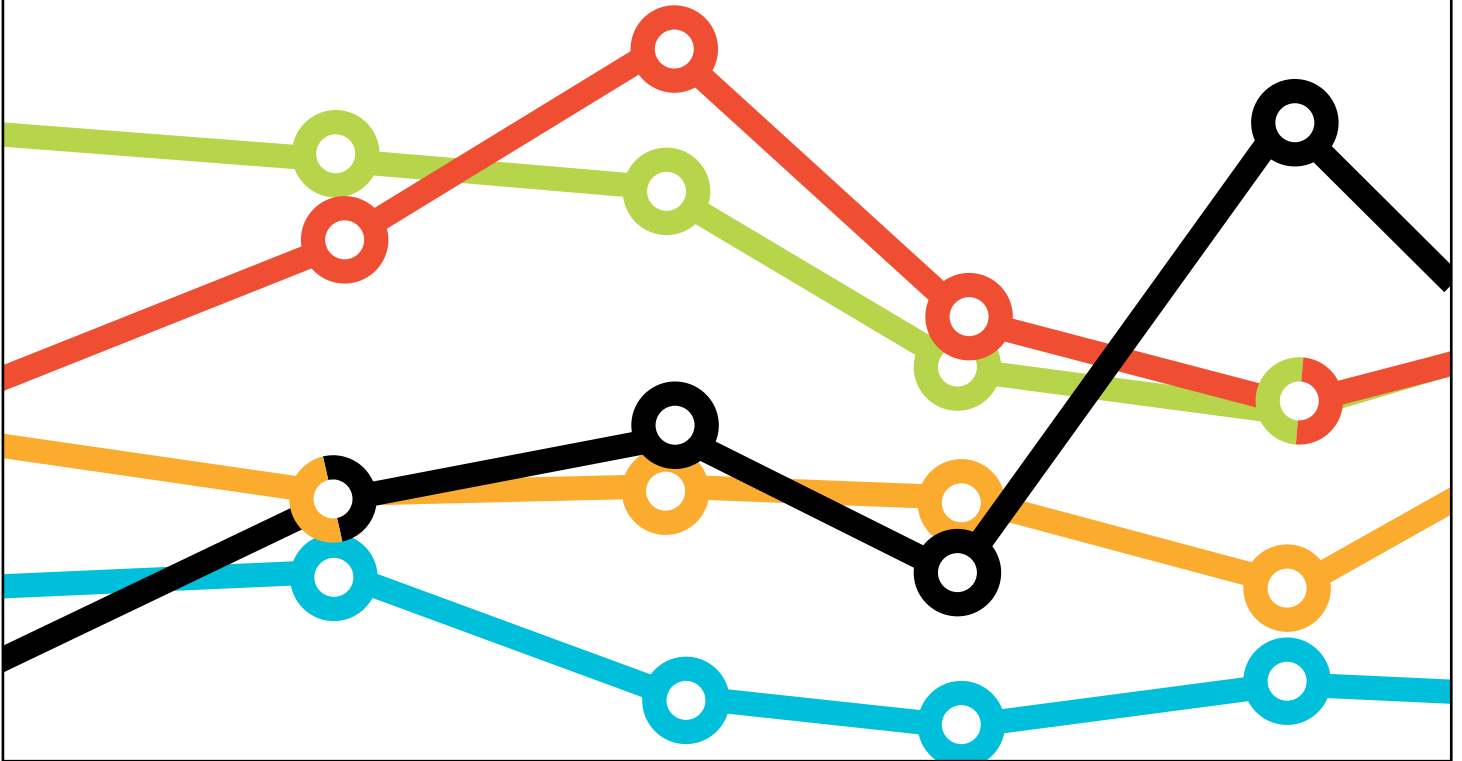
**Candidate's name and party affiliation (*if applicable*):**

**Candidate's related experience and qualifications for public office:**

**Campaign platform, priorities and promises:**

**Interesting and important facts about the candidate:**

# OPINION POLLING



An **opinion poll** is a question or a series of questions designed to measure the public's views on a specific topic or series of topics. Public opinion can change from one day to the next, and the results of a poll present a 'snapshot' of views and attitudes at a given point in time.

**Polls** are often reported on in the lead-up to and during an election. During a provincial election campaign, it is common to see the results from several polls per week from a variety of sources.

There are two main types of polling used in elections: preference polls (also called horse race polls) and issue polls. **Preference polls** report on which leader, party or candidate is favoured at the time by the general public, while **issue polls** focus on assessing voters' feelings on the issues of the campaign and proposed policies.

A poll can never be 100 per cent accurate and there are many aspects that affect the validity of a poll. These include methods for selecting respondents, the sample size or number of individuals surveyed, the wording of a question, the time when respondents are surveyed and even the attitude of the person asking the questions.

A **margin of error** is a small amount calculated for most polls to allow for miscalculations or changes in opinion. Generally, the margin of error is around 3 per cent. For example, a candidate with a 2 per cent lead in a poll with a 3 per cent margin of error could possibly be tied or trailing, or could be ahead by up to 5 per cent.

The methods for opinion polling have changed in recent years. In the past, polls were conducted by telephone or by sending interviewers to speak with people in the street or at their homes. With the advancement of technology, polling has become easier, faster and less expensive. Polls are now conducted online, through social media or by mobile phone. These polls can be hard to judge accurately and are not always entirely representative of the population, as participants tend to select themselves to participate, rather than by random or targeted selection.

Polls are used by media organizations to share the views of the public and to encourage debate and reflection. Political parties also conduct **internal polls** to help them make strategic decisions, such as focusing on particular issues or concentrating on competitive electoral districts they want to win.

## LESSON 7: OPINION POLLING

### BIG IDEA

Opinion polling has an influence on voters and on political campaigns.

### LEARNING INTENTIONS

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

- Factors that will impact the validity and reliability of polling data;
- How knowledge of polling data can impact voting intentions and behaviour; and
- That factors, forces and events can shift public opinion and impact electoral outcomes or decisions.

Students are expected to be able to do the following:

- Assess the methodology of an opinion poll for validity;
- Assess the justification for competing accounts after investigating points of contention, reliability of sources and adequacy of evidence; and
- Analyze the methods used by the media, governments and other important groups to influence public perception of an issue or event.

### RESOURCES

- Slide Deck 7: Opinion Polling in Elections
- An article or summary of a recent opinion poll (Videos, slide decks and digital versions of the activity sheets can be found at [www.studentvote.ca/bc](http://www.studentvote.ca/bc))

### ACTIVITIES

#### Hook: 15-20 min

1. Ask students to respond to one or more of the questions from a recent opinion poll reported in the media. This can be completed informally or by creating a paper or online survey.
2. Tally the results and share them with the class. Are students surprised by the results or did they predict them?
3. Compare the class results with the general population results from the opinion poll. Did students vote the same way or were the results different?
4. Have a post-activity debrief discussion. Why do you think the results were the same or different? What factors can impact the results of a poll (e.g., geography, age, the wording of questions)? How do you think polls influence election campaigns?

#### Essential Concepts: 10-15 min

Use Slide Deck 7 to review the key terms and concepts regarding opinion polling: polling, preference poll, issue poll, margin of error, internal poll.

#### ★ Action: 30 min prep time, implementation time, 30 min post-activity results and debrief

1. As a class or in groups, plan and conduct an opinion poll related to the election. The respondents could be students in the school, their families and/or community members.

**Step 1:** Determine the target group(s) and sample size. Consider the possibilities for comparing the results afterwards across different groups (e.g., grade, age group, gender).

**Step 2:** Decide on the purpose and questions to be asked. Some demographic questions should be included as well, such as age and gender.

**Step 3:** Prepare the survey using an online application.

**Step 4:** Field the survey and collect responses.

**Step 5:** Analyze and share the results. The results should include raw numbers and percentages for the responses. Depending on the sample size, more in-depth analysis could compare the results across different groups and demographics.

2. Review the results of the opinion poll(s) as a class. If the class was divided into groups, have each group share their findings to the rest of the class.

- What were the most interesting findings?
- What challenges did students face in collecting and analyzing data?
- Were any of the questions comparable across different polls and did they yield similar or different results? Why or why not? What factors might influence this (e.g., wording of questions, demographics)?

3. Encourage students to distribute the results. Students can write newspaper articles about their findings, share them during morning announcements or find other ways to disseminate the results to the rest of the school.

#### Extensions:

A. Throughout an election campaign, many different polls and their results will be shared. Each poll is commissioned by a different company, media outlet or stakeholder group and will ask different questions in an attempt to obtain a variety of information. As a class, individually or in groups, have students compare two different opinion polls regarding the same issue or topic. Ask them to determine the source, purpose of the poll, sample size, age group, geographic representation and margin of error. Do the results reflect the same sentiments? Consider why they do or do not.

## LESSON 7: OPINION POLLING

B. Create a polling corner in your classroom to display the results of preference polls during the election campaign. Chart the results visually with pictures of the leaders, include a timeline until voting day and find a way to display the results over time. Over the course of the campaign, record major announcements and events for future analysis (e.g., platform announcements, leaders' debate). After the election is over, examine the validity of the polling results. Were the polling results at the end of the campaign predictive of the election outcome? Did the polling results change dramatically from week to week? What major events or announcements impacted the polling results?

C. In recent elections, pollsters have been criticized when their polling results do not reflect the outcome of the actual election (e.g., 2016 U.S. presidential election, 2016 United Kingdom Brexit referendum). In some cases, pollsters have predicted a different election result than what actually occurred. Do you think polling results can impact voter turnout or voting preferences? Debate the advantages and disadvantages of polling and the impact it has on elections.



### Reflection: 5-10 min

Have a closing discussion about opinion polling in an election campaign. Alternatively, ask students to write a reflection for their election scrapbook (see *Assessment Opportunities*).

- What did you learn about opinion polling?
- What effect, if any, have opinion polls had on your decision to vote for a particular party or candidate?
- Do you think preference polls have a positive or negative impact on voters? Explain your reasoning.

## EXTERNAL RESOURCES

Polling and research company websites. Examples include:

- Abacus Data — <https://abacusdata.ca/>
- Ekos Research Associates — [www.ekos.com](http://www.ekos.com)
- Environics Research Group — [www.environics.ca](http://www.environics.ca)
- Forum Research — [www.forumresearch.com](http://www.forumresearch.com)
- Insights West — [www.insightswest.com](http://www.insightswest.com)
- Ipsos Reid — [www.ipsos.ca](http://www.ipsos.ca)
- Nanos Research — <https://www.nanos.co/>

# THE VOTING PROCESS



**Elections BC** is an independent and non-partisan Office of the Legislature responsible for administering electoral processes in British Columbia, including provincial general elections and by-elections, recall petitions, initiative petitions and initiative votes, the conduct of referenda and plebiscites, and campaign financing and advertising rules for local elections and assent voting. Elections BC is not responsible for administering federal elections or local elections. By doing so in a fair and impartial way, Elections BC makes sure that British Columbians have full access to their democratic rights.

British Columbia was the first jurisdiction in Canada to adopt **fixed-date elections**. *The Constitution Act* calls for provincial general elections to take place on the third Saturday in October every four years.

Regardless of fixed-date election legislation, a provincial election can be held at any time if the government loses the confidence of the legislature or if the lieutenant governor were to dissolve the legislature on the advice of the premier. As a result of an early election call, the 42nd British Columbia general election will take place on Saturday, October 24, 2020.

You are eligible to vote in a British Columbia provincial election if:

- You are a Canadian citizen;
- You are at least 18 years of age on voting day; and
- You have been a resident of British Columbia for at least six months prior to voting day.

The *Election Act* also requires that voters prove their identity and residential address in order to receive a ballot or register to vote. You have three options:

1. One document issued by the Government of B.C. or Canada that contains the voter's name, photograph and residential address, such as a B.C. driver's license or B.C. Identification Card (BCID).
2. A Certificate of Indian Status.
3. Two documents that contain the voter's name (at least one of the documents must also contain the voter's residential address).

Elections BC maintains a **voters list**, which includes the name and address of registered eligible voters. Before an election is called, you can register to vote using Elections BC's online registration system or by contacting their office. During an election, you can also register as a voter at the voting place prior to casting your ballot.



## LESSON 8: THE VOTING PROCESS

As part of recent changes to the *Election Act*, eligible 16 and 17 year olds in British Columbia can now register to be part of the List of Future Voters. Once they turn 18, registrants will be automatically added to the Provincial Voters List.

To be eligible for the List of Future Voters, an individual must be:

- 16 or 17 years old,
- a Canadian citizen, and
- a resident of B.C.

Each **electoral district** is divided into smaller **voting areas**, which are defined geographic areas. Eligible voters can vote at the **voting place** designated for their voting area or at any other voting place in the province. Voting places will be available on the Elections BC website ([www.elections.bc.ca](http://www.elections.bc.ca)), published in community newspapers and included on 'Where to Vote' cards sent to all registered voters.

Voters may choose to vote in one of four ways:

**At advance voting** — Advance voting locations are open from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. (local time) from Thursday, October 15 to Wednesday, October 21.

**On General Voting Day** — General voting places are open from 8 a.m. and 8 p.m., Pacific time.

**At any district electoral office** — From when an election is called to 4 p.m. on October 24.

**Vote by mail** — Voters can ask for a vote by mail package from before an election is called until 4 p.m. on General Voting Day. The package will be mailed to you or you can pick it up at a district electoral office. The completed package must be returned to Elections BC by 8 p.m. on October 24.

Voting in government elections is done by **secret ballot**. This ensures the privacy of each voter's preference. No one except the voter knows the choice that was made.

A **ballot** lists the names of the candidates running in your electoral district and their political party affiliation, where applicable. There is a space beside each candidate's name on the ballot. As long as you clearly mark the ballot for one candidate, your ballot will be **accepted** (e.g., checkmark, X, shading in).

The voting process at a voting place works as follows:

1. Once you confirm your eligibility, you are given a ballot initialed by the election official.
2. Go behind a voting screen to mark your ballot. Choose only one candidate on the ballot.
3. Hand your folded ballot back to the voting officer to check for the initials and remove the counterfoil.
4. Place your folded ballot in the ballot box.

A **rejected ballot** is a ballot that cannot be counted because the voter's intention cannot be interpreted from the mark on the ballot. This can include marking the ballot for more than one candidate (even if different symbols are used), ranking the candidates, leaving the ballot blank or identifying who the voter is.

A **spoiled ballot** is a ballot that is torn or marked mistakenly and exchanged for a new ballot. It is kept separate and not placed in the ballot box.

When preparing to vote, you can consider reasons to support a candidate for MLA, a political party or leader, a specific policy idea or a whole party platform. Voting requires that you do your research and devote the necessary time.

You will know you are ready to vote when you feel confident in your ability to make a choice.

### BIG IDEA

Elections are the process where citizens have the greatest influence on their government and legislation.

### LEARNING INTENTIONS

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

- The voting process in British Columbia;
- The eligibility criteria for voting in provincial elections; and
- The different ways that voters can choose to cast their ballot.

Students are expected to be able to do the following:

- Understand how to participate in the voting process;
- Engage in constructive and critical dialogue; and
- Demonstrate critical thinking and decision-making skills.

## LESSON 8: THE VOTING PROCESS

### RESOURCES

- Slide Deck 8: The Voting Process
  - Video: Student Vote BC 2017
  - Video: The Voting Process in British Columbia
  - Video: Why Voting Matters
  - Activity Sheet 8.1: Preparing to Vote
  - Student Vote Election Manual
- (Videos, slide decks and digital versions of the activity sheets can be found at [www.studentvote.ca/bc](http://www.studentvote.ca/bc))

### ACTIVITIES

#### Hook: 10-15 min

1. Watch the 'Student Vote BC 2017' and 'Why Voting Matters' videos with your class to prepare for Student Vote Day.
2. Explain to students that the purpose of the Student Vote program is to give students a chance to practice voting so that they will be more prepared to vote in the future. The Student Vote results are also released publicly and shared with the media, which allows young people to have a voice in the election and for parties to reflect on the views of the next generation of voters.
3. Facilitate a class discussion: What skills do you practice (e.g., sports, driving, video games, cooking)? Is it important for students to practice voting? Why or why not? Why should young people have the opportunity to share their views and opinions?

#### Discussion: 5 min

Voting in elections is done by secret ballot. What does this mean? Why is this important? What sort of consequences could develop if elections were held publicly? Why is it important to ensure a fair and impartial electoral process?

#### Essential Concepts: 10-15 min

Use Slide Deck 8 and 'The Voting Process in British Columbia' video to review the key terms and concepts regarding the voting process for British Columbia provincial elections: Elections BC, elector, ballot, secret ballot, accepted ballot, rejected ballot, spoiled ballot, advance voting, special voting opportunity.

#### ★ Action: 20 min and homework

1. Remind students that voting is more than just marking an 'X' on a ballot. It requires research, critical-thinking, reflection and decision-making. Using Activity Sheet 8.1, have students evaluate the campaign issues, party platforms, party leaders and local candidates.
2. Afterwards, facilitate a class discussion and allow students the opportunity to share their views of the candidates and the campaign. Some individuals may jump at the chance to share their opinions and even try to persuade others to adopt their choices. Others may opt for silence and prefer to keep their politics personal.

*Teacher Note: This is a great opportunity to reinforce the choice for privacy and the importance of being respectful to others who hold diverse points of view.*

3. Encourage students to take their activity sheets home and start discussions with their families and friends about the election. Have students ask their parents or guardians if they plan to vote and whether they have chosen a candidate to support. Remind students that they can visit the Elections BC website ([www.elections.bc.ca](http://www.elections.bc.ca)) to find where and when their parents/guardians can vote, and encourage them to accompany voters they know to the voting place to observe the process.

#### ✚ Extensions:

- A. Have students practice filling out a ballot by holding a mock vote with your class. Create a simple ballot for the class with a fun question and three to four options for responses (e.g., favourite sport, holiday, food, movie, TV show or musician/band). Show students what a ballot looks like and how to fill it out correctly. Distribute the ballots and invite each student to go behind the voting screen to mark their choice. Count the ballots and review the terms 'accepted' and 'rejected.' Share the results of the vote.
- B. In groups or individually, have students design a campaign poster, slide deck or speech to encourage people to cast a ballot in the provincial election. Students should use images and words to describe why it is important to vote. Afterwards, display the posters around the school or ask students to share their work with their family and friends.

## LESSON 8: THE VOTING PROCESS

C. Online voting has been suggested as a way to improve voter turnout. What are potential advantages and disadvantages of online voting? Is it more or less convenient? Is it more or less expensive? Is voter coercion a risk or not? Would the system be more or less secure? Have a class discussion or ask students to write an opinion piece about online voting.

D. As part of recent changes to the *Election Act*, eligible 16 and 17 year olds in British Columbia can now register to be part of the List of Future Voters. Once they turn 18, registrants will be automatically added to the Provincial Voters List. This will ensure they receive important information from Elections BC about where, when and how to vote when a provincial election is called. Review the process for getting on the List of Future Voters at Elections BC (<https://elections.bc.ca/voting/voters-list/future-voters/>) and consider making it a class activity.

E. Ask students to make predictions about the election results in the Student Vote and/or general election (e.g., seat count, popular vote percentage). Collect the predictions and reveal the student who is closest to the actual outcome after the election.



### Reflection: 10 min

Have a closing discussion about casting your ballot and making your decision. Alternatively, ask students to write a reflection for their election scrapbook (see *Assessment Opportunities*).

- Why is it important to have free and fair elections?
- Do you feel ready to vote? Why or why not?
- Have class activities, campaign events, dialogue with family and friends or media coverage had any impact on your decision to vote for a particular party or candidate? Reflect on what has shaped your decision.
- What moment or event in the election campaign has attracted the most attention from the media? Why do you think this is the case?
- Why do you think it is important to vote?

## EXTERNAL RESOURCES

- Student Vote Election Manual
- Elections BC — [www.elections.bc.ca](http://www.elections.bc.ca)

## ACTIVITY SHEET 8.1: PREPARING TO VOTE

1. What is the most important issue to you in this provincial election campaign? Why?

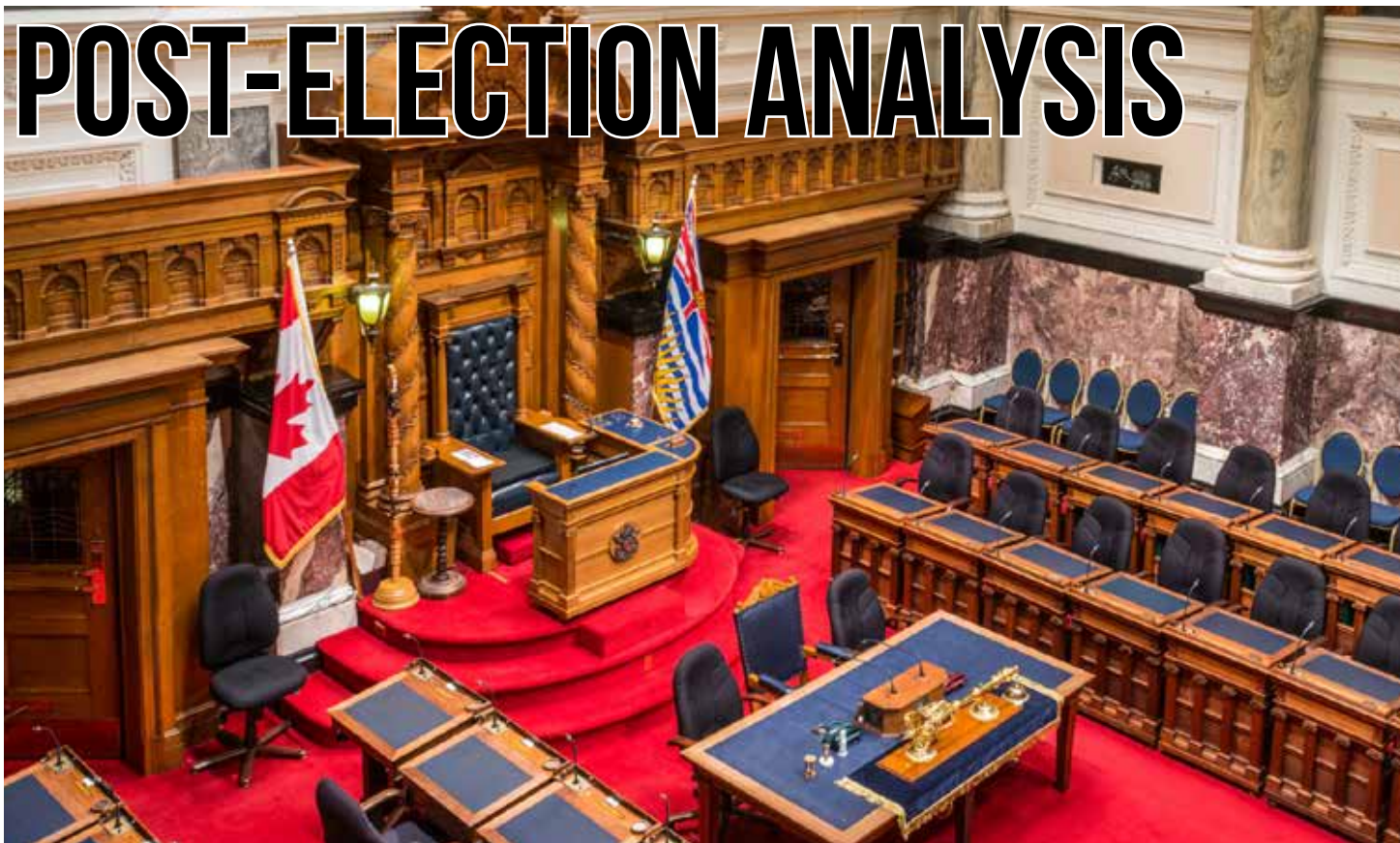


2. Use newspapers or media websites to review each party's position on the selected issue. Which party's position do you support most and why?

3. Compare the leaders of the provincial political parties. Which leader do you feel will make the best premier? Why?

4. Which local candidate do you feel will make the best MLA for your electoral district? Why?

# POST-ELECTION ANALYSIS



After the close of voting on voting day, election officials count the ballots for their voting place and share them with Elections BC, who shares the results publicly.

**Seat count** is the term used to reflect the number of representatives that each party will have in the legislature. It represents the number of local electoral district races won by each party. The 87 seats contested in this election will be awarded to the candidate in each of the electoral districts who receives the greatest number of votes.

**Popular vote** is the term used to show the total support a political party received across the province. It is shown as a percentage and is calculated by dividing the number of votes a party received by the total number of votes in the provincial election. Under our electoral system (FPTP), the seat count is not related to the popular vote percentage and therefore has no impact on the election outcome.

The political party with the most seats usually forms the government and their leader becomes the premier. If the governing party has more than half of all the seats (44 or more), they will have a **majority government**. If they have less than half (43 or fewer), they will have a **minority government**.

The party that has the second-highest number of seats usually becomes the **official opposition**. Any other party is called an opposition party. It is the responsibility of the opposition parties to hold the government to account and to question its actions. The official opposition organizes a shadow cabinet to act as expert critics on the portfolios or government ministries managed by each cabinet minister.

In order to pass any **legislation** (laws) or budgets, the bills must have support from more than half of the members of the Legislative Assembly. If the governing party has a minority government, they will need to gain the support of some of the opposition parties or independent candidates in order to pass any legislation.

The **Speech from the Throne** (also known as the Throne Speech) outlines the government's plans and initiatives. The speech is delivered by the lieutenant governor at the beginning of each new session of the legislature.



## LESSON 9: POST-ELECTION ANALYSIS

### BIG IDEA

The outcome of the election impacts the future direction of the province and the government.

### LEARNING INTENTIONS

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

- How the electoral system works in B.C.;
- How election results are analyzed in B.C.;
- The difference between a majority and minority government; and
- The results of the general election and Student Vote locally and provincially.

Students are expected to be able to do the following:

- Evaluate how factors, forces, events or people influence developments, outcomes or decisions;
- Discuss how campaign events influenced the outcome of the election; and
- Recognize the importance of voting and being an active and engaged citizen.

### RESOURCES

- Slide Deck 9: Analyzing Election Results
- Video: Parliamentary Democracy in British Columbia.
- Activity Sheet 9.1: Results Comparison
- Handout 6.1: 2017 Provincial Election Results
- Student Vote British Columbia results page ([www.studentvote.ca/bc](http://www.studentvote.ca/bc))

(Videos, slide decks and digital versions of the activity sheets can be found at [www.studentvote.ca/bc](http://www.studentvote.ca/bc))

### ACTIVITIES

#### Hook: 15-20 min

1. Announce the results of your school's Student Vote election. Who won the most number of votes? Was it a close race?
2. Compare the results of your school's election with the results of other schools in your electoral district. Are they similar or different? Is this surprising? Why or why not? Which candidate won in your electoral district in the Student Vote? (All school results can be found at [www.studentvote.ca/bc](http://www.studentvote.ca/bc)).

3. Share the province-wide Student Vote results. Which party attracted the greatest support? Which party won the most seats and formed the government? Are you surprised with the Student Vote results?

*Teacher Note: You must wait until the official polls close in your electoral district to share the Student Vote results. Student poll officials at your school should be sworn to secrecy.*

#### Discussion: 5-10 min

How do you feel about your participation in Student Vote? Would you like to participate again? What did you learn through the experience?

#### Essential Concepts: 15 min

Use Slide Deck 9 and/or the 'Parliamentary Democracy in British Columbia' video to review the key terms and concepts regarding the results of the election: analyze, seat count, popular vote percentage, voter turnout, minority government, majority government, official opposition, opposition party, Speech from the Throne.

#### Action: 25-40 min

1. Using the Student Vote website, Elections BC website and/or media reports, ask students to compare the Student Vote and general election results and complete Activity Sheet 9.1 in groups or pairs.
2. Take up Activity Sheet 9.1 as a class and have a closing discussion:
  - Which parties gained or lost seats? Why?
  - Do you know which party will form the government? Is there any uncertainty?
  - Do you know which party will form the government? Is there any uncertainty?
  - Does the popular vote reflect the seat count? Should it?
  - Were there any big surprises or upsets in the election results?
  - Did results from certain regions change drastically since the last election? If so, why?
  - Did the Student Vote results reflect the general election results? Why or why not?
  - Which type of graph works best for displaying election results (e.g., pie chart, line graph, bar chart)?

*Teacher Note: Use Handout 6.1 to compare the election results against the results of the 2017 provincial election.*



## LESSON 9: POST-ELECTION ANALYSIS

3. Compare news stories from several different media websites and regional and/or local newspapers to analyze the portrayal of the election outcome. Have a class conversation after analyzing the results and media reports: Did the sources report the results in a similar way? Can you detect any bias? What groups seem the happiest or unhappiest with the results?

### Extensions:

A. In groups or pairs, have students analyze the results of the general election and Student Vote. Assign each group a different comparison and ask them to make a short multi-media presentation or report. This can include analysis, commentary, graphs and/or charts.

Suggested analyses:

- Seat count comparison (general election vs. Student Vote);
- Popular vote comparison (general election vs. Student Vote);
- Current vs last election (seat count and popular vote); and
- Electoral district results comparison (general election vs. Student Vote).

B. Once an electoral candidate is elected to the Legislative Assembly, they must make decisions about how to pursue issues on behalf of their constituency. Have students write to their newly elected or re-elected MLA regarding an issue they believe should be considered a priority for the MLA and their party (if applicable).

C. The 2017 B.C. provincial election had a very close result, with the top two parties finishing within a few seats of each other — and with neither party winning enough seats to form a majority government (Handout 6.1). It took more than six weeks after voting day for the governing party to be confirmed. Review media stories from May and June 2017 to recount the post-election intrigue, and the various key events. Based on the results of the current election, is a similar scenario possible? Why or why not?

D. After the election, the premier must confirm the organization of government ministries and select the cabinet ministers to head each ministry. Which criteria should the premier use for selecting the cabinet (e.g., geography, experience, gender, ethnicity, age)? Follow the news and analyze the decisions made by the premier.

E. Choose a local candidate in your electoral district who received a significant proportion of the votes in Student Vote but did not secure a seat in the Legislative Assembly. Invite the candidate to speak with your class for a post-election debrief to discuss their experience and future plans.

F. Ask students to write a reflection about their Student Vote experience. Focus questions: Did you feel ready to vote on Student Vote Day? What were the most helpful activities you did to prepare for making your decision? What other activities could you do in the future? Why is voting important? How does voting help shape your community and future?



### Reflection: 5 min

Have a closing discussion about the outcome of the election and participation in the Student Vote program. Alternatively, ask students to write a reflection for their election scrapbook (see *Assessment Opportunities*).

- Were you pleased with the results? Why or why not?
- Did your participation in Student Vote influence anyone in your family to vote? Did it influence the choice they made about who to vote for?
- Should politicians be held accountable for keeping promises made in campaigns?
- What do you think the priorities of the newly elected British Columbia government will be?
- Do you feel that the make-up of the Legislative Assembly reflects the diverse population of British Columbia?
- What ways can you become involved in politics between elections?

## EXTERNAL RESOURCES

- General election results — [www.elections.bc.ca](http://www.elections.bc.ca)
- Student Vote results — [www.studentvote.ca/bc](http://www.studentvote.ca/bc)
- Newspaper and media websites

**Section A: The Election Results**

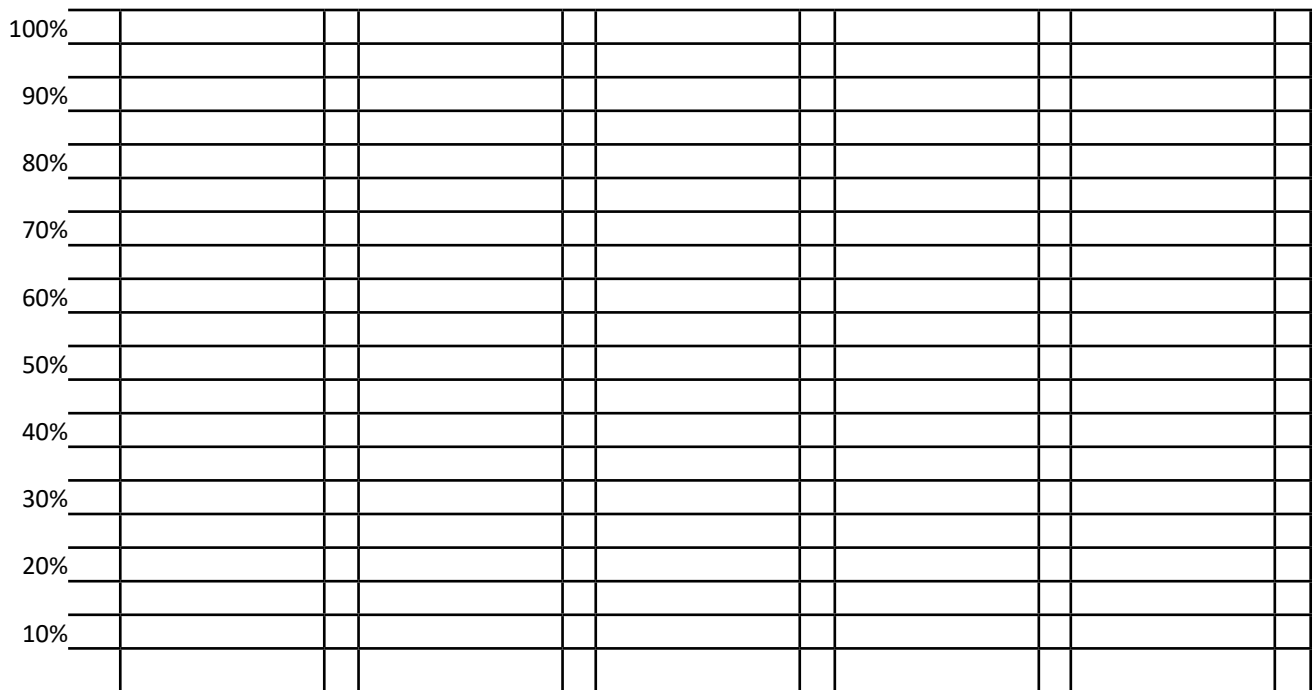
1. Which candidate won the Student Vote in your electoral district? What percentage of the vote did they receive?
2. Which candidate won the general election in your electoral district? What percentage of the vote did they receive?
3. Which party won the province-wide Student Vote? How many seats did the party win? What percentage of the popular vote did they receive?
4. Which party is likely to form government following the general election? How many seats did the party win? What percentage of the popular vote did they receive?

**Section B: The New Government**

1. Will the new government be a minority or majority government? How do you know? Explain your answer.
2. Who will become the premier? How do you know? Explain your answer.
3. Who will become the leader of the opposition? How do you know? Explain your answer.

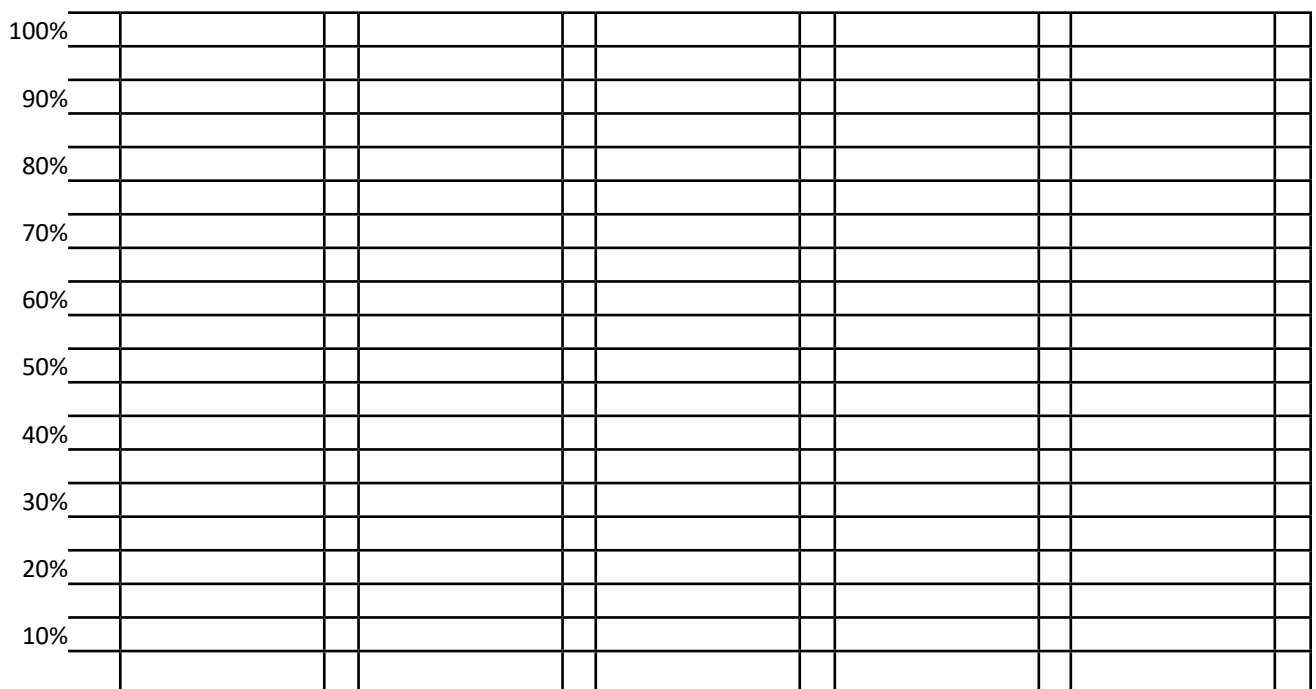
## ACTIVITY SHEET 9.1: RESULTS COMPARISON

1. Create a graph that shows the results of the Student Vote for your electoral district. Using the chart below, display the candidates or parties in order of the popular vote percentage they received.



Candidate/Party Name: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Create a graph that shows the results of the general election for your electoral district. Using the chart below, display the candidates or parties in order of the popular vote percentage they received.



Candidate/Party Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES

There are several options for assessing student learning and participation in activities related to the Student Vote program.

## ELECTION SCRAPBOOK

The Election Scrapbook is an assignment designed to be used as an ongoing or cumulative assessment tool. Students can keep track of the people, events and issues of the campaign, and use questions from the *Discussion* or *Extensions* sections to reflect on key topics. Students can also seek out and record, paste and/or review articles and other media. The assignment allows teachers to track student progress throughout the campaign period. Teachers may choose to adapt the assignment to make it shorter, or personalize it to fit with particular interests or needs of the class. Scrapbooks can be assessed daily, weekly or as a culminating activity.

## NEWS BANK

Ask students to create a news bank dedicated to the election incorporating both news reports and opinion pieces. For each news story, they will need to write a summary and respond to the consolidation questions. See Lesson 4.

## CLASSROOM DISCUSSION

Debate and dialogue in a respectful and intellectual environment is a prime incubator for new thought. Politics is rife with controversial issues and polarizing arguments, and teachers are encouraged to allow students to work alongside one another and to question each other's viewpoints while also respecting others' opinions. Students can be assessed on their participation in class discussions.

## JOURNAL REFLECTIONS

Used as an assessment tool, a wrap-up to lessons or simply as a homework assignment, keeping a journal is a great way for students to further interpret and solidify their learning. Consider using questions from the suggested activities within the lesson plans.

## STUDENT VOTE DAYS

Students in charge of running the Student Vote program may be evaluated on their performance and commitment to organizing a free and fair election in the school.

## GUIDE FOR VOTERS

Ask students to make a brochure or multi-media piece to share with their family members or guardians about the provincial election to help them feel prepared to cast their vote. Students can incorporate information about their electoral district, the parties and candidates, and the major issues. It should also include information about where they can vote and which forms of ID are deemed acceptable.

# ELECTION SCRAPBOOK ASSIGNMENT

You will create your own scrapbook to track the people, events and issues of the campaign, and record your experience.

Your scrapbook should include information about the provincial election, such as:

- The Student Vote program;
- The party leaders and their platforms;
- The local candidates;
- Campaign debates or events;
- Key election issues;
- Results of opinion polls;
- Why it is important to vote;
- Voting trends in Canada and British Columbia;
- Ways to improve voter turnout;
- Editorial endorsements for a party, leader or candidate;
- The Student Vote results; and
- The general election results.

Your scrapbook should contain a minimum of 10 artefacts. You can make a physical or digital scrapbook. Examples of multimedia tools include: Pinterest, Prezi, Padlet, Google Docs.

Your scrapbook should contain some or all of the following artefacts:

- Title page/front cover;
- Introduction to the election (your perspective or reflection);
- Articles (focusing on voter turnout, local candidates, campaign issues, etc.);
- Newscast summaries;
- Photos;
- Links to websites;
- Campaign literature;
- Political cartoons; and
- Personal reflections.

Describe the **5 Ws** for at least one of each of the following in your scrapbook: article, photo, cartoon and summary of a newscast.

- Who is the article, image, cartoon or newscast about?
- What is the argument of the article, point of the cartoon or theme of the newscast?
- Where is this taking place? Is the where important or on purpose?
- When did this occur? Is the when or timing important?
- Why was this article, image or political cartoon included here?



# RUBRIC

## ELECTION SCRAPBOOK

	Poor – P (1)	Limited – L (2)	Satisfactory – S (3)	Proficient – Pf (4)	Excellent – E (5)
<b>Demonstrates skills of research for deliberative inquiry</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use of research tools and strategies to investigate issues is minimal.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use of research tools and strategies to investigate issues is limited.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use of research tools and strategies to investigate issues is adequate.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use of research tools and strategies to investigate issues is sound.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use of research tools and strategies to investigate issues is sophisticated.</li> </ul>
<b>Demonstrates skills of critical thinking</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessment of the validity of information based on context, bias, sources, objectivity, evidence or reliability is minimal.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessment of the validity of information based on context, bias, sources, objectivity, evidence or reliability is incomplete.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessment of the validity of information based on context, bias, sources, objectivity, evidence or reliability is adequate.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessment of the validity of information based on context, bias, sources, objectivity, evidence or reliability is sound.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessment of the validity of information based on context, bias, sources, objectivity, evidence or reliability is sophisticated.</li> </ul>
<b>Demonstrates skills of media literacy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analysis of the impact of various forms of media is minimal.</li> <li>Identification of the complexities and discrepancies in information is inaccurate.</li> <li>Distinctions between sound generalizations and misleading oversimplifications demonstrate little to no understanding.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analysis of the impact of various forms of media is incomplete.</li> <li>Identification of the complexities and discrepancies in information is confused.</li> <li>Distinctions between sound generalizations and misleading oversimplifications are vague.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analysis of the impact of various forms of media is adequate.</li> <li>Identification of the complexities and discrepancies in information is conventional.</li> <li>Distinctions between sound generalizations and misleading oversimplifications are straightforward.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analysis of the impact of various forms of media is sound.</li> <li>Identification of the complexities and discrepancies in information is adept.</li> <li>Distinctions between sound generalizations and misleading oversimplifications are specific.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analysis of the impact of various forms of media is sophisticated.</li> <li>Identification of the complexities and discrepancies in information is perceptive.</li> <li>Distinctions between sound generalizations and misleading oversimplifications are insightful.</li> </ul>
<b>Demonstrates skills of oral, written, and/or visual literacy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vocabulary is over-generalized and/or inaccurate.</li> <li>Sentence structure is uncontrolled.</li> <li>The writing demonstrates a lack of control of mechanics and grammar and is haphazardly organized.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vocabulary is imprecise, simplistic, and/or inappropriate.</li> <li>Sentence structure is awkward.</li> <li>The writing demonstrates a faltering control of mechanics and grammar is ineffectively organized.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vocabulary is conventional and generalized.</li> <li>Sentence structure is controlled and straightforward.</li> <li>The writing demonstrates basic control of mechanics and grammar is adequately organized.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vocabulary is appropriate and specific.</li> <li>Sentence structure is controlled and effective.</li> <li>The writing demonstrates capable control of mechanics and grammar and is purposefully organized.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vocabulary is precise and deliberately chosen.</li> <li>Sentence structure is controlled and sophisticated.</li> <li>The writing demonstrates skillful control of mechanics and grammar and is judiciously organized.</li> </ul>



# RUBRIC

## DISCUSSION

Criteria	Approaching Competence (1)	Proficient (2)	Sophisticated (3)
<b>Ownership/Leadership/ Speaking</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is rarely actively engaged in discussions: listens but does not contribute verbally often.</li> <li>No constructive feedback provided.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is usually actively engaged in the conversation, demonstrated by verbal comments made.</li> <li>Attempts to provide constructive feedback occasionally.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is always actively engaged in the conversation and participates verbally frequently.</li> <li>Provides constructive feedback and support to others.</li> </ul>
<b>Verbal Reasoning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Verbal contributions to the discussion are more often based on opinion or unclear views than on reasoned arguments or positions based on the evidence.</li> <li>Few to no attempts to make links to contemporary issues.</li> <li>Comments or questions suggest a difficulty in following complex lines of argument.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Verbal arguments or positions are reasonable and mostly supported by evidence.</li> <li>Attempts at linking to contemporary events/issues.</li> <li>Comments or questions suggest an attempt to follow complex lines of argument.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Verbal arguments or positions are reasonable and always supported with evidence.</li> <li>Often deepens the conversation by going beyond the text, and linking to contemporary issues/events.</li> <li>In general, the comments and ideas contribute to the group's better understanding of the concepts.</li> </ul>
<b>Conduct</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student shows little respect for the class or the process as evidenced by speech and manner.</li> <li>Sometimes resorts to personal attacks when in disagreement with others.</li> <li>May sometimes eat or chew gum while speaking.</li> <li>Student texted or was otherwise disengaged from discussion more than once.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May sometimes dominate discussion.</li> <li>Has on one occasion eaten or chewed gum while speaking.</li> <li>Student texted or was otherwise disengaged from discussion at least once.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student verbally challenges ideas respectfully, encourages and supports others to do the same.</li> <li>Does not dominate discussion.</li> <li>Never eats or chews gum while speaking.</li> <li>Never texts or disengages from discussion.</li> </ul>
<b>Listening</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does not regularly listen well as indicated by the repetition of comments or questions presented earlier, or frequent non-sequiturs.</li> <li>Few responses made to discussion or evidence presented by others.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Usually listens well and takes steps to check comprehension by asking clarifying and probing questions, and making connections to earlier comments.</li> <li>Sometimes responds to ideas and questions offered by other participants.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Always actively attends to what others say as evidenced by regularly building on, clarifying, or responding to their comments.</li> <li>Can demonstrate good listening by infusing comments made by others into their own work (essays, projects, etc.)</li> <li>Often responds to others' input.</li> </ul>

# GLOSSARY

## A

**absentee voting** — Voting at advance voting outside your electoral district, or voting on General Voting Day not at your assigned voting place.

**absolute monarchy** — A form of government where a monarch (or dictator) retains full political power over a state and its people.

**accepted ballot** — A ballot that is properly marked for only one candidate.

**advance voting** — Advance voting locations are open from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. (local time) between Thursday, October 15 to Wednesday, October 21.

**analyze** — To examine methodically and in detail for the purpose of explanation and interpretation.

**apathy** — A state of indifference, or a lack of feeling or emotion towards someone or something.

**authoritarian** — Authoritarian governments exercise forceful control over the population, with no particular concern for its preferences or for public opinion.

**autocracy** — A type of government where political power is concentrated in the hands of one person who rules without restriction. An autocracy can be a dictatorship or an absolute monarchy.

## B

**ballot** — A document used by voters to indicate their preference in an election, electoral event or referendum.

**ballot box** — A container for marked ballots.

**bias** — A preconceived opinion, a one-sided view or a prejudice against something or someone without evidence or adequate reasoning.

**bill** — See *legislation*.

**by-election** — An election held in a particular electoral district to fill a vacancy in the parliament or legislative assembly at any time other than during a general election. More than one by-election can be held on the same day.

## C

**cabinet** — The governing body made up of the ministers of government ministries. Cabinet ministers advise the premier. The ministers are appointed by the lieutenant governor on the recommendation of the premier and are usually chosen

from the group of elected members of the party that forms the government.

**cabinet minister** — A member of the cabinet or executive council. Cabinet ministers introduce and debate bills. They also administer specific government ministries and formulate government policy while advising the premier.

**campaign period** — The period commencing with the issue of a writ for an election and the close of voting on General Voting Day.

**Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms** — A bill of rights enacted in 1982 as part of Canada's Constitution. The Charter guarantees certain political rights to Canadian citizens and civil rights of everyone in Canada. The Charter guarantees broad equality rights as well as fundamental freedoms, democratic rights, mobility rights, legal rights and language rights.

**candidate** — An individual who seeks election to public office. A candidate running in a provincial election or by-election is trying to become a Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA).

**caucus** — A group composed of elected representatives who belong to a given party.

**centre (spectrum)** — A political party or individual holding moderate views or middle-of-the-road opinions. A person with these views can be referred to as a centrist.

**Chief Electoral Officer (CEO)** — Appointed by the Lieutenant Governor on the recommendation of the Legislative Assembly. An all-party recommendation is responsible for making a unanimous recommendation to the Legislative Assembly on who should be appointed. The Chief Electoral Officer is responsible for the administration of the provincial electoral process.

**colonization** — The action or process of forcibly settling among and dispossessing Indigenous people from their lands and power.

**communism** — A political ideology that promotes the establishment of an egalitarian and classless society based on common ownership and control of the means of production and property.

**concurrency** — When federal, provincial/territorial and/or local governments overlap in jurisdictional responsibilities.

**consensus democracy** — A form of democracy that uses a consensus decision-making model in the process of developing legislation. Consensus democracies aim to be more collaborative and inclusive by taking into account as broad a range of opinions as opposed to decisions made by majority rule.

**consensus government** — A form of government where political power is shared by a group of individuals without party affiliation used to develop legislation. Consensus government is practiced in Northwest Territories and Nunavut.

**conservatism** — A political ideology advocating the preservation of society and opposing radical changes.

## GLOSSARY

**constituency** — See *electoral district*.

**constituent** — An individual who lives in an electoral district.

**constituency association** — An organization formed for an electoral district as the local organization of a political party or as the local organization to support an independent Member of the Legislative Assembly for that electoral district.

**constitution** — A set of fundamental principles or established laws which include the basic principles and laws of a nation or state that define the powers and duties of the government and guarantee certain rights to the people living within it.

**constitutional monarchy** — A form of government where the authority of the monarch is limited by a constitution. There is a democratically elected government with a leader, while the monarch remains the head of state and performs ceremonial duties. Canada is a constitutional monarchy as the Queen is the official head of state and is represented by the governor general at the federal level and a lieutenant governor in each province at the provincial level.

**councillor** — An elected member of a municipal government, like a city or town council.

**the Crown** — Represents the legal embodiment of executive, legislative and judicial governance in the monarchy. In Canada, the monarch's powers are exercised either by the monarch personally or by his or her representative in each jurisdiction (governor general, lieutenant governors).

## D

**democracy** — A type of government where a majority of the people are included in political decision-making. Citizens elect political representatives to make decisions on their behalf and are also free to run for political office.

**democratic rights** — Democratic rights include the right of every Canadian citizen, 18 years of age or older, to vote in an election, to be a candidate in an election and the requirement that governments hold elections at least every five years and that elected representatives meet at least once per year.

**department** — A specialized division of the government which is responsible for a specific area of public policy, government function or service delivery. Term used at the federal level and within some provinces/territories across the country. British Columbia uses ministry.

**dictatorship** — A type of government where one person or ruling group has power. Power is maintained through the use of a party or military, without the consent of the people. Citizens have limited rights and freedoms. There is usually a heavy military presence and no independent media.

**District Electoral Officer (DEO)** — An individual appointed by the Chief Electoral Officer who is responsible for administering elections in their assigned electoral district.

## E

**earned media** — Media coverage or mentions reported by third parties such as news organizations or external social media channels, or spread through word of mouth.

**editorial** — A newspaper article written by or on behalf of a publisher, editor or editorial team that provides an opinion or analysis of a topical issue, event or situation.

**elder** — Individuals within Indigenous communities who are sources of cultural knowledge and are respected for their wisdom.

**election** — The process by which our elected representatives and government are chosen. Elections are usually held at regular intervals.

**Elections BC (EBC)** — Administers the electoral process in B.C. This includes provincial general elections and by-elections, provincial referendums, initiative and recall petitions and initiative votes.

**elector** — A person eligible to vote. Also known as a voter.

**electoral district (ED)** — A geographical area represented by an elected official. There are 87 electoral districts being contested in the 42nd British Columbia general election. Also known as a *constituency*.

**electoral system** — The process by which votes are translated into seats in a parliament or legislature. In B.C. and across Canada, we use the First-Past-The-Post (FPTP) or Single-Member Plurality system.

**electorate** — The whole body of electors.

**enfranchise** — The extension of the right to vote to a particular group of people.

**executive branch** — The branch of government that implements and enforces laws, rules and regulations with the support of the public service.

## F

**fact** — Something known to exist or to have happened.

**factual** — Concerning the truth rather than interpretations of something.

**fascism** — An authoritarian ideology, usually headed by highly nationalistic or militaristic one-party states.

**federal** — One of the levels of government in Canada; pertaining to the whole country.

**First Nations** — Indigenous people considered by the federal government as non-status Indians and status Indians.

First Nations are located on lands called reserves and in communities across the country.

**First-Past-The-Post** — The electoral system in which the candidate who receives more votes than any other single candidate wins.

**fixed-date election** — A requirement that elections are held on pre-determined dates on a specific schedule. Since 2005, provincial general elections in B.C. have been held every fourth year on the second Tuesday in May.

**freedom** — The power or right to act, speak or think as one wants without hindrance or restraint.

## G

**general election** — An election usually held at regular intervals or fixed dates in which candidates are elected in the electoral districts of the nation or province/territory to represent citizens.

**General Voting Day (GVD)** — The day when an election is held in British Columbia. General Voting Day is the 28<sup>th</sup> day after the election is called.

**governance** — The system of practices and processes that an entity, community or group uses to organize themselves and make decisions.

**government** — Refers to the people and institutions put in place to lead a country, nation, province or community. The role of government is to create and enforce laws, provide services and make decisions for the benefit of the people living within its borders.

**governor general** — The federal representative of the Queen and the ceremonial head of state. This person is appointed by the Queen on the recommendation of the prime minister. The governor general opens, suspends and dissolves the Parliament, and gives or withholds royal assent to bills.

## H

**House of Commons** — Part of the legislative branch of the federal government and housed in the Parliament buildings in Ottawa. Located in Ottawa, the House of Commons consists of 338 Members of Parliament who create, implement and enforce laws, rules and regulations for the entire country.

## I

**ideal** — A person's conception of how things should be, or what should be aimed for.

**impartial** — Unbiased; not favouring one side or opinion

more than another.

**incumbent** — The existing holder of a political office. An electoral district without an incumbent candidate is known as an open seat.

**independent** — A candidate or elected representative who does not represent a political party.

**Indigenous peoples** — Comprises the First Nations, Inuit and Métis of Canada.

**Indigenous government** — The forms of government in some Indigenous communities or First Nations. Indigenous governments replace, overlap, or share certain responsibilities with the government of their province/territory or the federal government.

**internal poll** — Conducted by political parties to help them make strategic decisions, such as focusing on particular issues or concentrating on competitive ridings they want to win.

**Inuit** — An Indigenous individual (Inuk) or people who are native to the Arctic region.

**issue** — An important topic or problem for debate or discussion.

**issue poll** — Focus on assessing voters' attitudes on specific issues and proposed policies.

## J

**judicial branch** — The branch of government responsible for overseeing and administering the law. The judicial branch interprets the law and punishes those who violate established laws, rules and regulations.

## L

**left (spectrum)** — On the political spectrum, one who favours social services and government intervention in the economy, and policies that promote social equality, socialist or progressive views.

**legislation** — A proposed bill or law introduced to a parliament or legislature. It is enacted when passed by the parliament or legislative assembly and given royal assent.

**legislative assembly** — A legislative body composed of elected members at the provincial or territorial level. The role of the legislative assembly is to pass legislation, approve public finances and scrutinize government.

**Legislative Assembly of British Columbia** — The legislative body in British Columbia that is composed of 87 elected members (MLAs), who each represent a single electoral district.

## GLOSSARY

**legislative branch** — The branch of government responsible for debating, amending and passing laws.

**legislature** — Formally, the Lieutenant Governor acting by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly. Also the term commonly used to refer to the parliament buildings or the building where the legislative assembly gathers.

**liberalism** — A political ideology that favours individual liberty but acknowledges the need for some form of government intervention in the economy.

**libertarianism** — A political ideology that advocates for minimal state intervention in the lives of citizens.

**lieutenant governor** — The representative of the Queen and the ceremonial head of state at the provincial level. This person is appointed by the governor general on the recommendation of the prime minister. The lieutenant governor opens, suspends and dissolves the legislative assembly, and gives or withholds royal assent to bills passed by the legislature.

**local government** — Includes municipal governments, regional districts and improvement districts. They manage local matters such as water and sewage treatment, libraries, roads and bridges and local parks and recreation.

## M

**majority government** — A government formed by the party or the coalition of parties holding more than half of the seats in the parliament or legislature.

**margin of error** — A small amount calculated for most polls to allow for miscalculations or changes in opinion.

**mayor** — The highest-ranking officer in the municipal government.

**Member of Parliament (MP)** — An individual elected by the people in a particular federal riding or electoral district to represent them in the House of Commons. There are currently 338 MPs and each represents a different electoral district.

**Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA)** — An individual elected by the people in a particular electoral district to represent them in the Legislative Assembly. There will be 87 MLAs will be elected in the 42nd British Columbia general election.

**Métis** — A person of mixed First Nations and Euro-Canadian ancestry.

**minister** — See *cabinet minister*.

**ministry** — The public service in British Columbia is divided into ministries. Each ministry is responsible for a specific area of public policy, government function or service delivery.

**minority government** — A government that holds less than half of the seats in the parliament or legislature, but governs

because it holds more seats than any other party. It must maintain the confidence of the parliament or legislature to continue governing.

**monarchy** — A form of government where a monarch (king or queen) or royal family holds the political power. Political power is inherited and usually lasts until death. A monarchy can be an absolute monarchy or a constitutional monarchy.

**municipal** — Referring to the most local level of government in Canada. Municipal or local governments exist as a result of provincial or territorial legislation.

## N

**new media** — Refers to content that is accessible on devices via the Internet, such as online sources, newspaper websites and social media platforms. New media is typically interactive, user driven, borderless and functions in real-time.

**neutral** — An individual or opinion that is not aligned with or does not support any side on a given issue.

**non-partisan** — An individual or organization with no party affiliation or political bias.

## O

**official opposition** — The party that holds the second-largest number of seats in the parliament or legislature. It is accorded certain financial and procedural advantages over other parties in opposition.

**old media** — Refers to traditional media sources in broadcast and print format, such as television, newspaper, radio, magazines and pamphlets/flyers. Old media is typically one-way communication, and strives to maintain journalistic integrity and standards.

**oligarchy** — A government system in which power rests with a small number of privileged people.

**online sources** — Material you find on the Internet. It can include media websites, webpages, forums and blogs.

**opinion** — A personal view, attitude or judgement. Opinions are personal and highly subjective, and shaped by experiences, values, knowledge and attitudes.

**opinion poll** — A question or a series of questions designed to measure the public's views on a specific topic or series of topics.

**opposition party** — A political party that is neither the governing party nor part of a coalition of parties forming the government.

**owned media** — Internally managed promotional platforms, such as websites, blogs or social media channels.



## P

**paid media** — Publicity that has been purchased to bring a message to an audience, such as print, broadcast or social media advertising, or a direct mail campaign.

**parliament** — The period between general elections, composed of a number of sessions that are made up of individual sittings. Also the term used for Canada's federal legislature.

**parliamentary democracy** — A type of representative democracy in which members are elected to a parliament or legislature. The political party with the greatest number of seats or elected representatives in the parliament or legislature forms government and determines the leader of the government. Canada is a parliamentary democracy.

**partisan** — Support of a political party, cause or person.

**party leader** — An individual chosen or elected to act as the head of a political party.

**party member** — An individual who belongs to a political party.

**perspective** — A particular attitude or opinion toward something; a point of view.

**plank** — Individual topics or issues in a party's platform.

**platform** — A series of declared principles and policies on jurisdictional issues concerning government and the public. Parties share their platforms through announcements, advertising and events.

**political ideology** — A political ideology is a set of shared ideals or beliefs about how politics and government should function. Ideologies include liberalism, conservatism, socialism, communism and fascism, among others.

**political party** — A group of people sharing a particular ideology and set of goals that puts forward candidates for election, whose intention is to achieve power and create meaningful political change.

**political spectrum** — The political spectrum is a means of characterizing beliefs, values and priorities, and provides a conceptual framework in which to view and evaluate political parties and public policies.

**poll** — A sampling or collection of opinions on a subject taken from either a selected or a random group of individuals for the purpose of analysis.

**popular vote percentage** — The percentage of all ballots cast for a particular party or candidate. A reflection of support across a jurisdiction.

**preference poll** — Report on which leader, party or candidate is favoured at the time by the general public. Also known as horse race polls.

**premier** — The leader of a provincial or territorial government. After a provincial election, the leader of the party with the greatest number of elected members usually becomes the premier.

**prime minister** — The leader of the federal government. After a federal election, the leader of the party with the greatest number of elected members usually becomes the prime minister.

**provincial** — Referring to one of the levels of government in Canada; pertaining to the province.

## R

**referendum** — A vote on a matter of public interest or concern. Registered voters indicate their opinion by marking a ballot in response to one or more questions asked of them by the provincial government.

**rejected ballot** — A ballot that cannot be counted because the voter's intention cannot be interpreted from the mark on the ballot. This can include marking the ballot for more than one candidate (even if different symbols are used), ranking the candidates, leaving the ballot blank or identifying the voter.

**republic** — A sovereign state, country or government without a monarch. The democratically elected government holds all political power, government leaders exercise power according to the rule of law, and there is often a constitution.

**representative democracy** — A system of government where representatives are selected through elections to make decisions on behalf of the public.

**responsibility** — A duty or obligation that binds you to respect, promote and maintain certain rights.

**restorative justice** — A system of criminal justice focusing on rehabilitation through reconciliation with victims and the community.

**right** — A protected freedom that legally entitles you to take certain actions.

**right (spectrum)** — On the political spectrum, one who favours conservative views and traditions. Individuals on the right believe that government should not interfere with people and businesses, and that taxes should be as low as possible.

## S

**scrutineer** — A person appointed in writing by a candidate or the candidate's official agent to observe the voting and counting proceedings in an election. Also called candidate representatives.

**seat count** — The number of seats that each political party has in the parliament or legislature. The party or coalition of parties with the highest seat count traditionally forms the government.



## GLOSSARY

**secret ballot** — Government elections use a secret ballot, which means no one except the elector knows the choice that was made.

**self-government** — An Indigenous group with control over its own affairs. Comprehensive land claims agreements (modern treaties) between Canadian governments and First Nations often result in Indigenous peoples having greater autonomy in choosing their own method(s) of representation and decision-making.

**Senate** — Part of the legislative branch of the federal government in Canada. Located in Ottawa, the Senate consists of 105 appointed Senators.

**Single-Member Plurality** — An electoral system based on single-member districts, where the successful candidate is elected if they win the most votes in their electoral district. Also known as First-Past-The-Post.

**slogan** — A catchy phrase created and repeated in advertising and politics.

**socialism** — A political ideology that favours a system in which the means of production, distribution and exchange are owned by the community collectively, usually through the state.

**special voting opportunity** — An opportunity to vote for eligible voters who cannot visit a regular voting place because they are in hospital, a mental health facility, a long-term care facility, a remote work site or a correctional centre.

**Speech from the Throne** — The speech delivered by the lieutenant governor for each new session of the legislature. This speech outlines the government's plans and initiatives for the session. Also known as the Throne Speech.

**spoiled ballot** — A ballot that has been kept separate and never placed in the ballot box because it was mistakenly marked or torn and exchanged for a new ballot.

**Status Indian** — First Nations individuals registered under the *Indian Act* who are entitled to various programs and services.

**subsidiarity** — The principle regarding the division of responsibilities among the different levels of government; where the government closest to the issue governs it.

**Supervisory Voting Officer (SVO)** — The election official responsible for overseeing a voting place or group of voting places.

## T

**tabulation** — The counting of ballots following an election. Ballots are counted and recounted to ensure an accurate election result is recorded.

**territorial** — Referring to one of the levels of government in Canada; pertaining to the territory.

**transparency** — The act of being easy to open, honest and accountable.

## U

**universal suffrage** — The extension of the right to vote to all adult citizens, including the removal of restrictions against women, Indigenous peoples and ethnic and religious minorities.

## V

**values** — An individual's principles or standards of behaviour and priorities in life.

**vote by mail** — See *absentee voting*.

**voters list** — Contains the names and addresses of registered voters in each electoral district.

**voter turnout** — The total number of people who voted expressed as a percentage of the total number of eligible voters or registered voters.

**voting area (VA)** — Each electoral district is divided into smaller geographic called voting areas, which are used to assign voters to voting places.

**voting clerk (VC)** — A person appointed by the District Electoral Officer to help the voting officer.

**voting day** — See *General Voting Day*.

**voting officer (VO)** — The election official appointed by the District Electoral Officer to conduct the vote at a particular voting station.

**voting place** — The building or facility where voters can vote.

**voting screen** — A screen in a voting place behind which voters go to mark their ballot in private.

**voting station** — Voters in a voting area are assigned to vote at a voting station within a voting place.

## W

**worldview** — How an individual sees the world and interprets events on a daily basis.

**writ of election** — A formal order signed by the Chief Electoral Officer and the Lieutenant Governor that directs a District Electoral Officer to conduct an election. An election is called when the writ of election has been issued. In a general election, a writ is issued for every electoral district in the province.

