

Lesson 2

Rights and Responsibilities



GUIDING QUESTIONS

- 1 What rights do I have as a Canadian?**
- 2 How does the Charter impact me and different groups?**
- 3 Why should I be a responsible citizen?**

OVERVIEW

To be responsible citizens, Canadians need to understand their rights and obligations.

In this lesson, students explore the rights and responsibilities they have at school as an entry point to a discussion about rights and freedoms in a democracy. Students review the seven categories of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. Through a scavenger hunt activity, students navigate the Charter itself and improve their understanding of its application. In the *Consolidation* activity, students reflect on the responsibilities that go along with their rights.

LEARNING INTENTIONS

We are learning to:

- describe the rights and responsibilities we have at school and explain why they are important;
- provide examples about how the Charter impacts our life, and those who belong to various groups;
- analyze connections between rights and responsibilities.

Tips for Teachers

- Please use or adapt the activities in a way that is appropriate for your class.

Supplies/Needs

- Piece of paper for each student or access to Google Jamboard
- Slide Deck 2
- Access or copies of 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3.
- Online templates for all activities and any videos and slide decks are available on the project website

Starter

1. Review the idea of a 'right' and provide some examples. Rights are things that we are morally or legally allowed to do or have. For example, you have the right to learn and receive an education.
2. Using a 'Snowball Fight' strategy, have students consider the rights they have at school.
 - a) Provide each student with a piece of paper and ask them to write down one right they have at school.
 - b) Ask students to crumple their paper into a "snowball" and throw it across the room.
 - c) Have students find a snowball and write down another example on the piece of paper. It should be different from the first example.
 - d) Afterwards, have students throw their snowballs one more time and retrieve one.
 - e) Invite students to share the examples from the snowball they found and create a class list on the blackboard or whiteboard.

If you are in a remote setting, consider using a brainstorm strategy using Google Jamboard or another online tool.

3. Explain the relationship between rights and responsibilities. A responsibility is a duty, obligation or an expectation of how you should act.
4. Co-create a list of responsibilities you have at school. You may want to review your school's code of conduct for ideas. Afterwards, connect the specific student responsibilities back to the list of rights created by the class, making additions where necessary.
5. Have a whole class discussion. Guiding questions:
 - How are rights and responsibilities similar/different?
 - Why should you be aware of your rights and responsibilities?

Activities

1. Distribute Activity 2.1 to assess current knowledge about our rights in Canada.
2. As a class, review the seven categories of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. You can use either Handout 2.2 or Slide Deck 2. During the review, ask students to make connections to their own lives or provide real-world examples.
3. Ask students to complete a scavenger hunt using the summary of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (Activity 2.3). The purpose is to help students interpret the Charter and understand what it means for different groups. Give students time to complete it independently and then share their responses in pairs or small groups.

Consolidation

1. In pairs or small groups, ask students to consider the responsibilities that go along with specific rights using Activity 2.4. Afterwards, review as a class.
2. Have a closing discussion or ask students to write a reflection on one or more of the following questions:
 - Which rights in Canada do you think are most important and why?
 - What does it mean to be a responsible citizen?

ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES

LESSON SECTION	GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR TEACHERS
Starter	<p>Can students differentiate between rights and responsibilities?</p> <p>Are students able to understand why they should be aware of their rights and responsibilities?</p>
Activities	<p>Can students understand the language and concepts used in the Charter?</p> <p>Can students identify real-world examples related to our rights?</p> <p>Are students using headings and key words to find relevant sections in the Charter?</p>
Consolidation	<p>Are students able to identify the responsibilities that come with our rights?</p> <p>Can students analyze which rights are most important to them?</p> <p>Can students recognize the importance of being a responsible citizen?</p>

ADAPTATIONS AND SUPPORTS

Individual Education Plans	<p>Modifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support students' understanding of rights with real-world examples. <p>Enrichment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow students to research the original Charter document in order to familiarize themselves with the advanced language. • Students could prepare case studies that demonstrate a violation of rights and freedoms in Canada. Classmates can then decide if the issue is one that is solved by using the Charter.
Language Learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide definitions of key terms. • Support students' understanding of rights with real-world examples.
Culturally Responsive Pedagogy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will come from different backgrounds and have different opinions on the rights of many compared to the rights of the individual. Not all students will agree with the rights in the Charter. Ensuring a safe place for respectful discussion is encouraged. • Ask students to interpret the Charter and what it means for different groups in society (e.g., women, minority groups). Encourage thinking about how the Charter supports diversity and equality. • Investigate rights and responsibilities in various social and cultural settings, inclusive of First Nations peoples, and additional diverse cultural groups.
Accessibility & Accommodations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teaching strategy for the <i>Starter</i> activity can be replaced with a class discussion on rights and responsibilities or an online collaborative activity if there are concerns about maintaining physical distancing or limiting the shared touching of objects. • Provide mobility accommodations for any activities that require movement.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS

A **right** is a legal entitlement or something that we are morally or legally allowed to do or have. Rights are often fought for and claimed (in courts or through protests) and less often simply granted. With all rights come responsibilities.

A **responsibility** is a duty or obligation. It is something you should do in order to respect and maintain certain rights.

All citizens living in a democracy have civil and political rights, which are usually articulated in a legal document as part of a constitution, such as a **bill of rights**. This document limits the powers of government, explains the freedoms that are guaranteed to all people and protects people from a government that might abuse its powers.

In Canada, our rights are protected by the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. Canada's Charter is widely admired around the world and is the constitutional document most emulated by other nations.

The Charter has seven distinct categories:

- **Fundamental freedoms** include the freedom of conscience and religion; freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expression including freedom of the press and other media; freedom of peaceful assembly; and freedom of association.
- **Democratic rights** include the right of every Canadian, 18 years of age or older, to vote in an election, to be a candidate in an election, the requirement that governments hold elections at least every five years, and the requirement that elected representatives meet at least once per year.
- **Mobility rights** include the right of every Canadian to choose to live and work in any province or territory in Canada. Canadians also have the right to live in, leave or re-enter Canada whenever they choose.
- **Legal rights** include the guarantee that Canadians, when arrested, must be told of their right to see a lawyer and must be tried within a reasonable amount of time. Canadians are also guaranteed the right to be presumed innocent until proven guilty.
- **Equality rights** include the right of any Canadian not to be discriminated against on the basis of race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age, or mental or physical ability.
- **Official language rights** include the right of all Canadians to use either English or French in communications with Canada's federal government.
- **Minority language education rights** include the rights for French or English minorities in every province and territory to be educated in their own language under certain conditions.