Welcome

Thank you for leading the Student Vote program in your school and being a champion of democratic engagement for your students and community. Educators play a vital role in building future citizens and, we believe, preparing students for the voting process should start at an early age.

Student Vote Canada 2019 turns the federal election into an authentic learning opportunity and helps foster the development of 21st century competencies. Rather than learn about civics and citizenship from a textbook, students experience it firsthand with relevant events and issues in real time. The model is an exercise in deeper learning, exploration and connectedness, and in allowing students to practice the habits of active and informed 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.

Participant Outcomes

The Student Vote program aims to achieve the following student outcomes:

• Increased understanding and awareness of government and the electoral process;
• Enhanced sense of civic duty and social responsibility;
• Increased political conversation with friends and family;
• Heightened awareness and interest in politics; and,
• Improved critical thinking and media literacy skills.

An independent evaluation commissioned by Elections Canada in 2015 found that participating in Student Vote had a positive impact on student knowledge and understanding of Canadian politics and elections, on their interest and confidence in discussing politics and on future voting intentions. Furthermore, the program provides families with opportunities to learn about elections and politics. Among parents and guardians of participating students, 28 per cent said that their child’s participation in Student Vote positively influenced their own decision to vote.

Digital Literacy and News Consumption Habits

One of the most significant threats facing democracies today is the proliferation of misinformation and disinformation online, especially at election time. Citizens must navigate an information ecosystem where it is increasingly challenging to separate fact from fiction and to recognize credible information.

Developing effective information literacy skills has the potential to make a real and lasting impact on the next generation’s ability to contextualize and assess news and information from any source.

We believe these information literacy habits are essential for citizenship, and encourage you to use these materials as a starting point for the Student Vote program in your classroom, before exploring the parties, candidates and election coverage.

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.

Please be sure to visit the Student Vote Canada 2019 website for additional resources: studentvote.ca/canada
Acknowledgements

Student Vote is the flagship program of CIVIX.
CIVIX is a non-partisan registered Canadian charity dedicated to strengthening democracy through civic education.
Student Vote Canada 2019 is made possible by Elections Canada.

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 resource.
The 'Questioning Images' lesson (Lesson 7) and resource has been developed in collaboration with Professor Farida Vis and her colleagues at the Visual Social Media Lab and Education and Social Research Institute, based at The Manchester School of Art, Manchester Metropolitan University. It has been adapted from the Visual Social Media Lab and First Draft’s ‘20 Questions: Interrogating the Social Media Image’ framework and worksheet.

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# Table of Contents

## SECTION I: THE BASICS 7
- 1: Democracy 8
- 2: Rights and Responsibilities 14
- 3: Democratic Participation 18
- 4: Levels of Government 23

## SECTION II: INFORMATION LITERACY 31
- 5: Informed Citizenship 32
- 6: Online Verification Habits 38
- 7: Questioning Images 44
- 8: Journalism in Democracy 51

## SECTION III: FEDERAL ELECTIONS 57
- 9: The Federal Political Landscape 58
- 10: My Candidates 64
- 11: Election Debates 71
- 12: The Voting Process 79
- 13: Post-Election Analysis 84
How To Use This Resource

This resource is intended to improve civic literacy, introduce the concepts of governance and democracy, foster media literacy skills, increase awareness about the workings of government in Canada, and teach students how to effectively participate as active and engaged citizens in their community.

The lessons build upon each other, but they can also be used as stand-alone activities depending on the needs of your classroom and schedule. Please refer to the Lesson Pathways in the resource insert or on the project website (studentvote.ca/canada) for suggestions on how to select the most appropriate activities based on core subjects and time.

Below is a brief description of the components of each lesson.

Guiding Question(s): Questions that bring a clear focus to the lesson and direct student learning. Share these questions with students at the beginning of the lesson to support an awareness of the learning goals and promote engagement in the learning process.

Purpose: Summary of the big idea of the lesson followed by a description of the activities.

Learning Outcomes: Descriptions of what students should know, understand and be able to do by the end of the lesson.

Starter: The opening activity that gets students’ minds on the lesson and thinking about the key ideas.

Activities: The central activities that introduce new learning or extend/reinforce prior learning. They can also provide opportunities for practice and the application of learning.

Consolidation: Concluding activities and questions to summarize and reflect on what was learned.

Assessment: Suggested ideas that teachers can use to assess student comprehension, learning needs and progress during the lesson or unit.

Background Information for Teachers: The key terms and concepts that are related to the theme of the lesson. The overview is intended to enhance teacher knowledge and understanding. Not all terms and concepts are necessarily covered in the lesson.
Suggestions For Wider Engagement

The Student Vote program can be organized for your class, several classes or your entire school.

If you choose to engage more than just your own class, there are great ways to involve your students in the implementation of the program and provide them with an opportunity to develop their leadership skills.

You can divide students into groups and assign each ‘team’ a specific responsibility (see examples below). Choose the teams and focus areas that make sense for the size of your school.

**Communications Team:** Responsible for informing students about the Student Vote program and encouraging participation.

- Develop key messaging (slogans) and create outreach materials in different formats
- Design and implement a schedule for your communications and announcements, including the who, what, when, where and how (e.g., morning announcements, videos, classroom presentations, posters)
- Ask your school administrator to publicize Student Vote Canada 2019 electronically and on school signage

**Education Team:** Responsible for educating students about the candidates and election issues.

- Develop an education plan about what students should know (e.g., federal government responsibilities, important issues facing the country, the candidates and party platforms)
- Share the videos and tools on the Student Vote Canada 2019 website (e.g., Party Leader Q&A videos, Pollenize)
- Create literature and activities for distribution to classes throughout the school (e.g., bulletins, posters, multimedia presentations, activity sheets, *Vote Compass: Canada Youth Edition* tool)

**Events Team:** Responsible for organizing events during the campaign period in coordination with the other teams.

- Design a special event to build excitement around the election and improve voter turnout
- Coordinate a visit from the candidates over lunch or organize an all-candidates meeting
- Invite a guest speaker to discuss public service or the role of media in elections (e.g., public servant, journalist)
- Assign the roles and manage the event(s)

**Student Vote Day Operations Team:** Responsible for organizing the election.

- Determine which voting method will work best on Student Vote Day (e.g., stationary polling or mobile polling). Refer to the *Election Manual* for options
- Train election officials for their duties (e.g., deputy returning officer, poll clerks, candidate representatives)
- Compile a list of electors and determine ID requirements (if desirable)
- Decide on options for an advance poll for students who may be away on Student Vote Day
- Conduct an information session or prepare a poster or skit about how to fill out a ballot
- Ensure all materials are ready for Student Vote Day (ballots, ballot boxes, voting screens, tally sheets, list of electors)

**Media and Community Relations Team:** Responsible for communicating and engaging with local media and the greater community.

- Invite media to attend your campaign events or Student Vote Day (check with your school board policy)
- Write an opinion piece or letter to the editor of the local paper about the election
- Interview students and/or take photos of your Student Vote Day to share on your school’s website, newsletter or through social media
- Strategize ways to engage parents and families in the election that builds on the established communication plan (e.g., organize an information session for parents, host a viewing party of the leaders’ debate at the school)
SECTION I: The Basics
Lesson 1
Democracy

PURPOSE
There are several guiding principles that act as the foundation of a democracy, such as fair elections, fundamental freedoms, citizen participation and the rule of law.

In this lesson, students explore what democracy means and what the implications are for them as members of a democracy. After learning about key democratic principles, they investigate how the principles look in practice. In the Consolidation activity, they reflect on the significance of democratic principles for themselves and society.

LEARNING OUTCOMES
By the end of the lesson, students can:

• explain the meaning of democracy;
• describe some fundamental principles of democracy and how they are reflected in current events;
• evaluate which democratic principle affects their life the most or which principle they think is most important.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. What does it mean to live in a democracy?
2. Which principles of democracy are most important to me?
Starter

1. Give students time to work in pairs or small groups to activate any background knowledge they have about the term ‘democracy’ using a Frayer Model (Activity 1.1). Students can also use images to communicate their thinking.

TEACHER NOTE
Consider providing some key terms to support their thinking, such as political power, leadership, government, citizen participation, viewpoints, rights and freedoms.

2. Watch the ‘Government and Democracy’ video and have students add to their notes on Activity 1.1.

3. Afterwards, debrief as a class and create a class definition for the term ‘democracy’. Students should add the class definition to their activity sheet.

Activities

1. Using the ‘Democratic Principles’ video and/or Handout 1.2, explain to students that there are several guiding principles that act as the foundation of a democracy.

2. Divide students into pairs or small groups and have them work together to complete Activity 1.3. For each principle, students should help each other summarize it in their own words. Afterwards, review the responses as a class and ensure there is a solid understanding of the principles.

3. Students should next investigate what the principles look like in practice and consider which principle(s) are most important. Two options:

   OPTION A: Provide students with reputable media sources (e.g., newspapers, journals) in print or online and have them search for stories in which they feel one of the principles is being put into practice or being challenged. Students can also use examples from their own lives. Ask students to complete the second column of Activity 1.3.

   OPTION B: Provide students with news articles and have students identify which principle(s) are relevant or being put into practice. This could be completed using a ‘Jigsaw’ method, where students analyze an article with others and then share it with their group.

Examples:

- “Potential jurors in P.E.I. avoid punishment for failing to show for duty,” The Guardian (March 24, 2018)
- “Canada’s freedom of information laws ‘very outdated’: commissioner,” iPolitics (September 28, 2018)
- “Quebec students poised to strike over climate change,” Montreal Gazette (April 22, 2019)
- “Hundreds walk out of school to protest climate change inaction in Regina,” Global News (May 3, 2019)
- “Former N.S. Mountie sentenced to decade in prison for cocaine theft, trafficking,” CTV News (July 4, 2019)
- “UBC barred from Vancouver Pride Parade for hosting controversial speaker,” CBC News (July 8, 2019)
- “No direct threats to the election yet but foreign actors are getting ready to meddle: officials,” CBC News (July 9, 2019)

4. Invite students to share their examples and rankings in a larger group discussion.

Consolidation

Using a ‘Quick Write’ strategy, have students reflect on the significance of democratic principles using one of the prompts below.

Provide students with 3-5 minutes to write a response on a piece of paper or within their learning journal. Inform students that they will be assessed on their ideas and content, not grammar or organization, so they should write freely.

- The democratic principle that most affects my life is... because....
- The democratic principle that I think is most important is... because....
A government is made up of the people and institutions put in place to manage the land, resources and people living within its borders. Various types of government exist in the world.

Governments can be compared by their governance model, the number of people who have access to power, the rights and freedoms granted to citizens, and the existence of rule of law (laws are enforced equally, fairly and consistently).

An autocracy is a type of government where political power is concentrated in the hands of one person who rules without restriction. There is no rule of law and citizens are not consulted on the decisions and affairs of the country. An autocracy can be a dictatorship or an absolute monarchy.

In a dictatorship, the dictator or ruling group exercises power through control of a mass movement, a 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 and there is 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.

A monarchy is a form of government where a monarch (king or queen) is the head of state. The role of the monarch is inherited and usually lasts until death or abdication. The power of ruling monarchs can vary; in an absolute monarchy, a monarch retains full political power over a state and its people whereas in a constitutional monarchy, the role of the monarch is more symbolic. In a constitutional monarchy, the authority of the monarch is limited by a constitution, which includes the principles and laws of a nation or state, defines the powers and duties of the government and guarantees certain rights to the people living within it. A constitutional monarchy has a democratically elected government with a government leader, and a monarch who remains the head of state and performs ceremonial duties.

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

A republic is a sovereign state, country or government without a monarch where all members of government are elected (including the head of state), and the democratically elected government holds all political power. Similar to a constitutional monarchy, the government in a republic exercises power according to the rule of law and often has a constitution.

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.

Canada’s system of government is a parliamentary democracy and a constitutional monarchy. We elect members to represent us in our federal parliament and our provincial and territorial legislatures, and the political party with the most elected representatives, usually forms government. The British monarch, Queen Elizabeth II, is our head of state, represented by the Governor General at the federal level. 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).
ACTIVITY 1.1: What Does Democracy Mean?

CLASS DEFINITION:
# HANDOUT 1.2: The Principles of Democracy

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HUMAN RIGHTS AND EQUALITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• 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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• In most democracies, individuals are valued equally regardless of race, religion, ethnicity, language, gender or sexual orientation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• In Canada, our fundamental freedoms and equality rights are protected by the <a href="https://www.legalcanada.org/en/charter-of-rights-and-freedoms">Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms</a>, part of Canada's Constitution.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VOTE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Adult citizens have the right to vote in elections to choose their political representatives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Adult citizens also have the opportunity to run for political office.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• There are no obstacles to voting and no threats made to citizens before or after an election.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• In Canada, there must be elections to choose a federal government every five years or less.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• 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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• In a democracy, the press holds government to account and aims to keep citizens informed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 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.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THE RULE OF LAW</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• 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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• It also means that governments cannot punish people unless they have broken the law.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• All Canadians have a responsibility to respect the laws of the land, even if they disagree with them.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CITIZEN PARTICIPATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Citizen participation in government is more than just a right – it is a responsibility.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Participation includes voting in elections, being an informed citizen, debating issues, attending community meetings, paying taxes, serving on a jury and protesting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Citizen participation builds a stronger democracy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRINCIPLE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Rights and Equality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free and Fair Elections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accountability and Transparency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Rule of Law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizen Participation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lesson 2
Rights and Responsibilities

PURPOSE
Citizens living in a democracy have guaranteed rights and freedoms, and these rights come with responsibilities.

In this lesson, students discuss the rights they have at school in a 'Placemat Activity'. Together they create a class charter and reflect on the responsibilities that go along with their rights. Students review highlights from the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and then create a 'Mind Map' to link rights and responsibilities to democracy. In the Consolidation activity, they reflect on essential values in a democratic society.

LEARNING OUTCOMES
By the end of the lesson, students can:

• work collaboratively with their peers to discuss and compare perspectives about the rights and responsibilities they have at school;
• describe the rights and freedoms we have in Canada;
• analyze connections between the Charter and democracy, and the responsibilities of citizenship.

GUIDING QUESTIONS
1 What rights and responsibilities do I have in Canada?
**Starter**

1. Divide students into groups of four and provide each group a piece of chart paper.

2. Review the concept of a ‘right’ and ask students to take a few minutes to think about their rights and freedoms as members of the school community. Have each group member write a list of rights that should be guaranteed to every student in their section on the chart paper.

3. Have each group list the common ideas in the centre of the chart paper. Afterwards, have the class walk around and read each group's common ideas or review them as a class.

4. Create a class charter by taking the common ideas from amongst all the groups. Ask students to consider the responsibilities that go along with each of these rights.

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**Activities**

1. Using Slide Deck 2 and Handout 2.1, review the rights and freedoms we have in Canada. Guiding questions:
   - What is the Constitution of Canada?
   - What is the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*?
   - What are the seven categories within the Charter?
   - How are responsibilities associated with our rights?

2. Have students construct a 'Mind Map' to display which aspects of the Charter are relevant to democracy (e.g., freedom of opinion, freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, the right to vote, the right to be a candidate, equality rights). Each branch should extend to a section of the Charter (e.g., the right to vote) and split into smaller branches for the associated responsibilities (e.g., stay informed about politics, learn about the parties/candidates, cast your ballot).

   **TEACHER NOTE**
   A 'Mind Map' exemplar can be found on the project website (*studentvote.ca/canada*).

3. Give students time to share their 'Mind Map' with a partner and then debrief as a class.

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**Consolidation**

Through a class discussion or learning journal, have students respond to the following questions:

- Why is it important for us to be responsible members of society?
- Why are equality rights essential in a democracy?
- Why is diversity and political tolerance important in democracy?
- Why is citizen participation required in a democracy?
BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS

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.

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.

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.
### HANDOUT 2.1: Highlights from the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HIGHLIGHTS</th>
<th>EXAMPLES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS</strong></td>
<td>You cannot be punished for your religious beliefs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• You have the freedom to pray and worship in your own way, or not to pray or worship at all.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• You have the freedom to shape your own opinions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• You have the freedom to express your opinions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The media is free to report on anything in Canada.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• You can hold rallies to express your disagreements.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• You can choose your own friends.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS</strong></td>
<td>You can run for political office and vote when you turn 18.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• If you are a citizen and 18 years old, you can vote in elections.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• If you are a citizen and 18 years old, you can compete for the job of a politician (run for office).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The rule that governments must have elections every five years or less.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The rule that elected governments must meet at least once every year.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MOBILITY RIGHTS</strong></td>
<td>You can visit another country and come back when you choose.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• You can live and work in any province or territory in Canada.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• You can leave and come back to Canada when you want.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LEGAL RIGHTS</strong></td>
<td>You will receive a fair trial if you are accused of a crime.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• If you are arrested, you must be told of your option to see a lawyer.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• If needed, you must go to court in an amount of time that is considered fair.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• You must be considered innocent until proven guilty.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EQUALITY RIGHTS</strong></td>
<td>An employer cannot use your race or religion as a reason not to hire you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• You cannot be treated unfairly for many reasons. This includes your race, background, religion, gender, age, or mental or physical ability.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OFFICIAL LANGUAGES OF CANADA</strong></td>
<td>You can send a letter to your Member of Parliament in English or French.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• You can talk or write to the federal government in English or French.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MINORITY LANGUAGE EDUCATION RIGHTS</strong></td>
<td>You can attend a French high school in some English regions of Canada, if you went to a French elementary school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• You may be able to go to school in English or French if you meet certain criteria.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Lesson 3
Democratic Participation

PURPOSE
A healthy and vibrant democracy is based on an active and engaged citizenry, where all citizens are ready, willing and able to participate. Engagement includes staying informed, debating issues, engaging with politicians and participating in the voting process.

In this lesson, students will examine voter turnout statistics over the last thirty years and consider the significance of the trends and impact of different levels of voter participation. Students will reflect on their own attitudes toward democratic engagement, before examining the barriers that some people face when participating in the electoral process. In the Consolidation activity, students will debate different proposals to increase voter turnout or democratic engagement.

LEARNING OUTCOMES
By the end of the lesson, students can:
- explain the impact of low voter turnout amongst youth and the importance of democratic participation;
- analyze factors influencing voter participation and attitudes towards politics;
- assess which barriers could affect their decision or ability to vote in the future;
- evaluate the potential impact of different proposals on proving voter turnout.

GUIDING QUESTIONS
1. What is the impact of different levels of voter participation on our democracy?
2. What are some barriers to participating in the electoral process?
Starter

1. Explain the term ‘voter turnout’. Voter turnout is the percentage of eligible electors or registered voters that cast ballots in an election. Spark an initial discussion with students:
   - What do you think voter turnout was in the last federal election?
   - Do you think voter turnout stays the same over time?
   - Do you think voter turnout varies across age groups? Why or why not?

2. Review voter turnout statistics at the federal level from 1970 to 2015 (see Slide Deck 3).
   - What trends do you notice from 1970-2015? How has voter turnout changed over time?
   - What factors do you think lead to an increase in turnout? (e.g., “change” election, competitive election)
   - What do you think voter turnout will be this election and why?

3. Show students the infographic comparing voter turnout by age group in the 2011 and 2015 federal elections (see Slide Deck 3) or Handout 3.1 (voter turnout by age group, 2008 to 2015).
   - What do you notice about the different age groups? What do you think the reasons are behind the differences?
   - Why does youth voting matter?

4. Share the ‘First Time Matters’ slide (see Slide Deck 3). This graph shows that voting is habit forming: if you vote in your first election, you will probably be a lifelong voter.
   - Will you vote when you are eligible?
   - How do programs like Student Vote help future voters?

Activities

1. Using a ‘Stop and Jot’ strategy, have students respond to the following questions. You can ask students to draw a rectangle and write down their responses inside or you can ask them to write each answer on a sticky note.
   - What attitudes do you have about participating in politics and elections?
   - What or who has shaped your attitudes towards politics and democracy?

   Afterwards, review as a class. If you choose to use sticky notes, you can organize the responses on the board and group similar thoughts.

   TEACHER NOTE
   Be mindful and aware that there are barriers to democratic participation by certain groups due to language, class and negative historical experiences.

   2. Provide copies of Activity 3.2 to each student and ask them to answer each question as honestly as they can. Afterwards, give them a few minutes to discuss their responses with a partner.

   3. Review some key research findings about voting and the barriers to electoral participation using Slide Deck 3.
      - There are many different barriers to voting, including motivational barriers and access barriers. Motivational barriers have been found to be most significant.
      - Motivational barriers include low levels of political interest and political knowledge, lack of perceived importance, cynicism and lower sense of civic duty.
      - Access barriers include not knowing when and where to vote, lack of personal identification, challenges getting to the polling station, and language and literacy skills.

   4. Independently or with a partner, have students reflect on how many zeros they recorded on the voting survey (Activity 3.2) and which barriers could affect their decision or ability to vote in the future.

Consolidation

Discuss different ideas to increase voter turnout or democratic engagement through a ‘Four Corners’ debate. Designate the four corners of the classroom as “Strongly Agree”, “Somewhat Agree”, “Somewhat Disagree” and “Strongly Disagree”. Select a small object (e.g., tennis ball, bean bag) to be used as a “talking stick” to determine whose turn it is to speak.

Proposals (included in Slide Deck 3):
   - Voting should be a legal requirement and those who do not vote should be fined
   - Election day should be a holiday so that people have sufficient time to vote
   - Online voting would make it easier to cast a vote
   - The voting age should be lowered to 16 years of age
   - A proportional voting system would make voters feel that their vote mattered
   - Civics and citizenship education should be expanded in curriculum
   - School council elections should be reformed to give the council more decision-making power
   - Include youth in more government consultations
After each statement is read aloud, provide time for students to think and then move to the corner of the room that corresponds most closely with their own point of view. Students should be prepared to justify their opinion. Encourage them to link their thinking to the research about barriers to voting. Students can move around the room if their opinion changes as a result of the discussion.

Extended Learning

1. Divide students into groups and ask them to imagine they have been hired by Elections Canada to encourage participation and engagement in the 2019 federal election. Students will design an advertising campaign that incorporates social media, digital, print and/or audiovisual elements.

2. Have each group present their marketing campaign, as well as the rationale behind it. Guiding questions:
   - What was the inspiration behind the campaign? Where did the ideas come from?
   - How will this ad campaign increase youth engagement?
   - Are there any connections to the research findings?
   - What are the intended outcomes?

3. Post advertisements around the school or play the videos in the lead-up to the election. Submit your productions to CIVIX by email or share them through Twitter, YouTube, Facebook or Instagram.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS**

Voter turnout at federal elections has fluctuated over time. There have been some periods that showed a decline in voter turnout and others that have shown an increase. For instance, voter turnout in 1962 was 79 per cent. In 2008, it was 59 per cent and in 2015, it was 68 per cent.

Low voter turnout tends to be disproportionately concentrated among young people. This is concerning, because studies have shown that habits of voting and non-voting persist over time. Essentially, if young people do not vote during their first few eligible years, there is a concern they may never establish the habit.

The 2015 federal election saw the largest increase in youth voter participation on record. Electoral participation among 18-24 year olds increased by 18 percentage points to 57 per cent (up from 39 per cent in 2011). However, we do not know if this trend will continue.

In 2011, Elections Canada commissioned the first National Youth Survey following the federal general election to better understand the reasons why youth may or may not participate in the electoral process. The most significant motivational barriers were a lack of political interest and knowledge, and a lower sense that voting was a civic duty. The greatest access barrier was a lack of knowledge about the electoral process, including not knowing about different ways to vote and not knowing how or when to vote. The study found that youth who did vote were more likely to have discussed politics with their family while growing up.

Elections Canada conducted a follow up survey in conjunction with the 2015 federal election. The 2015 National Youth Survey found that youth who said they voted were much more likely than those who did not vote to say they learned about government and politics in high school, and more likely to have participated in a mock election (such as the Student Vote program).

This research underscores the importance of civic education and election simulations, which increase political knowledge and interest, encourage political conversation with family, and improve attitudes towards democratic participation among young people. By giving youth an opportunity to practice voting in elementary or high school, they will be more likely to cast a ballot when they become eligible.
HANDOUT 3.1: Federal Election Voter Turnout by Age Group

Source: Elections Canada
### ACTIVITY 3.2: Voting Survey

In the right hand column, respond to the question from the left-hand column and include if it is a 0 or 1. Explain the reasoning behind your answer. Afterwards, rank the barriers in order of importance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ATTITUDES TOWARDS VOTING</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>People have different views about voting. For some, voting is a CHOICE. They feel free to vote or not to vote in an election depending on how they feel about the candidates. For others, voting is a DUTY. They feel that they should vote in every election however they feel about the candidates.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For you personally, is voting FIRST AND FOREMOST a Choice or a Duty?</td>
<td>Duty=1; Choice=0.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POLITICAL INTEREST</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To what extent would you say you are interested in politics?</td>
<td>Somewhat/very interested=1; Not very/not at all interested=0.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ISSUES</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Politicians or candidates talk about issues that are important to me.</td>
<td>Somewhat/strongly agree=1; Somewhat/strongly disagree=0.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERSONAL CONFIDENCE</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes politics and government seem so complicated that someone like me can't really understand what's going on.</td>
<td>Somewhat/strongly disagree=1; Somewhat/strongly agree=0.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ATTITUDES TOWARDS POLITICIANS AND GOVERNMENT</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I do not think politicians or the government care much about what people like me think.</td>
<td>Somewhat/strongly disagree=1; Somewhat/strongly agree=0.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THE IMPACT OF MY VOTE</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I feel that by voting I can make a difference.</td>
<td>Somewhat/strongly agree=1; Somewhat/strongly disagree=0.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lesson 4
Levels of Government

PURPOSE
Canada has different levels of government; each with its own elected representatives and areas of responsibility. The federal government is the only one that affects everyone in Canada.

In this lesson, students compare the federal, provincial/territorial and municipal/local levels of government, including leadership roles, elected officials and areas of responsibility. Afterwards, students analyze how the levels of government affect them.

LEARNING OUTCOMES
By the end of the lesson, students can:

• describe our government system in Canada;
• distinguish between the levels of government;
• identify issues or areas of responsibility and explain how they relate to or directly affect their lives.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

1 How is government structured in Canada?
2 How do the different levels of government affect me?
Starter

1. Using Handout 4.1, review the levels of government in Canada. In column format, write the following on the board, or in an equivalent forum: federal / provincial or territorial / municipal or local / First Nations, Métis and Inuit.

2. Ask students to consider which level of government they would contact in the following scenarios:
   - You and your friends would like a skate ramp added to the local park
   - You think there should be more financial aid available to help youth pursue post-secondary education or skills and training programs
   - The streetlight near your home is broken and needs to be replaced
   - You are traveling to a foreign country and require documentation
   - The hospital or health clinic in your town is in need of a new X-ray machine
   - You would like your community to welcome more refugees

3. Debrief with the whole class using the following questions:
   - Why is it important to know which level of government is responsible for which issues?
   - If you needed to, how would you go about contacting each level of government?

Activities

1. Divide students into pairs and distribute Activity 4.2. Have them work together to fill in what they already know about the levels of government in Canada.

2. Then explain the structure of government in Canada. Use the ‘Levels of Government’ video, Slide Deck 4 and/or Handout 4.1.

   Guiding questions:
   - What kind of government do we have in Canada?
   - What is the role of our elected representatives?
   - What is the title given to the elected representative at each level?
   - What is the title given to the leader at each level? How are they chosen?
   - What are the areas of responsibility of each level of government?

   Afterwards, have students continue to work in pairs to complete Activity 4.2.

3. For each level of government, ask students to identify three issues or areas of responsibility and explain how they relate to or directly affect their lives (Activity 4.3). Ask students to search online to find and select relevant pictures to represent the issue or area of responsibility. Students could also use pictures that they take themselves in their community or find a current article or social media story that shows how the issue is affecting their life.

Consolidation

After the lesson and activities are complete, ask students to fill out the exit slip (Activity 4.4).

   - The most important thing I learned today...
   - The thing that surprised me today...
   - I would like to learn more about...

Extended Learning

Ask students to pick an issue that matters to them and analyze how the government could take action to improve the conditions. Students should advocate for government action through a method of their own choosing. This could include writing a letter to the minister(s) in charge of their related issue, producing a rant, pitch slide deck or multi-media artwork.
BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS

Canada is a federal state, parliamentary democracy and constitutional monarchy. As a constitutional monarchy, Canada’s head of state is a hereditary sovereign (queen or king) who reigns in accordance with the Constitution. The sovereign is represented in Canada by the governor general, who is appointed by the sovereign on the advice of the prime minister.

In each of the ten provinces, the sovereign is represented by a lieutenant governor, who is appointed by the governor general on the advice of the prime minister. Usually, the governor general and lieutenant governors serve five-year terms. There is no sovereign representative at the municipal/local or territorial level.

In Canada’s three territories, territorial commissioners serve a similar role to a lieutenant governor. Commissioners do not represent the sovereign, however. They are appointed by and represent the federal government. A federal state brings together a number of different political communities with a central government (federal) for general purposes and separate local governments (provincial/territorial) for local purposes.

The division of powers is based on the idea that the level of 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 concern, such as the armed forces, international relations and trade, currency, fisheries and oceans, criminal law and public safety. Provincial and territorial governments are responsible for their own province or territory and issues such as education, health care, social welfare, transportation and highways.

Municipal and local governments receive their powers from their respective provincial or territorial government. These governments handle local matters, such as garbage and recycling, libraries, public transit, local parks and recreation.

Some First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities have their own systems of governance. These councils or governments share certain responsibilities with the provincial/territorial or federal government.

For some issues, the different levels of government have to work together and share the responsibility. For example, federal, provincial and municipal governments are concurrently responsible for the environment. The federal government enforces the Canadian Environmental Protection Act and regulates waterways used for fishing and shipping. Provincial governments regulate land use, mining, manufacturing and harmful emissions. Municipal governments are responsible for zoning, garbage disposal, and sewage and water treatment.

Each level of government has elected officials to represent the people (constituents) living in their designated areas (e.g., electoral districts/divisions, wards, municipalities at-large). Elected representatives are responsible for proposing, studying, debating and voting on bills (potential laws), and raising issues put forward by their constituents.

Representatives at the federal level are called Members of Parliament (MPs). Representatives at the provincial or territorial level are called Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs), Members of Provincial Parliament (MPPs), Members of the National Assembly (MNAs) or Members of the House of Assembly (MHA), depending on the province or territory. The elected representative at the municipal level is usually called a councillor or alderman.

Most federal and provincial elected representatives belong to 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. At the territorial level in Northwest Territories and Nunavut and in most municipalities, there are no political parties.

The leader of the federal government is called the prime minister, whereas premier is the title given to the leader of each provincial and territorial government. At both levels of government, the leader of the political party with the greatest number of elected representatives in the legislative body usually assumes the role of the leader of that government. Therefore, we do not vote for the premier or prime minister directly.

The leader of the municipal government is most often called a mayor, reeve or chairperson. The leader is elected directly by the people.
HANDOUT 4.1: Government Responsibilities

A list of some key federal, provincial/territorial and municipal/local government responsibilities based upon Canada’s constitution.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FEDERAL GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBILITIES</th>
<th>PROVINCIAL/TERRITORIAL GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBILITIES</th>
<th>MUNICIPAL/LOCAL GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBILITIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Citizenship and passports</td>
<td>• Colleges and universities</td>
<td>• Animal control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Criminal law</td>
<td>• Drivers’ licensing and highways</td>
<td>• Fire protection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Currency</td>
<td>• Education</td>
<td>• Land use planning (zoning)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Federal taxes</td>
<td>• Hospitals and healthcare</td>
<td>• Libraries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Fisheries</td>
<td>• Municipalities</td>
<td>• Local parks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Foreign affairs and international trade</td>
<td>• Natural resources</td>
<td>• Local police</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Indigenous lands and rights</td>
<td>• Property and civil rights</td>
<td>• Road maintenance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• National defence</td>
<td>• Provincial law and courts</td>
<td>• Recreation and community facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Official languages</td>
<td>• Provincial taxes</td>
<td>• Public transportation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Postal service</td>
<td>• Social services</td>
<td>• Waste management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Veterans affairs</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Water supply and treatment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some shared areas of responsibility include: Immigration, agriculture, transportation and environment.
ACTIVITY 4.2: Levels of Government Graphic Organizer

What do you know already? Work with a partner to fill in what you already know first. Then using the materials provided by your teacher, complete the rest.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUESTION</th>
<th>FEDERAL</th>
<th>PROVINCIAL/TERRITORIAL</th>
<th>MUNICIPAL/LOCAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is the title of the role represented by the sovereign at this level?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who currently holds this position?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the official title of the leader at this level of government?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who currently holds this position and, if applicable, which party do they represent?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the official name of the elected members at this level of government? How many members are there?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who currently holds this position for your geographic area? If applicable, which party do they represent?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where does this level of government meet (name of the building and city)?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are three or more responsibilities at this level of government?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How often are elections held? When is the next election?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ACTIVITY 4.3: What does government have to do with me?

What are the different areas of responsibility for each level of government? Which level of government has the most impact in your life?

ASSIGNMENT: PHOTO CAPTIONS
For each level of government, identify three issues or areas of responsibility and explain how it relates to your life.

☐ Select relevant articles or pictures to represent each issue or area of responsibility. You can take your own pictures or find a current article or social media story that shows how the issue is affecting your life. You should have a total of nine pictures or articles.

☐ For each picture or article, write a caption to identify which level of government is involved and the name of the related government department/ministry.

☐ In one or two more sentences, explain the impact that each level of government has on your life. Use “I” statements to personalize your captions.

☐ Write an overall concluding statement to answer the following question: Which level of government has the most impact in my life?

EVALUATION CHECKBRIC

Correctly identifies the level of government and area of responsibility.

1 2 3 4

Selects a relevant picture or news story to represent the issue.

1 2 3 4

Explains the impact that each level of government has on their lives.

1 2 3 4
### ACTIVITY 4.4: Exit Slip

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The most important thing I learned today...</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The thing that surprised me today...</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would like to learn more about...</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SECTION II:
Information Literacy

“The problem with things on the internet is that they are often untrue.”

—Wilf Levanon, CSG, AC
Secretary, Prime Minister of Canada
Lesson 5
Informed Citizenship

PURPOSE
Being a responsible citizen involves seeking out information from a variety of sources and comparing perspectives on issues of importance.

In this lesson, students are assigned one of two social media newsfeeds that centre on a controversial issue: the proposed construction of a new solar-panel factory adjacent to their school. One feed is dominated by posts favouring the factory, while the other feed skews heavily toward its opponents. After reviewing their assigned feeds, students vote on whether the proposed solar development should proceed. A debrief discussion follows about how what they read may have informed the vote, and how the information we are exposed to may affect our decisions. In the Consolidation activity, students learn about how the internet has changed the way we consume and share information, and they evaluate the opportunities and challenges for citizens and democracies.

LEARNING OUTCOMES
By the end of the lesson, students can:

• analyze how news and information can influence our opinions on people, events and issues;
• describe how algorithms personalize the information they see online;
• evaluate the opportunities and challenges of the internet and social media for citizens and democracy;
• describe strategies for being responsible consumers of information.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

1 In what way does information influence my decisions?

2 What are the opportunities and challenges with the internet and social media for democracy?
Starter

Start with an opening conversation about sources of information. In pairs or small groups, ask students to consider how they would become informed to vote in the following scenarios.

a) School council election
b) Federal election

Discussion questions:

• What actions would you take to learn about the options?
• Which sources of information would you rely on and why?
• Do you think it is important to make an informed decision? Why or why not?

Activities

1. Complete the Feed for Thought activity found at the CIVIX website newsliteracy.ca. The activity can be completed with online scrollable newsfeeds or paper versions.

a) Introduce the Scenario. A solar-panel company has submitted a proposal to build a factory next to the school, and community members will vote in a referendum to decide whether or not the development should proceed. Students at the school will also have the opportunity to vote and express their choice.

Before voting, you will become familiar with the issue and the people involved by reading through a social media feed that has a mix of articles from news outlets and posts from community members and friends.

b) Read the Feeds. Without informing students of the two opposing feeds, provide half the class with the "pro" feed, and the other half with the "anti" feed. If you are using the online version, the link provided will randomly assign students one of the two feeds. Give students 10 minutes to review the information.

c) Vote. Have students vote on whether the factory should be built by raising their hands or by using paper ballots (Activity 5.1). Tabulate the results and announce them to the class.

d) Debrief. Through a whole-class discussion, ask students why they voted the way they did and what information shaped their decision.

Over the course of the discussion, it should become obvious that some students were provided different information than others. At an appropriate point in the discussion, share the fact that there were two different feeds and give students time to review them side-by-side to compare the differences.

Further questions to prompt discussion:

• How did you feel about the results of the vote before you knew there were two feeds? Were you surprised by the outcome? Why or why not?
• How might two people end up with such different news feeds?
• What are the consequences of people consuming different facts and information?
• Do you think people should be exposed to different perspectives or more than one side of an issue before making their decision?

2. Watch the video 'Behind the Screens – Who Decides What I See Online?' and/or review Slide Deck 5 to introduce the concepts of algorithms and filter bubbles, and the effects of the internet and social media on democracy. Guiding questions:

• How is online information personalized to me?
• What happens if we only see information we like or agree with?

Consolidation

In pairs or small groups, ask students to respond to the following questions. Afterwards, discuss the responses as a class.

• Why is it important to think critically about online information?
• What are the opportunities and challenges of the internet and social media for democracy? (This can be completed with a T-Chart.)
• How can we make sure we are informed citizens? Why should we consider different viewpoints?

Assessment

Ask students to fill out the ‘3-2-1 Exit Card’ (Activity 5.2).

• What are three things you learned?
• What are two actions you may take based on what you learned?
• What is one question you still have?
Extended Learning

Ask students to explore some of the themes in the lesson by completing an online investigation (Activity 5.3). During the activity, students should make notes under the comment section about what they learn through each activity.

- Find out what Google knows about you. For example, find three YouTube videos you watched in January of this year. Select "Filter by Date." (https://myactivity.google.com/)
- Find an ad online that has been targeting you. Why are you seeing it? Dismiss it, and click 'why am I seeing this' to learn more.
- Find the 'Terms of Service' for Snapchat – what rights do you give Snapchat when you post a 'Story' that is viewable by ‘Everyone’?
- Look into buying a Facebook or Instagram ad. What segment of the population do you want to reach? See how narrow you can make your search.
- Find a conspiracy theory on YouTube (e.g., Flat earth theory, fake moon landings, 9/11 cover up). How many views does it have? What related content is recommended?
- Go to google.com and type in "What is". Make note of the options that appear below. Select one option. Now type in "What is" again. How did the list of options change?
- Look at the social media channel of a mainstream news organization (i.e., The Globe and Mail, CBC, National Post). Compare what appears on the social media channel compared to the homepage of its website.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS

As citizens living in a democracy, we have a responsibility to stay informed about the issues that matter to us and to society. This is true all the time, but especially when we must make a meaningful choice at the ballot box.

The introduction of the internet and the rise of social media have been significant for news and information, and complicated for citizens.

Where traditional news organizations were once the gatekeepers of information and the only ones with the resources to disseminate it — printing presses and TV stations are costly to purchase and operate — the internet allows anyone, anywhere to be a publisher.

The rise of blogging and social media a generation ago was widely viewed as the democratization of information, bringing new voices into public discourse and leading to positive social change. The reality of online communication has been more complex.

When news came only from traditional or legacy media — newspapers, TV, and radio — there was always someone who stood between audiences and information, a person or process that filtered the stories or content, checked facts and packaged stories for public consumption.

Where human editors and producers were once the only gatekeepers who decided what news audiences saw, on the internet, that job belongs to algorithms, which are sets of instructions that tell computers how to perform specific tasks, like sorting information.

Social media algorithms work in such a way that we are more likely to see content that is similar to what we already like or agree with. Our social media feeds never give the whole picture.

Since people have become such heavy adopters of social media, they now rely on these sites (such as Facebook or Snapchat) for news. The problem is that social media platforms never intended to be news organizations, and there are consequences for informed citizenship when people rely on friends and the results of algorithms to find out about what is happening in the world.

Informed citizenship involves seeking out news and information from a variety of sources, comparing perspectives and keeping up with new developments. There are things you can do to make sure you are informed, particularly when there is so much information available online.
**ACTIVITY 5.1: Community Referendum – Voice your choice**

Use the sample ballots below to conduct a vote for the community referendum. Tabulate the results and announce them to the class.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMMUNITY REFERENDUM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The proposed factory development should be allowed to proceed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
**ACTIVITY 5.2: Exit Card**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3-2-1 EXIT CARD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Things that I learned:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actions that I may take based on what I learned:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One question that I still have:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3-2-1 EXIT CARD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Things that I learned:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actions that I may take based on what I learned:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One question that I still have:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### ACTIVITY 5.3: Online Investigation

Explore some of the themes in the lesson by completing an online investigation and making notes about what you learn through the activities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>COMMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Find out what Google knows about you. For example, find three YouTube videos you watched earlier this year. Select ‘Filter by Date’. (<a href="https://myactivity.google.com/">https://myactivity.google.com/</a>)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Find an ad online that has been targeting you. Why are you seeing it?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dismiss it, and click ‘why am I seeing this’ or a similar option to learn more.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Find the ‘Terms of Service’ for Snapchat – what rights do you give Snapchat when you post a ‘Story’ that is viewable by ‘Everyone’?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Look into buying a Facebook or Instagram ad. What segment of the population do you want to reach? See how narrow you can make your search.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Find a conspiracy theory on YouTube (e.g., Flat earth theory, fake moon landings, 9/11 cover up). How many views does it have? What related content is recommended?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go to google.com and type in “What is”. Make note of the options Google suggests to complete your search. Select one option (i.e., What is love?). Now type in “What is” again. How did the list of options change?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Look at the social media channel of a mainstream news organization (i.e., The Globe and Mail, National Post, CBC News). Compare what appears there with the homepage of its website.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lesson 6
Online Verification Habits

PURPOSE
Being able to determine what is fact or fiction online has become an essential skill of citizenship in the digital age. We need to think critically about what we see, learn the tools to fact-check information, develop the habits to verify stories and claims, and establish a list of trusted sources.

In this lesson, students participate in an online interactive game, FakeOut, which gives them a chance to assess their ability to detect false information before and after learning the tricks of verification. In the Consolidation activity, students will review what they learned and practice applying the skills.

LEARNING OUTCOMES
By the end of the lesson, students can:
- explain why it is important to verify information online before they believe or share it;
- describe the skills they can use to check a source, claim or image;
- apply the verification skills to the information they see online.

GUIDING QUESTIONS
1 What are the consequences of information pollution?
2 How can I verify information online?
Starter

1. Using Slide Deck 6, show students the three photos, and ask if they think each is real or manipulated. Have students commit to answers by writing them down.

2. Ask students to ‘Turn and Talk’ with a classmate and discuss the following questions.
   - How do you know what you see online is true?
   - Have you ever been fooled by false information?
   - What criteria do you use to assess if something is true or trustworthy?

3. Reveal the answers to the three images from Step 1 (Slide Deck 6).

Activities

1. Introduce the concepts of information pollution, misinformation and disinformation, using the 'Information Pollution' and 'Disinformation' videos and/or Slide Deck 6.

2. Have students play FakeOut, the online interactive game available at newsliteracy.ca. By registering and creating a class account, you can monitor each student’s ability to detect false information before and after learning the tricks of verification. This game can be played on mobile devices and computers.

   a) **Set-up:** Explain to students that they will get to test their ability to detect false information through an online game. Distribute the link to students and have them enter a personal identifier for tracking purposes.

   b) **Play Round 1:** In the first round, students face 10 posts from various sources. Using only their instincts, students are asked to assess whether each is true or false. Tell students they should not worry about their score and they should just guess quickly based on their gut reaction.

      When the round is complete, students are presented with their score out of 10.

   c) **Watch the tutorials:** Using the video tutorials, review the following tricks you can use to verify information. It is suggested that you watch these videos as a class. However, students can also watch them independently in the Skills section of game.

      - 'Check the Source' – Who produced the information? Search Wikipedia or Google to learn about the reputation of the source.
      - 'Check the Claim' – What do other sources say? Search keywords or the headline to learn more about a claim and what has been reported by other trusted sources.
      - 'Check the Image' – Has the photo been altered or used out of context? A reverse image search can help you learn more about an image by finding out where else it has been used.

   d) **Review how the skills work in the game:** Explain to students that these skills are incorporated into Round 2 of the game. For each post, options are available to 'check a source,' 'check a claim,' or 'check an image' using the pink plus signs. Have students practice using the checks in the example in the online interactive game prior to playing Round 2.

   e) **Play Round 2:** Students will review another 10 posts. This time, three pink plus signs representing the checks appear on each post. Clicking a plus sign will reveal the information found by using each check. Not every check will work every time, but players can employ as many checks as they like.

   f) **Review the results:** After submitting an answer for all the posts, a results screen shows the score for Round 2, as well as how it compares to Round 1. Teachers will have access to this data through the admin panel and the class account.

Consolidation

Remind students that these fact-checking skills can be used very quickly when reviewing information.

Using Activity 6.1, have students consolidate their learning by writing down what they learned from the activities and have them practice the skills on their own time.

   - Part 1: **REVIEW** – What did you learn from this lesson? Write down helpful notes for each check.
   - Part 2: **PRACTICE** – Select two social media posts you come across and practice investigating them. Write down what you find out.
Extended Learning

1. Introduce additional skills that can be used to verify sources by watching the 'Online Verification Skills with Mike Caulfield' video series.
   - **'Video 1: Introductory Video'** (3:14) – This video uses an experiment to highlight the importance of developing verification skills.
   - **'Video 2: Investigate the Source'** (2:43) – What is the publication or organization behind the story or claim? Find out information about who produced what you are reading with an online search (i.e., Google) or by using Wikipedia.
   - **'Video 3: Find the Original Source'** (1:33) – With so much re-reporting online, it is important to find the original reporting source and determine its credibility.
   - **'Video 4: Look for Trusted Work'** (4:10) – Look at fact-checking sites like Snopes and HoaxEye on Twitter, or established news sources to confirm stories or claims.

2. Have students practice these skills with the examples provided in Activity 6.2.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS**

Citizens face an information ecosystem where it is increasingly challenging to separate fact from fiction and to recognize what is credible.

Posts on social media are designed to look similar to one another, so it can be difficult to figure out where information is coming from, and if it is reliable. People often share posts without paying attention to the source or evaluating trustworthiness. Therefore, it is very easy for wrong information to spread, especially when no one is policing the facts.

All kinds of false and misleading information are labelled “fake news” — articles intended to deceive people, manipulated images, clickbait headlines, conspiracy theories and hoaxes. Some people call accurate news “fake” just because they don't like it. "Fake news" has been a widely used shortcut, but because it is politically charged and describes so many different things, it is best to use more precise language.

**Misinformation** is false information, but the person sharing it believes it to be true. While misinformation can be damaging, its intent is not to cause harm. Examples could include a factual error caused by misunderstanding, a manipulated image, or a real photo that appears with a made-up story.

**Disinformation** is false information that is deliberately created and shared to cause harm. It has the goal of confusing people about what is true and influencing how they think and act. For example, a false rumour circulated about a political candidate that causes others to doubt their trustworthiness is disinformation.

Together, all this misinformation and disinformation can be thought of as “information pollution.”

Unreliable stories or posts can be interesting or funny or spark an emotion that makes us want to believe and share them with friends. People contribute to the problem by sharing false and misleading content.

**Information pollution** can pose a serious threat to democracy when people base their views and decisions on faulty information. This is a particular concern at election time. There is also a risk that if people do not know what to believe they will become cynical and begin to distrust all sources.
**ACTIVITY 6.1: Verification Skills – Review and Practice**

1. **REVIEW**: What did you learn from this lesson? Write down your responses in the chart below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOURCE CHECK</th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CLAIM CHECK</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IMAGE CHECK</th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHY ARE THESE SKILLS IMPORTANT?</th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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</table>

2. **PRACTICE**: These checks are quick and easy to use. Select two social media posts and practice your verification skills by filling in the chart below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POST #1</th>
<th>POST #2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DESCRIPTION OF THE CONTENT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAME OF THE SOURCE/AUTHOR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHAT FACTS DID YOU FIND ABOUT THE POST?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHICH SKILL DID YOU USE? EXPLAIN WHAT YOU DID.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**ACTIVITY 6.2: Online Verification Practice**

1) **EVALUATE THE SOURCE**

Use your checking skills (Wikipedia search, web search) to investigate the reputations of the following sources. Make notes on what you find in the space provided.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOURCE:</th>
<th>NOTES:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.macleans.ca">www.macleans.ca</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.thebeaverton.com">www.thebeaverton.com</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.theglobeandmail.com">www.theglobeandmail.com</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.rabble.ca">www.rabble.ca</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.newspunch.com">www.newspunch.com</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2) **FIND THE ORIGINAL SOURCE**

The articles below involve ‘reporting on reporting’. Find the original source and then evaluate it.

*“Orange Seagull is Actually Covered in Curry Powder,” HuffPost (July 8, 2018)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ORIGINAL REPORTING SOURCE:</th>
<th>NOTES:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*“Primary School Bans All Parents from Sports Days for Overcompetitive Behaviour,” The Sun (July 1, 2019)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ORIGINAL REPORTING SOURCE:</th>
<th>NOTES:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3) INVESTIGATE THE CLAIM

To see if a claim is accurate, use Google to find reporting on the story. Look for established media sources or fact-checking sites in the results.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CLAIM:</th>
<th>NOTES:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>U.K. school bans kids from saying ‘like.’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kellogg's plans to release ranch-dressing flavoured Pop Tarts.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air Canada passenger says she woke up alone on dark, empty plane.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scientists find dandelion root kills 98% of cancer cells in 48 hours.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4) CHECK THE PHOTO

Visit studentvote.ca/examples to find examples to practice your reverse image search skills. Right-click any picture in the Chrome browser, and select ‘Search Google for Image’ to find out where else a photo has been used.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IMAGE DESCRIPTION:</th>
<th>NOTES FROM REVERSE IMAGE SEARCH:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Lesson 7
Questioning Images

PURPOSE
Today’s news literacy requires image literacy. Developing a habit of questioning images can make us more informed citizens and can help us identify misinformation or disinformation.

In this lesson, students use a visual framework to analyze images from a variety of online and offline sources, allowing students to use their visual literacy and digital literacy skills in tandem. By working through the series of questions, students will develop everyday fact-checking habits and their ability to interpret and think critically about images.

LEARNING OUTCOMES
By the end of the lesson, students can:

• analyze images and explain how they produce meaning;
• identify and assess the source of an image;
• evaluate images based on their accuracy;
• infer how different audiences may interpret and use images;
• make informed decisions about sharing images and information;
• understand how images can be used to influence opinion during an election campaign.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

❶ How do images produce meaning?

❷ How do I know if it is ethical to share an image on social media?

❸ How can images influence public opinion during an election?

“The problem with things on the internet is that they are often untrue.”

Sir Wilfrid Laurier, GCMG, PC, KC
Seventh Prime Minister of Canada
Starter

1. As a class, ask students to analyze a few photos to introduce critical thinking about images. You can choose your own images or use the ones in Slide Deck 7.
   - What is being depicted?
   - What is the meaning behind the image? How does it make you feel?
   - What choices are visible? (e.g., crop, focal point, lighting, angle, etc). How do those choices affect how you interpret the image?

2. Next, analyze an image with a headline or caption. Start by sharing the image without the headline and invite students to share their analysis. Afterwards, reveal the headline or caption. You can use an image from a newspaper or the examples in Slide Deck 7.
   - What is being depicted?
   - How does the addition of the words change your understanding of the image?
   - What are some of the different ways people might interpret the message?

3. Ask students how they approach images online. What strategies do they already use to analyze images and to determine whether an image is worth sharing? Students can write their answers down, or answers can be collected on chart paper.

Activities

1. Review the importance of images in society and during election campaigns.
   - A picture can inspire an emotion or action or shape the way we understand people, issues, and events.
   - Political parties spend many hours planning photo ops to make sure the right image of their leader is presented to voters.

   Additional resource: “Why good political photo-ops don’t happen by accident,” CBC News (September 28, 2015).

2. Explain to students that when we see images online, the context can be hard to identify. Pictures get re-used, re-posted, re-mixed, turned into memes and can appear in different places with different text, so what they represent can change dramatically. Use Slide Deck 7 to review the concepts of misinformation and disinformation, and some of the tactics people use to spread disinformation with special attention to images.

3. Distribute copies of the ‘Questioning Images’ handout (Activity 7.1) and introduce the framework to analyze images. There are two levels to the framework, and the activity may be simplified by eliminating social media elements.
   - **Image fundamentals**
     Students describe the content of an image, identify its source, analyze possible meanings, and assess purpose. This level includes basic research and fact-checking. The fundamentals can be applied to any image in any context.
   - **Social media analysis**
     This level follows the same path as the fundamentals, but asks a series of extension questions specific to images found on social media, including whether or not it would be ethical to share the image online.

4. Use a ‘Think-Aloud’ strategy to model how to use the framework to analyze images. Examples are available in Slide Deck 7 or at studentvote.ca/questioning. A teacher guide and exemplars are included for support.

   **TEACHER NOTE**
   If you are analyzing an image from social media, you can also use this as an opportunity to model information literacy strategies for students, such as using reverse image searches and evaluating sources using Google and Wikipedia (see Lesson 6).

5. Divide the class into small groups, giving each one an image to work through using the ‘Questioning Images’ framework. Ask students to record their notes on Activity 7.2. You can give each group a different image to analyze or use the same image to support a whole class discussion. Before you begin, consult Guide 7.3 for additional information. Allow students 5 minutes to work through each of the four framework segments (20 min total).

6. Ask each group to share their image with the class and explain their key insights and conclusions. Would students share this image (on social media, or with friends and family in general)? Are there any ethical considerations with sharing the image?

Consolidation

Have a closing discussion about images as a source of information or ask students to write a reflection in their learning journal.
   - What can we learn about images by analyzing them?
   - Why is it important to question the images that we see?
   - How can images influence public opinion or our choices in elections? To what extent?
Assessment

Provide each student with an example image (or let students find their own). Ask students to work their image through the framework and fill out the activity on their own.

Extended Learning

There are many ways students can use the ‘Questioning Images’ framework to discuss how political campaigns, media organizations and individuals use images to influence public opinion around political candidates and issues. Here are some guiding questions you can use to supplement the framework when analyzing images related to the election:

- Analyze campaign advertisements: How does the advertisement use images to appeal to our emotions? How do the images make an argument about a political figure or issue?
- Analyze political memes: What images become memes? How are these images edited and remixed on social media? What are the qualities of an effective meme?
- Analyze political cartoons: How do cartoonists depict political figures or issues? How does the political cartoon combine images and words to comment on politics? How does the cartoon communicate political opinions?
- Analyze journalistic images from news organizations (print or online): Does the image depict its subject in a neutral manner, or do you think it is biased? How do different newspapers (with different leanings) depict the same events or the party leaders?
- Compare the official political party social media accounts. How do the political parties use images to portray their leader or present their vision? Do they use different images on different platforms (Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter)? If so, why? What audiences are the different social media accounts trying to target?

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS

Images are powerful. A picture can inspire an emotion or shape the way we understand people, issues, and events. Many expressions describe the impact of visual information — “a picture is worth a thousand words” or “seeing is believing.”

Unlike text, images are immediate and it does not take much time or effort to make sense of them. Because of the tremendous power of images to appeal to our emotions, it essential to ask questions about them.

Photos can be immensely influential in election campaigns, and images may help voters form their opinions on political candidates or issues. For this reason, campaign teams spend many hours planning photo-ops for their party leader or deciding how to use images to frame political issues and influence public opinion. In the age of social media, crafting the right image is even more important because politicians are able to reach voters directly, without relying as much on traditional media outlets.

This emotional power of images becomes particularly important when it comes to their role in spreading misinformation and disinformation.

A common form of misinformation or disinformation is false context — when a real image is paired with a false claim to incorrectly influence an audience’s understanding of what they are looking at.

But even when images are not being used maliciously, valuable information can be found by analyzing them. There is no such thing as a purely neutral image because each choice behind its creation and presentation has an impact on how an audience will interpret it.

Even a journalistic photograph intended to inform people about a news event will involve a series of choices that affect how audiences understand it. The choice of subject, angle, light and distance will all create a particular mood or message.

Editorial decisions will limit meaning further — an editor will select one image from a range of possible photos to publish, adding a headline and a caption to help audiences make sense of what they are seeing in a particular way.

Similarly, your flattering and unflattering selfies are both you, but you make a choice about which to post, and your captions help viewers understand how to interpret the photo.

We can use image analysis skills to investigate any type of image, in any context. A news photo published by a media outlet has a clear context. Context can be harder to identify with images online. Pictures will get re-used, re-posted, re-mixed, turned into memes, and appear in different places with different text, so what they represent can change dramatically, and quickly. A journalistic image meant to inform could be used to communicate something completely different used somewhere else.
HANDOUT 7.1: Questioning Images

1. Describe the Situation
   - What does the image show?
   - How does it make you feel?

2. Identify the Source
   - Where did the image originate?
   - Where did the image come from?
   - What is the source's reputation?

3. Interpret the Meaning
   - Is there any text with the image?
   - Does it influence the meaning?
   - What is the intended message? Is it accurate?
   - How have others commented on the image?

4. Analyze the Purpose
   - What is the purpose of the image?
   - How might different audiences interpret the image?
   - Why might people share this image?
   - Would sharing this image cause ethical concerns?

5. Questioning Images
   - Analyze the purpose.
   - Identify the source.
   - Interpret the meaning.
   - Describe the situation.
**ACTIVITY 7.2: Questioning Images**

1. **DESCRIBE THE SITUATION**

   What does the image show?  
   *(What is in the scene?)*

   How does it make you feel?  
   *(Does the image elicit an emotion?)*

2. **IDENTIFY THE SOURCE**

   Where did the image come from?  
   *(What type of image is it? Do you know who created it? Who published it?)*

   What is the source’s reputation? Is it reliable or unreliable? Briefly explain your decision.  
   *(Research the source using Wikipedia and/or Google.)*

   Where did the image originate?  
   *(On social media? On a news site? In print? Using a reverse image search may help you find out.)*

   Was the original image modified?  
   If yes, explain how.
### 3. INTERPRET THE MEANING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is there any text with the image? If yes, how does it influence the overall meaning?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the intended message? <em>(What do you think the person who created it wants you to think about the message?)</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the message accurate? Briefly explain your answer. <em>(Are there facts that can be checked?)</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How have others commented on the image?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 4. ANALYZE THE PURPOSE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is the purpose of the image?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Intent to inform</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Intent to harm or deceive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Intent to persuade</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Intent to entertain</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Other (explain)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How might different audiences interpret the image? <em>(What might your grandmother think about it? Your friend? Someone from a different culture?)</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why might people share the image?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would sharing the image on social media cause ethical concerns? Explain briefly.</td>
<td>Yes, No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CONCLUSION:** Would you share this information? Briefly explain your decision.
GUIDE 7.3: Questioning Images (Teacher Guide)

Please Note: Questions marked with the share symbol (تذكرى) only apply to social media images.

❶ Describe the Situation:
- Before analyzing an image for meaning, ask students to simply describe what they see. Give students time to examine the image closely. Without interpreting the image, answer the 5 Ws (Who? What? Where? When? Why?)
- Ask students to describe how the image makes them feel. If the image provokes strong emotions (positive or negative), this is a sign that it requires further investigation.

❷ Identify the Source
- Establish a set of core facts about the image. Identify the type of image (Is it a tweet? An Instagram post? An image from a print publication?), as well as the source of the image. Can you determine who created the image?
- Search Google and Wikipedia to learn more about the source and its reputation.

If the image is from social media (تذكرى):
- Consider whether the image originated on social media or if it originated elsewhere (such as on a news website, on a television broadcast, etc.)
- Ask students to consider both where the image came from (if a news source is listed) and the reliability of the person who posted or shared it.
- Ask students to perform a reverse image search on the image (see the 'Check the Image' video from Lesson 6) in order to trace the image’s history and see if it may have been manipulated or modified in any way. This is also a good way to find out if the image has been remixed or used in different contexts.

❸ Interpret the Meaning
- Now that students have established the basic facts of the image, they can begin interpreting it. Ask students to think carefully about how the image is framed by accompanying text or other contextual information.
- You may want to use this step as an opportunity to discuss what we mean when we say a message is “accurate.” Some of the images are completely fabricated while others may try to express a real concern about a political issue through misleading images.

If the image is from social media (تذكرى):
- For clues about how others interpreted the image, students may want to see if others have commented on the image on social media.
- Note: Because comments on social media are not always appropriate, you may want to review comments in advance or select a representative sample to show students.

❹ Analyze the Purpose?
- This final step asks students to think about the image within a broader social and cultural context. Does it intend to inform, harm, mislead, influence, or entertain?
- Ask students to consider other possible interpretations of the image.

If the image is from social media (تذكرى):
- Ask students to imagine why different people or groups might share the image. What might people be trying to communicate about themselves or their beliefs by sharing it?
- Discuss any possible ethical concerns that may arise from this image being shared on social media. Consider some of the effects the image could have by circulating widely online.
Lesson 8
Journalism in Democracy

PURPOSE
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.

In this lesson, students review the role of journalism in democracy, explore the difference between news reporting and opinion journalism, and learn to assess news articles for evidence of professional standards. In the Consolidation activity, this knowledge is then applied to a news analysis exercise. Under Extended Learning, an election scrapbook activity is suggested to consolidate this learning and research for the election.

LEARNING OUTCOMES
By the end of the lesson, students can:
• explain the role of journalism in democracy;
• distinguish between fact-based news coverage and opinion-journalism;
• analyze the presence of journalistic standards in news articles.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. What is the role of journalism?
2. What is the difference between news and opinion journalism?
3. How can I assess the credibility of a news report?
Starter

1. Give students time to work in pairs or small groups to activate any background knowledge they have about the term “journalism” using Activity Sheet 8.1. Students can also use images to communicate their thinking.

2. Have students share their thinking with another pair or group. Through a class discussion, highlight common themes that emerge.

3. Journalism consists of gathering, assessing, presenting and/or commenting on news and information. Watch the video “What Is Journalism and Why Does it Matter?” Some of the roles of journalism highlighted in the video are:
   - “Watchdog” role: To monitor government activity, fact-check statements, question the decisions of our government officials (transparency) and make them take responsibility for their actions (accountability).
   - Empower citizens: To give people the information they need to make the best possible decisions about their lives, society and governments.
   - Debate and discussion: To foster conversation about important issues facing society by sharing different perspectives and potential solutions.
   - A voice: To give people a voice and help them be heard — particularly those who lack power in society. This reporting is often connected with influencing change in the community or government actions.

4. Create a class definition for the term “journalism.” Students can add additional examples and non-examples to their notes in Activity 8.1.

Activities

1. Explain to students that journalism includes reporting on a variety of topics (such as news, sports, entertainment) but the most fundamental distinction to make is whether a story is fact-based or opinion-based.
   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.

   c) Review example articles (studentvote.ca/journalism) and have students assess whether the 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.

   TEACHER NOTE
   Outside of assessing the content of an article, inform students that they can look for signs to determine the purpose of the article, such as the section where the article is located (News or Opinion sections), labels used (“Opinion” or “Editorial”), the type of author (reporter vs columnist vs editorial board), or whether a photo or drawing is featured beside the name of the author (columnists typically have photos, while reporters do not).

2. Introduce the importance of analyzing the news we consume. When we form our own opinions, we want to make sure they are based on the best possible understanding of the information available. The next step in assessing news coverage is to look for the presence of journalistic standards.
   a) Using Slide Deck 8, introduce the standards to students:
      - Sources: How many sources are used? Are they reliable/authoritative?
      - Accuracy: Is there evidence that the information has been fact-checked or verified?
      - Research: What reports or secondary sources have been included? Have statistics been included and sources cited?
      - Context: Does the article address the bigger-picture of the story, beyond the news event?
      - Fairness: Is the tone even? What kinds of words are used to describe the players/issues?
   b) Take students through an example of assessing journalistic standards. See Exemplar 8.2.
Consolidation

Ask students to find an article of their own choosing about the 2019 federal election and assess the presence of journalistic standards (Activity 8.2). Students should use the prompts and guiding questions to make notes in the right-hand column.

Alternatively, you could provide the same article and use it for assessment purposes.

Extended Learning

The Election Scrapbook (Activity 8.3) has been created to consolidate the learning from this lesson and to help students improve news literacy skills and habits during the election campaign. Students will research the political parties, candidates and issues while also evaluating news articles and sources. To support this activity, students will need access to various newspapers and technology for online media.

This assignment can be used as a summative assignment at the end of the Student Vote program. This ongoing activity should begin once students have become familiar with the parties and the electoral process (Lesson 10).

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS

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 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.

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.
ACTIVITY 8.1: Defining Journalism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEFINITION</th>
<th>PURPOSES / CHARACTERISTICS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EXAMPLES/MODELS</td>
<td>NON-EXAMPLES</td>
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CLASS DEFINITION:
# EXEMPLAR 8.2: Journalistic Standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOURCE: SOURCES</th>
<th>NOTES:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Write down all the people who are quoted or referenced in the story.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• What is the relationship of each person to the central story?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Are these sources qualified to comment? (Research them if you are uncertain)</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>SOURCE: FAIRNESS</th>
<th>NOTES:</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Is there more than one side to this story? If so, are different perspectives represented?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Highlight any adjectives or phrases used to describe people or issues. Are the descriptions neutral? Is any judgement implied?</td>
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<tr>
<th>SOURCE: RESEARCH</th>
<th>NOTES:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Are any reports quoted or referenced, and/or any statistics included?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Where did the report or statistics come from? Are they appropriate and reliable? Do they help make sense of the story?</td>
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<tr>
<th>SOURCE: CONTEXT</th>
<th>NOTES:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• What background information is included in the article to help explain the significance of the news event?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Does the added information help you better understand the news event/issue?</td>
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<tr>
<th>SOURCE: ACCURACY</th>
<th>NOTES:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Underline any facts related to the central story.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• What evidence is used to support those facts?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Are quotes attributed to reputable sources?</td>
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ACTIVITY 8.3: Election Scrapbook

Over the course of the federal election campaign, you will create a news scrapbook/collection related to the parties, leaders, candidates and election issues.

You will need to make a decision about who you are going to vote for on Student Vote Day, and this means researching and evaluating your options. Although your vote does not count towards the official election tallies, the Student Vote results are shared publicly and politicians will get a better sense of what matters to the next generation of voters.

By the end of the news challenge, you need to analyze at least 12 news pieces and make sure that you have covered the elements on the following checklist. One news piece can cover more than one of the elements.

CHECKLIST:
- 2 news articles about each of the major political parties from different sources
- 1-2 news pieces about the candidates/race in your riding
- 2-3 opinion pieces about the election from different sources
- 2 news stories from different sources about the same campaign event, issue or development

Your news articles/pieces should come from at least 5 different news outlets, and include both online, print and broadcast media (TV or radio).

For any of the fact-based news coverage, assess 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 collection, please respond to the following questions.
- Which two news sources do you like the most and why?
- 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 coverage influence your views about an issue, party or candidate? Explain.
SECTION III: Federal Elections
Lesson 9
The Federal Political Landscape

PURPOSE
In a democratic society, people have different beliefs and values, which influence their position on political issues. Political parties bring together people with similar beliefs and political perspectives who are seeking to effect change by being elected.

In this lesson, students are introduced to political issues and the political spectrum. After learning about Canadian political parties, students participate in an online tool (Vote Compass: Canada Youth Edition) to better understand the federal political landscape and which party they might be more closely aligned with.

GUIDING QUESTIONS
1. What is the relationship between people’s beliefs and values and their positions on political issues?
2. How does your position on the federal political landscape compare to others?

LEARNING OUTCOMES
By the end of the lesson, students can:
- analyze how beliefs and values shape positions and actions on political issues;
- explain the function of the political spectrum;
- assess their position on the political spectrum and compare it to others;
- demonstrate respect for others’ perspectives.
### Starter

1. Review the concept of a political issue and ask students to provide a few examples. A political issue is a topic or subject that affects society as a whole and, often there are multiple opinions on various sides of any given issue.

2. Use a ‘Values Continuum’ activity to explore different opinions on a particular political issue. Sample issues are listed after the instructions.

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### Activities

1. Using Slide Deck 9 and Handout 9.1, review the concept of the political spectrum. The political spectrum can have one or more dimensions represented by its own axis. Often, economic issues and social issues are separated.

   - On economic issues, left-leaning people tend to support social services and government intervention in the economy. Whereas right-leaning people tend to support lower taxes, free markets and less government intervention in the economy.
   - On social issues, people who identify as progressive tend to support the improvement of society through change and the promotion of social justice values. People who identify as social conservatives tend to support the preservation of traditions and established values.

2. Using Slide Deck 9, review the function of political parties.

   - A political party is a group made up of people who share a similar political ideology and goals about society and government.
   - In order for the political party to have the chance to work towards its goals, the party tries to win an election and form government.

3. Ask students if they can name any of the political parties at the federal level. Using Slide Deck 9, review the list of registered parties and the parties represented in the House of Commons.

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### Suggested Format

**A. Prepare the spectrum:** Draw a line on the blackboard or whiteboard. Post one of the paired statements at one end and its opposite at the other end of the line.

**B. Formulate an opinion:** Read the opposing statements for the topic selected and give students a few minutes to reflect on their views or ask them to jot down notes in their journal.

**C. Take a stand:** Ask students to post a sticky note or write their initials on the spot along the line that represents their opinion. They may place it anywhere between the two extremes, depending on how much they do or do not agree with the statement. If they are at either extreme, they are in complete agreement with the given statement.

**D. Explain your position:** Ask students to explain their reasoning. Encourage students to refer to evidence and examples when defending their stance. After several viewpoints have been heard, ask if anyone wishes to re-assess their position.

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### Sample political issues:

**SMARTPHONES IN THE CLASSROOM**

- Smartphones give students a wealth of creative options to enhance the learning experience in the classroom.
- Smartphones are a distraction in the classroom and their educational value is overstated.

**ZOOS**

- Zoos educate the public about animals and conservation efforts.
- Zoos do not educate the public enough to justify keeping animals captive.

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### Teacher Note

There are many more active political parties in Canada. All of the registered political parties are listed on the Elections Canada website ([www.elections.ca](http://www.elections.ca)).

4. Explain to students that the Vote Compass: Canada Youth Edition ([youth.votecompass.com/can](http://youth.votecompass.com/can)) is a political spectrum tool, which helps young people familiarize themselves with different ideological positions at the federal level. At the end of the survey, you will be placed on the two-dimension political spectrum so that you can see where you sit compared to other students and people aligned with the political parties in Canada.
**Consolidation**

Through a written reflection, ask students to consider their responses to one or more of the following questions:

- Do you agree with how you were placed on the political spectrum? Why or why not?
- What insights can you draw from the results of the Vote Compass: Canada Youth Edition? What conclusions can you make about the federal political landscape?
- How are people's beliefs and values connected to their positions on political issues?
- What do you think has shaped your political views most and why?

**Assessment For Learning**

Have students write an opinion piece where they agree or disagree with one of the statements in the Vote Compass: Canada Youth Edition (youth.votecompass.com/can).

Steps to writing an opinion piece:

i. Decide whether you agree or disagree with the statement.

ii. Think of reasons why you hold that opinion (try to come up with at least three), and at least one example from your own experience that supports your opinion.

iii. Write an introductory paragraph, making sure it clearly states your opinion.

iv. Write at least one body paragraph, which gives your reasons for your opinion and the examples from your own experience.

v. Write a concluding paragraph that summarizes your opinion.
A civic or political issue is a topic or subject that people speak about because it affects society as a whole and, often there are multiple opinions on different sides of any given issue.

A perspective is one particular point of view or outlook. Our perspectives are shaped by who we are and our environment or experiences. High school students may have a different perspective about life and priorities than their parents or guardians. Alternatively, people living in different countries may have different priorities or values in life.

How does a perspective differ from an opinion? Your perspective is where you are standing and how you look at something. Your opinion is what you see or believe about something.

The political spectrum provides a way to characterize different beliefs and ideologies, and distinguish between actions on political issues, as well as political parties.

The political spectrum can 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.

Canadians who are left-leaning on economic issues tend to support higher taxes and more government spending, more government involvement, and more social services.

Canadians who are right-leaning on economic issues tend to support low taxes and less government spending, less government intervention, and the free market.

Canadians 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.

Canadians 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.

A political party is a group of like-minded individuals with similar goals 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.
HANDOUT 9.1: 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 issues. Below is a general summary of views based on a two-dimensional political spectrum.

Related to economic issues, Canadians 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.

While Canadians who are right-leaning on economic issues 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.

On social issues, progressive Canadians 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.

While Canadians who are conservative on social issues 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 the country 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.
HANDOUT 9.2: Key Political Terms and Concepts at the Federal Level

Below are some key terms and concepts that you may want to be familiar with at the federal level to help prepare you before or while taking the Vote Compass: Canada Youth Edition survey.

- **Economy**: The wealth and resources of a country or region, particularly in terms of the production and consumption of goods and services.

- **Budget**: A financial plan or forecast that shows a breakdown of money to be received and money to be spent for a specific period. The federal government releases an annual budget every spring.

- **Balanced Budget**: When the amount of revenue equals the amount of expenses.

- **Deficit**: When the government has more expenses than revenues, and must borrow money to cover the gap.

- **Debt**: The amount of money borrowed over time that the government needs to repay.

- **Taxes**: The federal government collects money from different sources to pay for its expenses. There are four main types.
  - **Personal Tax**: Money collected from individuals based on the money they make from jobs and investments.
  - **Corporate Tax**: Money collected from businesses, which is calculated based on their profits.
  - **Goods and Services Tax (GST)**: Added to the cost of purchases and goods, such as clothing and fast food.
  - **Other Taxes**: Variety of other taxes such as import duties, fuel taxes and duties on alcohol and tobacco.

- **Transfer Payments**: Part of the federal government’s spending relates to transfers made to individuals, provincial/territorial governments and other groups.

- **Transfers to Individuals**: Includes elderly benefits, employment insurance benefits (for those out of work or unable to work) and children benefits.

- **Provincial/Territorial Transfers**: There are three main types of transfers to the provinces and territories.
  - The **Canada Health Transfer** provides long-term funding for health programs and services.
  - The **Canada Social Transfer** includes funding for post-secondary education, social programs and services for children such as child care.
  - **Equalization programs** relate to payments to address economic gaps between provinces/territories.

- **Infrastructure**: Physical and organizational structures, such as buildings, roads, power supplies.

- **Crown Corporations**: Businesses owned by the government that operate independent of government, such as the CBC, Canada Post and Via Rail. They are intended serve a particular objective or fill a need that may not be filled by a private enterprise.

- **Equality**: A strategy to achieve fairness by treating everyone the same and providing equal opportunity.

- **Equity**: A strategy to achieve fairness by recognizing differences and providing everyone what they need to be successful.

- **Reform**: Changes made to a social, political, or economic institution or practice in order to improve it.
Lesson 10
My Candidates

PURPOSE
During the federal election campaign, political parties and candidates communicate their vision and ideas to try to gain public support. As a voter, you need to evaluate the policies and promises critically, and find out which party or candidate best aligns with your views and priorities.

In this lesson, students learn about the federal election process in Canada. After learning the basics, students work in groups to research a candidate or party running in their school's riding and present this information to the rest of the class. In the Consolidation activity, students reflect on the similarities and differences between the candidates and/or parties, and assess which they would support and why.

LEARNING OUTCOMES
By the end of the lesson, students can:
• describe how to find out which riding they live in and which candidates are running for election;
• collaborate with their peers to learn about the candidates and parties running in the election;
• compare and contrast how different political parties or candidates respond to the same political issue;
• express their own political views and preferences.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

1 Who are the candidates in my federal riding?

2 Which party or candidate will best address my interests and concerns for the country?
Readiness

A few days prior to the lesson, ask students to survey at least five family members or friends about the federal issues they care about the most. Which issues or challenges do they believe should be addressed by the next government?

Starter

1. Using a ‘Turn and Talk’ strategy, have students discuss which issues they believe are most important in the upcoming federal election. Students should voice their own opinions and those of friends and family collected in the Readiness activity, or recall issues presented in Lesson 9 through the Vote Compass: Canada Youth Edition (youth.votecompass.com/can).

2. Afterwards, invite students to share their discussions. As a class, create a list of 10-12 issues or areas of concern.

3. Next, ask students: how would you decide which issues are most important? With students, develop a list of criteria for significance, or use the list of criteria provided below.

Sample criteria: Ask students to respond to the following questions for each issue: ‘Definitely not’/’Probably not’/’Probably’/’Definitely’

- Is the impact long lasting?
- Is the impact extreme – positively or negatively?
- Are many people affected?
- Does it directly affect you, your family, friends, and/or your community?
- How many people are for and/or against it?
- Are the differences between supporters and opponents substantial?

4. In small groups, have students use the criteria to rank the issues from most to least significant.

5. Follow up with a class discussion. Teachers can poll each group and ask which issue they ranked first and last. Come to a class consensus regarding the top three or four issues.

Activities

1. Ask students to fill out the ‘before’ column in the Anticipation Guide (Activity 10.1).


Guiding questions:

- What is an election?
- What is a candidate?
- What are ridings? How are riding boundaries determined? How many do we have in Canada?
- What is an electoral system?
- Which electoral system do we use in Canadian federal elections? How does it work?

3. Demonstrate to students how they can find out which riding they live in by visiting the Elections Canada website (www.elections.ca). Go to the ‘Voter Information Service’ and enter your school’s postal code.

4. Examine a map of your school’s riding and review the boundaries. Point out the location of your school within the riding.

5. Review the list of candidates running in your school’s riding (www.elections.ca).

TEACHER NOTE

The school’s riding may be different from where some students call home. Please contact CIVIX if you would like your school to receive Student Vote ballots for multiple ridings, to accommodate students who would like to vote for their local candidates.


7. Organize students into groups and assign each group a candidate (or political party), or allow them to choose one based on their preference. The goal is to ensure that a group covers each candidate/party running in your riding, including independent candidates and those with no party affiliation.

Using online sources ask each group to research their assigned party/candidate and create a presentation and product in a selected format (e.g., slide deck, video, bulletin board, party pamphlet).

Guiding questions:

- Who is the local candidate? Do they belong to a political party?
- If applicable, who is the current leader of the party?
- What are the main messages of their campaign advertisements?
- What are the party’s main priorities or promises? Who are the main beneficiaries?
- How will the party address the top issues identified in the Starter activity? Do the proposals have long-term benefit?
Lesson 10: My Candidates

Suggested sources:

• Candidate/party websites
• Candidate/party social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube)
• Candidate/party campaign literature
• News sources
• Pollenize – pollenize.org/canada (party platform summaries on a dozen topics)

TEACHER NOTE
Students should outline their information sources on their products or during the presentation. Review Lesson 6 for tips and tricks for source verification.

8. Have each group present their political party to the rest of the class. Students can take notes on each presentation using Graphic Organizer 10.2. Provide as many copies as necessary.

Consolidation

Have a brief closing discussion about the political parties and local candidates with your class, or have students fill out an 'Exit Slip' (Activity 10.3).

• What are the key similarities and differences between the candidates and/or parties?

Assessment

Using Activity 10.4, ask students to select an issue that matters most to them and research each party’s position or promises on the selected issue. Who are the main beneficiaries? Will the policy have long-term benefit? If so, how? Which party's position or policy do you most agree with and why? The Pollenize tool (pollenize.org/canada) can be used to support this research and comparison. Provide enough copies of 10.4 to allow for a write-up on each party running a candidate in your riding.

Extended Learning

Organize a presentation schedule that would allow each group to visit other classes in the school on a rotational basis to help inform and prepare the student electorate for Student Vote Day. A school-wide assembly could also be coordinated.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS

An electoral system is the way in which we elect our representatives. An electoral system includes set rules for how preferences are recorded and the method for determining which candidates win. There are many different electoral systems used around the world.

Canada uses a system called Single-Member Plurality or First Past the Post (FPTP). The country is divided into geographic areas called ridings (or electoral districts). Canada is currently divided into 338 federal ridings.

In our system, each riding is represented by one Member of Parliament. The size of ridings is determined by factors such as population size, geographic features and social considerations, such as culture and language. The most important factor is making sure that the number of people represented is as equal as possible, so that every vote counts the same.

Urban ridings are often geographically smaller due to dense populations, while rural ridings are often geographically larger with less dense populations.

In FPTP, voters choose a single candidate on the 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. This is called plurality.

Under Canada’s parliamentary system, the party that elects the greatest number of representatives to the House of Commons usually forms government and their leader becomes the prime minister.

Canada has a fixed-date election law. This means that federal elections must take place at least every four years, and that the date for that election is set. Canada’s 43rd federal general election is scheduled for October 21, 2019. Though we have fixed-date elections, a prime minister can still request that a federal election be held at any time as long as it is no later than five years after the previous election.

The election campaign period starts when Parliament is dissolved by the governor general, on the advice of the prime minister, and an election is called. The length of a campaign may vary, but it must be between 36 and 50 days. During an election campaign, an organized course of action is taken by a political party and its candidates to share its vision and platform with voters.

A political platform is a series of declared principles and policies on jurisdictional issues concerning government and the public. Candidates and parties use a communications strategy that incorporates all three types of media (paid, earned, owned) to share their party platforms through announcements, advertising and events and to gain support from constituents.
**ACTIVITY 10.1: Anticipation Guide – Federal Elections**

Answer the following questions, prior to learning about federal elections in Canada.

Afterwards, respond to the questions again based on any new information you have acquired.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUESTION</th>
<th>BEFORE</th>
<th>AFTER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>When is the next federal election?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Which electoral system do we use for federal elections?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>How many ridings are there in Canada?</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>What is the name of our school’s riding?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What is the title given to elected representatives at the federal level?</td>
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<tr>
<td>How many candidates can you choose on your ballot?</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do we vote for prime minister?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
**GRAPHIC ORGANIZER 10.2: Getting To Know The Candidates**

Fill out the graphic organizer below with information about the candidates running in your riding.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CANDIDATE AND POLITICAL PARTY DETAILS</th>
<th>PRIORITIES, PROMISES AND KEY MESSAGES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Candidate Name:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Party Name:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Party Leader:</td>
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<td>Candidate Name:</td>
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<td>Party Name:</td>
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<td>Party Leader:</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

68 Lesson 10: My Candidates
### ACTIVITY 10.3: Campaign Reflection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is one thing you will share with your family about the parties and candidates?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which candidate/party do you think you will vote for and why?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>What else do you want to know before making your voting decision?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is one thing you will share with your family about the parties and candidates?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Which candidate/party do you think you will vote for and why?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What else do you want to know before making your voting decision?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
GRAPHIC ORGANIZER 10.4: Analyzing the Campaign Promises

Pick one issue and analyze the parties’ policies and promises related to the issue. Afterwards, analyze which party's position you agree with most.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PARTIES:</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What are the party's promises related to the issue?</td>
<td>Who are the main beneficiaries of the policies?</td>
<td>Do the policies have long-term benefit?</td>
<td>Explain.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Which party's position you agree with most and why?
Lesson 11
Election Debates

PURPOSE
Debates are a cornerstone of a healthy democracy and can contribute to a well-informed and active citizenry. In order to be an informed voter, citizens should pay attention to what politicians are saying and have the tools to evaluate their statements.

In this lesson, students learn about effective debating skills and faulty arguments, before analyzing the leaders’ debate for the federal election. In the Consolidation activity, students discuss the role of debate in democracy.

LEARNING OUTCOMES
By the end of the lesson, students can:

- explain the role of debates in elections;
- summarize effective debating skills and techniques;
- identify different logical fallacies or faulty arguments that people may use;
- compare and contrast the performance of party leaders in the leaders’ debate.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. What makes an effective debater?

2. Why should we analyze the leaders’ debate and the statements made by leaders?
Lesson 11: Election Debates

**Starter**

1. Break students into pairs or groups of four and ask them to debate one of the propositions below. Students can make notes on Activity 11.1.
   - Social media is more helpful than harmful to our social lives
   - School should be year-round with more breaks
   - Basketball is better than hockey
   - The Weeknd is a better musician than Drake

2. Debrief on the activity:
   - Did your opinion on the topic change after the debate? Why or why not?
   - What arguments convinced you and why?
   - What arguments were not convincing and why not?
   - What skills and techniques make an effective debater?

**Activities**

1. Introduce the concept of a leaders’ debate.
   - A leaders’ debate is an opportunity for party leaders to present their policy ideas to the public, and challenge their opponents’ positions.
   - Debates allow citizens to be exposed to different political views.
   - Debates have produced great moments of political history and have acted as major turning points in election campaigns.

2. Watch one of the highlight videos below about previous leaders’ debates.
   - 2011 leaders’ debate (highlights) – [www.cbc.ca/player/play/2045305469](http://www.cbc.ca/player/play/2045305469)
   - 2008 leaders’ debate (highlights) – [www.cbc.ca/player/play/1844959231](http://www.cbc.ca/player/play/1844959231)
   - 2006 leaders’ debate (highlights) – [www.cbc.ca/player/play/1844851254](http://www.cbc.ca/player/play/1844851254)

3. Have a whole class discussion about what makes an effective debater. What did you see in the video that was effective or ineffective? What skills and techniques are important in debate? Which are not? Build on the list generated in the Starter activity, and add any of these that might be missing.

**Effective debating skills and techniques:** The ability to speak clearly and confidently, think quickly, clarify arguments, provide examples, use facts, maintain persuasive speech, appeal to emotions and maintain a professional tone and body language.

**Poor debating habits:** Losing control and expressing anger, poor listening, using faulty arguments, personal attacks, and acting unprofessional.

4. Explain to students that one way to analyze the debate is to pay attention to how the leaders construct arguments. Sometimes individuals will use faulty reasoning to make a point. Review common types of flawed arguments (logical fallacies) and have students write down their own example for each (Activity 11.2).
   - Authoritative Argument
   - Slippery Slope
   - Appeal to Tradition
   - Personal Attack
   - False Dilemma
   - Strawman Argument

Students may also recall arguments made in the Starter activity or use the proposition debated to create their faulty arguments.

5. Have students watch the 2019 leaders’ debate at home or watch select video clips of the event in the days following, and complete Activity 11.3. To prepare for the viewing, review the party leaders that will participate in the debate. You can use the Party Leader Q&A videos or the leader profiles on the Pollenize tool.

**KEY TERMS**

- **Zinger** a striking or amusing remark.
- **Gaffe** a mistake/error causing embarrassment.

**TEACHER NOTE**

In their entirety, each leadership debate may run for 90-120 minutes. The debate will be edited into several smaller segments afterwards, which will make it easier to watch in the classroom.
6. Afterwards, have students share their analysis and examples with their peers.

**Consolidation**

Have a brief closing discussion about the leadership debates and the role of debate in democracy.

- Why is debate important in democracy?
- Do you think it is valuable for citizens to watch leadership debates prior to voting in an election? Why or why not?
- Did you change your views of the party leaders or their party's positions after watching the debate? Explain.

**Extended Learning**

**OPTION A**: News media will report on the leadership debate, offering accounts of what occurred. There are two main categories of media report.

- A news story, or **factual account**, will go over the events of the debate. This type of story will be as neutral as possible, and will include interviews with experts offering interpretations of what occurred. Interview subjects with contrasting views may appear in the same story to offer different perspectives.
- The second category is an **opinion-based piece**, which usually takes the form of a written column. In this case, the journalist is also the expert. A columnist will advance a first-person argument based on their opinion. This opinion should be backed up with evidence, and existing knowledge of the subject. Some columnists will use more facts than others, or source their arguments better.

In pairs or small groups, have students analyze a pair of news articles — one written by a news reporter, the other by an opinion columnist, or articles from different publications. Students may use Activity 11.4. to record responses.

**OPTION B**: Organize your own candidates’ debate or watch a video of a debate organized in the community. Afterwards, analyze the performances of your local candidates. Guide 11.5 provides a helpful outline and tips for organizing a debate for your school.

---

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS**

Debates are a cornerstone of a healthy democracy and can contribute to a well-informed and active citizenry.

During federal elections, leaders’ debates act as a platform for certain party leaders to present their ideas and policy positions and challenge their opponents’ positions in a respectful and open environment. Debates ensure that citizens are exposed to a variety of political views, including positions that do not always align with their own – which is particularly important in the age of social media.

Leaders’ debates provide a chance for citizens to hear directly from the leaders in an unfiltered way, without manipulation from intermediate sources.

Debating is about using persuasive arguments and good oratory that appeal not only to our rational side, but also to our emotions. It involves reducing complex social and economic issues to simplified stories that are easy to understand and relate to. Promises and claims are often based on facts — data, statistics and the like — but disagreements can arise regarding the interpretation of facts, as well as which facts are important at all.

In order to be an informed voter, citizens should pay attention to what politicians are saying and have the tools to evaluate their assertions. A **logical fallacy** is a type of faulty argument. This type of argument may sound convincing in the moment, but if you stop and examine it, it does not stand up to the test of logic. It is very helpful to be able to recognize a logical fallacy and not be persuaded by it.

Recently, the government created an independent commission to organize federal leaders’ debates for the 2019 election to avoid partisan influences. There will be one debate in each official language. The English-language debate will occur on October 7 and the French-language debate will happen on October 10.

There are new rules which determine which political parties are eligible to participate in the debates. Political parties must meet two of the following three criteria to be included:

- have a member elected to parliament at the time the election is called;
- intend to run candidates in at least 90 per cent of ridings;
- have either obtained four per cent of the vote in a previous election or have a “legitimate” chance to win seats in the upcoming election.
# Activity 11.1: Debate Organizer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
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</table>

## Background Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>My Main Points/Arguments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>My Opponent's Arguments</th>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>My Rebuttal</th>
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</thead>
</table>
ACTIVITY 11.2: Common Logical Fallacies

A logical fallacy is a faulty argument. There are many different kinds—below are some common ones. This type of argument may sound convincing in the moment, but if you stop and examine it, it does not stand up to the test of logic. This is a tricky form of argument that is very helpful to be able to recognize (and not be persuaded by).

1. AUTHORITATIVE ARGUMENT
Claiming something to be true because an expert said so.

The scientist on TV last night said that chocolate is good for you, so that means we can all eat all the chocolate we want now.

YOUR EXAMPLE

2. SLIPPERY SLOPE
Believing a small change will lead to a disaster.

If we let students have phones in the classroom, they will never pay attention to the teacher, and won’t learn anything at school.

YOUR EXAMPLE

3. APPEAL TO TRADITION
Claiming something is true since it has always been so.

Fishing is prohibited in my village. This is silly. I fished there all the time growing up. It should still be allowed.

YOUR EXAMPLE

4. PERSONAL ATTACK
To ignore the arguments of an individual by attacking them personally and not their arguments.

Politician 1: “I will fight for the poor people of Canada.”

Politician 2: “Have you seen this guy’s mansion? What does he know about poor people?”

YOUR EXAMPLE

5. FALSE DILEMMA
Presenting only two solutions to one problem when other options are also available.

We can either go to an amusement park or waste our day off. You don’t want to waste a day off, do you?

YOUR EXAMPLE

6. STRAWMAN ARGUMENT
Deliberately misrepresenting someone else’s argument to make it easier to attack.

Politician 1: “I think we should spend less on the military.”

Politician 2: “My opponent wants to leave the country defenceless. We deserve better.”

YOUR EXAMPLE
ACTIVITY 11.3: Evaluating the Leaders’ Debate

❶ Identify four examples of faulty arguments made during the debate (e.g., personal attack, false dilemma, slippery slope, appeal to tradition). List the leader, the argument and type of logical fallacy.

❷ Which leader do you think performed the best and why?

❸ Which arguments were most persuasive and why?

❹ Did your views about the leaders or any policy positions change over the course of the debate? Explain.
**ACTIVITY 11.4: Analyzing Articles about the Debate**

Using the news articles provided, please fill in the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NEWS SOURCE</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HEADLINE</th>
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</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AUTHOR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DESCRIBE THE TYPE OF ARTICLE. Is the article a news report, or an opinion piece? How do you know?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUMMARIZE THE ARTICLE. What positive or negative comments were made about the leaders’ performances?</th>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHO WON THE DEBATE? Does the article declare a winner of the debate? What evidence is offered?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DESCRIBE THE IMAGE CHOSEN FOR THE ARTICLE. If your article contains a picture, why do you think it was chosen? What is it the meaning behind it?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
GUIDE 11.5: A Framework for Organizing an All-Candidates’ Debate

It is important when hosting an event at your school that things are run professionally and efficiently. Consider the following as you arrange your event.

PREPARATION:
- Decide on a time, date and location.
- Invite all candidates running in your riding to participate in the meeting/debate.
- Consider organizing the event with another school or videotaping, podcasting and/or live-streaming the event to share with other schools in your riding.
- Work with school staff to set up audio equipment and seating.
- Recruit a moderator (teacher, student, community leader or journalist).

QUESTIONS:
- Determine the timing for questions and answers and whether all, some or one candidate will respond.
- Plan questions in advance and encourage other classes to submit questions to increase interest and engagement. Consider both personal and policy questions (e.g., Why did you decide to run? What makes you qualified for the job? How will you improve the community? What is your number one priority if elected?).
- Once the questions have been selected, confirm which students will ask the questions.

FORMAT:
- Use a combination of short (i.e., 30 seconds) and longer responses (i.e., 2 minutes each). Make sure that the time limits are announced and monitored with a stopwatch.
- Establish an agenda and guidelines for the meeting to share with candidates and participating classes.
- Below is a suggested framework:
  a) Introduction — The moderator should welcome the audience, introduce the candidates and detail the structure of the meeting (3 minutes).
  b) Opening statements — Brief introductory statements from the candidates (2 minutes each).
  c) Planned questions — Ask the pre-determined questions to the candidates (25-30 minutes).
  d) Open questions — Give the audience an opportunity to ask final questions to specific candidates (10-15 minutes).
  e) Closing statements — Final words from the candidates (1-2 minutes each).
  f) Thank you — Plan a formal thank you from designated students (2 minutes).

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS FOR THE DEBATE:
- Ensure a respectful, non-partisan environment.
- If a candidate declines, cancels or does not show up, respect their campaign schedule and ensure that students are aware that the candidate is running in the election but is unable to attend.
- Communicate expectations regarding behaviour and participation.
- You can invite parents/guardians or members from the community, but non-student audience members should NOT ask questions.
- Have students take notes during the debate to review next class.
- If possible, provide time for students to talk with the candidates after the meeting and offer some refreshments.
Lesson 12
The Voting Process

PURPOSE
The right to vote comes with the responsibility to vote in an informed and purposeful manner.

In this lesson, students share their views and opinions about participating in the voting process. Students review essential information about eligibility and when, where and how people vote in federal elections. Afterwards, students reflect on the election issues, party platforms, leaders and the local candidates and what will influence their decision on Student Vote Day. In the Consolidation activity, students discuss whether voting is a duty or a choice.

LEARNING OUTCOMES
By the end of the lesson, students can:

- assess the importance of participating in elections;
- explain the requirements and steps in order to participate in the voting process;
- evaluate which factors will influence their voting decision;
- demonstrate respect for others’ perspectives.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. How do I vote in federal elections?

2. Is voting a duty or a choice?
Starter

1. Why do people vote? Ask students to share their views and opinions about participating in the voting process through a whole class discussion.

2. Watch the video 'Why Voting Matters' with your students to listen to different reasons why students believe voting is important.

3. Have a follow up conversation in small groups or as a whole class. Guiding questions:
   - Which opinions shared in the video resonate the most with you?
   - Over the course of the Student Vote activities, has your opinion changed about whether voting is important?
   - What is the impact of high or low levels of voter participation?
   - Do you think it is important that students practice voting before they turn 18 years old? Why or why not?

Activities

1. Explain to students that voting in federal elections is done by secret ballot. Voters mark their ballot behind a privacy screen and their choice is concealed afterwards. Using 'Think-Pair-Share', have students reflect on one or more of the following questions:
   - Why is secrecy important?
   - What could happen if elections were held publicly?
   - Why is it important to ensure a fair and impartial electoral process?

2. Using Slide Deck 12, discover key aspects of the voting process in Canadian federal elections. Guiding questions:
   - Who is qualified to vote in federal elections?
   - What is the list of electors?
   - Where do I vote?
   - How do I vote? How do I mark my ballot?

3. Remind students that voting is more than just marking an ‘X’ on a ballot. It requires research, critical thinking and reflecting on your perspective and opinions.

4. Ask students to reflect on the election issues, party platforms, leaders and the local candidates by filling out Activity 12.1.

5. Divide students into groups of five and have one student share their response to one specific question (questions 1-5) and provide time for group discussion. For the final question, invite all group members to share their thoughts.

6. Afterwards, facilitate a class discussion and allow students the opportunity to share their views. Some students 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 private.

   **TEACHER NOTE**
   This is a great opportunity to reinforce the choice for privacy and the importance of being respectful towards others with different points of view.

Consolidation

In this phase, students practice articulating viewpoints about voting.

1. Arrange students into pairs. One student will take the position, ‘voting is a choice,’ and the other student will take the position that ‘voting is a duty.’

2. Ask students to brainstorm statements that support their position on Activity 12.2.

3. Afterwards, have students share their thinking with their partner, taking turns speaking, listening and recording their discussions. Direct students to listen carefully to their partner’s ideas and use point form to record their partner’s ideas on the back of their brainstorming sheet.

4. Ask volunteers to share their statements and discussions with the whole class.

5. End with a class discussion about which statement they agree with most.

   **TEACHER NOTE**
   Alternatively, you could debate the statement: ‘voting is a right’ or ‘voting is a responsibility’.
To find out specific dates and times for voting, visit the Elections Canada website (www.elections.ca) for up-to-date information. To vote, you need to prove your identity and address. You have three options:

1. Show one piece of government-issued ID with your photo, name and address;
2. Show two pieces of ID. Both pieces must have your name, and one must also have your address;
3. If you don’t have ID, you can still vote if you declare your identity and address in writing and have someone who knows you and who is assigned to your polling station vouch for you. The voucher must be able to prove their identity and address. A person can vouch for only one person.

Visit the Elections Canada website (www.elections.ca) for a list of the different pieces of ID and proof of address that are accepted.

The voting process works as follows:

1. An election worker greets you and shows you to the right table. If you need help, ask an election worker.
2. Show your proof of identity and address.
3. An election worker checks your name on the list of electors and gives you a folded ballot.
4. Go behind the voting screen, mark your ballot and refold it to keep it secret.
5. Return your ballot to the election worker. They will remove the tab so that your ballot cannot be traced back to you.
6. Put your ballot in the box.

Voting across Canada is done by secret ballot. This ensures the privacy of each voter’s choice. No one except the voter knows the choice that was made. It is illegal to take a photo of a marked ballot.

A ballot lists the names of the candidates running in your riding and their political party affiliation, where applicable. There is a space beside each candidate’s name on the ballot to mark your preference. As long as you clearly mark the ballot for one candidate, your ballot is valid. This includes a checkmark, X, shading in or another marking.

A rejected ballot is a ballot that cannot be counted due to a deliberate or accidental unrecognizable choice. This can include marking the ballot for more than one candidate even if different symbols are used, ranking the candidates, leaving the ballot blank, writing your name or anything on the ballot.

A spoiled ballot is 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. The election worker marks the ballot as spoiled and sets it aside.

When preparing to vote, you can consider reasons to support a candidate for MP, a political party or leader, a specific policy idea and/or an entire 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.

Elections Canada is the official source for all information about federal elections in Canada. Find out more information at www.elections.ca.
ACTIVITY 12.1: Preparing to Vote

Use the following questions to reflect on various aspects of the election campaign and help you make your voting decision.

1. Which of the party leaders do you think would make the best prime minister and why?

2. Which local candidate do you think would make the best Member of Parliament and why?

3. Which party platform do you support the most and why? Which aligns with your priorities? Explain.

4. Which election issue is most important to you? Which party’s proposal to address this issue do you agree with the most?

5. Rate the following considerations when making your final voting decision. You can use the following rating scale: very important, fairly important, slightly important or not important at all.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONSIDERATION</th>
<th>RATING</th>
<th>REASON</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The local candidate</td>
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<tr>
<td>The party leader</td>
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<tr>
<td>The platform</td>
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<tr>
<td>Proposal for a single issue</td>
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6. Which information, events or activities related to the campaign helped shaped your views the most, and why?
ACTIVITY 12.2: Brainstorming Sheet

OPENING STATEMENT:

Voting is a CHOICE or voting is a DUTY.

REASON 1:

Supporting Statements: Give examples that support your reason.

REASON 2:

Supporting Statements: Give examples that support your reason.

CLOSING STATEMENT:
Lesson 13
Post-Election Analysis

PURPOSE
Elections are complex events and it is helpful to analyze the outcome to better understand the process and what the results mean for the future of the country.

In this lesson, students will examine the results of the Student Vote Canada 2019 program and the 2019 federal election. Afterwards, they will analyze the campaign promises made by the newly elected government and assess what these actions will mean for stakeholder groups and Canadians across the country. In the Consolidation activity, students have the opportunity to reflect on the outcome of the election.

LEARNING OUTCOMES
By the end of the lesson, students can:

• Analyze the results of the election;
• Discuss how campaign events influenced the outcome of the election;
• Predict the newly elected government’s priorities and assess the potential impact;
• Recognize the importance being an active and engaged citizen.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

❶ How can we analyze election results?

❷ How can we predict, track and assess the actions of the newly elected government?
Starter

1. Announce the results of your school’s Student Vote election. Who received the most votes? Was it a close race? What percentage of the vote did the winner receive?

2. Compare the results of your school’s vote with the results of other schools in your riding. Are the results similar or different? How did the results vary between schools? (Individual school results can be found at www.studentvote.ca/canada > Results).

Activities

1. Review some key concepts for analyzing election results, including seat count, popular vote, governing party and official opposition.
   - **Seat count** is the term used to show the number of representatives that each party will have in the House of Commons. It reflects the number of ridings won by each party.
   - **Popular vote** is the term used to show the total support a political party received across the country. 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 election.
   - The party that has the most seats usually becomes the governing party, and their leader typically becomes prime minister. If the governing party has more than half of all seats, they will have a **majority government**. If they have less than half, they will have a **minority government**.
   - The party that has the second-highest number of seats becomes the official opposition. Any other party is called an opposition party.

2. Using the Student Vote Canada 2019 website, the Elections Canada website and/or media reports, compare the Student Vote and general election results. Guiding questions:
   - Which party won the Student Vote election? Is it a majority or minority government?
   - Which party won the general election? Is it a majority or minority government?
   - Which candidate won in your riding in the Student Vote? Did the same candidate win in the general election?
   - Why do you think the results of the Student Vote or general election were similar or different?
   - What factors do you think shaped the outcome of the election?

3. The ballots have been counted and the election is over — but what does it all mean for Canada? As a class, review some of the promises made by the winning political party during the election as a preview of what may come in the next several months. You can use the party’s website, media websites or pollenize.org/canada.

4. Divide students into pairs or small groups and have them analyze one of the promises using Activity 13.1. Guiding questions:
   - Who will be impacted by the related action or decision?
   - Does it represent a turning point or critical moment for the issue? If so, how?
   - Do the other parties support this decision? Why or why not?
   - How can the government’s progress on this commitment or promise be tracked?

5. Afterwards, have students share their analysis with the rest of the class.

Consolidation

1. Ask students to produce a final written reflection on one of the following questions:
   - What factors do you think shaped the outcome of the election?
   - Was there a decisive moment or a series of events that led to the eventual results? Explain your reasoning.
   - What do the election results mean for you and your community? Provide concrete examples of how the newly elected government’s policies or commitments will have an impact.
   - How can we hold government to account on their campaign promises?

2. As a culminating activity, have students fill out the Election Reflection 'Exit Slip' (Activity 13.2).

Extension Activity

Have students compare news stories from several different media websites and regional and/or local newspapers to analyze the portrayal of the election outcome.

Guiding questions:
   - Did the sources report the results in a similar way? Why or why not?
   - How is the future of Canada portrayed by each source?
BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS

After the close of voting on election day, election officials count the ballots for their voting places and report them to Elections Canada headquarters, who share the results publicly. Results are released on an ongoing basis throughout election night and sometimes the following day.

Seat count is the term used to reflect the number of representatives that each party will have in the House of Commons. It represents the number of local riding races won by each party. The 338 seats contested in this election will be awarded to the candidates in each of the ridings who receive the greatest number of votes.

Popular vote is the term used to show the total support a political party received across the country. It is expressed as a percentage and is calculated by dividing the number of votes a party received by the total number of votes in the federal 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 typically becomes the prime minister. If the governing party has more than half of all the seats (170 or more), they will have a majority government. If they have half or less (169 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 Parliament. 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.

Elections are multifaceted events. Counting the ballots and crunching the numbers is essential, but so is looking for answers and meaning behind the process and outcome.
ACTIVITY 13.1: Analyzing the Outcome

Select one of the campaign promises made by the newly elected government and analyze the anticipated outcome. Suggested resources include the party’s website, media websites or pollenize.org/canada.

Briefly describe one of the commitments or promises made by the newly elected government during the campaign.

Who will be impacted by the related action or decision, and how?

Does it represent a turning point or critical moment for the issue? If so, how?

Do the opposition parties support this decision? Why or why not?

How can the government’s progress on this commitment or promise be tracked?
**ACTIVITY 13.2: Election Reflection**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>Three things I learned about federal elections in Canada:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
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<td>3</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2</th>
<th>Two activities I enjoyed the most during the program:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<td>2</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3</th>
<th>One way that this experience has changed me or developed my opinions:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
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