

Lesson 14

Post-Election Analysis



GUIDING QUESTION

① How can we analyze election results?

PURPOSE

Elections are complex events and it is helpful to review and analyze the outcome to better understand the process and results.

In this lesson, students will analyze the results of the Student Vote Canada 2019 program and the 2019 federal election. In the *Consolidation* activity, students have the opportunity to reflect on the learning experience, campaign events and the eventual outcome.

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;
- Recognize the importance of voting and being an active and engaged citizen.

Tips For Teachers

- Please use the activities and combine them in a way that is appropriate for your class.
- Remember you must wait until the official polls close in your riding (or province/territory) to share the Student Vote results. Student election workers at your school should be sworn to secrecy.
- You can access the Student Vote Canada 2019 results on the project website, including the national summary, results by riding and individual school results (studentvote.ca/canada > Results).
- Consider mailing your students' exit slips (14.2) to CIVIX afterwards.
- Supplies/Needs: internet access for the results, news coverage about the election results, copies of 14.1 and 14.2.
- Any videos, slide decks, handouts and activity sheets in Word can be found at: studentvote.ca/canada.

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 studentvote.ca/canada > Results).

Activities

1. Review some key concepts for examining 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 the most and why?
 3. Individually or in pairs, have students complete Activity 14.1. Alternatively, charts could be produced in Excel or another program.
 4. Compare news stories from several different media websites and regional and/or local newspapers to analyze the portrayal of the election outcome. Have a class conversation after analyzing the results and media reports: Did the sources report the results in a similar way? Why or why not? How is the future of Canada portrayed?

Consolidation

1. Ask students to produce a final reflection about the election campaign in a format of their own choosing. It could be a written, visual or auditory product.

Students can use one of the following questions to focus their work.

- What did you learn as part of the Student Vote activities? How will it prepare you for the future?
 - What were the most memorable moments of the campaign and why?
 - Was there a clear turning point, or a series of events that led to the eventual results? Explain your reasoning.
 - What promises and plans do you think the newly elected government will focus on?
 - What do the election results mean for you and your community?
2. As a culminating activity, have students fill out the election reflection 'Exit Slip' (Activity 14.2).

Extension Activity

Once a candidate is elected, they must make decisions about how to pursue issues on behalf of the constituents living in their riding. Have students write to their newly elected MP regarding an issue they believe should be considered a priority.

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 the outcome.