

Welcome

Dear Educator,

Thank you for involving your students in the Student Vote program for the 2025 Canadian federal election.

We recognize the many competing priorities you face, and we're grateful for your commitment to empowering the next generation of informed voters.

Evaluations of the Student Vote program have consistently shown that it positively impacts students by increasing their knowledge of government and elections, enhancing their sense of civic responsibility, and building their confidence to participate in the voting process.

Moreover, the program encourages students to share what they've learned at home, sparking conversations about the election within their families and expanding the learning experience to the broader community.

The lessons are designed to teach students about the foundations of democracy, their rights and responsibilities as citizens, how government and elections work in Canada, how to critically evaluate political information, and how to participate meaningfully in the democratic process.

The activities also incorporate social and emotional learning (SEL) strategies, helping students develop self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. The whole experience can foster a sense of belonging by helping students learn about themselves and understand others. This resource emphasizes the importance of developing constructive dialogue skills among students.

Within the front matter, you will find guiding principles for classroom discussion and activities for co-creating classroom norms with students. Developing classroom norms with your students is a great way to ensure a safe and caring classroom environment and encourage respectful, meaningful discussion.

As always, if you have any questions or suggestions, please feel free to contact our team at hello@civix.ca.

Please be sure to visit the 2025 federal election website for videos, slide decks, digital activity sheets and more: www.studentvote.ca/canada

Wishing you and your students a memorable and engaging experience!

The CIVIX Team

Acknowledgements

CIVIX is a non-partisan, national charity dedicated to building the habits of active and informed citizenship among school-aged youth. Student Vote is the flagship program of CIVIX.



Student Vote Canada is presented by CIVIX in collaboration with Elections Canada—our national electoral agency.



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

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How to Use This Resource

This resource is intended to improve civic literacy, introduce the concepts of democracy and elections, increase awareness about government, and teach students how to effectively participate as responsible citizens in their communities.

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. Consider consulting the *Lesson Pathways* on the following page to condense the learning into 2 or 4 classes/periods.

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

Guiding Questions

These critical queries 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 overarching Learning Goals and to enhance engagement.

Overview

The lesson overview outlines the big idea and provides a brief summary of the learning and activities of the lesson.

Learning Goals

Concrete knowledge and competencies that students are expected to have acquired or are working towards based on the instruction and activities completed in each lesson.

Tips for Teachers

Reminders or suggestions to assist with the delivery of the lesson.

Supplies/Needs

A list of support materials you will need for the lesson.

Strategies

Each lesson has been broken down into two parts with several strategies. You are encouraged to pick and choose from the strategies and related support tools based on the needs of your classroom and available time.

- **Starter:** Suggested opening activity, meant to pique interest in the topic and lesson.
- **Essential Learning:** Instruction of key concepts that form the basis of the lesson. Supported by videos and slide decks.
- **Activity/Activities:** Key activities that help students understand the essential concepts and practice key competencies.
- **Applied Learning:** Various activities that focus on project-based learning, real-world application or case study analysis.
- **Deeper Learning:** Activities that guide students to explore a key concept more deeply. These tasks promote critical thinking, analysis, and meaningful connections to the broader lesson.
- **Discussion:** A suggested discussion protocol to support meaningful reflection and conversation about the topic.
- **Consolidation:** Concluding questions and tasks to summarize and reflect on what was learned throughout the lesson.

Questions to Help Guide Assessment

These questions help teachers monitor their students' progress towards achieving the Learning Goals.

Adaptations and Supports

A few reminders and suggestions for language learners, culturally responsive pedagogy and accessibility as well as accommodation considerations.

Background Information for Teachers

This backgrounder provides contextual information related to the lesson theme. The purpose is to enhance teacher knowledge and understanding. Not all terms and concepts are covered in the lesson.

Elementary Lesson Pathways

2 LESSON PATHWAY

1

- Lesson 4: Federal Elections - Starter Activity
- Watch the “Voting in a Democracy” video and review the concept of democracy
- Lesson 4: Federal Elections - Essential Learning
- Lesson 4: Federal Elections - Activity, Steps 1–2

2

- Lesson 6: Researching the Parties and Candidates - Essential Learning, Steps 1–3
- Have students research the candidates and parties (Use media websites, Pollenize, Party Leader Q&A videos)
- Lesson 6: Researching the Parties and Candidates - Consolidation

1

- Watch the “Voting in a Democracy” video and review the concept of democracy
- Lesson 3: Levels of Government - Essential Learning, Steps 3–4
- Lesson 3: Levels of Government - Activities

2

- Lesson 4: Federal Elections - Starter Activity
- Lesson 4: Federal Elections - Essential Learning
- Lesson 4: Federal Elections - Activity, Steps 1–2

3

- Lesson 6: Researching the Parties and Candidates - Essential Learning
- Have students research the candidates and parties (Use media websites, Pollenize, Party Leader Q&A videos)
- Lesson 6: Researching the Parties and Candidates - Consolidation

4

- Lesson 7: The Voting Process - Starter
- Lesson 7: The Voting Process - Essential Learning
- Lesson 7: The Voting Process - Consolidation

4 LESSON PATHWAY

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 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 number of teams and focus areas that make sense for the size of your school.

Communications Team

Responsible for advertising the Student Vote program and encouraging participation.

- Develop key messaging (slogans) and create outreach materials in different formats (e.g., posters, videos, signage)
- Design and implement a schedule for your communications and announcements, including the who, what, when, where, and how (e.g., morning announcements, classroom presentations, lobby displays, Google Classroom)
- Ask your school administrator to publicize Student Vote Canada electronically and on school signage
- Use promotional activities such as a voting mascot or themed music over the PA system in the week leading up to Student Vote Day

Education Team

Responsible for educating students about the parties, candidates and election issues.

- Develop an education plan about what students should know (e.g., federal government responsibilities, key election issues, the candidates, and party platforms)
- Share the videos and tools from the Student Vote Canada website
- Disseminate literature and activities to classes throughout the school (e.g., bulletins, posters, multi-media presentations, learning activities)
- Create fun and excitement through trivia games, music, and small prizes (e.g., school swag)

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, such as a school-wide or grade-wide assembly
- 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 the media in elections (e.g., former elected representative, public servant, journalist)
- Assign the roles and manage the event(s)

Student Vote Day Team

Responsible for organizing the election.

- Determine which voting method will work best for your school on Student Vote Day (e.g., stationary voting or mobile voting). Refer to the *Election Manual* for options
- Train election officials for their duties (e.g., election workers, candidate representatives)
- Compile a voters list and determine ID requirements (if desirable)
- Decide on options for early voting for students who may be away on Student Vote Day
- Create an information session, 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, voters list)

Media and Community Relations Team

Responsible for engaging with local media and the greater community.

- Invite media to attend your campaign events or Student Vote Day (check with your school 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 social media
- Plan ways to engage parents and families in the election (e.g., organize an information session for parents, host a viewing party of the leaders' debate at the school)

Guiding Principles for Classroom Discussion

While discussion can occur in all kinds of settings, formal and informal, the classroom allows educators to approach it in a structured and intentional way. This is not to say that spontaneous or unstructured discussion is not valuable—some of your best classroom discussions may be spontaneous.

However, with intention, preparation, and practice, educators can help students systematically build constructive discussion habits regardless of context.

Students often want to discuss thorny or controversial questions, and school is a place where this can happen effectively.

Here are some guiding principles you may want to consider within classroom discussion.

Build Community

Students will be more likely to contribute to a discussion if they feel like they are in a safe and comfortable environment. Use activities that allow students to share their interests and backgrounds and co-create a set of classroom norms.

Let Students Lead

Teachers are often used to doing most of the talking in a classroom. Discussion can often look like a lighthouse, with the educator at the centre engaging sequentially with students, often the most vocal in the class. However, the best discussions often occur when students engage with each other, and the teacher is acting as a facilitator.

Embrace Structure

Student discussion can yield better outcomes when implemented with intention and structure. Using discussion protocols can help build more equitable conversations and ensure more voices are heard.

Recognize Different Discussion Styles

Some students will be outgoing and chatty, while others are reserved and quiet. Many will be somewhere in-between. Some students formulate their thoughts by talking, and others need to think for a bit before they feel comfortable contributing. Considering these different discussion styles and using various discussion protocols will help you get the most out of these exchanges.

Start Small

Students may initially feel more comfortable voicing their opinions in smaller groups. For any discussion, consider starting with groups of two or three before moving to a larger discussion. Consider trying different combinations with small groups, such as mixing reserved and outspoken students, or keeping students with similar discussion styles together. Both strategies can be helpful for student learning at different times.

For more best practices and a description of different discussion protocols, please refer to CIVIX's *Constructive Discussions Guide* at www.politalks.ca.



Establishing Classroom Norms

Creating classroom norms is one way to foster a sense of belonging among students and create a productive learning environment. A 'norms agreement' helps establish guidelines about behaviour and expectations, enables students to feel safe expressing their opinions, and reduces instances of incivility.

A norms agreement that is meaningful to your students requires giving them ownership of what goes in it. Co-creation also helps students feel that their voices matter and encourages them to hold each other accountable when norms are violated.

Once established, it is helpful to review the agreement regularly to foster commitment and update it as needed.

Please use or adapt the activities below to create your classroom norms. You will likely need to split up the activities over multiple days.

1 Hopes and Concerns (20 minutes)

This starter activity allows students to reflect on their hopes and concerns within the classroom.

- a) Distribute several sticky notes or pieces of paper to each student. Ask students to write down 3–4 hopes the remainder of the year. One idea per sticky note.

Prompts:

- What do I hope for myself?
- What do I hope for my classmates?
- What would I ask my classmates to do to help things better?

- b) Have students post their sticky notes on a chart paper titled OUR HOPES. Alternatively, you can collect the notes from each student so that their answers are anonymous. Afterward, review the responses as a class and organize the ideas so that similar ones are grouped together.

- c) Now, ask students to share their concerns or fears in the classroom. Ask students to write down 3–4 concerns. One idea per sticky note.

Prompts:

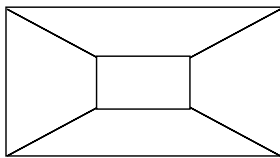
- What makes me anxious or uncomfortable in the classroom?
- What would I like to avoid?
- What are my concerns for my classmates?

- d) Have students post their sticky notes on a chart paper titled OUR CONCERNS. Alternatively, you can collect the notes from each student so that their answers are anonymous. Afterward, review the responses as a class and organize the ideas so that similar ones are grouped together.

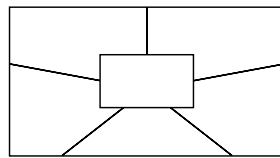
2 Understanding Community and Values (30 minutes)

A strong classroom community is one in which students feel valued, respected, and empowered to take an active role in their learning environment.

- a) Review the idea of community and sense of belonging in the classroom. A classroom community is a space where students come together as a class to work towards the common goal of learning.
- b) Discuss the concept of values. Review:
- Values are things you believe are important in relation to how you live your life.
 - A community's shared values influence how individuals act and interact with community members.
 - Examples: appreciation, collaboration, compassion, courage, dedication, empathy, enthusiasm, friendliness, gratitude, honesty, inclusivity, integrity, kindness, open-mindedness, perseverance, positivity, reliability, respect, being supportive.
- c) Have students propose which values they believe are important for their classroom community through a 'Placemat' activity. This cooperative learning strategy allows students to individually think about, record, and share their ideas in groups and then reach a consensus on the most important values.
- Divide students into groups of four or five. You can provide each group with one large sheet of paper divided into sections (one for each student and a centre block for the final group list). Alternatively, the activity could be conducted with an online app or tool.
 - Ask students to write down their proposed five values in their individual space. Consider providing students with a sample list.
 - Provide time for each student to share their recorded responses with the rest of their group without discussion from the other students.
 - Next, have each group decide, collectively, on the five most important values and record them in the centre of the placemat position. All group members must agree with the group list. Each group should also be prepared to share the reasons behind their choices.



Four person group



Five person group

- d) Review each group's list as a class. Afterward, create an agreed upon class list with 6 to 8 values.

3 Co-creating Norms (45 minutes)

Once students have understood the purpose of establishing classroom norms, you can give them the opportunity to co-create norms to align with the classroom values developed in Activity 2.

- a) Review the concept of norms. Classroom norms inform us of our responsibilities to the community and the ways in which we are expected to behave towards each other.
- b) Ask students to discuss the following questions using a 'Think-Pair-Share' protocol.
 - Why is it important to have a shared understanding of norms and expectations in the classroom?
 - What could happen if we do not have a set of classroom norms?
 - Should students be part of establishing classroom norms or should the teacher provide a list? Why?
- c) Divide students into groups and provide each with poster board or chart paper. Assign each group one value and ask them to come up with a few norms or behaviours that represent the value. Encourage students to make connections to Activity 1 and their hopes and concerns.

Prompt: What does (value) look like in the classroom?

On their poster board/chart paper, students can write out their value, a list of norms, and any images associated with the value. Examples:

Empathy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Avoid judgement and remember that everyone comes from different circumstances• Ask questions with curiosity• If you say something that offends someone, apologize, even if the hurt was not intended
Respect	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Raise our hands before speaking• Listen actively (e.g., be attentive, check your body language)• Everyone has the right to pass (from answering a question)
Inclusivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Allow everyone the opportunity to speak or share their ideas• Interact and build friendships with all your classmates
Gratitude	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If someone shares an idea or opinion that helps your own learning, say thank you

- d) Post each group's poster around the classroom or in the hallway. Organize a Gallery Walk so each group can review each group's responses and add their own ideas or suggestions on the poster directly or on sticky notes.
- e) Review the posters and norms together as a class and develop a consolidated list of norms. You can keep them linked to the values or make them distinct. Some norms may relate to multiple values. Afterward, consider posting the norms in a visible way so that you can point to them regularly.

4 Assessment (10 minutes)

Provide students with a 1-1-1 Exit card (page 11):

- One norm that was easy for you to practice
- One norm you know that you have to work on
- One topic you would like to discuss as a class in the future

1-1-1 Exit Card: Norms of Agreement

1-1-1 EXIT CARD	
1	One norm that was easy for you to practice:
1	One norm you know that you have to work on:
1	One topic you would like to discuss as a class in the future:

1-1-1 EXIT CARD	
1	One norm that was easy for you to practice:
1	One norm you know that you have to work on:
1	One topic you would like to discuss as a class in the future:

Lesson 1: Democracy



GUIDING QUESTIONS

- 1 How should we live together?**
- 2 What does it mean to live in a democracy?**
- 3 How are community and democracy related?**

OVERVIEW

In a democracy, individuals have the opportunity to participate in decisions that shape how their community is governed.

In Part One, students participate in a thought experiment in which they must decide how to live together and make decisions while living in the jungle without any adults. Afterward, they debrief on the activity and discuss the dynamics of making decisions in groups.

In Part Two, students learn about democracy and elections. Afterward, they use a 'Carousel' brainstorming protocol to help synthesize their understanding of democracy and identify differences and similarities between their own insights and those of their classmates.

LEARNING GOALS

We are learning to:

- analyze the opportunities and challenges when collaborating with others on a shared goal;
- describe the characteristics of a democracy; and
- explain the value of listening to the perspectives of others.

Tips for Teachers

- Please use and combine the activities in a way that is appropriate for your class.
- The lesson has been divided into two parts (35–40 min each), should you choose to deliver the activities over multiple periods/days.
- Recognize and acknowledge barriers that inhibit individuals or groups from voting (e.g., historical exclusions, socio-economic class, language, newcomers).

Supplies/Needs

- “[Voting in a Democracy](#)” video
- Slide Deck 1
- Copies or access to Activity 1.1 (one for each group)
- Chart paper
- Coloured markers
- All digital files, videos and slide decks can be found at: studentvote.ca/canada (Classroom Resources)

PART ONE

Starter

1. Divide students into larger groups of 6–8 students.
2. Share the following scenario with your students verbally or using Slide Deck 1.

It’s the last day of school and your class is watching “Jumanji: The Next Level”. Twenty minutes into the movie, the screen starts flickering. Suddenly, a black hole appears from within the projector screen and your class is sucked into the hole and transported to the jungle in Jumanji.

Since your teacher was out of the classroom, only students were transported to the jungle. There are no adults. Your challenge is to decide how to live together as a community.

3. Distribute copies of Activity 1.1. Ask each group to respond to the questions and decide how they will live together. Each group must reach a consensus on the decisions. Provide 20 minutes to complete the task.
4. Afterward, debrief on the activity and have students share their decisions. Questions to guide the discussion:
 - Was there a focus on collaboration and working together? Why or why not?
 - Who was responsible for making decisions for the community? Who held the power? Did you discuss ways to keep leaders accountable?
 - Did everyone have a chance to contribute to the decisions that were made? Why or why not?
 - Were rules established? Is it important to have rules in a community? Why or why not?
5. Reflect on the activity through a whole class discussion.
 - Did discussing these questions in a group lead to more thoughtful answers? Was it helpful to hear different perspectives? Share examples.
 - What challenges did you face in ensuring everyone’s voice was heard?
 - Was it hard to reach consensus for the decisions?

PART TWO

Essential Learning

1. Watch the “[Voting in a Democracy](#)” video and review the concept of democracy.
 - Democracy is about working collaboratively to solve problems, respecting different perspectives, and taking collective action.
 - In a democracy, power is shared by all the people.
 - Since it’s not possible for 40 million Canadians to be involved in making decisions, we collectively choose individuals to represent us and make decisions for our community or country. These people are called elected representatives.
 - Elections are the process for choosing representatives to make decisions on our behalf. Voting is one way to influence our future.

2. Reinforce students' understanding of democracy and reflect on the *Starter* activity. Democracy is about building community, cooperation, shared responsibility, and the inclusion of all voices in decision-making.
 - How are the terms 'community' and 'democracy' related?
 - Did you incorporate the ideas of democracy into your decision-making process in the Jumanji activity? Why or why not?
4. Rotate the groups through the stations. Give students 3–4 minutes to write down responses at each station. A bell or timer can be used to signal when it is time to move to the next station. Continue until each group has responded to each prompt.
5. Reconvene as a class to debrief the activity. Ask students to reflect on their answers, and the process of looking at other students' responses. Reference the chart paper with recorded student responses to help pull out similarities and differences to aid discussion and promote further reflection.

Discussion

1. Set up four or eight stations (for larger classes) with a piece of chart paper at each. Add numbers for easy identification and write one of the following questions at each station.
 - **Definition:** What it means
 - **Characteristics:** What it's like
 - **Examples:** What it looks like
 - **Non-examples:** What it's not
2. Divide students into four or eight groups. Give each group a distinct coloured marker to code their responses and assign each group to a different station.
3. Explain to students that they will be rotating through four stations, responding to the prompts at each one based on what they know about 'democracy.' They can add text and/or pictures. Encourage them to read through the other responses before adding their own with their group's coloured marker.

Consolidation

Select one of the following:

- a) Ask students to design a photo collage demonstrating their understanding of democracy.
- b) Ask students to write a reflection about the two-part lesson. After learning about democracy, would they have answered the questions differently in the Jumanji activity? Is democracy the most effective way to manage a community today?

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS

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.

A **democracy** is a type of government where most 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, and the right to participate in free and fair elections and run for political office.

Canada's system of government is a **parliamentary democracy**. We elect members to represent us in our federal parliament and our provincial and territorial legislatures, and the political party with the most elected representatives usually forms the government.





Questions to Help Guide Assessment

LESSON SECTION	GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR TEACHERS
Starter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are students able to come to consensus in their groups? • Are they listening to the opinions of other group members? • Can they identify the opportunities and challenges of collaborating with others?
Essential Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are students asking questions about democracy? • Can students make connections between community and democracy? Can they identify examples of democracy they incorporated into the Jumanji activity?
Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can they explain democracy in their own words and identify characteristics, examples and non-examples? • Do they notice differences and similarities between their insights and those of their classmates?
Consolidation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can students demonstrate their understanding of democracy? Can they think critically about the benefits and challenges of democracy?

Adaptations and Supports

Individual Education Plans	<p>Modifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide key terms and definitions in advance (democracy, government, elections, elected representative). • Present examples of how you can make decisions (autocratic/dictatorship, democracy). • Use additional CIVIX video resources on democracy to help students develop prior knowledge before class discussions and activities (i.e., the “Government and Democracy” video). <p>Enrichment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask students to research different government types around the world. Have them compare and contrast the different types.
Language Learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide students with terms and definitions in advance (democracy, government, elections, elected representative).
Culturally Responsive Pedagogy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be sensitive to circumstances at home that may challenge perspectives around voting and democratic participation, such as religion or traditions. • Remind students that new immigrants, adults who have difficulty reading, Language Learners, persons who are homeless and other specific groups may face challenges understanding or accessing the electoral process. Keep the focus on ideas to increase access and the benefits our society gets from hearing different voices, not only on the disadvantages these groups face.
Accessibility & Accommodations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If students are working remotely, use digital templates or online tools for brainstorming. • If it is challenging for students to move around to different stations, move the papers from group to group.

ACTIVITY 1.1: Surviving Jumanji

<p>Explain how you will organize yourselves. Will you work together, in groups or independently? Will there be roles?</p> 	
<p>What is your plan for finding food and setting up shelter? What other needs will you have?</p> 	
<p>Who will be responsible for making decisions for the group? Describe the process involved in deciding who will be in charge.</p> 	
<p>Will you establish any rules or code of conduct? If yes, list some examples.</p> 	

Lesson 2: Rights and Responsibilities



GUIDING QUESTIONS

- 1 What rights and freedoms do I have as a Canadian?**
- 2 What responsibilities do I have as a Canadian?**
- 3 What does it mean to be a responsible member of my community?**

OVERVIEW

We need to understand our rights and responsibilities to be active and engaged citizens.

In Part One, students discuss their rights and responsibilities at school. Afterward, students gauge their current knowledge of rights in Canada.

In Part Two, students review the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and explore how it applies to real-world situations. Next, they reflect on the responsibilities associated with each right, emphasizing that while responsibilities are not enforced by law, they are essential for maintaining fairness and respect in society. In the *Consolidation* activity, students consider the importance of being a responsible citizen and how their actions can support the rights and well-being of others.

LEARNING GOALS

We are learning to:

- describe the rights and responsibilities we have at school;
- analyze examples from the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*;
- understand our responsibilities as members in a community; and
- analyze what it means to be a responsible citizen.

Tips for Teachers

Please use the activities and combine them in a way that is appropriate for your class. The lesson has been divided into two parts (30–35 min each), should you choose to teach the content over multiple periods/days.

Supplies/Needs

- Slide Deck 2
- Digital access to or copies of Handout 2.1, Activity 2.2 and 2.3
- All digital files, videos and slide decks can be found at: studentvote.ca/canada (*Classroom Resources*).

PART ONE

Starter

1. Review the idea of a ‘right’ and provide some examples.
 - A right is something that every person is allowed to do or have because it is fair and important.
 - Some rights are protected by laws, while others are based on what we all agree is fair (morally right).
 - For example, you have the right to be treated equally and not to be discriminated against based on race, gender, religion, culture, etc.
2. Using a ‘Snowball Fight’ strategy, have students think about their rights at school.
 - a) Provide each student with a piece of paper and ask them to write down one example.
 - b) Ask students to crumple their paper into a “snowball” and throw it across the room.
 - c) Have students find a snowball and write down another example on the paper they found. It should be different from the first example.
 - d) Afterward, have students throw the snowballs one more time and pick up another one.
 - e) Invite students to share the examples from the snowball they found and create a list on the board.

Sample rights at school:

- the right to learn and receive an education
- the right to a safe learning environment, free from bullying, harassment, and violence
- the right to express our opinions, beliefs, and ideas
- the right to privacy regarding personal information
- the right to equality and not to be discriminated against because of our race, gender, religion, disability, or any other characteristic
- the right to be entitled to fair procedures if we face disciplinary action like suspension or expulsion

3. Explain the relationship between **rights** and **responsibilities**. A right is something you are allowed to have or do, and it can't be taken away. A responsibility is something you should do to help make things fair and work well for everyone. For example, you have the right to go to school and learn, no matter what. But you also have the responsibility to show up on time, listen in class, and do your work. Responsibilities help make sure that everyone can enjoy their rights and work together.
4. Co-create a list of student responsibilities. You may want to review your school's code of conduct for ideas. Afterward, connect the specific student responsibilities back to the list of rights created by the class, making additions where necessary.
5. End with a whole class discussion. Guiding questions:
 - How are rights and responsibilities similar/different? (Rights are encoded in law, but responsibilities are not. They are things we *should* do)
 - Why should you be aware of your rights and responsibilities?

Pre-Learning Assessment

Distribute Activity 2.1 to gauge current knowledge about our rights and freedoms in Canada. Have students complete the first column only (True/False).

PART TWO

Essential Learning

1. As a class, review the seven categories of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and discuss real-world examples. You can use either Handout 2.2 and/or Slide Deck 2 to support this review.
2. Individually or in pairs, have students review and update their answers on Activity 2.1 and fill out the second column (which category in the Charter does it apply to).
3. In pairs or small groups, ask students to consider the responsibilities that go along with specific rights using Activity 2.3. Afterward, discuss as a class.

Consolidation

1. Ask students if they know where the quote “With great power comes great responsibility” comes from. Afterward, reveal the final image on Slide Deck 2.
2. Ask students to analyze what it means and how it relates to our rights and responsibilities as citizens in a democracy through a whole class discussion.
3. Ask students to provide a written response to one of the following questions:
 - Which rights in Canada do you think are most important and why?
 - What does it mean to be a responsible citizen in my community?

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS

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

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

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

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

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 citizen, 18 years of age or older, to vote and be a candidate in an election; the requirement that federal, provincial and territorial 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, gender, sexual orientation, 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.

Questions to Help Guide Assessment

SECTION	GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR TEACHERS
Starter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can students identify the rights they have at school? • Can they differentiate between rights and responsibilities? • Can they understand why they should be aware of their rights and responsibilities?
Essential Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can students connect real-world examples to the <i>Charter of Rights and Freedoms</i>? • Can students analyze the responsibilities that go along with our rights?
Consolidation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can students explain the importance of being a responsible citizen and what it means?

Adaptations and Supports

Individual Education Plans	<p>Modifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support students' understanding of rights with more real-world examples. <p>Enrichment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow students to research the Charter to familiarize themselves with the advanced language. • Students could prepare case studies that demonstrate a violation of rights and freedoms in Canada. Classmates can then decide if the issue is solved by using the Charter.
Language Learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide students with terms and definitions in advance. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – right – freedom – responsibility – election – government – mobility – legal – equality – official languages • Support students' understanding of rights with more real-world examples. • Provide additional examples for the responsibilities handout (Activity 2.3) and/or work through them as a class.
Culturally Responsive Pedagogy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will come from different backgrounds and have different opinions on collective rights compared to individual rights. Not all students may agree with the rights in the Charter. Ensure a safe place for respectful discussion is maintained. • Ask students to interpret the Charter and what it means for different groups in society (e.g., women, minority groups). Encourage thinking about how the Charter supports diversity and equality. • Investigate rights and responsibilities in various social settings, inclusive of First Nations, Inuit, Métis and other diverse cultural groups.
Accessibility & Accommodations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teaching strategy for the <i>Starter</i> activity can be replaced with a class discussion on rights and responsibilities or an online collaborative activity if there are concerns about mobility or student behaviour during a 'snowball fight.'

ACTIVITY 2.1: What do you know about rights in Canada?








Are the following statements true or false in Canada? After learning about the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, update any of your answers and write down the related category in the Charter.

STATEMENT	TRUE/FALSE	CATEGORY OF THE CHARTER
Any citizen, aged 16 years and older, can vote in government elections.		
Citizens have the right to send an email to the federal government in any language they choose and request a response in the same language.		
I have the right to say anything I want, even if it could cause violence or someone getting hurt.		
Citizens can move to any province or territory in Canada for another job.		
If I commit a crime, I must be told of my right to speak to a lawyer.		
Citizens can be told they cannot apply to a job if they are of a certain race.		
I have the right to protest, hold up signs, and make lots of noise for an issue I believe in.		
I have the right to go to any school I want, regardless of the language I speak and the language of the school.		
The media can report on anything that happens in Canada.		
I will be presumed innocent if I am accused of a crime.		

Answer Key: Activity 2.1

STATEMENT	TRUE/FALSE	CATEGORY OF THE CHARTER
Any citizen, aged 16 years and older, can vote in government elections.	False	Democratic Rights
Citizens have the right to send an email to the federal government in any language they choose and request a response in the same language.	False	Official Languages of Canada
I have the right to say anything I want, even if it could cause violence or someone getting hurt.	False	Fundamental Freedoms and Equality Rights
Citizens can move to any province or territory in Canada for another job.	True	Mobility Rights
If I commit a crime, I must be told of my right to speak to a lawyer.	True	Legal Rights
Citizens can be told they cannot apply to a job if they are of a certain race.	False	Equality Rights
I have the right to protest, hold up signs, and make lots of noise for an issue I believe in.	True	Fundamental Freedoms
I have the right to go to any school I want, regardless of the language I speak and the language of the school.	False	Minority Language Rights
The media can report on anything that happens in Canada.	True	Fundamental Freedoms
I will be presumed innocent if I am accused of a crime.	True	Legal rights

HANDOUT 2.2: Highlights from the Charter of Rights and Freedoms

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

* The rights and freedoms in the Charter are not absolute. They can be limited to protect other rights or important national values. For example, freedom of expression may be limited by laws against hate or violence.

ACTIVITY 2.3: Our Rights and Responsibilities

For each of the following rights from the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, write down a corresponding responsibility.

RIGHT	RESPONSIBILITY
<p>I have the right to speak freely...</p>	<p>... and I have the responsibility to</p>
<p>I have the right to protest or participate in a rally about an issue I believe in...</p>	<p>... and I have the responsibility to</p>
<p>I have the right to pray and worship in the religion of my choice, or not worship at all...</p>	<p>... and I have the responsibility to</p>
<p>I have the right to be friends with or associate with anyone I choose...</p>	<p>... and I have the responsibility to</p>
<p>I have the right to vote in an election (when I am at least 18 years of age)...</p>	<p>... and I have the responsibility to</p>
<p>I have the right to communicate in either French or English when writing or speaking with the federal government...</p>	<p>... and I have the responsibility to</p>
<p>I have the right to be treated fairly regardless of my race, background, religion, gender, age, or mental or physical ability...</p>	<p>... and I have the responsibility to</p>

Lesson 3: Levels of Government



GUIDING QUESTIONS

- 1 How does government affect me?
- 2 How is government organized in Canada?

OVERVIEW

Governments make decisions and pass legislation that influence our lives.

In Part One, students discuss the need for laws and services in the community. Afterward, they explore the levels of government in Canada through various multimedia tools.

In the second part, students examine the responsibilities of each level and play a card game to build and test their knowledge. In the *Consolidation* activity, students create a visual diary to show how governments influence their daily lives.

LEARNING GOALS

We are learning to:

- explain the importance of government;
- understand that governments are made up of elected representatives;
- identify the roles and responsibilities associated with the different levels of government; and
- analyze how government affects us directly.

Tips for Teachers

- Please use and combine the activities in a way that is appropriate for your class.
- The lesson has been divided into two parts (30-35 min each), should you choose to deliver the activities over multiple periods/days.
- When discussing big concepts like elected representatives and levels of government, create classroom visuals with photos or images to give students a quick reference point throughout the unit or Student Vote program.
- If you are teaching in an Indigenous community, please reference your local Indigenous governance structures in the discussion and add details to Slide Deck 3.

Supplies/Needs

- “Levels of Government” video
- Slide Deck 3
- Digital access to or copies of Activity 3.1
- Set of cards for each group (Activity 3.2)
- All digital files, videos and slide decks can be found at: studentvote.ca/canada (Classroom Resources)

PART ONE

Starter

Using a ‘Turn-and-Talk’ strategy, discuss the need for laws and services in the community.

- What rules and laws are needed for people living in a community? For example: road and traffic laws, safety laws/wearing helmets while biking or skating, laws against stealing or trespassing, privacy laws, laws against bad business practices, laws against violence or destruction of property.
- What services are needed in a community? For example: education, and schools, health care and hospitals, police and fire protection, drinking water, sewage treatment, libraries.

Essential Learning

1. Create a schema chart with large chart paper or an online tool. It should have three sections: “Existing Knowledge,” “New Learning” and “Misconceptions.” Alternatively, you could use one piece of chart paper for each.

2. Ask students what they already know about governments and political leaders in Canada. Suggested prompts:

- Who is in charge of making laws in Canada?
- How does our government system work?
- What are some of the jobs or responsibilities of people in government?

Write down each student’s statement on a sticky note and put it under “Existing Knowledge.” Make sure to write all their knowledge statements on sticky notes, even if you know the statement is incorrect. Any misconceptions will be addressed during the next learning phase.

3. Watch the “Levels of Government” video and introduce students to the federal, provincial/territorial, and municipal levels of government.
4. Review the structure of governments in Canada using Slide Deck 3. Guiding questions:
 - What is a representative democracy?
 - What are the levels of government in Canada? What other forms of governance exist in Canada?
 - What is the title of the elected representative at each level?
 - What is the title of the leader at each level?
 - How are responsibilities divided among the levels of government?
5. Invite students to summarize what they learned about governments in Canada and make notes on the “New Learning” chart paper or section of the schema chart. Review students’ “Existing Knowledge” statements to identify any information that might be inaccurate or misleading. If a misconception has been discovered, move the sticky note to the “Misconception” section, and explain how it can be corrected or presented more accurately on a different coloured sticky note and attach it to the original note.

TEACHER NOTES:

- Use a different coloured sticky note for the “New Learning” statements (compared to the “Existing Knowledge” statements).
- If students are building on an “Existing Knowledge” statement, move the related sticky note to the “New Learning” section and attach a new sticky note to it with the brand new learning.

PART TWO

Activities

1. Review the idea that each level of government has its own group of responsibilities (i.e., the federal government handles national defence). Emphasize that governments also work together on a number of issues. This includes dividing up different aspects of an issue or providing money to another government, such as public transit.
2. Have students review the division of responsibilities among the three levels of government. This can be done as a class or in pairs. Encourage students to seek clarity about services they may not understand (Handout 3.1).
3. In pairs or small groups, provide each group with a set of playing cards (Activity 3.2). Ask students to divide the cards face down among their group. Have students take turns reading out the responsibility from one of their cards and letting the other student(s) guess the level of government(s) that handles it. The first student who answers correctly gets to keep the card. At the end, count how many cards each person has collected.

Consolidation

Ask students to create a visual diary or comic strip of how governments influence their daily lives. They can use slides, paper or an online app. Guidelines:

- a) Identify four or five activities in your life that are influenced by governments in Canada.
- b) Draw an image or find a photo to represent the action or activity.
- c) Write a caption to identify the related level of government(s) and its area of responsibility from Activity 3.1.

Extended Learning

Ask students to identify an issue that concerns them the most in the community. Ask them to find out which level(s) of government are responsible for this matter and to contact the appropriate elected representative (it could be more than one) expressing their concerns. This could be completed by email or letter.

Questions to Help Guide Assessment

SECTION	GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR TEACHERS
Starter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can students identify services and laws that we need? Can they explain the need for government?
Essential Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are students asking questions about the levels of government? • Can students share their newfound knowledge? Can they identify any previous misconceptions?
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are students asking questions about the various responsibilities? • Can they identify areas of shared responsibilities? • Can students identify the correct level of government for the examples in the card game?
Consolidation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can students identify the level of government and area of responsibility connected to their daily activities?

Adaptations and Supports

Individual Education Plans	<p>Modifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide examples or images of different responsibilities (e.g., defence – soldiers). • Share the “Levels of Government” video before class discussions and activities. <p>Enrichment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have students gather details and/or visuals for each level of government, such as the government leader, local elected representative and name and location of the parliament/legislature.
Language Learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide examples or images for each area of responsibility. • Have strong students describe responsibilities in their own words to Language Learners. • Ensure that subtitles are on during the videos.
Culturally Responsive Pedagogy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the demographic data of one or more elected bodies and discuss the need for more diversity in politics. • Discuss specific political issues facing your community and make connections to the levels of government. • Review the governance structure of an Indigenous community relevant to your students.
Accessibility & Accommodations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The card game in the <i>Activities</i> section could also be conducted through an online platform (e.g., Kahoot, Google Forms). • The artwork/media for the <i>Consolidation</i> activity can be created and shared in a digital format.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS

Canada is a federal state, parliamentary democracy and constitutional monarchy.

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 include 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, public transit, local parks and recreation.

Most 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 individuals with similar views about government and society whose intention is to achieve power, 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). **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 (MHAs), depending on the province or territory. The elected representative at the municipal level is usually called a councillor.

Most federal and provincial elected representatives belong to a political party. A **political party** is a group of individuals with similar views about government and society whose intention is to achieve power.

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 government. At both levels of government, the leader of the political party with the most 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 position of premier or prime minister directly.

The leader of the municipal government is called a mayor, reeve or chairperson. The leader is usually elected directly by the people.

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.

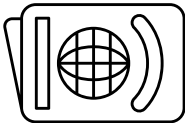
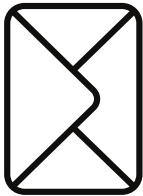

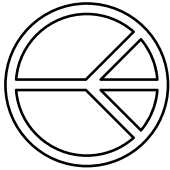
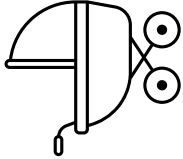
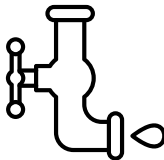

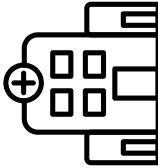
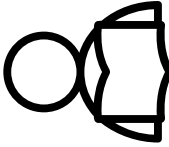
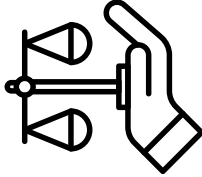
In Canada's three territories, territorial commissioners serve a similar role to a lieutenant governor. Commissioners do not represent the sovereign, however. They are appointed by and represent the federal government.



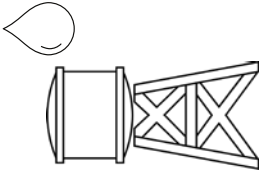
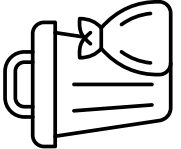
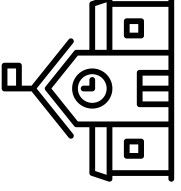


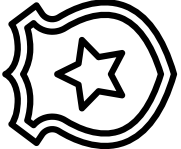
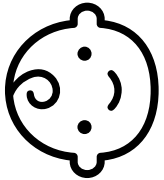

ACTIVITY 3.1: Government Responsibilities

In Canada, we have three levels of government: federal, provincial or territorial, and municipal. They all work together to help make sure our communities run smoothly. Each level has its own jobs, but sometimes they share responsibilities or need to work together to get things done.

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT	PROVINCIAL/TERRITORIAL GOVERNMENT	MUNICIPAL/ LOCAL GOVERNMENT
 Agriculture and food	 Agriculture and farming	 Animal control
 Citizenship	 Children and family supports	 Fire protection
 Criminal law	 Colleges and universities	 Land use planning (Zoning)
 Currency	 Community and social services (Support for seniors, low income, disabled people)	 Local parks
 Environment	 Drivers' licensing and highways	 Police
 Federal taxes	 Emergency management	 Recreation and community facilities
 Fisheries and oceans	 Education	 Road maintenance
 Foreign affairs and international trade	 Hospitals and healthcare	 Property taxes
 Heritage and culture	 Indigenous relations	 Public transportation
 Housing, infrastructure and communities	 Mental health	 Waste management
 National defence	 Municipalities	 Water supply and treatment
 Natural resources	 Natural resources (Mining, forestry)	
 Official languages	 Property and civil rights	
 Postal service	 Provincial law and courts	
 Public safety and risk management	 Provincial taxes	
 Services for Indigenous communities	 Tourism	
 Transport and port authorities		
 Veterans affairs		

ACTIVITY 3.2: Card Game – Whose Responsibility Is It?

<p>Helping people move to Canada and giving passports.</p>  <p><i>Federal</i></p>	<p>Delivering mail.</p>  <p><i>Federal</i></p>	<p>Managing airports and air travel.</p>  <p><i>Federal</i></p>	<p>Helping other countries with peace and security.</p>  <p><i>Federal</i></p>	<p>Giving money to parents on maternity or parental leave.</p>  <p><i>Federal</i></p>
<p>Making sure First Nations communities have clean water.</p>  <p><i>Federal</i></p>	<p>Giving and renewing driver's licenses.</p>  <p><i>Provincial</i></p>	<p>Taking care of hospitals and doctors.</p>  <p><i>Provincial</i></p>	<p>Deciding what students learn in school.</p>  <p><i>Provincial</i></p>	<p>Helping young people who break the law.</p>  <p><i>Provincial</i></p>

<p>Supporting families who need homes.</p>  <p><i>Provincial</i></p>	<p>Protecting forests and keeping them healthy.</p>  <p><i>Provincial</i></p>	<p>Providing clean water for the town.</p>  <p><i>Municipal</i></p>	<p>Collecting garbage and recycling.</p>  <p><i>Municipal</i></p>	<p>Running after-school programs.</p>  <p><i>Municipal</i></p>
<p>Building parks and playgrounds.</p>  <p><i>Municipal</i></p>	<p>Fixing roads and potholes.</p>  <p><i>Municipal</i></p>	<p>Providing police and safety services.</p>  <p><i>Municipal</i></p>	<p>Helping set daycare costs.</p>  <p><i>Federal and Provincial</i></p>	<p>Giving money for college or university.</p>  <p><i>Federal and Provincial</i></p>

Lesson 4: Federal Elections



GUIDING QUESTIONS

- 1 Why do we have elections?
- 2 How are candidates elected in federal elections?
- 3 How do federal elections shape our parliamentary system?

OVERVIEW

During federal elections, voters throughout Canada elect members of Parliament to represent them in the House of Commons in Ottawa.

In Part One, students begin by discussing why elections are important. Next, students learn about federal elections and how members are elected. Through guided activities, students will uncover information about their local electoral district, compared to others in the country.

In Part Two, students learn about Canada's major political parties and how our parliamentary system works. Working in small groups, students examine data from past federal elections and present their findings using charts or graphs. The lesson concludes with a reflection on the historical election data and what insights can be drawn.

LEARNING GOALS

We are learning to:

- describe the process for electing our federal representatives;
- identify their school's electoral district;
- explain how our parliamentary system works; and
- research and analyze election data.

Tips for Teachers

- Please use the activities and combine them in a way that is appropriate for your class.
- The lesson is divided into two parts, should you choose to teach the content over multiple days.
- If you are looking for options to condense the learning, focus on examining the 2019 and 2021 election data as a class, rather than in groups and through presentations.

Supplies/Needs

- “Federal Elections” video
- Slide Deck 4
- Whiteboard, blackboard or chart paper
- Printed copies or digital access to Activity 4.1, Handout 4.2 and Activity 4.3
- All digital files, videos and slide decks can be found at: studentvote.ca/canada (Classroom Resources)

PART ONE

Starter

1. Write the question “Why do we have elections?” at the top of the board or display it prominently. Begin with an open class discussion, inviting students to share their thoughts. Write their responses on the board in list format.

Examples include:

- To choose representatives
 - To express our opinions
 - To make decisions about our government
 - To ensure democracy and fairness
 - To exercise our democratic rights
2. Using a ‘Think-Pair-Share’ protocol, ask students to pair up to discuss the following:
 - What happens during an election?
 - What does it mean to participate in an election?Afterward, bring the class back together and invite pairs to share their insights.
 3. Highlight the key themes from the discussion. Emphasize that elections are foundational to democracy and are about making collective decisions. Use students’ responses to transition into the day’s lesson on how federal elections work in Canada.

Essential Learning

Review the election process in Canada using the “Federal Elections” video and Slide Deck 4.

- Elections Canada is the agency responsible for organizing federal elections in Canada.
- The country is divided into smaller geographic areas called electoral districts or ridings.
- Each electoral district has its own election race, where interested individuals compete for the job of Member of Parliament. These individuals are called candidates.
- Most candidates belong to a political party, but some run as independents.
- During elections, candidates and parties share their plans and priorities and convince people to vote for them.
- When it is time to vote, voters are allowed to choose one candidate on the ballot.
- The candidate with the most votes in each electoral district wins.
- The political party with the most elected candidates usually forms the government, and their leader becomes the prime minister.

Activity

1. Demonstrate to students how to look up your school’s electoral district using the Voter Information Service on the Elections Canada website (elections.ca). You will need to enter your postal code or address.
2. Find the related map for your school’s electoral district using the “Voter Information Service” on elections.ca (Search for your electoral district and select ‘Map’ on the navigation bar). Examine the map in the following ways:
 - Outline the boundaries of your electoral district and which neighbourhoods are included (See ‘Boundary Description’ or reference the major street names)
 - Point out the location of the school and other major landmarks
 - Identify neighbouring electoral districts (some students may live outside the school’s electoral district)
3. Explain to students that the number of federal electoral districts has increased since the last election. There will be 343 Members of Parliament elected this time, compared to 338 in the last election.

- The boundaries are reviewed after each 10-year census by an independent commission to determine if changes need to be made to reflect population. The goal is to have each district represent a similar population range.
 - Sometimes new districts are created, boundaries are redrawn and/or the district names change.
4. Post the large electoral district map provided in your Student Vote resource package and have students examine the size and shape of electoral districts across the country. Specifically, compare an urban electoral district to a rural electoral district. Discuss the differences and what those differences might reflect (e.g., population, geographic features).

TEACHER NOTE:

In your package, you will have both the 2012 Representation Order map (338 electoral districts) and 2023 Representation Order map (343 electoral districts). Use the maps to compare the changes.

5. Distribute copies of Activity 4.3. As a class, use the “Voter Information Service” on elections.ca to find interesting facts about your electoral district. Highlight the different sections, such as FAQ, Map, Profile and Past Results.
6. Afterward, invite students to look up another electoral district and find similar information. Ask students to share their research with a classmate or review the research as a class.

PART TWO

Applied Learning

1. Review the concept of how federal elections shape our parliamentary system.
- In our parliamentary system, a political party wins the election by having the most candidates elected—which means they have the most seats in the House of Commons.
 - If the winning party has more than half of the seats in the House of Commons, they have a majority government. If they win less than half, they have a minority government—which means they need to gain the support of other parties to pass laws and legislation.

- The political party with the second most number of elected candidates forms the official opposition.
2. Review the names of the political parties represented in the House of Commons over the last decade.
- Liberal Party of Canada, Conservative Party of Canada, Bloc Quebecois, New Democratic Party, Green Party of Canada.
 - Highlight that there are other political parties, but they have not won any seats in these recent elections.
3. Divide students into small groups and explain to them that they will be taking on the role of Canadian election data detectives. Each group will be tasked with examining election data for one federal election over the past 20 years (2006, 2008, 2011, 2015, 2019, 2021). The purpose of the activity is to help them better understand elections and our parliamentary system.
4. Provide copies of Handout 4.2 and Activity 4.3. Each group will have to research and examine various data points, such as seat count, popular vote, voter turnout. Afterward, have students display some of this data in a chart or graphic form (pie chart, bar chart).

TEACHER NOTE:

Review each data point to ensure students understand it (e.g., vote %, seat %, voter turnout). You may want to model the activity for one particular election.

5. Have students present their research to the rest of the class in historical order. Consider recording the information presented in a comparison table to be used in the *Consolidation* activity.

Consolidation

Reflect on the group presentations and historical election data and facilitate a class discussion.

- Do you notice any trends?
- Is there anything in the data that stands out to you or that surprises you?
- How has voter turnout changed over the years?
- How has the seat distribution among parties changed?
- What observations can you share about elections in Canada?

Questions to Help Guide Assessment

SECTION	GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR TEACHERS
Starter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can students express reasons why elections are essential to democracy? • Can they articulate why it is important to participate in elections?
Essential Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do students understand how candidates are elected? • Do students understand how a political party forms the government?
Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can students analyze the reasons behind the different shapes and sizes of electoral districts? • Do students understand where to go and how to look up their electoral district?
Applied Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can students locate, calculate and analyze election data? • Do they present election data in an accurate way?
Consolidation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can students draw observations and insights by analyzing the data shared in the presentations?

Adaptations and Supports

Individual Education Plans	<p>Modifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide key terms and definitions in advance. • Consider preparing the data in advance to reduce the number of steps in the activities. <p>Enrichment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have students use CPAC's Election Archive to review footage from past election campaigns. • Expand the research and analysis for past election data.
Language Learners	<p>Provide students with terms and definitions in advance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - election - electoral system - candidate - riding or electoral district - ballot - vote count - seat count - voter turnout
Culturally Responsive Pedagogy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have students research the electoral system used in their home country for comparison. • Students living in Indigenous communities should review the systems of elections and leadership in their home community first.
Accessibility & Accommodations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If working in pairs or small groups in the classroom is not possible, consider using Google Docs for collaborative work. • Prepare the data in advance to reduce the number of steps in the activities. • Assign roles (e.g., recorder, presenter) for group work so each student can participate at their comfort level.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS

The **Office of the Chief Electoral Officer**, commonly known as Elections Canada, is an independent, non-partisan agency that reports directly to Parliament. Elections Canada is responsible for organizing federal general elections, by-elections and referendums.

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**, commonly known as **First Past the Post (FPTP)**. Under this system, 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; just one more vote than any other candidates. This is called **plurality**.

The country is divided into geographic areas called electoral districts (or ridings). Each electoral district is represented by one Member of Parliament in the House of Commons.

The Constitution of Canada requires that federal electoral districts be reviewed after each 10-year census to reflect changes and movements in Canada's population. The most recent redistribution process began in October 2021; it was completed in October 2023. Canada now has 343 electoral districts. This reflects an increase of five electoral districts since the last general election.

The size of electoral districts is determined by factors such as population size, geography 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.

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

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. Regardless of fixed date election legislation, a federal election can be held at any time if the government loses the confidence of the House of Commons or if the governor general were to dissolve Parliament on the advice of the prime minister.

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. The length of a federal election campaign may vary, but it must be between 36 and 50 days.

ACTIVITY 4.1: Examining Electoral Districts

Go to www.elections.ca and use the “Voter Information Service” to research your electoral district and another one in the country. There are different sections of information (FAQ, Map, Profile, Past Results).

	YOUR SCHOOL'S ELECTORAL DISTRICT	ANOTHER ELECTORAL DISTRICT
Name		
Province		
City/Town		
Population		
Registered Voters		
Area (km²)		
Boundaries (List the street names)		
Elected candidate of the 2021 federal election (Name and party)		
Elected candidate of the 2019 federal election (Name and party)		

HANDOUT 4.2: Canadian Election Data

TABLE A: VOTES CAST (2006-2021)

PARTY NAME	2006	2008	2011	2015	2019	2021
Liberal	4,479,415	3,633,185	2,783,076	6,942,937	6,018,728	5,556,629
Conservative	5,374,071	5,209,069	5,835,270	5,613,633	6,239,227	5,747,410
NDP	2,589,597	2,515,288	4,512,411	3,469,368	2,903,722	3,036,348
Green	664,068	937,613	572,095	602,933	1,189,607	396,988
Bloc	1,553,201	1,379,991	891,425	821,144	1,387,030	1,301,615
Other	158,556	105,345	86,692	62,690	432,566	995,253
Total	14,818,908	12,452,692	14,723,980	17,591,468	18,170,880	17,034,243

TABLE B: CANDIDATES ELECTED (2006-2021)

PARTY NAME	2006	2008	2011	2015	2019	2021
Liberal	103	77	34	184	157	160
Conservative	124	143	166	99	121	119
NDP	29	37	103	44	24	25
Green	0	0	1	1	3	2
Bloc	51	49	4	10	32	32
Independent	1	2	0	0	1	0
Total	308	308	308	338	338	338

ACTIVITY 4.3: Canadian Election Detective

Source: Elections Canada, www.elections.ca

1. Write down your assigned election year and the number of seats awarded in the election.

2. Record the vote count and seat count for each party. Then calculate the percentage of votes and percentage seats that each party received.

PARTY NAME	VOTE COUNT	VOTE %	SEAT COUNT	SEAT %

3. Which political party formed the government? Was it a majority or minority government?

4. Which political party formed the official opposition?

5. Which candidate (and party) won in our school's electoral district? How many votes did they win by?

6. What was voter turnout for this election (percentage of eligible voters that cast ballots)?

7. What observations and insights do you have about this election?

Lesson 5: Evaluating Election Information



GUIDING QUESTIONS

- 1 Why should we evaluate election information?**
- 2 Which sources produce election information and what motives do they have?**
- 3 What are some ways that people try to persuade us during an election?**

OVERVIEW

Understanding the difference between facts and opinions, and identifying persuasive techniques helps us analyze election information.

In Part One, students begin by discussing why it is important to be critical consumers of information during elections. They discuss different communication motives and learn about different sources of election information by examining real-world examples, such as news articles, campaign ads, and social media posts.

In Part Two, students dive deeper by examining persuasive techniques like emotional strategies, repetition, and appeals to authority. They practice identifying these techniques in small groups and distinguishing facts from opinions. The lesson concludes with a reflection on what students learned and questions to keep in mind when evaluating election information.

LEARNING GOALS

We are learning to:

- explain why it is important to evaluate election information critically;
- identify common types of election information;
- recognize persuasive techniques used in campaign materials; and
- identify between facts, opinions, and false information in the context of election campaigns.

Tips for Teachers

- Please use and combine the activities in a way that is appropriate for your class.
- The lesson has been divided into two parts, should you choose to deliver the activities over multiple periods/days.
- If you choose to use your own examples, use examples from across the political spectrum.

Supplies/Needs

- Slide Deck 5
- Digital access to or copies of Activity 5.1 (if desired)
- All digital files, videos and slide decks can be found at: studentvote.ca/canada (Classroom Resources)

PART ONE

Starter

1. Begin with a conversation about sources of information about election. Through a whole class conversation, ask students the following questions:
 - Elections are a time when we hear lots of information from different places. Have you heard or seen people talking about the current election?
 - What information about the election have you seen?
 - Why is it important to have accurate and reliable information during elections?
2. Emphasize how information helps voters make decisions and how misleading information can affect choices. Imagine if false information was being shared about what ID you needed to vote. How could this confuse voters? What could be the consequences?

Essential Learning

1. Using the ‘Think-Ink-Pair-Share’ protocol, ask students to think individually about different reasons individuals or groups might produce or publish information during an election.
 - a) **Think:** Provide 1-2 minutes for individual reflection focused on the question: “Why do you think people create election information?”
 - b) **Ink:** Ask students to write down at least two reasons.

- c) **Pair:** Have students pair up to compare their answers and come up with another reason.
- d) **Share:** Review and discuss the major reasons people produce information during an election as a whole class.

Possible purposes or motives include the following:

- To inform (about election issues, parties, candidates and the voting process)
 - To persuade you to believe something (or to vote for them)
 - To advocate for a cause or issue
 - To entertain
 - To mislead
2. Examine different types of information students may encounter during an election using Slide Deck 5. The deck includes the following:
 - News articles
 - Campaign pamphlets
 - Video advertisements
 - Social media posts
 - Media interviews

For each example, ask students if they can recognize the type of source (e.g., political party, news media, influencer, government department/agency, community group). After students have suggested some answers, reveal the answer. Next, ask students if they can explain the purpose/motive of the information.

PART TWO

Deeper Learning

1. Review the difference between a fact, opinion and a false statement and assess the election-related examples in Slide Deck 5.
 - **Fact:** Can be proven true.
 - **Opinion:** A personal belief.
 - **False Information:** Not true, intended to mislead.

TEACHER NOTE:

Please note that showing students strategies for evaluating the credibility of a source is outside the scope of this lesson. If you would like to focus on source evaluation, please see our CTRL-F resources at CTRL-F.ca

2. Discuss the role of persuasion in election campaigns. The job of political parties and candidates is to convince you to vote for them. Be sure that students understand that persuasion is not necessarily “bad” or misleading (though it can be). Persuasion is a way of trying to get others to adopt your opinion or viewpoint, and this can be done in good faith and without the intent to deceive.

Using Slide Deck 5, introduce common techniques used in campaign materials.

- **Emotion:** Ads that make you feel happy, hopeful, scared, or angry.
- **Authority:** Quotes from experts or famous people.
- **Repetition:** Repeating slogans or promises.

Activity

1. In small groups, have students review the examples in Slide Deck 5 and analyze the content. Provide students with access to or provide copies of Activity 5.1.
 - What do you think they are trying to communicate?
 - Is the statement a fact or an opinion?
 - How do the words, colors, or images catch your attention?
 - What emotions are they trying to make you feel?
 - What persuasive techniques are being used?

2. After analyzing the examples, have one student from each group present their findings to the class. Facilitate further discussion about the techniques and motives.

Consolidation

Ask students to fill out the Exit Card (Activity 5.2).

- Three things I learned about elections and information
- Two questions I want to keep in mind when examining election information
- One way today’s lesson will help me be an informed voter

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS

Election information helps voters make informed decisions about candidates, policies, and voting procedures. It can come from various sources, including news media, political parties, advocacy groups, social media and government institutions. Each source has its own purpose, which may range from informing the public to persuading voters or advocating for specific causes. However, some information can be intentionally misleading, such as false claims or misinformation, which is why it is important to critically evaluate election information.

Understanding the differences between fact, opinion, and false information is a critical part of media literacy:

- **Facts** are verifiable statements that can be proven true.
- **Opinions** reflect personal beliefs or perspectives and cannot be objectively verified.
- **False information** is inaccurate or misleading content shared intentionally or unintentionally.

It is important to question the credibility of sources, verify claims, and distinguish factual reporting from biased or opinionated content.

Campaign materials often use persuasive techniques to influence voters’ emotions, beliefs, and decisions. Common techniques include:

- **Emotion:** Appeals to feelings like hope, fear, or pride to motivate action.
- **Authority:** Citing experts, leaders, or endorsements to build credibility.
- **Repetition:** Repeating slogans or promises to reinforce messages.

Identifying these techniques empowers voters to assess the intent behind the information they encounter.

Questions to Help Guide Assessment

SECTION	GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR TEACHERS
Starter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can students consider the consequences of inaccurate or misleading information during elections?
Essential Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can students identify motives behind various kinds of election information? • Can students correctly identify the type of source and motive in the examples? • Can they point out the problem with not knowing the source or the motive?
Deeper Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can students distinguish between fact and opinion? Do they understand the motives behind people who may share false information? • Can students identify persuasive techniques in their daily lives? Do they understand the common techniques used?
Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can they identify fact vs opinion in the examples? Do they recognize persuasive techniques?
Consolidation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can students frame questions that will help them assess election information? (i.e. Who created this and why?)

Adaptations and Supports

Individual Education Plans	<p>Modifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow students to draw or use visual aids instead of writing during the “Think-Ink” step. • Provide sentence starters or prompts to scaffold their thinking (e.g., “One reason someone might create election information is...”). • Group students strategically, pairing stronger critical thinkers with students who may need additional support. <p>Enrichment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have students examine more detailed persuasive techniques. Refer to Lesson 4 in the Secondary resource.
Language Learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use examples with more visuals in the activities (videos, print ads, posters). • Allow students to discuss key ideas in their first language before sharing in English/French.
Culturally Responsive Pedagogy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include examples of election materials that reflect diverse candidates, platforms, and communities. • If feasible, show examples of election materials in multiple languages and highlight the value of reaching diverse voters.
Accessibility & Accommodations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow students to respond orally instead of in writing or to present their ideas through drawings or digital tools. • Assign clear roles (e.g., reader, recorder, presenter) so each student can participate at their comfort level.

ACTIVITY 5.1: Analyzing Campaign Communication

As you examine the different examples of campaign communication, answer the questions below.

	EXAMPLE #1	EXAMPLE #2	EXAMPLE #3
Provide a short description of the campaign communication			
What do you think they are trying to communicate?			
Is the statement a fact or an opinion?			
How do the words, colors, or images catch your attention?			
What emotions are they trying to make you feel?			
Describe the persuasive techniques being used.			

ACTIVITY 5.2: 3-2-1 Exit Card

3-2-1 EXIT CARD	
3	Three things I learned about elections and information:
2	Two questions I want to keep in mind when examining election information:
1	One way today's lesson will help me be an informed voter:

3-2-1 EXIT CARD	
3	Three things I learned about elections and information:
2	Two questions I want to keep in mind when examining election information:
1	One way today's lesson will help me be an informed voter:

Lesson 6: Researching the Parties and Candidates



GUIDING QUESTIONS

- 1 Why do we have political parties?
- 2 How can I learn about the political parties?
- 3 Which political party best represents my views?

OVERVIEW

The job of voters is to research and compare the candidates, the political parties they belong to, and their campaign promises.

In Part One, students participate in a 'Four Corners' activity to explore different viewpoints on various topics and practice defending their opinions. They then watch a video about the role of political parties and how they campaign for support. After looking up which candidates are running for election, students create a Word Web and brainstorm how to decide who to vote for.

In Part Two, students share insights from family discussions about voting and rank important election issues in groups. They research the parties and local candidates using various sources, creating profiles to compare key messages, promises, and visions. Groups present their findings, followed by a reflection on party platforms and election issues through writing or discussion.

LEARNING GOALS

We are learning to:

- voice our opinion on political issues;
- describe the role of political parties and candidates during an election;
- evaluate issues of importance; and
- research, synthesize and critically analyze information about the candidates and political parties.

Tips for Teachers

- It is recommended that students complete Lesson 5 before completing this lesson to better evaluate information sources and political messaging.
 - Please use the activities and combine them in a way that is appropriate for your class.
 - The lesson is divided into two parts, should you choose to deliver the activities over multiple days.
 - Some students may jump at the opportunity to share their opinions and try to convince others to adopt their choices, while others may prefer to keep their politics personal. Remind students that views should be respected, even if they differ.
 - Consider using a word cloud generator (such as Wordle or Word Art) or an AI tool to help students simplify or summarize political party platforms or messages. Attach or paste the information you want to simplify, rather than asking the AI tool to find it for you.
3. Ask a few students to explain their choice. After each student defends their opinion, give the other students the chance to change their opinion/corner of the room, if others persuade them.
 4. Repeat as many times as you like.

Supplies/Needs

- “Introduction to politics and political parties” video
- Slide Deck 6
- Digital access to or copies of Activity 6.1 and 6.2 (or 6.3, alternatively) and 6.4
- All digital files, videos and slide decks can be found at: studentvote.ca/canada (Classroom Resources)

PART ONE

Starter

In this ‘Four Corners’ activity, students explore the idea that people have different beliefs and viewpoints. They are asked to take a stand on a specific topic and defend their position.

1. Place signs in the four corners of the room: “Strongly Agree,” “Somewhat Agree,” “Somewhat Disagree,” “Strongly Disagree”.
2. Read out a statement and ask students to vote by moving to one of the corners of the classroom. Choose statements you feel students will be comfortable answering in front of their classmates, starting with school-based statements.

For example:

- School uniforms should be mandatory for all students.

- Homework should be banned.
 - Zoos should be abolished.
 - Companies that pollute our air and water should face consequences.
 - The government should spend more money on national defence to protect our country.
 - Canada should give financial aid to other countries.
 - The government should be small and provide fewer services, so that we can pay less taxes.
3. Ask a few students to explain their choice. After each student defends their opinion, give the other students the chance to change their opinion/corner of the room, if others persuade them.
 4. Repeat as many times as you like.

Essential Learning

1. Watch the “[Introduction to politics and political parties](#)” video and review the role of political parties and candidates during elections.
 - **Politics** is the way that people living in groups make decisions and influence their government.
 - Anywhere people live together there will be different opinions about how things should work.
 - People with similar political views often come together as a team and work towards their shared goals. These teams are called **political parties**.
 - Anyone above the required age, usually 14 years old, can be a party member.
 - Party members choose a leader for their party. They also help choose candidates to run for election.
 - During elections, political parties usually release a **political platform** or party platform, which outlines the promises and actions the party will take if they are elected.
2. Demonstrate to students where they can find out which candidates are running for election in your school’s electoral district. Visit Elections Canada at www.elections.ca.
3. Share the question: How should we decide who to vote for?

As a class, create a Word Web and brainstorm questions to guide your research around this question.

To help students generate questions, you can write the following prompts on the board: local candidate, party leader, political party and platform, specific issues.

Sample responses:

- Local candidate - Who is the best candidate for the job of Member of Parliament? How have past experiences prepared them for this job?
 - Party leader - Which leader has the best vision for Canada? Which leader will be the best Prime Minister?
 - Political/party platform - What major actions will the party take if elected?
 - Specific issues - Which issues are important to me, my family, and our community? How will the parties address these issues?
4. Ask students to go home and ask their family members two questions to be shared in the next class. This can happen informally or using copies of Activity 6.1.
- How do you decide who to vote for in federal elections?
 - What issues do you think are most important in this election?

PART TWO

Applied Learning

1. Invite students to share any information they have learned from their discussions with family members about how they decide who to vote for and which issues they think are most important in this election.
2. Divide students into groups and have them rank the issues on Activity 6.1. Afterward, ask each group to provide their top three choices and tally the results for the class. If desired, the top three issues can be used for the research in the next part.
3. Explain to students that they will research the candidates/parties running in the school's electoral district. The goal is to collect similar information for each candidate/party so that it's easier to compare and evaluate them. Review the list of sources available for this research:
 - Party websites and social media accounts (YouTube, X, Facebook, TikTok)
 - Candidate websites and social media accounts
 - News websites
 - Other credible sources that summarize the party platforms

- Student Vote resources ("Party Leader Q&A" videos, Pollenize)
4. Building on the discussion from Part One, co-create an outline for producing a candidate/party profile and format (physical or digital). Alternatively, you can use the research template (Activity 6.2).

For example:

- Who is the local candidate? What is their background and experience?
- What are the candidate or party's key messages?
- What are the party's slogans? What is the party trying to communicate?
- Who is the party's leader? What is their vision for Canada?
- What are the party's major ideas? What actions are they promising to take if elected?
- What issues are important to our class or community? How will the party address these issues if they are elected?

As an alternative to this activity, students can work individually or in small groups to explore a specific election issue and compare the policies and positions of the political parties (Activity 6.3).

5. Have each group share their profile/presentation with the rest of the class.
6. Afterward, allow students time to review the presentations independently or through a Gallery Walk.

Consolidation

1. Ask students to write a reflection about one or more of the following questions.
 - Which party's message or vision do you support the most and why?
 - Did your opinion of any political parties change after learning about them? If so, how?
 - Which election issue is most important to you or your family? How does each party plan to address this issue?
 - Which party's platform do you agree with the most?
 - What else would you like to know? How would you find out more?
2. Ask students to complete Activity 6.4 and share it with their parents.

Extended Learning

Activity A: The Leaders' Debate

Have students watch the federal leaders' debate at home and/or watch clips in the classroom and complete Activity 6.5. To prepare for the viewing, discuss the qualities of a good debater and review the party leaders participating in the debate. You can also use the "Party Leader Q&A" videos on the Student Vote Canada website, in advance.

TEACHER NOTES

The entire debate may last close to two hours. The following day, many news media outlets will offer segments or highlights.

Activity B: Youth Vote Compass

Have students complete the *Vote Compass: Canada Youth Edition* (youth.votecompass.com/can). This is a political spectrum tool, which helps young people reflect on their political views. At the end of the survey, the *Vote Compass: Canada Youth Edition* tool indicates your position on the political spectrum so that you can see where you are placed compared to the average voter of the various political parties.

TEACHER NOTES

- This tool is designed for grades 7-12. Additional support may be required depending on age.
- Arrange for computer or internet access so that students can complete the survey. It is estimated to take 15-20 min.
- Remind students that there are no right or wrong answers; the questions are meant to encourage reflection on their political views.
- Background information has been included, along with definitions, to help students better understand the issues and terms. Consider reviewing some terms in advance.
- Analytics and summary data are provided at the end of the survey. Give students time to analyze their results (the area where they locate themselves on the spectrum, how they compare to average voter of the federal political parties).

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS

During an election campaign, a political party, its candidates, and its campaign teams organize to develop and share their party's ideas and vision.

A **political platform** is a set of declared principles, policies, and plans regarding government and public issues.

Candidates and parties use a communications strategy that incorporates paid, earned, and owned media, as well as outreach activities and events to spread their message.

- **Paid media** includes publicity that has been purchased to bring a message to an audience. Examples include print, broadcast, and social media advertising, and direct mail campaigns.
- **Owned media** consists of communications managed by an individual, group, or organization through its own platforms, such as websites, blogs, or social media accounts.
- **Earned media** consists of media coverage by third parties, such as news organizations, or mentions shared through external social media channels or word of mouth.

- **Campaign outreach** includes lawn signs, public events, door-to-door canvassing, town halls and debates.

Elections present an opportunity for citizens to explore societal issues and participate in constructive dialogue about priorities and public policies.

This process includes establishing which issues are most important to you, your community, and the country, and evaluating how the different political parties will address them.

It is the job of voters to gather, interpret and analyze campaign information; draw conclusions; and make their voting decisions.

Questions to Help Guide Assessment

SECTION	GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR TEACHERS
Starter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are students reflecting on their views about the statements? • Are students respectful of each other's opinions? • Can students appreciate that people have different political views?
Essential Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do students understand the role of political parties and the different ways that political parties and candidates campaign for their support? • Can students propose questions to support their research and help frame how they would decide who to vote for?
Applied Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can students identify issues that matter to them? • Are students posing questions to spark new areas of interest while researching their candidate/party? • Are students presenting information that is accurate and informative?
Consolidation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do student reflections demonstrate critical thinking and analysis of the candidates and political parties? Are they making connections to their own priorities? • Can students communicate their knowledge to their family members?

Adaptations and Supports

Individual Education Plans	<p>Modifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give lots of thinking time during the <i>Starter</i> activity. • Use an AI tool or word cloud generator to simplify political party messages. • Review key terminology in advance of reviewing party promises, such as 'economy' and 'policy'. <p>Enrichment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage students to offer their own political statements for the <i>Starter</i> activity. • Have students research the issue most important to them and see how the media reports on the different positions of each party.
Language Learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repeat terms and rephrase statements in different ways. • Use an AI tool or word cloud generator to simplify political party messages. • Review keywords in advance and use visuals where appropriate.
Culturally Responsive Pedagogy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing opinions is always challenging. Be aware of issues that may be controversial and support students in positive ways if they are uncomfortable sharing their opinions. Offer written alternatives or digital polls. • Select issues that matter most to your students or the community in which they live when researching the party's promises or actions they plan to take.
Accessibility & Accommodations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer a variety of materials, both print and online, for various accessibility needs.

ACTIVITY 6.1: Election Issues

- Canada's relationship with the other countries
- Cost of living
- Crime and safety
- Defence and security
- Environment
- Healthcare
- Housing
- Immigration
- Indigenous reconciliation
- Jobs and the economy

1. Which three issues are most important to me?

2. Which three issues are most important to my group?

ACTIVITY 6.2: Voter Research

1. Research the following information with your group using candidate and political party websites, campaign literature and social media posts.

RESEARCH QUESTION	FINDINGS
Who is the local candidate and which party do they belong to? What is their background and experience?	
What are the candidate or party's key messages?	
What are the party's slogans? What is the party trying to communicate?	
Who is the party's leader? What is their vision for Canada?	

RESEARCH QUESTION	FINDINGS
<p>What are the party's major ideas? What actions are they promising to take if elected?</p>	
<p>What issues are important to our class or community? How will the party address these issues if they are elected?</p>	

2. Using the information collected, create a presentation and promotional materials about your candidate and their political party.

Suggested Elements:

- Picture and short bio of your candidate
- Party logo
- One main slogan or message
- Three social media posts that represent the party's priorities or vision for the country
- Two images of the party leader (taken from social media or the party website)
- Summary of three major ideas or proposed actions
- Analysis of who will be impacted by the three major ideas
- One item to distribute to each student in the class that shares information about the candidate/party

ACTIVITY 6.3: Election Issue Case Study

<p>Identify an issue:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What issue is most important to you in this election?• Why is it important to you?	
<p>Find the facts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What is some background about the issue?• Write down the three important facts about the issue.	
<p>Research each party's position:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What does each party say about the issue?• What actions will the party take to address the issue?	
<p>Compare the positions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How are the positions similar or different?	
<p>Conclusion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Which party's ideas or plan do you think is best? Explain your reasoning.	

ACTIVITY 6.4: Reflection Card

REFLECTION CARD	
Name:	
The first thing I will share with my family tonight is...	
One piece of advice I have for voters is...	

REFLECTION CARD	
Name:	
The first thing I will share with my family tonight is...	
One piece of advice I have for voters is...	

ACTIVITY 6.5: Evaluating the Leaders' Debate

Complete *Step 1* in advance of watching the debate, and *Step 2* during the debate. Afterward, complete the rest of the questions.

1. Make a list of qualities and skills that make someone a good debater.

2. Summarize the key messages that each leader focused on during the debate using words and/or images.

NAME OF THE LEADER AND POLITICAL PARTY	KEY MESSAGES AND ISSUES THE LEADER FOCUSED ON

3. Which leader do you think performed the best and why?

4. Which points were most persuasive and why?

5. Did any viewpoints influence your thinking about an issue? Explain.

6. Was it helpful to hear different points of view? Explain.

Lesson 7: The Voting Process



GUIDING QUESTIONS

- 1 Is voting important?**
- 2 When, where and how do people vote in federal elections?**
- 3 How does Elections Canada ensure election integrity?**

OVERVIEW

A healthy democracy depends on informed, engaged citizens who make their voices heard through voting.

In Part One, students watch a video about the reasons why young people think voting is important and discuss different motivations for casting a ballot and the relevance of the Student Vote program. Afterward, students explore the key aspects of voting in federal elections, including the secret ballot, eligibility, voting methods, and how to correctly mark a ballot.

In Part Two, students explore election integrity through discussion and a fact-checking activity, where they debunk common myths about the federal election process to better understand and share accurate information. They consolidate their learning by creating a pitch to encourage people to vote in the federal election.

LEARNING GOALS

We are learning to:

- analyze reasons for voting in elections;
- describe where, when, and how to vote in federal elections;
- investigate and fact-check common myths about federal elections using trustworthy information; and
- use words and/or imagery effectively to convey our message.

Tips for Teachers

- Please use or adapt the activities in a way that is appropriate for your class.
- The lesson is divided into two parts, should you choose to deliver the activities over multiple days.
- Show students a Student Vote ballot for your electoral district so they know what to expect on Student Vote Day. Please refer to your ballot package.
- Be sensitive to issues at home that may challenge perspectives around voting and democratic participation, such as religion or traditions.
- Recognize and acknowledge barriers that inhibit individuals or groups from voting (e.g., historical exclusions, socio-economic class, language, newcomers).

Supplies/Needs

- “[Why Voting Matters](#)” video
- Slide Deck 7
- Digital access or copies of Activity 7.1
- Internet access
- All digital files, videos and slide decks can be found at: studentvote.ca/canada (*Classroom Resources*)

PART ONE

Starter

1. Watch the “[Why Voting Matters](#)” video.
2. Give students a couple of minutes to think about what the kids in the video said about voting. Ask them to write down one reason why voting is important.
3. Have students turn to partner and share their thoughts. Suggested prompts:
 - What was one reason from the video that stood out to you?
 - Why do you think people choose to vote?
4. Facilitate a whole-class discussion about the motivations behind voting and the consequences of not voting. Additional prompts:
 - What might happen if people stopped voting?
 - What would you say to someone who thinks their vote doesn’t count?
5. End with a conversation about the value of the Student Vote program. Why do you think Student Vote is important, even though it’s not an official election? How does it help students?

Below are a few points to highlight through the conversation.
 - **Demystifying the process:** Student Vote helps you practice voting so that it feels easy and familiar.
 - **Preparation for the future:** By participating now, you’re building the habit of voting, which helps make sure your voice will be heard when you’re older.
 - **Showing politicians what matters to young people:** Even though your votes don’t count in the official election, politicians and adults still pay attention to Student Vote results. It shows them what young people care about, and that helps shape future decisions.

Essential Learning

1. Using Slide Deck 7, explore some key aspects of voting in federal elections. Key questions:
 - Why do we vote by secret ballot?
 - Who organizes federal elections in Canada?
 - Who can vote in federal elections?
 - What are the different ways a person can cast their ballot?
 - How do I mark my ballot?
2. Show students a sample Student Vote ballot (available online or in your ballot package) and demonstrate how to fill it out correctly. Students can use a checkmark, X, or any other mark that indicates their choice. Remind students they can only vote for one option; otherwise, their vote will not count.

PART TWO

Deeper Learning

1. As a class, discuss the idea of election integrity, which means making sure the process of choosing our representatives is fair, safe and secure.
 - What does it mean for an election to be fair, safe and secure? Some responses include:
 - Every vote is treated equally
 - No one is left out who is allowed to participate
 - Every candidate follows the same process; there is no unfair advantage
 - People can choose who they want to vote for without anyone pressuring them
 - There is no cheating by the parties and candidates
 - The counting process is complete and accurate
 - Why is it important to trust the election process?
2. Introduce the idea that myths or incorrect information about elections can circulate and confuse voters. Ask students: what would the consequences be if false information was shared that said that you need a valid passport or drivers' licence to vote?
3. Explain to students that they will act as “Election Mythbusters” to find the truth and better understand election integrity.
 - a) Distribute copies of Activity 7.1.
 - b) Highlight that Elections Canada is the best source for information about federal elections.
 - c) Share the link to “ElectoFacts” and explain that they will use this resource to verify the information on Activity 7.1 (Search “ElectoFacts” on elections.ca to find the page)
 - d) Ask students to work in pairs to complete their research.
 - e) Review the findings as a class.
4. Debrief on the activity as a class. Guiding questions:
 - What did you learn about election integrity today?
 - Why is it important to check the facts when you hear something about elections?
 - How can you help others understand election integrity?

Consolidation

Ask students to create a short pitch to encourage people to vote in the federal election, using what they've learned about voting and elections.

Instructions:

- Students choose a format (poster, speech, social media post, short video, etc.).
- Their pitch should explain why voting matters and encourage eligible voters to participate.
- Encourage creativity and positive messaging.
- Students can share their pitches with the class, post them around the school or share them with family or caregivers.

Optional Prompt:

If you could say one thing to convince someone to vote, what would it be?

Questions to Help Guide Assessment

SECTION	GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR TEACHERS
Starter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can students identify reasons for why people vote? • Do students see the value of participating in Student Vote?
Essential Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are students able to understand the reason for voting in private? • Can students explain who is eligible to vote and the different ways someone can cast their ballot?
Applied Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are students able to understand the importance of election integrity? • Can they effectively fact-check the myths and find the correct information?
Consolidation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can students produce a compelling pitch about voting in the federal election?

Adaptations and Supports

Individual Education Plans	<p>Modifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide students with terms and definitions in advance (e.g., secret ballot, voter information card, polling place, election day, advance voting, vote by mail, special ballot). • Share the “Why Voting Matters” video before class discussions and activities. • Ensure that subtitles are on during videos. <p>Enrichment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have students conduct research into the roles of different election officials (see <i>Election Manual</i>) or design a plan for organizing Student Vote Day at your school.
Language Learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide students with terms and definitions in advance (e.g., secret ballot, voter information card, polling place, election day, advance voting, vote by mail, special ballot). • Share the “Why Voting Matters” video before class discussions and activities. • Ensure that subtitles are on during videos.
Culturally Responsive Pedagogy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider having students create the voting pitch in their home language to share with family members. • Remind students that some electors, including youth, new Canadians, Indigenous electors, electors with disabilities, persons who are experiencing homelessness, may face barriers to participating in elections. • Keep the focus on ideas to increase access to voting and the benefits our society gets from hearing different voices, not only on the disadvantages these groups face.
Accessibility & Accommodations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If working in pairs or small groups in the classroom is not possible, consider using Google Docs for collaborative discussion/brainstorming.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS

The Office of the Chief Electoral Officer, known as **Elections Canada**, is an independent, nonpartisan agency that reports directly to Parliament. It is responsible for organizing federal general elections, by-elections, and referenda.

Voting across Canada is conducted by **secret ballot**, which ensures the privacy of each voter's choice. No one except the voter knows the choice made. It is illegal to take a photo of a marked ballot.

You are eligible to vote in a Canadian federal election if:

- You are a Canadian citizen,
- You are at least 18 years of age on election day.

You must be registered to vote to cast a ballot in the election.

Your contact information will be added to the National Register of Electors if you are an eligible elector. The National Register of Electors is used to create the list of electors for each election.

If you have moved, recently become a Canadian citizen, will be voting for the first time, or are a student living away from home, you may not be correctly registered. You can visit the Elections Canada website (www.elections.ca) to check, update, or complete your registration. When you vote, you can also register at your local Elections Canada office or your polling place.

If you are eligible to vote and your name is on the list of electors, you will be sent a Voter Information Card (VIC) in the mail. The voter information card tells you when, where and how to vote.

Voters may choose to vote in one of the following ways:

1. On election day
2. On an advance voting day

3. At an Elections Canada office (Returning Office)
4. By mail

To find out specific dates and times for voting, visit the Elections Canada website (www.elections.ca) for up-to-date information.

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

A **rejected ballot** 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, or writing your name or anything that could personally identify you.

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.

Elections Canada is the trusted source on information about the federal electoral process. Our federal electoral process has many safeguards in place to ensure the integrity and security of federal elections. Some include:

Voter Identification and

Registration: Voters must provide proof of identity and address before casting their ballots, ensuring that only eligible individuals vote and that each person votes only once.

Secure Voting Methods: Whether voting in person or by mail, there are strict procedures to maintain the security and confidentiality of ballots.

For instance, a special ballot voting kit includes: a special ballot, a plain

inner envelope, and an outer envelope for returning the completed ballot.

To protect the secrecy of the vote, the inner envelope containing the ballot is removed and kept separate from the outer envelope. This makes it impossible to link the voter's identity with their vote.

For in-person voting, ballots come in booklets with unique, sequential serial numbers to ensure that only ballots handled by election officers are deposited in the ballot box. The counterfoil with the serial number is then removed from the ballot prior to the ballot being put in the ballot box so that it cannot be traced back to the voter.

Transparent Vote Counting: Trained election workers count ballots by saying out loud who received the vote for each ballot in front of other poll workers, as well as candidates or their representatives. There are also measures in place to manage the custody of ballots and ballot boxes, ensuring accurate and trustworthy results.

Monitoring and Addressing Threats:

Elections Canada collaborates with security agencies to monitor and address potential threats to protect the electoral process.

Regulation of Political Financing and Advertising:

The Canada Elections Act sets rules and obligations for political entities regarding financing and advertising, promoting transparency and fairness, and preventing undue influence in elections.

Emergency Preparedness: There are measures in place to deal with emergencies and unforeseen situations that could disrupt voting, ensuring that elections proceed smoothly under various circumstances.

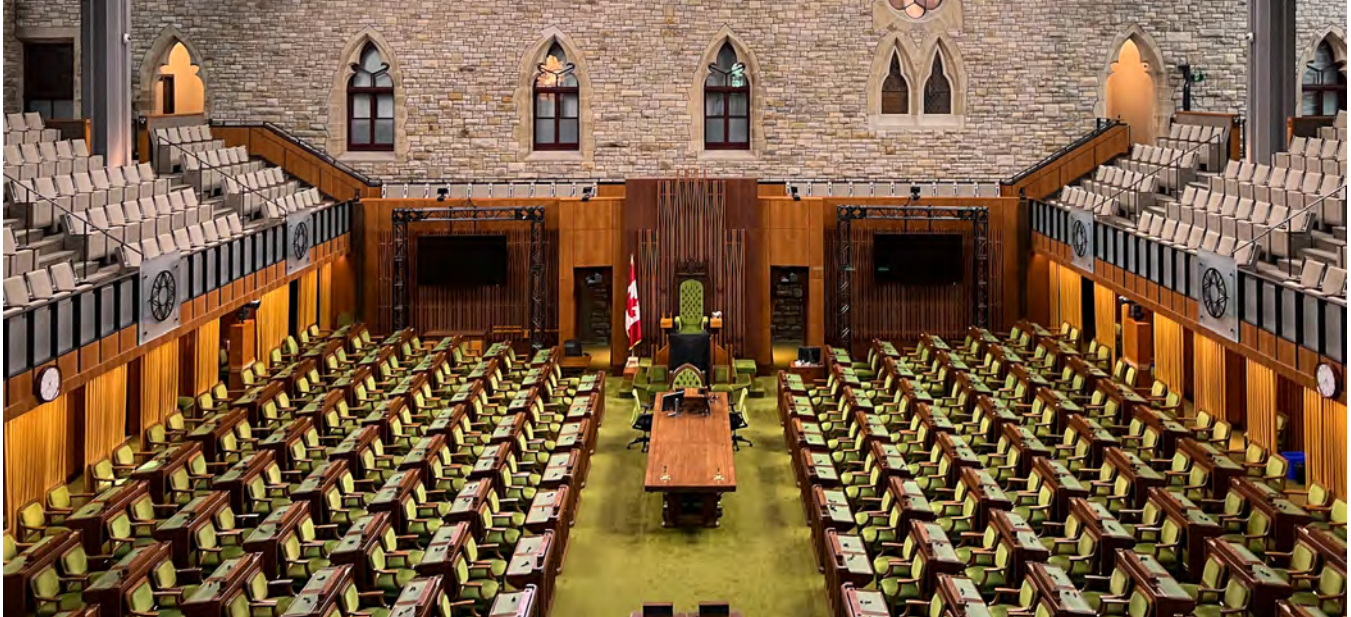
These are just some safeguards that collectively work to maintain a fair, transparent, and secure electoral system in Canada.

ACTIVITY 7.1: Mythbusters Worksheet

Using the following website, discover the truth behind these myths about voting in federal elections. In the last box, choose your own myth to bust. Go to www.elections.ca and search “ElectoFacts.”

MYTH	TRUTH
Vote-by-mail allows people to vote twice. Someone can mail in their special ballot and then show up at the polling place to vote again.	
Elections Canada plans to use new voting technology that allows people to vote online.	
Some people think if you use a pencil to vote , your mark could get smudged, erased, or not counted. They think you need to use a pen to make sure your vote is safe.	
Elections Canada sends voter information cards to people who are no longer living, and they can be used by other people to cast a vote.	

Lesson 8: Post-Election Analysis



GUIDING QUESTIONS

- 1 How can we examine election results?
- 2 What do election results tell us?
- 3 How can we be involved in making choices for our community in the future?

OVERVIEW

Elections play a key role in a democracy, allowing people to choose their government representatives. By examining the results, we can better understand what voters care about and how these decisions will shape the future of the country.

In Part One, students analyze their school's Student Vote results and compare them to other schools in their electoral district to identify voting patterns and differences. They review key concepts about election results before working in groups to research and compare Student Vote and general election results.

In Part Two, students work in small groups to create graphs comparing Student Vote results with general election data in different ways. Afterward, they present their findings to the class before participating in a brainstorming session to discuss key election-related questions. In the *Consolidation* activity, students reflect on their Student Vote experience and the role of voting in a democracy.

LEARNING GOALS

We are learning to:

- compare our school's Student Vote results with other schools in our electoral district;
- explain key terms such as seat count, popular vote, governing party, official opposition, majority vs minority government and voter turnout;
- create and interpret bar graphs and pie charts to represent election data;
- evaluate our participation in Student Vote Canada and discuss personal takeaways; and
- discuss the importance of voting and ways we can be active citizens.

Tips for Teachers

- Please use the activities and combine them in a way that is appropriate for your class.
- The lesson has been divided into two parts, should you choose to deliver the activities over multiple periods/days.
- Remember you must wait until the official polls close in your electoral district (or province/territory) to share the Student Vote results. Student election workers at your school should be sworn to secrecy.

Supplies/Needs

- Slide Deck 8
- Digital access to or copies of Activities 8.1 and 8.2
- Student Vote Canada results on the 2025 federal election website, including the national summary, results by electoral district, and individual school results (studentvote.ca/canada > *The Results*)
- General election results can be found at elections.ca
- News coverage of the election results
- Computer access or software applications for creating charts or infographics
- All digital files, videos and slide decks can be found at: studentvote.ca/canada (*Classroom Resources*)

PART ONE

Starter

1. Announce the results of your school's Student Vote election.
 - How many votes did each candidate receive?
 - Who received the most votes? Was it a close race?
 - Are you surprised by the results? Why or why not?
2. Compare your school's results to other schools in your electoral district. Individual school results can be found at studentvote.ca/canada > *The Results*.
 - How do the results compare? Are there patterns?
 - Why might different schools have voted differently?

Essential Learning

1. Using Slide Deck 8, review key concepts for examining election results, including seat count, popular vote, governing party, and official opposition.
 - **Seat Count** – The number of seats each party will have in the House of Commons.
 - **Popular Vote** – The percentage of total votes each party received.
 - **Governing Party** – The party with the most seats forms the government.
 - **Official Opposition** – The second-largest party in the House of Commons becomes the official opposition.
 - **Majority vs. Minority Government** – If the governing party has more than half of the seats, it has a majority; if the governing party has less than half, it has a minority.
2. Working in pairs or small groups, have students research and compare the Student Vote and general election results (Activity 8.1).
3. Review the answers as a class and clarify any of the answers as needed.

PART TWO

Deeper Learning

1. In small groups, have students create graphs to analyze the Student Vote results and the general election results. The data can be found at elections.ca and studentvote.ca/canada.

Suggested focus areas: focus areas:

 - **National Results:** Compare the number of seats won by each party in the general election and Student Vote Canada.
 - **Popular Vote:** Compare the percentage of votes each party received in the general election and Student Vote Canada.
 - **Local Results:** Compare the results for candidates in your school's electoral district.
 - **2021 vs. 2025 Results:** Compare the number of seats won by each party in 2025 compared to 2021 in the general election and/or Student Vote Canada.
 - **Voter Turnout:** Compare the estimated voter turnout in the general election to past elections.

Instructions:

- a) Assign each group one focus area and provide them with the election data or direct them to where they can find it themselves. (Data: elections.ca and studentvote.ca/canada)
- b) Provide blank graph templates (bar graphs or pie charts) or review how to use various software, such as spreadsheets or Canva.
- c) Ask groups to work together to create their graphs and analyze the data. Provide guiding questions as needed:
 - What patterns or trends do you notice in the results?
 - Are there any major differences between the data sets?
 - Are the results surprising? Why or why not?
 - What do the results tell us?
- d) Have each group present their graph and findings to the class, explaining key trends, differences and insights.

Discussion

Engage students in a deeper discussion about the results and what they mean. Students will work in small groups and rotate to different chart paper stations to respond to the discussion questions. Each station should have one of the following reflection questions written at the top:

- What do the Student Vote Canada results tell us about what young people care about?
- What do the general election results tell us about what voters care about?
- How might these results affect Parliament and government decision-making?
- How can we encourage more people to participate in elections in the future?
- Why does it matter who gets elected?
- How can we ensure leaders follow through on their promises?

Process:

- a) Create several stations around the classroom, each with a different discussion question. Leave a large sheet of paper for students to write down their thoughts.
- b) Students will move in small groups to each station.
- c) At each station, they will discuss the question and write down their thoughts on the chart paper. Have each group use a different coloured marker.
- d) Once all groups have visited every station, they will return to their original station and summarize the key points written by classmates.
- e) The class will then debrief as a whole, highlighting the recurring themes.

Consolidation

Encourage students to reflect on their experience participating in Student Vote Canada and the role of voting in a democracy.

1. Ask students to complete the Exit Slip (Activity 8.2).
2. Divide students into small groups and have them each share one major takeaway from the experience. Encourage students to identify common themes.
3. Facilitate a whole class discussion:
 - What did we learn from our Student Vote experience?
 - How do elections help shape our country?
 - What can we do as young citizens to say active in our communities before we can vote?

Extended Learning

Once a candidate is elected, they must decide which issues to pursue on behalf of the constituents living in their electoral district. Have students write to their newly elected MP regarding an issue they believe should be considered a priority.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS

After the polls close on election day, election workers count the ballots for their polling place and report them to Elections Canada headquarters, which shares the results publicly. Results are released continuously throughout election night and sometimes the following day.

Seat count is the term used to reflect the number of members each party will have in the House of Commons. It represents the number of electoral district races won by each party. Each of the 343 seats is awarded to the candidate in each electoral district who receives the most 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 calculated by dividing the number of votes a party received by the total number of votes in the election. Under our current electoral system (FPTP), the percentage of seats a party wins does not always match the percentage of the popular vote they receive.

The political party with the most seats usually forms the government, and its leader typically becomes the prime minister. If the governing party has more than half of all the seats (172 or more), it will have a **majority government**. If it has half or less (171 or fewer), it will have a **minority government**.

The party with the second-most seats usually becomes the **official opposition**. Any other party is called an opposition party. The opposition parties are responsible for holding

the government accountable and questioning its decisions and actions. The official opposition organizes a shadow cabinet to act as expert critics of the portfolios or government ministries managed by each cabinet minister.

In order to pass any **legislation** or budget, bills must have support from more than half of the Members of Parliament. If the governing party has a minority government, it will need to gain the support of some opposition parties or independent candidates 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.

Questions to Help Guide Assessment

SECTION	GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR TEACHERS
Starter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can students draw observations about how the results are similar or different locally? • Are students asking about how the local results feed into the national results?
Essential Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do students understand the key concepts for examining election results? • Do they understand how governments are formed? • Are students providing reasons for similarities or differences between the general election and Student Vote results? • Can students analyze and discuss what the results mean on a deeper level?
Consolidation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can students reflect on what they learned through the activities? • Can students identify ways to be active community members today and in the future?

Adaptations and Supports

Individual Education Plans	<p>Modifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide ready-to-use election data to support the graphing activity. • Offer simplified instructions and templates for data analysis. <p>Enrichment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask students to analyze media coverage of the results and how different journalists portray the future of Canada. • Have students explore the historical patterns of election results and predict future trends.
Language Learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide definitions of key terms and use visual aids to support understanding (e.g., seat count, popular vote, governing party, official opposition). • Watch a media recap of the election results. • Provide ready-to-use election data with labeled visuals to support the graphing activity.
Culturally Responsive Pedagogy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze the demographics of the newly elected House of Commons and compare them to Canada's population. • Discuss specific issues facing your electoral district and how they could be impacted by the newly elected MP and government policies. • Explore how election outcomes might affect different communities, particularly marginalized groups.
Accessibility & Accommodations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If working in pairs or small groups is not possible, consider using Google Docs or Google Sheets for collaboration. • Offer structured graphic organizers to help students analyze election results. • Provide multiple ways for students to demonstrate their learning, such as oral presentations, infographics, or written reflections.

ACTIVITY 8.1: Results Comparison

SECTION A: THE ELECTION RESULTS

1. Which candidate won Student Vote Canada in our electoral district? What percentage of the vote did they receive?

2. Which candidate won the general election in our electoral district? What percentage of the vote did they receive?

3. Which party won Student Vote Canada? How many seats did the party win? What percentage of the popular vote did they receive?

4. Which party won the general election? How many seats did the party win? What percentage of the popular vote did they receive?

SECTION B: THE NEXT PARLIAMENT

1. Is the new government a minority or majority government? How do you know? Explain your answer.

2. Who will become the prime minister? How do you know? Explain your answer.

3. Who will become the leader of the official opposition? How do you know? Explain your answer.

ACTIVITY 8.2: Election Reflection

REFLECTION CARD	
3	Three things I learned about federal elections in Canada: 1. 2. 3.
2	Two activities I enjoyed most: 1. 2.
1	One way this experience changed how I think about democracy: 1.

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