

# Welcome

Dear Educator,

Thank you for leading the Student Vote program for the 2023 Manitoba provincial election.

Numerous program evaluations have found that participating in Student Vote has a positive impact on students' knowledge and understanding of government and elections, on their sense of civic responsibility and confidence in participating in the voting process.

The program also provides an opportunity for students to take their newfound knowledge home and engage in conversations about the election with their family.

The Student Vote activities can also be used to engage students through social and emotional learning strategies (SEL) to support 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 can be achieved through collaborative problem solving, exploring multiple perspectives, and setting and achieving personal and class goals.

As part of CIVIX's priorities for the current school year, you will see an emphasis on building constructive dialogue skills among students.

Heightened social tensions and the erosion of democratic norms around the world only underscore the need for constructive dialogue skills. Democracy requires bridges between different perspectives.

On the following pages, you will find guiding principles for classroom discussion and activities for co-creating a 'norms of agreement' with students. Developing classroom norms with your students is a great way to ensure a safe and caring classroom environment and encourage respectful discussion.

As always, if you have any questions or suggestions, please feel free to contact our team at [hello@civix.ca](mailto:hello@civix.ca).

Please be sure to visit the project website for videos, slide decks, digital activity sheets and more:  
[www.studentvote.ca/mb2023](http://www.studentvote.ca/mb2023)

Wishing you and your students a great election,

The CIVIX Team

# Acknowledgements

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



The Student Vote program for the 2023 Manitoba provincial election was supported by the Government of Canada and several private foundations.



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 provincial 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.

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

## **Guiding Questions:**

Critical queries to 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:**

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 from the 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 activities.

## **Strategies:**

Each lesson has been broken down into three segments. 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.
- **Activities:** A series of key activities that help students understand and apply the essential concepts, and develop key competencies.
- **Consolidation:** Concluding questions and tasks to summarize and reflect on what was learned throughout the lesson.

## **Assessment Opportunities:**

Designed to inform and guide next steps, and help teachers and students monitor their 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 information covers key terms and concepts related to the theme of the lesson. The purpose is to enhance teacher knowledge and understanding. Not all terms and concepts are covered in the lesson.

# Secondary Lesson Pathways

## 2 LESSON PATHWAY

1

- Introduce the election and the Student Vote program ("Student Vote Canada 2019" video)
- Watch the "Voting in a Democracy" video
- Lesson 4: The Political Spectrum - Activities (Steps 1-4)

2

- Lesson 5: Manitoba Provincial Elections – Starter, Activities and Consolidation (Consider using the Assessment Activity instead of the group research)

## 4 LESSON PATHWAY

1

- Introduce the election and the Student Vote program ("Student Vote Canada 2019" video)
- Lesson 1: Democracy - Activities and Consolidation

2

- Lesson 3: Levels of Government (Starter, Activities, Consolidation)

3

- Lesson 4: Political Spectrum - Activities (Steps 1-4),

4

- Lesson 5: Manitoba Provincial Elections - Starter, Activities and Consolidation (Consider using the Assessment Activity instead of the group research)

# Suggestions for Wider Engagement

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

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

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

## Communications Team:

Responsible for informing students about the Student Vote program and encouraging participation.

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

- Develop an education plan about what students should know (e.g., provincial government responsibilities, important issues facing the province, the candidates and party platforms)
- Share the videos and tools from the Student Vote Manitoba website
- Create literature and activities for distribution to classes throughout the school (e.g., bulletins, posters, multi-media presentations, activity sheets)
- Create fun and excitement through trivia games, music, and small prizes (e.g., school pens)

## 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., 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 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., voting officer, election officers, scrutineers)
- Compile a list of electors and determine ID requirements (if desirable)
- Decide on options for advance voting for students who may be away on Student Vote Day
- Conduct an information session or prepare a poster or skit about how to fill out a ballot
- Ensure all materials are ready for Student Vote Day (ballots, ballot boxes, voting screens, tally sheets, list of electors)

## Media and Community Relations Team:

Responsible for communicating and engaging with local media and the greater community.

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

# Guiding Principles for Classroom Discussion

While discussion can occur in all kinds of settings, formal and informal, the classroom affords educators the opportunity to approach discussion in a uniquely 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 the context of 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. The best discussion occurs when students are engaging with each other, with the teacher acting as a facilitator.

## Embrace Structure

Student discussion can produce better outcomes when implemented with intention and structure. Using discussion protocols can help build conversations that are more equitable 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 first before they feel comfortable contributing. Taking into account 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 or full class 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 have their pros and cons.

For more best practices and a description of different discussion protocols, please refer to CIVIX's *Constructive Discussions Guide* at [www.politalks.ca](http://www.politalks.ca).

# Creating a Discussion-Friendly Classroom

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## Norms of Agreement

Creating a social contract or norms of agreement helps establish clear guidelines about behaviour and expectations, enables students to feel safe expressing their opinions, increases the range of voices heard in the classroom, and can help reduce instances of incivility.

Norms of agreement that are meaningful to your students require giving them ownership of what goes in it. Co-creating this agreement will help students feel that their voices matter and encourage them to hold each other accountable when norms are violated.

Once established, it is helpful to revisit the agreement in advance of and following your first few classroom discussions, and update it as needed. Afterwards, reviewing the agreement monthly is a good strategy to promote commitment.

Please use or adapt the activities below as you see fit. You may want to split up the activities over multiple days.

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## 1 Reflection on Discussion: Hopes and Concerns (20-25 minutes)

This activity allows students to understand the purpose of discussion, reflect on past experiences, and identify positive and negative characteristics associated with classroom discussion. It is designed to promote a group commitment to creating an environment in which students feel comfortable and confident participating.

a) Begin with an introductory conversation about discussion. Have students discuss in pairs for a few minutes and then discuss as a whole class.

Guiding questions:

- What is the goal of discussion?
- How can we learn from discussion?
- Why is discussion important?

b) As a class, create a working definition for discussion based on responses from the previous step, or provide the following definition: “the act of exchanging ideas with others through focused conversation on a specific problem, question, or issue.” Draw attention to the fact that discussion is different from debate, where the focus is on winning an argument, or pointing out weaknesses in your opponent’s argument. The purpose of discussion is to exchange and deepen our understanding of a topic.

For an extended activity, ask students to work in pairs to complete a graphic organizer to further refine their understanding of discussion.



c) Next, collect student feedback related to their concerns about classroom discussion. Post the following prompts on chart paper or as headings on the board.

- Classroom discussion doesn't work very well when...
- A reason I might not want to speak in class is...

Provide students with a few sticky notes to write their ideas for each prompt privately. Ask students to add their sticky notes to the chart paper for each prompt. Afterwards, review the answers as a class, ensuring anonymity.

Alternatively, you could use Google Forms for this activity to ensure students feel comfortable sharing their thoughts and opinions.

d) Repeat the process above using the following prompts related to effective classroom discussion:

- I feel comfortable participating in discussion when...
- What I like about a good class discussion is...

e) As a transition into the next part of the activity, let students know that the responses will provide a starting point for creating class norms.

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## **2 Understand the Purpose of Norms (15 minutes)**

a) Review the concept of norms. Classroom norms inform us of our responsibilities and how we are expected to behave towards each other.

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?
- What could happen if we did not have a set of norms?
- Should students be part of establishing classroom norms or should the teacher provide a list? Why?

b) Draw on student responses from Activity 1 (Reflection on Discussion) to anticipate scenarios or problem areas, and brainstorm ways in which students and/or the teacher can respond in those situations. Some examples might include:

- A teacher wants to hear the opinions of all students before determining the focus topic of an assignment
- A classmate says something other students consider offensive
- Some students dominate classroom discussions
- Some students may not feel comfortable speaking in front of others
- Students want to share ideas with their teacher to improve the classroom environment
- A student uses their phone during a peer's presentation

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### 3 Co-Create Norms (35 minutes)

Once students have understood the purpose of establishing classroom norms, you can give them the opportunity to consider what they want these norms to include as individuals, in small groups, then as part of the class.

1. Through a 'Placemat' activity, have students propose norms they believe are important in the classroom. 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 norms.
  - a) 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 also be conducted with an online app, such as a Google Doc or Jamboard.
  - b) Ask students to individually write down their proposed norms in their allotted space (suggested minimum of 3 norms per student).
  - c) Provide time for each student to share their recorded responses with the rest of their group without discussion from the other students.
  - d) Next, have each group decide, collectively, on the five most important norms and record them in the centre of the placemat – it is essential that all group members agree with the group list.
2. As a class, create norms of agreement for the classroom. As each statement is agreed upon, include a discussion about the reasons for it and/or possible examples and characteristics. Consider using a T-Chart with the norms on the left and reasons on the right (e.g. left column: "Raise our hands when we speak," right column: "To ensure one person is speaking at a time, and to show respect").

#### Sample Norms

- Listen actively (e.g., be attentive, check your body language).
- Show empathy.
- Respond with curiosity instead of judgement.
- Make comments using "I" statements.
- Criticize ideas, not individuals.
- Give everyone the opportunity to speak.
- Avoid making assumptions or generalizations about others.
- If you don't understand something, ask a question.
- Do not ask people to speak for their social/ethnic group.
- If someone shares an idea or opinion that helps your own learning, show appreciation.
- The right to pass.
- If you say something that offends someone, apologize, even if the offence was not intended.
- Always presume good intentions of those involved in the discussion.
- Strive for equitable participation from all members in the discussion.

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#### **4 Practice and reflection (25 minutes)**

Practice these norms by having a discussion on a low-stakes topic, such as ‘cats are better than dogs.’ Start with the discussion in small groups and then move to a whole-class discussion.

Afterwards, debrief with the class:

- What went well and why?
- Did the class uphold the norms and expectations?
- Is there anything that can be improved?
- Revise the list as necessary

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#### **5 Assessment (10 minutes)**

Provide students with a 1-1-1 Exit Card:

- 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

## Frayer Model: What is Discussion?

DEFINITION	CHARACTERISTICS
EXAMPLES	NON-EXAMPLES

**Discussion**

## 1-1-1 Exit Card: Norms of Agreement

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

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# Lesson 1: Democracy



## GUIDING QUESTIONS

**1 What does it mean to live in a democracy?**

**2 How can we support and maintain our democracy?**

## OVERVIEW

Democracy by definition is "rule by the people" where a majority of the people are included in political decision-making. A healthy democracy requires responsible citizens who uphold democratic principles and actively participate in society.

In this lesson, students experience different types of governance through a tower building activity. Afterwards, students explore what democracy means and what the implications are for them as members of a democracy.

## LEARNING GOALS

By the end of the lesson, students will:

- analyze different ways that groups make decisions and interpret the consequences;
- explain the meaning of democracy;
- identify the principles of democracy and how political institutions shape our lives;
- analyze the responsibilities of citizens in a democracy.

## Starter

### Tallest Tower Activity

1. Create four or more table stations and assign four to six students to each station.
2. Explain the task of building the tallest, most stable structure as possible that holds the jumbo marshmallow on top, using only the materials given.
  - 20 sticks of spaghetti/linguine
  - 1 metre of tape
  - 1 metre yarn/rope
  - Jumbo marshmallow
  - Scissors

Alternatively, you can use 20 small marshmallows and 20 sticks of spaghetti.

3. Provide each station with one card from Activity 1.1, which details the process for each group. They must build the tallest tower they can based on the group involvement described on their card. There are four suggestions:
  - *Team of 1 (dictatorship)* – Only one person is in charge and they make all the decisions without ideas from other group members. They can complete the task by themselves or direct who they want to help or not help. They can also ask the other group members to leave the table if they want. The person in charge is the oldest person in the group.
  - *Team of 2 (oligarchy)* – Only two people will work together on the task. No one else is involved. The team of two consist of the shortest person in the group and this person's choice of another person from the group.
  - *Team of all, with roles (democracy)* – All group members are involved in the task. They must choose a leader and determine different roles for the rest of the group members based on consensus or majority rule.
  - *Team of all, no roles (anarchy)* – All group members are involved in the task, but there are no roles or planning in advance of the task.
4. Provide groups with three minutes to plan for the task and ten minutes for building.
5. Give students time to reflect on the experience within their groups. What are the pros and cons of the style of leadership and group involvement? How did each group member feel during the process?
6. Organize a gallery walk to have students move around to each station to evaluate each tower and understand the style of group involvement. Afterwards, have each group summarize their experience.

- What made the building process successful or unsuccessful?
- What feelings developed among group members and why?

## Activities

1. Give students time to work in pairs or small groups to activate any background knowledge they have about the term 'democracy' using a Frayer Model (Activity 1.2). Students can also use images to communicate their thinking.

### TEACHER NOTE

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

2. Watch the "Government and Democracy" video and have students add to their notes on Activity 1.2.
3. Afterwards, debrief as a class and create a class definition for the term 'democracy'. Students should add the class definition to their activity sheet.
4. Using the "Democratic Principles" video and/or Handout 1.3, explain to students that there are several guiding principles that act as the foundation of a democracy.
5. Using Slide Deck 1 as a starting point, analyze examples of democratic principles in practice and the different ways they shape our lives. Ask students to share their own real-world examples.
6. Using a Think-Pair-Share protocol, have a closing discussion with the following prompts.
  - Is it important for citizens to support and uphold these principles? What would happen if no one cared?
  - Do our rights come with responsibilities? Explain using concrete examples. For example, the right to protest comes with the responsibility to do so peacefully and without violence.

## Consolidation

*Option 1:* Which concepts from this lesson about democracy are most important to remember? Use the exit card (Activity 1.4) to create four hashtags to describe what you learned from the lesson, and write down any lingering questions.

*Option 2:* Which democratic principle is most important to you? Create a poster or digital artwork that reflects this principle and what it means to you.

## ADAPTATIONS AND SUPPORTS

<b>Language Learners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide students with terms and definitions in advance.</li><li>• Share the lesson videos before class discussions and activities.</li><li>• Ensure that subtitles are on during videos.</li><li>• Support students' understanding of democratic principles with additional real-world examples.</li></ul>
<b>Culturally Responsive Pedagogy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Compare democracy to other forms of governance representing different countries and cultures that have meaning for your students.</li><li>• Students will come from different backgrounds and may have different opinions on democracy. Ensuring a safe place for respectful discussion is encouraged.</li><li>• Review democratic principles in various social settings, inclusive of Indigenous peoples and diverse cultural groups.</li><li>• Discuss the systemic barriers to equality faced by Indigenous peoples and other diverse cultural groups.</li></ul>
<b>Accommodations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• If working in pairs or small groups is not possible, consider using Google Docs for collaborative activities and discussion.</li></ul>





## 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.

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

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

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

The term **authoritarianism** is sometimes used to describe dictatorships. Authoritarian governments exercise forceful control over the population with no particular concern for their preferences or for public opinion.

An **oligarchy** is a type of government where power rests within a small number of people, generally individuals who are rich and powerful, often due to family lines, wealth or prominent political or military connections (e.g., China, Venezuela). People living under oligarchic rule usually have

some rights and freedoms. Similarly, an aristocracy is a form of governance where administration or power is in the hands of a special class of people. Aristocrats are connected to royal families through blood or ennoblement, whereas an oligarchy is not.

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

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

A **republic** is a sovereign state, country or government without a monarch where all members of government are elected (including the head of state), and the

democratically elected government holds all political power. Similar to a constitutional monarchy, the government in a republic exercises power according to the rule of law and often has a constitution.

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

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

## ACTIVITY 1.1: Cards for Tower Building Activity

### TEAM OF 1

The oldest person in the group is the leader. They make all the decisions without getting ideas or suggestions from the rest of the group.

The leader can complete the task on their own or direct others to help. The leader can also choose to send group members away if they want to work quietly or without any distractions. The group members must follow their orders without any objections.

### TEAM OF 2

The shortest person is the leader. They can choose one person from the group to work with on the task. No one else is involved.

Only these two people will work on task. They can focus on their own interests and do whatever they think is best without any help from others.

### TEAM OF MANY, WITH ROLES

All group members are involved in the task.

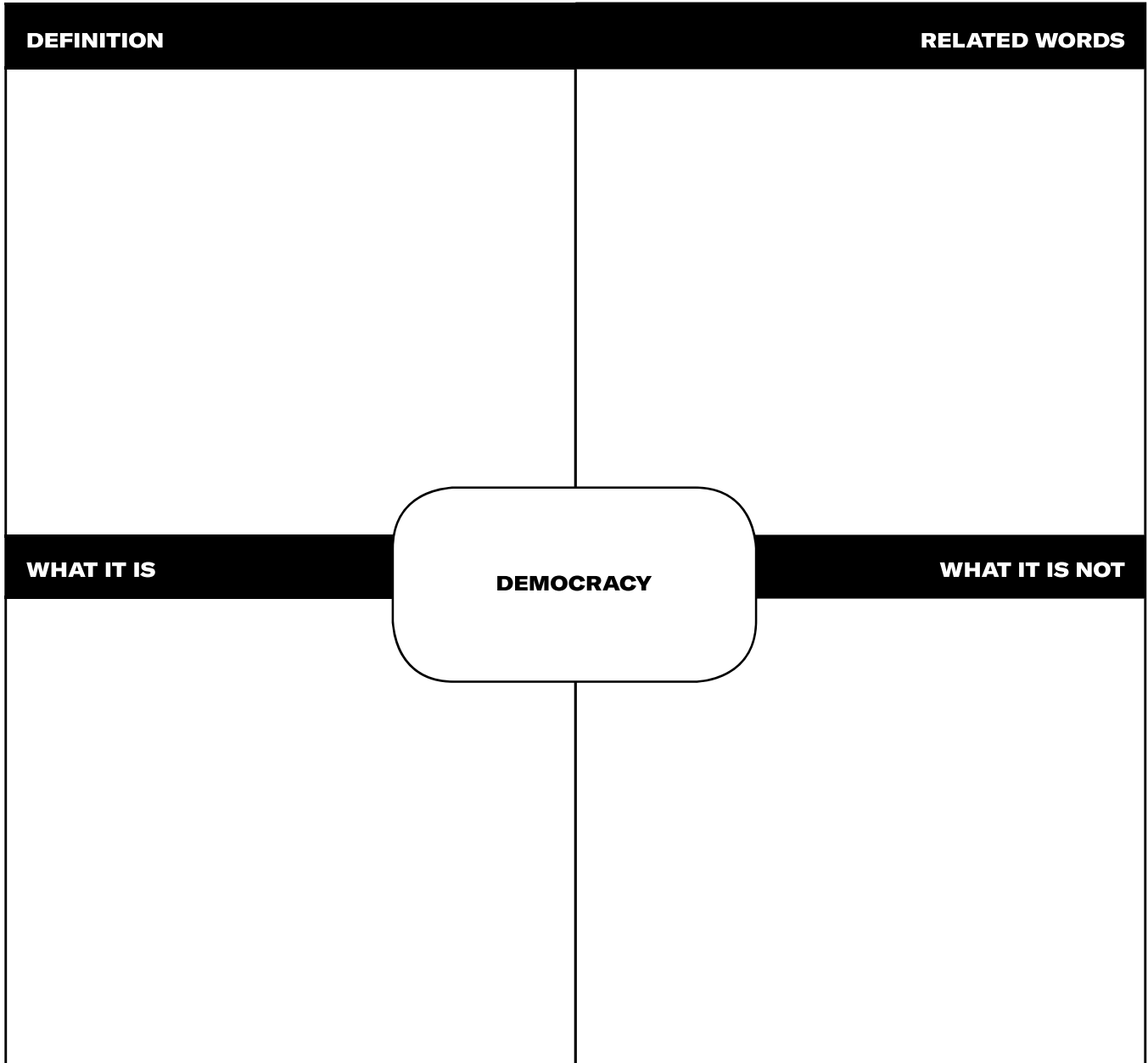
As a group, you must choose a leader through a vote and determine different roles for everyone. All group members should be part of the planning and decisions should be reached through a vote, either by consensus or majority rule.

### TEAM OF MANY, NO ROLES

All group members are involved in the task.

There is no leader in the group. No planning is allowed before the task starts. You can talk about your favourite songs or video games during the planning period.

## ACTIVITY 1.2: What Does Democracy Mean?



**CLASS DEFINITION:**

## HANDOUT 1.3: The Principles of Democracy

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



### HUMAN RIGHTS AND EQUALITY

- All people living in a democracy have guaranteed rights, such as freedom of opinion and expression, freedom of religion, and the right to organize and take part in peaceful protests.
- In most democracies, individuals are valued equally regardless of race, religion, ethnicity, language, gender or sexual orientation.
- In Canada, our fundamental freedoms and equality rights are protected by the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, part of Canada's Constitution.



### FREE AND FAIR ELECTIONS

- Adult citizens have the right to vote in elections to choose their political representatives.
- Adult citizens also have the opportunity to run for political office.
- There are no obstacles to voting and no threats made to citizens before or after an election.
- In Canada, there must be elections to choose governments every five years or less.



### ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY

- Elected representatives are responsible for their actions. They must perform their duties according to the wishes of those they represent, not for themselves or other interests.
- In a democracy, the media holds government to account and aims to keep citizens informed.
- In Canada, elected representatives participate in activities like Question Period to be held to account for their actions and respond to questions from the opposition parties. They also engage in meetings with the public.



### THE RULE OF LAW

- Laws are enforced equally, fairly and consistently. This means that everyone, including government officials, the police and members of the military, must obey the law.
- It also means that governments cannot punish people unless they have broken the law.
- All Canadians have a responsibility to respect the laws of the land, even if they disagree with them.



### POLITICAL TOLERANCE

- Society is comprised of people with different cultural backgrounds, who practice different religions, come from different racial and ethnic backgrounds, and have different gender identities and sexual orientations. The voices of these different groups are valued.
- Democratic societies strive to be politically tolerant and protect the rights of minorities.
- Those who are not in power allowed to organize and share their opinions.



### CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

- Citizen participation in government is more than just a right – it is a responsibility.
- Participation includes voting in elections, being an informed citizen, debating issues, attending community meetings, paying taxes, serving on a jury and protesting.
- Citizen participation builds a stronger democracy.

## ACTIVITY 1.4: Exit Slip – #Hashtags

---

**WHICH HASHTAGS WOULD YOU USE TO DESCRIBE THE LESSON AND/OR IDENTIFY THE MOST IMPORTANT CONCEPTS?**

# \_\_\_\_\_

# \_\_\_\_\_

# \_\_\_\_\_

# \_\_\_\_\_

**DO YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT TODAY'S LESSON?**

**WHICH HASHTAGS WOULD YOU USE TO DESCRIBE THE LESSON AND/OR IDENTIFY THE MOST IMPORTANT CONCEPTS?**

# \_\_\_\_\_

# \_\_\_\_\_

# \_\_\_\_\_

# \_\_\_\_\_

**DO YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT TODAY'S LESSON?**

# Lesson 2: Informed Citizenship



## GUIDING QUESTIONS

- 1 How does information influence my decisions?**
- 2 What are the opportunities and challenges of using online platforms?**
- 3 What actions can I take to be an informed, responsible citizen?**

## OVERVIEW

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

In this lesson, students experience the relationship between the information we consume and the decisions we make through a hands-on interactive activity. Before participating in a mock election, students learn about the candidates and election issues by reviewing information from one of two polarized social media feeds. After the vote, students discuss how what they read may have influenced their decision. Next, students learn about how the internet has changed the way we consume and share information, and discuss the implications of getting information from online platforms and possible solutions.

## LEARNING GOALS

By the end of the lesson, students will:

- analyze how news and information can influence our opinion on people, events and issues;
- explain how algorithms personalize the information we see online;
- practice problem-solving and consensus-building skills;
- describe strategies for being an informed citizen and accessing multiple perspectives.

## Starter

Start with an opening conversation about making informed decisions. Ask students to consider how they would become informed to vote in the following scenarios.

- a) School council election
- b) Provincial election

Using a Turn and Talk protocol, ask students to discuss the following questions with a partner. Before students begin their conversation, ask them to imagine what they are going to say and how they are going to listen. Students should take turns speaking and responding to each prompt.

- What actions would you take to learn about the people running for election? Which sources of information would you rely on and why?
- Is it important to be informed about the options before making a decision? Why or why not?

## Activities

1. Complete the *Feed for Thought: Election Edition* activity found at the CIVIX website [newsliteracy.ca](https://newsliteracy.ca) (free registration).

### TEACHER NOTE

A paper version of *Feed for Thought* is also available at [newsliteracy.ca](https://newsliteracy.ca). As an alternative to the online activity, you can print and distribute the two different feeds and ask students to vote using a show of hands or by using paper ballots (Activity 2.1).

- a) **Introduce the Scenario.** There is a competitive election coming up, and you are going to vote in it. There are two candidates to choose from, and people in your community feel strongly about who should win. It is expected to be a close race. Before you cast your ballot, you will learn about the candidates and election issues by reviewing information on social media to help make your choice. The social media feed has a mix of articles from news media and posts from friends and community members.
- b) **Read the Feeds.** Distribute the generated link to students and it will randomly assign students one of the two feeds (each feed more favourably supports one of the two candidates). Do not inform students about the two different feeds. Give students 10 minutes to review the information.

- c) **Vote.** Have students vote for the candidates using the online voting button located at the bottom of the social media feed. You can access the results from your [newsliteracy.ca](https://newsliteracy.ca) dashboard. Announce the vote totals to the class.
- d) **Debrief.** Through a whole-class discussion, ask students why they voted the way they did and what information shaped their decision.

Over the course of the discussion, it should become apparent that some students were provided with different information than others. At an appropriate point in the discussion, share the fact that there were two different feeds. You can also review the feeds side-by-side to compare the differences (preview links are available [newsliteracy.ca](https://newsliteracy.ca)).

Further questions to prompt discussion:

- How did you feel about the results of the vote before you knew there were two feeds? Were you surprised by the outcome? Why or why not?
  - How might two people end up with such different news feeds?
  - What are the consequences of people consuming different facts and opinions?
  - Do you think people should be exposed to different perspectives or more than one side of an issue before making their decision?
2. Watch the “Behind the Screens: Who decides what I see online?” video and review Slide Deck 2 to introduce the concepts of algorithms and filter bubbles, and the effects of online platforms on democracy.
  3. Divide students into pairs or small groups for a discussion about their own experiences.

Key questions:

- You have probably observed information or advertisements online that were based on your previous internet searches or content that you read or watched. Can you share an example from your own life of when this has happened? Are there other times you have noticed algorithms personalizing your internet experience?
- What is your understanding of how recommendation algorithms work?



4. As a class, briefly discuss the implications of getting our news and information through online platforms and possible solutions using a 'Dilemma Dialogue' discussion protocol.

### Dilemma Dialogue

- a) Present the class with the following dilemma:

*Information environments that are tailored to individuals can have an impact on informed citizenship and democracy.*

- b) Give students time to reflect and jot down any questions/insights.
- c) Divide students into small groups. Ask groups to assign a timekeeper.
- d) Each group member has 1 minute to share their initial thoughts about the dilemma. You may provide students with some suggested sentence stems for this portion:

*"I think the main issue is..."*

*"A question I have is..."*

*"I wonder if..."*

- e) The group then discusses the dilemma for 5 minutes. At this stage, students should not propose solutions. Instead, they should focus on digging deeper into the problem. Possible guiding questions for this step include:

- Why is this issue a concern?
- Who is it a concern for?
- What context is important to consider?
- What biases and assumptions are we bringing that might affect our thinking?

- f) Students can now propose solutions to the dilemma based on their prior discussions. Have each group decide what they think the best solutions might be.

- g) Debrief the activity as a whole class. Reflect on the proposed solutions, and ask students to explain their reasoning. If groups came to significantly different conclusions, discuss the underlying assumptions and values that influenced their decisions.

### Consolidation

Ask students to fill out the Exit Card (Activity 2.2).

- **WHAT?** Describe what you learned today. What stood out? What was your 'a-ha' moment?
- **SO WHAT?** Identify the implications. What does it mean for you? How does it affect you?
- **NOW WHAT?** Define a course of action. What actions will you take?

Alternatively, ask students to record one 'a-ha' moment from the discussion on a sticky note and attach it to the board.





## ADAPTATIONS AND SUPPORTS

<b>Language Learners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide students with terms and definitions in advance (e.g., online platforms, algorithms, filter bubbles).</li> <li>• Share the "Behind the Screens" video before class discussions and activities.</li> <li>• Ensure that subtitles are on during the videos.</li> </ul>
<b>Culturally Responsive Pedagogy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students may come from households with varying access to the internet, and have different levels of familiarity with social media. Keep in mind that not all students will have prior knowledge of the social media feeds being emulated in the 'Feed for Thought' activity.</li> <li>• Encourage students to share their own experiences with online platforms and social media.</li> <li>• Ensure that you are open and encouraging of diverse viewpoints your students may share.</li> </ul>
<b>Accommodations &amp; Accessibility</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If working in pairs or small groups is not possible, considering using Google Docs for collaborative discussion/brainstorming.</li> </ul>

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS

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

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

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

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

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

Where human editors and producers were once the only gatekeepers who decided what news audiences saw, on the internet, that job belongs to algorithms, which are sets of instructions that tell computers how to perform specific tasks, like sorting information. Social media **algorithms** work in such a way that we are more

likely to see content that is similar to what we already like or agree with. Our social media feeds never give the whole picture.

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

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

## ACTIVITY 2.1: Voice your choice!

Use the sample ballots below to conduct a vote for the candidates running for election. Tabulate the results and announce them to the class.

---

<b>WENDY ABBOTT</b>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>TRACY BELL</b>	<input type="radio"/>

---

<b>WENDY ABBOTT</b>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>TRACY BELL</b>	<input type="radio"/>

## ACTIVITY 2.2: What? So what? Now what?

<p><b>WHAT?</b></p> <p><b>Describe what you learned today.</b></p> <p>What stood out?</p> <p>What was your 'a-ha' moment?</p>	
<p><b>SO WHAT?</b></p> <p><b>Identify the implications.</b></p> <p>What does it mean for you?</p> <p>How does it affect you?</p>	
<p><b>NOW WHAT?</b></p> <p><b>Define a course of action.</b></p> <p>What actions will you take?</p>	

# Lesson 3: Levels of Government



## GUIDING QUESTIONS

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

## OVERVIEW

Canada has different levels of government, each with their own elected representatives and areas of responsibility.

In this lesson, students examine the different levels of government, including leadership roles, elected representatives and division of responsibilities. Afterwards, students contribute to a class bulletin where they use articles, images or social media posts to identify government services or decisions that influence their lives. In the *Consolidation* activity, students analyze which level of government has the most impact in their life and whether it is important to know which level of government is responsible for what.

## LEARNING GOALS

By the end of the lesson, students will:

- distinguish between levels of government in Canada and their areas of responsibility;
- describe how governments work together and influence society;
- analyze how the levels of government affect us by identifying specific examples.

## Starter

*'Write the Room' activity:*

1. Post three pieces of chart paper around the room and label each one with the name of a level of government (federal, provincial, municipal, Indigenous).
2. As students enter the classroom, ask students to write something they know about each level of government. Students can also write on sticky notes and post them on the chart paper.
3. Review students' existing knowledge as a class.

## Activities

1. Review the structure of government in Canada using the "Levels of Government" video and/or Slide Deck 3.

Have students create a 'sketchnote' to summarize the information. Sketchnotes are rich visual notes created from a mix of handwriting, drawings, and visual elements like arrows, boxes, and lines. An exemplar is provided on the project website under Lesson 3.

Alternatively, students could create a slide presentation with images and text.

2. Review Handout 3.1 and discuss the division of responsibilities as a class. Explain to students that the levels of government work together on many issues, such as healthcare. For example, the federal government focuses on providing funding to the provinces and territories (through the Canada Health Transfer), and manages health protection, disease surveillance, and disease prevention, including approving and buying vaccines. The provincial government handles health-care delivery, including hospitals and doctors, health promotion and public health initiatives such as vaccination campaigns. Provincial governments focus on paramedic services, sanitation, disease control, and setting up vaccination clinics. Indigenous governance institutions administer services that are funded by the federal government on reserves, such as education, band schools, housing, water and sewer, roads, and other community businesses and services.
3. Create a class bulletin board where students can identify how government services or decisions influence their lives. Students can contribute by attaching photos, news articles, headlines, social media posts, and other related content for each level of government. Ask each student to make two contributions for each level of government.

## Consolidation

1. Ask students to write down a new piece of knowledge on a sticky note for each level of government and put it on the chart paper from the *Starter* activity.
2. Ask students to write a response to one or both of the following questions (Activity 3.2).
  - Which level of government has the most impact on my life, and why? Explain with two examples.
  - Is it important to know which level of government is responsible for what? Explain.

## Extended Learning

1. Learn more about Indigenous self-government in Manitoba by reviewing Handout 3.3 with your class.
2. Use the First Nations Map of Manitoba ([www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca](http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca)) to determine the First Nation(s) or Indigenous community whose traditional territory your school is located on (if applicable), or select another Manitoba First Nation or community of your choosing.
3. As a class or in small groups, have students research the First Nation or Indigenous community selected by completing Activity 3.4.

## ADAPTATIONS AND SUPPORTS

<b>Language Learners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide students with terms and definitions in advance (e.g., elected representative, government, federal, provincial, territorial, prime minister, premier, mayor/reeve, MP, MLA, councillor, band chief).</li> <li>• Share the lesson video before class discussions and activities (“Levels of Government”).</li> <li>• Ensure that subtitles are on during videos.</li> <li>• Provide examples or photos for each area of responsibility.</li> </ul>
<b>Culturally Responsive Pedagogy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review the demographic data of one or more elected bodies and discuss the need for more diversity in politics.</li> <li>• Review the governance structure of a First Nations or Métis community you know about.</li> </ul>
<b>Accommodations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If working in pairs or small groups in the classroom is not possible, consider using Google Docs or Google Jamboard for collaborative activities and discussion. If students require further practice to consolidate their knowledge, assign a small group of students to create a review game such as Kahoot.</li> </ul>

### 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 issues such as education, health care delivery, social welfare, transportation and highways.

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

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

Comprehensive land claims agreements (modern treaties) between Canadian governments and Indigenous nations often result in Indigenous peoples having the autonomy to choose their own method(s) of representation and decision-making. An Indigenous nation with control over its own affairs is known as having **self-government**.

For some issues, the different levels of government have to work together and share the responsibility. For example, federal, provincial and municipal governments are concurrently responsible for the environment. The federal government enforces the *Canadian Environmental Protection Act* and regulates waterways used for fishing and shipping. Provincial governments regulate land use,

mining, manufacturing and harmful emissions. Municipal governments are responsible for zoning, garbage disposal, and sewage and water treatment.

Each level of government has elected officials to represent the people (constituents) living in their designated areas (e.g., electoral divisions, wards). **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 in Manitoba are called **Members of the Legislative Assembly** (MLAs). The elected representative at the municipal level is called a **councillor**.

A **band council** is an elected group, led by an elected **chief**, that administers federally funded programs on First Nations reserves.

Most federal and provincial elected representatives belong to a political party. A **political party** is a group of like-minded individuals with a shared vision and political ideology whose intention is to achieve power and create meaningful political change.

There are no political parties at the municipal level in Manitoba.

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

The leader of the municipal government is called a **mayor** or **reeve**. The leader is elected directly by all voters in the municipality.

As a **constitutional monarchy**, Canada's head of state is a hereditary sovereign (King Charles III) 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 levels.

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.



## HANDOUT 3.1: Government Responsibilities

A list of some key federal, provincial and municipal government responsibilities based on Canada's constitution.

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

**Some shared areas of responsibility include:** Immigration, agriculture, healthcare, transportation and environment.



### ACTIVITY 3.2: Lesson Reflection

<p><b>Which level of government has the most impact on my life, and why? Explain with two examples.</b></p>	
<p><b>Is it important to know which level of government is responsible for what? Explain.</b></p>	

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<p><b>Which level of government has the most impact on my life, and why? Explain with two examples.</b></p>	
<p><b>Is it important to know which level of government is responsible for what? Explain.</b></p>	

## Handout 3.3: Indigenous Governance in Canada

The Canadian Constitution recognizes three Indigenous peoples: First Nations, Inuit, and Métis.

Before European arrival in what is now Canada, Indigenous Peoples had their own distinct systems of governance. After the arrival of settlers, Indigenous peoples' self-governance and ways of life were suppressed. However, Indigenous peoples have continuously advocated for their right to self-government, which has led to reforms in the past few decades. In the *Constitution Act, 1982*, Canada recognized self-government as an inherent right of Indigenous peoples.

The system of Indigenous governance in Canada today is the complex legacy of this history and is still changing. There are specific governance systems in place for each recognized group, as well as hundreds of Indigenous organizations who engage in advocacy, research, and economic and social provision that are all part of Indigenous governance.

<b>FIRST NATIONS:</b>	<p>The <i>Indian Act, 1876</i>, replaced traditional Indigenous governance with the band council system that still shapes the governing of many First Nations. The <i>Indian Act</i> is a very controversial piece of legislation that many Indigenous groups have sought to reform or repeal; however, due to the difficulty of overhauling such a significant law, it has remained in place with some amendments.</p> <p>Under the <i>Indian Act</i>, members of a First Nation elect a council and a chief who form the local government. Most bands hold a piece of reserve land that is set aside for First Nation use. Band councils are responsible for First Nation affairs like education, healthcare, housing, roads, and other services on their reserves, many of which are shared with the federal government. Some First Nations have attained self-governing status and are no longer subject to the <i>Indian Act</i>. These self-governing First Nations establish their own governments, constitutions, and elections based on their traditions and community decisions.</p>
<b>MÉTIS:</b>	<p>Métis are not included in the <i>Indian Act</i>. The <i>Constitution Act, 1982</i>, was the first time the government explicitly recognized the Métis as a distinct Indigenous people, and historic discussions and agreements have recently occurred that have recognized Métis self-government rights and begun to set out paths to Métis self-government. Regional and national groups exist to represent the Métis: the Métis Nations of Ontario, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and B.C. are members of the Métis National Council, and the Manitoba Métis Federation represents itself independently.</p>
<b>INUIT:</b>	<p>Inuit are also not included in the <i>Indian Act</i>. Inuit self-government rights are determined by specific treaties, land claims, and self-government agreements. Each of the four regions of Inuit Nunangat (homelands) in Canada have a regional government or corporation to represent the Inuit and govern certain Inuit affairs, as set out by the specific agreements in each region. Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami is the national organization representing Inuit interests in Canada.</p>

### Activity 3.4: Profile of an Indigenous Community

Fill in the chart below as you research the Indigenous community whose traditional territory your school is located on (if applicable), or another Manitoba Indigenous community of your choosing.

---

**Name of the First Nation or Indigenous Community:**

**Location:**

**Language(s) spoken:**

---

**Federal treaty details (treaty number, land boundaries, date it was signed, who was involved) or other relevant agreement:**

---

**Who are the leaders? How are they selected?**

---

**Does the First Nation or community have recent land claims or self-government agreements with the government (federal, provincial, municipal)? What issues are they about?**

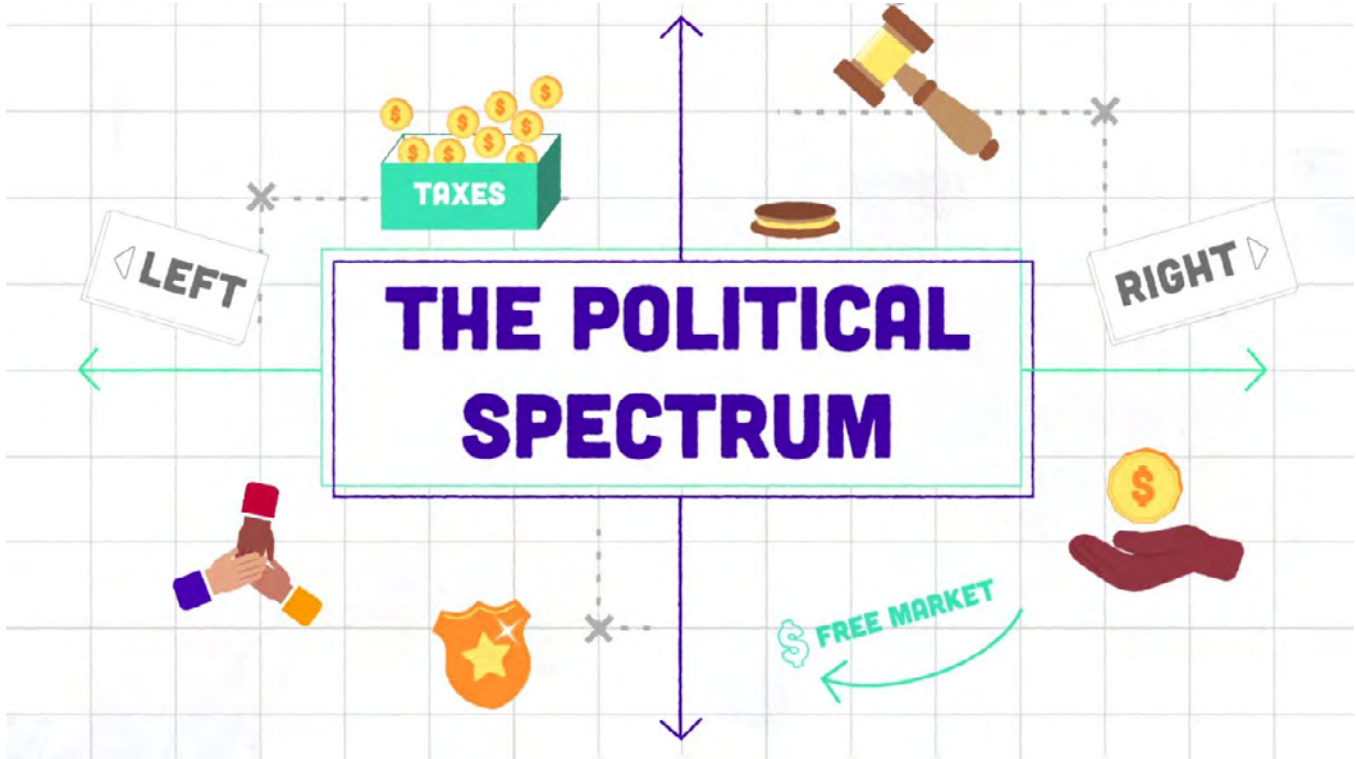
---

**List some of the services the First Nation or community provides for its members:**

---

**What are some issues related to Indigenous self-government?**

# Lesson 4: The Political Spectrum



## GUIDING QUESTIONS

- 1 How are people's beliefs and values connected to their political views?
- 2 What is your position on the political spectrum?
- 3 Why is it important to respect others' opinions and perspectives?

## OVERVIEW

In a democratic society, people have different beliefs and values, which influence their position on political issues. Political parties bring together people with similar beliefs and political views.

In this lesson, students explore different political perspectives and the importance of respecting and engaging with others who hold different views. After learning about political parties at the provincial level in Manitoba, students participate in an online survey to better understand the political spectrum and which party they might be most closely aligned with.

## LEARNING GOALS

By the end of the lesson, students can:

- analyze how beliefs and values shape positions and actions on political issues;
- describe different ideologies on the political spectrum;
- analyze their position on the political spectrum and which political party they might be most closely aligned with; and,
- demonstrate respect for others' perspectives.

## Starter

1. Watch one of the videos below to introduce the idea of finding common ground with others and the importance of engaging in discussion with people that share different perspectives.
  - “[Worlds Apart: Open Your World](#)” (produced by Heineken): This video features a social experiment where strangers, who have opposing beliefs on topics like feminism and climate change, must work together to complete a challenge. After the challenge, their opposing views are revealed and they are given the option to either walk away or stay and discuss their political differences.
  - “[Environmental Activist Meets Retired Oil Worker](#)” (produced by RAD, part of CBC/Radio-Canada): In this video, a mother of three who is concerned about climate change engages in a discussion with a retired oil worker in Calgary about their political views. The conversation is in English, but French subtitles are included.
2. Using a Think-Pair-Share protocol, discuss the following questions:
  - What is the main takeaway from the video?
  - Why are conversations about political issues sometimes challenging?
  - What is one thing you think people could do to make political discussions easier to have?

## Activities

1. Using Slide Deck 4 and “The Political Spectrum” video, review the concept of the political spectrum.

The **political spectrum** provides a way to characterize and distinguish between different policy positions and political ideologies. Often, economic issues and social issues are separated into two distinct dimensions (Handout 4.1).

- On **economic issues**, left-leaning people tend to support social services and government intervention in the economy. Right-leaning people tend to support lower taxes, free markets and less government intervention in the economy.
  - On **social issues**, people who identify as progressive tend to support the improvement of society through change and the promotion of social justice values. People who identify as social conservatives tend to support the preservation of traditions and established values.
2. Using Slide Deck 4, review the purpose of **political parties**.

- A political party is a group made up of people who share a similar political ideology and goals about society and government.
  - In order for the political party to have the chance to work towards its goals, the party tries to elect members to the Legislative Assembly.
3. Ask students if they can name any of the political parties and party leaders at the provincial level. Using Slide Deck 4, review some of the main political parties in Manitoba.

### TEACHER NOTE

- Reinforce the idea that political parties at the provincial and federal level are different and distinct entities.
  - To see a current list of registered parties, please visit the Elections Manitoba website.
4. Explain to students that *Vote Compass* is developed by political scientists and aims to help people discover how they fit in the provincial political landscape. After answering a short online questionnaire, users will learn which political party is most closely aligned with their own views. The tool is designed for adults, but may be relevant for your students.

Arrange for computer or internet access so that students can complete the survey. It should take approximately 15 min to complete. Reinforce to students that there are no right or wrong answers but the questions are meant to encourage reflection on their political views.

## Consolidation

Through a written reflection, ask students to consider their responses to the following questions:

- Do you agree or disagree with where you were placed on the political spectrum? Why or why not?
- What is one takeaway that you can apply outside of the classroom?

Alternatively, as students leave the room, ask them to share one word or concept that they learned today.

## Extended Learning

Visit CIVIX's PoliTalks website ([politalks.ca](http://politalks.ca)) to find a variety of resources to learn about perspectives and civic discourse. For example:

### Lesson A4: Underlying Values

Students learn about personal and social values before participating in a perspective-taking game in which they explore how prioritizing different values produces different points of view.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS

A **civic or political issue** is a topic or subject that people speak about because it affects many people in society. Often there are different opinions about how to view or address the issue.

The **political spectrum** provides a way to characterize different beliefs and ideologies, and distinguish between different policy positions and political parties.

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

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

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

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

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

A **political party** is a group of like-minded individuals with similar beliefs and a shared political ideology whose intention is to elect members to the legislative body and create meaningful political change.

Political parties are made up of interested members of the public. Anyone above the required age (usually 14-years-old) can be a member of a political party. Party members choose their party's leader and local candidates, and help them get elected.

Many people believe that society is becoming increasingly polarized or politically divided, causing political debate to become hostile with little room for compromise. We must respect that everyone has different influences and life experiences that shape their values and political perspectives, and that those things influence how they approach different issues.

## ADAPTATIONS AND SUPPORTS

<b>Language Learners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide students with key terms and definitions in advance (e.g., political issue, perspective, political ideology, political spectrum, political party).</li> <li>• Support students' understanding of political positions with real-world examples.</li> </ul>
<b>Culturally Responsive Pedagogy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Know your learners. Consider the cultural backgrounds of your students and be aware of discussions that may involve sensitive topics and could trigger an uncomfortable or unsafe environment.</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• Ensure a respectful environment remains a focus as students share opinions with which others may disagree.</li> </ul>
<b>Accommodations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If working in pairs or small groups in the classroom is not possible, consider using Google Docs or Google Jamboard for collaborative activities and discussion.</li> </ul>

## HANDOUT 4.1: Views on the Political Spectrum

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

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



### ECONOMIC/FISCAL ISSUES

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

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

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

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



### SOCIAL ISSUES

Individuals who are considered **progressive** most often believe that:

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

Individuals who are considered **conservative** most often believe that:

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



# Lesson 5: Manitoba Provincial Elections



## GUIDING QUESTIONS

- 1 How are candidates elected to the Legislative Assembly?
- 2 Who are the local candidates running for election?
- 3 Which party or candidate will best address my priorities and concerns?

## OVERVIEW

Provincial elections present a chance for citizens to discuss political issues affecting them and their communities, and debate the future direction of the province. As a voter, you need to evaluate the promises and proposals critically, and find out which party or candidate aligns with your political views and priorities.

In this lesson, students become familiar with provincial elections in Manitoba and the steps to become an informed voter. After learning about the election process, students work in groups to research the candidates and parties running in their electoral division. In the *Consolidation* activity, students analyze their thinking about the parties, leaders and candidates.

## LEARNING GOALS

By the end of the lesson, students can:

- describe the provincial election process;
- explain how to find out their electoral division and which candidates are running for election;
- collaborate with their peers to learn about the candidates and parties running in the election;
- compare and contrast how different political parties or candidates will respond to the same political issue; and,
- evaluate the parties and candidates and determine who they support, and why.



## Readiness

A few days before the lesson, ask students to survey family members about which issues are important to them now and over the next five years.

This information could be collected informally through discussion or through an online survey.

## Starter

Using a 'Rank-Order' discussion protocol, ask students to reflect on the most important issues for this election.

- a) Provide students with the list of policy issues (Activity 5.1) and ask them to select the five most important issues and rank them in order of most to least important. Ask students to write down some notes to explain their reasoning.
- b) Divide students into pairs or small groups and ask them to compare rankings. Students should explain their choices to each other even if they are in agreement, since it's possible that they ranked items similarly for different reasons.
- c) Reflect on the activity as a whole group and try to come to a consensus on the top 3-5 election issues. Guiding questions:
  - Were there major points of consensus or disagreement?
  - Were there cases where you had common priorities but different reasons for choosing them?
  - Did seeing someone else's ranking and/or hearing their reasons make you see or understand one or more of the items differently?
  - How would your parents or caregivers rank these issues? What about your grandparents or elders?

## Activities

1. Ask students to fill out the 'before' column in the Anticipation Guide (Activity 5.2).
2. Review the provincial election process using Slide Deck 5.

Key questions:

- What are elections? When do provincial elections take place?
- What is an electoral system? Which system do we use in Manitoba?
- How do campaigns work? What is a platform?

Demonstrate to students how they can find out which electoral division they live in by visiting the Elections Manitoba website ([electionsmanitoba.ca](http://electionsmanitoba.ca)). Go to the "Voter Information" page (Under the 'Voters' tab) and enter your school's address.

3. Afterwards, review the map of your school's electoral division found on the results page of the query. Reference the street boundaries and point out the location of your school within the electoral division.

### TEACHER NOTE

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

4. Next, review the list of candidates running in your school's electoral division ([electionsmanitoba.ca](http://electionsmanitoba.ca)). The final list of candidates should be posted after the close of nominations.
5. Organize students into groups and assign each group a candidate/political party, or allow them to choose one based on their preference. The goal is to ensure that a group covers each candidate/party running in your electoral division, including independent candidates.

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

Co-create a checklist for the research.

Guiding questions:

- Who is the local candidate? What skills and qualifications do they have?
- Does the candidate belong to a political party? What does the party stand for?
- Who is the leader of the party? What skills and qualifications do they have?
- What are the party's main priorities or promises? Who are the main beneficiaries?
- How will the party address the top issues identified in the *Starter* activity?

Suggested sources:

- Candidate/party websites
- Candidate/party social media channels (Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, Facebook or TikTok)
- Candidate/party campaign literature

6. Have each group present their political party/ candidate to the rest of the class, or share their presentations/products through a digital gallery. Students can take notes on each presentation using Graphic Organizer 5.3. Provide as many copies as necessary.

The presentations could also be shared with classes in the school to help prepare other student voters for Student Vote Day.

### ALTERNATIVE RESEARCH METHOD

This activity can also be completed individually or in pairs, where students collect information about all the candidates/parties running in the election using the same suggested resources. Students can use Graphic Organizer 5.3 to help them organize their findings or encourage them to use a digital format that incorporates images and social media posts.

## Consolidation

1. Ask students to fill out the 'after' column in the Anticipation Guide (Activity 5.2).
2. Ask students to fill out the Campaign Reflection (Activity 5.4) and a closing discussion about the political parties and local candidates.
  - Which party or candidate's priorities or positions align most closely with your own?
  - Which party or leader do you think is best suited to lead the province, and why?
  - Which candidate do you think will make the best MLA and why?
  - What else do you want to know before making your voting decision?

#### TEACHER NOTE

- Some students may jump at the chance to share their opinions and even try to persuade others to adopt their choices. Others may opt for silence and prefer to keep their politics private.
- Reinforce the choice for privacy and the importance of being respectful towards others with different points of view.

## Assessment

Using Graphic Organizer 5.5, ask students to select one issue that matters most to them and research each party's promises or proposals on the selected issue. Do the proposals have long-term benefit or are they short-term solutions? Which party's plan do you most agree with and why?

## Extended Learning

Organize an in-person or virtual candidates' forum (refer to Handout 5.6 for tips for organizing candidate debates). Alternatively, you could ask each candidate to submit a video to the class about their reasons for running and/or their priorities for the community. Another option is to collect a few questions from the class, pose them to all the candidates through email and request written responses.

## ADAPTATIONS AND SUPPORTS

<b>Language Learners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide key terms in advance (e.g., election process, electoral system, electoral division, candidate, political party, platform).</li> <li>• Use an application or word cloud generator to simplify political party messages (e.g., <a href="http://www.wordclouds.com">www.wordclouds.com</a>, <a href="http://monkeylearn.com">monkeylearn.com</a>).</li> </ul>
<b>Culturally Responsive Pedagogy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss issues or challenges your community is facing.</li> <li>• Analyze the diversity of the candidates running in your electoral division and discuss the need for diversity in politics.</li> </ul>
<b>Accommodations &amp; Accessibility</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If working in pairs or small groups is not possible, consider using Google Docs or Jamboard for collaborative activities.</li> <li>• Have students create digital presentations of their candidate/party research rather than physical formats.</li> </ul>

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS

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

Manitoba uses a system called **Single-Member Plurality** or **First Past the Post (FPTP)**. The province is divided into smaller geographic areas called electoral divisions. Each division is represented by one Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA).

In FPTP, voters choose a single candidate on the ballot and the candidate with the most votes wins. The successful candidate does not need more than 50 per cent of the vote; they only require one more vote than any other candidate. This is called a **plurality** of votes

The number of electoral divisions changes over time. Manitoba currently has 57 electoral divisions.

The size of electoral divisions is determined by factors such as population size, geographic features and social considerations, such as culture and language. The most important factor is making sure that the number of people represented is as equal as possible. Geographic representation is also a very important factor that needs to be balanced.

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

Under our parliamentary system, the party that elects the greatest number of representatives to the Legislative Assembly usually forms government and their leader becomes the **premier**.

Manitoba established **fixed-date elections** beginning in 2011. As a result, general elections will take place on the first Tuesday in October, every four years.

Regardless of fixed-date election legislation, a provincial election can be held at any time if the government loses the confidence of the legislature or if the lieutenant governor were to dissolve the legislature on the advice of the premier.

During an election campaign, an organized course of action is taken by a political party and its candidates to share its vision and platform with voters.

A **political platform** is a series of declared proposals and policies on jurisdictional issues concerning government and the public. Candidates and parties use a communications strategy to share their party platforms through announcements, advertising and events to gain support from constituents.

## Activity 5.1: Rank-Order Policy Issues

- Affordability of housing
- Climate change
- The cost of living
- Defending those working in the natural resources sector
- Improving health care
- Improving the education system
- Keeping taxes as low as possible
- Making Manitoba an attractive place for new businesses
- Managing Manitoba's economy
- Protecting the rights of gun owners
- Reducing the gap between the rich and poor
- Standing up for Manitoba's interests with the federal government

**SELECT THE FIVE MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES TO YOU AND RANK THEM IN ORDER OF IMPORTANCE.**

1 \_\_\_\_\_

2 \_\_\_\_\_

3 \_\_\_\_\_

4 \_\_\_\_\_

5 \_\_\_\_\_

**WHAT ARE SOME REASONS BEHIND YOUR RANKINGS?**

## ACTIVITY 5.2: Anticipation Guide – Provincial Elections

Answer the following questions prior to learning about provincial elections in Manitoba. Afterwards, respond to the questions again based on any new information you have acquired.

QUESTION	BEFORE	AFTER
When is the next provincial election?		
Which electoral system does Manitoba use for provincial elections?		
How many provincial electoral divisions are there in Manitoba?		
What is the name of our school's electoral division?		
What is the title given to elected representatives at the provincial level in Manitoba?		
How many candidates can you choose on your ballot?		
Do we vote for the position of premier?		

## GRAPHIC ORGANIZER 5.3: Getting To Know The Candidates

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

CANDIDATE AND POLITICAL PARTY DETAILS	PRIORITIES, PROMISES AND KEY MESSAGES

## ACTIVITY 5.4: Campaign Reflection

After researching the parties and candidates, respond to the questions below.

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**1 WHICH PARTY OR CANDIDATE'S PRIORITIES OR POSITIONS ALIGN MOST CLOSELY WITH YOUR OWN?  
EXPLAIN YOUR ANSWER WITH SPECIFIC EXAMPLES.**

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**2 WHICH PARTY OR LEADER DO YOU THINK IS BEST SUITED TO LEAD THE PROVINCE, AND WHY?**

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**3 WHICH CANDIDATE DO YOU THINK WILL MAKE THE BEST MLA AND WHY?**

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**4 WHAT ELSE DO YOU WANT TO KNOW BEFORE MAKING YOUR VOTING DECISION?**

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## GRAPHIC ORGANIZER 5.5: Analyzing the Campaign Promises





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

<b>PARTIES</b>	What are the party's promises and proposals related to the issue?	Who are the main beneficiaries of the proposals?	Do the policies have long-term benefit or are they short-term solutions? Explain.	Which party's plan do you agree with most on the selected issue and why?



## HANDOUT 5.6: A Framework for Organizing an All-Candidates' Debate

It is important when hosting an event at your school that things are run professionally and efficiently. Consider the following aspects as you plan your event and make sure all registered candidates are invited to participate.

 <p><b>PREPARATION</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decide on a time, date and location.</li> <li>• Invite all candidates running in your electoral division to participate in the meeting/debate.</li> <li>• Determine if the event will be held in-person or virtually.</li> <li>• Consider videotaping, podcasting and/or live-streaming the event to share with other schools in your electoral division.</li> <li>• Work with school staff to set up audio equipment and seating, if applicable.</li> <li>• Recruit a moderator (teacher, student, community leader or journalist).</li> </ul>
 <p><b>QUESTIONS</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan questions in advance and encourage other classes to submit questions to increase interest and engagement. Consider both personal and policy questions (e.g., Why did you decide to run? What makes you qualified for the job? How will you improve the community? What is your number one priority if elected?)</li> <li>• Determine the timing for questions and answers and whether all, some or one candidate will respond. Use a combination of short (i.e., 30 seconds) and longer responses (i.e., 2 minutes each).</li> <li>• Once the questions have been selected, confirm which students will ask the questions.</li> </ul>
 <p><b>FORMAT</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish an agenda and guidelines for the meeting to share with candidates and participating classes.</li> <li>• Below is a suggested framework:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Introduction – The moderator should welcome the audience, introduce the candidates and detail the structure of the meeting (3 minutes).</li> <li>b) Opening statements – Brief introductory statements from the candidates (2 minutes each).</li> <li>c) Planned questions – Ask the pre-determined questions to the candidates (20-25 minutes).</li> <li>d) Open questions – Give the audience an opportunity to ask questions to specific candidates (10-15 minutes).</li> <li>e) Closing statements – Final words from the candidates (1-2 minutes each).</li> <li>f) Thank you – Plan a formal thank you from designated students (1-2 minutes).</li> </ol> </li> <li>• Make sure that the time limits are announced and monitored with a stopwatch.</li> </ul>
 <p><b>ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS FOR THE DEBATE</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure a respectful, non-partisan environment.</li> <li>• If a candidate declines, cancels or does not show up, respect their campaign schedule and ensure that students are aware that the candidate is running in the election but is unable to attend.</li> <li>• Communicate expectations regarding behaviour and participation.</li> <li>• You can invite parents/guardians or members from the community, but non student audience members should NOT ask questions.</li> <li>• Have students take notes during the debate to review the next class.</li> <li>• If possible, provide time for students to talk with the candidates after the meeting and offer some refreshments.</li> </ul>

# Lesson 6: Campaign Communications



## GUIDING QUESTIONS

❶ **How do political parties and candidates communicate to voters?**

❷ **How can I evaluate campaign messages?**

## OVERVIEW

Political parties and candidates use a variety of communications to convince voters to choose them at the ballot box. Being an informed voter means critically examining these messages and advertisements.

In this lesson, students examine and analyze campaign communications or advertisements. In the *Consolidation* activity, students evaluate the effectiveness of each party or candidate's campaign strategy.

## LEARNING GOALS

By the end of the lesson, students can:

- explain the purpose of political communications in elections;
- analyze a variety of media texts and evaluate their significance or effectiveness; and,
- work collaboratively with peers to analyze and organize information.

## Starter

1. As a class, brainstorm all the ways political parties and candidates communicate with voters during elections (e.g., advertising on TV, lawn signs, mailings/pamphlets, their website, social media, public events, door-to-door canvassing, news coverage, debates and town halls).
2. Through a class discussion, ask students to share any advertisements or messages they have seen from the political parties and candidates in the current election, including where they saw them.

Discussion prompts:

- Which messages have stuck with you and why?
- Which methods do you think are most effective in 2023 and why?

## Activities

1. Review the three types of media: paid, earned and owned. Explain to students that candidates and political parties use all of these forms of media to communicate to voters.
  - **Paid media:** Advertising that has been purchased, including online ads, billboards, broadcast or print ads, and promotional mailings.
  - **Owned media:** Communications shared by individuals or groups through their own platforms, such as websites, blogs or social media channels.
  - **Earned media:** Media coverage produced by news organizations or reported by others through social shares, mentions or word of mouth.
2. Share examples of political party advertisements or social media messages from the current election campaign. You could use images from each party or party leader's Instagram account or videos found on their website, YouTube channel or TikTok account. Encourage students to look at language, colour, images, music, tone and content.

As a class, investigate the advertisements/messages using the following guiding questions (also provided on Activity 6.1).

- a) **Describe the content:** What does it show? What is your immediate impression? How does it make you feel?
- b) **Identify the claim (or main message):** What claim is being made? Is it a factual statement that can be proven? Is it an opinion statement that is up to one's interpretation?

- c) **Examine the framing:** How do the language, images, colour, fonts and tone influence the message? Is the message misleading?
  - d) **Analyze the purpose:** What is the purpose of the message? Is it about the party's vision/strengths or is it an attack ad? Who is the target audience? How might different audiences interpret it?
3. Co-create criteria to evaluate campaign communications (Activity 6.1). Have students work in groups and then discuss as a class to establish the final criteria.

For example:

- Is the message clear and concise?
  - Is the message factual?
  - Are the images/visuals relevant to the message(s)?
  - Do the message(s) target the intended audience?
  - Is the language of the message appropriate to the tone and content?
4. Divide students into groups and have them evaluate the communications of one of the political parties or candidates in your school's electoral division. Place each piece of media (or printed screenshot of the video) in the middle of a larger piece of paper or chart paper. Ask students to annotate their thoughts around the edge connecting back to criteria. Encourage them to look at language, colour, images, music, tone and content.

### TEACHER NOTE

- Select options from each party in the same medium(s) to ensure comparisons can be made on the same level and are not biased towards format.
- When choosing video advertisements, be sure to show ads of similar tone. Try not to compare a positive ad from one party with an attack ad from another.

5. Post each group's work around the classroom or down a hallway. Have students participate in a 'Gallery Walk' to look at their peers' work. For a further extension, give students sticky notes so they can add their own thoughts or ideas.

## Consolidation

Have a brief closing discussion about campaign communications, or ask students to write a reflection on one or both of the following questions:

- Evaluate the communications of each political party or candidate and rank them based on effectiveness. Explain the thinking behind your rankings and connect it back to the co-created criteria.
- Which party or candidate’s messaging is most appealing to you and why?

## Extension Activity

Divide students into groups and ask them to track the communications of one particular political party across various communications. Students should collect the party’s communications from multiple platforms and in different formats (e.g., video, print material, social media posts).

Provide an overall checklist of what should be collected during the tracking period. For example:

- 3 video advertisements
- 12 social media posts (e.g., Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok)
- 1 party pamphlet
- 1 speech
- 2 media releases

Suggested questions:

- What are the party’s key messages? Are they consistent across all platforms or communications?
- Are they focused on highlighting their own ideas or do they focus on criticizing their opponents?
- Which platform do you think is most effective and why?
- Which demographic groups does the party appear to be targeting with their communications? Do you think they use different platforms to target different audiences? Explain your reasons.

Afterwards, give students an opportunity to share their work with each other through a classroom presentation, ‘Gallery Walk’ or an alternative method.

## ADAPTATIONS AND SUPPORTS

<b>Individual Education Plans</b>	<p><b>Modifications</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group students so that everyone participates within their comfort level.</li> <li>• Use simple vocabulary when describing political terms.</li> <li>• Replay videos frequently or provide access in advance.</li> </ul> <p><b>Enrichment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask students to create their own additions to each party’s campaign – remembering to be in line with the party platform and campaign goals.</li> </ul>
<b>Language Learners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure subtitles are on during any videos and repeat them numerous times.</li> <li>• Give clear criteria and post key terms and definitions for student reference.</li> </ul>
<b>Culturally Responsive Pedagogy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It may be appropriate to show political ads from a country outside of North America as examples. Be sure that you understand the language and context.</li> <li>• Be selective in your choices of political ads so that students do not feel uncomfortable (e.g., Anti-immigration platform ads).</li> </ul>
<b>Accommodations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use technology options if needed. Websites such as <a href="https://note.ly">note.ly</a> or <a href="https://padlet.com">padlet.com</a> may be helpful.</li> </ul>



## BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS

Elections are contests of leadership, ideas and persuasion, where interested groups and individuals campaign for our support, and ultimately, our vote.

It is the job of political parties and candidates to communicate their vision and ideas with voters in order to gain their support. A **political platform** is a series of declared values and proposed actions the party will take if elected.

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

**Paid media:** Publicity that has been purchased to bring a message to an audience. Examples include, print, broadcast or social media advertising, or a direct mail campaign.

**Owned media:** Communications managed by an individual, group or organization through its own platforms, such as websites, blogs or social media channels.

**Earned media:** Media coverage or mentions reported by third parties such as news organizations, or shared through external social media channels or through word of mouth.

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

As a voter, it is your job to gather, interpret and analyze campaign information, formulate conclusions and judgments, and make your voting decision.



## ACTIVITY 6.1: Examining and Evaluating Campaign Communications

You can use the following framework when examining campaign communications.

STEPS	GUIDING QUESTIONS
<b>1 Describe the content</b>	What does it show? What is your immediate impression? How does it make you feel?
<b>2 Identify the claim (or main message)</b>	What claim is being made? Is it a factual statement that can be proven, or is it an opinion statement that is up to one's interpretation?
<b>3 Examine the framing</b>	How do the language, images, colour, fonts and tone influence the message? Is the message misleading?
<b>4 Analyze the purpose</b>	What is the purpose of the message? Is it about the party's vision/strengths or it an attack ad? Who is the target audience? How might different audiences interpret it?

Establish criteria for evaluating the effectiveness of campaign communications.

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**My group's criteria:**

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**Final class criteria:**

# Lesson 7: The Leaders' Debate



## GUIDING QUESTIONS

- 1 What is the distinction between discussion and debate?**
- 2 What skills and techniques are important in debate?**
- 3 Why should we analyze the leaders' debate and the arguments made by party leaders?**

## OVERVIEW

Election debates offer us the chance to measure the character and temperament of the candidates and hear about their ideas and positions on important issues. In order to be an informed voter, citizens should pay attention to what politicians are saying and have the skills to evaluate their statements.

In this lesson, students discuss the difference between discussion and debate. Afterwards, students learn about effective debating skills, as well as faulty arguments, before analyzing the leaders' debate. In the *Consolidation* activity, students discuss their thoughts, questions and epiphanies about the 2023 Manitoba leaders' debate.

## LEARNING GOALS

By the end of the lesson, students can:

- explain the purpose of debates;
- summarize effective debating skills and techniques;
- identify different logical fallacies or faulty arguments that people may use; and,
- evaluate the arguments made by party leaders in the leaders' debate.



## Starter

### Discussion vs. debate

1. In small groups, have students discuss the difference between discussion and debate. Consider using a 'Conver-Stations' discussion protocol.
  - a) Place students into groups of 4-6 students and ask them to discuss the purpose and characteristics of *discussion*.
  - b) After sufficient time has passed for the discussion to develop, ask two students from each group rotate to a different group, while the other group members remain where they are. Once in their new group, ask students to discuss the purpose and characteristics of *debate*. Encourage students to share some of the key points from their last group's conversation.
2. Discuss the distinction between discussion and debate.
  - **Discussion:** an exchange of ideas, usually informal but can also be part of academic settings. The goal is to learn. Participants listen thoughtfully to one another, reflecting on their own opinions. There is a possibility that someone may change their opinion based on new knowledge.
  - **Debate:** an opportunity to defend your position, usually formal settings. The goal is to win by making the strongest and most compelling arguments. Participants listen to find faulty arguments or inconsistencies. No openness to changing sides.

## Activities

1. Review the purpose of a leaders' debate (Slide Deck 7).
  - A leaders' debate is an opportunity for party leaders to present their policy ideas to the public and challenge their opponents' positions.
  - Debates allow citizens to be exposed to different political views that may be different from their own or those around them.
  - Debates have produced great moments of political history and have acted as major turning points in election campaigns.
  - Viewers often watch to see if any of the leaders make any "zingers" (a striking or amusing remark) or "gaffes" (a mistake/error causing embarrassment).
2. Watch the CBC video, "Do leaders' debates change how people vote?" to review some notable moments in history, what goes into preparing for debates and whether they influence voters.

3. As a class, brainstorm the qualities of an effective debater. Suggested prompts: What skills and techniques are important in debate? Which are not? (Slide Deck 7)

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

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

4. Explain to students that one way to analyze the debate is to pay attention to how the leaders construct arguments. Sometimes individuals will use faulty reasoning to make a point. Watch the "Logical Fallacies" video.

Then, use Slide Deck 7 to review common logical fallacies and have students write down their own example for each (Activity 7.1).

- Authoritative Argument
- Slippery Slope
- Appeal to Tradition
- Personal Attack
- False Dilemma
- Strawman Argument

5. Have students watch the leaders' debate at home or watch select video clips of the debate in class and complete Activity 7.2. To prepare for the viewing, review the party leaders that will participate in the debate.

### TEACHER NOTE

The leaders' debate may run for 60-90 minutes. The debate will be edited into several smaller segments afterwards, which will make it easier to watch in the classroom.

6. Afterwards, have students share their responses to Activity 7.2 with the rest of the class. When sharing their analysis of the leaders' debate, remind students to use evidence to support their arguments and to avoid faulty arguments, such as personal attacks.

## Consolidation

Use a TQE (Thoughts, Questions, Epiphanies) discussion protocol to reflect on the 2023 Manitoba leaders' debate.

- a) Students work in pairs or small groups. They brainstorm a list of as many thoughts, questions, and epiphanies (TQEs) as they can about the leaders' debate.

- b) Each group is asked to share their top 2-3 TQEs with the class.
- c) Have a whole-class discussion based on the TQEs shared.

## Extended Learning

News media will report on the leaders' debate, offering accounts of what occurred. There are two main types of media articles.

- A news story, or **factual account**, will go over the events of the debate. This type of story will be as neutral as possible, and will include interviews with experts offering interpretations of what occurred. Interview subjects with

contrasting views may appear in the same story to offer different perspectives.

- The second category is an **opinion-based piece**, which usually takes the form of a written column. In this case, the journalist is also the expert. A columnist will advance a first-person argument based on their opinion. This opinion should be backed up with evidence, and existing knowledge of the subject. Some columnists will use more facts than others, or source their arguments better.

In pairs or small groups, have students analyze a pair of news articles — one written by a news reporter, the other by an opinion columnist, or articles from different publications. Students may use Activity 7.3 to record responses.

## ADAPTATIONS AND SUPPORTS

<b>Language Learners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Watch the segments of the debate in different ways to help with the analysis (muted video, audio only).</li> <li>• Use an application or word cloud generator to simplify the leaders' statements (e.g., <a href="http://www.wordclouds.com">www.wordclouds.com</a>, <a href="http://monkeylearn.com">monkeylearn.com</a>).</li> </ul>
<b>Culturally Responsive Pedagogy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If you are selecting segments of the debate to watch, select questions or issues that are of interest to your students and/or the local community.</li> <li>• Analyze the diversity of the questions asked during the debate. Did the leaders address the concerns of different regional communities or groups? What other questions could have been asked to the leaders?</li> </ul>
<b>Accommodations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some students may not have the ability to watch the debate at home. Consider providing time in class to watch the debate so that all students have an opportunity. Turn on captions on the video whenever possible.</li> </ul>

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS

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

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

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

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

In order to be an informed voter, citizens should pay attention to what politicians are saying and have the tools to evaluate their assertions.

A **logical fallacy** is a type of faulty argument. This type of argument may sound convincing in the moment, but if you stop and examine it, it does not stand up to the test of logic. It is very helpful to be able to recognize a logical fallacy and not be persuaded by it.

## ACTIVITY 7.1: Common Logical Fallacies

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

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### 1 AUTHORITATIVE ARGUMENT

Claiming something to be true because an expert said so.

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

**YOUR EXAMPLE:**

---

### 2 SLIPPERY SLOPE

Believing a small change will lead to a disaster.

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

**YOUR EXAMPLE:**

---

### 3 APPEAL TO TRADITION

Claiming something is true since it has always been so.

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

**YOUR EXAMPLE:**

---

### 4 PERSONAL ATTACK

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

*Politician 1: "I will fight for the working class."*

*Politician 2: "What does he know about the working class? His family has extraordinary wealth and he's never had a job outside politics."*

**YOUR EXAMPLE:**

---

### 5 FALSE DILEMMA

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

*Vote for me or live through four more years of higher taxes.*

**YOUR EXAMPLE:**

---

### 6 STRAWMAN ARGUMENT

Deliberately misrepresenting someone else's argument to make it easier to attack.

*Politician 1: "I think we should spend less on the military."*

*Politician 2: "My opponent wants to leave the country defenceless. We deserve better."*

**YOUR EXAMPLE:**

## ACTIVITY 7.2: Evaluating the Leaders' Debate

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**1** Identify three examples of faulty arguments made during the debate (e.g., personal attack, false dilemma, slippery slope). List the leader, describe the argument and identify the type of logical fallacy.

---

**2** Which arguments were most persuasive and why?

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**3** Did your opinions about the leaders or any policy positions change over the course of the debate? Explain.

---

**4** Do you feel like your concerns were answered during the debate? What other questions would you like to ask the party leaders?

## ACTIVITY 7.3: Analyzing Articles about the Debate

Summarize the information for each article.

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**NEWS SOURCE**

---

**HEADLINE**

---

**AUTHOR**

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**DESCRIBE THE TYPE OF ARTICLE.** Is the article a news article or an opinion column? How do you know?

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**SUMMARIZE THE ARTICLE.** What positive or negative comments were made about the leaders' performances?

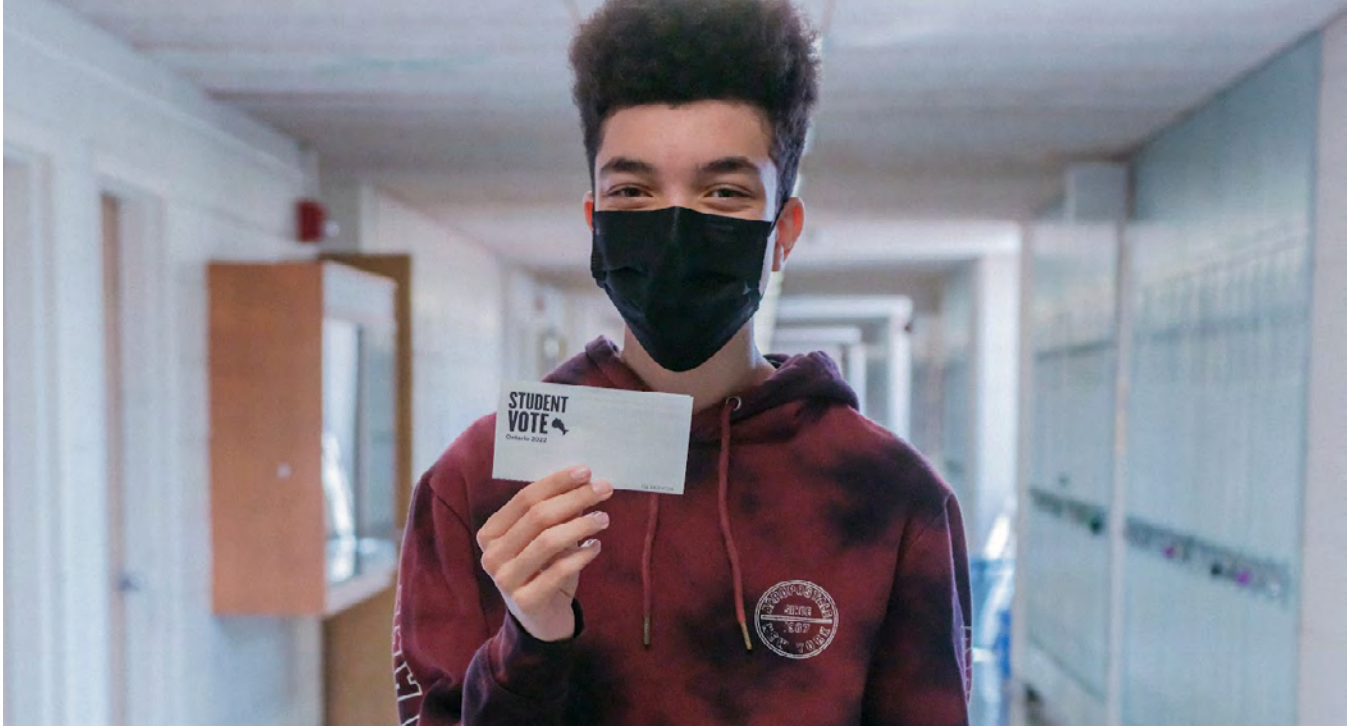
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**WHO WON THE DEBATE?** Does the article declare a winner of the debate? What evidence is offered?

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**DESCRIBE THE IMAGE CHOSEN FOR THE ARTICLE.** If your article contains a picture, why do you think this image was chosen? What is it representing?

# Lesson 8: The Voting Process



## GUIDING QUESTIONS

- 1 **Is voting in elections important?**
- 2 **How do I vote in provincial elections?**
- 3 **What are some barriers to voting and how are they relevant to me?**

## OVERVIEW

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

In this lesson, students analyze different reasons for voting in elections. Students review essential information about voter eligibility and where, when and how people vote in provincial elections. Afterwards, students learn about voter turnout and barriers to electoral participation, and reflect on whether any barriers may be relevant to them in the future. Next, students discuss actions to reduce or eliminate barriers through a collaborative brainstorming session. In the *Consolidation* activity, students create a social media style video about whether they believe citizens should vote or whether they plan to vote in the future.

## LEARNING GOALS

By the end of the lesson, students will:

- evaluate reasons for voting in elections;
- explain key information related to voting in provincial elections;
- analyze barriers to voting in elections;
- work collaboratively with their peers to discuss actions to reduce barriers to voting; and,
- articulate reasons for voting in a persuasive manner.

## Starter

1. Distribute one index card or piece of paper to each student. Introduce the activity by posing the following question: *Does voting matter?*
2. Watch the “Why Voting Matters” video and ask students to select one quote or reason for voting that stood out to them. They should write down the quote or reason on the index card. You may want to play the video twice in order to support this selection.
3. Ask students to explain why they chose the reason they did from the video by writing an explanation on the back of the card (e.g., what it meant to them, reminded them of, how it connects to prior learning).
4. Use the 'Save the Last Word' discussion protocol to discuss their choices.
  - a) Divide students into groups of three. Assign one student the role of timekeeper.
  - b) Invite one student to share their selection and reasoning with the rest of their group (1-2 min).
  - c) Afterwards, have the other two students respond to the first speaker (1-2 minutes each), building on what has been said (e.g. areas of agreement, differences, related insights). No interjections are allowed during this process.
  - d) The first student is then given the “last word” and is able to respond to the others. Consider providing prompts (“I like what \_\_\_ had to say about....”, “I hadn’t considered \_\_\_ that way before.”)
  - e) The activity repeats until each student has had the chance to go first and last.

## Activities

1. Explain to students that voting in provincial elections is done by secret ballot (Slide Deck 8). Voters mark their ballot behind a privacy screen and fold their ballot to conceal their choice. Using a 'Think Pair Share' discussion protocol, have students reflect on one or more of the following questions:
  - Why is voting in secrecy important?
  - What could happen if elections were held publicly?
  - Why is it important to ensure a fair and impartial election process?

2. Using Slide Deck 8 to review key aspects of the voting process in provincial elections in Manitoba.

Guiding questions:

- Who is qualified to vote in provincial elections?
  - What is the voters list?
  - What are different ways that voters can cast their ballot?
  - How do I mark my ballot?
  - Who is the trusted source for provincial election information? Where should I go if I have questions?
3. Explain the term 'voter turnout' (Slide Deck 8) and various statistics from provincial elections in Manitoba.

Review:

- Voter turnout is the percentage of eligible electors or registered voters that cast ballots in an election.
  - Having the right to vote doesn't always mean that a person will show up at the polls to cast a ballot.
4. Provide copies of Activity 8.1 and give students a few minutes to complete it. Ask students to answer each question as honestly as they can.

### TEACHER NOTE

Encourage students to take the survey home and have a discussion with their parents or caregivers.

5. Review some key research findings about voting and barriers to voting using Slide Deck 8. There are many different barriers to voting, including motivational barriers and access barriers.
  - Motivational barriers include low levels of political knowledge and interest in politics, lack of perceived importance, cynicism and lower sense of civic duty.
  - Access barriers include not knowing when and where to vote, lack of personal identification, challenges getting to the polling station, and language and literacy skills.
6. Independently or with a partner, have students reflect on how many zeros they recorded on the voting survey (Activity 8.1) and which barriers could affect their decision or ability to vote in the future.



7. Using a 'Carousel' brainstorming strategy, have students generate a list of actions that could be taken to reduce or eliminate barriers to voting.

a) Create 5 stations with chart paper. Write one of the following on each piece of chart paper.

- Low levels of knowledge about government and politics
- Cynicism towards government and politicians
- Lack of interest in politics
- Low confidence about understanding politics and how to vote
- Belief that voting is a choice, not a duty

b) Divide students into five groups. Give each group a distinct coloured marker to code their responses and assign each group to a different station.

d) Let students know they will be rotating through the stations, writing down suggestions for each barrier. Encourage them to read through the responses that have come before theirs before adding their own suggestions.

e) Rotate groups through the stations. Give students 2-3 minutes at each station. Continue until each group has visited every station.

f) Reconvene as a group to debrief on the activity. Review the responses on each chart paper. Pull out similarities and differences to promote further reflection.

## Consolidation

Create a social media style video highlighting three main points as a response to one of the following questions. Consider using visual graphics and a tag line.

- Should eligible citizens vote in elections?
- Does voting matter?
- Do you plan to vote in the future? Why?

## ADAPTATIONS AND SUPPORTS

<b>Language Learners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide students with terms and definitions in advance (e.g., election day, advance voting, vote by mail, ballot, accepted ballot, rejected ballot, declined ballot, spoiled ballot, voters list).</li> </ul>
<b>Culturally Responsive Pedagogy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remind students that new immigrants, adults who have difficulty reading, language learners, persons who are homeless, newly arrived refugees, and other specific groups may face challenges understanding or accessing the election system.</li> <li>• 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.</li> </ul>
<b>Accommodations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If working in pairs or small groups in the classroom is not possible, consider using Google Docs for collaborative discussion/brainstorming.</li> </ul>

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS

**Elections Manitoba** is a non-partisan agency of the Legislative Assembly with a mandate to conduct free and fair elections for Manitobans, to facilitate compliance with electoral laws, and to advance public awareness of and confidence in the electoral process.

Manitoba established **fixed-date elections** beginning in 2011. As a result, general elections will take place on the first Tuesday in October, every four years.

You are eligible to vote in a Manitoba provincial election if:

- You are a Canadian citizen;
- You are 18 years of age on or before election day;
- You have lived in Manitoba for at least 6 months immediately before election day.

Everyone must show ID to vote. Voters who are on the voters list but don't have the required ID may have someone vouch for them. Regarding ID, you have two options:

1. Show one piece of government-issued photo ID (e.g., driver's license, Enhanced Manitoba identification card, passport, treaty card).
2. Show two documents that include your name (e.g., Manitoba Health card, Social Insurance card, utility bill, credit card).

If you are voting on election day and your name is not on the voters list, you will also need to sign an oath confirming that you are eligible to vote and that you have not already voted. If none of your ID includes your address, you will be asked to sign a voter registration form.

Voters can vote at any **polling place** in their electoral division on election day. Once there, voters will cast their ballot on a first come, first served basis.

Voters may choose to vote in one of several ways:

1. **On Election Day:** You can vote on election day between 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m.
2. **In Advance:** Advance voting is held for eight days, beginning the Saturday 10 days before election day and continuing until the following Saturday.
3. **Absentee Voting:** Eligible voters who expect to be away during advance voting and on election day can apply to vote by absentee ballot.
4. **At Home:** If you are unable to go in person to a voting place due to a disability, you and/or your caregiver can apply to vote in your home by contacting your returning officer.

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

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

The voting process at a voting place works as follows:

1. Once you confirm your eligibility, an election official will provide you with a ballot that has the deputy returning officers' initials on the back.
2. Go behind a voting screen to mark your ballot. Choose only one candidate on the ballot.
3. Hand your folded ballot back to the election official to check for the initials.
4. Place your folded ballot in the ballot box.

A **rejected ballot** is a ballot that cannot be counted due to a deliberate or accidental unrecognizable choice. This can include marking the ballot for more than one candidate (even if different symbols are used), ranking the candidates, leaving the ballot blank or identifying who the voter is.

A voter can choose to **decline** their ballot if they do not want to vote for any of the candidates, but still want their vote to be counted. The elector writes the word "declined" on the front of their ballot (the side with the candidates' names), refolds the ballot and returns it to the election official. The election official checks that it is an official ballot (without unfolding the ballot) and it is placed in the ballot box.

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 during the voting process. The election official writes the word "spoiled" on the ballot and places it in the spoiled ballots envelope.

When preparing to vote, you can consider reasons to support a candidate for MLA, a political party or leader, a specific policy idea and/or an entire party platform. Voting requires that you do your research and devote the necessary time. You will know you are ready to vote when you feel confident in your ability to make a choice.

## ACTIVITY 8.1: Voting Survey

Read the questions below and answer them in the right-hand column. Include if your response is a 0 or 1. Explain the reason behind your answer. Afterwards, rank the different barriers in order of significance for you (1 = very important, 6 = not important).

<p><b>Attitudes towards voting</b></p> <p>People have different views about voting. For some, voting is a CHOICE. They feel free to vote or not vote in an election depending on how they feel about the candidates. For others, voting is a DUTY. They feel that they should vote in every election no matter what.</p> <p>Do you see voting as a choice or a duty?</p> <p><i>Duty=1; Choice=0.</i></p>	
<p><b>Political interest</b></p> <p>To what extent would you say you are interested in politics?</p> <p><i>Somewhat or very interested=1; Not very/not at all interested=0.</i></p>	
<p><b>Issues</b></p> <p>Politicians or candidates talk about issues that are important to me.</p> <p><i>Agree=1; Disagree=0.</i></p>	
<p><b>Personal confidence</b></p> <p>Sometimes politics and government seem so complicated that I can't really understand what's going on.</p> <p><i>Disagree=1; Agree=0.</i></p>	
<p><b>Attitudes towards politicians and government</b></p> <p>I do not think politicians or the government care much about what people like me think.</p> <p><i>Disagree=1; Agree=0.</i></p>	
<p><b>The impact of my vote</b></p> <p>I feel that by voting I can make a difference.</p> <p><i>Agree=1; Disagree=0.</i></p>	
<p><b>A key takeaway from this reflection for me is:</b></p>	

# Lesson 9: Post-Election Analysis



## GUIDING QUESTIONS

- 1 How can we analyze election results?
- 2 What did I learn during my Student Vote experience?

## OVERVIEW

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

In this lesson, students analyze and discuss the results of Student Vote Manitoba and the provincial general election. Using a 'Fish-Bowl' discussion protocol, students discuss the factors that shaped the results and what the outcome means for the province. In the *Consolidation* activity, students reflect on their Student Vote learning experience.

## LEARNING GOALS

By the end of the lesson, students can:

- analyze the Student Vote and general election results;
- discuss how campaign events influenced the outcome of the election; and,
- evaluate the impact of the Student Vote activities on themselves.

## Starter

1. Announce the results of your school's Student Vote election. Which candidate received the most votes? What percentage of the vote did the winner receive? Was it a close race?
2. Compare the results of your school's vote with the results of other schools in your electoral division. Are the results similar or different? How did the results vary between schools? (Individual school results can be found at [www.studentvote.ca/mb2023](http://www.studentvote.ca/mb2023) > Results).

## Activities

1. Using Slide Deck 9, review some key concepts for analyzing election results, including seat count, popular vote, governing party and official opposition.
  - **Seat count** is the term used to show the number of representatives that each party will have in the Manitoba legislature. It reflects the number of electoral divisions won by each party.
  - **Popular vote** is the percentage of total votes that each party received throughout the province. It is shown as a percentage and is calculated by dividing the number of votes that a party received by the total number of votes in the election.
  - The party with the most seats usually becomes the governing party, and their leader typically becomes premier. If the governing party has more than half of all seats, they will have a **majority** government. If they have less than half, they will have a **minority** government.
  - The party that has the second most seats becomes the **official opposition**. Any other party is called an opposition party.
  - To pass a law, the government must have support from more than half of the MLAs. If there is a minority government, the governing party will need to gain the support of other parties or independent candidates in order to pass any laws.

Ask students to work in pairs to complete Activity 9.1.

Direct students to the Student Vote Manitoba website ([studentvote.ca/mb2023](http://studentvote.ca/mb2023)) and Elections Manitoba website ([electionsmanitoba.ca](http://electionsmanitoba.ca)) to complete their data collection.

2. As a class, review the answers to Activity 9.1 and discuss the ending questions.
  - Are you surprised by the election results? Why or why not?
  - Why do you think the results of the Student Vote or general election were similar or different?

3. Using a 'Fish-Bowl' discussion protocol, discuss the following prompt:
  - What factors shaped the outcome of the election?
  - What does the outcome mean for the future of the province?
  - a) This activity involves one group of students discussing a prompt while another group or the rest of the class observes the discussion. Set up your classroom so that 5 or 6 chairs are in the centre of the room with enough space on the outside for the rest of the class to form a circle around them. The students in the inner circle (the fishbowl) will lead the discussion while the students in the outer circle will be the observers.
  - b) Provide students with one of the questions above. Give students a few minutes to reflect on the prompt individually.
  - c) Ask for volunteers to enter the fishbowl. These students will discuss the prompt while the rest of the students observe silently and take notes.
  - d) Replace the students in the fishbowl with a new set of volunteers, and repeat the process until everyone has had a chance to be inside the fishbowl. Alternatively, you can set up multiple fishbowls in your classroom.

## Consolidation

*Option 1:* As a culminating activity, have students fill out the Election Reflection 'Exit Slip' (Activity 9.2) or answer the questions through a written reflection in their learning journal.

- Three things I learned about provincial elections
- Two activities I enjoyed the most during the Student Vote
- One way that this experience has changed me or developed my opinions

*Option 2:* Create a visual timeline or pathway that depicts your Student Vote learning experience (Activity 9.3). Using a combination of visuals and text, it should include the following:

- One question you had at the beginning of your journey
- Three activities you enjoyed in the lead up to Student Vote Day
- One 'a-ha' moment
- One big idea that summarizes the entire experience



## Extension Activity

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

Guiding questions:

- Did the sources report the results in a similar way? Why or why not?
- How is the future of the province portrayed by each source?
- Can you detect any political leanings by the media groups?

## ADAPTATIONS AND SUPPORTS

<b>Language Learners</b>	• Provide students with terms and definitions in advance (e.g., seat count, popular vote, governing party, official opposition, majority government, minority government).
<b>Culturally Responsive Pedagogy</b>	• Analyze the demographics of the newly elected Manitoba legislature. How does it compare to the population of Manitoba? How does it compare to the previously elected legislature?
<b>Accommodations</b>	• If working in small groups is not possible, consider using Google Docs for collaborative activities.

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS

After voting ends on election night, the unofficial results are posted on the Elections Manitoba website as they are reported by the voting officer of each electoral division. These results do not include a breakdown of poll-by-poll results.

A few days after the election, the voting officer conducts the official tabulation. At the end of this process, the voting officer provides a final report for each poll to the Chief Electoral Officer with the total number of accepted, declined and rejected ballots.

Upon receipt of the official tabulation report from the voting officer, the Chief Electoral Officer declares the results official and then publishes a notice in the *Manitoba Gazette* with the names of the candidates elected as Members of the Legislative Assembly. This report is also published on Elections Manitoba website.

**Seat count** is the term used to reflect the number of representatives that each party will have in the

Manitoba legislature. It represents the number of local electoral division races won by each party. The 57 seats contested in this election will be awarded to the candidates in each of the electoral divisions who receive the greatest number of votes.

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

The political party with the most seats usually forms the government and their leader typically becomes the premier. If the governing party has more than half of all the seats (29 or more), they will have a **majority government**. If they have half or less (28 or fewer), they will have a **minority government**.

The party that has the second most seats usually becomes the **official opposition**. Any other party

is called an opposition party. It is the responsibility of the opposition parties to hold the government to account and to question its actions. The official opposition organizes a shadow cabinet to act as expert critics on the portfolios or government ministries managed by each cabinet minister.

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

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

## ACTIVITY 9.1: Examining Election Results

Fill out the following table using the election results on the Student Vote Manitoba website ([studentvote.ca/mb2023](http://studentvote.ca/mb2023)) and Elections Manitoba website ([electionsmanitoba.ca](http://electionsmanitoba.ca)).

	STUDENT VOTE	GENERAL ELECTION
<b>Your electoral division:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Name of the candidate with the most votes.</li><li>• Percentage of the vote count they received.</li></ul>		
<b>Governing party:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Name of the party that won the most seats.</li><li>• Number of seats they won.</li></ul>		
<b>Official opposition:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Name of the party that won the second-most seats.</li><li>• Number of seats they won.</li></ul>		
<b>Other key details:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Who is premier?</li><li>• Is it a majority or minority government?</li></ul>		

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❶ Are you surprised by the election results? Why or why not?

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❷ Why do you think the results of the Student Vote or general election were similar or different?

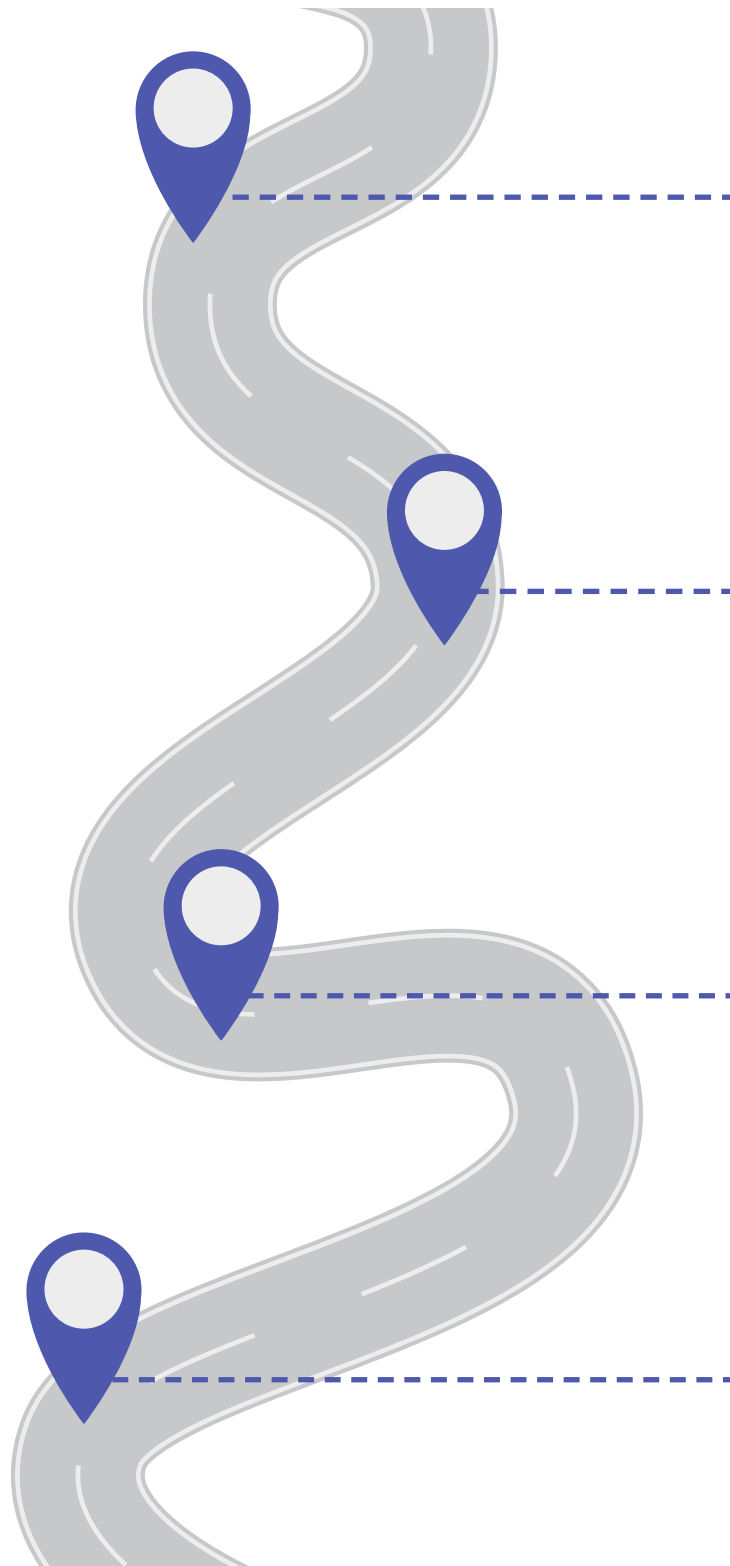
## ACTIVITY 9.2: Election Reflection

<b>STUDENT VOTE MANITOBA</b>	
<b>3</b>	Three things I learned about provincial elections in Manitoba:
<b>2</b>	Two activities I enjoyed the most during the Student Vote program:
<b>1</b>	One way that this experience has changed me or developed my opinions:



## ACTIVITY 9.3: Pathway Reflection

Fill in the following visual timeline that depicts your Student Vote learning experience.



**ONE QUESTION YOU HAD AT THE BEGINNING OF YOUR JOURNEY:**

**THREE ACTIVITIES YOU ENJOYED IN THE LEAD UP TO STUDENT VOTE DAY:**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

**ONE 'A-HA' MOMENT:**

**ONE BIG IDEA THAT SUMMARIZES THE ENTIRE EXPERIENCE:**

# Notes