

Lesson 7

Post-Election Analysis



GUIDING QUESTIONS

- 1 How can I analyze election results?
- 2 What do the election results mean for my community and me?

OVERVIEW

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

In this lesson, students will analyze the results of the Student Vote Student Vote Newfoundland and Labrador 2021 program and the 2021 general election. In the *Consolidation* activity, students have the opportunity to reflect on the learning experience, campaign events and the eventual outcome.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the lesson, students can:

- analyze the results of the election;
- discuss how campaign events influenced the outcome of the election;
- evaluate what the election results mean for the province, their community and themselves.

Teacher Tips

- Please use the activities and combine them in a way that is appropriate for your class.
- Remember you must wait until the official polls close to share the Student Vote results. Student election officers at your school should be sworn to secrecy.
- You can access the Student Vote Newfoundland and Labrador 2021 results on the project website, including the provincial summary, results by electoral district and individual school results (studentvote.ca/nl2021 > Results).
- Supplies/Needs: internet access for the results, news coverage about the election results, copies of 7.1 and 7.2.
- Online templates for all activities and any videos and slide decks are available on the project website.

Starter

1. Announce your school's Student Vote results. Which candidate received the most votes? Was it a close race?
2. Compare the results of your school's vote with the results of other schools in your electoral district. Are the results similar or different? How did the results vary between schools? (Individual school results can be found at studentvote.ca/nl2021 > Results).

Fundamentals

1. Review some key concepts for examining election results, including seat count, popular vote, governing party and official opposition.
 - **Seat count** is the term used to show the number of representatives that each party will have in the legislative assembly. It reflects the number of electoral districts won by each party.
 - **Popular vote** is the term used to show the total support a political party received across the province. It is shown as a percentage and is calculated by dividing the number of votes a party received by the total number of votes in the election.
 - The party that has the most seats usually becomes the governing party, and their leader typically becomes the premier. If the governing party has more than half of all seats, they will have a **majority government**. If they have fewer than half, they will have a **minority government**.

- The party that has the second-highest number of seats becomes the **official opposition**. Any other party is called an opposition party.
2. Using the Student Vote Newfoundland and Labrador 2021 website, the Elections NL website and/or media reports, compare the Student Vote and general election results. Guiding questions:
 - Which party won the Student Vote election? Is it a majority or minority government?
 - Which party won the general election? Is it a majority or minority government?
 - Which candidate won in your electoral district in the Student Vote? Did the same candidate win in the general election?
 - Why do you think the results of the Student Vote or general election were similar or different?
 - What factors do you think shaped the outcome the most and why?
 3. Individually or in pairs, have students complete Activity 7.1. Alternatively, charts could be produced in Google Sheets, Excel or another program.
 4. Compare news stories from several different media websites and regional and/or local newspapers to analyze the portrayal of the election outcome. Have a class conversation after analyzing the results and media reports: Did the sources report the results in a similar way? Why or why not? How is the future of Newfoundland and Labrador portrayed?

Consolidation

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

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

- What did you learn as part of the Student Vote activities? How will it prepare you for the future?
 - What were the most memorable moments of the campaign and why?
 - What promises and plans do you think the newly elected government will focus on?
 - What do the election results mean for you and your community?
2. As a culminating activity, have students fill out the *Exit Slip* (Activity 7.2).

ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Starter	<p>Can students analyze the Student Vote results locally?</p> <p>Are students posing questions about how the local results feed into the provincial results?</p>
Fundamentals	<p>Do students understand the key concepts for examining election results? Do they understand how governments are formed?</p> <p>Are students providing reasons for similarities or differences between the Student Vote and general election results?</p> <p>Can students speculate as to why the victorious parties and candidates were successful?</p> <p>Can students analyze the different narratives found in the media coverage about the results?</p>
Consolidation	<p>Can students reflect on what they learned through the activities?</p> <p>Can students analyze what the election results mean for the province, their community and themselves?</p>

ADAPTATIONS AND SUPPORTS

Individual Education Plans	<p>Modifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide various links and examples to media coverage of the election results in various formats, including written summaries, video recaps and illustrated graphics/charts. <p>Enrichment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask students to contact their newly elected MHA by letter or email regarding an issue they believe should be considered a priority.
English Language Learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide definitions of key terms. • Watch a media recap of the election results.
Culturally Responsive Pedagogy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss specific issues facing your electoral district, and how they could be impacted by your new MHA, and the new government. • Discuss how the election results could affect diverse cultural and marginalized groups, including Indigenous Peoples.
Accessibility & Accommodations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If working in pairs or small groups is not possible, considering using Google Docs or Google Sheets for collaboration. • The <i>Consolidation</i> activity can be created in a digital format. If physical productions are being created, ensure that enough materials are available to reduce the need for sharing.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS

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

Seat count is the term used to reflect the number of representatives that each party will have in the legislative assembly. It represents the number of local electoral district races won by each party. The 40 seats contested in this election will be awarded to the candidates in each of the constituencies 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 voting system (FPTP), the seat count is not related to the popular vote percentage and therefore has no impact on the election outcome.

The political party with the most seats usually forms the government and their leader typically becomes the premier. If the governing party has more than half of all the seats (21 or more), they will have a **majority government**. If they have less than half (20 or fewer), they will have a **minority government**.

The party that has the second highest number of seats usually becomes the **official opposition**. Any other party is called an opposition party. It is the responsibility of the

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

In order to pass any **legislation** (laws) or budgets, the bills must have support from more than half of the Members of the House of 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 the outcome.