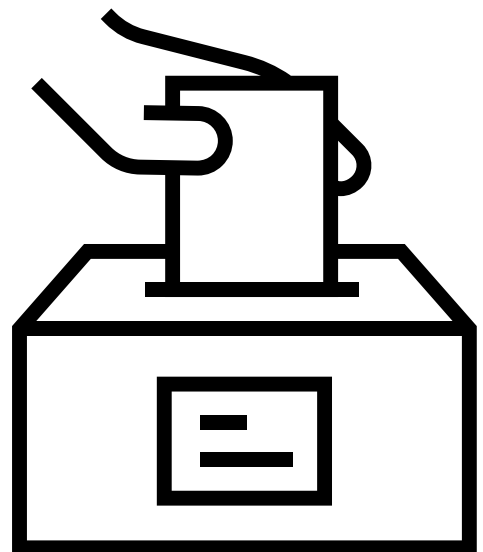




Grade 5

Social Studies

Curriculum Resources



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Introduction

Welcome to Elections Ontario's new educational resources. A lot has changed since the last resource, *Voting Rules!*, was developed in 2011, including the Grade 5 Social Studies curriculum.



New forms of media have presented both benefits and challenges for democracies. Social media has become a powerful tool for civic action. It has also been used to spread misinformation and disinformation that can produce harmful effects for a democracy.

Students need to develop the skills to have civic conversations, listen to and consider multiple perspectives and develop their own political identities. Learning how to treat others as political equals, understanding the ways to participate in decision-making and respecting the rights and freedoms of others are important skills and experiences for all students, within the classroom and in the communities they belong to outside of school.

Elections Ontario hopes this resource proves useful to educators to help deliver the grade 5 social studies curriculum. The lessons are aligned with the revised curriculum released in 2018, are asynchronous and can be used in whatever order that works best for the educator's respective students. This new resource is ready to teach, equipped with everything needed to deliver the lessons. Where appropriate, answer keys, sample student work, templates and assessment tools are provided to support educators and students.

Each lesson is focused on an inquiry question, begins with a big idea and prepares students with an engaging Minds On, and encourages knowledge construction through student-focused activities. Lessons conclude with relevant consolidation tasks and assessment activities.

Lesson topics include examining the characteristics of democracy and how they apply to students' lives, being an active citizen, and understanding different perspectives when making political decisions.

An election simulation is also included in this new suite of classroom activities. We remain committed to making voting easy and accessible for all electors, while maintaining the integrity, security and transparency of the electoral process. By using these activities in your classroom, students will learn more about elections as they discover how the voting process works and why they should exercise this important responsibility and right.

The content is available in both print and digital formats to ensure it meets the needs of all classrooms across the province.

We know that young people need to discuss civic issues and develop civic literacy. The activities in this resource prepare students to become informed voters and active citizens, providing them with a greater understanding of the value of democratic participation.

Lesson: What is democracy?

Big idea

Democracy means rule by the people and has a long history, originating in Athens hundreds of years ago. There are many democracies around the world. Each has its own voting system, ways of representing citizens, rights and responsibilities. Our Canadian system of government is called a “parliamentary democracy”. Understanding the characteristics of democracy and its strengths and weaknesses is an essential component of civic literacy.

Curriculum connections

B3. Understanding Context: demonstrate an understanding of the roles and key responsibilities of citizens and of the different levels of government in Canada, including First Nations, Métis, and Inuit governments.

B3.1 describe the major rights and responsibilities associated with citizenship in Canada (e.g. rights: equal protection under the law, freedom of speech, freedom of religion, the right to vote; responsibilities: to respect the rights of others, to participate in the electoral process and political decision-making, to improve their communities).

Learning goals

I am learning to:

- collaborate with my classmates and contribute to group discussions
- understand the characteristics of a democracy

Success criteria

I can:

- explain what a democracy is and what it is not
- develop a definition of democracy using my thoughts and my classmates’ ideas
- assess how our school and classroom do or do not model the characteristics of democracy
- complete a report card assessment of democracy in my school and classroom or select/create an image that communicates my understanding

Inquiry question

What is democracy?

Required materials

1. Appendix A Printable material:
[Aspects of democracy - Images](#)
2. Appendix B Student handout:
[Student backgrounder - What is democracy?](#)
3. Appendix C Student handout:
[Frayer model](#)
4. Appendix D Group handout:
[Democracy/Not a democracy - Cards](#)
5. Appendix E Student handout:
[Assessment - Exit card](#)
6. Appendix F Student handout:
[Democracy report card](#)
7. Appendix G Teacher resource:
[Democracy report card sample](#)
8. TVO video:
[Brief History Of Democracy*](#)

*Available online at: elections.on.ca/learning

Minds on

1. Post **five pictures** (Appendix A) depicting various aspects of democracy around the classroom. Make sure they are visible to all students.

Teacher note: *There are more than five images to choose from. The teacher can select five that will work best for their students or use images of their own choosing.*

2. Ask students to walk to each image and then select the one that best matches their current view of what a democracy is. They are to remain by the image to form a group with others selecting that image.
3. Once all students have selected an image, provide each group with a large chart paper or another shared document on which to record their thinking. Ask students to write down key words of which the image makes them think.
4. Once students have recorded their thinking, conduct a whole group discussion, with groups sharing their thoughts. Select a note taker from the class or the teacher can record the big ideas coming out of the class discussion. Keep these big ideas in a visible spot.
5. Ask each group to consider the class discussion and develop a definition of democracy. Have students post their definitions in a visible spot. Through consensus in a group discussion, arrive at a class definition of democracy. Post this definition in a visible spot for the remainder of the lesson.

Teacher note: *After student groups have come up with a working definition, consider having the class vote on the best definitions. This can be done with an online voting tool or simply a show of hands. Use majority rule to select the best definition. Try to get the class to practise reaching a consensus through this activity by asking if perhaps two definitions should be combined. A quick discussion could follow about whether the way the definition was developed was a democratic process.*

Activity

1. Organize students into groups of 3-4 and distribute the [Student background - What is democracy?](#) (Appendix B) handout as well as the [Frayer model](#) (Appendix C) handout.
2. Working in their groups, students should read the backgrounder and begin to fill in the different sections of the Frayer Model as they consider more deeply what democracy is.

Teacher note: Consider assigning roles in the groups to organize the workflow. Possible roles are note taker, reader, summarizer, presenter.

3. After students have completed the reading, discussed in groups, and recorded their thinking, discuss as a class to assess their comprehension.
4. Refer to the class definition of democracy and ask each group to think about whether it needs to be revised. Make any revisions as suggested by the class. Continue to keep the definition in a visible location.
5. The teacher should then create some scenarios that will help students further understand what a democracy is. These scenarios can be formatted into cards. One sample scenario has been included for reference on the group handout - [Democracy/Not a democracy - Cards](#) template (Appendix D). Once the teacher creates the scenarios on the blank card templates, print and cut them up into cards for the students.

6. Using their understanding from the reading, group and class discussions on what democracy is, students will sort the cards into two piles: “Sounds like a Democracy” and “Does not sound like a Democracy”.
7. Once they are happy with their piles, the teacher can lead a brief discussion with students assessing their understanding based on where they sorted the cards and having students explain their choices. Students can add to their Frayer Model definition handout as they further their understanding of what democracy is.
8. As a class or in each group, students can view the TVO video, [Brief History Of Democracy](#)*, which can help them to add points to their [Frayer model](#) definition handout.

*Available online at: elections.on.ca/learning

Consolidation

There are three options for students to consolidate and communicate their learning.

Option 1: Exit card (Appendix E)

Each student should complete an exit card responding to the lesson inquiry, “What is Democracy?”. Provide time for students to do this individually and then share with an elbow partner to help them finalize their thinking. This can be used as a formative assessment.

Option 2: Democracy report card (Appendix F)

Tell students they will now evaluate the ways in which their classroom and school model the characteristics of a democracy as determined by their learning in this lesson. Distribute the [Democracy report card](#) to each student and have students suggest criteria on which to make their evaluation. For example, Criterion #1 might be “Different voices have a chance to be heard”. Once the criteria have been set (see teacher resource – [Democracy report card sample](#) in Appendix G), students can work in small groups or individually to assess their school’s democratic nature. Students then provide a final leveled evaluation and rationale to conclude their thinking.

Option 3: A picture says it all

Students select an image or create their own that best exemplifies their understanding of democracy based on this lesson. A brief explanation connecting the image to two characteristics of democracy can be used to assess their understanding.

Assessment

The teacher can provide formative written feedback on one of the three consolidation tasks. This will allow the teacher to communicate to students how well they grasped the big ideas. These products can lead to teacher student conversations directed at what students reveal about their learning.

Appendix A

Printed material: Aspects of democracy - Images

Image #1



Image #3



Image #2



Image #4



Image #5



Image #7



Image #6



Image #8



Appendix B

Student handout: Student backgrounder – What is democracy?

The whole idea came about in Athens in 508 BC. Back then, there were kings and tyrants who ruled most countries. These people often were so power hungry that they would do anything to get more land and money... and they wanted it all for themselves. The Ancient Greek people decided that each person should have a vote about everything they did as a city. Whoever the most people voted for, won. In their democracy, everyone could have a say in what happened and anybody could propose a new law. No more rulers telling them what to do. Sounds great, right?

STOP AND THINK...

“Democracy” means rule by the people. The word is derived from the Greek words “demos” meaning the people and “kratos” meaning rule. What does the origin of the word tell you about the importance of people in this government system?

One problem that came up immediately was deciding who would be able to vote. Should people who are visiting the country be able to vote? What about little children? What are the limits on who gets to vote?

Most of the states in Greece decided that only adult male citizens could vote, and they had to own land and own their houses. That meant that in order to vote, you pretty much had to be rich.

STOP AND THINK...

What do you think of democracy in Ancient Greece so far? Do you think it would work well in Canada today? Why or why not?

There were other problems too. Because everybody had to vote on everything, it became really inconvenient for them to keep heading to a meeting place to vote. They had work to do, and all this voting was taking up a lot of time. So after a while, they decided that it was better to choose a few men who would do most of the voting, and the rest would only come when there would be a vote about something really important. Of course, picking these few men who would vote was difficult. At first, there was a lottery in Athens, Greece. If you got a winning ticket, you were on the Council of 500 for a year.

STOP AND THINK...

What are the types of problems the Greeks encountered with democracy? What do you think about how they chose to solve the problems? Can you think of another way to pick the people who would vote?

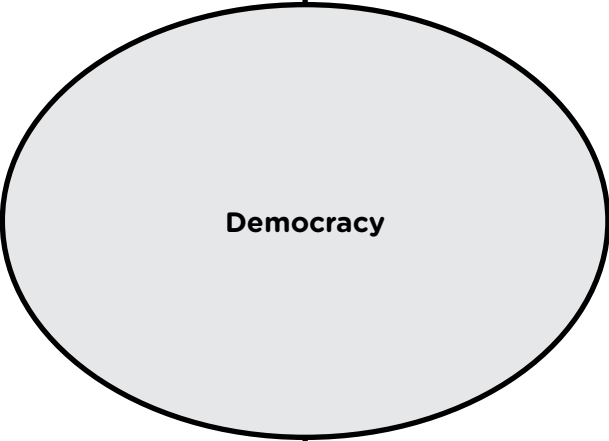
Democracy evolved a lot over hundreds of years into a system like we have today. Our Canadian system of government is called a “parliamentary democracy”. That means you do not win a lottery to become a decision maker in Canada. Instead, you need to be elected by other Canadians who pick you to represent them. The people we elect as representatives are responsible for making laws and making sure that the people who run our country are doing good things for all Canadians.

STOP AND THINK...

Why is democracy a good idea? What would happen if everyone in the country had to be a part of every decision made by the government? What would Canada be like if it were not a democratic society but a dictatorship instead? How is your classroom like a democratic society? How is it different?


Appendix C

Student handout: Frayer model

Definition	Characteristics
 Democracy	
Examples	Non-Examples

Appendix D

Group handout: Democracy/Not a democracy - Cards

<p>Sample: Your house is near a river that always swells in size when there is a big rainfall. You go door to door in your neighbourhood with a petition getting signatures for the government to build a barrier wall.</p>	<p>Sample: Your family came to your new country a few years ago and everyone just completed their citizenship test. Your older siblings and parents go to vote at the next election and choose the candidate they like best.</p>	

Appendix E

Student handout: Assessment - Exit card

Respond to the questions below in point form, with short words and phrases or with an image or drawing (briefly explain the image or drawing underneath).

What does living in a democracy feel like?

What does democracy sound like?

What do citizens need to do to keep democracy alive and well?

Appendix F

Student handout: Democracy report card

Instructions: Using the characteristics of democracy from the lesson, create criteria for your report card, then offer examples of how that looks in your school and provide a final assessment for each criterion. An example has been completed for you. Complete your report card with a final evaluation comment.

Criteria	How It Looks In My School	Final Assessment 1 - Not being achieved 2 - Satisfactorily achieved 3 - Doing a great job! 4 - Amazing!
Example: Lots of different voices are heard.	Example: We have assemblies for different student groups.	Example: 4

Criteria	How It Looks In My School	Final Assessment 1 - Not being achieved 2 - Satisfactorily achieved 3 - Doing a great job! 4 - Amazing!
Final Evaluation	I give my school a level _____ because:	

Appendix G

Teacher resource: Democracy report card sample

Instructions: Using the characteristics of democracy from the lesson, create criteria for your report card, then offer examples of how that looks in your school and provide a final assessment for each criterion. An example has been completed for you. Complete your report card with a final evaluation comment.

Criteria	How It Looks In My School	Final Assessment 1 - Not being achieved 2 - Satisfactorily achieved 3 - Doing a great job! 4 - Amazing!
Example: Lots of different voices are heard.	Example: We have assemblies for different student groups.	Example: 4
People are equal	Our teacher treats us equally by giving us the same tasks and equal expectations. But the grade 8s have more privileges than the younger students, they can go out for lunch so that is not really equal.	
Freedom of speech	We are allowed to tell our teacher what we think but we can't really say everything we want like bad words or jokes that are not appropriate.	
Freedom of expression to be who you want to be	We can't wear all the clothes we might want to, we must wear a uniform.	

Criteria	How It Looks In My School	Final Assessment 1 - Not being achieved 2 - Satisfactorily achieved 3 - Doing a great job! 4 - Amazing!
The people in power are elected; voting	We didn't get to choose our teacher or the principal! But we do vote for our student council. My friend's parent was voted in as parent council president.	
Common good, people should be responsible and care for others	Our school is a safe place and decisions are made in my class that are fair. For example, we vote on the days when assignments are due or what activities we are going to do sometimes.	
Laws and rules are in place that everyone has to follow	Mostly, everyone must follow the rules. But sometimes kids do not get in trouble that should. Sometimes we get in trouble when it is not fair. There are rules in our student agenda for the whole school that everyone can read and apply to everyone.	
Final Evaluation	I give my school a level _____ because:	

Lesson: What does it mean to be an active citizen?

Big idea

Active citizenship is important to a democracy, and it can take many forms. A successful democracy relies on everyday ways citizens help each other and society. Sometimes this can mean fundraising for important social issues or organizing a protest against a government policy. Other times, this means making your community better by treating each other fairly and equally. Everybody has a role to play.

Curriculum connections

B3. Understanding Context: demonstrate an understanding of the roles and key responsibilities of citizens and of the different levels of government in Canada, including First Nations, Métis, and Inuit governments.

B3.9 describe some different ways in which citizens can take action to address social and environmental issues (e.g. by determining the position of their local candidates on various issues and supporting/voting for the one whose position they agree with; through the court system; by organizing petitions or boycotts; by volunteering with organizations that work on specific issues; by writing to their elected representatives or to the media; by creating or participating in art projects that bring attention to an issue).

Learning goals

I am learning to:

- identify and explain what active citizens do
- understand different kinds of social action
- become an active citizen

Success criteria

I can:

- sort and categorize my ideas and the ideas of others to develop an understanding of active citizenship
- explain which activists inspire me and connect their actions to what I can do to be an active citizen
- analyse the actions different Canadians have taken to address social issues
- apply my learning about active citizenship to explain how I can be an active citizen

Inquiry question

What does it mean to be an active citizen?

Required materials

1. Appendix A Group handout:
[What do active citizens do? - Cards](#)
2. Appendix B Group handout:
[Active citizenship profiles](#)
3. Appendix C Student handout:
[What is active citizenship?](#)
4. Appendix D Student handout:
[My active citizenship profile](#)
5. Appendix E Teacher resource:
[Assessment check-brid citizenship profile](#)
6. Slide deck:
[Civic Action*](#)

*Available online at: elections.on.ca/learning

Minds on

1. Organize students into small groups (three to four students). Have students label themselves Student A, Student B, etc.
2. Hand a stack of blank cards to students. These can be cue cards, or just blank paper cut into strips or squares. A [template](#) (Appendix A) has been provided in the supporting materials for this lesson.
3. Groups will brainstorm what active citizenship looks like by writing down words, phrases or sentences on the cards. Students should ask each other: What do active citizens do? The teacher should display the question in a visible spot so groups can see it during their brainstorming session.
4. Groups can use the “Brainstorm and Pass” structure:
 - a. One student (Student B, for example) begins by offering an idea related to the question. For example, “I think active citizenship means reading the news and learning about the world you live in.”
 - b. The group discusses this idea, asks questions and writes it down on a card once everyone understands and agrees on the idea.
 - c. Group members can pass whenever they want (conduct multiple rounds) but are still included in subsequent rounds.
 - d. Students continue to add ideas down onto their cards until the brainstorming session is over. This can be after a predetermined number of rounds.
 - e. After brainstorming, groups consider all their ideas on the cards and begin to sort them. They can include similar ones together, circle or highlight important words or put some aside.
 - f. Each group then generates a list of the three most important things that active citizens do. Each group should post them in a visible spot for all other groups to see (e.g. on chart paper or a digital board). Keep these lists visible during the lesson.

Teacher note: Here are some ideas students can generate in their discussions:

- Active citizens vote
- Active citizens listen to others' ideas and offer their own ideas
- Active citizens participate in things like public meetings, social groups, committees, councils
- Active citizens help their society by doing good to help others
- Active citizens help their neighbours
- Active citizens speak out against hatred, injustice, inequality
- Active citizens keep their environment clean, pick up garbage, don't litter
- Active citizens try to make their communities a better place for everyone
- Active citizens protest
- Active citizens pay attention to social issues
- Active citizens debate
- Active citizens care about what is happening in the world and try to help victims of injustice, conflict and war

Activity

1. Introduce the concept of Civic Action through the [Civic Action slide deck](#)* included in this lesson.
2. Organize students into groups of 3 or 4 and distribute the [Active citizenship profiles](#) (Appendix B) to each group. Use a jigsaw strategy to complete this activity. Group 1 receives Citizenship Profile #1, Group 2 receives Citizenship Profile #2, etc.

Teacher note: A Google Search on these civic activists may result in videos that can also be used as an alternate source for students who are visual learners or early language learners.

3. Each group completes an analysis using the student handout, [What is active citizenship?](#) (Appendix C). Each student should complete the handout individually by recording their group's thinking, so they are ready for the next round.
4. Once this phase of the group work is over, continue to the next phase. Students go into a second group where they share their group analysis with others. In this phase, there should be at least one student representing each profile. Give students an agreed upon amount of time to share their citizen profiles with each other, taking note in part B of the [What is active citizenship?](#) handout.
5. After groups have completed sharing and any questions were asked for clarification, students will individually consider the questions asked in Part C of the handout.

*Available online at: elections.on.ca/learning

Consolidation

1. Provide sticky notes or use a digital tool (e.g. Jamboard, Padlet) for students to share their thoughts from Part C of the handout. Discuss the examples given as a class and keep this visible to all students.
2. Show video **Everybody Plays a Part***, and ask students to jot down any additional ideas that did not come up in this lesson yet about what it means to be an active citizen. This video emphasizes examples from everyday life.
3. Distribute the student handout, **My active citizenship profile** (Appendix D). Students create a brief bio of themselves and how they can be active citizens in their communities. These can be displayed in a visible spot in the classroom and can be used for assessment.

*Available online at: elections.on.ca/learning

Assessment

A **check-bric** (Appendix E) has been included with this lesson for the teacher to assess student citizenship profiles.

Appendix A

Group handout: What do active citizens do? - Cards

What do active citizens do?	What do active citizens do?	What do active citizens do?
What do active citizens do?	What do active citizens do?	What do active citizens do?
What do active citizens do?	What do active citizens do?	What do active citizens do?

Appendix B

Active citizenship profile #1: Abhayjeet Singh Sachal

Break the Divide is a non-profit organization that has connected thousands of students in dozens of schools from countries around the world. The organization was founded by Abhay Sachal when he was just 14 years old.

When Abhay was in high school, he went on a trip with an organization called “Students On Ice”. He made friendships with youth living in the Arctic who were suffering from mental health issues.

These friends told him that melting glaciers were threatening their homes. Abhay wanted to keep his connection to these friends while also tackling climate change. He found out that in general, First Nation communities suffer while the rest of Canada thrives. He thought if other young people saw the personal effects of climate change, they would want to get involved. That was when Break the Divide was founded.

Abhay explained in a 2021 interview that, “Essentially, it allows for global pen pals. One of my ninth-grade friends told me he learned more about Canada, reconciliation and climate change from a two-hour conversation with a young Arctic student than in all his previous social studies classes. He said having a friend to share how they felt about the state of the world helped him feel less alone.”



As a practicing Sikh, Sachal believes in “seva”, which means selfless service. His goal through his civic action is to turn empathy into action. Through connections, youth can build on their shared concerns to avoid social divides and create a plan of action. Break the Divide chapters now operate in many countries around the world.

Active citizenship profile #2: Autumn Peltier

Lake Huron is the world's largest freshwater supply. Autumn Peltier was born and raised in Wiikwemikoong Unceded Territory, Manitoulin Island, on the shores of Lake Huron. She is from the Anishinabek Nation in Canada. When she was young, she went to water ceremonies with her mother. One ceremony in Serpent River First Nation in Ontario affected her a lot. She saw signs that said the water was toxic and her mother had to explain to her that they had to boil their water to drink it. Toxic and polluted water on reserves in Canada has been an ongoing significant issue for many years. This is caused by things like pollution and pipeline leaks.

Autumn's aunt, Josephine Mandamin, was known as a "water walker" because she spent years working as the Anishinabek Nation Chief Water Commissioner before she passed away. Autumn learned a lot from her aunt and has fought for access for her people to drink clean water on reserves and for all people to have clean water around the world. In 2016, she even met the Prime Minister and criticized his government for not doing enough about clean water!

When her aunt passed away, Autumn became the new Chief Water Commissioner. She was 14 years old. She continues to bring attention to how First Nation communities are treated unequally in Canada. She has taken her fight to the United Nations on World Water Day. Her invitation to speak to the UN read, "By lending your powerful voice to this important cause, you give voice to the youth, most needy and vulnerable among us who have none."



Autumn Peltier, Chief Water Commissioner,
The Anishinabek Nation

*Image used with permission
Copyright Jessica Deeks*

Because of Autumn's activism, the Assembly of First Nations Youth Council created a Niabi Odacidae fund to help protect the water for future generations.

Active citizenship profile #3: Cameron Davis

Growing up in Markham, Ontario, Cameron Davis learned at an early age there were many negative stereotypes associated with being Black. He was inspired to fight back against the stereotypes at a Black Lives Matter protest in Markham in 2020.

To Cameron, being Black means that he is forced to always think about how he's acting when wearing a hoodie or playing loud music in his neighborhood; things his white friends never have to worry about. Cameron worries that people in leadership positions in schools, cities, provinces, and regions of Canada do not take racism seriously. He uses his YouTube channel to explain what it is like growing up Black in Canada. One video called "My Teenage Life Being Black in Canada" has gained hundreds of thousands of views. In the video, Cameron says the hardest thing he faces is prejudice. He tries to use his voice to educate others about racism so that society can change.

His speech at the protest and YouTube video convinced Cameron that his voice is important. "I was able to use my voice on news stations, speak to local politicians, and get my voice heard in places it had never been before," he shared in an interview with the Daily Hive. "After that, I decided it was time to do more."

Cameron started a non-profit organization, Black York Region Youth, for students to share ideas and make plans to achieve equity in high schools. He started a clothing line and from his profits, he donates to Black Youth Helpline and Caribbean African Canadian Social Services.



Photo courtesy of Cameron Davis

In 2021, Cameron took his work worldwide by attending the Children's General Assembly, which is broadcast to the United Nations, and allows youth to share research on different issues they care about and then find a solution. He has this to say to all young people, "We're the ones that are going to be going into power one day, and we're gonna be the ones making decisions in the future. If we're not giving youth their voice now, we'll have a whole generation that doesn't know what to do when they get into those positions."

Active citizenship profile #4: Rana Nasrazadani

Rana Nasrazadani wants to change how people with disabilities are treated by government programs and officials. When she was in high school, her teachers often talked to her educational assistants rather than Rana herself about her marks or assignments. She felt silenced for most of her high school career because she was rarely asked her opinion. She felt that she was treated like a little kid instead of like a teenager. When Rana was in grade 12, she did not get the support she needed to apply to university. She had to transition to university on her own and studied human rights and equity studies at York University in Toronto.

Rana tried to change things in 2016 when she was part of a team reviewing a government report called the “We Have Something to Say Report”. She wanted to help families and young people speak out about special needs and change. Rana submitted her own story to the Report, which was released in May 2016. It was the first ever report to actually put young voices front and centre.



Image source: The Toronto Star

The report recommended that young people with disabilities be completely involved in decisions affecting their lives, setting up youth panels to advise the government on policies and services directly affecting youth with disabilities, providing mandatory special education training for student teachers and all school personnel who work with students with disabilities.

Active citizenship profile #5: Sophia Mathur

Sophia Mathur is a young person with big hopes for the future. In 2018, she became the first student in Canada to join a global environmental movement by refusing to go to class on Fridays as a protest against global climate policies. She has marched in climate strikes and was involved in fighting for Canada's carbon tax, which was adopted by the Canadian government. Many people in Sophia's family are scientists and believe strongly that climate change is a serious problem. She has done a lot of work to help the planet.

In 2017, she participated in the Last Straw Project, where she went to all the restaurants and bars in her local city of Sudbury, Ontario to convince them to reduce their use of plastic straws. She helped to pressure the city council to then change its climate policies so that they can achieve net-zero emissions by 2050 (achieving net-zero emissions means the economy either emits no greenhouse gas emissions or balances its emissions through efforts like tree planting). She regularly plans actions in Sudbury like making videos demanding politicians, businesses and private individuals make real policies that fight climate change. She organizes a group called Fridays For Future to help with these actions and all of the members are kids! She spends about six hours a week on her activism.

In 2019, Sophia and six others took on a very big fight. They sued the Ontario government for not following through on its climate targets. They argued that the government was allowing more greenhouse gases to be emitted, leading to consequences like floods and polluted air. As of 2021, the case was still waiting to have its first full hearing.



Photo courtesy of Sophia Mathur

Sophia also wants to make sure Sudbury does not stop fighting climate change; she wants the city to form a youth climate council, so she does not have to continue doing so much work on her own. In an interview with TVO, Sophia had this to say to kids her age: "Since kids can't vote, we don't get to make decisions like adults do. But it's important that we share our voices about the climate crisis and talk to parents and people that can make those decisions. When I was younger, I even went lobbying and talked to politicians. But it's as simple as talking to your parents, telling them to consider the climate when they vote."

Appendix C

Student handout: What is active citizenship?

Part A: Home group

Using the active citizenship profiles, categorize the information into the organizer below.

Activist name:	Age:
Social issue What social issues concerned your citizen? Why?	
Action taken What steps did they take?	
Changes made What impact did the action have on other people or policies?	
Wonderings Is there anything that you don't understand, or you wonder about after reading your profile?	

Part B: Group handout

In your second group, compare the active citizenship profile notes by considering the questions below.

<p>What similarities do your activists have? What things do they have in common?</p>	<p>What action plans did they carry out?</p>
<p>How are they changing the world?</p>	<p>What does civic action mean to you after learning about their stories?</p>

Part C: Personal response

Now that you have learned about many young civic activists, what issues do you care about? Could you see yourself becoming an active citizen in the way these young activists have? Why or why not?

Appendix D

Student handout: My active citizenship profile

My name:		Teacher:
Grade:	Age:	School:

This is me!

Being an active citizen means:

Which activist inspired you the most? Why?

Types of civic actions I already do:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Other civic actions I can see myself doing:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Appendix E

Teacher resource: Assessment check-brid citizenship profile

1. Limited
2. Some
3. Considerable
4. Thorough/High Degree

Student can:	1	2	3	4
Identify an activist and explain their social action				
Explain what being an active citizen means to them				
Identify types of social actions				

Feedback:

Lesson: How do elections contribute to democracy?

Big idea

Free and fair elections are a significant characteristic of a healthy democracy. Ontario has a system of representative democracy and a voting system called First Past the Post. Citizens vote for a candidate that represents a political party and the winner is the candidate who gets the most votes. There are other voting systems in other democracies. In a democracy, there are winners and losers. However, the winning candidate must represent all the people once they take office. Voting is a responsibility for all citizens to ensure their voices are heard in Ontario's democracy.

Curriculum connections

B3. Understanding Context: demonstrate an understanding of the roles and key responsibilities of citizens and of the different levels of government in Canada, including First Nations, Métis, and Inuit governments.

B3.5 describe different processes that governments can use to solicit input from the public (e.g. elections, town hall meetings, public hearings, band council meetings, Métis general assemblies or community council meetings, commissions of inquiry, Supreme Court challenges, processes for granting easements, referendums, nation-to-nation discussions with First Nations and/or Inuit governments), and explain why it is important for all levels of government to provide opportunities for public consultation.

Learning goals

I am learning to:

- understand the different ways elections are run and votes are counted
- consider the advantages and disadvantages of different voting methods
- evaluate my options before I vote and choose the best option/candidate

Success criteria

I can:

- explain the different voting methods (First Past the Post, Runoff Ballot) and identify the advantages and disadvantages for each one
- practice running an election, being a candidate in an election, making a speech and/or voting
- think about what characteristics a political candidate should have and research how my local candidates either do or do not have those characteristics (election year)
- vote for a candidate/choice that is best for me

Inquiry question

How do elections contribute to democracy?

Required materials

1. Appendix A Student handout:
[Plus minus interesting](#)
2. Appendix B Printable material:
[Ballot template](#)
3. Appendix C Student handout:
[Speech planning](#)
4. Appendix D Printable material:
[Runoff tally sheet](#)
5. Appendix E Student handout:
[Choosing a political candidate](#)
6. Appendix F Student handout:
[Self-assessment tool](#)

Minds on

1. Remind students that fairness is an essential characteristic of democracy (If students have not completed lesson 1, consider doing so before this lesson. Alternatively, provide a brief overview of the characteristics of democracy to students). Democracies are fair when groups are represented well.
2. Begin by asking the whole class a question they will have a strong opinion about. This should be a closed YES/NO question.

Some examples of questions are:

- a. Are dogs better pets than cats?
- b. Should school take place outdoors?
- c. Is summer a better season than winter?
- d. Is physical education the best subject in school?

3. Hand out YES/NO signs to students and take a final vote. Alternately, students can raise their hands to vote or use a digital voting system.
4. Tally the results in a visible spot using a First Past the Post majority takes all system. Declare a winner.
5. Next, have students who voted YES find a student who voted NO and try to convince them to change their position. They can use any method to influence their decision.
6. Have students vote again but this time using a secret ballot (a **template** [Appendix B] has been provided; instead of a candidate's name, enter one of the options for this vote). Note any differences in the results using First Past the Post or if majority takes all again. If there is a difference, ask students to think about the reasons for the difference. If there was no difference, ask students whether it is better to vote publicly or in secret?
7. Next, tell students they will vote one final time but this time there will be many options for their vote. Use a question that has several preferences. Use the same **Ballot template** (Appendix B) included in this lesson. For example, use the question: "Which season is the best (spring, summer, fall or winter)?" or select several popular musicians and ask, "Which one is the most talented?". Another possibility is to ask which subject is the best in school with several options or ask which sport is the best.
8. Have students vote using a ballot system or online voting tool. Tally the results with a First Past the Post winner takes all and declare a winner. Calculate the percentage of the popular vote as well. Note how many students voted for the actual winning response. Was it the majority? Did the winner get 50% of the vote? Ask students if it is fair to say the winning response represents all students.
9. Ask students if this system of voting and tallying results seems the fairest. They can jot down their thoughts or share with an elbow partner before having a larger class discussion.
10. Give students time to record their thoughts about what they just learned on the student handout **Plus minus interesting** (Appendix A).

Activity

1. Begin by showing students a video that briefly explains First Past the Post. Explain that it is the voting system used in Ontario and Canada for its municipal, provincial and federal elections. An example of a video is below but the teacher could conduct a search to determine if there is a more recent video available online.
 - a. **Our Electoral System*** (Civix Canada, 2015) explains the basics behind First Past the Post.

*Available online at: elections.on.ca/learning

2. Ask the students whose favourite season or choice did not win the vote in the Minds On activity: Do you feel that your voices were heard? Were there too many voices and points of view represented? Remind students an important aspect of democracy is representation of the people.
3. Explain to students that there are other methods to run elections. For example, the Assembly of First Nations in Canada uses a runoff voting system:
 - a. The Assembly of First Nations leadership elections are held every 3 years and only the chiefs of each First Nation in Canada are eligible to vote.
 - b. A candidate needs 60% of the votes to win an election.
 - c. If a candidate receives less than 15% of the vote, they are dropped from the election.
4. Divide the class into different camps based on their votes for the last question. This should create three to four groups.

Teacher note: *Although the vote was completed by secret ballot, now students are publicly moving into a group with others who voted the same way. Observe whether students move confidently into a group or whether they look to see where their peers are going. This could make for an interesting continuation of the discussion around secret ballots vs voting publicly from the Minds On.*

Invite a couple of students to be undecided voters, along with the teacher who is also undecided. They should go to a separate area and discuss how they are thinking of voting.

5. Once in their groups, tell students they must select one person to become their spokesperson. This will become their candidate who will make a short speech to convince the class why their side is the best option.

Teacher note: *Use the same question from the Minds On (e.g. best season, best sport, best subject).*

6. Groups can use the handout **Speech planning** (Appendix C) to help them create a speech for their candidate.
7. The student-candidates make their short speeches. Encourage students to cheer and support their candidates.
8. Next, have all students, including the teacher and undecided voters, vote one last time using a secret ballot. Tally the results using the method used by the Assembly of First Nations. There is a **template** (Appendix D) included in this lesson to record the results.
 - a. Keep holding runoff elections until there is a choice that receives 60% or more of the popular ballot.
 - b. Do not forget to eliminate choices once 15% of the popular vote has not been achieved.
9. Give students time to continue to add to their **P.M.I. charts** (Appendix A).

Alternative activity: Election years

1. Students can research candidates running in any election where appropriate. For example, students can focus on the federal election or an election happening in another part of the world. Students can decide which electoral district to focus on. The teacher can create a short bio for each candidate in the district and display it in a visible spot in the class.
2. Ask students, “What makes a good political candidate for our electoral district?”.
3. In small groups, students create a ranking list of the qualities and characteristics they would like to see in a political candidate for their community/electoral district. Distribute the handout, **Choosing a political candidate** (Appendix E) to each group to record their thinking. Some criteria students could create are:
 - Cares about the environment
 - Wants to create jobs in the electoral district
 - Has a plan to improve health services in the community
 - Has a strong connection to the community
 - Wants to increase funding for certain school programs
 - Has a lot of experience working with people
 - Speaks the language of the ethnic groups in the community

4. Students then consider the actual candidates against their criteria. Additional research can be conducted by students to learn more about the candidates. The teacher can organize this as a group activity or an individual task.
5. Have the class vote on which candidate they think is best for the electoral district using a secret ballot and declare a winner. Students can share their work through verbal presentations, in a carousel format, or through digital products. The teacher can use all the different voting methods explained above.
6. Explain to students that in representative democracies, this is how political representation happens. Candidates are selected from groups of like-minded individuals (political parties) to represent all citizens in their electoral districts.

Consolidation

1. Show students the TVO video **How to Vote in Ontario***. Use this video to help reinforce understanding of Ontario’s voting system and to clarify any outstanding questions with students and review key concepts.
2. Students can summarize their learning by completing the **P.M.I. chart** (Appendix A).

*Available online at: elections.on.ca/learning

Assessment

A **self-assessment tool** (Assessment F) has been included in this lesson for students.

Appendix A

Student handout: Plus minus interesting

Plus

What are some positive aspects of voting and elections that you learned? What are some benefits of the different ways of voting you practiced?

Minus

What are some negative aspects of voting and elections that you learned? What are some challenges about the different ways of voting you practiced?

Interesting

What did you find interesting about the different ways of voting and tallying results?

Appendix B

Copy the number of ballots you will need for your class. If there are fewer than six candidates, you may cut the ballots down to the required size.

Candidate 1		Candidate 1	
Candidate 2		Candidate 2	
Candidate 3		Candidate 3	
Candidate 4		Candidate 4	
Candidate 5		Candidate 5	
Candidate 6		Candidate 6	
Candidate 1		Candidate 1	
Candidate 2		Candidate 2	
Candidate 3		Candidate 3	
Candidate 4		Candidate 4	
Candidate 5		Candidate 5	
Candidate 6		Candidate 6	

Appendix C

Student handout: Speech planning

Speech Topic:

Reason #1:	Facts/Explanations/Personal Connections:
Reason #2:	Facts/Explanations/Personal Connections:
Reason #3:	Facts/Explanations/Personal Connections:

Concluding Statement:

Appendix D

Printable material: Runoff tally sheet

First ballot

Candidate/Choice	Number of Votes	Percentage

Second ballot

Eliminate the candidate/choice with less than 15% of the vote.

Candidate/Choice	Number of Votes	Percentage

Third ballot

Eliminate the candidate/choice with less than 15% of the vote.

Candidate/Choice	Number of Votes	Percentage

Appendix E

Student handout: Choosing a political candidate



















What makes a good political candidate? Create a list of qualities and characteristics you would like to see in a political candidate. When you enter them on this chart, enter them in order of importance to you. Then do some research to consider the candidates running in the electoral district that your class is examining. For each criterion, evaluate the degree to which the candidate's ideas reflect the characteristics that are important to you.

Candidate:	Electoral District:
-------------------	----------------------------

Criteria	Evidence	Final Grade (Level 1 - 4) Include Your Reasoning

Appendix F

Student handout: Self-assessment tool

	Yes	So-So	No
I liked doing this work.			
I understand the different election methods practiced in this lesson (First Past the Post, Runoff election).			
I was able to identify some advantages (plus) and disadvantages (minus) about the different election methods in my P.M.I. chart.			
I voted according to what choice I thought was best based on my personal preferences and the speeches.			
I think I can explain how Ontario's voting system works to someone in my family after this lesson.			
Optional Election Years: I was able to create criteria for a good politician and use them to evaluate a political candidate.			
The one thing I am most sure about from this lesson is:			
The one thing I am still unsure about from this lesson is:			

Lesson: What role does government play in my life?

Big idea

In Canada, there are three levels of government: federal, provincial/territorial and municipal. It can sometimes be hard to figure out which level of government is responsible for things we do in our everyday lives. Sometimes, the different levels of government even share responsibilities! There are many ways government is involved in our daily lives from the water we drink to the streets we live on and the schools we attend. It is important to know about government responsibilities so that we can contact the correct government office or agency when we need assistance or information.

Curriculum connections

B3. Understanding Context: demonstrate an understanding of the roles and key responsibilities of citizens and of the different levels of government in Canada, including First Nations, Métis, and Inuit governments (Focus On: Significance).

B3.2 describe the jurisdiction of different levels of government in Canada, as well as of some other elected bodies (i.e. federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal governments; band councils; school boards), and some of the services provided by each (e.g. health services, education, policing, defence, social assistance, garbage collection, water services, public transit, libraries).

B3.3 describe the shared responsibility of various levels of government for providing some services and for dealing with selected social and environmental issues (e.g. services/issues related to transportation, health care, the environment, and/or crime and policing).

Learning goals

I am learning to:

- distinguish between the different levels of government in Canada and the responsibilities they have
- understand the services and programs governments provide in my life and the lives of all Canadians

Success criteria

I can:

- identify and label government responsibilities in everyday scenarios
- track my thinking about the role government plays in my life
- identify which level of government to contact when I have a concern

Inquiry question

What role does government play in my life?

Required materials

1. Slide deck:
[Government Responsibilities*](#)
2. Appendix A Student handout:
[My thinking on government responsibilities](#)
3. Appendix B Group handout:
[Government responsibility cards](#)
4. Appendix C Student handout:
[Government responsibilities - Who does what?](#)
5. Appendix D Teacher handout:
[Government responsibility cards - answer key](#)
6. Appendix E Group handout:
[Master list of government responsibilities](#)
7. Appendix F Group handout:
[Government responsibilities - Who does what?](#)
8. TVO video:
[Who Does What?*](#)

*Available online at: elections.on.ca/learning

Minds on

1. Use the [Government Responsibilities slide deck*](#) provided to begin the lesson.
2. Distribute the student handout, [My thinking on government responsibilities](#) (Appendix A) to each student. This is a thinking protocol to help with meta-cognition. Students track how their thinking changes over the course of new learning.
3. Provide an agreed upon amount of time for students to complete the first section, “I used to think”.

4. Use the [Government Responsibilities slide deck](#)* to provide students with a basic overview of the levels of government and the officials within them.
5. Provide students with time to begin tracking their thinking in the “I am now thinking” section of the handout. Students should record any new thinking.

*Available online at: elections.on.ca/learning

Activity

1. Organize students into small groups. One way to do this is to ask students to partner with one other peer and then pair the partners into groups of 4.
2. Once groups have been established, distribute the group handout, [Government responsibilities - Who does what?](#) (Appendix C) and the stack of [responsibility cards](#) (Appendix B). Make sure to cut the paper into cards for this activity.

Teacher note: *There are online tools available that allow for easy dragging and sorting into categories. If you are a paperless classroom, this activity can be done using one of those digital tools.*

3. Students sort the cards into the levels of government. They can move the cards around as they deliberate with each other and make their final decisions. Remind students to think about the slide deck from the Minds On. They can refer to the thinking they recorded on their [My thinking on government responsibilities](#) (Appendix A) handout as well.

Teacher note: *A teacher answer key (Appendix D) has been provided for reference.*

4. Ask groups to finalize their categorization of government responsibilities.
5. Show the video, [Who Does What?](#)* and then ask students to revisit their chart of responsibilities and make any last changes.
6. Provide students with the [master list](#) (Appendix E) showing the correct categories of responsibilities and have them self-assess making any changes. As a class, discuss which ones were confusing or challenging and allow time for any questions.
7. Direct students to the slide “Shared government responsibilities” in the [Government Responsibilities slide deck](#)* to discuss the areas and matters that both the provinces and the federal government have power over.
8. Pause and ask students to add to their “I am now thinking” part of their handout.

*Available online at: elections.on.ca/learning

9. In the same groups, distribute the group handout, **Government responsibilities - Who does what?** (Appendix F).
10. As a group, students will label the various government responsibilities in the illustration. This can be done through colour-coded circling and labeling (e.g. Black pen for federal responsibilities, Blue for provincial, etc.). Students can also use sticky notes to label. Discuss with the class what strategy they will use to complete the activity. Groups can then decide which one they would like to use.
11. As each group completes the activity, have them post the labelled illustration in a spot in the classroom. Each group should choose 2 students from their group to do a walking tour. They can decide if they would like 1 student to walk around first and look at other group's illustrations or if both would like to go together. Their job is to report back to their group whether they need to make any adjustments to their group's illustration.
12. After students have a chance to view each other's thinking, discuss as a class and come to a consensus about the levels of government responsibilities in the illustration.

Consolidation

Students are now ready to finish the thinking protocol on their handouts. Provide time for them to complete the last section, "I am now thinking" (Appendix A) to capture their learning.

Extension

Consider going for a neighbourhood walk and taking pictures of things like a streetscape, school playground, an intersection, shops, or buildings in the vicinity. These pictures can be taken by students if possible or the teacher can take the photos on one device. Print the photos and post them around the class. Have students label them with sticky notes to show the government responsibilities.

Assessment

The teacher can use the **My thinking on government responsibilities** (Appendix A) student handout to do a formative assessment of student understanding of this lesson, providing feedback and gauging whether the extension activity is needed to reinforce lesson content.

Appendix A

Student handout: My thinking on government responsibilities

Premise: A good strategy to develop critical thinking is to reflect on your thinking about a topic or issue and explore how and why your thinking has changed. This is useful for you to track new learning and identify any new beliefs, understanding, and opinions. In this way, your thinking becomes **visible** to you. Also, you are engaging in **knowledge construction** by extending or building on your previous understanding or background knowledge.

“I used to think...”

Record your initial thoughts to the question of, **“What role does government play in my life?”**.

“I am now thinking...”

- Have your thoughts changed because of what you have learned so far in the lesson? Record what you are thinking about the question. Start your sentences with *“I am now thinking...”*; *“Here’s what I am thinking so far...”*; *“I had a hunch that...and it looks like I am on the right track because...”*; *“What I am now thinking is very different from what I used to think because...”*.

“My final thoughts are...”


- Consolidate all thoughts here as you consider all the materials from this lesson. Start your sentence with *“My final thoughts are...”*.
- Remember the question is, “What role does government play in my life?”.

Appendix B

Group handout: Government responsibility cards

Fixing the road in front of the school	Repairing the 401 highway	Negotiating an agreement with a First Nation
Providing tax breaks for small businesses	Changing graduation requirements for all students in public school	Building a nuclear energy plant
Building a new mental health facility for first responders	Regulating television and streaming services	Opening a new water treatment facility
Opening a new skatepark	Changing the criminal code to list new crimes	Deciding to send the military to help another country
Setting the price for a stamp to mail a letter	Banning the fishing of lobster in certain waters	Eliminating dimes and quarters from circulation
Printing more money	Opening 300 units of affordable housing units for First Nation people in Sudbury	Hunting regulations in Algonquin Park
Announcing all new schools built from the ground up must include a daycare	Closing libraries	Adding new toddler swimming programs to the municipal pool's weekend schedule



Hiring police officers	Introducing a carbon tax	Changing the colour of license plates 
Opening a new university in Durham Region	Setting class sizes in elementary schools	Attracting doctors to work in small towns
Funding a francophone music festival in Ottawa	Mandating a vaccine for all travel	Raising the minimum wage
Providing a construction permit to renovate your home	Installing new lamp posts on your street	Cleaning the water you drink
Adding a new bus route between the library and local school	Revising the national anthem	Changing the definition of spouse in the Marriage Act
Investigating illegal fishing in Georgian Bay	Staffing long term care homes	Providing a pension plan for all Canadians over 65 years old
Deciding a new protein bar will not be sold in Canada	Changing the mandatory work week for all workers	Picking up a lost dog and taking it to a shelter

Appendix C

Student handout: Government responsibilities - Who does what?

Municipal	Provincial	Federal

Appendix D

Teacher resource: Government responsibility cards - answer key

<p>Fixing the road in front of the school</p> <p>Municipal</p>	<p>Repairing the 401 highway</p> <p>Provincial</p>	<p>Negotiating an agreement with a First Nation</p> <p>Federal/Provincial</p>
<p>Providing tax breaks for small businesses</p> <p>Federal</p>	<p>Changing graduation requirements for all students in public school</p> <p>Provincial</p>	<p>Building a nuclear energy plant</p> <p>Provincial</p>
<p>Building a new mental health facility for first responders</p> <p>Provincial</p>	<p>Repairing the 401 highway</p> <p>Federal</p>	<p>Opening a new water treatment facility</p> <p>Municipal</p>
<p>Opening a new skatepark</p> <p>Municipal</p>	<p>Changing the criminal code to list new crimes</p> <p>Federal</p>	<p>Deciding to send the military to help another country</p> <p>Federal</p>
<p>Setting the price for a stamp to mail a letter</p> <p>Federal</p>	<p>Banning the fishing of lobster in certain waters</p> <p>Federal</p>	<p>Eliminating dimes and quarters from circulation</p> <p>Federal</p>
<p>Printing more money</p> <p>Federal</p>	<p>Opening 300 units of affordable housing units for Indigenous people in Sudbury</p> <p>Federal/Provincial</p>	<p>Hunting regulations in Algonquin Park</p> <p>Provincial</p>
<p>Announcing all new schools built from the ground up must include a daycare</p> <p>Provincial</p>	<p>Closing libraries</p> <p>Municipal</p>	<p>Adding new swimming programs to the municipal pool's weekend schedule</p> <p>Municipal</p>

<p>Hiring police officers</p> <p>Provincial/Municipal</p>	<p>Introducing a carbon tax</p> <p>Federal</p>	<p>Setting the age requirement for a driver's licence</p> <p>Provincial</p>
<p>Opening a new university in Durham Region</p> <p>Provincial</p>	<p>Setting class sizes in elementary schools</p> <p>Provincial</p>	<p>Attracting doctors to work in small towns</p> <p>Provincial</p>
<p>Funding a Francophone music festival in Ottawa</p> <p>Federal (Heritage)/ Provincial (Tourism)</p>	<p>Mandating a vaccine for all travel</p> <p>Federal</p>	<p>Raising the minimum wage</p> <p>Provincial</p>
<p>Providing a construction permit to renovate your home</p> <p>Municipal</p>	<p>Installing new lamp posts on your street</p> <p>Municipal</p>	<p>Cleaning the water you drink</p> <p>Municipal</p>
<p>Adding a new bus route between the library and local school</p> <p>Municipal</p>	<p>Revising the national anthem</p> <p>Federal</p>	<p>Changing the definition of spouse in the marriage laws</p> <p>Federal</p>
<p>Investigating illegal fishing in Georgian Bay</p> <p>Federal</p>	<p>Staffing long term care homes</p> <p>Provincial</p>	<p>Providing a pension plan for all Canadians over 65 years old</p> <p>Federal</p>
<p>Deciding a new protein bar will not be sold in Canada</p> <p>Federal</p>	<p>Changing the mandatory work week for all workers</p> <p>Provincial</p>	<p>Picking up a lost dog and taking it to a shelter</p> <p>Municipal</p>

Appendix E

Group handout: Master list of government responsibilities

Federal (House of Commons)	Provincial (Legislatures)	Municipal (Councils)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulation of trade/commerce • Unemployment insurance • Direct/indirect taxation • Postal service • Census/statistics • National defence (military) • Navigation/shipping • Fisheries and oceans • Currency/coinage • Banking/incorporation of banks/paper money • Weights and measures • Indigenous people/First Nation reserves • Citizenship • Marriage/divorce • Criminal law, including criminal procedure and courts • Penitentiaries • Agriculture • Health • Public safety • Transportation • Environment • Old age pensions • Immigration • National heritage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct taxation within province (e.g. sales tax) • Management/sale of public lands belonging to province • Prisons • Hospitals and healthcare delivery • Municipalities • Formalization of marriage • Property and civil rights • Administration of civil/criminal justice • Education • Incorporation of companies • Natural resources • Provincial parks • Indigenous peoples/aboriginal affairs • Labour • Tourism • Colleges and universities • Social services (community services) • Immigration • Culture • Environment • Law enforcement (policing) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parks and recreation • Parking • Libraries • Roadways • Local police • Local land use • Fire protection • Public transportation • Community water systems • Animal control • Tourism • Public lighting (street lights) • Ambulance services • Policing and law enforcement • Family services • Sidewalks • Waste management • Land use and planning • Residential and commercial construction

Appendix F

Group handout: Government responsibilities - Who does what?

Label the government responsibilities in this illustration. You should identify the service and then label it as federal, provincial/territorial, or municipal.

1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	
11.	
12.	
13.	
14.	
15.	
16.	



Lesson: What makes a good political decision in a democracy?

Big idea

Ontario is divided into 124 electoral districts. An electoral district (ED) is a geographical area of the province that is defined by law and is represented by a Member of Provincial Parliament (MPP) in the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. Each ED is represented by one MPP so that is why there are 124 MPPs at Queen's Park in Ontario. Millions of people live in Ontario; some MPPs represent well over 100,000 constituents. It can be hard to make sure everyone is represented so making good political decisions is an important part of Ontario's democratic process. When these decisions are made, some people may be happy and others disappointed or frustrated. However, that is what democracy is about. Everyone has the right to vote for their representative in an electoral district. The candidate that then represents that electoral district must work hard to make decisions that represent the majority of the electors.

Curriculum connections

B2. Inquiry: use the social studies inquiry process to investigate Canadian social and/or environmental issues from various perspectives, including those of Indigenous peoples as well as of the level (or levels) of government responsible for addressing the issues.

B2.3 analyze and construct maps in various formats, including digital formats, as part of their investigations into social and/or environmental issues

B3. Understanding Context: demonstrate an understanding of the roles and key responsibilities of citizens and of the different levels of government in Canada, including First Nations, Métis, and Inuit governments.

B3.7 describe key actions taken by governments, including Indigenous governments, to solve some significant national, provincial/territorial, and/or local issues

B3.8 explain why different groups may have different perspectives on specific social and environmental issues

Learning goals

I am learning to:

- interpret a map of Ontario’s electoral districts
- understand what makes a good political decision in a democracy
- compare different perspectives about a political decision

Success criteria

I can:

- ask good questions about Ontario’s map of electoral districts to understand the differences and similarities between them
- create criteria for a good political decision using my background knowledge and learning about democracy
- make a political decision that fulfills my criteria
- explain what issues are most important in my own or my school’s electoral district

Inquiry question

What makes a good political decision in a democracy?

Required materials

1. Appendix A Student handout:
[Map of Ontario’s electoral districts*](#)
2. Appendix B Student handout:
[I see, I think, I wonder](#)
3. Appendix C Teacher key:
[I see, I think, I wonder](#)

4. Appendix D Student handout:
[Elections in Canada - Infographic](#)
5. Appendix E Student handout:
[Electoral district profiles](#)
6. Appendix F Group handout:
[Making a good political decision](#)
7. Appendix G Group handout:
[My electoral district profile](#)
8. Appendix H Student handout:
[Assessment - Exit card](#)

*Teachers can order a print copy online at:
elections.on.ca/learning

Minds on

1. Organize students into small groups or partners. Provide each group with a copy of the [Map of Ontario’s electoral districts](#) (Appendix A) as well as the handout, [I see, I think, I wonder](#) (Appendix B). This is a thinking protocol that helps set the stage for inquiry and emphasizes the importance of observation as the basis for thinking. This is a great thinking tool to use at the start of a new lesson or unit.

Teacher note: A sample [completed handout](#) (Appendix C) is provided in the learning materials for this lesson as a guide.

2. Provide a brief explanation to students about the map: Ontario is currently divided into 124 electoral districts. An electoral district (ED) is a geographical area of the province, defined by law, and is represented by a Member of Provincial Parliament (MPP) in the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. Each ED is represented by one MPP so that is why there are 124 MPPs at Queen’s Park in Ontario.

3. Allow time for students to make their observations and wonderings. Some question prompts the teacher can use are:
 - a. Are all the EDs the same size?
 - b. Do they all have the same climate?
 - c. What do you notice about the concentration or amount of EDs in the different areas of Ontario?
 - d. Do you notice any difference between the north and south of Ontario?
 - e. What physical characteristics of the land are unique to some of the EDs?
 - f. Would all the people living in the EDs be similar? Different languages and cultural groups?
4. Have students rotate groups or provide a space for students to post their wonderings so that students can share ideas.
5. Conduct a brief whole group discussion about the differences and similarities between Ontario's electoral districts, emphasizing how many there are, the different people and groups they represent and how the political representatives are responsible for meeting the needs of the whole province. Would this be easy or hard? Why?

Additional materials

This **infographic** (Appendix D) about the different ways elections are organized in Canada provides students with background information on the different levels of government and their relevant terminology and processes. This Elections Ontario video, **Which Election***, also provides relevant information for students.

*Available online at: elections.on.ca/learning

Activity

1. If students completed lesson 1 from Elections Ontario's Grade 5 curriculum resources, **What is democracy**, they may remember that Ontario is a representative democracy and that a key characteristic of democracy is the common good. It is important that political representatives make good political decisions.
2. In their groups from the Minds On, ask students to brainstorm what they think constitutes a good political decision. How would you know if the government is making a good decision? Give students chart paper, sticky notes or a digital brainstorming tool to record their thinking. These can be short phrases (e.g. common good, everyone is happy), single words (e.g. fair, well-researched, smart) or sentences (e.g. makes good financial sense, there were many voices heard, a lot of people will benefit).
3. As a class, create a checklist of criteria for what constitutes a good political decision. This can be digital or on paper and students may wish to tweak it as the activity continues. Make sure to keep this posted in a visible location.
4. Distribute a copy of the handout **Making a good political decision** (Appendix F) to each group.

Teacher note: The group handout has space for five criteria. Students may select the five from the class list they prefer, or the class can narrow down to five that on which most students agree.

5. Tell students that they will now consider a political decision that needs to be made that affects three electoral districts. Using the criteria of a political decision they co-created, they will try to make a good political decision.

Teacher note: *It may or may not have emerged from previous lessons that a key feature of democracy is that sometimes there are winners and sometimes there are losers when decisions are made. Members of a democracy compromise and recognize that sometimes their needs are sacrificed when a decision is made.*

6. Distribute copies of **Electoral district profiles** (Appendix E) for the following provincial ridings to each group:
 - a. **Kiiwetinoong**
 - b. **Parry Sound—Muskoka**
 - c. **Chatham—Kent—Leamington**
7. In their groups, students will deliberate over where the government should increase its health funding based on the electoral district profiles. They can record their thoughts in Part B of the group handout, **Making a good political decision** (Appendix F). Groups will then present their decision explaining how they met the criteria. They can use Part C of the group handout to plan their talking points.

Consolidation

1. Using the sample ED profiles from the previous activity, students will conduct some research into their own electoral district. This can be where they live or the one in which their school is located.
2. They will complete the **My electoral district profile** (Appendix G) handout using their research and then consider which issues are the most significant in their ED.

Using their own background knowledge and some additional research, students will rate the issues on the significance scale. The **Electoral district profiles** student handout has many issues already entered but there is also space for students to enter their own thinking about issues that are important in their districts.

Teacher note: *Remind students of the levels of government responsibilities; review the list of provincial responsibilities to refresh their memories of what issues the province can address.*

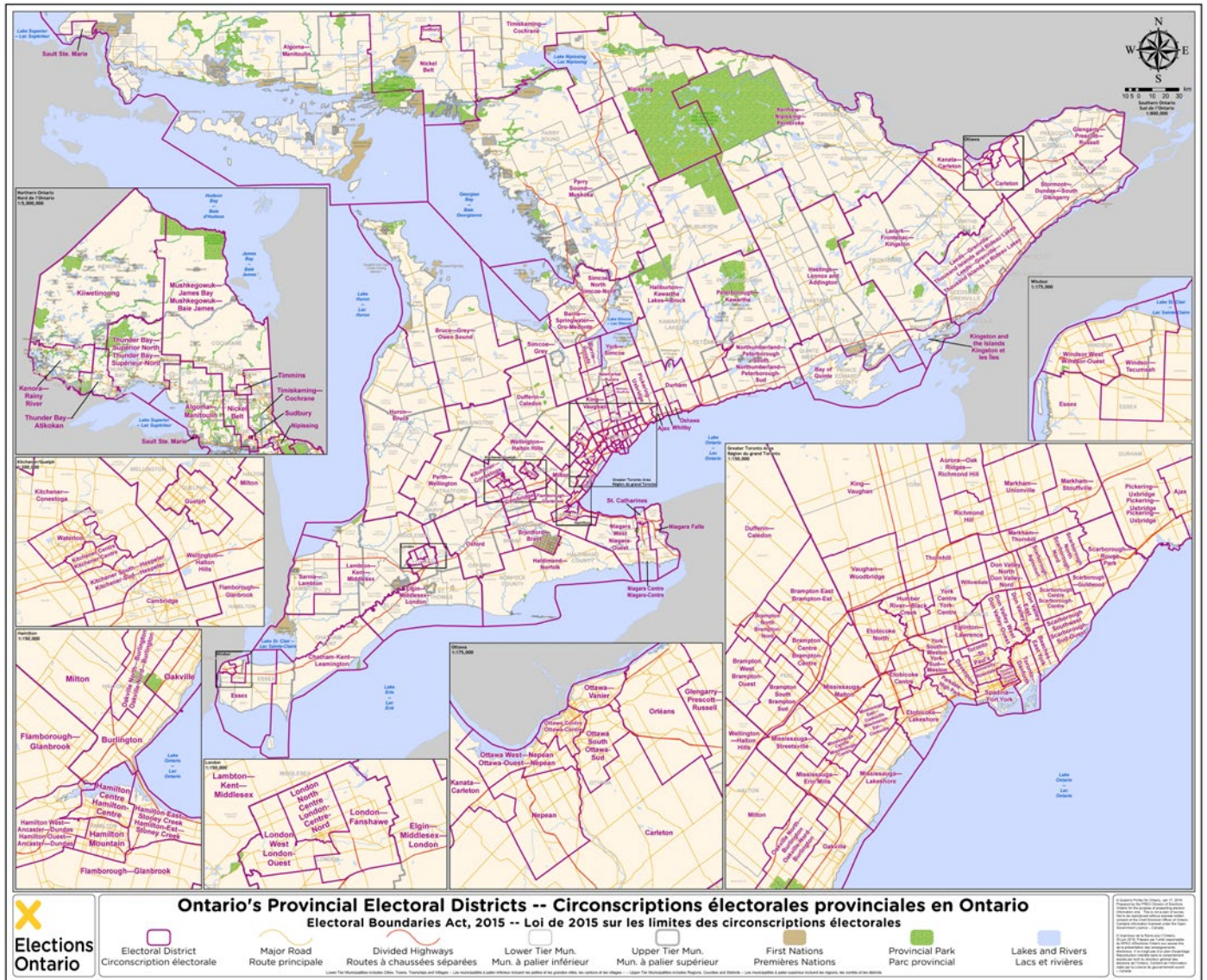
3. This activity can be completed in pairs, small groups or individually. For each significance rating, students should explain their thinking with at least one fact from their lived experience in the riding (electoral district) or from their research.

Assessment

Distribute an **exit card** (Appendix H) to each student and ask them to reflect on their learning.

Appendix A

Student handout: Map of Ontario's electoral districts



Appendix B

Student handout: I see, I think, I wonder

Using the map of Ontario's electoral districts, discuss what you observe with your partner or small group. Then, make some conclusions about your observations and ask further questions to deepen your understanding. An example has been completed for you.

I See What do you see? What do you observe?	I Think What do you think it means? What do you think is going on?	I Wonder What does it make you wonder? What other questions does it bring up?
Example: I see purple lines dividing up parts of Ontario	Example: I think these are voting areas? I think maybe they are the areas that politicians represent	Example: I wonder who decides how many districts there will be?

I See What do you see? What do you observe?	I Think What do you think it means? What do you think is going on?	I Wonder What does it make you wonder? What other questions does it bring up?

Appendix C

Teacher key: I see, I think, I wonder

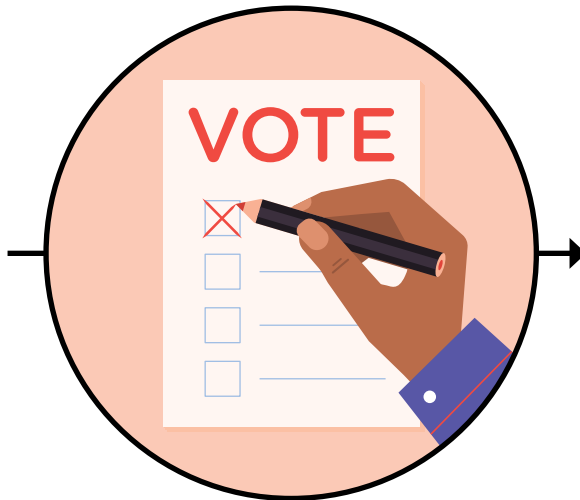
I See	I Think	I Wonder
What do you see? What do you observe?	What do you think it means? What do you think is going on?	What does it make you wonder? What other questions does it bring up?
I see purple lines dividing up parts of Ontario	I think these are voting areas? I think maybe they are the areas that politicians represent	I wonder who decides how many districts there will be
I see some areas magnified on the map	I think these areas have lots of voting areas	I wonder why there are more purple squares there
I see fewer purple squares at the top of the map	I think this is the north of Ontario	I wonder if there's a big difference between the north and the south
I see there are brown areas on the map	I think these are First Nations places because that is what the legend says	Do First Nations get their own voting areas?
I see yellow lines and red lines showing highways and roads	I think that there's not that many roads in the north	I wonder if it's harder to get around. Is it harder to vote?

I See What do you see? What do you observe?	I Think What do you think it means? What do you think is going on?	I Wonder What does it make you wonder? What other questions does it bring up?
I see a big green space called Algonquin Park	I think this is a big park that you can't build anything on	I wonder why it's divided by purple lines; does anyone live there?
I see the purple areas have names like Hamilton Centre or Burlington	I think these are also city names	Who made these names? Do they ever change?
I see purple lines dividing up Ontario	I think these are areas made by Elections Ontario	I wonder how they knew where to put these lines! Whose job is it?
I see the purple lines are called electoral districts	I think that has something to do with elections	I wonder what an electoral district is
I see so many purple squares	I think these are the areas that people vote in and then politicians get elected	How many people vote in Ontario? Is it hard to be a politician?
I see all of the province of Ontario	I think it is a big province with a lot of voters	How do all their voices get heard? How many people are in each purple area?

Appendix D

Student handout: Elections in Canada - Infographic

WHO RUNS THE ELECTION?



There are different levels of government: federal, provincial, and municipal, as well as First Nations, Métis & Inuit governments.

Elections in Ontario are run by Elections Ontario, an independent agency.

Federal: Elections Canada

Provincial: Elections Ontario

Municipal: local agencies/organizations

They are responsible for running elections that are fair and equal for all.

WHERE DO YOU VOTE?



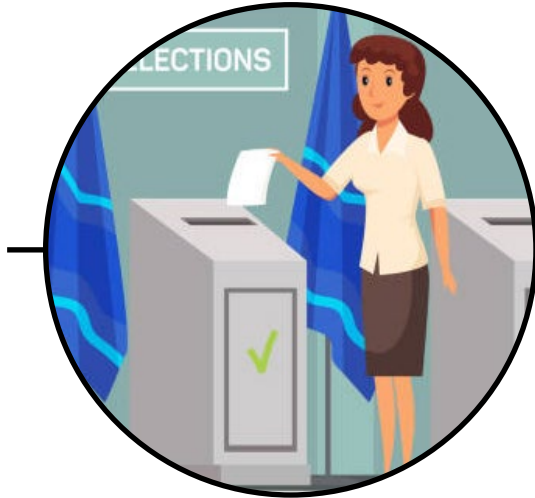
The number of voting districts is determined by population. Each area returns one elected official to represent a group of people.

Federal: Canada is divided into 338 electoral districts, called ridings from coast to coast to coast.

Provincial: Ontario is divided into 124 electoral districts.

Municipal: Some municipalities are divided into wards.

WHO CAN VOTE?



No matter where you live, if you are 18 years or older, and a Canadian citizen, you have the right to vote.

HOW DOES VOTING HAPPEN?

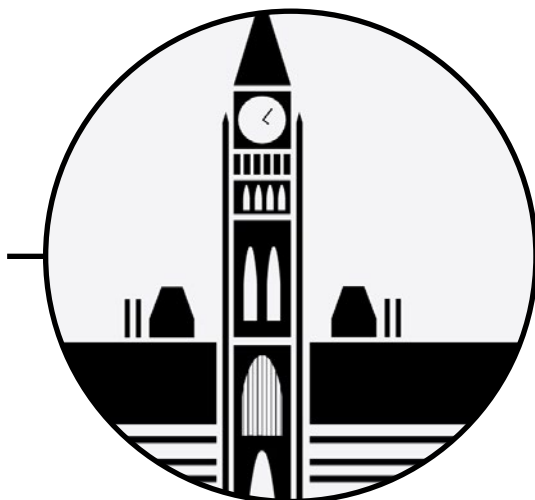


Across Canada at the federal, provincial, and municipal level, there are many ways to vote. This can include:

- voting by mail
- voting at an advance poll (if you can't vote on election day)
- voting on election day at your assigned voting location in your electoral district

Some elections officials count all the ballots by hand after the election and some use electronic vote counting machines to do the counting!

WHO DO YOU VOTE FOR?



Canada is a representative democracy. This means you vote for someone to represent you in making decisions in government.

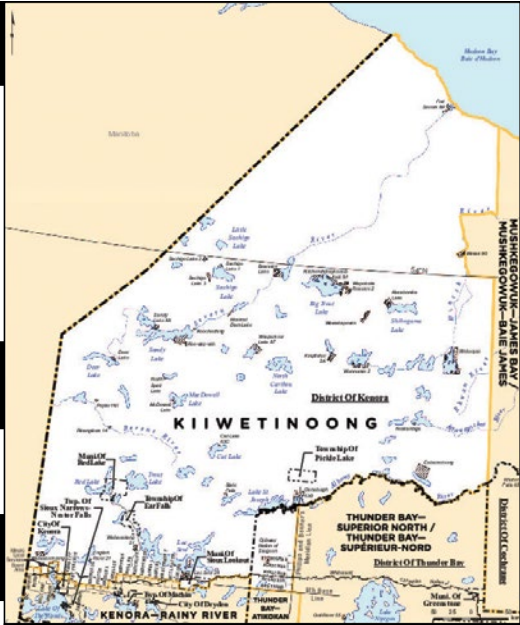
Federal: In Canada, each riding elects a Member of Parliament (MP). The party with the most MPs elected wins the election. The party leader becomes the Prime Minister.

Provincial: In Ontario, each electoral district elects a Member of Provincial Parliament (MPP). The leader of the party with the most MPPs elected becomes Premier.

Municipal: Councillors, mayors and school board trustees are elected.

Appendix E


Electoral district profile #1: Kiiwetinoong

Population	
32,987	
Only riding in Ontario with a majority Indigenous population	
30 First Nation communities receive healthcare in the area	
Region	
North	
Languages	
4 major languages and numerous dialects	
	<p>The new electoral district of Kiiwetinoong, located in Northern Ontario.</p> <p><i>Source: Elections Ontario</i></p>
Healthcare needs	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 200 long-term care beds are urgently needed for the Sioux Lookout Meno Ya Win Health Centre• In 2022, the wait time for a bed for a senior in need was between 3 to 5 years• The closest beds are located far away in Thunder Bay or Fort Frances• There are only 20 long-term care beds for approximately 30,000 residents, this is one bed for every 1,500 residents• Sioux Lookout Meno Ya Win Health Centre staff applied for the beds in 2018• Many residents feel that their needs are ignored. Chief Clifford Bull, in an interview in 2022, said, “There’s still some anger. Being left out, and not being heard at Queen’s Park” means many First Nations voters feel hostile or angry toward government• Services such as treatment centres for substance abuse and mental health supports are almost non-existent• More beds mean more staff and more equipment will be needed	


All data are taken from the Census Profile, 2016 Census - Statistics Canada

Source: Elections Ontario

Electoral district profile #2: Parry Sound—Muskoka

<p>Population</p>	
<p>94,400</p> <p>24,745 residents are over the age of 65 years, representing 30% of its population</p>	
<p>Region</p>	
<p>North</p> <p>It is the southernmost riding in northern Ontario</p>	
<p>Languages</p>	<p>The electoral district of Parry Sound—Muskoka, located in Northern Ontario.</p> <p><i>Source: Elections Ontario</i></p>
<p>98% of residents speak English</p> <p><i>All data are taken from the Census Profile, 2016 Census – Statistics Canada</i></p>	
<p>Healthcare needs</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare currently provides care to over 141,000 residents, cottagers and visitors to the Muskoka region • Cottagers come to the region during the summer months, many of whom are older and have medical issues • The electoral district covers a very big region and currently has two medium-sized hospitals that do not get enough funding to operate properly • As the region continues to grow, so will the demand for health care services • Both hospitals need more money to improve services and for construction/renovations • If the hospitals do not receive the necessary funding, travel time required to access timely life-saving health care, access for vulnerable populations and those living in more remote areas means that some residents will not be able to get the health care they need • If no funding is available, residents might have to drive to Barrie or North Bay rather than nearby Bracebridge or Huntsville to get health care they need 	

Electoral District Profile #3: Chatham-Kent—Leamington

Population	
109,620 24,950 residents are under the age of 19, representing 23% of its population	
Region	Southwestern
Languages	92% of residents speak English <p style="text-align: center;"><i>All data are taken from the Census Profile, 2016 Census – Statistics Canada</i></p>
	<p>The electoral district of Chatham-Kent—Leamington, located in Southwestern Ontario.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Source: Elections Ontario</i></p>
Healthcare needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In 2019-20, over 110,000 children and youth received rehabilitation services (occupational therapy, physiotherapy and speech-language pathology) through Children’s Treatment Centres in community-based settings• The current centre cannot handle the over 3,500 children and youth with special needs who access services there• In March 2022, the centre had a long waitlist of 1,100 kids waiting to get into therapy programs and it just did not have the space• A new building is needed to expand services• The staff want a full-size gymnasium to do occupational therapy and physiotherapy; a therapy pool; areas for social work and for parents to talk to staff, more youth meeting rooms, and expansion of their autism program• The current building is not accessible to people with disabilities; for example, every doorway is two inches too narrow• The cost of a new building was set at \$48 million in 2022

Appendix F

Group handout: Making a good political decision

Part A: Criteria for a good political decision

Record the criteria for a good political decision that your class created:

Criterion 1:	
Criterion 2:	
Criterion 3:	
Criterion 4:	
Criterion 5:	

Part B: Making a good political decision

With your partner or small group, imagine you are the government in power. You have \$50 million in health care money to spend on a good decision to help one of the communities highlighted in the electoral district profiles.

Read through the electoral district profiles and take any rough notes that will help you decide which community you would select to spend your health care funding, and that would make the best political decision.

Electoral District #1: Kiiwetinoong	
Electoral District #2: Parry Sound—Muskoka	
Electoral District #3: Chatham-Kent—Leamington	

Part C: Our good decision

Which healthcare project will your government fund?

How does your decision meet the criteria of a good political decision?

Use the specific criteria from Part A and provide reasons why your decision meets those criteria.

Appendix G

Group handout: My electoral district profile

Electoral District Name:

Population	
Region	
Languages	
Other Important Information	

Issue: Healthcare

Not that significant	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Very significant
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Evidence:	
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Issue: Education

Not that significant 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very significant

Evidence:

Issue: Community services

Not that significant 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very significant

Evidence:

Issue: Employment

Not that significant 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very significant

Evidence:

Issue: Public safety/Law enforcement

Not that significant 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very significant

Evidence:

Issue:

Not that significant 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very significant

Evidence:

Issue:

Not that significant 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very significant

Evidence:

Appendix H

Student handout: Assessment - Exit card

In this lesson, we discussed what makes a good political decision. List your top three criteria for a good political decision in the chart below.

Criterion #1	
Criterion #2	
Criterion #3	

Based on your research and background knowledge of your own electoral district or the one in which your school is located, which issue should the government concentrate on? What decision(s) do you think the government should make to address this issue?

Issue	
Decision(s) that should be made	

Lesson: How can you make your voice heard?

Big idea

It is important to know which level of government is responsible for the different programs and services students will interact with in their lives. In addition to knowing each government's responsibilities, it is also important to know which government to contact to get their voices heard and the ways in which the government acts to get public input. A key part of democracy is the idea of the common good. Government should listen to diverse voices because diverse groups have different perspectives on issues and decisions should be made that are the best for the whole society. Democracy involves deliberations over how to balance different interests.

Curriculum connections

B3. Understanding Context: demonstrate an understanding of the roles and key responsibilities of citizens and of the different levels of government in Canada, including First Nations, Métis, and Inuit governments (Focus on: Significance).

B3.1 describe the major rights and responsibilities associated with citizenship in Canada (e.g. rights: equal protection under the law, freedom of speech, freedom of religion, the right to vote; responsibilities: to respect the rights of others, to participate in the electoral process and political decision making, to improve their communities).

B3.6 describe different processes that governments can use to solicit input from the public and explain why it is important for all levels of government to provide opportunities for public consultation.

B3.8 explain why different groups may have different perspectives on specific social and environmental issues.

B3.9 describe some different ways which citizens can take action to address social and environmental issues.

Learning goals

I am learning to:

- understand the many ways the government uses to get feedback from the public and when it's appropriate to use the specific methods
- understand the many ways Canadians can get their voices heard
- understand that different groups have different perspectives on social issues

Success criteria

I can:

- identify an appropriate way for the government to consult the public on social and environmental issues
- explain the many ways Canadians can get their voices heard
- take on a group's perspective about a social issue and participate in a town hall meeting

Inquiry question

How can you make your voice heard?

Required materials

1. Appendix A Student handout:
[Who do you contact? - Cards](#)
2. Appendix B Student handout:
[Ways to make your voice heard](#)
3. Appendix C Student handout:
[Scenario cards](#)
4. Appendix D Student handout:
[How can you make your voice heard?](#)
5. Appendix E Student handout:
[Town hall role cards](#)
6. Appendix F Group handout:
[Town hall meeting preparations and reflection](#)
7. Appendix G Group handout:
[Town hall meeting preparations - Government officials](#)
8. Appendix H Student handout:
[Three 3s in a row](#)
9. Appendix I Teacher resource:
[Town hall meeting format](#)
10. Slide deck:
[Who Do You Contact?*](#)

*Available online at: elections.on.ca/learning

Minds on

Teacher note: Students need some familiarity with the government responsibilities for this lesson (see [What role does government play in my life?](#) lesson).

1. Play a quick little game called “Who do you contact?”. Students can play in groups, pairs or individually. Each student or group must get [one set of cards](#) (Appendix A) to play.
2. Use the [Who Do You Contact? slide deck*](#), to provide students with a scenario involving a government responsibility. Students raise their chosen card (municipal, provincial, federal, band council) to respond.

Teacher note: Consider adding a point value to make the game competitive, adding popsicle sticks so that the placards become paddles the students raise and encouraging students to cheer each other on if competing in groups. Alternately this can be done in more of a review format rather than competitive play.

3. Conclude the game and remind students it is important to know which level of government is responsible for the different programs and services they will interact with in their lives. In addition to knowing each government’s responsibilities, it is also important to know which government to contact to get their voices heard.

*Available online at: elections.on.ca/learning

Activity

1. Distribute the student handout [Ways to make your voice heard](#) (Appendix B). These are brief summaries of all the ways the government solicits input from the public.
2. Give time for students to review them individually or in partners. Have students circle any words they do not know from the summaries and provide time for a class discussion around these words. The unfamiliar words can be written in a visible spot in the class and their definitions and explanations beside them.

Teacher note: The student handout is structured in such a way that the summaries can be cut out into strips. This may help students with the activity as they can place a summary on the scenarios during their group or partner deliberations.

3. Distribute the [scenario cards](#) (Appendix C) to students. In their small groups or pairs, students will read each scenario and then select a process that the government could use to solicit public input on the issues involved.

Teacher note: The scenario cards can be given to all students as a set or a different scenario can be given to each student group, depending on what works best for your class.

4. Students should keep note of their selections and their rationale explaining their thinking on the handout, [How can you make your voice heard?](#) (Appendix D).
5. Partner groups together to review their work and make any further deliberations as they finalize their choices.
6. As a whole class, come to a consensus as to appropriate processes that the government could use in each scenario.
7. Remind students that a key part of democracy is the common good - government should listen to diverse voices because different groups have different perspectives on issues and decisions should be made that are the best for the whole society. Democracy involves deliberations over how to balance different interests.
8. Explain that students will now do a simulation where they will practice perspective-taking and government deliberation, as well as experience a process government uses to get input from the public. The process will be a town hall meeting.
9. Each student will get a [role card](#) (Appendix E) and then find the other students in the class who got the same role card. They will form a group.
10. The question being deliberated in the town hall meeting is: "Should our town's school board change the school year?". Establish what a school year involves for your students (e.g. school starts after Labour Day in September, there is a winter break, March or spring break, summer break, etc.), the days and hours students typically attend school (e.g. Monday to Friday, 8:30 am to 3 pm).
11. In their groups, students will deliberate changing the school year based on their assigned role card's perspective.
12. Encourage students to conduct research into the school year in other jurisdictions (e.g. Florida, British Columbia, France, Kenya. They can enter the search term "school year calendars around the world").
13. After an agreed upon amount of time to prepare their positions and questions using the student handout, [Town hall meeting preparations and reflection](#) (Appendix F), the town hall meeting will begin. Each group will have a chance to explain their position and to ask questions.
14. The students who are in the government group should sit in a designated spot as they will be listening to and considering all the points of view and reaching a decision. The government group has a different [handout](#) (Appendix G) from the rest of the groups to get ready for the town hall meeting.

Teacher note: A town hall meeting is suggested here for this activity; however, students can also vote on which process would be best for the government to get many different perspectives and input on the issue. Then the class could engage in that process. For example, you may wish to use this question as the basis for the election simulation (see [Election simulation](#) lesson).

15. A simple [town hall meeting format](#) (Appendix I) is included as a teacher resource for this lesson. You may wish to follow that format for the town hall meeting.
16. The town hall meeting concludes with the government deliberating and reaching a decision. Deliberations should occur in private (i.e. in the hallway). Once a decision has been reached, the government should deliver it to the class. A template is provided for the government group to plan their brief speech on their [handout](#) (Appendix G).
17. Ask students to complete their group handouts and then discuss as a class.
 - a. Are there any clear winners or losers?
 - b. Did the government deliver a decision that balances interests and helps to achieve the common good?

Consolidation

[Three 3's in a row](#) (Appendix H)

Students move around to their classmates, and they listen to each other and get information from their peer “experts”. Students must summarize what the peer expert stated into the corresponding box. The owner of the template is the one who must write the answer in the box. This is crucial because it helps them engage with what their peers said, and it helps the student develop processing skills through listening to each other. The students can only use a peer one time for a question so they will be talking to nine different students. After students have finished, share as a class what they learned.

Assessment

The teacher can do a quick assessment of learning by walking around the room and looking for any trends of empty boxes, indicating students are not too confident responding to the question(s). Review the questions with the class where those trends are apparent.

Appendix A

Student handout: Who do you contact? - Cards

MUNICIPAL

PROVINCIAL

FEDERAL

BAND
COUNCIL

Appendix B

Student handout: Ways to make your voice heard

These are some of the many ways government can use to get input from the people it represents.

Elections	Elections happen every four years in Ontario. During this time, candidates announce their ideas and policies and campaign throughout their electoral districts (ridings), trying to get as many people as possible to vote for them. To be eligible to vote in Ontario, voters must be 18 years of age or older on polling day, a Canadian citizen and a resident of the province.
Town Hall Meetings	Politicians meet with their constituents (people they represent) in a big meeting to hear from them about topics that interest or concern them or to discuss new laws and regulations. This is a way for the elected representative to get feedback from many people and to answer questions.
Public Surveys	A government can create a survey to gather feedback from the public. Usually, these surveys are online and open for a specific amount of time. They are used in addition to other public meetings for people who cannot attend in person but still want to share their opinions, which will be used to guide in making new laws or policies or revising existing ones.
Public Hearings/ Meetings	When a legislature, government agency or organization needs to make a decision or take action, it can call a public hearing or meeting to gather public opinions and concerns. Citizens can speak at the hearing/meeting to share their ideas and opinions. It is expected that their ideas and opinions be used to guide the decision-making process.
Band Council Meetings	Historically, First Nations have had their own traditional governing structures. This was disrupted by Canada's early colonial policies which tried to take power away from Indigenous people by establishing government-controlled bands. Today, bands have increasing control and responsibility over their own people's affairs. They are led by band councils made up of an elected chief and councilors. They hold meetings to discuss education, band schools, housing, water and sewage, roads, and community business and services.

<p>Métis General Assemblies or Community Council Meetings</p>	<p>The Métis Nation of Ontario represents Métis people and communities in Ontario that are part of the Métis nation. It has a governing council elected every four years and an annual general assembly where all the Métis leaders from across the province meet to discuss issues like protecting and preserving Métis culture and heritage and improving the social and economic well-being of Métis communities.</p>
<p>Commissions of Inquiry</p>	<p>Commissions of Inquiry investigate issues of national importance. They are led by experts or judges who can call witnesses to testify and request evidence at community hearings. The inquiry releases a final report and recommendations to the government to impact government policies. An example is the 2001 Commission on the Future of Health Care in Canada to review Canada's health care system and hear from Canadians about how it could be improved.</p>
<p>Referendums</p>	<p>A referendum is the asking of a political question in a general vote. Usually, voters go to a voting location and select their vote on a ballot. There have been many provincial referendums and some federal. All the provinces except New Brunswick have held referendums dealing with issues like switching to daylight-saving time, votes for women, public health, ownership of electric companies, and changing electoral systems. In Quebec, a referendum was held in 1995 asking voters if they agreed that Quebec should become independent from Canada, with 50.6% voting No and 49.4% voting Yes.</p>
<p>Nation-to-Nation discussions with First Nations and/or Inuit governments</p>	<p>Indigenous peoples have a special relationship with the Canadian government that is protected by the Constitution. Canada's constitution recognizes the reality that Indigenous peoples' ancestors owned and governed the lands, which now make up Canada and they have the right to self-government. This means that all levels of government must involve Indigenous people in decision-making, especially when government actions will impact them and their rights, including their lands, territories and resources.</p>

Appendix C

Student handout: Scenario cards

<p style="text-align: center;">1.</p> <p>You are unhappy with the way your Provincial Member of Parliament (MPP) does not ever reply to your family's emails and is hard to get a hold of on the phone. They are also not available at their office often.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">2.</p> <p>Your municipal government has announced it intends to change its policies about naming public places. It wants to establish a new framework moving forward that considers the perspectives of different groups.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">3.</p> <p>A reserve in Northern Ontario wishes to build a new elementary school but does not know where to build it and what programs it should offer.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">4.</p> <p>Housing prices in Canada have become very high in recent years. The federal government wants to investigate whether it should bring in regulations to help lower prices.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">5.</p> <p>The Province of Ontario is considering changing how election results are counted. It wants to know how many citizens would support this change.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">6.</p> <p>The federal government is considering building a pipeline through Indigenous territory.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">7.</p> <p>The federal and provincial governments are interested in hearing from Canadian parents about how affordable daycare programs would affect their lives.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">8.</p> <p>The chief of the Highlands Métis Nation wants to improve the services offered to his community's children and families.</p>

Appendix D

Student handout: How can you make your voice heard?

Read the scenario cards and decide which method of getting input from the public would be most appropriate in each scenario. Explain your thinking in a few sentences.

Scenario	Method of Public Input	Explain Your Choice
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		

Now that you have an understanding of the many ways your voice can be heard, do you think these processes are good enough? Do you see any barriers that would prevent people from having their voices heard?

Can you think of any other ways not listed here that government should consider to hear more voices?

Appendix E

Student handout: Town hall role cards

Notice:	Town Hall Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some of you have seasonal jobs and cannot take any summer vacation • the cost of summer daycare and camps is very expensive and finding spots for your children is very stressful • some of you have children that are in athletics or arts programs and a lot of training happens in the summer • you are concerned about how to find care for your children if there are lots of breaks during the school year
Date:		
Topic:	Changing the School Year Calendar	
Your Role:	Parent	

Notice:	Town Hall Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the school year is predictable for you and you look forward to summer vacation • school does get hard and you do feel that you need more breaks • sometimes it is hard to come back in September after two months off • you are in a lot of different activities during the summer and after school that depend on the school year staying the same
Date:		
Topic:	Changing the School Year Calendar	
Your Role:	Elementary Student	

Notice:	Town Hall Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • research shows that students in countries that go to school more days a year than students in Ontario do better on standardized tests • it will cost a lot of money to install air conditioning for school during the hot summer months • you are concerned about the loss of learning that happens over the summer, research shows this is especially concerning for math skills • summer school would be eliminated if there was no summer break
Date:		
Topic:	Changing the School Year Calendar	
Your Role:	Government Official (Provincial)	

Notice:	Town Hall Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • you notice a decline in students when they come back to school in September • you always worry about those students who use the breakfast program during the year and whether they have access to nutritious meals over the summer • you work very hard and need a summer break; this is when you recharge but also take summer courses to improve your teaching • some of you earn extra money teaching summer school
Date:		
Topic:	Changing the School Year Calendar	
Your Role:	Elementary Teacher	

Notice:	Town Hall Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • your business relies on the school year • it is easier to find staff to work consistent hours every day of every week during the school year rather than having lots of breaks in the school year • you could increase your business by offering daycare during breaks in the school year • you coordinate with bus companies who are all sharing routes with different school boards
Date:		
Topic:	Changing the School Year Calendar	
Your Role:	Before and After School Care Provider	

Notice:	Town Hall Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • you are concerned about students being out of school for two months during the summer that rely on mental health supports at school • students who rely on meal programs at school do not have access to these over the long summer break • many teachers and students in your board rely on summer jobs to make money • scheduling before and after care and bus routes is already hard enough with a school schedule that has been the same for decades
Date:		
Topic:	Changing the School Year Calendar	
Your Role:	School Board Official	

Notice:	Town Hall Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • your business relies on the school year and summer break • you employ students every summer • many of your camps help students who are low income or students with exceptionalities • there are hundreds of summer camps in Ontario that employ thousands of people
Date:		
Topic:	Changing the School Year Calendar	
Your Role:	Summer Camp Operator	

Appendix F

Group handout: Town hall meeting preparations and reflection

You are invited to a town hall meeting to discuss changing the school year. See below for the proposed changes. At the meeting, many perspectives will be shared from different groups.

School calendar year proposal

The province is considering mandating a change to the school year. The long summer break would be eliminated. Instead, students would go to school all year. There would be four breaks consisting of two weeks each during the year: a fall break, winter break, spring break and summer break.

PART A: PREPARE YOUR POSITION

Whose perspective are you representing?	
What are your major concerns?	
Are you in favour of changing the school year? Why or why not? List your main arguments in point form	
Based on your research, should the government be considering other changes to the school year?	

PART B: PREPARING QUESTIONS

Who will you ask?	What is your question?	Summarize the response

PART C: GROUP REFLECTION

Did you feel your voices were heard during the town hall meeting?

Which groups can be considered the ‘winners’ based on the government’s decision?

Which groups can be considered the ‘losers’ based on the government’s decision?

Did the government deliver a decision that balances interests and helps to achieve the common good?

Was this the best method for the government to get input from the public? Why or why not?

- consider the strengths and weaknesses of the town hall format

Appendix G

Group handout: Town hall meeting preparations - Government officials

Town hall meeting preparations

You are holding a town hall meeting to discuss changing the school year. See below for the government's proposed changes. At the meeting, many perspectives will be shared from different groups, and it is your job to make a final decision.

School calendar year proposal

You are considering mandating a change to the school year. The long summer break would be eliminated. Instead, students would go to school all year. There would be four breaks consisting of two weeks each during the year: a fall break, winter break, spring break and summer break.

PART A: PREPARE YOUR POSITION

<p>What is your reason for proposing a change?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider the information on your role card• Conduct some more research to develop your arguments		
<p>PROs and CONs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Start a list of the advantages and disadvantages of your proposal• Think about which groups would benefit and which would not• Add to your list as you hear different perspectives during the town hall	<p>PROs</p>	<p>CONs</p>

PART B: PREPARING QUESTIONS

To make a good political decision, it is important to hear many perspectives and try to balance the interests of different groups. Plan your questions here to help you make a fair decision.

Who will you ask?	What is your question?	Summarize the response

PART C: GROUP REFLECTION

What is your government's final decision?	
Which perspectives did you take into consideration?	
Which groups can be considered the 'winners' based on your government's decision?	
Which groups can be considered the 'losers' based on your government's decision?	
How did your decision balance interests and help to achieve the common good?	
Was this the best method for your government to get input from the public? Why or why not? Consider the strengths and weaknesses of the town hall format	

Appendix H

Student handout: Three 3s in a row

NAME:

Find someone who can answer what is asked for in each box (one classmate per box). Ask the person to initial your box and tell you the answer. Then summarize the answer in your box.

You are the only person who should be writing answers in your boxes.

Name two responsibilities of a municipal government.	Explain who is eligible to vote in Ontario.	List two issues a province could hold a referendum vote on.
Initials:	Initials:	Initials:
Answer:	Answer:	Answer:
Name three things a band council can discuss at a band council meeting.	Explain what the “common good” means in a democracy.	Explain the concept of “Nation to Nation” in Canada.
Initials:	Initials:	Initials:
Answer:	Answer:	Answer:
Name the level of government that is responsible for the mail service.	Name two ways the government can get public feedback when it needs to make a decision or take action.	List two responsibilities of the provincial government.
Initials:	Initials:	Initials:
Answer:	Answer:	Answer:

Appendix I

Teacher resource: Town hall meeting format

Here is a sample set of rules and procedures, you can tailor to your meeting.

1. The teacher can act as the moderator or a student volunteer.
2. The moderator calls the meeting to order.
3. The moderator introduces the groups at the meeting; consider using a sign for each group and seat them in a designated area (parents of elementary students, elementary students, government officials, elementary teachers, before and after school care providers, school board officials, summer camp operators).
4. Set up a speaking area like a table or desk. Bonus points if you have a microphone as a prop. When it is time for attendees to ask questions, they will do so from the speaking area.
5. The moderator will identify the issue to be discussed (“Should our town’s school board change the school year?”) during the meeting and the amount of time that will be dedicated to each group to present their perspective (suggested time is three to four minutes).
6. Each group will then have three to four minutes to share their perspective on the issue. They can do this from their seated area. Groups can decide to share the speaking role or designate one speaker on their behalf.
7. Attendees will then have a chance to ask questions and state opinions on the issue. A speakers list can be created and displayed in a visible spot. Speakers should ask questions from the speaking area and wait in line until it is their turn. This open forum discussion should last between five and fifteen minutes.
8. The moderator will rule out of order any questions deemed inappropriate, offensive, and derogatory.
9. Questions from the floor could be limited to one per individual to ensure as wide a participation from the audience as possible. The following rule could apply: If everyone who wishes to ask a question or make a statement has had the opportunity to do so and there is still time left, members of the audience may ask a second question.
10. Answers to questions should be limited to an agreed upon time (e.g. one minute).
11. Following the discussion of the issue, the moderator will ask the government officials group to go to a secluded area to discuss the issue and return within an agreed upon time to inform the attendees of the decision they are considering making along with their reasoning.

Lesson: Election simulation

This hands-on activity kit will help you hold an election simulation in your classroom so students can learn more about voting and Ontario's democratic processes.

It is designed to align with the grade 5 social studies curriculum, while also fitting other subject and grade expectations.

The kit includes the materials, roles, and steps you'll need to hold the election. Fillable templates for ID, ballots, voters list and results tally sheets have been included with the kit. There are guides for creating your own ballot box and voting screens.

The instructions will walk you through setting up your classroom for the election, having students create their own IDs, and getting student volunteers to act as election officials. **You can also choose between a short and long activity for selecting candidates, depending on what works best for your class.**

In the short activity, students will volunteer to run as candidates within a single electoral district based on a platform they have put together. The class will have two voting locations with the same list of candidates at each location.

In the long activity, students will be put into groups that represent political parties. The class will be divided into two electoral districts, and each political party will develop a platform and choose two members to run as candidates (one for each electoral district). Each electoral district will have its own list of candidates and its own voting location.

Once the candidates have been chosen and a class debate has taken place, students will be able to vote for the candidate of their choice using the ballot templates provided in the kit.

After the election, use the student organizers and discussion questions in the kit to talk with students about the experience. An in-class activity and a take-home activity have also been included to get students thinking about their future as voters.

In this kit:

- Instructions and materials to hold a mock election
- Student organizer template and discussion questions template
- Class and take-home activities including templates
- Assessment rubric
- Glossary of election terms

Getting started

Here's what you need to get started:

Materials

The following materials are included in this kit:

- Ballot template
- Voters list template
- ID slips template
- Results sheet template

You will also need to supply:

- Ballot box (example in appendix)
- Voting screen (example in appendix)
- Pencils or markers
- Two voting tables

Roles

- Voters (the whole class)
- Two or more candidates
- Two election officials
- A Returning Officer

The **Returning Officer** is the local election officer responsible for coordinating the election in their electoral district. For this activity, the Returning Officer should be the teacher.

Returning Officer and election official duties:

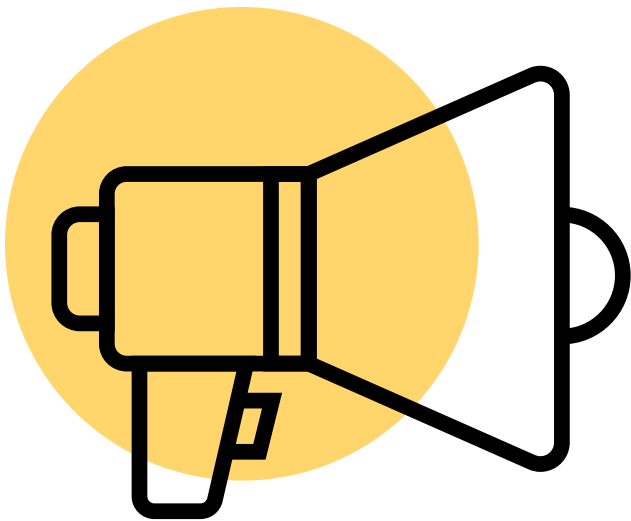
- The Returning Officer is responsible for overseeing the election and making sure the voting process is followed. They also announce the results to the class after the election.
- While the class discusses issues, the Returning Officer and election officials are neutral. They do not take a side on the issue and do not join the discussion. However, they do vote and should be included on the voters list and have ID.
- Election officials are responsible for checking the ID of voters, striking them off the voters list and giving out ballots. Once everyone has voted, election officials count how many votes each candidate has received. They give these results to the Returning Officer for review.

Curriculum connections

B3. demonstrate an understanding of the roles and key responsibilities of citizens and of the different levels of government in Canada, including First Nations, Métis, and Inuit governments.

B3.1 describe the major rights and responsibilities associated with citizenship in Canada (e.g. rights: equal protection under the law, freedom of speech, freedom of religion, the right to vote; responsibilities: to respect the rights of others, to participate in the electoral process and political decision making, to improve their communities).

B3.9 describe some different ways in which citizens can take action to address social and environmental issues.



Before the activity

1. Print enough ID slips for each student.
2. Set up at least two voting stations with a ballot box, results sheet, voting screen, and marker. In the **short activity**, there are two voting locations with the same list of candidates. In the **long activity**, the class is divided into two electoral districts; each district will have its own voting location and list of candidates.
3. Assign students to one of the two voting locations for when they cast their vote at the end of the short activity or to an electoral district (long activity).
4. Enter the names of the students assigned to vote at each location, or in each electoral district, into the corresponding voters list templates and print one copy of each list. Place the list on the respective table with a pen.

Ontario is divided into geographic areas called **electoral districts**. Each electoral district is represented by the Member of Provincial Parliament (MPP) elected for that district.

During the activity

1. If a student is going to be the Returning Officer, ask for a volunteer for that role first. If not, the teacher carries out these duties (refer to description of the role and responsibilities on page 3).
2. The Returning Officer chooses two student volunteers to help as election officials.
3. The Returning Officer distributes ID slips (see appendix) to students and has them fill out the slip. This is their **ID** to vote.

During a real election, voters must show **ID** proving their name and address to vote. If a voter is registered on the voters list, they will be mailed a voter information card during an election telling them when and where to vote. They should also bring this card with them when they vote.

Option 1: Short activity

CANDIDATE SELECTION

In this activity, student voters will be divided between two voting locations (tables). There will be one set of candidates for the class, and each candidate puts together their own platform.

1. Pick a topic that students would have multiple perspectives on. This could be a headline story, a classroom or school decision, or a hypothetical decision that would impact the students. Some examples are:
 - a. Should students wear uniforms?
 - b. What province/territory do you think is the best in Canada and why?
 - c. Should kids be allowed to eat junk food?
2. Give students time to write down their position on the topic using the organizer, **My perspective**. They should try to make these reasons as convincing as possible. Encourage students to complete some basic research on the topic if class resources allow.
3. Explain to students that their perspective on the issue will act as their platform.
4. Ask the class for volunteers who believe strongly in their position to be candidates. Make sure you have at least two students willing to be candidates. The students should represent different arguments on the topic chosen in step one.

5. The candidates stand at the front of the class together. This is a mock political debate. Each candidate has one minute to convince the class to vote for their position.
6. Select a student to be the debate moderator. This student will time the candidate speeches and call on other students to ask questions.
7. After the debate, the class gets to ask the candidates about their position. Give students some time to brainstorm questions, working in partners or small groups using the worksheet, **Formulating questions.**
8. Set an agreed upon time with the class (e.g. 15 minutes) for the question period. The student moderator should make sure to give different students a chance to ask questions and monitor the time allowed for the debate.

Teacher note: During the debate, add the candidates' names to the ballots (either digitally or manually). Divide the ballots between the election officials at the two voting stations.

Option 2: Long activity

CANDIDATE SELECTION

In this activity, the class will be divided in half into two electoral districts (two separate areas of the classroom). Each electoral district will have its own set of candidates, chosen by the party. Assign one election official to each district.

1. Pick a topic that students would have multiple perspectives or opinions on. This could be a headline story, a classroom or school decision, a hypothetical decision that would impact the students.
 - a. Should schools have a uniform policy?
 - b. What province/territory do you think is the best in Canada and why?
 - c. Should kids be allowed to eat junk food?

Teacher note: These questions are designed to elicit varied positions and not just a Yes/No response. For example, question A could garner perspectives such as agreeing to a uniform policy, rejecting a uniform policy, agreeing to it under certain conditions such as student input, rejecting a uniform but agreeing to a dress code, etc.

2. Give students time to write down their position on the topic using **My perspective** in Appendix A. They should try to make these reasons as convincing as possible. Encourage students to complete some basic research on the topic if class resources allow.

3. As a whole class, identify several positions on the topic and post them in a visible location. Divide the class into groups. Assign a position to each of the groups except for one.
4. Groups that have been assigned a position are **political parties**. The groups should work together to review the reasons listed on their **My perspective** organizers and discuss why their position is important. This is their platform that will be presented to the class.
5. The group that has not been assigned a position is a group of undecided voters. While the other groups are discussing their position and creating their platform, this group should discuss the issue from all angles. They do not need to reach an agreement on the issue. They can also start brainstorming questions for the candidates using **Formulating questions** in Part B of Appendix A.
6. Students in political parties should choose two members of their party to be the candidates. Each candidate will run in one of the electoral districts in the class.

Teacher note: Prepare two sets of ballots—one for each electoral district. Add the candidates' names for one electoral district to the ballots and print enough for half the class, with a few extra. Give these ballots to the corresponding election official. Do the same for the second electoral district. This task can be completed by student volunteers or the teacher.

7. The candidates stand at the front of the class together for the debate. Each team of two has one to two minutes to share their platform and convince the class that their position is the best.

Teacher note: Remind students that the candidates should work hard to persuade the undecided voters. Explain to students that in a democracy, persuasion is used rather than coercion to get people to do what you want.

You can also remind students that taking part in public discussion and debate on civic issues is an important democratic responsibility.

8. Select a student to be the debate moderator. This student will time the candidate speeches and call on other students to ask questions.
9. After the debate, the class gets to ask the candidates about their position. Give students some time to brainstorm questions, working in partners or small groups using the worksheet, **Formulating questions**.
10. Set an agreed upon time with the class (e.g. 15 minutes) for the question period. The student moderator should make sure to give different students a chance to ask questions and monitor the time allowed for the debate.

Teacher note: During the debate, add the candidates' names to the ballots (either digitally or manually). Divide the ballots between the electoral districts.

VOTING (SHORT AND LONG ACTIVITY)

For both the short and long activity, have the class vote on the platforms the candidates presented.

1. The candidates return to their seats following questions. The campaign is now finished, and voting begins.
2. The election officials take their seats at the voting stations.
3. Students line up for their assigned voting location with their ID slips.
4. One at a time, the students go to their assigned location and show their ID to the election official.
5. The election official checks that their name is on the voters list and runs a line through their name with a ruler and pen to strike them off the voters list. Being “struck off” the voters list means you have received your ballot to vote and cannot vote again in the election.
6. The election official then folds a ballot in half and gives it to the student.
7. The student takes the ballot and goes behind the voting screen to mark it in private. See below for the different ways students can mark their ballots.
8. The student folds the ballot, so no one can see how they voted, and takes it back to the election official, who directs them to put it in the ballot box.

Before voting, let students know about the different ways they can mark their ballot and remind them that how they choose to vote is up to them.

MARKING A BALLOT FOR A CANDIDATE

To vote for a candidate, students should mark an X in the circle beside the candidate’s name.

DECLINING A BALLOT

Voters in Ontario have the right to decline their ballot. This is a public process and is done out loud. If a student wants to decline their ballot, they can tell the election official this.

The election official will strike their name off the voters list and write “declined” on their ballot. The ballot will be kept separate and recorded separately in the results.

UNMARKED BALLOTS

A ballot will be counted in the results as “unmarked” if no mark has been made by the voter on the ballot and it has been deposited into the ballot box.

REJECTED BALLOTS

A ballot may be counted as rejected in the results if it is marked with initials or another identifying mark or marked outside of one of the circles beside the candidates’ names.

IF THEY MAKE A MISTAKE

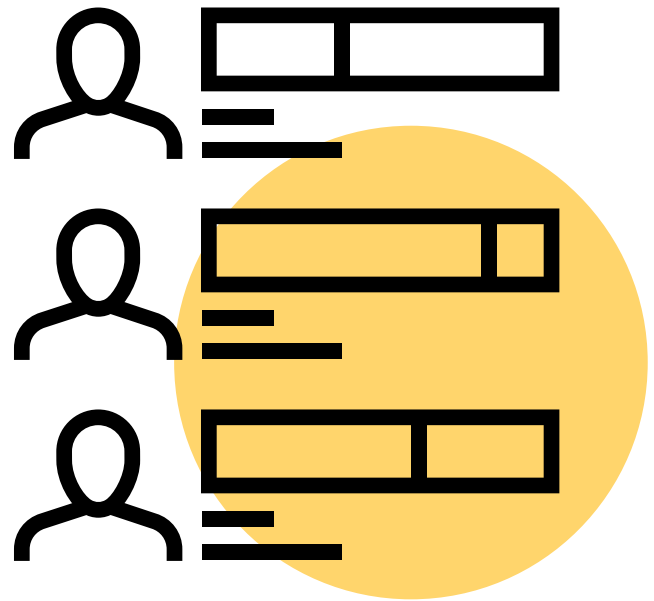
If a student makes a mistake while marking their ballot, they can take their ballot to the election official and ask for a replacement. The election official will write “cancelled” on the ballot and issue the voter a new ballot. Cancelled ballots are kept separate but are not part of the results.

RESULTS (SHORT AND LONG ACTIVITY)

Once all students have voted, including the election officials and Returning Officer, the election officials will open the ballot box to count the ballots.

Make sure any leftover or cancelled ballots have been cleared from the table, so they are not accidentally counted.

1. On the results sheet, the election official will list the names of the candidates and record how many votes each candidate received.
2. If any ballots have been declined, the election official will record the number on the results sheet.
3. If any ballots have been marked incorrectly, or not marked at all, the election official will record the number of rejected or unmarked ballots in the results sheet. If a ballot isn't marked properly, it is up to the election official to decide if it should be counted or rejected. Candidates have the option to challenge the official's decision and make their case, but the final decision is up to the official.
4. The election official will give the results sheet and the ballots (back in the ballot box) to the Returning Officer.
5. The Returning Officer will announce the official results to the class.



Discussion and activities

Post-election reflection: Understanding perspective

What role(s) did you play in the election?

Election official	Voter	Political party member	Undecided voter	Political candidate
How did the role you played affect your participation? <i>(e.g. Were you nervous? Did you know how you were going to vote? Were you able to listen and pay attention to all the candidates? What were your priorities?)</i>				
Did the candidates' speeches match your own perspective on the issue? <i>(Explain why you think different people have different views on issues)</i>				
Did a candidate persuade you to change your perspective? What convinced you to vote how you did?				
Based on this activity, why do you think some people do not vote?				
Based on this activity, do you feel ready to vote in the future? Why or why not?				
In addition to voting, what are some other actions elementary students could take to contribute to their community?				

Letter-writing activity: Future voters

Have students complete a letter addressed to “Ontario Voter” signed by “Ontario’s Future Voters.” Separate the class into smaller groups and have each group draft one paragraph of the letter, based on a prompt. A template is provided for this activity and student responses could be posted on a poster or bulletin board and displayed in the classroom. Photographs of the children could be posted alongside with “I am a future voter!”.

Dear Ontario Voters,

- It’s election time when _____
- If we could vote, we would think about _____
- When we become voters, we will _____
- Before voting, it’s important to _____

- In the future, I’ll vote:
 - so that _____
 - because _____
 - for my community to _____
 - for a future that is _____

Sincerely,

Ontario’s Future Voters

Take-home interview activity for students

Get students to speak with a voter in their life to learn more about their attitudes about voting. A template is provided for them to fill in the responses.

Get to know a voter

Now that you have voted, talk to an adult you know (a family member, family friend, coach or teacher) about what voting means to them.

- Do you vote? Why or why not?
- How do you decide who to vote for?
- How would you feel if you were no longer allowed to vote?
- Did you or someone you know ever have a hard time voting?
- Have you voted in another country besides Canada? How was it the same or different?

Teacher note: Consider contacting a secondary school in your neighbourhood or school board to match your students with Grade 12 students who will soon be first time voters. Your students could interview the senior students about their thoughts on voting. The questions above could be amended to reflect this as needed.



Assessment

Criteria	1	2	3	4	Feedback
Knowledge - shows understanding of the responsibilities of citizens					
Thinking - responses are well planned and reveal critical thinking about the voting process					
Communication - organization of ideas in written/audio/visual form results in clear communication					
Application - electoral/voting process makes connection between mock elections lesson and real world electoral/voting process					

Glossary

Find definitions for election terms

ADVANCE VOTING

Advance voting is a set number of days during the election period where you can vote in person before election day using a ballot with a list of candidates.

BALLOT

A ballot is a piece of paper that lists the candidates and their political parties (if applicable) who are running for office. To vote for a candidate, mark an “X” on the ballot in the white circle beside the name of the candidate of your choice.

CANDIDATE

A candidate is a person running to be a Member of Provincial Parliament (MPP), who has been issued a Certificate of Nomination from a Returning Officer or the Chief Electoral Officer during the election period.

CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICER

The Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) is an Officer of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council to oversee provincial elections in Ontario.

DECLINED BALLOT

Ontario’s election law allows voters to decline their ballot. This is a public process and is done out loud. The election official will mark “declined” on the election documentation and the ballot will be placed in an envelope for declined ballots. Declined ballots will be counted and reported after the polls close on election night and included in the official results as “declined ballots”.

ELECTION DAY

An election period ends with election day, which is the last day to vote in an election.

ELECTION PERIOD

The election period begins the day the writ is issued and ends on election day.

ELECTOR

An elector is a person who is eligible to vote in an Ontario provincial election. To be eligible, you must be at least 18 years old, a Canadian citizen and a resident of Ontario.

ELECTORAL DISTRICT (ED)

A geographical area of the province defined in the Representation Act that is represented by a Member of Provincial Parliament (MPP) in the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

MAJORITY GOVERNMENT

When the total number of government seats in the house exceeds the total number of opposition seats.

MARKED BALLOT

A marked ballot is one that has an X in one of the circles next to the candidates' names. Marked ballots will be counted and reported after the polls close on election night and included in the official results as accepted ballots marked for candidate.

MINORITY GOVERNMENT

When the total number of opposition seats in the house exceeds the total number of government seats.

OFFICIAL TABULATION

During official tabulation, the Returning Officer compiles the results for each candidate from the results tabulated by election officials on election night. At the conclusion of the official tabulation, each Returning Officer declares the candidate with the most votes to be elected. Candidates or their designated representatives are invited to official tabulation to observe the proceedings.

PERMANENT REGISTER OF ELECTORS FOR ONTARIO

The Permanent Register of Electors for Ontario (PREO), more commonly known as the voters list, includes the names and addresses of people who are eligible to vote in Ontario. Information on the register is updated from a variety of sources including Elections Canada, other government agencies, and through direct updates from electors.

When an election is called, information from the Permanent Register of Electors for Ontario is used to create the voters list for each electoral district.

POLITICAL PARTY

A political party is an organization that is registered with Elections Ontario and has run at least two candidates in an election.

REJECTED BALLOT

If a voter marks their ballot with initials or another identifying mark, or marks outside of one of the circles beside the candidates' names, their ballot may be rejected. Rejected ballots will be counted and reported after the polls close on election night and included in the official results as "rejected ballots".

RETURNING OFFICER

A Returning Officer is the election official who is appointed to administer an election in an electoral district by the Lieutenant Governor in Council (the Cabinet) upon the recommendation of the Chief Electoral Officer.

UNMARKED BALLOT

If a voter does not mark their ballot and places it in the ballot box, the ballot will be considered unmarked.

VOTER

A voter is an elector who accepts a ballot from an election official.

VOTERS LIST

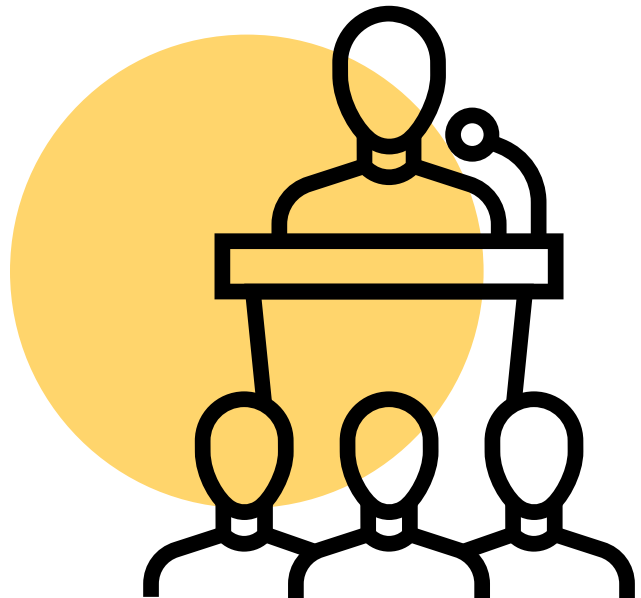
The voters list is the common way of referring to the Permanent Register of Electors for Ontario.

VOTING LOCATION

A building or other facility selected by a Returning Officer to be a location where voting takes place.

Templates

- **ID template**
- **Ballot template**
- **Voters list template**
- **Result tally sheet template**
- **Future Voters letter classroom activity template**
- **Get to know a voter template**
- **Classroom layout diagram**
- **Ballot box guide**
- **Voting screen guide**





NOTICE OF REGISTRATION
Election Day

AVIS D'ENREGISTREMENT
Jour de l'élection

Voting Hours

Heures de scrutin

ELECTORAL DISTRICT /
CIRCONSCRIPTION
ÉLECTORALE:

POLL NUMBER /
BUREAU DE VOTE:

**YOU VOTE AT/
VOUS VOYEZ AU**

This card contains revised information and replaces any other card you may have received.

Cette carte contient une information révisée et remplace toute autre carte déjà reçue.

REVISED/RÉVISÉE

Please take your ID and this card when you go to vote.

Veuillez apporter vos pièces d'identité et cette carte quand vous irez voter.



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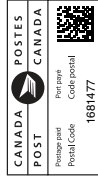
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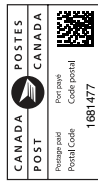
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Ballot template

Copy the number of ballots you will need for your class. If there are fewer than six candidates, you may cut the ballots down to the required size.

Candidate 1	<input type="radio"/>	Candidate 1	<input type="radio"/>
Candidate 2	<input type="radio"/>	Candidate 2	<input type="radio"/>
Candidate 3	<input type="radio"/>	Candidate 3	<input type="radio"/>
Candidate 4	<input type="radio"/>	Candidate 4	<input type="radio"/>
Candidate 5	<input type="radio"/>	Candidate 5	<input type="radio"/>
Candidate 6	<input type="radio"/>	Candidate 6	<input type="radio"/>
<hr/>			
Candidate 1	<input type="radio"/>	Candidate 1	<input type="radio"/>
Candidate 2	<input type="radio"/>	Candidate 2	<input type="radio"/>
Candidate 3	<input type="radio"/>	Candidate 3	<input type="radio"/>
Candidate 4	<input type="radio"/>	Candidate 4	<input type="radio"/>
Candidate 5	<input type="radio"/>	Candidate 5	<input type="radio"/>
Candidate 6	<input type="radio"/>	Candidate 6	<input type="radio"/>

Voters list template

The Poll Official should have a copy of the voters list.

The Poll Official crosses the voter's name off of the voters list with a ruler and writes the voter's name and the voter's number on the "Poll Record." When the voter deposits their ballot put an "X" under "Voted" beside the voter's name.

Electoral district - name of school or organization		
Municipality	Urban Rural	Polling division no. - Grade

Number	Name of elector	Voted
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		
11		
12		
13		
14		
15		
16		
17		
18		
19		
20		

Certified as to completeness and correctness	Date
Signature(s) of teacher(s)/group leader(s)	

Result tally sheet template

Returning Officer (teacher's name): _____

Voting location (name of class): _____

Use the table below to tally the votes in your Election Simulation (mock election). Write in the name of each candidate. Beside each name, indicate the number of votes for that candidate.

	Count total
Number of ballots cast for candidate #1:	
Number of ballots cast for candidate #2:	
Number of ballots cast for candidate #3:	
Number of ballots cast for candidate #4:	
Number of rejected ballots: (ballots that have an improper marking—not an “X”)	
Number of unmarked ballots: (ballots placed in ballot box that do not have any marking on them)	
Total number of ballots cast	

Number of ballots not used:	
Total number of ballots cast:	
Total (box 1):	

(This is the total number of ballots that were prepared for the “mock” election)	
Total (box 2):	

The figure in box 1 should equal the figure in box 2.

Signature of Poll Official (student assigned to be poll official): _____

Date: _____

When Resource Sheet 4.3 Running an Election Ballot Tally is completed, the Poll Official gives it to the teacher. (The teacher is the Returning Officer.) The Poll Official must also give a copy of the Ballot Tally Sheet to the Scrutineer (or Candidate's Representative in a federal election) for each political party. Remind students to keep the results confidential until the winner is declared.

Future Voters letter

Dear Ontario Voters,

It's election time, when

If we could vote, we would think about

When we become voters, we will

Before voting, it's important to

In the future, I'll vote:

so that

because

for my community to

for a future that is

Sincerely,

Ontario's Future Voters

Get to know a voter

Now that you have voted, talk to an adult you know (a family member, family friend, coach or teacher) about what voting means to them.

Person Interviewed (e.g. a family member, family friend, coach, teacher):

Do you vote? Why or why not?

How do you decide who to vote for?

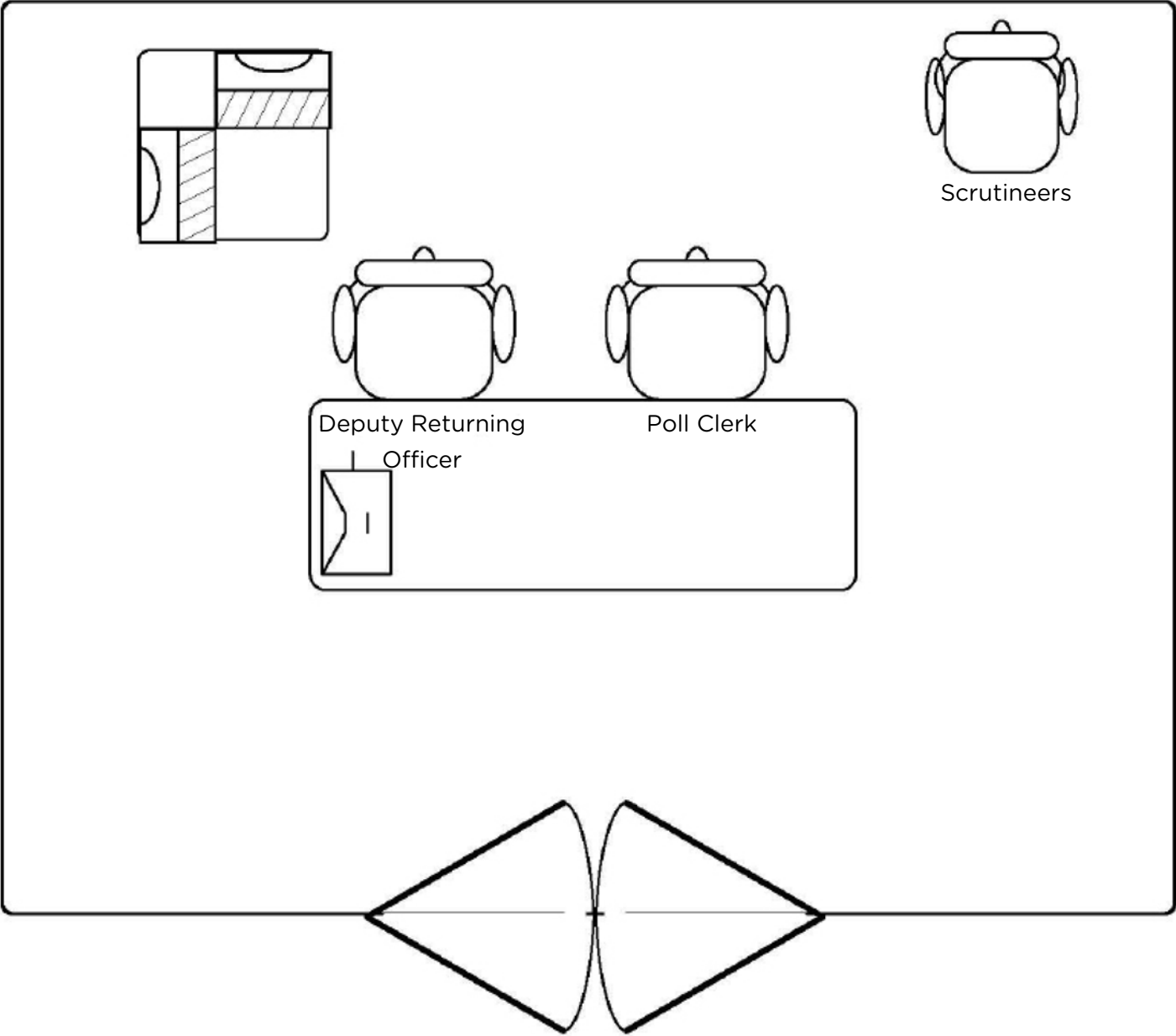
How would you feel if you were no longer allowed to vote?

Did you or someone you know ever have a hard time voting?

Have you voted in another country besides Canada? How was it the same or different?

Classroom layout diagram

Election day: Single poll

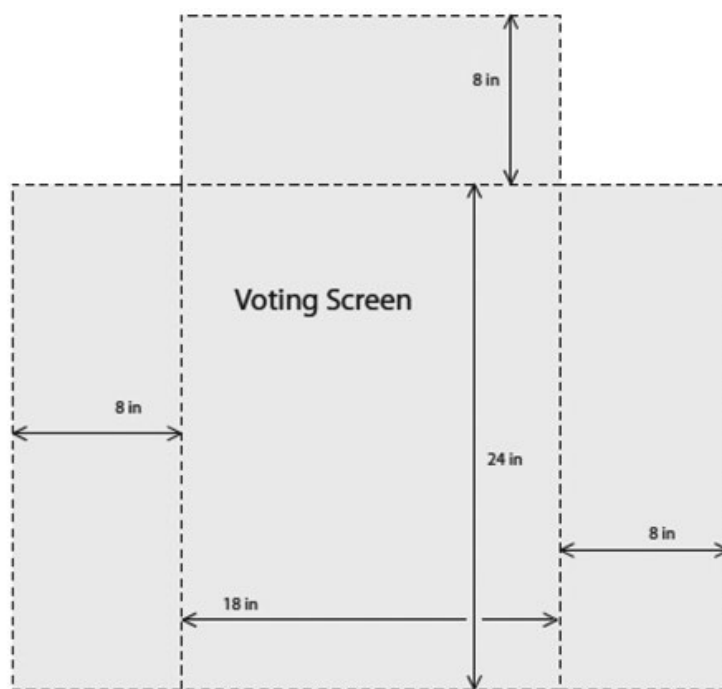


- Table
- Table for voting screens
- Doorway
- Chair
- Voting screens
- Ballot box

Voting screen guide

What to do

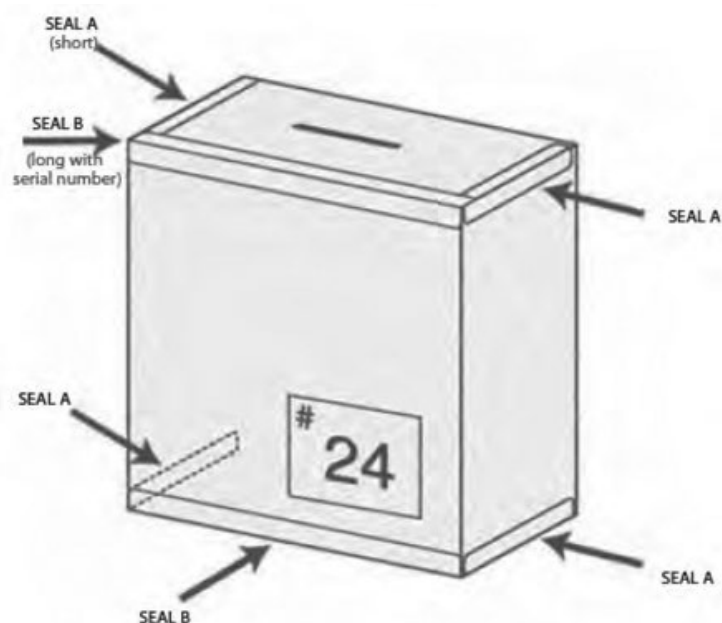
As shown in the POLLING PLACE LAYOUT, a polling booth must have a voting screen so that voters can mark their ballot in secret. Using the dimensions indicated here, have a student construct a voting screen from cardboard for use in your Election Simulation.



Ballot box guide

What to do

As shown in the POLLING PLACE LAYOUT, a polling place must have a ballot box. An official ballot box would look something like the image on the right. For your election simulation, you could have a student construct a cardboard replica of this ballot box. A simple box with a slot in the lid for ballots would also work. To make it more like a real election, place a ballot box cover over the slot. This can be a piece of cardboard cut to be about the same size as the top of the ballot box.



Appendix

Student organizer

Part A: My perspective

Topic:	
My perspective: A perspective is your position on the topic. This has to do with your values and beliefs in relation to the topic. You can draw on your personal experiences and what you think is important.	
Reasons to support my perspective: What are the major reasons behind your beliefs on the topic? List them in point form.	
3 sentence wrap-up: Sum up your thinking in three sentences or less.	

Part B: Formulating questions

Questioning is an important skill that helps you learn and think. Good questions can make you think about something in new ways and can even lead to better questions!

TYPES OF QUESTIONS

Close-ended questions	Can only be answered with a simple response like “yes” or “no”. They don’t really require the person answering to think about their answer too deeply.
Open-ended questions	Cannot be answered with a simple “yes” or “no”; the person answering needs to explain their response. This helps you to see things from their perspective.

For this activity, you will try to formulate open-ended questions. Here are some question prompts to help you create your questions:

What do you think about...?

What did you mean when you said...?

Have you ever thought about...?

What examples can you give...?

What would happen if...?

What is your opinion on...?

How do you feel about...?

Use the organizer below to help you formulate TWO questions as you listen to the debate. Try to use one of the question prompts to start your question. **Remember to keep your questions related to the speeches, avoid personal or irrelevant questions.**

<p>Claim/Argument</p> <p>What point is the speaker making?</p>	
<p>Questions I have:</p>	
<p>Claim/Argument</p> <p>What point is the speaker making?</p>	
<p>Questions I have:</p>	



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