

Student Vote



Getting started

How do I use this resource?

This resource was developed for elementary school students, specifically grades 5 and 6. However, these lessons may be applicable to any elementary grade level with your own modifications.

Each lesson includes a broad list of learning outcomes that will correlate with your province or territory's mandated curriculum. These curriculum correlations cover a variety of subject matter including Social Studies, Language Arts, Visual Arts and Mathematics.

Please take note of the Extensions and Home Connections which have been included for the purpose of generating greater in-depth study, cross-curricular applications and engaging families through student driven conversation.

Why is it important to encourage family discussion?

Based on extensive feedback from past programs, we know that students are eager to share their knowledge with family and friends, engaging them in conversation about the election. This family exchange allows students to explore different points of view and further develop habits of informed citizenship. Discuss ideas with your students that may encourage 'democracy at the dinner table' as take home assignments.

Should I extend the program to the entire school?

Yes! Teachers report increased satisfaction when the entire school has the opportunity to vote. Engaging more grades than just your own can be an empowering experience for your students – let them take on the challenge of organizing the campaign and hosting Student Vote Day for their peers.

How does Student Vote Day work?

During National Student Vote Week, October 6th to 10th, hundreds of thousands of students from across Canada will cast a Student Vote ballot. The results of the Student Vote will be shared with media partners for broadcast and publication following the official election.

Please respect the confidentiality of the Student Vote results after submission. We keep them confidential until the close of the official polls on Election Night (October 14th, 2008), so that students experience the same process as adult voters.

Thank you!

As always, the Student Vote Team is here to support you and your students. Please feel free to contact us through www.studentvote.ca or call toll free, 1.866.488.8775 for any assistance.

Acknowledgements

Student Vote and Elections Canada have partnered to provide this resource and parallel election project.

The resource has been modified from the “You Choose” Resource developed by the Elementary Teachers’ Federation of Ontario and the Ontario English Catholic Teachers’ Association in 2004.

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Lesson 1: Our Rights & Responsibilities



The inherent rights and responsibilities of citizens are key to a democratic government. Students should be able to discuss what a “right” is and understand that for every right there is an inherent responsibility.

A right is “an abstract idea of that which is due to a person or governmental body by law or tradition or nature”. An example of a right we all have is the right to an education. With every right comes a responsibility.

A responsibility is “the social force that binds you to your obligations and the courses of action demanded by that force”. If we have the right to an education, then the responsibility we have is to work hard and respect others’ right to learn.

PURPOSE

Students will work in cooperative groups while investigating the concepts of rights and responsibilities.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Social Studies

- demonstrate an understanding that for every right (e.g., the right of democratic governance) there is a responsibility (e.g., the responsibility to vote)

Language:

- express and respond to ideas and opinions concisely, clearly, and appropriately.
- contribute and work constructively in groups.

MATERIALS

- Chart paper or overhead
- Markers
- 1.1 Rights and Responsibilities Chart

LESSON OUTLINE

1. In a whole group brainstorming session, ask the students if they know what a “right” is. Examples may be the right to speak in class, the right to choose our own friends, the right to practice any religion, and the right to a safe classroom.
2. Record all responses so that students can see their responses (This can be done on a chart, overhead, digital projection system, blackboard, etc).
3. Ask the students to reflect on the responsibilities that go with each of these rights. For example, the right to speak in class is associated with the responsibility to listen

to others and be respectful and considerate when expressing an opinion. The right to choose our own friends is associated with the responsibility to make good decisions when associated with a particular group of friends. The right to a safe classroom is associated with the responsibility not to bully others and not to stand by while others are being bullied.

Example:

RIGHT	PRO	CON	RESPONSIBILITY
You have the right to choose your own friends at school	It is important to have good friends you can trust	Sometimes friends can pressure you to do things you would not otherwise do.	You must stay true to yourself and make decisions based on your own comfort and not someone else’s.
You have the right to speak in class	It is important to be able to state and defend your opinion.	You must be respectful of others and be reflective about the opinions you hold in order to determine if the opinions you hold can be hurtful to others.	You must take into consideration the appropriateness or truthfulness of the opinions you hold when sharing these opinions with others.
You have the right to a safe classroom.	In a safe classroom, you can take risks and push yourself to be the best you can be when you are in a safe environment. You will not be bullied, made fun of, or threatened by others.	Sometimes, taking risks can be intimidating and you may be criticized.	You must be willing to speak up for others and stop bullying in the classroom by reporting it to an adult or simply standing up to the bully yourself.

4. Divide the class into three groups. Assign one of the following to each of the three groups: home rights, peer rights, and school rights. Each group will brainstorm and record the rights they feel they should have either at home, within their peer group, or at school. Present groups’ ideas to the whole class once groups have completed their lists. Using the lists of rights, students will work in pairs to complete 1.1 Rights and Responsibilities Chart, indicating the right, a pro and con of that right, and the responsibility that goes along with the right.

ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES

Students may be assessed on their ability to work within a group, their understanding of rights and responsibilities, as well as their ability to communicate these understandings clearly and concisely.

MODIFICATIONS AND ADAPTATIONS

When forming cooperative groups, it is essential to determine a variety of strengths and learning styles present in each group. Students may complete the charts according to their ability.

EXTENSIONS

Social Studies: To further understand the concept of rights, review 1.2 The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms with your students. Afterwards, have students determine which right is most important to them and ask them to develop an exposition to support their opinion.

Current Events: Students can review the daily newspaper to find stories about rights denied to Canadian citizens and people around the world. These stories can be posted on a bulletin board in the appropriate section.

HOME CONNECTIONS

Students can discuss with parents and/or siblings the rights they feel are most important at home and negotiate the responsibilities associated with these rights. Some examples might be:

Right	Responsibility
The right to a clean and organized home.	Responsibility to clean and organize his or her room.
The right to three proper meals.	Responsibility to eat properly and healthfully.
The right to a safe home.	Responsibility to be kind to all members of the family

RESOURCES

Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms
<http://laws.justice.gc.ca/en/charter>

Human Rights in Canada: A Historical Perspective
<http://www.chrc-ccdp.ca/en/index.asp>

Bineshiinh Dibaajmowin/Bird Talk.
 Lenore Keeshig-Tobias. Toronto: Sister Vision: Black Women and Women of Colour Press, 1991, ISBN 0920813895.
 This book tells the story of a First Nations girl who is teased at school about her identity and heritage. She is strengthened by her mother’s support through the telling of First Nations stories and explanations around the truth of Christopher Columbus.

The Diary of a Young Girl.
 Anne Frank. Bantam, 1993, ISBN 0553296981.
 This diary, originally published in 1947, documents the struggles of an adolescent girl in hiding during the Nazi occupation of Amsterdam in the Second World War.

Anne Frank Webquest. (As of August 2007)
<http://cte.jhu.edu/techacademy/web/2000/jordon/final.html>
 This Web Quest takes the user on a journey through many issues related to the Holocaust, its victims, and its survivors to better understand the world of Anne Frank.

1.1 - RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES CHART

Name: _____

RIGHT	PRO	CON	RESPONSIBILITY

1.2 - CANADIAN CHARTER OF RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS

<p>Fundamental Rights</p>	<p>Included here are the freedom of conscience and religion³; freedom of thought, belief, opinion, and expression including the freedom of the press and other media⁴; freedom of peaceful assembly⁵; and freedom of association⁶.</p>
<p>Democratic Rights</p>	<p>Democratic rights include the right for every Canadian, 18 years of age or older, to vote in an election, to be a candidate, and the requirement that governments hold elections at least every five years and that these governments meet at least every year to pass laws.</p>
<p>Mobility Rights</p>	<p>Mobility rights mean that all Canadians can choose to live and work in any province or territory in Canada. Linked to this is the right that Canadians have to live in, leave, or re-enter Canada whenever they choose.</p>
<p>Legal Rights</p>	<p>Legal rights guarantee that Canadians ,when arrested, must be told their right to see a lawyer and must be tried within a reasonable amount of time. Canadians are also guaranteed the right to be presumed innocent until proven guilty.</p>
<p>Equality Rights</p>	<p>It is against the law in Canada to discriminate against any Canadian on the basis of race, national or ethnic origin, color, religion, sex, age, or mental or physical ability.</p>
<p>Official Languages of Canada</p>	<p>All Canadians have the right to use either English or French in communications with Canada’s federal government and some of Canada’s provincial governments.</p>
<p>Minority Language Education Rights</p>	<p>This right guarantees that French and English minorities in every province and territory have the right to be educated in their own language.</p>

³ This means that Canadians are free to worship the religion of their choice or not to worship at all.

⁴ This means that unless the media report something that is untrue, the media cannot be prevented from reporting anything that happens inside Canada.

⁵ This means that Canadians can meet as a group in private or public provided that it is done so in a non-violent and peaceful way.

⁶ This means that Canadians have the right to associate or befriend anyone they choose and the government does not have the right to limit these associations.

Lesson 2: Voting in a Democracy



One of the fundamental rights that is set out in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms is the right of every Canadian, age eighteen and older, to vote in an election.

Voting is a fundamental right to citizens living in a democratic country

PURPOSE

Students will compare various forms of government with respect to the right to vote and then review the history of the vote in Canada to better understand how and why this right developed in Canada.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Social Studies

- demonstrate an understanding of the rights of Canadians
- demonstrate an understanding that for every right (e.g., the right of a democratic governance) there is a responsibility (e.g., the responsibility to vote)
- identify the characteristics of different systems of government (e.g., democracy, dictatorship, monarchy)

Language Arts

- use research skills (e.g., formulate questions, locate information, and compare information from a variety of sources).

MATERIALS

- Paper
- 2.1 Voting Survey

LESSON OUTLINE

1. Begin with an introduction to decision-making. For example, tell your class that they will be going on a field trip the following week. Explain that only a few people can be part of the decision making process. Then invite three students to have a private discussion about potential ideas (there must be no input from the rest of the class). Afterwards, announce a decision based on the conversation.

End with a conversation about the decision-making process. Was everyone happy with the decision? Why or why not? How did it make the decision-makers feel? How did it make the non-decision makers feel? Is there a better way to make the decision?

2. Have a conversation about making decisions. Use the following questions:
 - How many of you make decisions with your friends?
 - What type of decisions do you make?
 - Have you ever disagreed about what choices to make?
 - How did you come to a decision or conclusion?
 - Was everyone satisfied with the decision or conclusion? Why or why not?
3. Your conversation should end with the following points.
 - We make decisions all in the time in groups.
 - In some situations everyone has a say or an opportunity to express their opinion.
 - In other situations, only one or a few people have an opportunity to express their opinion.
 - In some cases, not everyone will agree, but a decision or choice still needs to be made.
4. Explain the concept of government. The role of each government is to make decisions that will affect the people living in the country, province/territory or, city/town. Provide some examples of government responsibilities or decisions to help explain the concept. For example:
5. Explain that there are various types of government in the world and that different countries make decisions for their people in different ways. Review the three forms of government below. Relate it back to the field trip decision from the beginning of the lesson.

Although there are many forms of each type of government, at this level the following definitions should be used:

 - Democracy – government in which political power is retained by all the people. In a representative democracy, power may be delegated to their elected representatives.
 - Dictatorship – government in which a ruler possesses absolute power.
 - Monarchy – government with a monarch at the head.

Teacher Notes:

Re: Monarchy – Canada is a parliamentary democracy. It is also a monarchy in that the Queen is our head of state. A monarchy can be a democracy or a dictatorship.

6. Explain to the students that Canada is considered a democracy. This means that all citizens aged 18 and over have the right to vote in elections and referendums in the country (or province/territory).
7. Considering the definitions, how will each type of government impact a person's right to vote under that type of rule?
8. Discuss the differences between types of government in terms of peoples' rights and whether or not free elections occur in that country or civilization. Students should be critical in their understanding of who is afforded the right to vote in a specific country based on who would be defined as a citizen. Students should be made aware who would be considered a citizen and who would not be (e.g. women, various racial groups, etc). Today, free and fair elections are based on the concept that all citizens meeting the age requirement, regardless of gender, race, belief, or social status, are eligible to vote.

9. Take your students through a simulation exercise to better help them understand universal suffrage. For example:
 - Develop a referendum issue that relates to their school experience or community (e.g. the construction of a new playground and elements that should be incorporated).
 - Briefly have a discussion about issue, so that students can hear ideas and develop an opinion.
 - Hold a vote on the issue, but inform the students that not everyone is allowed to vote. (e.g. Students born in the spring or summer are disenfranchised)
 - Afterwards, ask the students that were disenfranchised: How did the experience make you feel? Did the results reflect your opinion or what you wanted?
10. Review the history of the vote in Canada by researching various resources, such as the following web site: <http://www.elections.ca/content.asp?section=gen&document=index&dir=his&lang=e&textonly=false>
11. As a class, create a timeline indicating key points in the history of vote in Canada. Include these key points:
 - a. Confederation in 1867
 - b. Women’s right to vote in provincial/territorial elections (examples, Ontario provincial elections in 1917; Manitoba provincial elections in 1916; Québec provincial elections in 1940) and federal elections in 1918
 - c. Denial of Japanese Canadians’ right to vote during WWII (1939-1945)
 - d. First Nations people on reserves win right to vote in 1960
 - e. Voting age lowered to 18 years of age in 1970
 - f. The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms establishes the fundamental right to vote in 1982
 - g. Bill passes to ensure access for people with disabilities to vote in 1992

Teacher Notes:

Explain the difference between having the right to vote and being able to exercise that right using 11.g. above as a case in point.

12. Discuss the upcoming election.
13. Provide each student with a copy of 2.1 - Voting Survey. Ask the students to speak to three eligible voters and write down their responses in the spaces provided on the survey.
14. The following day, have a whole group discussion about the responses collected. Find a way to display the information and/or share it with the rest of the school.

Teacher Notes: This survey has been designed to support voter awareness in the wider school community. Previous Student Vote programs have been found to encourage parents or guardians to get out to the polls.

15. Create a voter outreach activity that your class or school can implement during the campaign. Tell your students that they can have an impact on the election by encouraging people to vote. Can they increase voter turnout in the school’s electoral district? Report back to Student Vote about your plans.

ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES

Students will be assessed on their participation in the classroom discussion and completion of the homework assignment 2.1 – Voting Survey.

MODIFICATIONS AND ADAPTATIONS

Students can create visual timelines using photographs and putting them into slide shows on the computer. Students can work with partners to complete assignments.

EXTENSIONS

Media Studies: Students will select one of the key issues from Canadian history related to the right to vote and create a poster of this event. For example, students can create a poster in support of women’s right to vote. The year should be indicated on the poster. Another option is for students to design posters explaining to modern-day citizens of Canada why it is important to exercise the right to vote.

Data Management and Probability: Students can research and document the statistics related to how many Canadians exercised their right to vote in the most recent federal, provincial/territorial, and/or municipal elections.

Community Connections: Students can interview immigrants from a country where the right to vote does not exist to better understand why this right is so important. It may also be possible to interview a member of one of the groups that were recently granted the right or access to vote in Canada (e.g., Aboriginal Peoples, people with disabilities).

HOME CONNECTIONS

Students can have a discussion about their family’s history and how the Canadian history of the vote impacted the rights of family members. If the family were new to Canada, a discussion with parents about whether or not they had the right to vote in their previous country would be beneficial. Students can share stories with the class.

RESOURCES

<http://www.elections.ca/content.asp?section=gen&document=index&dir=his&lang=e&textonly=false%22>

Available in French and English, this site reviews the history of the right to vote in Canada. It begins with British North America Act when only affluent men were allowed to vote. It reviews the years from Confederation to the end of World War I and women’s rights. It reviews the years from the end of the World War I to modern times. It discusses the denial of the right to vote for Japanese Canadians during World War II. It also provides the statistic that one in four Canadians who can vote, choose not to exercise their right to do so. This site also includes a trivia game on the history of the vote in Canada.

<http://www2.parl.gc.ca/Parlinfo/compilations/ProvinceTerritory/ProvincialWomenRightToVote.aspx?Menu=ElectionsRidings-Election>

This website reviews the history of women’s right to vote in Canada. It provides details about the dates and legislation passed in each province/territory to address this issue.

2.1 VOTING SURVEY

<http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/suffrage.htm>

This site indicates when, if ever, countries around the world allowed women to vote in elections. For the same information in French visit www.ipu.org/wmn-f/suffrage.htm

<http://library.thinkquest.org/C004203/political/political01.htm>

This is a Web Quest dealing with ancient civilizations and democracy.

<http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/1999/china.50/red.giant/>

This site reviews communism in China.

<http://www.royal.gov.uk/output/Page1.asp>

This is the official site of the British monarchy.

<http://eng.tzar.ru/history/monarchy>

This site reviews the Russian monarchy.

www.elections.ca

This site has information about the current election, past election results and voter turnout statistics.

Participant 1: _____

Gender:	Age:
What is the date of the next federal election?	
Will you be voting in an advance poll or on Election Day?	
What advice do have for a first time voter?	

Participant 2: _____

Gender:	Age:
What is the date of the next federal election?	
Will you be voting in an advance poll or on Election Day?	
What advice do you have for a first time voter?	

Participant 3: _____

Gender:	Age:
What is the date of the next federal election?	
Will you be voting in an advance poll or on Election Day?	
What advice do you have for a first time voter?	

Lesson 3: Our Three Levels of Government



In Canada, there are three levels of government: federal, provincial/territorial and municipal. Each level of government has different responsibilities.

In order to participate in the Canadian democratic process as informed voters, it is important to have some basic knowledge of the structure and the responsibilities associated with each level of government.

PURPOSE

Students will research and record basic factual information about the levels of government in Canada.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Social Studies

- Describe the functions and interactions of different levels of government in Canada
- identify the structure of Canada's federal, provincial/territorial and municipal governments
- demonstrate an understanding of the components of the federal government
- use appropriate vocabulary
- locate relevant information from primary sources
- sort and classify relevant information to make comparisons
- identify current political leaders (local, provincial/territorial, and federal)

Language Arts

- use writing for various purposes including to summarize information from materials they have read.
- use research skills (e.g., locate and interpret information, and compare information from a variety of sources).

MATERIALS

- Access to the Internet
- Newspapers and books
- Chart or overhead
- 3.1 - Investigating Government
- 3.2 - Investigating Government: Teacher's Version
- 3.3 - What I Learned About Canada's Three Levels of Government

LESSON OUTLINE

1. In a whole group brainstorming session, ask the students if they know what a government does (eg. responsibilities). List the responses on a chart, blackboard or overhead.
2. Have a preliminary discussion about the three levels of government in Canada. Review some of the responses from 1 and identify which task or responsibility is associated with what level or which are shared among more than one level of government.
3. Distribute 3.1 - Investigating Government and have students work in pairs to complete the investigation. You may choose to complete this investigation as a webquest if your class has access to a computer lab, or you may divide your class into groups and provide resources such as books or newspapers.
4. Take up the worksheet as a class, allowing students to share their findings. It is important that students have accurate information, so ensure that students correct any errors in their own research as this discussion takes place.
5. Have students observe the common characteristics of each level of government identified by each row on the 3.1 - Investigating Government.

Teacher Notes: The information in 3.1 - Investigating Government can be used in a matching game.

ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES

Students may be assessed on their ability to work independently with a partner to locate and record relevant and accurate information, their understanding of government structures, as well as their ability to communicate these understandings with appropriate terminology and vocabulary. You may want to assess student learning using 1.3 - What I Learned About Canada's Three Levels of Government.

MODIFICATIONS AND ADAPTATIONS

When forming learning pairs, encourage students to choose someone who will help them focus on the learning task, and complete it in the time allocated. Weaker readers should find stronger readers to partner with. Some students could be asked to answer only the first, boldfaced, question in each row of the table. http://www2.actden.com/writ_den/g01/direct.htm is a website which is good for all learners but will be especially useful for students who have difficulty reading or are new to the English language. It provides information on government through a progression of levels of difficulty.

Teacher Notes: The language arts extension below is strongly recommended because it will help prepare students for an analysis of issues later in the campaign.

EXTENSIONS

Language Arts: Create a class list of federal ministerial departments on a chart (<http://canada.gc.ca/home.html>). Assign one department to each student or pair of students and ask them to research the services and programs provided by each ministry. Students can present their research to the class through oral and/or visual means.

Drama: Students can work in pairs or small groups to act out the various responsibilities and services for a specific government department or ministry. Ask the class to guess the level of government following each drama act.

Current Affairs: Outside of an election, invite your local MP, MPP (or MNA) and Councillor to speak to your students about their role and level of government.

HOME CONNECTIONS

Have students find a story related to government in the local newspaper. Have them identify whether this story concerns the municipal, provincial/territorial, or federal government. Have them highlight the words that tell them what level of government the story relates to. Have them summarize the story for the class without identifying the level of government involved. See if other students can identify the level of government from the people, places, or issues in the story.

RESOURCES

The following Internet sources:

For provincial/territorial governments:

Newfoundland and Labrador: www.gov.nf.ca

Prince Edwards Island: www.gov.pe.ca

Nova Scotia: www.gov.ns.ca

New Brunswick: www.gnb.ca

Quebec: www.gouv.qc.ca

Ontario: www.ontla.on.ca and www.kids.premier.gov.on.ca

Manitoba: www.gov.mb.ca

Saskatchewan: www.gov.sk.ca

Alberta: www.alberta.ca

British Columbia: www.gov.bc.ca

Nunavut: www.gov.nu.ca

Yukon Territory: www.gov.yk.ca

Northwest Territories: www.gov.nt.ca

(See Members and then Members by Constituency to find your member). These sites are available in both French and English, (Type in your postal code to find your member)

For the federal government:

www.elections.ca (To find your member) and www.parl.gc.ca or www2.actden.com/writ_den/g01/direct.htm to learn more about our federal government. Both www.elections.ca and www.parl.gc.ca are available in French and English.

3.1 - INVESTIGATING GOVERNMENT

Name: _____

Government	Municipal	Provincial/Territory	Federal
<p>Where does this level of government meet?</p> <p>What is the name of the building and in what city is it located?</p>			
<p>What is the official title of the leader of this level of government?</p> <p>What is the name of the politician who currently holds this office?</p>			
<p>What is the official name of the elected members at this level of government?</p> <p>What is the name of the politician who currently represents the area where you live?</p>			
<p>What is the name of the geographical area that each elected member represents?</p> <p>What is the name of the electoral area where you live?</p>			
<p>What are two responsibilities of this level of government?</p>			

Lesson 4: Political Parties



A political party is made up of people who share similar ideals and goals. In order for these goals and policies to be put into practice, the party must be elected to form government by citizens

In order to make informed choices voters should investigate the major parties in Canada and their current party platforms.

PURPOSE

Students will learn about Canada's political parties and compare their party platforms.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Social Studies:

- identify and describe the electoral process
- demonstrate an understanding of how governments are elected in Canada

Language Arts:

- ask and answer questions on a variety of topics to acquire and clarify information

MATERIALS

- Bristol board or large paper
- Scissors, glue, markers
- 4.1 - Past Election Results
- 4.2 - Comparing Political Parties

LESSON OUTLINE

1. Introduce the concept of a political party. Political parties are formed by people who share similar beliefs about how the province/territory (or country) should be run.
2. Ask the students if they know the names of any political parties in Canada. Create a list of the registered parties in Canada on a chart or blackboard. It is important to note that federal parties are separate from provincial/territorial parties.
3. Have a class discussion to determine their background knowledge of political parties and the political process. Some basic information to use is listed below.
 - a. How do political parties work?
 - Anyone over a certain age can join a political party. The age varies by party, but most are 14 or over.
 - Political parties consist of party members, who are made up of the general public.
 - Party members discuss their ideas and develop policy together.

- These ideas and policies make up the party platforms.
 - Party members choose their party's leader and candidates and help them become elected
- b. What is a candidate?
 - Candidates are nominated in electoral districts or ridings to represent political parties in an election.
 - To become a Member of Parliament, candidates must get the most votes in their electoral district during an election.
 - Most candidates for election belong to a political party. The exception is someone who runs for election as an independent. They don't belong to a political party.
 - Canada's government is based on political parties. The political party that elects the most candidates forms government.
4. Review 4.1 - Past Canadian Election Results. For each example, ask students which party formed government and which parties elected candidates in the House of Commons.

Teacher Notes: Using the nation-wide electoral district map provided (or one can be downloaded at www.elections.ca), examine the distribution of federal electoral districts.

5. Draw names to divide students into groups. Draw the names of the political parties and assign each group a party. Depending on your class size, you may choose to only assign the major political parties.
6. Within their groups, ask students to collect information about their political party, using party websites, newspapers, and campaign literature. (eg. party leader, logo, web site address, number of candidates, priorities, platforms or issue campaigns)
7. Give groups time to consolidate their information and create a large display about their political party.
8. Have each group present their political party to the rest of the class and post the displays in the classroom or hallway.
9. As a class, identify three campaign issues that are most important to your class. This can be done through a secret ballot process or through a method of your choice.
10. Using the information collected by each group and your own supplementary information, fill in the chart 4.2 – Comparing Political Parties. This can be completed in a jigsaw method or as a whole class discussion.

Teacher Notes:

In a non-election year, ask students to bring in newspaper articles that show differences of opinion among parties. Follow the same process of comparing the different views.

ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES

Students may be assessed on their participation in the class discussion as well as their ability to contribute ideas and to listen and respond constructively to the ideas of others when working in a group.

MODIFICATIONS AND ADAPTATIONS

Make adjustments to groups if necessary to ensure that all groups have a variety of abilities.

EXTENSIONS

Language and Visual Arts: Within groups, students could create their own political party and create their own logo, platform and pamphlets. This would work well in a non-election year. You can end the activity with a mock election on each of the political parties.

RESOURCES

Party websites:

Animal Alliance Environment Voters Party of Canada, www.environmentvoters.org

Bloc Québécois, www.blocquebecois.org

Canadian Action Party, www.canadianactionparty.ca/home.html

Christian Heritage Party of Canada, www.chp.ca

Communist Party of Canada, www.communist-party.ca

Conservative Party of Canada, www.conservative.ca

First Peoples National Party of Canada, www.fpn poc.ca

Green Party of Canada, www.greenparty.ca

Liberal Party of Canada, www.liberal.ca

Libertarian Party of Canada, www.libertarian.ca

Marijuana Party, www.marijuanaparty.ca

Marxist-Leninist Party of Canada, Marxist-Leninist Party of Canada
neorhino.ca, www.neorhino.ca

New Democratic Party, www.ndp.ca/home

Progressive Canadian Party, www.pcparty.org

Western Block Party, www.westernblockparty.com

A list of currently registered political parties, including contact information, is available at:
www.elections.ca

Media web sites: Visit various media web sites for find comparison tables of party platforms.

For example:

www.cbc.ca

www.globeandmail.com

www.canada.com

www.src.ca (French)

Table illustrating Number of valid votes by political affiliation for 39th federal election available at: <http://www.elections.ca/scripts/OVR2006/default.html>

4.1: PAST ELECTION RESULTS

THIRTY-NINTH GENERAL ELECTION - 2006 OFFICIAL VOTING RESULTS

Political affiliation	Seats	Valid Votes	% of Valid Votes
Animal Alliance Environment Voters Party of Canada		72	0.0
Bloc Québécois	51	1,553,201	10.5
Canadian Action Party		6,102	0.0
Christian Heritage Party of Canada		28,152	0.2
Communist Party of Canada		3,022	0.0
Conservative Party of Canada	124	5,374,071	36.3
First Peoples National Party of Canada		1,201	0.0
Green Party of Canada		664,068	4.5
Liberal Party of Canada	103	4,479,415	30.2
Libertarian Party of Canada		3,002	0.0
Marijuana Party		9,171	0.1
Marxist-Leninist Party of Canada		8,980	0.1
New Democratic Party	29	2,589,597	17.5
Progressive Canadian Party		14,151	0.1
Western Block Party		1,094	0.0
Independent	1	76,696	0.5
No Affiliation		5,164	0.0
	308	14,817,159	100.0

THIRTY-EIGHTH GENERAL ELECTION - 2004 OFFICIAL VOTING RESULTS

Political affiliation	Seats	Valid Votes	% of Valid Votes
Bloc Québécois	54	1,680,109	12.4
Canadian Action Party		8,807	0.1
Christian Heritage Party of Canada		40,335	0.3
Communist Party of Canada		4,426	0.0
Conservative Party of Canada	99	4,019,498	29.6
Green Party of Canada		582,247	4.3
Liberal Party of Canada	135	4,982,220	36.7
Libertarian Party of Canada		1,949	0.0
Marijuana Party		33,76	0.2
Marxist-Leninist Party of Canada		8,696	0.1
New Democratic Party	19	2,127,403	15.7
Progressive Canadian Party		10,872	0.1
Independent		47,068	0.3
No Affiliation	1	17,796	0.1
	308	13,564,702	100.0

4.2: COMPARING POLITICAL PARTIES

Political Party				
Issue #1				
Issue #2				
Issue #3				

Lesson 5: Campaign Poster



Different forms of media such as Campaign posters and advertisements play an important role in delivering critical partisan and non-partisan messages to the electorate.

PURPOSE

Students will use their abilities in linguistics and visual arts to convey a message to the electorate. Students will create a media work that delivers information to the student electorate or to the greater community.

Teacher Notes:

This activity is highly recommended by teachers who have taught these lessons as it keeps the entire student body motivated and interested until the end of the campaign.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Language Arts

- use vocabulary learned in other subject areas in a variety of contexts
- recognize that media works are composed of a series of separate elements
- create a variety of media works

Visual Arts

- produce two- and three- dimensional works of art that communicate a range of ideas for specific purposes and to specific audiences
- organize their art works to create a specific effect, using the elements of design
- produce two- and three- dimensional works of art that communicate a range of thoughts, feelings, and ideas for specific purposes and to specific audiences
- identify, in their plan for a work of art, the artistic problem and a number of possible solutions
- describe the connection between an element of design and a specific artistic purpose, using appropriate vocabulary

MATERIALS

- Samples of campaign posters or advertisements (partisan and non-partisan)
- Bristol board or large sheets of paper
- Pencils, markers, pencil crayons, crayons
- 5.1 - Poster Planning Sheet

LESSON OUTLINE

1. Show students examples of campaign posters and advertisements. Include non-partisan materials from Elections Canada and Student Vote.
2. Discuss with them the different techniques used to convey information to the electorate. (For example: The use of photographs versus hand-drawn or computer-generated images, the colour of the words/text and how they compare in size to the picture(s), the placement of pictures and words).

Teacher Notes:

Teachers may wish to use this opportunity to review or introduce the elements of design (colour, line, shape, form, space, texture) to facilitate student response to the works of art.

3. Hand out 5.1 - Poster Planning Sheets, and ask students to identify how they intend to deal with the artistic problem of combining pictures with words.
4. Have students create their media works based on one of the following choices:
 - a. A specific political party
 - b. The Vote: where and when to vote, and why it is important (this can be in preparation for Student Vote Day at your school or for the general election).
5. Have students present their posters/advertisements to the rest of the class.
6. Display the posters/advertisements in the classroom or in the hallway afterwards or send them home with students to encourage their parents to vote in the coming election.

ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES

Students may be assessed on their ability to create a media work.

MODIFICATIONS AND ADAPTATIONS

Some students may require assistance in filling out their poster planning sheets. Ideas could be scribed by a volunteer.

EXTENSIONS

Community Connections: If the posters are motivational, contact your local newspaper and find out if they would publish them in advance of the election, to encourage voter turnout.

Technology: Students can create a pre-election newspaper or brochure, using word processing and photo editing software. It could include photographs or newspaper pictures of the party leaders or candidates, highlights from party platforms, campaign pamphlets and advertisements.

HOME CONNECTIONS

Send the media works home with students and encourage them to use it as a conversation starter about the election.

5.1 - POSTER PLANNING SHEET

What do you want your poster/advertisement to say?

What kind of picture(s) do you want it to have?

Show on the poster/advertisement templates below two different ways you could place your pictures and words/text.

--	--

Which poster/advertisement do you like better? Why did you choose this one?

Lesson 6: Messages in the Media



In order to better understand the role of media in an election, it is important to become aware of the different forms of election communication.

“Earned media” or free media refers to any type of news story or opinion piece, whereas “paid media” refers to any type of advertising.

Students will have the opportunity to scrutinize various media to determine where different political parties stand on given issues.

PURPOSE

Students will identify the different forms of communication, including newspaper and radio stories and advertising, and use them to identify the positions and policies of political parties.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Language Arts

- read a variety of non-fiction materials for different purposes
- explain their interpretation of a written work, supporting it with evidence from the work and from their knowledge and experience
- make judgments and draw conclusions about the content in written materials, using evidence from the materials
- begin to identify a writer’s or character’s point of view
- identify various types of media works and some of the techniques used in them
- analyze media works
- list and describe many of the ways in which the media provide information (e.g., through news reports, the Internet, and documentary films)
- use writing for various purposes and in a range of contexts, including school work (e.g., to summarize information from materials they have read, to reflect on their thoughts, feelings, and imaginings)

MATERIALS

- Newspapers or articles from newspaper websites
- Audio or video recordings of advertisements, news stories and/or candidates debates
- Pamphlets and campaign advertisements
- Posters
- Chart paper
- Markers

LESSON OUTLINE

1. Introduce “What is media?” using a web organizer. Message to convey to students: Media is about messaging.
2. Explain the two main types of media in political campaigns. Earned media or free media refers to news coverage, news stories, and editorial or opinion pieces. Paid media refers to any type of advertising or pamphlets. Briefly discuss the pros and cons of each type (eg. Earned media carries more weight, but it is easier to control your messaging in paid media).
3. Present students with a variety of media samples (see Materials list).
4. Initiate a discussion related to the media. For example:
 - Who is the audience?
 - Who is the sender?
 - Who paid for it? What type of media is it?
 - Which type of media did you find most effective? Why?
 - Which type of media do you think is the most credible? Why?
 - Which type of media would you use? Why?
5. Select an issue that has received much attention during the campaign or one that is popular among your students.
6. Discuss the issue with the students for knowledge and understanding.
7. Organize, with class input, the party positions on the chosen issue in the form of a chart.

Teacher Notes:

This is similar to the activity done in Lesson 4: Political Parties, except this time the source of the information is the media. You might want to use one of the same issues identified by your students in this previous lesson.

8. Ask students to find articles about another issue in more than one newspaper. Students determine what issue is being discussed and what position the political party or parties are taking on the issue. Allow students to work together to collect articles from a variety of sources, e.g., newspapers, media websites.
9. Ask students to answer these questions in their journal.
 - Issue: What is your newspaper article about?
 - Party position(s): What is the position being taken by the party/parties on this issue?
 - How did the media cover this position?
 - Did all media cover it the same?
10. In groups, discuss the question: Did all media cover the issue the same?

ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES

Students may be assessed on their class participation and their journal entry. Some students may need to work with a partner and/or have their journal entries scribed for them.

EXTENSIONS

Intermediate Students: Intermediate teachers may wish to select more than one issue and challenge their students to organize the information along party lines working in a group. They may also wish to engage their students in a “reading with a purpose” exercise in which election materials are read critically to determine whether the information is fact or opinion.

Language: Ask your students to write their own article about the leaders’ debate or a local candidates’ forum. Have students read their articles to the class. Afterwards, acknowledge and discuss different opinions and perceptions.

RESOURCES

The following Internet site: <http://www.media-awareness.ca/>
This bilingual site contains resources and support in media and information literacy. There is a media toolkit and games.

Media Websites:

www.cbc.ca

www.theglobeandmail.com

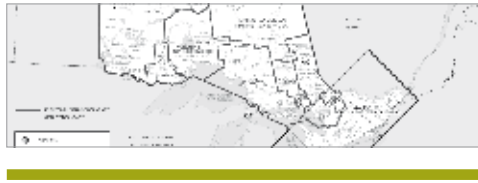
www.canada.com (for The National Post, Canadian Press and Global)

www.canoe.ca (for The Sun newspapers and other regional papers)

www.ctv.ca

www.src.ca (French)

Lesson 7: Your Electoral District, Your Choice



Voters across the country are all voting for different candidates and may be influenced by different issues; therefore it is important to learn that there are electoral districts and local and regional issues that could be important in an election.

PURPOSE

Students will have an opportunity to discover the electoral district in which they live in and go to school (they may or may not be different) and to learn more about local issues which may or may not influence the way the electorate votes.

Teacher Notes:

Explain that an electoral district, riding, and constituency are all the same.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Language Arts

- read a variety of non-fiction materials for different purposes
- communicate information, explain a variety of ideas and procedures, and follow the teacher's instructions
- use writing for various purposes and in a range of contexts, including school work (e.g., to summarize information from materials they have read, to reflect on their thoughts, feelings, and imaginings)

Social Studies

- identify and describe the electoral process
- identify current political leaders (local, provincial, and federal)

MATERIALS

- Map of the school's electoral district (www.elections.ca)
- Newspaper
- 7.1 - Writing a News Story Graphic Organizer

LESSON OUTLINE

1. Get a map of your school's electoral district. Teachers can prepare the maps for the students or have them download the maps themselves.
2. Ask students to title the map, e.g. "A map of my school's electoral district." Make note of the boundaries of the electoral district.
3. Ask students to identify which candidates are running in the electoral district.

4. Find a newspaper article that mentions the electoral district. You will use this article to model the following student activity by making an overhead transparency of the article. Using a marker, read the article with the class, and highlight the issue discussed, and any candidates mentioned.
5. Discuss the issue with the students.
6. Ask students to search for newspaper articles throughout the election period, which highlight issues relevant to the upcoming vote. These could be shared on a daily basis as part of current events. Encourage them to find articles that have the local candidates' names in it. Post on a bulletin board for reference.
7. From the collection of articles, ask the students to choose an article. Ask students to fill out the 7.1 - Writing a News Story Graphic Organizer to lay out the issue.
8. Ask students to write a journal reflection, answering the following questions:
 - a) How does looking at all of the issues help you decide which candidate to vote for?
 - b) List the issues that are most important to you. Explain why.

ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES

Observe students throughout the lesson and record anecdotal information on a class list or other tracker.

EXTENSIONS

Language: Have students write a letter to the editor of a local newspaper. During the election, this letter could focus on local issues in the campaign. Outside of an election, this could relate to events happening in the legislature or within the local community.

Events: Organize an all-candidates debate for your school. Invite each candidate in your electoral district to address your student electors and answer questions. This can be coordinated in the evening, as a family or community event as well.

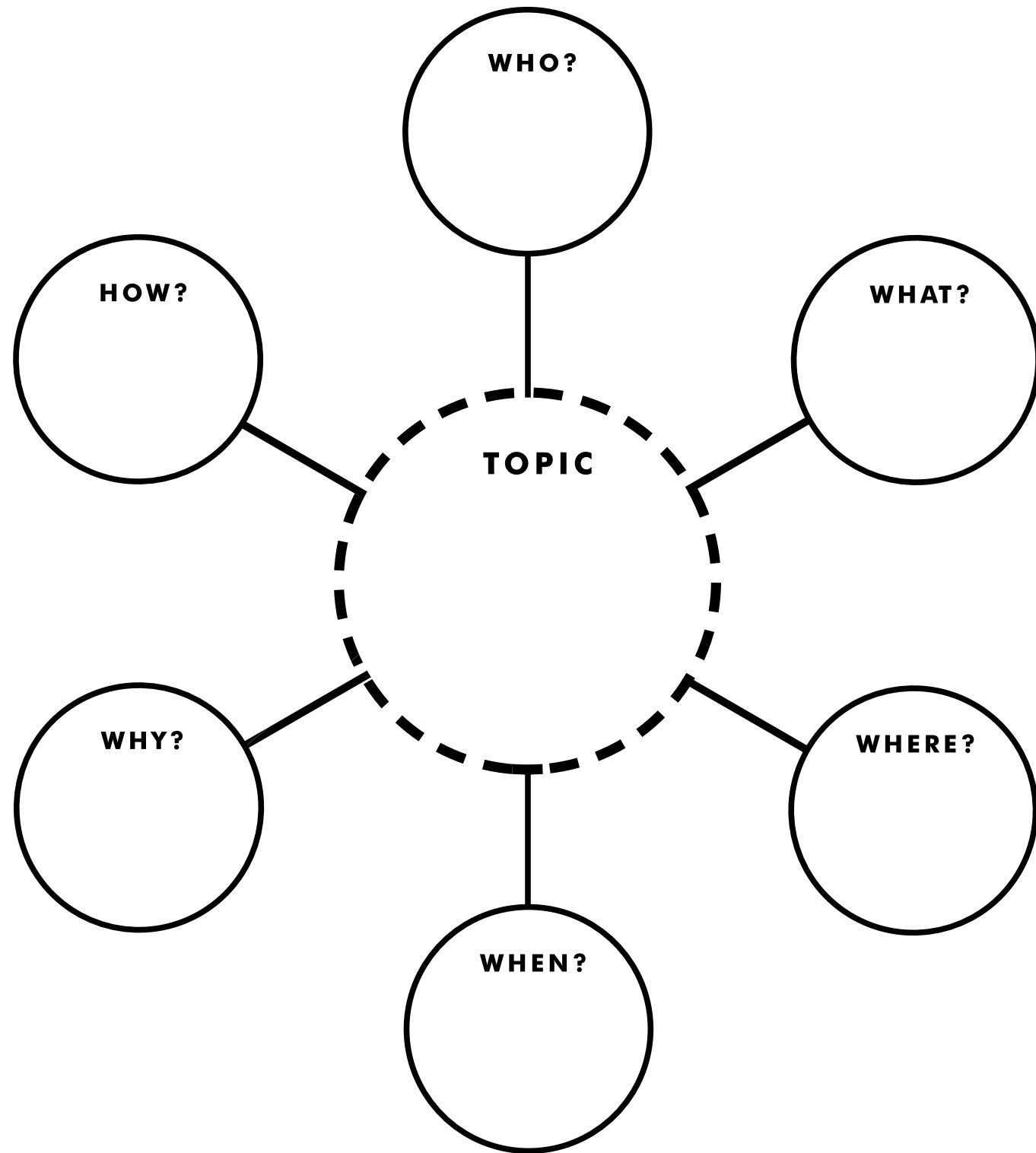
RESOURCES

www.elections.ca/

You can download the map for your riding (Click on Electoral Districts, enter postal code) from this bilingual site.

7.1 WRITING A NEWS STORY GRAPHIC ORGANIZER

NAME: _____



Lesson 8: Student Vote Day



In order to raise their civic awareness for democratic participation, students need to understand the election process and have an opportunity to participate in a parallel Student Vote.

Students will create a plan for their Student Vote Day, taking on roles of election officials, preparing election procedures all with the aim of engaging as many of their peers as possible in the vote.

PURPOSE

Students will participate in a parallel election in conjunction with the Student Vote program or a mock election outside of an election period.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Language Arts

- read a variety of non-fiction materials for different purposes
- use specialized terms in different subject areas, as appropriate
- communicate information, explain a variety of ideas and procedures, and follow the teacher's instructions
- ask and answer questions on a variety of topics to acquire and clarify information
- use appropriate words and structures in discussions or classroom presentations

Social Studies

- identify and describe the electoral process
- demonstrate an understanding of how governments are elected in Canada
- identify current political leaders (local, provincial, and federal)

MATERIALS

- Student Vote Operations Manual
- Voters List (prepared by returning officer)
- Pencils, pens
- 8.1 - Roles of Election Officials Handout
- 8.2 - Voter Information Card
- 8.3 - Election Announcement
- 8.4 - Election Ballots (for use during on a non-election year)

LESSON OUTLINE

1. Introduce the concept of a secret ballot. Tell your students that prior to 1874, electors

had to state their choice out loud, in public. Discuss how this may have impacted the vote.

2. Demonstrate how to correctly mark a ballot. Electors may choose to mark their ballot with an X, checkmark or shade the circle. As long as the mark clearly identifies one candidate, it will be deemed valid.
3. Review the process of organizing an election and assign tasks to students.
 - a. Draw up the voters list according to the school's involvement. Students will need to use a class list for each class participating. Draw a line through the names of any students who will not be present on election day. Try to make arrangement for these students to vote in advance.
 - b. Determine the time and place of the vote.
 - c. Prepare the voter information cards for the electors.
 - d. Advertise the date of the election through announcements and posters well ahead of time.
 - e. Prepare the ballots using the names of the candidates (or parties in a non-election year).
 - f. Review the procedures for election day.
 - g. Set up one or more polling stations.
4. Assign students roles and discuss what the various jobs entail. (See 8.1 Roles of Election Officials)
5. Hold the election, using official Student Vote materials.
 - a. Count the ballots, and record the results on tally sheets.
 - b. Report your results to the Student Vote Returning Office.

TEACHER NOTES

If there is no election occurring during the year (federal, provincial, or municipal), students can vote on the major political parties or on their own political parties they may have created previously. There are also several referendum issues which could serve as the basis for an election. For example: the abolition of the monarchy, the reform or elimination of the Senate, national unity, environmental issues, or aboriginal self-government. Some of these issues are appropriate for Grade 5 students, while others are more suitable for an older age group.

HOME CONNECTIONS

Teachers may ask students to talk to their parents and family about the election, the issues, and whether they will vote. Students need to understand that the election is an invaluable way for people to show their civic duty. Encourage your students to accompany their parents to the polls!

RESOURCES:

The following professional resources:

Canadian Government: Grades 4-6.

Demetra and Renee Perry-Watson Georgopoulos. GeoWat

Innovative Teacher Publishing Inc., 2002, ISBN 1-89452711-9

www.elections.ca

www.studentvote.ca

8.1 – ROLES OF ELECTION OFFICIALS

<p>THE RETURNING OFFICER:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draws up the voters list which includes everyone that is entitled to vote • Prepares the ballot listing the candidates in alphabetical order
<p>THE DEPUTY RETURNING OFFICER: (one for each polling booth)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hands out the ballots to the voters • Counts the ballots after the polling station has closed
<p>THE POLL CLERK: (one for each polling booth)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crosses out the names of the voters as they vote • Tallies the ballots which are counted by the deputy returning officer
<p>THE SCRUTINEER: (several – one for each party at each polling booth)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Party representatives observing the voting process • Present, as observers only, during voting and counting of ballots

8.2 VOTER INFORMATION CARD

STUDENT NAME: _____		
This notice will confirm that your name has been included in the list of electors prepared for the pending election. You must vote in the school.		
POLLS ARE OPEN ON ELECTION DAY FROM _____ TO _____		
ELECTORAL DISTRICT		
POLL NUMBER	THE POLLING PLACE WILL BE AT OR NEAR	This space left blank

VOTER INFORMATION CARD

STUDENT NAME: _____		
This notice will confirm that your name has been included in the list of electors prepared for the pending election. You must vote in the school.		
POLLS ARE OPEN ON ELECTION DAY FROM _____ TO _____		
ELECTORAL DISTRICT		
POLL NUMBER	THE POLLING PLACE WILL BE AT OR NEAR	This space left blank

Student Vote 

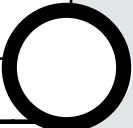
VOTE TODAY

Date:


Room:

Time:


BALLOT CARD

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____ 


PARTY NAME: _____

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____ 

PARTY NAME: _____

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____ 


PARTY NAME: _____

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____ 


PARTY NAME: _____

BALLOT CARD


BALLOT CARD

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____ 


PARTY NAME: _____

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____ 

PARTY NAME: _____

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____ 

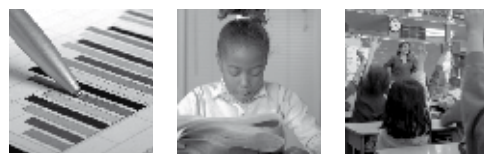
PARTY NAME: _____

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____ 

PARTY NAME: _____

BALLOT CARD

Lesson 9: Analyzing the Results



This lesson will take place after the actual election results are announced. Students will make a comparison of the Student Vote results and the federal election results.

PURPOSE

Students will display election information in a variety of ways and compare the class results with the actual election results and Student Vote results.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Mathematics:

- use computer applications to record the results of data collected
- interpret displays of data and present the information using mathematical terms
- design surveys, collect data, and record results on given spreadsheets or tally charts
- display data on graphs by hand and by using computer applications
- analyze how data were collected and discuss the reasonableness of results
- recognize that graphs, tables, and charts can present data with accuracy or bias
- construct labeled graphs both by hand and by using computer applications
- evaluate data presented on tables, charts, and graphs and use the information in discussion

MATERIALS

(Materials will vary depending on the method of graphing results.)

- Graph paper
- Pencils, pens, pencil crayons
- Rulers
- Computer access
- Math journals
- Results of the actual election (from newspaper or Elections Canada)
- Results of the Student Vote election (www.studentvote.ca or newspapers)

LESSON OUTLINE

1. Discuss the class results with your students. Ask the following:
 - a) In what ways can this data be organized to make it easier to understand?
 - b) Is it better in tabular or graphic format? Explain why.
 - c) What types of graphs could be used to display the data?
2. Instruct students to graph the results of the class election using the results from Lesson 8. Students should select an appropriate graph. Have students compare their graphs and discuss which format worked best for their results.

3. Using their previous discussion about types of graphs, students can then make decisions about how to display the results of the federal election and the Student Vote results. Comparisons can be made by the class or school, the electoral district and nation-wide summary.

Teacher Note:

Election results usually appear in the newspaper the day after the election and on the Elections Canada web site, in the weeks after the election.

4. Ask students to analyze the election results and the Student Vote results. Use the following questions:
 - How did your own class results compare to the overall election results and overall Student Vote results?
 - What surprised you when you compared the Student Vote results and the actual election results – by province/territory and by electoral district?
 - Were the results different across the country? Can any patterns be identified?
 - Why do you think the results may be different? What factors might influence the election results?
5. Afterwards ask students to write an analysis in their math journals.
6. Consider organizing a follow up activity or event, such as inviting the elected politician into your class or writing a letter to a newspaper about your participation in the program.

Teacher Notes:

If at all possible, students should display information using computer-graphing software, such as Claris Works Spreadsheet and Excel Spreadsheets. Reflections could also be made on the graph types and the best way of displaying election information.

ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES

Students may be assessed on their graphic representations of the electoral results as well as their journal reflections.

MODIFICATIONS AND ADAPTATIONS

Some students may wish to draw a picture of their feelings, record their reflections on tape, or dictate them to a volunteer scribe.

EXTENSIONS

Ask students to gather data from another electoral district and compare the election trends. Were the results consistent with their own district or were they different? Why or why not? Can they find other kinds of information that might help explain why the results were different (if they were)?

RESOURCES

<http://nces.ed.gov/nceskids/graphing/index.asp>

This site allows students to create their own graphs.

Glossary

Act

A written law passed by Parliament.

Advance polls (advance voting)

Polls held between noon and 8:00 p.m. on Friday, Saturday and Monday, the 10th, 9th and 7th days before election day, for those who want to vote in advance. The ballots are kept in a sealed envelope until election day and are counted at the same time as the other ballots.

Backbencher

A Member of Parliament who is not a Cabinet Minister, a Parliamentary Secretary, a House Leader, a Whip or an Opposition critic.

Ballot

A piece of paper where the names of the candidates are printed, their political parties and a place for the elector to indicate the preferred candidate. (At a referendum, the ballot has a printed question and spaces for the elector to answer "Yes" or "No".) Canada uses the secret ballot, which means no one except the elector knows the choice that was made.

Bellwether riding

Ridings that can often be relied upon to indicate general electoral trends.

Bias

A preconceived opinion, a one-sided view, or a prejudice about something, someone, or an issue formed without evidence or proper reason.

Bill

New legislation, or changes to an existing law that is being proposed to Parliament. Bills must be debated and passed by both the House of Commons and the Senate before they become laws.

Blog

A personal webpage of opinions, comments and discussions.

By-election

An election held in a particular electoral district to fill a vacancy in the House of Commons at any time other than during a general election.

Several by-elections may be held on the same day.

Canada Elections Act

The law governing the conduct of federal elections in Canada.

Cabinet

The executive branch of the Government, consisting of those Members and Senators appointed by the Governor General on the advice of the Prime Minister. Formally a committee of the Privy Council, it is responsible for the administration of the Government and the establishment of its policy.

Cabinet Minister

A member of the executive, appointed by the Governor General on the advice of the Prime Minister. Usually chosen from among existing Members of Parliament and Senators, Ministers are responsible to Parliament for their official actions and those of their departments. Cabinet Ministers are given the title "Honourable" and membership on the Privy Council for life.

Campaign period

The period between when an election is called and the close of General Voting for the election.

Candidate

A person who seeks election to public office. A candidate running in a federal election or by-election is trying to be elected a Member of Parliament. The candidates' signs dot the landscape in each electoral district.

Caucus

A group of representatives from the same political party in Parliament. Some people believe that the word "caucus" comes from the Algonquin word for "advisor."

Central poll supervisor (CPS)

The returning officer's representative at a polling place with four or more polling stations. This person supervises the staff, including the deputy returning officers and poll clerks.

Chief Electoral Officer (CEO)

The independent officer of Parliament responsible for conducting federal elections and referendums.

Coalition government

When two or more political parties join together to form a government, neither of which would be a majority government on their own. This can occur in order to avoid an election and keep Parliament running.

Constituency

See Electoral district.

Democracy

Refers to the belief that governments should be responsive to the wishes of the majority of citizens.

Deputy returning officer (DRO)

The election official who supervises a polling station. The DRO's tasks include making decisions about a person's eligibility, counting the ballots and certifying the results.

Dissolution of parliament

The bringing to an end of a Parliament, either at the conclusion of its five-year term or by proclamation of the Governor General. It is followed by a general election.

Election day

The day most people go to vote. Also known as polling day.

Elections Canada

The non-partisan agency responsible for the running of federal elections, by-elections and referendums. Also known as the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer of Canada.

Elector

A person eligible to vote, i.e. a Canadian citizen at least 18 years old.

Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act

The law that outlines the rules for redistribution of federal electoral district boundaries.

Electoral district

A geographical area that has its own Member of Parliament. Also known as a riding. There are 308 federal electoral districts in Canada.

Electoral system

Canada uses a first-past-the-post system. In this system, the candidate who gets more votes than any other candidate in the electoral district wins. It is thus not necessary to obtain an absolute majority of the votes (50 percent plus one) to be elected.

Enfranchise

Receive the right to vote.

Expenses limit

Maximum amount that a candidate or registered political party is authorized to spend during an election period. The limit is calculated on the basis of the number of registered electors in the electoral district in which the candidate is running, or in all the electoral districts in which the registered party is running confirmed candidates. It is indexed every year for inflation.

Federal System of government

A system of government in which powers and responsibilities are divided into national and regional levels to address national and regional needs. Canada is a federation in which powers and responsibilities are divided between the national and provincial governments.

First Past the Post

The system in which the candidate who has more votes than any other single candidate wins the election.

Franchise

The right to vote in a public election for members of Parliament, provincial legislatures, and municipal councils.

General election

An election held simultaneously in every electoral district in Canada.

Government

The sovereign political authority of a State, in which are vested the executive, legislative and judicial powers. In Canada, this authority is of Her Majesty the Queen. Often used to refer to the executive branch of the Government.

Governor General

The representative of the sovereign in Canada, exercises virtually all of the Crown's powers, and is appointed on the advice of the Prime Minister normally for a five-year term.

Horse race polls

Report about which leader or which party is ahead. They are generally more accurate than issue polls.

Independent Member

A Member of Parliament who is not a member of a recognized political party. A Member may be elected as an independent or may leave or be expelled from a party during a Parliament and sit as an independent.

Issue polls

These polls usually target the important issues of the campaign, such as health care.

Judicial recount

Second count of the votes conducted in front of a judge, automatically requested by the returning officer if two candidates are tied or the difference between the two leading candidates is less than 1/1000 of the votes cast. Any other request for a recount by judge must be presented within four days after the results of the vote are validated.

Legislative branch

Branch of government that has the power to make, change, and repeal laws. Also called Parliament.

List of electors

The list of names and addresses of all eligible electors, which is used at the polling station on voting day. Also known as the voters list.

Majority government

A government formed by the party or the coalition of parties holding the majority of seats in the House of Commons.

Member of Parliament (MP)

Person chosen in an election to represent the citizens of an electoral district to debate and vote on public issues in Parliament.

Minority government

A government formed by a party, possibly in a

coalition with one or more parties, which does not hold a majority of the seats in the House of Commons. While a minority government does not hold a majority of seats, it usually does hold more than any other party or coalition and must maintain the confidence of the House to continue in power.

National Register of Electors

A computerized database of Canadians who have the right to vote. It is prepared and maintained by Elections Canada and includes the name, address, date of birth and gender of all eligible Canadian electors.

Nomination papers

Elections Canada form that must be completed by candidates running for office in an electoral district.

Non-confidence motion

A motion, which, if adopted, indicates that the Government has lost the confidence of the House. The Government then either resigns or requests the Governor General to dissolve Parliament and issue election writs.

Office of the returning officer

An office that is set up in each electoral district at the start of each general election, by-election or referendum. It's the place from which the returning officer and his or her staff serve the public during an electoral event.

Official Opposition

The party or coalition of parties holding the second largest number of seats in the House of Commons. It is accorded certain financial and procedural advantages over other parties in opposition.

Opposition party

A political party that is neither the Government party nor part of the coalition of parties forming the Government.

Parliament

The legislative branch of government.

Party platform

A list of principles which a political party supports in order to appeal to the general public for the purpose of having that party's candidates voted into office.

Party strongholds

Ridings that traditionally can be relied upon to support the same party or candidate.

Political spectrum

A political spectrum is a way of comparing or visualizing different political positions, by placing them upon one or more geometric axes.

Poll clerk

The official who assists the deputy returning officer at a polling station by checking to see if a person's name is on the list of electors and dealing with the paperwork.

Polling day

See Election day.

Polling division

A small geographic section of an electoral district, for which a list of electors is prepared and a polling station is set up on election day. Each electoral district has many polling divisions.

Polling station

The place where electors go to vote.

Prime minister

The leader of the nation, head of the federal government, and leader of the party with the greatest number of seats.

Private Member

A Member who is not a Minister. The rules also specifically exclude the Speaker, the Deputy Speaker and Parliamentary Secretaries from this designation.

Protest Vote

An unmarked ballot, no mark on ballot, or a ballot that has been intentionally spoiled by the voter. Treated as a "rejected ballot" at the vote count.

Redistribution

The periodic adjustment of electoral district boundaries after a census to reflect population changes. Independent electoral boundaries commissions hold hearings and redraw the maps.

Referendum

An electoral event in which electors are asked to answer "Yes" or "No" to a written question.

Referendums are used by governments to consult the people on specific issues. The most recent federal referendum was in 1992 on a proposal to amend the Constitution.

Referendum Act

The law that sets out the rules for holding federal referendums in Canada.

Rejected ballot

A ballot that has been placed in the ballot box, but declared unacceptable for counting by the Deputy Returning Officer. A ballot that has not been marked properly.

Registered party

A political party that runs at least one candidate in a general election or by-election and complies with the requirements of the Canada Elections Act may be registered. Benefits of registering with the Chief Electoral Officer include having the party name appear on the ballot, the right to issue tax receipts for monetary contributions, partial reimbursement of election expenses, and quarterly public funding based on the number of votes received at the previous election. Registered parties must disclose their contributions received, election spending and other financial information.

Responsible government

A system of government in which Cabinet ministers are responsible to the elected members of the House of Commons, who are in turn responsible to the people.

Returning officer (RO)

The election official responsible for organizing the election in an electoral district.

Revising agent

An election official who updates the list of electors during the revision period of an electoral event. They work in pairs and receive applications from electors to have their names added to, corrected on, or deleted from, the list.

Riding

See Constituency.

Scrutineer

A candidate's representative who may be present at the polling station during the voting and counting of the ballots. Also known as Candidate's agent.

Single Member Plurality System

Electoral system based on single member districts, where successful candidates are elected if they win the most votes in their electoral districts. See First Past the Post.

Speaker

The Member elected by the House (by secret ballot) to preside over its proceedings. In particular, he or she is responsible for maintaining order and decorum. As Chair of the Board of Internal Economy, the Speaker oversees the administration of the House. In addition, the Speaker is the spokesperson and representative of the House of Commons in its relations with the Senate, the Crown and other bodies outside the House of Commons.

Special ballot

A ballot that can be sent in by mail, or filled in at the office of the returning officer, for those electors who cannot go to their polling station on election day. The elector must first apply to Elections Canada for registration. The special ballot differs from a regular ballot in that the elector writes in the name of his or her preferred candidate.

Special ballot coordinator

The election official who assists electors to register and vote by special ballot.

Swing Ridings

Ridings that frequently change their support from one party to another and are particularly sensitive to shifts in electoral fortunes.

Third party

Any person or group, other than a candidate, registered party or electoral district association of a registered party that incurs election advertising expenses to support or oppose a registered party or the election of a candidate. Third parties that incur more than \$500 in election advertising expenses must register with the Chief Electoral Officer and disclose their contributions and election spending.

Universal suffrage

The extension of the right to vote to all adult citizens, including the removal of restrictions against women and property ownership requirements. For example, in 1917, Canadian military nurses in France were among the first women to vote in a federal election.

Unmarked ballot

A ballot with no marks. Considered a "rejected ballot" at the vote count.

Voter Information Card

A card which Elections Canada sends to every elector whose name appears on the preliminary list of electors during an electoral event. It tells electors when and where they can cast their ballot on polling day or at the advance polls.

Voters list

See List of electors.

Voting screen

The place at the polling station where electors go to mark their ballot in private.

SUGGESTED ON-LINE RESOURCES

Elections Canada - www.elections.ca

Includes information about voter registration, how to find your electoral district, past election results, list of the registered parties, and the evolution of the federal franchise.

Government of Canada - www.gc.ca

Educational resources for teachers of elementary and secondary students from the Parliament of Canada. Also has information on current members of the Cabinet and Ministry, as well as information on the Prime Minister, Parliamentary Secretaries and women in Cabinet.

Canada's Parliament Web Site - www.parl.gc.ca

Includes information about Parliament, the workings of the Senate and House of Commons, the role of the Speaker, educational resources, and the history of federal electoral ridings.

Nodice Election Website - www.nodice.ca/elections

Includes the current list of federal ridings and nominated candidates, public opinion polls, current party leaders, registered parties.

Prime Ministers Site - www.primeministers.ca

Intimate portraits of the nation's leaders; learn about their lives and their greatest achievements.

Historica - www.histori.ca

Teaching and learning resources related to Canada's History, and Youth Links Section, a collaborative online learning program that connects high school students with their peers to discuss relevant issues.

History of the Vote - http://www.civilization.ca/hist/elections/el_001_e.html

Explore the history of the vote in Canada, read about universal suffrage and accessibility in the past, present and future.

Canada's Political Channel - www.cpac.ca

On-line discussions and news related to Canada's political news. Question Period is now available as a Podcast on this site.

CBC Archives - <http://archives.cbc.ca>

This site has archives with radio and television clips about the history of voting rights and memorable federal election highlights on the campaign trail. (Voting in Canada: How a Privilege Became a Right)

Online Political Cartoons:

Mackay political cartoons: <http://www.mackaycartoons.net/>

Political cartoons of Canada: <http://www.canadafreepress.com/toons/canadianpolitical.htm>

Decoding Political Cartoons: <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/education/008-3050-e.html>



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