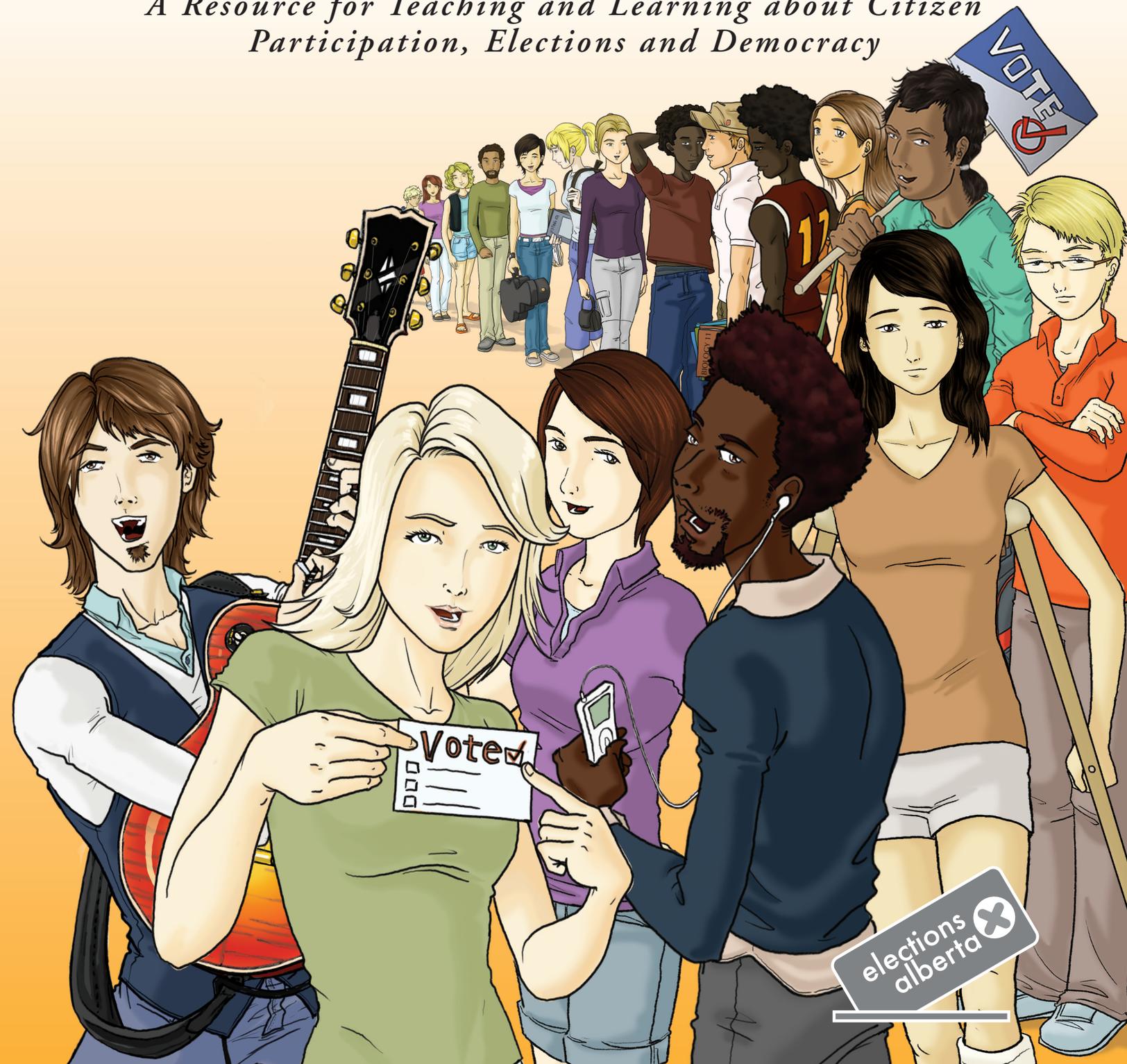


Grade 12
With Support for Grade 11

BUILDING FUTURE VOTERS

*A Resource for Teaching and Learning about Citizen
Participation, Elections and Democracy*



At Elections Alberta, our vision is to inspire and engage participation in the democratic process.

Democracy is most vibrant when all people participate – people of all backgrounds and all ages. We have developed this resource to assist educators in encouraging political participation among youth, in order to build involved citizenship that lasts a lifetime.

This resource will enable students to better understand their motivation for social and political participation, the importance of voting in expressing the identities and decisions of individuals and groups, and the extent to which citizens' preferences are reflected in public policies.

We hope this resource will help to fill a knowledge gap identified by educators in the past. Elections Alberta has often been asked for support materials to facilitate learning – and Building Future Voters is our enthusiastic response to that challenge. Our thanks go to InPraxis Group for lending their expertise to make our objective a reality.

It is my hope that *Building Future Voters* will contribute to the development of political and democratic awareness in youth and become an invaluable teaching tool for educators.



Lorne R. Gibson
Chief Electoral Officer

Acknowledgements

Elections Alberta gratefully acknowledges the following groups and individuals who have participated in the development of this resource.

Review, Contributions & Field Testing

Margo Cahn

Earl Buxton School, Edmonton

Stacy Morgan

Greenfield Elementary School, Edmonton

Jolanda Nicols

Brenda Schwer

École Coloniale Estates School, Beaumont

Marcia Tyerman

Retired Teacher, Sherwood Park

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Elections Alberta also acknowledges the contributions of ideas and approaches from the following organizations:

Elections Manitoba

Elections British Columbia

Elections New Brunswick

Elections Canada

Please be aware that Internet websites may change or disappear in the time between when this resource was written and when it is read. All Internet websites in this resource were current at the time of publication.

Teachers should check each website for appropriateness before using it in the classroom or providing the website address to students.

The developers have made every effort to acknowledge sources used in this resource. If any questions arise as to use of source materials, we will be pleased to make the necessary corrections in future printings.

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■ Building Future Voters - Grade 12

With Support for Grade 11

A Resource for Teaching and Learning about Citizen Participation, Elections and Democracy

The vision of Elections Alberta is to inspire and engage participation in the democratic process. This vision can be achieved if citizens are encouraged to build deep understandings about democracy as well as an appreciation of the potential impact of their actions on communities and society.

■ About *Building Future Voters*

This resource is about more than voting. It encourages the involvement of students in their schools and communities and society as a necessary first step to involvement in political processes, including voting.

This resource provides opportunities for students to:

- Engage in an exploration of democracy, governance, the electoral process and decision-making in the context of their lives and involvement in society
- Participate in decision-making and consider ways that they can be active, participatory citizens
- Explore multiple understandings of citizenship, identities, ideologies and participation
- Build understandings of the electoral process in Alberta and the concepts of responsibilities and empowerment of individuals and government
- Apply those understandings to the development and implementation of a project that is committed to making a difference.

Building Future Voters consists of the following components:

- This teaching and learning resource, which includes approaches, activities, assessment strategies, visual organizers and backgrounders for teaching about citizen participation, elections and democracy.
- *Build the Vote!*, which provides the process and materials to conduct an election simulation in the classroom.
- *Building Future Voters: A Resource for Returning Officers*, which provides Returning Officers with information and activities for participating with Alberta classrooms as they learn about the electoral process.
- The *Building Future Voters* CD, which includes PDF versions of this resource, *Build the Vote!* and the Returning Officer's resource. The CD also includes television and radio advertisements produced by Elections Alberta as well as other provincial electoral offices. It includes a *Building Future Voters* mini-library, with additional PDF documents that may be useful as background information on the electoral process.

In the Grade 12 Social Studies program, students explore the origins and complexities of ideologies and examine multiple perspectives regarding the principles of liberalism, individualism, common good and collectivism. Developing understandings of the roles and responsibilities associated with citizenship will encourage students to respond to emergent global issues. These understandings will also enable students to effectively comprehend and investigate, analyze and evaluate government policies and actions and develop individual and collective responses to contemporary local, national and global issues.

General Outcomes: Understandings of Ideologies

Students will explore the relationship between identity and ideology.

Students will assess their rights, roles and responsibilities as citizens.



Elections Alberta's **Election Simulation Toolkit** includes the following items:

- Electoral Division Map
- Provincial Electoral Division Map
- Voting Screen
- Pencils (3)
- Paper Ballot Box Seals (3)
- Election Officer Badges
- Scrutineer Badges
- "Vote Here" sign (with arrow tip)
- Registration Officer Sign
- Poll Book (modified to include 6 pages)
- Statement of Poll (photocopy)
- Voter Template for Visually Impaired
- Guide for Scrutineers
- Guide for Polling Place Officials
- Guide for Use of the Special Ballot Poll
- Guide for the Conduct of Mobile Polls
- Guide for Candidates on the *Election Act*
- Information for Students on Provincial Elections (brochure).

Contact Elections Alberta using the information provided below to order the toolkit.

This resource supports selected learning outcomes that deal with the concepts of:

- Principles of democracy
- Collectivism and individualism
- Citizen rights, roles and responsibilities
- Social and political participation
 - Public policy
 - The electoral process.

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Online Booking Form:
www.elections.ab.ca,
under the *Education* tab.

Elections Alberta welcomes the ongoing participation of teachers and students by:

- Providing your feedback and suggestions on the use of these resources. A **Teacher's Feedback Form (p. 122)** is provided at the end of this resource with directions for sending it to Elections Alberta. This form can be completed online at www.elections.ab.ca.
- Submitting ideas, activities and student products to be shared with other teachers and students on the Elections Alberta website. **Teaching Ideas & Student Work Submission and Permission forms (pp. 123-124)** are provided at the end of this resource.
- Supporting the involvement of Returning Officers in the classroom. Contact the Elections Alberta office at the contact information on this page or access the online booking form at www.elections.ab.ca to request the participation of a Returning Officer.

The Grade 12 Social Studies Program of Studies focuses on citizenship, identity and ideologies. Students focus on how choices to participate in democratic process can provide ways that they can become involved in personal, national and global communities and develop beliefs, values and attitudes that enable personal responses and empowerment. The topics of decision-making, governance and decision-making through the electoral process can be a natural place for students to explore issues, challenges and decisions that a democratic society faces.

Building Future Voters moves students from an understanding of the electoral process to an emphasis on political participation in the larger picture of commitment to democratic ideals. Students are encouraged to see voting as both a starting point and a natural extension of their involvement in their communities and in current issues.

Building Future Voters provides a context in which students investigate the electoral process through multiple issues and perspectives, and explore the importance of impartiality and effectiveness in a democratic system. Students are encouraged to develop an interest in, and commitment to, the idea of participating in the electoral process. Students connect concepts related to the electoral process to concepts related to individual and collective citizenship.

Engaging Students in Learning

Building Future Voters provides an introduction as well as two learning sequences that develop and support **selected** outcomes in the Grade 12 Social Studies Program of Studies. The introduction and learning sequences can comprise from four to eight weeks of time in the school year, depending on the activities that are implemented. The suggested time allocation for each section is based on 60-minute classes.

Make It Matter

Should social and political participation be a choice or an obligation?

This learning sequence introduces an overarching issue to students. The overarching issue provides a context for the inquiry presented in this resource. Students explore examples of ways that youth can develop a stance and act on issues and questions that are of importance to them. Students are encouraged to engage in an issue or decide on a **class action project** that they believe would make a difference.

Learning Sequence 1

Does voting reflect individual or collective identities and decision-making?

This learning sequence encourages students to explore individual and collective identities and perceptions of identities in popular culture. Students investigate the influence of identities on political and social participation, including voter turnout and the relationship between voting and other social and political actions. They connect these concepts to an investigation of current issues related to the electoral process, as well as the extent to which identities, beliefs and values affect change and reforms in political processes.

Learning Sequence 2

To what extent do public policies actually reflect the preferences of citizens?

This learning sequence asks students to consider the relationship between young adults, public policy and formal politics, including the electoral process. Students are encouraged to reflect on ways that the choice to vote or not to vote can represent a choice to affiliate with values and ideologies, and can result in a disconnect between public policies and the responses of individuals to citizenship rights, roles and responsibilities. Students explore various perspectives on political participation, including actions of dissent.

Working with Returning Officers

Throughout *Building Future Voters*, activities encourage interaction with a Returning Officer of an Alberta electoral division. Suggestions include inviting a Returning Officer to the classroom and involving him or her with students' learning in different projects.



Suggested Time Allocation

Make It Matter

2 to 4 60-minute class periods

Learning Sequence 1

4 to 8 60-minute class periods

Learning Sequence 2

6 to 10 60-minute class periods



Make It Matter

The **class action project** will add a variable amount of time to the implementation of the inquiry in this resource.

● Features

Within each section of the resource, features provide support for different learning preferences, abilities and interests, concept, skill and inquiry development, sharing, assessment and reflection.



Time Allocations are provided for implementing each learning sequence. These time estimates are based on 60-minute class periods.



What to Prepare provides a list of student resources, graphic organizers and materials that are needed to implement the activities in each learning sequence.



Make It Matter signals information, student resources and strategies for implementing the **class action project**. Strategies are connected to the inquiry process used in this resource.



Did You Know is provided in both the teaching suggestions and the student resources. This feature provides additional information and support for developing understandings.



Weblinks provide Internet URLs that support learning strategies and provide additional information. Weblinks are provided for teachers and found in student resources.



Find Out More is provided for teachers and featured in the student resources. This feature encourages research and inquiry skills by providing references to additional resources and sources of information.



Learning Log is featured in the student resource pages. This feature presents reflective questions that encourage critical thinking and personal connections.



Your Turn gives a signal to students that they will be asked to complete a task. Directions for the tasks are provided.



Differentiate provides suggestions and strategies for addressing differing learning needs, interests and prior knowledge.



Assess & Reflect provides suggestions, strategies and tools for assessment of students. Rubrics, checklist templates and assessment tools are included in each section of the resource. Strategies are also provided for student reflection and metacognition.



Share provides approaches for sharing learning in multiple contexts, including with Returning Officers, parents and community members.



Teacher Backgrounders provide detailed information to support students' learning of concepts and information related to provincial government and the electoral process. They also provide weblinks for additional support.



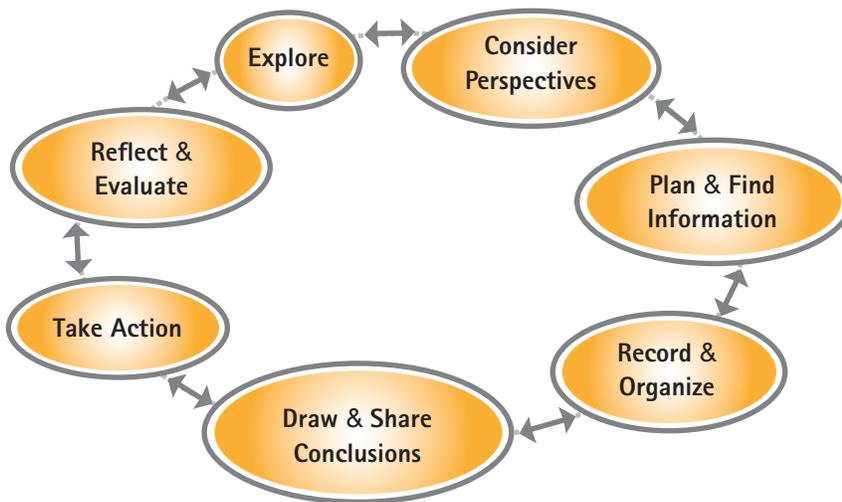
Student Resources can be photocopied and used with students in a number of ways. Each section of the student resources can be provided as students work through specific activities. Specific handouts may be selected for those activities that are implemented in the classroom. The resources can also be photocopied as a booklet and provided to students to work through at varying rates.

● Support for Grade 11

Social Studies 20-1 and 20-2 outcomes can also be developed with this learning resource. Learning outcomes and approaches are identified throughout the resource.

Engaging Students in Inquiry

The inquiry model used in this resource provides opportunities for students to develop and apply research and social participation skills. Students are asked to explore inquiries by starting with their own knowledge and perspectives, use research skills to collect information and apply critical thinking skills to develop conclusions and consider social action.



The process	Purpose of each step of the inquiry process	Questions that can guide inquiry
Explore	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Motivate and generate interest Establish prior knowledge and experiences Identify concepts and understandings Make predictions 	What do we already know? What do we think about this issue? What do we need to understand about this issue? How does this issue or question affect us? What interests us about this issue or question? Why is this important?
Consider Perspectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify research questions Identify individuals and groups involved with the question or issue Consider different perspectives and opinions 	What questions do we have? Who is affected and why? What different opinions exist?
Plan & Find Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on research process Identify, locate and organize sources and information Allocate tasks 	How will we find out what we need to know and understand? What type of information do we need? What sources do we need to consult? What is the best way to research? Who can we find out more from?

The process	Purpose of each step of the inquiry process	Questions that can guide inquiry
Record & Organize	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Record information • Organize information collected • Analyze the information • Make connections and comparisons 	<p>How will we record our research?</p> <p>What similarities and differences do we see?</p> <p>What comparisons can we make?</p> <p>What connections do we see?</p>
Draw & Share Conclusions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present the information • Draw conclusions • Analyze the information • Assess information • Consider solutions, perspectives, alternatives and predictions • Make decisions 	<p>How will we share our information?</p> <p>What would happen if...?</p> <p>What conclusions can we make?</p> <p>What evidence supports our conclusions?</p>
Take Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify actions • Implement action 	<p>What will we do with what we have learned?</p> <p>What would happen if...?</p> <p>How can we contribute?</p> <p>How can we make a difference?</p> <p>What should we do next?</p>
Reflect & Evaluate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflect on actions • Consider effectiveness • Assess learning • Identify further research • Start the inquiry process again 	<p>How effective were our actions?</p> <p>What should we change?</p> <p>What should we do next?</p> <p>What do we need to find out about?</p>

■ Assessing Students

There are a number of opportunities to assess student work. The following tools are provided with the learning sequences in the resource:

- Criteria checklists
- Rubrics for summative assessment of students' work
- Rating scales for students to assess their learning.

Criteria checklists provide assessment criteria that address outcomes from the Grade 12 Social Studies Program of Studies. Each criteria statement represents a cluster of outcomes and includes all Values and Attitudes, Knowledge and Understandings, and Skills and Process outcomes supported by the activities in each learning sequence.

The criteria checklists can be used directly to:

- Observe students as they work individually or in groups
- Monitor student participation in group or whole classroom activities and discussions
- Develop rubrics with students to assess products they create
- Develop checklists to assess student work.

The checklists can also help assess where students are at the beginning or end of the section. Assessing students at the beginning of the section provides support for making decisions about differentiating instruction or making choices about which activities will be used or how they should be modified.

The checklist can be photocopied and stapled or glued in a folder for each student or can be used to assess students as they work in groups. Additional assessments can be added to the folder as the unit progresses and comments added to each student's checklist.

Rubrics are evaluation tools that identify the criteria for evaluation and provide a word description of each level of performance for each criterion. Often the language is complex for students and they can be time consuming to create. Rubrics are best used for summative evaluation.

Rating scales are evaluation tools that describe the desired behaviour and then provide a scale for rating current performance. The addition of a comment column provides a place to record evidence for the rating. Rating scales can be based on frequency, consistency, independence or quality of performance. They are generally not translated into percentage scores and therefore can have three or more levels depending on how much specificity is desired.



Assess & Reflect

Assessment tips are provided throughout the teacher notes in each learning sequence. These tips also include suggestions for encouraging students to reflect on their own learning.

Rating scales are useful because they are less complex than rubrics. They can be used for formative assessment to help students (or peers) evaluate work in progress and identify areas for improvement. Rating scales are also useful for providing evidence of a wide range of process skills.

Rating scales and rubrics can be used together to create a broader picture of student performance. For example, students can use a rating scale to reflect on their contribution to a product as well as to rate their use of process skills. Teachers can use the evidence provided by the students on the rating scale as well as their own observations to assign rubric scores for the various criteria.

■ Engaging with Concepts & Vocabulary

■ Activities To Reinforce Understandings

Students are encouraged to develop understandings of key terms and concepts in activities and student resources. The following activities can be used to support a better understanding and more effective application of social studies concepts.

- Keep track of words, terms, ideas and concepts. When students find them in resources and sources of information, highlight or underline them or record a definition.
- Create an illustrated glossary. Record the definition with an illustration that will help students remember it. Students may be asked to maintain their glossaries individually, with a partner, or with a small group of classmates.
- Create a “What I Learned That I Did Not Know Before” booklet. In this booklet, record the definitions of new words, terms, ideas and concepts.
- Make a word bank list of words, terms, ideas and concepts to help students keep track of words associated with the electoral process and political participation. Encourage students to use these words when they complete assignments or projects.
- Have students create a word wall in the classroom using word art to display, describe or define key concepts and vocabulary.
- Encourage students to use vocabulary and concepts to create analogies, acrostic poems, word pictures, antonyms and synonyms.
- Create a mind map of words, terms, ideas and concepts that are related to each other.
- Use the glossary definitions to create a board game or game show similar to Jeopardy.

■ Glossary

The following pages provide glossary terms and concepts that are highlighted throughout the student resources. The terms are defined or described in the context and sequence of the content that is presented in student resources. Students can be encouraged to use other sources, such as dictionaries, Internet glossaries and classroom resources to expand their understandings of these terms and concepts.

Learning Sequence 1

A **democratic society** is based on the belief that all citizens have a voice in decision-making. However, individuals have differing perspectives about how and when they should participate politically.

The participation of **electors**, or those eligible to vote, as well as the results of their vote, can send important messages to and about government.

Many people find it rewarding to make sure that they are informed about **public issues**, which are issues that concern society.

Although the Task Force on Canadian Unity viewed electoral reform as a more minor issue, it suggested that the size of the House of Commons be increased by about 60 members, and that additional seats be awarded to candidates selected from party lists and distributed on the basis of a party's share of the national vote. This is called **proportional representation**.

The **bicameral**, or two-house, system that provides the structure of government at the federal level originated in Great Britain.

Alberta's Legislature consists of a **unicameral** House called the Legislative Assembly and the Lieutenant Governor.

The premier and **cabinet**, or executive branch, are the chief lawmakers.

The **premier** is the leader of the party commanding a majority of support of elected members in the Assembly while **cabinet ministers** are appointed **Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs)** from that party.

The **executive branch** consists of appointed members of the legislative branch.

When a political party has **majority support** or commands a majority, the party holds more than half of the seats in the Assembly. In this case, the government formed is called a **majority government**.

A party may also be said to command a majority if it holds fewer than half the seats in the Assembly provided that enough members from opposition parties support its major initiatives to ensure that they pass. This is called a **minority government**.

Learning Sequence 2

Through the **electoral process**, citizens give representatives the authority to make decisions, develop policies and enact laws on their behalf. So the electoral process is a critical aspect of the democratic process.

Some issues, such as the Constitution debate, can be decided through **referendums**, a "people's vote" that directly determines an issue of policy by a majority vote, as distinct from an election of political representatives who will make the decision for the people.

The idea of majority decision-making is an important aspect of the electoral process:

- The political party with the majority of seats forms the government.
- Decisions to pass laws are made through a majority of votes.

Residents, people who live in Canada whether or not they are citizens, have many of the same rights as citizens. Some residents, such as landed immigrants or student visitors, cannot vote and may have restricted mobility rights.

Collectively, or taken all together, election results can send a message to politicians, political parties and the public, letting them know what positions and points of view are supported by the majority.

Representatives are chosen through the single member plurality system, often called “**first-past-the-post**.” In other words, the candidate winning the majority of votes in an electoral division is the winner, even if he or she received less than 50% of the “**popular vote**,” which is the total number of votes cast.

Political parties begin the work of choosing candidates long before an election. Each party tries to select, or **nominate**, one candidate to run in each electoral division. Candidates who don't belong to a political party are called **independents**.

Voters who are not on the list of electors must provide identification to prove who they are, and register at the **polling station**, the place where they will vote, by completing an oath.

In some areas, Elections Alberta will conduct an **enumeration**, or a door-to-door survey of eligible voters.

In order to vote, each eligible voter must **register**, or identify themselves by adding their name to the List of Electors. Voting takes place in polling places.

In Alberta, there are criteria that must be met for **voter eligibility**. To be eligible to vote in a provincial election in Alberta, a person must:

1. Be a Canadian citizen
2. Be 18 years of age or older
3. Be ordinarily resident in Alberta for at least six months prior to Polling Day.

An election officially begins when the government in power passes an **Order in Council** and the **Chief Electoral Officer** issues a **Writ of Election** to each Returning Officer.

The election period is a total of 28 days after the date of the Writ of Election. This means that voting day is on the 28th day. **Nomination Day**, the date by which all candidates must be nominated, is the 14th day after the date of the Writ of Election and **Polling Day**, the day on which voting takes place, is the 14th day after Nomination Day.

Each Returning Officer completes an **Election Proclamation**, which contains the following information:

- The place, dates and times fixed for revisions to the **Lists of Electors**, which identify eligible voters.
- The place and times fixed for nomination of candidates, and the date fixed for the closing of nominations
- The locations, dates and times for voting at the advance polls
- The date and times for voting
- The place, date and time for the announcement of the official results
- The name, address and phone number of the Returning Officers in the electoral division.

A **candidate** is a person who is running for election in an electoral division.

Each candidate is required to appoint an elector as an **official agent**. The name, address and telephone number of the appointee must be on the Candidate Nomination Paper and is published by the Returning Officer in a newspaper of general circulation.

A **scrutineer** is a person who represents the candidates at each polling station. Scrutineers may watch election procedures in each polling station during polling hours as well as when the votes are unofficially counted after the polling station is closed.

Polling Day polls are open from 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. on the day of the election. Several polling stations can be located at one polling place.

Special ballot polls are used for electors who are unable to vote on Polling Day or at an advance poll.

Advance polls are established by the Returning Officer in each electoral division. These polls can be used by people with physical challenges and those who believe they will be absent from their polling station on Polling Day to vote in advance.

Mobile polls can be established by the Returning Officer for places like seniors' and treatment centres.

A **ballot** is a list of the candidates' names that electors use to vote.

Introduction & Class Action Project

This introductory section is designed to develop and support **selected** learning outcomes from the Grade 12 Social Studies 30-1 and 30-2 Program of Studies.

Advance Planning

- Start to collect media sources that students can use to explore examples related to democracy, provincial and federal government and participation in the community. Sources related to global issues around democracy, electoral processes and criteria and rights will also be helpful in supporting students' learning.
- Have students use a notebook, binder or file folder to start a **learning log**. Encourage students to use learning logs for personal reflections on what they have learned about democracy, ideologies, elections and social participation.
- Create a portfolio for the **class action project** students will start in this introductory section.
- Set aside a space to display posters with inquiry questions and strategies for participation in communities and with government.



Learning Log

Throughout the student resources, **learning log** questions are provided that encourage students to make personal connections and reflect on their learning.

Support for Grade 11

Many of the activities in this resource can also be used effectively with the Social Studies 20-1 and 20-2 Program of Studies. Suggestions are provided in the DIFFERENTIATE feature for realigning some activities for the Grade 11 program.

An introduction to the ethical and moral obligations and choices of individual and collective citizenship action

Make It Matter



Students decide on a class project to implement.

- **Plan It** (pp. 114-115)

MAKE IT MATTER

Should social and political participation be a choice or an obligation?

This learning sequence introduces an overarching issue to students. The overarching issue provides a context for the inquiry presented in this resource. Students explore examples of ways that youth can develop a stance and act on issues and questions that are of importance to them. Students are encouraged to engage in an issue or decide on a **class action project** that they believe would make a difference.



Prepare

Student Resource

- Student Resource I-1: Make It Matter (pp. 27-30)

Graphic Organizer

- Continuum (p. 104)
- T-Chart (p. 105)

Build the Vote! An Election Simulation

- A **Ballot Template** is provided in this resource.



2 to 4 60-minute class periods

MAKE IT MATTER

Should social and political participation be a choice or an obligation?

Curriculum Connections

Inquiry Context	Learning Outcomes 30-1	Learning Outcomes 30-2
<p>Should social and political participation be a choice or an obligation?</p> <p>An introduction to the ethical and moral obligations and choices of individual and collective citizenship action</p>	<p>1.2 appreciate various perspectives regarding the relationship between individualism and common good (PADM, C, GC)</p> <p>1.9 analyze the dynamic between individualism and common good in contemporary societies (PADM, ER, C)</p> <p>4.1 appreciate the relationship between citizenship and leadership (C, I)</p> <p>4.10 explore opportunities to demonstrate active and responsible citizenship through individual and collective action (C, GC)</p> <p>S.1 develop skills of critical thinking and creative thinking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evaluate personal assumptions and opinions to develop an expanded appreciation of a topic or an issue • analyze current affairs from a variety of perspectives <p>S.4 demonstrate skills of decision making and problem solving:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • generate and apply new ideas and strategies to contribute to decision making and problem solving <p>S.5 demonstrate skills of cooperation, conflict resolution and consensus building:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • respect the needs and perspectives of others • collaborate in groups to solve problems <p>S.6 develop age-appropriate behaviour for social involvement as responsible citizens contributing to their community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate leadership by engaging in actions that enhance personal and community well-being • acknowledge the importance of multiple perspectives in a variety of situations <p>S.7 apply the research process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reflect on changes of points of view or opinion based on information gathered and research conducted 	<p>1.2 appreciate various perspectives regarding the relationship between individualism and common good (PADM, C, GC)</p> <p>1.9 examine the relationship between individualism and common good in contemporary societies (PADM, ER, C)</p> <p>4.1 appreciate the relationship between citizenship and leadership (C, I)</p> <p>4.9 explore opportunities to demonstrate active and responsible citizenship through individual and collective action (C, GC)</p> <p>S.1 develop skills of critical thinking and creative thinking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evaluate personal assumptions and opinions • determine the strengths and weaknesses of arguments • analyze current affairs from a variety of perspectives <p>S.4 demonstrate skills of decision making and problem solving:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • apply ideas and strategies to contribute to decision making and problem solving <p>S.5 demonstrate skills of cooperation, conflict resolution and consensus building:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consider the points of view and perspectives of others • demonstrate cooperativeness in groups to solve problems <p>S.6 develop age-appropriate behaviour for social involvement as responsible citizens contributing to their community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promote and respect the contributions of team members when working as a team • cooperate with others for the well-being of the community <p>S.7 apply the research process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop conclusions based on information gathered through research of a wide variety of sources

Inquiry Context	Learning Outcomes 30-1	Learning Outcomes 30-2
	<p>S.8 demonstrate skills of oral, written and visual literacy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> communicate effectively to express a point of view in a variety of situations 	<p>S.8 demonstrate skills of oral, written and visual literacy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> communicate effectively in a variety of situations

C Citizenship

LPP The Land: Places and People

CC Culture and Community

I Identity

GC Global Connections

PADM Power, Authority and Decision Making

ER Economics and Resources

TCC Time, Continuity and Change

Selected curriculum outcomes from Alberta's Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Program of Studies are infused throughout the Social Studies Program of Studies and are indicated by this symbol ▶.

Assess & Reflect



The learning outcomes in this introductory section are developed in more depth in the learning sequences.

It is recommended that students be assessed as they move further into their inquiries rather than completing formal assessments at this stage.

Support for Grade 11

Social Studies 20-1 and 20-2 outcomes can also be developed through this learning sequence.

Learning Outcomes 20-1	Learning Outcomes 20-2
<p>1.6 develop understandings of nation and nationalism (relationship to land, geographic, <u>collective</u>, <u>civic</u>, ethnic, cultural, linguistic, <u>political</u>, spiritual, religious, <u>patriotic</u>) (I, CC, LPP)</p> <p>4.5 analyze methods used by individuals, groups and governments in Canada to promote a national identity (symbolism, mythology, <u>institutions</u>, government programs and initiatives) (I, C, LPP)</p>	<p>1.4 appreciate why peoples seek to promote their identity through nationalism (I, C)</p> <p>4.5 analyze methods used by individuals, groups and governments in Canada to promote a national identity (symbolism, mythology, <u>institutions</u>, government programs and initiatives) (I, C, LPP)</p>

MAKE IT MATTER

Should social and political participation be a choice or an obligation?

Teaching and Learning Activities

① Make It Matter

The development of personal beliefs in one's ability to take action and bring about change is an important aspect of participatory citizenship. Students should be encouraged to consider ways that their actions can result in change and make a difference. They can then be encouraged to consider how participating as a voter is also a means of bringing about change.

- Provide students with **Student Resource I-1: Make It Matter (pp. 27-30)** and ask them to review the statements on the first page of the handout.
- Have students respond individually to each statement. This can be completed as an individual activity or by having students indicating their responses in a class setting. To do this, students create five cards with the following phrases on them. They can also be provided with differently coloured index cards, or create each statement on an index card.
 1. Strongly agree
 2. Agree
 3. Neutral or not sure
 4. Disagree
 5. Strongly disagree
- Read each statement that follows out loud, one by one. Have students indicate the extent to which they agree or disagree with each statement by holding up the appropriate card. At various points, ask students to find a classmate with a different response from their own and discuss for one or two minutes why they feel the way they do. (*Students may also just be asked to use three points of agreement or disagreement for this activity – Agree; Disagree; Not Sure. Discuss and decide on the scale to be used before completing the response statements.*)

All individuals who live in Canada are represented equally by its democratic system.

The media should promote more patriotism to increase political participation.

There is no such thing as a Canadian national identity.

The government cares about what the youth of Canada have to say.

Voting is a responsibility and a right. All citizens should be required to vote by law.

Elections in Canada and Alberta are conducted fairly, impartially and securely.



Did You Know

“Today’s young adults are less likely to join political parties, but they do join non-governmental organizations. Many believe in protest politics and consumer activism, not in status quo politics. They are, however, less likely to vote than young adults in the past and many do not plan to start voting. But (and this is a big but) they tend to be less cynical than the Baby Boomers. Many retain a temperament for democracy, but express their civic commitment in different ways.... This shift is often mistaken for apathy....”

Bristow, Jason. (March 2008). *The Next West Generation: Young Adults, Identity and Democracy*. Calgary: Canada West Foundation (p. 3).



Differentiate

This activity can be limited to five to ten minutes or it can take an entire class period. To explore the statements in more depth, ask each pair to share a summary statement about their differing positions on each statement with the class.

If technology such as *Senteo Clickers* is available, it can be effectively used for this activity. A software application, such as *Survey Monkey*, can also be used to have students use the questions to create and administer a survey and compare results.

Discuss the meaning of terms such as patriotism, impartial, apathy and detrimental with students before starting the survey.

Differentiate



Alternatively, create eleven posters with each statement. Number students into ten groups of two or three. Have each group visit each poster, using a **carousel** format.

Have group members record their individual responses on each poster by adding tally marks, such as **||||**, to indicate their agreement with each statement.

In a carousel format, students are grouped and rotate through different learning centres or stations at timed intervals. Students may be grouped randomly or by learning preferences, interests or needs.

Share



Have students prepare a brief summary of one of the statements and different perspectives related to it to share with classmates, in a letter to the editor, or with parents.

Emphasize descriptions of the perspectives for 30-2 students, and analysis and comparison for 30-1 students.

Provincial representatives in the federal government represent regional interests rather than Canadian interests.

If you belong to a political party, you have to believe its ideology completely.

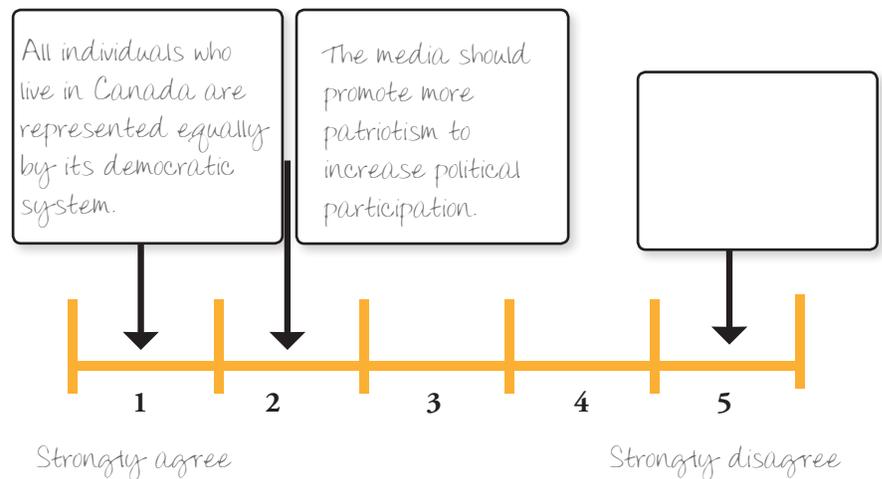
Canadian culture and heritage should be protected by government policies against external global influences.

The government does not represent the identity and interests of all Canadians because of the system of representation by population.

Voter apathy is detrimental to the well-being of Canadians.

- Discuss and compare the extent to which students agree or disagree with the statements. Create a continuum on the board, listing the five choices across the continuum and recording the number of responses for each question. Students can also be provided with a graphic organizer, such as a **Continuum (p. 104)** to create their own. Alternatively, students can be asked to create bar graphs to synthesize their collective opinions.

To create a continuum, add up and average the responses to each question. Create the continuum by placing the averaged questions in the boxes along the top of the continuum line, as in the example below.



- Explore how the collective responses differ from students' individual responses. What types of actions are implied by or suggested by the issues involved in these statements?
- Provide students with a graphic organizer such as a **T-Chart (p. 105)**. Ask students to use the T-Chart to explore examples of social and political participation that involve individual and collective actions. Students can be asked to work individually, with a partner and then with a small group to brainstorm and add ideas to the T-Charts. Use this as a starting point to discuss or reinforce the advantages and disadvantages of individual and collective efforts.

Introduce the idea of “degrees of participation” in society. What degrees of participation do different actions represent? Why? (*Students may be encouraged to consider how degrees of participation represent different levels of involvement or commitment. Students completing activities during the field test of this resource argued that, in a democracy, the right to get involved and the degree of involvement is a democratic right. Therefore, democracies protect an*

individual's right not to get involved. Students may also be encouraged to consider how and why youth get involved in different degrees depending on their ages and interests. Students from the field test pointed out that they believe youth are targeted on the issue of apathy.

Students may also discuss issues relating to the extent to which the economy influences degrees of participation. Students in the field test commented that when the economy is going well, the electorate believes that there is no need to change the status quo politically. However, the government is still responsible and accountable for making good decisions. Encourage students to also consider whether voter turnout or election results would be different if voting were mandatory.)

Degrees of Participation

Individual	Collective



Find Out More

If time permits, consider having students do Internet or media research to find examples of actions that illustrate social and political participation and add them to the T-Chart as choices or obligations.

- Ask students to discuss obligations and choices they think they have as individuals to improve the well-being, standard of life or quality of life in their immediate environments, nationally or globally. Ask students to also consider choices and obligations of their age group as a collective in acting on issues and challenges that concern them.
 - ➔ What actions do you think are most acceptable to society in improving well-being, standard of life or quality of life?
 - ➔ What actions do you think are most effective? Is there a difference in effectiveness of individual or collective actions? What and why?
 - ➔ Is there a difference between what is “acceptable” and what is “effective?” *(Students may bring a variety of perspectives to this question. They may identify some types of political or social action as being “acceptable” – talking to a political representative, participating in community meetings, participating with a political party or writing letters to local media. Students may have varying perceptions of the effectiveness of these actions. Students may also tend to identify other forms of action as being more “effective” – engaging in forms of protest, such as boycotting or demonstration, joining an interest group or supporting a non-governmental organization (NGO). Encourage students to explore the differences, if any, between “acceptable” and “effective” forms of action.)*
- Discuss and list social or political conditions that students believe they can impact or change. Have students analyze these initial ideas, using questions such as the following:
 - ➔ What types of change are possible in the short term?
 - ➔ What types of changes could take longer?

- What changes involve individual or collective actions? What are some examples of individual and collective actions?
- What changes have challenges associated with them? What are these challenges?

The T-Chart graphic organizer can also be used to have students analyze the changes they see a need for and the potential effects and challenges. *(Encourage students to consider the criteria that could be used to evaluate how successful, challenging, realistic or unrealistic some changes may be. Consider why some ideas for change can be challenging or unrealistic and how criteria should be applied in deciding what types of actions will be effective in bringing about change.)*

- Work with the class to prioritize their ideas for change and action. Make a decision about how to select a project that the class can work on throughout the inquiry in this resource.
- Ask students to identify examples of injustices or challenges in the school or community. Use a consensus building process to decide on a project to work together on as a class that can address an injustice or challenge. The class action projects should address a relevant area of concern to students in their own schools or communities, but may include issues such as:
 - Community youth curfews
 - Cyberbullying legislation
 - Banning of ‘junk food’ and/or bottled water in schools
 - Industrial development applications, such as oil, natural gas or factory farm production and environmental community impacts
 - The cost of higher education
 - Insurance rates for young adults
 - Labour laws relating to youth or young adult workers, including safety, financial impact and training standards for full- or part-time workers
 - Community support standards for troubled young people
 - Health care issues related to youth
 - Young adults and Canada’s military recruitment drive
 - Canada’s role in the world as a right or responsibility.

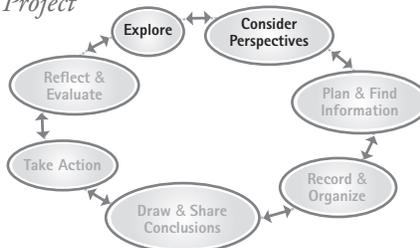
Although these issues are not associated directly with the electoral process, they provide a valuable connection to the idea of participation in a democracy and can often be related to, or affected by, governments and legislation. As students learn about government and democracy, they should be encouraged to consider the connections between different forms of social participation, including voting.

- Establish project groups of four or students and negotiate each group's responsibilities with the class. Discuss how to ensure that the project is doable within the time frame established to work on it. There are a variety of approaches that can be used to establish group responsibilities:
 - ➔ Ask each group to complete the same tasks and then compare and combine results as a class before taking the next step. Make the decision to move forward with the project as a class.
 - ➔ Establish separate responsibilities for each group. For example, have each group explore different issues, perspectives or opinions associated with the project.
- Ask students to make a commitment to work on the class action project throughout this unit of study. Discuss ideas for continuing the project throughout the year, or brainstorm examples of additional strategies that can be used to continue involvement in the project. Establish realistic goals and desired results for the project with the class.
- The ***Make It Matter*** icon at the end of each learning sequence in this resource provides additional suggestions for implementing the class action project throughout this unit. However, the scope of the project may necessitate its continuance throughout the school year. The project can be implemented by:
 - ➔ Allocating one class period every week to have students work on the class action project.
 - ➔ Dedicating two or three classes every few weeks to complete a stage in the class action project. These stages can correlate with the suggestions and planning templates referenced in Learning Sequences 1 and 2.
 - ➔ Establishing a schedule for project groups to work on the class action project once every one or two weeks during lunch or after school. Each group may be asked to work on the project on a rotating basis. This may also necessitate making participation in the class action project an optional component of this unit.
- Create a class poster or allocate bulletin board space to identify and describe the challenge or injustice that students are taking on as their class action project. Students can be asked to add mini progress reports to the poster or bulletin board to update their progress and results.



Make It Matter - *Class Action Project*

- Invite each project group to use **Plan It (pp. 114-115)** to organize and create a project plan. This student resource asks students to describe the project goals and group responsibilities.





Should social and political participation be a choice or an obligation?

I-1 Make It Matter

To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of these statements?

1. Strongly agree
2. Agree
3. Neutral or not sure
4. Disagree
5. Strongly disagree



All individuals who live in Canada are represented equally by its democratic system.

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There is no such thing as a Canadian national identity.

The government cares about what the youth of Canada have to say.

Voting is a responsibility and a right. All citizens should be required to vote by law.

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Provincial representatives in the federal government represent regional interests rather than Canadian interests.

If you belong to a political party, you have to believe its ideology completely.

Canadian culture and heritage should be protected by government policies against external global influences.

The government does not represent the identity and interests of all Canadians because of the system of representation by population.

Voter apathy is detrimental to the well-being of Canadians.

Should social and political participation be a choice or an obligation?

Is the perception that young people are apathetic about politics a stereotype? Many think so. Some recent studies show that while young people don't get involved with politics the way their parents might have, they do get involved with issues and controversies.



Learning Log

How do these findings compare to your opinions on political and social participation?

A 2006 survey found the following about a group of 1000 young people, aged 15 to 34:

- Young people consider themselves to be engaged citizens.
- Young people believe that politics is important to their lives, but do not feel they have enough say in where the country is going.
- Young people believe voting on issues is more important than voting for politicians.
- Young people do not believe that the best person usually wins in federal elections.

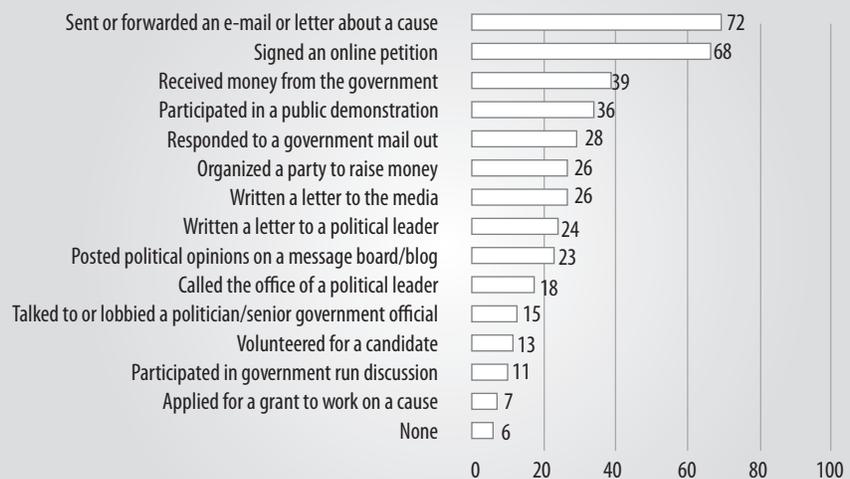
- Overall, young people do not believe that the voting age should be dropped to 16. However, agreement that the voting age should be dropped was much stronger in the 15 to 19 age group.
- Young people are split on whether Canada should make voting mandatory by law.

The same survey found that young people participate politically outside of voting in a variety of ways.

Find Out More



The information on this page comes from a study conducted by Decode, a for-profit enterprise designed to help governments and business build relationships with young people. Find out more about this organization at www.d-code.com. What biases and perspectives do you think influence the reliability and validity of this information? What could you do to balance these perspectives?



Youth Voter DNA Report: How are Canadians between 15-34 engaged in politics, voting and political action? Summary Report: January 16, 2006. Toronto: DECODE (Self-Published) (p. 12). www.d-code.com/pdfs/YouthVoterDNA.pdf.

Other examples show that young people do get involved. Consider the following excerpt from a newspaper article.

“Two Nova Scotia students are being praised across North America for the way they turned the tide against the bullies who picked on a fellow student for wearing pink.

The victim – a Grade 9 boy at Central Kings Rural High School in the small community of Cambridge – wore a pink polo shirt on his first day of school.

Bullies harassed the boy ... for wearing pink and threatened to beat him up, students said.

Two Grade 12 students – David Shepherd and Travis Price – heard the news and decided to take action.

"I just figured enough was enough," said Shepherd.

They went to a nearby discount store and bought 50 pink shirts, including tank tops, to wear to school the next day.

'Sea of pink' support

Then the two went online to e-mail classmates to get them on board with their anti-bullying cause that they dubbed a "sea of pink."

But a tsunami of support poured in the next day.

Not only were dozens of students outfitted with the discount tees, but hundreds of students showed up wearing their own pink clothes, some head-to-toe.

When the bullied student, who has never been identified, walked into school to see his fellow students decked out in pink, some of his classmates said it was a powerful moment. He may have even blushed a little.

"Definitely it looked like there was a big weight lifted off his shoulders. He went from looking right depressed to being as happy as can be," said Shepherd.

And there's been nary a peep from the bullies since, which Shepherd says just goes to show what a little activism will do.

"If you can get more people against them ... to show that we're not going to put up with it and support each other, then they're not as big as a group as they think are," he says. ”

Bullied student tickled pink by schoolmates' T-shirt campaign (September 19, 2007). CBC News Online. www.cbc.ca/canada/nova-scotia/story/2007/09/18/pink-tshirts-students.html.



Find Out More

Search for more articles and sources related to this event by using the search words "sea of pink T-shirt campaign." What have the "ripple" effects of this event involved? How is this article an example of the phrase "from local to global?"



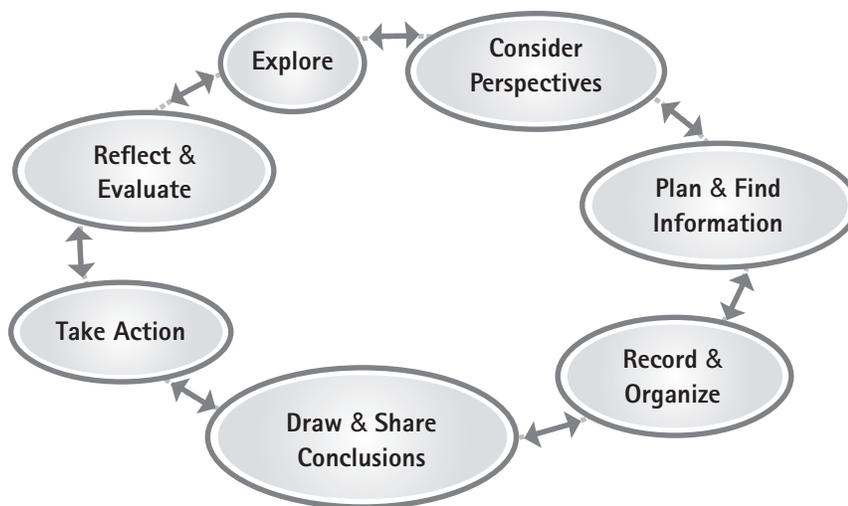
What about you?

How important is it to you to get involved? In what ways do you participate, politically or socially?

What do you think needs changing? Make another list of your ideas.

What do you think you could do about the things that need changing?

Making a decision to take action involves the inquiry process. As you plan how you can "make it matter" for an issue that you are concerned about, consider how to use an inquiry model. How would you apply each step of the inquiry model?



Explore

Consider Perspectives

Plan and Find Information

Record and Organize

Draw and Share Conclusions

Take Action

Reflect and Evaluate

■ Learning Sequences

The two activity sequences that follow are designed to develop and support selected learning outcomes from the Grade 12 Social Studies Program of Studies. The activity sequences can be used or adapted for both the Social Studies 30-1 and 30-2 Programs of Studies.

Notes are provided in the **Assess & Reflect** and **Share** features regarding the different skills and processes outcomes in 30-1 and 30-2, as well as within **Differentiate** for adapting activities to meet different learning needs of students.

■ Advance Planning

- Start to collect media sources that students can use to explore examples related to democracy, rights, governance and participation in society.
- Identify websites that students can use to research information about democracy, rights, elections, voting and social action.
- Set aside bulletin board space for group projects that students complete in the learning sequences.
- Contact Elections Alberta through the contact information on this page to request the participation of a Returning Officer. Invite him or her to visit the class to view student work at the end of the learning sequence activities.



Share

The *Building Future Voters Returning Officers' Resource* encourages Returning Officers to interact and work with students in the classroom. Involving Returning Officers with your students provides an authentic context in which students can develop research and inquiry skills and share learning.

Elections Alberta

Suite 100, 11510 Kingsway NW
Edmonton, Alberta T5G 2Y5

Office Hours:
Monday through Friday

8:15 a.m. to 12 noon;
1:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Tel: 780-427-7191
Fax: 780-422-2900

Other locations in the province can call toll free by dialing 310-0000 then dial 780-427-7191

Online Booking Form:
www.elections.ab.ca,
under the *Education* tab.

An exploration of the impact of individualism and common good on identities and decision-making

Make It Matter



Students work with their project groups to research and explore information that will support their class project.

- **Get Informed (pp. 116-117)**

Students work with their project groups to develop strategies for communicating their project goals and actions.

- **Communicate and Implement (pp. 118-119)**

LEARNING SEQUENCE 1

Does voting reflect individual or collective identities and decision-making?

This learning sequence encourages students to explore individual and collective identities and perceptions of identities in popular culture. Students investigate the influence of identities on political and social participation, including voter turnout and the relationship between voting and other social and political actions. They connect these concepts to an investigation of current issues related to the electoral process, as well as the extent to which identities, beliefs and values affect change and reforms in political processes.



Prepare

Student Resources

- Student Resource 1-1: Identities (pp. 49-52)
- Student Resource 1-2: Times Change (pp. 53-57)
- Student Resource 1-3: Power to Choose (pp. 58-62)

Graphic Organizers

- Mind Map (p. 106) or Sphere of Influence Chart (p. 107)
- Triple T-Chart (p. 108)
- Cause and Effect Timeline (p. 109)
- T-Chart (p. 105)



4 to 8 60-minute class periods



Teacher Backgrounder 1 (pp. 94-96) provides background information that you may find useful in supporting students' learning.

LEARNING SEQUENCE 1

Does voting reflect individual or collective identities and decision-making?

Curriculum Connections

Inquiry Context	Learning Outcomes 30-1	Learning Outcomes 30-2
<p>Does voting reflect individual or collective identities and decision-making?</p> <p>An exploration of the impact of individualism and common good on identities and decision-making</p>	<p>1.2 appreciate various perspectives regarding the relationship between individualism and common good (PADM, C, GC)</p> <p>1.9 analyze the dynamic between individualism and common good in contemporary societies (PADM, ER, C)</p> <p>1.10 evaluate the extent to which personal identity should be shaped by ideologies (I, C)</p> <p>4.1 appreciate the relationship between citizenship and leadership (C, I)</p> <p>4.3 accept responsibilities associated with individual and collective citizenship (C, GC)</p> <p>4.6 analyze perspectives on the rights, roles and responsibilities of the individual in a democratic society (respect for law and order, dissent, civility, political participation, citizen advocacy) (C, PADM, ER)</p> <p>4.10 explore opportunities to demonstrate active and responsible citizenship through individual and collective action (C, GC)</p> <p>S.1 develop skills of critical thinking and creative thinking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evaluate ideas and information from multiple sources • determine relationships among multiple and varied sources of information • evaluate personal assumptions and opinions to develop an expanded appreciation of a topic or an issue • synthesize information from contemporary and historical issues to develop an informed position • evaluate the logic of assumptions underlying a position • assemble seemingly unrelated information to support an idea or to explain an event • analyze current affairs from a variety of perspectives 	<p>1.2 appreciate various perspectives regarding the relationship between individualism and common good (PADM, C, GC)</p> <p>1.9 examine the relationship between individualism and common good in contemporary societies (PADM, ER, C)</p> <p>1.10 analyze the extent to which personal identity should be shaped by ideologies (I, C)</p> <p>4.1 appreciate the relationship between citizenship and leadership (C, I)</p> <p>4.3 accept responsibilities associated with individual and collective citizenship (C, GC)</p> <p>4.5 examine perspectives on the rights, roles and responsibilities of the individual in a democratic society (respect for law and order, protest, civil disobedience, political participation) (C, PADM, ER)</p> <p>4.9 explore opportunities to demonstrate active and responsible citizenship through individual and collective action (C, GC)</p> <p>S.1 develop skills of critical thinking and creative thinking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • analyze ideas and information from multiple sources • determine relationships among multiple sources of information • evaluate personal assumptions and opinions • determine the strengths and weaknesses of arguments • identify seemingly unrelated information to explain a concept or event • analyze current affairs from a variety of perspectives <p>S.2 develop skills of historical thinking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • analyze connections among patterns of historical change by identifying cause and effect relationships • develop reasoned arguments supported by historical and contemporary evidence

Inquiry Context	Learning Outcomes 30-1	Learning Outcomes 30-2
	<p>S.2 develop skills of historical thinking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> analyze connections among patterns of historical change by identifying cause and effect relationships develop a reasoned position that is informed by historical and contemporary evidence <p>S.4 demonstrate skills of decision making and problem solving:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> generate and apply new ideas and strategies to contribute to decision making and problem solving <p>S.5 demonstrate skills of cooperation, conflict resolution and consensus building:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> respect the needs and perspectives of others collaborate in groups to solve problems <p>S.6 develop age-appropriate behaviour for social involvement as responsible citizens contributing to their community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrate leadership by engaging in actions that enhance personal and community well-being acknowledge the importance of multiple perspectives in a variety of situations <p>S.7 apply the research process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop, express and defend an informed position on an issue reflect on changes of points of view or opinion based on information gathered and research conducted draw pertinent conclusions based on evidence derived from research demonstrate proficiency in the use of research tools and strategies to investigate issues integrate and synthesize argumentation and evidence to provide an informed opinion on a research question or an issue of inquiry develop, refine and apply questions to address an issue select and analyze relevant information when conducting research <p>S.8 demonstrate skills of oral, written and visual literacy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> communicate effectively to express a point of view in a variety of situations use skills of formal and informal discussion and/or debate to persuasively express informed viewpoints on an issue ask respectful and relevant questions of others to clarify viewpoints listen respectfully to others 	<p>S.4 demonstrate skills of decision making and problem solving:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> apply ideas and strategies to contribute to decision making and problem solving <p>S.5 demonstrate skills of cooperation, conflict resolution and consensus building:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> consider the points of view and perspectives of others demonstrate cooperativeness in groups to solve problems <p>S.6 develop age-appropriate behaviour for social involvement as responsible citizens contributing to their community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrate leadership by engaging in actions that enhance the well-being of self and others in the community promote and respect the contributions of team members when working as a team cooperate with others for the well-being of the community <p>S.7 apply the research process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop and express an informed position on an issue develop conclusions based on information gathered through research of a wide variety of sources use research tools and methods to investigate issues consult a wide variety of sources, including oral histories, that reflect varied viewpoints on particular issues revise questions on an issue as new information becomes available select relevant information when conducting research <p>S.8 demonstrate skills of oral, written and visual literacy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> communicate effectively in a variety of situations engage in respectful discussion use a variety of oral, visual and print sources to present informed positions on issues ask respectful and relevant questions of others to clarify viewpoints on an issue make respectful and reasoned comments on the topic of discussion

Inquiry Context	Learning Outcomes 30-1	Learning Outcomes 30-2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use a variety of oral, visual and print sources to present informed positions on issues ➤ apply information technologies for context (situation, audience and purpose) to extend and communicate understanding of complex issues <p>S.9 develop skills of media literacy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ evaluate the validity of various points of view presented in the media ➤ appraise information from multiple sources, evaluating each source in terms of the author's perspective or bias and use of evidence ➤ analyze the impact of various forms of media, identifying complexities and discrepancies in the information and making distinctions between sound generalizations and misleading oversimplification 	<p>S.9 develop skills of media literacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ assess the authority, reliability and validity of electronically accessed information ➤ analyze the validity of various points of view in media messages ➤ analyze information from multiple sources, evaluating each source in terms of the author's perspective or bias and use of evidence

C Citizenship

LPP The Land: Places and People

CC Culture and Community

I Identity

GC Global Connections

PADM Power, Authority and Decision Making

ER Economics and Resources

TCC Time, Continuity and Change

Selected curriculum outcomes from Alberta's Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Program of Studies are infused throughout the Social Studies Program of Studies and are indicated by this symbol ➤.

Support for Grade 11

Social Studies 20-1 and 20-2 outcomes can also be developed through this learning sequence.

Learning Outcomes 20-1	Learning Outcomes 20-2
<p>1.4 appreciate why peoples seek to promote their identity through nationalism (I, C)</p>	<p>1.4 appreciate why peoples seek to promote their identity through nationalism (I, C)</p>
<p>1.6 develop understandings of nation and nationalism (relationship to land, geographic, <u>collective</u>, <u>civic</u>, ethnic, cultural, linguistic, <u>political</u>, spiritual, religious, <u>patriotic</u>) (I, CC, LPP)</p>	<p>1.6 develop understandings of nation and nationalism (relationship to land, geographic, <u>collective</u>, <u>civic</u>, ethnic, cultural, linguistic, <u>political</u>, spiritual, religious, <u>patriotic</u>) (I, CC, LPP)</p>
<p>4.3 respect the views of others on alternative visions of national identity (I, C)</p>	<p>4.3 respect the views of others on alternative visions of national identity (I, C)</p>
<p>4.4 explore multiple perspectives on national identity in Canada (I, C, LPP)</p>	<p>4.4 explore multiple perspectives on national identity in Canada (I, C, LPP)</p>
<p>4.5 analyze methods used by individuals, groups and governments in Canada to promote a national identity (symbolism, mythology, <u>institutions</u>, government programs and initiatives) (I, C, LPP)</p>	<p>4.5 analyze methods used by individuals, groups and governments in Canada to promote a national identity (symbolism, mythology, <u>institutions</u>, government programs and initiatives) (I, C, LPP)</p>
<p>4.9 develop personal and collective visions of national identity (I, C)</p>	<p>4.9 develop personal and collective visions of national identity (I, C)</p>

LEARNING SEQUENCE 1

Does voting reflect individual or collective identities and decision-making?



Checklist

Criteria	Yes	Somewhat	Not Yet
Students provide evidence of their learning as they:			
Consider and respond respectfully to various perspectives that relate to identities and citizenship (1.2; 4.1)			
Value the impact that leadership and action can have on citizenship (4.1)			
Analyze, compare and evaluate the relationship between individual citizenship action, ideological stances and identity (1.9; 1.10; 4.1)			
Describe and assess rights, roles and responsibilities of individuals as they engage in democratic processes (4.3; 4.6/4.5)			
Demonstrate commitment to engage in action that reflects personal stances and values (1.9; 4.10/4.9)			
<i>*The following criteria statements reflect clusters of skill outcomes. These criteria statements can be combined or used with the statements above to assess student learning.</i>			
Express, support, evaluate and reflect on development of personal opinions and perspectives			
Develop, express and support a position with relevant and justifiable evidence, examples and perspectives			
Organize, combine and synthesize information to develop conclusions and propose solutions			
Analyze connections, patterns, perspectives and evidence from current and historical sources			
Access, organize, summarize and compare diverse viewpoints and perspectives from a variety of sources			
Access, compare and analyze diverse media messages that reflect current, social or political issues			
Identify and assess different points of view and perspectives			
Reflect on processes used			
Use graphic organizers to make connections and synthesize information and ideas			
Examine, evaluate and assess sources of information			
Develop inquiry questions			

Criteria	Yes	Somewhat	Not Yet
Students provide evidence of their learning as they:			
Describe and assess ways to participate in democratic decision-making processes			
Participate in problem solving and decision-making processes by offering ideas and providing examples and reasons			
Communicate with others to share original ideas and persuasively express viewpoints on issue-related problems			
Work collaboratively and cooperatively in a group setting			

LEARNING SEQUENCE 1

Does voting reflect individual or collective identities and decision-making?

Rubric

This rubric provides an example of how criteria statements can be applied to summative assessment of student learning. It can be applied to a variety of student products.



Level Criteria	4 Excellent	3 Proficient	2 Adequate	1 Limited *	Insufficient / Blank *
Analyzes, compares and evaluates the relationship between individual citizenship action, ideological stances and identity (1.9; 1.10; 4.1)	Presents significant and thorough analysis of the effects and influence of ideological stances and identities on aspects of citizenship participation.	Presents specific and detailed analysis of the effects and influence of ideological stances and identities on aspects of citizenship participation.	Presents general and partial analysis of the effects and influence of ideological stances and identities on aspects of citizenship participation.	Presents vague and sketchy analysis of the effects and influence of ideological stances and identities on aspects of citizenship participation.	No score is awarded because there is insufficient evidence of student performance based on the requirements of the assessment task.
Develops, expresses and supports a position with evidence, examples and perspectives	Provides compelling support for position.	Provides convincing support for position.	Provides simplistic support for position.	Provides trivial support for position.	
Discusses and shares creative and original ideas with others	Shares insightful ideas and interrelated examples.	Shares solid ideas and relevant examples.	Shares adequate ideas and general examples.	Shares unconnected ideas and trivial examples.	
Communicates with others to discuss and solve issue-related problems	Communicates information in an effective manner that engages others.	Communicates information in a purposeful manner that interests others.	Communicates information in a straightforward manner that generally holds the attention of others.	Communicates information in an ineffective manner that does not sustain the attention of others.	

* When work is judged to be limited or insufficient, the teacher makes decisions about appropriate intervention to help the student improve.

Find Out More



The Spring 2007 issue of *Dialogues*, a Canada West Foundation Publication, focuses on young adults, democracy and the future of Canada. It can be accessed at the weblink www.cwf.ca/V2/files/DialoguesSpring07.pdf.

Differentiate



Have students brainstorm what they understand about the concept of democracy individually, in their notebooks, using large sticky notes or index cards, or in small groups or as a class, using chart paper. Remind students to record all their responses without debating them. If students work within a group to brainstorm, have individuals add ideas to the group's chart paper without discussing them first.

Social Studies 20-1 and 20-2 students can focus on the concept of identity in the context of national identities and nationalism.

Weblink



A **graffiti wall** is a strategy typically used in language arts classrooms and connected with literature studies. Adapt this strategy for social studies by centering its creation on a key concept, such as identities. The graffiti walls can provide an opportunity to experiment with imagery and exaggeration, as well as discuss messages and modes of communication that represent popular culture.

A graffiti wall strategy emphasizes a constructivist approach to learning, as students express and negotiate understandings as they construct it.

Find out more about this strategy at www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=208.

LEARNING SEQUENCE 1

Does voting reflect individual or collective identities and decision-making?

Teaching and Learning Activities

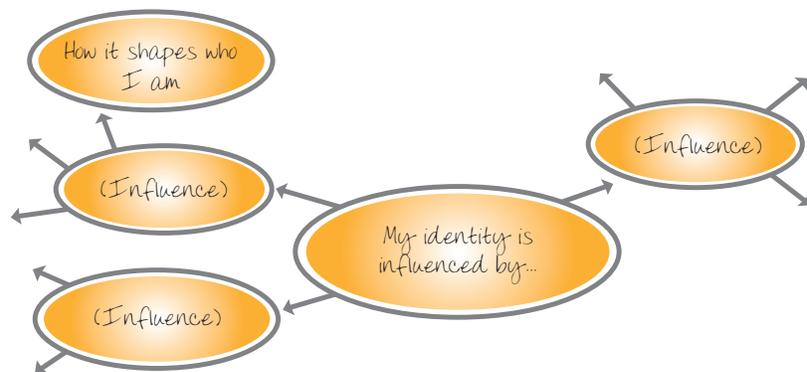
1 Individual and Collective Identities

“Identities,” according to Colley, “are like badges, not hats” (2005, 5). This means that identities are multiple, like the multiple badges someone can wear, and not like hats, where it is possible to wear one at a time.*

* Bristow, Jason. (March 2008). *The Next West Generation: Young Adults, Identity and Democracy*. Calgary: Canada West Foundation (p. 9).

The concept of identities is increasingly associated with the political and social participation of youth, or as some label individuals aged 24 and younger, “Generation Y.” Students are encouraged to explore aspects of identity and consider whether there is a collective youth identity that affects opportunities to participate.

- Challenge students to reflect on what provides them with a sense of who they are as individuals. Ask them to individually brainstorm and jot down ideas that describe their individuality. Use a graphic organizer such as a **Mind Map (p. 106)** or **Sphere of Influence Chart (p. 107)** to explore what they believe has influenced, or influences, who they are as individuals.



- Provide students with **Student Resource 1-1: Identities (pp. 49-52)**. Invite students to work with a small group to explore ideas and find other sources about collective and individual identities. Record these using a graphic organizer such as a **Triple T-Chart (p. 108)**. Complete the puzzle in the student resource, focusing on constructing influences on aspects of identity for “Generation Y,” a concept introduced in the resource.
- Provide each group with bulletin board space or poster paper to create a **graffiti wall**. Introduce the task by asking students to talk about examples of graffiti they have seen and what graffiti represents. Discuss examples of what graffiti includes – shapes, drawings, doodles, symbols, colours, story excerpts, quotations and word labels. (*Graffiti began originally in the 1960s as a form of identity “tagging” that individuals used to record their names in public places. It was more of a statement of identity than anything else. Graffiti that*

represented scenes became known as “pieces.” Today, graffiti is used to communicate messages about social or cultural issues as well as individual expressions and identities.)

- Ask students to create their graffiti walls to communicate messages about identities and the ideas, or ideologies, which influence them. (*Students may benefit from some initial support to identify starting points. Messages may include ideas from popular culture, personal histories and backgrounds, experiences as youth in society, the impact of technology and opportunities to participate as youth in society. However, it is also important to encourage students to come up with their own conceptions of “Generation Y” identities and influences.*)
- Have each group present and discuss their graffiti walls. Create a master list of the concepts that are common among student groups. Discuss questions such as the following:
 - ➔ What does this “master list” tell you about how youth, or “Generation Y” might want to be perceived? What does it tell you about the ideas that are important to youth?
 - ➔ Can the messages on your graffiti walls be generalized to all youth? Why or why not? Is there such a thing as a “collective” Generation Y identity? Why or why not?
 - ➔ What evidence is there that shows the extent to which Generation Y youth have the opportunity to participate in decision-making and enact change?
- The graffiti walls can be continuously added to as students continue to explore aspects of social and political participation.



Share

Have students take digital photographs of their graffiti walls. Consider sharing them in one or more of the following ways:

- Post the photographs with captions that students write on a classroom or school website.
- Send the photographs, with students’ reflections on democracy, to local or community newsletters or newspapers.
- Submit the photographs to be shared with other teachers and students on the Elections Alberta website. **Teaching Ideas & Student Work Submission and Permission** forms (pp. 123-124) are provided at the end of this resource.
- Invite parents, community members or a Returning Officer to the classroom to view the graffiti walls and explore ideas about democracy with students.



Did You Know

Graffiti can be a contentious issue in communities today. Many, including the cities of Edmonton and Calgary, have launched campaigns to inform the public of the legal implications of spreading graffiti on public property, even though others consider it to be an art form. Ensure that you discuss appropriate and inappropriate venues for the creation of graffiti. Encourage students to look at the graffiti they create on their personal property – doodles on their binders, posters placed on the inside of lockers or cubbies or blackboards placed in public venues for graffiti creation. Caution students that the creation of graffiti on public property is illegal.



Differentiate

■ **Social Studies 20-1 and 20-2** students can explore sources such as the following to focus on concepts of national identities:

Sylvain Lafrance. (September 24, 2007). *What is the Public Broadcaster’s Role Regarding the Coexistence and Protection of Cultural Identities?* CBC Radio. www.cbc.radio-canada.ca/speeches/20070924.shtml.

Read a perspective on democracy, nationalism, and participation on this website from India at www.yidream.org/natvis.shtml. How do the values and attitudes expressed compare to perceptions of Canadian identities and nationalism?

Weblink



Student research on the history of voting rights and democracy can be structured as a **WebQuest**.

Information about creating a WebQuest, as well as examples of WebQuests, can be found on the WebQuest.Org website at <http://webquest.org/index.php>.

Timelines are a type of graphic organizer that can be used to develop understandings of chronology and time-related concepts, as well as skills of sequencing and analysis.

An electronic timeline template is accessible at www.readwritethink.org/materials/timeline/index.html.

Differentiate



Social Studies 20-1 and 20-2

students can explore a question such as the following:

To what extent do you think who has the right to vote is representative of nationalism or national identity?

(Consider the question of who has “status” as citizens and how this has changed over time. For example, women, Aboriginal peoples, people with mental disabilities and inmates have all at one time, not had the right to vote.

How are societal attitudes connected with the right to vote?)

2 Times Change

Encouraging students to consider who democracy serves, and who can participate in a democracy, is an important aspect of understanding connections between democracy, identities and the electoral process. A brief historical perspective on the development of both democracy and voting rights establishes the context for analyzing opportunities to participate in society, including the choice to vote or not to vote.

• Discuss the following questions with students:

- ➔ Who can vote?
- ➔ Do you think it has always been this way? Why or why not?
- ➔ How would you define the “right to vote?” What challenges and successes do you know about that individuals and groups experienced in obtaining the right to vote? *(Encourage students to review what they have learned previously about historical events, people and places that relate to the development of democracy in Alberta and Canada, such as the fight for the right to vote by women’s groups like the Famous 5, the importance of Confederation and the influence of the British, French and Aboriginal peoples on the ways Canadians make decisions as a society. This historical perspective is something that students will have learned in Grades 4, 5, 6 and 7 Social Studies. They will also have explored conceptions of citizenship in Grade 9 Social Studies.)*
- ➔ Do you think there should be any changes to who can vote today and how they can vote? *(Students may contribute a variety of ideas such as lowering the voting age, the use of technology in the process of voting, whether voting should be mandatory or optional and whether residents who are not citizens should have the right to vote.)*



Did You Know

Many 18-year-old men bravely entered into combat for Canada in World War II. It was after this period in history that there was a movement to drop the voting age from 21 to 18.

In the 2004 federal general election, 37% of electors aged 18–24 voted. In the 2006 general election, approximately 44% of electors in the 18–24 age group voted.

Elections Canada. *Election basics: Frequently asked questions.* Young Voters Site www.elections.ca.



Assess & Reflect

Have students reflect on questions such as the following:

- How much do youth really have a say in government and the democratic system?
- Why should we be concerned about voting and elections before we can actually vote?

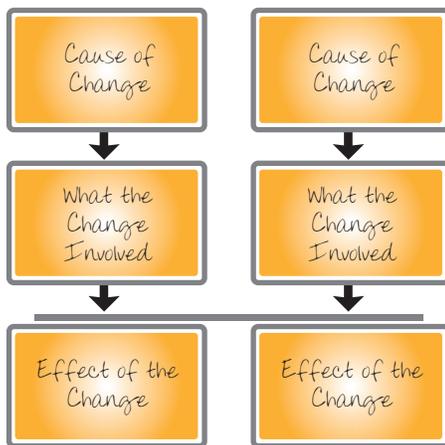
- Invite students to explore the information on **Student Resource 1-2: Times Change (pp. 53-57)**. Discuss the context of citizenship as something that has evolved over time, and involved both inclusions and exclusions that were frequently represented by **who** had the right to vote. Those who had the right to vote also usually had a voice in decision-making.



Find Out More

If Internet access is available, work with partners or small groups to find information about events that contributed to the development of Canadian citizenship.

- Ask students to identify what they think are the five most influential individuals, groups or events in the development of Canadian citizenship. Use these events to create a **Cause and Effect Timeline (p. 109)** and include **one** of the following elements in timeline text or visuals:
 - ➔ Quotations that represent the successes in achieving equity and representation in rights
 - ➔ Brief profiles of individuals who influenced events
 - ➔ Brief descriptions of events
 - ➔ Explanations and examples of how individual and collective actions or events influenced the right to vote
 - ➔ Examples or facsimiles of primary sources.



- Display the timelines in the classroom. Timelines can be constructed as:
 - ➔ Displays to add to students' graffiti walls
 - ➔ Three-dimensional mobiles and displayed on a wire strung across the classroom
 - ➔ A bulletin board display
 - ➔ A presentation, such as a PowerPoint display or an Internet webpage.



Share

Timelines can be shared in different contexts, with other students, classrooms, parents or community members.

Have students add information to their graffiti walls about individual and collective voices and influences on decision-making, summarizing key points and issues on index cards and placing them as "callouts" or speech bubbles on the graffiti walls.



Assess & Reflect

Use a rating scale such as the one below to assess students' demonstration of historical thinking skills.

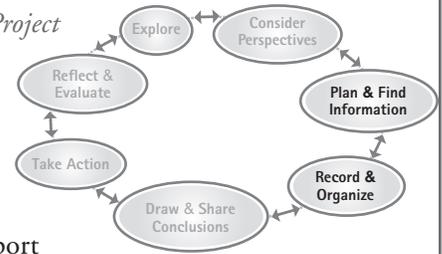
Does this student demonstrate understanding of...	Yes	Somewhat	Not Yet
Cause and effect relationships of events representing historical change?			
The impact of historical events on contemporary issues?			

Ask students to individually reflect on the following question:

- What do I appreciate most about the changes that others have acted for?



Make It Matter - Class Action Project



- Review the project proposal that the class selected for their project. Use **Get Informed** (pp. 116-117) to have groups research:
 - ➔ Reasons and examples that support the need for change that they have identified
 - ➔ Background information on the issue
 - ➔ Reasons and support for possible actions.
- Tell students that they will have opportunities to implement their project over the next few weeks.
- Project groups can be encouraged to explore Internet sites and various media sources, such as newspapers and community publications or watch television news programs to find information that relates to their project. Have them collect these sources in file folders or portfolios. Decide how to best organize information to continue implementing the project.

3 Power to Choose

The choice to participate as a voter can sometimes be considered a form of power. Different voting patterns over time have brought increasing attention and concern over issues connected to levels of voter participation and the issue of voter apathy. How do these concerns connect to conceptions of youth identities? Students explore two issues that connect historical perspectives on voting rights and participation to current challenges and questions that Canadian society is grappling with.

- Share the video and radio advertisement clips produced by Elections Alberta, found on the **Building Future Voters CD**. As they watch or listen to each clip, have students identify the issue they address. *(The video and radio advertisements were created by Elections Alberta for the 2008 provincial election and targeted at potential voters. Advertisements from other provinces are also included.)*
- Use a graphic organizer such as a **T-Chart (p. 105)** and the video and radio clips to introduce discussion on why students think people choose to vote or choose not to vote in elections.

To Vote or Not to Vote

Why people choose to vote	Why people choose not to vote

- Prepare a poster or record the following questions on the board:

Why is voter participation at an all time low?

Should the citizens of Canada be legally required to vote?

Does voter apathy result in unfair and inequitable representation?

Provide students with a few minutes to individually record reactions to each statement. *(Students can be encouraged to consider the issues associated with each statement, such as if voter participation should be mandated for the common good or if it is an individual choice. They may also be asked to consider whether different methods of voting are required to increase voter participation, whether the voting age should be lowered to increase youth interest and voter turnout or if all residents, not just citizens, should have the right to vote.)*

- Ask students to form small working groups, with approximately the same number of students in each. Alternatively, number students into groups randomly. Provide each group with a few minutes to discuss the questions and their reactions. Groups can also be asked to create a simple **Mind Map (p. 106)** to represent their group's perspectives. What other issues are associated with these perspectives?
- Provide students with **Student Resource 1-3: Power to Choose (pp. 58-62)** and have them explore the perspectives presented through various sources and the issue consideration steps. Decide on an issue to be debated as a class, depending on student interest and motivation.



Find Out More

Elections Alberta completed a survey with the general public after the March 2008 Alberta provincial election. The results of this survey are provided in a research report entitled *Elections Alberta: Survey of Voters and Non-Voters* (July 17, 2008). This resource is available in PDF format on the Elections Alberta website at www.elections.ab.ca, as well as in the **Building Future Voters CD** mini-library. The survey provides information on the public's perception of voting, awareness of their rights and obligations, levels of voting participation and satisfaction with the voting process.



Differentiate

Assign one of the group research roles in the student resource to each group for 30-2 classes, or have each group in a 30-1 class complete the responsibilities outlined in each task.

Share



A **horseshoe debate** is an informal debating strategy that encourages students to research multiple positions and perspectives, analyze evidence that supports alternatives, and present opinions and evidence. In a horseshoe debate, desks are arranged in an open semi-circle, or a horseshoe shape. Students on one half of the semi-circle are assigned the task of presenting a prepared statement and the supporting evidence on one side of the issue. Students in the other half take the opposite position. Students can be asked to take turns presenting the position and a brief summary of the evidence they have collected. Once students share their positions and evidence, the floor is opened for questions and challenges. Students can be assessed on both their research and presentation, as well as on their participation in the question and challenge component of the debate.

There are different options for structuring the debate process. Students can be asked to select the side they will present and defend and sit on that side of the semi-circle. Or, students can be asked to research and support multiple perspectives on an issue and be assigned one perspective on the day of the debate.

Students may also be asked to stand in a horseshoe to present their position statements. As each student presents their perspective, other students can move around the horseshoe, depending on how their opinions are affected by the presenter's arguments.

Define key terms in the issue. Discuss and negotiate how this issue should be debated and how the debate will be assessed. For example, students may be required to include supporting evidence that includes media images and advertising, statistics and visuals that support perspectives and opinions.

- Have students work with a partner and use previous research, website links and classroom resources to explore the issue and evidence supporting different positions. Ask students to collect and organize additional evidence that supports these positions.

Have each pair prepare a position statement and evidence that responds to two conflicting sides of the issue question – one that supports the action or issue statement and the other that is against it. Use the position statements and evidence to participate in a **horseshoe debate**.



Find Out More

Use a variety of sources that provide perspectives and opinions on current affairs and issues, such as position pieces like those written by Andrew Coyne from the *Globe & Mail*, articles from periodicals like *Macleans* or editorials from newspapers.

- Discuss and compare perspectives presented in the debate. Revisit the inquiry question “Does voting represent individual or collective identities and decision-making?”



Share

Ask students to work in small groups to develop questions to interview the Returning Officer. Interview questions can focus on issues relating to voter turnout rates and youth participation.

Interviews can be conducted in the following ways:

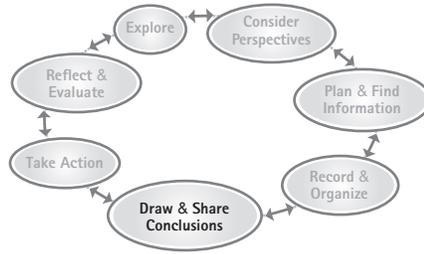
- Through Elections Alberta, invite a Returning Officer to the classroom to be interviewed.
- Compile interview questions and have a group of students represent the class in conducting a telephone interview.
- Send interview questions by email to the Returning Officer.

Have students compile and discuss answers. How are the Returning Officer's perspectives on issues relating to voter participation and responsibility similar to or different from what the class has discovered and learned in their inquiry?



Make It Matter - Class Action Project

- Encourage students to consider who is important to involve in their project planning and implementation by discussing and reflecting on questions such as the following:



- ➔ How are the goals of our class project related to rights of citizens and responsibilities of government?
 - ➔ Who is important to inform about the importance and goals of the project? Are there members of the school or community who can help support the project?
 - ➔ What strategies can best be used to elicit support for the project from different individuals and groups?
- Review the research for the class project. Use **Communicate and Implement (pp. 118-119)** to identify individuals and groups who can help support the project and ways to communicate the goals and importance of the project.



Assess & Reflect

The products that students create in this learning sequence provide an opportunity for summative assessment of students' understandings of the concepts of individualism, collectivism, identity and citizenship. Although students work in groups and as a class, they demonstrate their learning in the creation of individual products. Evaluation should be based on individual student performance and gathered from a variety of sources of evidence to make a judgement of student performance using the descriptors of the **rubric (p. 39)**:

- Use evidence from the individual tasks – the Mind Map or Sphere of Influence Chart, puzzle assignment in the student resource, Cause and Effect Timeline and position statement – to assess individual understandings of the concepts.
- Use observation evidence collected throughout the activities of the learning sequence to consider performance of process skills and group participation.



1 Does voting reflect individual or collective identities and decision-making?

1-1 Identities

How do you describe yourself? Do you use labels or generalizations to describe your characteristics, personality or talents? "I'm a Sagittarius" or "I'm a musician." Young people in your generation, or those born somewhere in the 1980s and 1990s, are often referred to in popular culture as "Generation Y" or "Millennials." According to some sources of information, there are a number of characteristics that Generation Ys have in common:*

- Generation Ys are facing higher costs for things like education and housing than any other generation.
- Generation Ys are consumer focused and driven. They also provide a strong influence on consumer trends.
- Generation Ys are more peer-oriented, but also more self-aware, goal-oriented, determined and self-reliant.
- As employees, Generation Ys can be demanding and impatient. However, they are also ambitious, hard working and loyal. They are energetic and charismatic. They are entrepreneurial.
- Generation Ys have never experienced life without a computer. They own cell phones and portable music devices. They use Instant Messaging and websites as their main source of information about news, create and read blogs and download music.
- Generation Ys are global, civic and community-minded and service-oriented.
- Generation Ys are about now.

* Paraphrased from Deloitte Consulting (2008). *Who are the Millennials? a.k.a. Generation Y.* www.deloitte.com/dtt/cda/doc/content/us_consulting_millennialfactsheet_080606.pdf.

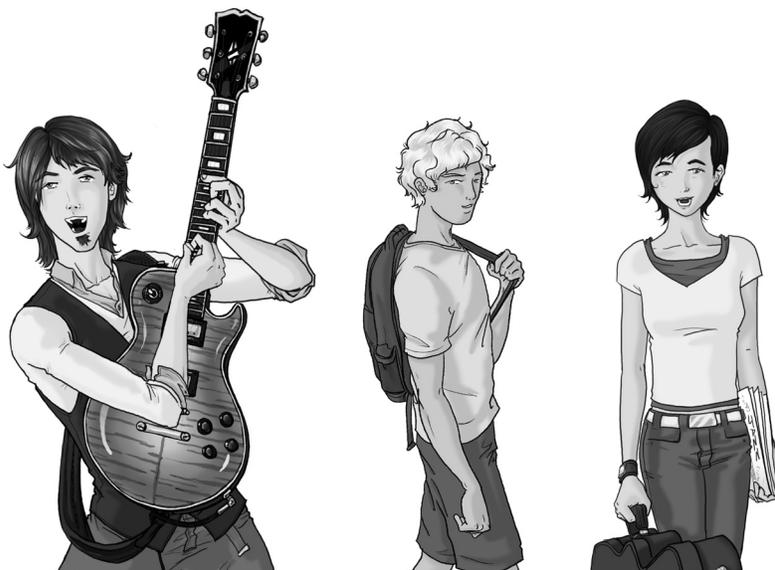


Learning Log

How do you identify yourself as a citizen? As a Canadian? Is there a difference?

Do you believe that a country can have expectations of its citizens? What might these expectations be?

How do these expectations influence your identity?



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According to Statistics Canada, more than 6.7 million Canadians were born between 1980 and 1995. Many people, including the media, describe this group as Generation Y. Daily life for Generation Ys are made up of multi-media and sound bites, continual change in technology and a focus on multi-tasking.

Generation Ys rely on instant communication and, some say, instant gratification. They are often described as the "most wired generation ever."

Sporting a cell phone, an iPod and a laptop, 23-year-old Sarah Wenglensky says technology is part of every aspect of her life, especially her studies.

"It's stereotypical, but it's also true. We've become so accustomed, become so dependent on technology," said the University of Ottawa management student.

"Even if you don't like it, you don't have a choice. You have to become familiar with it."

Events define Gen-Yers

According to sociologist Diane Pacom, Generation Ys' identities are influenced by several factors. These factors range from the divorce rate, rapidly changing information and communication technologies and the events of 9/11 to global and social problems and issues. Pacom asserts that Generation Ys are not apathetic at all, despite the way they are often portrayed in media and popular culture. They are passionate about various causes and more globally and environmentally aware than any other generation before them.

“This ultra-consumer society, with its flakiness and also its superficiality, came to an end with this event. Because people saw there was fear ... Death was there. The possibility of losing something from one minute to the other,” she said.

Pacom says gen-Yers are not the apathetic, depressed group they're often made out to be. Rather, she calls them passionate about various causes, and more globally aware than any other generation before them. ”

Need to make the connection

“University of Ottawa professor Joel Westheimer teaches many Generation Ys. He agrees that plenty of young people in this age group are aware of issues and participate by volunteering, but is concerned that action doesn't necessarily go beyond this awareness. He says that schools do not always encourage young people to get interested and involved in the political process.

“They are interested in issues. What they're missing is the full spectrum of ways to address those issues,” he said.

“What I'm more concerned about is their readiness to take on the responsibilities of participating in a democratic society,” Westheimer said.

“It's not just going out and bringing the homeless person a coat. It's asking the tough questions about what can you do about the conditions that lead to so many homeless people.” ”

CTV Ottawa (March 24, 2008). *Most Wired Generation Prepares to Take the Reigns*. Ottawa: Author. www.ctvottawa.ca/servlet/an/local/CTVNews/20080324/OTT_GenY1_080324/20080324/.

Political Identities

Some believe that Generation Y's reliance on technology is connected to their political and personal identities. Those with whom they communicate through the Internet are a peer group. Does the increasing reliance on technology emphasize isolation and decrease social participation? Some say it does. However, the point has also been made that technology does not necessarily emphasize individualism. It also facilitates communication and a collective identity.

Ilona Dougherty, "Apathy is Boring." Referenced in McKinnon, Mary Pat; Pitre, Sonia; Watling, Judy (October 2007). *Lost in translation: (Mis)understanding youth engagement*. Ottawa: Canadian Policy Research Networks (p. 12).

What about the political identities and activities of Generation Ys? According to research that has involved groups of young people, Generation Ys do have a political identity, but one that is different from previous generations:

- Generation Ys vote less than young adults did in the past. They are more individualistic, and some believe that this is the cause of the decline in voting rates among this age group. Some say that this is the cause of the decline in voting overall.
- Generation Ys do not follow rules as faithfully as previous generations and they tend to view things as choices rather than obligations.
- The tendency to choose not to vote can also indicate that Generation Ys do not engage in other, more "traditional" forms of political participation – joining a political party and communicating with elected representatives.
- Identity with Canada is strong with Generation Ys. They can express feelings of patriotism and nationalism. However, Aboriginal Generation Ys respond differently, identifying more with their Aboriginal status and affiliations.
- Generation Ys have strong feelings about the relationship between Canada and the United States. They emphasize differences, rather than similarities. They do not want more integration with the United States.
- Generation Ys tend to participate in more "non-traditional" forms of political expression. They engage in dissent – they demonstrate, protest, sign petitions, occupy buildings or join strikes. They politicize their consumer choices, boycotting products, brands and entire companies. They get involved by communicating their opinions with peer groups and by joining non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that they believe will be more effective in allowing them to make a difference.

Bristow, Jason. (March 2008). *The Next West Generation: Young Adults, Identity and Democracy*. Calgary: Canada West Foundation.





What do you think? Find other sources that describe or refer to the identities of Canadian youth. Use a graphic organizer such as a *Triple T-Chart* to identify the source in the first column and in the second column record the perspectives it presents. Request this graphic organizer from your teacher.

Consider these questions:

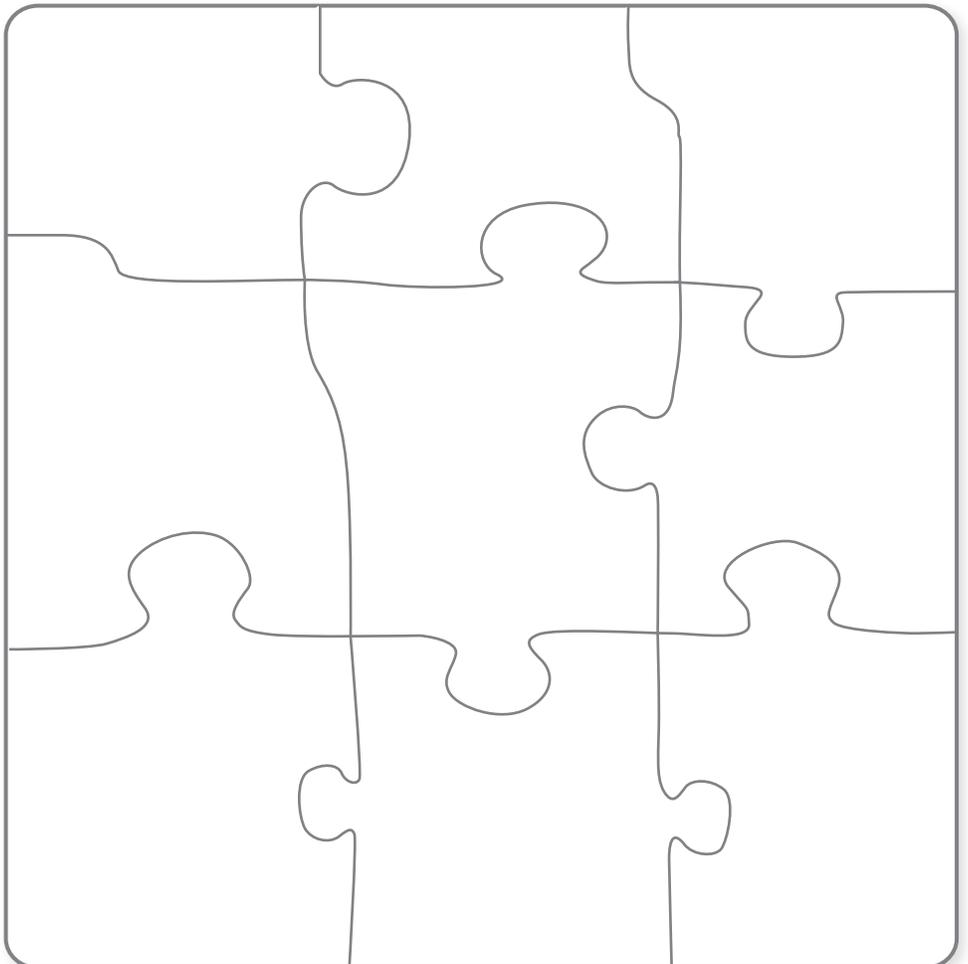
- Do the sources agree or disagree with the perspectives presented in this student resource? How?
- What additional information do these sources provide about Generation Ys? Are these facts or opinions?
- What causes and influences most affect Generation Ys' identities?

In the third column of the Triple T-Chart, analyze the source:

- Who wrote or created the source?
- How reliable is it? What biases are present in the source? Why and how do you know this?
- To what extent do you think the perspectives in the source reflect stereotypes or caricatures of today's youth?



What most influences your identity as a Generation Y? Create responses for each piece of the puzzle below to reflect who you are as a Generation Y and what influences your identity.



Learning Log



What does your completed puzzle tell you about the different perspectives that shape identities?



Does voting reflect individual or collective identities and decision-making?

1-2 Times Change

Canadian citizenship as we know it today was only ushered into existence in 1947, when the *Canadian Citizenship Act* came into force. In January of that year, 26 new citizens received their certificates under the new act. Prior to 1947, there was no such thing in law as a Canadian citizen. Canadian nationals were still British subjects, many of whom had already fought in two world wars for Britain. In fact, it was the Second World War that inspired Paul Martin Sr. to initiate the changes that would lead to the *Citizenship Act* of 1947.

With this act, Canada became the first Commonwealth country to create its own class of citizenship separate from that of Great Britain. Immigrants who had been naturalized in Canada, non-Canadian British subjects who had lived in Canada for five or more years, and non-Canadian women who had married Canadian citizens and who had come to live in Canada could now acquire Canadian citizenship, with all its rights and responsibilities.



The snapshots that follow provide some examples of changes that individuals and groups made in the fight for rights and equality and the development of democracy. They do not represent all individuals and groups who contributed to change. What other events, individuals and groups could you add to these snapshots?



Learning Log

How important is it to voice your concerns and participate in society?

If youth do not express their concerns and identify their issues, what do you think the chances would be that these concerns and issues are paid attention to?

What about concerns that are not perceived to be popular? How important is it to voice your opinion and take action even if you are perceived to be “rocking the boat?”



Weblink



Visit the Historica Voices website at www.historica.ca/voices/index.do. Explore the history of the vote and perspectives on citizenship, as well as what some young people have to say about voting.

This website provides a summary of the history of voting in Canada: www.canadian-politics.com/elections/elections.shtml.

Explore the Time Portal on Human Rights cases at www.chrc-ccdp.ca/en/timePortals/1900.asp.

Find Out More



Find out more about what each of these individuals contributed to equality rights in Canada. Do an Internet search or check biographical sources in your library.

Snapshot 1: The Evolution of Voting Rights

Some think that Canadians take their rights for granted and do not always recognize the challenges and struggles that have influenced those rights. Over different time periods, not everyone had the same access to rights that are part of the foundation of our society today.

What injustices and inequalities did people face in the past? The legal and political system of English common law and French civil law is based on rule of law, which means that the government, like the people, is accountable to the law. However, it has not always been this way. Before the 1900s, there were no laws that protected people against discrimination or prejudice, except criminal laws. Those rights that did exist were reserved for male property owners. Although there were some gains made in the 1800s to expand rights to different groups, there were many who still experienced discrimination based on their gender, race, religion, ethnicity and language.

By the middle of the 1920s, women started to gain political and legal rights, both federally and provincially. They insisted on, fought for, and won the right to enter "non-traditional" professions and gain their independence. However, most of the power was still held in the hands of economically dominant white males.

Other groups in Canadian society also did not have access to many rights. Aboriginal people could not vote until 1960. Asian Canadians did not gain the vote until 1949. It wasn't until 1988 that people with intellectual disabilities gained the right to vote.

Equality in the workplace, equal access to places to live and the ability to use public services was not part of many Canadians' daily lives until well into the 1900s. However, laws against discrimination were slowly established and people started to pay more attention to the importance of working toward equality for all.

In the 1930s, legislation made discrimination based on race, religion and political affiliation illegal. Over the years, different laws have improved equality for citizens and residents of Canada. What remains is still the ethical and moral work necessary to change attitudes of prejudice and discrimination.

Snapshot 2: Working Toward Equality

With the emphasis today on respecting diversity and our multicultural heritage, it can be hard to imagine the extent of discrimination and prejudice against groups and individuals in Canadian society in the past. Discrimination and racism were not just a social convention of the day, but institutionalized by government policies and practices.

Over time, people and groups have worked to change these policies and influence people's attitudes. From the discrimination faced by Canada's Aboriginal, Black and Asian communities to the inclusion of individuals in all aspects of society, outstanding individuals such as Carrie Best, Harriet Tubman, Thomas Shoyama and Jackie Robinson worked to break barriers and right injustices.

Snapshot 3: Times of Struggle

Canada's development as a nation has been marked by periods of hardship and struggle. In these times, people have organized, protested, motivated and fought to overcome challenges and fight for rights, equality and better ways of life. Highlights of some of these events follow, but do not represent the full spectrum of the growing pains Canadians experienced.

When Canada became a nation in 1867, it faced the challenges involved in keeping a vast, diverse territory connected and under the control of the federal government. One of the events that marked Canada's identity as a nation was the building of a railway from coast to coast. When the railway was completed, the Chinese community in Canada organized to provide support to those workers who were left with no jobs, no means of support and no way of paying their way back to China. This community of individuals had no status as either residents or access to rights guaranteed to citizens.



The end of World War I in 1918 transformed Canadian society, both economically and socially. The income tax, temporarily imposed, was made permanent and Canada started to move away from Britain. The Canadian soldiers who fought for Britain in the war left a mark on the collective identity of all Canadians through stories of valour and tragedy. John Macrae's poem, "On Flanders Fields" – represented the losses that many Canadians felt after the war.

As cities grew and ways of life changed, the nature of work and labour was affected by changes in technology, the growth of an urban labour force and unions that grew to protect workers' rights. By 1919, conditions in Winnipeg came to a head and the resulting general strike was the biggest in Canada's history. Although the actions of unions and workers during the strike did not gain them the better pay and hours they were demanding, it did gain workers the right to bargain through their unions. Just as importantly, these actions affected attitudes toward labour conditions and rights.

When the Great Depression hit Canada in the early 1930s, almost everyone living in Canada at the time was affected. People concentrated on survival, but some focused on improving attitudes to help cope with the difficulties of everyday life.

continued on next page



Find Out More

Explore the events that influenced Canadian politics and its evolving national identity through video and audio clips in the CBC Archives. Go to <http://archives.cbc.ca/politics/>.



Learning Log

How do you think each of the events described in this snapshot has contributed to a Canadian national identity? Or do you think there is any such national identity?

If there is no national identity, why is that? Is there any country that has a distinct national identity? If yes, which one and why?

World War II brought another conflict to Canadians and solidified Canada's independence from Britain with the resulting passage of the *Statute of Westminster*. The contributions made to the war effort from the diverse peoples of Canada were often not recognized until much later, as were many of the injustices that occurred during the war years.

One of these injustices involved Asian and Aboriginal Canadians. At the beginning of World War II, many Asian Canadian men like Thomas Shoyama and Douglas Jung attempted to join the Canadian armed forces but were turned away. Some influential politicians such as B.C. Premier Duff Patullo, federal cabinet minister Ian Mackenzie, and Vancouver Alderman Halford Wilson argued against allowing Asians into the armed forces in case they used their military service as grounds for gaining the right to vote.

It was only towards the end of the war that Chinese and Japanese Canadians were recruited to serve in military intelligence in Asia. For many Asian Canadians, serving in the military was their way of proving their commitment to Canada. Democracy for these

individuals did not come until a few years after the end of war. For Aboriginal peoples, the right to vote in federal elections was not to come until 1960. In Alberta, it was not until 1962 that the law was changed, and until 1965 that Aboriginal peoples voted in their first provincial election.

Find Out More



What can you find out about each of the individuals mentioned in this snapshot? Do an Internet search or check biographical sources in your library.

Snapshot 4: Changing the Electoral System

In the late 1970s, discussions over threats to Canada's national unity and identity, mainly from the issues of Quebec separation and western alienation, resulted in the formation of the Pepin-Robarts Task Force on Canadian Unity by Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau's government in 1978. Although the Task Force on Canadian Unity viewed electoral reform as a more minor issue, it suggested that the size of the House of Commons be increased by about 60 members, and that additional seats to be awarded to candidates selected from party lists and distributed on the basis of a party's share of the national vote. This is called **proportional representation**.



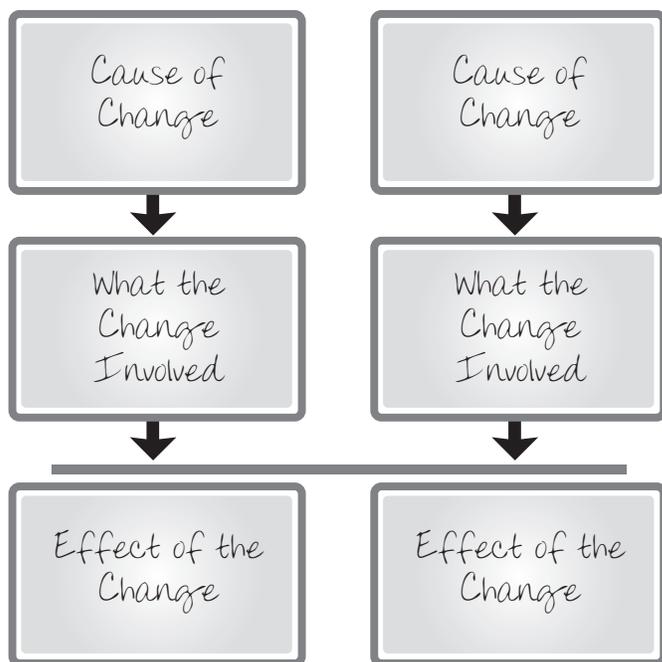
Since then, some provinces have looked at ways to approach making changes in their electoral systems:

- The Parti Québécois was the first administration in North America to disallow contributions to political parties from corporations.
- The Liberal government of Gordon Campbell in British Columbia established a non-partisan Citizens' Assembly to hold public hearings to consider changes in the ways that representatives would be elected to the provincial legislature, including proportional representation.
- Prince Edward Island has held public consultation meetings on possible changes to the provincial electoral system, including the advantages of changing from the first-past-the-post system to proportional representation because overwhelming majorities for the winning political party excluded half or more of the people from meaningful representation.



What would you identify as the five most influential changes in the development of Canadian citizenship?

- Think about Canadian citizenship as a legal status that can be defined by who has rights and the ability to participate in decision-making and the activities of the nation.
- Identify the five events or changes that you think were most significant. Use a *Cause and Effect Timeline* to describe these events. Request this graphic organizer from your teacher.





1 Does voting reflect individual or collective identities and decision-making?

15% of Canadians would rather vote in U.S. election: survey
Monday, February 4, 2008

☞ Fifteen percent of Canadians would give up their ballot in Canada’s next federal election to vote in the U.S. election, a new poll co-sponsored by the CBC has found.

The poll, done by the Canadian polling company Environics, asked 2,001 Canadians over the age of 15 questions about how they perceive their role, and Canada’s role, in the world.

Forty-six per cent of those surveyed in January by telephone said it matters a great deal to Canada who wins the November 2008 U.S. presidential election. Another 35 per cent said it mattered somewhat, while only eight per cent said it doesn’t matter at all. ☞

15% of Canadians would rather vote in U.S. election: survey. (February 4, 2008). CBC News Online: www.cbc.ca/canada/story/2008/02/01/poll-cbc.html.

1-3 Power to Choose

A democratic society is based on the belief that all citizens have a voice in decision-making. However, individuals have differing perspectives about how and when they should participate politically.

The participation of electors, or those eligible to vote, as well as the results of their vote, can send important messages to and about government.

Many people find it rewarding to make sure that they are informed about public issues, which are issues that concern society.



Why do you think some people choose to vote and others do not? Explore the following list of reasons. Rank each list in the order that you think is most common. Compare your ranking with two of your classmates.

Rank	Common Reasons for Voting	Rank	Common Reasons for Not Voting
	To exercise the right – we live in a democracy and we have the right to vote – why not use it		Do not have time
	Out of duty – many people feel that it is their job as citizens to participate in elections		Forget
	To support a particular candidate or their political party		Have to work
	To have a voice – to have a say in how things are done		Do not like any of the choices
	To change things, to make a difference		Do not know who to vote for
	The system does not work if people do not vote		Out of town
			Not interested
			Do not think it matters
			Do not know when or where to vote

The issues of low voter turnout and voter apathy in elections for all levels of government – federal, provincial and local – has increasingly become a matter of concern for governments, politicians and many Canadians. The reasons are many – some based on opinion and some based on evidence and statistics. The following is a sampling of perspectives and statistics on these issues from across Canada.

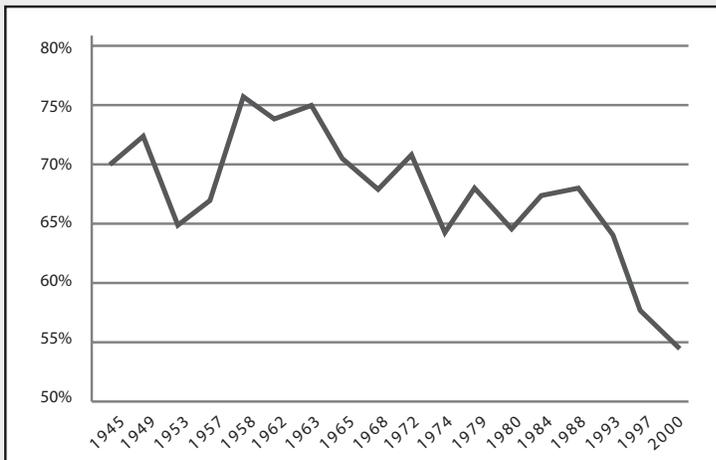


The excerpts that follow come from a variety of sources. As you explore each source, consider the following questions:

- What issues do the excerpts present?
- What different perspectives are represented in the source excerpts?
- How reliable or valid do you think the sources are?

Voter participation is at an all time low. Voter apathy results in unfair and inequitable representation.

Canadian voter turnout (as a percentage of the voting age population)



The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, online: www.idea.int/vt/region_view.efm?CountryCode=CA.

Law Commission of Canada (2004). *Voting Counts: Electoral Reform for Canada*. Ottawa: Minister of Public Works and Government Services (p. 39). www.fairvotecanada.org/files/VotingCountsElectoralReformforCanada.pdf.

“... looking at each of the past two general elections, the number of people who did not vote at all was larger than the number of people who voted for the winning party. Now, we can rationalize these results with reference to political circumstances or social change, but at some stage we have to face up to the fact: something is going wrong here, and in a fundamental way. Casting a ballot is the most basic function of our democratic system. That so many Canadians chose not to do so is the political equivalent of the canary in the coalmine. It demonstrates graphically how high the stakes surrounding reform are—that far too many Canadians cannot be bothered to vote because they don't think their vote matters.”

Martin, P. (December 2002–January 2003). “The Democratic Deficit.” *Policy Options at 11* (p.1). In Law Commission of Canada (2004). *Voting Counts: Electoral Reform for Canada*. Ottawa: Minister of Public Works and Government Services. (p. 4). www.fairvotecanada.org/files/VotingCountsElectoralReformforCanada.pdf.

Learning Log



How important do you think it is for citizens to participate in elections at different levels of government? Why?

Find Out More

The Maple Leaf Web website provides a feature topic on *Voter Turnout in Canada* at www.mapleleafweb.com/features/voter-turnout-canada. A variety of perspectives and statistics are provided on this link, including some from other countries.

The *Voter Almanac* link at www.mapleleafweb.com/voter-almanac also provides statistics and information.

“The heart of our citizenry, if one may so speak, is deeply troubled. Across the province, Quebecers are extremely disillusioned with politics. Their frustration with their powerlessness to influence decisions that affect their lives and those of their fellow citizens is palpable. One major source of disappointment is the voting system; citizens do not feel that their vote is truly and systematically reflected in the composition of the National Assembly.”
[Translation]

Steering Committee of the Estates-General on the Reform of Democratic Institutions (Quebec, March 2003). *Prenez votre place! La participation citoyenne au coeur des institutions démocratiques québécoises*. In Law Commission of Canada (2004). *Voting Counts: Electoral Reform for Canada*. Ottawa: Minister of Public Works and Government Services (p. 5). www.fairvotecanada.org/files/VotingCountsElectoralReformforCanada.pdf.

“Under our current voting system, our votes only count—or have impact on the allocation of seats—when we happen to share the most popular partisan viewpoint in our riding. In other words, what you believe in determines whether your vote counts—not the fact that you’re an equal citizen along with everyone else in your riding.”

Make Every Vote Count. Fair Vote Canada (2003). www.fairvotecanada.org. In Law Commission of Canada (2004). *Voting Counts: Electoral Reform for Canada*. Ottawa: Minister of Public Works and Government Services (p. 68). www.fairvotecanada.org/files/VotingCountsElectoral-ReformforCanada.pdf.

Perceived Reasons Why Young People Less Likely to Vote (Open-ended; multiple responses)

	Under 25 years (%)	25 years and older (%)
Not Integrated	79	71
Distanced from politics by age; not feeling represented, connected	40	37
Lack of information, understanding, knowledge	34	27
Lack of encouragement	2	4
Too busy, too mobile	3	3
Disengagement	51	59
Uninterested, apathetic	31	30
Negativism, cynicism, disillusionment	9	14
Distrustful of system, politicians	7	9
Irresponsibility, rebelliousness, laziness	4	6
Other	2	4
Do not know	0	*

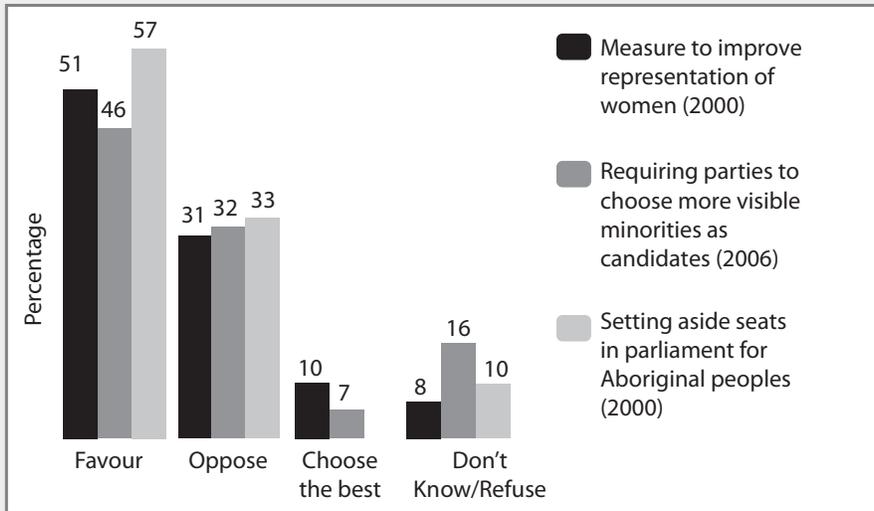
*less than 1 percent.

J. Pammett and L. LeDuc (2003). “Confronting the Problem of Declining Voter Turnout Among Youth” 5:2 *Electoral Insight* at 6.

“Of particular concern in recent years has been the lack of youth participation in traditional political processes. For example, only about 25 percent of eligible voters between the ages of 18 and 24 cast ballots in the 2000 federal general election. Although there is a range of factors contributing to the non-participation of youth, including a lack of knowledge about politics and insufficient time to vote, there is evidence to suggest that many youths do not feel connected to the system of democratic governance, or that they lack interest in politics. [The chart on this page], taken from a recent study completed in co-operation with Elections Canada, reveals some of the reasons that people provided when asked why young people did not vote in the 2000 election. As the table illustrates, one-third of people under the age of 25 cited disinterest and apathy as perceived reasons why youth did not vote, while two fifths suggested that not feeling represented or connected played a role in the decision not to vote.”

Law Commission of Canada (2004). *Voting Counts: Electoral Reform for Canada*. Ottawa: Minister of Public Works and Government Services (p. 41). www.fairvotecanada.org/files/VotingCountsElectoralReformforCanada.pdf.

Opinions of Canadians on measures to improve representation of various groups in parliament



Adopted from P. Howe and D. Northrup (2000). "Strengthening Canadian Democracy: The Views of Canadians." *Policy Matters at 18–20* (pp. 1-5). The category "choose the best" refers to "choose the best candidate." It does not apply to seats for Aboriginal peoples.

Law Commission of Canada (2004). *Voting Counts: Electoral Reform for Canada*. Ottawa: Minister of Public Works and Government Services (p.63).

www.fairvotecanada.org/files/VotingCountsElectoralReformforCanada.pdf



Explore an Issue

Use the issue consideration cards on the page that follows to explore the issue that you identify. Use each card to assign responsibilities to each group member. Some group members may share a responsibility.

Identify the Issue

Consider these examples of issues as you decide on one to explore and research:

- To what extent should political decision-making be restricted to a specific group in society?
- To what extent should the right to express minority viewpoints be protected?
- To what extent should governments control the thoughts and beliefs of their citizens?
- To what extent should politicians be accountable to the electorate?
- Should the administration of elections be completely separate and independent from the political process?
- Should we have regularly scheduled elections in Canada?

Issue Consideration Steps

Strengths–Weaknesses

- Identify the strengths and weaknesses of different positions on the issue
- Consider how the strengths and weaknesses are supported by evidence, examples and data

Analyze the strengths and weaknesses of a position or stance on the issue using a Retrieval Chart.

Consider the Evidence

- Collect evidence – sources, statistics, opinions and data – that supports identified positions on the issue
- Organize the evidence

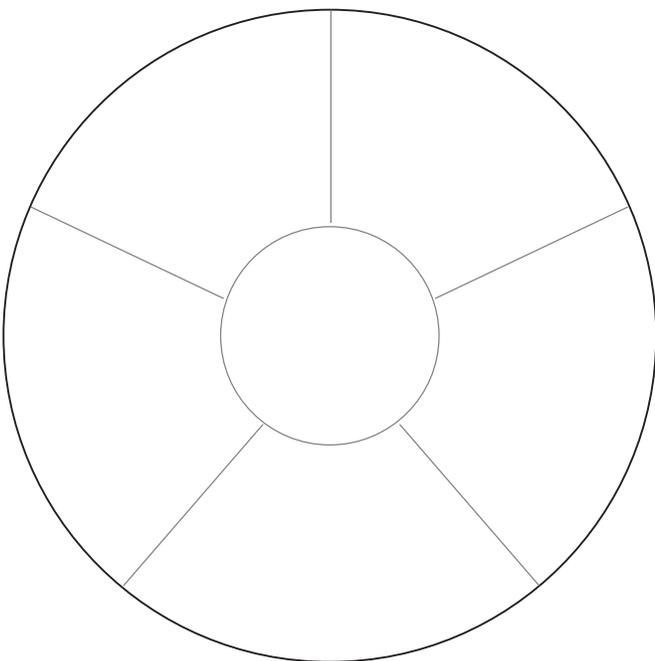
Collect and organize the evidence in a format that you choose. Consider using:

- A database
- A chart
- A file of index cards.

Perspectives

- Identify the perspectives that influence different positions on the issue
- Describe the individuals or groups who have these perspectives

Identify different perspectives that influence positions on this issue. Record each perspective in a spoke on a wheel chart.



Solutions–Alternatives

- Identify possible solutions or alternatives that could resolve the issue
- Consider ways that the issue can be acted upon

Identify and describe the solutions or alternatives for resolving or taking action on this issue. Organize these in a format you choose. Consider using:

- A database
- A chart
- A file of index cards.

Learning Sequences

LEARNING SEQUENCE 2

To what extent do public policies actually reflect the preferences of citizens?

This learning sequence asks students to consider the relationship between young adults, public policy and formal politics, including the electoral process. Students are encouraged to reflect on ways that the choice to vote or not to vote can represent a choice to affiliate with values and ideologies, and can result in a disconnect between public policies and the responses of individuals to citizenship rights, roles and responsibilities. Students explore various perspectives on political participation, including actions of dissent.



Prepare

Student Resources

- Student Resource 2-1: Politics and Policy (pp. 81-86)
- Student Resource 2-2: Election Experiences (pp. 87-89)
- Student Resource 2-3: Consider Engagement (pp. 90-91)

Graphic Organizers

- Mind Map (p. 106)
- T-Chart (p. 105)
- Triple T-Chart (p. 108)
- Retrieval Chart (p. 110)
- Continuum (p. 104)
- Flow Chart (p. 111)

Build the Vote! An Election Simulation

- Election simulation resources, templates, forms and directions are provided in this resource.
- An **Election Simulation Toolkit** can be ordered from Elections Alberta at the contact information provided on page 4 of this resource.



6 to 10 60-minute class periods



Teacher Backgrounder 2 (pp. 97-102) provides background information that you may find useful in supporting students' learning.

An exploration of issues related to electoral reform and youth engagement in political processes



Make It Matter

Students explore options for implementing their class action project and plan steps and activities.

- **Plan for Action (p. 120)**

Students assess the impact and results of their activities and consider how effective their class action project has been.

- **Assess the Impact (p. 121)**

Elections Alberta's **Election Simulation Toolkit** includes the following items:

- Electoral Division Map
- Provincial Electoral Division Map
- Voting Screen
- Pencils (3)
- Paper Ballot Box Seals (3)
- Election Officer Badges
- Scrutineer Badges
- "Vote Here" sign (with arrow tip)
- Registration Officer Sign
- Poll Book (modified to include 6 pages)
- Statement of Poll (photocopy)
- Voter Template for Visually Impaired
- Guide for Scrutineers
- Guide for Polling Place Officials
- Guide for Use of the Special Ballot Poll
- Guide for the Conduct of Mobile Polls
- Guide for Candidates on the *Election Act*
- Information for Students on Provincial Elections (brochure).

Contact Elections Alberta using the information provided below to order the toolkit.

LEARNING SEQUENCE 2

To what extent do public policies actually reflect the preferences of citizens?

Curriculum Connections

Inquiry Context	Learning Outcomes 30-1	Learning Outcomes 30-2
<p>To what extent do public policies actually reflect the preferences of citizens?</p> <p>An exploration of issues related to electoral reform and youth engagement in political processes</p>	<p>1.1 appreciate various perspectives regarding identity and ideology (PADM, TCC, I)</p> <p>1.10 evaluate the extent to which personal identity should be shaped by ideologies (I, C)</p> <p>4.1 appreciate the relationship between citizenship and leadership (C, I)</p> <p>4.3 accept responsibilities associated with individual and collective citizenship (C, GC)</p> <p>4.6 analyze perspectives on the rights, roles and responsibilities of the individual in a democratic society (respect for law and order, dissent, civility, political participation, citizen advocacy) (C, PADM, ER)</p> <p>4.8 evaluate the extent to which ideology should shape responses to contemporary issues (I, C, GC)</p> <p>4.10 explore opportunities to demonstrate active and responsible citizenship through individual and collective action (C, GC)</p> <p>S.1 develop skills of critical thinking and creative thinking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evaluate ideas and information from multiple sources • determine relationships among multiple and varied sources of information • assess the validity of information based on context, bias, sources, objectivity, evidence or reliability • evaluate personal assumptions and opinions to develop an expanded appreciation of a topic or an issue • synthesize information from contemporary and historical issues to develop an informed position • evaluate the logic of assumptions underlying a position • analyze current affairs from a variety of perspectives 	<p>1.1 appreciate various perspectives regarding identity and ideology (PADM, TCC, I)</p> <p>1.9 examine the relationship between individualism and common good in contemporary societies (PADM, ER, C)</p> <p>1.10 analyze the extent to which personal identity should be shaped by ideologies (I, C)</p> <p>4.1 appreciate the relationship between citizenship and leadership (C, I)</p> <p>4.3 accept responsibilities associated with individual and collective citizenship (C, GC)</p> <p>4.5 examine perspectives on the rights, roles and responsibilities of the individual in a democratic society (respect for law and order, protest, civil disobedience, political participation) (C, PADM, ER)</p> <p>4.7 analyze the extent to which ideology should shape responses to contemporary issues (I, C, GC)</p> <p>4.9 explore opportunities to demonstrate active and responsible citizenship through individual and collective action (C, GC)</p> <p>S.1 develop skills of critical thinking and creative thinking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • analyze ideas and information from multiple sources • determine relationships among multiple sources of information • determine the validity of information based on context, bias, sources, objectivity, evidence or reliability • evaluate personal assumptions and opinions • determine the strengths and weaknesses of arguments • analyze current affairs from a variety of perspectives

Inquiry Context	Learning Outcomes 30-1	Learning Outcomes 30-2
	<p>S.4 demonstrate skills of decision making and problem solving:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • generate and apply new ideas and strategies to contribute to decision making and problem solving ➤ describe a plan of action to use technology to solve a problem ➤ use appropriate tools and materials to accomplish a plan of action <p>S.5 demonstrate skills of cooperation, conflict resolution and consensus building:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate leadership during discussions and group work • respect the needs and perspectives of others • collaborate in groups to solve problems <p>S.6 develop age-appropriate behaviour for social involvement as responsible citizens contributing to their community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate leadership by engaging in actions that enhance personal and community well-being • acknowledge the importance of multiple perspectives in a variety of situations <p>S.7 apply the research process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop, express and defend an informed position on an issue • reflect on changes of points of view or opinion based on information gathered and research conducted • draw pertinent conclusions based on evidence derived from research • demonstrate proficiency in the use of research tools and strategies to investigate issues • integrate and synthesize argumentation and evidence to provide an informed opinion on a research question or an issue of inquiry • develop, refine and apply questions to address an issue • select and analyze relevant information when conducting research ➤ plan and perform complex searches, using digital sources ➤ use calendars, time management or project management software to assist in organizing the research process ➤ generate new understandings of issues by using some form of technology to facilitate the process 	<p>S.4 demonstrate skills of decision making and problem solving:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • apply ideas and strategies to contribute to decision making and problem solving ➤ describe a plan of action to use technology to solve a problem ➤ use appropriate tools and materials to accomplish a plan of action <p>S.5 demonstrate skills of cooperation, conflict resolution and consensus building:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make meaningful contributions to discussion and group work • consider the points of view and perspectives of others • demonstrate cooperativeness in groups to solve problems <p>S.6 develop age-appropriate behaviour for social involvement as responsible citizens contributing to their community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate leadership by engaging in actions that enhance the well-being of self and others in the community • promote and respect the contributions of team members when working as a team • cooperate with others for the well-being of the community <p>S.7 apply the research process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop and express an informed position on an issue • develop conclusions based on information gathered through research of a wide variety of sources • use research tools and methods to investigate issues • consult a wide variety of sources, including oral histories, that reflect varied viewpoints on particular issues • select relevant information when conducting research ➤ use calendars, time management or project management software to assist in organizing the research process ➤ plan and perform searches, using digital sources <p>S.8 demonstrate skills of oral, written and visual literacy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • communicate effectively in a variety of situations • engage in respectful discussion

Inquiry Context	Learning Outcomes 30-1	Learning Outcomes 30-2
	<p>S.8 demonstrate skills of oral, written and visual literacy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • communicate effectively to express a point of view in a variety of situations • use skills of formal and informal discussion and/or debate to persuasively express informed viewpoints on an issue • ask respectful and relevant questions of others to clarify viewpoints • listen respectfully to others • use a variety of oral, visual and print sources to present informed positions on issues ➤ apply information technologies for context (situation, audience and purpose) to extend and communicate understanding of complex issues <p>S.9 develop skills of media literacy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ evaluate the validity of various points of view presented in the media ➤ appraise information from multiple sources, evaluating each source in terms of the author's perspective or bias and use of evidence ➤ analyze the impact of various forms of media, identifying complexities and discrepancies in the information and making distinctions between sound generalizations and misleading oversimplification ➤ demonstrate discriminatory selection of electronically accessed information that is relevant to a particular topic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use a variety of oral, visual and print sources to present informed positions on issues • ask respectful and relevant questions of others to clarify viewpoints on an issue • make respectful and reasoned comments on the topic of discussion <p>S.9 develop skills of media literacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ assess the authority, reliability and validity of electronically accessed information ➤ analyze the validity of various points of view in media messages ➤ analyze information from multiple sources, evaluating each source in terms of the author's perspective or bias and use of evidence ➤ demonstrate discriminatory selection of electronically accessed information

C Citizenship

LPP The Land: Places and People

CC Culture and Community

I Identity

GC Global Connections

PADM Power, Authority and Decision Making

ER Economics and Resources

TCC Time, Continuity and Change

Selected curriculum outcomes from Alberta's Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Program of Studies are infused throughout the Social Studies Program of studies and are indicated by this symbol ➤.

● Support for Grade 11

Social Studies 20-1 and 20-2 outcomes can also be developed through this learning sequence.

Learning Outcomes 20-1	Learning Outcomes 20-2
<p>1.2 appreciate the existence of alternative views on the meaning of nation (I, C)</p> <p>1.4 appreciate why peoples seek to promote their identity through nationalism (I, C)</p> <p>1.5 explore a range of expressions of nationalism (I, C)</p> <p>1.9 analyze nationalism as an identity, internalized feeling and/or collective consciousness shared by a people (French Revolution and Napoleonic era, Canadian nationalism, Québécois nationalism, American nationalism, First Nations and Métis nationalism, Inuit perspectives) (I, TCC, C, CC)</p> <p>1.10 evaluate the importance of reconciling contending nationalist loyalties (Canadian nationalism, First Nations and Métis nationalism, ethnic nationalism in Canada, civic nationalism in Canada, Québécois nationalism, Inuit perspectives on nationalism) (I, TCC, C)</p>	<p>1.2 appreciate the existence of alternative views on the meaning of nation (I, C)</p> <p>1.4 appreciate why peoples seek to promote their identity through nationalism (I, C)</p> <p>1.5 explore a range of expressions of nationalism (I, C)</p> <p>1.9 analyze nationalism as an identity, internalized feeling and/or collective consciousness shared by a people (French Revolution, Canadian nationalism, Québécois nationalism, First Nations and Métis nationalism, Inuit perspectives) (I, TCC, C, CC)</p> <p>1.10 evaluate the importance of reconciling contending nationalist loyalties (Canadian nationalism, First Nations and Métis nationalism, ethnic nationalism in Canada, Québécois nationalism, Inuit perspectives on nationalism) (I, TCC, C)</p>

LEARNING SEQUENCE 2

To what extent do public policies actually reflect the preferences of citizens?



Checklist

Criteria	Yes	Somewhat	Not Yet
Students provide evidence of their learning as they:			
Consider and respond respectfully to various perspectives that relate to identities and ideologies (1.1; 4.1)			
Describe, compare, evaluate and share perspectives on the relationship between ideologies and individual or collective responses (4.8/4.7)			
Analyze, compare and evaluate the relationship between individual citizenship action, ideological stances and identity (1.10; 4.1)			
Describe and assess rights, roles and responsibilities of individuals as they engage in democratic processes (4.3; 4.6/4.5)			
Demonstrate commitment to engage in action that reflects personal stances and values (1.9; 4.10/4.9)			
<i>*The following criteria statements reflect clusters of skill outcomes. These criteria statements can be combined or used with the statements above to assess student learning.</i>			
Express, support, evaluate and reflect on development of personal opinions and perspectives			
Develop, express and support a position with relevant and justifiable evidence, examples and perspectives			
Organize, combine and synthesize information to develop conclusions and propose solutions			
Analyze connections, patterns, perspectives and evidence from current and historical sources			
Access, organize, summarize and compare diverse viewpoints and perspectives from a variety of sources			
Access, compare and analyze diverse media messages that reflect current, social or political issues			
Identify and assess different points of view and perspectives			
Reflect on processes used			
Use graphic organizers to make connections and synthesize information and ideas			
Examine, evaluate and assess sources of information			
Develop inquiry questions			
Describe and assess ways to participate in democratic decision-making processes			

Criteria	Yes	Somewhat	Not Yet
Students provide evidence of their learning as they:			
Participate in problem solving and decision-making processes by offering ideas and providing examples and reasons			
Communicate with others to share original ideas and persuasively express viewpoints on issue-related problems			
Work collaboratively and cooperatively in a group setting			

LEARNING SEQUENCE 2

To what extent do public policies actually reflect the preferences of citizens?



How am I doing?

How well did I:	A great job	A good start	Not there yet	I know this because;
Contribute to the group?				
Provide information and ideas?				
Listen to the ideas of others?				

How consistently did I:	Most of the time	Some of the time	Not very often	I know this because:
Communicate ideas and opinions with others?				
Apply my understandings to my work?				
Reflect on what I was learning?				

LEARNING SEQUENCE 2

To what extent do public policies actually reflect the preferences of citizens?

Rubric

This rubric provides an example of how criteria statements can be applied to summative assessment of student learning. It can be applied to a variety of student products.



Level Criteria	4 Excellent	3 Proficient	2 Adequate	1 Limited *	Insufficient / Blank *
Describes, compares, evaluates and shares perspectives on the relationship between ideologies and individual or collective responses (4.8/4.7)	Makes significant and comprehensive comparisons of examples that reflect various perspectives on ways that ideologies shape citizenship responses.	Makes specific and detailed comparisons of examples that reflect various perspectives on ways that ideologies shape citizenship responses.	Makes general and partial comparisons of examples that reflect various perspectives on ways that ideologies shape citizenship responses.	Makes vague and sketchy comparisons of examples that reflect various perspectives on ways that ideologies shape citizenship responses.	No score is awarded because there is insufficient evidence of student performance based on the requirements of the assessment task.
Accesses, compares and analyzes diverse media messages that reflect current affairs and social or political issues	Provides an insightful analysis of the messages in a variety of media sources.	Provides a logical analysis of the messages in a variety of media sources.	Provides a basic analysis of the messages in a variety of media sources.	Provides a vague analysis of the messages in a variety of media sources.	
Demonstrates commitment to taking on roles and responsibilities in projects and events in the community	Formulates purposeful strategies and roles for taking responsibility for a project.	Formulates relevant strategies and roles for taking responsibility for a project.	Formulates generalized strategies and roles for taking responsibility for a project.	Formulates superficial strategies and roles for taking responsibility for a project.	
Communicates with others to discuss and persuasively express viewpoints on issue-related problems	Communicates information in a purposeful manner that persuasively engages the audience.	Communicates information in a memorable manner that interests the audience.	Communicates information in a straightforward manner that holds the attention of the audience.	Communicates information in an ineffective manner that does not sustain the attention of the audience.	

* When work is judged to be limited or insufficient, the teacher makes decisions about appropriate intervention to help the student improve.

LEARNING SEQUENCE 2

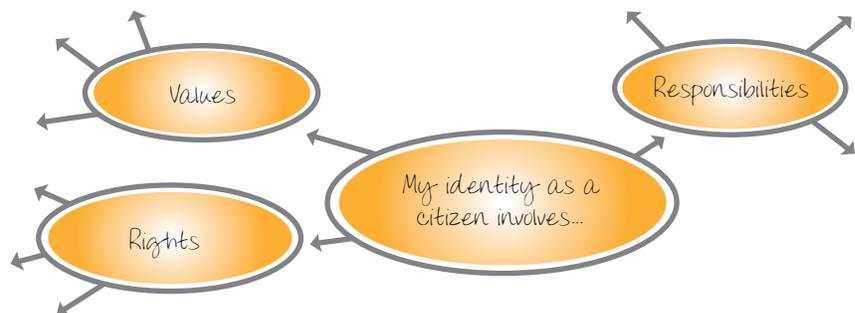
To what extent do public policies actually reflect the preferences of citizens?

Teaching and Learning Activities

① Diverse Political Roles, Rights and Responsibilities

The electoral process in Canada is based on the principles of representation by population, in which electoral divisions with approximately the same population are formed to elect representatives, and first-past-the-post, in which the candidate with the most votes is elected whether or not that person has more than half of all the votes in the electoral division. Canada's Constitution, at the same time, guarantees a minimum number of seats to provinces according to the number of senators they have. Does this mean that the federal government represents provinces or regions instead of individuals? Students explore these and other issues related to the ideologies that influence the electoral system.

- Ask students to construct a representation of their understandings of personal, individual roles, responsibilities and values. Use a graphic organizer such as a **Mind Map (p. 106)** to explore aspects of their identity as individual citizens.



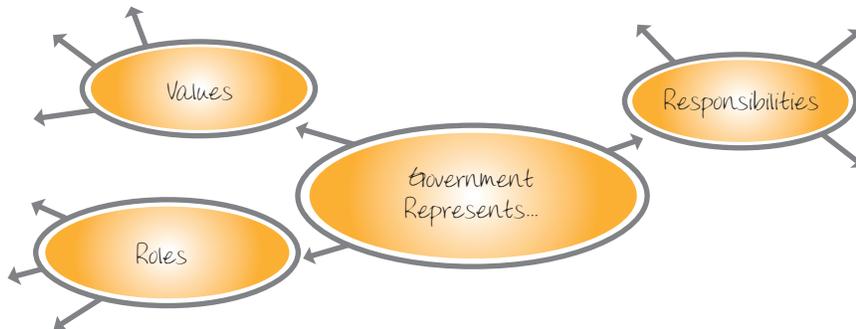
- Share and compare the ideas represented on the mind maps – with a partner, in a small group or as a whole class. What **values** are associated with your ideas? Are there common values and ideas that represent the preferences and priorities of Canadians? *(Students may come up with values such as equality, equity, fairness, justice and respect. They may also mention values that they may believe to be part of the Canadian identity but should not be, such as discrimination or inequality. Encourage them to provide examples of situations in which they have seen these values demonstrated. Students may also argue that values and ideas that represent the preferences and priorities of Canadians are diverse and are not always commonly held. Encourage them to justify their responses.)*

Differentiate



If students have difficulty with the concepts of propaganda and national identity, provide some individual instruction and support for the meanings of these concepts.

- Ask students to create a comparative mind map of the roles, responsibilities and values of government. Explore and briefly summarize the policies and ideologies of the current government at the federal, provincial or local level, using a second mind map like the one below. Is there any “disconnect” between the values and policies of government and what is important to students? If yes, what does this disconnect involve?



Weblink

The article, *Mackenzie King and Canada's National Identity*, provides some interesting perspectives, both historical and contemporary, that include references to the significance and impact of voters and federal elections. It can be accessed at www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/transactions/3/nationalidentity.shtml#top. Some students may be challenged by the reading level.

- Provide students with **Student Resource 2-1: Politics and Policy (pp. 81-86)** and explore the examples of media headlines, propaganda and advertisements on the first page of the handout. Invite students to brainstorm questions that come to mind when they read these headlines using a graphic organizer such as **Mind Map (p. 106)** or a **T-Chart (p. 105)**. These examples come from Internet and print media sources and include:
 - Canada's National Identity Will Be Determined by Your Vote!
 - Voting in Veils: Canada's ID Card Crisis
 - Canada's Government Takes Opportunity to Reduce Voter Fraud
 - First Past the Post Effective?
 - Representation a Concept That is Stretched Thin
 - Movement growing to lower Canadian voting age to 16

Ask students to research one or two of these issues and questions, using the information provided on the student resources as a starting point. Use a graphic organizer such as a **Triple T-Chart (p. 108)** or **Retrieval Chart (p. 110)** to organize research. Alternatively, assign a different issue to small groups of students.



Did You Know

The “first-past-the-post” system is used in 43 of the 191 countries in the United Nations.



Did You Know

“Young people feel that government has little to do with them – they don't tend to connect the role of government with the issues they think are important, perhaps due to their limited understanding of government and how it works. Counterintuitively, cynicism toward government and the political system is generally lower among young Canadians than among older ones, and, interestingly, they have greater confidence in party leaders and candidates than older generations (O'Neill, 2007: 17).”

MacKinnon, Mary Pat; Pitre, Sonia; Watling, Judy. (CPRN Research Report October 2007). (Mis) *Understanding Youth Engagement Synthesis Report: Charting the Course for Youth Civic and Political Participation*. Ottawa: Canadian Policy Research Networks Inc (p. 14).

Differentiate



Students may be asked to work individually or with a partner to brainstorm ideas and responses.

In a **poster carousel discussion**, questions are recorded on poster paper. Students work with a small group to discuss and record responses to the question on each poster.

Students can be assigned one or more of the issues identified on the student resource, depending on their interests or abilities.

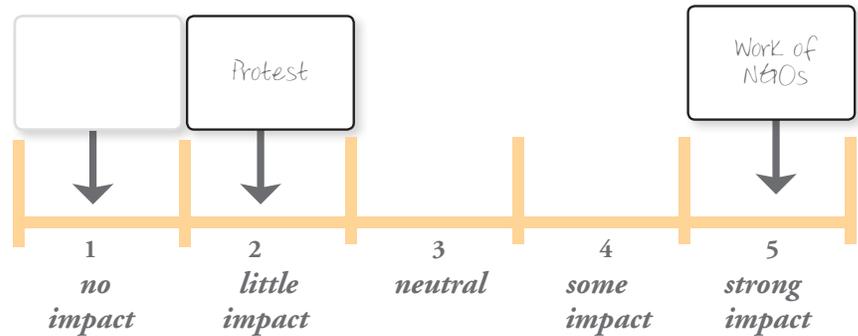
Emphasize identification and description of evidence associated with the issues and perspectives for 30-2 students, and description, integration and synthesis of the argumentation behind the evidence associated with issues for 30-1 students.

- Discuss and explore the following questions with students through a **poster carousel discussion**. These questions are also provided on the student resource.
 - ➔ How can a choice to vote represent a choice to affiliate with particular values, ideologies or stances on issues and concerns? (*Consider the role of political parties and the different philosophical stances that parties represent on policies and issues.*)
 - ➔ In what ways can the process of voting be used to find out how citizens feel about an issue or decision? What is meant by the “popular vote?”
 - ➔ Can voter participation patterns, or voter turnout rates, provide insights into what citizens believe to be important (or not important)? What might these insights include? (*This discussion may provide an appropriate opportunity to discuss issues that have been the subject of referendums, such as the constitutional debate. A **referendum** is a “people’s vote” that directly determines an issue of policy by a majority vote, as distinct from an election of political representatives who will make the decision for the people.*)
 - ➔ What actions other than voting can represent political participation and affiliation with a particular stance or ideology? (*Students may discuss actions of dissent, such as protest, boycotting and more “non-traditional” means of communication, such as blogging or graffiti messages. They may also discuss more traditional forms of action, such as participating with a political party or during an election campaign, volunteering or participating with community groups.*)
 - ➔ What degree of impact do you think different forms of political action, including voting, have? Use a **Continuum (p. 104)** to indicate degree of impact.

Differentiate



Depending on student background and experience with concepts relating to referendums on national issues, consider exploring some examples of referendums that have addressed issues of national identity, for example, the Quebec Referendum and the constitutional debate.



Weblink



The CBC Digital Archives provides a number of sources and perspectives related to the constitutional debate that can be accessed at <http://archives.cbc.ca/politics/federal-politics/topic/394/>.

→ Whose voices are excluded from the electoral process? Why? Is this fair? *(Consider non-citizen residents' participation in political processes and the issue of whether all residents, citizens or not, should have the right to vote. Is it possible for individuals who are residents, but not citizens, to have nationalist loyalties? Also encourage discussion of perspectives relating to voter identification and verification, such as those exemplified by the veil issue or identification cards.)*

- Invite students to work with a group to prepare and present a **poster session** or **PowerPoint presentation** on one of the issues that they have explored.



Assess & Reflect

The products that students create in this activity provide an opportunity for summative assessment of students' initial understandings of the concepts of ideologies, citizenship rights, responsibilities and roles. Although students worked as a group to complete the poster or PowerPoint presentations, they demonstrate their learning in the creation of individual products. Evaluation should be based on individual student performance and gathered from a variety of sources of evidence to make a judgement of student performance using the descriptors of the **rubric (p. 71)**:

- Use evidence from the individual work that students do in creating the Mind Map and Continuum to assess individual understandings of these concepts.
- Use observation evidence collected throughout the activities of the learning sequence to consider performance of process skills and group participation.

Have students reflect individually on questions such as:

- How are Canadian values represented in the electoral processes in the Canadian democracy?
- Are there values that are not addressed in Canada's current electoral system? What are they?



Differentiate

A **poster session** is a means to convey information in a brief format. The poster is designed to communicate concepts and data to the audience using a combination of visuals and text. Poster sessions tend to be more informal than oral presentations.

Groups can be asked to present to each other. After a timed interval, groups can be reformed. The poster session can be presented to the whole class.

As an alternative to a poster, students may also be asked to create a **PowerPoint presentation**, with a minimum and maximum number of slides.



Share

Have students add information to their graffiti walls that addresses different issues and perspectives related to the electoral process, summarizing key points and issues on index cards and placing them as "callouts" on the graffiti walls.

Emphasize identification and descriptions of the issues and perspectives for 30-2 students, and synthesis and summary of the issues for 30-1 students.



Through Elections Alberta, invite a Returning Officer to participate with students in planning and holding the student election. Returning Officers can be invited to participate in a number of ways:

- Ask the Returning Officer to email or fax a Writ of Election on behalf of the Chief Electoral Officer to establish the beginning of the simulation. Discuss dates and timelines for the election simulation with the Returning Officer when you are in contact with him or her.
- Invite the Returning Officer to the classroom to provide an information session on electoral processes for the class or for students who are acting as election officers.
- Invite the Returning Officer to participate with students on Polling Day. The Returning Officer can be asked to act as an observer. Discuss with students how established democracies, including Canada, can send observers to countries implementing democratic elections.

2 Election Experiences

Experiencing the electoral process provides insight into how elections work and why they are structured and legislated the way they are. The electoral process emphasizes the importance of open, fair and impartial elections.

- Open a class discussion by posting inquiry questions, such as those below, that ask students to revisit concepts connected with the overarching issue: *Should social and political participation be a choice or an obligation?*
 - ➔ Does the electoral system result in governments that represent the views of its citizens? What impact do you think that declining voter turnout rates have on the concept and functioning of representative democracy?
 - ➔ How do you think election results affect the ways that people may choose to participate in society? Why?
 - ➔ Should voting be a mandatory citizenship responsibility? Why or why not?
- Provide students with **Student Resource 2-2: Election Experiences (pp. 87-89)**. Explain to students that they will be participating in an election simulation, taking on the roles of voters as well as people involved in administering the election process. This process encourages students to explore issues related to representation and participation in the context of a classroom, multiple classrooms or a school-wide election. Students can also be given the opportunity to research and create an alternative process, other than the “first-past-the-post” system in use in Canada today.
- Discuss the forms of student government that exist in the school. What roles and responsibilities does it have? How are student representatives elected? How could the voter turnout be described?
- Discuss questions such as the following as a class:
 - ➔ Voter eligibility: Why do we establish eligibility criteria for voters? (*Students may discuss ideas that include the importance of eligibility criteria to make sure that voters are old enough to make a good decision; to protect citizens’ right to vote; to ensure that voters actually live in the electoral division, etc.*)
 - ➔ The election process: Why is it important to follow the same process for each election?
 - ➔ What effects do you think result from declining participation in political processes, including voting?
 - ➔ What electoral reforms do you think might improve voter turnout rates? Ask students to work as a class or with a small group and identify issues that are related to this question. (*Issues may include those related to provincial and federal differences – e.g., setting fixed election dates; those related to inclusion – e.g., lowering the voting age or the extent to which cultural and religious identities are respected in the electoral process, such as allowing Muslim women to keep their veils on when voting; those related to proportional representation – e.g., keeping the first-past-the-post system or how the number of representatives are determined.*)

- Introduce the election simulation by referring students to the information on the student resource, which guides them through questions that they can consider in planning and holding a student election. Students are encouraged to identify issues that will become a focus for a student election, such as those connected with mandatory participation or other electoral reforms.
- The election simulation is provided in *Build the Vote! An Election Simulation Resource*. This resource booklet provides templates, forms and directions for implementing an election in the classroom. An Election Simulation Toolkit can also be ordered from Elections Alberta at the contact information provided on page 4 of this resource. A PDF version of the election simulation resource is also provided on the *Building Future Voters CD*.
- The information, forms and templates in *Build the Vote!* are designed to actively engage students with the electoral process, give them opportunities to stand as candidates, explore political party affiliations, run campaigns and vote.
 - ➔ Information is presented in source card formats, designed to be photocopied and cut into two or four cards per page.
 - ➔ Source cards represent roles involved in the electoral process, including election officers, candidates and media.
 - ➔ Templates guide students through steps in the process that are modeled on Alberta election processes.
 - ➔ The activities, templates and source cards can be applied in different contexts:
 - To conduct the election simulation in the classroom
 - To conduct the election with combined classrooms at the same grade level
 - To organize and conduct an election for your school.



Find Out More

The *Election Act* is the main legislation that guides the conduct of elections in Alberta. It sets out all the rules and procedures that must be followed to ensure that elections are fair and impartial. Elections Alberta is responsible for making sure the *Election Act* is followed. They must remain independent from any political party or government in power. The *Election Act* and other election-related legislation can be accessed on the Elections Alberta website at www.elections.ab.ca/legislation.html.



Assess & Reflect

Use a checklist to assess students' demonstrations of their understanding of different perspectives involved in the electoral process.

Use criteria such as the following to assess understanding:

- Analyzes and compares the roles, responsibilities, rights and values involved in democratic processes

Does this student demonstrate the ability to...	Yes	Somewhat	Not Yet
Identify processes of the current electoral system?			
Critically assess advantages and disadvantages to the individual?			
Compare roles and responsibilities of individuals and groups involved in the electoral process?			

IF THIS IS AN ELECTION YEAR

Post a large sheet of poster paper horizontally. Divide it into three columns, labelled “Fact,” “Opinion” and “Not Sure.” Introduce the chart to the students. Ask them to define and clarify the difference between facts and opinions.

Make sure students understand that facts are verifiable, while opinions are not. Ask students the following two questions, allowing for as many responses as there is time:

- ➔ What do you know about this election?
- ➔ How do you know?
- ➔ What do you know about the candidates?
- ➔ How do you know?

As each response is given, ask the group to evaluate whether the statement is a fact (provable) or simply someone’s opinion.

Write the statement in the corresponding column. If consensus is not reached for any statement, write it in the “Not Sure” column. When all responses are given and posted, review the items in each column. Discuss whether any of the items in the “Not Sure” column are verifiable.

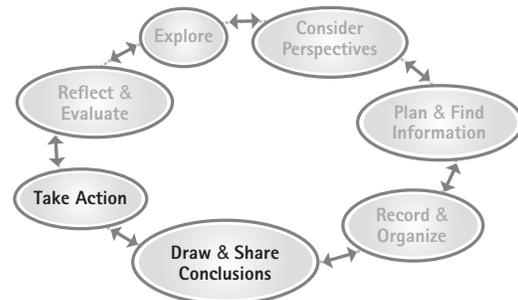
When reviewing the “Opinion” column, be sure to address the idea that opinions are not invalid, and talk about what makes them valid (different ideas, goals, perspectives and understandings). You can also examine the newspaper or magazine articles and campaign flyers or posters that the students bring in. Some might bring in editorials, political cartoons or news articles.

Activity adapted from *Voting: What’s it all about?* Read-Write-Think. NCTE International Reading Association. www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=396.



Make It Matter - Class Action Project

- Encourage students to draw conclusions from the research they completed to support their project. Use a graphic organizer such as a **Mind Map (p. 106)** or **Flow Chart (p. 111)** and **Plan for Action (p. 120)** to develop paths of action they can take. Provide students with time to start to implement actions related to the project.
- Discuss how elected representatives identify things that need to be improved or changed and develop a plan to try to implement change or take action.
- Work with students to establish a context for the election that is connected to the class project. This context can involve possible actions that each group will present as part of their election campaigns, depending on the type of project your class is implementing:
 - ➔ Strategies for communicating and lobbying for a need for change with their MLA or the government, such as making a presentation, sending a letter, sharing research and findings, sending an invitation to meet with the class, etc.



- ➔ Strategies for implementing the project in the classroom or school, such as holding a school awareness campaign, organizing student meetings or working groups, holding lunch hour take action meetings, etc.
- ➔ Strategies for implementing the project in the community, such as preparing a community information night, holding a press conference, organizing a public service announcement or campaign, organizing a mini-conference, etc.
- Candidates can campaign on the basis of how they will take leadership in developing, furthering and implementing the goals of the project.

3 Considering Engagement

“The profile of youth participation is complex, sometimes contradictory or contested, and remains incomplete. Nonetheless, we can be confident of a few things. We know that today’s youth have less formal political knowledge than previous generations and at the same time are highly suspicious of political spin and insincerity. Despite being the best-educated cohort in our history, many of them don’t grasp how government and political institutions work nor do they get the connections between their everyday realities, politics and policy. And, as is well publicized – 40% of the non-voting in federal elections is attributed to lower turnout among the young (Pammatt and LeDuc, 2003).”

MacKinnon, Mary Pat; Pitre, Sonia; Watling, Judy. (CPRN Research Report October 2007). (Mis) *Understanding Youth Engagement Synthesis Report: Charting the Course for Youth Civic and Political Participation*. Ottawa: Canadian Policy Research Networks Inc. (p. 5).

- Invite students to consider what they associate with political and social participation and engagement. How and why should youth be encouraged to participate? Work with the class to establish a format or criteria for an advertising campaign that focuses on this question.
- Provide students with use **Student Resource 2-3: Consider Engagement (pp. 90-91)**. Identify and list elements that students should include in their advertising campaign, such as meanings of youth participation and engagement, strategies for participation and youth issues, priorities and concerns. The campaign materials that students develop should include visuals and written information. Students should develop a project plan, detailing the following information:
 - The purpose and products for the advertising campaign
 - Group tasks and timelines
 - Individual responsibilities within the group.
 - Each individual group member should clearly identify a product that they will create that will become part of the group’s effort.
- Alternatively, have students create a persuasive poster, collage, storyboard or photo essay that responds to the question, “How and why should youth be encouraged to participate?”



Differentiate

Provide students with choices regarding the type of product they create to apply their understandings and to demonstrate learning. Some of these product choices can include the following:

- A **personal poster** is used to create a personal response, including visuals and text. The personal poster should be completed individually.
- A **collage** is created with a collection of items from different sources. A collage can include excerpts from media sources, photographs, illustrations, drawings, quotations and literature excerpts. It can also include items that students create themselves. Three-dimensional objects can be used in a collage to create a “collage in relief.”

(Continued on next page)



Did You Know

“The question of what constitutes politics and things political and how to define political identity – using the vantage point of young people – is an important element explored in this research series.... In general, the literature and surveys take a traditional approach to defining political interest, knowledge and participation. Political participation is generally defined to involve the “formal arena of politics: political parties, elections, interest groups, social movements and protest behaviour. Civic participation, on the other hand, extends to include participation in community activities, normally those designed to bring about some social good (often in the form of a policy change or program implementation) as well as social organizations” (O’Neill, 2007: 2). In an era when “politics” carries such pejorative connotations, it is not unreasonable to question whether standardized surveys on political participation, using traditional language and concepts, fail to adequately capture what is going on below the surface. Are concepts about political participation and politics being poorly translated for youth audiences on the one hand and misinterpreted by youth on the other hand? There is an emerging discourse among young people, including discussion that occurs through online networking that calls out for study and analysis. ... we need to broaden definitions and understandings of how young people comprehend political and civic interest and activity.”

MacKinnon, Mary Pat; Pitre, Sonia; Watling, Judy. (CPRN Research Report October 2007). (Mis) *Understanding Youth Engagement Synthesis Report: Charting the Course for Youth Civic and Political Participation*. Ottawa: Canadian Policy Research Networks Inc. (p. 6).



Differentiate & Share



Students can be provided with options for sharing their work. Smaller group presentation contexts encourage students to develop skills in more comfortable contexts.

- Students can share with a partner. Have partners develop questions they can ask of each other.
- Students can present their work to a small group, taking turns presenting their opinions and evidence.
- Students can practice a presentation with a partner or small group, then present to the whole class.

Assess & Reflect



Have students reflect on what they have learned and how they have learned by responding to the following three statements.

- I liked learning about....because....
 - I struggled when I was trying to learn....
 - I didn't know that...

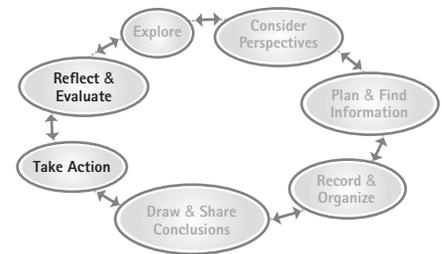
- A **storyboard** is a series of drawings, sketches and text that is used to present a sequence of ideas or events. A storyboard is usually created using a series of boxes like a comic strip.
- A **photo essay** is a collection of photographs that are presented in order to tell a story or evoke an emotional reaction. A photo essay can provide a written explanation, literature excerpt or quotation or descriptive words and phrases with each photograph. When students are asked to create a photo essay, they can be encouraged to take their own digital photographs and create their essay in electronic form or they can cut and paste photographs they find in different sources.

- Revisit students' graffiti walls. Have students add different perspectives on issues related to youth participation in political and social issues.
- Invite students to use the last page of the student resource to develop a personal commitment card. Provide students with blank index cards, or have them make their own.



Make It Matter - Class Action Project

- Provide time for students to continue to implement their class project. If students are completing their projects, have them reflect on the impact they think their actions have had. If students are still implementing their projects, have them reflect on how effective they think their project work has been.
- Encourage the class to check in with each other by discussing and reflecting on questions such as the following:
 - ➔ What has most inspired us with our project work so far?
 - ➔ Who have we connected with? How have different perspectives changed or affected our project work?
 - ➔ What do we consider to be the most successful in the work we have done? Why is it successful? What challenges or barriers have we had to overcome?
- Use **Assess the Impact (p. 121)** to guide students through an assessment and reflection of their project work. Depending on the project and how much work students have completed, assign parts or all of the resource.





2 To what extent do public policies actually reflect the preferences of citizens?

2-1 Politics and Policy

Canada's National Identity Will Be Determined by Your Vote!

Past Blogs

Voting in Veils:
Canada's ID Card Crisis

Canada's Government Takes Opportunity to Reduce Voter Fraud

Representation by Population
Stretched Thin

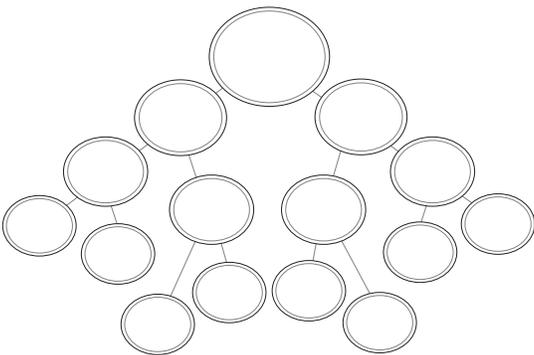
First Past the Post Effective?

Movement growing to lower Canadian voting age to 16



What do these headlines mean? What issues do you think are associated with each?

Brainstorm questions that you think of when you read each headline. Use a list, or a graphic organizer such as a *Mind Map* or a *T-Chart* to organize your questions. Request these graphic organizers from your teacher.



■ A Matter of Policy?

Some say that Canada's citizenship laws, policies and legislation encourage citizens to use their voice on issues that are important to them. Others say that it doesn't do enough to ensure that all citizens can be heard equally. To what extent do you think this is true?

Through the electoral process, citizens give representatives the authority to make decisions, develop policies and enact laws on their behalf. So the electoral process is a critical aspect of the democratic process. In recent years, there have been a number of issues that have brought attention to changes that some believe are necessary to Canada's electoral system.

Some people believe that Canada's political and cultural realities require more reflection on what we want the Canadian democracy to be and how this vision should be represented in the electoral system. Some also raise questions about whether the existing electoral procedures really meet the democratic needs of Canadian society.



What are some of the perspectives and evidence related to each of the headlines you explored earlier? Each of the sources that follow presents a starting point for finding out more about these topics and issues. Add other sources that you locate and identify.

Find Out More



There are a number of different sources that present perspectives on the impact of voting as well as political policy on Canadian voters. Start with these sources, but ensure that you find others that represent different views.

Canadian Identity: A Francophone Perspective. Multicultural Canada website:
www.multiculturalcanada.ca/ecp/content/canadian_identity_a_francohone_respective.html.

“Globalized electorates create multiple voting opportunities: Canadians can belong to – and vote in – more than one national group at the same time (Apr 18, 2008)” *The Star* online:
www.thestar.com/comment/article/415675.

The Great Canadian Questions Website – Identity Revolution & After Unity. The Dominion Institute website:
www.greatquestions.com/e/index.html.

Use a graphic organizer such as a *Triple T-Chart* or *Retrieval Chart* to organize your research. Request these graphic organizers from your teacher. Ensure that you analyze the source for perspective and bias:

- Who wrote or created the source?
- How reliable is it? What biases are present in the source? Why and how do you know this?

⏪ Past Blogs

■ Canada's National Identity Will Be Determined by Your Vote!

Voters cast their ballots to support a political party or an individual candidate. This choice can be influenced by the policies and stances that parties and candidates take and promise to put into place when they are elected. Sometimes, special interest groups will encourage voters to vote for the party or candidate that represents their point of view on issues and decisions. Some elections can be centered on a particular issue. Some issues, such as the Constitution debate, can be decided through **referendums**, a “people’s vote” that directly determines an issue of policy by a majority vote, as distinct from an election of political representatives who will make the decision for the people.



Past Blogs

■ Voting in Veils: Canada's ID Card Crisis

The "Voting in Veils" controversy brought up a number of questions associated with rights and freedoms that are connected to the electoral process as well as the laws that govern how citizens can register to vote. It also became part of the larger question of identity verification for Canadians. The media produced numerous articles about Canada's Chief Electoral Officer's position that Muslim women did not have to remove religious head coverings when they vote.



Past Blogs

■ Canada's Government Takes Opportunity to Reduce Voter Fraud

National ID cards are a hot topic in Canada and other countries thinking about introducing a nationwide identification document. Influenced by the "fight against terrorism" and recent questions about voter security and identification, national ID cards have become the subject of media articles and government debate. Recently, a Toronto reporter was charged with voter fraud when he attempted to expose gaps in the voter registration system by registering to vote at three different polling stations. Increasing issues of fraud and identity crimes are also adding to supporters' arguments for the national ID card.

However, national ID cards can be associated with loss of privacy and individual freedom. This issue can lead to questions like: What personal information is collected and how is it protected? Who can demand to see the ID card and for what reason? How much does it all cost?

Another hot topic is the use of the Internet to register voters as well as to cast ballots. Some say this will make it easier to encourage voter registration in advance of elections, and reduce the issue of providing ID and documentation. Others question the security and privacy of Internet voting.

Elections Alberta now uses an online voter registration system called Voterlink. Eligible voters can register to vote using the Internet at www.voterlink.ab.ca. To register, you need an Alberta Driver's License or an Alberta Identification Card. Any Canadian citizen who has been ordinarily resident in Alberta for at least six months and who is aged 16 or over can register.



Find Out More

There are a number of different sources that present perspectives on the issue of rights and freedoms versus protection of the principles of a democratic electoral system. Start with these sources, but ensure that you find others that represent different views.

"Elections Canada battles a bipartisan, multicultural backlash over photo ID requirements that don't exist." *Macleans* magazine online. www.macleans.ca/article.jsp?content=20070910_171616_7936.

"Voting in Veils: Canada's ID card crisis." *CIO Canada Government Review*. www.intergovworld.com/article/67215a2f0a0104080021477c6316d065/pg0.htm.

National Archive (video): Rex Murphy "Of Veils and Voting." CBC News online. www.cbc.ca/national/blog/video/rex_murphy/of_veils_and_voting.html.

Voting and the Veil. Canadian Council of Muslim Women. www.cfuw.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=521&Itemid=2.



There are a number of different sources that present perspectives on the issue of rights and freedoms versus security and privacy. Start with these sources, but ensure that you find others that represent different views. You may also find other examples of situations or stories that connect to this broader issue.

Canada's New Government Takes Action to Reduce Voter Fraud. (24 October 2006). Government of Canada. Democratic Reform website: www.democraticreform.gc.ca/eng/media.asp?media_category_id=1&id=1374.

A National Identity Card? Report of the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration (October 2003). House of Commons Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration: Joe Fontana MP, Chair. www.oipcbc.org/pdfs/public/cimmrp06-e.pdf.

Bray, Richard (February 5, 2007). "One entity, one identity." *CIO Canada Government Review*.

InterGovWorld.com website: www.intergovworld.com/article/833b44af0a010408019ac931afe1e97d/pg0.htm.

Canadian Internet Policy and Public Interest Clinic, University of Ottawa website: www.cippic.ca/national-id-cards/.

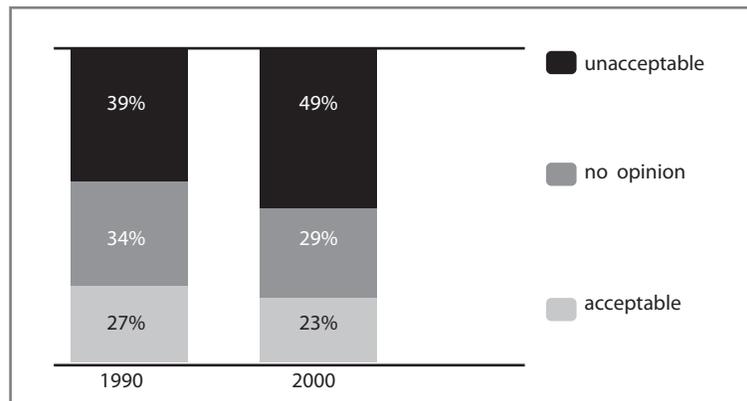
Government of Canada Solves Problem of Verifying the Residence of Voters: (November 2, 2007). Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform press release. Marketwire website: www.marketwire.com/mw/release.do?id=788197.

■ First-Past-the-Post Effective?

There have been numerous discussions and debates about the effectiveness of Canada's current electoral system, many focused on the first-past-the-post system. A number of citizens believe that the **first-past-the-post** system results in inequalities in representation and promote a system called **proportional representation**. In this system, political parties are assigned seats in the House of Commons or provincial legislatures according to the percentage of the vote they receive. Candidates also win on the percentage of the vote they receive.

Law Commission of Canada (2004). *Voting Counts: Electoral Reform for Canada*. Ottawa: Minister of Public Works and Government Services (p. 6). www.fairvotecanada.org/files/VotingCountsElectoralReformforCanada.pdf.

Voters' opinions on first-past-the-post election results
1990 and 2000



Adapted from P. Howe and D. Northrup (2000). "Strengthening Canadian Democracy: The Views of Canadians." *Policy Matters at 14* (pp. 1-5).

"...the first-past-the-post system has its supporters, who present arguments in its favour.

- The system is easily understood by the average voter. At election time, voters simply mark the ballot (with a cross or other mark) beside the name of their preferred candidate.
- It can produce **majority governments** that take decisive action.
- This system allows voters to oust an unpopular government at the next election.
- It creates a clear geographic link between Members of Parliament and constituents."

Law Commission of Canada (2004). *Voting Counts: Electoral Reform for Canada*. Ottawa: Minister of Public Works and Government Services (p. 8). www.fairvotecanada.org/files/VotingCountsElectoralReformforCanada.pdf.



Find Out More

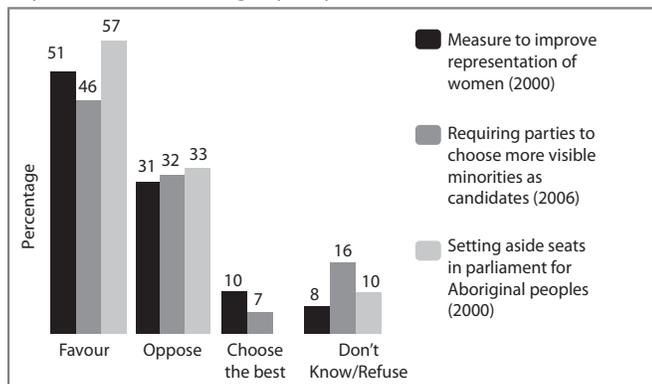
Representation a Concept That is Stretched Thin

The issue of who is represented and who is not is one that is related to a number of different topics and questions. With Canada's representation by population system and its Constitutional guarantee of a minimum number of seats for provinces, some ask whether it is really individual citizens who are represented in Parliament, or is it the provinces?

Some bring up the issue of representation of minority groups, women and Aboriginal peoples in all levels of government. Others ask if established **residents** of Canada, who pay taxes and live in Canadian communities, should be able to vote even if they are not citizens. And others believe that by lowering the voting age, youth will be more effectively represented and engaged in political processes.

Law Commission of Canada (2004). *Voting Counts: Electoral Reform for Canada*. Ottawa: Minister of Public Works and Government Services (p. 6).
www.fairvotecanada.org/files/VotingCountsElectoralReformforCanada.pdf.

Opinions of Canadians on measures to improve representation of various groups in parliament



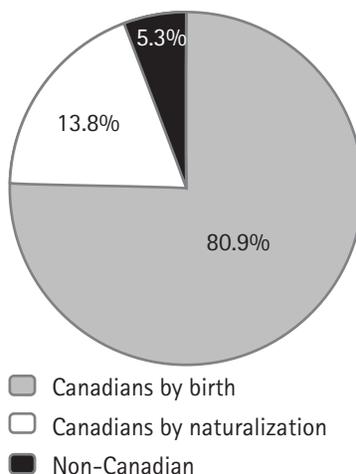
Adopted from P. Howe and D. Northrup (2000). "Strengthening Canadian Democracy: The Views of Canadians." *Policy Matters at 18-20* (pp. 1-5). The category "choose the best" refers to "choose the best candidate." It does not apply to seats for Aboriginal peoples.



Did You Know

How many people who live in Canada are Canadian citizens? In 2001, 80.9% of the Canadian population were Canadian born citizens.

www12.statcan.ca/english/census01/teacher's_kit/activity10_chart5.cfm



Find Out More

There are a number of different sources that present perspectives on the issue of representation in the Canadian electoral system. Start with these sources, but ensure that you find others that represent different views.

"One person, one vote. Is that so complicated?" (May 26, 2007). Andrew Coyne.com website.

<http://andrewcoyne.com/columns/2007/05/one-person-one-vote-is-that-so.php>

Visit the Fair Vote website at www.fairvote.ca/en/. Fair Vote Canada (FVC) is a multi-partisan citizens' campaign for voting system reform.

Find Out More



There are a number of different sources that present arguments for and against lowering the voting age. Try searching the Internet with “Lowering the Voting Age in Canada” to find sources.

■ Movement growing to lower Canadian voting age to 16

There have been a number of movements to lower the voting age, and even more debate and controversy about whether or not it is a good idea. In 2005, MPs from four political parties – the Liberals, Conservatives, Bloc and NDP introduced a private members bill to change Canada’s *Election Act* and lower the voting age to 16. The bill was voted down in parliament. Other countries have also introduced bills to lower the voting age, including the United States and Britain. Iran lets young people vote at 16 in some elections, and in Brazil, the Philippines and many municipalities in Germany, the voting age is also 16.

In January 2005, two teenagers – Eryn Fitzgerald and Christine Jairamsingh – from Edmonton, Alberta attempted to voice their opinions on the issue to the Supreme Court. They were refused.

In the June 2005 House of Commons debate, Conservative Pierre Poilievre, the youngest Member of Parliament at 25, opposed the idea of lowering the voting age with the reasons that “the responsibility ... to pay taxes usually arrives around the age of 18... Values such as thrift, responsibility and hard work are most exemplified in the years that follow, having reached the age of majority.” Others disagreed, stating that everyone pays GST and most pay provincial sales taxes.



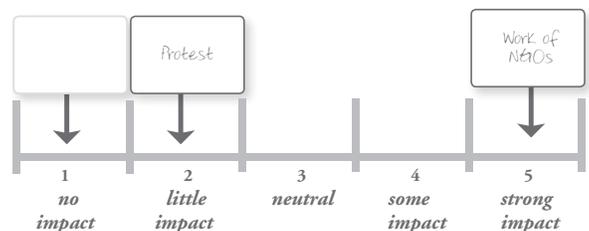
Work with a group to create a poster session to present information on one issue that you and your group identify and research. A *poster session* is a way of communicating information in a brief format. The poster is designed to communicate concepts and data to an audience using a combination of visuals and text. Poster sessions tend to be more informal than oral presentations.

- Clearly identify your issue.
- Plan your poster, including the issue, visuals and textual information.
- Collect and organize your research.
- Create your poster.



Reflect on and discuss the following questions after you have shared your research.

- How can a choice to vote represent a choice to affiliate with particular values, ideologies or stances on issues and concerns?
- In what ways can the process of voting be used to find out how citizens feel about an issue or decision? What is meant by the “popular vote?”
- Can voter participation patterns, or voter turnout rates, provide insights into what citizens believe to be important (or not important)? What might these insights include?
- What actions other than voting can represent political participation and affiliation with a particular stance or ideology?
- What degree of impact do you think different forms of political action, including voting, have? Use a *continuum*, such as the one below, to indicate degree of impact. Request this graphic organizer from your teacher.
- Whose voices are excluded from the electoral process? Why? Is this fair?





To what extent do public policies actually reflect the preferences of citizens?

2-2 Election Experiences

Voting is sometimes described as the most important action that a citizen can take to be politically involved in a representative democracy. Every eligible voter has the right to vote in Canada's democratic system, although some choose not to vote.

A democracy cannot exist without free and fair elections. A free and fairly run election makes everyone equal because each citizen has one vote. Therefore, voting gives every individual an equal say. **Collectively**, or taken all together, election results can send a message to politicians, political parties and the public, letting them know what positions and points of view are supported by the majority.

The idea of **majority decision-making** is an important aspect of the electoral process:

- The political party with the majority of seats forms the government.
- Decisions to pass laws are made through a majority of votes.
- Representatives are chosen through a system that is often called "**first-past-the-post**." In other words, the candidate winning the majority of votes in a constituency is the winner, even if he or she received less than 50% of the "popular vote," which is the total number of votes cast.

In some countries, voting is a mandatory responsibility. Should it be in Canada? You decide.



Does your school already have a student government? How are you represented? What opportunities are there for students to show leadership?

A student government can represent the interests and voices of students when making decisions that may affect everyone. A student government can also take responsibility for leadership tasks related to a school or classroom project or action plan.

If you already have a student council or government in your school, you will still find an election experience valuable. Consider holding a student election in one of the following contexts:

- Hold an election to elect a mini-council for your classroom. Identify the issues and responsibilities such a classroom government will have.
- Hold an election around an issue relevant in your school or classroom. Instead of electing a representative, adapt the election materials in this resource to hold a referendum on a decision.

Learning Log



When have you made decisions by majority decision-making? What other forms of decision-making have you used?



Find Out More

Elections Alberta provides a number of detailed resources on the electoral process on their website at www.elections.ab.ca.

Some of these resources include:

- *A Guide for Polling Place Officials* (PDF). www.elections.ab.ca/Public%20Website/files/A_Guide_for_Polling_Place_Officials.pdf.
- *Guidelines for the Selection of Returning Officers* (Document). www.elections.ab.ca/Public%20Website/files/Documents/Guidelines-for_RO_selection.doc.
- *A Guide for Candidates on the Election Act* (PDF). www.elections.ab.ca/Public%20Website/files/Documents/Guide_for_Candidates_on_the_Election_Act.pdf.
- *A Guide for Scrutineers* (PDF). www.elections.ab.ca/Public%20Website/files/Documents/guide_for_Scrutineers.pdf.

Did You Know



The most common voting age around the world is 18, with a few countries that have lower voting ages. East Timor, Indonesia, North Korea, the Seychelles and Sudan have a national minimum voting age of 17. Austria, Brazil, Cuba and Nicaragua have a minimum age of 16. People who are between the ages of 16 and 18 and employed can vote in Bosnia, Serbia and Montenegro. However, in Uzbekistan, the minimum age to vote is 25. In Italy, the minimum voting age for elections to the Senate is also 25.

Find Out More



The *Election Act* is the main legislation that guides the conduct of elections in Alberta. It sets out all the rules and procedures that must be followed to ensure that elections are fair and impartial. Elections Alberta is responsible for making sure the *Election Act* is followed. They must remain independent from any political party or government in power. The *Election Act* and other election-related legislation can be accessed on the Elections Alberta website at www.elections.ab.ca/legislation.html.

Detailed information about electoral processes, as well as templates and tools that you can use, are provided in the resource *Build the Vote!* These processes are based on those in the *Election Act*, which is the legislation governing electoral procedure in Alberta.



What is the focus of your student election? Identify whether your election will be held in your school, with other classrooms or in your classroom only.

What will the impact of the election be on your class or school? What powers will elected representatives hold? What roles and responsibilities will they have?

Voter Eligibility

In Alberta, there are criteria that must be met for voting eligibility. To be eligible to vote in a provincial election in Alberta, a person must:

1. Be a Canadian citizen
2. Be 18 years old or older
3. Be ordinarily resident in Alberta for at least six months prior to Polling Day.

The following persons are not eligible to vote:

- Returning Officers (except to break a tie)
- Persons who, on Polling Day, are inmates of correctional institutions, excluding persons sentenced to terms of imprisonment of 10 days or less or for the non-payment of fines.



What are the criteria for voting in federal elections?

Should there be changes to voter eligibility at different levels of government?

What criteria will establish voter eligibility in your election?

In some ways, your school is like an **electoral division**. Your classroom is like a **polling subdivision**. In a provincial election, each electoral division must elect a representative. In order to vote, each eligible voter must **register**, or identify themselves by adding their name to the List of Electors. Voting takes place in polling places within each polling subdivision.



Why do you think it is important that all voters register?

In most elections, there are issues that people are concerned about. Your student election will be focused on issues that are important to your class. The issues may relate directly to your classroom or school. They may also be issues related to a project that your class or school is working on.



What issues were raised in your election?

How might your issues differ from other classrooms, groups of people or communities?

Use your research from previous activities to identify alternatives to a first-past-the-post, or majority, decision. What changes would you have to make to the election materials and resources used? Consider:

- Does the ballot have to be redesigned?
- Do election officers have different responsibilities?
- Will election results be counted and recorded using different processes?



Make It Matter

Make your student election matter to your class project. What actions or policies will be important to the candidate's election campaigns? Consider strategies like the following, depending on the type of project you are working on.

- **Strategies for communicating and lobbying for a need for change** with your MLA or the government, such as making a presentation, sending a letter, sharing research and findings or sending an invitation to meet with the class.
- **Strategies for implementing the project in the classroom or school**, such as holding a school awareness campaign, organizing student meetings or working groups or holding lunch hour take action meetings.
- **Strategies for implementing the project in the community**, such as preparing a community information night, holding a press conference, organizing a public service announcement or campaign or organizing a mini-conference.

Encourage your candidates to campaign on the basis of how they will take leadership in developing, furthering and implementing the goals of your class action project.

2 To what extent do public policies actually reflect the preferences of citizens?

■ 2-3 Consider Engagement

Develop a Campaign

How and why should youth be encouraged to participate? Develop an advertising campaign focused on this question.

Consider the elements that will be included in your campaign, such as meanings of youth participation and engagement, strategies for participation and youth issues, priorities and concerns. The campaign materials that you develop should include visual and textual information.

Make a plan for creating your advertising campaign. Ensure that each group member has responsibility for completing one task.

The Products We Will Create	The Purpose of Each Product	The Tasks	Who is Responsible and When It Has to be Done



Future Voter Commitment Card



Future Voter Commitment Card



When I am 18 years old
in _____, I will vote.
(year)



Future Voter Commitment Card



When I am 18 years old
in _____, I will vote.
(year)

Learning Log



How will you participate in the democratic process?
Will you vote when you are 18? Why?

Have you registered as a voter on Voterlink?



Teacher Backgrounders

TEACHER BACKGROUNDERS 1

Find Out More



Some of the information in this backgrounder is based on *The Citizen's Guide to the Alberta Legislature* 6th Edition, accessed at www.assembly.ab.ca/pub/gdbook/CitizensGuide.pdf.

Weblink



Teaching Democracy: What Schools Need to Do, by Joseph Kahne & Joel Westheimer is available at the weblink www.democraticdialogue.com/DDpdfs/TeachingDemocracyPDK.pdf. This article presents a number of perspectives valuable in thinking about how to approach teaching democratic principles.

An online module on parliamentary democracy from Athabasca University can be accessed at www.athabascau.ca/govn/parliamentary_democracy/introduction/options.html.

Information on the provinces and territories, including federal–provincial relations is available on the Canadian-Politics.com website at the weblink www.canadian-politics.com/provinces/prov_assembly.shtml.

An Overview of Government

People often use the term “government” to mean everything connected with making and enforcing laws, collecting taxes and providing public services. However, in our parliamentary system “government” has a very limited and specific meaning. It refers to the team of elected representatives that has the support of a majority in parliament or a provincial assembly. This majority government is responsible for providing leadership to make laws and for ministries that deliver programs and services mandated by those laws. In this system, government is also referred to as the cabinet.

The **bicameral**, or two-house, system that provides the structure of government at the federal level originated in Great Britain. The British Parliament evolved into an elected House of Commons and the appointed House of Lords in the 14th century. In Canada, this is equivalent to the House of Commons and the Senate.

The provincial equivalent of the federal parliament is the legislature. Alberta's Legislature consists of a **unicameral** House called the Legislative Assembly and the Lieutenant Governor. Like their federal counterparts, the premier and cabinet are from the same political party – the one with the most elected members in the Assembly.

Each provincial legislature consists of a unicameral legislature with an elected assembly. Holding elections in which ordinary citizens elect representatives to a parliament is also part of Canada's British heritage. Local village leaders were called to parliament as early as the 13th century, although voting rights were extended to the middle and working classes only in the 19th and 20th centuries and to women in the 20th century.

Responsible and Direct Democracies

The Canadian system of government, and therefore the electoral system, is based on the British principle of responsible government, which means that the cabinet must have the support of a majority in the elected Assembly to continue governing. This establishes a system in which the government is responsible, or accountable, to the Assembly. If a major policy or law is defeated, the government must resign and call an election.

Responsible government has always been part of the Canadian system, but the concept of responsible government came from Britain. It began in Britain in 1742, when the first Prime Minister, Sir Robert Walpole, resigned after two of his major policies were defeated in the Commons.

In the Canadian system of responsible government, the areas of proposing, passing and administering laws overlap. The premier and **cabinet**, or executive branch, are the chief lawmakers. The **premier** is the leader of the party commanding a majority of support of elected members in the Assembly while **cabinet ministers** are appointed **Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs)** from that party. The **executive branch** consists of appointed members of the legislative branch.

When a political party has majority support or commands a majority, the party holds more than half of the seats in the Assembly. In this case, the government formed is called a **majority government**. In Alberta's parliamentary system, majority governments tend to be stable because voting on major government initiatives such as bills and budget estimates normally occurs along party lines. The defeat of a major government initiative would mean the downfall of the government. Therefore, party unity is usually necessary for the government to remain in office. Consequently, party discipline, under which all MLAs from the same party support their party's policies in the Assembly, is a tradition in the parliamentary system.

A party may also be said to command a majority if it holds fewer than half the seats in the Assembly provided that enough members from opposition parties support its major initiatives to ensure that they pass. This is called a **minority government**. If one of its major initiatives is defeated, the government must resign, usually resulting in an election call. Minority governments rely on compromise with members from other parties, so their bills and spending priorities may represent a consensus of different parties' ideas. Thus opposition members in a minority government usually have more influence on government business than they do with a majority government.

Direct democracy is a system of government in which voters can directly repeal, amend or initiate policies and laws through binding referendums. Switzerland provides a good example of a country that practices direct democracy in establishing laws and policies. Swiss voters can challenge laws or policies through petition and referendum. The result of referendum voting is binding on the government.

The Issue of Voter Participation

The issues of low voter turnout and voter apathy in elections for all levels of government – federal, provincial and municipal – has increasingly become a matter of concern for governments, politicians and many Canadians. The issue of voter participation among young adults has increasingly turned to the issue of youth engagement and participation in social and political issues.

Youth engagement can be defined or described as meaningful participation and consistent involvement in activities that are focused on other individuals or groups. Youth can be engaged in many things, and in many different ways. Youth involvement can include volunteer activities, leadership roles, political participation, membership with organizations or individual actions such as participating in meetings, becoming involved in a lawful protest or rally or speaking out at public forums. In other words, participation can range from those actions that are considered to be more “traditionally” based to those that are not. Recent research is showing that young people tend to be involved, but in those activities that are perceived as “non-traditional.”

An expert on youth participation, Roger Hart, describes involvement using the analogy of an eight-step ladder. This ladder is referenced in *The Heart of the Matter: Character and Citizenship Education in Alberta Schools* Workshop Facilitator Guide (Alberta Education, 2007). It can provide a useful context in which to analyze the forms of participation that students identify.



Find Out More

A comprehensive history of the vote is available on the Elections Canada website at www.elections.ca/content.asp?section=gen&dir=his&document=index&lang=e&textonly=false.

The CBC Archives provide a number of video clips and articles that deal with the history of the vote on the *Voting in Canada: How a Privilege Became a Right*, found at http://archives.cbc.ca/IDD-1-73-1450/politics_economy/voting_rights/.

Perspectives on voting and citizenship, including historical and youth perspectives, can be found on the *Historica Voices* weblink at www.historica.ca/voices/index.do.



Find Out More

An excellent website that describes direct democracy in Switzerland is available at www.swissworld.org/dvdrom/direct_democracy_2005/index.html. This website provides a number of examples and illustrations.



Find Out More

The Maple Leaf Web website provides a feature topic on *Voter Turnout in Canada* at www.mapleleafweb.com/features/voter-turnout-canada. A variety of perspectives and statistics are provided on this link, including some from other countries.

The *Voter Almanac* link at www.mapleleafweb.com/voter-almanac also provides statistics and information on voting and elections.

Find Out More



A research paper that deals with the concept of youth engagement in social issues and organizations can be accessed on the website www.mealexchange.com.

Yeung, Monica (January 2007). "Youth Engagement in Canada." *Ingredients for Learning Research Paper*. Toronto: University of Toronto.

Other interesting research articles on the issue of youth engagement and political participation include:

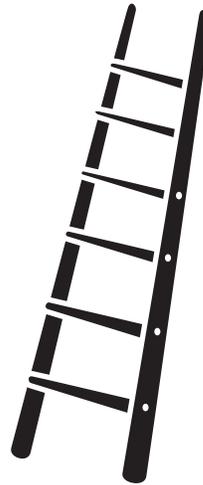
Bristow, Jason. (March 2008). *The Next West Generation: Young Adults, Identity and Democracy*. Calgary: Canada West Foundation.

MacKinnon, Mary Pat; Pitre, Sonia; Watling, Judy. (CPRN Research Report October 2007). *(Mis) Understanding Youth Engagement Synthesis Report: Charting the Course for Youth Civic and Political Participation*. Ottawa: Canadian Policy Research Networks Inc.

A paper discussing the issue of Aboriginal youth engagement can be accessed at <http://ir.lib.sfu.ca/retrieve/3566/chodarr0246.pdf>.

Matthew, C. (n.d.) *An Exploration of Aboriginal Youth Engagement*. Centre for Native Policy and Research.

The Ladder of Student Involvement in School



8. Student-initiated, shared decision-making with adults (student-adult partnerships)
7. Student-initiated and direct action
6. Adult-initiated, shared decision-making with students
5. Students informed and consulted about action
4. Students informed about and then assigned action
3. Tokenism
2. Decoration
1. Manipulation

Degrees of Participation

Degrees of Non participation

Adapted from Roger Hart (1994). *Children's Participation: From Tokenism to Citizenship*. New York: UNICEF.

TEACHER BACKGROUNDER 2

Provincial General Elections

Canada's Constitution requires that provincial elections be held at least once every five years, but they are usually held approximately every four years.

A government that waits until the end of its legal term to call an election runs the risk of being forced to call one at a time that may not be as advantageous politically, therefore reducing its chances of winning. Conversely, governments that take advantage of favourable political conditions by calling an election too soon—a snap election—risk criticism. Governments normally look for a combination of an upsurge of popularity at the polls and the winding down of their mandate to call an election. Holding an election is a complex affair, beginning well before the premier formally asks the Lieutenant Governor to dissolve the legislature.

Electoral Divisions

The difficult decisions involved in an election are not all made by voters. One of these decisions involves how to divide the province into voting districts, or electoral divisions, each of which has one MLA.

Alberta is divided into 83 electoral divisions. One Member of the Legislative Assembly represents each electoral division, and that member represents everyone within the electoral division's boundaries, regardless of how they voted in the last election or whether they voted at all.

Electoral division boundary lines change about every ten years and are normally determined by a special body called the Electoral Boundaries Commission.

The Electoral Boundaries Commission is made up of a chairperson appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council and four members (commissioners) appointed by the Speaker: two on the recommendation of the premier and two on the recommendation of the Leader of the Official Opposition in consultation with the other opposition leader or leaders. A boundaries commissioner must have a thorough knowledge of electoral law combined with an understanding of the needs and wishes of the people who live in the electoral division. The commission draws the boundaries mainly on the basis of population but also considers common community interests, the geographical area, natural boundaries such as rivers, political boundaries such as county lines and city limits as well as other factors. Its decisions are guided by a law called the *Electoral Boundaries Commission Act*. When the commission changes boundaries, the changes must become law before they can take effect.



Find Out More

Some of the information in this backgrounder is based on *The Citizen's Guide to the Alberta Legislature* 6th Edition, accessed at www.assembly.ab.ca/pub/gdbook/CitizensGuide.pdf.



Weblink

Students can search for their electoral division on the Elections Alberta website at www.elections.ab.ca/streetkey/.

Find Out More



Elections Alberta provides a number of detailed resources on the electoral process on their website at www.elections.ab.ca.

Some of these resources include:

A Guide for Polling Place Officials (PDF). www.elections.ab.ca/Public%20Website/files/A_Guide_for_Polling_Place_Officials.pdf.

Guidelines for the Selection of Returning Officers (Document). www.elections.ab.ca/Public%20Website/files/Documents/Guidelines_for_RO_selection.doc.

A Guide for Candidates on the Election Act (PDF). www.elections.ab.ca/Public%20Website/files/Documents/Guide_for_Candidates_on_the_Election_Act.pdf.

A Guide for Scrutineers (PDF). www.elections.ab.ca/Public%20Website/files/Documents/A_guide_for_Scrutineers.pdf.

Find Out More



The *Election Act* is the main legislation that guides the conduct of elections in Alberta. It sets out all the rules and procedures that must be followed to ensure that elections are fair and impartial. Elections Alberta is responsible for making sure the *Election Act* is followed. They must remain independent from any political party or government in power. The *Election Act* and other election-related legislation can be accessed on the Elections Alberta website at www.elections.ab.ca/legislation.html.

Running an Election

The complex task of running a provincial general election belongs to Elections Alberta, the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer. This office must do the following:

- Divide electoral divisions into polling subdivisions
- Update the Lists of Electors, which may include a full or partial enumeration to collect voters' names by going door to door
- Train Returning Officers to run the election
- Make sure voting is conducted according to the rules
- Take care of all election paperwork
- Issue the official election results.

First-Past-the-Post

In Canadian elections winners are chosen through the single-member plurality system, or “**first-past-the-post**.” In other words, the candidate winning the most votes in an electoral division is the winner, even if he or she received less than 50% of the “**popular vote**,” which is the total number of votes cast.

Another voting system used by some democracies is **proportional representation**, in which parties win seats according to the percentage of the total votes cast in their favour. There are many countries using this system, including Germany, Switzerland and Ireland.

Political Parties

When a group of people have similar ideas about the major issues affecting people in a democratic society, they may form a political party to elect some of their people to office and therefore have a better chance of putting their ideas into practice.

Members of a political party can influence politicians and governments when policies are being formed or reviewed. In an election campaign, candidates usually concentrate on promoting policies that are already in place. Young adults can get involved by joining a party's youth association. Alberta's major political parties include the Progressive Conservatives, the Liberals and the New Democrats. The Progressive Conservatives and the Liberals have their roots in the 19th century, while the New Democratic Party was born in the 20th century. The same parties are prominent in federal politics and also in the politics of other provinces. Many parties have both federal and provincial wings, and each wing can have its own members and select its own candidates.

Political parties begin the work of choosing candidates long before an election. Each party tries to select, or **nominate**, one candidate to run in each electoral division. Candidates who don't belong to a political party are called **independents**.

Making a Choice

Voters choose how to vote for a variety of reasons. They may vote for a candidate based strictly on individual qualifications. They may also vote for both the candidate and for the political party that candidate represents, unless the candidate is running as an independent. When deciding how to vote for a candidate in an election, it is important to listen not only to the candidate but also to the party leader. Party leaders will communicate what their party intends to do if they form a government while individual candidates may also focus on what they want for their electoral divisions.

Candidates will often go door to door during their campaigns. People seeking public office welcome questions. They are competing for votes and a chance to explain their party's policies. Voters should explore the issues that most concern them, and find out what their candidates and their parties plan to do about them. There are a variety of strategies voters can use to communicate with candidates and get involved in the electoral process:

- Talk to candidates and other individuals at their constituency associations or campaign headquarters.
- Find out how previously elected candidates handled issues in the past by reading copies of *Hansard*, which can be found on the Assembly's website at www.assembly.ab.ca and is searchable by keyword. If voters know the important details about an issue, their questions are likely to be more to the point, and they will be better able to judge how much the candidates know about that particular issue.
- Attend public meetings, debates, forums and discussion groups in which candidates will be speaking. One of the best ways to find out about a party's election platform is for candidates in one electoral division get together to talk about issues and answer voters' questions. This is an opportunity to hear how potential MLAs would deal with issues and concerns.
- Listen to or take part in a phone-in program, watch candidates' panel discussions or read their statements on important issues in the media.

The media provides helpful sources of information about candidates and issues. Television, radio and newspapers all offer extensive coverage of election issues, the best of which involve the candidates themselves speaking on various matters.

The Electoral Process in Alberta

An election officially begins when the government in power passes an **Order in Council** and the **Chief Electoral Officer** issues a **Writ of Election** to each **Returning Officer**.

The election period is a total of 28 days after the date of the Writ of Election. This means that voting day is on the 28th day. **Nomination Day**, the date by which all candidates must be nominated, is the 14th day after the date of the Writ of Election and **Polling Day**, the day on which voting takes place, is the 14th day after Nomination Day.



Find Out More

Information on political parties in Alberta can be accessed on Elections Alberta's website at www.elections.ab.ca/Public%20Website/603.htm. This information can also be found in the telephone directory under the political party's name.

Find Out More



The responsibilities of Election Officers are described on the Elections Alberta website at www.electionsalberta.ab.ca/Public%20Website/597.htm.

Information for candidates and political parties can be found at www.electionsalberta.ab.ca/Public%20Website/politicalparticipants.htm.

Changes to the List of Electors can also be made by electors using Voterlink at www.voterlink.ab.ca, an online voter registration service provided by Elections Alberta.

Each Returning Officer completes an **Election Proclamation**, which contains the following information:

- The place, dates and times fixed for revisions to the **Lists of Electors**, which identify eligible voters.
- The place and times fixed for nomination of candidates, and the date fixed for the closing of nominations
- The locations, dates and times for voting at the advance polls
- The date and times for voting
- The place, date and time for the announcement of the official results
- The name, address and phone number of the Returning Officer in the electoral division.

As soon as possible following the date of the Writ of Election, each Returning Officer publishes the information on the Election Proclamation, a map of the electoral division and a list of polling places. This information is published in one or more newspapers in each electoral division.

The Chief Electoral Officer provides copies of the Lists of Electors and polling subdivision maps to each registered political party. Each political party and candidate is entitled to receive this information. The same material is provided by the Returning Officer to independent candidates.

The Returning Officer can accept changes to the Lists of Electors, starting on the 5th day after the date of the Writ of Election and continuing each day, except Sundays and holidays. Changes can continue to be made until 4:00 p.m. on the Saturday before the opening of the advance polls.

These changes often include names of electors who:

- Were not included on the List of Electors
- Moved since the List of Electors was prepared
- Recently became eligible to vote.

A **candidate** is a person who is running for election in an electoral division. A candidate must file an Application for Registration of Candidate with Elections Alberta to begin to raise and spend money on his or her campaign and to begin campaigning. After the Writ of Election is issued and the candidate has registered by filing a nomination paper with the Returning Officer, his or her name will appear on the ballot.

To be nominated, a candidate must be at least 18, a Canadian citizen and a six-month resident of the province. A person does not have to be ordinarily resident in an electoral division in order to be a candidate in that electoral division. A member of the Senate or House of Commons of Canada is not eligible to be nominated as a candidate.

Each candidate is required to appoint an elector as an **official agent**. The name, address and telephone number of the appointee must be on the Candidate Nomination Paper and is published by the Returning Officer in a newspaper of general circulation.

Persons appointed as official agents must be eligible to vote under the *Election Act*, but do not have to be a resident in the electoral division where their candidate is seeking office. The official agent must consent to the appointment by signing the Candidate Nomination Paper. A candidate cannot act as an official agent.

A **scrutineer** is a person who represents the candidates at each polling station. Scrutineers may watch election procedures in each polling station during polling hours as well as when the votes are unofficially counted after the polling station is closed.

Each candidate may appoint, in writing, not more than four resident electors for each polling station and Registration Officer's station as scrutineers. Not more than one scrutineer per candidate per ballot box or Registration Officer's station may be present at any one time. A scrutineer may attend more than one polling station or Registration Officer's station. Scrutineers must take the Oath of Secrecy at each polling station or Registration Officer's station before performing their duties.

There are four types of **polls** that are used to conduct voting in each electoral division:

- **Polling Day polls** are open from 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. on the day of the election. Several polling stations can be located at one polling place.
- **Special ballot polls** are used for electors who are unable to vote on Polling Day or at an advance poll. Special ballot polls can be used by people with physical challenges, candidates, election officers, official agents or scrutineers. They may also be used by people who live in remote areas or are away on Polling Day.
- **Advance polls** are established by the Returning Officer in each electoral division. These polls can be used by people with physical challenges and those who believe they will be absent from their polling station on Polling Day to vote in advance. Election officers, candidates, official agents or scrutineers can also use advance polls if their official duties may prevent them from voting at their own polling station on Polling Day. Advance polls are open from 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. on the Thursday, Friday and Saturday prior to Polling Day. The dates and locations are published by the Returning Officer in the Election Proclamation. All electors who wish to vote at an advance poll must complete an Advance Poll Declaration.
- **Mobile polls** can be established by the Returning Officer for places like seniors' and treatment centres. The hours for mobile poll voting are established by the Returning Officer, who consults with the staff at these centres.

The votes cast at all types of polls are counted after the close of polls on Polling Day. The *Election Act* allows a candidate to briefly visit polling places during polling hours, but campaigning is prohibited. Students and members of the media are also permitted to briefly visit polling places.

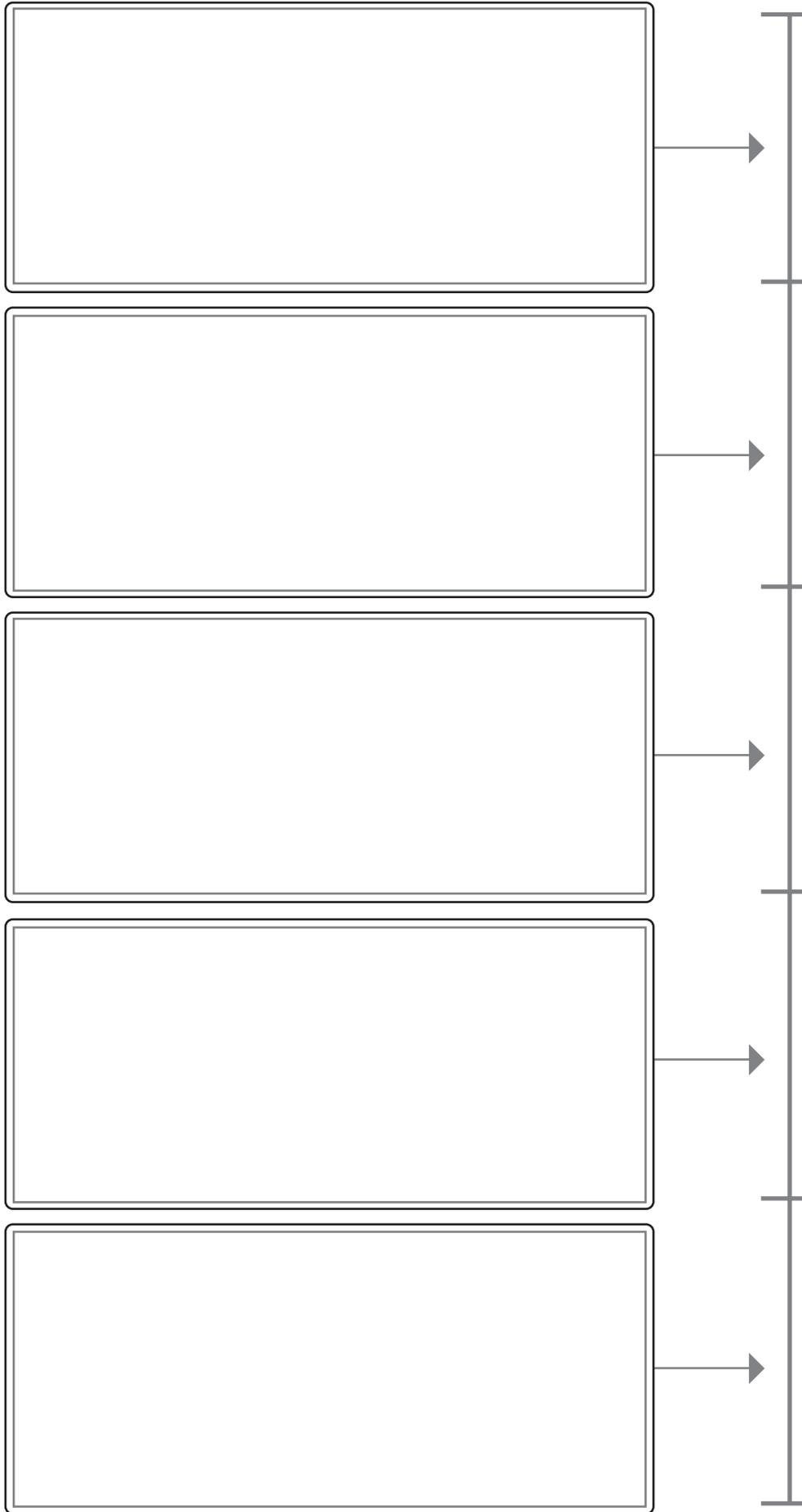
A **ballot** is a list of the candidates' names that electors use to vote. Candidates' names are listed on the ballot in alphabetical order by their last name. Candidates' names cannot include titles, degrees, prefixes or suffixes. The name of the political party which the candidate represents appears directly below the name of the candidate. If the candidate is not running for a political party, the word "Independent" is printed beneath the candidate's name.

Voting involves the following process.

- The Deputy Returning Officer is responsible for obtaining each elector's name and address.
- The Poll Clerk finds the elector's name in the Poll Book beside a consecutive number. The Poll Clerk then draws a line through the elector's name on the List of Electors, which is preprinted inside the Poll Book.
- The Deputy Returning Officer provides the ballot to each elector once their name has been found in or added to the Poll Book. The ballot is numbered with a corresponding number found in the Poll Book and the Deputy Returning Officer initials the back of the ballot.
- The Deputy Returning Officer then provides instructions to the voter to proceed to a polling booth and mark the ballot by placing an "X" in the circle opposite the name of the selected candidate. The ballot should then be folded and handed back to the Deputy Returning Officer once the elector has voted.
- When the voter is in the polling booth, no one else may enter or look into the booth to see the ballot. Voting is private and secret. Exceptions are made if the voter is physically unable to vote or cannot read the ballot. An elector may receive assistance after appropriate oaths are taken.
- Ballots may not be removed from the polling place. If a person declines to vote, the Deputy Returning Officer writes the word "Declined" on the ballot and places it in a separate envelope.
- The Deputy Returning Officer checks the ballot without unfolding it to ensure the number matches and it is the same ballot provided to the voter. The ballot is then placed in the ballot box after the stub with the identifying number is removed.
- The Poll Clerk marks the Poll Book to show the voter has voted.

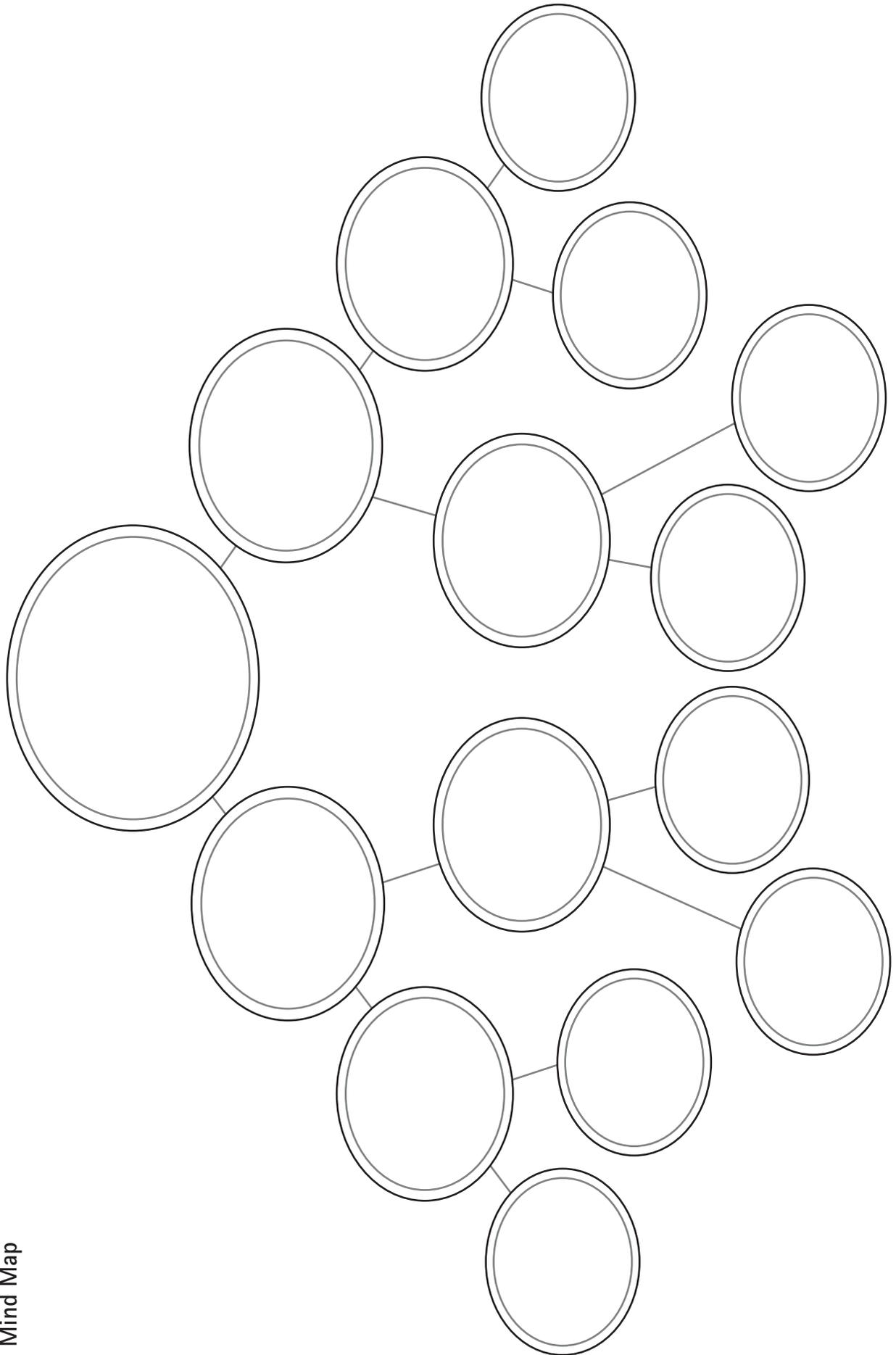
Graphic Organizers

Continuum

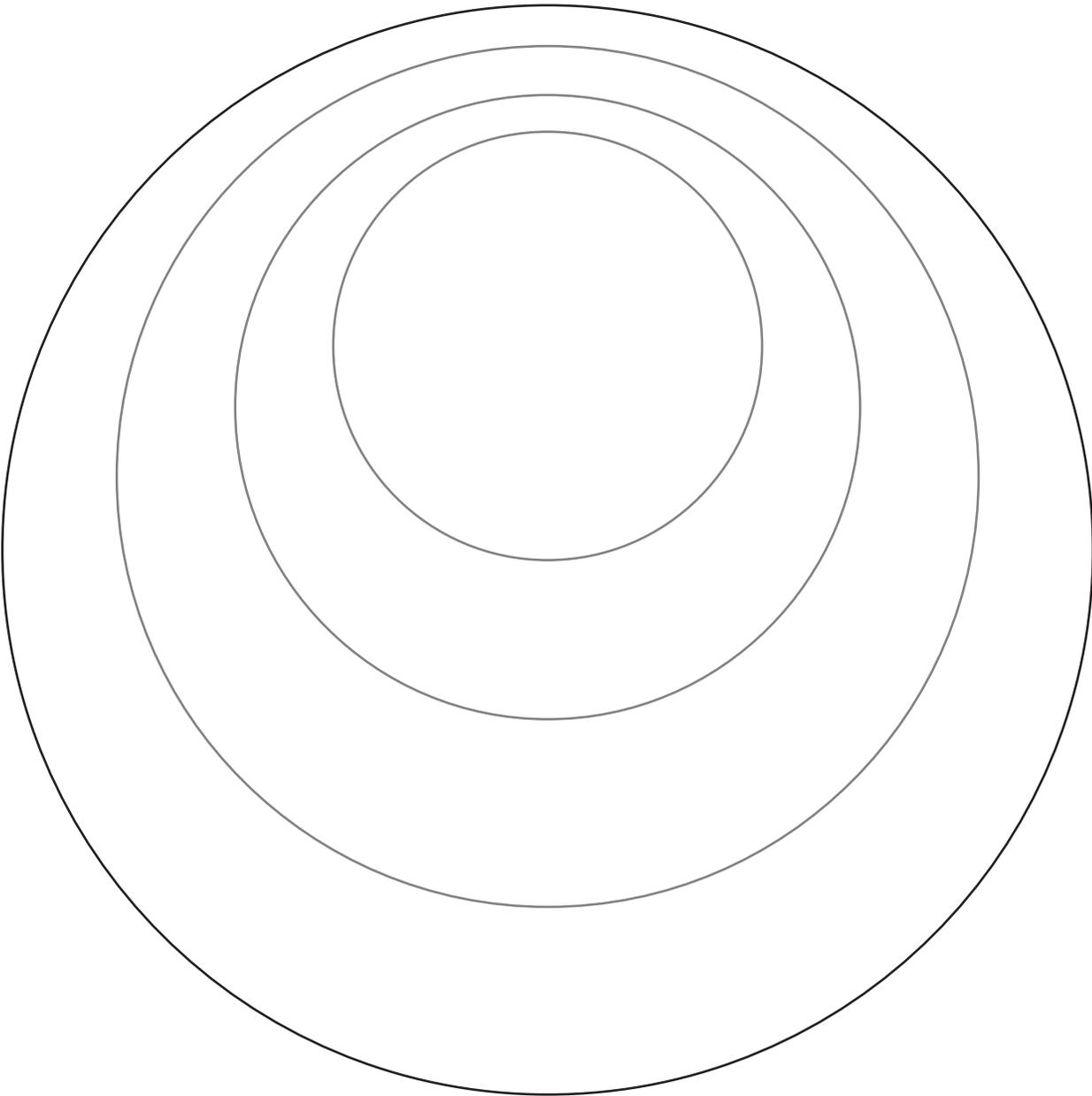


T-Chart

Mind Map

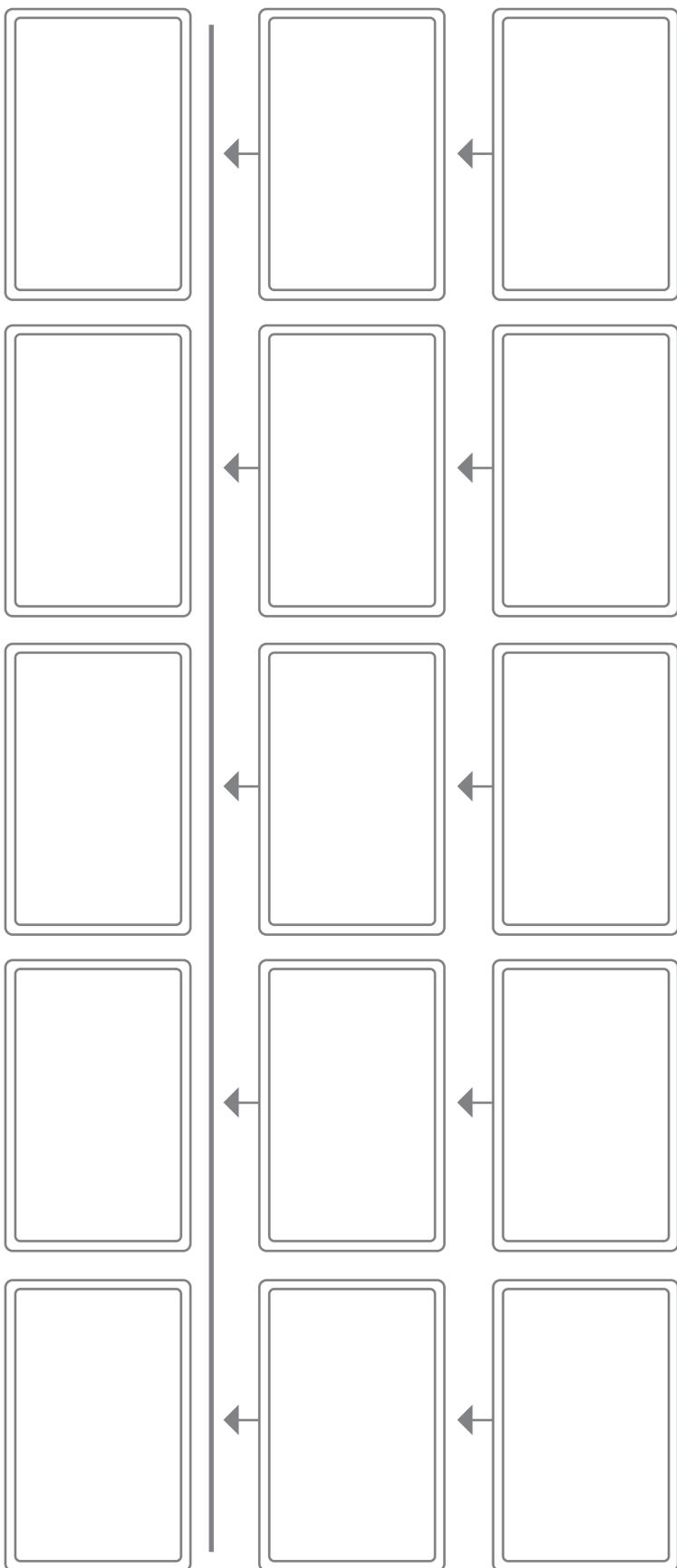


Sphere of Influence Chart



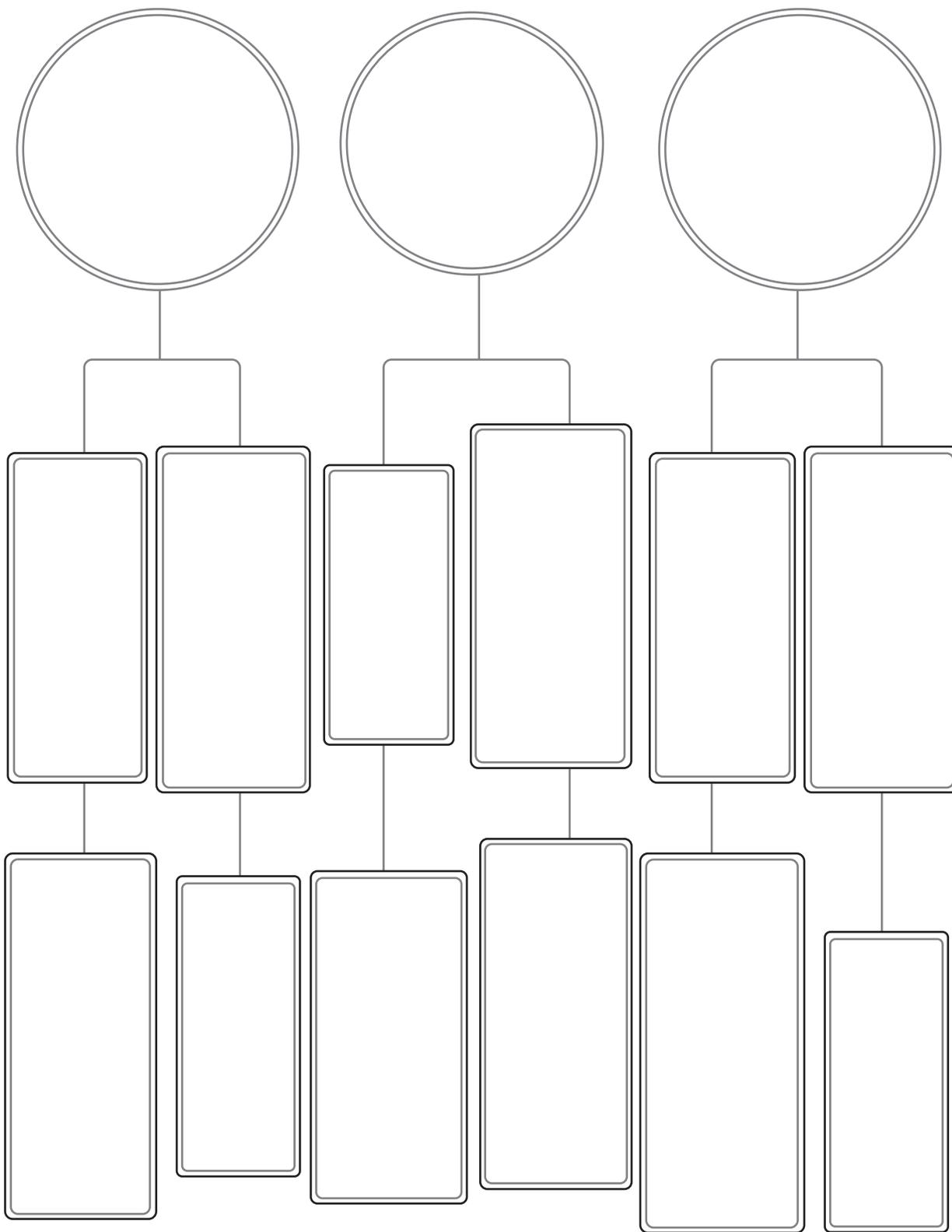
Triple T-Chart

Cause and Effect Timeline

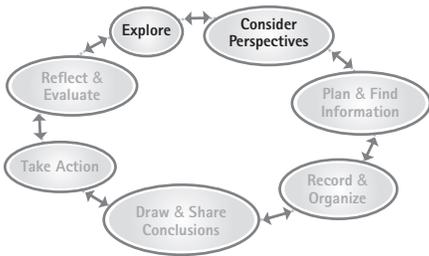


Retrieval Chart

Flow Chart



Project Planning Templates



Plan It

Ideas turn into action when you plan the steps you need to take. Start planning by thinking about the purpose and goals of your class action project.

What would you like to see changed? Describe the purpose of your project.

What are the project goals? Write them down. Make the goals focused and specific by describing actions.

For example, if your project involves helping make your neighbourhood safer or cleaner, identify a specific goal like organizing monthly safety meetings for parents and students, or holding a neighbourhood cleanup day twice a year. If your project involves making your school more aware of the problem of poverty or bullying, identify specific goals like holding a rally, fundraising or starting a monthly newsletter.

What do we already know?

What do we think about this issue?

What do we need to understand about this issue?

How does this issue or question affect us?

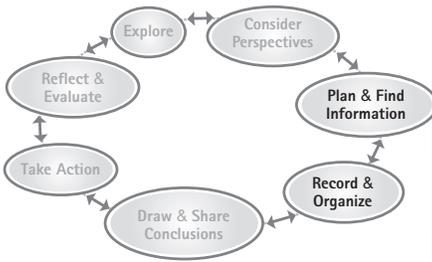
What interests us about this issue or question?

Why is this important?

What questions do we have?

Who is affected and why?

What different opinions exist?



How will we find out what we need to know and understand?

What type of information do we need?

What sources do we need to consult?

What is the best way to research?

Who can we find out more from?

How will we record our research?

What similarities and differences do we see?

What comparisons can we make?

What connections do we see?



Get Informed

What information do you need to support the project? Consider different types of sources you can consult to answer questions and develop knowledge and expertise about your issue.

Review Learning

What have you already learned? What information is important and relevant to the project? What opinions, perspectives or biases affect the reliability or validity of the information?

Where can you find information?

Print sources: Go to your school or local library. Books, magazines and newspapers can provide research information.

Internet sources: Make a list of websites of interesting organizations, government sites, online newspapers and magazines. Check the search terms you will use with your teacher. When you find information, check the accuracy of the information you find on the Internet with your teacher or another adult.

People sources: Talk to friends and family members. Identify individuals who have expertise and organizations that can provide information.

List other sources.

Ask Questions

What more can you learn about the issues that relate to your project? Develop questions to which you need answers. For example:

- What makes this issue unique and important?
- Who is most affected? Why?
- Does this issue have local, national, or global implications, influences or effects? What are they?
- Who is already involved? (Consider individuals or groups such as government, businesses, non-profit organizations, etc.)
- What different strategies have others used to try to deal with the issue?

List other questions you may have:

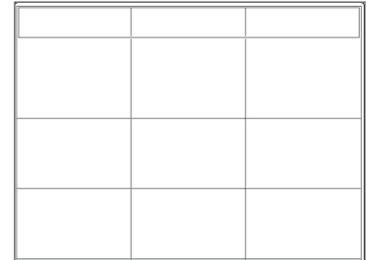
Organize Research

Make a plan to find information. Identify the responsibilities and tasks of each group member by using this chart.

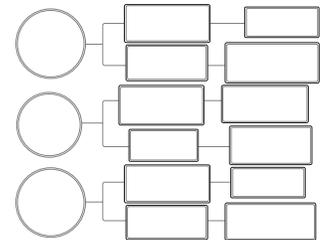
Group Member	Responsibilities (Area or Topic)	Tasks and Specific Jobs	Target Date

Use graphic organizers to organize your research. Decide what type of graphic organizer works best for collecting the information you need. Ask your teacher to provide you with the organizers you need.

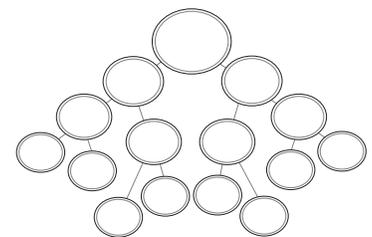
Triple T-Chart

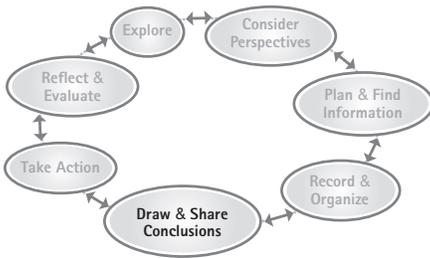


Flow Chart



Mind Map





How will we share our information?

What would happen if...?

What conclusions can we make?

What evidence supports our conclusions?

Communicating effectively involves identifying the people you know and what they can offer or help you with.

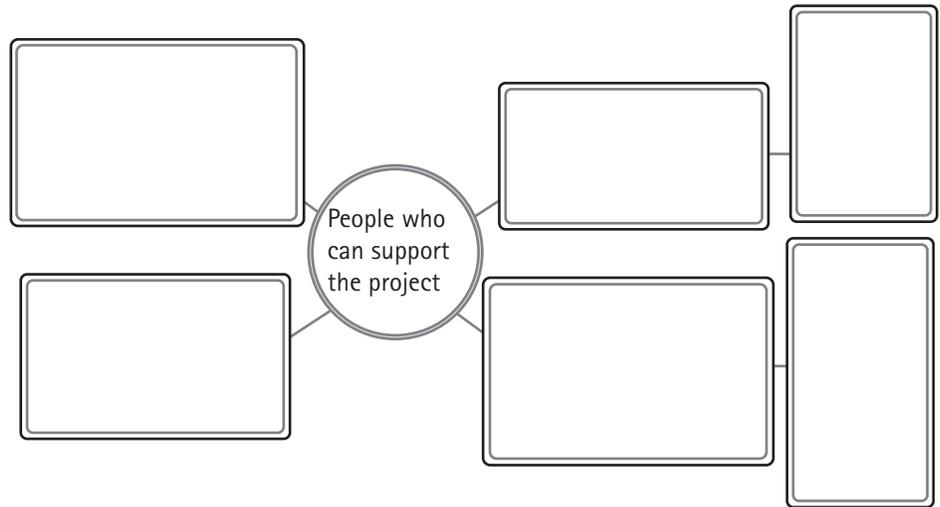
- Use a mind map to start identifying people you think can support your project. Ask your teacher for this graphic organizer.
- Describe what they can do in the second layer of the map.
- Identify other people who could contribute to your project.



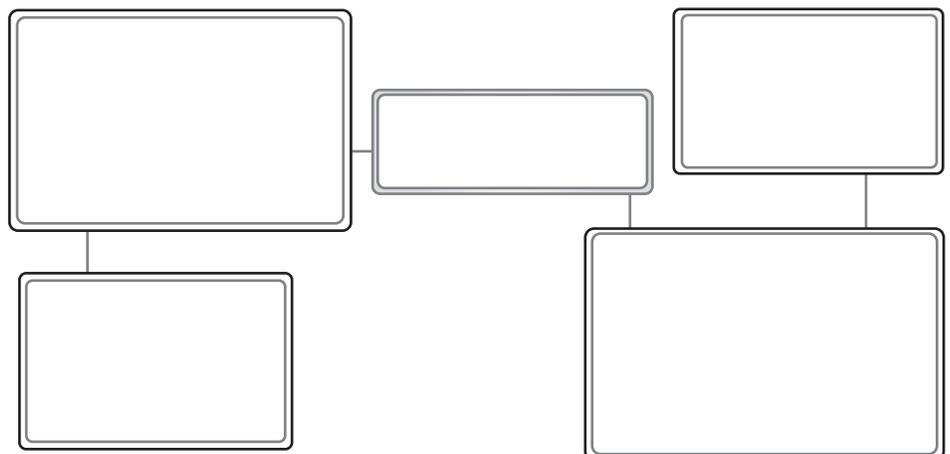
Communicate and Implement

Effective communication is important to the success of your project. Effective communication involves:

- Communicating with others to ask questions and find information
- Asking for help from experts
- Telling others about your project
- Getting support for your project.



What progress have you made? Summarize the actions you have taken so far in the flow chart below. What are the next steps?



What conclusions can you make? Use the chart below to analyze what you have accomplished and learned.

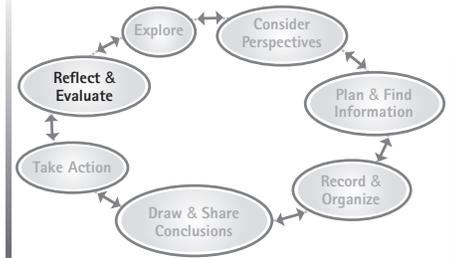
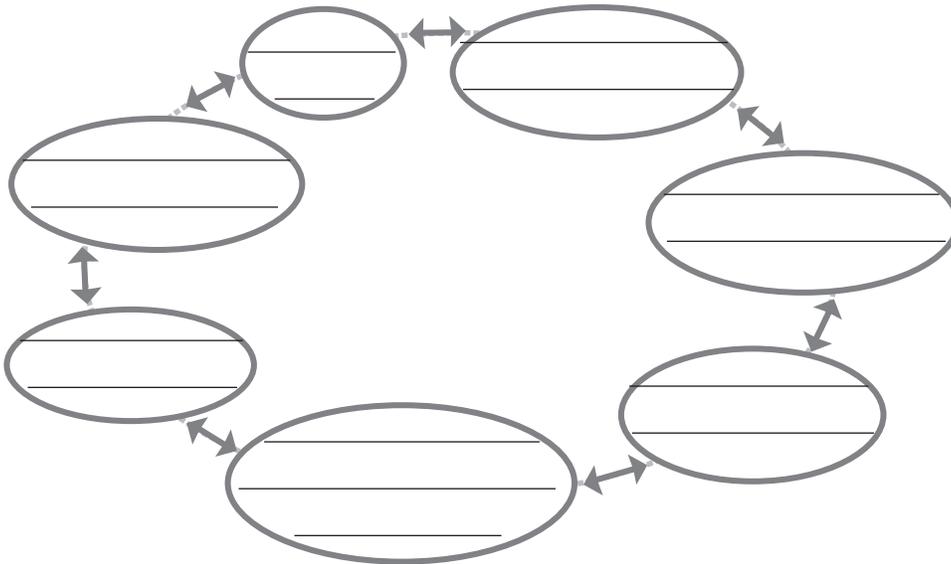
What is most important to know about our class action project?	What have we learned that we did not know before? What conclusions can we make?	What evidence supports our conclusions?	What are some solutions that address the issue or challenge of our class action project? What would happen if we implemented these solutions?

Assess the Impact

How can you **assess**, or judge, the impact of your activities?

- Keep your assessment simple. Evaluate how successful you think your activities were. What were the results? Describe them.
- Ask for the input of others. What did they think? How were they affected?
- Look for unexpected results from your activities. What were they and who did they affect?
- What else could you do? What other ideas resulted from your activities?

Use the inquiry circle to assess the process you have used to implement your project.



How effective were our actions?

What should we change?

What should we do next?

What do we need to find out about?

How can you tell if you are successful? Consider:

- The people who have participated
- Who and how many you have affected
- A sense of accomplishment from team members
- Other projects that have been inspired by your work
-
-
-
-

We hope this resource is helpful in supporting your Social Studies program. Please indicate your agreement with the following statements about this resource.

Please return this page to:

Elections Alberta
Suite 100, 11510 Kingsway NW
Edmonton, Alberta T5G 2Y5

Office Hours:
Monday through Friday

8:15 a.m. to 12 noon;
1:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Tel: 780-427-7191
Fax: 780-422-2900

Other locations in the province can call toll free by dialing 310-0000 then dial 780-427-7191

This feedback form can also be completed online on the Elections Alberta website at www.elections.ab.ca, under the *Education* tab.

Building Future Voters

■ **Teacher's Feedback Form**

1. This resource provides effective and practical strategies to support student learning about citizenship, democracy and the electoral process.

strongly agree agree disagree strongly disagree

COMMENTS

2. This resource is well organized, and easy to read and use.

strongly agree agree disagree strongly disagree

COMMENTS

3. The activities and strategies in this resource were effective in helping me prepare to work with students at the Grades 6, 9 or 12 levels (circle one).

strongly agree agree disagree strongly disagree

COMMENTS

4. We welcome your comments and suggestions for future editions of this resource.

COMMENTS

Building Future Voters

■ Permission Form



Elections Alberta has developed educational resources, called **Building Future Voters**, for teaching about citizenship, democracy and the electoral process for Grades 6, 9 and 12 Social Studies classrooms. Some activities that your child completes may involve working directly with a Returning Officer of an Alberta electoral division.

Elections Alberta would like to share examples of student ideas, responses and work on their website at www.elections.ab.ca. They are asking for your permission in two areas:

One: To share your child's work with Elections Alberta

I/we are aware that by giving this consent, I/we are permitting Elections Alberta and Returning Officers who may visit the classroom, to view samples of _____ (name of child)'s work.

Signature

Date

Two: To display a sample of your child's work on the Elections Alberta website

NOTE: These samples would include your child's first name and community only and would appear on the Elections Alberta website.

I/we are aware that by giving this consent, I/we are permitting Elections Alberta to display samples of _____ (name of child)'s work on the Elections Alberta website at www.elections.ab.ca, and that if consent were withheld, this posting would not occur.

I _____ give permission for my child _____'s work (if selected) to be displayed on the Elections Alberta website.

Signature

Date

If you have any questions or concerns, Elections Alberta can be contacted using the information below:

Elections Alberta

Suite 100, 11510 Kingsway NW
Edmonton, Alberta T5G 2Y5

Office Hours:

Monday through Friday

8:15 a.m. to 12 noon;

1:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Tel: 780-427-7191

Fax: 780-422-2900

Other locations in the province can call toll free by dialing 310-0000 then dial 780-427-7191

Return this form and attachments to:

Elections Alberta

Suite 100, 11510 Kingsway NW
Edmonton, Alberta T5G 2Y5

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then dial 780-427-7191

Building Future Voters

■ Teaching Ideas & Student Work Submission Form

The teaching and learning process can always be improved. We welcome your ideas and suggestions for enhancing, adapting to adding to the activities, information and materials in this resource.

Please submit your ideas on this form and attach any photographs or photocopies you may have of student work. Ensure that you also attach the **Permission Form** provided on page 123 of this resource with any student work that you send to us.

Name: _____

Contact Information: _____

Description of idea or suggestion (Attach extra pages if required):

Attached:

Student work (Describe and identify students by first name, grade level and community. Attach list if necessary.)

Permission Form(s)

