

Historica Canada Education Portal

Spending the Surplus

Overview

Students will demonstrate an understanding of the challenges of governing communities or societies in which diverse value systems, multiple perspectives, and differing civic purposes coexist.

Aims

Skills

- research and inquiry (ie. formulating questions, note taking)
- writing a persuasive proposal (including editing and revising)
- group work (ie. collaboration)
- role-playing

Activities

Time Allowance: 4 periods of 75 min.

Procedures:

Scenario

The federal government has decided to consult the provinces and territories to get their input on the expenditure of an unexpected federal surplus budget. Each province and territory will send a delegation to Ottawa to inform and persuade the federal government of their own fiscal needs in order to secure a "fair share" of the money available.

Students will assume the roles of the provincial and territorial MPPs/MLAs/MNAs. They will research the current issues and needs of their respective province or territory, prioritize these needs, and persuasively argue why their requests should be met. A governing body or individual will make a decision based on the presented arguments.

Activity

Day 1

1. Present the scenario to the class.
2. Divide students into roles (for example, 2 or more delegates per province/territory). You can choose to be final decision maker, or have a group of students take on the role of the federal government.
3. Distribute fact sheets prepared by teacher, if necessary. These sheets can contain information regarding distribution of financial responsibility among the different levels of government and details about the creation of a budget.
4. Break into provincial groupings to review and discuss their issues. Encourage students to distribute further research of the issues between them.

Day 2

5. Research. Students should use reputable internet sources, newspapers, and their library.

Day 3

6. Meet again with provincial/territorial groups to discuss their research and make a list of priorities that will be presented to the Federal government.
7. Prepare a persuasive presentation (each group member should be prepared to present their issues, although only one member will be selected to present).

Day 4

8. Presentations - one member of each delegation will be randomly selected to read his/her prepared proposal. In addition, each student will submit their individual proposal for assessment/evaluation.
9. You, or the group representing the federal government, will make their decision the distribution of the federal surplus funds based on each province/territory's presentation.

Required Materials:

- scenario sheet
- fact sheet (including information regarding special interest lobbies eg. environment, health, labour, education, arts etc)
- resources (including internet the [Government of Canada website](#), [The Canadian Encyclopedia](#), newspaper articles, national magazines, books, etc.)