



LESSON
PLANS

Canadian Citizenship

MATERIAL COVERED

- Pages 28-33 of the *Discover Canada guide*

LESSON PLANS

How Canadians Govern Themselves & Federal Elections

Pre-reading/Introductory Activities

1 PREDICTION ACTIVITY

Begin with a discussion (in pairs, groups or as a class) about students' own understanding of the ideas, principles, responsibilities, and people that make-up Canada's federal system of government and democracy.

Discussion questions could include:

- For what kinds of things do you think the federal government is responsible?
- How do you think an idea or policy becomes a law?
- What skills do you think a Member of Parliament should have before being elected? Explain why.
- What do you think motivates someone to become an MP? Do you think these are positive motivations? Why or why not?
- You could also have students brainstorm ideas about the challenges of governing a vast and diverse country, and the importance of citizens playing an active role in democracy.
- After the discussion, have students (in pairs, groups or individually) brainstorm the job description for a Member of Parliament. They should consider the answers to the discussion questions in brainstorming their responses.

2 GLOSSARY / WORD WALL

Have students create a glossary, defining and/or explaining key terms from each reading. Examples include: federalism; parliamentary democracy; Prime Minister; House of Commons; bill; Governor General; right to vote; majority government; Official Opposition; provincial/territorial governments; First Nations councils. You might consider creating a word wall by having each student choose a term and write its definition/explanation with a visual to accompany their definition (either realistic or symbolic) and displaying all the words and definitions on a wall of the classroom.

Other resources to use with these activities:

**The Canadian
Encyclopedia**
www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com

Historica Canada
www.historicacanada.ca

Elections Canada
www.elections.ca



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During Reading Activities

1 QUESTION AND ANSWER WORKSHEETS

These worksheets can be completed at either a junior level (fill in the blank, simple recall, short answers) or at a senior level (more synthesis, answer questions). All answers are based on the reading and the students' own opinions.

2 WRITING ACTIVITIES

Have students complete one of the following tasks by incorporating facts, concepts, and themes from the reading:

- A)** Write a help wanted advertisement for a Member of Parliament. Include a comprehensive job description, ideal personal qualities and background, and the type of qualifications that a successful applicant should have.
- B)** Write an opinion piece about: i) how well Canada's system of government meets the needs of a large, diverse country; ii) what ideas, principles, and responsibilities are most important in governing ourselves; iii) why it is important to be an active citizen in Canadian democracy; or iv) what should motivate someone to run for election as a Member of Parliament.

For additional information students can consult **The Canadian Encyclopedia**, website.

3 PRESENTATION ACTIVITIES

- A)** Oral Presentation: In pairs or groups, have students choose a current or a former Member of Parliament and research the following:
 - i) why they ran for office;
 - ii) their professional background before becoming an MP;
 - iii) their current role.

As a class, discuss the diversity of backgrounds and motivations discovered and how this impacts our government and democracy.

- B)** Poster Activity: Have students create a poster, or collage of images, that reflects key aspects of Canada's system of government and federal election system, and how it makes Canada unique. Students should present their posters to the class, explaining the images they chose, what they represent, and why they symbolize Canadians' unique approach to governing ourselves. (Extension: As a class, discuss the meaning of Canadian democracy and the power of symbols in shaping how we view our government.)

Post-Reading / Extension Activities

1 MULTIMEDIA PRODUCT

Individually or in small groups, have students create a website, multimedia presentation, social media site or computer generated pamphlet communicating the facts, concepts, and themes in the "How Canadians Govern Themselves" or "Federal Elections" section of the guide. The goal is for students to create a product that is engaging and informative for young Canadians, and reflects themes like the uniqueness of our system of government and the importance of being an active citizen. Have students present their final product to the class.

2 GUEST SPEAKER OPPORTUNITY

Call or email **Historica Canada** about the possibility of having a former parliamentarian come and speak to your class and share their experiences in public life.

Email: challenge.defi@historicacanada.ca Phone: 1.866.701.1867



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