BUILDING
FUTURE VOTERS

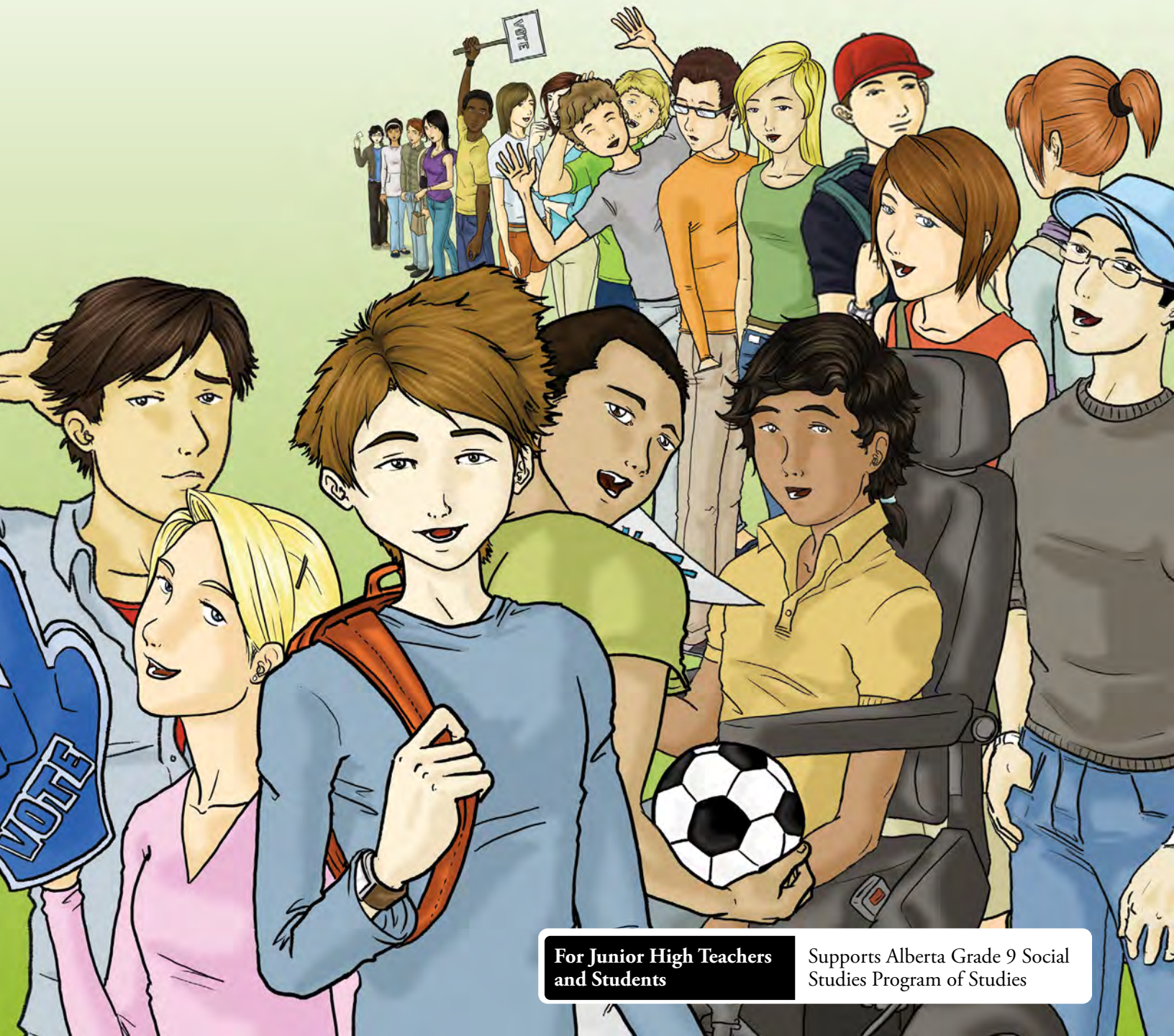elections alberta X

Teaching and Learning About Democracy, Elections and How to Participate as a Citizen

Third Edition

For Junior High Teachers and Students

Supports Alberta Grade 9 Social Studies Program of Studies

"Every citizen of Canada has the right to vote in an election of members of the House of Commons or of a legislative assembly and to be qualified for membership therein."

At **Elections Alberta**, we are committed to encouraging youth to explore the democracy in which we live. Youth who are introduced to democracy at an early age are more likely to take on a consistent, active role, as an adult.

Through *Building Future Voters*, we strive to develop an informed understanding of the electoral system and the role each individual has as a citizen so they may take personal responsibility and initiative in influencing the outcome of important decisions that will ultimately affect their lives.

This third edition has been updated to reflect electoral legislation changes that occurred between 2018 and 2022. Future revisions will be completed to align with the implementation of a revised social studies curriculum.

It is with hope that *Building Future Voters* will continue to contribute to the development of the next generation of informed and engaged voters.

Elections Alberta

Acknowledgements

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

Contents

A variety of support materials are also available on Election Alberta's *Building Future Voters* website at **www.buildingfuturevoters.ca**.

● Building Future Voters

Teaching and Learning about Democracy, Elections and How to Participate as a Citizen

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 a deeper understanding of democracy and an appreciation for the impact of their actions on their communities. *Building Future Voters* emphasizes engaged and active participation, collaboration and commitment to democratic values – all principles important to meaningful participation in society.

🧩 Learn through Competencies

This teaching and learning resource provides a range of rich opportunities to develop competencies that integrate across curricular areas. These competencies provide a focus for the learning activities in this resource and encourage the development of skills, attitudes and knowledge for deep and lifelong learning.

Students **think critically** when they conceptualize what democracy means to them. They question and analyze evidence, assertions and assumptions about democracy and citizenship and reflect on their own thinking.

Students **solve problems** when they approach challenges relating to citizenship and governance with creativity and flexibility. They also clarify, draw from multiple perspectives and explore and generate ideas for action.

Students **manage information** as they use a variety of digital and print sources, organize and make connections. They interpret and analyze the reliability, validity and integrity of current, historical and geographic information.

Students **innovate** and **apply creative thinking** when they generate new ideas and apply understandings of democracy, government and the role of the electoral process. They transform ideas into actions and contribute to their communities.

Students **communicate** when they share ideas through oral, written and non-verbal media. They also consider perspectives and demonstrate curiosity and respect for government and electoral processes.

Students **collaborate** when they work with others, exchange ideas and share responsibilities to explore diverse opinions, approaches and goals.

Students **build cultural and global citizenship skills** as they analyze political and social contexts and evaluate the impact of decision-making. They build appreciation for equity and diversity and believe in their capacity to make a difference.

Students **build strategies for personal growth** as they explore ways to contribute to their communities and develop a commitment to democratic ideals.

This teaching and learning resource supports the Grade 9 Social Studies curriculum, and learning about political and legislative processes and issues relating to governance, rights, citizenship and identity.

Democracy

Citizen participation

Responsibilities of government

Economic influences

Democratic values

Voting rights and responsibilities

🧩 Competency Cues

Teaching and learning support for competencies is provided throughout this resource. Look for cues and tips on ways to focus on and develop the competencies.

Alberta Education identifies and provides support for the competencies at **https://education.alberta.ca/competencies**.

About *Building Future Voters*

This resource is about more than just voting. It encourages the involvement of students in their schools and communities 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, levels of government, the electoral process and decision-making in the context of their lives and involvement in their communities

• Participate in decision-making and make a commitment to become active, participatory citizens

• Explore multiple understandings of citizenship, identities, governance, economics, rights, quality of life and participation

• Build understandings of the electoral process in Alberta and the concepts of responsibility and empowerment of individuals and government

• Apply those understandings to the development and implementation of a **Make It Matter** project that is committed to making a difference

Building Future Voters Print Components

• This teaching and learning resource includes approaches, activities, assessment strategies, visual organizers and backgrounders for teaching about citizen participation, elections and democracy.

• *Build the Vote!* provides the process and resources to conduct an election simulation in the classroom.

• *Building Future Voters: A Resource for Returning Officers* provides Returning Officers with information and activities to participate in Alberta classrooms as students learn about the electoral process.
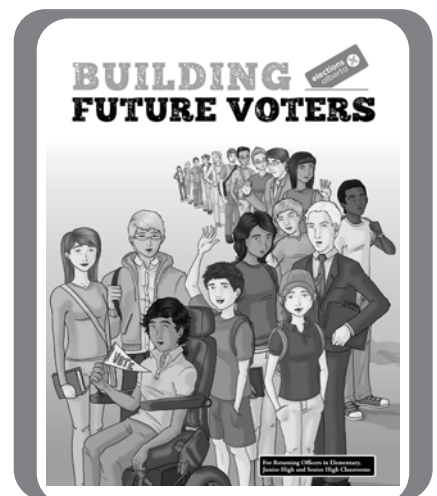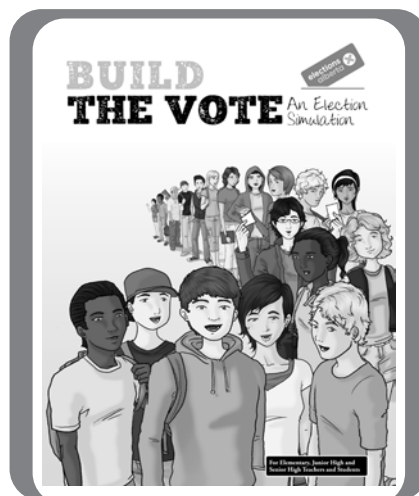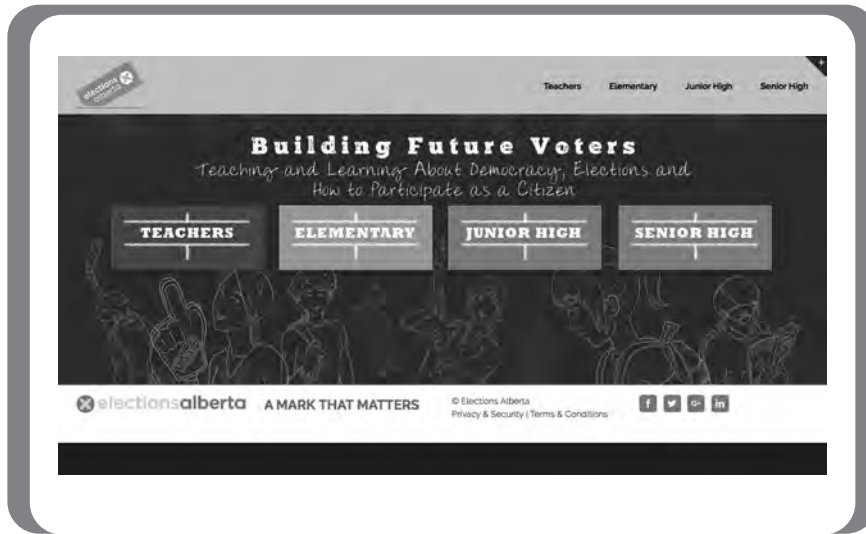
● *Building Future Voters* Website

- The *Building Future Voters* website, at **www.buildingfuturevoters.ca**, engages students in an exploration of issues, information, fast facts and questions – all connected to the inquiries in each learning sequence of this resource.

- The teacher webpage of the *Building Future Voters* website provides PDF versions of this resource, *Build the Vote!* and *Building Future Voters: A Resource for Returning Officers*. Additional resources and weblinks are also provided on the teacher webpage.

- Fillable PDF versions of all student resources in the *Building Future Voters* teaching and learning resources are available on the junior high webpage.

Integrate Technology www.

Share ideas, activities and insights with other educators on social media by tagging **@ElectionsAB**. Use **#BFVAB** to contribute to the conversation!

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.

Email: outreach@elections.ab.ca

Phone: 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

● Participate with *Building Future Voters*

Elections Alberta welcomes the ongoing participation of teachers and students by encouraging them to provide feedback and suggestions on the use of these resources. Support the involvement of Returning Officers in your classroom. Contact the Elections Alberta office to provide feedback and request the participation of a Returning Officer.

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

- *Build the Vote!* Election Simulation Guide
- Electoral Division Map
- Provincial Electoral Division Map
- Voting Screens
- Ballot Box
- Ballot Box Seals
- Pencils
- Election Officer Badges
- Scrutineer Badges
- "Vote Here" Sign
- Registration Officer Sign
- Ballot Books

Contact Elections Alberta to order the toolkit.

■ Engage Students in Learning

● The Learning Context

The Alberta Grade 9 Social Studies Program of Studies focuses on citizenship, identity and democratic processes of decision-making within society. Students explore how they can participate in the democratic process and with their communities. They develop beliefs, values and attitudes that enable them to influence and effect change. Community involvement, governance and decision-making through the electoral process can be a natural place for students to build understandings of the issues, challenges and decisions that a democratic society faces.

Building Future Voters encourages students to take an active role in their own learning and explore a variety of learning opportunities, approaches and strategies through inquiry and discovery. Thinking critically, solving complex problems, adapting to respond to challenges and valuing ethical and responsible participation in society are important aspects of living in a democracy.

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 communities and with current issues.

Building Future Voters provides a context through which students explore and investigate rights and responsibilities of citizens, expanding on their knowledge of the Alberta provincial electoral process learned in Grade 6 and establishing a point of comparison to federal processes of government. Students explore the relationship between individual citizens and collective participation in government. They also focus on issues relating to impartiality, disclosure and transparency in the electoral process.

Building Future Voters includes an introduction as well as four learning sequences that develop competencies and support **selected** outcomes in the Grade 9 Social Studies program.

The introduction and learning sequences comprise four to eight weeks of time in the school year, depending on the activities that are implemented. The suggested timing for each section is based on 50-minute classes.

Ethical
participation

Responsible
participation

Living in a
democracy

Make It Matter
2 to 4 50-minute class periods

Learning Sequence 1
4 to 8 50-minute class periods

Learning Sequence 2
5 to 8 50-minute class periods

Learning Sequence 3
6 to 10 50-minute class periods

Learning Sequence 4
4 to 6 50-minute class periods

Make It Matter

The action project can add a variable amount of time to the implementation of each learning sequence.

● Learning Sequences

Make It Matter
Does everyone have the same opportunities to participate?

Make It Matter introduces an overarching inquiry question that provides the context for the *Building Future Voters* junior high program. Students explore examples of ways that young people can take a stand on issues and questions that are of importance to them. They decide on an individual, group or class action project that will make a difference in their communities.

Learning Sequence 1
Do we live in a democracy?

In Learning Sequence 1, students explore understandings and conceptions of democracy in Canada, as well as the organization and responsibilities of Canadian governments. Students review what they know and investigate what they believe to be most important in a democracy.

Learning Sequence 2
How do our votes influence government decision-making?

The electoral process can be influenced by voter attitudes, economic conditions and current issues. Learning Sequence 2 presents an example of an issue with political and economic implications and encourages students to explore how participation in the electoral process can affect voter and government decision-making.

Learning Sequence 3
What do you mean, our votes don't count?

Democratic processes, including elections, emphasize values of equity, fairness, accountability and openness. In Learning Sequence 3, students investigate the right to vote in the context of age, citizenship and equitable, accessible processes. Students also consider the historical context of voting rights.

Learning Sequence 4
Why should we be more involved?

The processes of a democratic society result in ongoing questions, concerns and challenges. In Learning Sequence 4, students explore issues related to citizen participation, including voting age and voter turnout. This final learning sequence asks students to return to the overarching inquiry question, **Does everyone have the same opportunities to participate?**

Learning with Returning Officers

Throughout *Building Future Voters*, activities encourage interaction with Returning Officers of an Alberta electoral division. All requests for the participation of a Returning Officer must be made through Elections Alberta, at the contact information provided on **page 6** of this resource.

Features to Look For

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

Competency Cues provide teaching support for building and enhancing learning through a competency-focused approach.

Curriculum Connections indicate references or teaching suggestions that support learning outcomes in the Alberta Social Studies program of study.

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

Integrate Technology highlights suggestions for using the *Building Future Voters* website, social media and internet sources.

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

Integrate identifies opportunities to integrate strategies and activities and reinforce outcomes across different subject areas.

Assess and 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.

Backgrounders provide detailed information and weblinks that support concepts and information related to provincial government and the electoral process.

Timing suggestions are provided for implementing each learning sequence. These time estimates are based on 50-minute class periods.

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

Student Resources can be photocopied and used with students in a number of ways. Each section of the student learning 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.

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

Find Out More is included 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.

Pause and Reflect is featured in the student resources. 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 learning task. Directions for the tasks are provided.

engage

inquire

reflect

investigate

assess

Engage 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 to guide the inquiry process
Explore	• 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? What do we think we will find out as we investigate this issue? How does this issue or question affect us? What interests us about this issue or question? Why is this important?
Consider Perspectives	• 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? Are there contradictory perspectives? What are they?

The process	Purpose of each step of the inquiry process	Questions to guide the inquiry process
Plan and Find Information	• 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? From who can we find out more?
Record and Organize	• Record information • Organize information collected • Make connections and comparisons	How will we record our research? What concepts or topics are best used to organize information and ideas? How can we show our understanding of the information? What similarities and differences do we see? What comparisons can we make? What connections do we see?
Construct and Share Conclusions	• Present the information • Draw conclusions • Analyze the information • Assess information • Consider solutions, perspectives, alternatives and predictions • Make decisions	What would happen if…? Are there inconsistencies between ideas or values and actions? How does evidence support conclusions? Can alternative interpretations be proposed? What conclusions can we make? What solutions should we propose? What evidence supports our conclusions? How has our thinking or perspectives changed? How will we share our findings and solutions?
Take Action	• Identify actions • Implement action	What will we do with what we have learned? How can we contribute? How can we make a difference? What should we do next?
Reflect and Evaluate	• Reflect on actions • Consider effectiveness • Assess learning • Identify further research • Start the inquiry process again	How effective were our actions? What should we change? What should we do next? What do we need to find out about? How can we reflect on our learning through this inquiry? What has inspired us most?

Assess 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 a list of assessment criteria that address outcomes from the Grade 9 Social Studies program of study. Each criteria statement represents a cluster of outcomes and includes the 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 class activities and discussions

- Create 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 placed 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 can be 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. Rubrics can be time consuming to create and are best used for summative evaluation. The language in rubrics can be complex and are therefore important to discuss and review with students.

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 and 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.

Integrate Technology

Google Docs assessment tools, including class versions of the checklists in this resource, are provided on the *Building Future Voters* teacher webpage at **www.buildingfuturevoters.ca**.

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.

◼ Engage with Concepts and Vocabulary

◼ Activities that 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 build and support better understandings of social studies concepts.

- Keep track of words, terms, ideas and concepts. When students come across them, highlight, underline or record a definition.

- Use prompts and questions to encourage students to pause and reflect about what they have investigated and learned.

- Create an illustrated online or print 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.

- Invite students to create a digital **I didn't know this before!** booklet. In this booklet, record the definitions of new words, terms, ideas and concepts. Alternatively, use an app such as Google Drive and Google Docs to create a shared class version of the booklet.

- Make a word splash or 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 apply these words when they complete assignments or projects.

- Have students create a word wall in the classroom or online, 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. Share on classroom blogs or school websites.

- 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 such as Jeopardy.

- Some of the terms and concepts in this resource deal with the provincial level of government. Encourage students to make connections and comparisons between the federal and provincial levels of government.

◼ Glossary

The glossary terms and concepts that follow are highlighted throughout the student resources. The terms are defined in the **context and sequence** of the content in these resources. Students can be encouraged to use other sources, such as dictionaries, online glossaries and classroom resources to expand their understandings of these terms and concepts.

◤ Curriculum Connections

Governance refers to the act, process or power of governing.

Executive branch is the government body that ensures the administration of laws and of the country, comprised of the Prime Minister of Canada and the Cabinet.

Legislative branch is the government body that is authorized to pass federal laws/legislation, comprised of the House of Commons and the Senate.

These terms and concepts are defined in the *Alberta Social Studies Program of Study* (2007), Grade 9, p. 10.

Learning Sequence 1

Canada is a constitutional monarchy, a parliamentary democracy and a federal state. Canadians are bound together by a shared commitment to the rule of law and to the institutions of **parliamentary government**.

A **constitutional monarchy** is a form of government in which a monarch acts as head of state, within the laws established by a constitution.

A **parliamentary democracy** is a form of government in which voters elect a parliament, which then forms the government. The party with the most votes picks the leader of the government, who becomes the Prime Minister.

A **federal state** brings together a number of political communities, which are partially self-governing, under a common government.

Rule of law means that Canadians are ruled by the laws established by government, not by those who make or enforce these laws. No individual in Canada is above the law.

When the Person's Case was won in 1929, the *British North America Act of 1867* was described as "a living tree capable of growth and expansion within its natural limits." From this statement, the **living tree doctrine** was established. This means the Constitution, including the Charter, is not set in stone.

Government is the team of elected representatives with the support of a majority in the Parliament or a provincial or territorial Assembly.

The concept of **justice** is closely connected to the concept of fairness as well as the administration of laws. The concept of **injustice** can include a lack of justice and equity, violations of rights, wrongs and unfair behaviours or conditions.

Democracy happens when citizens have a say in decisions and in their **governance**, or the ways that governments organize themselves in order to make decisions or accomplish goals.

Our laws are based on our **democratic values**, which include equality, respect, freedoms, peace and law and order.

Learning Sequence 2

Although obeying the law is **mandatory**, or required, and there are laws to protect heritage, the environment and freedom of expression, as well as try to prevent discrimination and injustice, there are no laws that make voting and helping others in the community mandatory.

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.

In Alberta, the **electoral process**, or the steps and actions involved in an election, is run by an organization called Elections Alberta. This organization is **non-partisan**, which means it is not influenced by or affiliated with any political party or government.

Most places in North America and across the world have **campaign finance legislation**, which is legislation that deals with the impact of money on elections and public policy.

Public transparency is another term that is used to describe the disclosure of political financing.

In Alberta, there are different financial requirements during campaign periods and for non-election years that involve political parties, candidates and **constituency associations**, which are volunteer organizations that handle the activities of a political party in an electoral division.

Learning Sequence 3

The *Charter* is founded on the rule of law and **entrenches**, or guarantees, rights and freedoms in the Constitution.

The *Charter* is, in some respects, Canada's most important law because it can **invalidate**, or take away the legality of, any laws that are inconsistent with it.

For more than 20 years, Canadian courts have made more than 300 decisions in which they **invoke**, or reference, the *Charter* to justify a change to Canadian laws.

The *Charter* is **embedded** in, or part of, the Constitution. This means that no part of it can be changed by a federal or provincial government.

Our judicial system is **bijudicial**. This means it is based on two systems of law: civil law from the French and common law from the English.

Canadian **laws** are written rules that provide guidelines for people in society.

The Canadian justice system guarantees everyone due process under the law. Our judicial system is founded on the **presumption of innocence** in criminal matters, meaning everyone is innocent until proven guilty. **Due process** is the principle that the government must respect all the legal rights a person is entitled to under the law.

Rule of law means that the law in Canada applies to everyone, including judges, politicians and the police. Our laws are intended to provide order in society and a peaceful way to settle disputes, and to express the values and beliefs of Canadians.

Laws were based on **habeas corpus**, the right of a person being detained by the authorities to be brought in front of a judge to see if the detention is valid.

Canadian law secures the right to a **secret ballot**. This means that no one can watch you vote and no one should look at how you voted.

Canada is a **representative democracy**, in which citizens elect representatives to form a government and make decisions on their behalf.

Residents, people who live in Canada, have many of the same rights whether or not they are citizens. However, residents who are not citizens cannot vote in elections.

Canada's system of representative democracy is based on **principles**, or important values and ideas, which are hundreds of years old.

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 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 percent of the "**popular vote**," which is the total number of votes cast.

Alternative systems of **majority decision-making** are used in other countries. There has been increasing discussion about the advantages of changing Canada's electoral system. These alternatives include proportional representation, ranked ballots (also called preferential voting), single transferable vote and mixed member proportional.

In **majority electoral systems**, the winning candidate must get a majority (over 50%) of the votes cast.

Proportional representation systems seek to closely match a political party's vote share with its seat allocation in the legislature.

An additional voting system is **preferential voting**, in which voters can rank candidates in order of preference.

Mixed electoral systems combine elements of a plurality or majority system with elements of proportional representation. Citizens in a riding cast two votes: one to directly elect an individual member to serve as their representative, and a second for a political party or parties to fill seats in the legislature allocated according to the proportion of the vote share they receive.

Electoral divisions are established with approximately the same number of people. One representative is elected to represent the people in the riding, giving everyone an equal say. However, when electoral divisions shrink or expand, this equality is affected

Voting takes place at **voting places** within each electoral division. Electoral divisions are divided into smaller **voting areas**, which are used to assign voters to a specific **voting place** on Election Day.

In order to vote, each eligible elector must **register**, or identify themselves, by adding their name to the List of Electors. Voters can register at their **voting station**, the place where they vote, by completing a declaration. They can also register online or by phone outside of an election period. In some areas, Elections Alberta will conduct an **enumeration**, or a door-to-door survey of eligible voters.

Learn with Technology

Building Future Voters integrates technology to provide support, choice and flexibility in learning. Technology can create opportunities for differentiating instruction, increasing engagement, encouraging collaboration and supporting social participation.

The **Integrate Technology** feature focuses on strategies and approaches for using the *Building Future Voters* website as well as integrating social media, researching with technology-based resources and collaborating and communicating with others.

Share students' project ideas, accomplishments and insights about citizenship, democracy, elections and voting with Elections Alberta on social media using **@ElectionsAB**. Use **#BFVAB** to get involved and contribute to conversations about what it means to be a future voter.

Use sharing platforms such as **Google Drive**, **Padlet** and **Pinterest**. Padlet, found at **www.padlet.com**, is a virtual wall that allows sharing of any content, including images, videos, documents and text, on a common topic. Pinterest, found at **www.pinterest.com**, is a social network that allows you to visually share, and discover, images or videos to your own or others' boards. Invite students to share ideas and resources on Google Drive. Padlet and Pinterest boards can be set up specifically for your classroom.

Kahoot, found at **www.getkahoot.com**, is a platform that allows students to create learning games from a series of multiple choice questions, with added videos, images and diagrams. Challenge students to create kahoots based on what they are learning about citizenship, democracy, elections and voting.

Survey Monkey, found at **www.surveymonkey.com**, provides a platform for the creation and administration of surveys. Kahoot can also be used for survey creation.

Snapchat, at **www.snapchat.com** offers a feature called My Story, created from video clips and pictures taken over time and made into a movie. Stories can be downloaded to students' camera rolls and shared via email with a class.

Apps such as **Evernote** and **OneNote** can be used to collect, organize and share sources of information and research, while online software such as **Skype, Google Meet** and **Microsoft Teams** can enable conversations, face-to-face interviews and collaboration with other classrooms and community members.

Prezi, found at **www.prezi.com**, is a presentation tool that can be used as an alternative to traditional slide making programs such as PowerPoint. Instead of slides, Prezi makes use of one large canvas with pan and zoom capabilities. Students can use this tool to create and share projects and learning products.

The Building Future Voters website, at **www.buildingfuturevoters.ca**, engages students in an exploration of issues, information, fast facts and questions – all connected to the inquiries in each learning sequence of this teaching and learning resource. Suggested approaches to integrate the B*uilding Future Voters* website into the activities of each learning sequence are included in the **Integrate Technology** feature.

The Building Future Voters junior high webpage is organized through sections that focus on **Make It Matter** and the four learning sequences in this resource. Clickable icons open pop-ups, which provide a variety of sources, including primary sources, videos, news articles, research and website links. Challenge students to discuss and reflect on the questions provided in the pop-ups.

Student activities and visual organizers are also provided on the junior high webpage. Encourage students to question and explore what it means to be a future voter by clicking on and opening the icons, timeline tiles and flip boxes.

MAKE IT MATTER Action Project

Make It Matter is designed to be the introduction to the *Building Future Voters* program. This introductory section emphasizes competency development and supports learning outcomes from the Grade 9 Social Studies program.

Prepare

- Start to collect media sources that students can use to explore examples related to democracy, levels of government and citizen participation.

  Consider using a digital bulletin or vision board, such as OneNote, Evernote, Pinterest or Padlet, to collect and pin media sources. Alternatively, if your school provides students with access to school or class websites, set aside space to collect and share information with students and their parents.

- Have students use a digital notebook, binder or file folder to start a journal or reflection log. Encourage students to use their journals to reflect on what they have learned about democracy, elections and social participation. Use Google Drive to create a classroom sharing space for action project updates.

- Create a digital or paper portfolio for the **Make It Matter** action project that students start in this introductory section.

- Set aside a space to display posters with inquiry questions and strategies for participation in communities and with government.

- Establish a digital file for use on interactive whiteboards in which students create graffiti walls or thought clouds related to inquiries and issues. Encourage students to add to this file as they work through learning activities. Invite students to collect digital images that they can add to their graffiti walls or thought clouds.

Competency Cues

Focus on competencies that emphasize critical and innovative thinking, cultural understandings and application of active citizenship skills in **Make It Matter**.

MAKE IT MATTER

Does everyone have the same opportunities to participate?

Make It Matter introduces an overarching issue that provides a context for the inquiries in the *Building Future Voters* resource. Students explore examples of youth who take a stand on issues and questions that are of importance to them. They investigate and decide on an individual, group or class action project that they believe would make a difference in their school or community.

Prepare

Student Resource

- I-1: Make It Matter (pp. 29-33)

Graphic Organizer

- T-Chart (p. 122)

Build the Vote! An Election Simulation

- Ballot Template

2 to 4 50-minute class periods

Students use **Plan It** (pp. 134-135) to make decisions about their action project.

Assess and 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.

Participate

Impact Change

Take action

Curriculum Connections

Find the learning outcomes supported by **Make It Matter** on **page 145**.

MAKE IT MATTER

Does everyone have the same opportunities to participate?

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 **I-1: Make It Matter (pp. 29-33)**. Discuss the media sources in this student resource.

- Provide students with a graphic organizer such as a **T-Chart (p. 122)**. Ask students to use the first column of the T-Chart to provide examples of injustices that they believe exist in society. Discuss ideas as a class. *(Consider discussing both the ideas of justice and injustice with students. The concept of justice is closely connected to the concept of fairness as well as the administration of laws. The concept of injustice can include a lack of justice and equity, violations of rights, wrongs and unfair behaviours or conditions.)*

- Use the second column of the T-Chart to brainstorm a list of ways that people can take action to address these injustices.

Injustices	Actions that Address Injustices

Find Out More

If time permits, consider having students do additional internet or media research to find additional examples of injustices and actions that have been taken to address them.

- Ask students to categorize their examples by considering questions such as the following:

  ➡ Are there different types or "levels" of injustice? Is there a difference between individual and collective injustices? What is this difference?

  ➡ What actions do you think are most acceptable to society in bringing about change?

  ➡ What actions do **you** think are most effective in bringing about change?

- Is there a difference between what is "acceptable" and what is "effective?" *(Students may bring a variety of perspectives to this question. They may have identified more "traditional" 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 traditional actions. Students may also tend to identify "non-traditional" 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 between "traditional" and "non-traditional" forms of action.)*

  - In what ways do you think students can have a voice and have an impact? Are youth under the age of 18 limited in what they can do to make a difference? Why or why not?

- Ask students what they consider to be the government's role in addressing injustices and unfairness in society, starting with questions such as the following:

  - Should the government address and take action on injustices and unfairness?

  - Can you find examples and evidence that government addresses unjust or unfair practices or conditions?

  - Is there contradictory evidence?

- Invite students to brainstorm examples of injustices or challenges in the school or community that concern them. Some of these issues may include:

  - An environmental problem or challenge in the community

  - Incidents of bullying in the school or community

  - Negative uses of social media

  - Community supports for youth

  - Community awareness of poverty or homelessness

  - Health or fitness issues

Although these challenges 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.

- Work with students to discuss and critically analyze their 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 personal or group actions?

  - What changes have challenges associated with them? What are these challenges?

Differentiate

Students can be provided with different structures to brainstorm ideas and examples:

- Brainstorm ideas individually, then share and compare answers with a partner.

- Brainstorm ideas with a partner or a small group, taking turns contributing ideas and then comparing and compiling ideas and responses.

- As a whole class, using a strategy such as a board share. In a **board share** structure, groups brainstorm responses and ideas. A group recorder continually adds the group's ideas to the board.

- As a whole class together, using **stand and share**. In this structure, all students stand. Once they have contributed an idea and it is recorded on chart paper or the board, they sit down. If another student contributes their idea, they can also sit. This strategy can be used to provide students with practice in sharing their ideas with the whole class, without feeling uncomfortable if someone repeats their ideas. They are also encouraged to think of multiple examples when brainstorming.

The T-Chart graphic organizer can also be used to have students analyze each change and the potential effects and challenges. Discuss the importance of identifying innovative, but realistic, possibilities for action. *(Encourage students to consider criteria that can 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 to decide what types of actions will be most effective in bringing about change.)*

• Work with the class to identify ideas for projects that are most relevant to them. Discuss options for taking on a project as an individual student, with a partner, in a small group or as a class. List and prioritize ideas for change and action.
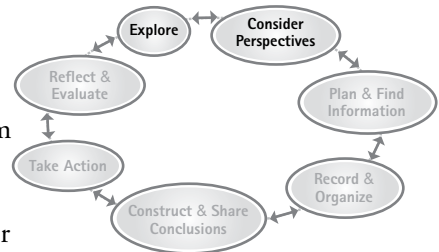
② **Plan a Project**

• Organize students in project groups. These project groups can be of varying sizes. Discuss and list the responsibilities for the project, including those required of individual students and those shared in a small group.

Make It Matter

Provide students with **Plan It (pp. 134-135)** and work with them to plan and organize their projects. Students will identify and describe their project goals and individual or group responsibilities.

• If the decision is made to work on a class project, vote or use consensus to select the challenge or issue.

• Discuss how to ensure that the project is achievable within the time frame established to work on it. There are a variety of approaches that can be used to structure 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 to the next task 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 their 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 students.

- The **Make It Matter** icon at the end of each learning sequence provides additional suggestions for implementing the action project. However, the scope of the project may necessitate its continuance throughout the school year. The project can be implemented in a number of ways:

  → Allocate one class period every week to have students work on their action projects.

  → Dedicate two or three classes every few weeks to complete a stage in the action projects. These stages can correlate with the suggestions and planning templates referenced in Learning Sequences 1 to 4.

  → Establish a schedule for project groups to work on their action project once every one or two weeks during lunch or after school. If you are working on a class project, different groups can be asked to work on the project on a rotating basis. Participation in the action project can be an optional component of *Building Future Voters*.

Integrate Technology

Use Padlet, at **www.padlet.com**, or Pinterest, found at **www.pinterest.com**, as an **action project progress wall**. Padlet and Pinterest boards or a Google Drive can be set up specifically for your classroom.

Share project ideas and progress on social media. Tag us **@ElectionsAB** and use the **#BFVAB** to start a conversation about ways to get students involved in social action. Encourage students to share their project ideas. Have students identify and describe the challenges or injustices that they are taking on and add mini progress reports to update their progress and results.

◼ Make It Matter

Each of these events or conditions sparked action from individuals and groups at different times during the history of Canada.

Explore events and conditions that include those below in the **Choose to Participate** timeline on **Building Future Voters** at www.buildingfuturevoters.ca. What events or conditions spark reactions and encourage participation today?

Children often started working from the age of 7, spending 12 to 18 hours a day, 6 days a week, in factories and mines. It was not until the mid **1800s** that laws started to pass restricting child labour.

In **1884**, Indigenous potlatches were made illegal under the *Indian Act*.

In **1885**, the government passed the *Chinese Immigration Act,* which established a head tax of $50 on every Chinese person entering Canada. In 1903, this was increased to $500.

In **1914**, the Supreme Court of Canada upheld a Saskatchewan law that prohibited Chinese businesses from hiring white women. Ontario passed a law forbidding "Oriental" persons from employing white females.

In **1916**, the Manitoba Government abolished bilingual instruction. It was not until 1963 that French language instruction was officially authorized for all grades in Manitoba.

In **1917**, the *Wartimes Elections Act* excluded some minorities, including Ukrainians and Germans, from voting.

It was not until **1918**, that women could vote in federal elections. Women could not vote and run for office until 1916 in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, 1918 in Nova Scotia, 1919 in New Brunswick and 1922 in Prince Edward Island.

In **1927**, the *Indian Act* was amended to make it illegal for First Nations to raise money or hire a lawyer for land claims, therefore blocking effective political court action.

During World War II from **1939** to **1945**, Canada restricted immigration of Jewish refugees, despite the persecution of Jews in Nazi Germany. Canada accepted fewer than 5 000 Jews from 1933 to 1945. In 1939, a ship carrying 1 000 Jewish refugees was refused entry and forced to return to Germany. Under the *War Measures Act*, over 600 Italians as well as over 800 Germans and Austrians were sent to work camps as enemy aliens in 23 camps across the country.

The Canadian Bill of Rights was passed in **1960** and was the first federal human rights law in Canada. It guaranteed many basic rights and freedoms, including the "right of the individual to life, liberty, security of the person and enjoyment of property."

Does everyone have the same opportunities to participate?

Some people think that everyone has the same opportunity to participate in our democracy. Anyone can protest, say what they believe, write a blog or join a movement. Everyone can decide the extent to which they want to participate in their communities.

However, the answer to this question can be more than just a simple "yes" or "no." Some believe that issues like bullying and homelessness can prevent people from participating in society, and therefore, in our democratic society.

Often, elections and voting are associated with citizen participation. Elections, and the right to vote, are important elements of a democracy. The results of an election can affect many aspects of society, including the opportunities that individuals and groups have to participate. Have you ever considered whether those opportunities are fair and equal for everyone?

Youth and children can't vote, so how do you get a say? How can you make sure that your ideas and concerns are heard? Even though you cannot vote, you can participate in society in a number of ways. You can express your opinions using social media. You can participate in youth groups and join political organizations. Youth can act together in their communities to ensure their voices are heard on issues that matter to them.

Planning ahead to stop bullying

Grade 9 students (L-R) Charlene Harasym, Mateo Rueda, Emily Grant and Kyle van Winkoop pose in pink T-shirts for a photo with a 'Bullying is the elephant in the room' poster at St. Joan of Arc School in Calgary, Alberta, on Tuesday, Feb. 23, 2016. The next day would be Pink Shirt Day, a national effort anti-bullying effort among schools.

Once confined to the playground, bullying has entrenched its ugly form online.

Students admit checking Twitter, Facebook and Instagram can often lead to a daily assault of cruel posts, from the typical "you're so ugly, you're so stupid," to the horrifying "go kill yourself."

But as public and Catholic schools across the city mark National Anti-Bullying Awareness Day Wednesday donning their favourite pink shirts, educators are determined to turn the online monster on its head by giving victims….

Students at St. Joan of Arc agree it's critical that students understand they can speak up and they can get help.

"Cyber-bullying is everywhere, in so many forms," says Grade 9 student Kyle Van Winkoop.

"But it's important to always tell someone, tell your parents, tell your friends, tell your teachers," adds Charlene Harasym, also in Grade 9.

Emily Grant, has chosen to opt out of social media use, being one of the few Grade 9 students at her school to have no Facebook, Twitter or Instagram accounts. "You don't really need it, there are plenty of other ways to communicate with your friends," she says.

Ferguson, E. (February 23, 2016). *Planning ahead to stop bullying*. Calgary Sun. www.calgarysun.com/2016/02/23/planning-ahead-to-stop-bullying

Brookside Junior High students tweet out tips for easing stress

'They're not all infected with bad stuff, stuff that's going to make you feel down or sad'

At Brookside Junior High, students are using social media to affect positive change.

Scroll down the middle school's Twitter account and you'll find advice to reduce stress. The advice that populates @Brookside Twitter feed is all written by students (#kidsreducestress).

"When you fall down it's not about how it happened, that's over, it's about how your brush yourself off and stand back up again," said Graham Rice, a 15-year-old Grade 9 student.

follow	**Brookside Junior High** @Brooksidejh
	St quote: When I'm feeling down I like to take a walk in the woods. And climbing trees makes me feel calm. **#kidsreducestress #hiking #nature**
	9:13 AM - 5 Apr 2015

The project started as an in-class assignment: Write down how you deal with stress. From there, students distilled their thoughts into 140 characters or less to be tweeted out daily to the middle school's followers…

Insight on how students manage stress is just part of it. In the bigger picture, the students see it as a way to contribute something positive to the Twittersphere; a place that can be a breeding ground for cyberbullying.

For Grade 6 student Paige Lapointe, the tweets are inspiration.

follow	**Brookside Junior High** @Brooksidejh
	St quote: The best way I get rid of stress is to be with the people that I love the most & who love me. **#kidsreducestress #Family #Friends**
	5:55 AM - 22 Apr 2015

"They're not all infected with bad stuff, stuff that's going to make you feel down or sad," said Lapointe.

Grade 7 student Stephanie Whynot agrees.

"It really just sends them a message, like hey, there's people out here you don't need to be alone," Whynot told CBC News.

Segal, M. (April 24, 2015). *Brookside Junior High students tweet out tips for easing stress.* CBC News Nova Scotia. **www.cbc.ca/news/canada/nova-scotia/brookside-junior-high-students-tweet-out-tips-for-easing-stress-1.3046765**

What are some examples of situations or conditions that you think are unfair or unjust? What makes them unfair or unjust?

How could these unfair or unjust situations or conditions be changed? Select one or two and make a list of ideas for change.

What do you think you can do about the situations or conditions that need changing?

Making a decision to take action involves the inquiry process. As you plan how you can "make it matter" in your home, school or community, you will use a model for inquiry. What do each of the steps of the inquiry model involve?

Explore

Consider Perspectives

Plan & Find Information

Reflect & Evaluate

Take Action

Construct & Share Conclusions

Record & Organize

Explore

_____

_____
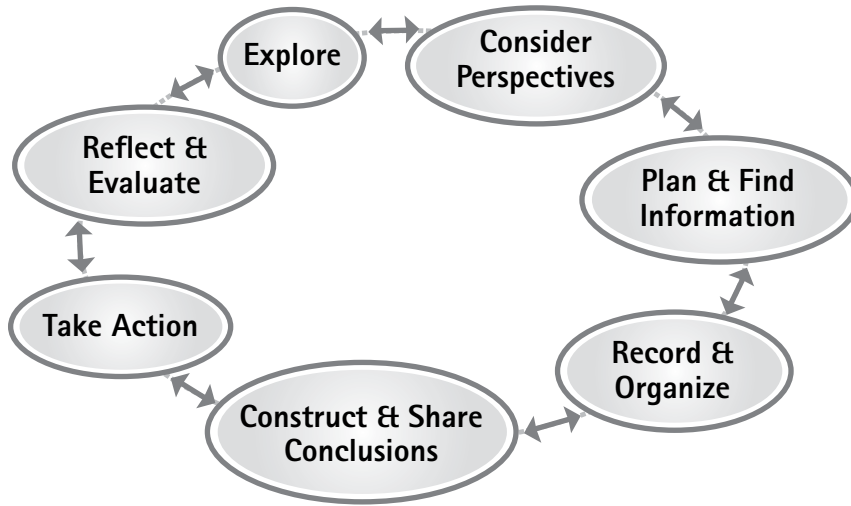
Consider Perspectives

_____

_____

Plan and Find Information

_____

_____

Record and Organize

_____

_____

Construct and Share Conclusions

_____

_____

Take Action

_____

_____

Reflect and Evaluate

_____

_____

Learning Sequences

The four learning sequences in this resource are designed to develop and support competencies and selected learning outcomes from the Grade 9 Social Studies program. Select from those activities that best meet the needs of your students.

Prepare

- Collect media sources and identify websites that students can use to explore examples related to democracy, rights, governance, the electoral process, voting and participation in society.

  Establish a digital repository of online sources of information that students can access for research. Bookmark sources that are appropriate for students to use. Consider online options and apps for the creation of secure bulletin boards, posting walls and blogs.

- Set aside digital or classroom bulletin board space for products and projects that students complete in the learning sequences.

- Ask students to create blog posts or share updates on social media as they progress through the learning sequences. These messages can be limited to sharing with classmates and parents. Tag us at **@ElectionsAB** and use **#BFVAB** to share insights, ideas and actions.

- Have students continue to reflect on what they have learned about democracy, elections and social participation.

  If online programs or apps are used, continue to pin and collect information as students explore and research with internet sources. If available, contribute student work and research to classroom or school-based online bulletin boards or websites.

- Encourage students to continue to add concepts, ideas, questions, keywords and visuals to digital interactive whiteboard graffiti walls or thought clouds.

Competency Cues

Learning sequence activities provide opportunities for students to develop, reinforce and apply competency-based knowledge, skills and attitudes. Watch for evidence of critical and creative thinking, information management, communication and collaboration skills and development of global and cultural understandings related to citizenship in a democracy.

Share

Building Future Voters: A Resource for Returning Officers encourages Returning Officers to interact and work with students in the classroom. Returning Officers can provide your students with an authentic context in which they can develop research and inquiry skills and share learning.

- Contact Elections Alberta to request the participation of a Returning Officer. Invite them to visit the class to view student work at the end of the learning sequence activities.

LEARNING SEQUENCE ❶
Do we live in a democracy?

Students explore understandings and conceptions of democracy in Canada, as well as the organization and responsibilities of Canadian governments. **Learning Sequence 1** encourages students to investigate and identify what they believe to be most important in a democracy.

In this learning sequence, students develop, demonstrate and apply competencies when they:

- Deepen understandings of democratic principles and **citizenship** by exploring perspectives and actions that affect political participation

- **Think critically** to assess the organization and responsibilities of government

- Develop and demonstrate oral, written and visual **communication** skills and engage in **collaborative** processes

- Apply a research process to **manage information** and assess options for citizen participation

Prepare

Student Resources

- 1-1: Democracy Enacted (pp. 47-49)

- 1-2: Government and Democracy (pp. 50-52)

Graphic Organizers

- KWHL Chart (p. 123)

- Continuum (p. 124)

- Retrieval Chart (p. 125)

- Sphere of Influence (p. 126)

4 to 8 50-minute class periods

Backgrounder ❶ (pp. 106-107) provides information that can help you support student learning.

democracy *youth*
government participation

Curriculum Connections

Find the curriculum connections chart for **Learning Sequence 1** on **page 146**.

Make It Matter

Students use **Get Informed (pp. 136-137)** to organize their research and assess information they collect to support their action project.

LEARNING SEQUENCE ❶
Do we live in a democracy?

⁇➲ Criteria Checklist

Criteria Students provide evidence of their learning as they:	Almost always	Sometimes	Not yet
Explore and question the effects of government policies and practices on citizenship in a democracy (Social Studies 9.1.2)			
Examine how values affect communities and citizen participation (Social Studies 9.1.3)			
Identify examples and effects of legislative processes and citizenship participation (Social Studies 9.1.4.8)			
Analyze and compare structures and functions of different levels of government (Social Studies 9.1.4.8; 9.S.7.2)			
Apply critical thinking to express, support and reflect on personal opinions (Social Studies 9.S.1.4; 9.S.7.1)			
Develop, express and support a position with evidence, examples and perspectives (Social Studies 9.S.4.4; 9.S.7.2; 9.S.7.3)			
Manage information to compare ideas, solve problems, develop conclusions and propose ideas and solutions (Social Studies 9.S.4.3; 9.S.7.4)			
Discuss and share creative and original ideas with others (Social Studies 9.S.1.5; 9.S.8.4; 9.S.8.5)			
Communicate with others to discuss issues and solve problems (Social Studies 9.S.4.4; 9.S.8.1; 9.S.8.3)			

🧩 Competency Cues

This learning sequences focuses on the development of understandings about the concepts of democracy and political participation. Encourage students to make connections between responsible citizenship and the impact of decisions and actions on communities within a democracy. Facilitate opportunities for students to build the belief that they have the capacity to make a difference.

LEARNING SEQUENCE ❶
Do we live in a democracy?

How am I doing?

Criteria for a good _____ :	Does my work demonstrate the criteria I identified?		
	Yes	Not Yet	I know this because:

Criteria / Level	4 Excellent	3 Good	2 Adequate	1 Limited	Not demonstrated
Applies citizenship skills to identify examples and effects of legislative processes and participation (Social Studies 9.1.4.8)	Applies **significant** and **thorough** examples that reflect effects of legislative processes and citizenship participation	Applies **specific** and **detailed** examples that reflect effects of legislative processes and citizenship participation	Applies **general** and **partial** examples that reflect some effects of legislative processes and citizenship participation	Applies **vague** and **unfocused** examples of legislative processes and citizenship participation	No score is awarded because there is insufficient evidence of student performance based on the requirements of the assessment task
Thinks critically to develop, express and support a position with evidence, examples and perspectives (Social Studies 9.S.4.4; 9.S.7.2; 9.S.7.3)	Expresses **compelling** support for a position	Expresses **convincing** support for a position	Provides **simplistic** support for a position	Provides **minimal** support for a position	
Innovates and applies creative thinking to share original ideas with others (Social Studies 9.S.1.5; 9.S.8.4)	Shares **insightful** ideas and **interrelated** examples	Shares **comprehensive** ideas and **relevant** examples	Shares **basic** ideas and **general** examples	Shares **unconnected** ideas and **trivial** examples	
Communicates with others to discuss issues and **solve problems** (Social Studies 9.S.4.4; 9.S.8.1; 9.S.8.3)	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	

LEARNING SEQUENCE ❶
Do we live in a democracy?

Teaching and Learning Activities

① **Democracy Enacted**

Democracy is an abstract concept that is shaped by different perspectives and often affected by a sense of belonging and place. Students will have explored conceptions of democracy in previous grade levels, including the significance and importance of the electoral process. They extend these understandings to the organization and responsibilities of government.

- Create a **word splash** on the board, recording terms connected with democracy and the electoral process, such as:

  ➡ Democratic

  ➡ Government

  ➡ Vote

  ➡ Election

  ➡ Rights

  ➡ Equity

  ➡ Freedoms

  ➡ Responsibility

  ➡ Politics

  ➡ Transparency

  ➡ Accountability

  These terms are provided on the first page of **1-1: Democracy Enacted (pp. 47-49)**. After students have explored the introductory ideas in the student resource, ask them to work individually to write a paragraph that uses these terms, constructing an initial response to the question, **Do we live in a democracy?**

- Encourage students to brainstorm research questions that come to mind when they are presented with the inquiry question. Each research question can be placed on a sheet of chart paper and posted in the classroom. Students, in pairs or small groups, can visit each chart and record written responses and ideas below each question. The responses should then be discussed as a class. The charts can provide guiding questions that students can use to develop a structure for their inquiries. This activity can be repeated for each of the learning sequences in this resource.

Integrate Technology

Provide time for students to explore the **Living in a Democracy** section of the *Building Future Voters* junior high webpage at **www.buildingfuturevoters.ca**. The student resources and graphic organizers for this learning sequence can be accessed and downloaded on the webpage, completed in digital format and saved to a computer.

Explore as a class with an interactive whiteboard, or provide time for individual students or small groups to explore the stories, images and information on this section. Encourage students to respond to the questions posed, either in class discussion or through individual or small group reflection.

The Springtide Collective in Nova Scotia provides a number of short videos on democracy, governance and elections in Canada at **www.springtide.ngo/video/series/three-minute-citizen/**. These videos can enhance the initial discussion of democracy and may also support activities throughout this resource.

Differentiate

A **word splash** activity supports vocabulary and conceptual understandings. It can also be used to support struggling or reluctant readers by having them create a context in which the vocabulary is used. A word splash is a list of terms and concepts, randomly "splashed" on paper or the board that students are encouraged to use in a piece of writing.

The extent to which youth perspectives and opinions are heard, particularly during elections, is a factor that is often attributed to youth apathy and disinterest in the electoral process. However, some research indicates that this is a misconception. Students explore ideas and attitudes toward government, elections and voting and explore if and how government affects their lives.

- Have each student create five cards with the following phrases on them. Students 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 of the statements that follow 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 than their own and discuss for one or two minutes why they have these opinions.

The government is accountable to the public.

The media can have a negative influence on a candidate's image during an election.

The messages in the media can influence people's decisions.

The government stays true to its promises.

The government cares about what youth have to say.

Voting is a responsibility and a right. Everyone of voting age should exercise their right to vote.

Elections are fair and impartial.

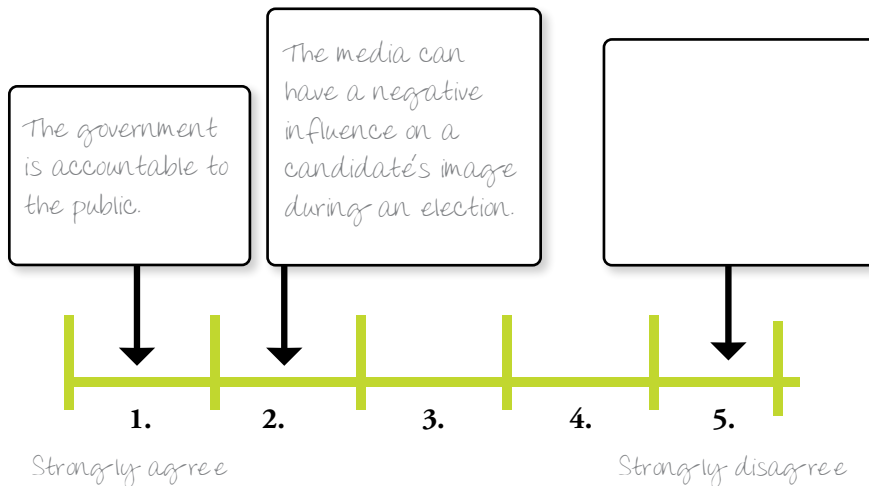It doesn't matter who gets elected – things never change.

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

Voting is the best way to participate in a democratic society.

The government represents everyone equally.

Differentiate

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

Use an online or digital app to create and administer a survey and compare results. The survey can be created on Google Drive or with an online platform such as Survey Monkey at **www.surveymonkey.com** or Kahoot at **www.getkahoot.com**.

Alternatively, establish areas in the classroom that represent degrees of agreement or disagreement. As you read each statement, have students move to the area that best represents their opinions.

Students can also be encouraged to create discussion and research questions through a variety of strategies:

• A **think-pair-share** strategy asks students to think individually about their response, share with a partner and then discuss with a small group or the whole class.

• A **KWHL chart** (What I Know; What I Want to Know; How I Will Find Out; What I Learned) provides students with the opportunity to identify prior knowledge and understandings, questions they have, how they could research those questions and later, reflect on what they have learned. Use the **KWHL Chart (p. 123)** graphic organizer.

- 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. 124)**, to create their own. Alternatively, students can be asked to construct bar graphs to tally their collective opinions.

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

The government is accountable to the public.

The media can have a negative influence on a candidate's image during an election.

1. 2. 3. 4. 5.

Strongly agree   Strongly disagree

- Use the discussion to have students, either individually or with a partner, decide what they would identify as the most important elements in a democracy, from the perspective of youth.

- Provide students with **1-2: Government and Democracy (pp. 50-52)**. Have them work individually to respond to the activities, using graphic organizers such as a **Retrieval Chart (p. 125)** and a **Sphere of Influence (p. 126)**. These activities focus on the following questions:

  ➡ What are the three levels of government and how do their structures and functions compare?

  ➡ What opportunities do you think there are for youth to participate with government? What opportunities do you think there **should** be for youth to participate? Is there a difference?

  ➡ Do you think opportunities to participate with government are provided equally to everyone? Why or why not?

- Revisit the examples of injustice that students collected in the introductory learning sequence. How are these injustices associated with principles of democracy? *(Encourage students to consider how injustices are perceived to be inequitable or unfair because they contravene principles such as fairness and equity, as well as representation, rights, freedoms and participation.)*

Integrate Technology

A graffiti wall can be created digitally, using a bulletin board app such as Padlet, Evernote or Pinterest. Students can be asked to create and pin their examples on a class or small group board.

Find Out More

A **graffiti wall** strategy encourages students to "hear" and build respect for ideas and perspectives of others. Students create the graffiti wall by silently writing to fill a poster or bulletin board space with drawings, shapes, symbols, colours, excerpts, quotations and illustrations. The graffiti wall can be centred on a key concept, such as evidence of democracy.

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.facinghistory.org/resource-library/teaching-strategies/graffiti-boards**.

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.

- 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 they think graffiti represents. Discuss types of graffiti – 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 for individual expression and identity.)*

- Ask students to create their graffiti walls to communicate messages about the responsibilities of government in a democracy. *(Students may need some initial support to identify starting points. Messages may include issues that relate to how the government ensures fairness or equality and deals with the influence of media; how government actions and decisions affect individuals and groups; how democratic principles, transparency and impartiality are safeguarded. However, it is important to encourage students to come up with their own conceptions of what is important in a democracy and what the responsibilities of government should, or should not, involve.)*

Students can be guided through a discussion of the use of graffiti as an expression of political and social issues and citizenship engagement. An example of graffiti as a form of expression can be found in the feature on Tom Grayeyes in Culture Clashes, in *Dreaming in Indian: Contemporary Native American Voices*. Tom Grayeyes uses his graffiti art to challenge stereotypes of indigenous peoples. (ISBN 978-1-55451-687-2)

Various places around the world, including some cities in Canada, Prague, Warsaw, Melbourne, New York and Paris, recognize graffiti as a form of expression and provide legal spaces for it. Ask students to discuss the extent to which they think these spaces can promote freedom of speech.

- 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 what is important to youth in a democracy?
  - ➜ Which examples and evidence on the graffiti wall illustrate citizens' participation? Which examples illustrate changes that have been influenced by citizen action?
  - ➜ What evidence is there that shows the extent to which individuals have the opportunity to participate in decision-making and enact change?

- The graffiti walls can be continuously added to as students continue to explore how democracy is enacted in communities and evidenced in political processes.

Assess and Reflect

Have students reflect on questions such as the following:

- To what extent do youth really have a say in government and in a liberal democratic society?

- Why should we be concerned about the extent to which people have equal opportunities to participate with government?

The products that students create in this activity provide an opportunity for summative assessment of students' initial understandings of the concepts of democracy, governance and social participation. Although students worked as a group to complete the graffiti walls, they demonstrate their learning in the creation of an individual product. 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. 40)**:

- Use evidence from the individual work that students do in creating the Continuums, Retrieval Chart and Sphere of Influence 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.

Make It Matter

Provide students with **Get Informed (pp. 136-137)**. Work with individual students, groups or the class to research:

- Reasons and examples that support the need for change that they have identified

- Background information and perspectives

- Reasons and support for possible actions
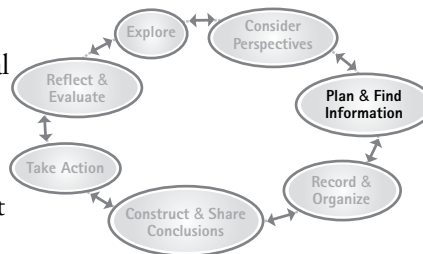
Encourage students to use websites and media sources, such as newspapers, community publications or television news programs to find information that supports their project. Have them collect their sources in digital or paper file folders or portfolios. Decide how to best organize information to continue implementing the project.

Share

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

- Post the photos with captions that students write on a classroom or school website.

- Send the photos, with students' reflections on democracy, to local or community newsletters or newspapers.

- Share photos, stories and reflections on **@ElectionsAB**. Use **#BFVAB** to share inspiring examples.

- Invite parents, community members or the Returning Officer to the classroom to view the graffiti walls and explore ideas about democracy with students.

Democracy Enacted

What do these words mean to you?

GOVERNMENT

DEMOCRATIC

Freedoms

POLITICS

equity

ELECTION

responsibility

POLITICS

Vote

rights

ACCOUNTABILITY

TRANSPARENCY

Freedoms

Pause and Reflect

What are your responsibilities at home, at school and in your community? How can responsibilities in the community encourage participation and action? How do they add pressure?

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

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How are expectations like responsibilities? What do you think your responsibilities as a citizen are?

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Some of us may think of our government as something that was developed and put into place long ago. The truth is that our government has changed and grown as our notion of democracy has developed and our values and attitudes have influenced it.

Canada's *Constitution Act*, which was originally called the *British North America Act of 1867*, has been amended a number of times. The *Constitution Act* has also been shaped by how it has been interpreted it in the courts, Parliament, provincial legislatures and our communities.

There is no doubt that our understanding of citizenship, laws and the processes of government will continue to change over time and as a result of the decisions of many governments.

The participation of citizens with government and decision-making is considered by many to be a responsibility and expectation of citizenship.

Canada is a constitutional monarchy, a parliamentary democracy and a federal state. Canadians are bound together by a shared commitment to the **rule of law** and to the institutions of **parliamentary government**. Canadians take pride in their identity and have made sacrifices to defend their way of life.

Canadian citizens have rights and responsibilities. These come to us from our history, are secured by Canadian law, and reflect our shared traditions, identity and values. Canadian law has several sources, including laws passed by Parliament and the provincial legislatures, English common law, the civil code of France and the unwritten constitution that we have inherited from Great Britain.

Rights that are protected in Canadian law include:

- Freedom of conscience and religion

- Freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expression, including freedom of speech and of the press

- Freedom of peaceful assembly

- Freedom of association

Together, these secure for Canadians an 800-year old tradition of ordered liberty, which dates back to the signing of Magna Carta, also known as the *Great Charter of Freedoms*, in 1215 in England, including:

- Freedom of conscience and religion
- Freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expression, including freedom of speech and of the press
- Freedom of peaceful assembly
- Freedom of association

Habeas corpus, the right to challenge unlawful detention by the state, comes from English common law.

The *Constitution of Canada* was amended in 1982 to entrench the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, which begins with the words, "Whereas Canada is founded upon principles that recognize the supremacy of God and the rule of law." This phrase underlines the importance of religious traditions to Canadian society and the dignity and worth of the human person.

Did You Know

When the Person's Case was won in 1929, the *British North America Act of 1867* was described as "a living tree capable of growth and expansion within its natural limits." From this statement, the **living tree doctrine** was established. This means the *Constitution*, including the *Charter*, is not set in stone. How does the living tree doctrine encourage citizens to pursue **injustices** that they see in society?

Find other perspectives and opinions about **Living in a Democracy** on the **Building Future Voters** junior high webpage at **www.buildingfuturevoters.ca.**

Excerpted from *Discover Canada: The Rights and Responsibilities of Citizenship Study Guide (2012).* Citizenship and Immigration Canada: pp. 8-9. **www.cic.gc.ca/english/pdf/pub/discover.pdf**

Write a paragraph, using the terms from the first page, in response to this question: What does government have to do with democracy?

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Government and Democracy

Canadians often use the term "government" to mean everything connected with making laws, collecting taxes, enforcing laws and providing public services. However, in the Canadian parliamentary system, "government" has a very limited and specific meaning:

- **Government** is the team of elected representatives with the support of a majority in the Parliament or a provincial or territorial Assembly.

- It provides leadership by making laws and developing policies.

- It is responsible for the government ministries that deliver the programs and services mandated by those laws.

Each of the three levels of government is organized in a similar way.

Level of Government	Elected Officials	Some Responsibilities
Federal	Members of Parliament (MPs)	National Defence Foreign Policy Citizenship Policing
Provincial and Territorial	Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) or Members of the National Assembly (MNA) or Members of the Provincial Parliament (MPP) or Members of the House of Assembly (MHA)	Education Health Care Highways Policing
Municipal (Local)	Mayor Councillors	Policing Firefighting Snow Removal Recycling Programs

How do the three levels of Canadian government compare? Each diagram in the chart shows the organization of each level of government. Complete the **Retrieval Chart** by responding to the questions below.

a. How would you describe and compare the organization of each level of government? Start with the organizational diagrams in the first row of the chart. Describe the organization and structure in the second row.

b. Use other sources to research the responsibilities of each level of government. Identify three points that summarize key responsibilities of each level of government in the third row.

Federal	Provincial	Local
Parliament of Canada **King** Represented in Canada by the Governor General **Senate*** Appointed on the Prime Minister's recommendation Prime Minister and Cabinet **House of Commons** Elected by voters — Government Members | Opposition Members *Please note that some ministers of the government are members of the Senate.*	**King** Represented in Alberta by the Lieutenant Governor Premier and Cabinet **Legislative Assembly** Elected by voters — Government Members | Opposition Members	Local Authorities — Municipalities, Special Areas and Improvement Districts, School Districts, Health Authorities, Métis Settlements*
Organization		
Responsibilities		

Do we live in a democracy? Many believe that political participation is an essential aspect of a democracy. What opportunities to participate with government are provided to youth? To all Canadians?

Use a **Sphere of Influence** to reflect on the impact of possible actions that youth may take.

Pause and Reflect

What opportunities do you think there **should** be for youth to participate? Is there a difference between these ideas and what you think currently exists?

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Do you think opportunities to participate are provided equally to everyone? Why or why not?

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- Start in the inner circle with things you use or do everyday that are affected by government responsibilities and decisions.

  Consider taxes or services and facilities that are used on a daily basis. Consider rules or regulations that the government sets. For example, you might say "When we buy things, we have to pay a tax that goes to the government to provide services that we need and use" or "The government helps pay for roads and sidewalks we use every day" or "The government sets the age at which we can drive and vote."

- In each outer circle of the sphere, describe actions you could take to influence the decisions of governments.

  Place each action the one of the circles of the sphere. If you think an action has the potential to influence a government's decisions, place it closer to the centre of the sphere. If you think an action is less likely to influence a government's decisions, place it in an outer circle.

  For example, you could identify talking to or writing a letter to an MP as an action that may influence government decisions. Which circle of the sphere would you put this in? You could identify joining a group that promotes lowering the voting age as an action that may influence government decision-making. Which circle of the sphere would you put this in?

  Consider how a sphere of influence could look different if it is completed from other perspectives, such as a young person, a senior or a recent immigrant.
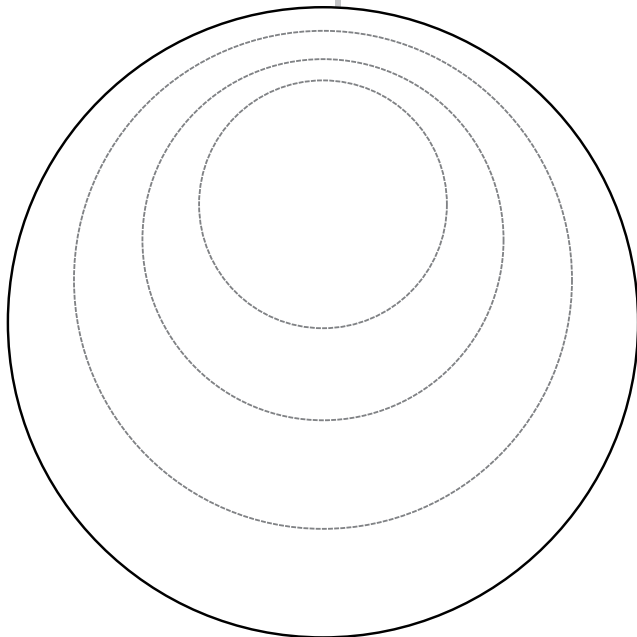
LEARNING SEQUENCE ❷

How do our votes influence government decision-making?

The electoral process can be influenced by voter attitudes, economic conditions and current issues. **Learning Sequence 2** asks students to investigate the right to vote and issues associated with government decision-making.

In this learning sequence, students develop, demonstrate and apply competencies when they:

- **Think critically** to assess the effect of current issues on elections and government decision-making

- Develop and demonstrate oral, written and visual **communication** skills and engage in **collaborative** processes

- Apply a research process to **manage information** and solve complex problems

Prepare

Student Resources

- 2-1: Opportunities and Rights (pp. 59-61)
- 2-2: Political and Economic Decision-Making (pp. 62-68)

Graphic Organizers

- Triple T-Chart (p. 127)
- Mind Map (p. 128)
- Continuum (p. 124)
- T-Chart (p. 122)
- Money Cards (p. 129)

4 to 8 50-minute class periods

Backgrounder ❷ (pp. 108-109) provides information that can help you support student learning.

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rights and responsibilities

economics

electoral process

voting

decisions

Curriculum Connections

Find the curriculum connections chart for **Learning Sequence 2** on **pages 147-148**.

Make It Matter

Students use **Communicate and Implement (pp. 138-139)** to develop strategies for communicating the goals of their action project and taking action.

LEARNING SEQUENCE 2
How do our votes influence government decision-making?

Criteria Checklist

Criteria Students provide evidence of their learning as they:	Almost always	Sometimes	Not yet
Investigate the effect of government policies and legislation on social and economic conditions in a democracy (Social Studies 9.1.1; 9.2.1; 9.2.3)			
Compare examples and effects of the ways that rights and responsibilities are protected in social and economic contexts (Social Studies 9.1.6.2; 9.1.6.4; 9.2.6.2)			
Develop, express and support a position with evidence, examples and perspectives (Social Studies 9.S.4.4; 9.S.7.2)			
Manage information to solve problems, develop conclusions and propose ideas and solutions (Social Studies 9.S.4.3; 9.S.7.4; 9.S.7.6; 9.S.7.14)			
Access, organize, summarize and compare diverse viewpoints and perspectives from a variety of sources to solve problems (Social Studies 9.S.1.2; 9.S.1.6; 9.S.1.7; 9.S.9.2)			
Express, support and reflect on development of personal opinions and perspectives (Social Studies 9.S.7.1)			
Discuss and share ideas and ask question to collaborate with others (Social Studies 9.S.8.3; 9.S.8.4; 9.S.8.5)			
Access, compare and analyze diverse media messages to think critically about current affairs and social or political issues (Social Studies 9.S.9.1; 9.S.9.3)			

Competency Cues

This learning sequences focuses on the development of understandings of rights and freedoms, as well as influences on both voter and government decision-making. Encourage students to reflect on the ways that values influence both voter and government decisions. Have them explore how shared or diverse interests contribute to decision-making in political and economic contexts. Watch for evidence that students recognize and respect differing perspectives.

LEARNING SEQUENCE ❷
How do our votes influence government decision-making?

Rubric

| Criteria \ Level	4 Excellent	3 Good	2 Adequate	1 Limited	Not demonstrated
Applies citizenship skills to identify examples and effects of rights and responsibilities in social and economic legislation and democratic contexts (Social Studies 9.1.6.2; 9.1.6.4; 9.2.6.2)	Provides **specific and purposeful** analysis of the effects of social and economic legislation and democratic processes	Provides **relevant** analysis of the effects of social and economic legislation and democratic processes	Provides **general** analysis of some effects of social and economic legislation and democratic processes	Provides **superficial** identification of social and economic legislation or democratic processes	No score is awarded because there is insufficient evidence of student performance based on the requirements of the assessment task
Solves problems by accessing, organizing, summarizing and comparing diverse viewpoints and perspectives from a variety of sources (Social Studies 9.S.1.2; 9.S.1.6; 9.S.1.7; 9.S.9.2)	Provides an **insightful** evaluation of a wide variety of sources	Provides a **thoughtful** evaluation of a range of sources	Provides a **basic** evaluation of a specific range of sources	Provides a **minimal** evaluation of few sources	
Discusses and shares ideas and asks question to **collaborate** with others (Social Studies 9.S.8.3; 9.S.8.4)	Shares **strongly justified** opinions and ideas with others	Shares **well supported** opinions and ideas with others	Shares **generally supported** opinions and ideas with others	Shares **inconsistently supported** opinions and ideas with others	
Accesses, compares and analyzes diverse media messages to **think critically** about current affairs and social or political issues (Social Studies 9.S.9.1; 9.S.9.3)	Offers an **insightful** analysis of multiple messages in diverse media sources	Offers a **logical** analysis of different messages in diverse media sources	Offers a **general** analysis of specific messages in different media sources	Offers a **vague** analysis of a message in an identified media sources	

LEARNING SEQUENCE ❷
How do our votes influence government decision-making?

Teaching and Learning Activities

① **Opportunities and Rights**

The term "rights" is commonly used, but does not always refer to legal rights. Some students equate ethical choices or actions with moral rights. An action that is considered "right" is not always "a right" that is entrenched in law.

• Write phrases such as "I have the right to…" or "You have no right to…" on the board. Invite students to share examples of times they have used these phrases. How often do these phrases actually refer to rights that are protected by law? Brainstorm examples of rights that students believe are protected by law and experiences they have had that involved those rights.

• "Do rights protect opportunities to participate in a democracy?" Share this question with students and provide them with **2-1: Opportunities and Rights (pp. 59-61)**. The student resource invites students to consider their own perspectives, as well as those of two others, to respond to the following questions:

  ➡ What do you think the most important responsibility of a citizen should be?

  ➡ Can responsibilities be mandated? How?

  ➡ Do you think voting is more of a right or a responsibility?

  ➡ Should voting be mandatory? Is it appropriate to mandate something that is a right?

  ➡ Do you think everyone has the same opportunities to get involved with decisions that the government makes?

  ➡ What do you think? Are opportunities to participate with government and in communities protected and ensured? In what ways? Or why not?

• Encourage students to consider the relationship between political rights and responsibilities by using a graphic organizer such as a **Mind Map (p. 128)** to explore how they perceive their own political identity.
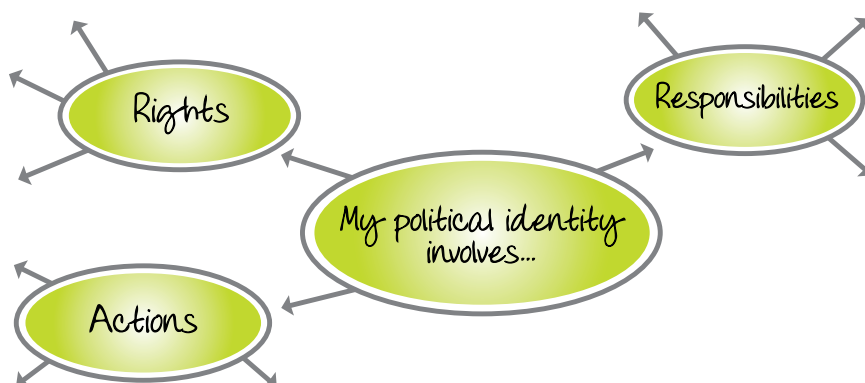
② Political and Economic Decision-Making

The relationship between political decision-making, economic issues and voter attitudes can impact the perceptions that the public has toward the electoral process. Issues relating to equity and fairness are often involved in discussions relating to election finances.

- Place questions such as the following on the board, and invite students to share their initial thoughts and perspectives:

    → Do you think that participating and taking action as a citizen has financial or economic effects? What could they be?

    → Do you think financial or economic decisions made by the government can limit or encourage social action? In what ways? Why?

    → How do you think money could influence the electoral process?

- Provide students with **2-2: Political and Economic Decision-Making (pp. 62-68).** Ask students to discuss the article excerpts as a class, with a partner or in a small group. Questions encourage students to consider how current issues influence government decision-making and public support. Questions also asks students to think about how current issues affect positions of politicians during an election.

    Introduce and discuss the idea that elections have economic implications, using the information in the student resource.

    The student resource also introduces the electoral process through a campaign finance simulation, which asks students to explore the financial rules and guidelines that govern electoral processes. These financial rules and guidelines affect candidates, political parties and campaign contributors.

- Ask the class to identify an issue that will be the focus for the campaign finance simulation. The issue can be related to any that students have previously identified, one connected to an action project or the issue introduced in the student resource.

    Have students nominate candidates and obtain financial support from contributors. The steps for conducting the campaign are summarized in the student resource. Students will use a **T-Chart (p. 122)** to establish criteria for campaign funding.

    → First, have the class nominate five candidates. The rest of the students will be contributors.

    → Prepare and distribute **Money Cards (p. 129)** randomly to students who are the contributors. The money cards are provided as a graphic organizer in **Appendix B**. Label each money card is with a monetary value, using the formula below:

        • 8 cards = $100

        • 8 cards = $250

        • 8 cards = $500

        • 8 cards = $1500

        • 1 card = $3000.

Share

Ask students to work in small groups to develop questions to interview a Returning Officer. Interview questions can focus on rights and responsibilities inherent in the electoral process and campaign rules and guidelines.

Interviews can be conducted in the following ways:

- Invite a Returning Officer to the classroom to be interviewed.

- Compile interview questions and have a group of students represent the class and conduct a telephone interview.

- Send interview questions by email to the Returning Officer. Alternatively, set up an interview using conferencing technology, such as Skype, Google Meets or Microsoft Teams.

Have students compile and discuss answers. How are the Returning Officer's perspectives on rights and responsibilities involved in the electoral process similar to, or different from, what the class has learned?

Be sensitive to the demands on a Returning Officer's time! Consider having one or a small group of students represent the class if conducting a telephone or email interview.

The products that students create in this learning sequence provide an opportunity for summative assessment of students' understandings of the concepts of political rights, decision-making and participation. 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. 55)**:

• Use evidence from the individual tasks – the survey results and reflection, mind map, continuum and fund raising analysis – to assess individual understandings of the concepts.

• Use evidence from the product that students create about participating during an election campaign.

• Use observation evidence collected throughout the activities of the learning sequence to consider performance of process skills and group participation.

➡ Each student should receive the same number of money cards. (For example, if you have 25 contributors in your class, each would receive eight money cards.) Students will receive money cards that total up to different amounts.

➡ Ask how many students received a total of $800 (the minimum they can receive) to spend. Ask who received the $3000 bill and how much their money cards add up to. As a class, discuss why contributors might consider contributing money to a candidate, connecting the discussion back to the issue identified earlier.

➡ It is now the candidate's job to persuade contributors to donate money to their campaigns. Candidates must convince contributors that they are the best representatives and should be supported with a contribution. Have candidates prepare a brief presentation for contributors. This can take the form of a press conference for potential campaign funders. Have contributors prepare a list of what they consider to be most important in deciding what they will contribute to a campaign.

➡ Provide a set amount of time during class for candidates to meet with contributors and try to obtain contributions. Tell contributors that it is up to them to decide how they wish to contribute to the candidates.

➡ When all contributors have donated their money, have students regroup as a class. Count and record the amount each candidate collected. Have students respond to the questions on the student resource individually or discuss as a class.

➡ Ask students to work individually to construct a personal response to the questions at the end of the student resource. Analyze opportunities for participating with government decision-making during election campaigning.

⋁⋁⋁ Make It Matter

Have students identify people and/or groups who they think are important to involve in their project planning and implementation by discussing and reflecting on questions such as the following:

• How are the goals of the project related to the responsibilities of provincial government? Should an MLA be contacted? If so, how could he or she help support the project?

• Who else 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 obtain support for the project from different individuals and groups?

Ask students to review their project research. Use **Communicate and Implement (pp. 138-139)** to identify individuals and groups who can help support the project and ways to communicate its goals and importance.
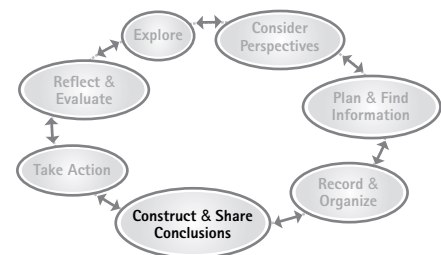
◼ Opportunities and Rights

Do rights protect our opportunities to participate in a democracy?
You decide.

All Canadians have certain rights and responsibilities. They are based on Canadian laws, traditions and shared values. Many of these rights are defined in the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, which is part of Canada's Constitution.

◼ Citizenship Rights

The *Charter* attempts to summarize fundamental freedoms while also setting out additional rights. The most important of these include:

- Mobility rights mean that Canadians can live and work anywhere they choose in Canada, enter and leave the country freely, and apply for a passport.

- Aboriginal Peoples' rights ensure that the rights guaranteed in the *Charter* will not adversely affect any treaty or other rights or freedoms of Aboriginal peoples.

- Official language rights and minority language educational rights ensure that French and English have equal status in Parliament and throughout the government.

- Multiculturalism is a fundamental characteristic of the Canadian heritage and identity. Canadians celebrate the gift of one another's presence and work hard to respect pluralism and live in harmony.

Discover Canada: The Rights and Responsibilities of Citizenship Study Guide (2012).
Citizenship and Immigration Canada: pp. 8-9. www.cic.gc.ca/english/pdf/pub/discover.pdf

Some citizenship rights are defined in Canadian laws. One such right is the right for citizens to be given preference for jobs in the federal government. Many of these rights and freedoms existed in earlier laws. However, with the creation of the *Charter* in 1982, they became better defined and better protected.

Under the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, Canadian citizens also have the right to:

- Be candidates in federal, provincial and territorial elections

- Be educated in either official language

- Vote in federal and provincial or territorial elections

? Did You Know

This is Canada's Oath of Citizenship. What does the Oath tell you about Canadian citizenship?

I swear (or affirm) that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to His Majesty King Charles the Third, King of Canada, His Heirs and Successors, and that I will faithfully observe the laws of Canada including the Constitution which recognizes and affirms the Aboriginal and treaty rights of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples and fulfil my duties as a Canadian citizen.

◼ Citizenship Responsibilities

In Canada, rights come with responsibilities for everyone. Individual Canadians and the levels of Canadian government have the responsibility to respect the rights and freedoms of all Canadians. The rights of a single Canadian or a group of Canadians cannot interfere with the rights of any other. For this reason, courts are sometimes asked to interpret the *Charter* to make sure that it is applied fairly in all situations.

Citizenship also brings responsibilities. For example, voting in elections is considered both a right and a responsibility by some.

- **Obeying the law.** One of Canada's founding principles is the rule of law. Individuals and governments are regulated by laws and not by arbitrary actions. No person or group is above the law.

- **Taking responsibility for oneself and one's family.** Getting a job, taking care of one's family and working hard in keeping with one's abilities are important Canadian values. Work contributes to personal dignity and self-respect, and to Canada's prosperity.

- **Voting in elections.** The right to vote comes with a responsibility to vote in federal, provincial or territorial and local elections.

- **Serving on a jury.** When called to do so, you are legally required to serve. Serving on a jury is a privilege that makes the justice system work as it depends on impartial juries made up of citizens.

- **Helping others in the community.** Millions of volunteers freely donate their time to help others without pay — helping people in need, assisting at your child's school, volunteering at a food bank or other charity, or encouraging newcomers to integrate. Volunteering is an excellent way to gain useful skills and develop friends and contacts.

- **Protecting and enjoying our heritage and environment.** Every citizen has a role to play in avoiding waste and pollution while protecting Canada's natural, cultural and architectural heritage for future generations.

Discover Canada: The Rights and Responsibilities of Citizenship Study Guide (2012). Citizenship and Immigration Canada: pp. 8-9. www.cic.gc.ca/english/pdf/pub/discover.pdf

Use the **Triple T–Chart** to explore different perspectives on rights and responsibilities. Use the chart below or get one from your teacher. Record your own opinions in the first column. Then, find out what two other individuals think. Make sure at least one individual is of voting age. Record their opinions in the second and third columns.

	My Opinions	Person 1	Person 2
What do you think the most important responsibility of a citizen should be? Why do you think this?			
To what extent do you think responsibilities should be mandated? What responsibilities would you make **mandatory**?			
Do you think voting is more of a right or a responsibility? Why do you think this?			
Should voting be mandatory? Why do you think this?			
Is it appropriate to mandate something that is a right? Why or why not?			
Do you think everyone has the same opportunities to influence decisions that the government makes? Why or why not?			

What do you think? Are opportunities to participate with government, and in communities, protected and ensured? In what ways? Or why not? Write a response in the format of:

- A letter to the editor

- An opinion feature for a youth newsletter

- An internet blog

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2 How do our votes influence government decision-making?

Find Out More

Explore some examples of political and economic effects on voter and government decision-making in **Voter Influence** on the junior high webpage of **Building Future Voters** at **www.buildingfuturevoters.ca**.

Find out more about the Pembina Institute, found at **www.pembina.org**. What perspectives or biases do you think an organization like this might have when it conducts research studies or surveys? Do you see any evidence of bias in the news release?

Political and Economic Decision-Making

Are you a voter? You probably are, even though you can't yet vote in local, provincial or federal elections. You have likely voted as a member of a group, with friends to make a choice or perhaps in a community meeting. The point is, you participate and express your opinion when you vote.

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.

- What are some factors that you think influence the ways people vote?

- Do you think more people vote when there is public interest in specific issues? Do you think more people vote if they want to send a message to the government in power?

- Do you think that candidates and the government listen more to groups like seniors, farmers, oil producers or business leaders, that have the highest voter turnout in elections? Why or why not?

What do these articles tell you about the impact of voter perspectives on government actions?

MEDIA RELEASE

Poll: Most Albertans want stronger climate change policies

Survey shows public support for climate action and a stronger price on carbon

EDMONTON — New public opinion research shows that 53 per cent of Albertans want the province to adopt stronger policies to cut carbon emissions. This result comes from a survey of more than 1,800 Albertans conducted by EKOS Research Associates and commissioned by the Pembina Institute.

Half of Albertans (50 per cent) also support the introduction of a carbon tax that applies to all polluters, including both individuals and companies. Support for this kind of carbon price is 10 to 20 percentage points higher when the revenue is directed to specific sources, such as infrastructure projects or technologies that reduce carbon emissions.

Quick facts

A majority (56 per cent) of Albertans think the province has an obligation to cut emissions to address climate change, with only 26 per cent disagreeing.

A large majority of respondents (70 per cent) support investing in renewable energy sources to reduce the province's reliance on coal-fired electricity.

Most Albertans (53 per cent) want the province to adopt stronger climate change policies, even if that means oilsands companies must pay higher costs to produce oil.

New Alberta climate-change plan includes carbon tax for individual Albertans, cap on oilsands emissions

JODIE SINNEMA, November 23, 2015

Alberta's new climate-change plan will introduce a carbon tax on every Albertan, phase out coal pollution and plants by 2030, set a greenhouse-gas-emissions cap on oilsands production and pump money back into the pockets of Albertans and businesses to help with the transition.

While the plan doesn't set greenhouse gas emission targets with dates, the entire climate-change policy puts Alberta on track to reduce emissions by approximately 20 megatonnes in 2020 compared to what would be the case if no changes were made, and 50 megatonnes by 2030.

It will also cut methane emissions from flaring and leakage by 45 per cent from 2014 levels by 2025. Methane is roughly 30 times more potent than carbon dioxide as a heat-trapping gas.

The plan was hailed by energy and environmental leaders as a "game changer" that will make Alberta a global leader in fighting climate change. But it will also require Albertans to pay 4.7 cents more per litre of gas at the pumps in 2017, and 5.5 cents more per litre of diesel, plus an extra $320 to heat their homes in 2017, rising to $470 by 2018. The $3 billion raised by these carbon taxes won't go into government coffers, but will go back to Albertans through a rebate program and by building green infrastructure and public transit, the premier said.

"This is the day that we set a better course for our economic future," Premier Rachel Notley said Sunday, addressing environment and energy groups at the Telus World of Science. "This is the day that we start to mobilize capital and resources to create green jobs, green energy, green infrastructure and a strong, environmentally responsible, sustainable and visionary Alberta energy industry with a great future … This is the day we stop denying there is an issue, and this is the day we do our part."
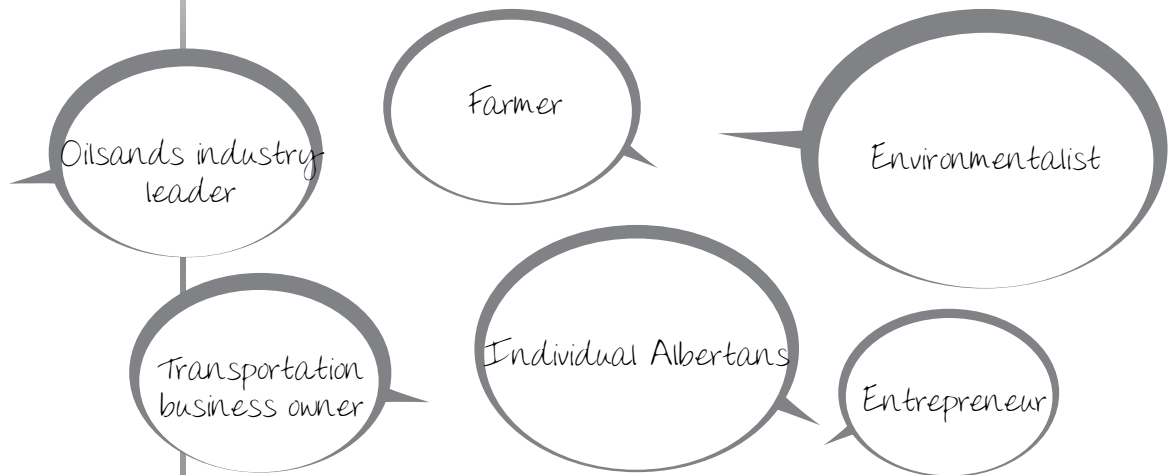
Sinnema, J. (November 23, 2015). *New Alberta climate-change plan includes carbon tax for individual Albertans, cap on oilsands emissions.* Edmonton Journal. https://edmontonjournal.com/news/politics/new-alberta-climate-change-plan-includes-carbon-tax-for-individual-albertans-cap-on-oilsands-emissions
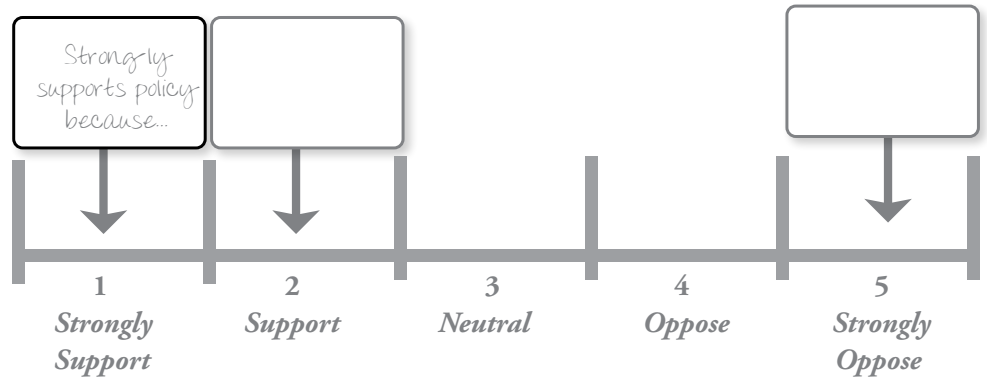
What other perspectives are involved in this issue? Find out how three of the individuals identified below feel about climate change and government policy.

Oilsands industry leader

Farmer

Environmentalist

Transportation business owner
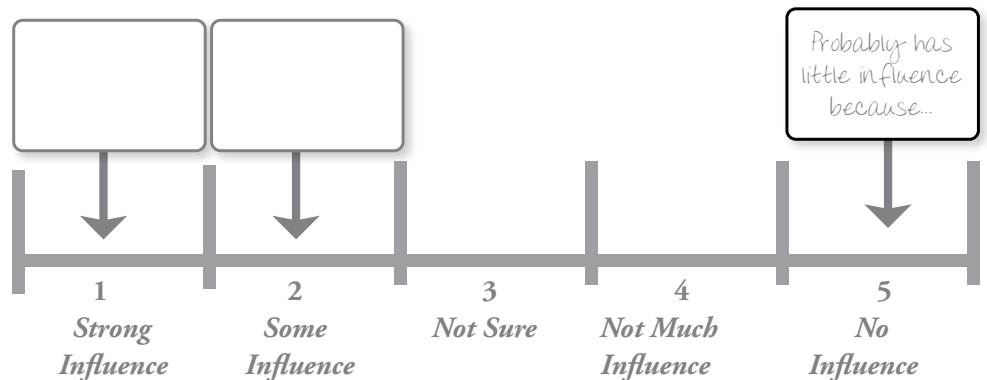
Individual Albertans

Entrepreneur

Use two copies of the **Continuum** graphic organizer. Place and describe the points of view of each of the three individuals on the appropriate position on the first continuum. On the second continuum, identify and describe how much influence you think each group or individual has on government decision-making about climate change policy. Use the examples below to help you start.

Support of Climate Change Policy

Strongly supports policy because...

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Support	*Support*	*Neutral*	*Oppose*	*Strongly Oppose*

Influence on Government Decision-Making on Climate Change Policy

Probably has little influence because...

1	2	3	4	5
Strong Influence	*Some Influence*	*Not Sure*	*Not Much Influence*	*No Influence*

■ Impact of Political Involvement

Many people find it rewarding to be informed about **public issues**, which are issues that concern society. They are interested in others' opinions and perspectives and like to make the effort to find information. Some people believe that being informed provides them with the knowledge they need to communicate their own opinions and influence public decision-making. Some just get involved because it gives them satisfaction to be part of the democratic process.

Many people believe that lack of participation in the electoral process can have a concrete impact. For example:

- Elected representatives may target their campaigns towards those groups that do participate more in elections. For example, if seniors have a higher participation rate in elections, seniors' issues may be a priority that candidates focus on during an election.

- Once elected, representatives may pay more attention to those issues and groups that got them elected. If environmental or economic issues are important during a campaign, the government that is elected may make promises to develop new policies in those areas. If seniors' issues are a concern during a campaign, they may become part of the priorities of the government. What evidence have you seen of this?

■ The Economics of an Election

In Alberta, the **electoral process**, or the steps and actions involved in an election, is run by an organization called Elections Alberta. This organization is **non-partisan**, which means it is not influenced by or affiliated with any political party or government. Elections Alberta makes sure that when an election happens, the following conditions are met.

- The election is open, fair and impartial.

- Voters have the necessary information to participate in the election.

- Political participants have the information and assistance to make sure they are following election rules.

- Election officers are trained to make sure elections are run properly and results are made available to people.

- Elections are evaluated to recommend any changes that could be made to improve the electoral process.

Pause and Reflect

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 economic issues that relate to elections themselves? Most places in North America and across the world have **campaign finance legislation**, which is legislation that deals with the impact of money on elections and public policy. This legislation is usually based on the premise that campaign spending is a significant factor in determining electoral success – in other words, getting a candidate elected.

Campaign finance legislation promotes financial equity and fairness, or creates a "more level playing field." In Alberta, the *Election Finances and Contributions Disclosure Act* is a law that maintains the accountability of candidates and those who run the electoral process. It does this through rules that provide contribution limits and the disclosure, or making public, of contributions that individuals or groups make to political parties and their campaigns during an election.

Public transparency is another term that is used to describe the disclosure of political financing.

In Alberta, there are different financial requirements during campaign periods and for non-election years that involve political parties, candidates and **constituency associations**, which are volunteer organizations that handle the activities of a political party in an electoral division.

Annual reporting is the responsibility of the political party and the constituency association and is based on a calendar year. Campaign reporting is the responsibility of a political party and the candidate. It occurs in a year in which there is a provincial general election, a by-election or a Senate nominee election.

Find Out More

Information about financial requirements for candidates and political parties can be found at **www.elections.ab.ca/political-participants**.

transparency
election finance
LEGISLATION
disclosure

Participate in a fund raising campaign based on an issue that is important to you and your classmates. What insights does the campaign provide about the economic aspects of an election?

1. Identify and describe an issue that will be the focus of an election campaign.

For this activity, you will take the role of either a candidate for election or a contributor.

- The job of the candidates will be to raise money to pay for their campaign in an election.

- The contributors will make a decision to support a candidate who they think will best represent their or their organizations' views and opinions on the issue.

2. Record the criteria for campaigning that you establish as a class. Use a Campaign Criteria T–Chart to record the rules and guidelines for candidates and contributors.

3. Conduct the fund raising campaign.

- If you are a contributor, you will receive money cards that you will use to make your contributions. You can choose how much you will give to one or more candidates. You will be responsible for preparing a list of priorities that you will use to allocate your contributions.

- If you are a candidate, you will prepare and present a brief statement that explains why you are the best choice to receive financial support from contributors. Your statement should address where you stand on the issue. You will be asked to present your statement at a press conference to the contributors.

- You will have a set amount of time during class to distribute or collect contribution funds.

4. Analyze the results with your class and answer the Fund Raising Results Analysis questions on the next page.

■ Campaign Criteria

Use a **T–Chart** like the example on the left to establish the criteria for campaign funding. Consider these questions:

- Should there be limits on how much can be contributed?

- Should we limit who can contribute?

- Should there be limits on how much candidates can spend on their campaigns?

- Should the public know how much is contributed, who contributes and how much candidates spend on campaigns?

Criteria for Campaign Funding	Reason
1.	
2.	

■ Fund Raising Results Analysis

After the fund raising campaign has been run, consider and respond to these questions:

1. Were some candidates better than others at fundraising?

2. What influenced the negotiations between candidates and contributors?

3. Do those with money to spend have an advantage?

4. What impact does campaign funding have on the outcome of an election?

5. Why do you think there are contribution limits in a campaign?

6. Is the system fair and equitable?

7. Should the government reimburse political parties and candidates for their campaign spending?

What do you think?

• How do you think political and economic decisions made by government affect opportunities that citizens have to participate during an election campaign?

• What are these opportunities?

• Are these opportunities fair and equitable?

• How should these opportunities be communicated to others in the school or community?

Construct your response using a format from the choice board below. Pick **one** strategy to participate with government.

Write a letter to post on a blog site

Create a poem or lyrics to a song

Design a graphic message for a website

Create a comic strip that communicates a message

Create a collage with current media examples

Develop Twitter or Instagram messages

LEARNING SEQUENCE ❸
What do you mean, our votes don't count?

Democratic processes, including elections, emphasize values of equity, fairness, accountability and openness. Students investigate the right to vote in the context of age, citizenship and equitable, accessible processes and consider the historical context of voting rights. **Learning Sequence 3** asks students to explore democratic processes and the values associated with them.

In this learning sequence, students develop, demonstrate and apply competencies when they:

- Recognize and reflect on values that are part of democratic processes to create opportunities for **citizen** participation

- **Think critically** to consider challenges and opportunities involved in the electoral process

- Develop and demonstrate oral, written and visual **communication** skills and engage in **collaborative** processes

- Apply a research process to **manage information** and analyze issues to **solve problems**

Prepare

Student Resources

- 3-1: Times Change (pp. 79-83)
- 3-2: An Election Experience (pp. 84-87)

Graphic Organizers

- T-Chart (p. 122)
- Cause and Effect Timeline (p. 130)
- Mind Map (p. 128)

Build the Vote! An Election Simulation

- Election simulation resources, templates, forms and directions

  Order the **Election Simulation Toolkit** from Elections Alberta. See page 6 of this resource for ordering information.

6 to 10 50-minute class periods

Backgrounder ❸ (pp. 110-115) provides information that can help you support student learning.

---

right to vote time age equity accessibility

Find the curriculum connections chart for **Learning Sequence 3** on **pages 149-150**.

Make It Matter

Students use **Plan for Action (p. 140)** to explore options for implementing their project and plan steps and activities.

LEARNING SEQUENCE 3
What do you mean, our votes don't count?

Criteria Checklist

Criteria Students provide evidence of their learning as they:	Almost always	Sometimes	Not yet
Explore and investigate the impact of changes and developments in the evolution of rights, including the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (Social Studies 9.1.1)			
Identify examples and effects of legislative processes and citizenship participation (Social Studies 9.1.4.8)			
Apply understandings of the rights and responsibilities inherent in the electoral process (Social Studies 9.1.4.8; 9.1.6.4)			
Analyze context and importance and describe cause and effects of significant events to solve problems (Social Studies 9.S.2.1; 9.S.2.2; 9.S.2.4)			
Develop, express and support a position with evidence, examples and perspectives (Social Studies 9.S.4.4; 9.S.7.2; 9.S.7.3)			
Communicate with others to discuss and persuasively express viewpoints on issue-related problems (Social Studies 9.S.4.4; 9.S.8.1; 9.S.8.2; 9.S.8.3; 9.S.8.4; 9.S.8.5)			
Manage information to develop conclusions and propose ideas and solutions (Social Studies 9.S.4.3; 9.S.7.4)			
Express, support and reflect on personal opinions to demonstrate understandings (Social Studies 9.S.1.4)			
Demonstrate commitment to taking on roles and responsibilities in projects and events in the community (Social Studies 9.S.6.1)			

Competency Cues

This learning sequences emphasizes the role of the electoral process in democratic societies as well as the responsibilities of citizenship. Encourage students to analyze how decision-making is part of the electoral process. Ask them to reflect on their potential for involvement in these decision-making processes. Focus on communication and collaboration skills as students interact with each other and share ideas and opinions.

LEARNING SEQUENCE ❸
What do you mean, our votes don't count?

Rubric

Level / Criteria	4 Excellent	3 Good	2 Adequate	1 Limited	Not demonstrated
Applies **citizenship skills** to assess rights and responsibilities inherent in the electoral process (Social Studies 9.1.4.8; 9.1.6.4)	Applies **comprehensive** examples to evaluate rights and responsibilities involved in the electoral process	Applies **thorough** examples to compare rights and responsibilities involved in the electoral process	Uses **basic** examples to describe rights and responsibilities involved in the electoral process	Identifies **superficial** examples of rights or responsibilities involved in the electoral process	No score is awarded because there is insufficient evidence of student performance based on the requirements of the assessment task
Solves problems by analyzing context and importance and describing cause and effects of significant events (Social Studies 9.S.2.1; 9.S.2.2; 9.S.2.4)	Provides an **insightful** analysis of cause and effect relationships involved in significant events	Provides a **thoughtful** analysis of cause and effect relationships involved in significant events	Provides a **basic** analysis of cause and effect relationships involved in significant events	Provides an **ineffective** analysis of cause and effect relationships involved in significant events	
Demonstrates **personal growth** through a commitment to take on roles and responsibilities in projects and events in the community (Social Studies 9.S.6.1)	Formulates **purposeful** strategies and roles to take responsibility for a project	Formulates **relevant** strategies and roles to take responsibility for a project	Formulates **generalized** strategies and roles to take responsibility for a project	Formulates **superficial** strategies and roles to take responsibility for a project	
Communicates with others to discuss and persuasively express viewpoints on issue-related problems (Social Studies 9.S.4.4; 9.S.8.1; 9.S.8.2; 9.S.8.3; 9.S.8.4)	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 attention** of the audience	

LEARNING SEQUENCE ❸
What do you mean, our votes don't count?

Teaching and Learning Activities

① Times Change

Some political rights, including the right to vote, have not always been accessible to all citizens. Encouraging students to consider who democracy serves and who can participate is important to understand and analyze the connections between democracy, participatory citizenship and the electoral process.
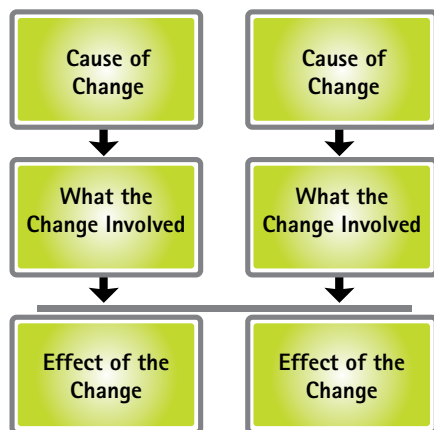
- Ask students to brainstorm examples that they think represent participation in a democratic society. How many of these examples relate to voting and elections? Encourage students to discuss whether or not they think voting is the most important form of participation.

- Use a **T-Chart (p. 122)** graphic organizer to have students brainstorm why they think people choose to vote or not in an election.

Why people choose to vote	Why people choose not to vote

- Share the following questions with students in a class discussion:

  ➡ How important do you think it is to participate in elections?

  ➡ Who can vote today? How has the right to vote changed over time? Do you think it is still changing? Why?

  ➡ What factors have most influenced the challenges and successes that individuals and groups experienced in obtaining rights? *(Encourage students to review what they have previously learned about 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 Indigenous peoples on the ways Canadians make decisions as a society. Encourage students to think back to what they have learned in previous grade levels.)*

  ➡ Do you think the concept of democracy has changed over time? In what ways? *(Encourage students to consider whether democracy is something that is "static" or whether it changes over time, in much the same way as the concept of rights has changed. Discuss how and why democracy is an evolving idea that is influenced by perspectives of individuals and groups. For example, students may be asked to revisit, from their learning in previous grade levels, how the Athenians,*

the Haudenosaunee, the British and the French had different views of democracy. In addition, the Charter of Rights and Freedoms *has also influenced Canadian democracy to be more inclusive.)*

➡ Is the electoral process fair and equitable? Do you think there should be any changes to who can vote today and how they can vote? *(Students may contribute ideas such as changes in the voting age or the use of technology in the process of voting. Post these in the classroom for reference in Learning Sequence 4.)*

• Invite students to explore the information in **3-1: Times Change (pp. 79-83)**. Work with partners or in small groups to research events that have resulted to a change in Canadian's understandings and laws regarding rights.

• Ask students to identify what they think are the five most influential events in the development of rights over time. Use these events to create a **cause and effect timeline**. Use the **Cause and Effect Timeline (p. 130)** graphic organizer 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 actions or events connect to the principles of democracy – fairness, equity, representation, justice

➡ Examples or facsimiles of primary sources

➡ Intended and unintended consequences of individual actions or events

```
┌─────────────┐      ┌─────────────┐
│  Cause of   │      │  Cause of   │
│   Change    │      │   Change    │
└─────────────┘      └─────────────┘
       │                    │
       ▼                    ▼
┌─────────────┐      ┌─────────────┐
│  What the   │      │  What the   │
│   Change    │      │   Change    │
│  Involved   │      │  Involved   │
└─────────────┘      └─────────────┘
       │                    │
       ▼                    ▼
┌─────────────┐      ┌─────────────┐
│ Effect of the│     │ Effect of the│
│   Change    │      │   Change    │
└─────────────┘      └─────────────┘
```

• Display timelines in the classroom. Timelines can be constructed as:

➡ Visual components added 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 a webpage

Find Out More

The Charter Cases website, found at **www.chartercases.com**, provides critical analyses of leading court decisions involving the Canadian *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. Guide students through an exploration of some of the Charter cases that they find relevant, discussing how challenges to the Charter influence and shape the Canadian democratic society and impact changing perspectives on rights.

Assess and Reflect

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

Does this student demonstrate ability to…	Yes	Almost	Not Yet
Describe relevance and sequence of significant events?			
Identify cause and effects of significant events?			

Ask students to individually reflect on the following question:

• What do I appreciate most about the changes that others have made?

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 2021 federal general election, 47% of electors aged 18 to 24 voted. In the 2019 general election, approximately 54% of electors in the 18 to 24 age group voted.

Elections Canada. *Estimation of Voter Turnout by Age Group and Gender at the 2021 General Election.* https://www.elections.ca/content.aspx?section=res&dir=rec/eval/pes2021/evt&document=p1&lang=e

Share

Share timelines in different contexts, with other students, classrooms, parents, Returning Officers or community members.

Have students add information to their graffiti walls on the electoral process, summarizing key points and issues on index cards and placing them as "callouts" or speech bubbles on the graffiti walls.

Share insights on **@ElectionsAB** and **#BFVAB**.

Competency Cues

Encourage students to make connections between Canada's political and economic systems and the political rights protected by the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. Ask students to think critically about the relationship between rights and responsibilities in a democracy.

rights

equity

change

fairness

② An Election Experience

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 with questions that ask students to revisit the introductory issue, **Does everyone have the same opportunities to participate?**

  ➜ What impact do you think voting really has? Is the electoral system fair and equitable for everyone?

  ➜ Do you think election results affect the other ways that people may choose to participate in society? Why?

- Provide students with **3-2: An Election Experience (pp. 84-87)** and invite them to review the information on the first page. Discuss the issue of fairness and equity related to an electoral system that is based on majority decision-making.

  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 fairness and equity in the context of a classroom, multiple classroom or school-wide election.

- Review what students know about the electoral process and discuss questions such as the following as a class:

  ➜ Voter registration: Why should all voters register? *(Encourage students to consider ideas such as ensuring one vote per person, fairness, making sure that only people really living in the area actually vote, etc.)*

  ➜ 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 citizen's 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?

- Introduce the election simulation by referring students to the information on the student resource, which guides them through questions to consider in order to plan and hold an election for a student government or council. Students are encouraged to connect their election to a project or issue important to them, including their action projects.

  Have students use the election experience to critically analyze and consider changes that could make the electoral process in Canada and Alberta more fair or equitable.

Share

Through Elections Alberta, invite a Returning Officer to help students plan and hold 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 them.

- 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 Election Day. The Returning Officer can be asked to act as an observer. Discuss with students how established democracies, including Canada, often send observers to developing democracies.

Find Out More

The Chief Electoral Officer of Alberta is required by the *Election Act* to provide a report on each provincial general election and byelections. These reports provide a summary of the electoral process, including key dates, candidate and voter statistics and results. Samples of strategies used for public outreach are also included.

These reports can be found on the Elections Alberta website at **www.elections.ab.ca/reports/**.

Assess and Reflect

Ask students to reflect on how the electoral process affects them personally.

The research that students complete provides an opportunity for assessment of students' understandings of the electoral process. These understandings should be assessed through an individual demonstration of learning. 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 work that individual students complete during the student election to assess individual understandings of the electoral process.

• Use observation evidence collected throughout the activities of the learning sequence to consider performance of process skills and group participation.

Support for an election simulation is provided in *Build the Vote! An Election Simulation.* This resource provides templates, forms and directions to implement an election in the classroom. Access this resource on the teacher webpage of the *Building Future Voters* website at **www.buildingfuturevoters.ca**.

An Election Simulation Toolkit can also be ordered from Elections Alberta at the contact information provided on **page 6** of this resource.

• The information, forms and templates in the election simulation are designed to actively engage students, 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 to four cards per page.

➡ Source cards represent roles involved in the electoral process, including election officers, candidates, candidates' official agents, scrutineers, lobby groups 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 an election simulation in the classroom

➡ To conduct an election simulation for combined classrooms at the same grade level

➡ To organize and conduct an election simulation or student council election for your school

• Encourage students to add insights about the electoral process to their graffiti walls.

participation

commitment

engagement

For 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 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 an 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 as fact.

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 website. **www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/lesson-plans/voting-what-about-396.html**

Assess and Reflect

Use a checklist to assess students' demonstrations of their understanding of the electoral process.

Use criteria such as the following to assess understanding:

• Analyzes the structure and function of the electoral process

| Does this student demonstrate ability to…	Yes	Almost	Not yet
Identify the processes that are part of elections?			
Provide reasons for each process?			
Compare roles and responsibilities of individuals and groups involved in the electoral process?			
Apply analysis of process to different levels of government?			

Make It Matter

Encourage students to draw conclusions from the research they completed to support their projects. Use a graphic organizer such as a **Mind Map (p. 128)** or **Flow Chart (p. 131)** to organize research, look for patterns and draw conclusions. Use **Plan for Action (p. 140)** to develop a plan for implementation.
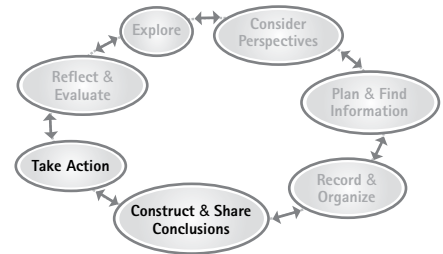
Discuss how elected representatives identify priorities for change and actions that are needed to make those changes, including the development of legislation and policies.

Work with students to connect the processes involved in their class election to possible actions they can take to implement their projects. Students can be encouraged to present action strategies as part of their class election campaigns, considering strategies such as:

- Communicating and lobbying for support of their project with an MLA or the government, including making a presentation, sending a letter or email, sharing research and findings, sending an invitation to meet with the class

- Implementing the project in the classroom or school, including creating a school awareness campaign, organizing student or working group meetings, holding lunch hour take-action meetings

- Implementing the project in the community, including preparing a community information night, holding a press conference, organizing a public service announcement or social media campaign, organizing a mini-conference

Candidates can campaign on the basis of how they will take leadership in developing, furthering and implementing the goals of the project.

Times Change

Do you think that Canadians take their rights for granted? Some people believe that we do not always recognize the challenges and struggles that have built and developed those rights.

Over different time periods, some people did not have the same access to rights that is part of our society's foundation 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, except criminal laws. The rights that did exist were reserved for male property owners. Although there were some gains made in the 1800s that expanded 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 assert their independence. However, most of the power was still held in the hands of the economically dominant white male.

In 1960, the Bill of Rights was passed to became the first federal law protecting human rights.

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

Find Out More

Explore these and other events in **Counting Votes** on the **Building Future Voters** junior high webpage at **www.buildingfuturevoters.ca**. Flip the photos to consider how rights were influenced by legislation.

Pause and Reflect

What does the word "ethics" mean to you? What is ethical citizenship?

_____

_____

What are "morals"? How would you describe your moral values?

_____

_____

rights
equity
rule of law
discrimination

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. 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, some work relief 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. However, ethical and moral work is still necessary to change attitudes of prejudice and discrimination.

## ◼ Legislation and Declarations that Protect Human Rights

The *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* was adopted on December 10, 1948 and is often considered one of the United Nations' greatest achievements. The *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* promoted non-discrimination based on race, colour, sex, language, religion and politics. It recognized that human rights are a matter of international concern. It asserted individual, fundamental rights to health care, education and work. The *Declaration* served as a model for many constitutional documents throughout the world, including the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.*

The *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* came into force on April 17, 1982. Section 15 of the *Charter*, which addresses equality rights, came into effect three years after this date.

The *Charter* is founded on the rule of law and **entrenches**, or guarantees, rights and freedoms in the Constitution. It recognizes:

- Fundamental freedoms (e.g. freedom of expression and of association)
- Democratic rights (e.g. the right to vote)
- Mobility rights (e.g. the right to live anywhere in Canada)
- Legal rights (e.g. the right to life, liberty and security of the person)
- Equality rights
- The multicultural heritage of Canadians.
- Official language and minority language education rights.

In addition, the provisions of section 25 guarantee the rights of the Aboriginal peoples of Canada.
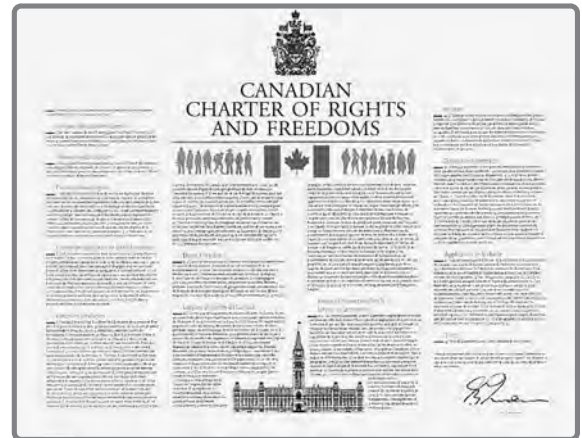
The *Charter* is, in some respects, Canada's most important law because it can **invalidate**, or take away the legality of, any laws that are inconsistent with it. For more than 20 years, Canadian courts have made more than 300 decisions in which they **invoke**, or reference, the *Charter* to justify a change to Canadian laws.

The *Charter* has also had an impact on the promotion and protection of human rights in Canada. It has reinforced the rights of official-language minorities and led to the recognition and enforcement of the rights of minorities and disadvantaged groups. In matters related to justice, the *Charter* has clarified what the rights of offenders are.

The *Charter* is **embedded** in, or part of, the Constitution. This means that no part of it can be changed by a federal or provincial government. The House of Commons, the Senate, and two thirds of the provinces representing over 50 percent of Canadians must approve any changes to the *Charter* or any part of the constitution.

■ Canadian Values Protected by Law

How important do you think it is that people are treated fairly, equally and respectfully? These concepts are fundamental values in Canadian society and the justice system. Canada's government makes decisions through a system of legislation, regulations and laws. Our judicial system is **bijudicial**. This means it is based on two systems of law: civil law from the French and common law from the English. Increasingly, Indigenous principles of justice have a strong influence on laws and decision-making.

Why do federal and provincial governments pass laws? Canadian **laws** are written rules that provide guidelines for people in society. The police and courts are responsible for enforcing those laws. Canadians have rights and freedoms that are protected under the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* through the justice system.

The Canadian justice system guarantees everyone due process under the law. Our judicial system is founded on the **presumption of innocence** in criminal matters, meaning everyone is innocent until proven guilty.

Canada's legal system is based on a heritage that includes the rule of law, freedom under the law, democratic principles and due process. **Due process** is the principle that the government must respect all the legal rights a person is entitled to under the law.

Rule of law means that the law in Canada applies to everyone, including judges, politicians and the police. Our laws are intended to provide order in society and a peaceful way to settle disputes, and to express the values and beliefs of Canadians.

How do you think human rights protected by the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* affected the establishment of voter eligibility in Canada over time?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

◼ Who is protected?

Before the entrenchment of the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, some believed that criminal laws protected criminals more than they did residents of Canada. People charged with crimes had a number of protections that were based on English common law.

They had the right to a fair trial and the right to have fair procedures. Laws were based on **habeas corpus**, the right of a person being detained by the authorities to be brought in front of a judge to determine whether the detention is valid. The laws also said that a person had the right to be secure in their own house unless the police obtained a search warrant.

What issues do you think these laws brought up in Canadian society at the time? How did the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* expand the legal rights of citizens?

_____

_____

What examples can you find that shows how the concept of democracy has changed over time?

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_____

◼ The Highest Court

The Supreme Court was created in 1875, but not as the highest court in Canada. Until 1949, the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in Britain made the final decisions over all colonial courts.

The Supreme Court of Canada is now the country's highest court. The Federal Court of Canada deals with matters concerning the federal government. In most provinces there is an appeal court and a trial court, sometimes called the Court of Queen's Bench or the Supreme Court.

Voting Counts

One of the privileges of Canadian citizenship is the right to vote. You are eligible to vote in a federal election or cast a ballot in a federal referendum if you are:

- A Canadian citizen

- At least 18 years old on voting day

- On the voters' list

The voters lists used during federal elections and referendums are produced from the National Register of Electors by a neutral agency of Parliament called Elections Canada. This is a permanent database of Canadian citizens 18 years of age or older who are qualified to vote in federal elections and referendums.

Canadian law secures the right to a **secret ballot**. This means that no one can watch you vote and no one should look at how you voted. You may choose to discuss how you voted with others, but no one, including family members, your employer or union representative, has the right to insist that you tell them how you voted. Immediately after the polling stations close, election officers count the ballots and the results are announced on radio and television, and in the newspapers.

Excerpted from *Discover Canada: The Rights and Responsibilities of Citizenship Study Guide (2012)*. Citizenship and Immigration Canada: pp. 8-9. **www.cic.gc.ca/english/pdf/pub/discover.pdf**

Build a timeline of influential events. Pick what you think are the five most important events in the development of rights over time. Write or draw what is important about each event, placing it in chronological order on a **Cause and Effect Timeline** graphic organizer**.**

Do the rights we have in place today give everyone fair and equitable access to participate? To vote? What would you change if you could?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Pause and Reflect

What impact, if any, do you think the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* has on your daily life?

_____

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_____

What impact do you think the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* has had on the development of democracy?

_____

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Pause and Reflect

How do the events you've selected for your timeline impact you?

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■ An Election Experience

Can you think of times when someone has represented you? Or you have represented others? When you are a group leader or spokesperson, you represent the members of your group. For example, when a classmate attends a school meeting, he or she represents your class. Representation in government works much the same way.

Pause and Reflect

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

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_____

Canada is a **representative democracy**, in which citizens elect representatives to form a government and make decisions on their behalf.

Residents, people who live in Canada (whether or not they are citizens), have many of the same rights. However, residents who are not citizens cannot vote in elections. Canada's system of representative democracy is based on **principles**, or important values and ideas, that are hundreds of years old.

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 a democracy, although some choose not to vote.

A democracy can not 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 important to 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 percent of the **"popular vote,"** which is the total number of votes cast.

- Alternative systems of majority decision-making are used in other countries. There has been increasing discussion about the advantages of changing Canada's electoral system. These alternatives include **proportional representation**, **ranked ballots** (also called preferential voting), **single transferable vote** and **mixed member proportional**.

Find Out More

Explore some facts about the voting process in the **Counting Votes** section of the **Building Future Voters** junior high webpage.

Go to **www.buildingfuturevoters.ca** and find information and examples of voting processes and procedures.

- **Electoral divisions** are established with approximately the same number of people. One representative is elected to represent the people in the riding, giving everyone an equal say. However, when electoral divisions shrink or expand, this equality is affected.

Is the electoral process fair and equitable? You decide. Use the election process you are about to have to consider what changes could make it more fair or equitable.

Investigate one of the alternatives to the first-past-the-post system. Describe one advantage and one disadvantage of your alternative.

_____

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_____

_____

_____

vote   representation
act
student voice
leadership

A student government or council can be meaningful if it has a purposeful focus. It can represent the interests and voices of students. A student government or council can take responsibility for leadership tasks related to a school or classroom project or action plan.

Does your school involve students in decision-making? How are you represented? What opportunities are there for students to show leadership?

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_____

As a class, decide on the focus and function of your student government or council. Describe it.

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_____

What should the responsibilities of your student government or council be? Think about this question as you prepare to hold your election. Make a list and check it with other classmates.

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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. A Canadian citizen;

2. 18 years old or older; and

3. A resident of Alberta.

When voting, electors in Alberta are required to provide their name and current physical address when voting. To do this, voters can provide one piece of identification, such as their driver's license or Alberta identification card, or two pieces of identification both containing their name and with one showing current physical address, such as a utility bill and student identification card, or have another elector vouch for them. A list of authorized identification is available at **www.elections.ab.ca/VoterID**

Find out what the criteria is for voting in federal elections.

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_____

What criteria will establish voter eligibility in your election?

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_____

In some ways, your school is like an electoral division. Your classroom is like a voting station. 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 voting stations.

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

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_____

In most elections, there are issues that people are concerned about. Your election should address issues that are important to you, your classroom, your school or your community. The issues may relate directly to a project that you are already involved with.

What issues do you think will be raised in your election?

_____

_____

_____

_____

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

_____

_____

_____

_____

Make It Matter

Make your student election matter for your action project. What actions or policies are important for the candidates' election campaigns? Consider strategies like these, depending on your project.

• **Communicate and lobby for change** with your MLA or the government by making a presentation, sending a letter, sharing research and findings or sending an invitation to meet with the class.

• **Implement the project in the classroom or school** by holding a school awareness campaign, organizing student meetings or working groups or holding lunch hour take-action meetings.

• **Implement the project in the community** by 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 promote your action project.

LEARNING SEQUENCE 4
Why should we be more involved?

The processes of a democratic society result in ongoing questions, concerns and challenges. In **Learning Sequence 4**, students explore issues related to citizen participation, including voting age and voter turnout. This final learning sequence asks students to return to the overarching inquiry question, **Does everyone have the same opportunities to participate?**

In this learning sequence, students develop, demonstrate and apply competencies when they:

- Apply **personal growth** and **citizenship** involvement strategies by exploring ways to contribute and make a commitment to democratic processes

- **Innovate** and **think creatively** by generating ideas and options for action

- Develop and demonstrate oral, written and visual **communication** skills and engage in **collaborative** processes

- Apply a research process to **manage information** and transform ideas into action

Prepare

Student Resources

- 4-1: Why Participate (pp. 101-102)

- 4-2: Make a Commitment (p. 103)

Graphic Organizers

- Cause and Effect Chart (p. 132) or T-Chart (p. 122)

4 to 6 50-minute class periods

Backgrounder 4 (pp. 116-120) provides information that can help you support student learning.

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political involvement

participation

citizenship

commitment

Curriculum Connections

Find the curriculum connections chart for **Learning Sequence 4** on **pages 151-152**.

Make It Matter

Students use **Assess the Impact (p. 141)** to predict and analyze the impact and results of their activities and the effectiveness of their action projects.

LEARNING SEQUENCE 4
Why should we be more involved?

Criteria Checklist

Criteria Students provide evidence of their learning as they:	Almost always	Sometimes	Not yet
Investigate and question the effect of government policies and legislation on social and economic conditions (Social Studies 9.1.1; 9.1.2)			
Examine how values affect communities and citizen participation (Social Studies 9.1.3)			
Identify examples and effects of social and economic legislation and the protection of rights and responsibilities (Social Studies 9.1.6.4)			
Access, organize, summarize and compare diverse viewpoints and perspectives from a variety of sources (Social Studies 9.S.1.2; 9.S.1.3; 9.S.9.2)			
Manage information to develop conclusions and propose ideas and solutions (Social Studies 9.S.4.3; 9.S.7.2; 9.S.7.4; 9.S.7.14; 9.S.7.16)			
Develop, express and support a position with evidence, examples and perspectives (Social Studies 9.S.4.4; 9.S.7.2)			
Express, support and reflect on development of personal opinions (Social Studies 9.S.1.4; 9.S.7.1)			
Share ideas and ask questions of others (Social Studies 9.S.8.3; 9.S.8.4; 9.S.8.5)			
Access, compare and analyze diverse media messages that reflect current affairs and social or political issues (Social Studies 9.S.9.3)			

Criteria Students provide evidence of their learning as they:	Almost always	Sometimes	Not Yet
Participate and communicate with others to discuss and resolve issue-related problems (Social Studies 9.S.4.4; 9.S.8.1)			
Discuss and share creative and original ideas with others (Social Studies 9.S.1.5; 9.S.8.4)			
Communicate with others to persuasively express viewpoints on issue-related problems (Social Studies 9.S.4.4; 9.S.8.1; 9.S.8.3; 9.S.8.2)			
Demonstrate commitment to roles and responsibilities in projects and events in the community (Social Studies 9.S.4.1; 9.S.6.1)			
Work collaboratively and cooperatively in a group setting (Social Studies 9.S.5.1; 9.S.5.2; 9.S.8.5)			

Competency Cues

This learning sequences emphasizes participation and engagement with democratic processes. Encourage students to reflect on ways that collaboration in classroom contexts promotes and builds skills for a democratic society. Watch for evidence of problem-solving strategies that demonstrate flexibility and creativity. Provide opportunities for students to synthesize and assess information to draw conclusions and propose solutions and actions.

LEARNING SEQUENCE 4
Why should we be more involved?

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 4
Why should we be more involved?

Rubric

Criteria \ Level	4 Excellent	3 Good	2 Adequate	1 Limited	Not demonstrated
Values the impact of issues on quality of life, **citizenship** and identity (Social Studies 9.1.3)	Provides **meaningful** description of ways that citizens can contribute to improve quality of life	Provides **purposeful** description of ways that citizens can contribute to improve quality of life	Provides **appropriate** description of ways that citizens can contribute to improve quality of life	Provides **minimal** description of ways that citizens can contribute to improve quality of life	No score is awarded because there is insufficient evidence of student performance based on the requirements of the assessment task
Thinks critically to assess how democratic rights and responsibilities are protected in social and economic legislation (Social Studies 9.1.6.4)	Applies **comprehensive** examples of rights and responsibilities involved in social and economic legislation	Applies **thorough** examples of rights and responsibilities involved in social and economic legislation	Applies **generalized** examples of rights and responsibilities involved in social and economic legislation	Applies **superficial** examples of rights and responsibilities involved in social and economic legislation	
Works **collaboratively** and cooperatively in a group setting (Social Studies 9.S.5.1; 9.S.5.2)	Contributes **skillfully** to group products and **consistently** engages in appropriate group behaviours	Contributes **effectively** to group products and **frequently** engages in appropriate group behaviours	Contributes to group products and **occasionally** engages in appropriate group behaviours	Contributes **minimally** to group products and **seldom** engages in appropriate group behaviours	
Expresses, supports and reflects on **personal growth** and development of opinions and perspectives (Social Studies 9.S.1.4; 9.S.7.1)	Provides a **perceptive** reflection on individual and group work	Provides a **thoughtful** reflection on individual and group work	Provides a **basic** reflection on individual and group work	Provides an **unclear** reflection on individual and group work	

LEARNING SEQUENCE 4
Why should we be more involved?

Teaching and Learning Activities

1 **Why Participate**

The issue of participation in the electoral process is one that continues to be discussed, whether it is an election year or not. Considering whether voting should be mandatory or a choice encourages students to critically analyze the importance of the electoral process in a democracy.

- Ask students to find print or digital media example of issues related to democratic participation. How many of these issues relate to voting and elections? As a class, watch, listen and view the media spots produced by Elections Alberta for previous provincial elections. Challenge students to identify issues that they think these media spots address. Provide students with **4-1: Why Participate (pp. 101-102)**. Ask students to work with a partner to rank common reasons for voting or not voting. Compare and discuss responses.

- Invite students to brainstorm strategies, either individually, in a group or as a class, which could increase participation in the electoral process. Encourage students to consider not just voting, but also interest in the process and results of elections as well as strategies that influence what democracy in Canada "looks like". *(Some common suggestions that students may offer include lowering the voting age, making voting a mandatory responsibility, educating new voters, allowing online voting, encouraging families to talk about politics and elections at home, making sure election dates are set so that everyone has the same information on an election, encouraging candidates and political parties to talk about issues that are important for young people or changing election campaign finance rules.)*

- Ask students to select one or two of these strategies that they think are most effective. Work collaboratively as a class to analyze the consequences of these strategies. Use a graphic organizer, such as the **Cause and Effect Chart (p. 132)** or the **T-Chart (p. 122)**. Consider causes and effects or pros and cons.

How effective is online voting?

Pros	Cons
-easier and more convenient to vote -appeals to people who use the internet	-security and privacy may be difficult to ensure -extra costs may be added because traditional voting methods would still be needed

- Discuss some current issues related to electoral reform and collaboratively develop **position statements** that reflect these issues. Share examples of position statements with students, such as:

  ➡ All Canadians should be required to vote.

  ➡ People should be allowed to vote online.

  ➡ Candidates should only be allowed to spend roughly the same amount of money on campaigns to "level the playing field."

  ➡ Every province and territory, as well as the federal government, should be required to hold elections on fixed dates.

  ➡ The legal voting age should be lowered.

- Decide on one issue to be debated as a class, depending on student interest. Organize students to either work individually or with a partner and research the benefits and challenges involved in the issue.

- Have students use previous research, website links and classroom resources to explore the position statements involved with the issue and the evidence that supports each position on it.

  Use large index cards to create **research source cards**. Define the issue and the positions involved on the front of the card. List information sources and examples on the back of the card.

- Plan to hold a **horseshoe debate** on the selected issue. Ask students to identify and define the key terms in the issue and position statements. Discuss and negotiate the structure of a debate and how it will be assessed.

  For example, students can be required to prepare supporting statements for each side of the selected issue. Or, they can be divided into "for" and "against" groups and asked to prepare only for their side of the issue.

  Alternatively, students can use their cards to prepare their position statement on the front, while using the back of the cards for research and talking points. During the debate, have students fold down one corner of the card each time they participate. All students can be required to have two corners folded before anyone is allowed to participate a third or fourth time.

  When students present their position statements, they can be assessed on the supporting evidence they include, including media images and advertising, statistics or visuals. Students can be asked to submit their research source cards as evidence of their debate preparation and participation.

- Compare decisions about the extent to which students were involved in the debate to the reasons that individuals choose to vote or not to vote. Are there similar reasons? How do choices to participate affect quality of life?

positions
debate
participation
issues

Canada's Constitution requires that provincial elections be held at least once every five years, but they are usually held approximately every four years. In some provinces, including British Columbia and Alberta, election dates are more specifically set. In Alberta, the *Election Statutes Amendment Act* established a fixed election date of the last Monday in May every four years. The 2023 provincial general election was the first to be held on this date.

When the election is over, the Chief Electoral Officer prepares a report, with the official results of the election and statistics on voter turnout. These reports are published on the Elections Alberta website at **www.elections. ab.ca/reports/**. These reports identify current concerns associated with the electoral process, including such issues as voter identity, online voting and voter access.

Differentiate

As an optional extension, students can be asked to create research source cards on current or local issues related to political participation and the electoral process.

Integrate Technology

Have students revisit the **Participation Matters** section of the *Building Future Voters* junior high webpage. This section presents information on issues related to the electoral process, including mandatory voting, internet voting and the voting age. Explore as a class, with partners, in small groups or individually.

Share

Through Elections Alberta, invite a Returning Officer to the classroom to listen to the horseshoe debate.

Assess and Reflect

Have students reflect on a question such as the following:

• What inspires me to get involved?

Assess students' contributions to the debate by using a checklist such as the following:

Does this student demonstrate the ability to…	Yes	Almost	Not Yet
Communicate their point of view in a persuasive manner?			
Use evidence and examples to justify their point of view?			

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

When debriefing the debate, have those students who did not participate discuss their decision to not become involved. Why did they choose non-involvement over involvement?

(2) **Consider Action**

Revisiting concepts of democracy reinforces and emphasizes the value of informed participation. Developing a commitment to participate in democratic processes is an important forerunner to decisions about how to participate in the electoral process.

- As a class, brainstorm ideas about what an ideal, active and engaged citizen **looks like, sounds like and feels like**.

- Ask students to form groups to create a media campaign that will be implemented in the school. Focus the media campaign on the question, **What is an ideal, active and engaged citizen?** The campaign can be created with a variety of products, including:

  → Blog site

  → Social media campaigns

  → PowerPoint presentations

  → Speeches for school or community events

  → Videos

- Provide students with **4-2: Make a Commitment (p. 103)**. Work with the class to establish a format or criteria for their media campaigns in advance, listing the elements that they should include, such as meanings of citizenship, characteristics of an ideal citizen and strategies for citizen participation. 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 media 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, **Should there be any changes to the rights we have as citizens today?**

- Revisit students' graffiti walls. Have students add different perspectives on the ways that democracy can work to impact or address injustices.

- Ask students to think about how they can make a commitment to participate in the electoral process. Students can be asked to make a commitment card with blank index cards or cardstock.

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."

- 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 a digital essay or they can cut and paste photographs they find in different sources.

Integrate Technology

Have students use **My Story** in Snapchat to create their own stories, using photos and video clips. Students can choose how and with whom to share their stories.

Students can be provided with options to share 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.

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

• Post the photographs on a classroom or school website

• Send the photographs, with students' reflections on democracy, to local or community newsletters or newspapers

• Invite parents, community members or a Returning Officer to the classroom to view the graffiti walls and explore ideas about democracy with students

Assess and Reflect

Ask students to reflect individually on the value of social and political participation within their communities.

The products that students create in this learning sequence provide an opportunity for assessment of students' understandings of the options for social and political participation and their own accountability as citizens. These understandings should be assessed through an individual demonstration of learning. 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. 93)**:

• Use evidence from the **Cause and Effect Charts** or **T-Charts** and advertising campaign products to assess students' abilities to analyze cause and effect and consequences of actions.

• Use observation evidence collected throughout the activities of the learning sequence to consider performance of process skills and group participation.

participation
commitment
engagement

🎯 Make It Matter

Provide time for students to implement their class project. Students who have completed projects can reflect on the impact they think their actions have had. Students who are still implementing projects should reflect on the effectiveness of their project work to date.
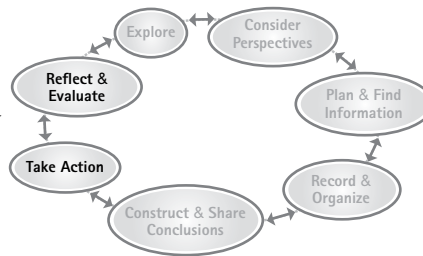
Encourage students to check in with each other by discussing and reflecting on questions such as the following:

- 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. 141)** 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.

■ Why Participate

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

Why do you think some people choose to vote and others do not? Explore the following list of reasons. Rank each reason 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
			Forget
	Out of duty – many people feel that it is their job as citizens to participate in elections		Have to work
			Do not like any of the choices
	To support a particular candidate or their political party		Do not know who to vote for
			Out of town
	To have a voice – to have a say in how things are done		Not interested
			Do not think it matters
	To change things, to make a difference		Do not know when or where to vote
	The system does not work if people do not vote		

Push is on to get young Alberta voters to the polls

Fletcher Kent Global News

October 15, 2015

Younger students may be unable to vote, but there is a push to involve them in the election as well.

Grade 9 students at Edmonton's Sir John Thompson Junior High School cast ballots as part of Student Vote. The national campaign is designed to expose Canadian youth to the voting process.

Teacher Joseph Filiplic said such exposure will eventually help increase youth voter turnout.

> "The younger they're exposed to the voting process, the more likely that they'll continue to vote. It'll become a habit when they are legally able to vote."

The 13 and 14-year-olds taking part this year said the campaign issues interest them and so do the discussions about them.

Mateo Skeljo said dinner conversations have recently changed. His parents argue about politics. Now he is joining in.

"It's been fun getting in fights together," he said.

Skeljo said he'll vote when he has the chance. Many of his classmates said they will as well.

One Grade 9 student at the school is making a difference this election. Hazel Diamono-Mensah's parents recently became Canadian citizens. They have not voted before and did not plan to vote in the 2015 federal election.

Diamano-Mensah told them how important voting is. Now both her parents have promised to cast a ballot on Monday which makes the 14-year-old "happy and [excited] because at least, even though I can't vote, my parents can vote and they can make Canada a better place."

Kent, Fletcher (October 15, 2015). *Push is on to get young Alberta voters to the polls.* Global News http://globalnews.ca/news/2276974/push-is-on-to-get-young-alberta-voters-to-the-polls/

Find Out More

Find other information about voting ages in the **Participation Matters** section of the **Building Future Voters** junior high webpage at **www.buildingfuturevoters.ca**.

Pause and Reflect

Do you think it is necessary to vote to be considered an active, engaged citizen? Why or why not?

_____

_____

_____

_____

What are other effective ways to be an active, engaged citizen?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Make a Commitment

Develop a Campaign

What matters most when people participate as citizens? How do you get them to participate? Develop a media campaign focused on the question, "What is an ideal, active and engaged citizen?"

What will you include in your campaign? Consider meanings of citizenship, characteristics of an ideal citizen and effective strategies for citizen participation. Include visuals and written information in your campaign materials.

Make a plan for creating the campaign. Make sure 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

Ideas to Promote Active and Engaged Citizenship

- Plan a blog site with initial posts that encourage voting and citizen participation

- Start a Twitter or Instagram campaign

- Create a PowerPoint presentation for sharing online

- Make a speech for a community or school event

- Create a video

- Go to **Participation Matters** on the **Building Future Voters** junior high webpage at **www.buildingfuturevoters.ca** for more information

- Make a commitment to vote by creating your own **I will vote** commitment card.

Backgrounders

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. In the Canadian parliamentary system, "government" has a limited and specific meaning.

Government refers to the team of elected representatives that have the most support of all representatives in the parliament or a provincial assembly. The government is responsible for providing leadership to make laws, and for the ministries that deliver programs and services mandated by those laws.

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.

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.

The provincial equivalent of the parliament is called the legislature. Alberta's legislature consists of a **unicameral** house, which consists of 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.

● Responsible Democracy

The Canadian system of government 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.

Responsible government has been part of the Canadian system since 1867, 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 and his government lost a vote of non-confidence.

Responsible government commonly refers to a government that is responsible to the people. In Canada, responsible government refers to an executive branch that depends on the support of an elected assembly.

In Alberta, the premier and **cabinet** make up the executive branch. The premier is the leader of the political party that has elected more representatives to the Legislative Assembly than any other party. The premier appoints cabinet members. Traditionally, they are selected from elected **Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs)**. The executive branch is responsible for proposing, passing and administering laws.

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 budgets 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 **minority government** happens if a party holds fewer than half the seats in the Assembly. However, a party may be said to command a majority if they draw enough support from members of opposition parties. If a major policy or law is defeated, there may be a vote of **non-confidence**. The government must resign and call an election if it loses the non-confidence vote. 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

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.

Economics of the Electoral Process

All federal and provincial elections in Canada today are governed by legislation that regulates, to varying degrees, the contributions and expenditures of candidates and political parties – before, during and after election campaigns. The tools for regulating political donations include actions such as reporting requirements for the names of donors, the amounts of contributions, or the amounts and types of expenditures. Other rules restrict candidates, parties and their supporters – such as limits on contributions, expenditures or both. Legislation at provincial and federal levels requires that the parties' nominated candidates register with the Chief Electoral Officer before the candidates can accept donations.

An election officially begins when the government in power passes an **Order of the Lieutenant Governor 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 Election Day is on the 28th day.

Every candidate for office in a federal or provincial election must have a Chief Financial Officer (or Official Agent), who is the only person authorized to accept contributions and to authorize expenditures on behalf of the candidate. The maximum penalties for violating campaign finance rules are harsh and include the loss of the right to be a candidate in a future election.

In Alberta, the **electoral process**, or the steps and actions involved in an election, is run by an organization called Elections Alberta. This organization is independent from the government. Elections Alberta makes sure that when an election happens, the following conditions are met.

- The election is open, fair and impartial.

- Voters have the necessary information to participate in the election.

- Political participants have the information and assistance to make sure they are following election rules.

- Election officers are trained to make sure elections are run properly and results are made available to people.

- Elections are evaluated to recommend any changes that could be made to improve the electoral process.

Most places in North America and across the world have campaign finance legislation. This legislation usually deals with the impact of money on elections and public policy and is based on the premise that financial support is a significant factor in determining electoral success – in other words, getting a candidate elected.

The legislation promotes financial equity and fairness, or creates a "more level playing field." In Alberta, the *Election Finances and Contributions Disclosure Act* is a law that maintains the accountability of candidates and those who run the electoral process. It does this through rules that provide contribution limits and the disclosure, or making public, of contributions that individuals or groups make to political parties and their campaigns during an election.

In Alberta, there are different financial requirements during campaign periods and for non-election years that involve political parties, candidates and **constituency associations**, which are volunteer organizations that handle the activities of a political party in an electoral division.

Annual reporting is the responsibility of the political party and the constituency association and is based on a calendar year. Campaign reporting is the responsibility of a political party and the candidate. It occurs in a year in which there is a provincial general election, a by-election or a Senate nominee election.

- Annual contributions are those made to a political party or constituency association.

- Annual contributions cannot be made during an election campaign. A campaign begins when a Writ of Election is issued by the Chief Electoral Officer and ends two months after Election Day.

- During an election campaign period, campaign contributions or donations can be provided to candidates and registered political parties. They must be reported.

- Each of the financial reports filed by parties, candidates, and constituency associations must include their list of contributors that contributed a total of over $250 in cash or valued goods and services.

- Contributions may only be made by individuals, ordinarily resident in Alberta.

Find Out More

Elections Alberta provides a number of detailed resources on the electoral process on their website at **www.elections.ab.ca**. These resources include guidelines for parties, candidates, constituency associations, leadership contests and third party advertisers.

Elections Alberta Elections Alberta maintains registration and financial reporting information for registered political parties, registered constituency associations, registered candidates, registered third party advertisers and registered leadership contestants. A website that details financial disclosure information can be accessed at **http://efpublic. elections.ab.ca/**.

A summary of the guidelines and rules for federal campaign financing can be accessed on the Elections Canada website at **www.elections.ca/ content.aspx?section=pol&&docum ent=index&lang=e**.

BACKGROUNDER ❸

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. In Alberta, the *Alberta Election Statutes Amendment Act* established a fixed election date of the last Monday in May every four years. The 2023 general election was the first to be held on this date.

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 Legislative Assembly.

● 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 87 constituencies. 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.

Integrate Technology 🖥️

Find weblinks and additional information on the teacher webpage of the *Building Future Voters* website at www.buildingfuturevoters.ca.

Find maps of each electoral division on the Elections Alberta website at www.elections.ab.ca/resources/maps/.

● 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:

- 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 and Returning Office staff 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. Electoral reform, centred on the idea that Canada needs a system that allows for more proportional representation in the House of Commons, has received increasing attention.

One voting system under consideration 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. An additional voting system is **preferential voting**, in which voters can rank candidates in order of preference. This system is used in Australia. A change at the federal level may also influence provincial elections.

● Political Parties

When a group of people have similar needs or ideas about the major issues affecting people in a democratic society, they may form a political party with a view to electing some of their people to office and therefore having 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. As of 2023, there are fourteen registered political parties in Alberta. However, in the 2019 and 2023 provincial elections, only two political parties elected members to the Legislative Assembly: the Alberta New Democratic Party and the United Conservative Party of Alberta.

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 and often welcome questions. Candidates compete for votes and a chance to explain their party's policies is a valuable opportunity. Voters thus 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/assembly-business/transcripts** 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 of the Lieutenant Governor 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 10th day after the date of the Writ of Election. **Election Day**, the day when people vote, is the 18th day after nomination day. Advance voting is held on the Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday,

Friday, and Saturday of the full week preceding Election 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**

- The place and times fixed for nomination of candidates, and the date fixed for the closing of nominations

- The locations, dates and times for advance voting

- The date and times for voting on Election Day

- 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, Elections Alberta publishes the information on the Election Proclamation, a map of the electoral division and a list of voting 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 electoral division 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.

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 their 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, their 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.

Find Out More

Elections Alberta also provides resources for individuals involved in the electoral process on their website at **www.elections.ab.ca**.

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 a candidate at the voting station or Registration Officer's table. Scrutineers may observe election procedures at each voting, registration and ballot box station during voting hours and during the unofficial count after the voting station is closed.

Each candidate may appoint, in writing, not more than four electors for each station as scrutineers. Not more than one scrutineer per candidate per station may be present at any one time. However, a scrutineer may attend more than one station or voting place throughout their day. Scrutineers must also take the Oath of Secrecy at each voting place they are appointed to observe before performing their duties. They must also sign the Scrutineer's Code of Conduct.

There are four voting opportunities available to voters during an election in each electoral division:

- **Election Day** voting locations are open from 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Every voter is assigned to a voting location based on where they live. On Election Day, voters can only vote at their assigned voting location.

- **Special ballot** voting can be used by electors who are unable to vote in person on Election Day or during advance voting. Special ballots can be completed by mail or in person at the local returning office.

- **Advance voting** locations are established by the Returning Officer in each electoral division. During advance voting, electors may choose to vote at any advance voting location in the province. Advance voting takes place between 9:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. on the Tuesday through Saturday of the week prior to Election Day.

- **Mobile voting** locations provide on-site voting services to residents at supportive living and long-term care facilities, in-patients at hospitals and treatment centres, and people receiving services at emergency shelters and community support centres. The dates, times and locations for mobile voting are established by the Returning Officer, in consultation with the staff at these centres.

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

A **ballot** is a list of the candidate 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 that 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 processes:

- At the voting station, the elector will provide their identification to the election officer to prove their name and current physical address.

- If the elector is registered, the election officer will draw a line through their name in the Voting Record. If the elector is not registered, they will be added to the Voting Record after taking a declaration.

- Once the elector has been found or added to the Voting Record, the election officer initials the back of the ballot and issues it to the elector.

- The election officer then provides instructions to the voter to proceed to the voting screen 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 taken to the ballot box station.

- When the voter is marking their ballot behind the voting screen, no one can look or go behind it to see how they have chosen to mark their ballot. Voting is private and a secret. Exceptions are made if the voter requires assistance to vote. A voter may receive assistance after the appropriate oath is taken.

- Ballots may not be removed from the voting location. If a person declines to vote, the election officer writes the word ''Declined'' on the ballot and places it in a separate envelope.

- After marking their ballot, the voter shows the back of the folded ballot to the election officer at the ballot box, who confirms the ballot has been initialed by an election officer.

Legislative amendments from the *Election Statutes Amendment Act* were implemented for the first time in the 2023 provincial general election. Some of these changes included:

- General elections will take place on a fixed election date, the last Monday in May, every four years.

- Electors must prove their name and current physical address when voting.

- Mobile voting can be held on any advance voting day, on Election Day, or on a combination of dates.

- Employers are required to give an employee time off for voting only if their schedule does not provide the employee with at least three consecutive hours to vote during advance voting or on Election Day.

- Election officers able to perform a wider range of assigned duties instead of being restricted to specialized roles.

- Terminology changes, adopting commonly used terms such as ''vote'', "voting" and ''Election Day'' to replace "poll" and ''Polling Day'', for example.

Find Out More

More information on these amendments is available at **www. elections.ab.ca/uploads/Election-Act-Amendments-Bill-81.pdf.**

After the Election

The electoral process is not finished after an election is complete. Individuals who are involved in an election, including Elections Alberta and the government, have important responsibilities to fulfill.

The Chief Electoral Officer submits an annual report to the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta. The report provides consolidated information from the financial statements of parties, constituency associations and candidates.

As required by the *Election Act*, the Chief Electoral Officer also submits a report to the Standing Committee on Legislative Offices following each enumeration, election, by-election, plebiscite and referendum. The report provides detailed information on each activity, and presents detailed election results.

After an election is over, the Returning Officer must prepare reports on the election and provide these reports to the Chief Electoral Officer. A Returning Officer's appointment expires four months after the election is over.

The Chief Electoral Officer is also responsible for exploring and identifying ways that the electoral process can be improved.

● Issues 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 reasons are many – some based on opinion and some based on evidence and statistics. The 2015 elections, both in Alberta and federally, brought some unexpected changes and highlighted some emerging issues.

The sources that follow provide a sampling of perspectives and statistics on issues related to voter engagement and participation.

"While the conduct of the 2015 election was generally a success, it was apparent that a system anchored in the 19th century is no longer suited to meet Canadians' expectations. Electors want more accessible and convenient election services, whether in person or online, and real-time digital information."
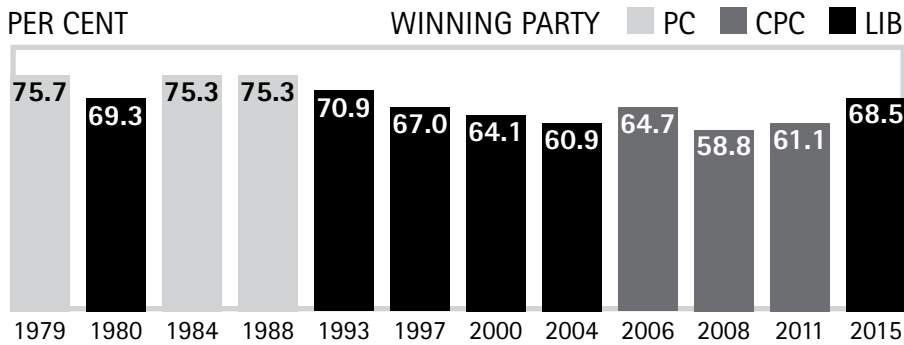
Office of the Chief Electoral Officer of Canada (2016). *Report on the 42nd General Election of October 19, 2015*. Elections Canada: p. 7.

"A significant re-write of the legislation needs to be undertaken to ensure an enabling legislative structure rather than a prescriptive legislative structure for elections that protects the key principles of fairness of process, accessibility for all stakeholders and integrity of the results while ensuring that it is written in plain language that is easy to understand and interpret for all interested parties."
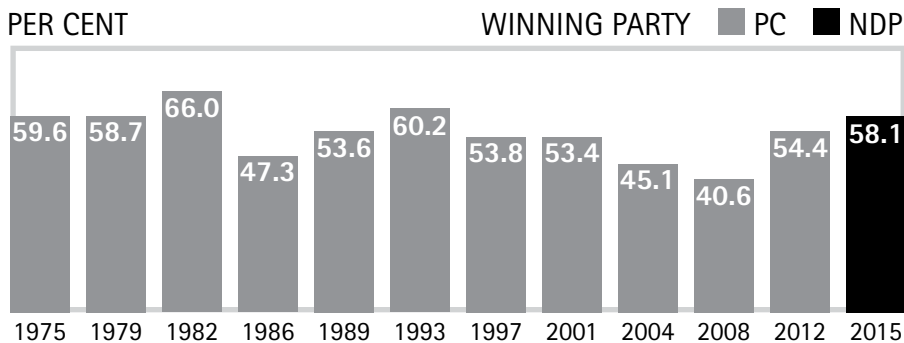
Chief Electoral Officer of Alberta (2016). Remarks of the Chief Electoral Officer. *Report of the Chief Electoral Officer on the May 5, 2015 Provincial General Election*. Elections Alberta: p. 2.

Find Out More

Elections Alberta provides a number of detailed reports on election results and statistics on their website at www.elections.ab.ca.

Statistics Canada provides articles on civic engagement and political participation in Canada:

Arriagada, P., et al. (2022). *Political participation, civic engagement and caregiving among youth in Canada.* www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/42-28-0001/2021001/article/00006-eng.htm

Turcotte, M. (2015). *Civic engagement and political participation in Canada*. Statistics Canada. www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/89-652-x/89-652-x2015006-eng.htm

Canadian Voter Turnout in Federal Elections

In 2003, the Canadian Reform Conservative Alliance and the Progressive Conservative Party of Canada (PC) joined to form the Conservative Party of Canada (CPC).

PER CENT   WINNING PARTY ▢ PC ▨ CPC ▪ LIB

Year	Per Cent
1979	75.7
1980	69.3
1984	75.3
1988	75.3
1993	70.9
1997	67.0
2000	64.1
2004	60.9
2006	64.7
2008	58.8
2011	61.1
2015	68.5

Alberta Voter Turnout in Provincial Elections

PER CENT   WINNING PARTY ▨ PC ▪ NDP

Year	Per Cent
1975	59.6
1979	58.7
1982	66.0
1986	47.3
1989	53.6
1993	60.2
1997	53.8
2001	53.4
2004	45.1
2008	40.6
2012	54.4
2015	58.1

Find Out More

A comprehensive analysis of the 2015 federal election can be found online, in the University of British Columbia publication *Canadian Election Analysis: Communication, Strategy and Democracy*. This publication includes numerous articles about the 2015 election campaign, the media and political communication, campaign issues, public opinion polls and voter behaviour. Find this publication at **www.ubcpress.ca/ canadianelectionanalysis2015/ CanadianElectionAnalysis2015.pdf**.

The Conference Board of Canada provides a comparison of international rankings for voter turnout across 15 countries, current as of 2013. Go to *Voter Turnout* at **www.conferenceboard.ca/hcp/ details/society/voter-turnout.aspx**.

"Since 2000, Canadians have gone to the polls six times to elect a prime minister. That's a lot of federal elections in a period of just 15 years (four in the last decade), and the Canadian electorate has made their burnout evident. Voter turnout has been abysmal in recent elections, reaching a historic low in 2008, when just 58.8% of registered voters showed up on election day. More troublingly, voter apathy has been disproportionately concentrated amongst the youngest eligible voters – in the 2011 election, less than 40% of Canadians aged 18 to 24 cast a vote. Maybe young people were too disillusioned to go to the polls, or just didn't feel that their choices could make a difference. But, for whatever reason, the majority of young Canadians did not feel an urgency to vote.

This year was different. Leading up to the election it felt different. Social media abounded with political content. Young Canadians urged their peers to vote strategically, promoting websites like strategicvoting.ca and voteswap.ca. Election selfies trended on Twitter, and nearly 450,000 people RSVP'd to a "Stephen Harper Going Away Party" on Facebook. Young people also got the message, from a variety of sources, that their votes were important. Elections Canada made an active effort to break down barriers for youth voters, opening 71 advance-voting stations at university campuses and youth centers across the country. John Oliver, host of comedy talk show "Last Week Tonight", urged Canadians to go to the polls (when is the last time American media took an interest in Canadian politics?). And prominent local comedian, Rick Mercer, gave an impassioned speech on national radio, telling Canadians "if young people show up to vote; it will change everything."

Mercer was right. The election results that trickled in on the night of October 19, 2015, were historic for a number of reasons. The election saw a massive swell in voter turnout. Nearly 70% of registered Canadians voted – the highest turnout for a federal election since 1993. While the exact voter breakdown has yet to be released, a sizable youth vote is believed to be a major factor behind the resounding Liberal Party victory."

Dorfmann, J. (November 4, 2015). *The Power of Young Voters: Canada's Historic Election.* Harvard International Review. **http://hir.harvard.edu/power-young-voters-canadas-historic-election/**

"This study, which was based on data from the 2013 General Social Survey (GSS) on Social Identity, has shown that younger people are less likely to vote than older individuals and are also less likely to report that they intend to vote in the next election. Younger people also tend to be less interested in politics than their older counterparts. These trends, however, conceal a relatively high degree of engagement in other activities. For example, many young Canadians are politically and civically engaged, but in different ways. The youngest of them – those aged 15 to 19 – were the most likely of all age groups to be members of or participants in groups, organizations or associations. They were also the most likely to participate at least once a week in group activities or meetings.

Youth aged 20 to 24 are among the most engaged of all in political activities such as signing petitions and participating in demonstrations or marches. Young university students stood out in particular, as they had the highest participation rates for almost all these types of activities. In short, when alternative ways of participating in political and civic activities are considered, it is clear that a significant portion of young individuals are interested in public affairs.

However, the proportion of politically inactive individuals – those who did not participate in any political activity in the past 12 months and who were not highly likely to vote in the next election – was larger among youth. The lower voter turnout among younger individuals promises to be a topic of interest and concern in the coming years."

Turcotte, M. (2015). *Political participation and civic engagement of youth*. Statistics Canada.
www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/75-006-x/2015001/article/14232-eng.htm

Find Out More

Find a range of information, from a survey of 1000 Canadians aged 18 to 25, about the recent history of youth engagement in Canadian politics and the consequences of increased voting rates in *The Next Canada: Politics, political engagement, and priorities of Canada's next electoral powerhouse: young Canadians* (2016), commissioned by the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations. http://abacusdata.ca/the-next-canada-politics-political-engagement-and-priorities-of-canadas-next-electoral-powerhouse-young-canadians/

Reasons for not voting by age group

	18 to 24 years (%)	25 to 34 years (%)	35 to 44 years (%)	45 to 54 years (%)	55 to 64 years (%)
Everyday life or health reasons	47	48	47	44	44
Too busy	28	30	30	22	17
Out of town	13	11	11	12	14
Illness or disability	5	6	7	10	14
Political reasons	38	40	42	44	43
Not interested in politics	33	33	34	34	34
Electoral process–related reasons	11	8	6	7	6
All other reasons	4	5	5	5	6

Find additional statistics for other age groups in this source.

Statistics Canada (February 22, 2016). *Reasons for not voting in the federal election, October 19, 2015: Reasons for not voting by age group and sex.* www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/160222/t002a-eng.htm

Electoral Reform

Alternative electoral systems to FPTP can be grouped into three broad families: majority systems; proportional representation systems; and mixed electoral systems.

In **majority electoral systems**, the winning candidate is the individual who gets a majority (over 50%) of the votes cast. This system can be designed in different ways. For example, the system could allow voters to rank the candidates running in their electoral division in order of their preference. If no candidate receives a majority of votes on the first count, the lowest candidate is dropped and the second-preference votes for that candidate are assigned to the respective remaining candidates. This process continues until one candidate receives the necessary majority. Another example is a system in which there are two election days, generally weeks apart. In this type of electoral system, if no candidate receives a majority of votes in the first round, there is a second election with only the top two candidates from the first election result. The candidate with the higher number of votes in the second round is elected. This type of system is used in Australia and France.

Proportional representation (PR) systems seek to closely match a political party's vote share with its seat allocation in the legislature. PR systems tend to vary and the method for calculating seat distribution can range from simple to complex. Proportional representation systems are not based on single-member constituencies. Citizens generally vote for more than one candidate or for a political party. Sweden uses this type of system.

Mixed electoral systems combine elements of a plurality or majority system with elements of proportional representation. Citizens in a riding cast two votes: one to directly elect an individual member to serve as their representative, and a second for a political party or parties to fill seats in the legislature allocated according to the proportion of the vote share they receive. Japan and New Zealand use a mixed electoral system.

Government of Canada (online). *Electoral Systems Factsheet.* www.canada.ca/en/campaign/electoral-reform/learn-about-canadian-federal-electoral-reform/electoral-systems-factsheet.html

Find Out More

In 2016, the Government of Canada established a Special Committee on Electoral Reform to study and consult Canadians on reforms to the Canadian electoral system. The reports of this committee were presented to the House of Commons in December 2016 and are available at **https://www.ourcommons.ca/Committees/en/ERRE/StudyActivity?studyActivityId=9013025**.

Macleans provides an article that explains the choices between the current electoral process and four options that other countries use.

Shendruk, A. (June 16, 2016). *On electoral reform, what are Canada's options?* Macleans. **www.macleans.ca/politics/making-sense-of-electoral-reform-what-are-canadas-options/**

The Library of Parliament provides a comprehensive overview of electoral reform options in *Electoral Systems and Electoral Reform in Canada and Elsewhere: An Overview.* **https://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2016/bdp-lop/bp/YM32-2-2016-6-2-eng.pdf**.

In many countries across the world, voting is not only a right. It is considered a duty that governments enforce through mandatory voting.

In Canada, retired politician Mac Harb is an advocate of compulsory voting.

Writing in the Canadian Parliamentary Review, the former Liberal MP and senator recalled that mandatory voting was introduced in Australia in 1924.

"Now, Australia has consistently boasted a turnout of over 90 per cent," Harb wrote. "Compulsory voting in Belgium dates back to 1893. Currently, voter turnout in Belgium is over 90 per cent."

"The most recent election in the European Union revealed the tremendous power of mandatory voting legislation and the pro-voting culture it brings along," Harb continued. "Member states with mandatory voting during the last European Union elections had remarkable turnouts, with 90.8 per cent in Belgium, 89 per cent in Luxembourg, and 71 per cent in Cyprus, as compared with countries with no compulsory voting, voter turnout was only 42.7 per cent in France, 45.1 per cent in Spain and a mere 38.8 per cent in the United Kingdom."

Pablo, C. (October 7, 2015). *Is it time for mandatory voting?* The Georgia Straight. **www.straight.com/news/551946/it-time-mandatory-voting-canada**

Youth engagement

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.
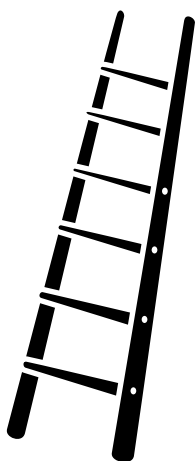
The Ladder of Student Involvement in School

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

Degrees of Participation

3. Tokenism
2. Decoration
1. Manipulation

Degrees of Non participation

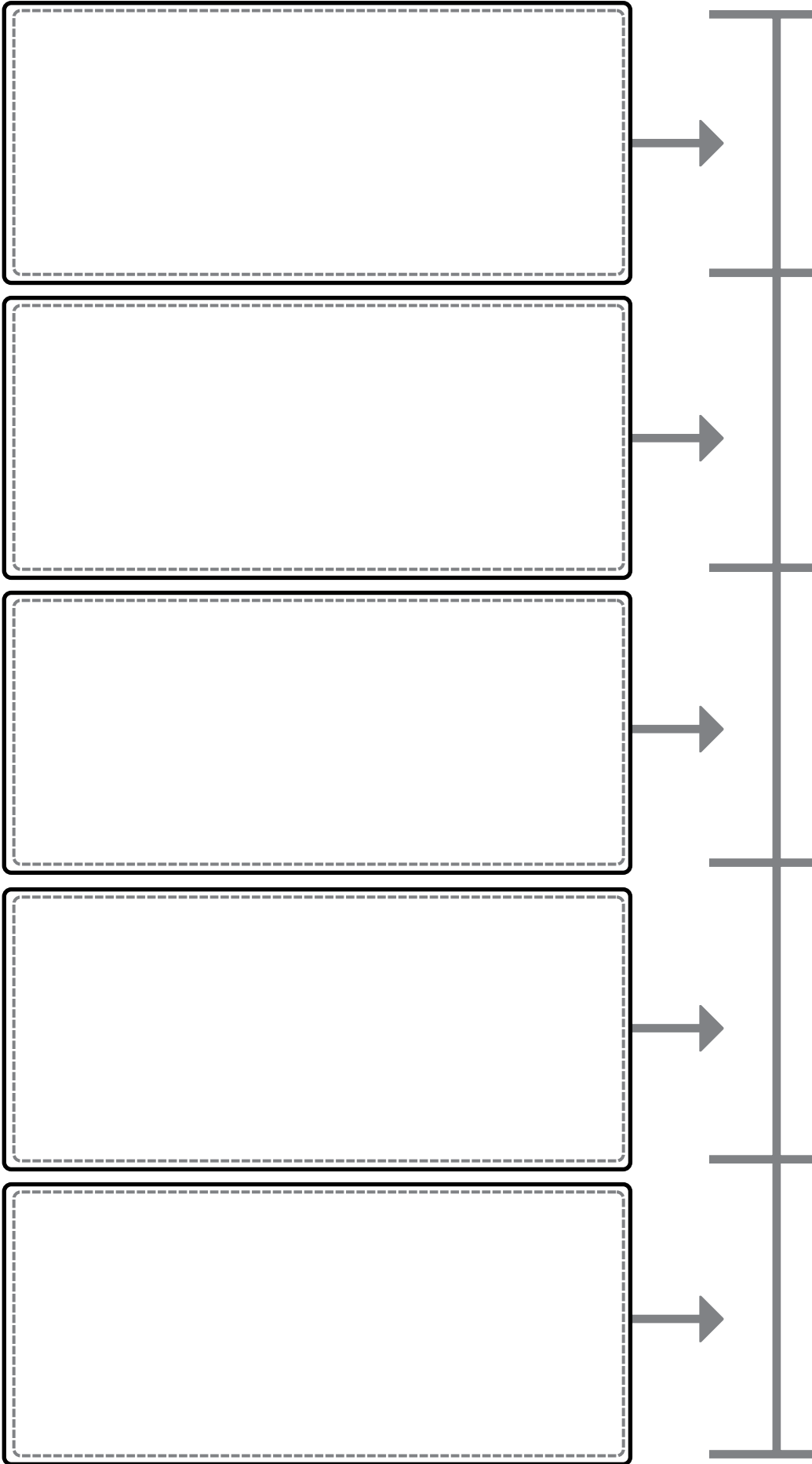Adapted from Roger Hart's *Children's Participation: From Tokenism to Citizenship.* New Yourk, NY: UNICEF, 1994.
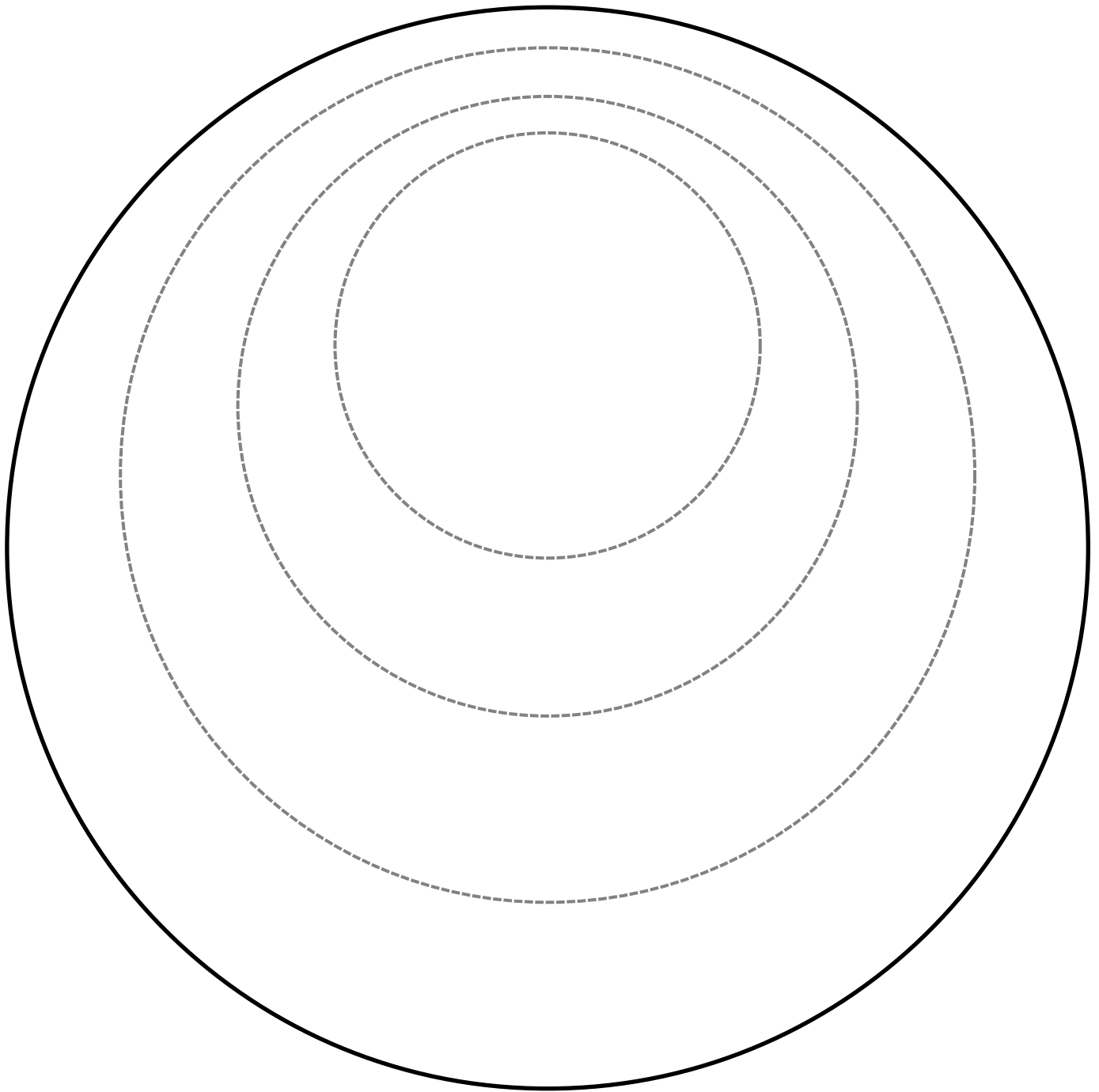
Graphic Organizers

T–Chart

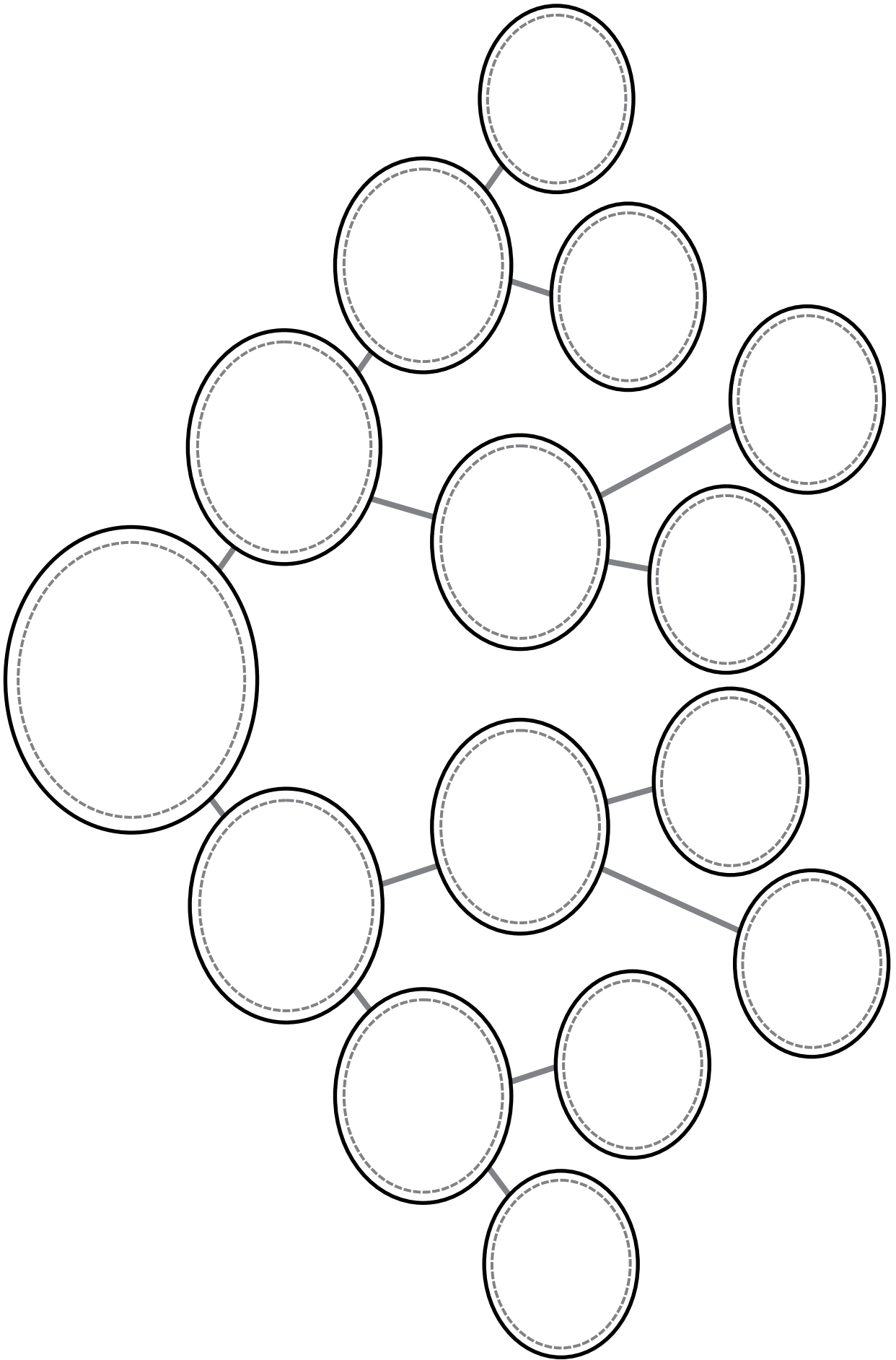| What I Know	What I Want to Know	How I Will Find Out	What I Learned

Continuum

Retrieval Chart

Sphere of Influence

Triple T–Chart

Mind Map

Money Cards
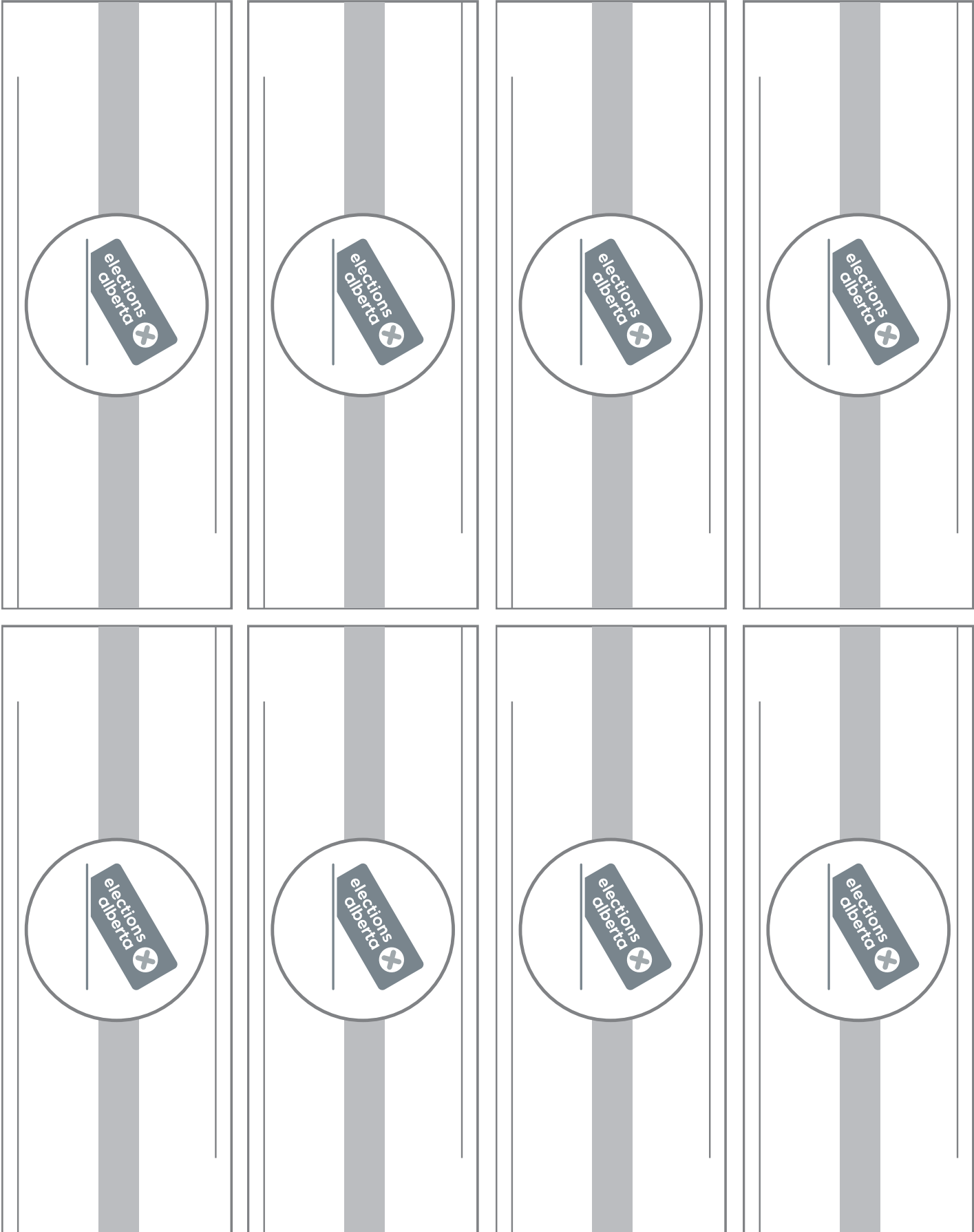
Cause and Effect Timeline

Cause and Effect Chart

Effects 1
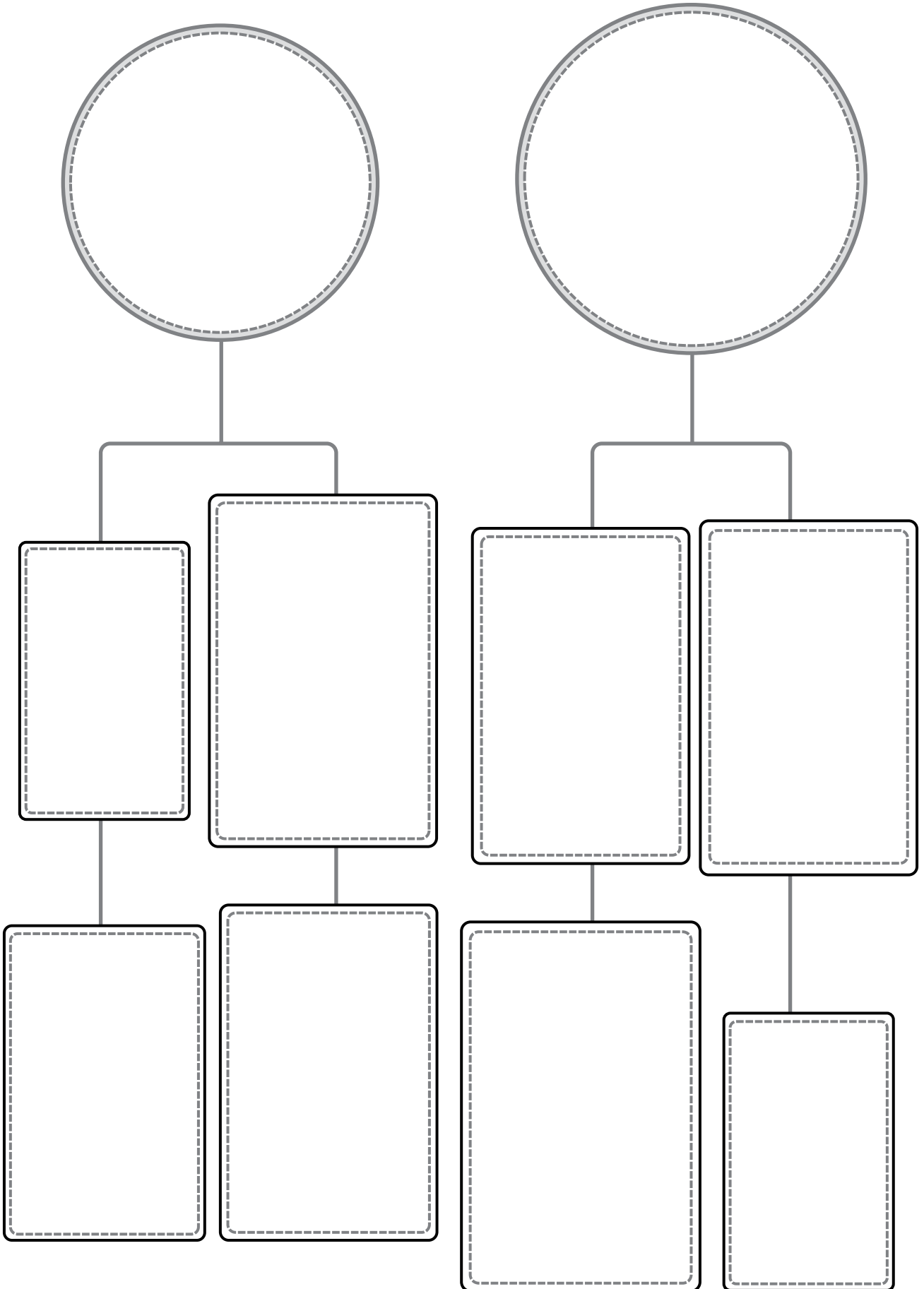
Effects 2

Cause

Effects 3

Effects 4
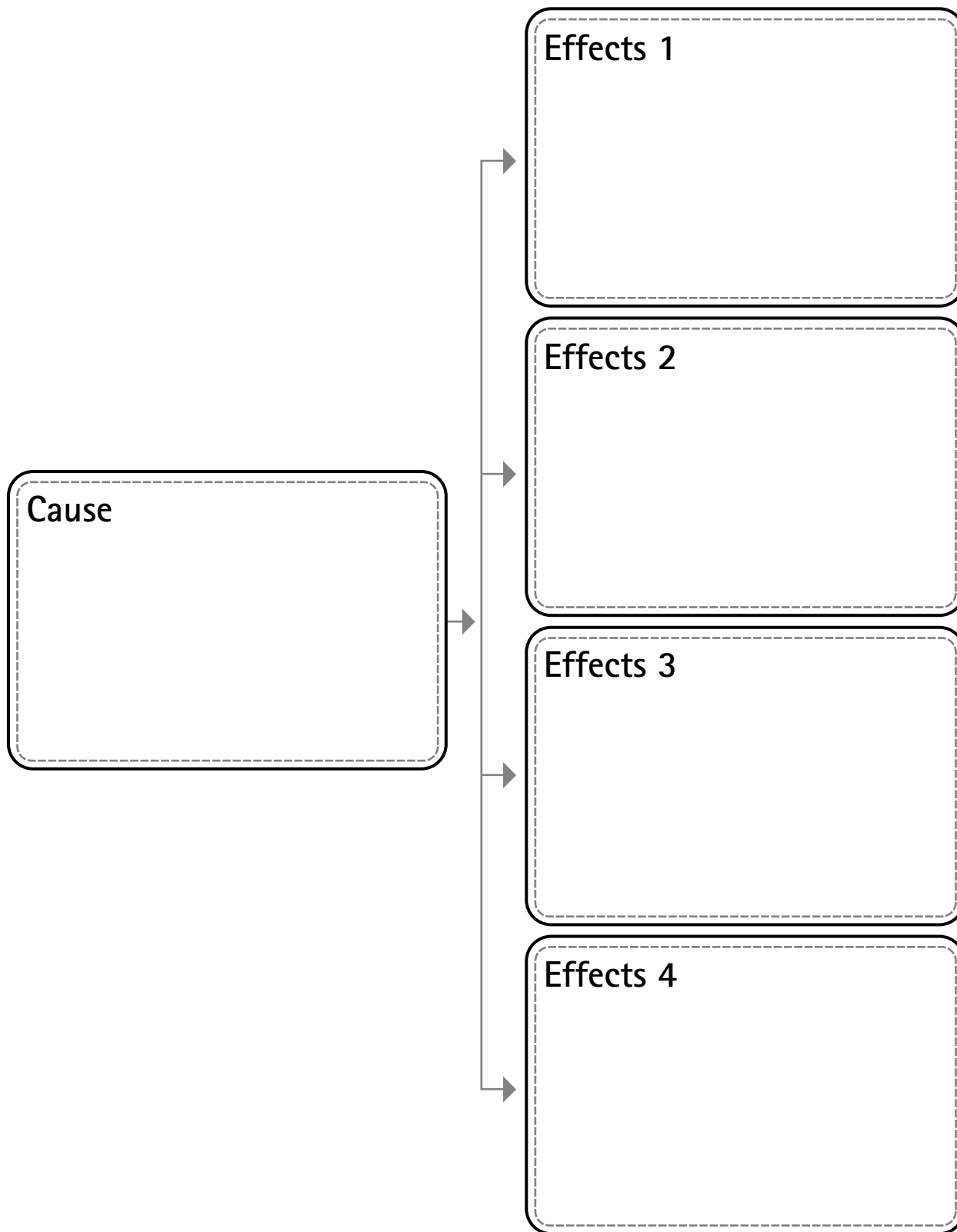
Project Planners

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?

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 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 or starting a monthly newsletter.

What resources will you use to reach the project goals?

What different types of resources will help you with your project?	What support do you think you will need from people in your classroom, school or community?	Describe how much time you will need to work on the project.	Consider what information will help you with your project. Make a list of questions you have.

If you are working with a group, list all project group members and respond to the questions. If you are working alone, answer the questions for yourself.

- What is each group member good at? What would each group member like to do?

- How will you assign tasks?

- How will you keep track of each group member's responsibilities?
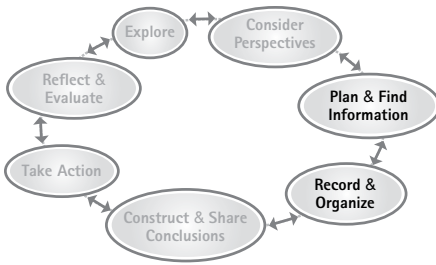
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Get Informed

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 about your action project? What information is important and relevant to the project?

_____

_____

_____

_____

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 we will record our research?

What similarities and differences do we see?

What comparisons can we make?

What connections do we see?

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 online information 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 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?

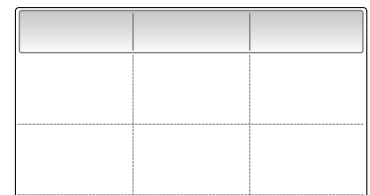List other questions you may have:

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Organize Research

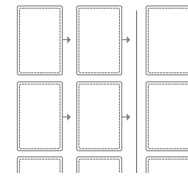Make a plan to find information. Identify the responsibilities and tasks of each group member by using this chart.

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

Use graphic organizers to help you organize your research. Decide what type of graphic organizer works best for collecting the information you need.
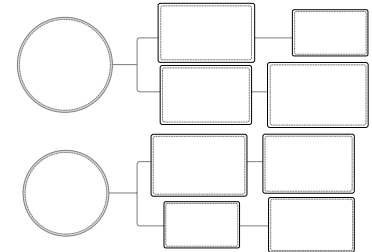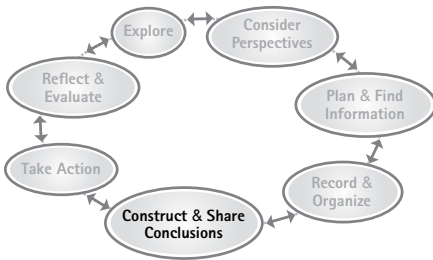
Triple T–Chart

Cause and Effect Chart

Flow Chart

Explore ↔ Consider Perspectives

Reflect & Evaluate

Plan & Find Information

Take Action

Record & Organize

Construct & Share Conclusions

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.

- 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

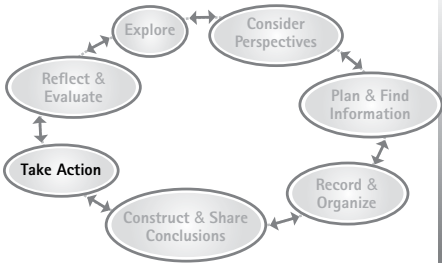People who can support our project
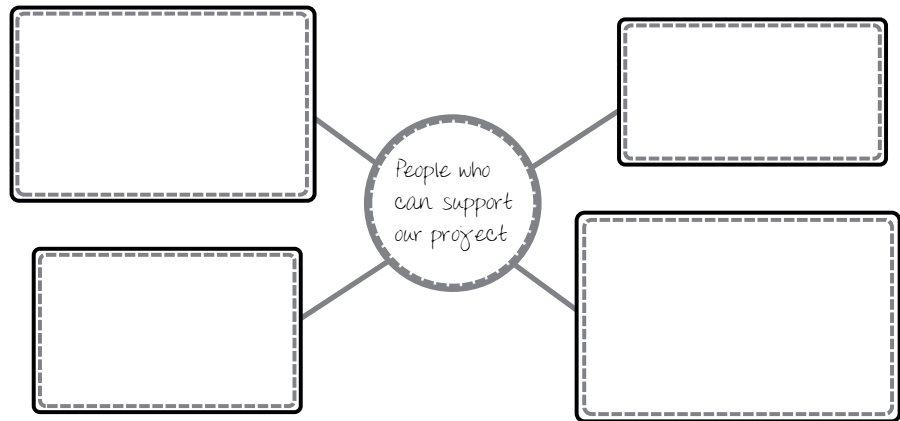
What progress have you made? Summarize the actions you have taken so far in the flow chart below. What are the next steps?
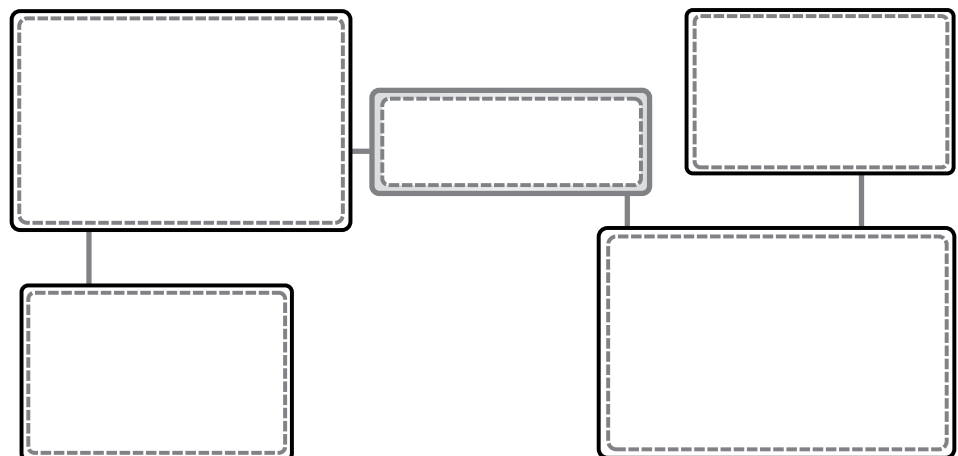
What conclusions can you make from your action project? Use the chart below to analyze what you have accomplished and learned.

What is most important to know about our 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 action project? What would happen if we implemented these solutions?

What will we do with what we have learned?

What would happen if...?

How can we contribute?

How can we make a difference?

What should we do next?

Activity Ideas

Create posters

Plan a social media campaign

Plan a day of action in the community or school

Hold a workshop

Create a video advertisement

Distribute pamphlets

Organize a local student day of action

Start a youth council

Start a student newsletter

Start a website

Create a game with a message

Organize a student festival

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Plan for Action

By now, you should be well on your way to implementing your action project. Revisit and review your project goals, and use the chart below to break down the steps you can take. What activities best fit your goals and the resources you have available to you?

Activities	Resources	Who and When

## ✖ 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.
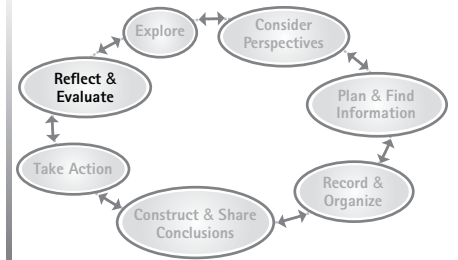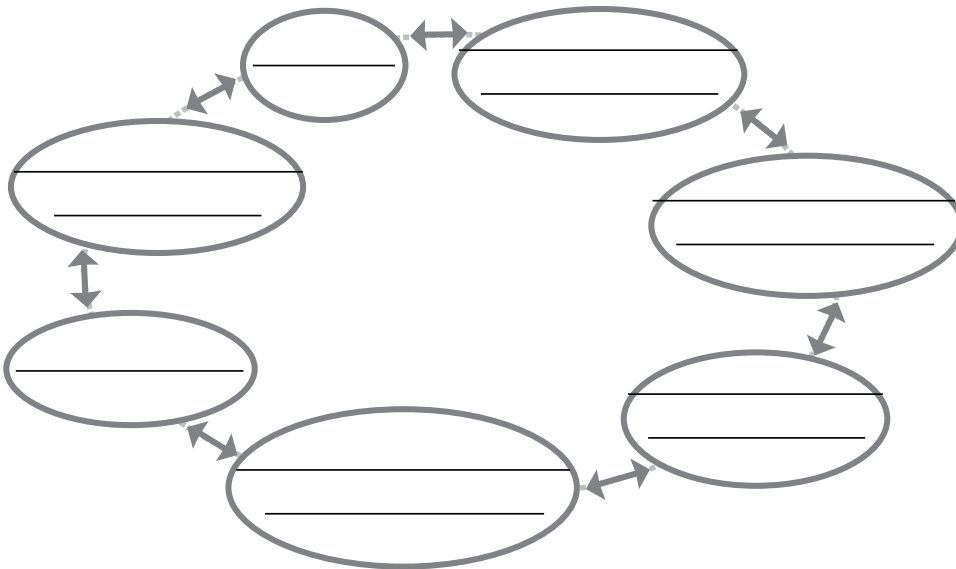
How effective were our actions?

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 are affected

- Satisfaction from team members

- Other projects that have been inspired from your work

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Curriculum Connections

Notes

Alberta Education is working to develop a student-centred provincial curriculum that will enrich student's lives and prepare them for careers in a diversified economy. Provincial curriculum will be developed and available for use through a digital platform, the Curriculum Development Application (CDA).

Outcomes that are current at the date of publication are supported by this resource and provided in this Appendix. However, this resource is consistent with the identified focus of future curriculum development, which will be student-centred and will:

- Keep pace with issues, topics and themes that are of concern to many Albertans. This includes topics like climate leadership, financial literacy, mental health, sexual health and consent, online citizenship and many more

- Reflect the importance of inclusion, diversity and pluralism

- Include Francophone perspectives, history and contributions

- Include enhanced mandatory content about First Nations, Métis and Inuit ways of knowing, perspectives, experiences, languages and cultures, in historical and contemporary contexts, including residential schools and treaties for all students in Alberta

- Focus on learner outcomes that support the development of 21st century competencies as well literacy and numeracy across curriculum

Alberta Education (online). *Curriculum Development.* **https://www.alberta.ca/curriculum-development**

MAKE IT MATTER
Does everyone have the same opportunities to participate?

 Curriculum Connections

Inquiry Context	Learning Outcomes
Does everyone have the same opportunities to participate? An introduction to participation and the effects of taking action	**9.1.3** appreciate how emerging issues impact quality of life, citizenship and identity in Canada (C, I, PADM) **9.1.4** examine the structure of Canada's federal political system by exploring and reflecting upon the following questions and issues: • (8) To what extent do political and legislative processes meet the needs of all Canadians? (PADM, C) **9.S.1** develop skills of critical thinking and creative thinking: • (4) re-evaluate personal opinions to broaden understanding of a topic or an issue • (5) generate creative ideas and strategies in individual and group activities **9.S.4** demonstrate skills of decision making and problem solving: • (3) propose and apply strategies or options to solve problems and deal with issues • (4) propose and apply new ideas and strategies, supported with facts and reasons, to contribute to problem solving and decision making **9.S.5** demonstrate skills of cooperation, conflict resolution and consensus building: • (1) demonstrate leadership in groups, where appropriate, to achieve consensus and resolve conflicts peacefully and equitably • (2) demonstrate a positive attitude regarding the needs and perspectives of others **9.S.6** develop age-appropriate behaviour for social involvement as responsible citizens contributing to their community, such as: • (1) develop leadership skills by assuming specific roles and responsibilities in organizations, projects and events within their community **9.S.7** apply the research process: • (1) reflect on changes of perspective or opinion based on information gathered and research conducted **9.S.8** demonstrate skills of oral, written and visual literacy: • (2) use skills of informal debate to persuasively express differing viewpoints regarding an issue • (3) elicit, clarify and respond appropriately to questions, ideas and diverse points of view presented in discussions • (4) make reasoned comments relating to the topic of discussion • (5) listen to others to understand their perspectives

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 study are infused throughout the Social Studies program of study and are indicated by this symbol ➤.

LEARNING SEQUENCE ❶
Do we live in a democracy?

🧭 Curriculum Connections

Inquiry Context	Learning Outcomes
Do we live in a democracy? An introduction to the concepts of democracy, representation and participation	**9.1.2** appreciate the various effects of government policies on citizenship and on Canadian society (C, I, PADM) **9.1.3** appreciate how emerging issues impact quality of life, citizenship and identity in Canada (C, I, PADM) **9.1.4** examine the structure of Canada's federal political system by exploring and reflecting upon the following questions and issues: • (8) To what extent do political and legislative processes meet the needs of all Canadians? (PADM, C) **9.S.1** develop skills of critical thinking and creative thinking: • (4) re-evaluate personal opinions to broaden understanding of a topic or an issue • (5) generate creative ideas and strategies in individual and group activities **9.S.4** demonstrate skills of decision making and problem solving: • (3) propose and apply strategies or options to solve problems and deal with issues • (4) propose and apply new ideas and strategies, supported with facts and reasons, to contribute to problem solving and decision making **9.S.7** apply the research process: • (1) reflect on changes of perspective or opinion based on information gathered and research conducted • (2) integrate and synthesize concepts to provide an informed point of view on a research question or an issue • (3) develop a position supported by information gathered during research • (4) draw conclusions based upon research and evidence **9.S.8** demonstrate skills of oral, written and visual literacy: • (1) communicate in a persuasive and engaging manner through speeches, multimedia presentations and written and oral reports, taking particular audiences and purposes into consideration • (3) elicit, clarify and respond appropriately to questions, ideas and diverse points of view presented in discussions • (4) make reasoned comments relating to the topic of discussion • (5) listen to others to understand their perspectives

LEARNING SEQUENCE ❷
How do our votes influence government decision-making?

Curriculum Connections

Inquiry Context	Learning Outcomes
How do our votes influence government decision-making? Research into political rights and responsibilities and exploration of some economic implications of the electoral process	**9.1.1** appreciate the impact of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms on rights and governance in Canada (C, I, PADM) **9.1.6** assess, critically, the impact of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms on the legislative process in Canada by exploring and reflecting upon the following questions and issues: • (2) How does the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms support individuals in exercising their rights? (PADM, C, I) • (4) What is the relationship between the rights guaranteed in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the responsibilities of Canadian citizens? (PADM, C) **9.2.1** appreciate the values underlying economic decision making in Canada and the United States (C, ER) **9.2.3** appreciate the impact of government decision making on quality of life (C, CC, PADM) **9.2.6** assess, critically, the interrelationship between political decisions and economic systems by exploring and reflecting upon the following questions and issues: • (2) How is a political party's philosophy reflected in its platform (i.e., social programs, specific taxes, taxation model)? (ER, PADM) **9.S.1** develop skills of critical thinking and creative thinking: • (2) evaluate, critically, ideas, information and positions from multiple perspectives ➢ (6) access diverse viewpoints on particular topics by using appropriate technologies ➢ (7) assemble and organize different viewpoints in order to assess their validity **9.S.4** demonstrate skills of decision making and problem solving: • (3) propose and apply strategies or options to solve problems and deal with issues • (4) propose and apply new ideas and strategies, supported with facts and reasons, to contribute to problem solving and decision making **9.S.7** apply the research process: • (1) reflect on changes of perspective or opinion based on information gathered and research conducted • (2) integrate and synthesize concepts to provide an informed point of view on a research question or an issue • (4) draw conclusions based upon research and evidence • (6) organize and synthesize researched information ➢ (14) make connections among related, organized data, and assemble various pieces into a unified message **9.S.8** demonstrate skills of oral, written and visual literacy: • (3) elicit, clarify and respond appropriately to questions, ideas and diverse points of view presented in discussions • (4) make reasoned comments relating to the topic of discussion • (5) listen to others to understand their perspectives

Inquiry Context	Learning Outcomes
	9.S.9 develop skills of media literacy: • (1) examine techniques used to enhance the authority and authenticity of media messages • (2) examine the values, lifestyles and points of view represented in a media message • (3) analyze the impact of television, internet, radio and print media on a particular current affairs issue

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

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LEARNING SEQUENCE ❸
What do you mean, our votes don't count?

Curriculum Connections

Inquiry Context	Learning Outcomes
What do you mean, our votes don't count? An exploration of the right to vote in the context of time, age, citizenship and equitable, accessible processes	**9.1.1** appreciate the impact of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms on rights and governance in Canada (C, I, PADM) **9.1.4** examine the structure of Canada's federal political system by exploring and reflecting upon the following questions and issues: • (8) To what extent do political and legislative processes meet the needs of all Canadians? (PADM, C) **9.1.6** assess, critically, the impact of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms on the legislative process in Canada by exploring and reflecting upon the following questions and issues: • (4) What is the relationship between the rights guaranteed in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the responsibilities of Canadian citizens? (PADM, C) **9.S.1** develop skills of critical thinking and creative thinking: • (4) re-evaluate personal opinions to broaden understanding of a topic or an issue **9.S.2** develop skills of historical thinking: • (1) analyze selected issues and problems from the past, placing people and events in a context of time and place • (2) distinguish cause, effect, sequence and correlation in historical events and issues, including the long- and short-term causal relations • (4) analyze the historical contexts of key events of a given time period **9.S.4** demonstrate skills of decision making and problem solving: • (3) propose and apply strategies or options to solve problems and deal with issues • (4) propose and apply new ideas and strategies, supported with facts and reasons, to contribute to problem solving and decision making **9.S.6** develop age-appropriate behaviour for social involvement as responsible citizens contributing to their community, such as: • (1) develop leadership skills by assuming specific roles and responsibilities in organizations, projects and events within their community **9.S.7** apply the research process: • (2) integrate and synthesize concepts to provide an informed point of view on a research question or an issue • (3) develop a position supported by information gathered during research • (4) draw conclusions based upon research and evidence

Inquiry Context	Learning Outcomes
	9.S.8 demonstrate skills of oral, written and visual literacy: • (1) communicate in a persuasive and engaging manner through speeches, multimedia presentations and written and oral reports, taking particular audiences and purposes into consideration • (2) use skills of informal debate to persuasively express differing viewpoints regarding an issue • (3) elicit, clarify and respond appropriately to questions, ideas and diverse points of view presented in discussions • (4) make reasoned comments relating to the topic of discussion • (5) listen to others to understand their perspectives

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LEARNING SEQUENCE 4
Why should we be more involved?

Curriculum Connections

Inquiry Context	Learning Outcomes
Why should we be more involved? A focus on political involvement and citizen participation	**9.1.1** appreciate the impact of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms on rights and governance in Canada (C, I, PADM) **9.1.2** appreciate the various effects of government policies on citizenship and on Canadian society (C, I, PADM) **9.1.3** appreciate how emerging issues impact quality of life, citizenship and identity in Canada (C, I, PADM) **9.1.6** assess, critically, the impact of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms on the legislative process in Canada by exploring and reflecting upon the following questions and issues: • (4) What is the relationship between the rights guaranteed in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the responsibilities of Canadian citizens? (PADM, C) **9.S.1** develop skills of critical thinking and creative thinking: • (2) evaluate, critically, ideas, information and positions from multiple perspectives • (3) demonstrate the ability to analyze current affairs from multiple perspectives • (4) re-evaluate personal opinions to broaden understanding of a topic or an issue • (5) generate creative ideas and strategies in individual and group activities **9.S.4** demonstrate skills of decision making and problem solving: • (1) take appropriate action and initiative when required in decision-making and problem-solving scenarios • (2) participate in and predict outcomes of problem-solving and decision-making scenarios • (3) propose and apply strategies or options to solve problems and deal with issues • (4) propose and apply new ideas and strategies, supported with facts and reasons, to contribute to problem solving and decision making **9.S.5** demonstrate skills of cooperation, conflict resolution and consensus building: • (1) demonstrate leadership in groups, where appropriate, to achieve consensus and resolve conflicts peacefully and equitably • (2) demonstrate a positive attitude regarding the needs and perspectives of others **9.S.6** develop age-appropriate behaviour for social involvement as responsible citizens contributing to their community, such as: • (1) develop leadership skills by assuming specific roles and responsibilities in organizations, projects and events within their community **9.S.7** apply the research process: • (1) reflect on changes of perspective or opinion based on information gathered and research conducted • (2) integrate and synthesize concepts to provide an informed point of view on a research question or an issue • (3) develop a position supported by information gathered during research • (4) draw conclusions based upon research and evidence ➢ (14) make connections among related, organized data, and assemble various pieces into a unified message ➢ (16) analyze and synthesize information to create a product

Inquiry Context	Learning Outcomes
	9.S.8 demonstrate skills of oral, written and visual literacy: • (1) communicate in a persuasive and engaging manner through speeches, multimedia presentations and written and oral reports, taking particular audiences and purposes into consideration • (2) use skills of informal debate to persuasively express differing viewpoints regarding an issue • (3) elicit, clarify and respond appropriately to questions, ideas and diverse points of view presented in discussions • (4) make reasoned comments relating to the topic of discussion • (5) listen to others to understand their perspectives **9.S.9** develop skills of media literacy: • (2) examine the values, lifestyles and points of view represented in a media message • (3) analyze the impact of television, internet, radio and print media on a particular current affairs issue

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