

Political System in Canada

↳ SS 11

- ↳ How do our beliefs translate to political action?
- ↳ How do we know what we are voting for?
- ↳ How can Canadians make change at different levels of government? (What needs changing?)
- ↳ What are our power structures and how do these affect the kind of society

Focus Questions

- ↳ Take the Quiz! Find out where you fall on the political spectrum (be prepared to share your results tomorrow in class)
- ↳ <https://www.politicalcompass.org>

Political Spectrum Quiz

- ⌘ What have you seen in the news lately about politics?
- ⌘ Try a "Canada politics news" search

Current Events

- ⌘ Chapter 10 Questions
- ⌘ Will learn more about this next class

Ideologies

COUNTERPOINTS – SS11 NOTES THE CITIZEN AND GOVERNMENT CH. 10

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Why hold an election?

⌘ How our elections work, why we have voter apathy

Big Idea

Writing

⌘ Define the following:

- ⌘ Electoral districts (ridings, constituencies)
- ⌘ Voter apathy
- ⌘ Nomination process
- ⌘ Enumeration
- ⌘ Party platform
- ⌘ Polling stations
- ⌘ Electoral officer
- ⌘ First-past-the-post system
- ⌘ Proportional representation
- ⌘ Single-transferable vote

1. Describe briefly how our voting system works
2. Why do you think we often have low voter turnout?
3. How do political parties choose the people they want to run in elections?
4. How are opinion polls used? What impact do they have on politicians?

<http://www.nationstates.net>

Game

THE ELECTORAL SYSTEM

FIRST-PAST-THE-POST

- Used in Canada
- Winners are candidates who get the most votes in their riding
- Winners does not need to have a majority over half of the votes in their riding

Example:

Conservative candidate	3000 votes
Liberal candidate	4000 votes
NDP candidate	4000 votes
Green Party candidate	3000 votes
Other Candidates combined	3000 votes

Even though the Conservative candidate did not have the majority (over half of the votes), he had the most votes in the riding, and would win the seat in the House of Commons.

Benefits of this System

- Easy to see who wins the seat in the House
- Usually a clear winner at the election (no minority governments)

Drawbacks of this System

- Electoral results do not often reflect the wishes of the majority of voters

Example:

If a majority had this made the Conservative party would win all 100 seats in the House of Commons even though they only received 33% of the total votes.

PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION

- Used in Israel, Belgium & Italy
- Political parties put forward a list of all its candidates
- Voters select a candidate based on the party he/she represents
- The number of seats a party wins in the House of Commons is based on the percentage of votes it receives
- The candidates from the winning party's list who received the most votes would earn seats in the House of Commons

Example:

Suppose there were 100 seats in the House of Commons (for ease of work). If 30% of voters in the UK voted for the Conservative Party, they would get 30% of the seats in the House of Commons.

Benefits of this System

- Number of seats each party earns is a good reflection of the wishes of the majority of voters

Drawbacks of this System

- Local representation (having a local MP allocated to each riding) would disappear or change
- Subtle but important governments that require multiple parties with different beliefs to join them a candidate to get things done

The Electoral System

- First-past-the-post system
 - What is it?
 - Pros?
 - Cons?
- Proportional representation (PR) system
 - What is it?
 - Pros?
 - Cons?

The Electoral System

- Some countries (e.g. Germany, New Zealand) have developed systems that combine elements of PR and first-past-the-post.
- The first-past-the-post system accentuates regionalism in Canada. (what does this mean?)



Choosing the Government

- Public Opinion Polls**
 - Parties typically spend 15% of their election budget on polling.
 - Polling companies contact a cross-section of the population that is believed to represent the views and opinions of Canadians in general.
 - Public opinion polls showing the level of voter support for parties are not allowed to be published in the 24 hours immediately prior to an election.
 - On election day, voting takes place in private, behind a small screen, and no campaign signs or literature are allowed at or around the polling station.

Public Opinion Polls

- PROS**
 - Believed to represent the views and opinions of all Canadians
 - Political parties can address particular concerns during speeches
- CON**
 - Believed to affect voter's choices (voting with the majority vs. own opinions or withdrawing)

Why Study Parliament?

{ SS 11 – Unit I (50-70 min)

⌘ In small group discussion, your classmates and you will consider a number of questions about Parliament, its importance to you as an individual, and its importance to our country. You will then choose one of the questions and write a short personal response to it.

Instructions

⌘ In your group, discuss the following questions as assigned. Write down your responses (one recorder) and be prepared to share (one speaker)

⌘ Observe...

- ⌘ State 10 ways in which decisions made in Parliament affect your daily life.
- ⌘ If you have seen televised excerpts from Question Period or the Speech from the Throne, what visual images do you remember?
- ⌘ What does a Senator do? What does an MP (Member of Parliament) do?
- ⌘ If you have met with, spoken to, or had written contact with a Senator or MP or his or her staff, describe the interaction. What question did you ask and what was the response?

Group Discussion

⌘ Reflect...

- ⌘ Have you ever visited Parliament? Have you ever watched events on Parliament Hill on television? What did it mean to you?
- ⌘ Have you ever had contact with Senators or MPs and let them know how you feel about important issues? Have you had successes or frustrations in contacting them?
- ⌘ What is the impression one gets about Parliament from watching tv news broadcasts and reading newspapers?
- ⌘ What other forms of government might we have if we didn't have a parliament?

Group Discussion Continued...

⌘ Think About...

- ⌘ Parliament makes decisions that affect you. What are some of those decisions? How do they affect your lives?
- ⌘ What role should the media play in its coverage of Parliament? Do you think its portrayal is accurate?
- ⌘ MPs are elected and Senators are appointed to make good decisions that serve the best interests of their constituents and the country. This may be a difficult balance. Sometimes they may be asked to make decisions that are not popular with their constituents. Should parliamentarians always consider the needs of their constituents first?
- ⌘ Why is our parliamentary democracy so important? If we did not have a democratic system, how would our lives be different?

Group Discussion Continued...

⌘ What if? ...

- ⌘ If you were a parliamentarian, what would you do to represent the youth of Canada?
- ⌘ As a teen, can you influence what Parliament decides? If yes, how? If no, why not? Does the situation change much when you reach voting age? Who do you think has the greatest influence in determining how our country is run?
- ⌘ Over the centuries, Parliament has evolved to become a fundamental means of resolving a society's conflict peacefully. What other options would you choose for resolving conflict peacefully? What if no one in our society exercised his or her right to vote? How would it affect our parliamentary system?
- ⌘ What are your responsibilities with respect to Parliament? To what degree do you and other Canadians meet these responsibilities? What can you do to make Parliament work better?

Group Discussion Continued...

<http://www.lop.parl.gc.ca/About/Parliament/PhotoGallery/index-e.html>

Parliament of Canada Photo Gallery

Choose one of the "Think about..." or "What if..." questions and write a short piece (2 paragraphs) in which you express your thoughts, feelings and ideas about the issues the questions raise. Your piece may be a series of reflections or ideas, an argument for a position about which you feel strongly, or a narrative describing personal experiences.

Personal Response Writing

Organization of the Parliamentary Day

{ SS 11 – Unit I (50-70 min)

- ⌘ Half of you will be parliamentary assistants to a Senator and the other half to an MP.
- ⌘ You will receive the following
 - ⌘ List of events in a Parliamentary Day
 - ⌘ Descriptions of Typical Events in a Parliamentary Day
 - ⌘ Copies of e-mail (Senate or House of Commons)
 - ⌘ Copies of Daily Planner Sheet (Senate or House of Commons)

Your Role

- ⌘ Review the instructions at the top of the e-mails.
- ⌘ Your MP or Senator needs help in scheduling and it is your job to read the e-mail, familiarize yourself with the parliamentary schedule for a typical Tuesday or Thursday, fit the different activities mentioned into the planner, and prioritize when necessary.

Review Instructions

- ⌘ How did you categorize the requests and set priorities?
- ⌘ How did your impressions of a parliamentarian's work change as a result of this exercise?

Journal Assignment

Who's Who in Parliament?

{ SS 11 – Unit I (50-70 min)

⌘ Key roles in Parliament.

Brainstorm

- ⌘ Governor General
- ⌘ Speaker
- ⌘ Prime Minister
- ⌘ Senator
- ⌘ Cabinet Minister
- ⌘ Member of Parliament
- ⌘ Leader of the Official Opposition
- ⌘ Committee Chair
- ⌘ Clerk
- ⌘ Page

Brainstorm

- ⌘ Complete the "Who's Who in Parliament" worksheet (in pairs) – you will have to do online research for this. If you are unable to find the information you will have to complete this at home.
- ⌘ This is due next class.

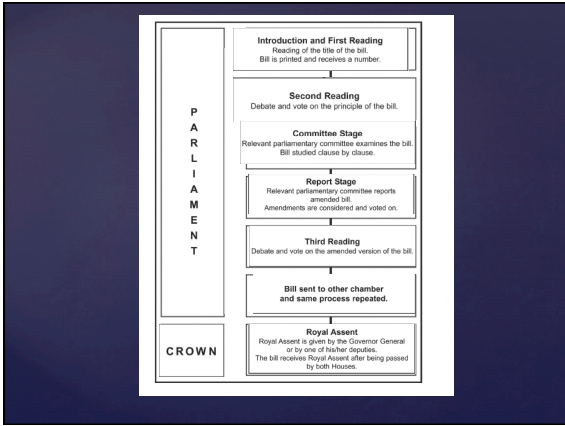
Who's Who in Parliament?

How a Bill Becomes Law

{ SS 11 – Unit I (50-70 min)

- ⌘ You will receive a copy of "Blank Flow Chart" and a copy of "How a Bill Becomes a Law"

Flow Chart



What are the benefits and drawbacks of having so many steps in the legislative process? (2 paragraphs)

Journal Response

There is a quiz open as of 3:30PM today on classmarker. Be sure you have received your code and have successfully logged in.
This quiz will be available until 11:55PM Friday July 8th

Classmarker Quiz
