

# LESSON 10

## THE VOTING PROCESS

### GUIDING QUESTIONS

Is it important to vote? How do I vote in provincial elections?

### SUMMARY

Voting in elections is the way Canadians express their choices for who they think is best to represent their needs locally and lead the province.

In this lesson, your students review essential information about voting in provincial elections in Ontario. Afterwards, they practice voting and counting ballots through a mock vote. In the culminating activity, students demonstrate their knowledge of voting by creating an instructive pamphlet or poster, which can be shared with a parent, guardian or an adult they know, encouraging them to vote.

### LEARNING GOALS

We are learning to:

- use the concept of *significance* to explain the importance of being an active and engaged citizen;
- understand how to participate in Ontario provincial elections (Citizenship Education Framework – Active Citizenship);
- use the concept of *significance* to describe the rights and responsibilities associated with citizenship in Canada;
- demonstrate effective communication skills to share information and messages about voting using our words and graphics (Global Competencies – Communication).

### SUCCESS CRITERIA

Below are some sample success criteria you can use or build upon. Co-creating success criteria with your class will allow students to have ownership over their learning and understand what successful learning looks like.

I CAN...

- discuss why it is important to be an active and engaged citizen (*significance*);
- describe when, where and how to vote in provincial elections;
- mark my choice on a ballot correctly;
- explain how and why voting is a responsibility of citizenship (*significance*);
- use words and images effectively to convey my message about voting and the voting process.

# LESSON 10: THE VOTING PROCESS

## CURRICULUM LINKS

	<i>Overall Expectations</i>	<i>Specific Expectations</i>
<b>Social Studies</b>	B3. Understanding Context: demonstrate an understanding of the roles and key responsibilities of citizens and of the different levels of government in Canada (FOCUS ON: Significance)	B3.1 describe the major rights and responsibilities associated with citizenship in Canada  B3.4 describe different processes that governments can use to solicit input from the public and explain why it is important for all levels of government to provide opportunities for public consultation
<b>Oral Communication</b>	2. use speaking skills and strategies appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes;	2.7 use a variety of appropriate visual aids to support or enhance oral presentations
<b>Writing</b>	2. draft and revise their writing, using a variety of informational, literary, and graphic forms and stylistic elements appropriate for the purpose and audience;  3. use editing, proofreading, and publishing skills and strategies, and knowledge of language conventions, to correct errors, refine expression, and present their work effectively;	2.3 use some vivid and/or figurative language and innovative expressions to add interest  3.8 produce pieces of published work to meet identified criteria based on the expectations related to content, organization, style, use of conventions, and use of presentation strategies
<b>Media Literacy</b>	3. create a variety of media texts for different purposes and audiences, using appropriate forms, conventions, and techniques;	3.1 describe in detail the topic, purpose, and audience for media texts they plan to create

## MINDS ON

1. Explain to students that the purpose of the Student Vote program is to give students a chance to practice voting so that they will be more prepared to vote in the future. The Student Vote results are released publicly and through the news media. This allows young people to have a voice in the election and have their perspectives shared. Watch the “[Student Vote 2015](#)” video with your class to give students a preview.

2. Through a whole class discussion, answer the following questions.

- What skills do you practice regularly? (e.g., sports, music, languages)
- Is it important for students to practice voting? Why or why not?
- Why should young people have the opportunity to share their views and opinions?
- Is voting in elections important? Why or why not?

## ACTION

1. Using Slide Deck 10, discover some of the key aspects of voting in Ontario provincial elections.

- What does it mean to vote by secret ballot?
- Who is able to vote in provincial elections?
- Who organizes provincial elections in Ontario?
- What is the voters list?
- Where do I vote?
- How do I vote?
- How do I mark my ballot?

2. Have students practice voting by holding a mock vote with your class. Create a simple ballot with a fun question and three to four options for choices (e.g., favourite sport, food, movie, TV show or musician/band). Templates are provided in Activity 10.1. You could also use an online application or software program.

3. Show students how to fill out a ballot correctly. Students can use a checkmark, X, or any other mark as long as it clearly indicates their choice. Remind students that they can only vote for one option, otherwise, it will not count.

## LESSON 10: THE VOTING PROCESS

4. Distribute the ballots and invite each student to go behind the voting screen one at a time to mark their choice. Afterwards, ask them to re-fold their ballot to ensure privacy and place it in the ballot box.

5. Review the ballot terms 'accepted', 'rejected' and 'unmarked'.

- Accepted: A ballot that is properly marked for one candidate.
- Rejected: A ballot that cannot be counted because the choice was not clear or more than one option was selected.
- Unmarked: A ballot that was not marked by the voter.

6. Divide students into small groups and ask them to review and count the ballots from the mock vote. One person should show the ballot to the rest of the group and as a group they should decide whether the ballot would be deemed 'accepted', 'rejected' or 'unmarked'. One person should be selected to tally the votes.

7. Add up the results from each group and announce the results.

8. Have a closing discussion and answer any remaining questions about the voting process.

- Do you think voting is easy?
- Do you feel ready to vote in the Student Vote election? Why or why not?
- What other questions do you have about voting?

### CONSOLIDATION

#### *Voting Poster*

Have students demonstrate their knowledge by creating a poster or pamphlet about how to vote or to promote voting. It could be designed for a parent, guardian, or an adult they know to encourage participation in the election. This poster can be done informally in a notebook, or as a larger assessment opportunity.

Ideas for possible content:

- Lists the qualifications for eligible voters in provincial elections;
- Where and when to vote;
- The steps to cast your ballot;
- Reasons for voting.

Co-create criteria with your class. Sample criteria below.

- Headings are meaningful and appropriate;
- Graphics or symbols are used to help explain the process (if applicable);
- The tagline and/or graphics are used to capture interest;
- Maps and charts are presented to help the intended audience.

### TIPS FOR TEACHERS

- Be aware of cultural responsive practices when discussing voting with students. Open and non-judgmental discussions about reasons why people do or do not vote will help foster comfort during class talks.

# LESSON 10: THE VOTING PROCESS

## ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Type of Assessment	Lesson Area	Guiding Questions for Teachers
FOR LEARNING	<b>MINDS ON:</b> Discussion	Can students describe the benefits to voting and consequences that come from not voting?
AS LEARNING	<b>ACTION:</b> Discussion  Mock vote	Can students explain who is qualified to vote?  Are students accurately casting a ballot?  Can students evaluate an accepted ballot and tally the votes?
OF LEARNING	<b>CONSOLIDATION:</b> Voting Poster	Are students choosing an appropriate audience for their poster?  Do posters demonstrate important details about how and why people should vote?

## LEARNING FOR ALL

<b>Individual Education Plans</b>	<p><b>Modifications</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide students with terms and definitions in advance.</li> <li>• Use CIVIX video resources on voting to help students develop prior knowledge before class discussions and activities.</li> </ul> <p><b>Enrichment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide the opportunity for alternative research:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Action segment: Research the different election worker roles and/or ways the voting process has evolved to be more accessible.</li> <li>- Consolidation segment: Research alternative ways Indigenous groups in Canada vote, current and historical.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>English Language Learners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide students with terms and definitions in advance.</li> <li>• Use additional CIVIX video resources on voting to help students develop prior knowledge before class discussions and activities.</li> </ul>
<b>Culturally Responsive Pedagogy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remind students that new immigrants, adults who have difficulty reading, English Language Learners, persons who are homeless, newly arrived refugees, and other specific groups may face challenges understanding or accessing the election system. Allow for constructive dialogue that recognizes individual and systemic barriers, while steering the focus on ideas to increase access and the benefits our society gets from hearing different voices.</li> </ul> <p><b>Indigenous Focus</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remind students that enfranchisement of Indigenous Peoples happened late in Canadian history. Despite this challenge, Indigenous groups have incredibly rich histories of voting in different ways in their communities.</li> </ul>
<b>Accessibility &amp; Learning Space</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure students can access ballot templates (alternative colours in printing, electronic copies).</li> <li>• Provide mobility accommodations when casting and counting ballots.</li> </ul>

# ACTIVITY 10.1: BALLOT CARD TEMPLATES

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