

LESSON 10

ELECTION ISSUES

GUIDING QUESTION

Which party or candidate will best address my interests and concerns for the province?

SUMMARY

Political parties bring together people with similar ideologies and political perspectives who are seeking to effect change by being elected.

In this lesson, students learn about the election process in Ontario. After learning the basics, students work in groups to research a candidate or party running in their school's electoral district and present this information to the rest of the class. Students reflect on the similarities and differences between the candidates and/or parties, and assess which they would support and why. Overall, students cultivate the skills and attitudes that foster civic engagement and develop their civic self-image.

LEARNING GOALS

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Use the concept of *political significance* to explain how elections work and how ideas and people contribute to political change in society;
- Understand how to find out which electoral district they live in and which candidates are running for election;
- Develop an understanding of how political institutions affect their lives (Citizenship Education Framework – Structures);
- Work in a collaborative manner to learn about the candidates and parties running in the election;
- Use the concept of *political perspective* to compare and contrast how different political parties respond to the same political issue;
- Develop a sense of their civic self-image image by exploring their own political views (Citizenship Education Framework – Identity).

SUCCESS CRITERIA

- I can analyze how elections work and how ideas and people contribute to political change in society;
- I can explain how to find out which electoral district I live in and which candidates are running for election;
- I can assess how elections affect my life;
- I can collaborate with my peers to learn about candidates and parties running in the election;
- I can compare and contrast how different political parties respond to the same political issue;
- I can evaluate which issues matter most to me and which candidates or parties best align with my political views.

CURRICULUM LINKS

CHV20 – Overall Expectations

A1. Political Inquiry: use the political inquiry process and the concepts of political thinking when investigating issues, events, and developments of civic importance

A2. Developing Transferable Skills: apply in everyday contexts skills developed through investigations related to civics and citizenship education, and identify some careers in which civics and citizenship education might be an asset

B2. Governance in Canada: explain, with reference to a range of issues of civic importance, the roles and responsibilities of various institutions, structures, and figures in Canadian governance

C2. Inclusion and Participation: assess ways in which people express their perspectives on issues of civic importance and how various perspectives, beliefs, and values are recognized and represented in communities in Canada

CHV20 – Specific Expectations

A1.2 select and organize relevant evidence, data, and information on issues, events, and/or developments of civic importance from a variety of primary and secondary sources, ensuring that their sources reflect multiple perspectives

A1.4 interpret and analyse evidence, data, and information relevant to their investigations using various tools, strategies, and approaches that are appropriate for political inquiry

A1.5 use the concepts of political thinking when analysing and evaluating evidence, data, and information and formulating conclusions and/or judgments about issues, events, and/or developments of civic importance

A1.7 communicate their ideas, arguments, and conclusions using various formats and styles, as appropriate for the intended audience and purpose

A2.1 describe some ways in which political inquiry can help them develop skills, including the essential skills in the Ontario Skills Passport, and those related to the citizenship education framework, that can be transferred to postsecondary opportunities, the world of work, and everyday life

A2.2 demonstrate in everyday contexts attributes, skills, and work habits developed in civics and citizenship education

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A2.3 apply the concepts of political thinking when analysing current events and issues involving Canada and the world

B2.1 identify the political parties in Canada and their position on the political spectrum, and explain how the beliefs/values that underpin them may affect their perspectives on and/or approaches to issues of civic importance

B2.5 identify Canada's form of government and demonstrate an understanding of the process of electing governments in Canada

C2.1 analyse ways in which various beliefs, values, and perspectives are represented in their communities, and assess whether all perspectives are represented or are valued equally

C2.3 describe various ways in which people can access information about civic matters, and assess the effectiveness of ways in which individuals can voice their opinions on these matters

MINDS ON

1. Review the concept of elections: elections are contests of leadership, ideas, politics and power where interested groups and individuals compete against each other and campaign for public support.

2. Ask students what they know about how provincial elections work in Ontario. Students should write down their thoughts in the K column on Activity 10.1 (What do I KNOW about elections in Ontario?).

3. Now ask students to write down their next set of thoughts in the W column on Activity 10.1 (What do I WANT to know about elections in Ontario?).

4. Through a class discussion, ask students to consider how they think individuals should be selected to represent the people of Ontario? Guiding questions:

- Ontario's population is over 14 million people. How many elected representatives should we have in our provincial legislature?
- Ontario is made up of many communities and groups with different needs and wants. Do you think someone in the Greater Toronto Area has the same concerns as someone living in Sudbury? Why or why not? What about gender or ethnicity? In what ways should our representatives reflect our population?
- Have you ever voted for something before? How did you express your choice? How was the winner(s) chosen? There are many different ways to express preferences on a ballot. How should citizens be able to share their preferences for elected representatives? One choice? Two choices? Ranking of choices? How should the winners be chosen?

ACTION

1. Review the election process in Ontario using the following guiding questions and support tools (Slide Deck 10, 'Elections in Ontario' video).

- What is an election?
- What is a candidate?
- What is an electoral system?
- What are electoral districts? How many do we have in Ontario?
- What electoral system do we use in Ontario elections? How does it work?

Teacher Note: The number of electoral districts in Ontario will increase to 124 for the general election on June 7, 2018. This includes four electoral districts in Northern Ontario, where previously there were two, in order to improve electoral representation in the far North. They include Kiiwetinoong, Mushkegowuk-James Bay, Timmins, and Kenora-Rainy River.

2. Demonstrate to students how they can find out which electoral district they live in by visiting the Elections Ontario website – Voter Information Service (enter your postal code). Examine the map of your school's electoral district and review the boundaries. Point out the location of your school in the electoral district.

3. Review the list of candidates running in your school's electoral district. Elections Ontario will update this information on a daily basis during the election and the final list will be posted after the close of nominations on May 17, 2018.

4. Organize students into groups and assign each group a candidate, or allow them to choose one based on their preference. The goal is to ensure that a group covers each candidate running in your electoral district, including independent candidates.

Using candidate and party websites and social media platforms (Twitter, Instagram, YouTube), campaign literature and news sources, ask each group to create a presentation about their assigned candidate.

- Who is the local candidate? Do they belong to a political party?
- What are the main messages of their campaign advertisements?
- If applicable, who is the current leader of the party? What is their vision for Ontario?
- What are the party's main priorities or ideas? What is their platform?
- Where does the party or candidate sit on the political spectrum?

Students can also produce videos, posters or multi-media works to share this information.

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5. Have each group present their political party to the rest of the class. Students can take notes on each presentation using Graphic Organizer 10.2. Afterwards, have students vote on the political party they like best – excluding their own party.

Teacher Note: Organize a presentation schedule that would allow each group to visit other classes in the school on a rotational basis to help inform and prepare the student electorate for Student Vote Day. A school-wide assembly could also be coordinated.

CONSOLIDATION

Have a brief closing discussion about political parties and local candidates with your class.

- What are the key similarities and differences between the candidates and/or parties?
- Which candidate/party would you support and why?

ASSESSMENT IDEAS

A) After the lesson and activities are complete, ask students to write down what they learned about elections in Ontario in the L column on Activity 10.1 (What have I LEARNED about elections in Ontario?).

B) Ask students to write an independent supported opinion paragraph about which candidate they would choose to vote for and why (Consolidation activity).

C) Summative Assessment – Ask students to select an issue that matters most to them and research each party's position or policy on the selected issue. Which party's position or policy do you most agree with and why?

ACTIVITY 10.1: ELECTIONS IN ONTARIO – KWL CHART

K What do I KNOW about elections in Ontario?	W What do I WANT to know about elections in Ontario?	L What I LEARNED about elections in Ontario?

Which level of government has the most impact in my life? Explain.

ACTIVITY 10.2: GRAPHIC ORGANIZER – GETTING TO KNOW THE CANDIDATES & PARTIES

Fill out the graphic organizer below with information about the candidates and parties running in your electoral district.

Candidate/Political party details	Priorities, promises and key messages
<p>Candidate Name:</p> <p>Party Name:</p> <p>Party Leader:</p>	
<p>Candidate Name:</p> <p>Party Name:</p> <p>Party Leader:</p>	
<p>Candidate Name:</p> <p>Party Name:</p> <p>Party Leader:</p>	
<p>Candidate Name:</p> <p>Party Name:</p> <p>Party Leader:</p>	
<p>Candidate Name:</p> <p>Party Name:</p> <p>Party Leader:</p>	