

Lesson 2: Post-Visit Debrief

OBJECTIVES

Students will debrief after Rep Day and discuss ways to become engaged in politics and stay connected with their Member of Parliament and community.

LEARNING GOALS

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

- Review the highlights of the MP visit;
- Understand the role and function of their Member of Parliament;
- Pinpoint other opportunities for local civic engagement.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- What are some of the ways I can stay engaged in politics?
- What was my impression of the visit and of my MP?
- How do I feel in regards to our politicians and democratic institutions?

LESSON PLAN

Part A: Debrief of Visit (10 min)

In groups, ask students to reflect on the Rep Day visit with the MP and discuss the following guiding questions:

- Did you enjoy the meeting? Was your MP approachable?
- Did anything about the visit surprise you?
- Did it change how you view politics and politicians?
- What did they learn from their MP's visit?
- Do you think the experience was valuable for your MP? Why or why not?
- Did they think of any other questions they would have liked to ask their MP since the visit?

Alternatively, you could ask your students to write a short paragraph to answer one of those questions.

Part B: Engagement (20-30 min)

1. There are a number of ways young people can participate in their democracy, even if they are too young to vote. Ask students to suggest some examples. Include all or some of them on the board, on chart paper or on the SmartBoard. Examples may include:

- Volunteering at a local constituency office or for a candidate during the next electoral campaign;
- Joining a political party's youth wing;
- Joining your MP's Youth Council (if it doesn't exist, write to your MP about starting one);
- Attending a public meeting at your local city or town hall and/or asking a question during question period during a town hall meeting;
- Joining an activist group that works for a cause you feel passionate about.

Additional examples could include:

- Joining a leadership group or student council/parliament at school;
- Volunteering with an organization (governmental or otherwise) that provides services for people in your community;
- Discussing issues that are important to you with family and friends;
- Staying informed about current events;
- Writing letters to political representatives (at any level) about issues that concern you.

2. Try to brainstorm different ways students can keep in touch with their MP. How do you get in touch with an MP?

- Social media (like Twitter or Facebook)
- Subscribing to newsletters
- Following local news
- Attending events
- Writing letters or emails

3. Ask students to reach out to their MP using any of the ways discussed above. Students can ask about a political issue they care about, an issue they may have forgotten to bring forth during the visit, or ask for clarification on a topic that was brought up by the MP.

Part C: Final Considerations (10 min)

Considering the examples on how to remain in touch with their MP and how to get involved, ask students the following questions:

- How many students would take part in their MP's activities?
- Do students plan on participating in their democracy between now and the next election (municipal/local, provincial/territorial or federal)?
- How many students plan to vote when they are eligible? Why or why not?
- Do you have to vote to be politically engaged?

HOMEWORK:

- Ask students to access social media platforms to follow their MP, a local or national news organization, the Parliament of Canada, or any other political organization or individual that would provide insights about their government.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

- Have students write a short summary of their Rep Day meeting, as if it were being covered by a local or national newspaper. What aspects of the Rep Day visit would be highlighted? Would the focus be on students or the MP? Who would you interview and what would they say? Is the tone of the article positive or negative? Is there a photo they would include? Students can share their articles in class the next day. (Please also consider sharing them by email to rep@civix.ca, by using #RepDay on Twitter or Instagram or sharing them with CIVIX on Facebook).
- Track events, debates and issues at the federal level of government. This could include following your MP's social media platforms and website to analyze their stance on key issues

and comparing them with relevant news articles. You could also dedicate a corner on your classroom wall to post news articles that speak about your MP, their area(s) of expertise or concern your riding.

- Make it clear to students that their federal Member of Parliament is not the only political representative that they can turn to about local issues or to learn more about getting involved in politics. Using your postal code, [Find Your Representative](#) enables you to search for your elected representatives at each level of government. Do not hesitate to contact these other representatives directly to organize an independent classroom visit!

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [Contact information for Members of Parliament](#) – Parliament of Canada
- [Contact information for all political representatives in your riding](#) – Find Your Canadian Representative