



Unit 1 Lesson 6 - Democracy in Canada

Lesson Overview

Students will learn about the fundamental principles of democracy in a Canadian context. They will then apply these principles of democracy to evaluate Canada's current system.

75 minutes

Connections to Inquiry Process (at least one)

- ★ Formulate Questions
- ★ Gather and Organize
- ★ Interpret and Analyze
- ★ Evaluate and Draw Conclusions
- ★ Communicate

Connections to Political Thinking Concept(s)

Political Significance
Political Perspective

Curriculum Expectations

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

A1.5 communicate their ideas, arguments, and conclusions using terminology, formats, and styles appropriate for specific audiences and purposes, and use accepted forms of documentation to acknowledge different types of sources

B1. Civic Issues, Democratic Values: describe beliefs and values associated with democratic citizenship in Canada, and explain how they are related to civic action and to one's position on civic issues (FOCUS ON: Political Significance; Political Perspective)

B1.2 describe fundamental beliefs and values associated with democratic citizenship in Canada, including democracy, human rights, freedom, and the rule of law, identifying some of their key historical foundations, and explain ways in which these beliefs and values are reflected in **citizen actions**

B1.4 explain why it is important for people to engage in **civic action**, and identify various reasons why individuals and groups have engaged, and continue to engage, in such **action**, using both **historical** and current examples

Learning Goals

We are learning the fundamental principles of democracy so that we can evaluate Canada's own democracy.

Readiness

- Prepares students for the basics of government structures in Canada to be explored in Unit 2.
- Students will have focused on the Political Thinking Concepts, having completed one assignment for evaluation.
- Students have background knowledge of treaties, the treaty-making process, and *The Indian Act*, problematizing the notion of an 'authentic democracy'.

Materials

- Computer
- Projector
- Speakers
- Chart paper or paper for groups
- Markers

Resources

1. Springtide Collective, "[How Canada Became a Democracy Part One](#)"



<p>Terminology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Citizenship● Democracy● Rights● Equality● Accountability● Transparency● Tolerance● Rule of Law● Freedoms● Responsibilities● Oppression● Stability and Change	<ol style="list-style-type: none">2. Springtide Collective, "How Canada Became a Democracy Part Two".3. Student Vote: Democratic Principles
<p>Minds On</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Establishing a positive learning environment● Connecting to prior learning and/or experiences● Setting the context for learning	<p>Connections</p>
<p>WHOLE CLASS (15 mins):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">4. Post the following question for the class: "<i>Is Canada's democracy working?</i>" in a visible location. Then, divide students into groups. Ideally, students can be organized into groups of 3. Assign each student in each group a letter - student A, student B, student C and ask the students to review the question they have been assigned. <p>Teacher Note: create larger groups and partner students together to respond to one question together (e.g. two students as student C).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Is Canada a true democracy? Recall what we've already learned about the history and ongoing oppression of Indigenous Peoples enshrined into law via The Indian Act.b. We cannot go back in time, so how do we maintain <i>Stability</i> in our society while realizing much needs to <i>Change</i> in order to have a truer democracy?c. Has Canada's democracy contributed to The Common Good of all its residents/citizens? Do you think many Indigenous Peoples would agree? <ol style="list-style-type: none">5. To help students respond to the questions, show students the following short YouTube videos:<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. From Springtide Collective, "How Canada Became a Democracy Part One" and "How Canada Became a Democracy Part Two". These videos are part of the Three Minute Citizen, an educational suite of videos about government in Canada including its politics, law and history. Please note, in these videos, the Haudenosaunee are referred to incorrectly as Iroquois. This is corrected in the next video.b. From PBS and NPR, "Haudenosaunee: Women and Governance" a video explaining the role of women in Haudenosaunee governance and explains some links between the Haudenosaunee system and that of the United States of America.	<p>Assessment <i>for</i> learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Teacher will stop videos to clarify points and highlight key ideas● Teacher will be providing verbal feedback to small groups as they answer questions <p>Assessment <i>as</i> learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Students will provide informal peer assessment and collaboration in small group to achieve a consensus on questions● Consider making students responsible in their groups for certain tasks: note taker, leader, presenter, etc. <p>Differentiated Instruction:</p> <p>Differentiation of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Process○ Product○ Content● Based on:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Readiness○ Student interest○ Learning profile



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<p>c. From CIVIX' Student Vote program, "Democratic Principles" outlines some basic principles of Canada's democracy today.</p> <p>6. Give students time to discuss as a group and then conduct a whole group discussion. Students should then record their thinking on their Common Good course tracker.</p>	
<p>Action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Introducing new learning or extending/reinforcing prior learning● Providing opportunities for practice and application of learning (guided > independent)	<p>Connections</p>
<p>WHOLE CLASS (40 mins):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Distribute the handout from Student Vote - Ontario 2022 (Civix): Handout 1.1: the Principles of Democracy . As a class, read aloud the principles, one-by-one, until the whole sheet is done. Consider creating vocabulary cards with the key terms from the hand out and distributing them to students. Have them write their own definitions on the back of the cards in groups and then post what they think is the BEST explanation of their word cards on a word wall. To create a word wall, see this resource: Using Word Walls to Develop and Maintain Academic Vocabulary Read Write Think <p>Some key words/terms to put on word cards for a word wall are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Human Rights● Equality● Free/Fair Elections● Accountability● Transparency● Rule of Law● Political Tolerance● Citizen Participation <ol style="list-style-type: none">2. Distribute a copy of the student worksheet, Democratic Principles, and have students complete the organizer using the Principles of Democracy handout from step 1.3. Begin the Student Vote slide deck, Thinking About Democracy. Review the first slide together as a class.<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Images will prompt students to come up with words or phrases.b. Use speaker notes in the slide deck to prompt discussion.c. Model the Visual Thinking Strategy process for the first couple of images to get the students to investigate the images (see: How to Teach Visual Thinking Strategies to Your Students Education World)4. Once done, students should complete the SECOND part of the worksheet distributed in Step 2 in partners or on their own, linking rights and responsibilities. Review student responses in a whole group discussion..	<p>Assessment: Assessment <i>for</i> learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Students respond to material in group discussion.● The teacher should review the handout and design Socratic questioning / discussion prompts to ensure all listed examples of democratic principles are understood in context. <p>Differentiated Instruction:</p> <p>Differentiation of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Process○ Product○ Content● Based on:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Readiness○ Student interest○ Learning profile <p>Different students will recognize and understand different images on the slides. Consult the speaker notes for the slides.</p> <p><i>Encourage</i> thinking aloud in response to the handout and images, especially for students with less developed English vocabulary and language difficulties.</p> <p>Quick Tips: Use the speaker notes in the slide deck to prompt discussion.</p>



Consolidation <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Providing opportunities for consolidation and reflection• Helping students demonstrate what they have learned	Connections
GROUP (20 mins): <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Divide the class into six groups giving each group ONE principle of democracy.2. Students will create a dramatic representation of their assigned principle. This can be:<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. a short skit, song, choreographed TikTok, or brief tableau3. Students should have fun demonstrating their understanding of what the principle of democracy looks like in their daily life. The trick is that they will not explicitly communicate which principle they are presenting - the rest of the class has to guess based on the dramatic representation!4. As each group presents to the whole class, each student should complete an assessment using this handout.	Assessment: <p>Assessment <i>as</i> learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Peers assess each other on their success in portraying the principles of democracy. Differentiated Instruction: <p>Differentiation of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Process○ Product○ Content <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Based on:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Readiness○ Student interest○ Learning profile <p>Each group depicts one of the six principles of democracy, using the dramatic method of their choice.</p> Quick Tips:
Additional Resources	

The Common Good: course tracker

Individualistic

The Common Good









Exit Card: Democracy in our Everyday Lives

Each group in the class is responsible for showing us ONE of the Principles of Democracy we have learned about in class. You have 10 minutes to create a short (minimum 15 second - maximum 30-second) skit or Tiktok, song or tableaux to demonstrate what this **looks like** in a democratic society. Refer to the slide deck images and to the descriptions in your handout. If the rest of the class can figure out which of the principles of democracy you are demonstrating BEFORE your time is up, you have done a good job! Give each group a level based on how clear and accurate they are.

Criteria/Achievement	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Overall clarity of expression and accuracy	Limited	Somewhat	Good	High Degree

As each group demonstrates their principle, record what you see and how it connects to the principle of democracy.

Principle	Looks like...	Level?
 <p>HUMAN RIGHTS AND EQUALITY</p>		
 <p>FREE AND FAIR ELECTIONS</p>		
 <p>ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY</p>		
 <p>THE RULE OF LAW</p>		
 <p>POLITICAL TOLERANCE</p>		
 <p>CITIZEN PARTICIPATION</p>		





PRINCIPLES OF DEMOCRACY

from the Greek demos, "people", and kratos, "rule"

1. **What does democracy look like? Using your Principles of Democracy sheet, identify WHICH principle of democracy is shown in each of the PPT examples**

Example	What is it? (1)	What principle is demonstrated? Explain why. (2)
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		

2. For each of the principles of democracy, identify a specific RESPONSIBILITY that goes with each principle. A RESPONSIBILITY is something which must be done to uphold a right for all so that the Common Good is attempted and/or achieved. It is also called an 'obligation' or a 'duty.' Use your 'Principles of Democracy' information sheet to determine what would be a specific duty or responsibility to uphold each right.

Everyone in a democracy has the right to but they must
 <p>HUMAN RIGHTS AND EQUALITY</p>	
 <p>FREE AND FAIR ELECTIONS</p>	
 <p>THE RULE OF LAW</p>	
 <p>POLITICAL TOLERANCE</p>	

HANDOUT 1.1: The Principles of Democracy

There are several guiding principles that act as the foundation of a democracy.



- All people living in a democracy have guaranteed rights, such as freedom of opinion and expression, freedom of religion, and the right to organize and take part in peaceful protests.
 - In most democracies, individuals are valued equally regardless of race, religion, ethnicity, language, gender or sexual orientation.
 - In Canada, our fundamental freedoms and equality rights are protected by the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, part of Canada's Constitution.
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- Adult citizens have the right to vote in elections to choose their political representatives.
 - Adult citizens also have the opportunity to run for political office.
 - There are no obstacles to voting and no threats made to citizens before or after an election.
 - In Canada, there must be elections to choose governments every five years or less.
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- Elected representatives are responsible for their actions. They must perform their duties according to the wishes of those they represent, not for themselves or other interests.
 - In a democracy, the media holds government to account and aims to keep citizens informed.
 - In Canada, elected representatives participate in activities like Question Period to be held to account for their actions and respond to questions from the opposition parties, and engage in meetings with the public.
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- Laws are enforced equally, fairly and consistently. This means that everyone, including government officials, the police and members of the military, must obey the law.
 - It also means that governments cannot punish people unless they have broken the law.
 - All Canadians have a responsibility to respect the laws of the land, even if they disagree with them.
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- Society is comprised of people with different cultural backgrounds, who practice different religions, come from different racial and ethnic backgrounds, who have different gender identities or sexual orientations. The voices of these different groups are valued.
 - Democratic societies strive to be politically tolerant and the rights of minorities are protected.
 - Those who are not in power must be allowed to organize and share their opinions.
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- Citizen participation in government is more than just a right – it is a responsibility.
 - Participation includes voting in elections, being an informed citizen, debating issues, attending community meetings, paying taxes, serving on a jury and protesting.
 - Citizen participation builds a stronger democracy.
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