

LESSON PLANS
AND ACTIVITIES

Election facts and the
value of voting

Grade 6

YOUR
power **TO**
CHOOSE

ElectionsManitoba





GRADE 6

Lesson 3 of 3

Supports

Curriculum Outcomes:

6-KC-002

6-KC-006

6-KP-051

Resources/Materials

- Election Facts – True or False and answer key
- Reasons Why People Vote
- Red and green index cards
- Survey: How Much Do Adults Know About Elections? and answer key

Lesson Objectives

Students learn the value of voting:

- Student perspective
- Adult perspective
- Youth participation statistics

Teaching Strategies

- Consensus Building
- Brainstorming
- Survey

Activating Strategy

Consensus Building Activity

- This pre-exercise will help students practice the skill of consensus building by warming up with a fun, true or false Election Facts Questionnaire (see page 5).
2. Setting up the activity:
 - Hand out the Election Facts – True or False Questionnaire.
 - Instruct students to take two to three minutes individually to fill out the questions.
 3. Ask them to turn to a partner and compare their answers for three to five minutes.

NOTE: Every student will have his/her own reason for choosing an answer so this will provide an opportunity to explain his/her decision and come to an agreement on one correct answer.
 4. Students MUST keep in mind the following rules of consensus building:

State your answer and the reason why you believe your answer is correct.

Be an active listener – this means that you have to listen to your partner’s point of view.

Don’t take shortcuts – speak your mind.

Don't give in to your partner if you believe you know the facts. If you still think your answer is correct, leave your answer and move on to the next question. It's OK to disagree.

5. When students are finished their discussions, reveal the answers; hand out the answer keys so your students have a clean copy with all the correct answers and the facts (see appendix).
6. Poll the class to see how many people got more questions correct when they came up with an answer on their own, compared to how many questions were correct when done with their partner.
7. Ask students what they learned from this activity.

Possible answers may include:

- *Two heads are better than one.*
- *There are different ways to look at a problem/issue.*
- *Being an active listener is important.*
- *Sometimes I changed my mind because my partner thought of a reason that I didn't think of.*

Acquiring Strategy

Brainstorming Activity

1. Brainstorm with the class a list of reasons why they think it is important to vote.
2. Once this has been completed, hand out the list of reasons why people vote that are supported by statistical research (see appendix).
3. Ask students individually to rank the reasons with (1) being the most common reason why people say they vote and (10) being the least common reason.
4. Once completed, ask students to turn to their partner and compare lists.
5. Ask students to come up with one list of answers that will be reflective of the pair (consensus building).
6. Reveal the correct order.

SUGGESTION: The teacher can do a poll to see whether students did better individually or as a team (pair).

7. Hand out one red index card and one green index card to each student (see included package).
8. Tell students that the red card represents that they “disagree” and the

green card represents that they “agree” with the statement.

9. Ask the students to display the card of their choice to the class once the following statement is read:

Are you going to vote when you turn 18?

10. Now ask students if they knew the following:

Many 18-year-old men entered into combat for the country in the Second World War. It was after this period in history that there was a clear movement to drop the voting age to 18 from 21.

Participation of 18- to 24-year-olds in the 2015 federal election indicates the highest increase in turnout since Elections Canada began collecting information on the age of voters. Turnout for voters 18–24 increased to 57.1% in 2015 from 38.8% in 2011. Even with the increase, however, participation among 18- to 24-year olds was the second lowest of all age groups.

Card Game Activity

1. Ask students to take out a piece of paper to prepare for the next activity.
2. Tell students to fold the paper in half and then in half again creating four quadrants or cards.
3. Ask students to tear along the folds to create the cards for the game and then find a partner.
4. When play has stopped, ask each pair to share one reason with the class, (without repetition of answers), to create one master list of explanations.

Applying Strategy

1. Ask students to come up with some possible solutions to the list of reasons for not voting created during the last activity; this can be done through brainstorming as a class.

Some common suggestions are:

- *Focus on educating new voters*
- *Get families talking about politics and elections at home*
- *Lower the voting age*
- *Get candidates/parties to talk about issues that are important to young people*

How to



- Without the help of his/her partner, each student is to write down one explanation on one of the cards as to why young people don't vote .
- When they are done, students can share their explanation with their partner. If they both came up with the same answer, the team gets one point. If the explanations are different, the team gets two points.
- The object of the game is to come up with as many unique explanations as possible (for a maximum total of eight points).

Survey: How Much Do Adults Know About Elections?

1. Ask students to conduct a survey (see appendix for the answer key) with an individual (relative, friend etc.) who is 18 or older. The survey asks personal questions about experience with elections and knowledge questions about the electoral process and the current government in power.
2. Once students have completed the survey, students will get into groups of three. Each group member will be assigned a number.

Person #1 Write the rough draft of questions

Person #2 Keep the group on task (noise level etc.)

Person #3 Write the final draft of questions
3. Students will be asked to compare survey answers with other group members. Through comparison and discussion, students will find out the correct answers to the knowledge questions.
4. Students will create one five-question multiple choice quiz with corresponding answers. Use these questions generated by the class for a future quiz or test on this unit.

Debriefing

1. At the end of class, ask students to take out a piece of paper.
2. Write the following questions on the board:

List five reasons that are important to YOU in explaining why people vote.

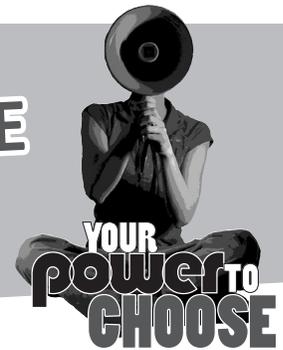
Rank the list (1-5) according to what YOU think is the most important reason – (1) being the most important and (5) being least important.

Explain why the number one reason is most important to you.

Think of one incentive that would encourage youth to vote.

ELECTION FACTS TRUE OR FALSE

Pre-Election Experience



Circle your answer.

1. In some countries, the voting age is less than 18.

True False

2. The United States of America is the world's largest democracy.

True False

3. It is illegal to eat your ballot in a Canadian federal election or by-election.

True False

4. The secret ballot originated in Australia in the 1850s and is sometimes called the Australian ballot.

True False

5. The word "democracy" originated in ancient Rome.

True False

6. Québec was the first Canadian province to allow women to vote.

True False

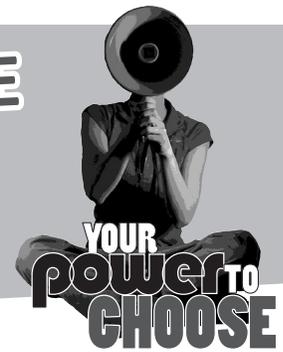
7. In some countries voting is compulsory. If one chooses not to vote, he/she can be charged a small fine, community service and (although rarely) imprisonment.

True False

ELECTION FACTS TRUE OR FALSE

ANSWER KEY

Pre-election Experience



1. In some countries, the voting age is less than 18.

- True

There are a number of countries around the world where the voting age is less than 18:

- In Brazil, the minimum voting age is 16 – voting is voluntary until you turn 18, and then it is compulsory.
- In Cuba, the minimum voting age is 16 – anyone eligible to vote is also eligible to be nominated as a candidate.

2. The United States of America is the world’s largest democracy.

- False

India is the largest democracy. Almost 554 million people voted in India’s national election in 2014, breaking the world record for the largest democratic election ever held.

3. It is illegal to eat your ballot in a Canadian federal election or byelection.

- True

Six members of the Edible Ballot Society, a protest group, were charged after the 2000 Canadian federal election for willfully destroying a ballot.

4. The secret ballot originated in Australia in the 1850s and is sometimes called the Australian ballot.

- True

New Brunswick was the first colony in British North America to use the secret ballot in 1855.

5. The word “democracy” originated in ancient Rome.

- False

The Greeks coined the term for democracy. *Demos* means “the people” and *kratos* means “to rule.” Together the components create the definition of “democracy” – “ruled by the people.”

6. Québec was the first Canadian province to allow women to vote.

- False

In 1916, Manitoba became the first province to grant voting privileges to women, although not all women were eligible to vote.

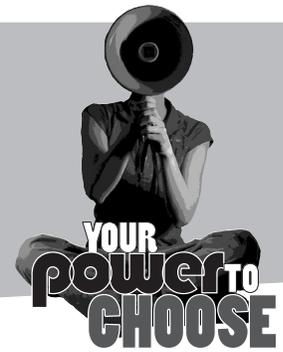
7. In some countries voting is compulsory. If one chooses not to vote, he/she can be charged a small fine, community service and (although rarely) imprisonment.

- True

For example, voting is compulsory in Australia. Voter turnout in Australia has not dropped below 94% since the general election in 1955 (when it was approximately 88%).

REASONS WHY PEOPLE VOTE

Pre-election Experience



Most common reasons for voting:

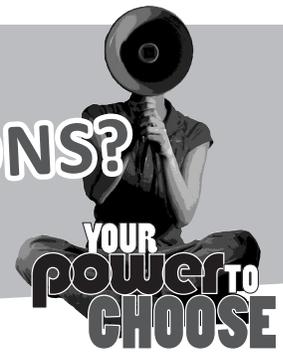
- To exercise the right – we live in a democracy and we have the right to vote – why not use it
- Out of duty – many people feel it's their job as citizens to participate in elections
- To support a particular candidate or their political party
- To have a voice – to have a say in how things are done
- To change things, to make a difference
- The system doesn't work if people do not vote

Some explanations why people don't vote:

- Don't have time
- Forget
- Have to work
- Don't like any of the choices
- Don't know who to vote for
- Out of town
- Not interested
- Doesn't matter
- Don't know where or when to vote

SURVEY: HOW MUCH DO ADULTS KNOW ABOUT ELECTIONS?

Pre-election Experience



Assignment: Use the following survey questions to interview someone who is 18 years of age or older (e.g. a relative, neighbour, friend etc.).

Personal Questions

1. Gender:

Male

Female

2. Age:

18-24

25-34

35-44

45-54

>55

3. Do you discuss politics/government with your family?

Yes

No

4. Do you feel that it is important to vote?

Yes

No

Please explain:

5. Have you ever voted in an election (federal, provincial, or municipal)?

Yes

No

If no, what was your reason for not voting?

6. At what age did you first vote?

7. When you vote, what is the number one thing you consider when making your decision?

SURVEY: HOW MUCH DO ADULTS KNOW ABOUT ELECTIONS?

Pre-election Experience



8. Was there ever a time that you did not vote?

Yes

No

Please explain:

Knowledge Questions

1. Manitoba was the first province to have women vote.

True

False

2. What is an electoral division? What electoral division do you live in?

3. What is a voters list?

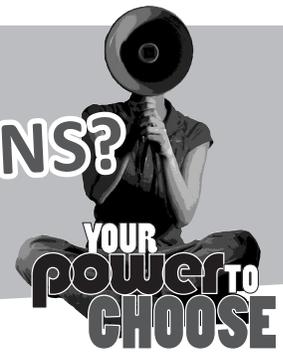
4. How old do you have to be to vote in a provincial election?

5. What does MLA stand for?

6. Who is your current MLA?

SURVEY: HOW MUCH DO ADULTS KNOW ABOUT ELECTIONS?

Pre-election Experience



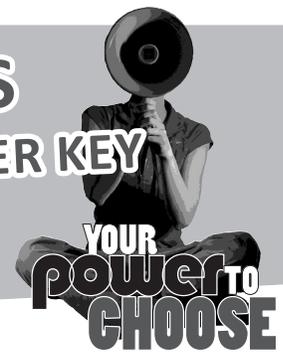
7. What political party does your MLA belong to?

8. What is a political party?

9. How many political parties do we currently have in Manitoba?

SURVEY: HOW MUCH DO ADULTS KNOW ABOUT ELECTIONS? ANSWER KEY

Pre-election Experience



Knowledge Questions

1. Manitoba was the first province to have women vote.

- True

2. What is an electoral division? What electoral division do you live in?

- An electoral division is a geographic area. Manitoba is divided into 57 electoral divisions for the purpose of elections. Each electoral division is represented by an elected candidate.

Each division has approximately the same number of people living in it when the boundaries are drawn. It is divided this way to make sure there is equal representation for each voter. The boundaries of Manitoba's electoral divisions are reviewed every 10 years and adjusted for changes in population.

To find out what division(s) your students live in, visit www.electionsmanitoba.ca. Electoral division maps are also available from Elections Manitoba.

3. What is a voters list?

- A voters list is a record of every person who is registered and eligible to vote, including their name and address.

4. How old do you have to be to vote in a provincial election?

- You have to be 18 to vote in a provincial election. You must also be a Canadian citizen and have lived in Manitoba for six months before election day.

5. What does MLA stand for?

- Member of the Legislative Assembly. When a candidate gets elected, he/she becomes an MLA.

6. Who is your current MLA?

- A listing of the current MLAs is available on the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba's web site: www.gov.mb.ca/legislature

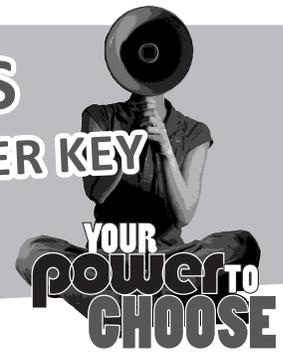
7. What political party does your MLA belong to?

- See answer to question 6.

8. What is a political party?

SURVEY: HOW MUCH DO ADULTS KNOW ABOUT ELECTIONS? ANSWER KEY

Pre-election Experience



- A political party is a group of persons organized to nominate and support candidates.

9. How many political parties do we currently have in Manitoba?

- As of December 2016, we have five registered political parties in Manitoba:
 - Communist Party of Canada – Manitoba (CPC-M)
 - Manitoba Liberal Party (Liberal/Libéral)
 - Manitoba Party (MP)
 - New Democratic Party of Manitoba (NDP)
 - The Green Party of Manitoba (The Manitoba Greens)
 - The Progressive Conservative Party of Manitoba (PC Manitoba)

Refer to www.electionsmanitoba.ca for a current list of political parties.