



LESSON PLANS
AND ACTIVITIES

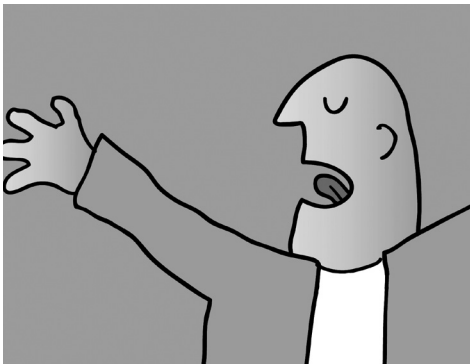
**Ways and Impact
of Participating**

Grades 9 & 11

**YOUR
power TO
CHOOSE**

*Elections*Manitoba





GRADES 9 & 11

Ways and Impact of Participating

Lesson Objectives

Students will learn about the importance of participation and democracy:

- Ways to participate
- Impact of participating
- The power of the individual

Teaching Strategies

- Debate
- Discussion
- Fish Bowl

Activating Strategy

1. As a class, brainstorm a list of issues students feel may be neglected in elections.
2. From this list, narrow it down to the top five issues that students feel are the most important and least discussed.

Supports

Curriculum Outcomes:

Grade 9

9-KC-005

9-KC-008

9-KC-013

9-KC-014

9-KP-046

Grade 11

How much influence do governments have in the everyday lives of most citizens?

What are the responsibilities of citizens?

Resources/Materials

- Peer Evaluation
- Popsicle sticks

Acquiring Strategy

1. Divide the class equally into five groups.
2. Write the issues on pieces of paper and put them into a hat.
3. Have one member from each group draw from the hat.

Applying Strategy

The Debate

1. Each group has five to seven minutes to debate in their small groups and try to win over its negotiator.
2. When time is up, have group members comment on the debate by filling out a Peer Evaluation sheet (see page 4).

Discussion

1. Ask students what they learned from this activity.

How can the skills practiced in this activity be applied in our system of democracy in Manitoba? (Examples: lobbying the government, political/social activism, writing to your local MLA, voting, becoming a candidate, joining a political party)

SUGGESTION: Have students write their local Member of the Legislative Assembly on issues that they feel strongly about and/or visit the Manitoba Legislature and witness a political debate.

Debriefing

Fish Bowl Activity

1. Give each student two Popsicle sticks.
2. Ask the class to gather around a centrally located table in the room.
3. Have students build a structure by adding their sticks one-by-one.
4. Ask for three volunteers. Have each remove a stick from the top, middle and bottom of the structure.
5. Freeze the activity.

How to

- As a group, students identify two sides to the issue.
- Appoint one member to be the negotiator and assign him or her one side of the issue.
- The rest of the group takes the opposing side.
- The objective of this debating exercise is for the group to convince the negotiator to support their position on the issue.
- Before meeting as a group, each student (including the negotiator) must research the issue using the Internet, magazines, newspapers etc. and develop an argument for their side.
- All members (excluding the negotiator) should meet in advance of the debate to decide who will discuss what and develop a strategy to win over the support of the negotiator.

6. Discuss the following:

What do you think the Popsicle sticks represent? (People. Voters. Democracy.)

What happened when we removed three sticks? (The structure fell apart.)

What does this demonstration show you? (The power of the individual within a group. Participation is fundamental to democracy. Participation strengthens the democratic process.)

7. Have the students rebuild the structure.

8. Now ask one student if he or she can remove approximately two-thirds of the sticks – some from the top, some from the middle and some from the bottom – without toppling the structure.

9. This will prove to be impossible. Explain to students that approximately three-quarters of eligible young people (those 18 - 24) do not vote.

10. Freeze the activity.

11. Ask students the following questions:

What do you think about this statistic regarding youth participation?

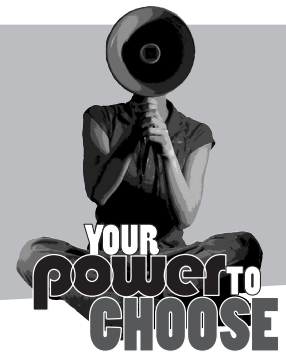
Why do you think so few youth vote?

Do you think it is important to participate in elections?

What are some incentives that could be used to encourage young people to get involved?

PEER EVALUATION

Democratic Experience



1. Do you think your group did a good job convincing the negotiator to change positions on the issue?

Circle the number that applies to the description.

1 Poor 2 Satisfactory 3 Good 4 Very Good 5 Excellent

Explain your choice.

2. Was your group well prepared to defend your respective positions?

Circle the number that applies to the description.

1 Poor 2 Satisfactory 3 Good 4 Very Good 5 Excellent

3. Provide one positive comment to each group member.