

Backgrounder

New Civic Education Resources for Secondary Students

Elections Canada recently developed new civic education resources for secondary students, tailored to today's curricula and teaching methods. The resources are hosted on our new learning-focused website, [ElectionsandDemocracy.ca](https://electionsanddemocracy.ca).

Developed with Teachers, for Teachers

Elections Canada's new suite of secondary resources was created through extensive consultation and collaboration with educators across the country. We worked with expert teachers to develop pedagogically sound content, formed a national Advisory Circle of Educators to vet and advise on decisions along the way, and pilot-tested each resource in classrooms across Canada.

Meeting the Needs of Today's Classrooms

Elections Canada's new resources are linked to provincial and territorial curricula and will contribute to democracy education across Canada. Teachers can access these resources online or order them for free. They can be used in many classes, including social studies, history, geography and math. The new lessons are inquiry-based, designed around activities that spark students' reflection and discussion. They have been designed to promote student-centred learning with rich content, such as maps and videos, combined with hands-on, interactive learning.

List of new education resources

Voting Rights through Time

Exploring issues of inclusion since 1867

The right to vote hasn't always existed for everyone. In this activity, students reflect on the question of inclusion and exclusion then work together to examine case studies related to federal voting rights. Through debate and discussion, they create a timeline with attitude to explore the question: How inclusive is our democracy?

Elections by the Numbers

Interpreting data on voter turnout

Voter turnout changes over time, and participation in elections affects our democracy. In this activity, students think about voting trends and make predictions about new ones. Then, they analyze real elections data and create their own visual interpretation to compare youth voting to other age-group voting.

Civic Action: Then and Now

Analyzing a model for active citizenship through historical case studies

Citizens can act in a number of ways inside and outside the formal political process in order to bring about change. In this activity, students think about something they would like to change in their community. They explore historical case studies that resulted in real change and examine the actions taken by real citizens. They apply their understanding as a model to launch their own civic action.

Geography of Elections

Understanding ridings as electoral communities

Each federal election, a community of voters chooses one candidate to represent their district in Parliament. In this activity, students reflect on the different communities to which they belong. By examining electoral maps and census data, they compare their ridings to others and come to understand ridings as communities of voters.

Does Voting Matter?

Experiencing the effects of voting

In every election, whether voter turnout is high or low, the person elected makes decisions that affect everyone. In this activity, students explore how much they care about decisions that are made by the federal government and how much voting matters to them. They then engage in a series of fun voting simulations and view a consolidation video to consider the question: Does voting matter?

Election Simulation Toolkit

Engaging students in the electoral process

By practicing voting through an election simulation, students can gain first-hand experience with the electoral process. This kit, complete with ballot box and voting screen, is based on the real procedures that are in place for Canadian federal elections. Note that the popular elementary resource, *Choosing Our Mascot*, will continue to be available at ElectionsandDemocracy.ca.

About Elections Canada's Civic Education Program

Educating students about the federal electoral process is an important part of Elections Canada's mandate. For over 20 years, we have fulfilled this mandate by providing a civic education program for students in primary and secondary schools. Research shows that there is a link between increased political knowledge and interest in voting. The goal of the civic education program is to give young people the knowledge, understanding, interest and skills they need to decide how they want participate in democracy.