



Civic Action: Then and Now

Analyzing a model for
active citizenship through
historical case studies

Civic Action: Then and Now

Big Idea

Actions taken by citizens have resulted in change. Citizens can act in a number of ways both inside and outside of the formal political process.

Inquiry Question:

How can you take action to make a difference?



Overall description

This activity can be used in a social studies, history, civics or citizenship class. It can also be used to launch a student-led civic action or service learning project.

In this activity, students think about something they would like to change in their school or community. Then they examine one or two historical case studies that resulted in real change.

They can then apply that understanding as a model for their own civic action on a present-day issue that they care about.

✕ Time needed

60 min

✕ Competencies and skills

- Students will think critically in determining relationships between cause and effect to understand historical events.
- Students will manage information by sorting and categorizing relevant historical facts.
- Students may work collaboratively and use problem-solving skills to explore the citizenship issues in each of the case studies, or they may work independently.
- Students will communicate their ideas in small-group discussions to clarify understanding. They will express their conclusions in whole-class discussions and personal reflection to become self-aware of any changes in their thinking since the start of the activity.

✕ Materials

- Activity board*
- Case Study 1: Women and the Vote
 - Activity cards*
 - Video**
 - Background information (pages 9–10)
 - Potential response guide (pages 11–14)
- Case Study 2: Aboriginal and Treaty Rights in Canada's Constitution
 - Activity cards*
 - Video**
 - Background information (pages 15–18)
 - Potential response guide (pages 19–22)
- Thinking guide (page 24)
- Graphic organizer: Ways to Take Civic Action (page 25)
- Optional assessment rubric (page 26)

* In your kit or online at electionsanddemocracy.ca

** Available online at electionsanddemocracy.ca

Instructions

Before beginning the lesson, decide whether your class will do one or both case studies. If you would like students to complete both case studies, you will probably need more than one class period.

✕ Minds on

5 min

Ask students to write quietly for two minutes, answering these questions on their thinking guide:

- What is one thing you would like to change in your school, community or society?
- What could you do to change it?

They then find a partner and share their ideas.

Alternatively, teachers can collect and display student responses using sticky notes or a collaborative document (such as Google Docs, Google Forms, Padlet or a polling app). Or simply collect the handouts to analyze later.

Explain that students will now analyze a historical case study in civic action to see real-life examples of people working for lasting change.

✕ Activity

25 min

Begin by showing the introductory video related to the case study you are exploring. Ask students to observe the kinds of civic actions citizens are taking in the video. After watching the video, have a brief class discussion identifying some of the actions that students noticed.

1. Getting started

Place students in small groups. Distribute a set of case study cards and an activity board to each small group.

Before beginning the activity, take about five minutes to go through the definitions on the activity board.



Explain that the activity board outlines four ways to take civic action. This model demonstrates that any person can take action to make a difference on something that matters to them, but for real change to happen, actions must be taken in all quadrants:

Participating as an individual

Personal actions like volunteering, signing a petition, attending a meeting or expressing your opinion.

Working together as a group

Collective actions such as joining or forming a group with like-minded people to plan and organize activities.

Building public support

Outreach actions like holding a rally or starting a communications campaign to convince others to support your cause.

Working through the political system

Actions like contacting a politician or presenting a petition to bring an issue to elected officials and others involved in politics and government.

Then explain the categories in more detail by talking through the example of a petition, which can go through all four categories:

- A person who signs a petition is participating as an individual.
- When many people decide to create and circulate a petition, that is working together as a group.

- When a petition draws widespread attention to an issue, that is building public support.
- When a petition is presented to an elected official, that is working through the political system.

You can also model the activity by placing one card on each quadrant.

2. Placing the cards

Working together, students will analyze the case study cards and place them in the appropriate quadrants on the activity board.

Give students time to discuss and come to a consensus on where to place the remaining cards.

Note: Each case study card demonstrates one historical action that, when combined with all the other actions, resulted in change. There is no single set of correct answers for where to place the cards, as many cards could fit comfortably in more than one category. The discussions and reasoning are more important than the answers.

Here are some options to build broader consensus within the class:

- Pair up like groups (such as two groups that did the same case study) so students can continue to build consensus across groups.
- Pair up unlike groups (such as two groups that did different case studies). Ask: What similarities and differences do you notice in the two groups? Have groups share and record their observations on the board or on chart paper.

✖ Consolidation

30 min

Part 1

Discuss in small groups or as a whole class the following questions (from the thinking guide):

- What could happen if you removed one of the quadrants?
- Would the events of the case study be similar or different today?

Part 2

Then invite students to reflect individually on the following questions:

- Consider the action you wrote down at the start of this activity. What kind of civic action is it? How has your thinking changed since the beginning?
- Consider the thing you would like to change. What would it look like if you changed it for the better? What results would you like to see?
- What else could you do to take action on the thing you would like to change? Create a civic action plan using the activity board as a template.

Have students share their reflections in pairs or small groups. (Teachers can facilitate the forming of civic action groups.) Students then work together to brainstorm ways they could take action to get the civic results they would like to see, using the activity board as a template.

✖ Optional extension activity

After they have completed the case study activity, invite students to work together (as a whole class or in small groups) to plan and take action on a civic issue that matters to the group. You can assign many of the roles based on the Ways to Take Civic Action template (page 25). For example, students can research existing groups working on this issue (working together as a group), work on media relations (building public support) or draft emails to members of Parliament or school trustees (working through the political system).

This activity can also be used in a history class to examine the actions of individuals in the past, and then to launch an exploration or investigation using the following historical thinking concepts:

- **Change and continuity:** What has changed since then? What has remained the same?
- **Cause and consequence:** What were the most important factors in creating this historical change? What are the consequences of that change, in the short term and in the long term? Were there any unintended consequences?
- **Ethical dimension:** What is my responsibility, now that I understand this historical event?

✕ Teaching tips

- It is good practice and time well spent for engagement to establish norms or co-create success criteria for a civic discussion. You may wish to start by referring to guidelines in your provincial/territorial curricula.
- This activity offers you an opportunity to give students feedback on their discussion skills, or to have them reflect on the norms and how they are progressing.
- Some students may struggle to find a civic action that they care about personally. You may need to spend more time with them in personal reflection, conversation or prompting to help them to connect their own passions and sense of justice to a civic action.
- Discussion protocols are a helpful way to engage all students and provide support for academic conversations. Think-Pair-Share is used in this activity as a simple talk protocol. Students think and write individually, share with a partner, then share in a small group or with the whole class. This gives time for thinking, builds confidence, and ensures that all students have the opportunity to have their voice heard.



Background information

For teachers



Case Study 1: Women and the Vote

✖ Background information

The struggle for women to achieve their democratic rights and vote in provincial and federal elections took decades. Groups sprang up across the country to advocate for women's equality and their right to vote. The suffrage movement—the fight for women's voting rights—was especially motivated and organized on the Canadian Prairies, with Manitoba leading the way.

Manitoba women, like all women in Canada, were denied the vote after the province entered Confederation in 1870. Women's rights activism grew out of grassroots campaigns that spawned several suffrage groups and a number of dedicated leaders. The earliest women's rights organizations in the province were formed in Manitoba in the 1890s by women who had come from Iceland. Other groups supporting women's suffrage, such as the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, followed. They drew up petitions, and women lobbied Manitoba politicians to secure their support. Many people opposed these initiatives, but the movement towards suffrage had begun.

The momentum intensified when the Manitoba Political Equality League, founded in 1912, started its organized and highly creative campaign to press for women's rights. Led by notable women such as Nellie McClung, the League undertook a campaign to win the support of Manitobans and pressure the provincial government to grant women the right to vote. The members advanced their cause through alliances with other provincial groups, delivering educational lectures and organizing rallies and media promotions. They even held a satirical mock parliament. In 1915, the League collected over 40,000 names on a petition in favour of women getting the vote and delivered it to the premier and the Manitoba legislature.

The concerted actions of women (and men) across Manitoba had a major impact on the political and social climate of the province. In 1916, a bill was introduced by Premier Norris and passed by the legislature to offer some women in Manitoba the right to vote. (It did not apply to all women in the province, as they had to meet other eligibility criteria.)

Manitoba was the first jurisdiction in post-Confederation Canada to remove the gender barrier to voting. This was the first step in a decades-long journey to achieving voting rights for women throughout Canada.

Key Dates for the Removal of Gender Barriers in Provincial and Federal Elections

The list of dates beside outlines some key milestones in the journey to women's voting rights in Canada.

Voting history is complex: gender was only one of the factors that determined who was eligible to vote at the federal and provincial level. At different times and in different parts of the country, other factors included Indigenous status, race, property ownership, religion, occupation and more.

We use the word "many" beside as a reminder that not all women received the right to vote when gender barriers were removed. They were excluded by other eligibility criteria that applied to both women and men. In particular, First Nations women and men were not afforded the right to vote until 1960, unless they gave up their status.

- **1916:** Many women in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta obtain the provincial vote.
- **1917:** Many women in British Columbia and Ontario obtain the provincial vote.
- **1917:** Women serving in the Canadian Armed Forces and women who are relatives of men in the military are able to vote in federal elections.
- **1918:** Many women across Canada obtain the federal vote.
- **1918:** Many Nova Scotia women obtain the provincial vote.
- **1919:** Many New Brunswick and Yukon women obtain the provincial or territorial vote.
- **1922:** Many Prince Edward Island women are able to vote in provincial elections.
- **1925:** Many women in Newfoundland and Labrador (which did not become part of Canada until 1949) are able to vote.
- **1940:** Many Quebec women obtain the provincial vote.
- **1950:** Inuit women (and men) obtain the right to vote.
- **1951:** Many women in the Northwest Territories obtain the right to vote at the territorial level.
- **1960:** First Nations women (and men) obtain the federal vote without conditions.
- **1982:** The *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* guarantees all citizens the right to vote.

Please see another Elections Canada educational resource, *Voting Rights through Time*, for more information about inclusion, exclusion and voting rights at the federal level in Canada.

Visit electionsanddemocracy.ca.

✖ Potential Response Guide: Women and the vote

There is no single set of correct answers to the case study card placement activity in *Civic Action, Then and Now*. Many cards could comfortably fit in more than one category: the discussion and reasoning are more important than the answers.

However, here is one possible set of responses that may be helpful to teachers.

Participating as an individual

1	Sign a petition Individual women and men signed a petition in favour of Manitoba women getting the right to vote.
2	Collect signatures on a petition Amelia Burritt, age 93, personally collected over 4,000 names on a petition supporting Manitoba women's right to vote.
3	Write articles for newspapers and magazines Francis Marion Beynon wrote a regular "women's page" for the <i>Grain Growers Guide</i> that highlighted equality issues.
4	Donate money to support the cause Mary Hamble donated funds to the Manitoba Political Equality League, which promoted women's right to vote.
5	Attend an event Women and men showed their support for women's right to vote by attending meetings, rallies, lectures and social events.

Working Together as a Group

1	<p>Create a group of local supporters</p> <p>The Manitoba Political Equality League was founded to promote equality and obtain the right to vote for women in the province.</p>
2	<p>Join with national organizations</p> <p>Local women’s groups worked with national organizations such as the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union to help further their cause.</p>
3	<p>Hold group activities</p> <p>Manitoba women held social events or “Pink Teas” in their homes so women could discuss issues related to the struggle for equality.</p>
4	<p>Build alliances with others</p> <p>Manitoba women’s groups got support from other organizations, such as the Manitoba Grain Growers Association.</p>

Building Public Support

1	<p>Give public talks</p> <p>Nellie McClung, a novelist and activist, went on speaking tours to promote her writings and women's voting rights.</p>
2	<p>Create a publication</p> <p>A monthly magazine, <i>Freyja</i> (which means "woman" in Icelandic), was published in Manitoba to educate readers about women's rights.</p>
3	<p>Take part in public events</p> <p>The Manitoba Political Equality League set up a booth at the Winnipeg Stampede, where they handed out pamphlets in favour of women getting the vote.</p>
4	<p>Attract attention through advertising</p> <p>The Manitoba Political Equality League ordered 100 banners to hang on Winnipeg streetcars as rolling ads.</p>
5	<p>Use humour to get noticed</p> <p>Women staged a mock parliament with a humorous debate on whether men should have the vote.</p>
6	<p>Collect signatures on a petition</p> <p>Women brought petitions to church meetings, family gatherings and fall fairs where they could persuade a lot of people to sign.</p>

Working Through the Political System

1	<p>Speak to the legislature</p> <p>Leaders of various organizations gave inspiring speeches in the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.</p>
2	<p>Get involved in election campaigns</p> <p>Women volunteered to help provincial electoral candidates who would, if elected, support women's voting rights in the legislature.</p>
3	<p>Present a petition</p> <p>A petition with over 40,000 signatures was presented to the provincial premier to show there was political support for women's voting rights.</p>
4	<p>Promote introduction of a bill</p> <p>Activists convinced Premier Norris to introduce a bill in the Manitoba legislature to extend the vote to women in the province.</p>
5	<p>Contact an elected member</p> <p>Women contacted all members of the Manitoba legislature to demand that women get the right to vote and to run as provincial candidates.</p>



Case Study 2: Aboriginal and Treaty Rights in Canada's Constitution

✖ Background information

Introduction

This case study examines a moment in Canada's history when the *Constitution Act, 1982* and the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* were being created. The focus is on some of the civic actions taken to attain constitutional recognition of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights.

Note: This lesson does not cover the larger story of Indigenous rights, governance and law.

Begin by acknowledging that First Nations, Métis and Inuit have their own ways of governing themselves: Indigenous governance is distinct from the mainstream federal political system.

Historical Context for this Case Study

When the federation that we know today as Canada was formed in 1867 through Confederation, its highest law (or Constitution) was under the control of the British Parliament. In the 1970s, the federal government decided it was time to bring this law back from Great Britain and create a new Canadian Constitution.

From 1978 to 1982, First Nations, Métis and Inuit leaders and groups took action nationally and internationally to fight for affirmation of their rights.

This case study has been selected as a compelling example of civic action, rather than as a study in constitutional history.

Terminology

Terminology relating to Indigenous people in Canada is evolving. There is not always a simple answer when it comes to which term to use. Here are some guidelines:

- First Nations, Métis and Inuit are distinct and separate peoples. In fact, there are more than 600 First Nations. Whenever you can be specific, that is the best choice.
- When you want to refer to First Nations, Métis and Inuit collectively, use the term "Indigenous peoples or Aboriginal peoples." While both are correct, "Indigenous peoples" is the preferred term at the present time.
- However, when it comes to the question of rights, it is important to use accurate wording. When referring to the Constitution, the proper legal term is "Aboriginal Rights."

For the purposes of this lesson, to respect the historical context of the 1980s, when these events took place, and to avoid confusing students by using the terms “Aboriginal” and “Indigenous” interchangeably, we use “Aboriginal” throughout. In the 1980s, the most common term for First Nations individuals was “Indian.” That term is also used in this resource where appropriate historically.

What are Treaty, Aboriginal and Indigenous Rights?

- **Treaty Rights**

Agreements between specific groups of First Nations, Métis or Inuit and the Crown (government) that recognize certain rights, such as rights to land and resources. Some treaties were signed before Confederation, while others are very recent, but all of them are still in effect. These Nation-to-Nation agreements create binding obligations on both parties. These obligations have been interpreted differently by the parties involved and continue to be discussed today.

- **Aboriginal Rights**

Rights that apply to all First Nations, Métis and Inuit in Canada and are affirmed in the Constitution.

- **Indigenous Rights**

Rights outlined in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and inherent to Indigenous people everywhere in the world. Canada has signed the declaration.

In brief: The Story of Aboriginal Rights in the Constitution

When the Government of Canada decided to patriate, or bring home, the Constitution from the control of the British Parliament in the late 1970s, Aboriginal peoples expected to be consulted and be part of the development. Would there be recognition of existing Aboriginal land title and Treaty Rights? Would they have a say in future amendments or changes to the Canadian Constitution? These concerns mobilized Aboriginal groups into action across the country to ensure that a new Canadian Constitution affirmed their rights.

The main national Aboriginal groups involved at the time were:

- National Indian Brotherhood (now Assembly of First Nations), representing the status Indians
- Inuit Tapirisat of Canada (now Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami), representing Inuit
- Native Council of Canada (now Congress of Aboriginal Peoples), representing Métis and non-status Indians
- Native Women’s Association of Canada

First Nations, Métis and Inuit leaders used a number of strategies to seek constitutional recognition of their rights. They organized action groups, lobbied politicians, launched petitions, prepared written submissions, made presentations, and sought national and international support. An office was set up in London, England, as a base for lobbying support from British parliamentarians to delay transferring the Constitution back to Canada.

One of the largest grassroots efforts within Canada was the “Constitution Express,” organized by the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs. These two trains left Vancouver in November 1980 to head to Ottawa, picking up passengers along the way. Around a thousand people, mostly First Nations, arrived in Canada’s capital to publicize their cause to all Canadians and to parliamentarians.

Throughout 1980 and 1981, the federal government held a number of constitutional meetings and First Ministers’ conferences (meetings between the prime minister and the provincial premiers) on its plan to patriate the Constitution and introduce a new *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. The plan required a certain level of agreement between the federal government and the premiers. This was not easy to obtain, as various provinces opposed the idea. Amid all the federal–provincial negotiations, it was difficult for Aboriginal peoples to make themselves heard. In November 1981, the federal and provincial governments came to a tentative agreement on the Constitution that did not include Aboriginal or Treaty Rights.

This news spurred Aboriginal leaders to organize demonstrations across Canada. They demanded further rounds of discussion with government leaders. Finally, they persuaded the federal government and the provinces to provide the constitutional recognition that Aboriginal peoples had fought for.

In the end, actions taken by First Nations, Métis and Inuit individuals and groups bore results. On July 1, 1982, the *Constitution Act* was enacted: it included the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. Section 35 of the *Constitution Act* legally guaranteed that “existing Aboriginal and Treaty Rights of the Aboriginal people of Canada are hereby recognized and affirmed.” The Constitution defines “Aboriginal” as including Indian, Inuit and Métis.

The affirmation of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights in the Constitution was an important step, but it is not the end of the story. Since 1982, First Nations, Métis and Inuit have taken many more actions to affirm their rights. Conversations continue to this day.

Some Key Concepts Relating Canada's Constitution and Aboriginal Rights

The Constitution

A constitution outlines the principles by which a country is governed. Canada's Constitution had its roots prior to 1867, but the *British North America Act* (BNA Act) of 1867 was the written foundation of the country's laws and governance. The BNA Act, which was passed by the British Parliament, created Confederation and set out the responsibilities and powers of each level of government and the rights of the nation's inhabitants.

From 1867 to 1982, Great Britain retained the power, or authority, to amend Canada's Constitution. For many years, but intensifying in the 1970s, the federal government sought ways to transfer (or "patriate") the Constitution from Great Britain and have the ability to amend or change it. Lengthy rounds of discussions took place between the federal government and the provinces to define the content of the new Constitution and the proposed creation of a Canadian charter of rights and freedoms.

After the federal government came to an agreement with nine provincial premiers (Quebec was the only exception) on the content of the *Constitution Act* and the *Charter of Canadian Rights and Freedoms*, Canada's Parliament asked the British Parliament to pass an Act to patriate Canada's Constitution. The *Constitution Act, 1982* ended the need for the British Parliament to be involved in Canada's constitutional affairs.

Aboriginal Peoples and the Constitution

Agreements between the Crown and Aboriginal Peoples existed before Confederation and the BNA Act. Aspects of the agreements are written down in the Royal Proclamation of 1763 and in treaties.

The BNA Act stated that the federal government had jurisdiction over "Indians and Lands reserved for Indians." There was no explicit mention of Inuit or Métis in the BNA Act, as Canada's territory at the time was much smaller and did not include the west or the north.

As Canada grew after Confederation, relationships between the Crown and First Nations, Inuit and Métis were negotiated and governed through treaties, the 1876 *Indian Act*, land claims, and other laws and policies. But there was no national constitutional acknowledgement of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights until the Constitution Act, 1982.

✖ Potential Response Guide: Aboriginal and Treaty Rights in Canada's Constitution

There is no single set of correct answers to the case study card placement activity in *Civic Action, Then and Now*. Many cards could comfortably fit in more than one category: the discussion and reasoning are more important than the answers.

However, here is one possible set of responses that may be helpful to teachers.

Participating as an Individual

1	Join a national protest Individuals gave up several days to travel by train from Vancouver to Ottawa to protest on Parliament Hill.
2	Donate money Individuals donated money to cover the \$90,000 cost of renting two trains to bring protesters from Vancouver to Ottawa.
3	Bring food At stops along the way, people brought food and gifts for the train passengers to help them on their journey.
4	Provide support The Mayor of Ottawa personally welcomed protestors who arrived by train.
5	Step up as a leader George Manuel, president of the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs, came up with the idea of the "Constitution Express" train.

Working Together as a Group

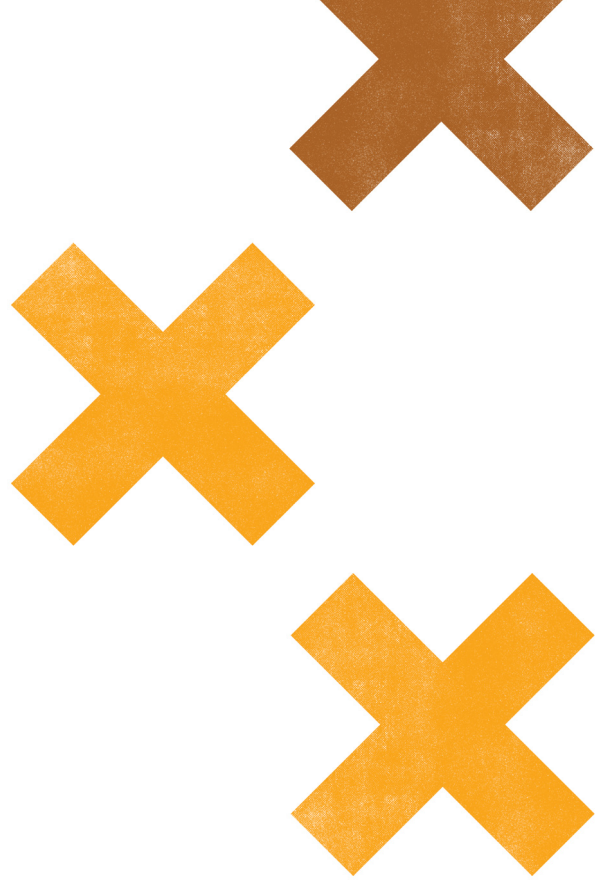
1	<p>Bring leaders together</p> <p>Hundreds of chiefs and elders from all provinces and territories (except Alberta) held the first All Canada Chiefs Assembly so they could work together on constitutional issues.</p>
2	<p>Create a way for people to take part</p> <p>The Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs rented two trains to bring groups of protesters from Vancouver to Ottawa.</p>
3	<p>Set up an action committee</p> <p>The Inuit Committee on National Issues was created to present Inuit views on Canada’s Constitution.</p>
4	<p>Coordinate activities</p> <p>First Nations groups arranged marches on Parliament Hill and at provincial legislatures.</p>
5	<p>Create a new national organization</p> <p>The National Indian Brotherhood changed the way it was organized and became the Assembly of First Nations.</p>

Building Public Support

1	<p>Educate others</p> <p>First Nations activists organized a campaign to educate the public about Aboriginal and Treaty Rights.</p>
2	<p>Take it to the world</p> <p>First Nations leaders travelled to Britain, Europe and the United Nations to tell an international audience about their cause.</p>
3	<p>Make it visible</p> <p>About 1,000 First Nations protesters attracted attention by travelling from Vancouver to Ottawa aboard a train they called the “Constitution Express.”</p>
4	<p>Talk to the media</p> <p>When the “Constitution Express” train arrived in Ottawa, First Nations activists spoke with journalists who spread the word about Aboriginal rights.</p>
5	<p>Build community awareness</p> <p>The Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs organized workshops across the province to educate First Nations communities about rights and treaty issues.</p>

Working Through the Political System

1	<p>Lobby British lawmakers</p> <p>Over 200 First Nations Chiefs travelled to England to meet British parliamentarians and convince them that Aboriginal rights needed to be protected.</p>
2	<p>Make presentations</p> <p>First Nations, Métis and Inuit groups made many formal written and verbal presentations to the Canadian parliamentary committee that was working on the Constitution.</p>
3	<p>Meet with the Governor General</p> <p>On behalf of the National Indian Brotherhood, National Chief Noel Starblanket met with the Governor General of Canada.</p>
4	<p>Petition the Queen</p> <p>First Nations Chiefs took a petition to Queen Elizabeth (as head of state) to ask her and the British government to delay patriating the Constitution.</p>
5	<p>Discuss with Canadian decision makers</p> <p>First Nations, Métis and Inuit leaders met with politicians and government officials at all levels to express their concerns about the wording of the Constitution.</p>
6	<p>Work with elected representatives</p> <p>Aboriginal activists asked Peter Ittinuar, the only Inuk member of Parliament, to arrange meetings with key decision makers on Parliament Hill.</p>



Materials

To be photocopied

✕ Thinking Guide Civic Action, Then and Now

Before the case study

1. What is one thing you would like to change in your school, community or society?

2. What could you do to change it?

After the case study

1. What could happen to a civic action if you removed one of the four ways to take civic action? (Example: If a bill is introduced in Parliament, but there is no public support; OR there are a lot of individuals taking action, but no groups are organized.)

2. Would the events of the case study be similar or different today?

For individual reflection

1. Consider the action you wrote down at the start of the activity. What kind of civic action is it?

2. Consider the thing you would like to change. What would it look like if you changed it for the better? What results would you like to see?

3. What else could you do to take action on the thing you would like to change?
Create a civic action plan using the Ways to Take Civic Action template.

✖ Graphic Organizer: Ways to Take Civic Action

Brainstorm as many ways to take action as you can to get results on the civic issue of your choice. Write a statement of the results you want before you start!

Participating as an individual

Personal actions like volunteering,
signing a petition, attending a meeting
or expressing your opinion.

Working together as a group

Collective actions such as joining or
forming a group with like-minded people
to plan and organize activities.

Building public support

Outreach actions like holding a rally
or starting a communications
campaign to convince others to
support your cause.

Working through the political system

Actions like contacting a politician or
presenting a petition to bring an issue to
elected officials and others involved in
politics and government.

✕ Elections Canada Civic Education Assessment Rubric

Task: Civic Action: Then and Now

Student name: _____ Group: _____

	Absent / Incomplete	Level 1 (Below expectations)	Level 2 (Approaches expectations)	Level 3 (Meets expectations)	Level 4 (Exceeds expectations)
Understanding Content (e.g., ideas, opinions, concepts, relationships among facts)		Demonstrates limited understanding of content	Demonstrates some understanding of content	Demonstrates considerable understanding of content	Demonstrates thorough understanding of content
Understanding Context(s) (e.g., relationship of content to big ideas, such as “fairness,” “democracy,” and “inclusion vs. exclusion;” themes; frameworks)		Demonstrates limited understanding of context(s)	Demonstrates some understanding of context(s)	Demonstrates considerable understanding of context(s)	Demonstrates thorough understanding of context(s)
Applying Critical Thinking Skills (e.g., analyzing, evaluating, inferring, interpreting, revising, refining, reviewing, reflecting, forming conclusions, detecting bias, synthesizing)		Uses critical thinking skills with limited effectiveness	Uses critical thinking skills with some effectiveness	Uses critical thinking skills with considerable effectiveness	Uses critical thinking skills with a high degree of effectiveness
Using Collaborative Group Learning Skills (e.g., communication skills, questioning, active listening, problem solving, focus on task, level of engagement, teamwork)		Shows communication skills and collaborative group learning skills with limited effectiveness	Shows communication skills and collaborative group learning skills with some effectiveness	Shows communication skills and collaborative group learning skills with considerable effectiveness	Shows communication skills and collaborative group learning skills with a high degree of effectiveness
Demonstrating Civic Disposition (e.g., respects diversity of opinion, recognizes that rights come with responsibilities, considers what is good for society as a whole)		Expresses few civic dispositions	Expresses some civic dispositions	Expresses many civic dispositions	Expresses a considerable number and range of civic dispositions

Comments:

Learn more

If you and your students enjoyed this lesson, we encourage you to use Elections Canada's other educational resources. These cross-curricular materials can be taught in a variety of subjects, including history, geography, social studies, civics and math.

All resources are available in English and French, and there are versions for language learners.

Visit electionsanddemocracy.ca to browse our complete list, download or order. You can also contact us using the information beside.

Contact us

To share comments or ask questions, or if some of your kit components are missing, write or call us:

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