

Grades 4-7 Sample Unit: Canadian Government

Stage One	Assessment Evidence – Canadian Government
Grade 4 – 7 Social Studies	

Introduction

God chooses to govern us by the hands of men. This unit on government begins with lessons about the necessity of laws in order to maintain the common good (based on 1 Corinthians 12:4 – 7). Students will be made familiar with the different aspects of the system of government in Canada. We look at who makes the laws, who upholds the laws and the process of how laws are made. Attention is also given to the ceremonies and functions of the various offices of government. Throughout the unit students become increasingly aware of the level of responsibility politicians hold toward their constituents. To become aware of how Canadian citizens can influence government, we teach the requirements for achieving and holding political office in Canada.

Goals

- Demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to become active and responsible citizens
- Demonstrate a critical understanding of the role of social, political, economic, and legal institutions
- Develop a Biblical sense of compassion, fairness, and justice
- Develop effective communication skills
- Develop collaborative and cooperative skills

Desired Understandings

1. The main purpose of government is to steer our communities and to make good decisions about how we will live together.
2. The authority to govern is given by God. (Romans 13)
3. The decisions we make about how we will live together must be guided by our belief that we are all children of God.
4. The various branches of our government are meant to ensure that fair laws are made and upheld.
5. Because Canadians value freedom, they choose to govern democratically.

Essential Questions

1. Why should we care about what goes on in government?
2. How can we become involved in government?
3. How should a Christian respond to a law or right that goes against the Bible?
4. How is a Prime Minister chosen?
5. How are laws made in the House of Commons?
6. What kind of person should a Member of Parliament be?

Key Knowledge and Skills

Students will know: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Key terms – government, common	Students will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Read and interpret information from
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<p>good, laws, democracy, parliamentary, monarchy, dictatorship, anarchy, legislative, executive, judicial, Governor General, Prime Minister, Cabinet, House of Commons, Speaker of the House, Sergeant at Arms, The Mace, Usher of the Black Rod, political party, backbencher, Opposition, Civil Service, constituency, candidate, constituent, electoral district, campaign, party platform, writ of election, incumbent, Chief Electoral Officer, Returning Officers, Poll Clerks, polling stations, ballots and ballot boxes, scrutineers, voter registration</p>	<p>text</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin to grow in their awareness of their civic responsibilities as Canadian citizens and residents of their country, province, and municipality • Acquire knowledge of some of the history and traditions of federal, provincial, and municipal government • Identify and describe the main characteristics Canada's system of government • Express their appreciation for the value of a democratic system of government • Describe the process of electing a government in Canada • Understand the purpose and levels of government; how we choose our representatives; and how we can influence government • Identify the stages involved in the passage of a bill • Design, implement, and assess strategies to address community problems or projects • Organize and participate in a mock election
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Performance Tasks/Projects

- Role-play: In groups, students will design and introduce a private member's bill. They will then debate the bill, following the various stages involved in passing it. (using GRASPS)
 - Your goal is to introduce a bill.
 - You are a member of parliament.
 - You need to convince the majority of the legislature and the Senate.
 - The challenge is convincing your audience of the validity of your arguments.
 - You need to create a bill and supporting details.
 - Your work will be judged by the legislature based on your presentation.
- Produce a one-page explanation of the major obstacles, when making a private members' bill into law.

Quizzes/Tests	Academic Prompts
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Names of people in government and their function; e.g.: Prime Minister, Speaker... • Stages in passing a bill • List of tasks for which Government | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe two challenges for Christians presenting a private member's bill. • Analyze the difficulties of Christians involved in Government. |
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<p>is responsible.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Election process. 	
Other Evidence (observations, work samples, dialogues)	Student Self-Assessment, Peer Review
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observe student's level of oral participation in activities. • Evaluate neatness and accuracy of work; e.g.: charts, diagram of legislature... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the debates and how effective you or your classmates were. • Critique peer's letter to the editor. • Review the election campaign and discuss why you or your party won or lost.

Stage Three	Canadian Government
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Teaching and Learning Experiences
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Display a banner/poster with the phrase, "God Keep Our Land". Have students respond in writing as to what they think this means. (Where does this phrase come from, what does it mean, what does it refer to?) H 2. Why do we need laws? Have students reflect on what their family, school, and country would be like if there were no rules that people had to follow. H 3. Review Romans 13 with students and introduce 1 Corinthians 12:4-7. Discuss the role of rulers and the purpose of laws. E 4. Introduce the essential questions W <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Why should we care about what goes on in government? b) How can we become involved in government? c) How should a Christian respond to a law or right that goes against the Bible? d) How is a Prime Minister chosen? e) How are laws made in the House of Commons? f) What kind of person should a Member of Parliament be? 5. Introduce the culminating role-play. W 6. Introduce key terms throughout unit. W 7. Divide students into small groups and present each group with a different scenario in which a new law is being proposed, e.g. building a new freeway through town, raising the driving age, relaxing pollution laws, etc. Have students respond to these scenarios by explaining why they should care about these laws and what they could do to show their support or opposition to them. Students share scenarios and their responses with the class. E, E2 8. Have students respond to the prompts, "Why should we care about what goes on in government?" and "What if Christians did not involve themselves in government at all?" E2, R 9. Brainstorm with students ways that they can be involved in government (e.g. through writing letters to MPs, voting when they are old enough). <i>Extra Challenge:</i> students write

a letter to their MP. **E, R, T**

10. Introduce students to the different forms of government (democracy, monarchy, dictatorship, anarchy) by illustrating what each would look like if they were implemented in the classroom. Have students identify which form of government they think we have in Canada and what the benefits of this system are. **E**
11. Teacher directed lesson on the different levels of government and their purposes. **E**
12. Introduce the basic structure and function of the federal government and the key individuals who make up our government (Parliament, House of Commons, Senate, Prime Minister, Cabinet, Member of Parliament, Political Party, Opposition, Governor General, Sergeant at Arms, Speaker of the House, Queen, etc.) using flowcharts and diagrams. **E**
13. Student quiz on the roles of different institutions and individuals in government. (Suggested Format: "I am the Prime Minister and my job is to...") **E2**
14. Provide students with information (flowchart, diagram) on how the electoral system in Canada operates and how a Prime Minister is chosen. **E**
15. Students participate in a mock election. **E, R**
16. Have students research through a guided reading activity how the cabinet is chosen and what their specific responsibilities are. **E**
17. Quiz on all information covered to this point. **E2**
18. Provide students with information on the stages involved in the passage of a bill in the House of Commons. Have them work through an actual case study of a law that was passed. **E**
19. Introduce the concept of the Private Member's Bill and provide an example. Have students brainstorm as to what makes this type of law so hard to pass. **E**
20. Students prepare for and present their Private Member's Bill role-play. **E2**
21. Students produce a one-page explanation of the major obstacles faced when making a private member's bill into law. **E2**
22. Cumulative test.
23. Final reflection: Why is it important that all politicians are fair, honest, trustworthy, and stewardly? **R**