

Area of Learning: SOCIAL STUDIES — Political Studies 11

BIG IDEAS

Understanding how political decisions are made is critical to being an informed and engaged citizen.

Political institutions and ideology shape both the exercise of power and the nature of political outcomes.

Decision making in a democratic system of government is shaped by the unequal distribution of political and social power.

International political agreements require compromises between countries with a wide range of values and priorities.

Learning Standards

DRAFT

(significance, relevance, and pertinence):

Content – Elaborations

- Senate of Canada
- power of the Prime Minister
- British monarch as Canada’s head of state

major ideologies and political systems*Sample topics:*

- ideologies and systems:
 - democracy, liberalism, capitalism, authoritarianism, conservatism
 - command-economy
 - libertarianism
- left-to-right political spectrum
- political compass

election processes and electoral systems:*Sample topics:*

- electoral systems:
 - single member plurality (first past the post) proportional representation
 - single transferable vote
 - majoritarian
- consensus model elections in Nunavut and Northwest Territories
- local elections
- outside factors such as opinion polls, campaign financing, third-party involvement, election advertising, social media, etc.
- history of First Nations and other minority voting rights in Canada.

Key questions:

- Should Canada reform its electoral system? Explain your answer.
- Should the voting age be reduced? Explain your answer.

power relationships between citizens, government, and other bodies in the creation of public policy:*Sample topics:*

- theories of power that range from authoritarian to democratic:
 - *power over* (power to compel, direct, or dictate) versus *power to* (power to influence, enable, empower)

Key questions:

- When are governments proactive in the creation of policy and when are they reactive to the needs and demands of the population?
- Identify and assess the leading factors empowering certain groups in society while disempowering others.
- Analyze the circumstances in which political power shifts from one group (or amalgam of groups) to another.