



Chalk Talk

Greetings | Feature | News | Youth Vote

PLEASE SHARE CHALK TALK WITH YOUR COLLEAGUES!!!

Letter from the Editor

Dear Educators,



To say that history was made on May 2, 2011 would be an understatement. Surprises abounded as journalists, pundits and pollsters struggled to find the words to describe the outcomes of the recent federal election.

The election took place on the heels of a long weekend that began with a Royal Wedding and ended with the death of Osama Bin Laden. At the same time Canada was dealing with the flooding in Manitoba and in the U.S. hundreds died as the result of devastating tornadoes. By the time election day arrived, I feared that it might turn out to be something of an anti-climax. But for political watchers there were more than enough twists, turns and drama to keep us up till the wee hours waiting for ballots to be counted across the country.

One of the particularly interesting aspects had to do with Youth engagement and the Youth Vote. The many 'Vote Mobs', encouraged by a Rick Mercer rant, that took place on university campuses were inspiring and bode well for the future. The use of social media by young people to encourage their peers to vote pulled the election solidly into 21st century communications. The election of a 19 year old university student was record-setting.

More than anything this election was a testament to the fact that voting matters. It can and will shape the Canada's future. Voting was up from the last election but there are still too many Canadians who do not take this opportunity to exercise this most democratic of rights. And among young people there is still a long way to go before their voices are fully heard. This week's **Chalk Talk** features a variety of interesting and useful free classroom resources produced by **Elections Canada**.

CoEd Communications is dedicated to supporting the important work of teachers. Visit our website at www.4edu.ca to view the many free teachers' resources on offer.

[Your feedback is welcome.](#)

Mary Kovack

Leadership is the art of finding a parade and getting in front of it. -- John Naisbitt

Elections Canada — Resources for Teachers



Researchers tell us that civic education is linked to increased political knowledge and interest levels, two important predictors of democratic engagement.

As educators, you play a primary role in shaping the world that your students live in, as well as in instilling Canadian youth with lifelong values, behaviours and responsibilities. Voting is one of those learned values, behaviours and responsibilities that develops early in childhood. We believe that teachers play a crucial role in educating youth early in their lives on *why* voting matters and *how* to take part in the voting process, which ultimately is fundamental to creating engaged and informed citizens.

Elections Canada offers elementary, junior, high school and ESL/FLS teachers a [variety of educational resources](#) on democracy, elections, voting and active citizenship for students of all ages. With your guidance, these resources will spark their interest in voting and make voting a habit for future generations.

Educators, you can get a jump on the 2011-12 school year by ordering our free resources in print format or by downloading them from elections.ca. (For more information on individual resources, see the **Website of the Week** below.)



Why Should I Vote?
Why is it important?

The [Youth](#) section of Elections Canada's website is loaded with information for students who want to know more about elections. They can look up the answers to election basics or dig deeper to find information on Canada's electoral system. Encourage them to go online and have a look around.

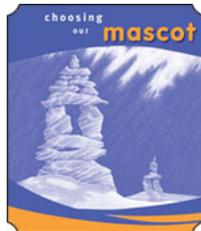
If you have questions about these resources or wish to **order** them for use in your classroom, click [here](#), or call us at 1-800-463-6868.

What you will find at elections.ca

Welcome, educators!

Spark interest in voting: Elections Canada provides the tools.

As educators, your role is more crucial than ever in making our parliamentary and democratic institutions relevant to students – the voters of tomorrow. Elections Canada offers elementary, junior, high school and ESL/FLS teachers free educational resources, tools, activities, information and links, all designed to make their work a little easier. Order your resources today!

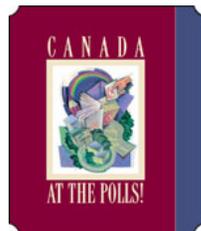


Choosing Our Mascot

Audience: Kindergarten to Grade 4

Description: Election simulation kit

Have your students hold their own election to choose a classroom mascot. This kit includes instructions on how to conduct a mock election, as well as activity booklets for each student with colouring sheets, crosswords and connect-the-dots exercises.



Canada at the Polls!

Audience: Grades 5 to 12

Description: Election Simulation kit and student council election guide

Running a student council election? This kit contains a step-by-step guide and materials for electing a student council. You'll find useful election supplies like tally sheets, ballot boxes and more. The kit also outlines three scenarios you can use to conduct an election simulation in your classroom.

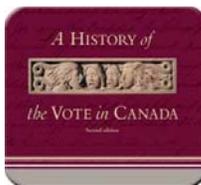


I Can Vote!

Audience: Literacy classes and ESL learners

Description: A user-friendly guide to voting in Canada

I Can Vote! makes the electoral process more accessible to all Canadians. This guide takes the mystery out of voting and shows that voting is all about choosing. It is intended for literacy classes and the Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) program.



A History of the Vote in Canada

Audience: Teachers and secondary school students

Description: Resource material

This beautiful 150-page, full-colour book is a great background piece for any teacher. *A History of the Vote in Canada* recounts how Canadians acquired the right to vote and how they overcame obstacles in exercising this right.

The Electoral System of Canada

Audience: Teachers

Description: Resource material



The *Electoral System of Canada* explains how Canadian elections are run. It describes key aspects of the federal electoral process and what happens behind the scenes at Elections Canada.

Election Canada's Partners

Student Vote (www.studentvote.ca)

Audience: Elementary and secondary school students

Description: Parallel election program



Student Vote is a not-for-profit, non-partisan organization working with educators to engage young Canadians in the democratic process. Since 2008, Student Vote has successfully designed and coordinated parallel election projects at the federal, provincial and municipal levels across the country for more than 2 million students. During the next election, register your school and conduct your own parallel election.

Forum for Young Canadians (www.forum.ca)

Audience: Secondary school and CEGEP students

Description: One-week national program in Ottawa



Forum for Young Canadians is an educational experience created to teach youth about the ins and outs of how Canada functions in the heart of the Capital. Each one-week session gives 125 high school students from across Canada a bilingual, behind-the-scenes study of Parliament Hill. It's about getting deep inside Canadian politics and public affairs and seeing what running the country looks like up close.



RESULTS ARE IN!

Did your school participate in a **Student Vote parallel election** coinciding with the recent federal election held on May 2, 2011? The chart below shows what the House of Commons would have looked like using the ballots cast by students. Canadian students voted for a Conservative minority government with an NDP opposition. Over 560,000 ballots from close to 3,800 schools were cast in 301 electoral districts across Canada.

Check out the Student Vote Web site at www.studentvote.ca, where you can view the full details, watch a results video and find out how your school can take part in future Student Vote parallel elections.

The above chart does not include 24,666 rejected ballots, bringing total ballots cast to 563,498. The results video reflects preliminary results as of the close of polls on May 2.

NATIONAL SUMMARY CHART

PARTY	SEAT COUNT	VOTE COUNT	VOTE PERCENT
Conservative	130	166,888	30.98%
NDP	113	140,157	26.01%
Liberal	47	106,166	19.70%
BLOC QUEBÉCOIS	6	7,011	1.30%
green PARTY OF CANADA	5	93,140	17.29%
Other	-	25,470	4.72%
TOTALS	301	538,832	100.0%

Related Education News

[Dusseault becomes Canada's youngest-ever MP at 19 -- Sidhartha Banerjee, THE CANADIAN PRESS, TheStar.com, May 03, 2011](#)

NDP's Pierre-Luc Dusseault, a 19-year-old student of applied politics at the Universite de Sherbrooke, now becomes the youngest member of Parliament in Canadian history, according to the House of Commons website. [Read more...](#)

[Will vote mobs translate into actual votes? -- Sarah Millar, The Toronto Star, April 18, 2011](#)

Christina Anderson was not planning to vote in next month's federal election. The 24-year-old Algonquin College student had voted in prior elections, but this time around she is scheduled to start an internship on May 2. She figured she just wouldn't have time to cast her ballot.

Then a couple of weeks ago, Anderson logged on to Facebook to see a video that had been shared by a friend of hers. The video was of [Rick Mercer's March 29 rant](#) on the *Rick Mercer Report* encouraging young people to vote. The friend that linked to the post wasn't particularly into politics. In fact, Anderson said, she "didn't seem to care" about them. Out of curiosity, Anderson clicked on the link, watched the video and she began to change her mind about not voting. "I think I've been convinced to do it," she said.

Her decision, which is "not just because of Rick Mercer, and not just because of the flash mobs," has also inspired her to apply to Elections Canada to work on the election. The flash mobs Anderson is talking about are the [so-called "vote mobs"](#) which have been [popping up on university campuses across the country](#) since the beginning of April. [Read more ...](#)

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