



Chalk Talk

Greetings

| Feature

| Young Voters

PLEASE SHARE CHALK TALK WITH YOUR COLLEAGUES!!!

Letter from the Editor

Dear Educators,

"I am a Canadian [...] free to speak without fear, free to worship in my own way, free to stand for what I think right, free to oppose what I believe wrong, or free to choose those who shall govern my country. This heritage of freedom I pledge to uphold for myself and all mankind."

The Right Honourable John Diefenbaker
Prime Minister of Canada (1957 -1963)

My son will be turning 18 later this year and is looking forward to his first opportunity to vote. Though we do not know exactly when that will happen, I am hopeful that the foundation he has received from his civics and history courses at school, combined with the model behaviour he observed at home, has put him on course to becoming a life-long voter. As a family, we sought to nurture his interest in the electoral process by consistently going to vote, bringing him with us to the polling station and encouraging discussions on important issues as they came up in the news. As is to be expected, he is idealistic and sees all issues through the lens of his youth. Concerned one minute about saving the world, and the next, his need for a new cell phone, it will take time and effort for him to become an educated voter.

Changing demographics, social media, and globalization have significantly altered the political landscape in Canada. All levels of government are increasingly reflective of different ages, genders and ethnicities. With four provinces currently headed by female premiers and with hundreds of mayors, MLAs and MPs from dozens of backgrounds, it is reassuring to see how many barriers and stereotypes have fallen by the wayside in the past few years.

Canada's parliamentary system has proven to be effective and flexible in accommodating either a majority or a minority government. And while the non-confidence votes that define minority situations can trigger more elections, it is an engaged, informed electorate that makes our system work and ensures its stability.

This week's **Chalk Talk** features free educational resources and information from **Elections Canada**, as well as information to help you prepare for **Canada's Democracy Week 2013** (September 16–23, 2013). These resources and this initiative will help educators increase students' interest in becoming not only future voters, but also active citizens.

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

Elections Canada

SPARK INTEREST IN VOTING IN YOUR CLASSROOM

We provide the tools!

Elections Canada recently commissioned an environmental scan of civic education resources by Canadian election bodies, provincial and territorial legislatures, and select Canadian and American non-profits that develop and distribute educational resources. The report confirmed that "educators rated curriculum support, authentic learning and engagement as the most important characteristics of civic education resources."

The scan also revealed that as teachers, you are looking for resources that closely fit or can be easily adapted to fit with your curriculum, that are user-friendly and interactive, that create opportunities to draw on current affairs, and that speak to students and reflect their world.

As educators, your role is crucial in showing the relevance of our parliamentary and democratic institutions to students – the voters of tomorrow.



Elections Canada wants to make your work a little easier. We offer elementary, secondary and ESL teachers **free**, user-friendly resources that fit with your curriculum and allow your students to incorporate their world into classroom activities.

For more information on the free products, programs, resources and initiatives sponsored by Elections Canada, see below or visit www.elections.ca (click on "I am a teacher" at the bottom of the home page) or visit www.bit.ly/election-education.



Educational Products — Elementary Level

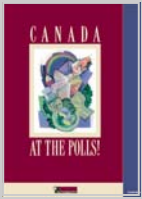


Choosing Our Mascot

Audience: Kindergarten to Grade 4

Description: Election simulation kit

Have your students choose a classroom mascot. The kit includes instructions on how to conduct a mock election, activity booklets and election materials.

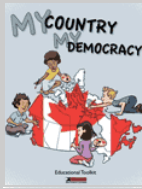


Canada at the Polls!

Audience: Grades 5 to 8

Description: Election simulation kit and student council election guide

Want your students to experience the democratic process? Running a student council election? This kit contains a step-by-step guide and materials for electing a student council or conducting an election simulation, including tally sheets, a ballot box, a voting screen, and more.



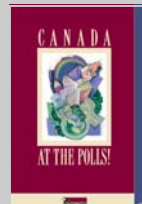
My Country, My Democracy *NEW!*

Audience: Kindergarten to Grade 4

Description: Interactive learning activities guide

Divided into three levels of difficulty, this tool kit provides a variety of activities and interactive learning ideas to allow students to increase their sense of the wider Canadian community and their understanding of Canadian citizenship.

Educational Products — Secondary Level



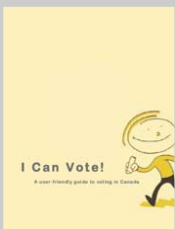
Canada at the Polls!

Audience: Grades 9 to 12

Description: Election simulation kit and student council election guide

Want your students to experience the democratic process? Running a student council election? This kit contains a step-by-step guide and materials for electing a student council or conducting an election simulation, including tally sheets, a ballot box, a voting screen, and more.

Educational Product — E.S.L., Low Literacy



I Can Vote!

Audience: All levels, ESL, low literacy

Description: Teaching resource

I Can Vote! takes the mystery out of voting and shows that voting is all about choice. It is intended for literacy classes and the Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) program but can be used in any venue as a plain-language introduction to the electoral system and government in Canada.

Educational Resources



A History of the Vote in Canada

Audience: Teachers and secondary school students

Description: Background resource

This 150-page, full-colour book is a great background resource for any teacher. It recounts how Canadians acquired the right to vote and how they overcame obstacles in exercising this right.

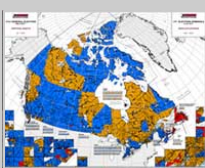


The Electoral System of Canada

Audience: Teachers and secondary school students

Description: Background resource

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



Maps Corner

Description: Maps of Canada's provincial and territorial electoral districts and regions

Searching for a visual way to explain how federal elections take place? Check out the Maps Corner to find provincial and territorial maps with the federal electoral boundaries and voting results from past elections.



Classroom Posters

Description: Background resources for educators and students

Elections Canada has two informational posters for the classroom: the *Voting Rules! Democracy in Canada* poster and the *Vox Populi – The Evolution of Electoral Democracy in Canada* poster.

Annual Initiative



CANADA'S DEMOCRACY WEEK

(September 16–23, 2013)

A great way to kick off your civics or social studies class in September!

What is Canada's Democracy Week?

[Canada's Democracy Week](#) is an Elections Canada civic education initiative that engages youth and teachers in hands-on learning activities. It builds on the United Nations' International Day of Democracy (September 15) to celebrate and raise awareness of democracy and civic engagement.

How can my class participate?

Plan now to participate in Canada's Democracy Week 2013 this September by:

- ✓ using our "Democracy" [lesson plans](#) for elementary- and secondary-level classes
- ✓ using the [National Youth Challenge](#) (launches in mid-September 2013) as a semester-long classroom activity and entering your students' work in the Challenge
- ✓ encouraging your students to enter the [National Youth Challenge](#) (launches in mid-September 2013)
- ✓ inviting your local MP, MPP/MNA/MLA or municipal councilor to your school for a presentation and Q-and-A session
- ✓ having a group discussion with students about connecting with their democracy and community, and the role they play as active citizens
- ✓ developing and delivering an activity that highlights Canada's democratic achievements and traditions
- ✓ encouraging your students to participate in these great national civic education programs in the National Capital Region:
 - [Forum for Young Canadians](#)
 - [Encounters With Canada](#)
 - [Rotary Adventures in Citizenship](#)

What is the [National Youth Challenge](#)? (launches mid-September 2013)

Looking for a classroom activity that combines civics and social studies with technology and media arts? If so, get your class involved in the [National Youth Challenge](#).

The [Challenge](#) is a creative, student-focused project that you can do in your civics, politics, history, law or social studies classes. It uses art and social media to get young Canadians thinking and talking about democracy.

Use the [Challenge](#) as a classroom activity to support your curriculum, and encourage your students to participate – they can win great prizes!

New for 2013! National Youth Challenge School Category: Watch for how your school can win at [democracy-democratie.ca](#), in September 2013!

[Click here](#) to watch, read and view entries from the 2012 Challenge winners.

Where can I find out more?

Stay up to date on all Canada's Democracy Week activities.

Visit [democracy-democratie.ca](#).

Follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [YouTube](#).

To be added to this mailing list, please opt in by clicking [here](#)

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We are the Company for Education Communications. We specialize in developing, producing and evaluating school resources and award programs. Working in conjunction with Departments/Ministries of Education, school district/boards, associations, teachers and subject specialists across the country; we provide free, curriculum-based educational resources to Canadian classrooms.

The opinions, conclusions and other information expressed in the preceding content do not necessarily reflect the views of and are not endorsed by CoEd Communications.

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