

<b>Unit Title:</b> Voting and Elections, What's it all about?
<b>Time Frame:</b> 4 days
<b>Unit Developer(s):</b> Robert R. Deonarine
<b>Developed for Course Name and Course Code:</b> Canadian and World Politics - CPW 4UO
<b>Strand(s) and Curriculum Learning Expectations Addressed:</b>  <i>Power, Influence, &amp; the Resolution of Differences Strand</i> PO3.01 – describe the factors (e.g., resources, economy, and wealth) that contribute to Canada's power groups) <i>Values, Beliefs, and Ideologies Strand</i> VB2.03 – explain how similar values, beliefs, and ideologies (e.g., religions, nationalism, culture, social and economic values) can result in cooperation between governments VB3.04 – demonstrate an understanding of the commonality of human aspirations for a better, more secure life  <i>Methods of Political Inquiry and Communication Strand</i> PI3.01 – express opinions, understandings, arguments, and conclusions, as appropriate for different audiences and purposes, using a variety of styles and forms (e.g., role plays, interviews, simulations, debates, group presentations, seminars, reports, essays) PI3.03 – use appropriate terminology to communicate political concepts, opinions, and arguments

## Desired Results

<b>Unit Description:</b>  In this unit, designed for Canadian and World Politics (CPW 4UO), students will understand the historical creation of Canada's electoral systems and how it is influenced by various historical and political movements. If students do not learn about these concerns there is risk of having a society which knows very little about their own electoral system. Therefore, through the use of current technologies (for example; internet and streaming videos) learning the history and actions of the electoral process students can better understand why certain actions occur at the municipal, provincial, and federal elections. Students will learn to understand and apply specific knowledge (the history of the electoral system, functions of elections, and Canada's electoral process) attained from the electoral system and apply it to their own lives. Learning to reflect on their opinions and thoughts effectively will help students to avoid misconceptions, poor judgments and to critically analyze political debates and outside influences. The main activities in this unit will include a class debate, reaction paper, short answer questions, and a knowledge and understanding assignment.
<b>Enduring Understandings / Learning:</b>  Students will learn: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• what suffrage is;</li> <li>• how to summarize articles;</li> <li>• how to critically analyse; and</li> <li>• how to illustrate concepts through oral debate.</li> </ul>

### Assessment Tasks

**Performance Tasks and Other Evidence That Will Demonstrate the Knowledge and Skills Acquired:**

- Homework Completion
- Reaction Paper
- Oral Participation

**Assessment Criteria:**

- Students will write a reaction paper on *Votergate* and will be evaluated using the provided rubric .

### Unit Planning Notes

**Prior Learning Necessary (if any):**

Students prior knowledge does not need to be extensive; rather there is a need for basic knowledge (attained from their Civics class in grade 10) such as the roles and general responsibilities of Senators, Judges, Members of Parliament, political parties, Canada's electoral process, and pressure groups.

**Preparation Notes (if any):**

## Resources:

- Articles (Appendices)
- Video (*Votergate*) - [www.votergate.tv](http://www.votergate.tv)

## Supplies:

- Chart paper and markers
- Access to current and relevant newspapers

## Equipment:

- LCD Projector with a computer/laptop and internet connection

### Learning Plan

**Lesson 1**

1. Pre-lesson: Assign the article for reading, *A History of the Vote in Canada: Chapter 2 - From a Privilege to a Right 1867–1919, Women and the Vote*. The article can be found on-line at: [www.elections.ca/gen/his/chapter2\\_e.pdf](http://www.elections.ca/gen/his/chapter2_e.pdf)
2. To begin, have students write down the strengths and weaknesses they know about their current voting system (First-Past-The-Post - FPTP) here in Canada. Ask them to share their thoughts? Direct students to list what they believe are the criteria for voting in Canada (for example; age, gender; citizenship) through a class discussion.
3. Provide the definitions (Appendix A) on the overhead to allow for clarification on certain key terms. This portion of the class will be given in a two-fold format; firstly there will be an overhead for clarification and note-taking

skills. Secondly, it will closely follow the Socratic style of teaching by introducing the history of voting (key points can be researched from [www.elections.ca/res/his/chapter2\\_e.pdf](http://www.elections.ca/res/his/chapter2_e.pdf)) and the rights of women.

4. Distribute the handout “Women and the Vote - Reading Assignment” (Appendix B) and instruct the students that they have the remainder of the class to answer the questions using their pre-assigned article for assistance.

### Lesson 2

1. Pre-setup: Arrange to book a computer lab or have multiple laptops/computers available for students to access during the lesson.
2. Place different pictures, regarding political leaders, from the current newspaper or from online articles around the classroom and direct the students to walk around to view each picture. Instruct students to return to their seats and create different headlines that are catchy and interesting. Afterwards peer-share the headlines and take up some of the funny headlines with the whole class.
3. Provide students with a specific breakdown of the “Functions of Elections and the Major Electoral Systems” (Appendix C). Discuss with the students some real world examples.
4. Direct students to form groups of three or four and assign each group a notable (for example, Australia, Germany, France, Russia, USA, and Canada) country and research what type of electoral system it has and be prepared to share with other groups.
5. Direct students to return to their seats and begin to summarize and paraphrase in their own words what are the “Functions of Elections and Types Electoral Systems” (Appendix D). Instruct students that they have the remainder of class to complete the handout or it will be homework due for the next class.
6. Before class is over direct students to elaborate to the teacher verbally what they think they have learned today. More specifically, have the students explain to the teacher one thing new they have learned today.

### Lesson 3

1. Pre-setup: Set up the classroom for a debate. Also ensure to have a place where students can make a polling station.
2. Direct students about the rules and orders of debating. Introduce the topic of: whether or not the current electoral process in Canada is effective or not. They will be divided into three groups, those that are for and those that are against and some observers. This will be done by choosing a partner and one partner goes on one side and the other on the other side. (BIRT: Canada's current electoral system is out of date and there is a need to progress towards PR.)
3. Following the debate have students attend the polling station to cast their vote for who they believed won the debate. Instruct the observers to count the votes and present the results to the class. Discuss with the class how the polling station is relatable to real world voting.
4. Distribute the handout “Canada's Elections – Key Terms” (Appendix E) to the students relating examples to what they just did at their make shift polling station.
5. Discuss with the class their take home assignment “Elections and Electoral Systems” (Appendix F). Elaborate on using all their resources that are available to them vis-à-vis: handouts, online resources; and class discussions.

6. Instruct students to begin to research and complete their assignment in class and complete the remaining questions for homework for next class.

**Lesson 4**

1. Discuss with the students how they previously voted in Lesson 3 and what the formal process was. Allude to how it can be time consuming and very costly. Raise the question of electronic voting and the many conveniences it can bring (for example, less time, more convenient, quicker, and more accessible) and conduct an informal vote on who favours the possibility of electronic voting as opposed to paper voting.
2. Students are to watch the *Votergate - The Presidential Election Special Edition (Election Fraud)* video found on-line at: <http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=3555094491715905699>
3. After watching the video, have a short discussion on the findings and outcomes of the documentary.
4. Conduct a post vote to see if any students have changed their minds on electronic voting.
5. Distribute the "Reaction Paper on *Votergate*" (Appendix G) instructing students to complete the paper within class and submit for marking before the end of class.

**Appendices**

Appendix A: Key Terms - The History of Elections

Appendix B: Women and the Vote - Reading Assignment

Appendix C: Functions of Elections and the Major Electoral Systems

Appendix D: Functions of Elections and Types of Electoral Systems

Appendix E: Canada's Elections - Key Terms

Appendix F: Take Home Quiz: Elections and Electoral Systems

Appendix G: Reaction Paper on *Votergate*

**Other Possible Course Applications**

Civics: CHV20

Canadian and World Issues: CGW4U