



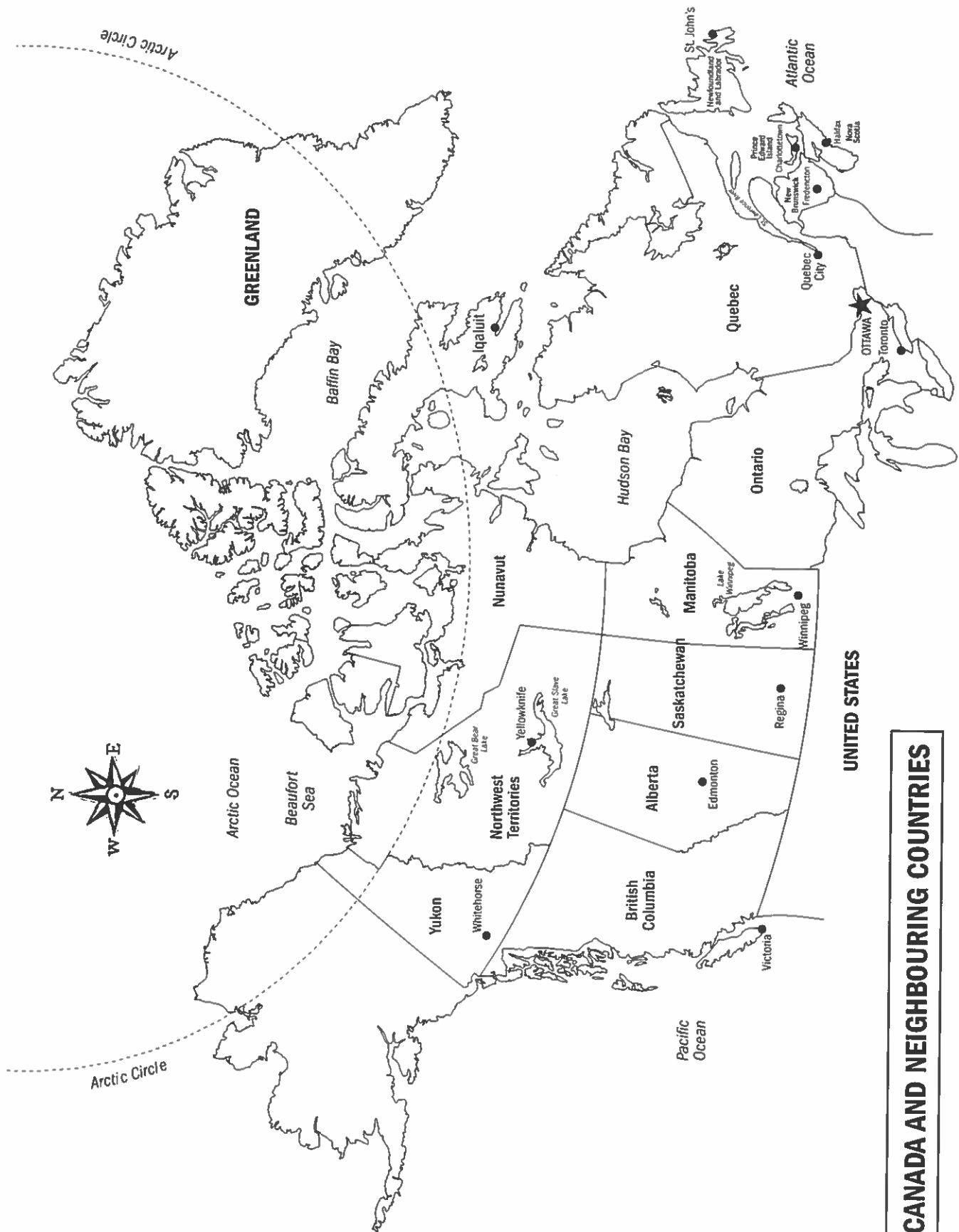
Provincial Parliament Building, Quebec, Saskatchewan

Power and Authority: Government



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CANADA AND NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES

Systems of Government

What is a government?

Did you know that the word "government" means the power to make laws and to enforce them? The word "government" can also mean the group of people who make the laws. If there were only a few people in a community, it would be easy to come together and make decisions about the best way to run things. In reality, there are usually too many people in a community and millions in a country. This makes it difficult to make decisions without being organized. The government helps organize decision-making.

Canada's System of Government

Canada is a constitutional monarchy, and has a federal system of government. Other countries that have a federal system government are the United States of America, Australia and Switzerland. In Canada, the federal system of government is organized so that powers and responsibilities are divided between the federal government stationed in Ottawa and each of the 10 provincial governments. In addition, every city or smaller community has a local government called a municipal government. Municipal governments have specific responsibilities too.

Other Systems of Government:

Monarchy

When a king or queen rules a country, this form of government is called a monarchy. Citizens do not have a choice as to who will be their leader. Instead, right of birth hands down power. Usually when a king or queen dies, the throne is given to the oldest son. If there is no son, the oldest daughter becomes queen. At one time, there were many monarchies in countries such as Russia, England, Italy, France and Germany. Today, there are only a few countries that are ruled by kings or queens, for example Jordan.

Republic

The term, republic is used to describe countries that were once ruled by a king or queen. People of these countries did not think a monarchy was a fair system of government and decided to oust the monarch from power and to never have a king or queen again. Often force was needed to get rid of a king or queen. For example, France became a republic in 1789 when the French people revolted against their king- Louis XVI.

Systems of Government

Anarchy

Anarchy is the word to describe when there is no government.

Constitutional Monarchy

The term constitutional monarchy, describes countries that still have a king or queen as the symbolic head of state, but the people elect the government. Some examples of constitutional monarchies are Sweden and Norway.

Dictatorship

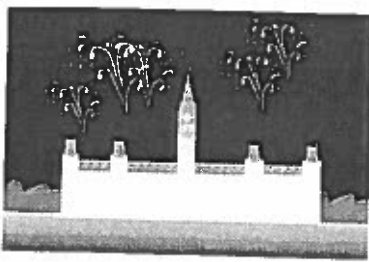
A dictatorship is a form of government when only one person has all the power. A dictator has the power to tell people what to do, how to do it and when to do it. Regular citizens have no say in their government and often live in fear of the police and army who carry out the orders of the dictator. Citizens must be careful not to speak out against the dictatorship government as they might get into serious trouble or even put to death. An example of a dictator was Adolph Hitler, the leader of Nazi Germany from 1933-1945. He governed with the use of fear and had a secret police called the Gestapo to make sure people did not question his authority. Today, countries like Cuba and Libya are examples of dictatorships.

Democracy

Democracy is a form of government elected and controlled by the people who live under it. Democracy comes from the Greek words meaning "government by the people". This means that people make laws for their community together. Eligible citizens of the community can also vote and have a say in decisions made about the good of their community. Canada, United States and Australia have democratic forms of government.

Communism

Communism is a form of government where the government is a small group of people who are members of the Communist Party. As a result, only a very few people have a voice in how the government is run. Citizens are not allowed to express themselves. Usually, publications, or radio and television broadcasts have to be approved by the government. Communists believe that the good of the group is more important than the good of an individual. In this type of government, communists strive to bring education, housing and healthcare to all people.



History Of Canada's Government

Did you know the Dominion of Canada was formed in 1867? **Dominion** is the word to describe a self-governing nation within the British Commonwealth. When Canada first became a country in 1867, there were only four provinces established: New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Ontario, and Quebec. Now in the year 2002, Canada has ten provinces and three territories.

In 1867, the British government agreed to allow the four colonies of Quebec, Ontario, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick to organize as provinces under one government, while staying loyal to Britain. This union is called Canada's **Confederation**. Since then, six additional provinces and three territories have joined confederation to form the Canada we live in today.

During the time of Confederation (1860's), the various colonies were experiencing many problems. For example, the colonies wanted to sell their goods more easily to different markets. There was also a big concern that the colonies needed protection from an American invasion. Although, the colonies were scattered over wide areas of land and had many differences such as language and religion, the colonies wanted to join to form a country with a federal system of government.

When the colonies joined in 1867, there was a discussion on how the new country should be run. As a result, a document was created outlining the rules and foundation for Canada's new government. This document is called the **British North America Act**. The British Government approved of this Act on March 29, 1867, and the Dominion of Canada was created on July 1, 1867. Sir John A. Macdonald became Canada's first Prime Minister.

Canada's form of government is very similar to the British parliamentary system. The Canadian government's body of laws and federal system of government is made of both written and unwritten codes. The written code is based on the **Constitution Act of 1982**, which includes the BNA Act of 1867. The unwritten code includes the parliamentary system of government modeled after the one in Great Britain. Canada still has close ties with Britain and is a member of the British Commonwealth of Nations. The **British Commonwealth of Nations** is a way to keep a connection to Great Britain and its former colonies. Canada still recognizes the British monarch as its head of state.

O Canada



On July 1, 2012, Canada became 145 years old. Canada is a relatively young nation compared to many others, but it has grown to be one of the most prosperous nations in the world.

Canada was created in 1867 when a group of British colonies in North America decided to unite. The city of Ottawa was chosen as the nation's capital, because it was located on the border of French-speaking Quebec and English-speaking Ontario. It was a way of acknowledging the importance of both groups in the founding of Canada. This history continues to be acknowledged today in Canada's two official languages: English and French.

Today Canada consists of ten provinces and three territories. Its motto is From Sea to Sea. With its vast north, Canada is the second-largest

nation in the world in land area, but its population of 34,867,000 is only the 35th largest in the world. Canada's economy and **standard of living** are often rated among the best in the world.

Canada's system of government is called a federal parliamentary democracy. What this means is that there is a strong central (federal) government made up of elected representatives who meet in a place called Parliament. They make decisions about laws and the future of the country. Currently, Canada's government is led by Prime Minister Stephen Harper and the Conservative party, who won the national election on May 2, 2011.

With their first **majority government**, Prime Minister Harper and the Conservatives have passed some **controversial** new laws over the past year, including changing the

retirement age. The government has also made it harder for jobless Canadians to collect employment insurance, and has passed new laws that will result in harsh penalties for human smugglers and refugees who arrive here illegally. ★

DID YOU KNOW?

Canada's well-recognized maple-leaf flag is a lot younger than the country itself. It wasn't adopted as the nation's flag until February 15, 1965.

WORD POWER

COLONY: A territory that is under the political control of a country that is usually far away.

STANDARD OF LIVING: The level at which a

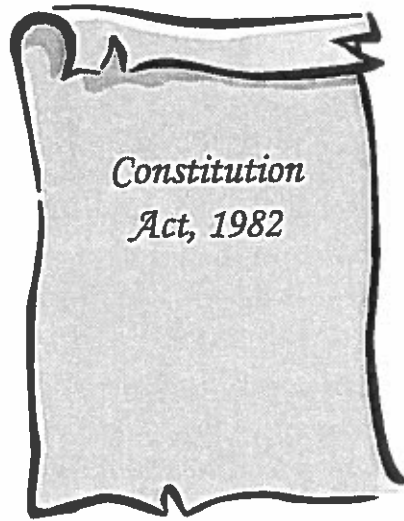
person, group, or nation lives as measured by how available are food, shelter, clothing, etc.

MAJORITY GOVERNMENT: A government that has more than 50 percent of the seats in

Parliament.

CONTROVERSIAL: Something that is or can be much argued about; debatable.

The Constitution Act, 1982



What do governments and clubs have in common? They both need a set of basic rules of how the organization is supposed to work. In Canada, we have a **constitution**. This is a special document, which contains all the rules and powers of the government.

Just like the citizens of Canada, the government must obey the laws. If the government passes laws that do not agree with the constitution, the laws are called *unconstitutional*. Then it is the job of the

Supreme Court of Canada to decide if laws agree with the constitution. If the Supreme Court decides the law is *unconstitutional*, the law is not allowed to come into effect.

Before 1982, Canada's constitution was the **British North America Act**. The BNA act was a special document created in 1867 when Canada was formed. All the details of how the government was organized were outlined in this important document. Canadians did not have the power to change the British North America Act without asking permission of the British government.

In 1982, under the government of Prime Minister Pierre Elliot Trudeau, Canada developed a new constitution. It was signed and made official on April 17, 1982 by Canada's Queen Elizabeth II. **The Constitution Act, 1982** gave Canadians the right to make changes to our government without the permission of the British Government.

Inside the Constitution Act, 1982, there is an important section called the **Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms** or the Charter for short. The Charter lists certain fundamental rights for Canadians that cannot be interfered with or taken away by the government.

The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms

The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms grants Canadians certain rights and freedoms. Here are some of them.

1. **Fundamental Rights:** freedom of conscience and religion; freedom of thought, belief, opinion, and expression; freedom of the press; freedom of peaceful assembly; freedom of association
2. **Democratic Rights:** right to vote
3. **Mobility Rights:** right to enter, remain, and leave Canada or move to other provinces
4. **Legal Rights:** right to life, liberty, and security of the person; right to be secure against unreasonable search or seizure; right not to be detained or imprisoned; right to counsel; right to be presumed innocent until proven guilty
5. **Equality Rights:** right not to be discriminated against based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age, or disability
6. **Official Languages of Canada:** English and French are the official languages and will be treated equally
7. **Minority Language Educational Rights:** the right to receive instruction in minority language provided out of public funds

O Canada

(French Version)

Ô Canada! Terre de nos aïeux,
 Ton front est ceint de fleurons glorieux!
 Car ton bras sait porter l'épée,
 Il sait porter la croix;
 Ton histoire est une épopée
 Des plus brillants exploits.
 Et ta valeur de foi trempé
 Protégera nos foyers et nos droits;
 Protégera nos foyers et nos droits.

O Canada

(English Translation of French Lyrics)

O Canada! Land of our forefathers
 Thy brow is wreathed
 with a glorious garland of flowers.
 As in thy arm ready to wield the sword,
 So also is it ready to carry the cross.
 Thy history is an epic
 of the most brilliant exploits.
 Thy valour steeped in faith
 Will protect our homes and our rights
 Will protect our homes and our rights.

**O Canada
(O Kanata)**
(Cree Version)

O Kanata. Ki-ta-ski-mi-na-naw.
Ki-sten-te-tan, e-ta-ske-ne-si-yahk
ki-ti-hi-nahk ma-ska-wen-tan
ki-ta-wi-chi-ta-yahk.
Ni-pa-wi-tan. O Kanata.
So-ki-te-he-wi-nihk.
O Kanata, ni-ki-ho-tan.
O Kanata, mi-no-na-ko-ta-tan.
O Kanata, wi-mi-chi-min-te-tan.



Government Structures in Canada

Canada is a ***constitutional monarchy***. This means that the king or queen of Great Britain is its head of state. Canada is also a ***parliamentary democracy***. This means that the prime minister is its head government and a parliament make its laws. The federal government (government of all of Canada as a whole) creates laws and makes decisions for all of Canada. The federal government has three governing or decision-making bodies: the legislative branch, the executive branch and the judicial branch.

Inquiry questions:

How do our governments work?

Who are the people in our government?

Who gives them the authority?

Federal Government,
House of Commons
Building in Parliament
Hills, Ottawa, Ontario



Provincial and Territorial governments (Saskatchewan Government)

Provinces and territories have their own governments in charge of things such as schools, courts, and hospitals. Some provinces such as Quebec, also have some control over immigration. Territorial governments, however, do not control their land and natural resources as provinces do. Territorial (North West Territories, Yukon and Nunavut) powers are also not a part of the Constitution.

Sometimes, provinces do not agree about which powers the federal government (Canada) should have. This might happen when a local matter comes under federal control. For example, the federal government controls fisheries and oceans. That may not be a problem for people who live in Saskatchewan. In Newfoundland and Labrador, however, fisheries are an important local industry.

Canada's provincial governments (Saskatchewan) work in much the same way as the federal government. There are some differences though. There is only one branch, or "house" - the legislative assembly. There are no provincial senates. Provincial leaders are known as ***premiers***. Provinces also use a parliamentary system (laws and decision making) of government, with cabinets, ministries, and backbenchers.

Saskatchewan
Provincial Parliament
Building in Regina,
Saskatchewan



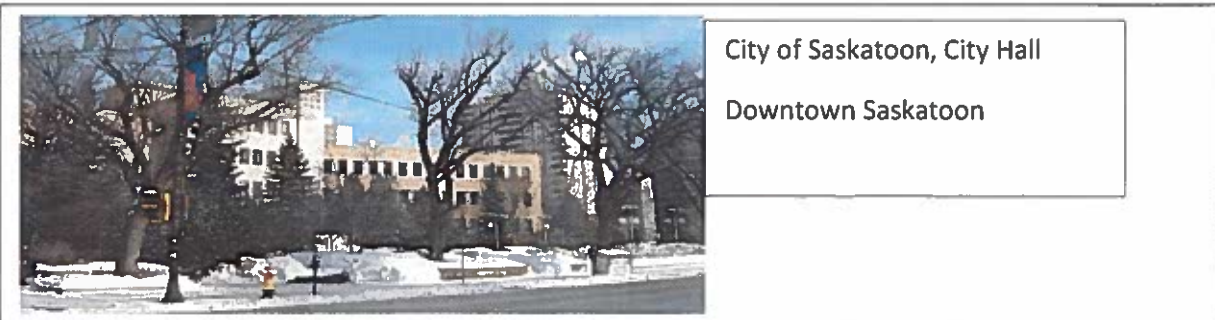
and give royal assent to any laws that are passed. **Lieutenant governors** represent their provinces and reward their citizens for outstanding achievements.

Territorial governments are like provincial governments. They have elected legislative assembly and a government leader or head. Territorial governments have commissioners instead of lieutenant governors.

Municipal Government (City of Saskatoon government)

Municipal governments run cities, towns, or rural areas. They are responsible for local matters, such as police, fire departments, parks, and roads. They also handle things like snow clearing, garbage collection, public transportation, and water and sewer services.

Most municipal governments are made up of councils. Members of a council are known as councillors. Councils are headed by a mayor, and in rural areas a reeve. Municipal governments pass bylaws. Bylaws are laws that only apply to their own communities.



Aboriginal Government

Just as there are many different Aboriginal groups in Canada, there are different forms of Aboriginal government. Many First Nations run their government by the rules set out in the **Indian Act**, with a chief and band council elected every two years. Other First Nations choose their governments based on their own traditions, such as rule by hereditary chiefs (family blood line). The Inuit of Nunavut are the only Aboriginal group who run a public, territorial government.

Band Councils

The most common form of First Nations government is the band council. A **band council** is made up of a chief and a group of councillors. They are all elected by

members of their local First Nation. Band councils are like municipal governments. They can pass bylaws to manage reserve affairs, such as traffic control, bridges, roads, and agriculture.

Band councils get their authority from the Indian Act, which defines who has Indian status. It states which groups of First Nations people can legally form a band and what powers they have. Band councils cannot collect taxes from their citizens. This is one way they differ from municipal governments. Instead, band councils are given funds from the Department of Indian Affairs. This means the band council must answer to band members as well as the federal government.

Self-Government

Many first Nations do not use the band council system. They govern themselves using their own traditions. First Nations people believe self government is a right they have always had. Long before Europeans arrived in North America, and long before the Indian Act was ever written, First Nations people took care of themselves.



Nisga'a Lisims Government Building, B.C.

Aboriginal self-government can take many forms. One example is the system used by the Nisga'a of the Nass River Valley in British Columbia. In 1998, the Nisga'a replaces the old band council system with the new Nisga'a **Lisims government**. The Nisga'a government is led by 3 officers. They are elected from each village within the Nisga'a territory. Representatives are also elected for

Nisga'a citizens who live outside of their territory. Today the Indian Act is no longer used within the Nisga'a territory. As a result, the Nisga'a pay taxes and govern their own fisheries and natural resources. They run their own education and legal systems and have control over their language and culture. The government of Nunavut is the largest system of self-government in Canada. Aboriginal self-government does not mean that First Nations are independent of Canada. Self-governing First Nations still use the Canadian Constitution as the highest law in the land.

There are 13 tribal councils in Saskatchewan. Find out the name of the tribal council in your region and the names of the First Nations communities that are part of this council.

Tribal councils are not independent. They only have the same power as the members and the work they do depends on what the members want them to do.

All tribal councils in Saskatchewan belong to the **Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations**. All 74 First Nations in the province belong to this organization. The goals of the FSIN are:

- To protect the treaties and the rights of First Nations people under those treaties
- To help First Nations people to progress in economic, educational and social endeavors
- To promote cooperation with civil and religious leaders
- To engage in discussion and constructive criticism in all matters that pertain to First Nations
- To follow a democratic procedure
- To promote respect and fairness for all people

Metis people in Saskatchewan

The Metis people in Saskatchewan practice a democratic form of government. Rather than being traditional, these local and national councils have been formed in recent years. The Metis don't have a long history of self-government like the First Nations peoples do. When the treaties were signed and the Metis displaced from their land they were put in the same category as First Nations. They lost much of their culture, tradition and language.

In the past 25 years or so there has been a rebuilding of the Metis recognition. They have formed locals, which consist of small groups of Metis people that work together for the good of the people. There are about 130 Metis locals in Saskatchewan today.




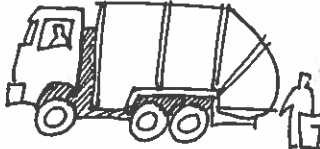

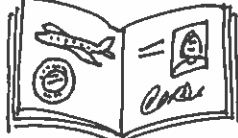
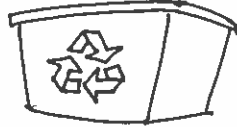

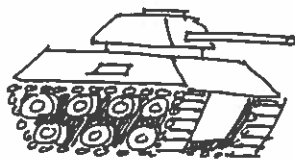
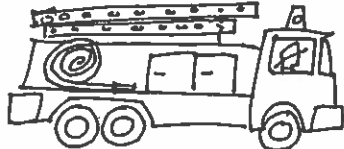
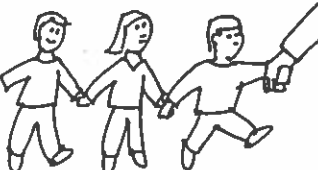
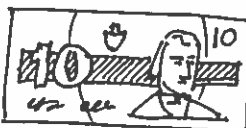
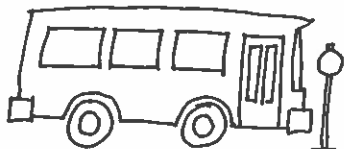
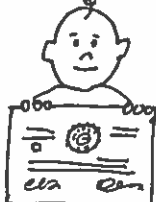

The Metis Nation – Saskatchewan holds province wide elections at regular intervals. There are specific locations throughout Saskatchewan where those who are Metis can vote. There are ballot boxes, just as there are in provincial and federal elections. In this way, the manner in which the provincial and national representatives are elected is the same as the Canadian government model.

Through the Metis locals, the Metis Nation – Saskatchewan and the Metis Nation Council, the Metis people have a voice in matters that affect them. These organizations have worked hard to address issues of concern for the people and to negotiate with the government over land and traditional hunting, trapping and fishing rights.

While the definition of Metis commonly refers to descendants of a First Nations mother and a European father, in order to be considered Metis for these organizations in western Canada, one has to prove a link to the original Metis of the Red River Valley in Manitoba.

The Metis Nation – Saskatchewan came into being in 1975. There were other Metis organizations before that starting in the 1940's that worked to restore Metis land rights that they lost in the late 19th century. It receives funding from both the provincial and federal governments. In 1982, the Metis were recognized as one of the Aboriginal Peoples of Canada in the Constitution Act.

Government Responsibilities

City Police 	Education 	R.C.M.P. 
Garbage Collection 	Driver's Licences 	Passports 
Recycling 	Hospitals 	Defence 
Fire Department 	Child Care 	Banks and Money 
Public Transit 	Birth Certificates 	Fisheries 

Levels of Government

Federal Government

- Makes laws for all of Canada
- Responsibilities include
 - Soldiers, army, navy, air force
 - Passports
 - Television and radio
 - R.C.M.P.
 - Banks and money
 - Fisheries
 - Stamps and postal services
 - National parks

Government of Saskatchewan

- Makes laws for Saskatchewan
- Responsibilities include
 - Driver's licences
 - Hospitals
 - Education
 - Child care
 - Birth certificates
 - Provincial parks

Municipal Government

- Makes local laws
- Responsibilities include
 - Garbage pick up and recycling
 - Repairing streets
 - Snow ploughing
 - Local police, fire, and ambulance
 - Public transit



Municipal Governments

Did you know a municipal or local government looks after the needs in a local area? A community must have three things in order to be officially established as a municipality. First, a community must have official city or town limits or boundaries. Second, a community must have a council to make decisions on behalf of local residents. Third, a community must have ways to carry out decisions for the good of the community. A municipal government works in partnership with provincial and federal governments.

How is a Municipal or Local Government Formed?

Most local governments elect a leader, called a **mayor**. The mayor is the chair of the elected council. Council members along with other elected officials make decisions to help a community run smoothly. During council meetings there are debates about how to spend money, how to provide public transportation or ideas on how to make the community a better place to live.

What are By-Laws?

Approved laws in a local community are called **by-laws**. By-laws are created to meet specific needs in a community. For example, not allowing smoking in public places or allowing dogs to run around without a leash in a park. Sometimes, there are similar by-laws from community to community. A good example is a safe low speed limit for vehicles in school zones to keep children safe. Police officers employed by the community enforce the laws.

What are Municipal or Local Services?

Municipal or local governments provide their communities with many important services. Some of these services are libraries, garbage collection, police service, fire fighting, parks and snow clearance.

How are Municipal Governments paid for?

There are four ways that local governments raise money to keep operating. They are property taxes, user fees, licenses and transfer payments. Local governments raise the majority of the money needed to keep operating through property taxes.



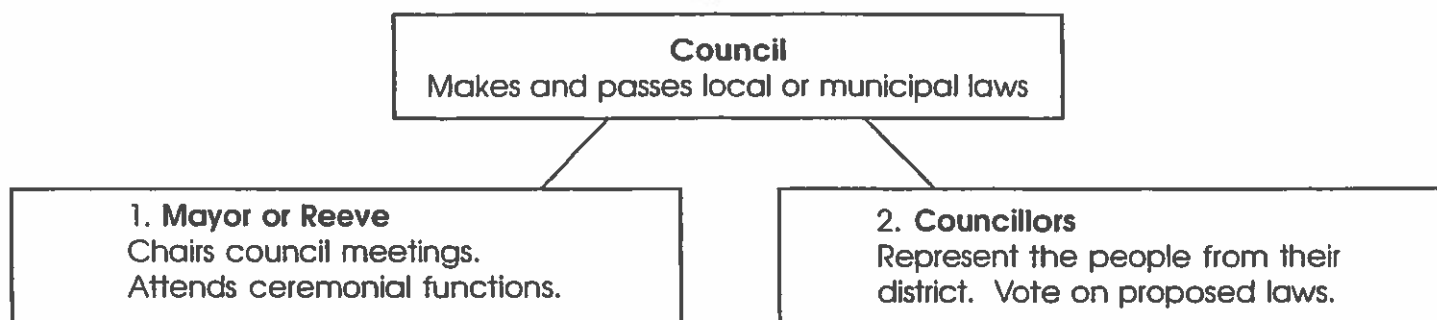
LOCAL OR MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENTS



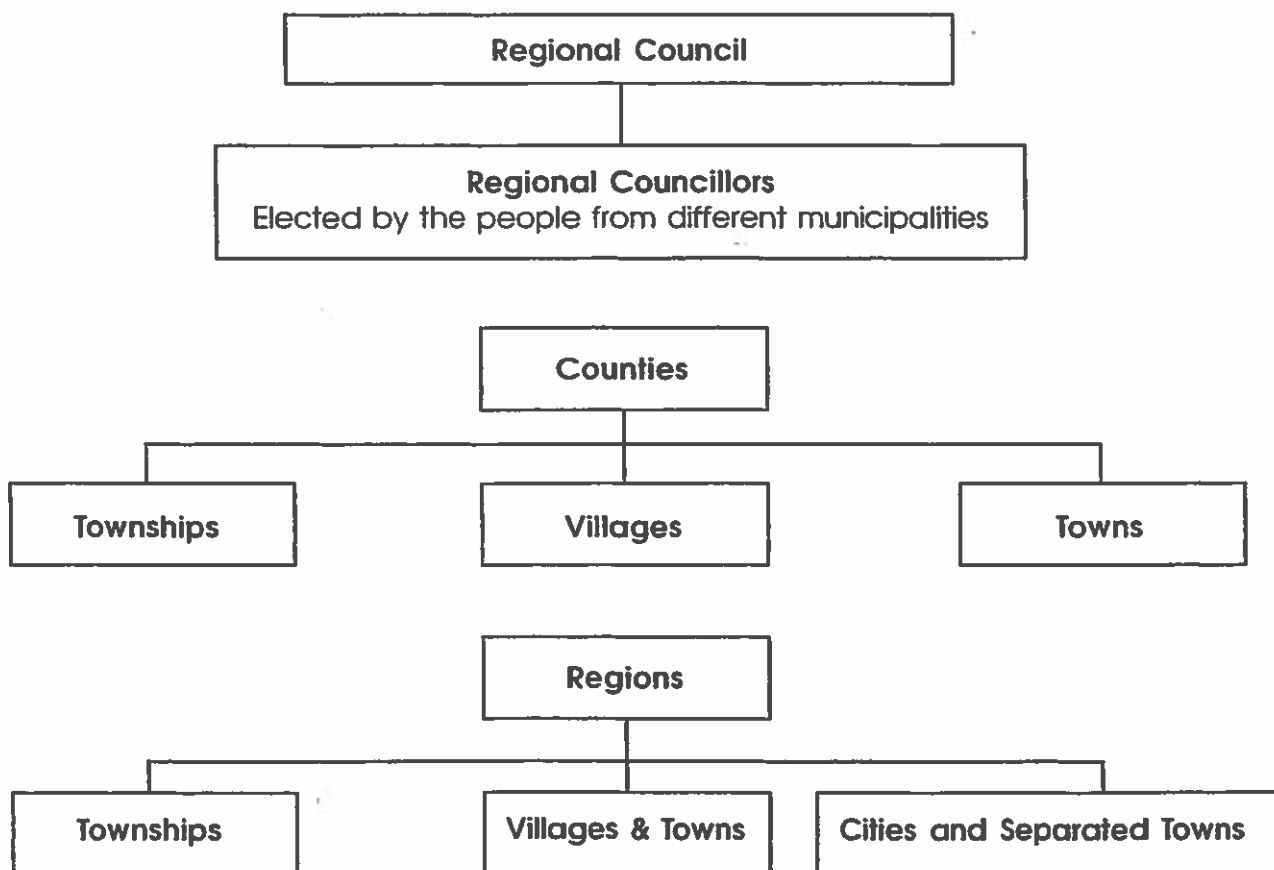
Each province and territory regulates local governments and each has a different system. Usually each province or territory is divided up into counties, districts, or regions. These counties, districts or regions are divided up into cities, towns, villages and townships.

An elected council governs a municipality. It makes and passes municipal laws. The head of a local government may be called a *mayor*, a *reeve*, a *warden* or *overseer*. The leader of a local government chairs council meetings and attends ceremonial functions. Council members may be called *controllers*, *aldermen*, or *councillors*. They represent the people from their district and vote on proposed laws and issues.

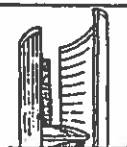
Local or Municipal Governments



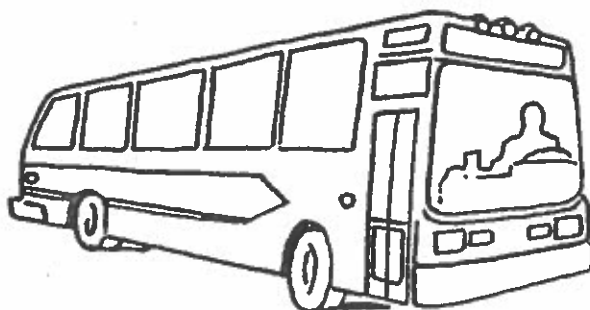
Regional Government



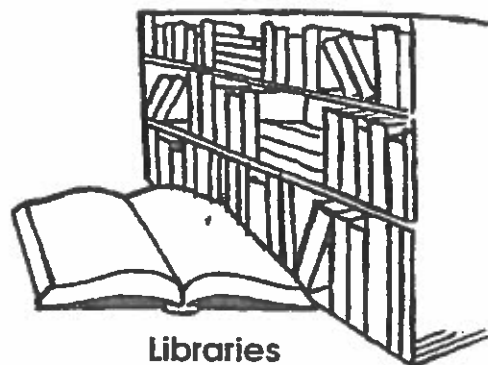
MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT SERVICES



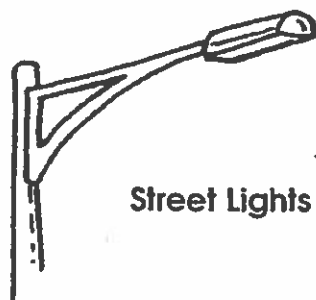
Fire Department



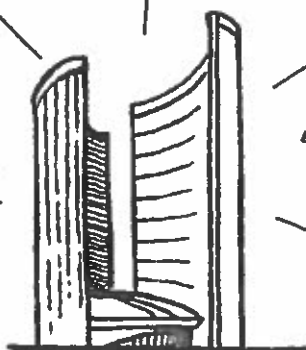
Public Transport



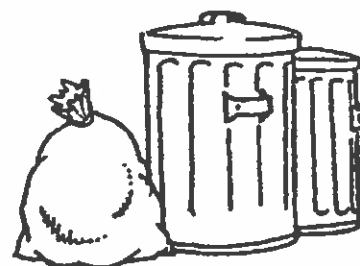
Libraries



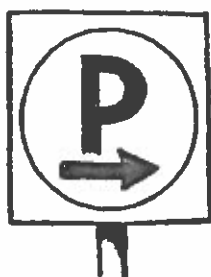
Street Lights



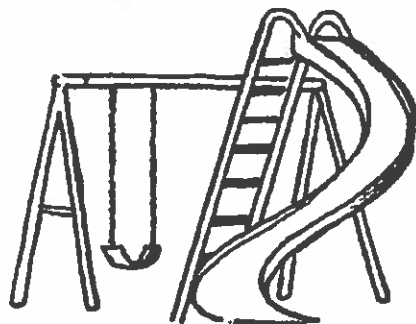
City Hall



Garbage Removal



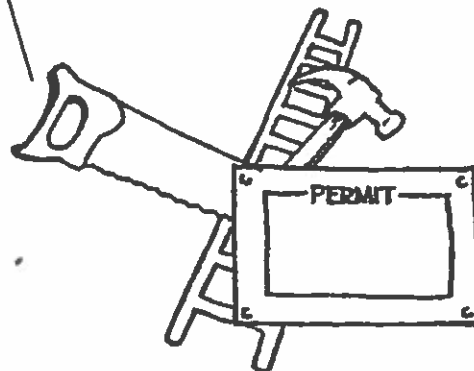
Parking



Parks and Playgrounds



Local Police



Building Permits

Name _____

The Provincial Level Of Government

Did you know each province in Canada has its own government? Provincial and federal governments in Canada are very similar in the way they operate. In a provincial election, the leader of the political party that wins the most seats in the legislature becomes the Premier of the province. The Premier chooses a cabinet formed by elected members of their political party. The Cabinet helps the Premier make decisions. Other members of the legislature, from different political parties or who are independent members become the opposition. Provincial governments usually meet twice a year for about six to ten weeks.

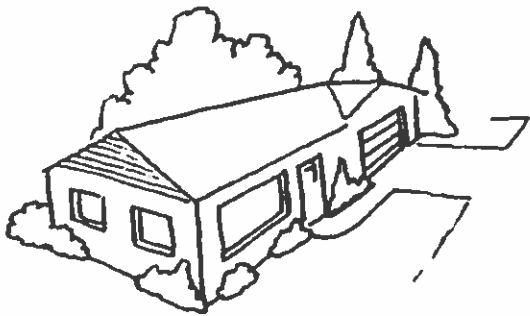
Some differences between provincial and federal governments are as follows. For example, provincial governments have only one legislature that makes laws and do not have a Senate. Another example is the Queen's representative, a similar position to the Governor General, is called the Lieutenant Governor.

The legislature has different names in different provinces:

Province	Name of Elected Member	Name for Legislature
British Columbia Saskatchewan Manitoba Alberta New Brunswick Nova Scotia Prince Edward Island	Member of the Legislative Assembly or MLA	Provincial Legislature
Ontario	Member of the Provincial Parliament or MPP	Provincial Parliament
Quebec	Member of the National Assembly or MNA	National Assembly
Newfoundland	Member of the House of Assembly or MHA	House of Assembly



PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT SERVICES



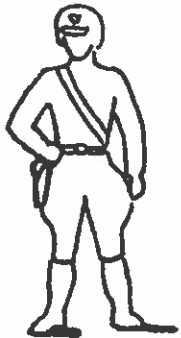
Housing



Education



Labour Legislation



Provincial Police



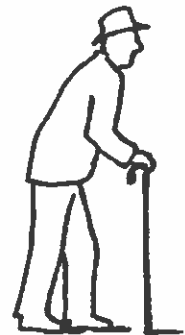
Sports and Recreation



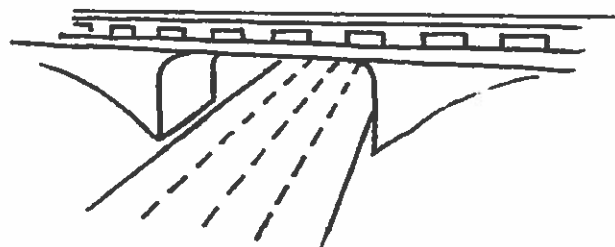
Tourism



OHIP and Medical Plans



Social Services



Roads and Bridges

Territorial Governments

Did you know that for the most part Canada's territorial and provincial governments operate in a similar way? Here is a description of each of Canada's three territorial governments.

The Yukon Territory

Yukon's territorial government is very similar to a provincial government. It has a Legislative Assembly. Elected representatives to the Legislative Assembly are called Members of Parliament. The leader of Yukon's government is called the Premier. A Commissioner is appointed by the Prime Minister and Cabinet to represent the federal government.

The Northwest Territories

The Northwest Territories function under a consensus system of government. This style of government is similar to the traditional way Aboriginal peoples have made decisions. All Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs), are elected as independent representatives of their constituencies. First, there is a secret ballot to choose a Speaker of the House. This position is chosen first to emphasize its importance. Next, a secret ballot is held to choose the Premier, after an opportunity for candidates to speak and be questioned. A majority on all issues carries the vote in the Legislative Assembly. A Commissioner is appointed by the Prime Minister and Cabinet to represent the federal government.

The Territory of Nunavut

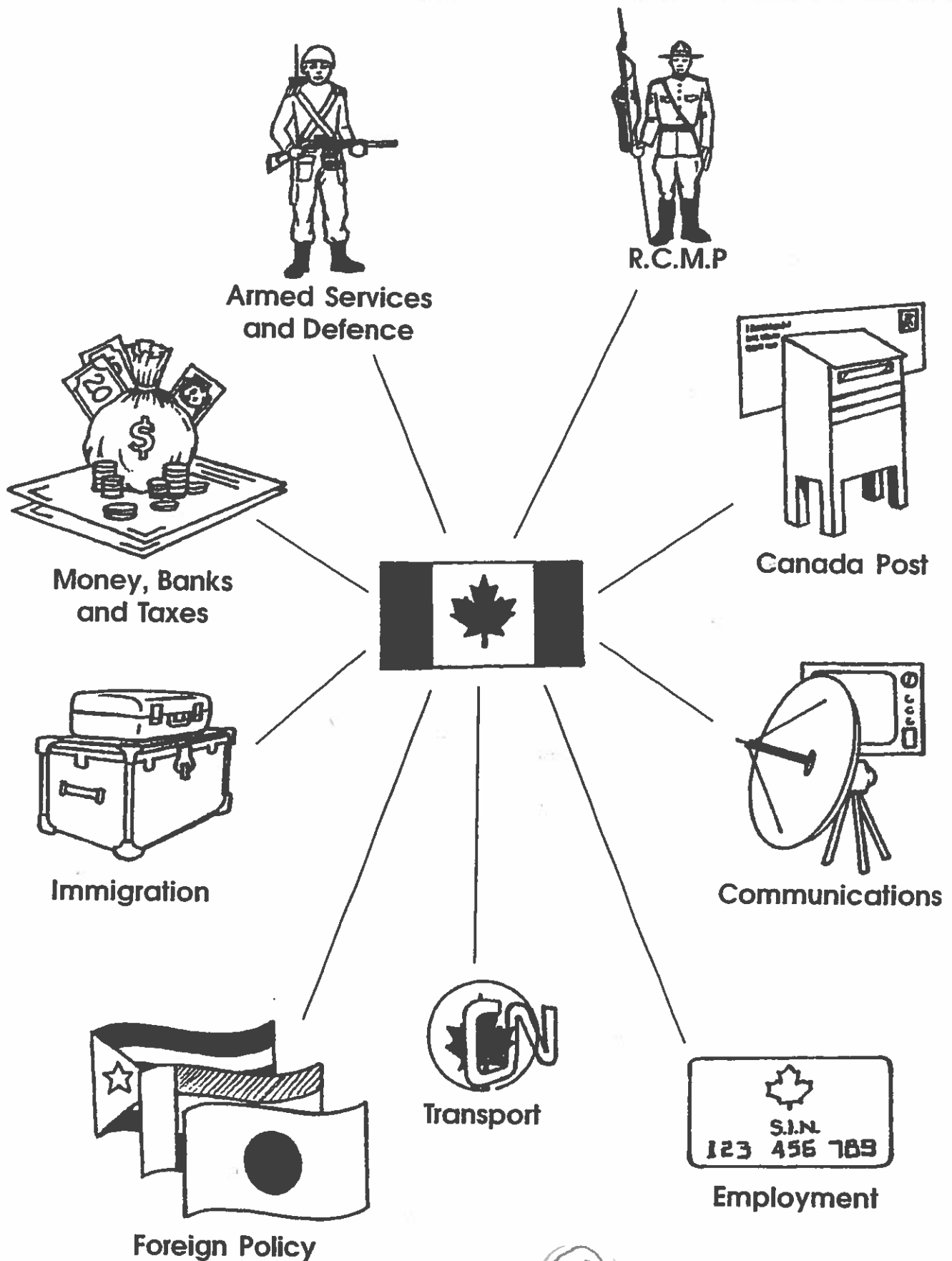
Nunavut is the newest territory in Canada and was formed in 1999. It has a Legislative Assembly and an Executive Council. A Commissioner is appointed by the Prime Minister and Cabinet to represent the federal government.

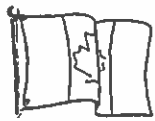
Brainwork!

1. **On a separate piece of paper compare how each of the territorial governments are the same, yet different.**
2. **Explore the government websites of each of these territories and list five interesting facts about these areas.**
3. **How has the map of Canada changed with the addition of Nunavut?**

GeoWat innovative teacher publishing ©2002

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SERVICES

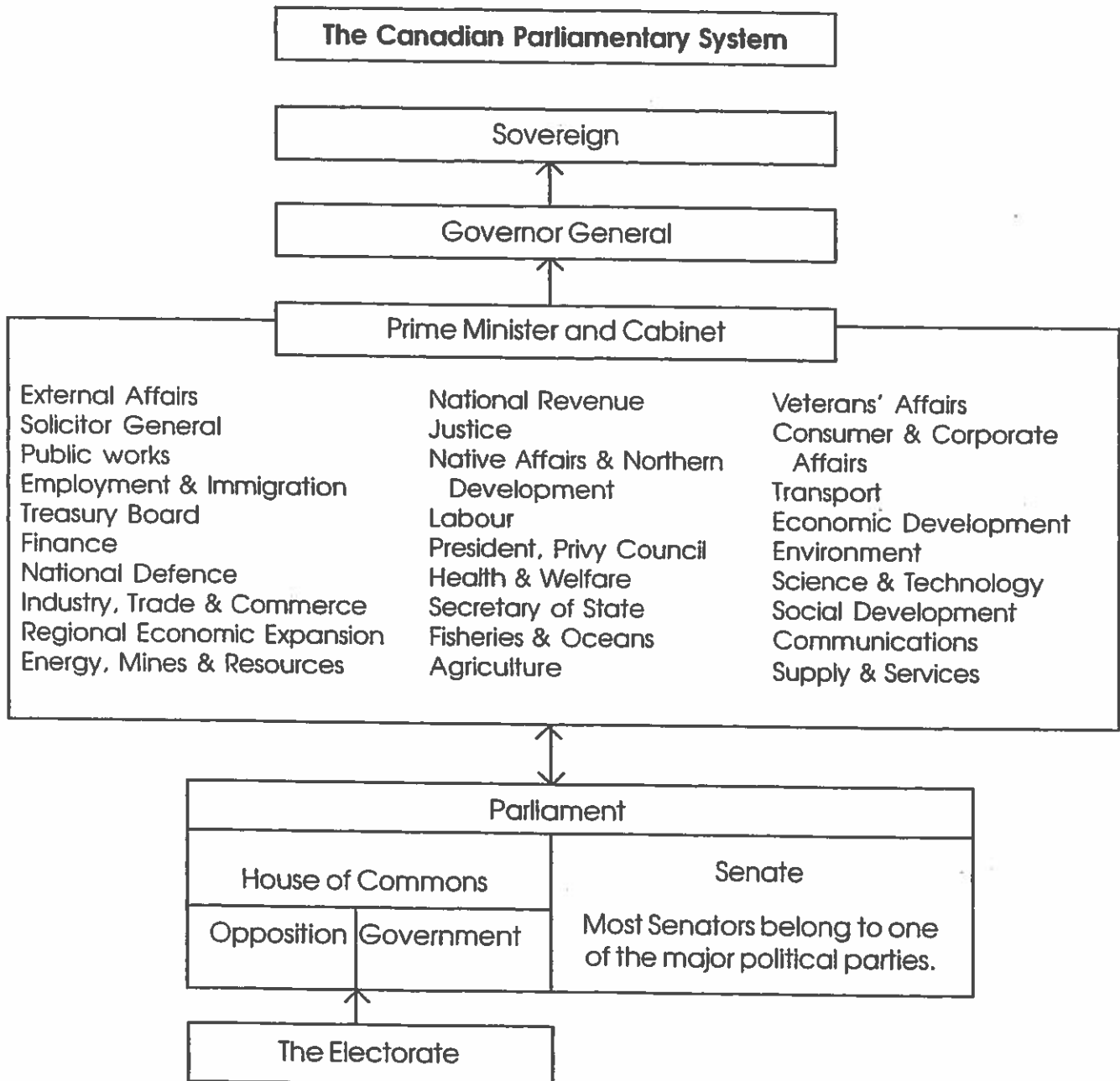




CANADA'S GOVERNMENT



People often refer to our government as a federal system of government. This means our government has a system in which the power to make laws is shared between two levels of government – a national or central government and provincial governments. Canada is a federation of provinces and territories or has a federal government because both levels of government have the power to make laws.



Political Parties



Did you know not all parties are about cake, ice-cream and balloons? In Canada, there are **political parties** made from groups of people who share the same ideas about how the country should run. This way, voters can choose between different political parties based on their leaders and their "programs". Some political parties in Canada are the Liberals, Progressive Conservatives, Block Quebecois, New Democrats and Canadian Alliance.

In Canada, the political party that wins the largest number of seats in an election forms the government. In a federal election, the leader of the winning political party becomes **Prime Minister**. In a provincial election, the leader of the winning political party becomes **Premier**. The political party in second place, in both types of an election, becomes the **Official Opposition**.

The core of Canada's government parliamentary system is the idea that there are competing political parties. The main goal of a political party is to win elections so that they can put to work their ideas about how to run the government. During election time, political parties develop a program or "**platform**" that explains to voters their ideas. Political parties also choose a leader whom they hope people would like to represent them.

Choosing a good candidate to represent a political party is very important. To promote a candidate, a political party will do many things. Often campaign literature and other brochures that give personal information about the candidate are handed out to the public. In addition, local and national newspapers are filled with what candidates think.

Candidates may even do interviews or other television appearances. Candidates who want to entice voters often hire media experts to coach them on the way look or present themselves. Political parties want to make sure that their candidate seems confident, intelligent and trustworthy.



Brainwork:

Look up the websites of some political parties.

The Premier

Did you know the Premier is the political leader of a provincial government? The job of the Premier is like the job of the Prime Minister in the federal government. In a provincial election, the leader of the political party that wins the most seats in the legislature becomes the Premier of the province and is officially appointed by the Lieutenant Governor. A Premier must call an election within every five years.

One of the jobs of the Premier is to choose Cabinet Ministers. These people control the government and carry out plans for important areas like health, education, and finance.

Sometimes, the provinces' Premiers get together to discuss mutual concerns in small groups. All the premiers of Canada meet with the Prime Minister to discuss issues of concerns to all of Canada. When all the Premiers and the Prime Minister meet, it is called a First Ministers Conference.

Brainwork!

1. In which province or territory do you live in?

2. What is the capital of your province?

3. Who is the Premier of your province?

4. Which political party does your Premier represent?

6. What is the name of your member to the legislature?

7. Which political party does your member to the legislature belong to?

The Federal Level of Government



Did you know that the federal government is the main system of government in Canada? The federal level of government handles such matters as keeping our country safe, lawmaking, banking, the postal system and foreign relations. It is also involved in other areas like transportation, communication, immigration, health, and environmental matters.

The federal government of Canada is organized into three main parts. The first is the legislative branch of government. This is where all the laws are made and then put into action by different federal departments. The second is the judiciary branch of government. This is where all laws are controlled and made clear through the courts. The third is the executive or administration branch of government. This is where the day-to-day work of the government is done.

The Legislative Branch

The legislative branch of government is made up of the two houses of Parliament. The first "house" is called the House of Commons. People must be elected to be a member of the House of Commons. The second "house" is called the Senate. People are appointed by the Prime Minister to be in the Senate.

The House of Commons is in Ottawa and is the centre of the federal government. It consists of 301 Members of Parliament who are elected by Canadians. Each Member of Parliament holds a seat in the House of Commons. This is where the Members of Parliament meet to examine issues and to pass laws. Visitors can sit in the Visitor's Gallery and listen to MPs discussing government business.

The political party with the most members elected forms the government. The leader of the party that forms the government becomes the Prime Minister. The party that has the second most elected members is called the Official Opposition. Their leader is called, the Leader of the Opposition. The job of the Official Opposition is to question the plans of the government in power in order to improve them. At the House of Commons, there is a special job for someone who is called the Speaker of the House. The Speaker of the House is like the referee. The Speaker of the House makes sure all Members of Parliament play by the rules.



Name _____

The Federal Level of Government

The Legislative Branch

The Senate is the second “house” of Parliament. 104 members of Senate are appointed to their position by the government. They meet in their own special room called the Senate Chamber located in the Parliament buildings in Ottawa. Senators must retire when they are seventy-five years old. The Prime Minister appoints new senators when vacancies become available. Usually Prime Ministers select people from their own political party to become senators. The Senate has very little power and is not able to make new laws. The Senate does three main things:

- After a bill is passed in the House of Commons, the Senate must pass it, before the bill becomes an official law.
- Before a bill is debated in the House of Commons, senators give their input to make the bill better.
- A senate inquiry can be used to help investigate problems of national importance such as child poverty or unemployment.

The Judiciary Branch of Government



It is the responsibility of the Judiciary branch of government to apply and interpret laws through Canada's court system. Canada's federal judiciary is made of the Supreme Court of Canada, the Federal Court, and the Provincial and Territorial Courts. Canada's court system settles disputes between individuals, between organizations, and between governments. Established in 1875, the Supreme Court of Canada is the final place where a challenge to a law can be made. It is the highest court in all of Canada, and the Supreme Court's decisions are binding.

The Executive or Administrative Branch of Government

The Executive or Administrative Branch of the Federal government is where all the day-to-day operation of the government happens. The executive is made of the Prime Minister and his or her cabinet. Sometimes cabinet members are appointed by the Prime Minister to take on special responsibilities called a minister's portfolio. Some examples of portfolios are the Minister of Finance, Minister of Energy and Natural Resources or the Minister of Immigration. The work done in the executive branch by the Prime Minister and his or her cabinet helps to shape the policies and the actions of the government.



Name _____

The Prime Minister

Did you know the Prime Minister is the head of the government of Canada? The Prime Minister can be from any part of Canada, but when he or she is in office, he or she lives with their family in Ottawa, in a large home on Sussex Drive. The Governor General officially appoints the Prime Minister. As Prime Minister there is no fixed term in office, however general elections are held within every five years.

As the leader of the federal government, the Prime Minister is the most powerful person in Canadian politics. This is because he or she is the leader of the political party that holds the majority of seats in the House of Commons. The Prime Minister selects his or her Cabinet from members of his or her political party. The Cabinet helps the Prime Minister make decisions about how to run the country. The Prime Minister speaks for the government of Canada and represents Canada in international relations.

The Prime Minister has many duties while holding office. He or she has the authority to appoint Senators, members of Cabinet, and other important positions such as Deputy Ministers, and ambassadors. Other responsibilities of the Prime Minister include appointing people to oversee federal boards and government agencies such as the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) and the National Library. The Prime Minister also advises the Governor General on the need and the date for a federal election.

The biggest and most difficult task for the Prime Minister is to try to make sure the concerns of each of the provinces is met. The Prime Minister has an important role in meeting with the Premiers of the provinces to discuss topics of concern to the whole country. Meetings with the Premiers are called First Ministers Conferences.

Brainwork:



Did you know you can write a letter to the Prime Minister and not use a stamp? Write a letter to the Prime Minister as a citizen of Canada. Share your feelings about being Canadian. Be certain to thank the Prime Minister in advance for a reply. Here is the address:

Right Honourable Jean Chrétien
Prime Minister
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario
Canada



Governor General Of Canada



Did you know the Governor General is the personal representative of the king or queen of Britain? The Governor General is not a member of a political party and is a symbol of Canadian unity. The Governor General receives the title "Right Honourable" for life and while in office he or she is called "His Excellency" or Her Excellency". The Governor General also gets to reside at a large mansion in Ottawa called Rideau Hall.

When Canada first formed, the job of the Governor General was to act on the behalf of the British government. He was chosen by the king or queen to make sure that Canada's laws matched the ones in Britain. As Canada became more separate and independent from Britain, the job of Governor General has become less powerful and more ceremonial.

Today, the Prime Minister recommends a candidate for the position of Governor General and the Queen officially appoints the person as her representative. The Governor General carries out their powers only on the advice of the Prime Minister. The first Canadian to be appointed as Governor General was the Right Honourable Vincent Massey in 1952. The first woman appointed Governor General was the Right Honourable Jeanne Mathilde Sauvé in 1984.

Some of the duties of the Governor General of Canada include:

- reading the Throne Speech at the opening of Parliament;
- swearing in the Prime Minister and the Cabinet ministers;
- opening and dissolving Parliament;
- signing bills passed by the House of Commons and the Senate;
- hosting royal visitors and other important visitors to Canada;
- presenting medals for bravery and other awards as well as lending support to worthy causes;
- traveling to other countries to represent Canada.



Brainwork:

1. Find out who is the present Governor General.
2. What is the Order of Canada?

How Our Laws Are Made



Did you know that the Legislative assembly is the place where ideas are presented and made into laws? Laws begin as ideas, and then ideas become bills. A bill is like a rough draft explaining the idea for a law. Bills go through a special procedure called the Legislative process to become laws or acts.

The legislative process is important, because Members of Parliament make sure that before an idea, becomes a bill and finally a law or act that the idea is worthwhile. During the legislative process, a bill is discussed, and the public can come and express their opinions so that changes to a bill can be made before becoming a law.

Creating a law is just like the process of writing. First, you start with an idea of what to write about, second you write a rough draft, third you add details and edit your work making sure it is clear for the reader and finally you publish it.

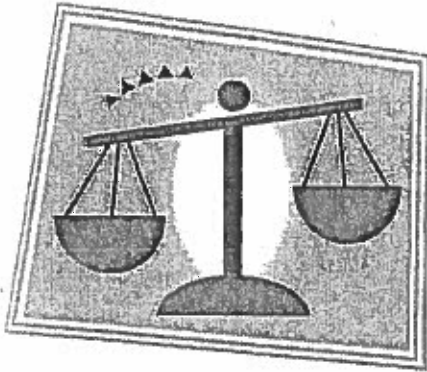
A cabinet minister usually presents government bills or "public bills" into the House of Commons. Government bills usually have something to do with the government's plan to spend public money or raise taxes. Bills are supposed to be good for Canada, like providing more public housing for people who are forced to live in the city street. Other types of bills are called Private Members' bill or private bills.

The Supreme Court of Canada



The Supreme Court of Canada is made up of nine judges appointed by the Prime Minister. It only considers cases that involve legal questions of fundamental importance. The purpose of the Supreme Court is to interpret laws and acts passed by federal and provincial governments to ensure that they abide by The Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Constitution.

How Our Laws Are Made



Step 1: The First Reading

This is when a Member of Parliament presents the bill. A bill is a document that explains the proposed law. Usually a bill is presented by a Cabinet minister, but not always. During the first reading, there are no debates or votes.

Step 2: The Second Reading

This is when Members of Parliament discuss and debate as a group, the advantages and disadvantages of a bill.

Step 3: Standing Committee

The bill is sent to be studied by a group of Members of Parliament called a standing committee. A standing committee is made up of MPs from all the political parties, so that all points of view are taken into consideration when studying a bill with a specific issue. For instance, there are standing committees that study all bills to do with agriculture. This is also the time when experts and other members of the public may appear before the committee to present their view.

Step 4: The Report Stage

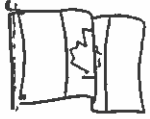
Any changes or amendments suggested by the standing committee are discussed in the House of Commons.

Step 5: The Third Reading

The bill is debated in its final form and voted on two more times.

Step 6: Royal Assent

Once the bill has been passed three times in the House of Commons, it must be approved by the senate and signed by the Governor General. The bill is now an official law.

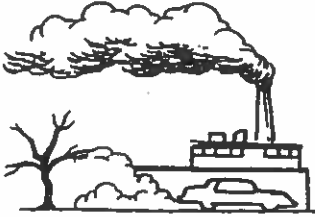


How A Law Is Made



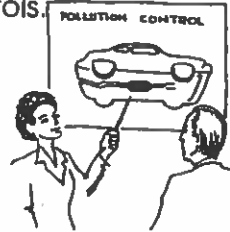
Problem:

Pollution is becoming a serious problem. Scientists say that the smoke from factories is causing acid rain. People are becoming worried about this problem.



Minister's Solution:

The Minister of the Environment discusses this problem with the workers in his department. They suggest that factories should be made to add better pollution controls.



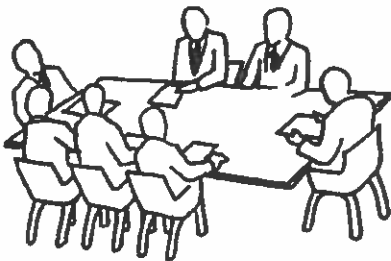
Cabinet Discussions:

The Minister discusses the idea at a Cabinet meeting. The Cabinet discuss whether this is a good idea and if the people will like it.



First Reading:

A bill is written by the Minister. It says that factory owners must add better pollution controls by a certain date. This bill is read in the House of Commons to let all the MPs know the Government wants to make a new law.



Second Reading:

The MPs think about the bill and then discuss it. They vote whether to accept the main idea that factories should have better pollution controls.



Committee Discussions:

The bill is then discussed by a small group of MPs who represent all the parties. They read the bill line by line and suggest changes.



Third Reading:

When all the changes are made to the bill, it is sent back to the House of Commons. The MPs discuss the revised bill. Then they vote whether or not to make it a law.



The Senate:

The bill is given three readings in the Senate. The Senators can send it back to the House of Commons for slight changes. But usually the Senate passes the bill.



The Governor General:

Once the bill has been passed by the Senate, it is sent to the Governor General. When the Governor General signs the bill, it becomes law.



What Are Taxes?

Did you know Canadians have to pay money to the federal, provincial and municipal governments for the public services they provide? The money that Canadians are required to pay to the government is called **taxes**.



Taxes pay for the operation of the government and its activities. This can be expensive. People cannot choose to pay for some public services and not for others. The building and repair of roads, schools, libraries and hospitals are just some of the things paid for with tax money. Even if you do not need to use the services of a hospital, police or fire fighters, as a member of the community you are expected to pay taxes. You might not need the service now, but who knows about later?

Canadians pay taxes in many ways. The first way is by giving up some of their salary. This is called **income tax**. The second way is by paying extra money for things we buy. This is called **sales tax**. The third way is by paying taxes on any property someone owns. This is called **property tax**.

The government knows how much tax money they need by deciding ahead of time what they plan to spend the money on. This plan is called a **budget**. A budget explains how much things will cost and if the government has enough money to pay for it.

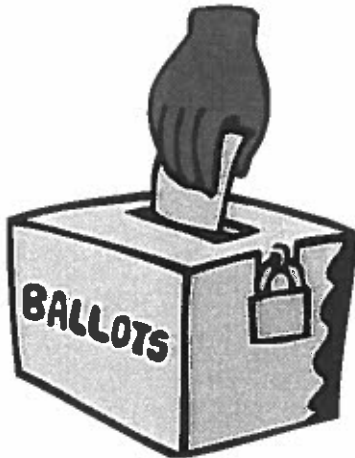
Each year, federal, provincial and municipal governments are responsible to keep track of money spent. If at the end of the year, the government spent more money than it had, this is called a **deficit**. If the government has money left over, this is called a **surplus**.

Brainwork:

1. What is the sales tax in your province or territory? _____

2. What is the Goods and Services Tax?

All About Elections



Did you know an election is like organizing a big public event? In order for people to participate, people need information about when and where it is going to happen. Organization is the key!

Elections give citizens the opportunity to choose people whom they would like to represent them in office. During an election, a candidate is voted into office to represent the people of a specific area. In federal and provincial elections, this specific area is called a **riding** or a **constituency**. In a municipal election, the area of a city that a candidate is elected to represent is called a **ward**. It is important to divide areas into ridings or wards to make sure people of all communities are fairly represented in the selected government.

When is an Election called?

In Canada, federal and provincial elections are called at least every five years. Municipal or local elections are called every three years. The date for a federal election is chosen by the Prime Minister. He or she then notifies the Governor General so that Parliament can be dissolved. The Chief Electoral Officer is also informed of the Election Day. Usually the Prime Minister tries to hold an election when voters feel the government is doing a good job and when all major bills have been passed. In this way, there is a better chance that the government already in office is re-elected.

Who runs an Election?

All federal elections are organized and run by an agency of parliament called **Elections Canada**. The purpose of Elections Canada is to make sure the rights of all eligible Canadian voters are protected. The person in charge of an election is called the **Chief Electoral Officer (CEO)**. Their job is to make sure the election is organized and runs smoothly.

Usually, before an election, Elections Canada makes sure that their eligible voter lists are up to date. The process of doing this is called **Enumeration**. The people who come to your household to check the names of eligible voters are called enumerators. **Enumerators** give eligible voters an Elector Information Card to be used on Election Day. Elections Canada includes voters who are new Canadian citizens or who have moved.

Diary Of A Federal Election



The Prime Minister chooses a date for Election Day. He or she notifies the Governor General and the Chief Electoral Officer. The Governor General dissolves Parliament.



Political Parties name their candidates for office. Candidates must be Canadian Citizens and 18 years old on polling day.



Political Parties have 36 days to convince eligible voters that their Candidates should be voted into government office. Usually candidates have an election campaign team to help convince voters.



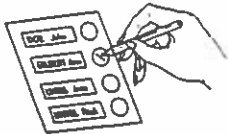
On Election Day, eligible voters go to the polling station. Federal elections are held on a Monday or Tuesday, if the Monday is a holiday. Voters mark their secret ballot. The ballot is then folded and placed into the ballot box to be counted later.



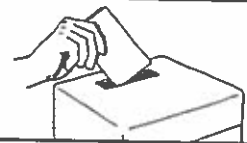
The candidate who receives the most votes wins and becomes a representative for their riding.



The political party who has the most candidates elected as Members of Parliament forms the government. If the winning political party has more than half the seats in Parliament, it is a *majority government*. If the winning political party has fewer than half of the seats in Parliament, but more seats than the other parties do, it is a *minority government*.



VOTING PROCEDURES



Number the boxes in the correct order.

The Elector Information Card confirms that your name is on the list of electors. Call the Elections Canada office in your Electoral District if you don't receive one.

An Elector Information Card

This notice will confirm that your name is on our list of electors prepared for the pending election. You must vote in the electoral district where you reside. If you have moved from this address, please call 1-888-666-6463 for information.

POLLS ARE OPEN ON ELECTION DAY FROM 9 A.M. TO 5 P.M.

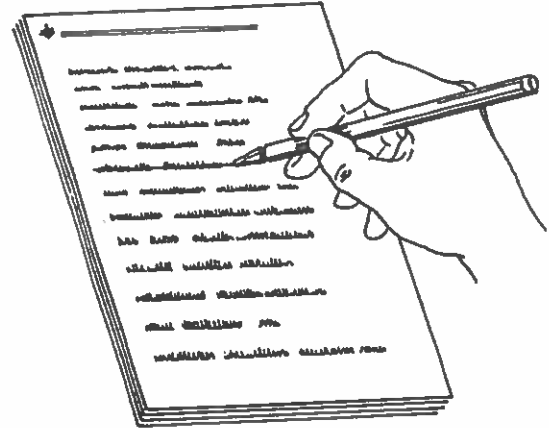
Cet avis indique que votre nom se trouve sur la liste électorale pour les prochaines élections. Vous devez voter dans la circonscription électorale où vous résidez. Si vous avez changé d'adresse, veuillez composer le 1-888-666-6463 pour des renseignements.

LE JOUR DU SCRUTIN: LES BUREAU DE VOTE SONT OUVERTS DE 9 H 00 À 17 H 00.

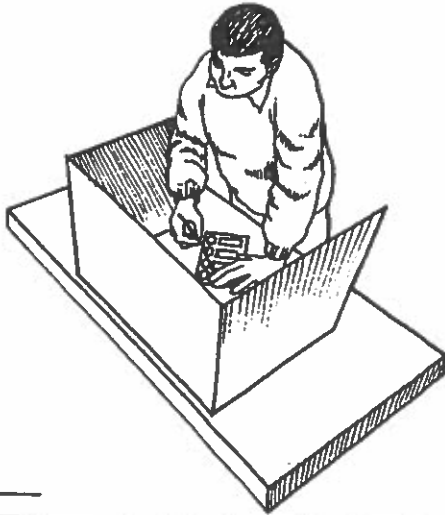
June 3, 1999

ELECTORAL DISTRICT / CIRCONSCRIPTION ÉLECTORALE		TELEPHONE/TELEPHONE
HASTING-FRONTENAC-LENNOX & ADDINGTON		
Poll No. 990	The Polling Place Will Be At Or Near Lennox House for the Aged 310 Bridge St. W., NAPANEE	1-800-773-6137 473-4999

The Poll Clerk draws a line through your name on the Register of Electors and then enters it in the Poll Book.



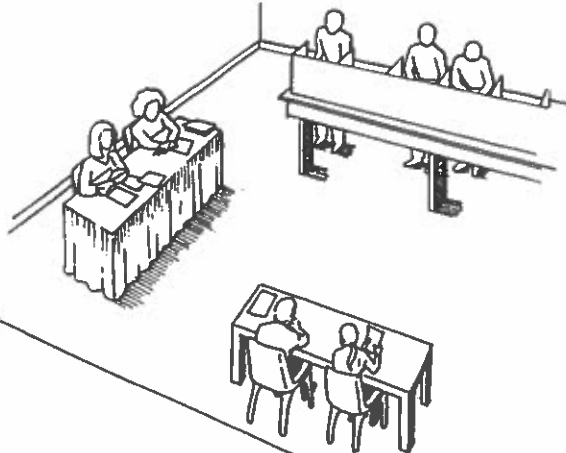
Behind a voter's screen you vote by secret ballot.



The Deputy Returning Office checks your ballot and then drops it in the ballot box.

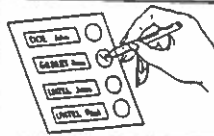


On Polling Day go to your Polling Station. Present your Elector Information card.



An enumerator visits your home during the election period to find out the names of the people in your house who can vote.

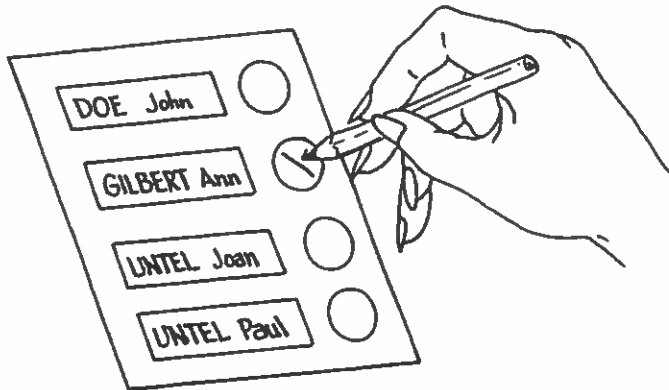




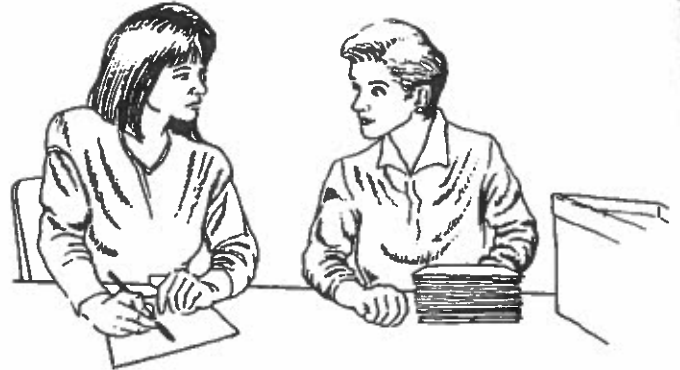
VOTING PROCEDURES (CONTINUED)



On the ballot mark an "X" in the circle to the right of the name of the candidate you prefer.



The enumerators record the names of all the eligible voters. They also give each voter an Elector Information Card.



The Deputy Returning Officer counts the ballots at the end of the day.



The Deputy Returning Officer hands you a folded ballot with his/her initials on it.



The winning party celebrates its victory.



The Deputy Returning Officer calls the headquarters of the candidates with the results.

