



Introduction

Grade 5 Social Studies: Aspects of Government and Citizenship in Canada

This package of additional resources was developed for the Grade 5 Social Studies unit on Aspects of Government and Citizenship. The activities in this package will help teachers and students gain an understanding of what it means to be a citizen of a municipality. Students will learn about the various functions of their community and the importance of being involved on a local level. The municipal government is the closest level of government to individuals, and it is hoped that throughout this mini-unit students will come to understand the impact and influence local government has on their day-to-day lives. Thus, this unit is heading students towards understanding the processes and events associated with Toronto Municipal Elections. The activities will help students understand concepts associated with the municipal elections, but they are also geared towards promoting literacy and can easily be modified to meet the needs of individual students. All of the activities build on the skills students will need to develop in order to successfully complete the final culminating task.

The unit also focuses on citizenship and what it means to be a citizen of a classroom. Many of the activities are well suited for the beginning of the year, because they require students to reflect on their rights and responsibilities in the classroom, school, and community. Many of the learning strategies provide students with real life learning experiences that will encourage responsible citizenship and stewardship for their local communities. Students will discover the issues that matter most to their friends and families as they relate to the upcoming Toronto Municipal Elections.

There are several activities that require students to read through newspaper articles and other types of media, issues pertaining to the city of Toronto. If possible, teachers should bring to class local newspapers on regular basis and set aside 15-20 minutes once or twice a week, so that students have an opportunity to gradually build a portfolio of media resources that will be helpful for the final culminating task.

This mini-unit is a small extension of the much broader concept of citizenship that students learn about in Grade 5 social studies. Teachers may begin this unit by asking students what they think it means to be a good citizen. Throughout the unit students can be asked to formulate questions and uncover information about the various aspects of citizenship. Teachers can encourage students to create a mind map similar to the one in Appendix A of this document, which in turn may be used to formatively assess students. Students should be encouraged to choose an organizer best suited for their own learning, as they will be deciding how to organize the information (e.g. colour coding their responses using symbols, pictures, etc).

Teaching/Learning Strategies

1. Teachers may choose from among the municipal services listed below which issues students may discuss in the brochure.

•Public transit (e.g., buses, subways)	•Taking care of local roads	•Restaurant inspections	•Improving existing neighbourhoods
•Fire department	•Parks and recreation	•Ambulance services	•Parking
•Animal services	•Garbage/Recycling	•Childcare centres	
•Water testing	•Library services	•Local police	

2. In order to help students organize their information teachers may provide students with a chart to help them plan and sequence their arguments. The questions should help students determine what are the important issues and the steps they will take in order to address them. **(Appendix #2)**

3. A rubric is available for teachers and students and may be reviewed together as a class to ensure students are aware of expectations. Teachers may also show students examples of brochures to make sure students are aware of the proper format of a brochure and appropriate content to include.

Evaluation

Rubric: Issue Information Brochure **(Appendix #3)**

Accommodations

- Encourage ESL students to write their first draft in their native/first language and then use a dictionary to translate their work into English.
- Limit the amount of content students are expected to cover by assigning them only one issue.
- Provide students with information necessary to complete Brochure Planning Chart (Appendix B). If necessary fill in the Brochure Planning Chart for students and have them copy this information directly into a brochure format.
- Provide extra time for ESLs and students with special needs to complete task.

Extensions

- Hold a mock election where students vote for a candidate that best represents their position.
- Students may also observe through voting, the ability of citizens to influence their local government on issues that affect them directly. Although students are not eligible to vote, they can understand that the ability to elect individuals/leaders to represent them is part of the democratic process.
- Have students design ballots and campaign posters.

Culminating Task Description

Students will create a brochure about local issues entitled “Who I Am and Where I Stand.”

Within the brochure students:

- will explore/discuss issues affecting their community
- should think about which issues are most important to them and explain/justify why these issues need to be addressed
- should include visually appealing pictures, graphs, symbols, etc.
- will assume the role of a candidate, either local councillor or mayor, and present on two or three issues they believe are representative of their community
- express his or her own opinions/beliefs

Purpose

Students learn who in their community best represents their position on issues that are important to the community as a whole. Each student will present their individual positions to the class and compare the various stances on issues. Helping students determine which issues are most important will help them to understand how candidates are chosen based on their ability to represent the needs of the local community.

Overall Expectations

Students will:

- summarize the structures, functions, and interactions of Canada’s federal, provincial /territorial, and municipal governments, and identify and describe significant
- Canadian symbols, ceremonies, buildings, and political figures (e.g., local councillors and mayoral candidates)
- use a variety of resources and tools to gather and analyse information about government processes, the rights of groups and individuals, and the responsibilities of citizenship in Canada, including participation in the electoral process
- identify concrete examples of how government plays a role in contemporary society and of how the rights of groups and individuals and the responsibilities of citizenship apply to their own lives.

Specific Expectations

Students will:

- use graphic organizers and graphs to sort, classify, and connect information
- use media works, oral presentations, written notes and descriptions, drawings, and tables to present information about processes or sequences of events
- model activities and processes of responsible citizenship (students assume role of a candidate in their brochure and present to the class their platform).

Time Required: Two 40 min periods