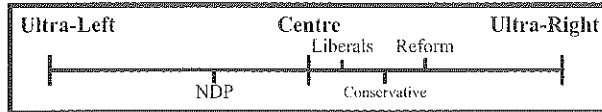


THEME 1: POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT

PLO1.a *Demonstrate understanding of the political spectrum.*

The **political spectrum** is the designation of political beliefs on a continuum from radical to reactionary.



The further to the left of the spectrum, the more radical the ideology in terms of government control. For example, a dictatorship where one person controls all is at the far left of the political spectrum.

Democracy is a form of government in which the supreme power is vested in the people and exercised directly by them or by their elected agents under a free electoral system. Canada is based on a system of democracy.

SIX MAJOR IDEOLOGIES

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Democratic</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Liberalism 2. Conservatism 3. Socialism | <p>Dictatorship</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Fascism 5. Communism 6. Totalitarianism |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

An **ideology** is a belief system, a philosophical perspective, or set of opinions about HOW and WHY government should operate.

Ideologies	Definitions
Liberalism	strong belief in economic and intellectual freedom Classical Liberalism – government should not be involved more than necessary Reform Liberalism – stronger commitment to limited government intervention
Conservatism	strong belief in economic freedom and intellectual equality
Socialism	belief that government should control means of production; support government intervention in the economy
Communism	belief in the economic equality of all people; want to abolish all private property
Fascism	no intellectual freedom, limited economic freedom, strong government regulations
Capitalism	a system, not a political ideology, but opposed to communism; belief that business, not government, produces goods
Totalitarianism	absolute control by the state or a governing branch of a highly centralized institution

MAJOR CANADIAN FEDERAL POLITICAL PARTIES

Conservative Party	Leader	Colour
	Stephen Harper	Blue

- This party is traditionally the party of business.
- Recent Prime Ministers include Stephen Harper, Brian Mulroney, and Kim Campbell.

Liberal Party	Leader	Colour
	Stéphane Dion	Red

- This party has held power longer than any other.
- Recent Prime Ministers include Pierre Trudeau, Jean Chrétien, and Paul Martin.

New Democratic Party	Leader	Colour
	Jack Layton	Orange

- This party is traditionally the party of labour and unions.
- There has never been an NDP Prime Minister.

Bloc Québécois	Leader	Colour
	Gilles Duceppe	Blue

- This is a Québec sovereigntist party.
- They only run candidates in Québec.

Policies, Philosophies, and Priorities of Major Canadian Federal Provincial Parties

Liberal Party

Economic Equality: Everyone has the right to the necessities of life. The government should work to equalize opportunities for everyone and also provide support for those who are unable to support themselves. They support free trade.

Intellectual Freedom: The government should not regulate our access to ideas or published materials.

Personal Freedom: The personal freedoms of people must be protected. When rules, laws, or norms infringe upon freedoms, they must be changed.

Non-Traditional Values: Many traditional values represent old-fashioned ideas that are unfair to women and minorities.

Activist Government: The government has a responsibility to regulate business to protect workers, the environment, and the public from abuse.

Use of Property for Public Good: The government has the right to tell people how to use their personal property in order to maximize the public good.

Conservative Party

Economic Freedom: The government should allow individuals to maximize their economic potential and not interfere. They support a balance between a balanced budget and supporting social programs.

Intellectual Equality: The government should protect society from harmful expressions and publications.

Personal Responsibility: People have a responsibility to follow the rules/laws/norms set by society. Stern punishments should be given to those who break the rules/laws/norms.

Traditional Values: People should strive to live by the traditional moral codes. The government should reflect religious values.

Laissez-Faire and Decentralized

Government: The federal government should let free market forces keep order in the business world. Government should be as small as possible, and most power/responsibility should be distributed to provinces and local government.

Property Rights: The government should pass and enforce laws that protect the rights of property owners.

New Democratic Party

- Formed from the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation (CCF) in 1962 by Tommy Douglas
- Increased taxation of large corporations
- Against the privatization of government-run Crown corporations
- Increased funding for education and health care with equal access for all
- Support minority rights and welfare measures

Bloc Québécois Party

- Supports the aim of Québec separation
- Support comes entirely from Québec

MAJOR POLITICAL PARTIES OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Party	Leader
Liberal	Gordon Campbell
Conservative	Wilf Hanni
New Democratic Party	Carole James
Green Party	Christopher Ian Bennett (Interim)

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

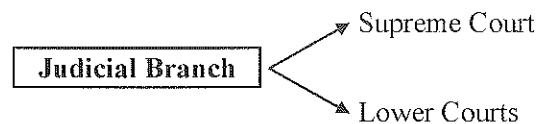
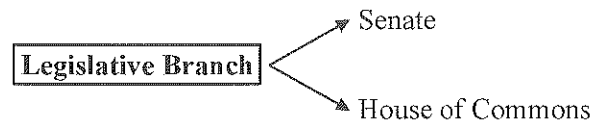
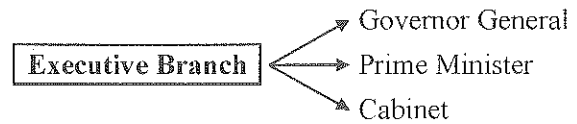
1. Which of these parties is the furthest to the **left** wing?
 - A. Liberal
 - B. Alliance
 - C. NDP
 - D. Progressive Conservative

2. Which of these ideologies is furthest to the **right** wing?
 - A. Socialism
 - B. Conservatism
 - C. Communism
 - D. Fascism

PLO1.b *explain how Canadians can effect change at the federal and provincial levels*

The Canadian government is composed of three branches:

- The Executive Branch
- The Legislative Branch
- The Judicial Branch



The **Executive Branch** is responsible for carrying out the duties of government and enforcing legislation passed by the Legislative Branch.

The executive branch consists of a Governor General, Prime Minister, Cabinet, Department of Justice, Department of Defence, Crown corporations, regulatory agencies, and advisory bodies.

GOVERNOR GENERAL
Ceremonial Role:

- appointed by the Queen of England to carry out her duties in Canada
- if the Prime Minister resigns, the Governor General asks the new party leader to form government
- calls elections, appoints the Lieutenant Governors
- **Gives the Speech from the Throne:** a speech prepared by the Prime Minister's office outlining the goals of the government in the next session of Parliament (begins a new session of Parliament)
- **Royal Assent:** approves a bill to make it law

- **Prorogue:** on the advice of the Prime Minister, the Governor General can end a session of parliament without dissolving the legislature (no election is required)

PRIME MINISTER

Power of Party Leadership: Leader of the party that wins the most seats

Power of Appointment: Selects cabinet ministers and appoints senate members

Power of Government Organization: sets election dates, can change size and structure of cabinet, gives direction to government

Power of Dissolution: advises the Governor General when to dissolve parliament

CABINET

- Usually Members of Parliament, but can be Senators.
- Usually from the government party, but not always.
- Once appointed to the Cabinet, they are called Ministers.
- Three types of Ministers: Ministers, Ministers of State, and Ministers without Portfolio.
- In charge of civil services

Bureaucracy Government Departments: top civil servants in each department are Deputy Ministers

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE

CROWN CORPORATIONS

- companies owned by the government such as the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) and VIA Rail

REGULATORY AGENCIES

- set and enforce rules and regulation; for example, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency and Environment Canada

ADVISORY BODIES

- established to study issues and give advice; for example, the National Advisory Board on Forest Research

LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

The **Legislative Branch** (or Parliament) consists of

- **Senate** (105 seats)
 - Appointed by Governor General on the advice of the Prime Minister
 - Role is to provide a “sober second thought” to bills from the House of Commons
 - Role is to provide regional representation (equal number of senators from each region – not based on population)
 - Cannot introduce any bills requiring the spending of tax dollars.
- **House of Commons** (308 seats)
 - Consists of Members of Parliament from all parties
 - Representation by population
 - The Government sits to the right of the speaker. The Prime Minister and his cabinet sit in the front row. The other members are called backbenchers.
 - The Opposition sits opposite the Government and has a Shadow Cabinet to offer specialized scrutiny of cabinet policy and actions

JUDICIAL BRANCH

The **Judicial Branch** consists of the Supreme Courts, Federal courts, and provincial courts. It is charged with interpreting and enforcing the legal system.

Mechanisms of Changing Public Policy

There are many ways Canadians can effect change at the federal and provincial levels.

Strategy	Explanation
Elections	Voting in elections is the most common and widespread method of influencing government. Any Canadian citizen, age 18 or older, can vote in a federal election for the party of his or her choice.
Petitions and Protests	Individual – letter-writing to a Member of Parliament Group – protest rallies
Special Interest and Lobby groups	Join a group with people who share a similar viewpoint. Form a pressure group to change or influence government to promote a common interest. Example: Greenpeace or the National Council of Women
Join a Political Party	Those who choose to join can nominate and vote for the candidates who will run in their riding.
Civil Disobedience	The act of intentionally breaking a law that one considers unjust. Example: 1993 Clayoquot Sound, BC. Protestors blocked the logging road into the area and were arrested for breaking the law.
Media Campaigns	The media is a primary method of communicating and influencing ideas and information within society. The media can give Canadian citizens information on the government's business just as the media can give the government feedback from Canadian citizens on recent policy decisions.

The Lawmaking Process – Passage of Legislation

- A bill is proposed legislation usually introduced by a cabinet member in the House of Commons.
- The bill is put on the **Order Paper** and then goes through **First Reading**.
- In the first reading, it is simply introduced.
- In the **Second Reading**, it is debated and voted on.
- If it is approved, the bill goes to **committee**. There it is refined and polished.
- At **Third Reading**, the House votes on it.
- If approved, it is sent to **Senate**, where it goes through first reading, second reading, committee, and a third reading.
- If both the House and the Senate pass the bill, it is sent to the **Governor General** who then must sign it (**Royal Assent**) for it to become law.

A private member may also initiate a bill. It is introduced in the House of Commons by a member of parliament who is not a cabinet minister. A **private member's bill** follows the same legislative process as a government bill, but the time allocated for its consideration is restricted.

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

3. Parliament consists of
- A. the Governor General, Senate, and House of Commons
 - B. the House of Commons and the Senate
 - C. the Prime Minister, Cabinet, Senate, and House of Commons
 - D. the Supreme Court, Senate, and House of Commons

4. In total, how many readings does a bill usually go through in the Senate and House of Commons?
- Three
 - Four
 - Six
 - Eight

PLO1.c *explain how federal and provincial governments are formed in Canada*

THE ELECTORAL SYSTEM

- Federal and Provincial Governments hold elections at least every five years.
- The Prime Minister can choose a time that is convenient for his party (high popularity numbers) or may be forced into it if a major bill is defeated in the House of Commons
- The Prime Minister then asks the Governor General to dissolve Parliament.
- Canadians do not vote directly for the Prime Minister.
- Canadians vote for a candidate to represent their riding or constituency.
- The party that has the most elected Members of Parliament gets to form the next government.
- The leader of the party becomes the Prime Minister.

Elections have six stages; dissolution, enumeration, nomination, campaigning, balloting, and tabulation.

Dissolution: the session of the House of Commons comes to an end, and MPs effectively lose their jobs.

Enumeration: Chief Electoral Officer is in charge of this stage, preparing the voters' list.

Nomination: Candidates are selected for each party in each riding (geographic areas representing about 100 000 people)

Campaigning: Candidates are given media coverage, make speeches, promote their party platform and hold meetings.

Campaign contributions are a major political issue. Prior to and during an election,

candidates and parties actively raise money to help them run a campaign. Many people think that corporations, organization, and individuals give money to ensure that they have influence or can earn favours after the election.

The Elections Expenses Act of 1974 sets rules for how money is collected by political candidates and parties. For examples, all donations over \$200 per year must be made public.

Balloting: Voters go to polling stations in their communities to vote, mark, and "X" by the name of the candidate they want to represent their riding.

Tabulation: Votes are counted.

ELECTORAL SYSTEMS

First-Past-the Post: This is the current system used in federal and provincial elections.

A candidate only needs one more vote than his closest competitor to win. That means a candidate can win with less than 50% of the votes if there are more than two candidates.

Proportional Representation: If a party earns 41% of the popular vote, that party gets to have 41% of the seats in the legislature. This system is not used in Canada, but is more representative. Opponents suggest that MPs would not have a direct connection to the people of each riding.

Single Transferable Vote: This is a system suggested by a group of BC citizens. Although defeated in the last provincial election, proponents are hoping it gains popularity.

In this system, voters can choose candidates based on ordered preference. Once a candidate gets 50% of the vote, the voter's second choice is recorded. It is possible for a riding to elect more than one MLA. This system is more complicated, but very well-balanced.

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

5. The stage of the electoral process where the Chief Electoral Officer compiles a list of eligible voters is called
- nomination
 - balloting
 - tabulation
 - enumeration

Use the following information for the next question

Federal electoral district *P* is half the size of federal electoral district *Q*.

6. Why is electoral district *P* smaller in area than *Q*?
- Region *Q* has more land than region *P*.
 - The representative for region *Q* is more outspoken.
 - Region *P* has a smaller population than region *Q*.
 - People live closer together in region *P* than in region *Q*.

PLO1.d *describe major provisions of the Canadian constitution, including the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and assess its impact on Canadian society.*

CANADIAN CONSTITUTION

The Canadian Constitution defines the political structure and relationship between Canada's government and its people. The central principles are peace, order, good government, and the rule of law.

- The Charter of Rights and Freedoms is the longest portion.
- The Constitution establishes two levels of government (Federal and Provincial).
- Contains 147 sections
- Sections 91–95 deal with the Separation of Power

- Section 91 outlines federal jurisdictions (defence, postal, fisheries, criminal law, census, currency)
- Section 92 outlines provincial jurisdictions (hospitals, forests, municipal (or local) governments, highways, property and civil rights)

PRECURSORS TO THE CANADIAN CONSTITUTION

The Royal Proclamation (1763): Established British rule and law

Québec Act (1774): Recognized French civil law and religion in Québec but maintained British criminal law

Constitution Act (1791): Established Upper and Lower Canada in response to Loyalist immigration.

Act of Union (1840): Established one legislature for both Upper and Lower Canada

British North America Act (1867): Established the Dominion of Canada

Bill of Rights (1960)

Canada Act (1982): Ended the power of the British Parliament to legislate for Canada. Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau wanted to bring home (patriate) the Canadian Constitution and create a Charter of Rights as part of the Constitution (entrenched rights)

Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms: As an *entrenched* part of Canada's Constitution, the Charter of Rights and Freedoms guarantees basic rights and freedoms for Canadians. It came into effect in 1982. Before the Charter, many of these rights were merely protected by existing laws (Bill of Rights 1960) which meant that Parliament had the ability to change any existing rights. However, as part of the Constitution, the Charter is difficult to change (see notwithstanding clause on the next page). Because it is so difficult to change, the rights are considered *entrenched*.

CATEGORIES OF THE CHARTER

Equality Rights: freedom from discrimination based on race, ethnic origin, religion, sex, age, or mental or physical disability.

Mobility Rights: the right to live and seek employment anywhere in Canada

Legal rights: a person accused of crimes has the right to life, liberty, security of person, and a fair trial. Persons are innocent until proven guilty, and may not be subjected to cruel and unusual treatment.

Language rights: establishes English and French as the official languages of Canada (Official Language rights); right to an education in either language or each province to decide whether to provide education in a minority language (Minority Language right).

Fundamental Freedoms: freedoms considered basic to a democratic society which include the freedoms to think and believe whatever they want; freedom of belief and expression; freedom of association; freedom of religion and speech.

Democratic Rights: right to vote, run for office, have a federal election every 5 years, and a sitting of Parliament at least once every year.

Other important sections of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms include

The Preamble: the introductory sentence

Enforcement: Anyone whose rights or freedoms have been denied can appeal to the judiciary where evidence will be considered to resolve the matter.

Notwithstanding clause – Section 33: This section acts as an escape clause which can be enacted to override the Charter in some areas. It must be re-enacted every five years.

The amending formula states that. . .

To change the constitution you need to have two-thirds of the Provinces that represent at least 50% of the population and two-thirds support of the House and the Senate.

IMPACTS OF THE CHARTER ON CANADIAN SOCIETY

Charter	Impact
Fundamental Freedoms	Allows Canadians an opportunity to stand up for their rights.
Notwithstanding Clause	Gives some power back to the government but also allows for legal restriction of individual rights. This clause allows the possibility for both levels of government to pass a law even if the law violates one of the rights guaranteed in the Charter.
Civil Rights	The courts are often required to interpret the law where individual rights are in conflict with the good of the society. This places a burden of interpretation on the judicial system.
Gender Equity (Section 15)	In reality, women still do not receive equal treatment in the workplace. Thus, the Charter allows for special initiatives like affirmative action programs such as preferential hiring without conflicting another individual's rights.
Age Equity (Section 15)	Protects the rights of young people to find work by establishing forced retirement at age 65. When civil rights conflict, society needs to balance the protection of the rights of the individual with the rights of society.



PRACTICE QUESTIONS

7. To change the constitution, you need, in addition to two-thirds of Parliament,
 - A. 50% of the provinces and 50% of the population.
 - B. 50% of the provinces and two-thirds of the population.
 - C. two-thirds of the provinces and 50% of the population.
 - D. two-thirds of the provinces and two-thirds of the population.

8. Most of the rights in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms could previously be found in the
 - A. Royal Proclamation, 1763
 - B. Constitution Act, 1791
 - C. British North America Act, 1867
 - D. Bill of Rights, 1960

DEFINITIONS

Bill: a form or draft of a proposed statute presented to a legislature, but not yet enacted or passed and made law

Cabinet: generally responsible for introducing legislation in the House of Commons, responsible for various government departments, members appointed by the Prime Minister

Cabinet Ministers: members of the Cabinet

Cabinet Solidarity: once policy is decided among Cabinet Ministers, it is expected all will support that policy

Candidate: a person who seeks or is nominated for an office

Constituency: the voters or residents in a district represented by an elective Riding officer

Government: title given to the party that elects the most representative to the House of Commons

	Definition	Benefits and Challenges
Majority Government	In a federal election, if a party wins more than 50% of the available seats	If MPs vote with the party, the government can not be defeated in the House of Commons The government is almost guaranteed the ability to pass any law it proposes Every party has a "Whip", a senior MP, who tries to keep all MPs voting with party policy

Minority Government	In a federal election, if a party has won the most seats, but still has less than 50% of the total	Must make alliances with other parties to stay in power. May be more responsible than a majority because they must work with other parties and cooperate
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Governor General: the official representative of the Queen in Canada

House of Commons: consists of all MPs from all parties. Some become Cabinet Ministers. 308 seats.

Members of Parliament (MP): re-elected representatives in the House of Commons. Each MP represents a riding (constituency)

Monarch: ultimate source of governmental authority in Canada

Official Opposition: title given to the party that elects the second most representatives to the House of Commons

Order-in-Council: Policies that do not go beyond law or that can work within the boundaries of existing laws can automatically become law. These are usually decided at Cabinet Meetings.

Party Discipline: Similar to cabinet solidarity in that all members of the party will show support for their party's decisions.

Patronage: a favour, often a government position, given in return for political support

Prime Minister: leader of the political party that forms government

Senate: 105 members. Appointed by Governor General on the advice of the Prime Minister. Purpose is to give "sober second thought" to bills from the House of Commons.

Shadow Cabinet: Opposition MPs that criticize specific government departments

Speaker: acts as a referee, moderates debate