



Enrichment Activity – Youth Organizations Component

Who Do I Petition?

Staff Sheet

In the course of this activity, voters in training will become more aware of issues that affect citizens. They will learn to understand their concerns and determine which elected officials they should reach out to so that they are taken into consideration.

Skills developed

- ✓ Knowledge of the different levels of government and the roles that elected representatives are called on to play
- ✓ Reflection on the issues that can drive an election campaign

Length

45 minutes

Material required

- ✓ Copies of the Voters in Training "Who Do I Petition?" activity sheet.
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Icebreaker activity

Discuss the topic of petitions with the group. In particular, have them look at the diversity of petition topics on the National Assembly website:

<http://www.assnat.qc.ca/en/exprimez-votre-opinion/petition/signer-petition/index.html>

A bit of theory

A petition is a document in which one or more people address their elected representatives to obtain redress for a situation that they feel is unjust (a "grievance"). People who sign a petition are called "petitioners."

The right to petition is a well-established right in our society. Although they may not appear to produce immediate results, petitions do have an advantage: they publicly express citizens' concerns or opinions and show what they would like to change in their surroundings. It is a way of measuring the number of people who are for or against a project, for example.

In some cases, petitions can be very effective for putting pressure on political decision-makers and may play a decisive role in the advancement of certain issues.

The right target

A petition must concern an area in which the elected representative has power to act. So, it is important to understand the jurisdictions of the various levels of government in order to know who to send a petition to. Depending on its subject matter, a petition may be addressed to a federal, provincial, municipal or school official.

The following table presents situations that could cause concern among the population, and therefore, be the topic of a petition. They are categorized by level of government, in other words, who to contact in order for the petition to be heard.

Federal	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Broadcasting of the Olympic Games✓ Education financing (post-secondary)✓ Support for a Burmese refugee family✓ Canada's participation in a war✓ The signing of an international agreement
Provincial	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ The obligation of taking driver education✓ Expansion of a hospital✓ Education financing
Municipal	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Development of bicycle paths✓ Construction of a new basketball court✓ Student rates for public transportation✓ Objection to the building of a factory pig farm✓ Library opening hours✓ Construction of a new shopping mall✓ Installation of water meters in businesses
School	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Landscaping of a school yard✓ School recycling



Voters in training

Suggested steps

1. Referring to the "A Bit of Theory" section, explain the different levels of government (federal, provincial, municipal and school) and their elected officials to the youths.
2. Explain to them what a petition is.
3. Distribute copies of the "Who Do I Petition?" activity sheet to the youths so they can fill them out individually or in small groups.
4. To wrap up the activity, ask them to think about what they would specifically want to see changed in their surroundings, as well as in society in general. Continue the discussion by asking the following questions:
 - Can a petition have the power to change things?
 - Are there issues that concern you that might drive you to start a petition?
 - To which levels of government would you address your petition?



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Voters in Training Sheet

To which level of government should you address your petition in order to express your opinion on the issues in the table below?

	Federal	Provincial	Municipal	School
Development of bicycle paths				
The obligation of taking driver education				
Expansion of a hospital				
Education financing				
Support for a refugee family				
Canada's participation in a war				
Construction of a new basketball court				
Student rates for public transportation				
Library opening hours				
Construction of a new shopping mall				
Landscaping of a school yard				
Installation of water meters in businesses				
School recycling				

Broaden your horizons

Want to know more about petitions? Visit (in French)

<http://www.paricilademocratie.com/approfondir/parlementarisme-et-elections/684-le-processus-petitionnaire>

There you will learn about the different stages of a petition and other topics.



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CORRECTED – Who Do I Petition?

To which level of government should you address your petition in order to express your opinion on the issues in the table below?

	Federal	Provincial	Municipal	School
Development of bicycle paths			■	
The obligation of taking driver education		■		
Expansion of a hospital		■		
Education financing		■		
Support for a refugee family	■			
Canada's participation in a war	■			
Construction of a new basketball court			■	
Student rates for public transportation			■	
Library opening hours			■	
Construction of a new shopping mall			■	
Landscaping of a school yard				■
Installation of water meters in businesses			■	
School recycling				■