



Enrichment Activity – Primary School Component

Voters' Rights

Teacher's Sheet

Over the course of this activity, students will discover that voters have rights. They will try to rank these rights in order of importance.

Link to the Québec Education Program

Social Sciences area – History and Citizenship Education

Objective

- ✓ Learn about voters' rights and discuss their importance in the election process

Length

45 minutes

Material required

- ✓ Copies of the Voters in Training "Voters' Rights" activity sheet
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Icebreaker activity

Ask students the following questions: Do you think voters have rights? Why?

A bit of theory

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights establishes that the governments of countries must be based on the will of the people and that this will is expressed in periodic and honest elections.

Also, everyone has the right to take part in the decisions of their country and therefore they have the right to vote, be elected and express their political views. This is also noteworthy:

- All citizens of legal age have the right to vote in elections, on a non-discriminatory basis.
- All voters have the right to vote at an accessible polling station.
- The right to vote in secret is absolute and cannot be restricted in any way.
- All candidates and political parties participating in an election must accept the election results.

As a result, States (or the election organizers) have responsibilities they must fulfill:

- Ensuring that honest and free elections are held at regular intervals
- Establishing a neutral, impartial system for the organization of elections, including the following:
 - Ensuring that those responsible for conducting elections act in an impartial manner
 - Ensuring that the voting procedure is consistent and made known to the electorate
 - Ensuring scrutiny of the election process to prevent multiple votes or participation in the election of those who do not have the right to vote
 - Ensuring regularity in the counting of votes
- Guaranteeing that the principle of the secret ballot is respected and that voters can vote freely, without fear or intimidation
- Ensuring that fraud or any other form of irregularity is prevented and that the counting of votes is carried out by qualified personnel, under supervision, and subject to impartial verification
- Guaranteeing the transparency of the process through, for example, the presence of party representatives



Suggested steps

1. Divide the class into teams of four or five students.
2. Present the list of voters' rights, pointing out that although these are not rights that figure in law, they are rights just the same:
 - I. The right to vote
 - II. The right to a secret ballot
 - III. The right to ask questions before voting
 - IV. The right to vote for anyone
 - V. The right to convince others to vote as you do
 - VI. The right to complete, impartial information
 - VII. The right to switch allegiance
 - VIII. The right to cancel your vote
 - IX. The right not to vote
 - X. The right to not justify your vote
3. Explain to the students that they must, as a team, choose five rights that they feel are most important.
4. Distribute the Voters in Training "Voters' Rights" activity sheet and allow enough time for discussion among team members.
5. Once each team has completed the activity sheet, compare answers. Ask teams to justify their choices and to convince the class that their choices are the best ones.
6. To wrap up the activity, briefly present the bits of information contained in "A Bit of Theory."



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Voters' Rights

Voters in Training Sheet

Know these voters' rights:

- I. The right to vote
- II. The right to a secret ballot
- III. The right to ask questions before voting
- IV. The right to vote for anyone
- V. The right to convince others to vote as you do
- VI. The right to complete, impartial information
- VII. The right to switch allegiance
- VIII. The right to cancel your vote
- IX. The right not to vote
- X. The right to not justify your vote

Are there some rights you feel are more important than others? Discuss as a team. In the table below, rank the five rights you feel are most important by order of importance.

| We chose the following rights: | Because: |
|--------------------------------|----------|
| 1. | |
| 2. | |
| 3. | |
| 4. | |
| 5. | |