The Canadian Reader

Current Canadian events and issues for students in Grades 3 and up

Issue 1 • Sample Edition

Free Sample

Includes

• A News Story
• Lesson Plan
• Organizer

Subscribe to receive 2 additional articles, answer keys, & more!

4 Free Article: Election Day – October 21
6 Comprehension Check | 7 Language Focus | 8 Lesson Plan
11 Organizer: Learned/Wonder | 12 Map: Canada
14 Comic: The Federal Government

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Sports fans across the country were on the edge of their seats. Could the Toronto Raptors go all the way? The basketball team was on a winning streak. It made the playoffs. Then it pulled ahead . . .

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With a subscription, you’ll receive eight full issues.

Each issue combines current Canadian events and issues with geography to expand students' knowledge of Canada while enhancing their ability to read and understand informational text.

Three levelled news stories are accompanied by detailed literacy-based lesson plans, organizers, and criteria for assessment, as well as comprehension checks and a language focus.

“Your package will be a part of my classroom for many years to come!!!”
- M. Schneider, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

"I love this publication! It is an excellent complement to my Social Studies curriculum and the activities enable me to cover many provincial outcomes."
- S. Giffin, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia

"When I have kids in grade 4/5 wanting to know when the next issue is coming, even in December and June, that's when I know I have an excellent resource."
- A. Eisler, Burnaby, B.C.
The Canadian Reader is published eight times during the school year in English and in French from September through May by LesPlan Educational Services Ltd.

Subscribe to The Canadian Reader at a cost of $198 per year ($24.75 per issue), by contacting us at:
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#1 - 4144 Wilkinson Road
Victoria, BC V8Z 5A7

The Canadian Reader is protected by copyright. Subscribers receive one copy of the publication each month and may photocopy each issue for use by all students and teachers within one school.

How to use this resource:

The Canadian Reader is a made-in-Canada teaching and learning resource featuring all-Canadian content. It has three main components; use the entire package, or pick and choose the pages that suit your class the best.

1. Literacy Focus – This generic lesson plan focuses on seven key non-fiction reading comprehension strategies, presented in the following order:
   Issue 1: Using Text Features
   Issue 2: Making Connections
   Issue 3: Visualizing
   Issue 4: Asking Questions
   Issue 5: Making Inferences
   Issue 6: Determining Importance
   Issue 7: Transforming/Synthesizing
   Issue 8: Reading Strategies Review and Assessment

Teachers may introduce and practice each month’s strategy using any of the articles in the issue, or save it for another time or text.

2. Canadian news stories – Each of the three articles is leveled and accompanied by Comprehension Check questions, a Language Focus, and a literacy-based lesson plan and supporting materials. Teach the lessons as they are presented, or pick and choose the activities and assignments you’d like to explore with your students.

3. Did You Know? comic – This comic provides basic information about a current news story or event, or supports one of the articles with background information. It’s a great way to engage reluctant readers and build students’ background knowledge in a fun and graphic way.

Note: All URLs referenced in The Canadian Reader are posted as links on our student website at http://www.lesplan.com/en/links. Bookmark this URL on your school’s computer network to give students easy access to our recommended sites.

Share The Canadian Reader with other staff members in your school, including itinerant, relief, and substitute teachers.
How a federal election works

Federal elections usually happen every four years. The country is divided into 338 electoral regions, also known as ridings. Each is represented by one MP, chosen by the people in that riding.

During the campaign, candidates try to persuade people in their riding to vote for them. They knock on doors. They post on social media. They give speeches and run ads.

On election day, voters go to a polling station. Each voter is given a ballot. It lists the candidates in that riding. There’s a blank circle beside each name. Voters put an X beside the person they want as their MP. At the end of the day, the votes are counted. The candidate with the most votes becomes the MP for that riding.

The 338 Members of Parliament go to Ottawa. They meet and debate in the Parliament Buildings. They make decisions about how the country should be run.

About political parties

Most candidates belong to a political party. It’s a group of people with similar opinions about how Canada should be governed.
Some choose to be “independent” instead. They don’t follow a party line.

Seven political parties had seats in the last Parliament. They are the Liberal Party, the Conservative Party, the New Democratic Party, the Bloc Québécois, the Green Party, the People’s Party, and the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation.

The party that elects the most MPs in an election forms the government. The leader of that party becomes Canada’s Prime Minister (PM). The Liberals won the last election. They elected the most MPs. Their leader, Justin Trudeau, became PM.

The Prime Minister has more power than most MPs. The PM chooses who will get the top jobs in the Government. Who will be the Minister of Finance, for example? Or, the Minister of Foreign Affairs?

So voters have a big job. They are not just choosing an MP for their riding. They are also voting for a political party. They are deciding who will become Prime Minister.

**The choice is ours**

Being able to choose your government is a democratic right. People in some countries don’t have that right. Canadians are fortunate that they do.

You would think Canadians would be excited to vote. Actually, voter turnout is not that high. In the last federal election in 2015, only 68 percent of voters cast ballots. In the 2011 election, it was 61 percent. The turnout is especially low among younger (18- to 24-year-old) voters.

Can we do better? Canadian comedian Rick Mercer thinks so.

“Take 20 minutes out of your day, do what young people all over the world are dying to do: vote.”

Some people have suggested lowering the voting age to 16 years. What do you think?
Comprehension Check

Write the letter of the best answer in the space beside each question.

1. When is the next federal election?
   a) October 21, 2015.
   b) October 21, 2019.
   c) November 5, 2019.

2. How often are federal elections usually held in Canada?
   a) Every 20 minutes.
   b) Every year.
   c) Every four years.
   d) Every ten years.

3. What are voters choosing with their vote?
   a) An MP for their riding.
   b) A party to form government.
   c) The Prime Minister.
   d) All of the above.

4. Who becomes the MP of a riding?
   a) The candidate with the most votes for that riding.
   b) The candidate that the Prime Minister chooses.
   c) The candidate with the most friends.
   d) We do not know.

5. What party forms the government in Canada?
   a) The Green Party.
   b) The party that Rick Mercer leads.
   c) The party that elects the most independent candidates.
   d) The party that elects the most MPs in an election.
Election Day – October 21

Language Focus

**Initialism** is an abbreviation formed from a string of initials and often pronounced as individual letters.

*For example:*

- **DVD** (Digital Versatile Disc)
- **UFO** (Unidentified Flying Object)
- **LOL** (Laugh Out Loud)

Find examples of initialism in the article. Write them, and what they stand for, below.

Now list as many other examples of initialism as you can think of:
Lesson Plan

Before Reading:

☐ Create a large K-W-L (Know-Wonder-Learned) chart*, like the example below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Election Day – October 21</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We think/we know…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confirmed…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We learned…</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

☐ Ask students to share what they know (or think they know) about elections and the questions they have about them. Record their responses on sticky notes (one idea/note) and place them in the appropriate boxes.

☐ If students’ background knowledge is limited, direct them to use the text features of the article (e.g., headings, bolded vocabulary/glossary, images) to help them activate their prior knowledge and generate questions.

☐ Note: Students’ initial responses will indicate the degree of scaffolding they may need to understand how elections work. You may wish to: read and discuss the article together; read the article aloud one paragraph at a time and invite students to sketch their understanding of the main ideas; or, before reading the article, watch an introductory video on Canada’s electoral system, like ‘Our Electoral System’ by Student Vote: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=USK3Q4rsgnw [2:31].

* Adapted from: https://elementaryinquiry.com/2019/01/03/interactivekwlchart/

During Reading:

☐ As students read the article, encourage them to mark up the text using the following symbols:

√ = information that was confirmed;
! = misconceptions;
* = new information;
? = something they wonder, are curious about, or find confusing.

Encourage them to use the class chart and their own background knowledge to mark up the text.

After Reading:

☐ As a class, revisit the chart. Invite students to move sticky notes from the We think… box to the Confirmed or Misconception box. Then, divide the class into two groups and distribute sticky notes to each group. Direct groups to use the information from their marked text to add to their respective boxes: We learned… or We wonder…
Lesson Plan

- Distribute a copy of Learned/Wonder (p. 11) to each student. Invite them to summarize what they learned about how a federal election works (include 5-7 facts) and to record 2-3 questions they still have on the organizer.

- **Criteria for Assessment:** An effective summary is clear (easy to read), concise (to the point), and complete (includes important facts that explain the topic).

**Extension:**

- **Option 1: Register your class for Student Vote**
  
  Student Vote prepares material, videos, and lesson plans to engage students in learning about provincial and federal elections and the voting process. They learn “about government and the electoral process, research the parties and platforms, discuss relevant issues and cast ballots for the official election candidates. The results of the vote are shared with the media for broadcast and publication following the closing of the official polls.” Register your class for Student Vote 2019: https://studentvote.ca/canada/.

- **Option 2: Discuss whether or not the voting age should be reduced**
  
  Encourage students to conduct further research into the debate on lowering the voting age. [You may wish to use the Learned/Wonder organizer on p. 11 to help students organize their facts.]
  
  Suggested links are found in Internet Connections. Once their research is complete, conduct a U-shaped discussion on the issue. Invite students to respond to this statement: The voting age in Canada should be lowered to 16. See the LearnAlberta online overview of how to structure this discussion strategy: http://www.learnalberta.ca/content/sssm/html/u-shapeddiscussion_sm.html. Encourage students to remain open-minded, see the merits of both sides, and be willing to change their position if they hear convincing evidence.

**Internet Connections:**

- Find out more about general elections in Canada:
  
  

- Check out the Elections Canada website:
  
  https://www.elections.ca/homeGE.aspx

- Read to find out what the top issues are in the fall election:
  
  https://www.huffingtonpost.ca/entry/climate-change-canada-election-2019_ca_5d2cb2c6e4b08938b0990248

- Get up-to-date poll results on this interactive Poll Tracker:
  
  https://newsinteractives.cbc.ca/elections/poll-tracker/canada/
Lesson Plan

☐ See what others think of lowering the voting age:
  https://globalnews.ca/news/4363415/this-is-why-voting-age-canada/
  https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/chief-electoral-officer-voting-age-16-1.4579051

☐ Learn more about how Canada’s parliament works:
  https://lop.parl.ca/about/parliament/education/ourcountryourparliament/home-e.aspx

Note: All URLs are posted as links at http://www.lesplan.com/en/links
Election Day – October 21

Learned/Wonder

**Topic:** Federal Elections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What I Learned</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What I Wonder</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Completing the following map assignment will help you to better understand the context of Election Day – October 21.

Label the following, then colour:

**Provinces**
- Alberta
- British Columbia
- Manitoba
- New Brunswick
- Newfoundland and Labrador
- Nova Scotia
- Ontario
- Prince Edward Island (P.E.I.)
- Quebec
- Saskatchewan

**Territories**
- Northwest Territories
- Nunavut
- Yukon

**Salt Water**
- Pacific Ocean
- Arctic Ocean
- Atlantic Ocean

**Other**
- Greenland
- Iceland
- Russia
- United States

**Challenge:**
On maps, provincial and territorial capitals are often marked with a ★. National capitals are marked with a 🌍. Can you label all of the provincial capitals and the capital of Canada on your map?

A good map is complete, accurate, and visually appealing.
A government is a small group of people chosen to make laws for a larger group. Governments also decide how to spend taxes. Taxes are money that the government collects from people to pay for services it provides, like health care or the army.

In Canada, there are three levels of government:
- Federal
- Provincial or Territorial
- Municipal or Local

Most of the MPs belong to one of three main political parties:
- Liberal Party (177 MPs, leader is Justin Trudeau)
- Conservative Party of Canada (95 MPs, leader is Andrew Scheer)
- New Democratic Party (NDP) (41 MPs, leader is Jagmeet Singh)

The leader of the federal government is the Prime Minister. He works with elected Members of Parliament (MPs) to govern the country.

There are 338 MPs in total. Each one represents a different riding or electoral region in Canada.

Seven MPs are Independent. They don't belong to any political party.

The Bloc Québécois (BQ) has ten seats. The Green Party has two seats. The Co-operative Commonwealth Federation and the People's Party have one seat each. Four seats are vacant.

MPS are elected to the House of Commons. They carry out their business from Parliament, in Ottawa.
Create a **concept map** to show the structure of government in Canada. Use as many of the words and phrases in the tab as you can in your map:

- Prime Minister
- Members of Parliament
- Conservative
- Liberal
- NDP
- Independent
- government vacant
- Bloc Québecois
- People’s Party
- Green Party
- Co-operative
- Commonwealth Federation

A good concept map uses all of the listed words (plus others as needed) and clearly shows how these words are related.
Students want to know what’s happening in their world – but the news can be difficult and time-consuming to teach.

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Students Can Work In Word . . .

![Image with grade 3 & up, grade 5 & up, grade 5 & up pictures]

Did you know...

. . . that each issue of *The Canadian Reader*, *What in the World?* and *Building Bridges* includes a PDF file (complete document) and a Word file (articles and questions only)

Students can complete assignments directly in the word file. Teachers can email the file to students or post it on the Internet. The Word file also allows teachers to:

- easily modify and format content including changing fonts and text sizes
- create a PDF document and use Adobe Reader’s ‘Read Out Loud Mode’
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- promote and encourage students’ computer skills

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There are three ways to access data from a password protected file:

1) To remove the password, use the Save As command to save a new copy of the file. You can then remove the password by changing the Security settings.

2) Select the data you wish to Copy and then Paste it into a new Word file, or into any another word processing program.

3) You can import the entire Word file into LibreOffice (or another similar program) and then save as a new file.

Google Docs and LibreOffice

- You can easily upload the Word file to Google Docs to share it with students or other teachers.

- You can translate Google Docs into another language (see Tools>Translate document) but you will need to edit the document to suit your requirements. Google Docs can translate into over 100 languages including Spanish, Mandarin, and German.

- LibreOffice is a free alternate to Microsoft Office and offers the same functionality. It’s easy to install and use.

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Wish your students knew more about their country? Help them to learn who’s who, what’s where, and what’s going on in Canada with a subscription to THE CANADIAN READER.

This classroom-ready resource combines current Canadian events and issues with geography to expand students’ knowledge of their country while enhancing their non-fiction literacy skills.

These current events are the perfect supplement for any Social Studies program. They are a wonderful jumping point for class discussion. Keep up the good work!

K. Faltin, Erskine, AB

It is a relief to have a resource that fits with the curriculum and is teacher-friendly (ready to hand out). The added bonus of having the answers to the questions and discussion notes makes my life just a little bit easier.

B. Thibodeau, Saskatoon, SK

I have been using your product for seven years. There isn’t a month that goes by that I don’t get into challenging discussions with my students with the leads you provide and go in directions I could never imagine. Thank you for this terrific teaching aid!

D. Faerber, Pembroke, ON
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* Offer only applies to new subscriptions.

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4.

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Wait a moment...
Not everyone was excited. Some said that the Great Trail would be a waste of money. Others said it shouldn't be built. It would mean a lot of work for the people who would be building the trail. It would also mean a lot of money would be spent. And it would take a long time to build. But most people agreed that the Great Trail was a good idea. It would be a way to see Canada and its beauty from the inside out.

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