

Canada's Three Levels of Government

Created by a Grade 7-8 Teacher

Subject Area

SOCIAL STUDIES

Provincial & Territorial Suggested Social Studies Curriculum Connections:

Province	Grade Level	Outcome / Big Idea
Alberta	6	6.1.4, 6.1.5
British Columbia & the Yukon	6, 10	6- Different systems of government/ 10-government, First Peoples governance, political institutions, and ideologies
Manitoba	9	9-KC-005, 9-KP-044, 9-VC-001
New Brunswick	7.9	7.3.4, 9- Learners will investigate the structure, operation, and selection of government in Canada, including federal, provincial, territorial, indigenous, and municipal government models.
Newfoundland & Labrador	7.9	7.3.4/ 9- Learners will investigate the structure, operation, and selection of government in Canada, including federal, provincial, territorial, indigenous, and municipal government models.
Northwest Territories	9	9.1
Nova Scotia	7.9	7.3.4/ 9- Learners will investigate the structure, operation, and selection of government in Canada, including federal, provincial, territorial, indigenous, and municipal government models.
Nunavut	7.10-1	7- Territorial and Provincial Governments/10- identify the structures of the Government of Canada and the Government of Nunavut & recognize how power is distributed locally, regionally, and nationally (3)
Ontario	8, 10 Civics	8- Strand A. Creating Canada, 1850–1890 (A1.1)/ 10- B: Civic Awareness (B2)
Prince Edward Island	7.9	7.3.4/ 9- Learners will investigate the structure, operation, and selection of government in Canada, including federal, provincial, territorial, indigenous, and municipal government models.
Quebec)	7	By helping students to understand the significance of human actions in a territory, take a position on territorial issues and examine major global phenomena, the program contributes to educating informed, responsible citizens. In this sense, it ties in with the broad area of learning Citizenship and Community Life.
Saskatchewan	4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9	As active and responsible citizens, students engage in discussions and take action as members of communities – locally, nationally, and globally. The concept of citizenship provides a foundation that enables students to understand and become committed to democratic ideals.

Lesson Big Ideas / Enduring Understandings Essential Questions

In Canada, our constitution lays out unique roles and responsibilities for each of our levels of government. Understanding each role ensures students are empowered as citizens to know where to turn for a particular concern and to better understand governmental conflicts when these roles are unclear or overlap.

Content and Context

- Levels of government
- What each level does (roles and responsibilities)

Grade Level: 6 to 10

Time Required: 1-1.5 hours

Resources

- [Kids Boost Immunity](#) website
- Student Worksheet: Key Figures in Government
- Student Worksheet: KBI Lesson Information

Link to worksheets [here](#)

LESSON ACTIVITY

This lesson plan can be taught online or in the classroom.

Adaptations for online

Here are some suggested adaptations for working with your classes online:

- Use a class conference tool such as Microsoft Teams, Google Meet, Zoom or other.
- Create a discussion board on your classroom's website/portal.
- Have students create individual written responses to reflect upon and complete using the prompts provided.
- Have students work as distance partners over the phone, on Google Meet/Hangout, FaceTime, or another online option to complete their responses after a discussion (i.e., record their Google Meet audio session, type up their answers, etc.).

Activating

- **Discussion:** Discuss with your students as many jobs and responsibilities of the government as they can think of. Create a web or shared space to look this over together. If you are completing this as an at-home activity, use Google Meet, a class discussion board, Google Classroom question or other shared answer online tool.

Activating

- **Key Figures in Government:** Students will generally know a few key figures in government (i.e., mayor, premier, prime minister, monarch, etc.)
- As an introductory activity, have the students complete this [Key Figures in Government worksheet](#) about these figures together in a Google Meet (or other shared space) or individually. They will need to research these—no one is expected to come into this activity with these memorized!
- **Discussion:** Have students discuss factors that have shaped government.
- Canada was created in 1867, only a few years after the American Civil War ended. How do you think the lessons of the American Civil War shaped the decisions made during Confederation?

Hints:

Middle Stream (Grades 6-8): Two years after the Civil War ended, many Fathers of Canadian Confederation saw that the Civil War had occurred as a result of State versus Federal power struggles (which would be Provincial vs Federal for Canada). The Southern states wanted to keep slavery, and the North did not. The Southern states demanded the right to choose and questioned the federal government's power. This fight for power and control led to a violent war. So the Fathers of Confederation wanted to ensure that this would not happen in Canada.

Senior Stream (Grades 9+): After the American Civil War, Canada had additional concerns over manifest destiny/jingoism, mass mobilized troops of experienced and armed regiments, and the recent sale of Alaska from the Russians (negotiations began March 1867). Canadians needed a smoothly run government with strong leadership at the top (federal) for defense and relationships with other nations, but regional (provincial) flexibility and autonomy over society, so that smaller former colonies like Nova Scotia felt their culture would have some protections. It was a fine balance to strike at a time when threats from the United States seemed to loom large.

- Canada has very distinct roles for each level of government. There is overlap or shared responsibilities between these levels that can sometimes create confusion or inaction. Some areas like health or natural resources can fall into multiple levels. Why do you think we designed the government like that?
- How do you think this relates to COVID-19 as far as which levels of government are responsible during a pandemic?

Acquiring

- Have students register or log in to [Kids Boost Immunity](#).
- Go to the Lessons section of the website, and click on [Canada's Three Levels of Government](#) to reveal the lessons.
- Have students complete all 4 lessons and accompanying quizzes—remember each quiz with a score of 80% or higher earns a vaccine for a child in need!
- As students complete the quizzes, they can fill in their answers on the [Canada's Three Levels of Government worksheet](#) OR, as a teacher you may choose to share the answers afterwards to review what they have learned.

Applying

There are many roles carried out by individuals and departments in government that provide an important service. Students will identify a government role (either by an individual or department) to send a letter or email thanking them. This will require research into what sort of work they are doing, etc. Decide how you want to manage the selection, either as a class or by individual students, pairs, etc.

Choose from 2 options. Option 1 relates to government roles during the current COVID-19 crisis. Option 2 is a municipal government role.

Option 1- COVID-19 unsung heroes:

Our governments are facing incredible stress because of the demands of current events relating to public health, the economy and other social issues. Have students identify a government role (job) where hard work is being done to help people at this time.

- Students write a letter of thanks to send to the person or department they have chosen. For younger grades, have students send you their email or letter and indicate who they would like to send it to. For some students, it might be more meaningful to include original artwork, motivational quotation bookmark, friendship bracelet, poem, or Top 5 reasons this person's work is important.

TIP: Let your students know that with current demands, it is unlikely they will hear back directly from these workers, because of how incredibly busy their days are. We know, though, that community outreach for our front line or unsung community heroes is very important for both the recipients and those who send them.

Option 2 - municipal unsung heroes:

Have students identify one job or responsibility they feel their municipal government does very well. If some students need prompts think about:

- Do they use a recreation centre for their hockey team? What's it like?
- Have they ever visited a local park (e.g. Stanley Park in British Columbia)?
- Do they go to your neighbourhood library?
- Delving deeper:
 - What memories do they have there?
 - What are some jobs, supports, and costs that needed to happen to ensure they could enjoy or use it?
- When students have identified a task they feel their local government does very well, have them write an email to the mayor or their local councillor to tell them:
 - What they liked?
 - How it impacted them?
 - Why this service is important for everyone in the city?

Applying (cont.)

They can carbon copy (cc) you on this email so you can see it has been completed and the level of detail they have included.

All cities will have their email contacts posted on their local government website. As a class, you could also decide to bring 2 levels of government together, e.g. use the federal postal service to send a card to the municipal councillor instead!

Getting Ready

If you have not used Kids Boost Immunity before, it is very easy to use. In order to use the site, teachers must first register, and that just takes a minute to do. It's a good idea to register a few days before asking your students to do the lessons.

- Teacher registration can be done [here](#).
- Help for setting up your class to use KBI can be found [here](#) (you must be logged in to access).
- Student registration help can be found [here](#) (you must be logged in to access).