

## Lesson Plan or Classroom Activity

**Title:** Parliamentary Committees & Student Consultations

**Audience:** Grade 11 – Political Studies

**Overview:** This is an exercise to help increase participation in Student Vote. It involves the forming of committees in an effort to show students how collaborative governance can be. The intention is to inspire confidence in the government and parliamentary democracy and motivate participation in our democratic system.

Content:

1. Electoral processes and electoral systems
2. Issues in local, regional or national politics of Canada

**Big Ideas:**

1. Understanding how political decisions are made is critical to being an informed and engaged citizen.
2. Decision making in a democratic system of government is shaped by the unequal distribution of power.

**Objectives:**

To increase student understanding of:

1. Government
2. Parliamentary Committees
3. Government processes

Ultimate objective: To increase participation in Student Vote

*“Voting is a right best exercised by people who have taken time to learn about the issues.”*  
~Tony Snow

**Activities and Methods:**

- Students will choose a Parliamentary Committee that is of interest to them. (Aboriginal Affairs; Children and Youth; Education; Health, etc.)  
<https://www.leg.bc.ca/parliamentary-business/committees>

- They will then break into committee groups to evaluate a topic of interest that would impact that committee.
- Each student will individually research a point of interest within the topic.
- Students will find supporting documents, summon experts (teachers or persons in the community, their local MLA, municipal officers) that can speak on behalf of their issue.
- Sources can include, but are not limited to: newspapers or any media type in order to find a relevant and current topic of interest.
- Draw up a proposal for the topic – providing 3 options for recommendations (Who, What, Why, Where, When, How, If, If Not, Because)
- This proposal can be in any type of medium.
- They will bring this back to their small group/committee to draw up a recommendation for proposal to the democratic panel.
- Submit first draft to committee (teacher) for review.
- Draft is then returned with recommendations and the process continues until draft is accepted (by teacher).
- Set up a panel so that each of the groups can present their findings. (Teachers, administrators, persons from community with particular expertise, municipal councillors or other students).
- Request that the local MLA come to school for presentation of reports and Q & A session with students (part of the evaluation process).

Suggested topics:

1. Cell phone use in the classroom
2. Hat rule in school
3. Lowering the voting age to 16
4. Online voting

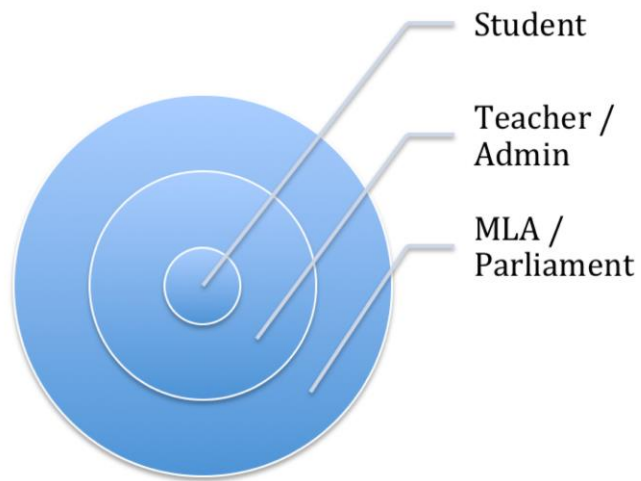
### **Extension Activities:**

Send to a local MLA or Municipal Councillor

Take students to visit the Parliament Buildings and observe a legislative session and/or Question Period.

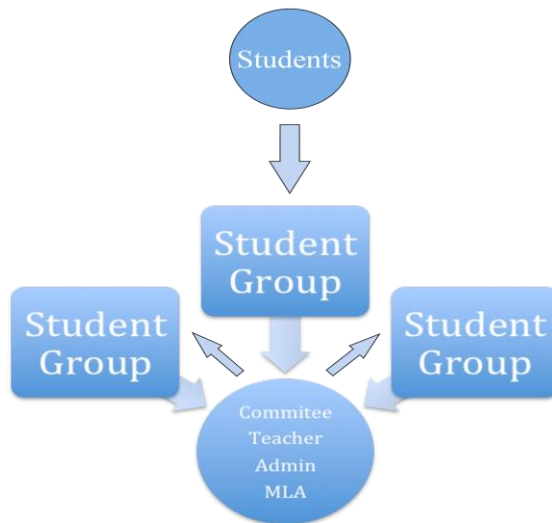
**BIG Question: Is this a good model of governance?**

After listening to dissenting views/debates in the Legislative Chamber, ask students if they have any recommendations for altering the current parliamentary model.



**Preparation (by teacher and by student):**

1. Explain and provide committee structures
2. Understand the process and the purpose of the committee gathering
3. Understand the impact the committee can have on government and on regional, familial and personal decisions.



**Duration of Activity:** 3 weeks

## Learning Standards:

Curricular Competencies:

1. Analyze the methods used by the media, governments, and other groups to influence public perception of an issue or event (political perspectives).
2. Explain how different ideologies and worldviews shape perspectives on the same political issue and information (political perspectives).
3. Analyze interrelationships between objectives and intended or unintended results (interrelationships, objectives, and results).
4. Assess the factors that cause political stability or instability (stability and change).

## Materials and Resources:

Please see related PowerPoint.

## Evaluation of Activity:

- Panel concept – capstone project (MLA, Administrator, Peers, etc.)
- Students present findings
- Prefabricate rubric for each of the panelists
- Panel provides feedback to the students immediately (written, direct)
- Panel has the ability to ask questions
- Self-Assessment – reflection and follow-up on suggestions by the panel.



## Submitted By:

Linda Bardini, Fraser Park Secondary School, SD#41 Burnaby School District  
Georgina Knox, Carihi Secondary School, SD#72, Campbell River School District  
Mark Neufeld, Claremont Secondary School, SD #63, Saanich School District  
Westley Olson, TTOC, SD#38, Richmond School District

**NOTE:** *The ideas and opinions expressed in this classroom activity belong to their authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia. The Parliamentary Education Office only edits for clarity.*

**Copyright©:** *The Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia grants permission to duplicate these materials for educational or informational purposes only. Any commercial or other use of this product requires the written permission by the Speaker.*