

Lesson Plan

Title

Mock Provincial Parliament

Audience

Grades 10 and 11 Social Studies

Overview

A 3 Lesson Mock Provincial Parliament Unit

Objectives

- To bring provincial parliamentary processes to life
- To enhance the understanding of how bills become laws
- To enhance the understanding of the scope and role of provincial ministries
- To help students understand the term “responsible government”

Activities and Methods

- Using the discussion of “characteristics of an effective” leader, students vote for students whom they feel have the qualities that exhibit the best class leader. The student who gets the most votes is the Premier and the second most votes will be the Leader of the Official Opposition.
- The class is then divided into Government and Opposition based on their score on an “ISM” political spectrum test.
- The class is now in their two groups and work to form political parties. The students are to decide a name for their party and what their party platforms will be once they understand where they are on the political spectrum.
- Drafting Bills: working within their political party, students choose a Ministry and draft a Bill. If in government, their Bill will be introduced in the Mock Parliament. If in Opposition, they will draft a Bill, but it will not be introduced in the Mock Legislative Assembly. (These Opposition Bills will be seen during the Debriefing)
- Researching Bills: the students should be given time to research their proposed Bills. For example, if they wish to have government pass an Education Bill on class size language, they will first need to research where their party stands on this issue and convince government to pass the bill.
- Run a mock parliament in the classroom to pass/defeat new Bills over three 88-minute classes.

DAY 1

The student who is Premier puts together a Speech from the Throne. (From ideas she/he gets from discussions in caucus and written submissions given to them about each student’s Bill). The Speech from the Throne is to be read by an Administrator (student) and the classroom teacher will act as the Speaker of the House. If time available, have the Leader of the Official Opposition respond to the Speech from the Throne.

DAY 2

Commence class with Question Period, then introduce Bills and have them read for the first time. Depending on time, students may move to Second Reading.

DAY 3

Following Question Period, the House Leader either calls for Second Reading of Bills or moves into Committee of the Whole where the Bills can be debated and amended, then reported back for Third Reading. At Third Reading, have students vote on the legislation. Debrief the entire process.

Preparation (by teacher and by students)

- Political spectrum
- Characteristics of a good leader
- How political parties work
- Various roles in the Legislative Assembly
- Physical set up of the Legislative Chamber
- Examine/analyze political party platforms

Duration of Activity

3 – 5 lessons

Learning Outcomes

It is expected that students will:

- identify the role of the legislative and executive branches in responsible government
- demonstrate an understanding of the various roles in the legislature: i.e. Lieutenant Governor, Speaker, Sergeant at Arms, etc
- demonstrate an understanding of the political system
- explain how provincial governments are formed in British Columbia
- plan and conduct library and community research using primary and secondary print and non-print sources, including electronic sources
- assess and defend a variety of positions on controversial issues
- plan, revise, and deliver formal presentations that integrate a variety of media
- demonstrate leadership by planning, implementing, and assessing a variety of strategies to address the problem, issue, or inquiry initially identified

Materials & Resources

www.political-spectrum.org

Appendix 1 – List of Ministries ([attached](#)) or
go to www.gov.bc.ca under “Ministries & Organizations” for an up-to-date list

Appendix 2 – Sample bill template ([attached](#))

Appendix 3 – Questionnaire ([attached](#))

Evaluation of Activity

Appendix 3 – Questionnaire ([attached](#))

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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 Public Education and Outreach office only edits for clarity.

Appendix 1

Updated Spring 2013 List of Ministries:

Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation

Ministry of Advanced Education

Ministry of Agriculture

Ministry of Children and Family Development

Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development

Ministry of Education

Ministry of Energy, Mines and Minister Responsible for Core Review

Ministry of Environment

Ministry of Finance

Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations

Ministry of Health

Ministry of International Trade and Minister Responsible for Asia Pacific Strategy and Multiculturalism

Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training and Minister Responsible for Labour

Ministry of Justice

Ministry of Natural Gas Development and Minister Responsible for Housing

Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation

Ministry of Technology, Innovation and Citizens' Services

Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

Appendix 2

Bill Template

Sample Bill Template below:

Bill #: _____

Bill Name: _____

Her Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of British Columbia, enacts as follows:

(2 sentence introduction)

Powers of Commission:

(2 paragraph detailed explanation)

This Act comes into effect, on the day set by proclamation.

Hon: _____ – Minister of _____

Appendix 3

NAME: _____

POLITICAL PARTY: _____

POSITION: _____

Questionnaire on the Mock Parliament

1. Was it a worthwhile activity? Explain why.
2. What was the best part of the activity?
3. What was the worst part of the activity?
4. How would you improve this activity?
5. Name three things you learned about the parliamentary process. List in order of importance.
6. List the five steps needed to pass a bill in the mock parliament.
7. What ceremony was observed?
8. Which laws passed? Which laws did not? Why or why not?
9. What changes would you make to the legislative process?
10. The legislative process can be slow and frustrating. Comment in respect to what you experienced.
11. Who has the toughest job in this legislature?
12. To what extent is the process of passing a bill fair?
13. Why do you think political scientists consider parliamentary democracy the best political system in the world?
14. After this process, would you want to be a politician? Explain.