

Canadian Government



Levels of Government

Federal Government



Provincial Government



Municipal Government

Division of Powers

- Responsibilities are divided among the different levels of government.
- The federal government is in charge of matters that affect all Canadians.
- The provincial governments look after regional matters.
- Municipal governments look after local affairs. They are placed under the control of the provincial governments.

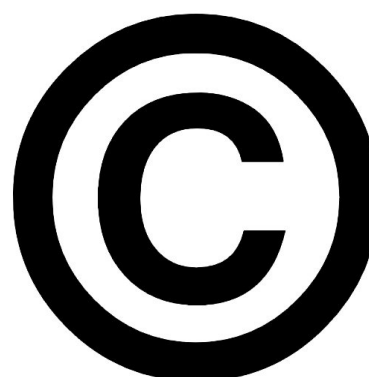
Federal Government Responsibilities

- Defence
- Foreign Policy
- Trade
- Most forms of taxation
- Banking and Money
- Criminal Law, RCMP, Federal Prisons
- Postal System



Federal Government Responsibilities

- weights and measures
- patents and copyrights
- fisheries
- First Nations, Inuit, and Metis affairs



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Provincial Government Responsibilities

- Health
- Education
- Social Services
- Highways
- Municipal Government
- Property Taxes
- Licences
- Natural Resources
- Administration of justice and courts



Shared Federal and Provincial Government Responsibilities

- Immigration
- Environment
- Agriculture



Municipal Government Responsibilities

- Snow removal
- Garbage removal
- Fire protection
- Local police
- Water supply
- Sewage
- Public Transit
- Recreational facilities
- Streets and streetlights



Government has the following three basic powers:

1. Legislative power: the power to make laws.
2. Executive power: the power to administer the country and to carry out laws.
3. Judicial power: the power to interpret and enforce laws.

The Federal Parliament

Is made up of:

The Prime Minister

The Elected House of Commons

The appointed Senate

The Governor General

The Prime Minister

- Is the leader of the party that wins the most seats in the House of Commons.
- The Prime Minister is a member of the House of Commons. If he or she isn't then they will try to obtain a seat in a by-election (special local election).
- The Prime Minister is the most powerful government official in Canada.
- Looks after legislative and executive duties.

Prime Minister Responsibilities

- Choosing members of Cabinet
- Developing programs, projects, and policies for the country
- Representing Canada at international events
- Providing effective administration of federal services
- Working with premiers and the provinces
- Appointing Supreme Court judges, senators, ambassadors, and other officials.
- planning new laws and promote government policies
- providing leadership in the Cabinet and House of Commons
- Leading his or her political party.

What is the Cabinet?

- The members of the Cabinet are usually members of the House of Commons who have been appointed to the executive branch of the government.
- Cabinet members are responsible for the day to day operation of the government.
- They are responsible for departments such as National Defense, Finance, Transport, Foreign Affairs.....etc.

The Cabinet Responsibilities

- Overseeing the operation of his or her department.
- Explaining policies and answering questions about the department.
- Providing advice to the prime minister.
- Presenting new laws or policies to Parliament regarding his or her department.
- Defending government policies
- Representing the electoral riding that elected her or him.

What is The House of Commons

- Is the main legislative body of the federal government.
- It's members are from the 308 electoral districts, called ridings all over Canada.
- Each riding elects a representative known as a Member of Parliament (MP)

The House of Commons Responsibilities

- Discuss bills
- vote on whether bills are to become laws
- attend Question Period
- make speeches and participate in debates
- be aware of the problems and issues of the people in their riding
- give interviews
- participate in caucus (meetings of the elected members of an MP's political party)
- help raise funds for their political party.

The Senate

- is a part of Parliament that is not elected.
- On recommendation of the Prime Minister, the Governor General appoints members of the Senate.
- It provides a "sober" look at bills before they become law.
- All bills must go through the Senate before they become law.
- Most times the Senate will pass bills because the House of Commons has already done this.
- Some cases the Senate will amend or ask for changes to the bill, or take so long in voting on the bill that it will die.

The Governor General

- Represents the Queen in Canada
- Has no political power, more ceremonial
- Responsibilities are:
 - Signing bills before they become law
 - Opening and closing Parliament
 - Reading the Speech from the Throne, which outlines the government's plans for each session of Parliament
- Representing all the people of Canada

Other Roles in the House of Commons

- **Speaker of the House:** keeps order and run the daily operations of the House. The Speaker is an MP who is elected by the other MPs to do this job.
- **House Leader:** the cabinet minister responsible for managing the government's legislation in the House of Commons.
- **Leader of the Official Opposition:** Usually the leader of the second-largest party in the House of Commons. They are to act as a watchdog to make sure the government is acting in the best interests of the country.
- **Shadow Cabinet:** The leader of the Official Opposition selects members of their party to shadow the other government departments monitoring the governments actions and give suggestions.
- **Party Whips:** Members of each political party who are responsible for making sure that other party members will be in the House of Commons to vote on bills.
- **Pages:** Students who collect and distribute official documents and other running around duties.

The Life of a Bill

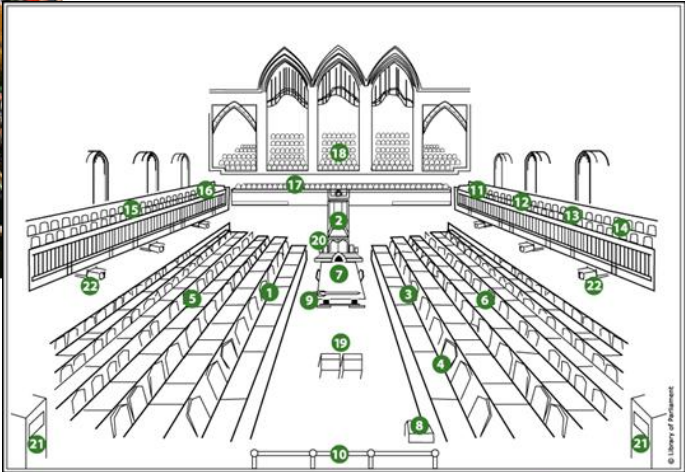
- Bills - Are introduced policies or new laws. They will need to be defended and voted on before they become law.
- There are many bills proposed but it is the Prime Minister that decides which one's will be introduced.
- The Cabinet meets in secret to discuss the proposed bill. The group will edit the bill and get it ready to be presented to the Parliament in the House of Commons.
- The First Reading - When the bill is first read to the House of Commons. This does not involve any debate.

The Life of a Bill

- The Second Reading - The bill must go through this next process. This is the longest most complex stage.
- The bill is debated and depending on the bill this could be a short or long session.
- The House could send the bill back to the committee of MP's to improve it.
- A vote is taken for or against approving the bill in principle.

The Life of a Bill

- If the bill is approved in principle, it then has its Third Reading.
- Any changes are debated and finally there is another vote.
- Government MP's usually vote in favor and Opposition MP's vote against.
- Sometimes the government allows MP's to vote how they feel, other times they vote on the direction of the party.
- If the bill survives its Third Reading, it is sent to the Senate for approval and then the Governor General for the finaling signing.



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|--|--------------------------------|--|
| 1 Prime Minister | 11 Senate Gallery | 17 Press Gallery |
| 2 Speaker | 12 Speaker's Gallery | 18 Public Gallery |
| 3 Leader of the Official Opposition | 13 Government Members' Gallery | 19 Proceedings and Verification Officers |
| 4 Leader of the second largest party in opposition | 14 Diplomatic Gallery | 20 Pages |
| 5 Government Members | 15 Opposition Members' Gallery | 21 Interpreters |
| 6 Opposition Members | 16 Officials' Gallery | 22 T.V. cameras |
| 7 Clerk and Table Officers | | |
| 8 Sergeant-at-Arms | | |
| 9 The Mace | | |
| 10 The Bar | | |

Provincial Government

- Organized like the federal government but the titles of people are different.
- The Premier heads the government
- The Lieutenant Governor acts in the same way as the Governor General
- The Legislative Assembly acts in the same way as the House of Commons
- There is no Senate.

Municipal Government

- Controlled by the provincial government.
- Cities and towns elect mayors and councilors.
- The mayor has only one vote like the other councilors and sometimes only vote to break a tie.
- There are no parties so all proposals must meet the majority of the councilors.

The Election Process

When does an election happen?

- Federal elections must be held every 5 years. The Governor General will call it then.
- A Prime Minister usually decides to call an election when the government is doing well in the polls or is near the end of its term.
- Sometimes the Governor General will call an election on a "non-confidence" motion, meaning the government lost the support of the majority of members during a vote in the House of Commons.

The Election Process

Who runs in an Election?

- Political parties choose people to run in each riding.
- Political parties are groups of people who share the same values and ideas
- Examples: Conservatives, Liberals, NDP
- Some candidates are not in a riding and run as a **independent**.
- A voters list is prepared in each province of all the people who are eligible to vote in that election.

The Election Process

Election Campaign

- Political parties run their campaigns for about 36 days before the election.
- Candidates use media, signs, meetings, and debates to explain to voters their ideas and values.
- Laws limit the amount of money used and all candidates must have equal broadcasting time.



The Election Process

Election Day

- Citizens are informed of the location of their local polling station where they can vote.
- These are usually at community centers and schools.
- Voters choose their candidate by secret ballot.
- Election officials ensure the rules are followed, check off those who have voted, and count the ballots once the polls close.
- The Candidate with the most votes wins and become the representative for that riding in Parliament



Textbook

P. 242

Review and Reflect:

Questions: 1-4

Apply and Extend

Question 1