CIVICS IN THE CLASSROOM:

THE CITIZENSHIP CHALLENGE ELEMENTARY EDUCATION GUIDE





















MESSAGE TO TEACHERS

The guide is meant to give teachers tools to help students think critically about topics in Canadian civics and engage with civics education more deeply. This guide complements provincial and territorial curricula for grades 4-6 history and social studies units and is meant to help prepare students for the Citizenship Challenge, a mock quiz based on the test taken by those seeking a path to citizenship. The Challenge tests students' knowledge of Canada and their ability to meet the standards expected of newcomers to the country. The lessons may be used in sequence or individually.

This guide was produced with the generous support of the Government of Canada. Historica **Canada** offers programs that you can use to explore, learn and reflect on our history, and to discover what it means to be Canadian. Additional free, bilingual educational activities and resources on Canadian civics are available on **The Canadian Encyclopedia**. Historica Canada's bilingual education guides are part of a collaborative process that engages educators, academics, and community stakeholders in content creation and lesson planning.

ONLINE RESOURCES

The following list of bilingual resources supports educators and students.

The Citizenship Challenge: Citizenshipchallenge.ca

The Canadian Encyclopedia
Citizenship Collection:
Thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/
en/collection/citizenship

Elections Canada -Elections and Democracy: **Electionsanddemocracy.ca**

Native Land: Native-land.ca

Cover images:
Dancers at a multicultural fashion
show in Vancouver in 2012 (Dreamstime/
Howesjwe/25474158).
Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms
(courtesy Library and Archives Canada/
Robert Stacey fonds/Crown copyright/

KII2/4-148/1 of 2).

A federal elections ballot from

Elections Canada (Dreamstime/
Photopal604/63896418).

Canadian Parliament buildings in Ottawa
(Dreamstime/Adwo/91479599).

INTRODUCTION

This education guide teaches students about key topics in Canadian civics. You can use the guide to learn about how the Canadian system of government works, your rights and responsibilities as Canadians, and how students can engage in active citizenship — for example, through stewardship of the natural environment. It also asks students to consider the enduring legacy of colonialism for Indigenous peoples in Canada and highlights the responsibilities of Canadians of all ages in the process of reconciliation.

The guide also encourages students to understand that they can create positive change in society by becoming active citizens. It stresses that civic engagement involves more than just voting. Through active citizenship, young people can make a meaningful difference in their communities, and help shape the future of the country they would like to inhabit.

SECTION 1

HOW CANADIANS GOVERN THEMSELVES

ACTIVITY 1:

DEVELOPING A VISUAL ANCHOR CHART

Canada has three levels of government: federal (the Government of Canada), provincial/territorial (for example, the Province of Manitoba), and municipal (cities, towns, and villages). Each level of government has different responsibilities. In this activity, students will learn about the responsibilities of each level of government.

1. Your school is divided into groups, each with different responsibilities: the Classroom (teachers), the Office (principal and vice principal), and the School Board (superintendents and trustees). Similarly, Canada's government is divided into three groups, each with their own responsibilities.

Classroom - Teacher	Office - Principal	School Board - Director/Superintendents/Trustees
Example: Class rules	Example: Ensure students' safety	Example: Creating an annual budget

- Your teacher will write the three groups in your school Classroom, Office, School Board —
 on the board. As a class, come up with a list of six to eight responsibilities for each level and
 write them on the board.
- 3. Working as a class, propose a list of responsibilities that span Canada's three levels of government (e.g., snow removal, education, foreign aid). Make sure that there are at least as many responsibilities on the list as there are students in your class.
- 4. Working as a class, develop a "Canada's Three Levels of Government" visual anchor chart that can be permanently displayed in the classroom. Using visuals, the chart will showcase the different responsibilities of each of the three levels of government.
- 5. As a class, create three visual icons to represent the three levels of government, and place each icon at the top of a column.
- 6. Using the list you created in Step 3, each student will create a visual representation of a responsibility and place it on the visual anchor chart below the level of government that you think is responsible.
- 7. Review the anchor chart as a class. Your teacher will point out different responsibilities and ask the contributing students why they placed them where they did. Be prepared to justify your own placement of responsibilities to your teacher/class.

TEACHER TIP: Consider writing each responsibility on a sheet of paper, and have students draw them from a hat. Here are some responsibilities (and the responsible jurisdictions) to get you started:

Municipal - Mayor | Provincial - Lieutenant-Governor | Federal - Governor General

ACTIVITY 2A: FORMING POLITICAL PARTIES

Canadian Snowbirds performing at the Canadian International Air Show in Toronto, Ontario

(Dreamstime/Ian Whitworth/15927854).



It is important to understand that Canadians elect Parliaments, not governments. Canadians do this by electing representatives to the House of Commons, which makes the laws in Canada. These representatives are called Members of Parliament (MPs) and they usually belong to a political party. MPs represent the needs and interests of the people living in their constituency (the region in which they run for office). The political party with the largest number of elected MPs forms the government. The leader of that party becomes prime minister. The provinces and the Yukon territory follow similar electoral processes. In this activity, you will form political parties and stage a classroom election.

KEY TERMS

TEACHER TIP: Before beginning the activity, consider reviewing the following key terms and definitions as a class, as a word wall, or on a handout.

Constitutional Monarchy: Canada's system of government. In a constitutional monarchy, the monarch's power is limited by the laws of the Constitution, and the monarch (king or queen) does not rule directly. Although the monarch is technically the head of state, their duties are mainly ceremonial, and the prime minister is the elected head of the government.

Parliament: The legislative branch of government in Canada, which at the federal level is the House of Commons and the Senate. This is the part of government that makes the laws in Canada.

Governor General: The British Crown's representative in Canada. They are appointed by the monarch on the advice of the prime minister. They perform the tasks of the monarch in Canada. The governor general has an important role in making sure that the traditions of Parliament and other democratic institutions are upheld.

Lieutenant-Governor: The Crown's representative in each province, appointed by the governor general on the prime minister's advice.

House of Commons: During elections, Canadians elect representatives to hold seats in the House of Commons. These are known as Members of Parliament (MPs). The House of Commons is the centre of political power in Canada and where MPs meet to debate policy, hold the government to account, and vote on legislation. Parties with the most seats in the House of Commons tend to win votes in the House more easily.

Majority Government: After an election, if the winning party that forms government has at least 50% + 1 of the seats in the House of Commons, it has a majority. This means that the party has the potential to win every vote in Parliament because it has more seats than the other parties combined.

Minority Government: After an election, if a party has less than half of the seats in the House of Commons, but still has more seats than the next largest party, it can form a minority government. In such cases, it might be difficult to win votes in the House of Commons because the largest party doesn't outnumber the combined number of MPs in the other parties. In a minority government, the other parties can unite to defeat the government.

- 1. Within your class, divide into seven equal groups. Create a Student Parliament with seven seats. Each of these groups represents a riding in your classroom. Each riding will be given a number from 1 through 7.
- 2. Have the teacher distribute four different-coloured cards to the members of each group so that every student has a colour (two or three people may have the same colour). Each colour represents a political party.
- 3. Find the other students with the same colour as you, and form a group. This is your political party. In your group, decide on the following:
 - · A party name
 - The leader of the party
 - Three new proposed policies for the classroom (This will be your party's platform).

Example:

Red Party's proposed policies:

- 1) Try to reduce the amount of paper used in class
- 2) Declare "litterless lunches" for specific days
- 3) Hold 20-minute discussions about the environment on Fridays
- 4. Introduce your party to the rest of the class in a group presentation. Share your name, leader, and the three new rules (your party platform) with your classmates.

EXTENSION ACTIVITY: Political parties in Canada run campaigns to get elected. Create a campaign for your political party. Your campaign can include memes, videos, posters, and other materials to educate the rest of the class about your party.

INDIGENOUS SELF-GOVERNMENT

Indigenous self-governance allows Indigenous communities to manage their people, land, resources, and related policies. This happens through treaties — formal agreements — with provincial/territorial and federal governments. The Indian Act is a federal law passed in 1876 that gave the Canadian government control over the lives of First Nations peoples and their traditional systems of government. Since then, Indigenous communities have fought to regain the rights they lost under the Act.

In 1982, Section 35 of the Constitution Act recognized Indigenous peoples' right to self-government. Today, some communities have the authority to manage their lands, assets, and resources, and can create laws about citizenship, language, and culture. Others continue to struggle to have their rights upheld or recognized. The map in the Treaties with Indigenous Peoples in Canada article on The Canadian Encyclopedia shows the current treaties and selfgovernment agreements in Canada.

TERRITORIAL GOVERNMENTS

The governments of both Nunavut and the Northwest Territories operate by consensus. Instead of a party system, Members of the Legislative Assembly are elected as independents to represent their constituencies. Older students can read the article **Territorial Government in** Canada on The Canadian Encyclopedia to learn more.

elections.ca

- Now you will hold an election in your classroom to form a Student Parliament. Go back
 to your original groups (your ridings). The teacher (as Governor General) calls an election.
 The teacher asks each group to select one candidate from each party to represent their "riding."
 If there are two members of the same party in one group, they must decide among themselves who is
 running. This is because each riding selects only one person to sit in Parliament. Each student can vote for
 their preferred candidate within their riding. Candidates cannot vote for themselves.
- 2. Tally the votes. The winning candidates from each riding become the **Members of Parliament**. The teacher, as **Governor General**, determines which party has the best chance of getting its laws passed (the party with the most seats). This party is invited to form government.

Some possible scenarios:

















* The Red Party has a MAJORITY Government — it has a better chance of winning votes because it holds more than half of the seats.















* The Blue Party has a MINORITY Government — it has less than half the seats in the House of Commons, but more than the second-largest party.







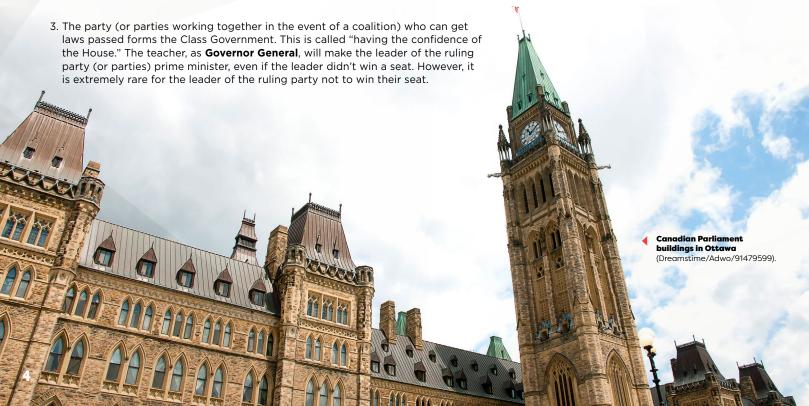








* A COALITION Government — The Red Party will have to support either the Green or Blue Party in order for the government to be functional (or the Green and Blue Party could join together).



SECTION 2

THE RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF CANADIAN CITIZENSHIP

ACTIVITY 3:

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Canadians have both rights and responsibilities. The *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* tells people living in Canada what their rights and freedoms are in this country. The *Charter* was added as part of the Constitution in 1982. The Constitution is the highest law in Canada, meaning that it and the *Charter* are the most important laws we have.

Canadians also have responsibilities. These responsibilities allow Canadians to live together in peace and participate in Canada's democracy. Responsibilities like protecting the natural environment help keep Canada safe and clean for future generations.

Some rights and responsibilities in Canada relate to Indigenous peoples. Responsibilities toward Indigenous peoples in Canada are addressed in Activity 4 in the section **Impact of Colonialism in Canada**, starting on the next page.

TEACHER TIP: Consider going through Canadians' rights, freedoms, and responsibilities listed on the right together as a class. Some, for example "freedom of assembly," may require further explanation. Consult Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada's "The rights and responsibilities of citizenship" for a summary of the rights and responsibilities Canada has enshrined: https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/publications-manuals/operational-bulletins-manuals/canadian-citizenship/overview/rights-responsibilities.html

You can also consult Canadian Heritage's <u>"Guide to the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms"</u> available here: https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/services/how-rights-protected/guide-canadian-charter-rights-freedoms.html#a2e

PART I:

- 1. Have the teacher write five rights and five responsibilities of Canadian citizenship on the board. As a class, categorize each word on the board as either a right or a responsibility. How might some rights (e.g., the right to democracy) be linked to some responsibilities (e.g., the responsibility to vote)?
- 2. Have a class discussion about which rights and responsibilities are important in a classroom/school/country. What might happen if someone at school did not live up to their responsibilities? Can you think of a time when you witnessed or heard of someone being denied their rights?

Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms

(courtesy Library and Archives Canada/Robert Stacey fonds/Crown copyright/R11274-148/1 of 2)

Dancers at a multicultural fashion show in Vancouver in 2012 (Dreamstime/ Howesjwe/25474158).



PART II:

1. Working individually from the list of examples below, create a poster or infographic that represents a specific right or freedom as well as a specific responsibility. Older students can write a paragraph accompanying their designs, which should include definitions of the right/freedom and responsibility, and an explanation of the symbolism in the visuals.

RIGHTS:

- Mobility rights Canadians can live and work anywhere in Canada and can apply for a passport.
- Legal rights Canadians have the right to be treated fairly during legal proceedings, including those charged with a criminal offence.
- Official language rights French and English have equal status in the federal government.
- Equality All Canadians are equal under the law. For example, men and women are equal in Canada.
- Multiculturalism Canada is a multicultural country and works hard to protect its multicultural heritage and accept differences among Canadians.
- Democratic rights All Canadians have the right to participate in Canada's democracy, including voting in elections.

FREEDOMS:

- Freedom of thought, belief, opinion, and expression
- Freedom of religion
- Freedom of association
- Freedom of peaceful assembly

RESPONSIBILITIES:

- · Obeying the law
- Serving on a jury
- Voting in elections
- · Helping others in the community
- Protecting Canada's natural environment

ALTERNATIVE ACTIVITY: CREATING GROUP TABLEAUS

- 1. Introduce Canadians' rights/freedoms and responsibilities through a tableau. A tableau is a frozen scene created by students, using their bodies to depict an idea, story, moment in time, or emotion.
- 2. Divide into small groups of three or four students. Select one right or freedom from the lists above. Work in your group to create a tableau that represents your chosen right or freedom.
- 3. With your group, create a second tableau that represents one responsibility of Canadian citizenship from the above list.
- 4. Once you are prepared to share your work, have each group present its frozen images as the teacher reads out the right/ freedom and responsibility depicted.

Inuit children who lived too far away and had to stay at school during the summer. Anglican Mission School, Aklavik, N.W.T, 1941 (courtesy Library and Archives Canada/M. Meikle/PA-101771).

IMPACT OF COLONIALISM IN CANADA - THE LEGACY OF RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS



Residential schools were religious schools funded by the Government of Canada. The main goal of these schools was to force Indigenous children to abandon their Indigenous identities and blend into Euro-Canadian society. Thousands of Indigenous children were taken from their homes and families to attend these schools, which were located outside of their communities. These schools were designed to break the connections Indigenous children had to their families, communities, cultures, and identities. The schools were underfunded, and the children commonly experienced starvation, illness, neglect, and abuse. Students were frequently forbidden to speak their first language or perform traditional music and dance. Since they were separated from their communities and homes, they did not grow up surrounded by family. Residential schools caused enormous damage, disrupting lives, disturbing communities, and causing long-term problems for Indigenous peoples and communities. At least 6,000 Indigenous children died while attending residential schools.

ACTIVITY 4:

HEALTHY HOME AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

Content Advisory: The topics covered in this activity could trigger a strong emotional response from your students. Teachers must be sensitive to individuals and the group to ensure the classroom remains a safe environment for all learners. Set ground rules for respectful discussions and consult your school guidance counsellor for additional support, if needed.

- 1. Think about your family, home, school, and your school community. As a class, make a word cloud of 10 to 15 things needed for a healthy home environment. Next, as a class, make a second word cloud of 10 to 15 things needed for a healthy learning environment.
- Read the <u>Residential Schools in Canada (Plain-Language Summary)</u>
 article on *The Canadian Encyclopedia*. You may also wish to consult the
 "Key Facts About Residential Schools" section of the same article. Think
 about how many of the things on your list of healthy environments were
 not provided to Indigenous children.
- 3. Watch the <u>Chanie Wenjack</u> Heritage Minute as a class. While you watch, write a point-form timeline of the events in the Minute.
- 4. After watching the video, discuss as a class:
 - a. Why do you think Chanie chose to run away from the residential school?
 - b. What does this say about the conditions students faced in the school?
 - c. Was this a healthy learning environment for Indigenous students?
- 5. Look back to your word clouds of needs for a healthy home environment and healthy learning environment. As a class, discuss:
 - a. Which things were removed or restricted from Indigenous children by the residential school system?
 - b. How do you think this affected Indigenous children as they grew up and returned to their communities?
- 6. Reconciliation is the term used to describe the healing process between Indigenous peoples and other Canadians. Reconciliation is about relationships. It is about trying to repair damaged relationships between Indigenous peoples and other Canadians. This means that all people living in Canada should participate in the reconciliation process. Think about yourself and your school community. As a class, discuss how you and your school can contribute to reconciliation. Come up with five practical tips for your classroom/school to better participate in reconciliation. Have the teacher write these five tips on chart paper, to keep in your classroom.

EXTENSION/ALTERNATIVE ACTIVITY: Divide your class into small groups. Read the Daily Schedule at Qu'Appelle Industrial School, 1893, in the "Daily Routine at Residential Schools" section of the Residential Schools in Canada article on The Canadian Encyclopedia. Compare the daily schedule of this residential school with your own school routine. What do you notice about the residential school schedule? Were children only meant to learn at residential schools? Do you think this schedule would have adequately satisfied the needs of the students?

KEY TERMS

Indigenous: Indigenous peoples are the original inhabitants of the land we now call Canada. Indigenous peoples in Canada do not represent one group or experience, but a diversity of cultures, languages, and perspectives. There are three legally recognized groups of Indigenous peoples in Canada: First Nations, Inuit, and Métis. There is great diversity within each of these groups. Broadly speaking, Métis peoples are of mixed European and First Nations ancestry, and the term generally refers to Indigenous people whose historic homeland stretches west from northwestern Ontario into the Prairies. Not all people who are categorized as Métis identify themselves that way. The Inuit primarily inhabit the northern regions of Canada, where their homelands are collectively known as Inuit Nunangat. In more southern areas live the First Nations, which is a broad term that refers to Indigenous peoples who are not Inuit or Métis.

Colonialism: Colonialism refers to the laws and practice of gaining control of another land or people, occupying the land with settlers, and taking advantage of it economically. In Canada, French and later British governments and settlers colonized Canada, significantly changing the lives of the original Indigenous peoples in the process. Colonialism and its effects are not restricted to the past, but continue today, with the impact still felt in Indigenous communities in Canada.



Shingwauk Indian Residential School, Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, May 1966 (courtesy of Archives of Ontario/I0012275/ Mildred Young Hubbard Fonds/F4369-1-0-7RG 1-653).

TREATIES IN CANADA

Treaties are formal agreements made between parties. Today this usually refers to agreements between Indigenous peoples and the Government of Canada. In the era of New France (1608-1763), the French Crown entered into alliances and treaties with Indigenous peoples. After the *Royal Proclamation of 1763*, the British Crown (and later the Government of Canada) also made many treaties with Indigenous peoples to encourage trade and settlement on lands where Indigenous peoples lived and worked. Most of these agreements describe exchanges where Indigenous nations agree to share some of their lands in return for various payments, goods, and promises. Treaties were often understood and interpreted differently by Indigenous peoples and the Government of Canada. The meanings of many treaties are still debated in Canada today. Watch the *Naskumituwin (Treaty)* Heritage Minute as a class and consider: How do the meanings of treaties change when we consider them as relationships rather than contracts? What does it mean to violate these relationships? How are they interpreted differently between Indigenous peoples and the Government? What can Canadians do to honour treaties?

For further activities exploring treaties, Indigenous perspectives and history, see the <u>Treaties in Canada Education Guide</u> and the <u>Indigenous Perspectives Education Guide</u> on the <u>Education Portal</u>.

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SECTION 4

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP - TAKING ACTION IN OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY

ACTIVITY 5:

PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

It is a responsibility of people in Canada to help protect Canada's natural environment. This is something that anyone living in Canada can do, and it can begin in your local community. Small actions can make a difference in ensuring that Canada's environment is protected for future generations. Actions to protect the environment connect you to the global movement to make our communities more sustainable and help save the planet.

PART I:

- The United Nations (UN) has a list of 17 Sustainable Development
 Goals (www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment) to promote prosperity
 and protect the planet. Have the teacher select a few of the UN goals
 — or, if time allows, all 17 and discuss as a class how these goals are
 connected to protecting the planet. Be specific. For example, climate
 change is creating more deserts. We need healthy soil to grow enough
 food to reach the UN Zero Hunger goal, so we need to prevent desert
 land from spreading.
- Refer to the class Visual Anchor Chart (Activity 1) and discuss the responsibilities that each jurisdiction has in relation to the UN Sustainable Development Goals and/or good environmental stewardship.

PART II:

- 1. Divide into groups of three or four students and take a class walk through the neighbourhood around the school. Each group will select one natural feature or natural space around the school that they would like to protect for themselves and future students. Alternatively, bring in images or pictures of natural features or spaces in the larger community that the group can choose from.
- Back in the classroom, get into your groups and brainstorm specific issues related to protecting that feature, or needs that should be addressed by the local government for the feature to thrive within your community. Below are some examples of issues:
 - Lack of garbage cans
 - No signs helping to educate people about the importance of healthy waterways
 - Little natural space
 - Nothing to encourage biodiversity (building bat houses, bird houses, or pollinator gardens) or prevent habitat loss

Earth Day parade in Montreal, Quebec (Dreamstime/Meunierd/47373908).

A Midland Painted Turtle investigating trash in Toronto's High Park (Dreamstime/Beth Baisch/117147098).

Canada goose goslings snuggling with mother (Dreamstime/Leerobin/115160892).







ACTIVITY 5 CONTINUED

3. Next, develop a plan to better protect and/or rehabilitate the chosen community space. The plan should include clear ideas (e.g., better signage) and a plan of action that could be forwarded to a city councillor for feedback and possible implementation. You may want to work in collaboration with your teacher to develop an action plan. See below for an example.

Issue:	Trash on the green space in front of our school	
Goal:	Clean up the trash and encourage people to stop littering	
Step 1:	Create "no littering" signs and put them up in front of the school	
Step 2:	Create a "Greener is cleaner" campaign and encourage people to take the initiative to keep the shared space clean	
Step 3:	Organize a weekly clean-up of the space: Choose one day a week to go out for 30 minutes as a class Ask your school custodian for garbage bags and plastic gloves Have your teacher supervise your class during your clean-up Break into teams and see who can clean up the most trash in 30 minutes	
Step 4:	Write to the principal and school board, asking them to place more garbage and recycling bins in front of the school	

4. Does your plan of action work toward any of the UN Sustainable Development Goals? Which goals does it help and in which ways does it help them?

EXTENSION: ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP

Helping protect Canada's natural environment is one way you can be an active citizen, but there are many others. Change in your school or community might come from governments, but it can also come from people just like you, doing things within the school or community. As a class, come up with a list of 7 to 10 things you can do to make your school or community a better place (e.g., creating a new group in your school, writing a blog, petitions).

SECTION 5

TAKE THE CITIZENSHIP CHALLENGE WITH YOUR STUDENTS

To become a Canadian citizen, newcomers to the country must pass a citizenship test. Newcomers need a score of at least 75% to pass the test. Historica Canada has created the <u>Citizenship Challenge</u> quiz so you can test your knowledge about the country and find out if you would pass the real citizenship test!

ACTIVITY 6:

PREPARING YOUR STUDENTS FOR THE CITIZENSHIP CHALLENGE

1. Learn more about key topics in civics education as a class. Dedicate one week to each of the key topics from the list below. That topic becomes the theme for that week. The teacher can offer mini lessons on the weekly topic, or direct students to online resources so they can conduct their own investigations.

- Symbols of Canada
- The Rights and Responsibilities of Canadian Citizenship
- How Canadians Govern Themselves
- Canadian Geography
- Canadian History
- Who Are Canadians? (e.g., Indigenous peoples, French Canadians, later immigrants to Canada)
- 2. As a class, recap what you've learned about the weekly theme at the end of each week. Have the teacher write down key points about the theme on chart paper that can be posted in the classroom.
- 3. Test what you've learned by taking the Citizenship Challenge!

Canada Day on Parliament Hill, Ottawa, Canada

(Dreamstime/Wangkun Jia/20297613).





Happy Canada Day and the Flag (Dreamstime/Juan Moyano/72989886).

TEACHER TIP: Register your classroom for the Citizenship Challenge. Select the elementary (grades 4–6) level quiz, and have your students take the 20-question Challenge online. You can administer the Challenge and check your students' scores from your teacher account. Visit www.citizenshipchallenge.ca to register your class.

EXTENSION: EXPLORING MORE CANADIAN CIVICS

After taking the Citizenship
Challenge, consider where you lacked knowledge. Undertake your own mini-inquiries to learn more about the questions from the Challenge that you weren't sure about. The teacher can help by directing students to appropriate resources.