Democratic Values in Action: Unit Overview

CHV2O, Civics and Citizenship, Grade 10 (Open), Unit 2. 5 classes of 75 minutes (about one week), plus time to complete the summative.

The big question

What do Canadians believe about democracy, and how do those beliefs become action?

Students define four core democratic values (democracy, human rights, freedom and the rule of law) and trace their roots from Athens, the Haudenosaunee Great Law of Peace and Magna Carta to responsible government, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Charter, and the expansion of the vote in Canada. They study why people take civic action through examples from Mary Ann Shadd and the Winnipeg General Strike to Viola Desmond, Terry Fox, Shannen Koostachin and Autumn Peltier. They learn how foreign actors try to interfere in elections and debate, and how Canada and citizens defend against it. They meet Canada's main federal parties and the political compass, describing every party objectively, and compare perspectives on civic issues before stating their own positions. The summative, Values in Action Case Study, asks students to profile an example of civic action, the values behind it and its results.

Lessons

#	Lesson	Classes	Question	Expectations	What's inside
1	**Democracy and Its Roots**	1	Where did our democratic values come from?	B1.2	Four values; roots timeline; expanding the vote; the Persons Case
2	**Why People Take Action**	1	Why do people act for change?	B1.4	Five reasons; six examples; methods then and now; Viola Desmond
3	**Foreign Interference and Disinformation**	1	How do foreign actors try to interfere?	B1.3, A1.3	Influence vs interference; methods; defences; the public inquiry
4	**Parties and the Political Compass**	1	What do parties believe?	B2.1, B1.5	Two axes; main federal parties; same goal, different paths
5	**Where Do I Stand?**	1	How do values shape positions?	B1.1, B1.5	Four corners; perspective maps; common ground; summative launch

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Assessment

Type	In this unit
Assessment for learning	Values Sort, Values Then and Now, Action Profiles, Then and Now, Methods and Defences, Case File, Compass Sort, Values and Approaches, Perspective Map, My Stand, exit tickets
Assessment as learning	Self-checks on success criteria in every lesson; private values reflection in Lesson 4
Assessment of learning	Values in Action Case Study (10% of the final grade), with planning organizers, a four-level rubric and a teacher guide

Sources

Included:

- **Original summaries of real people and events:** the roots of democracy, the Persons Case, Mary Ann Shadd, the Winnipeg General Strike, Viola Desmond, Terry Fox, Shannen Koostachin and Autumn Peltier
- **Original practice sources:** a fake voting post, the invented Lakeshore Centre interference case, eight invented policies for the compass sort and a model perspective map
- **Teacher reading (recommended):** the public summary of the final report of the Public Inquiry into Foreign Interference (2025), and current information from Elections Canada, CSIS and the parties' own websites

Political neutrality runs through the unit: parties are described evenly, no current leaders or seat counts are named, and students may argue any side. Lessons 2 and 3 touch on racism, loss and intimidation; teacher notes give trauma-informed guidance.

What's in each lesson

- Teacher lesson plan with expectations, timed sequence, differentiation, look-fors and answer guides
- Slides with speaker notes
- Student handouts and organizers
- Editable Word and PowerPoint files, plus PDFs

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