

PRE-VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Pre-viewing activities are designed to pique curiosity, set the stage and focus attention on the program about to be screened. Choose one or more of the following to help prepare your class for the video experience.

Set the Scene

Facilitate a class discussion about rules. Where are rules found—at home, in school, on a sports team? List examples of rules at school. Explore why they exist, who enforces them and what might happen without them.

Substitute the word “laws” for “rules.” Discuss the way in which laws have an effect on our lives on a daily basis—from the food we eat to the clothes we wear, the television we watch, the books we read and the schools we attend. Underscore the importance of having the right people in place to make the laws we live by.

What’s in a Name?

Explain that you are about to view a video called *MPTV*. Poll students to determine what they think the program is about. If necessary, break down the title. Has anyone heard of an MP? Explore possible meanings.

Location, Location, Location

The *MPTV* video is shot on location on Parliament Hill in Ottawa. Ask students to name and locate the capital on a map. Canvass the class to collect words and images associated with the capital or Parliament. Write the list on the board (some starters: flag, Mountie, Prime Minister).

Think Ahead

Using the list of words and images from the previous activity, ask students to anticipate what they might see in the *MPTV* video. Circle words that you know are included in the program. Add others that you feel are key elements, such as House of Commons, government, Speaker, elected. It may be helpful at this stage to define some of these terms and alert students to watch and listen for them in the video. For younger students, it is especially important to include objects and concrete symbols (for example, flag, maple leaf).

Class Brainstorm: KWL

A KWL activity helps you establish how much the class knows about the topic in advance of the screening. The exercise also serves to help students focus on key elements to look for during viewing.

Prepare a KWL chart on the board using this template.

Prompt students to add to the list. What do they know about MPs, Parliament, the House of Commons, etc.? Fill in the first column with as much relevant information as



possible. Then use the five Ws (who, what, when, where, why) as triggers to complete the middle column.

Return to complete the final column after screening the video.

VIEWING TIPS

- View the video in its entirety before screening with students.
- Precede class viewing with an activity, even a simple one, to help focus attention on the content. (See Pre-Viewing Activities)
- Have the class screen the main body of the video (the first six minutes) without interruption.
- Determine in advance whether or not to include the quiz in the first screening. If you choose to conduct the quiz without pausing for discussion, alert students before viewing begins that there will be a set of on-screen questions at the end of the video. This will encourage them to pay close attention.
- Decide whether responses to the quiz will be given as a group or individually, with pencil and paper or verbally, etc.
- You may prefer to have the class take the quiz in “real time.” There are nine questions with an interval of a few seconds allowed for each response.
- Alternatively, you may choose to pause the tape between each question to allow more time for answers or discussion.
- Some students may benefit from repeated screenings. Use the pause and rewind features to control the pace, emphasize a point or review content.



POST-VIEWING ACTIVITIES

The following suggestions offer a variety of approaches for you and your class to further explore the information presented in the *MPTV* video. They reflect different subject areas and may be adapted to suit the needs of different grade levels or class situations.

KWL

Return to the KWL chart and complete the final column as a class exercise.

Build a Word Bank

View the video again to collect vocabulary for a word bank. Ask students to listen carefully and write down any words they encounter that relate specifically to the topic. After the screening, compile a class list on the board.

Follow-up assignments:

- Write definitions for each word on the list.
- Rearrange the words in alphabetical order.
- Study the words to prepare for a spelling quiz.
- List all the words you can make from the letters in Parliament Hill.

Check the Glossary of Parliamentary Terms - for younger students.

Story Starters

It was my first day on the job as a reporter on Parliament Hill ... It was my first day in the House of Commons as an MP...

A Place of Pride

Parliament Hill is important to all Canadians. It is the place where the laws we live by are made. Invite students to explore the Hill to search for some of the art and architectural elements that make it special. Browse through the parliamentary photo gallery and the Canadian Symbols at Parliament photo gallery, or take a virtual tour.

Follow-up assignments:

- Paint a picture to represent your region of Canada to hang in the House of Commons.
- Create a stained-glass window for the chamber.
- Design a new chair for the Speaker of the House.



- Choose six symbols you would like to display in the House.

Students can explore the history of the Hill.

The Parts of Parliament

Parliament has three parts:

- The Queen (represented by the Governor General)
- The Senate
- The House of Commons

Cue the video to this segment and review the three parts of Parliament. Distribute the handout "The Three Parts of Parliament" and ask students to fill in the blanks.

Who's Who in the House?

Screen the program for the purpose of allowing students to choose roles in the House of Commons for themselves. Those named in the video include Members of Parliament, the Prime Minister, Cabinet members, the Leader of the Official Opposition, the Speaker and the Sergeant-at-Arms.

Have students research the roles they have chosen and complete one of the following activities:

- Write a first-person paragraph describing their duties.
- Create a montage of images associated with the role.
- Take part in a game of "Who Am I?" in which classmates are allowed to ask up to five questions to uncover each student's identity. Only questions that can be answered with a yes or no may be asked.

Refer to the House of Commons map to see where the students would sit.

On the Campaign Trail

Members of the House of Commons are elected to represent their constituents in Parliament. Challenge students to run for office in their local riding. As part of the process they should identify qualities that would be important to their voters and for doing a good job in the House.



Follow-up assignments:

- Create a campaign poster.
- Compose and perform a campaign rap song.
- Write a speech to potential voters.
- Create a TV or radio commercial about yourself as an MP.

A Day in the Life of an MP

Cue the tape to 7:07 to locate the segment dealing with the work of a Member of Parliament. Ask students to list some of an MP's activities outside the House of Commons chamber (for example, research, connect with constituents, attend Parliamentary committee meetings, present petitions, meet with groups, answer reporters' questions, follow current events, solve problems, travel between his or her riding and Ottawa, read reports).

For background information refer to *On the Job with a Member of Parliament*.

When the list is complete, ask students to give three reasons why they would like to be an MP and three reasons why they would not.

You may want to adapt the teaching tool *Setting the Agenda* for use by your class.

Put Yourself in the Picture

Kristina Barnes is the CBC Newsworld reporter who hosts the *MPTV* video. Invite students to imagine themselves in her role. Would-be reporters should jot down their responses to the following questions:

- What else would you want to investigate about the House of Commons?
- Who would you like to interview?
- What questions would you ask?

My Voice Counts

All Canadians play a part in the way the country is governed. Those old enough to vote can choose the Member of Parliament they send to represent them in the House of Commons. But even students not yet eligible to cast a ballot can make their voices heard by sharing their views with their MPs. They can make a difference.

Refer to Elections Canada for resources on voting.



What's Important to Me?

Divide the class into small working groups. Ask them to research some of the topics dealt with in the House of Commons. (Refer to the list of House of Commons committees.) Invite each group to choose an issue they care about that might be discussed by one of the committees (for example, the environment, voting age, foreign aid). Their task is to collect relevant information from the Internet, newspapers and other sources to support a position on the issue. Have each group make a presentation to the class. Then ask students to vote for which groups should present their findings to their Member of Parliament.

Mail may be sent postage-free to any Member of Parliament at the following address:

(name of MP)

House of Commons
Parliament Buildings
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A6

Invite an MP to Visit

Contact your Member of Parliament to arrange a visit to your classroom:

- Students may write individual letters or collaborate on a group invitation.
- In advance of the visit, involve the class in preparing a list of questions to ask. Many MPs have personal Web sites that can be helpful research tools.
- Encourage the class to share their opinions on issues of importance to them with their MP.
- Assign various tasks to individual students, such as introducing and thanking the guest.
- Thank-you letters offer another opportunity to practice letter-writing.

Lights, Camera, Action!

Watch and listen to Members of Parliament as they carry on business in the chamber each day that Parliament is in session. Check the Cable Public Affairs Channel (CPAC) "In the Classroom" Web site.

Class discussion topics:

- Compare and contrast the chamber as shown in the *MPTV* video with the chamber in action during CPAC's coverage of Question Period.
- What role does the Speaker of the House of Commons play?



- Why are both French and English used in Parliament?

Head for the Hill

Arrange a class visit to Parliament Hill. Educational tours geared to the interests of your class are offered by the Library of Parliament. While in the Capital, visit some of the many museums, galleries, federal institutions and historical sites. A listing of special school programs is available through the National Capital Commission.

How's My French?

All parliamentary proceedings and discussions in the House of Commons are conducted in both French and English with simultaneous interpretation. The *MPTV* video contains programs in French and English. Challenge students to try the quiz in their second language as part of a language lesson. Listen to the House in both languages at CPAC.

What Do I Remember?

See if your students can remember important information about the House of Commons. "What Do I Remember?" is a fill-in-the-blanks activity that may be used in many ways, including as a vocabulary review, spelling list, test, game or "pair and share."

