

# Activity 5

## ON THE RIGHT LEVEL

### Objective

To become familiar with:

- the division of powers between the federal, provincial/territorial and municipal levels of government and their degree of responsibility.

### Suggested Sources

The preceding Info Box, *Running Canada*;

The government (usually blue) pages of the phone book;

Internet searches for phrases like “federal powers” and “provincial powers”;

*The Constitution Act, 1867*, Section VI, “The Distribution of Legislative Powers,” especially subsections 91, 92 and 93;

[http://www.solon.org/Constitutions/Canada/English/ca\\_1867.html](http://www.solon.org/Constitutions/Canada/English/ca_1867.html) has an excellent consolidated version of the document, including revisions;

Federal government contact information <http://www.parl.gc.ca/common/senmemb/house/members/MemberList.asp?Language=E&Parl=37&Ses=1&Sect=hoccur>; and

Information for provincial or territorial representatives can be found on their Web sites.

### Directions

1. Make enough copies of the On The Right Level activity sheet for the entire group. Have them find out which powers are assigned to the federal level of government, the provinces, and which ones are shared, by noting which level(s) of government are responsible for the service or issue involved.
2. Have the group review their findings together. For homework, ask individuals to bring in one news story, or make notes from a TV or radio news story, which refers to one of these areas and the level of government involved and have them explain why that level is involved.
3.
  - a) Individually or in pairs, have users think of a question that they, a family member or a friend has with which the government might be able to assist. (If they have problems coming up with one, individuals can phone the local federal and provincial government information offices and ask them for a few questions they are frequently asked. Another good source of questions is [http://www.canada.gc.ca/comments/faq\\_e.html](http://www.canada.gc.ca/comments/faq_e.html).)
  - b) Have them ascertain which level of government, and, if possible, which official might be able to help them answer their question.
4. Have each pair or individual compose a letter to the appropriate official, clearly stating their question and the action that they hope will be taken. You may wish to suggest that a formal tone and stating the issue factually will be most effective in achieving the desired results. They should trade these letters with one another for proofreading and feedback before submitting their rough drafts. As your resources allow, encourage them to send their letters and keep the group apprised of the response. Note that letters to federal Members of Parliament sent to the House of Commons do not require postage, whereas letters to other legislators do. You may consider e-mailing your letters.

# Activity Sheet

## ON THE RIGHT LEVEL

Area:	Level(s) of Government Responsible:		
	Federal	Provincial/ Territorial	Municipal
Agriculture			
Armed Forces			
Copyright			
Correctional Facilities			
Education			
Elections			
Energy			
Fire Department			
Hospitals			
Human Rights			
Immigration			
International Trade			
Internet			
Labour			
Libraries			
Liquor Licenses			
Marriage Permits			
Parks			
Passports			
Pensions			
Police			
Recycling			
Water and Sewers			
Social Insurance Numbers			
Taxes			
Telecommunications			
Tourism and Travel			
Traffic and Parking Signs			
Transportation			

# *Answer Sheet:* ON THE RIGHT LEVEL

The central principle for determining whether a power is federal or provincial is whether more than one province or Canada's relationships with other countries is affected. Municipalities are under the control of provincial governments. Not all provincial responsibilities are also territorial responsibilities; this varies among the three territories.

<b>Area:</b>	<b>Level(s) of Government Responsible:</b>
Agriculture	Federal and provincial
Armed Forces	Federal
Copyright	Federal
Correctional Facilities	Federal and provincial
Education	Provincial
Elections	Federal and provincial
Energy	Provincial and federal
Fire Department	Provincial and municipal
Hospitals	Provincial
Human Rights	Provincial and federal
Immigration	Federal and limited provincial
International Trade	Federal
Internet	Federal and limited provincial
Labour	Provincial and limited federal
Libraries	Provincial and municipal
Liquor Licenses	Provincial
Marriage Permits	Provincial
Parks	Federal and provincial
Passports	Federal
Pensions	Federal and provincial (Quebec)
Police	Federal, provincial and municipal
Recycling	Provincial and municipal
Water and Sewer	Provincial and municipal
Social Insurance Number	Federal
Taxes	Federal, provincial and municipal
Telecommunications	Federal and limited provincial
Tourism and Travel	Federal and provincial
Traffic and Parking Signs	Provincial and municipal
Transportation	Federal and provincial