



# LESSON PLAN

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# THREE LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT

*Recommended for Grades 5/6*  
*Duration: Approximately 60 minutes*

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Canada's Three Levels of Government (visit [www.ola.org/en/visit-learn/teach-learn-play/levels-government](http://www.ola.org/en/visit-learn/teach-learn-play/levels-government))

## LEARNING GOALS

This lesson plan is designed to engage students in a meaningful group discussion through an interactive activity, where they will learn the structure of government, understand the responsibilities at all levels of governments, and recognize governance in their communities and daily lives.

## INTRODUCTORY DISCUSSION

As a class or with a partner, ask students to think of examples of things that the government is responsible for. E.g. garbage pick up, schools, laws etc.

After hearing many examples, these can be related to everyday responsibilities. Similar to family homes where chores need to be divided in order for them to be completed, Canada as an entire country has many responsibilities that need to be divided so that all of them can be done.

## EXPLANATION

How many levels of government are there in Canada? What are they?  
(federal, provincial, municipal)

- The **federal** government takes care of things that affect the entire country, for example global affairs and diplomacy.

*Sample questions: Ask your students, have they travelled abroad?  
Did they need a passport or buy something? All the people who live across  
Canada use the same money or have a Canadian passport - just like them.*

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- The **provincial** level looks after things that affect only the people in the province.

*Sample questions: What do you do if you're feeling sick or if you have an accident? Go to the doctor or the hospital - how do you pay? Ontario Health Insurance Plan (OHIP) for all people in Ontario.*

- The **municipal** level is responsible for things that affect only the city or town.

*Sample questions: Can you think of some things that are in your own neighbourhood or things that happen in your town? Fire hall, police station, public library, snow removal, bus stop or subway stop - use exploratory questions, such as: If there's a snow storm or a fire nearby, can a snowplow or fire truck come from another city or province? What is written on the side of a police car or bus (name of city).*

### **INTERACTIVE ACTIVITY**

#### **Government Responsibilities (15 minutes)**

Print out the list of responsibilities below and share the list with your students. Write the three levels of government on the classroom board: Federal, Provincial, Municipal. Group students into small groups of 2 or 3 - encourage students to discuss with each other which level of government is responsible for each item on the list. Invite one student from each group to write one responsibility under the corresponding level of government.

- [Responsibility List and Answer Key](#)

### **REFLECTION ACTIVITY**

Print out the activity sheet below for students to reflect on the different government responsibilities and how each level impacts their daily lives.

- [Reflection Activity Sheet](#)

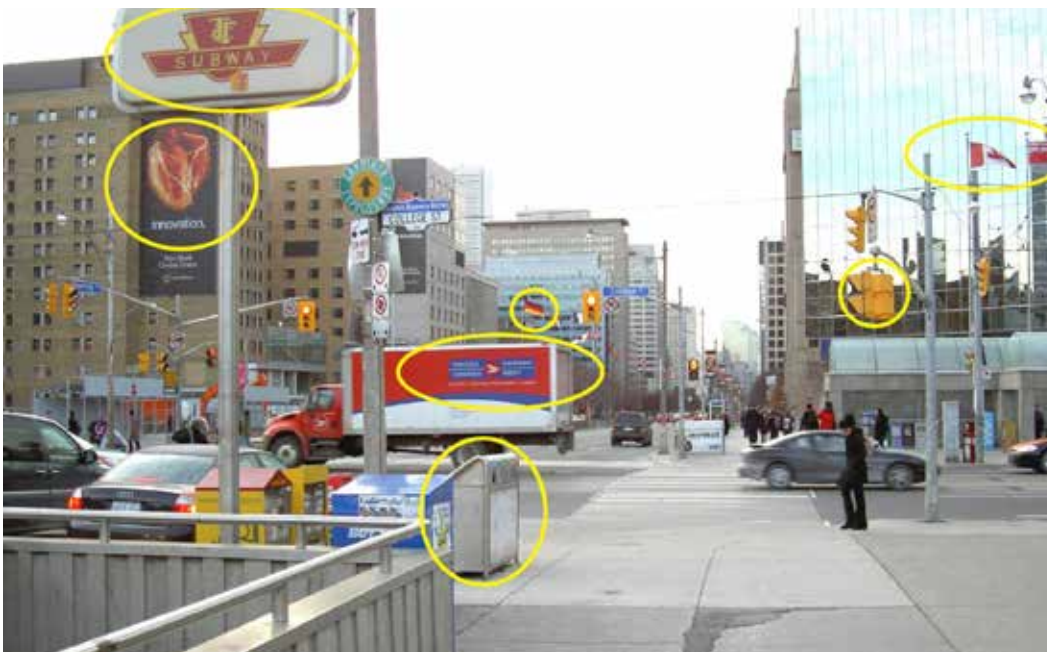
### **SUBSEQUENT DISCUSSIONS**

- Where do governments meet? At the parliament buildings. Where are the parliament buildings - in what cities? Who is the Prime Minister, Premier or Mayor?
- Relate the location of each level of government to their responsibilities, for example, Canada's Parliament is in Ottawa - Canada's capital city. Ontario's Parliament is in Toronto - the provincial capital city. The municipal governments meet in each city or town called a city or town hall.

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## ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

- Play the [Levels of Government](http://www.ola.org/en/visit-learn/teach-learn-play/games/levels-government) game as a class (visit [www.ola.org/en/visit-learn/teach-learn-play/games/levels-government](http://www.ola.org/en/visit-learn/teach-learn-play/games/levels-government))
- As a class, go for a walk around the block of your school. Have students (either working alone or in groups) take photos of signs or symbols that identify various levels of government in the community. When students return to the classroom, they can present their photographs and describe which levels of government they captured in their images. See example below:



LEFT:  
CITY STREET VIEW  
WITH OBJECTS  
CIRCLED IN YELLOW  
THAT REPRESENT  
RESPONSIBILITIES  
AT DIFFERENT  
GOVERNMENT  
LEVELS (SUBWAYS,  
HOSPITALS, FLAGS,  
MAIL, GARBAGE, AND  
TRAFFIC LIGHTS



# ACTIVITY SHEET

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## THREE LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT

### INTERACTIVE ACTIVITY RESOURCES

#### RESPONSIBILITY LIST

- **Adoption**  
Federal Provincial Municipal
- **Citizenship**  
Federal Provincial Municipal
- **Birth Certificates**  
Federal Provincial Municipal
- **Recycling**  
Federal Provincial Municipal
- **Agriculture (Farming)**  
Federal Provincial Municipal
- **Criminal Law**  
Federal Provincial Municipal
- **Boating Safety**  
Federal Provincial Municipal
- **Education**  
Federal Provincial Municipal
- **Airports**  
Federal Provincial Municipal
- **Driver's Licences**  
Federal Provincial Municipal
- **Mail**  
Federal Provincial Municipal
- **Energy**  
Federal Provincial Municipal
- **National Defence**  
Federal Provincial Municipal
- **Emergency Services**  
Federal Provincial Municipal
- **Money**  
Federal Provincial Municipal
- **Fisheries**  
Federal Provincial Municipal

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## RESPONSIBILITY LIST (CONTINUED)

- **Global Affairs**  
Federal Provincial Municipal
- **Health Care**  
Federal Provincial Municipal
- **Garbage Collection**  
Federal Provincial Municipal
- **Immigration**  
Federal Provincial Municipal
- **Libraries**  
Federal Provincial Municipal
- **Lottery**  
Federal Provincial Municipal
- **Marriage Certificates**  
Federal Provincial Municipal
- **Road Signs**  
Federal Provincial Municipal
- **Old Age Security**  
Federal Provincial Municipal
- **Water and Sewage**  
Federal Provincial Municipal
- **Ontario Provincial Police (OPP)**  
Federal Provincial Municipal
- **Provincial Parks**  
Federal Provincial Municipal
- **Transportation**  
Federal Provincial Municipal
- **Snow Removal**  
Federal Provincial Municipal
- **Public Transit**  
Federal Provincial Municipal
- **Local Police**  
Federal Provincial Municipal
- **Tourism**  
Federal Provincial Municipal
- **Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP)**  
Federal Provincial Municipal
- **Local Parks**  
Federal Provincial Municipal
- **Colleges and Universities**  
Federal Provincial Municipal
- **Road Maintenance**  
Federal Provincial Municipal
- **Environment and Climate Change**  
Federal Provincial Municipal

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## ANSWER KEY

### Federal:

Agriculture  
\*shared with the  
provincial level

Immigration  
\*shared with the  
provincial level

Global Affairs

Criminal Law

Canadian Currency

National Defence

Canada Post

Citizenship

Boating Safety

Fisheries

Royal Canadian Mounted  
Police (RCMP)

Old Age Pensions

Environment and Climate  
Change \*shared with the  
provincial level

Airports (Transport Canada)

### Provincial:

Health Care

Adoption

Education

Road Signs

Lottery

Tourism

Transportation \*shared  
with the federal level

Driver's License

Ontario Provincial Police  
(OPP)

Provincial Parks

Marriage Certificates

Birth Certificates

Energy \*shared with  
the federal level

Colleges and Universities

### Municipal:

Local parks

Library Services

Emergency Services

Garbage Collection

Snow Removal

Recycling

Public Transit

Police Services

Water and Sewage

Road Maintenance

Community Centres

Homeless Shelters



# ACTIVITY SHEET

## THREE LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT REFLECTION ACTIVITY

Put a check mark beside **five** government responsibilities that are most important, in your opinion.

MUNICIPAL	PROVINCIAL	FEDERAL
Water and Sewage	Health Care	National Defence
Road Maintenance	Energy	Agriculture
Libraries	Birth Certificates	Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP)
Public Transit	Marriage Certificates	Citizenship
Local Parks	Provincial Parks	Criminal Law
Local Police	Ontario Provincial Police (OPP)	Immigration
Emergency Services	Driver's License	Canada Post (Mail)
Garbage and Recycling	Lottery	Global Affairs
Sidewalks	Road Signs	Fisheries
City Lights	Education	Old Age Pensions
Community Centres	Adoption	Canadian Currency (Money)
Homeless Shelters	Universities	Airports
Snow Removal	Tourism	Environment and Climate Change
	Transportation	

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All levels of government are important, but which level do you think has the most impact on your life?

Circle one and briefly explain your choice:

**MUNICIPAL**

**PROVINCIAL**

**FEDERAL**

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