**Area of Learning: SOCIAL STUDIES — Political Studies Grade 12**

**BIG IDEAS**

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| Understanding how political decisions are made is critical to being an informed and engaged citizen. |  | Political institutions and ideology shape both the exercise of power and the nature of political outcomes. |  | Decision making in a democratic system of government is influenced by the distribution of political and social power. |

**Learning Standards**

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| **Curricular Competencies** | **Content** |
| *Students are expected to be able to do the following:** **Use Social Studies inquiry processes and skills to ask questions; gather, interpret, and analyze data; and communicate findings and decisions**
* **Assess the significance of political issues, ideologies, forces, decisions, or developments, and compare varying perspectives on their significance at particular times and places, and from group to group (significance)**
* **Analyze political data and assess the reliability of sources (evidence)**
* **Compare and contrast continuities and changes for different political institutions and organizations at particular times and places (continuity and change)**
* **Assess how underlying conditions and the actions of individuals or groups affect events, decisions, and developments, and analyze multiple consequences (cause and consequence)**
* **Explain and infer different perspectives on political issues, decisions, or developments (perspective)**
* **Make reasoned ethical judgments about political issues, decisions, and developments (ethical judgment)**
 | *Students are expected to know the following:** **structure and function of Canadian and First Peoples political institutions**
* **major ideologies and political systems**
* **election processes and electoral systems**
* **methods used by media, governments, or political groups to influence public opinion**
* **political power in democratic andnon-democratic societies**
* **current and future public policy**
* **scope and characteristics of the international system**
* **issues in local, regional, national, and international politics**
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|  **SOCIAL STUDIES – Political StudiesCurricular Competencies – Elaborations Grade 12** |
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| * **Use Social Studies inquiry processes and skills to ask questions; gather, interpret, and analyze data; and communicate findings and decisions:**

Key skills:* + Draw conclusions about a problem, an issue, or a topic.
	+ Assess and defend a variety of positions on a problem, an issue, or a topic.
	+ Demonstrate leadership by planning, implementing, and assessing strategies to address a problem or an issue.
	+ Identify and clarify a problem or issue.
	+ Evaluate and organize collected data (e.g., in outlines, summaries, notes, timelines, charts).
	+ Interpret information and data from a variety of maps, graphs, and tables.
	+ Interpret and present data in a variety of forms (e.g., oral, written, and graphic).
	+ Accurately cite sources.
	+ Construct graphs, tables, and maps to communicate ideas and information, demonstrating appropriate use of grids, scales, legends, and contours.
* **Assess the significance of political issues, ideologies, forces, decisions, or developments, and compare varying perspectives on their significance at particular times and places, and from group to group (significance):**

Sample activity:* + Evaluate the most significant electoral issues in a particular election campaign. What did each political party try to establish as the key issue for voters and why?
* **Analyze political data and assess the reliability of sources (evidence):**

Key question:* + Can people on different sides of a political issue agree on the objective facts involved in the issue?

Sample activities:* + Analyze the origin, purpose, perspective, and veracity of a claim made in a political speech.
	+ Analyze how language can be used in a political statement or speech to obfuscate.
* **Compare and contrast continuities and changes for different political institutions and organizations at particular times and places (continuity and change):**

Key question:* + How do political perspectives change over time? What can cause this?

Sample activity:* + Examine the role played by a Canadian political institution (e.g., Governor General, Senate, Supreme Court) over time and assess how its role and power have changed or stayed the same.
* **Assess how underlying conditions and the actions of individuals or groups affect events, decisions, and developments, and analyze multiple consequences (cause and consequence):**

Sample activities:* + Analyze the role of several important political factors (e.g., ideology, public opinion, economics, institutional factors, identity politics, the media) in a recent political decision.
	+ Examine the intended and unintended consequences of a political decision or policy change.
* **Explain and infer different perspectives on political issues, decisions, or developments (perspective):**

Sample activity:* + Compare the coverage of a political event or topic in different mass media or in the social media feeds of different people.
* **Make reasoned ethical judgments about political issues, decisions, and developments (ethical judgment):**

Sample activity:* + Conduct a debate about a current or past political decision.
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|  **SOCIAL STUDIES – Political Studies Content – Elaborations Grade 12** |
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| * **structure and function of Canadian and First Peoples political institutions:**

Sample topics:* + federal, provincial, and territorial legislatures
	+ First Peoples governance
	+ roles of executive, legislative, and judicial branches
* **major ideologies and political systems:**

Sample topics:* + ideologies:
		- liberalism
		- conservatism
		- democratic socialism
		- Libertarianism
	+ political systems:
		- democracy
		- theocracy
		- dictatorship
		- totalitarian state
	+ left-to-right political spectrum and two-dimensional representation, such as the political compass

Sample activities:* + Take online tests designed to represent your views on a linear or two-dimensional spectrum. Compare the questions asked and the methodology of two such tests.
	+ Compare the way terms such as “liberal” and “conservative” are used in Canada, the United States, and other countries.
* **election processes and electoral systems:**

Sample topics:* + electoral systems:
		- single-member plurality (first past the post)
		- proportional representation systems
		- single transferable vote
		- majoritarian
		- consensus-model elections in Nunavut and Northwest Territories
	+ processes for local, provincial, and federal elections
	+ outside factors in elections, such as opinion polls, campaign financing, third-party involvement, election advertising, and social media
	+ history of voting rights in Canada

Sample activities:* + Analyze the media coverage of one day in an election campaign or a significant day in politics. Review a variety of print, web, and broadcast sources. Consider placement and size of stories, images chosen, accuracy, and reporting bias.
	+ Compare electoral systems in Canada and another jurisdiction.
* **methods used by media, governments, or political groups to influence public opinion:**

Sample topics:* + lobbying
	+ media campaigns
	+ propaganda
	+ awareness or information campaigns
	+ public consultation

Sample activity:* + Prepare a case study of the influence of media, government, or political groups in shaping public perception of an issue.
* **political power in democratic and non-democratic societies:**

Sample topic:* + theories of power:
		- *power over* (power to compel, direct, or dictate) versus *power to* (power to influence, enable, or empower)

Sample activities:* + Identify and assess the leading factors empowering certain groups in society while disempowering others.
	+ Analyze the circumstances in which political power shifts from one group (or amalgam of groups) to another.
* **current and future public policy:**

Key question: * + When are governments proactive in the creation of policy and when are they reactive to the needs and demands of the population?

Sample Activity:* + Simulate the policy-making process on a current issue that involves the articulation of stakeholder perspectives (e.g., parliamentary committee stage, local community engagement process).
* **scope and characteristics of the international system:**

Sample topics:* + sovereign states
	+ intergovernmental organizations:
		- U*nited Nations*
		- NATO
		- EU
	+ non-governmental organizations
	+ social movements
	+ multinational corporations
	+ international law
	+ terrorism

Sample activities:* + Hold a model United Nations meeting.
	+ Simulate the meeting of another global organization.
* **issues in local, regional, national, and international politics:**

Sample topics: * + economic development
	+ sustainability
	+ conflict resolution
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