**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 and non-democratic societies** * **current and future public policy** * **scope and characteristics of the international system** * **issues in local, regional, national,  and international politics** |

| **SOCIAL STUDIES – Political Studies Curricular 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. |

| **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 |