

Lesson 3:

The perspective of the parties and their budget priorities

INTRODUCTION:

Quebec society regularly faces political challenges. In many cases, people have different opinions on certain issues, with their opinion being influenced by their values, their principles and their vision of the world around them. Some issues are more sensitive than others and have a direct impact on people's lives. This is why it is important to question everyone's perspective while respecting their point of view.

OVERVIEW:

The purpose of this lesson is to help young people gain a better understanding of provincial budgeting by highlighting differences of opinion and the existence of several political parties representing them. It is important that future voters are able to determine which groups best represent their interests.

Thus, we wish here to offer you a flexible set of teaching tools that you can use to help your students develop critical thinking skills while learning to position themselves within the current political structure.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

Following this lesson, students will be able to:

- Analyze and compare the economic positions and priorities of political parties in Quebec;
- Analyze and compare different political opinions and economic priorities;
- Develop a critical eye with regard to public policies;
- To form their own opinion on public policies;
- Position their economic perspective in relation to the parties currently elected.

RESSOURCES :

- Sheet 3.1: Political issues and opinions
- Slide Deck F: The political spectrum
- Videos: Party perspectives
(<http://budgetconsultation.quebec/party-perspectives/>)
- Budget Consultations Questionnaire for Students in Quebec (paper and online versions are available)

ACTIVITIES:

This section is divided into five parts. “Getting started”, “Initiation”, “Let’s go”, “The Consultation” and “Consolidation”. We estimate the complete realization of the activities to a maximum of 1 hour and 20 minutes. Note that section IV can be given as homework.

I. Getting started: 5 to 10 min.

Ask students if they would prefer to pay more taxes and get more government services, or pay less taxes and get fewer services. Invite students to share their opinions and participate in a friendly class discussion.

Suggested questions:

1. Which service(s) would you be willing to give up in exchange for lower taxes (free health care, child support, subsidized public transportation, Télé-Québec, public road maintenance)
2. For which additional service(s), would you be willing to raise taxes for? (Free education, dental insurance, free medication)

II. Initiation: 10 to 15 min

In class, discuss the following concepts with your students: **political issue** and **opinion** using Slide Deck F.

A **political issue** is a subject that affects society as a whole and often there will be many different opinions about a given issue.

An **opinion** is a belief or idea about a given issue. Your opinions are personal, they are subjective and influenced by your values, knowledge and perspectives. For example, not everyone shares the same opinion about what is the most important issue facing Quebec. However, there is no right or wrong answer; as they say, all opinions are equal. Invite your students to become aware of their opinions using an example of a political issue such as the management of people experiencing homelessness. Then ask them the following questions:

- What is your opinion on this issue?
- What other opinions are there on this one?
- What influenced your opinion on this political issue? (e.g., family, friends, media, personal experiences, social groups, religious institutions)

Conclude by mentioning that each individual has their own way of seeing the world around them. This perception of the world, combined with other factors such as education, forms the basis for developing a point of view. Sometimes certain principles (freedom of expression, equality, equity) also have a bearing on an opinion or a social project.

III. Let’s go: 10-15 min

1. After having approached the concepts of political stake, opinion and vision of the world. You could ask your students to complete sheet 3.1: “Political issues and opinions” and try to identify these concepts by watching the party perspective videos.

2. In class, watch the [party perspectives videos](#) found online on the Student Budget Consultation website. These videos present the opinions of political parties on budgetary priorities.
3. Then ask students to think about the following questions:
 - a. Which opinions or positions of political parties do you most agree with? Why?
 - b. Which issues are most relevant to you and why?

IV. The Consultation: 25 à 30 min.

1. Present the 2019 Student Budget Consultations questionnaire. Ask students to answer the questions based on their own priorities. Their opinions, as well as those of hundreds of students from across Quebec, will be shared with political parties, the media and the general public in anticipation of the 2019 Quebec budget.
2. Next, you could review the results of some questions from the Student Budget Consultations from the previous year that are shown in Slide Deck F.
3. Give students 20 to 25 minutes to complete the survey online or on paper. The survey is compatible with a tablet and a smartphone. Hard copies will be available upon request and free of charge (including return by mail).

V. Consolidation: 5 à 10 min.

Start a closing discussion on the political outlook for the Quebec budget. You can ask the students to prepare a written reflection.

- Would you prefer to have fewer taxes and fewer services or more taxes and more services? Explain your point of view.
- The economic policy of which party suits you the most and why?
- What have you learned about politics through the Student Budget Consultations? Is there anything else you would like to learn?
- What have you learned about yourself and your opinions? Who (or what) most influenced your opinions?
- Has your preference for a political party changed as a result of what you learned from participating in the program?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

- [National Assembly](#)
- [the Student Budget Consultation website](#)
- [Conservative Party of Quebec's platform](#)
- [Liberal Party of Quebec's engagements](#)
- [Coalition Avenir Quebec's resolutions \(French only\)](#)
- [Quebec Solidaire's program \(French only\)](#)