

A PRACTITIONER'S MANUAL: GRADE 6 SOCIAL STUDIES UNIT PLAN DEVELOPMENT



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A PRACTITIONER'S MANUAL

GRADE 6 SOCIAL STUDIES

Unit Plan Development

Designing Inquiry-Based, Inclusive, and Democratic Learning



Brittany Clark

Faculty of Education

ED 3601 | EDUC 3604

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A Practitioner's Manual: Grade 6 Social Studies Unit Plan Development

First Edition



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About the Author

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Brittany Clark is a writer drawn to the quiet, complex spaces of human experience—where resilience, identity, and connection take shape. A mother of five and a future classroom educator, she believes deeply in the power of words to connect, heal, and make sense of the world. Her poetry and writing are inspired by real life: motherhood, resilience, injustice, growth, and the often-overlooked moments that shape who we are. She writes for the everyday woman, for the unseen stories, and for anyone who has ever needed to feel understood.



Brittany is the founder of The Invisible Woman Series (theinvisibleme.ca), a community-driven initiative that brings visibility to the unseen. Through storytelling, a weekly blog and podcast, anti-bullying and inclusion programming for schools, and rural sport and leadership camps for youth, the Series highlights the everyday experiences, contributions, and quiet strength of individuals—especially women, children, and families—who are often overlooked.

The same values that animate the Invisible Woman Series—empathy, inclusion, the dignity of every voice, and the conviction that small acts of kindness build stronger communities—run through this manual. As a teacher candidate, Brittany approaches social studies as a living invitation to citizenship: a chance to help children see themselves, see one another, and see the systems that shape their world.

Her work continues to evolve as a reflection of lived experience and quiet observation, and as a humble offering to the students, families, and colleagues who will carry democratic learning forward.

Learn more at theinvisibleme.ca

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Intended Audience

This manual is written for pre-service and in-service teachers, curriculum leaders, education students, instructional coaches, and parents interested in understanding how a Grade 6 Social Studies unit on democracy is developed from curriculum analysis through to assessment.

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Preface

Purpose of This Manual

This manual was written for one reason: to make unit planning visible. Too often, teacher candidates and early-career teachers see only the finished product of curriculum design—a polished unit plan, a glossy rubric, a confident lesson—without ever seeing the questions, drafts, and revisions behind it. The manual you are holding is an attempt to pull back that curtain.

Using a complete Grade 6 Social Studies unit on democracy as its example, the manual walks the reader through every stage of unit development: curriculum analysis, scope and sequence, lesson design, assessment planning, inclusive practice, and final evaluation. Each section is intended to be readable on its own, so a busy educator can dip into whichever stage they need; together, the sections form a coherent model of how thoughtful, inquiry-based units come into being.

Three commitments run through every page. First, that democracy is best taught when it is lived through experiences students can feel, not only ideas they can recite. Second, that inclusion is not an add-on but a design principle; the strongest units are the ones in which every learner has a meaningful way in. Third, teaching is a craft that improves with reflection; the helpful hints, key notes, and follow-up questions throughout the manual exist so that readers can pause, think, and try again.

How to Use This Manual

Each section opens with a brief summary and a list of learning outcomes, so the reader knows what to expect. Within each section, the original unit plan content is presented in full, with spelling, grammar, and clarity polished for ease of use. Helpful hints and key notes appear as boxed callouts beside the most relevant content. At the end of each section, a short set of follow-up questions invites reflection, classroom application, or peer discussion.

An index, glossary, and full source list appear at the back of the manual. Readers are encouraged to mark up these pages, return to them often, and adapt the ideas they find to the children, the classroom, and the community they serve.

— *Brittany Clark, May 2026*

Section 1 | Curriculum Foundations

SECTION SUMMARY

Section 1 introduces the foundational thinking behind the Grade 6 Social Studies unit on democracy. It maps the big ideas of the Alberta Program of Studies onto the Knowledge, Understanding, and Skills Procedures (KUSPs) framework, and it explains how the curriculum connects to the core concepts of citizenship and identity. The section also examines how multiple perspectives—Indigenous, francophone, and pluralist—are honoured in the curriculum, and it identifies the challenges and unique opportunities that this grade level presents for teaching and learning.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After completing this section, the reader will be able to:

1. Identify the major themes and big ideas of the Grade 6 Social Studies curriculum in Alberta.
2. Explain how the curriculum connects to citizenship and identity.
3. Describe how Indigenous, francophone, and pluralist perspectives are embedded in the program.
4. Anticipate common challenges in teaching democracy to Grade 6 students.
5. Recognise the unique opportunities the grade level offers for powerful teaching and learning.

1.1 Big Ideas and KUSPs Alignment

The chart below maps the six big ideas of the Grade 6 Social Studies program to their aligned Knowledge, Understanding, and Skills Procedures (KUSPs) and the key concepts or dimensions of thought they invite into the classroom.

Big Idea	Aligned KUSPs	Key Concepts / Dimensions
1. Democracy depends on participation, voice, and shared responsibility.	Understand that democratic decision-making requires citizen participation. Recognise the relationship between rights and responsibilities.	Participation; Responsibility; Ethical reasoning
2. Democratic systems develop differently across cultures and time.	Examine governance structures in Ancient Athens and the Iroquois Confederacy. Compare democratic practices across societies.	Continuity and change; Historical thinking; Comparison
3. Inclusion and exclusion shape the fairness of democratic systems.	Analyse who participated in decision-making in different democratic systems. Understand how inclusion and exclusion affect equity and representation.	Equity; Representation; Power

Big Idea	Aligned KUSPs	Key Concepts / Dimensions
4. Democracy in Canada operates through interconnected levels of government.	Identify the roles and responsibilities of local, provincial, and federal governments. Understand how shared powers support governance.	Systems thinking; Interdependence; Civic literacy
5. Citizens influence democratic change through ethical and peaceful action.	Identify ways citizens engage in democratic processes. Examine how civic participation leads to social change.	Civic action; Ethics; Cause and effect
6. Inquiry and critical thinking are essential to active citizenship.	Develop skills to ask questions, gather information, and evaluate evidence. Use multiple perspectives to make informed civic decisions.	Inquiry; Critical thinking; Perspective-taking

HELPFUL HINT — Reading the KUSPs Chart

Treat the KUSPs column as the verbs that tell you what students will do, not just what they will know. When you plan lessons, choose at least one verb from this column for every activity you design.

The key concepts on the right are not separate topics—they are lenses you can apply to almost any lesson. A simple classroom vote, for example, can be analysed through the lenses of participation, equity, and power, all at once.

1.2 Connection to Citizenship and Identity

The Grade 6 Social Studies curriculum reflects the front-matter emphasis on citizenship and identity by positioning students as active, engaged participants in democratic life rather than as passive recipients of knowledge. Citizenship is framed as an active and responsible process grounded in participation, ethical decision-making, and an understanding of democratic structures at the local, provincial, and federal levels.

In alignment with the front matter's focus on belonging and pluralism, the curriculum supports students in exploring how individual and collective identities shape participation in democratic systems. By examining historical and contemporary democracies—including Indigenous governance systems such as the Iroquois Confederacy—students learn that citizenship is influenced by culture, worldview, and lived experience. This emphasis affirms that identity is diverse, evolving, and integral to democratic engagement.

The curriculum also aligns with the front-matter priority of multiple perspectives by encouraging students to examine inclusion, exclusion, and power within democratic systems. Through inquiry and critical thinking, students consider whose voices are heard, whose are marginalized, and how equitable participation contributes to a more just society. This approach reinforces an understanding of citizenship that values respect, fairness, and shared responsibility.

Consistent with the front matter's emphasis on inquiry-based learning and active participation, students are given opportunities to apply democratic concepts through simulations, discussions, and community-focused inquiry. These experiences help develop a strong civic identity by

allowing students to see themselves as capable contributors to their communities and to Canadian democracy, both now and in the future.

KEYNOTE — Citizenship is a Practice, Not a Definition

Throughout this manual, citizenship is treated as something students do, not just something they are taught about. Look for opportunities to put students into the role of decision-maker as early and as often as possible.

1.3 Attention to Multiple Perspectives

The Grade 6 Social Studies curriculum intentionally attends to multiple perspectives by emphasizing Indigenous, francophone, and pluralist worldviews in its exploration of democracy, citizenship, and governance.

Indigenous Perspectives

Indigenous perspectives are foregrounded through the study of the Iroquois Confederacy, which is examined as a sophisticated system of governance grounded in consensus-building, relational responsibility, and long-term thinking. This approach affirms Indigenous governance as valid, enduring, and influential, rather than positioning it as a precursor or alternative to Western democratic models.

Francophone Perspectives

The curriculum reflects francophone perspectives by situating democracy within the Canadian context, where linguistic and cultural duality is foundational to national identity. Students examine how democratic participation and representation operate within diverse communities, including those shaped by the French language, history, and culture, reinforcing the idea that citizenship in Canada is linguistically and culturally plural.

Pluralist Perspectives

Pluralist perspectives are further embedded through inquiry into inclusion, exclusion, and representation within democratic systems. Students are encouraged to examine how factors such as culture, identity, and historical context influence access to voice and power. By comparing ancient, Indigenous, and contemporary democratic systems and by engaging with diverse viewpoints, students develop respect for differing perspectives and learn that democracy is strengthened through diversity, dialogue, and mutual understanding.

TEACHER TIP — Honouring Indigenous Governance

When introducing the Iroquois Confederacy, present it as a contemporary, living system of governance—a historical one. Frame the comparison with Ancient Athens as a study of two equally valid democratic traditions.

Whenever possible, draw on resources authored by Indigenous scholars and Knowledge Keepers, and consult local protocols before bringing community members into the classroom.

1.4 Challenges to Teaching and Learning

The Grade 6 Social Studies curriculum invites teachers to thoughtfully support students as they engage with complex and often abstract concepts such as democracy, governance, representation, and power. At this developmental stage, students may benefit from concrete examples, discussion, and experiential learning to help connect historical democratic systems—including Ancient Athens and the Iroquois Confederacy—to contemporary Canadian democracy and their own lived experiences.

Attending to multiple perspectives, particularly Indigenous governance, requires careful, respectful, and accurate instruction. Teachers may need to seek additional resources, professional learning, or community guidance to do this well. In addition, the inquiry-based nature of the curriculum asks teachers to intentionally plan for diverse learners and to use varied assessment strategies that support the development of critical thinking and ethical reasoning within the available instructional time.

HELPFUL HINT — Bridging the Abstract

When a concept feels too abstract, return to a single, concrete classroom moment: a vote, a disagreement, a turn-taking decision. From that moment, students can scale up to the federal level. This is one of the most reliable strategies in Grade 6.

1.5 Unique Opportunities for Powerful Teaching and Learning

The Grade 6 Social Studies curriculum offers rich opportunities for powerful teaching and learning by inviting students to explore democracy as a lived and relevant experience rather than an abstract concept. The focus on local, provincial, and federal governance allows students to make meaningful connections between curriculum content and their own communities, fostering a sense of relevance and belonging.

Through experiential and inquiry-based learning—such as simulations, debates, mock elections, and community-issue investigations—students can actively practise democratic skills, including collaboration, critical thinking, and ethical decision-making. The inclusion of historical and Indigenous governance systems fosters comparative thinking and deeper respect for diverse perspectives, while empowering students to recognize that democratic participation takes many forms.

Grade 6 also offers a window into controversial yet important topics—immigration, land rights, government accountability, and social justice—where students can develop the language and skills to engage respectfully across difference. Overall, this grade level is uniquely positioned to help students see themselves as capable, informed citizens whose voices matter, both now and in the future.

FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS

Reflect on the following questions individually or as a study group:

1. Which of the six big ideas resonates most strongly with your own teaching philosophy, and why?

- 2.** How might you introduce the concept of the Iroquois Confederacy to a class with no prior exposure to Indigenous governance?
- 3.** Identify one likely misconception your students may bring to the unit. How will you surface and address it?
- 4.** What community resources—local government, francophone organisations, Knowledge Keepers—could enrich your teaching of this unit?
- 5.** Which of the challenges listed in §1.4 would be hardest for you personally, and what professional learning would help?

Section 2 | Scope, Sequence, and Unit Design

SECTION SUMMARY

Section 2 turns curriculum analysis into a workable yearly plan. It introduces the visual scope and sequence for the Grade 6 Social Studies year, the weekly timetable used to allocate instructional minutes, and a period-based design that organises the year into five inquiry units. The section concludes with an icon legend that gives the unit its recurring visual language.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After completing this section, the reader will be able to:

1. Read and explain a Grade 6 Social Studies scope-and-sequence visual.
2. Estimate weekly and unit instructional time using a Social Studies block schedule.
3. Describe each of the five periods of the year and the perspective lens that anchors each week.
4. Use the unit icon legend to communicate skills and perspectives to students.

2.1 Timeline Visuals

The visuals below summarise the year-long arc of the Grade 6 Social Studies program. Each colour band represents one of the five inquiry units, and the icons cue the dominant skills and perspectives explored in that period.



Figure 2.1 | Grade 6 Social Studies Scope and Sequence: Democracy develops over time and depends on informed, active citizens.

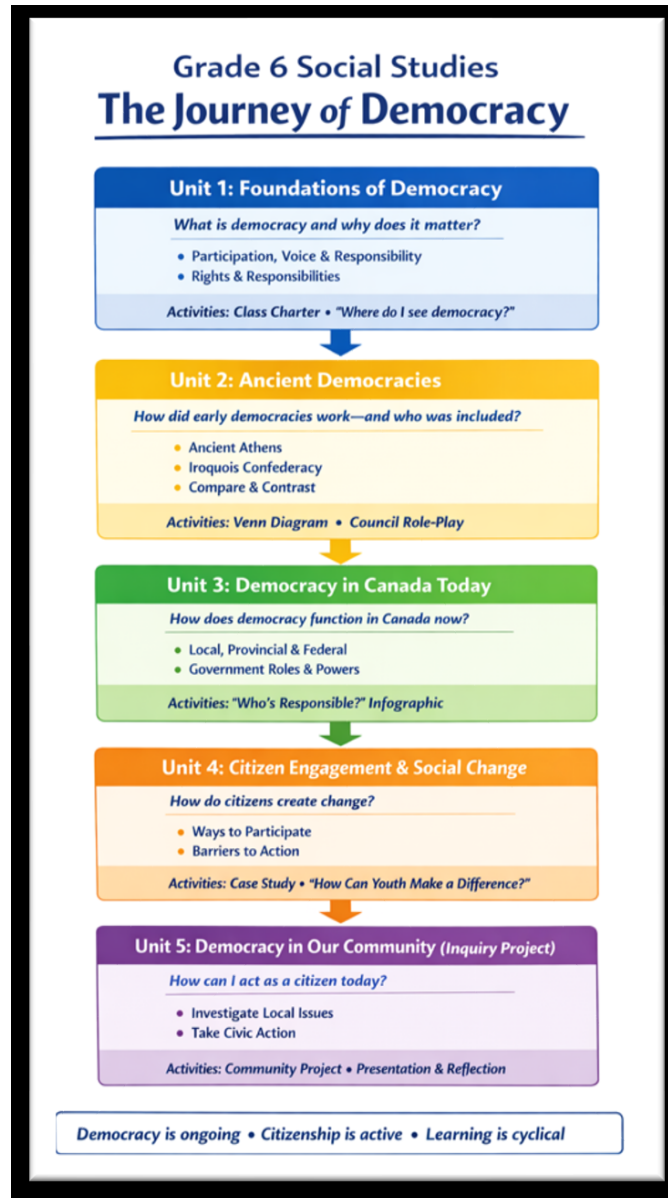


Figure 2.2 | *The Journey of Democracy*: a unit-by-unit overview showing the central inquiry question for each period.

2.2 Weekly Schedule

A predictable weekly schedule supports continuity, especially when units include multi-step simulations and community action projects. The schedule below allocates 200 minutes of Social Studies per week, spread across four days.

Day	Social Studies Block	Length
Monday	1:00 – 1:50 p.m.	50 minutes
Tuesday	10:30 – 11:20 a.m.	50 minutes

Day	Social Studies Block	Length
Wednesday	11:25 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.	50 minutes
Thursday	– No block –	–
Friday	10:30 – 11:20 a.m.	50 minutes

Total weekly time: 200 minutes (3 hours, 20 minutes).

HELPFUL HINT — Protect the Block

Of the four weekly blocks, the Monday block tends to be the most vulnerable—assemblies, holidays, and weather can chip away at it. When you map out your unit, schedule lessons that are easier to recover (review, reflection, or independent inquiry) for Monday, and protect the mid-week blocks for new instruction.

2.3 Period-Based Unit Design

The year is organized into five periods, each anchored by a guiding question and built around a weekly rotation of perspectives. The five-period structure mirrors how citizens think: starting from personal experience, widening to community and history, examining the systems we live within, and returning—at the end—to personal civic identity.

Unit 1 / Period 1: Foundations of Democracy (Weeks 1–3)

Anchor question: What is democracy?

- Week 1 — Personal Perspective: How do I experience decision-making? Classroom rules, voice, and fairness.
- Week 2 — Community Perspective: Families, schools, local groups. Who decides? Who participates?
- Week 3 — Ethical Perspective: Rights versus responsibilities. Fairness and inclusion.

Skill tags: Critical thinking; Ethical reasoning.

Unit 2 / Period 2: Ancient Democracies (Weeks 4–7)

Anchor question: How did early democratic systems work, and who participated?

- Week 1 — Ancient Athens (Historical Perspective): Direct democracy; citizenship and exclusion.
- Week 2 — Iroquois Confederacy (Indigenous Perspective): Consensus; clan mothers; long-term thinking.
- Week 3 — Comparative Perspective: Similarities and differences; inclusion versus exclusion.
- Week 4 — Equity Perspective: Who held power? Who was excluded, and why?

Skill tags: Historical thinking; Comparison; Perspective-taking.

Unit 3 / Period 3: Democracy in Canada Today (Weeks 8–11)

Anchor question: How does democracy work in Canada?

- Week 1 — Structural Perspective: Local, provincial, and federal government.

- Week 2 — Francophone and Linguistic Perspective: Language, representation, Canadian pluralism.
- Week 3 — Indigenous and Treaty Perspective: Indigenous governance today; nation-to-nation relationships.
- Week 4 — Systems Perspective: Shared powers; how governments work together.

Skill tags: Systems thinking; Civic literacy.

Unit 4 / Period 4: Social Change and Civic Action (Weeks 12–15)

Anchor question: How do citizens create change?

- Week 1 — Youth Perspective: How young people participate.
- Week 2 — Historical Change Perspective: Past movements and advocacy.
- Week 3 — Barrier and Equity Perspective: Who can participate easily? Who cannot?
- Week 4 — Ethical Action Perspective: Peaceful change; responsibility and impact.

Skill tags: Ethical judgement; Cause and effect.

Unit 5 / Period 5: Inquiry and Action (Weeks 16–20)

Anchor question: Democracy in our community — what kind of citizen am I?

- Week 1 — Inquiry Perspective: Identifying a local issue.
- Week 2 — Research Perspective: Gathering evidence, voices, and viewpoints.
- Week 3 — Action Perspective: Proposing solutions.
- Week 4 — Reflection and Identity Perspective: “What kind of citizen am I?”

Skill tags: Inquiry; Collaboration; Metacognition.

UNIT 1 / PERIOD 1
Foundations of Democracy
 (Conceptual Time)

Period 1: What Is Democracy?
 Grade 6 Social Studies | Weeks 1–3 | 600 minutes

- S.1, S.7, ELA.1, and 6.1.1/6.1.2
- Apply critical and ethical reasoning skills in the democratic process of decision making

Week 1 – Personal Perspective

- How do I experience decision-making?
- Decision-making?
- Classroom rules, voice, fairness

Week 2 – Community Perspective

- Families, schools, local groups
- Who decides? Who participates?

Week 3 – Ethical Perspective

- Rights vs. responsibilities
- Fairness and inclusion
- Fairness and inclusion
- Fairness and inclusion

Critical thinking **Ethical reasoning**

OUTCOMES & KUSPs:











- 6.1.1: Recognize how individuals, events, and ideas shape democracy.
- 6.1.2: Demonstrate an understanding of the fundamental principles of democracy

Figure 2.3 | Unit 1, Period 1: Foundations of Democracy — visual planner.

2.4 Icon Legend

The icons used throughout the manual serve as visual cues highlighting the primary perspectives, skills, and dimensions of thought emphasized in each unit. They support students in seeing democratic learning as multifaceted, inquiry-driven, and inclusive.

Icon	Theme	What It Signals
	Governance / Democratic Structures	Formal systems of governance, democratic institutions, and civic structures—ancient and contemporary.

Icon	Theme	What It Signals
	Indigenous Perspectives	Indigenous governance systems, relational worldviews, consensus-based decision-making, and long-term thinking.
	Place, Language & Pluralism	Cultural, linguistic, and geographic diversity; francophone perspectives; Canadian pluralism.
	Systems Thinking	Interconnected systems, shared powers, and cause-and-effect relationships within governance.
	Civic Action / Advocacy	Citizen participation, advocacy, youth engagement, and social change.
	Inquiry	Questioning, investigation, research, and gathering evidence from multiple viewpoints.
	Reflection / Metacognition	Thinking about thinking, self-reflection, and identity formation as a citizen.
	Agency / Citizenship	Student empowerment, active citizenship, and applying democratic learning in real-world contexts.
	Voice / Personal Perspective	Student voice, lived experience, and individual perspectives; how students experience decision-making and participation.
	Community / Collaboration	Shared decision-making, cooperation, and collective responsibility within families, schools, and communities.
	Ethics / Fairness	Rights and responsibilities, equity, inclusion, exclusion, and ethical reasoning in democratic systems.

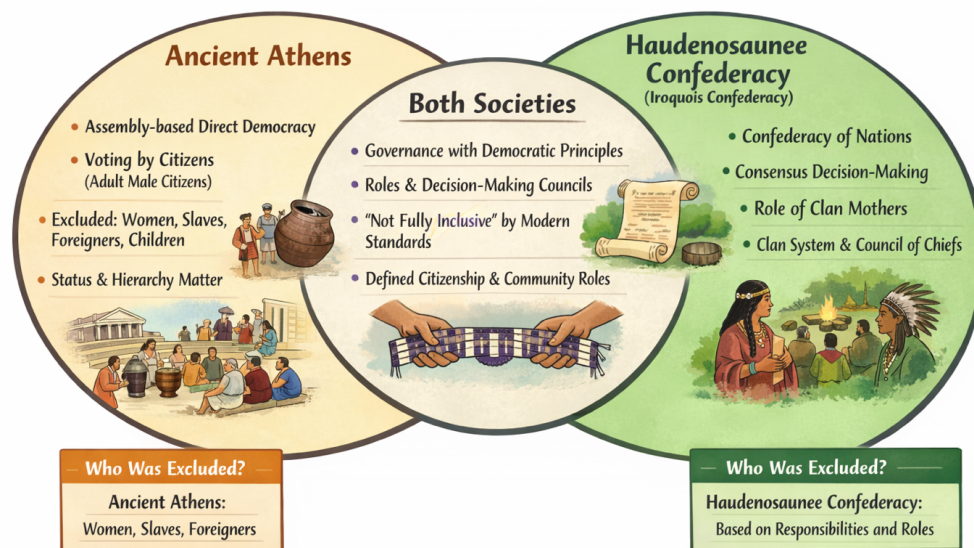


Figure 2.4 | Assignment-ready icon legend used throughout the unit.

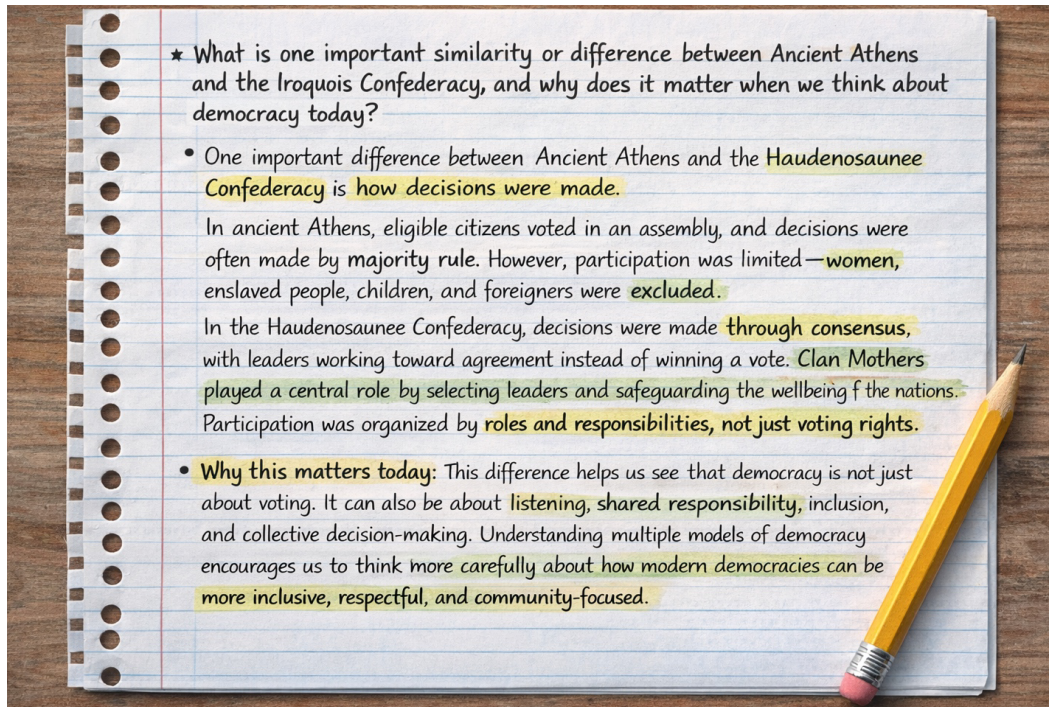


Figure 2.5 | Extended icon legend with classroom-friendly student descriptions.

KEYNOTE — Icons are Cognitive Scaffolds

Once students learn that 🌿 always means “think about Indigenous perspective”, the icon becomes a thinking prompt on its own. Print the legend as a classroom poster and reuse the icons on lesson handouts, exit slips, and rubrics so students start to recognise them.

Worksheet & Student Tool Ideas

1 Weekly Perspective Reflection Sheet

Perspective This Week	What I Learned

- ✓ Supports inquiry
- ✓ Great for formative assessment
- ✓ Easy to differentiate (sentence starters, visuals)

2 Perspective Compare Sheet

Perspective	How Decisions Are Made	Who Has Power

- ✓ Makes equity explicit
- ✓ Supports ethical reasoning
- ✓ Excellent discussion launcher

3 Democracy Across Perspectives Map

- ✓ Students add:
- ✓ Key ideas
- ✓ Symbols
- ✓ Real-world examples

4 Inquiry Timeline Strip

ISSUE	PERSPECTIVES	EVIDENCE

- ✓ Excellent for inquiry projects
- ✓ Makes thinking visible
- ✓ Works for summative assessment

5 Icon-Based Thinking Tracker

(Connects directly to your poster)

Icon	How Did I Use This Thinking? Example:
	Voice
	Indigenous perspective
	Ethics
	Inquiry

4 Inquiry Timeline Strip

ISSUE	PERSPECTIVES	EVIDENCE	ACTION

- ✓ Excellent for inquiry projects
- ✓ Makes thinking visible
- ✓ Works for summative assessment

5 Icon-Based Thinking Tracker

(Connects directly to your poster)

Icon	How Did I Use This Thinking? ..
	Voice
	Indigenous perspective
	Ethics
	Inquiry

6 "I am a Citizen" Timeline

(Culminating Reflection)

Beginning of year: What I thought democracy was.

Middle: What challenged my thinking

End: What kind of citizen I am becoming

- ✓ Draw
- ✓ Write
- ✓ Write
- ✓ Comic-style
- ✓ Digital

Figure 2.6 | Worksheet and student-tool ideas: weekly reflection slips, perspective compare sheets, and “I am a Citizen” timelines.

FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS

Reflect on the following questions individually or as a study group:

1. Map the five periods onto your school year. Where would breaks, assessments, and field trips fall?
2. Which period feels most ambitious to teach, and what support would help you carry it off?

- 3.** How could the weekly perspective rotation be communicated to students so that they notice and use it?
- 4.** Choose one icon from §2.4 and design a quick formative assessment that uses it as a prompt.
- 5.** How might you adapt the timetable in §2.2 if your school's Social Studies block is reduced to 150 minutes per week?

Section 3 | Unit 1, Week 1 — Foundations of Democracy

SECTION SUMMARY

Section 3 unpacks Week 1 of Unit 1 with two complete lessons: the Democracy Escape Room and the Classroom Election. Both lessons are designed to move Grade 6 students from learning about democracy to experiencing it. They introduce voting, consensus, representation, authority, and inclusion as live, comparable systems—each with consequences students can feel.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After completing this section, the reader will be able to:

1. Plan and facilitate the Democracy Escape Room across five decision-making stations.
2. Lead a Classroom Election in which students nominate, campaign, and live under elected rules.
3. Identify how voting, consensus, representation, authority, and inclusion shape group outcomes.
4. Use UDL roles, sentence stems, and visual supports to ensure inclusive participation.
5. Collect formative evidence that informs the rest of Unit 1.

3.1 Lesson 1 — Democracy Escape Room

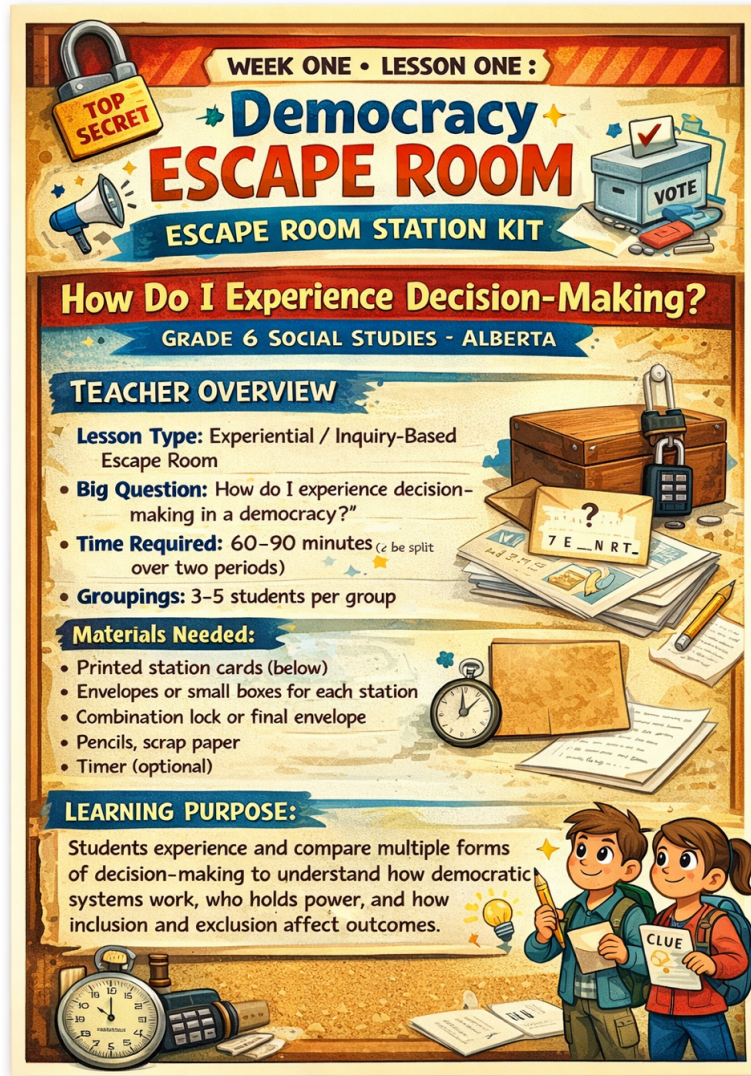


Figure 3.1 | Week 1, Lesson 1 promotional poster — Democracy Escape Room Station Kit.

Teacher Overview

- Lesson type: Experiential, inquiry-based escape room.
- Big question: How do I experience decision-making in a democracy?
- Time required: 60–90 minutes (can be split across two periods).
- Groupings: 3–5 students per group.
- Materials: printed station cards (below), envelopes or small boxes for each station, a combination lock or final envelope, pencils, scrap paper, and an optional timer.

Learning purpose: students experience and compare multiple forms of decision-making to understand how democratic systems work, who holds power, and how inclusion and exclusion affect outcomes.

Curricular Alignment (Alberta)

Topic: Democracy — Action and Participation.

General Outcome (GLO):

- 6.1 — Citizens Participating in Decision-Making.

Selected Specific Learning Outcomes (SLOs):

- 6.1.1 Recognize how individuals and governments interact and bring about change within their local and national communities.
- 6.1.2 Demonstrate an understanding of decision-making processes used in a democratic society.
- 6.1.3 Analyze how democratic ideals are reflected in the structure and processes of local and national governments.
- 6.1.5 Analyze the impact of power and authority on decision-making.

Knowledge, Understanding, and Skills Procedures (KUSPs):

- Identify and compare different decision-making processes (voting, consensus, authority, representation).
- Examine how power, voice, and participation influence outcomes.
- Recognize that democratic decision-making can include or exclude people.
- Develop skills of collaboration, respectful dialogue, and critical reflection.

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Supports

The following supports are embedded to ensure access, participation, and success for all learners, including English Language Learners (ELLs), students with learning differences, and students who benefit from structure and choice.

UDL Roles (print and assign per group)

Assign or allow students to choose one role per student. Roles may rotate between stations.

- ▶ Facilitator — keeps the group focused and ensures everyone is heard.
- ▶ Reader — reads task cards and instructions aloud.
- ▶ Recorder — writes down decisions and codes.
- ▶ Timekeeper — monitors time and prompts the group to move forward.
- ▶ Equity Checker — notices who is speaking and who is not.

UDL rationale provides a clear structure, reduces cognitive load, and supports executive functioning.

UDL Sentence Stems

Post stems on the wall or provide them on strips. Students may use any stem orally or in writing.

General decision-making stems:

- “I think this option is fair because...”
- “I agree with _____ because...”
- “I respectfully disagree because...”
- “Another way to think about this is...”
- “My perspective is...”

Power and inclusion stem:

- “This decision includes/excludes people by...”
- “Someone without a voice might feel...”
- “If I could change this process, I would...”

UDL rationale supports language development, participation, and confidence.

UDL Visual Supports (teacher prep)

Before starting the escape room, post or project the following:

- A Decision-Making Methods Chart with icons: 🗳️ Voting, 🤝 Consensus, ⚖️ Authority, 🗣️ Representation, 🚫 Inclusion / Exclusion.
- A Process Flow Visual: TASK → DISCUSS → DECIDE → CODE → REFLECT.
- A Group Norms Visual: one voice at a time; all ideas respected; disagree kindly.

UDL rationale supports comprehension, memory, and self-regulation.

HELPFUL HINT — Designing the Stations

Print each station card on coloured paper to match the icon for that decision-making method—voting in blue, consensus in green, authority in red, representation in yellow, inclusion in purple. The colour coding becomes a comprehension scaffold without adding any words.

Hide each station's code inside a small envelope rather than reading it aloud. This builds anticipation and protects students who finish at different speeds.

Station Instructions (print and cut)

Station 1 — Majority Rules (Voting)

Democracy focus: voting and majority rule.

Student task card: Your community has received funding, but only one project can be chosen.

Vote on ONE option:

- Build a park.
- Improve the library.
- Add sports equipment.

Steps:

- ▶ Each group member votes once.
- ▶ Tally the votes accurately.
- ▶ Circle the option with the most votes.

Code: write down the number of votes for the winning option.

What this shows:

- Everyone has a vote.
- The majority decides.
- Some voices may not be represented.

Station 2 — Consensus Council

Democracy focus: consensus decision-making.

Student task card: Your group must agree on ONE solution to this problem—“The school wants to reduce waste at lunch time. What is the best idea?”

Rules:

- ▶ Everyone must agree.
- ▶ No vote is allowed.
- ▶ You may not move on until consensus is reached.

Code: write down the first letter of your agreed-upon solution.

What this shows:

- All voices matter.
- Decisions take time.
- Compromise is necessary.

Station 3 — Representative Decision-Making

Democracy focus: representation.

Student task card: Choose ONE representative from your group. Only the representative may:

- Read the information card.
- Make the final decision.

The representative returns and explains the decision.

Code: the number printed on the information card.

What this shows:

- Decisions are made on behalf of others.
- Trust is required.
- Voices are indirect.

Station 4 — Authority Makes the Call

Democracy focus: authority and power.

Student task card: Read the decision card carefully. You must follow the instructions exactly. No discussion is allowed.

Code: provided once the instructions are followed correctly.

What this shows:

- Decisions are fast.
- Power is held by one authority.
- There is no public input.

Station 5 — Who Gets a Voice?

Democracy focus: inclusion and exclusion.

Student task card: Some group members may speak; others may not. Use the voice cards provided. Make a group decision about: “What is the most important rule for a fair classroom?”

Code: the number of voice cards used.

What this shows:

- Not everyone always has a voice.
- Exclusion affects outcomes.
- Fairness depends on participation.

Final Lock — Collective Decision

To unlock the final envelope, all groups must agree to combine their codes. If there is disagreement, stop and discuss.

Reflection question: What kind of decision-making did this final step require?

TEACHER TIP — Debriefing the Escape Room

Resist the urge to debrief immediately. Let students name the discomfort of being silenced in Station 5 or rushed in Station 4 before you intervene. The feelings are the data. Use a four-corner debrief: label four corners of the room as Voting, Consensus, Representation, and Authority. Read prompts aloud (“Which felt most fair?”, “Which was fastest?”) and have students walk to their answer.

Assessment and Reflection

Exit slip:

- Which decision-making method felt most fair? Why?
- Which was fastest? Which was hardest?
- How does this connect to democracy in real life?

Assessment for learning (formative):

- Observation of group discussions.
- Student explanations during debrief.
- Reflection responses.

Extension Ideas

- Compare these systems to historical or modern governments.
- Rewrite one station to make it more democratic.
- Connect the experience to student council or community decisions.

3.2 Lesson 2 — Democracy in Action: Our Classroom Election

Subtitle: Voices, Choices, and Responsibility.

Required for Week 2.

Lesson Title

“Who Decides? Power, Voice, and Responsibility in a Classroom Democracy.”

Lesson length: 60 minutes.

Placement in unit: Period One, Lesson 2 — following Lesson 1 (What Is Democracy? Decision-Making, Voice, and Fairness).

Big question: How does the way we make decisions affect fairness, power, and responsibility?

Learning Intentions (student-friendly)

Students will:

- Experience how different democratic systems operate in real life.
- Understand that power comes with responsibility.
- Recognize that decision-making systems can feel fair or unfair depending on structure and inclusion.

Alberta Curriculum Alignment (Grade 6)

General Outcome: 6.1 Citizens Participating in Decision-Making.

Selected Specific Learning Outcomes — students will:

- 6.1.1 Recognize how individuals bring about change within communities.
- 6.1.2 Demonstrate an understanding of decision-making processes used in democratic societies.
- 6.1.5 Analyze how power and authority influence decision-making.

Key Understandings and Skills (KUSPs):

- Different decision-making systems lead to different outcomes.
- Power structures influence who has a voice and who does not.
- Democratic leadership requires accountability and fairness.

Materials

- ▶ Group notes from the previous lesson (decision-making types).
- ▶ Chart paper or poster paper.
- ▶ Markers.
- ▶ Candidate Planning Sheet (rules, consequences, rationale).
- ▶ Ballots or voting slips (optional).
- ▶ Station task cards (five sets).
- ▶ Envelopes or station containers.
- ▶ Voice cards (for inclusion station).
- ▶ Reflection sheets.
- ▶ Role cards (Facilitator, Reader, Recorder, Timekeeper, Equity Checker).
- ▶ Timer.



Candidate Planning Sheet

Be a Responsible Leader!

My Classroom Rules

Create 3–5 rules for our Social Studies class next week:

Rule #1: _____

Rule #2: _____

Rule #3: _____

+ More Rules: _____



Consequences if Rules Are Broken

What happens if someone breaks the rules?

If a rule is broken, then... _____

- The consequence will be... _____
- Students will have to... _____
- Because... _____

Why My Rules Are Fair

My rules are fair because...

- They help our class by... _____
- I believe everyone should... _____



Being a Good Leader

To be a good Classroom President, I need to:

Include others by... _____

Be responsible by... _____

My goal as a leader is...

Figure 3.2 | Candidate Planning Sheet used by nominees to draft their classroom rules, consequences, and rationale.

Lesson Structure

1. Minds On / Review (10 minutes)

The teacher prompts the whole class or in a circle:

“Last class, we experienced different ways decisions can be made. Today, we are going to use those systems again—but this time, the decisions will affect us next week.”

Briefly review:

- ▶ Voting (majority rule).
- ▶ Consensus.
- ▶ Representation.
- ▶ Authority.
- ▶ Inclusion/exclusion.

Ask:

- Which systems felt fair?
- Which felt fast?
- Which felt uncomfortable?

Do not resolve tensions yet. Let them sit.

2. Group Task — Nominate a Classroom Leader (15 minutes)

Students return to the same groups as last week. Each group must:

- ▶ Choose one decision-making system to operate under.
- ▶ Use that system to nominate ONE candidate for Classroom President (Social Studies).
- ▶ Be prepared to explain why they chose that system, and how the decision was made.

Examples:

- A group might vote.
- Another might require consensus.
- Another may let one person make the decision (authority).

This is intentional; systems will feel different.

3. Candidate Role and Preparation (15 minutes)

Each nominated candidate receives a Candidate Planning Sheet and works independently (or with quiet support). They must prepare:

- Three to five classroom rules for Social Studies the following week.
- Consequences for breaking those rules.
- A short explanation of why the rules are fair, and how they support learning and respect.

Important framing by the teacher:

“Power is not about control—it is about responsibility. Your rules will affect everyone.”

This language matters.

4. Classroom Election (15 minutes)

Each candidate presents briefly:

- Their rules.
- Consequences.
- Why is their system fair?

Then, the class votes (majority rule). This is powerful:

- Even groups that did not use voting must now live under it.
- Students experience how systems collide.

The winning candidate becomes the Classroom President for Social Studies the following week.

5. Closure and Reflection (5 minutes)

Choose one prompt for a quick written or oral reflection:

- “The decision-making system I preferred today was _____ because...”
- “Having power means...”
- “A rule feels fair when...”

Do not over-process yet. Next week, we will do that work for you.

Assessment

Assessment for learning:

- ▶ Observation of group decision-making.
- ▶ Candidate explanations and rationale.
- ▶ Student reflections.

Assessment as learning:

- Students reflect on fairness, power, and responsibility.

No grades are required—this is rich formative evidence.

KEYNOTE — Teacher Notes (Important)

Some students may choose unfair or harsh rules. Within safety boundaries, let this happen. That discomfort is the curriculum.

Keep a non-negotiables list: school safety rules override all student-made rules.

Take photos or notes—this lesson is excellent for practicum reflection and TQS evidence.

Looking Ahead (Intentional Foreshadowing)

Next week, when the elected rules are in place, you will be able to ask:

- ▶ Who benefits?
- ▶ Who struggles?
- ▶ Was the process fair?
- ▶ Should power have limits?

That is democracy.

FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS

Reflect on the following questions individually or as a study group:

1. Which station of the Democracy Escape Room are students most likely to misread—and how will you scaffold it?
2. If a small group always chooses “authority” as their preferred decision-making system, what does that tell you, and how would you respond?
3. How would you adapt the Classroom Election for a class with significant friendship-group dynamics or social anxiety?
4. What is the difference between a rule being legal and a rule being fair? How will you draw that distinction in Grade 6 language?
5. What evidence from these two lessons would you collect for a practicum reflection or TQS portfolio?

Section 4 | Unit 1, Week 2 — Democracy in Action

SECTION SUMMARY

Section 4 carries Week 2 forward by moving students from electing a leader to forming a classroom government, swearing an oath, and leading a Community Action Project. The two lessons in this section show how a classroom can simulate the work of representative democracy: cabinet appointments, shared responsibility, and accountability through reflection.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After completing this section, the reader will be able to:

1. Form a classroom government modelled on a President-and-Cabinet structure.
2. Define five strength-based cabinet roles and the shared responsibilities they hold.
3. Facilitate a Community Action Project rooted in a real local issue.
4. Use mini reflection prompts to surface how power is distributed in classroom decisions.
5. Document leadership behaviours for practicum or TQS evidence.

4.1 Lesson 3 — How Do We Experience Decision-Making, Power, and Responsibility?

Teacher Overview

- Lesson type: inquiry-based, experiential civic learning.
- Time frame: two to three class periods, plus one action week.
- Big questions: How do citizens make decisions together? How does power affect fairness, voice, and responsibility? What does it mean to lead in a democracy?

Learning purpose: students move from learning about democracy to living it by participating in elections, forming a classroom government, and acting on a local community issue.

Alberta Curriculum Alignment (Grade 6)

General Outcome: 6.1 Citizens Participating in Decision-Making.

Selected Specific Learning Outcomes — students will:

- 6.1.1 Recognize how individuals and governments interact to bring about change in communities.
- 6.1.2 Demonstrate an understanding of democratic decision-making processes.
- 6.1.5 Analyze how power and authority influence decision-making.

Knowledge, Understanding, and Skills (KUSPs) — students will:

- Compare different decision-making systems (voting, consensus, authority, representation).
- Examine how voice, inclusion, and exclusion shape outcomes.
- Practise collaboration, respectful dialogue, and shared responsibility.

Classroom Government Structure — President + Cabinet Model

Shared Leadership Responsibility (read aloud to the class)

“The President and all members of the government are responsible for keeping the classroom engaged, focused, and respectful. They must help ensure that the rules created during the election period are followed and fairly enforced. Leadership is not about control—it is about supporting the success of the whole community.”

Step 1 — Appointment of Government (Cabinet)

After being elected, the Classroom President appoints a government to help lead the class during the Community Action Project. The President:

- Selects cabinet members intentionally.
- Assigns each role based on strengths.
- Explains why each role is important.
- Remains accountable for the government's actions.

Teacher framing: strong leaders do not do everything themselves—they build a government.

Step 2 — Government Roles and Shared Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Facilitator	Keeps the class focused and on task. Encourages respectful discussion. Reminds peers of agreed-upon rules. Redirects behaviour using class norms before consequences.
Reader	Reads task cards, instructions, and announcements aloud. Re-reads rules or expectations when focus is lost. Supports clarity so rules are applied fairly.
Recorder	Records rules, decisions, and plans. Tracks reminders and consequences as agreed. Represents decisions accurately and honestly.
Timekeeper	Monitors time and pacing. Gives reminders to support focus. Helps prevent rushed or off-task behaviour.
Equity Checker	Notifies who is speaking and who is not. Encourages quieter voices. Raises concerns if rules are applied unfairly. Supports inclusive engagement for all students.

Step 3 — How the Government Works Together

The President leads and makes final decisions when needed.

The government works together to:

- Keep the class engaged and focused.
- Remind peers of agreed-upon rules.
- Support fair and consistent enforcement of consequences.

Leadership responsibility is shared, not individual.

President and Cabinet Oath

Read aloud and sign before action week begins:

“As leaders of our classroom community, we promise to:

- Act fairly and respectfully.

- Listen to all voices.
- Use power responsibly.
- Enforce rules kindly and consistently.
- Support learning for everyone, including ourselves.

We understand that leadership is about service, not control.”

President signature: _____ Date: _____

Cabinet member signatures:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

TEACHER TIP — The Oath is a Pedagogical Move

Reading the oath aloud and signing it in front of peers makes leadership tangible. It is also a low-stakes opportunity to practise the gravity of public commitments—the same gravity that underlies real political offices.

Keep the signed oath visible in the classroom. When a student in government slips into bossing rather than serving, return to the oath instead of giving a private warning.

4.2 Lesson 4 — Community Action Project: “The President's Choice.”

Unit 1: Historical Models of Democracy — Week 2, Lesson 4.

Alberta Curriculum Alignment (Grade 6 Social Studies)

General Outcome 6.1:

- Students will demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of the democratic principles exemplified by Ancient Athens and the Iroquois Confederacy.

Specific outcomes addressed:

6.1.1 Values and Attitudes — students will:

- Recognize how individuals and groups can influence decision-making.
- Appreciate the importance of fairness, equity, and responsibility in democratic processes.

6.1.2 Knowledge and Understanding — students will:

- Describe the structure and function of leadership in democratic systems.
- Analyze how power is distributed in democratic governance.
- Examine how decision-making processes affect citizens.

6.1.3 Skills and Processes — students will:

- Analyze issues from multiple perspectives.
- Demonstrate skills of collaboration, cooperation, and conflict resolution.
- Engage in inquiry and decision-making to solve problems.
- Communicate ideas clearly and respectfully.

Lesson Focus

Big question: How can citizens work together to improve their community?

Lesson purpose:

- Students apply their understanding of democratic leadership and decision-making systems by engaging in a real-life community action project led by a Classroom President and the government.
- Students experience democracy as lived citizenship, not simply as historical content.

Learning Intentions (student-friendly)

We are learning:

- How leadership works in democratic systems.
- How decisions impact different groups of people.
- How citizens can work together to improve their community.

Success Criteria

I can:

- Explain how our class used a decision-making system.
- Describe how power was shared or limited.
- Work collaboratively toward a common goal.
- Reflect on whether our process was fair.

Materials Needed

- President and Cabinet role cards.
- Chart paper or whiteboard.
- Community-issue option cards.
- Decision-making framework anchor chart (voting, consensus, representation, authority).
- Planning template (problem, impact, action plan, roles).
- Reflection sheets.
- Exit tickets.
- Project-specific supplies (garbage bags, poster paper, markers, envelopes, etc.).

Project Overview

The Classroom President and the government identify a local community issue and guide the class in developing and implementing a realistic solution. This simulates democratic leadership, the distribution of power, accountability, and citizen responsibility.

Step 1 – Community Issue Discussion (15–20 minutes)

The President:

- Presents two or three possible community issues.
- Explains why each issue matters.
- Invites respectful input (no debate yet).

Students:

- Identify who is affected.
- Consider why the issue matters.
- Ask clarifying questions.

Teacher role: facilitator, not decision-maker; observe participation and democratic behaviours.

Curriculum connection: students analyze how issues affect different citizens and consider multiple perspectives (6.1.3).

Step 2 – Issue Selection

The President selects one issue using a visible decision-making system:

- Majority voting.
- Consensus.
- Representative decision.
- Authority-based decision.

Students must:

- Identify which system is being used.
- Explain how power operates within that system.

Mini reflection prompt: Who holds power in this system? Is it limited?

Curriculum connection: students examine how decision-making structures distribute power (6.1.2).

Step 3 – Action Planning

As a class, students determine:

- What is the problem?
- Who is affected?
- What action is realistic?
- What roles are needed?
- How will we collaborate respectfully?

The President and government:

- Clarify rules and expectations.
- Outline the consequences of breaking the rules.
- Identify who enforces those consequences.

Curriculum connection: students practise citizenship skills and collaborative problem-solving (6.1.3).

Community Issue Options (student-friendly)

1. Garbage and Environmental Care

- Issue: litter around school spaces.
- Possible actions: school-yard clean-up; waste-awareness poster campaign; lunchroom waste audit.
- Power reflection: Who decides what “clean enough” means?

2. Kindness and Inclusion Initiative

- Issue: students feeling excluded.
- Possible actions: kindness challenge week; anonymous appreciation notes; inclusion pledge.
- Power reflection: Can kindness be enforced?

3. Community Connection Project

- Issue: a weak connection between school and community.
- Possible actions: thank-you letters to helpers; community-role display; invite a guest speaker.
- Power reflection: Whose stories get shared?

4. Respecting Shared Spaces

- Issue: damage or disrespect in shared areas.
- Possible actions: student-created norms; peer reminder system; signage campaign.
- Power reflection: Who enforces rules in shared spaces?

Step 4 — Action Week

During the week:

- The President leads check-ins.
- The government monitor’s progress.
- The class carries out the agreed action.
- Rules and consequences are applied as decided.

Teacher role:

- Document leadership style.
- Observe collaboration and engagement.
- Note examples of power-sharing or imbalance.

Curriculum connection: students demonstrate applied citizenship and responsibility (6.1.1).

Step 5 — Reflection and Accountability

Students reflect individually and as a class:

- Was the decision-making process fair?
- How was power shared?
- Did leadership help or hinder the project?
- What would we change next time?
- Should leaders have limits on their power?

Final written reflection prompt: Which leadership responsibility was hardest to carry, and why?

Curriculum connection: students analyze democratic principles in action (6.1.2).

Assessment

Assessment for learning:

- Observation of collaboration.
- Anecdotal notes on decision-making participation.
- Exit-ticket reflections.
- Informal questioning.

Assessment as learning:

- Self-assessment on fairness and responsibility.
- Reflection on leadership effectiveness.
- Peer feedback discussion.

Assessment evidence:

- Planning sheet.
- Participation checklist.
- Reflection response.
- Completed action project.

Differentiation and Inclusive Supports (UDL)

- Visual anchor charts for decision-making systems.
- Role scaffolds for leadership positions.
- Sentence starters for reflection.
- Option for oral or written reflection.
- Clear structure for students needing predictability.
- Collaborative grouping to support diverse learners.

Pedagogical Rationale

This lesson:

- Bridges historical democracy (Athens and the Iroquois Confederacy) to lived experience.
- Makes power visible and discussable.
- Embeds ethical reasoning.
- Develops real citizenship skills.
- Generates authentic assessment evidence.
- Creates strong practicum reflection opportunities.

FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS

Reflect on the following questions individually or as a study group:

1. Which cabinet role is most likely to be misunderstood by Grade 6 students, and how will you explain it?
2. What classroom conditions make the Community Action Project genuinely democratic—rather than a guided activity in disguise?
3. How will you respond if the elected President begins to enforce rules unfairly?
4. What does “leadership is service, not control” look like in a Grade 6 student—how would you spot it in action?
5. How might you involve families or community partners in the Action Week without taking the decision out of student hands?

Section 5 | Week 3 – Student Council Choices: Community Action

SECTION SUMMARY

Section 5 presents Week 3 of Unit 1, structured as a “Choose-Your-Own-Democracy Adventure”. Four short, perspective-rich lessons—Operation Clean Enough, Trash Detectives, If Our School Were a Guest, and the Lunchroom Waste Trial—each look at the same overarching question (how do citizens work together to solve community problems fairly?) through a different lens. Each lesson is mapped to its Knowledge, Understanding, and Skills outcomes and to assessment for, as, and of learning.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After completing this section, the reader will be able to:

1. Plan a week-long inquiry that examines a single big question through four different lenses.
2. Use power reflections to make decision-making visible to students.
3. Embed assessment for, as, and of learning into short, daily lessons.
4. Recognise how systems-thinking and ethics intersect in everyday classroom problems.



Figure 5.1 | Week 3 lesson posters: Operation Clean Enough, Trash Detectives, If Our School Were a Guest, and the Lunchroom Waste Trial.

Overarching big question: How do citizens work together to solve community problems fairly?

5.1 Lesson 1 — Operation Clean Enough

Driving question: Who decides what “clean enough” is?

KUSPs Snapshot

Knowledge — students will know that:

- Communities create standards.
- Standards affect behaviour.

Understanding — students will understand that:

- “Clean” is a value-based judgement.
- Power determines whose standards are enforced.

Skills — students will be able to:

- Justify decisions.
- Consider multiple perspectives.

Assessment

- For learning: group discussion; justification language.
- As learning: reflection prompt — “I changed my mind because...”
- Of learning (optional): a short explanation of who should decide standards.

HELPFUL HINT — Make the Standard Visible

Bring a tray with three objects—one spotless, one slightly cluttered, one openly messy. Ask students to rank them from “cleanest” to “least clean” and then defend the ranking. The disagreement that follows is the lesson.

5.2 Lesson 2 — Trash Detectives: Follow the Garbage

Driving question: Who is responsible for waste in our community?

KUSPs Alignment

Knowledge — students will know that:

- Garbage comes from daily habits and systems.
- Waste management involves multiple community members.

Where this appears, track where litter shows up and identify types of garbage.

Understanding — students will understand that:

- Responsibility for waste is shared, not individual.
- Systems (bins, schedules, packaging) influence behaviour.

Where this appears, discussion of causes vs. blame; designing solutions that change systems rather than punish people.

Skills — students will be able to:

- Collect simple data (tallies, observations).
- Analyze patterns.
- Propose realistic solutions.

Assessment Alignment

Assessment for learning:

- Observation of the investigation process.
- Ability to identify patterns.

Assessment as learning:

Student prompt: “I used to think garbage was caused by _____. Now I think...”

Assessment of learning (optional):

Task: explain one way the community could reduce garbage without blaming individuals.

Criteria:

- Identifies a system or habit.
- Explains reasoning clearly.

KEYNOTE — Power Reflection

Who has the power to change waste systems—students, families, or the school? Use this question to scaffold the move from blaming individuals to redesigning systems.

5.3 Lesson 3 — If Our School Were a Guest...

Driving question: How would we treat our school if it were a guest in our home?

KUSPs Alignment

Knowledge — students will know that:

- Shared spaces belong to everyone.
- Respect is shown through actions.

Understanding — students will understand that:

- Communities rely on mutual care.
- Respect cannot always be enforced, but it can be modelled.

Skills — students will be able to:

- Use empathy to guide decisions.
- Create norms and agreements.
- Communicate values visually or verbally.

Assessment Alignment

Assessment for learning:

- Participation in empathy-based discussion.
- Contribution to a class agreement.

Assessment as learning:

Student reflection: “If our classroom were a guest, I think we should...”

Assessment of learning (optional):

Task: Create a Respect Pledge or poster that explains one expectation and why it matters.

Criteria:

- Connects behaviour to community values.

- Explains reasoning.

Power reflection: Can respect be enforced? Should it be? This directly assesses ethical reasoning.

5.4 Lesson 4 — The Lunchroom Waste Trial

Driving question: Is our waste problem fair—and who fixes it?

KUSPs Alignment

Knowledge — students will know that:

- Different groups experience problems differently.
- Decision-making often involves conflicting interests.

Understanding — students will understand that:

- Fairness depends on whose voices are heard.
- Power influences outcomes in group decisions.

Skills — students will be able to:

- Argue from a perspective.
- Listen and respond respectfully.
- Weigh evidence and viewpoints.

Assessment Alignment

Assessment for learning:

- Observation of role participation.
- Ability to stay in role and explain perspective.

Assessment as learning:

Student reflection: “The voice that had the most power was _____ because...”

Assessment of learning (optional):

Task: Which group should have the most say in solving the lunchroom waste problem? Explain why.

Criteria:

- References at least one perspective.
- Shows understanding of fairness.

Power reflection: Did having power make the decision fairer or faster—or both?

5.5 Week 3 Assessment Snapshot

Across all four lessons, students demonstrate:

- Understanding of decision-making processes.
- Awareness of power and responsibility.
- Ability to justify decisions.
- Reflection on fairness and inclusion.

Why This Week Is Pedagogically Strong

- Each lesson explores the same concept through a different lens.
- Students do not just “do” – they think, decide, and reflect.
- Power is examined, not hidden.
- Assessment is embedded, not bolted on.

FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS

Reflect on the following questions individually or as a study group:

1. How does treating “clean enough” as a value judgement change the way you teach environmental responsibility?
2. Which of the four lessons would be hardest to facilitate in a class with active conflict, and how would you adjust?
3. In Lesson 4, how would you prevent the loudest students from dominating the “voices” of marginalised groups?
4. What is the role of empathy in social studies assessment, and how might you mark for it without making it performative?
5. How could Week 3 be re-sequenced if your class only had three Social Studies blocks that week?

Section 6 | Ethical Perspective — Inclusion, Kindness, and Belonging

SECTION SUMMARY

Section 6 develops the ethical dimension of the Foundations of Democracy unit. It maps the Kindness Council, the Kindness Challenge vote, Anonymous Appreciation Notes, and the Inclusion Pledge Debate to the Grade 6 Specific Learning Outcomes 6.1.1 through 6.1.5. Students examine the ethics of kindness, the rights and responsibilities of citizens, and the power dynamics behind everyday classroom norms.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After completing this section, the reader will be able to:

1. Plan a lesson sequence that develops ethical reasoning across SLOs 6.1.1–6.1.5.
2. Use three classroom posters as visual anchors for kindness, debate, and appreciation.
3. Help students debate the ethics of mandatory versus voluntary kindness.
4. Connect ethical action to citizenship and identity in age-appropriate language.

Inquiry focus: How should a democratic society respond to issues of inclusion and belonging?

6.1 Program of Studies Connections (Grade 6)

General Outcome 6.1: Citizens participating in a democratic society. Students explore how democratic principles guide decision-making, fairness, and participation in communities.

6.1.1 — Citizenship and Identity

Recognize how democratic ideals and principles influence identity and behaviour.

Connection to kindness and inclusion:

- Students examine how kindness, respect, and inclusion shape classroom identity.
- They reflect on how democratic values influence how citizens treat one another.

Used in: Kindness Council; Inclusion Pledge Debate; ethical reflections.

6.1.2 — Democratic Ideals

Appreciate democratic ideals such as equity, fairness, respect, and participation.

Connection:

- Students evaluate whether kindness initiatives are fair, inclusive, and respectful.
- They compare voluntary versus enforced kindness through an ethical lens.

Used in: Kindness Challenge Week vote; Appreciation Notes reflection; power-analysis discussions.

6.1.3 — Decision-Making in Democracy

Understand how citizens participate in decision-making.

Connection:

- Students engage in voting, representation (Kindness Council), debate, and discussion.

- They experience democracy as a process, not just a concept.

Used in class votes, council simulations, and structured debates.

6.1.4 — Rights and Responsibilities

Analyze the rights and responsibilities of citizens in a democratic society.

Connection:

- Students grapple with the right to personal choice and the responsibility to treat others with dignity.
- They debate the limits of authority: Can rules make people kind?

Used in: Inclusion Pledge Debate; ethical exit tasks.

6.1.5 — Power, Authority, and Influence

Examine how power and authority are exercised in democratic societies.

Connection:

- Students explicitly analyze who decides what kindness “looks like”.
- They examine who enforces the rules and who benefits, or who may feel excluded.

Used in: Power Reflection questions; community-lens analysis.

6.2 Classroom Posters

Poster 1 — The Kindness Council: “Who Should Decide?”

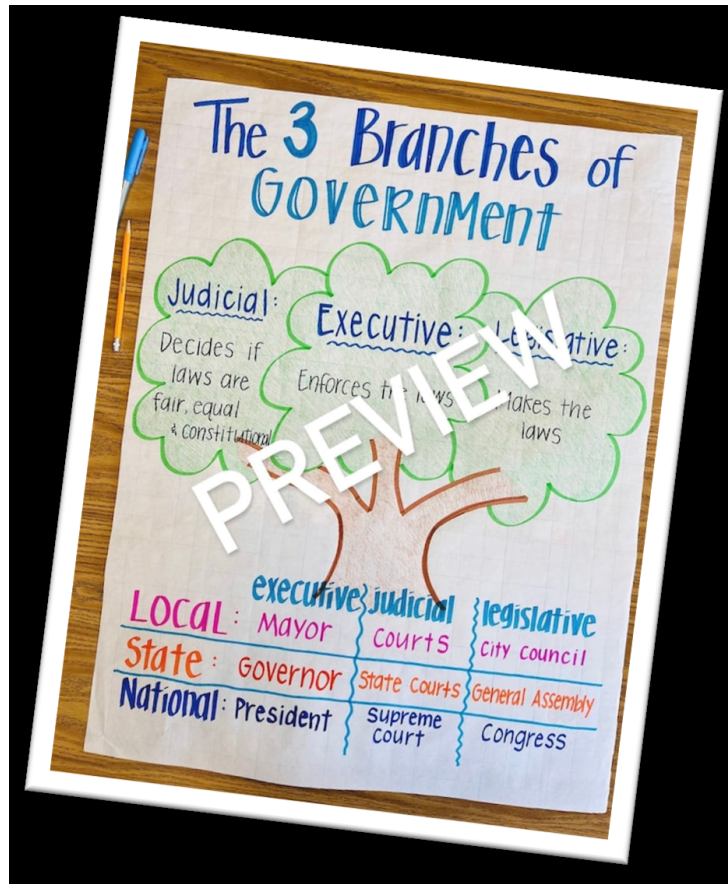


Figure 6.1 | A classroom anchor chart adapted for the Kindness Council—who decides matters at the local, state, and national levels.

Visual design:

- Title bubble: “The Kindness Council”.
- Centre graphic: a round table with speech bubbles.
- Three labelled sections, each with an icon: 🧑 Students; 👨‍👩‍👧 Families and school community; 🧑 Teachers.

Key questions on the poster:

- Who feels left out?
- Who gets a voice?
- What would be fair for everyone?

Bottom prompt: In a democracy, decisions should include many perspectives.



Figure 6.2 | “Everyone Is Welcome Here” classroom poster used as a visual anchor throughout the inclusion lessons.

Poster 2 — Kindness Challenge Week: “Vote or Volunteer?”

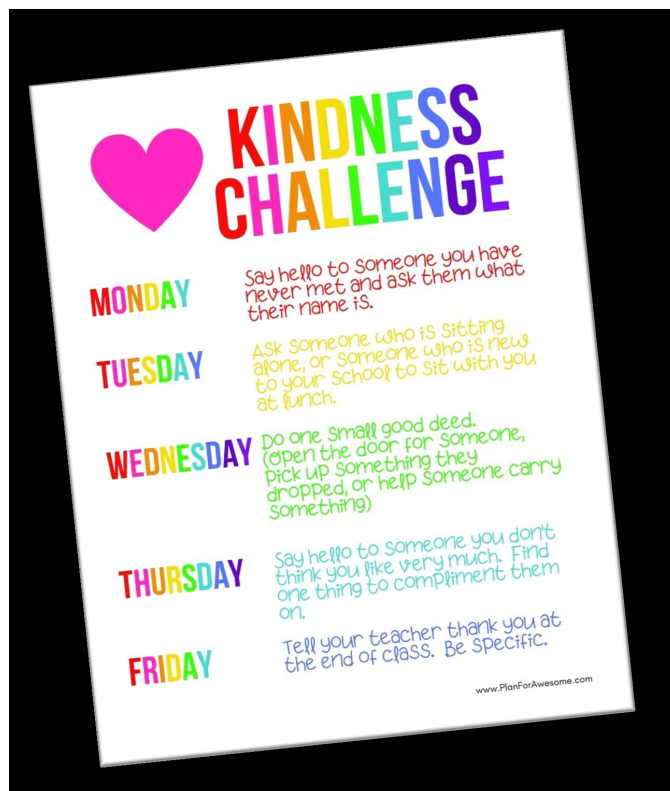


Figure 6.3 | Kindness Challenge Week—five days of small, specific acts of kindness.

Visual design:

- A bright ballot box in the centre.
- Three colourful option cards: ● Mandatory kindness; ● Voluntary kindness; ● Mixed approach.

Student decision prompts:

- Is it fair to force kindness?
- Does choice matter?
- What makes kindness meaningful?

Democracy skill highlight: ✓ voting; ✓ participation; ✓ majority vs. fairness.

Poster 3 — Anonymous Appreciation Notes: “Does Intent Matter?”

Figure 6.4 | Anonymous Appreciation Notes—handwritten thank yous that surface what often goes unnoticed.

Visual design:

- Sticky notes floating across the page.
- Anonymous envelopes (no names!).
- Soft, calming colours.

Reflection questions:

- How does kindness feel when it is anonymous?
- Who might still feel left out?
- Is kindness about the giver or the receiver?

Ethical thinking tag: think about impact, not just intention.



Figure 6.5 | Additional inclusion-themed classroom resource.



Figure 6.6 | Inclusion poster for the kindness lesson sequence.

6.3 Inquiry and Skill Outcomes (Process-Based)

Critical Thinking and Ethical Reasoning

Students:

- Evaluate multiple perspectives (students, families, teachers).
- Justify opinions using evidence and examples.
- Reflect on unintended consequences.

Communication and Collaboration

Students:

- Participate in respectful discussion.
- Listen to opposing viewpoints.
- Co-construct class decisions.

6.4 Front-Matter Alignment (Big Ideas)

These lessons strongly support the Alberta front matter emphasis on:

- Citizenship — active participation, shared responsibility.
- Identity — belonging, voice, dignity.
- Ethical decision-making — fairness, inclusion, power.
- Democratic participation — voting, dialogue, representation.

6.5 Lesson-by-Lesson Curriculum Mapping (Quick View)

Lesson	Curriculum Outcomes
Kindness Council	6.1.1, 6.1.3, 6.1.5
Kindness Challenge Vote	6.1.2, 6.1.3
Anonymous Appreciation Notes	6.1.1, 6.1.4
Inclusion Pledge Debate	6.1.2, 6.1.4, 6.1.5
Ethical Exit Task	6.1.1 – 6.1.5

6.6 Assessment Language (Ready to Use)

Students demonstrate understanding of democratic principles by evaluating ethical issues related to inclusion, fairness, and power, and by participating in democratic decision-making processes.

TEACHER TIP — Approach the Kindness Challenge with Care

Some students may have just experienced unkindness at home or on the bus. Frame the kindness challenge as something we offer, not something we owe. The line between encouragement and shame is thinner than it looks—stay on the encouragement side.

FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS

Reflect on the following questions individually or as a study group:

- 1.** Should kindness be a class rule? Defend your answer using one of SLOs 6.1.1–6.1.5.
- 2.** If a student refuses to participate in the Kindness Challenge, what is the appropriate response—and why?
- 3.** How could the Kindness Council be redesigned so that families have a real voice, not a token one?
- 4.** What is the ethical difference between “anonymous appreciation” and “anonymous criticism” in a Grade 6 classroom?
- 5.** Reread the Power Reflection questions in §6.2. Which one would you ask first, and what evidence would tell you the discussion went well?

Section 7 | Unit Assessment Plan — Historical Models of Democracy

SECTION SUMMARY

Section 7 presents the Unit Assessment Plan (UAP) for the Historical Models of Democracy unit. It outlines the General and Specific Learning Outcomes, essential questions, enduring understandings, and a complete map of assessments for, as, and of learning. Two complementary summative assessments are used to provide multiple, equitable opportunities for students to demonstrate understanding.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After completing this section, the reader will be able to:

1. Articulate the General and Specific Learning Outcomes of the Historical Models of Democracy unit.
2. Distinguish among pre-assessment, formative, and summative tools.
3. Build a rationale for using two summative assessments rather than one.
4. Apply the principles of validity, reliability, and fairness to your own assessment plan.
5. Use the Unit Assessment Overview Chart as a planning template.

7.1 Unit Overview

Unit title: Historical Models of Democracy.

Grade level: Grade 6.

Length: approximately three weeks.

Focus: students examine how different societies—Ancient Athens and the Iroquois Confederacy—developed democratic systems; who participated; who was excluded; and how these systems influence democracy today.

The unit emphasizes assessment for learning, assessment as learning, and assessment of learning, with a strong focus on valid, reliable, and inclusive assessment practices. Two summative assessments are used to provide multiple, equitable opportunities for students to demonstrate understanding.

7.2 Program of Studies Outcomes

General Learning Outcome (GLO)

Students demonstrate an understanding of democracy by examining historical and contemporary decision-making systems and their impact on citizenship.

Specific Learning Outcomes (SLOs) — Students will:

- Examine how Ancient Athens demonstrated democratic principles (assemblies, voting, citizenship).

- Describe governance structures of the Iroquois Confederacy (consensus decision-making, the role of clan mothers).
- Compare similarities and differences between historical models of democracy.
- Analyze who was included and who was excluded from participation in different democratic systems.
- Use respectful language when discussing Indigenous governance systems.
- Make connections between historical models and modern Canadian democracy.

7.3 Essential Questions and Enduring Understandings

Essential Questions

- ▶ What democratic features can be identified in Ancient Athens and the Iroquois Confederacy?
- ▶ Who was included and excluded from decision-making in Ancient Athens and the Iroquois Confederacy?
- ▶ How do ideas from Ancient Athens or the Iroquois Confederacy appear in modern Canadian democracy?
- ▶ How does inclusion affect how democratic a system can be? Use historical examples.

Enduring Understandings — Students will understand that:

- Democracy has taken different forms across cultures and time periods.
- Power, participation, and voice are central to democratic systems.
- Inclusion and exclusion significantly shape how democratic a system is.
- Indigenous governance systems represent legitimate and sophisticated democratic models.
- Democracy is an evolving concept.

7.4 Pre-Assessment (Assessment for Learning)

Tool: Prior Knowledge and Perspectives Probe.

Format:

- Short written or oral response.
- Concept map or quick sketch.
- Teacher-led discussion with an observation checklist.

Purpose:

- Identify students' prior understanding of democracy.
- Surface misconceptions (for example, “democracy only means voting”).
- Inform instructional planning and grouping.

Outcomes assessed: understanding of democracy; awareness of participation and fairness.

7.5 Formative Assessments (For and As Learning)

Tool 1 — Comparison Charts / Venn Diagrams

Description: Students complete a Venn diagram comparing Ancient Athens and the Iroquois Confederacy, focusing on decision-making, participation, and key democratic ideas.

How students demonstrate learning:

- Identify key features of each system.
- Compare similarities and differences.
- Use social studies vocabulary.

Assessment type:

- For learning: teacher feedback during work.
- As learning: student self-assessment using a checklist.

Validity and fairness:

- Multiple formats are allowed (paper, digital, oral explanation).
- Focuses on conceptual understanding rather than writing mechanics.

Tool 2 — Group Discussion with Observation Checklist

Description: Students participate in structured group discussions using guiding questions.

How students demonstrate learning:

- Verbal explanation of ideas.
- Respectful discussion of Indigenous governance.
- Critical thinking about inclusion/exclusion.

Assessment type: assessment for learning.

Validity and fairness:

- Allows oral demonstration of understanding.
- Supports ELL and neurodivergent learners.

Tool 3 — Student Self-Assessment Chart

Description: Students reflect on their understanding using a self-assessment checklist aligned to the rubric.

How students demonstrate learning:

- Reflect on strengths and areas for improvement.
- Take responsibility for learning.

Assessment type: assessment as learning.

Validity and fairness:

- Encourages metacognition.
- Can be completed orally, visually, or in writing.

7.6 Summative Assessments (Assessment of Learning)**Summative Assessment 1 — Performance Task: Comparing Democratic Systems**

Format: Venn diagram plus a written or oral defence.

Task overview: students compare Ancient Athens and the Iroquois Confederacy and defend one key similarity or difference, explaining why it matters for democracy today.

Outcomes assessed:

- Understanding of historical democratic systems.

- ▶ Comparison and critical thinking.
- ▶ Respect for Indigenous perspectives.
- ▶ Ability to connect the past to the present.

Summative Assessment 2 — Reflection: Inclusion and Democracy

Format (choice-based):

- Short written reflection.
- Oral explanation (recorded or as a teacher conference).
- Visual or multimodal representation with explanation.

Task overview: students explain how inclusion and exclusion affect the degree of democracy a system can achieve, using examples from Ancient Athens and the Iroquois Confederacy.

Outcomes assessed:

- ▶ Understanding of democratic principles.
- ▶ Use of historical evidence.
- ▶ Ethical reasoning and reflection.
- ▶ Clear communication of ideas.

Rationale: This summative assessment allows students to demonstrate conceptual understanding and ethical reasoning in a flexible, inclusive format that complements the comparative performance task.

KEYNOTE — Why Two Summatives?

Using two summative assessments provides multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate learning, which strengthens reliability. It also lets you separate students' grasp of historical content (Summative 1) from their ethical reasoning (Summative 2), so a single weakness does not mask competence.

7.7 Unit Assessment Overview Chart

Stage	Tool	Outcomes (GLO / SLOs)	Evidence	Type	Validity & Fairness	TQS & Inclusive Ed Alignment
Pre-Assessment	Prior Knowledge & Perspectives Probe	GLO; SLO 1, SLO 4	Quick written / oral response; concept map or discussion	For Learning	Identifies misconceptions; multiple response formats ensure access	TQS 3, 4 — responsive planning; Inclusive Ed: barrier identification
Formative 1	Comparison Chart / Venn Diagram	SLO 1, SLO 2, SLO 3	Identify democratic features; compare	For & As Learning	Digital, visual, or oral options increase fairness	TQS 3, 4 — UDL and DI; multiple means of representation

Stage	Tool	Outcomes (GLO / SLOs)	Evidence	Type	Validity & Fairness	TQS & Inclusive Ed Alignment
			similarities and differences			and expression
Formative 2	Group Discussion & Observation Checklist	SLO 4, SLO 5	Participate in guided discussion using respectful language	For Learning	Oral assessment supports ELL and neurodivergent learners	TQS 1, 5 – respectful relationships; Indigenous perspectives
Formative 3	Student Self-Assessment Chart	SLO 1 – 6	Reflect on understanding; identify strengths and goals	As Learning	Builds metacognition; oral and visual options permitted	TQS 2, 4 – reflective practice; learner agency
Summative 1	Performance Task: Comparing Democratic Systems (Venn + Defence)	SLO 1, 2, 3, 4, 6	Create comparison; defend one similarity or difference; connect to democracy today	Of Learning	Rubric-based; assesses outcomes, not mechanics; accommodations allowed	TQS 3, 6 – valid assessment; fair, equitable evaluation
Summative 2	Written or Multimodal Reflection: Inclusion & Democracy	SLO 4, 5, 6	Explain how inclusion affects democracy; use historical evidence; express learning in chosen format	Of Learning	Multiple expression formats reduce bias; focus on reasoning and evidence	TQS 3, 4 – inclusive assessment; multiple means of expression

7.8 Balanced Assessment Summary

Assessment for learning: pre-assessment probe, group discussions, teacher observation, and feedback.

Assessment as learning: student self-assessment and reflection.

Assessment of learning:

- Summative performance task (comparison plus defence).
- Summative reflection on inclusion and democracy.

Using two summative assessments provides multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate learning and increases reliability.

7.9 Validity, Reliability, and Fairness

- Validity – both summative assessments directly measure curricular outcomes related to democratic principles, inclusion, comparison, and historical understanding.
- Reliability – clear success criteria, aligned rubrics, and multiple summative data points increase consistency and accuracy of evaluation.
- Fairness – flexible formats (written, oral, visual) and normalized accommodations ensure that students are assessed on understanding rather than on language, processing speed, or writing mechanics.

7.10 Marker-Friendly One-Line Justification

This unit assessment plan aligns with the Alberta Teaching Quality Standard and the Inclusive Education Policy by using multiple valid summative measures, universal design principles, and culturally responsive assessment practices to ensure fair and meaningful evaluation of student learning.

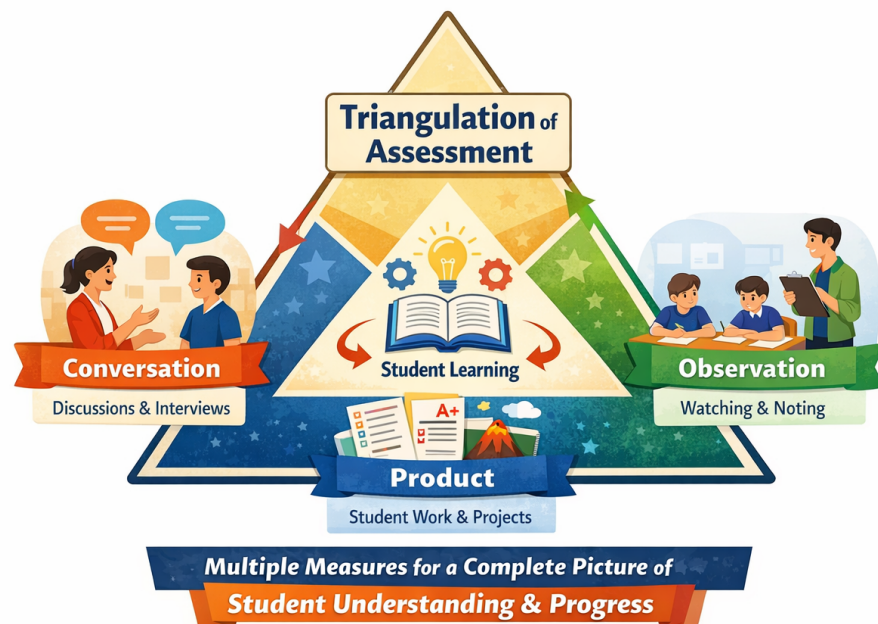


Figure 7.1 | Common assessment rubric used across perspectives, inquiry, and civic action.

FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS

Reflect on the following questions individually or as a study group:

1. Choose one Specific Learning Outcome from §7.2. Which formative tool gives you the most accurate signal of student progress on it?
2. How would you adjust the Unit Assessment Overview Chart if Indigenous perspectives were under-developed in your class so far?
3. Why might a Grade 6 student perform well on Summative 1 but struggle on Summative 2? What would that tell you?

- 4.** How do you communicate the difference between assessment for, as, and of learning to families during a parent-teacher interview?
- 5.** Identify one fairness risk in your current assessment practice. Which UDL principle would help you address it?

Section 8 | Performance Assessment Task and Rubrics

SECTION SUMMARY

Section 8 provides the materials for the summative performance task: comparing Ancient Athens and the Iroquois Confederacy. It includes the student-facing task sheets for Summative 1 and Summative 2, the shared summative rubric, the assessment-evidence map, and a student self-assessment chart. The section closes with sample rubric language teachers can adapt for their own grade books.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After completing this section, the reader will be able to:

1. Hand students a clear, choice-based task sheet for each of the two summative assessments.
2. Apply a shared rubric across written, oral, and visual responses.
3. Use the student self-assessment chart to build metacognition.
4. Distinguish observable behaviours from assessment evidence.

8.1 Performance Assessment Task (Example)

Title: Comparing Democratic Systems — Ancient Athens and the Iroquois Confederacy.

Assignment Details

Democracy did not begin in one place or one time. Different societies developed systems to make decisions, share power, and govern their people. In groups of three (determined by the teacher: drawer, scribe, reader), complete the following.

For this task, you will explore TWO historical democratic systems:

- Ancient Athens.
- The Iroquois Confederacy.

You will compare how these societies practised democracy and think about how their ideas connect to democracy today.

Task Instructions

You will:

- Create a Venn diagram comparing how decisions were made, who could participate, and key democratic ideas (such as voting, consensus, and leadership).
- Include similarities and differences in the correct sections of the diagram.
- Use social studies vocabulary accurately.
- Show respect for Indigenous governance when describing the Iroquois Confederacy.
- Defend your thinking by answering the question below.

Written Response — Defending Your Thinking

On a separate page or below your diagram, answer: What is one important similarity or difference between Ancient Athens and the Iroquois Confederacy, and why does it matter when we think about democracy today?

Observable Student Behaviours

Students can be observed:

- Identifying key democratic features of Ancient Athens (assemblies, voting by citizens).
- Describing governance structures of the Iroquois Confederacy (consensus, the role of clan mothers).
- Comparing similarities and differences between historical models and modern democracy.
- Using respectful language when discussing Indigenous governance systems.
- Recognizing who was included and excluded from participation in different democratic systems.
- Making connections between historical models and present-day Canadian democracy.

Assessment Tools

- Comparison chart or Venn diagram.
- Written paragraph response.
- Group discussion with a rubric.

Observable Behaviours → Assessment Evidence

Observable Behaviour	Assessment Tool	Rubric Criteria
Identifies democratic features of each system	Chart	Accuracy and relevance
Compares similarities and differences	Written response	Depth of comparison
Recognises inclusion / exclusion	Discussion rubric	Critical awareness
Uses respectful language about Indigenous governance	Observation	Respectful and appropriate language

8.2 Shared Summative Rubric (used for both summative tasks)

Important for students: everyone is assessed using the same criteria. You may choose how you show your learning.

Criteria	Beginning	Developing	Proficient	Exemplary
Understanding of Historical Democratic Systems	Shows limited or inaccurate understanding of Ancient Athens or	Shows some correct understanding with minor gaps.	Clearly explains key features of both systems.	Demonstrates deep, accurate understanding with strong detail.

Criteria	Beginning	Developing	Proficient	Exemplary
	the Iroquois Confederacy.			
Comparison and Use of Evidence	Little comparison or unclear evidence.	Some similarities and differences identified with limited evidence.	Clear comparison supported by relevant historical evidence.	Insightful comparison using well-chosen, specific evidence.
Inclusion and Exclusion	Limited explanation of who participated.	Identifies inclusion and exclusion with basic explanation.	Clearly explains who was included or excluded and why it matters.	Thoughtfully analyses how inclusion shapes democracy.
Connection to Democracy Today	Connection is unclear or missing.	Makes a simple connection to today.	Clearly connects historical ideas to modern democracy.	Makes meaningful, well-explained connections to today.
Communication and Respectful Expression	Ideas are unclear or incomplete.	Ideas are mostly clear and respectful.	Ideas are clearly communicated using respectful language.	Ideas are clear, confident, and consistently respectful.

8.3 Student-Facing Task Sheet — Summative 1

Task: Comparing Democratic Systems.

What is this task about?

You will compare Ancient Athens and the Iroquois Confederacy to show how democracy worked in different societies and how those ideas connect to democracy today.

What you need to do

You will complete TWO parts.

Part 1 — Compare the systems. Choose ONE format:

- Venn diagram.
- Chart or graphic organizer.
- Oral explanation (recorded or with the teacher).

Show:

- How decisions were made.
- Who could participate?
- One similarity and one difference.

Part 2 — Defend one idea. Choose ONE way to explain:

- Why one similarity or difference matters for democracy today.

You may explain this by:

- Writing.
- Speaking (live or recorded).
- Creating a visual with an explanation.

How you will be assessed

You will be assessed using the Summative Rubric, which looks at:

- Your understanding of the systems.
- Your comparison and use of evidence.
- How do you explain inclusion and exclusion?
- Your connection to democracy today.
- Clear and respectful communication.

Choice and Support for All Learners

You may:

- Explain ideas orally instead of writing.
- Use assistive technology.
- Use visuals, notes, or cue cards.
- Ask for extra time or breaks.
- Use graphic organizers or sentence starters.

These supports do not lower expectations—they help remove barriers.

8.4 Student-Facing Task Sheet — Summative 2

Task: Reflection — Inclusion and Democracy.

Big question: To what extent does inclusion affect how democratic a system can be? Use Ancient Athens and the Iroquois Confederacy to support your thinking.

What you need to do

Explain:

- Who was included and excluded in each system?
- How inclusion (or exclusion) affected democracy.
- How does this idea connect to democracy today?

Choose how you show your learning

You may choose:

- Short written reflection.
- Oral explanation (recorded or as a conference).
- Visual or multimodal response with explanation.

All options are marked using the same rubric.

Supports and Accommodations

You may:

- ▶ Speak instead of writing.
- ▶ Use visuals or organizers.
- ▶ Use assistive technology.
- ▶ Work in chunks.
- ▶ Ask for clarification or conferencing.

Choose the format that helps you show your best thinking.

8.5 Sample Rubric Language

- Beginning — describes systems with minimal detail.
- Developing — identifies basic similarities and differences.
- Proficient — explains similarities and differences with examples.
- Extending — makes thoughtful connections to modern democracy.

8.6 Student Self-Assessment Chart – Venn Diagram

Name: _____ Date: _____

Learning Area	What I Checked For	Beginning	Developing	Proficient	Extending
Understanding Each Democratic System	I explained how Ancient Athens and the Iroquois Confederacy worked.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	My information is accurate.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	I included enough detail.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comparing Similarities and Differences	I showed similarities between the two systems.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	I showed differences between the two systems.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	I placed information in the correct part of the Venn diagram.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Organisation and Clarity	My diagram is neat and easy to read.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	My ideas are clear and complete.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Respect for Indigenous Perspectives	I used respectful language.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Learning Area	What I Checked For	Beginning	Developing	Proficient	Extending
	I accurately described the Iroquois Confederacy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social Studies Vocabulary	I used social studies words correctly (e.g., democracy, consensus).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Reflection Section

One thing I did well:

One thing I want to improve:

One question I still have:

Why I am self-assessing: self-assessment helps me understand my learning, improve my work, and take responsibility, just like a citizen in a democracy.

8.7 Detailed Assessment Rubric (Example)

Criteria	Excellent	Proficient	Adequate	Limited	Insufficient / Blank
Understanding Democratic Systems	Demonstrates a thorough and accurate understanding of both democratic systems, using detailed examples.	Demonstrates a clear and accurate understanding of both systems.	Demonstrates a basic understanding with some accurate information.	Demonstrates limited or inaccurate understanding of the systems.	No score awarded due to insufficient evidence of learning.
Comparison (Venn Diagram)	Clearly and thoughtfully compares similarities and differences, all placed correctly.	Clearly compares similarities and differences, mostly placed correctly.	Identifies some similarities and differences with minor errors.	Comparison is unclear, incomplete, or incorrectly organised.	No score awarded due to insufficient evidence of learning.

Criteria	Excellent	Proficient	Adequate	Limited	Insufficient / Blank
Use of Social Studies Vocabulary	Uses vocabulary accurately and confidently throughout the task.	Uses appropriate vocabulary correctly.	Uses limited vocabulary, with some errors.	Uses vocabulary incorrectly or very rarely.	—
Respect for Indigenous Perspectives	Demonstrates deep respect and accurate understanding of Indigenous governance.	Demonstrates respectful and accurate descriptions of Indigenous governance.	Shows some respect, but understanding may be surface level.	Demonstrates limited understanding or inappropriate language.	—
Defending the Response	Defends ideas using clear, thoughtful reasoning and strong connections to democracy today.	Defends ideas using clear reasoning and relevant connections.	Defends ideas using simple reasoning.	Defends ideas with unclear or undeveloped reasoning.	—

When work is judged to be limited or insufficient, the teacher will determine appropriate support or intervention to help the student improve.

8.8 Checklist and Rubric – Comparing Democratic Systems (Venn Diagram)

Student: _____ Date: _____

Through this task, the student demonstrated an understanding of:

- Democracy.
- Historical models of government.
- Similarities and differences.
- Indigenous governance.
- Respectful citizenship.

Notes:

TEACHER TIP – Common Rubric Pitfalls

Avoid vague verbs like “shows understanding”. Replace them with observable verbs such as describes, compares, defends, and connects.

Read each rubric criterion aloud to a Grade 6 student before publishing it. If they cannot explain it back to you, simplify the language—not the standard.

★ My Democracy Success Checklist ★

Grade 6 Social Studies — Historical Models of Democracy

I can check off what I understand about democracy!

Understanding Democratic Systems

- I can explain Ancient Athens.
- I can explain the **Iroquois Confederacy**.
- I can use words like **democracy**.

Comparing & Using Evidence

- I can find one **similarity**.
- I can find one **difference**.
- I can use **historical examples**.
- I can explain **why it matters**.

Inclusion & Exclusion

- I can explain who was **included**.
- I can explain who was **excluded**.
- I can explain **why it's important**.

Connecting to Today

- I can connect ideas to **today**.
- I can explain **why it still matters**.

Communication & Respect

- I can share my ideas **clearly**.
- I can use **respectful language**.

Using My Supports

- I can use tools to help me **do my best!**

Supports help me succeed!

I feel...

Confident

Still Working

Need Help

Need Help

Figure 8.1 | Example student handout from the Comparing Democratic Systems performance task.

FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS

Reflect on the following questions individually or as a study group:

1. How might you adapt the Venn diagram task for students whose strongest mode of expression is visual art?

- 2.** Which rubric criterion is most likely to be marked too generously by a tired teacher? How will you guard against drift?
- 3.** If a student submits an excellent oral defence but a weak Venn diagram, what does that pattern tell you about your instruction?
- 4.** Identify one of the bullet items in §8.8 you would expand into a separate sub-criterion for your own grade book.
- 5.** What evidence on the rubric would tell you a student has internalised respect for Indigenous governance, rather than performed it?

Section 9 | Inclusive Design and UDL Accommodations

SECTION SUMMARY

Section 9 organises the inclusive design of the unit into a single resource. Built on the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) framework, it sets out supports for representation, action and expression, and engagement; describes adaptations for specific learner profiles; and aligns every choice with the Alberta Teaching Quality Standard (TQS). The section anchors the whole manual: inclusive assessment is not about lowering expectations—it is about removing barriers that are not part of the learning outcome.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After completing this section, the reader will be able to:

1. Anchor your assessment design in a clear, defensible core principle.
2. Apply UDL principles to representation, action and expression, and engagement.
3. Choose targeted assessment adaptations for specific learner profiles.
4. Defend each adaptation in terms of its impact on validity.
5. Map your lesson and assessment decisions to TQS competencies 1–6.

9.1 Core Principle

Inclusive assessment is not about lowering expectations—it is about removing barriers that are not part of the learning outcome. Students should be assessed on what they know and understand, not on their disability, processing style, or physical access needs.

This framing aligns with:

- Universal Design for Learning (UDL).
- The Alberta Inclusive Education Policy.
- Teaching Quality Standard competencies 3, 4, and 5.
- EDUC 3604 assessment validity language.

9.2 Universal Design for Assessment (Baseline for All Students)

Before any individual adaptations are added, the assessment plan already uses UDL-based design. This means many students are supported by default, without requiring individual accommodations:

- Multiple ways to demonstrate learning (written, oral, visual, multimodal).
- Flexible timing where appropriate.
- Rubrics focused on conceptual understanding, not mechanics.
- Choice-based summative formats.

9.3 UDL Framework — Three Domains

Accessing the Content (Representation)

Neurodivergent learners (ADHD, ASD, dyslexia):

- Provide visual comparison templates (pre-labelled Venn diagram with icons).
- Use colour-coding: blue for Ancient Athens, green for the Iroquois Confederacy, purple for similarities.
- Offer chunked information cards instead of full paragraphs.
- Allow audio versions of background information (teacher-read or text-to-speech).
- Provide key vocabulary cards with the word, a simple definition, and a visual symbol.

Second-language learners (ELL / ESL):

- Provide sentence frames such as “One similarity between these systems is...” and “A key difference is... because...”.
- Offer bilingual dictionaries or translation tools.
- Use visuals and diagrams before text-heavy explanations.
- Allow oral explanations instead of full written paragraphs.

Blind or low-vision learners:

- Provide screen-reader compatible digital files.
- Use high-contrast text.
- Provide a tactile Venn diagram (raised lines, string, or textured shapes).
- Allow audio-recorded responses instead of written diagrams.

Deaf or hard-of-hearing learners:

- Provide written instructions for all tasks and visual discussion prompts.
- Allow written or drawn contributions during group work.
- Use captioned videos or teacher notes instead of oral instruction.

Expressing Understanding (Action and Expression)

Students may demonstrate understanding by choosing one of the following teacher-approved formats:

- Traditional Venn diagram.
- Digital Venn diagram (Google Slides or Docs).
- Oral explanation (recorded or live).
- Visual poster or concept map.
- Point-form comparison chart.
- Teacher-guided scribe support.

Assessment focuses on understanding—not on handwriting, spelling, or speed.

Grouping and Roles (Engagement)

Strength-based group roles support engagement. Roles are flexible and can rotate:

- Reader / Listener — accesses text or audio.
- Speaker / Explainer — shares ideas verbally.
- Organizer / Visual Thinker — places information in the diagram.
- Timekeeper / Regulator — helps with pacing and breaks.

This structure supports:

- ADHD (movement, purpose).
- ASD (clear expectations).

- Physical disabilities (seated roles are valued equally).

Physical Accessibility

Students using wheelchairs or with mobility needs:

- All materials are available at desk height.
- No requirement to move around the room.
- Digital alternatives are available for any physical task.
- Group work is structured so that no role requires movement.

Assessment Accommodations (Fair, Not Easier)

Assessment adjustments:

- Extended time where needed.
- Reduced writing load without reducing thinking.
- Oral assessment options.
- Visual or point-form responses are accepted.
- Assistive technology is permitted (speech-to-text, text-to-speech).

Rubric interpretation:

Rubric criteria are applied based on conceptual understanding, respectful language, and accuracy of ideas—not spelling, handwriting, or verbal fluency, unless these are explicitly taught.

Emotional and Sensory Regulation Supports

- Quiet workspace option.
- Noise-reducing headphones.
- Visual timer.
- Option to take brief regulation breaks.
- Clear task checklist to reduce anxiety.

Student Self-Assessment (Inclusive Adjustment)

Students may:

- Self-assess orally with the teacher.
- Use icons or emojis instead of written reflections.
- Record a short audio reflection answering: “One thing I learned...” and “One thing I am proud of...”.

KEYNOTE — Teacher Rationale — Why This Matters

These accommodations ensure that all students can access democratic thinking, mirroring the lesson’s core message: democracy depends on inclusion, voice, and equitable participation. The lesson itself models democratic values by honouring multiple ways of knowing, communicating, and participating.

9.4 Targeted Assessment Adaptations by Learner Profile

Neurodivergent Learners (ADHD, Dyslexia, Autism, Processing Differences)

Assessment adaptations:

- Oral responses or recorded explanations instead of written-only tasks.
- Reduced written output without reducing conceptual depth.
- Visual organizers (Venn diagrams, charts, icons).
- Chunked tasks with clear success criteria.
- Extended time or flexible completion windows.
- Rubrics shared in advance to reduce anxiety and support planning.

Why this maintains validity: outcomes assess understanding of democracy, not reading speed or executive functioning. Evidence remains aligned with the SLOs.

Blind or Visually Impaired Students

Assessment adaptations:

- Oral assessment or teacher-student conference.
- Screen-reader compatible digital materials.
- Audio-recorded responses.
- Tactile or verbal descriptions in place of visual diagrams.
- Alternative to Venn diagrams—for example, a verbal comparison or structured audio response.

Why this maintains validity: visual representation is not an outcome; conceptual comparison and reasoning remain intact.

Physically Impaired / Mobility or Fine-Motor Challenges

Assessment adaptations:

- Speech-to-text tools.
- Oral presentations instead of handwritten tasks.
- Use of assistive technology.
- Reduced handwriting demands.
- Option to demonstrate learning through discussion or digital formats.

Why this maintains validity: the assessment focuses on thinking and reasoning; physical output demands are not conflated with learning.

English Language Learners (ELL)

Assessment adaptations:

- Oral responses or bilingual explanations where appropriate.
- Visual supports and word banks.
- Reduced emphasis on grammar and mechanics.
- Use of the first language to clarify ideas (where permitted).
- Teacher prompts during oral assessment.

Why this maintains validity: Content understanding is separated from language proficiency. Outcomes still align with social studies expectations.

Anxiety, Trauma-Affected, or Emotionally Vulnerable Learners

Assessment adaptations:

- Choice in assessment format.
- Private conferences instead of public presentations.

- Predictable assessment structure.
- Clear timelines and expectations.
- Opportunity to revise or clarify responses.

Why this maintains validity: emotional regulation is not part of the assessed outcomes; students can demonstrate understanding in psychologically safe ways.

9.5 Teacher-Only Accommodation Table (with TQS Alignment)

For professional use only; not student-facing.

Guiding principle: Accommodations remove barriers to access and expression while maintaining consistent learning outcomes and assessment criteria.

Learner Need / Profile	Potential Barriers	Approved Accommodations	TQS Alignment	Validity & Fairness Rationale
Neurodivergent (ADHD, Dyslexia, Autism)	Sustained writing, time pressure, executive-function demands, text-heavy tasks.	Oral or recorded responses; visual organisers; chunked tasks with checkpoints; extended or flexible time; rubrics shared in advance.	TQS 3 – Inclusive Learning Environments; TQS 4 – Assessment.	Outcomes assess conceptual understanding of democracy, not processing speed or written output.
Blind / Visually Impaired	Visual diagrams, printed text, spatial representations.	Oral assessment or teacher conference; screen-reader compatible digital tasks; audio-recorded responses; verbal comparison in place of Venn.	TQS 3; TQS 4.	Visual representation is not an outcome; conceptual comparison remains intact.
Low Vision	Small text, visual clutter, dense graphics.	Enlarged print or digital zoom; high-contrast materials; simplified layouts; oral explanation option.	TQS 3.	Supports access while maintaining assessment expectations.
Physically Impaired / Fine-Motor Challenges	Handwriting demands, physical endurance, diagram construction.	Speech-to-text; typing or oral responses; reduced handwriting; alternative formats for diagrams.	TQS 3; TQS 4.	Physical production is not conflated with cognitive understanding.
English Language Learners (ELL)	Academic vocabulary, written syntax, expressive language.	Oral explanations; visual supports and word banks; reduced emphasis on grammar / mechanics;	TQS 3; TQS 4.	Content knowledge is assessed separately from language proficiency.

Learner Need / Profile	Potential Barriers	Approved Accommodations	TQS Alignment	Validity & Fairness Rationale
		clarifying prompts during oral assessment.		
Anxiety, Trauma-Impacted, Emotionally Vulnerable	Public presentation, unpredictability, time pressure.	Choice of format; private conference instead of presentation; predictable structure; opportunity to revise or clarify.	TQS 3; TQS 1.	Emotional regulation is not part of the assessed outcomes.
Gifted / Advanced Learners	Limited challenge, restricted depth.	Optional extension questions; deeper ethical or comparative analysis; leadership roles in discussion.	TQS 3; TQS 2.	Extension enhances depth without changing core criteria.
Temporary Barriers (injury, illness, family stress)	Missed time, fatigue, reduced output.	Flexible deadlines; alternative assessment timing; reduced volume with maintained rigour.	TQS 4; TQS 1.	Ensures equity while maintaining consistent expectations.

Implementation Notes (Teacher Use)

- All students are assessed using the same rubric criteria; accommodations adjust access and expression, not expectations.
- Accommodations are normalised and offered discreetly to preserve student dignity.
- Decisions are guided by professional judgement, student need, and available documentation.
- Effectiveness of accommodations is reviewed and adjusted as needed.

Assessment accommodations align with TQS expectations by removing barriers to access while maintaining valid, reliable, and outcome-aligned evaluation for all learners.

9.6 Alberta Teaching Quality Standard (TQS) Alignment Table

TQS Competency	TQS Indicator (plain language)	Lesson Evidence (what the teacher does)	Inclusive Education Alignment
TQS 1 – Fostering Effective Relationships	Builds inclusive, respectful learning environments	Establishes strength-based group roles (reader, organiser, speaker, regulator); explicitly teaches respectful language when	Promotes belonging and dignity; supports emotional safety for neurodivergent and

TQS Competency	TQS Indicator (plain language)	Lesson Evidence (what the teacher does)	Inclusive Education Alignment
	where students feel safe and valued.	discussing Indigenous governance; provides emotional regulation supports (quiet space, visual timers, breaks).	trauma-affected learners.
TQS 2 — Engaging in Career-Long Learning	Reflects on and applies inclusive, research-based instructional practices.	Designs lessons using UDL and DI principles; adjusts assessment to focus on conceptual understanding rather than output mode; embeds student self-assessment and reflection.	Removes barriers to learning; recognises diversity as a strength rather than a deficit.
TQS 3 — Demonstrating a Professional Body of Knowledge	Applies pedagogical knowledge to support diverse learners.	Uses multiple representations (visual, oral, tactile, digital); provides vocabulary supports, sentence frames, and exemplars for ELLs; allows assistive technology (speech-to-text, text-to-speech).	Ensures equitable access for learners with language, sensory, or processing differences.
TQS 4 — Establishing Inclusive Learning Environments	Responds to learner diversity through flexible instruction and assessment.	Offers multiple ways to demonstrate learning (Venn diagram, oral explanation, visual map, digital product); provides extended time and reduced writing load where appropriate; ensures physical accessibility for wheelchair users.	Aligns with Inclusive Education Policy: access, participation, and success for all learners.
TQS 5 — Applying Foundational Knowledge about First Nations, Métis, and Inuit	Supports respectful, accurate inclusion of Indigenous perspectives.	Presents the Iroquois Confederacy as a legitimate democratic system; assesses respectful Indigenous language as a criterion; guides students to examine inclusion and exclusion across systems.	Supports culturally responsive pedagogy and reconciliation-aligned teaching.
TQS 6 — Adhering to Legal Frameworks and Policies	Upholds provincial legislation, policy, and ethical responsibilities.	Provides reasonable accommodations without lowering learning expectations; uses fair assessment practices aligned to outcomes; normalises accommodations and assistive tools.	Meets the Alberta Inclusive Education Policy and human-rights-based education requirements.

This lesson meets Alberta Teaching Quality Standard expectations by embedding inclusive design, equitable assessment practices, and culturally responsive pedagogy that ensure all students can meaningfully engage with democratic concepts.

TEACHER TIP — Make Accommodations Quiet

Whenever possible, offer accommodations to the whole class as choices, not to individual students as exceptions. A student who can choose to type instead of write does not have to be singled out as the “one who needs help.”

FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS

Reflect on the following questions individually or as a study group:

- 1.** Choose one of the learner profiles in §9.4. Draft a one-line script you could use to offer the accommodation without singling the student out.
- 2.** Which TQS competency in §9.6 do you feel least confident about, and what is one resource that could strengthen your practice?
- 3.** How could you teach Grade 6 students about UDL—so they understand why their classmates may be working in different formats?
- 4.** If a parent challenges an accommodation as “unfair”, how would you respond using the core principle in §9.1?
- 5.** Which accommodation would you keep even if it took more time, because it raises the quality of your assessment evidence?

Section 10 | Summative Test and Blueprint

SECTION SUMMARY

Section 10 presents the Summative Written Test for Historical Models of Democracy, along with the blueprint that maps each item to the Specific Learning Outcomes and to Bloom's Taxonomy. The section provides a complete student version, an answer key, and notes on validity, fairness, and accommodations. It demonstrates how a single 45-minute test can give multiple, defensible measures of student learning.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After completing this section, the reader will be able to:

1. Build a test blueprint that distributes items across SLOs and cognitive levels.
2. Write multiple-choice, true/false, matching, and constructed-response items aligned to outcomes.
3. Provide an answer key with marking guidelines for constructed responses.
4. Apply UDL principles to whole-test design and item-by-item accommodations.
5. Justify the validity, reliability, and fairness of the test to colleagues or families.

10.1 Test Overview (Student Version)

Grade 6 Social Studies — Historical Models of Democracy.

Time: 45 minutes | Total marks: 20.

Student instructions:

- Read each question carefully.
- Answer all questions.
- Choose the best answer for multiple-choice questions.
- Use complete sentences for written responses.
- Approved accommodations may be used as needed.

10.2 Test Blueprint

Selected Program of Studies outcomes:

- SLO 1 — Examine how Ancient Athens demonstrated democratic principles (assemblies, voting, citizenship).
- SLO 2 — Describe governance structures of the Iroquois Confederacy (consensus decision-making, the role of clan mothers).
- SLO 3 — Compare historical democratic systems and analyze inclusion and exclusion.
- SLO 4 — Connect historical democratic models to modern Canadian democracy.

Taxonomy: Bloom's Taxonomy (Remember, Understand, Apply, Analyze).

Q#	SLO	Question Type	Bloom's Level	Points
1	SLO 1	Multiple Choice	Remember	1

Q#	SLO	Question Type	Bloom's Level	Points
2	SLO 2	Multiple Choice	Understand	1
3	SLO 3	Multiple Choice	Analyse	1
4	SLO 4	Multiple Choice	Apply	1
5	SLO 1	True / False	Understand	1
6	SLO 3	True / False	Understand	1
7	SLO 2	Matching	Remember	2
8	SLO 4	Matching	Understand	2
9	SLO 3	Constructed Response (Short)	Analyse	3
10	SLO 4	Constructed Response (Paragraph)	Analyse	6

Total questions: 10 | Total points: 20.

10.3 Summative Test – Student Version

Section A – Multiple Choice (1 mark each)

Circle the answer that applies.

1. Which feature best shows how democracy worked in Ancient Athens?

- A. Decisions were made by a king.
- B. Citizens voted in assemblies.
- C. Clan mothers chose leaders.
- D. Everyone living in Athens could vote.

2. What was an important part of governance in the Iroquois Confederacy?

- A. Voting by all citizens.
- B. Rule by one leader.
- C. Consensus decision-making.
- D. Military control.

3. Which statement best compares Ancient Athens and the Iroquois Confederacy?

- A. Both allowed all people to participate equally.
- B. Both used consensus decision-making.
- C. Both had rules about who could participate.
- D. Both systems were the same as modern democracy.

4. Which idea from historical democracy is most clearly reflected in Canadian democracy today?

- A. Exclusion of women.
- B. Decision-making through discussion and voting.
- C. Rule by elders only.
- D. Leadership based on family status.

Section B – True / False (1 mark each)

Check the box that applies.

5. In Ancient Athens, women and enslaved people could vote. True False
6. The Iroquois Confederacy valued cooperation and long-term thinking. True False

Section C – Matching (4 marks total)

7. Match each democratic feature to the correct system (check the boxes that apply).

Feature	Ancient Athens	Iroquois Confederacy
A. Clan mothers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B. Assembly voting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. Match each term to its meaning (check the boxes that apply).

Term	Meaning
A. Democracy	People share power.
B. Consensus	Group agreement.

Section D – Constructed Response

9. Short answer (3 marks).

Describe one way participation was limited in either Ancient Athens or the Iroquois Confederacy and explain its significance (three to four sentences).

10. Paragraph response (6 marks).

Choose one important similarity or difference between Ancient Athens and the Iroquois Confederacy. Explain why this matters when we think about democracy in Canada today (six to seven sentences).

Bonus Question (1.5 marks)

An additional half-mark will be awarded for each thoughtful response. Please write in full sentences.

Question: Tell me one thing that you learned from this unit and its significance to you, personally (three to four sentences).

10.4 Teacher Notes – Validity and Fair Assessment

- Outcomes are assessed multiple times using varied formats.
- Cognitive demand increases progressively across the test.
- Accommodations support access without altering expectations.

Summary: This assessment demonstrates valid, reliable, and inclusive assessment practices aligned with the Alberta curriculum and the Teaching Quality Standard.

10.5 Answer Key (Teacher Use Only)

Section A – Multiple Choice

- ▶ B – Citizens voted in assemblies.
- ▶ C – Consensus decision-making.
- ▶ C – Both had rules about who could participate.
- ▶ B – Decision-making through discussion and voting.

Section B – True / False

5. False – Women and enslaved people were excluded from voting in Ancient Athens.
6. True – Cooperation and long-term thinking were central to Iroquois governance.

Section C – Matching

7. Democratic Features → System:

- A. Clan mothers → Iroquois Confederacy.
- B. Assembly voting → Ancient Athens.

8. Terms → Meanings:

- A. Democracy → People share power.
- B. Consensus → Group agreement.

Section D — Constructed Response (Suggested Criteria)

9. Short answer (3 marks). Acceptable responses may include:

- In Ancient Athens, women, enslaved people, and non-citizens were excluded from participation.
- In the Iroquois Confederacy, participation depended on clan roles and consensus rather than individual voting.

Marking guideline:

- 1 mark — identifies a valid limitation.
- 1 mark — accurate historical reference.
- 1 mark — clear explanation.

10. Paragraph response (6 marks).

Responses should identify one similarity or difference between the two systems and explain its relevance to Canadian democracy today.

Marking guideline:

- 2 marks — accurate identification of similarity or difference.
- 2 marks — explanation using historical examples.
- 2 marks — connection to modern Canadian democracy.

KEYNOTE — Guiding Principle for All Accommodations

Accommodations change how students show learning, not what they are expected to know. The learning outcomes, cognitive demand, and scoring criteria remain the same. This aligns with UDL, the Alberta Teaching Quality Standard (TQS 3 and 4), and fair, valid assessment practice.

10.6 Whole-Test Design Adjustments (Universal Supports)

These supports are built into the test by default, not added later.

Layout and Organization

- Grouping questions by type (MC → T/F → Matching → Constructed Response) reduces task-switching and supports working memory and executive functioning.
- Clear section headers and consistent formatting.
- One idea per question; uncluttered visuals.

Instructions

- Short, direct instructions at the top of each section.
- Vocabulary kept consistent with classroom instruction.
- Key verbs (describe, explain, choose) have already been practised in class.

Why this matters: supports students with ADHD, ASD, learning disabilities, anxiety, and English Language Learners—without singling anyone out.

10.7 Item-Type Accommodations

Multiple Choice and True / False

Access supports:

- Oral read-aloud (teacher, EA, or text-to-speech).
- Digital version with screen-reader compatibility.
- Extra spacing between options for visual clarity.

Cognitive supports:

- Distractors are plausible but not tricky.
- No double negatives.
- One correct answer that clearly matches the outcome.

Outcome integrity is unchanged; what is adjusted is sensory and processing load.

Matching

Flexible response options — students may:

- Draw lines.
- Circle answers.
- State answers orally.
- Type responses in a digital version.

Structural support:

- Limited number of matches per item.
- Parallel structure (feature → system).

Why this matters: supports students with fine-motor challenges, dysgraphia, or visual processing difficulties—without reducing rigour.

Constructed Response

Options for expression (UDL: Action and Expression). Students may:

- Write by hand.
- Type responses.
- Dictate orally (teacher, EA, or voice-to-text).
- Use speech-to-text software.

Supports allowed:

- Sentence starters (optional, not mandatory). Example: “One way participation was limited was...”
- A graphic organizer is used before writing.
- No penalty for spelling or handwriting (unless language conventions are explicitly the outcome—which they are not here).

Time and environment:

- Extended time if needed.
- Quiet testing space or movement breaks.

Assessment focus remains on historical understanding and democratic reasoning. Removed barriers: language mechanics, processing speed, motor output.

10.8 Supports for Specific Learner Groups

English Language Learners

Linguistic supports:

- Simplified sentence structures (already embedded).
- Clarified vocabulary (democracy, consensus, participation).
- Bilingual dictionary or approved translation tools.
- Oral explanation of instructions (not content).

Important distinction: understanding of democracy is assessed—not English fluency.

Students with Sensory or Physical Needs

Visual supports:

- Large-print version.
- High-contrast formatting.
- Digital zoom options.

Physical and mobility supports:

- Digital completion.
- Scribe support.
- Flexible seating.

Equity lens: students demonstrate thinking, not physical endurance.

Teacher note: this assessment was designed using Universal Design for Learning principles to proactively remove barriers while maintaining curricular rigour. Accommodations such as alternative response modes, assistive technology, extended time, and environmental supports allow students to demonstrate their understanding of democratic concepts without altering learning outcomes or performance criteria. These adjustments support equity, validity, and reliability by ensuring the assessment measures students' conceptual understanding rather than extraneous factors such as processing speed, language proficiency, or physical access.

FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS

Reflect on the following questions individually or as a study group:

1. Reread the blueprint in §10.2. Which Bloom's level is under-represented, and what would you add to balance it?
2. Draft a written rationale you could send to a parent who feels the matching items are too easy.
3. Choose one accommodation in §10.7. Sketch the language you would use to offer it to the whole class.
4. What evidence on Question 10 would tell you a student has internalised respect for Indigenous governance, rather than performed it?
5. If a class average on this test were very high, what would your next instructional move be?

Glossary

The following terms appear throughout the manual and are defined here to support consistent use in classrooms, parent-teacher conferences, and professional learning.

Assessment as learning — A formative process in which the student is the primary assessor; the goal is to build metacognition and learner agency.

Assessment for learning — A diagnostic and feedback-oriented use of assessment to inform teaching and adjust instruction during a unit.

Assessment of learning — A summative use of assessment that evaluates what students have learned at the end of a unit, course, or year.

Authority (decision-making) — A model in which decisions are made by a single individual or office; fast, but with limited public input.

Bloom's Taxonomy — A framework that orders cognitive demand from Remember and Understand to Analyse, Evaluate, and Create.

Cabinet (classroom) — A small group of students appointed by an elected Classroom President to share leadership during a community action project.

Citizenship — An evolving practice of belonging to and participating in a community; in this manual, citizenship is treated as something students do, not just something they study.

Civic action — Actions taken by citizens—voting, advocacy, community projects—to influence public life.

Civic literacy — The knowledge and skills needed to participate effectively in democratic life.

Clan mother — A female leader in the Iroquois Confederacy with responsibilities including the nomination, observation, and (if necessary) removal of chiefs.

Consensus — A decision-making model that seeks the agreement of all participants rather than a simple majority.

Constructed response — A test item type that requires students to write or produce their own answer rather than choose from options.

Curriculum — The planned learning experiences and outcomes set out by a jurisdiction—in this case, the Alberta Program of Studies.

Democracy — A system of government in which power is shared among citizens, typically through participation, voting, or consensus.

Distractor — An incorrect answer option in a multiple-choice question that is plausible but not correct.

Enduring understanding — A long-lasting insight that students are expected to retain after a unit ends.

Equity — Fairness in access, participation, and outcomes; not the same as equality.

Essential question — An open, intellectually engaging question that frames inquiry across a unit.

Ethical reasoning — The skill of weighing values, rights, and consequences to make defensible decisions.

Exit slip — A short, end-of-class formative assessment used to capture student thinking before transition.

Formative assessment — Assessment that informs teaching while learning is still happening.

Front matter — The introductory portion of the Alberta Program of Studies that sets out big-idea commitments such as citizenship and identity.

General Learning Outcome (GLO) — A broad statement of learning expectations for a strand of the curriculum.

Inclusion — Designing learning so that every student has meaningful access to the content and to the community of learners.

Inquiry — An approach in which questions, evidence-gathering, and reasoning drive learning.

Iroquois Confederacy — Also known as the Haudenosaunee Confederacy; a long-standing Indigenous democratic system rooted in consensus and the Great Law of Peace.

KUSPs — Knowledge, Understanding, and Skills Procedures—the Alberta framework that names what students should know, understand, and be able to do.

Majority rule — A decision-making process in which the option with more than half of the votes wins.

Metacognition — Thinking about one's own thinking; a key habit of mind in assessment as learning.

Performance task — An assessment in which students apply knowledge and skills to produce evidence of learning—often a project, product, or demonstration.

Pluralism — The view that a healthy society includes—and is strengthened by—many cultures, languages, and worldviews.

Power reflection — A prompt that invites students to make visible how power is distributed in a decision.

Pre-assessment — Assessment that surfaces prior knowledge and misconceptions before instruction begins.

Representation (decision-making) — A model in which a chosen representative makes decisions on behalf of a group.

Rubric — A scoring guide that describes levels of performance against criteria.

Specific Learning Outcome (SLO) — A precise statement of what a student is expected to learn within a General Learning Outcome.

Summative assessment — Assessment used to evaluate learning at the end of a unit or period.

Teaching Quality Standard (TQS) — The Alberta standard that describes the competencies expected of teachers.

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) — An instructional and assessment framework that builds in multiple means of representation, action and expression, and engagement from the start.

Validity (assessment) — The extent to which an assessment measures what it is intended to measure.

Voice (citizenship) — The opportunity—and capacity—for a person to be heard and to influence decisions that affect them.

Voting — A decision-making process in which each participant indicates a preference and the option with the most support wins.

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