

HOSTING CONVERSATIONS ABOUT ELECTIONS

Youth, newcomers, and individuals with low incomes often don't participate in elections, despite having the right to vote. It doesn't have to be this way.

Here are three quick and simple activities to help spark group discussions about voting. (We also have a similar handout you can share with others).



1) DOES EVERY VOTE REALLY COUNT?

Many people don't vote because they believe their vote won't make a difference. In reality, elections are often decided by incredibly slim margins. Try this activity to show participants just how impactful their vote can be.

Ask participants: Guess how often do you think federal ridings are decided by a margin of 4% or less? Write their guesses on a board or flip chart.

Then, give folks the good news. In the last federal election, more than half a dozen federal ridings in the GTA were decided by a margin of 4% or less, showing just how close elections can get and how every vote truly matters.

2) WHY SHOULD YOU CARE ABOUT FEDERAL ELECTIONS?

People are often unaware of how much federal government decisions impact their daily lives.

Begin by reminding participants about the three government levels: Federal, Provincial, and Municipal.

Then, ask: who they believe is responsible for providing the following services:

- Immigration and Citizenship
- Affordable Housing
- Indigenous Services
- Federal Taxes and Budget
- National Defence
- Climate Policy
- Foreign Policy
- Policing and Public Safety



After each service, clarify that it is the Federal government's responsibility. Encourage folks to shout "Federal!" together after each answer. Voting in elections means you make an impact on the quality of services for you, your family, and your neighbours.

3) HOW EASY IS IT TO VOTE?

Take a short pop quiz to find out what people know about the voting process and how easy it is to vote.



1) How long does Elections Canada say it takes to vote in an election?

- a) Under 5 minutes b) Under 15 minutes c) About 30 minutes d) More than an hour

Answer: A - On average, it takes about 5 minutes to wait and fill out the ballot.

2) What percentage of people found it easy to vote according to the Elections Canada study?

- a) 50% b) 75% c) 90% d) 98%

Answer: D - More than 80% found it very easy.

3) What else do you need to vote for besides being over 18 and a Canadian citizen?

- a) Be on the voter's list b) Have a voting card c) Have a government ID
d) Have anything that shows your name and address in Canada.

Answer: D - Being on the voter's list and having a voting card is not mandatory. To vote, you can show any document issued by the government or a corporation that shows your address. A piece of mail, a credit card statement, a mortgage or rental agreement, an insurance statement, or a utility bill.



List of Accepted IDs

4) When are you able to cast a ballot in the next election?

- a) Election day on April 28th from 9 AM - 9 PM
b) During advance polls on April 18th, 19th, 20th, and 21st, from 9 AM to 9 PM EST.
c) By mail, if you register by April 22nd by 6 PM EST
d) All of the above

Answer: D - Voters have many choices about when to vote.



5) Where are you able to cast a ballot in the next election?

- a) Designated polling place on election day April 28th, from 9 AM - 9 PM EST.
b) Designated polling place on advance polls on April 18th, 19th, 20th, and 21st, from 9 AM to 9 PM EST.
c) By mail, if you register by April 22nd by 6 PM EST
d) All of the above

Answer: D - Voters have many choices about where to vote.

For more information or any help, email info@communitymetamorphosis.ca