

Answer Key: Comparing Canadian and American Systems of Government

How are they the same?

- Democratic, federal states
- Similar cultures

How are they different?

Canada	With regard to...	United States
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written (Canadian and British statutes) • Unwritten (traditions, customs, conventions) 	Constitution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One written document
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two official languages (French and English) 	Languages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One language (English)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Queen (represented by Governor General) is head of state • Prime Minister is head of government 	Head of State / Head of Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • President is both head of state and head of government
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elections every 5 years • No limit to how long person can be Prime Minister 	Elections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • President can only be elected to a maximum of 2 terms
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appointed by Governor General • Serve until age 75 	Senators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elected for fixed terms
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prime Minister needs the support of the House of Commons in order to maintain power 	Support of the House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • President and Congress may disagree but President remains in power until end of term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decentralization—broadened powers of provinces and narrowed power of federal government 	Division of Powers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centralization—broadened federal power and narrowed powers of states