

**Date Reviewed**

February 2023

**Course**

[Social Studies 2](#)

**Topic**

Leaders in our Community

**Big Idea**

Canada is made up of many diverse regions and communities.

**Essential Question**

- How are decisions made in your community?

**Content**

*Students are expected to know the following:*

- roles and responsibilities of regional governments

**Curricular Competencies**

*Students are expected to be able to do the following:*

- Use Social Studies inquiry processes and skills to ask questions; gather, interpret, and analyze ideas; and communicate findings and decisions

**Core Competencies**

[Communication](#) - I can contribute during group activities, cooperate with others, and listen respectfully to their ideas about a community issue.

[Thinking](#) - I can reflect on my work and experiences and tell others something I learned about local government.

[Personal and Social](#) - I contribute to group activities that make my classroom, school, community, or natural world a better place.

## First People's Principles of Learning

Learning involves generational roles and responsibilities.

### Introduction

- Read the book *Swimmy* by Leo Lionni or watch the [video](#).
- Ask:
  - How did Swimmy and his friends learn to outsmart the big fish? (Cooperation)
  - Why is cooperation important? (If everyone works together, they can accomplish more. Cooperation can make the difference between success and failure because some goals can only be achieved through teamwork.)

### Pre-Assessment

- Tell the students that they are going to learn more about cooperation by finding out how a local government works.
- Create a KWL chart with the word “local government” at the top. Review what these words mean. Ask students what they KNOW about this topic. Record their ideas on the chart. (Keep the chart for reference. The class will add to the other two sections as the lesson progresses.)

### Interactive Learning Activities

#### Part 1: Many People Help to Run a School

- Tell the students that running a city is a little bit like running a school. It takes many people to make sure that the school runs smoothly and that students and staff are safe and happy.
- Distribute plain paper. Tell the students they will be creating a web. Have them turn their paper to landscape orientation and write the name of their school at the top. (As the teacher guides the students to create their own web, the teacher will be creating an anchor chart of this web as well.)
- Ask: Who is in charge at the school? Have the students write the name of the principal or head teacher at the top of the page below the name of your school. Tell them to draw a circle around the name. Discuss the many responsibilities of the principal.
- Guide them as they draw 4 lines down from the principal circle.
- Now ask: Who is responsible for the students? Who helps keep the school clean? Who keeps records and answers the phone? What other jobs or people are necessary to make school safe, productive and fun? Record the students' answers as parts of the web. The students will add the names of as many people as they can. Guide them to draw circles around each name: Teachers, custodians, office staff, EA's, etc. Below each of these, brainstorm the roles or responsibilities of each of these people and add them as extensions of the web (eg. Teachers: create lessons, teach the students, coach teams. Custodians: move furniture, mop and sweep the floors, change the paper towels. etc.)
- Ask: Who have we forgotten to add to the web? (The students!) Students have responsibilities in the school as well. Have the children tell some of their responsibilities: arrive on time, be prepared, listen, participate in lessons and activities, follow the school rules.

- Collect and save these papers for the next lesson.
- Watch the video [Local Government in British Columbia](#) from the beginning until the 1:08 mark. (This explains a little about municipal governments.)
- After watching the video, go back to the original KWL chart. Now that they know how a school is organized, ask the students to extend this same framework to a city. Have them add some questions to the WONDER section. (These might include: What does a mayor do? How do councils make decisions? etc.)

## Part 2: Organization of Local Government

- Review the web the students created about their school. Remind students that the principal is in charge of overseeing the school and the care and safety of the students, but they need many other helpers or assistants to make sure all the jobs get done and the school is a fun and safe place to learn.
- Using a [Think Pair Share](#) strategy ask: How do you think running a city might be like running a school? Remind students to think about the story of Swimmy. (Many people need to cooperate together)
- Ask: Who is the person in charge of your city or town? The students may or may not remember that this person is the mayor.
- Redistribute the school webs from the last lesson. Have students turn the paper over and write the name of your city at the top of the paper (like they did the name of their school). Now, add the word “mayor” underneath the town name. If they know the name of their current mayor, they could add this. Draw a circle around the mayor’s name. (As the students complete this new web, the teacher also creates one as an anchor chart.)
- Tell the students that, like the principal of the school, the mayor of the city has a team of people to help them. The students may or may not remember the word “city council” or “councillor” from the video. Explain that the mayor is the head of the council, and the mayor and councillors are the elected officials who are in charge of making the city safe and a good place to live.
- Have students continue the web by adding the word “city council” below the mayor circle. Draw a circle around these words as well.
- Ask: What is the city council in charge of? To help the students along, review the needs of people in a community. (Food, shelter, communication, transportation, water, services such as police/fire/ambulance, etc) Explain that many of these are part of the mandate of the local government.
- Ask: Do you think the mayor could manage to meet the needs of all the members of the community on their own? (No, they need the councillors and many staff—workers—to help manage them.)
- Project some photos or images for the students to view (a fire truck or police car (Keeping the city safe) , a library (loans books but also hosts events) , a sidewalk (engineering department is in charge of water, sewers, trails and sidewalks), a park (the parks department mows the grass and plants the flowers, etc) , a garbage or recycling truck (garbage trucks take trash and

recycling away), a skateboard park or tennis court (recreation centers are built and maintained), a construction site (the planning department designs the community to provide a balance of nature and housing), a parade (fun community events are hosted by the city), a no parking sign (By-law officers make sure citizens are following the rules), a tax bill (the finance department collects taxes and pays for all the services the city provides)

- Talk about the services or areas of responsibility represented by each picture.
- Put the students in teams of 3 or 4. Assign each group one of the pictures. Give them 5 minutes (or an appropriate amount of time) to discuss with their group members why these services are important to them. When the time is up, have each group tell their ideas to the rest of the class.
- Add the names of the departments or areas underneath the city council bubble on the web or alternatively have the students draw small pictures to show a book for the library and a trash can for the garbage collectors etc.
- Record these on a chart with two columns. In the first column, record the service. In the second, larger column, record the students' ideas as to why they are important. Eg: (SERVICE) Garbage and recycling collection (REASONS) people need a way to get rid of their trash so they don't leave it lying around as this would make the city smelly and dirty, recycling is important for the environment, having trash lying around would encourage pests such as bugs or rats, people want the city to be safe and having huge mountains of garbage could be dangerous, etc. If any other students not from that group have further ideas, add them as well.

### Part 3: Responsibilities of Citizens

- Review the city chart from yesterday. Just like students in a school have to act responsibly, citizens in a city do, too. Being on time for school and following the rules of the playground are called “personal responsibilities. The responsibilities of a citizen are called “civic responsibilities”.
- Ask: Can you use the chart to help you come up with some civic responsibilities?
- Try to lead the students to the following four civic responsibilities:
  1. to vote for the mayor and the councillors in an election
  2. to follow the rules and laws of the community
  3. to pay taxes
  4. to bring ideas to the council to help improve the city
- Tell the students they are going to have a debate about a pretend community issue. For example: The City Council has some extra money. Some citizens might think the money should be spent to build a new park and playground. Others think they should buy a new fire truck.
- The teacher can assign some students to play the role of the mayor and council members. The rest of the students will be the “citizens”.
- Ask the “citizens” which item they think the City Council should pay for. Divide the citizens into two groups, depending on their spending preference. Have each group gather, discuss and

write down as many reasons to support their preference as they can. Set a time limit to complete this task.

- Each group should present their reasons to the council. After hearing all the reasons, the council will vote.
- Explain that this is often how decisions are made when citizens bring new ideas to the council.
- Ask: Whose responsibility is it to help in the community? (Everyone's - the citizens have their responsibilities as do the mayor and city council but it takes teamwork and cooperation to make sure the city runs smoothly and everyone's needs are met.)
- Return to the original KWL chart one last time. Have the students add their new learning to the chart under the LEARN section.

### **Post-Assessment**

- Give each child a copy of the handout "Local Government Exit Slip" and have them complete it.
- Use this as an exit slip and to assess understanding.

### **Extension Activities**

- Students can write to their mayor and city council about an idea they have for making their community better.
- Students can interview the mayor/councillors in their town about their job. Ask them about the sorts of things they do, which committees they are a part of and what their responsibilities are. Students can then write a short paragraph, draw a picture or take a photo of the person. The class can create a bulletin board introducing them to the rest of the school.
- Students can interview a teacher, principal, custodian or office worker in the school to find out what they do as part of their job.
- Create a class council. Hold an election for class "mayor" and councillors. Have candidates create a platform (identify their goals and what they want to accomplish if they are elected.)
- Have students choose a community helper, such as a firefighter, a chef or a doctor. Write a "Who Am I? Community Helper" riddle with several clues. Each clue should become more specific than the last. Illustrate the riddle and display so others can try to guess your helper. eg. I work as part of a team. We have a lot of equipment. I am trained to save lives. I need to wear protective clothing. Who am I? (a firefighter)

### **Additional References**

CBC Kids. 2017. "What Does a Mayor Do: According to Kids." [video]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EcEJNu3NnYk>

Children's Library Lady. 2021. "31 Picture Books about Cooperation and Teamwork."

<https://childrenslibrarylady.com/books-cooperation-teamwork/>

City of North Vancouver. 2021. "How Our City Work."

<https://www.cnv.org/parks-recreation-and-culture/signature-events/kids-in-the-hall/how-our-city-works>

Kalman, B. 2021. "Helpers in My Community." [video]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OihAnefOEgk>

Student Vote. 2014. "Local Government in British Columbia." [video]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=13kIEyBEUfk>

## **Materials and Resources**

## Local Government Exit Slip

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Who is the head of the local government of a city?

\_\_\_\_\_

Who are the helpers who assist in running the city?

\_\_\_\_\_

Name 3 services that the local government is in charge of:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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