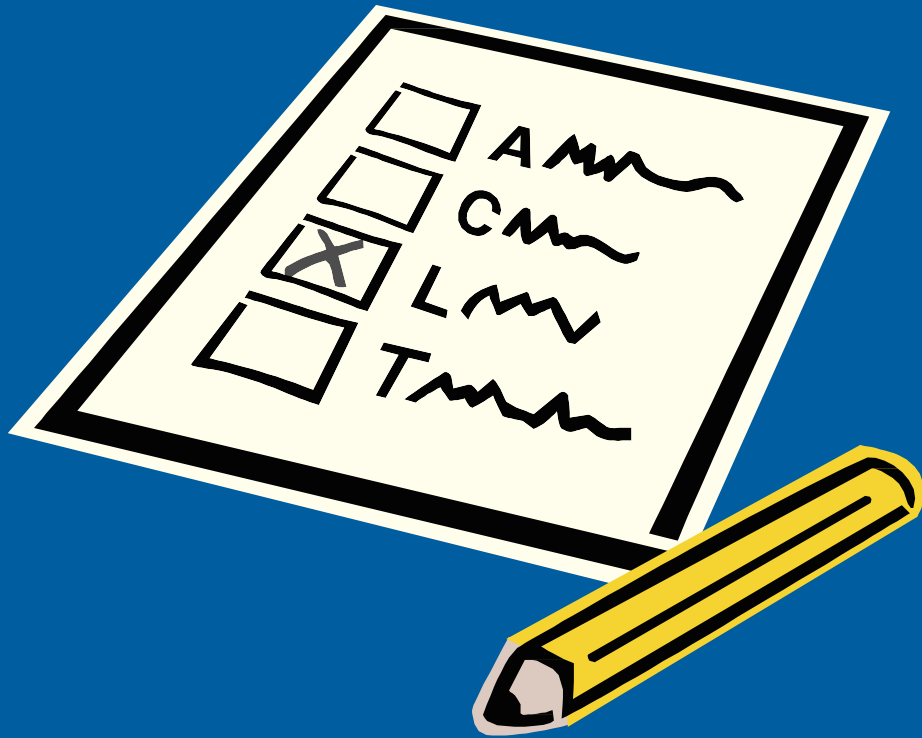


How-to-Kit



Northwest Territories General Election 2015



Northwest Territories Education, Culture and Employment



Election How-to Kit

The NWT Literacy Council is a territorial, nonprofit organization. We help NWT communities build their capacity to support literacy and essential skills programs in all NWT official languages. To do this we:

- Develop resources and learning materials
- Mentor, train, and support local literacy workers and projects
- Design, write, and edit plain language documents
- Promote, research, and share information about literacy and essential skills
- Monitor and respond to territorial and national literacy and essential skills policies

We believe:

- Everyone has a right to literacy.
- Literacy involves everyone—individuals, families, communities, business, labour, and governments.
- Literacy and essential skills are the foundation of lifelong learning. They support active participation in the social, economic, and political life of our communities, our territory, and our country.

NWT Literacy Council

Box 761, Yellowknife, NT X1A 2N6

Phone toll free: 1-866-599-6758

Phone Yellowknife: 867-873-9262

Fax: 867-873-2176

Email: nwtliteracy@nwtliteracy.ca

Website: www.nwt.literacy.ca



July, 2015

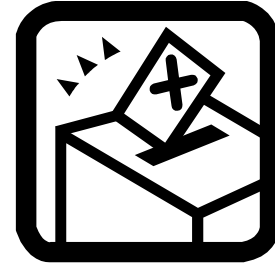
Contents

Introduction	1
Activity: Voting Quiz	2
Election Vocabulary	5
Voting Basics	7
Who Can Vote.....	7
Voter ID	7
Registering to Vote	9
Ways to Vote.....	10
Election Calendar.....	11
Elections NWT	12
Brief History of Voting in the NWT	13
Activity: Election Word Search	14
Activity: Election Survey	15
Activity: People Scavenger Hunt	16
Map of Electoral Districts	17
Activity: Election Geography.....	18
Activity: Candidates.....	21
Activity: More Election Ideas.....	23
Activity: To Vote or Not? A Survey	24
Activity: Choosing to Vote.....	25
Activity: Election News Board.....	26

Activity: What are the Important Issues?	27
Activity: Deciding Who to Vote For.....	29
Activity: Campaign Promises	33
Activity: Learners Take Action for Literacy!.....	34
Sample Questions for Candidates about Literacy and Essential Skills	35
Sample Letter (to a candidate).....	36
Sample: Talking to a Candidate (in person or by phone)	37
Election Results—Consensus Government and First-past-the-post.....	39
Activity: Exploring Other Voting Systems.....	41
Literacy and Essential Skills in the NWT	42
Resources for Election How-to Kit.....	44
Answer Key for Activities	46
Activity: Voting Quiz	46
Activity: Election Word Search.....	47
Activity: People Scavenger Hunt.....	47
Activity: Election Geography	47

Introduction

This Election How-to Kit has information and activities for adult learners. The overall purpose is to increase their awareness about the NWT general election and to encourage them to take an active role in the upcoming territorial election.



- Develop election vocabulary.
- Learn how voting happens; realize why voting counts.
- Discover how to make your opinions and ideas heard during the election campaign.
- Choose to vote. Participate in the democratic process; realize your right as a resident of the NWT and Canada.

The next general election for Members of the NWT Legislative Assembly is Monday, November 23, 2015.

Elections have their own vocabulary and rules. They can be challenging and intimidating for learners who are not familiar with the process. Elections are a great opportunity to build literacy skills.

Have fun!

Activity: Voting Quiz

What do you know about voting in a territorial election? Take this quiz to find out. Then read the information on the next few pages and take the quiz again to see how much you learned.

1. When voters vote in a territorial election, they are electing (check ☒ one):
 - ☐ Members of Parliament (MPs)
 - ☐ Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs)
 - ☐ Members of Council
 - ☐ None of these
2. To be eligible to vote, a voter must be (check ☒ one):
 - ☐ 20 years old, a Canadian citizen, an NWT resident for the past 3 years
 - ☐ 16 years old, a Canadian citizen, an NWT resident for the past 6 months
 - ☐ 18 years old, a Canadian citizen, an NWT resident for the past year
3. Each voter must have proper ID when they go to vote.
 - ☐ True ☐ False
4. Each voter must register to vote.
 - ☐ True ☐ False
5. If a voter lives outside the NWT during the election, to go to college or university, they can still vote.
 - ☐ True ☐ False

6. If a voter has no proper ID, another eligible voter can vouch for them; they swear the voter is who they say they are.
- ☐ True ☐ False
7. There are many ways to register to vote. Check ☒ all that apply.
- ☐ Online
- ☐ Polling station on Election Day
- ☐ Local band office
- ☐ Elections NWT office in Yellowknife
- ☐ Returning Officer's office
8. Mary works at a mine site in the NWT with many other NWT residents. She normally lives in Hay River, but she is going to be at work on Election Day. She works two weeks in and two weeks out. Her shift starts on Monday Nov. 16. How can Mary vote? Check ☒ one.
- ☐ Mobile Poll
- ☐ Absentee Ballot
- ☐ Multi-District Poll
- ☐ Office of the Returning Officer
- ☐ She can't vote
9. Albert is going to college in Edmonton. He normally lives in Deline. He has been away at school for two years. How can Albert vote? Check ☒ one.
- ☐ Mobile Poll
- ☐ Absentee Ballot
- ☐ Multi-District Poll
- ☐ He can't vote

10. Bertha voted in the last election. Since then she moved to a new house, but she lives in the same community. She needs to contact Elections NWT to update her voter registration.
- ☐ True ☐ False
11. Johnny needs to produce ID at the polling place on Election Day. Check ☒ any ID combination that the Election Officers can accept (hint: more than one in this list).
- ☐ Electricity bill and library card
- ☐ Credit card statement and bank statement
- ☐ NWT driver's license
- ☐ Bank statement and health care card
- ☐ Health care card and fishing license
- ☐ Social Insurance Number Card
12. Last month your aunty moved from Lutselk'e to a long-term care home in Yellowknife. She needs the extra care and she's not too mobile. How can she vote? Check ☒ one.
- ☐ Mobile Poll
- ☐ Absentee Ballot
- ☐ Returning Officer's Office
- ☐ She can't vote
13. Each voter can vote only once in an election.
- ☐ True ☐ False
14. Your grandmother speaks Inuvialuktun; she does not speak or read English. You can go with her to the polling place, act as interpreter, and help her.
- ☐ True ☐ False

Election Vocabulary

Elections have special vocabulary and jargon. Here are some examples. As you work through these election activities, add more words to this list that you want to understand. Look up the meaning online. Note that some words have a general meaning; and may have a different or more specific 'ELECTION' meaning.

Absentee ballot: a way to vote for people who temporarily live outside their electoral district, including outside the NWT. Example: people away at school or a treatment centre.

Ballot: the form that voters mark when they vote. Secret ballot—voters do not show anyone how they marked their ballot.

Campaign: the ads, speeches, buttons, events, and other things that the candidates and their teams do to try to convince you to vote for them.

Candidate: person who wants to get elected.

Election: when people vote to choose someone to represent them, often to government. In a territorial election we elect MLAs. In a federal election we elect MPs. In a municipal or band election we elect councillors. In a school board election we elect school board trustees.

Elections NWT: the independent, territorial agency responsible to carry out territorial elections. The Chief Electoral Officer is the boss, appointed by the Legislative Assembly.

Election officers: people who work for Elections NWT. Each Electoral District has a returning officer who is responsible for things in their area. Each polling station has a deputy returning officer and poll clerk. They look after voters and voting.

Electoral Districts: the NWT is divided into 19 electoral districts. The people that live in that area vote to elect their MLA.

Eligible voter: a person who is entitled to vote.

MLA: abbreviation or acronym for Member of the Legislative Assembly.
During a territorial election, we elect MLAs.

Polling division: a geographic area within an electoral district, set up to organize voting.

Polling station: the place where voters go to vote.

Register of electors: the list of people registered to vote.

Voting Basics

This section has some basic information about who can vote, different ways to vote, and what it means to register to vote. An election calendar shows the important dates for the upcoming election.

Who Can Vote

You can vote if:

- You are a Canadian citizen, and
- You are 18 years or older, and
- You have lived in the NWT for the last 12 months.

If you lived outside the NWT for the last 12 months for school, work, or medical treatment, and you normally live in the NWT, you are still considered a resident and can vote.

Voter ID

Before you can vote, you have to provide ID that shows your name and address. There are four ID options.

- One piece of photo ID that shows the voter's name and home address. Examples: NWT Driver's license and NWT General Identification Card.

Note: if you recently moved within the NWT, you must have an up-to-date driver's license if you want to use it as ID for voting. You can update your driver's license free of charge, so that it shows your correct address. Contact the local licensing office.

- Two pieces of ID: one that shows the voter's name and one that shows their address. Examples:

ID with the voter's name	ID with the voter's address
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Status card Birth certificate Health card Passport Fishing, trapping, or hunting license Social Insurance Number Card Old Age Security (OAS) Card Government employee ID Library card Veterans Affairs Health card Canadian Blood Services card CNIB ID bracelet Long-term care facility bracelet Student card from an accredited college or university 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utility bill (electricity, cable, heat) Bank statement Credit card statement Vehicle ownership Employment Insurance Statement Disability statement Income Support statement Affidavit Child Tax Benefit Statement Pension statement Government cheque stub Residential lease Mortgage agreement Income tax assessment Property Tax Assessment Home insurance policy Letter or statement from a shelter, elders' home, or long-term care facility

- Vouching: if a voter has no ID, another eligible voter can vouch for them. Both electors take an oath to swear that the person is who they say they are.
- Voting by Acquaintance: if the Returning Officer knows the voter personally, the person can vote in the RO office or at the Advance Poll without any ID.

Registering to Vote

Before you can vote you must register with Elections NWT. If you voted in the last territorial election, your name is probably already on the list of voters.

When the election period starts, Elections NWT puts out a list of registered voters for each electoral district. Check the list; make sure your name is on it and the information is correct. Register if needed.

You should register to vote if you:

- Moved to the NWT from outside the NWT.
- Turned 18 since the last election.
- Did not vote in the last election and you are eligible to vote.

You should update your registration if you voted in the last territorial election and you:

- Moved to a different address in the NWT since the last election.
- Changed your name since the last election.

There are three ways to register:

- Register online. Elections NWT is setting this up as we write this how-to kit. Check their website <http://www.electionsnwt.ca/>, Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/ElectionsNWT>, and Twitter @ElectionsNWT for news of when the portal is ready.
- Contact the Returning Officer in your electoral district. Find a list of ROs on the Elections NWT website <http://www.electionsnwt.ca/staff-directory>
- Register when you go to vote. Make sure you have proper ID. This is not the best option because it can slow down voting for you and other voters.

Ways to Vote

To vote, you must be an eligible voter, be registered with Elections NWT, and be prepared to show proper ID.

Polling Day or Election Day: most people vote on Election Day. For this election that is Monday, November 23, 2015. Polling places are open in every community from 9 am to 8 pm.

Office of the Returning Officer: during posted office hours, from Thursday, Nov. 12 to Saturday Nov. 21 at 2 pm.

Advance Poll: a way to vote before Election Day in communities that do not have a Returning Officer's office; from Monday, November 16 to Thursday November 19 during posted hours.

Absentee Ballot: a way to vote for voters who temporarily live outside their electoral district, including outside the NWT. Example: voters away at school or a treatment centre. You must apply to Elections NWT to vote with an Absentee Ballot; apply from Monday Oct. 12 to Friday, Nov. 13. Elections NWT must receive the ballot no later than Monday, Nov. 23 at 8 pm. If the ballot arrives later than that it does not count.

Mobile Poll: for voters with a physical disability that prevents them from getting to a polling station. Example: people in a hospital or long-term care facility. Voters must apply to Elections NWT to get the Mobile Poll; apply from Monday, Nov. 9 to Friday, Nov. 13. The poll happens from Monday, Nov. 16 to Thursday, Nov. 19.

Multi-District Polls: set up in places where NWT residents from many electoral districts live temporarily. Examples: mine sites, college campuses, correctional facilities. Voters vote for a candidate in the electoral district where they normally live.

Election Calendar

A list of important dates for the 2015 territorial election

Important dates	What happens on that date
Monday, Oct. 12	First day to apply for an Absentee Ballot.
Monday, Oct. 26	Writ issued. First day to revise Preliminary List of Electors.
Wednesday, Nov. 4	Last day to revise Preliminary List of Electors.
Monday, Nov. 9	First day to apply to vote by Mobile Poll.
Thursday, Nov. 12	First day to vote in the Returning Officer's Office.
Friday, Nov. 13	Last day to apply for an Absentee Ballot. Last day to apply to vote by Mobile Poll.
Monday, Nov. 16	First day to vote by Mobile Poll. First day to vote at Multi-District Polls. First day of Advance Poll.
Thursday, Nov. 19	Last day to vote by Mobile Poll. Last day to vote at Multi-District Polls. Last day of Advance Poll.
Saturday, Nov. 21	Last day to vote at Returning Officer's Office: 2 pm.
Monday, Nov. 23	Election Day: Polling place open in each community: 9 am to 8 pm. Chief Electoral Officer must receive absentee ballots by 8 pm or they don't count.

Elections NWT

Elections NWT is an independent agency that is responsible to manage and carry out free and fair territorial elections, according to the laws. The Chief Electoral Officer is the boss. She is appointed by the Legislative Assembly.



The Chief Electoral Officer appoints a Returning Officer (RO) for each electoral district. The RO is responsible to run the election in their area. The RO is the contact person for other election workers, candidates, and voters in their electoral district.

Each polling place in each electoral district has a Deputy Returning Officer and poll clerk; and interpreters if needed. All election officers must be neutral and not connected with any candidate.

Contact Elections NWT for more information. Invite the returning officer for your electoral district to come and give a presentation or answer questions.

Brief History of Voting in the NWT

From 1905 to 1951, the federal government appointed a council to govern the NWT; residents did not vote. From 1951 to 1975, the governing council and assembly were a mix of appointed and elected members. From 1975 to the present day, NWT residents have elected all Members of the Legislative Assembly.

Starting in 2007, the *Elections Act* states that the NWT has an election on the first Monday in October every four years. A strong motivation for this law was the practical difficulties of holding an election during the winter. For the 2015 election, the date changed to November 23 so that the federal election—scheduled for October 19—does not overlap with the 30-day campaign period for the NWT election.

Canada formed as a country in 1867. The government granted First Nations people the right to vote, so long as they gave up their treaty rights and status. First Nations people refused to do that. In 1954 the federal government restored the right to vote to Inuit, without qualification. And in 1960 First Nations people got the right to vote without having to give up their treaty or Aboriginal rights.

Many First Nations people choose to not vote in elections for members of public government: federal, territorial/provincial, or municipal. They question the right of any public government to govern them. They prefer self-government based on Aboriginal and treaty rights; dealing with public government nation-to-nation. They see public government as part of the imposed system that oppresses their own culture and governing systems.

Other First Nations people choose to vote. They see voting and participating in the political process of public government as a duty and a right, and part of the struggle to deal with oppression.

Activity: Election Word Search

Circle the vocabulary words in the word search below. The words may go down or across. Check them off the list as you find them.

B	A	L	L	O	T	Z	N	F	C
E	V	O	T	E	E	P	C	R	A
L	T	I	Q	L	U	R	A	Y	M
I	Y	K	C	E	K	Q	N	O	P
G	H	P	G	C	R	J	D	P	A
I	O	E	K	T	N	S	I	W	I
B	U	B	O	I	C	L	D	Q	G
L	W	J	A	O	M	L	A	I	N
E	Q	I	Z	N	U	R	T	U	R
G	O	V	E	R	N	M	E	N	T

☐ MLA☐ campaign☐ vote☐ ballot☐ eligible☐ candidate☐ government☐ election

Activity: Election Survey

Do this survey after the election campaign is underway.

Read each question. Check ☒ yes or no.

1. I can name the candidates in my electoral district for this election.
☐ Yes ☐ No
2. I am registered to vote in this election.
☐ Yes ☐ No
3. I know the name of the electoral district where I live and vote.
☐ Yes ☐ No
4. I know where to go to vote on Election Day (my polling place).
☐ Yes ☐ No
5. I know where to go if I have questions about the election.
☐ Yes ☐ No
6. I understand how elections work.
☐ Yes ☐ No
7. I plan to vote in the upcoming election.
☐ Yes ☐ No

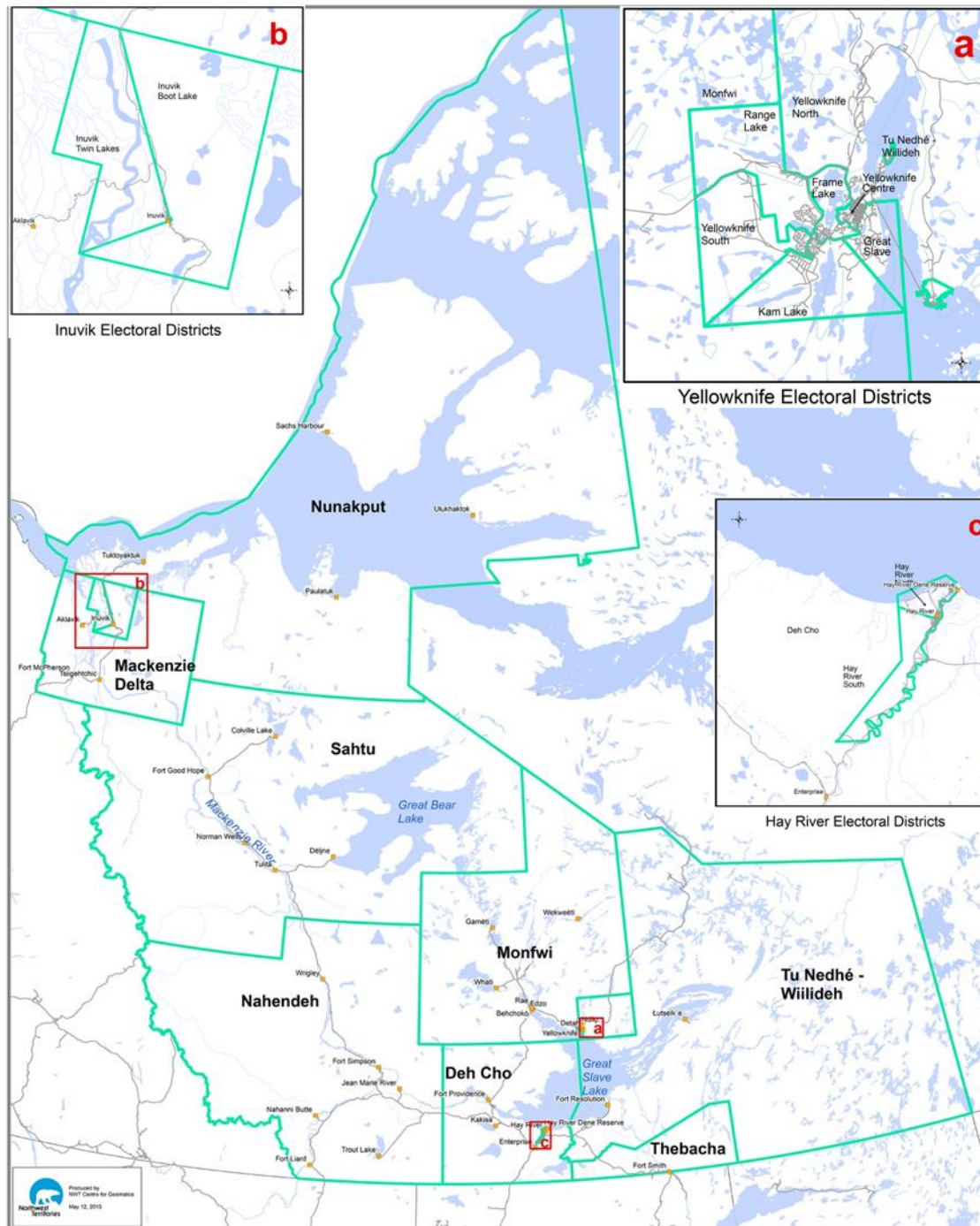
Activity: People Scavenger Hunt

This activity helps you think about the election process and to share your knowledge with each other. Find the answer to each question from a different person. Write down the answer and the person you got it from. The winner is the first person to fill in the grid.

1. What is the date of the upcoming election? Answer: Name:	2. Name one candidate who is running in your electoral district. Answer: Name:
3. Name the current MLA for your electoral district. Answer: Name:	4. How long do you have to live in the NWT before you can vote? Answer: Name:
5. How old must you be to vote? Answer: Name:	6. How often are elections held in the Northwest Territories? Answer: Name:
7. Name the current Premier. Answer: Name:	8. How many MLAs are there in the NWT? Answer: Name:

Map of Electoral Districts

Go to www.electionsnwt.ca for a clearer map.



Activity: Election Geography

Answer the questions.

1. What is an electoral district?

2. The NWT has 19 electoral districts.

☐ True

☐ False

3. Each voter can vote once for a candidate in the electoral district where the voter lives.

☐ True

☐ False

4. Sally lives in Gameti. What is the name of the electoral district where she lives? What other communities are in the same district?

5. How many communities are in the Sahtu electoral district? Name them.

6. How many communities are in the Nahendeh electoral district? Name them.

7. What electoral district covers the largest area? What communities are in this area?

8. Hay River and Inuvik each have two electoral districts. Yellowknife has seven electoral districts. Other electoral districts cover many square miles. Why are electoral districts organized like this?

9. If you live in Fort McPherson, what is the name of your electoral district? What other communities are in the same district?

10. If you live in Dettah or Ndilo, what is the name of your electoral district? What other communities are in the same district?

11. Which electoral district has only one community?

12. What other communities are in the same electoral district as Fort Providence? Name them and the district.

13. What is the name of your electoral district?

Activity: Candidates

Being a candidate in an election is like applying for a job as the MLA for that electoral district. Candidates sell themselves to the voters. They give speeches, make promises, share their ideas, and generally try to convince the voters to vote for them.

Each electoral district has its own candidates. Sometimes there is only one candidate. If that happens, that person gets the job; the voters don't vote because there is no one else to vote for.

Follow the candidates in your electoral district during the election period. Start when the campaign starts; finish on Election Day when you know the results. Keep track of the major issues and how the candidates stand on these issues.

1. Who are the candidates in your electoral district?

2. Who is the incumbent—person who holds the job now, until the election?

3. Contact Elections NWT for a list of all the candidates and their addresses. You can use this information to send letters to the candidates.

4. Which candidates do you think get the most media attention?
Why?

5. Do you know anything about the candidates? What? Make a list of anything you know or assume about them.

6. Where did you get this information from? Media? Family? School or work? Community gossip?

Activity: More Election Ideas**Posters**

- Describe the issues of each candidate.
- Describe one or more candidates.
- Draw a Venn diagram to compare issues or candidates.

Election News Board

Encourage learners to bring in news clippings and information from home to discuss with the class. The news board could be divided into areas for different candidates or issues as well as a general section.

Word List

Invite learners to identify and discuss words that are part of the election vocabulary. Display these words with their definitions. Practice using the words in a sentence. Build on this as the unit progresses.

Activity: To Vote or Not? A Survey

In Canada and the NWT, many people choose not to vote or just don't bother to vote. In the last NWT election, less than 50% of voters voted. Voter turnout was better in elections before this: 57% in 2007; 69% in 2003; 70% in 1999.

What about your classmates, friends, and family? What reasons do your friends and family have for voting or not voting? Do they make a conscious decision to vote or not to vote? What about you personally? Do a small survey.

Reasons to vote	Reasons not to vote

Activity: Choosing to Vote

You want to convince a friend that she should vote. She says that as a single parent she's too busy with her job, her adult education classes, and raising her three school-age children (ages 7, 12, and 16). One of her children has a chronic illness, and she lives in a small community away from the medical care she needs for her child. She does not have time to think about the election.

What would you say to her? What kinds of issues might motivate this woman to vote? What arguments might you use to encourage your friend to vote?

Activity: Election News Board

Hunt through newspapers and other resources for election-related news, photos, editorials, and more.

Try to find some of these items about the election:

- News articles about an important issue in the election campaign.
- News articles about an individual candidate's campaign.
- Photographs about the election or candidates.
- Editorial cartoons that relate to one of the candidates.
- Editorial cartoons that relate to one of the campaign issues.
- Election ads or flyers for candidates from a news source or campaign office.

Make an election news board where you can post all your class findings and news clippings.

Activity: What are the Important Issues?

1. For this current election campaign, what are the most important issues for your community and for the NWT?
2. Brainstorm a list of important issues that you believe the next territorial government will face.
3. Vote to narrow the issues to a list of the five most important ones. Each learner votes for three issues.
4. Hold another vote. Ask each learner to vote for the single issue that they believe is most important.
5. Ask each learner to create a graph to represent that final vote.

Here are some issues that are often important to people in the NWT.

- Education—school and adult education
- Jobs and economic development
- Recreation facilities
- Housing—affordable and available
- Elder abuse
- Violence against women
- Increases in power and gas prices
- Food security
- Drug and alcohol abuse and treatment
- Healthcare in communities
- Child care—affordable and available
- Managing and protecting the land and water
- Managing and protecting wildlife
- Environment; climate change
- Land claims and self-government
- Poverty

What issues are important to you?

What issues is the territorial government responsible for?

Activity: Deciding Who to Vote For

This activity helps you:

- Identify how and where people get information about candidates.
- Decide how useful these sources are.

Prospective voting means looking forward. Voters look carefully at each candidate and think about how their future will be if they vote for that person. Voters look closely at the issues.

Retrospective voting means looking back. Voters consider how things have been in recent years. If the answer is good the voter is more likely to vote for the incumbent. If the answer is not so good, the voter is more likely to vote for another candidate.

Brainstorm a list of reasons why a voter might vote for the incumbent or another candidate.

Vote incumbent	Vote another candidate

Information about candidates

How do people get information about candidates? Brainstorm a list of all the places where people get their political information from.

Interview

Talk to people in your community about where they get their information about candidates and issues.

Questions

As you interview people, think about these questions. Discuss them as a class when you finish the interviews.

- How does the information source affect the way people vote?
- What is the most effective source of information about candidates?
- What is the most useful source of information for voters?
- Are people happy with the information they get from the sources they use?
- Do people think that the available information helps them make a well-informed choice? Does it affect the way they vote?

Some suggestions for where you might find information on candidates.

- Broadcast news: TV and radio
- Print media: newspapers, magazines
- Family, friends, workplace, community gossip
- Campaign ads: such as on TV, radio, yard and road signs, buttons, bumper stickers
- Campaign events: such as a fish fry or tea and bannock.
- Public appearances: speeches, all candidate meetings
- Campaign literature: such as brochures or pamphlets
- Internet: public resources, candidate web pages
- Candidate campaign offices

What are the differences and similarities between these sources?

Try to find the same information in several different sources. Are there different biases in different sources?

Types of Campaign Ads

Learn to recognize different types of campaign ads and understand why candidates choose these types of ads for their campaign.

Four main types of campaign ads:

- Negative: one candidate portrays another in a bad way.
- Warm and fuzzy: a candidate makes voters feel good about the territory, electoral district, community, or their campaign.
- Humorous: a candidate gets a laugh or a smile from the viewer.
- Fear: a candidate suggests images that promote worry or concern or dread. Usually combined with a negative ad.

Can you think of examples that fit into each of the four types?

After you look at some political ads, answer the following questions.

- What are the key messages in each ad?
- What type of ad is more memorable? Why?
- What type of ad is most effective to convince people to vote for (or against) a candidate?
- Did you learn from the ads? Did they help you decide which candidate to support?
- What do all types of ads have in common? Do they give facts? Do they stir up emotions?
- During which programs (radio/TV) do the ads play? What time of the day do you see the most ads?
- What are the limitations of a 30-second ad?
- How important is a candidate's look in an ad? What type of image are they trying to create?
- If you were the campaign manager for a candidate, what type of ad would you try to create?

Activity: Campaign Promises

Find out what are the major issues in the election campaign. Learn what each candidate says about each issue.

What is a campaign promise? What influences the promises that candidates make during the election?

Issue	Candidate	Their Position / Solution

Activity: Learners Take Action for Literacy!

Adult learners can make a difference. Talk about literacy during the election campaign.

- Send a personal letter to each candidate in your electoral district. Use the sample provided or write your own letter. Tell each candidate why literacy is important to you.
- Attend campaign events. Talk to people at the event about literacy. Bring copies of 'Literacy Facts in the NWT' and hand them out to people.
- Go to the all candidate meetings in your community. If allowed, ask a question about issues that are important to you. See the sample questions provided.
- Take part in radio call-in programs with the candidates. Phone in with questions and information related to issues that are important to you.

If you are in a literacy program, invite the candidates to a forum in your program. Come up with questions to ask the candidates about issues that are important to you.

Volunteer to work on the campaign of a local candidate that you support. Offer to stuff envelopes or deliver campaign literature door to door. Use your contacts with the candidate and his or her workers to talk about literacy.

Sample Questions for Candidates about Literacy and Essential Skills

Sample questions to ask candidates about literacy and essential skills, and what the candidate will do to improve literacy in the NWT.

Get ideas from these questions to make up questions about other important issues in your community.

- About 42% of adults in the NWT do not have the literacy and essential skills that they need to function at work and in their community. If elected, what will you do to give people real opportunities to improve their literacy and essential skills?
- Many adult learners face huge financial barriers when they return to school. In your opinion, what should the government do to strengthen financial support for adult learners?
- Many adult learners in the NWT are also parents. How will you ensure that quality, affordable childcare is available to them?
- Many adults would like to upgrade their skills, but they can't leave their family and home community to attend courses. What ideas do you have to help these people to improve their skills?
- The NWT has nine official Aboriginal languages. What will you do to support Aboriginal language literacy in the NWT?
- The graduation rate in the NWT is much lower than the national average. Graduating high school gives people more choices for their future. What should the territorial government do to encourage and support youth to stay in school and graduate?

Make up your own questions about issues that are important to you.

Sample Letter (to a candidate)

Your address

Today's date

Candidate's name

Candidate's address

Dear Candidate:

Did you know that one in five adults in the Northwest Territories has major difficulty with reading or writing? I am one of those adults, and I am voting in the upcoming territorial election. Right now people like me have few opportunities to improve our skills.

I want to know what you will do, if elected, to improve opportunities for people like me to develop our literacy and essential skills? Your answer will help me decide how to vote in the election.

I hope to hear from you soon.

Yours truly,

Sample: Talking to a Candidate (in person or by phone)

Excuse me, please. May I talk with you for a moment?

(If you are talking to a candidate by phone you could say, "Hello. May I please talk to _____ or their assistant?")

My name is _____ and I represent learners from _____ (college or organization).

If you are elected would you please support (name issue)

This is important because (give your needs statement; your reasons to support this issue)

Our solution is (say how supporting this action helps your cause)

Do you have any questions or suggestions? (write down any questions or suggestions the candidate has)

Can I count on your support?

☐ YES

☐ NO

☐ MAYBE

Thank you very much for your time.

Name of Candidate _____

Electoral District _____

Election Results—Consensus Government and First-past-the-post

When you vote, you put a mark beside the name of the candidate you want to win. The candidate with the most votes wins the election; they become the MLA for their electoral district.

Soon after the election the 19 MLAs get together and vote among themselves to elect the Speaker and the government: the Premier and six Ministers who form the cabinet. The government is responsible for legislation, policies, and the budget. The other 11 MLAs are the opposition.

The NWT and Nunavut are the only two places in Canada with this type of government; no political parties.

The party system is the type of government for Yukon, the provinces, and the federal House of Commons. Each MLA or MP is elected the same way as in the NWT: the candidate with the most votes wins the election for their area. And the candidate that wins often has less than 50% of the total votes. The candidate that comes second may have only one vote less than the candidate that wins.

With the party system, the party with the most elected MLAs or MPs forms the government. The party leader becomes the premier (provinces and Yukon) or prime minister (feds). The premier or prime minister appoints other party members as cabinet ministers.

A majority government is when the winning party has more than half the seats. A minority government is when the winning party has less than half the seats. But the winning party often has less than 50% of the total votes, even with a majority government.

Many other democratic countries around the world use a different voting system. And many people in Canada believe that our voting system needs to change. With a different voting system, an election can have very different results; and many people believe fairer results.

The most common alternative voting system is some form of proportional representation. In general this means that the percent of votes a party gets = the percent of seats they get in the legislature. With a proportional system, a party with less than 50% of the total votes could NOT form a majority government.

Consider this table. It shows the actual results of the 2011 federal election. It compares what happened with first-past-the-post (FPTP) and what could happen with proportional representation (PR).

2011 Federal Election Party	% total votes across the country	FPTP		PR	
		% seats	# seats	% seats	# seats
Conservatives	40% (less than half)	54%	166	40%	122
NDP	31%	33%	103	31%	95
Liberals	19%	11%	34	19%	59
Green	4%	<1	1	4%	13
Bloc Quebecois	6%	1%	4	6%	19

Under FPTP the conservatives have a majority, even though they have only 40% of the total votes. Under PR the conservatives do not have a majority. The number of seats for each party represents the percent of voters that supported that party.

Activity: Exploring Other Voting Systems

Watch these videos:

Why We Need Proportional Representation

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yG_X285UODA&feature=player_detailpage&list=PLE0dYpVCw9bYWQIuI1pr0L-ptCk5EpWYn

Disproportional Misrepresentation

https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_detailpage&v=sSd4p1jq9HE&list=PLE0dYpVCw9bYWQIuI1pr0L-ptCk5EpWYn

First Past the Pizza

https://www.youtube.com/watch?list=PLE0dYpVCw9bYWQIuI1pr0L-ptCk5EpWYn&v=oYTE3dtCLwY&feature=player_detailpage

Use the videos to discuss what proportional representation means.

Compare first-past-the-post and proportional representation.

Other resources:

- Lesson plan and power point presentation for teachers.
<http://campaign2015.fairvote.ca/resources/>

Literacy and Essential Skills in the NWT

Different people and agencies have unique definitions and ways to think about literacy and essential skills. Today we think of literacy as much more than the ability to read and write. We think of the overall skills, knowledge, and understanding that people have to manage their life at home, at work, and in their community. We think of how people understand and use information and technology.

Essential skills are the skills people need for work, learning, and life. They are the foundation for learning all other skills; they help people adapt to change.

Low literacy is when people don't have the skills they need to carry out the essential tasks in their daily life. People with low literacy skills cannot participate fully in the modern world at work or school, at home, and in their community.

Adult Basic Education

Adult basic education is any program that helps adults prepare for further training or employment. Adult basic education is learning to read, write, and use numbers and information technology. It is life skills, career planning, upgrading in specific subjects, or work training and experience.

Many Aboriginal people in the NWT speak English as a second language. English literacy scores for Aboriginal people may in part reflect this.

Go to the NWT Literacy Council website to get more information on literacy facts.

- IALSS Info Series #1
<http://www.nwt.literacy.ca/litfacts/IALSSinfoseries-1.pdf>
- IALSS Info Series #2
<http://www.nwt.literacy.ca/litfacts/IALSSinfoseries-2.pdf>
- Literacy and Families
<http://www.nwt.literacy.ca/litfacts/LiteracyandFamilies.pdf>
- Literacy and Health
<http://www.nwt.literacy.ca/litfacts/LiteracyandHealth.pdf>
- Literacy and Youth
<http://www.nwt.literacy.ca/litfacts/LiteracyandYouth.pdf>
- Literacy and the Workforce
<http://www.nwt.literacy.ca/litfacts/LiteracyandtheWorkforce.pdf>
- Literacy and Unemployment
[http://www.nwt.literacy.ca/litfacts/LiteracyandUnemployment.p
df](http://www.nwt.literacy.ca/litfacts/LiteracyandUnemployment.pdf)
- Literacy and the Economy
<http://www.nwt.literacy.ca/litfacts/LiteracyandtheEconomy.pdf>

Resources for Election How-to Kit

Elections NWT (elections for MLAs; territorial elections)

3rd Floor, YK Centre East, #7, 4915-48th Street

Yellowknife NT X1A 3S4

Phone: 867-920-6999 or Toll free: 1-800-661-0796

Fax: 867-873-0366 or 1-800-661-0872

Website: <http://www.electionsnwt.ca>

Email: electionsnwt@gov.nt.ca

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/ElectionsNWT>

Twitter @ElectionsNWT

Elections Canada (elections for MPs; federal elections)

257 Slater Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0M6

Phone: 1-800-463-6868

Fax: 613-954-8584 Toll free fax: 1-888-524-1444

Website: <http://www.elections.ca/home.aspx>

- Educational resources
<http://www.elections.ca/content.aspx?section=vot&dir=yth/tea&document=index&lang=e>

NWT Literacy Council

Box 761, 5122 - 48th Street, Yellowknife, NT X1A 2N6

Phone: (867) 873-9262 / Toll Free in NWT: 1-866-599-6758

Fax: (867) 873-2176

Website: <http://www.nwtliteracy.ca/>

Email: nwtliteracy@nwtliteracy.ca

- NWT Literacy Facts
<http://www.nwtliteracy.ca/Literacy%20and%20Essential%20Skills%20in%20the%20NWT>

Fair Vote Canada

- Resources and other information about changing the voting system in Canada from first-past-the-post to some type of proportional representation

Website: <http://campaign2015.fairvote.ca/resources/>

Department of Education, Culture and Employment

- Towards Literacy: A Strategy Framework
http://www.ece.gov.nt.ca/files/publications/NWT_Literacy_Strategy.pdf

Answer Key for Activities

Look for answers to certain activities—those with ‘right and wrong’ answers. We do not include any answers for the many activities that have various answers rather than ‘right and wrong’ answers.

Activity: Voting Quiz

1. Members of the Legislative Assembly
2. 18 years old, a Canadian citizen, an NWT resident for the past year
3. True
4. True
5. True
6. True
7. All except local band office
8. Multi-District Poll, Returning Officer’s office
9. Absentee Ballot
10. True
11. Electricity bill and library card; NWT driver’s license; bank statement and health care card. ID must show proof of name and address, or one with name and one with address.
12. Mobile Poll
13. True
14. True

Activity: Election Word Search

B	A	L	L	O	T	Z	N	F	C
E	V	O	T	E	E	P	C	R	A
L	T	I	Q	L	U	R	A	Y	M
I	Y	K	C	E	K	Q	N	O	P
G	H	P	G	C	R	J	D	P	A
I	O	E	K	T	N	S	I	W	I
B	U	B	O	I	C	L	D	Q	G
L	W	J	A	O	M	L	A	I	N
E	Q	I	Z	N	U	R	T	U	R
G	O	V	E	R	N	M	E	N	T

Activity: People Scavenger Hunt

1. Monday, November 23, 2015
2. Various answers
3. Various answers
4. 12 months
5. 18 years or older
6. Every four years
7. Bob McLeod
8. 19 MLAs

Activity: Election Geography

1. Electoral district: geographic area where the people who live there vote for their MLA
2. True
3. True
4. Monfwi: Gamètì, Wekweètì, Whatì, Behchokò (Rae and Edzo)

5. Five Sahtu communities: Colville Lake, Fort Good Hope, Norman Wells, Tulita, Deline
6. Six Nahendeh communities: Wrigley, Fort Simpson, Jean Marie River, Nahanni Butte, Fort Liard, Trout Lake
7. Nunakput electoral district: Ulukhaktok, Tuktoyaktuk, Paulatuk, Sachs Harbour
8. Because of the high population in these cities, especially Yellowknife
9. Mackenzie Delta: Aklavik, Tsiigehtchic, Fort McPherson
10. Dettah and Ndilo: Tu Nedhé Wiilideh; Lutselk'e and Fort Resolution
11. Thebacha
12. Enterprise, Kakisa, and K'atlodeeche First Nation (Hay River Reserve) with Fort Providence. Deh Cho electoral district
13. Various answers