

# ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

## ACTIVITY BOOK

7-8



LEGISLATIVE  
ASSEMBLY  
OF ALBERTA

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# Learner's Activities

## Pre-tour Materials

The pretour activities prepare you for the Legislature tour. They include reading, listening and speaking activities that expose you to the vocabulary that you will encounter on the tour and give you a chance to use that vocabulary. They also introduce you to some of the background knowledge you will need to make the tour more educational.

1. Symbols: Jigsaw Reading and Worksheet
2. Quotes from Chief Crowfoot: Pronunciation
3. Understanding the Treaties: Listening
4. You and your MLA: Reading Comprehension
5. You and Your MLA: Role-play

# Symbols

## Jigsaw Puzzle



### Official Flower: Wild Rose

The wild rose, or prickly rose (*Rosa acicularis*), was designated the floral emblem of Alberta in 1930. Its bright pink blossoms enhance the countryside in all parts of the province. The wild rose is also useful: its colourful red berries (or hips) feed many species of birds and add a unique flavour to teas and jellies.



### Official Bird: The Great Horned Owl

A king assigned Alberta its first coat of arms, but it was the province's citizens (primarily schoolchildren) who chose the official bird. They voted in 1974 for the great horned owl (*Bubo virginianus*), a year-round resident of the province. The Legislature approved their choice in 1977. A resourceful and resilient bird, the great horned owl exemplifies the best traits of Alberta's people both past and present.



### Official Tree: The Lodgepole Pine

The lodgepole pine (*Pinus contorta* var. *latifolia*), a western tree prevalent in the Rocky Mountains, became Alberta's official tree in 1984, a culmination of four years' effort by the Junior Forest Wardens of Alberta. Lodgepole pine was an important source of railroad ties during Alberta's settlement and since has played an important role in Alberta's economic development. It has even been suggested that the lodgepole pine may have been used by certain First Nations to make teepee poles (hence its name). Even today the long, straight lodgepole pine is in great demand in the lumber industry.

# Symbols



## Official Mammal: Bighorn Sheep

In 1989 the Assembly designated the Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep (*Ovis canadensis*) Alberta's official mammal after contacting Alberta schools to gauge their support of this choice. The bighorn sheep is commonly seen in the Rocky Mountains and was given its scientific name in 1804 by botanist George Shaw as based on his observations near Exshaw. With its proud carriage, crowned by magnificent horns, the bighorn sheep is a majestic inhabitant of our province.



## Official Fish: The Bull Trout

In 1995 the bull trout (*Salvelinus confluentus*) became the provincial fish of Alberta. Bull trout are actually a char and closely related to other members of the char family, such as lake and brook trout. Bull trout generally have light-coloured spots on their bodies and do not have any dark spots or markings on their dorsal fins. Depending on their environment and food supply, they can weigh 20 pounds (approximately 9 kilograms) or more and can live more than 20 years.



## Official Grass: Rough Fescue

Rough fescue (*Festuca scabrella*) is a perennial bunchgrass with stiff, narrow leaves that are rough to the touch. Alberta has the largest area of rough fescue grassland in the world and is the only place in North America where all three types—plains, foothills and northern fescue—occur. Fescue grasslands provide vital food for wildlife and livestock year-round. On May 7, 2003, rough fescue was adopted due to the efforts of the Prairie Conservation Forum.



## Pronghorn Antelope

Representing Alberta on the Alberta coat of arms, the pronghorn were (and still are) very common on the prairie and an important source of food for First Nations people and early settlers. They have white patches on their rumps, sides, bellies and necks and are the fastest land mammal in North America.



## Bison

The largest mammal in Alberta, bison were an important source of food, clothing, shelter and tools for the First Nations people. Like the beaver, bison also played an important part in the fur trade. By the end of the 19th century, bison had been hunted almost to extinction.



## Alberta Tartan

A tartan is a woven cloth with horizontal and vertical bands of colors. Alberta's tartan pays tribute to the Scottish component of our heritage. The colours represent our abundant natural resources: green for forests, gold for wheat fields, blue for clear skies and lakes, pink for wild roses and black for coal and petroleum. The tartan was designed by the Edmonton Rehabilitation Society for the Handicapped (now Goodwill Industries) and was officially recognized in 1961.

# Symbols



**Beaver**

The beaver was a key part of the fur trade that led to the exploration and settlement of both Alberta and Canada. It became a symbol of the Hudson's Bay Company and later a symbol of Canada. At the peak of the fur trade 100,000 beaver pelts were being shipped yearly to Europe to satisfy the demand for beaver-pelt hats. By the middle of the 19th century, the beaver was almost extinct. Fortunately, the demand for beaver pelts ended as silk hats came into fashion in Europe.



**Crown**

Headgear worn by a king or queen as a symbol of sovereignty, often made of precious metal and ornamented with gems.



**Lion**

A symbol of the British Empire, the lion represents power and strength.



**Provincial Shield**

The Provincial shield represents the geographic features that are seen as you travel from east to west: wheat fields in the east of the province, then the prairies, the foothills and in the far west, the Rocky Mountains.



**Red Cross**

The red cross of St. George is a reference to the Hudson's Bay Company. Fur traders and explorers with Hudson's Bay Company played a critical role in the early settlement of Alberta.



**Wheat**

Wheat played an important role in the farming communities that developed in Alberta and in the economy of Alberta. Huge wheat fields are a significant feature of the Alberta landscape.

# Symbols

## Jigsaw Reading and Worksheet

### Prepare

Learn about your symbol(s). Be prepared to explain your symbol(s) to your classmates, without reading your info sheet. If you wish, you can use your electronic device to pull up a picture of the symbol to use when presenting.

### Present

Tell your classmates about your symbol(s) and learn about their symbols. Use a conversational style with verbal and non-verbal expression and eye contact. Don't read!

### Answer questions

**Hand in your readings; then work together to answer the questions below.**

What animal represents Canada and was an important part of the fur trade in Alberta? .....

How did a change in clothing fashion keep this animal from going extinct? .....

When did the wild rose become an emblem of Alberta?

How is it useful?

What mammal was hunted almost to extinction and was a particularly important source of food and materials for First Nations people in Alberta? .....

What is Alberta's official grass? .....

Why is it important for the economy of Alberta? .....

What is the official bird of Alberta? .....

Who chose this bird to be a symbol of Alberta? .....

The lodgepole pine is Alberta's official tree. How was this tree historically significant?

Is this tree still important in Alberta?

Alberta's official mammal is described as majestic, with a proud carriage and magnificent horns.

What is this animal? .....

Who did the government check with before they decided that it would be the official mammal? .....

The bull trout is Alberta's official fish. What does it look like?

How heavy can it grow? .....

How long can it live? .....

What do the following colours in Alberta's tartan represent?

Green .....

Gold .....

Blue .....

Pink .....

Black .....

What is the organization that designed the tartan now called? .....

*Look at Alberta's coat of arms below. What are each of the symbols, and what do they represent?*



# Chief Crowfoot Quotes

## Pronunciation

The table on the next page highlights the pronunciation problems that typically cause the most miscommunication. The middle column includes tips for avoiding that problem. The third column helps you practise putting those tips into practice using the following quote from **Chief Crowfoot**.



*"A **little while** | and I will  
be **gone** from among you,  
| **whither**, | I **cannot tell**. |  
From **nowhere** we **came**; |  
into **nowhere** we **go**. | **What**  
is **life**? | It is the **flash** of a  
**firefly** in the **night**. | It is the  
**breath** of a **buffalo** in the  
**winter time**. | It is as the **little**  
**shadow** | that **runs across**  
the **grass** | and **loses itself** in  
the **sunset**."*

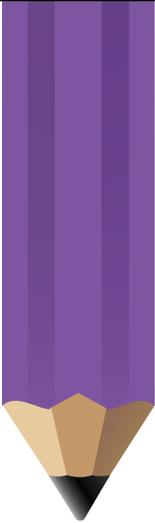
— Chief Crowfoot

Pronunciation Problems	Tips	
1. Missing or wrong word stress	Say all the multi-syllabic words in your quote with correct word stress. Make sure the unstressed syllables are very quiet.	<b>L</b> ittle, <b>NO</b> where, <b>FIRE</b> fly, <b>BU</b> fallo, <b>SHA</b> dow, a <b>CROSS</b> , it <b>SELF</b> , <b>SUN</b> set
2. Mispronouncing vowels in stressed syllables	Practise some of the vowels in the stressed syllables.	[ai]: while, life, firefly, night [ou]: nowhere, go [æ]: flash, shadow, grass
3. Mispronouncing consonants at the beginning of stressed syllables	Practise problem consonants, especially those at the beginning of stressed syllables.	<b>w</b> ill, <b>w</b> ither, <b>w</b> hile, <b>w</b> hat, <b>w</b> inter <b>l</b> ittle, <b>l</b> oses, <b>l</b> ife, <b>i</b> tself, <b>s</b> unset <b>f</b> lash, <b>f</b> irefly, <b>b</b> reath, <b>b</b> uffalo
4. Deleting final consonants	If one word ends with a consonant and another begins with a vowel, link the consonant to the vowel.	Fro m among you wha t is life? i t is the fla sh o f a firefly
5. Adding extra vowel sounds between words	If a word ends with a consonant and the next begins with a consonant, the first consonant stops the air and the second releases it.	i t is the brea th of a run s across lose s itself I cannot tell.
6. Missing or wrong rhythm and intonation	Say the quote. Which syllables are spoken <b>slowly and more loudly</b> (nouns, verbs, adjectives, negatives, et cetera), and which words are spoken very quickly and quietly? Which words have an intonation change? Where should you pause?	

What can you infer about Chief Crowfoot from the above quote? What kind of person was he? You will learn more about Chief Crowfoot in the next activity and on the Legislature tour.



# Chief Crowfoot



## Legislature Tour

On your Legislature tour, you will see a statue of Chief Crowfoot. In the 1800s he was the leader of the First Nations Blackfoot people in Southern Alberta. Crowfoot, along with other leaders, signed an agreement called Treaty 7 with the Dominion of Canada, which was meant to benefit both groups, offering help and education in exchange for land.

**Following are some quotes which have been attributed to Chief Crowfoot\*. With a partner or group select one of those quotes and follow the six tips on the previous page to help each other say the quote clearly and expressively.**

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“My brother, your words make me glad. I listened to them not only with my ears but with my heart also. In the coming of the Long Knives, with their firewater and quick-shooting guns, we are weak and our people have been woefully slain and impoverished. You say this will be stopped. We are glad to have it stopped. We want peace. What you tell us about this strong power which will govern good law and treat the Indian the same as the white man, makes us glad to hear. My brother, I believe you and am thankful.” p. 81 to 82

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“While I speak, be kind and patient. I have to speak for my people who are numerous and who rely upon me to follow the course which in the future will tend to their good. The plains are large and wide. We are the children of the plains. It is our home and the buffalo has been our food, always. I hope you will look upon the Blackfoot, Bloods, Piegans and Sarcees as your children now and that you will be considerate and charitable to them. They

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\* These quotes are from *Portraits from the Plains, Who was Who in Native American History*, by Carl Waldman (pages 81, 82, 86). Cited in <http://www.telusplanet.net/public/mtoll/crow.htm>

all expect me to speak for them and I trust the Great Spirit will put into their breasts to be good people, also into the minds of all men, women and children of future generations.” p.86

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“The advice given to me and my people has proven good. If the police had not come to this country, where would we all be now? Bad men and whiskey were killing us so fast that very few of us would have been alive today. The Mounted Police have protected us as the feathers of the bird protect it from the frosts of winter. I wish all my people good and trust that all our hearts will increase in goodness from this time forward. I am satisfied. I will sign the Treaty.” p. 86

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### *Regroup*

Take turns saying the quote to your group. Discuss the quotes. What kind of man was Chief Crowfoot? Give evidence from the quotes to support your answer.

# Chief Crowfoot

## Part 1: Introduction to Chief Crowfoot

### *Listening Comprehension*

Listen as the Heritage Interpreter introduces you to the statue of a very important person in Alberta's history: Chief Crowfoot. This statue can be found in the Rotunda of the Alberta Legislature.

*While you are listening, take notes on these main details from the audio:*

Which nation did Chief Crowfoot lead? .....

Where was that nation originally from? .....

What was the number of the Treaty he signed with the Canadian government? .....

What does he wear around his neck? .....

Why did he receive this item? .....

What does he wear on his head? .....

What does this item symbolize? .....

What does he have at his side? .....

What does this item symbolize? .....

What does he carry over his arm? .....

What does this item symbolize? .....

*Compare your notes with your neighbour.*

Do you have the same information? Can you help each other to complete the note-taking table correctly?

# Chief Crowfoot

## Part 2: Understanding the Crowfoot Legacy

You will watch a video featuring Hugh Dempsey, the Chief Curator Emeritus of the Glenbow Museum in Calgary. He is a historian who has studied the history of the Blackfoot people, the people of Chief Crowfoot and he wrote a book titled *Crowfoot: Chief of the Blackfeet*.

### Pre-listening

1. Look at the vocabulary listed below. With others in your group talk about what the words and phrases mean. Use your English dictionary to look up three words or phrases that you are not familiar with and record their meanings and collocations below.

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Plains                 | <input type="checkbox"/> To have a spot             | <input type="checkbox"/> To be crippled by something |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Staff of life          | <input type="checkbox"/> Life as they knew it       | <input type="checkbox"/> Ailments                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Teepee                 | <input type="checkbox"/> To come to an end          | <input type="checkbox"/> Transform                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Robes                  | <input type="checkbox"/> To be all over             | <input type="checkbox"/> Throngs                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Extensively            | <input type="checkbox"/> Extinction                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Barely enough               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To see an end in sight | <input type="checkbox"/> Envisioned                 | <input type="checkbox"/> A welfare state             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To the detriment of    | <input type="checkbox"/> To be brought to its knees | <input type="checkbox"/> Dictator                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To secure something    | <input type="checkbox"/> Gopher                     | <input type="checkbox"/> To make or break something  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A land base            | <input type="checkbox"/> Adapting                   |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A gamble               | <input type="checkbox"/> Perpetual                  |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To till the ground     | <input type="checkbox"/> Mourning                   |  |

.....

.....

.....

2. Based on the vocabulary list, what do you think the tone of the video will be?

.....

.....

.....

3. Based on what you know about Chief Crowfoot from the quotes you examined earlier and what you learned on the Legislature tour, make at least three predictions about what you might hear in the video:

.....

.....

.....

The video can be found at [YouTube.com](#) – Click on this.

# Chief Crowfoot

## First Listening

As you listen to each section, jot down notes on what you hear. At the end of each section, with your group, tell what you heard. Be sure to use vocabulary from the Pre-listening **activity**.

<i>0:00 - 1:25</i>	On the plains it was the buffalo that were the staff of life. It provided _____ _____ By the 1860s _____ By 1877 _____ _____
<i>1:25 - 2:22</i>	When Chief Crowfoot signed Treaty 7, in 1877 _____ _____
<i>2:23 - 3:03</i>	But soon after Crowfoot signed Treaty 7, _____ By 1880, _____ _____
<i>3:03 - 3:42</i>	By the end of the 19 <sup>th</sup> century, _____ _____
<i>3:43 - 4:30</i>	If any tribe could transform from buffalo hunters to reserve dwellers, it was the Blackfoot. _____ _____
<i>4:30 - 5:58</i>	Even so, by 1905 _____ _____
<i>5:58 - 7:30</i>	But things got tougher still after the First World War. In 1918 _____ _____
<i>7:32 - end</i>	But Chief Crowfoot taught his family independence _____ _____ _____

**Look back at your predictions. Were they accurate?**

# Comprehension Questions

The following questions encourage you to explore causes and consequences.

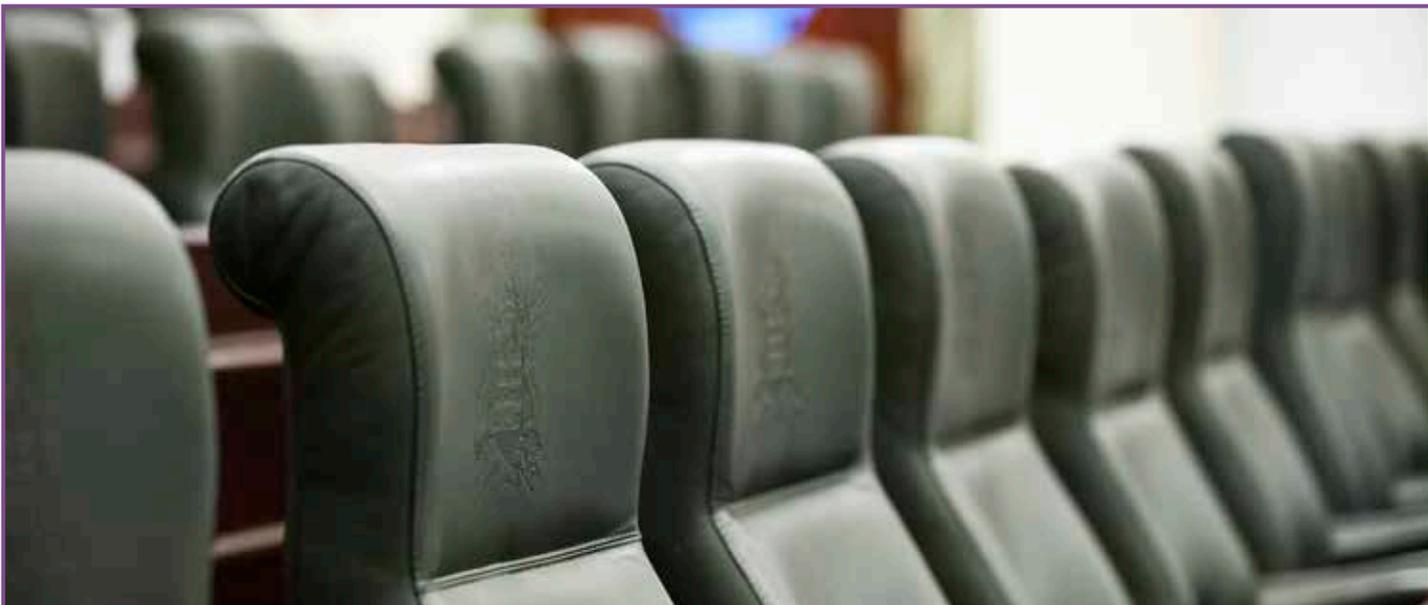
1. **Consequences:** Why were the buffalo so critical to the Blackfoot nation’s survival? What did they lose when the buffalo were gone? .....
2. **Causes:** Why did Crowfoot sign Treaty 7? List at least two factors. ....
3. **Causes:** Why did the Blackfoot have to rely on the government to keep them alive? .....
4. **Consequences:** What did Chief Crowfoot pass on to his people? .....
5. **Causes:** What factors limited the Blackfoot people’s ability to become independent and self-sufficient? .....

## *Detailed analysis*

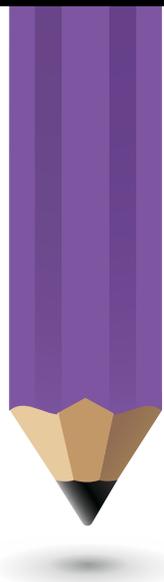
6. What do the following sentences mean?
  - a. “It was a gamble that the treaty would lead to a better future.”
  - b. “They saw education as the new buffalo.”

7. Complete the sentences using the correct verb tense (present or past perfect or conditional untrue), then explain to your partner why that verb tense was chosen:

- c. Hugh Dempsey ..... (write) extensively on the Blackfoot people.
- d. Crowfoot could ..... (chose) war.
- e. The reason he stayed out of the war is that his people would ..... (lose).
- f. The buffalo ..... (hunt) to near extinction.
- g. [His children] ..... (die) of various ailments.



# You and Your MLA



## Reading Comprehension

A Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) is elected to represent people in his or her riding or constituency at the provincial level of governance. You will read an article titled *You and Your MLA*. The article explains how MLAs represent the people of Alberta.

### *Predict*

Before you read the article, predict what you will learn.

1. What do you think the article will say about the duties and responsibilities of an MLA?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What kind of person do you think would make a good MLA?

## Vocabulary

Sometimes you need a dictionary to figure out the meaning of a word or phrase. But sometimes there are enough clues in the context for you to make a reasonable guess as to the meaning. The following words are bolded in the article. Find them in the article. Read the sentences before and after the word or phrase. Based on the context, make a reasonable guess about the meaning of the word or phrase.

1. **Constituency:**.....
2. **Constituent:**.....
3. **Eligible:**.....
4. **Rural:**.....
5. **Unanimous:**.....
6. **Caucus meetings:**.....
7. **Cabinet Ministers:**.....
8. **Backbencher:**.....
9. **Landslide election victory:**.....
10. **To shadow:**.....

# You and Your MLA



## Underline Key Ideas

**Read the article quickly.** As you read, underline the responsibilities and duties of MLAs in Alberta's democratic form of governance. Then answer the questions that follow.

### *You and Your MLA\**

Until the 1970s being a Member of Alberta's Legislative Assembly was for most a part-time job. Hours were long during sittings, but Members were able to hold other jobs when sessions were adjourned. Things have changed. The once part-time, sessional lawmaker has become a full-time MLA, facilitator, guest speaker, troubleshooter and goodwill ambassador. Modern communication, especially television coverage and webstreaming of question period and the increasing demand for governments to provide more and better services have transformed an MLA's relationship to his/her constituents and have radically changed the nature of the job.

Today we are more aware of the decisions our MLAs are making, and we want greater involvement in that decision-making. We want to tell them what we think and we want them to listen to us. To be there for us 12 months of the year, today's MLAs have offices in their **constituencies** and in the Legislature and may take calls at home at all hours of the day or night seven days a week. Gone is the part-time MLA. Their jobs are now full-time and then some.

### *Serving the Constituency*

First and foremost, MLAs represent their **constituents** and to represent means, above all, to communicate on behalf of. In the Assembly Chamber MLAs earn their living with their voices, making the views of their constituents known by introducing Bills and debating and discussing concerns with other Members. To represent you in the Assembly, your MLA communicates your concerns to other elected Members and to various government ministries.

But that is only a small part of your MLA's role as your representative. MLAs perform most of their duties in their constituencies, out of sight of cameras and reporters. Here they earn their living with their ears, listening to the problems, questions, ideas and opinions of the people who elected them.

\* Reprinted with permission from *The Citizen's Guide to the Alberta Legislature, 9th Edition (2016)*, p.22-30.

## *Who Is Represented?*

MLAs represent all their constituents, regardless if they are **eligible** to vote, didn't vote or their candidate was defeated.

Whether you are a farmer wondering about crop insurance, a businessperson wanting to expand your business, a senior citizen with a question about your pension or a worker applying for workers' compensation benefits, your MLA is willing to help you. MLAs from other constituencies may also be able to assist you. Often their role is simply to direct you to the people most qualified to deal with your concern, but your MLA may even become an advocate for you if your own attempts to solve a problem have been unsuccessful. MLAs also deal with special-interest groups. Do you belong to a group concerned about the environment, child care, health, impaired or distracted driving, education or any other important issue? Your group may want to meet with your MLA, who may take up your cause by proposing a new law or resolution in the Assembly or by writing a letter to a government ministry.

If you live in a **rural** area or constituency, your MLA may drive as many as 80,000 kilometres a year just getting around in your constituency and from the constituency to the Legislature. Rural Albertans expect their MLAs to be part of the communities they serve, attending graduations, anniversary celebrations and public events. Rural MLAs also meet with officials from municipalities, improvement districts, school and hospital boards, chambers of commerce and so on. Urban MLAs get together with individual Albertans and various organizations as well, both to seek their advice and to help them. While urban MLAs may not travel as far to keep in touch with their constituents, they often have more people to represent. In addition to meeting with their constituents, MLAs spend time becoming informed about matters of public interest, preparing speeches and going to meetings to talk about policies and issues.

## *Taking a Stand*

Of course, no MLA can agree with all constituents because people's opinions are never **unanimous**. MLAs often have to take sides and which side they take depends on party platforms, constituents' points of view and the MLAs' personal beliefs.

MLAs try to determine how most people feel about a given issue. Through public meetings, day-to-day contact and local media forums MLAs gather information from as many constituents as possible. They then discuss the issue in private meetings, called **caucus meetings**, with other MLAs from the same party. The caucus members decide as a group what their party's position will be. Voting in the Legislature tends to be along party lines, according to what the caucus decided beforehand; however, a number of parliamentary reforms enacted in 1993, one of them allowing free votes on some bills and motions, means that members may vote as they see fit rather than according to their caucus' position. If some MLAs feel that the caucus' position does not reflect what their constituents want or that it would not be beneficial to their constituents, they can and sometimes do speak against the position of their caucus.

## *Your MLA as a Cabinet Minister*

It is not uncommon for constituents to contact **Cabinet Ministers** as well as their own MLAs. Because Cabinet Ministers are MLAs in charge of specific government ministries, they are in a position to influence ministry policies and programs. Ministers may remain Ministers but not MLAs when the House has been dissolved for an election. As well as representing you, Ministers are ultimately responsible for whatever their ministries do.

## *Your MLA as a Private Government Member*

Private government Members are often called **backbenchers** because in the Assembly they sit in the back rows, behind the Cabinet Ministers. However, the correct term for any Member who is not in cabinet is "private Member." A private government Member is a private Member who belongs to the governing party.

Like other MLAs the private government Member is there to hear your concerns and to try to act on them. He or she has the additional advantage of belonging to the same party as the Cabinet Ministers, who of course play a key role in determining programs and policies.

Historically Alberta has been a province of **landslide election victories** for the winning party. As a result, governing parties of the past have had a large number of private government Members, whose role in the Assembly was limited

to supporting decisions made by ministers. Recently, however, these private Members have had a greater part in both the Assembly and all-party standing and select special committees. They sit on government and legislative committees and even sponsor government Bills other than money Bills (that is, Bills that have the approval of cabinet before being introduced and, therefore, a good chance of passing and becoming law). In addition, private government Members will in the same way that opposition Members do, introduce their own Bills, called private Members' public Bills and raise their constituents' concerns in the Legislature.

### *Your MLA in Opposition*

You may also want to take your concern to an MLA from one of the opposition parties. The role of an opposition party is to criticize government activity, hold the government accountable, propose improvements and present itself to the public as an alternative to the party in office.

Opposition parties assign some of their MLAs to be critics of specific departments. Collectively opposition critics are called a shadow cabinet. For example, a resource development critic takes up problems with the Environment and Sustainable Resource Development Minister, suggesting alternative policies and development priorities and keeping energy policies in the public eye. You might see a resource development critic on the job if you watch Oral Question Period. Critics may have more than one Minister to **shadow** and would have to be familiar with the policies, practices and plans of each ministry. Opposition critics, like the Ministers they shadow, hear concerns and ideas from various persons and interest groups from anywhere in the province.

### *Your Participation Is Vital*

You must do your part so that your MLA can represent you effectively. One of your obligations as a constituent is to be informed. Not every issue will interest you, of course, but if a policy or issue is important to you, learn as much as you can about it before approaching your MLA. Sometimes just unearthing basic facts can help you come up with ideas or solutions. MLAs rely on their constituents for information and ideas.

If you really want to get involved at the policy-making level, join a political party. Look in the White Pages, on the Internet or through social media. Although parties are most visible during an election campaign, you can join at any time. And, remember, all MLAs began their careers as ordinary party members trying to make a difference in how our province is governed.

Your vote is critical, but before casting your ballot in an election, find out as much as you can about each candidate's position so that you can choose the one who most closely reflects how you feel about issues that are important to you. Even if you don't contact your MLA or work for a political party, voting is an important contribution to the democratic process.

### *Getting in Touch*

If you need to find out who your MLA is, check your telephone directory under the government of Alberta or call either Elections Alberta at 780.427.7191 or the Legislature information line at 780.427.2826. They will let you know your MLA's name, address and telephone number. This information is also easily accessed online at [www.assembly.ab.ca](http://www.assembly.ab.ca).

If you decide to write to your MLA, state your question or concern as completely as you can. You may also telephone your MLA at his or her constituency or Legislature office during regular office hours as well as write or phone the appropriate Cabinet Minister or opposition critics.

MLAs strive to be available, accessible and accountable to their constituents. They can reach these objectives through open communication with you, the constituent.





2. You underlined the duties and responsibilities of MLAs in Alberta. Based on what you underlined, infer at least eight skills, abilities or personal characteristics that an MLA needs to have. The first has been done as an example:

***An MLA must be resourceful (in order to find ways to help constituents).***

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

***Compare your list with a partner's list.***

***Explain why each characteristic is particularly important for an MLA.***

# You and Your MLA

## Role-play

Your instructor will assign you a role. Read your role-play card and gather information from the article. Role-play the conversation with a partner.

### *Career Counsellor*

Imagine you are counselling someone who is considering a political career. Sometime in the future, she/he would like to run for office. That is, this person would like to be an MLA. Your goal is to determine whether this person might make a good MLA. What questions could you ask about this person's knowledge, skills and personal characteristics?

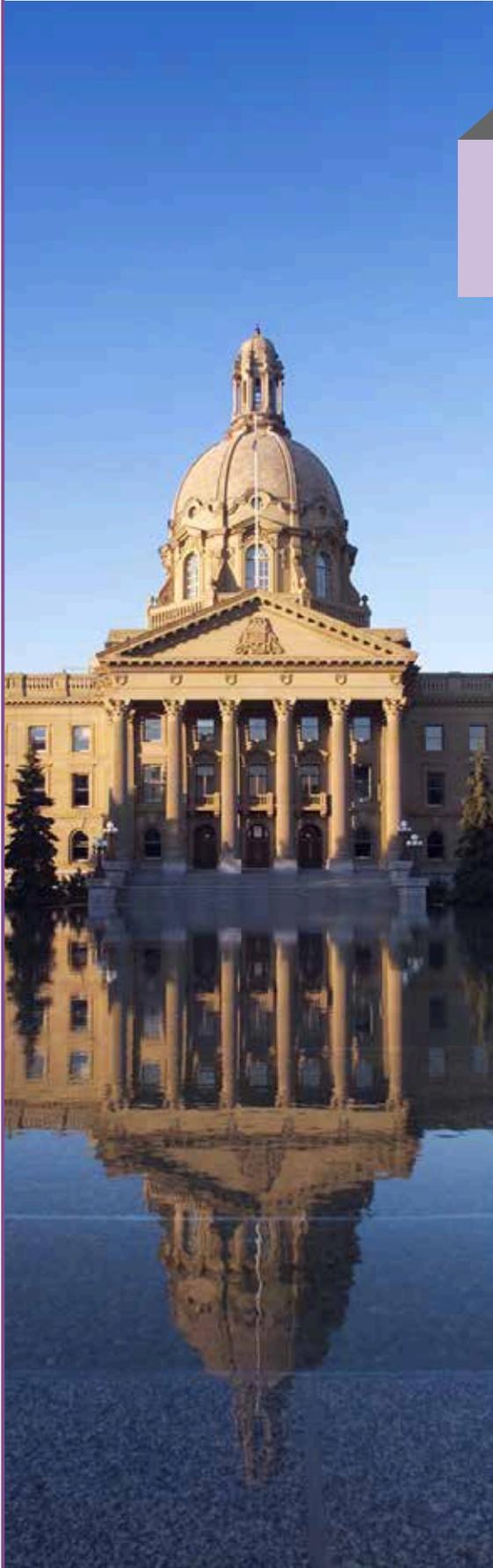
What skills and characteristics might the person need to develop? What suggestions could you make about steps to take to prepare for a political career?

### *Potential MLA*

Imagine you are considering a career in politics. At some point you would like to run for office. That is, you would like to become an MLA.

Think of evidence (from your education, job experience, life experience, hobbies, et cetera.) that you can use to show you have the skills and abilities necessary for a career in politics. (*Note: as this is a role-play, you can make some of this up!*)

You will talk to a career counsellor about your interest.





## Learner's Activity

### Post-tour Materials

The post-tour materials include reading, writing and speaking tasks that encourage you to make use of the ideas and language you gained through the Legislature tour.

1. Two Styles of Governing: Reading Comprehension
2. Two Styles of Governing: Writing a Summary that Compares and Contrasts
3. Countering an Argument: Writing a Paragraph
4. Debating a Current Issue



# Two Styles of Governing

## Reading Comprehension

### *Pre-reading: Discussion*

After the pretour activities and the Alberta Legislature tour, you should be somewhat familiar with the **Canadian** parliamentary system. In the past you might have learned a bit about the government of the **United States**, either formally in school, or informally through the media.

With a partner or group brainstorm for what you think are the similarities and differences between the Canadian and American systems:

#### Similarities



#### Differences



# Two Styles of Governing



## Pre-reading

### Vocabulary

Following is a selection from the article you will read. Using clues from the context, match each bolded word with one of the definitions that follow:

In Canadian Legislatures members introduce **Bills** in the House at first reading. All bills are introduced in complete form and read almost exactly the same as they would should they become the law of the province. Bills are then debated in three stages-second reading, Committee of the Whole and third reading-and must pass each stage to go on to the next. **Passage** is by a simple majority of members present for the vote. Government Bills-Bills that receive the prior approval of cabinet-usually pass with few, if any, **amendments** while Bills introduced by private Members are much less likely to be passed. After passing third reading, Bills are granted **royal assent** by the Lieutenant Governor before officially becoming law.

In bicameral state Legislatures in the United States Bills may be introduced in the House of Representatives or the Senate. In some states representatives may introduce a Bill in **skeleton form** to see if the idea will **fly** before going to the trouble of **drafting** a complete Bill. Once introduced, Bills are referred to a committee that studies them, changing them where necessary to ensure their eventual passage or **blocking** further consideration. The committee reports its findings to the House or the Senate, depending on where the Bill originated, and successful Bills are **considered** there for some time before being put to a vote. Voting in state Legislatures is not necessarily along party lines, as it is in Canada and often a Bill **sponsored** by a member from the majority party will not have enough support from that party to pass. State Legislatures also **make no distinction** between government Bills and private Members' Bills; however, some Bills in some states must have a two-thirds majority to pass. Bills that pass **one body** then **undergo** the same process in the other. If Bills are successful, depending on the state, the Governor signs them into law or may **veto** all or parts of them.\*

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\* Most of the content above was excerpted from *The Citizen's Guide to the Alberta Legislature, 9th Edition (2016)*

# Two Styles of Governing

Words from excerpt	Definitions
	<b>1.</b> An incomplete, unfinished version (e.g., of a Bill or text), an outline
	<b>2.</b> Ideas for new laws, or suggested changes to old laws
	<b>3.</b> The act of writing a version (e.g., of a Bill or text)
	<b>4.</b> To see no difference between two things, to treat two things equally
	<b>5.</b> Movement from one stage to another; can also refer to a group's acceptance of a proposal.
	<b>6.</b> An organized group of people (e.g., a committee, a Senate, a Legislative Assembly)
	<b>7.</b> Formal agreement or acceptance of a law, by the monarch (King or Queen) or his/her representative
	<b>8.</b> Preventing something from happening or progressing
	<b>9.</b> To think about something carefully, to debate or discuss
	<b>10.</b> To reject a decision, proposal or Bill
	<b>11.</b> Introduced and supported by someone
	<b>12.</b> Additions, deletions or other changes (to a Bill or other formal document)
	<b>13.</b> To experience, to go through some process or procedure



# Two Styles of Governing

## Provincial and State Legislatures\*

Now read the entire article and answer the questions which follow.

The Canadian and American systems of government are both democracies with roots in the British parliamentary system. As well, both Canada and the United States chose the federal system, dividing power between regional and national governments, giving each its own areas of jurisdiction. In spite of their obvious similarities, the two systems are quite different. For example, Canada is a constitutional monarchy while the United States is a republic.

### *The Person at the Top*

Constitutionally His Majesty King Charles III is the King of Canada and the head of state while the real power is held by the head of government (the Prime Minister at the federal level or the Premier at the provincial level) and cabinet. On the advice of the Prime Minister the Governor General appoints a Lieutenant Governor to represent the monarch in each province. The Lieutenant Governor typically gives royal assent to Bills, opens and closes sessions of the Legislature and accepts the Premier's resignation if the government is defeated in the Assembly.

In the United States the head of state and head of government are one and the same. This is true at both the federal (President) and state (Governor) levels. At the state level there is a Lieutenant Governor as well, but the person who fills this position is elected, presides over the state Senate and fills in for the Governor when he or she is absent.

### *The Legislatures*

All provincial Canadian Legislatures are unicameral, meaning that there is only one body of elected representatives. In Alberta this body is called the Legislative Assembly.

In the United States all state Legislatures except Nebraska's are bicameral, meaning that the people elect two groups of representatives: a House of Representatives and a Senate.

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\* Reprinted with permission from *The Citizen's Guide to the Alberta Legislature, 9th Edition (2016)*.

# Two Styles of Governing



## *Elections*

In Canada some provinces have decided to set fixed election dates whereby a maximum term of office is specified. There is no minimum term of service as a term of government can be cut short at any time if a major government proposal is defeated. This is considered a vote of nonconfidence, which results in the fall of the government and an election call. Voters elect candidates in their own constituencies and do not directly elect their Premier. The leader of the party electing the most seats normally becomes the Premier.

In state Legislatures terms of office are fixed and citizens elect the Governor and the Legislature separately. The whole state elects the Governor while members of the Legislature are elected by their own districts. It is not unusual for the Governor to belong to a different political party than that of the majority of the members of the House of Representatives or the Senate.

## *The Party System*

Political parties play an important role in both provincial and state Legislatures. In the Canadian system the survival of the government depends on party unity. Party discipline prevents Members of the Assembly from publicly criticizing their party or voting against its policies or decisions. If enough government Members vote against a government proposal, it can be defeated. As mentioned above, the defeat of a major government proposal is a vote of nonconfidence.

In the American system the role of parties in the House is less obvious. Elected representatives frequently support their local interests at the expense of their party's overall policies, and the Governor does not necessarily control the Legislature even if the Governor's party has a majority of seats.

## *Powers of Government*

The powers of democratic governments are divided among the executive, the legislative and the judicial branches. The executive branch administers existing laws and, through Cabinet Ministers, proposes new ones. The legislative branch approves laws by voting on them in an Assembly, and the judicial branch interprets the laws and applies them through the courts.

Provincial and state governments have organized these powers very differently. In Canada we have the principle of responsible government, meaning that the cabinet's major proposals for laws and spending must have the approval of a majority in the Legislative Assembly. In addition, the Premier and Cabinet Ministers, or executive branch, are also Members of the Legislative Assembly, or legislative branch, and both the Premier and Cabinet Ministers may vote on the Bills they introduce. Thus, parliamentary government features a concentration or fusion of powers.

# Two Styles of Governing



In the United States the executive and legislative branches are completely separate, and this total separation of powers is what most distinguishes the American from the Canadian system. A state Governor is not a Member of the Legislature but is elected separately and appoints the cabinet, which does not include Members of the Legislature. The Governor provides leadership and initiates important laws, particularly the state budget, but does not vote on Bills in the House of Representatives or the Senate. Instead, when both Houses have passed a Bill, the Governor signs it into law.

## *Making Laws*

In both provincial and state Legislatures ideas for new laws or changes to old ones are called bills and come from the same sources: citizens, individual elected Members or special-interest groups and other organizations. However, Bills become law in very different ways in the two countries.

In Canadian Legislatures Members introduce Bills in the House at first reading. All bills are introduced in complete form and read almost exactly the same as they would should they become the law of the province. Bills are then debated in three stages—second reading, Committee of the Whole and third reading—and must pass each stage to go on to the next. Passage is by a simple majority of Members present for the vote. Government Bills—Bills that receive the prior approval of cabinet—usually pass with few, if any, amendments while Bills introduced by non-cabinet Members have little chance of passing at all. After passing third reading, Bills are granted royal assent by the Lieutenant Governor before officially becoming law.

In bicameral state Legislatures in the United States Bills may be introduced in the House of Representatives or the Senate. In some states representatives may introduce a Bill in skeleton form to see if the idea will fly before going to the trouble of drafting a complete Bill. Once introduced, bills are referred to a committee that studies them, changing them where necessary to ensure their eventual passage or blocking further consideration. The committee reports its findings to the House or the Senate, depending on where the Bill originated, and successful Bills are considered there for some time before being put to a vote. Voting in state Legislatures is not necessarily along party lines as it is in Canada, and often a Bill sponsored by a member from the dominant party will not have enough support from that party to pass. State Legislatures also make no distinction between government Bills and private Members' Bills; however, some Bills in some states must have a two-thirds majority to pass. Bills that pass through one body then undergo the same process in the other. If Bills are successful, depending on the state, the Governor signs them into law or may veto all or parts of them.

## Focus on Meaning

1. Which of the following statements best captures the main idea of the reading?
  - a. The Canadian and American governments are both democracies.
  - b. The American system of government is more democratic than the Canadian system.
  - c. The Canadian system of government is better than the American system of government.
  - d. The Canadian and American systems of government are quite different.
  - e. The monarchy plays a part in the Canadian system of government but not in the American system of government.
  
2. Indicate whether the following statements are true for the **U.S.**, **Canada** or **both**:
  - f. Both The British parliamentary system has influenced the government.
  - g. \_\_\_\_\_ Citizens vote directly for their head of state or province (i.e., Governor or Premier).
  - h. \_\_\_\_\_ The head of the province/state is also the head of the governing party.
  - i. \_\_\_\_\_ Elected officials know exactly how long it will be until the next election.
  - j. \_\_\_\_\_ Elected officials seldom openly disagree with their party's stands on specific issues.
  - k. \_\_\_\_\_ The head of state/province (i.e., Governor or Premier) can introduce and vote on Bills.
  - l. \_\_\_\_\_ Bills proposed by a ruling party are more likely to become law in this country.
  - m. \_\_\_\_\_ A Bill that is proposed usually goes through many changes before it becomes law.
  - n. \_\_\_\_\_ Ideas for new laws can come from elected officials or citizens, and they are discussed, debated and finally voted on by Members of the Legislature.
  
3. Before the Legislature tour you read an article about the roles and responsibilities of MLAs in Alberta. Based on what you remember from that article, the Legislature tour and the information in this article, contrast the roles and responsibilities of the **Lieutenant Governor** in Alberta with the roles and responsibilities of an **MLA**.
  
4. What word best describes the tone of the article?
  - o. Neutral
  - p. Biased
  - q. Opinionated
  - r. Persuasive

# Analyze the Structure of the Article

## Comparing and Contrasting

1. This article compares and contrasts American and Canadian systems of government. With a partner discuss how the writer uses paragraphing and vocabulary choices to indicate whether he is talking about the U.S. or Canada. Write down your observations.
2. In a few sections of the paper the author uses explicit comparison or contrast vocabulary. Reread the following sections and then fill in the middle column in the table below:
  - The introductory paragraph
  - The Party System
  - Making Laws

	Language from the article	Other useful language
Pointing out similarity		
Addition of another similarity or difference		
A move from talking about similarities to talking about differences		
Pointing out difference		
Introducing examples or explanations	For example,	

3. Following is a list of other expressions that are often used in comparison and contrast writing. Work with a partner to sort the expressions into the correct category in the table on the previous page. As you do, practise using the expression in sentences about Canadian and U.S. systems of government.

..... A and B differ in terms of who/what/how/where/when they...

..... Although they both .....,

..... Although they have many superficial similarities, A and B are really quite different.

..... Another difference between A and B is...

- ..... Comparative words with “er”
- ..... A and B also differ in how they...
- ..... Despite their similarities,
- ..... For instance,
- ..... In contrast to A, B...
- ..... In contrast,
- ..... In other words,
- ..... In the same way,...
- ..... Like A, B...
- ..... More/less
- ..... One difference between A and B is...
- ..... Similarly,...
- ..... This means that
- ..... While it is true that they both .....,

## Writing Tasks

Following are two writing tasks.

- ⦿ Each task requires you to make use of the transitions you just reviewed.
- ⦿ Each task requires you to use evidence from sources to support your point. Following are some reporting phrases that might be useful:
  - According to ....., + complete idea.
  - states that + a fact, a quote.
  - emphasizes that + a key point
  - discusses/describes/explains/examines how/why...
- ⦿ Each task includes a “Did I...?” checklist of criteria that are important for the writing task. Be sure to read the checklist **before** you do your writing. Then review the checklist **after** you have completed your writing and **check off** the criteria you have met. Your teacher may ask you to submit the checklist along with your writing assignment.



# Two Styles of Governing

## Writing a Summary that Compares and Contrasts

Your summary should be one substantial paragraph with a topic sentence and supporting points.

- Your topic sentence should
  - capture the main idea of the article
  - use a reporting phrase to introduce the idea (e.g., according to the [The Citizen's Guide to the Alberta Legislature, 9<sup>th</sup> Edition \(2016\)](#) + main idea).
- Use some of the comparison and contrast language you just reviewed.
- Although it is OK to use key words from the article (government, Bill, state, province), your sentences should be your own. If you use a string of words from the article, you should use quotation marks. Reference any quotes to [The Citizen's Guide to the Alberta Legislature, 9<sup>th</sup> Edition \(2016\)](#).

# Checklist

After writing your summary, look at the following checklist. If you cannot place a checkmark beside any of the criteria, then revise your summary so that you can do so.

Did I...

- Include a topic sentence that has a reporting phrase, the source of the article and the main idea of the article?*
- Combine chunks of similar ideas?*
- Accurately present the author's key ideas?*
- Use my own words and sentences? (i.e., did you avoid plagiarism?)*
- Use quotation marks when I used strings of words from the article?*
- Omit minor details?*
- Organize the paragraph logically?*

## ***Clarify comparisons and contrasts using***

- Correct word choices*
- Transitions to show similarity and difference*
- Transitions to show addition (i.e., addition of a difference)*
- Transitions to move from similarity to difference*
- Transitions to introduce examples and explanations*

Consider other writing you have done for your instructor. What are your two most common errors? Check them off below:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Run-on sentences</i>                 | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Word form errors</i>   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Fragments (incomplete sentences)</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Word order errors</i>  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Article errors</i>                   | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Punctuation errors</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Verb form and tense errors</i>       | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Other:</i>             |

Read your summary out loud. Check to make sure you are not making those particular errors.

## Writing a Summary Rubric

Name.....	Date.....	Rating				Comments
<b>Overall Effectiveness</b>						
Effectively conveys the key ideas and tone of the original article		4	3	2	1	
<b>Analytic Criteria</b>						
Includes a main idea sentence that captures the main idea and includes a reporting phrase and citation		4	3	2	1	
Conveys all essential information		4	3	2	1	
Reduces information to main points with accurate supporting details		4	3	2	1	
Avoids plagiarism by using own words, using reporting phrases and using quotation marks where necessary		4	3	2	1	
Uses appropriate connective words and phrases to clarify comparisons and contrasts		4	3	2	1	
Demonstrates control of simple and complex structures		4	3	2	1	
Makes use of a good range of vocabulary		4	3	2	1	
Demonstrates good control of spelling, punctuation and format		4	3	2	1	
<b>4=achieved with excellence, 3=achieved adequately, 2=partially achieved, 1=not yet achieved</b>		<b>Total Score</b>				



# Countering an Argument

## Writing a Paragraph

*Consider the following:*

- ⦿ Two Styles of Governing: Provincial and State Legislatures has a neutral tone. That is, the goal of the writer is to explain the differences between the American and Canadian systems of government to a curious reader. The goal is not to argue that one style of government is particularly good in some way, or that it is better or more democratic than another. The article does not express an opinion. However, you might indeed have an opinion!
- ⦿ Your Legislature Heritage Interpreter probably started the tour with a statement similar to the following: “The Alberta Legislature is the people’s building and the heart of the province’s democracy.” He or she then went on to tell you about symbols and traditions that emphasize the role of the people in Canada’s democracy. He or she might also have mentioned symbols related to the monarchy along with symbols and traditions that show the limits on the monarchy’s powers.
- ⦿ The article you read before the tour, You and Your MLA, talked about how MLAs go about representing the people of Alberta and how the people of Alberta can have a say in what the government does.

Think about what you learned in the Legislature tour. Think about what you learned about the roles and responsibilities of MLAs in You and Your MLA. Think about what you just read in Two Styles of Governing. What do you think about the role of the people in Canada’s (or Alberta’s) government?

- a. Do you feel that citizens in the United States have a greater voice in what happens in their country than Albertans or Canadians do? Do they have more power than Canadian voters? What evidence do you have to support your opinion?
- b. Do you think that the people in Canada or Alberta have a key role in governing their country or province? What evidence do you have that they do play a key role?

## Your task

Write a paragraph in which you identify and briefly explain an opponent's argument, but then counter that opinion and give evidence to support your point about the role of citizens in Canada's or Alberta's democracy. For instance, if you agree with A above, then B might be the opponent's argument that you counter. If you agree with B, A might be the argument you counter.

- You could follow one of the following patterns:
  - **It's true that** + other side's argument (if it is a fact) + some details about that argument. However, + your opinion/counter argument + supporting points + facts and details to support each point.
  - **It might be argued that** + other side's argument (if it is an opinion).
  - **However,** + your opinion/counter argument + supporting points + facts and details to support each point.
- Use evidence from the following three sources: Two Styles of Governing, You and your MLA or the Legislature Tour to support your paragraph.
- If you are not familiar with how to respond to a counter argument you might find the following video by Sam Tabbakh useful. Counter Argument: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NPrRSPHuJkg&feature=channel&list=UL>

After writing your paragraph, look through the following checklist. If you cannot place a checkmark beside any of the criteria, then revise your paragraph so that you can do so.

Did I...

- Identify the counter argument?*
- Provide some details about that side's argument?*
- Address the counter-argument?*
- Clearly express my stand on the issue?*
- Provide enough details and evidence to support my opinion?*
- Use transitions*
  - to move from talking about the other side's opinion*
  - to talking about my opinion?*
  - to move from one main point to another?*
  - to show contrast?*
  - to introduce examples or explanations?*
  - Use my own words and sentences? (i.e., did I avoid plagiarism?)*
- Use quotation marks when I used strings of words from the article?*
- Use reporting phrases to give credit for words and ideas?*

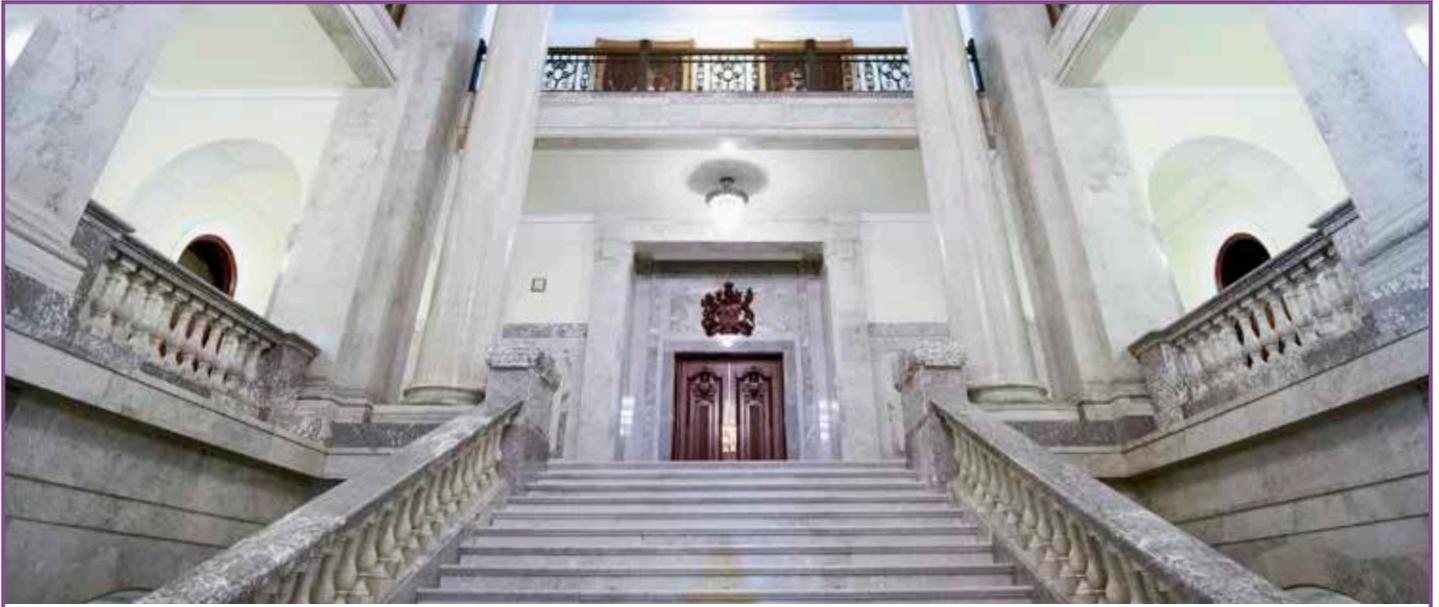
Consider other writing you have done for your instructor. What are your two most common errors? Check them off below:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Run-on sentences</i>                 | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Word form errors</i>   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Fragments (incomplete sentences)</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Word order errors</i>  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Article errors</i>                   | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Punctuation errors</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Verb form and tense errors</i>       | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Other:</i>             |

Read your counter-argument paragraph out loud. Check to make sure you are not making those particular errors.

### Paragraph Rubric

Name .....	Date .....	Rating				Comments
<b>Overall Effectiveness</b>		4	3	2	1	
Effectively counters an opponent's argument						
<b>Analytic Criteria</b>						
Appropriately presents a relevant counter argument		4	3	2	1	
Clearly indicates limitations or disagreement with the counter argument		4	3	2	1	
Clearly expresses his/her stand on the issue		4	3	2	1	
Provides sufficient evidence and details to support his/her stand		4	3	2	1	
Avoids plagiarism by using own words, using in-text references and using quotation marks where necessary		4	3	2	1	
Presents text as a coherent connected whole with the use of appropriate connective words and phrases		4	3	2	1	
Demonstrates control of simple and complex structures		4	3	2	1	
Makes use of a good range of vocabulary		4	3	2	1	
Demonstrates good control of spelling, punctuation and format		4	3	2	1	
4=achieved with excellence, 3=achieved adequately, 2=partially achieved, 1=not yet achieved		<b>Total Score</b>				



# Debating a Current Issue

## Speaking Task

1. In groups of four to six identify a debatable issue that is currently relevant in your school, community or Alberta. (see Instructor's Notes for sample topics)
2. Agree on a position or resolution that can be debated. For example: "Alberta should ban the sale of flavoured tobacco products."
3. Divide into two teams: One team will support the resolution/bill and the other will oppose it.
4. Take on the roles of MLAs representing the best interests of their constituents. Research the topic. In each team one member should plan to present the main arguments of the team's position, another member should counter the opposing team's arguments and another should wrap up with a final argument. Prepare for your debate. Refer to the "Did I...?" checklist on next page to see what is important when debating.
5. Debate the resolution following the schedule below.
  - Team A: Presents arguments to support the resolution/bill. (four minutes)
  - Team B: Presents arguments to oppose the resolution/bill. (four minutes)
  - Team A: Counters Team B's arguments. (three minutes)
  - Team B: Counters Team A's arguments. (three minutes)
  - Team A: Final wrap-up (three minutes)
  - Team B: Final wrap-up (three minutes)

Listeners take note of the key points on each side of the debate. The class votes on whether or not to pass the resolution/bill.

Did I...

- Appropriately oppose or support a stand?*
- Seem knowledgeable and well prepared?*
- Clearly express my opinion?*

AND/OR

- Clearly counter an argument the other side made?*
  - Summarize the argument to confirm my understanding?*
  - Explain the limitations of the argument?*
- Provide enough details and evidence to support my point?*
- Use vocal expression, gestures and eye contact to keep my audience engaged?*

# Debate Rubric

	Name	Name	Name	Name	Name	Name
Appropriately opposes or supports a position (wholistic)						
Is clearly knowledgeable and well prepared						
Expresses opinions; provides arguments, details and evidence to support a position OR Counters an argument: summarizes to confirm understanding; expresses reservation, concern; provides details and evidence						
Uses vocal expression, gestures, eye contact, et cetera to keep audience engaged						
Speaks fluently and at a normal rate						
Uses an expanded range of vocabulary, structures and idiomatic language which may include some common cultural references						
<b>Total Score</b>						
<b>4=achieved easily, 3=achieved, 2=difficulty achieving, 1=not yet achieved</b>						

**Legislative Assembly of Alberta - Visitor Services**

*English Language Learners: Activity Book – 7 to 8*

Phone: 780.427.7362 • Toll Free: 310.0000 • [visitorinfo@assembly.ab.ca](mailto:visitorinfo@assembly.ab.ca)

