



LEGISLATIVE
ASSEMBLY
OF ALBERTA

MAKE A MACE

Symbols and Mace construction activity

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VISITOR SERVICES

Overview

In this lesson you will learn about the Mace used by the Legislative Assembly of Alberta. You will learn about the history of the mace and what it is used for today. You will also learn about other provincial symbols and be able to construct your very own mace!

Introduction

Have you heard the word **symbol** before? What does **symbol** mean to you?

Symbol: Something that stands for something else, not by exact appearance, but by suggestion.



In your head: Why do we have symbols? Can you think of some examples of symbols in your life? In your home? Your classroom? Your community?

Write it down: Why are symbols important? Do symbols have the same importance for every person?



Personal symbols

Come up with a symbol, or a few symbols, that have meaning to you and fill out the sheet below. Think about why this symbol has meaning. Maybe the symbol has a history, maybe it is made up of important parts, maybe it represents something of significance.

Draw a symbol (or two) that has meaning to you.

Name of Symbol: _____

Why is this symbol important to you?

What does this symbol represent?

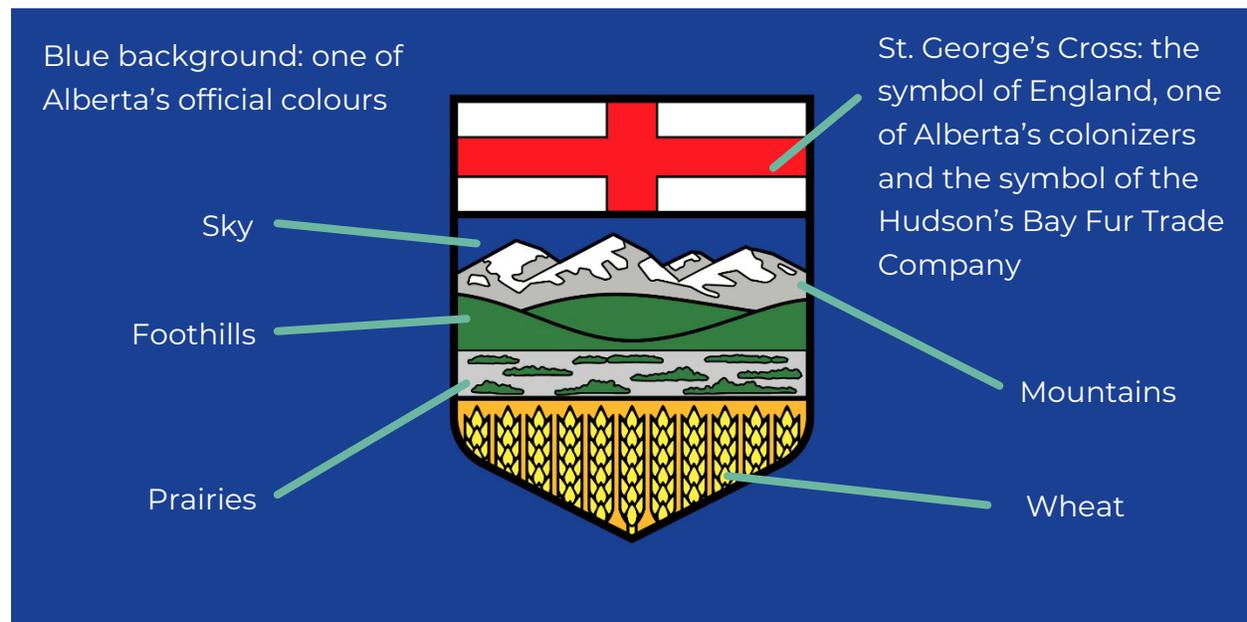


Provincial symbols

Now think about some symbols in Canada and Alberta. Albertan symbols might include our coat-of-arms, the provincial flag, or any of the following:

| | |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| Provincial flower: | Alberta wild-rose |
| Provincial tree: | Lodgepole pine |
| Provincial stone: | Petrified wood |
| Provincial grass: | Rough fescue |
| Provincial mammal: | Bighorn sheep |
| Provincial fish: | Bull trout |
| Provincial bird: | Great horned owl |

The flag is a great example of a provincial symbol with many meanings. As a whole, the flag represents our province, but each part of the flag has a meaning as well.





So what about the Mace?

Morning Star

Mace

Flail



In History

The mace used to be a weapon. Although the three medieval weapons above look similar, only the middle one is a mace. In the Middle Ages, a mace was the weapon of choice of the King's bodyguards. This led to people thinking about the King whenever they saw a mace. The mace was a **symbol** of the King.

Today

Since the King of Canada is still our Head of State, the Legislative Assembly uses a mace to represent them.





The easiest way to think of it is that the Mace is a big, shiny permission slip that let's our Government make laws.

Democracy: This word comes from two Greek words: *Demos* and *Kratia*. Together, they mean 'rule by the people.'

In your head: The government needs permission from the King to make laws. Who else do they need permission from? HINT: Who has the power in a democracy?

Write it down: Look at the image of the mace on the next page. We have identified several of its symbols for you. Why do you think the Legislative Assembly of Alberta chose each of these symbols?

Beaver: _____

Crown: _____

Maple leaf: _____

Sheaf of wheat: _____

Shield of Alberta: _____

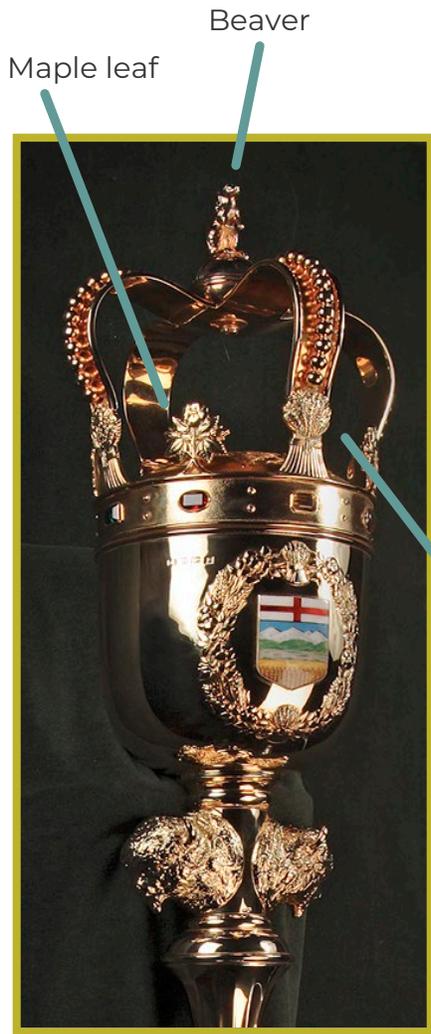
Bison heads: _____

Wild roses: _____

Wonder what makes it shine? The mace is made out of sterling silver and plated in gold. It weighs more than twenty pounds! Why do you think the mace is made of such fine material?



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Crown

Shield of Alberta

Bison heads

Sheaf of wheat





Make a Mace

Materials required:

- Cardboard cylinders (from paper towels, wrapping paper, etc. – toilet paper rolls will be too small)
- Construction paper
- Plastic containers (from yogurt, ice cream, etc.)
- Glue or tape
- Coloured markers
- Buttons, sequins, plastic jewels, pebbles, and other decorations



Instructions

1. On the bottom of the plastic container, trace the circumference of your cylinder. Cut out the traced circle.



2. Draw the crown of your mace on construction paper. Cut it out. You can decorate your crown with markers and ornaments. Glue it onto the container.
3. To make the staff of the mace, use a long cardboard cylinder or tape/glue a few cylinders together. You can also make it out of several pieces of paper.
4. Decorate the staff with markers, ornaments, or construction paper. You can draw symbols of Alberta, your school, your community, etc. Be sure to leave the top of the cylinder blank as you will not be able to see it.

5. Insert the staff into the hole in the container and use tape to hold it in place.
6. Ta-da! You have your very own Legislative Mace!



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The Mace write-up

- Write a summary for your mace. Things to think about:
- Why did you choose the materials you used?
- What symbols did you include on your mace and why?
- What do those symbols represent?
- Is there anything else interesting about your mace you'd like to share?

Share your ideas with your classmates. What kind of maces did everyone else make?

You can see the Alberta Mace on a tour of the Legislature Building. You can also hear the AMAZING story about Alberta's first mace!



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Thinking outside Alberta

Remember, every Legislative Assembly in Canada needs their own mace. Canada has one for every province and territory, and two for the Federal Government: one for the House of Commons and one for the Senate. That's fifteen maces in total!

← This is the Mace of Nunavut. What do you see that represents the territory of Nunavut?

Additional Links and Resources

Assembly Online

Watch current and past sessions online:

<http://assemblyonline.assembly.ab.ca/harmony/>.

Parliament and other Canadian Legislatures

Access the official websites of Parliament and other provincial and territorial legislatures: <https://www.assembly.ab.ca/links.htm>.

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Make a Mace directions adapted from: The Legislative Assembly of Alberta, The Mock Legislature Student Debate Teacher Manual, 2nd Edition (Edmonton: The Legislative Assembly of Alberta, 2012).

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