



Preparing to vote

ACTIVITY



30 minutes
approximately

A close look at democracy

During this activity, the voters in training will become familiar with representative democracy and the vocabulary associated with provincial elections.

OBJECTIVE

*Become familiar with the vocabulary
of the Québec political system*

MATERIAL REQUIRED

- ✓ Copies of the Voters
in Training activity sheet

LINKS TO THE QUÉBEC EDUCATION PROGRAM

Social Sciences area

Awareness of his/her community and its issues

Knowledge on the role of our institutions

*Competency: Cycle One: Constructs his/her consciousness of citizenship
through the study of history*

*Cycle Two: Strengthens his/her exercise of citizenship through
the study of history*

ICEBREAKER ACTIVITY

With the group, watch the video “Three levels of election” on our YouTube channel: <https://youtu.be/uDWZffLr0JQ>.

Then ask the group:

- Did you learn anything about our democracy by listening to this clip?
- What important words do you remember?
- Based on the information provided in the video, why is it important to vote?

A BIT OF THEORY

Democracy is a political system in which sovereignty resides with the people, meaning that the power belongs to the entire population. This information can take different forms:

- direct or participatory democracy: when the people directly take part in decision-making, in voting laws, and in choosing its leaders;
- representative democracy: when the population exercises its sovereignty through elected representatives. That is the case of our democracy.

In Québec, democracy is representative. Power is thus held by several representatives of the people. The citizens choose their representatives during general elections or by-elections. This helps ensure that power will not be held by a single person, as is the case in a dictatorship, for example.

It is thus by exercising our right to vote that we can influence the election of the person that will be mandated to represent us and make decisions in our name.

Québec is divided into 125 electoral divisions that make up the electoral map. An electoral division is a geographic area with more or less 48,100 electors. The number of electoral divisions corresponds to the number of seats in the National Assembly. The provincial general elections thus serve to elect the 125 members that will sit in it. The members do not have to belong to a political party. The National Assembly is where they exercise their role, including that of adopting laws and debating matters of public interest.

When elections are called

In 2013, the Government of Québec adopted a law setting the date of provincial general elections for the first Monday of October every four years. However, the Premier can call an election and ask the Lieutenant-Governor to end the mandates of the Members of the National Assembly before the end of the four-year term.

A close look at democracy

The Chief Electoral Officer, a neutral and impartial person, is appointed by the National Assembly to organize and hold the elections at the provincial level.

During the election period, the candidates of the different political parties and the independent candidates campaign to make themselves known and to present their program to be elected in your electoral division.

Electors are called to vote for one of these candidates, whether it is at the advance poll or on polling day. The political party with the greatest number of members elected form the government; its leader then becomes Premier. A government forms a majority when it wins more than half of the 125 seats in the National Assembly. If it wins less than half of these seats, it is a minority government, and the groups that form the opposition have more seats than it does. In the history of our province, the governments have almost always been majority governments.

SUGGESTED STEPS

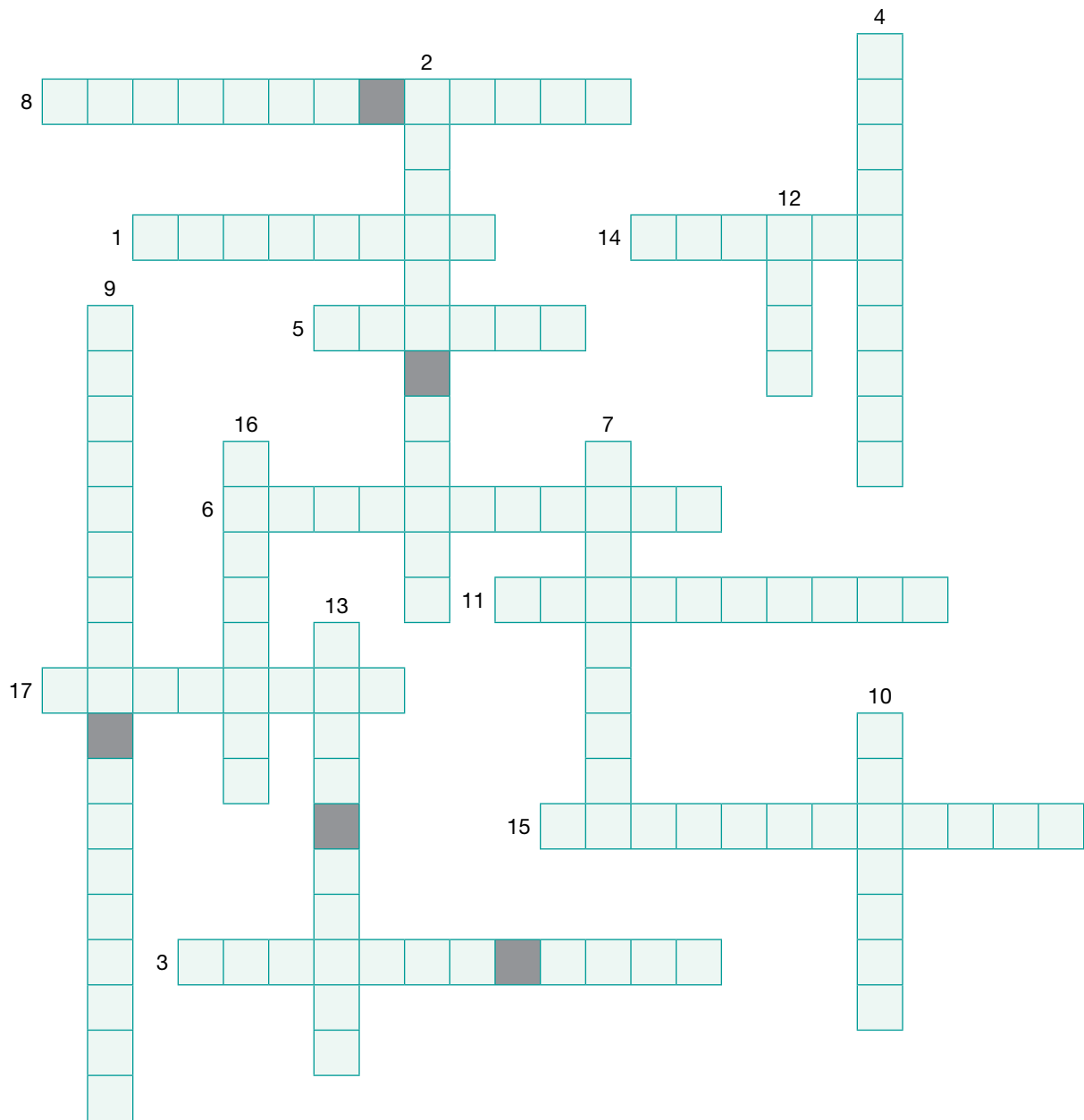
- 1.** Explain the notions of democracy in Québec to the group by referring to the “A bit of theory” section.
- 2.** Hand out a copy of the activity sheet to the young people and ask them to complete the crossword, alone or in teams.



ACTIVITY SHEET

A close look at democracy

You now know a little bit more on democracy in Québec. Are all the words fresh in your mind? Here is a crossword puzzle that will help put your knowledge to the test!



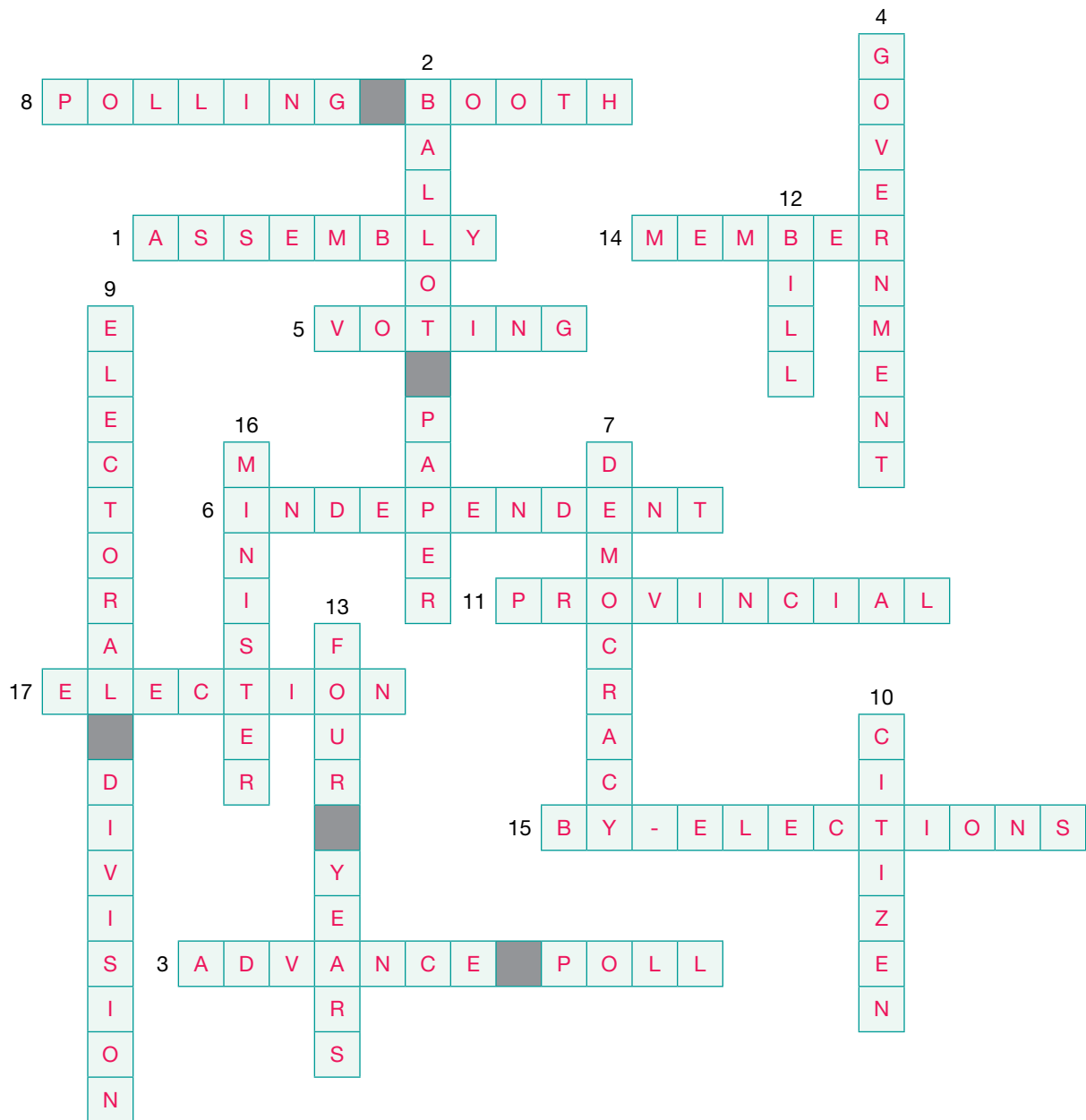
A close look at democracy**ACTIVITY SHEET**

1. Place where members sit: National _____.
2. Paper with an elector's vote.
3. Characteristic of a vote cast on another day than on polling day.
4. I am formed by the political party with the greatest number of members elected.
5. Action of expressing your choice.
6. Is said of a candidate who is not a member of a political party.
7. Political system in which power is held by the entire population.
8. Recipient used during elections to receive the ballot papers.
9. Area of the electoral map regrouping more or less 48,100 electors.
10. I have the right to participate in democratic life, to vote for my representatives, and to run as a candidate in the elections.
11. The Chief Electoral Officer of Québec is responsible for organizing the elections at the _____ level.
12. Legislative text presented at the National Assembly and studied by the members.
13. Frequency at which provincial general elections are held since 2013.
14. At the National Assembly, I represent the electors of my electoral district.
15. There are general elections and _____.
16. Member of the Executive Council appointed by the Prime Minister.
17. Event during which everyone who has the right to vote is called upon to choose the person that will represent them at the National Assembly.


ACTIVITY SHEET **ANSWER KEY**

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A close look at democracy**ACTIVITY SHEET**

1. Place where members sit: National ASSEMBLY.
2. Paper with an elector's vote. **BALLOT PAPER**
3. Characteristic of a vote cast on another day than on polling day. **ADVANCE POLL**
4. I am formed by the political party with the greatest number of members elected. **GOVERNMENT**
5. Action of expressing your choice. **VOTING**
6. Is said of a candidate who is not a member of a political party. **INDEPENDENT**
7. Political system in which power is held by the entire population. **DEMOCRACY**
8. Recipient used during elections to receive the ballot papers. **POLLING BOOTH**
9. Area of the electoral map regrouping more or less 48,100 electors. **ELECTORAL DIVISION**
10. I have the right to participate in democratic life, to vote for my representatives, and to run as a candidate in the elections. **CITIZEN**
11. The Chief Electoral Officer of Québec is responsible for organizing the elections at the PROVINCIAL level.
12. Legislative text presented at the National Assembly and studied by the members. **BILL**
13. Frequency at which provincial general elections are held since 2013. **FOUR YEARS**
14. At the National Assembly, I represent the electors of my electoral district. **MEMBER**
15. There are general elections and BY-ELECTIONS.
16. Member of the Executive Council appointed by the Prime Minister. **MINISTER**
17. Event during which everyone who has the right to vote is called upon to choose the person that will represent them at the National Assembly. **ELECTION**