Elections in Canada

**The Election Process**

* Our Prime Minister is **not directly** elected (like in America).
* When an election is called, 308 **mini elections** take place in the **ridings** across the country.
* Each riding elects **one** representative to hold a **seat** in the House of Commons.
* The party that wins the most **votes**, filling the most **seats** in the House of Commons, gets to form a **government**.
* The **leader** of this party is asked by the **Governor General** to lead the government, and becomes **Prime Minister.**

**Majority vs. Minority Governments**

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| --- | --- |
| **Majority Government** = the winner has over 51% of the seats (the majority) in the House of Commons | **Minority Government** = the winner has less than 50% of the seats in the House of Commons |
| * What every government wants * Have a lot of **power** and most of their bills get **passed** (because most of the people voting are on their side) * **A lot of change** can happen * They **cannot lose** a non-confidence vote | * What every government fears * Other parties can **gang up** on them when voting on bills , so their bills **won’t** get passed * **Not a lot changes** because they can’t agree * The government **can lose** a non-confidence vote an lose their government |

**Coalition Government**

* Coalition governments are created when different political parties **co-operate** to form a government together.
* This sometimes happens when the ruling party **loses** a non-confidence vote.
* Coalitions normally appear during periods of crisis such as war or political breakdown.

**What would this look like in the House of Commons? Fill in the seats with the correct colour:**

**The last election – 2011 (majority government)**

Conservative Party 167 people elected (blue)

NDP 102 people elected (orange)

Liberal Party 34 people elected (red)

Bloc Quebecious 4 people elected (light blue)

Green Party 1 person elected (green)

**House of Commons**

**Speaker**

**Opposition Leader**

1. What would happen if the Conservatives wanted to pass a bill that the opposition didn’t like?
2. Would the Conservatives be able to do what they said they would do during the election?
3. What would happen if the opposition really didn’t like the Prime Minister and wanted to form a government against him?

**The election before that – 2008 (minority government)**

Conservative Party 143 people elected (blue)

Liberal Party 77 people elected (red)

NDP 49 people elected (orange)

Bloc Quebecious 37 people elected (light blue)

Green Party 2 people elected (green)

**House of Commons**

**Speaker**

**Opposition Leader**

1. What would happen if the Conservatives wanted to pass a bill that the opposition didn’t like?
2. Would the Conservatives be able to do what they said they would do during the election?
3. What would happen if the opposition really didn’t like the Prime Minister and wanted to form a government against him?

**What almost happened in 2008 (coalition government)**

Conservative Party 124 people elected (blue)

Liberal Party and NDP 154 people elected (red/orange) – would have the most seats together

Bloc Quebecious 29 people elected (light blue)

Green Party 1 people elected (green)

**House of Commons**

**Speaker**

**Opposition Leader**

1. What would happen if the Liberal/NDPs wanted to pass a bill that the opposition didn’t like?
2. Would the Liberal/NDPs be able to do what they said they would do?
3. Is this a good example of democracy? This party wasn’t voted on by the public. Explain your answer.