

THE LIBERALS CHOOSE A NEW LEADER


Introduction

Focus

In a leadership contest that promised to be the most competitive since Pierre Trudeau's bid in 1968, the Liberal race of 2006 proved to be a political thriller. This *News in Review* story looks at the candidates, the campaign, and the surprising election of Stéphane Dion as the new Liberal leader.

Definition

Caucus is a political term that refers to a meeting of the elected members of political party.

 Sections marked with this symbol indicate content suitable for younger viewers.

A somber Paul Martin made his way to the podium on the evening of January 23, 2006, to deliver the concession speech he had hoped he would not have to give. By the time the polls closed on the West Coast, the Martin Liberals were out and the Harper Conservatives were in—although with a minority government. Martin addressed his supporters with the class of a career politician. He ended his address with his pledge to continue to represent his constituents as well as his decision to step down as party leader. “During the coming days,” Martin advised, “I will consult caucus and the party leadership in order to come across with an orderly transition and ensure an effective leadership in the House of Commons and the party” (*The Globe and Mail*, January 24, 2006). While a chorus of “No! No!” rang out among his supporters, Liberals watching the resignation either in the auditorium or live on television almost immediately turned to their Blackberries, cell phones, and computers to begin the conversations back and forth that would eventually bring as many as 15 Liberal hopefuls to the forefront in a bid for the party's top job.

Narrowing the Field

In the days immediately following the election loss and resignation of Martin, speculation began to swirl regarding who might best lead the party into the next federal campaign. Contenders such as John Manley, Frank McKenna, Lloyd Axworthy, and Brian Tobin were encouraged to run but they all decided that the job was not for them. Already suffering from the post-election blues, this was not good news for the Liberals. However, candidates gradually began to

emerge. Martha Hall Findlay was the first to declare her candidacy and, by spring, 14 others jumped on the leadership bandwagon. These included academic superstar Michael Ignatieff and former Ontario NDP premier Bob Rae. The race itself held little appeal in the early going as there were too many candidates vying to have their voices heard. But by September the battle lines were drawn as the field was narrowed to eight candidates.

The Liberal brass couldn't have been happier. The candidates were seen as intelligent and competent, and some provided a refreshing vision for the party. Most importantly, none of them carried any substantial political baggage from the previous Chrétien and Martin regimes. The four frontrunners were:

- Michael Ignatieff – a prominent scholar and new MP, billed by some to be a visionary in the likeness of Pierre Trudeau
- Bob Rae – former NDP premier of Ontario who had proven himself to be a skilled problem-solver in political circles, particularly for his work in convincing the government to hold an inquiry into the Air India disaster
- Gerard Kennedy – the young, dynamic Ontario Minister of Education who entered the race, recruited more new members to the party than any other candidate, and proved himself to be an adept and influential political force
- Stéphane Dion – the former minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and, more importantly, minister of the Environment, who vowed to win the trust of Canadians on a platform of environmental protection, social justice, and economic sustainability.

Further Research

To stay informed about the Dion Liberals and their opponents consider a regular visit to the official Web sites of Canada's major political parties: Liberals – www.liberal.ca, Conservatives – www.conservative.ca, New Democratic Party – www.ndp.ca, Bloc Québécois – www.blocquebecois.org and Green Party – www.greenparty.ca.

Strategists believed that these four candidates had a realistic chance of winning the party with Ignatieff and Rae given the clear edge because of support from backroom powerbrokers who could attract large numbers of delegates to their camps. That left Kennedy and Dion (the third- and fourth-place candidates respectively) with little hope of winning the leadership on their own. So they decided to meet on several occasions leading up to the convention. Eventually they brokered a deal that would lead to an outcome that almost none of the experts expected.

The Convention

Entering the leadership convention, political pundits said the race was too close to call. Many anticipated that the contest would be a two-horse race between Ignatieff and Rae, with that perspective being the dominant theme through the first two ballots. But then something dramatic happened. Despite being eligible to appear on the third ballot, Kennedy—likely as a result of a strategic deal that he and Dion had agreed to in one of their meetings—dropped out of the race and threw his support to Dion. Suddenly Dion appeared to be the man to beat. Word from the convention floor began to focus on Dion as the man to unite the party, something that the two “outsiders,” Michael Ignatieff (who hadn’t lived in Canada for 30 years before turning to politics) and Bob Rae (the former NDP premier of Ontario), would

not be able to do. Rae fell victim to this sentiment on the third ballot; Ignatieff, who had been the frontrunner for the entire campaign, lost on the fourth. Dion rode a wave to victory that put the grassroots ahead of the party powerbrokers. He surged from fourth place to first over the course of four ballots. He was seen as the only “pure Liberal” left on the ballot and, to almost everyone’s surprise, emerged as party leader at the end of the day.

Winning the Next Election

When a jubilant Dion got his chance to speak to the convention after winning the leadership, he said to the crowd at the Palais des congrès in Montreal, as well as the nation watching on television, “The most exciting race in the history of our party is over—let’s get ready for the election” (*Toronto Star*, December 3, 2006). Before Liberals could pack their suitcases and start their commute home from Montreal, the analysts were already dissecting Dion’s political character. Could he beat Harper? Could he win in Quebec? Did he have what it takes to capture the attention of the nation in an election campaign? Would his emphasis on environmental issues resonate with the national electorate? While the political experts debated these questions, Dion left the convention knowing that he had been underestimated coming into the leadership race and would likely be underestimated going into the next federal election.

To Consider

1. How was news of Paul Martin’s resignation greeted by many Liberals?
2. Who were the top four candidates going into the leadership convention? What strengths did each candidate have going into the voting?
3. What advantage did Ignatieff and Rae have over Kennedy and Dion?
4. How did Dion manage to win the leadership race?
5. Why might it be dangerous for the Conservatives, the NDP, and the Bloc to underestimate the abilities of Dion?

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Video Review

Carefully respond to the questions as you view the video.

Did you know . . .

Every person elected as Liberal leader since 1887 has become prime minister of Canada.

1. What nickname is often applied to Canada's Liberal Party?

2. How many months did Liberals campaign for a new leader? _____
3. How many leadership candidates made it to the convention? _____
4. Which candidate was in the lead before the convention? _____
5. What were some of Michael Ignatieff's weaknesses?

6. What problems faced Bob Rae in the race?

7. Who were the other two top-four candidates besides Ignatieff and Rae?

8. What experience did Stéphane Dion bring to his leadership bid?

9. Who were the other four candidates?

10. How many ballots were needed to pick a clear winner? _____
11. What key event helped Dion win the race?

12. If you had been a delegate to the convention, which candidate would you have supported? Why?

THE LIBERALS CHOOSE A NEW LEADER

Timeline 2006: The Search for a Liberal Leader

Review the following timeline and complete the activity that follows.

January 23 The Liberals lose power to the Conservatives, and Paul Martin resigns as party leader.

January 25 - February 3 The following high-profile Liberals announce they will not pursue the position of party leader: John Manley, Frank McKenna, Brian Tobin, Lloyd Axworthy, and Allan Rock.

February 8 Martha Hall Findlay becomes the first person to enter the race.

March 18 Paul Martin formally resigns as Liberal leader.

March 19 John Godfrey becomes the second candidate to enter the race but withdraws on April 12 due to health concerns.

April 5 Gerard Kennedy resigns as Ontario's Education Minister in order to run for the party leadership. Bob Rae joins the Liberal party.

April 6 Belinda Stronach announces she will not run for the party leadership.

April 7 The leadership race officially begins as candidates start campaigning. Between the official start of the campaign and May 4, the following Liberals enter the leadership race:

April 7 – Stéphane Dion, Michael Ignatieff

April 19 – Maurizio Bevilacqua

April 21 – Joe Volpe

April 23 – Scott Brison

April 24 – Bob Rae, Carolyn Bennett

April 27 – Gerard Kennedy

April 28 – Ken Dryden

May 4 – Hedy Fry

June 1 Joe Volpe is accused of improper conduct under the Elections Act and agrees to return donations given to him under the names of several children of corporate executives.

June 10 Leadership debate #1 in Winnipeg

June 17 Leadership debate #2 in Moncton

August 14 Maurizio Bevilacqua drops out of the race and throws his support behind Bob Rae.

August 21 – 24 National Liberal Caucus meets in Vancouver. The Liberal Women's Caucus Leadership Forum meets on the 22nd in Vancouver.

August 22 Leadership debate #3 in Vancouver.

September 10 Leadership debate #4 in Quebec City.

September 15 Carolyn Bennett drops out of the race and throws her support behind Bob Rae.

September 17 Leadership debate #5 in Vancouver

September 25 Hedy Fry drops out of the race and throws her support behind Bob Rae.

September 29 - October 1

“Super weekend” — ridings and party clubs elect delegates. Ignatieff leads with 29 per cent of party support; Rae has 20 per cent; Kennedy 17.5 per cent; Dion 16 per cent; Dryden 5 per cent; Volpe 4 per cent; Brison 4 per cent; Findlay 1 per cent.

October 15 Leadership debate #6 in Toronto.

Did you know . . .

Former prime minister Jean Chrétien accidentally let slip the results of the final ballot well before the official announcement. He was studying his BlackBerry and showed it to his wife, Aline. She quietly mouthed the words "Stéphane Dion." Unfortunately, they were surrounded by reporters who quickly spread the news.

October 21 Quebec wing of the Liberal Party puts forward a resolution proposing that Quebec should be recognized as a nation within Canada.

Michael Ignatieff supports the resolution and promises to be its most vocal and active supporter.

November 21 In response to the Liberal resolution, the Bloc Québécois prepare to put forward a motion recognizing Quebec as a nation, but not within a Canadian context.

November 22 Prime Minister Stephen Harper promises to put forward a motion to undermine the Bloc proposal calling Quebec a nation "within a united Canada."

November 27 The House of Commons votes in favour of the Harper motion. Two leadership candidates, Gerard Kennedy and Ken Dryden, do not support the motion.

November 28 Liberals begin assembling in Montreal for the leadership conference, and organizers remove debate regarding the notion of Quebec as a nation from the agenda.

November 29 Policy workshops and keynote address by Howard Dean, U.S.

Democratic National Chairman. Dean urges the Liberals to appeal to all voters in all ridings in order to garner truly national support for the party.

November 30 Tribute to Paul Martin. Martin appeals for party unity and a return to core liberal values in an effort to win back power in the next election.

December 1 Candidates' speeches and first round of voting begins. Results reported later that evening show little gains for most candidates. However, Dion moves into third place ahead of Kennedy.

December 2 Pundits claim Ignatieff's campaign has stalled and his hopes of victory are in danger. Despite endorsements from three candidates who dropped out of the race, Rae's campaign falls victim to the post-second-ballot move of Gerard Kennedy to the Dion camp. The momentum of the Kennedy endorsement vaults Dion into first place with the surge continuing for Dion through to the final ballot. Dion emerges as the candidate of party unity whose focus on the environment and social justice gives him the leadership of the Liberal Party.

Activity

1. Underline the names of all the people who decided to run for the party leadership.
2. Put a box around the names of the people who dropped out of the race. In the margin note who they then decided to support.
3. Circle the names of the people who decided not to run for the leadership.
4. Use a highlighter to indicate the three most important moments in the leadership race. In five to seven sentences explain why you made these selections.
5. In your view, is the political convention a good way for a party to choose a new leader? Explain.

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The Candidates

Definition

Key political terms: *Delegate* – a member of the Liberal Party elected through a riding to vote in the leadership contest. Approximately 4 000 delegates were slated to vote at the leadership convention.

Ex-officio delegate – non-elected delegates (MPs and senators both past and present as well as riding association presidents) who are eligible to vote. Approximately 890 ex-officio delegates were slated to vote at the leadership convention.

The Liberal leadership race provided no shortage of high-profile politicians vying for the role of party leader. Often leadership candidates earn cabinet posts if the party manages to win power in an election. Read the following profile of each candidate and complete the activity that follows.

Source of quotes: *Toronto Star*, December 2, 2006

Stéphane Dion

Going into the convention: Fourth
Where he finished: First on the final ballot with 54.7 per cent of the vote

Background: Dion is a highly successful and accomplished academic, having earned a PhD in political science. He was recruited into politics by the Liberals after the 1995 referendum in Quebec, becoming the MP of Saint-Laurent-Cartierville and successfully holding his seat for the next four elections. While in government, Dion served as Intergovernmental Affairs Minister in the Chrétien government and authored the Clarity Act, which laid out the framework by which a province might separate from Canada. Later he served as Environment Minister in Paul Martin's cabinet. Dion's integrity has seldom been questioned, leaving many political observers wondering how his opponents will be able to develop a strategy to discredit him.

The downside of his candidacy: Dion is unpopular among Quebec sovereigntists (those wanting an independent Quebec) due to his drafting of the Clarity Act. Many Liberal insiders fear Dion will be unable to win the

hearts of the Québécois, with Quebec being a key battleground if the Liberals hope to be successful in the future. Dion is also seen as uncharismatic, and his spoken English is considered weak.

Campaign notes: Dion's environmental agenda proved impressive for most of the campaign and became central at the convention. His defence of the Kyoto Protocol resonated with many Liberals, as reflected in his strong fourth-place showing after "super weekend" voting and his eventual surge from fourth to first place at the convention. Despite accusations of a lack of charisma, Dion managed to make the issues win him votes and let that momentum carry him to victory. Supporters and opponents alike point to Dion's honesty and integrity.

Memorable quote: "Good social policy is good economic policy."

Vision: A Canada that focuses on the environment, economic growth, and social justice. Dedication to these three areas would help to unify the nation.

Michael Ignatieff

Going into the convention: First
Where he finished: Second on the final ballot with 45.3 per cent of the vote

Background: After 30 years living outside Canada, Ignatieff was recruited into politics by several powerful Liberals. He became an MP in 2006 after winning a seat in Etobicoke-Lakeshore. Ignatieff is an accomplished scholar: the author of 16 books, winner of the Governor General's Award for one of

his non-fiction books, and short-listed for the prestigious Booker Prize for one of his novels. Before returning to Canada, Ignatieff was the director of Harvard University's Carr Center for Human Rights Policy.

The downside of his candidacy:

Ignatieff was pictured as an outsider by some Liberals since he had been out of the country for so long. He also got himself into trouble with his candid comments during the Lebanon-Israel conflict of the summer of 2006 and for his support for U.S. participation in the war in Iraq prior to the invasion of 2003.

Campaign notes: Ignatieff ran an extremely well-organized campaign. He consistently held the lead over the course of the leadership contest and was fortunate to have many influential Liberals backing his campaign. However, he could not stave off the momentum of Dion and finished second in the leadership race.

Memorable quote: "I will make you proud. I will give you victory."

Vision: Canadians want leadership that has the courage to provide a vision that both inspires innovation and dismisses excuses for inaction.

Bob Rae

Going into the convention: Second

Where he finished: Third. Rae's campaign was unable to recover from Kennedy's unexpected move to Dion after the second ballot.

Background: Rae was the leader of the Ontario New Democratic Party (NDP) and became Premier of Ontario in 1990. Rae's government had the good fortune of winning a majority government over

the Ontario Liberals as well as the bad luck of gaining power during the worst economic recession to hit Ontario since the Great Depression. Rae was voted out of office in 1995. He re-entered public life via federal Liberal appointments to help the international community develop constitutional democracies and to investigate and determine if an inquiry into the Air India disaster was warranted. Rae earned a reputation as an accomplished mediator and statesman before being approached by some Liberals to run as party leader.

The downside of his candidacy: Some Liberals feared Rae would never be able to win Ontario after running a huge economic deficit while he was premier. He also had antagonized many powerful Ontario Liberals, including former premier David Peterson.

Campaign notes: Rae's campaign grew quickly and managed to maintain momentum right into the convention. Three leadership hopefuls, upon dropping out of the race, gave their support to Rae as well as three leadership candidates who bowed out at the convention. However, the momentum of the early ballots was short-lived, as Gerard Kennedy's move to Dion made the eventual winner's lead too much for Rae to overcome.

Memorable quote: "I really have a sense of this country in my bones. . . . I know how to do this."

Vision: Canada needs leadership that brings progressive social forces together in a united front that deals directly with existing problems and problems that may arise in the future.

Did you know . . .

When Kennedy ran for the leadership of the Ontario Liberal Party, he led the race for the first four ballots but then lost on the next and final ballot.

Gerard Kennedy

Going into the convention: Third

Where he finished: Fourth; Kennedy shocked the convention when he elected not to run on the third ballot and instead joined forces with Dion.

Background: Kennedy dropped out of university and founded the first food bank in Canada. The Edmonton food bank eventually led to a job as director of the Toronto food bank. Always having a passion for politics, Kennedy entered political life, became an MPP, ran for provincial party leadership (losing to Dalton McGinty), and served as Ontario's Minister of Education. Kennedy's charisma has long made him a person of influence in public service and political circles.

The downside of his candidacy:

Kennedy's French was considered weak. He was also seen as being too young for party leadership but a candidate whose time would come, perhaps in the next leadership race. Many Liberals feared his poor communication abilities in the French language would make it difficult for him to win seats in Quebec.

Campaign notes: Kennedy surprised many observers with his strong finish in the "super weekend" vote. His extensive campaigning with the youth wing of the party proved him to be an energetic and passionate political star on the rise. He was viewed as the youth candidate who won the support of Justin Trudeau, the son of the late prime minister Pierre Trudeau. Kennedy eventually played the role of kingmaker when he dropped his name from the third ballot and threw his support behind Dion. By some accounts, an astonishing 91 per cent of Kennedy

delegates moved with him, showing the extreme loyalty he was able to garner among his supporters. Many see Kennedy as the next leader of the Liberal Party.

Memorable quote: "We will meet our Kyoto targets by 2012, thanks to the work of Mr. Dion."

Vision: Government needs to model compassion and understanding for its citizens. If the Liberal Party can build a clear vision for the future—one that includes all Canadians; young and old, rich and poor—Canada could be the nation it wants to be.

The other four candidates:

Ken Dryden

Where he finished: Fifth. He then moved his support to Rae and later to Dion.

Vision: Canada needs leadership that is not afraid to take on challenges; a nation that values all citizens and provides people with educational opportunities to make Canada a productive and proud nation.

Memorable quote: "I'm not sure these Conservatives even like this Canada."

Scott Brison

Where he finished: Sixth. He then supported Rae and later Ignatieff.

Vision: Canada needs to maintain a competitive economy, continue to build a progressive society, and actively embrace environmental responsibility.

Memorable quote: "Energy is Canada's greatest global advantage. We can be the world leader in clean energy."

Joe Volpe

Where he finished: Seventh. He then supported Rae and later Dion.

Vision: Modern leadership should bring transparency to the political process so that citizens can see and understand how government works.

Memorable quote: “I thought Canada was a paradise.”

Martha Hall Findlay

Where she finished: Eighth. She then supported Dion.

Vision: Canada needs a leadership model that is open, transparent, and inclusive. Government needs to be compassionate and caring, promoting social justice and equality among citizens.

Memorable quote: “If I were to become leader of this great party, Stephen Harper wouldn’t know what hit him.”

Activity

1. Read the “Vision” statements capturing the ideas of each of the candidates. Which vision do you think is the best for Canada? Explain your answer.

2. Write your vision for Canada. Be prepared to share that vision with your peers.

THE LIBERALS CHOOSE A NEW LEADER

The Convention

Did you know . . .

During one week-end in September, members of the Liberal Party elected delegates to the convention through their riding associations in what came to be known as “super weekend.” Michael Ignatieff won 29 per cent of the delegates, Bob Rae 20 per cent, Gerard Kennedy 17 per cent, and Stéphane Dion 16 per cent.

Did you know . . .

Some experts believe Kennedy was able to deliver 808 of his 884 delegates to Dion after the second ballot. This is a staggering 91 per cent—a tribute to the loyalty and conviction of the Kennedy supporters to stick with and then follow their candidate when he dropped out of the race.

It was political theatre at its finest. Delegates arrived in Montreal, skipped most of the policy sessions, and readied themselves to cast their first ballot and listen to the candidate speeches. The speeches provided no real surprises. All eight candidates performed well, explaining their vision to Canadians viewing on television and restating their positions for the assembled delegates. However, the first ballot results did provide a few surprises. The Ignatieff and Rae campaigns seemed to stall at their “super weekend” numbers while Stéphane Dion managed to leapfrog ahead of Gerard Kennedy.

By the time delegates arrived for second ballot voting on Saturday morning, Dion picked up the support of eighth-place finisher Martha Hall Findlay, while Scott Brison and Joe Volpe went to the Rae camp. Then the second ballot results put the front-runners into a frenzy. Ignatieff and Rae both grew on the second ballot but not enough to put a stranglehold on their opponents.

Shortly after the results were announced Ken Dryden moved to Rae, making it seem as if Rae had the momentum going into the third ballot. Then, in what was the pivotal moment of the convention, Kennedy crossed the floor to the Dion camp, just as party organizers were announcing the names that would appear on the third ballot. With Kennedy’s support, and many insiders claiming that Kennedy could deliver as much as 60 per cent of his delegates, the Ignatieff and Rae camps scrambled to secure more votes as delegates made their way to the polls.

An anxious convention waited for the results of the third ballot knowing that

any one of the three candidates could be knocked out. Rumours circulated: the grassroots were staging a coup, attempting to knock out the two “outsiders,” Rae (the former NDPer) and Ignatieff (a virtual ex-patriot); Dion would get bumped off the ballot due to the “winability” factor, with many speculating that he lacked the charisma to beat the Conservatives in the next election. The third-ballot results put Dion in the lead—doubling his support from the first ballot. Ignatieff was close behind and Bob Rae, the candidate who seemed to have the momentum through most of the first two rounds of voting, was knocked out of the race. Rae decided to release his delegates to vote for whom-ever they chose while he elected to keep whom he was voting for to himself.

Then came the moment of truth. Would it be the star power of Michael Ignatieff or the grassroots candidacy of Stéphane Dion? Delegates went to the polls to cast their ballots in the decisive fourth ballot. The buzz in the room was that the Dion campaign had positioned itself perfectly for the final ballot and, judging by the number of high-profile Liberals surrounding him in the minutes leading up to the fourth-ballot results announcement, one couldn’t help but believe the buzz. And, sure enough, when the results were announced, Dion had surged from fourth to first and won the day. A disappointed Michael Ignatieff gracefully congratulated Dion and vowed to support his leadership.

A triumphant Dion took to the stage to accept the leadership of the Liberal Party of Canada. His was a victory for the grassroots, a victory for the environmentalists in the party, and a victory for the underdog. While Canadians love an

Did you know . . .

Even before the balloting was finished, some Conservative Party organizers were distributing buttons with the image of Stéphane Dion as the main character in the famous film, *Back To The Future* and the words, "Old Liberal Record. Old Liberal Approach."

underdog, one question was on the minds of Liberals as they left their convention. Could Stéphane Dion, the

modest man who came from behind to win the leadership, bring them to victory in the next federal election?

The Results of the Balloting

Candidate	1 st Ballot	2 nd Ballot	3 rd Ballot	4 th Ballot
Stéphane Dion	17.8%	20.8%	37.0%	54.7%
Michael Ignatieff	29.3%	31.6%	34.5%	45.3%
Bob Rae	20.3%	24.1%	28.5% Removed from ballot; released his delegates; did not back another candidate	-
Gerard Kennedy	17.7%	18.8% Dropped out; went to Dion	-	-
Ken Dryden	4.9%	4.7 % Removed from ballot; went to Rae	-	-
Scott Brison	4.0% Dropped out; went to Rae	-	-	-
Joe Volpe	3.2% Dropped out; went to Rae	-	-	-
Martha Hall Findlay	2.7% Removed from ballot; went to Dion	-	-	-

Questions

1. How was the 2006 Liberal convention "political theatre at its finest"?
2. Who had the momentum early in the convention? What happened to take the moment away from this candidate and give it to another?
3. What rumours circulated prior to the third ballot?
4. Which elements of the party would have been most happy with Dion's victory? Why?
5. Who do you think would have been the best choice? Why?

THE LIBERALS CHOOSE A NEW LEADER

Activity: Becoming a Leader

Assume you are vying for the leadership of one of Canada's political parties. Develop a political platform that you think will serve the needs of the people of Canada.

1. Your political platform should cover the following topics:
 - Youth
 - The Environment
 - Health Care
 - The Economy
 - Social Programs
 - National Unity
 - Canada and the World
 - Immigration
2. Use information already listed on the Web sites of Canada's main political parties to give you an idea of what a political platform might look like.
 - Conservatives – www.conservative.ca
 - Liberals – www.liberal.ca
 - New Democratic Party – www.ndp.ca
 - Bloc Québécois – www.blocquebecois.org
 - Green Party – www.greenparty.ca
3. Prepare a brochure outlining your main ideas. Your brochure must include: your name, a picture of you, a brief biography and a seven-to-10-sentence explanation of each topic covered in your platform.

Follow-up

Based on the successful completion of the brochures, your teacher may decide to run a leadership race within the class, pitting the top five candidates (or the most willing five candidates) against each other. The leadership contest would work like this:

- Each candidate presents their platform to the class.
- Students vote for the candidate they believe would best serve the interests of Canada.
- The person with the lowest number of votes is dropped from the ballot and a second round of voting takes place.
- Voting continues into a third and fourth round, removing the candidate with the lowest number of votes, until the field is narrowed to two.
- The final two candidates make one last appeal for votes before the decisive round of voting.
- The victorious leader has the option of expressing her/his gratitude to the class for their support.