

## Jurisdictions: Canada 🇨🇦

# Media Fact Check Activity

### Summary:

Democracy depends on an informed and engaged populace. This follow-up activity is about helping students engage in the democratic process through the media. Students will review political news and party promotions and conduct jurisdictionally-minded research to confirm or refute claims made by political figures and commentators. We recommend running one of the other Jurisdictions: Canada activities before this to familiarize them with the concepts of Canadian governmental responsibilities first.

**Expected Duration:** 2 hours (90 minutes of research, 30 minutes writing)

### Learning Outcomes:

- Demonstrate knowledge of governmental responsibilities and division of powers in Canada
- Engage with and analyze political news and political party messaging/propaganda.
- Apply research methods and critical analysis of news
- Practice media literacy, digital citizenship, political awareness and democratic engagement.
- Practice formal and persuasive writing to compose a complaint or retort

### Instructions:

Introduce the students to mainstream media websites (such as [globalnews.ca](http://globalnews.ca), [ctvnews.ca](http://ctvnews.ca), [cbcnews.ca](http://cbcnews.ca), [theglobeandmail.com](http://theglobeandmail.com), [nationalpost.com](http://nationalpost.com), [macleans.ca](http://macleans.ca), [citynews.ca](http://citynews.ca)). Show them the Canadian political news sections as applicable. Choose any particular topic currently being hotly debated and contested by political parties either federally or provincially. Highlight differences in opinion and especially conflicting statements. Discuss how political debate and news coverage can highlight, hide, distort or uncover facts and points of consideration. Question acceptance of statements in pieces. Ask how students can know or trust statements?

Challenge students to research topics and find news articles, political speeches, press briefings, statements in council, political party advertising, letters to the editor, editorials, or opinion pieces that interest them. Have them analyze a few news or promotional pieces for how accurate they align with the actual division of powers and government responsibilities and other facts. Do the students find anything inaccurate or misleading? If so, what? Have them write a letter to the editor about any contestable findings they find and urge a retraction or correction, or provide a counterpoint for publication.

### Reflection:

How can citizens trust politicians? How can they trust the media? How can democracy survive in an era of misinformation? How can their habits support a healthy democracy? How can they help contribute to a better informed society?

This activity can raise many difficult questions for interesting and involved class discussion. It can be useful to close with a reminder that whatever problems our democracy faces, they have now participated in the defense of a free, fair and informed society.



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