

Constitutional Change - What would you do?

A Constitution defines the role of government and establishes some of the “public” values of a society. You have learned about successful and unsuccessful attempts to change the Constitution. As you will hopefully remember, the Canadian provinces and the federal government (under Pierre Trudeau) “patriated” the Constitution in 1982, although Quebec did not approve. A new federal government (under Brian Mulroney) tried twice to get Quebec and others on board with the 1987 Meech Lake Accord¹ and the Charlottetown Accord (1992)². Both were defeated. In fact there were many attempts³ to “fix” the constitution before and after patriation in 1982, going all the way back to our original constitution, the BNA Act of 1867.⁴ and even beyond that if you think about the kinds of governments that used to exist in Canada before Confederation.

For this assignment, you have been tasked with the challenge of developing an accord that accomplishes the following goals:

1. provides reason for Quebec to sign on to the Constitution
2. respects the multicultural fabric of our society
3. balances federal and provincial power
4. addresses the issue of Aboriginal self-government
5. continues to protect the rights of all Canadians
6. Is likely to get through the existing amending formula

Using any format you wish, develop a short proposal for a new Constitutional Accord that tries to achieve these goals. Explain why these goals are important for Canada to achieve, and what you think it would take to meet these goals. You are welcome to borrow or compare with past attempts to achieve these goals (e.g. you can include elements from existing accords). Give your accord a cool name.

This Optional Assignment, if attempted, will be applied to your Unit 1-2 (Active Citizenship) Project mark or your Unit 3-6 (Echo) Project mark. This is not a “bonus” (e.g. anything you do is added to an existing mark), this is an alternate and additional method to demonstrate your learning and understand of core learning outcomes in Social Studies 11.

RUBRIC	<i>moving from: basic ---> developing ----> meeting expectations ---> mastery</i>
form	careful design of questions, thorough research, thoughtful and creative use of evidence, edited and polished presentation or submission
function	shows understanding of key themes and core learning outcomes from Social Studies 11, applies critical thinking skills to a relevant topic

¹ <http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/meech-lake-accord/>

² <http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/the-charlottetown-accord/>

³ <http://publications.gc.ca/Collection-R/LoPBdP/BP/bp283-e.htm>

⁴ <http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/constitutional-history/>