

Lesson 8:

Traditional Processes for Métis Leader Selection

1. Possible Inquiry Questions:

1. What are the similarities and differences between traditional Métis leadership selection and current Saskatchewan leadership selection?
2. How do the traditional Métis Laws of the Hunt compare to current Saskatchewan laws?
3. What were some of the benefits/challenges of traditional Métis leadership governance?

2. Background Knowledge for Teacher:

Traditional processes for the selection of Métis leaders were based on consensus of people in the community rather than a formal vote or election process. Take for example Gabriel Dumont. He became a leader amongst his community for his generosity in the community, his prominence in the buffalo hunt and his participation in the Battle of Grand Couteau. He also had a natural level of ability and leadership that drew people to him for guidance. His people made him a leader in his community through the general consensus that he was best for the community.

For more information visit:

<http://www.métismuseum.ca/resource.php/06280>

The Laws of the Hunt (see next page)

<http://www.métismuseum.ca/resource.php/03152>

3. Key Vocabulary:

Election • Consensus • Traditional • Leader • Selection



4. Focus/Supplementary Outcomes:

(PA) 4.4 - Demonstrate an understanding of the Métis governance system.

- (b) Compare the traditional processes for selection of leaders of Métis people to current practices for selection of leaders by the Métis people?

5. Timeline: Approximately 60 minutes

6. Materials:

- Whiteboard
- Markers
- Pencil/pen
- Paper
- Computer
- Projector

7. Motivational Set:

1. Hold two decision-making processes with your class. One by majority rule voting and the other by consensus building. You may wish to offer students a choice of activity for later in the day, such as more silent reading time (Choice A) or more time for art (Choice B).
2. In the first election, clarify that students must raise their hand for only one vote. First, ask them to raise their hand if they would prefer choice A. Then, ask students to raise their hands if they prefer choice B. Make sure to tally student votes. Explain to them how that vote represents an election or a majority vote. Explain that the outcome is based upon the majority.
3. In the consensus building activity, explain that consensus has a range of meanings. Most people think of it as meaning 100% agreement on an issue. To most Indigenous Peoples, it means all participants are provided an opportunity to express their opinions multiple times in a respectful and inclusive discussion until it has been thoroughly discussed. At that point, the minority will defer to the majority. In a way, it is respectfully agreeing to disagree and to accept the decision of the majority. This should not be established by voting, but by sensing the momentum of the discussion.

LESSON 8: TRADITIONAL PROCESSES FOR MÉTIS LEADER SELECTION

4. For the discussion around whether to have Choice A or Choice B, students can either raise their hands to provide input or use a talking circle format. For the first method, ensure that those who did not raise their hands are asked if they would like to add anything. For the talking circle format, ideally students move their desks to a circle format or sit elsewhere in a circle. An object like a talking stick or talking stone will be passed clockwise to indicate whose turn it is to provide input. No one else is to speak or interrupt. If a participant wants to pass, they move the object to the next person on their left. This format allows everyone input and forces each participant to listen to others and formulate what they wish to say based on what has already been said until it is their turn to speak. Respectful dialogue is a must. Participants are time-conscious in that in a class of 25 when you have an hour to discuss something, no one should speak more than 2 minutes. This is an extension of traditional talking circles that do not have time limits. It is necessary in a classroom setting because of time constraints.
5. Using a smart, white or chalkboard, write down the terms “majority” and “consensus.” Then, either write definitions of these terms for students or have them come up with definitions as a class.

8. Process:

1. Explain that traditionally, the Métis people selected their leaders by consensus. Watch the video - “Gabriel Dumont: Métis Legend” from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FpYMf_smtKA
2. Examine as a class why Gabriel Dumont may be selected as a leader by consensus. Have students explain why everyone might like Gabriel Dumont for a leader.
3. Have students read some laws/legislation made by Métis consensus in “The Laws of the Hunt” - <http://www.métismuseum.ca/resource.php/03152>
4. Discuss how these rules may have been made by consensus, also known as the “traditional way”.

9. Possible Assessments:

- Reflective writing on differences between traditional Métis elections vs. contemporary Métis elections.
- Provide students to reflect on how the Métis Nation - Saskatchewan may govern them in the Student Assessment Handbook. Have students continue adding to their final project.

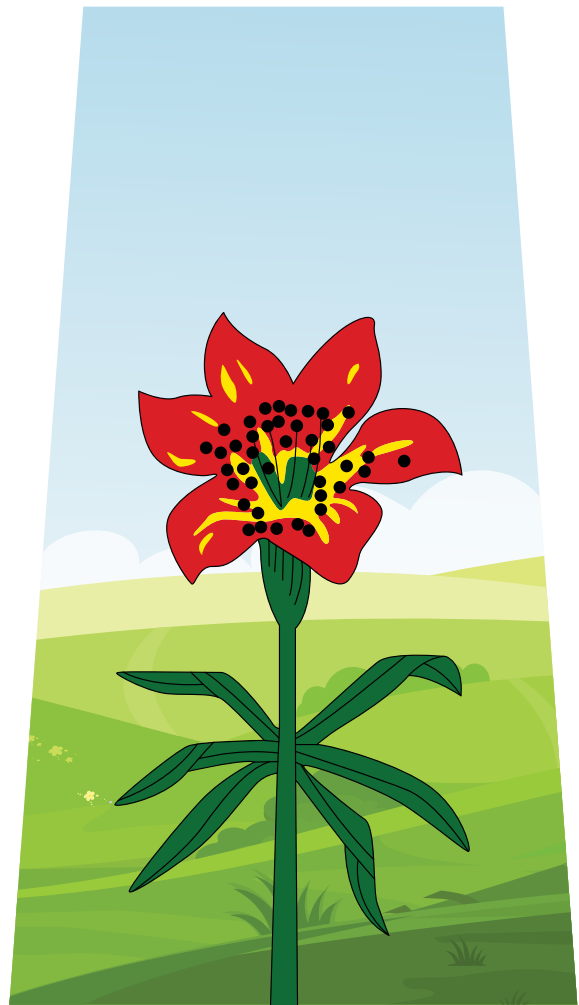
GDI Resources:

Métis Legacy II: Michif Culture, Heritage and Folkways, by Lawrence Barkwell, Leah Dorion and Audreen Hourie
Available for purchase at: <https://gdins.org/product/métis-legacy-ii-michif-culture-heritage-and-folkways/>

Power and Authority

Social 4 Student Handbook

Lesson 8: Traditional Processes for Métis Leader Selection

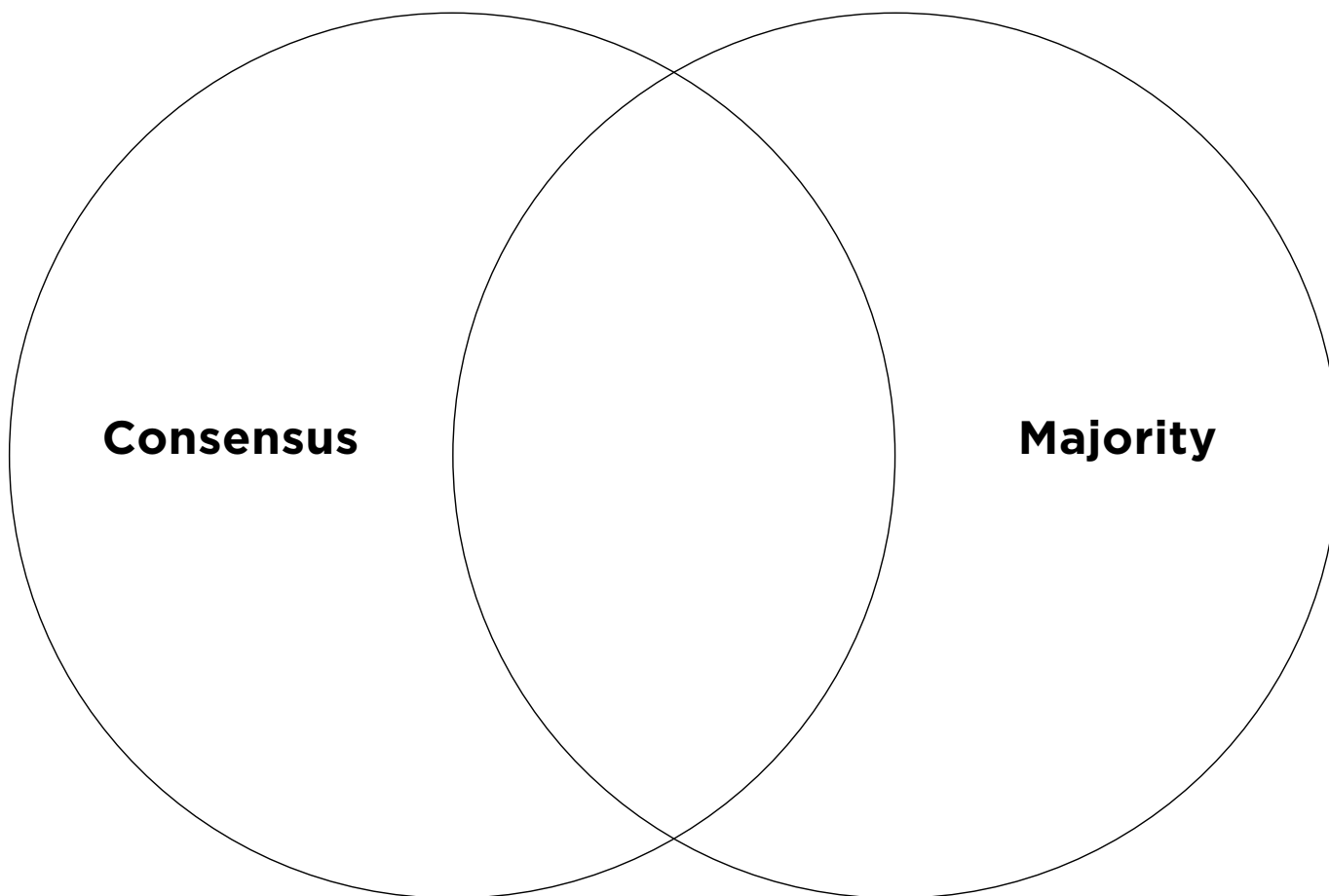


Name: _____

The purpose of Our Government Unit is to learn about how decisions are made to help Canadians and people in Saskatchewan.

Consensus and Majority:

Use pictures, words and/or symbols to show what you think you know.



Which way of decision-making do you like better? Why?

The Laws of the Hunt

1. No buffalo to be run on the Sabbath-day
2. No party to fork off, lag behind, or go before, without permission.
3. No person or party to run buffalo before the general order.
4. Every captain with his men, in turn, to patrol the camp, and keep guard.
5. For the first trespass against these laws, the offender to have his saddle and bridle cut up.
6. For the second offence, the coat to be taken off the offender's back, and be cut up.
7. For the third offence, the offender to be flogged.
8. Any person convicted of theft, even to the value of a sinew, to be brought to the middle of the camp, and the crier to call out his or her name three times, adding the word "Thief" each time.

References:

Barkwell, L. D. (2006). Métis Legacy II: Michif Culture, Heritage and Folkways. Gabriel Dumont Institute.

Métis Museum. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.métismuseum.ca>

YouTube. (n.d.). Retrieved from Gabriel Dumont:

Métis Legend: https://youtube.com/watch?v=FpYMf_smtKA