

Video 1: What is public policy?

Curriculum Links

This video series fits within the following high school courses across Canada. Teachers are encouraged to explore further connections to other courses in their province or territory.

Alberta <ul style="list-style-type: none">Grade 9 Social StudiesSocial Studies 10-1 or 10-2Social Studies 20-1 or 20-2Social Studies 30-1 or 30-2	British Columbia <ul style="list-style-type: none">Social Studies 11Political Science 12
Manitoba <ul style="list-style-type: none">Grade 9: Social StudiesGrade 12: Global Issues: Citizenship and Sustainability	New Brunswick <ul style="list-style-type: none">Civics 10Political Science 120Canadian Law 120
Newfoundland <ul style="list-style-type: none">Social Studies 1201/1202Social Studies 2201Social Studies 3201/3202Ethics and Social Justice 2106Career Development 2202	Northwest Territories <ul style="list-style-type: none">Grade 9 Social StudiesSocial Studies 10-1 or 10-2Social Studies 20-1 or 20-2Social Studies 30-1 or 30-2
Nova Scotia <ul style="list-style-type: none">Citizenship Education 9Global Politics 12Advanced Global Politics 12Law 12	Nunavut <ul style="list-style-type: none">Grade 9 Social StudiesSocial Studies 10-1 or 10-2Social Studies 20-1 or 20-2Social Studies 30-1 or 30-2
Ontario <ul style="list-style-type: none">Grade 10: Civics & CitizenshipGrade 11: Politics in Action: Making ChangeGrade 12: Canadian and International Politics	Prince Edward Island <ul style="list-style-type: none">Grade 9 Social StudiesCanadian Studies CAS401A
Québec <ul style="list-style-type: none">Monde ContemporainSensibilisation à l'entrepreneuriatHistoire du Québec et du Canada	Saskatchewan <ul style="list-style-type: none">Social Studies 10History and Social Studies 30Law 30
Yukon <ul style="list-style-type: none">Social Studies 11Political Science 12	

The Big Question

What is public policy?

In video 1, we tackle the big and nuanced question: what is public policy? Through the voices of [Action Canada](#) Fellows, young leaders in Canada all involved or interested in public policy, students will hear different definitions and examples of what public policy looks like in action. The activities in this Teacher Guide will help students create a concrete definition of public policy and reflect on examples of it in action. Understanding what public policy is will provide a base for further learning in the remainder of the Policy 101 video series. More questions may be raised after viewing the video, teachers and students are encouraged to watch the rest of the Policy 101 video series to learn more.

Learning Goals

Upon completion of this module, students will be able to:

- Define public policy.
- Identify examples of public policy.

Materials

You will need the following materials to complete the activities described in this Teacher Guide.

- Access to technology for video viewing
 - [Video 1: What is public policy?](#)
- Printed video transcript PDFs (if using)
 - These can be helpful for students who need support following the video, for English or French language learners or simply for annotation purposes
- Writing surface for class viewing (white board, Smart board, chalkboard or chart paper)
- Writing utensils for writing surface
- Paper or cue cards, enough for each student
- [Appendix 1: KWL Worksheet](#) for each student (if using)

Pre-Video Activity

Tackle this activity before watching the video.

Know Wonder Learned (KWL)

Whole Group (Optional: Independent), 20 minutes

NOTE: This activity could also be completed as an independent activity. See [Appendix 1: KWL Worksheet](#) for a worksheet template.

1. On a visible writing surface, create a chart with 3 columns: **1. Know 2. Wonder 3. Learned**
2. Ask students to reflect independently on what they already **know** about public policy. Some questions to ask:
 - a. How would you define public policy?
 - b. Where have you heard this term used before?

- c. Do you know any examples of public policy in action?
 - d. Do you know anyone who works in the public service or government? What does their job look like?
 - e. What policies do you interact with every day? Think about policies in your school or community.
3. Share ideas as a class and record in the chart in the **Know** column.
 4. Ask students to reflect independently on what they **wonder** about public policy. Some questions to ask:
 - a. What questions do you have about public policy?
 - b. What specific policies or policy areas are you curious about?
 5. Share ideas as a class and record in the chart in column **Wonder**.

Post-Video Activities

After watching the video, dive into these post-video activities to further discussions and deepen learning.

Know Wonder Learned (KWL) Revisited

Whole Group (Optional: Independent), 20 minutes

NOTE: This activity could also be completed as an independent activity. See [Appendix 1: KWL Worksheet](#) for a worksheet template.

1. Revisit the KWL chart created as a class before watching the video. Ask students to reflect independently on what they **learned** about public policy. Some questions to ask:
 - a. How would you define public policy now?
 - b. What are some examples of public policy cited in the video?
 - c. What questions do you still have about public policy?
2. Share ideas as a class and record them in the chart in the **Learned** column. Any continued questions can be added to the **Wonder** column.
3. Continue to revisit this KWL chart as you work through the rest of the video series. Record new topics the class **wonders** about and new ideas **learned**.

Assessment: Exit Ticket

Independent, 15 minutes

1. Hand out pieces of paper or cue cards, one per student.
2. Ask students to craft their own definition of public policy and cite one example of public policy, making sure to include their name.
3. Ask students to hand their definition to you before leaving class.
4. Review responses to assess student learning. Follow up with individual students who may need more clarity. Or try the extension activity to create a class definition of public policy.

Extension Activity

Interested in continuing the learning? Try the activity below.

Public Policy Definition

Whole Group, 20+ minutes

1. Using the exit tickets submitted, review a few well-crafted definition examples as a class.
 - a. You can choose to include student names or keep the definitions anonymous.
 - b. Optionally, students can submit their definitions through an online social media generator and have other students “like” definitions they think are strong.
2. As a class, discuss:
 - a. What do you like about these definitions?
 - b. What is missing?
3. Take some time to research other definitions of public policy. Discuss as a class what elements of these definitions you like and would add to your class definition.
4. Create a class definition of public policy using all the elements discussed.
5. Discuss examples of public policy as a class and add some to your definition to help it come to life.
6. Post your definition and examples in a prominent location. As you work through the rest of the video series, revisit your class definition and examples, adjust as needed.

About the Policy 101 Video Series

The Policy 101 Series breaks down public policy into digestible content for students through engaging videos, podcasts, and teacher guides. These modules empower students to learn the basics of public policy and critically analyze its implications. The series aims to sow the seeds for a future where youth play an active role in shaping the policies that shape their lives.



Name: _____

Appendix 1: KWL Worksheet

Know	Wonder	Learned
<p>-How would you define public policy? -Where have you heard this term used before? -Do you know examples of public policy in action? -Do you know anyone who works in public service or government? What does their job look like? -What policies do you interact with every day? Think about policies in your school or community.</p>	<p>-What questions do you have about public policy? -What specific policies or policy areas are you curious about?</p>	<p>-How would you define public policy now? -What are some examples of public policy cited in the video?</p>