Name: _____

Diversity and the Court

Student worksheet

Use this worksheet to guide your thinking before, during, and after the video that you will watch. As you watch, focus on how diversity has changed the Supreme Court of Canada and why representation, experience, and regional balance matter in judicial appointments.

Before you watch

Scenario

Imagine that the Supreme Court of Canada was made up entirely of judges from the same province, the same gender, and similar cultural or professional backgrounds. Although these judges might be highly qualified, what concerns might arise about fairness, public confidence, or representation? In a country as large and diverse as Canada, should the highest court reflect the population it serves? Why or why not?

Appointing a Supreme Court judge

When appointing judges to the Supreme Court of Canada, several factors must be considered. Brainstorm in the space below factors you think are important. Be specific and be prepared to justify your reasoning.

While you watch

As you watch the video, answer the questions in order. Focus on the main ideas rather than small details.

1. How is the current Supreme Court more diverse than past versions?

2. Who was the first woman appointed to the Supreme Court of Canada, and what challenges did she face?

3. How did her appointment affect women arguing cases before the Supreme Court?

4. What changes were made to the appointment process in 2016?

5. Why can regional representation sometimes make it difficult to reflect other forms of diversity?

6. According to the video, how might a judge's personal experiences influence their decisions?

After you watch

Reflection: Diversity and decision-making

1. The video suggests that diversity on the Supreme Court can influence:
   - Public confidence
   - Quality of discussion
   - Understanding of lived experiences
   - Legitimacy of decisions

   Which of these do you think is most important? Explain your reasoning using examples or ideas from the video.

2. Some legal experts in the video suggest that diversity leads to "livelier" or more thoughtful discussions among judges. How might having judges with different backgrounds improve the quality of decision-making?

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