

Keep the Promise Summit

Understanding the Language Activity

Word	Definition
Member of Parliament	A person elected to the House of Commons. There are 308 Members of Parliament representing all of the areas of Canada in the House of Commons.
House of Commons	The group of 308 elected Members that represents all the areas of Canada. This term also refers to the Chamber where they meet regularly.
Senate	The Upper House of Parliament. This term also refers to the room where Senators meet regularly.
Senator	A member of the Senate. There are 105 Senators to represent regions of Canada. Senators are appointed by the Governor General on the advice of the Prime Minister.

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Word	Definition
Senate Chamber	The room where the Senators meet; sometimes called the Red Chamber.
Bill	A suggestion for a law that Parliament is asked to consider.
Law	A rule for all Canadians made by the Senators and Members of Parliament through discussion and voting.
Policy	A plan or course of action—of a government, political party, or other organization—intended to influence and determine decisions, actions, and other matters.

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Word	Definition
Citizenship	The legal status and expected behaviour of a member of a country in terms of his/her rights, privileges and duties.
NGO	A Non-Governmental Organization, any non-profit, voluntary citizen's group, organized on a local, national or international level for a specific purpose.
Non-Profit	A non-profit organization does not earn profits for its owners, but uses any money raised or earned to support its cause.

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Word	Definition
Diversity	A range of different things, having different characteristics; the concept of diversity in humans encompasses recognition and celebration of individual differences; acceptance and respect for all, regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, culture, religion, socio-economic status, physical ability.
Human Rights	Rights and freedoms to which all humans are entitled, which includes right to life, liberty, freedom of thought and expression, and equality before the law.
Equity	The state of being just, fair and impartial; having equal access to resources and opportunities.

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Word	Definition
Social Justice	Fairness for all and mutual obligation in society; we are responsible for one another and should ensure we all have equal opportunity for success.
Social Action	Organized activity on the part of an interested group towards social or institutional change to improve human welfare.
Government	The ruling authority running the business of the country.
Democracy	A system of government in which the citizens elect representatives to make decisions on their behalf.

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Word	Definition
Consensus	General, widespread, or collective agreement by a group as a whole; a decision-making process that seeks the consent of all in the group.
Vote	A formal expression of opinion or choice; the way citizens choose representatives to government; the way Senators and MPs make decisions about policy and law.
Indigenous Rights	Those collective rights that exist in recognition of the specific condition of the indigenous peoples; because each First Nation historically functioned as a distinct society, these may vary among the groups.
Sustainable	The ability to be maintained, supported, or upheld at a certain level over time.

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Word	Definition
Advocacy	The act of supporting, or recommending a course of action; a political process by an individual or group aiming to influence decisions in political, economic, and/or social systems and institutions.
Activism	Use of direct, noticeable action to achieve a goal; efforts to promote, impede, or direct social, political, economic or environmental change.
Homelessness	Situation of an individual or family of having no stable, permanent or appropriate housing, nor the immediate prospect, means or ability of acquiring it.

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Word	Definition
Taxes	A compulsory financial contribution to government revenue, based on a percentage of income, or added to the cost of goods and services. In Canada, taxes are collected at the Federal, Provincial and Municipal levels.
Accountability	The obligation of an individual or organization to account for its activities, accept responsibility for them, and to disclose the results in a transparent manner.
Social Rights	Socio-economic human rights, such as the right to education, housing, health, and an adequate standard of living.
Caucus	A group of Senators and Members of Parliament from the same political party.

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Word	Definition
Charity	Voluntary giving of help to those in need; an organization set up to provide help and raise money for those in need.
Social Responsibility	Ethical framework that suggests that individuals and organizations have an obligation to act in a way that benefits society at large.
Systemic	Refers to something that is spread throughout, affecting the group or system (such as a body, economy or market) as a whole rather than its individual parts.

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Word	Definition
Charter of Rights and Freedoms	A section of the Canadian Constitution that ensures that all people in Canada are guaranteed certain basic rights and freedoms.
Constituency	The specific geographic area in Canada that is represented by a Member of Parliament; also known as a riding, or electoral district; implies a reference to the people in the area represented.
Federal Government	The Government of Canada that speaks for the whole country.
Dignity	The quality, or state, of being worthy of respect.

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Word	Definition
Community	A group of people living in the same place, or having a particular characteristic in common; a feeling of fellowship with others as a result of sharing common attitudes, interests and goals.
Food Security	The state of having reliable access to a sufficient quantity of affordable, nutritious food. The World Health Organization: food security exists “when all people at all times have access to sufficient, safe, nutritious food to maintain a healthy and active life”.
Volunteer	A person who offers time, energy and skills of his/her own free will without expectation of being paid.

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Word	Definition
Child Rights	Human rights for children, which includes rights such as education, health care, adequate standard of living, and protection from abuse, exploitation, discrimination and harmful substances.
Marginalized	To push to one side and treat as unimportant and without influence or power.
Justice	Fair behaviour or treatment; can also refer to a judge or magistrate.
Shelter	A basic human need along with food, water and companionship; a place giving temporary protection from weather, or danger; a place that provides temporary housing to homeless people or those in danger.

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Word	Definition
Civil Society	Society considered as a community of citizens linked by common interests and collective activity; includes elements such as free speech, an independent judicial system; can also mean a collection of non-governmental organizations that show the interest of all citizens; sometimes called the “third sector” of society, as distinct from government and business.

These definitions were compiled using online dictionaries, primarily the Government of Canada site.

<http://www.parl.gc.ca/about/parliament/education/glossaryelementary/index.asp?Language=E>