

CLB 8 – June Question

Name: _____

Date: _____

Parliamentary Democracy

In Canada's *parliamentary democracy*, the people elect members to the House of Commons in Ottawa and to the provincial and territorial legislatures. These representatives are responsible for passing laws, approving and monitoring expenditures, and keeping the government accountable. Cabinet ministers are responsible to the elected representatives, which means they must retain the "confidence of the House" and have to resign if they are defeated in a non-confidence vote.



Parliament has three parts: the **Sovereign** (Queen or King), the **Senate** and the **House of Commons**. Provincial legislatures comprise the Lieutenant Governor and the elected Assembly.

In the federal government, the **Prime Minister** selects the Cabinet ministers and is responsible for the operations and policy of the government. The **House of Commons** is the representative chamber, made up of members of Parliament elected by the people, traditionally every four years. **Senators** are appointed by the Governor General on the advice of the Prime Minister and serve until age 75. Both the House of Commons and the Senate consider and review **bills** (proposals for new laws). No bill can become law in Canada until it has been passed by both chambers and has received royal assent, granted by the Governor General on behalf of the Sovereign.

Living in a democracy, Canadian citizens have the right and the responsibility to participate in making decisions that affect them. It is important for Canadians aged 18 or more to participate in their democracy by voting in federal, provincial or territorial and municipal elections.

Review Question:

What must happen to a bill before it receives Royal Assent to become a law?

- The people of Canada must vote in favour of the bill.
- The bill must be passed by both Houses.
- The Prime Minister must agree to the bill.
- Everyone in Parliament must agree to the bill.