SENATE REFORM

Is the Senate Worth Keeping?

• When Canada was created in 1867, many people, including the first Prime Minister, John A. Macdonald, did not trust in democracy. To protect against bad laws being passed because of public demands, the Senate was to be **appointed** and given the right to **review** and **veto** (reject) bills.
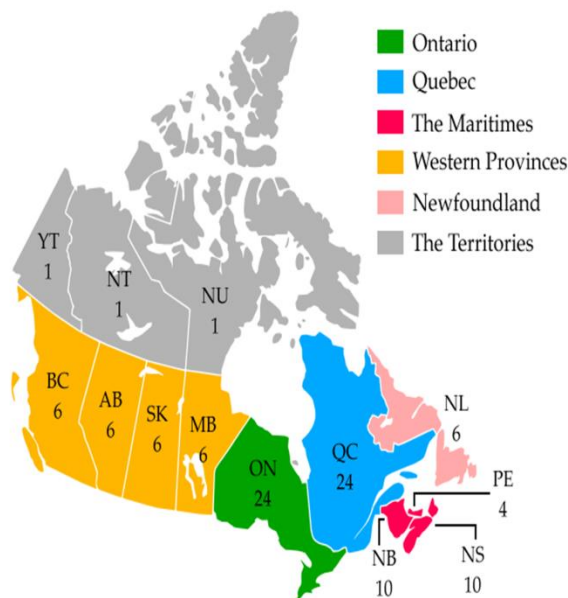
Senate Qualifications

• A Senator must be 30 years of age.
• He must own $4000 worth of real property.
• He/she may retain his seat until the age of 75 unless
  o bankruptcy is declared
  o or an infamous crime is committed.

Attendance in the Senate

• Regular attendance in the Senate has become a very controversial issue as some senators do not regularly take their seats.
• A senator can only be disqualified from office if he fails to attend once in two consecutive sessions.

Today's problems with the senate:

1. Many Canadians think that having an **appointed** Senate is undemocratic.
2. People feel that some members of the Senate are not **qualified** to do their job.
3. People see many Senate appointments by the Prime Minister as **patronage** – reward for loyalty or support to the political party in power.
4. Some Canadians also think that the Senate is not **representative** of all Canadians because:
   • only 20% are women
   • members of the Senate are upper or middle class.
   • too many representatives from central Canada (Ontario and Quebec)

Legend:
- Ontario
- Quebec
- The Maritimes
- Western Provinces
- Newfoundland
- The Territories

DISTRIBUTION OF SENATE SEATS	
AREA	SEATS
Ontario	24
Quebec	24
Maritimes	24
Nova Scotia	10
New Brunswick	10
Prince Edward Island	4
Western Provinces	24
Manitoba	6
British Columbia	6
Saskatchewan	6
Alberta	6
Additional representation	9
Newfoundland and Labrador	6
Northwest Territories	1
Yukon Territory	1
Nunavut	1
TOTAL	105

SENATORS ONLY.
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SÉNATEURS SEULEMENT.
GOUVERNEMENT DU CANADA
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GOVERNMENT OF CANADA

CHOICES FOR SOLVING THE PROBLEM WITH THE SENATE:

Choice 1: <u>Get rid of the Senate</u>
Why?

-It is not needed, not democratic, and not representative of all Canadians
-Too expensive
-More power should be given to the elected members of the House of Commons

Choice 2: <u>Reform the Senate</u>
Why? -- It is better to create a **<u>Triple E Senate</u>:**

-Elected – Senators should be directly elected by Canadians, so they are **responsible** the people.
-Equal – Each province should have the same number of senators, so Ontario and Quebec do not have all the power. No voting along party lines.
-Effective –Senate would have the power to pass or reject bills and make their decisions for the people they represent, not the party that is in power.

Choice 3: <u>Keep the Senate the Way It Is.</u>
Why?

-An elected Senate would be too easily influenced by public opinion.
-Today's Senate is has a great amount of experience.

Paragraph Assignment:
Answer the following question in a well written formal paragraph.
Explain which of the above choices is the best choice for Canadians?
- No I statements or personal pronouns, formal structure
- Topic sentence, supporting details, and a conclusion

	Needs Improvement		Satisfactory	Good		Excellent	
	1	2	3	4		5	6
MEANING • ideas and information • use of detail • generalizations or conclusions • sense of audience		• purpose is unclear; writing is unfocused • inappropriate, trivial, or simplistic details • generalizations or conclusions omitted, illogical, inappropriate • little sense of audience; tone may be inappropriate	• purpose is clear; may lose focus • some relevant examples and details • may overgeneralize or omit generalizations or conclusions • some sense of audience; tone may be inconsistent	• purpose is clear; focus is generally sustained • specific relevant examples, details • some generalizations and conclusions • sense of audience; appropriate tone (may slip)		• purpose and focus are effective and sustained • uses specific relevant examples and details to elaborate and clarify • logical insights, generalizations, and conclusions • clear sense of audience; appropriate and consistent tone	