



# Stories in Stone

**Level:** Grades 8-12, QC Secondary II-V, CEGEP

**Time:** 60-90 minutes

## Overview

During this lesson, students will consider how the art in Centre Block reflects different aspects of Canada: its natural environment, peoples and democratic system. After gaining familiarity with the building's art, they will apply their knowledge of parliamentary processes, people and history to create their own artwork.

### Inquiry Question

What can we learn from the art in Centre Block?

### Learning Outcomes

Students will gain a deeper understanding of how Centre Block reflects Canadians, their country and parliamentary democracy.

### Curriculum Links

Students will be able to:

- Identify and explain symbols and art in Parliament
- Explain how these reflect different aspects of the country's geography and society
- Assess how art can impact society and storytelling

### Competencies

Students will:

- Apply creative skills and processes
- Develop critical thinking skills
- Demonstrate decision-making and problem-solving skills
- Demonstrate oral, visual and written literacy skills
- Develop media literacy skills
- Develop a sense of social involvement and responsibility

### Materials & Setup

- [Centre Block art Flickr album](#)
- Computer and projector (optional)
- Paper, markers, pencils, tape, other craft supplies, or digital design applications
- [Art worksheet](#)

### Minds on

(15 minutes)

**Step 1:** For this warm-up, ask students to write down their favourite space from the virtual experience of Centre Block and explain what they liked about it.

**Step 2:** Quickly go around the classroom and ask students to name their favourite space and what they liked about it.

**Step 3:** Explain that the art inside the rooms of Centre Block was designed to reflect the country, its history and the role of Parliament.

**Step 4:** Show students the [Flickr album](#) of Centre Block art. Ask students to identify what they see in each artwork and what they think it represents. (Information about each artwork can be found in the Flickr image description.)

**Step 5:** After cycling through the images, ask students to identify the major themes represented. Write them down on the board. They may include the following:

- |                               |             |
|-------------------------------|-------------|
| • Canadian plants and animals | • Values    |
| • Canadian people(s)          | • Rights    |
| • History                     | • Democracy |

### Activity

(30 minutes)

**Step 1:** Based on what they learned in the virtual experience of Centre Block, previous lessons and the photo album, challenge your students to create their own parliamentary carving or other artwork. They should apply what they have learned about the work and role of Parliament. Encourage them to be creative: it could be a carving, sculpture, painting, stained-glass window, or anything else that inspires them.

**Step 2:** Distribute the [art worksheet](#), as well as paper, pencils, markers, or other craft supplies to help students design their work. Have students reflect on the following questions as they plan their design:

- 1) Why is Parliament important?
- 2) In what ways does Centre Block and/or Parliament reflect the country?
- 3) Who and what should be represented in the art of Centre Block?

**Step 3:** Have students create a design based on their reflections using the materials provided (or create a written description if they prefer).

**Step 4:** Ask students to write a short explanation of their design using the art worksheet, including a rationale as to why their work should be included in Centre Block.

**Step 5:** Once students have finished, ask them to post their designs around the class. Please ensure that the designs are spaced out in accordance with your school's distancing protocols, as students will be taking a gallery walk during the Consolidation exercise.

### Consolidation

(15 minutes)

**Step 1:** Once all designs are posted around the class, send students on a gallery walk to view each other's work and share their thoughts about the different designs.

**Step 2:** Ask students to fill in information about two other artworks they think should be added to Centre Block, completing the second part of the worksheet.

### Assessment

**Step 3:** Have students hand in their worksheets for a participation mark to ensure they have understood the concepts and themes highlighted throughout the different exercises.

### Online Teaching Tips

• **Minds on:** Ask students to review the Centre Block art [Flickr album](#) and select their favourite image. Using an online discussion board, ask students to submit a post with answers to the following questions:

- 1) What is your favourite artwork and where is it located in Centre Block?
- 2) What does the artwork represent (check the description for more information)?
- 3) What major themes does it show? (E.g. plants and animals, Canadian peoples, history, legends, rights, values, democracy, etc.)

You may want to review students' answers during an online group chat, if possible.

- **Activity:** Have students individually design an artwork for Centre Block, using art supplies they may have at home or using digital design applications at their disposal. You may want to post the questions from **Step 2** to guide their thinking. Get students to complete the artist statement portion of the [worksheet](#) for their design.
- **Consolidation:** Once their designs and artist statements are complete, get students to upload a picture of their artwork and their write-up to an online gallery (e.g. shared classroom drive, class Flickr album, etc.). Ask students to take a virtual gallery walk in order to complete the second part of the worksheet. Have students submit the completed worksheet for assessment.

### Enhancements

- Ask students to choose a carving or artwork from Centre Block to research in more detail (based on the Flickr album provided). Ask them to include information about the artist, subject and history, and why they think it was included in the building. Create a class “art gallery” of students’ favourite artworks.
- Have students design a new landmark for their school or community, using the art worksheet to outline and explain their design.

### Additional Resources

- [Parliament of Canada Flickr albums](#)
- [Snapshots from Parliament video series](#)
- [Parliament 360 video series](#)