

Same-Sex Marriage

An Example of the Evolution of a Right

Teacher's Guide





Éducaloï is a Quebec non-profit organization whose mission is to make the law accessible and easy to understand and use in daily life.



We need you!

Tell us what you think and we'll create tools that meet YOUR needs.

Scan the QR code or click on this link.

It will take less than 5 minutes.

[Link to the survey](#)



IMPORTANT NOTICE

August 2025 version

None of the information in this guide can be considered a legal opinion.

Teachers in Quebec may use and reproduce this guide in an educational context and for non-commercial purposes only. Éducaloï must be credited. Any other reproduction or use is prohibited without the written consent of Éducaloï.

© ÉDUCALOI

Table of Contents

Presentation of the Activity	4
Preparing the Activity	6
Become familiar with the Teaching Kit	6
Required material	6
Period 1 – Discover the Legal Context	7
Presentation of the theme of the activity	7
Discovery of the legal context around marriage	7
Period 2 – Reconstructing the Timeline	8
Activity instructions	8
Doing the activity	8
Period 3 – Same-Sex Marriage	9
Discovery of the evolution of the right to same-sex marriage	9
Review of the timeline and questions	9
Additional information	10
Période 4 – Summative Evaluation	10
Evaluation	11
Answer key – Evaluation	12

Presentation of the Activity

What you need to know	This Teaching Kit will help the students understand that the law is in constant evolution, as is society. Students will learn about the evolution of the right to same-sex marriage and the role of legal institutions in establishing this right.
Target audience	Secondary Cycle II students
Summary	<p>With their teacher, students will discover the legal context of the laws that contributed to the evolution of the right to same-sex marriage.</p> <p>Students will divide into groups to analyze reference materials and construct a timeline of the evolution of the right to same-sex marriage.</p> <p>The teacher and the students will review what was learned.</p>
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learn more about the evolution of the rights of LGBTQ+ persons until they obtained the right to same-sex marriage.• Understand that the law evolves along with societal values.• Become familiar with the Canadian and Quebec judicial systems.• Understand the concept of the division of powers between the federal and provincial governments.

Knowledge and competencies	<p>Culture and Citizenship in Quebec – Secondary IV</p> <p>Theme (Cultural reality): Justice and the law – Legal and judicial institutions</p> <p>Compulsory concepts: Fundamental rights recognized by the charters, Supreme Court</p> <p>Secondary V</p> <p>Theme (Cultural reality): Search for meaning and world views – Social and cultural integration</p> <p>Compulsory concepts: Choices related to adulthood, Parenthood, Individual and collective responsibilities related to sexuality</p> <p>Theme (Cultural reality): Social groups and power relations – Social inequalities</p> <p>Compulsory concept: Sexism and other inequalities related to gender and sexuality</p> <p>Competency 1: Studying cultural realities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Analyze social relations:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Characterize relations between individuals, groups, and institutions– Situate these relations in time and space <p>History of Quebec and Canada – Secondary IV</p> <p>Themes: Societal choices in contemporary Quebec (civil society)</p> <p>Competency 2: Interpreting a social phenomenon:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Analyze a social phenomenon:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Identify changes and continuities
-----------------------------------	---

Duration	<p>Three periods of 75 minutes</p> <p>Possibility of a fourth period of 75 minutes to provide more time for the analysis of the reference materials and/or to complete the optional evaluation.</p>
Material included	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One Teacher's Guide • The Slide Show • One Team Workbook
Material to print	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Team Workbook (one per team)

Preparing the Activity

Become familiar with the Teaching Kit

Read the **Slide Show**, the **Team Workbook Answer Key**, and this document (**Teacher's Guide**).

Required material

A computer and a projector or an interactive whiteboard for the **Slide Show**.

The documents to print:

- **Team Workbook** (one per team)
- **Team Workbook Answer Key**, if necessary
- Did you want to do a summative evaluation? If so, print:
 - one evaluation per student
 - one corrected evaluation for you

Period 1 – Discover the Legal Context

Presentation of the theme of the activity

Slides 1 and 2

Tell the students that they'll learn about the different legal events that made same-sex marriage possible. In teams, the students will analyze documents and place events related to the evolution of LGBTQ+ rights regarding same-sex marriage in chronological order.

15
minutes

This theme underwent profound changes in the social and legal spheres in the 20th and 21st centuries. At the beginning of the 20th century, homosexuality was a crime. Today, same-sex marriage is permitted, and discrimination based on sexual orientation is prohibited.

Discovery of the legal context around marriage

Marriage

60
minutes

Slides 3 to 10

Present the legal context surrounding marriage based on the slide notes.

Division of powers

Slides 11 to 13

Explain the concept of the “division of powers” between the federal government and the provincial governments based on the slide notes.

This concept is essential for understanding the role of each government in the evolution of the right to same-sex marriage.

Period 2 – Reconstructing the Timeline

Activity instructions

Slide 15

Present the activity: In teams of 4, students must analyze documents, place the key event cards in chronological order, and answer the reflection questions. All of these materials are included in the **Team Workbook**.

10
minutes

Doing the activity

The students do the activity.

Each team of 4 students must:

65
minutes

- 1 Carefully read the reference materials (pages 6, 8, 9 and 11-12 of the **Team Workbook**).
- 2 Analyze each event or document by answering the guiding questions (pages 7, 8, 10 and 12 of the **Team Workbook**).
- 3 Place the key event cards in chronological order (pages 13 to 15 of the **Team Workbook**).
- 4 Answer the reflection questions (page 16 of the **Team Workbook**).

All students in each team must take part in the activity, but they can divide up the work in whatever way they find most effective.

You can print one of the answer keys available in the **Team Workbook Answer Key** to show students what kind of answers are expected for the guiding questions.

Period 3 – Same-Sex Marriage

Discovery of the evolution of the right to same-sex marriage

Slides 16 to 34

Present the key legal events in the evolution of the right to same-sex marriage based on the slide notes.

Ask the students to make any necessary corrections on their key event sheets.

45 minutes

Review of the timeline and questions

Slides 35 and 36

Present the timeline to the students (see the slide notes).

30 minutes

Discuss and correct the reflection questions.

Ask the students to make any necessary corrections in their **Team Workbooks**.

Discuss the use of a timeline to understand a historical period.

Possible elements for discussion

- Timelines highlight specific events. However, the processes of social change overlap and extend over time. They're also complex and involve different social players who may disagree.
- The timeline is a summarizing tool that facilitates the interpretation of a subject through its chronology.

Additional information

There are several articles on the rights of LGBTQ+ persons in the Web Guide on the Éducaloi website [LGBTQ+ | Éducaloi \(educaloi.qc.ca\)](https://www.educaloi.qc.ca/lgbtq+) and on slide 38.

Period 4 – Summative Evaluation

You'll find below the summative evaluation to distribute to the students, if you've chosen to do one.

Print as many evaluations as there are students, and print the corrected version for yourself. It will help you correct the exercise.

Evaluation

Name: _____

Group: _____

10

1) What is the concept of “division of powers” in Canada?

3

2) Why is it important to understand the division of powers to understand the evolution of the right to same-sex marriage?

3

3) Imagine two homosexual couples in Quebec: one lived in the province in 1950, the other in 2010. What were their relationship rights in each of these periods? What are the differences between the rights of same-sex persons in these two periods?

4

Evaluation

Answer
key

Name: _____

Group: _____

10

1) What is the concept of “division of powers” in Canada?

Example of answer: The federal government and the provinces are each responsible for creating laws regarding certain matters. This means that the provinces are responsible for laws on some matters, while the federal government is responsible for laws on others matters.

3

Note: The students can also use the terms “National Assembly” to refer to the provincial government and “Parliament” to refer to the federal government.

2) Why is it important to understand the division of powers to understand the evolution of the right to same-sex marriage?

Example of answer: Because in Canada, the federal government and the provincial governments each have its own responsibilities (jurisdictions). Each one had to change laws to permit same-sex marriage.

3

3) Imagine two homosexual couples in Quebec: one lived in the province in 1950, the other in 2010. What were their relationship rights in each of these periods? What are the differences between the rights of same-sex persons in these two periods?

Example of answer: The couple in the 1950s did not have rights as a couple because homosexuality was a crime at the time. The couple in 2010 enjoys many rights. For example, this couple can marry or form a civil union. The couple in 2010 is also protected against discrimination under the Quebec and Canadian charters, which prohibit any discrimination based on sexual orientation.

4

Your Opinion

To better support you and create tools adapted to your needs, we want to hear about your experience and opinions.

Take this short survey by scanning the the QR code or by clicking on the link.

It will take you less than 5 minutes.

Thank you for your participation!



[Link to the survey](#)

Other Tools for You!

Did you like this tool? We have more! Here's a list of the workshops and teaching guides we offer to help you teach key legal concepts.

You'll surely find what you're looking for!

Workshops Given by Legal Experts

Our workshops are free, interactive, and introduce participants to the justice system. They are led by volunteer legal professionals. The goal of these workshops is to help young people develop legal skills. They offer knowledge and tools that are practical and useful in students' daily lives.

Now it's your turn! All that's left is to [register](#) to your account and request the workshop you're interested in!

- **READY, SET, INVEST!**

Students step into the shoes of an investor to reflect on legal and ethical business practices before making investment decisions.

- **WORKING: NOT AT ALL COSTS!**

Students become aware of harassment in the workplace through a quiz and scenarios. They also learn about possible remedies and resources they can turn to if they experience or witness harassment.

- **BEAT THE BUZZER!**

In this game, teams square off to answer questions about legal issues in the lives of 12-to-17-year-olds.

- **BULLYING: WHAT'S YOUR OPINION?**

Students learn about the legal aspects of bullying such as criminal law, sharing of intimate images, the right to control images of themselves and possible recourses. Students then take a position on these issues.

- **THE SMALL CLAIMS COURT IS IN SESSION!**

Students stage a mock civil trial between a consumer and a business. They discover the various players involved and experience what a trial is like in this court.

- **THE LAW: IT'S NOT LIKE IN THE MOVIES!**

By staging a mock criminal trial, students discover the roles of various players in the Quebec justice system, the different steps in a trial and basic criminal law concepts.

- **THE RULES OF THE GAME!**

In this game show activity, students debate legal issues affecting the lives of young adults: work, housing, consumer rights, the criminal justice system, and more.

- **OUR CONFLICT, OUR SOLUTION!**

Conflicts don't always end up in court with lawyers battling it out! In this scenario, groups of high school students who have a disagreement arrive at a win-win solution. This activity introduces students to mediation as an alternative method to prevent and resolve disputes.

- **PICK YOUR SIDE!**

Students take a position on issues that stimulate debate. They learn that the concept of justice evolves constantly and is shaped by the clash of ideas and changing societal values. Students then discuss why they chose one side over the other. The volunteer legal professional presents relevant legal information and encourages students to reflect on the issues raised.

Our Teaching Guides: Ready-To-Use Resources

Our teaching guides can be used in a range of grades. They are of various lengths and activity types. Turnkey, they can be led by the teacher and are specifically adapted to secondary school students.

Make your choice and download them free of charge.

Secondary – Cycle 1

- **ARE YOU OLD ENOUGH?**

Students learn which responsibilities and freedoms the law gives them according to their age.

- **THE INTERNET AND THE LAW**

This activity provides an overview of prohibited online activities and recommends solutions if a child is being harassed online.

- **THE CRIMINAL LEGAL SYSTEM FOR TEENAGERS**

This activity explains how the criminal legal system often treats teenagers differently than adults.

Secondary – Cycle 2

- **BIOETHICS: SAVIOUR BABIES**

This activity involves a class debate on two hot topics in biotechnology: the selection of human embryos and the use of a baby's tissues or organs to cure another person. Students then draft a bill on these topics.

- **DISCRIMINATION AT SCHOOL?**

This teaching tool lets students explore the themes of justice, tolerance and the accommodation of differences.

- **INSIDE THE COURTROOM: THE KEY PLAYERS AND STEPS OF A CRIMINAL TRIAL**

This activity explains the roles of people who play a part in a criminal trial, and the steps in the process.

- **INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY**

Clear explanations about trademarks, copyrights, patents, and more!

- **LEGAL CAREERS**

This activity introduces students to a variety of jobs that involve the law.

- **A RIGHT TO PRIVACY**

This teaching tool gets students thinking about why privacy rights are protected. Activities include discussion questions and a writing exercise.

- **LEGAL CAREERS IN THE INDIGENOUS CONTEXT**

In this activity, students learn about the variety of law-related jobs. It was designed with the realities of Indigenous people in mind.

- **DON'T FIGHT, MEDIATE!**

Students are asked to take on specific roles in a simulated mediation session to resolve a conflict between two teens and their families.

- **UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT: WITNESS EXAMINATION AND CROSS EXAMINATION**

Students learn the basics of the criminal justice system, the steps involved in questioning witnesses and the role of each player in a criminal trial. Students then take part in a mock trial with the help of a script. This activity appeals to students' sense of justice. They will role-play, analyze a situation, take a position and formulate questions to get to the truth.

CCQ: Resources for Teachers

TRAINING 101: CULTURE AND CITIZENSHIP IN QUEBEC, THE LEGAL CONCEPTS

Follow our training session, which covers the legal concepts found in the new CCQ course, improve your understanding of general legal concepts, and increase your confidence to teach them!

TRAINING LEGAL CONCEPTS IN THE CCQ PROGRAM: SECONDARY SCHOOL LEVEL

Listen to this hands-on training session. You'll get an overview of all the tools available to you. This will help you use them more easily and find all the resources you need.

Videos: Legal Education

You can use these videos and tutorials when discussing legal concepts with your students:

- [**LE DROIT EN CLASSE: AGIR EN LIGNE**](#) (Being online, French with English subtitles)
- [**LE DROIT EN CLASSE: PROCÈS SIMULÉ**](#) (Mock criminal trial, French with English subtitles)
- [**LE DROIT EN CLASSE: LE CONSENTEMENT**](#) (Sexual consent, French with English subtitles)

Order a Poster

These materials are great tools to reinforce the learning done in class.

All that's left is to order them and display them:

<https://educaloi.gc.ca/en/order-educalois-products/>

- [**AGE OF CONSENT TO SEXUAL ACTIVITIES**](#)
- [**CYBERBULLYING ... IT CAN BE A CRIME!**](#)
- [**WORKING: NOT AT ALL COSTS!**](#)

To Learn More

Visit legallifeskills.ca for complete information about our workshops and teaching guides.

If you have any questions, please contact us at scolaire@educaloi.gc.ca.