# Appendix A: Experiment Materials

## A1: Invitation to Professors

**Invitation for your Class to Participate in Research Study**

Dear [PROFESSOR NAME],

As part of a research study on electoral politics, we are seeking for instructors at [INSTITUTION] who may be willing to have their students read a short text and complete a 20-minue survey. The text and survey are paper-based and would be administered by the researcher or their assistant, at the beginning or end of your class.

This survey provides your students the opportunity to think about contemporary political issues and reflect on their roles as citizens.

The success of our research depends upon obtaining responses from a broad sample of students, and we thank you for your serious consideration of our request to approach the students in your course regarding participation.

Sincerely,

Dr. Holly Ann Garnett

Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, Royal Military College of Canada

National Defence, P.O. Box 17000, Station Forces Kingston, ON K7K 7B4

Tel: 613-985-7512

Email: holly-ann.garnett@rmc-cmr.ca

Dr. André Blais

Professor and Canada Research Chair in Electoral Studies, Université de Montréal

Pabillion Lionel-Groux, 3150 rue Jean-Brillant, Montréal QC H3T 1N8

Tel: 514-343-6111 #40564

Email: andre.blais@umontreal.ca

## A2: Consent Letter to Students[[1]](#footnote-1)

**Researchers:**

Dr. Holly Ann Garnett

Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, Royal Military College of Canada

National Defence, P.O. Box 17000, Station Forces Kingston, ON K7K 7B4

Tel: 613-541-6000 x6141

Email: holly-ann.garnett@rmc-cmr.ca

Dr. André Blais

Professor and Canada Research Chair in Electoral Studies, Université de Montréal

Pavillion Lionel-Groux, 3150 rue Jean-Brillant, Montréal QC H3T 1N8

Tel: 514-343-6111 #40564

Email: andre.blais@umontreal.ca

**Title of Project:** “Electoral Politics in Canada”

**Sponsor:** The Centre for the Study of Democratic Citizenship

Dear Student,

We are interested to know more about Canadians’ views about politics. This activity will provide you the opportunity to think about current political issues and reflect on your role as a citizen.

Please read the text on the next page, and complete the short survey attached. This should take less than 20 minutes.

Participation is voluntary, and you may refuse to participate in any part of this study, decline to answer any question, and may withdraw from the study at any time, for any reason. If you decline to participate, you may leave your survey in the marked envelope. These surveys will be disposed of. As participation is anonymous, withdrawal is not possible after the study session is concluded.

This project has obtained SLC-REB approval (SLC-REB #2018-183HG). There are no risks to you participating in this research. No identifying information will be collected, so your anonymity will be respected. Your course grade will not be affected in any way by your choice of whether or not to participate.

You may detach this letter and keep it for future reference. If you are interested in seeing the results of this study, visit [www.hollyanngarnett.com/electoralpoliticsstudy](http://www.hollyanngarnett.com/electoralpoliticsstudy). We expect the results will be available by December, 2018.

Submitting your responses indicates that you consent to participate in this study.

If you have any questions about this project, please contact researcher Dr. Holly Ann Garnett at the contact information stated above.

Thank you!

*Note: If you have already completed this survey in another class, please return it to the survey facilitator now.*

## A3: Experimental Text (Control Text)[[2]](#footnote-2)

**Please read.**

You know that you're doing something big when your company name becomes a verb. Ask Xerox. In 1959 they created the first plain paper copy machine. It was one of the most successful products ever. The company name Xerox grew into a verb that means "to copy," as in "Bob, can you Xerox this for me?"

Around 50 years later, the same thing happened to Google. Their company name grew into a verb that means "to do an internet search." Now everyone and their grandma knows what it means to Google it.

Unlike Xerox, Google wasn't the first company to invent their product, not by a long shot. Lycos released their search engine in 1993. Yahoo! came out in 1994. AltaVista began serving results in 1995. Google did not come out until years later, in 1998. Though a few years difference may not seem like much, this is a major head start in the fast moving world of tech.

So how did Google do it? How did they overtake their competitors who had such huge leads in time and money? Maybe one good idea made all the difference.

There are millions and millions of sites on the internet. How does a search engine know which ones are relevant to your search? This is a question that great minds have been working on for decades. To understand how Google changed the game, you need to know how search engines worked in 1998. Back then most websites looked at the words in your query. They counted how many times those words appeared on each page. Then they might return pages where the words in your query appeared the most. This system did not work well and people often had to click through pages and pages of results to find what they wanted.

Google was the first search engine that began considering links. Links are those blue underlined words that take you to other pages when you click on them. Larry Page, cofounder of Google, believed that meaningful data could be drawn from how those links connect. Page figured that websites with many links pointing at them were more important than those that had few. He was right. Google's search results were much better than their rivals. They would soon become the world's most used search engine.

It wasn't just the great search results that led to Google becoming so well liked. It also had to do with the way that they presented their product.

Most of the other search engines were cluttered. Their home pages were filled with everything from news stories to stock quotes. But Google's homepage was, and still is, clean. There's nothing on it but the logo, the search box, and a few links. It almost appears empty. In fact, when they were first testing it, users would wait at the home page and not do anything. When asked why, they said that they were, "waiting for the rest of the page to load." People couldn't imagine such a clean and open page as being complete. But the fresh design grew on people once they got used to it.

## A4: Experimental Text (Text at Reading Level Grade 6)

**Please read.**

Canada is thinking about changing the way we elect Members of Parliament (MPs). Right now, Canada uses the first-past-the-post (FPTP) system. In FPTP you vote for 1 person. The person with the most votes becomes MP for that riding.

It is being suggested that Canada should use the single-transferable-vote (STV). This voting system is used in Malta and Ireland.

Using The “Single-Transferable Vote” (STV)

The STV

* allows you to vote
	+ for more people
	+ from different parties or the same party
* uses ranked ballots – you put them in order of your choice
* makes the ridings larger
* has more elected MPs for each riding (3-7)

How STV Works

1. A certain number (quota) of votes is needed to win. The candidates who reach that number become MPs.
2. Some candidates may have more votes than they need. The extra votes are given to the next choice on your ballot.
3. If none of the candidates reach the required number
	1. the person with the least number of votes is out of the race
	2. their votes are given to the rest of the candidates
4. Votes will be counted until all seats are filled.
5. It can take
	* many counts to elect all MPs
	* more time after the vote closes to learn who is elected

Using STV means

* the results are more proportional – for example if a party gets 10% of the votes they are more likely to have 10% of the seats in parliament
* there is greater chance of having a minority or coalition government – if a minority government is voted in it may join with another party to create a coalition

If any party receives more than half of the seats, the governor general invites its leader to form a government. If there is a coalition then the leader will usually be from the party with the most seats.

## A5: Experimental Text (Text at Reading Level Grade 9)

**Please read.**

Canada is considering changing its electoral system, or the way that votes are translated into representation in the House of Commons. In the current system of first-past-the-post (FPTP), you vote for 1 candidate in that riding (electoral district). The person with the most votes becomes the Member of Parliament (MP) for that riding.

It is being suggested that Canada should use the single-transferable-vote (STV). This voting system is used in Malta and Ireland.

The single-transferable-vote

* allows you to vote for more people and from a single party or from different parties
* uses ranked ballots – you put them in order of your preference
* makes the ridings larger
* has more elected MPs for each riding (3-7)

How STV Works

1. A certain number of votes (quota) is needed to win. Those who reach that quota become MPs.
2. Some candidates may have more votes than they need. The extra votes are given to the next choice on your ballot.
3. If none of the candidates reach the quota
	1. the candidate with the least number of votes is eliminated
	2. their votes are given to the rest of the candidates
4. Votes will be counted until all seats are filled. This means moving votes to other candidates as candidates are eliminated.
5. It can take
	* many counts of the votes to elect all of the MPs
	* more time after the vote closes to learn who is elected

By the time all seats from the riding are assigned, nearly all votes will have counted towards the election of a candidate. This produces a relatively proportional result. The result tends to grow more proportional with larger ridings that have more MPs.

The combination of multi-member districts and a quota-based electoral formula ensures the results are broadly proportional across the entire country.

If any party receives more than half of the seats, the governor general invites its leader to form a government. Often with the single-transferable-vote system, no single party has a majority, and two or more parties come together to form a coalition. The prime minister is usually the leader of the largest party in the coalition.

## A6: Experimental Text (Text at Reading Level Grade 12)

**Please read.**

Canada is considering changing its electoral system, or the way that votes are translated into representation in the House of Commons. In the current system of first-past-the-post, voters in each riding vote for one candidate in that riding (electoral district). The candidate that has the most votes is elected as the Member of Parliament for that riding.

The proposal being put forward to replace the current first-past-the-post system is the single-transferable-vote electoral system. The single-transferable-vote combines elements of a number of different electoral systems to both achieve a relatively proportional result and to elect Members of Parliament from specific constituencies. This system uses ranked ballots and large ridings, each with multiple elected Members of Parliament. The single-transferable-vote features multiple member constituencies, (likely between three and seven Members of Parliament). Accordingly, ridings are bigger than they are in systems that elect only one Member of Parliament per riding.

As a voter, you will rank candidates in order of your preference and you are allowed to vote for candidates from a variety of parties or from a single party.

To be elected, a candidate must receive a certain quota: a number of votes required to win calculated using the number of votes cast in the riding and the number of seats to be won there. Candidates who reach the quota are elected and become a Members of Parliament. Excess votes beyond that quota are transferred to the next choice on the voters’ ballots. If no candidate has reached the quota, the last-place candidate is eliminated, and their votes are transferred to remaining candidates. Counting continues in this way through subsequent rounds until each seat is filled. This process can take many rounds to complete and cannot begin until all votes are counted. Therefore, the results may not be known for some time after voting closes.

By the time all seats from the riding are assigned, nearly all electors’ votes will have counted towards the election of a candidate, producing a relatively proportional result. The result tends to grow more proportional with larger ridings that have more Members of Parliament. The combination of multi-member districts and a quota-based electoral formula ensures the results are broadly proportional across the entire country.

If any party receives more than half the seats, the governor general invites its leader to form a government. Often with the single-transferable-vote electoral system, no single party has a majority, and two or more parties come together to form a coalition. The prime minister is usually the leader of the largest party in the coalition.

Two countries that currently use single-transferable-vote to elect their lower houses of government are Ireland and Malta.

## A7: Survey

**Please complete the following survey. It consists of 25 questions about yourself and politics.**

|  |
| --- |
| **Section 1: About You** |
|  |  |  |
| 1.  | Are you…? |
|  | [ ]  | Male |
|  | [ ]  | Female |
|  | [ ]  | Other/Prefer not to say |
|  |  |  |
| 2 | In what year were you born?  | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 3.  | What is the highest level of education that you have completed? |
|  | [ ]  | Have Not Completed Elementary School |
|  | [ ]  | Completed Elementary School |
|  | [ ]  | Some Secondary / High School  |
|  | [ ]  | Completed Secondary / High School |
|  | [ ]  | Some Technical, Community College, CEGEP, College Classique |
|  | [ ]  | Completed Technical, Community College, CEGEP, College Classique |
|  | [ ]  | Some University |
|  | [ ]  | Bachelor’s Degree |
|  | [ ]  | Master’s Degree |
|  | [ ]  | Professional Degree or Doctorate |
|  |  |  |
| 4.  | Is English the first language that you learned? |
|  | [ ]  | Yes |
|  | [ ]  | No  |
|  |  |  |
| 5.  | Were you born in Canada? |
|  | [ ]  | Yes |
|  | [ ]  | No.  *In what year did you come to live in Canada? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 7.  | People sometimes describe themselves as belonging to the lower class, the middle class, or the upper class. Would you describe yourself as belonging to the… |
|  | [ ]  | Upper class  |
|  | [ ]  | Upper middle class  |
|  | [ ]  | Lower middle class  |
|  | [ ]  | Lower class |
|  |  |  |
| 8.  | Are you studying part-time or full-time? |
|  | [ ]  | Part-time |
|  | [ ]  | Full-time |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |
| **Section 2: Your Opinions** |
|  |  |  |
| 9.  | How interested are you in politics in general? |
|  | [ ]  0 [ ]  1 [ ]  2 [ ]  3 [ ]  4 [ ]  5 [ ]  6 [ ]  7 [ ]  8 [ ]  9 [ ]  10

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| No interest | A great deal of interest |

 |
|  |  |  |
| 10.  | In federal politics, do you usually think of yourself as a Liberal, Conservative, NDP, Green, or none of these? |
|  | [ ]  | The Liberal Party |
|  | [ ]  | The Conservative Party |
|  | [ ]  | The New Democratic Party |
|  | [ ]  | The Green Party |
|  | [ ]  | None of these  |
|  |  |  |
| 11. | We would like to see how widely known some political figures are.  Write their name here.  |
|  |  |  |
|  | a. | Do you happen to recall the name of the federal Minister of Finance?  | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
|  |  |  |  |
|  | b. | Do you happen to recall the name of the Governor-General of Canada? | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
|  |  |  |  |
|  | c. | Do you happen to recall the name of the Premier of Ontario? | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
|  |  |  |  |
|  | d. | Do you happen to recall the last name of the President of Russia?  | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
|  |  |  |
| 12.  | Choose one response from the following options:  |
|  | [ ]  | It's best for everyone if people try to fit in instead of acting in unusual ways.  |
|  | [ ]  | People should be encouraged to express themselves in unique and possibly unusual ways.  |
|  |  |  |
| 13 | Choose one response from the following options:  |
|  | [ ]  | Obeying the rules and fitting in are signs of a strong and healthy society.  |
|  | [ ]  | People who continually emphasize the need for unity will only limit creativity and hurt our society.  |
|  |  |  |
| 14 | Choose one response from the following options:  |
|  | [ ]  | We should admire people who go their own way without worrying about what others think.  |
|  | [ ]  | People need to learn to fit in and get along with others. |
|  |  |  |
| 15 | On a scale of 0-10, where 0 means strong distrust, and 10 strong trust, how much do you trust politicians in general?  |
|  | [ ]  0 [ ]  1 [ ]  2 [ ]  3 [ ]  4 [ ]  5 [ ]  6 [ ]  7 [ ]  8 [ ]  9 [ ]  10

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Strong Distrust | Strong Trust |

 |
|  |  |  |
| 16 | How satisfied are you with the performance of the current federal government?  |
|  | [ ]  | Very satisfied |
|  | [ ]  | Fairly satisfied  |
|  | [ ]  | Not very satisfied |
|  | [ ]  | Not satisfied at all |
|  |  |  |
| 17 | In each election we find that a lot of people were not able to vote because they were not registered, they were sick, or they did not have time. Which of the following statements best describes you during the 2015 Canadian federal election? |
|  | [ ]  | I did not vote in the election |
|  | [ ]  | I thought about voting but didn’t |
|  | [ ]  | I usually vote but didn’t this time |
|  | [ ]  | I am sure I voted in the election |
|  | [ ]  | I was not eligible to vote (too young, not a Canadian citizen) |
|  | [ ]  | Don’t know/prefer not to answer |
|  |  |  |
| 18 | Do you recall voting in the 2007 Ontario referendum on electoral reform? |
|  | [ ]  | No |
|  | [ ]  | Yes |
|  |  |  |
| 19 | You probably have a favourite colour. But we are more interested in making sure you’re doing the survey carefully, so please just select the colour brown here. |
|  | [ ]  | Orange |
|  | [ ]  | Blue |
|  | [ ]  | Brown |
|  | [ ]  | Green |
|  | [ ]  | Red |
|  | [ ]  | Yellow |
|  | [ ]  | Purple |
|  |  |  |
| **Section 3: About Elections** |
|  |  |
| 20. | How do you feel about the existing first-past-the-post electoral system that is used for elections in Canada and Ontario? |
|  | [ ]  0 [ ]  1 [ ]  2 [ ]  3 [ ]  4 [ ]  5 [ ]  6 [ ]  7 [ ]  8 [ ]  9 [ ]  10

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Strongly dislike  | Strongly like. |

 |
|  |  |
| 21. | On a scale of 0-10, how interested are you on the issue of electoral reform?  |
|  | [ ]  0 [ ]  1 [ ]  2 [ ]  3 [ ]  4 [ ]  5 [ ]  6 [ ]  7 [ ]  8 [ ]  9 [ ]  10

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Not at all interested | Very interested |

 |
|  |  |  |
| *The single-transferable-vote is a voting system in which voters rank the candidates from the most to the least preferred, and the candidates with the most support are elected in multi-member districts.*  |
|  |  |  |
| 22. | Which of the following statements are true about single-transferable vote: | True | False | Don’t Know |
|  | a. | It is used in national lower house elections in Ireland | [ ]  | [ ]  | [ ]  |
|  | b. | It is currently used in national elections in Canada. | [ ]  | [ ]  | [ ]  |
|  | c. | Every district will only have one member of parliament. | [ ]  | [ ]  | [ ]  |
|  | d. | The Governor General chooses the candidates who are listed on the ballot. | [ ]  | [ ]  | [ ]  |
|  | e. | Only one candidate from a given party can run in each district. | [ ]  | [ ]  | [ ]  |
|  | f. | Voters can rank the candidates. | [ ]  | [ ]  | [ ]  |
|  | g. | Voters can only vote for candidates from a single party. | [ ]  | [ ]  | [ ]  |
|  | h. | Candidates must meet a specific quota of votes to be elected. | [ ]  | [ ]  | [ ]  |
|  | i. | The results of the election are likely to be more proportional than now | [ ]  | [ ]  | [ ]  |
|  | j. | All parties will receive some representation in the House of Commons, whether or not they receive any votes.  | [ ]  | [ ]  | [ ]  |
|  |  |  |
| 23. | How informed do you think you are about the issue of electoral reform?  |
|  | [ ]  0 [ ]  1 [ ]  2 [ ]  3 [ ]  4 [ ]  5 [ ]  6 [ ]  7 [ ]  8 [ ]  9 [ ]  10

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Not at all informed |  Very well informed |
|   |  |

 |
|  |  |  |
| 24. | Which of the following statements are true about single-transferable-vote?  | True | False | Don’t Know |
|  | a. | My ballot will look the same as now. | [ ]  | [ ]  | [ ]  |
|  | b. | My riding (electoral district) will be larger. | [ ]  | [ ]  | [ ]  |
|  | c. | I will have more than one Member of Parliament in my district. | [ ]  | [ ]  | [ ]  |
|  | d. | I can only rank candidates from one party. | [ ]  | [ ]  | [ ]  |
|  | e. | It will take longer to find out the results of the election. | [ ]  | [ ]  | [ ]  |
|  |  |  |  |
| 25. | If a referendum were held today in Canada with the following question, how would you vote?  |
|  | *“Which electoral system should Canada use to elect members to the House of Commons”* |
|  | [ ]  | The existing electoral system (First-Past-the-Post) |
|  | [ ]  | Single transferable vote |
|  | [ ]  | Don’t know / no opinion |

End of survey.

Thank you for your time. Please return this survey to the survey facilitator.

# Appendix B: Text Revision Process

*The following explanation was provided by the clear writing consultant hired to revise the texts used in this paper:*

Leah Morris

Recognized by the Learning Networks of Ontario – Clear Writing Consultant

Leah has been providing Clear Writing consulting, design and training since 1989.

Process used for this document

The first step was to determine the grade level of the original document. This was completed using the Flesch-Kincaid grading system. Once the grade level was determined the language and design of the document was considered.

The original document was roughly a grade 10.5. The more complex the language, the longer the sentences used and the more ‘text’ heavy a document, the higher the reading level.

Documents written at higher grade levels will

* have longer sentences (many sentences with more than 15 words)
* more multi-syllable words (3 syllables or more)
* more complex language and thoughts
* use fewer acronyms

To increase the original document from a grade 10.5 to 12, the consultant removed acronyms, used longer sentences and fewer paragraphs (7 rather than 9). These simple changes brought the document to the required grade 12 level.

To lower the reading level of a document the consultant

* used more white space
* used down-style punctuation (no colons, fewer commas etc.)
* created shorter sentences
* used numerals
* replaced multi-syllable words with more direct and easier to read language
* pulled information out of paragraph format and used lists

Once the grade 6 level was achieved, the consultant then considered the language and design used in the grade 12 document and the grade 6 document, to create the grade 9 document.

After the editing and re-development of the original document, the three revised documents were at grade 5.9, 8.7 and 12.

# Appendix C: Variables (Codebook)

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Q # | Indicator | Question | Response Options (#s) |
| 1 | Sex | Are you…? | 1. Male
2. Female
3. Other/Prefer not to say

*(Recoded as 0 Male 1 Female)* |
| 2 | Birthyear | In what year were you born? | Year*(Recoded to age)* |
| 3 | Education | What is the highest level of education that you have completed? | 1. Have Not Completed Elementary School
2. Completed Elementary School
3. Some Secondary / High School
4. Completed Secondary / High School
5. Some Technical, Community College, CEGEP, College Classique
6. Completed Technical, Community College, CEGEP, College Classique
7. Some University
8. Bachelor’s Degree
9. Master’s Degree
10. Professional Degree or Doctorate

*(Recoded as 0-5 as 0 and 6-9 as 1)* |
| 4 | ESL | Is English the first language that you learned? | 1. No
2. Yes
 |
| 5 | Bornabroad | Were you born in Canada? | 1. No
2. Yes
 |
| 6 | Yeartocanada | In what year did you come to live in Canada?  | Year |
| 7 | Class | People sometimes describe themselves as belonging to the lower class, the middle class, or the upper class. Would you describe yourself as belonging to the… | 1. Lower class
2. Lower middle class
3. Upper middle class
4. Upper class

  |
| 8 | Fulltime | Are you studying part-time or full-time? | 1. Part-time
2. Full-time
 |
| 9 | Interestpolitics | How interested are you in politics in general? | 1. 0 (no interest)
2. 1
3. 2
4. 3
5. 4
6. 5
7. 6
8. 7
9. 8
10. 9
11. 10 (A great deal of interest)
 |
| 10 | Partyid | In federal politics, do you usually think of yourself as a Liberal, Conservative, NDP, Green, or none of these? | 1. None of these
2. The Liberal Party
3. The Conservative Party
4. The New Democratic Party
5. The Green Party
 |
| 11a | Know1 | Do you happen to recall the name of the federal Minister of Finance? | 1. Other
2. Morneau

*(Note: for all these questions, correct spelling was not required)* |
| 11b | Know2 | Do you happen to recall the name of the Governor-General of Canada? | 1. Other
2. Payette
 |
| 11c | Know3 | Do you happen to recall the name of the Premier of Ontario? | 1. Other
2. Ford
 |
| 11d | Know4 | Do you happen to recall the last name of the President of Russia? | 1. Other
2. Putin
 |
| 12 | Personality1 | Choose one response from the following options: | 1. It's best for everyone if people try to fit in instead of acting in unusual ways.
2. People should be encouraged to express themselves in unique and possibly unusual ways.
 |
| 13 | Personality2 | Choose one response from the following options: | 1. Obeying the rules and fitting in are signs of a strong and healthy society.
2. People who continually emphasize the need for unity will only limit creativity and hurt our society.
 |
| 14 | Personality3 | Choose one response from the following options: | 1. We should admire people who go their own way without worrying about what others think.
2. People need to learn to fit in and get along with others.
 |
| 15 | Trust | On a scale of 0-10, where 0 means strong distrust, and 10 strong trust, how much do you trust politicians in general? | 1. 0 (Strong distrust)
2. 1
3. 2
4. 3
5. 4
6. 5
7. 6
8. 7
9. 8
10. 9
11. 10 (Strong Trust)
 |
| 16 | Satisfaction | How satisfied are you with the performance of the current federal government?  | 1. Not satisfied at all
2. Not very satisfied
3. Fairly satisfied
4. Very satisfied
 |
| 17 | Vote | In each election we find that a lot of people were not able to vote because they were not registered, they were sick, or they did not have time. Which of the following statements best describes you during the 2015 Canadian federal election? | 1. I did not vote in the election
2. I thought about voting but didn’t
3. I usually vote but didn’t this time
4. I am sure I voted in the election
5. I was not eligible to vote (too young, not a Canadian citizen)
6. Don’t know/prefer not to answer
 |
| 18 | Referendum2017 | Do you recall voting in the 2007 Ontario referendum on electoral reform? | 1. No
2. Yes
 |
| 19 | Colour | You probably have a favourite colour. But we are more interested in making sure you’re doing the survey carefully, so please just select the colour brown here. | 1. Orange
2. Blue
3. Brown
4. Green
5. Red
6. Yellow
7. Purple
 |
| 20 | Opinionfptp | How do you feel about the existing first-past-the-post electoral system that is used for elections in Canada and Ontario? | 1. 0 (Strongly dislike)
2. 1
3. 2
4. 3
5. 4
6. 5
7. 6
8. 7
9. 8
10. 9
11. 10 (Strongly like)
 |
| 21 | interestelectoral | On a scale of 0-10, how interested are you on the issue of electoral reform? | 1. 0 (Not at all interested)
2. 1
3. 2
4. 3
5. 4
6. 5
7. 6
8. 7
9. 8
10. 9
11. 10 (Very interest)
 |
| 22a | Fact1 | It is used in national lower house elections in Ireland | 1. **True**
2. False
3. Don’t know
 |
| 22b | Fact2 | It is currently used in national elections in Canada. | 1. True
2. **False**
3. Don’t know
 |
| 22c | Fact3 | Every district will only have one member of parliament. | 1. True
2. **False**
3. Don’t know
 |
| 22d | Fact4 | The Governor General chooses the candidates who are listed on the ballot. | 1. True
2. **False**
3. Don’t know
 |
| 22e | Fact5 | Only one candidate from a given party can run in each district | 1. True
2. **False**
3. Don’t know
 |
| 22f | Fact6 | Voters can rank the candidates | 1. **True**
2. False
3. Don’t know
 |
| 22g | Fact7 | Voters can only vote for candidates from a single party.  | 1. True
2. **False**
3. Don’t know
 |
| 22h | Fact8 | Candidates must meet a specific quota of votes to be elected.  | 1. **True**
2. False
3. Don’t know
 |
| 22i | Fact9 | The results of the election are likely to be more proportional than now | 1. **True**
2. False
3. Don’t know
 |
| 22j | Fact10 | All parties will receive some representation in the House of Commons, whether or not they receive any votes.  | 1. True
2. **False**
3. Don’t know
 |
| 23 | Informed | How informed do you think you are about the issue of electoral reform?  | 1. 0 (Not at all informed)
2. 1
3. 2
4. 3
5. 4
6. 5
7. 6
8. 7
9. 8
10. 9
11. 10 (Very well informed)
 |
| 24a | Impact1 | My ballot will look the same as now. | 1. True
2. **False**
3. Don’t know
 |
| 24b | Impact2 | My riding (electoral district) will be larger. | 1. **True**
2. False
3. Don’t know
 |
| 24c | Impact3 | I will have more than one Member of Parliament in my district. | 1. **True**
2. False
3. Don’t know
 |
| 24d | Impact4 | I can only rank candidates from one party. | 1. True
2. **False**
3. Don’t know
 |
| 24e | Impact5 | It will take longer to find out the results of the election. | 1. **True**
2. False
3. Don’t know
 |
| 25 | referendumq | If a referendum were held today in Canada with the following question, how would you vote?  | 1. The existing electoral system (First-Past-the-Post)
2. Single transferable vote
3. Don’t know / no opinion

*(Recoded twice for regression analysis:* *Favourability to STV*1. *The existing electoral system (FPTP) or Don’t Know*
2. *Single transferable vote*

*Opinion on Electoral Reform*1. *Don’t know / no opinion*
2. *Either The existing electoral system (FPTP) or single transferable vote)*
 |

**Questions adapted from the following sources:**

Feldman, S. (2003). Enforcing Social Conformity: A Theory of Authoritarianism. *Political Psychology,* *24*(1), 41-74.

Fournier, Patrick, Fred Cutler, Stuart Soroka and Dietlind Stolle. (2015). The 2015 Canadian Election Study. [dataset]

Vowles, J. (2013). Campaign claims, partisan cues, and media effects in the 2011 British Electoral System Referendum. JELS Electoral Studies, 32(2), 253-264.

# Appendix D: Mokken Scaling of Knowledge Variable

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  | Observed | Expected |  |  |
|  |  | Mean | Guttman | Guttman | Loevinger |  |
| Item | Obs | Score | errors | errors | H coeff | z-stat. |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Fact 4 | 474 | 0.2996 | 693 | 1116.67 | 0.3794 | 24.7466 |
| Impact 5 | 474 | 0.2806 | 563 | 1069.64 | 0.47366 | 30.131 |
| Fact 5 | 474 | 0.2532 | 507 | 974.43 | 0.4797 | 28.6616 |
| Fact 8 | 474 | 0.4557 | 521 | 1166.72 | 0.55345 | 34.9182 |
| Fact 3 | 474 | 0.3101 | 548 | 1134.05 | 0.51678 | 33.9243 |
| Impact 3 | 474 | 0.2785 | 520 | 1063.22 | 0.51092 | 32.3757 |
| Impact 2 | 474 | 0.2954 | 529 | 1107.74 | 0.52245 | 33.9333 |
| Impact 1 | 474 | 0.4008 | 501 | 1182.91 | 0.57647 | 37.4235 |
| Impact 4 | 474 | 0.4473 | 437 | 1175.64 | 0.62829 | 40.0034 |
| Fact 9 | 474 | 0.3565 | 485 | 1169.79 | 0.5854 | 38.3814 |
| Fact 6 | 474 | 0.5148 | 349 | 1062.17 | 0.67143 | 38.4424 |
| Fact 7 | 474 | 0.4451 | 407 | 1176.88 | 0.65417 | 41.7129 |
| Fact 1 | 474 | 0.3143 | 527 | 1139.03 | 0.53733 | 35.3074 |
| Fact 2 | 474 | 0.481 | 373 | 1128.37 | 0.66943 | 40.7274 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Scale | 474 |  | 3480 | 7833.63 | 0.55576 | 93.0827 |

*Results of the STATA MSP command demonstrate that all but the final knowledge question can be added together into a scale of knowledge.*

## Figure D1: Robustness check with only 14 items included

*Chi2(3) = 41.92 p<0.000*

# Appendix E: Comparability of Groups

The four groups were similar in size:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Number of Respondents | % of all Respondents |
| Control | 127 | 26.79 |
| Grade 6 | 122 | 25.74 |
| Grade 9 | 115 | 24.26 |
| Grade 12 | 110 | 23.21 |
| TOTAL | 747 | 100% |

Cross-tabulations, with Chi2 tests were used to determine whether there were significant differences between the four groups according to key categorical variables:

* ***Gender*** (Female/Male), chi2 = 3.23, p>0.1
* ***University Education***, chi2 = 3.15, p>0.1
* ***English as Second Langage***, chi2 = 1.80, p>0.1
* ***Partisan Identification*** (which party), chi2 = 11.50, p>0.1
* ***Class*** (3 categories), Chi2 = 10.94, p>0.1

Analysis of Variance, with Chi2 tests were used to determine whether there were significant differences in means between the four groups according to key continuous variables:

* ***Age*** (means for each group between 22.71 and 23.15), p>0.1
* ***Interest in Politics*** (means for each group between 4.20 and 4.49), p>0.1
* ***Trust in Government*** (means for each group between 3.24 and 3.69), p>0.1
* ***Satisfaction with Current Government*** (means for each group between 1.43 and 1.45), p>0.1

There were significant differences in the means of ***political knowledge*** between groups (p<0.1). However, it is important to note that when pairwise comparisons are conducted, the differences between groups do not reach the p<0.05 level.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Type | Mean | Std. Dev. | Frequency |
| Control | 1.291339 | 1.000875 | 127 |
| Grade 6 | 1.262295 | 1.050803 | 122 |
| Grade 9 | 1.017391 | 0.982144 | 115 |
| Grade 12 | 1.027273 | 0.962214 | 110 |
| TOTAL | 1.156118 | 1.005742 | 474 |

# Appendix F: Standard Deviations of Means presented in Figures 2, 3 & 4

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Mean Knowledge Score | Standard Deviation | Mean Subjective Information Score | Standard Deviation | Mean Interest Score | Standard Deviation |
| Control | 0.18 | 0.20 | 2.01 | 2.33 | 3.95 | 3.04 |
| Grade 6 | 0.46 | 0.35 | 2.65 | 2.41 | 4.27 | 2.60 |
| Grade 9 | 0.46 | 0.34 | 2.52 | 2.42 | 4.19 | 2.78 |
| Grade 12 | 0.35 | 0.29 | 2.11 | 2.18 | 4.34 | 2.78 |

# Appendix G: Regression Analysis

Results of a regression analysis considering each of the dependent variables alongside key control variables. The results demonstrate the same patterns as the simple cross-tabulations and ANOVAs.

### Table G1: Impact of Text Type

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | (1) | (2) | (4) | (5) | (6) |
|  | Knowledge Score(0-1) | Self-Assessment - Informed (0-10) | Interest in Electoral Reform (0-10) | Referendum Question (‘yes’ to STV)(0/1) | Referendum Question (Any opinion) (0/1) |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Reading Level 6 Text | 0.29\*\*\* | 0.77\*\*\* | 0.46 | 1.13\*\*\* | 1.21\*\*\* |
| (0.04) | (0.25) | (0.31) | (0.31) | (0.29) |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Reading Level 9 Text | 0.29\*\*\* | 0.70\*\*\* | 0.21 | 0.90\*\*\* | 0.98\*\*\* |
| (0.04) | (0.25) | (0.31) | (0.32) | (0.30) |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Reading Level 12 Text | 0.19\*\*\* | 0.25 | 0.29 | 0.62\* | 0.62\*\* |
| (0.04) | (0.25) | (0.31) | (0.33) | (0.30) |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Female | 0.0.4 | -0.06 | 0.25 | 0.01 | -0.04 |
|  | (0.03) | (0.21) | (0.26) | (0.25) | (0.24) |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Some University-Level Education | 0.06\*\* | 0.15 | 0.39 | 0.25 | 0.14 |
| (0.30) | (0.20) | (0.24) | (0.23) | (0.23) |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| English as Second Language | 0.05 | -0.17 | -0.47\* | 0.19 | -0.09 |
| (0.03) | (0.23) | (0.28) | (0.28) | (0.27) |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Age | 0.00 | 0.03\* | 0.01 | 0.02 | -0.00 |
|  | (0.00) | (0.02) | (0.02) | (0.02) | (0.02) |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Political Knowledge Score | 0.07\*\*\* | 0.15 | 0.04 | -0.05 | 0.08 |
| (0.02) | (0.10) | (0.13) | (0.12) | (0.12) |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Interest in Politics | 0.02\*\*\* | 0.43\*\*\* | 0.60\*\*\* | 0.18\*\*\* | 0.28\*\*\* |
| (0.01) | (0.04) | (0.05) | (0.05) | (0.05) |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Constant | -0.14\* | -0.88\* | 1.03\* | -3.13\*\*\* | -2.04\*\*\* |
|  | (0.07) | (0.48) | (0.59) | (0.59) | (0.57) |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| N | 458 | 447 | 442 | 458 | 458 |

*Standard errors in parentheses \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1*

*Models 1-5 are OLS Regression. Models 6-7 are logistic regression.*

*Reference category is control text.*

### Figure G1: Predicted Information Score

*Predicted probability (using ‘margins’ command in STATA), from results in Table E1, Model 1, 95% confidence intervals depicted.*

### Figure G2: Predicted Level of Interest in Electoral Reform

*Predicted probability (using ‘margins’ command in STATA), from results in Table E1, Model 4, 95% confidence intervals depicted.*

### Figure G3: Predicted Probability of voting for STV

*Predicted probability (using ‘margins’ command in STATA), from results in Table E1, Model 5, 95% confidence intervals depicted.*

1. Please note this letter, as well as each of the texts, was originally designed to fit on one page. The added Appendix heading slightly changes the formatting on the page. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Text taken from: <https://www.ereadingworksheets.com/reading-comprehension-worksheets/nonfiction-reading-text-google.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)