

The purpose of this learning strategy is to provide students with an opportunity to investigate the viewpoints that specific individuals may have on an issue and to be involved in the process of debate and negotiations to resolve the issue. In this learning experience, the class will select a relevant issue relating to resource development in their own region or anywhere in Canada. (See TN G-29 for further details on how to conduct a role-play as a learning strategy.)

This learning activity suggests that the role-play be conducted in the form of a public hearing by a Royal Commission that has been appointed to investigate a controversial issue, to hear differing viewpoints, and to then make recommendations on the course of action to resolve the issue.

A **Royal Commission** is a committee appointed by the government (usually the prime minister or premier) to investigate and report on a controversy or matter of great importance. The commission may consist of a lead Commissioner and a number of members, as well as support staff. The commission usually travels to different locations to host public hearings to gather information from the various parties who have an interest in a controversial issue.

For the purpose of the role-play, the characters of the commission members, in addition to those of the various parties involved, should be assigned to students. Additional role-play characters might include:

- The president or representative of a resource development company (mining, forestry, hydro) that is proposing to exploit a resource or establish a resource-based industry
- Chief or council member of a local First Nation Band who may either oppose this development to protect the natural environment or seek certain changes that will benefit the local community
- The Minister of Natural Resources from the government whose responsibility it is to oversee the appropriate management of resources and either approve or deny the company's plans for development
- Other ministers or representatives from government departments, such as Indian and Northern Affairs or Environment and Economic Development
- Representatives from environmental lobby groups such as the Sierra Club, Canadian Wildlife Federation, or Greenpeace
- Local individuals and representatives of local companies who hope to participate and gain employment and profit
- A tourism lodge operator whose business may be negatively affected by resource development in the region
- An Aboriginal Elder or youth who is concerned about the impact on maintaining traditional values and practices
- Other characters students may think of for the role-play

Students may be assigned roles by the teacher, have them determined by draw, or choose their roles themselves. Teacher-prepared role cards might assist students to further develop their roles.