

Date Printed: 04/09/2009

JTS Box Number: IFES_61
Tab Number: 19
Document Title: I can Vote! A user-friendly Guide to
voting in Canada
Document Date: 1997
Document Country: Canada
Document Language: English
IFES ID: CE00431



* 4 8 D 9 6 D 6 3 - 3 2 D 5 - 4 C A 3 - B B 6 C - 1 7 D B E A B E 9 7 5 F *

I Can Vote!

A user-friendly guide to voting in Canada



I Can Vote!

A user-friendly guide to voting in Canada

F Clifton White Resource Center
International Foundation for Election Systems

For enquiries, please contact:

Public Enquiries Unit
Elections Canada
257 Slater Street
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0M6

Tel.: 1 800 463-6868
TTY/TDD: 1 800 361-8935
Internet: <http://www.elections.ca>
E-mail: eleccan@magi.com

Canadian Cataloguing in Publication Data

Main entry under title:

I can vote!: a user-friendly guide to voting in Canada

Issued also in French under title: Je peux voter!
Guide made for first-time voters and self-advocates. — Pref.
ISBN 0-662-25979-3
Cat. no. SE3-42/1997E

1. Elections — Canada — Handbooks, manuals, etc.
2. Voting — Canada — Handbooks, manuals, etc.
 - I. Elections Canada.
- II. Title: A user-friendly guide to voting in Canada.

JL193.I22 1997 324.971 C97-980301-2

© Chief Electoral Officer of Canada 1997

Printed in Canada

Part of this publication – like sample ballot – may be photocopied for educational purposes only. We invite your comments and contribution of material for future editions.

EC 90245

September, 1997

Dear Users,

I am pleased to provide you with this user-friendly guide to voting in Canada entitled, *I Can Vote!* It has been developed in close collaboration with community groups, educators, advocates and self-advocates, English-as-a-second-language teachers and ethnocultural specialists to reach first-time voters.

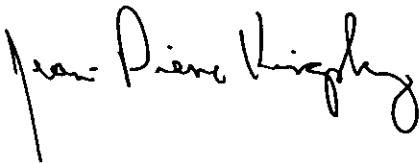
The overall goal of *I Can Vote!* is to make the electoral process more accessible to all Canadians. The approach we have used is both direct and personal. At the same time, the guide provides a framework that educators or teachers can use and adapt to their individual needs.

As a tribute to the 50th anniversary of Canadian Citizenship, *I Can Vote!* will be translated into several heritage languages. At Elections Canada, we are committed to the development of voter education and information programs for all Canadians. In this guide, we have made a special effort to reach out to those who may experience difficulty in exercising their individual right to vote.

Should you require additional copies or have any questions, please call our Community Relations Officer, Denise McCulloch, at either 1 800 463-6868 or (613) 990-3605.

In closing, may I take this opportunity to thank you for your help in preparing this guide and for your valuable contribution toward making the electoral system more accessible to all Canadians.

Yours sincerely,

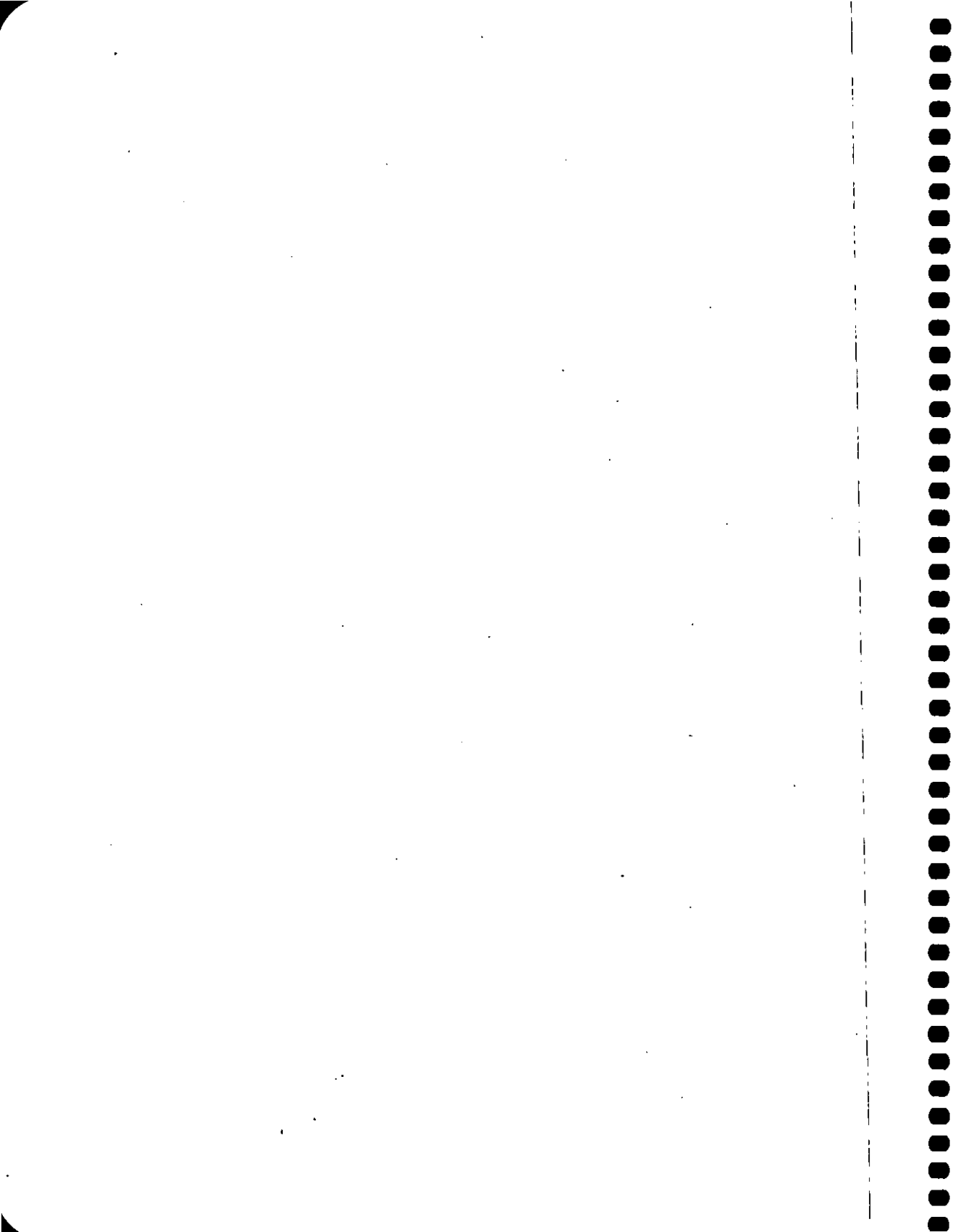
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jean-Pierre Kingsley". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jean-Pierre Kingsley
The Chief Electoral Officer

Table of contents

Preface	7
Who can vote?	8
Section 1	
• Election Words I Need To Know	9
Section 2	
• What Elections Are All About	23
Section 3	
• Election – I Make A Choice	29
For more information	52





Preface

Voting for the first time can be intimidating because people often do not know what to expect.

This guide takes the mystery out of voting. It shows what voting is all about. Voting is about choosing. Everyone has to make choices in their daily lives.

About This Guide

This guide is divided into 3 sections and teaches the basics of voting.

- Section 1 – Election Words I Need To Know – This section explains election words used throughout the guide. Understanding these words before reading the guide will help you.
- Section 2 – What Elections Are All About – This section briefly outlines the electoral process and provides a sense of the people involved.
- Section 3 – Election – I Make A Choice – This section is a step-by-step guide on how to vote. It is a good overview of the process, the people involved, and election words. You may choose to go directly to this section.

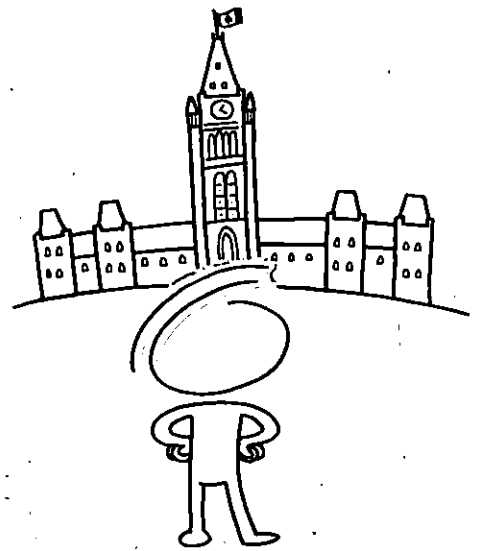
How to Use This Guide

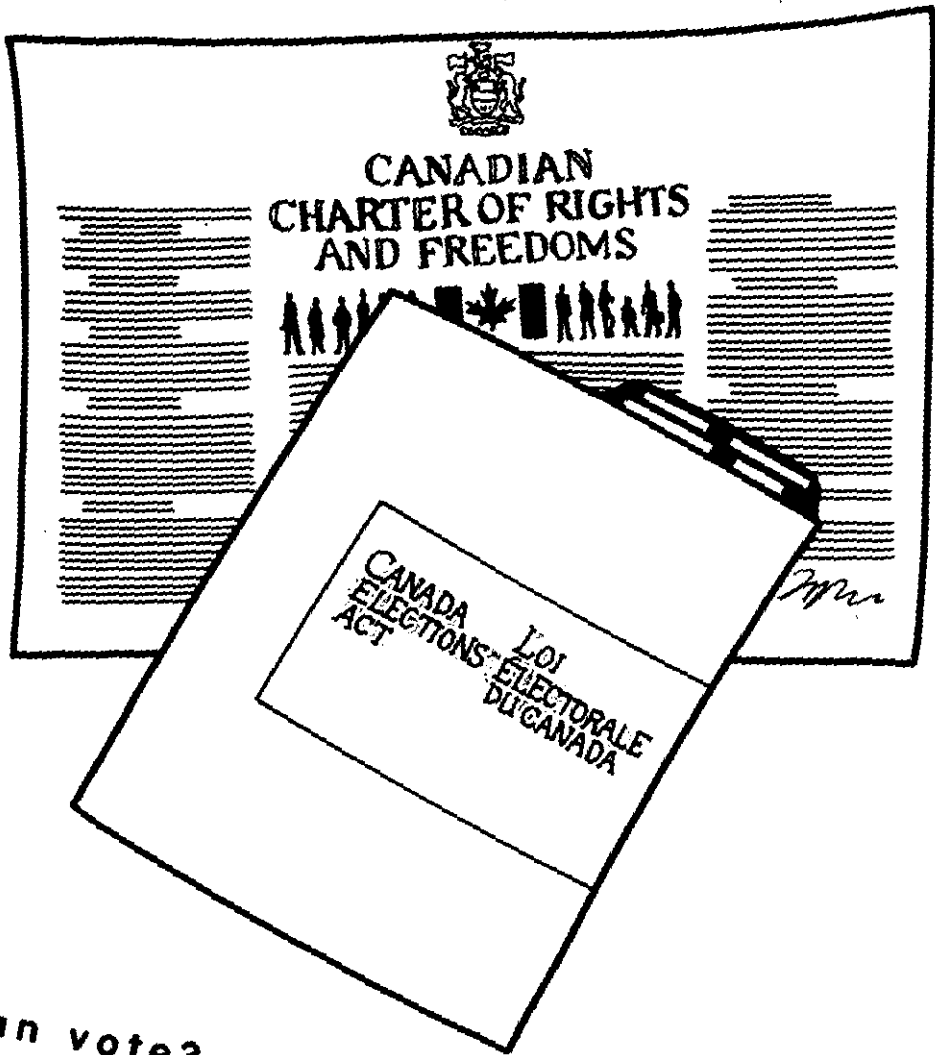
This user-friendly guide was made for you, first-time voters and self-advocates.

- Use it yourself to feel more comfortable about voting.
- Use it with the help of a friend, family member or advocate.
- Use it together with an election simulation kit which can be ordered from Elections Canada. This simulation kit contains everything you need to set-up a practice polling station and go through the steps of voting. There is also a blank ballot at the end of this guide. Role-playing can be a fun way to learn how to vote.

Who Can Use This Guide

- ESL teachers and educators. The vocabulary, pictures and use of plain language make it a handy tool for both teaching and learning.
- Advocates of persons with intellectual disabilities or low literacy skills may wish to use this guide and adapt it to suit the needs of self-advocates.





Who can vote?

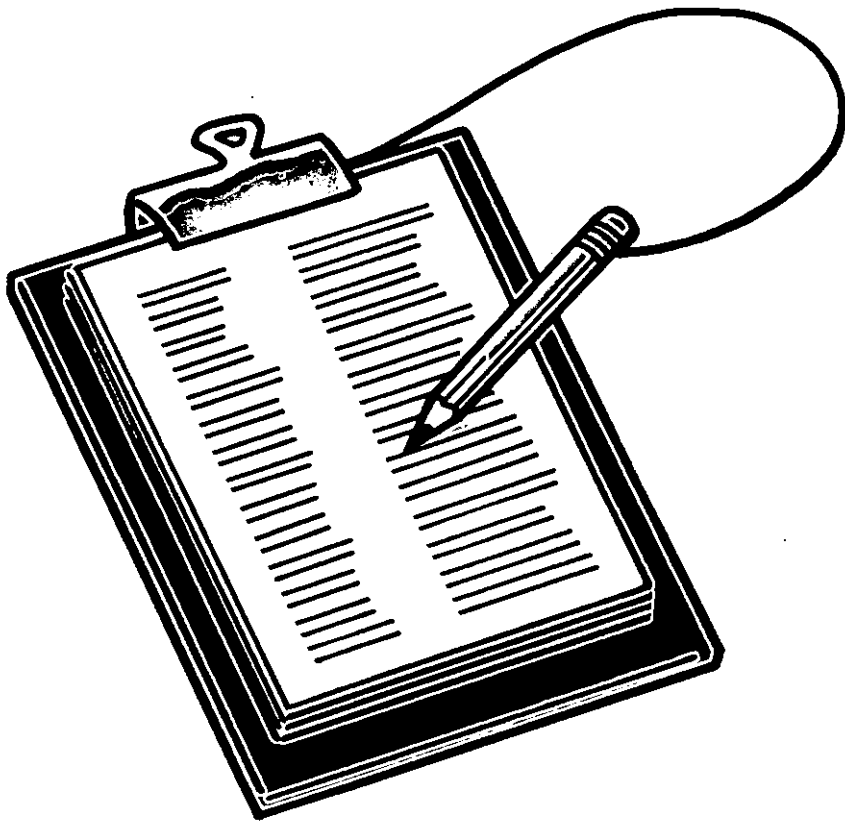
To vote I must be:

- a Canadian citizen
- at least 18 years of age, and
- my name must be on the list of electors

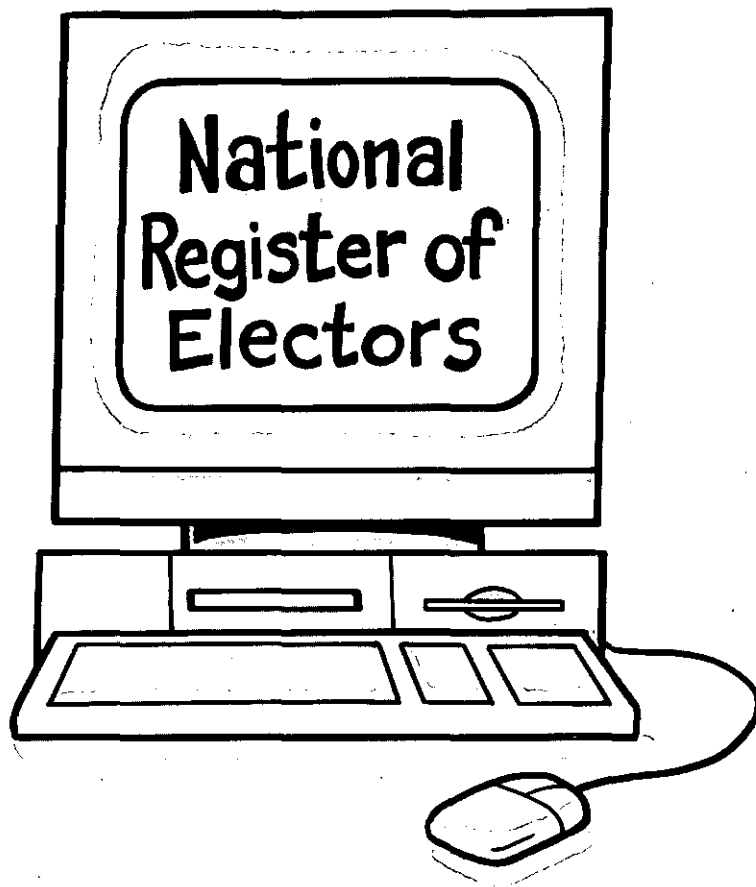
Section 1

Election Words I Need To Know

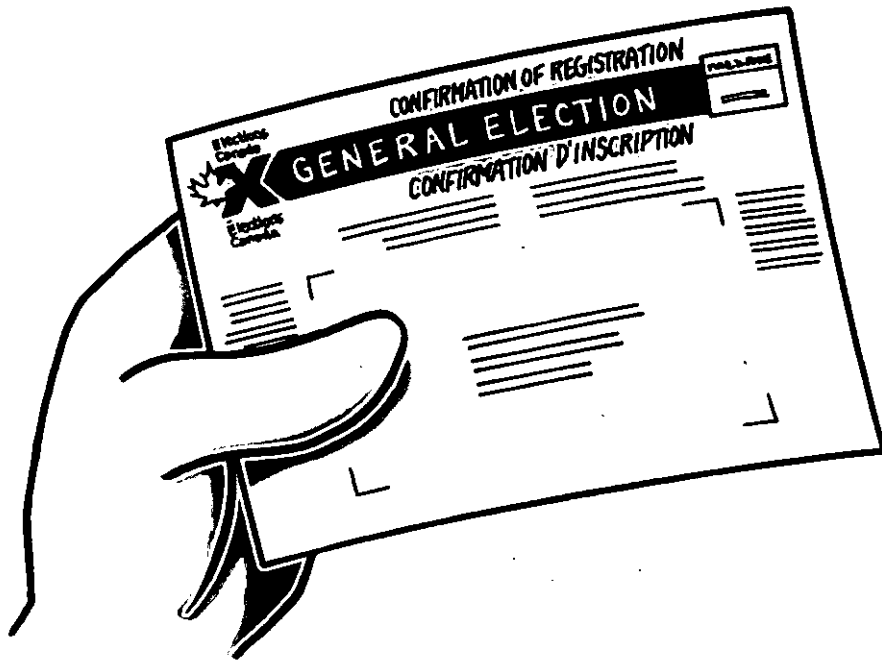




Everyone who is allowed to vote has their name on the **list of electors**, also known as the voters list.



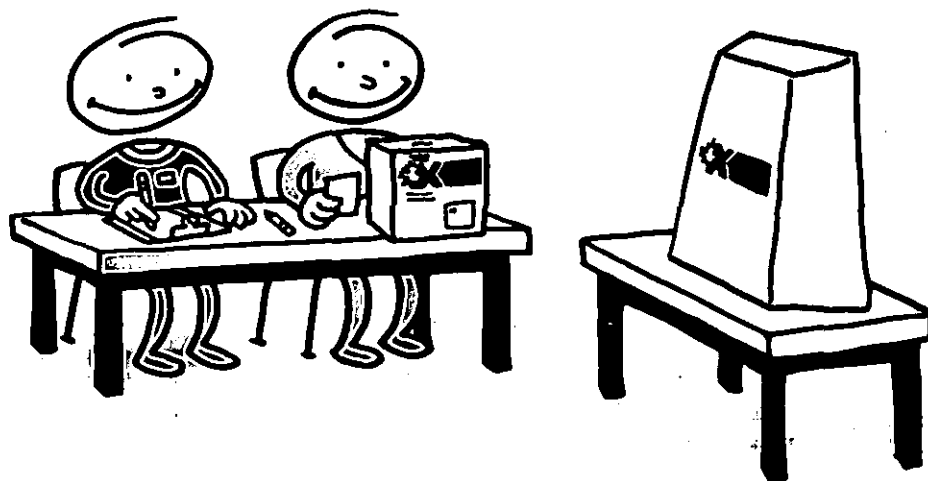
The list of electors is now taken from the new **National Register of Electors**. The Register is a computer data base list of Canadians who have the right to vote.



If my name is on the list of electors, I will receive a **confirmation of registration notice** in the mail soon after an election is called. This **notice** is important. It gives me lots of information. It tells me when and where I go to vote. If I do not receive this notice, I will phone Elections Canada to make sure I get on the list.



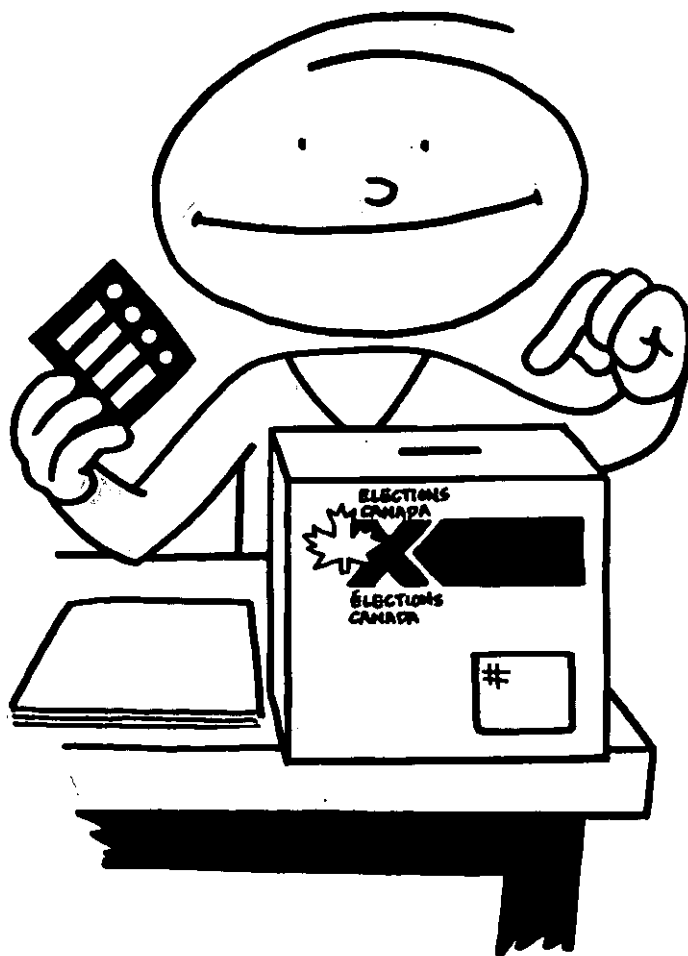
I look for this **polling station pennant**. This big yellow sign is outside the building where I go to vote.



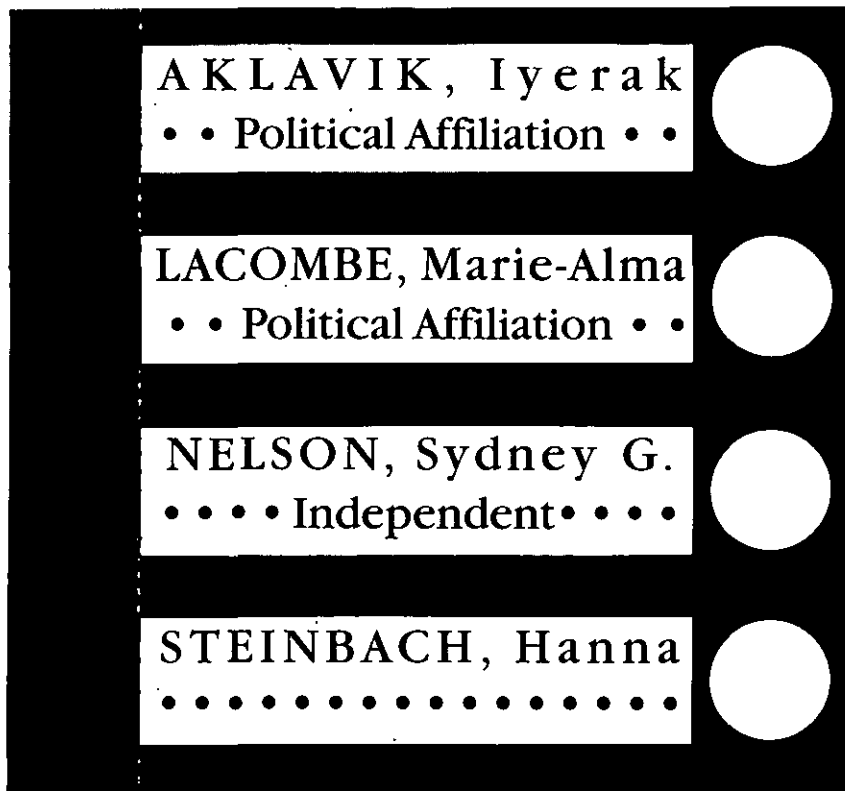
The **polling station** is where I go to vote.
The address is on my confirmation of registration notice.
There are two people at each polling station: the poll clerk and the deputy returning officer. There are often many polling stations at the same place.



The **poll clerk** works at the polling station. The poll clerk has the list of electors and will look for my name before I vote. The poll clerk also helps the deputy returning officer count the votes after the polling station is closed.



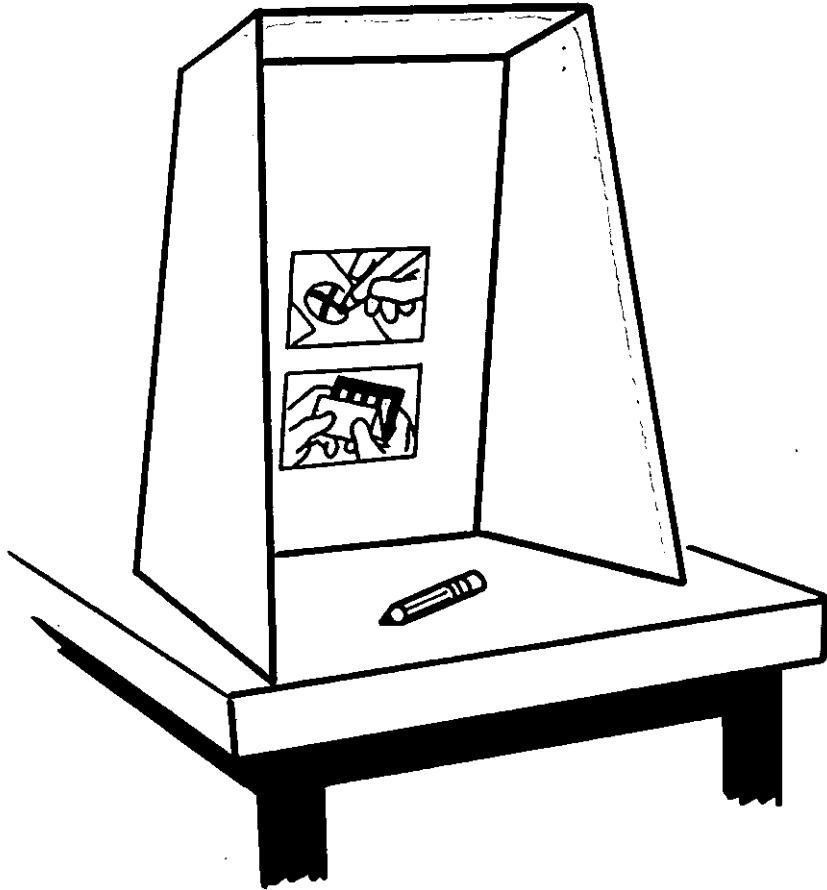
The **deputy returning officer (DRO)** works at the polling station. The DRO gives me a special paper to vote. This paper is called a ballot. The DRO helps people to vote, if asked. The DRO counts the votes after the polling station is closed.



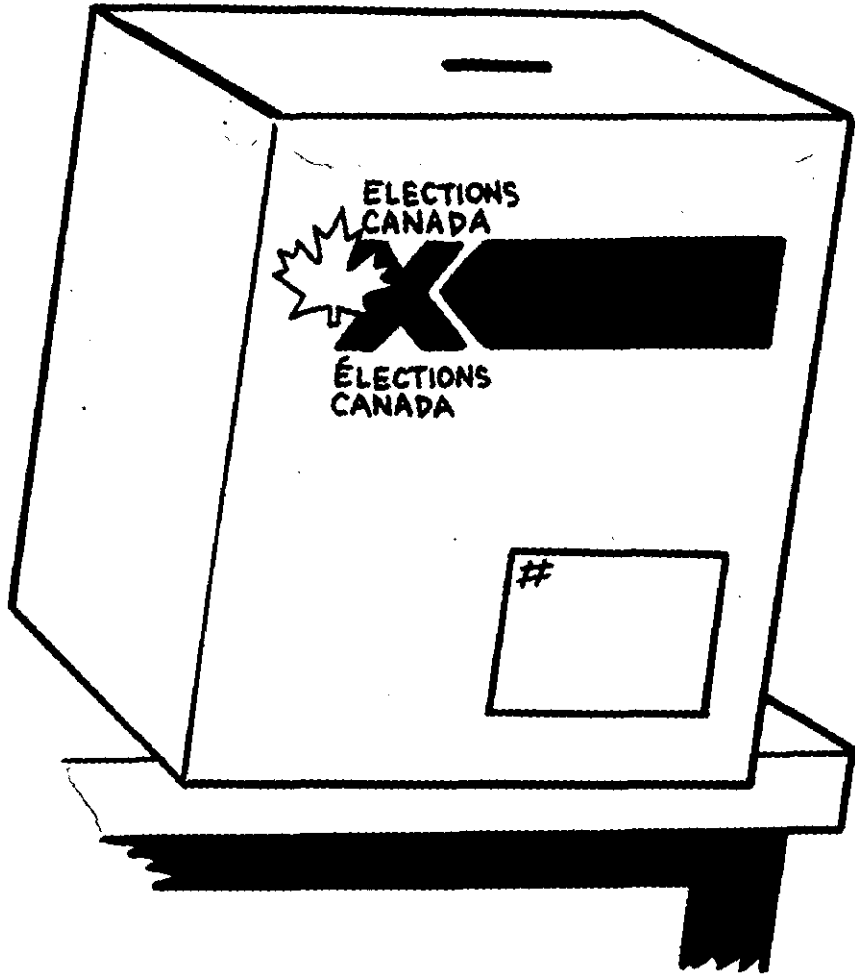
This is what a **ballot** looks like. It has a black tab with a number on it to make sure the ballot I was given is the same ballot I bring back. The ballot lists the names of people (known as candidates) who are up for election.

Their names are listed in alphabetical order.

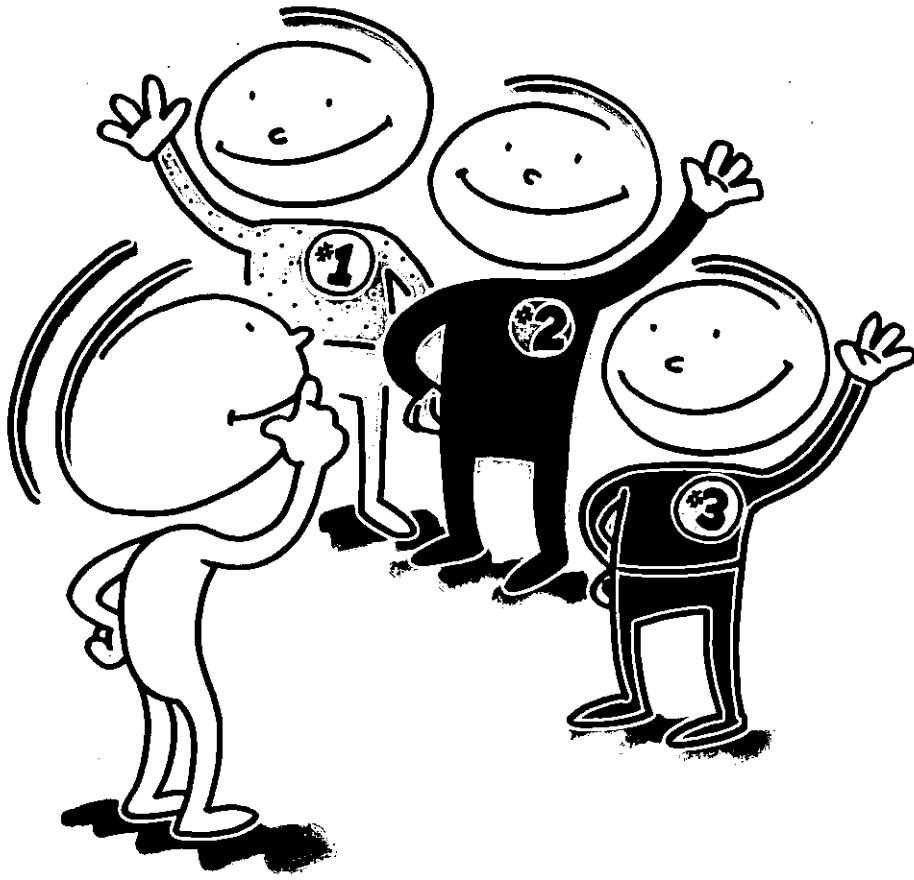
I put my mark in one of the circles to make my choice.



The **voting screen** is a private place in the polling station to mark my ballot.



The **ballot box** is where all the marked ballots go. This is where I will put my ballot after I have made my choice.

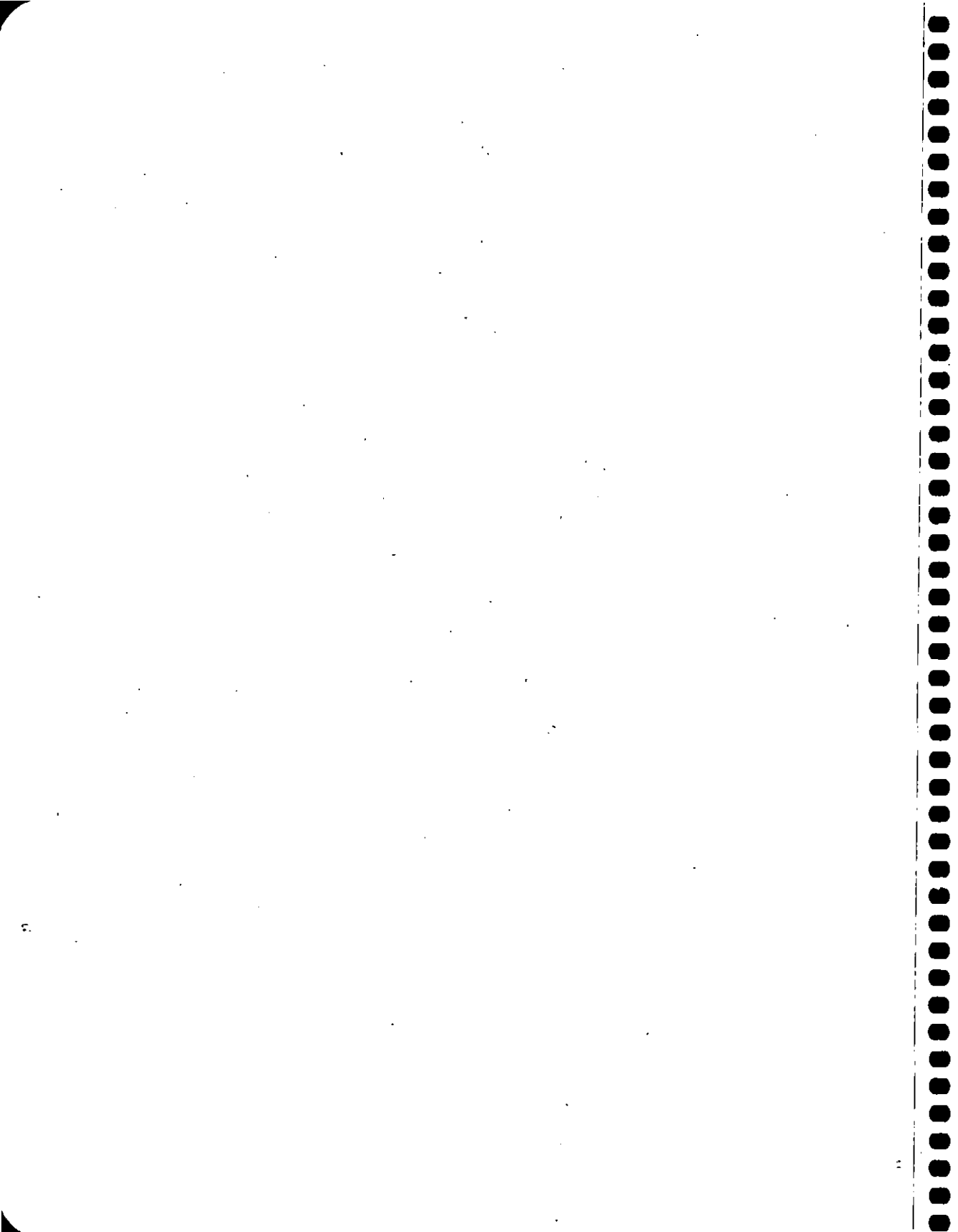


People who want to be elected are called **candidates**.

Their names are listed on the ballot.

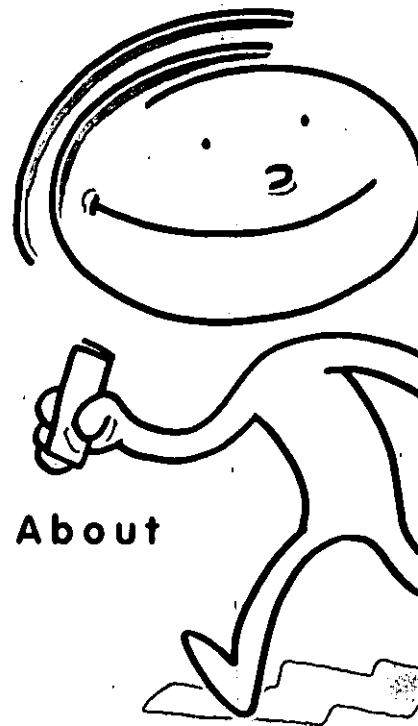


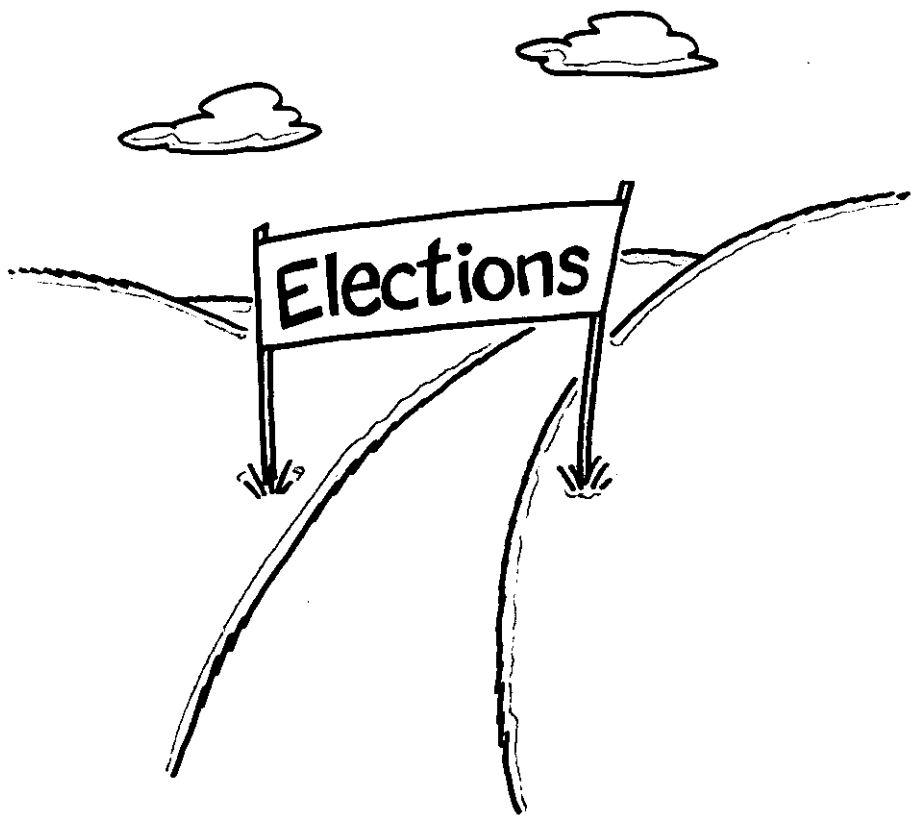
When I vote, I choose one candidate to represent me,
in the House of Commons, in Ottawa.



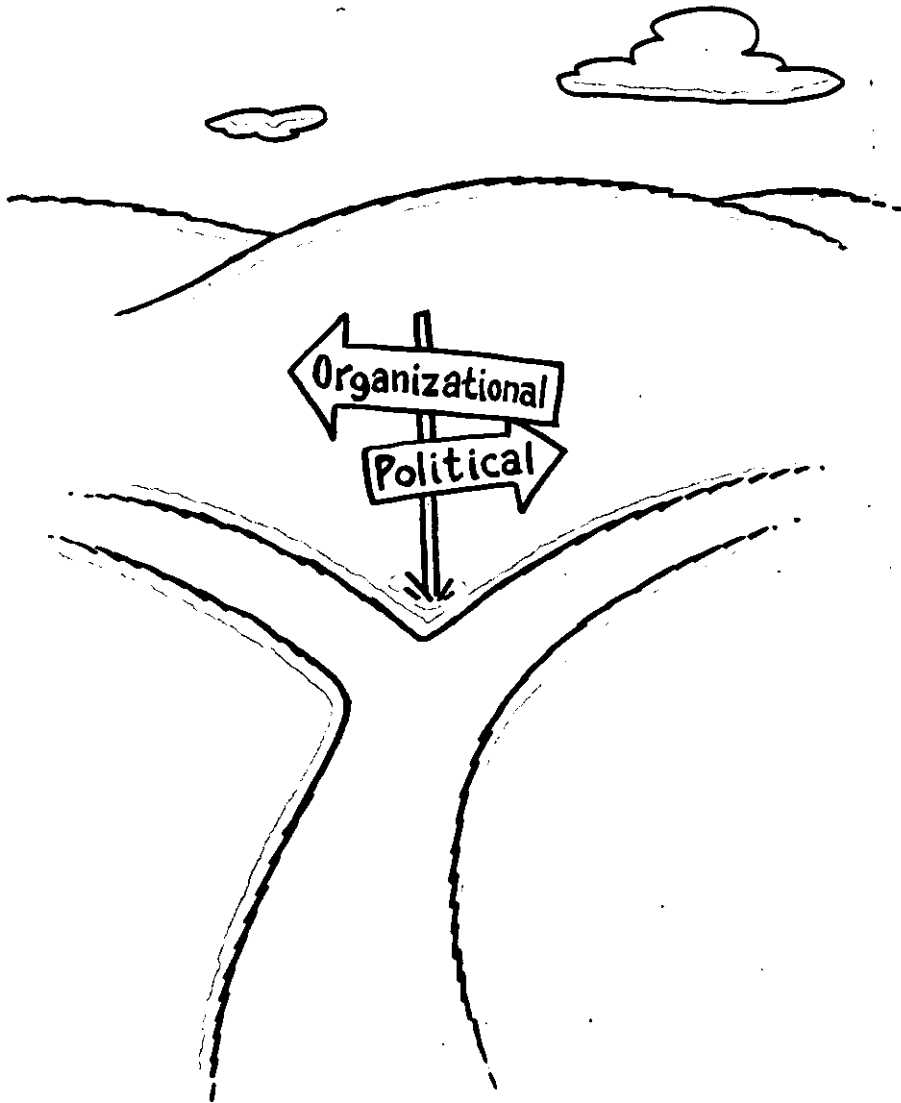
Section 2

What Elections Are All About

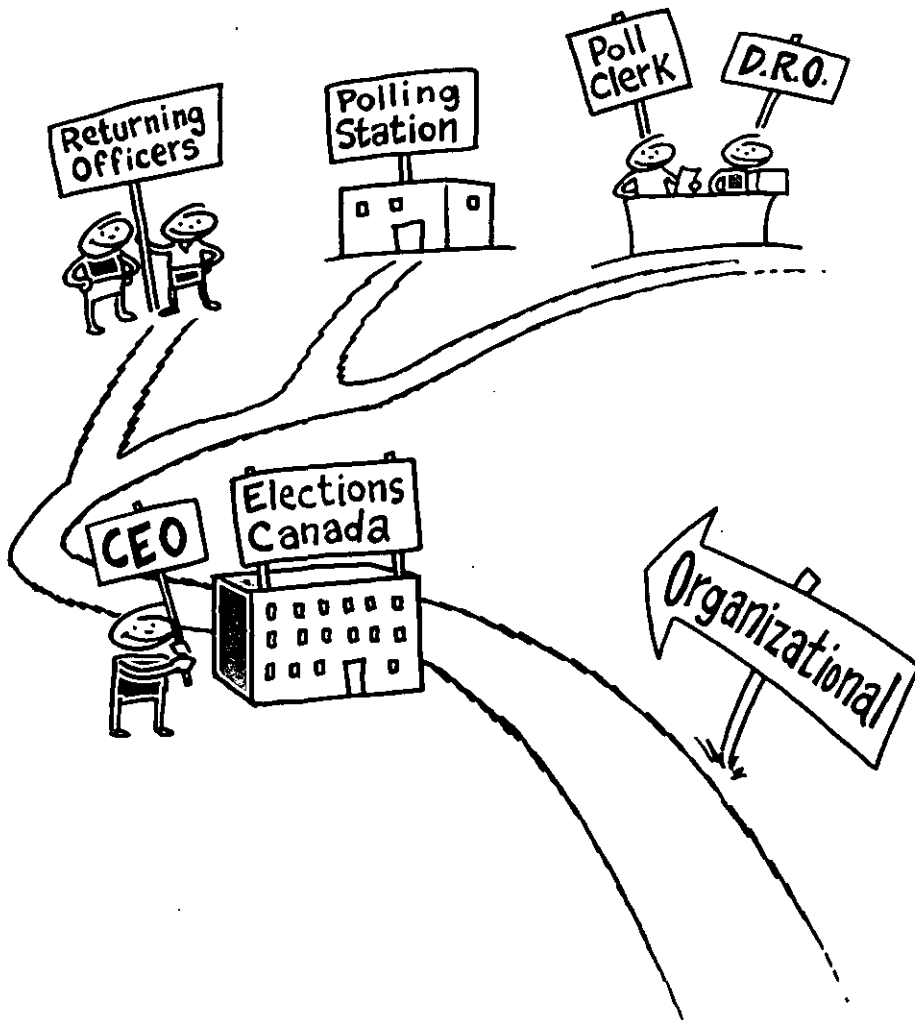




Voting is about **choosing** the government
that will run the country.

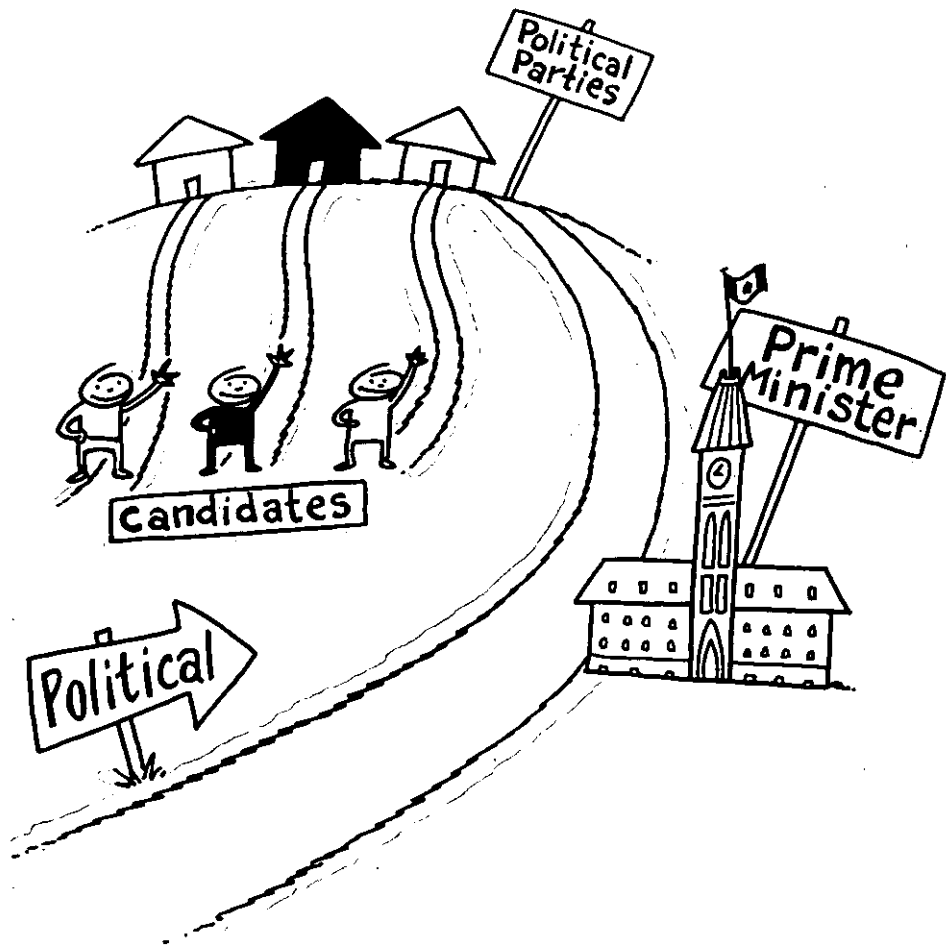


The **electoral process** includes all the steps taken to choose a government. There are two parts to the electoral process: the organizational part and the political part.



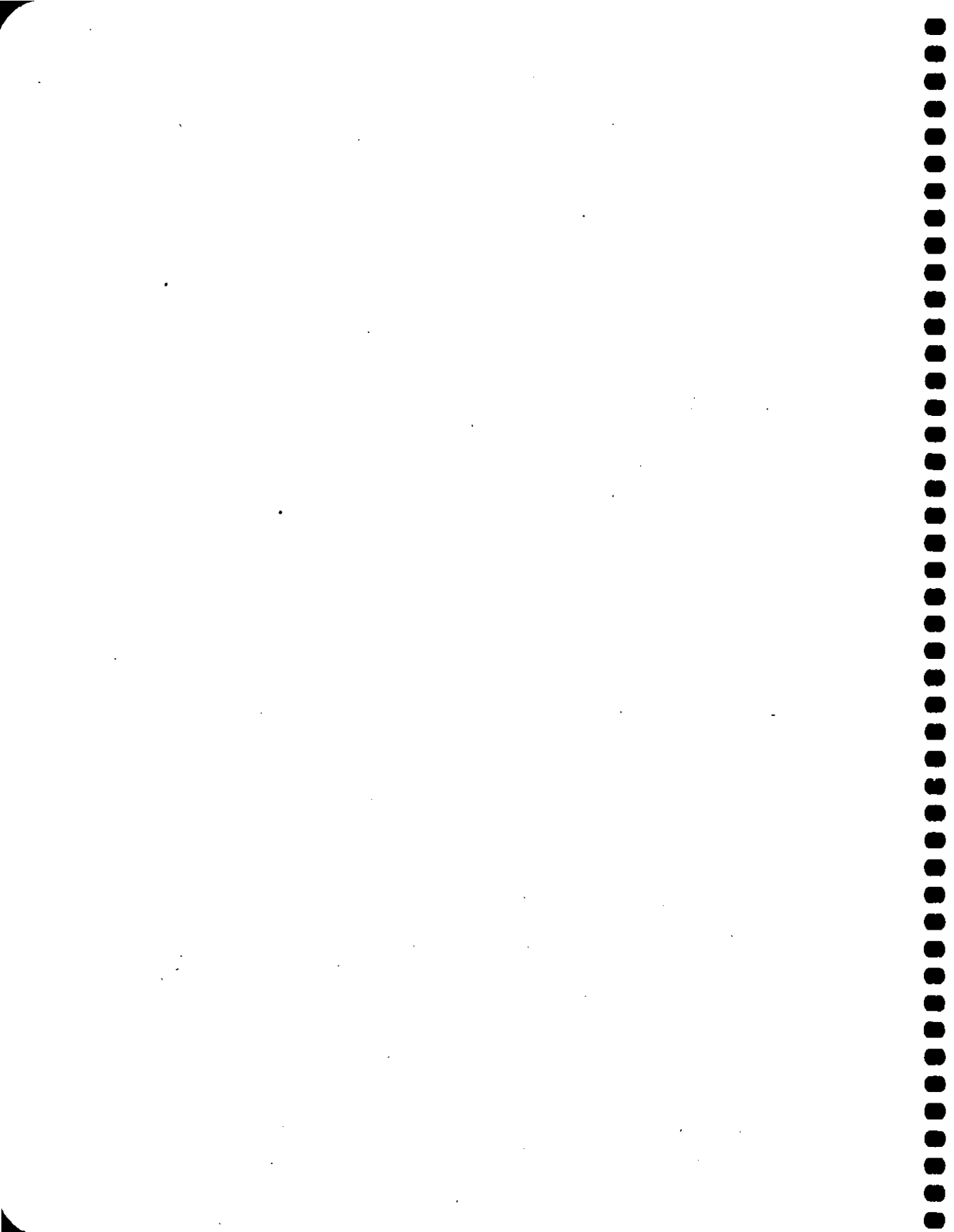
The **organizational** part includes all the people who work for Elections Canada with the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO).

They help me vote but do not tell me for whom to vote.



The **political part** includes candidates who want to be elected as Members of Parliament (MPs). When a group of candidates work together, they form a political party.

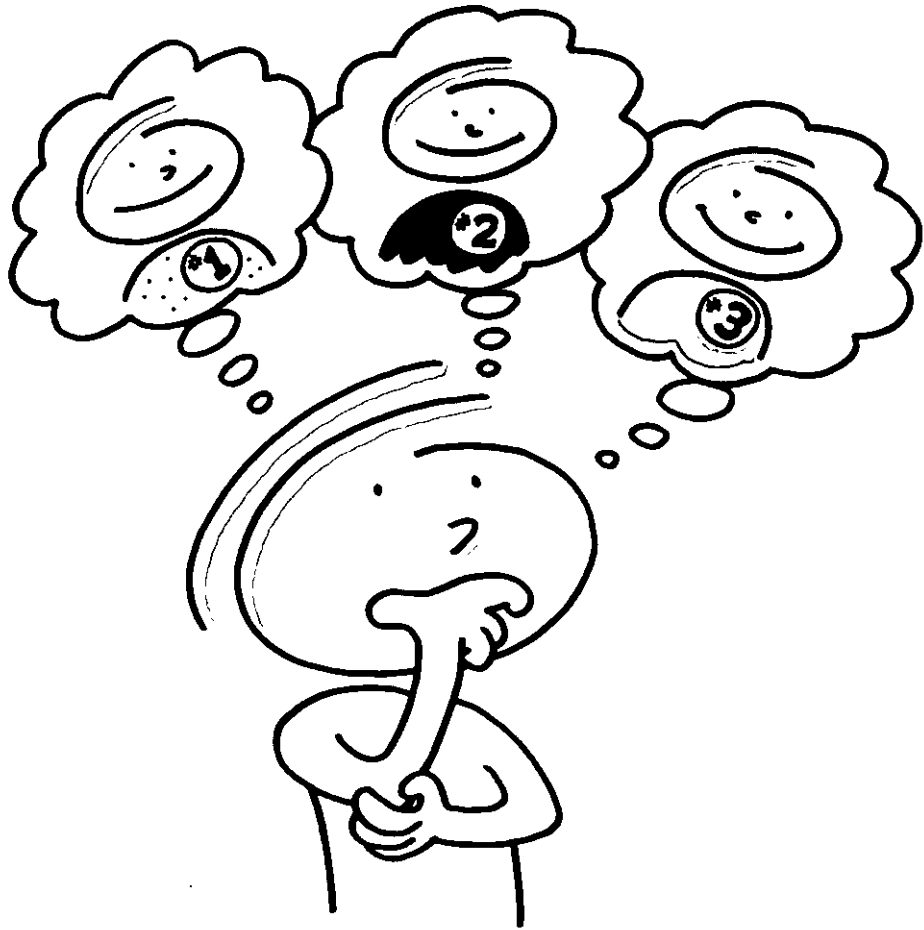
There are many political parties in Canada.



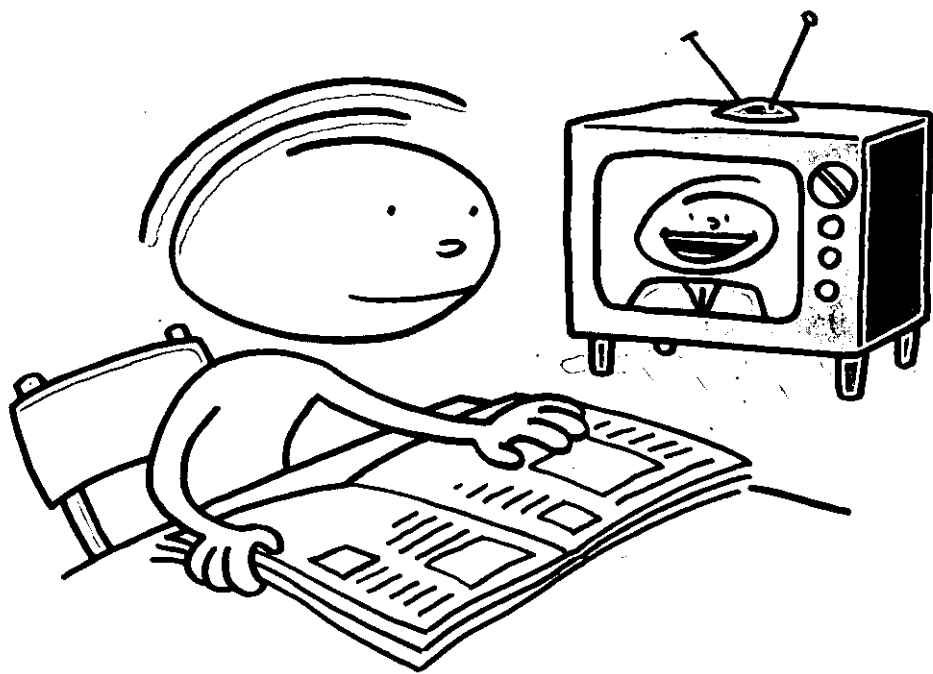
Section 3

Election - I Make A Choice





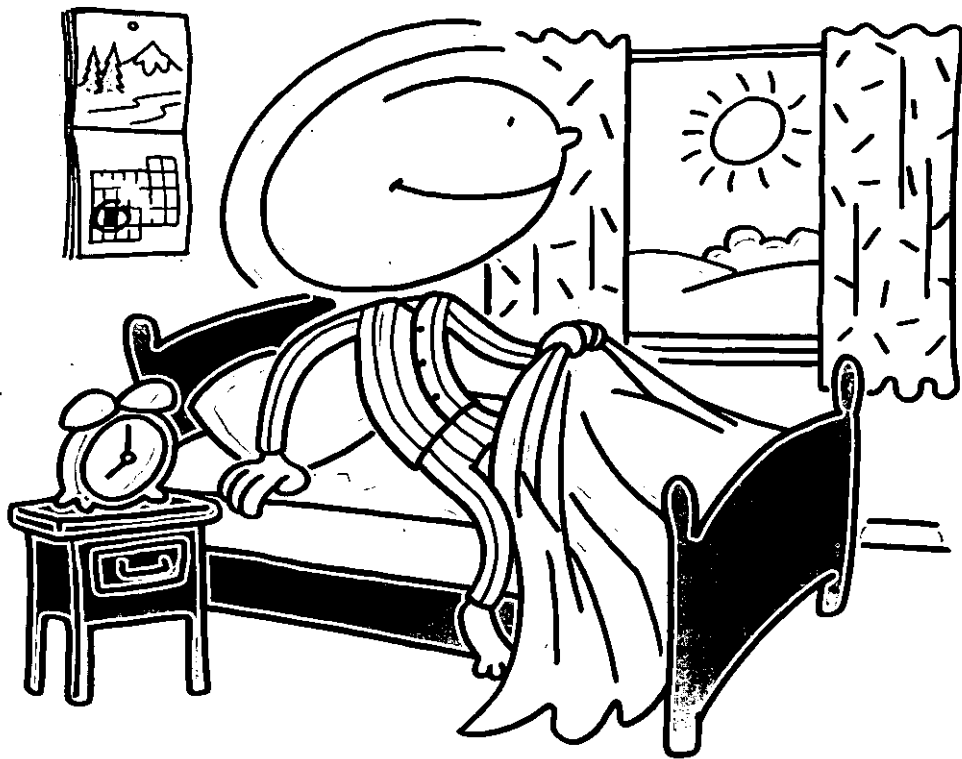
In an election, I have to make a choice. I must choose a
person to help run Canada's government,
a person to represent me.



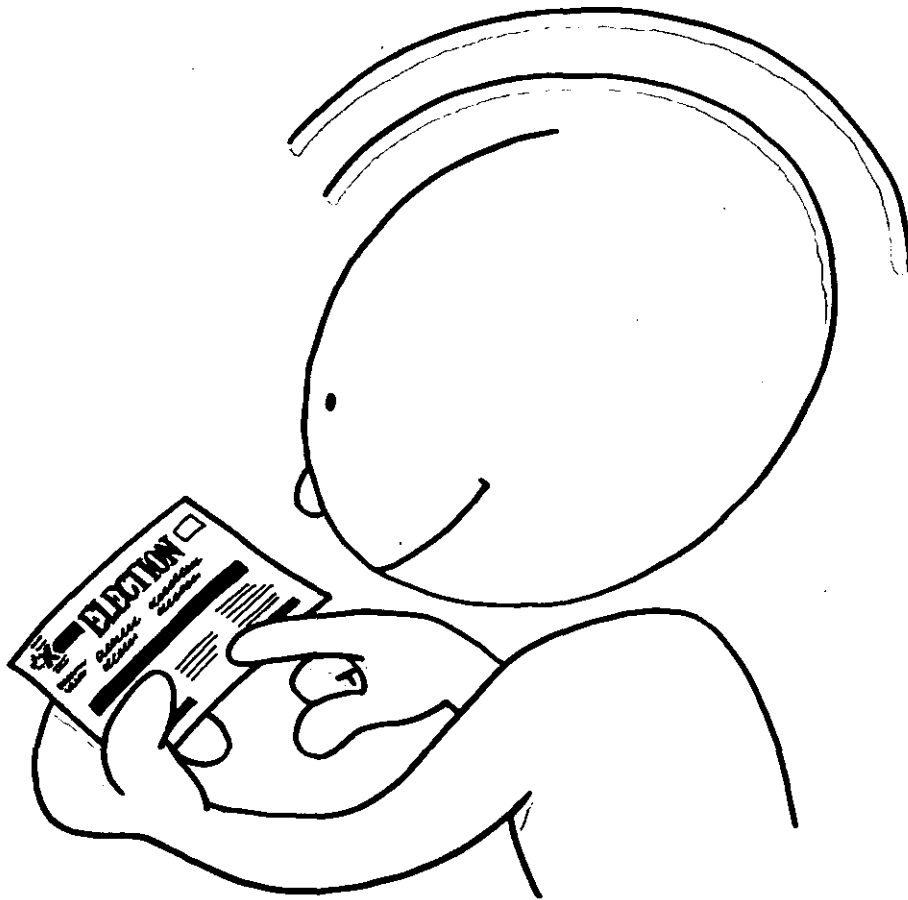
I can find out about the **candidates** by listening to the radio, reading the newspapers, watching TV and talking to friends and family members. I will take the time I need to make my choice.



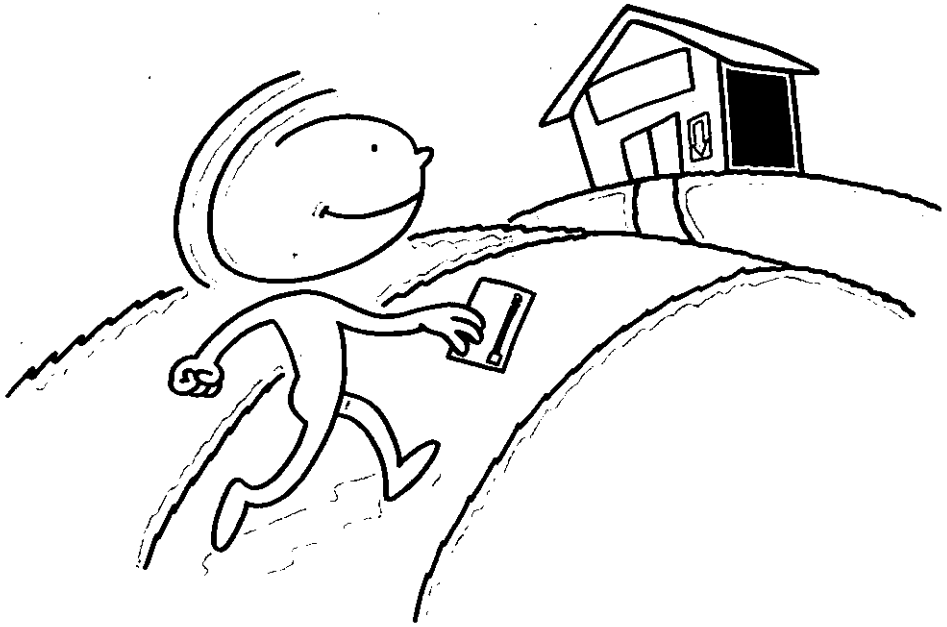
Who will I choose? I will choose the **candidate** who has good ideas and who will do the best job at representing me.



Election day is the day I vote.
I have marked the date on my calendar.



I find the address of my **polling station** on my **confirmation of registration notice**. It also tells me what time the polling station is open.

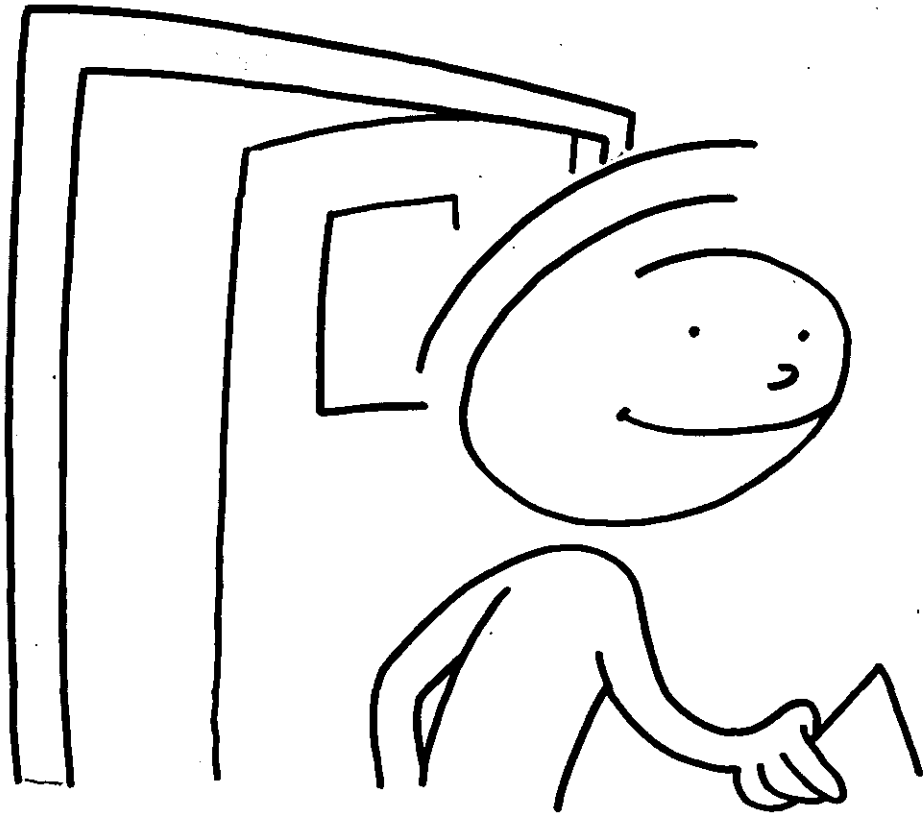


I will take my **notice** with me to the **polling station**.

I can go by myself to vote.

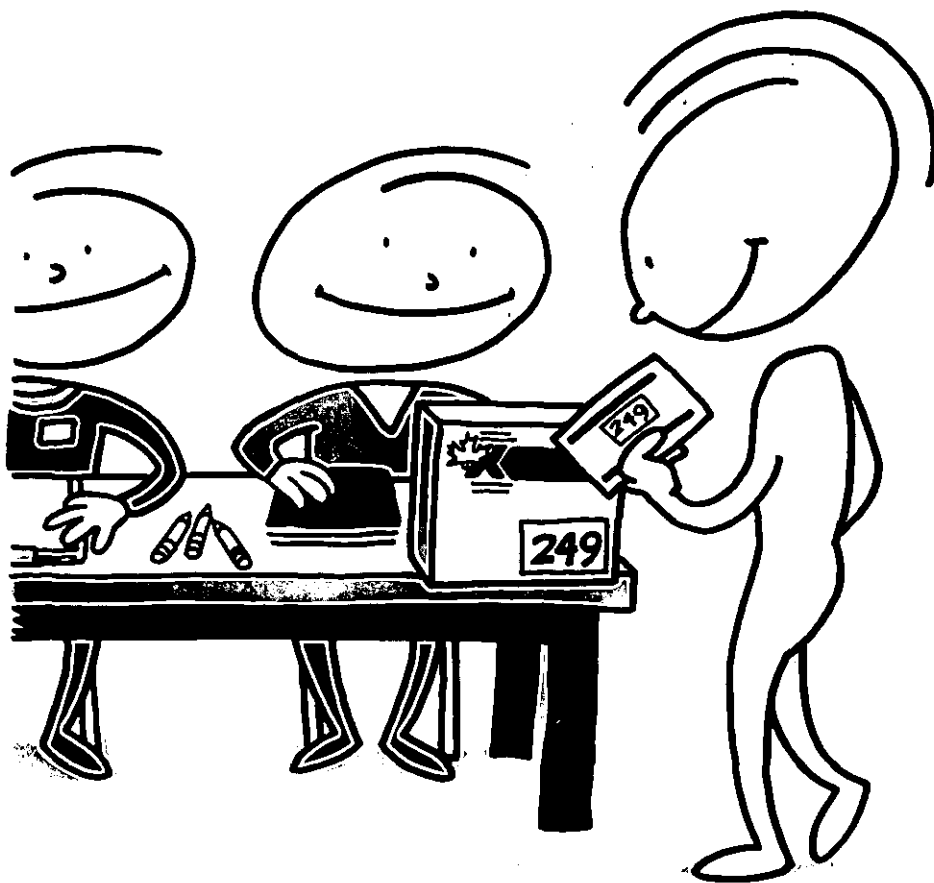


Or, I can go with a friend or a family member
who is also voting there.

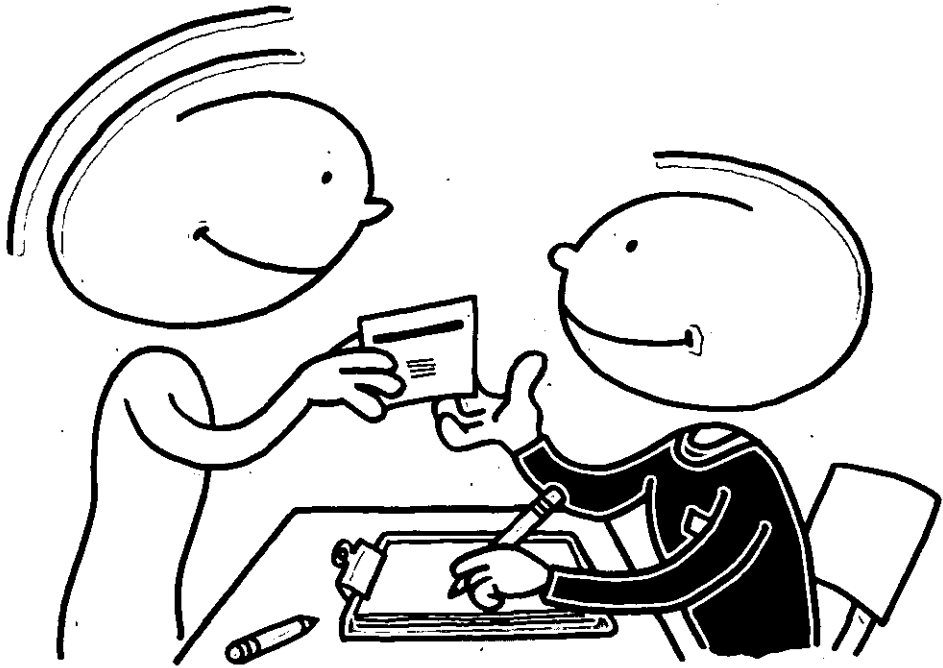


At the **polling station**, there will be people sitting at tables working. There will be other people too.

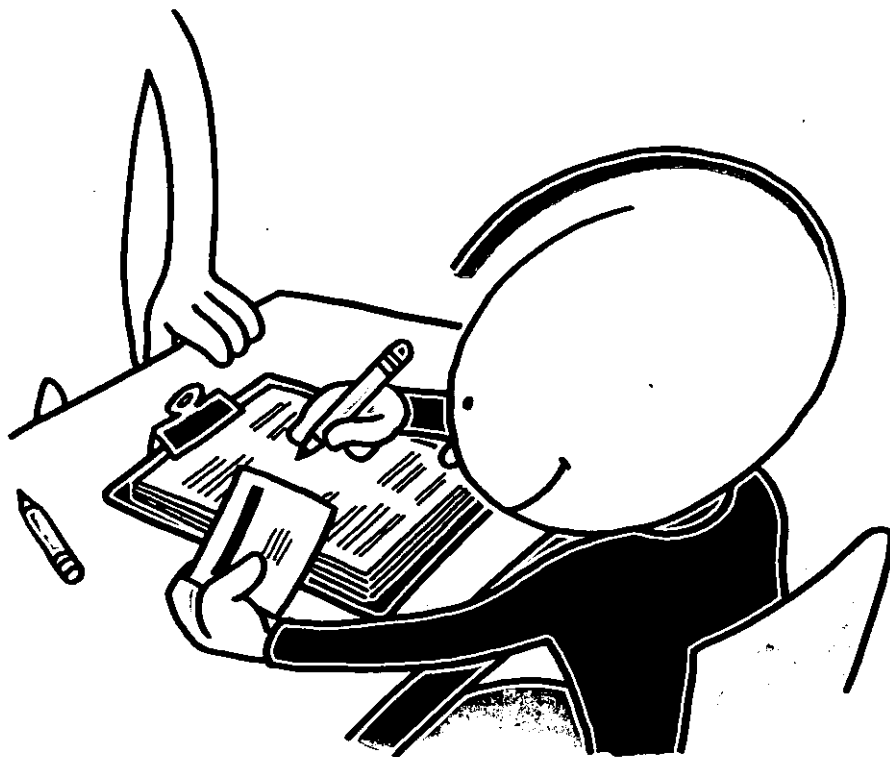
Most people are here to vote just like me.



Inside the **polling station**, I look for a **ballot box** with the number that matches the number on my **confirmation of registration notice**. So I know I am in the right place.



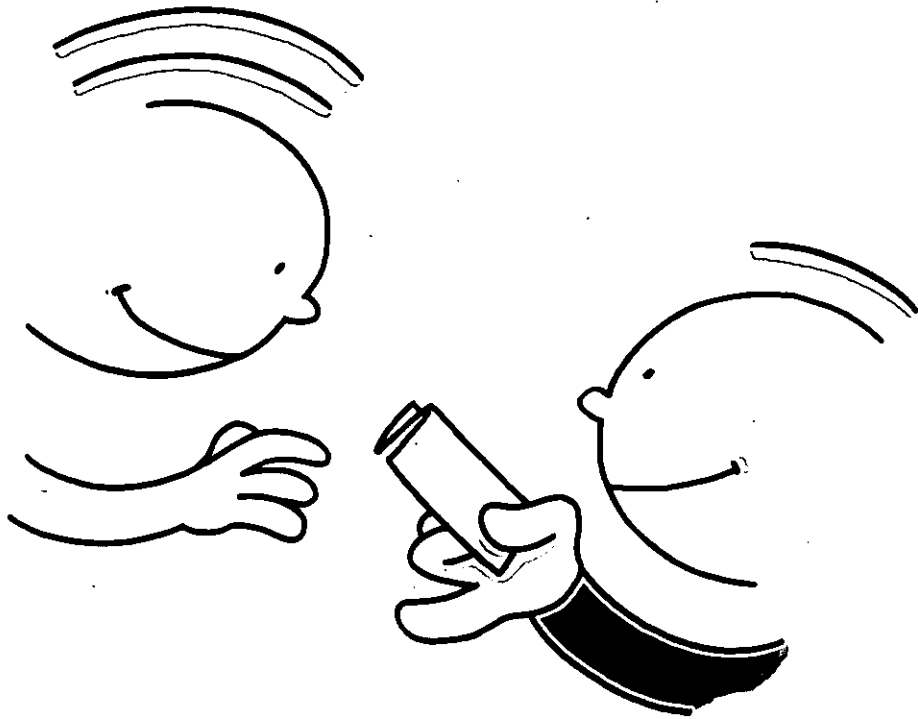
I give my **notice** to the **poll clerk**. It has my name and address on it. **Or** I just give my name and address to the poll clerk. So the poll clerk knows who I am.



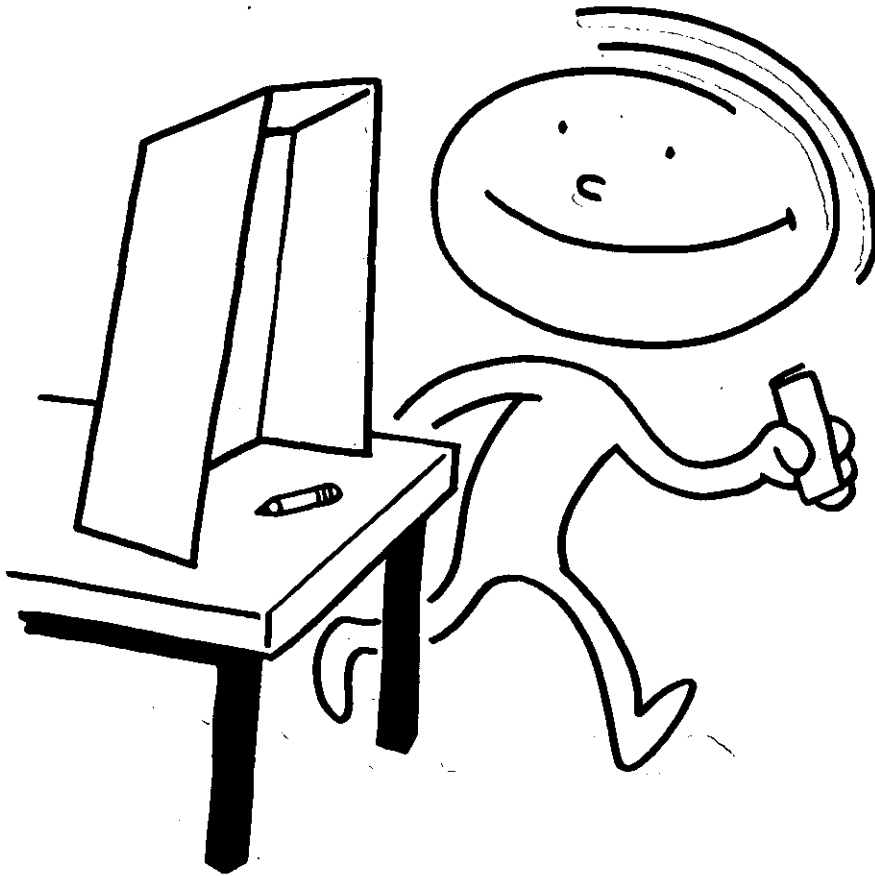
The **poll clerk** has a **list of electors**.

The poll clerk will find my name on the list.

The poll clerk will cross my name off the list to
show that I have come to vote.



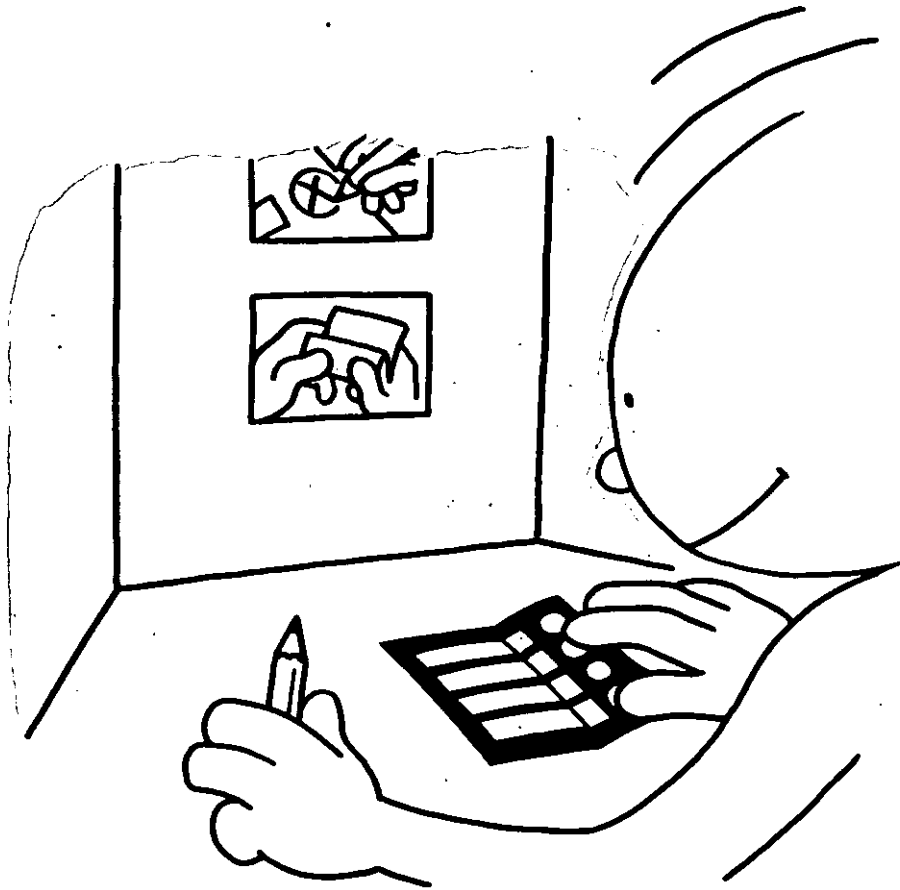
The **deputy returning officer** will give me a
ballot that is folded.



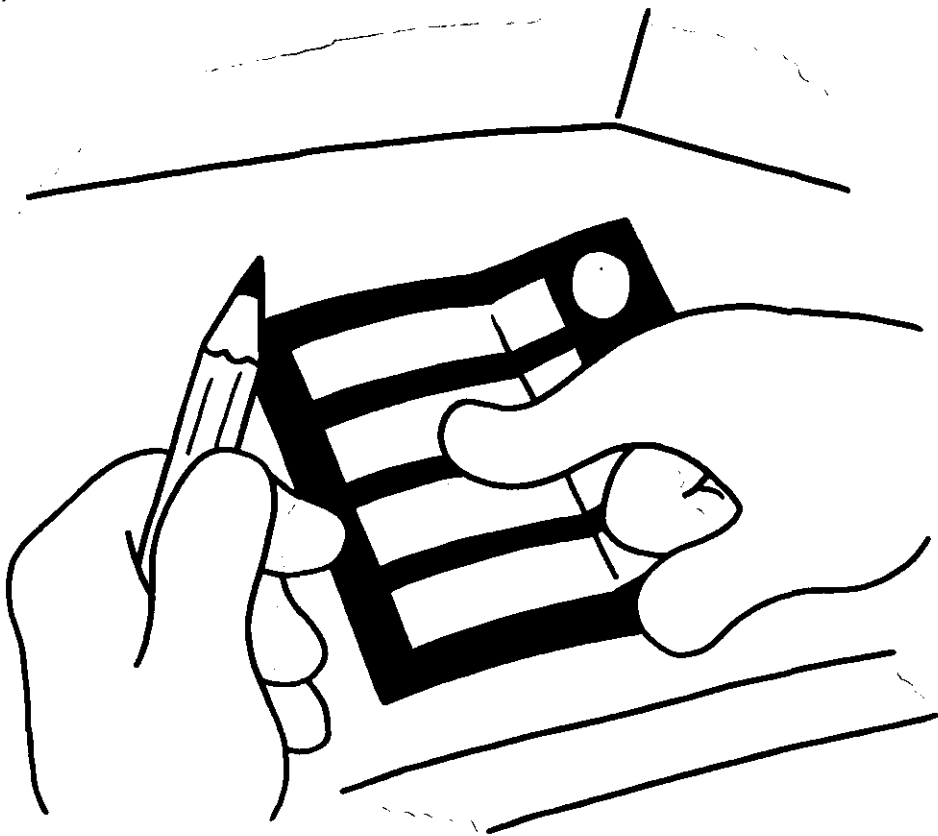
I take my **ballot** behind the **voting screen**.

No one can see how I vote.

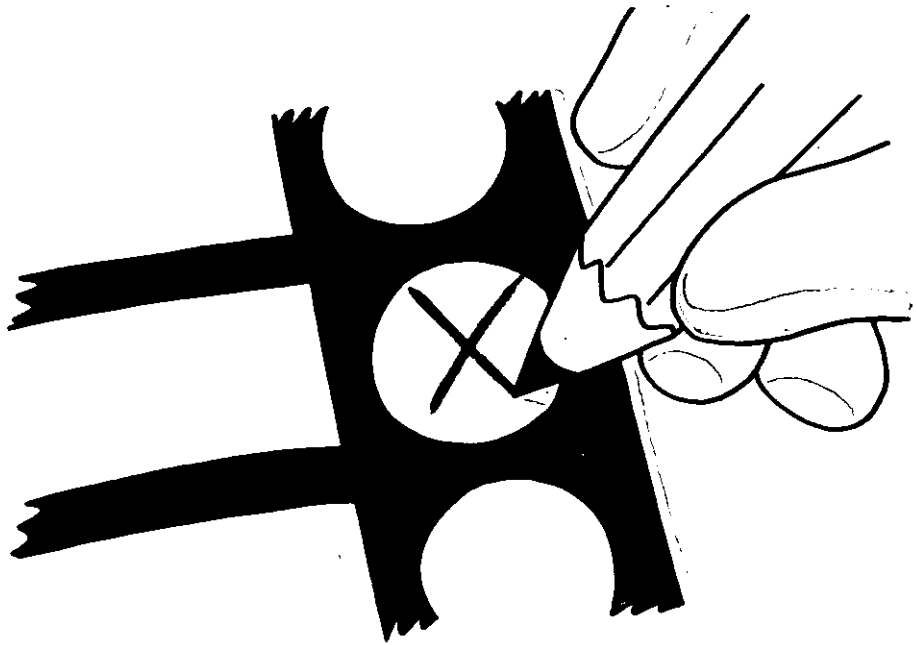
There is a pencil there for me to use.



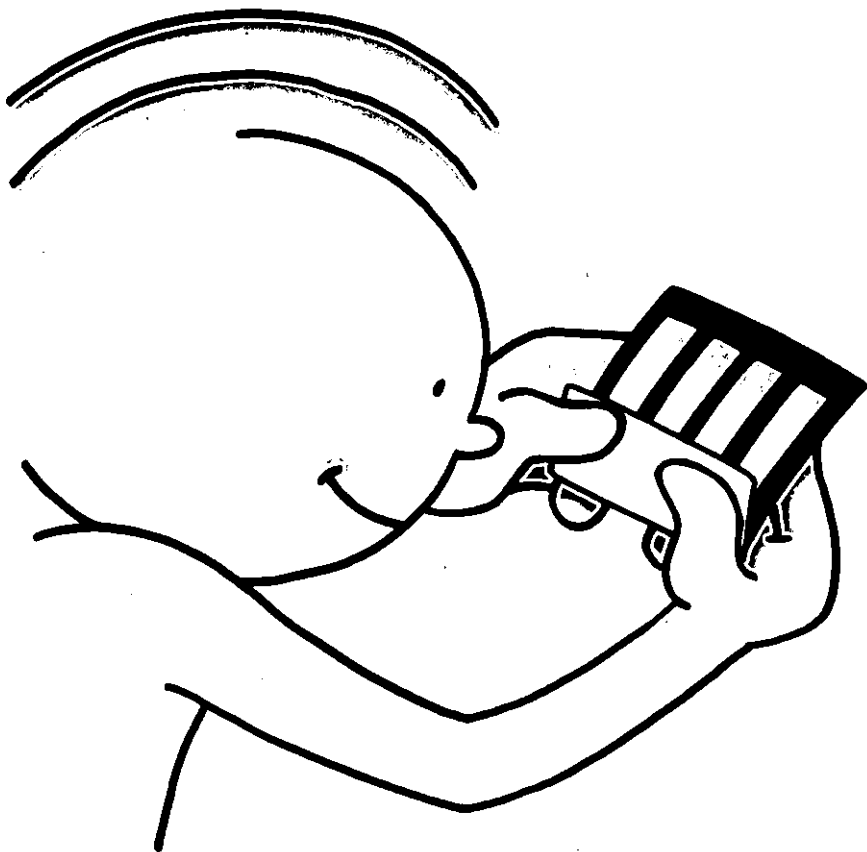
I open the **ballot** so all the names of the **candidates** show. If I need help to mark my ballot, I may bring a friend or family member or I can ask the **deputy returning officer**.



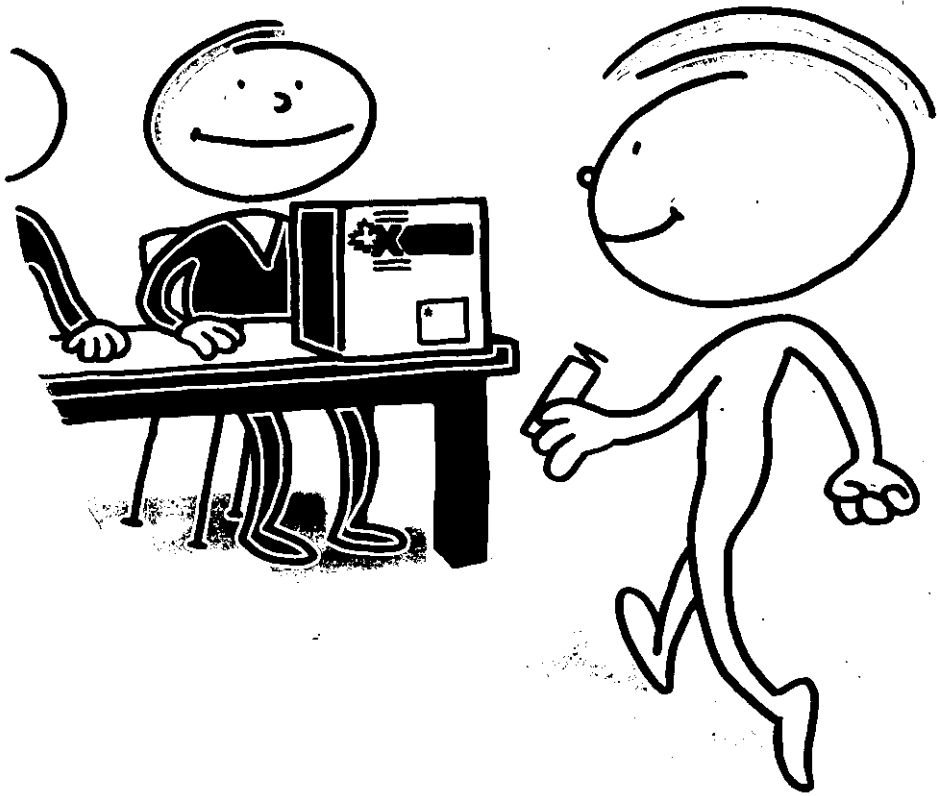
I find the name of the **candidate** I want.



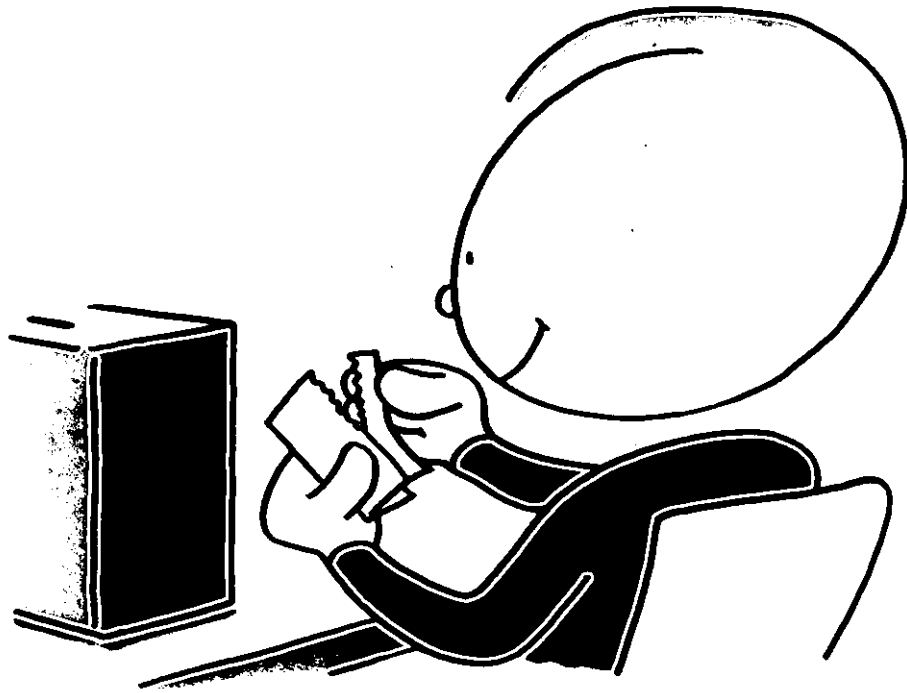
I make an **X** in the circle beside the name of
the **candidate** I choose. The **X** is my vote.



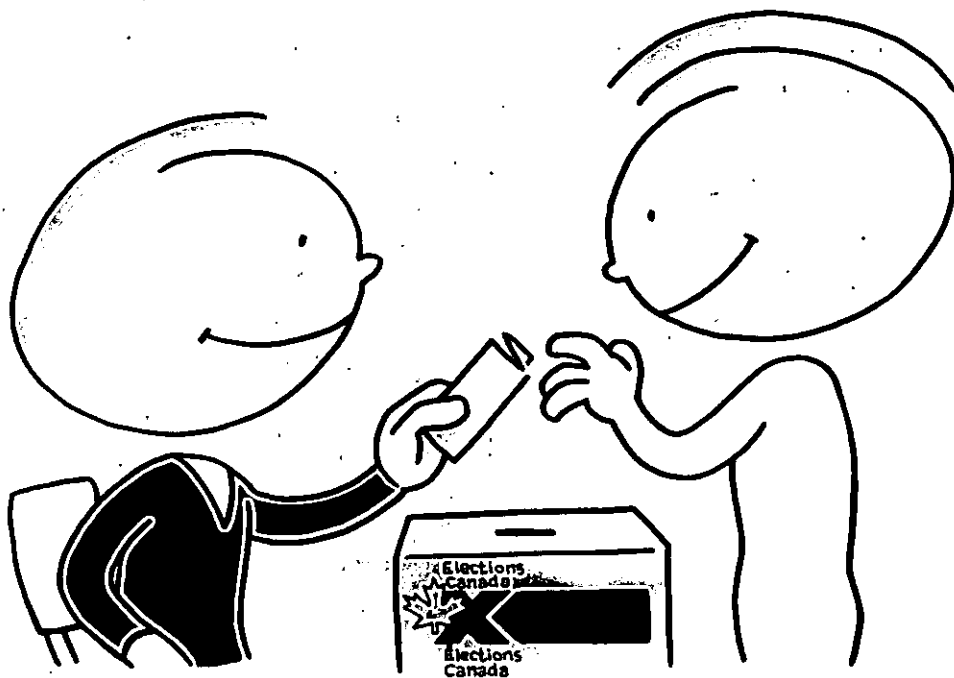
Then, I fold my **ballot** to keep my vote a secret.



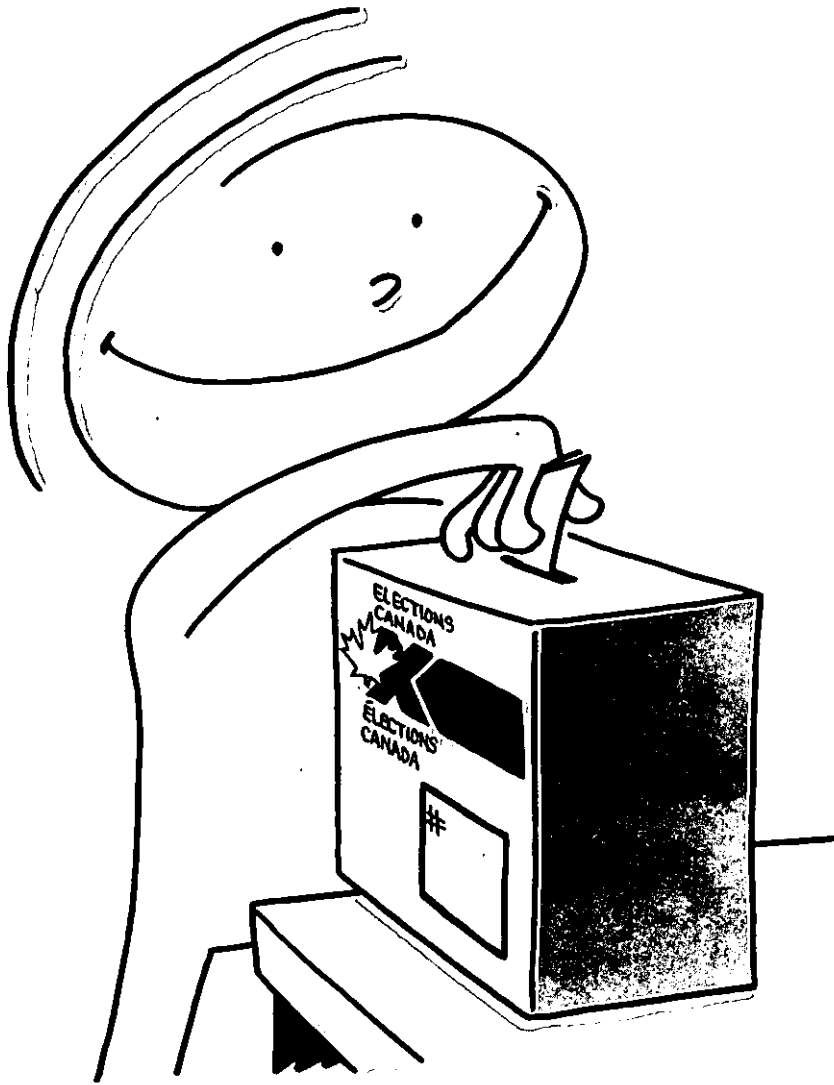
Now, I take my **ballot** back to the table. I give it to the **deputy returning officer**, the person who gave me the **ballot**. And I wait.



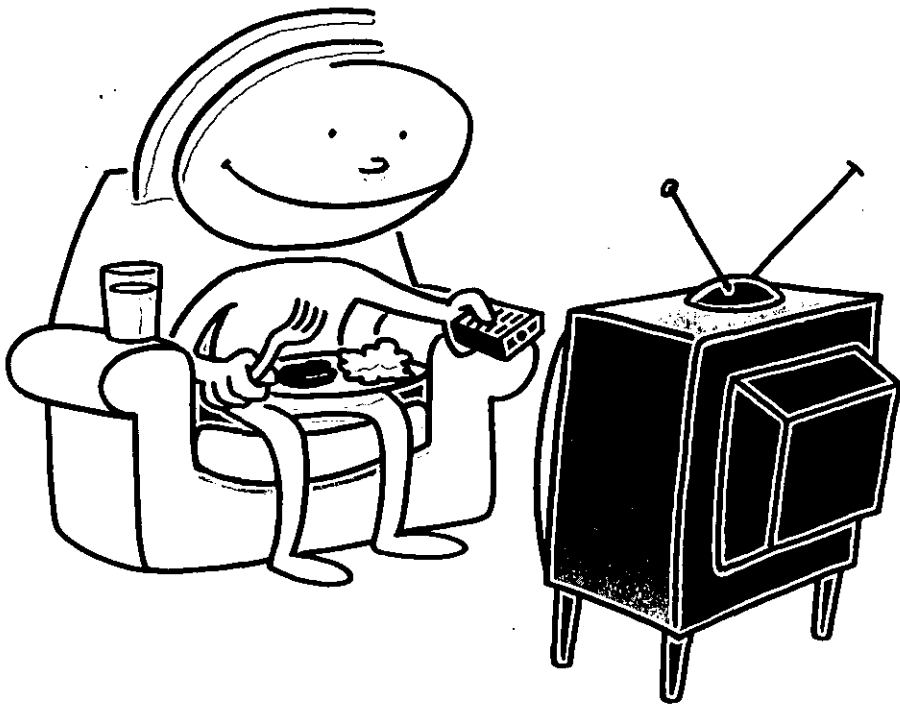
The **deputy returning officer** will tear off the black tab without opening my **ballot**. This keeps my vote private.



The deputy returning officer will give me back
my ballot.



I put my **ballot** in the **ballot box**. I have just voted!



Then I go home and watch the news.

I hope my **candidate** is elected.

**If you cannot go to the polling station,
you can still vote:**

- 1. You can vote before polling day at an advance poll**
See your confirmation of registration notice for details
- 2. You can vote by mail by special ballot**
You can get an application for a special ballot from
Elections Canada

**If you need more information or
wish to order additional material,
contact:**

ELECTIONS CANADA

257 Slater Street

Ottawa, Ontario

K1A 0M6

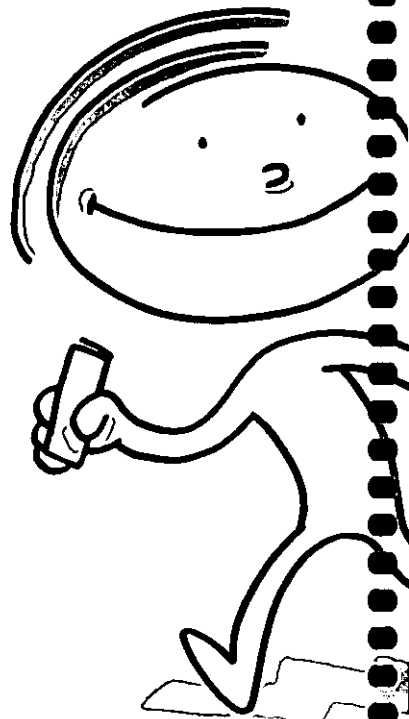
Telephone: 1 800 463-6868

Fax: (613) 954-8584

E-mail: eleccan@magi.com

If you are deaf or hard of hearing,
call our TTY/TDD line: 1 800 361-8935

Visit our Web page at: <http://www.elections.ca>



Notes

Notes

This tab stays in the ballot book of the deputy returning officer

cut here

Black tab with number on back





EC 90245