

Examining the Political Spectrum

Left Wing

Centre

Right Wing

The purpose of the political spectrum is to show the differences in beliefs and ideologies (communism, racism, feminism, capitalism, liberalism, sexism etc.). The main issues that position a person's attitudes on the spectrum include:

- Speed of change in a society
- Freedom of individual versus security of group
- Sharing of wealth through social benefits

Political Spectrum Chart

Left Wing	Centre	Right Wing
-more liberal		-more conservative
-support change in order to improve welfare of all citizens	-tradition is important but change is supported if most people want it	-tradition is important and change should be treated with caution
-government should play a larger role in people's lives (social services, benefits)	-government should play a role only in that it improves the lives of citizens	-government should play a small role -private business should ensure needs of citizens are met
-law and order are important to protect right of all citizens fairly and equally	-law and order are important to encourage and protect right of individuals	-emphasis of law and order to protect society and its traditions
-more freedom to individuals and less power to police		-less freedom to individuals and more power to police

The Political Spectrum Activity

Read each of the statements below. Plot the number of each statement on the political spectrum line where it is best suited. Refer to the Political Spectrum Chart to help you.

Left	Centre			Right
communist	socialist	liberalist	conservative	fascist

1. A person who believes that convicted murderers should be hanged.
2. A person who believes that the school strap should be abolished.
3. A person who is racist.
4. A person who believes in a higher minimum wage.
5. A person who believes that the police should be able to wiretap telephones.
6. A person who believes that Canada should restrict immigration.
7. A person who believes that the Canadian military should acquire more sophisticated weaponry.
8. A person who believes that Canada should send aid to Third World countries.
9. A person who believes that women should stay home and be mothers.
10. A person who believes that First Nations should have self-government.
11. A person who believes that all major industries should be owned by the state.