



SENATE | SÉNAT
CANADA

The Wise Owls

by the Senate of Canada






There are 105 senators in Canada's Parliament, each one representing a region and championing causes.

How did they get there?

How did the Senate of Canada come to be?

Read on to learn how these Wise Owls took their places in Parliament.



An illustration of a forest scene. In the foreground, a large black bear is climbing a tree trunk. To its right, a blue and yellow bird is perched on a branch. Further right, a brown squirrel is climbing a tree trunk. In the background, three owls are perched on tree branches. The scene is set in a forest with tall, thin trees and some autumn leaves falling. The sky is blue with some clouds.


Once upon a time, in the Forest of Canada,
a great Lioness ruled over all the animals.

She was wise and fair. Even though she lived on an island
on the far side of a great ocean, the animals loved her.

As the animals grew older, they learned more and more about how to
live together in the woods. They discovered that, by working together,
they could get more done than they could by working alone.

Together, the animals made sure each one had water to drink
and food to eat, and they lived together in harmony.






So the animals started to talk about ruling themselves. They wanted to build a Big Den where a Council of Animals would make decisions about how to run the Forest.

Soon, the woods were filled with animals giving wonderful speeches to each other about how they would make decisions on the Council.

As it turned out, the Foxes chose a clever Fox.

The Wolves picked a speedy member of their pack.

And the Moose chose a bull with big antlers to speak for them.


The illustration depicts a magical forest at night. In the foreground, several owls of various colors (brown, grey, and white) are perched on the branches of large, gnarled trees. The background shows a dark blue sky with a large, glowing moon and faint constellations. In the center, a group of diverse forest animals, including a bear, a fox, a rabbit, a deer, and a squirrel, are gathered around a small, rustic hut or fire pit. The scene is illuminated by a warm, golden light, suggesting a fire or moonlight. The overall atmosphere is serene and mysterious.

As the animals prepared to start their meeting, a shaggy Bear looked up and saw a group of Owls perched in the trees.

“The Council is a good idea,” the Bear said. “But I wonder — maybe we could ask the Owls to help. They can travel to parts of the Forest where we cannot go. Could the Owls give their views on the Council’s decisions to make sure the needs of all the animals everywhere in the Forest are met?”

The animals thought it was a good idea indeed, and they even made up a special name for the group — the Senate of Owls.

But some animals wondered if the Senate of Owls was really necessary.



Everyone in the Forest knew the Owls were wise – there was no doubt about that.

They had been in the Forest as long as anyone could remember. They had big eyes to see whatever was going on. And when they took to the skies on their big, soft wings, they could see the entire Forest from east to west and from north to south.

The Council of Animals worked well, but not everything was perfect.



Beavers knew about building dams but not about leading a Wolf pack.



Moose knew about grazing but not about chopping down trees.



Squirrels knew about gathering nuts but not about fishing.

Then one week, a Beaver came to the Big Den and asked to cut down 20 trees to make a lodge for all the Beavers in his pond. The Council quickly gave its permission – but the animals forgot to consult the Senate of Owls!

The Beaver went straight to work and he was so happy in his task that he didn't notice a Squirrel's nest in a tree he was chopping down.

As the tree tumbled to the ground, the Squirrel leapt to safety.
"You destroyed my home!" Squirrel said.

A Badger squeezed his way out from beneath the fallen tree and joined the frantic Squirrel.

"Your tree smashed my front door!" Badger said to the Beaver.

"It is the will of the Council of Animals," Beaver said.

"That will not bring back my home," Squirrel said.

"That will not rebuild my front door," Badger said.

"Has the Council of Animals forgotten us?"

My house!

My front door!

It is the will of the Council of Animals...



ROARRR

All of the animals began to argue.

Suddenly, a great roar silenced the beasts.

"Listen!" shouted the Lioness.

"It is not an easy thing to govern. It is important for you all to work together if you are to do what is best for everyone in the Forest. Is there nowhere you can turn for help?"

The animals scratched their heads and swished their tails. Night fell and they still did not know what to do.

Just then, a Wise Owl alit on a tree branch, silhouetted against the glowing moon.

"The Senate of Owls is here to help you," the Wise Owl said.

"In our journeys, we have watched you and spoken to you and listened to you. We have seen that the needs of Foxes are not those of Rabbits and that your differences are what make this Forest such a beautiful place to live.

"We will carry your voices from the four corners of the Forest to the Council of Animals."

The shaggy Bear rose to her feet.

"The Council has done good work," she said.

"But I am glad we can rely on the Senate of Owls."

The other animals agreed and began to cheer.



To end the dispute between the Beaver and the Squirrel, the Senate of Owls asked the Beaver to use only the trees where no animals of the Forest live.

The animals agreed that it was a perfect solution and the Lioness gave a roar of assent.

As the years passed, different animals came and went from the Council. But the Senate of Owls remained to give the Council of Animals the benefit of its perspective so that the Council truly acted for the good of every animal in the Forest.



The Senate of Canada came about in much the same way as the Senate of Owls. Canada used to belong to Britain but a long time ago, in 1867, Canadians got permission from Queen Victoria to create their own country.

It was to be governed by people whom Canadians would elect to the House of Commons. But some worried that parts of Canada with more people in it would become too powerful — and that the needs of places with fewer people would not be met.

The Senate was created to make sure everyone in Canada had a voice in Parliament.

Ever since then, senators have been conscientiously serving all Canadians.



Treasure Hunt

The Senate of Owls is looking for three very important objects.

Can you help find them?

They are somewhere in this book!

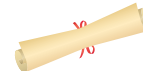
See if you can find:

THE SENATE MACE



This important object symbolizes the authority of the Monarch (King/Queen). The Senate cannot sit unless the mace is present in the Senate Chamber.

A BILL



A bill is a proposal to create a new law or to change or repeal an existing law.

A SENATOR'S PIN



Each senator is given this special red pin to wear as a badge of office.

Can you find the 8 differences?



Answers: kids.SenCanada.ca

Who will help the animals in the Forest of Canada?

When the Forest-dwellers decide to elect a Council of Animals to run their affairs, not everything goes to plan. They quickly learn that what's good for one animal is not necessarily good for all of them — but how can they resolve their differences?

Enter the Wise Owls, who agree to form a Senate to make sure every animal's voice is heard.



This endearing and richly-illustrated story presents the origin of the Senate of Canada in a whimsical fable that is sure to appeal to children of all ages.

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