



DemocraCity Classroom Resource Booklet

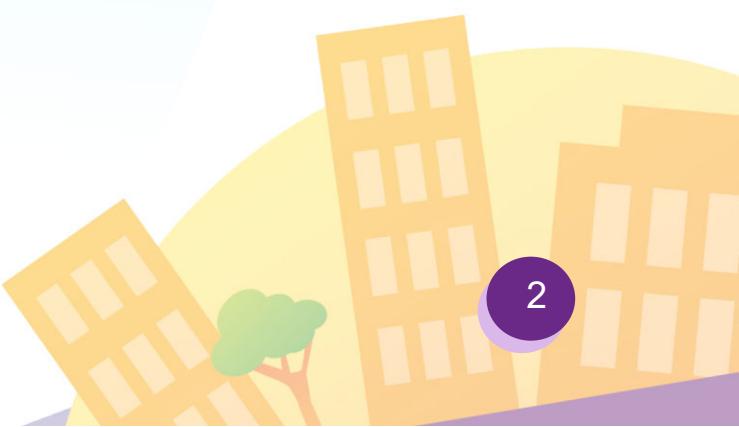


AEC

Australian Electoral Commission

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Introduction

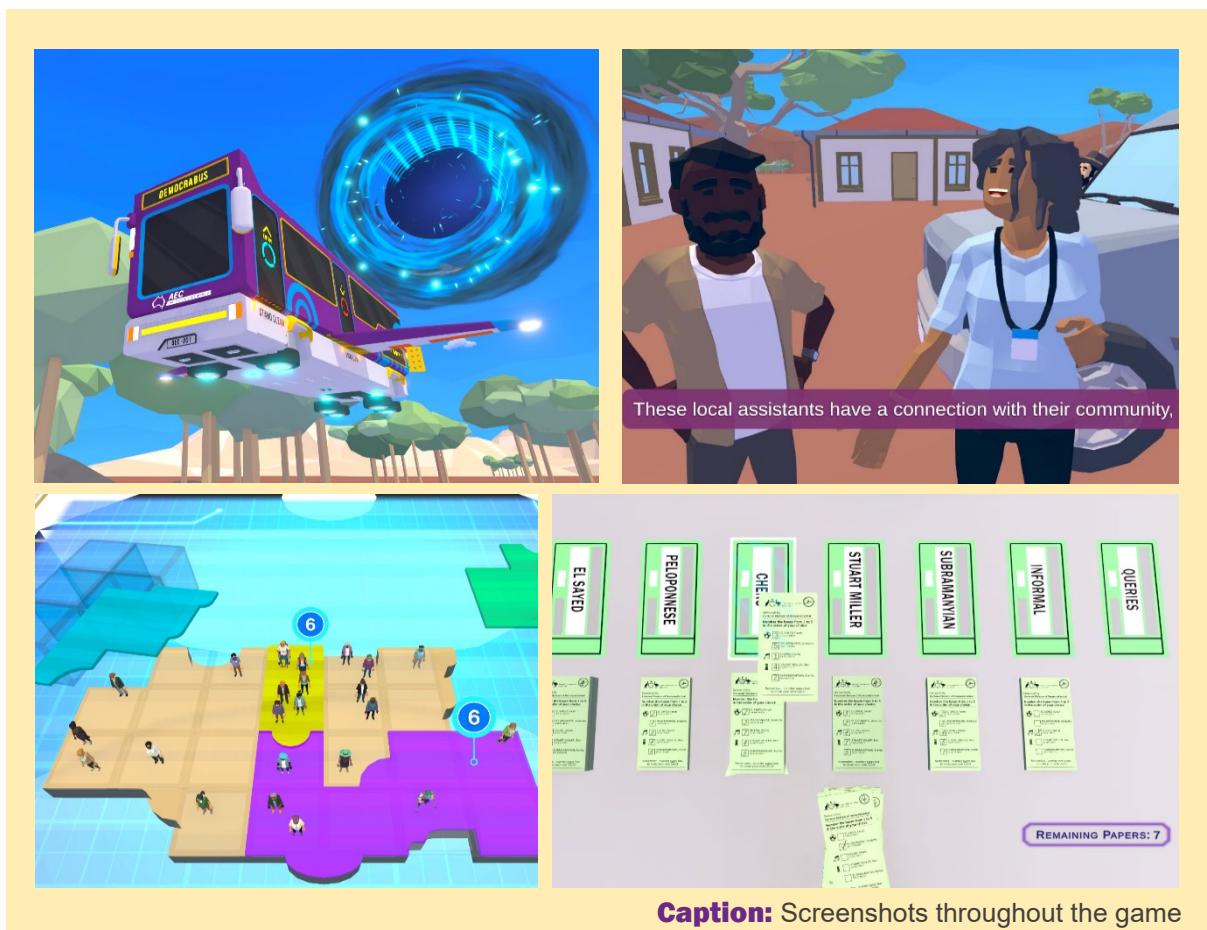
For teachers

Welcome to DemocraCity! This resource is designed by AEC electoral educators to support teachers in delivering engaging classroom experiences alongside [DemocraCity— a free, immersive 3D game that brings the Australian electoral process to life](#). Aligned with Version 9.0 of the Australian Curriculum, these resources provide experiential learning opportunities across key topics such as enrolment, representation, election day, media literacy, and democratic principles. Through hands-on digital exploration, students learn about the unique aspects of Australia's democracy. To enhance classroom impact, this guide offers application-style activities, suggested assessment rubrics, and clearly defined learning outcomes. Each game module is supported by robust educational resources designed to help teachers plan and deliver targeted lessons, consolidate student understanding, and assess civic knowledge in creative, inclusive ways.

To take the learning further, the '[Get Voting](#)' resource provides all the resources and supports to deliver a hands-on election in your classroom.

More information to support the teaching and learning can be found at www.aec.gov.au. For clarification of terminology see '[Glossary - Australian Electoral Commission](#)'.

The following pages contain the resources to support each of the modules. All content was accurate at the time of publication but may change – please see the AEC website.



Caption: Screenshots throughout the game

Enrolment



This module introduces students to DemocraCity and explains the importance and process of enrolment.



In the game, students are at the counter of an AEC information stall, and are active participants in DemocraCity, helping community members determine their eligibility to enrol and how to enrol.



Learning outcomes

By the end of the activities, students will:

- Identify the eligibility for enrolment in Australia.
- Explain different scenarios for enrolling.
- Outline the rules and methods for enrolling and updating enrolment details.
- Recall that voters need to be enrolled to vote in a federal election.



Suggested extension knowledge and understanding activities

- Use the [Enrolment quiz questions](#) to test their enrolment knowledge with the answers available on the [Enrolment quiz answers](#) sheet.
- Use the [Enrolment scenario recall PowerPoint](#) or [Enrolment scenario cards](#) for students to recall different community members options for enrolment. Read the [guide](#) on how to use these.



Suggested extension application activity:

UNIT OF WORK: Your vote helps shape Australia.

The unit includes these suggested learning activities:

- As a lead-in to a classroom/school election, provide an opportunity for students to enrol to be able to vote.
- Consider representation of the population through enrolment. If people don't enrol, they can't have their say. Consider whether representation is important and why?



Supplementary links with AEC resources

Links to other AEC education and information resources:

- [Democracy Rules Activity 5: Your vote, your choice p122](#)
- Get Voting: [Voter list template generator](#)
- AEC Factsheet: [A guide to enrolling and voting](#)

Video resources:

- **English:** [Why it's important to enrol and vote](#)
- **Auslan:** [Enrol to vote](#)

First Nations Languages:

- [Alyawarra – why it's important to enrol and vote](#)
- [Anindilyakwa – why it's important to enrol and vote](#)
- [Arrernte – why it's important to enrol and vote](#)
- [Burarra – why it's important to enrol and vote](#)
- [Kriol – why it's important to enrol and vote](#)
- [Kukatja – why it's important to enrol and vote](#)
- [Martu – why it's important to enrol and vote](#)
- [Murrinh Patha – why it's important to enrol and vote](#)
- [Ndjebanna – why it's important to enrol and vote](#)
- [Ngaayatjarra – why it's important to enrol and vote](#)
- [Nyangumarta – why it's important to enrol and vote](#)
- [Pitjanjatjarra – why it's important to enrol and vote](#)
- [Pintupi Luritja – why it's important to enrol and vote](#)
- [Tiwi – why it's important to enrol and vote](#)
- [Yolngu Matha – why it's important to enrol and vote](#)
- [Walmajarri – why it's important to enrol and vote](#)
- [Walpiri – why it's important to enrol and vote](#)
- [Waramungu – why it's important to enrol and vote](#)

Your vote helps shape Australia - Understanding enrolment.



DEMOCRACY MODULE

Enrolment



KEY CONCEPT

Citizenship



RELATED CONCEPTS

- **Power** - who holds it, how it's shared, and exercised through voting.
- **Participation** - civic responsibilities and barriers to engagement.
- **Representation in our democracy** - electing officials to represent the Australian people.



Overarching questions

What role does enrolment play in ensuring fair and inclusive participation in Australia's democracy?

Inquiry questions:

Factual – What is the process of enrolling to vote in Australia?

Conceptual – How does enrolment impact democratic participation and representation?



Learning outcomes

By the end of the activities, students will:

- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of civic systems and electoral processes.
- Investigate enrolment across historical and societal contexts.
- Communicate understanding through advocacy pieces (E.g. campaign materials, persuasive writing).
- Reflect on civic responsibilities and propose solutions to improve voter enrolment rates.



Suggested extension learning experiences and activities:

- **Opening activity:** As a lead-in to a classroom/school election, provide opportunities for students to enrol to be able to vote. [See Enrolment for class election](#) for guided questions.
- Consider representation of the population through enrolment.
 - ↳ **Take it further:** Ask students to design a campaign which encourages enrolment (digital posters, speeches, social media). See [Representation of the population activity](#) for more details.

Your vote helps shape Australia: Understanding enrolment - Suggested assessment rubric

| Criteria | Level 1-2 | Level 3-4 | Level 5-6 | Level 7-8 |
|---|---|---|--|--|
| Criterion A: Knowing and understanding | Demonstrates limited knowledge of enrolment processes or civic systems. | Demonstrates basic knowledge with some relevant examples. | Demonstrates clear understanding supported by relevant examples and connections. | Demonstrates thorough knowledge with detailed understanding and insightful connections. |
| Criterion B: Investigating | Investigates with minimal focus or clarity; sources may be irrelevant or unclear. | Investigates with some focus; uses sources with partial relevance or analysis. | Investigates effectively using relevant sources; shows sound reasoning. | Investigates thoroughly, critically evaluates sources, and provides compelling analysis of enrolment issues. |
| Criterion C: Communicating | Communication lacks clarity or structure; message may be difficult to follow. | Communicates with some clarity and structure; message gets across but inconsistently. | Communicates effectively with clear structure and engaging presentation. | Communicates with clarity, creativity, and persuasive impact; presentation is compelling and well-executed. |
| Criterion D: Thinking critically | Offers limited reflection; conclusions may be unsupported or superficial. | Reflects with some depth; conclusions show basic understanding. | Reflects thoughtfully; conclusions are well-reasoned and supported. | Reflects critically and creatively; conclusions demonstrate deep understanding and propose innovative civic solutions. |



WORKSHEET

Enrolment quiz

Question 1: What is enrolling to vote?

- A. It is an act of signing up for school or extra-curricular classes.
- B. It is an activity to allow you to register for a democracy sausage on election day.
- C. It is a registration process for you to gain a licence to drive when you are old enough.
- D. It is a registration process to ensure you can vote at an election.

Question 2: How can you enrol?

- A. You can visit the Australian Taxation website and enrol online.
- B. You can use the 'MyGov' app and enrol online.
- C. Attend a police station and have a character interview.
- D. Online at aec.gov.au/enrol or you can visit any AEC office for an enrolment form.

Question 3: What do you do if you move house?

- A. Check your neighbours know which voting division they can vote in.
- B. Every time you move or change your name, you need to update your details with the AEC.
- C. Inform your local post office of your new details so they can change your enrolment for you.
- D. Tell your local police station your new details, obtain a paper form, provide your ID and ask them to witness your form.

Question 4: If you are an American and an Australian permanent resident, but not a citizen can you enrol?

- A. Yes, American permanent residents have voting rights in federal elections in Australia.
- B. No, only Australian citizens can enrol.
- C. Yes, American permanent residents can enrol for federal elections, but not state or local elections.
- D. Yes, American permanent residents can vote in all elections in Australia.

Question 5: What age can you enrol?

- A. At 14 and 15 years old, as you will be ready to vote as you near completion of secondary school.
- B. At 12 and 13 years old, as this age is the transition to secondary school.
- C. At 10-12 years old as you have already voted in a class election and are in Senior Primary School, ready to enrol.
- D. If you are 16 or 17, you can enrol so when you turn 18, you will be ready to vote.

Question 6: You are required by law to enrol if you are...

- A. 15 years old and an Australian citizen.
- B. A permanent Australian resident only and 18 years old.
- C. A dual citizen of any country and 15 years old.
- D. 18 years of age or older and an Australian citizen.

Question 7: Why is enrolment important?

- A. Because it means you will get a democracy sausage on voting day.
- B. It ensures members get to vote in the House of Representatives.
- C. It ensures Senators can scrutinise legislation.
- D. It ensures that every eligible citizen has the opportunity to participate in the democratic process by having their voice heard through voting.

Question 8: Why is it important to keep your enrolment up to date?

- A. So you can vote online at the next federal election.
- B. So you can vote in the next school election.
- C. To ensure that you are eligible to obtain your driving licence.
- D. To maintain an accurate electoral roll for the AEC which means every eligible citizen is able to vote in the electorate to which they're entitled.

Question 9: Is it compulsory to enrol?

- A. No, enrolment and voting in elections is optional in Australia according to the Australian Constitution, the rule book for the federal government.
- B. Yes, it is compulsory for all Australian citizens who have turned 18 and have lived at their residential address for a period of one month to enrol.
- C. Yes, it is compulsory for Australian citizens, who have turned 15 and living with their parents/guardians.
- D. No, enrolment is only compulsory for people interested in politics.

Question 10: Does the AEC protect personal enrolment information for people on the electoral roll?

- A. Yes, the AEC takes commitment to privacy seriously. It protects personal information on the electoral roll under the Privacy Act 1988.
- B. The Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) administers the SPAM Act, and they maintain personal enrolment information for the AEC electoral roll, ensuring privacy.
- C. By law, the AEC is required to share all personal information with anyone that asks for it, this includes police officers.
- D. Disclosure to political parties is expected by politicians for any texts to anyone at election time.

Final score:

/10



ACTIVITY

Enrolment quiz answers

| Question | Answer |
|--|--|
| 1. What is enrolling to vote? | D: It is a registration process to ensure you can vote at an election. |
| 2. How can you enrol? | D: Online at www.aec.gov.au/enrol or you can visit any AEC office for an enrolment form. |
| 3. What do you do if you move house? | B: Every time you move or change your name, you need to update your details with the AEC. |
| 4. If you are an American and an Australian permanent resident, but not a citizen can you enrol? | B: No, only Australian citizens can enrol. |
| 5. What age can you enrol? | D: If you are 16 or 17, you can enrol so when you turn 18, you will be ready to vote. |
| 6. You are required by law to enrol if you are... | D: 18 years of age or older and you are an Australian citizen. |
| 7. Why is enrolment important? | D: It ensures that every eligible citizen has the opportunity to participate in the democratic process by having their voice heard through voting. |
| 8. Why is it important to keep your enrolment up to date? | D: To maintain an accurate electoral roll for the AEC which means every eligible citizen is able to vote in the electorate to which they're entitled. |
| 9. Is it compulsory to enrol? | B: Yes, it is compulsory for all Australian citizens who have turned 18 and have lived at their residential address for a period of one month to enrol. |
| 10. Does the AEC protect personal enrolment information for people on the electoral roll? | A: Yes, the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) takes commitment to privacy seriously. It protects personal information on the electoral roll under the Privacy Act 1988. |



ACTIVITY

Enrolment scenario activity

This activity provides an opportunity for students to work together to practice identifying different enrolment eligibility situations.



Materials:

- [Enrolment scenario recall PowerPoint](#) (located under 'Classroom resources' on the DemocraCity homepage).
- Optional: Enrolment scenario cards [Enrolment scenario cards](#).



Teacher Preparation:

- Display PowerPoint slide 2 for students to see the different enrolment scenarios.
- Optional: Cut scenarios into cards.



Task:

- Students are to problem solve 'What should the community member do?' with the provided scenarios. Use PowerPoint Slide 2 – Enrolment Scenarios (or provide scenario cards cut and trimmed) for students for problem solving.
- After students problem solve the scenarios, go through the solutions together using PowerPoint slide 3 and the following 'Answer sheet' overleaf.



Going further

- Discuss: 'Why do you think the AEC provides different enrolment categories for members of the public?'
- Example: Enrolment for silent electors, prisoners and voters with no fixed address [Special enrolment options - Australian Electoral Commission](#)

Additional Information

The AEC provides enrolment FAQs for the public. If any specific enrolment questions arise in classroom activity, you may find the answers on the website [Enrolment – frequently asked questions - Australian Electoral Commission](#).



Suraj

I am in my first year at university and am going to be 18 before the next election.

What should I do?



Izzy

I am an American citizen and a permanent Australian resident. I don't plan on becoming a citizen any time soon though.

Can I enrol for the next federal election?



Tyler

I have just moved house.

What should I do?



Madison

I am 16 years old and a dual citizen, Australian and American.

What should I do before the next federal election?





Bailey

My dad works as a policeman, and he does not want people to know our home address.

How should I enrol?



RJ

I have an Australian passport, and I am 17 years old.

What should I do?



Sinead

I am a new Australian, I have just become a citizen. I am 21 years old.

What should I do?





Enrolment scenario answer sheet

| Scenario | Answer | More information |
|---|-------------------------|---|
| I am in my first year at university and am going to be 18 before the next election. What should I do? | Enrol | By enrolling before the next election you can make sure you're eligible to vote in that election. |
| I am an American citizen and a permanent Australian resident. I don't plan on becoming a citizen any time soon though. Can I enrol for the next federal election? | No, I cannot enrol | To enrol and vote in Australian federal elections you must be 18 years old and an Australian citizen. |
| I have just moved house. What should I do? | Update my enrolment | It's important to update your enrolment details each time your situation changes to make sure you're able to vote in your correct electorate and your vote counts. |
| I am 16 years old and a dual citizen, Australian and American. What should I do before the next federal election? | Enrol | As an Australian citizen you have the right and the responsibility to enrol and vote in federal elections. |
| My dad works as a policeman, and he does not want people to know our home address. How should I enrol? | Enrol as a silent voter | You can apply to be enrolled as a silent elector through the AEC website if you believe that having your address shown on the publicly available electoral roll could put your personal safety, or your family's safety, at risk. |
| I have an Australian passport, and I am 17 years old. What should I do? | Enrol | As an Australian citizen you have the right and the responsibility to enrol and vote in federal elections. By enrolling at 17 you are ready to vote whenever an election is called once you turn 18. |
| I am a new Australian, I have just become a citizen. I am 21 years old. What should I do? | Enrol | As a new Australian citizen you can enrol now so you are ready to vote whenever an election is called. |



ACTIVITY

Enrolment activity for class election

Below is a suggestion for an opening activity to discuss enrolling to vote and to open enrolment for your class election. You will need to determine the cutoff time for enrolment – the close of rolls. After this time, new enrolments can't be accepted onto the electoral roll, and students will not be able to vote in your class election.

This provides useful opportunities for the class to explore the idea of representation, either before close of rolls to encourage enrolment or after the election when discussing the results.



Enrolment Guide

The AEC has enrolment guidelines to help voters to enrol to vote on the AEC website at [Enrol to vote - Australian Electoral Commission](https://www.aec.gov.au/enrol-to-vote/).

You can decide the enrolment guidelines appropriate for your class election. This might include students being a member of your class and being a particular age.

Messaging for students

Just like in federal elections, to vote in our class election you will need to enrol. Enrolling to vote places your name on a list – the electoral roll – which means you can then have your say in the next election.

Messaging for students

Rolls are open now for enrolment but close at

If you are not enrolled by the time the roll closes, you will not be able to vote in our election.



Going further: guided questions

- If you don't enrol, should you still have a say in the election outcome?
- What might happen if only a small group of students enrol – does the result of the election truly represent the class?
- How could low enrolment affect the fairness and transparency of a class election?



ACTIVITY

Representation of the population: enrolment activity

This activity provides information and guided questions about enrolment and representation in Australia's democracy.

You may like to have a class discussion, small group discussion and sharing, or individual responses which can be shared.

Activity

To vote in Australian elections you need to enrol. If you don't enrol, you miss your opportunity to have your say in decisions that may impact you.



Consider

- If people only from a particular age group, demographic or geographical area enrol, what would that mean for representation in our democracy?
- Who is represented and, conversely, who isn't?

If you've planned a class election requiring enrolment, you could relate the concept of representation there. People who either didn't enrol or who missed the 'close of rolls' aren't represented in the class decision.

- Why is this a problem?
- How might this impact the results of an election?
- What can be done to encourage participation in enrolling and voting?



Going further

Ask students to design a campaign which encourages people to enrol. They can present their findings and 'campaign' in the mode of their choice e.g. digital posters, social media post or reel, or a speech. You could ask them to consider:

- How does voter enrolment impact democratic representation and equity?
- What are common enrolment barriers to voter enrolment for different groups (e.g. young people, First Nations communities, people with disability).
- What motivates different demographic groups to take action?
- How can a campaign be designed to be culturally responsive and accessible?
- Which communication methods are most effective for reaching target audiences?

Representation

This unit explores the two houses of Parliament and examines representation in each chamber, how representatives organise themselves into political parties or independents and how government is formed. The two units in this module are completed with a revision quiz.

Students are taken to Parliament House where specific topics include:

- the role of the House of Representatives and the Senate,
- how representatives are elected to each chamber,
- what an electoral division is,
- how states and territories are allocated seats in the Senate,
- the seating plan of each chamber and how government is formed.



Learning outcomes

By the end of the activities, students will:

- Recognise Australia as a representative democracy and describe what that means.
- Recall the two houses of Parliament and how representatives are elected to the House of Representatives and the Senate.
- Understand how representation works in the House of Representatives and the Senate.
- Understand the difference between government, opposition and the crossbench and their role within the Parliament.



Suggested extension knowledge and understanding activities

- Use this [Representation quiz](#) to test your students' knowledge. Topics include the Parliament, the House of Representatives, Senate, house composition and forming government. Download the [quiz answers](#).



Suggested extension application activities:

UNIT OF WORK: How are we represented?

The unit includes these suggested learning activities:

- Recall representation in the House of Representatives. Students research their electorate and current member.
- Research 'redistributions' on the AEC website. Students investigate their purpose in representation and why they are important.



Supplementary links with AEC resources

Links to other AEC education and information resources:

- Democracy Rules – Topic 1 - '[You and me, the decision-makers](#)'
 - Investigation A: What do we mean by democracy?
 - Investigation B: Can we all make the decisions?
- Democracy Rules – Topic 2 - '[Representing everyone](#)'
 - Investigation A: How do you have your say? (activity 1 and 2).
- Democracy Rules – Topic 3 – '[What's your vote worth? - Investigation A](#)'
- Democracy Rules – Topic 3 – '[What's' your vote worth? - Investigation B](#)'



Representation quiz

Question 1: Australia is a representative democracy. This means:

- A. The people elect representatives to Parliament to make decisions on behalf of all Australians.
- B. The Prime Minister makes all the decisions based on the number of seats they have.
- C. Decisions on the democratic process are made by the representative high council.
- D. All of the above.

Question 2: True or false: the House of Representatives and the Senate are the two houses that make up Parliament.

- A. True
- B. False

Question 3: Currently, how many senators represent each state and territory in the Senate?

- A. 6 Senators from each state and 2 from each territory.
- B. 12 senators from each state and 2 from each territory.
- C. 10 from New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland. 8 from every other state and territory.
- D. It depends on the formula in the Constitution.

Question 4: What determines the number of senators each state can have?

- A. Parliament but the Constitution dictates states must have an equal number of senators each.
- B. The Constitution.
- C. The Prime Minister and the Cabinet.
- D. The people – it depends on how many people vote on election day.

Question 5: Government is formed in which house?

- A. The House of Representatives.
- B. The Senate.

Question 6: Who sits on the crossbench?

- A. The government.
- B. The media.
- C. The opposition.
- D. Minor parties and independents.

Question 7:

True or false: Each electorate in the House of Representatives within a given state/territory has roughly the same number of enrolled voters.

- A. True
- B. False

Question 8:

What does the Speaker of the House of Representatives do?

- A. They tell the government how to run Parliament.
- B. They help the government negotiate with the opposition and the crossbench.
- C. They are the official source of information from the Parliament to the people.
- D. They oversee the House of Representatives and ensure that members are obeying the rules of the House.

Question 9:

True or false: A political party is an organisation made up of like-minded people with similar ideas and aims.

- A. True
- B. False

Question 10:

To form government, how many seats does a party or group of parties need in the House of Representatives?

- A. An absolute majority (More than 50% of the seats).
- B. A super majority (More than 65% of the seats).
- C. Any number – it depends on who has the biggest number of representatives.
- D. It doesn't matter – the government can negotiate with the Senate.

Question 11:

How many years are House of Representatives members elected for?

- A. Until they retire.
- B. 6 years.
- C. 4 years.
- D. 3 years.

Question 12:

How many years are senators elected for?

- A. 3 years.
- B. 6 years for state senators and 3 years for territory senators.
- C. 4 years for state senators and 3 years for territory senators.
- D. Until they retire.

Question 13:

During a double dissolution election, who is up for election?

- A. All senators only.
- B. All members of the House of Representatives and half the number of senators.
- C. Just the members of the House of Representatives.
- D. All members of the House and all senators.

Question 14:

True or false: A political party requires a majority in the Senate to form government.

- A. True
- B. False

Question 15:

What is the role of the President of the Senate?

- A. To determine how many senators each state gets.
- B. To oversee the Senate.
- C. To decide who is eligible to be a senator.
- D. To veto the decisions of the government if they think it's unconstitutional.

Final score:

/15



ACTIVITY

Representation quiz answers

| Question | Answer |
|--|---|
| 1. Australia is a representative democracy. This means: | A: The people elect representatives to Parliament to make decisions on behalf of all Australians. |
| 2. True or false: the House of Representatives and the Senate are the two houses that make up Parliament. | A: True. |
| 3. Currently, how many senators represent each state and territory in the Senate? | B: 12 senators from each state and 2 from each territory. |
| 4. What dictates the number of senators each state can have? | A: Parliament but the Constitution dictates states must have an equal number of senators each. |
| 5. Government is formed in which house? | A: The House of Representatives. |
| 6. Who sits on the crossbench? | D: Minor parties and independents. |
| 7. True or false: Each electorate in the House of Representatives within a given state/territory has roughly the same number of enrolled voters. | A: True. |
| 8. What does the Speaker of the House of Representatives do? | D: They oversee the House of Representatives and ensure that members are obeying the rules of the House. |
| 9. True or false: A political party is an organisation made up of like-minded people with similar ideas and aims. | A: True. |



| Question | Answer |
|---|--|
| 10. To form government, how many seats does a party or group of parties need in the House of Representatives? | A: An absolute majority (More than 50% of the seats). |
| 11. How many years are House of Representatives members elected for? | D: 3 years. |
| 12. How many years are senators elected for? | B: 6 years for state senators and 3 years for territory senators. |
| 13. During a double dissolution election, who is up for election? | D: All members of the House and all senators. |
| 14. True or false: A political party requires a majority in the Senate to form government. | B: False. |
| 15. What is the role of the President of the Senate? | B: To oversee the Senate. |

Representation - How are we represented?



DEMOCRACY MODULE

Representation



KEY CONCEPT

Representation in parliament



RELATED CONCEPTS

- **Participation** – your vote will help shape Australia.
- **Voting** – eligible citizens determining who should represent them.
- **Representative democracy** – where elected officials advocate and make decisions on our behalf.



Overarching questions

How are citizens represented in Australia's Parliament? How do elected officials represent the Australian people?

Inquiry questions:

Factual – How are representatives elected to Australia's Parliament?

Conceptual – How do the planning and structure of electorates make voting more equitable?



Learning outcomes

By the end of the activities, students will:

- Explain parliamentary structures, the functions of each house and how members and senators represent their constituencies.
- Explain the difference between government, opposition and the crossbench and their role within the parliament.
- Investigate representation in the House of Representatives and the role of redistributions.



Suggested extension learning experiences and activities:

- Recall representation in the House of Representatives. Look up your electorate. How many enrolled voters live in that area? Who is the current representative? Use resources such as [find my electorate](#) and the AEC's [enrolment statistics](#).
- Research 'redistributions' on the AEC website. Investigate their purpose in representation and why they are important. More information can be found on the AEC's [Federal redistributions](#) website and on [Redistributions – Frequently Asked Questions](#).

Section continues next page... ↗

Continued from previous page... 

- Explore members or senators in your electorate. [Home - Parliamentary Handbook](#). [Home – Parliament of Australia](#) What are their roles and responsibilities? They've been elected to represent your electorate – research what they do.
- The Australian people vote for candidates to represent them in parliament. They don't, however, vote for the Prime Minister. Research how the Prime Minister is appointed and discuss.

How are we represented? - Suggested assessment rubric

| Criteria | Level 1-2 | Level 3-4 | Level 5-6 | Level 7-8 |
|--|--|--|--|---|
| Criterion A: Knowing and understanding Recall of structures and facts about representation, electorates and redistributions. | Demonstrates limited understanding of parliamentary representation or voting concepts. | Demonstrates basic understanding with partial accuracy and some relevant facts. | Demonstrates sound understanding with mostly accurate facts and clear explanations. | Demonstrates thorough understanding with insightful connections between electoral data, representation, and democratic structures. |
| Criterion B: Investigating Research into representatives, redistributions and voter data. | Uses limited research and relies on general or unclear sources. | Uses basic research methods; sources are somewhat relevant. | Uses effective research strategies; synthesises relevant information clearly. | Uses thorough, critical research to draw meaningful conclusions from data and sources. |
| Criterion C: Communicating Presentation of ideas, comparisons, and fairness discussions. | Communicates ideas in a limited or unclear manner; lacks structure. | Communicates adequately with some structure and clarity. | Communicates effectively with clear structure, appropriate comparisons and terminology. | Communicates persuasively with clarity, depth, and insight; compares scenarios with strong logic and cohesion. |
| Criterion D: Thinking critically Evaluation of redistribution fairness and representation equity. | Attempts basic evaluation; ideas may be undeveloped or unsupported. | Evaluates with some insight; draws basic comparisons between electoral and classroom situations. | Evaluates thoughtfully; reflects on fairness and links ideas to real-world representation. | Evaluates critically and creatively; integrates fairness principles with real-world electoral implications and presents informed recommendations. |

Voting options

In this module, students will be introduced to different voting options by helping DemocraCity citizens. The activity has students meeting people with different circumstances and recommending voting options to them from a multiple-choice list.



Learning outcomes

By the end of the activities, students will:

- Recall that voting in Australia is compulsory.
- Identify different voting options during an election.
- Understand when each voting option may be used.



Suggested extension knowledge and understanding activities

- Match the voting scenario: Have students match the different situations of voters to the most suited voting options on the [Voting scenarios](#) worksheet.



Suggested extension application activities:

UNIT OF WORK: Free and fair – Voting options in Australia

- The linked unit includes an opportunity for students to reflect on Australia's voting options and features and design a 'free and fair' classroom election based on these features.



Supplementary links with AEC resources

Links to other AEC education and information resources:

- Democracy Rules – Topic 3 ['What's your vote worth?'](#)
- Democracy Rules – Topic 5 - ['Young people and the vote'](#)
- AEC TV: [Check voting options – Referendum](#)
- AEC TV: [The count - getting the votes home](#)
- [Election safeguards](#)

WORKSHEET



Voting scenarios

Instructions

Now that you have explored the voting options citizens of DemocraCity have during an election, below are some voters who have unique voting situations.

Think back to those voting options from DemocraCity and do some research on other voting options from the column on the right. Use your knowledge to recommend a voting option to the people below and justify your answer.



Sally

I am blind and live at home. I know that AEC staff can assist me if I can get to a polling place, but the nearest polling place is too far away.

Do I have any other options?

Your answer:

Other voting options

Overseas voting



In-person voting may be available for those outside of Australia. Find out how people can vote overseas [by watching this video.](#)



I live with my family on Country in a remote community in the Kimberley in Western Australia. The closest town to me with a polling place is 3 hours away. I'll be here for the whole election.

Are there any voting options for me?

Your answer:



Callum

I'm a researcher studying emperor penguins at Mawson Station in Antarctica for 12 months and won't be home for the election.

Do I have to vote? What are my options?

Your answer:

Telephone voting



The AEC has a dedicated telephone voting service available to eligible voters. [Check out the AEC's website to find out more.](#)



I'm currently backpacking in Europe and heard there is an election happening back home. Since I'm traveling, I don't have a postal address. I'll be in London for most of the pre-poll period.

Your answer:



Liam

Mobile polling



Did you know the AEC has an in-person voting services that travels around remote parts of the country? [Watch this video to find out more.](#)



Free and fair – Voting options in Australia



DEMOCRACY MODULE

Voting options



KEY CONCEPT

Characteristics of democracy



RELATED CONCEPTS

- **Equity** – representation, fairness and impartiality.
- **Rights and responsibilities** – civic privilege and compulsory voting.
- **Accessibility** – addressing barriers to participation.



Overarching questions

There is a variety of voting options, why is that important for Australia's democracy?

Inquiry questions:

Factual – What voting options exist in Australia?

Conceptual – What could be the possible impact on equity and representation if voting wasn't compulsory?



Learning outcomes

By the end of the activities, students will:

- Identify and describe voting options used in Australia.
- Evaluate voting rules (including compulsory voting, timeframes and methods) and how they relate to equity and representation.
- Consider and design class election parameters that reflect principles of free and fair voting.



Suggested extension learning experiences and activities:

Designing a 'Free and fair' class election. Students apply their understanding of voting options and features by planning a class election that reflects democratic principles.



'Free and fair' class election activity overview

1. **Group brainstorm:** What makes an election free and fair?
2. **Design phase:**
 - Choose a voting method (e.g. preferential, first-past-the-post).
 - Decide on rules: eligibility, campaigning, ballot secrecy, vote counting.

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- Consider accessibility: how will all classmates participate, what voting options will be available?

3. Reflection:

- Justify choices using concepts of equity and fairness.
- Compare with Australian electoral practices.
- Compare and contrast with one of our regional neighbours.

Teacher scaffolding: Voting options and features in Australia

| Voting option/aspect | Feature | Impact on 'Free and fair' |
|-------------------------------|---|---|
| Compulsory voting | It is compulsory for enrolled voters to vote in federal elections. As voting is compulsory, people are given several ways to cast their vote. | Positively impacts participation and therefore representation in decisions made in Australian elections. |
| Postal voting | Ballots mailed in for those unable to attend polling stations. | Increases accessibility. Provides an option for people who may not be able to get to a polling place. |
| Early (pre-poll) voting | Voting before election day with valid reason. | Convenient. Means people can still vote if they're unavailable on election day. |
| Provisional (Absentee) voting | Voting outside one's electorate. Also available if someone can't be found on the electoral roll. | Ensures participation; people aren't disenfranchised by not being found on the roll – they still have the opportunity to vote and then the AEC checks after election day. |
| Telephone voting | Telephone voting made available to people who are blind or with low vision and for voters in Antarctica. | Provides an accessible option for participation. |
| Preferential voting | Voters rank candidates in order of preference. | Promotes majority support - ensures the person elected is chosen by more than half of the voters. |
| Electoral roll accuracy | High enrolment rates and regular updates. | Enhances legitimacy and inclusivity. |

Free and fair: Voting options in Australia – Suggested assessment rubric

| Criteria | Level 1-2 | Level 3-4 | Level 5-6 | Level 7-8 |
|---|--|--|--|---|
| Criterion A: Knowing and understanding | Identifies limited voting methods and shows minimal understanding of electoral fairness. | Describes several voting options with basic explanation of fairness. | Explains voting methods with accurate understanding of fairness, equity, and representation. | Analyses voting options comprehensively, clearly linking electoral systems to fairness and equity. |
| Criterion B: Investigating | Gathers minimal information and uses it with limited relevance. | Collects some relevant data but lacks depth or organization. | Uses relevant evidence to support planning and decisions in election design. | Researches thoroughly, using clear, relevant evidence to critically support election decisions. |
| Criterion C: Communicating | Shares ideas with limited clarity or structure. | Communicates decisions clearly but lacks coherence or justification. | Communicates election design clearly and logically with some justification. | Communicates persuasively and with clarity, thoroughly justifying election choices using key concepts. |
| Criterion D: Thinking critically | Provides basic reflection with minimal evaluation of fairness. | Reflects on fairness with some evaluation but lacks depth. | Evaluates election design using fairness and development concepts with some insight. | Thoughtfully evaluates and refines election design, showing deep understanding of fairness and development. |

Nominations

This module explains how to nominate to become a candidate.

Students are invited into a virtual divisional office where they explore eligibility requirements for nominees in the House of Representatives or Senate. Various scenarios are presented for students to learn about the nomination process including how to nominate, eligibility requirements and how the candidates appear on the ballot paper.

The 'Ballot draw' module outlines the transparent process to determine the order of names on the House of Representatives ballot paper using the process of 'double randomisation'.



Learning outcomes

By the end of the first module, students will:

- Recall the eligibility requirements to nominate to be a candidate for Parliament.
- Recognise the role of the AEC in the nomination process.

By the end of the second module, students will:

- Outline the process of double randomisation and its key role in the nominations process.
- Examine how the eligibility criteria of candidates interact with the broader democratic process.



Suggested extension knowledge and understanding activities

- Use this [Nominations quiz questions](#) to test your student's knowledge. Download the [Nominations quiz answers](#).



Suggested extension application activities:

UNIT OF WORK: Pathways to representation

The linked unit includes these suggested learning activities:

- Students consider what requirements a class representative should have. If you wish to run for class representative, what makes you a good candidate?
- Conduct a class election nomination eligibility activity and ballot draw.



Supplementary links with AEC resources

Links to other AEC education and information resources:

- Get Voting resources: [Step 1 - get started planning and nomination](#)
- Formal AEC procedures: [Conducting the ballot draw](#)
- Get Voting resource: [Instructions for candidates – campaign](#)
- More information for nominating as a candidate: [Nomination guide for candidates](#)



WORKSHEET

Nominations quiz

Question 1: What is a divisional returning officer in charge of?

- A. Printing the ballot papers.
- B. Running the election in an electoral division.
- C. Informing the Prime Minister of how people are voting.
- D. Providing updates to Parliament about news and events in an electoral division.

Question 2: To become a candidate for the House of Representatives or the Senate, you must be:

- A. An Australian citizen.
- B. Enrolled or eligible to enrol.
- C. 18 years or older.
- D. All of the above.

Question 3: True or false: You can be a dual citizen and nominate to be a candidate.

- A. True
- B. False

Question 4: If a candidate has dual citizenship, how can they become eligible to be a candidate?

- A. Give up their non-Australian citizenship.
- B. Write to the divisional returning officer for an exemption.
- C. Pay a higher candidate fee.
- D. Not applicable – dual citizens are allowed to nominate as a candidate.

Question 5: If an independent candidate nominates for the House of Representatives, how many signatures do they need from the public to nominate?

- A. 151
- B. Depends on the electoral division
- C. 100
- D. 1000

Question 6: When do nominations need to be lodged by?

- A. By the start of the ballot draw.
- B. By the close of nominations.
- C. Before the election is announced.
- D. Before the pre-poll period starts.

Question 7: Who can attend the ballot draw of candidates?

- A. The media.
- B. Candidates.
- C. Members of the public.
- D. All of the above.

Question 8: During the ballot draw, what does the first ball draw decide?

- A. The number that will represent the candidate during the second draw.
- B. The date of the election.
- C. How many candidates can run.
- D. The position of the candidate on the ballot paper.

Question 9: During the ballot draw, what does the second ball draw decide?

- A. The date of the election.
- B. The number that will represent the candidate during the second draw.
- C. How many candidates will appear on the ballot paper.
- D. The position of the candidate on the ballot paper.

Question 10: True or false: Anyone in attendance at the ballot draw is allowed to spin the bingo barrel.

- A. True
- B. False

Final score:

/10



ACTIVITY

Nominations quiz answers

| Question | Answer |
|--|--|
| 1. What is a divisional returning officer in charge of? | B: Running the election in an electoral division. |
| 2. To become a candidate for the House of Representatives or the Senate, you must be: | D: All of the above. |
| 3. True or false: You can be a dual citizen and nominate to be a candidate? | B: False. |
| 4. If a candidate has dual citizenship, how can they become eligible to be a candidate? | A: Give up their non-Australian citizenship. |
| 5. If an Independent candidate nominates for the House of Representatives, how many signatures do they need from the public to nominate? | C: 100. |
| 6. When do nominations need to be lodged by? | B: By the close of nominations. |
| 7. Who can attend the ballot draw of candidates? | D: All of the above. |
| 8. During the ballot draw, what does the first ball draw decide? | A: The number that will represent the candidate during the second draw. |
| 9. During the ballot draw, what does the second ball draw decide? | D: The position of the candidate on the ballot paper. |
| 10. True or false: Anyone in attendance at the ballot draw is allowed to spin the bingo ball. | A: True. |

Pathways to representation in Australian elections



DEMOCRACY MODULE

Nominations



KEY CONCEPT

Representation



RELATED CONCEPTS

- **Participation** – who can stand for election, and how?
- **Structure** – electoral systems, nomination rules, ballot order.



Overarching questions

How do nomination and ballot draw processes contribute to representation and equity in Australia's electoral processes?

Inquiry questions:

Factual – What are the requirements for nominating as a candidate in Australia?

Conceptual – How does the ballot draw contribute to fairness and impartiality in elections?



Learning outcomes

By the end of the activities, students will:

- Understand the nomination process and ballot draw procedures in federal elections.
- Investigate if ballot position can affect voter behaviour.
- Evaluate the strengths and limitations of the nomination process and propose informed improvements.



Suggested extension learning experiences and activities:

- Not everyone can be a representative; there are mandatory requirements. If you were to elect a class representative, what requirements for the role should they have? Develop a list for class discussion.
- Conduct a class election [nomination eligibility activity](#). Use this [nomination form](#) for your election.
- Set up ballot draw for your class election. [Ballot draw activity](#).
- Analyse research on ballot position effect. Conduct a classroom poll or experiment to analyse the impact of placement on outcomes.
- Debate ballot fairness – develop a proposal for improving fairness or accessibility in the nomination process.

Pathways to representation in Australian Elections - Suggested assessment rubric

| Criteria | Level 1-2 | Level 3-4 | Level 5-6 | Level 7-8 |
|---|--|---|---|--|
| Criterion A: Knowing and understanding Understanding of nomination processes, eligibility, and ballot draw systems. | Demonstrates limited understanding of democratic processes or terminology. | Demonstrates basic understanding with some accurate information. | Demonstrates clear understanding with accurate use of civic terms and examples. | Demonstrates thorough understanding with detailed explanations and insightful connections between electoral procedures and fairness. |
| Criterion B: Investigating Research into nomination requirements and the impact of ballot draw. | Investigation lacks clarity; sources are minimal or unrelated. | Investigates with partial relevance; basic conclusions are drawn. | Investigates effectively with relevant sources and sound analysis. | Investigates thoroughly using reliable sources, critically examines implications of ballot positioning and candidate accessibility. |
| Criterion C: Communicating Presentation of civic processes and impacts. | Communicates with limited clarity or structure; ideas may be confusing. | Communicates with some structure; ideas are mostly clear. | Communicates effectively using appropriate format, structure, and terminology. | Communicates with clarity, creativity, and coherence; presentation is persuasive and well-reasoned. |
| Criterion D: Thinking critically Evaluation of fairness, accessibility, and electoral outcomes. | Demonstrates limited reflection or basic conclusions. | Reflects on electoral fairness with some supporting ideas. | Reflects thoughtfully; evaluates current systems and offers suggestions. | Evaluates thoroughly with nuanced understanding; presents informed, impartial recommendations for improving democratic processes. |



ACTIVITY

Nomination eligibility activity

To nominate as a candidate for election into the Australian parliament, there are several steps to make sure that the person is eligible.

To nominate for either the Senate or the House of Representatives, you must be:

- at least 18 years old
- an Australian citizen
- either enrolled or eligible to be enrolled on the Commonwealth electoral roll.

You cannot nominate for the Senate or the House of Representatives if you are:

- currently a member of a state parliament or territory legislative assembly and have not resigned before the hour of nomination.
- disqualified by section 44 of the Constitution. See examples here: [Candidate eligibility - Australian Electoral Commission](#).



Consider

- What criteria do you think are important for being eligible to nominate in our election?

For our class election, we will choose our own eligibility criteria. This could be things like involvement in an extracurricular activity, attendance criteria, or something else we think is important for someone who will represent the class.

What criteria do you consider essential to nominate for the class election? Why are these criteria important?



Finalised your criteria?

Use the accompanying ['Nomination Form'](#) to include your chosen requirements and make it available to those wishing to nominate for election.



ACTIVITY

Nomination Form

Use this form to nominate to run for the class election. All sections must be completed and submitted no later than _____

1. Your name as it appears on the class roll:

2. The class you are a member of:

3. Contact email:

Eligibility checklist

| Yes | No |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Criterion A:

Criterion B:

Criterion C:

I confirm the information in the checklist above to be true and correct.

Signature of candidate

Date



ACTIVITY

Ballot draw activity

The candidate positions on a ballot paper are determined by a ballot draw. The ballot draw is a randomised system that keeps it fair for all candidates. The AEC conducts the draw publicly.



Prior activity: Complete the nomination activity.

Note: If time does not allow to conduct a ballot draw you can use the 'randomiser' option on the [ballot paper generator](#) in Get Voting.

To see an example of a 'nomination ballot draw' in action watch this AEC [video](#).



Materials required:

- [Number Picker Wheel - Pick Random Number by Spinning](#)
- [Ballot order table](#)



Conducting the draw

On the 'Number picker wheel', type the number of candidates into the MAX range box. For example, if you will have four candidates enter 4. After each spin, click 'remove choice' to reset the wheel.

Student assistants:

- 1 x student to 'spin' the Number Picker Wheel.
- 1 x student to write up the candidate names using the template provided.
- 1 x student to write the numbers as they're drawn.

Draw 1: The first draw (wheel spin) assigns a number to each candidate.

1. Insert candidate names under 'Draw 1' in the first column of the ballot order table.
2. 'Spin' the wheel to reveal the first number.
3. Record the number in column 1 for 'assigned number'. The first number called is written against the first candidate on the list. Each candidate keeps this number for draw 2.

Draw 2: The second draw (wheel spin) determines the order in which each candidate appears on the ballot paper.

1. Reset the Number Picker Wheel with correct number of candidates.
2. 'Spin' the wheel to reveal the first number.
3. Record the number in the top row of the second column of the table.
4. Ensure 'remove choice' is clicked after each spin.

You can now prepare ballot papers using the Get Voting [ballot paper generator](#).

Going further: For a full explanation of how the AEC conducts the draw see the [AEC website](#).



ACTIVITY

Ballot order

Draw 1: Assigned number

Draw 2: Ballot paper position

Candidate name:

Ballot position 1:

Assigned number:

Candidate name:

Ballot position 2:

Assigned number:

Candidate name:

Ballot position 3:

Assigned number:

Candidate name:

Ballot position 4:

Assigned number:

Election day



This module is an excellent introduction to what happens on election day and to running a class election.



In the first module, students are transported to a polling place to be guided through the process of voting on election day and practise filling in ballot papers for the House of Representatives and the Senate.

In the second module, students walk around and explore the polling place, finding key people and important objects. By doing so, students develop greater understanding of the voting process and how the AEC maintains election integrity.



Learning outcomes

By the end of the first module, students will:

- Recall the three questions each voter is asked before being issued a ballot paper.
- Recall that voters can vote above or below the line in the Senate.
- Demonstrate how to correctly fill in a House of Representatives and Senate ballot paper.

By the end of the second module, students will:

- Recall the key areas and objects within a polling place.
- Recall the roles different people fill on polling day.
- Identify that the AEC ensures election integrity by having various process and people present in a polling place.

By the end of the Declaration voting module, students will:

- Recognise that voters can still vote even if they cannot be found on the electoral roll.
- Recognise that people with a variety of needs can be assisted in voting.
- Identify the purpose of a declaration vote.



Suggested extension knowledge and understanding activities

- Organise a mock polling place for a class election. Refer to the [Get Voting](#) site for information on election roles, components and supplies. [Setting up a polling place checklist](#).
- Visit the AEC website and [practise](#) completing a ballot paper for the House of Representatives.

- Research the role of campaigners in supporting candidates. Also consider the rules around their involvement at the polling place. Create a poster for your classroom election explaining the rules campaigners must abide by. More information available here: [Party & Campaign Workers](#).



Suggested extension application activities:

UNIT OF WORK: Election day in action

A good election encourages democratic decision making and a respected outcome. A good election is based on principles that ensure it is free and fair.

- Use the 'Unit of work' on page 25 to conduct a class election.



Supplementary links with AEC resources

Links to other AEC education and information resources:

- AEC TV video: [Preferential Voting](#)
- AEC website get voting tool - [Practise voting - House of Representatives](#)
- AEC [Preferential voting: House of Representatives explainer](#)
- AEC [Preferential voting: Senate explainer](#)
- AEC [Ballot paper formality guidelines](#)

Election night



This module is excellent to learn about election night and for pairing with a class election.



Students are transported to the polling place after it closes on election night. Students will help conduct a House of Representative first preference count.

Students will also learn about the various security and transparency measures used when opening ballot boxes and sorting ballot papers.

In the second module, students will help conduct a House of Representatives two-candidate preferred (TCP) count. The TCP is conducted on election night after the first preference count to give an early indication of results.



Learning outcomes

By the end of the first module, students will:

- Recall that ballot papers are first sorted by first preference on election night.
- Recall what a first preference count is.
- Identify an informal ballot paper.
- Demonstrate how to sort ballot papers by first preference.
- Recall that there are processes to ensure transparency and election integrity in the counting of ballot papers.

By the end of the second module, students will:

- Recall that a two-candidate preferred (TCP) count is conducted after a first preference count on election night.
- Recognise the role of the TCP count.
- Demonstrate how to sort ballot papers in a TCP count.
- Recall that there are processes to ensure transparency and election integrity in the counting of ballot papers.



Suggested extension application activities:

UNIT OF WORK: Election day in action

A good election encourages democratic decision making and a respected outcome. A good election is based on principles that ensure it is free and fair.

- Use the 'Unit of work' on page 49 to conduct a class election.



Supplementary links with AEC resources

Links to other AEC education and information resources:

- Get Voting resources - [Get Voting - School elections made easy](#)
- Get Voting: Instructions for counting [First-past-the-post and Preferential including tally sheet](#)
- AEC poster: [Counting House of Representatives preferential voting](#)
- AEC [Ballot paper formality guidelines](#)
- AEC [House of Representatives count](#)
- AEC TV video: [Scrutineers look but don't touch](#)

Distribution of preferences



This module is excellent to learn about election night and for pairing with a class election.



Students are transported to an AEC count centre where they help to conduct a distribution of preferences. Distribution of preferences is the process of excluding House of Representative candidates with the least number of votes and transferring those votes to other candidates. Through this process a candidate is elected.



Learning outcomes

By the end of the first module, students will:

- Demonstrate how to distribute ballot papers based on 2nd and 3rd preferences.
- Identify why a candidate is excluded in each exclusion round.
- Describe what happens to the votes of a candidate that is excluded.
- Recognise that a candidate must get an absolute majority to be elected.



Suggested extension knowledge and understanding activities

- Students research both preferential and first-past-the-post voting including what other countries use. Using this information, compare and contrast the different systems.



Suggested extension application activities:

UNIT OF WORK: Election day in action

A good election encourages democratic decision making and a respected outcome. A good election is based on principles that ensure it is free and fair.

- Use the 'Unit of Work' on page 49 to conduct a class election.



Supplementary links with AEC resources

Links to other AEC education and information resources:

- [Get Voting - school elections made easy](#)
- Get Voting: [Instructions for counting](#)
- AEC poster: [Counting House of Representatives Preferential voting](#)
- AEC [Ballot paper formality guidelines](#)
- AEC [House of Representatives count](#)
- AEC TV video: [Scrutineers look but don't touch](#)
- AEC TV video: [Counting the votes](#)
- [Preferential voting - Australian Electoral Commission](#)

Issuing votes



This module is excellent to learn about election processes and for pairing with a class election using the [AEC's Get Voting resource](#).



In this module, students take on the role of assisting in a polling place by locating voters on the certified list and issuing them with ballot papers. Guided by the Officer in Charge (OIC) and DemocraBot, students learn the three questions to ask before issuing a ballot paper, how to accurately find voters on the certified list, and how to provide clear instructions for filling out ballot papers. Students have an opportunity to practise issuing ballot papers with other voters.

This module also introduces students to declaration votes, using examples such as silent voters and absent voters. They explore the differences in issuing a declaration vote and how the AEC verifies that these votes are only issued to eligible voters.



Learning outcomes

By the end of the first module, students will:

- Recall the three mandatory questions asked when being issued a ballot paper.
- Understand why the three mandatory questions are needed.
- Identify the purpose of ordinary and declaration votes.
- Demonstrate the process of issuing a ballot paper.



Suggested extension knowledge and understanding activities

- Students research both preferential and first-past-the-post voting including what other countries use. Using this information, compare and contrast the different systems.



Suggested extension application activities:

UNIT OF WORK: Election day in action

A good election encourages democratic decision making and a respected outcome. A good election is based on principles that ensure it is free and fair.

- Use the 'Unit of Work' on page 49 to conduct a class election.



Key questions

1. What are the three mandatory questions voters get asked when being issued a ballot paper?

Answer:

- What's your full name?
- Where do you live?
- Have you voted in *this* election?

2. Why are these questions asked before voters are issued their ballot paper?

Answer: You are asked your name to find your name on the electoral roll. You are asked your address to ensure it is the correct person and not someone else with the same name. The third question is a legal question. It is asked to make sure people are only voting once. After the election, the certified lists (where your name has been crossed off) are scanned looking for those who have not voted and to identify any who appear to have voted more than once, which will be investigated as part of maintaining electoral integrity.

3. What's a declaration vote?

Answer: A declaration vote is issued if your name and/or address details cannot be found on the certified list at the polling place, or if your name has already been marked as having voted. Declaration votes ensure all voters who are entitled to vote are able to do so.

UNIT OF WORK

Election day in action



DEMOCRACY MODULES

Election day, Election night and Distribution of preferences



KEY CONCEPT

Citizenship



RELATED CONCEPTS

- **Participation** – active engagement in democracy through voting.
- **Processes** – electoral systems (including preferential voting) and election roles.
- **Integrity** – fairness and accessibility of voting processes.



Overarching questions

How do electoral structures and safeguards support participation and a trusted outcome in democratic societies?

Inquiry questions:

Factual – What is preferential voting and how is it conducted on election day?

Conceptual – How do polling procedures contribute to secure and accessible voting?



Learning outcomes

By the end of the activities, students will:

- Explore and explain measures like ballot box integrity, accessible tools, and voter assistance options.
- Explain how the AEC ensures elections are secure and conducted transparently through the various roles and checks present in a polling place.
- Demonstrate how to complete a formal vote for the House of Representatives.
- Demonstrate understanding of the first preference count by determining ballot paper formality.
- Demonstrate understanding of the full distribution of preferences in a House of Representatives count.
- Recall the differences between full preferential voting and first past the post and critically evaluate how each affects representation.



Suggested extension learning experiences and activities:

- Develop a resource pack (poster, video, guide) for educating first-time voters about polling place procedures and electoral integrity safeguards.
- Create an informative poster for 'completing a formal vote' for display in your polling place explaining how to vote and why it's important.
- Conduct a class election using '[Get Voting](#)' resources. Conduct a full distribution of preferences to achieve an election result.
- Research full preferential versus first past the post voting and write an evaluation on how each impacts representation.

Election day in action - Suggested assessment rubric

| Criteria | Level 1-2 | Level 3-4 | Level 5-6 | Level 7-8 |
|---|--|--|---|--|
| Criterion A: Knowing and understanding Use knowledge to explain concepts and ideas in familiar and unfamiliar contexts. | Demonstrates minimal knowledge of electoral systems and voting processes. | Demonstrates some knowledge, with limited application to unfamiliar scenarios. | Demonstrates accurate and relevant understanding of electoral systems in varied contexts. | Demonstrates comprehensive and insightful understanding of electoral processes and safeguards. |
| Criterion B: Investigating Formulate questions, plan investigations, and use methods effectively. | Identifies a basic question or hypothesis with minimal planning or reference to sources. | Develops questions and conducts investigations with some source variety or procedural structure. | Designs purposeful investigations using credible sources and clear methodology. | Conducts sophisticated inquiry with critical use of diverse sources and rigorous investigative planning. |
| Criterion C: Communicating Organise and express information in appropriate formats and styles. | Communicates with limited clarity or structure; errors interfere with understanding. | Communicates ideas using some structure and conventions; meaning is mostly clear. | Organises ideas clearly using appropriate formats and terminology relevant to electoral contexts. | Communicates persuasively and fluently using discipline-specific vocabulary and engaging formats. |
| Criterion D: Thinking critically Analyse concepts, arguments, evidence and draw reasoned conclusions. | Shows minimal analysis or evaluation; conclusions lack justification. | Attempts analysis with some logical reasoning; conclusions are basic or unsupported. | Evaluates evidence and arguments with reasoned conclusions relevant to civic contexts. | Demonstrates insightful analysis and synthesis, drawing well-substantiated conclusions about democracy. |



Setting up a polling place

The ['Get Voting' resources](#) provide all you need to prepare for and conduct your own election.

To help transform your learning space into a polling place we have the following checklist:

| Task | More information | Check |
|--|--|-------|
| Establish voting route. Enter → Vote → Ballot Box → Exit | <p>It's important to make sure voters can enter, participate and leave the polling place. This maintains some order, illustrates the importance of fairness and integrity through visible voting systems and mirrors real life participation in Australia.</p> | |
| Set up a table near the entry for polling officials with your 'electoral roll', pencils and ballot papers. | <p>Making it clear that voters need to visit the issuing table first will help with the flow of traffic. You can also have a polling official at the door to direct voters and control any line that begins.</p> | |
| Position voting screens with adequate spacing. | <p>By spacing voting areas appropriately you increase the accessibility of the space while also modelling and encouraging the secret ballot. You can also consider adding some seated booths to ensure greater accessibility.</p> | |
| Position ballot box between the voting screens and the exit. | <p>This positioning encourages voters to deposit their ballot papers in the ballot box before leaving the polling place. A ballot box guard can also be in place to assist voters and ensure all ballot papers are placed in the box.</p> | |

Australian democracy

This module explores various aspects of the Australian democratic system, some through a historic lens, which shaped the voting system today. The topics are covered in short videos which students can explore at their own pace with short, fun quizzes on board Democrabus at the end of each video to test their knowledge. Topics covered in this module include:

- The Constitution and Federation
- Preferential voting
- Universal male suffrage
- Women's suffrage
- Indigenous rights
- Independent electoral body
- Secret ballot
- Compulsory voting
- Voting age
- Three levels of government

Students can return to the main DemocraCity map at any time and can watch the videos in any order.



Learning outcomes

By the end of the first module, students will:

- Recognise key aspects of Australia's democracy and recall the historical context in which they emerged, including the secret ballot, compulsory voting, preferential voting and the current voting age.
- Recognise that Australia is a federation of states.
- Recall the three levels of government in Australia.
- Identify the progression of suffrage in Australia.



Suggested extension knowledge and understanding activities

- Construct a timeline that traces Australia's voting history – the evolution of voting rights, electoral systems and democratic reforms.
- Research compulsory voting – what it is, why it exists, when it was brought in, compare and contrast other countries (e.g. Belgium, UK, Brazil, New Zealand, USA, Singapore.)
- 3 levels of government – match the level of government to the responsibility. (PPT or document).

- Students draft a basic classroom Constitution with consideration for what kinds of things could be included.
- Analyse speeches or articles from First Nations advocates on voting rights.



Supplementary links with AEC resources

Links to other AEC education and information resources:

- [Democracy Rules: An electoral education resource](#) - The voice of a vote in a world of change



Key questions

1. Today everyone who is an Australian citizen over 18 years of age and enrolled can vote. Was that always the case? Who could and couldn't vote?

Answer:

- Until the reforms following the Eureka stockade, most people didn't have a say in how Australia was governed
- Women couldn't vote until 1902
- Indigenous people couldn't vote until the 1960s
- People 18-21 couldn't vote until 1973

2. Today when everyone votes, they do it without anyone else knowing how they voted. Why do you think that is?

Answer: Before the secret ballot, other people could put pressure on someone or intimidate them to vote a particular way. It's important that everyone has their say – every vote counts!

3. What are the three levels of government in Australia?

Answer: Federal, State/Territory and Local



ACTIVITY

Three levels of government

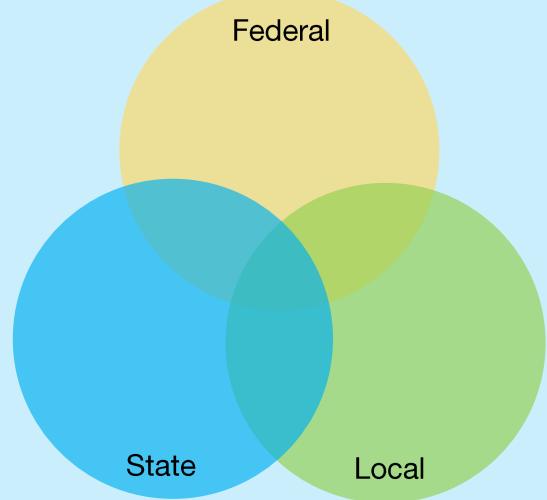
This activity tests students' knowledge and understanding of the responsibilities of each level of government in Australia. After watching the 'Three levels of government' video in the 'Australian democracy' module, students need to match the items to their correct level of government. Teachers can facilitate a discussion about each item and their appropriate level of government.



Activity Guide

This activity can be completed using the cards on the following pages as a class with a three-way Venn diagram drawn on a board or in small groups or pairs on a worksheet. Answers to each item are in the table below. Alternatively, you may wish to use the [PowerPoint version of this activity for more interactivity](#).

Example diagram



Answer key

| FEDERAL | Defence Foreign Affairs Aviation Currency | FEDERAL AND STATE |
|---------|---|-------------------|
| STATE | Police/ambulance Public transport Hospitals Driving licences | STATE AND LOCAL |
| LOCAL | Rubbish collection Parking Pets Libraries | ALL LEVELS |
| | | Taxation |

Going further: Inquiry questions



- Why are government responsibilities split between multiple levels?
- What would happen if a federal level responsibility like defence or foreign affairs were at the local level? Alternatively, what would happen if local level responsibilities like regulating pets or rubbish collection was at a federal level?
- Some responsibilities are split between multiple levels. For example, healthcare (Federal responsible for programs such as GPs, Medicare, NDIS, State for hospitals and ambulance service) and education (Federal responsible for universities and setting the curriculum, State for running primary and secondary schools). Why may that be?
- Taxation is at all three levels. Why might that be important?



Driving licenses



Libraries



Town planning



Foreign Affairs



AUSTRALIAN
DEFENCE FORCE

Defence



Aviation



Currency



Rubbish collection



Education



Hospitals



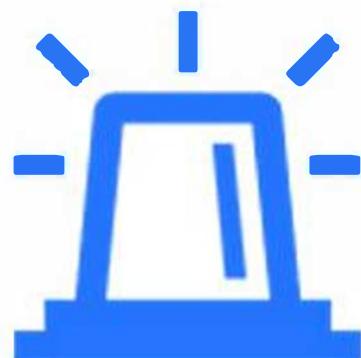
Healthcare



Public transport



Parking



Police/ambulance



Pets



Taxation

Media literacy and being informed



This module highlights the importance of being informed and critically literate about sources of electoral information. Students begin in DemocraCity town square to explore and interact with various different media sources. Students will also interact with other sources of information such as political parties, friends and family and official sources such as the AEC to understand their role during an election.



Learning outcomes

By the end of the first module, students will:

- Identify ways voters are informed about and participate in democracy.
- Recognise that while voters will be exposed to many sources of information, each person should make their own decision when voting.
- Recall the role of the AEC in providing information on the voting process.



Suggested extension knowledge and understanding activities

- Identify and discuss the different sources voters may gain information during an election by reviewing the 'DemocraCity Fruit Election' material in the unit guide. Students can review the 'AEC Digital Literacy' videos and the 'Media Literacy' persuasive techniques handouts to identify the techniques.



Suggested extension application activities:

ACTIVITY: Creating your own election material

Creating your own election material: The citizens of DemocraCity are having an election to decide on a town fruit. Students can create a piece of election material using a medium of one of the sources of information in DemocraCity. More information can be found in the unit guide.



Supplementary links with AEC resources

Links to other AEC education and information resources:

- Link to Digital Literacy videos on AEC TV
 - Identifying false and misleading information - [Digital Literacy - Introduction](#)
 - [Examine – what is the content?](#)

- [Investigate – who is the author?](#)
- [Review – When was it shared?](#)
- [Explore – How was it shared?](#)
- [Could it be false or AI?](#)
- [Exploring deep fakes](#)
- [The voting experience](#)
- [Your vote is your choice](#)
- [Digital Literacy: The Impact on Democracy](#)

- Link to Stop and Consider [Stop and Consider: Our campaign - Australian Electoral Commission](#)
- Classroom resource on teaching media literacy in democracy - [Media Literacy in Democracy: Women's Suffrage in Australia - AEC for schools](#)
- Links to information about authorisations
 - [Authorisations – AEC TV Video](#)
 - [Authorising electoral communications – AEC Website](#)



Key questions

1. What are some of the people and places voters get information during an election?
Answer: From the AEC, the media (newspapers, TV, radio), social media, friends and family, candidates and political parties
2. What is the best source of information about the election process?
Answer: The Australian Electoral Commission, the AEC. The AEC is an independent organisation that runs Australia's federal elections. They are independent of any political parties or candidates.
3. What's the most important thing for voters to remember after receiving a lot of information and then going to vote?
Answer: Your vote is your choice. You can vote the way you want to in private. Carefully consider all the information you receive and decide who you want to vote for.



ACTIVITY

Media Literacy and Elections: DemocraCity Fruit Election

These activities help students use what they've learned about elections and media literacy to think critically about how people get information during an election. Both activities are conducted in light of a 'DemocraCity fruit election' to simulate real-life sources of electoral information during an election campaign.



Materials:

- Student handout and activity instructions.
- Media Sources handout which includes:
 - how-to-vote card
 - campaign flyer
 - newspaper article
 - online social media post
 - text-based social media posts
 - quotes from family and friends.



Teacher Preparation:

- Share [student handout](#) with instructions
- Share all six media [sources](#)



Learning outcomes:

By the end of the activities, students will:

- Recall the range of sources from which electoral information may come.
- Exercise healthy scepticism to analyse a range of sources.
- Identify a range of persuasive techniques of which to be aware.



Important to highlight

The media sources used in this activity are meant to simulate real-life examples voters may encounter during an election. These sources include official information, campaign material and sources from hearsay. Students are encouraged to critically analyse, debate and question these sources. Students are encouraged to 'Stop and Consider' the information as if they were voters in an election themselves.



ACTIVITY 1: Analysing media sources

Students are asked to discuss six sources of election material related to the fruit election to identify the techniques used by the media, political campaigns and citizens when sharing information with voters.

Students are encouraged to use healthy scepticism to critically analyse the sources to answer:

- What type of source is this information? Where did the information come from?
- Who produced the information, how would you check the source?
- What is the information's aim or agenda?
- What techniques are being used to persuade you?
- How might this information influence a citizen when they go to vote?

To assist in identifying the techniques, students can review the [AEC Digital Literacy videos](#) and the Media Literacy [persuasive techniques](#) handout to identify the techniques used in the election material.

Below are the source types and some guided questions teachers may use to assist in student's inquiries:

| Source type | Description | Techniques | Guiding questions |
|-------------------|--|--|---|
| How-to-vote card | <p>Campaign material instructing voters on how to vote for Mango. Material sets out basic information and preferred candidate order on ballot paper.</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presenting evidence Inclusive language | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Why might political campaigns create 'how to vote' cards? Do voters have to follow these cards? Where might you see this electoral material during the election? |
| Campaign flyer | <p>Campaign from Strawberry campaign using overly exaggerated and hyperbolic facts and statements to convince voters.</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flattery Inclusive language Exaggeration Evidence and statistics Has been authorised by the Strawberry party | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Is the information in this campaign believable? What do voters need to look for when viewing campaign materials? Where might you see this electoral information during an election? |
| Newspaper article | <p>An excerpt from the local newspaper about the election highlighting disinformation within the Apple campaign and general mis and disinformation found in other sources.</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expert opinions Presenting evidence | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> What is the purpose of news reports and journalists during an election? Can information in reporting be biased? After reading the article, who may benefit from this information? |



| | | | |
|---|--|--|--|
| <p>Social media post</p>  | <p>A visual post from a social media user with basic facts on why you should vote for Apple and how to support the campaign.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presenting evidence Flattery | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Where might you see this type of information being shared? How would you verify the information in this post? |
| <p>Social media text post</p>  <p>I've been telling everyone for years: mangoes are the new super foods. Rich in nutrients and vitamins. That's where my vote will be this election. It's what all the smart gym-goers are doing. #votemango</p> | <p>Various types of posts from social media users including a general social media user talking about the election, official campaign posts, commentators supporting one fruit and news media organisations.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong emotional language Presenting evidence Contradicting evidence Telling stories and anecdotes Smear | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Where might you see this type of information being shared? How would you verify the information in these posts? Are some posts likely to be more trustworthy than others? |
| <p>Quotes from family and friends</p>  <p>Oh, you should totally vote for apple. I heard that the apple industry pumps \$29 million dollars into our city's economy. I want to support that.</p> | <p>Anecdotes from friends and families about the election.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong emotional language Presenting evidence Contradicting evidence Telling stories and anecdotes | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> How persuasive would you find information like this from friends and family? Where do you think these people would have obtained this information? How would you respond to these quotes if they were said to you? |



ACTIVITY 2: Creating your own election material

Once they have identified and discussed the different sources of election material, students will be asked to produce their own election material to convince their fellow Democracy City citizens to vote for a specific fruit candidate. Students can create posters, flyers or digital mediums to create their material.

Students will need to consider:

- Which candidate are they going to support?
- What message are they trying to convey? Is it a positive message, a negative campaign or factual information?
- What medium they will pick to convey their message?
- Which techniques are most effective for that medium?
- Does their material need to be authorised? Check out [this AEC video](#) to find out more about authorisations. More [information](#) can be found on the AEC website.

Some examples of materials may include:

- a campaign poster
- political flyers
- a TV advertisement
- an online video
- a social media post such as visual image or short video/reel
- an opinion or newspaper article.



ACTIVITY

Media Literacy and Elections: DemocraCity Fruit Election

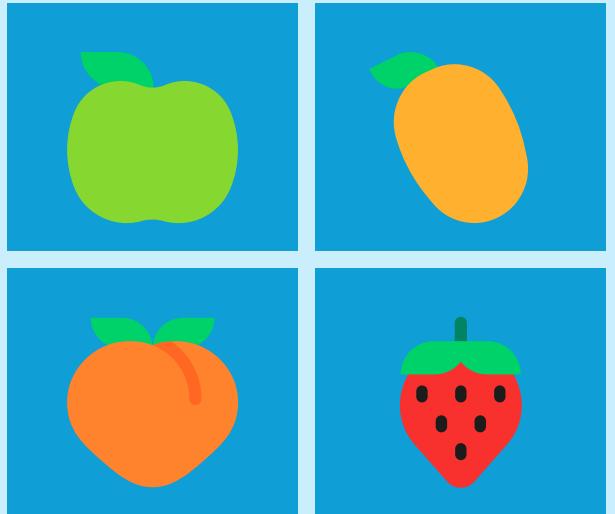
Background

DemocraCity is conducting a 'DemocraCity fruit election' using a preferential voting system to determine the official fruit of DemocraCity.

Four options are on the ballot as campaigns launch to persuade citizens on why their fruit should be made the official DemocraCity fruit.

The four fruit candidates are:

- Apple
- Mango
- Peach
- Strawberry



ACTIVTY 1: Analysing media sources

You are a citizen of DemocraCity voting in the upcoming fruit election. Before you can vote, you need to make sure you have all the information you need to make an informed vote.

There are six sources of information. Using your analytical skills and some healthy scepticism, try and answer the following questions:

- Where might you see this source of information?
- Who produced the information?
- What is the information's aim or agenda?
- What techniques are being used to persuade you?
- How might this information influence a citizen when they go to vote?



ACTIVITY 2: Creating your own electoral information

Once you have identified and discussed the different sources of election information, you may have a fruit candidate in mind you wish to support.

Using the techniques and mediums you have identified in the DemocraCity game and from analysing the fruit election information, use your skills to create a piece of electoral material in support of a fruit candidate of your choice.

Your job will be to persuade your fellow DemocraCity citizens and other classmates to vote for your preferred fruit.

When creating your material, consider:

- What medium will best convey your message?
- Is the medium appropriate for endorsing a candidate?
- Which techniques are most effective for that medium?
- Does your material need to be authorised? Check out [this AEC video](#) to find out more about authorisations.

Some examples of materials may include:

- a campaign poster
- political flyers
- a TV advertisement
- an online video
- a social media post such as visual image or short video/reel
- an opinion or newspaper article.



ACTIVITY

Media literacy and elections: How-to-vote card

VOTE 1

VOTE MANGO

How to vote for mango this election:

**DemocraCity Election
Ballot Paper**

DemocraCity
Fruit Election for DemocraCity

Number the boxes from 1 to 4 in
the order of your choice

4 Apple

1 Mango

2 Peach

3 Strawberry

SAMPLE BALLOT

Remember... number every box to make your vote count

Put a 1 in the box next to mango and then number each other box as shown on this example ballot paper.

A vote for mango is a vote:

- for more tropical fruits in DemocraCity
- to support local families by keeping the mango industry alive and thriving
- for the sweetest fruit representing our city

Authorised by the Mango 4 DemocraCity Campaign, DemocraCity



ACTIVITY

Media literacy and elections: Campaign flyer

**Why are all
the smart,
savvy people
voting apple?**

The answer is simple:

- Apples have amazing health and nutritional benefits! You'll feel younger, happier and healthier eating apples!
- Last year, the apple industry contributed \$29 million to the DemocraCity economy.
- Apples are high in Vitamin C, potassium and are rich in fibre.

Make the **smart** choice this election

Vote 1 Vote Apple

Authorised by the DemocraCity Apple Campaign, DemocraCity



ACTIVITY

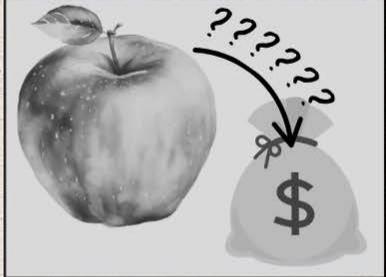
Media literacy and elections: Newspaper article

The DemocraCity Times
Since 1897 - News that matters to you

ROTTEN TO THE CORE: The Apple Industry Exposed

Janet Frost
Lead Investigative Reporter and Editor-in-Chief

A DemocraCity Times investigation has uncovered shocking new evidence about the apple industry which presents serious questions for their claimed benefits to the DemocraCity economy.



With the DemocraCity Fruit Election underway, campaigns are vying for voter attention as pre-polls commence next week. Voting is compulsory with fierce campaigning already being seen in the streets of DemocraCity with how-to-vote cards, campaign flyers and corflutes on street corners.

A key claim by the apple campaign throughout the election has been the economic benefits of the fruit to DemocraCity, claiming that, "Apples have contributed \$29 million to the DemocraCity economy." DemocraCity Times have uncovered damning accounting and tax records which reveal that most of the \$29 million dollar profit claimed by the apple campaign to benefit the DemocraCity economy has instead been profits made elsewhere.

A spokesperson for the peak body of the apple industry has stated while the figures were "...a mix of profits across the region which includes DemocraCity...", they clarified that "the apple industry employs over 400 locals in the picking, production and delivery of apple products throughout DemocraCity. That's double the next nearest fruit."

Fruit industry experts have pointed out to DemocraCity Times that while apples do contribute a part of the DemocraCity economy, the stated claim of \$29 million dollars would be nearly impossible to reach as the DemocraCity climate is not suited for large scale apple growing.

The peach and strawberry campaigns have leapt on this report, highlighting how apples do not contribute as much as they claimed to the DemocraCity economy and encouraged voters to support their fruits which contribute a proven, tangible benefit to the community. Verified reporting from DemocraCity Times have confirmed the peach and strawberry industries have contributed \$11 million and \$14 million dollars respectively to the DemocraCity economy.

The \$29 million dollar statistic has been one of several mis and disinformation claims being circulated. Earlier this week, a post online suggested that votes in pencil were being erased. The AEC has confirmed ballot papers are never left unattended adding "pencils are provided as they do not smudge when a ballot paper is folded, they can be stored and re-used from one event to the next without drying out like pens do."

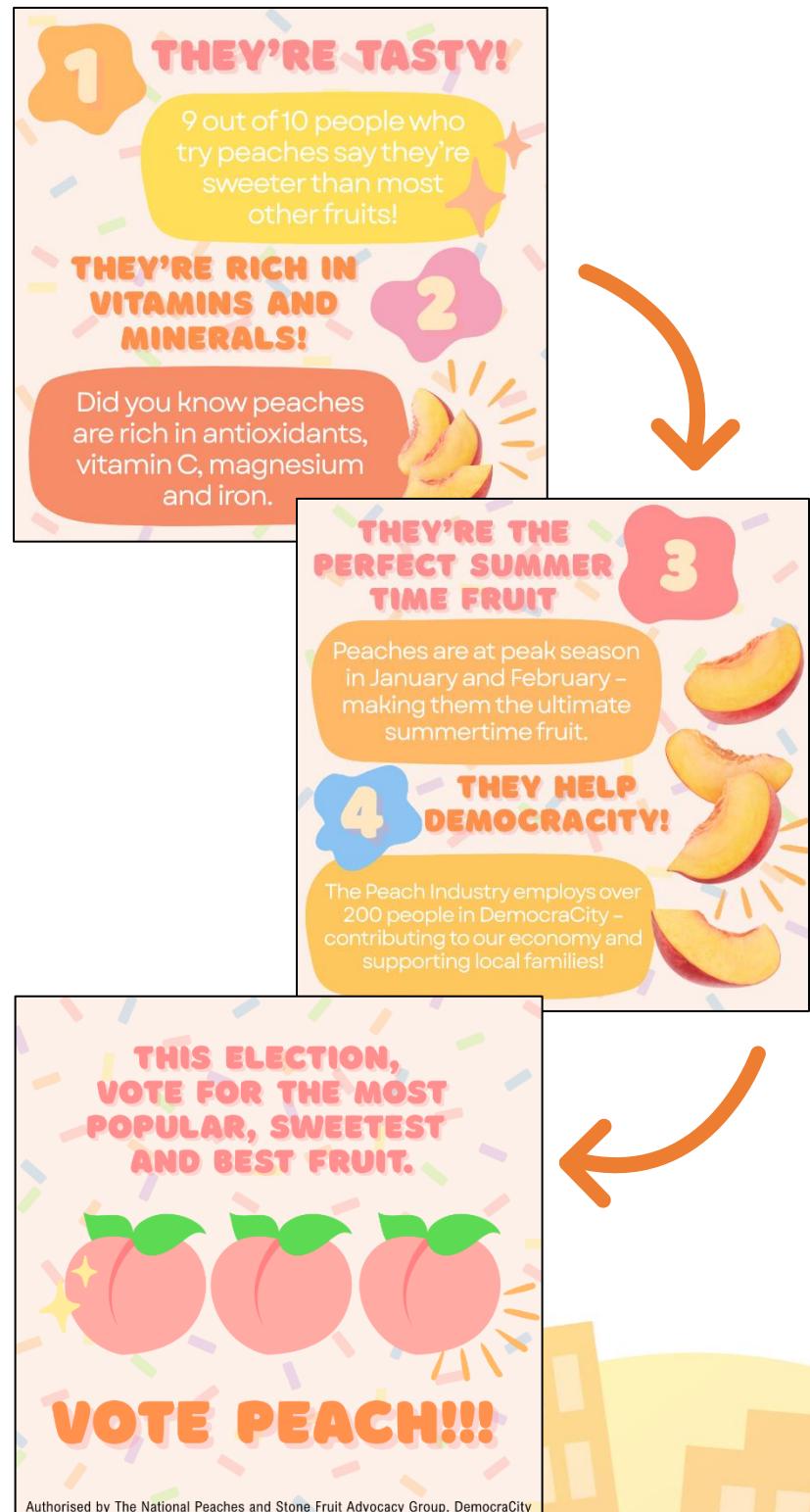
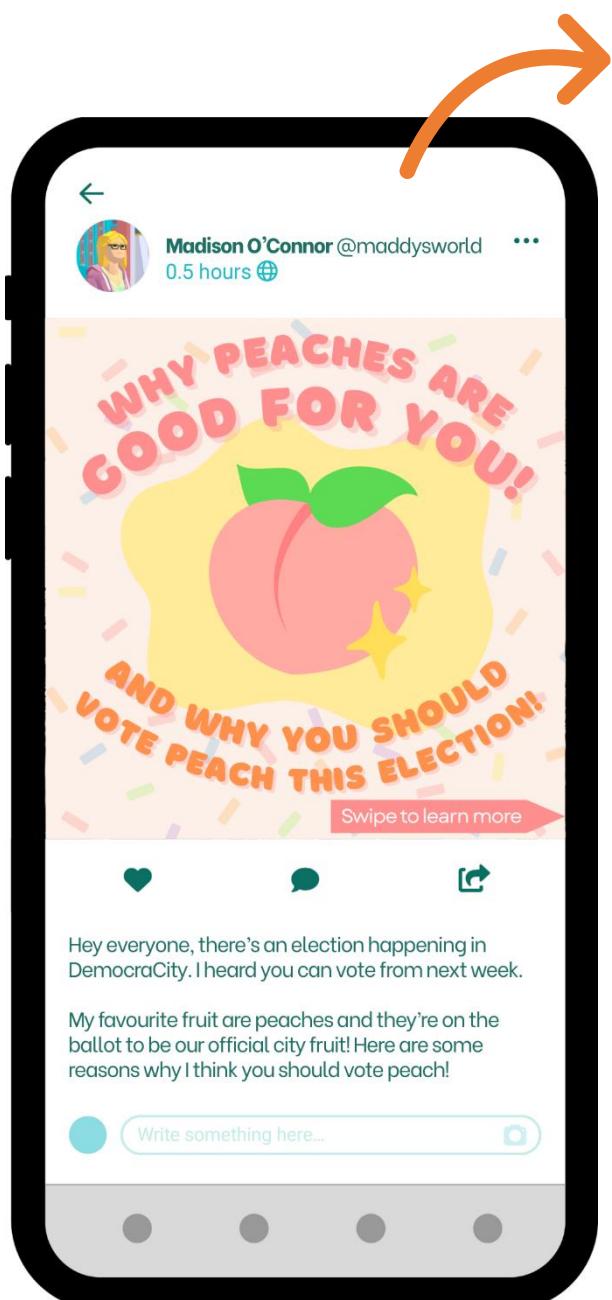
Voters are permitted to bring their own pen to mark the ballot paper with if they wish.

The campaign continues.



ACTIVITY

Media literacy and elections: Social media post





ACTIVITY

Media literacy and elections: Social media text posts



Callum's Vlogs (New vlogs everyday!) 📹 📹 📹
@calebvlogs

I've been telling everyone for years: mangos are the new super foods. Rich in nutrients and vitamins. That's where my vote will be this election. It's what all the smart gym-goers are doing. #votemango



The Official DemocraCity Apple Campaign
Political campaign
@applesfordemocracy ✅

Last year, apples contributed \$29 million to the DemocraCity economy. The choice is clear. #vote1 #voteapple



The Anti Berry Brigade
@theantiberrybrigade

Make no mistake, if we elect Strawberries, next they will outlaw all stone fruit.

It's not very merry, don't vote strawberry.



me and my tin foil hat
@meandmyinfoilhat

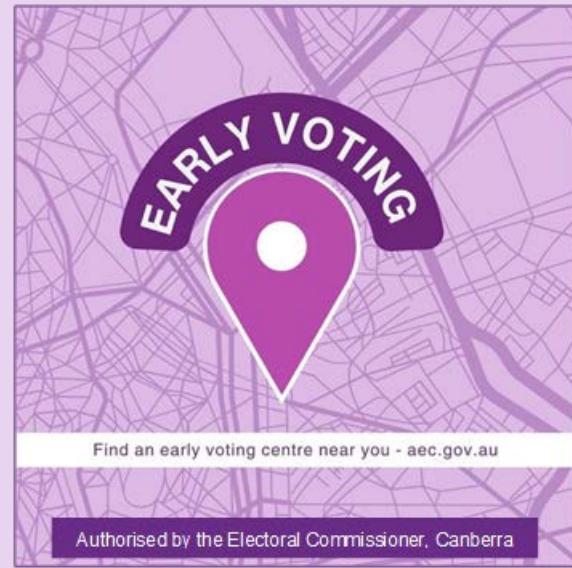
THE ELECTION IS RIGGED – a friend told me the vote counters rub out the pencil marks on the ballots. #WAKEUPPEOPLE



Australian Electoral Commission ✎
@AusElectoralCom ✅

Pre-poll voting starts next week in DemocraCity.

Make sure to number every box on your ballot paper this upcoming fruit election for your vote to count.



Authorised by the Electoral Commissioner, Canberra



Janet Frost – Editor-in-chief
at **The DemocraCity Times**
@jfrost_democracytimes ✅

In this week's [@democracytimes](#) investigation, the Apple Industry's misleading claims exposed and why DemocraCity received little of the \$29 million claimed. #DemocraCityElection



ACTIVITY

Media literacy and elections: Quotes from friends and family



Sally
Local dog walker

Oh, you should totally vote for apple.
I heard that the apple industry
pumps \$29 million dollars into our
city's economy.
I want to support that.



Mr Wilson
Next door neighbour

Someone told me that they saw
vote counters rubbing
out people's votes.
Did you hear anything about that?



Fredrick
Friend

I heard the people on that Strawberry
campaign want to ban all stone fruit.
It seems too risky to put
strawberry at #1.



Cass
Friend

I'm not 100% sure which fruit to vote
for this election. I know I don't want
mango to win but I can't pick between
apples, strawberries or peaches.



Aunty Bell
Family member

I'm disappointed that they didn't have
my favourite fruit, pears, on the ballot
paper. I think I'll put apples first since
that's the closest to pears.



Tyler
Friend

I am a big fan of tropical fruits, so
voting mango is a no brainer.

MODULE

Counting declaration votes

This module tasks students to conduct a preliminary scrutiny of provisional and postal ballots. DemocraBot guides learners through an entitlement and enrolment check where students must engage with authentic AEC processes, including checking the details on voter envelopes. Learners are then guided through an outposted centre where they are witness to envelopes being opened and the start of fresh scrutiny.



Learning outcomes

By the end of the first module, students will:

- Recall the AEC provides declaration votes as a means to increase accessibility.
- Recall that the AEC checks the entitlement of voters to make a declaration vote
- Recall instances where a declaration vote will be issued.



Suggested extension application activities:

UNIT OF WORK: Beyond the ballot box – Exploring declaration voting

The linked unit includes these suggested learning activities

- Students assume the role of election consultants, public educators, or policy analysts to explore the purpose of declaration voting and how it facilitates electoral access.



Key questions

1. How do declaration votes help increase accessibility and participation in elections?

Answer: They allow eligible voters who cannot be found on the electoral roll to affirm their eligibility and cast a vote which ensures broader inclusion in the democratic process.

Beyond the ballot box – exploring declaration voting

**DEMOCRACY MODULE**

Counting declaration votes

**KEY CONCEPT**

Citizenship

**RELATED CONCEPTS**

- **Participation** – systems that enable inclusive access to voting.
- **Processes** – electoral procedures and checks.
- **Equity of access** – Ensuring fairness and rights for all eligible voters.



Overarching questions

How does declaration voting support electoral participation in Australian elections?

Inquiry questions:

Factual – What is declaration voting and when is it used in Australia?

Conceptual – How do voting procedures affect the integrity and inclusivity of elections?



Learning outcomes

By the end of the activities, students will:

- Explain the role of declaration votes in ensuring voters have a range of options for casting their vote.
- Communicate civic understanding through reports, strategy proposals, or campaign messaging.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of current declaration voting methods in providing access while maintaining integrity.



Suggested extension learning experiences and activities:

Students assume the role of election consultants, public educators, or policy analysts. They will:

- Explore the purpose, process and implications of declaration voting in Australia. For more information: [Understanding Declaration Voting in Australia-supporting resource for teachers](#).
- Assess the role of declaration voting in ensuring electoral access while safeguarding trust and integrity in the process.

Section continues next page... 

Continued from previous page... ↗

- Design a policy, recommendation, or public information campaign to improve accessibility, accuracy, or voter confidence.
- Present via infographic, written policy brief, video pitch, or community flyer—tailored to the intended audience.

Beyond the ballot box - Suggested assessment rubric

| Criteria | Level 1-2 | Level 3-4 | Level 5-6 | Level 7-8 |
|---|--|--|--|--|
| Criterion A: Knowing and understanding Describes the purpose, process, and context of declaration voting in Australia. | Demonstrates limited understanding; uses few relevant terms or concepts. | Demonstrates basic understanding with some relevant information and terminology. | Demonstrates sound understanding with accurate descriptions and civic relevance. | Demonstrates thorough understanding with insightful connections across process, purpose, and democratic context. |
| Criterion B: Investigating Explores electoral access, voter legitimacy, and challenges using evidence. | Investigates superficially; limited analysis or source use. | Investigates with some structure; uses partially relevant sources or examples. | Investigates effectively; interprets data or scenarios to draw thoughtful conclusions. | Investigates comprehensively; evaluates implications with well-supported reasoning and impartial evidence. |
| Criterion C: Communicating Presents findings and strategy clearly and appropriately for task and audience. | Communication lacks clarity, organisation, or appropriate format. | Communicates with some structure; presentation meets basic expectations. | Communicates effectively with clear organisation, format, and civic terminology. | Communicates persuasively, demonstrating structure, accuracy, and audience awareness through strategy or campaign. |
| Criterion D: Thinking critically Evaluates declaration voting's role in electoral access and legitimacy; proposes improvements. | Offers limited evaluation; ideas may be underdeveloped or unsupported. | Reflects with some insight; proposals may lack depth or feasibility. | Evaluates thoughtfully with reasoned recommendations grounded in evidence. | Evaluates critically and impartially; presents innovative, feasible, and well-supported improvements with civic awareness. |



EXPLAINER

Understanding Declaration Voting in Australia – supporting resource for teachers

A briefing on purpose, process, and implications according to AEC guidelines

1. Purpose of Declaration Voting

Declaration voting exists to uphold the principle of universal suffrage, the right to vote, in Australia's compulsory voting system. It ensures that eligible voters who are not able to cast an ordinary vote at their designated polling place on election day can still participate in federal elections.

Key reasons declaration voting is used:

- Voter is outside their enrolled division (absent voting)
- Voter is overseas or interstate
- Voter is unable to attend polling places due to illness, disability, or remoteness
- Voter needs to vote early (pre-poll or postal)
- Voter requires anonymity (e.g. silent electors)
- This mechanism supports electoral inclusion and accessibility, particularly for mobile populations and those facing barriers to in-person voting.

2. Process of Declaration Voting

Declaration votes are cast using a special envelope that includes a voter declaration to confirm their eligibility. The process varies slightly depending on the type:

| Type of declaration vote | Description |
|--------------------------|--|
| Postal Vote | Voter applies in advance and receives their ballot papers by mail. They must complete the declaration and return before the deadline to be counted. |
| Pre-Poll Vote | A vote before election day at designated early voting centres. If the voter is outside their enrolled electoral division, it is treated as declaration vote. |
| Absent Vote | Cast on election day at a polling place outside the voter's enrolled electoral division. |
| Provisional Vote | Used when a voter's name cannot be found on the certified list (the electoral roll). |
| Silent Elector Vote | For voters whose address is protected it ensures anonymity. |



Processing steps:

1. Voter completes ballot papers and declaration envelope.
Ballot papers are placed inside the envelope to maintain secrecy of the vote.
2. AEC verifies the declaration against the electoral roll.
3. Once validated, the envelope is opened, and the ballot papers are included in the count.
4. Invalid or incomplete declarations cannot be included in the count.

This process is governed by the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*, which outlines strict procedures to ensure integrity and transparency.

3. Implications for Electoral Integrity and Administration

While declaration voting enhances accessibility, it introduces several challenges:

Administrative Complexity

- Declaration votes require manual verification and handling.
- Counting can be delayed, often continuing for days after polling.
- Increases cost and workload for electoral authorities.

Ballot Secrecy Concerns

- Postal votes are cast outside controlled environments, which could have potential ballot paper secrecy or voter coercion risks.

Rising Usage and Reform Pressure

- Growth in declaration voting reflects societal shifts (mobility, convenience).
- AEC has proposed reforms, such as treating in-division pre-poll votes as ordinary votes to streamline processing.

Civic and Educational Relevance

Declaration voting is a vital tool for electoral inclusion, but its complexity makes it a rich topic for civic education.

Exploring it can:

- Highlight the balance between access and integrity
- Encourage informed participation
- Foster understanding of electoral logistics and reform debates

Sources and Further Reading

- [AEC Research Report on Declaration Voting](#)

Referendum

In this module, learners explore the process of changing the Australian Constitution through a referendum. Several results from past referendums are used to reinforce understanding. Students are asked to determine if an historic referendum was approved or rejected.



Learning outcomes

By the end of the first module, students will:

- Recognise the Australian Constitution is an important legal document that sets rules for how Australia is governed.
- Recall the purpose of a referendum.
- Identify how to vote in a referendum.
- Recall what is needed for a referendum to result in a change to the Australian Constitution.



Suggested extension application activities:

UNIT OF WORK: Changing the rules together – exploring referendums

- Students propose constitutional “amendments” relevant to school life.
- Conduct a classroom referendum using [Running a referendum - Guide for teachers](#). Reflect on the outcome and the process including an analysis of the double majority.



Supplementary links with AEC resources

Links to other AEC education and information resources:

- [Remote voting in a referendum - YouTube](#)
- [Completing a referendum ballot paper - YouTube](#)
- [How a referendum is passed – YouTube](#)
- [The double majority - YouTube](#)

Changing the rules together – exploring referendums and constitutional change in Australia



DEMOCRACY MODULE

Referendums



KEY CONCEPT

Constitutional change



RELATED CONCEPTS

- **Public decision making** – Exercised through voting in referendums.
- **Participation** – Citizens' role in shaping national decision-making.
- **Processes** – Procedures governing change in democratic systems.



Overarching questions

How can citizens shape constitutional change in Australia? Why are informed participation and broad consensus important in this process?

Inquiry questions:

Factual – What is a referendum and how is a constitutional change proposed in Australia?

Conceptual – Why is a double majority required to change the Constitution?



Learning outcomes

By the end of the activities, students will:

- Explain the framework and procedures involved in Australian referendums.
- Investigate historical referendum outcomes and explain the role of the double majority.
- Communicate civic concepts through structured formats like debates, presentations and mock electoral activities.
- Evaluate the strengths and limitations of referendums as tools for democratic change.



Suggested extension learning experiences and activities:

- Investigate [historical referendums](#) and in small groups develop a summary of the topic, the result obtained and what you consider the effect it had on Australia.
- Students propose constitutional “amendments” relevant to school life: Proposing a change - referendum intro activity.

Section continues next page...

Continued from previous page... 

- Conduct a school referendum using the guide provided. Reflect on the outcome and process including an analysis of the double majority.

Beyond the ballot box - Suggested assessment rubric

| Criteria | Level 1-2 | Level 3-4 | Level 5-6 | Level 7-8 |
|---|---|--|---|---|
| Criterion A: Knowing and understanding Identifies procedures and terms related to referendums, the Constitution, and the double majority. | Demonstrates limited knowledge of civic structures and processes. | Demonstrates basic understanding with some relevant facts. | Demonstrates sound understanding with accurate terminology and clear connections. | Demonstrates thorough understanding with insightful explanations and connections across legal and historical contexts. |
| Criterion B: Investigating Researches historical referendums, eligibility requirements, and implications of the double majority. | Investigation lacks clarity; sources may be unclear or minimal. | Investigation uses some relevant sources; draws basic conclusions. | Investigation is structured and effective; uses reliable sources and thoughtful analysis. | Investigation is critical and comprehensive; synthesizes multiple perspectives and evaluates the impact of constitutional change. |
| Criterion C: Communicating Explains civic processes through mock campaigns, referendum guides, or presentations. | Communication is unclear; ideas may lack organisation or depth. | Communication shows basic organisation and appropriate format. | Communication is coherent and well-structured; conveys civic concepts effectively. | Communication is clear, engaging, and informative; demonstrates civic literacy and persuasive impact. |
| Criterion D: Thinking critically Evaluates the referendum process, including effectiveness, accessibility, and outcomes. | Offers limited evaluation or reflection. | Reflects with some insight; draws basic comparisons. | Reflects thoughtfully; evaluates strengths and limitations with reasoned judgement. | Evaluates critically and impartially; proposes informed recommendations and demonstrates nuanced civic reasoning. |



ACTIVITY

Running a referendum – guide for teachers

This guide is to help support teachers conduct a referendum at their school. This can either be done after completing the activity 'Proposing a change' or by using the included example topic.



Materials:

- Floor set up map
- Ballot box
- [Tally board](#) (located under 'Classroom resources' on the DemocraCity website)
- Ballot papers (either [blank](#) to include your topic or '[Blazer](#)')



Important to highlight

FOR STUDENTS

When sharing ideas and opinions it's important to make sure we are all responding respectfully to each other. Differences in opinion make this more interesting so make sure you are respectful of the person with whom you're speaking. Be sure to listen carefully and not just wait to speak.



Process

Select the example topic:

- **Either:** The proposed change we decided on in our 'Proposing a change' activity was _____.
- **Or:** The proposed change we will be voting on is whether students should wear blazers to and from school.



Important to highlight

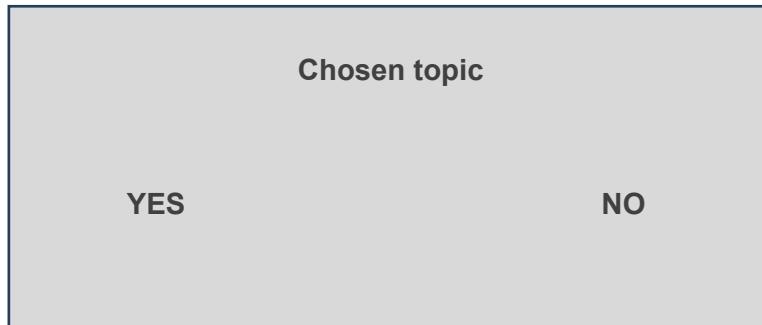
FOR STUDENTS

Not everyone will feel the same way about this proposal. To vote in this referendum we will need to know the arguments for and against (or the YES and the NO arguments)

TEACHERS NOTE: You will know whether it's best to let students choose their own side or to assign them to YES or NO.



On a whiteboard, write the chosen topic with YES and NO below as in the following diagram. Discuss the arguments and summarise below the appropriate 'side'.



Example diagram: Whiteboard for YES and NO arguments

Instructions for students



FOR STUDENTS

Now that you understand the arguments, it's important to know how to complete the ballot paper correctly. For your vote to count in this referendum, you need to make sure that you follow the instructions.

If you agree with the change, you will write 'Yes'. If you disagree with the change, you will write 'No'.



Preparing to vote

Setting up the polling place:

- You will need a desk to distribute ballot papers, a place for students to vote in secret (voting screens) and a ballot box. You can choose student representatives to work as polling officials, or you can do this yourself. You will need officials to distribute ballot papers and one to guard your ballot box.



Instructions for students

FOR STUDENTS

In a real referendum, the polling officials at the desk will ask you three questions:

- What is your name?
- What is your address? and
- Have you voted before in this referendum?

Today in our referendum, we will just be asking "Have you voted before in this referendum?".

Once the polling official gives you a ballot paper, you will take it to the voting screens where you will vote in private. After you have filled in your ballot paper, you will put it here in the ballot box.



Now you can direct students to vote, making sure each student receives only one ballot paper and that they all have the opportunity to vote in secret. When everyone has voted, you can proceed with the next step.



Instructions for students

FOR STUDENTS

Everyone has voted and the polls are closed. We now need to count the vote to find out if our proposal has been approved or not.

There are a couple of ways you may choose to complete this step.

- You can bring all classes together and complete the count, one class at a time and enter the results on the [tally board](#).
- Teachers can count their own class results privately and share with other teachers to each complete the count with their own classes. If you choose this method, you will enter your YES and NO results on the tally board before entering the results of the other classes.
- Place the YES and NO signs on the floor behind which the ballot papers will be sorted. Ask a student polling official to sit behind each sign (facing the class). You can also have scrutineers stand behind them to watch the count.



Script for students

FOR STUDENTS

You probably remember from playing DemocraCity that for a referendum to be passed and the Constitution to be changed you need a double majority. A double majority is when at least four out of six states vote YES and more than half the voters in Australia also vote YES. We will need a double majority for our referendum to be passed, and our proposal acted upon. We have (number of classes) participating so we need at least (more than half) of the classes to vote YES.

Polling officials are now going to count the ballot papers for our referendum. Scrutineers, watch carefully and make sure the polling officials are not making any errors. You need to check each ballot paper and place the YES ballot papers behind the correct sign. If you see an informal ballot paper, give it to me and I'll put it aside to be counted separately. (Teacher note: we won't record these on the tally board however you can reference them in the analysis of results.)

Now that the sort is finished, polling officials pick up your ballot papers and count each one separately onto the floor in a pile in front of you. Make sure that the scrutineer can see and agrees with the total number of votes. If the scrutineer disagrees, they can say "Challenge", and I'll come and check.



[Once the count is complete]

YES

Polling official for the YES vote, how many ballot papers do you have?

Scrutineer, do you agree? (Write this number on the tally board in the YES column for your class.)

NO

Polling official for the NO vote, how many ballot papers do you have?

Scrutineer, do you agree?

[Write this number on the tally board in the NO column for your class.]

Is there a majority in favour for this class?

[Write YES or NO as appropriate on the tally board.]

Is there a majority of voters in a majority of classes in favour of the proposal? (For example, if you have 6 classes participating you need 4 to have voted in favour.)

[Write YES or NO as appropriate on the tally board.]

[Tally 'School results']

Has a double majority been achieved? Has the proposal been approved?



INFORMAL VOTES: These votes, didn't follow the instructions and so couldn't be counted. These voters missed their opportunity to have their say in our referendum. Any informal votes could also impact the outcome of the referendum decision itself. For these reasons, it's so important to follow the instructions on your ballot papers.



Conclusion of voting

Depending on the result of your referendum, your classes will have either voted to approve the proposal or not. Take these results and action if you've decided to conduct a referendum on a topic relating to school life.

You can explain that this is the process required for altering the Australian Constitution by referendum. For a change to be made, a double majority is required, at least 4 out of 6 states, as well as a majority of Australians, need to vote Yes.

Referendum floor set up plan

Below is a guide on how to set up your classroom for counting during your classroom referendum.



TALLY BOARD

Set out YES/NO signs

Distribute the formal votes behind the YES or NO signs

YES

NO

SEATED PARTICIPANTS



ACTIVITY

Proposing a change



For teachers:

This activity provides an opportunity for students to consider the rules and choices experienced in their school life. 'Proposing a change' activity will take approximately 30 – 40 minutes. If you progress to running a referendum, you will need to commit an additional 90 minutes (approx.).

If choosing this activity, teachers must choose a change that can realistically be made. The results of the referendum must be binding and will be implemented. The question must be fair, easy to understand and have two choices where voters write 'yes' or 'no' on the ballot paper. Additionally, it's important to choose a topic that will receive a variety of responses (i.e. not all geared towards 'yes') to ensure both sides of the topic can be debated.

Some suggestions for change include:

- an item for sale or special occasion choices at the canteen
- addition of 15 minutes reading time etc after lunch
- introducing student recycling/composting
- introduction of a 'quiet zone' or low stimulation areas in the school.

Given the requirement for a double majority, this activity is best run across a whole year level (or school). See this [Double majority fact sheet](#) for more information.

Once a proposal has been selected by leadership, divide classes into small proposal teams – teams for the 'yes' vote and teams for the 'no' vote



Learning outcomes

By the end of the activities, students will:

- Understand the referendum process and how decisions can be made through direct democracy.
- Explore stakeholder perspectives and equitable representation.
- Participate in planning, campaigning, voting, and reflecting on outcomes.



Going further: research and campaigning

- **Optional:** you could run a 'research and campaigning' period where students are required to investigate stakeholders (e.g. students, teachers, administrators) and prepare an argument either for or against the proposal.



WORKSHEET

Proposing a change

For students



In our democracy, **everyone's view matters** — and that includes you!

In this activity, you'll step into the role of changemakers by exploring real-world issues within our school community.

Together, we'll brainstorm potential improvements that affect student life, wellbeing, and learning. A shortlist of suggested changes will be taken to the leadership team for a proposed change. Then, just like in national referendums, you'll help shape the future by having your say in a school-wide vote.

This is your chance to reflect on what matters to you, consider diverse perspectives, and experience democracy in action — starting right here at school.



BALLOT PAPER

Referendum on proposed Constitutional alteration

DIRECTIONS TO VOTER

Write "YES" or "NO" in the space provided opposite the question set out below.

A PROPOSED LAW:

Do you approve this proposed alteration?

WRITE "YES"
OR "NO"

This referendum scenario has been developed for education purposes and does not reflect Commonwealth policy.

AEC EDUCATIONAL USE ONLY

SAMPLE



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Referendum on proposed Constitutional alteration

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AEC EDUCATIONAL USE ONLY

SAMPLE

MODULE

Remote voting

This module helps students understand the ways in which the AEC provides access to voting in remote Australian communities. Students explore the remote voting teams' role in supporting voters across Australia. This module also examines community engagement, information given to voters, and the unique materials and equipment used to provide access to voting to remote and very remote communities.



Learning outcomes

By the end of the first module, students will:

- Recall the AEC works with local communities to enable voting in remote areas.
- Recognise the AEC carefully considers cultural factors when engaging with communities.
- Recall the process of voting in remote areas mirrors that of an ordinary polling place.



Suggested extension application activities:

UNIT OF WORK: Democracy across the distance

The linked unit includes these suggested learning activities:

Students assume the role of *electoral strategy consultants* for a fictional remote region in Australia and propose strategies to improve democratic access.



Key questions

1. When the AEC goes to remote areas to facilitate voting, what sort of activities does it do before it gets there?

Answer:

- Prepares equipment to access remote areas
- Contacts community elders and leaders beforehand when the AEC is coming and to make sure cultural factors are considered
- Engages local assistants to support the community and the AEC
- Provides information to share in the local community

2. Is voting in remote places the same as voting in the city or in a town?

Answer: The process is the same. Some specialised equipment is used so that it's easier to carry it into remote areas. E.g. soft ballot boxes. Providing voting services in remote areas is complex - scheduling and logistical arrangements require the AEC to be agile covering thousands of square kilometres to deliver services.

UNIT OF WORK

Democracy across the distance – Access and equity through remote voting in Australia



DEMOCRACY MODULE

Remote voting



KEY CONCEPT

Citizenship



RELATED CONCEPTS

- **Participation** – Ensuring all citizens can engage in democratic processes.
- **Equity** – Addressing geographic, cultural, and logistical barriers to voting.
- **Structure** – Electoral frameworks enabling inclusive access.



Overarching questions

How does remote voting support equitable democratic participation?

Inquiry questions:

Factual – How does remote mobile polling work in Australia?

Conceptual – Why is equitable access essential to a functioning democracy?



Learning outcomes

By the end of the activities, students will:

- Describe remote voting systems and polling methods used across Australia.
- Examine and explain barriers to participation including real-life challenges such as distance, language and cultural protocols.
- Evaluate remote voting practices and propose informed improvement to access.



Suggested extension learning experiences and activities:

Students assume the role of *electoral strategy consultants* for a fictional remote region in Australia in the 'Remote voting in Australia activity'.

Using what they've learned about mobile polling and associated challenges, they will:

- Describe and analyse the region's geography, population, and voting history.
- Identify potential barriers to electoral participation.
- Propose a practical and culturally respectful strategy to improve democratic access.
- Present their proposal via written report, infographic, or spoken pitch.

Democracy across the distance - Suggested assessment rubric

| Criteria | Level 1-2 | Level 3-4 | Level 5-6 | Level 7-8 |
|---|---|--|--|---|
| Criterion A: Knowing and understanding Explains remote voting processes, challenges, and civic structures. | Demonstrates limited understanding; few accurate facts or concepts. | Demonstrates basic understanding of remote voting; some relevant details included. | Demonstrates clear understanding with accurate use of terminology and examples. | Demonstrates thorough understanding; integrates concepts of equity, geography, and electoral structure fluently. |
| Criterion B: Investigating Researches barriers to participation and community context for strategic planning. | Investigation is superficial; limited use of sources or analysis. | Uses relevant sources with some interpretation; conclusions are basic. | Investigates effectively with thoughtful use of data and contextual reasoning. | Investigates comprehensively; analyses challenges in depth and applies findings strategically to the fictional region. |
| Criterion C: Communicating Presents strategy proposal with clarity, structure, and civic relevance. | Communication lacks organisation; message may be unclear or incomplete. | Communicates ideas with some structure; message is mostly clear. | Communicates clearly with logical organisation, appropriate format, and civic terminology. | Communicates persuasively with structure, precision, and creative problem-solving; format enhances understanding. |
| Criterion D: Thinking critically Evaluates remote voting access and proposes informed recommendations. | Reflection is limited; ideas may be underdeveloped or unsupported. | Reflects with some insight; recommendations are basic or general. | Reflects thoughtfully with reasoned proposals grounded in evidence. | Reflects critically and innovatively; recommendations are feasible, impartial, and demonstrate nuanced civic reasoning. |



ACTIVITY

Democracy across the distance: Remote voting activity

Background

Students assume the role of electoral strategy consultants for a fictional remote region in Australia. There are three community profiles to choose from: Democralsland, DemocraOutback and DemocraRural.



Materials:

- Remote voting activity profiles:
 - Democralsland
 - DemocraOutback
 - DemocraRural



Teacher Preparation:

- Read the teacher support notes on the next page.
- Print and share community profiles with instructions for students.



Activity Instructions

Students should select one or more of the communities and:

- Describe and analyse the community's characteristics including population, geography, education, cultural diversity, languages used, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander information and voting history.
- Identify potential barriers to electoral participation.
- Propose a practical and culturally respectful strategy to improve access and participation.
- Present your proposal in written report, infographic, or orally.



Teacher support notes

The background information below can be used for lesson planning and to help build connections between new and existing knowledge.

The AEC delivers a mobile voting service supporting electors who experience additional barriers to voting.

Remote mobile polling: Geographic remoteness is no barrier to supporting electors to cast their vote in a federal election. In the 2025 federal election almost 470 locations received an in-person voting service, utilising 77 teams across six states in remote and very remote areas of Australia. Teams travelled by road, air and sea visiting Indigenous communities, remote outstations, pastoral properties, and small townships. The AEC also engages local Indigenous people from within communities to promote voting opportunities, interpret and assist electors. Find out more in this [video](#).

Remote communities: Many communities in the Northern Territory, Western Australia, and Queensland and some islands are considered remote due to their isolation.

Examples of barriers in communities:

- **Geographic isolation:** May lead to limited access to essential services including voter information.
- **Transport:** A lack of public transport and the need to travel vast distances for basic needs can impact the ability to access services and opportunities e.g. access to a polling place.
- **Healthcare:** Rural and remote areas have fewer healthcare professionals and this may impact individuals that have chronic conditions e.g. some voters may have medical conditions that impact their ability to vote in person.
- **Technology:** Not everyone can afford a computer and have access to digital technology. Some people may not have the digital or literacy skills to use it.
- **Infrastructure:** Unreliable power supply may prevent voters from accessing online services like enrolling to vote or researching electoral information.
- **Socio-economic barriers:** Including limited employment opportunities and access to education opportunities. These barriers can restrict access to polling places and/or community voter education sessions.
- **Housing:** Overcrowding or homelessness e.g. see [voters with no fixed address](#) on the AEC website.
- **Environmental:** Areas that are vulnerable to natural disasters which can interfere with their ability to reach essential services e.g. floods, bushfires, cyclones, heatwaves, places cut off during 'wet seasons' or drought that can have significant economic impacts on agricultural communities.



Populations facing barriers:

- Elderly people.
- People with disabilities or health conditions.
- People experiencing homelessness.
- Indigenous communities.
- Refugee and migrant communities.
- Low-income households.

Obstacles voters may face:

- Access to election resources and information.
- Uncertainty about how to cast a formal vote.
- Literacy-related difficulties.
- Access to a polling booth.



ACTIVITY

Democracy across the distance

Background

You are assuming the role of electoral strategy consultants for a fictional remote region in Australia. There are three community profiles to choose from:

- Democralsland
- DemocraOutback
- DemocraRural

Using what you've learned about mobile polling and associated challenges through playing DemocraCity, now let's analyse a remote electorate profile to expand on what we've learned.



ACTIVITY 1: Analysing information and data

As an electoral strategy consultant, select one or more of the communities and:

- Describe and analyse the community's characteristics including population, geography, education, cultural diversity, languages used, and voting history.
- Identify potential barriers to electoral participation.
- Propose a practical and culturally respectful strategy to improve access and participation.
- Present your proposal in written report, infographic, or orally.



Historical barriers to participation

Each remote community has the following historical barriers you will need to think about when analysing:

- Originally only had access to postal voting.
- Mobile voting facilities were made available but only on election day, rather than in the in-person early voting period.
- Information in local media was often not up to date.
- More recently lack of reliable internet connectivity to access news, including election campaign information from political parties.



ACTIVITY

Democracy across the distance: Democralsland





ACTIVITY

Democracy across the distance: DemocraOutback

**Come visit
DemocraOutback
Experience outback Australia**

| Population 345 people | Median age 43 years old | First Nations population 297 people | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|---|------------|-----------------|--------------|---------|-----|-----------|------------|-----------|---|
| Hazards Annual floods and access roads may be closed for many weeks. Small airstrip is located near townsite. | Getting to and from DemocraOutback Buses are not available. Four-wheel-drive vehicles only and planes. Red dirt roads only. Nearest community does not have direct flights, layovers required. People living outside the community will require a permit to enter or conduct business. | | | | | | | | | | |
| Country of birth <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Country</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Australia</td> <td>92%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>South Africa</td> <td>1%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>UK</td> <td>2%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Not Stated</td> <td>5%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> | Country | Percentage | Australia | 92% | South Africa | 1% | UK | 2% | Not Stated | 5% | Voting history Voter turnout at last federal election 72% Informality rate (percentage of people who made an invalid vote) 17% |
| Country | Percentage | | | | | | | | | | |
| Australia | 92% | | | | | | | | | | |
| South Africa | 1% | | | | | | | | | | |
| UK | 2% | | | | | | | | | | |
| Not Stated | 5% | | | | | | | | | | |
| Distance and travel time to nearest city with services 700km Flights can take up to 18 hours with layovers | Main language spoken at home <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Language</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Kimberley Kriol</td> <td>43%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>English</td> <td>33%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Walajarri</td> <td>12%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Afrikaans</td> <td>1%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> | Language | Percentage | Kimberley Kriol | 43% | English | 33% | Walajarri | 12% | Afrikaans | 1% |
| Language | Percentage | | | | | | | | | | |
| Kimberley Kriol | 43% | | | | | | | | | | |
| English | 33% | | | | | | | | | | |
| Walajarri | 12% | | | | | | | | | | |
| Afrikaans | 1% | | | | | | | | | | |



ACTIVITY

Democracy across the distance: DemocraRural

Experience DemocraRural

Quick Facts

Population
744 people

Median age
47 years old

Distance and travel time to nearest city
500km
5 hours

Climate
Sunny and temperate winters, hot and dry summers.

Bushfire risks
Area prone to bushfires from November to April due to dry conditions.

More information

Public Transport
Long-distance bus service available to nearest major city.
Limited local bus and taxi service to surrounding small towns.
No air links available to nearest city, apart from occasional charter flights.

Country of birth



| Country | Percentage |
|-------------|------------|
| Australia | 38% |
| Not stated | 18% |
| Vietnam | 17% |
| India | 18% |
| Philippines | 6% |
| UK | 2% |

Main language spoken at home

| Language | Percentage |
|------------|------------|
| English | 60% |
| Vietnamese | 15% |
| Punjabi | 12% |
| Tagalog | 7% |
| Hindi | 6% |

Voting history
Voter turnout at last federal election: 84%

First Nations population
65 people

AEC
Australian Electoral Commission

99

Central Senate Scrutiny

This interactive game guides learners through the process of checking Senate ballot papers for formality after election night. It introduces the Central Senate Scrutiny (CSS) where Senate ballot papers are electronically scanned and processed. Through a real-world scenario, election officials demonstrate each step of the procedure. Players discover how Senate ballot papers are electronically scanned and counted, including how they are verified using electronic scanning 'double blind' checks. With DemocraBot as their guide, learners step into the role of analyst to explore and understand the scrutiny process firsthand.



Learning outcomes

By the end of the first module, students will:

- Recall that security practices of Central Senate Scrutiny impact integrity and transparency of the election.
- Recall the importance of integrity and security of ballot papers



Key takeaways

- **Every task matters:** From scanning to verification, each stage of the Senate ballot paper process plays a vital role in maintaining electoral integrity.
- **Security matters:** Robust security measures at Central Senate Scrutiny help ensure that the election process remains transparent and trustworthy.
- **Ballot paper integrity is essential:** Protecting the integrity and security of ballot papers is critical to upholding the democratic principles and public confidence in election outcomes.



Supplementary links with AEC resources

Links to other AEC education and information resources:

- [The Senate count: Check, then check again](#)
- [The Senate counting process](#)
- [Central Senate Scrutiny \(FAQs\)](#)



Key questions

1. Senate ballot papers are checked and counted twice. What are the two ways?
Answer: Electronically scanned and checked by a computer and then by a human operator. If there is a difference between the computer's check and the human operator's check, then it goes to another human operator.



Key questions

1. What is the document that sets the rules for how Australia is governed?
Answer: The Australian Constitution
2. What's the purpose of a referendum?
Answer: In a referendum, the Australian people are asked to vote on a change to the Constitution.
3. Do voters get choice of candidates in a referendum, or do voters select yes or no?
Answer: They select yes or no
4. What is needed for a referendum to 'pass' – for the change to be made?
Answer: A 'double-majority' – more than half (a majority) the voters in Australia need to vote yes. And more than half the voters in more than half the states must vote yes.

Key questions

The key questions in this section are designed to highlight the central ideas students should understand after completing the game module. Answers are provided to support teachers in guiding discussion, clarifying concepts, and responding to student enquiries with confidence.

| Module | Key questions |
|----------------|---|
| Enrolment | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What do you need to be able to enrol to vote? Answer:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 16 years old and an Australian citizen.2. Who can vote in a federal election? Answer:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Anyone who is 18 years old and enrolled to vote. |
| Representation | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What are the two houses of parliament and what colour are they? Answer:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• House of Representatives, green and Senate, red2. Does each electorate have the roughly the same number of voters or different? Answer:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Same. Even though some electorates cover a really big area and others a really small area, they all have roughly the same number of people in them.<p><i>Give an example from your state or use the following – “In the Northern Territory, Darwin (Solomon) is one electorate, but all of the rest of the Northern Territory (Lingiari)- a really large area - is one electorate. They are very different in size but they have a similar number of people.</i></p>3. Does each representative in the House of Representatives represent roughly the same number of people? Answer:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Yes, each member represents an electorate, which has roughly the same number of people.4. Does each Senator represent the same number of people? Or does representation work differently in the Senate? Answer:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Senators don't represent the same number of people. They represent states or territories. There are 12 Senators for each state, and the territories have 2 Senators each.<p><i>If students ask, ‘why do the territories only have two Senators?’: When the states agreed to federate, they agreed to have the same number of senators. The territories were created after the Constitution was written, so only have two each.</i></p> |

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| Voting options | <p>1. Do you have to vote at your local polling place on election day?</p> <p>Answer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No, there are many other ways you can vote in certain circumstances. <p>2. What are some reasons you might be able to vote before election day?</p> <p>Answer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some of the reasons include you are working on the day, you are going to be travelling, are not well or going to give birth. <p>3. Can you post your vote if you can't go to the polling place?</p> <p>Answer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes, you can. <p>4. Can you email your vote?</p> <p>Answer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No, you can't. |
| Nominations | <p>Nominations (level 1)</p> <p>1. Who can nominate to be in parliament? Do you need a qualification or some experience?</p> <p>Answer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australian citizens, 18 years or over and enrolled to vote. You don't need any special qualifications or experience. However, some people might not qualify such as people who are dual citizens. <p>2. Do you have to be part of a political party to nominate to be in Parliament?</p> <p>Answer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No, you don't. You can nominate to be part of a party, but you also can be an independent. <p>3. If you want to nominate, where should you go to get the right form?</p> <p>Answer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AEC website. <p>Ballot draw (level 2)</p> <p>1. Why do you think the ballot draw is done in the public?</p> <p>Answer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • So it's transparent and we can trust in the electoral system. <p>2. Is the order of candidates on the ballot paper random or determined by when candidates hand in their nomination papers?</p> <p>Answer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The order is random. It starts off with the order in which they handed it in and then a whole process takes place to make sure it's random. |

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| Election day | <p>Election day (level 1)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> What are the three questions voters are asked before being issued a ballot paper? Answer: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What's your full name? Where do you live? Have you voted in <i>this</i> election? What do you write on a House of Representatives ballot paper to vote? Answer: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write a number next to each candidate from your most preferred candidate to your least preferred. What are the two ways you can vote on a Senate ballot paper? Answer: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Either above the line for groups of candidates OR below the line for individual candidates. <p>Election day (level 2)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> What are some ways that people's votes are kept a secret? Answer: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Voting screens allow people to mark the ballot paper in secret. Voters drop their folded ballot papers into a sealed ballot box. Ballot papers don't have anything that can identify the voter. What are some of the things the AEC does to make sure votes aren't interfered with, that elections are fair and all votes count? Answer: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A ballot paper guard makes sure the ballot boxes are secure. Ballot boxes have secure seals with seal numbers. It's checked each day to make sure it's not been tampered with. When not in use, ballot papers are stored in 'Ballot paper secure zones' under the watch of the Office in Charge (OIC). Scrutineers – work for the candidates and can be in the polling place to observe. |
| Election night | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Are the following examples of ballot papers formal or informal? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not numbering all the boxes? [Answer: informal] Numbering all the boxes correctly, but drawing a cartoon on the ballot? [Answer: formal] |

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| | <p>2. What do we do in a first preference count?</p> <p>Answer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sort ballot papers into piles based on what the voter marked as their first preference – '1' - on the ballot paper. <p>3. What are some of ways that the voting count on election night is fair and transparent?</p> <p>Answer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scrutineers who represent candidates observing the vote, seals on the ballot boxes. |
| Distribution of Preferences | <p>1. What percentage of votes does a candidate need to reach an absolute majority?</p> <p>Answer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> more than 50%. <p>2. Does the candidate need to reach more than 50% on 'first preference' votes?</p> <p>Answer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No. First preference votes are those which the voter marked '1' next to the candidate. Candidates often don't get more than 50% of first preference votes. <p>3. What happens when no one reaches an absolute majority on first preferences?</p> <p>Answer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The candidate with the lowest first preference votes is excluded – or ruled out. Then that candidate's votes are distributed – or moved - to the other candidates. <p>4. How do you decide how the excluded candidate's votes are redistributed to other candidates?</p> <p>Answer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You check each ballot paper to see what the voter put as their second preference – number 2 on the ballot paper. You then move the votes from the excluded candidate to the candidate that had number 2 next to them. <p>5. What happens if the first candidate is excluded and none of the remaining candidates have an absolute majority?</p> <p>Answer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The same process of excluding the candidate with the fewest preferences happens until only two candidates remain. Mathematically, a candidate should have an absolute majority by this point. |
| Issuing votes | <p>1. What are the three mandatory questions voters get asked when being issued a ballot paper?</p> <p>Answer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is your name? What is your address? Have you voted before in this election? |

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| | <p>2. Why are these questions asked before voters are issued their ballot paper?</p> <p>Answer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You are asked your name to find your name on the electoral roll. You are asked your address to ensure it is the correct person and not someone else with the same name. The third question is a legal question. It is asked to make sure people are only voting once. After the election, the certified lists (where your name has been crossed off) are scanned looking for those who have not voted and to identify any who appear to have voted more than once, which will be investigated as part of maintaining electoral integrity. <p>3. What's a declaration vote?</p> <p>Answer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A declaration vote is issued if your name and/or address details cannot be found on the certified list at the polling place, or if your name has already been marked as having voted. Declaration votes ensure all voters who are entitled to vote are able to do so. |
| Australian democracy | <p>1. Today everyone who is an Australian citizen over 18 years of age and enrolled can vote. Was that always the case? Who could and couldn't vote?</p> <p>Answer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Until the reforms following the Eureka stockade, most people didn't have a say in how Australia was governed • Women couldn't vote until 1902 • Indigenous people couldn't vote until the 1960s • People 18-21 couldn't vote until 1973 <p>2. Today when everyone votes, they do it without anyone else knowing how they voted. Why do you think that is?</p> <p>Answer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before the secret ballot, other people could put pressure on someone or intimidate them to vote a particular way. It's important that everyone has their say – every vote counts! <p>3. What are the three levels of government in Australia?</p> <p>Answer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Federal, State/Territory and Local |
| Media literacy and being informed | <p>1. What are some of the people and places voters get information during an election?</p> <p>Answer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From the AEC, the media (newspapers, TV, radio), social media, friends and family, candidates and political parties <p>2. What is the best source of information about the election process?</p> <p>Answer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Australian Electoral Commission, the AEC. The AEC is an independent organisation that runs Australia's federal elections. They are independent of any political parties or candidates. |

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| | <p>3. What's the most important thing for voters to remember after receiving a lot of information and then going to vote?</p> <p>Answer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your vote is your choice. You can vote the way you want to in private. Carefully consider all the information you receive and decide who you want to vote for. |
| Counting declaration votes | <p>1. How do declaration votes help increase accessibility and participation in elections?</p> <p>Answer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They allow eligible voters who cannot be found on the electoral roll to affirm their eligibility and cast a vote which ensures broader inclusion in the democratic process. |
| Referendum | <p>1. What is the document that sets the rules for how Australia is governed?</p> <p>Answer: The Australian Constitution</p> <p>2. What's the purpose of a referendum?</p> <p>Answer: In a referendum, the Australian people are asked to vote on a change to the Constitution.</p> <p>3. Do voters get choice of candidates in a referendum, or do voters select yes or no?</p> <p>Answer: They select yes or no</p> <p>4. What is needed for a referendum to 'pass' – for the change to be made?</p> <p>Answer: A 'double-majority' – more than half (a majority) the voters in Australia need to vote yes. And more than half the voters in more than half the states must vote yes.</p> |
| Remote voting | <p>1. When the AEC goes to remote areas to facilitate voting, what sort of activities does it do before it gets there?</p> <p>Answer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepares equipment to access remote areas • Contacts community elders and leaders beforehand to let them know when they are coming and to make sure cultural factors are considered • Engages local assistants to support the community and the AEC • Provides information to share in the local community |

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| | <p>2. Is voting in remote places the same as voting in the city or in a town?</p> <p>Answer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The process is the same. Some specialised equipment is used so that it's easier to carry it into remote areas. E.g. soft ballot boxes. Providing voting services in remote areas is complex - scheduling and logistical arrangements require the AEC to be agile covering thousands of square kilometres to deliver services. |
| Central Senate Scrutiny | <p>1. At Central Senate Scrutiny, senate ballot papers are checked and counted twice. What are the two ways?</p> <p>Answer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electronically scanned and checked by a computer and then by a human operator. If there is a difference between the computer's check and the human operator's check, then it goes to another human operator to verify. |

Australian Curriculum

Australian Curriculum V.9 Matrix: Civics and Citizenship

The table below outlines summarised points of relevant curriculum content that relates to the DemocraCity game.

| | Year 5 | Year 6 | Year 7 |
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| Achievement Standards – excerpts from the Australian Curriculum v.9 | <i>Students explain the key values and features of Australia's democracy and how people achieve civic goals.</i> | <i>Students explain the roles of significant people, events and ideas that led to Australian Federation, democracy and citizenship.</i> <i>explain the key institutions, roles and responsibilities of Australia's levels of government, and democratic values and beliefs.</i> | <i>Students describe the key features of Australia's system of government.</i> <i>They explain the characteristics of Australian democracy.</i> |
| Knowledge & understanding | AC9HS5K06 the key values and features of Australia's democracy, including elections, and the roles and responsibilities of elected representatives. | AC9HS6K06 the key institutions of Australia's system of government, how it is based on the Westminster system, and the key values and beliefs of Western democracies. AC9HS6K07 the roles and responsibilities of the 3 levels of government in Australia. | AC9HC7K01 the key features of Australia's system of government, including democracy, the Australian Constitution, responsible government and federalism. AC9HC7K02 the characteristics of Australia's democracy. |
| Related DemocraCity modules | Enrolment Voting options Nominations Election day Election night Distribution of preferences Media literacy Australia's democracy Remote voting Central Senate Scrutiny | Enrolment Representation Election day Election night Distribution of preferences Media literacy Australia's democracy Remote voting | Enrolment Representation Voting options Election day Election night Distribution of preferences Media literacy Australia's democracy Remote voting Central Senate Scrutiny |

| | Year 8 | Year 9 | Year 10 |
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| Achievement Standards – excerpts from the Australian Curriculum v.9 | <p><i>Students explain how Australians are informed about and participate in their democracy.</i></p> <p><i>They describe the roles of political parties and elected representatives in Australian government.</i></p> | <p><i>Students analyse the role of the Australian Constitution, the federal system of government, and the process and reasons for constitutional change.</i></p> <p><i>explain policy development and legislative processes in Australia's democracy.</i></p> | <p><i>Students compare the key features and values of Australia's system of government to those of another system of government.</i></p> <p><i>They identify and explain challenges to a resilient democracy and a cohesive society in Australia and/or in our region or globally.</i></p> |
| Knowledge & understanding | <p>AC9HC8K01 how Australians are informed about and participate in democracy.</p> <p>AC9HC8K02 the role of political parties and independent representatives in Australian democracy, including elections and the formation of governments.</p> | <p>AC9HC9K01 the role of the Australian Constitution in providing the basis for Australia's federal system of government and democratic processes, including institutions, and the process for constitutional change through a referendum.</p> <p>AC9HC9K02 the legislative processes through which federal government policy is shaped, developed and implemented.</p> | <p>AC9HC10K01 the key features and values of Australia's system of government compared with at least one other democratic or non-democratic system of government in the Asia-Pacific region.</p> <p>AC9HC10K05 the challenges to and ways of sustaining a resilient democracy and a cohesive society in Australia and/or in our region or globally.</p> |
| Related DemocraCity modules | Enrolment Voting options Ballot paper issuing Election day Election night Distribution of preferences Counting declaration votes Media literacy Australia's democracy Remote voting Central Senate Scrutiny | Enrolment Election day Election night Distribution of preferences Media literacy Remote voting Referendums Australia's democracy Counting declaration votes | Enrolment Voting options Election day Election night Distribution of preferences Media literacy Australia's democracy Counting declaration votes |

SOURCE: <https://v9.australiancurriculum.edu.au/>



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