

Constitutional Referendums

Post visit activities for students
based on Bloom's Taxonomy



How is the Australian Constitution changed?

Knowing * Understanding * Applying
Analysing * Creating * Evaluating

The Constitution provides a framework for government in Australia. The only way it can be altered is by the citizens of Australia voting to change it. Results of a Constitutional Referendum must be carried out by the Parliament.

Knowing

- Draw and label a pie graph to show how many referendum questions Australians have voted on since 1901, and how many were passed. Were they all conducted at the same time as a Federal Election?
- Illustrate a timeline for the development of the Australian Constitution.
- Compile a glossary of terms related to constitutional referendums. Eg. writ, plebiscite, constitution.

Let your electoral knowledge bloom!

Understanding

- Design a poster to support the Yes or No argument for a previous referendum question.
- Explain why the referendum votes of people in the territories are considered differently to those in the states. Do you agree/disagree? Why?
- Examine why Australia has held plebiscites or national polls in the past. Explain the difference between these processes and referendums.

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Applying

- Design a cover for the Australian Constitution. Consider its importance to our federal system of government.
- Develop a dynamic PowerPoint presentation to show the process of voting in a referendum.
- Choose a previous referendum topic, or devise your own. Choose music for an advertising campaign to support the Yes or No argument.

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Analysing

- Make a cartoon strip to show the process for changing the Australian Constitution.
- Imagine you are the Editor of your local newspaper. Write an editorial on how a Double Majority can be achieved in a referendum.
- Construct a PMI (plus, minus, interesting) chart to compare direct and indirect participation in making laws.

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Creating

- Design an attractive booklet highlighting the Yes and No cases for a previous change to the Australian Constitution, or devise your own referendum topic.
- Research the Constitutional Convention held in Canberra in 1998. Write and perform a role-play highlighting the arguments for and against a constitutional monarchy.
- Hypothesise on whether the territories should be included with the states in the Double Majority. Currently 4 of 6 states must achieve an absolute majority Yes vote. How might this work? Would it alter the balance of the Double Majority?

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Evaluating

- 'Australians are resistant to change.' Discuss this statement in relation to the referendum results over the last century.
- As a member of the general public you have an idea for a change to the Australian Constitution. Discuss the process you could undertake to instigate such a change.
- Compare and contrast the Australian Constitution to that of another democracy. Eg. United States of America, Great Britain. What, if any, provisions are included in their constitutions to allow constitutional change?



Your choice...
Yes? or No?

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Running a Referendum in your school

Your school may wish to hold a Referendum to
approve or change important rules.

Resources are available on our web site to help you.

Visit www.aec.gov.au/Education



Other useful pages on the AEC website

For more information about Referendums:

www.aec.gov.au/Elections/referendums/