



Citizenship

The Role of Government

This topic will develop students' awareness of the roles different levels of government have in Australia.

This topic is made up of five parts. You can present them one at a time or follow on depending on the needs of your students and the time you have available.

Learning Intentions

When students have finished this topic, they will be able to:

- Identify the three levels of government
- Identify the roles and responsibilities of each level of government
- Identify different government services in their community and who provides them
- Understand the process of elections

They will learn these skills by:

- Participating in a mock election
- Watching a video or presentation
- Completing worksheets

	What the students will do	What you will need before you start
Part 1 'What are the levels of government?'	Video and activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Butcher's paper, whiteboard or Smartboard • Copies of graphic organisers for each student • Computer with internet connection to show video
Part 2 'Where are the government services in my community?'	Group activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community services map from previous activity • Pens, pencils, textas etc
Part 3 'What is an election?'	Group activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer with internet connection to show presentation • Election process presentation • Butchers paper, whiteboard or a Smartboard. • Enrol to vote forms
Part 4 'What are the Australian political parties?'	Group activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer with internet connection for students to use for research • Butchers paper, whiteboard or a Smartboard. • Copies of political parties worksheet for each student • Political party presentation • AEC app to egenerate own ballot papers
Part 5 'How do I vote in an election?'	Role play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer with internet connection to show presentation • How to vote presentation • Copies of ballot papers for each student • The electoral roll of all student's names • Box to store all the ballots

Word list

government = the people who have the right to make decisions for a country or state or local area – they ‘represent’ (or stand in for) the people who voted for them

vote = to vote is to have a say in choosing your government – ‘one person, one vote’

election = where each group says what they will do for the people if they ‘win’ government (they ‘stand on a platform of ideas’); and where the group with the most votes ‘wins’ government (for that country, state or local area)

responsibilities = the things a person or group must do

jurisdiction = having the responsibility to make laws in an area

Part 1: What are the levels of government?

Objective – What do we want the students to know?

The purpose of this lesson is develop student’s awareness of the different levels of government in Australia.

Overview – How will they learn this?

Students will watch a short video and then discuss as a group the different levels of government.

Resources – What will I need?

- Butcher’s paper, whiteboard or Smartboard
- Copies of graphic organisers for each student
- Computer with internet connection to show video
<http://www.peo.gov.au/multimedia/videos.html>
 and click on “Three levels of government”.



Lesson plan – What do I need to do?

1. Introduce students to today’s lesson:
 What: about the levels of government in Australia
 How: watch a video
 Why: knowing the levels of government and what they control helps you to know what your politicians can change when voting
2. Hand out the graphic organiser worksheets to students.
 Depending on the literacy level of students, students can complete individually or in pairs.
3. Draw up the following grid on the board or butcher’s paper.

Level of government	Can make laws for:	Responsible for:
Federal		
State		
Local		

4. Ask students about the jurisdiction and responsibilities of each level of government outlined in the video. Fill in the table above with student input.
5. Possible answers:

<i>Level of government</i>	<i>Jurisdiction</i> <i>Can make laws for:</i>	<i>Responsibilities</i> <i>Responsible for:</i>
<i>Federal</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Defence</i> • <i>Immigration</i> • <i>Economy</i> • <i>Etc.</i> 	<i>All Australians</i>
<i>State</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Education</i> • <i>Health</i> • <i>Etc.</i> 	<i>Everyone who lives in or visits that state</i>
<i>Local</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Parks and reserves</i> • <i>Waste management</i> 	<i>Everyone who lives in or visits that council area</i>

6. Summary: end the lesson summing up that the three levels of government each have responsibilities for and are responsible for creating laws for different parts of Australia.

Part 2: Where are the government services in my community?

Objective – What do we want the students to know?

The purpose of this lesson is to develop student awareness of the government services in their community and the level of government (federal, state and local) they are responsible for.

Overview – How will they learn this?

Students will review the community services map they created outlined in the Community Services and identify the level each government organisation belongs to.

Resources – What will I need?

- Community services map from previous activity
- Pens, pencils, textas etc

Lesson plan – What do I need to do?

1. Introduce students to today's lesson:
What: identifying the levels government organisations in their community belong to
How: mapping the government organisations in their community
Why: being aware of the various government organisations makes it easier for students to access their services
2. Bring students attention to the previously completed community map. Explain that some of the community services are run by the government. Some are run by federal, state or local governments.
3. Researching community organisations: introduce the activity:
 - a. Research the organisations on their map
 - b. Find out whether they are government run
 - c. Find out whether they are paid for (funded) by the federal, state or local government (or a mix)

d. Add this information to the class map.

Show students some of the ways they can find this information, such as:

- asking (or phoning) employees
- looking for a short statement about ‘who pays’ or ‘funding’ on organisation websites
- looking for federal or state logos on organisation brochures etc.

4. You can take students around to organisations to collect this information as an excursion, or it could be done at the same time as when creating the community services map.
5. Individual students or small groups can select one or more organisations to investigate. They then compile this information on to the class map.
6. Students present their findings about the government organisations to the class. You can tally up the local, state and federal organisations (as below) on the board as students present.

Federal	State	Local

7. Summary: end the lesson reminding students that different levels of government provide a variety of services in their community

Part 3: What is an election?

Objective – What do we want the students to know?

The purpose of this lesson is to develop student's awareness of the election process.

Overview – How will they learn this?

Students will learn watch a presentation outlining the election process and then fill in an enrol to vote form.

Resources – What will I need?

- Computer with internet connection to show presentation
- Election process presentation
- Butchers paper, whiteboard or a Smartboard.
- Enrol to vote forms <http://www.aec.gov.au/enrol/>

Lesson plan – What do I need to do?

1. Introduce students to today's lesson:
What: what an election is
How: watching a presentation and filling out an electoral roll enrolment form
Why: Students will have to vote when they turn 18 and learning how to do the process will enable them to make the choice that best suits them
2. Explain to students that federal, state and local government are made up of people who are elected to represent the people in their electorate. You could look up which federal and state electorate the school is based in and identify the politicians that look after these areas.
3. Explain that the people elected are called politicians and that they are elected by people voting in an election.
4. Watch the presentation on the election process.
5. Explain that to vote in Australia you must be enrolled on the election roll. Explain that everyone over 18 must be enrolled to vote.

- Introduce students to activity: filling out an electoral enrolment form. Tell students this form gives them the right to vote.
 - Having the right to vote is important.
 - Some people in other countries don't have this right.
 - Many people have fought hard for us over time to have this right.
 - Give each student an electoral enrolment form.
 - Model filling out the form for students.
 - Students fill out their own forms and submit to teacher.
6. Give each student an electoral enrolment form. Model filling out the form for students.
 7. Students fill out their own forms and submit to teacher.
 8. When you collect the forms, explain that you will use this information to create a class election roll.
 9. Summary: end the lesson reiterating that politicians represent our interests in the government and that they are elected to government through an election.

Part 4: Who are the Australian political parties?

Objective – What do we want the students to know?

The purpose of this lesson is to develop student's awareness of the political parties in Australia.

Overview – How will they learn this?

Students will learn

Resources – What will I need?

- Computer with internet connection for students to use for research
- Butchers paper, whiteboard or a Smartboard.
- Copies of political parties worksheet
- Political party presentation
- AEC app to generate own ballot papers
<http://getvoting.aec.gov.au/ballotpaper>
- Lots of excellent instructions on running a mock election
http://www.elections.act.gov.au/education/run_your_own_elections/run_a_mock_election/run_your_own_hare-clark_election
- Also more resources here
<http://education.aec.gov.au/getvoting/content/resources.html>

Note:

Where possible, support students to choose an issue to ask their elected politicians to look at will make this exercise useful and relevant. You may have students who find it difficult to think of an issue or for proposing solutions for it. If this is the case, you will need to identify the issue, solutions and political parties for students to work through this lesson plan with. The Get Up! Website has a lot of short clips about various issues that could be used.

Lesson plan – What do I need to do?

1. Introduce students to today's lesson:
What: who are the political parties in Australia.
How: watch a presentation and fill out a worksheet
Why: students will have to vote when they turn 18. Being able to choose the political party that will best suit their interests helps them to make the right choice.
2. Explain that most of the people we elect to represent us in the government belong to a political party. Explain that a political party is a group of politicians with similar ideas about how to run the country.
3. Introduce activity: students in groups will fill out a brief worksheet, identifying the political parties each of the politicians on it belong to.
4. Students move into groups and identify the political parties people on the worksheet belong to.
5. Bring students together as a class and share results.
6. Introduce next activity: creating class political parties. Students will identify issue(s) that are important to them (food offered in the canteen, length of class time, where engagement camps will be held etc). Political parties providing different options (having 'junk' food day at the canteen, only have healthy food) will be created and a ballot for the election will be created.
7. Start with a class brainstorm on an issue likely to be important to your students. Coming to class with a few options, based on what you know of your students will be helpful, as students are likely to need prompting.
8. Write up the issue on the board. Ask students to think of different solutions to the issue. You can use the changing the food in the school canteen above as an example.
9. Either ask for student volunteers to act as political candidates or select students.
10. Create a ballot paper using the AEC app (<http://getvoting.aec.gov.au/ballotpaper>). Show students and

explain that they will be voting on the issue on the paper in an upcoming session.

11. Summary: end the lesson making clear that politicians often belong to political parties, which seek to represent the interests of the people who vote for them.

Part 5: How do I vote in an election?

Objective – What do we want the students to know?

The purpose of this lesson is to develop student's awareness of the way politicians are elected to office and the voting process.

Overview – How will they learn this?

Students will learn about how to fill out a ballot paper, then participate in a mock election.

Resources – What will I need?

- Computer with internet connection to show video
- Butchers paper, whiteboard or a Smartboard.
- AEC app to generate own ballot papers
<http://getvoting.aec.gov.au/ballotpaper>
- Lots of excellent instructions on running a mock election
http://www.elections.act.gov.au/education/run_your_own_elections/run_a_mock_election/run_your_own_hare-clark_election
- Also more resources here
<http://education.aec.gov.au/getvoting/content/resources.html>

Lesson plan – What do I need to do?

1. Introduce students to today's lesson:
What: how to vote in an election
How: participate in a mock election
Why: students will have to vote when they turn 18.
Understanding the process helps them make the choice that best suits them
2. Introduce the activity: students will fill in a secret ballot paper, to elect the representative of their choice.
3. Show students the 'How to vote' video.
4. Hand out copies of the ballot paper to each student. Explain how to fill out the ballot paper as it is likely to be different to

that in the video. Demonstrate filling it out yourself and putting it in the voter box.

5. (optional) Give the politicians one more opportunity to tell the voters what they will do to help them if elected.
6. Show students the voting space. Explain they will come to you to get a ballot paper and have their names crossed off the electoral roll. They will fill out their ballot papers in the supplied space without talking or looking at other students ballots. They will put their completed ballot paper in the supplied box and then they will wait until the rest of the class is finished.
7. Students complete voting process.
8. Collect all of the completed ballots and, with the students, tally (or add) up the ballot. You can do a preferential tally (1st, 2nd and 3rd) or just award the person with the most votes the win.
9. Announce the winner. If they'd like to, the winning candidate (the winner) can give a victory speech 😊
10. Explain that all elections, whether they are federal, state or local, follow fairly similar steps and people who are eligible to (allowed to) vote have the ability to influence (make a difference) in deciding who gets into power and represent them in the government.