



Government of **Western Australia**
School Curriculum and Standards Authority

Humanities and Social Sciences: Civics and Citizenship

Teaching, learning and assessment exemplar

Year 10

Protecting democracy



Acknowledgement of Country

Kaya. The School Curriculum and Standards Authority (the Authority) acknowledges that our offices are on Whadjuk Noongar boodjar and that we deliver our services on the country of many traditional custodians and language groups throughout Western Australia. The Authority acknowledges the traditional custodians throughout Western Australia and their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We offer our respect to Elders past and present.

Background

This teaching, learning and assessment exemplar (the exemplar) has been developed by the School Curriculum and Standards Authority (the Authority) as part of the *School Education Act Employees (Teachers and Administrators) General Agreement 2017* (Clause 61.1–61.3).

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Disclaimer

Any resources, such as texts and websites, that may be referred to in this document are provided as examples of resources that teachers can use to support their learning programs. Their inclusion does not imply that they are mandatory or that they are the only resources relevant to the course. Teachers must exercise their professional judgement as to the appropriateness of any resources they may wish to use.

This resource utilises electronic web-based resources, such as videos and image galleries. Teachers should be present while an electronic resource is in use and close links immediately after a resource, such as a video has played to prevent default ‘auto play’ of additional videos. Where resources are referred for home study, they should be uploaded through Connect, or an equivalent system, that filters advertising content.

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The Western Australian Curriculum

The *Western Australian Curriculum and Assessment Outline* (the *Outline* – <https://k10outline.scsa.wa.edu.au/>) sets out the mandated curriculum, guiding principles for teaching, learning and assessment, and support for teachers in their assessment and reporting of student achievement. The *Outline* recognises that all students in Australian schools, or international schools implementing the Western Australian curriculum, are entitled to be given access to the eight learning areas described in the *Alice Springs (Mparntwe) Education Declaration*, December 2019.

The Humanities and Social Sciences curriculum

The mandated curriculum is presented in the year level syllabus documents.

The Humanities and Social Sciences curriculum delivers a sequential and age-appropriate progression of learning with the following key elements:

- a year level description that provides an overview of the context for teaching and learning in the year
- a series of content descriptions, populated through strands and sub-strands, that sets out the knowledge, understanding and skills that teachers are expected to teach and students are expected to learn
- an achievement standard that describes an expected level that the majority of students are achieving by the end of a given year of schooling. An achievement standard describes the quality of learning (e.g. the depth of conceptual understanding and the sophistication of skills) that would indicate the student is well placed to commence the learning required in the next year.



This exemplar

This Humanities and Social Sciences exemplar articulates the content in the *Outline* and approaches to teaching, learning and assessment reflective of the Principles of Teaching, Learning and Assessment. This exemplar demonstrates a sequence of teaching and learning, including suggested assessment points, for 16 lessons.

Catering for diversity

This exemplar provides a suggested approach for the delivery of the curriculum and reflects the rationale, aims and content structure of the learning area. When planning the learning experiences, consideration has been given to ensuring that they are inclusive and can be used in, or adapted for, individual circumstances. It is the classroom teacher who is best placed to consider and respond to (accommodate) the diversity of their students. Reflecting on the learning experiences offered in this exemplar will enable teachers to make appropriate adjustments (where applicable) to better cater for students' gender, personal interests, achievement levels, socio-economic, cultural and language backgrounds, experiences and local area contexts.



Using this exemplar

This teaching, learning and assessment exemplar provides suggestions to support the delivery of the mandated curriculum content. The exemplar provides:






- a teaching and learning sequence
- the mandated curriculum content to be taught at each point of the teaching and learning sequence, suggested resources, a sample assessment task and marking key
- the number of lessons to deliver the teaching and learning experiences
- learning intentions and support notes that may provide focus questions and additional information and/or examples to assist with the interpretation of curriculum content
- support notes to assist teachers to unpack the content and support teaching and learning experiences
- teaching and learning experiences that outline the structure of the lesson. These explicitly state each activity that the lesson will progress through and the key focus area for that activity.

Links to electronic resources

This sequence of lessons may utilise electronic web-based resources, such as videos and image galleries. Teachers should be present while an electronic resource is in use and close links immediately after a resource, such as a video, has played to prevent default 'auto play' of additional videos. Where resources are referred for home study, they should be uploaded through Connect, or an equivalent system, that filters advertising content.

Resources legend

The following symbols are used in this teaching, learning and assessment exemplar to provide teachers with information on the nature of the resources included in the lesson sequence.

Symbol	Name	Description	Examples of use
	Multimedia	Video or audio materials to be shown to the class	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• YouTube clips• documentary• podcasts
	Webpage	Online information source	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• news article• museum website• government website
	Student resource	Resource that students need to access for learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• student worksheets• graphic organiser template• interactive webpage
	Lesson materials	Materials that require teacher preparation prior to lesson	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• collection of images• card-sort activities• materials for practical activities
	Teacher support resource	Additional information to support teachers in the suggested lesson	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• thinking routine instructions• example of completed graphic organisers• additional information on topic

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Best practice

Teaching and learning

The teaching and learning opportunities offered in this exemplar are not exhaustive. Thus, teachers are encouraged to make professional decisions about which learning experiences, and the sequence in which they are delivered, are best suited to their classroom context, taking into account the availability of resources and student ability.

This sample may prove a useful starting point for amplifying creativity in the classroom, while presenting the embedded expectations of the Western Australian Curriculum: Humanities and Social Sciences.

Teachers may find opportunities to incorporate the General Capabilities and the Cross-curriculum Priorities into the teaching and learning program.

Ways of teaching – teachers can locate additional information on the Ways of teaching from the School Curriculum and Standards Authority (the Authority) website

<https://k10outline.scsa.wa.edu.au/home/wa-curriculum/learning-areas/humanities-and-social-sciences/overview/humanities-and-social-sciences-ways-of-teaching>.

Assessing

Assessment, both formative and summative, is an integral part of teaching and learning. Assessment should arise naturally out of the learning experiences provided to students. In addition, assessment should provide regular opportunities for teachers to reflect on student achievement and progress. As part of the support it provides for teachers, this exemplar includes suggested assessment points. It is the teacher's role to consider the contexts of their classroom and students, the range of assessments required, and the sampling of content descriptions selected to allow their students the opportunity to demonstrate achievement in relation to the year level achievement standard. Teachers are best placed to make decisions about whether the suggested assessment/s are used as formative or summative assessment and/or for moderation purposes.

Ways of assessing – a range of assessment strategies that can enable teachers to understand where students are in their learning is available on the Authority website

<https://k10outline.scsa.wa.edu.au/home/wa-curriculum/learning-areas/humanities-and-social-sciences/overview/humanities-and-social-sciences-ways-of-assessing>.

Reflecting

Reflective practice involves a cyclic process during which teachers continually review the effects of their teaching and make appropriate adjustments to their planning. The cycle involves planning, teaching, observing, reflecting and replanning.

This exemplar supports reflective practice and provides flexibility for teachers in their planning. The exemplar shows how content can be combined and revisited throughout the year. Teachers will choose to expand or contract the amount of time spent on developing the required understandings and skills according to their reflective processes and professional judgements about their students' evolving learning needs.



Protecting democracy

This exemplar can be used to develop students' understanding of key Civics and Citizenship concepts, knowledge and skills as they apply to the democratic governing of Australia. Throughout the teaching and learning sequence, teachers will explicitly teach the threats to Australia's democracy, the safeguards that protect Australia's democratic system and the role of the High Court.

If the suggested learning experiences and the relevant syllabus content for this unit have been studied, students will be well positioned to address the requirements of the assessment task to the best of their ability. This assessment task will require students to develop and present a role-play simulation of a High Court hearing concerning a fictional case that challenges a democratic principle.



Year level description

In the middle adolescence phase of schooling, teaching and learning programs encourage students to develop an open and questioning view of themselves as active participants in their society and the world.

In Humanities and Social Sciences, students build on their understanding of important concepts and continue to develop their awareness of the complexity of the natural environment, social issues and the impact of technological advances. Students consider how the relationship between knowledge, technology and values influences their own role within society.

In Year 10, students develop increasing independence in critical thinking and skill application, which includes questioning, researching, analysing, evaluating, communicating and reflecting. They apply these skills to investigate events, developments, issues and phenomena, both historical and contemporary.

Students continue to build on their understanding of the concepts of democracy, democratic values, justice, and rights and responsibilities by exploring Australia's roles and responsibilities at a global level and its international legal obligations. They inquire into the values and practices that enable a resilient democracy to be sustained.

Students are introduced to the concept of economic performance and living standards while continuing to further their understanding of the concepts of making choices, interdependence, specialisation, and allocation and markets through examining contemporary issues, events and/or case studies. They explore the nature of externalities and investigate the role of governments in managing economic performance to improve living standards. They inquire into the ways businesses can manage their workforces to improve productivity and adapt to future conditions.

The concepts of place, space, environment, interconnection, sustainability and change continue to be developed as a way of thinking, through an applied focus on the management of environmental change on the full range of scales, from local to global and in a range of locations. The geography of human wellbeing is investigated through comparison between Australia and less economically developed countries.

Students develop their historical understanding through key concepts, including evidence, continuity and change, cause and effect, perspectives, empathy, significance and contestability. These concepts are investigated within the historical context of the modern world and Australia from the lead-up to World War II to the present, with an emphasis on Australia in its global context. They consider the impacts of world events on human rights and freedom of different groups of people.



Achievement standard

By the end of the year:

Students construct a range of questions and hypotheses involving cause and effect, patterns and trends, and different perspectives. They use a range of methods to select, record and organise relevant information and/or data from multiple sources. When interpreting sources, students identify their origin and purpose, and draw conclusions about their usefulness. They examine sources to compare different points of view/perspectives and describe different interpretations. Students analyse information and/or data to identify simple patterns, trends, relationships and/or change over time. They draw evidence-based conclusions, using information and/or data to consider multiple perspectives and/or to propose action in response to contemporary challenges. Students develop a range of texts appropriate to the type of discussion and/or explanation required. They use subject-specific terminology and concepts, and provide evidence from a range of sources to support conclusions, and acknowledge these sources.

Students describe key features of the Westminster system and Australia's democratic values. They make comparisons between Australia's democracy and the political system of one other country. Students identify the international agreements Australia has ratified and make connections between these agreements and the rights and responsibilities of citizens. They explain how Australia's democracy, and other democracies, may be undermined, and identify the safeguards that protect Australia's democratic system.

Students use economic indicators to analyse the economic performance of the Australian economy. They describe how government policy is used to manage the economy and improve economic performance and living standards, including the redistribution of income and wealth. Students describe how businesses respond to changing economic conditions and the processes that businesses can use to improve productivity. They explain the challenges of ethical decision-making in business, and the future implications of changes to the working environment.

Students describe how the places in which people live influence their wellbeing and opportunities. They describe the interconnections between people and natural environments, and compare how the characteristics of places and natural environments can be influenced, changed and managed by people over time. Students predict the consequences of the changes and describe the alternate views on strategies to sustainably manage a geographical challenge.

Students identify the causes and effects of World War II and the development of people's rights and freedoms, describing their significance from a range of perspectives. They refer to key events, the actions of individuals and groups, and beliefs and values, to explain patterns of change and continuity over time. Students describe different interpretations of the past and identify the evidence used to support these interpretations.



Lessons 1–16

Lesson 1

The Western Australian Curriculum content addressed in this lesson is below.

Protecting democracy

- The key features and values of Australia’s system of government compared with another system of government in the Asia–Pacific region
- The threats to Australia’s democracy and other democracies

Evaluating

- Draw evidence-based conclusions by evaluating information and/or data, taking into account ambiguities and multiple perspectives; negotiate and resolve contentious issues; propose individual and collective action in response to contemporary events, challenges, developments, issues, problems and/or phenomena

Resources



Large sheets of butcher’s paper or whiteboards and markers



Appendix A – Democracy challenge cards

Lesson outline

Learning intention/s	Success criteria
<p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• understand the core components of democracy and their interconnections, such as leadership, lawmaking, citizen participation, and checks and balances• apply democratic principles to create and defend a new democratic country, demonstrating an understanding of how democratic principles function together to ensure fairness and balance.	<p>Students can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• design a new democratic system by making thoughtful decisions on leadership, lawmaking, citizenship participation, and checks and balances• explain how the new democracy functions• evaluate the fairness and functionality of different democracies based on criteria• reflect on the most important part of democracy.

Introduction

- In small groups, students brainstorm responses to the following scenario: 'Imagine you wake up in a country where there are no rules, no government and no way to make decisions together. What would happen?'
- Discuss the responses with the class, prompting students to consider whether they would want to live in a country like this.

Main activity

- Explain to each group that they will need to build their own democracies. They must create a new democratic country by deciding on the following points:
 - Leadership and elections – Who is in charge, and how are they chosen?
 - Laws and rights – How are laws made? What rights do people have?
 - Citizenship participation – How do people have a voice?
 - Checks and balances – How do they prevent corruption?
- Students work with their group to create their own democracies, recording information on butcher's papers/large whiteboards.
- Every few minutes, the teacher reads a 'challenge card' from the *Democracy challenge cards* (Appendix A) that the students must respond to.
- Each group then presents their democracy to the class, with each other group in the class required to ask at least one clarifying question about their democracy.
- After the presentations, the class votes on which democracy seems the most fair and functional.

Review of learning

- Students respond to the following question with a short reflection: 'What is the most important part of democracy, and why?'

Lesson 2

The Western Australian Curriculum content addressed in this lesson is below.

Protecting democracy

- The key features and values of Australia’s system of government compared with another system of government in the Asia–Pacific region

Communicating and reflecting

- Develop texts, particularly explanations and discussions, using evidence from a range of sources to support conclusions and/or arguments

Resources



Parliamentary Education Office – Australian Constitution

<https://peo.gov.au/understand-our-parliament/how-parliament-works/the-australian-constitution/australian-constitution>



K20 Center – Caption this <https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/82>



Australian Constitution Centre – Introduction to the six principles

<https://www.australianconstitutioncentre.org.au/the-six-principles/>



K20 Center – Expert stay and stray <https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/2650>

Teacher information

Linked on the *Introduction to the six principles* webpage are individual webpages for each of the six principles. On each of the principles’ webpages, students may choose to access a downloadable PDF resource with more detailed information and questions on this information. Teachers may also choose to print these PDF documents and use them for this lesson instead of the online activity.

Lesson outline

Learning intention/s	Success criteria
<p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">understand the six principles of the Australian Constitution and how each contributes to the protection of individuals and the functioning of the nation.	<p>Students can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">identify and explain one of the six principles of the Australian Constitution, citing relevant sections and examplesrank the six principles based on their perceived importance for Australia, justifying the choice for both the highest-ranked and lowest-ranked principles.

Introduction

- Show students the image of the Australian Constitution from the *Australian Constitution* webpage. Students use the *Caption this* instructional strategy to recall their knowledge about the Constitution from previous years and share their captions with the rest of the class.

Main activity

- Students are allocated one of the six principles of the Australian Constitution (the teacher should aim to have each principle equally represented by students). All students read the text on the *Introduction to the six principles* webpage. Students use the icons at the bottom of the *Introduction to the six principles* webpage to navigate to their relevant information webpage.
- Using the information specific to their individual principle, students record the following information:
 - a short explanation of how the principle works to protect people
 - which sections of the Australian Constitution relate to this principle
 - examples of this principle in Australia
 - examples of this principle internationally (if applicable).
- Students examining the same principle should form into groups, where they will collaborate to combine their information and create an agreed upon 'expert' explanation of their principle.
- Using the *Expert stay and stray* instructional strategy, students then share their ideas with other members of the class, rotating through the different principles until they have recorded explanations for all six principles.
- Students should rank the six principles from most important to least important for Australia, justifying their top and bottom choices. Allocate different parts of the classroom a number between one to six, and assign each number one of the six principles (democracy, the rule of law, separation of powers, federalism, nationhood and rights). Students move to the number/place in the classroom that is allocated to the principle they consider most important. Select students at random from each part of the classroom, asking them to justify their highest-ranked principle. Repeat the process for students' lowest-ranked principle.

Review of learning

- Engage students in a class discussion, asking the question 'What would happen if the Australian Constitution changed and we removed one or more of these principles?'

Lesson 3

The Western Australian Curriculum content addressed in this lesson is below.

Protecting democracy

- The key features and values of Australia’s system of government compared with another system of government in the Asia–Pacific region

Communicating and reflecting

- Generate a range of viable options in response to an issue or event to recommend and justify a course of action, and predict the potential consequences of the proposed action
-

Resources



ABC Education – Democracies in action: US elections vs Australian elections
<https://www.abc.net.au/education/digibooks/democracies-in-action-us-elections-vs-australian-elections/104140634>



K20 Center – Lines of agreement
<https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/165>

Teacher information

Below is an example of how students may lay out their comparison table. Please note that students will require this table to be enlarged to cover at least an A4 page (landscape orientation).

Criteria	Australia	USA	Who does it better?	Justification
Democracy				
Constitution				
Voting system				
Major political parties				
Political campaigns				
Balance of Power				

Lesson outline

Learning intention/s	Success criteria
<p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• explore the differences and similarities between the democratic systems of the USA and Australia.	<p>Students can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• complete a comparison table highlighting the differences and similarities between US and Australian elections• justify decisions on which country does democracy better based on each criterion• suggest improvements for each country's democratic system and explain how it would strengthen democracy.

Introduction

- Students complete the following true/false statements:
 - The leaders of the USA and Australia are both directly elected by their citizens. (False)
 - Voting is mandatory in Australia, but not the USA. (True)
 - In Australia and the USA, federal elections are held every four years. (False)
 - Australia and the USA both use the same voting system. (False)
 - Both countries have a Bill of Rights that protects the individual rights of citizens. (False)

Main activity

- Students access the *Democracies in action: US elections vs Australian elections* webpage.
- Students develop a comparison table (example in Teacher information), populating it with information from the *Democracies in action: US elections vs Australian elections* webpage. Students should decide on which country governs better based on each criterion and provide a short justification for each.
- Using the *Lines of agreement* instructional strategy, students respond to the prompt 'Is democracy stronger in the USA or Australia?'

Review of learning

- Students suggest one aspect of democracy Australia could adopt from America to make it a stronger democracy, and one aspect of democracy that the USA could adopt from Australia to make it a stronger democracy. This may be presented as a class discussion or an exit ticket.

Lesson 4

The Western Australian Curriculum content addressed in this lesson is below.

Protecting democracy

- The key features and values of Australia’s system of government compared with another system of government in the Asia-Pacific region

Communicating and reflecting

- Reflect on why all findings are tentative
- Compare evidence to substantiate judgements

Resources



Parliamentary Education Office – Separation of powers: Parliament, Executive and Judiciary
<https://peo.gov.au/understand-our-parliament/how-parliament-works/system-of-government/separation-of-powers-parliament-executive-and-judiciary>



Parliamentary Education Office – Separation of powers <https://peo.gov.au/teach-our-parliament/education-resources/quizzes/separation-of-powers>



Teacher Toolkit – Exit ticket – <https://www.theteachertoolkit.com/index.php/tool/exit-ticket>

Teacher information

The information that students collect in this lesson will be used in a comparison exercise in Lesson 6.

Lesson outline

Learning intention/s	Success criteria
<p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• understand the concept of separation of powers and its role in limiting government authority• explore how Australia’s system of government distributes power among the Parliament, Executive and Judiciary branches• reflect on why Australia is considered to have only a partial separation of powers.	<p>Students can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• explain the meaning of separation of powers and its purpose• create an annotated diagram illustrating how power is divided in Australia.

Introduction

- Using the *Think, pair, share* instructional strategy, students respond to the question ‘What is meant by the Lord Acton quote, “All power tends to corrupt; absolute power corrupts absolutely”?’
- Ask students to think about examples of when someone has had too much power, and what the outcome of their having too much power was.

Main activity

- Students read through the content in the *Separation of powers: Parliament, Executive and Judiciary* webpage.
- Students create an annotated diagram that illustrates Australia’s separation of powers.
- Using the *Separation of powers* online quiz, students check their understanding. Any additional information from the quiz can be added to their annotated diagram.

Review of learning

- Using the *Exit ticket* instructional strategy, ask students to respond to the question ‘Why is Australia considered to only have partial separation of powers?’

Lesson 5

The Western Australian Curriculum content addressed in this lesson is below.

Protecting democracy

- The key features and values of Australia’s system of government compared with another system of government in the Asia-Pacific region

Analysing

- Account for different interpretations and points of view/perspectives in information and/or data
- Apply subject-specific skills and concepts in familiar, new and hypothetical situations

Resources



Parliamentary Education Office – Three levels of government: Governing Australia
<https://peo.gov.au/understand-our-parliament/how-parliament-works/three-levels-of-government/three-levels-of-government-governing-australia>



Parliamentary Education Office (2024) *Rights, Power, Action*, ch. Cooperative federalism in action, pp. 18–21
https://peo.gov.au/assets/Public/2024-PEO_Rights-Power-Action.pdf

Teacher information

‘Federalism’ refers to the system that divides political power between the national government and the states. Students need to have an understanding of Australian federalism for a comparison in Lesson 6.

The student activity in this lesson requires the students to simulate a discussion between the division of powers in Australia to reflect the cooperative nature of federalism in Australia. Teachers should preview the ‘Cooperative federalism in action’ chapter in the *Rights, Power, Action* PDF to ensure that they are adequately prepared for this lesson.

Lesson outline

Learning intention/s	Success criteria
<p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• understand the roles and responsibilities of the division of powers in Australia• explore how cooperative federalism operates in decision-making and governance.	<p>Students can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• describe the key functions of federal, state and local governments• participate in a cooperative federalism activity to simulate decision-making• explain how different levels of government work together to address issues.

Introduction

- As a class, read through the *Three levels of government: Governing Australia* webpage. This provides the background information for the following activity.

Main activity

- Complete the 'Before you begin' section of the 'Cooperative federalism in action' chapter in the *Rights, Power, Action* PDF (p. 18) and provide students with the instructions and materials required in the 'Getting started' section.
- Students complete the 'Activity' section of the *Rights, Power, Action* PDF (p. 19).

Review of learning

- Students respond to the 'What happened?' questions from the *Rights, Power, Action* PDF (p. 20).

Lesson 6

The Western Australian Curriculum content addressed in this lesson is below.

Protecting democracy

- The key features and values of Australia’s system of government compared with another system of government in the Asia–Pacific region

Analysing

- Analyse information and/or data in different formats
-

Resources



BBC Bitesize – How is the US Government structured?

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zbc3wsg#z92sdb>



Appendix A – Separation of powers scenario cards

Lesson outline

Learning intention/s	Success criteria
<p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• explore how power is separated in different democratic systems• compare the structure of government in Australia and the USA• consider the role of each branch of government in making, enforcing and interpreting laws.	<p>Students can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• identify the three branches of government in both Australia and the USA• record similarities and differences using a Venn diagram• determine which branch of government is responsible for handling specific scenarios in each system.

Introduction

- Students brainstorm the question 'A new law is needed in our country. Who makes it? Who enforces it? Who decides if it's fair?'
- Explain that different democracies separate their power differently, and that in this lesson, they will compare Australia to the USA.

Main activity

- Students read through the *How is the US Government structured?* webpage.
- Using a Venn diagram, students record the similarities and differences between Australia and the USA's government structures and systems. Students may need to refer to their notes from Lesson 4 (separation of powers in Australia) and Lesson 5 (federalism in Australia).

Review of learning

- Divide the class into two teams: Team Australia and Team USA. Within each team, assign students to the Executive, Legislative or Judicial branches.
- Read a selection of the scenarios from the *Separation of powers scenario cards* (Appendix A). Each team must decide on which branch is responsible for handling it in their assigned country.
- After a short discussion, teams present their decisions and why.

Lesson 7

The Western Australian Curriculum content addressed in this lesson is below.

Protecting democracy

- The threats to Australia's democracy and other democracies

Analysing

- Account for different interpretations and points of view/perspectives in information and/or data
-

Resources



The Conversation – Lobbying 101: How interest groups influence politicians and the public to get what they want

<https://theconversation.com/lobbying-101-how-interest-groups-influence-politicians-and-the-public-to-get-what-they-want-60569>

Teacher information

The article suggested here may be substituted for a more contemporary example. If the suggested article is used, comprehension questions such as the following may be used:

- What is the primary goal of interest groups when they engage in lobbying activities?
- How do interest groups utilise media campaigns to shape public opinion?
- What role do financial resources play in the effectiveness of an interest group's lobbying efforts?
- Can you explain the difference between direct lobbying and grassroots lobbying?
- In what ways can the concentration of media ownership affect the strategies of advocacy groups?
- How do international standards aim to regulate lobbying activities across different countries?
- What ethical concerns arise from the close relationships between lobbyists and legislators?

Lesson outline

Learning intention/s	Success criteria
<p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• explore the role of lobbying, donations and media influence in Australian politics• understand how different interest groups attempt to shape political decisions.	<p>Students can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• describe how lobbying and political donations influence decision-making• analyse different perspectives on a political issue• develop a lobbying strategy based on a specific group's interests.

Introduction

- Ask students: 'Who has the most influence over political decisions – voters, businesses, the media or politicians themselves?' Briefly explain the role of lobbying and donations in Australian politics.
- Pick one of the following political issues relevant to Australia:
 - Should Australia ban political donations from big corporations?
 - Should gambling companies be allowed to advertise during sports events?
 - Should mining companies pay higher taxes?
- Allocate different roles to students (politicians, corporations, activists, journalists, voters) and discuss who benefits from this law, who might oppose it and how might money or influence change the outcome?
- Divide students into two broad sides: those who support the law and those who oppose it. Each side must argue their position. The wealthiest side (e.g. corporations or major donors) gets to speak twice as often. The activists or public get fewer chances to speak. After a few minutes, ask: 'Was this a fair debate? Why or why not?'

Main activity

- Students read through the *Lobbying 101: How interest groups influence politicians and the public to get what they want* article.
- Students respond to the comprehension questions, such as those provided in the Teacher information for this lesson.

Review of learning

- Divide students into small groups and assign roles to each group (a mining company, an environmental organisation, a public health advocacy group or a media lobby) and ask them to develop a lobbying strategy for whether mining companies should pay higher taxes.
- Each group presents their strategy in 1–2 minutes.
- Vote on which group was most persuasive, and then ask students to discuss what ethical concerns there are around lobbying.

Lesson 8

The Western Australian Curriculum content addressed in this lesson is below.

Protecting democracy

- The threats to Australia's democracy and other democracies

Communicating and reflecting

- Compare evidence to substantiate judgements
-

Resources



ABC Behind the News – The rise of misinformation <https://www.abc.net.au/btn/high/the-rise-of-misinformation/104504042>



ABC Education – If you're listening: How US YouTubers were paid to spread propaganda <https://www.abc.net.au/education/how-us-youtubers-were-paid-to-spread-propaganda/104390822>

Teacher information

'Misinformation' is defined as false or misleading claims shared without intent to deceive (unintentional falsehoods), whereas 'disinformation' is false claims deliberately spread to manipulate public perception (deliberate deception).

Examples of misinformation/disinformation prompts for the Introduction activity:

- A concerned Facebook user posts: 'The Australian government has banned all petrol-powered vehicles starting next year.' (Misinformation based on misinterpretation of government policies.)
- A fringe political group claims in a viral video: 'The last election was rigged using fake postal votes to keep the ruling party in power.' (Disinformation as it is a deliberate attempt to undermine confidence in the electoral process.)
- An anti-vaccine activist spreads on Telegram: 'The government is putting microchips in vaccines to track citizens.' (Disinformation based on a common, debunked conspiracy theory spread to discourage vaccinations.)
- A local news report misquotes an official, stating: '... wind and solar energy caused the recent blackouts in South Australia'. (Misinformation due to simplification of the issue – blackouts are often caused by multiple factors.)
- A social media influencer with a political agenda posts: 'Refugees coming by boat each receive \$50 000 and a free house upon arrival.' (Disinformation as it is a false narrative intended to stir anti-immigration sentiment.)

Lesson outline

Learning intention/s	Success criteria
<p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• explore the concepts of misinformation and disinformation and how they differ• understand how false information spreads and its impact on Australian democracy.	<p>Students can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• identify and explain the difference between misinformation and disinformation• analyse examples of misinformation and disinformation• discuss the effects of false information on elections and democracy in Australia.

Introduction

- Provide students with a definition of misinformation and disinformation.
- Students read through a small number of example statements (such as those provided in Teacher information) and determine whether they are misinformation or disinformation. Prompt students to explain why they have decided each example is misinformation or disinformation.

Main activities

- Students view *The rise of misinformation* video and the *If you're listening: How US YouTubers were paid to spread propaganda* video.
- While viewing the videos, students record key information in a note-taking format of their choice.
- In pairs, students agree upon responses to the following questions, using information from the videos and their prior knowledge:
 - What is the difference between misinformation and disinformation? What is an example of each from the videos?
 - How can misinformation spread on social media affect how Australians vote in elections?
 - What are some strategies that the Australian government, media or fact-checking organisations use to combat misinformation and disinformation? Are they effective? Why or why not?
- Divide the class into two, with one half allocated to misinformation and one half allocated to disinformation.
- Each group searches for and reads a recent news article relating to their topic, recording key information, including a statement that summarises the topic, how the information was spread and the impact (or potential impact) of spreading this information.
- Students pair up, read their summary of key information to a partner and the partner with the example that is most dangerous to Australian democracy remains standing, while the other partner sits down. Students repeat this process until only one student is left standing.

Review of learning

- Students write an individual response to the question 'How significant a risk is misinformation and disinformation to Australian democracy? Justify your response using examples.'

Lesson 9

The Western Australian Curriculum content addressed in this lesson is below.

Protecting democracy

- The safeguards that protect Australia’s democratic system and society, including shared values and the right to dissent within the bounds of the law

Evaluating

- Critically evaluate information and/or data and ideas from a range of sources
-

Resources



Appendix A – Press freedom survivor



Human Rights Careers – Freedom of the press 101: Definition, examples, significance
<https://www.humanrightscareers.com/issues/freedom-of-the-press-101-definition-examples-significance/>



Project Zero: Harvard Graduate School of Education – Think, pair, share
<https://pz.harvard.edu/resources/think-pair-share>

Teacher information

Press freedom survivor is designed to provide students with a short introduction to some of the challenges involved in freedom of the press. This may be played as a class, or in smaller groups.

One player is the moderator (this may be the teacher), and the rest are journalists. The moderator presents a series of challenges to the journalists. The journalists state their response, with the moderator deciding if they made a good decision or a poor decision (spreading misinformation, giving in to censorship). A poor decision results in a warning, and following three warnings, the player/journalist is out. The last surviving journalist wins.

Lesson outline

Learning intention/s	Success criteria
<p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• explore the concept of press freedom and its role in democratic societies• understand the different types of press freedom and their significance.	<p>Students can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• identify their response to a range of press freedom challenges• summarise and rank the five types of press freedom• evaluate the importance of press freedom in the context of misinformation and disinformation.

Introduction

- Students engage in a game of 'Press freedom survivor' using the challenges provided in the *Press freedom survivor* activity (Appendix A).

Main activity

- Students read through the *Freedom of the press 101: Definition, examples, significance* webpage.
- Students make notes under each of the five types of 'Freedom of the press' from the *Freedom of the press 101: Definition, examples, significance* webpage, including a definition of each and the corresponding example.
- Students rank each type of press freedom based on their importance in Australia from 1–5, with 1 being the most important. Students should write a justification for their top three.

Review of learning

- Using the *Think, pair, share* thinking routine, students respond to the following question: 'Given the rise of misinformation and disinformation, why is it important to have a free media in Australia?'

Lesson 10

The Western Australian Curriculum content addressed in this lesson is below.

Protecting democracy

- The safeguards that protect Australia’s democratic system and society, including shared values and the right to dissent within the bounds of the law

Communicating and reflecting

- Generate a range of viable options in response to an issue or event to recommend and justify a course of action, and predict the potential consequences of the proposed action

Resources



Department of Home Affairs – Australian values

<https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/about-us/our-portfolios/social-cohesion/australian-values>



Attorney-General’s Department – Australia’s anti-discrimination law

<https://www.ag.gov.au/rights-and-protections/human-rights-and-anti-discrimination/australias-anti-discrimination-law>



Australian Human Rights Commission – About the Age Discrimination Act

<https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/age-discrimination/about-age-discrimination-act>



Australian Human Rights Commission – About racial discrimination

<https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/race-discrimination/about-racial-discrimination>



Australian Human Rights Commission – About disability rights

<https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/disability-rights/about-disability-rights>



Australian Human Rights Commission – About sex discrimination

<https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/sex-discrimination/about-sex-discrimination>



AITSL – Peer feedback

https://www.aitsl.edu.au/docs/default-source/feedback/aitsl-peer-feedback-strategy.pdf?sfvrsn=372dec3c_2

Lesson outline

Learning intention/s	Success criteria
<p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• explore the concept of equality of opportunity and its importance in Australian society• understand how anti-discrimination laws protect individuals from unfair treatment• investigate the impact of discrimination on democratic participation.	<p>Students can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• describe different forms of discrimination and their real-world effects• analyse how discrimination can impact democratic engagement• develop and present solutions to improve equality of opportunity in Australia.

Introduction

- Ask students to write a short list (3–5 points) of what values they think are important for Australians to share. Collate student responses on the board and pick out the most common responses.
- Show students the *Australian values* webpage and compare the values included there with the values decided by the class. Discuss whether the class identified equality of opportunity for all people – if not, why not?

Main activity

- Explain to students that equality of opportunity is protected by various pieces of legislation, and show them the list of anti-discrimination acts on the *Australia's anti-discrimination law* webpage.
- Students break into groups. Each group is allocated one of four types of possible discrimination (age, race, disability, sex), and reads the relevant webpage from the Australian Human Rights Commission to gain an understanding of the issue.
- In their groups, students record the following information from the website:
 - Type of discrimination
 - Definition
 - Examples of discrimination
 - Name of the Act protecting against this form of discrimination
- Students brainstorm different ways that this form of discrimination may impact on people's ability to engage with democracy in Australia (e.g. Election materials may not be accessible to those who have limited English literacy).
- Using this brainstorm, students 'flip' the negatives into possible solutions (e.g. printing election materials in multiple languages).
- Groups select their top solution/s and present to the class.

Review of learning

- Students provide feedback to other groups on their presentations and on their solutions that facilitate equality of opportunity.

Lesson 11

The Western Australian Curriculum content addressed in this lesson is below.

Protecting democracy

- The role of the High Court, including interpreting the Constitution

Analysing

- Analyse the 'big picture'
-

Resources



Behind the News – The High Court of Australia

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=66vfDU37OrI>



Australian Constitution Centre – Teacher reference document 125: The jurisdiction of the High Court of Australia

<https://www.australianconstitutioncentre.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/TRD-125-and-Lesson-2.pdf>

Teacher information

Example cases for the review of learning are:

- The Free Speech Case
 - A student is suspended for posting a political rant online.
 - Does this violate their right to free speech? Should the High Court intervene?
- The Citizenship Case
 - A politician is found to have dual citizenship.
 - Should they be allowed to stay in Parliament?
- The Protest Ban Case
 - A city bans protests in public parks.
 - Does this violate the right to political communication?
- The Government Surveillance case
 - The government introduces a law allowing police to monitor private phone calls and emails without a warrant to prevent crime and terrorism.
 - Does this violate people's rights and freedoms?
- The Right to Vote case
 - A law bans all prisoners from voting in federal elections.
 - Does this go against the democratic principle of being 'chosen by the people'? Should some prisoners still have the right to vote?

Lesson outline

Learning intention/s	Success criteria
<p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• understand the role and function of the High Court of Australia.	<p>Students can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• identify key sections of the Australian Constitution related to the High Court• explain the High Court's appellate and original jurisdiction• recognise the significance of the High Court's power to interpret the Constitution.

Introduction

- Begin with a class discussion, asking students 'Who makes the decisions in the school? What happens if you disagree with the decision? Can you appeal it?'

Main activity

- Students view *The High Court of Australia* video.
- While viewing *The High Court of Australia* video, students record as many facts as possible without pausing.
- As a class, read through the information from the *Teacher reference document 125: The jurisdiction of the High Court of Australia* PDF.
- Following their reading of the *Teacher reference document 125: The jurisdiction of the High Court of Australia* PDF, students should add information to their notes from the video.
- Students respond to the following questions:
 - What is the High Court of Australia?
 - Identify the section of the Australian Constitution that establishes the High Court.
 - Define the appellate jurisdiction, and explain how the High Court exercises it.
 - List and describe the types of cases that fall under the High Court's original jurisdiction.
 - Explain how the High Court handles cases when the facts are disputed.
 - Discuss the significance of the High Court's power to interpret the Constitution. How does this influence Australian law and governance?

Review of learning

- Pick three students to act as High Court Justices and sit at the front of the room. The rest of the class are lawyers presenting cases.
- The teacher reads out 3–4 short legal dilemmas from the Teacher information at the beginning of this lesson (based on real High Court cases). The lawyers (rest of the class) have 30 seconds to raise their hands and argue their side. The Justices deliberate briefly and announce their ruling.

Lessons 12

The Western Australian Curriculum content addressed in this lesson is below.

Protecting democracy

- The role of the High Court, including interpreting the Constitution

Questioning and researching

- Use a range of methods to collect, select, record and organise relevant and reliable information and/or data from multiple sources that reflects the type of analysis of information that is needed with and without the use of digital and spatial technologies

Resources



Parliament of Australia – Part V – Powers of the Parliament, Section 51. Legislative powers of the Parliament

https://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Senate/Practice_and_Procedure/Constitution/chapter1/Part_V_-_Powers_of_the_Parliament



Parliamentary Education Office – Interpret the Constitution

<https://peo.gov.au/teach-our-parliament/classroom-activities/how-parliament-works/interpret-the-constitution>



Parliamentary Education Office – The Australian Constitution in focus

<https://peo.gov.au/understand-our-parliament/how-parliament-works/the-australian-constitution/the-australian-constitution-in-focus>



Teacher toolkit (links found on the Interpret the Constitution webpage)



Law at a glance worksheet downloadable Word document



High Court script downloadable Word document



Group organisation table

Teacher information

This activity requires students to review the Australian Constitution before engaging in a role-play developed by the Parliamentary Education Office. Note that the Teacher toolkit is only accessible through links on the *Interpret the Constitution* webpage.

Lesson outline

Learning intention/s	Success criteria
<p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• explore the powers of the federal government under Section 51 of the Australian Constitution• understand how the High Court interprets the Constitution.	<p>Students can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• identify key powers granted to the federal government under Section 51 of the Australian Constitution• analyse the role of the High Court in interpreting the Constitution• discuss the significance of constitutional interpretation in lawmaking.

Introduction

- Provide students with a copy of Section 51 of the Australian Constitution using the *Part V – Powers of the Parliament, Section 51* webpage.
- In groups, students use the prompt: ‘The federal government wants to make a law about internet safety, but is that covered under the Constitution?’ and decide whether they think the law is constitutional.

Main activity

- Students to read through *The Australian Constitution in focus* webpage.
- Students make dot point notes under each of the headings to review the purpose and structure of the Australian Constitution, and the role of the High Court in interpreting the Constitution.
- Using the information from the ‘Getting started’ and ‘Activity’ sections of the *Interpret the Constitution* student activity, students role-play the hypothetical case of *Lee v Electoral Commissioner*.

Review of learning

- Use the questions from the ‘What happened’ section of the *Interpret the Constitution* student activity to lead a classroom discussion.

Lesson 13

The Western Australian Curriculum content addressed in this lesson is below.

Protecting democracy

- The role of the High Court, including interpreting the Constitution

Communicating and reflecting

- Deconstruct and reconstruct the collected information and/or data into a form that identifies the relationship between the information and the hypothesis, using subject-specific conventions, terminology and concepts

Resources



Appendix A – High Court case investigation



Australian Constitution Centre – *The High Court*

<https://www.australianconstitutioncentre.org.au/the-high-court/>



Project Zero: Harvard Graduate School of Education – Headlines

<https://pz.harvard.edu/resources/headlines>

Teacher information

This lesson requires students to access *The High Court* website and read in detail about one of the six High Court cases linked to this page.

Lesson outline

Learning intention/s	Success criteria
<p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• explore how the six principles of the Australian Constitution impact everyday life• understand the role of the High Court in interpreting and applying these principles• examine real-life case studies to see how constitutional principles are upheld in practice.	<p>Students can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• identify key principles of the Australian Constitution and their significance• analyse a High Court case study and summarise the main points of a case in a clear and concise format.

Introduction

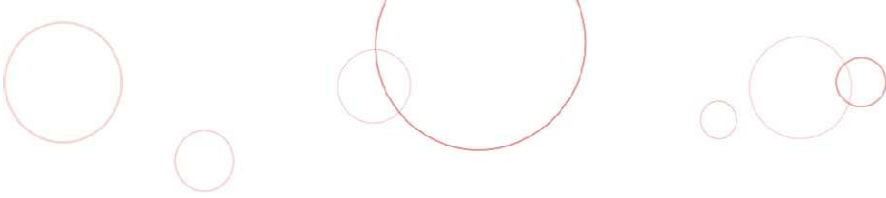
- In pairs, students brainstorm the following prompt: 'Democracy is more than just voting. It's about fairness, rights and responsibilities. How do the six principles of the Australian Constitution influence your everyday life?'
- Discuss the responses as a class.

Main activity

- Students are allocated one of the following six case studies from *The High Court* website:
 - Separation of powers
 - Democracy
 - Rights
 - Nationhood
 - Federalism
 - The Rule of Law
- Students use the information from their allocated case study to complete the *High Court case investigation* retrieval chart (Appendix A). Students should record dot point information in the relevant sections of the retrieval chart.
- Students use the information from their case study to write a summary at the bottom of the retrieval chart.

Review of learning

- Using the *Headlines* instructional strategy, students create a punchy headline for their summary to share with the rest of the class.



Lessons 14–16

See Appendix B: Assessment task



Appendix A

Resources



Lesson 1: Democracy challenge cards

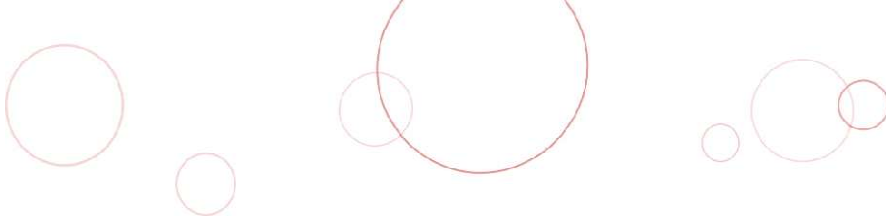
<p>Election crisis One of your candidates claims the election was unfair and refuses to step down. How does your democracy handle this situation while staying fair and peaceful?</p>	<p>Media control debate A powerful leader wants to control the news to prevent ‘fake information’. Should your democracy allow this? How do you ensure people get truthful news without limiting free speech?</p>
<p>Minority rights at risk A new law is passed that benefits the majority but negatively impacts a smaller group of people. How does your democracy protect minority rights while still respecting majority rule?</p>	<p>Protest in the streets Citizens are protesting a government decision they think is unfair. How does your democracy respond? Should protests always be allowed? Why or why not?</p>
<p>Corruption scandal A government official is caught accepting bribes. What steps does your democracy take to investigate and prevent corruption?</p>	<p>Emergency powers – Too much power? A national emergency happens, and the leader wants to take complete control ‘for safety’. Should they be allowed to? What checks and balances prevent leaders from abusing power?</p>
<p>Freedom of speech controversy A citizen is saying things that many people find offensive. Should your democracy limit their speech, or should everyone have the right to say whatever they want?</p>	<p>Low voter turnout Less than half of your citizens are voting in elections. What can your democracy do to encourage more people to participate?</p>

Lesson 6: Separation of powers scenario cards

<p>A new law is needed to improve environmental protection.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which branch writes and passes the law? • Who enforces it? • Who reviews it if challenged? 	<p>The Prime Minister/President wants to introduce new taxes without approval.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can they do this? • Which branch has the final say?
<p>A citizen claims their rights have been violated by a new law.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who reviews the case? • How does each system handle constitutional rights? 	<p>The leader of the country wants to stay in power beyond their term.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What prevents them from doing so? • Which system (USA or Australia) has stronger protections?
<p>The country is facing a national emergency. The leader (President/Prime Minister) wants to pass new laws immediately without approval from the legislature.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which branch has the power to approve or reject this decision? • Can the leader make decisions without checks from other branches? • How do Australia and the USA differ in handling emergencies? 	<p>The government passes a law that limits freedom of speech. A group of citizens challenges it in court, saying it violates their rights.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which branch of government decides if the law is constitutional? • Does Australia have a bill of rights like the USA? How does this affect the case? • Can the court overrule the government's decision?
<p>The military wants to take action against another country, but the leader (President/Prime Minister) makes a decision without consulting the legislature.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which branch has control over the military in each country? • Can the leader make military decisions alone? • How do Australia and the USA differ in declaring war or military action? 	<p>The leader (President/Prime Minister) wants to spend a huge amount of money on a new program, but some lawmakers disagree.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which branch controls government spending in each country? • Can the leader spend money without approval? • What happens if the legislature refuses to pass the budget?

Lesson 9: Press freedom survivor

	Scenario	Examples of possible responses
Censorship challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A major news outlet is shut down by the government for reporting on corruption. What do you do? • The government has introduced a new law requiring journalists to get official approval before publishing political news. If you refuse, you could lose your job. What do you do? • Your investigative report on corporate corruption has been removed from all news websites by government order. Do you find another way to publish it or stay silent? • Your news outlet receives a warning: 'Stop criticising the government, or your licence will be revoked.' Do you change your reporting style or continue as usual? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish on social media • Work with international media • Go underground (i.e. hide from the government)
Information challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A viral story claims the Prime Minister was arrested, but there's no credible source. Do you report it? • A social media influencer with millions of followers claims that mainstream media is lying about an election scandal. How do you respond? • Your news team rushes to report on a breaking event, but sources are unverified. If you wait, competitors will publish first. Do you proceed or fact-check first? • A fake news website publishes an article that falsely accuses a politician of a crime. Many people believe it. Do you ignore it or actively debunk it? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fact-check before publishing • Wait for confirmation from an official channel • Rush to publish and risk credibility
Threat challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A journalist colleague has been jailed. If you report on it, you may be targeted next. What do you do? • A journalist you know has mysteriously disappeared after reporting on police brutality. Do you continue investigating their case or stay silent for your own safety? • A government official calls you privately and says, 'If you stop covering protests, we'll make sure your career flourishes.' What do you do? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek legal help • Raise awareness • Stay silent
Ethical challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A politician offers you money to publish a false positive story. Do you accept? • A wealthy business owner offers an exclusive interview in exchange for positive coverage of their company. Do you accept? • A whistleblower leaks sensitive documents that expose corruption but could put national security at risk. Do you publish them? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reject and expose • Accept and risk credibility • Secretly report them



Lesson 13: High Court case investigation

Case name	
Focus area	
Background to the case	
Key facts of the case	
Decision	
Additional information	
Summary	



Appendix B

Assessment task



Task details

Title	Democracy on trial
Description	Students will work in small groups to develop and present a role-play simulation of a High Court hearing concerning a fictional case that challenges a democratic principle.
Way of assessing	Performance/written work
Evidence to be collected	Written script and validation response
Suggested time	3 x 50-minute lessons (Lessons 14–16)
Differentiation	Teachers should differentiate their teaching and assessment to meet the specific learning needs of their students, based on their level of readiness to learn and their need to be challenged. Where appropriate, teachers may either scaffold or extend the scope of the assessment tasks.

Content descriptions

Knowledge and understanding

- The key features and values of Australia’s system of government compared with another system of government in the Asia–Pacific region
- The threats to Australia’s democracy and other democracies
- The safeguards that protect Australia’s democratic system and society, including shared values and the right to dissent within the bounds of the law
- The role of the High Court, including interpreting the Constitution

Humanities and Social Sciences skills

Questioning and researching

- Use a range of methods to collect, select, record and organise relevant and reliable information and/or data from multiple sources that reflects the type of analysis of information that is needed with and without the use of digital and spatial technologies

Analysing

- Analyse information and/or data in different formats
- Account for different interpretations and points of view/perspectives in information and/or data
- Apply subject-specific skills and concepts in familiar, new and hypothetical situations

Evaluating

- Draw evidence-based conclusions by evaluating information and/or data, taking into account ambiguities and multiple perspectives; negotiate and resolve contentious issues; propose individual and collective action in response to contemporary events, challenges, developments, issues, problems and/or phenomena

Communicating and reflecting

- Reflect on why all findings are tentative
- Develop texts, particularly explanations and discussions, using evidence from a range of sources to support conclusions and/or arguments



- Compare evidence to substantiate judgements
- Generate a range of viable options in response to an issue or event to recommend and justify a course of action, and predict the potential consequences of the proposed action

Key concepts

Justice, rights and responsibilities.



Instructions to students

Democracy on trial: Role-play and validation

This assessment has two parts. Complete both parts.

You have 150 minutes in class under test conditions.

Part A: Role-play

The functions of the High Court are to interpret and apply the law of Australia; to decide cases of special federal significance including challenges to the constitutional validity of laws and to hear appeals, by special leave, from Federal, State and Territory courts.

Working in groups, you are to produce a role-play of a fictional High Court case related to one of the following:

- freedom of political communication
- voting rights
- citizenship laws
- government overreach or emergency powers.

Example fictional High Court case:

A new federal law bans protest activity within 500 metres of any parliament building, citing public safety concerns. A civil rights organisation argues that this law infringes on the implied constitutional right to political communication. The matter is brought before the High Court.

To prepare for this, you will need to:

- research relevant sections of the Australian Constitution
- understand previous High Court rulings related to the issue
- develop arguments and questions relevant to your role.

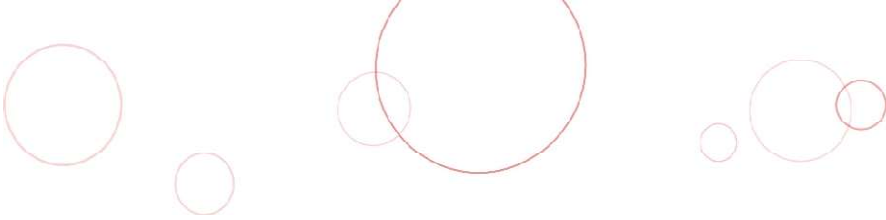
Students will need to adopt the roles of Justices, plaintiff/s, defendant/s, witnesses and media representatives (see roles on following page).

The structure of the role-play should include:

- opening statements
- presentation of evidence/arguments
- questioning
- Justice deliberation and judgement.

Using this information, as a group you are to prepare a scripted High Court case that you will perform. Following the role-play, you will complete a written task to validate your understanding of the High Court's role in protecting Australian democracy.

Role	Description of role
Justice	As a Justice of the High Court, you will analyse the arguments presented by both parties, including references to relevant sections of the Constitution and past High Court decisions. You will evaluate the strength of each argument, considering whether the law in question upholds or undermines democratic values such as freedom, fairness and the rule of law. Your final judgement should evaluate the law's potential impact on Australian democracy.
Plaintiff	As the plaintiff, you will analyse how the law in question may impact on constitutional rights or democratic principles. You will find evidence that supports your argument that this is not a justified use of government power, referencing past cases and constitutional provisions. You should highlight the broader risks to democracy posed by the law and argue why the Court should find it unconstitutional.
Defendant	As the defendant for the government, you will analyse the basis of the law under the Constitution, including legislative powers and limits. You will find evidence that supports your argument that this law is reasonable and proportionate in a democratic society. Your task is to defend the law as a valid exercise of power that maintains democratic stability and public interest, while addressing potential criticisms and constitutional concerns raised by the plaintiff.
Witness	As a witness or expert, you will analyse the potential effects of the law on individuals, communities or democratic processes, drawing on relevant expertise (e.g. legal, political, social). You will evaluate the law's consequences by assessing how it aligns with democratic values, human rights or legal principles. Your testimony should inform the Court by providing evidence-based insight into the broader impact of the case.
Media representative	As a media representative, you will analyse the arguments presented in the case and the High Court's final decision. You will evaluate the democratic significance of the ruling, including its implications for citizens' rights, government accountability and constitutional interpretation. Your task is to communicate the outcome clearly to the public and reflect on whether the decision strengthens or challenges Australia's democratic system.



Part B: Validation

1. Provide a brief description of the fictional law that is being introduced.

(2 marks)

2. Explain how this law threatens democracy in Australia.

(3 marks)

3. Summarise a previous High Court ruling that addresses the same democratic right in Australia.

(3 marks)

4. Evaluate the High Court’s role in safeguarding Australian democracy.

(5 marks)



Part A: Marking key

Description	Marks
Knowledge and understanding (Role-play)	
Evaluates the law being introduced and the threats that it poses to Australian democracy, clearly demonstrating the links to previous High Court rulings	4
Explains the law being introduced and the threats that it poses to Australian democracy	3
Describes the law being introduced and the threats that it poses to Australian democracy	2
Identifies the law being introduced and the threats that it poses to Australian democracy	1
Subtotal	/4
Analysing and evaluating (Role-play)	
Analyse the constitutional, legal and democratic issues presented by the case Evaluate the strengths, relevance and implications of arguments	7–8
Explains the constitutional, legal and democratic issues presented by the case Outlines the strengths, relevance and implications of arguments	5–6
Describes the constitutional, legal or democratic issues presented by the case Comments on the quality of arguments	3–4
Identifies constitutional, legal or democratic issues in the case	1–2
Subtotal	/8
Communicating and reflecting (Role-play)	
Constructs a structured script that clearly identifies the relationship between opening statements, the evidence and arguments presented, and the conclusions made Consistently and appropriately uses subject-specific terminology	4
Constructs a structured script that identifies the relationship between most aspects of the case Appropriately uses subject-specific terminology	3
Constructs a script that identifies the relationship between some aspects of the case. Uses subject-specific terminology	2
Constructs a script that makes a series of statements Uses minimal subject-specific terminology	1
Subtotal	/4
Total	/16

Part B: Marking key

Description	Marks
Question 1: Provide a brief description of the fictional law that is being introduced.	
Describes the fictional law introduced in role-play	2
Identifies the fictional law introduced in role-play	1
Subtotal	/2
Question 2: Explain how this law threatens democracy in Australia.	
Explains how the introduction of this law poses a threat to democracy in Australia	3
Describes how the introduction of this law poses a threat to democracy in Australia	2
Makes a statement about a threat to democracy	1
Subtotal	/3
Question 3: Summarise a previous High Court ruling that addresses the same democratic right in Australia.	
Summarises the key aspects of a previous High Court ruling, clearly linking to the democratic right being challenged in the role-play	3
Summarises the key aspects of a previous High Court ruling	2
Identifies a previous High Court ruling	1
Subtotal	/3
Question 4: Evaluate the High Court's role in safeguarding Australian democracy.	
Evaluates the High Court's role in safeguarding Australian democracy	5
Discusses the High Court's role in safeguarding Australian democracy	4
Explains the High Court's role in safeguarding Australian democracy	3
Describes the High Court's role in safeguarding Australian democracy	2
Makes a statement on the High Court's role in safeguarding Australian democracy	1
Subtotal	/5
Total	/13



Acknowledgements

Lesson 2 Information from: Australian Constitution Centre. (n.d.). *Introduction to the Six Principles*. Retrieved September, 2025, from <https://www.australianconstitutioncentre.org.au/the-six-principles/>

Lesson 4 Quote adapted from: Dalberg-Acton, J. (1887). [Quote by Lord Acton concerning the moral problem of writing history about the Inquisition]. Retrieved August, 2025, from <https://oll.libertyfund.org/quotes/lord-acton-writes-to-bishop-creighton-that-the-same-moral-standards-should-be-applied-to-all-men-political-and-religious-leaders-included-especially-since-power-tends-to-corrupt-and-absolute-power-corrupts-absolutely-1887>

Appendix B: Assessment task

Instructions to students Paragraph 1 from: High Court of Australia. (n.d.). *Role of the High Court*. Retrieved September, 2025, from <https://www.hcourt.gov.au/about/overview-high-court/role-high-court>

