



Sample assessment task	
Year level	7
Learning area	Humanities and Social Sciences
Subject	Civics and Citizenship
Title of task	Referendums and changing the Australian Constitution
Task details	
Description of task	Students analyse the 1967 and 1999 referendum results and explain the voters' decision
Type of assessment	Summative
Purpose of assessment	To assess students' understanding of key Civics and Citizenship concepts and skills as they apply to the process for constitutional change through referenda and what influenced the outcomes
Assessment strategy	Written responses
Evidence to be collected	Written responses
Suggested time	1 lesson
Content description	
Content from the Western Australian Curriculum	<p>Knowledge and understanding The process for constitutional change through a referendum and examples of attempts to change the Australian Constitution by referendum, such as the successful vote on the <i>Constitution Alteration (Aboriginals) 1967</i> or the unsuccessful vote on the <i>Constitution Alteration (Establishment of Republic) 1999</i></p> <p>Humanities and Social Sciences skills A> Interpret information and/or data to identify the key relationships and/or trends Identify points of view/perspectives, attitudes and/or values in information and/or data A> Apply subject-specific skills and concepts in familiar and new situations E> Draw evidence based conclusions by evaluating information and/or data ; make comparisons; and infer relationships</p>
Key concepts	Democracy, Democratic values, Participation, Rights and responsibilities
Task preparation	
Prior learning	Students are familiar with the purpose and value of the Australian Constitution. They have learnt about the referendum process and the constitutional requirements for success, along with the major arguments for and against the proposals in 1967 and 1999.
Assessment 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 task.
Assessment task	
Assessment conditions	Complete in class under supervised conditions
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sources showing the results of the 1967 and 1999 referenda

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Referendums and Plebiscites</i>
http://www.peo.gov.au/learning/fact-sheets/referendums-and-plebiscites.html
<i>Referendums: Getting the numbers: How a double majority works</i>
http://www.civicsandcitizenship.edu.au/cce/getting_the_numbers_how_a_double_majority_works,9557.html |
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Instructions for teacher

Questions to use with students to develop their conceptual understanding:

Democracy

What is meant by the will of the majority?

What is the difference between a simple, a qualified and a double majority?

Under what circumstances might a community want a double or qualified majority?

What role does the individual have in a democracy?

Does the individual have any responsibilities in a democracy?

Democratic values

Is the Commonwealth Constitution more, less or equally important than other laws in Australia?

Why should the people of Australia have the final say on what the Commonwealth Constitution says?

Should there be differentiation (in a negative sense) between peoples within a constitution?

Participation

What is the difference between political parties, pressure groups and community groups?

Do each of these have a role to play in a political campaign to change the Constitution?

When campaigning for or against a change to the Constitution, should one be focused on emotional or substantive argument?

Rights and responsibilities

As a resident in a nation, do I have the right to do anything I want?

As a citizen, do I have the right to object to a governmental decision on an issue?

Can I freely discuss political issues even if they are controversial?

As preparation for the assessment:

- review the referendum process and look at the 1967 and 1999 referenda in particular.
- organise a class debate focused on the, for and against arguments, in each referendum.
- discuss with students 'why the result' in each instance.

Sample marking key	
Analysing, Evaluating (Questions 1 and 2).	
Description	Marks
All four aspects of the question are addressed in the discussion. Comparisons are made between States in terms of voting trends. Statistics are used appropriately in the discussion.	5
Three or four aspects of the question are addressed in the response. Some comparison is made between States in terms of voting trends. Some statistics are used in the response.	3-4
One or two aspects of the question are addressed. Statements are made about voting trends. Minimal use of data.	1-2
(2x5=10) Subtotal	10
<p>Answer could include, but is not limited to:</p> <p>1967 National majority 'Yes', 90.7 compared to 9.2 All 6 States voted 'Yes' Victoria and NSW had the highest 'Yes' vote (94.6 and 91.4) WA lowest 'Yes' vote (80.9) Informal vote is less than 1% across all States ACT and NT voters excluded</p> <p>1999 National majority is 'No', 54.8 compared to 45.1 All 6 States voted 'No', with Victoria very close 50.1 'No' and 49.8 'Yes' ACT voted 'Yes' with a strong margin (63.2) compared with the NT which was fairly even Queensland had the highest 'No' vote (62.5) Informal vote less than 1% across all States and Territories ACT and NT votes were part of the national vote statistics</p>	
Knowledge and understanding (Question 3a)	
Description	Marks
Briefly explains at least one main argument for, and one against, for each referendum.	7-8
Outlines one argument for, and one against, for each referendum.	5-6
States one argument for and one argument against, for each referendum or Briefly explains at least one main argument for, and one against, for one referendum or States an argument for and /or against each referendum.	3-4
States an argument for and against for one referendum or Makes a general statement about one or both referendums.	1-2
Subtotal	8
<p>Answer could include, but is not limited to:</p> <p>1967 referendum Arguments for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • constitutional references were discriminatory [S. 51 (26) and S. 127] • precondition for Aboriginal equality • <i>'Aborigines want to be Australians too'</i> • wiping out 200 years of injustice 	

Arguments against:

- the legislative power should remain with the States
- Commonwealth powers may be used to discriminate against Aboriginal people.

1999 referendum

Arguments for:

- Australia is an independent nation
- our Head of State should be an Australian
- our multicultural nation is increasingly divorced from Britain
- an hereditary monarch as Head of State is out of keeping with a modern democracy

Arguments against:

- the current system has worked well, is working well
- there is no one single acceptable model for a Republic.

Evaluating (Question 3b)

Description	Marks
Discusses a key reason why people voted either 'Yes' (1967) or 'No' (1999). The reason is based on evidence. Makes some reference to why the other side 'lost'. Makes connections between the proposal and the arguments.	5
Discusses a key reason why people voted either 'Yes' (1967) or 'No' (1999). The reason is based on limited evidence. Makes limited reference to why the other side 'lost'.	3-4
Makes a statement concerning why the particular referendum 'passed' or 'failed'.	2
Makes a general statement concerning referendum outcomes.	1
Subtotal	5
Total	23

Results by State 1967 Referendum

Referendum question: “Do you approve the proposed law for the alteration of the Constitution entitled ‘An Act to alter the Constitution’ so as to omit certain words relating to the people of the Aboriginal race in any state so that Aboriginals are to be counted in reckoning the population?”

State*	Yes		No		Informal
	votes	%	votes	%	
New South Wales	1,949,036	91.46%	182,010	8.54%	35,461
Victoria	1,525,026	94.68%	85,611	5.32%	19,957
Queensland	748,612	89.21%	85,611	10.79%	9,529
South Australia	473,440	86.26%	75,383	13.74%	12,021
Western Australia	319,823	80.95%	75,282	19.05%	10,561
Tasmania	167,176	90.21%	18,134	9.79%	3,935
Total for Commonwealth	5,183,113	90.77%	527,007	9.23%	91,464

* Residents of the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory did not have the right to vote in referenda at that time.
Source: [24] | [SMH Referendum results by state](#) [17]

Results by State 1999 Referendum

Referendum question: Do you approve the proposed law ‘To alter the Constitution to establish the Commonwealth of Australia as a republic with the Queen and Governor-General being replaced by a President appointed by a two-thirds majority of the members of the Commonwealth parliament’

Summary of Results – Republic Question

State	Yes	%	No	%	Informal	%	Total	%
NSW	1 817 380	46.43	2 096 562	53.57	34 772	0.88	3 948 714	95.23
Vic.	1 489 536	49.84	1 499 138	50.16	28 063	0.93	3 016 737	95.32
Qld	784 060	37.44	1 309 992	62.56	14 642	0.69	2 108 694	94.63
WA	458 306	41.48	646 520	58.52	9 500	0.85	1 114 326	94.73
SA	425 869	43.57	551 575	56.43	8 950	0.91	986 394	96.01
Tas.	126 271	40.37	186 513	59.63	2 857	0.91	315 641	96.31
ACT	127 211	63.27	73 850	36.73	1 553	0.77	202 614	95.31
NT	44 391	48.77	46 637	51.23	852	0.93	91 880	84.96
National Total	5 273 024	45.13	6 410 787	54.87	101 189	0.86	11 785 000	95.10

Acknowledgements

Parliament of Australia. (2014). *Referendum results* (27 May 1967, question 2). Retrieved February, 2018, from <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22handbook%2Fnewhandbook%2F2014-10-31%2F0049%22>

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Australian Electoral Commission. (2011). *1999 Referendum report and statistics: Summary of results – Republic question* (National summary). Retrieved February, 2018, from

http://www.aec.gov.au/Elections/referendums/1999_Referendum_Reports_Statistics/summary_republic.htm

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