

Parliamentary treasures—*Parliamentary Quiz*

HSIE/SOSE outcome

Describes features of the Australian parliamentary structure at a national level.

Subject matter focus

Using the *Parliamentary Quiz*, students can test their knowledge of:

- What parliament is and how it works.
- Significant people and events that have shaped the Australian parliament.

Implications for learning

In this area of study, students have opportunities to:

- Test their understanding of: the composition of the parliament; the formation of government and the role of the government and the opposition in two quizzes *Government and opposition* and *Parliament today*.
- Review some facts relating to historical events that have shaped the Australian parliament in two quizzes—*Australian firsts* and *Our nation is born*.
- Test understanding of basic law making processes in the *Law-making quiz*
- Test knowledge of some significant parliamentary places in the *Parliamentary places* quiz.

Take home message

Our current parliament has been influenced by different people and events.

Parliamentary Quiz outcome

Students test their knowledge across six key areas that focus on what parliament is and how it works.

Using the *Parliamentary Quiz*

The *Parliamentary Quiz* interactive may be used to:

- Provide a key stimulus question for class discussion at the start of each related lesson.
- Stimulate group or individual research based on one of the six quiz areas.
- Build parliamentary knowledge using a game show format, e.g. in the style of *BP Pick-a-box*, *Sale of the Century* or *Who wants to be a millionaire?*
- Reward early finishers.

Key questions

Australian firsts

- Can you name:
 - The year in which Indigenous Australians were first allowed to vote?
 - The first Indigenous Australian elected to federal parliament?
 - The year in which Australian women were first allowed to vote?
 - The first woman elected to parliament?
 - The first Australian prime minister?
 - The place in which Australia's first federal parliament met?
- Reflect on each of these firsts. What impact does this event have on today's parliament?

Our nation is born

- What would Australia be like today if the colonies had not federated? In your opinion has Federation been a positive or negative influence on Australia? Justify your answer.

Government and opposition

- Is federal parliament best served by two big parties, several smaller parties, or a mixture of the two? Explain your response.
- What is the role of the government? What is the role of the opposition?

Law-making

- What are the three fundamental steps to a bill becoming a law?
- Why might the government presume that government bills will pass the House of Representatives? Why might the government not presume that government bills will pass the Senate?
- Can you name three advantages to having the largest team in the House of Representatives?
- What process is used to decide Australia's parliamentarians?

Parliamentary places

- Can you name three well-known rooms in Australia's Parliament House?
- Why was new Parliament House built? Will Australia need another Parliament House in the future? How do you know?

Parliament today

- What is the current composition of the House of Representatives?
- What is the current composition of the Senate?
- What do you think the phrase 'balance of power' might mean?

Class activities

Australian firsts

- Choose an 'Australian first' to research. Present your research to the class as a poster, play, power point presentation or speech.

Our nation is born

- As a class, discuss the fundamental rules that underpin how your class operates. Consider how power is shared, how problems are solved and how decisions are made.
- Draft a written constitution to guide the governance of your class.
 - Allow time to trial and review the draft constitution. Is it working? Does it need to be changed? Make any necessary changes.
 - When you are satisfied with the draft constitution, you may wish to give the class the opportunity to formally adopt it. If so, consider how this should happen e.g. will all class members have a vote? Will all votes be of equal value?
 - If the constitution is adopted, what will be the process for changing it?

Government and opposition

- Watch the political news tonight. Try and work out if the politicians you see belong to the government or the opposition (ministers belong to the government and shadow ministers belong to the opposition). Note how long the ministers speak compared to the shadow ministers. What do you notice? What conclusions do you draw?

Law-making

- Run a parliamentary role-play in your classroom. Instructions and scripts are available at <http://www.peo.gov.au/teachers/diy.html> Have fun!

Parliamentary places

- The year is 2020. A new parliament house is required. Run a 'Design a new Australian Parliament House competition'. As a class develop the criteria that the plans must meet, for example:
 - A design that represents Australian values and culture.
 - At least two chambers to accommodate a bigger parliament-say, 240 members of the House of Representatives and 120 senators.
 - Office space to accommodate, say, 8000 staff during sitting weeks.
 - Areas set aside for a parliamentary library, committee rooms and the press.

- Recreation facilities e.g. gym, swimming pool, cafeterias, shops etc.
- Something unexpected!

Parliament today

- Create a pie chart for the House of Representatives and another for the Senate. Use different colours to identify different parties and independents.
- Predict how parliament might change in the future. Explain your ideas.
- Create and name three imaginary parties and explain what they stand for.
- Explore the possibility of five major parties competing to form government in the House of Representatives. What are the possibilities? How might this situation affect representation? Law-making? Policy?

Reflection

- Decide on the best and worsts things that have happened in our parliamentary history.
- In your view, what event in Australian history has had the biggest impact on our parliament?
- What would you define as the most significant stages of growth in Australian democracy?

Integration

- History, maths (percentages/ratios).
- Science and technology: Designing a new Parliament House.

Literacy notes

This unit provides opportunities for students to increase their parliamentary knowledge; to draft a procedural document and to participate in a role-play.

Resources

Get *Parliament*, magazine available from the Parliamentary Education Office.

See http://www.peo.gov.au/publications/get_parliament.html

Links

- Video - Making a Law: <http://www.peo.gov.au/multimedia/video/makingALaw/transcript.html>
- Video - What is Parliament: <http://www.peo.gov.au/multimedia/video/whatIsParliament/transcript.html>
- Parliamentary Education Office Resources: <http://www.peo.gov.au/publications/index.html>
- Current information about parliament: http://www.peo.gov.au/students/now_parl.html
- Historical parliamentary information: <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22handbook%2Fnewhandbook%2F2008-12-19%2F0069%22>