

# Accountability

## 1. Create an accountability quiz

Devise a quiz about how the Parliament keeps the government accountable. Write a list of ten questions and answers. For example, you could ask questions like 'What is Hansard?' Find a partner and take it in turns to answer each other's questions.



## 2. Discuss the ways in which the opposition and minor parties and Independents closely examine the work of the government

To find out more, check these links on the PEO website:

[www.peo.gov.au/faq/faq\\_17.html](http://www.peo.gov.au/faq/faq_17.html)

[www.peo.gov.au/students/fss/fss22.html](http://www.peo.gov.au/students/fss/fss22.html)

[www.peo.gov.au/students/fss/fss14.html](http://www.peo.gov.au/students/fss/fss14.html)

## 3. Draw a political cartoon for a daily newspaper

Political cartoons use satire to draw attention to the actions of the Parliament. Create your own cartoon that comments on a recent event in Parliament, for example something said by a member of parliament or a new policy announced by one of the political parties.

For inspiration, check out examples of political cartoons on the National Museum of Australia site:

[www.nma.gov.au/exhibitions/online\\_exhibitions/cartoons/](http://www.nma.gov.au/exhibitions/online_exhibitions/cartoons/)

or look at examples in major daily newspapers.

## 4. Research the role and history of Hansard

Hansard reporters provide a written record of what is said in Parliament. Find out more about the history of Hansard and explain in your own report how Hansard plays a part in keeping the Parliament accountable.

To find out more about Hansard, check these links:

[www.peo.gov.au/students/fss/fss44.html](http://www.peo.gov.au/students/fss/fss44.html)

[www.peo.gov.au/faq/faq\\_13.html](http://www.peo.gov.au/faq/faq_13.html)

To view Hansard, follow this link:

<http://www.aph.gov.au/hansard/index.htm>



## 5. Explore how the Parliament closely investigates the work of the government

You could watch Question Time in the House of Representatives and/or a Senate committee of inquiry.

Discuss with the class:

- What is the purpose of Question Time or a Senate committee?
- How does it work?
- Who asks the questions and why?
- How effective was it in examining the actions of the government or investigating an issue?

Compare the processes of Question Time and the Senate committee. How are they similar or different?

You can watch a Senate committee live or replays of Question Time by following this link on the Australian Parliament House website (to find out when Senate committees are held, check the schedule on the link):

[webcast.aph.gov.au/livebroadcasting/](http://webcast.aph.gov.au/livebroadcasting/)

## 6. Research a parliamentary committee

Write a report on a parliamentary committee. Include in your report:

- the name of the committee and whether it is a Senate, House or Joint committee
- an inquiry that it is undertaking
- a summary of the terms of reference of the inquiry (what the committee is investigating)
- any recommendations made by the committee.



To find out more about committees follow this link:

[www.aph.gov.au/committee/index.htm](http://www.aph.gov.au/committee/index.htm)

Current inquiries and recent reports are listed by subject matter and committee.

## 7. Scrutinising the media

The media play a role in informing the public about the Parliament and keeping the government accountable. Find three news reports (in newspapers, on TV, radio or an internet news service) about an issue currently before the Parliament; for example, a report about a new bill or an announcement made by either the government or the opposition.

Compare the way this issue is covered in different types of media. Are there any differences in the way it is reported? Do you think the media can influence public opinion? If so, is this a good or a bad thing?

## 8. Democracy vs dictatorship

Hold a class discussion or debate to compare democracy and dictatorship. How does scrutiny of democratic leaders or dictators differ? Are there advantages or disadvantages to each system of governance?

