

Electing members of parliament

1. Create an election quiz

Devise a quiz about electing members of parliament. Write a list of ten questions and answers. For example, you could ask questions like 'How often are federal elections held?' Find a partner and take it in turns to answer each other's questions.



2. Write a speech or design a poster to convince Australian voters to elect you to Parliament

You will have to decide on a slogan and think about what you want to express about yourself.

3. Imagine you are a journalist who has been asked to write an article about your federal electorate

Use 'who, what, when, where, why' questions to collect information. For example, 'when was your electorate established?' and 'who is your federal member'? Alternatively, you could investigate a senator who represents your state. Check out these links:

Australian Electoral Commission
<http://apps.aec.gov.au/eseach/>

Australian Parliament House
www.aph.gov.au/house/members/mi-alpha.asp
www.aph.gov.au/senate/senators/index.htm#sph

4. Conduct a class election using preferential voting

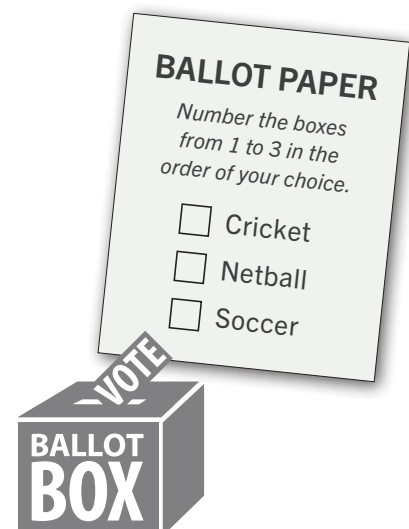
As a class, decide on a theme or topic to vote on. For example, the election could be about favourite bands, television programs, sports or school subjects. Create a ballot paper listing the top three candidates.

Each student receives one ballot paper. Number the candidates from one to three in order of your choice. Make sure you number all three boxes. Place your folded ballot paper in a ballot box. The vote should be conducted in secret.

Use the preferential voting system to discover the results of your class election.

To find out how an election is conducted using preferential voting, look at 'How Preferential Voting Works' on p.10 of *Get Parliament* or check this link on the Australian Electoral Commission website:

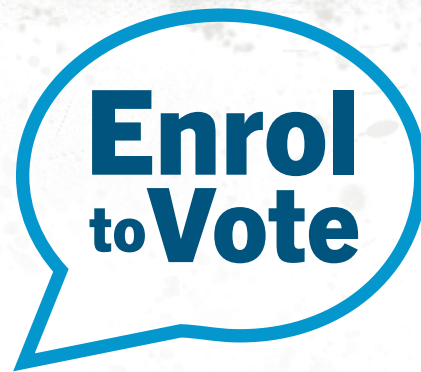
www.aec.gov.au/Voting/counting/hor_count.htm



5. Devise a campaign encouraging 18 year olds to enrol to vote

Before the 2010 federal election, nearly one million Australians aged between 18 and 24 were not enrolled to vote. How would you convince young Australians to have a say about who runs the country?

During the 2010 federal election the Australian Electoral Commission ran a video competition called 'Famous People Vote Too'. You could check out the entries by doing an internet search.



6. Lowering the voting age

It has been suggested that the voting age be lowered from 18 to 16. Should 16 and 17 year olds have the right to vote? Give reasons for your answer.

To find out more follow these links:

www.abc.net.au/pm/content/2008/s2637958.htm

www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/09/23/2694432.htm

7. Compulsory voting

Australia is one of the few countries in the world where voting is compulsory. This means all eligible Australians must vote at federal elections. Discuss the pros and cons of compulsory voting.

To find out more about compulsory voting, check out the 'Voting' section on the Australian Electoral Commission site:

www.aec.gov.au/Voting/index.htm



8. The impact of social media on federal election campaigns

Social media sites like Facebook, YouTube and Twitter are increasingly being used by political parties to get their message out to voters. Has this affected the way election campaigns are run? Does social networking allow parties to engage more directly with the community?

To find out more do a search on the internet.

You could also check out these links:

<http://news.anu.edu.au/?p=3161>

www.thewire.org.au/audio/WWtwitter%20and%20the%20greens.mp3

