

PARTICIPATION CASE STUDY LESSON PLAN

→ Teacher Guide

| Level | Learning Area | Strands | Topic |
|--------|------------------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| 9 & 10 | Humanities: Civics and citizenship | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government and democracy | Participation Case Study |

Overview

The aim of this lesson plan is to give teachers a range of ideas and activities to:

- Encourage students to be more aware of issues facing their community and how they can make their voices heard
- Review the different ways citizens can participate in the political process
- Review the origins, and start to understand the role of, political parties in Australia's system of government
- Start to understand how government policy is shaped and developed
- Begin to consider the challenges of sustaining a resilient democracy and develop a case study of political participation
- Encourage student engagement with the Parliament of Victoria.

Curriculum Links

Victorian Curriculum F-10

| Level | Learning Area | Strands | Curriculum Code |
|--------|--------------------------------|--|------------------------|
| 9 & 10 | Civics and citizenship | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government and democracy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discuss the role of political parties and independent representatives in Australia's system of government and explain the process by which government policy is shaped and developed | VCCCG028 |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Citizenship, Diversity and Identity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discuss challenges to and ways of sustaining a resilient democracy and cohesive society | VCCCC036 |
| | Capabilities | Strand | Curriculum Code |
| | Critical and creative thinking | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Questions and Possibilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Investigate the characteristics of effective questions in different contexts to examine information | VCCCTQ043 |

Learning Goals

By the end of these lessons, students will be able to:

- Understand further the different ways citizens can participate in the political process and the strengths and weaknesses of different types of political participation
- Explore the origins, purposes, objectives and constituencies of political parties and research various political parties or interest groups in Victoria
- Evaluate the values of a political party in light of their own personal values
- Develop a case study of political participation: political parties or interest groups

Resources and Materials

Included for this lesson plan are:

- Teacher guide or summary
- Teacher instructions: learning activities
- *Evaluate ways to take action and participate* worksheet
- *Comparing policies of the main parties* worksheet
- *Assessment task* worksheet

You will need:

- Poster paper for the mind-map activity
- A4 paper for students to make pamphlets
- Student access to PowerPoint or another presentation software package if used
- Parliament posters: A set of posters introducing Members of the Legislative Council, Legislative Assembly, Members Born Overseas and Victorian Electorates. Free copies available by contacting educationinfo@parliament.vic.gov.au
- Access to the internet:
 - Online state based newspapers
 - www.parliament.vic.gov.au to research purpose and nature of political parties
 - www.vec.vic.gov.au to research the steps required to register a political party
 - relevant external sites for additional research

Teacher background reference:

- www.parliament.vic.gov.au/images/stories/Education/Secondary_workbook.pdf
- www.parliament.vic.gov.au/committees/get-involved/giving-evidence
- www.parliament.vic.gov.au/committees/get-involved/making-a-submission
- www.vec.vic.gov.au/SchoolsAndCommunity/Schools.html
- passport.vec.vic.gov.au

Learning Activities Summary

1. Warm-up: Why should I care?
2. Participation mind mapping activity
3. Evaluating ways of participating
4. Political Parties: present your understanding (option: Power point presentation or assessment task)
5. Political Parties and me: Values match-up
6. Participating through Political Parties - How To Guide
7. Extension: It's Party Time! ... Starting My Own Political Party

Achievement Standard

By the end of these lessons students will meet the needs of the achievement standards in Levels 9 and 10 Civics and Citizenship by being able to:

- Explain some features of Australia's system of government
- Start to identify and analyse the influences on people's electoral choices
- Start to identify and evaluate a range of factors which sustain democratic societies
- Begin to understand and analyse ways they they can be active and informed citizens

ASSESSMENT TASK: REPORT

Political parties - present your understanding

One of the ways students can take direct action in the political process is to join a political party. It is important for students to understand the purpose and nature of political parties, as well as understand the current political parties in Victoria.

By completing this task students will:

- Explore the origins, purposes, objectives and constituencies of political parties in Victoria
- Start to understand the role of political parties in Australia's system of government
- Build their skills in research, comprehension and evaluation.

Resources:

- www.parliament.vic.gov.au
 - See About Parliament, go to Parliamentary System, go to Political Parties
 - See Members
- Parliament posters
- Use the website of the political party you have chosen to research in detail - remember to focus on the Victorian Branch.

Answer the following focus questions:

1. What is a political party and explain the concept of a political party in simple terms.
2. What do we call it when two political parties join together to form government? What do you think could be some of the challenges when this happens? What could be some of the advantages?
3. Describe the history of one of these parties: The Labor Party (historically known as the Democratic Labor Party), the Liberal Party, the Nationals
4. Name the eight political parties currently represented in the Victorian Parliament. Include their name, logo and slogan where appropriate. Find out how many members of these parties are in the Legislative Assembly and how many are in the Legislative Council.

5. Choose one party to look at in more detail. Research and explain:
 - the leader
 - the party's main platforms, ideals and policies - what do they believe in and stand for?
 - Analyse the symbolism of their logo.
 - Briefly outline the process you would have to go through to become a member of that party including any costs.

Independent members

Sometimes in Parliament members are elected as independents, that is, they are not part of a political party. Think about the advantages of being an independent member as well as any limitations or difficulties. There is one independent member in the current Parliament of Victoria, Suzanna Sheed. Find out as much as you about her including:

- How long she has been in Parliament
- Is she in the Legislative Assembly or the Legislative Council?
- The electoral district she represents
- Some details about her personal history and interests

Extended response question:

Explain in your own words the strengths and weaknesses of the political party system in Victoria. What are the benefits of this system? How might it be flawed? Did you learn anything new about the political party system you did not know before? Explain your answer.