

ACTIVITY

What is Parliament?



Imagine these situations in your school. **Read each, and decide how you feel about it.** You can make some notes or write your answers in the empty box alongside each situation. Then cut out and paste the best description from the text boxes over the page.



1

Your teacher wants to know where you would like to go for a day's outing – on a picnic, to a film, to a skating rink, to a video game arcade, or to a shopping centre.

She tells you that to decide she will ask one student, and whatever answer he/she gives is where you will all go.

Is this a good way of making a decision? Discuss it, and explain your reasons.

Write your reasons here:

Paste the best description from the next page **HERE.**

2

The school principal wants to know if students would rather have uniforms or free dress.

You have a Student Council and it will get to make this decision for the whole school. Each class has a representative on this Council. Your class representative makes a decision on this issue without talking to anyone else in the class.

Is this a good way of making a decision? Discuss it, and explain your reasons.

Write your reasons here:

Paste the best description from the next page **HERE.**

3

The school is invited to be part of a special quiz program on TV. The prize money that is won will be used to improve the school's facilities.

Only one student can compete on the show. Every student from the youngest to the oldest is eligible. One name is randomly drawn out of a hat.

Is this a good way of making a decision? Discuss it, and explain your reasons.

Write your reasons here:

Paste the best description from the next page **HERE.**



What is Parliament?

In this situation the problem is that the class, the people, did not get a say. One person made the decision for them.

In this situation the problem is that you have a representative, but that representative did not do his or her job, which was to find out what you wanted and then go with the majority opinion.

In this situation the problem is that not everybody could have done the job of representing the school equally well. In a quiz show you need the person with the best general knowledge. The school had less chance of being successful because it did not necessarily have the best possible representative.

These three situations all tell us something about democracy and our government. This is how decisions are made which lead to laws for the State of Victoria.

Our parliamentary system aims to avoid the problems in these three situations.



SITUATION ONE

EVERYONE GETS TO HAVE A SAY, THROUGH VOTING

SITUATION TWO

WE ELECT REPRESENTATIVES TO PUT FORWARD WHAT THE MAJORITY OF THE VOTERS WANT

SITUATION THREE

WE TRY TO SELECT THE BEST PERSON FOR THE JOB WHEN WE VOTE

SO PARLIAMENT IS ALL ABOUT PEOPLE VOTING TO SELECT A PERSON TO REPRESENT THEM, AND TO MAKE THE BEST DECISIONS AND LAWS FOR THEM.

VOTERS ELECT PEOPLE TO REPRESENT THEM IN PARLIAMENT

THESE ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES SIT IN PARLIAMENT TO MAKE LAWS FOR ALL VICTORIANS

