

# Parliament of Victoria

## Taking action: Evaluating the options



Teacher notes and  
student activities

---

# Taking Action

## Evaluating the options

### Teacher notes

Students may not be aware that, even though they are not eligible to vote, they can still have their voices heard and can engage with the parliamentary process. The questions and activities below will help students to identify the different ways they can have their voices heard, as well as evaluate the effectiveness of these actions. This is designed to be flexible, where students can complete activities individually, in pairs, small groups or expert groups, or as part of class discussion.

The activity asks students to evaluate the different actions they can take to help have their voices heard. One way to introduce this activity is by asking students to brainstorm different actions and then compare these actions to those listed.

Students or groups can select either one or a number of the different actions and write a process/es for how they might take these actions.

### Questions students might like to consider include:

- Who are the people you would need to contact? And how might you contact them?
- Are there any requirements for contact, e.g. particular forms that you need to fill out?
- Are there any rules or laws that you need to abide (stick) by?
- Who is your audience? Is it one person, a few people, or many people?
- Why would these people be interested in your cause or what you have to say?
- How might this action influence parliament?

If different groups have focused on different actions, students can compare their responses and do a further evaluation of the action by responding to the question:

- Which action seems like it would be more effective? Why?
  - Some things to consider include: the number of people the message will reach; the number of people with influence who will see the message; time; budgets; and more ...

### **Further prompts for class discussion:**

- Which actions are direct ways to influence what happens in Parliament (i.e. they involve having your voice heard directly)?
- Which actions are indirect ways to influence what happens in Parliament? (i.e. they may swap public opinion or lead to more awareness about the issue)
- Looking at this list – they are all examples of ‘taking action’. How might this list help us move towards an understanding of the term ‘Active Citizen’?
- Why is it important to have ‘Active Citizens’ in a representative democracy?

### **Planning for action**

Students can select an action they would like to take on a chosen topic. Using the processes for taking action that they identified above, they can design an action plan and take action.

- Why have you chosen that action and how do you think it will help your voice be heard on your chosen issue?
- What do you think the outcome of your action plan will be?
- What is your message?
  - Issues you would like to highlight, but also possible solutions
- What evidence do you have to support what you would like to see happen?
- What resources (help, time, money, materials) might you need to take action?
- What action would you like other people to take?

## Student Activities

### Evaluating the impact of your actions

Below is a list of some the different actions you could take to influence Parliament.

- Peaceful protest
- Organise a flash mob
- Email a politician
- Design a social media post
- Write a letter to the editor
- Make a website
- Contact your local MP
- Organise an art show
- Speak at an assembly
- Write an article for your local newspaper
- Make a speech
- Make a podcast
- Make a short film
- Create or sign a petition

Looking at the list of actions, answer the following questions:

- Are there ones that you were not aware of, or that you are surprised by? What examples of these actions can you think of? Did they help the person or people to be heard?
- How might these activities help to have your voice heard?
- Rank them in order of effectiveness. Why do you think some might be more effective than others?
- Which ones were most appealing to you? Why? Did this change after exploring the different actions more closely?

### Analysing your action

- Which methods do you think would be most effective?
  - Complete a SWOT analysis of your chosen action.

Strengths	Weaknesses
Opportunities	Threats