

Talking Democracy

A civic education kit about
elections in Victoria



Facilitator guide

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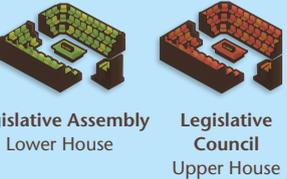
With your class or community group, watch the two animations found at vec.vic.gov.au/talkingdemocracy and use this guide to facilitate activities and group discussion. If internet access is limited, you can download a series of eight storyboards from the link above or call the Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) on 131 832 to order hard copies.

Introduction	How to deliver	Content	Key electoral concepts
	<p>Introduce the animation to students: Mohammed needs to call the Victorian Electoral Commission (or VEC) to get some help with his homework.</p>	<p>Good morning, this is the Victorian Electoral Commission. My name is Sonia. How may I help you?</p> <p><i>Hi, my name is Mohammed. I am a student and I have homework about the Australian government and elections. My teacher told me to ring you for information. Can I ask you some questions?</i></p> <p>Hi Mohammed, yes, I can give you the information you need. What would you like to know?</p>	<p>Victorian Electoral Commission is also called VEC</p>

Why voting is important	How to deliver	Content	Key electoral concepts
 <p>Australia is a democracy</p>	<p>Most students will have a basic understanding of democracy. They may have experienced it in their home country.</p> <p>Your task here is to help students understand what Australian democracy is and why it is important to vote.</p> <p>Steps</p> <hr/> <p>Take students through the animation or story boards.</p> <hr/> <p>Use a question and answer style to encourage participation.</p>	<p><i>Why does the teacher say that voting is important in Australia?</i></p> <p>Because Australia is a democracy. We vote for people who make laws and decide on services for us. That is why voting is very important.</p>	<p>Understanding democracy</p> <hr/> <p>Importance of voting</p> <hr/> <p>Legislation and laws</p>

Levels of Government	How to deliver	Content	Key electoral concepts
<p style="text-align: center;">Federal</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">State</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">Local</p> 	<p>Watch the animation. Ensure students understand the difference between Federal, State and local council.</p> <p>Steps</p> <hr/> <p>Take students through the content.</p> <hr/> <p>Use question and answer style to encourage participation.</p>	<p><i>How many levels of government are there in Australia?</i></p> <p>In Australia, there are three levels of government: Federal, State and local.</p>	<p>Three levels of government</p> <hr/> <p>Federal</p> <hr/> <p>State</p> <hr/> <p>Local Government is also known as local council</p>

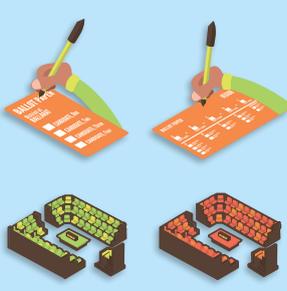
Federal Government	How to deliver	Content	Key electoral concepts
<p>Parliament of Australia</p>   <p>Prime Minister</p>   <p>House of Representatives Lower House</p> <p>Senate Upper House</p>	<p>In this activity students learn to identify services provided by the Federal Government.</p> <p>Through this process, students should consider why it is important to vote in a Federal election.</p> <p>Steps</p> <p>Place all the government services cards out. Ask students to identify and match services provided by the Federal Government.</p>	<p><i>How do they differ?</i></p> <p>This is Australia’s Parliament House. It has two houses: House of Representatives (or Lower House) and Senate (or Upper House).</p> <p>The Federal Government is in Canberra. It makes decisions for all of Australia. For example: immigration, tax, Centrelink, Medicare and defence.</p> <p>The leader of the Federal Government is the Prime Minister.</p>	<p>Federal Government</p> <hr/> <p>Federal Parliament</p> <hr/> <p>Parliament House</p> <hr/> <p>House of Representatives or Lower House</p> <hr/> <p>Senate or Upper House</p> <hr/> <p>Prime Minister</p>

<p>State Government</p>	<p>How to deliver</p>	<p>Content</p>	<p>Key electoral concepts</p>
<p>Parliament of Victoria</p>   <p>Premier</p>   <p>Legislative Assembly Lower House</p> <p>Legislative Council Upper House</p>	<p>In this activity students learn to identify services provided by the State Government.</p> <p>Through this process, students should consider why it is important to vote in a State election.</p> <p>Steps</p> <p>From the remaining government services cards ask students to identify services provided by the State Government.</p>	<p><i>What about the State Government?</i></p> <p>This is Parliament House Victoria.</p> <p>It also has two houses: Legislative Assembly (or Lower House) and Legislative Council (or Upper House).</p> <p>The Victorian Government is in Melbourne.</p> <p>It makes decisions for the State of Victoria. For example: schools, hospitals, public transport, housing and police.</p> <p>The leader of the State Government is the Premier.</p>	<p>State Government</p> <hr/> <p>Victorian Parliament</p> <hr/> <p>Parliament House</p> <hr/> <p>Premier</p> <hr/> <p>Legislative Assembly or Lower House</p> <hr/> <p>Legislative Council or Upper House</p>

Local government	How to deliver	Content	Key electoral concepts
<p>Local council</p>   <p>Mayor</p> 	<p>In this activity students learn to identify services provided by local councils.</p> <p>Through this process, students should consider why it is important to vote in a council election.</p> <p>Steps</p> <p>From the remaining government services cards ask students to identify if they are all council services. Ask students to do a final review of where they have placed all the cards and move any they believe are in the wrong place.</p> <p>Then review all the cards and explain any that are in the wrong government level section.</p>	<p><i>And Local Government?</i></p> <p>Local Government or local council.</p> <p>You vote in the council area in which you live.</p> <p>Local councils make decisions about local issues.</p> <p>Councils look after rubbish collection, parks, community centres, childcare, parking, libraries, swimming pools, youth centres, cultural festivals and other services.</p> <p>The leader of your local council is the Mayor.</p>	<p>Local government</p> <hr/> <p>Local council</p> <hr/> <p>Mayor</p>

What does the VEC do?	How to deliver	Content	Key electoral concepts
<p>Runs elections</p>  <p>State</p>  <p>Local</p> <p>Looks after electoral roll</p>  <p>Teaches people how to vote</p> 	<p>Some students may have never heard of the VEC. It is important that students understand the VEC is independent of government.</p> <p>Steps</p> <p>Take students through the content.</p> <p>Use question and answer style to encourage participation.</p> <p>Show students what an enrolment form looks like – ask ‘Have you enrolled to vote?’</p>	<p>What does the Victorian Electoral Commission do?</p> <p>The VEC is an independent organisation. We are not a government department. We run State and Local Government elections, and other community polls. We teach people how to vote correctly. We also look after the electoral roll.</p> <p>What is the electoral roll?</p> <p>It is a list of Australian citizens aged 18 and over who have enrolled to vote. It shows their name and current address.</p>	<p>Victorian Electoral Commission</p> <hr/> <p>Independent</p> <hr/> <p>Elections</p> <hr/> <p>Electoral roll</p>

Who can vote?	How to deliver	Content	Key electoral concepts
<p>Over 18 years</p>  <p>Australian citizen</p>  <p>Enrolled</p> 	<p>This information is very important. Take time to support students through the content.</p> <p>Steps</p> <p>Take students through the content.</p> <p>Use question and answer style to encourage participation.</p>	<p>Who can vote in Australia?</p> <p>All Australian citizens aged 18 and over must enrol and must vote at every Federal, State and local council election.</p> <p>Non-citizens who pay council rates can enrol to vote at council elections only. This is a special rule.</p> <p>Are you enrolled to vote?</p> <p>No.</p> <p>Are you an Australian citizen and over 18 years old?</p> <p>Yes. I am. How do I enrol?</p> <p>You can get an enrolment form from a post office, fill it in and send it to the VEC. If you want help to fill in a form, please ring us on 131 832 or on an interpreter line 9209 0112.</p> <p>You can also get one from our website vec.vic.gov.au</p> <p>Thank you for the information. I will get an enrolment form after this conversation.</p> <p>What happens if I move house?</p> <p>It is very important that you let us know if you move to a new place or change your name. You can use an enrolment form to update your details and send it to us.</p>	<p>Australian citizen</p> <hr/> <p>Enrolment forms</p> <hr/> <p>How to get help to enrol to vote</p> <hr/> <p>When to update personal details on the electoral roll</p>

How do I vote?	How to deliver	Content	Key electoral concepts
<p>Lower House Upper House</p>  <p>Ballot box</p> 	<p>This is an optional activity. The VEC can teach your students how to vote. However, you can teach your students using this information.</p> <p>Steps</p> <hr/> <p>Watch the animation.</p> <hr/> <p>Demonstrate how to complete Lower House and Upper House ballot papers.</p> <hr/> <p>Check if students understand.</p> <hr/> <p>Distribute ballot papers and pens.</p> <hr/> <p>Ask students to complete the ballot papers.</p> <hr/> <p>Go around the room to see if students know what to do.</p> <hr/> <p>Give them about 2 minutes, then check if they have finished.</p> <hr/> <p>Collect ballot papers and check if the students have voted correctly.</p>	<p><i>How do I vote?</i></p> <p>In Australia, we use numbers when voting. Let's look at how to vote correctly in Victorian State elections. You get two ballot papers: a smaller one for the Lower House and a bigger one for the Upper House.</p> <p>To vote for the Lower House, write 1 next to the name of the candidate you would most like to win the election. Then write 2 for the candidate you like second, 3 for the one you like third and so on, until every box is numbered.</p> <p>To vote for the Upper House, you can vote above-the-line or below-the-line.</p> <p>To vote above-the-line, pick one party who you want to win and write the number 1 in a box next to the party's name above the black line.</p> <p>To vote below-the-line, you need to pick at least five candidates.</p> <p>Write the number 1 in the box next to the candidate you would most like to win the election. Then write 2 for the candidate you like second, 3 for the one you like third, 4 for the one you like fourth and 5 for the one you like fifth. You can number more candidates if you wish, but you must choose at least five candidates.</p> <p><i>Can the VEC teach us how to vote?</i></p> <p>Yes, we can. Please contact us. We can come to you and teach your community how to vote.</p> <p><i>Do I have to vote if I am overseas when there is an election?</i></p> <p>You are encouraged to vote, but you will not be fined if you do not vote. Please keep your tickets to show us that you were overseas.</p>	<p>Use numbers only when voting.</p> <hr/> <p>Victorian State election – two ballot papers:</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Lower House (smaller ballot paper)</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Upper House (bigger ballot paper).</p> <hr/> <p>People are encouraged to vote, but they will not be fined if they do not vote while overseas. They will receive a please explain letter. The VEC advises people to keep their travel document to show us that they were overseas.</p> <hr/> <p>Candidates</p>

Conclusion	How to deliver	Content	Key electoral concepts
	<p>Finish watching the animation with your class.</p> <p>Ask if they have any final questions</p>	<p><i>Hmmm, ok. I think I can do my homework now. Thank you very much for your help.</i></p> <p>If you need more information you can visit our website vec.vic.gov.au, send an email to info@vec.vic.gov.au or ring us again.</p> <p>We also have an interpreter line 9209 0112 or contact us on 133 677 through the National Relay Service. We will be happy to help you.</p> <p><i>Thank you. Bye</i></p> <p>Bye Mohammed. Good luck with your homework.</p>	<p>How to contact the VEC if students need assistance with enrolling or voting.</p>

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