



Teacher Resource

History of Democracy

Focus Questions

1. Summarise the History of Democracy story.
2. What ancient civilisation came up with the idea of democracy?
3. What does democracy mean?
4. What type of government was common during the Middle Ages?
 - a. Democracy
 - b. Monarchy
 - c. Anarchy
5. What year was the Magna Carta created?
6. How did the Magna Carta impact on England's kings and queens?
7. When did America become democratic?
8. What is a constitution?
9. What is the role of a politician?
10. What questions do you have about this story?

Activity: Class Discussion

Discuss the BTN History of Democracy story as a class. Ask students to record what they know about democracy. What questions do they have? Use the following questions to guide discussion:

- Where does the word *democracy* come from?
- What is democracy? Come up with a class definition.
- Australia is a democratic society. What does this mean?
- How would our lives be different without democracy?



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KEY LEARNING

Students will learn more about significant events in Australian democracy.

CURRICULUM

Civics and Citizenship – Year 5

The key values that underpin Australia's democratic system of government.

Civics and Citizenship – Year 6

The key institutions of Australia's democratic system of government and how it is based on the Westminster system.

The responsibilities of electors and representatives in Australia's democracy.

History – Year 6

Key figures, events and ideas that led to Australia's Federation and Constitution.

Experiences of Australian democracy and citizenship, including the status and rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, migrants, women and children.

Activity: Glossary

Create your own glossary about democracy. Start by brainstorming words using a mind map to record your ideas. Add to your list of words by downloading the BTN History of Democracy story transcript and highlighting all the words that relate to democracy. Find definitions for each word.

DEMOCRACY	REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY	MONARCHY
MAGNA CARTA	CONSTITUTIONAL DEMOCRACY	PARLIAMENT

Activity: Democracy Research

After watching and discussing the BTN History of Democracy story, what questions do students have? The following KWLH organiser provides students with a framework to explore their knowledge on this topic and consider what they would like to know and learn.

<i>What do I <u>know</u>?</i>	<i>What do I <u>want</u> to know?</i>	<i>What have I <u>learnt</u>?</i>	<i><u>How</u> will I find out?</i>

- Compared to some parliaments around the world, Australia’s is quite young, but it is based on practices and ideals from parliaments in centuries past. Research the origins of parliament and present your findings in a timeline which highlights significant events. Find similarities and differences between ancient parliament and Australia’s parliament now.
- Magna Carta has become a powerful symbol of our rights and freedoms. Why was Magna Carta originally created? What would life be like if Magna Carta didn’t exist? This [British Library video](#) explains more.
- Investigate the key values that underpin Australia’s democratic system of government: freedom, equality, fairness and justice. What does each value mean to you? Why are these values important?
- What are the benefits of democracy? Is everyone’s experience of democracy the same?

Activity: Telling the story of Australian democracy

Take a look at this fun and engaging infographic, [The Story of Our Freedom](#), to get a picture of the origins of democracy and how it has influenced our rights and freedoms today.



Students can then create their own timeline highlighting the main events that led to democracy in Australia. Research the origins of democracy and what democracy looks like in Australia today. Include three significant facts about each event. Reflect on ways in which people in ancient societies were represented and compare to Australia today.

Activity: Representative democracy

In Australia we have something called a representative democracy. That means that unlike in ancient Greece where everyone went to meet and vote on laws, we elect a representative to do that for us. They're our politicians and they represent us in parliament. It's their responsibility to keep in touch with their voters and make sure their voices are heard on a national level.

What makes a good representative?

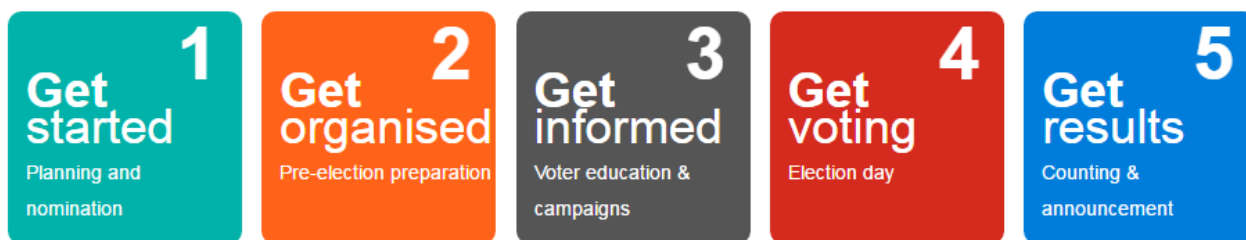
Ask students to think about the following question: What do you think makes a good representative? Brainstorm and list what a good representative 'is', 'does', 'does not' and 'says'. Record their ideas. Here are some examples:

- honest
- good at communicating
- confident
- has a positive attitude
- commitment
- creative
- inspiring

Run your own election

Running an election for your class provides the opportunity for students to participate in the democratic process of choosing representatives for a range of purposes. Students will run their own election and investigate how the preferential voting system works.

Watch [BTN's Preferential Voting story](#) to find out why people's preferences matter on election day. Visit the Australian Electoral Commission's [Get Voting website](#). Get voting is everything you need to run a free and fair election for your class.



Activity: Visual literacy

In this activity students will examine, analyse and query a range of images which show significant moments in Australia's history of democracy. Students will choose one or more of the images below and respond to the following:

- What is happening in the image? Create a caption for each image.
- How does the image make you feel?
- What does the image tell you about democracy in Australia?
- What questions do you have about what you see in the image?



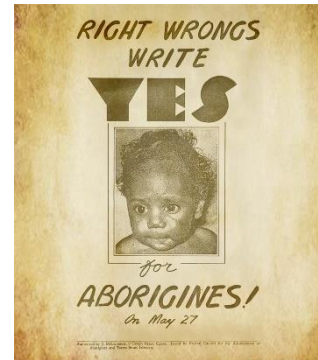
[MoAD](#)



[MoAD](#)



[MoAD](#)



[AIATSIS](#)

Further investigation

Students can find and collect images, photographs and illustrations that represent the history of democracy in Australia. Students can organise and sequence their pictures in the form of a timeline.

Activity: Women in Politics Timeline

Students create a timeline showing significant political milestones for Australian women. Use the timeline template at the end of this activity to record key dates and milestones. Students can use the following questions to guide their research:

- When did women get the right to vote in Australia?
- Which state first gave women the right to vote?
- When were women first given the right to stand for Federal Parliament in Australia?
- When were Australian Aboriginal women given the right to vote?
- Who was the first woman to be elected to the House of Representatives?
- Who was the first woman to be elected in the Senate?
- Who was Australia's first female Prime Minister?

Women in Politics Timeline

Create a timeline showing significant political milestones for Australian women. List an interesting fact for each significant event listed on your timeline.

Date	Significant event

Activity: 1967 Referendum

The BTN [1967 Referendum story](#) explains how a majority of Australians voted to change our country's laws to count Indigenous Australians as full citizens. Students watch the story and then respond to the following questions.

1. Did Aboriginal people have equal rights to other Australians in the 1960s? Explain.
2. In what year were Indigenous Australians given the right to vote in Federal Elections?
3. To change the constitution there has to be a referendum. True or false?
4. What is a referendum?
5. In 1967 what percent of Australians voted 'yes' to change the constitution?
6. Discuss why it is important to remember Australia's 1967 referendum.
7. How do you think being left out of the Constitution affected Aboriginal people?



Activity: Museum of Democracy Digital Excursion

The Museum of Australian Democracy's Digital Excursions bring Old Parliament House directly into the classroom. These digital programs allow Museum Educators to connect with students in real time and guide them through the building to explore some key people and events in our democracy. Students participate in interactive activities and discussions to learn more about their role as active citizens and our democratic history. Find out more [here](#)



Activity: Democracy Quiz

1. Who created the first form of democracy?

A. Ancient Greece

B. Ancient Rome

C. Ancient Egypt

2. In which year did Federation occur?

A. 1899

B. 1900

C. 1901

3. In Australia, the public doesn't vote in a Prime Minister.

A. True

B. False

4. In which city did parliament first meet?

A. Canberra

B. Melbourne

C. Sydney

5. Who does the Governor-General represent in Australia?

A. Prime Minister

B. The people

C. The Queen

6. How many levels of government are there in Australia?

A. 1

B. 2

C. 3

7. Voting in Australia is NOT compulsory.

A. True

B. False

8. At what age is it compulsory for an Australian citizen to vote?

A. 16 years old

B. 18 years old

C. 21 years old

9. When was a referendum held to change the Constitution so that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were counted in the census?

A. 1901

B. 1962

C. 1967

10. Victoria was the first state to give women the right to vote.

A. True

B. False

Quiz Answers: 1A, 2C, 3A, 4B, 5C, 6C, 7B, 8B, 9C, 10B, South Australia was the first state to give women the vote.

Useful Websites

- [Defining Democracy](#) – Museum of Australian Democracy
- [Democracy](#) - Parliamentary Education Office
- [Milestones in Australian democracy](#) – MOAD
- [What is Democracy?](#) – BTN
- [Magna Carta](#) – BTN
- [History of Voting](#) – BTN
- [Australian Women in Politics](#) – BTN
- [1967 Referendum](#) – BTN
- [Federation](#) – BTN
- [The story of our freedom](#) – Human Rights Commission

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