



Teacher Resource

# Young Senator

## Focus Questions

Discuss the BTN story as a class and record the main points of the discussion. Students will then respond to the following:

1. How old is Charlotte Walker?
2. Charlotte is the youngest senator to be elected to Australian Parliament. True or false?
3. What state does she represent in the Australian Senate?
4. How did Charlotte become involved in politics?
5. The Senate is also known at the \_\_\_\_\_ house.

## Activity: Class Discussion

After watching the BTN story, hold a class discussion using the following discussion starters.

- What is the name of a person elected to the Senate?
- Who elects senators?
- How many senators are there in Australia?
- What questions would you like to ask Senator Charlotte Walker?



## Activity: Ask a Question

Do you have a question about the Senate or senators that you would like to ask as a class? Send it into the PEO's [Your questions on notice](#)

Below is an example from the PEO's Your Questions on Notice.

- *"What are the similarities and differences between the Senate and the House of Representatives?"*
- *"How can a member of government also be part of the Senate?"*
- *"Are the politicians that run for the House of Representatives the same as those that run for the Senate?"*



### EPISODE 4

24 February 2026

### KEY LEARNING

Students will learn about what a senator does and the role of the Senate in Australian parliament.

### CURRICULUM

#### Civics and Citizenship – Year 5

The key features of the electoral process in Australia.

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

#### HASS – Year 5

The key values and features of Australia's democracy, including elections, and the roles and responsibilities of elected representatives.

#### Civics and Citizenship – Year 6

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

#### Civics and Citizenship – Year 7

Reflect on their role as a citizen in Australia's democracy.

Develop a range of questions to investigate Australia's political and legal systems.

## Activity: Key Words

Students will brainstorm a list of key words that relate to the BTN Young Senator story. Here are some words to get them started.

PARLIAMENT	SENATOR	BILL
SENATE	UPPER HOUSE	HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Ask students to write what they think is the meaning of each word (including unfamiliar words). They will swap definitions with a partner and ask them to add to or change the definition. Check these against the dictionary definition.

Further activities for students:

- Become an etymologist and study the origin and history of the word *bicameral*. Where does the word *bicameral* come from? (The term comes from the Latin meaning “two rooms” or “two houses”).
- Why do we have two houses? Which house has more power? How do the houses work together?
- Visit the Parliamentary Education Office (PEO) for a [glossary](#) to browse or search the meanings of key parliamentary terms.

## Activity: BTN Explainer

Parliament House is where decisions are made in Australia, but it's actually not just one house, it's two. Australia's parliament is made up of the Lower House and the Upper House, otherwise known as House of Representatives and the Senate.

As a class, watch [BTN's Houses](#) explainer to learn more about houses in Australian Parliament. Discuss the BTN story as a class and record the main points of the discussion. Students will then respond to the following discussion questions.

### Discussion questions

1. How many houses are there in the Australian government?
2. What is another name for the Senate?
3. What is another name for the House of Representatives?
4. Approximately how many politicians are in the House of Representatives?
5. How many senators are in the Senate?
6. What do senators do?



BTN Election Lingo – [Houses](#)

## Activity: Compare and Contrast

Students will identify similarities and differences between the Senate and the House of Representatives and organise the information they find using a T-chart. Students can use the following to guide their investigation.

	Senate	House of Representatives
Find a photo or diagram to show what it looks like.		
What is its colour scheme?		
Does it have another name?		
Main role		
Number of members		
Who do the members represent?		
Special responsibilities of its members		
Describe 3 symbols of the house (inc. photo)		
List 3 similarities between the houses		
What is one key difference between the houses?		
2 interesting facts		

## Useful Websites

- [The Senate](#) – BTN
- [Senators Fact Sheet](#) – Parliamentary Education Office
- [Senate](#) – Parliamentary Education Office
- [What happens in the Senate?](#) – ABC Education
- [The Australian Parliament: The Senate](#) – ABC Education
- [Make a Law: Senate \(classroom activities\)](#) – Parliamentary Education Office
- [Senate](#) – Parliament of Australia
- [Senators and Members](#) – Parliament of Australia
- [House of Representatives](#) – Parliamentary Education Office