



Teacher Resource

Democracy Day

Focus Questions

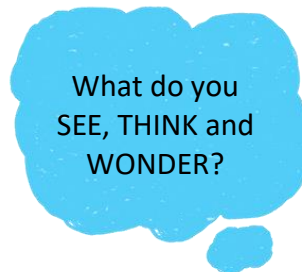
Discuss the BTN story as a class and record the main points of the discussion. Students will then respond to the following:

1. What is a monarchy? Name three countries that are monarchies.
2. What type of government do we have in Australia?
3. Democracy comes from which two Greek words?
4. What are some threats to democracy?
5. What questions do you have about the Democracy Day story?

Activity: See, Think and Wonder?

After watching the BTN Democracy Day story, students will respond to the following questions:

- What did you SEE in this video?
- What did you LEARN from this story?
- What do you WONDER about this story?
- What QUESTIONS do you have about this story?



Activity: Class Discussion

After watching the BTN Democracy Day story, hold a class discussion, using the following questions as a guide. Record student responses on a mind map.

- What is democracy?
- Where did democracy come from?
- Australia is a democratic society. What does this mean?
- What is needed for a healthy democracy?
- What are some threats to democracy?



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KEY LEARNING

Students will learn more about what democracy is and explore significant events in Australian democracy.

CURRICULUM

HASS – Year 5

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

HASS – Year 6

The key institutions of Australia’s system of government, how it is based on the Westminster system, and the key values and beliefs of Western democracies.

Glossary

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

DEMOCRACY	REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY	MONARCHY
DECISIONS	CONSTITUTION	GOVERNMENT

Activity: Research Project

Discuss the information raised in the BTN Democracy Day story. What questions were raised in the discussion and what are the gaps in students' knowledge? The following KWLH organiser provides students with a framework to explore their knowledge on this topic.

What do I know ?	What do I want to know?	What have I learnt ?	How will I find out?

Students will develop their own question/s to research about democracy. They will collect and record information from a wide variety of sources. Students may develop their own question for inquiry or select one of the questions below.

- 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?
- What is the Voice to Parliament? Write a summary which answers the 5 W's – Who, What, Where, When and Why? Include the following words in your explanation: Uluru Statement from the Heart, referendum, First Nations Voice and constitution.
- What is the Australian Constitution? When and why was it written?
- What are the steps to change the Australian Constitution? Explain the process of a referendum. How many votes does a referendum need to be successful?
- How many referendums have been held in Australia? Use a timeline to highlight important referendums in Australia.

Activity: Australian Democracy

Look at this 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. Students can watch [Ten Fast Facts about Australian Democracy](#) to help them create their timelines.

FOUR KEY IDEAS OF AUSTRALIAN DEMOCRACY



Active and engaged citizens

Citizens have a voice and can make changes in society



An inclusive and equitable society

We work towards a society where everyone is respected and free



Free and franchised elections

We get to stand for election and choose who makes decisions on our behalf



The rule of law for both citizens and the government

Everyone is equal before the law and must follow the law

Source: [Parliamentary Education Office](#)

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

Who represents you in your electorate?

Find out which electorate your school is located in and who represents you in your local area.

- Go to the [Australian Electoral Commission](#) website to [find your electorate](#).

- Find more information on the electorate that your school is situated. On a map locate your school and draw the boundary of your electorate.
- Create a profile on your local Member of Parliament.
 - Who is the current member for this electorate?
 - What political party do they represent?
 - Is it a safe or marginal seat? Watch this [BTN story to learn more about Safe and Marginal Seats](#).

Who represents you in your school community?

What makes your school a democratic community?

- Who makes decisions at your school? Give examples.
- What decisions do you make personally?
- Are many decisions made through representation?
- How do your school representatives know what you want?
- Who represents you on the School Representative Council (SRC)?
- How important is it for us to have good representatives that make decisions on our behalf?
- How can teachers, students and parents have a say in what happens in your school community?

Activity: Class poll

Should young people have a say in how our country is run? Students will conduct their own opinion poll on the issue of lowering the voting age. Working in groups, students will need to decide who their sample group will be and how many people will be polled.

- What method they will use to conduct the poll? (Face to face interviews or written responses).
- Ask students to graph the opinion poll results and display in the classroom. Students can reflect on how reliable they think the results were. What would they do differently next time?
- Students may want to film their interviews and then create a movie to present to other students.



Activity: BTN Democracy special

Watch this [BTN Democracy special](#) to learn more about the origins of democracy, Australia's democratic journey and ask whether voting rights should be extended to younger Australians.



Activity: Democracy Quiz

1. Who created the first form of democracy?

A. Ancient Greece

B. Ancient Rome

C. Ancient Egypt

2. Which type of government gives citizens the power to decide the laws they live under?

A. Communism

B. Democracy

C. Monarchy

3. Australia is a constitutional monarchy.

A. True

B. False

4. The word democracy comes from the ancient Greek words 'demos' and 'kratos'. What do these words mean?

A. The dictator, to rule

B. The king, to rule

C. The people, to rule

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

A. Prime Minister

B. The people

C. The King

6. Voting in Australia is compulsory.

A. True

B. False

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

A. 16 years old

B. 18 years old

C. 21 years old

8. When is the Indigenous Voice to Parliament referendum going to be held?

A. 14 September

B. 14 October

C. 14 November

Quiz Answers: 1A, 2B, 3A, 4C, 5C, 6A, 7B, 8B

Useful Websites

- [International Day of Democracy](#) – UNESCO
- [Defining Democracy](#) – Museum of Australian Democracy
- [Democracy](#) - Parliamentary Education Office
- [Ten Fast Facts about Australian Democracy](#) – MOAD
- [History of Democracy?](#) – BTN
- [History of Voting](#) – BTN
- [The story of our freedom](#) – Human Rights Commission