



Teacher Resource

# Republic Debate

## Focus Questions

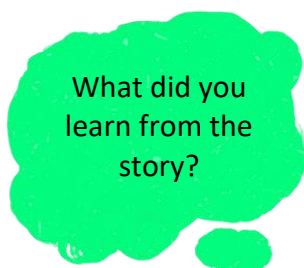
Discuss the BTN story as a class and record the main points of the discussion. Students will then respond to the following:

1. Who is our head of state?
2. What is a republic?
3. Why do some people think Australia should become a republic?
4. What is the process to change the constitution?
  - a. Plebiscite vote
  - b. Parliamentary vote
  - c. Referendum vote
5. Do you think Australia should become a republic? Give reasons for your answer.

## Activity: Class Discussion

Students will discuss the BTN story in pairs and then share their thoughts with the class.

- Australia is a constitutional monarchy. What does that mean?
- Who is our head of state?
- What is a republic?
- How could Australia become a republic?
- What is a referendum?
- Why would some people vote against Australia becoming a republic?
- Do you think Australia should become a republic? Create a plus, minus and interesting chart.
- Who would you choose as our head of state? Give reasons for your choice.



### EPISODE 28

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### KEY LEARNING

Students will develop an argument for or against Australia becoming a republic.

### CURRICULUM

#### HASS – Year 6

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

#### HASS – Year 7

Sequence information about events, developments, periods and phenomena using a variety of discipline-appropriate formats and conventions including chronological frameworks that use dating conventions.

#### Civics and Citizenship – Year 7

The process for constitutional change through a referendum.

#### English – Year 6

Plan, draft and publish imaginative, informative and persuasive texts, choosing and experimenting with text structures, language features, images and digital resources appropriate to purpose and audience.

## Activity: Glossary

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

MONARCHY	REPUBLIC	REFERENDUM
HEAD OF STATE	CONSTITUTION	GOVERNOR-GENERAL

## Activity: KWLH

Discuss the information raised in the BTN Republic Debate 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 <u>know</u> ?	What do I <u>want</u> to know?	What have I <u>learnt</u> ?	<u>How</u> will I find out?

Students will develop their own question/s to research or choose one or more of the questions below.

- What is the role of the King in Australia's system of government?
- Why does Australia have a monarch as its head of state?
- What is a constitutional monarchy?
- Explore the reasons why some people want Australia to become a republic.
- What would change if Australia became a republic?
- What is a referendum? How do they work and when was a referendum last held in Australia?

**Watch these BTN videos to help students understand more about Australia's Constitution and referendums.**



[BTN – Australia's Constitution](#)



[BTN – 1967 Referendum](#)

## Activity: Understanding Referendums

Students will explore what a referendum is in more detail. They can use the following questions to guide their research.

- What is a referendum?
- How does a referendum work?
- When was the last referendum held on becoming a republic?
- How many referendums have been held in Australia and how many of these have resulted in a change to the Constitution?
- Is it compulsory to vote in a referendum? Explain why.
- What other issues have Australians voted on in referendums?

### Further investigation

Students can hold their own classroom referendum.

This [BTN Teacher Resource](#) has more details.

The Australian Constitution can only be changed with the support of the majority of Australian voters **and** a majority of voters in at least 4 states.



#### SCENARIO ONE

- ✓ Majority of Australian voters
- ✓ Majority of voters in at least 4 states
- ✓ **CHANGE THE CONSTITUTION**



#### SCENARIO TWO

- ✗ Majority of Australian voters
- ✓ Majority of voters in at least 4 states
- ✗ **DON'T CHANGE THE CONSTITUTION**



#### SCENARIO THREE

- ✓ Majority of Australian voters
- ✗ Majority of voters in at least 4 states
- ✗ **DON'T CHANGE THE CONSTITUTION**

Source: [Parliamentary Education Office](#)

## Activity: Persuasive Text

Students will explore the issue of Australia becoming a republic and then develop a persuasive text for or against the following statement: 'Australia should become a republic'. Students need to weigh up the pros and cons of the issue then write a short persuasive argument stating Australia should or should not become a republic.

### Tips

- Who is your audience? For example, are you directing your argument at kids, teachers, or politicians?
- Explore how language choices can have a big impact on persuading your audience.
- Which language devices give the report credibility and authority?
- Which are designed to create an emotional response in the listener?
- Provide facts and evidence to support your argument.
- Write in the present tense.
- Check your spelling and punctuation.

Use this *Read Write Think* [persuasion map](#) to plan your exposition text.

### Introduction

- What is the point you are trying to argue?  
Construct an introductory paragraph which states the issue or topic.
- Introduce the arguments that will be developed in the body of the text.

### Body

- Construct arguments that support your point of view.
- Each paragraph starts with a topic sentence which introduces each point.
- The rest of the paragraph gives more reasons.
- Arguments can be ordered from strongest to weakest.

### Conclusion

- Restate your position on the argument.
- Construct a concluding paragraph that provides a summary of your arguments and a call to action.

## Reflection

- How difficult was it to think of points to support one side of the argument?
- Do you think you would have done a better job supporting the other side of the argument?
- Was I able to convince others of my opinion?
- Did my opinion change?
- What did you learn from this activity?

## Activity: Quiz

### 1. Who is Australia's Head of State?

- A. Anthony Albanese
- B. David Hurley
- C. King Charles III

### 2. Australia is a...

- A. Absolute monarchy
- B. Constitutional monarchy

### 3. The Australian Constitution is a set of rules by which Australia is run.

- A. True
- B. False

### 4. What is the process to change the Constitution?

- A. Plebiscite vote
- B. Parliamentary vote
- C. Referendum vote

### 5. For a referendum to be successful, it needs to be agreed to...

- A. By a majority of voters
- B. By a majority of states
- C. By a majority of voters and a majority of states

### 6. How many referendums have been successful in Australia?

- A. 8
- B. 16
- A. 44

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

## Useful Websites

- [Republic movement unleashes campaign after mourning period for Queen](#) – ABC News
- [Queen's Holiday Protests](#) – BTN Newsbreak
- [Referendums and plebiscites](#) – Parliamentary Education Office
- [The Constitution](#) – Parliamentary Education Office
- [Why are we a constitutional monarchy?](#) – Parliamentary Education Office
- [Referendums](#) – Australian Electoral Commission
- [Republic](#) – BTN
- [Australia's Constitution](#) – BTN
- [The Queen in Australia](#) - BTN