



Teacher Resource

The Senate

Focus Questions

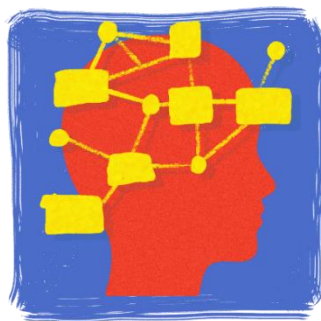
Discuss the BTN story as a class and record the main points of the discussion. Students will then respond to the following:

1. The Senate is also known at the _____ house.
2. What is debated and voted on in the Senate?
3. Who elects the Senate?
4. How old is the newly elected senator Charlotte Walker?
5. What do you understand more clearly since watching the BTN story?

Activity: Class Discussion

After watching the BTN The Senate story, discuss with students what they learnt about senators and the Senate. Use the following questions to guide discussion.

- Who are senators?
- What is the Senate?
- Why do we have senators?
- Who can be a senator?
- How is the Senate different or similar to the House of Representatives?
- What questions do you have about the story?



Activity: Glossary

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

Senate

Bill

Upper house

Caucus

Senator

Session

EPISODE 15

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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: Houses

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.

Watch

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.



BTN Election Lingo – [Houses](#)

Discussion questions

1. How many houses are there in Australian Parliament?
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?

Class Activity

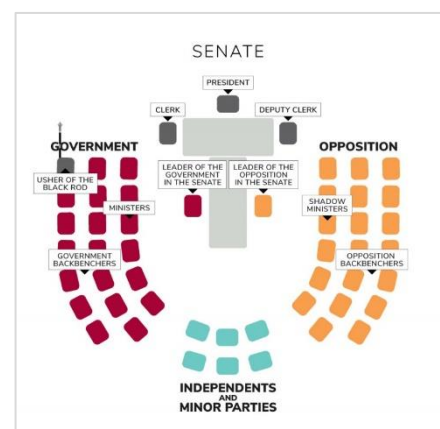
Before starting this activity, investigate the following in small groups or as a class:

- How many seats are in the Senate? Look at the current [composition of the Senate](#) (Source: PEO). Look at the [seating plan of the Senate](#) (Source: Parliament of Australia)
- How is a law passed in Australian Parliament?

Role-play the Parliament: Senate

Turn your class into a Parliament using this PEO [Make a Law: Senate toolkit](#).

Discover how bills – proposed laws – are introduced, debated and voted on in the Senate by turning your class into a Parliament and doing it yourselves!



[Make a Law: Senate toolkit](#)
(Source: PEO)

Activity: Quiz

1. The Senate is also known as...

A. The Lower House

B. The Middle House

C. The Upper House

2. What colour is traditionally associated with the Senate?

A. Blue

B. Green

C. Red

3. Who do senators represent?

A. Australian states and territories

B. Governor-General

C. Prime Minister

4. Who elects senators to the Senate?

A. Prime Minister

B. People of Australia

C. The King

5. How many senators are in the Senate?

A. 16

B. 56

C. 76

6. Where is the Senate located?

A. Australian Parliament House

B. Parliament Houses in each state

C. House of Representatives

7. What shape is the Australian Senate Chamber?

A. C-shape

B. L-shape

C. U-shape

8. What is the role of a senator?

A. Represent their state or territory

B. Debate and vote on bills

C. Examine issues in committees

D. All of the above

9. The Prime Minister sits in the Senate.

A. True

B. False

10. To become a law a bill must be passed by the Senate.

A. True

B. False

Quiz Answers:

1C, 2C, 3A, 4B, 5C, 6A, 7C, 8D, 9B, 10A

Useful Websites

- [Labor candidate who turned 21 on election night likely to become senator](#) – ABC News
- [Senators: fact sheet](#) – PEO
- [Senate: fact sheet](#) – PEO
- [Senators and Members](#) – Parliament of Australia