

# PARLIAMENT AND ELECTIONS: PART 1

## Extension Activities

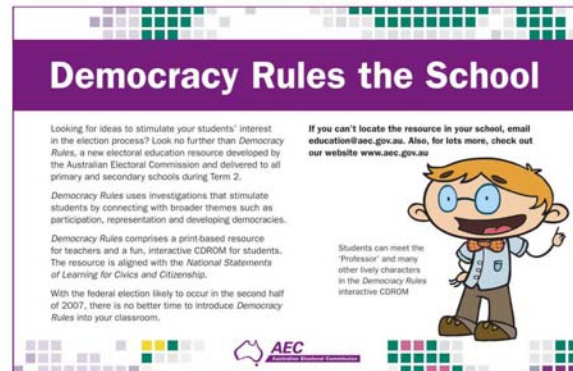
### Useful resources

*Democracy Rules –*

#### ***An electoral education resource***

(delivered to all schools in Term 2)

Contact: [education@aec.gov.au](mailto:education@aec.gov.au)



- AEC Schools and Community Visits Program – staff from divisional offices across Australia visit schools to present information sessions on voting and enrolment and conduct school elections. Contact: 132326
- Electoral Education Centres in Canberra, Melbourne, Adelaide and Perth present free interactive education programs on the Federal electoral system and referendums.

## EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

### ***Design a 'How to vote' card***

Have students prepare a 'How to vote' card for a candidate at an imaginary school council election. The card should explain why the particular candidate is the best for the job and what actions they propose to take on behalf of other students if elected.

### ***Running a School Election.***

Consider running a class or school election. The Australian Electoral Commission ([www.aec.gov.au](http://www.aec.gov.au)) has some very useful information to help you plan and conduct these events (see the website resource listed above).

[http://www.aec.gov.au/content/How/education/resources/index.htm#teacher\\_resources](http://www.aec.gov.au/content/How/education/resources/index.htm#teacher_resources)

### ***Responsibility chart***

- Discuss the different roles and responsibilities within the classroom, for example, the roles of the teacher and the roles of the students. Mention any overlaps in the roles or responsibilities.
- Ask the students to work in small groups to design a class responsibility chart or wheel.
- Ask students to propose a way in which these responsibilities can be shared fairly.

### ***Leaders***

Ask the students to name as many leaders as they can from the community—mayors, principals, captains of sports teams etc.

Talk about the process of how these leaders were selected and by whom.

### ***Research activity(1): elements of voting systems***

Ask students to consider one of the following elements of Australia's federal voting system

- Secret Ballot
- Compulsory voting
- Universal franchise

Students research one of these elements, identifying some of the arguments that have been used to adopt it.

### ***Research activity(2): types of voting system***

There are a number of different voting systems used around the world. Discuss some of these with the class. Start by providing a brief overview of the following two systems of voting:

- 'First past the post': the candidate with the most votes wins the election.
- Preferential voting: under this system, the ballot paper is completed by placing a '1' in the box next to the preferred candidate and the remaining candidates are numbered in the order of preference (2, 3, 4 and so on).

Divide the class into groups allocating one of the above systems to each. Ask them to find different places/communities/countries where each system is used and how effective it is. Have each group prepare a short presentation, speech or PowerPoint display to share their findings. Each group should include their own opinion of the merits of that voting system.

### ***Research activity: casting votes***

Have students research new systems of casting votes around the world. Students could consider developments such as the US punch-card and electronic/touch-screen voting system. Might such systems be introduced in Australia? What are some of the potential problems?