



DIGITAL PACK OUTLINE and INSTRUCTIONS

Program name		Voting in Australia's Democracy
Year	5 and 6	
Pack Content	[This document] PowerPoint presentation Ballot Paper_Example_LA_LC Ballot paper_CHOCOLATE Chocolate candidate signs Activity: Word wall Activity: Election Quiz	
Lesson duration	Approximately 90 minutes	
Curriculum	Year 5	The key features of the electoral process in Australia (ACHASSK116): Exploration of the secret ballot and compulsory voting as key features of Australia's democracy. Recognising the role of Electoral Commissions in administering elections that are open, free, and fair. Clarifying who has the right to vote and stand for election in Australia.
	Year 6	The key institutions of Australia's democratic system of government and how it is based on the Westminster system (ACHASSK143). The roles and responsibilities of Australia's three levels of government. (ACHASSK144).
Learning Outcomes		
ACHASSK116: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Students understand the significance of voting rights in a democratic society.Students can explain the importance of the secret ballot in ensuring voter privacy.Students understand the concept of compulsory voting and its role in promoting civic participation and representation.Students can describe the voting processes Electoral Commissions use to maintain electoral integrity.Students can articulate who is eligible to vote for election in Australia. ACHASSK143: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Students understand the historical context and principles of the Westminster system as it applies to Australian democracy. ACHASSK144: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Students can differentiate between the responsibilities of the federal, state, and local governments in Australia.Students can give examples of services and functions managed by each level of government.Students understand the importance of each level of government in addressing community needs and implementing policies.		
Lesson preparation		
Materials		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Make a ballot box with an A4 paper box or similar. Cut a neat slot in the top and label the box BALLOT BOX.Print one each of Example Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly ballot papers. Laminate to allow students to pass them around.Print one each of the four mock election chocolate signs. Laminate.Print Ballot Paper_CHOCOLATE. Ensure one ballot paper for each student plus some extras.If possible, set up mock 'voting screens' – construct something that simulates four booths with dividers. Provide a pencil in each booth.		

Instructions for using the PowerPoint	
<p>The <i>Voting in Australia's Democracy PowerPoint</i> contains text and images with animations. The text and images appear on click, so information appears in sequence to allow for teacher pacing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practice using the presentation prior to showing your class. Each 'click' will bring text and/or images to the slide. Use presentation mode when showing to the class. The animated ballot box on the first slide is set to play continuously until the second slide is required. Click to progress to the second slide. 	
Instructions for extension information	
<p>Extension information has been provided for classes and students who need more challenging material. Use these points to start discussions that encourage deeper analysis and critical thinking.</p>	
Notes for individual slides	
<i>What is a democracy?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Go over the points in the slide. Inform students the word <i>democracy</i> comes from ancient Greek language. It is made up of two Greek words: <i>demos</i>, which means "people," and <i>kratos</i>, which means "rule" or "power." So, the literal meaning of democracy is "rule by the people".
<i>Things to know</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Go over points in the slide. Ask students if they know the names of any political parties or candidates. After explaining what compulsory voting means, ask students why everyone having to vote is a good idea. Responses to elicit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lots of people voting: This means the results show what most people think. Everyone's voice counts: Not just people who love (or dislike) politics. Stable Government: With more voters, the government works better. Focus on everyone: Politicians care about all people, not just some groups. Cheaper campaigns: Politicians spend less money to get people to vote.
Extension information	<p>Compulsory voting was first introduced in Australia in Queensland in 1915 to respond a decreasing turnout of eligible voters. It was later adopted for Federal elections from 1924.</p>
<i>Parliament</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> After going over the points in the slide, you could tell students to think about parliament like a group school project: the Lower House writes the first draft, and the Upper House checks it over. Ask students if they know what the job name is for MPs (Politicians).
Extension information	<p>If a student asks about what happens when the Upper House does not want to pass a Bill: Under the Federal Constitution, if the Senate twice fails to pass a bill from the House of Representatives, the Governor General may dissolve both houses, in which case elections are held for all seats in both houses.</p> <p>In State parliament, if the two houses cannot agree on amendments, each house can appoint several members to settle the differences in what is called a Conference of Managers. If this fails to reach an agreement, the Bill fails.</p>
<i>Three levels of government</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Go over the three levels of government. Ask the students what political parties they know of, if they know which political party the Prime Minister and the Premier are from. NOTE: you may wish to research who the mayor is in your local area and add their photo to the slide.
Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask students if they know what they think each level of government might look after (their responsibilities). Click through the slide for the Federal, State and Local Government responsibilities.
Extension information	<p>At the time of federation, the responsibilities of the Federal and State (formally self-governing colonies) Governments were outlined in the Constitution, and later State Governments moved local services to what would become Local Governments.</p>



	On other matters, the Commonwealth and the states have what are called <i>concurrent powers</i> —that is, both the Commonwealth and the states may legislate. The states retain legislative powers over matters not specifically listed in the Constitution.
Who is eligible to vote? What is the electoral roll?	Ensure students understand: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the meaning of the word <i>eligible</i> the meaning of <i>enrolling</i> to vote The word <i>compulsory</i>
Ballot papers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep explanations very simple. Remind students that the Lower House is the group of MPs who make the laws, and the Upper House is the group that reviews them. Provide the laminated ballot papers for students to hand around.
Extension information	Difference in the ballot papers: the lower house ballot is used to elect a single person to represent an electorate, and the upper house ballot is to elect several people to represent a whole state.
Preferential Voting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use an example, such as ice cream flavours or sports to reinforce understanding of <i>preferences</i>, or Use the names listed on the example ballot paper to see who the students would choose for their first, second, third and fourth preference. Clicking through the slide will see a 1, 2, 3 and 4 appear in the boxes. Reinforce that not completing the ballot properly means it will not be included in the count. Ballot papers can only be marked with numbers; not ticks or crosses, or anything else, and no blank squares. <p>Additional resource: You may wish to show the AEC Preferential Voting video.</p>
Election Day	Ask students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If anyone has been to a polling place. If they know whether their school operates as a polling place. Whether they have ever seen election campaign workers handing out flyers. Explain that the flyers demonstrate how a particular party or candidate <i>wants</i> the voter to vote, and the boxes are numbered in the order that is most favourable to that candidate. Reinforce that voters <i>make their own decisions</i> about their preferences, and that they do not have to take the “how-to-vote cards”.
Voting at a Polling Place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walk the students slowly through the slide pathway. Ask the students why we have voting screens for each voter. The answer is to ensure voter privacy – it is the secret ballot system. This means no one else gets to see your vote. Ask the students why think a secret ballot is important. Responses: No one will know who you are voting for - you cannot be judged, get into arguments or be intimidated by other people. Ask students whether voters put their names on ballot papers. Answer is no – all votes are anonymous. Voters do not add identifiable information.
Extension Information	Australia was the first country in the world to use the “secret ballot” – this was in Victoria in 1856. It became known as the “Australian” ballot.
Counting the votes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Go over the points of the slide. Potential questions to ask students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why are the ‘1s’ counted first? What happens if no candidate gets more than half of the votes? What do you think scrutineers are looking for?
Let’s vote!	<p>You will now conduct a mock election with chocolates as candidates.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Place the ballot box at the front of the class. Ask for six volunteers – two to play the role of election workers, and four to be candidates. Ask your election workers to stand up the front and to the side of the classroom. If preferred, have a double desk set up where the elections workers can sit. Give the ballot papers to the election workers. Allocate one chocolate sign to each of the four candidate students and ask them to stand in a row at the front of the classroom, facing the class and hold their signs up.

<p><i>The Candy-dates</i></p>	<p>Voting time!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask the class to form a queue to collect their ballot papers from your election workers. Remind students they are making a <i>preferential vote</i>, ensuring they know this means they need to fill in the ballot paper in order of their preference, and they must number EVERY square. If you have erected 'voting booths' ask the students to use these, until all students have voted. If you do not have voting screens, ask the students to return to their desks to complete the ballot paper. Remind students that it is a SECRET vote – and not to discuss it or allow anyone to see their ballot paper. Once the students have completed their ballot papers, ask them to deposit them into the ballot box and return to their seats. Ensure the 'election workers' and 'Candidates' also vote, but that they remain at the front of the class. Open the ballot box and divide the ballot papers into three piles. Give one pile to each of the election workers and keep one pile for yourself. Check the completed votes have numbers in all the squares. If a ballot contains blank squares, it is considered an <i>informal</i> vote and removed from the count. Start counting the valid or <i>formal</i> votes. The three of you then distribute the votes to whichever candidate received a '1' on the ballot paper. The candidates then count the number of votes they have received.
<p><i>The Preferential Count</i></p>	<p>Counting time!</p> <p>NOTE: If you have a smartboard, write the counts directly into the first column. If you do not have a smartboard, draw up a large 4x4 table on the board and write the names of the chocolates in the left column. Replicate the three boxes from the slide on the right side of the board.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask each candidate for the number of votes they have received and record the numbers in the first column. Calculate the total number of valid votes (hopefully the same as the number of students in the class) and write the number in the box in the top-right corner. Get the students to help determine the Absolute Majority (half the number of valid votes plus 1). For example, if the total number of valid votes is 32, divide by 2 (=16) and then + 1 = 17. NOTE: If the total number of valid votes is an odd number, divide the number by two and round up to the next whole number, for example, $33/2=16.5$, so round up to 17 – this is now more than half the vote or Absolute Majority. Write this figure in the box in the bottom-right corner. Inform students that a candidate needs to get this number of votes or higher to win. Now check – did any of the candidates achieve the Absolute Majority (or higher) in the first preference count?
<p>Case A: One candidate achieves the absolute majority with the first preference count and declared the winner.</p> <p>For the sake of the exercise, to show how the preferential count works, demonstrate the following hypothetical:</p> <p>Remove enough votes from the winning candidate to bring them under the Absolute Majority and distribute them to the other candidates, so all have less than the Absolute Majority. For example, if the total number of valid votes is 32, and the winning candidate has received 19 votes, take three votes from that candidate, so they now have 16. Give the other 3 votes to the other candidates (avoid having a tie).</p> <p>Proceed as in Case B.</p>	<p>Case B: If there is no winner in the first round as none of the candidates achieves the Absolute Majority, you will “redistribute” some votes.</p> <p>How to conduct a redistribution</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Strikethrough to eliminate the candidate with the least number of votes. Thank that 'candidate' student, ask them to give you their ballot papers and return to their seat. Ask the remaining candidates to place their ballot papers on the floor in front of them. Check the 2nd preference on the ballot papers from the eliminated candidate and hand them to the appropriate remaining candidates. Ask the candidates to count their additional votes. Write a plus sign under the number in the first column and then the number of 2nd preference votes. See example below. NOTE: If there is still no Absolute Majority, the candidate with the lowest number of votes is eliminated, and the count proceeds as above with the 3rd preference distribution going to the remaining two candidates.

Example

NOTE: Impress on students that the preferences they assign are very important as they may have an impact on who is eventually elected, particularly in a close race.

The preferential count

	7		
	12		
	4		
	15		

Number of students
in the class

38

Absolute
majority =
50% + 1

Absolute majority in
this class is...

19 + 1

20

The number of votes required to win (Absolute Majority) is **20**, calculated by 50% of 38 (total number of valid votes) = 19, then + 1 vote = 20.

As reflected in the above graphic, the result of your election is:

Mars Bar	7
M & Ms	12
KitKat	4
Maltesers	15
Total valid votes	38

BUT none of the candidates has received 20 (or more) votes.

The candidate with the least number of votes is then eliminated. In this case, is KitKat.

The preferential count

	7 + 0 =	7	
	12 + 3 =	15	
	4 + 1 =		
	15 + 1 =	16	

Number of students
in the class

38

Absolute
majority =
50% + 1

Absolute majority in
this class is...

19 + 1

20

KitKat's ballot papers are then redistributed to the candidates selected as 2nd preference. If three votes went to M&Ms, and one to Maltesers, the above graphic demonstrates the calculation.

As reflected in the above graphic, the results are now:

Mars Bar	7 + 0	7
M & Ms	12 + 3	15
KitKat	4	
Maltesers	15 + 1	16
Total valid votes	38	

However, still no candidate has reached the Absolute Majority of 20.

The preferential count

	$\frac{7}{+0=}$	$\frac{7}{+3=}$	
	$\frac{12}{+3=}$	$\frac{15}{+3=}$	18
	$\frac{4}{+1=}$	$\frac{4}{+3+1=}$	
	$\frac{15}{+1=}$	$\frac{16}{+3+1=}$	20

Number of students
in the class

38

Absolute
majority =
50% + 1

Absolute majority in
this class is:

$19 + 1$

20

- Mars now has the least number of votes and so is eliminated.
- Mars' ballot papers are then redistributed to the candidates selected as 3rd preference.
- Three votes went to M&Ms, three votes to Maltesers and one vote to KitKat.
- One vote went to KitKat, but KitKat has been eliminated. If this happens, we look at the 3rd preference on that ballot paper. In this case the 3rd preference went to Maltesers. So Maltesers gets four votes.

Mars Bar	$7 + 0$	7	
M & Ms	$12 + 3$	$15 + 3$	18
KitKat	4	4	
Maltesers	$15 + 1$	$16 + 3 + 1$	20
Total valid votes	38		

We can now declare **Maltesers** as the winner because they achieved the Absolute Majority required of 20 votes.

Additional information

Donkey vote	<p>Students may have heard the expression, <i>donkey vote</i>.</p> <p>A donkey vote is when a ballot is filled out in numerical order starting with 1. Despite its name suggesting a lack of thought, it is still a formal vote and may reflect the voter's true preferences.</p> <p>In the past, candidates were listed in alphabetical order, so names at the top of the list acquired a small advantage due to donkey voting. Now, candidates' names are randomly ordered so there is no point in changing your name to Aardvark.</p>
Tie	<p>If more than one candidate has the lowest number of votes, they can be eliminated by chance, one at time.</p> <p>The names of the candidates with the equal lowest votes are written onto cards and placed in a ballot box. The first name drawn is eliminated, and their preferences are then distributed to the remaining candidates.</p> <p>To reduce the likelihood of ties for smaller classes, prepare some additional ballot papers to add to the count. These can be referred to as early votes.</p>
Extension information	<p>If a government election is very close, votes are recounted to check if any have been missed or attributed to the wrong candidate. If a recount confirms a tied election and cannot be decided, the Electoral Commission must file a petition with the Court of Disputed Returns, which declares either a candidate elected, or the election as void. In the case of a void election, a by-election will be held.</p>
Additional resources	<p>Fact Sheets and Useful links are available on the WA Electoral Commission Education Resources webpage.</p>