

Mathematics Level 7

Chapter 1 — Knowledge and Understanding: democracy, rules and the communities we belong to

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What democracy looks like: government, law and shared values

Civics and Citizenship 3 · Chapter 1 · Section 1A VC2 code: VC2HC4K01 — Victorian Curriculum 2.0, Civics and Citizenship, Levels 3 and 4; draws on VC2HC4K01.E01, VC2HC4K01.E02 and VC2HC4K01.E03.

New words in this section

Some words in this section are the very words this subject teaches. Here is how this book uses each one, the first time it comes up.

- **government** — the people who make the big decisions for a place, like a town.
- **law** — a rule made by a government. Everyone in that place has to follow it.
- **democracy** — a way of running a place where the people have a say in the decisions. **Democratic** means “to do with a democracy”.
- **freedom** — being able to make some of your own choices.
- **fairness** — being treated in a way that is right. People can have different ideas about what is fair.
- **equality** — everyone counts the same, and everyone gets the same chance.
- **value** — an idea a group thinks is important.

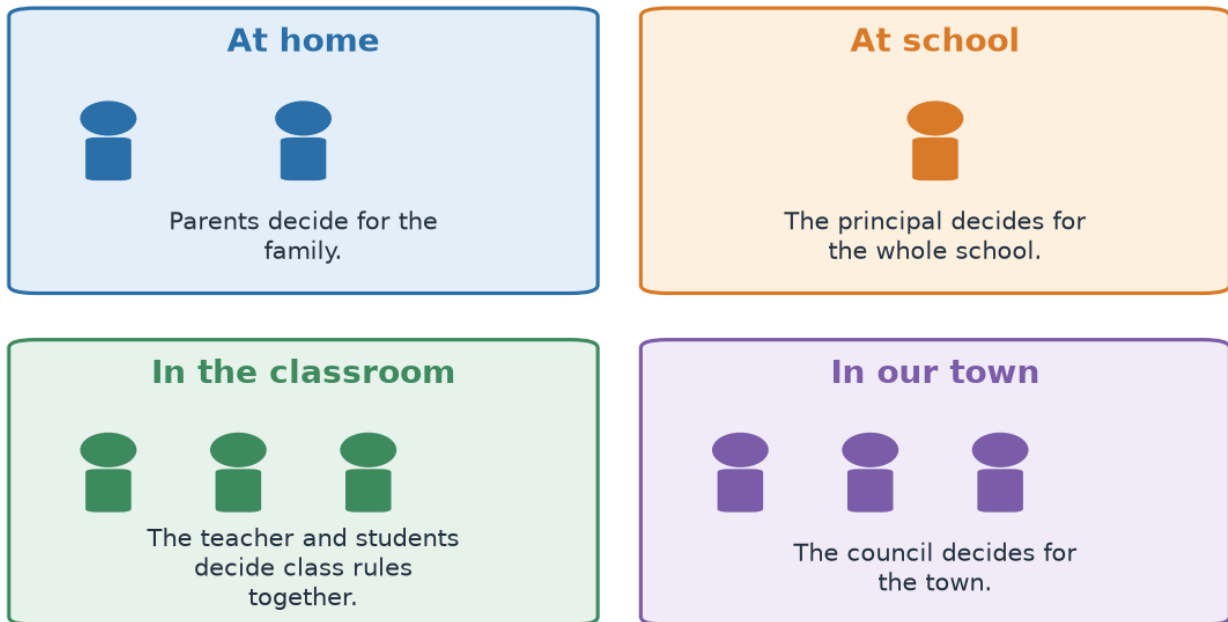
VC2 uses *freedom*, *fairness* and *equality* but does not say what they mean, so this book uses the meanings above, and every question here can be answered with these meanings alone.

Teaching sequence

Step 1 — Someone always decides (talk). Start with your own day. Ask: *Who decided what time you got up? Who decided what is for lunch at school today?* At home, parents make many decisions for the family. At school, the principal makes many decisions for the whole school. Look at the picture below and talk about each box.

Who makes the decisions?

Every group of people has someone who makes decisions for it.



Four boxes show who makes decisions. At home, parents decide for the family. At school, the principal decides for the whole school. In the classroom, the teacher and students decide class rules together. In our town, the council decides for the town.

Ask: *Why are parents the ones who decide at home?* (They care for the family and know the children well.) *Why is the principal the one who decides for the school?* (The principal is in charge of the whole school.) Someone is always the person who decides for a group.

Step 2 — Meet the word “government” (talk). A family is a small group. A school is a bigger group. A town is a very big group of people. The people who make the big decisions for a place like a town are called the **government**. The council is the government for a town. Show the table and talk about the three rows.

Who decides? A small group or a big group

Where	Who decides	One thing they decide
Your home	Parents	Bedtime, and what is for dinner
Your school	The principal	What time school starts each day
Your town	The council	Where to build a new playground

Some decisions are for a small group.
Other decisions are for a very big group of people.

A table with three rows. Your home: parents decide, for example bedtime and what is for dinner. Your school: the principal decides, for example what time school starts each day. Your town: the council decides, for example where to build a new playground.

Point out what is the same: the bigger the group, the more people a decision is for. A government decides for a whole area, not just one home or one school.

Step 3 — Meet the word “law” (talk and sort). Governments make **laws**. A law is a rule that everyone in a place has to follow: children, parents, teachers and schools. Look at three real laws from Victoria.

Laws in our lives

Laws are made by the government. Everyone has to follow them.



Three cards about laws in Victoria. *Helmet law: bike riders must wear a helmet, done up the right way, for all bike riders, from the Road Safety Road Rules 2017. Seatbelt law: people in cars must wear a seatbelt if the car has one, for drivers and riders of all ages, from the Road Safety Road Rules 2017. School law: children must go to school from when they turn 6 until they are 17, for children and their parents, from the Education and Training Reform Act 2009.*

Run the sort: *Is the helmet law for you? Is it for your teacher? Is it for a grandparent on a bike?* Yes — a law is for everyone. Now look at a family rule like “dinner before the TV”: that rule is only for one home, and it was not made by a government, so it is not a law.

Step 4 — What a law looks like (have a good look). Show the law the way it really lives, in a law book. This is a real rule from Victoria, put into easy words.

What does a law look like?

A LAW IN VICTORIA

Road Safety Road Rules 2017 (Vic), Rule 256

The law says:

A person must not ride a bicycle unless they are wearing a bicycle helmet that is done up the right way.

In easy words: if you ride a bike, you must wear a helmet.
This law is for everyone: children and adults.

A page like a law book. It says: Road Safety Road Rules 2017, Victoria, Rule 256. A person must not ride a bicycle if they are not wearing a bicycle helmet done up the right way. In easy words: if you ride a bike, you must wear a helmet. This law is for everyone, children and adults.

Ask: *Who made this rule?* (The government.) *Who has to follow it?* (Everyone.) *Why do you think we have this rule?* (To keep people safe.) These are the three checks for “is it a law?”

Step 5 — Key democratic values (talk with the cards). Now the values. A **democracy** is a way of running a place where the people have a say. **Democratic values** are the ideas a democracy holds close. Show the three cards.

Key democratic values

A value is an idea a group thinks is important. A democracy holds these three close.



These values help people have a say and be treated well.

Three cards. Freedom: being able to make some of your own choices; you are free to pick which book to read.

Fairness: being treated in a way that is right; people can have different ideas about what is fair. Equality: everyone counts the same, and everyone gets the same chance; everyone in the game gets a turn.

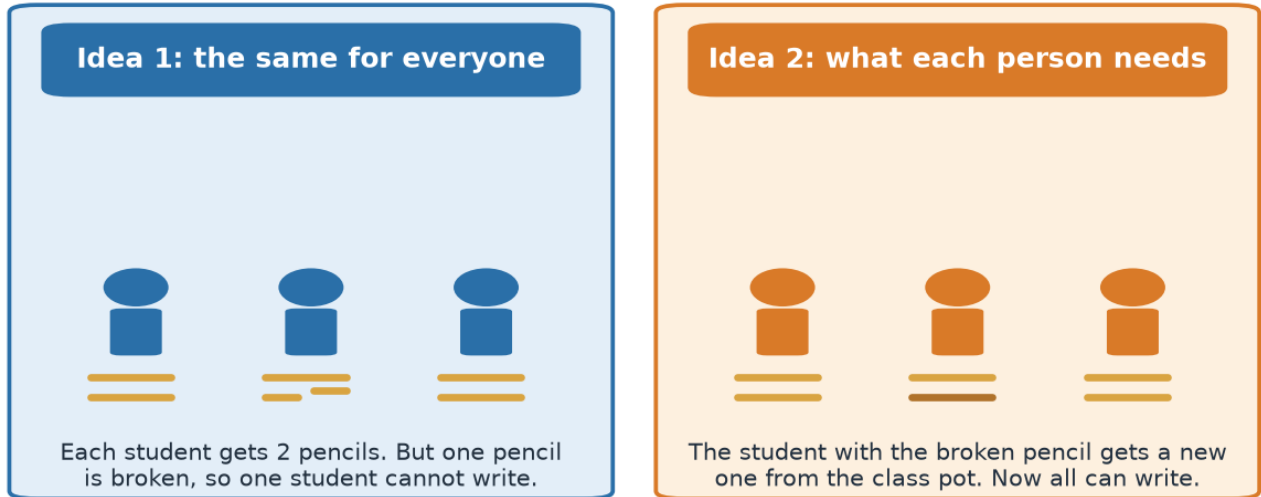
Talk about each one in your own lives (that is what we are asked to discuss in this section):

- **Freedom:** you are free to pick your library book, and free to pick a game at lunch. You are not free to skip the seatbelt — that law keeps you safe. Freedom comes with laws that look after everyone.

- **Fairness:** fairness is a word people can see in different ways. Look at the two ideas below. Both are trying to be fair.

Two ideas of fair

The class has 6 pencils for 3 students. One student's pencil breaks.



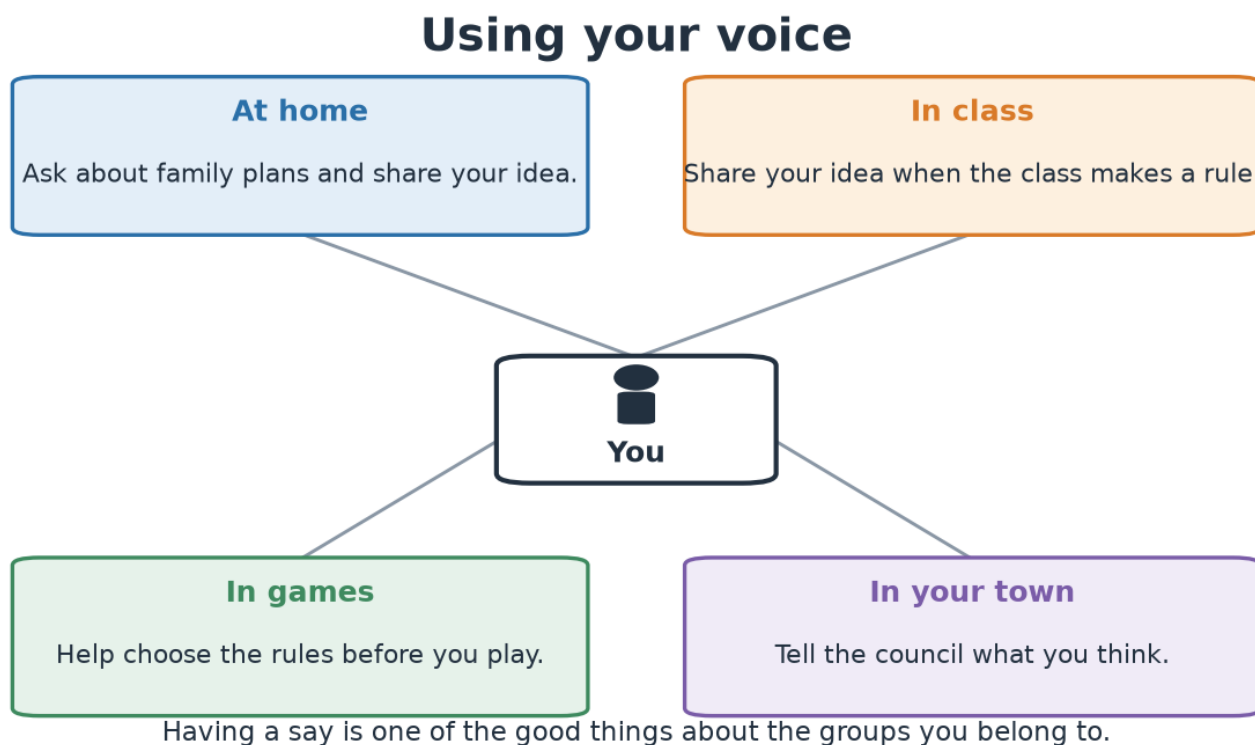
Both ideas try to be fair. Good friends can pick differently and still both be kind.

Two ideas of fair. The class has 6 pencils for 3 students, and one student's pencil breaks. Idea 1, the same for everyone: each student has two pencils, but one pencil is broken so one student cannot write. Idea 2, what each person needs: the student with the broken pencil gets a new one from the class pot, so all three can write.

Idea 1 is strong: everyone gets the same, so there are no favourites and no one is left out. Idea 2 is strong too: if someone needs a little more help, giving that help means everyone can do the work. Good friends can pick different ideas and both be kind. In this class we listen to both ideas before we say which is fairer.

- **Equality:** everyone counts the same. In a game, everyone gets a turn. In the class, everyone's hand can go up. That is equality in your life.

Step 6 — Using your voice (activity). Finish with the voice map. Having a say is part of being in a group.



A map with “you” in the middle and four boxes around it: at home, ask about family plans and share your idea; in class, share your idea when the class makes a rule; in games, help choose the rules before you play; in your town, tell the council what you think.

Do the matching activity in pairs, then check as a class.

Match: who decides?

Draw a line from each decision to the person or group that makes it.

The decision	Who makes it?
What time school starts each day	The council
What is for dinner at your home	The students, together
Where to build a new playground	The parents
The rules of a lunchtime game	The principal

Cut the cards out if you like, and sort them into pairs.

A matching page with two boxes of cards, one on the left and one on the right. Left box, the decision: what time school starts each day; what is for dinner at your home; where to build a new playground; the rules of a lunchtime game. Right box, who makes it: the council; the students together; the parents; the principal.

Worked examples

Example 1 — Who is the person who decides, and why?

Three real decisions. For each one, name the person or group who decides, and give a reason why they are the right one.

The decision	Who decides	Why them?
What time you go to bed on a school night	Your parents	They care for you and know what you need.
What time your school starts each day	The principal	The principal is in charge of the whole school, so one person can decide for everyone in it.
The dates of school holidays for every government school in Victoria	The Victorian Department of Education	It looks after all government schools in Victoria, so it decides for the whole area, not just one school.

Now compare with a government: a council deciding where to build a new playground works the same way — one person or group decides for a whole area, because the playground is for everyone in the area.

Model text. Read it, then say it in your own words.

At my home, my parents decide my bedtime, because they look after me. At my school, the principal decides what time school starts, because the principal is in charge of the whole school. In my town, the

council decides where the new playground goes, because the playground is for everyone in the town. The bigger the group, the bigger the area the decision is for.

Example 2 — Is it a law? Use the three checks

The three checks: (1) Was it made by a government? (2) Is it for everyone in the place? (3) Does it help keep people safe, or help people be treated well?

Say	Check 1: government?	Check 2: for everyone?	Check 3: safe, or treated well?	A law?
Bike riders must wear a helmet (Road Safety Road Rules 2017, Vic, Rule 256)	Yes	Yes — children and adults	Yes — keeps heads safe	Yes, a law
People in cars must wear a seatbelt (Road Safety Road Rules 2017, Vic)	Yes	Yes	Yes — keeps people safe	Yes, a law
Children must go to school from 6 to 17 (Education and Training Reform Act 2009, Vic)	Yes	Yes — all children and their parents	Yes — learning is for every child	Yes, a law
In our home, dinner comes before the TV	No — a family made it	No — one home only	(maybe!)	Not a law

The family rule might be a good rule, but it fails checks 1 and 2, so it is not a law. Laws are rules a government makes for everyone.

Practice questions

With help

Q1. Look at the “Who makes the decisions?” picture from Step 1. Name the person or group who decides for: (a) your family, (b) your school, (c) your town.

Q2. Finish the sentences with the words *decisions*, *place* and *everyone*.

- (a) A government is the people who make the big _____ for a _____.
- (b) A law is a rule that _____ in that place has to follow.

Q3. Look at the “Laws in our lives” cards from Step 3. Which law is for you when: (a) you ride your bike to a friend’s home? (b) you travel in a car? (c) you are 8 years old and living in Victoria?

Q4. Put a circle around the things that are laws, and a cross through the things that are not.

- (a) Bike riders must wear a helmet.
- (b) In our home, shoes come off at the door.
- (c) People in cars must wear a seatbelt.
- (d) In our class, hands go up before we speak.
- (e) Children must go to school from 6 to 17.

Q5. Freedom. Finish both sentences about your own life.

- I am free to choose _____.
- I am not free to choose to skip my seatbelt, because _____.

Q6. Fairness. Look at the “Two ideas of fair” picture from Step 5. (a) Which idea gives every student the same? (b) Which idea gives the student with the broken pencil what they need? (c) Which idea do you think is fairer here? Say why.

On your own

Q7. A school has hundreds of students, but one principal makes some big decisions for the whole school. Give one reason why that makes sense.

Q8. Name one law that is for you, and one law that is for the adults in your life. Say who each law is for.

Q9. Tell about a time something felt fair to you, or unfair. What would make it fair?

Q10. Laws are for everyone, not just some people. Why do you think that matters?

Reasoning question

Someone always decides. Give one reason why parents are the right people to decide at home, and one reason why the principal is the right person to decide at school. Then give one reason why the people of a town let a council decide some things for the whole town. Are your reasons the same kind of reason all three times, or different?

Answers

Q1. (a) Parents. (b) The principal. (c) The council.

Q2. (a) decisions; place. (b) everyone.

Q3. (a) The helmet law. (b) The seatbelt law. (c) The school law — children must go to school from 6 to 17.

Q4. Laws: (a), (c), (e). Not laws: (b) a family rule, and (d) a class rule. (b) and (d) are good rules, but a family or a class made them for one small group, not a government for everyone.

Q5. Answers will be different. Example: “I am free to choose which book I read. I am not free to choose to skip my seatbelt, because the seatbelt law keeps me safe and it is for everyone.”

Q6. (a) Idea 1. (b) Idea 2. (c) Any pick is fine if the reason is about fairness — for Idea 1, “the same for everyone means no favourites”; for Idea 2, “the student who needs help gets it, so all three can write”.

Q7. Example: the principal sees the whole school, so one person can decide for everyone; if every student decided for the whole school, the school could not run.

Q8. Example: the helmet law is for me when I ride my bike; the seatbelt law is for my parents when they drive. Both laws are really for everyone.

Q9. Answers will be different. A good answer says what happened, and says what would make it fair using one of the two ideas of fair.

Q10. Example: if a law were only for some people, the others could be unsafe or left out; a law for everyone keeps everyone safe and treats everyone the same.

Reasoning question. Example reasons: parents know and care for their children; the principal is in charge of the whole school; a council can decide for a whole town because one home or one school cannot. The reasons are the same kind all three times: the person who decides looks after the whole group.

For the teacher: where this section comes from, contested words and sources

Where this section comes from. Victorian Curriculum 2.0 (VC2), Civics and Citizenship, Levels 3 and 4. This section owns VC2HC4K01 and draws on the band’s three examples of what students might do: VC2HC4K01 . E01 (why the person who decides — a parent, a principal — is the right one to decide, and how that compares with a government deciding for a whole area), VC2HC4K01 . E02 (naming the laws that reach students, their families, teachers and schools) and VC2HC4K01 . E03 (talking about freedom, fairness and equality — real examples from students’ own lives). This section is checked against the code itself and the band’s end-of-Level-4 picture of what students can do, not against a count of examples touched.

Contested words. *Freedom*, *fairness* and *equality* are words people argue about: VC2 uses them without saying what they mean, and people who mean well can use different meanings. This section gives its working meanings at first use (CONTESTED_TERMS Rule 1), puts the two strongest ideas of fairness side by side, not one weak one (Rules 4 and 5), and marks the fairness questions so that the thinking is what gets the marks, not the answer reached. *Democracy* is given one clear meaning a child can use (“the people have a say”), and does not say other meanings are wrong.

Sources (real, named, able to be checked).

Road Safety Road Rules 2017 (Vic) — instrument page live 2026-08-25:

<https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/in-force/statutory-rules/road-safety-road-rules-2017>

Rule 256 (bicycle helmets); the seatbelt rule as adopted in Victoria.

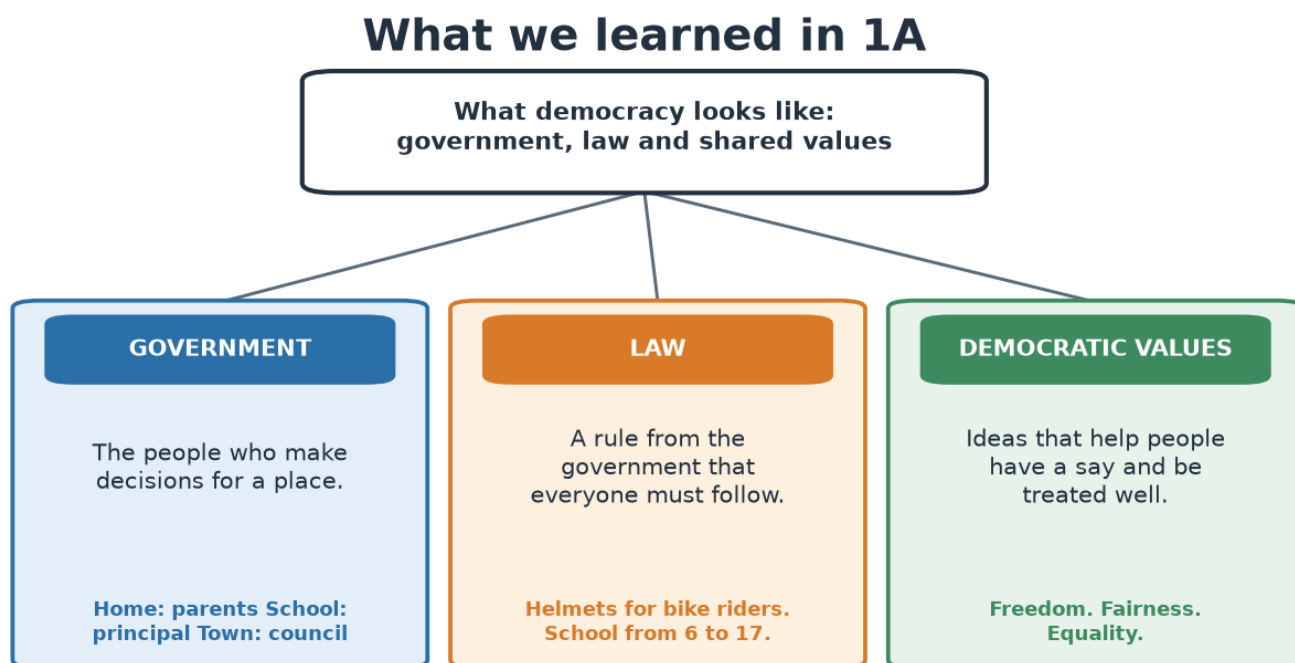
Road Safety Act 1986 (Vic) — page live 2026-08-25:

<https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/in-force/acts/road-safety-act-1986>

Education and Training Reform Act 2009 (Vic) s 2.1.1 — school age in Victoria is 6 to 17, as published by the Victorian Government.

Victorian government school holiday dates are set for all government schools by the Victorian Department of Education (education.vic.gov.au). No textbook was used in writing this section.

What this section leaves out. This is the first section of the first band of Civics and Citizenship: nothing is taken as known, and nothing is looked at again as if taught before. The three kinds of government, the way voting works, parliaments, courts and police are taught in Levels 5–6 and later, and do not appear here; “government” is built only from the people children know: who decides at home, at school and in town.



A summary map with three boxes under “What we learned in 1A”. Government: the people who make decisions for a place; home, parents, school, principal, town, council. Law: a rule from the government that everyone must follow; helmets for bike riders, school from 6 to 17. Democratic values: ideas that help people have a say and be treated well; freedom, fairness, equality.

Two ways to decide: one person, or everyone has a say

Teaching sequence (for the teacher)

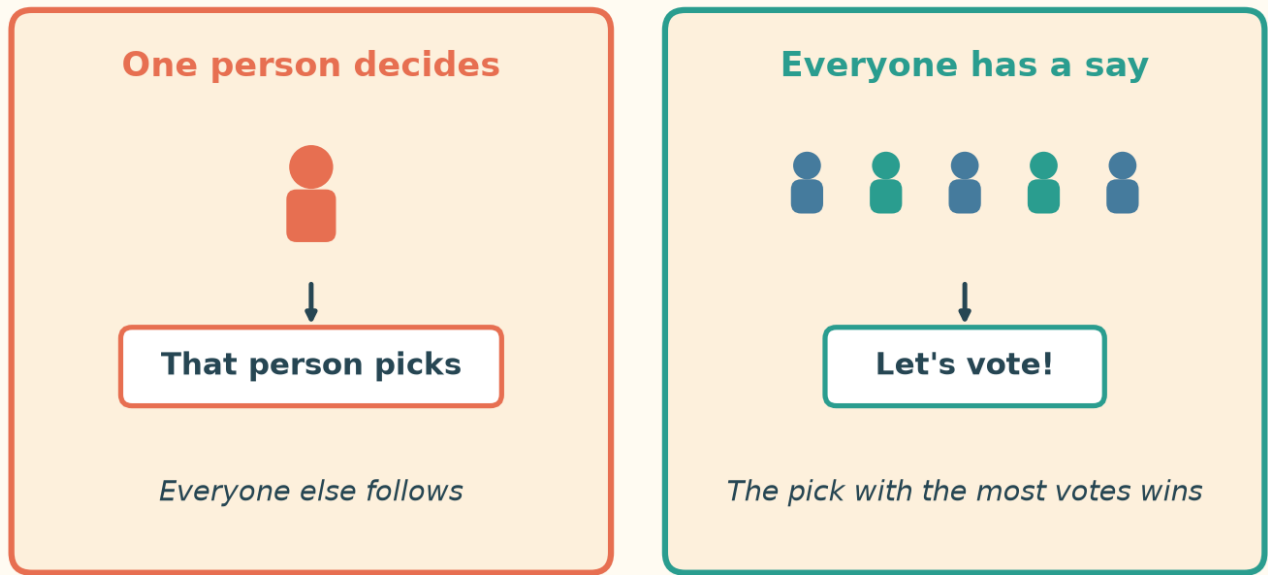
- **Curriculum links.** This section owns VC2HC4K02 (Victorian Curriculum F–10 Version 2.0, Civics and Citizenship, Levels 3 and 4 band; VCAA export retrieved 2026-07-29) and draws on elaborations .E01 (one person making classroom rules compared with the whole class contributing), .E02 (how a family decides compared with how a school decides) and .E03 (how countries have changed from monarchies to democracies — like France and the USA — or keep a mix of both — like the UK and Japan). This is the second section of the book; there is no earlier Civics and Citizenship learning to revise or assume.
 - **Contested terms (house rule).** *Democracy, fairness, equality* and *freedom* are contested terms that the curriculum uses without defining. The student-facing word box below states, in child language, that people use these words in different ways and fixes the meaning this book reasons with; students reason inside the stated meaning. *Monarchy* and *emperor* are plain descriptive terms, defined at first use.
 - **Step 1 — hook.** Ask: who decided what you had to eat this morning? Who decided what time school starts? Steer toward the idea that someone makes every decision, and different groups decide in different ways.
 - **Step 2 — big ideas.** Read the Big ideas text aloud together, pausing at the word box and at each picture. Then run a live class vote on a small pick (which story to read next) using the five steps in Picture 2, and finish by running the fair check (Picture 3) on your own vote.
 - **Step 3 — worked examples.** Walk through Examples 1 and 2; have students retell each row of the tables in their own words before moving on.
 - **Step 4 — practice.** Q1–Q6 with support (pairs welcome); Q7–Q10 on their own, with written or drawn answers accepted; R1 as a think–pair–share, then one or two sentences each.
 - **Step 5 — links to the Skills chapter.** The contexts set up here are reused later: posing questions about decision-making (2A), sorting democratic and non-democratic decisions (2B), describing local government as a democratic decision-making body (2C) and using consensus and deliberation on classroom rules (2D).
 - **Assessment note.** Open answers are marked on the quality of reasoning — a reason given, the defined words used in the stated sense — never on which option a student prefers.
-

Big ideas

A **decision** is a pick. When you choose one thing and not another, you have made a decision. Think about this morning. Someone decided what you had to eat. Someone decided what time school starts. In every group, someone makes the decisions.

A group of people who share a place, a school or a club is called a **community**. Your family is a community. Your class is a community. Your whole town is a community too. Different communities make decisions in different ways.

Two ways a group can decide



Two cards showing two ways to decide. Left card: one person decides; that person picks; everyone else follows. Right card: everyone has a say; let us vote; the pick with the most votes wins.

Picture 1 shows the two big ways a group can decide. **One person decides**, and everyone else follows. Or **everyone has a say**, and the group goes with the pick that most people want. When a group decides the second way, it is being **democratic**.

Words we use

- **decision** – a pick; when you choose one thing and not another.
- **community** – a group of people who share a place, a school or a club.
- **vote** – a way to show your pick, like putting up your hand or ticking a box.
- **democracy** – a way of deciding where everyone in the group gets a say, and the group goes with the pick that gets the most votes. A group that decides this way is being **democratic**. People use this word in different ways. In this book, this is what it means.
- **fairness** – everyone gets a proper go. People can mean different things by “fair”. In this book, fair means everyone gets a say and every say counts the same.
- **equality** – everyone counts the same. No one’s say is bigger than anyone else’s.
- **freedom** – being able to say what you think and help choose.
- **monarchy** – a country where a king or queen is the head, and the job stays in one family.
- **emperor** – the head of some countries, a bit like a king. Japan has an emperor.

Why do groups choose the democratic way?

Groups often pick the democratic way because of three big ideas from the word box:

- **Fairness.** Everyone gets a say, not just one person.
- **Equality.** Everyone’s say counts the same. One student, one vote.
- **Freedom.** People can say what they think and help choose.

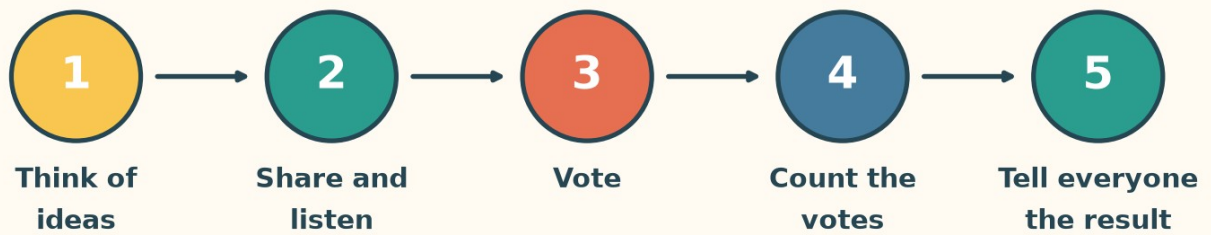
There is one more good thing about it. When many people share ideas, more ideas come out, so the group can make a better pick. And people are happier to follow a pick they helped make.

One person deciding is not always wrong. It is quick. If someone gets hurt at recess, you do not stop and vote — a grown-up decides fast and helps. When a group wants speed more than everyone’s say, one person deciding can be the better pick. When a group wants fairness and everyone’s say, the democratic way is the better pick.

How does a class make a democratic pick?

It uses a **vote**, done in five fair steps.

The steps of a fair class vote



Five circles in a row, numbered 1 to 5, in this order: think of ideas; share and listen; vote; count the votes; tell everyone the result.

After the vote, a class can run the fair check. If every box gets a tick, the decision was a fair one.

A fair decision: our check



Did everyone get a say?



Did every vote count the same?



Did everyone listen?



Was the result told to everyone?

A checklist. The top line says “A fair decision: our check”. Four ticked boxes: did everyone get a say? Did every vote count the same? Did everyone listen? Was the result told to everyone?

Home and school

Now look at two communities you know well: your family and your school.

Who decides? At home and at school

The decision	At home	At school
Who makes the rules?	Parents make family rules	The class makes rules together
What do we eat?	A parent picks dinner	The school picks the lunch list
What do we do for fun?	The family picks together	Students vote for class games
Who helps?	A parent helps	A teacher helps

A table of who decides at home and at school. Who makes the rules: parents make family rules, and the class makes rules together. What do we eat: a parent picks dinner, and the school picks the lunch list. What do we do for fun: the family picks together, and students vote for class games. Who helps: a parent helps, and a teacher helps.

Picture 4 shows something interesting. A family is a small community, so it can give everyone a say quite often — and it still leaves some quick picks to one parent. A school is a bigger community. It shares some decisions, like class rules, and it leaves some decisions to one person, like the principal choosing when the bell rings. Small group or big group, both use the democratic way when they want everyone's say.

A whole country can decide too

Long ago, most countries were a **monarchy**: a king or queen was the head, and the job stayed in one family. Over time, many countries changed to a democracy, where the people choose who decides.

Who decides for a whole country?

MONARCHY	DEMOCRACY	A MIX OF BOTH
		
A king or queen is the head of the country.	The people choose who decides. They vote.	A king or emperor is the head, and the people also choose

Three cards. Monarchy: a king or queen is the head of the country. Democracy: the people choose who decides; they vote. A mix of both: a king or emperor is the head, and the people also choose.

France and the USA are democracies today. Long ago, France had kings; now the people of France choose their leaders by voting. The people of the USA choose their leaders by voting too. Two countries kept a mix of both. The UK still has a king, and Japan has an **emperor** — and in both countries, the people also choose who makes the big decisions.

How do four countries decide?

 France The people of France choose their leaders by voting. Long ago, France had kings.	 The USA The people of the USA choose their leaders by voting.
 The UK The UK has a king, and the people choose who makes decisions.	 Japan Japan has an emperor, and the people choose who makes decisions.

The flags are kept simple.

Four cards with simple flags. France: the people of France choose their leaders by voting; long ago, France had kings. The USA: the people of the USA choose their leaders by voting. The UK: the UK has a king, and the people choose who makes decisions. Japan: Japan has an emperor, and the people choose who makes decisions.

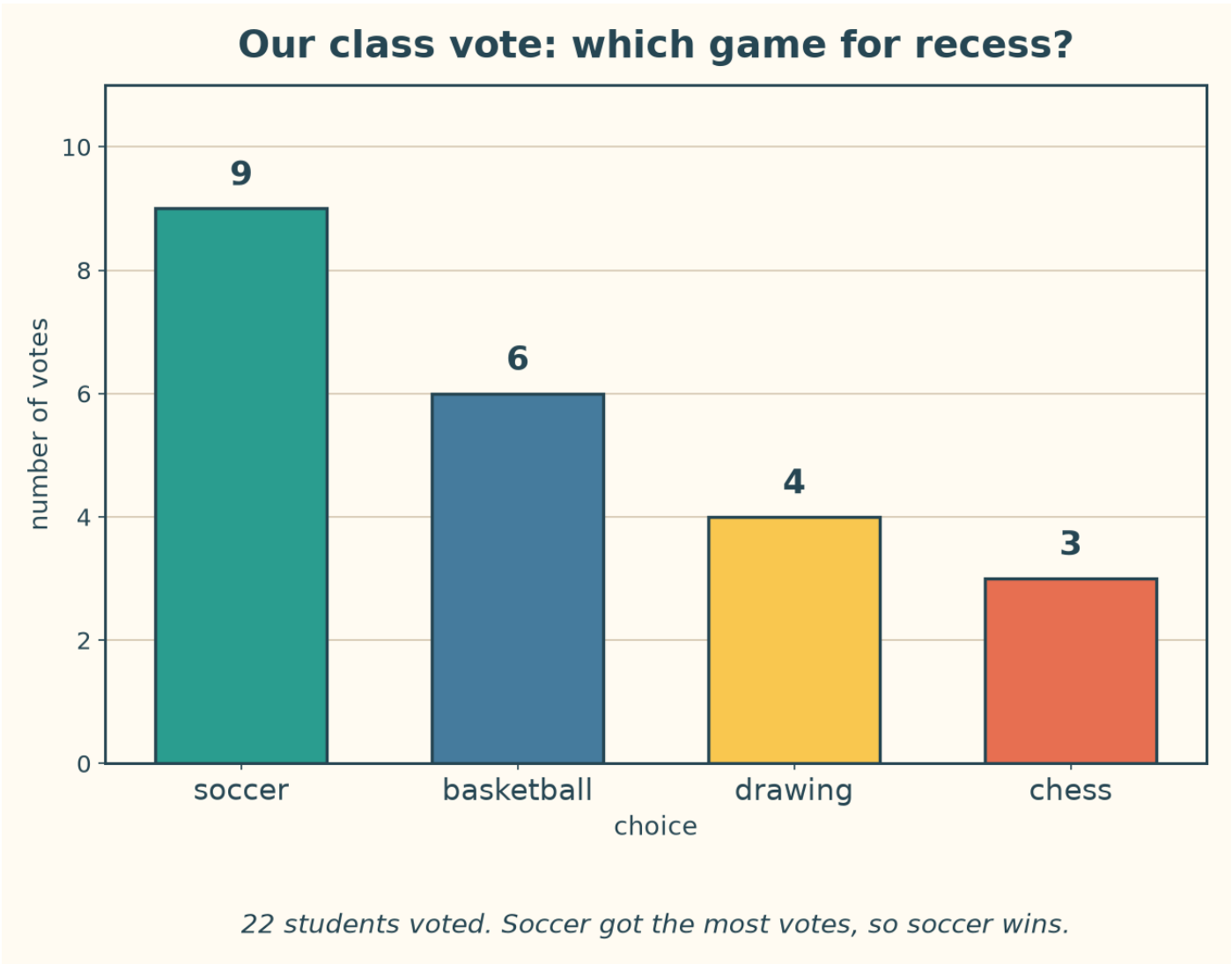
In Australia too, grown-ups vote to choose the people who make the big decisions for the whole country. A class vote, a family say, a country's vote — the big idea is the same. The people who must live with a decision get a say in it.

Worked examples

Example 1 — with help

Our class picks a recess game. The Year 3 class wants to pick one game for recess on Fridays. There are 22 students. They use the five fair steps.

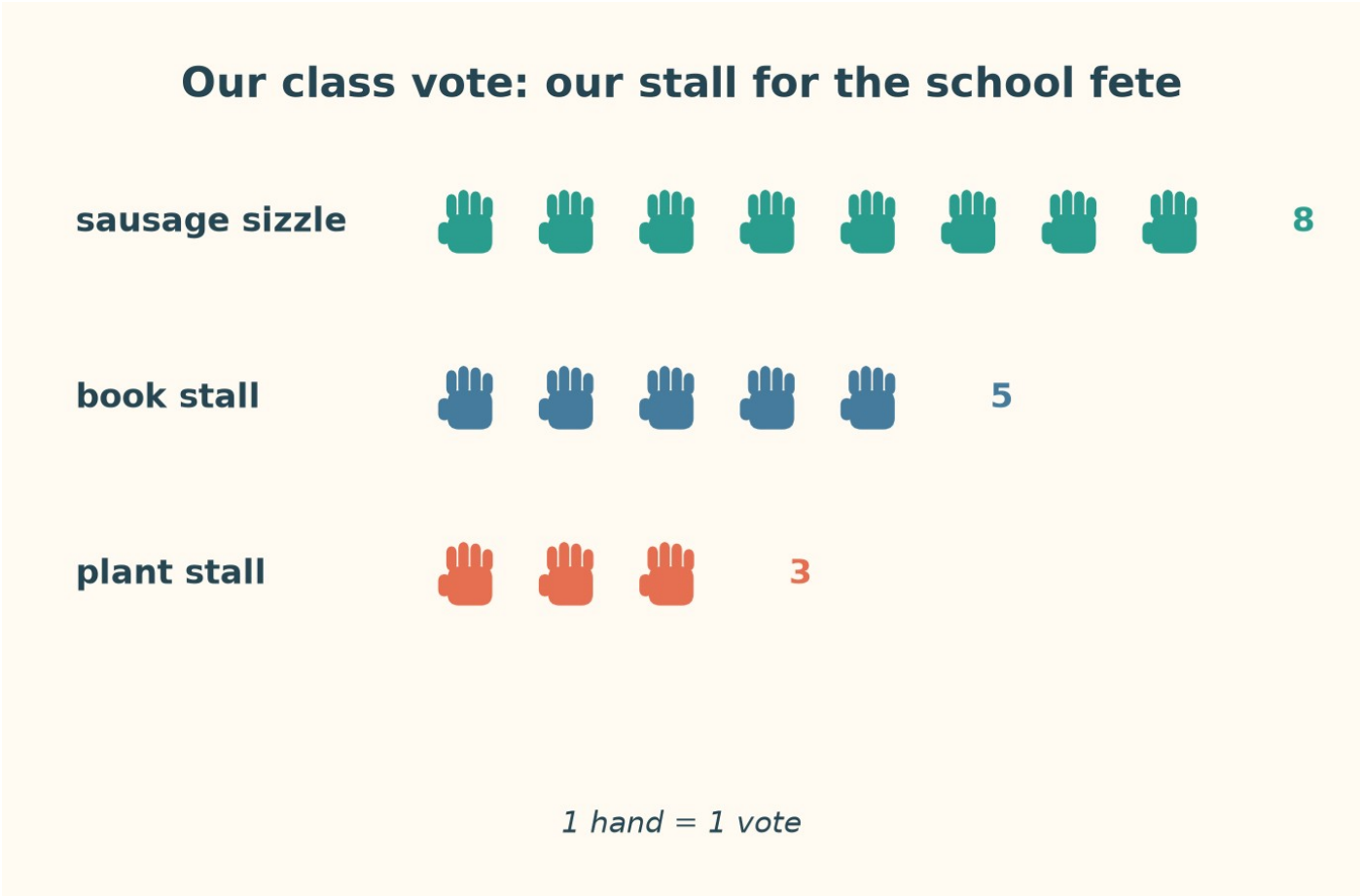
What the class does	Why it is fair
1. Think of ideas: soccer, basketball, drawing, chess.	Every idea gets heard.
2. Share and listen: each student says one good thing about their pick.	Everyone gets a say.
3. Vote: each student puts up a hand once, for one game.	Every hand counts the same.
4. Count: soccer 9, basketball 6, drawing 4, chess 3.	The count is done in the open, so everyone can check it.
5. Tell everyone the result: soccer wins.	No one is left wondering.



A bar chart of the class vote. Soccer got 9 votes, basketball 6, drawing 4 and chess 3. 22 students voted. Soccer got the most votes, so soccer wins.

So the democratic pick is soccer. Nine out of 22 is not everyone — 13 students picked something else. In a democracy, the pick with the most votes wins, and the class can swap the game next term so the other picks get a turn.

The same class also voted on their stall for the school fete. Picture 8 shows that vote, with one hand for each vote.



A picture of raised hands showing a class vote about the stall for the school fete. Sausage sizzle got 8 hands, book stall got 5 hands, plant stall got 3 hands. One hand is one vote.

Example 2 — with help

Dinner at home, rules at school. Look at four real decisions and ask: did one person decide, or did everyone get a say?

The decision	Who decides	One person, or a say for everyone?
Dinner on a school night	A parent.	One person decides. It is quick on a busy night.
Dinner on Friday	The kids pick from two meals.	The kids get a say.
Class rules	The whole class, together.	Everyone has a say — democratic.
When the bell rings	The principal.	One person decides for the whole school.

What do you notice? Small groups, like families, can give everyone a say more often. Big groups, like schools, share some decisions and leave some to one person. Both use the democratic way when they want everyone’s say — that is what makes a decision democratic.

Practice

With help

Q1. Look at Picture 1. Put each decision into the right group: *one person decides* or *everyone has a say*. (a) Dad picks what time you go to bed. (b) The class votes on a name for the class pet fish. (c) The teacher picks who lines up first today. (d) Everyone in the class puts up a hand to pick the Friday game.

Q2. Look at Picture 7, the recess vote chart. (a) How many students voted? (b) Which game won? (c) How many more votes did soccer get than chess?

Q3. Put the five fair steps in order. Write 1 to 5 on the lines. _____ Count the votes. _____ Tell everyone the result. _____ Think of ideas. _____ Vote. _____ Share and listen.

Q4. Finish each sentence with a word from the box. Each word is used once.

democracy · vote · fair · say

- (a) When everyone in a group gets a _____, the group is using democracy.
- (b) A _____ is how we show our pick.
- (c) A vote is _____ when every vote counts the same.
- (d) _____ is the name for deciding where everyone gets a say.

Q5. Look at Picture 8, the fete stall vote. One hand is one vote. (a) Which stall got the most votes? (b) How many hands are in the book stall row? (c) Did more students pick the plant stall or the book stall?

Q6. Look at Picture 6, the four country cards. Write F, U, K or J. (a) This country has an emperor, and the people choose who makes decisions. (b) This country has a king, and the people choose who makes decisions. (c) The people of this country choose their leaders by voting. Long ago, it had kings. (d) The people of this country choose their leaders by voting.

On your own

Q7. Your class will pick one game for recess. Write or draw the five fair steps you would use, in order.

Q8. Give one good thing about letting everyone in the class have a say, and one hard thing about it.

Q9. Think of one decision at your home. Who makes it? Write one way your family could give everyone a say in it.

Q10. Look at Picture 6. A friend says the UK cannot be democratic because it has a king. Use what you know to answer your friend.

Reasoning

R1. Why do groups choose the democratic way? Give two reasons, and one time when one person deciding is better. Try to use the words *fairness* or *equality* in your reasons.

Answers

Q1. (a) One person decides. (b) Everyone has a say. (c) One person decides. (d) Everyone has a say.

Q2. (a) 22 students voted. (b) Soccer won. (c) Soccer got 6 more votes than chess ($9 - 3 = 6$).

Q3. Count the votes = 4. Tell everyone the result = 5. Think of ideas = 1. Vote = 3. Share and listen = 2.

Q4. (a) say. (b) vote. (c) fair. (d) Democracy.

Q5. (a) The sausage sizzle. (b) 5 hands. (c) The book stall (5 to 3).

Q6. (a) J. (b) K. (c) F. (d) U.

Q7. A good answer shows the five steps in order: think of ideas; share and listen; vote; count the votes; tell everyone the result.

Q8. A good answer: good — it is fair, because everyone gets a say; hard — it takes more time, and not everyone gets their own pick.

Q9. A good answer: Dad picks when you go to bed; the family could vote on which walk to do on the weekend.

Q10. A good answer: the UK has a king, but the king is not the only decider. The people of the UK choose who makes the big decisions, so the people still get a say. That is a mix of both ways.

R1. A good answer: two reasons — it is fair because everyone gets a say, and everyone's say counts the same (equality); also, people are happier to follow a pick they helped make. One time when one person deciding is better: when someone gets hurt, a grown-up decides fast and helps.

Sources (for the teacher)

- Victorian Curriculum F–10 Version 2.0, Civics and Citizenship, Levels 3 and 4 band: content description VC2HC4K02 and its three elaborations (VCAA export retrieved 2026-07-29; the curriculum is the scope authority for this section).
- United Kingdom head of state: royal.uk, “The King” — King Charles III (retrieved 2026-08-25).
- Japan head of state: Emperor Naruhito, checked against the Wikipedia article “Emperor of Japan” (retrieved 2026-08-25).
- France and the USA as countries whose leaders are chosen by voting, and the UK and Japan as mixes of a royal head and people-chosen decision-makers: as stated in the curriculum's own elaboration .E03.
- All class, family and school examples are original to this book; no publisher material was used.

Our council: the services it runs and how we help

For teachers — curriculum trace. Victorian Curriculum 2.0 Civics and Citizenship, Levels 3 and 4 band; strand Knowledge and Understanding, sub-strand Government and democracy. Content description **VC2HC4K03**. Draws on elaborations **VC2HC4K03 .E01**, **VC2HC4K03 .E02** and **VC2HC4K03 .E03**. Elaboration ids are linkage keys, not a teaching order (TOC D7).

Learning

Look at your town or your part of the city. Someone has to look after the parks, pick up the rubbish, run the library and look after the pools. In each part of Victoria, a group of people is chosen to do this big job. This group is called the **council**.

The work that a council does for the people in its area is called **local government**. *Local* means it looks after one part of the country — the part where you live. *Government* means it is the group that makes decisions for that part.

New word — local government. In this section, *local government* means the council: the group of people chosen to make decisions and look after services in one area (Local Government Act 2020 (Vic)). These words can mean other things too, but in this section we use this meaning.

Who chooses the council?

The people who live in the area choose the council. They do this by **voting**. A time when people vote to choose who will decide things is called an **election**.

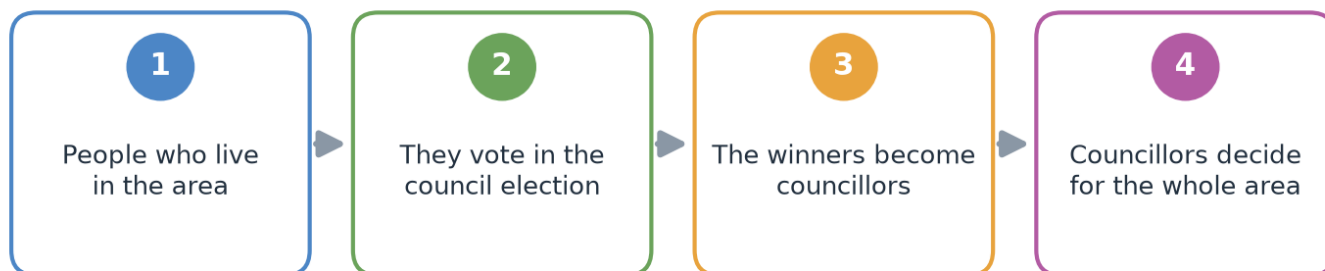
Every four years, there is a council election in Victoria. The last one was on 26 October 2024. People in most council areas got their voting papers by post, filled them in and sent them back. The people who win the vote become **councillors**.

A **councillor** is a person chosen by the people to make decisions at the council. Each council has between 5 and 12 councillors (Local Government Act 2020 (Vic)). Some councils cover a big city. The City of Greater Geelong has about 271,000 people and 11 councillors. Some councils cover quiet country land. The City of Ballarat has about 127,000 people and 9 councillors.

Councillors meet to talk about what their area needs. Then they decide together. Many councils also choose one councillor to be the **mayor**. The mayor speaks for the council and leads the meetings.

Councillors cannot do all the work on their own. The council also has workers. Council workers drive the rubbish trucks, plant new trees, help you at the library, look after the pools and keep the parks safe and clean.

How is our council chosen?



Every four years, people in Victoria choose their councillors by voting.

A flow diagram with four steps showing how a council is chosen: people who live in the area vote at an election, councillors are chosen, and councillors make decisions for the area

Who does what?

Who?	What do they do?
Councillors	decide what the area needs — they talk, listen and then choose
Council workers	do the hands-on jobs: drive the trucks, plant trees, help at the library and the pool
People who live in the area	use the services, look after them, and say what they need

Councillors decide. Council workers do the jobs. Everyone can use and look after the services.

A table with three rows showing who does what: councillors decide, council workers do the hands-on jobs, and people in the area use the services and say what they need

Talk together (teacher-led). Ask: *Who decides things at our school? Who decides things for our town?* Then ask: *Did you choose them? How?* Let students share ideas. Explain that the people who live in an area choose the councillors by voting.

What does the council do?

The council runs and looks after many things we all share. These things are called **services**. A *service* is something the council runs for everyone in the area.

Services our council looks after



A service is something the council runs for everyone in the area.

A diagram with Our council in the middle and eight services around it: rubbish and recycling, libraries, health checks for families, parks and gardens, fun events, pools and sport, arts, and pets

The council's services include:

- **rubbish and recycling** — trucks pick up your bins; the council decides what happens to the things we throw away
- **libraries** — free books, story time for little kids, computers and quiet places to read
- **health** — free checks for babies and young kids and their families, called Maternal and Child Health (*maternal* means about mums and babies)
- **parks and gardens** — grass, trees, playgrounds, paths and seats to look after and enjoy
- **events** — fun days, markets and shows for the whole area
- **pools and sport** — pools to swim in and places to play sport
- **arts** — art shows, music and other fun things to see and do
- **pets** — every dog and cat must be on the council's pet list from 3 months of age (Domestic Animals Act 1994 (Vic)); the council looks after lost pets too

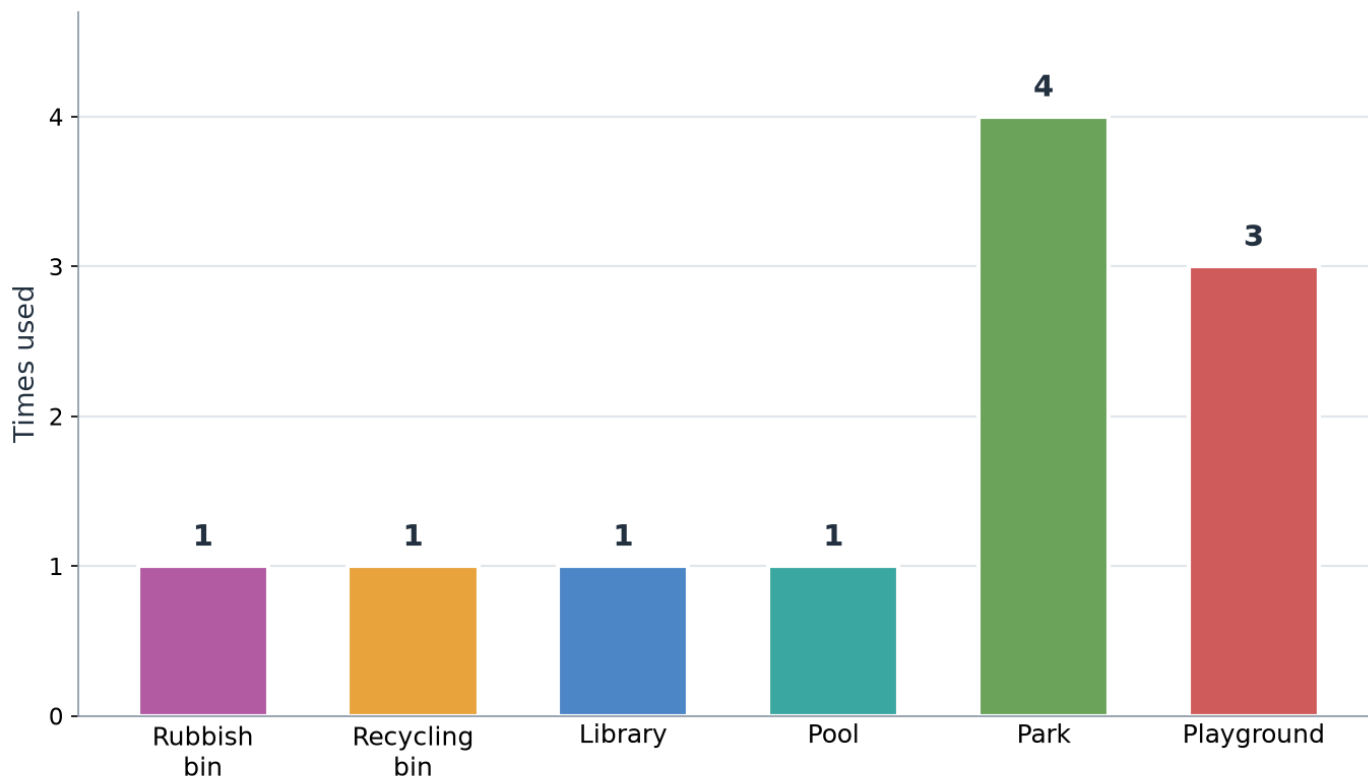
The council can also make small laws for its own area. These laws can say things like where dogs may run free or where bikes may ride.

Talk together (teacher-led). Ask: *Which of these have you or your family used?* List the answers on the board. Ask: *Can you think of one more thing the council looks after?*

How do we use the council's services?

You and your family use council services all the time — often without knowing it! Putting your bin out is using a service. Borrowing a book is using a service. Playing at the playground is using a service.

Council services Mia's family used in one week



Even in one week, a family uses council services many times.

A bar chart showing how many times Mia's family used council services in one week: rubbish bin once, recycling bin once, library once, pool once, park four times and playground three times

How do we help the council's services?

The council's services belong to everyone. So everyone can help look after them. There are many ways to help.

- Put the right things in the right bin. In Victoria, the government wants every council to use four bins by the year 2030 (Victorian Government, Recycling Victoria, 2020): a **red** bin for rubbish, a **yellow** bin for things we can use again, a **green** bin for food and garden bits, and a **purple** bin for glass.
- Return library books on time so others can read them.
- Put rubbish in the bin at the park, or take it home. Do not drop it on the ground.
- Look after the playground so it stays safe for little kids.
- Say please and thank you to council workers.

People also help with money. People who own a house or land in the area pay money to the council each year. This money is called **rates**. The council uses rates to run the services we all share.

The four bins



By 2030, every council in Victoria will use these four bins (Victorian Government, Recycling Victoria).

A diagram of four bins with coloured lids — purple for glass, green for food and garden bits, yellow for things we can use again, and red for rubbish — with examples of what goes in each

We use them — and we help look after them

How we use council services	How we help look after them
• Put the bins out for pick-up	• Sort things into the right bin
• Borrow books from the library	• Return library books on time
• Play in the parks and playgrounds	• Take our rubbish home from the park
• Swim at the council pool	• Look after the playground
• Go to fun events near home	• Say what we need to the council

The services belong to everyone — so everyone can help.

A table with two sides: one side lists ways we use council services, and the other side lists ways we help look after them

Your voice matters

You can tell the council what you think. This is called using your **voice**. Groups in your area can use their voices too. The **environment** — the land, water, air, plants and animals around us — is something many people speak up for.

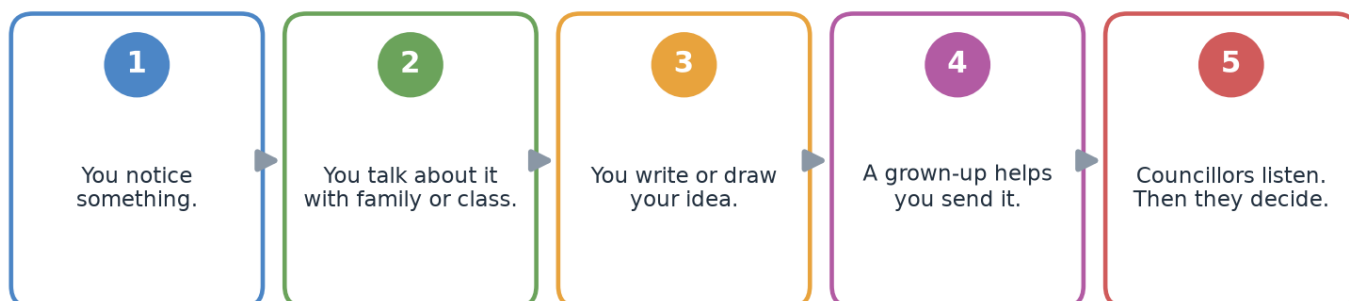
How can you use your voice?

1. Notice something. *The park needs a new seat. The path to school is hard to cross.*
2. Talk about it with your family or your class.
3. Write or draw your idea. A grown-up can help you send it to the council.
4. Councillors read and listen to what people say. Then they decide.

5. The council can tell you what it decides.

You can also make good choices every day. When you put glass in the purple bin, walk to the park instead of driving, or pick up litter, you are caring for your area and its environment.

How your voice can reach the council



Using your voice means telling the council what you think.

A flow diagram with five steps showing how a student's voice reaches the council: notice something, talk about it, write or draw the idea, send it to the council, and councillors listen and decide

A model letter to the council

Dear Councillors,

My name is Mia. I am 8 years old.

I live near Lake Park.

I love our playground. But on hot days,
the slides are too hot to use.

Could you please plant some big trees
near the slides to give us shade?

Thank you for listening.

From Mia, Age 8

A model letter written by a child to the councillors, asking for more shade trees at a local park

Talk together (teacher-led). Ask: *What is one thing in our area you would like to change?* Students draw or say their idea. Ask: *Who could we tell?* Draw out: family, teacher, class, council. Point out that writing to the council is something real people do.

Worked examples

Example 1 — with help: who decides in Geelong?

The City of Greater Geelong is a big council by the sea. About 271,000 people live there. How do they get the people who decide things for them? Follow the steps.

Step	What happens	Why it matters
1	People who live in Geelong get voting papers by post.	Everyone in the area can take part.
2	They vote in the council election (the last one was 26 October 2024).	The people choose who decides for them.
3	Eleven people win the vote and become councillors.	Geelong's council has 11 councillors, one for each part of the area.
4	The councillors meet, talk and decide about parks, bins, libraries and pools.	One group makes the decisions for the whole area.

Step	What happens	Why it matters
5	Council workers do the jobs the councillors decide on.	Decisions turn into real things, like a new playground.

✓ Check: the people chose the councillors. That is how local government is chosen.

Example 2 — with help: Mia's family and the four bins

Mia's family lives in a council area in Victoria. On bin day, Mia helps sort the family's things into the right bins. Follow her choices.

Thing	Which bin?	Why?
A broken plate	Red — rubbish	It cannot be used again.
A glass jar	Purple — glass	Glass can be made into new glass things.
An apple core	Green — food and garden	Food bits turn into good soil for gardens.
A milk bottle (plastic)	Yellow — use again	It can be made into new things.
Grass from the lawn	Green — food and garden	Garden bits turn into good soil too.
A torn, dirty sock	Red — rubbish	It is too worn out to use again.

✓ Check: Mia sorted each thing into the right bin. This is one way she helps the council's waste service and cares for the environment.

Practice questions

With help

Q1. Fill in the blanks. Use the words in the box: *council · councillors · election · services*.

- The group that looks after services in one area is called the _____.
- A time when people vote to choose who will decide things is called an _____.
- The people chosen by the vote to make decisions are called _____.
- The things the council runs for everyone, like libraries and parks, are called _____.

Q2. Match each thing to the council service it belongs to. Draw a line.

Thing	Service
Borrowing a book	parks and gardens
Putting your bin out	libraries
Playing on the swings	rubbish and recycling
Swimming on the weekend	pools and sport

Q3. Put the steps in order, from 1 to 4.

- () Councillors meet and make decisions for the area.
- () People who live in the area get voting papers.
- () The people vote in the council election.
- () The winners become councillors.

Q4. Circle two ways your family uses council services.

- Putting the bin out for pick-up
- Watching TV at home
- Playing at the playground
- Eating dinner
- Borrowing books from the library

Q5. Which bin does each thing go in? Write *red*, *yellow*, *green* or *purple*.

- (a) a banana skin _____
- (b) a glass bottle _____
- (c) a broken toy that cannot be fixed _____
- (d) a clean paper bag _____

Q6. Finish the sentence with one idea: *My voice can reach the council if I ...*

On your own

Q7. What is a councillor? How does a person become one?

Q8. Name three services your local council runs near you.

Q9. Write two ways you can help look after the council's services.

Q10. Think of one thing in your area you would like to be better. Write or draw it. Then write who you could tell about it.

Reasoning question

Q11. Some people think the council should spend more money on new playgrounds. Other people think the council should spend more money on picking up rubbish. Both sides have good reasons.

- (a) Write one good reason *for* new playgrounds.
 - (b) Write one good reason *for* picking up rubbish.
 - (c) What could the council do to hear from both sides before it decides?
-

Answers

Q1. (a) council · (b) election · (c) councillors · (d) services. **Q2.** Borrowing a book — libraries · putting your bin out — rubbish and recycling · playing on the swings — parks and gardens · swimming on the weekend — pools and sport. **Q3.** Order: People get voting papers (1) → people vote (2) → winners become councillors (3) → councillors meet and decide (4). **Q4.** Any two of: putting the bin out for pick-up · playing at the playground · borrowing books from the library. **Q5.** (a) green · (b) purple · (c) red · (d) yellow. **Q6.** Example: ... write a letter to the council. **Q7.** A councillor is a person chosen by the people to make decisions at the council. A person becomes a councillor by winning the vote in a council election. **Q8.** Answers will be different. Examples: rubbish pick-up, a library, parks, a pool. **Q9.** Answers will be different. Examples: put the right things in the right bin; take your rubbish home from the park. **Q10.** Answers will be different. The student names one idea and one person or group to tell (for example: family, teacher, class, the council). **Q11.** (a) Example: kids need safe, fun places to play. (b) Example: rubbish can hurt animals and make the area dirty. (c) Example: the council could ask people to write in and tell them what they think, and listen at a meeting.

Answers with steps

Q1. The sentence in (a) talks about the group for one area → *council*. The sentence in (b) talks about the time when people vote → *election*. The people chosen by the vote are *councillors* (c). The things run for everyone, like libraries, are *services* (d).

Q2. Ask: what is happening in each picture? Books come from the library. Bins are part of rubbish and recycling. Swings are in parks. Swimming happens at the pool.

Q3. Think about what must happen first. People need voting papers before they can vote. They vote before there are winners. The winners become councillors before the councillors meet and decide. So the order is: papers → vote → winners → decisions.

Q4. Using a service means doing something the council runs for you. TV and dinner happen at home, not through the council. The bin pick-up, the playground and the library are all council services. Pick any two of those three.

Q5. Food bits go in the green bin (banana skin). Glass goes in the purple bin (bottle). Things that cannot be used again go in the red bin (broken toy). Clean paper and bags can be used again, so they go in the yellow bin.

Q6. Start with one real way from the *Your voice matters* part of the section: write a letter, draw a picture and send it in, or ask a grown-up to help you tell the council your idea. Any one of these completes the sentence.

Q7. Build the answer in two parts. Part 1 says what a councillor is: a person chosen by the people to make decisions at the council. Part 2 says how: by winning the vote in the council election, which happens every four years.

Q8. Think of what you have seen in your area: bins and trucks, a library, parks with playgrounds, pools, paths and seats. Name any three. Every council runs some of these.

Q9. Helping means looking after what we all share. Step 1: pick two services you use. Step 2: for each one, think of one way to look after it. For example, for bins — sort things into the right bin. For parks — take your rubbish with you when you leave.

Q10. Step 1: pick one thing you would like to be better (a path, a park, a playground, a crossing). Step 2: write or draw it. Step 3: name who you could tell — your family, your teacher, your class, or the council itself. All of these are good answers.

Q11. Step 1: stand on each side in turn. For playgrounds, think about what kids need (safe, fun places to play and make friends). For rubbish pick-up, think about what happens when rubbish is left out (it can hurt animals, smell bad and make the area dirty). Step 2: both reasons are good, so the council should hear both. It could ask people to write in with their ideas and listen to them at a meeting before it decides. This is how a council uses everyone's voices.

Sources (for teachers)

Curriculum: Victorian Curriculum 2.0, Civics and Citizenship, Levels 3 and 4 band, content description VC2HC4K03 and elaborations .E01–.E03 (VCAA export retrieved 2026-07-29; codes cross-checked in VC2_AS-CD-Elab_29-07-2026.csv).

Real-world facts (all verified 2026-08-25 unless noted):

- 79 local councils in Victoria (34 cities, 38 shires, 6 rural cities, 1 borough) — Wikipedia, “Local government areas of Victoria”, retrieved 2026-08-25; figure agrees with Local Government Victoria.
- Council elections held every four years; most recent general elections 26 October 2024, voting by post across 78 of the 79 council areas — Wikipedia, “2024 Victorian local elections”, retrieved 2026-08-25.
- Each council composed of 5–12 councillors — Local Government Act 2020 (Vic), s 3.
- City of Greater Geelong: population 271,057 (2021 Australian census), 11 councillors elected from 11 single-member wards — Wikipedia, “City of Greater Geelong”, retrieved 2026-08-25.
- City of Ballarat: population about 127,000 (June 2026 estimate), 9 councillors — Wikipedia, “City of Ballarat”, retrieved 2026-08-25.

- Four-bin kerbside system (purple glass, green food and garden organics, yellow mixed recyclables, red residual waste) for all Victorian councils by 2030 — Victorian Government, *Recycling Victoria* policy (2020).
- Dogs and cats must be registered with the local council from 3 months of age — Domestic Animals Act 1994 (Vic).
- Maternal and Child Health: free universal service delivered by Victorian councils for families with children from birth to school age — Victorian Government.

Rules and laws: how they differ and why laws matter

In this section we meet rules and laws. We find out what a rule is, what a law is, and the big difference between them. We look at why laws are important, and at the laws you follow every day.

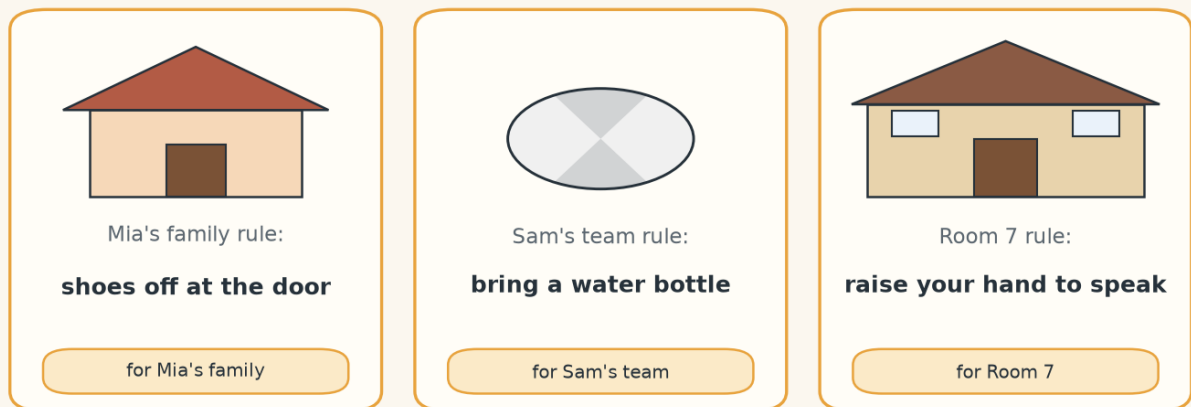
Big ideas

A **rule is a guide**. It tells you what to do and what not to do.

You already know lots of rules:

- **At home** — bedtime at 8, shoes off at the door, help with the dishes.
- **With friends** — take turns, play by the rules of the game.
- **At school** — raise your hand to talk, walk inside.

Rules can be for just one group



These are good rules. They are not laws — they are not for everyone.

Three panels: Mia's family rule is shoes off at the door, Sam's team rule is bring a water bottle, and Room 7's rule is raise your hand to speak. Each panel says the rule is only for that group.

A rule can be for **just one group**. Mia's family rule is not Sam's family rule. That is okay. Rules can be different in different groups.

A law is a special kind of rule. It is a strong rule made by the government. The **government** is the group of people who make big decisions for a whole place, like Victoria or all of Australia.

Here is the big difference:

Laws apply to everyone. Rules can apply to just one group.

If a law is about bikes, then **everyone** who rides a bike must follow it — children, adults, even your teacher! A rule, like bedtime at 8, is only for the people in one group.

Rules and laws — the big difference

	RULES	LAWS
What is it?	A guide that says what to do and what not to do	A strong rule made by the government
Who is it for?	One group — like a family, a class or a team	Everyone
Who makes it?	The people in the group	The government
Example	Lights out at 8 o'clock at Mia's house	Wear a helmet when you ride a bike

A law is for everyone. A rule can be for just one group.

A table comparing rules and laws: a rule is a guide that says what to do and what not to do, is for one group like a family, a class or a team, and is made by the people in the group; a law is a strong rule made by the government, is for everyone, and an example is wearing a helmet when you ride a bike.

Why do laws matter? Three big reasons:

Why do laws matter?



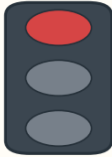
They keep us safe.

Helmets, seatbelts and road rules protect our bodies.



They are fair.

Everyone has to follow them.
No one gets to skip.



We know what to expect.

When the light is red, cars stop.
Then we can cross safely.

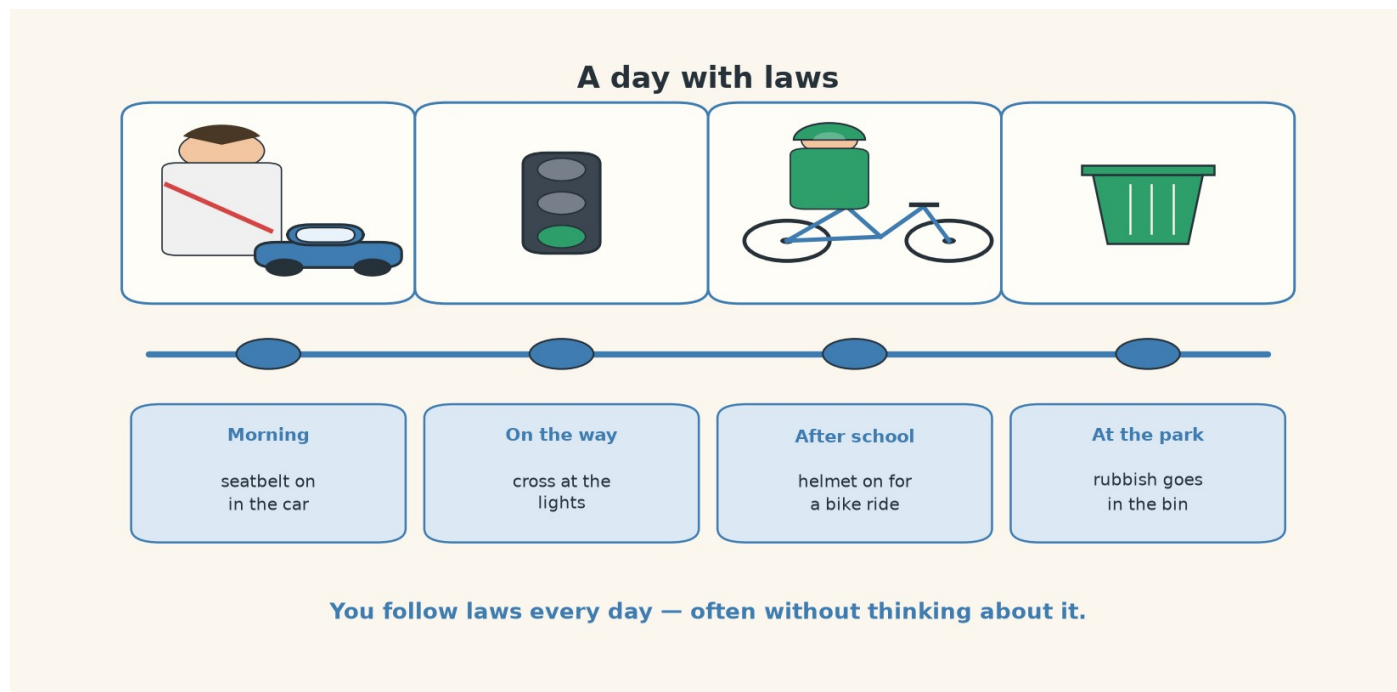
Laws matter because they help everyone live together safely.

Three panels: laws keep us safe because helmets, seatbelts and road rules protect our bodies; laws are fair because everyone has to follow them and no one gets to skip; and we know what to expect because when the light is red, cars stop and then we can cross safely.

1. **They keep us safe.** Helmets, seatbelts and road rules protect our bodies.
2. **They are fair.** Everyone has to follow them. No one gets to skip.
3. **We know what to expect.** When the light is red, cars stop. Then we can cross safely.

Word box — *fair*. *Fair* does not have one agreed meaning. This book uses it like this: **fair = the same rules for everyone, and the same chances for everyone.** Some people use *fair* in another way. When you say something is not fair, say which way you mean.

How do laws affect your life? More than you might think! Here is one day:

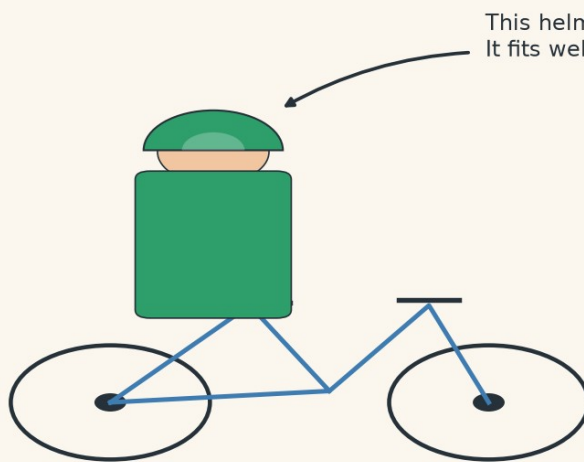


A timeline of one day: in the morning a seatbelt is on in the car; on the way to school we cross at the lights; after school a helmet is on for a bike ride; at the park rubbish goes in the bin.

Seatbelts, helmets, red lights and crossing safely are all laws. You follow laws every day — often without thinking about it.

One real law to know: Victoria's bike helmet law. Victoria has a law about bike helmets. It says everyone who rides a bike must wear a helmet that fits well. Kids and adults. Every ride. Helmets protect your head if you fall. This law is in Victoria's road rules (Road Safety Road Rules 2017, rule 256).

A law that keeps heads safe



Victoria's bike helmet law

Victoria has a law about bike helmets. It says everyone who rides a bike must wear a helmet that fits well.

Kids and grown-ups.
Every ride.

**Helmets protect your head
if you fall.**

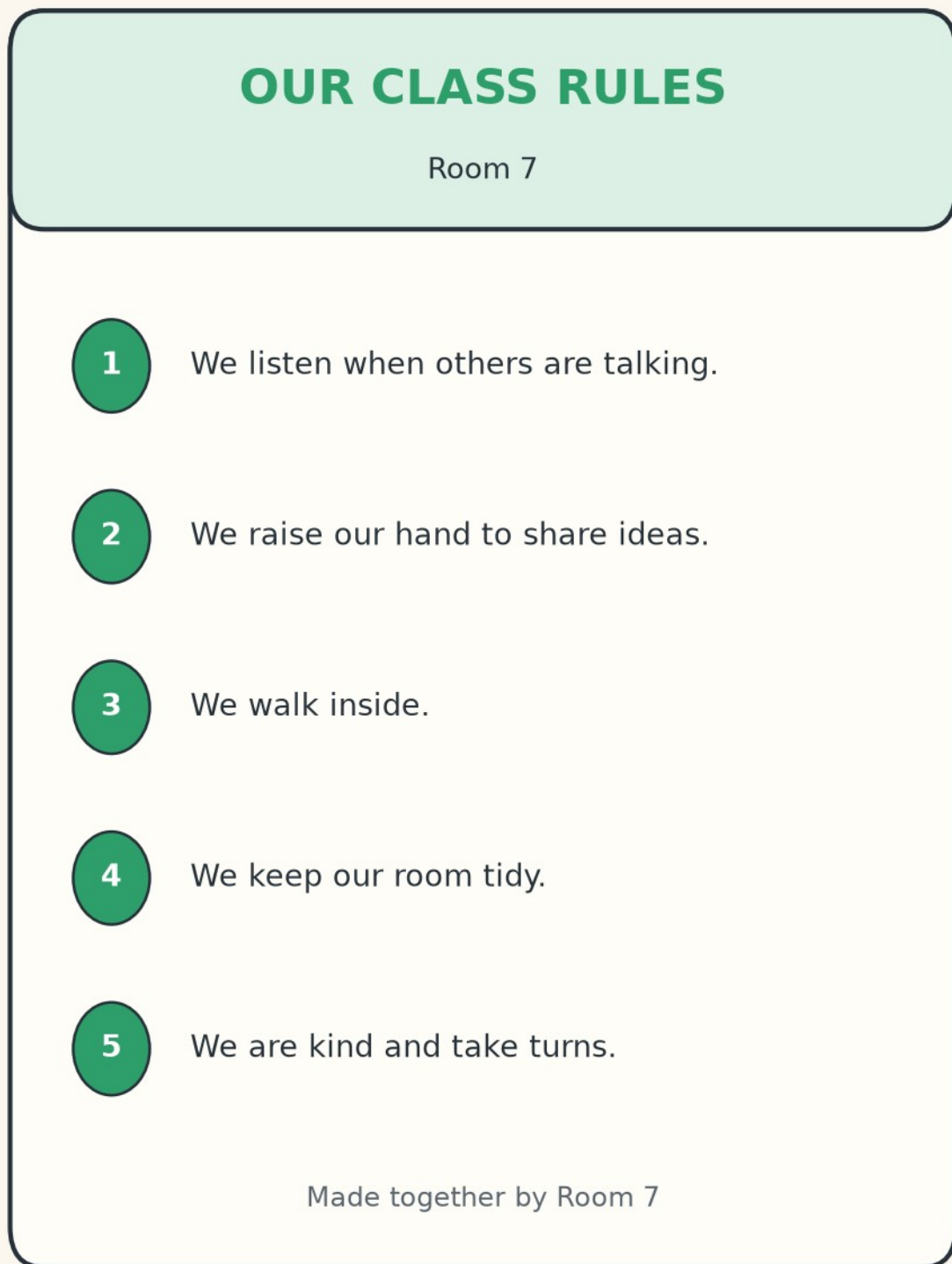
This law is in Victoria's road rules
(Road Safety Road Rules 2017, rule 256).

Bikes are fun — and the law helps keep riders safe.

A labelled diagram of a child riding a bike with a helmet, beside a fact box: Victoria's bike helmet law says everyone who rides a bike must wear a helmet that fits well, kids and adults, every ride; helmets protect your head if you fall; the law is in Victoria's road rules, Road Safety Road Rules 2017, rule 256.

There is a law like this for cars too: everyone in a car must wear a seatbelt (Road Safety Road Rules 2017, rules 264 to 266).

Are school rules laws too? Look at a class rules poster:



A model class rules poster for Room 7 with five rules: we listen when others are talking; we raise our hand to share ideas; we walk inside; we keep our room tidy; we are kind and take turns. It says the rules were made together by Room 7.

School rules are **rules, not laws**. They are made for the people at one school, and they are only for that school. Ask the two questions: *Who is it for?* Only Room 7 — not everyone. *Who made it?* The class and the teacher — not the government. So it is a rule.

But look closer. Some school rules help everyone follow a law. A school rule about wearing a helmet on bike rides matches the helmet law. And there is one law about school itself: in Victoria, the law says children who are 6 to 17 years old must go to school (Education and Training Reform Act 2009). That law is for **all** children that age — not just the ones at your school.

Let's talk about it

Teacher-led — the class does these together.

1. **Rules at my place.** Tell a partner one rule from your family and one rule you have with friends. Are they the same rules as your partner's? Why might they be different?
2. **Sort the cards.** Put the cards from the sorting chart into two piles: rules and laws. Talk about each card before it goes down.
3. **Two questions.** For every card, ask: *Who is it for — one group, or everyone? Who made it — the group, or the government?* Use the answers to check your piles.
4. **Look at our school rules.** Read your class or school rules together. For each one, ask: is this a law too? How do you know? Can the whole class agree on each answer?
5. **Laws we follow.** Look at the timeline of a day. Add one more law the class follows. Say why that law is important.

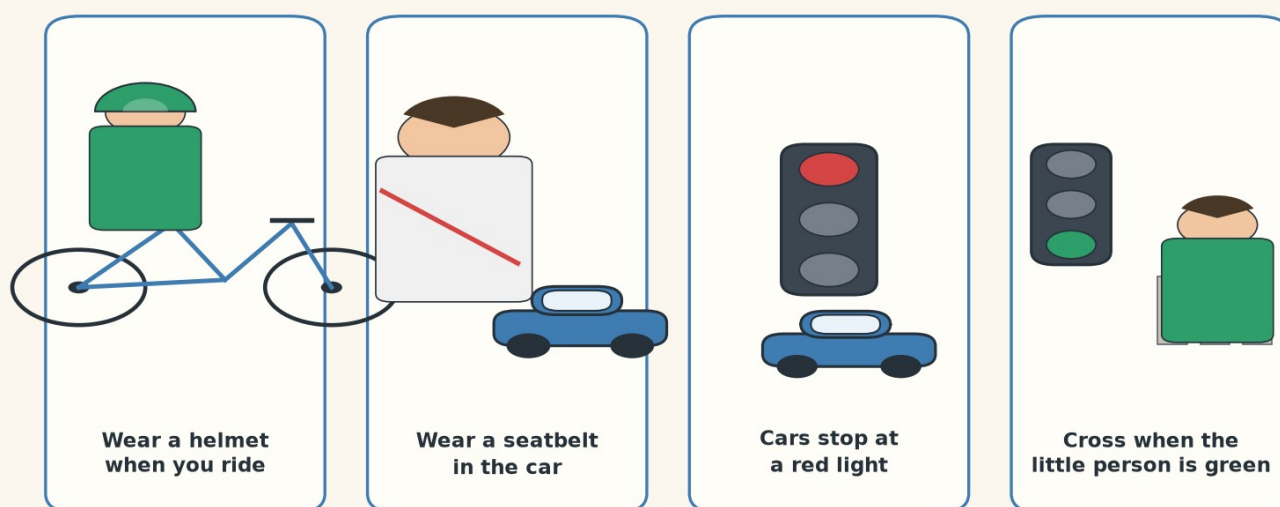
Sort the cards: rule or law?

RULES for some people — like a family, a class or a team	LAWS for everyone — kids and grown-ups	
Bedtime at 8 o'clock	Wear a seatbelt in the car	Raise your hand to speak in class
Wear a helmet on your bike	Bring your water bottle to training	Stop at a red light

Where does each card go? Talk about it, then sort them.

A sorting chart with two boxes, rules for some people and laws for everyone, and six cards to sort: bedtime at 8 o'clock; wear a seatbelt in the car; raise your hand to speak in class; wear a helmet on your bike; bring your water bottle to training; stop at a red light.

Laws everyone follows



These laws are for everyone — kids and grown-ups.

Four panels of laws everyone follows: wear a helmet when you ride; wear a seatbelt in the car; cars stop at a red light; and cross when the little person is green.

Worked examples

Example 1 — with help: rule or law?

Sort each card. Ask the two questions every time.

The card	Who is it for?	Who made it?	Rule or law?
Bedtime at 8 at Mia's house	One group — Mia's family	Mia's family	Rule
Wear a seatbelt in the car	Everyone in a car	The government	Law
Raise your hand in Room 7	One group — Room 7	The class and teacher	Rule
Wear a helmet on a bike	Everyone who rides	The government	Law
Cars stop at a red light	Everyone on the road	The government	Law

Check: the laws are the cards about **everyone**. The rules are the cards about **one group**.

Example 2 — with help: why is this law important?

Take Victoria's bike helmet law. We can think it through in four steps.

Ask	Answer
What does the law say?	Everyone who rides a bike must wear a helmet that fits well.
Who is it for?	Everyone — kids and adults.
What could happen without it?	Riders could hurt their heads in a fall.
Why is the law important?	It keeps riders safe, and it is fair because it is for everyone.

That is what “important” means here: **things are better with the law than without it.**

Practice questions

With help

Q1. Sort these into rules and laws. Ask the two questions first. (a) Shoes off at the door at Sam’s house. (b) Everyone in a car must wear a seatbelt. (c) In Room 7, we walk inside. (d) Everyone who rides a bike must wear a helmet.

Q2. Finish each sentence. (a) A rule is _____. (b) A law is _____. (c) The big difference is _____.

Q3. Your school has a rule: *we walk inside*. Is this rule also a law? Use the two questions to check. Fill in the table.

Ask	Answer
Who is it for?	
Who made it?	
Rule or law?	

Q4. Match each law to how it helps. Draw a line.

Law	How it helps
Wear a seatbelt in the car.	Riders’ heads stay safe.
Wear a helmet on a bike.	We can cross the road safely.
Cars stop at a red light.	People stay safe in their seats.

Q5. Finish the sentences with a reason. (a) The helmet law is important because _____. (b) The seatbelt law is important because _____. (c) The red light law is important because _____.

Q6. Look at the timeline of a day. Write one law you follow in the morning, one at school and one after school.

Time of day	A law I follow
Morning	
At school	
After school	

By yourself

Q7. Write one rule from your family and one rule you have with friends. For each one, say who it is for. Is it a law? How do you know?

Q8. Draw a picture of one law that everyone follows. Write one sentence to say why it is important.

Q9. A friend says, “Walking inside is a law, because the school wrote it on a poster.” Is your friend right? Write what you think and say why.

Q10. Imagine there were no road laws at all. Write or draw three things that could happen. Then say why road laws are important.

Think hard

Some people say: *laws stop us doing what we want.*

Other people say: *laws help us do what we want, safely — like riding a bike or crossing a road.*

Talk about both sides with a partner. Then write which side you agree with, and give one good reason.

(Teacher note: both sides can be right. A good reason matters more than which side you pick.)

Answers

Example 1 check: laws = everyone; rules = one group.

Q1. (a) Rule — one group (Sam’s family). (b) Law — everyone in a car. (c) Rule — one group (Room 7). (d) Law — everyone who rides.

Q2. Example answers. (a) A rule is a guide that tells you what to do and what not to do. (b) A law is a strong rule made by the government. (c) The big difference is that laws apply to everyone, but rules can apply to just one group.

Q3. Who is it for? The people at our school — one group. Who made it? The school — not the government. Rule or law? A rule, not a law.

Q4. Seatbelt → people stay safe in their seats. Helmet → riders’ heads stay safe. Red light → we can cross the road safely.

Q5. Example answers. (a) ...it keeps riders’ heads safe if they fall. (b) ...it keeps people safe in their seats if the car stops fast. (c) ...cars take turns, and we know when it is safe to cross.

Q6. Answers will be different. Check each one is for everyone (a law), not just one group (a rule).

Q7. Answers will be different. Family and friend rules are for one group, so they are rules, not laws.

Q8. Example answer: a picture of a helmet; “The helmet law is important because it keeps my head safe.”

Q9. Example answer: my friend is not right. The school rule is only for our school, and the school made it — not the government. So it is a rule, not a law. (But some school rules do help us follow a law — like the helmet rule.)

Q10. Answers will be different. Example ideas: cars might not stop; people might get hurt crossing the road; no one would know what to expect. Road laws are important because they keep everyone safe and we know what to expect.

Think hard. Both sides give good reasons. Laws do stop some things — like riding a bike with no helmet. But laws also help us do things safely — like riding a bike at all! Marking is on the reason you give, not the side you pick.

Real laws named in this section, checked 25 August 2026:

- *Road Safety Road Rules 2017 (Vic), rule 256 — bike helmets; rules 264 to 266 — seatbelts.*
- *Education and Training Reform Act 2009 (Vic) — children who are 6 to 17 years old must go to school.*

Your rights and the responsibilities that go with them

Curriculum: Victorian Curriculum 2.0 Civics and Citizenship, Levels 3 and 4. Owns VC2HC4K05. Draws on VC2HC4K05.E01, VC2HC4K05.E02 and VC2HC4K05.E03.

The big idea. Everyone has rights. Rights come with responsibilities. Together, they help the groups we belong to be safe, kind and fair.

New words

These words are used a lot in this section. Each one is shown on the word wall below.

- **community** (say: kuh-MYOO-nuh-tee) — a group of people who share something and belong together. Your family is a community. Your class is a community. A team you play on is a community. The people who live near you are a community too.
- **right** — something every person should have, and other people should keep safe. A right is not a reward you win. You do not have to do anything to get it. It is yours.
- **responsibility** (say: ree-spon-suh-BIL-uh-tee) — something you should do, or something you should look after. It is your job in the group. *Responsibility* and *responsibilities* are big words, but they just mean “the things I should do”.
- **fair** — when people are treated the right way, and no one is left out for no good reason. People can see things in different ways when they talk about what is fair. In this book, *fair* means everyone is treated with care.

One more thing about the word *right*. We also say “right” when an answer is correct. That is a different job for the same word. In this book, a *right* is something you should have, like the right to be safe.

Word wall — new words for this section



Word wall showing the four new words of this section — community, right, responsibility and fair — each on its own card with a short meaning

Teaching sequence — rights, responsibilities and you

Teacher-led discussion and activities. Talk about each step before moving on.

Step 1 — What should every student have?

Ask: *What should every student at our school have?* Let students share ideas. Write the ideas where everyone can see them. Look for ideas like these: to be safe, to learn, to have a say, to be treated with kindness.

Explain: these ideas are not lucky things. They are not rewards. Every student should have them. Things like these are called **rights**.

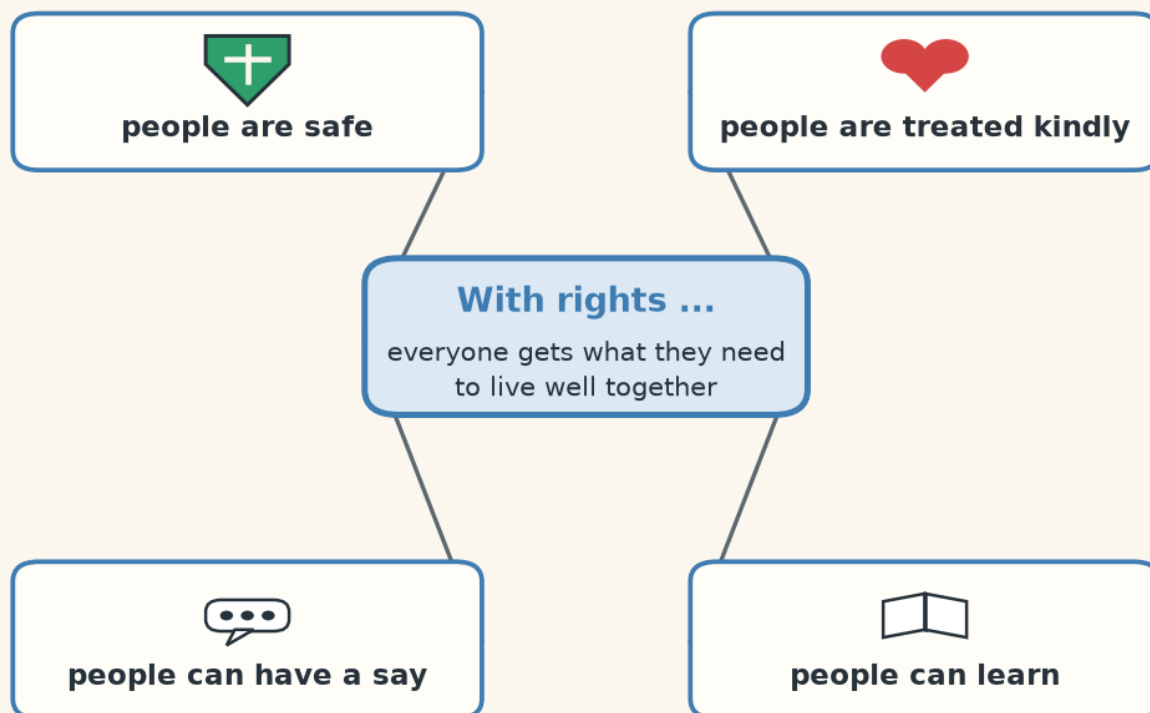
Step 2 — Why do rights matter?

Ask: *What if there were no rights? What would be different?* Talk about it in pairs, then share with the class. Guide the talk to the ideas in the picture below: with rights, people are safe, people are treated kindly, people can have a say, and people can learn.

Rights matter because they tell us what every person needs to live well together. People all around the world agree about this. In 1989, many countries agreed on a list of rights for children. It is called the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*. Australia said yes to this list in 1990.

Teacher note: the Convention on the Rights of the Child was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 20 November 1989 and ratified by Australia on 17 December 1990 (United Nations Treaty Collection, status of the Convention on the Rights of the Child; retrieved 2026-08-25). Use the Convention here only as an example that rights can be written down and agreed on — detailed legal rights are later-year content and are not taught at this level.

Why do rights matter?



Rights matter because they say what every person should have.

Diagram titled “Why do rights matter?” with four spokes: people are safe, people are treated kindly, people can have a say, and people can learn

Step 3 — Rights come with responsibilities

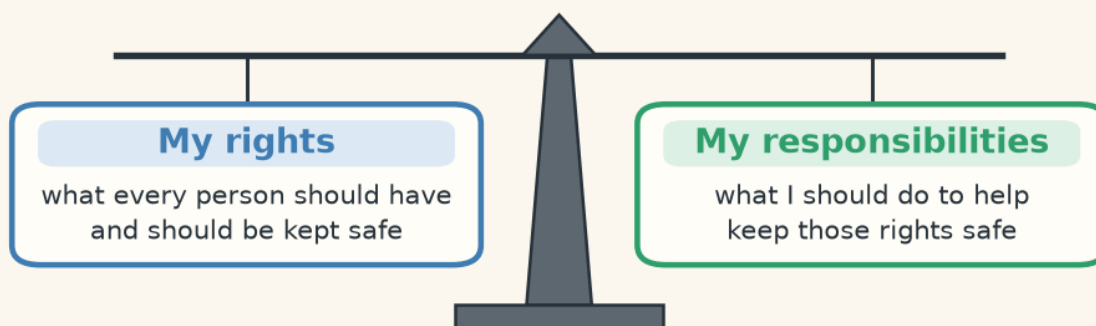
Tell the class: *Rights do not come on their own. Every right comes with a responsibility.*

Use this example. You have the right to learn. Everyone else in the class has that right too. So you have a responsibility: to let others learn. That means you listen, you wait your turn, and you keep your voice down when others are working.

Ask: *What happens if everyone keeps their rights but no one does their responsibilities?* (Ideas: the room gets noisy, no one can hear, people get hurt, things get broken.) Guide students to the key idea: **when no one does their responsibilities, rights get hurt.** The right to be safe only works when people act in safe ways. That is why responsibilities matter.

A right and its responsibility are a pair, like two sides of the same coin. The picture below shows the pair in balance.

A right and its responsibility are a pair



When we do our responsibilities, everyone's rights stay safe.

The balance tips when no one does their part.

A balance scale level on both sides: a card labelled “My rights” on one side and a card labelled “My responsibilities” on the other, showing that the two work as a pair

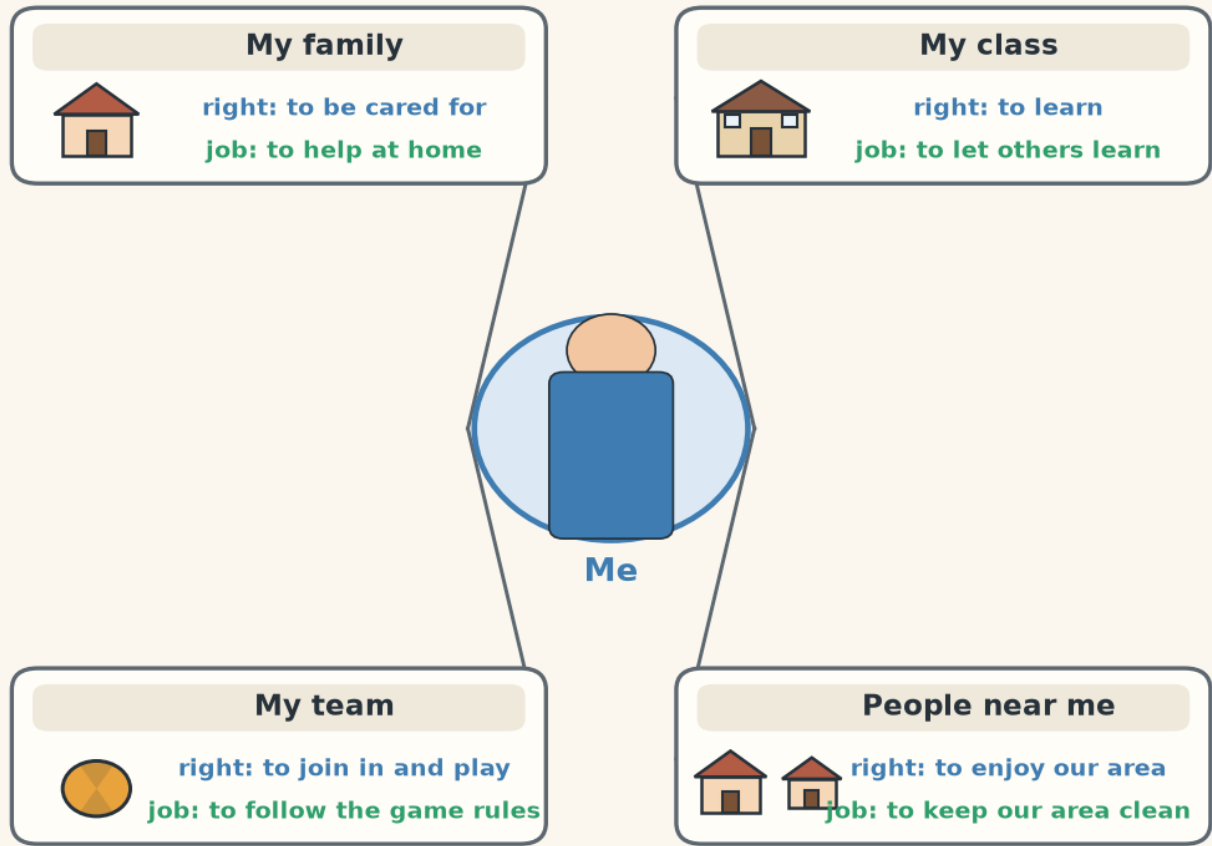
Step 4 — The communities you belong to

Ask: *Which groups do you belong to?* Students will name family, class, school, teams, clubs, and the people who live near them. Explain that each of these groups is a **community** — a group you belong to.

Show the community map below. In each community, you have rights, and you have responsibilities. For example: in your family, you have the right to be cared for, and a responsibility to help at home. In your class, you have the right to learn, and a responsibility to let others learn.

Activity: students draw their own community map with themselves in the middle, then add one right and one responsibility for each community they name.

The communities I belong to



Each community you belong to gives you rights — and gives you jobs to do.

Community map with “Me” in the middle and four communities around it — my family, my class, my team and the people who live near me — each with one right and one responsibility listed

Step 5 — Put it together

Ask three questions and talk about each one:

1. What is a right? (Something every person should have and should be kept safe.)
2. What is a responsibility? (Something you should do or look after in a group.)
3. Why do rights and responsibilities come as a pair? (Because rights only stay safe when people do their part.)

Worked examples

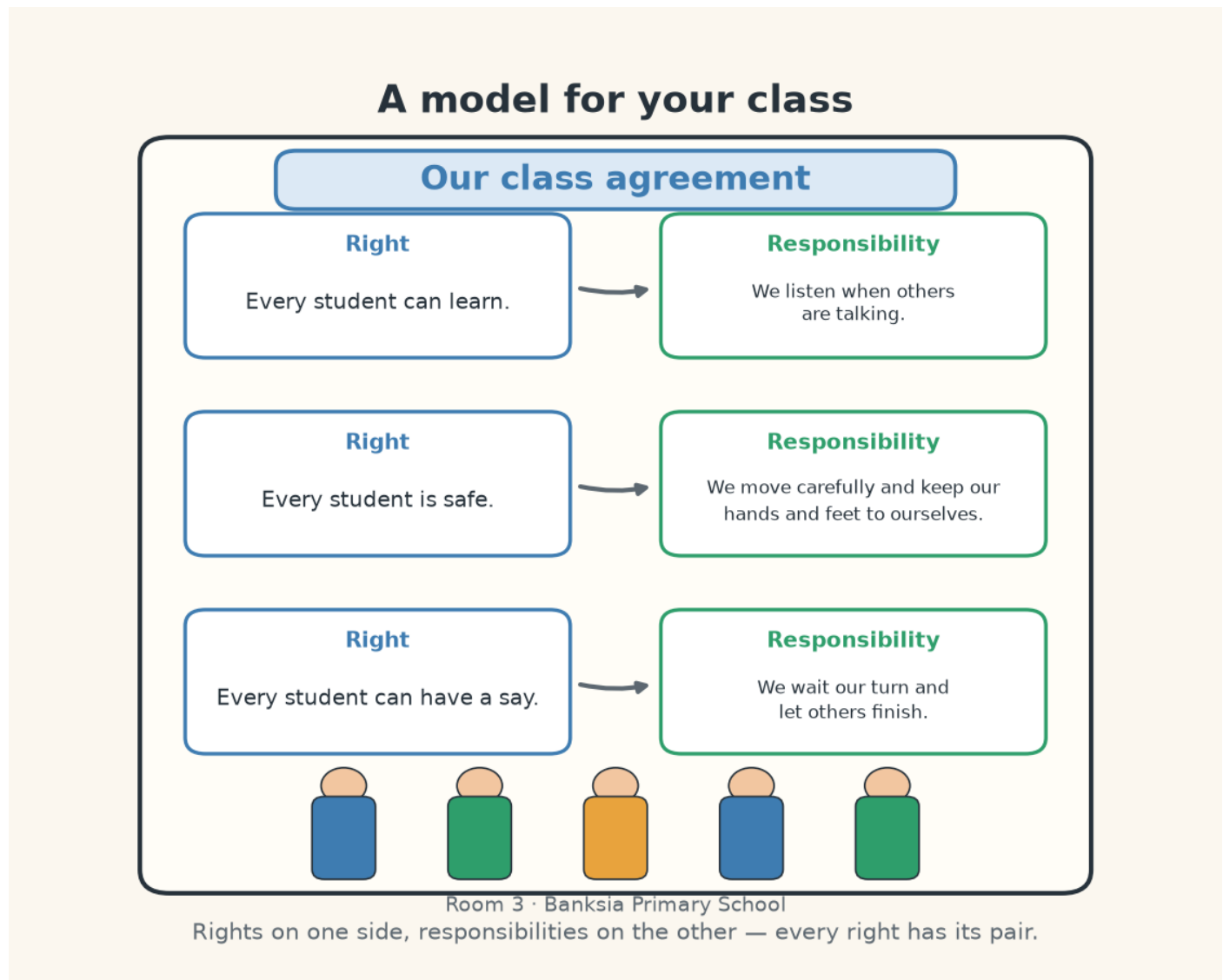
Example 1 — with help

Room 3 at Banksia Primary School is writing a class agreement. The class lists its rights, then finds the responsibility that goes with each right. Match each right to its responsibility.

Right	Matching responsibility	Why they go together
Every student can learn.	We listen when others are talking.	Listening lets everyone hear, think and learn.
Every student is safe.	We move carefully and keep our hands and feet to ourselves.	Careful moving keeps bodies safe, so no one gets hurt.
Every student can have a say.	We wait our turn and let others	Waiting our turn means everyone

Right	Matching responsibility	Why they go together
	finish.	gets heard, not just the first person to speak.

The class agreement in the picture below shows what Room 3 made. It is a good model for your own class.



Model class agreement poster titled “Our class agreement” listing three rights — every student can learn, every student is safe, every student can have a say — and three matching responsibilities — we listen when others talk, we move carefully and keep our hands and feet to ourselves, we wait our turn and let others finish

Example 2 — with help

Mia lives near Green Gums Park. Everyone in the area can use the park. The park has rights for people, and responsibilities too.

Right at the park	Matching responsibility	Why it matters
Everyone can play on the grass and use the swings.	We share the swings and take turns.	Taking turns means everyone gets a go.
Everyone can enjoy a clean park.	We put our rubbish in the bin.	Rubbish on the ground can hurt animals and make the park yucky for everyone.
Everyone can enjoy the trees and flowers.	We leave the plants and trees as they are.	Plants and trees are living things. When we care for them, the park stays lovely for the next visit.

The picture below shows Green Gums Park and its signboard. Each right on the sign has a responsibility that keeps it safe.



Green Gums Park scene with trees, a swing, a rubbish bin and Mia, next to a park signboard that pairs each right with its responsibility — everyone can play here and we share the swings and take turns, everyone can enjoy a clean park and we put our rubbish in the bin, everyone can enjoy the trees and flowers and we leave the plants as they are

Mia sees a full bin and some rubbish on the grass. What could she do? She could pick up the rubbish she can reach and tell an adult the bin is full. Looking after the park is everyone's responsibility — even kids.

Practice questions

With help

Q1. Finish the sentence using the word wall. *A right is something ...*

Q2. Put a tick next to the things that are rights. Leave the others blank.

- being safe at school
- having a new toy
- having your say
- eating only sweets
- learning at school
- staying up late

Q3. Sort these cards. Put each one on the right side of the sort chart below. One card is done for you on each side.
Cards: *be safe at school* · *listen when others speak* · *use the park* · *put rubbish in the bin* · *have your say* · *wait your turn*.

Rights

be safe at school

Responsibilities

listen when others speak

Cards to sort:

use the park

put rubbish in the bin

have your say

wait your turn

Sort chart with two sides headed “Rights” and “Responsibilities”; the card “be safe at school” is placed on the Rights side and the card “listen when others speak” is placed on the Responsibilities side, with space for more cards on each side

Q4. Draw a line to match each right on the left to its responsibility on the right.

Right	Responsibility
the right to learn	wait our turn and let others finish
the right to be safe	let others learn by listening
the right to have a say	move carefully and keep our hands and feet to ourselves

Q5. Finish the sentence. *My right to learn comes with my responsibility to ...*

Q6. A community is a group you belong to. Write two communities you belong to. The first one is done for you.

1. my class
2. ...
3. ...

On your own

Q7. Choose one community you belong to. Write one right you have in that community, and one responsibility you have in it.

Q8. Draw your own community map. Put yourself in the middle. Add at least three communities you belong to, and write one right for each one.

Q9. At Green Gums Park, no one puts their rubbish in the bin. What could happen to the park? Why does this responsibility matter?

Q10. Write one new right and its matching responsibility for your class agreement. Use the class agreement poster from Example 1 as your model.

Think hard

Some people say, “Rights are the most important thing. Without rights, people are not safe and not treated kindly.”

Other people say, “Responsibilities are the most important thing. If no one does their part, nothing works and no one’s rights stay safe.”

Talk about both sides. Then say what you think, and give your reasons.

Teacher note: mark the reasoning, not the side a student picks. A student who argues for either side with reasons and examples has done well. The strongest answers notice that rights and responsibilities work as a pair: rights say what every person should have, and responsibilities say what each person should do to keep those rights safe.

Answers

Example answers. Your answers may use different words.

Q1. A right is something every person should have, and other people should keep safe.

Q2. Rights: *being safe at school ✓, having your say ✓, learning at school ✓*. Not rights: a new toy, eating only sweets, and staying up late are wants. Someone gives them to you, but no one should have to.

Q3. Rights side: *be safe at school, use the park, have your say*. Responsibilities side: *listen when others speak, put rubbish in the bin, wait your turn*.

Q4. The right to learn → let others learn by listening. The right to be safe → move carefully and keep our hands and feet to ourselves. The right to have a say → wait our turn and let others finish.

Q5. Example: ... listen when others are talking and let others learn.

Q6. Examples: my family, my school, my footy team, my dance class, the people who live near me.

Q7. Example — community: my family. Right: to be cared for. Responsibility: to help at home, like setting the table.

Q8. Check that the student is in the middle, that there are at least three communities, and that each has a right written for it.

Q9. Example: the park gets dirty and smelly. Rubbish can hurt animals and birds. People may not want to come. The responsibility matters because the right to enjoy a clean park only works when everyone does their part.

Q10. Example — right: every student can use the class books. Responsibility: we put the books back where they belong so the next person can find them.

Think hard. Example: I think they work as a pair. Rights tell us what everyone should have, like being safe. Responsibilities tell us what to do to keep those things safe, like moving carefully. If we had rights but no responsibilities, no one would keep anyone safe. If we had responsibilities but no rights, we would be working for nothing. So we need both.

The groups we belong to, and who we are

Teaching sequence (for the teacher)

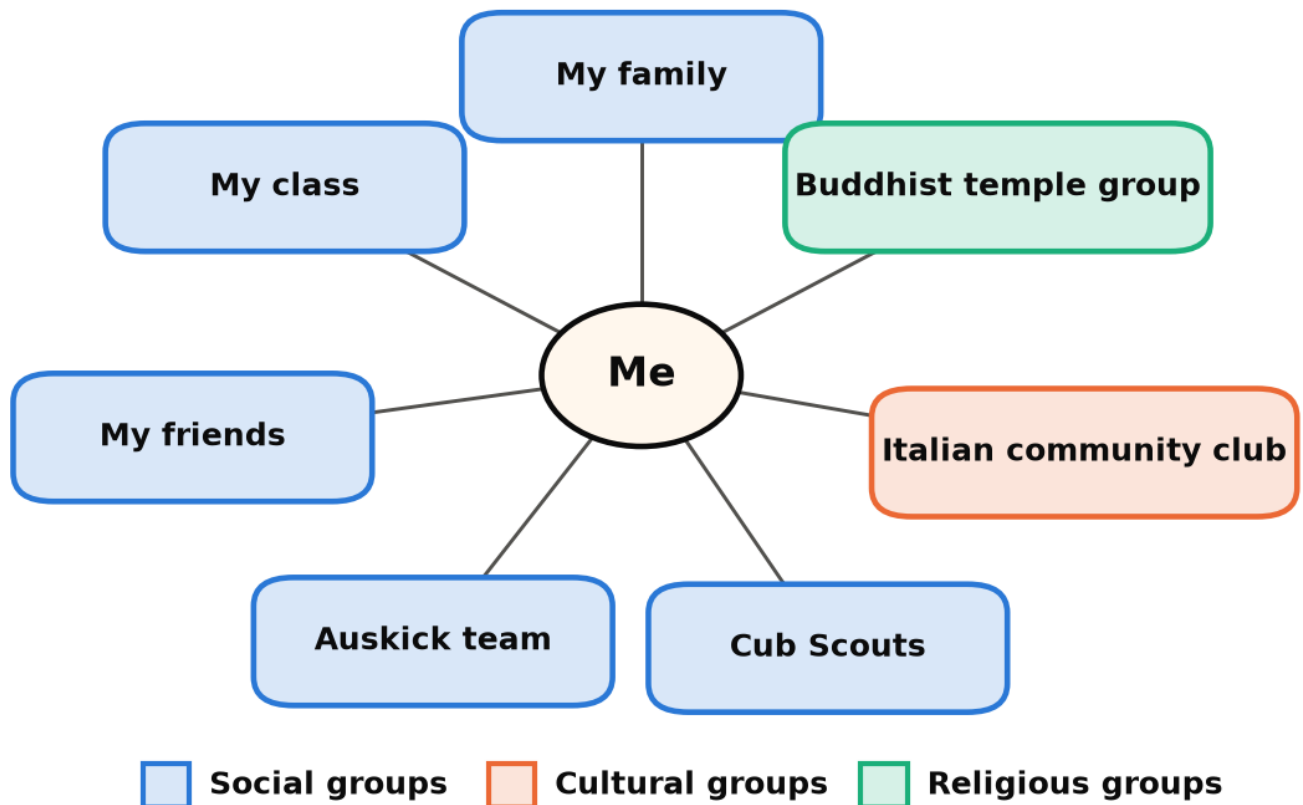
- **Curriculum links.** This section owns VC2HC4K06 (Victorian Curriculum F–10 Version 2.0, Civics and Citizenship, Levels 3 and 4 band; VCAA file of 2026-07-29) and draws on its two illustrations: .E01 (noticing the many kinds of groups in students’ lives, and what makes each one feel like belonging) and .E02 (listing what groups believe, the traditions they keep and the symbols they use, and comparing them).
 - **.E03 note.** The third illustration — the one about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, Country and Place — is outside this book’s plan. It is not taught in this section and is not swapped for anything else. This section reaches VC2HC4K06 through the groups in students’ own lives.
 - **Contested terms (house rule).** *Identity, diversity, culture* and *religion* are words this book uses that do not have one fixed meaning. The student-facing word box below says that people use these words in different ways and fixes what they mean in this book; students reason inside the stated meanings. *Group, belong, social, cultural* and *religious* are defined at first use.
 - **Step 1 — hook.** Ask: what groups do you belong to? Let students name groups — teams, classes, family things, clubs. List them on the board without sorting them yet.
 - **Step 2 — big ideas.** Read the Big ideas text aloud together, pausing at the word box and at each picture. Then students draw their own group web like Picture 1 in their books — this becomes Q7.
 - **Step 3 — worked examples.** Walk through Examples 1 and 2; have students say each row of the tables in their own words before moving on.
 - **Step 4 — practice.** Q1–Q6 with support (pairs welcome); Q7–Q10 on their own, with writing or drawing fine as answers; R1 as a think–pair–share, then two or three sentences each.
 - **Step 5 — links to later sections.** Listing, sorting and comparing come back in the Skills chapter (2A–2E), and the idea that groups matter to people carries into section 1G, where people work together in their community.
 - **Marking note.** Open answers are marked on the quality of reasoning — a reason given, the defined words used in the stated sense — never on which groups a student belongs to or likes.
-

Big ideas

You belong to lots of **groups**. Some are at school, like your class. Some are near where you live. Some are about what you do for fun, like a team or a club. Everyone in this class belongs to groups — and no two people belong to all the same ones.

Picture 1 shows one person's groups, like a web. One person can belong to many groups at the same time.

The groups I belong to (an example)



A web of groups around the word Me in the middle. Social groups: my family, my class, my friends, my Auskick team and my Cub Scouts. A cultural group: the Italian community club. A religious group: the Buddhist temple group.

This section looks at three kinds of groups. A **social group** is people who do things together and like being together, like your family, your friends or your team. A **cultural group** is people who share a **culture**, like the Italian community club or a Greek dance group. A **religious group** is people who share a **religion** and often meet together, like at a church, a temple or a mosque. The word box below fixes what each word means in this book.

Words we use

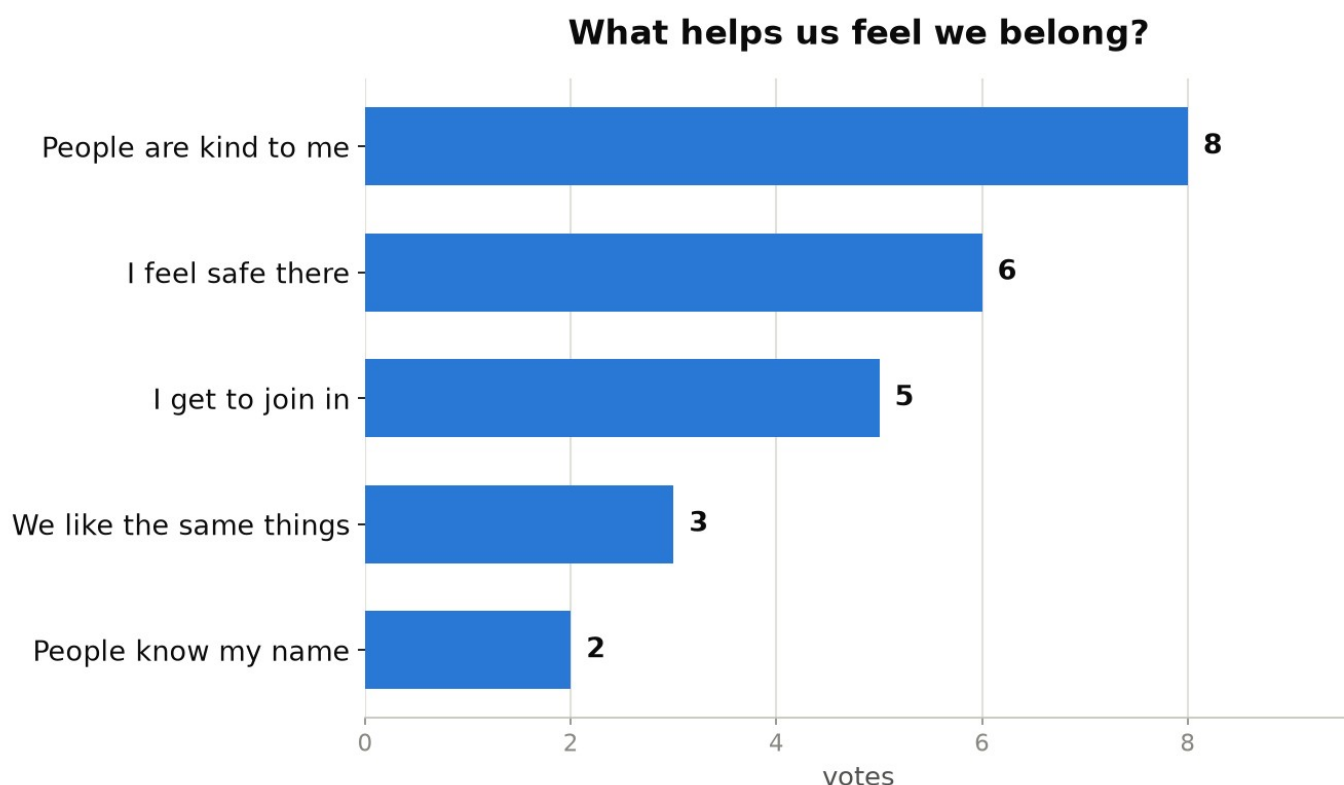
The Victorian Curriculum F–10 Version 2.0 does not give one fixed meaning for words like *identity*, *diversity*, *culture* and *religion*, and people can use these words in different ways. In this book, they mean this:

- **group** – people who are together for a reason, or who share something.
- **belong** – to be part of something, and to feel welcome in it.
- **social group** – people who do things together and like being together, like your family, your friends or your team.
- **cultural group** – people who share a culture.
- **culture** – the ways a group of people live, like their language, foods, stories and festivals. People can mean different things by “culture”. In this book, this is what it means.
- **religious group** – people who share a religion and often meet together, like at a church, a temple or a mosque.
- **religion** – what a group of people believe about the world and how to live. People can mean different things by “religion”. In this book, this is what it means.
- **mosque** – a place where many Muslims meet to pray.
- **diversity** – lots of different kinds. People use this word in different ways. In this book, this is what it means.

- **community** – people who live near each other, or who share a place and do things together.
- **beliefs** – what a person thinks is true or important.
- **traditions** – things a group does again and again, often at special times.
- **symbols** – things that stand for a group or an idea, like a flag, a badge or a special colour.
- **identity** – who you are: all the things that make you, you. People use this word in different ways. In this book, this is what it means.

What makes us feel we belong?

Think of one group you belong to. What makes you feel you belong there? Is it the people? The things you do? Picture 2 shows what one example class said when they were asked.



An example class of 24 students. Each student picked one thing.

*A bar chart called **What helps us feel we belong?** People are kind to me got 8 votes, I feel safe there got 6, I get to join in got 5, we like the same things got 3, and people know my name got 2. It shows an example class of 24 students.*

The class picked things like “People are kind to me” and “I feel safe there.” When a group does these things for you, you feel part of it. That is what **belonging** feels like. Your class can do the same vote — you may pick different things.

Beliefs, traditions and symbols

Every group has things that make it what it is. Three big ones are **beliefs**, **traditions** and **symbols**. Picture 3 shows what each word means, with examples.

Beliefs, traditions and symbols — what are they?

Beliefs	What a person thinks is true or important. Examples: Being kind to others. Looking after the world.
Traditions	Things a group does again and again. Examples: A big family lunch every Sunday. Songs and dances at a festival.
Symbols	Something that stands for a group or an idea. Examples: A flag or a badge. A special colour.

Three cards. Beliefs: what a person thinks is true or important, like being kind to others. Traditions: things a group does again and again, like a big family lunch every Sunday. Symbols: something that stands for a group or an idea, like a flag or a badge.

Different groups have different beliefs, traditions and symbols. That is **diversity**. All of these groups belong in Australia.

Harmony Week: everyone belongs

Australia is home to people from many cultures and religions. Picture 4 is a fact card about Harmony Week, a week when Australia celebrates this.

Harmony Week in Australia

WHEN	The week that includes 21 March (Monday to Sunday). 21 March is Harmony Day.
MESSAGE	“Everyone belongs.”
COLOUR	Many people wear orange clothes or ribbons.
AT SCHOOLS	Morning teas with foods from many cultures.
WHO RUNS IT	The Australian Government. The Department of Home Affairs leads the national celebration.
HOW OLD	It began in 1999 as Harmony Day. It became Harmony Week in 2019.

Facts checked: Wikipedia, “Harmony Day”, viewed 25 August 2026. Official site: harmony.gov.au

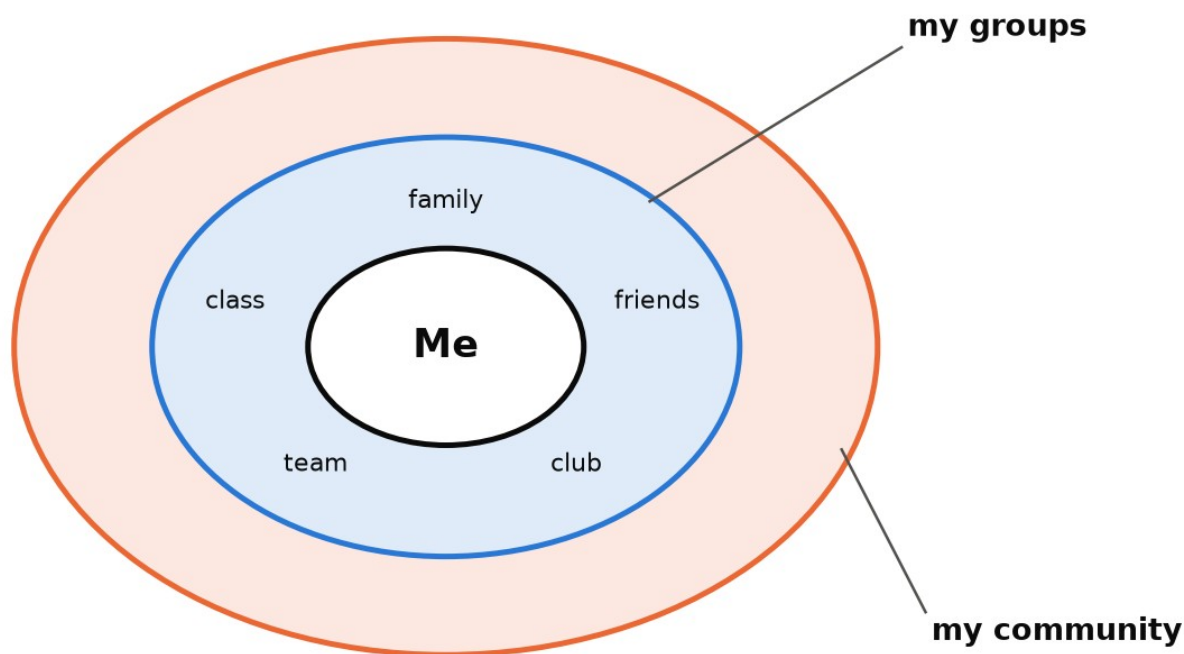
A fact card about Harmony Week in Australia. When: the week that includes 21 March, and 21 March is Harmony Day. Message: everyone belongs. Colour: many people wear orange clothes or ribbons. At schools: morning teas with foods from many cultures. Who runs it: the Australian Government, led by the Department of Home Affairs. How old: it began in 1999 as Harmony Day, and it became Harmony Week in 2019.

The Harmony Week message is “Everyone belongs.” That is the same big idea as Picture 2: belonging matters. During Harmony Week, many schools have morning teas with foods from many cultures, and many people wear orange.

Your groups help make you, you

Picture 5 puts it all together. In the middle is you. The next ring shows your groups. The outside ring shows your community.

Where do I fit in?



The groups we belong to help make us who we are. That is part of our identity.

Three rings, one inside the next. The middle says Me. The next ring says my groups. The outside ring says my community. The picture shows that our groups sit between us and our community.

The groups you belong to help make you who you are. You learn things from them, like games, songs, or how to be kind. You share good times with them. You feel proud when your group does well. All of this is part of your **identity**.

No one else belongs to all the same groups as you, so no one else is just like you.

Everyone's groups matter to them. We show **respect** by listening, and by not laughing at a group's beliefs, traditions or symbols. And some people do not belong to any religious group — that is fine. Everyone belongs to some groups.

Worked examples

Example 1 — with help: sorting the class list

The class sorts its groups. A Year 3 class in Victoria is getting ready for Harmony Week. The teacher asks each student to name one group they belong to. The class list is: the Auskick team, Cub Scouts, my friendship group, my family, the Italian community club, a Greek dance group, the Buddhist temple group and a church group. The class wants to sort the list into the three kinds of groups.

What the class does	Why
1. List all the groups first.	Listing them all first helps you see every group.
2. For each group, ask: is it people doing things together (social), people sharing a culture (cultural), or people sharing a religion (religious)?	The three kinds from the word box tell you how to sort.
3. Sort: social — Auskick team, Cub Scouts, friendship group, family; cultural — Italian community club, Greek dance group, family; religious — Buddhist temple group, church group.	Each group goes under the kind it fits best.
4. Look again: family is there twice. A family is a social	Some groups fit more than one kind. That is fine.

group, and a family can also share a culture.

5. Say what helps you feel you belong: “At Auskick, everyone gets a turn, and the coach knows my name.”

Belonging comes from what the group does for you.

Picture 6 shows the sort as a table.

Sorting the groups from Example 1

Social groups	Cultural groups	Religious groups
Auskick team	Italian community club	Buddhist temple group
Cub Scouts	Greek dance group	church group
my friendship group	my family	
my family		

Notice: my family is there twice! Some groups fit in more than one place.

A table that sorts groups into three kinds: social, cultural and religious. Social groups: Auskick team, Cub Scouts, my friendship group and my family. Cultural groups: Italian community club, Greek dance group and my family. Religious groups: Buddhist temple group and church group. A note says my family is there twice, because some groups fit in more than one place.

Example 2 — with help: listing and comparing three groups

Three groups share what makes them, them. For the Harmony Week display, three groups each share one belief, one tradition and one symbol with the class: the Auskick team, the Italian community club and the Buddhist temple group. The class lists them, then compares them.

1. Make a table like Picture 7: one place on top for each group, and rows for beliefs, traditions and symbols.

A table keeps the list neat, so you can compare.

2. Ask each group the same three questions: What do you think is important? What do you do at special times? What stands for your group?

The same questions for every group make it fair to compare them.

3. Put each answer in its place in the table.

First list, then compare. Listing first means nothing is missed.

4. Read each row across. Each group has its own beliefs, its own traditions and its own symbols.

When you compare, you can see what is the same and what is different.

Picture 7 shows the table.

Listing and comparing three groups

	Auskick team (social group)	Italian community club (cultural group)	Buddhist temple group (religious group)
Beliefs	Everyone gets a turn.	Family time matters.	Be kind to people and animals.
Traditions	Training every week, then cheering together.	Sunday lunch together, with Italian songs.	Visiting the temple and sitting quietly.
Symbols	Our team colours.	The green, white and red flag of Italy.	Candles and flowers at the temple.

Each group is different — and each one matters to the people in it.

A table of three groups side by side: the Auskick team, the Italian community club and the Buddhist temple group. Rows show each group's beliefs, traditions and symbols.

The three groups are different, and each one matters to the people in it. That is diversity.

Practice

With help

Q1. Look at Picture 1. (a) Name the three kinds of groups in this section. (b) Pick one group of each kind from Picture 1.

Q2. Put a tick in one box for each group. Is it social, cultural or religious?

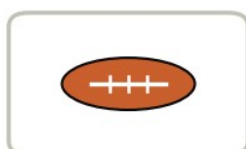
Group	Social	Cultural	Religious
Cub Scouts			
a church group			
a Greek dance group			
a netball team			
an Eid family lunch			

Q3. Finish these two sentences about you. "I belong to ____." "I feel I belong there because ____."

Q4. Look at Picture 8. Draw a line from each symbol to the group or festival it stands for.

Match each symbol to the group or festival it stands for

Draw a line from each picture to its matching word.



Auskick

Christmas

Diwali

Chinese New Year

Four symbols in a line: a Christmas tree, a small lamp, a red envelope and a football. Next to them are the words Auskick, Christmas, Diwali and Chinese New Year, for matching.

Q5. Look at Picture 2, the example class chart. (a) How many students picked “People are kind to me”? (b) Which thing did 6 students pick? (c) How many students picked “We like the same things”?

Q6. Look at Picture 4, the Harmony Week card. (a) What date is Harmony Day? (b) What colour do many people wear in Harmony Week? (c) The message of Harmony Week is “Everyone belongs.” Write what this means to you in one sentence.

On your own

Q7. Draw your own group web, like Picture 1. Put in at least four groups you belong to. Write *social*, *cultural* or *religious* next to each one.

Q8. Make a table like Picture 7 for two groups you belong to, or know about. Write one belief, one tradition and one symbol for each group.

Q9. Picture 2 lists five things that help people feel they belong. Name two more things that help you feel you belong in a group.

Q10. Pick one group from this section. Say why it is important to the people in it.

Reasoning

R1. Why do the groups you belong to matter for who you are? Write three sentences. Use the words *group*, *belong* and *identity*, and give one example from your own life.

Answers

Q1. (a) Social, cultural and religious groups. (b) A good answer picks from the picture: my family, my class, my friends, my Auskick team or my Cub Scouts (social); the Italian community club (cultural); the Buddhist temple group (religious).

Q2. Social: Cub Scouts, a netball team. Cultural: a Greek dance group. Religious: a church group, an Eid family lunch. A tick in a second box is fine with a reason — some things, like a family lunch at a festival, fit more than one kind.

Q3. A good answer names a real group and gives a reason, like “because people are kind to me there”.

Q4. The Christmas tree goes to Christmas. The small lamp (a diya) goes to Diwali. The red envelope goes to Chinese New Year. The football goes to Auskick.

Q5. (a) 8 students. (b) “I feel safe there.” (c) 3 students.

Q6. (a) 21 March. (b) Orange. (c) A good answer: something like “everyone has a place in Australia”.

Q7. A good answer shows at least four groups, and each one is named social, cultural or religious.

Q8. A good answer has two groups, with one belief, one tradition and one symbol for each. Each one should fit its meaning in the word box.

Q9. A good answer gives two things not already on the chart, like “everyone gets a turn” or “people ask me what I think”.

Q10. A good answer says what the group gives the people in it, like friends, things to do, stories, or a place to belong.

R1. A good answer uses all three words, gives one example from the student’s own life, and says how the groups a person belongs to help make that person who they are.

Sources (for the teacher)

- Victorian Curriculum F–10 Version 2.0, Civics and Citizenship, Levels 3 and 4 band: VC2HC4K06 and its two illustrations, .E01 and .E02 (VCAA file of 2026-07-29; the Victorian Curriculum F–10 Version 2.0 fixes what this section teaches).
- Harmony Week — the week that includes 21 March (Harmony Day); the message “Everyone belongs”; many people wear orange; schools have morning teas with foods from many cultures; the Australian Government runs it, led by the Department of Home Affairs; it began in 1999 as Harmony Day and became Harmony Week in 2019: Wikipedia, “Harmony Day” (viewed 2026-08-25); official site harmony.gov.au (viewed 2026-08-25).
- Auskick, where children from 5 to 12 learn Australian football: Wikipedia, “Auskick” (viewed 2026-08-25).
- Cub Scouts, part of Scouts Australia, for children from 8 to 11: scouts.com.au (viewed 2026-08-25).
- All classes, surveys, tables and examples are original to this book; nothing was copied from other books or worksheets.

Taking part: why people help and how you can too

Section map (teachers and auditors — not student text)

Owns VC2HC4K07 (Knowledge and Understanding · Citizenship, diversity and identity). **Draws on** elaborations .E01 .E02 .E03 and .E04. .E04 is taught in its neutral form only: contributors to communities are discussed as volunteers and leaders; no other referent is used.

Words to know

Some words in this section have more than one meaning. In this section, we use them to mean what this table says.

Word	What it means in this section
community	a group of people who share a place, a job to do, or something they love
participate	to join in and take part
contribute	to give something that helps — your hands, your ideas, your time, or some money
volunteer	a helper who helps for free, because they want to
leader	a person who starts something and asks other people to join in
motivation	the reason inside a person for doing something
virtual community	a community that meets on the internet, not in one place
habitat	the home of an animal or a plant
award	a special thank-you a person gets for doing something good
recognise	to notice the good thing someone did, and say thank you for it

Ideas

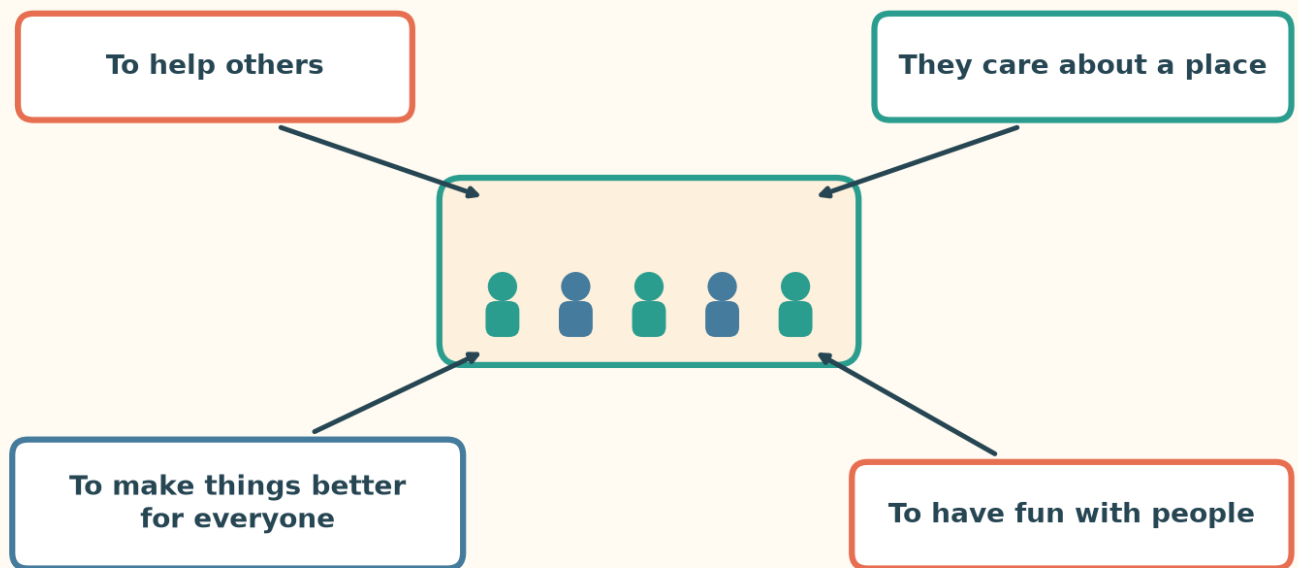
A community is a group that shares. Your class is a community — you share a room, a teacher and lots of days together. Your street is a community. A sports club is a community. People who love the same game and talk about it on the internet are a community too. A community can be big or small. What makes it a community is that the people in it share something.

To participate is to join in. When you take part in your class, you participate. When a grown-up joins a clean-up day at the beach, they participate too.

To contribute is to give help. You can contribute your hands (picking up litter), your ideas (making a plan), your time (helping after school), or some money (putting coins in a tin). A contribution is the thing you give.

Why do people join in? A person's motivation is the reason inside them for doing something. People have many motivations for joining in.

Why do people join in?



People join in for many reasons. Each reason matters.

Labelled diagram of four reason bubbles pointing at a group of five people: to help others; they care about a place; to make things better for everyone; to have fun with people.

Most of the people who join in to help are **volunteers**. A volunteer is not paid. A volunteer is not told to help. A volunteer helps because they want to. Some helpers are **leaders** — they start the helping, and they ask other people to join in.

Groups join in too. A group has a *purpose* — the job it does. Here are some real groups in Australia.

Groups that join in — and what they are for

Group	Where they help	What they do
Landcare groups	parks, rivers and bush	plant trees and pull weeds
Clean Up Australia helpers	beaches and streets	pick up litter
School fair helpers	at our school	raise money for new things
Sports club coaches	at a park near you	teach kids games
Online reading club	on the internet	share stories they love

A group's purpose is the job it does. Why do these groups matter to you?

Table of five groups with where they help and what they do: Landcare groups plant trees and pull weeds in parks, rivers and bush; Clean Up Australia helpers pick up litter on beaches and streets; school fair helpers raise money at our school; sports club coaches teach kids games at a park; an online reading club shares stories on the internet.

Landcare groups are one real example. The first Landcare group started in Victoria in 1986, when farmers near a town began looking after their land together. Now there are thousands of Landcare groups in Australia. *(Source notes are at the end of this section.)*

Some groups meet in one place. That is a **local** community. Some groups meet on the internet. That is a **virtual community**. Both are real.

Two places to join in



Both are real ways to join in.

Two labelled cards side by side: your local community, people near you such as your street, your school and your town, where you can see the people you help; and a virtual community, people who meet online such as an online chess club or a class reading page, where you help through a screen.

How can you join in? You do not need to be an adult to participate. You can join in with a school or community project. Most projects run in four steps.

Join in! Four steps for a class project



You can join in too. Start small.

Flow diagram of four steps with a class example under each: 1 Spot a need — penguins near St Kilda need to stay safe; 2 Make a plan — we will make signs and raise money; 3 Do the work — we make, we ask, we give; 4 Tell people — we show the school what we did.

And here are six ways kids often contribute.



Pictogram grid of six cards with small icons: pick up litter, plant trees, raise money, make posters, read to little kids, care for animals.

Saying thank you. When a person contributes, other people can recognise it — they can notice the good thing and say thank you for it. Thank-yous come in many sizes.



Diagram of four rising steps from small to big: 1 a thank you from a friend or teacher; 2 a school award, like a certificate; 3 a thank you from a community group; 4 the Order of Australia, a big thank you from all of Australia, which began in 1975.

The biggest thank-you in Australia is the **Order of Australia**. It began in 1975. It is given to people who have done great helping for their communities. Many of the people who get it are volunteers. *(Source notes are at the end of this section.)* But most volunteers never get an award. They keep helping because they want to.

Teaching sequence (teacher-led)

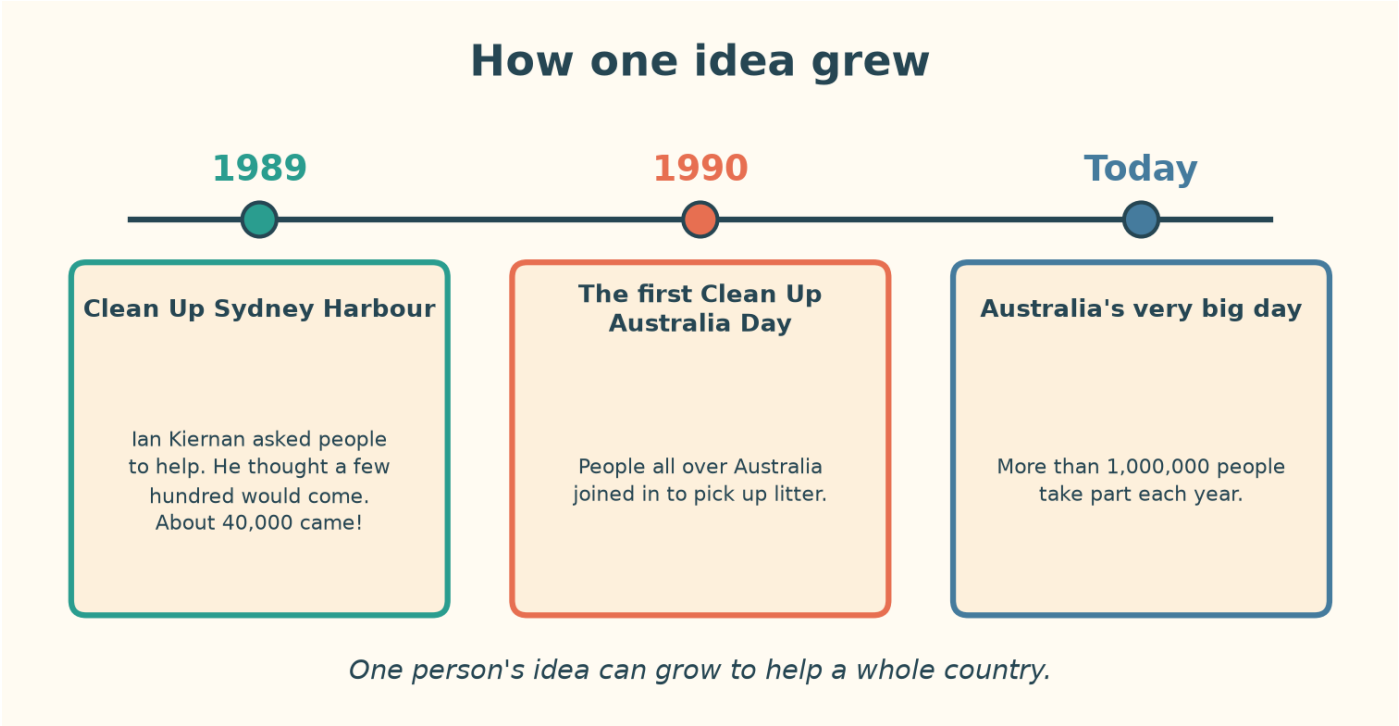
1. **Reasons wall.** Show *Why do people join in?* Read the four bubbles aloud. Ask: *Which reason have you felt?* Add the class’s own reasons to a wall chart in their words.
2. **Local or virtual sort.** Read the five rows of *Groups that join in*. As a class, sort the five groups into two piles: *meets in one place* and *meets on the internet*. Ask what each group’s purpose is (the job it does).
3. **Pick one small project.** Using *Ways kids can join in* and the four steps, the class chooses one small helping job for this week (for example: make thank-you cards for the people who help at school, or collect spare books for a new class). Run it through the four steps together.

Worked examples

Example 1

The clean-up that started with one person.

In 1989, a man named Ian Kiernan was sad about the rubbish in Sydney Harbour. He asked people to come and help clean it up. He thought a few hundred people would come. About 40,000 people came! The next year, 1990, the first Clean Up Australia Day was held, and people all over Australia joined in. Today, more than 1,000,000 people take part each year. *(Source notes are at the end of this section.)*



Timeline with three points: 1989, Clean Up Sydney Harbour, Ian Kiernan asked people to help and about 40,000 came; 1990, the first Clean Up Australia Day, people all over Australia joined in to pick up litter; Today, more than 1,000,000 people take part each year.

Read each row. The left side is what happened. The right side is what it shows about joining in.

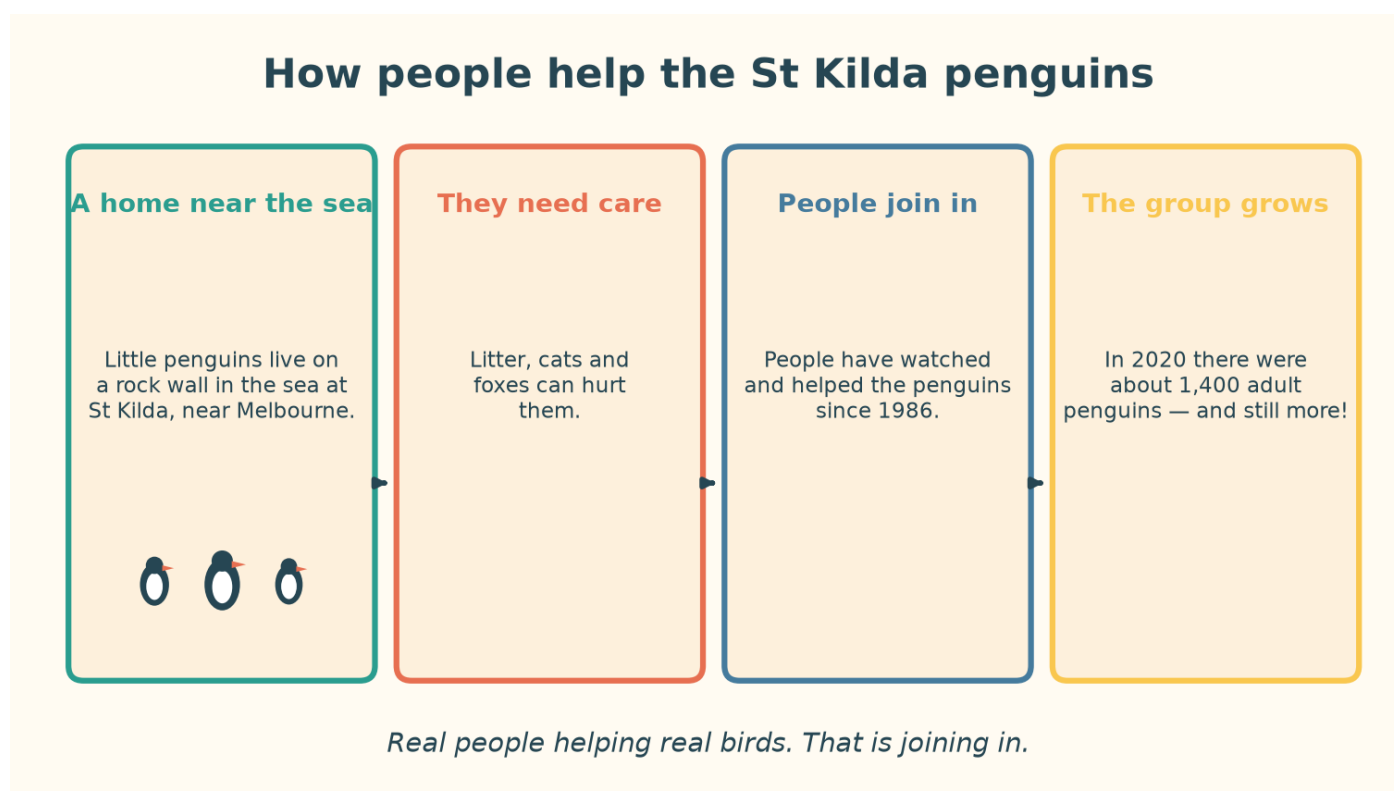
What happened	What it shows
Ian Kiernan cared about the harbour, so he asked for help.	People participate when they care about a place. A leader asks others to join in.
He thought a few hundred would come. About 40,000	Lots of people want to help. Sometimes they just need to

What happened	What it shows
came.	be asked.
In 1990 the helping day was held again, all over Australia.	When helping works, people do it again — bigger.
Today more than 1,000,000 people take part each year.	One person's idea can grow into a whole country joining in.
Ian Kiernan was a volunteer. Nobody paid him to start it.	Many big helping jobs start with a volunteer who cares.

Example 2

A class project for the St Kilda penguins.

Little penguins live on a rock wall in the sea at St Kilda, near Melbourne. People have watched over them and helped them since 1986. In 2020 there were about 1,400 adult penguins living there — more than before, and still growing. (Source notes are at the end of this section.)



Four labelled cards in a row: a home near the sea — little penguins live on a rock wall in the sea at St Kilda, near Melbourne; they need care — litter, cats and foxes can hurt them; people join in — people have watched and helped the penguins since 1986; the group grows — in 2020 there were about 1,400 adult penguins and still more.

Now a class near the penguins wants to contribute. Here is how the four steps could look.

Step	What the class does	Why it helps
1 Spot a need	The class finds out that litter and animals like cats and foxes can hurt the penguins.	You cannot help until you know what the problem is.
2 Make a plan	The class plans to make signs that say <i>please keep dogs on leads</i> , and to raise money for nest boxes.	A plan turns <i>we care</i> into <i>here is what we will do</i> .
3 Do the work	The class makes the signs, asks people for coins, and gives the money to a penguin group.	This is the contribution — hands, ideas, time and money at work.

Step	What the class does	Why it helps
4 Tell people	The class shows the school what it did, so more people join in next time.	Telling people helps the helping grow.

If the class finishes its project, the school might recognise it — with a clap, a certificate, or a school award. Grown-ups who help animals and places for many years can get even bigger thank-yous, all the way up to an Order of Australia. But remember: most helpers help because they want to. The thank-you is a nice extra, not the reason.

Practice questions

With help

- Q1.** Look at *Why do people join in?* Choose two of the four reasons. For each one, tell a partner about a time you joined in for that reason, or a time you saw someone else do it.
- Q2.** Look at *Groups that join in.* Sort the five groups into two piles: *meets in one place* and *meets on the internet*. Then say the purpose (the job it does) of two groups.
- Q3.** A volunteer is a helper who helps for _____, because they _____ to. Fill in the two missing words.
- Q4.** Landcare groups started in Victoria in 1986. Name two things Landcare groups do, and say why those things help your community.
- Q5.** Put these four steps in the right order for a class project: *do the work*; *spot a need*; *tell people*; *make a plan*.
- Q6.** Look at *How we say thank you.* (a) Put these in order from the smallest thank-you to the biggest: *an Order of Australia*; *a thank-you from a friend*; *a school award*. (b) Which thank-you began in 1975? (c) Which one could your class give this term?

On your own

- Q7.** Name three ways you could participate at your school this week. At least one must be a way you have not tried before.
- Q8.** Why do people participate in communities? Give two reasons in your own words.
- Q9.** A park near your school is a habitat for small birds. The birds need help. Use the four steps (*spot a need*, *make a plan*, *do the work*, *tell people*) to plan one class project for the birds. Write one sentence for each step.
- Q10.** Think of a person in your family, street or school who helps other people. What do they do? Why do you think they do it?

Reasoning question

- Q11.** Most volunteers are never paid, and most never win an award. So why do they keep helping? Give your two best reasons. Then answer this too: *If there were no thank-yous at all, would people still help?* Say why or why not.

Answers

Q1. Answers will be different. An example: *I joined in to help others when I carried boxes for my teacher. I saw people join in because they care about a place when my street picked up litter.* Check: did your partner hear a reason and a story for it?

Q2. Meets in one place: Landcare groups, Clean Up Australia helpers, school fair helpers, sports club coaches. Meets on the internet: the online reading club. Example purposes: Landcare groups look after parks, rivers and bush; school fair helpers raise money for new things.

Q3. for **free**; because they **want** to.

Q4. Any two of: plant trees, pull weeds (and look after parks, rivers and bush). Example why: new trees give birds a home and shade for people; pulling weeds helps the bush grow.

Q5. Spot a need → make a plan → do the work → tell people.

Q6. (a) A thank-you from a friend, then a school award, then an Order of Australia. (b) The Order of Australia. (c) Answers will be different — a school award (or a thank-you from a friend) is one your class can give.

Q7. Answers will be different. Check: each way is something a kid really can do, and one is new for you.

Q8. Example: to help other people; because they care about a place; to make things better for everyone; to have fun with people. Any two, in your own words.

Q9. Example: *Spot a need — the birds' nests get broken by people and dogs. Make a plan — we will make small signs and ask the school to put them up. Do the work — we make the signs and put them up with a teacher. Tell people — we read out what happened at assembly so other classes help too.*

Q10. Answers will be different. Check: you said what the person does **and** gave a reason you think they do it.

Q11. See the example answer below.

Example answer for the reasoning question

An example, not the only answer. You can reach a different answer and still reason well.

Two strong reasons volunteers keep helping: (1) they can see that their helping makes things better — the park is cleaner, the person is happier, the penguins are safer — and seeing that feels good; (2) they care about the people, the place or the animals, and helping is what caring looks like when it gets to work. Many also like the friends they help with.

Would people still help with no thank-yous at all? Some would and some might not. The helpers who help because they care would keep going, because the reason is inside them, not in the thank-you. But thank-yous do matter too: they show new people that helping is noticed, and that can bring more helpers in. A good answer here gives a reason for each side, then picks one and says why.

Sources (retrieved 25 August 2026)

- Clean Up Australia, “About us”, cleanup.org.au — Ian Kiernan organised Clean Up Sydney Harbour in 1989 expecting a few hundred volunteers; about 40,000 came; Clean Up Australia Day was born in 1990.
- Wikipedia, “Clean Up Australia Day” — more than a million people participate each year.
- Wikipedia, “Little penguin” — the St Kilda breakwater colony has been the subject of a conservation study since 1986; about 1,400 breeding adults as of 2020, and growing.
- Wikipedia, “Landcare in Australia” — the movement began in Victoria in 1986 with farmers near St Arnaud; thousands of volunteer groups now.
- Wikipedia, “Order of Australia” — established 14 February 1975; the Medal of the Order of Australia recognises service worthy of particular recognition.