

Mathematics Level 7

Chapter 5 — Skills: participating in civic processes and communicating

This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License. To view a copy of this license, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/> or send a letter to Creative Commons, PO Box 1866, Mountain View, CA 94042, USA.

Attribution: Classbasics Pty Ltd, vwx.au

Curriculum codes refer to the *Victorian Curriculum F–10 Version 2.0*, published by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA). Classbasics is not affiliated with the VCAA; the VCAA does not endorse this resource and makes no warranties regarding it.

Distribution note: this document may be distributed, and whole pages may be removed from it, provided only WHOLE pages are removed (never part of a page). This allows teachers to remove tests, exams and subtopics they do not want to issue.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content has been excluded as accuracy cannot be guaranteed, and it is better to be respectful than cover the entire curriculum inaccurately.

Significant effort has been made to ensure this content is legal. Please send any areas of concern to admin@vwx.au with appropriate document/legal references so errors can be verified and changes be made.

Contents

Section	Page
Making decisions by consensus and by vote	2
Ways citizens take part, from local to national	16
Sharing an evidence-based analysis in different ways	33

Making decisions by consensus and by vote

Section 5A — Making decisions by consensus and by vote · Chapter 5 — Skills: participating in civic processes and communicating · Civics and Citizenship 7–8 **Owens:** VC2HC8S06 (Victorian Curriculum 2.0, Levels 7 and 8 band) **Elaborations drawn on:** .E01 · .E02 · .E03 **Linked bank:** 6 MCQs mapped to VC2HC8S06 **Student-facing range:** student text runs from “What we are learning” to “Check your answers”; this blockquote and the “Teaching sequence” at the end are for the teacher. This section is *doing*, not describing: students run the votes, build the consensus and play the parliament.

What we are learning

When a group must decide, the **method** it uses changes who wins and how the losers feel. This section gives you two families of method to *use*, not just read about:

- **Voting** — each member casts one **ballot** (a counted vote), and a counting rule turns the ballots into a winner.
- **Consensus** — the group talks, listens and reshapes a proposal until **every** member can say “I can accept this.” Consensus is not everyone getting their first choice; it is everyone being able to live with the result.

Two families of democratic decision-making

DECIDING BY VOTING	DECIDING BY CONSENSUS
How it works Each person backs an option. The option with the most support wins. Good when a group must choose quickly, or not everyone can agree. Watch for the losing side must accept the result. <i>Rule of the majority: more than half decides.</i>	How it works The group talks, listens and shapes a proposal everyone can accept. Good when everyone must live with the decision every day. Watch for it takes time, and one person can hold things up. <i>Not everyone's first choice — but one no one blocks.</i>

Both are democratic: everyone gets a voice. They differ in how the decision is reached.

Two panels comparing how a group can decide: on the left, voting, where students cast ballots and the option with the most votes wins; on the right, consensus, where the group talks and reshapes a proposal until every member can accept it.

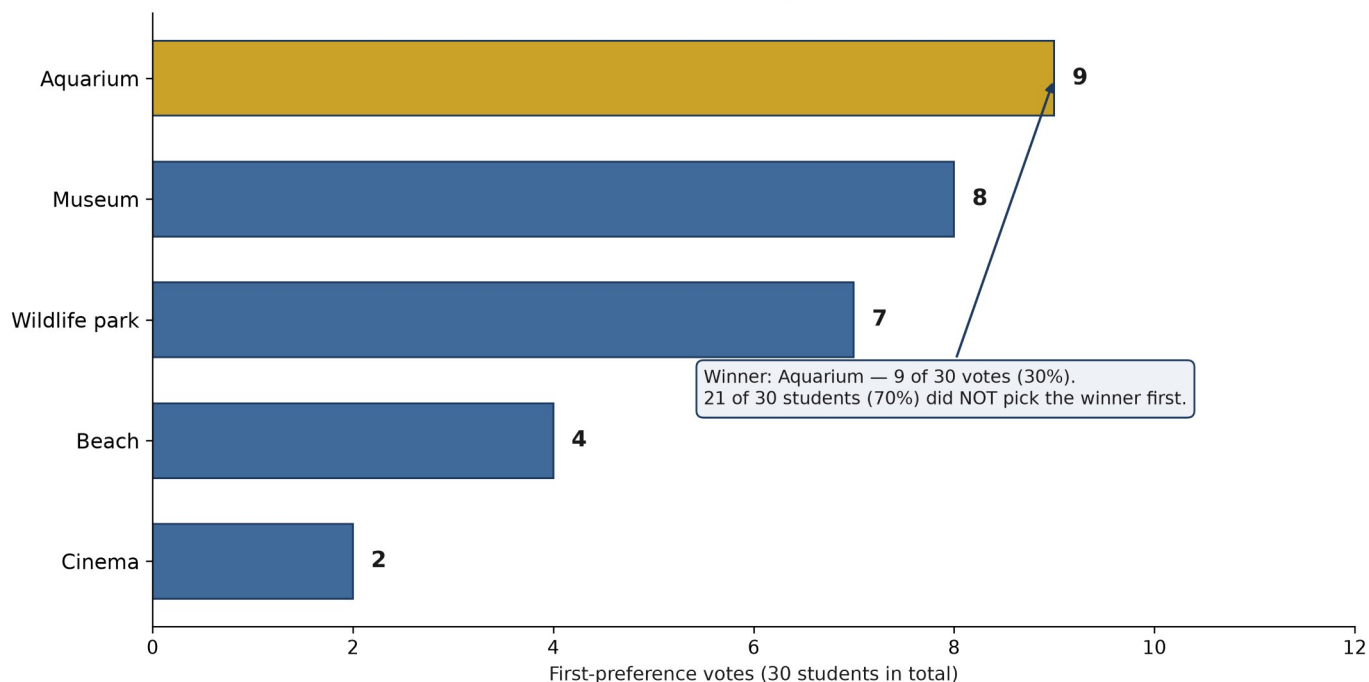
Key words are defined the first time they appear, and a **key-terms checker** sits inside the tasks. In Australia, voting in federal elections is **compulsory** (required by law) for enrolled citizens aged 18 and over, and has been since 1925. You are practising the skills now so that later they are habits.

Method 1 — First-past-the-post voting

First-past-the-post is the simplest voting rule: every voter picks **one** option, and the option with the **most** votes wins — even if it falls short of half.

Worked example A — the excursion vote. A Year 7 class of 30 must pick one excursion. Each student votes once. The count:

A class vote by first-past-the-post: the most votes wins



Bar chart of first-preference votes for the class excursion: Aquarium 9, Museum 8, Wildlife park 7, Beach 4, Cinema 2. The Aquarium wins with 9 of the 30 votes (30%); 21 students did not pick it first.

Half of 30 is 15, so a **majority** (more than half) would be 16 or more. The Aquarium wins with 9 — the most votes, but only 30% of the class. First-past-the-post is quick and easy to understand, but it can crown a winner that most voters did **not** choose.

Method 2 — Preferential voting

In elections for the Australian House of Representatives, the rule is **preferential voting**: voters number **every** box on the ballot paper 1, 2, 3, ... in order of choice. The Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) counts first preferences; if no option has more than half, the lowest option is **excluded** and its votes **transfer** to each voter's next preference. This repeats until one option has more than half. A ballot that is not numbered correctly (a box missed, a number repeated, a tick instead of numbers) is **informal** — set aside and not counted, which is why the AEC's core rule is "number every box".

A model preferential ballot paper

Sample
student's
choices

CLASS EXCURSION BALLOT PAPER

Number EVERY box from 1 to 5, in the order you prefer.
Put 1 beside your first choice, 2 beside your second, and so on.

3	Aquarium
1	Museum
5	Wildlife park
4	Beach
2	Cinema

A ballot with only a 1, or a repeated number, is INFORMAL — it is set aside and not counted (AEC rule).

A model preferential ballot paper with five options, numbered 1 to 5 in the voter's order of choice, beside the rule that every box must be numbered or the vote is informal and is not counted.

Worked example B — the same 30 votes, counted preferentially. Suppose the 30 students' full preferences fell into five groups:

Group	Students	Order of preference (1st → 5th)
A	9	Aquarium, Beach, Museum, Wildlife park, Cinema
B	8	Museum, Wildlife park, Aquarium, Beach, Cinema
C	7	Wildlife park, Beach, Museum, Aquarium, Cinema
D	4	Beach, Wildlife park, Museum, Aquarium, Cinema
E	2	Cinema, Beach, Museum, Wildlife park, Aquarium

Counting the same 30 votes by preferential voting

Aquarium	Museum	Wildlife park	Beach	Cinema
9	8	7	4	2
Round 1: first preferences. No option has more than half of 30.				
9	8	7	6	OUT
Cinema is lowest (2). Its 2 votes move to Beach.				
9	10	11	OUT	OUT
Beach is lowest (6). Its votes move: 4 to Wildlife park, 2 to Museum.				
OUT	19	11	OUT	OUT
Aquarium is lowest (9). All 9 of its votes move to Museum.				

Museum has 19 of 30 (63%) — MORE THAN HALF. Museum wins.

Table of the preferential count in four rounds: round 1 first preferences 9, 8, 7, 4, 2; the lowest option is excluded each round and its votes move to the voters' next preference, until the Museum reaches 19 of 30 (63%) — more than half — and wins.

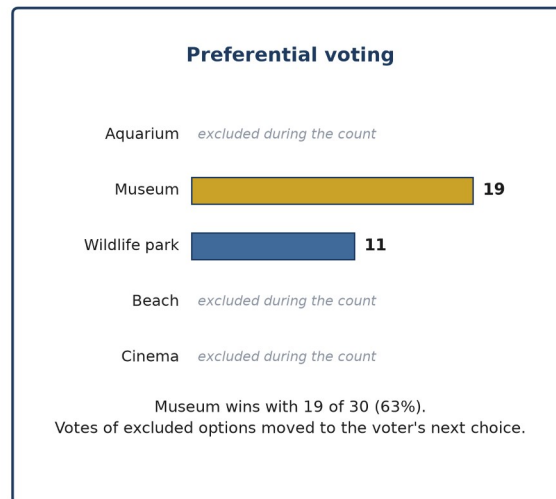
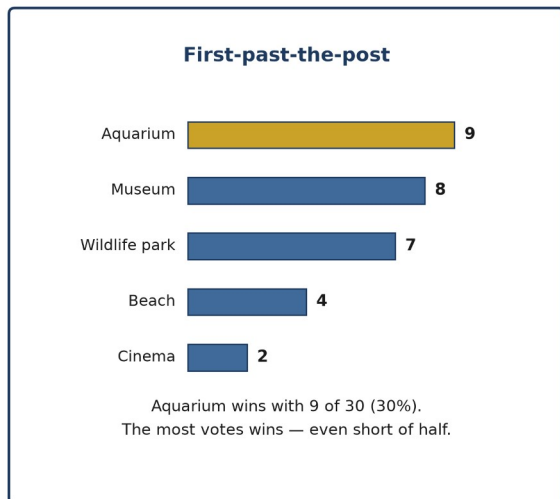
- **Round 1:** first preferences — Aquarium 9, Museum 8, Wildlife park 7, Beach 4, Cinema 2. Nobody has more than half (15). Cinema is lowest and is excluded.
- **Round 2:** Cinema's 2 votes transfer to Beach (group E's next choice): Beach 6. Still nobody over half; Beach is now lowest and is excluded.
- **Round 3:** Beach's 6 votes split by next available choice — 4 to Wildlife park (group D), 2 to Museum (group E): Wildlife park 11, Museum 10, Aquarium 9. Aquarium is lowest and is excluded.

- **Round 4:** Aquarium's 9 votes all list Museum next: Museum **19**, Wildlife park 11.

Nineteen of 30 is 63% — more than half. **Museum wins.**

Same votes — different winners

Same 30 votes — different winners



The method of counting changed the result. Which result do you think better shows what the class wanted?

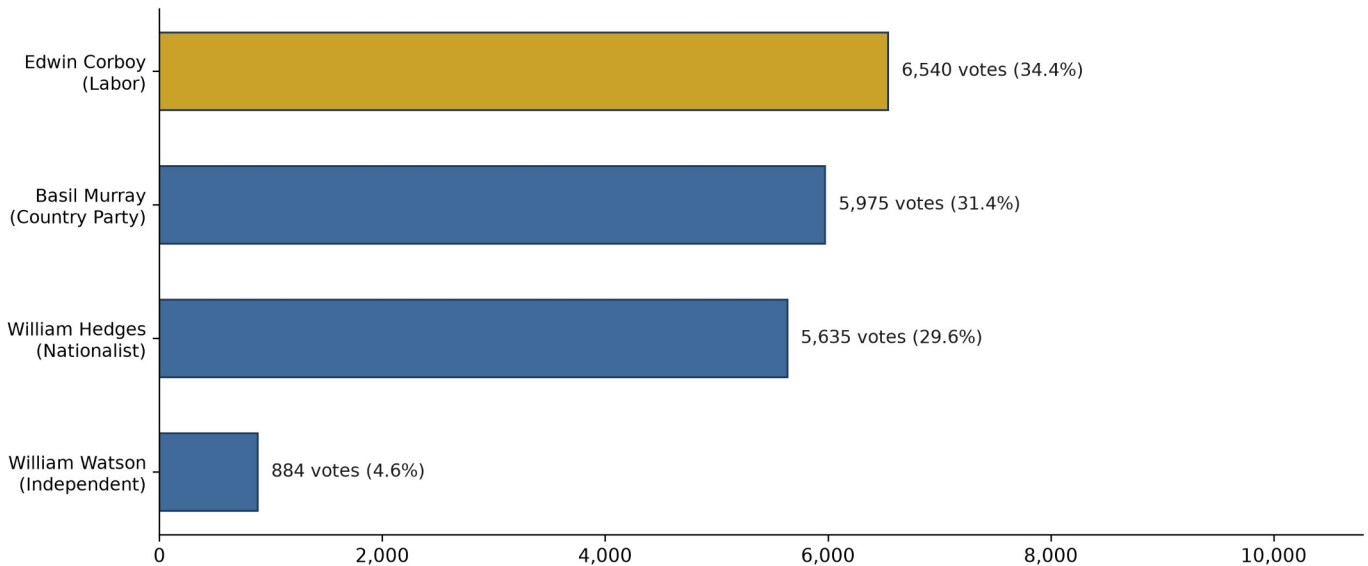
Two bar charts of the same 30 votes: first-past-the-post elects the Aquarium (9 of 30), while preferential voting elects the Museum (19 of 30) after the excluded options' votes move to next preferences.

Same 30 ballots, two different winners. Under first-past-the-post the winner needed only 30%; under preferential voting the winner ended with 63%. Reflect: the method is part of the decision. Whether one method is *fairer* than the other is a **contested** question — people disagree, and each side can give reasons. “Fairer” depends on what you value: speed and simplicity, or a winner most people can accept. You will be marked on the quality of your reasons, never on which side you pick.

Case study 1 — the 1918 by-election that changed Australian voting

This is not a made-up problem. On 26 October 1918, four candidates split the vote in a Western Australian by-election (a **by-election** fills a seat that falls vacant between elections). The seat's name is printed on the chart:

First-preference votes in the Swan by-election, 26 October 1918 (Division of Swan, Western Australia — 19,034 formal votes)



Winner: Edwin Corboy (Labor) with only 34.4% — less than half. The two non-Labor candidates split the rest of the vote.

Source: Wikipedia, "1918 Swan by-election", retrieved 26 August 2026.

Bar chart of first-preference votes in a Western Australian by-election, 26 October 1918: Corboy (Labor) 6,540 (34.4%), Murray (Country Party) 5,975 (31.4%), Hedges 5,635 (29.6%), Watson (Independent) 884 (4.6%). Corboy won with less than half because the two non-Labor candidates split the rest of the vote.

Edwin Corboy (Labor) won with 6,540 votes — 34.4%, well short of half — because the two non-Labor candidates, Murray and Hedges, **split** the bigger non-Labor share between them. Between them they had 11,610 votes to Corboy's 6,540. Many voters saw a result most of them did not want, and the new federal Parliament responded: the **Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918** introduced preferential voting for federal elections, first used at the Corangamite by-election on 14 December 1918. The rule change was designed so that a winner should end with more than half of the votes still in the count — exactly the fix you used in Worked example B.

Method 3 — Consensus

Consensus means a decision every member can accept — not necessarily anyone's first choice, but a proposal nobody needs to block. Because everyone must accept it, everyone gets a say in shaping it. The loop below is a reliable way to run it.

Building consensus: five steps in a loop



Someone still cannot accept it — reshape the proposal

Consensus is reached when every member can say: “I can accept this.”

Flow chart of five consensus steps in a loop: 1 state the problem, 2 hear everyone, 3 list the options, 4 shape a proposal, 5 test for agreement — looping back to step 4 for as long as anyone cannot accept the proposal. Consensus is reached when every member can say “I can accept this.”

Note what consensus is **not**: it is not a hidden vote, and it is not “the loudest voice wins”. The test at step 5 is spoken by each member in turn: “*I can accept this.*” If one person cannot say it, the proposal goes back to step 4.

Case study 2 — National Cabinet: consensus at the top

Consensus is not only for classrooms. **National Cabinet** is a real Australian decision-making body: the Prime Minister plus the Premiers of the six states and the Chief Ministers of the two territories — nine leaders. It was established on 13 March 2020, replacing an earlier body called COAG, to coordinate the national response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and it has continued since.

National Cabinet has **no formal vote**. The Prime Minister chairs, but cannot outvote a Premier: the nine leaders **negotiate** — trade, adjust and reshape a plan — until all nine can accept it. Why no vote? Because the members are not members of one organisation; they lead nine separate governments that must each carry the agreement home and implement it with their own laws and budgets. A 5–4 vote would leave four governments enforcing a plan they opposed. Consensus is slower — but a decision all nine accept is a decision all nine carry out.

Which method fits which decision?

Which method fits which decision?

THE SITUATION	METHOD	WHY
Pick one option from many — quickly	VOTE	Preferential if more than two options and the choice matters
A class rule everyone must live with every day	CONSENSUS	Everyone must accept it, so everyone helps shape it
A jury deciding guilt in a Victorian criminal trial	NEAR-AGREEMENT	All 12 jurors aim to agree; 11 of 12 may suffice after long discussion (Juries Act 2000 (Vic), s 46)
Leaders of nine governments settling a national plan	CONSENSUS	No formal vote at National Cabinet — the leaders negotiate to agreement

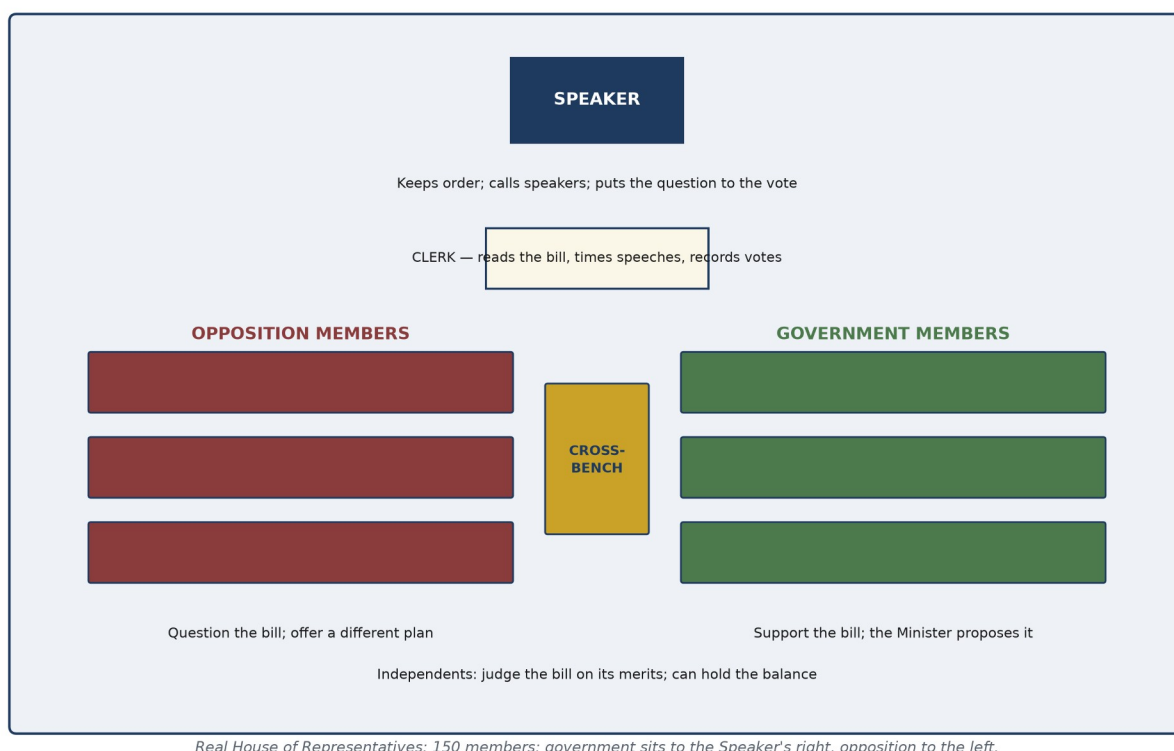
Table matching four situations to a method with a reason: choosing one option from many quickly — vote (preferential if the choice matters); a class rule everyone must live with daily — consensus; a Victorian criminal jury — near-agreement, all 12 aim to agree and 11 of 12 may suffice after long discussion under the Juries Act 2000 (Vic) s 46; nine government leaders settling a national plan — consensus, as at National Cabinet.

A jury is a third, in-between method worth noticing: in a Victorian criminal trial, 12 jurors aim for full agreement, but for many offences, after long discussion, 11 of 12 may decide (*Juries Act 2000* (Vic), s 46). The law sets the bar far above “most votes win” because the decision is so serious.

Mock parliament — role-play

Now you will use voting inside a model of the real thing. The **House of Representatives** (the house that forms government) has 150 members; the government side sits to the Speaker’s right, the opposition to the left, and **crossbench** members — independents, not in either team — sit between them.

Mock parliament: the room and the roles



Floor plan of a mock parliament chamber modelled on the House of Representatives: the Speaker at the front keeping order and putting the question, the Clerk's table below reading the bill and recording votes, government benches on the Speaker's right supporting the bill, opposition benches on the left questioning it, and the crossbench in the middle judging it on its merits.

The bill (a proposed law) for your role-play: *Commonwealth Electoral Amendment (Lowering Voting Age to 16)*
Bill — a real bill title: in 2023 a senator introduced a bill with this name to lower the federal voting age to 16; like most private bills, it did not become law. Your mock House will debate it.

Roles: Speaker (keeps order, calls speakers, puts the question); Clerk (reads the bill, times speeches, counts the votes); a Minister (proposes the bill for the government); government members; opposition members (question the bill, offer a different plan); crossbench (judge the bill on its merits — if the House is close, they hold the balance).

Stages (simplified from the real Parliament):

1. **First reading** — the Clerk reads the bill's title. No debate yet.
2. **Second reading** — the Minister explains why the bill should become law; the opposition replies; the Speaker calls other members to speak in turn.
3. **The vote** — the Speaker puts the question; members call "Aye" (yes) or "No". If the result is unclear or challenged, the House holds a **division**: members stand or move to be counted by the Clerk. More than half of those voting = **carried**.

In the real Parliament the bill would then have to be agreed in the same words by the Senate, and the Governor-General would sign it into law. Your role-play stops at step 3 — note this in your reflection.

A contemporary issue — should the voting age be 16?

The law today: citizens must enrol and vote from age 18; 16- and 17-year-olds may enrol but cannot vote until they turn 18. The 2023 bill above shows this is a live question Parliament has actually debated. It is also a perfect test for the methods you have practised — and a genuinely contested one.

A contested question: should the voting age be lowered to 16?

Each side in its strongest form — as its own supporters would put it

ARGUMENTS FOR	ARGUMENTS AGAINST
• Sixteen-year-olds can work and pay tax — they should help choose who makes the laws. • Decisions made today (climate, housing, debt) hit young people hardest and longest. • Voting at 16 builds the habit while civics is still taught at school. • If 16-year-olds can make big life choices, they can make a considered voting choice.	• Eighteen is one clear line for adult duties: voting, juries, contracts, full-time work. • Life experience and independence grow between 16 and 18, sharpening judgement. • Young voices are already heard: petitions, school councils, youth parliaments. • A change this big should wait until a clear majority of citizens supports it.

Reasoning task: which points could be tested with evidence, and which rest on values?

Two columns showing the strongest arguments for and against lowering the voting age to 16, four per side. For: 16-year-olds can work and pay tax so should help choose who makes the laws; today's decisions on climate, housing and debt hit young people hardest and longest; voting at 16 builds the habit while civics is taught at school; if 16-year-olds can make big life choices they can make a considered voting choice. Against: 18 is one clear line for adult duties such as voting, juries, contracts and full-time work; life experience and independence grow between 16 and 18, sharpening judgement; young voices are already heard through petitions, school councils and youth parliaments; a change this big should wait until a clear majority of citizens supports it.

Both columns are written the way each side's own supporters would put their case — the strongest form, not a weak version. Some points can be **tested with evidence** (check what the law says about work and tax; check whether youth parliaments exist). Others **rest on values** (where the adult line should sit; how much weight future years should carry). In your extended response you will be marked on how well you handle both kinds — and on the quality of your reasoning, not on the side you land on.

Tasks — scaffolded

T1. Read the first-past-the-post count in Worked example A. (a) Which option won? (b) What share of the 30 votes was that? (c) How many students did **not** pick the winner first?

T2. A parallel class votes first-past-the-post on a Friday sport: Soccer 11, Basketball 9, Cricket 7, Tennis 3. (a) Which option wins? (b) Half of 30 is 15. Did the winner get a majority (more than half)? Show the comparison.

T3. Mia's true order of choice is: Museum, then Wildlife park, then Aquarium, then Cinema, then Beach. Write the numbers 1–5 she must write beside each option on a preferential ballot. Then state two things that would make a ballot informal.

T4. Using the five preference groups in Worked example B, write the round-1 first-preference tally for all five options, and state whether any option has more than half.

T5. Cinema is excluded after round 1. Whose votes move, where do they go, and what is the new tally? (Hint: look at group E's second choice.)

T6. Finish the count: after Beach then Aquarium are excluded, which option wins, with how many votes, and is that more than half of 30?

T7. Match each consensus step (1–5 in the loop figure) to its description: (a) “Blend the ideas into one plan most people can support”; (b) “What exactly must the group decide?”; (c) “Can everyone accept it? If not, reshape”; (d) “Each person speaks; the rest listen and ask questions”; (e) “Collect every idea — do not judge them yet”.

T8. Your class is building consensus on a phones rule for project work. Views in the room: **View 1** — no phones at all during lessons; **View 2** — phones any time your work is done; **View 3** — phones only with the teacher’s OK. Complete this proposal starter so it borrows from **all three** views: “*Our rule is ..., because it takes ... from View 1, ... from View 2 and ... from View 3. We will review the rule in ... weeks.*”

T9. Copy and complete the National Cabinet table: (a) Who sits at the table? (b) How is a decision reached? (c) What older body did it replace? (d) When was it established?

T10. From the 1918 by-election figure: (a) Corboy won with 34.4%. How far short of half is that? (b) Add the other three candidates’ shares. What does that total tell you about the non-Labor vote?

T11. Match each mock-parliament role to its duty: Speaker, Clerk, Minister, opposition member, crossbench member. Duties: (a) proposes the bill and argues for it; (b) keeps order, calls speakers, puts the question; (c) questions the bill and offers a different plan; (d) reads the bill, times speeches, counts the votes; (e) judges the bill on its merits and can hold the balance.

T12. Sort the eight voting-age arguments in the figure into two columns: **testable with evidence** / **rests on values**. For two of your choices (one from each column), add a one-line reason.

Tasks — unscaffolded

T13. Invent your own group of 20 voters choosing between four options, writing every voter’s full preference order. Count it twice — first-past-the-post and preferential — and choose your numbers so the winners **differ**. Show both counts and check every tally adds to 20.

T14. In your own words: why does a preferential ballot make you number **every** box, and what would go wrong in the count if a voter numbered only their first choice?

T15. Run the five-step consensus loop on a real, low-stakes decision your class must make this week. Keep a one-page record: the problem as stated, the options listed, the first proposal, what changed it, and the final “I can accept this” check.

T16. National Cabinet has nine leaders, so a vote would be quick to run. Give **two** reasons the nine negotiate to agreement instead.

T17. A Victorian jury aims for all 12 to agree, yet for many offences 11 of 12 may decide after long discussion (*Juries Act 2000* (Vic), s 46). Explain why the law does **not** settle for a simple 7-to-5 majority.

T18. After the role-play: whose speeches moved votes, if any? What did the crossbench actually do in your division? Answer from what happened in your room.

T19. The 1918 by-election used first-past-the-post, so we cannot know voters’ preferences for certain. Argue from the numbers: if preferential voting had been used, which candidate would most likely have won, and why? (A reasoned case, not a single right name.)

T20. Take one FOR argument and one AGAINST argument from the voting-age figure and strengthen each: add a piece of evidence, an example, or a sharper reason its own side would use.

T21. Choose a method (vote — which kind? — or consensus) for each, with a one-line reason: (a) electing your SRC president; (b) choosing a class motto to go on your wall for years; (c) deciding where the new bike racks go; (d) changing the colour of the sports uniform.

T22. An informal vote is set aside and counted for no-one. Explain why the count must do that, and suggest one practical way to reduce informal votes in a real election.

T23. Two students argue: “First-past-the-post is fairer — one person, one vote, most votes wins, done.” “Preferential is fairer — the winner must end up with more than half.” Explain why **both** can give real reasons, and what each side values.

T24. Compare your mock parliament to the real House of Representatives: two ways they are the same, and one way they differ. (Think: numbers, the Senate, the Governor-General, compulsory voting.)

Extended responses

A. The two-methods reflection (E01). Run first-past-the-post **and** preferential voting over the same real class decision (use the role-card data if your class is smaller than the option count needs). In 150–200 words: state both results; say whether they differed; explain **why or why not** using the count itself; and give your reasoned judgement on which method suited this decision better.

B. The voting-age bill (E02 + E03). After the mock parliament, write **one** of: (i) your second-reading speech as a Minister, opposition member or crossbench member on the voting-age bill; or (ii) a 200–250 word reasoned answer to “Should Australia lower the voting age to 16?” Either way: present the other side in its strongest form, use evidence where a point is testable, state your position and your reasons, and explain how the method of deciding (a parliamentary vote) fits this kind of question.

Check your answers

T1. (a) Aquarium. (b) 9 of 30 = 30%. (c) $30 - 9 = 21$ students. **T2.** (a) Soccer. (b) $11 < 15$, so no — most votes, but not a majority. **T3.** Museum 1, Wildlife park 2, Aquarium 3, Cinema 4, Beach 5. Informal if, e.g., a box is left blank, a number is used twice, or a tick/cross replaces numbers — the AEC rule is number every box. **T4.** Aquarium 9, Museum 8, Wildlife park 7, Beach 4, Cinema 2. Half of 30 is 15; no option has more than half. **T5.** Cinema's 2 votes (group E) go to Beach, their next choice: Beach $4 + 2 = 6$. New tally 9 / 8 / 7 / 6. **T6.** Beach's 6 split (4 to Wildlife park, 2 to Museum) → 9 / 10 / 11; then Aquarium's 9 go to Museum → Museum 19, Wildlife park 11. $19 > 15$, so Museum wins with 63%. **T7.** (a) 4, (b) 1, (c) 5, (d) 2, (e) 3. **T8.** Range: the proposal must take something real from each view (e.g. phones stay away during direct teaching from View 1; earned phone time when tasks are complete from View 2; teacher sign-off from View 3) and set a review date — a review date is what makes a consensus a trial everyone can accept. **T9.** (a) The Prime Minister, six state Premiers and two territory Chief Ministers — nine leaders. (b) By negotiation until all can accept; no formal vote. (c) COAG. (d) 13 March 2020. **T10.** (a) Half is 50%; 34.4% is 15.6 percentage points short. (b) $31.4 + 29.6 + 4.6 = 65.6\%$ — most voters were non-Labor, but their vote was split three ways, letting Labor win with the largest single share. **T11.** Speaker (b); Clerk (d); Minister (a); opposition member (c); crossbench member (e). **T12.** Sample: testable — “16-year-olds can work and pay tax” (check the law on work and tax) and “young voices are already heard: petitions, school councils, youth parliaments” (check they exist). Values — “18 is one clear line for adult duties” and “a change this big should wait for a clear majority” (claims about where lines *should* sit). Other defensible sorts exist; your reason line is what counts. **T13.** Check: the same 20 ballots used in both counts; tallies add to 20 in round 1; the preferential winner ends over half (11+); and the two winners are different options. **T14.** Range: numbering every box tells the count where your vote goes next if your option is excluded; a first choice only would leave your vote with nowhere to go — or, if ticks were allowed, the count could not read an order at all. **T15.** Check your record shows all five steps, at least one reshaped proposal if anyone could not accept the first, and a final check in which every member said “I can accept this”. **T16.** Range: the nine lead nine separate governments — none can out-rank the others; and a plan imposed 5–4 would be carried home by four leaders who opposed it, so it might never be implemented. Consensus buys commitment, at the cost of speed. **T17.** Range: the decision can take away liberty and ends a person's good name, so the law demands near-certain agreement; at 7–5, nearly half the jury holds real doubt; 11 of 12 after long discussion balances certainty against a jury that can never agree (which means a retrial). **T18.** Personal evidence — check you point to something that actually happened in your room, not a general claim. **T19.** Range: a reasoned case that a non-Labor candidate (Murray or Hedges) would most likely have won — e.g. Murray $5,975 + \text{Hedges } 5,635 = 11,610$, well over Corboy's 6,540, if their voters preferred each other to Labor — plus the honest note that first-past-the-post ballots recorded no preferences, so the case is an argument, not a fact. **T20.** Check each strengthened argument is one the *other* side would accept as their own strongest point, not a straw figure. **T21.** Range: (a) vote — one winner from several, secret and quick (preferential if a majority matters); (b) consensus — everyone lives with it for years; (c) either, with a matching reason (e.g. vote, because it is one-way and low-stakes; or consensus, because the racks sit outside everyone's classroom); (d) consensus or a whole-school vote, reasoned. Method + reason must fit. **T22.** Range: the count cannot guess a voter's intention, and guessing would treat some votes as worth more than others; so an unclear ballot is set aside. Reduction: clear “number every box” instruction, how-to-vote guides, or help for voters with disability or low literacy. **T23.** Range: side 1 values speed, simplicity and equal single votes; side 2 values a winner most voters can accept. “Fair” is contested: once facts are agreed, the dispute is about what to value, so both reasoned positions stand. **T24.** Same, e.g.: a Speaker puts the question; the side with more than half carries the vote; government faces opposition across the chamber. Different, e.g.: the real bill must also be agreed by the Senate and signed by the Governor-General; real members are 150, elected by compulsory voting.

A. Checklist: both methods run over the *same* ballots; both results stated; the why-or-why-not explained from the count (a split field of options is what lets the methods differ); a judgement with reasons.

B. Checklist: the other side stated in its strongest form; testable points backed with evidence; a clear position with reasons; the link made between the deciding method (a parliamentary majority vote) and the kind of question.

Teaching sequence (teacher)

1. **Do first, explain second (E01).** Open with a live decision (the excursion data works as role cards for any class size). Count it first-past-the-post, then preferential, on the board. Let the different winners land before any theory.
2. **Teach the counts** with the figures from Worked examples A and B; pairs re-run one round each until the transfer rule is mechanical.

3. **Case study 1 (Swan).** The historical mirror of the classroom result: a 34.4% winner, a split field, and the Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918 as the fix, first used at Corangamite, 14 December 1918.
4. **Consensus loop.** Run one low-stakes consensus (T15 can be the live run). Debrief with the trade: consensus is slower, compliance is higher.
5. **Case study 2 (National Cabinet) and juries** as agreement methods at opposite ends of seriousness; then the matching figure (which method fits which decision).
6. **Mock parliament (E02).** Cast roles, allow 3-minute speech prep, run the three simplified stages, hold a division. Debrief the crossbench: when does a small group hold the balance, and is that fair?
7. **Contemporary issue (E03).** The voting-age figure is the debate briefing; run Extended response B as the summative writing task.
8. **Assessment note.** Mark reasoning quality, never the conclusion reached: steelmanning the other side, evidence for testable claims, and honest labelling of value claims are the criteria. “Fair” is treated as contested in this section by design.
9. **Legal simplification note.** Statutes (e.g. *Juries Act 2000* (Vic) s 46) and parliamentary stages are simplified for classroom use; they are not legal advice. Sources for real-world figures: Wikipedia “1918 Swan by-election”; Australian Electoral Commission, “Preferential voting” and “How to vote — House of Representatives”; Parliament of Australia bills list (Commonwealth Electoral Amendment (Lowering Voting Age to 16) Bill 2023); all retrieved 26 August 2026.

Ways citizens take part, from local to national

Curriculum traceability (teacher)

Content description owned by this section (Victorian Curriculum 2.0, Levels 7 and 8 band): VC2HC8S07

Elaborations drawn on: VC2HC8S07.E01 · VC2HC8S07.E02 · VC2HC8S07.E03 · VC2HC8S07.E04

Handoffs received (§4):

- **VC2HC6K05** — the legal rights and responsibilities of citizens. Students arrive knowing that citizens hold rights (to vote, to petition, to free assembly within the law) and responsibilities (obeying the law, and for adults, compulsory voting). This section picks that up twice: the methods menu is what those rights look like in practice, and the campaign “rules of the road” restate the responsibility side.
- **VC2HC6K08** — working together for a civic goal. Students arrive having practised organised group action toward a shared goal. The closing campaign task (E04) is the Year 7 version of that: a planned, multi-method group effort aimed at a real decision-maker.

Sequencing note: Chapter 5 sections are task-heavy and page-light. This is a skills section, so practice volumes are doubled: two teaching sequences, twelve scaffolded tasks, twelve unscaffolded tasks and two evidence-based extended responses. The section closes with an enacted or hypothetical campaign (E04).

For the teacher — two teaching sequences

Sequence A — The menu and the map (methods × levels).

1. Open with the local: show *Six ways to take part close to home* and ask students which they have seen a parent or neighbour use. Anchor it in a real, live fact: the Victorian Electoral Commission ran the 2024 council elections entirely by post, and in August 2026 six council by-elections (for example in Banyule and Greater Bendigo) were under way in Victoria. Participation is happening now, near them.
2. Map the three levels with *Local, state, national: who decides what?* Sort a quick list of issues (dog rules, public school funding, the internet age ban) to the level that decides them.
3. Introduce the menu of methods with *The participation menu*. Stress that methods are tools: you pick the tool to fit the job and the decision-maker.
4. Teach the submission pathway with *Your voice in writing*, then model one submission aloud on a live or recent inquiry — the Victorian Inquiry into Public School Funding (submissions opened 1 October 2025; final report presented 12 May 2026) is the worked case below.
5. Formative pass: scaffolded tasks 1–6 and 9–12.
6. Exit ticket: “Name one method and the level of government you would aim it at for an issue you care about, and say why that pairing.”

Sequence B — Did it work? Judging participation, then running one.

1. Start from the contested term. Put *Three ways to judge whether participation worked* on the board and define the three frames before any case is discussed.
2. Case 1 (national, fast): the under-16 social media ban, November 2024 (*A national law made in a hurry and How many voices reached the committee?*). Students judge the 15,000 submissions in each frame and discover the frames give different answers — that is the point.
3. Case 2 (national, slow): the Human Rights Act campaign, March 2023 to 20 August 2026 (*A campaign in five steps*). No federal law yet — is that failure? Steelman both answers before students choose.
4. Case 3 (direct action): the 20 September 2019 school strikes. Weigh the Prime Minister’s “more learning in schools and less activism” against the strikers’ strongest case.
5. Campaign build: students complete *The campaign planner* in groups (extended response 2), choosing at least three methods and writing a success test in every frame. Enact where the school permits (petition, submission draft, letter to a member, media piece); otherwise run it as a documented hypothetical.
6. Summative pass: unscaffolded tasks and extended response 1.

Assessment note: mark reasoning, not conclusions. On every “was it effective?” task, full marks go to a student who names a frame, applies evidence to it, and can state the other side’s strongest view — whichever side they land on.

Theory — the menu, the map, and what “worked” means

Part 1 — What is civic participation?

Civic participation is taking part in public life to help shape the decisions a government makes. A **method** of participation is one particular way of doing that — writing, speaking, meeting, marching or voting. In Australia, participation is a right for everyone, not just adults who vote. You do not need to be 18 to write a submission, sign or start a petition, speak at a meeting, or organise a peaceful march.

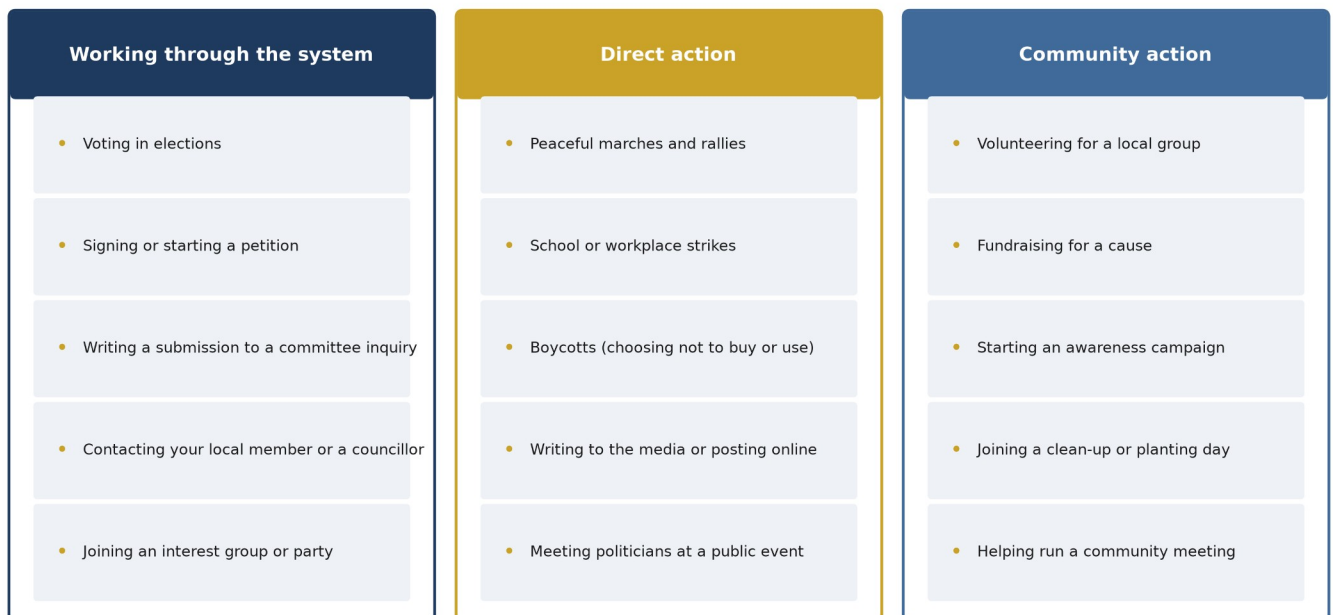
Why do people take part? Four reasons come up again and again in the cases in this section:

1. **The decision affects them** — parents in the school funding inquiry spoke because the decision touched their children’s classrooms.
2. **It is their right** — Australians have held the right to petition the federal Parliament since Federation in 1901, and the Parliament’s own website calls a petition “the only way an individual can directly place a complaint before the Parliament” (aph.gov.au, retrieved 26 August 2026).
3. **Fairness** — people take part so that decision-makers hear from everyone a decision touches, not just the loudest voices.
4. **Numbers matter** — one voice is easy to miss; 15,000 voices in a day are not.

Part 2 — The menu of methods.

A menu of methods: how citizens can take part

One issue can call for several methods at once. Different methods suit different goals.



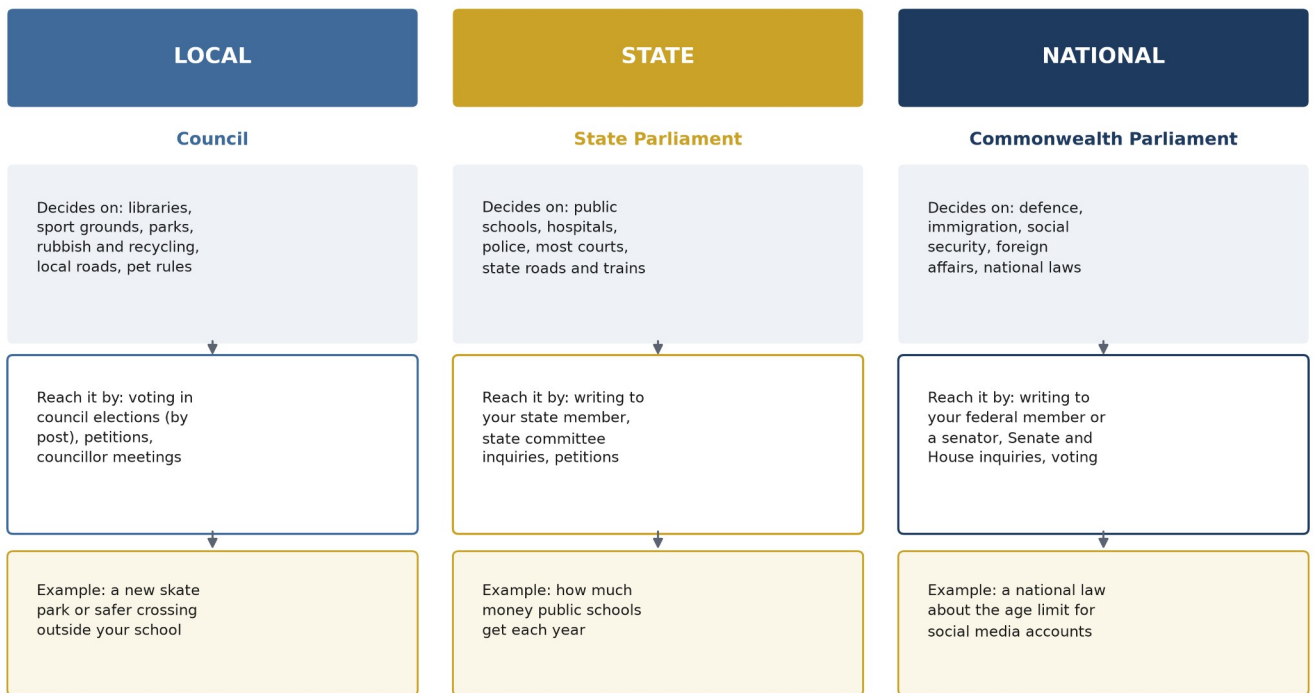
All of these are lawful ways to have a say in Australia's democracy. The law sets rules for some of them, such as permits for marches.

A menu of the main methods of civic participation shown as labelled rounded boxes, grouped by kind: writing (letters, petitions, submissions), speaking (contacting a member, media), meeting (council and committee meetings, hearings), marching (protests, strikes, boycotts) and voting.

The participation menu. Every method on this menu is used somewhere in the case studies below.

Part 3 — The map: local, state, national.

Three levels of government — and how you can reach each one



The same issue can sit at more than one level. Money for public schools, for example, involves both state and national decisions.

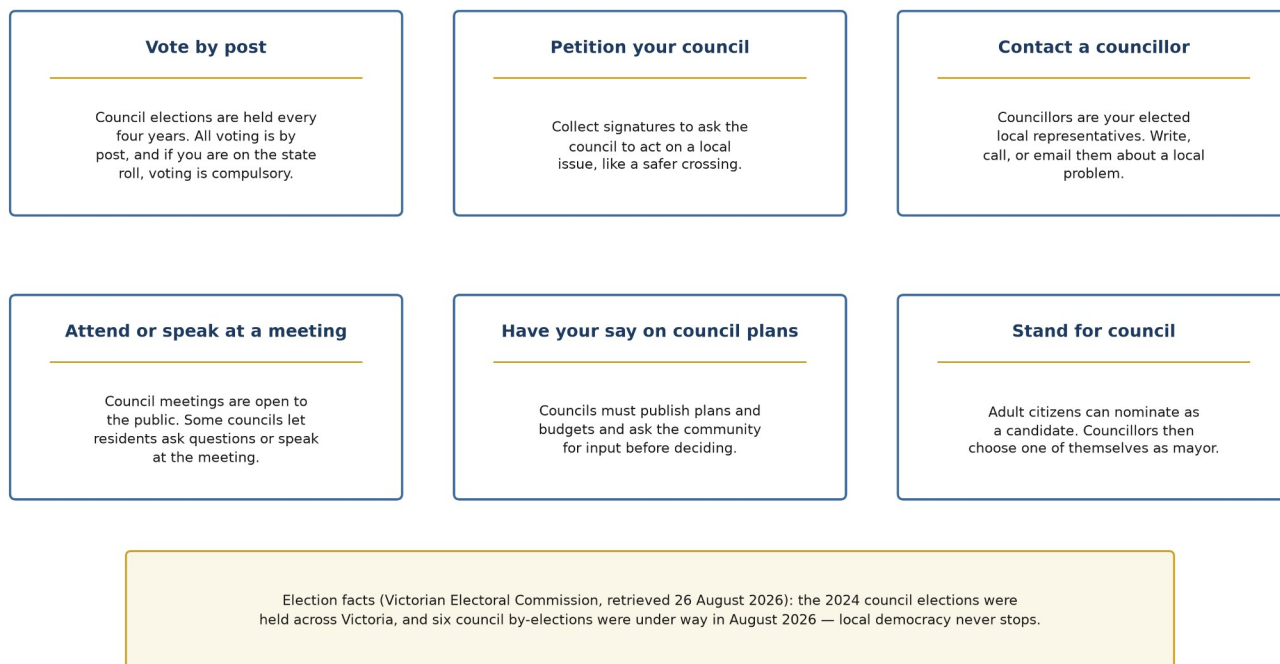
Three columns showing the three levels of government in Australia — local councils, state parliaments and the federal Parliament — with examples of what each level decides and who citizens aim their methods at in each column.

Local, state, national: who decides what? The first question in any campaign is “which level can actually make this change?”

Part 4 — Taking part close to home: the local level.

Closest to home: ways to participate at council level

Local councils in Victoria decide on libraries, parks, local roads, rubbish collection and more.



Six rounded boxes showing six ways to take part in local council decisions in Victoria: voting in postal council elections, petitioning the council, contacting your councillor, attending or speaking at a council meeting, commenting in a council have-your-say process on plans and projects, and standing for council yourself one day.

Six ways to take part close to home. Based on the Victorian Electoral Commission's guidance for council elections (vec.gov.au, retrieved 26 August 2026).

Worked mini-example — a local issue:

The issue: the equipment at your local playground is broken and stays broken for months. **Who decides?** The local council — parks and playgrounds are council business. **Method choice:** a petition to the council shows numbers; contacting your **councillor** (the person elected to represent your suburb) puts a name and a story on it; speaking for two minutes at a **council meeting** puts a face on it. Using two or three of these together is stronger than one alone. **A real anchor:** councils also run formal elections. In Victoria, every vote in the 2024 council elections was cast by post; voting is compulsory for adults on the state roll (people who do not vote can be fined); and in August 2026 six council by-elections — special elections to fill a single empty seat — were under way across Victoria (vec.gov.au, retrieved 26 August 2026). In Melbourne, voters elect a lord mayor, a deputy lord mayor and nine councillors.

Part 5 — Taking part in a law: submissions and committee inquiries.

When a government proposes a new law (a **bill**), Parliament often sends it to a **committee** — a small group of members and senators — to study. The committee usually opens an **inquiry** and asks the public for **submissions**: written documents giving views, facts and experience about the issue. Anyone may send one. The committee may also hold a public **hearing**, where people speak to the committee face to face and answer questions. At the end, the committee writes a **report** with findings and recommendations and presents it to Parliament.

Your voice in writing: making a submission to a committee inquiry

Based on the Australian Senate's public guidance for citizens



Tip: anyone may write a submission — you do not need to be an expert. Committees want to hear from the people an issue affects. (aph.gov.au, retrieved 26 August 2026)

A five-step flow chart showing how a citizen's submission moves through a committee inquiry: 1 find an inquiry and read its terms of reference, 2 write your submission with your views and experience, 3 send it before the deadline using the parliament's secure online form, 4 the committee reads it and may publish it or invite you to a hearing, 5 the committee's report may quote your submission and make recommendations to the government.

Your voice in writing: making a submission to a committee inquiry. Based on the Australian Senate's public guidance for citizens (aph.gov.au, retrieved 26 August 2026).

Part 6 — A contested term: what does “worked” mean?

Contested term — “effective”. When we ask whether participation was *effective* — whether it worked — honest people disagree, because they are judging with different rulers. Following the house rule on contested terms, this section does not pretend there is one ruler. We give the word a working definition, with **three frames** (three rulers), and we steelman — put the strongest case for — each side of every argument before judging it.

- **The awareness frame:** did people find out about the issue? Did it become news, dinner-table talk, something the whole country knows?
- **The agenda frame:** did the issue move up the list of things decision-makers must deal with? Did it get a debate, a committee inquiry, a question in Parliament, an election promise?
- **The decision frame:** did the actual decision change — a law passed or amended, a policy reversed, a funding decision fixed?

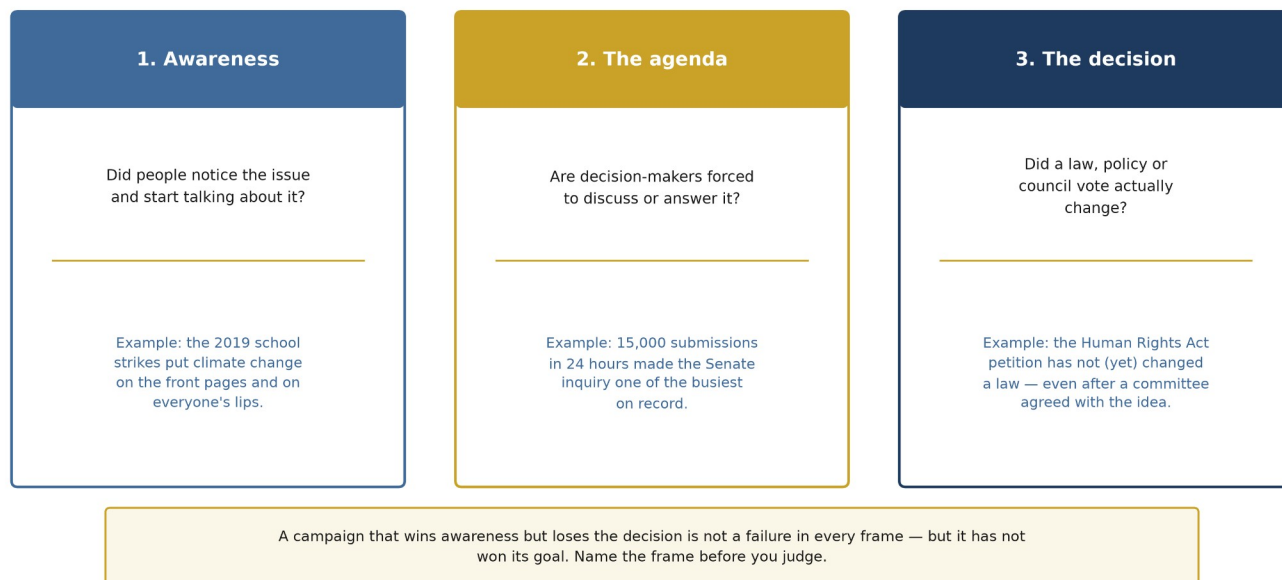
Two fair views, steelmanned. One fair view says a campaign that changes no law has still worked: it can shift what a whole country talks about, and changed talk is how changed laws begin — the strikers of 2019 never passed a law, yet climate stayed on the agenda for years. The other fair view says awareness without a decision is comfort, not change: if the funding cut or the law you opposed still stands, the people affected

are no better off, and calling that “success” can drain the energy a campaign needs to keep going. Both views are defensible.

How this section marks the word: a claim that participation was, or was not, effective earns marks only when it names the frame it is using and applies evidence to it. Reasoning is marked; conclusions are not.

Was it effective? First say what 'effective' means

'Effective' is a contested word. In this book, Judge an action at three levels, hardest at the end.



Three rounded boxes showing the three frames for judging whether participation worked — awareness, the agenda, and the decision — each with a real example from this section: the 2019 school strikes for awareness, the 15,000 social media submissions for the agenda, and the Human Rights Act petition, which has not yet changed a law, for the decision frame.

Three ways to judge whether participation worked. The same event can get a different score in each frame — that is not a contradiction, it is three different questions.

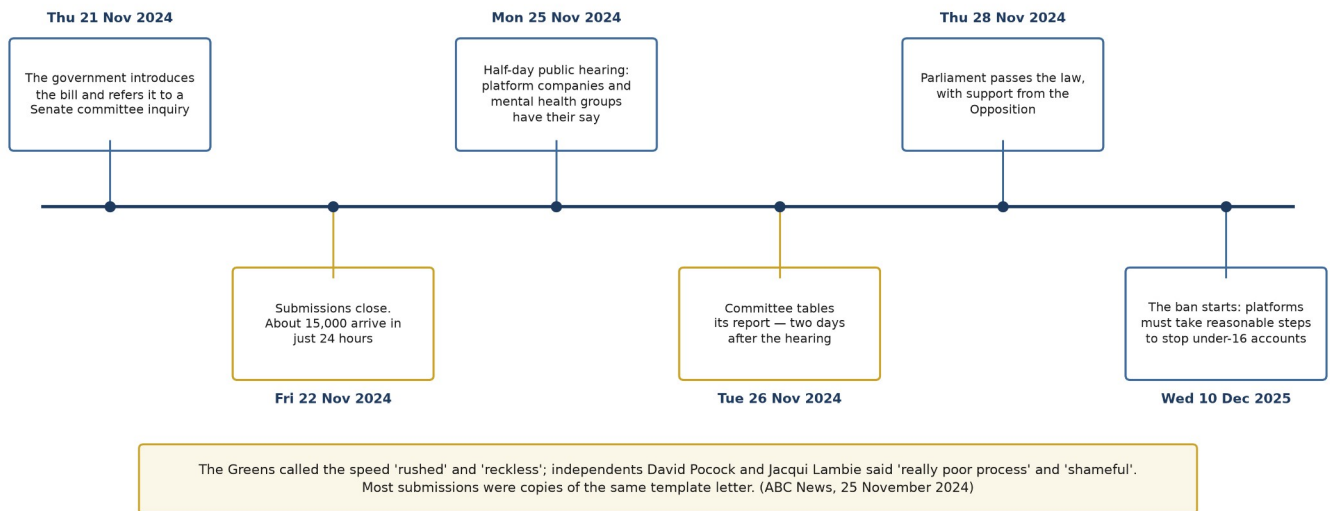
Worked case studies

Case study 1 — National: the under-16 social media ban (2024–2025).

In November 2024 the federal government proposed a law to ban Australians under 16 from holding accounts on certain social media platforms. What happened next is one of the fastest law-making processes in Australia’s recent history — and a full display of the participation menu.

A national law made in a hurry: the under-16 social media ban

Online Safety Amendment (Social Media Minimum Age) Act 2024 (Cth)

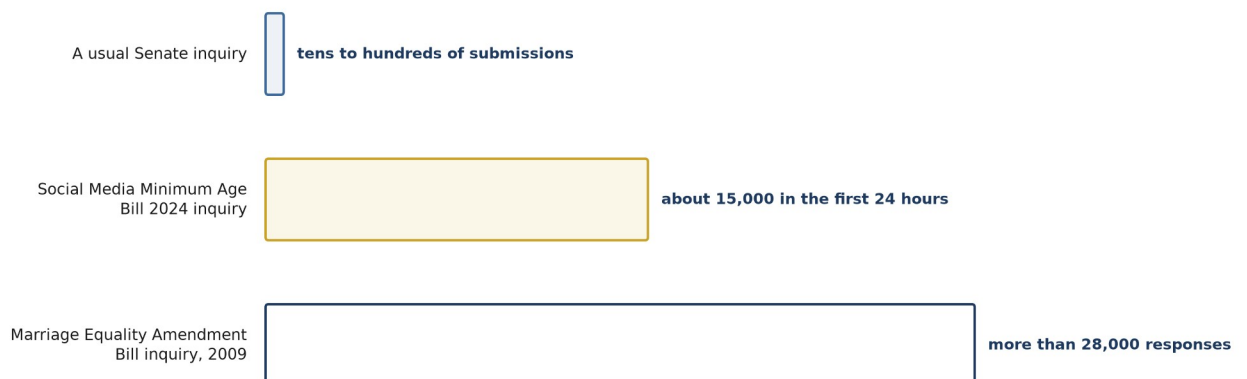


A horizontal timeline with six dated boxes, from Thursday 21 November 2024, when the bill was introduced and sent to a Senate committee, through about 15,000 submissions in 24 hours on 22 November, a half-day hearing on 25 November, the committee report on 26 November, the law passing on 28 November, to the ban starting on 10 December 2025; a strip below records that the Greens called the speed rushed and reckless and independents David Pocock and Jacqui Lambie called the process really poor and shameful, and that most submissions copied one template letter.

A national law made in a hurry. Dates from ABC News (25 November 2024, retrieved 26 August 2026) and the Parliament of Australia.

How loudly do Australians speak up? Submissions to Senate inquiries

Number of submissions received (not drawn to scale below 1,000)



Big, fast numbers like these show how many people cared — but a count alone does not tell us whether the submissions changed the law. That is the question Section 5B asks next.

Source: ABC News, 25 November 2024, 'Social media age ban inquiry flooded with 15,000 submissions'.

A simple bar chart comparing the number of submissions received by Senate committee inquiries: tens or hundreds for a usual inquiry, about 15,000 in 24 hours for the social media inquiry in November 2024, and more than 28,000 for a 2009 inquiry into a marriage equality bill.

How many voices reached the committee? Most Senate inquiries receive tens or hundreds of submissions (ABC News, 25 November 2024, retrieved 26 August 2026).

The methods on show: thousands of citizens wrote **submissions** (about 15,000 in 24 hours, most of them copies of one template letter); **interest groups** — bodies that organise to influence decisions on a shared cause, such as mental health organisations and DIGI, the digital industry group — wrote their own submissions and spoke at the half-day **hearing**; citizens flooded members and senators with messages; the media carried the argument nationwide; and the Greens and independents used their places in Parliament to criticise the speed. DIGI argued for making platforms safer rather than banning accounts; most mental health groups supported the ban. On 28 November 2024 Parliament passed the law with the Opposition’s support. The ban, run by the eSafety Commissioner, started on 10 December 2025: platforms must take reasonable steps to stop under-16 accounts, and companies face fines of up to \$50 million, while parents and young people themselves are not fined.

Worked judgement in the three frames:

- **Awareness — strongly yes.** The issue was already national news, and the 24-hour submission flood was itself news. Almost every Australian household heard about this law.
- **Agenda — yes, with a warning.** The issue got the full formal machinery: a committee inquiry, a hearing, a report, a debate and a vote. But the machinery was given less than a week. The Greens called the process “rushed”; the independent senator David Pocock called it a “really poor process” and the independent senator Jacqui Lambie called it “shameful” (ABC News, 25 November 2024). A channel only works as well as the time it is given.
- **Decision — no, for the citizens who opposed the bill.** The law passed quickly, with the Opposition’s support, in much the shape the government wanted. The submissions did not stop or remake the law. In the decision frame, the participation of the “against” side changed little — which is exactly why the frames must be named before anyone says “it worked” or “it failed”.

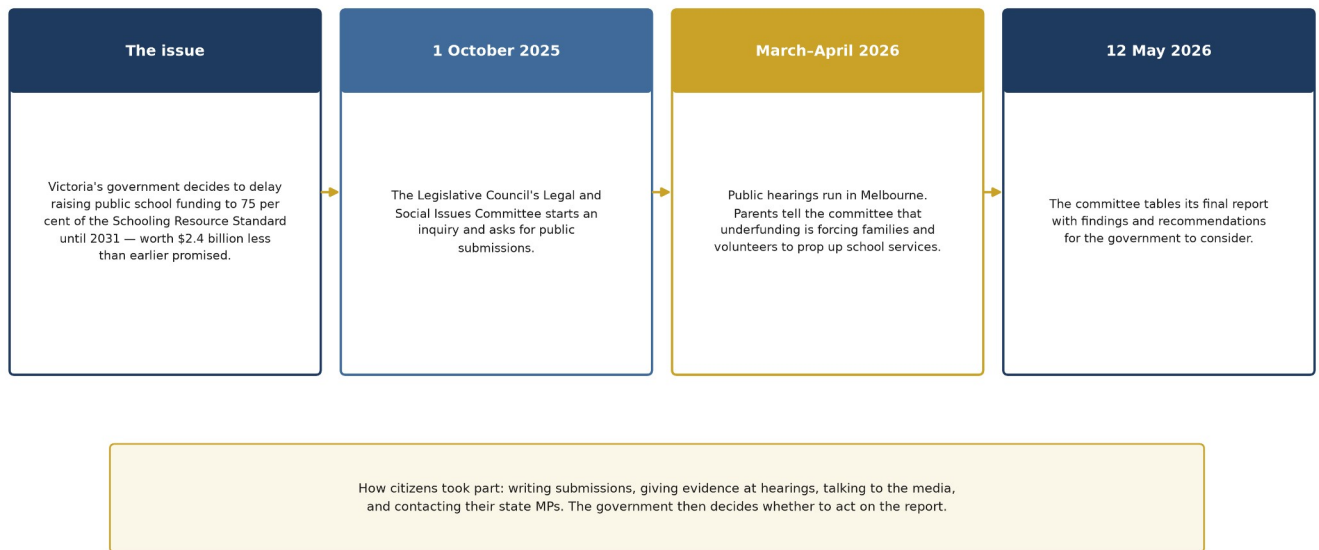
One comparison to keep: a 2009 Senate inquiry into a marriage equality bill drew more than 28,000 responses. There, the decision frame took years — but the awareness and agenda work of 2009 is part of the story of a law that eventually changed. Participation can be a long game.

Sources: ABC News, “Social media age ban inquiry flooded with submissions”, 25 November 2024 (retrieved 26 August 2026); Parliament of Australia, aph.gov.au (retrieved 26 August 2026); eSafety Commissioner (retrieved 26 August 2026).

Case study 2 — State: public school funding in Victoria (2025–2026).

A state issue: who speaks up about school funding in Victoria?

Inquiry into Public School Funding — Legislative Council Legal and Social Issues Committee



A four-step flow chart of the Victorian Inquiry into Public School Funding: the issue (Victoria's government delays raising public school funding to 75 per cent of the Schooling Resource Standard until 2031, worth \$2.4 billion less than earlier promised); 1 October 2025 (the Legislative Council's Legal and Social Issues Committee starts an inquiry and asks for public submissions); March–April 2026 (public hearings in Melbourne, where parents say too little money for schools forces families and volunteers to prop up school services); 12 May 2026 (the committee presents its final report with findings and recommendations). A strip below lists how citizens took part: writing submissions, giving evidence at hearings, talking to the media, and contacting their state MPs.

A state issue: who speaks up about school funding in Victoria? Facts from the Parliament of Victoria inquiry page and committee media releases (parliament.vic.gov.au, retrieved 26 August 2026).

The methods on show: parents, teachers, principals and school councils wrote **submissions**; witnesses gave evidence at public **hearings** in Melbourne, where parents told the committee that underfunding — too little money for schools — was forcing families and volunteers to “become the charity” that props up school services; campaigners talked to the media; and people contacted their state members of Parliament.

Worked judgement in the three frames:

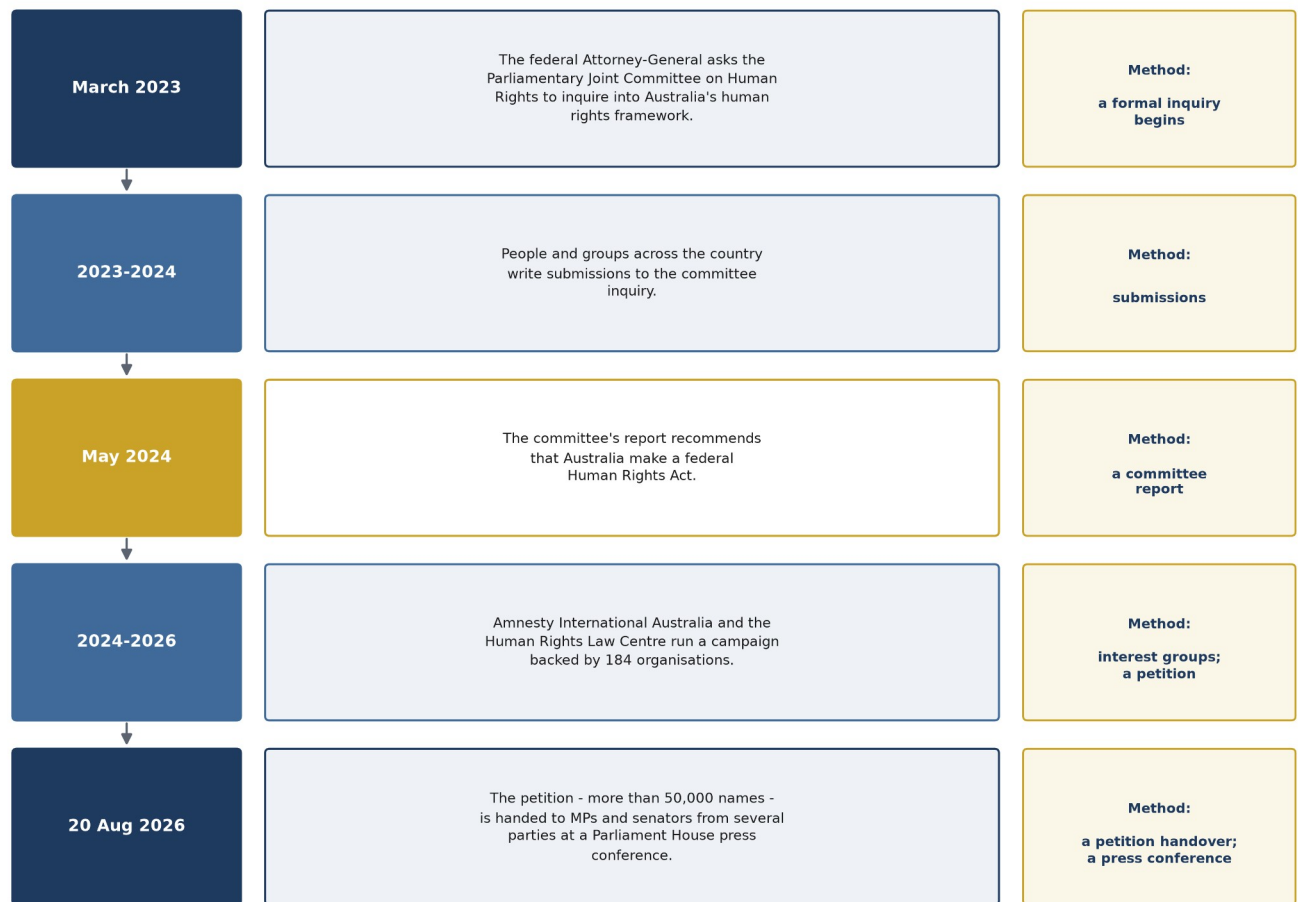
- **Awareness — yes.** The funding figure (\$2.4 billion less) and the “become the charity” line reached the news across Victoria.
- **Agenda — yes.** A formal committee inquiry is the agenda frame in action: the issue was given hearings, evidence and a report, presented to Parliament on 12 May 2026.
- **Decision — still open.** A committee report recommends; it does not order. The government of the day decides whether to act. At the time of writing the decision frame is unanswered — a useful reminder that the three frames can move at different speeds, and that “we do not know yet” is an honest answer in the decision frame.

Case study 3 — National campaign: a federal Human Rights Act (2023–2026).

A **campaign** is a planned effort, over time, using several methods together, aimed at one goal. The push for a federal Human Rights Act shows a campaign using the menu method by method.

A campaign in five steps: a Human Rights Act for Australia

One goal, several methods, across three years



Sources: aph.gov.au (PJCHR inquiry page, retrieved 26 August 2026); Amnesty International Australia, '50,000 people call for Australian Human Rights Act' (retrieved 26 August 2026).

A five-row flow chart of the campaign for a federal Human Rights Act: March 2023, the Attorney-General asks the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights to inquire into Australia's human rights framework (a formal inquiry begins); 2023–2024, people and groups across the country write submissions; May 2024, the committee's report recommends a federal Human Rights Act; 2024–2026, Amnesty International Australia and the Human Rights Law Centre run a campaign backed by 184 organisations (interest groups; a petition); 20 August 2026, the petition of more than 50,000 names is handed to members and senators from several parties at a Parliament House press conference. A box at the right of each row names the method used.

A campaign in five steps. Facts from the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights inquiry page (aph.gov.au) and Amnesty International Australia, "50,000 people call for Australian Human Rights Act" (both retrieved 26 August 2026).

The methods on show: a formal **inquiry** with public **submissions**; a committee **report**; **interest groups** working together (Amnesty International Australia and the Human Rights Law Centre, backed by 184 organisations); a **petition** of more than 50,000 names; and a **press conference** at Parliament House on 20 August 2026, where the petition was handed to members and senators from several parties at once — Labor, Greens and independents — so that no single party could treat it as someone else's problem. Victoria, Queensland and the ACT already have human rights acts, and campaigners point to them as working examples.

Steelmanning the other side. A federal Human Rights Act is contested. Its critics — including some politicians and commentators — argue that rights are best protected by an elected Parliament answerable to voters, and that an Act would shift real power to unelected judges. That is a serious argument about how Australian democracy should work, not a silly one. Campaigners answer that Parliament sometimes fails to protect minorities, and that the Victorian, Queensland and ACT acts have kept Parliament supreme while still giving rights a legal voice. In this section, students do not have to pick a side — but they must be able to state the side they reject in its strongest form.

Worked judgement in the three frames: awareness — a 50,000-name petition handover is national news, so yes; agenda — strongly yes (an inquiry, a report, repeated parliamentary discussion); decision — not yet, no federal law exists. By the rules of this section, “the campaign has failed” is as incomplete as “the campaign has won”: name the frame first.

Practice questions

Scaffolded

S1 — Match the story to the method. Use the participation menu. Write the method beside each story.

- a) A document with 50,000 names is handed to members of Parliament at a press conference.
- b) You write two pages of your own views and experience and send them to a committee through the Parliament’s secure online form.
- c) About 300,000 Australians walk through city streets holding signs on a school-strike day.
- d) An adult marks a ballot paper in a postal council election.

Scaffold: the menu includes petitions, submissions, protests and marches, and voting.

S2 — Sort the issue to the level. For each issue, write *local*, *state* or *national* — the level that can actually make the change.

- a) The broken equipment at your local playground.
- b) A minimum age for social media accounts across Australia.
- c) Funding for Victorian public schools.
- d) Rules about dogs on leads at the beach reserve.
- e) A federal Human Rights Act.
- f) A new train line in Melbourne.

Scaffold: use *Local, state, national: who decides what?* — councils run parks and local rules; states run schools and state transport; the federal Parliament makes national laws.

S3 — Read the timeline. Using *A national law made in a hurry*:

- a) How many days passed between the public hearing and the committee report?
- b) How many days passed between the bill being introduced and the law passing?
- c) On what date did the ban actually start?

Scaffold: read the six dated boxes left to right; count calendar days.

S4 — Read the chart. Using *How many voices reached the committee?*:

- a) About how many submissions does a usual Senate inquiry receive?
- b) How many arrived for the social media inquiry, and in what time?
- c) Which inquiry on the chart received the most submissions, and in what year?
- d) What does the difference between (a) and (b) tell you about how many people cared?

S5 — List the methods. Using *A campaign in five steps*, list four different methods of participation the Human Rights Act campaign used.

Scaffold: the cream boxes at the right of each row name the methods.

S6 — Read the state case. Using *A state issue: who speaks up about school funding in Victoria?*:

- a) Name two groups of people who took part.
- b) Name two methods they used.
- c) Who decides, at the very end, whether to act on the report?

S7 — One frame, one answer. Judge the 20 September 2019 school strikes using **only the awareness frame**. About 300,000 people struck across Australia and more than 4 million around the world. Did the strikes work, in that frame? Answer in one sentence that names the frame.

Scaffold: sentence starter — “In the awareness frame, the strikes worked / did not work because ...”

S8 — Put the steps in order. These five steps of making a submission are out of order. Rewrite them in the correct order using the numbers from *Your voice in writing*.

- a) The committee reads your submission and may invite you to a hearing.
- b) You find an open inquiry and read its terms of reference.
- c) The committee’s report may quote your submission.
- d) You write your views and experience, staying on topic.
- e) You send it through the secure online form before the deadline.

S9 — Pick a local channel. The skate park in your suburb is closed for repairs that never seem to finish. Choose **two** channels from *Six ways to take part close to home* and give one reason for each choice.

Scaffold: reasons can be about numbers (a petition), a named person (your councillor), a public face (speaking at a meeting), or a formal record (a have-your-say process).

S10 — Word work. In your own words, define: **submission, petition, inquiry, councillor.**

Scaffold: a submission is a written ...; a petition is a document of ...; an inquiry is a study by ...; a councillor is an elected person who

S11 — Why take part? Complete two of these sentence starters with your own reason, then add one reason of your own:

- “I would take part on an issue that touches my family because ...”
- “I would take part even on an issue that does not touch me because ...”

Scaffold: the four reasons in Theory Part 1 are a fair starting list.

S12 — Planner warm-up. Using *The campaign planner*, fill in panels 1 and 2 for this issue: *Cars speed past the gate at school pick-up time.*

- Panel 1 (the issue and the goal): write the problem in one sentence and the change you want.
- Panel 2 (who decides?): name the level and the body or people — and say why you chose them.

Scaffold: a school gate can involve the council (local roads and parking) and the state (road rules and school crossings). It is fine to name both — but say which goes first.

Un scaffolded

U1. A government proposes a new law you disagree with. Describe three **different** methods of participation you could use in response, and say what each method is good for.

U2. About 15,000 people wrote submissions on the social media bill in 24 hours, most copying one template letter. Explain what they were hoping to change, and which level and body they were aiming at.

U3. The Greens called the social media process “rushed”. The government said the law was urgently needed to protect children online. Steelman both sides: write the strongest, fairest version of each case, then say which you find stronger and why.

U4. Judge the participation in the social media case in **all three frames**. For each frame, give a one-line verdict and one piece of evidence from the case study.

U5. Choose a real local issue you have noticed in your own suburb. Name the council channel you would use first, the channel you would use second, and why the order matters.

U6. You are in Year 7 and cannot vote in any election. Give two reasons why you can still take part in civic life within the law, and name one method that is open to you right now.

U7. A petition gathers many names on one short demand; a submission gives one person's or group's detailed views. Explain when you would choose each, using one example from this section for each.

U8. In 2019 the Prime Minister told striking students there should be “more learning in schools and less activism”, and the Education Minister said students should strike after school or on weekends. The strikers said the climate crisis could not wait for the weekend. Steelman both sides, then give your own view with a reason.

U9. The Human Rights Act campaign has not yet produced a federal law. One student says “then it has failed”. Another says “it has put the issue on the national agenda, so it has worked”. Using the frames, explain why **both** sentences can be true at once.

U10. In Victoria, voting in council elections is compulsory for adults on the state roll, and people who do not vote can be fined. Give one strong reason **for** compulsory voting and one strong reason **against** it.

U11. Most of the 15,000 social media submissions copied a single template letter. Does a copied letter deserve as much attention from a committee as a letter someone wrote from their own experience? Argue one side, then the other, then give your verdict.

U12. Choose a contemporary issue you genuinely care about. Name the level of government that decides it, the body or people at that level, and the single method you would use first — with one reason tying the method to the goal.

Extended responses

Extended response 1 (E03). “Examine how well different forms of participation worked in the making of the under-16 social media law, and explain why they did or did not work.” Write 250–350 words. You must: examine at least three different methods from the case study; use at least two of the three frames, naming each one you use; include at least two dated pieces of evidence from the timeline or chart; and state the strongest view against your own conclusion before you finish.

Marking note (teacher): marks are awarded for naming frames, pairing each method with evidence, and honest steelmanning — never for which conclusion the student reaches. A student who argues “the submissions failed” in the decision frame and a student who argues “the submissions worked” in the awareness frame can both score full marks.

Extended response 2 (E04) — the campaign.

The campaign planner

Copy this canvas into your book. Fill in each panel before you act.

1. The issue and the goal What is the problem? Write it in one sentence. Then write the change you want, and who it would help.	2. Who decides? Which level of government — local, state or national — can actually make this change? Name the people or the body.	3. Your methods Pick at least three methods from the menu. Say why each one suits your goal and your group.
4. Allies and voices Who else cares? Groups, schools, neighbours, local media. Who will speak for the campaign?	5. Steps and dates A timeline: what happens first, what happens next, and the date you want a decision by.	6. Success — in which frame? How will you know it worked: awareness, the agenda, or the decision? Write a test for each.

Rules of the road: stay peaceful and lawful, tell the truth, and be ready to hear the other side's strongest argument before you answer it.

A six-panel planning canvas for designing a campaign: panel 1 the issue and the goal, panel 2 who decides, panel 3 your methods, panel 4 allies and voices, panel 5 steps and dates, and panel 6 how success will be judged in each frame.

The campaign planner. Copy the six panels into your book and fill them in before you act.

Plan a campaign — real or imaginary — on a current issue of your choice, using the planner above. Your plan must: complete all six panels; use at least **three** different methods of your choice and say why each suits your goal and your group; name the level of government and the decision-maker; keep to the rules of the road (peaceful, lawful, truthful, ready to hear the other side's strongest argument); and write one success test for **each** of the three frames. If your school approves the real thing (a petition, a submission draft, a letter to a member), enact it and attach evidence; otherwise submit the plan as a documented hypothetical.

Marking note (teacher): assess the fit between goal, decision-maker and methods, and the quality of the three success tests. The campaign does not have to “win” in the decision frame to score full marks — it must show it knows what winning would mean in each frame.

Answers

Scaffolded

- **S1.** a) petition. b) submission. c) protest / march. d) voting.
- **S2.** a) local. b) national. c) state. d) local. e) national. f) state.
- **S3.** a) One day (hearing Monday 25 November 2024, report Tuesday 26 November 2024). b) Seven days (introduced 21 November, passed 28 November 2024). c) Wednesday 10 December 2025.
- **S4.** a) Tens or hundreds. b) About 15,000, in 24 hours. c) The 2009 inquiry into a marriage equality bill, more than 28,000. d) Far more people cared about the social media bill than about a usual inquiry topic — the issue touched almost every family.
- **S5.** Any four of: submissions to a formal inquiry; a committee report; interest groups working together (184 organisations); a petition; a press conference / media.
- **S6.** a) Any two of: parents, teachers, principals, school councils, volunteers. b) Any two of: writing submissions, giving evidence at hearings, talking to the media, contacting state MPs. c) The Victorian government of the day (a report recommends; the government decides).
- **S7.** Model: “In the awareness frame the strikes worked, because about 300,000 Australians and more than 4 million people around the world made climate impossible to miss for a week.” Any one-sentence answer that names the frame and applies the numbers is acceptable.
- **S8.** b, d, e, a, c.
- **S9.** Model: a petition (shows the council how many families care) plus contacting your councillor (puts a named local story on the record). Reasons must tie each channel to a purpose; other pairings are acceptable.
- **S10.** Model: a submission is a written document sending your views, facts or experience to a committee; a petition is a document of many names making one demand to a parliament or government; an inquiry is a formal study of an issue by a committee, usually open to public input; a councillor is a person elected to represent a suburb or ward on the local council.
- **S11.** Answers will vary. Check that each reason is about participation (rights, fairness, being affected, numbers) and not about a method.
- **S12.** Model: panel 1 — “Cars speed past the gate at pick-up time; we want safer crossing and slower traffic outside the gate.” Panel 2 — “The council first, because local roads, parking and crossings are council business; the state second, because school crossings and road rules are state business.” Other defensible splits are acceptable.

Unscaffolded

- **U1.** Model points: a submission (good for detailed views and the formal record of an inquiry); contacting your member (good for a direct, named ask of the person who votes on the bill); a petition (good for showing numbers quickly); a peaceful protest (good for awareness and media). Any three with a “good for” reason each.
- **U2.** They were aiming at the national level — the Senate committee running the inquiry, and through it the senators and members who would vote on the bill. They hoped the numbers would slow the process, change votes, or at least put their safety worries on the formal record.
- **U3.** Strongest government case: rising harm to teenagers online was documented and every year of delay meant more harm; the law had broad public support. Strongest Greens case: a law this far-reaching deserved more than a weekend for citizens to be heard, and a law made in a hurry usually has more mistakes in it. Verdicts may differ; the mark is in the fairness of the two steelmen.
- **U4.** Model: awareness — yes, the 24-hour flood and the national argument (evidence: about 15,000 submissions in 24 hours); agenda — yes but squeezed (evidence: hearing on 25 November, report on 26 November 2024, one day later); decision — no for the against side (evidence: the law passed on 28 November 2024 with the Opposition’s support, in the shape the government wanted).
- **U5.** Answers will vary. Check: the first channel suits raising the issue (for example contacting your councillor), the second suits adding weight or putting the issue on the formal record (petition, council meeting, have-your-say), and the order is explained.

- **U6.** Model: participation is a right of citizens and residents, not only voters (the right to petition has existed since Federation); committees and councils say clearly that anyone, including children, can give input, because they want to hear from the people an issue affects. A method open now: writing a submission, signing or starting a petition, speaking at a council meeting, a peaceful protest.
 - **U7.** Model: choose a petition when the point is numbers and one clear demand (the 50,000-name Human Rights Act petition); choose a submission when the point is detail, evidence or lived experience (parents in the school funding inquiry).
 - **U8.** Strongest “after school” case: school time is for learning, paid for by the public; students can protest without losing it. Strongest strikers’ case: a strike during school hours is the whole message — “this is an emergency bigger than a lesson” — and an after-school march would have drawn far fewer students and far less news. Own view with a reason.
 - **U9.** Because they are using different frames. “Failed” uses the decision frame (no federal law yet); “worked” uses the agenda frame (an inquiry, a report, a 50,000-name handover kept the issue before Parliament). Same facts, different rulers.
 - **U10.** For: compulsory voting makes governments listen to everyone, not just the motivated few, and produces high turnouts such as Victoria’s council elections. Against: forcing people to vote can produce careless or informal votes, and a choice not to vote is also a form of expression. Both reasons must be given at their strongest.
 - **U11.** Model arguments: copied side — the numbers are real; 15,000 people chose to attach their name, and a committee counting concern should count them; writing side — a template tells the committee nothing it did not already know, while one lived-experience letter can change a member’s mind. Verdict with reasons.
 - **U12.** Answers will vary. Check the level is correct for the issue, the body is named (for example a named council, a named committee, a minister), and the first method is tied to the goal.
-

Fully-worked solutions

Extended response 1 — model solution.

Three methods, two frames named, two dated facts, the other side steelmanned.

When the under-16 social media ban was made in November 2024, citizens used submissions, interest-group evidence at a hearing, and pressure on members through media and messages. How well these worked depends on the frame, so I will name mine: the agenda frame and the decision frame.

In the **agenda frame**, participation worked. A usual Senate inquiry receives tens or hundreds of submissions; this one received about 15,000 in 24 hours before closing on 22 November 2024. Interest groups such as DIGI and mental health organisations gave evidence at the hearing on 25 November. The sheer number forced the issue to be treated as a national event, not a routine bill, and it gave ordinary citizens a formal place on the record.

In the **decision frame**, participation did not work for those who opposed the bill. The committee reported on 26 November — one day after the hearing — and Parliament passed the law on 28 November 2024 with the Opposition’s support, in the shape the government wanted. The submissions neither stopped the law nor bought time; the awareness and agenda were enormous, but the decision had effectively been made.

The strongest view against my conclusion is that the “against” side was always a minority: most Australians supported the ban, so the law passing is not proof participation failed — Parliament was reflecting the public, and the participation of the “for” side (the messages and groups backing the ban) worked exactly as participation should.

That is a fair point, and it is why the frames matter: in the awareness frame the whole process worked for both sides. But judged in the decision frame against the hopes of the 15,000, the answer is that the channel was open, used, and heard — and the decision went the other way anyway. Naming the frame is what turns “it worked” or “it failed” from a slogan into an argument.

Marking note (teacher): this model scores on structure — methods named, frames named and applied, dated evidence used (22/25/26/28 November 2024; the “tens or hundreds” comparison), and a genuine steelman in paragraph four. A shorter or differently-concluded response with the same structure scores equally.

Extended response 2 — model solution.

Issue: safer crossing at the school gate. All six panels; three methods; one success test per frame.

- **Panel 1 — issue and goal:** Cars speed past the gate at pick-up time; we want a supervised crossing and 40 km/h signs during school hours.
- **Panel 2 — who decides?** The local council first (local roads, parking, crossings) and the state road authority second (speed limits and school crossing programs). We start at the council because it is closest and fastest.
- **Panel 3 — methods (three, with reasons):** (1) a petition to the council — shows numbers, and a petition is the classic tool for putting one clear local demand on the record; (2) two students speak at a council meeting — puts faces and voices on the numbers, and council meetings are open to the public; (3) a short written submission to the council's have-your-say process on the local road plan — puts our facts (traffic counts we did with a teacher at pick-up time) into the formal record the council must read.
- **Panel 4 — allies and voices:** the parents' group, the school leadership team, neighbouring shops whose customers cross the road, and the local paper. Speakers at the meeting: one student, one parent, one shopkeeper.
- **Panel 5 — steps and dates:** week 1 — traffic count and petition launch; week 3 — petition handed to the councillor; week 4 — speakers at the council meeting and submission lodged; week 6 — written follow-up asking for a decision date before the end of term.
- **Panel 6 — success tests, one per frame:** awareness — the local paper runs the story and the petition passes 300 names; agenda — the crossing is listed for discussion at a council meeting or in the road plan; decision — the crossing and the 40 km/h school-hours signs are installed.

Rules of the road kept: peaceful and lawful (counting traffic from the footpath, not the road); truthful (only counts we actually did); and we will state the drivers' side at its strongest — that the street is a through-route and slowing it moves traffic onto other streets — before we answer it.

Marking note (teacher): this model scores because every method is tied to a purpose, the decision-maker is correct and sequenced, the allies add weight rather than decoration, and each frame has a testable success line. Enacted versions attach the petition sheet, the submission, or the meeting record as evidence.

Sources for this section (all retrieved 26 August 2026 unless stated): Victorian Curriculum 2.0, Levels 7 and 8 band, VC2HC8S07 and elaborations E01–E04 (victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au); ABC News, “Social media age ban inquiry flooded with submissions”, 25 November 2024; Parliament of Australia, aph.gov.au — Senate committee guidance “Making a submission”, petitions guidance, and the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights inquiry page; eSafety Commissioner; Parliament of Victoria, parliament.vic.gov.au — Inquiry into Public School Funding, Legal and Social Issues Committee, including media releases of 10 March, 23 March and 17 April 2026; Victorian Electoral Commission, vec.gov.au — 2024 council elections and 2026 by-elections; Amnesty International Australia, “50,000 people call for Australian Human Rights Act”, 20 August 2026; Wikipedia, “School strike for climate”.

Sharing an evidence-based analysis in different ways

Section 5C · Skills — Communicating · Content descriptor VC2HC8S08

Elaborations drawn on: .E01 · .E02

This section is the book’s synthesis point. Everything you learned in Chapters 1–4 — institutions, laws, courts, participation, sources, perspectives — is the material you now analyse and communicate. It is also the home of the end-of-book task.

Teaching sequence (for the teacher)

1. **Name the goal.** Put VC2HC8S08 and the band achievement-standard line on the board. Students have met every ingredient already; 5C assembles them into one skill: developing and communicating an analysis.
2. **Shape of an analysis.** Use `5c_analysis_shape.png`. Define the four parts (issue, knowledge, evidence, perspectives) and the conclusion they support. Contrast analysis with opinion using the green banner line.
3. **Methods.** Use `5c_methods_table.png`. The CD says “multiple methods of communication” — drill the match between method and message before any writing starts.
4. **Worked treatment 1 (E01).** The 2017 marriage law change (already met in 1B). Read `5c_power_graph.png` row by row: who decided, who acted, who influenced at each stage. Then read `5c_survey_results.png` as a model student-made chart — title, source line, figures quoted as the source gives them.
5. **Worked treatment 2 (E02).** Use `5c_lawmaking_flow.png`. Trace the Online Safety Act 2021 (Cth) down the parliament column and Grant v Australian Knitting Mills down the courts column. Link back to 2C (statutory and common law).
6. **Evidence and perspectives habits.** `5c_source_check.png` (link to 4B) and `5c_perspectives_table.png`. Model setting two views out at their strongest before judging. State the marking rule aloud: marks go to the quality of reasoning, not the side reached.
7. **Tasks.** Scaffolded Q1–Q6 in class, unscaffolded Q7–Q12 for homework or pairs, MCQs as a short check.
8. **End-of-book task.** Issue the task with `5c_plan_board.png`; students self-check against `5c_rubric.png` before submitting. Mark with the same rubric.

Assessment note: several tasks here are contestable by design. Mark the reasoning — defined terms, accurate knowledge, dated evidence, perspectives at their strongest, a conclusion that follows — never the conclusion itself.

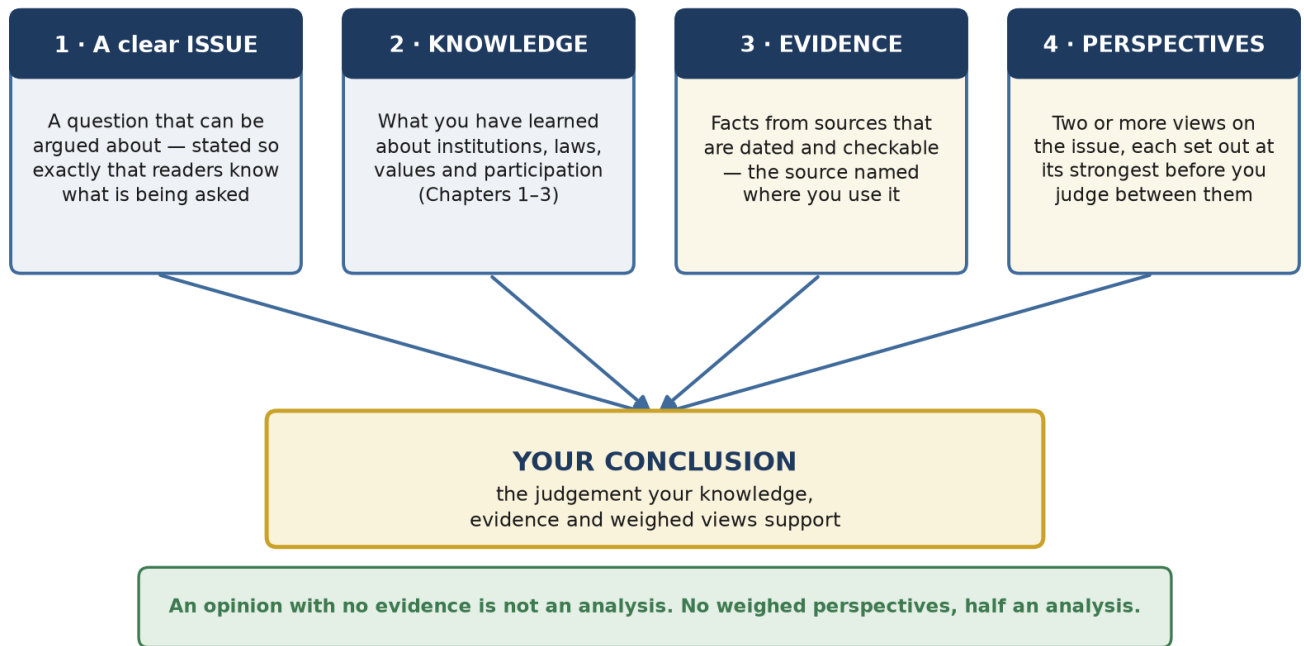
Theory

What an analysis is. In everyday talk, “analysis” can mean little more than a close look. In this book, an **analysis** of a civics and citizenship issue is a reasoned account built from four parts and a conclusion:

- an **issue** — a question about civic, political or legal life that people can reasonably disagree about;
- **knowledge** — what you have learned about the institutions, laws, values and participation involved (Chapters 1–3);
- **evidence** — facts taken from sources that are named and dated, so a reader can check them;
- **perspectives** — the views held by people and groups on the issue, each set out at its strongest before you judge between them.

What goes into an evidence-based analysis

Band achievement standard: develop an analysis using evidence from diverse perspectives



ClassBasics Civics and Citizenship 7 · Section 5C · VC2HC8S08

Four boxes labelled issue, knowledge, evidence and perspectives, with arrows leading down into a single conclusion box

An **institution** is an established body with an official role in Australia’s democracy or legal system — a parliament, a court, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC). A **political actor** is a person or group acting on an issue — a minister, an MP or senator, a lobby group, a citizen writing to their representative. Both terms come straight from the curriculum, and both are what your analysis must name.

More than one way to say it. VC2HC8S08 asks for “multiple methods of communication”. The same analysis can be written, spoken, drawn or built — and each method suits a different message and audience:

Five ways to communicate your analysis

VC2HC8S08 asks for more than one method — pick the method that fits the message

Method	What it is	When it is a good choice
Extended written response	Paragraphs that state the issue, give evidence, weigh perspectives and reach a conclusion	When you must show your reasons step by step
Oral presentation	A spoken talk, with or without slides or props	When you want to persuade the people in the room
Graphical representation	A chart, map or diagram of data, roles or power	When a picture shows a pattern faster than words can
Flow chart	Boxes and arrows that show the steps in a process	When order matters — how a law gets made, start to finish
Digital or multimedia product	A video, web page or infographic built for an audience	When you want to reach people outside the classroom

One issue, several methods: the same analysis can be written, spoken, drawn or built — and each method suits a different audience.

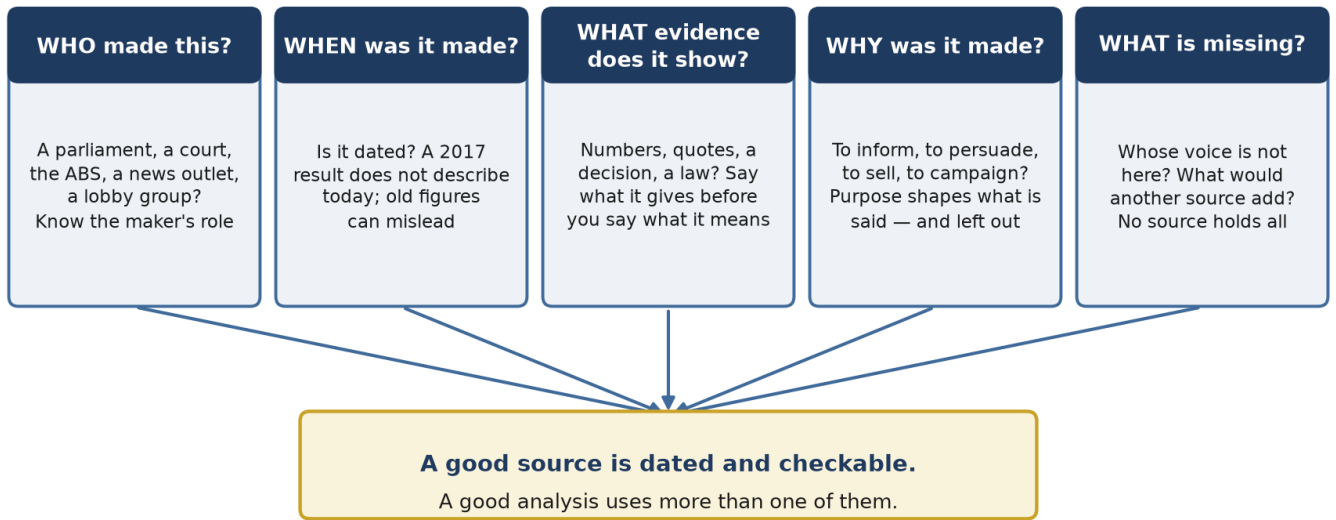
Table of five methods of communicating an analysis — extended written response, oral presentation, graphical representation, flow chart, digital product — with what each is and when it is a good choice

The rule is simple: pick the method that fits the message. A process wants a flow chart; a pattern in numbers wants a chart; a careful weighing of reasons wants paragraphs.

Evidence before judgement. A claim only becomes evidence once its source passes a check. These five questions (met in 4B) are the habit this section relies on:

Check a source before it becomes evidence

Five questions for every source in your analysis — from Sections 4B and 5C



ClassBasics Civics and Citizenship 7 · Section 5C · the evidence habit

Five question cards — who made this, when was it made, what evidence does it show, why was it made, what is missing — leading to the line “a good source is dated and checkable”

Perspectives at their strongest. A question is **contested** when reasonable people disagree about it. The method this book uses for contested questions is to set each view out at its strongest before judging — never at its weakest. Here is the model, on a question Australians genuinely disagree about:

Model: two strong positions on one contestable question

Issue: "Should voting in Australia stay compulsory?" — each side set out at its strongest

Position	Strongest reasons for it	Evidence someone could use	Value it rests on
Keep voting compulsory	- every adult's voice gets heard, not just the loudest - parliaments reflect all of us - high turnout gives governments a strong mandate	- turnout over 90% at federal elections (Australian Electoral Commission figures) - compulsory since 1924 — long-running, well understood	Equality and inclusion
Move to voluntary voting	- voting by choice is a real form of participation - a forced vote adds little information - citizens should be free to choose	- most democracies vote voluntarily - informed, chosen votes can count for more than forced ones	Freedom and choice

Notice: both positions are reasonable and use real civic values.

Marks here go to the quality of your reasoning — two students who reach opposite conclusions can both do very well.

The compulsory-voting facts above (turnout, the 1924 Commonwealth law) are recorded by the Australian Electoral Commission, aec.gov.au; retrieved 26 August 2026.

Table setting out two positions on whether voting in Australia should stay compulsory, each with its strongest reasons, usable evidence and the value it rests on

Notice the values row. Most civic disagreements are disagreements between two reasonable values — equality and inclusion on one side, freedom and choice on the other. Naming the value under each view is part of a strong analysis.

Worked examples

Worked example 1 — scaffolded (E01): who held power in the 2017 marriage law change?

What happened. In August 2017 the Australian Government decided to ask all enrolled Australians a question about marriage. The ABS ran the Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey between September and November 2017. It was voluntary and it did not bind Parliament — it was a survey, not a vote. On 15 November 2017 the ABS released the result: **Yes 61.6% (7,817,763), No 38.4% (4,873,980)**, from 12,691,743 valid forms (a 79.5% response rate). Parliament then took over. The Marriage Amendment (Definition and Religious Freedoms) Bill 2017, introduced by Senator Dean Smith as a private senator's bill, was debated and voted on with a conscience vote (a free vote — each MP and senator followed their own judgement, not a party line). The Senate voted 43–12 on 29 November 2017; the House of Representatives voted 128–4 on 7 December 2017. The Governor-General gave Royal Assent (the signature that makes a bill into law) on 8 December 2017, and the Act took effect on 9 December 2017.

Who was involved. The Australian people, the Government, the ABS, the Parliament, individual MPs and senators, and the Governor-General — each with a different kind of power at a different stage.

Which concept it shows. Elaboration .E01 — a graph of power: institutions and political actors, stage by stage. The graph below is the model: one box per actor at each stage, shaded by the kind of power shown.

Worked model (E01): who held power in the 2017 marriage law change

A graph of power: institutions and political actors — one box per actor at each stage of the case

	Aug 2017 Survey announced	Sep-Nov 2017 Survey runs	15 Nov 2017 Result released	Nov-Dec 2017 Parliament votes	8 Dec 2017 Royal Assent
Australian people	-	Voted in survey (61.6% said Yes)	Their answer set the agenda	Wrote to and talked to MPs	-
Australian Government	Decided to hold the survey	-	-	Let its MPs vote by conscience	-
Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS)	-	Ran the survey; collected the forms	Released the result	-	-
Parliament (Senate + House)	-	-	-	Debated, amended and voted on the bill	-
Individual MPs and senators	-	-	Read the result; heard their voters	Conscience vote: Senate 43-12, House 128-4	-
Governor-General	-	-	-	-	Signed the bill: Royal Assent

decision

action

influence

Ask yourself: at which stage did each actor matter — and could any one of them have stopped the change alone?

Case: Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey 2017 (ABS) and the Marriage Amendment (Definition and Religious Freedoms) Act 2017 (Cth).

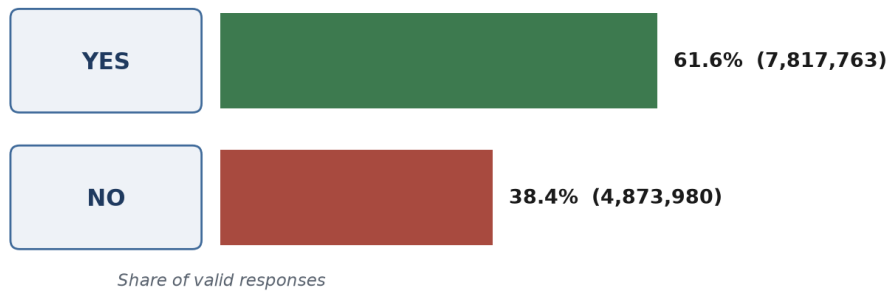
Grid of six actors against five stages of the 2017 marriage law change, with cells shaded navy for decision, steel blue for action and gold for influence, plus a legend

Read it the way an analyst would. The people's power was real but indirect: they set the agenda, yet Parliament could still have voted no. The ABS had the action-power of running the survey and releasing the result, but no decision-power over the law. Only Parliament and the Governor-General sit in the last two columns as decision-makers. Ask the caption question aloud: could any one actor have stopped the change alone?

The data as a chart. The same case also models the other product an analyst needs — a chart of the evidence itself, with a title, a source line, and figures quoted exactly as the source gives them:

The 2017 postal survey result — recreated from official figures

Question asked: “Should the law be changed to allow same-sex couples to marry?”



What these numbers do — and do not — tell us

- The survey was voluntary and its result was not binding: it advised the Parliament, it did not make law
 - 12,691,743 valid responses were counted; the response rate was 79.5%
- Changing the law still took an Act of Parliament — passed 7 December, Royal Assent 8 December 2017

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey, 2017 (released 15 November 2017). Chart recreated by ClassBasics; retrieved 26 August 2026.

Bar chart of the 2017 postal survey result — Yes 61.6 per cent, No 38.4 per cent — beside a facts panel noting the survey was voluntary — Parliament did not have to follow it — with the response figures and the Act’s passage dates

Sources: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey 2017; Parliament of Australia, Marriage Amendment (Definition and Religious Freedoms) Act 2017 (Cth) passage records; retrieved 26 August 2026.

Worked example 2 — scaffolded (E02): two ways laws are made in Australia

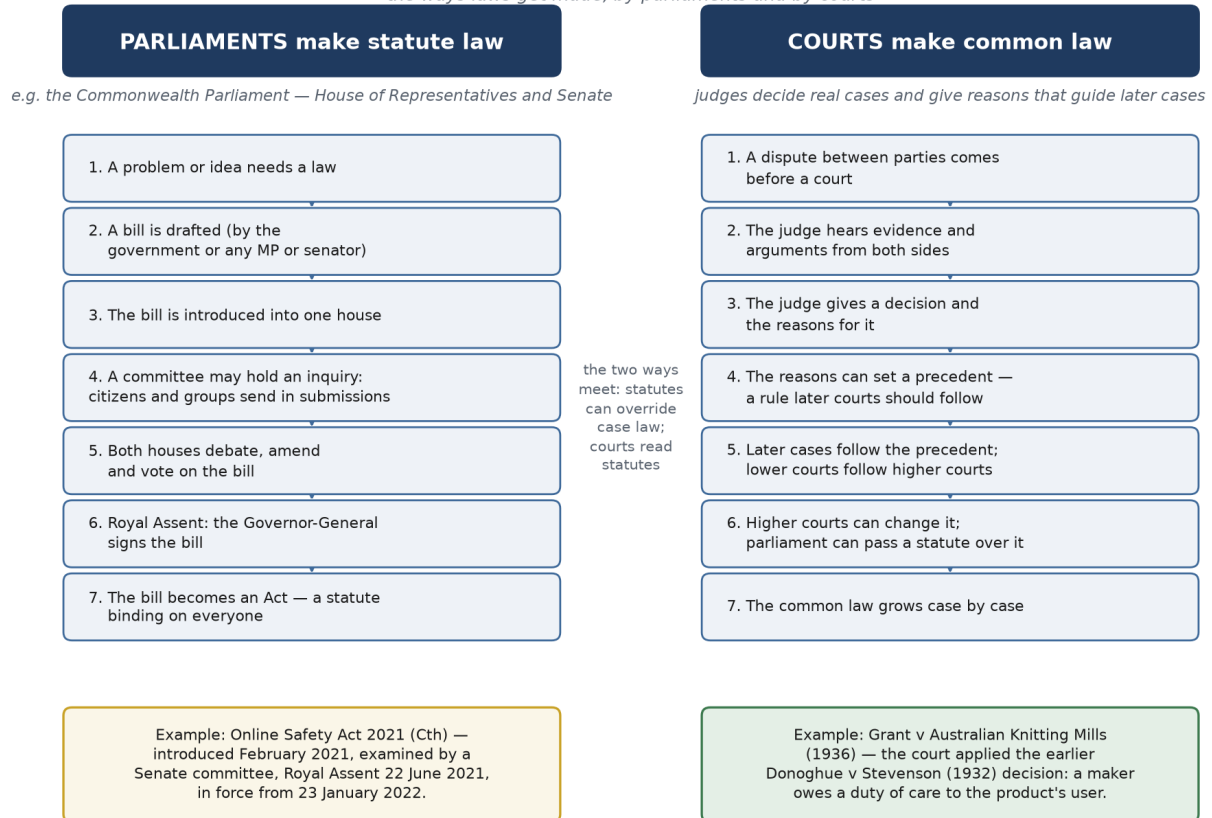
What happened (parliaments — statute law). The Online Safety Act 2021 (Commonwealth) began as a bill introduced to Parliament in February 2021. A Senate committee inquired into it and heard from the public (the participation step you met in 2B). Both Houses debated and amended it. It received Royal Assent on 22 June 2021 and took effect on 23 January 2022, strengthening the eSafety Commissioner’s powers over harmful online material. Law made this way — by parliament, as an Act — is **statute law** (the term defined in 2C).

What happened (courts — common law). In *Grant v Australian Knitting Mills* (1936), a doctor fell very ill after wearing woollen underwear that contained a harmful chemical left in by the maker. His claim climbed the courts and was finally decided on appeal by the Privy Council in London, then Australia’s top appeal court. The court applied the “neighbour principle” from the earlier British case *Donoghue v Stevenson* (1932): you must take care to avoid harming people closely affected by your actions. An earlier decision that later courts follow is a **precedent**, and law made this way — by judges, case by case — is **common law** (also defined in 2C).

Which concept it shows. Elaboration .E02 — flow-charting the ways laws get made, by parliaments and by courts. The two columns below are the model, each traced with one real example:

Worked model (E02): two ways laws are made in Australia

the ways laws get made, by parliaments and by courts



ClassBasics Civics and Citizenship 7 · Section 5C · VC2HC8508 .E02. Process simplified for Level 7; dates as recorded by the Parliament of Australia and the Federal Register of Legislation.

Two-column flow chart: seven steps down the parliament column making statute law, traced with the Online Safety Act 2021, and seven steps down the courts column making common law, traced with Grant v Australian Knitting Mills applying Donoghue v Stevenson

Read the columns side by side. Parliament's law starts as policy and ends as an Act that binds everyone; a court's law starts as a dispute between two parties and ends as a precedent that binds later cases. And the columns meet: parliaments can change common law by passing an Act, while courts read and apply Acts in real cases.

Sources: Online Safety Act 2021 (Cth) No. 76 of 2021, Federal Register of Legislation; Grant v Australian Knitting Mills [1936] AC 85; Donoghue v Stevenson [1932] AC 562; retrieved 26 August 2026.

Practice questions

Scaffolded

Q1. Here is a short paragraph on a contested question.

“Should the voting age stay at 18? In Australia, enrolment and voting are compulsory for citizens from age 18 (Chapter 1D). The AEC reports turnout above 90% at federal elections. Some argue the age should drop to 16, since many 16-year-olds work, pay tax and are affected for longest by laws. Others answer that 18 matches the age at which full adult responsibilities begin in law. On balance, 18 remains a workable line, because it keeps the vote tied to full legal adulthood — but the case for 16 deserves a hearing.”

- (a) Match each sentence to one part of 5c_analysis_shape.png (issue, knowledge, evidence, perspective, perspective, conclusion). (b) Which part is the weakest, and what one dated source would strengthen it?

Q2. Match each message to the best method in `5c_methods_table.png`, and give one reason: (a) showing your class the steps a bill follows to become an Act; (b) weighing whether compulsory voting should stay; (c) persuading the school community to support a petition; (d) showing the Yes/No split in the 2017 postal survey.

Q3. A student group wants a safer crossing outside their school. Actors: the student group, the principal, the local council, the state government. Copy the 3-column grid idea from `5c_power_graph.png` (decision / action / influence) and place each actor once, with a one-line reason.

Q4. These steps of the Online Safety Act 2021 (Commonwealth) are out of order. Put them in order using the parliament column of `5c_lawmaking_flow.png`: (a) Royal Assent, 22 June 2021; (b) a Senate committee hears public submissions; (c) the Act takes effect, 23 January 2022; (d) the bill is introduced to Parliament, February 2021; (e) both Houses debate and amend the bill; (f) the eSafety Commissioner uses the new powers in real cases.

Q5. A social-media post (no date, no named maker) claims “most young Australians want the voting age lowered to 16”. Run it through the five questions of `5c_source_check.png` and state which questions it fails.

Q6. Using `5c_perspectives_table.png`: (a) add one further piece of evidence to each side, naming a source type you would check; (b) name the value each side rests on; (c) in one sentence, say which side you find stronger *and which reason did the work* — the marking rule in this section is about reasoning, not side.

Unscaffolded

Q7. Choose an issue you studied in Chapters 1–4. Draw your own power graph for the institutions and political actors in it (the E01 product): at least four actors, at least three stages, shaded by decision / action / influence, with a one-line caption answering “who really decided?”

Q8. Make a flow chart of how a law is made by a parliament (the E02 product, left column), using a real or realistic Victorian or Commonwealth example. At least five steps; name the Act or bill.

Q9. Make a flow chart of how a court makes law (the E02 product, right column), using *Grant v Australian Knitting Mills* or a case from 2C–2D. Your chart must show where precedent enters.

Q10. Write a 250–300-word analysis of the question “Should voting in Australia stay compulsory?” Use all five parts of `5c_analysis_shape.png`, at least two dated sources and both perspectives at their strongest.

Q11. Choose one issue from 1B or 3B. Communicate a single analysis in **two** different methods from `5c_methods_table.png`, and add two sentences explaining why each method suits its part of the message.

Q12. Find one source on an issue from Chapter 3 (a news item, a government page, a campaign post). Apply the five questions of `5c_source_check.png` in writing, then rule: strong enough to use as evidence, or not — and why.

Multiple choice

MCQ 1. A classmate writes: “Compulsory voting is wrong, and everyone agrees.” What is missing for this to be an analysis?

A. A conclusion · B. Dated evidence and weighed perspectives · C. A longer paragraph · D. Stronger feelings

MCQ 2. In `5c_power_graph.png`, which actor completed the final legal step of the 2017 marriage law change?

A. The ABS · B. The people · C. The Governor-General · D. The Senate

MCQ 3. Which method is the best fit for showing the *order* of the steps by which a bill becomes an Act?

A. Flow chart · B. Oral presentation · C. Data chart · D. Poster

MCQ 4. Statute law is law made by:

A. judges in decided cases · B. parliaments, as Acts · C. the police · D. local councils only

MCQ 5. In common law, an earlier decision that later courts follow is called:

A. a bill · B. a survey · C. a precedent · D. a conscience vote

A. An undated meme · B. A dated ABS release, named and checkable · C. A comment thread · D. A rumour repeated on video

The task. Choose one issue you studied in Chapters 1–4 — a law, an election, a campaign, a case. Develop an analysis of that issue with knowledge and evidence, and communicate it in **two** ways:

- Your material must include at least **three dated sources** that pass the source check, and at least **two perspectives** set out at their strongest. Plan with the board below, and self-check against the marking guide before you submit.

VC2HC8S08 — develop an analysis of an issue with knowledge and evidence, using more than one method



Marking guide: what a strong analysis shows

Use it to self-check before you submit — it is the same guide your teacher marks with

Criterion	What a strong response looks like
Knowledge and accuracy	The issue is described correctly. The right institutions, laws, roles and terms are used, and nothing important is left out or mixed up.
Use of evidence	Every big claim is backed by at least one dated, checkable source. Sources are named where they are used, and figures are quoted as the source gives them.
Perspectives and reasoning	At least two views are set out at their strongest before any judgement. Assumptions in the question are noticed. The conclusion follows from the reasons given.
Clear communication	The chosen methods suit the message. The structure is easy to follow, the language is exact, and every graph or chart has a title and a source line.
Marks go to the quality of your reasoning — not the side you end up on. Two students who reach opposite conclusions can both do very well, if both define their terms, use dated evidence and weigh each view at its strongest.	

ClassBasics Civics and Citizenship 7 · Section 5C · end-of-book task marking guide

Marking guide table with four criteria — knowledge and accuracy, use of evidence, perspectives and reasoning, clear communication — and a banner stating that marks go to the quality of reasoning, not the side reached

Two students who reach opposite conclusions can both score highly here. The rubric marks what it says it marks.

Answers

Q1. (a) S1 issue; S2 knowledge; S3 evidence; S4 perspective (for 16); S5 perspective (for 18); S6 conclusion. (b) The evidence is thinnest — one AEC figure. A dated source on turnout or on other countries' voting ages (e.g. Austria, 16) would strengthen it. **Q2.** (a) Flow chart — order matters. (b) Extended written response — reasons must be weighed step by step. (c) Oral presentation (or digital product) — persuasion suits a live audience. (d) Data chart — a split in numbers is seen fastest as a picture. **Q3.** Model: council = decision (approves and funds the crossing); state government = decision/action (grants, road rules); principal = action/influence (writes to council, backs the students); student group = influence (petition, evidence, media). Any placement with a reason that fits the definitions scores. **Q4.** d → b → e → a → c → f. **Q5.** Fails WHO (no named maker), WHEN (no date), WHY (purpose unknown) and WHAT IS MISSING (no link to data); the closest it gets is “what evidence does it show” — and a claim is not evidence. **Q6.** Models: keep side — “enforced habit of voting builds lifelong turnout (AEC data over time)”; move side — “fines fall hardest on younger and poorer voters (AEC fine data)”. Values: equality and inclusion / freedom and choice. (c) Any sentence that names the reason that did the work. **Q7–Q12.** Check against the four-part shape, the E01/E02 models and the source check: actors and stages named and shaded (Q7); five-plus ordered steps with a named Act (Q8); precedent shown entering the chart (Q9); all five parts, two dated sources, both sides at their strongest (Q10); one analysis, two methods, two reasons (Q11); five questions answered and a ruled judgement (Q12). **MCQs.** 1 B · 2 C · 3 A · 4 B · 5 C · 6 B.

Fully-worked solutions

Q1. Work through the paragraph sentence by sentence against the shape. S1 asks the question → **issue**. S2 states how the law stands (compulsory from 18, from 1D) → **knowledge**. S3 gives a checkable figure with a named source (AEC) → **evidence**. S4 and S5 give the two views at their strongest → **perspectives**. S6 weighs them and lands on a judgement that follows from the reasons → **conclusion**. The weakest part is evidence: one figure, no date given for the turnout claim, and no evidence on the “for 16” side. One dated, checkable source — for example an AEC turnout table or a report on Austria's voting age of 16 — would turn the paragraph from a fair sketch into an analysis.

Q4. Start from the parliament column of the flow chart: a bill must exist before anyone examines it, so **(d)** introduced, February 2021, comes first. Committee inquiry — the public participation step — happens while the bill is before Parliament: **(b)**. The Houses then debate and amend: **(e)**. Royal Assent ends the parliament's work: **(a)**, 22 June 2021. Commencement follows: **(c)**, 23 January 2022. Finally the law is used in real cases: **(f)**. Order: d → b → e → a → c → f.

Q10. A model response (your conclusion may differ — the marks are in the reasoning):

Issue. Should voting in Australia stay compulsory? *Knowledge.* Federal voting has been compulsory for enrolled citizens since 1924 (Commonwealth Electoral Act 1924), and it is administered by the AEC.

Evidence. Turnout stays above 90% at federal elections (AEC), while most comparable democracies — the United Kingdom, New Zealand, Canada — vote voluntarily. *Perspectives.* At its strongest, the keep side says compulsory voting makes parliaments reflect all Australians, not just the motivated few, and keeps the value of equality and inclusion. At its strongest, the move side says a chosen vote is a truer act of participation, and rests on freedom and choice. *Conclusion.* On balance, keep it: the evidence shows participation most democracies lack, and the freedom lost is small against the inclusion gained — but the move side is right that civics education matters, so that the vote is informed as well as full.

Every part of the shape appears, both views are set out at their strongest before the judgement, the sources are named and dated, and the conclusion follows from the reasons — which is exactly what the rubric pays for.