

Civics and Society

LEARNING CONTRACT

Set your own target with these activities. A few have asterisks - you have to do those ones.

Choose from the other activities and score as many points as you can.

Activities worth more points generally require a bigger effort so keep that in mind - you may do fewer activities if you choose ones that require greater detail!

If you have your own great ideas for an activity then feel free to negotiate with your teacher.


Good luck!



Secrets of Successful Internet Searching

- Unless you know a specific site, use a Search Engine like Google (www.google.com) or a resource like TekMom (www.tekmom.com).
- Try using smart keywords that narrow down your search. Typing 'LAW' will give too many useless results. Be more specific - typing 'AUSTRALIAN LEGAL SYSTEM' may give more effective search results.
- The web is great for up-to-date info but books & CD-ROMs may be more effective for facts.
- Record any Websites you use in your Bibliography, just like for books.
- Tell your teacher and classmates about any useful sites you come across—the Web is all about the sharing of info!

No.	Task.	Tips.
1. * (20)	Write your opinion about the following questions: - Why do we need laws? - Why do we have governments? - Why do we have different political parties? - Why do we have elections?	Depending on what you already know it could be a good idea to come back to this question after you have been doing some research about related topics. Keep each response to a concise paragraph.
2. * (20)	Briefly describe the three levels of government in Australia and explain what kinds of things each would be responsible for.	Use quotation marks around a phrase like "three levels of government" when using a search engine like Google. This helps you search for a phrase rather than individual keywords.
3. * (20)	What are Aboriginal laws ? We will read and retell several Dreaming stories to show how traditional rules and laws are passed on through group and individual knowledge.	We will do this activity as a group in class.
4. * (20)	Choose another country that interests you and research its system of government. How is it different to Australia? How are its leaders chosen? What type of government is it? Do you think it is a fair system?	Challenge yourself by choosing a country with a very different culture than that of Australia. Identify some of the strengths and weakness of this country's political system.
5. (20)	Research and describe these types of Government: Dictatorship, democracy, monarchy, communist government, federal government. List the advantages and disadvantages of each. Try to include an example of countries that fit each description.	Be careful—some countries have a government which is made up of more than one of these types! http://news.bbc.co.uk/cbbcnews/hi/guides/ is a good starting point (look for 'government').
6. (20)	The Australian Government wants migrants to sit for a citizenship test . Make a top ten list of the things you believe new citizens of Australia should know about. Do you agree with the idea of a Citizenship test? Why or why not?	Your list could include questions about Australian laws and values, such as democracy and equality, and would also include questions about Australian customs.
7. (20)	Explain how a law is made in Australia. What is the process of a bill becoming a law?	If using the internet, make sure you are using an Australian site. Also, decide if you are going to describe how a Federal or State law is made.

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8. (10)	Compare and contrast what happens in the Federal House of Representatives and the Senate .	What are the main roles of each? Who are the main participants? How do they get elected? How long are they elected for?
9. (10)	Find out who the leaders and opposition leaders are in each Australian state and territory.	Make sure your information is current and up to date!
10. (20)	Create a timeline of key events that led to the Federation of Australia. Illustrate with a picture of the Federation flag.	Try http://www.kidcyber.com.au as a good starting point.
11. (10)	Think of a RULE your family has. Why do you have it and who enforces it? What is the punishment for breaking it? Now think of a LAW we have in society. Why do we have it and who enforces it? What is the punishment for breaking it? What are some of the similarities and differences between rules and laws?	For the similarities and differences question, you could make a Venn diagram that compares rules with laws. 
12. (10)	Choose a road law and imagine it has been cancelled for the rest of the day! Write about the scenario you see. How might it affect you and others? What care / responsibilities would you need to take? What might be some of the consequences? Why do we need road laws?	Perhaps make an Inspiration flow chart showing some of the events and consequences that might follow the road laws being cancelled.
13. (10)	Find 3 articles about current court cases reported in the newspaper. Write about the laws that were broken, the reason for the law, the circumstances of the court case and the outcome.	These could be local or international news stories. Just remember that laws are different in all countries.
14. (10)	There ought to be a law! Decide on an issue about which you feel strongly (eg. Pollution, bullying, endangered animals) and come up with a suggestion for a new law that effectively and fairly deals with the problem.	You will need to: - Identify the problem. - List reasons why it is a problem. - Suggest a new law to overcome it. - List some appropriate consequences for breaking your new law.
15. (10)	Make a presentation of the United Nations' ' Declaration of the Rights of the Child ' and answer these questions: - Which rights are the most important to you & why? - Why do you think this list needed to be written?	When you search for the 'Declaration of the Rights of the Child', do a keyword search for a 'plain language' version which will make it easier to understand.
16. (20)	Volunteers. Explain briefly what it means to be a volunteer. Create an Inspiration mind map categorising the different roles of volunteers and the groups they work for. Interview a volunteer you know from inside or outside the school. Find out about what they do and why they do it.	A few useful links: www.australianvolunteers.com www.volunteer.com.au/ www.conservationvolunteers.com.au/ http://www.volunteering.com.au/
17. (20)	Visit www.ausflag.com.au and, from the 'Flags Since 1788' section, create a labelled gallery of 10 of your favourite Australian flags. Look at the 'New Flag Designs' section to inspire you to design a new Australian flag—one that promotes a spirit of reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians, and recognises Australia's heritage.	Make sure when you create your gallery that you include a reference to www.ausflag.com.au in your bibliography.



How Did You Go?

<i>Backbencher.</i>	<i>Minister, maybe?</i>	<i>Opposition leader.</i>	<i>Prime Minister material!</i>
Less than 80 points	80-140 points	140-200 points	200-270 points