

Democratic Values

Lesson Ideas Pack



Introduction

We support the view that schooling should develop a sense of community engagement in students by increasing their potential to be informed, responsible, ethical and active participants in society.

Through practical tasks relating to real life experiences, these *free* resources help students develop a positive attitude towards their role in society. They enable teachers to select lesson ideas within a theme in any order, to best suit **curriculum requirements** and the **interest** of students. Digital resources embedded in these resources support the [Social Media Minimum Age obligation](#) (SMMA obligation) and have been chosen with careful consideration to support learning and wellbeing. Some resources feature YouTube videos that can be seen without logging into an account. These should be viewed by students with teacher support.

We developed these to make the content of the Australian Humanities and Social Sciences (HASS) Civics and Citizenship syllabus for Years 7-10 *more engaging*.

To make things easy, lesson ideas link directly to the Australian and Victorian Curriculum content codes and key concepts, namely; *Democratic Values*, *The Westminster System*, *Justice*, *Participation*, and *Rights and Responsibilities*. The activities provided are just suggestions and should be adjusted to suit the student cohort.

Year Level Description and Required Content

Year 7

An understanding of the Civics and Citizenship concepts is developed through a focus on Australia's democracy and legal system. The teaching ideas in this resource assist students to gain knowledge and understanding regarding the values on which Australia's legal system and citizen participation are based. *Links to curriculum codes:* [AC9HC7K03](#) / [VC2HC8K05](#)

Year 8

An understanding of the Civics and Citizenship concepts is developed through a focus on Australia's laws, the responsibilities and freedoms of citizens and participation in the democratic process. The teaching ideas in this resource assist students to gain knowledge and understanding regarding the purpose of laws and how direct action can support this. *Links to curriculum codes:* [AC9HC7K02](#) / [VC2HC8K02](#) / [VC2HC8K04](#)

Year 9

An understanding of the Civics and Citizenship concepts is developed through a focus on how Australia's legal system works to support a democratic and just society. The teaching ideas in this resource assist students to gain a knowledge and understanding of how the values on which our laws are based and the responsibilities of a citizen supports the application of justice. *Links to curriculum codes:* [AC9HC9K04](#) / [VC2HC10K05](#)

Year 10

An understanding of the Civics and Citizenship concepts is developed through a focus on Australia's global roles and responsibilities and the values and practices that enable a resilient democracy to be sustained. The teaching ideas in this resource assist students to gain a knowledge and understanding of how the values on which our laws are based and the responsibilities of a citizen protect our democratic system.

Links to curriculum codes: [AC9HC10K01](#) / [VC2HC10K03](#) & [AC9HC10K05](#) / [VC2HC10K10](#)

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Learning Intentions

Resource Focus

Community safety and well-being is enhanced by developing and following agreed expectations of individual behaviour

Students Understand:

- That behaviour is an expression of the values held by an individual
 - That schooling aims to develop a student's disposition towards the acquisition of particular values
 - That Australia has a set of values and principles which both Australians and visitors are expected to abide by
 - The notion of justice; behaviour that is fair, equal and balanced for everyone.
 - That they have a responsibility to act in protecting our system of democracy and justice
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Lesson Ideas

Tuning In

Students are provided with a stimulus, such as [Young Australian of the Year: Corey Tutt](#), fundraising for science in schools or [2025 QLD Young Australian of the Year Dr Katrina Wruck](#) video to identify the civic behaviour shown by these recipients of the Young Australian award. Conduct a class callout to collate the types of behaviour shown in the stimulus.

Lesson Idea 1: Education Values

Explain that our thoughts and actions towards ourselves and others are based on the values that we believe in. In Australia, educators believe that schooling should assist students in developing values that encourage positive behaviours.

- Hand out the resource [The Australian Values of Schooling](#). In pairs, groups or as a jigsaw activity, students fill in the template discussing and sharing ideas. Ask each pair/group to pick one value that they feel most strongly about.
- Provide students with access to the [Values X Chart](#) to complete.
- Provide students with access to the [When My Value Is Compromised Y Chart](#) to complete.
- Complete the activity by asking a representative from each pair/group to share their responses.

Lesson Idea 2: School Rules

Explain to students that sometimes a person may choose to ignore certain values agreed to by the broader community and their behaviour may become a problem for themselves and others around them. To assist students in understanding the behaviour that a school expects from its community a set of rules are written.

Conduct a class call out about what would happen if there were no school rules. Students are provided with a copy of their school rules. Students investigate how these rules support the values of schooling and/or how these rules support a safer community.

Explain that students will be given the opportunity to explore the [Student Wellbeing Hub](#). Once they have entered the appropriate age section, students select one of the topics and browse through the supporting resources. Complete the activity by asking the class to share what they have discovered and how it relates to the rules and values of their school; and supporting a safer community.

Lesson Idea 3: Values Of Our Australian Society

- In 2016 the Australian government produced a booklet [Life in Australia: Australian Values and Principles](#). This was later revised in November 2019. It is designed for people who wish to apply for an Australian visa.
 - Ask students to explain, either as a call out or in their journals, the following statement from the booklet.

“In order to maintain a stable, peaceful and prosperous community, Australians of all backgrounds are expected to uphold the shared principles and values that underpin Australian society.”
 - Brainstorm with the class the values they think should be in this list.
- Provide students with the [Australian Values](#) handout to complete.
 - Compare the values on the sheet with the class brainstorm and discuss what is common and why some values may be different.
 - Discuss with the class why, when applying for a visa to visit Australia, applicants aged 18 years and over are required to sign an Australian Values Statement confirming they will respect Australian values and obey the laws of Australia.
- Students compare the process of visa application in Australia with another country. The focus of their research should be on how each process is used to ensure that the values of the society are upheld.

Lesson Idea 4: Upholding Society Values; Our Collective Responsibility

Laws are passed to ensure that society's values are upheld. As a visitor to or citizen of a country it is your responsibility to be aware of these laws. In Australia, it is the police that enforce these laws but citizens have an important role to play.

Discuss with students why it is the responsibility of each citizen to help ensure that our laws are upheld.

Taking action

- In Australia, it is legal to make a citizen's arrest as long as any force used is reasonable and not disproportionate to the crime being committed. Anyone making a citizen's arrest must take the person straight to the police or court of law. This is the law under which security guards operate. Here is an example of the steps taken to conduct a [citizen's arrest](#) in the ACT.

Discuss with students the pro and cons of taking this sort of action.

An alternative to making a citizen's arrest is to provide Crime Stoppers with information about a crime that has or may occur.

Divide the class into groups of six. Each group creates a scenario depicting when it is appropriate to tell someone in authority about the poor/bad behaviour of someone. This could be related to the breaking of a school rule or Australian law and should include the benefit to the wider community of taking this action. Using an app such as *Vyond*, they create a storyboard and animated version of their scenario. Complete the activity by sharing each group's animation.

- An important value/principle (rule of law) on which the Australian justice system operates is that a person accused of committing an offence is deemed innocent until proven guilty. How does this fundamental value protect:
 - The notion of democracy?
 - A citizen when they are taking civic action?
 - Justice for an accused citizen?
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Resources

Lesson Idea – Tuning In

- [Young Australian of the Year: Corey Tutt, fundraising for science in schools](#) – video
- [2025 QLD Young Australian of the Year Dr Katrina Wruck](#) - video

Lesson Idea 1 – Education Values

- [Australian Values of Schooling](#) – information sheet
- [Values X Chart](#) - worksheet
- [When My Value Is Compromised Y Chart](#) - worksheet

Lesson Idea 2 – School Rules

- A set of your school rules – information sheet
- [Student Wellbeing Hub](#) – website

Lesson Idea 3 – Values Of Our Australian Society

- [Life in Australia: Australian Values and Principles](#) - information sheet
- [Australian Values](#) – handout

Lesson Idea 4 – Upholding Society Values; Our Collective Responsibility

- [Citizen's Power Of Arrest](#) – website

Assessment

- [Marking Key](#)
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Further Student Enquiry

- Students investigate the values underlying school rules/laws in other countries or at other periods in history.
 - Students investigate the process through which their school rules were developed. How were the views of individual stakeholders i.e. school staff, students and parents taken into account? Students design and promote a process for the ongoing review of the school rules.
 - Students investigate Australian case studies of citizens' arrests.
 - Students investigate an Australian case study of community information leading to a criminal conviction or the prevention of an unlawful incident.
 - Many of the themes explored in this resource are further developed within the other Crime Stoppers resources provided on this website.
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Assessment

Formative

- Students individually develop a classroom rule that they can relate back to the values of schooling. Teachers might like to pool these ideas together to develop an agreed set of behaviours for the class.
- Use the Taking Action scenario, in Lesson Idea # 4 Upholding Society Values; Our Collective Responsibility, to assess students understanding of a citizen's responsibility in helping to ensure a just and fair society.

Summative

- Students design, for the school/classroom, a persuasive poster, role play, ICT presentation, story board, pamphlet or speech that promotes a particular Australian value and its role in ensuring we live in a fair society.
- Students pose and investigate a question around school values and/or rules.
- Students explain how the role of the citizen supports the notion of justice.
- Students investigate a particular law, either in Australia or abroad, focusing on the societal values it is designed to protect.

- With the support of case studies students explain how society is better protected when individuals take action.
 - Students investigate how the principles on which Australian democracy is based assist in reducing particular threats to our society.
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This material can also be [accessed online](#)

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