

Law, the media and the environment: Civics and citizenship

Strand

Time, Continuity and Change

Culture and Identity

Systems, Resources and Power

Core learning outcomes

<i>Time, Continuity and Change</i>	TCC 5.1	Students use primary and secondary evidence to identify the development of ideas from ancient and modern times.
	TCC 5.3	Students collaborate to locate and systematically record information about the contributions of people in diverse past settings.
<i>Culture and Identity</i>	CI 5.5	Students express how dominant and marginalised identities are constructed by media and other influences.
<i>Systems, Resources and Power</i>	SRP 5.1	Students evaluate the relationship between an ecological system and a government and/or an economic system.
	SRP 5.3	Students use a structured decision-making process to suggest participatory action regarding a significant current environmental, business, political or legal issue.
	SRP 5.4	Students report on the main features and principles of legal systems in Australia.

Purpose and overview

Students examine the history and development of principles underlying Australia's legal system by using primary and secondary evidence to identify the development of ideas from ancient to modern times. Students learn about how governments are bound by law and identify how laws are made in Australia including the role of constitutions, parliament and courts.

Students analyse contributions of people in diverse past settings to Australia's current legal system. Australia's current system of law and Indigenous laws and customs are studied.

Students develop understandings about how the construction of law can be influenced, including by the media, and how a structured decision-making process can be used to design political actions.



Phases (Minimum time recommended: 12 hours)	Activities	Core learning outcomes	Assessment opportunities
1. Exploring: The law (approximately 3 hours)	1. The need for law 2. Ancient law 3. Systems of law 4. Law, media and identity 5. Development of law	TCC 5.1 CI 5.5 SRP 5.4	Table illustrating systems of law Discussion Newspaper article
2. Researching: People and the law (approximately 1 hours)	6. Influencing change 7. Contributions of people	TCC 5.3	Oral Presentation
3. Analysing: Australian legal systems (approximately 4 hours)	8. Australian law courts and powers	SRP 5.4	Report
4. Making judgments: The law and the environment (approximately 4 hours)	9. A case study: an environmental issue 10. Participatory action	SRP 5.1 SRP 5.3 CI 5.5	Report Media campaign

Assessment

The assessment opportunities outlined are examples of how to assess students' demonstrations of the identified learning outcomes. As often as possible, negotiate assessment with students and support a variety of ways of demonstrating the learning outcomes. Reflect with students on evidence gathered when making judgments about their demonstrations of learning outcomes. Some students may require more time and/or other contexts in which to demonstrate these learning outcomes. Other modules may provide such time and/or contexts and the 'Levels 1 to 6 module learning outcomes maps' in the *Years 1 to 10 Studies of Society and Environment Sourcebook Guidelines* can be used to identify these modules.

Assessing learning outcomes at different levels

Activities are designed primarily for students working towards demonstrations of Level 5 learning outcomes. Some assessment opportunities may be used to decide whether students are demonstrating the learning outcomes at levels before or after Level 5. To guide judgments about students' demonstrations of learning outcomes consider whether students are:

- working towards demonstration of the Level 5 learning outcomes
- demonstrating the Level 5 learning outcomes
- demonstrating the Level 5 learning outcomes and working towards Level 6 learning outcomes.

Learning outcomes in the syllabus at Level 4 and Level 6 could provide a guide for teacher judgments. Studies of Society and Environment learning outcomes are organised so that there is a progression of concepts and processes within a strand. For example, the progression from SRP 4.4 to SRP 5.4 to SRP 6.4 involves increasing sophistication and complexity particularly related to the concept of *citizenship and government* and the process of *communicating*, though neither of these is exclusive of other concepts and processes. The elaborations provide specific content examples of how the concepts and processes may be levelled from Levels 1 to 6. See the Queensland School Curriculum Council website at www.qscc.qld.edu.au for more information.

Using this module

This module provides a framework for using the Curriculum Corporation's *Discovering Democracy Secondary Kit* materials. This kit is a series of publications and materials to support civics and citizenship related topics. These materials will assist students to develop the knowledge and skills necessary for them to take their place as effective and responsible citizens. The materials were distributed to every school in Australia. It is not essential that activities be followed in the order provided however this sequence of activities is suggested to develop understanding and to provide opportunities for students to demonstrate the core learning outcomes.

Background information

Terminology

In this module students have opportunities to become familiar with and use the following terminology:

Cabinet	courts	High Court	State Government
civil law	criminal law	Legislation	statute law
common law	equality	Local Government	
Commonwealth	fair trial	Parliament	
Government	Federal	precedent	
Constitution	Government		

School authority policies

Be aware of and observe school authority policies that may be relevant to this module.

Equity considerations

Activities take place in a supportive environment. They provide opportunities for students to increase their understanding and appreciation of equity through valuing cultural diversity and challenging inequities. Activities encourage students to:

- appreciate ways that democracy protects cultural diversity
- critique democratic practices.

Some students with disabilities may need assistance with some activities. Advice should be sought from their support teachers. It is important that these equity considerations inform decision making about teaching strategies, classroom organisation and assessment.

Links

Studies of Society and Environment

This module is one of a suite of modules for Levels 1 to 6. See the Queensland School Curriculum Council website at www.qscc.qld.edu.au for more information.

English

In several activities within this module links are made to genres featured in the English Key Learning Area.

Other key learning areas

Activities may offer opportunities for planning across key learning areas. However, it is important that the integrity of the key concepts, organising ideas and processes within key learning areas is maintained.

Evaluation of a unit of work

After completion of units of work developed from this module, collect information and make judgments about:

- teaching strategies and activities used to progress student learning towards demonstrations of core learning outcomes
- opportunities provided to gather evidence about students' demonstrations of core learning outcomes
- future learning opportunities for students who have not yet demonstrated the core learning outcomes and to challenge and extend those students who have already demonstrated the core learning outcomes
- the extent to which activities matched needs of particular groups of students and reflected equity considerations
- the appropriateness of time allocations for particular activities
- the appropriateness of resources used.

Information from this evaluation process can be used to plan subsequent units of work so that they build on, and support, student learning. The evaluated units of work may also be adapted prior to their reuse. For further information, refer to the 'Curriculum evaluation' section in the sourcebook guidelines.

Activities

Phase 1 Exploring: The Law

Core learning outcomes emphasis: TCC 5.1, CI 5.5, SRP 5.4

Focus questions:

- Why is there a need for laws?
- How have the ideas related to law developed from ancient to modern times?
- What are the systems of law that have existed throughout time?
- How have legal procedures changed throughout time?
- What is the historical background to Australia’s law system?

Activity 1 The need for law

Ask students to make a list of the laws that would relate to the following everyday activities:

- buying an item from the school tuck-shop
- riding a bike to school
- attending a music concert.

Discuss other everyday activities that are regulated by laws.

Support materials and references

Ask students to complete appropriate activities to explore the need for laws from the section ‘Law’ in the *Discovering Democracy: Lower Secondary Units*.

Activity 2 Ancient Law

Discuss definitions of primary sources and secondary sources:

- Primary sources come from the time the event occurred.
- Secondary sources are produced after the events they describe.

Discovering Democracy ‘Law’

Explain to students that Historians and other social scientists test reliability or representativeness of sources they use. Ask students in small groups to explore ancient laws from a range of cultures (refer to Ancient Law in the ‘Law’ section of *Discovering Democracy: Lower Secondary Units* for primary sources of Hammurabi’s Code and the Ten Commandments).

Activity 3 Systems of law

Use a variety of sources including ‘What are the sources of Australian Law’ in the ‘Law’ section of *Discovering Democracy: Lower Secondary Units* to discuss a number of systems of law. Students collate information about features of these systems in a table. Consider what influence such systems may have on the construction of individual and group identities.

Legal procedure	Problems which may exist with procedure
Customary law:	
Inquisitorial method:	
Adversarial process:	
Capital punishment:	

Activity 4 Law, media and identity

Ensure students understand that their perceptions of law and legal procedures are influenced by the nature of the sources used to gain that understanding, the current social values of and the type of media communicating the information and their own background and experiences with the law and legal procedures. Students must be aware of and can analyse how media may give a dominant opinion or viewpoint and may marginalise or create bias and stereotypes and difference to ideas and identities that do not conform to this dominant view.

Use a media article or news footage that deals with two different systems of law that feature in Australia and highlights different values held by people and groups. Use the following questions to help students analyse the article or footage.

- What systems of law are represented?
- What are the reasons for each system of law?
- Do you agree or disagree with either of these systems of law? Why or why not?
- What is the view of the article's footage's author? What evidence supports your opinion?
- Are there biases stereotypes or marginalisations occurring in the report? If so how is this being done?

Support materials and references

Refer to and discuss Aboriginal/customary law in the 'Law' section of *Discovering Democracy: Lower Secondary Units*.

Assist students to investigate and discuss how dominant and marginalised identities are constructed by media and the law (CI 5.5).

Activity 5 Development of Law

Ask students to write a newspaper report on the development of law from ancient to modern times. This should use the key elements of the newspaper report genre. The report should refer to the following:

- a particular element of the law as explored in Activity 1 – morality, custom, religious belief, personal liberty, a smooth-running society, privilege or protection of persons and property.
- sources that provide information about these laws
- how this law can be used to dominate and marginalise various people and groups.

Phase 2 Researching: People and the Law

Core learning outcomes emphasis: TCC 5.3

In this phase, students will research the contributions of various people in Law.

Focus questions:

- How can people make positive contributions to legal developments?
- Who are some people who have contributed to legal developments?
- What are the details of the achievements of these people?

Activity 6 Influencing change

In groups students search through various newspapers to find at least two articles about people who have or are working towards influencing the law or legal process. Students analyse these articles and respond to the following questions:

- What are the activities of the individuals or groups?
- What is the law they want to influence?
- How successful has this activity been?

Discuss the articles and answers. Assist students to create a definition of 'political activity'.

Activity 7 Contributions of people

Ask students to work in groups to research a minimum of three individuals or groups who have impacted on the development of laws. The groups and individuals chosen must have some differences in the era in which they engaged in this activity and the place in which they were active (refer to the section 'Men and women in political life' in the *Discovering Democracy: Lower Secondary Units*).

Support materials and references

Explain students are to use a structured information-gathering tool such as a table or chart with specified headings related to the topic. This table is to be submitted with their presentation. Headings may include:

- name
- dates
- activity related to the Law or political process
- achievements
- future activities.

On completing this collaborative research each group is to present their findings as a presentation. The presentation may take the form of a multimedia display, a creative performance, a seminar presentation or any other negotiated presentation genre.

Conference with students about their abilities to locate, share, analyse and record information and abilities to collaborate to develop their presentations.

Phase 3 **Analysing: Australian legal systems**

Core learning outcomes emphasis: SRP 5.4

In this phase, students will analyse and report on concepts such as the historical background to Australia's parliamentary system, statute and common law and the hierarchy of courts.

Focus questions:

- What is the 'separation of powers' and what is its purpose?
- What is the historical background and levels of Australia's parliamentary system?
- What is the Australian constitution and what purpose does it serve?
- What is the difference between statute law and common law?
- What levels make up the hierarchy of courts in Australia and what is the role of each level?

Activity 8 Australian law, courts and powers

Review understandings of law, the origin of Australian law and how laws are made and changed.

Support materials and references

Provide a variety of primary and secondary sources including sections from *Discovering Democracy: Lower Secondary Units* for students to analyse.

Students prepare an information report on the main features and principles of legal systems in Australia. Negotiate with students the various aspects of this topic that could include: Separation of powers, Australian constitutions, common law, statute law, courts, fair trial.

Phase 4 **Making judgments: The law and the environment**

Core learning outcomes emphasis: SRP 5.1, SRP 5.3

Students will evaluate and work towards using a structured decision-making process to suggest participatory action regarding a significant current environmental issue.

Focus questions:

- What is the background to the issue/debate?
- How did citizens and environmental groups use the media during the campaign about the issue?
- What action can be taken in support of a current environmental issue?

Activity 9 A case study: an environmental issue**Support materials and references**

With students, choose an appropriate case study to use as the context for students to evaluate and environmental issue, the law, law matters, media and citizens involved in the issue. The Tasmanian World Heritage Area (refer to the 'Getting things done' section of *Discovering Democracy: Middle Secondary Units*) may be an appropriate environmental issue.

Working in groups, students will synthesise information from a range of sources, make judgments, determine consequences and suggest alternative solutions as they analyse:

- the background to the issue
- the main features of the issue or debate surrounding it
- actions that citizens took about the issue
- actions taken and/or decisions made by the government
- media coverage of the issue
- media influences on public opinion.

On completion of the evaluation of the information students will present their findings and discuss the action that was taken in relation to the issue.

Activity 10 Participatory action**Resource 1**

Assist students to choose an environmental issue that is receiving media attention. Introduce the assessment item — media campaign (Resource 1). Explain the task, assist students as necessary and model formal meeting procedures and processes involved in the development of a media campaign to complete the assessment task.

Assessment: Media Campaign**Resource 1**

Core learning outcome This assessment task will give you the opportunity to demonstrate the following core learning outcome:

SRP 5.3 Students use a structured decision-making process to suggest participatory action regarding a significant current environmental, business, political or legal issue.

Task: In a group, you are to adopt the role of a stakeholder group (an interested party) in current environmental issue that has featured in media reportage and develop a media campaign to influence the outcome of the issue. The issue must have a significant legal issue or scope to involve government decisions about legislation. You may choose any group that is involved in the issue. For example an issue that involves mining in a National Park could involve state and federal governments, the mining company, the trade union representing workers for the proposed mine, environmental groups and political parties.

Conditions: Length: Oral (Meeting) – 15 minutes
Written (Campaign Outline) – 250 words
Campaign Materials – 1 A4 page

- Requirements:**
1. Organise the group into specific roles and conduct a structured decision making process to make decisions about the action that will be involved in the media campaign. This will involve conducting a formal meeting in role. The meeting will be observed by your teacher who will look for the following elements:
 - selection or allocation of roles (chair, minute-taker)
 - keeping of records
 - decisions on standing orders / meeting procedure
 - setting of agenda
 - inclusivity of decision making process
 - participation by all members of the group in meeting business
 - communication of the meeting decisions.
 2. Design a media campaign that clearly outlines the participatory action that can be taken to influence the outcome of the issue. It is important that the participatory action developed from this process involves the use of the media to further the aims of the group, addresses the environmental, governmental and legal issues and proposes a solution to the issue selected. You are required to develop a written outline of the campaign.
 3. Develop a sample of materials to be used in this participatory action, for example, a media release (refer to source 2, extract 6 p. 191 from *Discovering Democracy: Middle Secondary Units* as a guide; Internet home page sites for political parties also provide models), a speech to a particular audience, a script for a television or radio advertisement or a pamphlet to be used in a letter box drop.

Support materials and references

Alexander, D. & Rouen, M., 1999, *Heinemann SOSE for Queensland Book 1*, Heinemann / Reed International, Port Melbourne, Vic.

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Saunders, C. 1998, *It's your constitution: Governing Australia Today*, The Federation Press, Sydney, NSW.

Callinan, R. & Bradford, S. *Tribal law used for turtle hunter*. The Courier Mail, Tuesday, November 9, 1999, page 14.

Websites

(All websites listed were accessed in March 2002.)

Inquiry Approaches in Secondary Studies of Society and Environment Key Learning Area Paper
www.qscc.qld.edu.au/

Curriculum Corporation: Discovering Democracy, www.curriculum.edu.au/democracy/

Australian Federation of Societies for Studies of Society and Environment,
www.pa.ash.org.au/afssse/

Queensland Law Society, www.qls.com.au/

The Society has published a number of excellent modules specifically related to SOSE core learning outcomes.

This sourcebook module should be read in conjunction with the following Queensland School Curriculum Council materials:

Years 1 to 10 Studies of Society and Environment Syllabus

Years 1 to 10 Studies of Society and Environment Sourcebook Guidelines

Studies of Society and Environment Initial In-service Materials

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