

# Get involved

## 1. Create a get involved quiz

Write a list of ten questions and answers. For example you could ask questions like ‘How many petitions are presented to the Parliament each year?’ Find a partner and take it in turns to answer each other’s questions.



## 2. Letters to the editor

Letters to the editor are one way the public can comment on current issues. Collect three letters to the editor from newspapers. What are they about? How well does each letter make its argument? Is it an issue that may be dealt with by Parliament?

Write your own letter to the editor of a daily newspaper about a local or national issue that you are concerned about.

To the Honourable  
President and  
members of the  
Senate in Parliament  
assembled

The petition of the  
undersigned shows...

Your petitioners ask/request  
that the Senate...

Name	Address	Signature
1. John Smith	12 Sunshine Rd, Happyville Tas, 1234	~~~~~
2. Jennifer Smith	12 Sunshine Rd, Happyville Tas, 1234	~~~~~
3. Tony Stars	19 Moon St, Starville Tas, 1234	~~~~~
4. Stacy Stars	19 Moon St, Starville Tas, 1234	~~~~~
5. Jane Citizen	58 Sunshine Rd, Happyville Tas, 1234	~~~~~
6. Steven Citizen	58 Sunshine Rd, Happyville Tas, 1234	~~~~~
7. Suzie Alvin	24 Saturn Ave, Happyville Tas, 1234	~~~~~
8. Tony Balony	15 Sunshine Rd, Happyville Tas, 1234	~~~~~
9. Tori Balony	15 Sunshine Rd, Happyville Tas, 1234	~~~~~
10. Albert Talbert	29 Moon St, Starville Tas, 1234	~~~~~
11. Sam Bobam	6 Sunshine Rd, Happyville Tas, 1234	~~~~~
12. Alberts Bobam	6 Sunshine Rd, Happyville Tas, 1234	~~~~~
13. Johnny Begood	17 Saturn Ave, Happyville Tas, 1234	~~~~~
14. Jasmine Begood	17 Saturn Ave, Happyville Tas, 1234	~~~~~
15. Tom Domdom	3 Sunshine rd, Happyville Tas, 1234	~~~~~
16. Delia Domdom	3 Sunshine rd, Happyville Tas, 1234	~~~~~
17. John James	20 Sunshine rd, Happyville Tas, 1234	~~~~~
18. Jeremy Toole	68 Moon St, Starville Tas, 1234	~~~~~
19. Ava Shine	72 Moon St, Starville Tas, 1234	~~~~~

## 3. Have your say

As a class, brainstorm ways you can get involved in national or community issues.

Discuss what might be the most effective way to:

- Get a response from Parliament
- Raise public awareness
- Create media attention
- Target young people
- Change people’s behaviour.



To find out more about how to get involved, follow this link:

[www.tinyurl.com/getinvolved-video](http://www.tinyurl.com/getinvolved-video)

## 4. Create your own petition

As a class, brainstorm community issues that you are concerned about. In small groups, write a petition asking the Senate or House of Representatives to take action on one of these issues.

To find out how you should set out the petition follow these links on the Australian Parliament House website:

[www.tinyurl.com/Senatepetitions](http://www.tinyurl.com/Senatepetitions)

[www.tinyurl.com/Housepetitions](http://www.tinyurl.com/Housepetitions)

## 5. Class committee of inquiry

Hold a class committee of inquiry to investigate an issue in your school.

- Divide the class into committee members, witness groups (people who present evidence to the committee) and journalists.
- Decide on the terms of reference (what the committee is investigating).
- After the inquiry, ask the committee to present a list of recommendations to the class.
- Ask the journalists to write and present a report about the inquiry and the committee's findings.

To find out more about committees, check these links on the PEO and Australian Parliament House websites:

PEO fact sheet – Parliamentary Committees  
[www.tinyurl.com/FS-Committees](http://www.tinyurl.com/FS-Committees)

APH Infosheet 4 – Committees  
[www.tinyurl.com/Infosheet4](http://www.tinyurl.com/Infosheet4)

Senate brief 4 – Senate Committees  
[www.tinyurl.com/SB4-Committees](http://www.tinyurl.com/SB4-Committees)

For information about how to run a committee role-play, follow this link:  
[www.tinyurl.com/Role-play-Com](http://www.tinyurl.com/Role-play-Com)

## 6. Voting rights

In 1901, when Australia federated, not everyone had the right to vote at federal elections. For example, many women and Indigenous people were not eligible to vote. Research an aspect of Australia's electoral history and present your findings to the class. Why do you think people have fought for the right to vote?



To find out more about Australians and the vote, check this link about Australian electoral history on the Australian Electoral Commission website:

[www.tinyurl.com/AEC-history](http://www.tinyurl.com/AEC-history)

You could also take a look at Get Parliament: Indigenous Australians and the vote: [www.tinyurl.com/InAustVote](http://www.tinyurl.com/InAustVote)



## 7. Parliament and you

Explore alternative ways for the Parliament to engage with young people. Explain why these might be effective. Find examples, such as members of parliament using social media, to illustrate your argument.

## 8. Parliamentary privilege

Is it reasonable that parliamentary privilege allows members of parliament to speak freely in Parliament? Write a short essay examining the concept of parliamentary privilege, including its advantages and disadvantages.

For more information about parliamentary privilege, check this link on the Australian Parliament House website:  
[www.tinyurl.com/Infosheet5](http://www.tinyurl.com/Infosheet5)