

UNIT TITLE:***Adelaide High School 2000: Australian
Citizenship*****Writer/Management:**

Peter Leverenz

Audience: Year 10 students in SOSE, Civics and Citizenship or History

Purpose:

Students develop

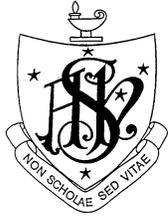
- a greater understanding of Australian democracy
- an understanding of the role of citizenship and citizens in a democracy
- skills in interviewing an immigrant and present their story clearly
- act in the interests of the community and work toward the common good
- produce a unit using Publisher software.

Links to Curriculum:

SOSE, Civics and Citizenship, History

Discovering Democracy links

Units: Active citizenship activities – particularly Clean Up Australia, Amnesty International
Australian Readers – selected stories on citizens
Federation CD-ROM; One Destiny CD-ROM;
Parliament at Work CD-ROM.



ADELAIDE HIGH SCHOOL, 2000

AUSTRALIAN CITIZENSHIP

This unit is aimed at Year 10 or 11 students studying Society and Environment, Civics and Citizenship or History.

This resource looks at the Concept of Citizenship in Australia. It explores the following issues:

- What is a good citizen of Australia?
- Why is Democracy important?
- What does “citizenship” mean?
- How can someone become an Australian citizen?
- Should all migrants become Australian citizens?

Outcomes

- A greater understanding of Australian Democracy
- An understanding of the role of citizenship and citizens in a democracy
- The skills to be able to interview an immigrant and present their story clearly
- Ability to discuss an issue in Australian Society and analyze the arguments embedded in the issue.
- Act in the interests of the community and work towards the common good.
- To produce a unit using Publisher software

Teacher: Peter Leverenz

Activity One

In this unit we are going to look at the notions of citizens and citizenship. People who live in Australia are its citizens. The word comes from the Ancient Greeks who invented democracy in Athens. If you are born here you are automatically an Australian Citizen and can hold an Australian passport. If you are a migrant you can opt to become an Australian Citizen. More on that later. Firstly, what makes a good Australian Citizen?

Qualities of a Good Citizen

Identify what qualities make a good citizen of Australia. A range of ideas that students have suggested are:

- Treating others with respect.
- Helping people in need.
- Respecting the property of others.
- Being kind to animals.
- Have political awareness.
- Being involved in the community.

1. Write down four things that you think would be qualities of a good citizen and the actions that put these qualities into practice. For example, the quality of being kind to animals could be demonstrated by volunteer work at an animal shelter.

Qualities of a good citizen	Actions of a good citizen
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	

2. What aspects of your life or groups that you belong to, are most important to you? Eg family, dance club, sporting club, environment... What do you do to support these people or groups?

3. List five ideas for community based activities that you think reflect good citizenship, ie; visiting elderly people at a nursing home, joining in Clean Up Australia, supporting CANTEEN (kids with cancer), Amnesty International, Wilderness Society...

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

5) _____

6) _____

4. Contact one or more of these groups to speak to the class, and either produce a report on them or join them and support their cause. Start by contacting your local government and then brainstorm community groups that work to help our community.

5. Read stories on good citizens from the *Discovering Democracy* readers or other sources eg sources on Sir Gustav Nossal, Ian McKernan, Lowija O'Donahue.... Research the life of one of them.

Examples:

Postal services, public transport, telecommunications, water supply, electricity, parks, defence, libraries, gas supply, quarantine, schools, rubbish collection, health, courts, footpaths, immigration, fisheries and wildlife, building regulations, industrial health and safety, consumer protection, road laws, police, the environment, parking and by-laws, home help, social security, taxes, and education.

Not all systems of government are developed along Federal lines. Some systems of government are centralized having only have or two tiers of government. Australia became a Federation in 1901. This was not an easy decision, as many people had different views. Delegates came from all the Colonies to voice their opinions in a series of Constitutional Conventions. The debate about Federation went on for over a decade. Prior to Federation each colony administered itself, answering to the government of Great Britain.

2. Using the 'Federation' CD-ROM, 'One Destiny' CD-ROM or *Stories of Democracy* CD-ROM list 6 reasons for Federation. Write short profiles about these leaders: Henry Parkes, Edmond Barton, Alfred Deakin, Louisa Lawson and Vida Goldstein.
3. Read through the booklet: "What it means to be an Australian Citizen" available from the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (sent to all schools in 1999) and answer these questions: (These Web sites would also be useful – www.peo.gov.au, www.aph.gov.au, www.immi.gov.au.)
 - 1) What does each part of the flag represent?
 - 2) What is on the Coat of Arms?
 - 3) What does the National Anthem mean in Modern English? Translate into Youth Talk or another language.
 - 4) The Australian Citizenship Act was passed in 1948. What was its purpose?
 - 5) How can someone become an Australian citizen? What rights and responsibilities do they have?
 - 6) What is an Australian passport? Describe what is in it.
 - 7) What turning points have influenced Aboriginal rights in Australia? Eg. Date - event
 - 8) What turning points have influenced European rights until 1902?

- 9) What does multicultural Australia mean? What is your school's policy on multiculturalism?
- 10) What rights do you have as a citizen?
- 11) How is Australia governed? Draw a mind map of how it works on poster paper.
 - Constitution
 - Legislative role
 - Executive
 - Judiciary
 - Monarchy
- 12) Should Australia become a republic? Discuss this issue after displaying your posters in class.
- 13) How is power separated between the legislative, execution and the judiciary?
- 14) Commonwealth Government:
 - Describe the voting procedures for the House of Representatives and the Senate.
 - What steps are there in the running of an election?
- 15) If you were an exchange student and you had to portray Australia and its democracy to a group of students in another country, how would you present your talk and visuals? Write a speech for this presentation
 - Include Aboriginal people, a range of cultures, country and city life, environmental highlights, language, sports, our way of life, cultural aspects...
 - Include 400 words plus illustrations. A Power Point demonstration would be a useful way to make your presentation more visually appealing.

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE AN AUSTRALIAN CITIZEN

The Preamble to the *Australia Citizenship Act 1948* describes the meaning of Australian Citizenship as:

'Australian citizenship represents formal membership of the community of the Commonwealth of Australia; and

Australian citizenship is a common bond, involving reciprocal rights and obligations, uniting all Australians, while respecting their diversity; and

Persons granted Australian citizenship enjoy these rights and undertake to accept these obligations:

- by pledging loyalty to Australia and its people, and
- by sharing their democratic beliefs; and
- by respecting their rights and liberties, and
- by upholding and obeying the laws of Australia'.

The responsibilities and privileges of being an Australian Citizen

Being an Australian Citizen means that we all have certain shared responsibilities to Australia and to each other and we share the same privileges.

These responsibilities and privileges include:

- obeying the laws and fulfilling duties as an Australian Citizen;
- voting at Commonwealth, State/Territory elections and referenda;
- standing for any public office or nominating for election at Commonwealth, State and Territory level (subject to Section 44 of the Constitution)
- obtaining permanent employment within the Australian Public Service and other government jobs requiring Australian Citizenship;
- enlisting in the Australian Armed Forces and defending Australia, should the need arise (subject to the same rights and exemptions as Australian born Citizens);
- serving on a jury, if called upon;
- applying for an Australian passport and to leave and re-enter Australia without the need for a re-entry visa;
- claiming protection from Australian diplomatic representatives while overseas;
- registering a child (under 18 years of age born to an Australian citizen overseas) as an Australian Citizen by descent.

Activity

Present some of these ideas in a poster. eg laws in Australia poster, voting poster, Armed Forces poster, Passport poster and so on.

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE AN AUSTRALIAN CITIZEN

Active citizenship in the Australian community

It is important that Australian citizens understand how they, as responsible individuals, can contribute to a better future for themselves and Australia. Each day many Australians contribute their energy and ideas in the workplace and community and are recognised for the work they do in their chosen field.

For example, every year on Australia Day, a person is named the "Australian of the Year". Those honoured through the years with this pre-eminent award have contributed to Australia and come from many walks of life: the arts, science, medicine, sports, community service, indigenous affairs.

Likewise, many local councils also recognise their local citizens in a similar way, with awards presented, around Australia on Australia Day, to those Australian citizens who have made an outstanding contribution to the community at a local level.

All awards are based on nominations from the general public. However, it is important to recognise that many Australians make a significant contribution to the community without receiving any formal recognition through the awards system. This does not in any way diminish the contribution they make or the importance other Australian citizens should attach to their work.

There is a distinction between the legal definition of citizenship and the general qualities of being a good citizen.

For Example:

	Legal requirements of citizenship	Active citizenship (general qualities)
Dad	Votes Holds a passport	On the school Parents and Citizens Council
Little sister	Registered as a child	Helped in the <i>Clean Up Australia</i> program 2000

ACTIVITY

Research and write/discuss one of the following themes of Australian citizenship:

1. The Preamble is a statement at the beginning of the *Australian Citizenship Act 1948* to describe what Australian citizenship means. Can you write your own preamble describing what you think Australian citizenship means?
2. Choose a current or former Australian of the Year and research that person's contribution to the Australian community.
3. Choose a former citizen of the year from your local area. Perhaps you could invite them to come and talk to the class about why they may have been chosen, and what it meant to them to be given the award.
4. Given the attributes of Australian citizenship discussed above, list the criteria you believe should be used to select the "Australian of the Year"?
5. Find a person who you believe has made a significant contribution to your community. Write a story about why they may deserve to have their contribution recognised.
6. Debate: 'The most valuable thing about being an Australian citizen is the sense of belonging, not just the practical benefits.'
Before undertaking the debate, explore in groups some of the issues related to this topic.

WHO IS AN AUSTRALIAN CITIZEN?

What does “Citizenship” mean?

Citizenship defines the membership of a nation-state as well as the rights and obligations that go with that membership. A person usually becomes a Citizen by birth, through a parent or by being granted Citizenship.

The grant of Australian Citizenship (or naturalisation as it was once called) is often used to describe the legal process where a person who is not an Australian Citizen successfully applies for Australian Citizenship, pledges their loyalty to Australia, and accepts the responsibilities and privileges associated with being an Australian Citizen. This is governed by an Act of Parliament known as the *Australian Citizenship Act 1948*.

Australian Citizenship is a key element or bond that unites us as a nation. It has become a cornerstone of both our national pride and the sense of belonging and inclusiveness that all Australians share.

It is only in the last 50 years that a person born in Australia or a person who chose to live in Australia permanently could become an Australian Citizen.

The Australian Citizenship Act 1948

Until 1949, even though the word "Australian" was used to describe those people born or naturalised in Australia, there was no such thing as being an Australian Citizen; rather, all Australians were British subjects".

In 1949, being an Australian Citizen became a legal reality through the passage of an Act of Parliament called the *Naturalisation and Citizenship Act 1948*. This was amended in 1973 to become the *Australian Citizenship Act 1948*, and provides the framework by which a person may become an Australian Citizen.

The Act commenced on 26 January 1949. 1999 marks the 50th Anniversary of the commencement of that Act and it is timely that all Australians think about what it means to be an Australian Citizen.

The most common way a person becomes an Australian Citizen is by being born in Australia, where one or both parents is either an Australian Citizen or a permanent resident of Australia. (A permanent resident is a person who is not an Australian Citizen but who can legally stay in Australia as long as they like.)

WHO IS AN AUSTRALIAN CITIZEN?

Other ways a person can become an Australian Citizen include:

- **grant** - where a person applies for and is granted Australian Citizenship; and
- **descent** - where a person born overseas is registered as an Australian Citizen by one of their parents who is an Australian Citizen.

Australian Identity – What is it?

Collect and discuss images from magazines, newspapers, flyers etc of Australians and Australia. See the *Discovering Democracy* readers for examples (Curriculum Corporation, 2000). Teachers could use images from film and TV to discuss this. Screen Sound Australia - the Old national film and Sound Archives do workshops with students which explore Australia's Identity as expressed through Australian film.

DISCUSSION TOPICS

1. What is Australian Citizenship and what does it really mean to be able to call yourself an Australian Citizen? Is there a difference between being an Australian and being an Australian Citizen?
2. Is it important that people migrating from overseas are allowed to become Australian Citizens?
3. Is Australian Citizenship central to our national identity; and if so, in what ways?
4. Under the Australian Citizenship Act 1948, people born in Australia lose their Australian Citizenship if they apply for and take out the Citizenship of another country. Do you think this makes Australian Citizenship more or less important?
5. The logo chosen for the 50th Anniversary of Australian Citizenship features the word "my" in the shape of Australia. What do you think is meant by the logo?

THE STEPS TO BECOMING AN AUSTRALIAN CITIZEN

The most common way for a person not born in Australia to become an Australian Citizen is by "grant" of Citizenship. There are a number of steps required to acquire Australian Citizenship by grant.

First step: Eligibility

To be eligible for the grant of Australian Citizenship, a person must meet certain requirements. These include that a person:

- is a permanent resident of Australia;
- has lived in Australia as a permanent resident for at least two years in the previous five years, including at least 12 months in the last two years;
- is able to speak and understand basic English;
- understands the responsibilities and privileges of Australian Citizenship;
- is of good character;
- intends to reside in Australia or maintain a close association with Australia.

Second step: An application

A person wishing to become an Australian Citizen must complete a Citizenship application form and submit the form and fee to the nearest office of the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs.

An interview is then conducted with the applicant to assist in determining their eligibility for Citizenship.

Third step: Attending an Australian Citizenship ceremony

If a person is found to meet the requirements for Australian Citizenship, they must attend a Citizenship ceremony. The purpose of the Citizenship ceremony is to complete the legal requirement of making the Australian Citizenship Pledge and then to formally welcome them as Australian Citizens. It is one of the highlights of a new Citizen's life.

Everyone 16 years and over must attend a Citizenship ceremony and make the Australian Citizenship Pledge to become a Citizen by grant. A person becomes an Australian Citizen on the day they attend their Citizenship ceremony and make the Pledge of commitment to Australia.

Citizenship ceremonies are usually held periodically in town halls and other civic buildings and are usually presided over by the local Mayor.

THE STEPS TO BECOMING AN AUSTRALIAN CITIZEN

The acquisition of Australian Citizenship is a very important milestone in a migrant's life and as such their Citizenship ceremony is a special event and an occasion for celebration. New Citizens often invite family and friends to come to the ceremony and celebrate with their local community.

Another important part of a Citizenship ceremony is the presentation of the Certificate of Australian Citizenship. The Certificate is a symbol of a new life as an Australian Citizen and is provided to all new Citizens as legal proof of their Australian Citizenship.

A small gift or memento, such as a native Australian tree, is also often presented to the new Citizens to help them remember the occasion.

The Australian Citizenship Pledge

A key part of any Australian Citizenship ceremony is reciting the Australian Citizenship Pledge. The words of the Pledge are:

**From this time forward, *under God*,
I pledge my loyalty to Australia and its people,
whose democratic beliefs I share,
whose rights and liberties I respect,
and whose laws I will uphold and obey.**

The words of the pledge can be spoken in this form as an oath, or can be taken as an affirmation by omitting the words 'under God'.

ACTIVITY

Choose one:

1. As a multicultural society, many Australians have ties to other lands and spend time abroad. In such circumstances, what advantages are there in being an Australian Citizen?
2. Why do you think a person living in Australia (who is not already an Australian Citizen) should apply for Australian Citizenship? Write a newspaper report.
3. Contact your local council and find out when the next Citizenship ceremony is to be held in your local area. You may wish to attend.
4. Design a Certificate that you think fully signifies the meaning of being an Australian Citizen, which could be presented to new Australian Citizens.
5. What do the words of the Pledge mean to you? Write your own version of what you think a person who wishes to acquire Australian Citizenship should say in the Pledge.
6. Describe how important your Australian Citizenship is to you?

Australian Citizenship Assignment

Prepare a booklet for new citizens on Australian Democracy and Citizenship.

Present on hard copy and floppy disc using “Publisher” software or as a Power Point demonstration.

Include:

1. Becoming a citizen – privileges, responsibilities, ceremony
2. Our flag, Coat of Arms, National Anthem – translate into other languages where possible.
3. Illustrations of cultural diversity in Australia
4. Information on Aboriginal Australians
5. Information or illustrations on the Australian “way of life”
6. Diagrams on how the Government works
 - 3 levels of Government
 - Voting
 - Constitution
 - Courts
7. Any other “Aussie” highlights eg football, kangaroos, nature, peoples’ faces, Olympics.....
8. A summary of an interview with someone who has become an Australian citizen (questions provided)
 - Work in pairs
 - Include a bibliography and photo references
 - You may translate parts into another language eg Vietnamese, Chinese, German, Polish...

These can be sent to the Minister of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs or your local M.P. You can send it online to www.immi.gov.au

Web Sites:

www.atsic.gov.au

www.immi.gov.au

www.ash.org.au/teachers.afssse

www.learning21.org

www.citzine.ca

Interview with an Australian Citizen

- Why did you migrate to Australia?
- Has coming to Australia helped your lifestyle?
- What are some benefits of being an Australian citizen?
- Where did you come from?
 - How did you get here?
 - What are some of the similarities / differences between Australia and the country from which you have immigrated?
- What was your first impression of Australia?
- Do you encounter much hostility and racism?
- How did you find settling in?
- How were you treated when you arrived?
- Do you think Australia should become a republic?
- What advantages are there living in Australia?
- What is the greatest 'challenge' of settling into Australia?
- Are there any disadvantages of being in Australia?
- Should all migrants become Australian Citizens?

Bibliography

1. Australian Red Cross, Victoria. Civics and Citizenship
- Teacher and Student Activities.
2. “Australian Citizenship: A Sense of Belonging” Kit, Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs, Canberra, 2600. Telephone: 02 62 641 320.
3. Education for Responsible Citizenship, Social Education Association of Australia, 1997 (AFSSSE Website www.ash.org.au/teachers.afssse)
4. Moore, B et al “Issues in Australian Studies”, Macmillan, 1991 (Chapter 7 Australian Citizenship)
5. Federation Video – a three part journey to Nationhood Film, Australia (on the ABC, October, 1999)
6. “Australian Multiculturalism for a new century: towards inclusiveness”, National Multicultural Advisory Council, April, 1999.
7. Honours Secretariat
www.itsanhonour.gov.au or Freecall: 1800 552 275 or 02 6283 3533

Discovering Democracy materials, DETYA and Curriculum Corporation