

**UNIT TITLE:**

***Happy Birthday Australia***

**Writer/Management:**

Ms Robyn Mainsbridge and SOSE Associations  
Tasmania

**Audience:** ECE/Middle Primary

**Purpose:** To explore what it means to be Australian, using the context of the Centenary of Federation

**Links to Curriculum:**

SOSE  
TCC 1.2; 1.3; 2.1; 2.2; 2.3  
PS 1.5; 1.6  
NSS 1.13; 1.15;

National Key Competencies:

- Collecting, analysing and organising
- Communicating Ideas and Information
- Planning and Organising Activities
- Working with Others and in Teams
- Solving Problems

***Discovering Democracy links***

- Images, poems and stories from *Middle Primary Reader*
- Middle Primary *We Remember* Activity Cards
- *Discovering Democracy* poster – three levels of government
- Primary Video – *We Remember*
- *We Remember* teacher notes from *Middle Primary Units*
- *Discovering Democracy* CD ROM – *Stories of Democracy – National Anthem*
- *Flag: Australian Readers* – Upper Primary collection
- *One Destiny!* Enhanced CD ROM (when released, April 2001)

# Happy birthday Australia



## **Introductory Note:**

Early Childhood Education is an under resourced area in Civics and Citizenship (including Discovering Democracy) with most extant materials targeted at grades 4-10 students. This will be assisted in April 2001 with the arrival of the K-3 Discovering Democracy “Big Book” – but this unit is an attempt to provide some ideas and support for lower primary students using existing resources. The unit could easily adapted to incorporate activities and ideas from the Big Book once it arrives.

**Title of Unit:** Happy Birthday, Australia – Centenary of Federation

**Author:** Ms Robyn Mainsbridge and SOSE Associations, Tasmania

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## **Links and Resources:**

- <http://www.centenary.gov.au/>

Particularly: Federation Arches

Decade-by-Decade – Australian Women’s Weekly Posters.

Have Fun: Activity Book

Windows on Federation

Commemorative Medals activities and resources

Image Library

Federation Map

- *Discovering Democracy* Support Materials - Curriculum Corporation
  - (a) Images, poems and stories from *Middle Primary Reader*
  - (b) Middle Primary *We Remember* Activity Cards
  - (c) *Discovering Democracy* Poster illustrating the three levels of government
  - (d) Primary Video – *We Remember*
  - (e) *We Remember* teacher notes from *Middle Primary Units*
  - (f) *Discovering Democracy* CD ROM – *Stories of Democracy- National Anthem*
  - (g) *Flag: Australian Readers* – Upper Primary Collection.
  - (h) *One Destiny!* enhanced CD ROM (when released, April 2001)

## Local resources

- ASSPA Committee
- Project Officer – Discovering Democracy, Department of Education, Tasmania
- PEO – Studies of Society and the Environment, Department of Education, Tasmania
- Senior Curriculum Officers with Aboriginal Education, Equity Standards Branch, Department of Education, Tasmania



### The Unit:

Through this unit, students will explore what it means to be Australian and how Australia is represented through images and other texts. Federation and its Centenary will be used to explore national identity through largely visual texts.

An in-depth experience of what Centenary of Federation means for young children is clearly a challenge. Young children cannot be given a battery of facts about our past and present Parliaments, or about what Federation means in a purely political sense. This is not the way that students learn or construct their understandings. They learn through connecting with what is real, their prior knowledge and their areas of interest.

Early Childhood Education is the ‘Cradle of Civics and Citizenship’. Once students leave Early Childhood (Kindergarten to Grade 2) they have begun to make decisions about sharing, looking after themselves and others, and participating: the very basis of democracy.



### Key Questions:

1. Which symbols do Australians use to show who they are and what they value?
2. Which symbols represent our democratic nation?
3. How do we commemorate significant events and lives in Australia?
4. Who has made the decisions about the changes to our country?

### SOSE: A Curriculum Profile for Australian Schools - Strands:

#### Time, Continuity and Change

- 1.2 Places lifetime events and stages in sequence
- 1.3 Explores people’s origins and futures
- 2.1 Identifies similarities and differences in the lives of different generations

- 2.2 Uses calendars and objects to describe age and sequence
- 2.3 Identifies aspects of environments and family ways of life that have endured or changed

#### Place and Space

- 1.5 Identifies places that are important to self and others
- 1.6 Takes part in routines and projects to care for a significant place

## **Natural and Social Systems**

- 1.13 Identifies examples of elements of natural systems (including people)
- 1.15 Identifies how elements of systems meet own needs.

## **Australian National Key Competencies**

- Collecting, Analysing, and Organising Information
- Communicating Ideas and Information
- Planning and Organising Activities
- Working with Others and in Teams
- Solving Problems.



## **PART ONE: GUEST SPEAKERS**

### **“Serving Our Land”**

Guest speakers can greatly enrich a teaching program. Young children in particular, understand and retain more when provided with real life examples of what they are learning about. Representatives from the three levels of government at work in our federal system would provide a practical approach to enabling young students to make real life links between local, state and federal government as well as assist them in comprehending the contributions each level of government makes in managing and ruling Australia. Presenting a non-partisan approach to students is important in order to present an objective framework; one that enables them to make their own informed decisions.

#### **Each speaker will be asked to describe:**

- (a) What they do
- (b) How their work is part of the federal system of government
- (c) The highlights and lowlights of their work

#### **Representatives from each level of government will be involved, i.e.**

- Local Council
- State Government
- Federal Government
  
- Representative from the local Aboriginal community
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They will be asked to discuss their roles, how what they do contributes to the country as a whole and to the development of government over the last 100 years:



## **PART TWO: DISPLAY/COLLECTION OF FAMILY PHOTOGRAPHS/CELEBRATION**

### **“Everyone has a history!”**

A time line is a relatively abstract concept for young children to comprehend. In order to develop a working knowledge of what a time line means to young children, the starting point needs to begin with them personally and with their own families and experiences. This translates into what is significant in their lives and in their personal histories, as well as where those histories might intersect.

1. Videotape children answering the question “What does Federation mean to you?”
2. The children will make a birthday cake for Australia and be encouraged to bring in candles from home to make 100. The song ‘*Happy birthday*’ will be sung to the tune of *Advance Australia Fair!* (Or at least attempted). Read and listen to the words of ‘*Advance Australia Fair*’ on the *Discovering Democracy, Stories of Democracy* CD ROM.
3. The children will bring in photographs of their immediate and extended families dating back to the year of Federation: 1901. The photographs will then be grouped by decade from 1901 to present day. In this way the Centenary of Federation Celebration is placed within a contemporary context. A context that is real for young children.
4. The children will make a pizza in the shape of Australia. It will be cut into the states and territories of Australia. Discussion will occur as to who was allowed to vote for Federation in 1901. Boys in the class will represent each state. Girls and Aboriginals will be excluded from eating the pizza. The Principal will represent Henry Parkes and serve the cake. Just before the girls and Aboriginals get too upset at what is transpiring, fast forward to 2001 and begin to share pizza.
5. Debrief to share what it felt like to be part of the party, and what if felt like to miss out.



## PART THREE: SYMBOLS

### “Every picture tells a story”

Children learn to make sense of their world through their own personal stories and the stories of others. The following published stories of life on the land will support the children in moving into the adult world. Strong outcomes in literacy and learning what it means to be active informed Australian citizens can be achieved in this way:

1. Draw and redesign flags, coat of arms, emblems – use the *Discovering Democracy* activity cards, *We Remember* unit handouts (symbols and emblems) and posters. Also visit the *Discovering Democracy* website ([www.curriculum.edu.au/democracy](http://www.curriculum.edu.au/democracy)) to explore more symbols and representations of important national days, events and ideas.
2. Discuss National days and events – use the *Discovering Democracy*, *We Remember* video segments to explore and discuss days like Australia Day, Anzac and Remembrance Day for example.
3. Examine and redesign Banknotes and coins – use the *Create your Own Banknote* activity from the *Stories of Democracy* CD-ROM.
4. Discuss Local Street and suburb names – what they mean and what they represent.
5. Present medallions to the class by a 100 year old and a one year old – use appropriate activities from the *Australia. It's what we make it* medallions booklet.
6. Access *Discovering Democracy* CD ROM: Songs of Australia and Australian symbols.
7. Videotape children answering the question “What does Federation mean to you now?”

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