

UNIT TITLE:

***Everybody, Everybody, Everybody –
Environmental Citizenship***

Writer/Management:

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Audience: Middle to Upper Primary

Purpose: To promote environmental citizenship and encourage students to actively participate and take action on a local environmental project. The students will also explore way others have taken action in the past and in present times.

Links to Curriculum:

SOSE

Discovering Democracy links

- *Joining In teacher notes* - Middle Primary Units
- *Joining In* Poster
- *This is my Country* and *From Little Things Big Things Grow:* Australian Readers. Upper Primary Collection
- *Discovering Democracy through Research* (Taking Issue)
- *Stories of Democracy* CD-ROM – *Joining In* and *Parliament at Work* – *Save the Wombat* and *Opal Bay* simulations

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Links and Resources:

- *Discovering Democracy* Support Materials. Curriculum Corporation
 - *Joining In* teacher notes from *Discovering Democracy* Middle Primary Units
 - *Joining In* Poster
 - *This is my Country* and *From Little Things Big Things Grow*: Australian Readers. Upper Primary Collection.
 - *Discovering Democracy through Research* (Taking Issue)
 - *Stories of Democracy* CD ROM - *Joining In* and *Parliament at Work* CD ROM – *Save the Wombat* and *Opal Bay simulations*

- *Window*: Jeannie Baker
- *My Place*: Nadia Wheatley and Donna Rawlins.
- *My Patch*: Nel Smit.
- *The Paddock*: Lilith Norman and Robert Roennfeldt.

The Unit:

Since day one of European settlement of Australia and up to the present, there have been various levels of formal and informal democratic institutions and processes at work on the land of Australia. Students will participate in a four part study of their school's local environment. They will complete an in-depth exploration of what the federal system of government over the last 200 years means in real terms, how it works from local to global levels, and the role of people and parliament in this process. A range of *Discovering Democracy* materials will be used to support these investigations and explorations.

KEY QUESTIONS:

1. How has our federal system worked towards management of the land for all Australians?
2. In what ways has our land management changed since Federation?
3. Who has made the decisions about the changes to our natural environment?
4. What are active citizens responsibilities in relation to the land and as members of a global community?



PART ONE: LITERATURE BASE

Each of these selected stories give a sense of history in relation to the land. Students will be asked to brainstorm what has happened in Australia over the past 200 years – though for the purposes of the Centenary of Federation the focus could be more strongly on the last 100 years. This will give a child centered approach to the proposed study, (particularly in relation to land management by allowing students to see what has happened between then and now).

Resources:

This is my Country, From Little Things Big Things Grow, The Land is My Backbone, Arooka Dreaming, The Story of Tjirbruki, The People of the Southland, Antidote Australian Readers. Upper Primary Collection

<i>Window</i>	by Jeannie Baker
<i>My Place</i>	by Nadia Wheatley and Donna Rawlins.
<i>My Patch:</i>	by Nel Smit.
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Discovering Democracy- Stories of Democracy and Parliament at Work CD ROMs and websites. Compare and contrast the images and ideas about the Australian landscape – use the teacher notes in the Readers' Collections as starting points for discussion. Generate a display of "*The Land and Us*" inspired by the above stimulus material and other sources.

PART TWO: GUEST SPEAKERS PROGRAM

The following **guest speakers** who are responsible to each level of government will be invited to participate as guest speakers in the classroom program. They will be asked to discuss attitudes and practices of the land during the last 100 years in Australia.

- Hobart City Council: Bushcare Coordinator
- Greening Australia's (Tasmania) Bushcare staff
- Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife: Contact a ranger (State Government)
- Adopt-A-Patch: Contact the Coordinator of this Natural Heritage Funded project, responsible to the Federal Government.
- Contact local Aboriginal elders through the Speakers' Program

Students brainstorm questions to ask each speaker – may conduct informal audio/video interviews; take pictures with digital cameras; display findings on the school website.

Questions could include:

- What is your role in relation to the land?
- Who are you answerable to?
- What are your views on our local land practices?
- What are the 'big issues' about land?
- What would you like to see happen in the future?
- How can we help?

Use the *Discovering Democracy* poster set (Levels and functions of government) and the *Parliament at Work* CD-ROM and website to map how these relationships (and individuals and their responsibilities) intersect.

Possibly use the *Joining In, Stories of Democracy* interactive to explore the responsibilities of various levels of government, and the role of community groups

Some of these findings may lead to a local project as per the next section of this unit – use the guide and interview / investigations proformas and ideas in *Discovering Democracy through Research* (especially the following – *Taking Issue, Good Citizens, Our Town and Who Rules Here?*)

PART THREE: TAKING ACTION

Actively involve students in managing and restoring a piece of native habitat for wildlife through some of the following. These can be tailored to local site use for appropriateness, timing and content – for example, in the Centenary of Federation year it might be appropriate to Plan 100 Blue Gums or find some other topical and relevant strategy – this needs to be negotiated with students and local needs – which will be partly dependent on local habitats and issues

- Research into history of bush land via written and oral reports from other stakeholders including a media search.
- Listing of the changes to the bush area the students have observed since they have been at the school including the interviewing of the longer serving members of staff and community.
- Explore the ways others have taken action in the past through some of the Discovering Democracy materials, specifically:
 - Save the Wombat simulation (Parliament at Work CD ROM)
 - Opal Bay simulation (Parliament at Work CD ROM)
 - Getting Things Done (Video and interactive on the Stories of Democracy CD ROM)
 - People Power- video and *Stories of Democracy* interactive - concentrate on strategies for change rather than specific content
 - Clean Up Australia video segment from the primary video
- Investigation of current land use, vegetation structure and diversity, water, biodiversity and known threatened or rare species.
- Class discussion of group vision and main issues for the piece of native habitat and what they want to do about it
- Develop an action plan utilizing the Discovering Democracy through Research Book, 'Taking Issue' section.

PART FOUR: PROMOTING EDUCATION AND AWARENESS

In order to actively encourage the students to value their natural environment and have a sense of place and ownership they will be expected to report on their class work to their school community. They will see a strengthening and building of appreciation for their natural heritage. Through engaging the students in the following forms of reporting, brainstorm with students and encourage group explorations, investigations and actions based on student and local needs and interests.

Forms of reporting:

- Informing other classes via regular assemblies
- Setting up a mentor system to involve younger students in the action projects
- Presenting a public performance, using readings of poems, visual projections, video recordings, short drama scenes, and music to tell the story and present their findings, the issues and their action.
- School displays of ongoing rehabilitation of area
- Articles in school newsletters, school Intranet and Internet and local newspapers
- Public radio broadcasts
- Emails to other schools in the local area; presentation of findings on the web
- PowerPoint presentations.