



Minutes of Evidence Coranderrk Curriculum & Teacher Resource Package

Section 1 Enquiring about Inquiries

Curriculum links:

Victorian Curriculum: Civics and Citizenship Levels 9&10

Discuss the role of political parties and independent representatives in Australia's system of government, including the formation of governments, and explain the process through which government policy is shaped and developed (**VCCCG028**)

Discuss challenges to and ways of sustaining a resilient democracy and cohesive society (**VCCCC036**)

Discuss how and why groups, including religious groups, participate in civic life (**VCCCC037**)

This sequence of activities investigates the role of Inquiries in the Australian political system. Students are introduced to the concept of 'Inquiry', they define and distinguish between types of Inquiries, and investigate how inquiries inform governments and assist in decision making processes which can lead to policy change and changes to legislation

The following questions are posed:

- What is an inquiry?
- What types of Inquiries are within the Australian political system?
- How do Inquiries differ in roles and functions?

Background Information that could be provided in support of the unit

Definitions teachers could preface/provide/scaffold to students

Colony of Victoria
- Boards of Inquiry

Australian Government
- Senate Committee Inquiries
- House of Representatives Inquiries

- Joint committee Inquiries e.g.

Victorian government

- Legislative Assembly
- Legislative Council
- Judicial Inquiries

Royal Commissions

Resources

KWHL graphic organiser, large poster paper, coloured pens, whiteboard or interactive board, access to computers for online research.

Websites

The following websites will assist students with their research. Follow the subheadings on the site in question:

www.publicinquiries.com.au >Overview, History, Definition

www.aph.gov.au >Parliamentary business>Committees>Making a submission to an Inquiry

www.aph.gov.au >Parliamentary business>Committees>Senate Committees

www.aph.gov.au >Parliamentary business>Committees>House of Representative Committees

www.aph.gov.au >Parliamentary business>Committees>Joint committees

www.aph.gov.au >Parliamentary business>Committees>Getting involved in Parliamentary Committees

www.aph.gov.au >Parliamentary business>Committees>House of Representatives>Outline of an Inquiry process

www.aph.gov.au >Parliamentary business> Petitions

www.peo.gov.au Multimedia>Videos>About Parliament>Parliamentary Committees

www.peo.gov.au >Help>Glossary

www.peo.gov.au >Help>FAQs

www.parliament.vic.gov.au >Education Zone>Video &Audio> How Parliaments Committees Work

www.parliament.vic.gov.au >Legislative Council>Publications and research>Information sheets>6. Committees

Activity 1

- 1.1 Begin this activity by initiating a class discussion on what is meant by the word 'Inquiry'? Facilitate the discussion by asking:

When you think of the word inquiry, what comes to mind?

Accept general meaning responses and prompt students if required

with these follow up questions:

- Have you heard of Parliamentary Inquiries, Public Inquiries?
- What do you think they might be?
- What areas might they investigate?
- Can you recall any Inquiries and what they were about?
- What do you think is the purpose of an Inquiry?

Record student answers, and key points for future reference on a 'Know' sheet. Then proceed to record any questions and queries that have been identified during class discussion on a 'Want to know' sheet. Finally, record methods of 'How' the investigation can be advanced. Explain to students that during the investigation they will have the opportunity to add information to the 'Learnt' sheet.

Teacher note: Information can be added during each session, as it is envisaged that as students progress through the unit more **Want to know**, **How to find out** and **Learnt** will be added. Also if possible, display the four sheets in the classroom as visual reminders during each lesson and to add further information and queries as appropriate.

Assessment point: These graphic organiser sheets will also serve as a record of learning and can form part of class assessment.

- 1.2 Organise students to work in small 'inquiry' groups to firstly formulate a definition of an Inquiry, and secondly to research one type of Inquiry.

Allocate one type of Inquiry to each group from the following: House of Representatives, Standing Committee, Senate, Joint Committee, Public, Judicial and Royal Commissions.

Instruct student groups to research and gather information on the role, functions, membership and scope of the type of inquiry being researched. Provide students with the websites listed for this activity to assist in the research.

- 1.3 Draw 'Inquiry groups' back together and re-assign a member of each to a new group so that each new group has a member with "expert knowledge' on each type of Inquiry. Ask each new member of the group to share the information gathered. ('Jigsaw' information activity)

Using this information, instruct students to analyse the types of Inquiries showing the similarities and differences between each researched Inquiry. Graphic organisers such as Venn diagrams or T Charts could assist students to analyse this information. Ask each group to decide how they wish to present the information about Inquiries.

Some suggestions: a crossword with clues, a written report, a flowchart, power point or web based application such as a Wordle, Tagxedo, Popplet.

Teacher note: *Jigsaw refers to a learning organisational method where individuals or each group of students – usually small – researches a different, yet related area of study and then shares it with the rest of the class or within a new group, thus ‘jig sawing’ all areas of study together to give all students the ‘full picture’. Its benefit is that it is an efficient use of time for a large area of study/investigation and allows for a more comprehensive and in-depth analysis of information and data, and avoids repetition when investigating related content.

1.4 Draw groups back together to share information and displays.

Facilitate a discussion on the following questions:

- What are the key features of Inquiries?
- How do Inquiries benefit Parliamentary processes and decision-making?
- What are the impacts of Inquiries on the public
- Why are people willing to participate in the Inquiry process?
- Are there any perceived issues, problems, or benefits in the Inquiry system?

Give students the opportunity to share any other points of interest in the discussion. This discussion will assist students to clarify information, share and refine ideas and opinions.

Finally, instruct each student to write a short 5-10 sentence statement about Inquiries.

Teacher note: Do not direct or prompt students during this exercise as it can be used as an assessment task.

Assessment point: group presentations, class discussion points, individual participation within the discussion, individual statements can be used for assessment purposes.