

Grades

7-10

History & Social Studies

Unit 11

“Australian Federation to World War 2 (& Cooperation)”



‘Opening of the first Parliament of Australia’ by artist Tom Roberts



History & Social Studies (Grades 7-10)

“Australian Federation to World War 2 (& Cooperation)”

SUMMARY:

“Lest we forget”: So we don’t forget our heritage and the sacrifices of the people who contributed to keeping Australia free and making Australia great; this unit explores the life of Australians at the turn of the 20th century. We read the amazing stories of how Australians came together to form a modern nation, how they fought together for our freedoms, and sacrificed everything to make the world a better place.

RESOURCES:

All the information you need is included within the informational story in each lesson plan.

The hands-on or creative activities are designed to use materials you will likely have already in your home, but you should maintain some **art and craft materials**.

Each child will also need a **History Journal** (i.e., a lined exercise book for writing responses to questions, planning notes for creative projects, and other activities). It is also helpful to have a good **dictionary**.

Three lessons a week will provide the basic learning. To enjoy a richer learning experience, you could supplement the lessons with extra books about the topics in this unit, from your local library.

Some suggestions for extra reading include but are not limited to...

- To be advised

Prior to starting each week, review the recommended resources.

Contents

Week	Description	Page
Week 1	Australian Society in 1900	
Week 2	Australian States, Regions and Civic Life	
Week 3	Australian Law & Order	
Week 4	World War 1 (Part 1)	
Week 5	World War 1 (Part 2)	
Week 6	Between the Wars	
Week 7	World War 2 (Part 1)	
Week 8	World War 2 (Part 2)	
Assessment		

LINKS TO THE AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM v.9

Week 1: Australian Society in 1900

1. Australian Society at the turn of the 20th Century (AC9HH9K05; AC9HH10K11; AC9HH10K12; AC9HH10K13; AC9HH10K18; AC9HH10K20; AC9HH10S07)
2. Australian Society's Ideas, Beliefs & Values in 1900 (AC9HH9K06; AC9HH10K11; AC9HH10K12; AC9HH10K13; AC9HH10K18; AC9HH10K20; AC9HH10S07)
3. The Federation of Australia (AC9HC7K01; AC9HC&K02; AC9HC7K03; AC9HC&K04; AC9HC7K05; AC9HH9K07; AC9HH10K11; AC9HH10K12; AC9HH10K13; AC9HH10K18)

Week 2: Australian States, Regions and Civic Life

4. The Contribution of Individuals & Groups in Civic Life (AC9HC9K05; AC9HC9S04; AC9HH10K11; AC9HH10K12; AC9HH10K13; AC9HH10K18; AC9HH10K20; AC9HH10S07)
5. Australian States & Regions (AC9HG10K02; AC9HG10K03; AC9HG10K07; AC9HG10S06; AC9HH10K20; AC9HH10S07)
6. Australian States & Regions (Continuing yr 9 & 10 Geography & Civics)

Week 3: Australian Law & Order

7. The Australian Constitution (AC9HC7K01; AC9HC7K03; AC9HC7K04; AC9HC7K05; AC9HC9K01; AC9HC10K01; AC9HC10K02; AC9HC10K03; AC9HC10S05)
8. Legislative Processes of the Australian Federal Government (AC9HC7K01; AC9HC7K03; AC9HC9K02; AC9HC9S01; AC9HC10K01; AC9HC10S05)
9. The Court System in Australia (AC9HC7K03; AC9HC7K05; AC9HC8K03; AC9HC8K04; AC9HC8S03; AC9HC9K03; AC9HC9K04; AC9HC9K03; AC9HC9K04; AC9HC10K05; AC9HC10S03; AC9HC10S04)

Week 4: World War 1 (Part 1)

10. Causes of World War 1 & Reasons Why Australians Enlisted to Fight (AC9HH8S06; AC9HH8S07; AC9HH9K08)
11. Gallipoli & the Western Front (AC9HH9K09)
12. Australia in the Middle East (AC9HH9K09)

Week 5: World War 1 (Part 2)

13. Significant Turning Points of the War (AC9HH9K10)
14. Effects of World War 1 on Australian Society (including the role of women; political debates about conscription; relationships with the British Empire) (AC9HH8S06; AC9HH8S07; AC9HH9K11)
15. The ANZACS & Experiences of Returned Soldiers. (AC9HH8S07; AC9HH8S07 ; AC9HH9K11; AC9HH9K12)

Week 6: Between the Wars

16. The Roaring 20s (AC9HH8S06; AC9HH8S07; AC9HH10K01)
17. The Great Depression (AC9HH8S06; AC9HH8S07; AC9HH10K01)
18. Causes of World War 2 (AC9HH8S06; AC9HH8S07; AC9HH10K01)

Week 7 & 8: World War 2 (Part 1 &2)

19. The Battle of Britain (AC9HH8S06; AC9HH8S07; AC9HH10K02)
20. Kokoda (AC9HH10K02)
21. Australia's Home Front (AC9HH10K04)
22. The Holocaust (AC9HH8S06; AC9HH8S07; AC9HH10K03)
23. The Atomic Bomb (AC9HH8S06; AC9HH8S07; AC9HH10K03)
24. The Significance and Commemoration of World War 2 (AC9HH8S06; AC9HH8S07; AC9HH10K05; AC9HH10K06)

Lesson 1: Australian Society at the Turn of the 20th Century

Australian Curriculum:

AC9HH9K05 – The nature of Australian society around the year 1900, including the experiences of men, women and children, and the influence of British culture

AC9HH10K11 – Significant events & methods in civil rights for First Nations Australians

AC9HH10K12 – Significant events in the women's movement, & changes to the role & status of women

AC9HH10K13 – Civil rights & freedoms for First Nations Australians, migrants & women

AC9HH10K18 – Continuities & changes in perspectives, responses, beliefs & values, & how these influenced the Australian way of life.

AC9HH10K20 – Historical interpretations & debates in the second half of the 20th century.

AC9HH10S07 – Analyse contested historical interpretations.

Lesson Introduction

Student Instructions:

Today we are going to explore what life was really like in Australia around the year 1900. That's more than 120 years ago, when your great-great-grandparents might have been children. As you read this lesson, look out for differences between then and now. What values shaped people's daily lives? What did people do for work, for fun, and for family? How were men, women, and children treated differently? And how much of British culture still shaped the young Australian colonies?

This lesson includes a historical story written from the perspective of several people living in 1900. Afterwards, you'll complete a creative activity and reflect on your learning. Ready to step back in time?

Informational Story

"Snapshots from 1900: A Day in Colonial Australia"

The sun rose over the neat rows of weatherboard homes in the Melbourne suburb of Hawthorn.

Soft golden light crept through the curtains of the Murphy household as kettles were filled and fires rekindled. In 1900, there were no electric stoves or instant hot water – just cast-iron ranges (ie., oven-stove-fire-box) and patience.

Mrs Harriet Murphy was already in her apron, peeling potatoes and boiling tea, humming a hymn she had sung at



Sunday service. Harriet was a mother of four and the wife of a bank clerk. She spent most of her day cooking, cleaning, sewing, and looking after the children – especially her youngest, little Elsie, who was prone to sniffles and mischief.

Upstairs, 15-year-old Thomas Murphy was wrestling with his collar. “Mum!” he called. “Where’s my cravat?” His school uniform, starched and buttoned, was hot and scratchy, but school was a privilege. Thomas attended a grammar school run by the Church of England, and though classes were stern, he dreamed of one day becoming a lawyer or a Member of Parliament.

His younger sister, 13-year-old Clara, was not at school today. She helped her mother mend socks and darn sleeves, her fingers already skilled with a needle. Most girls her age left school by 12 or 13 to assist at home or work in service.

Far from the city in western New South Wales, on a wide, red-dirt sheep station, lived the O’Connor family. Mr Patrick O’Connor had come from Ireland during the gold rush but had found steadier work as a stockman and grazier. The family lived in a modest timber homestead, with a tin roof and wide verandah.

Ten-year-old Michael O’Connor had already fed the chooks and gathered firewood. His little sister Rose, aged seven, carried a bucket of milk from their jersey cow. There was no school nearby, but the children read the Bible and poetry aloud each day while their mother, Annie, taught them sums and spelling.

Annie’s hands were rough from soap-making and scrubbing, but her mind was sharp. She had grown up in a one-room schoolhouse and wanted better for her children. Still, out here, books were scarce, and every child had to help on the land. “Hard work builds character,” she often said.

Their neighbour, old Mr Macleod, was a widower and war veteran. He told stories of fighting in the Sudan, of Queen Victoria’s Jubilee, and the glory of the Empire. Though many young Australians had never seen Britain, most still thought of themselves as British subjects.



In a fishing village near Fremantle, twelve-year-old Amina Hassan watched her father haul in the nets. Her family, pearl divers from the Malay Archipelago, had lived in Australia for a decade, though few locals welcomed them. People of Asian or Islander descent were sometimes viewed with suspicion. They couldn’t vote or own land in many places, and were barred from public swimming baths and railway carriages. This was not the way England and the first Governor Philip wanted for the new colony. The message from England was that everyone should be treated as equal subjects of the Crown, with equal rights; but somehow as things developed away from the homeland, attitudes and laws turned out differently to Queen Victoria’s expectations.



Amina's mother, Laila, made beautiful batik garments and told stories of her island childhood. Though they paid taxes and followed the law, their family was often treated as though they were not quite "truly Australian." Yet they were resilient and proud.

Some of Amina's friends were Aboriginal girls who had been rescued from an abusive situation, or from danger during a tribal war. They had been taken in by some kind missionaries, and placed in mission schools. Others worked in laundries or as servants. You found work wherever you could.

In Sydney, in the thick of bustling George Street, two men read the newspaper aloud from a street corner: *"Debate continues about Federation of the colonies. Mr Barton argues for unity under one Constitution."*

It was 1900, and the six Australian colonies (New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, South Australia, Western Australia, and Tasmania) were still self-governing, but change was coming. The people had voted in referenda across the country, and by next year, 1901, the colonies would become one nation under the Commonwealth of Australia. A new federal parliament, a High Court, and a Constitution were on the way.



Not everyone was thrilled. Some feared it would increase taxes. Others thought it didn't go far enough in giving workers or minorities a voice. Yet there was a sense of pride: Australia would become a nation, finally equal in status to Canada and New Zealand.

In the remote town of Kalgoorlie, on the edge of the desert, gold fever still burned. Miners worked long hours underground in dangerous conditions. Unions were rising in strength, demanding fair wages and safer work sites. Strikes were common.

Mrs Wang, a Chinese-Australian widow, ran a boarding house for single miners. She cooked rice and damper, brewed herbal teas, and prayed each night in both English and Mandarin. Though there were obvious difficulties when you come from a non-English culture, over time, the local people saw her good deeds and began to trust her.

Across all these scenes, one thread tied them together – hard work, hope, and a belief in progress. Churches were full on Sundays, neighbours often helped one another, and people dreamed of a better future for their children.

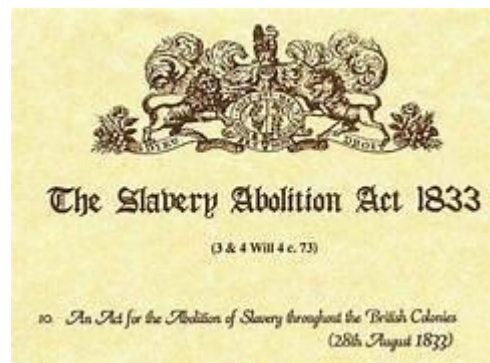
Although there was still some inequality for women and Aboriginal and Islander people, Australia was leading the world in human rights.

What most modern rights activists don't realise about our history is that in the 1850s under the constitutions of Victoria, New South Wales and South Australia, Aboriginal men had the same right to vote as other male British subjects aged over 21. However, it wasn't until 1896 that Tasmania granted Aboriginal men franchise.

In 1895 **South Australia became the first electorate in the world** to give [equal political rights to both women and men](#). Aboriginal women shared these rights.

However, laws specifically intended to deny the vote to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were enacted by Queensland (1885), Western Australia (1893) and the Northern Territory (1922); and so it took until 1965 for the last state to update its law.

That was Australia in 1900: young, hopeful, hardworking, and leading the world in human rights, because we were founded on Christian principles.



Activity: Create a “1900 Life Comparison Scrapbook”

Instructions:

Create a digital or printed mini-scrapbook comparing daily life in Australia in 1900 to life in Australia today. Choose three categories from this list:

- Food and Cooking
- School and Education
- Women’s Roles
- Children’s Responsibilities
- Technology and Inventions
- Government and Voting
- Clothing and Fashion

For each category:

1. Find **two historical photos or paintings** from 1900 that match your theme.
2. Write a short paragraph explaining what life was like in 1900.
3. Add a current photo or take one yourself to show how that aspect of life has changed.
4. Write a paragraph describing the differences you notice.

Where to find images:

- Trove – National Library of Australia
- National Museum of Australia – 1900s
- Australian War Memorial – Early 20th Century
- State Library of NSW – Historic Photographs

Optional:

Print your scrapbook or save it as a PDF. Share it with your family and explain what surprised you most.

Biblical Reflection

Due to the influence of Christians in England, the British played a pivotal role in leading the world towards abolishing slavery through a combination of internal abolitionist movements, legislative action, and external pressure on other nations. The British Slave Trade Act of 1807 banned the British slave trade, and the Slavery Abolition Act of 1833 outlawed slavery in the British Empire, freeing over 800,000 enslaved

people. Britain also used its influence to encourage other countries to abolish the slave trade, sometimes through treaties and diplomatic pressure, and even compensated slave owners in its own colonies. Various African tribes were still capturing slaves from other tribes and selling them to slave-traders from different nations. There were also nomadic Muslim Arabs who were slave traders to various countries.

Because Australia in 1900, had been shaped by British traditions and ideas, many Christian values were at the heart of daily life: hard work, charity, family, respect for life, and faith. As you reflect on this time in history, consider this verse:

“He has shown you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God?” (Micah 6:8)

As with people in other countries, Australians were not always just or merciful, but the people who followed God often worked to improve their society. As you learn history, ask how you too can “act justly” in your own world.

Narration Activity:

If your parent/tutor is available now, ask them to listen while you retell what you have just learnt. Or if they are not available now, then tell your story during your lunch break today.

Lesson 2: Australian Society's Ideas, Beliefs & Values in 1900

Australian Curriculum:

AC9HH9K06 – The ideas, beliefs and values that shaped the Australian colonies and the experiences of people who migrated to Australia in the 19th century

AC9HH10K11 – Significant events & methods in civil rights for First Nations Australians

AC9HH10K12 – Significant events in the women's movement, & changes to the role & status of women

AC9HH10K13 – Civil rights & freedoms for First Nations Australians, migrants & women

AC9HH10K18 – Continuities & changes in perspectives, responses, beliefs & values, & how these influenced the Australian way of life.

AC9HH10K20 – Historical interpretations & debates in the second half of the 20th century.

AC9HH10S07 – Analyse contested historical interpretations.

Lesson Introduction

Student Instructions:

What did people in 1900 Australia believe about life, society, God, race, and the future? Today we'll explore the key ideas and values that shaped Australian society at the turn of the 20th century. We'll look at how Christian beliefs influenced daily life, how views about race and gender were shaped by British ideals, and how hope, duty, and national pride helped shape the new Federation.

The ideas presented in this lesson are in many ways controversial because they are countercultural to the common views of today's mainstream media and social media. The author does not intend any disrespect to any people group. However, there is a groundswell of anti-white narrative that has become popular based on a distortion of truth, and it needs to be contested. The aim here is to help students to understand the worldviews that shape people's thoughts and actions.

As Dr Nigel Biggar has said... *"We do not wish to ever deny that European or British colonialism caused grief and harm to Indigenous peoples. But the British empire also chalked up some major humanitarian and liberal achievements. So, we want the whole story to be told, not just part of it, and we want the record of British colonialism to be put in its proper context, namely a world where, long before Europeans and Britons arrived [in Australia], the indigenous culture included [some serious humanitarian abuses]"*. And the coming of Western civilisation, to some degree, put a stop to these abuses (although they still continue in outback indigenous communities). Biggar, Dr. N (2023) 'Colonialism: A Moral Reconning', Harper Collins Publishers (AU).

This lesson includes a complex historical story. Be prepared to think deeply about how beliefs shape decisions, and how they shaped a nation.

Normally, in this curriculum, we do not include bibliographical references, so as to focus on the flow of the story. However, some topics have become more controversial since the 'woke' revisioning of history that has occurred over the last couple of decades. For this reason, it is prudent to include the academic references to validate the information given. In today's lesson, the reference citations are included.

Informational Story

“What We Believed: Stories from the Heart of 1900”

A Farmer’s Musings on Federation: The sun was barely up as Thomas Hall hitched the horses to the plough. The year was 1900, and the morning dew clung to the wheat like silver threads. As Thomas worked the soil, he thought about more than crops and rain. Everyone in the district was talking about Federation – the colonies joining to become one nation next year.



He wiped the sweat from his brow and paused to straighten his back. “Well Betsy - I’m not certain if it’ll do us any good out here” he muttered to his horse. “I’ve worked this patch of land in New South Wales since I was a lad. Never had much need for politicians or paperwork”.

“Still, there’s been talk at the town hall meetings. They say the new nation – Australia, they’ll call it – will have one set of trade rules, one army, one government. Might make it easier to send our wool and wheat to Victoria without all them taxes and border checks. That’d save us a fair bit”.

“They say we’ll get a fairer say in Parliament, including country folks like us. I suppose I’ll believe it when I see it. My neighbour, old Mr. Jackson, reckons we’ll just be swallowed up by city folk and their fancy schemes”.

“Still, I can’t help feeling a stir of hope. Maybe this Federation means we’re growing up – not just colonies anymore, but one people. Maybe my boys will grow up in a country that stands strong, together.”

Mrs Hall rang the farm-bell for dinner, and Thomas headed home. The paddocks behind him were ready for harvest – and perhaps, so was the land itself. Ready for something new. “Maybe this Federation idea isn’t such a bad thing after all.”

Meanwhile, in the town of Bendigo, 17-year-old Patrick Chen was finishing a long day delivering laundry. His father had migrated from Canton during the 1850s to escape famine. But life had not been easy. Chinese migrants at first found it difficult because of the different language and culture; and some narrow-minded people blamed them for disease or unemployment.

Patrick had grown up hearing taunts in the street: “Go back to China!” “Yellow menace!” But he was inspired by successful and respected Christian businessmen like Quong Tart; and so, Patrick’s father always reminded him: “We are guests in this land. Show respect. Work hard. God sees us.”

The Chens attended a small Methodist church. Though some white congregants were a little suspicious of them, others shared meals and friendship. Patrick had learned to hold two truths together: he belonged to both China and



Quong Tart outside his Loong Shan Tea House on King Street in Sydney.
Photo: State Library of NSW

Australia, and his faith made him fully human, even when occasionally others treated him as less.

He had memorised the verse, *“There is neither Jew nor Greek... for you are all one in Christ Jesus”* (Galatians 3:28); and he tried to live out that truth.

In Hobart, Tasmania, 21-year-old Mary Woodford was training to be a teacher. She boarded at the Ladies’ Seminary, where young women learned French, piano, scripture, and moral philosophy. Mary believed that education was the key to women’s improvement.

“One day,” she wrote in her journal, “women may vote, speak in Parliament, and become doctors. But for now, we must lead quietly – by influence, not authority.”



Some women in 1900 were already fighting for ‘suffrage’. ‘Suffrage’ also known as ‘political franchise’, or simply ‘franchise’ is the right to vote in public, political elections and referendums. South Australia had granted women the vote in 1894, and New Zealand women had voted since 1893. But in other colonies, female suffrage was still controversial.

Newspapers printed articles warning that too many educated women would “abandon motherhood” or “forget their gentle nature.” Yet women like Mary believed their Christian faith called them to use every gift God gave, including their minds.

What many anti-western, anti-colonialists fail to realise is that women did not have equal rights with men in the majority of nations and cultures in the world; and the vast majority of cultures still engaged in slavery and slave-trading. Whereas it was England and the British colonies and commonwealth nations who were inspired by Christian reformers, and they were leading the world in both banning slavery and fighting for equal rights of all citizens including women, indigenous people, and foreign immigrants.

Meanwhile, on the far edge of Arnhem Land, an old Yolŋu elder named Djalŋu sat under the stars with his grandson. He told stories of the land, the sky, the turtle, and the snake. He spoke in language, painting images in the sand.

Although he had become a Christian through the kindness and love of a nearby Christian sheep station owner, Djalŋu had kept his ancestral stories alive. “God is great,” he said, “and He gave us this land, and these stories too. Never forget.”



Aboriginal beliefs, were deeply spiritual. Many Aboriginal people understood the land itself to be sacred – a story from the Dreaming, filled with life and meaning. This belief in land-as-identity clashed with European ideas of land ownership and fencing off paddocks for farmland.

In Adelaide, Rev. Samuel Walker stood at the pulpit of St. Matthew's Anglican Church. He was preaching on the topic of "Christian duty in a modernising world." He preached from a handwritten manuscript, as was the custom.

"My dear brethren," he began, "God has blessed this land. Though young in years, we are rich in promise. We must train our children in righteousness, we must honour our Queen, and uplift the native races with Christian truth."

This view that it was a good and uplifting thing to bring Western culture to the Aboriginal people was a common view at the time – and although, in the 21st century, it may seem a little arrogant – the historical records show that the Aboriginal people did not have such an idyllic noble humane culture as some would have us believe.

During periods of drought, Aboriginal tribes could kill up to one third of all new-born babies so that the tribe could feed everyone else (Chavurah, 2025). The anthropologists Ronald and Catherine Berndt, who lived and worked among Aboriginal Australians at Ooldea (1941), Northern Territory cattle stations (1944–46) and Balgo (1957–81), note that *"infanticide does seem to have been practised occasionally almost all over Aboriginal Australia, [although not frequently]"*. [Berndt, RM & CH (1977). *The World of the First Australians*", (2nd ed) Sydney: Ure Smith p. 470]

Other reports show that domestic violence was rampant, girls were raped, and the women frequently bashed (AIHW, 2018). Even in 2014 - 15, a government report showed that Indigenous women were 32 times as likely to be hospitalised due to family violence as non-Indigenous women, while Indigenous men were 23 times as likely to be hospitalised as non-Indigenous men (AIHW, 2018; SCRGSP 2016). In 2015 - 16, Indigenous children were 7 times as likely to be the subject of substantiated child abuse or neglect as non-Indigenous children (AIHW 2017a).

In Australian Indigenous cultures, one 'sorry business' custom was that women had to bash their own heads with rocks to show grief for a dead husband, and to show they are sorry for not caring for him better (this often led to brain damage), and then the other tribe members would also beat her (Giner, 2011). Records from women who had been rescued from abusive tribal situations show that none of them wished life was just like before (Chavurah, 2025).

The tribal law of 'payback' was often brutal and deadly, and so were the wars between tribes. Early records show that one Aboriginal tribe in Tasmania had vowed to totally exterminate another tribe.

While the positive aspects of Aboriginal culture and their connection to the land, and knowledge of nature and survival skills can and should be preserved, there are some aspects of tribal life, that were completely inhumane, and needed to be called out for what they are.



- Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW), *Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence in Australia 2018* (Canberra, Australia: AIHW, 2018). [[Google Scholar](#)]
- Berndt, RM & CH (1977). *The World of the First Australians*", (2nd ed) Sydney: Ure Smith p. 470
- Biggar, Dr. N (2023) 'Colonialism: A Moral Reconning', Harper Collins Publishers (AU).
- Chavura, Dr. S (2023) 'Reason, Religion and the Australian Polity: A Secular State?' (Routledge Studies in Modern History Book 49)
- Giner, F (2011) '*Heart of Arnhem Land*', Longeville Books, NSW
- Rubinstein, WD (2004) "Genocide: a History", Pearson Education, p.16
- SCRGSP (2016) '*Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators 2016*'. Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision.

- Video: 'The Myth of Indigenous History', John Anderson Media
 - Video: 'Infanticide in Pre-colonial Australia', Dr Stephen Chavura, John Anderson Media, 2025.
 - Wills, E. & Fitts, M. (2024) *Listening to the Voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women in Regional and Remote Australia About Traumatic Brain Injury From Family Violence: A Qualitative Study*
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Worldview Context about the Land & Property: The ideas in the previous story of Djalul highlight the mixing of two distinct worldviews.

The Aboriginal perspective was that no-one owns the land, and so an Aboriginal person would never put up a fence. Rather, the land owned the people, and gave them their identity.

Author Bruce Pascoe (in his book 'Dark Emu') has promoted a false idea that Indigenous Australians farmed the land with agriculture, horticulture and aquaculture, and even built permanent villages. However, this concept has been proven false by respected anthropologists and archaeologists (Rintoul 2021, Sutton & Walshe 2021, Keen 2021).

The Indigenous Australians did have a deep respect for the land, but there is no reputable record of them being agricultural farmers who built permanent houses and towns. Indigenous Australians were definitely nomadic, which means they moved from place to place, and so hunted and gathered food and resources from one area, and then when an area was nearly depleted, they moved on to another area.

Rintoul, S (2021) "*Debunking Dark Emu: Did the Publishing Phenomenon Get it Wrong?*", Sydney Morning Herald.

Sutton, P & Walshe, K (2021) "*Farmers or Hunter-Gatherers? The Dark Emu Debate*", Quadrant Publishers.

Keen, I (2021) "*Dark Emu and the Controversy Over Aboriginal Agriculture*", Australian National University

Windschuttle, K (2004 & 2009) "*The Fabrication of Aboriginal History*" (Vols. 1&3)

In contrast to the Aboriginal worldview about the land, Western civilisation is based on the Biblical view that while God ultimately owns all the land and everything in it, and His people are meant to be good stewards of the land given to them by God. The Bible supports private ownership and responsibility for land, possessions and finances. God then expects people to care for and manage their resources responsibly ("to tend the garden"), so as not to be a burden on others by providing for their own needs; and then to also give to others. The Bible promotes an ethic of working hard, benefitting from that work to provide for your family, wisely storing assets to provide for your family during times of difficulty (illness or famine); and also accruing enough so you have plenty to give away and help those in need. Because the Aboriginal people placed no value in storing up for hard times, records show that they developed a custom of killing up to a third of their newborn babies during times of drought, so they could feed the rest of the tribe. [Rubinstein, WD (2004) "Genocide: a History", Pearson Education, p.16]

In the small coastal town of Albany, Western Australia, 14-year-old Grace Donnelly tucked a sprig of wattle into her diary and sat down to write. It was September 1900, and spring had come in a burst of gold and green.

"Dear Diary,

Mr Barton spoke again in Parliament today. Papa says we might become a federated nation by next year. That means our colony will unite with the others, under one government! Papa says it's time we all joined together to become Australians, not just British settlers, Aboriginals, Islanders, Asians etc. We are all Australians."

Grace paused her pen. She had been born in Australia, but her grandparents were from Glasgow. They had come for the gold rush, bringing only a Bible, a box of silverware, and strong opinions about how the ‘good life’ should be lived.

Grace, like most girls her age, was raised on ideas of duty, loyalty, and modesty. She read the Bible each morning, learned embroidery each afternoon, and helped with church fairs on weekends. She believed, as most Australians did at the time, that men should lead, women should nurture, we should all help our neighbours when in need, and God should rule over all.

Ideas That Shaped 1900 Australia:

As you can see, people in 1900 held many different beliefs, but some big ideas shaped society as a whole:

- **The Value of Civilisation:** Most settlers saw Britain as the model for civilisation, law, and order.
 - **Christian Morality:** The Bible shaped views on marriage, parenting, education, diligence in work, charity/generosity, and the sanctity of all life.
 - **Racial Hierarchies:** Some people who had accepted the ideas of Darwinian evolution believed white Europeans were more “advanced” or “more evolved” than indigenous natives. This idea led to many injustices, and it was not a Christian view.
 - **Hard Work & Nationhood:** There was a growing pride in the idea of Australia as a strong, moral, hardworking society.
 - **Role of Women:** Women were expected to be pure, gentle, and domestic—but that was beginning to change.
 - **Faith & Progress:** Faith in God, and in Australia’s future, walked side by side.
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Activity: Design a “Beliefs & Values Wall Poster”

Instructions:

Create a wall poster (either on A3 paper or digitally using Canva, PowerPoint, or Google Slides) that displays five key beliefs or values from Australian society in 1900. For each belief:

1. Give it a short title (e.g. “Faith in God”, “British Loyalty”, “Women’s Duty”).
2. Write a 2 - 3 sentence explanation of what this value meant and how it was seen in daily life.
3. Add a historical quote or Bible verse that matches it.
4. Add one historical image or painting from the time to illustrate it.

Helpful Websites for Finding Images:

- Trove – National Library of Australia
- [Australian History Timeline – MyPlace](#)
- [Australian Museum – Beliefs & Society](#)
- State Library of Victoria – Photographs Collection

When finished, hang your poster in your study space or include it in your portfolio.

Biblical Reflection

The values that shaped Australia in 1900 were a mix of mostly honourable and some harmful. While many Australians were guided by Christian faith, others used their secular humanist and Darwinian beliefs to justify exclusion and inequality. As Christians, we're called to examine our values by the light of Scripture.

"Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind."
Romans 12:2

This verse reminds us to think critically about the beliefs we inherit. Some ideas may need to be challenged – others, strengthened. Ask yourself: What beliefs guide my life today? Where did they come from (parents, wise mentors, the Bible, or Social Media here-say, Google & AI, television and movies, or friends who heard it from someone else)? Are your beliefs and ideas about the world grounded in God's truth, or in the passing ideas of society?

Narration Activity:

If your parent/tutor is available now, ask them to listen while you retell what you have just learnt. Or if they are not available now, then tell your story during your lunch break today.

Lesson 3: The Federation of Australia

Australian Curriculum:

AC9HC7K01 – Australian government, democracy and the Constitution
AC9HC7K02 – Characteristics of democracy
AC9HC7K03 – Australian legal system, Constitution, rule of law and court system.
AC9HC7K04 – The diverse cultural origins of Australia’s democratic system based on Christian and Western Heritage.
AC9HC7K05 – Common Australian & democratic values.
AC9HH9K07 – The key events, ideas, people and attitudes that led to Federation and shaped Australia’s system of government
AC9HH10K11 – Significant events & methods in civil rights for First Nations Australians
AC9HH10K12 – Significant events in the women’s movement, & changes to the role & status of women
AC9HH10K13 – Civil rights & freedoms for First Nations Australians, migrants & women
AC9HH10K18 – Continuities & changes in perspectives, responses, beliefs & values, & how these influenced the Australian way of life.

Lesson Introduction

Student Instructions:

Before 1901, Australia didn’t exist as a single nation. Instead, six colonies (New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, South Australia, Western Australia, and Tasmania) each had their own government, army, taxes, and laws. [The area now known as the Northern Territory was part of South Australia.] Today, we’ll explore how and why these colonies came together to form one federated country, and how the people of the time viewed this historic decision.

In this lesson, you’ll read a historical narrative, then complete a creative timeline activity and a narration task. As you read, consider what *united* the colonies, and what almost *stopped* Federation from happening.

Informational Story

“The Year We Became One: Stories from Federation”

It was a warm January morning in 1901 when the streets of Sydney filled with cheering. Union Jack flags waved, brass bands played, and children climbed lamp-posts just to glimpse the parade. Crowds had travelled from across the colonies – some by train, others on horseback or steamboat. For today was historic: the official birth of the Commonwealth of Australia.

Six colonies were about to become one nation.

Twelve-year-old William Cooper was among the crowd, clinging tightly to his father’s coat. He couldn’t see much, but he felt the energy – a mix of excitement, pride, and something else. “Why is everyone so happy, Pa?” he asked.



“Because today, we are no longer just New South Welshmen,” his father said. “We are Australians.”

But Federation didn’t happen in a single day. It was the result of decades of talks, dreams, arguments, and negotiations. It was a moment shaped by visionaries, protestors, women’s groups, and rural farmers. It was

built on ideas, but also on ink – pages and pages of legal documents, speeches, and referenda. A ‘referendum’ is where the people vote on one specific question, so the government can know the will of the people and confidently make plans about that issue.

The First Spark – Why Federation?

Back in the 1880s, the colonies had begun to see problems with remaining separate. Each colony had its own postal system, trade tariffs, railways with different gauges (i.e., the width of the train tracks was different in each region). If you wanted to send goods from Victoria to New South Wales, you paid taxes twice. If you were a travelling merchant, it was frustrating and expensive.

More than that, there were growing concerns about defence. European powers like Germany, France, and Russia had begun showing interest in the Pacific. Australia needed a united military force and foreign policy. A British naval ship might come to help, but there was no guarantee.

There were also shared ideals such as pride in the land, a belief in democracy, and a desire for an Australian voice in world affairs. Many people, especially in the cities, began to think: “Wouldn’t it be better if we stood together?”

Still, not everyone agreed.

Obstacles to Unity

The first obstacle was distance. Australia is a big place. Western Australia felt isolated from the eastern colonies. Queenslanders didn’t trust southern politics. Tasmania feared it would be ignored entirely.

Then there was the issue of power. Who would get more say? Would population decide? Or geography? What would happen to each colony’s laws? Would Federation mean losing control over education, trade, or railways?

Smaller colonies were afraid of being swallowed up by the big ones. Larger colonies didn’t want to carry the economic burdens of the smaller ones. And many working-class Australians wondered: “What’s in it for me?”

Finally, there was the issue of race. Some Federation supporters wanted a White Australia Policy – restricting non-European immigration. While to many people today, this seems racist, most people at the time believed that it was important to keep a unified Western culture. There was an understanding that not all cultures are equally humane, and not all cultures are suited to our unique Australian context. This idea was widely supported at the time and became one of the driving motivations behind national unity.

It wasn’t so much racism, as Australia was already made up of people from many backgrounds, and they were together developing a unique Australian culture. It was more a fear that people from foreign countries and different cultures may not have the common Western democratic ideals and values that came from our Judeo-Christian heritage, (ideals that valued freedom of speech; freedom of association, assembly and movement; and freedom of religion). Not all countries and cultures value a constitutional legal system that protects marriage, family and the sanctity of life plus the dignity of the individual person. They did not necessarily value a legal system that promotes the rule of law and order where a person is considered to be innocent until proven guilty; and a legal system that promotes free trade and economic ownership where

individuals can enjoy the benefit of their own labour, each person in the community pulling their weight, being responsible to carry their own load, while also helping others who are overloaded or unable to help themselves. If other immigrants did not believe in these common Christian and democratic values, then it would not stay a safe and prosperous society. Many people from countries based on other religions and ideologies (eg., Muslim, Buddhist, Confucian, Hindu, Marxism, or Indigenous Ancestor Worship) did not necessarily hold these Christian and democratic values and beliefs to be self-evident.

- For example, Marxist-Socialism and Communism believes the State should control all wealth and all media, and there should be no private ownership, no private education, no freedom of religion, (certainly no homeschooling) and it squashes freedom of thought and speech.
- To look at another culture, in India, the custom of ‘Sati’ meant that a woman would be burnt alive on the funeral pyre when her husband had died. It was the British who banned this practice in India in 1829, although it was still occasionally practiced in villages into the late twentieth century.
- In China, the Communist regime instituted a one-child policy until 2015 when it changed to 2 children, and in 2021 the law changed to allow 3 children, and eventually lifted all restrictions. During the child-limiting policies, women were forced to use contraception, undergo abortions and forced sterilization. As male children were favoured, millions of baby girls were abandoned to die.
- And regarding Islam, this is a culture that preaches that Muslims will be assured a place in heaven if they kill Jews and Christians, and they become heroes if they die doing this.



Ideologies and ideas have far reaching practical consequences for people's lives and well-being.

It is interesting that over the last 50 years, Australia has increasingly welcomed and tried to appease cultures and ideas that are not founded on our Western (Christian & Democratic) principles; and now many people are realising that not all cultures and all ideas are equally helpful to our safety and prosperity, and they don't always foster the freedoms we have enjoyed in the past. Not all cultures and ideas lead to the good life. Some ideas and values are downright dangerous to our health, safety and prosperity. Some ideas and values of foreign cultures (such as Islamic ideals and Marxist Socialism/Communism) cause division, disrupting social cohesion, and end up enslaving or impoverishing us.

The people who framed our Australian Constitution as they were preparing for 'Federation' and nationhood, understood this, and wrote into the Constitution a range of clauses to try to protect the people against tyranny and human-rights violations. However, in recent years there have been an increasing barrage of political agendas aiming to remove these protections, and destroy our long-held freedoms (such as the freedom of speech; freedom of association, assembly and movement; freedom of religion; and financial freedom).

Key Figures in the Federation Movement

Returning to our story, of life in Australia in 1900, despite the differences of opinion, several leaders pushed for unity with passion and wisdom:

- **Sir Henry Parkes**, known as the "Father of Federation," gave a famous speech in Tenterfield in 1889, calling for a national government.

- **Edmund Barton** worked tirelessly to unite the colonies and later became Australia's first Prime Minister.
- **Alfred Deakin**, a brilliant speaker and statesman, helped convince voters and build consensus.
- **Catherine Helen Spence**, a suffragist and reformer, campaigned for women's inclusion and helped raise public awareness.
- **George Reid**, leader of the Free Trade Party, played both sides but eventually supported Federation.

These individuals – along with many unknown farmers, editors, and activists – brought the dream to life.

The People Vote

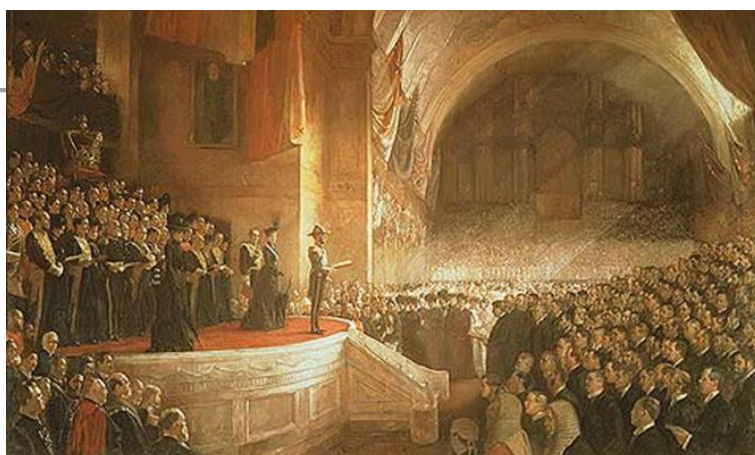
Federation wasn't just decided by politicians. It was put to the people. Between 1898 and 1900, each colony held referendums. Voters had to read and consider the proposed Constitution of Australia – written during long and heated conventions. The document described the new federal system, a national Parliament, and the powers that would be divided between federal and state governments.

Most colonies said “yes” – though sometimes just barely. New South Wales initially rejected it. Western Australia didn't join until the very end. Some Aboriginal and Chinese Australians were excluded from voting. But across much of the country, excitement grew.

Newspapers declared: “A New Nation is Born!” Schoolchildren practised singing “Advance Australia Fair,” though “God Save the Queen” remained the official anthem.

A Nation Begins

On **January 1st, 1901**, Queen Victoria signed the proclamation, and the **Commonwealth of Australia** was established. In Sydney, Lord Hopetoun was sworn in as the first Governor-General. A great parade took place through Centennial Park.



Women in white dresses marched. Bands played. Children waved flags. And a new flag (the blue ensign with the Southern Cross and Union Jack) fluttered across town halls. The flag was inspired by both the



British heritage and the Eureka Stockade stand for freedom and equal rights.

Six colonies became **six states** in a federal system. (The Northern Territory was a part of South Australia until 1911). Each state kept its own parliament but gave certain powers to the national government such as immigration, defence, currency, and foreign policy.

The **Australian Constitution** created a **bicameral parliament** (with a House of Representatives and a Senate), a **High Court**, and the principles of

representative democracy and **responsible government**. It was deeply influenced by British traditions, American federalism, and Australian ideals.

Australian Democracy (based on the Westminster System of government) was largely founded on Christian principles, though not completely. The new nation was built on both noble ideals and a few flaws (as it took some years for Women and Aboriginals in every State to have full voting rights and equal wages). But it did mark a turning point. Australia now had its own Parliament, its own Constitution, and its own name.

The Federation Legacy

Federation wasn't perfect. But it gave Australia a framework for growth. Over the next century, this system would evolve – slowly including more voices, recognising the rights of women and Indigenous people, and refining democratic processes.

And yet the founding moment still matters. It shows what can happen when people seek unity, even amid difference. It reminds us that building a nation takes vision, dialogue, and courage.

Young William Cooper didn't fully understand the Constitution. But that day in Sydney, as the sun shone on the marching bands and flying flags, he knew something had changed. He was no longer just a boy from New South Wales. He was an Australian.

Activity: Create a Federation Timeline Mural

Instructions: Design a creative mural or timeline that shows 8 - 10 major events or developments leading up to and including Federation. Use A3 paper, poster board, or a digital canvas.

Your timeline must include:

- The Tenterfield Speech (1889)
- Conventions & debates (1891–1898)
- Referendums (1898–1900)
- Proclamation of Federation (Jan 1, 1901)
- First Prime Minister (Edmund Barton)
- Constitution and powers
- At least one image or sketch per event

You may use images from:

- Trove
- [National Museum of Australia](#)
- Australian Constitution Centre
- Australian Electoral Commission – Federation Timeline

Make sure your mural is easy to follow and includes short captions for each event.

Biblical Reflection

The early Federation movement was driven by people seeking unity and justice. Even so, as Christians, we are reminded that true unity only comes through Christ. Human governments can be wise or flawed; but God's kingdom is perfect.

“How good and pleasant it is when God’s people live together in unity!” – Psalm 133:1

We should celebrate our nation’s foundations while also working to include those who may be excluded by some people.

Narration Activity

If your parent/tutor is available now, ask them to listen while you retell what you have just learnt. Or if they are not available now, then tell your story during your lunch break today.

Lesson 4: The Contribution of Individuals & Groups in Civic Life

Australian Curriculum:

AC9HC9K05 – The role of individuals, communities and governments in the development of civic life

AC9HC9S04 – Develop and present evidence-based arguments incorporating source materials

AC9HH10K11 – Significant events & methods in civil rights for First Nations Australians

AC9HH10K12 – Significant events in the women's movement, & changes to the role & status of women

AC9HH10K13 – Civil rights & freedoms for First Nations Australians, migrants & women

AC9HH10K18 – Continuities & changes in perspectives, responses, beliefs & values, & how these influenced the Australian way of life.

AC9HH10K20 – Historical interpretations & debates in the second half of the 20th century.

AC9HH10S07 – Analyse contested historical interpretations.

Lesson Introduction

Student Instructions:

What is *civic life*? It's everything that involves being part of a community: voting, joining a local group, writing to your MP, volunteering, organising a clean-up, or peacefully protesting for a cause. This lesson will help you explore the role of *individuals* and *groups* in shaping Australia's civic life, especially those who made a difference in history.

You'll learn how ordinary people have helped to shape policies, inspire change, and stand up for what's right. After reading the historical story, you'll complete a practical activity to analyse how civic life is shaped, and end with a narration task to retell what you've learned.

Informational Story

“Voices of Change: The People Who Built Australian Civic Life”

In a sandstone town hall in Adelaide in 1894, a tall woman with tired eyes and a determined voice stood before a packed room.

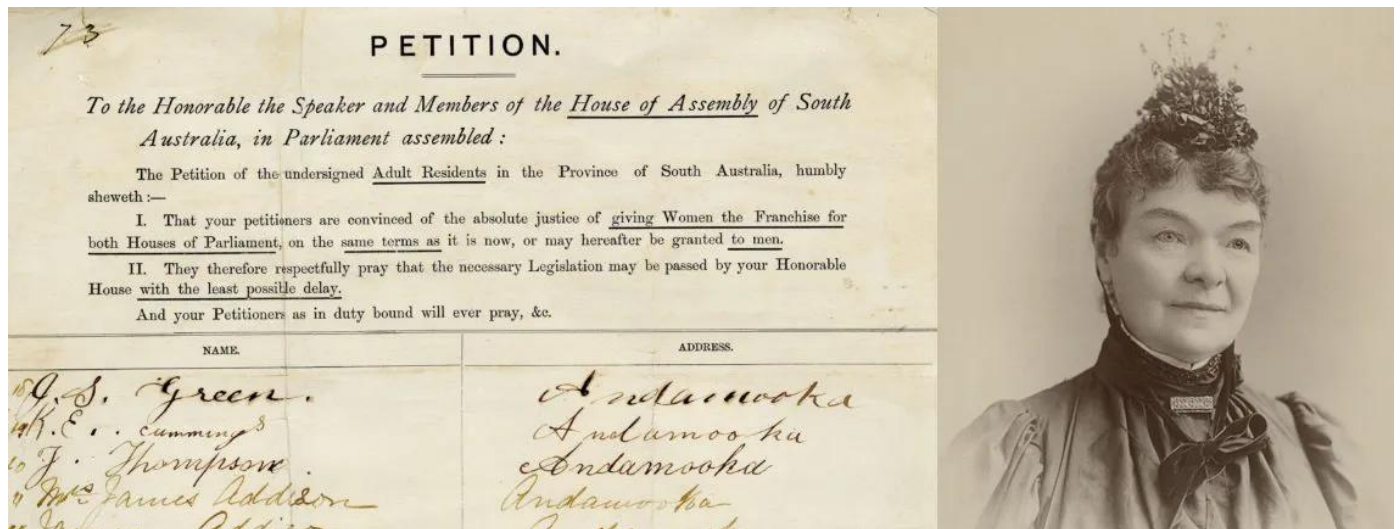
“My name is Mary Lee,” she began. “I am seventy years old, and I do not speak for myself alone. I speak for every woman who pays her taxes, raises her children, obeys the law – and yet has no say in how this country is run.”

The crowd erupted into applause. Mary Lee had spent the last decade petitioning, lobbying, and rallying for women's voting rights in South Australia. She had walked miles through dusty streets with rolled-up



petitions. She had knocked on the doors of Parliament. And now, her voice echoed through the hall like a trumpet.

Later that year, South Australia became the first colony in Australia – **and one of the first places in the world** – for women to be granted both voting rights and the right to stand for Parliament. It was an incredible victory, but not just for women. It showed the power of civic life, and demonstrated that Australia was a world leader in human rights.



Mary Lee & her petition for women's right to vote.

Civic Life in Australia: Then and Now

Civic life means more than just obeying laws or casting a vote. Being a citizen means being involved – speaking up for positive change, participating in community decisions, and finding ways to improve your town or society making them a better place to live for everyone,

Even in the early days of the colonies, civic life began to form. Citizens came together to build churches, fight bushfires, campaign for hospitals, and to petition for certain rights. Over time, these actions shaped the Australia we live in today.

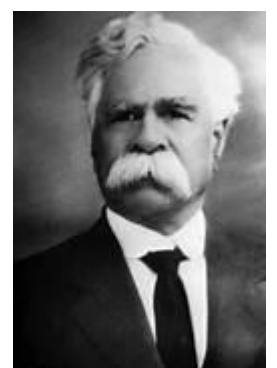
Let's meet some of the voices – famous and forgotten – who helped shape civic life in Australia.

William Cooper – Standing for Justice

In 1938, an Aboriginal elder named **William Cooper** walked to the German Consulate in Melbourne and delivered a letter condemning the persecution of Jews in Nazi Germany. It was the day after Kristallnacht, a night of terror in which Jewish businesses and synagogues were destroyed.

The consulate refused to accept the letter.

But Cooper's protest remains one of the **only private citizen-led protests** against Nazi Germany anywhere in the world at that time.



William Cooper had already spent decades writing letters to Parliament, advocating for the rights of Aboriginal people. According to the Australian Law Reform Commission - Reform Journal (Issue 74, 1999), Child endowment was not paid to nomadic Aborigines, and they didn't have voting rights because it was not viewed as being needed if they lived a nomadic existence away from civilisation. William Cooper petitioned King George VI to recognise all Aboriginal Australians as British subjects and called for political representation. His legacy reminds us that civic life isn't limited to those with power or privilege.

The Unions and the Eight-Hour Day



In the 1850s, Australian stonemasons working on Melbourne buildings began to walk off the job. Their demand? An eight-hour workday: *eight hours work, eight hours recreation, eight hours rest.*

In a time when people worked ten to twelve hours a day, often six days a week, this was revolutionary.

They held rallies, carried banners, and refused to work until change came. Eventually, their persistence paid off. The Eight Hour Day became a cornerstone of Australian labour rights and inspired others to fight for better wages and conditions.

Unions (groups of workers advocating for their rights) became a powerful part of civic life. They continue to advocate today.

Catherine Helen Spence – First Female Political Candidate

When Federation was announced in 1901, South Australian women already had the right to vote – and one of them was ready to make history.

Catherine Helen Spence stood as a candidate for the Federal Convention in 1897, making her Australia's **first female political candidate**. Though she didn't win, she continued to write, teach, and speak publicly on political reform and women's rights.



She believed passionately that good governance required the voices of women, and that civic education should be taught to every child. She once said:

"I had wanted to be a politician and to take part in the councils of the nation. But I have done what I could."

Faith-Based Groups – Salt and Light

In the past, Churches and faith-based organisations have always played a strong role in shaping civic life in Australia. In the 19th and early 20th centuries, churches:

- Opened schools and orphanages
- Advocated for alcohol regulation through the temperance movement
- Led relief efforts during droughts and depressions (ie., depression = a serious downturn in the economy).
- Ran soup kitchens and night shelters to help homeless people
- Supported migrants and helped them settle into local communities

Organisations like the **Salvation Army**, **Methodist Women's Missionary Unions**, and the **Catholic St Vincent de Paul Societies** shaped policies and attitudes around poverty, family life, and justice.

To this day, Christian organisations like **Anglicare**, **World Vision**, and **The Bible Society** continue to influence civic life through advocacy, service, and education. However, in the last 50 years, gradually, most Christians and the Church in general have opted to keep out of political debate, and this withdrawal from providing a strong moral voice to guide the nation, has resulted in laws and culture that have drifted far from our country's Judeo-Christian roots. This shift has resulted in the escalation of much of the political turmoil, racial and religious hatred, and the increase in crime and violence that we have seen since the year 2000.

Community Organisations: Quiet Builders

While the big names are remembered in books, millions of everyday Australians have contributed quietly through:

- **Volunteer firefighting brigades**
- **Landcare groups**
- **Parent-teacher associations**
- **Local council submissions**
- **Fundraisers for hospitals or disability services**
- **Petitions and letter-writing campaigns to MPs**

These actions don't always make headlines – but they shape laws, influence decisions, and build communities. Civic life is more than just politics; it's about participation.

Modern Civic Movements

Although many young people are misinformed by social media regarding all the facts about an issue, and so they sometimes are spreading incorrect information; yet there is a good side to the fact that in the last decade young people have increasingly become active in civic life through:

- Human rights campaigns
- Local council submissions on town planning
- Petitions on social issues
- Church youth groups volunteering in aged care or street kitchens
- Digital activism through blogs, videos, and social media

- The tools have changed—but the principles of community involvement remain the same.

Getting involved in civic life can be either positive for, or detrimental to, developing a safe and prosperous society. Unfortunately, often activists promote a one-sided issue that only looks at half the facts, or no facts at all – just hearsay and rumour or political propaganda. Whether the activism has positive or negative results depends on whether the underlying values of the issue are good, and wholesome; and whether all the facts of the situation have been fully researched in an objective way, and the arguments have been well-thought-through. Before taking a side on an important issue, we need to consider... How does this issue (and the facts on both sides of the issue) align with an absolute moral standard?

Over the last 50 years, the education system, government and social media have been taken captive by a form of propaganda called the “woke” movement. This started in the 1930’s as a positive call to “wake up” to social injustice, but has become a political tool of cultural-left ideology propagated by both Marxist Socialism and Muslim Extremism. These ideologies use ‘political correctness’ and sympathy for supposedly oppressed minority groups as a tool for stifling free and open debate, and inciting others to violence. However, in reality, these activists care more about destroying Australian society, democracy and Western Civilisation than they care about helping the supposedly ‘oppressed minority’ people that they protest about.

An aboriginal woman, Jacinta Nampijinpa Price had this to say... *“It was in 2017, that I waded into the national conversation [about abolishing Australia Day] ...I argued that while it is important to learn the truth about our history, to acknowledge the good and the bad and learn from both, changing the date or abolishing the celebration, will do nothing to change the past.*

And so, I asked then the same questions I ask now. Why aren’t the people concerned with the date of Australia Day as concerned about the Aboriginal people affected by domestic violence, alcohol and drug abuse? Why aren’t the marches for murdered Aboriginal women [often by their own Aboriginal men] as big as the anti-Australia Day marches that occur each year?

The answer to these questions is obvious, it is because the left’s real agenda has nothing to do with helping the vulnerable and marginalised in our community.”

(Donnelly, 2024, ‘Wake up to Woke: It’s Time, Australia’, page 10)

[Refer to the book “Wake up to Woke: It’s Time Australia” by Dr Kevin Donnelly AM; and the book “Defend the West: The Culture of Freedom” by Dr Kevin Donnelly AM.]



What About You?

God created each person with a voice and a purpose. Civic life is one way we express our God-given responsibility to care for others and to help build a just and compassionate society. If you don’t just believe the ‘group-think’ on social media; but instead, properly research both sides of an issue to find the truth; and then learn to debate with respectful robust conversation (not inciting to violence), then young people like yourself could have a truly valuable contribution to make towards changing Australian society for the betterment of all. That would be good positive civic involvement – not tearing down society, but finding

ways to make the world a better place, finding ways to help others, bringing goodness, truth and beauty into the lives of all those around you.

Write down some ideas about what you could do to make the world a better place...

- i) in your family?
 - ii) in your neighbourhood/town/community?
 - iii) amongst your broader contacts?
 - iv) or throughout Australia?
-

Activity: Analyse and Present a Civic Hero

Instructions: Choose one of the following civic contributors to research more deeply:

- Quong Tart
- Mary Lee
- William Cooper
- Catherine Helen Spence
- A modern Christian group (e.g. World Vision, Anglicare, Salvos)
- A lesser-known local community volunteer or group (can be someone from your town)

Create a presentation that includes:

1. **A short biography** (150 - 200 words)
2. **Their civic contribution** – What did they do? Why did it matter?
3. **Evidence** – One primary source (photo, newspaper quote, or historical document).
4. **Your analysis** – In 3 - 4 sentences, explain how this person/group helped shape civic life in Australia.
5. **A Bible verse** – Choose one that connects with their motivation or actions.

You may present your findings as:

- A poster or collage
- A short speech (recorded or live)
- A PowerPoint or Google Slides presentation

Helpful Resources:

- Trove
 - [Australian Women's Register](#)
 - [Australian Human Rights Commission – Civic Participation](#)
 - [Parliamentary Education Office](#)
-

Biblical Reflection

Christian involvement in civic life is not new. From the prophets of Israel to the early church, God's people have always stood up for justice and helped shape society for good.

“Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you... and pray to the Lord on its behalf.”

– Jeremiah 29:7

We don't engage in civic life to gain power, but to serve. Civic responsibility, done with humility and truth, reflects Christ's heart for the world.

Narration Activity

If your parent/tutor is available now, ask them to listen while you retell what you have just learnt. Or if they are not available now, then tell your story during your lunch break today.

Lesson 5: Australian States & Regions (Part 1)

Australian Curriculum v9 Content Area:

Geography (HASS integration) – Exploration of states, regions, environments, and how they shape Australian civic identity and responsibilities. (Note: This lesson supports broader AC9HC9K05 understanding.)

AC9HG10K02 – Environmental worldviews & their implications for environmental management

AC9HG10K03 – First Nations Australians' approach to custodial responsibility & environmental management

AC9HG10K07 – Spatial variations in human well-being in Australia, including for First Nations Australians.

AC9HG10S06 – Create descriptions using geographical knowledge, tools, concepts & terms.

AC9HH10K20 – Historical interpretations & debates in the second half of the 20th century.

AC9HH10S07 – Analyse contested historical interpretations.

Lesson Introduction

Student Instructions: Australia is one country made up of **six states** and **two major territories**. But these states and territories are more than lines on a map – they're shaped by climate, environment, history, and culture. This lesson is the first of two that explores Australia's physical and human geography.

Today you'll read a story that takes you on a journey across all six states. As you travel, you'll learn how geography affects the way people live, work, and engage in civic life. Afterward, you'll complete a map-based project and narration task.

Informational Story

“The Map and the Road: A Journey Across Australia's States”

When their father was transferred from Melbourne to Darwin for work, the Tan family decided to take a road trip across Australia – one final family adventure before settling into the Top End. Twelve-year-old Mei Tan wasn't thrilled at first. She'd rather fly. But her dad had a different idea.

“We'll take the long way,” he said, grinning. “All six states: coast to coast, city to bush. By the end, you'll know your country like the back of your hand.”

They packed the car, rolled out the atlas, and began their journey in Victoria.



Victoria – “The Garden State”

The Tans began their trip in **Melbourne**, the capital of Victoria, known for its trams, art, coffee, and sports. They wandered through Federation Square, ate dumplings in Chinatown, and visited the Shrine of Remembrance, honouring Australia's war heroes.



Driving east, the landscape turned to green pastures and cool forests. The Dandenong Ranges, with their winding roads and tall ferns, gave way to Gippsland's dairy country.

"What makes Victoria special?" Mei asked.

Her mum replied, "It's compact, but packed with culture. And it was central to Australia's gold rush and Federation."

In civic life, Victorians are known for strong political engagement and union movements. It was here the eight-hour workday began.

New South Wales – "The Premier State"

Next stop was **Sydney**, the oldest and most populous city in Australia. Mei stood before the Opera House and Harbour Bridge, thinking of all the postcards she'd seen.

At Parramatta, they visited the oldest surviving government house in the country. In the Blue Mountains, they learned about the Darug and Gundungurra peoples, whose rock art and stories echo through the gorges.



NSW has a diverse population and economy – banking, farming, tourism, and technology.

"It's the birthplace of European Australia," Dad said. "But also home to some of the oldest living cultures on earth."

The family noticed how geography affected lifestyles: coastal surfing towns, farming inland plains, and bustling cities.

Queensland – "The Sunshine State"



Driving north up the coast, the family entered Queensland. It was warmer, sunnier, and full of sugar cane, banana farms, and tropical towns.

In **Brisbane**, Mei loved the riverfront markets and the South Bank's Ferris-wheel. But what fascinated her most was the **Great Barrier Reef**. They snorkelled near Cairns and saw coral gardens teeming with fish.

Queensland's vast geography ranges from deserts to rainforests. Remote Indigenous communities live in Cape York; mining towns dot the outback.

"What's Queensland known for civically?" Mei asked.

Mum said, "Strong regional identity. People here often push for decentralised power with more decisions made locally."



South Australia – “The Festival State”

Crossing west, the family entered South Australia, known for its churches, vineyards, and orderly town planning.

In **Adelaide**, they attended a local food festival and toured the art gallery. “This city feels calm,” Mei noted.

Her dad explained that South Australia was founded not as a penal colony but as a free-settler experiment, with ideals of religious freedom and planned development.

They visited the Barossa Valley, then drove north into the dry Flinders Ranges, where ancient red rocks told geological stories thousands of years old.

They also learned about the **Pitjantjatjara** and **Yankunytjatjara** peoples who have lived in the central deserts for generations.



Western Australia – “The Wildflower State”

It took days to cross the Nullarbor Plain. They camped under stars so clear Mei felt she could touch them. Eventually, they reached **Perth**, the most isolated capital city in the world.

Western Australia is huge – it covers a third of the continent. Mei noticed how vast and empty much of it seemed, compared to the east.

In Fremantle, they toured a convict prison. In Broome, they watched the sunset over red cliffs and turquoise sea.

“WA has its own sense of identity,” Mum said. “Sometimes they’ve even talked about seceding!”

Mei learned that WA’s civic conversations often centre on resource wealth such as mining for iron ore, drilling for gas, and royalties from mining.



Tasmania – “The Apple Isle”

Flying from Perth to **Hobart**, the Tans finished their journey on the green island to the south.

Tasmania’s crisp air and mountainous terrain were different again. They explored convict ruins at Port Arthur and hiked among towering eucalyptus in Mount Field National Park.

In Hobart, Mei visited MONA (the Museum of Old and New Art) and sampled local apples and honey.

“Tasmania has a deep convict history,” Dad said. “But also some of Australia’s strongest environmental activism.”

From the Franklin River protests of the 1980s to recent marine conservation efforts, Tasmania has played a key role in national civic movements.

Reflection

By the end of the journey, Mei’s view of Australia had changed. She no longer saw her country as just cities or headlines. She saw it as a patchwork of places, people, and perspectives – shaped by mountains and deserts, oceans and rivers, history and hope.

Each state had its own story, and yet they were all part of one nation. That was the beauty of Australia.

Activity: Create a State Profile Poster

Instructions:

Choose **one Australian state** to research in depth and create an illustrated poster (or digital presentation) with the following:

1. **State Name and Capital City**
2. **Map** – Show where the state is located.
3. **Natural Features** – Mountains, rivers, deserts, forests, reefs, etc.
4. **Major Industries** – What drives the economy?
5. **Civic Life** – What are some distinctive features of how people engage in civic issues?
6. **Cultural Identity** – Any special traditions, events, or regional pride?
7. **Images** – Include at least two photographs or artworks (with captions and links).

Helpful Websites for Research:

- [Australian Bureau of Statistics \(https://www.abs.gov.au/\)](https://www.abs.gov.au/) – Regional Profiles
- [National Museum of Australia \(https://www.nma.gov.au/\)](https://www.nma.gov.au/) – Explore States
- State Libraries of Australia
- Australian Geography Map – ABC Education

Biblical Reflection



God created a world full of variety – mountains, oceans, forests, deserts – and people with different languages and traditions. In Australia, our states reflect this diversity.

“From one man He made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and He marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands.”

– Acts 17:26

We’re called to understand and respect the land we live on, and the people who share it. Learning about Australia’s regions helps us appreciate the richness God has placed within our nation.

Narration Activity

If your parent/tutor is available now, ask them to listen while you retell what you have just learnt. Or if they are not available now, then tell your story during your lunch break today.

Lesson 6: Australian States & Regions (Part 2)

Australian Curriculum v9 Context: Continues supporting Year 9 & 10 content for understanding civic life, geography, identity, and local engagement through regional awareness. This lesson builds on Part 1 by focusing on **territories, climate zones, population patterns, and regional challenges** in civic life.

Lesson Introduction

Student Instructions:

Now that you've explored Australia's six states, it's time to complete the picture by looking at the territories, climate zones, and how different regions shape our civic responsibilities and challenges. Australia's geography influences everything – what people grow, how they live, and what issues they care about. This is the second part of your journey into understanding regional Australia.

You'll read a story about two cousins who travel through the Northern Territory and Australian Capital Territory, compare different regions, and explore how geography and government connect. Then you'll complete a creative map-based activity and share what you've learned through narration.

Informational Story

“Territories and Top End Tales: Cousins on the Road”

Samantha and Levi hadn't seen each other in over a year. One lived in Darwin, the other in Canberra—two cousins from opposite ends of Australia.

This year, they'd arranged to spend the holidays together, switching cities halfway through. Their parents called it “an exchange of capitals,” but Sam and Levi called it **The Great Territory Swap**.

Samantha lived in Darwin, the capital of the **Northern Territory**. It was hot, tropical, and surrounded by crocodile warning signs. Levi lived in Canberra, the bush-covered seat of the **Australian Capital Territory**, full of politics, embassies, and monuments.

Their adventure would teach them both a lot about landscapes, and about civic life.

Northern Territory – The Top End and Red Centre

When Levi landed in Darwin, the heat hit him like a wall. “Is the air always this thick?” he asked.

“Welcome to the Top End,” Sam laughed. “This is just build-up season. Wait till the rains come!”

They visited Mindil Beach Markets, tried tropical fruit ice blocks, and walked through the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, where Levi saw Aboriginal bark paintings older than anything in European Australia.

The Northern Territory (NT) isn't a state – it's a territory. It has a Legislative Assembly, but certain powers remain with the federal government. The NT Chief Minister doesn't have the same constitutional authority as a state premier.

Sam explained, "We can make laws, but the Commonwealth can overturn them. That's happened before, especially with land rights."

Levi was surprised. "So, you don't have full self-government?"

"Not quite. But we still care about the land, our rights, and our future. Territory people are passionate."

They took a long drive to Kakadu National Park, where Sam's uncle, a local ranger, pointed out ancient rock art sites and told Dreaming stories passed down for thousands of years.

"Civic life here," he said, "means respecting the land, and listening to its first people."



Later, they visited Alice Springs, in the heart of the Red Centre, where the desert stretched in every direction. It was a world away from Canberra.



Australian Capital Territory – The Nation's Heart

A few weeks later, Samantha flew south.

"Whoa," she said, stepping off the plane into cool, dry Canberra air. "Where are all the mango trees?"

Levi laughed. "We've got eucalypts instead. And politicians."

They biked around Lake Burley Griffin, visited the National Museum, and toured Parliament House, where they watched a debate from the public gallery.

"This," Levi said, "is where the federal government makes decisions - for all Australians."

The Australian Capital Territory (ACT) was carved out of NSW in 1911 to be a neutral capital. It's not a state either, but it's fully self-governing. It has its own Assembly and Chief Minister.

"What makes Canberra special," Levi explained, "is that it belongs to everyone. Our job is to represent the whole country's interests, even if our population's small."



They walked through the Australian War Memorial, and Sam left a poppy beside her great-grandfather's name. She felt proud to be part of a country where history was remembered.

Regions, Climates & Civic Differences

Over the next few days, Sam and Levi created a journal of Australia's different regions. Here's what they wrote together:

- **Tropical North (e.g. Darwin, Cairns)**
 - Wet-dry seasons; prone to cyclones
 - Strong Indigenous communities
 - Civic issues: Land rights, water management, remote healthcare
- **Arid Centre (e.g. Alice Springs, Coober Pedy)**
 - Desert climate; extreme heat and isolation
 - Small towns with limited services
 - Civic issues: Access to education, drought support
- **Temperate Coasts (e.g. Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide)**
 - Four seasons; major urban populations
 - Multicultural communities
 - Civic issues: Housing, public transport, infrastructure
- **Mountainous & Alpine (e.g. Snowy Mountains, Tasmanian Highlands)**
 - Cold winters, snow; hydro-electric schemes
 - Tourism and agriculture
 - Civic issues: Climate policy, conservation
- **Islands and Remote Areas (e.g. Tasmania, Torres Strait)**
 - Diverse ecosystems; unique identities
 - Isolation from mainland decisions
 - Civic issues: Shipping access, health services, cost of living

They realised that regional Australians often cared about different issues from city dwellers. Civic life looked different in every place because geography shaped daily life, and daily life shaped priorities.

Back Together – New Perspectives

When the cousins returned home, they each had a deeper appreciation for the other's world.

Samantha now understood how decisions made in Canberra affected Darwin, even if her voice wasn't always heard.

Levi realised that real civic life involved more than just Parliament and politics. It was about listening to the land and people, wherever they were.

And both understood that Australia was a land of vast difference, but also of shared purpose.

Activity: Design a “Civic Geography Map”

Instructions:

Create a **Civic Geography Map of Australia** that highlights how physical regions influence civic priorities and participation.

1. Print or draw a map of Australia (outline only).
2. Colour in the main regional zones:
 - Tropical North
 - Arid Interior
 - Temperate South-East
 - Alpine Regions
 - Remote Islands (including Tasmania and Torres Strait)
3. For each region, add:
 - 1 or 2 main geographic features (e.g. desert, reef, mountains)
 - 1 or 2 key civic issues (e.g. land rights, transport, access to health)
 - An image or icon representing the lifestyle or issue
4. Add a title, legend, and compass rose to your map.

Suggested Resources for Reference:

- [Geoscience Australia – Maps and Data](#)
- ABC Education – Australia’s Landscapes
- BOM Climate Maps

Optional: Present your map to your parent/tutor or display it with your other projects.

Biblical Reflection

Australia’s diversity is one of God’s great blessings. He made the rainforests and the deserts, the mountains and the oceans. And He places people in every region to care for it.

“The earth is the Lord’s, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it.”
– Psalm 24:1

Wherever you live – whether in a city, a territory, or a tiny town – you have a role in civic life. God calls us to steward His world wisely, speak for justice, and love our neighbours – no matter their postcode.

Narration Activity

If your parent/tutor is available now, ask them to listen while you retell what you have just learnt. Or if they are not available now, then tell your story during your lunch break today.

Lesson 7: The Australian Constitution

Australian Curriculum Links:

AC9HC7K01 – Australian government, democracy and the Constitution

AC9HC7K03 – Australian legal system, Constitution, rule of law and court system.

AC9HC7K04 – The diverse cultural origins of Australia's democratic system based on Christian and Western Heritage.

AC9HC7K05 – Common Australian & democratic values.

AC9HC9K01 – The key features of the Australian Constitution, including the separation of powers, and the roles of the Executive, the Legislature and the Judiciary

AC9HC10K01 - the key features and values of Australia's system of government compared with at least one other democratic or non-democratic system of government in the Asia-Pacific region

AC9HC10K02 - the Australian Government's role and responsibilities at a regional and global level

AC9HC10K03 - the role of the parliament and the High Court of Australia in protecting rights under the Constitution, common law, and through federal and state statute law

AC9HC10S05 - create descriptions, explanations and arguments using civics and citizenship knowledge, concepts and terms that incorporate evidence

Lesson Introduction

Australia's system of government is a constitutional monarchy and liberal democracy, founded on values such as the rule of law, separation of powers, representative government, and the protection of individual rights. These values have developed from a Christian-Biblical understanding of law and human dignity. This system of government features a federal structure with power divided between the Commonwealth and the states, a bicameral Parliament, and compulsory voting.

The Australian democratic system of government stands in contrast to other systems in the Asia-Pacific region – such as China's one-party authoritarian state, which holds obedience to the State as much more important than the individual or family. In contrast to a Marxist/Socialist/Communist regime, Australia's democracy is marked by pluralism (allowing different beliefs and opinions, within the same society), free elections, and open political participation. This contrast highlights the importance of institutional checks and balances and civic freedoms in safeguarding democratic processes. Many people do not realise that the further the nation moves towards the left side of politics, the closer it moves towards an authoritarian State.

If Australia were a game, then the **Australian Constitution** would be the rulebook. It tells us who can make laws, who enforces them, and who settles disputes. It also outlines the rights and responsibilities of government.



Today's lesson will guide you through the structure and purpose of the Australian Constitution, and introduce you to the three key branches of government: the Legislature (Parliament), the Executive (Ministers and Departments), and the Judiciary (Courts).

You'll read a story following the journey of a young Australian who discovers how the Constitution shapes our democracy. Then, you'll complete a hands-on activity to help you visualise the system, and finish with narration.

Informational Story

"The Constitution Quest: Emily's Journey to Parliament"

Emily Parkes had always been curious.

When she was little, she asked why coins had Queen Elizabeth's face. At age nine, she wanted to know why some school rules were negotiable and others weren't. Now, at fifteen, she had a bigger question:

"How exactly does Australia work?"

Her civics teacher handed her a copy of the **Australian Constitution**. It was thin, surprisingly small. "This," he said, "is where it starts."

Emily opened to the first page. "Whereas the people... have agreed to unite..." she read aloud. She didn't understand all the legal words, but one thing was clear: the Constitution wasn't just a historical document – it was the foundation for the government she lived under now.



A Visit to Canberra

A few weeks later, Emily's class visited **Parliament House** in Canberra. The building's massive flagpole soared above the lawns. Inside, halls buzzed with activity – senators debating, school groups exploring, cameras rolling.

Their guide, Mr Bennett, gathered them under the marble pillars.

"Welcome to the heart of Australia's federal democracy," he said. "Everything here exists because of the Australian Constitution, written in 1900 and effective from January 1, 1901."

Emily asked, "Who decided what went in it?"



“The colonies,” Mr Bennett said. “Delegates from each state met, debated, and sent the final draft to the people to vote on. After that, the British Parliament passed it as the **Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act**.”

“And what’s in it?” she asked.

He smiled. “Let’s take a tour.”

The Three Arms of Government

They began in the **House of Representatives** – the green chamber. Emily saw Members of Parliament discussing a new education bill.

“This is the **Legislature**,” Mr Bennett explained. “The branch that **makes laws**.”

Next, they visited the **Senate** (the red chamber) where senators from all states and territories review and vote on bills. Mr Bennett told them that both houses must pass a bill before it becomes law.

“What if someone breaks a law?” a student asked.

“Then the **Judiciary** steps in,” said Mr Bennett. “Let’s go see it.”

At the **High Court of Australia**, Emily learned about the **Judiciary** – the branch that **interprets the law** and resolves disputes. Judges ensure that laws follow the Constitution.

“Okay,” Emily said, “so Parliament makes the laws, courts interpret them... Who enforces them?”

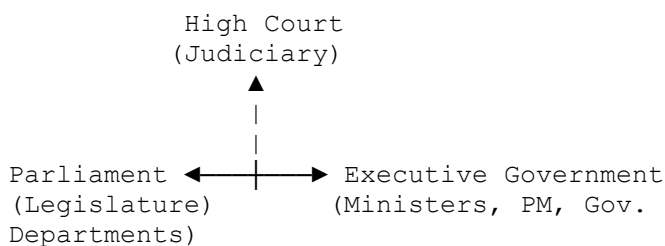
“That’s the **Executive**,” Mr Bennett replied. “The Prime Minister, Cabinet Ministers, and government departments.”

“Wait,” said Emily, “doesn’t Parliament also choose the Prime Minister?”

“Exactly,” said Mr Bennett. “The **separation of powers** in Australia isn’t total; but each branch has its own role.”

Separation of Powers Explained

Mr Bennett drew a triangle on the whiteboard:



He explained:



- **The Legislature (Parliament)** – elected representatives who **debate and pass laws**.
- **The Executive** – ministers and public servants who **implement laws and run services**.
- **The Judiciary** – judges and courts who **apply the law** and protect constitutional boundaries.

“Each arm checks the others. That way, no one group has too much power.”

Emily nodded. “It’s like teamwork – with rules.”

Key Features of the Constitution

In a workshop, the class explored other features of the Constitution:

- **Division of Powers** – Some powers belong to the federal government (e.g. immigration, defence), other powers belong to the states (e.g. education, hospitals).
- **Representative Government** – Citizens elect members to represent them in Parliament.
- **Responsible Government** – Ministers are responsible to Parliament—and can be removed if they lose support.
- **Rule of Law** – Everyone, including leaders, must follow the law.
- **Referendums** – To change the Constitution, a double majority is needed: a national majority of voters, and a majority of states.

“Since 1901,” Mr Bennett said, “there have been 44 proposed constitutional changes. Only 8 have passed.”

“Why so few?” asked Emily.

“Because it’s hard to change the rules. You need strong support from both the people and the states.”

How the Constitution Affects Daily Life

As they headed home, Emily reflected on all she’d learned.

When her family watched the news that night, she saw things differently.

- A debate in Parliament? – The **Legislature** at work.
- A new school or homeschooling policy from the Department of Education? – The **Executive** implementing law.
- A High Court decision on a civil rights case? – The **Judiciary** protecting justice.

Even decisions about roads, trains, taxes, and the environment – she now understood how they all connected back to the Constitution.

It wasn’t just a document from the past. It was the framework for every civic decision today.

Activity: Build a Constitution Diagram & Reflection

Instructions:

1. **Draw and label the three branches of government** in a triangular diagram. Use arrows to show how they relate.
 - Label each one: Legislature, Executive, Judiciary.
 - Include who is in each branch (e.g. Parliament, Prime Minister, High Court).
 - Describe **one job** each branch does.
 2. **Write a short paragraph** explaining why the **separation of powers** is important. Include at least one example from the lesson (e.g. a bill, court case, or ministerial decision).
 3. **Extension (optional):** Read **Section 51** of the Constitution (online) and identify 3 areas the federal Parliament has power over.
Link: Australian Constitution at Parliament Website = <https://www.aph.gov.au/constitution>
-

Biblical Reflection

Good government matters to God. The Bible shows that leaders should serve with justice, humility, and wisdom. While Australia's Constitution is a human document, it reflects important biblical values such as accountability, fairness, and limited power.

“For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king; it is He who will save us.”
– Isaiah 33:22

In a broken world, no system is perfect. But as Christians, we are called to participate in civic life with integrity, prayer, and hope.

Narration Activity

If your parent/tutor is available now, ask them to listen while you retell what you have just learnt. Or if they are not available now, then tell your story during your lunch break today.

Lesson 8: Legislative Processes of the Australian Federal Government

Australian Curriculum:

AC9HC7K01 – Australian government, democracy and the Constitution

AC9HC7K03 – Australian legal system, Constitution, rule of law and court system.

AC9HC9K02 – The process by which laws are initiated and passed through the Australian Parliament

AC9HC9S01 – Develop questions and formulate explanations using concepts of democracy and law

AC9HC10K01 - the key features and values of Australia's system of government compared with at least one other democratic or non-democratic system of government in the Asia-Pacific region

AC9HC10S05 - create descriptions, explanations and arguments using civics and citizenship knowledge, concepts and terms that incorporate evidence

Lesson Introduction

Student Instructions:

How does an idea become a law in Australia? Today, you'll discover the journey of a bill – from someone's concern in the community, to debates in Parliament, to being signed into law.

In this lesson, you'll read a story that follows a fictional law from idea to reality, helping you visualise each stage of the process. You'll then complete a hands-on legislative flowchart activity and wrap up with narration.

Understanding how laws are made gives you the tools to become an informed citizen, and maybe even a lawmaker yourself someday.

Informational Story

“From Idea to Act: The Journey of a Law”

Fourteen-year-old Charlie Nguyen lived in a small town just outside Wollongong, surrounded by gum trees, kookaburras, and winding creeks. Every morning, Charlie rode his bike along the same narrow road to school dodging potholes, possums, and occasional trucks.

One morning, he nearly collided with a delivery van that swerved into his lane. Shaken but unhurt, Charlie arrived at school determined to do something.

In civics class that week, his teacher explained that **any citizen** can write to their local **Member of Parliament (MP)** about issues that matter to them. Charlie went home that night and wrote:

Dear Ms Reid,

I'm writing to ask if you can raise the issue of bike safety in our area. Many students ride to school, but the roads are narrow and unsafe. We need better signs, paths, and penalties for drivers who don't respect cyclists.

To his surprise, Ms Reid replied. She said she'd been considering a broader **cycling safety reform bill**, and Charlie's letter gave her the final push.

Stage 1: Idea and Drafting the Bill

MP Reid brought the idea to her party room – other members of her political party. After some discussion, the party agreed to propose a **Private Member's Bill** on cycling safety. She worked with legal drafters to turn ideas into formal law.

They wrote up a proposed law called the **Road Safety Amendment (Cyclist Protection) Bill 2024**.

The bill included:

- Lower speed limits around schools
- Fines for passing cyclists too closely
- Funds for shared bike lanes in regional towns

Ms Reid prepared to introduce it in the **House of Representatives**.

Stage 2: First Reading

One Monday morning, Ms Reid stood before Parliament and said:

"I present the Road Safety Amendment (Cyclist Protection) Bill 2024."

That was the **first reading** – just a formal introduction. There was no debate. Members received printed copies to read.

Charlie, watching online from his school's library, grinned. "That's *my* bill!"

Stage 3: Second Reading and Debate

Two days later came the **second reading**. Ms Reid gave a speech explaining why the bill mattered.

"This bill addresses a danger faced daily by thousands of Australian children. Road safety is a shared responsibility."

Members of Parliament then debated the bill.

Some supported it, sharing stories from their own electorates.

Others raised concerns: "Is this too expensive? Will rural councils cope with these changes?"

After debate, the House voted. The bill passed the second reading and moved to the **Consideration in Detail** stage.

Stage 4: Consideration in Detail (House of Representatives)

During this stage, members discussed the bill clause by clause. Some proposed amendments:

- One wanted to remove the fine increase.
- Another suggested adding a grant program for councils.

After discussion, some changes were accepted. Others were voted down. The updated version of the bill was approved.

Stage 5: Third Reading

The House held a **third reading** – a final vote on the revised bill. It passed with a slim majority.

The bill then moved to the **Senate**.

Stage 6: Senate Review

In the **Senate**, the process repeated:

- First Reading (formal introduction)
- Second Reading (debate)
- Committee Stage (detailed examination)
- Third Reading (final vote)

Senators also amended the bill – adding a requirement for yearly road safety reports.

The Senate passed the amended bill and sent it back to the House for agreement. After a few final changes, both houses agreed on the final text.

Stage 7: Royal Assent

The bill was now ready for **Royal Assent** – the formal approval by the **Governor-General**, who represents the King in Australia.

With a flourish of pen and ink, the **Road Safety Amendment (Cyclist Protection) Act 2024** became law.

It was published in the **Government Gazette** and came into effect in 90 days.

Back Home Again

When Charlie saw the news online, he was stunned. A law had changed, starting from one simple letter.

His teacher printed a copy of the Act and pinned it to the classroom wall.

“See,” she said. “Real people. Real voices. Real change.”

Charlie smiled. He wasn’t just a kid with a bike. He was part of Australia’s democracy.



Activity: Make a Law-Making Flowchart

Instructions:

Create a flowchart that shows each stage of how a bill becomes law in the **Australian Federal Parliament**.

Use large paper or a digital tool (e.g. Canva, Google Slides). Your flowchart must include:

1. **A title:** e.g. “How a Bill Becomes Law in Australia”
2. **Boxes for each stage:**
 - Idea and Drafting
 - First Reading (House of Reps)
 - Second Reading (debate)
 - Consideration in Detail
 - Third Reading
 - Senate Stages (same steps)
 - Royal Assent
 - The law takes effect
3. **Arrows** to show the direction
4. A **brief sentence** in each box explaining what happens
5. **Icons or images** (optional) to enhance presentation
6. A **quote** from the story (optional)

Helpful Links:

- Parliamentary Education Office – Making a Law = <https://peo.gov.au/understand-our-parliament/how-parliament-works/bills-and-laws/making-a-law>
- APH – Passage of a Bill = https://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/House_of_Representatives/Powers_practice_and_procedure/Practice7/HTML/Chapter10/Bills%E2%80%94the_parliamentary_process

You may also colour-code the roles:

- House of Representatives (green)
- Senate (red)
- Royal Assent (gold or neutral)

Biblical Reflection

Even in ancient Israel, lawmaking was a serious task. In Deuteronomy, leaders were called to write laws carefully and apply them fairly. God's law was to be a blessing, not a burden.

“Choose for your tribes wise, understanding, and experienced men, and I will appoint them as your heads.”
– Deuteronomy 1:13

Good laws protect the vulnerable and promote justice. As Christians, we're called to be salt and light in our communities. Sometimes that means writing letters, sometimes that means writing laws.

Narration Activity

If your parent/tutor is available now, ask them to listen while you retell what you have just learnt. Or if they are not available now, then tell your story during your lunch break today.

Lesson 9: The Court System in Australia

Australian Curriculum:

[AC9HC7K03](#) - the key principles and features of the Australian legal system, including the Australian Constitution, the rule of law and the court system

[AC9HC7K05](#) - how values based on freedom, respect, fairness and equality of opportunity can support social cohesion and democracy within Australian society

[AC9HC8K03](#) - the characteristics of laws and how laws are made in Australia through parliaments (statutory law) and through the courts (common law)

[AC9HC8K04](#) - the types of law in Australia, including criminal law and civil law, and the place of First Nations Australian customary law

[AC9HC8S03](#) - analyse information, data and ideas about political, legal or civic issues to identify and explain differences in perspectives and potential challenges

[AC9HC9K03](#) – The role of the court system in applying and interpreting Australian law

[AC9HC9K04](#) – The types of law in Australia, including criminal law, civil law, and customary law

[AC9HC10K05](#) - the challenges to and ways of sustaining a resilient democracy and a cohesive society in Australia and/or in our region or globally

[AC9HC10S03](#) - analyse information, data and ideas about political, legal or civic issues to identify and evaluate differences in perspectives and interpretations

[AC9HC10S04](#) - evaluate the methods or strategies and outcomes related to making decisions about civic participation

Lesson Introduction

Laws don't just get written – they need to be applied, enforced, and interpreted fairly. That's the job of the **court system**. Today, you'll learn how Australia's courts work, what kinds of laws they deal with, and how different cases are handled. You'll also discover that the legal system includes more than Parliament – it includes **customary law** held by Indigenous communities.

This lesson includes a story that follows three real-life inspired cases through different courts. After the story, you'll complete a practical court mapping activity and a narration task.

Informational Story

“Courts and Cases: Three Journeys Through Justice”

In three different towns, on the same morning, three very different Australians walked into three very different courtrooms.

None of them knew each other. But each would discover something about how justice works in Australia.

Case 1 – Jodie's Story: A Matter of Civil Law

In suburban Adelaide, Jodie Harris, a Year 10 student, stood nervously outside the **Magistrates Court** with her mother. They weren't there because Jodie was in trouble. In fact, she was the one who had been wronged.



Two months earlier, Jodie had saved up her part-time job money to buy a second-hand bike from a local seller online. But when the bike arrived, it had a cracked frame and faulty brakes. The seller refused a refund. Her mum said, “That’s not right. Let’s take it to **civil court**.”

Civil law deals with **disputes between individuals or organisations** such as contracts, property, and small claims.

Inside the courtroom, a magistrate listened to both sides. Jodie calmly explained what had happened. The seller gave his version. No jury. No dramatic cross-examinations. Just facts, questions, and fairness.

The magistrate ruled in Jodie’s favour. The seller was ordered to refund the full amount plus a small fee.

Jodie smiled as she walked out. “That’s the law working for ordinary people,” she said.

Case 2 – Malik’s Story: Criminal Charges in Court

In the heart of Sydney, Malik Thompson, 23, waited in the **District Court**. He wasn’t proud of why he was there.

A few months ago, Malik had been caught shoplifting electronics from a department store. It was a dumb decision made under pressure – he’d lost his job and was struggling with rent. But now, he was facing criminal charges.



Criminal law deals with offences against society – like theft, assault, and drug offences. These are prosecuted by the state.

Malik’s lawyer explained the charge: theft under \$2,000. Not the worst crime, but still serious. In court, the prosecution presented CCTV footage and statements. Malik pled guilty but asked for leniency.

The judge considered the facts: Malik had no prior record, had returned the goods, and was now employed again. He was sentenced to **community service** and a **good behaviour bond**.

Malik walked out relieved – and determined not to return.

Later, he told his brother, “The judge didn’t just punish me. He gave me a second chance.”

Case 3 – Aunty Ruth’s Story: Customary Law and the Circle Court

Far north in Arnhem Land, **Aunty Ruth Yunupingu**, a respected Yolŋu elder, sat in a **circle of chairs**, not a courtroom dock.

She was not the defendant; but part of the **Circle Sentencing** process, an initiative used in some parts of Australia to



incorporate **Aboriginal customary law and cultural input** into the justice system.

The young man in the centre, Nathan, had vandalised community property and refused to attend school. But rather than being sentenced by a magistrate alone, Nathan would hear from **his community**.

Aunty Ruth spoke first.

“You are Yolŋu. Your choices reflect on all of us. You hurt our land and our name. But we don’t throw you away. We guide you back.”

Other elders, police, a support worker, and Nathan’s uncle all spoke. Nathan apologised. He agreed to perform restitution – repairs and volunteer work – and to meet weekly with a mentor.

Though Circle Sentencing doesn’t apply to all cases, and doesn’t override state law, it reflects a **wider truth**: law is not just about punishment. It’s about restoration, relationships, and culture.

Understanding the Court System

These three stories show different parts of Australia’s legal system.

1. **Civil Law** – Resolves **disputes** between individuals or groups.
Examples: property, contracts, defamation, small claims.
2. **Criminal Law** – Deals with **offences** against the state or society.
Examples: theft, assault, drug offences.
3. **Customary Law** – Refers to **laws and traditions practiced by Indigenous groups**, often for thousands of years, which still influence modern justice practices.

There is also another type of law called **Common law**, also known as **judge-made law or case law**. This is a legal system where laws are created and developed through court decisions rather than written codes or statutes. This means that judges, by making rulings in specific cases, establish precedents that guide future decisions in similar situations.

Court Levels in Australia

Australia has a **hierarchy of courts**, from lower to higher:

- **Local/Magistrates Courts** – Minor criminal and civil matters
- **District/County Courts** – More serious matters, including jury trials
- **Supreme Courts** – Serious criminal cases and appeals
- **High Court of Australia** – Final court of appeal; interprets the Constitution

Each state and territory has its own court system, but federal courts exist too, especially for immigration, taxation, and constitutional issues.

The Role of the Judge

Unlike Parliament, where laws are made, **courts interpret and apply those laws.**

Judges and magistrates are **independent from government.** They don't take sides. They listen to the facts, consider the law, and make fair decisions. Some trials use juries; others are judge-only.

Why Does This Matter?

A fair court system protects **every Australian**, rich or poor. It gives people the right to be heard, to defend themselves, and to seek justice.

Courts can correct mistakes, resolve conflict, and even challenge bad laws.

Jodie, Malik, and Auntie Ruth were part of this system. So are millions of others each year.

Activity: Create a Court System Chart

Instructions:

Create a visual diagram of the **Australian Court System.** Include at least the following:

1. **Three types of law:**
 - Civil Law
 - Criminal Law
 - Customary Law
2. **Four main court levels:**
 - Magistrates/Local Court
 - District/County Court
 - Supreme Court
 - High Court of Australia
3. **Arrows showing appeal pathways** (e.g. from Magistrates to District to Supreme)
4. **Icons or example cases** in each court (e.g. shoplifting, contract disputes, constitutional challenges)
5. **Optional:** Use colour coding or cartoon symbols to make it visually appealing.

Useful References:

- Parliamentary Education Office – Courts
 - ABC Education – Legal System
-

Biblical Reflection

The Bible is full of examples where God calls His people to uphold justice. Judges are warned not to take bribes or show partiality. Proverbs says:

“Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy.” (Proverbs 31:9)

God is both just and merciful. A good legal system reflects His character by balancing truth, fairness, and compassion. That's why Christians should care about justice and pray for our courts.

Yr 10 Extension Reading:

The Challenges of Citizenship: Like all democracies, Australia faces ongoing challenges in sustaining both a resilient political system and a cohesive society. These challenges include political disengagement, misinformation, social inequality, and polarisation. Ensuring long-term democratic resilience involves promoting media literacy, maintaining transparency in political processes, and encouraging respectful dialogue across diverse communities. Cohesion is strengthened when all citizens feel represented, and when all citizens understand how to participate in the society's culture. Globally, many nations grapple with similar issues, making civic education and active engagement critical for sustaining democracy in the 21st century.

To navigate these complex challenges, it is vital for students and citizens to analyse a wide range of information, data, and perspectives on political and legal issues. By critically examining different viewpoints, individuals can understand the reasoning behind opposing arguments and identify potential biases or misinformation. This skill fosters empathy and informed judgment, enabling citizens to move beyond simplistic interpretations and engage thoughtfully in civic discussions. It also empowers individuals to evaluate public policies and leadership decisions more effectively.

Finally, evaluating the methods and outcomes of civic participation reveals the power of community action, advocacy, and informed voting. Whether through petitions, peaceful protests, joining local councils, or contacting members of Parliament, citizens can influence change. Assessing the effectiveness of these methods – both in terms of impact and democratic integrity – helps young Australians understand that civic involvement is not just a right but a responsibility. Through strategic, informed, and respectful engagement, individuals contribute to the continual strengthening of Australia's democratic society.

Narration Activity

If your parent/tutor is available now, ask them to listen while you retell what you have just learnt. Or if they are not available now, then tell your story during your lunch break today.

Lesson 10: Causes of World War I & Reasons Why Australians Enlisted to Fight

Australian Curriculum:

[AC9HH8S06](#) - identify perspectives, attitudes and values of the past in sources

[AC9HH8S07](#) - explain historical interpretations about significant events, individuals and groups

[AC9HH9K08](#) – The causes of World War I and the reasons people from Australia and its territories enlisted to fight in the war

Lesson Introduction

Student Instructions:

World War I was one of the most devastating conflicts in human history. But how did it begin? And why did tens of thousands of young Australians – many barely older than you – volunteer to fight in it?

In this lesson, you'll read a historical story that brings the lead-up to the war to life, through the eyes of those living in Australia in 1914. You'll explore the **long-term causes of the war**, the **immediate spark**, and the **motivations that drove Australians** to enlist. After the story, you'll complete a practical activity and a narration task.

Informational Story

“The Storm Approaches: Australia on the Eve of War”

August 1914.

The news reached the Coopers just as the sun rose over their wheat farm in New South Wales. Jack Cooper, seventeen years old, dropped his spade when he heard the distant clatter of hooves – it was old Mr Rowley from the post office galloping in, waving a telegram.

“War’s been declared!” he shouted. “Germany’s invaded Belgium. Britain’s at war, and we are too!”

Jack's father, normally quiet and slow to speak, nodded grimly. "Then so are we. Australia stands with Britain."

Jack didn't understand all the details yet, but his heart beat faster. War! The very word stirred images of honour, flags, marching bands, and battlefield glory. Like most Australians, he had grown up believing that Britain – the "mother country" – was noble, righteous, and invincible.

But how had it come to this? What chain of events had turned a tense peace into global war?

The Long Fuse: Causes of World War I

Though war was declared in 1914, the causes had been building for decades. Jack's older brother Samuel, a teacher, explained it like this:

"Europe's like a powder keg," he said. "All it needed was a spark."

There were four major causes:

1. **Militarism** – Nations like Germany, Britain, and France had been building powerful armies and navies. An arms race between Germany and Britain – especially their navies – fuelled fear and suspicion.
2. **Alliances** – Countries had formed complex alliances:
 - Triple Entente: Britain, France, Russia
 - Triple Alliance: Germany, Austria-Hungary, ItalyThese alliances meant that a small conflict could drag many nations into war.
3. **Imperialism** – European powers competed fiercely for overseas colonies. Tensions were high in Africa, Asia, and the Balkans as countries tried to expand their empires.
4. **Nationalism** – National pride and ethnic tensions stirred rebellion, especially in the Balkans. Many Slavic people in Austria-Hungary wanted to unite with Serbia.

Then came the **spark**.

The Assassination

On June 28, 1914, a Serbian nationalist named Gavrilo Princip assassinated **Archduke Franz Ferdinand**, heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne, in Sarajevo.

Austria-Hungary blamed Serbia and, with Germany's backing, declared war.

Russia backed Serbia. Germany declared war on Russia and France. Germany invaded Belgium to reach France, prompting Britain to declare war on Germany.

Within weeks, the world's major powers were at war.

Australia Enters the War

As a dominion of the **British Empire**, Australia was automatically at war when Britain was.

Prime Minister **Joseph Cook** declared:

“When the Empire is at war, so is Australia.”

Most Australians welcomed the news. Crowds sang “God Save the King” in the streets. Newspapers ran headlines like “For King and Country!” Young men lined up to enlist.

Jack Cooper was one of them.

Why Did Australians Enlist?

Jack wasn’t alone in his excitement. In 1914, nearly **50,000 men volunteered** in the first few months. But why?

1. Loyalty to Britain

Many Australians still saw themselves as British. Defending Britain meant defending civilisation.

Jack’s mother kept a portrait of Queen Victoria beside the family Bible. “England has never let us down,” she said.

2. Adventure and Travel

Young men from farms and towns saw war as a chance to see the world.

“Better than digging ditches,” Jack joked. “I’ve never even seen Sydney.”

3. Mateship and Honour

Boys enlisted with friends – whole football teams, church groups, or classmates.

Jack’s friend Billy said, “If you go, I’ll go too. Can’t let you go alone.”

4. Employment and Pay

With high unemployment in 1914, the army offered regular pay, clothes, and meals. For some, that was too good to pass up.

5. Pressure and Propaganda

Posters showed women begging men to fight. Some were told they’d be cowards if they didn’t join.

Even Jack’s younger sister said, “You’ll be a hero when you come home.”

6. Belief in a Short War

Most thought the war would end by Christmas.

No one imagined the trenches, gas attacks, or years of suffering to come.



Faith in the Fight

For many Christian Australians, the war was seen as a **just cause**. Ministers preached sermons about fighting for truth and justice. Psalm 144 was often quoted:

“Praise be to the Lord my Rock, who trains my hands for war, my fingers for battle.”

Chaplains joined troops to offer prayer, support, and Scripture readings. Soldiers carried small Bibles in their breast pockets.

Jack’s pastor gave him a pocket Bible before he left. “Courage, lad,” he said. “And don’t forget your true commander.”

Jack Joins Up

Jack and Billy rode into town to enlist. The recruitment officer asked their names, ages, and whether they were fit. Jack’s mother cried quietly, but didn’t stop him.

“I trust God will bring you home,” she whispered.

They were given khaki uniforms, tents, and rifles. After training at Liverpool Camp, they boarded a ship for Egypt.

As the coastline disappeared behind them, Jack felt a mix of pride, fear, and destiny.

The world had changed, and so had he.

Looking Ahead

Jack didn’t know what lay ahead: Gallipoli, the Western Front, Egypt, Palestine.

He only knew that he had answered the call.

And back home, a nation was learning what war really meant.

Activity: Create a Recruitment Poster with Historical Accuracy

Instructions:

Create your own **WWI-style recruitment poster**, as if it were August 1914. Use a historical lens – include genuine motivations and beliefs from that time.

Your poster should include:

1. **A slogan** – something powerful and convincing (e.g. “Join Today for Honour and Glory!”)
2. **An image** – a soldier, flag, family, or battlefield (drawn or found online)
3. **Three persuasive reasons to enlist**, based on the story (e.g. loyalty to Britain, mateship, adventure)
4. **A Bible verse or quote** that a Christian recruiter might have used
5. **Colours and fonts** appropriate to the time

Helpful Resources for Inspiration:

- Australian War Memorial – Recruitment Posters
- Trove – National Library of Australia

When finished, display it in your study space or include it in your portfolio.

Biblical Reflection

War is a tragic reality in a fallen world. While we honour those who sacrificed for justice, we also pray for peace. As Christians, we are called to courage—but also to wisdom and mercy.

“Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.” (John 15:13)

Many Australian soldiers fought with bravery and belief; but we also remember the suffering of all involved. True peace comes through Christ.

Narration Activity

If your parent/tutor is available now, ask them to listen while you retell what you have just learnt. Or if they are not available now, then tell your story during your lunch break today.

Lesson 11: Gallipoli and the Western Front

Australian Curriculum:

AC9HH9K09 – The places where Australians fought and the nature of warfare during World War I, including the Gallipoli campaign and the Western Front

Lesson Introduction

Student Instructions:

Gallipoli and the Western Front are two of the most well-known battlefields where Australians fought during World War I. These places shaped Australia's memory of the war; but they were also sites of intense suffering, courage, and sacrifice.

In this lesson, you'll read a story following Australian soldiers through the trenches of Gallipoli and France. You'll then complete a creative diary-writing activity and a narration task.

Informational Story

“Letters from the Front: Gallipoli and the Western Front”

April 25, 1915 – Anzac Cove, Gallipoli

Private Jack Cooper gripped the side of the wooden boat as it rocked in the cold, dark sea. All around him were other young men – some whispering prayers, others white-faced with fear. Turkish cliffs loomed ahead.

Suddenly, rifles cracked. Bullets sliced the air. The rowboat next to them splintered and sank. A voice yelled, “Over the side! Get to shore!”

Jack plunged into the icy water, holding his rifle above his head. He stumbled through the surf, dodging machine-gun fire, climbing over rocks, and clambering up steep cliffs. This was not the beach they had expected. The landing had gone wrong.



By nightfall, Jack lay in a shallow trench, soaked and shaking. He wrote:

Dear Mum,

We landed at dawn. It was chaos. We lost many. But I'm alive. I believe God is watching over me. Pray for us.

Your Jack.

The Gallipoli Campaign

The Gallipoli campaign was designed by the British to capture the **Dardanelles Strait**, knock the Ottoman Empire out of the war, and open a supply route to Russia. The **Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZACs)** were sent to land on the Gallipoli Peninsula in Turkey.

But from the first day, the campaign turned into a disaster.

- The terrain was steep, rocky, and exposed
- Turkish forces, led by Mustafa Kemal (later known as Atatürk), fiercely defended their homeland
- The ANZACs were stuck in trenches only metres from the enemy

Jack's days were filled with flies, heat, dysentery, and constant danger.

One day he wrote:

Billy was hit this morning. He never even cried out. I buried him behind the ridge. We're running out of water again. Some lads are breaking down.

Life in the Trenches

Gallipoli was trench warfare at its rawest. Soldiers dug narrow ditches, lived on bully beef and hard biscuits, and used empty tins as toilets. They were tormented by:

- **Heat and flies** in summer
- **Cold, mud, and frostbite** in winter
- **Sniper fire** at any time

But amid the horror, there was also humour, friendship, and faith.

Soldiers sang, joked, read Scripture, and wrote poetry. Some carved crosses from bullets or etched prayers into the butts of their rifles.

Jack's chaplain read from Psalm 23 at a burial:

"Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death..."



Evacuation and Reflection

After **8 months** of fighting, the campaign was abandoned. Over **8,000 Australians** had died. The final weeks saw a miraculous evacuation with barely a life lost.



Jack left Gallipoli on a cold December night, turning back to look once. He whispered, “Goodbye, Billy. We did our best.”

1916–1918: The Western Front

After Gallipoli, Jack was sent to **France**, to the Western Front. There, the war was different... but just as brutal.

In places like **Fromelles, Pozieres, and Villers-Bretonneux**, Australians faced:

- Endless **mud**
- **Gas attacks**
- **Barbed wire and shell craters**
- **Artillery bombardments that lasted days**



Jack wrote from France:

The shelling never stops. It rattles your bones. The trenches are knee-deep in mud. Some men sleep standing up. Others have lost their minds. I hold onto prayer. God keeps me sane.

Key Battles Involving Australians

1. **Fromelles (1916)** – Australia’s bloodiest 24 hours: over 5,000 casualties in one night.
2. **Pozieres (1916)** – Fierce fighting to capture a small French village. The town was obliterated.
3. **Bullecourt (1917)** – Soldiers attacked without proper artillery support.
4. **Passchendaele (1917)** – A muddy nightmare. Horses, men, and carts drowned in the sludge.
5. **Villers-Bretonneux (1918)** – Australians recaptured the town from German forces in a daring night attack. It was a turning point.

Jack survived all of them; but lost more friends than he could count.

Daily Life on the Western Front

When not fighting, soldiers mended trenches, wrote letters, and tried to stay warm. Rats, lice, and trench foot were constant problems.

Sometimes they shared food with local French children. Other times, they rested in ruined churches.

One day, Jack wrote:



I found a small chapel. The roof is gone, but the cross still stands. I sat and prayed for home. And I prayed for the Germans too. I don’t hate them. I just want this to end.

Faith in the Trenches

Many soldiers carried small Bibles or New Testaments. Army chaplains, often called “padres,” held services, funerals, and prayer groups.

Jack’s padre, Father Maclean, gave communion under gunfire and prayed with dying soldiers. He often read from Romans chapter 8:

“Nothing can separate us from the love of God...”

Even unbelievers asked for prayer. In the trenches, faith was both fragile and fierce.

The End of the War

By November 1918, the tide had turned. Germany was exhausted, and its allies were defeated. On **November 11**, an armistice was signed.

Jack wrote his final letter:

It’s over. We’ve survived. I’m coming home. I can’t believe it’s real.

I’ve seen too much. Lost too much. But I still believe in goodness, in God, and in life. Maybe that’s enough.
With love, Jack.



A Kiwi Chaplain serving communion in the field near Messines Ridge, Belgium, in WWI



Activity: Write a Soldier’s Diary Entry

Instructions: Write a **first-person diary entry** from the perspective of an Australian soldier at **Gallipoli** or **the Western Front**. Use realistic detail based on what you’ve read.

Include:

1. **Where you are** (Gallipoli or France)
2. **What happened today** (e.g. battle, weather, a friend injured, a chapel visit)
3. **Your emotions** – fear, hope, sorrow, confusion
4. **A sentence of prayer or Scripture** you might have carried
5. 150 - 250 words in total

You may handwrite it and age the paper to look like a historical artefact, or type it and add wartime photos.

Optional: Read real WWI letters or diaries for inspiration:

- State Library of NSW – WWI Diaries
 - Australian War Memorial – Personal Stories
-

Biblical Reflection

In war, humanity's brokenness is painfully clear. Yet in the darkness, many found light through faith, courage, and sacrificial love.

“The Lord is close to the broken-hearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.” (Psalm 34:18)

As we remember the ANZACs, let's honour their bravery, and also their humanity and hope. May we be peacemakers in our own time.

Narration Activity

If your parent/tutor is available now, ask them to listen while you retell what you have just learnt. Or if they are not available now, then tell your story during your lunch break today.

Lesson 12: Australia in the Middle East

Australian Curriculum:

AC9HH9K09 – The places where Australians fought and the nature of warfare during World War I, including the Gallipoli campaign and the Western Front

Lesson Introduction

Student Instructions:

When most Australians think of World War I, they picture Gallipoli or the muddy trenches of France. But thousands of Australians also served in the **Middle East**, where warfare looked very different – deserts, horses, and wide skies.

In this lesson, you'll read a story that follows Australian Light Horse soldiers in the Sinai and Palestine campaigns. You'll learn about the challenges of desert warfare, the role of mounted troops, and the victories that helped end the war. After the story, you'll complete a map-based activity and a narration task.

Informational Story

“Riders in the Desert: The Light Horse in the Middle East”

April 1917 – Sinai Desert, Egypt

Corporal Elijah Morris wiped sand from his eyes and checked the reins on his horse, Sandy. The heat shimmered across the dunes like water on a road. His uniform was dusty, his boots cracked, but he sat tall in the saddle.

He was part of the **Australian Light Horse**—mounted infantry who rode like cavalry but fought on foot. In the wide, dry expanse of the Middle East, they were exactly what the British command needed: fast, flexible, and fearless.

Their current mission: drive the Ottoman Turks out of **Palestine**; then secure Egypt and the **Suez Canal**, and break through to **Damascus**.

But first, they had to survive the desert.

Note: The name ‘Palestine’ was the name the British had given the Turkish occupied area between Egypt and Lebanon, and between the Mediterranean Sea and Jordan. There was no official country or government of ‘Palestine’. The area from Dan in the north Beersheba in the south and the area from Jordan to the Mediterranean sea had been the homeland of the Jewish people for about 3,500 years).

Australia's War Beyond Gallipoli

After Gallipoli, many Australian troops stayed in the region. The **Australian and New Zealand Mounted Division** joined British forces defending Egypt from Ottoman attacks.

The **Middle East campaign** had three main goals:

1. Protect the Suez Canal – vital as a trade route for shipping for Britain and other nations.
2. Defend British-controlled Egypt
3. Push into Palestine and Syria to defeat the Ottoman Empire

Elijah and his unit had fought in small skirmishes along the Sinai Peninsula – dry, flat, and hot enough to boil water on metal.

“War in the sand,” Elijah wrote home, “is a battle against thirst.”

Life in the Desert

The Light Horse travelled light and fast. Each man rode one horse and led another to carry supplies. They slept under canvas or stars, boiled tea in tins, and lived on hard biscuits, bully beef, and dates from local trees.

Key challenges included:

- **Water shortages**
- **Sandstorms**
- **Long-distance rides**
- **Disease and heatstroke**



Yet they built strong bonds with each other, and with their horses.

Sandy, Elijah’s mare, had a calming nature and sure footing. Soldiers loved their horses deeply, but knew they might not survive the war.

Beersheba – The Famous Charge

On **October 31, 1917**, Elijah’s unit was part of the **Battle of Beersheba**, one of Australia’s most famous WWI victories.

The British needed to capture the town’s wells before the Turks destroyed them. A long, costly battle raged all day. At sunset, General Chauvel ordered something unexpected: a full mounted charge.

Over **800 men of the 4th and 12th Australian Light Horse Regiments** lined up.

Elijah and Sandy were among them.



“Don’t stop. Don’t slow,” his commander warned. “Ride hard. Ride low. Take the trenches.”

The line galloped across 6km of open desert – sabres drawn, hooves thundering. Turkish gunners opened fire, but the horsemen were too fast.

They **jumped trenches**, fought hand-to-hand, and secured Beersheba. The wells were saved.

It was one of the last successful cavalry charges in history.

Elijah wrote that night:

We charged like a storm. I thought we’d all die. But the Lord preserved us. Beersheba is ours.



From Gaza to Jerusalem

After Beersheba, Allied forces pushed on toward **Gaza**, then north to **Jerusalem**.

In December 1917, General Allenby entered Jerusalem on foot – out of respect for its holiness. Australian troops, including the Light Horse, played a vital role in that campaign.

Elijah rode through olive groves and ancient villages. “We pass where Christ once walked,” he wrote. “I feel unworthy.”

Final Push to Damascus

In 1918, the Light Horse helped launch the final offensive through **the Jordan Valley**, **Amman**, and **Damascus**. They often fought alongside Arab forces led by **T.E. Lawrence** – the famous “Lawrence of Arabia.”

At the same time, Arab nationalism had been rising and the Arabs also wanted to be free from the Turkish rule of the Ottoman Empire. They wanted lands of their own, which are now in the area of present day Syria, Iraq and Saudi Arabia.

By **October 1918**, the Ottoman Empire was crumbling. Damascus fell, and the war in the Middle East drew to a close.

Elijah’s last days in the desert were spent burying fallen mates and saying goodbye to Sandy, who was too weak to return home. The horses were sold, gifted, or put down to avoid disease quarantine.

“Leaving her,” Elijah wrote, “broke me more than any bullet.”

Why the Middle East Campaign Mattered

Though less well-known than Gallipoli or the Western Front, the Middle East campaign:

- **Defended key Allied supply routes**
- **Helped defeat the Ottoman Empire**
- **Allowed Britain to claim new territories** (e.g. Palestine, Transjordan) until they could eventually be returned to the Jews (Israel) and Arabs (Iraq, Syria, Jordan & Saudi Arabia).



It also deepened **Australia's military identity** - showing the endurance and daring of troops in extreme conditions.

Indigenous Troopers and Cameleers

Some Aboriginal men served in the Middle East, despite official resistance. One such soldier was **Jack Pollard**, a stockman from Queensland.

His bush skills were vital – tracking, riding, and surviving heat. Though poorly treated back home, he fought with honour.



“We weren’t just Light Horse,” Jack said. “We were light-hearted and heavy-duty.”

Others joined the **Imperial Camel Corps**, guiding camels through harsh terrain. Camels carried more weight than horses and needed less water. They were perfect for the Sinai.

Faith in the Desert

Faith was a deep comfort in the desert. Soldiers sang hymns like *Abide with Me* and *All Things Bright and Beautiful*. Chaplains baptised men in the Jordan River and read Scripture under moonlight.

Elijah carried a small Bible, worn at the edges. In battle, he recited Psalm 121:

“I lift up my eyes to the hills, where does my help come from?
My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth.”

Coming Home

Elijah returned in 1919, thinner, older, and quieter. He settled on a soldier's block and married a nurse named Rachel. He rarely spoke of Beersheba; but when asked, he'd smile softly and say:

“We rode fast, we rode hard, and we rode for one another.”



Activity: Map and Timeline of the Middle East Campaign

Instructions:

Create a **map and timeline** that traces Australia's role in the Middle East campaign.

1. **On a map** of the Middle East (print or draw), label:
 - Egypt
 - Sinai Peninsula
 - Beersheba
 - Gaza
 - Jerusalem
 - Jordan Valley
 - Damascus
2. Use arrows to show the direction of movement.
3. Next to your map, create a **timeline** with at least 5 major events:
 - E.g. Battle of Romani (1916), Beersheba (1917), Fall of Jerusalem (1917), etc.
4. Include **one quote** from Elijah's story in your display.

Helpful Links:

- Australian War Memorial – Sinai and Palestine
- WWI Maps – Imperial War Museums

Optional: Use coloured pencils or design software for a polished look.

Biblical Reflection

Australia's soldiers rode through the very lands where biblical events occurred. From the Jordan to Jerusalem, they witnessed history both ancient and new.

Yet, while war raged, many held to Christ's promise of peace.

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God.” (Matthew 5:9)

As we remember the Light Horse and others who served, let's seek to be people of peace in our words and actions.

Narration Activity

If your parent/tutor is available now, ask them to listen while you retell what you have just learnt. Or if they are not available now, then tell your story during your lunch break today.

Lesson 13: Significant Turning Points of the War

Australian Curriculum:

AC9HH9K10 – The significant events and turning points of World War I, including the strategies, tactics, and outcomes of key battles

Lesson Introduction

Student Instructions:

World War I dragged on for over four years and cost millions of lives. But certain battles and decisions changed the course of the war shifting momentum from one side to another and setting the stage for victory or loss.

In this lesson, you'll read a narrative exploring **four significant turning points** of World War I from both a global and Australian perspective. After the story, you'll complete a strategic map-based activity and then share what you've learned through narration.

Informational Story

“The Tide Turns: Four Key Moments That Changed the War”

1. 1915 – The Gallipoli Evacuation

December 1915.

Jack Cooper stood on the narrow beach of Anzac Cove for the last time. It had been eight long months since the disastrous landing. Now, instead of charging up cliffs, the Australians were withdrawing under cover of darkness.

This wasn't defeat – it was a miracle of discipline. The soldiers had created fake camps, timed rifle discharges, and tiptoed out silently. Not a single life was lost during the retreat.

The Gallipoli evacuation was a turning point – not of military victory, but of realisation. It taught Allied leaders the cost of poor planning, the value of intelligence, and the courage of ordinary soldiers.



From this point on, Australia's role in the war shifted to **the Western Front**, where a new kind of warfare awaited.

2. 1916 – Fromelles and Pozieres

Jack arrived in northern France in mid-1916. He was assigned to the 5th Division, which was thrown into battle at a place he had never heard of: **Fromelles**.

The result was catastrophic. In just one night (July 19 – 20) Australia lost over **5,500 men**, many of them new recruits. It was the worst 24 hours in Australian military history.

Just days later, at **Pozieres**, Australian divisions faced brutal shelling and fierce resistance while trying to capture a tiny French village on a ridge.

Jack wrote:

“The ground shakes constantly. Men vanish under shells. Pozieres is a graveyard. But we held the ridge.”

Though the human cost was terrible, the **Battle of Pozieres** became a symbol of **Australian tenacity**. The ridge gave the Allies a strategic advantage in northern France and demonstrated the AIF's value to the British command.

Pozieres marked a **military and emotional turning point** for Australians: from naïve enthusiasm to grim resolve.

3. 1917 – The Battle of Beersheba

In the Middle East, another kind of turning point was underway.

On **October 31, 1917**, Australian Light Horse units stormed the Ottoman trenches at **Beersheba**. It was one of the last great cavalry charges in history, and it succeeded.

The battle broke the stalemate in southern Palestine and allowed Allied forces to advance toward **Jerusalem**.

Elijah Morris, a Light Horse corporal, recalled:

“We charged through rifle fire like a thunderstorm. Beersheba fell before sunset.”

The victory at Beersheba turned the tide in the Middle East and opened the road to Damascus. It showed that mobility, boldness, and coordination



could win battles. These were lessons later applied in Europe.

4. 1918 – The Hundred Days Offensive

By 1918, both sides were exhausted. The Germans launched a desperate spring offensive that pushed the Allies back. But once the line held, the Allies responded with a series of **decisive attacks** known as the **Hundred Days Offensive**.

Jack Cooper now fought alongside Canadians, New Zealanders, and Americans. On **August 8**, they launched the **Battle of Amiens** – a coordinated assault with tanks, planes, and infantry. The result was stunning: the German lines crumbled.

General Ludendorff, the German commander, called it “**the black day of the German Army**.”

Over the next hundred days, Allied forces pushed Germany out of France. Australians were heavily involved in:

- **Mont St Quentin** (September 1918)
- **Peronne**
- **Hindenburg Line assault**



Jack wrote:

“We no longer fear them. We chase them. The tide has turned.”

On **November 11, 1918**, Germany surrendered. The war was over.

Reflection: Why These Events Mattered

Each of these turning points had a unique role:

- **Gallipoli** taught humility, resilience, and strategic lessons.
- **Pozieres and Fromelles** revealed the brutality of modern war, and the grit of ANZAC troops.
- **Beersheba** showed how daring tactics could break a deadlock.
- **The Hundred Days Offensive** brought final victory through coordination and innovation.

Turning points don’t always look like triumph. Some are buried in loss, others in brave decisions. But all changed the war’s direction, and its legacy.

Activity: Battle Map and Turning Point Timeline

Instructions:

Create a **map and annotated timeline** showing four major WWI turning points involving Australians.

Part A: Map

1. Print or draw a map of Europe and the Middle East.
2. Mark and label:
 - **Gallipoli (Turkey)**
 - **Fromelles and Pozieres (France)**
 - **Beersheba (Palestine)**
 - **Amiens/Mont St Quentin (France)**
3. Use **symbols or arrows** to indicate direction of movement or outcomes.
4. Add **short notes** explaining each event's significance next to the locations.

Part B: Timeline

1. Draw a horizontal timeline from **1914 to 1918**.
2. Mark and date each of the following:
 - Gallipoli Evacuation – Dec 1915
 - Fromelles/Pozieres – July 1916
 - Beersheba – Oct 1917
 - Battle of Amiens – Aug 1918
3. Under each, write **1 - 2 sentences** describing why it was a turning point.

Optional Extension: Add a quote from Jack or Elijah for each event, or include a brief diary-style reflection.

Helpful Sites:

- Australian War Memorial – Battles
- First World War Timeline – IWM

Biblical Reflection

In the turmoil of war, God calls us to recognise His presence even in suffering. Not all turning points are victories – some are moments of truth, courage, or surrender.

“You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good, to accomplish what is now being done.”
(Genesis 50:20)

God works even in chaos, redeeming sorrow for purpose. We honour the turning points of history, and seek spiritual turning points of hope and healing in our lives.

Narration Activity

If your parent/tutor is available now, ask them to listen while you retell what you have just learnt. Or if they are not available now, then tell your story during your lunch break today.

Lesson 14: Effects of World War I on Australian Society

Australian Curriculum:

[AC9HH8S06](#) - identify perspectives, attitudes and values of the past in sources

[AC9HH8S07](#) - explain historical interpretations about significant events, individuals and groups

[AC9HH9K11](#) – The effects of World War I, with a particular emphasis on the impact on Australian society, such as the changing role of women, political debates about conscription, and the influence of the war on Australian relationships with Britain

Lesson Introduction

Student Instructions:

World War I changed Australia forever. It wasn't just soldiers who were affected – families, women, politics, and national identity were reshaped by the conflict. In this lesson, you'll explore three major effects of the war on Australian society:

1. The **changing role of women**
2. The **conscription debate** that divided the nation
3. The **evolving relationship with Britain**

You'll read a historical story, then complete a creative newspaper front-page activity, and wrap up with your narration task.

Informational Story

“When the War Came Home: The Battle Beyond the Trenches”

Melbourne, 1917

At the tram stop on Collins Street, **Annie Whitmore** adjusted her nurse's cap and watched another trainload of wounded men arrive at the station.

She was only 22 years old, but war had aged her. For the past two years, Annie had served in the **Australian Army Nursing Service**, first in Egypt, now at the **No. 5 Base Hospital** in Melbourne.



Inside the carriage, stretcher bearers carried men who'd fought at Gallipoli and the Western Front. Some had lost limbs. Some had lost their minds.

Annie braced herself. The war might have been fought overseas, but **Australia itself had become a battlefield** – a place of grief, debate, and transformation.

1. Women in a New Role

When the war began, Annie had been a schoolteacher. Women were expected to stay home, support husbands, raise children, and mind the hearth.

But as men enlisted, women stepped into new roles:

- **Nurses** served near frontlines
- **Women's factories** produced ammunition, uniforms, and supplies
- **Women farmed, managed businesses**, and ran charitable organisations



Annie's younger sister became a **munitions worker** in Footscray. Their mother led a **Red Cross parcel team**, sewing socks and baking ANZAC biscuits.

Some women took over banks, councils, and even police offices and fire-brigades. While they didn't yet have **equal voting rights federally**, their contribution during wartime demanded recognition.

"We are no longer merely wives and mothers," Annie's supervisor said. "We are workers in a nation at war."

Yet it came with cost. Wages were lower. Hours were long. Respect wasn't always given. Still, women pushed forward, proving that **capability was not limited by gender**.

2. The Conscription Crisis

In October 1916, a new war erupted – this time **at home**.

Prime Minister **Billy Hughes** proposed a **national referendum** asking voters whether men should be **compelled (conscripted)** to serve overseas.

Voluntary enlistment had dropped. Casualties were mounting. Hughes believed conscription was necessary.

The question read:

"Are you in favour of the government having in this grave emergency the same compulsory powers for requiring citizens to serve overseas as it now has for requiring them to serve in Australia?"

The country split in two.

- The **YES vote** claimed duty, loyalty to Britain, and military necessity.
- The **NO vote** warned of broken families, lost freedoms, and moral overreach.

Churches, unions, and returned soldiers lined up on both sides. Campaign posters appeared everywhere:

“Vote YES – for victory!”

“Vote NO – to keep Australia free!”

Annie’s own family was divided. Her father supported YES. Her mother voted NO.

The result?

NO won by a narrow margin.

When Hughes tried again in **1917**, he lost even more ground. The **Second Conscription Referendum** confirmed that Australia would not force men to fight overseas.

It was the **only major Allied nation** to rely entirely on volunteers.

3. Loyalty and a New Identity

Before the war, most Australians still considered themselves **British subjects**. They spoke of the “Mother Country” with pride. Union Jacks flew on government buildings. British culture was taught in schools.

But by 1918, things had shifted.

Australians began to see themselves as a **distinct people**, with their own courage, voice, and cost in the war.

At battles like Gallipoli, Pozieres, and Villers-Bretonneux, Australians had proven themselves under fire. The stories of the **ANZACs** spread across newspapers and homes.

A new national sentiment was growing.

At the same time, bitterness also crept in. Many felt Britain had **used Australians poorly**, especially at Gallipoli. Others questioned whether **Australia’s interests** always matched Britain's.

Even returning soldiers whispered doubts. “We fought for King and Country,” one wrote, “but we died as Australians.”

Annie’s View from the Hospital

Through it all, Annie kept nursing.

She changed bandages, wrote letters for blinded men, and sat beside soldiers who could no longer speak.

One night, a man named **Private James Fairley** arrived from France with a shattered leg and a deeper wound—he’d lost his best mate and couldn’t forgive himself for surviving.

Annie offered him tea, Scripture, and silent companionship.

“You don’t need to talk,” she said. “But you need to know you matter.”

Over weeks, he improved. By Christmas, he was smiling again.

One evening, he whispered:

“You saved me, nurse. The Germans didn’t kill me—but the silence almost did.”

After the War

In November 1918, the war ended. Crowds sang in the streets. Bells rang. Tears flowed.

But recovery would take years.

Annie left the hospital in 1920. She joined the **Returned Nurses League** and spoke at schools about the role of women in wartime.

She voted proudly in the next election, believing that **every woman had earned her place** in the nation’s future.

Lasting Changes in Australian Society

- **Women’s Rights:** Women gained more political, social, and economic opportunities. The war proved their capacity, but full equality was still far off.
 - **National Identity:** The ANZAC story helped forge a unique Australian identity – one of courage, mateship, and endurance.
 - **Political Division:** The conscription debate split parties, families, and churches. Hughes left his party and created the Nationalist Party.
 - **Grief and Memorials:** Nearly **62,000 Australians** died. Every town built a war memorial. ANZAC Day became sacred.
 - **Bitterness and Strength:** The war made Australians more critical of war, and more aware of who they were, and who they wanted to be.
-

Activity: Create a 1918 Newspaper Front Page

Instructions:

Design a **historical newspaper front page** for the end of World War I from the perspective of Australian society.

Your front page must include:

1. **Headline** (e.g. “Peace Declared – Nation Rejoices and Reflects”)
2. **Two main articles:**
 - One on **the impact of war on women**

- One on the **conscription referendums or national identity**
- 3. **Quotes or statistics** from the story above
- 4. **An image** (drawing or printed) of a nurse, war memorial, ANZAC troops, or conscription poster
- 5. A short **editorial column** (100 words) where you write your own opinion on how the war has changed Australia

Helpful Sources for Imagery and Inspiration:

- Trove – National Library Newspapers
- Australian War Memorial – Wartime Posters & Women’s Roles

Make your newspaper look authentic using fonts, borders, and layout styles from the 1910s.

Biblical Reflection

Even in the aftermath of war, God invites us to be part of His work of healing and peace. As women stepped forward, as soldiers struggled to return, and as debates stirred hearts, the call of Christ remained:

“He has sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives... to comfort all who mourn.” (Isaiah 61:1 - 2)

May we be agents of healing in our homes, communities, and nation offering hope after conflict.

Narration Activity

If your parent/tutor is available now, ask them to listen while you retell what you have just learnt. Or if they are not available now, then tell your story during your lunch break today.

Lesson 15: The ANZACs and Experiences of Returned Soldiers

Australian Curriculum:

[AC9HH8S06](#) - identify perspectives, attitudes and values of the past in sources

[AC9HH8S07](#) - explain historical interpretations about significant events, individuals and groups

[AC9HH9K11](#) – The effects of World War I, including the role and experiences of Australians during and after the war

[AC9HH9K12](#) – How World War I has been remembered and commemorated in Australia and globally

Lesson Introduction

Student Instructions:

“ANZAC” stands for **Australian and New Zealand Army Corps**, but it has come to mean far more. It represents courage, mateship, sacrifice, and a national story passed from one generation to the next.

In this lesson, you’ll read the true-to-life story of two returned soldiers: one who came home with visible wounds, and one whose scars were hidden. You’ll explore what it meant to be an ANZAC, how soldiers were received after the war, and how Australia began the work of remembering them.

Then you’ll complete a reflective monument design activity and share your understanding in a narration.

Informational Story

“Coming Home: The Journey of the ANZACs”

Melbourne, 1919

The ship slipped into Port Phillip Bay beneath a cloudy sky. The deck was crowded with pale, quiet men – some missing arms, others hobbling on crutches. A few still wore their slouch hats, though they were stained and bent.

Sergeant Harry Mulvaney leaned on the rail. He had left this bay four years earlier with his best friend, **Frank Redfern**. They’d enlisted together in 1915, served at Gallipoli, and fought on the Western Front.

Frank hadn’t made it back.



The Glory and the Grief

Harry was greeted by a brass band, streamers, and cheers. Crowds waved Union Jacks and ANZAC flags. Children shouted, “Welcome home!”

But inside, Harry didn’t feel like cheering.



“We’re not heroes,” he thought. “We’re just the ones who didn’t die.”

Harry’s right leg had been amputated below the knee. He wore a wooden prosthetic now. The stump still ached. But it was the **memories** that haunted him more.

Shellfire. Gas. Rats. The look in Frank’s eyes as he died.

Back to Civvy Street

Harry returned to his job at the postal service, but nothing felt the same.

People meant well. They said, “Thank you for your service,” and “We’re so proud.” But they didn’t understand.

He had nightmares. Loud noises made him flinch. He often avoided crowds. Some called it “shell shock.” There were few treatments.

The government offered a **soldier settler block** – a piece of land to farm. But Harry didn’t know how to farm. Many such schemes failed due to poor soil, isolation, and lack of support.

“You’re lucky,” a man told him.

“Maybe,” Harry replied. “But I lost more than my leg.”

Another Kind of Wound

Meanwhile, **Private Tom Holloway** came home with both arms, both legs, and no obvious injuries. But inside, he was hollow.

He’d survived Pozieres and Passchendaele. His body was whole, but he felt like a stranger. He avoided eye contact. He drank too much. He didn’t speak of the war – not even to his wife.

One day, walking past a parade, a child asked, “Did you fight?”

Tom just nodded.

“What was it like?”

“Cold,” he said. “And long.”

The Birth of the ANZAC Legend

While many returned soldiers struggled, a different story was being told in the newspapers, on memorials, and in public speeches.

The **ANZACs were heroes**. Brave. Honourable. Loyal to mates and country. The term “ANZAC spirit” was born.

- It stood for **courage in adversity**
- **Mateship** on the battlefield
- **Endurance and humour**, even in horror

This myth comforted the nation. It helped Australians make sense of the terrible loss.

But for many veterans, it also **hid their pain**.

Harry once said to a friend, “They speak of honour. But they don’t see the cost.”

How Australia Remembered the War

After the war, every Australian town built a memorial. Some were grand statues. Others were simple plaques. All bore the names of the fallen.

ANZAC Day was declared in 1921 as a national day of remembrance. Services were held at dawn. Wreaths were laid. The “Last Post” was played.

Harry attended the first few years, but found them hard.

“I don’t need a speech,” he said. “I just need quiet.”

Tom never went. “I remember every day,” he told his wife.



The Role of Faith and Reflection

For many veterans, faith became a refuge.

Chapels were built in memory of those lost. Soldiers’ Bibles were treasured. Psalm 46 was often quoted:

“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear...”

Harry became active in his local church. He led a small group for “the boys” – returned soldiers who met to talk, cry, and pray.

Tom began volunteering with the Salvation Army, helping other veterans find work and shelter.

Through brokenness, both found purpose again.

The Families Who Waited

The war didn’t just scar soldiers. It left deep grief at home.

Frank’s mother kept his photo on the mantel and laid flowers beneath his name on the town’s memorial every ANZAC Day.

War widows raised children alone. Sisters and fiancées waited for ships that never returned.

Australia had lost **over 62,000 men**, and **hundreds of thousands more were wounded**.

The whole nation mourned.

A New Australia Emerges

Out of the sorrow came strength:

- Returned soldiers helped found the **Returned Sailors and Soldiers Imperial League of Australia** (now the RSL)
- ANZAC Day became a **civic tradition**, not just a military one
- Schools taught the ANZAC story
- Films, books, and poems captured the legacy

Over time, ANZAC became a symbol of what it meant to be Australian.

But for Harry and Tom, it always remained personal. A story not so much of glory – but of loss, courage, and healing.

Activity: Design a Memorial with Meaning

Instructions:

Design a **memorial or monument** that honours the experiences of returned soldiers like Harry and Tom.

Your design must include:

1. A **title** for your monument (e.g. “The Wounded Come Home”)
2. A drawing or diagram of the memorial (statue, wall, sculpture, chapel, or garden)
3. At least **three symbolic features** and what they represent
 - e.g. a cracked wall (brokenness), eternal flame (remembrance), bench seating (rest/reflection)
4. An **inscription or quote** from Scripture, poetry, or this lesson
5. A short paragraph explaining why your design matters today

Optional Extension: Write a short dedication speech (100 words) to go with your memorial’s unveiling.

Helpful Sites:

- Australian War Memorial – Commemoration
 - RSL – ANZAC Day Resources
-

Biblical Reflection

Jesus said:

“Come to me, all who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.” (Matthew 11:28)

Soldiers came home with heavy burdens. Some found peace. Others carried wounds for life. As Christians, we remember their sacrifice, but also look to Christ for true healing.

Let’s be people who offer rest to the weary, comfort to the broken, and honour to those who served.

Narration Activity

If your parent/tutor is available now, ask them to listen while you retell what you have just learnt. Or if they are not available now, then tell your story during your lunch break today.

Lesson 16: The Roaring 1920s

Australian Curriculum:

While no single descriptor directly names “the 1920s,” this lesson supports the understanding of:

AC9HH10K01 – The causes of World War II, including the interwar period and its impact on societies, economies, and politics

[AC9HH8S06](#) - identify perspectives, attitudes and values of the past in sources

[AC9HH8S07](#) - explain historical interpretations about significant events, individuals and groups

Lesson Introduction

Student Instructions:

After the horror of World War I, the 1920s brought a new mood – one of excitement, rebellion, and change. It was a time of jazz music, flapper fashion, radios, cars, and new freedoms. Yet, under the surface, tensions remained.

In this lesson, you’ll explore what made the 1920s “roaring,” especially in Australia, and how this decade shaped the lead-up to the next great conflict. You’ll read a historical narrative, complete a creative culture collage activity, and finish with your narration.



Informational Story

“The Roaring Twenties: When the World Danced Again”

Sydney, 1926

The evening hum of traffic rolled through the streets as lights blinked on in shop windows. Outside the newly built State Theatre, a line of glamorous women and sharply dressed men waited to see a silent film. Inside, the band tuned their instruments – music was everything now.

Among the crowd stood **Grace Bell**, 19, wearing a daring knee-length dress and a cloche hat. Her red lipstick and bobbed hair made her feel modern – bold, even.

Grace had grown up during the war years. Her father had fought at Pozieres, and her older brother had died in Belgium. But now, with peace restored, Grace and her generation were ready to live.



“We’re not like our mothers,” she often said. “We’re the future.”

Australia in the 1920s

The 1920s were a time of **contrast**. After the tragedy of war and the loss of over 60,000 lives, Australians wanted to feel alive again. Life moved faster, louder, brighter.

Some key changes included:

- **Urbanisation:** Cities grew, with new buildings, cinemas, department stores, and streetcars.
- **Technology:** Radios, gramophones, telephones, electric fridges, and washing machines entered homes.
- **Transport:** Cars became more common, and Qantas was founded in 1920.
- **Entertainment:** Jazz music, dancing, and cinema became the heartbeat of youth culture.
- **Women’s Roles:** More women joined the workforce, shortened their skirts, and claimed independence.

Still, the decade wasn’t perfect. There were strikes, inflation, rural hardship, and growing class divides.

Grace and the Modern Woman

Grace worked in the millinery department at the **David Jones Store**, designing hats. It was a good job, but what thrilled her most was Saturday nights – dancing at the **Trocadero Ballroom**.

She and her friend Elsie practised the **Charleston**, a fast-paced dance from America. Jazz was everywhere: Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong, and local artists filled gramophones.



The old ways were being challenged. Grace’s mother disapproved of short hair and loud music.

“Ladies should be modest,” she said.

“Ladies should be free,” Grace replied.

Magazines showed **flappers**—young women who wore makeup, smoked cigarettes, and laughed in public.

“I want to be one,” Elsie giggled. “Just for a weekend.”

The Rise of Consumer Culture

With wages rising and work more stable, people had more money to spend. New products flooded the market:

- Radios and gramophones

- Automobiles and bicycles
- Fashion items and cosmetics
- Ready-made clothes and electrical appliances

Advertising became powerful. Posters promised beauty, convenience, happiness.

“Buy this powder – be radiant!”

“Electricity: a servant in your home!”

Shops stayed open longer. Shopping became a pastime. Cities became commercial hubs.



Tensions Beneath the Surface

Yet beneath the fun and glamour, not all was well.

1. **Farmers struggled** – While city life boomed, rural areas suffered low prices and high debt.
2. **Unions protested** – Workers demanded better conditions and pay. Strikes grew more frequent.
3. **Returned soldiers felt lost** – Not all veterans adjusted easily. Some faced unemployment and trauma.
4. **Racial divides deepened** – The White Australia Policy remained strong, and Indigenous Australians were still denied full rights.

Grace’s uncle, a returned soldier, drank too much and rarely spoke. Her cousin on a farm near Dubbo wrote that wheat prices had collapsed.

“Everyone dances in Sydney,” he wrote. “But out here, we’re barely holding on.”



A Global Influence

The 1920s weren’t just roaring in Australia. All across the Western world, cultures shifted.

- In America, **prohibition** banned alcohol, fuelling underground bars and gangsters.
- In Europe, **art and fashion** transformed: Art Deco, Surrealism, Coco Chanel.
- Women won the right to vote in many countries (Australia had done so earlier).
- The **League of Nations** was formed to prevent another war.

Yet new threats were growing:

- **Fascist movements** in Italy and Germany
- **Communist fears** in Russia
- **Fragile global economies** built on debt



Grace’s friend Elsie dreamed of visiting New York. But her brother, who read politics, warned:

“The world’s not as stable as it looks.”

Faith and the Roaring Decade

Amidst the noise of the jazz age, some people felt something was missing.

Churches struggled to hold the attention of young people. Attendance dropped in cities. Yet rural congregations stayed strong.

New Christian groups like the **Scripture Union** and **YMCA** reached out to youth with camps, clubs, and music nights.

Grace still attended church with her parents, though she sometimes skipped to go dancing. One Sunday, the preacher said:

“The world is rushing forward – but what are we rushing toward?”

It stuck in her heart. That night, she read her Bible and prayed.

End of the Party?

In 1929, the stock market in New York crashed. The good times would not last.

But in 1926, Grace and her generation didn’t know that. They were too busy living.

As she rode the tram home after the film, she smiled at the city lights. “This is our time,” she thought. “We survived the war. Now we build something new.”

She had no idea that a **second, even greater war** lay ahead.

Activity: Create a “Roaring 20s” Cultural Collage

Instructions:

Create a **visual collage** representing the 1920s in Australia, especially the themes from Grace’s story.

Your collage must include:

1. A **title** (e.g. “The Roaring Twenties: Jazz, Change, and Challenge”)
2. At least **5 images** (can be printed, drawn, or cut from magazines) showing:
 - Women’s fashion (e.g. flapper dress, cloche hat)
 - Jazz or dance scenes
 - Technology or products from the 1920s (radio, car, electric appliances)
 - Political or social protests

- A church or religious symbol
- 3. **Captions or short quotes** from Grace's story beside each image
- 4. A short reflection (3 - 5 sentences) explaining what you think was the most important change in the 1920s and why

Helpful Sites:

- Trove – Historical Photos
 - Australian Dress Register – 1920s Fashion
 - [Australian Jazz Museum](#)
-

Biblical Reflection

The 1920s offered excitement, but also confusion and drift. Some people danced; others mourned. Some found purpose in faith, others chased fame.

Ecclesiastes reminds us:

“There is a time for everything... a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance.”
(Ecclesiastes 3:1,4)

As Christians, we can enjoy life's good things – but we must also stay grounded in truth and love. Our identity doesn't come from fashion or fads – but from Christ.

Narration Activity

If your parent/tutor is available now, ask them to listen while you retell what you have just learnt. Or if they are not available now, then tell your story during your lunch break today.

Lesson 17: The Great Depression

Australian Curriculum:

This lesson supports the understanding of:

AC9HH10K01 – The causes of World War II, including the interwar period and its impact on societies, economies, and politics

[AC9HH8S06](#) - identify perspectives, attitudes and values of the past in sources

[AC9HH8S07](#) - explain historical interpretations about significant events, individuals and groups

Lesson Introduction

Student Instructions:

The “Roaring Twenties” ended with a crash. The Great Depression swept across the globe, leaving millions without jobs, homes, or hope. Australia, like much of the world, suffered deeply.

In this lesson, you’ll follow the story of two families during the 1930s – one in the city, one in the country. You’ll see how unemployment, poverty, and political tensions shaped the lives of ordinary Australians. Afterward, you’ll complete a hands-on “Depression Era Survival Plan” and share your understanding in the narration task.

Informational Story

“Hard Times: Australia and the Great Depression”

Sydney, 1932

The factory was silent.

Where once there had been the whirl of sewing machines and shouts of foremen, now there was only dust and echoes. **Tom Evans**, aged 14, stood at the gates of the clothing mill where his father had worked for twelve years. A sign hung from the fence: “**Closed Until Further Notice.**”



His father, Charles Evans, walked home without a word. He didn’t know how to tell his wife there would be no pay that week, or the next.

The Crash

In **October 1929**, the US stock market collapsed, triggering a financial panic that quickly spread across the world. Banks failed. Companies closed. Demand for goods plummeted.

Australia was hit hard.

- **Unemployment soared** to nearly **30%**
- Export prices for **wool and wheat collapsed**
- Public works projects stopped
- Thousands of families lost homes and businesses

The Evans family was just one among many.

Life in the City

The Evanses lived in a small weatherboard house in **Redfern**, Sydney. With no wages coming in, they rationed everything:

- Bread and dripping for breakfast
- Watered-down stew for dinner
- Clothes patched and re-patched

Mrs Evans took in laundry to earn pennies. Tom collected firewood and delivered newspapers.

They sold furniture piece by piece – first the rug, then the clock, then the radio.

Charles queued each day at the **unemployment office**, hoping for relief payments. He hated it.

“I fought in France,” he said bitterly. “Now I beg in Sydney.”



The Country Struggles Too

Meanwhile, on a dusty farm near **Wagga Wagga**, the **O'Connell family** faced another kind of ruin.

Grain prices had crashed. Drought burned the paddocks. With no money coming in, they couldn't afford seed, let alone school fees.

Mary O'Connell, aged 16, left school to work the farm. She drove the plough, milked cows, sewed clothes, and cooked from what little they grew.

Once a week, she rode into town to barter eggs for sugar or bread.

“We don't have much,” she told her younger brother, “but we have each other.”

At night, her father sat silently on the porch, wondering how to keep the land.



The Government's Response

Australian leaders were divided on how to handle the crisis.

- Some pushed for **cuts to wages and spending** to balance the budget

- Others wanted **more government borrowing** to create jobs and stimulate the economy
- The newly formed **United Australia Party** rose to power in 1931

Prime Minister **Joseph Lyons** called for discipline and hard work. But for the unemployed, hope was fading.

Soup kitchens fed the hungry. Churches handed out second-hand clothes. Some families lived in **makeshift shanty towns** called “Happy Valleys” or “tent cities” on the edges of towns.



Creative Resistance and Survival

Australians found ways to survive:

- Families shared housing
- Women formed **co-ops** for cooking and childcare
- Men travelled the country “**on the wallaby**”, looking for work
- Children helped in any way they could

Tom started selling pencils on the street. Once, he earned sixpence. He gave it to his mum.

“You keep it,” she smiled. “You earned it.”

“I want to help,” he replied.

Mary made soap from fat and ash. She turned old flour sacks into dresses. She taught herself how to mend shoes with wire and leather offcuts.

“We make do,” she wrote in her diary. “Because we must.”

Social and Political Unrest

Frustration bubbled over. In 1931, violent **unemployment protests** rocked the streets of Sydney and Melbourne. Police clashed with marchers.

Radical groups grew – some looked to communism; others to extreme nationalism. Australians were **divided**, uncertain, angry.

At the same time, some people turned back to **faith**.

“When everything else is gone,” one minister preached, “God remains.”

Churches offered more than prayer – they opened their doors for food, shelter, and warmth. Children sang hymns, even on empty stomachs.

Moments of Hope

In the middle of the darkness, there were glimmers of light.

In 1932, the **Sydney Harbour Bridge** was opened. It became a symbol of unity and progress. Grace Bell (from the previous lesson) attended the opening with thousands of others. She wept as the flags rose.

“We built this,” she whispered. “Even in ruin, we rise.”

Tom later got a part-time job as a telegram boy. He wore a blue uniform and rode a red bike. He felt proud.

Mary received a scholarship to teacher’s college through a church charity.

“I’ll go,” she told her father, “but I’ll come home to help when you need me.”



Looking Forward

By the mid-1930s, the economy slowly recovered. But the wounds of the Depression lingered.

A generation had learned to:

- Stretch every coin
- Grow their own food
- Value community
- Rely on God

And as the decade closed, new clouds gathered in Europe and Asia.

Tom, now 24, read the newspapers with growing dread. Hitler was rising. Japan was expanding. The world, once again, was drifting toward war.

Activity: Depression-Era Survival Plan

Instructions:

Imagine you are living in a city or country town in 1932. You are part of a family with limited income, few resources, and rising costs. Your task is to **create a weekly survival plan** to help your family live simply, faithfully, and wisely.

Your plan must include:

1. **Food plan for one week** – List simple meals you can make with limited ingredients (e.g. damper, porridge, soup, boiled vegetables)
2. **Budget tips** – How would you save money? What could be reused or repurposed?
3. **Daily work schedule** – What can each family member do to help (e.g. work, errands, repairs, community aid)?

4. **Faith or community role** – How can your family stay spiritually strong and help others?
5. **A brief reflection (3 - 5 sentences)** on how this experience helps you understand Australians in the 1930s

Optional Extension: Write one journal entry (100 words) from your character's perspective during a hard week.

Helpful Resources:

- ABC Education – The Great Depression in Australia
 - Australian Museum – Living Through the Depression
-

Biblical Reflection

In times of hardship, God invites us to trust Him more deeply. Jesus said:

“Do not worry about your life... but seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.” (Matthew 6:25,33)

During the Depression, many Australians rediscovered the power of community, simplicity, and faith. In trials, God doesn't always remove suffering – but He walks with us through it.

Narration Activity

If your parent/tutor is available now, ask them to listen while you retell what you have just learnt. Or if they are not available now, then tell your story during your lunch break today.

Lesson 18: Causes of World War II

Australian Curriculum:

[AC9HH8S06](#) - identify perspectives, attitudes and values of the past in sources

[AC9HH8S07](#) - explain historical interpretations about significant events, individuals and groups

[AC9HH10K01](#) – The causes of World War II, including the Treaty of Versailles, the rise of Nazism and Japanese expansion, and the interwar period

Lesson Introduction

Student Instructions:

World War II didn't appear out of nowhere. Its causes were sown during and after World War I, and grew during the chaos of the 1920s and 1930s.

In this lesson, you'll read a historical narrative that traces the rise of Nazi Germany, fascist Italy, and imperial Japan – and the global tensions that followed. You'll explore why the world fell back into war just two decades after the "war to end all wars." Afterward, you'll complete a timeline-based activity and share your understanding in the narration task.

Informational Story

“The Storm Returns: Why the World Went to War Again”

London, 1938

It was late autumn when **Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain** returned from Germany holding a signed paper. Outside the airport, he declared to the waiting crowd:

“I believe it is peace for our time.”

But in Berlin, **Adolf Hitler** smiled. He had already taken Austria, now **Czechoslovakia**, and next... who knew?

Watching the newsreel from her Melbourne school hall, **17-year-old Lydia Matthews** turned to her teacher and asked, “Will we have another war?”

The teacher looked grim. “I fear it's already begun in people's hearts.”

The Seeds of War: The Treaty of Versailles

When World War I ended in 1918, the Allies imposed the **Treaty of Versailles** on Germany. The treaty:

- Blamed Germany for the war (Clause 231 – the “war guilt” clause)
- Demanded **reparations** (money paid to rebuild France and Britain)
- Severely **limited Germany's army**
- Took away land and overseas colonies

- Humiliated the German people

Many Germans saw it as **unjust and punishing**. It created bitterness and a desire for revenge.

“We were beaten,” one German veteran wrote, “but this treaty has crushed us.”

The Rise of Nazism in Germany

In the 1920s, Germany struggled:

- Hyperinflation made money worthless
- The economy collapsed
- Millions were jobless
- Political instability led to riots

In this chaos, **Adolf Hitler** and the **Nazi Party** promised:

- To restore national pride
- Rebuild the military
- Create jobs
- Blame Jews, communists, and the Treaty of Versailles for Germany’s suffering



In 1933, Hitler was appointed Chancellor. Soon after, he declared himself **Führer** (leader). He abolished democracy, jailed opponents, and began building a **totalitarian state**.

Germany became a nation built on:

- **Racism** and **anti-Semitism**
- **Militarism**
- **Cult of personality** around Hitler
- **Revenge** for Versailles

Lydia’s uncle, a reporter in Europe, wrote home:

“Germany is marching again. But not toward peace.”

Fascism in Italy and Japan’s Expansion

Germany wasn’t alone in this path.

In **Italy**, **Benito Mussolini** had seized power in 1922, establishing **fascism** – a system where the government controls everything, crushes opposition, and glorifies the nation above all.



Mussolini wanted to **rebuild the Roman Empire**. He invaded **Ethiopia** in 1935 and helped Spain's dictator **Franco** during the Spanish Civil War.

In **Japan**, military leaders gained power in the 1930s. They believed Japan needed “**living space**” and natural resources.

- In 1931, Japan invaded **Manchuria** in China.
- In 1937, they launched a full war against China, including the horrific **Nanjing Massacre**.

The League of Nations protested, but did nothing effective.

“The world watches,” Lydia’s teacher said, “but the aggressors march on.”

Appeasement and Inaction

Britain and France, still scarred from World War I, wanted to **avoid another war** at all costs. This led to a policy called **appeasement**.

In 1936, Hitler remilitarised the **Rhineland**, breaking the Treaty. No one stopped him.

In 1938, he annexed **Austria** (the “Anschluss”). No one stopped him.

Later that year, he demanded part of **Czechoslovakia**. At the **Munich Conference**, Britain and France agreed to let him have it—hoping it would satisfy his ambitions.

It didn’t.

In **March 1939**, Hitler took the rest of Czechoslovakia.

Britain’s Prime Minister Chamberlain began to realise that appeasement had failed.

Australia Watches and Prepares

In Australia, many people believed war was coming.

Newspapers reported German and Japanese aggression. The government began quietly preparing defence plans.

Prime Minister Joseph Lyons promised loyalty to Britain. Australians still saw themselves as part of the **British Empire** – and knew that if Britain went to war, Australia would too.

Still, many hoped peace might hold.

Lydia’s older brother enlisted in the **militia**. Their church held prayer nights for peace.

“Lord,” the minister prayed, “may the leaders of nations choose wisdom over war.”

The Final Spark: Invasion of Poland

On **September 1, 1939**, Hitler's army invaded **Poland**, using a false excuse that Poland had attacked first.

This time, Britain and France had promised to protect Poland. Enough was enough.

On **September 3**, they declared war on Germany.

That same day, **Australia also declared war**, standing alongside Britain.

"Fellow Australians," Prime Minister **Robert Menzies** said on the radio, "It is my melancholy duty to inform you officially that, in consequence of the persistence by Germany in her invasion of Poland, Great Britain has declared war... and, as a result, Australia is also at war."



Lydia listened in silence. Her mother wept.

Summary: The Causes of World War II

1. **Treaty of Versailles** – Harsh, humiliating, and left Germany angry
2. **Economic hardship** – Global depression led to instability and radical politics
3. **Rise of fascism** – Hitler (Germany), Mussolini (Italy), and militarists in Japan
4. **Appeasement** – Britain and France allowed aggression to avoid war
5. **Invasion of Poland** – The final trigger

Activity: Interwar Timeline with Cause-and-Effect Arrows

Instructions:

Create a **timeline** showing the key events that led to the outbreak of World War II.

Your timeline must include:

1. **10 key events or developments**, with:
 - A **date**
 - A **brief description**
 - A **label for the category** (e.g. Treaty, Fascism, Appeasement, Japan)
2. Use **arrows or colour coding** to show **cause and effect**:
 - e.g. Treaty of Versailles → Rise of Nazism → Invasion of Poland
3. Include at least **one quote** from Lydia's story
4. On the back or next page, write a short **analysis paragraph** (5–7 sentences) explaining:
 - Why appeasement failed
 - How fear of another war helped dictators rise
 - Whether war could have been prevented earlier

Helpful Resources:

- Australian War Memorial – World War II Overview
 - BBC – Causes of World War II
-

Biblical Reflection

In a world gripped by fear, God calls His people to courage and wisdom. As leaders made poor choices, others remained silent. But silence can allow evil to grow.

“Rescue the weak and needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked.” (Psalm 82:4)

We must be people who speak truth, stand for justice, and remember that **peace must be protected with both wisdom and action.**

Narration Activity

If your parent/tutor is available now, ask them to listen while you retell what you have just learnt. Or if they are not available now, then tell your story during your lunch break today.

Lesson 19: The Battle of Britain

Australian Curriculum:

[AC9HH8S06](#) - identify perspectives, attitudes and values of the past in sources

[AC9HH8S07](#) - explain historical interpretations about significant events, individuals and groups

[AC9HH10K02](#) – The experiences of Australians during World War II and significant events in which Australia was involved, including the Battle of Britain

Lesson Introduction

Student Instructions:

The year is 1940. Nazi Germany has crushed Poland, stormed France, and is now turning its eyes toward Britain. The only thing standing between Hitler and full control of Western Europe is the Royal Air Force.

In this lesson, you'll read a story about one young Australian pilot who fought in the skies over Britain during this pivotal time. You'll learn how air power shaped the course of history and how Australians contributed from afar. After the story, you'll complete a "Wings of Courage" illustration activity, and finish with a narration task.

Informational Story

“Wings Against the Storm: An Australian in the Battle of Britain”

Kent, England – September 1940

The sky roared.

Flight Lieutenant Douglas Fairchild, 23, gripped the controls of his **Supermarine Spitfire** as it climbed through clouds above the English Channel. Beside him, sunlight struck the silver wings of three more fighters, their engines humming like angry bees.

Below them, Britain braced for invasion. Across the Channel, Hitler's armies waited.

Doug wasn't British. He was from **Ballarat, Victoria**, the son of a wool merchant. But like many Australians, he had joined the **Royal Air Force (RAF)** through the **Empire Air Training Scheme**. He came not just to fly, but to defend freedom.



The Situation

In 1940, Germany seemed unstoppable. Hitler's **blitzkrieg** ("lightning war") had crushed Poland, Denmark, Norway, Belgium, and France in under a year. British forces barely escaped at **Dunkirk**, leaving weapons behind.

Now, Hitler planned **Operation Sea Lion**, an invasion of Britain.

But before landing troops, Germany needed to **destroy the Royal Air Force** to gain control of the skies. The Luftwaffe (Germany's air force) was huge and battle-tested.

On **July 10, 1940**, the **Battle of Britain** began.

"Never before," said Winston Churchill, "has so much been owed by so many to so few."



Doug Takes Flight

Doug had completed six months of pilot training in Canada, then transferred to an RAF squadron based near **Biggin Hill**, one of the key airfields defending London.

His days were a blur of:

- **Scrambles** (emergency take-offs)
- **Dogfights** with Messerschmitt Bf 109s
- Long hours waiting by the tarmac
- Letters to home
- Cold tea and sleepless nights



Doug missed Australia terribly – the eucalyptus scent, the family dog, the red dust of the bush. But up here in the sky, duty was everything.

"We don't fight for medals," his flight commander once said. "We fight so the world won't burn."

A Battle in the Skies

The Luftwaffe bombed:

- Radar stations
- Aircraft factories
- RAF airfields
- Eventually, **London itself**

Doug's squadron often faced impossible odds – twelve Spitfires against forty enemy bombers, with fighters flying escort.



One afternoon, Doug locked sights on a German **Heinkel 111**. He fired a burst from his wing-mounted machine guns. The bomber bucked, released smoke, then fell. He watched the crew parachute out.

“War is strange,” he wrote in his diary. “You shoot a man one moment, pray for his survival the next.”

Australian Contributions

While most Battle of Britain pilots were British, over **30 Australians** served in the RAF during this period. Thousands more would later fight in **Bomber Command**, the **Desert Air Force**, and the **Pacific**.

Other Australians:

- Built aircraft in factories back home
- Watched skies from coastal bases
- Trained pilots and mechanics under the **Empire Air Training Scheme**

Doug often wrote to his younger brother, who was building Beaufort bombers in Melbourne.

“We’re both flying,” he joked. “You just happen to do it from the ground.”

Life Between Flights



When not flying, Doug and his mates slept in old farmhouses near the airfield.

They played cards, read letters from home, and tried not to think too much.

A chaplain visited weekly, reading from Psalm 91:

“He will cover you with his feathers, and under his wings you will find refuge...”

Doug kept that verse in his flight log.

Some pilots painted Scripture on their fuselage. Others carried small crosses or Bibles in their pockets.

London Burns

By September, the Luftwaffe began nightly bombings of London – known as **The Blitz**.

Fires raged across the city. Churches, homes, and schools were destroyed.



Yet the people did not surrender. Civilians sang hymns in underground shelters. Firemen ran toward the flames. Children were evacuated to the countryside.

Doug once flew over the smoking capital at dawn and wrote:

“London doesn’t fall. It glows.”

Turning the Tide

Thanks to radar technology, skilled pilots, and public resilience, the RAF held its ground.

On **October 31, 1940**, Hitler postponed the invasion indefinitely. The **Battle of Britain was won**.

Doug had survived twelve weeks of flying, ten direct battles, and had three confirmed kills.

But he had also lost friends. His bunkmate, Alan, had been shot down over Dover. Another pilot never returned from patrol.

Doug wrote home:

“Victory tastes like ash when your mates are gone.”

Aftermath and Legacy

The Battle of Britain proved:

- Air power could stop an invasion
- Small nations could resist tyranny
- Courage, teamwork, and prayer could win the day

Doug remained in Europe for another two years, flying missions over France.

Back in Australia, his brother listened to the news on the wireless, waiting for word.

And each year after, Doug stood silently on **Battle of Britain Day (September 15)**, remembering the few who saved the many.

Activity: “Wings of Courage” Illustrated Reflection

Instructions:

Create a **visual tribute page** honouring the Australian pilots and people who contributed to the Battle of Britain.

Your page must include:

1. A **title** (e.g. “Wings of Courage: Australians in the Battle of Britain”)
2. An **illustration** of a Spitfire, pilot, radar tower, or Blitz scene
3. **Three quotes** from Doug’s story above
4. A **summary paragraph** (5–7 sentences) explaining:
 - What the Battle of Britain was
 - Why it mattered
 - How Australians contributed
 - What lessons we can learn today

Optional Extension: Write a poem or short prayer based on Psalm 91 to include in your artwork.

Helpful Image Sources:

- Australian War Memorial – Battle of Britain Collection
 - Imperial War Museums – Aircraft Photos
-

Biblical Reflection

In the face of fear, the British people – and the pilots above them – relied not just on weapons but on courage and faith.

“He will cover you with his feathers, and under His wings you will find refuge.” (Psalm 91:4)

Let us remember that even in turbulent skies, God is our protector. True strength comes not from machines, but from the One who commands the storm.

Narration Activity

If your parent/tutor is available now, ask them to listen while you retell what you have just learnt. Or if they are not available now, then tell your story during your lunch break today.

Lesson 20: Kokoda

Australian Curriculum:

AC9HH10K02 – The experiences of Australians during World War II and significant events in which Australia was involved, including the Kokoda Trail campaign

Lesson Introduction

Student Instructions:

In 1942, Australia faced a terrifying possibility: invasion by Japan. The threat came not from across the sea, but over the mountains and jungles of **Papua New Guinea**, along a muddy track called the **Kokoda Trail**.

In this lesson, you'll read a narrative following young Australian soldiers and the Papua New Guinean villagers who supported them. You'll learn about the battle, the conditions, the heroism, and the legacy of Kokoda. Then you'll complete a practical terrain map activity, and end with a narration.

Informational Story

“Mateship in the Mud: The Story of Kokoda”

July 1942 – Owen Stanley Range, Papua New Guinea

The jungle pressed in on all sides – thick, wet, buzzing with mosquitoes. **Private Stan McKenzie**, aged 18, gripped his rifle and pushed forward. His boots were caked with mud. Rain poured like buckets from the sky. His uniform clung to his skin like glue.

He and his mates were members of the **39th Battalion**, made up mostly of young, untrained militia. They had been sent to hold the **Kokoda Trail** – a steep, narrow path through mountains and jungle – against the advancing Japanese.

They were under-equipped, exhausted, and heavily outnumbered.

But they had no choice.

The Threat of Invasion

In early 1942, Japan was advancing rapidly across the Pacific. Singapore had fallen. Darwin had been bombed. Fears grew that **Australia might be next**.

The Japanese aimed to capture **Port Moresby** in Papua New Guinea. If successful, they could launch bombing raids on northern Australia, and potentially invade.

Two main options existed:

1. Attack by **sea** (repelled at the **Battle of the Coral Sea**)
2. March **overland** via the **Kokoda Trail**

The second route was a nightmare, a winding 96 km jungle path over the **Owen Stanley Ranges**. But Japan tried it anyway.

And so, **Australian soldiers were rushed in** to block the trail.



The 39th Battalion: Young, Green, and Brave

Stan had joined the militia months earlier, expecting home service. Instead, he was dropped by plane into the highlands of PNG.

His unit was poorly supplied:

- Only two sets of clothes
- Rusty rifles from World War I
- Limited medical supplies
- No jungle warfare training

The Japanese, in contrast, were elite, battle-hardened troops.

“We were boys,” Stan later said. “They were warriors.”

But the boys had heart. And they had something else: the support of the local villagers.

The Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels

The Papuan carriers – later called “**Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels**” – were local men recruited to carry supplies and evacuate the wounded.

They walked barefoot through mud and rain, lifting stretchers over rivers and cliffs.



Stan remembered one who helped him when he collapsed from fever.

“He held my hand,” Stan whispered. “Kept saying, ‘It’s okay. You go home soon.’”

These men showed **compassion and courage** that saved thousands of lives. Many soldiers owed their survival to them.



Battles in the Jungle

From **July to November 1942**, the Australians fought **a series of brutal battles** along the trail:

- **Kokoda village**
- **Isurava**
- **Efogi and Ioribaiwa Ridge**

Conditions were horrific:

- Rain every day
- Mud waist-deep in places
- Sharp ridges and mosquito swarms
- Tropical diseases like malaria and dysentery



At **Isurava**, 99 Australians were killed, including **Bruce Kingsbury**, who charged alone to stop a Japanese advance and was awarded the **Victoria Cross**.

Stan watched friends fall. He wrote in his journal:

“We’re not fighting for glory. We’re fighting for each other.”

Reinforcements Arrive

Eventually, the **2nd AIF (Australian Imperial Force)** joined the militia. Battle-hardened troops from the Middle East arrived with better equipment and training.

Together, they pushed the Japanese back, one ridge at a time.

By November 1942, the **Japanese had retreated**, and Port Moresby was safe.

The Kokoda campaign was over, but its impact had just begun.

Why Kokoda Mattered

- It was **Australia’s first major land battle** on its doorstep
- It showed that **inexperienced militia could become heroes**
- It proved the importance of local **Papuan support**
- It helped stop the Japanese southern advance
- It gave birth to a new national legend of **courage, mateship, and endurance**

Stan returned home with malaria, a wounded leg, and a changed heart.

“I went up a boy,” he said. “I came back a brother to every man who stood in that mud.”

Legacy of Kokoda

Today, the Kokoda Trail is:

- A **symbol of Australian resilience**
- A **pilgrimage site** for trekkers
- The focus of memorials and ANZAC Day stories

Schools teach about the **Isurava memorial**, inscribed with four words:

Courage. Endurance. Mateship. Sacrifice.

Stan, now an old man, once visited the trail again. He stood by the cross at Isurava and laid a wreath.

“For the boys,” he said. “Always for the boys.”

Activity: Kokoda Terrain Map and Memorial Design

Instructions:

Create a two-part activity presentation to help you understand the geography and emotion of Kokoda.

Part A: Terrain Map

1. Draw or print a map of the **Kokoda Trail**, including:
 - Port Moresby
 - Kokoda Village
 - Isurava
 - Efogi
 - Ioribaiwa Ridge
 - Owen Stanley Range
2. Mark the **path of the Australian troops**, the **location of key battles**, and the **terrain types** (mountains, rivers, jungle)

Part B: Memorial Design

1. Choose one key word from the **Isurava Memorial**:
 - Courage
 - Endurance
 - Mateship
 - Sacrifice
2. Design a **monument or symbolic artwork** that reflects that word
3. Include:
 - A drawing or model
 - A short quote from Stan’s story
 - A reflection (4–5 sentences) explaining why that word matters today

Helpful Resources:

- Australian War Memorial – Kokoda Campaign
- [Kokoda Historical Maps](#)
- ABC Education – The Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels

Biblical Reflection

Jesus said:

“Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.” (John 15:13)

At Kokoda, love looked like carrying a wounded mate. It looked like standing your ground. It looked like villagers helping strangers.

As we honour their courage, let us also live out that same love, in big ways and small.

Narration Activity

If your parent/tutor is available now, ask them to listen while you retell what you have just learnt. Or if they are not available now, then tell your story during your lunch break today.

Lesson 21: Australia's Home Front

Australian Curriculum:

AC9HH10K04 – The experiences of Australians on the home front during World War II, such as changing roles of women, rationing, censorship, internment camps, and the threat of invasion

Lesson Introduction

Student Instructions:

While Australian soldiers fought in Europe, North Africa, and the Pacific, millions of people supported the war effort at home. Life during World War II changed dramatically for those who remained, especially women and children. People faced shortages, worked long hours, and lived in fear of attacks on their own soil.

In this lesson, you'll read a story following three people on the home front. You'll explore how daily life changed, how ordinary citizens helped defend their nation, and how faith and resilience kept people going. Afterward, you'll complete a practical activity and finish with your narration.

Informational Story

“Holding the Line at Home: Life in Wartime Australia”

Sydney, 1942

The siren blared again.

Hazel Perkins, aged 12, ducked under the table with her little brother, Sam, as blackout curtains fluttered in the breeze. It was a drill – one of many since Japanese submarines had attacked Sydney Harbour in May.

Her mother, Eleanor, lit a candle and said calmly, “Just in case.”

Hazel missed her father terribly. He was serving with the 9th Division in North Africa. Letters came slowly, and she read them over and over.

But here at home, everyone was part of the fight too, even if they didn't carry rifles.

The Threat Comes Closer

In 1942, Australia felt war on its doorstep.

- **Darwin was bombed** multiple times by Japanese planes
- **Sydney Harbour was attacked** by mini-submarines
- Fears of **invasion or sabotage** grew daily

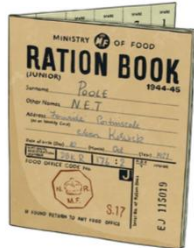
People dug air-raid shelters in their yards. **Blackouts** were enforced. Coastal cities were on high alert.

Hazel's school had bomb drills. Her teacher kept a bag of bandages in her desk drawer.

"Be brave," she told the children. "And be wise."

Rationing and Shortages

Food, clothing, and petrol were rationed across the country. Every family had **ration books** with coupons they had to use for essentials:



- Sugar
- Butter
- Tea
- Meat
- Fabric
- Petrol



Hazel's mother traded eggs with the neighbour in exchange for wool. They used **wartime recipes** – carrot cakes with no sugar, stews with scraps, and no-waste policies.



New clothes were rare. Hazel wore her cousin's hand-me-downs. Sometimes she helped darn socks by candlelight.

"It's not so bad," her mother said. "We're lucky to have each other."

Women Step In

With so many men at war, **women took on roles** previously reserved for men.

Eleanor joined the **Women's Land Army**, working on a farm outside Sydney twice a week to help grow food. Her friend Alma worked in an ammunition factory. Another neighbour became a tram conductor.

Across Australia, women served as:

- Mechanics
- Factory workers
- Clerks and telegraph operators
- Ambulance drivers
- Nurses and servicewomen in the **WAAAF**, **AWAS**, and **WRANS**

Hazel was proud. "Mum," she said once, "you're just like the soldiers."

Eleanor smiled. "Yes. We're all fighting, just in different ways."

Internment Camps and Censorship

War brought fear and sometimes injustice.

Thousands of people living in Australia who were born in **Germany, Italy, or Japan** were labelled as “enemy aliens,” even if they had lived peacefully for decades.

Some were placed in **internment camps**, under suspicion of spying or sabotage.

Mail was censored. Newspapers and radio broadcasts were monitored. Posters warned: “**Loose lips sink ships.**”

Hazel’s classmate, Mariko, stopped coming to school. Rumours spread that her family had been taken to a camp. Hazel didn’t understand.

“She was kind,” she told her mum. “She helped me with my painting.”

“War makes us do foolish things,” Eleanor said quietly.

Children Help, Too

Even children joined the effort:

- They collected **metal, paper, and rubber** for recycling
- They knitted socks and scarves for soldiers
- They helped plant “**victory gardens**” in backyards and parks
- They raised money for **Red Cross parcels**

Hazel and Sam kept a **tin full of pennies**, slowly saving for a Red Cross donation. They wrote letters to soldiers and read the news aloud for their elderly neighbour.

“We’re doing our bit,” Hazel told Sam. “Just like Dad.”

Faith and Courage

Churches became places of comfort and action:

- People prayed daily for victory and peace
- Ministers gave sermons on **hope and perseverance**
- Congregations sent aid to soldiers and refugees
- Hymns rang out through dark nights

One Sunday, Hazel’s church recited Psalm 46:

“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble...”

She memorised it. She repeated it when the sirens wailed.

Victory in Sight

By 1944, tides were turning. Australian forces were pushing back in **New Guinea and the Pacific**. News from Europe hinted that Germany might fall.

Hazel's father returned in early 1945. He had lost weight, walked with a limp, and held his children tightly.

"You grew," he said. "And so did I."

Eleanor wept. Not for sorrow, but for relief.

The war would end later that year, but the memories, courage, and lessons of those at home would never be forgotten.

Activity: Create a Wartime Family Profile & Ration Plan

Instructions:

Imagine you are part of an Australian family living on the home front in 1942. Create a **profile and weekly ration plan** based on what you've learned.

Part A: Family Profile

1. Give your family a surname and list:
 - The names and ages of family members
 - Who is serving in the war
 - Who is working or volunteering
 - What roles each family member plays
2. Write a short **paragraph (5 - 6 sentences)** describing how your family is coping with wartime life

Part B: Ration Plan

1. List 7 days of simple meals using typical rationed foods:
 - e.g. wartime soup, bread & dripping, oat porridge, stew with vegetables
2. List 3 items you would **make, repair, or reuse** instead of buying
3. Write one **prayer or Scripture verse** your family might read together for encouragement

Helpful Resources:

- Australian War Memorial – Australians at Home
 - State Library of NSW – Wartime Rationing
-

Biblical Reflection

During hardship, faith lights the way. God never promises an easy life, but He promises to walk beside us.

"The Lord is good, a refuge in times of trouble. He cares for those who trust in Him." (Nahum 1:7)

Just like Eleanor, Hazel, and the millions who served at home, we can show courage through ordinary faithfulness.

Narration Activity

If your parent/tutor is available now, ask them to listen while you retell what you have just learnt. Or if they are not available now, then tell your story during your lunch break today.

WEEK 8

WORLD WAR 2 (PART 2)

Lesson 22: The Holocaust

Australian Curriculum:

[AC9HH8S06](#) - identify perspectives, attitudes and values of the past in sources

[AC9HH8S07](#) - explain historical interpretations about significant events, individuals and groups

[AC9HH10K03](#) – The causes and course of the Holocaust and the roles of individuals or groups in events and responses

Lesson Introduction

Student Instructions:

The Holocaust was one of the darkest chapters in human history. This war-crime was the planned extermination of millions of people by a modern government (like the Palestinian Liberation Organisation, Syria and Hamas in Gaza are trying to exterminate the Jews today). During World War II, under Adolf Hitler's leadership, Nazi Germany carried out a systematic genocide of **six million Jews**, along with other targeted groups (such as Negro people and anyone with a disability or mental health problem).

In this lesson, you'll read a deeply moving narrative based on the real experiences of a young Jewish girl in hiding. You'll learn how the Holocaust unfolded, how people responded, and how some resisted at great personal risk. Afterward, you'll complete a "Memory Wall" creative activity, and conclude with a narration.

Informational Story

"Voices in the Silence: A Holocaust Story"

Amsterdam, 1943

The cupboard door creaked softly as **Leah Stein**, age 14, slid it closed behind her. She crouched in the attic, holding her breath, listening to the quiet thump of boots downstairs. Her heart pounded.

She hadn't left this attic in almost a year.

She hadn't seen the sky in just as long.

Life Before the War

Leah had been born in **Berlin, Germany**, in 1929. Her father was a tailor. Her mother played violin. They were a kind, hardworking Jewish family who loved their neighbours and taught their children to honour God and study Torah (the first five books of the Old Testament Bible).

But after **1933**, everything changed.

Adolf Hitler and the Nazis rose to power, blaming Jews for Germany's problems. Leah remembered how:

- Jewish children were banned from schools
- Jewish shops were smashed during **Kristallnacht** (Night of Broken Glass)
- Neighbours stopped waving
- Soldiers yelled, "Jews out!"

Her family fled to the **Netherlands** in 1938, hoping to escape.

They didn't know that safety was only temporary.

Occupation and Oppression

In **1940**, the Nazis invaded the Netherlands. Anti-Jewish laws followed:

- Jews had to wear a yellow star on their clothing to identify them as Jews
- They couldn't go to public parks or shops
- Radios were taken
- Schools were closed
- Families were deported – first to labour camps, then to **death camps**



By 1942, Leah's parents made a desperate decision: **they would hide**.

The Attic Refuge

With the help of a Christian friend named **Mrs. Van Dijk**, the Steins moved into a tiny attic room above her bakery in Amsterdam. They shared the space with another family, the Rosens. Six people in total.

They couldn't speak during the day. They tiptoed across wooden floors. They rationed bread, potatoes, and water.

Each night, Leah wrote in her diary by candlelight:

"We are still here. That is something."

The Holocaust Unfolds

Between 1941 and 1945, the Nazis carried out the **Final Solution** – a systematic plan to **eliminate every Jew in Europe**.

- Jews were transported in cattle trains to camps like **Auschwitz**, **Treblinka**, and **Sobibor**
- Millions were gassed, shot, starved, or worked to death
- Others were used in cruel medical experiments
- Entire communities – men, women, children – were wiped out

It was **genocide**: the deliberate extermination of an entire people group.

In total:

- **6 million Jews died**, including 1.5 million children
 - **Millions more** were murdered for being Roma (Romanian Gypsies), disabled, political dissidents, or homosexuals
-

Acts of Courage and Resistance

But not everyone was silent.

- **The White Rose** – German students who secretly printed anti-Nazi leaflets
- **The Ten Boom Family** – Dutch Christians who hid Jews in their home (later caught and sent to prison camps)
- **Oskar Schindler** – A German businessman who saved 1,200 Jews by employing them
- **Raoul Wallenberg** – A Swedish diplomat who forged papers to save Hungarian Jews

And people like **Mrs. Van Dijk**, who risked everything just to keep a family alive.

A Risky Visit

One night, Leah's father whispered to her:

"If anything happens to us, God sees you. He is your refuge."

The next week, a warning came.

The bakery had been searched. The family had to move.

Leah's father went out first, to find another place. He never came back.

Later, they learned he'd been arrested and sent to Auschwitz.

"He went as a father," her mother said. "He did not hide from danger."

Leah stayed hidden with her mother and the Rosens. Every day, she prayed Psalm 27:

“The Lord is my light and my salvation – whom shall I fear?”

Liberation

In **May 1945**, after five years of darkness, Nazi Germany surrendered. British and American forces liberated the camps. Survivors were found – starving, sick, and grieving.

Leah and her mother were rescued by Canadian soldiers in Amsterdam. They were half-starved, pale, and weak – but alive.

They moved to London, then later to Australia, where Leah married and raised a family.



Years Later

Leah became a teacher and spoke in schools about her experience. She showed children her yellow star. She read from her diary.

She stood at memorials with tears in her eyes.

“I am one of the lucky ones,” she said. “So, I must speak for those who cannot.”

In 2000, she stood in front of Sydney’s **Jewish Holocaust Centre** and said:

“Never again is not just a wish. It must be a promise.”



Why Study the Holocaust?

The Holocaust shows us:

- How **hatred grows when left unchallenged**
- What happens when people stay silent
- That **human dignity must always be protected**
- That even in evil, **courage and compassion can shine**

We study this so we do not forget.

And we study it, so it does not happen again.

The great tragedy of our times is that as a nation we have such short memories; as in the last few years there has been a growing tide of anti-semitism (hatred of the Jews & Israel) in this country that was once a proud supporter of the Jewish people. Even as recent as June 2025, the Australian government announced sanctions against Israel for defending itself against the Hamas terrorist organisation that brutally massacred

1200 Israeli people (including men, women, children, babies and the elderly) and took captive 240 hostages on October 7, 2023. Some victims were tortured, raped, burned and mutilated, or beheaded with many of the acts proudly filmed by the perpetrators.

The attackers also killed hundreds of Israeli soldiers situated near the border. And then, up to the end of June 2025, there had been daily missile attacks on seven fronts (by Hamas in Gaza, Hezbollah in Lebanon, Houthis in Yemen, Islamic Jihad Cells in the West Bank, & Iranian backed militias in Iran, Iraq & Syria), all supporting the Palestinians/Hamas. During that period, Israel attacked Gaza in ongoing efforts to rescue the hostages. Yet unbelievably, the Australian government, and much of the Australian and world media and social-media sided with the terrorists, and demanded that Israel stop defending itself. They have bought into the propaganda lie that the terrorists, the Palestinians are the victims, being treated unfairly.

So, why study the Holocaust? So it does not happen again – even though it is actually happening right now.

Activity: Memory Wall of Courage and Loss

Instructions:

Create a **“Memory Wall” poster or booklet** to help your family or community remember and reflect on the Holocaust.

Your wall must include:

1. **One drawing or symbol** to represent:
 - The victims
 - The rescuers
 - The survivors
2. **Three quotations** (use Leah’s diary, her father’s words, or Scripture)
3. A **timeline** of 5 key Holocaust events (with dates and explanations)
4. A short **reflection paragraph (5–7 sentences)** on:
 - What you learned
 - How the Holocaust affected you emotionally
 - Why remembering matters today

Optional Extension: Write a letter to Leah, expressing what her story taught you.

Helpful Resources:

- [Sydney Jewish Museum – Holocaust Education](#)
 - [United States Holocaust Memorial Museum](#)
 - [Yad Vashem – Holocaust Remembrance](#)
-

Biblical Reflection

Even in the darkest hours, God does not forget His people.

“The Lord is close to the broken-hearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.” (Psalm 34:18)

The Holocaust shows us the depths of human sin – but also the power of courage, memory, and faith. We are called not only to remember, but to stand for the oppressed, speak for the voiceless, and live in love.

Narration Activity

If your parent/tutor is available now, ask them to listen while you retell what you have just learnt. Or if they are not available now, then tell your story during your lunch break today.

Lesson 23: The Atomic Bomb

Australian Curriculum:

[AC9HH8S06](#) - identify perspectives, attitudes and values of the past in sources

[AC9HH8S07](#) - explain historical interpretations about significant events, individuals and groups

[AC9HH10K03](#) – The causes and course of the Holocaust and the roles of individuals or groups in events and responses

(This code includes other significant events in the closing stages of WWII, such as the use of the atomic bomb.)

Lesson Introduction

Student Instructions:

In August 1945, the world entered a new era. Two atomic bombs were dropped on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. These bombings ended World War II – but also opened up new ethical and scientific questions that still shape global politics today.

In this lesson, you'll read a narrative about a young Japanese Christian survivor in Hiroshima, alongside reflections from Allied scientists and soldiers. You'll explore the events, motivations, outcomes, and human cost of the atomic bomb. Afterward, you'll complete a creative comparison task and conclude with narration.

Informational Story

“When the Sky Caught Fire: Hiroshima and the Atomic Bomb”

Hiroshima, Japan – August 6, 1945

The morning was still.

Emiko Tanaka, age 15, placed a white cloth over the table in her family's small home. She hummed softly as she set out three bowls of rice. Her father had already gone to work at the factory. Her mother was folding washing by the window.

At exactly **8:15 am**, the sky turned white.

And then – everything shattered.

The Road to Hiroshima

By 1945, the war in the Pacific had raged for over four years. Japan had refused to surrender, even as American forces closed in from island to island.

The Allies feared:

- A land invasion of Japan could cost **millions of lives**
- Japanese civilians might be armed and resist
- The war might drag on for another year or more

Meanwhile, in secret, American, British, and Australian scientists had been working on a terrifying new weapon: **the atomic bomb**, under the project codenamed **Manhattan**.

It could destroy a city with a single explosion.

The Decision

On **July 26, 1945**, the Allies issued the **Potsdam Declaration**, demanding Japan's unconditional surrender. Japan refused.

American President **Harry Truman**, believing it was the only way to end the war swiftly and avoid a full-scale invasion, authorised the use of the atomic bomb.

The chosen target: **Hiroshima**, a military and industrial city of 350,000 people.

The bomb was nicknamed "**Little Boy**."

A Flash Like No Other

At 8:15am on August 6, the **Enola Gay**, a US bomber, dropped the uranium bomb over Hiroshima.

Emiko saw a white flash, brighter than the sun. Her house exploded around her.



Her mother shielded her with her body. Debris fell. Fire raced through the streets.

Emiko crawled from the rubble, her ears ringing. She found her mother, bleeding but alive. The sky had turned black. Everything was dust.

"It looked like the end of the world," she later said. "Like the sky had caught fire."

The Human Toll

The destruction was unimaginable:

- Over **70,000 people died instantly**
- Fires consumed the city
- Buildings vaporised
- Shadows were burned into walls
- Thousands more died in days and weeks from **radiation sickness**, burns, and injuries



Three days later, a second bomb – **“Fat Man”** – was dropped on **Nagasaki**, killing 40,000 more.

On **August 15**, Japan surrendered. World War II was over.

But for survivors like Emiko, the war would never truly end.

Survivors: The Hibakusha

Emiko became one of the **hibakusha** (survivors of the atomic bomb).

She lived with scars, both seen and unseen:

- Hair loss
- Skin burns
- Illness
- Nightmares



Many survivors faced **shame and discrimination**. Some were rejected in marriage. Others developed cancer years later.

But Emiko found strength in her faith. She clung to Psalm 121:

“He who watches over you will not slumber...”

She became a nurse, helping others who suffered. She also spoke in schools and churches about peace and forgiveness.

“I do not hate,” she said. “I remember. And I hope.”

Voices from the Other Side

Meanwhile, **Robert Oppenheimer**, the chief scientist on the Manhattan Project, watched the first test of the bomb in New Mexico weeks before Hiroshima. As the mushroom cloud rose, he whispered a line from a Hindu text:

“Now I am become Death, the destroyer of worlds.”

Many scientists had feared what they created.

Some argued the bomb should only be used in a demonstration on an uninhabited island.

Others believed it was necessary to **stop Japan’s aggression** and **prevent future wars**.

Australian pilot Leonard Siffleet, who had seen the horrors of Japanese treatment of POWs, said:

“If it saved our mates from being bayoneted on the beach, maybe it was justified.”

But others wondered if there was a better way.

The Ethics of War

Was it right to use the atomic bomb?

This question still haunts historians, theologians, scientists, and survivors.

Arguments in favour:

- It ended the war quickly
- It may have saved lives by avoiding invasion
- Japan had refused to surrender

Arguments against:

- It killed civilians in massive numbers
- Japan was already weakened
- It unleashed a new kind of terror on the world

Emiko never blamed the pilots or the Americans.

“War makes monsters of us all,” she once said. “But peace begins with one heart choosing mercy.”



Remembering Hiroshima

Today, the **Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park** stands in the centre of the rebuilt city.

At its heart is the **Atomic Bomb Dome** – a ruined building left as a witness.

Children fold **paper cranes** for peace, inspired by the story of **Sadako Sasaki**, a girl who died of radiation sickness and tried to fold 1,000 cranes before her death.



Emiko helped build a small chapel nearby. On the wall is engraved:

“Blessed are the peacemakers.”(Matthew 5:9)

The Bomb and the World

The atomic bomb changed warfare forever. Since 1945:

- Nations have built vast **nuclear arsenals**
- Treaties have tried to limit weapons
- Campaigns for **nuclear disarmament** have spread
- Survivors' stories have challenged generations to choose peace

The bomb ended one war, but started a new era of fear and global responsibility.

Activity: Compare Perspectives – Voices of Hiroshima

Instructions:

Create a **two-part reflection poster or slideshow** titled: “Voices of Hiroshima: A Story of Power and Peace.”

Your work must include:

Part A – Perspectives

1. Choose two characters from the story above:
 - Emiko (survivor)
 - Oppenheimer (scientist)
 - Truman (US President)
 - Australian soldier or POW
2. Write a **short journal entry (100 - 150 words)** from each person's perspective explaining how they viewed the bombing and its impact

Part B – Symbols & Reflection

1. Create or find **symbols** representing:
 - Destruction
 - Suffering
 - Peace
 - Forgiveness
2. Under each symbol, write a brief explanation (1–2 sentences)
3. Write a **reflection paragraph (5–7 sentences)** explaining:
 - What you learned about the bombing
 - How different people viewed it
 - What responsibility we have today as global citizens

Helpful Resources:

- Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum
 - ABC Education – The Bombing of Hiroshima
 - [Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes – Story Summary](#)
-

Biblical Reflection

Jesus taught:

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God.” (Matthew 5:9)

The story of Hiroshima reminds us that great power brings great responsibility. War may end violence, but peace begins with healing, memory, and mercy.

We must not only remember the past; we must build a better future.

Narration Activity

If your parent/tutor is available now, ask them to listen while you retell what you have just learnt. Or if they are not available now, then tell your story during your lunch break today.

Lesson 24: The Significance and Commemoration of World War II

Australian Curriculum v9 Content Descriptions:

[AC9HH8S06](#) - identify perspectives, attitudes and values of the past in sources

[AC9HH8S07](#) - explain historical interpretations about significant events, individuals and groups

[AC9HH10K05](#) – The significance of World War II, including the Holocaust and use of the atomic bomb

[AC9HH10K06](#) – Different historical interpretations and commemorations of World War II over time

Lesson Introduction

Student Instructions:

World War II was the most devastating conflict in human history. It involved over 100 million people, killed more than 70 million, and changed every part of global society. But its significance didn't end in 1945. In the years since, we've remembered the war through monuments, stories, films, museums, and national days.

In this lesson, you'll read a narrative that follows post-war remembrance through the eyes of a returned Australian soldier and his granddaughter. You'll explore why remembering matters and how people interpret the war in different ways. You'll then complete a personal commemoration activity and finish with narration.

Informational Story

“Lest We Forget: Remembering World War II”

Canberra, 1995

The sun warmed the marble stones of the **Australian War Memorial**. Crowds gathered for the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II. School children in neat uniforms held wreaths. Bugles gleamed in the morning light.

Private Alan Drayton, now 75, stood beside his 12-year-old granddaughter, **Elise**, as the tune *The Last Post* began to play.

He hadn't cried in decades. But today, he did.

A Soldier's Memories

In 1941, Alan was just 21, a farmhand from near Wagga Wagga. He enlisted with the 2/13th Battalion and fought in **North Africa**, then later in **New Guinea**.

He remembered:

- The blinding sun of Tobruk
- Mud and fever along the Kokoda Trail

- Mates lost in seconds
- Letters folded and refolded
- The first Christmas spent eating bully beef from a tin

When the war ended, Alan returned to Australia a different man.

“I didn’t want a medal,” he told Elise. “I wanted a world where boys didn’t have to carry guns.”

The Significance of World War II

World War II shaped the world in countless ways:

- It led to the **United Nations**, initially formed to prevent future wars
- It exposed the evil of the **Holocaust**, leading to human rights laws
- It ushered in the **atomic age**, with new fears and global diplomacy
- It shifted power from Europe to the **United States** and **Soviet Union**, starting the **Cold War**
- It helped give rise to the **modern civil rights movement**, as people questioned government decisions and injustice in societies
- It shaped Australia’s identity, especially through Kokoda and the Pacific campaigns

At home, it also:

- Changed the roles of women permanently
- Created the first large **wave of post-war migration**
- Strengthened Australia's push for **independence from Britain**

Elise looked at her grandfather’s medals and whispered, “You helped change the world.”

Alan just smiled. “We all did. In small ways.”

Different Ways of Remembering

Not everyone remembers the war the same way.

Some families tell heroic stories. Others speak of trauma, silence, or loss. Nations, too, remember differently:

- In **Germany**, remembrance centres on sorrow, repentance, and education
- In **Russia**, WWII (called the “Great Patriotic War”) is remembered with pride and military parades
- In **Japan**, public memory is complex – some mourn Hiroshima, others debate responsibility
- In **Australia**, ANZAC Day has become a powerful symbol of sacrifice, courage, and mateship

Elise asked, “Why do some people still argue about it?”

Alan said, “Because memory is like glass. It reflects differently, depending on where you stand.”

The War Memorial

They walked through the galleries of the War Memorial.

Elise saw:

- A **Damien Parer photograph** of a soldier helping a wounded mate in New Guinea
- A **torn teddy bear** from a child evacuated from London
- Letters from **nurses, codebreakers, and prisoners of war**
- A map with red pins showing battles
- A faded Bible, carried by a pilot shot down over France



They paused at the **Roll of Honour**, where 40,000 Australian names are etched in bronze.

“They gave everything,” Alan said. “All we’re asked to give is remembrance.”

The Legacy of Peace

Alan told Elise:

- The war taught him that peace is precious
- That hate grows quietly if not challenged
- That courage is often found in ordinary people
- That we must learn history to avoid repeating it

“People think remembering is about the past,” he said. “But it’s really about shaping the future.”

Commemoration Around the World

After the war, many ways of remembering were developed:

- **Memorials and cenotaphs** in towns and cities
- **Remembrance Days**, especially November 11 (Armistice Day) and April 25 (ANZAC Day)
- **Holocaust museums** in Jerusalem, Berlin, Sydney, and Washington
- Films, documentaries, and literature that preserve survivors’ voices
- Pilgrimages to former battlefields – Tobruk, Kokoda, Normandy, Hiroshima



Some people wear **poppies**. Others light **candles**. Some walk in silence. Others sing hymns of hope.

The form may vary, but the heart is the same: **Never forget.**

Elise's Reflection

That night, Elise wrote in her journal:

“Grandpa is my hero, not because he fought, but because he remembers.
He doesn't tell stories to make war sound fun.
He tells them, so we know what it cost.
I want to be someone who remembers, too.”

Activity: Design a Personal Commemoration

Instructions:

Create a **personal commemoration project** that honours the people and lessons of World War II.

You may choose one of the following formats:

Option A: Commemoration Journal Page

1. Choose one person from any lesson in this unit (e.g. soldier, survivor, pilot, nurse, civilian)
2. Draw or print a symbolic image related to them
3. Write a short biography (100–150 words) explaining who they were and why you chose them
4. Choose one Scripture or quote to include
5. Reflect (4–5 sentences) on what their story means to you and how we can live out the lessons of WWII today

Option B: Mini-Memorial Design

1. Design a small memorial or monument that could be displayed at your home, church, or school
2. Include:
 - A title
 - A symbol (e.g. cross, poppy, flame, helmet, dove)
 - An inscription or quote
 - A short explanation of what it represents and why you chose it

Helpful Resources:

- [Australian War Memorial – Remembering WWII](#)
 - Department of Veterans' Affairs – Commemorations
 - [United Nations – Peace and Remembrance](#)
-

Biblical Reflection

Jesus said:

“Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.” (John 15:13)

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God.” (Matthew 5:9)

World War II teaches us about the high price of peace. Let us honour those who gave, suffered, prayed, and hoped – not with mere words, but with lives of love, truth, and vigilance.

Narration Activity

If your parent/tutor is available now, ask them to listen while you retell what you have just learnt. Or if they are not available now, then tell your story during your lunch break today.

WEEK 9

CULMINATING PROJECT OR ASSESSMENT

Culminating Assessment Task: “Australia’s Story: Truth, Citizenship, and Legacy”

Overview:

Students will complete a **multi-modal inquiry project** that synthesises their learning across history and citizenship. The project includes:

- A **written report** (1000–1200 words)
- A **creative presentation** (poster, slideshow, or short speech)
- A **reflection component** (personal and civic insight)

Part A: Historical Investigation (Written Report)

Choose **one** of the following topics:

1. **Australia’s Federation and Civic Identity**
Investigate the events leading to Federation, the values that shaped Australia’s Constitution, and how these reflect Christian and Western democratic heritage.
2. **World War I or II: Courage, Conflict, and Consequences**
Explore a key event (e.g. Gallipoli, Kokoda, Holocaust, Home Front) and analyse its impact on Australian society, values, and civic life.
3. **The Sexual Revolution and Moral Relativism**
Analyse the ideological shifts of the 1960s–70s, focusing on moral relativism and its consequences for Western society. Consider how ideas about freedom, identity, and morality evolved, and how these changes are viewed today.

Your report must include:

- A clear historical question
- Use of primary and secondary sources
- Analysis of perspectives and bias
- Referencing using APA or Harvard style

Part B: Citizenship & Civic Analysis (Creative Presentation)

Prepare a **visual or oral presentation** responding to:

“How do historical events and ideological shifts shape civic life and national identity in Australia?”

Use examples from:

- The Federation movement
- War experiences and commemorations
- Media and ideological bias
- Moral and cultural shifts in the 20th century

Presentation formats may include:

- A poster or infographic
- A PowerPoint or Google Slides
- A short recorded speech (3–5 minutes)

Part C: Personal Reflection

Write a short reflection (300–400 words) addressing:

- What values or ideas from history have shaped your view of citizenship?
- How can you contribute to civic life today?
- What lessons from Australia’s past should guide our future?

 **Justification Table: Curriculum Alignment**

Assessment Component	Australian Curriculum Achievement Standard	Justification
Historical Investigation	AC9HH10K11–AC9HH10K13, AC9HH10K18, AC9HH10K20	Students analyse significant events, values, and perspectives shaping Australian society
Use of Sources & Perspectives	AC9HH10S07	Students evaluate contested interpretations and source reliability

Assessment Component	Australian Curriculum Achievement Standard	Justification
Citizenship Analysis	AC9HC10K01–AC9HC10K05, AC9HC10S05	Students explore civic values, media influence, and democratic processes
Creative Communication	AC9HC10S05	Students present ideas using historical and civic concepts
Personal Reflection	AC9HC10S03–S04	Students evaluate civic participation and reflect on their role in society

Marking Rubric (5-Point Scale)

Criteria	5 – Excellent	4 – Good	3 – Satisfactory	2 – Developing	1 – Limited
Historical Understanding	Deep, nuanced understanding with strong context	Clear and accurate understanding	Basic understanding with minor gaps	Limited understanding with errors	Minimal or inaccurate understanding
Use of Sources & Evidence	Wide range of sources, critically evaluated	Several sources with some evaluation	Adequate use of sources with basic referencing	Few sources, limited evaluation	Inappropriate or missing sources
Analysis of Bias & Perspective	Insightful and balanced analysis	Clear analysis with relevant examples	Basic analysis with some insight	Limited or generalised analysis	No meaningful analysis
Civic Insight & Citizenship	Sophisticated understanding of civic life and values	Clear understanding with examples	Basic understanding with limited depth	Limited understanding or weak examples	No clear understanding demonstrated
Communication & Presentation	Highly effective, engaging, and well-structured	Mostly clear and well-structured	Adequate clarity and structure	Some clarity issues or disorganisation	Poor communication and structure
Personal Reflection	Deep, thoughtful reflection with clear	Clear reflection with personal insight	Basic reflection with some relevance	Limited reflection or vague ideas	No meaningful reflection or connection

Criteria	5 – Excellent	4 – Good	3 – Satisfactory	2 – Developing	1 – Limited
	civic connection				
