

House of Assembly – Classroom role-play lesson plan



Subject: Legal Studies

This role-play is designed to give your students an idea of how a law is made in the Parliament of Tasmania. You can choose to use the scripted or unscripted version, each follows an edited version of proceedings in the House of Assembly, where most new legislation starts. The role-play can be adapted for use with Legal Studies 3 or Foundation classes. The process detailed in the role-play is quite comprehensive, so feel free to edit and use those parts which suit your context best.

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Before the lesson

Prior knowledge	<p>The following activities are optional, depending on what civics learning the class has covered.</p> <p>Pre-teach key vocabulary</p> <p>As a class watch the video illustrating the passage of legislation. This is taken from debate on the Police Offences Amendment (Knives and Other Weapons) Bill 2025. See fact sheet here.</p>
Resources required	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Facilitator runsheet• Student scripts• Optional - title cards• Props – a bell, a Mace. You can make a Mace for your classroom using these instructions or improvise using something like a broom handle.• Optional - gowns for the Speaker, Clerk and Sergeant-At-Arms. You can make gowns following this pattern or improvise using suit jackets to mark them out from the rest of the class.• Optional – Coloured sport sashes to illustrate different parties in the Parliament.

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During the lesson

Duration	Step	Instructions	Resources/Note
5- 10 minutes	Introduce the topic of the role-play – the use of AI in schools. In the role-play, the Government is proposing a Bill to structure how AI is used in Tasmanian schools.	Have students brainstorm reasons for and against this idea to activate their thinking around the topic.	
5 minutes	Allocate roles and divide into Government, Opposition and crossbench.	<p>Nominate Clerk and Sergeant-at-Arms. They are parliamentary officers and will not participate in debate. All other students are Members of Parliament. Choose or elect the Speaker. While they are an elected Member, the Speaker does not participate in debate, or vote on the Bill, unless there is a tie, in which case they have the casting vote.</p> <p>Divide the remaining Members into Government, Opposition and crossbench. Choose whether to have a majority Government or a minority Government. A majority Government will have an overall majority out of all the Members, a minority Government will have the biggest single</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student scripts • Coloured sports sashes (optional) • Gowns for Speaker. Clerk and Sergeant-at-Arms (optional)

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		group but not an overall majority. Use the coloured sports sashes to identify to Government, Opposition and crossbench. The sashes help student see that Government and Opposition are “teams” who work together. The crossbench is made up of minor parties and independents, so they are not one entity and sash accordingly.	
5 minutes	Set up the classroom	Arrange the classroom for the debate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom layout plan • Title cards • Bell for the Clerk/Mace for Sergeant-at-Arms
5 minutes	Prepare for the debate	<p>Explain the Speaker’s role in maintaining order during the debate. Members’ behaviour and the way the House of Assembly is run are governed by the Standing Orders, the rule book of the House.</p> <p>“Hear, hear” is the parliamentary way to show support for a Member.</p>	

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30 minutes	Conduct the debate	Follow the facilitator run sheet	Facilitator run sheet
Lesson Summary			
10 minutes	Recap and reflection	Chance for students to ask questions and reflect on their learning	
Differentiation			
Differentiation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Members have the right to speak on a Bill, so students who may have difficulty reading scripts can be encouraged to make a verbal contribution. Brainstorming the topic prior to debate and allowing for time for discussion before unscripted contributions may help students feel confident participating. Modify scripts to fit the class. 		
Modification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you have a large class, you can nominate students to act as a media gallery, taking notes during the debate and preparing a written report or video piece covering the proceedings. 		
Extension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extend the role-play with the Committee stage of the Bill, where Members propose amendments (changes) to the Bill. Each amendment is debated and voted on and if a majority agree, it becomes part of the Bill. Conduct another role-play debate with students determining the topic and scripting their own speeches. 		

