Understanding Democracy Through Elections – Year 7- 9

Curriculum Alignment

- **AC9HC7K01** – Principles and values of Australia's democracy (freedom, equality before the law, representative democracy).

- **AC9HC7K03** – Features of Australia's electoral system and how it supports democratic participation.

- **AC9HC8K02** – Roles and responsibilities of political institutions and elected representatives.

- **Skills:**

    o **AC9HC7–9S01** – Develop and refine inquiry questions.

    o **AC9HC7–9S02** – Locate and select reliable sources about democratic structures and processes

    o **AC9HC7–9S03** – Communicate informed opinions using civics terminology.

Learning Intentions

Students will:

- Explain why elections are essential in a democracy.

- Understand how South Australia's electoral system works.

- Analyse the roles and responsibilities of elected representatives.

- Reflect on their role as future participants in democracy.

Session 1: Why Elections Matter

- **Key Concepts:** Representative democracy, fairness, political equality.

- **Activities:**

    o Starter question: *"Could a democracy exist without elections? Why or why not?"*

    o Overview of democratic principles and how elections uphold them.

    o Connect to SA election as a real-world example.

- **Student Task:**

    o Write a short explanation: *How do elections protect democratic values?*

Session 2: How Elections Work in South Australia

- **Key Concepts:** Secret ballot, compulsory voting, preferential voting.

- **Activities:**

    o Review the 2022 SA election timeline. See 2022 State election report page 6

    o Discuss why Australia uses compulsory voting and its impact on fairness.

- **Student Task:**

    o Create an annotated diagram of the voting process.

    o Extension: Evaluate one strength and one challenge of compulsory voting.

Session 3: Political Participation and Campaigning

- **Key Concepts:** Political parties, candidates, ethical campaigning.

- **Activities:**

    o Analyse generic campaign strategies (posters, slogans, media influence).

    o Discuss: *"What responsibilities do candidates have during elections?"*

- **Student Task:**

    o Develop a **code of ethical campaigning** (focus on respect, truth, inclusivity).

Session 4: After the Election – Power and Accountability

- **Key Concepts:** Formation of government, accountability, representation.

- **Activities:**

    o Explain how votes translate into governing authority. 2022 State election results

    o Discuss the role of the Premier, Cabinet, and Parliament.

- **Student Task:**

    o Write an explanatory paragraph: *How are elected representatives accountable to voters?*

Session 5: Youth Voice and Future Participation

- **Key Concepts:** Civic agency, active citizenship, political literacy.

- **Assessment Task (Summative):** Choose ONE:

    o Analytical response: *To what extent do elections ensure representative government?*

    o Civic action proposal: *How young people can engage ethically in democracy.*

    o Multimedia presentation: *Why elections still matter in modern Australia.*

Success Criteria:

    o Uses accurate civics terminology.

    o Demonstrates understanding of electoral processes.

    o Presents a reasoned, evidence-based argument.