



Unit 11: Changing the Constitution (referenda) – Year 9 - C & C Strand:
Government & Democracy

Topic 9.1: Referendum: the process for Constitutional change

Referendums and plebiscites

Terminology

In Australia, these days, we commonly refer to a 'referendum' as a vote of the people upon a specific change to the Constitution, which comes into effect if the vote is passed. We use the word 'plebiscite' to deal with other kinds of votes, such as non-constitutional or non-binding votes, that indicate the will of the people about a subject.

For example, if the vote is about whether we want daylight saving or where to build a dam, then it is a plebiscite. A plebiscite could also be used to show the public's in-principle preference on a constitutional matter at an early stage, so that the choice could then be developed and put to the people in a binding constitutional referendum. For example, the Commonwealth could ask the people if they wanted, in principle, a republic, and if so, then later put a constitutional referendum to the people to make the formal change.

In Australia, a constitutional referendum only allows a choice between the current Constitution and a specific change to it. You cannot choose between a range of options. So a plebiscite may be used to show the public's preference amongst choices. For example, in 1977 four choices were given in a plebiscite on Australia's national song. More controversially, in 1981 voters were given two choices as to where to [build a dam](#) in Tasmania, but not a choice for no dam (which caused people to write '[No Dams](#)' on their ballot).

Australians have only made this distinction between plebiscites and referendums in more recent years. In the past, they were usually all called 'referendums'.

For example, if you read about the votes on conscription in 1916 and 1917 during World War I, they are referred to as referendums, even though they didn't change the Constitution and were not legally binding.

There is an ongoing [debate](#) about whether the plural of referendum is '[referenda](#)' or '[referendums](#)'. Some say that because it is derived from Latin, the plural of 'um' is 'a'. But the problem here is that the Romans actually used a different word for such votes, based on the Latin 'plebescitum' (from which we get plebiscite).

**Write "NO DAMS" on your Ballot Paper
on June 5th for World Environment Day.**

**Vote as normal, then put "NO DAMS"
on the top right hand corner
of your vote.**

THIS WILL NOT INVALIDATE YOUR VOTE.

THE FRANKLIN RIVER IS A NATIONAL ASSET

Phone 49 8011 if you want to help the "NO DAMS" campaign.

Do not sign the ballot paper.



Tasmanian Wilderness Society 'No Dams' campaign material Source: National Library of Australia

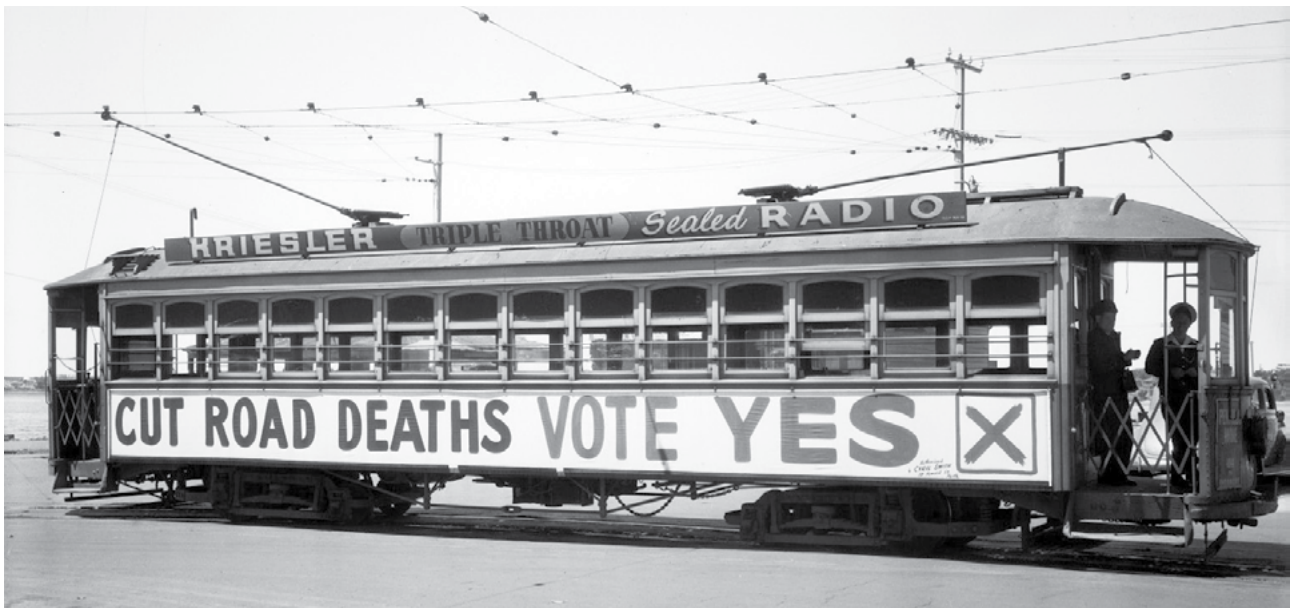
The term referendum is a nineteenth century British invention. While it draws on a Latin root, referendum is a gerund, which does not take a plural, so the term 'referenda' is not grammatically correct in Latin. Most therefore argue that because the word is a British invention, the plural should be made by adding an 's'. Overall, both are regarded as acceptable in modern English, so if anyone tells you that one or other plural is 'wrong', politely let them know that there are genuine arguments either way, and that as a consequence either may be used.

Plebiscites in the States

The first Australian plebiscite occurred in South Australia in 1896, concerning religion in government schools, with Queensland holding a similar plebiscite in 1910. The most important plebiscites (then described as referendums) in Australia occurred in 1898 and 1899, when the people of the Australian colonies were asked to approve federation and the Constitution. In the first half of the 20th century, there was a 'prohibition' movement to ban alcohol or to limit the opening hours of pubs and impose licensing conditions on pubs, as a means of reducing domestic violence exacerbated by drunkenness and other societal issues.

This resulted in plebiscites on matters relating to pubs and alcohol in: Western Australia in 1911, 1921, 1925 and 1950; South Australia in 1915; Tasmania in 1916; New South Wales in 1916, 1928, 1947, 1954 and 1969; Queensland in 1920 and 1923; and Victoria in 1956.

Some plebiscites dealt with matters that were governmental in nature, but did not involve amending the State's Constitution. For example, in 1911 there was a plebiscite in South Australia about approving an increase in pay for Members of Parliament. Unsurprisingly, the answer was no. In 1933, Western Australia voted in a plebiscite for secession from Australia (i.e. leaving the federation and returning to being a British colony), which resulted in a majority yes vote, but the British Parliament would not permit the State to leave without the agreement of the Commonwealth, and the Commonwealth did not agree. A plebiscite was also held in the Australian Capital Territory in 1978 about whether it wanted self-government and in 1992 and 1995 about its electoral system. The Northern Territory held a plebiscite about Statehood in 1998.



WA prohibition plebiscite campaign material on the side of a tram | 1950
Source: State Library of WA

Other issues upon which plebiscites have been held have largely concerned social matters that divide the community. Gambling is an example, with a plebiscite in South Australia in 1965 about whether State lotteries should be allowed, and one in Tasmania in 1968 about whether a casino should be permitted. Plebiscites have also been held on shopping hours, such as one in South Australia in 1970 about permitting late night shopping on Fridays and one in Western Australia in 2005 about the extension of shopping hours. Whether there should be daylight saving is another popular plebiscite question, with plebiscites being held on this topic in: Western Australia in 1975, 1984, 1992 and 2009; New South Wales in 1976, South Australia in 1982; and Queensland in 1992. As noted above, a plebiscite was also held in 1981 about the divisive environmental issue of building a dam in Tasmania for hydro-electricity.

Plebiscites at the national level

There have been far fewer plebiscites at the national level. This is largely because the types of social issues that split political parties and need determination by a vote of the people, tend to fall under State powers, rather than the Commonwealth's powers.

Two highly divisive plebiscites were held on whether or not there should be [conscriptio](#)n during World War I, in 1916 and 1917.

The Commonwealth Parliament had the necessary power, under section 51(vi) of the Constitution, to pass a law to conscript people to fight in the war, but the Senate was unlikely to pass it. The Labor Prime Minister, Billy Hughes, did not want to hold a double dissolution election on the issue, as it would split his party and he would most likely lose government. The only alternative way of getting a mandate from the people on the issue was to hold a plebiscite. Because it did not involve an amendment to the Constitution, there was no need for approval in a majority of States – only an overall majority. People in the territories could also vote (even though they could not vote in constitutional referendums until the Constitution was changed in 1977). Both plebiscites, however, failed and conscription was not introduced.

In 1977 a plebiscite was held on what should be Australia's '[national song](#)', with Advance Australia Fair winning. In 2017 a plebiscite was held on whether to approve same-sex marriage. It was described as a '[postal survey](#)' so that it could be held without enacting a new statute to authorise it. It was a voluntary poll. It passed with 61.6% of the vote in favour.





Teacher Reference Document 90



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Government & Democracy

Topic 9.1: Referendum: the process for constitutional change

Referendum – why use it for constitutional change?

When the Constitutions for a number of the Australian colonies were made in the 1850s, they were either enacted by the local colonial Parliament, or were [approved by the United Kingdom Parliament](#), which gave authority to Queen Victoria to bring the colonial Constitution into effect. No referendum was involved. These colonial Constitutions could be amended by the relevant colonial Parliament by enacting ordinary legislation.

But making a Constitution for a federation was far more complex. It involved distributing powers amongst the Commonwealth and the States. If the Commonwealth Parliament could just amend the Constitution, like an ordinary statute, then it could easily wipe out the States or take away all their powers whenever it wanted.

The Constitution therefore needed to have a higher status than other laws, so it could only be amended in a special manner that neither the Commonwealth nor the States controlled.

The main example that the framers could copy from was the Canadian Constitution (known as the [British North America Act 1867](#)). It was enacted by the British Parliament. This 'entrenched' it (i.e. stopped it from being easily changed). Under the doctrine of 'repugnancy', no colonial Parliament could make a law that was repugnant to (i.e. inconsistent with) certain British laws that applied 'by paramount force' to the colonies. This meant that the Canadians had to ask the British Parliament to amend their Constitution whenever they wanted a change.



Queen Victoria | 1850 |
Joseph Backler
Source: State Library of NSW

The framers of the Australian Constitution did not like the Canadian system at all. They did not want to have to go begging to the British Government every time a change was needed to the Constitution. But they did still want to use the British Parliament and the doctrine of repugnancy as a means of entrenching the Constitution so it could not be amended by an ordinary law enacted by the Commonwealth Parliament.

The compromise was for the Constitution to be drafted in Australia, at a number of constitutional conventions, and then sent to the United Kingdom to be enacted by the British Parliament.

The big difference was that it would contain its own constitutional amendment mechanism, permitting it to be amended in the future from within Australia. This was a huge innovation for its time, and a significant step towards independence.

But that left the question of what the local amendment mechanism should be. Here the framers adopted the Swiss innovation of the referendum, which had been developed in the 16th century. It had been adopted in some of the States of the United States of America, but was not used nationally there. Nor was it used in the United Kingdom or Canada.

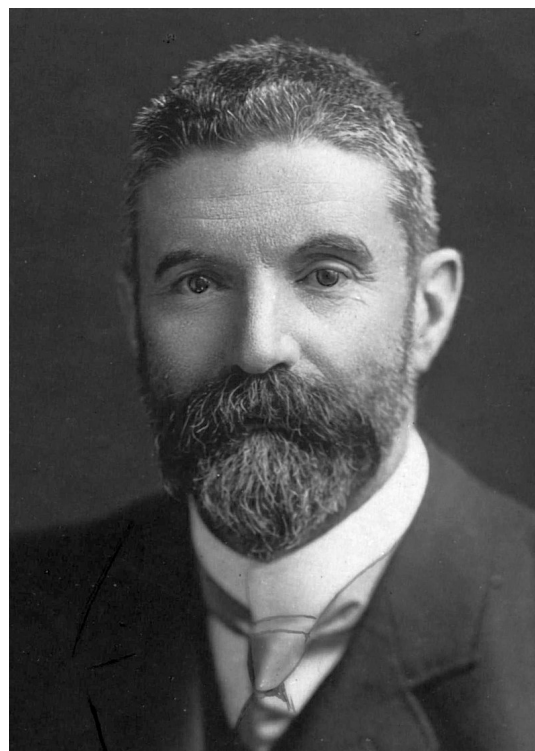
It was raised at a conference in 1890 in Melbourne where federation was first seriously discussed. [Alfred Deakin](#) talked about how the people of the colonies would be consulted about a new Constitution. The normal approach would be for local colonial Parliaments to approve it, and then for it to be an issue in a general election.

Instead, Deakin proposed the radical alternative of putting it to the people directly in a referendum for their approval. Deakin pointed out that at an election, voters have plenty of other matters to consider and that the fate of federation should not be tied to a particular government or party in an election. He didn't want it mixed up with other political issues.

This idea was then brought up at the 1891 Constitutional Convention. It was argued that the referendum should not only be used to approve the making of the Constitution but also as the way to approve changes to it in the future. This proposal was originally defeated, with the Convention opting for a system relying on elected conventions in the States, similar to that used in the United States Constitution. But interest in the idea of a referendum was growing.

Some colonies thought it might be a good way of resolving deadlocks between the two Houses of Parliament. In Victoria, a Royal Commission in 1894 supported its use for resolving such conflicts. Many members of that Royal Commission were also members of the Constitutional Conventions involved in drafting the Commonwealth Constitution.

South Australia then decided to have its own experiment, using a referendum in 1896 to help resolve a contentious issue about the teaching of scripture in public schools.



Alfred Deakin | 1905
Source: Wiki Commons

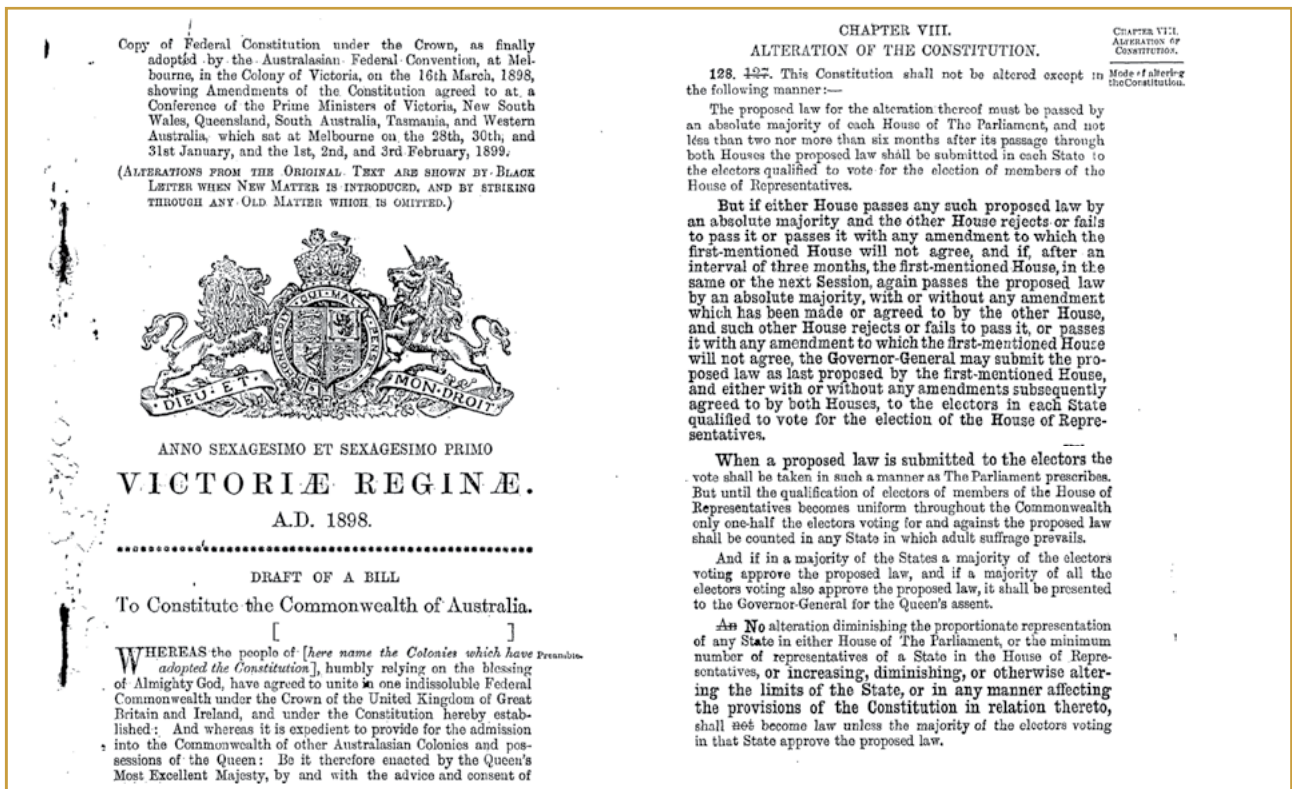
New South Wales also proposed to use the referendum to resolve deadlocks, but was worried that not enough people would vote to make the vote meaningful. In those days there was no compulsory voting. So it included a condition that to pass, a referendum had to be supported by a minimum of 80,000 valid votes. While this bill did not pass, a similar clause would later cause a great problem in the referendum to approve federation.

During the various debates upon such proposals in the colonies, arguments in favour of the use of referendum included:

- it settles a dispute once and for all and avoids lingering deadlocks;
- it has an educative effect and makes the people more interested in politics if they get a direct say in the issues;
- it operates as a safety-valve for political agitation; and
- it is a proper way of recognising the sovereignty of the people.

Those on the other side argued that:

- the people would soon get wearied by having to vote on issues and prefer the Parliament to do its job instead; and
- Parliament, as a body of practical, well-informed politicians is a safer body to determine such issues than the masses outside.



Much was also said about the conservative nature of the referendum. Some saw it as a good thing, as it would defeat hasty ill-considered changes or changes proposed purely for party-political reasons. Others argued that it is hard enough to achieve change already and that there will be a natural tendency for the public to vote 'No', as it is easy to run a scare campaign and the fear of the new tends to outweigh any unhappiness with what we have now. If a detailed proposal is put to the people, it is likely they will find fault with at least one bit of it, and if a general proposal is put without the detail, voters will be afraid about unexpected consequences.

Draft Constitution, showing amendments proposed by the Premiers' Conference 1899, including to the referendum provision in section 128
 Source: State Library of Victoria

At the 1897-8 Constitutional Convention, Deakin and his supporters were successful in convincing the Convention to agree to [section 128](#) of the Constitution, which provided for the Constitution to be amended, in Australia, by a referendum. It was intended to be hard to achieve. The framers did not want the Constitution to be altered every time the wind blew in a different direction. But they did not want it to be almost impossible to change either. Did they get the balance right?



Unit 11: Changing the Constitution (referenda) – Year 9 - Civics and Citizenship C & C Strand: Government & Democracy

Topic 9.1: Referendum: the process for Constitutional change

Referendums – how does constitutional change work in practice?

[Section 128](#) of the Commonwealth Constitution starts by saying: 'This Constitution shall not be altered except in the following manner'. It is therefore the exclusive way of formally amending the words of the Constitution. (The effect of the Constitution can still be altered in other ways – eg by constitutional interpretation, or by legislation where a constitutional provision says 'until the Parliament otherwise provides...')

There are three stages to constitutional amendment: initiation of the amendment proposal; passage of a bill by a House or Houses; and approval by the people in a referendum.

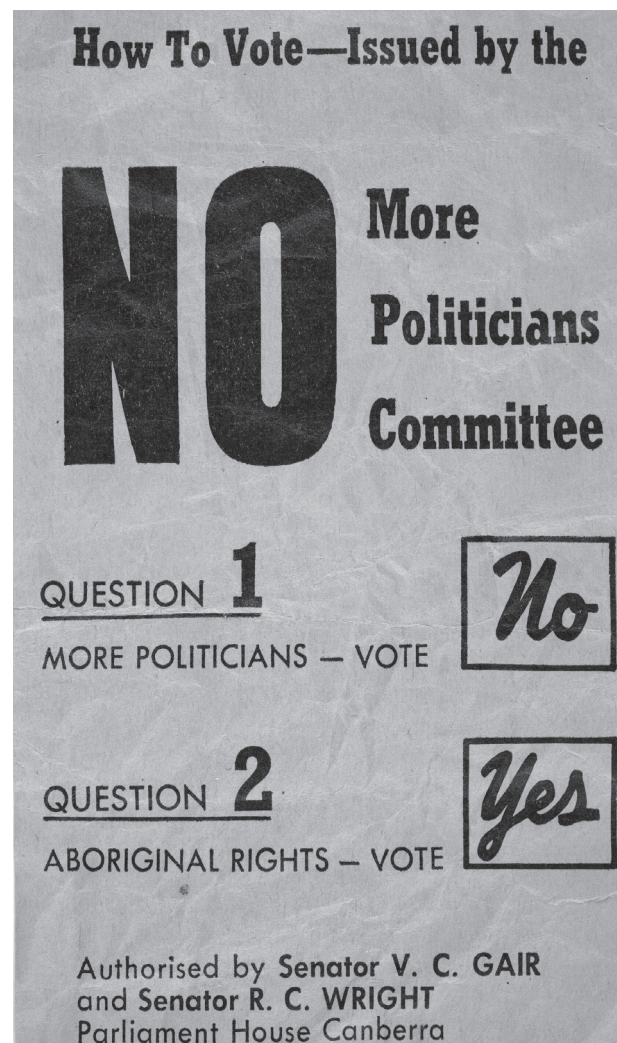
Initiation – Who starts off a proposal to amend the Constitution?

The Commonwealth Government effectively controls the initiation of a referendum, because it ultimately advises the Governor-General to put the referendum to the people. Neither the States nor any constitutional reform body can initiate a Commonwealth referendum. There is no process for citizens' initiated referendums, as there is in some countries like [Switzerland](#). While the Australian people can form groups to campaign for constitutional reform on issues such as the constitutional recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples or an Australian republic, they cannot succeed without Commonwealth Government support.

One consequence is that it is virtually impossible to get a referendum put to the Australian people that would reduce Commonwealth power or expand the powers of the States. This means that constitutional reform tends to be skewed in favour of greater Commonwealth power.

Passage by the House(s) of the Commonwealth Parliament

The original draft of section 128 required an amendment bill to be passed by both Houses, but it was changed in 1899, after the failure of the 1898 referendum in New South Wales, so that one House could not block a referendum from being put to the people.



'How To Vote', Issued by No More Politicians Committee, 1967
Source: National Library of Australia



Section 128 now provides two paths to a referendum.

Path 1: A bill to amend the Constitution, which sets out the words of the proposed constitutional change, is passed by an 'absolute majority' (i.e. half plus one of the total number of members, not just those who turned up to vote) of each House. The bill then 'shall' be submitted to a referendum not less than 2 months and not more than 6 months later. This is intended to give people at least 2 months to learn about the proposed change, but not so long that the issue becomes stale and they forget about it.

Path 2: The amendment bill is passed by an absolute majority in House A, then House B rejects it, fails to pass it, or passes it with amendments unacceptable to House A, then after 3 months House A passes it by an absolute majority again, and House B again rejects it, fails to pass it or passes it with unacceptable amendments. The term 'fails to pass' is there in case a House just puts off voting on the bill for a long time or sends it off to a committee for a lengthy inquiry, as a way of getting rid of the bill without formally rejecting it. But the difficulty is judging when that failure to pass has occurred, as the three months commences from that failure.

1951 Communist Referendum Yes and No flyers
Source: National Library of Australia

Once this process has been completed, 'the Governor-General may submit' the bill, as last proposed by House A, to voters in a referendum. The problem here is the word 'may' rather than 'shall'. This gives the Governor-General a choice, and he or she is advised by ministers. The effect is that while technically, the Senate could pass a referendum bill against the wishes of the Commonwealth Government, Commonwealth ministers can simply advise the Governor-General not to put it to a referendum. This actually [happened in 1914](#) when a referendum bill was passed by the Senate alone, in accordance with section 128, but was not put to a referendum because the Governor-General acted upon ministerial advice not to do so. The consequence is that the Commonwealth Government effectively controls what gets put to referendum.

Referendum

The rules about [running the referendum](#) are set out in [legislation](#). Before a referendum is held, the Commonwealth usually produces a booklet which sets out the [Yes and No cases](#).



Yes/No Republic Referendum | 1999
Source: National Library of Australia

Each case is drafted by a committee of the politicians that voted that way in Parliament during the passage of the Bill. If no one votes 'No' in Parliament, a 'No' case is not published. Because the cases are drafted by politicians, not independent experts or objective people, the arguments are often emotional, inaccurate, misleading and manipulative. (In contrast, in New South Wales, where there is a referendum to amend the State Constitution, the explanatory material sent to voters is drafted by public servants and tested by experts to ensure accuracy and objectivity. Referendums in New South Wales have a much higher success rate than Commonwealth ones.)

Section 128 of the Commonwealth Constitution says that to succeed, a referendum must pass a [double majority](#). First, there must be approval by a majority of 'all the electors voting'. This means the 'Yes' vote must be greater than the 'No' votes. Informal (i.e. blank or invalid) votes are not counted on the ground they are not valid 'votes'. Since section 128 was amended in 1977, Territory voters are counted in the overall majority.

Second, there must be approval by a majority of voters in a majority of the States (i.e. four out of six States). The territories do not count for this second majority test. If this double majority is met, the bill is then presented to the Governor-General for assent, which completes the process.

While the double majority is often seen as problematic, there have been few cases in which a referendum has been passed by an overall majority but has failed because it did not achieve majorities in four States.

There are also special provisions in section 128 that say that if a constitutional amendment would reduce the proportionate representation of a State in either House, or its minimum number of Members in the House of Representatives, or alter the borders of the State, then the approval of a majority of voters in the affected State must also approve of it. This is a kind of triple majority for those particular issues.

A referendum approves of a bill that contains the words of the constitutional amendment. The question is therefore a Yes/No question of whether the bill is approved - not a general policy question. It is not possible, therefore, to have a referendum asking people which of several choices they prefer. For example, one could not ask voters in a referendum under section 128 to choose between different republic models. One can only ask voters if they approve or disapprove of the particular form of republic set out in the bill.

But if you want to find out which options voters prefer, you can ask them to vote on it in a 'plebiscite', which is a non-binding vote that indicates what the people want. You could then take the successful model, and propose that in a referendum, so people can decide yes or no.





Topic 9.1: Lesson One

Plebiscites, Referendums and the Constitution



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Time/Lesson

- 1 hour

Learning Goal

- To understand the difference between a plebiscite and a referendum.
- To understand why a referendum is used to change the Constitution.
- To understand and apply the referendum process in the Constitution.

Rationale

Students should understand the reasoning and justifications, such as democracy and federalism, for using a referendum to amend the Constitution. With this understanding, students can make sense of the referendum process.

Success Criteria

Students will be able to explain the fundamentals of the referendum process, particularly the 'double majority' voting requirement. Students will think critically about 'double majority' voting as a way of changing the Constitution.

Teaching Reference Document

- TRD 89 - Referendums and Plebiscites
- TRD 90 Referendum – why use it for constitutional change?
- TRD 91 Referendum – how does constitutional change work in practice?

Resources

A copy of your school's rules

VIDEOS:

- Google BTN (ABC-TV) for multiple referendum videos

ENRICHMENT:

- Google PEO (Parliamentary Education Office) Referendums

Tuning In

- Provide students with your school's rules.
- **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**
 - Who makes school rules?
 - Why might you want to change school rules?
 - If you wanted to change school rules, how could you do this?
 - Can you list all the different stakeholders school rules impact? (principals, teachers, students, families, etc.) Should all these people get a say in changing school rules? Why/why not?
- Think/Pair/Share answers to these questions.
- When discussing with students, guide them towards thinking about democracy, and how it is possible for everyone to have a say, while still making change. Should it be a decision of the majority across all stakeholder groups? What if teachers and families want one thing but students want another, and students are the majority?
- It may be useful to think of an actual school rule to change/introduce so as to anchor the discussion.
- Through this comparison and discussion, try to show how having a 'double majority', as in a referendum, may be a democratic way to make a decision, while also ensuring specific groups are on board (whether they are stakeholders in the school rules scenario, or states in Australia).
- A reason that should be brought out regarding why you would want to change school rules is because schools change over time. It's the same for Australia.

Teacher Instruction

- **REVISE:** Unit 1 Topic 4.1 'Respecting and changing rules and laws' and the lessons/activities. Revise topic 6.2 TRD 'What is a Constitution and why it is binding?' and the accompanying lesson.
- **DISCUSS:** Explain the difference between a plebiscite (a non-binding, non-constitutional vote to learn about the preferences of the people - eg the same-sex marriage plebiscite) and a binding referendum to change the Constitution. Note that this distinction in terminology has not always been made, so many past plebiscites were described as referendums in the past. What sort of issues do we use plebiscites for? Why are they mostly divisive social issues (eg drinking, gambling, the environment)? Should we have more plebiscites or leave it to Parliament to decide these issues?
- **EXPLAIN:** The Constitution is the ultimate rule book for Australia. It doesn't set out all the rules, but instead it sets the rules for how laws are made in Australia, who's allowed to make them, and how they are enforced. For example, it sets out basic rules for establishing the Parliament, such as the requirement that each House of Parliament must be directly chosen by the people. It also explains how the Constitution can be changed: through referendums.
- **DISCUSS:** The decision to let the people vote on constitutional changes was a radical one at the time it was made. Many countries still don't hold a referendum to change their Constitution. Is it a good idea to trust the people with this responsibility, or was it a mistake, because many people aren't sufficiently interested to make a considered decision?
- The stakeholders for Australia are all the people of Australia, and also the people of the states of Australia. This is a confusing difference but should make sense by the end of the class.
- **WATCH:** [How votes in a referendum are counted](#) – AEC (2:26)
- **DISCUSSION QUESTION:** Why do a majority of states, as well as a majority of people, have to say 'yes' to a constitutional referendum?
- **ANSWER:** Australia is a Federation. Just like the stakeholder groups in school rules, it would be unfair if the majority of states didn't also agree to the change. Otherwise, the populous States could vote in a referendum to disadvantage the people in the less populous States, which would be unfair.
- **EXPLAIN:** the process of referendums with a combination of the following resources:
 - MAIN RESOURCE: TRD 91: Referendum - How does constitutional change work in practice?
 - COMPLEMENTARY RESOURCES:
 - [AEC Constitutional Referendums brochure PDF](#)
 - [PEO Referendums and plebiscites](#)

Group/Independent Learning

- **PLAY: DOUBLE MAJORITY!** ([9.1 Lesson 1. Activity 1](#))
- **PLAY:** AEC's [Were these referendum's successful?](#) (similar, online version to DOUBLE MAJORITY! Trickier arithmetic but more data provided)
- **EXTENSION:** Use the PEO's [Hold a referendum](#) to role-play a referendum. This will take more than one lesson (PEO suggests 2-3 lessons)

Wrapping it up

- **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**
 - o Do you think the 'double majority' is a good or a bad way to change the Constitution? Why?
 - o Do you think the 'double majority' would be a good or a bad way to change school rules? Why?
- Students write down any questions they have from this activity.

Differentiation

- Use AEC's [Constitutional Referendums: Classroom activities for students based on Bloom's Taxonomy](#)

Assessment strategies

- Collect DOUBLE MAJORITY! To check understanding



DOUBLE MAJORITY!

Each box states

- what % of the population said "Yes" to the referendum
- How many states had a majority "Yes" vote in the referendum

Based on this, decide if the referendum is a SUCCESS or a FAILURE.

Total Population Yes Vote: 83% States with majority Yes votes: NSW, Qld, SA, Tas, Vic, WA SUCCESS/FAIL	Total Population Yes Vote: 33% States with majority Yes votes: None SUCCESS/FAIL	Total Population Yes Vote: 49% States with majority Yes votes: Qld, Tas, WA SUCCESS/FAIL	Total Population Yes Vote: 80% States with majority Yes votes: NSW, Qld, SA, Tas, Vic, WA SUCCESS/FAIL
Total Population Yes Vote: 54% States with majority Yes votes: Qld, Vic. SUCCESS/FAIL	Total Population Yes Vote: 55% States with majority Yes votes: Qld, SA, Tas, Vic, WA SUCCESS/FAIL	Total Population Yes Vote: 78% States with majority Yes votes: NSW, Qld, SA, Tas, Vic, WA SUCCESS/FAIL	Total Population Yes Vote: 50% States with majority Yes votes: NSW, Vic, WA SUCCESS/FAIL
Total Population Yes Vote: 49% States with majority Yes votes: Qld, Tas, WA SUCCESS/FAIL	Total Population Yes Vote: 73% States with majority Yes votes: NSW, Qld, SA, Tas, Vic, WA SUCCESS/FAIL	Total Population Yes Vote: 74% States with majority Yes votes: NSW, Qld, SA, Tas, Vic, WA SUCCESS/FAIL	Total Population Yes Vote: 34% States with majority Yes votes: None SUCCESS/FAIL
Total Population Yes Vote: 91% States with majority Yes votes: NSW, Qld, SA, Tas, Vic, WA SUCCESS/FAIL	Total Population Yes Vote: 62% States with majority Yes votes: NSW, SA, Vic SUCCESS/FAIL	Total Population Yes Vote: 45% States with majority Yes votes: None SUCCESS/FAIL	Total Population Yes Vote: 54% States with majority Yes votes: NSW, Qld, SA, Tas, Vic, WA SUCCESS/FAIL



DOUBLE MAJORITY! (Answers)

<p>Total Population Yes Vote: 83%</p> <p>States with majority Yes votes: NSW, Qld, SA, Tas, Vic, WA</p> <p>SUCCESS 1906 Senate Elections</p>	<p>Total Population Yes Vote: 33%</p> <p>States with majority Yes votes: None</p> <p>FAIL 1988 Parliamentary Terms</p>	<p>Total Population Yes Vote: 49%</p> <p>States with majority Yes votes: Qld, Tas, WA</p> <p>FAIL 1910 Finance</p>	<p>Total Population Yes Vote: 80%</p> <p>States with majority Yes votes: NSW, Qld, SA, Tas, Vic, WA</p> <p>SUCCESS 1977 Retirement of Judges</p>
<p>Total Population Yes Vote: 54%</p> <p>States with majority Yes votes: Qld, Vic.</p> <p>FAIL 1937 Aviation</p>	<p>Total Population Yes Vote: 55%</p> <p>States with majority Yes votes: Qld, SA, Tas, Vic, WA</p> <p>SUCCESS 1910 State Debts</p>	<p>Total Population Yes Vote: 78%</p> <p>States with majority Yes votes: NSW, Qld, SA, Tas, Vic, WA</p> <p>SUCCESS 1977 Territory Voting in Referendums</p>	<p>Total Population Yes Vote: 50%</p> <p>States with majority Yes votes: NSW, Vic, WA</p> <p>FAIL 1946 Industrial Employment</p>
<p>Total Population Yes Vote: 49%</p> <p>States with majority Yes votes: Qld, Tas, WA</p> <p>FAIL 1951 Communism</p>	<p>Total Population Yes Vote: 73%</p> <p>States with majority Yes votes: NSW, Qld, SA, Tas, Vic, WA</p> <p>SUCCESS 1928 State Debts</p>	<p>Total Population Yes Vote: 74%</p> <p>States with majority Yes votes: NSW, Qld, SA, Tas, Vic, WA</p> <p>SUCCESS 1977 Senate Vacancies</p>	<p>Total Population Yes Vote: 34%</p> <p>States with majority Yes votes: None</p> <p>FAIL 1988 Local Government</p>
<p>Total Population Yes Vote: 91%</p> <p>States with majority Yes votes: NSW, Qld, SA, Tas, Vic, WA</p> <p>SUCCESS 1967 Aborigines</p>	<p>Total Population Yes Vote: 62%</p> <p>States with majority Yes votes: NSW, SA, Vic</p> <p>FAIL 1977 Simultaneous Elections</p>	<p>Total Population Yes Vote: 45%</p> <p>States with majority Yes votes: None</p> <p>FAIL 1999 Republic</p>	<p>Total Population Yes Vote: 54%</p> <p>States with majority Yes votes: NSW, Qld, SA, Tas, Vic, WA</p> <p>SUCCESS 1946 Social Services</p>