

# Australian Citizenship Day lesson and activity ideas



These lesson and activity ideas have been designed to complement other Civics and Citizenship classroom resources, in particular, the Discovering Democracy resources. We hope all these ideas will assist you to plan classroom activities in the lead up to, and on, Australian Citizenship Day this year.

## Society and the Environment

- \* Consider some of our national symbols, e.g. our flag, the coat of arms and our national anthem. Brainstorm and list other things that have come to symbolise Australia and being Australian.
- \* New Australian citizens have to make a pledge of loyalty to Australia. Discuss what it means to make a pledge or a promise. Should all the people who live in Australia have to make such a pledge?
- \* Research what the different symbols and colours on the Australian flag and Coat of Arms mean. What other things symbolise Australia? Design your own Coat of Arms using four symbols of your choice.
- \* Australia is a democracy. What does this mean? In about 500 words describe how our Australian democracy works.
- \* Many Australian citizens have shaped our nation into what it is today. Write about your favourite Australian and why you think he or she is important to our country.
- \* Students to produce their family tree, tracing their line of descent back to the countries of birth of their ancestors. Display the family trees at school. List the various countries represented at your school, and display an item of significance from each country.
- \* As a class, adopt a place in your school or local community that needs improving. This might be a playground that needs some work, or an area where graffiti is often found. Students can undertake improvements to the school themselves, or write letters to the council to suggest that improvements be made to a local area.

## English

- \* Read and compare different poems about Australia. Write your own poem about Australia.
- \* Organise a class discussion on the topic: 'Australia is the best country in the world'.
- \* Imagine that you have recently become an Australian citizen. Write a letter to family or friends from your country of origin telling them about why you have become a citizen, and what it means to you.
- \* In small groups, look at our national anthem. Create a poster of the anthem and include some message boxes explaining some of the more difficult words in the anthem.
- \* Using a dictionary, write down the meanings of these words: citizenship; pledge; loyalty; democracy; beliefs; privileges; responsibilities; respect; parliament; referendum; uphold; obey; harmony; diversity; unity; laws; heritage; affirmation; multicultural; liberty; equality; identity. Use as many as you can as clues for a crossword. Add some of your own Australian words too!
- \* Write a diary entry for Benjiro Bear, talking about the day on which he became an Australian citizen.
- \* Interview six people about what it means to them to be an Australian citizen. Use a video camera to record your interviews.

## The Arts

- \* Draw a large outline of Australia, and fill it with magazine pictures, drawings, natural materials, labels and words to illustrate things that represent Australia.
- \* Write new words to one of your favourite tunes that reflect what's great about being an Australian.
- \* Students to design a fabric or clay square featuring an Australian symbol. Use them to make a class quilt or tiled walkway.

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- \* Listen to the Australian national anthem. What different images of Australia and being Australian are being portrayed? Try writing another verse to the national anthem that also captures what it means to be an Australian.
- \* Make a collage showing the different 'Faces of Australia' by pasting pictures from magazines inside a huge outline of Australia.
- \* Make up a play about a family deciding to become Australian citizens and going through a citizenship ceremony.
- \* Make puppets of Tilly Bilby, Pledge Platypus, and Benjiro Bear. Write a play about how Benjiro Bear became an Australian citizen and include all three citizenship characters.
- \* Draw a large outline of Australia and fill it with magazine pictures, drawings, labels and words illustrating things that are Australian.

## Mathematics

- \* Survey your class or school to find out how many people have come from other countries, and from which countries they have come. Graph the results.
- \* Research statistics about the number of different nationalities that make up the population of Australia and display the results as a poster in your classroom.

## Science and Technology

- \* Design a symbol or logo to represent Australian Citizenship Day.
- \* Research an Australian animal, plant or natural wonder (e.g. the Great Barrier Reef) and write a short report about it. Include illustrations.
- \* Research some of the great things that have been discovered or invented by Australians that are now being used both in Australia and overseas.
- \* Investigate some famous Australian scientists and the discoveries they have made.

## Languages

- \* Compare some of Australia's national symbols with those of other countries.
- \* List the different countries of origin of students in your class. Some may have more than one. Discuss their different languages and try to speak a couple of words from each of these languages.
- \* Look in the phone book and find names that seem to be more common. Investigate the countries from which some of these names originated. Are there similarities in some names?
- \* Research some of the most commonly-spoken languages in Australia other than English. Try learning a few words from each of them.

## Health and Physical Education

- \* List some sports in which Australians have excelled. Brainstorm and list some of our sporting heroes and their achievements.
- \* Play cooperative games to emphasise the importance of everyone working together. For example, modify games like netball so that each time a goal is scored team members change positions.