



Australian Citizenship Day

17 September

There are four characters to help your students learn about the responsibilities and privileges of being an Australian citizen.

In 2004 Benjiro Bear joined Tilly Bilby and Pledge Platypus by becoming an Australian citizen. We followed Benjiro's journey as he enrolled to vote, voted in elections, and applied for his Australian passport.

In 2008 we meet a new character, Gina Giraffe. Gina is keen to share her ideas, interests, and skills with her new Aussie friends as she too looks forward to becoming an Australian citizen.

Celebrate the day at your school!

What's it all about?

- Australian Citizenship Day is an opportunity for all Australians to reflect on the meaning and importance of Australian citizenship.
- Australian Citizenship Day marks the expression of pride in being part of Australia's dynamic and diverse society.
- All Australians can celebrate the values which unite us, such as a shared belief in the democratic process and respect for the rights and liberties of all other Australians.
- It provides an opportunity to reflect on the responsibilities and privileges of Australian citizenship, and to celebrate what it means to each one of us to be an Australian.

What does Australian citizenship mean?

Australian citizenship

Australian citizenship is important because it:

- helps build our nation
- unites all Australians in a shared identity, especially because Australians come from all over the world
- welcomes migrants to become full members of our Australian community.



Australian citizens are able to:

- live in Australia and apply for an Australian passport
- vote and choose whom we want to be in charge of our country
- nominate for election to parliament
- apply for a job in the defence forces and in government
- leave and re-enter Australia without a return visa
- seek assistance from Australia's diplomatic representatives while overseas
- register children born overseas as Australian citizens by descent.

Australian citizens are required to:

- obey Australia's laws
- enrol on federal and state/territory electoral registers
- vote in elections
- serve on a jury, if called upon to do so
- defend Australia, should the need arise.

Meet Shawn Redhage

It was a special moment in Perth's basketball history when towering Shawn Redhage strode onto the court at Challenge Stadium to take the Australian citizenship pledge.

Shawn describes the experience as *"a pretty memorable moment"*, as he became one of Australia's newest citizens.

The opportunities to settle in Australia and represent the nation in the sport he loves were key reasons why Shawn became an Australian citizen.

"I love Australia's laid-back and friendly lifestyle. We've made this place our home so it feels the right thing to do to become a citizen."

"I think becoming a citizen makes me feel more a part of this country. It's a huge honour to be able to help uphold the values Australia has created and what the country stands for."



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**New resources for teachers and students can
be found at: www.citizenship.gov.au (Click on Resources)**

Check out the website



Resources for teachers and students

The Australian Citizenship Day website has new interactives to engage students in enjoyable online learning tasks about the privileges and responsibilities of being an Australian citizen. You will also find:

- background information on Australian citizenship and Australian Citizenship Day
- cross-curricular lesson and activity ideas
- printable student activity sheets
- an online feedback form - with an incentive for you and your students when you tell us what you think about these educational materials.

Visit the website now: www.citizenship.gov.au (Click on Resources)

Engaging and interactive fun for students

The Australian Citizenship Affirmation - it's new!

Complete the affirmation online.

Australian citizenship - what's it all about?

Fact or Fiction? What are the privileges and responsibilities of being an Australian citizen?

Celebrate Australian citizenship

This is a multiple choice quiz with a surprise ending.

Citizenship - get into it!

Australia needs good Australian citizens – how do we all shape up?

Australian citizenship true or false

Join Tilly, Pledge and Benjiro and enjoy this great Aussie quiz. You decide whether the answers are true or false.

Australian citizenship crossword

Complete the crossword online!

About Australia cross-off - exciting new interactive!

Discover more about our fantastic country and watch Gina Giraffe and the other Australian Citizenship Day characters slam dunk the basketball and demonstrate great teamwork!



New resources for teachers and students can be found at: www.citizenship.gov.au (Click on Resources)

Hold an Australian citizenship affirmation ceremony on Australian Citizenship Day

An affirmation ceremony is a short ceremony where all present are given the opportunity to publicly affirm their loyalty and commitment to Australia and its people by reciting the affirmation.

The affirmation is based on the pledge of commitment made by candidates at citizenship ceremonies in order to become an Australian citizen.

Affirmation ceremonies increase awareness of Australian citizenship, promote community involvement and participation, and help people feel that they belong.

They also help build pride in Australians about their citizenship.

Holding an Australian citizenship affirmation ceremony is an ideal way to involve students in an Australian Citizenship Day activity.

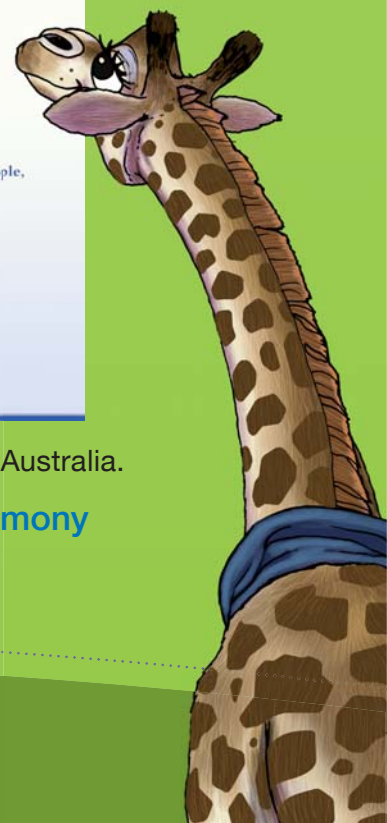


Who can participate in an affirmation ceremony?

- Everyone is welcome and participation is voluntary.
- Many Australians would not have had an opportunity to declare their commitment to Australia and its people at a citizenship ceremony because they were born in Australia.
- Some overseas-born Australian citizens have previously pledged their commitment to Australia at a citizenship ceremony. They may, however, wish to join in and re-affirm their loyalty to Australia and its people.
- There are also many people living in Australia who, although not yet Australian citizens, consider Australia their home. They too may wish to express their loyalty to Australia, and show their support for the values that are part of Australian citizenship, by joining in the affirmation at the second line.
- Invite students, parents, teachers and guests to recite the affirmation at your own unique Australian citizenship affirmation ceremony.

Here are some ideas for your own special affirmation ceremony:

- Students can design and make affirmation cards, with the words of the affirmation on them, to hand out at the event.
- Affirmation cards should be placed on seats or handed to guests as they arrive. This allows members of the audience time to become familiar with the words.
- The person leading the affirmation ceremony should invite all those who wish to publicly affirm their commitment to Australia and its people to stand and join in repeating the affirmation.
- Ask some students to speak about why Australian citizenship is important to them.
- Hold a special morning tea or lunch, celebrating the diversity of food we enjoy in Australia.



More information on holding an Australian citizenship affirmation ceremony can be found on the website: www.citizenship.gov.au

(Affirmation cards are also available from the website.)