Australia as a Nation Web-Quest

Before 1901, Australia was not a nation. At that time, the continent consisted of six British colonies which were partly self-governing, but subject to the law-making power of the British Parliament. Each colony had its own government and laws, including its own railway system, postage stamps and tariffs (taxes). This caused a lot of problems and people began to think about the benefits of uniting as one nation, under a federal system of governance.

Activity 1 - The Road to Federation

Watch the video.
Part way through the video is a map showing the six separate colonies. On the map provided divide Australia into the six colonies. Around the outside of your map record dot points about how the six colonies were like six separate countries. Inside the map record the areas that people thought a national government should look after.


Read the information explaining the main reasons why Australia became a Federation. Divide your page into 4 sections and record key phrases for each section. Write a summary for one section.

Activity 2 - Who is Sir Henry Parkes?

1. Henry Parkes is often called/referred to, as?
2. When and where was he born?
3. In which Australian state was he Premier fives times?


On the timeline find the Tenterfield Oration. (A speech given by Henry Parkes.)
4. Why is the Tenterfield Oration considered to be important?
5. List some of the reasons Sir Henry Parkes supported Federation. Which reason do you think was the most important? Explain.

Using the information learnt in Activity 1 & 2, imagine you are ‘For Federation’. Design a poster to persuade others to vote yes for federation.

Activity 3 - Who is Edmund Barton?
(Read the Prime Minister and Beyond Politics paragraphs)

1. Why was Edmund Barton the first Prime Minister of Australia?
2. How long had he worked on Federation for?
3. Explain when and why Edmund Barton stopped being the Prime Minister.
Australia's Six Colonies Activity 1
**Activity 4 - What is the Constitution?**


Watch the clip on the constitution and answer the following questions in full sentence responses. Ensure your answers give all the details provided on the clip.

1. What is a constitution?
2. Describe Australia before 1901.
3. Who was in control of Australia before 1901?
4. When did representatives start to discuss bringing the colonies together to form a nation and what did they do?
5. What were the meetings to discuss the constitution called?
6. What did each colony hold to decide about the constitution?
7. After the people of Australia approved the constitution where did it have to go?
8. When did it finally come into action?
9. List all the aspects the constitution rules over?
10. Who sorts out disputes about the constitution?
11. How can the constitution be changed and how many times has it changed?
12. Reflecting on what you’ve learnt, is it easy to change the constitution?

**Activity 5 - Australia is a Democracy!**


Click on the Freedom to Choose link.

As you create the flag you are given lots of different definitions/information about democracy. Jot down key phrases and use them to construct a small paragraph sharing what you have learned about democracy.

Democracy is …

**Activity 6 - The Commonwealth of Australia**


Read the text and explain the following:

* Who is the Head of State?
* What is an Elected Government?
* What is the main job of the Government?
* The Australian Parliament is split into how many parts? They are called …
* Who gets to run the Government?


Watch the clip ‘What is Parliament.’ Record any additional information you learn.
**Activity 7 - Three Levels of Government**


Watch the clip ‘Three Levels of Government.’

Create a poster explaining the three levels of government and the different areas they govern (make laws about). Your poster needs to educate students aged 10-12 years. Think about how you can best present your information.

**Activity 8 - Federal Government**

**Website** - Below there are two fact sheets and two videos you can watch about the two houses of Parliament.


Divide your page in half and record information in key phrases about each of the houses. Use your key phrases to write a report on each house.

**Homework** - Publish your work using word, publisher or power-point.

**Activity 9 - Making Laws**


Today you are going to learn how the Government makes new laws. Click the Pass the Bill link. Read through the entire script before completing the activities so you have an overview of the process first. Then go back and complete the following activities.

1. On the map of the House of Representatives label where the following people sit. The Speaker is on the map as a starting point. Prime Minister, Leader of the Opposition, Government, Opposition, Clerk, Independent and Minor Parties.
2. Explain the role of each person/group (including the Speaker). Hint: When you hover over each person/group it tells you.


Click the link to read the Making Laws fact sheet and answer the following questions.

1. What is a bill?
2. Describe what needs to happen for a bill to become law.
3. Approximately how many bills are introduced to parliament in a week and how many are passed?
Activity 10 - Federal Elections

KWL Chart!
Divide your page into three sections.
Complete sections 1 and 2 before going onto section 3.
Section 1: What I think I know about elections
Section 2: What I want to find! Questions I have about elections
Section 3: What I have learnt about elections - Click the link below to learn about Federal Elections. Make sure you add at least 1 point from each section.

Test your knowledge by completing the quiz!