



When is it compulsory to enrol to vote in Australia?

What is the oldest political party in Australia?

When is a House of Representatives by-election held?



Does politics interest you? Politics and Policy can be studied at the University of Tasmania as a major through the Bachelor of Arts or the Bachelor of Social Science.

VOTING IN AUSTRALIA

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AUSTRALIA has a new Government, following the recent election.

You are probably aware that the Australian Labor Party won the election, and its leader Anthony Albanese became our new Prime Minister.

If you are a regular reader of *The Wonder Weekly* you may remember the edition about the Australian system of government (October 11, 2021).

It talked about there being three levels of government in Australia - federal, state and local.

This month's election was for the Federal Parliament - the House of Representatives and the Senate.

There are 151 elected members in the House of Representatives, and they represent 'electorates' from all around Australia.

An electorate is a designated area in which people live.

In Tasmania, there are five federal electorates - Bass, Braddon, Clark, Franklin and Lyons.

One candidate from each of these electorates is elected to a 'seat' in the House of Representatives.

These politicians not only represent their electorates, most are members of political parties.

The party, or coalition of parties, with the support of most

members in the House of Representatives is given the opportunity to govern the country.

At the time of writing this article, counting was still continuing, and four seats were yet to be decided.

But Labor had won 75 seats, the Coalition of the Liberal Party of Australia, The Nationals and the Country Liberal Party had won 57, while Independents (elected

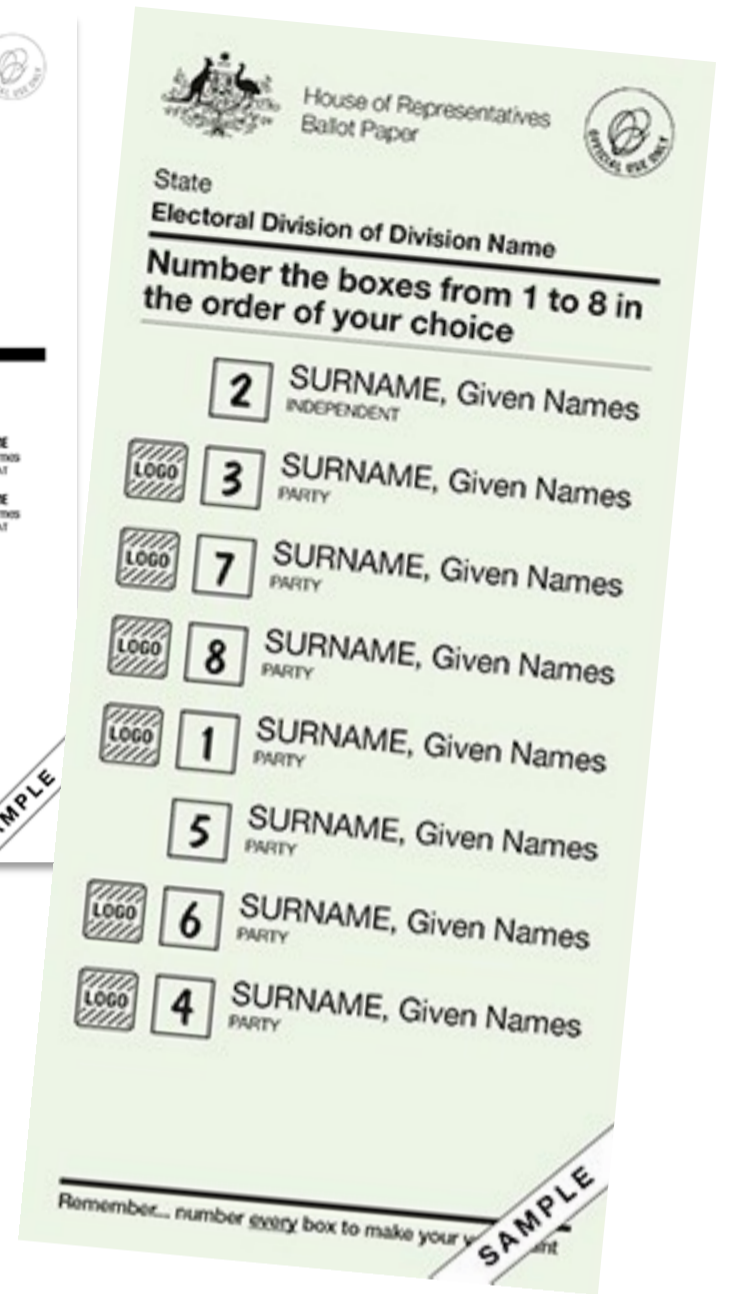
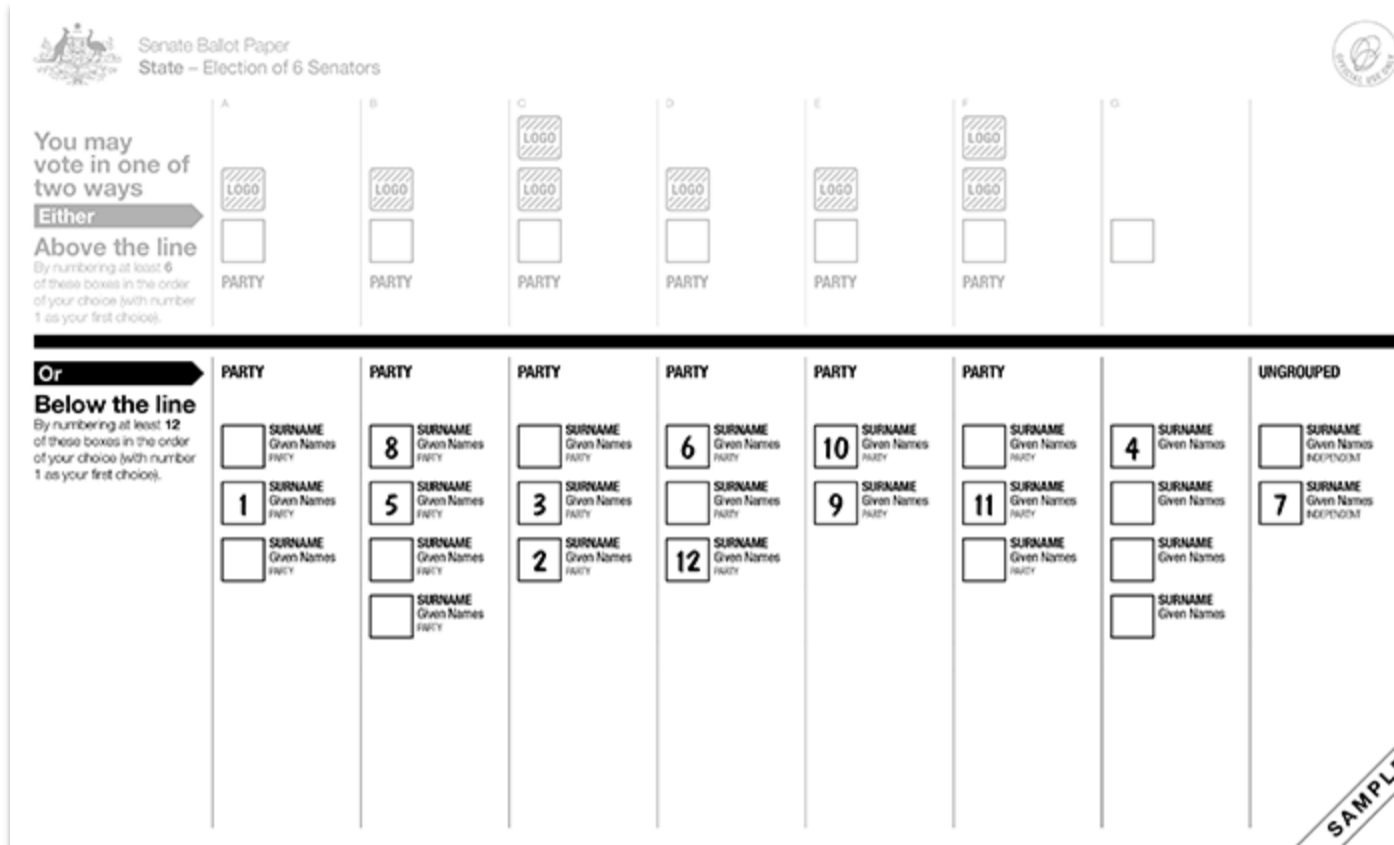
members who are not aligned to any party) and minor parties had won 15 between them.

Therefore Labor needed one more seat (76) for a majority.

Otherwise Labor will govern with the support of the Independents and minor parties.

The Parliament of Australia website is a great resource to learn more: aph.gov.au

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Election time challenges

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Members of the House of Representatives are elected using a system of 'preferential voting',

Under this system a single member is elected for each electorate when they achieve an 'absolute majority' - more than half the votes.

Voters write a number in the box beside every name on the ballot paper - '1' for their first choice (first preference), '2' for their second choice and so on, until all the boxes are numbered.

If no candidate receives more than half the first preference votes, the candidate with the least number of votes is excluded and their votes are 'redistributed'.

This means that the second choice on those ballot papers is now added to the votes of the remaining candidates.

The process of redistributing votes continues until someone receives more than half of the votes.

But the House of Representatives, which is known as the Lower House, is just one part of the Australian Parliament.

It also consists of the Queen (represented by the Governor-General) and the Senate.

The Senate is made up of 76 senators—with 12 senators elected for each state, and two for each of the Northern Territory and Australian Capital Territory.

Unlike House of Representative members, who are elected for three years, state senators are elected for six years.

But a rotation system is used so that half the state senators end their term every three years.

While Tasmania has 12 senators, only six were elected in the recent Federal election.

A different form of preferential voting is used for the Senate - 'proportional voting'.

It is more a complicated system, but to win a Senate seat a candidate must gain a 'quota' of first and later preferences.

This equals 14.3% of the total vote in the states.

This system leads to a wider range of political parties and independent candidates being elected to the Senate.

Because the counting of votes is more complicated than the system for the House of Representatives it might take several weeks before all the Senate votes are counted and we know the final result.

You might like to challenge yourself to find out facts about the House of Representatives election result.

Here's some questions for you to research:

- Which electorate do you live in?
- Who has been elected to represent this electorate?
- Are they a member of a

party, or an independent?

- What other facts can you find out about them?

You could also create your own election poster.

No doubt you have seen plenty around your town or neighbourhood in recent weeks.

They say the candidate's name, whether they are a member of a political party or an independent, and often they include a picture

of the candidate.

If you were to run for election what would your policies be?

Perhaps you could write a speech to convince people to vote for you.

You could also adopt a slogan for your campaign.

Another challenge might be to create your own ballot papers, using the examples above as a guide.

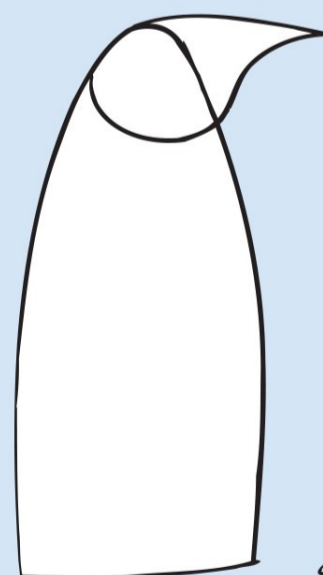
Perhaps you could make your friends or family members, and yourself, the candidates.

You could even make your own ballot box to put the votes in.

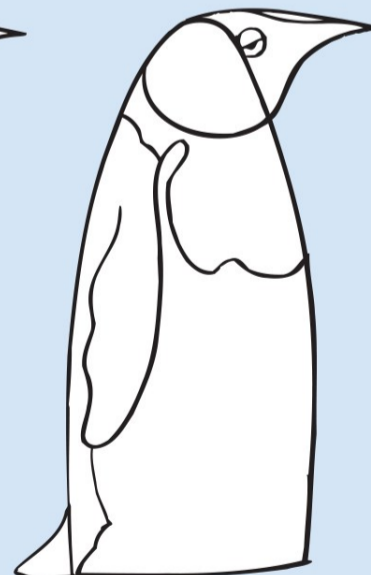
Any box with a lid will do the job. Be creative and have fun.

Children's University Tasmania members can earn stamps in their passport for any of these challenges, at the discretion of their school/ hub coordinators.

How to draw an EMPEROR PENGUIN



Using a pencil, draw a curved cone shape for your penguin's head. Add a raindrop shape at the top for his head as shown above. These will be your guides.



Inside the raindrop draw the shape of your penguin's head and his eye. In the cone draw his flipper. Give him a tail and add a curved line from the top of his flipper across his chest. Add another one from the bottom of his flipper to his tail.



Give him a second flipper and some feet. Add a curved line across his throat and a line on his beak. Rub out all the lines you don't want and ink him in with a pen or fine tipped texta. To finish, just add some colour.