The Parliament Prize Teacher notes

Preparing a Member's Statement

Each sitting day, any day that parliament meets, Members of Parliament (MPs) can make a Member's Statements. This is a 90-second speech on any topic or issue they consider important. MPs often use this time to speak about individual constituents or organisations in their electorate. One of the great things about member statements is the range of topics and issues that are addressed, meaning member statements can vary a lot depending on who the MP is, what area they represent, and what they and their constituents are interested in.

There is no set structure to a member statement. The only requirement is that the speech is no longer than 90 seconds and that the language is respectful.

It may be useful for students to read and explore some examples of Members' Statements from the Legislative Assembly and Legislative Council. You can watch example Member's Statements at vicparl.news/mention

If you would like more examples of member statements, you can visit vicparl.news/Hansard-member-statements. The statements can then be filtered by year, house, member of parliament.

Some questions that you might like students to consider, include:

- What sort of topics do the Members of Parliament talk about?
- Are there any words or phrases that are used consistently between the different Members' Statements?
- What sort of examples do they use?
- How might students use or incorporate some of words and phrases or types of examples into their member statement?

Alternatively, the blog post *Literacy strategies: Reciprocal teaching* and the VicTESOL website provides a framework for drafting writing while researching and investigating different topics and text types, as well as how to use model texts to help students develop their own piece of work. Students can use one or several of the member statements provided (or find their own) as model texts as they research and develop their understanding of their topic.

- Literacy strategies: Reciprocal teaching
- The teaching and learning cycle, VicTESOL

Research

Below are some strategies that students might find useful to help initially focus their research and then select material to use in their Member's Statement. If using the teaching and learning cycle, these strategies support the 'building the context or field' stage of the cycle.

'Generating research questions' provides some question starters through the Question Matrix that maybe useful to create different types of research questions. The sections, 'Finding credible sources' and 'Selecting information', provide students with some guidance for their research and using their research in their Members' Statements.

Generating research questions

The question matrix provides some question starters that maybe useful to create different types of questions. Below are a few different ways the question matrix can be used. Students can:

- Pick 5 question starters and write some questions that they find interesting.
- Use the question starters to brainstorm as many questions about their topic as possible
    - Choose their two favourite questions to start their research
- Pick one question starter from each row
    - Put these question starters into an order that they think makes sense and see if they can answer each of the questions in that order. (This can be used as a 'think-slow' approach to writing and research)
- Write a question on their chosen topic using every box
    - Questions they already know the answer to, they colour green and then try to write new questions that they are not sure how to answer
    - Questions they are not sure how to answer, they colour orange
    - For boxes where students can't think of a question, they colour red
    - When students are doing their research, they concentrate on answering the questions in the orange boxes.

?	Event	Situation	Choice	Person	Reason	Means
Present	What is?	Where/when is?	Which is?	Who is?	Why is?	How is?
Past	What did?	Where/when did?	Which did?	Who did?	Why did?	How did?
Possibility	What can?	Where/when can?	Which can?	Who can?	Why can?	How can?
Probability	What would?	Where/when would?	Which would?	Who would?	Why would?	How would?
Prediction	What will?	Where/when will?	Which will?	Who will?	Why will?	How will?
Imagination	What might?	Where/when might?	Which might?	Who might?	Why might?	How might?

Wiederhold, C.W. (2007). Cooperative learning & higher-level thinking: the Q-matrix Heatherton, Vic. Hawker Brownlow Education.

Finding credible sources

Below are some questions to help you think about the source of your information and its credibility.

- Who wrote it?

  - What is their background? What experiences might they have that makes them knowledgeable?

- What are the key points they are making?

  - A great way to do this is to read a paragraph or a page, and then write down what you remember reading. This will help you to write down the different ideas in your own words. You can always go back and double check any dates, statistics, or any other facts.

- Where is it published?

  - If it is on the internet, is it a reliable site. Things to look for:

    - https: - the 's' means the website is secure
    - .vic.gov.au – government website, including funded agencies
    - .asn – association
    - .org – organisation (but check to see who the organisation is)
    - .au – Australian website

  - Is it a secondary source (re-published or shared by different people on different platforms) or is it the primary source (original)? Always try to find the original primary source where you can.

    - Where are they getting their information from? If they use some evidence or quote someone, check out where they got the information from; are they using reliable sources?
    - Books are often more reliable because they are usually checked multiple times before they are published, just check how old the information is.

- When was it published?

  - When was the article or website written?

    - If it was something that hasn't been updated in the last couple of years, is it the most up-to-date information that we have?

- Why are they writing this?

  - What is the purpose of the article?
  - Is the author being paid by outside organisations to write the article? Do they have sponsorships or advertising groups that have an interest in the topic?

- How many other sources say the same thing?

  - Looking for multiple sources that have the same or similar information is useful. But make sure that they are reliable sources, otherwise you could be confirming the wrong or inaccurate information.

Selecting information

Sometimes when we do research, we can end up with too much information. You can use a table like the one below to help select which bits of the research you keep and what might keep for something else. The information in the "interesting to know" column might not be high on your list of things to include but there may be a story or fact that can help demonstrate your point, add variety to your arguments, or create additional interest.

Necessary to know	Good to know	Interesting to know	Not relevant for now

Researching can be frustrating if you can't find what you're looking for and take a lot of time if you find lots of information or new and interesting ideas. The different questions and tables above might be useful to help you focus on your topic.

Once you have undertaken your research speak to a teacher, friend or family member about the research and information you have discovered. They might ask you questions which you may then need to follow up or learn more about.