

Parliament of Victoria

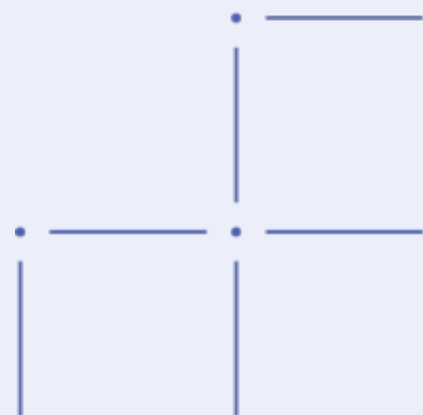
A guide to
challenging
conversations



A teaching resource for
classroom conversations

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— · Introduction

This document provides some guiding strategies for facilitating issues-based discussions in the classroom, especially issues which may be considered challenging for a variety of reasons. These strategies also acknowledge that any topic has the potential to raise questions and concerns for students and teachers, especially when the issue or topic encourages different perspectives.

The different perspectives and viewpoints may for instance relate to social, political, environmental, religious, ethical or moral, historical, economical or legal considerations, and/or these perspectives may be informed by students' lived experiences including family or community views and values.

There are several benefits to having issues-based conversations with students. These include:

- Understanding of students' perspectives, views and values
- Skills and understandings of democratic debate
- Demonstrate how issues connect from the personal to the local, national and international levels, and across sectors
- Opportunities to connect conversations to the work and processes of Parliament
- Developing critical and creative thinking skills and empathy
- Provide opportunities to amplify student voice
- Developing research and information literacy skills and using evidence to support arguments and perspectives.

The skills students learn from having challenging conversations are important in developing their critical and creative thinking, but also help to develop opportunities for student voice and agency. The Department of Education and Training's 'Amplify' document (see Additional resources) provides an overview of why student voice in the classroom and schools is important.

These strategies are flexible and adaptable to take into account teaching context, age of the students, appropriateness of topic and depth of discussion, as well as school and community expectations. The strategies emphasise beginning from students' personal perspectives to an understanding of multiple perspectives on an issue, rather than arriving at a 'correct' perspective.

Considerations

When having challenging conversations there are a few things that you might like to consider and discuss with students, where appropriate and relevant, including:

- Students' funds of knowledge from outside school experiences and prior knowledge on a topic developed within school. This knowledge may be informed by lived experience, values and views informed by their family or community and religious beliefs, and/or by their learning within schools.
- Students may find considering alternative perspectives confronting to their identity, sense of self and understanding of the world. Student responses to these conversations can result in withdrawal from the conversation, humour or inappropriate humour, anger or a range of other emotions as a result of the discomfort. There is a potential also for students to become distressed especially if their feelings are heightened by perspectives expressed that are or could be considered discriminatory, prejudiced, or biased. Some of the protocols around creating safe spaces and frameworks for running the discussions are designed to try and minimise any potential distress.
- Biases that inform particular viewpoints may often be unconscious. They may be biases that are widely accepted by or reinforced through family, community, culture or experiences, and students may have never had the opportunity to reflect upon and challenge some of these assumptions.
- Some issues may be confronting for students and/or yourself, and the issue that is confronting and/or the response may be unexpected. Working with the school Wellbeing team, other teachers in the school and the protocols for creating safe spaces for these conversations can help to provide both yourself and the students with strategies to deal with any discomfort that might be experienced.

The strategies outlined below take the considerations into account by offering guidance on ways to create a safe space for issues-based discussions including discussion protocols, language use, sentence and questions stems, and opportunities for reflection.

There may be some students whose personal situations and experiences might make particular topics more challenging for them. You might like to consider:

- Checking with school leadership or the Wellbeing team about the topic or any particular students of concern
- Checking in with students before and after the class discussion. It may be appropriate for a member of the Wellbeing team to do this in certain circumstances
- Provide opt-out options for students, although students may prefer not to take this option as they may feel it could draw attention to them
- Providing the topic to the whole class in advance and have students prepare arguments and evidence for different, potentially assigned perspectives
- Developing discussion protocols that are used across all classroom conversations so students develop a familiarity with the protocols
- Referring back to the conversation protocols during the discussion
- The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership's Creating an inclusive classroom culture provide some strategies for developing inclusive culture (see Additional resources).

Creating safe spaces

If you are looking for additional guidance as to how to approach Challenging Conversations in your classroom, it may be useful to discuss any concerns you might have about topics, particular students, or particular approaches with members of school leadership and/or the Wellbeing team.

Co-design guidelines

- What are the non-negotiables?
- Explore what the guidelines mean
- Does it include protocols for who speaks when and how often people get to share. Does everyone have to share?
- What might be considered inappropriate and why?
- Person first, strength-based language
- Use of 'I statements'
 - I think, I believe, I wonder, I'm curious about, I feel ...

Creating a safe space for your classroom can sometimes take some time. Some practices and protocols that may be useful include:

- Ideas are valued by non-evaluative, or less-evaluative, responses from both teachers and students
- Use of wait-time for answers to questions or if the discussion pauses
- Protocols or strategies for dealing with potentially negative or harmful responses, such as:
 - Asking students to clarify how their response fits within the class discussion protocols
 - Providing opportunities for rephrasing for instance through modeling 'I' statements or strength-based language
 - Using comments as opportunities to explore assumptions, biases, alternative perspectives and/or stereotypes, including how people might form assumptions and biases
 - Asking students to provide evidence and asking clarifying questions.
- Beginning with shorter conversations or writing tasks that ask students to reflect on their personal experiences or stances, building to longer more complex discussions.
- Using inclusive practices that provide the space for students to decide what they share about themselves, how much and when. Asking students to consider a range of alternative perspectives is useful because students can consider issues from viewpoints or experiences other than their own and therefore still participate in the conversation.
- Explaining or asking students to explain terminology that might be topic-specific, and explaining why some terminology may be considered outdated or offensive.
 - The *Aboriginal Change Makers* resource discusses how terminology is used to discriminate, humiliate or oppress. It may be linked to particular systems such as historical government policies (see Additional resources for the link).
- Breaking up the discussion to provide opportunities for students to reflect on the conversation and capture the main points, or any additional questions they may have. This time can also be used to 'reset' the conversation, or if time is short, wrapping up the conversation.

Establishing protocols

Establishing protocols and boundaries upfront can help students by providing a framework for having challenging conversations. Making these visible to the students and referring students to these protocols as the conversation goes along can help to reinforce the framework and continue to develop an inclusive environment. Some protocols that might be useful include:

- Use of a Y chart to think about what respectful discussion and/or debate looks, sounds and feels like.
- Using thinking routines from Project Zero for students to investigate claims, present arguments, and ask questions (see Additional resources for links). These include:
 - Claim, Support, Question
 - True for who?
 - What makes you say that?
- What are examples of respectful language, for example ‘I statements’ or person first language such as ‘people with disabilities’ as opposed to ‘disabled persons’
 - Discussing language may also provide an opportunity to discuss how groups are not homogeneous and may not necessarily all like to be identified using the same labels or described using particular terminology or phrases. Government departments or organisations such as SBS often have language use policy that may be useful for either informing this discussion or for students to reference.
 - Use of person-first language. For instance, “a person with a disability” rather than “a disabled person”.
 - Respectful language can be itself can be a rich issues-based conversation that connects to the diversity and identity aspects of the civics and citizenship curriculum.
 - Use of various modal verbs (type of auxiliary verbs) to indicate different levels of certainty or strength of attitude. For instance, modal verbs demonstrate difference in certainty, for example the difference between ‘may’, ‘might’ and ‘must’. The use of less certain modals, such as ‘may’, ‘might’ or ‘perhaps’, can encourage a range of perspectives and alternatives in contrast to the more definitive modal verbs such as ‘should’, ‘will’ or ‘does’. The JSTOR blog has an interesting article around the use of modal verbs in politics and science, and discusses the purpose of using different types of modal verbs, for example to create more open and nuanced arguments (see Additional resources).
- How are the students going to use and refer to the protocols throughout the discussion? For instance, using questions such as ‘how does the comment or language used demonstrate or not the features of respectful democratic debate?’
- Does everyone have to speak?
- Are students taking notes?
- Providing opportunities to reflect on, evaluate and revise protocols at the end of a discussion or the following lesson. A SWOT analysis may be useful to help capture the class’s ideas.

You may wish to start having challenging conversations by presenting students with a variety of practice topics and shorter conversations. Asking students to suggest topics and increasing the amount of time spent on the conversations may help students to practice the conversation protocols and inclusive language.

Discussing human rights and responsibilities may be a useful topic at some point as it provides an opportunity to discuss the benefits and potential issues with having conversations with multiple perspectives. For example, ‘Does freedom of speech mean the right to say anything?’. Students can include in the discussion the interpretations of the right to freedom of speech, the other human rights, how these rights are used, and the potential misunderstandings and misuses of the right to freedom of speech.

Making connections between the issue, the classroom and students’ lives

Starting with the purpose of the challenging conversation can help students to make connections between the conversation, the classroom and their lives, and this can help students to understand the bigger picture and understand there are multiple perspectives on any issue. Even if you regularly have issues-based challenging conversations in the classroom, it can be useful for students to return to the purposes and importance of having these conversations. Some questions to consider include:

- Why is it important to discuss challenging issues?
- How do perceptions of issues change over time?
- How do issues reflect society’s views and values at the time?
- Why are we discussing this particular issue?
- How does this issue relate to the other work students are doing or the subject in general?
- How is debating challenging issues a feature of democratic values?

You may also wish to discuss with students that the issues discussed in these sorts of conversations often link to a range of other topics and issues, both historical and contemporary. A discussion about voting rights might include discussions about the Suffragettes, the Civil Rights movement, social media, online voting, political apathy, compulsory voting, personal anecdotes, or changing the voting age. Asking students to make these connections throughout the discussion but also in the reflection helps students to see the connections between the issues and their lives. You may wish to discuss with students some protocols for how to keep the discussion relevant to particular ideas, concepts or issues that are discussed. The questions and question stems below can help students make connections between their arguments and the ideas/topic. They can also be useful to model for students positive language that they can use to respectfully challenge perspectives throughout the discussion. For instance:

- I’m wondering, how might ...
- Can you explain some more about how ...
- Can you tell me more about that?
- What makes you say that?
- Can you explain a little more about the connections between your point ...

Prior research

Providing students with some time to research an issue, develop their arguments and to find examples and evidence can help to them to consider different perspectives and develop more informed arguments. As part of this research you might like to discuss or develop with students:

- An understanding of credible sources of information
- Questions to guide the research. The question matrix may help students to develop a range of questions (see link in Additional resources section).
- A list of perspectives that might be relevant to the particular topic
- Some key words that might be useful as search terms when using the internet
- A list of different search engines that might be useful to find different sources of information
- Advanced search conventions to reduce the number of results
- Different guidelines on their research, such as find 3 different newspaper articles that provide 3 different arguments on the issue
- Provide students with some stimulus/research material. This does not need to be extensive
- Provide some guidance as to how students might take notes and keep records of the information that they find
- Using jigsaw expert groups (see link in the Additional resources section)
- Thinking routines such as ‘What I know, what I want to know, what I learnt’ and Project Zero routines such as:
 - Stop, Look, Listen
 - Think, puzzle, explore

— • Facilitating the discussion

The strategies listed below encourage students to think about the complexities of an issue from a range of perspectives. They also encourage students to participate and capture their thoughts and reflections and track how their ideas and understandings may have changed throughout the conversation. You may want to encourage students to think about avoiding for/against binaries. It can be useful to ask students to think of the exceptions to the rule, the ‘yes, but’ or ‘no, but’ responses, which helps to develop complex and critical thinking.

Introducing the issue

- Why might this topic be considered challenging?
- What different perspectives might there be on this topic? What might be informing this perspective?
- What do you know about this issue?
- What are the different arguments or concerns?
 - Are the arguments or concerns, for example, informed by different social, political, environmental, historical, emotional, religious, moral lenses?
 - How different arguments or concerns relate to different lenses? A multi-circle Venn diagram maybe useful to help students think about the overlap of the different arguments or concerns.
- Why is something an issue right now?
 - Has it always been an issue, but is it getting more attention at the moment? Or, is it a relatively new issue?
 - What has happened that this issue is being discussed in Parliament, by journalists, on social media, and across different communities?
- Who are the groups/demographics that are contributing their voices to this issue?
- What are the different perspectives that are being presented? Where might these perspectives come from? For instance, what are the different fears, hopes, views and values of the different people?

Some thinking routines that may be useful to introduce the topic include:

- Hotspots
- Circle of viewpoints
- Think, puzzle, explore
- 3-2-1 Bridge
- Walk the week

Sentence and question stems

As part of developing students' skills in participating in challenging conversations, you make like to also encourage students to ask questions of both themselves and their peers. Developing students' question skills helps to develop their critical, creative and higher order thinking. The questions below encourage students to think of additional explanations and evidence, and help to support developing a reasoned argument. Example prompts include:

- Reasoning:
 - What are your reasons for saying that?
 - How do you know?
 - Do you have any evidence?
- Clarifying:
 - Can you explain what you mean?
 - Can you give me an example?
 - Can you explain more about your thinking?
- Wondering:
 - What if...?
 - Does... imply...?
 - Is it possible that...?
- Examining:
 - Can you give an example/ counter example?
 - Is that always the case or only sometimes?
 - If you say that, does it follow that...?
- Evaluating:
 - Has anyone changed their mind?
 - Can anyone summarise what we have said so far?
 - Do we all understand the difference of opinion on this?

These prompts can be used along with the question matrix and may be useful to broaden the types of questions students ask.

- [27 questions for facilitating philosophical dialogue](http://27questionsforfacilitatingphilosophicaldialogue.com/), P4C resources, SAPERE archive.sapere.org.uk/Default.aspx?tabid=289

It may also be useful to model for students positive language that they can use to respectfully challenge perspectives throughout the discussion. For instance:

- I'm wondering, how might ...
- Can you explain some more about how ...
- Can you tell me more about that?
- What makes you say that?
- Can you explain a little more about the connections between your point ...

Conversation continuum or human barometer activity

In this activity students form a line from strongly agree to strongly disagree in response to a statement or a series of statements, moving their position as they feel necessary. Students can then provide their arguments from their response position. Students can also have the option to move along the line in response to the arguments presented.

For more examples see:

- Take a stand: Human Barometer activity from the National Museum of American History amhistory.si.edu/docs/Human_Barometer_Activity.pdf
- Social studies Teacher notes from the Department of Education, Manitoba www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/cur/socstud/foundation_gr9/tns/tn3.pdf

Socratic circles

Socratic circles are an approach to discussion based on the ancient Greek philosopher Socrates. Students sit in a circle so that they can see each other and build on and refute each other's arguments. The Victorian Department of Education's Literacy Teaching Toolkit outlines the various stages of a Socratic circle – setting protocols, initiating the discussion, tracking the discussion and reflection. The outline links the Socratic circles to the Grade 5 and 6 Civics and Citizenship curriculum, specifically learning about Government and Democracy, however, this approach has benefits across learning levels and different curriculum areas.

- Socratic discussions, Literacy Teaching Toolkit, Department of Education and Training Victoria www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/discipline/english/literacy/speakinglistening/Pages/examplesocratic.aspx

Think, pair, share

Think, pair, share is a common discussion protocol that allows students to have thinking and reflection time before responding to a question. Within a challenging conversation it can be used to slow down the conversation and provide students' an opportunity to reflect. The pairs can then share their thoughts with another pair or the larger group to restart or summarise the discussion.

- Think, pair, share, Project Zero Visible Thinking Routines www.pz.harvard.edu/resources/think-pair-share
- Classroom talk techniques, Literacy Teaching Toolkit, Department of Education Victoria www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/discipline/english/literacy/speakinglistening/Pages/exampleclasstalk.aspx

For more examples of similar protocols see:

- See, think, wonder, Project Zero Visible Thinking Routines www.pz.harvard.edu/resources/see-think-wonder
- Claim, support, question, Project Zero Visible Thinking Routines www.pz.harvard.edu/resources/see-think-wonder

Talk tokens

Talk tokens are a way of distributing the contributions across the class and making sure that everybody has an opportunity to speak. Students are given tokens and each time they contribute they must hand a token in. There are different conditions that can be used with talk tokens that can be negotiated with students. For instance:

- Different coloured tokens to represent questions and contributions
- Students receiving different number of tokens as a way of differentiating the approach to the discussion
- Opportunities to earn tokens back. For example, once everyone in the class has used one token, students can opt to get an additional token.

Line debates

Unlike normal debating where students might research one particular side of an issue or an argument, a Line Debate requires students to think about a topic or issue from multiple sides and multiple perspectives.

1. Divide the class into two teams and form single lines opposite each other
2. Assign one team as the affirmative (arguing for) and the other team as the negative (arguing against)
3. Each side need to come up with appropriate and worthy arguments, regardless of their personal opinions on the matter
4. The class needs to negotiate the criteria for what constitutes a 'quality' argument for the response and any other conditions for the debate.
For example:
 - Students must respond to and rebut the last point made
 - Students must respond within 10sec of the last point
 - Students must refrain from using certain words or phrases, such as 'umm'
5. Each contribution must be original and support the point of view (affirmative or negative) they have been assigned
6. The debate moderator – a teacher, student, another person – will decide if an argument presented meets the criteria
 - If the criteria are meet, the person who spoke may choose someone from the other line to join their side
 - If the criteria are not meet, then the person must cross to the other side themselves
7. Students may only change lines or sides up to 3 times (although this can be negotiated as part of the criteria)
8. The debate should last up to 10 to 15 minutes to make sure a range of views have been covered and everyone has had an opportunity to speak
9. The debate ends when either all arguments have been exhausted or one side ends up with all the class members
10. Students can act as scribes to capture the arguments presented by both teams

Below are some alternative ways of running the line debate and some other points you might like to consider.

- It is important that students understand that they are not presenting their point of view, but rather are able to argue from a range of points of view
- It may be appropriate for students to have some time to research prior to the debate in order to think through the different perspectives and issues. However, this is not essential to the process
- Students may wish to think about the issues from multiple perspectives, including from social, cultural, political, educational, environmental, religious/spiritual and/or historical perspectives
- The Line Debate can also be run as a Fishbowl:
 - A smaller number of students participate in the debate in the middle or front of the classroom
 - The other members of the class watch the debate, recording their observations and the arguments that are presented
 - The students observing then have the opportunity to question members of the debating teams. For instance, asking them to provide evidence or elaborate on their arguments
- If a student's argument meets the criteria, the student may be allowed to pick the person from the opposing line who speaks next
- All students must speak at least once before the students can begin presenting multiple arguments.

The Line Debate protocol has been adapted from *And Gladly Teach: A classroom Handbook*, Glen Pearsall (2011), TLN Press static1.squarespace.com/static/52db91b3e4b0c2e3ce0f1ce4/t/56bc4b379f72665ed6d3749e/1455180628040/Gladly-teach.pdf

The fishbowl method

The fishbowl method of discussion allows for a more reflective approach where half the class are observers and the other half of the class participate in the discussion. The observers sit around the outside of the classroom and take notes about what is being discussed and how the discussion is progressing.

At the halfway mark of the discussion the students can switch roles. During the reflection time students share what they noticed, such as the topics discussed, good questions that were asked, points that contributed to the building of an argument, as well as opportunities to improve the discussion. Students should be encouraged to stick to observational data and not use specific students as examples.

A variation on the fishbowl is to split the class into two groups: for and against. The discussion is not about debating the topic, but is instead about forming an argument and having an opportunity to listen to a range of arguments. Students should still be encouraged to consider a range of perspectives and think about the range of arguments a particular position might have. This can help students develop a more detailed and more nuanced understanding of the various arguments.

- Fishbowl, Facing History and Ourselves www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/teaching-strategies/fishbowl

Note-taking

You may like to encourage students to take notes either during or after the conversation. This is a similar process to the creation of Hansard, which documents Parliament sittings and Committee hearings. There are several note-taking tools that may be useful for students.

- Note-taking tools, Literacy Toolkit, Victorian Department of Education www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/discipline/english/literacy/Pages/note-taking-and-summarising-texts.aspx
- Deakin student note-taking strategies www.deakin.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0006/900906/Note-taking-Six-strategies_Deakin-Study-Support.pdf

Reflection

Providing students with an opportunity to reflect on the conversation can be useful as an opportunity to debrief, to also consolidate their learning, and to reflect on the protocols used throughout the conversation. These reflection strategies might include:

- Exit cards on students' key learnings or their response to a discussion question. For instance, how does this discussion connect to or relate to ...?
- Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats analysis on the issue and/or the conversation
- Thinking routines such as:
 - 3-2-1 Bridge
 - I used to think ... but now I think
 - Walk the week

Questions you might like to ask students include:

- What were the points, examples or perspectives that surprised you or that you found most interesting or that you are still unsure about? Why?
- What other information do you need?
- What other questions do you have?
- When you read back over your ideas before the conversation, are there any ideas or arguments you had that stand out?
- How have your ideas changed?
 - Why do you think that might be?
 - Would you now use different examples or language?
 - Would you now include different perspectives?

If you are wanting students to share their reflections, online applications such as Padlet or Google Docs can be useful. Students can share their ideas anonymously if they aren't signed in and these are also useful for debate and discussion in online forums. The classroom discussion protocols can be adapted for online reflection to ensure that the online debate is also respectful and moderated.

Connecting to parliamentary processes

Within Parliament there are procedures for debate known as ‘Standing Orders’. These are the rules that govern the Members’ behaviour in the chambers and include rules like not insulting people, not using the word ‘liar’ and not referring to people by name but rather using their titles. Some of these Standing Orders might be useful in informing the protocols for your class (see Additional resources for a summary). The full Standing Orders for Rules of Debate and Disorder for the Legislative Assembly can be found on the Parliament website:

- Full standing orders: new.parliament.vic.gov.au/parliamentary-activity/orders/assembly-standing-orders
- Rules of debate: new.parliament.vic.gov.au/parliamentary-activity/orders/assembly-standing-orders#chapter-12
- Disorder: new.parliament.vic.gov.au/parliamentary-activity/orders/assembly-standing-orders#chapter-13

Parliament is a place where challenging issues are debated, and there are processes that help facilitate this, including:

- Question time: new.parliament.vic.gov.au/parliamentary-activity/orders/assembly-standing-orders/#chapter-8
- Members’ Statements (see Statements by members section): new.parliament.vic.gov.au/parliamentary-activity/orders/assembly-standing-orders#chapter-6

Committees are a good example of how Parliament, and the Members of Parliament on a Committee, can take into consideration different viewpoints and make decisions. For current and past committee inquiries see:

- Committees: www.parliament.vic.gov.au/committees

To view a video of two of the committee managers discuss their role and the role of the Committees, including a committee resource see:

- A focus on committees: new.parliament.vic.gov.au/teach-and-learn/education-blog/vce-legal-studies-a-focus-on-committees

The Hansard reporters play an important role in Parliament by providing a record of parliamentary debates, the proceedings from sittings and committee hearings. Hansard is public record and can be used by the courts to interpret legislation. Connecting students’ note-taking of the discussion to Hansard and the purpose of having a record of the conversation is another way to connect to Parliament’s processes. Taking notes during a conversation could be the responsibility of the whole class, given to certain groups of students, or to a student, depending on the needs of the class and the student. Some questions you might like to raise with students include:

- Why is it important to have a record of what was said in Parliament important?
- Why is it important to have a public account of what is discussed in Parliament?
- How does Hansard differ from note-taking?
- What are the benefits and limitations of Hansard compared to note-taking
 - Hansard is apolitical, it’s purpose is to report what was said rather than with note-taking where people might have different interpretations of what was said or emphasise different parts of the argument as important.
- Hansard often edit particular parts of the spoken speech so that it reads more

fluently as written text. What changes might they need to consider?

- These could include punctuation, hesitation words like ‘um’, interruptions or injections
- How might the class share their notes and come to an agreement about what was discussed and any outcomes?

Hansard is available online and can be searched by topic, date, Member of Parliament and/or parliamentary session. Students can use speeches from Hansard as model texts for their own speeches or to find out what different arguments have been presented to Parliament on a particular bill or topic.

- Hansard: hansard.parliament.vic.gov.au/
- The teacher notes that have been developed to support the Parliament Prize competition also include some selected examples of Member’s Statements: new.parliament.vic.gov.au/teach-and-learn/Resources/preparing-for-the-parliament-prize/

Additional resources

Teaching tools

- Amplify, Department of Education and Training, Victoria www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/teachers/teachingresources/practice/Amplify.pdf
- Creating an inclusive classroom culture fact sheet, Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership www.aitsl.edu.au/docs/default-source/research-evidence/spotlight/creating-an-inclusive-classroom-culture-fact-sheet.pdf?sfvrsn=5cf3d33c_2
- The hidden life of modal verbs, JSTOR Daily, 14 November 2018 daily.jstor.org/the-hidden-life-of-modal-verbs/
- Jigsaw expert groups, The Literacy Teaching Toolkit www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/discipline/english/literacy/speakinglistening/Pages/exampleclasstalk.aspx
- Thinking routines, Project Zero Harvard University www.pz.harvard.edu/thinking-routines

Question matrix

	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?

Parliament of Victoria resources

Victorian Parliament has several resources and experiences available to help you teach Challenging issues in the classroom. All resources, tours and incursions are free and linked to the Victorian curriculum.

- The Workday Revolution

new.parliament.vic.gov.au/teach-and-learn/Resources/the-workday-revolution

This resource explores the Stonemason agitation for an eight hour work day and helps students understand concepts such as social cohesion and respect as well as freedoms that enable active participation in Australia's democracy including freedom of speech, religion, association, assembly and movement.

- Changing the ways we work

new.parliament.vic.gov.au/teach-and-learn/Resources/changing-the-ways-we-work

This resource explores some of the ways life has changed since the 8-hour work day came into effect in 1856, the impact of these changes on our work-life and encourages students to ask whether we need to amend our existing laws, or if it's time for a new Workday Revolution.

- Aboriginal Change Makers

new.parliament.vic.gov.au/aboriginal-change-makers

This resource tells the stories of Aboriginal self-determination and empowerment, and asks students to consider their cultural perspectives and to consider concepts like decision-making from different cultural perspectives.

- Law reform case study: Medically Supervised Injecting Centres

Coming in 2022. This resource is designed to support students studying the law reform through the committee process. It focuses on the passage of the Bill allowing for the Medically Supervised Injecting Centre trial and the subsequent implementation and review of the legislation. The resource contains excerpts from the different political debates as well as commentary from social media and media. See website for more details in the new year.

- First women of politics and parliament

new.parliament.vic.gov.au/teach-and-learn/Resources/women-of-politics-and-parliament

Additional material

- Murris, K. (2015). Questions and Concepts (Developing the Philosophical). SAPERE Handbook to accompany the Level 1 P4C Foundation Course. SAPERE
- Oxfam has an excellent guide for discussing Challenging issues. This document also includes several lesson plans which, although aimed at the UK curricula, can be adapted to suit Victorian schools.
www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/teaching-controversial-issues
- Philosophy and philosophical methods of teaching are excellent ways to approach teaching Challenging issues. In particular, Philosophy for Children (P4C) is a discussion based educational practise started by Professor Matthew Lipman in the US. P4C encourages children to discuss and examine “big ideas” as well as developing listening and empathy skills.
 - The Victorian Association for Philosophy in Schools has a list of links and resources about P4C. vaps.vic.edu.au/resources/classroom-activities
 - SAPERE is a UK site which provides resources that can be adapted to the Victorian curriculum. www.sapere.org.uk/resources/
- US-based All Sides is a site which collates news articles and shows the left, right or centre bias of the author. You can also search to see articles about specific topics such as education, free speech and elections.
www.allsides.com/unbiased-balanced-news

Curriculum links

Civics and Citizenship Curriculum — Diversity and Identity strand, as well as opportunities to connect through issues-based examples to the law and government strands. The issues-based discussions may also have connections to Victorian curriculum: History and Victorian curriculum: English. There are also a range of Capabilities that students develop through engaging with contemporary and Challenging issues, these have also been summarised below, according to the Capability strand.

Parliament of Victoria Standing Orders

Below is a summary of some of the most relevant Standing Orders for the classroom. The number corresponds to the standing order, the full standing orders are available at:

new.parliament.vic.gov.au/parliamentary-activity/orders/assembly-standing-orders

Rules of Debate

103 Members to stand

- A member wishing to speak stands in his or her place and addresses the Speaker. If more than one member rises, the Speaker calls the one who stood up first, recognising that, once each party has put its view, the call will normally alternate between speakers on each side of the House.
- A member who is sick or disabled may speak while seated in his or her place.

106 Motion that a member be no longer heard

- A member may move without notice that a member who is speaking be 'no longer heard'.
- The Chair must put that question immediately, but only if the Chair is satisfied that:
 - the member speaking has already had ample opportunity to state his or her views on the matter; and
 - the member is using his or her right to speak in a way that is an abuse of the rules or conventions of the House, or to obstruct business.

109 Keeping to the subject

A member must not depart from the subject matter of the question or issue under discussion.

110 Irrelevant material or tedious repetition

- The Chair may warn a member speaking in the House for continued irrelevance or tedious repetition.
- After a warning, a member may move 'That the Chair direct the member to discontinue his or her speech ...

114 Interrupting debate

A member may only interrupt another member while speaking to:

- Move a closure motion; or
- Move that a member 'be no longer heard'; or
- Move 'That the Chair direct the member to discontinue his or her speech'.

115 Order to be maintained by the Speaker

Order will be maintained in the House by the Speaker.

119 No offensive language against other members

A member must not use offensive or unbecoming words in relation to another member.

120 Objection to words

If a member objects to words used in debate:

- The objection must be taken immediately.
- If the words relate to a member of the House and that member finds them personally offensive, the Chair will order the words to be withdrawn and may require an apology.
- If the Chair considers that any other words used are objectionable or unparliamentary, the Chair may order the words to be withdrawn and may require an apology.
- A withdrawal, and an apology, must be made without explanation or qualification.

Disorder

124 Chair ordering member to withdraw

Where the Speaker or Deputy Speaker considers the conduct of a member to be disorderly:

- The Speaker or Deputy Speaker may order the member to withdraw from the House for up to one and a half hours. That order is not open to debate or dissent.
- The member, whilst suspended, may still return to the Chamber to vote in a division.
- If a member is ordered to withdraw under paragraph (1) and the House adjourns before the end of the suspension period, the member, subject to paragraph (2), will not return to the Chamber on the next sitting day until the remaining time has expired. Time is calculated from the end of the ringing of the bells.

125 Naming a member

A member may be named by the Speaker or the Deputy Speaker for:

- Persistently and wilfully obstructing the business of the House; or
- Being guilty of disorderly conduct; or
- Using offensive words, and refusing to withdraw or apologise; or
- Persistently and wilfully refusing to conform to any standing order, rule or practice of the House; or
- Persistently and wilfully disregarding the authority of the Chair; or
- Refusing to immediately follow an order to withdraw under Standing Order 124.

126 Procedure following naming

- After naming a member, the Deputy Speaker must immediately interrupt proceedings and advise the Speaker of the naming.
- Following the naming of a member and a motion being moved 'That the member be suspended from the service of the House during the remainder of that day's sitting (or for such period as the House may think fit)', the Speaker must put the question immediately without amendment, adjournment or debate.

127 Suspension of member following naming

- A member suspended under Standing Order 126 must immediately withdraw from the House and must not re-enter the Chamber during the period of the suspension.
- This Standing Order does not deprive the House of any other powers it may have to proceed against a member.