

Parliament role play development information

How to prepare a self-scripted role play

How the role play will work

In the role play, students will play the parts of MPs and parliamentary staff in a parliament style debate. You may choose any topic to discuss but there are a few key things you will need to ensure it runs smoothly.

Firstly, we recommend you have fairly even numbers of people presenting arguments for and against. This will help your students think about the issue in depth and cast their votes with less bias.

We also recommend including some independent or minor party “members” to your role play as these people can have unique arguments and will give your students the opportunity to bring up more ideas.

Students will be given roles, just as we have in Victorian Parliament. The scripted roles are there to ensure that procedure is followed, and debate is fair. The unscripted roles will require preparation from you.

Those students representing the Government will be supporting (for) the bill. Those representing the Opposition will be opposing the bill. The Independent/Minor Party members could either support or oppose the bill.

What we expect from you

Preparation is required for a self-scripted role play to work. We expect that your students will have done some research on the issue you choose to debate and are ready to present short speeches (approximately 80–100 words) either in favour or against the bill.

We recommend that five students will speak **IN FAVOUR** of the bill, and five students speak **AGAINST** the bill.

Methods you could use:

1. Ask every student in your class to prepare two short speeches, one in favor of the bill and one opposing the bill.
2. Divide your class into two groups, ‘for’ and ‘against’. Each group can work together to research the topic and create short speeches. Five students from each group can then be nominated to present their group’s arguments on the day.

Parliament role play development information

How to prepare a self-scripted role play

The roles of Speaker, Clerk and Serjeant-at-Arms are scripted. The students chosen for these roles will not be able to present an argument but will wear costumes and use props such as the mace*. They have an important role in the successful operation of the parliament. The students chosen for these positions might like to research their role and what it involves. These roles may be suitable for students who are less confident with public speaking.

Students who are not assigned a scripted or self-scripted role will still participate in the roleplay. They will support their peers by shouting 'hear, hear!' They will also vote on the bill. They may also wish to give their opinion on the bill once the contributions have been completed.

Please remind your students that just because the opposition is opposing the bill, it does not necessarily mean they want the exact opposite. Why else might they oppose this bill? What other ideas might they have? Do they have an idea that might work better than this bill?

* Video on the history of the mace:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5uS3TC348y8>

Role play parts

Scripted

- Speaker
- Clerk
- Serjeant-at-Arms

Self-scripted

- x5 FOR the bill
- x5 AGAINST the bill

Example topics

- Banning cattle grazing in National Parks.
- Banning sports betting companies from advertising on television.
- Banning shops and restaurants from giving out plastic straws.
- Banning pedestrians from using their mobile phones around traffic.



School Role Play Template

Serjeant at Arms

Honourable members, the Speaker!

All members stand

Speaker

Members, please be seated.

The House is now in session.

The rules of the House must be obeyed.

Clerk, please read the rules.

Clerk

Always stand up to speak.

Always address your remarks through the Speaker.

Members should not interrupt each other.

The Speaker keeps order.

Speaker

Clerk, please read the title of the bill.

Clerk

[Insert debate topic here] Bill.

Speaker

I call the Minister.

Minister

Insert student's 80 - 100 word argument supporting the bill.

Speaker

I call the Shadow Minister.

Shadow Minister

Insert student's 80 - 100 word argument opposing the bill.

Speaker

I call the Premier.

Premier

Insert student's 80 - 100 word argument supporting the bill.

Speaker

I call the Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition

Insert student's 80 - 100 word argument opposing the bill.

Speaker

I call the Member for *[insert student's name]*.

Member for *[insert student's name]* (Government)
Insert student's 80 - 100 word argument supporting the bill.

Speaker

I call the Member for *[insert student's name]*.

Member for *[insert student's name]* (Opposition)
Insert student's 80 - 100 word argument opposing the bill.

Speaker

I call the Member for *[insert student's name]*.

Member for *[insert student's name]* (Government)
Insert student's 80 - 100 word argument supporting the bill.

Speaker

I call the Member for *[insert student's name]*.

Member for *[insert student's name]* (Independent/Minor Party)

Insert student's 80 - 100 word argument supporting or opposing the bill.

Speaker

I call the Member for *[insert student's name]*.

Member for *[insert student's name]* (Independent/Minor Party)

Insert student's 80 - 100 word argument supporting or opposing the bill.

Speaker

I call the Member for *[insert student's name]*.

Member for *[insert student's name]* (Opposition)

Insert student's 80 - 100 word argument opposing the bill.

The Presenter will pause the role play here for a discussion.

Speaker

Order! We now need to vote on the bill.
The question is that the bill is accepted.
Those who agree say 'Aye'.

(Members call out 'Aye')

Those who disagree say 'No'.

(Members call out 'No')

I think the 'Ayes' have it.

Opposition members will call out “No!”

Order! Leader of the Opposition, is a division required?

If the Leader of the Opposition says “Yes”, say:

Division required. Ring the bells.

When the bells stop ringing say:

Lock the doors! Those who support the bill move to the right of the Speaker’s chair and those who oppose the bill move to the left of the Speaker’s chair.

When everyone has moved to one side or the other say:

Order! Leaders, count the vote.

Once the votes have been counted, you will announce the result to the House.