Immerse your students in a Minecraft model of Queensland's Parliamentary Chamber, where they can explore the key features and processes of Queensland's unicameral parliament through these interactive and engaging activities...

Learning Intention:

We are learning how democracy is enacted in Queensland's state parliament.

Success Criteria:

- I can identify key features of Queensland's parliamentary chamber.
- I can describe some of the key parliamentary roles.
- I can explain how laws are made in a unicameral parliament.

Required resources:

- Minecraft Education license
- PC or tablet
- File: Legislative Assembly Chamber in Minecraft

Detail of Queensland's Coat of Arms in Minecraft Chamber

Other helpful resources:

- Queensland Parliament website:
    - Teacher Resource page
    - Video Resources
    - Classroom Activities
    - Role Plays
    - Factsheets
- Minecraft Education website
- NPC (non-player character) tutorial
- NPC Video

Queensland Parliament's Legislative Assembly Chamber in Minecraft Education

Lesson Sequence

Session 1: Introducing Queensland's Parliament

Learning Objective

To explore some key features and roles within Queensland's parliament.

Activities

1. **Introduction (10 minutes)**: Brief overview of Queensland's unicameral parliament

   - Assign a key role to each pair of students (e.g., Speaker, Premier, Cabinet Minister, Clerk at the Table, Leader of the Opposition, Whip).

   - Students view the "People of Parliament" video relevant to their assigned role.

   - Students use the retrieval chart to record key information.

   - Groups report their findings to the class.

2. **Minecraft Activity (30 minutes)**: Exploring the Parliamentary Chamber model in a shared world

   - Students (as players) explore the Minecraft model of the Legislative Assembly Chamber.

   - In pairs, students locate and identify key items and areas in the Chamber (e.g., Speaker's chair, Table of the House, flags, Members' seats, media, Hansard and public galleries).

   - Students create an NPC (non-player character) to represent their key role, ensuring the NPC is labelled and wearing appropriate attire.

   - Using the /say command and buttons, students create a script for the NPC to answer the follow three questions:

     - *Who are you?* (Hello, I'm…)

     - *What is your main job in the Chamber?* (My role in the Chamber is to…)

     - *Why is your role important to the Parliament?* (This is an important role because…)

   - Allow time for students to view other NPCs and offer constructive feedback to their peers.

   - Extension: Advanced students and fast-finishers use in-game boards to label key items and areas in the Chamber and explain their purpose (e.g. mace, coat of arms, flags).

3. **Reflection and Discussion (10 minutes)**:

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- Students add screenshots and text to their in-game journal or use posters and boards to document their findings and reflect on the roles and structure of the parliament.

- Guide a class discussion to give students the opportunity to share what they've learned about the roles and their significance with their peers.

Assessment

- Informal observation of students' engagement and contributions.

- Review in-game journals for understanding. Students can export journals in PDF format for easier teacher review.

- Students' responses to the peer feedback on their NPC.

- Cloze worksheets on People of Parliament

Session 2: How laws are made

Learning Objective

To discover how laws are made in Queensland's parliament through a simulated role play.

Activities

1. **Introduction (10 minutes)**:

   - Use the videos and associated resources to explain the law-making process.

   - Students brainstorm ideas for a simple bill (e.g., a new school or class rule).

2. **Minecraft Activity (30 minutes)**: Legislative Process Role Play

   - Assign a role to each pair of students (e.g., Speaker, Members of Parliament, press gallery).

   - Conduct a virtual parliamentary session in-game during which students role-play the legislative process: introducing a bill, debating for or against, voting and consideration by a parliamentary committee. The role play master script can be modified to suit the students' bill ideas. Alternatively, stage one of the available scripted mock bills.

   - Student reporters in the press gallery can use in-game boards to record tweets or news headlines or prepare a news article using the in-game journal.

3. **Reflection and Discussion (10 minutes)**:

   - Students use in-game journals to write about their role in the legislative process and the steps they followed.

   - Guide class discussion about what students learned and any challenges they faced.

Assessment

- Informal observation of student engagement and contributions.

- Students' contributions to role play.

- Review in-game journals for understanding of the legislative process.

Session 3: When arguing is a good thing!

Learning Objective

Students will apply their understanding of a democratic legislative process by preparing and delivering persuasive speeches on a bill.

Activities

1. **Introduction (10 minutes)**: Arguing productively with persuasive speeches

   - Briefly recap the legislative process and roles in parliament. Use our worksheet or complete flowchart cut into stages, to sequence the law-making process.

   - Student volunteers are given 30 seconds to convince the class about a supplied statement or idea e.g. sports are better than computer games.

   - Review persuasive writing format.

2. **Minecraft Activity (30 minutes)**: Debate Preparation and Delivery

   - In pairs, students prepare persuasive speeches for or against the bill introduced in Session 2. Brainstorm arguments for and against as a class.

   - Students can use Minecraft's in-game whiteboards to outline their arguments and key points.

   - Conduct a virtual parliamentary debate in Minecraft where each pair presents their speeches and engages in a structured debate. The Speaker calls each member when it is their turn to speak.

3. **Reflection and Kahoot Quiz (10 minutes)**:

   - Students reflect on their persuasive speeches and the law-making process.

   - Conduct a Kahoot quiz to assess understanding of the parliament structure, legislative process, and key roles.

Assessment

- Kahoot quiz scores.

- Review of in-game tools (journals, boards).

- Informal assessment of engagement, contributions to debates, and quality of persuasive speeches.

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Differentiation

For struggling students:

- Use templates and guides to provide additional structure for students' reflections and speech preparation.

- Pair students with competent peers for support.

- Offer sentence starters and scaffolds for journal reflections and speeches.

- Make use of the Immersive Reader option in Minecraft Education.

For advanced students:

- To extend these students, assign more than one role or key feature.

- Ask these students to explore more of the videos on the Queensland Parliament's channel. Ask them to use screen shots to create an anchor chart or visual summary of the content.

- Challenge these students to create more complex arguments during the debates, and provide evidence of independent research.

- Assign leadership roles for greater involvement during the role-play.

- Encourage them to independently devise their own bills for additional debates.

- For further extension: Students can explore additional classroom resources on the Parliament website. For example, the Pass that Law flowchart activity.

Teacher's Role

- Guide students through each session, providing support, thinking prompts and answering questions as needed. Encourage peer support with Minecraft's technical features and in-game tools.

- Facilitate discussions and reflections to deepen understanding.

- Set strict boundaries for in-game interactions (actions, behaviours and chat) and explain the consequences (e.g. exclusion from activities for a period of time). Real Members of Parliament must follow "Standing Orders" which govern language, behaviour and procedures. Real members may be sent out of the Chamber if they do not comply.

- Monitor progress and provide feedback during Minecraft activities.

- There is no prerequisite for a thorough understanding of Minecraft building techniques. Let your students be the experts. If a student destroys the Chamber, you can download a new copy from the website.

Further Extension:

Integrating Civics with English

- Students create a proposal for a new school playground, learning area or local park.

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- o Research, identify stakeholders, interview key people, brainstorm ideas.
  - o Use graph paper to plan the model in Minecraft. First mimic what currently exists in the space. Then modify the model to redesign the space.
  - o Write a brief, summarising the research and outlining the benefits, sustainability features, and costs of the new proposal.
  - o Invite school or student council leaders, Parents and Citizens committee members or the local councillor to visit the classroom so students can showcase their proposals.
  - o Hold a showcase for key stakeholders where students present their completed builds and invite visitors to 'walk around' in the Minecraft model.

- Hold a Class Council election in Minecraft.

  - o First clearly define the roles of class councillor and class captain. Decide as a class on the term of service (e.g. one school term).
  - o Students nominate themselves by creating an NPC and preparing a board to summarise the key ideas of their campaign.
  - o Voters use in-game chat to ask questions of each NPC candidate and offer feedback on their response.
  - o Candidates deliver a campaign speech to outline their strengths and explain their 'policies' or promises if elected.
  - o Students develop a voting system, such as a clearly defined area to stand to indicate a vote for each candidate. Expert Minecraft players may design a mechanical voting system using levers or pressure plates and redstone circuits. Your students will amaze you!

Integrating Civics with Digital Technologies

- After exploring the purpose and functions of the parliament, students design and build their own 'ideal' parliamentary chamber.
  - o Invite the school's Member of Parliament to visit the class. Students interview the Member about their requirements for an ideal parliamentary chamber.
  - o Students follow an iterative design process to seek and respond to feedback about early prototypes.
  - o In groups, students create and showcase their Parliamentary Chamber.

Integrating Civics with Maths

- Plan a measurement unit around the Minecraft chamber model. Ask students to estimate, measure, calculate and graph, for example:
  - o Quantities of the various materials used in the build.
  - o Volume and surface area of various key elements.
  - o Cost of various elements and of the entire build, based on given prices for each material.
- Students propose modifications to the build to modernise or renovate the space, adhering to a given budget limit.