

## Make a Law Role Play Teacher Information Sheet

Discover how bills are introduced, debated and voted on in the Legislative Assembly of Queensland by turning your classroom into a mock Parliament and role-play the legislative process yourselves!



### DURATION

1 to 3 lessons



### LEVEL

Years 5 to 12

## Before

### Investigate topic for debate

Choose an issue relevant to your students and the curriculum.

- Find inspiration from the issues recently discussed in Parliament - visit the [‘Bills this Parliament’ webpage](#).
- If you’re stuck for ideas, use the [‘School Hours Amendment Bill’](#) or [‘Voluntary School Sports Mock Bill’](#) scripts.

With students, develop a plan to address the issue. This plan will be your bill.

### Bill example

<b>Issue</b>	The amount of homework students are required to do.
<b>Proposed solution</b>	Banning homework.
<b>Bill name</b>	The No Homework Bill: A Bill for an Act to ban homework in all Queensland schools.

### Allocate roles

Divide the class into the key roles outlined below. Leaders can be elected by their teams or allocated by the teacher. For the current composition of the Legislative Assembly of Queensland, visit the [Seating Plan](#).

### Prepare students

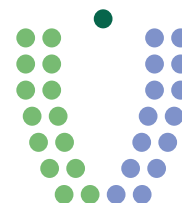
Give your students sufficient time to prepare. The activity works best when students have enough time to research the topic of investigation in some detail. Ask students to prepare their speech using the [Key Roles resource](#). **\*This resource is intended to be shared electronically.**

- Government members will support the bill
- Opposition members will oppose the bill
- Minor parties and Independents can choose to support, oppose or suggest changes to the bill.

The Speaker, Clerk and Sergeant-at-Arms may write speeches, but won’t deliver them during the role-play.

### Set up room

Transform the classroom into the Legislative Assembly Chamber by arranging chairs and tables in a horseshoe shape.



# During

## Making a law

Follow this process in the [Master Script](#).

### Opening the Parliament

### The debate

### Voting on the bill

### Passing the bill

Before the Bill can become a law, it must receive Royal Assent (when the Governor signs as representative of the Sovereign). After this the Bill becomes an Act of Parliament.

# After

## Reflection

As a class, discuss what happened in your mock Chamber. Explore the following questions with your students:

- Did the bill pass? Why?
- Discuss what other steps the bill needs to go through to become a law.
- Usually the government has a majority in the Legislative Assembly, and will win the vote on bills. Why then is it important for the government, opposition, minor party members and independents to participate in the debate? e.g. to represent their electorates and the Queensland people, to publicly scrutinise the bill, to suggest amendments.
- Why are parliamentary debates public - i.e. broadcast on television, radio and the Internet, recorded in Hansard, and reported on in the media. How would Queensland be different if Parliament made laws in secret? e.g. because bills are debated in Parliament the public can learn:
  - about the advantages and disadvantages of the bill
  - the differing opinions of parties and independents regarding the bill, and
  - how their local member of Parliament is representing them.
- Why do we need laws in Queensland? e.g. laws are formal rules which society uses to define how people and organisations are expected to behave.
- Why is it important for Queenslanders to choose members of Parliament to make decisions on their behalf? What qualities would you look for in a representative? e.g. they make decisions for everyone, so it's fair for the people to have a say.
- How might members of the public get involved in the democratic process? Why would they want to? e.g. people can watch ParliamentTV, contact their representatives, protest, petition, join a political party or community group.



# Checklist

Watch YouTube video 'The Legislative Process'

Issue for debate discussed with students

Proposed solution (Bill) discussed with students

Space in the classroom to separate students into key roles

Key roles allocated

- 1 x Speaker
- More than half the class as Government Members
  - 1x Minister for relevant portfolio
  - 1x Premier
  - 1x Party Whip
  - Remaining Government Members
- 2-5 students as Minor Party and Independent Members
- Remaining students as Opposition Members
  - 1x Shadow Minister for relevant portfolio
  - 1x Leader of the Opposition
  - 1x Party Whip
  - Remaining Opposition Members
- 1x Clerk
- 1x Sergeant-at-Arms

Key role resources and Master Script electronically distributed to students  
(can print if necessary)

Copy of Master Script to follow yourself

Time to set up room (move tables and chairs)