



Australian Government

Department of Education, Employment
and Workplace Relations



2008 NATIONAL CIVICS AND CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION FORUM

From curriculum to community
— *the impact of civics and*
citizenship education

REPORT

June 2008

From Curriculum to Community – the impact
of Civics and Citizenship Education

National Civics & Citizenship Education
Forum

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The National Civics and Citizenship Forum, entitled *From Curriculum to Community – the impact of Civics and Citizenship Education*, was held at the National Museum of Australia in Canberra on Monday and Tuesday, 2 and 3 June, 2008.

The forum was organised by the Australian Curriculum Studies Association (ACSA) on behalf of the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR).

This report was prepared by Vic Zbar, from Zbar Consulting, for the Forum organisers.

Background to the Forum

The 2008 National Civics & Citizenship Forum built on similar forums in earlier years with a focus on the three themes of government and law, citizenship and democracy, and historical perspectives.

In this context, the forum specifically aimed to:

- raise the awareness of the national agenda in civics and citizenship education; and
- promote good teaching practice in civics and citizenship education in Australian schools.

Keynote addresses from Jack Waterford, George Williams and Peter Stanley and the opening address from Barry McGaw, along with workshops, panels and other stakeholder presentations provided the impetus for discussion at the forum about current and future directions in CCE in Australia.

The Purpose of This Report

The purpose of this report is to provide forum participants and other interested parties with a synthesis of the outcomes of the forum, drawn from the keynote addresses and workshop presentations, together with the outcomes of forum discussion sessions. The report follows the structure of the forum program.

Forum Program

The forum program, which includes details on each presenter, is included as an Appendix to this report.

Major outcomes of the Forum

Forum Opening

After a brief introduction and welcome to country from forum facilitator Tony Mackay (Executive Director, Centre for Strategic Education), the forum was officially opened by Professor Barry McGaw (Chair, National Curriculum Board) representing the Hon Julia Gillard (Minister for Education, Employment and Workplace Relations) who was unable to attend.

The forum and the work behind it, according to McGaw, reflects the importance of civics and citizenship education to both the health of our community and Australia's democracy. 'Democracy needs citizens with inquiring minds who are well-informed about their culture and their history'. Teaching civics and citizenship in his view helps develop such citizens and hence contributes positively to our community. CCE in this context is not restricted to schools, but involves homes and communities as well.

The program, he observed, began in 1997 with *Discovering Democracy* which saw the provision of a range of high quality resources, substantial professional development and awareness raising activities for parents and other stakeholders. The CCE program builds on this, but the real challenge in his view is to have it all make a difference – a challenge, which he accepted, extends to the national curriculum as well.

Given the Ministerial Council for Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) in 2003 put civics and citizenship on the agenda for national sample surveys there already is some data to put this challenge to the test; albeit acknowledging, as McGaw quoted Einstein as saying, that 'not everything important can be measured and not everything measured is important'.

Nonetheless, the sample testing was done in 2004 with what he referred to as 'some mixed messages as a result'. There were 'some encouragements, but also some challenges' as outlined by Suzanne Mellor in the 2007 CCE forum and in her workshop reported below. 'We now wait for the October 2007 results to not only see the results for that year, but to compare them with 2004'.

CCE and the National Curriculum

McGaw then reflected on the connections between civics and citizenship education work and the work of the National Curriculum Board. The Board, he explained, is starting work on national curricula in English, Mathematics, Science and History which is to be completed by the end of 2010, along with a continuum of learning for literacy and numeracy. It then will move on to Geography and Languages other than English. 'It's a very big task with a limited timeline', but they are not beginning with a blank page.

Australian education delivers 'very good results' and is among the best in the world in areas measured by PISA and other major international studies. However, McGaw argued, 'a country aspiring to gold in sport, should also aspire in education not to be among the best, but to be the best'. Certainly other countries already adopt this view and in the recent PISA results, Australia slipped in relative terms, not so much because 'we got worse, but because others such as Hong Kong got better'.

Perhaps, he suggested in this context, 'we talk so much about minimum competence that we've lost sight of high level performance'; as reflected in these latest results where Australia's high achievers have not kept pace with some other countries that have passed us by.

So what, in McGaw's view, is needed for Australia to be the best?

First we need to acknowledge what is good in Australia and build on it. We then need to challenge ourselves with the evidence of what others are doing who outperform us in various ways (eg, Finland, Singapore, South Korea, etc.). This does not mean embracing exactly what they do, some of which we would find unpalatable such as the sheer amount of out of hours tutoring in which South Korean students engage, but rather, looking at what they do and adapting it where it makes sense to our context. We need to pay careful attention to research evidence on pedagogy, learning and what works and, perhaps most importantly, make all of this a 'genuinely collaborative effort, or otherwise it just won't work'.

Put simply, 'if it is to make a difference, then it has to result from us working together to achieve world's best curriculum'.

With this in mind, the National Board has begun to think about curriculum documentation that is 'accessible and useful' and is developing writing guidelines for its expert groups. While these are yet to be finalised, the groups will be directed to ensure a balance between both the content to be taught and the performance standards to be achieved. Their task will be 'futures-oriented' in that the national curriculum must educate young people for the 21st century, while also connecting appropriately to the past. Some limitations will be set on the scope of the documents so they are useful to teachers and they will be written in 'plain language' that assumes the target audience is beginning teachers so accessibility is assured.

The national curriculum, he added, must also deal with cross curriculum skills we all accept are needed for success in our modern economy and society (eg, thinking, problem solving, working with others, etc.) while resisting the temptation to assume that these skills somehow exist 'in isolation from knowledge and expertise'. Cross curricular skills, he noted, are dependent on a depth of knowledge in the relevant domain where they are to be exercised; which he illustrated with reference to expert and novice performance in political analysis and research.

How the national curriculum in English, Maths, Science and History might address civics and citizenship education issues, McGaw concluded, will also need to be addressed. Groups will look at the Statements of Learning in CCE because they have 'important concepts we need to take into account'.

He then commended the forum agenda and the way in which it addresses each of the strands that the CCE Statements of Learning contain.



Responding to questions raised by participants in a short question and answer session, McGaw indicated that ‘lots of other things go on in schools separate to the national curriculum’. Once a national curriculum names some areas, however, ‘every other area wants to be in it’. In this context there are, he noted, ‘many things we must ensure we do not lose from the curriculum just because the national curriculum only covers certain domains’. The national curriculum will need to allow for local flexibility – in some senses only differing from state and territory curricula ‘in its geography’ – and ensure that we do not lose other important aspects of the curriculum that already exist.

Asked to comment some more on the national curriculum process, McGaw indicated an intention to ‘make it as collaborative as possible’. It couldn’t, he conceded, replicate state and territory approaches since that is prohibited by cost, and this may mean the use of more creative, perhaps technological means through which people can become involved. The process is starting on June 27 with an invitational forum that will involve all of the major organisations and stakeholders where some of the key issues can be addressed.

The connection between the national curriculum and national assessment is, he acknowledged in response to another question, ‘essential’. We currently have national assessment without a curriculum, or even an explicit framework for the assessment that occurs. When a national curriculum is in place, the national assessments will need to be ‘reshaped to reflect it’. Asked about whether this will see a move towards a national senior certificate and assessment, McGaw simply responded by quoting the Deputy Prime Minister who, when asked about the same things, indicated that the national curriculum is about what all Australians should learn, and not about how it should be assessed.

Being an active citizen

As an ACT journalist for almost 30 years, Jack Waterford (Editor at Large, The Canberra Times) has learned that in most fields of public policy there is ‘a wheel that goes around about once every 25 years’. In education, it’s about ‘relevance versus knowledge ... and whether you are the hand maiden of the economy or believe a brake needs to be applied to that sort of approach’. This, he suggested, is an important lesson to take into account.

He then provided an outline of his own background growing up in a remote community where he didn’t even go to school until the age of ten. He was, however, ‘a voracious reader’ who grew up in a very interesting place with many Indigenous people and parents who were involved in the struggle for their rights. He then went to boarding school in Sydney where he had ‘marvellous teachers who nurtured him over the years’. He learned to love a host of subjects, including the history of the kings and queens of England which he still draws on today.

While he supports a strong national history, he also feels that an awareness of the history of England is essential to understand the development of our democracy and the Westminster system we enjoy. It laid out 'the fabric of our federation in contrast to the experience of the United States which the founding fathers also took into account'.

Waterford left school in the 1960s and was 'heavily involved' in student politics and the campaign against Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War. He came to journalism by accident driven by a need for money at the time, and only formally became a journalist on the day Gough Whitlam was elected Prime Minister since that also was the day the warrant for his arrest for evading national service expired.

An informed community

As a journalist Waterford has observed a lot of what he calls 'small g government that is the business of Canberra even more than the big G government that occurs up on the hill'. Canberra, he argued, is a city of politics that attracts people who are interested in what goes on in their own communities as well. It's a city that's called upon to govern, and where the main business is administration, which also means that people need to know what is going on.

Canberra for him is, then, 'an information-hungry town' where many different perspectives are sought; and this extends beyond just the public service to academia, lobby groups, think tanks, diplomats and more. It's a 'city of experts in everything' – an incredibly 'engaging community in which to be involved'. Parliamentary reporters, he noted in this context, can become 'insular', talking to politicians in Parliament House but ignoring the range of expertise that exists in the groups and individuals outside.

With all of the changes in technology that provide access to great wealths of information at the touch of a finger, Waterford feels that the journalist's job now is to 'sort and synthesise this barrage of information into what people might need or want to know, and/or in ways that excite their interest given they lack the time to do it all for themselves'.

It's not just a question of 'sorting out all this mess', however. It also involves remembering your market and readers and what they want to know, taking account of the diversity of readers you have – 'from the 30% who know more about it than you, to those who know very little on the particular subject at all'.

In that sense, Waterford regards himself as 'a hand maiden to the process of community discourse and debate; helping people to make sense of what they need to know'. This makes him less of an advocate in the debate, which he sees as resonant for the education profession as well, though when he does become involved, he seeks to do it in a professional way that does not transcend the need for people to have the facts and see both, or all of the sides.

Citizenship and involvement

When it comes to questions of citizenship and involvement we are, in Waterford's view, in a society where a lot of people see this as 'irrelevant and boring because

everything works so well'. While he tends to share this view, an occasional 'cold shower' brings him to his senses.

He described, for instance, how in 1995 on a visit to Rwanda he was standing at a bridge on the border and saw a group of soldiers on the other side, standing beside a stack of machetes they had confiscated as a million people fled over the bridge to 'one of those instant refugee cities that form'. 'They fled massacre but many', he stated, 'also were implicated in it'.

Looking back from the bridge he saw a large waterfall with a tumult of water at the bottom flowing down to Lake Victoria which is the source of the Nile. He then looked in the swirling water and saw 'bobbing babies who ... people couldn't even bother to kill but merely flung in the water with their legs tied'. It is an image 'that still sticks with me today'.

Waterford noted that he then spent time in the refugee camp as well and wondered about who is implicated and who not. And he also was struck by the fact 'they were just people like you and me. How could they have been involved in this? How could their society have broken down to this extent?'

While he had no answer to this question, he did recognise that they grew up in societies where there was no expectation of ultimate justice in their communities. It's a 'tribal society of "big men"'. A growing proportion of our population, he noted, come out of this sort of experience, and some of our nearest neighbours are experiencing societal breakdown that heads down the same path.

Many people, he argued, come to Australia looking for 'refuge and peace' compared with their experience of civil strife. People who don't understand the reasons for our society being the way it is will suffer in terms of taking an active role. 'Mercifully', he suggested, 'we have many ways in which people can become actively involved regardless of the perceived issue at hand'. When we have our debates, people enter them with 'great vehemence and passion', as evidenced by major debates in *The Canberra Times* about the relative rights of pedestrians and cyclists which occasioned more letters and a fiercer response than did the entire Vietnam War.

There is, he noted, a wealth of information to draw on when talking to children about how they can become involved in society and how movements of ideas can emerge. Recently, for instance, the Clinton/Obama battle is 'a particularly thrilling contest' on which teachers can readily draw and in which many Australians are engaged.

The problem of non-engagement, Waterford concluded, presents us with a challenge to get people engaged; 'because individuals can make a difference'. Sometimes it requires a lot of work to bring people in, and there are times when journalists can help, such as the editorial in that day's *Canberra Times* which took both the Prime Minister and the Premier of NSW to task for failing to satisfactorily condemn the decision of Camden Council to prohibit the building of an Islamic school.

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As a participant in the 2020 Summit, Waterford observed in response to a question from facilitator Mackay on the event, that he went to sessions in which he was

'intensely interested'. There was, he noted, lots of good discussion and ideas, but he soon became 'cynical because we were facilitated to death', and there was too much focus on 'snazzy press releases and being seen to support the agenda the government had'. The science of facilitation, he observed in this context, is 'so refined that you don't even need to know anything about the subject you are seeking to discuss, just the processes of drawing people out'.

Asked for an editor's view on 'Kevin 24/7', Waterford noted that Rudd 'is a workaholic', but it ought not be assumed he 'will have a breakdown from that'. The real issue is that 'it's highly unproductive' and results in lots of focus on 'second order things which result from attempting to micro-manage the news cycle'. At the end of the day, in his view, the 'substance of what you are on about matters more and he should concentrate instead on the sort of grander themes that got him elected in the first place'.

Finally, Waterford agreed to some extent with a questioner's contention that over-representation of some important topics in the media such as climate change might 'immunise' people against them, but he also advanced some evidence for a contrary view. 'A feeling is percolating through the community and beginning to have an effect that community sacrifices will be needed to make a difference ... which makes you wonder why the government has been mucking about for a week on two or three cents in the petrol cost'.

Workshops: Session 1

Participants then had the opportunity to attend one of four workshops, each of which is briefly summarised below.

Having fun with Human Rights in the classroom

Sarah Winter (Policy Officer) and Rebecca Stuart (Education Manager) from the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC) predicated their workshop in the premise that young people today have many questions about human rights. For example, 'what are they?', 'where did they come from?', 'how do they know what their responsibilities are?', 'are child rights in any way different?', and 'how are they protected in Australia?'

This year, they noted, marks the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, while next year marks the 20th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. And over 60 years the Australian political landscape and legal frameworks have changed to accommodate development both locally and overseas.

In this context, the workshop illustrated the use of simple, fun activities around human rights issues and highlighted topical child rights case studies teachers can use. Participants had the opportunity to engage with HREOC's education resources and consider how they best can be integrated with daily lessons in class.

A range of free resources were covered including:

- *Celebrating Human Rights Day (December 10)* which contains a collection of web-based activities that encourage students to engage in human rights through visual images, increased historical knowledge and practical case studies;
- *Youth Challenge: Teaching human rights and responsibilities*, which is a collection of resources available on-line, on CD-Rom and DVD to illustrate the impact of disability issues, sexual harassment and racism. Film grabs, role plays and other learning activities help students to understand their rights under federal and state laws; and
- *Voices of Australia education module*, which is an educational tool to help combat racism and promote a culture of respect and equality among high school students around Australia. The module is based on stories collected in celebration of 30 years since the inception of the Racial Discrimination Act, 1975 and activities help students to reflect on the timeline of race relations in Australian history.

Giving a face to the nation: Exploring Australia's civic past through the National Portrait Gallery collection

Helena Bezzina (Senior Educator, National Portrait Gallery) outlined how the National Portrait Gallery offers a 'uniquely accessible and inter-disciplinary approach towards increasing students' understanding of the Australian people, their identity, history, creativity and culture'.

More specifically, her workshop provided participants with a set of skills to use in interpreting portraits from the Gallery designed to highlight an appreciation of the uniqueness and diversity of Australia as a multicultural society. To this end, participants were introduced to images from the collection and resources that will be available for teachers when the Gallery reopens in its new building in December of this year.

Historical understanding and active citizenship

Upper primary students, according to David Boon (Grade 3/4 teacher, Illawarra Primary School, Tasmania) need to understand their personal and collective responsibility for environmental sustainability and how they can act to effect positive change in their community if they are to participate as responsible citizens in a local context. This requires a solid understanding of the historical development of their community and of local land-use patterns over time.

The use of images, maps, street directories, aerial photographs and other documentary evidence of changes over time to the local physical environment provide resources for genuine enquiry and are crucial to enabling students to make considered decisions about current and future use of their local environment.

The workshop then focused on one such inquiry by a group of Grade 4/5 students at Illawarra Primary School in Blackman's Bay in Tasmania.

Now more than ever we live in one world

Jennifer Ure (Partnerships Project Manager, Asia Education Foundation) focused her workshop on what an Asia-engaged student looks like in the civics and citizenship classroom and the range of new resources published by the AEF to support the integration of studies of Asia into civics and citizenship education.

Workshop participants were invited to consider where their school/curriculum/teaching are in relation to being an Asia-engaged school through a number of awareness raising strategies. They viewed and considered a range of resources that could support the inclusion of studies of Asia texts into the teaching and learning of civics and citizenship including:

- *2020 Schools engage with Asia DVD* which provides a powerful and succinct rationale for why 21st century education needs to equip young Australians to engage with Asia;
- *Now more than ever before we live in one world* – a text that provides authentic examples of studies of Asia and internationalised curriculum and how it looks in practice in a school or classroom; and
- *Asia Scope and Sequence for Studies of Society and the Environment* which is based on State and Territory curriculum and syllabus documents as well as the national *Statements for Learning for Civics and Citizenship*.

Skilling up on improving student learning in CCE

Suzanne Mellor (Senior Research Fellow, Australian Council for Educational Research) explained that her workshop was premised on the fact that, having noted shortcomings in the 2004 sample assessment outcomes to which McGaw had earlier referred, things 'aren't a lot better in 2007'. In fact, the results and achievement levels can be described as 'disappointing'. How, she asked, can this be after a decade of work, \$40 million spent on quality resources, more than \$18 million spent on professional development, the acceptance of the Adelaide Declaration goals, the existence of the Statements of Learning, and lots of activity reported across the nation?

The answer in her view lies in civics and citizenship education 'not being implemented in a meaningful way'. Put simply, something is going wrong with the implementation. There are, she conceded, 'a host of possible reasons for this, but there is no point in seeking to blame'. What instead she wanted to do was unpack the implementation, starting with this workshop with people who already are engaged and on board.

With this in mind, her workshop (which facilitator Tony Mackay later described as something more of a 'master class') aimed to share insights to the range of learning processes students need to experience if they are to achieve cognitive and dispositional learning in civics and citizenship education, along with how to identify when learning by students has been achieved. Through the workshop, participants were provided with a repertoire of strategies and analytical tools to enable them to work with their colleagues in schools to improve the delivery of CCE teaching and learning with a view to raising student achievement in the National Assessment.

A lot of people think that 'beaut activities with kids generate learning'. However, the research shows this is not necessarily the case. At the end of most CCE activities, Mellor argued, the people involved do not find out what the students have learned, in part perhaps because they do not ask. Assessment is too frequently overlooked when planning, resulting in classroom activities being merely 'feel good rather than

learning activities', with the result that no learning occurs. 'Instead, we need to challenge students to stretch their heads'.

In this context, she provided forum participants with the opportunity to:

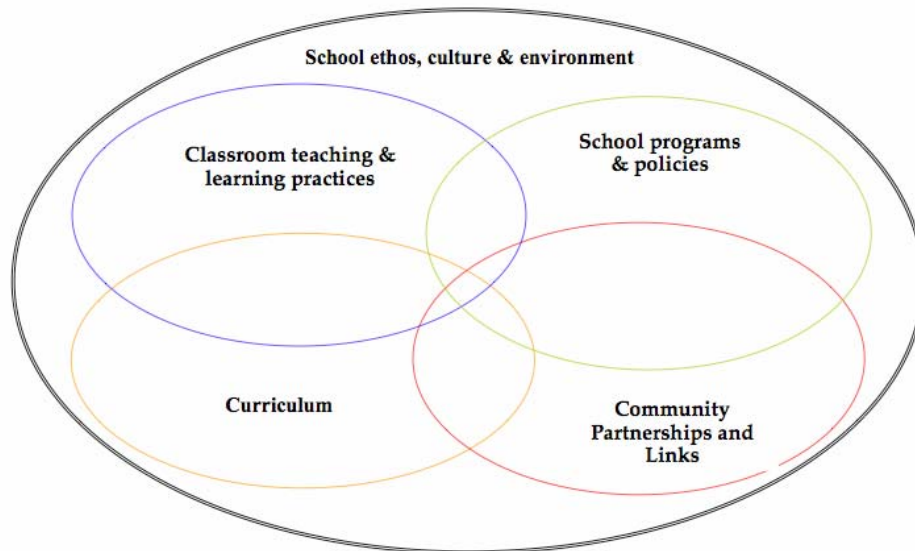
- consider and identify the programs/activities/curriculum/teaching/governance in their school which already do, or potentially could contribute to CCE learning;
- interrogate the Student Background Survey questions and the student data provided as well as what such data reveals about student learning in CCE;
- familiarise themselves with the conceptual distinctions in the definitions of Civics and Citizenship in the Statements of Learning and the Assessment Domain;
- write answers to two test units, mark the responses of another participant using the marking score guide for those units and then discuss their responses;
- unpack the marking guide together to inform reflection on what they indicate about student knowledge and dispositions associated with CCE;
- analyse the Progress Map, including the placement of the worked test items on the scale; and
- extrapolate from this analysis generalisations about the range of 'opportunities to learn' that students need if they are to achieve better in CCE.

In essence, her hope was that by the end of the process, forum participants would be in a position to judge what they can do better to implement CCE in their locations, wherever they may be.

Delivering CCE

The specific modes of delivery Mellor advanced for pursuing civics and citizenship education in the school encompass not only the classroom and formal curriculum but extend to teaching and learning practices, school programs and policies, and community partnerships and links, all conducted within the overall ethos, culture and environment of the school as illustrated in the diagram below.

Modes of delivery in civics and citizenship education



She then invited participants to consider ideas of what they/their institution could contribute to improve the implementation of CCE in each of the four action areas that are contained within the larger circle of school ethos, culture and environment.

Some of the ideas suggested, which she processed to ensure greater clarity about what was proposed, included:

- (for school programs and policies) a student philanthropic foundation, which also reasonably could sit under community partnerships and links thereby demonstrating, according to Mellor, that where you put the activity isn't always clear and depends on the purpose for which you establish it and how the program is evaluated;
- (for community partnerships and links) the formation of a bi-cameral system of student government and the development of such community programs as a blood donation competition that exists in one participant's school;
- (for curriculum) a case study approach to ensure that CCE is ingrained in a lot of the programs offered through SOSE and other subjects; and
- (for classroom teaching and learning practices) the use of rights and responsibilities in the classroom, and collaborative learning and how that is managed.

The overarching school ethos, culture and environment circle, Mellor noted, 'has to be in the right place for any of the smaller circles to be effective'. Unless a whole school approach exists, teachers will be less effective in the classroom because there will be insufficient institutional support. And leaders have to own it if CCE is to succeed.

Having demonstrated the importance of each of these modes working in tandem, she then shared the questions that comprise the Student Background Survey of the national assessment which elicit such information as whether or not students read about current events or watch the news on TV outside of school, and the extent to which they vote for class representatives, can participate in community activities and generally become involved in various other ways in their schools.

This provides important information that can inform teachers' particular civics and citizenship approach. In 2004, for instance, the survey revealed a strong effect on achievement of the extent to which students talk about political or social issues with their family. The fact the same effect is not experienced in other domains such as Maths and Science suggests that schools are not having enough of an impact on learning in CCE. Similarly, Australian students do not appear to be hungry for news (though those who do have an interest tend to be high achieving), and teachers could usefully alert them more to the news; though this does first mean knowing about it themselves. Beyond this, the research is 'unequivocal' that student involvement in decision making leads to better outcomes, which raises questions about what schools are doing in this regard.

Given these sorts of findings, Mellor urged participants to read the 2007 report when it is released, since it will contain a rich vein of information they can use to inform the way in which they pursue action in each of the delivery modes outlined.

The conceptual distinctions involved

The *Statements of Learning for Civics and Citizenship* suggest that they are concerned with 'the development of students as informed and active citizens of Australia'. They describe the knowledge, skills, understanding and capacities that all young Australians should have the opportunity to learn and develop in the domain. These are organised in four year junctures and structured around the following three broadly defined aspects of Civics and Citizenship curriculums considered to be both essential and common across states and territories:

- Government and the Law;
- Citizenship in a Democracy; and
- Historical Perspectives.

The Assessment Domain in this context describes Civics in terms of knowledge and understanding of civic institutions and processes and Citizenship in terms of disposition and skills for participation. The actual descriptors and performance measures applying to each are detailed below.

Yr 6 Civics & Citizenship Key Performance Measures

KPM 1: Civics: Knowledge & Understanding of Civic Institutions & Processes

Knowledge of key concepts and understandings relating to civic institutions and processes in Australian democracy, government, law, national identity, diversity, cohesion and social justice.

Within primary schooling this KPM anticipates that students can:

- 6.1: Recognise key features of Australian democracy.
- 6.2: Describe the development of Australian self-government and democracy.
- 6.3: Outline the roles of political and civic institutions in Australia.
- 6.4: Understand the purposes and processes of creating and changing rules and laws.
- 6.5: Identify the rights and responsibilities of citizens in Australia's democracy.
- 6.6: Recognise that Australia is a pluralist society with citizens of diverse ethnic origins and cultural backgrounds.

KPM 2: Citizenship: Dispositions & Skills for Participation

Understandings related to the attitudes, values, dispositions, beliefs and actions that underpin active democratic citizenship.

Within primary schooling this KPM expects that students can:

- 6.7: Recognise that citizens require certain skills and dispositions to participate effectively in democratic decision-making.
- 6.8: Identify ways that Australian citizens can effectively participate in their society and its governance.
- 6.9: Recognise the ways that understanding of and respect for, commonalities and differences contribute to harmony within a democratic society.
- 6.10: Understand why citizens choose to engage in civic life and decision-making.

Yr 10 Civics & Citizenship Key Performance Measures¹

KPM 1: Civics: Knowledge & Understanding of Civic Institutions & Processes

Knowledge of key concepts and understandings relating to civic institutions and processes in Australian democracy, government, law, national identity, diversity, cohesion and social justice.

Within secondary schooling this KPM expects that students can:

- 10.1: Recognise that perspectives on Australian democratic ideas and civic institutions vary and change over time.
- 10.2: Understand the ways in which the Australian Constitution impacts on the lives of Australian citizens.
- 10.3: Understand the role of law-making and governance in Australia's democratic tradition.
- 10.4: Understand the rights and responsibilities of citizens in a range of contexts.
- 10.5: Analyse how Australia's ethnic and cultural diversity contribute to Australian democracy, identity and social cohesion.
- 10.6: Analyse Australia's role as a nation in the global community.

KPM 2: Citizenship: Dispositions & Skills for Participation

Understandings related to the attitudes, values, dispositions, beliefs and actions that underpin active democratic citizenship.

¹The Year 10 KPMs assume the Year 6 KPMs have already been achieved by students

Within secondary schooling this KPM expects that students can:

- 10.7: Understand that citizens require certain knowledge, skills and dispositions to participate effectively in democratic political and civic action.
- 10.8: Analyse the role of a critical citizenry in Australia's democracy.
- 10.9: Analyse the relationship between democratic values and social justice as an important aspect of Australia's democratic tradition.
- 10.10: Analyse the reasons Australians make choices about participating in political and civic processes.

With this in mind, Mellor recommended a sequence for pursuing CCE which starts with facts and interpretations through civic knowledge and then shifts to a focus on understanding. A student who has understanding can articulate a conceptual grasp, which enables them to recognise the concept in a different context. Only then, they can (and even might) form a commitment to that concept and, if they have some disposition to engage, may form an argument to support it. While engagement is 'a long way down this process, many of our activities seek to deal with it at the start, without having established the knowledge and understanding first'. When this disposition is developed, students might be prepared to act and action is the next stage. 'You can't expect action up front as we often tend to do'.

Mellor then invited participants to have a go at two test items she provided that related to an advertisement for the first National Sorry Day which appeared on a media website in 1998, and the Australian Citizenship Pledge, and explained how to use the answers to unpack if students have clarity, as a stage in the sequence she had outlined.

Proficiency levels, standards and progress in Civics and Citizenship

Mellor used the experience of working with the test items and the marking guides to briefly outline the proficiency levels and standards on the Civics and Citizenship Scale and the progress map to which they gave rise.

There are five proficiency levels ranging from '1' (containing the least difficult items) to '5' (containing the most difficult items). The proficient standard is a level of performance that would be expected for a student at that year level. Students need to demonstrate more than minimal or elementary skills to be regarded as having reached a proficient standard. A proficient standard is not the same as a minimum benchmark standard because the latter refers to the basic level needed to function at that year level, whereas the former refers to what is expected of a student at that year level. The Proficient Standard for Year 6 was set at Proficiency Level 2 and for Year 10 at Proficiency Level 3 as can be seen in the Progress Map below.

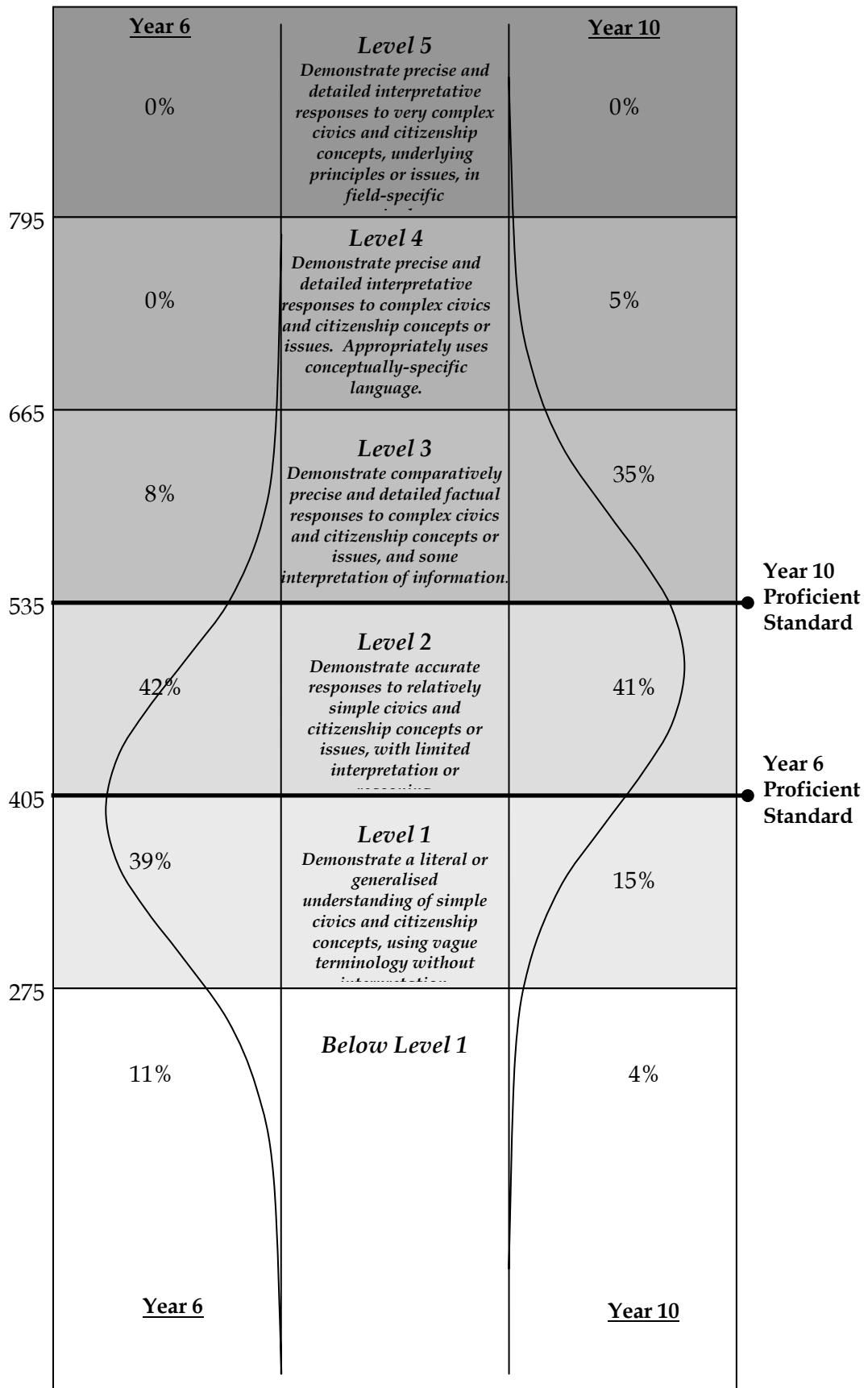
Characteristics of Proficiency Level 2 (Yr 6 PL)

Students who achieved at Proficiency Level 2 were able to demonstrate accurate responses to relatively simple civics and citizenship concepts or issues, with limited interpretation or reasoning. They could, for example, identify more than one basic feature of democracy or democratic process, have basic understandings of citizens' taxation and/or civic responsibilities, and recognise tensions between democratic rights and private actions.

Characteristics of Proficiency Level 3 (Yr 10 PL)

Students who achieved at Proficiency Level 3 were able to demonstrate comparatively precise and detailed factual responses to complex civics and citizenship concepts or issues, and some interpretation of information. They could, for example, identify the historical event remembered on Anzac Day, clearly understand the mechanisms and importance of secret ballot, and understand the general effect of sanctions in international agreements.

Progress Map: Distribution of Years 6 and 10 Students on the Civics and Citizenship Scale (Note that percentages have been rounded)



The Progress Map, Mellor explained, is read from the bottom up, and she outlined how the sample questions she gave participants to work on fit into this map.

These standards, she emphasised, reflect where the students came in the sample assessments rather than where we might want the standards to be; which again is a key reason why her workshop session was held.

To finish the workshop, participants were provided with the marking score guide for the 'Sorry Day' example they earlier tried to score each other's responses and give a sense of how the levels are judged.

Mellor then ended by stressing the need for students to get the curriculum knowledge they need ('the brick on which to build') so they then can be supported to see how it can be used. It is only then that 'we will get different answers on the sample assessments'. For her this means teachers actually teaching some civics and providing activities that enable students to demonstrate what they have learned. And they will then expect citizenship to operate in their communities and in their schools.

Educating young Australians about their system of government: Meeting the challenge

Day two of the forum began with a keynote address from Professor George Williams (Anthony Mason Professor, Faculty of Law, The University of New South Wales).

As an educator and teacher, Williams has always seen civics and citizenship education as 'needing to transcend the classroom'. Certainly the classroom is a good place to give students a grounding in the material, but 'unless it is reinforced as part of popular culture and ongoing media debate it, like a lot of other material learnt by rote, will', in his view, 'fall by the wayside'.

The good citizen

There are, Williams suggested, many aspects to being a good citizen which, ultimately, is the purpose of civics and citizenship education in schools. 'These include a willingness to obey the law, respect for fellow citizens and a willingness to take part in community affairs'. All of this, he contended, is naturally 'a matter of values, but also a question of knowledge'. Many of these aspects of good citizenship depend, fundamentally, on having sufficient knowledge about how we are governed and how our system works. 'When it comes to citizenship, then, knowledge and values go hand in hand'.

By way of example, he explained how knowledge about the rule of law often informs values such as fairness, including the idea that every citizen should have a 'fair go'. Conversely, a set of values without some level of knowledge about how we are governed can be 'disconnected from what is needed to be an active and effective citizen ... How can a person obey the law without knowing what the law is?'

Where a community has what he described as 'a thin, or shallow understanding of these basic concepts, it can cause anxiety about government, which can sometimes be mistaken as apathy'. The community can also find itself 'vulnerable to bad decision

making'. The point is that education about these matters is 'a key to accountability and good governance'. Thus, he sees the quality of education about civics and citizenship as being reflected in 'the quality of how we are governed and, ultimately, in the future sustainability and prosperity of the nation'.

Although education about civics and citizenship in this context is important for people of all ages it is, in Williams' view, especially needed for young people. 'The values and principles that underpin our system of government need to be passed on when students are forming their own views and perspectives about the society in which they live'. In addition, it also is often the best way to educate their parents as well.

Some challenges to address

With this broad context in mind, Williams then proceeded to set out what he sees as some of the key challenges and his observations on how these might be met.

Year after year, he noted, he sees students who 'retain little or no knowledge of their civics and citizenship programs once they get to first or second year university, despite them being many of the best students in the country who have chosen to study law'. They recall their high and primary school programs in the area as being 'disconnected from their day to day existence' and know little of how they are governed and how their country is run. If this is the perspective of many of our most talented students, he observed, 'it goes a long way to explaining the broader sense of alienation that many in the community have from how they are governed'.

There are four specific challenges he then proceeded to outline which arise from this finding that students' retention of knowledge is poor, even when the teaching may have been good.

1. Australia's system of government is more complex and harder to understand than it should be.

Australia is one of the oldest continuous democracies in the world. But this comes, in Williams' view, at a price. 'Rather than having a fresh new system of government, with clear modern rules that reflect contemporary practice, Australia's system of government is built on a largely unchanged 1901 Constitution supplemented by a maze of conventions, assumptions and workarounds which need to be understood'.

In reality, some of the basic laws and rules, 'no-one understands'; as reflected in the continuing debate about the reserve powers of the Governor General waged since 1975. This difficulty and complexity constitutes what he sees as 'a significant barrier' to education in schools. The Constitution, which we should be using as a primary teaching resource, simply 'does not match the reality of how government actually works'. The text of the Constitution, Williams argued, does not match political reality because it 'assumes understanding of the conventions of the Westminster system of government operating in Britain in 1901. Those assumptions are not explained in the text, so an air of unreality pervades our most basic law and becomes a barrier to understanding how the Australian system of government works'.

Similarly, our system of government, 'uniquely among democratic nations', lacks a clear statement of citizens' rights. But, he argued, this need not be the case. Other

nations set out in clear text how their government works and what the basic rules are. Australia should aspire to do the same. 'We should have our basic rules of government in an up to date and accessible form where the most important rules can be easily understood by members of the general public'.

2. Australia's system of government is perceived as boring

Lionel Murphy the former federal Attorney-General and Justice of the High Court, Williams explained, 'used to remark that he kept a copy of his Constitution beside his bed. He said that if he ever woke up in the night suffering from insomnia, he knew he had the Constitution there to quickly put him back to sleep'. Murphy, in Williams' view, 'had a point'. The text of the Constitution is hard to read, in part because it was fashioned according to the style of the 1890s. It was not written as a people's document but rather as a compact between the colonies to meet the needs of commerce and trade.

This makes it hard to relate the text of our Constitution, and the other rules of our system of government, to what actually happens today. 'At over a century old, it is often difficult to relate the Constitution to contemporary events'. In a somewhat related vein, another reason the document and our system of government are perceived as boring is that they are seen to be very 'static'. The referendum process, for instance, has been invoked 44 times, but only eight proposals have succeeded. None of these eight was a major revision of the text, although some have been of political importance, such as the 1967 referendum which deleted discriminatory references to Indigenous peoples and allowed federal laws to be made on behalf of Indigenous Australians.

The effect is, according to Williams, that the Constitution remains 'almost exactly as it was enacted in 1901'. Teaching the Australian Constitution in this context can be like 'teaching ancient history in a foreign language, but without the battles'. Change and new thinking, he suggested, excites and interests people. Its absence, however, gives the impression something is static. 'The absence of big debates and new thinking is a problem when it comes to education about these areas'.

3. Australians know little about their system of government

Knowledge, Williams argued, tends to reinforce itself. 'Well educated parents have a tendency to imbue the same in their children and, in the same way, a society that reflects through its media and public discussions knowledge and understanding about government will tend to reinforce and even deepen that'. By contrast, everything suggests that Australia generally is 'coming off a very low base when it comes to knowledge about civics and citizenship'. Rather than being engaged and active citizens, many Australians are 'woefully ignorant of even the most basic aspects of government', and a range of statistics he cited bear this out.

This lack of knowledge constitutes a real problem for our country, made worse in his view by the belief that many have from watching US police shows that they have rights that apply in America rather than here.

4. Knowledge about how we are governed is not reinforced by popular culture

When one travels to countries such as the US, Williams explained, one finds that 'issues of governance and citizenship permeate much of their popular culture. Their identity is shaped less, as in Australia, by questions of sport, as it is by values and

principles like free speech and democracy'. He was not in this context advocating that Australia should seek to be like the United States, but rather that 'we should recognise that the large absence of these matters from our own popular culture is a problem'.

The rare examples of when 'governance and popular culture overlap' in Australia demonstrate the possibilities; such as the film *The Castle* about the struggle of a suburban family to protect their house against government by arguing for their right to property in the High Court. It's a 'fabulous teaching tool' which Williams uses in his own teaching, because it portrays important questions and material in an entertaining and effective way, and reinforces key messages about the power of citizens and the role of the courts. But it is rare to find this type of material developed in Australia and we rely much more instead on formal methods such as classroom teaching which often constitutes a more 'one dimensional way' of going about the task. 'Students', he observed, 'are often inspired by what they consume from popular culture and if this reinforces their curriculum, that can be a very powerful dynamic'. In addition, this type of engagement also reinforces the participatory nature of citizenship and can 'remove it from more abstract concepts and ideas into something that actually has real life relevance to the greater body of citizens'.

Overcoming the challenges

In seeking to overcome these challenges there is a need to recognise that, as Williams put it, 'effective classroom teaching by itself will not be sufficient to instil the ongoing knowledge and values we seek about our system of government ... Even the very best teaching will not be as effective as it might be unless it is reinforced outside of the classroom'. A multi-dimensional approach is required if civics and citizenship is to be advanced.

'If', according to Williams, 'the Australian government is serious about Australians knowing more about how they are governed and being good citizens', it should:

- 'use imaginative ways of bringing about real citizen engagement to inspire interest in how we are governed' such as conducting a national preamble competition along the lines of the national flag competition decades ago and encouraging schools to become involved; and ensuring the 2020 Summit is just the beginning of more national conversations, with a national schools' convention as well.
- move away from what Williams sees as 'too great an emphasis on formalised methods of instilling knowledge and values', of which the citizenship test is a good example because it only promotes rote learning that is not effective in building 'genuine, long term understanding and knowledge'.
- 'set about changing our system of government so that its formal parts reflect how it actually operates and so the system of government does include the foundations of citizenship, such as rights and responsibilities'.
- 'take seriously the idea that knowledge needs to be based on a system that in reality is built on popular ownership rather than a disconnected community'.

As a strong supporter of civics and citizenship education within schools, Williams concluded with an expression of scepticism about its current utility unless 'our

government, and we as a society, do more to create a system in which this education has value and in which it is reinforced. We can improve how we educate young Australians about government, but we need to recognise that, if it is going to be effective, only so much can be done in the classroom. We need a broader strategy that goes to the heart of what we understand by Australian citizenship and the sort of government and community that we aspire to achieve. If we want people to learn effectively about being an active citizen, we need to provide more opportunities for them to become one’.

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Responding to a question about the training the Governor-General gets to do their job, Williams indicated there is no formal training at all, though the appointees often are lawyers with knowledge in the field. That said, sometimes those with more knowledge can be more of a problem when only vague powers exist, as evidenced by Sir John Kerr. That is why he believes that any move to a republic requires the powers to be codified and written down.

Agreeing with another questioner who commented on the importance of taking CCE outside of the classroom, Williams noted that this still does not obviate the need for mechanisms to really engage people in society as a whole; or else the things learned through participation in, for example, Parliaments in schools, will soon dissipate. Active citizenship in society, he suggested, should be ‘the norm and not the exception’.

Asked about how we can better engage young people, including some who are refugees who are keen to be involved but have had ugly experiences to transcend, Williams responded by suggesting that is why he supports a simple set of rules, and a Bill of Rights — ‘because that assists greater levels of citizenship and popular engagement’. Beyond that, he noted, people often are inspired by role models and we should not neglect the value of drawing on young Australian achievers while also directing people more to the value of becoming involved in a range of non-government organisations that exist.

Probably the biggest institution that students experience, Suzanne Mellor commented, is their school. There are some schools in which students are effectively engaged, especially in decision making, but a lot where they are not. Young people, she argued, need to experience decision making, participation and leadership, so SRCs and the like are important structures in schools which can be supplemented by the range of ways in which students can actively participate in the community.

Williams agreed with Mellor’s comment but added that, without the sort of changes he seeks, ‘we won’t realise our full potential’. What he would like is to see ‘young people actively engaged in a whole range of ways and, ultimately, taking responsibility for changing the system itself’. This requires the sort of multi-dimensional approach that he advocated in his address.

Dimensions of citizenship in civics and citizenship materials

Kurt Ambrose (Project Manager, Civics and Citizenship Education, Curriculum Corporation) sought to demonstrate how the concept of 'citizenship' can provide a 'useful organising concept' when considering the civics and citizenship material in the *Discovering Democracy* Units and Readers, and the lesson plans and student research units on the CCE website (www.civicsandcitizenship.edu.au/cce)

The national *Statements of Learning for Civics and Citizenship*, he explained, came into effect at the beginning of the year, and 'highlight opportunities for students to engage with civics and citizenship knowledge, skills and values at Years 3, 5, 7 and 9'. The *Discovering Democracy* units online have been mapped to these statements and will be made available on the website before the end of June along with additional teaching units and student research activities.

The concept of citizenship

Citizenship, Ambrose argued, 'bestows on individuals membership of a state'. It affords them 'an equality of status with other members of that state, and demands that their rights and entitlements are protected by the state. Indeed, the state is said to have failed when it can no longer guarantee those rights and entitlements'.

He then proceeded to unpack the concept in three different ways, with reference to *Discovering Democracy* materials that teachers can use.

The classical conception

The ancient Greeks, he suggested, 'provide us with the citizenship ideal ... that is most easily understood and used in the context of the classroom. Citizens are participants in their own government. They meet to deliberate on matters that they have in common, make laws, decide courses of action the community must take to secure its interests, and participate on juries'. In this conception, it is the obligation of every citizen to participate in direct ways.

The *Discovering Democracy Middle Primary Unit, Stories of the People and Rulers* addresses this classical conception of democracy and looks at the responsibility of citizens to participate in government and the differences between direct and indirect representation and the contexts in which each is most effective.

The Liberal-democratic conception

While the classical conception of citizenship is the easiest way to achieve understanding of the concept with younger students, it sets what Ambrose sees as an 'unattainable standard' and is 'perhaps a little removed from the ways individuals actually experience citizenship in modern societies or polities'.

The Liberal-democratic conception of citizenship according to Ambrose, 'more accurately applies to Australia and provides students with a useful dichotomy in which to see the political disputes and conflicts of our times ... For liberals, the individual and their rights and freedoms are paramount ... while for democrats these concerns are secondary to the will of the people and the principle of equality'. We can, he argued, readily in classrooms think of political issues where this tension

exists, such as recent anti-terror laws, the right to privacy in a time of increased use of surveillance cameras and so on. Keeping this liberal-democratic tension in mind provides a framework for classroom investigations, debates and deliberations about citizenship in Australia.

The historical conception

In an historical context, Ambrose explained, 'the state precedes the rights of citizenship and there can be no citizenship without the guarantee of protection of the rights that individuals have in common'. That said, citizenship is not static and has become more broadly defined and complex as the state has responded to different historical challenges. The *Discovering Democracy Lower Secondary Unit, Parliament versus the Monarch* helps students to understand how rights were first won against the all powerful state. In the unit on *Democratic struggles*, they can investigate how workers' and women's struggles for political, social and economic rights in the 19th century eventually democratised the state and limited the power of the wealthy over those with whom they came to share an equality of citizenship.

Dimensions of citizenship

Ambrose identified four dimensions of citizenship which he then briefly outlined.

Belonging and Rights

In the literature, he explained, citizenship is said to 'resemble the Roman god, Janus, with its two heads simultaneously looking to the future and the past; much like the two dimensions of citizenship, belonging and rights'. Both of these dimensions of citizenship have changed over time and, in his view, 'have a symbiotic relationship in the concept of citizenship. Historically, as the dimension of belonging has expanded, so have rights, and vice versa'. This, he contended, is because of 'one of the principles on which citizenship ultimately is based – equality, which creates the dynamic in citizenship ... As citizens of a democracy, we may not have all the rights we might like, or all the protections we think we should have, but we would be affronted if the law applied differently to some than to others'.

Equality of status for Ambrose is a 'fundamental principle of citizenship and appeals to it historically have pushed and expanded dimensions of belonging and rights'. He illustrated this with reference to Indigenous people, women and migrants in the Australian context.

We are Australian in the Middle Primary Readers and *Stories we tell about ourselves* in the Lower Secondary Readers provide good examples of how notions of belonging to the nation have changed in Australia. In more recent times, the principle of social justice has also expanded the concept of citizenship, and the Middle Secondary Student Research Unit, *Indigenous and Human Rights* (on the website) along with *Equality and Difference* in the Middle Secondary Reader allows students to explore this in depth.

Moral Participation

It is the principles of freedom, equality and justice that Ambrose believes inform political participation in liberal-democratic societies, and which give citizenship its moral dimension. Participation inspired by these principles are examined through

the units of work included in *Political People*, a collection of texts related to important historical figures, and *Equality and Difference* referred to above.

Responsibility/Obligation

This dimension in Ambrose's view is implied in 'the rights and moral/participation dimensions of citizenship. 'The grant of a right compels an obligation/a responsibility to respect that right unless the citizen finds that right an affront to the principles of freedom, equality or justice, in which case there is a moral obligation to act'. The units in the *Discovering Democracy* theme *Citizens and Public Life* across the four levels look at examples of active citizenship in Australia's democracy, while the Middle Primary Lesson Plan, *Active Citizenship: Problems and Possible Solutions* on the website invites primary students to identify and solve problems in their school or local community.

The examples he provided all help illustrate how the range of civics and citizenship resources available from Curriculum Corporation can be used to flesh out the concept of citizenship and assist students to explore it in more depth. There are, he concluded, lesson plans and student research units on human rights, global citizenship, climate change and more on the website on which participants can draw and which they can bring to the attention of their fellow staff.

Civics and citizenship: Network nationally and share your civics and citizenship ideas

Esther Robinson (DEEWR) provided a brief update on some aspects of the Civics and Citizenship Education Program before a networking session facilitated by Tony Mackay.

A DEEWR update

The *Discovering Democracy* program to support Civics and Citizenship Education, Robinson noted, spanned 1995 to 2004, whereas the subsequent CCE program from 2004 to 2008 has been somewhat more contained and, to some extent, focused on a 'maintenance role'. It has included the continuation and further development of the website, this forum, and two big events – The National Schools Constitutional Convention and Celebrating Democracy Week which includes the Every Voice Counts student forum.

A review of the program has been conducted over recent months and is awaiting approval in terms of where to head over the next four years. Given this, she was unable to provide any 'clarity of direction' at this stage, though she did indicate that a modest amount of money was allocated in the recent Commonwealth budget for continued civics and citizenship education activity.

She then briefly outlined some other activities undertaken by the DEEWR Civics and Citizenship Education team, including work related to human rights and Australia's obligations in this regard. She cited this work both to indicate the breadth of the team's remit and to illustrate that the work of the public service itself has an important civics and citizenship role.

She finished by drawing the attention of participants to the ongoing Parliament and Civics Education Rebate (PACER) program and the opportunities it affords. The Australian Government, she explained, has provided a total commitment of \$16.3 million from 2006-07 to 2009-10 for PACER to subsidise student travel to the national capital to visit a range of civic institutions such as Parliament House, the Australian War Memorial and Old Parliament House which play a key civics and citizenship role. The subsidy, for Year 4 to 12 students from schools 150km or more from Canberra, supports the national *Statements of Learning for Civics and Citizenship* and helps ensure that by the time they leave school, students should be active and informed citizens with an understanding and appreciation of Australia's system of government and civic life.

Further information about PACER can be gained from www.ncetp.org.au, and Robinson emphasised the importance of teachers actually applying in advance should they wish to receive the subsidy.

The networking activity

The facilitated networking session enabled participants to work in primary and secondary focused groups, albeit acknowledging that much middle years work spans the two. Each group was provided with a copy of the Year 3 and 5 (for primary) or Year 7 and 9 (secondary) statements of learning for civics and citizenship which are embedded in state and territory curriculum documents, and the professional elaboration for one of its three aspects on which the group then worked.

More specifically, the groups were asked to consider how these best can be used to inform the development of 'powerful learning activities' in Suzanne Mellor's terms, as a means of getting a sense of what already works in primary and secondary schools.

Some of the flavour of the deliberations can be gained from the following snapshot of responses from table groups when asked by Mackay to nominate a highlight they wanted to bring to the attention of others in the room.

- The importance of much of the action-based learning already going on in schools which generally works best when there is choice in the classroom and hence student decision making, and which the teacher can reinforce by imparting relevant civics and citizenship knowledge and concepts.
- The need to make more people aware of the excursion opportunities that Canberra can provide through the PACER program described above, especially when supplemented by *Discovering Democracy* materials and role play activities such as 'The Real Game'. This led some other participants to contribute suggestions such as mock parliaments, virtual resources for students who are unable to visit Canberra's civics institutions, etc.
- Professional development is required to help teachers to teach CCE in their classrooms and this needs to include the building of teachers' civics and citizenship knowledge as well. The same can also be said for pre-service teacher training so new teachers are equipped to take on the task.

- Given the importance of leadership, there may be a need to consider what can be learned from the successful 'Dare to Lead' program and the new AEF leadership training approach.
- Can we look at the possibility of a CCE equivalent of the Values Education Program's Good Practice Schools approach?
- Advice for teachers on whole school approaches including strategies to deal with the competition for classroom time that arises from what is perceived to be an 'overcrowded curriculum'. There was some suggestion in this context that the forthcoming national curriculum work could consider the establishment of time frames for different curriculum areas to help deal with this. The National Curriculum Board should also seek to embody CCE knowledge and activities in the disciplines and subjects that students undertake.
- Helping teachers to unpack the Statements of Learning and other curriculum documents more effectively. This may require state-based planning for teachers to help them tailor the Commonwealth materials and resources to their local curriculum and classrooms.
- Student Action Groups provide a useful means for promoting civic action in schools.
- Core knowledge and active participation need to go hand in hand.
- Taking classrooms to the 'real world' and inviting the real world in by having guest speakers, meeting your local member, etc.
- There is a need to clarify how teachers can tackle historical perspectives when, in some jurisdictions, history is not mandated; which led another group to note that there may also be a need to build historical knowledge amongst teachers themselves.

Summing up the discussion Mackay suggested that there are messages from all the good ideas advanced for: the Civics and Citizenship website and how it best can be used; how we strategically draw on successful experiences in other national programs (Values, Dare to Lead and the AEF); the National Curriculum Board and its role; and States and Territories and the curriculum advice they provide.

Workshops: Session 2

Participants were able to attend one of four further workshops which each are briefly summarised below.

Civics and citizenship resources and programs from the National Museum of Australia (This workshop replaced the workshop in the program titled *Citizenship the Sandgate way*, as at the last minute Duncan Ree was unable to travel to Canberra.) David Arnold (Manager, Education), Lyn Beasley (Educator) and Colleen Fitzgerald (Senior Educator) from the National Museum explained how, since 2001, it has developed programs and classroom resources which have direct application to civics and citizenship in schools. They then demonstrated some of the latest programs and resources available from the NMA. More specifically:

- Beasley talked about the programs offered for visiting schools to aid any excursion to Canberra aimed at exploring civics and citizenship themes;

- Fitzgerald discussed the latest offerings from the Museum's website, including the primary school *Snapshots* project which encourages students to explore their local communities; and
- Arnold demonstrated the value of the Museum's new *Collaborating for Indigenous Rights* website which is a powerful aid to the teaching and learning of the history of Indigenous rights in the classroom.

Democratic opportunity knocks at Bateman's Bay High

Ben Herzinger (Year 12 student) and Liz Thomas (Visual Arts, Design and Photography teacher) from Bateman's Bay High School outlined how the Australia 2020 Schools Summit gave students at the school the opportunity to express their ideas on the future of Australia while allowing them to experience a democratic process in action. The workshop explored the process that was undertaken in running the summit, the outcomes of the Summit and how it relates to civics and citizenship.

Selection of students for the Summit, they explained, was relatively informal. SRC members at all levels were encouraged to participate, volunteers were sought and year advisors nominated three 'articulate and opinionated' students as well. Forty students in all were gathered in the library, and presented with the Prime Minister's welcome and an explanation of the Summit's aims. Students were then asked to vote on the suggested topics from the stimulus material and the topics chosen were: the Australian economy – human capital; population stability, climate change and water; and a long term national health strategy.

The Senior SRC in the school structured an introduction to each topic, using a variety of stimulus materials including those provided by the Government, but also YouTube videos, and Google-earth. Students were then divided into three smaller groups, with senior team leaders and a balance of students based on gender and age. The traditional butchers' paper and texta technique was used to mind map and record ideas which were presented back to the larger group. At the end of each session, major points were recorded to video in a vox-pop style and then additional students were engaged in the editing process.

The response from the students was described to the workshop as 'very encouraging', with students 'excited that their ideas from a coastal school could make an impact on national decision making'. Students, student leaders and teachers from the school agree that such a process would be valuable as an ongoing event to highlight the concerns of youth at the local, national and global levels. Subsequent screening of the video at a school assembly helped raise awareness of the capacity of school-age students to participate in democratic processes and impact on the national conversation and interest.

Preparing the next generation of teachers for engaging students in regional and global citizenship via intercultural online communication

The next generation of teachers, according to Dr Deborah Henderson (Lecturer, Faculty of Education, Queensland University of Technology), will face many challenges as they prepare their students for an increasingly interconnected world. They are, however, challenges that constitute opportunities as well. Developments in information and communication technologies (ICTs), for instance, provide

opportunities for students to participate in online intercultural communication and virtual learning communities.

The workshop then outlined an experiment in intercultural online communication conducted between a cohort of QUT pre-service students from a final year Social Education (secondary) curriculum unit and a cohort of students in Taiwan. Inspired by Andy Hargreaves' challenge to cultivate a 'cosmopolitan identity' that 'prompts a genuine curiosity towards and willingness to learn from other cultures', the experiment was designed to embed ICTs as a vehicle for critically reflecting on aspects of national identity and regional and global citizenship. (*Teaching in the knowledge society: Education in the age of insecurity*, Teachers' College Press, New York, 2003).

The experiment, Henderson explained, was predicated on the assumption that the experience would result in these pre-service teachers being more disposed to develop similar learning experiences in their civics and citizenship education classrooms.

Adding value through school/community partnerships

Di Smith (Teacher, Albuera Street Primary School, Tasmania) retraced the pathway she took in connecting her upper primary students with the community. In this context, she particularly focused on a 'unique inter-generational partnership' with Legacy which, four years later, resulted in the book, *Legacy: A guide for teachers*, which is being issued to all Tasmanian schools.

The workshop outlined the story of the Legacy project which included an interview with a veteran. The project, Smith explained, is 'very much about sharing a set of values and attitudes through a civics and citizenship focus'.

Smith provided participants with an overview of the implementation process and the scope and nature of the community work undertaken by the students. This included examples of teaching and learning experiences that they can use, as appropriate, in their own civics and citizenship programs.

Invading Australia and the implications of questioning Australia's historical understanding

Standing in at short notice for Peter Cochrane who was unable to attend the forum due to illness, Dr Peter Stanley (Director, Centre for Historical Research, National Museum) provided an outline of how the substance of his forthcoming book, *Invading Australia: Japan and the Battle for Australia 1942*, provides a case study of how historical perspectives can contribute to civics and citizenship discussions in class.

His interest in this context is not just in what happened in Australian history, but also how we understand Australian history, why we believe what we do, and how we conduct the necessary debate about the interpretations we adopt.

With this in mind, he sought to take several episodes in the history of 20th century Australia and see if 'we can stimulate some debate about whether it's possible to reach a justifiable understanding of Australia's history, especially in our school

students'. And he focused in particular on three episodes in Australia's experience of the Second World War which revolve around the idea of the invasion Australia seemed to face.

In his forthcoming book, Stanley explained, he looks at the idea of Japan invading Australia, 'first in the 50 years before 1942, when invasion became a dark prophetic fantasy; second in 1942 when it seemed that the Japanese would invade; and third after 1945 when we learned that the Japanese decided not to invade (and never had a chance to change their mind)', yet despite this, we saw the invention in the mid 1990s of the 'idea of a "Battle for Australia" ... which most Australians now still believe'. This, he argued, is reflective of 'an emotive nationalism' which has 'derailed the rational interpretation of evidence'; which he illustrated with such images as an anti-Japanese cartoon from the Bulletin of 1907, an advertisement from 1942 foreseeing bombing as a prelude to invasion, and more.

The book, he noted, related to two connected ideas that are of concern to educators – the way Australians understand their history; and the way we understand the process of doing history. Both are important because they inform judgments and choices we make about the way we understand Australia in the modern world.

He then proceeded to look at three examples in more depth.

The Brisbane Line

The 'single largest fiction connected with the crisis of 1942', Stanley argued, 'remains the alleged existence of the Brisbane Line'. All Australians 'remember' it from the Second World War; despite the fact it never actually existed, as demonstrated by such historians as Paul Hasluck, Geoffrey Bolton, Michael McKernan and Paul Burns. 'Practically everyone of a certain age, particularly in Queensland', he explained by way of example, believes in the Brisbane Line, as evidenced by a Mt Isa resident he quoted who told interviewers that 'We heard that nothing was being protected north of Brisbane ... we had no defence, no defence at all'. Similarly a woman in Ipswich recalled her father as being 'ropable about Queensland being sacrificed'. The irony of the Brisbane Line 'folklore', Stanley observed is that, 'with the exception of the submarine raid on Sydney and the ships torpedoed south of Stradbroke Island, all of the Australians who died at Japanese hands on Australian soil died in the area supposedly to be given up under the mythical plan'.

Put simply, he explained, 'The Advisory War Council did not think of abandonment (and) in March 1942 wanted Darwin, Port Moresby and Fremantle defended, and approved movements of forces north because its members wanted to defend everything'. The Brisbane Line is a myth that began with allegations by Eddie Ward, a left-wing ALP member who, from late 1942 alleged that the Menzies government had planned to abandon the north of Australia to the Japanese invaders without serious resistance. These charges were actually tested by Prime Minister Curtin through a Royal Commission and found to be baseless. Yet many Australians have continued to believe that they substantially are true.

John Curtin and the Chinese map

By the end of the Papuan campaign, Stanley explained, 'it was clear that the war would become a matter of Allied counter-offensives against Japan's conquests and then, perhaps, Japan itself'. Nonetheless, Curtin continued to worry that Australia might be invaded, as exemplified by 'the phenomenon of the "Chinese map".'

As the campaign was ending in February 1943, the Australian delegation in the Nationalist Chinese capital, Chungking, forwarded to Canberra a map which Chinese intelligence officers had obtained by unspecified means which purported to show that the Japanese had planned in June 1942 to make a large diversionary landing at Darwin, and to invade Western Australia and advance eastwards across the Nullabor.

The experts took the map as 'bogus', but Curtin seems to have been half convinced by it. It seems, according to Stanley, that the map 'confirmed one of the dark fantasies he had entertained before the war and since Japan's run of victories'. The Chinese map seemed to confirm that 'his own Western Australia might indeed be threatened'. This map has, in his view, 'done a huge amount of mischief, and Curtin's reaction raised the question not so much of why he continued to 'bang the invasion drum for so long' as why he continued to 'believe invasion likely or possible for a year after military experts ... advised it was increasingly unlikely'. In fact, not until a year after he was advised that no Japanese invasion was contemplated did Curtin finally admit the prospect publicly.

Memory and history

Oral history, Stanley suggested, is often seen simply as 'a way of preserving "memories": the aural equivalent of a family photograph album'. But as we all know, 'the snapshots that make it into an album are only those we have vetted and approved ... The voice of the past is really the voice of the present with a selective memory'; which he illustrated with reference to recorded memories of 1942.

For two years from 2004, he explained, the film maker Michael Caulfield used federal funding to create the *Australians at War Film Archive*, 'the most ambitious oral history undertaking this country has ever seen'. Caulfield sent teams of interviewers to record about 2000 veterans of conflict since 1939.

While the interviewing teams were often 'more enthusiastic than knowledgeable, they at least allow us to enter into the collective memory of Australians of that generation'. Desmond Pigram, who Stanley cited by way of example, ended the war guarding Japanese charged with war crimes in Ambon, and remembered that 'they were going to come down over the Kokoda Trail and invade us'. Others convey 'a more subtle recollection'. For instance, an interviewer asked Donald Daniels who fought in Papua whether there had been a real fear that the Japanese would invade. 'No', he replied, 'not a real fear. It was muted ... It was a possibility'. The interviews, in Stanley's view, 'reflect differences of opinion as well as common experiences' But certainly many veterans reflected the common belief of the purpose of the Brisbane Line.

Somewhat interestingly in this context, some interviews showed that the idea of the Brisbane Line had 'taken stronger root among those who had only read about the war rather than lived through it'. One interviewer exposed this with what Stanley referred to as 'the clarity of a court room cross examination'. Sylvia Cater joined the Australian Army Nursing Service later in the war and served in the occupation force in Japan. As a Victorian, she had not heard of the Brisbane Line, but her interviewer clearly accepted it as true, as evident in the following exchange that Stanley quoted:

Q: What did you hear about things such as the Brisbane Line?

A: The Brisbane Line?

Q: It was supposedly a line above which they would concede ground to the Japanese without a fight and withdraw forces back to Brisbane. Did you ever hear of that?

A: I have never heard of that. Never.

Q: Oh right. But it was a real proposition.

A: You're introducing it to me.

Q: And I think it was a real proposition.

A: It probably wasn't.

The problem for oral history this demonstrates is that it sounds like 'a replay but it is really an improvisation'. The value of oral history is not just that it tells us what people did in 1942, but also how they feel about it 70 years or more on. The point for Stanley is that increasingly, those who lived through 1942 want to remember it a particular way: 'hence the extraordinary phenomenon of the Battle for Australia movement'.

These three examples are relevant in his view, because they relate to sources of evidence that schools use all the time – ie, oral history. His intention in this context was not to suggest that we do not use oral history, or that school students shouldn't, but rather to show 'the perils of using it as more than a way of understanding the ideas about the past, rather than a way of gathering hard, incontrovertible "facts" about the past'. And in that sense, all three of his examples have a bearing on civics and the historical imagination. In particular they give rise to 'live questions' for Australians, and especially educators and students, such as the question he then posed to participants for discussion and then feedback before he concluded his address – 'can we truly form a justifiable understanding of our own nation's past?'

Some participant questions and responses

Asked by facilitator Tony Mackay whether there is a 'connecting thread' between the argument he had posed and the way in which he sees a lack of evidence leading to a set of beliefs that influence our perception of ourselves and the way in which civics and citizenship is enacted, Stanley responded it is 'nationalism'. In the last decade, he suggested, we have tended to value 'nationalism more than rationalism', and this is something schools need to address.

How you simultaneously communicate content, process and analysis in the curriculum time available to any class, he noted in response to a question about how educators assist students to move beyond myth to evidence, is a 'massive problem' that simply must be done if we are to transcend cartoon-like, one dimensional heroes and villains approaches we often adopt.

Stanley was sceptical about the suggestion from the floor that the growth in nationalism is simply a response to globalisation. It dates back to the 1970s, he argued, spurred by the film Gallipoli with its decisive moment coming when Paul Keating as Prime Minister symbolically kissed the ground at Kokoda. The nationalist version of Australian military history is happening for Australian reasons.

Responding to a comment about the challenge to get students looking at primary sources and using evidence, Stanley acknowledged the existence of a 'tension' between wanting students to acquire the skills to make up their own minds, yet also not wanting them to 'get it wrong'. One of the things he most values about our system in this context is that we have the 'freedom to be wrong'; though there are, in his view, times when expertise simply should be brought to bear to help young people make up their minds.

Asked about his view of the 'history wars', Stanley indicated that they are defined differently by different people. This was, in his view, a 'dark period in Australia's intellectual life' which came out of a conflict between an understanding of history arising from evidence, and an understanding of history derived from a theory. The history wars got 'badly derailed' by people such as Keith Windshuttle who ignored the substance to focus on footnotes and attack people's integrity and motives instead.

Finally, when asked whether some groups are actively cultivating a sense of nationalism and myth, Stanley simply noted that the Battle for Australia never happened, yet in the 1990s the concept suddenly emerged. In tackling this myth, he is by no means denigrating or minimising the sacrifices Australian soldiers made. Quite the contrary. 'The most important thing about World War 2 from an Australian perspective is that we got involved for other people's freedoms. That's what matters and when some organisations promote an inaccurate view to acknowledge veterans, their worthy aim just uses the wrong method'.

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Having heard all of this discussion, Stanley then concluded his contribution by suggesting that what he presented is 'relevant to a conference such as this, not just because the episodes relate to how we understand, interpret or justify Australian history. It's also highly relevant to the way we conduct the inevitable and necessary debates that will occur between people who disagree. One of the hallmarks of a democracy is that people will value ideas and principles, and will promote or defend them strenuously; as they should. When historical questions such as "the Japanese invasion" are discussed, it's particularly important that those debates be pursued vigorously and with a respect for the evidence and for each others' views'. And he was, in this context, 'delighted' to find that that is exactly what had happened that afternoon.

Conclusion

Facilitator Tony Mackay then ended the forum by noting that the challenge is to really progress the civics and citizenship education agenda at a time when we are about to formulate new national education goals and a national curriculum through the new Curriculum Board.

With this broad 'enabling' agenda in mind, he then asked participants if there were any 'key actions' they felt needed to be on the table beyond suggestions that emerged in the facilitated discussion earlier in the day.

The key idea to emerge, which gained broad participant support, related to the need to support ongoing professional development of teachers through the development of a one-year Graduate Diploma in Civics and Citizenship which could lead to accreditation for Masters Courses. This idea was sufficiently supported that participants indicated they wished it to be brought to the attention of DEEWR as it deliberates on where to take the CCE program next.

Beyond this, there was strong support for the need to make clearer connections between other major national initiatives such as the Values Education Program, and ensure that each picks up on the other, including the identification of case studies where work is succeeding and can be emulated.



Australian Government
Department of Education, Employment
and Workplace Relations



2008 NATIONAL CIVICS AND CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION FORUM

From curriculum to community
— the impact of civics and
citizenship education

National Museum of Australia
Monday 2 and Tuesday 3 June 2008

2008 NATIONAL CIVICS AND CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION FORUM



Monday 2 June 2008

Facilitator — Anthony Mackay, Director, Centre for Strategic Education

9.30 – 10.00 am VISIONS THEATRE FOYER	Registration Arrival tea and coffee
SESSION 1 10.00 – 10.45 am VISIONS THEATRE	Introduction and welcome — Anthony Mackay Welcome to the National Museum of Australia — Louise Douglas, General Manager, Audience and Programs, National Museum of Australia Welcome to Country — Matilda House, Ngunnawal Elder Official opening — Professor Barry McGaw, Chair of the National Curriculum Board
SESSION 2 10.45 – 11.30 am VISIONS THEATRE	Keynote address <i>Being an active citizen</i> — Jack Waterford, Editor at Large, <i>The Canberra Times</i>
11.30 am – 12.00 pm PENINSULA ROOM	MORNING TEA
SESSION 3 12.00 – 1.00 pm VISIONS THEATRE	Workshops <i>Having fun with human rights in the classroom</i> — Sarah Winter and Rebecca Stuart, Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission
STUDIO	<i>Giving a face to the nation: Exploring Australia's civic past through the National Portrait Gallery Collection</i> — Helena Bezzina, National Portrait Gallery
BUNYIP	<i>Historical understanding and active citizenship</i> — David Boon, Illawarra Primary School, Tasmania
YOWIE	<i>Now more than ever we live in one world</i> — Jennifer Ure, Asia Education Foundation
1.00 – 2.00 pm PENINSULA ROOM	LUNCH
SESSION 4 2.00 – 4.00 pm VISIONS THEATRE	Workshop <i>Skilling up on improving student learning in civics and citizenship education</i> — Suzanne Mellor, Australian Council for Educational Research
4.00 pm	Conclude day one
EVENING EVENT 7.00 – 10.00 pm THE LOBBY	Forum dinner with dinner speaker — Jonathon Welch, 2008 Australian Local Hero of the Year, Director of the Choir of Hard Knocks The Lobby Restaurant, King George Terrace, Parkes ACT

2008 NATIONAL CIVICS AND CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION FORUM



Tuesday 3 June 2008

Facilitator — Anthony Mackay, Director, Centre for Strategic Education

8.45 – 9.00 am VISIONS THEATRE FOYER	Arrival tea and coffee
SESSION 5 9.00 – 10.00 am VISIONS THEATRE	Keynote address <i>Educating young Australians about their system of government: Meeting the challenge</i> — George Williams, Anthony Mason Professor, Faculty of Law, University of NSW
SESSION 6 10.00 – 10.30 am VISIONS THEATRE	Resources <i>Dimensions of citizenship in civics and citizenship materials</i> — Kurt Ambrose, Project Manager Civics and Citizenship Education, Curriculum Corporation
10.30 – 11.00 am PENINSULA ROOM	MORNING TEA
SESSION 7 11.00 am – 12.00 pm PENINSULA ROOM	Facilitated discussion <i>Civics and citizenship: Network nationally and share your civics and citizenship ideas</i>
SESSION 8 12.00 – 1.00 pm VISIONS THEATRE	Workshops <i>Citizenship the Sandgate way</i> — Duncan Ree, Sandgate State School, Queensland
STUDIO	<i>Democratic opportunity knocks at Batemans Bay High</i> — Ben Herzinger and Liz Thomas, Batemans Bay High School, New South Wales
BLINYIP	<i>Preparing the next generation of teachers for engaging students in regional and global citizenship via intercultural online communication</i> — Dr Deborah Henderson, Queensland University of Technology
YOWIE	<i>Adding value through school/community partnerships</i> — DI Smith, Albuera Street Primary School, Tasmania
1.00 – 1.45 pm PENINSULA ROOM	LUNCH
SESSION 9 1.45 – 2.45 pm VISIONS THEATRE	Keynote address <i>Re-imagining our colonial history</i> — Peter Cochrane, Winner of the Inaugural Prime Minister's Prize for Australian History
SESSION 10 2.45 – 3.00 pm VISIONS THEATRE	Conclusion
3.00 pm	Close
3.30 pm	Bus departs for Canberra Airport

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