



Teacher Briefing Sheet:

The Fabric of Australia: Ties That Bind Us – Card Deck Challenge

Overview

Inspire the next generation of informed, engaged citizens by bringing civics to life in your classroom. This creative, curriculum aligned card competition helps students explore, express, and showcase a meaningful understanding of Australia's democratic values and structures.

Your students' goal: create a unique deck of "Fabric of Australia" civics playing cards!

- Students will research core democratic principles, design visuals, and write clear explanations.
- All participants earn a certificate of participation.
- The winning group receives a custom-printed card deck featuring their own designs!

[Click on the website link](#) to find out more about the competition or see details below.

Competition Objectives

- Develop meaningful understanding of Australian civics through visual and written expression.
- Encourage respectful discussion, creativity, collaboration, and critical thinking.
- Support civic knowledge through active, engaging learning.

Who Can Participate?

- Students in **Years 7–10** from **any subject** ie civics, history, commerce or art

Judging Criteria

- Civic Understanding: Accurate representation of Australian civics
- Creativity: Visual appeal and Originality
- Coherence: How well the cards express the "Common Threads" theme
- Educational Value: Can cards help others understand civics?



Step-by-Step Guide: Informed Fabric of Australia Competition



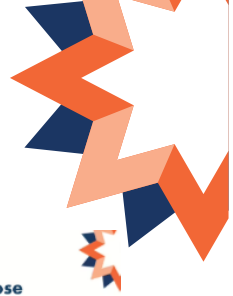
STEP ONE: Download

Explore the Fact Sheets, Activities and PowerPoints provided.

Download the [blank card set template](#), [14 Fact Sheets](#) and the [Cards Poster](#) to begin your project .

Civics Topics and Subtopics

- **Constitution** – Separation of powers, division of powers, the people’s document
- **Governance Structures** – Legislature, Executive, Judiciary
- **Levels of Government** – Federal, State, local
- **Principles of Justice** – Equality, fairness, access
- **Fair Trial** – Judicial independence, due process, presumption of innocence
- **Laws** – Types of Laws, Law Making and Effective Laws
- **Representative Democracy** – Parliamentary sovereignty, checks and balances, active and engaged citizens
- **Rule of Law** – Equality before the law, checks and balances, people power
- **Freedoms** – Rights as citizens and humans, patchwork of protections, freedom of speech
- **Active and Engaged Citizens** – Voting and juries, rights and responsibilities
- **Equality before the law** – Equal benefit of the law, Equally subject to the law, Equal substance of the law
- **Values** –Respect for others, a fair go, freedom
- **Pluralism** – British heritage, Migrant heritage, Indigenous heritage



STEP TWO: Pre-Test

Test what you already know using the benchmark test [Click here](#)

STEP THREE: Learn

Pick (or be assigned) a civics topic from the list of 14 topics/cards.

Each topic includes three subtopics for you to explore.

This research will help you prepare to create your civics cards.

- Use the resources and activities provided to help you
- Use any other resources your teacher gives you
- Use Rule of Law Education Centre [posters](#) and your own research
- Make use of classroom materials to design and create your own playing card

STEP FOUR: Create

- Divide the class into pairs.
- Assign each pair on one of the [14 topic blank card sheets](#) and provide each pair with the relevant factsheet. If using a class page on a learning platform, you could have a link to the resources page here so that they can look up the information directly and download it themselves.
- Using the blank card templates, each pair must create **one card** for their topic area.

For example, for the topic Levels of Government, we have used the map of Australia held together with train tracks to represent the unified federalist system.

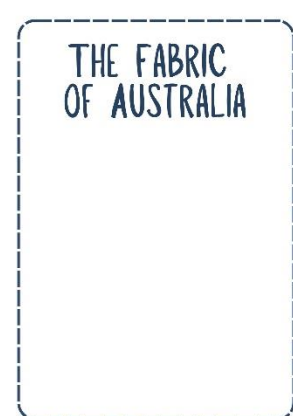
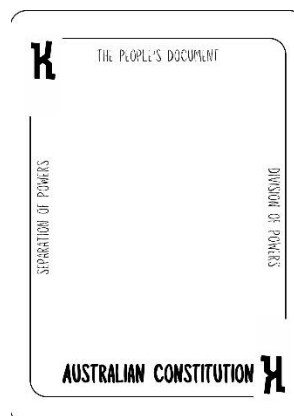
Students must create a new picture for their card that shows that concept in their understanding that other students could find relatable.

o Front of Card:

- ♣ Draw a symbol, image, or artwork that visually represents the topic.
- ♣ Encourage creativity and original designs based on the students' understanding.

o Back of Card:

- ♣ Write a short, clear explanation of the topic in your own words.
- ♣ The explanation should be simple, engaging, and easy for other students to understand.



The Constitution: Its Purpose

What is the purpose of the Australian Constitution?

What is the Constitution?
The Constitution is a legal document setting out the basic laws for the government of Australia. It is situated so that the Australian people have the ultimate power.
The Constitution came into effect on 1 January 1901, when the states of the Empire and self-governing colonies joined the British Empire to form a new nation, the Commonwealth of Australia.
The fundamental purpose of the Constitution is to define how power is shared within Australia. It defines who the power lies, who can use it and how it is controlled. The Constitution also defines the structure of government and the powers of the various levels of government through the Separation of Powers and Checks and Balances.
The Constitution is the supreme document and can only be amended by the Australian people through a referendum.

Purpose 1:

Establishes and creates the Commonwealth of Australia.

The Constitution established the Commonwealth of Australia, bringing the independent colonies together into a single nation. There was concern that the separate colonies would lose their independence if they joined a new nation. The Constitution established the framework of a federal government with clearly defined powers between the Commonwealth and the States.
Section 51 of the Constitution lists the powers in which the Federal Government can make laws. For example, defence and foreign affairs. States that are not listed under section 51 are the states' responsibility. For example, health, education and social services.
Section 66 of the Constitution lists the powers in which the Federal Government can make laws. For example, defence and foreign affairs. States that are not listed under section 66 are the states' responsibility. For example, health, education and social services.

Purpose 2:

Working power between the Legislative, Executive and Judiciary.

The Constitution is also structured to give and control the powers of the three branches of the government: the Legislative, Executive and Judiciary.
This is done in the Separation of Powers.
The power to make laws is given to the Legislative Assembly (Parliament) for the state and the Commonwealth.
The power to execute the laws is given to the Executive Government (the Prime Minister, Ministers and Departments).
The power to interpret the laws is given to the Judiciary (the High Court and the State Courts).
The Constitution also defines the powers of the various levels of government through the Separation of Powers and Checks and Balances.

The Constitution is a document for the Australian people.



Purpose 3:

Protects the Australian People.

The Constitution protects the Australian people from arbitrary power and ensures their rights. It defines the powers of the government and ensures that they are used in a way that protects the rights of the people.
The Constitution also defines the powers of the various levels of government through the Separation of Powers and Checks and Balances.
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STEP FIVE: Submit

Your teacher will collect and submit your cards as a class entry.

Each submission must include:

- Your school's name
- Your class name
- Your subject area
- Your year level

Accepted file types: PDF, DOC, DOCX, JPEG

Instructions on how to submit will be uploaded onto the website.

STEP SIX: Post-Test

Take the Post-Test Survey to reflect on what you've learned [Click here](#)

STEP SEVEN: Winners & Recognition

Submissions will be reviewed by the Rule of Law Education Centre. Additional categories may be added to the competition.

The best class set of cards will **win** their very own playing card deck with their own class designs on it!

Stay tuned for announcements about winning entries and class recognition.