



# Student Resource Book

## Years 7/8

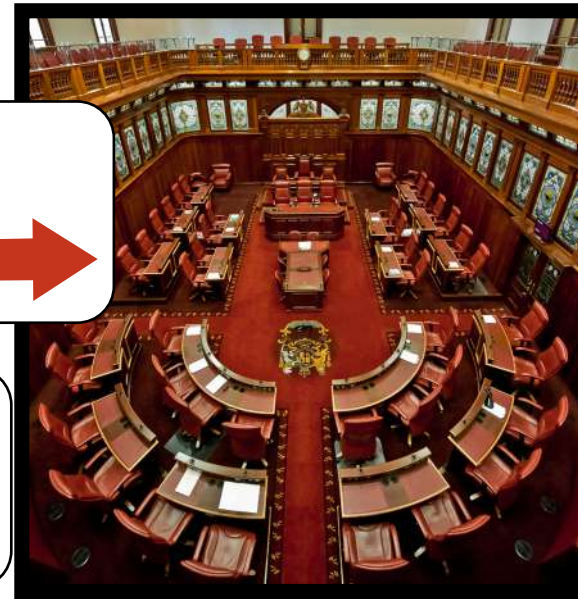


**HOW LAWS ARE MADE IN AUSTRALIA  
THROUGH PARLIAMENTS (ACHCKO63)**

**BEFORE AN IDEA EVER BECOMES A NEW LAW IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA,  
IT MUST TRAVEL THROUGH A NUMBER OF STAGES IN PARLIAMENT...**



... in both the  
Legislative Council  
(also known as the  
upper house)... →



← ... and the  
Legislative Assembly  
(also known as the  
lower house)...

These stages are called readings, there are six stages in all; three in the Legislative Assembly and three in the Legislative Council. It is only after the idea (known as a Bill) successfully passes through each of these stages, that it will gain Assent and become a law or an Act of Parliament. Assent is the final stage of a Bill becoming a law and is given by the Governor of Western Australia. Bills (except for those related to money) can start their legislative journey in either house. This journey is a bit like the Socceroos trying to win the World Cup.



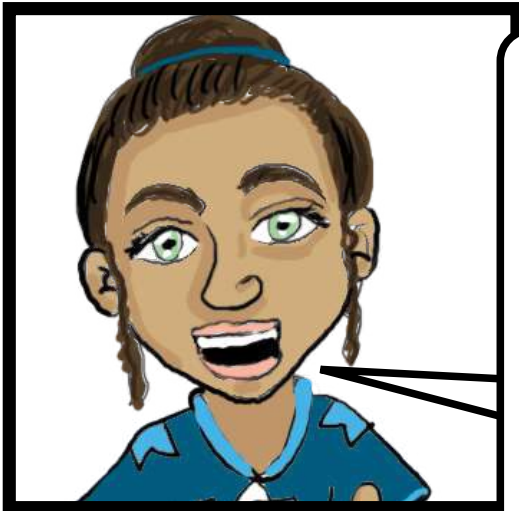
Let's imagine that the Socceroos need to win three matches in the first round of the World Cup before they can progress to the next round. To do this, they need to score a majority of goals in all three matches. This is similar to when a Bill is introduced into the first house (either the Legislative Council or Legislative Assembly).

Here, the Bill will be read three times and must gain the support of a majority of members in each reading, before it can enter the next house ...

***TO BE CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE ...***

## MEANWHILE ...

Just like a soccer game, there are certain rules that need to be followed. In Parliament, these rules are called standing orders. If the correct standing orders are not followed by the member introducing the Bill, like a soccer player not playing by the rules, it could receive a 'red card' and not be allowed to continue ...



Now let us imagine that the Socceroos score the majority of goals in each of their three matches and therefore enter the second round of the World Cup. They will need to be on their game, because the opposition will now have a greater knowledge of their strengths and weaknesses. Their game plan will be put under the microscope, there will even be some minor rule changes and they may even have to change how they play if they want to win all three matches. If they achieve this, the Socceroos will win the World Cup.



This process could be compared to a Bill entering the second house, where it must, once again win the majority of votes in all three readings. If this is achieved the Bill will then win Assent from the Governor of Western Australia. This means, just as the Socceroos will be deemed world champions, the Bill will be deemed a law or an Act of Parliament.

*LET'S CHECK OUT THE FIXTURES ON NEXT PAGE ...*

# FIRST ROUND

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY STADIUM

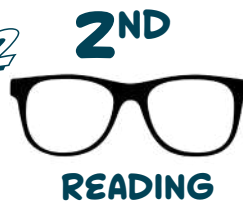
BILL

ROUND 1  
VS



BILL

ROUND 2  
VS



BILL

ROUND 3  
VS



ONWARD TO  
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
STADIUM ...



# SECOND ROUND

## LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL STADIUM

BILL

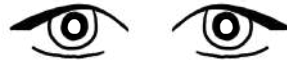
ROUND 1 1<sup>ST</sup>  
VS



READING

BILL

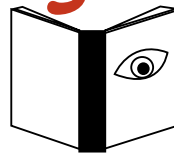
ROUND 2 2<sup>ND</sup>  
VS



READING

BILL

ROUND 3 3<sup>RD</sup>  
VS



READING



# REVISION ...

What is the term used for an idea for a proposed law, when it is introduced into Parliament?

\_\_\_\_\_

Who can introduce this into the house? \_\_\_\_\_

How many times will it be read in each house? \_\_\_\_\_

What is another name for the Legislative Assembly? \_\_\_\_\_

What is another name for the Legislative Council? \_\_\_\_\_

What is the term for the rules that must be followed in Parliament?

\_\_\_\_\_

Who is responsible for granting Assent? \_\_\_\_\_

Once it has gained Assent, what is this idea then called? \_\_\_\_\_

As well as these six stages, the Parliament of Western Australia also has some other important features to enhance quality control. Just like the Socceroos match committee look at their game plan as they approach the finals, both the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly also have the opportunity to take a closer look ...



... This can happen after the second reading and gives members the opportunity to look at the Bill in detail, clause by clause. In the Legislative Assembly, this stage is called Consideration in Detail, in the Legislative Council stage it is known as the Committee of the Whole House ...



1 ... During this stage, the Minister/member in charge of the Bill will come to the Table of the House and may be joined by one or more advisers. In this instance, members can ask specific questions regarding the precise impact of certain clauses, and potentially move amendments (make changes to the existing clauses) and even insert new clauses. This process gives members the chance to become more informed about the issue the Bill is addressing and may therefore lead to improving its function ...

2 ... The Western Australian Parliament also uses committees that sit outside of the houses. Ones that operate permanently are called Standing Committees and those that are focused upon a specific issue are called Select Committees. Unlike Standing Committees, Select Committees only operate for a defined period, meaning once the committee has handed down its findings, the committee will be dissolved. Generally, the committees comprise members of each house separately, however on the occasions where members of both houses serve on the same committee, it is referred to as a Joint Committee.



# THE COMMITTEE REPORT



**WHEN A BILL'S A LITTLE SKETCHY, LACKING THE NITTY GRITTY  
IT SOMETIMES NEEDS IMPROVING, THROUGH THE AID OF A COMMITTEE  
AFTER THE SECOND READING, MEMBERS GET THE CHANCE  
TO GIVE IT GREATER SCRUTINY, THAN JUST A PASSING GLANCE  
CONSIDERATION IN DETAIL, IS ONE WAY THIS IS DONE  
IT IS IN THE LOWER HOUSE, THAT THIS IS BEGUN  
THE UPPER HOUSE ALSO GETS TO PLAY A CRUCIAL ROLE  
IT'S THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL'S 'COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE'**

## *REVISION ...*

After which reading stage can a bill be looked at by a committee?

Consideration in detail takes place in which house?

What is an amendment to a Bill?

What is the difference between Standing Committees and Select Committees?

What is a Joint Committee?

Why do you think it is a good idea to have the committee process in Parliament?



# ... COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE CLASS!

**ESTABLISH A WHOLE CLASS COMMITTEE TO EXPLORE THE PROPOSED SCHOOL BILL, 'THAT SCHOOL UNIFORMS NO LONGER BE COMPULSORY'.**

Remember, the good thing about committee processes is that they give members more time to really explore all of the issues associated with a particular piece of legislation, before they have to vote upon it.



**IN GROUPS OF FOUR, SPEND FIFTEEN MINUTES WRITING DOWN ALL OF THE ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES RELATING TO THE BILL, 'THAT SCHOOL UNIFORMS NO LONGER BE COMPULSORY'.**

Now you need to choose a spokesperson from your group to report your findings to the whole class. Hopefully, once you have had the opportunity to hear from each group, you will be more informed about how to vote on the issue.



# TIME TO VOTE WITH YOUR FEET!

Sometimes in a soccer match, where a game needs to be decided, yet there is no clear winner, the referee will call for a penalty shoot-out. A penalty shoot-out is a quick process where the winner is decided by whichever team gets the majority of goals. In parliamentary terms, the penalty shootout is a little like a Division ...

... Although the Division may be requested by any member of the chamber, like the referee in a soccer match, it will be up to either the Speaker in the lower house or the President in the upper house to announce it.



A division is where members vote by moving to opposite sides of the chamber, depending on whether they agree or disagree with the Bill. Those who support the Bill (vote yes) move to the right hand side of the Speaker or President, while those who disagree with it (vote no) move to the left hand side.

# TIME TO VOTE WITH YOUR FEET!

## CLASS DIVISION EXERCISE



For this exercise, you will need to set up your classroom with a centre aisle down the middle of the room, with desks on the two sides. At this stage, you can stay sitting in your usual seat. The classroom is now the Legislative Council chamber ...

... Those on the left side of the chamber are the Purple Party and those on the right side are the Gold Party.

Your teacher will take the role of the Legislative Council President and will announce 'A division has been called' and announce **'THE QUESTION IS THAT SCHOOL UNIFORMS NO LONGER BE COMPULSORY'...**

... If you agree with the Bill (that school uniforms no longer be compulsory) you need to move to the right side of the teacher. If you disagree with the Bill, you will need to move to the left hand side of the teacher.



Once this is completed, your teacher can do a head count and declare if the Bill has succeeded, meaning that more members of the chamber agree 'that school uniforms no longer be compulsory'. In the Parliament of Western Australia, the two people who do the counting are called 'Tellers'. The Tellers, along with the Clerks will make sure the numbers are correct before the President or the Speaker announces the result!

# IN CONCLUSION...!

1... Wow, the journey of a Bill becoming a Law is certainly complex. Three readings in both houses, not to mention on some occasions Consideration in Detail, Committee of the Whole House, Standing Committees, Select Committees and Joint Committees before finally being given Assent from the Governor of Western Australia!

2... Although this journey seems longer than the road to the World Cup, our Parliament continues to make laws throughout the year. Laws that change the way we as Western Australians live, laws that impact on our whole community and laws that may be in place for many years to come. With the stakes so high, aren't you glad that Parliament has a well thought out game plan?



**SO WELL DONE ON LEARNING HOW OUR LAWS ARE MADE  
IN THE PARLIAMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA AND  
HOW THE COMMITTEES CAN ASSIST THIS PROCESS.**

**WHY NOT ASK YOUR TEACHER TO BOOK A TOUR OR VISIT US  
ONLINE [WWW.PARLIAMENT.WA.GOV.AU](http://WWW.PARLIAMENT.WA.GOV.AU) TO DISCOVER MORE.**

