

NAME:

Year 7 – Indigenous Australia – Referendum

ACTIVITY 1 – PROCESS OF CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGE

Read the '1967 Referendum' (page 10) section of the fact book and the information on the following website

<https://www.peo.gov.au/learning/fact-sheets/referendums-and-plebiscites.html>

to complete the following tasks.

You are going to use the 1967 referendum as a case study to examine the process of constitutional change.

1. Create a flow chart explaining the process for changing the constitution in Australia.

2. Briefly summarise the arguments made in the government's 'yes' case for the 1967 referendum.

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3. What was different about the 1967 referendum when compared with a typical referendum? Why is this significant?

4. What do the results of the referendum reveal about Australian society at this time?

ACTIVITY 2 – CREATING A ‘YES’ CAMPAIGN

Before completing the following task, read the ‘[Expert Panel on Constitutional Recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples](#)’ (page 21) section of the fact book.

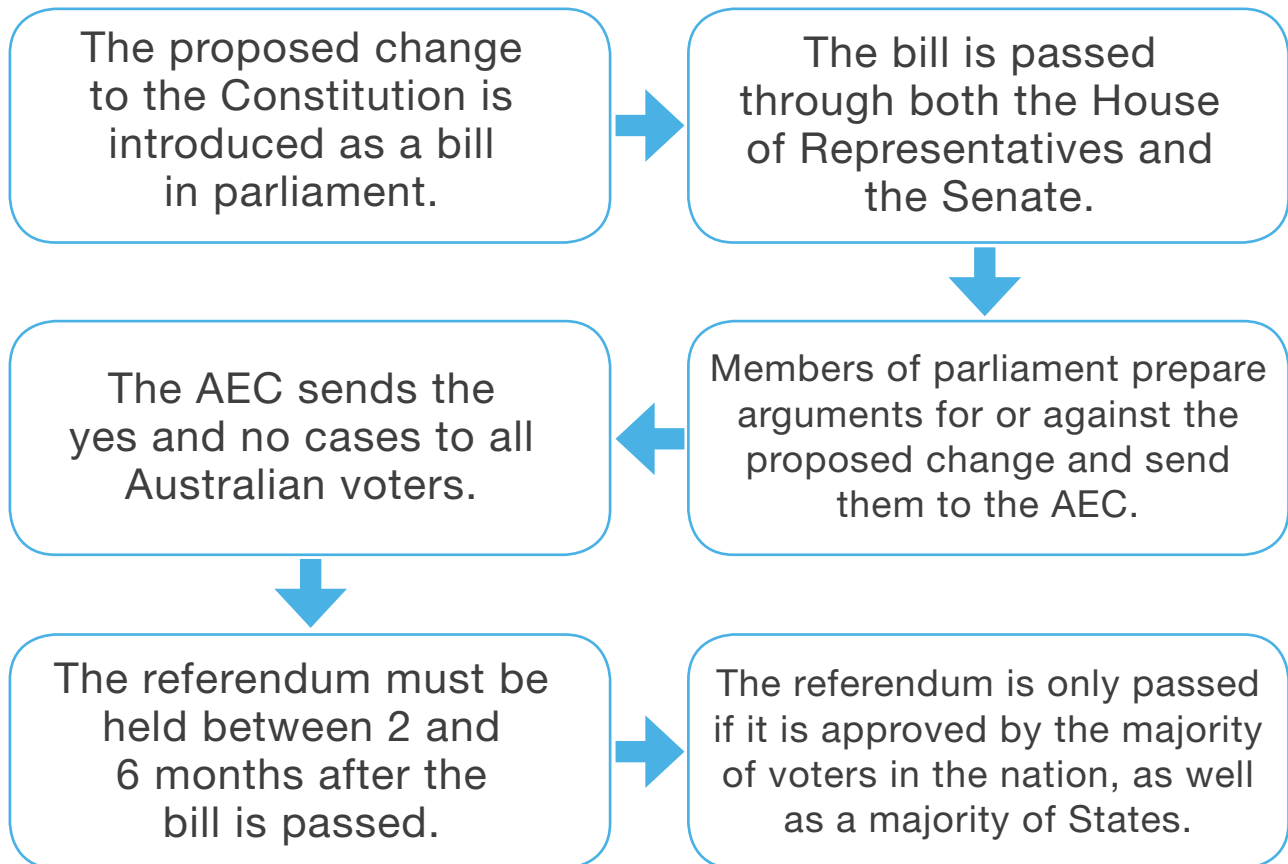
The Expert Panel on Constitutional Recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples has recommended holding a referendum to repeal multiple sections of the Constitution, while also adding some sections.

Your task is to create a ‘yes’ campaign for this referendum. For this campaign you will create promotional material such as a poster, slogan or television advertisement. Your promotional material must explain why Australian voters should vote to add and remove the sections of the Constitution identified by the Expert Panel.

You may like to do further research on some of the yes campaigns presented for past referendums, for example the 1999 referendum to make Australia a republic.

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2. Briefly summarise the arguments made in the government's 'yes' case for the 1967 referendum.

The yes case stated that the proposed amendments to the Constitution would remove the belief that the Constitution discriminated in some ways against Indigenous Australians. In addition, the changes would allow the Commonwealth to make special laws for Indigenous Australians if necessary or desirable.

The yes case argued that the Commonwealth's object would be to cooperate with the States to ensure that they acted in the best interests of Indigenous Australians. They also stated that section 127 was completely out of harmony with the national attitudes and modern thinking of Australia.

3. What was different about the 1967 referendum when compared with a typical referendum? Why is this significant?

In a typical referendum, members of parliament prepare 'yes' and 'no' arguments to be put to the voters. In the case of the 1967 referendum, only a 'yes' case was prepared, with no member of parliament opposing the referendum. This is significant as it showed that regardless of political affiliation, everybody agreed that the Constitution must be changed.

4. What do the results of the referendum reveal about Australian society at this time?

The referendum was easily passed, with 90.77% of voters voting yes. This shows that Australian society wanted to forge a new path to equality among Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. It also showed that societal attitudes towards Indigenous Australians had changed significantly over time.