

## Glossary Resource for Community Online Programs

<b>A</b>	
accountable	To be responsible for one's actions and decisions.
active participation	The enthusiastic and energetic engagement of individuals in activities that address community needs and contribute to the public good.
Act or Act of Parliament	A law made by a parliament.
ancient	Having lived or existed for a very long time.
Australian Constitution	The set of rules by which Australia is governed.
Australian Electoral Commission (AEC)	The organisation responsible for running federal elections and referendums.
authentic	Something that is real or true.
autocracy	A government in which one person has unlimited power.
<b>B</b>	
ballot	A voting process by which a choice is made.
ballot box	A box where voters place their completed ballot papers into.
ballot paper	A piece of paper listing the names of candidates for election, on which voters record their choice.
bias	Having a strong preference for one thing or person over another, even without a good reason.
bicameral	A parliament that consists of 2 chambers or houses.
bill	An idea for a new law.
boycott	The voluntary refusal to buy, use, or participate in something.
<b>C</b>	
campaigning	A planned set of actions that are carried out to achieve a particular purpose.
candidate	A person standing for election to Parliament.
chamber	A purpose-built room in a parliament house, in which law-making and debates occur.
citizen	A person who legally belongs to a country and has the rights and protection of that country.
colony	A country or area under the full or partial political control of another country and occupied by people from that country.
compulsory	Something that you have to do.
conscious consumerism	The practice of purchasing products or shopping at companies that align with a person's values.
constitution	The set of rules by which a state or country is run.
constitutional democracy	A system where the powers and limits of the government is set out in a Constitution.
constitutional monarchy	A system of government where a monarch (king or queen) is the head of state, but their powers are limited by a constitution and laws, often acting on the advice of an elected government.
cornerstone	Something very important that everything else depends on.
council	The law-making body of a local government.
council chambers	The place where councillors meet to discuss issues and laws that affect their community.
councillor	Title for a person elected to a local council.
critical thinking	A kind of thinking in which you question, analyse, interpret, evaluate and make a judgement about what you read, hear, say, or write.
<b>D</b>	
debate	A formal discussion on a bill or other topic in which different views are expressed.
deepfakes	Images, videos or audio that manipulate a person's likeness to make it appear like they have said or done something when they never did.
democracy	A system of government in which the people have a say on who should govern their country or state.
demos	An ancient Greek word meaning 'people'.

dictatorship	A form of government when one person or a small group has all the power and makes all the laws.
direct democracy	A system where citizens vote on laws and important decisions themselves, instead of having elected leaders make those decisions for them.
disinformation	False information that is deliberately created and spread in order to obscure the truth.
distrust	To lack faith or confidence in; to doubt.
disunity	When a group of people can't agree and work together, causing them to be divided.
diversity	Having a wide variety of different people and things within a group or setting.
<b>E</b>	
election	A process in which people vote to choose a person or group of people to hold an official position.
electoral roll	A list of all the people who are able to vote.
electorate	A geographical area represented by a member of parliament, sometimes referred to as a seat.
eligible	Someone is allowed to do or get something because they meet the rules or have the right qualities.
empathy	The ability to share someone else's feelings or experiences; to be able to see the world from their point of view.
empower	To help people become stronger and more confident by giving them the ability, authority, and opportunities to make their own choices.
engage	To get involved in an activity, or to make someone interested in something, keeping their attention.
enthusiastic	Having or showing great interest.
entrusted	To put someone or something into someone's care because they are trusted to do a good job.
equality	Treating everyone fairly and giving them the same chances and same amount of things, no matter who they are.
evolving	To change or develop slowly and gradually over time, often into a more complex or better form.
Executive arm	The part of the government whose job is to put laws into action, manage government departments, and make sure the country is running smoothly.
exempt	To be free from something that others are required to do.
<b>F</b>	
fact	Something known or proved to be true.
fair elections	Elections in which all votes are of equal value and included in the final result.
fairness	The impartial and just treatment of individuals, ensuring everyone has access to opportunities, resources, and support regardless of their background.
fake news	News stories that are false, with the story itself made up, with no facts, sources or quotes.
federal democracy	A system where power and responsibilities are divided between the federal (central) government and state governments.
federal election	The process by which eligible citizens vote for people to represent them in the House of Representatives and the Senate.
federal government	The level of government that puts Australian law into action, provides national government services and makes decisions on behalf of the nation.
federalism	A way of organizing a country's government where power is shared between a federal (central) government and smaller, regional or state governments.
(to) federate	Where separate states or groups join together and unite under one central government.
Federation	The joining together of the six British colonies in 1901 to form Australia.
fiction	A story that is made up from a person's imagination and isn't based on real people or events.
flawed	Having a mistake, fault, or weakness.
fostering	Helping to encourage something to grow or develop.
foundation	The important starting idea or skill that helps you learn more.

free choice	The ability to make your own choices, without the law or people in authority controlling you.
freedom	Being able or allowed to do, say, and think whatever you want to, without being controlled or limited.
free elections	Elections where citizens are free to vote for a candidate of their choice.
fundamental	The most important, basic, or essential part of something.
<b>G</b>	
government	A group of people who have the power to make laws and run a country, state or local area.
Governor	The King's representative in each state of Australia.
Governor-General	The King's representative in Australia.
GST	Goods and Services Tax is a tax that is charged on most goods and services you buy.
<b>H</b>	
harmonious	Things that go together nicely and have a peaceful sound or look.
head of state	The formal leader of a country. For example, King Charles III is Australia's head of state.
honourable	A title that may be used by a current or former government minister.
House of Representatives	One of the two houses of the Australian Parliament, also known as the lower house, in which the Federal Government is formed.
human rights	The basic freedoms and rules for how everyone should be treated so we can all have safe, fair, and respectful lives.
<b>I</b>	
impartial	Not favouring something or someone more than another.
implied	To suggest or show something without saying it directly.
income tax	A government levy on the earnings of individuals and businesses.
independent	Not being influenced or controlled by others; thinking or acting for oneself.
inspiration	A person or thing that motivates, uplifts, or gives someone the confidence to do something.
<b>J</b>	
Judicial arm	The part of the government made up of courts and judges that decides if laws have been broken and determines what the penalty shall be and makes sure that everyone is treated fairly under the law.
judiciary	The judges and courts who interprets and makes judgements about the law.
jury	A group of people called to a court of law who listen to the facts of a case and decide its outcome.
justice	Fairness in the way people are dealt with.
<b>K</b>	
(the) King	His Majesty King Charles III, Australia's head of state.
kratos	An ancient Greek word meaning 'rule'.
<b>L</b>	
law	Compulsory rules that help manage our society and define how people and organisations are expected to behave.
legislation	A law or proposed law.
Legislative arm	The group of people elected to parliament that makes the laws.
Legislative Assembly	One of the two houses of the Western Australian Parliament, also known as the lower house, in which the State Government is formed.
Legislative Council	One of the two houses of the Western Australian Parliament, also known as the upper house.
liberal democracy	A system where the power of the government is limited, and the freedom and rights of individuals are protected by laws.
local election	The process by which eligible citizens vote for people to represent them on their local council.
local government	The level of government that looks after local services, such as rubbish collection, pet control and local roads.

lore	Stories and traditional knowledge that are passed down among members of a culture, usually orally.
<b>M</b>	
Magna Carta	A 1215 English document that was the first to establish the idea that no one, not even the king, is above the law and that everyone is entitled to legal rights.
majority rule	A system of giving the largest group of people the power to make decisions for everyone.
Mayor	The leader of a city or town council.
medieval period	A time in history (from about 500 to 1500 BCE) that came between ancient and modern times.
minority groups	A smaller group of people in a society or country who are different from the larger, more powerful group in some way, such as by their race, religion, or culture.
misinformation	False or inaccurate information that is mistakenly created or spread.
monarch	A head of state, such as a king or queen, who has inherited their position.
<b>O</b>	
oligarchy	A system of government where power is held by only a small number of people.
<b>P</b>	
parliament	An assembly or group of elected law-making representatives.
parliamentary democracy	A system where citizens elect representatives to sit in parliament and make laws on their behalf and the head of government (e.g. the Prime Minister) is an elected member of parliament.
parliament house	The building where elected representatives meet to make laws.
petition	A collection of signatures, identifying people who share a stance on a particular issue.
plebiscite	A national vote used to decide a question that does not affect the Australian Constitution, the result of which is not binding on the government.
pluralist democracy	A system which allows multiple groups in society with different views and interests (e.g. political parties or pressure groups) to compete with each other to influence decision making.
(political) power	How governments and leaders make decisions and control their country or state.
Premier	The elected leader of the political party or coalition of parties that form a state government.
Prime Minister	The head of the Australian Government, who leads the parliamentary party or coalition of parties that wins the support of the majority of members in the House of Representatives.
public good	Something useful that is available to everyone and doesn't run out when one person uses it.
<b>R</b>	
rates	A type of tax on property collected by local councils.
referendum	A national vote on a question about a proposed change to the constitution.
representative democracy	A system in which people vote for candidates to represent them in a parliament.
representative	A person elected to Parliament or local council to make decisions on behalf of others.
resident	Someone living in a place for some length of time.
resilient	Being able to cope with tough times and have the ability to recover from disappointments or difficulties.
resonate	To have particular meaning or importance for someone.
respect	Showing care and consideration for others and valuing their worth.
(government) responsibilities	The duties and services that governments provide for the well-being of the people of the nation, state or local area.
(individual) responsibilities	The duties and obligations people contribute to society in order to keep it fair, safe and harmonious.

robust	Something that is strong and healthy.
Royal assent	The signing of a bill by the Governor-General (or Governor), which is the final step in making a bill into a law.
rule of law	A principle or idea whereby no one is above the law; that everyone is equal in the eyes of the law.
rural	Areas outside of cities and big towns, with not many people living there – sometimes farming areas.
<b>S</b>	
scrutinise	To examine something closely.
self-governing	Having control or rule over oneself.
Senate	One of the two houses of the Australian Parliament, also known as the upper house.
Senator	A person elected to the Senate.
separation of powers	The idea or principle that the power to make, administer and interpret laws should be shared between different groups to make sure no one group gets too much power.
(government) services	Work or duties performed by individuals employed by the different levels of government.
shared responsibilities	Different levels of government working together to provide services.
shire	An area of local government, usually rural.
Shire President	The leader of a shire council.
snapshot	Capturing a moment in time; something brief and transitional.
social cohesion	The idea that holds a group of people together, making them feel like they belong, are included, and work together for the same goals.
stamp duty	A tax charged by state governments on purchases such as buying a home.
state election	The process by which eligible citizens vote for people to represent them in their state parliament.
state government	The level of government that puts state laws into action, delivers government services and makes decisions on behalf of the people of that state.
suffrage	The right to vote.
<b>T</b>	
tax	An amount charged by a government on items such as wages or goods and services, to provide money for government services.
territory government	The level of government that puts territory laws into action, delivers government services and makes decisions on behalf of the people of that territory.
three arms of government	Are the legislative (makes laws), the executive (puts laws into action), and the judiciary (interprets laws), with each arm checking the power of the others to ensure no single arm becomes too powerful.
trustworthy	Something you can believe in and rely upon.
<b>U</b>	
unique	Being the only one of its type or kind.
United Nations	A group of independent countries that agree to work together and try to keep the world peaceful and safe.
Universal Declaration of Human Rights	A global document listing the basic rights and freedoms that every person in the world should have, simply because they are human.
uphold	To support and defend a promise, a law, or a belief, and make sure it stays strong against challenges.
urban	Having to do with a city or town.
<b>V</b>	
values	The beliefs and principles that guide the way that people live and behave.
vibrant	Something that is full of life, energy, and enthusiasm.
voluntary	Something you do because you want to, without being influenced or forced into it.
volunteering	The giving of your time and effort to help others or your community, without being paid.
vote	A formal expression of a choice.

voter	A person who votes or is eligible to vote.
<b>W</b>	
ward	A geographical area within a local council area.
Western Australian Electoral Commission (WAEC)	The organisation responsible for running state and local elections in Western Australia.
Westminster system	A way a country's government is organised, based on Britain's system where a parliament makes laws, and a Prime Minister is in charge of the government, with a Monarch as the Head of State, represented by the Governor-General.
will of the people	What most people in a country want or believe to be right.

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**Acknowledgement of Country** The Department of the Premier and Cabinet acknowledges the traditional custodians throughout Western Australia and their continuing connection to the land, waters and community. We pay our respects to all members of the Aboriginal communities and their cultures; and to Elders past and present.



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The Constitutional Centre of WA