

CHOOSING THE SITE OF THE NATIONAL CAPITAL

Activity

Setting the scene

Choosing the site of the National Capital was not an easy task. In 1902, members of Federal Parliament began inspections of possible sites. After years of dispute, in 1908 it was declared that the district of Yass-Canberra, in southern New South Wales, would become the Seat of Government of the Commonwealth.

Blundells' Cottage, one of the cottages of Duntroon Estate, catering for the property workers, exists today on the shores of Lake Burley Griffin as a reminder of life before the area became the National Capital. The residents of Duntroon Estate were one group of many that would be affected by a dramatic social and cultural change.

What to do

Imagine you are the Federal Government Minister attempting to gain support for the National Capital site among the workers on Duntroon Estate.

Produce a poster aimed at the workers and include the following:

- changes in population, resources and overall growth of the area
- changes in the lifestyles of the Duntroon workers
- the benefits of living in a cool climate
- the benefits of living in a National Capital
- an invitation to the opening of Parliament House

Be creative

Divide into small groups and debate for and against having the National Capital in the Yass-Canberra district. One group can act as if it represents the Minister's office and the opposing group can represent the disgruntled workers from Duntroon Estate.

THE FIGURES OF FEDERATION

Activity

Setting the scene

Federation was not a foregone conclusion. Debate raged for many years as practical considerations and political idealism proved difficult to reconcile. Finally, in January 1901, the Australian colonies united to become a nation. This was an obvious turning point in the history of Canberra, as it led to the pressure to create a national capital.

Below are just a few individuals who influenced the direction and ultimate outcomes of Australian Federation.

What to do

Select one of these people and submit a 1,000 word report detailing their achievements and contributions towards Federation.

Sir Henry Parkes (1815–1896)

Considered by some as the 'Father of Federation', Parkes was a passionate advocate for the uniting of Australia's colonies. He died several years before Federation became a reality.

Charles Scrivener (1855–1923)

Charles Scrivener surveyed the site for the National Capital.

Walter Burley Griffin (1876–1937)

In May 1912, Walter Burley Griffin's design was declared the winner of the international competition for Australia's National Capital.

Marion Mahony Griffin (1871–1961)

Wife of Walter Burley Griffin, Marion was an inspired artist, architect and drafts person who rendered the winning design for the Griffins' plans of the National Capital.

King O'Malley (1858–1953)

King O'Malley was the outspoken and controversial Minister for Home Affairs who announced Walter Burley Griffin as the competition winner to design Australia's National Capital.

Sir Edmund Barton (1849–1920)

Sir Edmund Barton was the first Prime Minister of Australia and a stout supporter of Federation.

Key points within your report should cover the following questions:

- Was Federation important to the growth of Australian identity?
- How has this person shaped Australia's history?
- Did this person have a direct influence on Australia's National Capital?
- How would you personally describe the character of this person?
- Is this person adequately recognised in Australian society today through memorials or the naming of towns and Canberra suburbs? If not, should they be recognised for their achievements?

A TIME FOR FEDERATION

Activity

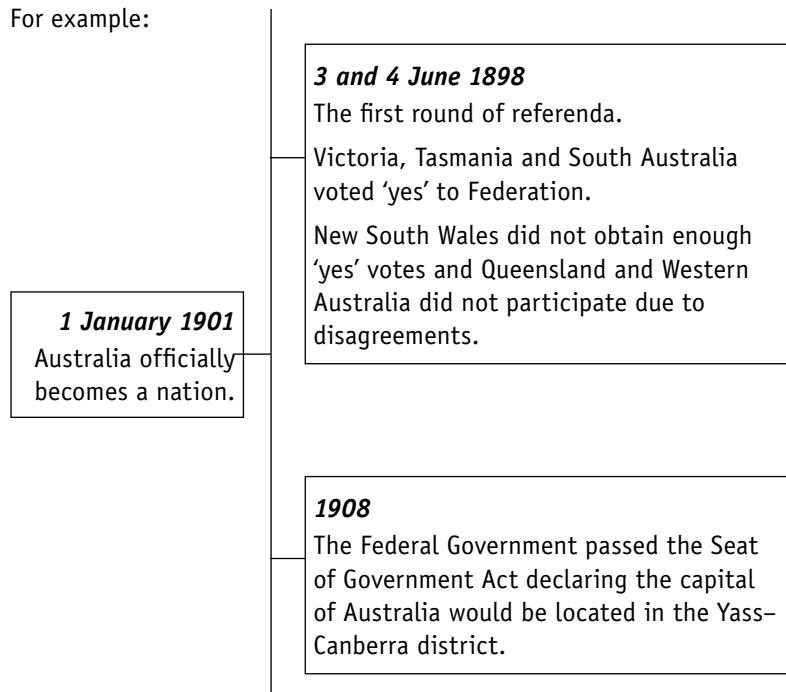
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What to do

- Create a timeline documenting significant moments in the push towards Federation and the creation of Australia's National Capital.
- Provide a brief description against each date to explain the significance of that event.

For example:



- Begin your timeline in 1880 and finish in 1913.
- Construct your timeline using as much paper as necessary, or convert your timeline onto a disk.
- Be creative in your presentation and design.

Be creative

Once your timeline is complete, explain how you think the events in your timeline influenced Australian identity today. Hint: Australian identity may refer to the public's perceptions of the National Capital, mateship, national independence, popular culture and national icons.