

Script: Your Vote Counts (Extended version)

FADE UP ON A COACH WITH PARLIAMENT HOUSE IN THE BACKGROUND. THE COACH IS FULL OF 10-12 YEAR OLDS (YEAR 6).

CHILD 1

I wonder if we'll see snow.

CHILD 2

Hey, look at that building! What's that big white building on that hill?

CHILD 1

I think it's the Parliament House.

FADE UP TWO MAIN CHARACTERS IN FRONT OF THE COACH: ONE MALE AND ONE FEMALE TOUR GUIDE STANDING NEXT TO EACH OTHER, IN FRONT OF THE KIDS FROM THE COACH. WE SEE PARLIAMENT HOUSE IN THE DISTANCE.

WE HEAR THE KIDS' TEETH CHATTERING, SEE THEM SHIVERING WITH COLD.

WOMAN

C'mon, we told all you mob to pack your jumpers!

GIRL

True! I'm proper cold!

WOMAN

I know it's cold, but this is a very special place. This is where Australia's laws are made. It's where decisions are made that affect all of us.

THE KIDS LOOK AROUND, CONFUSED.

MAN

Listen now, to this story...

TOUR GUIDES MOVE TO THE LOWER LEFT OF SCREEN WITH THE KIDS BEHIND THEM. A THOUGHT CLOUD FADES ON IN THE CENTRE OF THE SCREEN.

MAN

For thousands of years, before Australia was established as a Country, it was already occupied by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. During this time, **hundreds** of unique language groups and clans governed themselves through their own laws, and they practised traditions and performed their own ceremonies.

WOMAN

Then, in 1788, ships arrived and claimed the land for the British, establishing colonies.

Hey, where did Maarli go? Come back here Maa!

Everyone, stay together!

WE SEE THAT ONE OF THE KIDS HAS WANDERED OFF. WHEN THEY HEAR THEIR NAME, THEY RETURN TO THE GROUP IN FRONT OF THE COACH AND PARLIAMENT HOUSE.

MAN

In 1901, the colonies came together to form one nation, known as Australia. This was called 'Federation'. As part of this, a Constitution was created, which is Australia's founding document. The constitution is like Australia's birth certificate, and it has rules on how Australia should be governed.

WOMAN

Each level of government provides different services, and sometimes these services overlap. The three levels are Federal, State and Local government.

MAN

The federal government is responsible for issues that affect all Australians.

State and territory governments are responsible for issues that affect people in that state or territory.

And local councils are responsible for issues that affect local communities.

WOMAN

That's right! But who knows the names of the two houses of parliament inside the Australian Parliament house?

BOY

Awww, I dunno Miss! What are they?

WOMAN

The House of Representatives and the Senate.

So, the House of Representatives is green and has 151 members. Each member lives inside their electorate and represents it.

MAN

Then you have the Senate. The Senate is red and has 76 senators. They represent the people who live in their state or territory. Each Australian state and territory has a set number of senators.

WE SEE "YOUR VOTE COUNTS" ON THE BALLOT BOX AND HANDS PLACE THEIR VOTES INSIDE WHILE THE MAN IS SPEAKING.

MAN

Australia is a democracy. That means that the majority decide what the rules will be, by voting.

GIRL

Hey, Sir, I heard I have to vote when I turn 18, is that true?

MAN

Yes, that's right - Australia's one of the few countries in the world where it's compulsory for citizens over the age of 18 to vote in elections and referendums. But did you know you have to register to vote before you can vote?

ALL CHILDREN

No.

WOMAN

Each person gets one vote, but if you don't register you can't vote. This means that if you don't register, you can't choose who **you** want to represent you and your community in parliament.

WOMAN

Canberra is a long way from our home, but the people here make decisions that can affect everyone, everywhere in the country.

MAN

Listen now, as the first occupants of Australia, we will always have a unique place in Australia's history, and we will continue our laws and traditions. Australia is now the home to millions of people from many different cultures around the world, who speak many languages. Our diversity, and working together in unity, makes us strong.

WOMAN

So, make sure you enrol to vote, to have YOUR say.

Go to aec.gov.au and register today.

MAN

Alright you mob, everyone back on the bus, our Kimberley home is calling us!

BOY

Oi, I get the window seat!

CREDITS ROLL