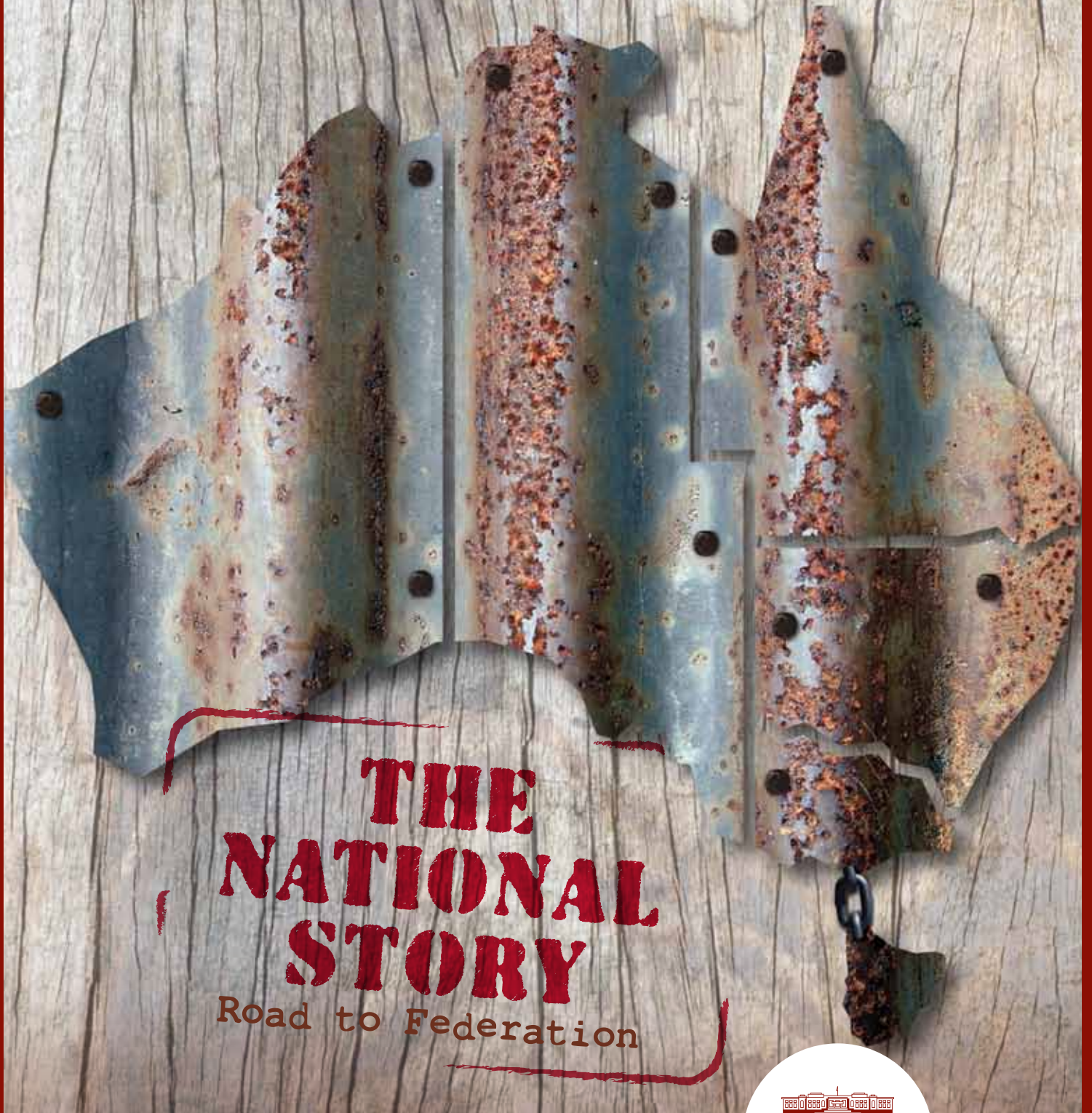


GETTING IT TOGETHER

From Colonies to Federation



THE NATIONAL STORY

Road to Federation



MUSEUM
OF AUSTRALIAN
DEMOCRACY

OLD PARLIAMENT HOUSE

INVESTIGATIONS OF
AUSTRALIA'S JOURNEY
TO NATIONHOOD
FOR THE MIDDLE
YEARS CLASSROOM

MOAD
LEARNING

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Road to Federation

Henry Parkes, Premier of New South Wales, delivered a speech at Tenterfield in 1889, calling for the six Australian colonies to unite and form one national government.

The population of the colonies was increasingly composed of Australian-born people. Unlike their parents and grandparents who had come as migrants, those born in Australia saw themselves as Australian, not British. They began to consider the colonies' divisions as unnecessary, separating people who shared the same language, culture and values. Colonial separation was also an inconvenience for trade and travel, and could be disastrous for defence in times of war.







Imagining one nation without colonial divisions was one thing. In fact, a united Australia was already celebrated in the poems and songs of the day, and a combined Australian cricket team was playing test cricket against England. However, actually bringing the colonies together was quite another proposition. In 1890, Henry Parkes again urged the colonies to unite, and they agreed to explore this at a Constitutional Convention in Sydney the following year. The Convention was attended by seven delegates from each colonial parliament, and by three delegates from New Zealand. Andrew Inglis Clark, a member of the Tasmanian delegation, had researched the constitutions of the United States, Canada and Switzerland. All of those countries were federations, a model that a united Australia would adopt.

At the 1891 Convention, the delegates approved a draft Australian Constitution, drawn up by one of the Queensland delegates, Samuel Griffith. The Convention had proposed a national Parliament made up of two houses, a Senate and a House of Representatives. The colonies would become States in the Federation and a High Court would safeguard the Constitution.

Ensuring that the people were involved was a crucial part of making Federation a successful democratic process. In 1893, at a federal conference held in Corowa, New South Wales, John Quick from Victoria devised a scheme that would involve people electing delegates to a Constitutional Convention, and then voting on the proposed Constitution at referendums. When the Australasian Federal Conventions were held in Adelaide, Melbourne and Sydney in 1897–98, their members were elected, and the draft Australian Constitution was again considered and amended. The Constitution Bill was put to the people in all of the colonies for acceptance.

The first referendums were held in 1898 in South Australia, Victoria, Tasmania and New South Wales. When New South Wales fell short of the 80,000 'yes' votes required, the Premiers of the colonies met again to settle their differences, and make it more likely that the Constitution Bill would be accepted at future referendums. In 1899, South Australia, Victoria, Tasmania, New South Wales and Queensland held successful referendums. The draft Constitution was then escorted to London in 1900 by prominent delegates from the Convention to obtain assent from the Imperial Parliament and Queen Victoria. Once it was likely that Federation would proceed, Western Australia also held a referendum. When the Western Australians voted 'yes' to the proposed Constitution, it was then certain that there would be a 'nation for a continent, and a continent for a nation'.

Investigations

-  **1.** What were the arguments for Federation?
-  **2.** How did the people of the colonies become involved in Federation?
-  **3.** Who were some of the prominent figures on the road to Federation?
-  **4.** What were the issues that had to be resolved before the colonies could federate?
-  **5.** What role did national identity have in influencing Federation?
-  **6.** Where would the capital of the Commonwealth of Australia be located?

INVESTIGATION 1

What were the arguments for Federation?

By the late 1800s, the Australian colonies had become increasingly wary of the British Empire's colonial rivals in the Pacific. Some colonies had armies and navies, but there was no coordinated system of transportation between colonies. They feared that, individually, they would be weak in the face of a threat from a country such as Germany, France or Russia. Some were also concerned about the possible threat that Japan or China could pose in the future. United, however, the colonies could better face such threats and also be an important ally to Britain.

Trade was another area in which more cooperation was needed among the colonies. Goods transported from one colony to another could be taxed, making them more expensive to sell. Each colony had customs houses to stop the smuggling of goods across borders. If the intercolonial tariffs were abolished, manufacturers would be able to find markets in any of the colonies.

Despite the advantages of unification, the colonies were unwilling to give up their

YOU WILL NEED

Resource sheet 1

- cartoon: 'Boomerang versus cannon'
- extract: Henry Parkes' Tenterfield speech
- extract: Edmund Barton's resolutions
- cartoon: 'Barriers between brothers. Shall they remain?'

independence easily. When Henry Parkes urged Federation in 1889, and again in 1890, representatives from the colonies responded by attending Constitutional Conventions. At the Convention in 1891, they discussed how they might come together and draft an Australian Constitution. The terms of their association were again raised by Edmund Barton, as the 'first order of business' at the National Australasian Convention in Adelaide in 1897.

Examine the terms on which the colonies would agree to come together as one nation.

Your task

Activities

1. In pairs, examine 'Boomerang versus cannon'. Read the words written on the boomerangs. What are they referring to? Read what is written on the cannon and the cartoon's caption. What is the message of the cartoon? Write another title for the cartoon to convey that message and share it with the class.
2. Still in pairs, read the extract from Henry Parkes' Tenterfield speech. List what he says needs to be done.
3. As a class, read the extract from Edmund Barton's resolutions in 1897. Discuss the meaning of each resolution and whether it maintains a

colony's independence or encourages cooperation. Classify the resolutions under the headings: 'Trade', 'Defence' and 'States' rights'.

4. Individually, examine the cartoon 'Barriers between brothers. Shall they remain?' Write a caption for the cartoon that explains what would remain the same and what would change if Barton's resolutions were accepted. You could also draw on the cartoon to show the changes.
5. As a class, discuss and then vote on whether Barton's resolutions agree with the messages in both cartoons.

INVESTIGATION 2

How did the people of the colonies become involved in Federation?

YOU WILL NEED

Resource sheet 2

- extract: Australian Federal Congress Bill
- cartoon: 'Britannia (to New South Wales)'

At the Federal Convention in 1891, delegates agreed on a draft Australian Constitution. It was then sent to the colonies' parliaments for consideration and amendment. It was not made a priority, however, because the parliaments had become preoccupied with the economic depression between 1891 and 1893. The smaller colonies were waiting for New South Wales to act, but it too was hesitant.

The supporters of Federation were losing patience and faith in parliamentarians. They wanted to keep the movement going. Federal leagues, supported by the Australian Natives Association, sprang up in New South Wales and Victoria to build support for Federation among the people themselves.

By 1893, all of the Australian colonies had responsible government and colonists were well versed in electing representatives to their parliaments. At a conference to promote Federation in Corowa in 1893, John Quick, a lawyer from Bendigo and member of the Australian Natives Association, proposed a plan to ensure the involvement of the people in the decision to federate. Importantly, the Premier of New South Wales, George Reid was won over by Quick's idea, and got the Premiers of the other colonies to agree to it as a way to continue on the road to Federation.

Discover how John Quick's Corowa plan influenced the course of Federation.

Your task

Activities

1. Examine John Quick's 1894 Australian Federal Congress Bill. Draw a flow chart outlining his proposal. Compare your flow chart to a classmate's and make amendments if needed.
2. In small groups, use a concept map to brainstorm the meaning of 'democracy'. Re-read John Quick's Bill. Does it fit your group's definition of a democratic process?
What are the advantages of a democratic system?
What are some possible disadvantages? Share your thoughts as a class.
3. In pairs, examine the 'Britannia' cartoon. Consider the following questions.
 - Britannia is a symbol of which country?
 - What do the other women represent?
What are they holding?
 - What does the caption tell you about what is happening in the cartoon?
 - Do you think the cartoon supports John Quick's plan?
 - Share your responses with the class.
4. As a class, discuss the following questions.
 - Do you think John Quick's plan would help solve the problems shown in the cartoon?
 - How might the road to Federation have been different without Quick's plan?
5. Choose one of the following to demonstrate your understanding of John Quick's contribution to Federation.
 - Create a political cartoon promoting John Quick's plan and the people's voice in the Federation process.
 - In small groups, use your knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of democracy to recreate the scene at the Corowa conference when John Quick proposed his plan. Make sure to include two arguments for and two arguments against the people's involvement.
 - In small groups, think of other ways in which people might have been involved in the Federation debates and process. Use one of these as a basis for creating a charade, and perform it for the class.

INVESTIGATION 3

Who were some of the prominent figures on the road to Federation?

Inspired by John Quick's Corowa plan, George Reid, the Premier of New South Wales, presented a similar proposal at the Premiers' Conference in January 1895. The Premiers agreed that their parliaments would pass bills to allow Convention delegates, elected by the people of their colonies, to draw up a draft Australian Constitution. It would then be put to the people at referendums for them to approve or reject. Even though all the Premiers agreed, the colonial parliaments were slow to implement Reid's proposal.

When the 1897–98 Australasian Federal Conventions were held, 10 elected delegates from Victoria, South Australia, New South Wales and Tasmania were present. The Western Australian and Queensland Parliaments failed to pass bills to enable the election of delegates. The Western Australian Parliament sent 10 of its own members, but Queensland was unrepresented. In March 1897, the prominent politicians from each colony, all men, met in Adelaide for the first of three sessions. Among them were Edmund Barton and Alfred Deakin. These politicians were determined to reach agreement on a draft Australian Constitution so that the people of the Australian colonies could vote in referendums on the Constitution Bill and demonstrate their support for Federation.

YOU WILL NEED

Resource sheet 3

- biographies: Edmund Barton, Charles Cameron Kingston, Alfred Deakin, Edward Braddon and Catherine Helen Spence

Your task

Examine the biographies of some influential people who contributed toward Federation.

Activities

1. As a class, brainstorm what you think takes place at a Constitutional Convention. You might want to compare it to your understanding of the proceedings of parliament.
2. Create a class list outlining the skills, values, characteristics and kinds of knowledge that you think delegates to a convention should have.
3. In groups of four, explore a biography each of one of the representatives at the 1897–98 Australasian Federal Conventions. As you read about your person's life and accomplishments, write a list of the skills, values, characteristics and kinds of knowledge that you think they might have needed to be elected to represent the people of their colony.
4. Decorate your lists with your person's name, colony and a portrait or caricature. Display them in the classroom, grouping the same people together.
5. Catherine Helen Spence stood, but failed, in her attempt for election to the Convention for South Australia, the only colony where women had the vote and were allowed to stand for parliament. In pairs, examine her biography. Compare her skills, values, characteristics and knowledge to that of the other representatives.
6. Write a letter, dated March 1897, to the editor of a South Australian newspaper detailing the ways in which you think Catherine Helen Spence would have been able to make an important contribution as a delegate to the Convention.

INVESTIGATION 4

What were the issues that had to be resolved before the colonies could federate?

Fifty delegates from the colonies of Victoria, New South Wales, South Australia, Tasmania and Western Australia met at the first session of the Australasian Federal Convention in Adelaide in March 1897. They met again in Sydney in September, and for a final time in Melbourne in January 1898. Using the draft Australian Constitution from the 1891 Federal Convention as a starting point, the delegates debated and carefully considered proposals and objections to shape a new Constitution. Edmund Barton and Richard O'Connor from New South Wales, and John Downer from South Australia had responsibility for writing it.

The Constitution had to be democratic and allow for majority rule, but also be fair and protect the smaller States. The House of Representatives would have to be balanced by a Senate, in which each State had the same number of representatives. The delegates had to decide who would have the vote, what powers the new parliament would have, and how money would be divided among the States.

On 16 March 1898, the work of the Convention was done. It was now up to the people to vote for the Constitution Bill at referendums. Victoria, New South Wales and Tasmania held the referendum on 3 June 1898, and South Australia on 4 June.

Your task

Investigate the issues that were debated during the writing of the Australian Constitution.

Activities

1. In small groups, take responsibility for one of the issues debated during the drafting of the Australian Constitution, including the right to vote; States' rights and democracy; or free trade versus protectionism.
2. Read the source material together. Discuss or use a dictionary for any words you don't understand. Take care to:
 - identify the kind of documents you are examining;
 - establish when and where they were published or used; and
 - describe the purpose of each document.
3. Combine with the groups that have examined the same issue. Discuss the historical material together. Create a presentation for the rest of the class explaining how you think the Convention delegates might have approached your issue. The extract from the draft Constitution shows how the issue was resolved at the 1897–98 Convention.
4. Does your group agree with the way the delegates resolved the issue, given the evidence in the historical material? Include your analysis in your presentation.

YOU WILL NEED

Resource sheet 4

- petition: the Womanhood Suffrage League of NSW
- extracts: the draft Australian Constitution
- extracts: newspaper, speech and diary
- cartoon: 'To the memory of majority rule'

INVESTIGATION 5

What role did national identity have in influencing Federation?

The referendums held in Victoria, Tasmania and South Australia were successful, with majorities approving the Constitution Bill. A majority was also achieved in New South Wales, but the number of 'yes' votes did not meet the threshold of 80,000 votes stipulated by the New South Wales Parliament.

In January 1899, the Premier of New South Wales, George Reid, organised a 'secret' conference of Premiers in Melbourne. Here, it was agreed that slight alterations would be made to the draft Australian Constitution so that it would be more acceptable to the larger colonies. It was also agreed that the capital of the new Commonwealth would be in New South Wales.

A second round of referendums was held in 1899 in South Australia, New South Wales, Victoria and Tasmania. They were successful. Queensland also held a successful referendum in September 1899. Western Australia waited until the Constitution was passed by the British Government before it held a referendum in July 1900.

The success of the referendums depended on the abilities of leaders and supporters of Federation to help sway opinion. Much of the persuasion was based on arguing about the details of the proposed Constitution, but emotional appeals to the people of the colonies as 'Australians' were also important.

YOU WILL NEED

Resource sheet 5

- poster: 'To the Australian Born'
- extract: newspaper
- extract: speech
- poem: *Men of Australia* by Edward Dyson
- data: 1898, 1899 and 1900 referendum results
- calculator

Your task

Discover how appeals to national identity influenced people of the Australian colonies.

Activities

1. In pairs, select and examine one Federation campaign item. Establish and record the following:

- the purpose it was written for and the audience it was addressed to; and
- the use of feeling, sentiment or emotion to persuade the audience.

2. Form a group with students who examined the other items. Discuss the following questions together.

- Which items are making positive appeals to Australian identity? Identify the ways in which they do this.
- Which items are appealing to negative emotions? Identify the ways in which they do this.
- What did being Australian mean in the Australian colonies in the 1890s?

3. In your groups, examine the results for the referendums on the draft Australian Constitution. Do the following tasks.

- For each table, calculate the total number of votes.
- Calculate the percentage of 'yes' and 'no' votes.
- Compare the results of the 1899 and the WA 1900 referendums to the results of the 1898 referendum.
- Make a list of the most significant differences in the results.

4. Create a group presentation of an 'Australian' in the 1890s. Ensure that your presentation refers to place, values, fears, hopes and loyalties. Explain also how you think your '1890s Australian' would fit into the Australia of today.

5. As a class, consider the referendum results tables. Using your knowledge of Federation, discuss or debate the proposition: 'Federation was inevitable because the people of the colonies felt "Australian"'.

INVESTIGATION 6

Where would the capital of the Commonwealth of Australia be located?

One of the issues that both divided and united opinion around Federation was the requirement for a new capital city. It was agreed it should be outside of the existing colonial capitals, but where? At the Australasian Federal Convention in Melbourne in January–February 1898, the delegates argued about the location and the issue was left unresolved as each colony vied for the honour.

At the ‘secret’ conference of the Premiers held in Melbourne in January 1899, George Reid was successful in getting the other colonies to agree that the capital of the new Commonwealth would be in New South Wales, but not within 100 miles of Sydney.

YOU WILL NEED

Resource sheet 6

- extracts: debate on the site for the capital city

internet access

library access

In the debates about the location of the capital, there were many clues about what the delegates thought important in deciding the location. These included climate, accessibility, physical conditions, capacity to support a population and food supply.

Examine the debate about the location of the capital city of the new Commonwealth.

Your task

Activities

1. Read the extracts from the debate on the location of the nation's capital aloud. Role-play the debate. You might want to add arguments and suggestions to the extracts to make them more persuasive.
2. In pairs, list what the delegates thought important in deciding the location of a capital city. Add your own ideas to the list.
3. The Government of New South Wales considered climate, accessibility, physical conditions, capacity to support a population and food supply to make its decision. Would you change your list or add to the Government's list? Share your criteria for a capital city with the class.
4. Create a class ranking chart in which you order the criteria from most important to least important, given your knowledge of Australia in the early 1900s.

5. In a research project, using the internet and other reference sources, find out why Canberra was eventually chosen as the site for the nation's capital, and the history of its development. Find out as many interesting facts as you can. Answer the following questions.

- Where did the name ‘Canberra’ come from? What other names were considered?
- Who planned the city?
- When did building the city begin?

Think of other questions to answer, and share them with the rest of the class.

Debate the following topic.

- Canberra is the best location for the nation's capital.



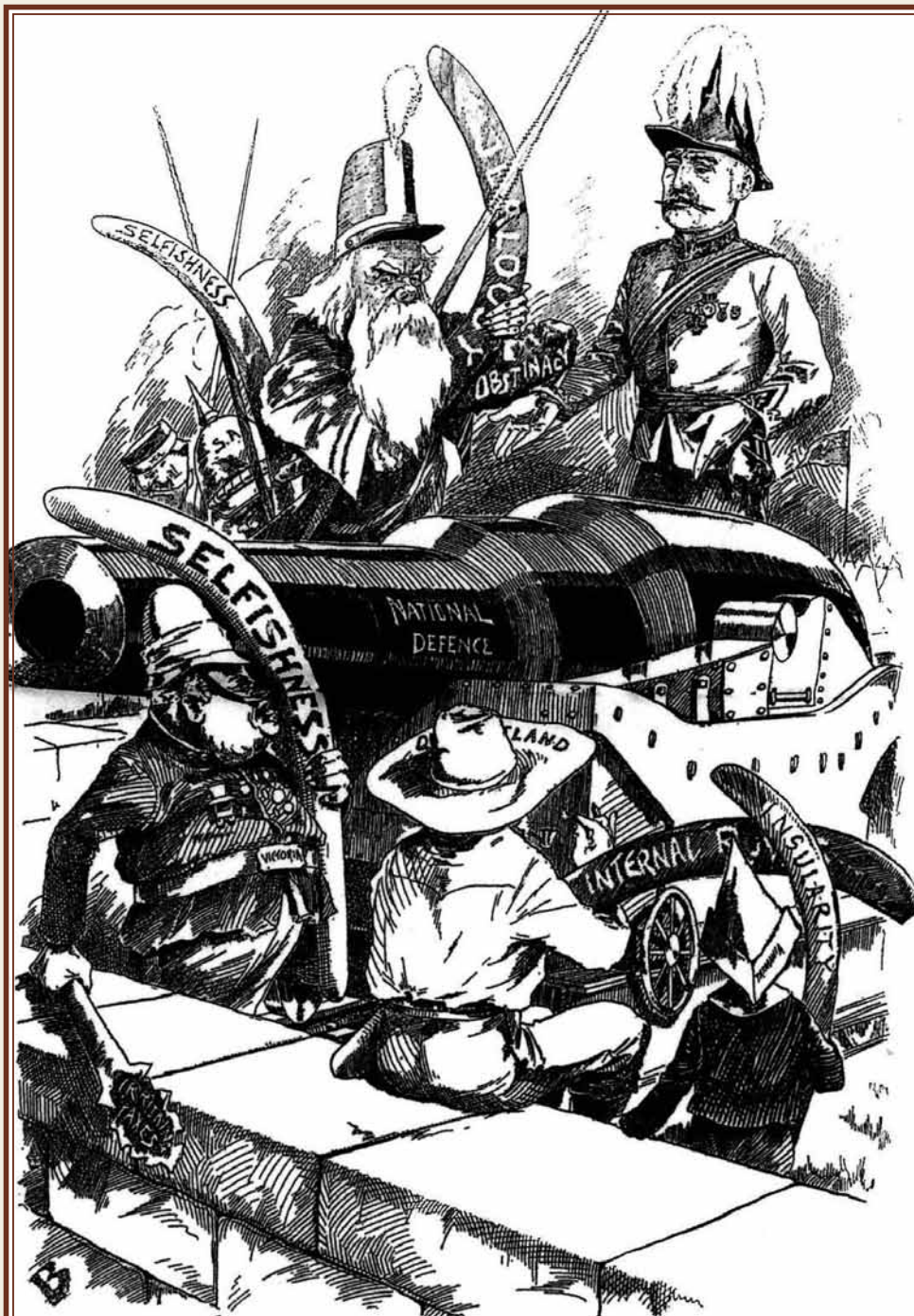
What are you thinking now?

Now that you have completed the investigations in Road to Federation, use your knowledge to explore connections to your life today. Do one or more of the following activities.

- 1.** When the Australian colonies came together to discuss Federation, they had a set of principles that they all agreed could not be altered. What would be the minimum conditions in a set of class or school rules that you would like to see? What would you see as non-negotiable?
- 2.** Visit the websites of the Commonwealth Parliament and your State or Territory Parliament to find out about your representatives. What experiences have your representatives had outside of parliament that have prepared them for their roles? Compare your representatives to three other representatives. Are there similarities and differences? How representative of your community is your parliament? With your class, draw up a research plan to find out.
- 3.** Imagine you are in charge of planning the capital city of a new country. Write a description or draw a plan of the ideal location, how the city would be laid out and organised, and all the amenities you would like to be available to its citizens.

RESOURCE SHEET 1

Boomerang versus cannon



BOOMERANG VERSUS CANNON.

MAJOR-GENERAL EDWARDS — 'TENSHUN! NOW, MY MEN,
I'M GOING TO TEACH YOU HOW TO USE THIS FINE PIECE OF ORDNANCE.'

CHORUS — 'HERE WE ARE SIR, ALL READY.'

MAJOR-GENERAL EDWARDS — 'READY? WELL, HARDLY: UNDERSTAND THIS TO BEGIN WITH.
YOU CANNOT WORK THIS GUN WHILE YOU ARE HAMPERED WITH YOUR OBSOLETE WEAPONS.
THROW AWAY THOSE MISERABLE ENCUMBRANCES AND TAKE HOLD TOGETHER;
IF YOU DO NOT, THIS MAGNIFICENT GUN MIGHT AS WELL BE SPIKED AT ONCE.'

Melbourne Punch, 14 November 1889.

**Extract from speech by Henry Parkes at Tenterfield,
24 October 1889**

General Edwards had also advised that the forces of the various colonies should be federated for operation in unison in the event of war so as to act as one great federal army. If an attack were made upon any of the colonies, it might be necessary for us to bring all our power to bear on one spot of the coast.

The great question which they had to consider was, whether the time had not now arisen for the creation on this Australian continent of an Australian Government ... to preserve the security and integrity of these colonies that the whole of their forces should be amalgamated into one great federal army ... They had now, from South Australia to Queensland, a stretch of about 2,000 miles of railway, and if the four colonies could only combine to adopt a uniform gauge, it would be an immense advantage to the movement of troops.

Surely, what the Americans have done by war, the Australians could bring about in peace. It is essential to preserve the security of these colonies that there should be one great federal army ... We must appoint a convention of leading men from all the colonies who would ... devise the constitution (for) a federal government with a federal parliament ...

The Sydney Morning Herald, 25 October 1889.

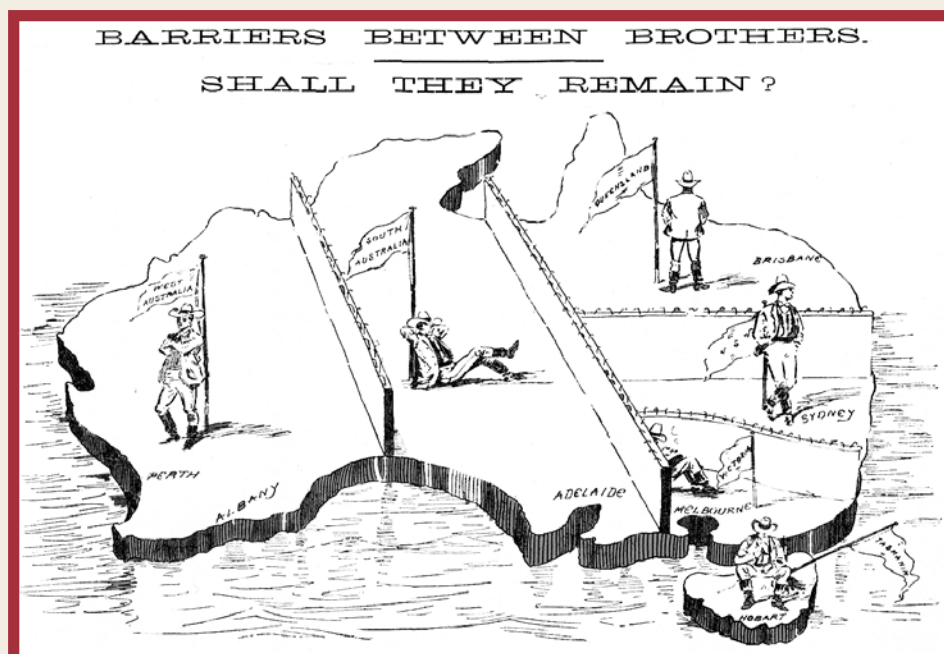
MR. BARTON: I rise to move the following resolutions:-

That, in order to enlarge the powers of self-government of the people of Australia, it is desirable to create a Federal Government which shall exercise authority throughout the Federated Colonies, subject to the following principal conditions:-

- i That the powers, privileges, and territories of the several existing colonies shall remain intact, except in respect of such surrenders as may be agreed upon to secure uniformity of law and administration in matters of common concern.
- ii That, after the establishment of the Federal Government, there shall be no alteration of the territorial possessions or boundaries of any colony without the consent of the colony or colonies concerned.
- iii That the exclusive power to impose and collect duties of customs and excise, and to give bounties, shall be vested in the Federal Parliament.
- iv That the exclusive control of the military and naval defences of the Federated Colonies shall be vested in the Federal Parliament.
- v That the trade and intercourse between the Federated Colonies, whether by land or sea, shall become and remain absolutely free.

Official report of the National Australasian Convention, Adelaide, 22 March to 5 May 1897, pp 17-27.

Barriers between brothers



The Argus, 1 June 1898, National Library of Australia.

RESOURCE SHEET 2

Australian Federal Congress Bill (1894)

Proposed by Dr John Quick

**Debated and accepted by the Australian Natives Association,
Bendigo Branch**

**Resolutions submitted to the Australasian Federation League,
Sydney Branch**

1. That each colony should elect, on its Parliamentary franchise, ten representatives to a Federal Congress.
2. That the Congress should frame a federal Constitution.
3. That, on a day to be arranged between the Governments, the Federal Constitution should be referred to the electors of each colony for acceptance or rejection.
4. That if the Constitution were accepted by majorities in two or more colonies, it should be forwarded to the Imperial Government to be passed into law.

J Quick and RR Garran, *The Annotated Constitution of the Australian Commonwealth*, Angus and Robertson, Sydney, 1901.

Why won't you join the ring?



Melbourne Punch, 14 December 1893, National Library of Australia.

BRITANNIA (to New South Wales)

Why won't you join the
ring with your sisters?

N.S.W.

Because Victoria
proposed it, and I
am not going to play
Victoria's game.

RESOURCE SHEET 3

Biography: Sir Edmund Barton (1848-1920)



Sir Edmund Barton, National Archives of Australia, A5954:1299/2 PHOTO PL 375/1.

Edmund Barton was born and raised in Sydney. He was a good student in secondary school and university. By the age of 30, he was a lawyer and a member of parliament.

Like many other people born in Australia, he was keen on the plan to form an Australian nation. He became the leader of the Federation movement in New South Wales, travelling the colony to give speeches and organise supporters. On this issue, he had found his calling.

Barton was the dominant figure of the 1897–98 Federal Convention. He was in charge of getting the words in the Constitution right and after each day's debate, he worked through the night while the other delegates slept.

He became so admired and trusted that the leading politicians in the other colonies wanted him to be the first Prime Minister. He was Prime Minister from 1901 to 1903, and then he retired and became a judge on the new High Court.

In June 1898, on the eve of the vote to decide whether or not the Australian colonies should federate, Edmund Barton wrote an open letter to the local newspaper. He did not speak as a political leader, but rather as an ordinary citizen, about the nation's future happiness and that of its people being dependent upon voting in favour of Federation.

One word, I may, however, add as your fellow elector. New South Wales is my native colony—it is my home. It is the birth-place of my children ... In voting for the Bill, I am committing myself, and the happiness of my children, to the Australian future. You do no less, but you do no more.

Maitland Daily Mercury, 1 June 1898.

Biography: Charles Cameron Kingston (1850-1908)



Portrait of Charles Kingston,
Swiss Studios, National Library of Australia,
nla.pic-an23379300.

Charles Cameron Kingston was a lawyer. In politics, he was a radical, and impatient with those opposed to democratic reforms. He challenged one of his opponents to a duel with pistols and was arrested by the police. In court, the magistrate ordered him to keep the peace for 12 months. But, this did not stop him becoming Premier.

He was a great supporter of Federation. Apart from insisting that the small States must have the same number of senators as the large States, he wanted a democratic Constitution for the Commonwealth. He believed that all people, men and women, should have the vote. He argued strongly that the upper house (Legislative Council) should not block the people's wishes represented in the lower house, as it did in South Australia.

Kingston was Minister for Trade and Customs in the first Commonwealth ministry under Edmund Barton. This was an important post, since he had to steer through Parliament the new tariff duties, which were to replace those of the colonies. He also drew up the Bill for the Arbitration Court that was to settle workplace disputes, something he had pioneered in South Australia.

In a letter to the people of South Australia, Kingston encouraged voters to vote in favour of Federation, and warned them against further delay as the consequences of such action would only lead to increased intercolonial differences.

What patriotic Australian can desire to see a further postponement of the accomplishment of Federation ... I have penned this letter that at least it may not be my fault should they fail to realise the great possibilities of the position and the dangers which may result from their neglect. But neglect would be a crime against Australia, and I cannot seriously contemplate its probability.

The Register, 26 May 1898.

Biography: Alfred Deakin (1856-1919)



Portrait of Alfred Deakin, National Library of Australia, nla.pic-an23309831.

Alfred Deakin was the second Prime Minister of Australia. He led the Federation movement in Victoria. Only Edmund Barton worked harder to create the new nation of Australia.

Deakin was born in Melbourne in 1856. He became a lawyer and wrote for *The Age* newspaper. Deakin was clever, handsome and a wonderful speaker. He entered politics at the age of 22, became involved in the Australian Natives Association and was very soon the leader of the reformers in the Victorian Parliament. Though he was an excellent politician, he kept thinking he would give it up and become a writer or a preacher.

Deakin was keenly interested in spirituality, and was involved with a number of different spiritual groups and churches throughout his life. He felt that God wanted Australia to be a nation and that he was doing God's will in working for Federation.

Deakin was Prime Minister from 1903–04, and then from 1905–08. He was a protectionist Prime Minister and, with the support of the Labor Party, he encouraged Australian industry with tariffs; set decent wages for workers through the Arbitration Court; and planned an Australian navy. As Labor grew stronger, he combined with all other non-Labor politicians in 1909 to form the Liberal Party.

At an Australian Natives Association banquet in Bendigo in March 1898, Deakin addressed the crowd directly after Victorian politician Isaac Isaacs had spoken about his reservations regarding the draft Constitution. Making his most famous and most celebrated speech, Deakin spoke to the Australian Natives Association members as one Australian to another. His speech received rousing support. Noting the high level of support for Federation, other prominent Victorian politicians then campaigned in its favour.

At a time like the present this association cannot forget its watchword – Federation – or its character, which has never been provincial. It has never been a Victorian, but always an Australian Association. Its hour has now come ... Every branch should be stimulated into action, until, without resorting to any but legitimate means, without any attempt at intimidation, without taking advantage of sectionalism, but in the purest and broadest spirit of Australian unity, all your members unite to awaken this colony to its duty...

Cited in JA La Nauze (ed), *Alfred Deakin, The Federal Story: The Inner History of the Federal Cause 1880–1900*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1963.

Biography: Sir Edward Braddon (1829-1904)



Sir Edward Braddon, JW Beattie,
State Library of Tasmania,
AUTAS001125880757.

Edward Braddon was born in Cornwall, England. He migrated to Tasmania in 1878 and settled at Leith on the north-west coast. He entered the Tasmanian Parliament the following year and was Premier of Tasmania from 1894 to 1899.

Premier Braddon was especially clever at making sure government money was not wasted. The money was used to build important roads, harbours and railways. To help raise money for Tasmania, he even arranged for Tattersall's lotteries to be set up.

When Federation was being discussed, Braddon was very keen for Tasmania to join, but not if it would disadvantage the colony. He was concerned that Tasmania could lose the money raised from the customs taxes they had always collected on imported goods. The Tasmanian Government counted on getting this money and

desperately needed it. The plan for Federation was that the new federal government would collect all the customs taxes and keep the money for its own needs.

Braddon was a Tasmanian representative at the Federation Conventions and upset some of the other delegates when he insisted at the last moment that the federal government give three-quarters of the customs money back to Tasmania and the other States. Those who did not want the Commonwealth to raise a lot of money through customs called it 'the Braddon blot'. However, he won the argument, and Tasmania received this important income for the next 10 years.

Edward Braddon was elected to the first Federal Parliament in 1901, when he was nearly 72 years old. He still holds the record for being the oldest person to enter the House of Representatives.

On the eve of the first referendum on whether Tasmanians should join the proposed Commonwealth of Australia, Braddon wrote a letter published in the local newspaper. He spoke about his vision for the future and the benefits that Federation would bring to all Tasmanians.

... the opportunity will be presented to you of casting your vote for Australian Federation, and so helping forward that great movement, which, if reason prevail, will make this small colony an integral portion of a nation and a sharer in all of the advantages that will flow to every province united under the Constitution Bill in the Commonwealth of Australia.

Launceston Examiner, 28 May 1898.

Biography: Catherine Helen Spence (1825-1910)



Catherine Helen Spence, 1902, State Library of South Australia, SLSA: B 6759.

Catherine Helen Spence was born in Scotland on 31 October 1825. Her family migrated to South Australia in 1839 after the failure of her father's business.

In Adelaide, Spence became a writer. Her novel *Clara Morison: A Tale of South Australia During the Gold Fever* was the first novel set in Australia

to be written by a woman. Spence later turned her attention away from fiction and wrote for various newspapers and magazines. As a journalist, Spence wrote about social issues and politics in Australia. In 1859, she became a strong campaigner for a proportional representation voting system to be introduced in Australia.

Spence formed the Effective Voting League of South Australia. She addressed several public meetings and conferences in Australia, the United States and Britain, promoting proportional representation. Public speaking on such a scale was highly unusual for women at this time.

In 1891, Spence also took a leading role in the campaign for women's suffrage. She became Vice-President of the Women's Suffrage League of South Australia. When South Australian women were granted the right to vote and stand for election in 1894, she went on to support similar campaigns in New South Wales and Victoria.

Catherine Helen Spence was the only female candidate to stand for the Federal Convention in 1897. While she was unsuccessful, coming twenty-second out of 33 candidates, she had become a leading example for women in Australia.

As a social reformer, Catherine Helen Spence was concerned with a wide variety of issues. She was most concerned with the issues of voting and democracy and voting rights for women. She advocated that women should have the vote for the Commonwealth Parliament.

The grand democratic basis of the Commonwealth constitution of 'one man one vote' needs to be expanded into 'one adult one vote'... While half of the human race is shut out from public activities, no one can call the government really democratic.

Woman's Place in the Commonwealth, United Australia, April 1900.

RESOURCE SHEET 4

The right to vote

Petition from the Womanhood Suffrage League of New South Wales to the 1897 National Australasian Convention (abridged)

To the Honourable the President and the Honourable members of the Electoral Convention of 1897.

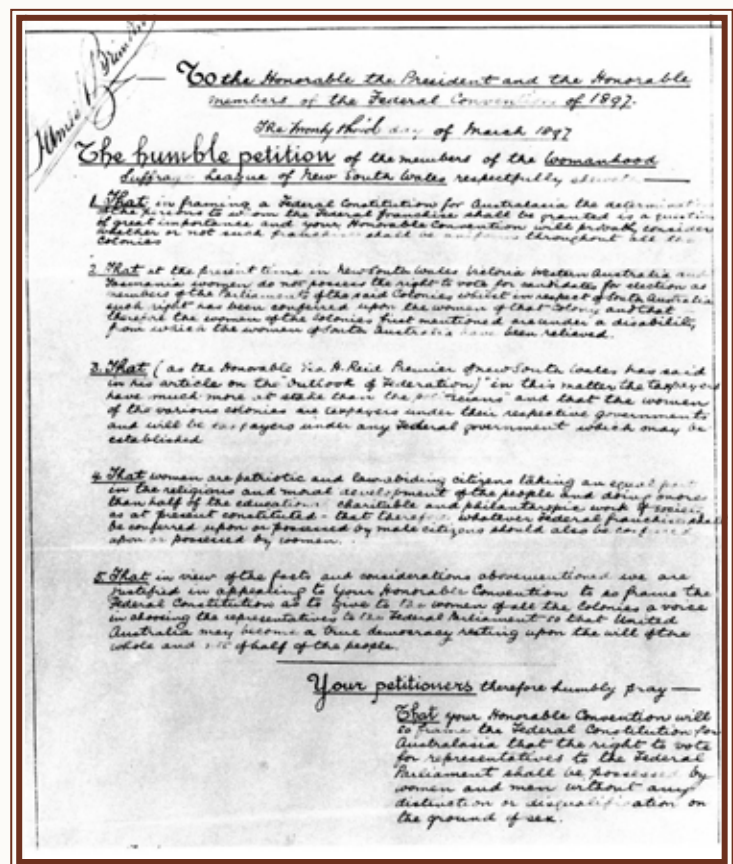
The humble petition of the members of the Womanhood Suffrage League of New South Wales respectfully sheweth ...

2. That at the present time in New South Wales, Victoria, Western Australia and Tasmania women do not possess the right to vote for candidates for election as members of Parliament of the said colonies whilst in respect of South Australia such right has been conferred upon the women of that colony and that therefore the women of the colonies first mentioned are under a disability from which the women of South Australia have been relieved.

3. That (as the honourable G. H. Reid Premier of New South Wales has said in his article on the Outlook of Federation) "in this matter the taxpayer has much more at stake than the politicians" and that the women of the various colonies are taxpayers under their respective governments and will be tax payers under any federal government which may be established.

4. That women are patriotic and law abiding citizens taking an equal part in the religious and moral development of the people.

5. That in view of the facts and considerations abovementioned we are justified in appealing to your Honourable Convention to so frame the Federal Constitution as to give the women of all the colonies a voice in choosing the representatives to the Federal parliament so that united Australia may become a true democracy resting upon the will of the whole and not half of the people.



National Archives of Australia, R16, 2.

Modified extract from 1897 draft Constitution, Section 41

No adult person who had the vote for a state parliament could be prevented from voting for the Commonwealth Parliament.

Draft of a bill to constitute the Commonwealth of Australia, Robt S Brain, Government Printer, Melbourne, 1897.

Is the constitution democratic? – Yes!

The Senate of the Commonwealth has no qualification for its members other than that which its electors must have. That is to say, there is no property qualification whatever, and the elected, like the elector, need only be a man holding the manhood franchise ... The poorest elector in all Australia is made eligible for election to the Senate, and all the other poor electors as well as the rich ones can vote for him.

It so chances that South Australia is at present in this continent the only state possessing the “adult” franchise; that is, the women have votes as well as the men ... [this is] bound to become the adopted practice in every Australasian colony ... There is no desire on the part of practical politicians to press for the logic of the issue as one involving eligibility of women to seats in the Legislature. That is a matter that can well bide its time, if it have a time in the future.

Ballarat Courier, 31 May 1898.

States' rights and democracy

Modified Extract from 1897 draft Constitution

Section 7

There shall be a minimum of six senators for each Original State and equal representation shall be maintained.

Section 127

To alter the constitution, the proposed change must pass through both houses of the parliament, and be agreed to by a majority of voters in a majority of the six States.

To the memory of majority rule



Draft of a bill to constitute the Commonwealth of Australia, Robt S Brain, Government Printer, Melbourne, 1897. National Library of Australia

Is the constitution democratic? – No!

An overwhelming majority of the electors of the Commonwealth, and an overwhelming majority in the House of Representatives (the peoples' house, elected on a population basis) may desire an amendment, but if the Senate, i.e., the Upper House (where area and not people carries the weight) says no to the proposed amendment, it cannot pass. Thus the Senate—the Chamber in which the small colonies representing a small minority of people will be dominant. (New South Wales and Victoria between them will have twelve members in the Senate, and South Australia, West Australia, Tasmania, and Queensland, 24)—has the power to veto ... A small minority of Australians are to control the will of a large majority of Australians.

Ballarat Courier, 19 May 1898.

RESOURCE SHEET 4 continued

Speech extract by Henry Bournes Higgins, Geelong, 18 April 1898

This [the Constitution] is not like an ordinary Act of Parliament which Parliament can change if it does not work well ... The difficulty will be far greater in getting a change in the Federal Constitution.

To make a change in a single word in this constitution, there must not only be an absolute majority of both houses of the Federal Parliament; but the change has to be submitted to the electors in the several colonies; and unless there be a majority of the people, and also a majority of the States in favour of the change, the change cannot be made. Even if four out of every five Australians voting vote for change, the change is not necessarily carried.

Henry Bournes Higgins, *Essays and Addresses on The Australian Constitution Commonwealth Bill*, Melbourne, 1900, pp 6–9.

Diary extract, 2 June 1898

We realised that Federation must come—that it was an absolute necessity for Australia ... Every year of delay would make the problem more difficult ... the prospect of agreement on fair terms more remote. That this would especially be the case with the smaller colonies who would be the more overshadowed by the large and rapidly growing populations of New South Wales and Victoria. Now Tasmania is offered equal terms in the Constitution—equal representation in the Senate with the great colonies, a minimum of 5 members—instead of 3 her proportionate number—in the House of Representatives ... never again were we likely to get such favourable terms.

JB Walker, diary, 2 June 1898, *Reports on the Historical Manuscripts of Tasmania*, Nos 1–5, Hobart, 1964, pp 179–181.

Free trade versus protectionism

Modified extract from 1897 draft Constitution, Section 92

Trade between the states shall be free of customs duties.

Draft of a bill to constitute the Commonwealth of Australia, Robt S Brain, Government Printer, Melbourne, 1897.

Food will be cheap because of the pouring in to Tassie of South Australian Wheat; cheap food for factory hands means low wages. Low wages and high prices for heavily protected woollen goods ought to suit the consumer for he will have to wear a high-priced colonial suit or go without a suit altogether.

Clipper, 4 June 1898.

Trade, commerce, and intercourse among the States, whether by means of internal carriage or ocean navigation, shall be absolutely free.

All artificial barriers to trade and interchange between the federated colonies are to be removed, so that commerce may be free to flow through its natural channels ... The consumer who lives a few miles from an imaginary boundary-line will not have a fine imposed upon him because he dares to spread with South Australian butter his bread made of South Australian flour, or because he puts his crop with a South Australian stump-jumping plough, and harvests it with a South Australian stripper. "You may buy in any Australian market".

South Australian Register, 27 April 1898.

RESOURCE SHEET 5

Voters of New South Wales Constitution Bill referendum poster, 1899

To the Australian Born.

No people in the world have been so manifestly marked out by destiny to live under one Government as the people of this island continent ; but no people with so little reason have been so disunited in their public actions.

The Vote on Tuesday next will determine whether we will continue as we are, a cluster of petty provinces, each waging a wasteful competition with the other by means of hostile tariffs and railway rates ; or whether **we shall have the courage to accept the responsibility cast upon us by our heritage of this great Continent.**

"A Continent for a People, a People for a Continent," was Mr. Barton's fine expression of a noble hope four years ago. If Australians are true to themselves this hope will be realised on June 20th.

All the difficulties in the way of Union vanish if we look at them as **Australians**, and not as the inhabitants of any single province. There should be no more difference between, say **Victoria** and **New South Wales**, than there is in **Great Britain** between **Somerset** and **Yorkshire**.

Australia is our home. Our aspiration is to **make Australia great.**

If this is **"sentiment"** it is also **"hard sense."** No Nation has ever played a worthy part in the world unless it has had confidence in its own future.

A Nation's Greatness does not depend upon Acreage of Territory or Material Wealth, but on the **nobleness of the thoughts by which its people are inspired ;** and of all the impulses to noble deeds which history records there is none more universal or more potent than this sentiment of Nationality.

Let us become a Nation

and establish in the Southern Hemisphere a **POWER** which makes for Peace and Order in the sight of other nations, and which will prove to men of every race that the descendants of Britons in **AUSTRALIA HAVE NOT LOST THEIR CAPACITY FOR SELF-GOVERNMENT.**

William Brooks & Co., Printers, 17 Castlereagh Street, Sydney.

A white nation

Put in plainest terms, Federation means the ideal that every patriot of the country longs for—

“Australia for the Australians!” United the Colonies will be in a strong position to resist the encroachment of coloured ... peoples, and one marked feature in the Bill that should recommend it to the electors ... is the power given to the Commonwealth Parliament to deal with its danger to the future of Australia as a white nation.

Richmond River Express, 3 June 1898.

Speech by Alfred Deakin to the Australian Natives Association, Bendigo, 1898

You are entitled to reckon among the greatest of all your achievements the Federal Convention just closing. The idea of such a convention may be said to have sprung up among you, and it is by your efforts that it must be brought to fruition. One-half of the representatives constituting that Convention are Australian-born.

Those to whom we propose to entrust the sole creation and control of the new government are the Australian people.

It is not a time to surrender. Let us nail our standard to the mast. Let us stand shoulder to shoulder in defence of the ... constitution.

JA La Nauze (ed), Alfred Deakin, *The Federal Story: The Inner History of the Federal Cause 1880–1900*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1963.

Men of Australia

by Edward Dyson

Men of all the lands Australian from the Gulf to Derwent River,
From the Heads of Sydney Harbour to the waters of the West,
There's a spirit loudly calling where the saplings dip and quiver,
Where the city crowds are thronging, and the range uplifts its crest!

Do ye feel the holy fervour of a new-born exultation?

For the task the Lord has set us is a trust of noblest pride—
We are named to march unblooded to the winning of a nation,
And to crown her with a glory that may evermore abide.

Miners in the dripping workings, farmers, pioneers who settle
On the bush lands, city workers of the benches and the marts
Swarthy mechanics at the forges, beating out the glowing metal,
Thinkers, planners, if ye feel the love of country stir your hearts,
Help to write the bravest chapter of a fair young nation's story—
Great she'll be as Europe's greatest, more magnificent in truth!—
That our children's children standing in the rose light of her glory
May all honour us who loved her, and who crowned her in her youth!

The Argus, 1 June 1898.

RESOURCE SHEET 5 continued

Results of the 1898 referendums

Colony	Voted 'yes'	Voted 'no'	Total votes	Percentage of 'yes' votes	Percentage of 'no' votes
New South Wales	71,595	66,228			
South Australia	35,800	17,320			
Northern Territory	150	8			
Tasmania	11,797	2716			
Victoria	100,520	22,090			

Results of the 1899 referendums

Colony	Voted 'yes'	Voted 'no'	Total votes	Percentage of 'yes' votes	Percentage of 'no' votes
New South Wales	107,420	82,741			
Queensland	38,488	30,996			
South Australia	65,990	17,053			
Northern Territory	393	16			
Tasmania	13,437	791			
Victoria	152,653	9805			

Results of the West Australian referendum, 1900

Colony	Voted 'yes'	Voted 'no'	Total votes	Percentage of 'yes' votes	Percentage of 'no' votes
Western Australia	44,800	19,691			

Helen Irving (ed), *The Centenary Companion to Australian Federation*.

RESOURCE SHEET 6

The debate on the site for the capital

Edward Braddon, Tasmania

Nature has fixed upon Hobart as the capital. Everything points to it or some other place in Tasmania as the capital ... honourable members who aspire to seats in the Federal Parliament will be making no sacrifice of health or personal comfort.

George Turner, Victoria

We undoubtedly have in this colony of Victoria a place which is well suited, by nature and by what has been done for it, for the federal capital. We possess buildings well adapted to the purpose, and we have a climate unrivalled for changes in any part of the Australian colonies ... I propose to insert before the words "in Sydney" the words "St. Kilda".

Mr Symon, South Australia

There is a place in South Australia that is ideally fitted – and in this I am perfectly serious – for the federal capital, and that is Mount Gambier. It is unequalled for climate, for beauty of scenery, for every-thing that would tend to make life pleasant and agreeable.

Dr Cockburn, South Australia

I should like to point out that, from the geographical point of view, the centre of gravity of Australia lies at one definite point ... Adelaide, which is situated on the water-way that is the most important water-way of access to the centre of the continent ... Judging from our debates, what has proved to be the most important part of Australia? Undoubtedly the River Murray. On these grounds, I should like to put in a claim first of all on behalf of Adelaide, and failing that for some city situated on the River Murray.

Mr Lynne, New South Wales

... [T]he arguments are in favour of having the federal capital in New South Wales. I have heard that Sydney is a likely place of attack. The same objection operates against the selection of Melbourne, and to an even greater extent against Hobart. All these places would be easily open to attack in case of war. We have, as every one knows, many sites where the climate is good, which are suitable in regard to position, and which possess all the qualities that are requisite to make any one of them an ideal spot for the federal capital. I venture also to think that the position of New South Wales, if at any future time Queensland comes into the Federation, makes her the more suitable colony to contain the federal capital.

Mr Howe, South Australia

I choose to designate New South Wales as the mother colony ... I say that we should consider the position of the mother colony. She has natural resources, I believe, far and away, according to her area, beyond those of any of the other colonies existing at the present time.

The National Australasian Federal Convention, Melbourne Session, January–February 1898.