

# Citizens need governments

The topics of law and government are both separate and intertwined. A government is a way of organising society to make the decisions needed for the people that live there. Can you imagine, for example, a country without rules and laws? Making laws for people to live by is just one of the roles of government.

## Explore

There are three different levels of government in Australia (Local, State/Territory and Federal). They do different jobs and have varying roles to play. How much do you already know about each type of government? Make notes in the table below.

Local	State / Territory	Federal

## Explore

News comes in all forms. News in all forms is a good source of information about the world. Think about the various platforms that deliver news, for example, a community newspaper, television news or a State newspaper. Look at the table below. Use ticks to show which types of news you are likely to find in each type of media form.

	Community and local newspaper	The West Australian newspaper	The West Australian online	Channel 7 Perth news	Channel 7 national news	SBS world news	Regional TV and radio	Other online news
Local news								
State news								
Federal news								
World political news								

## Discover

It is important for readers to be able to understand the difference between fact and opinion in news reports.

- Facts** are indisputable and can be backed up with evidence (eg Mark McGowan was elected as The Premier of WA in 2017).
- Opinions** are what people think or feel about an issue, and will differ from one person to the next (eg building a high rise school in Northbridge is a sensible idea).

## Investigate

What do you think an article about government might contain and where might you find it?

Some of the sections of *The West Australian* that might be about government and law include:

- NEWS** **OPINION** **WORLD** **LETTERS** **IN THE COURTS NEWS** **EDITORIAL CARTOON**

Flick through *The West Australian* to find two headlines that might be about governments. Use them to complete the table below. An example has been provided for you. Cut out the articles and paste them on the glue strip.

Headline	What it is about	Government or people listed	Where did you find it?
Libs back push for new school	Moving Perth Modern School	The State government	

## Discover

It is the responsibility of the press in a nation such as Australia to report fairly and accurately on events, including those that occur in the areas of law and government. This means reporting in a balanced way it will:

- include at least two different points of view or two sides of the story.
- show that a reporter has tried to represent both points of view - the reporter may use statements such as, "The Prime Minister refused to comment."

## Connect

1 What are the two main stories about government and law in today's paper? Write the headlines below.

Government	Law

Do these stories contain facts or opinion?

\_\_\_\_\_

2 Flick through a copy of today's *The West Australian* to complete a newspaper scavenger hunt. Place a tick for each of the items you can find.

Item	Tick/cross	Page
Picture of a politician		
News article about the Prime Minister		
Report about a government in another country		
Letter to the Editor about a political issue		
Cartoon about a person in government		
Newspaper heading (called a strapline) about news in the courts. eg. <b>IN THE COURTS NEWS</b>		
An article in the opinion section about the government		

Glue or staple articles here

# Politics in the news

The sections of *The West Australian* may include a range of articles, letters and cartoons about politics and law, and these may all contain both facts and opinions. Remember facts can be backed up by evidence; opinions are what people think or feel about an issue.

## Explore

Flick through your copy of *The West Australian* and tick each of these sections according to whether they have mainly opinions or facts.

Section	Opinion	Fact
NEWS	. . . . .	. . . . .
WORLD	. . . . .	. . . . .
LETTERS	. . . . .	. . . . .
OPINION	. . . . .	. . . . .
IN THE COURTS	. . . . .	. . . . .
EDITORIAL CARTOON	. . . . .	. . . . .

## Explore

Find some examples of **fact** and **opinion** in politics and law in today's newspaper. Use the rating scale below to show whether they contain mainly opinions or facts.

Page	Section	Name/Title	Opinion	Fact
			. . . . .	. . . . .
			. . . . .	. . . . .
			. . . . .	. . . . .


## Evaluate


As a citizen who will one day be able to vote for representatives, it is important for you to have informed opinions.


When you read articles about government or law you should look at all sides of the story and not just automatically follow the most popular opinion or agree with your friend's opinion. Your opinion might also change when you become more informed about the facts of a story.


Choose one of the main stories about law or government from today's paper. Cut this article out and paste it on the glue strip. What is your opinion of the story? Shade in the emoji that best shows your view.


Headline


  
 Happy

  
 Sad

  
 Angry

  
 Surprised

  
 Worried

  
 Confused

Glue or staple articles here

## Explore

Editorial cartoons comment on issues or events of the day. They are usually published in daily newspapers in the editorial section; this is because they are the opinion of the cartoonist. Dean Alston is the editorial cartoonist at *The West Australian*. Cartoonists try to link different ideas in their cartoons.



## Innovate

Express your opinion about a government or law issue by writing a short Letter to the Editor. Look at today's Letters to the Editor first.

## Connect

1 What are the two main stories about government and law in today's paper? Write the headlines below.

Government	Law

Do these stories contain mainly fact or opinion?

2 What is the main story about?

3 Look at the two main stories about government and law in today's newspaper. How could they be linked in a cartoon? List your ideas below.

4 Have a go at being a cartoonist. Use the two news ideas or issues you have listed to create your own political cartoon.