

# Interpreting **HANSARD**

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## HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE

Welcome to the Museum of Australian Democracy's (MoAD) resource, *HansART: Interpreting Hansard Records*

This digital resource focuses on the records of Hansard and was developed for secondary students. Since Federation in 1901, Australia's federal parliament has been the scene of many robust debates, which have led to many significant decisions and shaped our country's development over time. We have explored over 100 years of Hansard and identified six themes which crop up repeatedly throughout our history and remain relevant today. The resource links to the Museum of Australian Democracy website.

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### AN ICONIC BUILDING

The Museum of Australian Democracy is located within the National Heritage-listed building, Old Parliament House, in Canberra. Federal Parliament sat here for 61 years, from 1927 until 1988. The building's striped neo-classical architecture, designed by John Smith Murdoch, has become an iconic monument in the Canberra landscape. Its design and features reflect the strong links, traditions and symbols we have adopted from the British Parliament or the United States Congress. The chambers and offices throughout the building tell the stories of our political, economic and social history at a point in time.



### SPORT AND CULTURE

References to sporting teams and pop culture have often played a significant part in many political speeches. Whether it is an allusion to Harry Potter, Star Wars, Beyoncé or Shane Warne, by simply mentioning these iconic names politicians help build connections with everyday Australians. Such pop culture references are the great equalisers: they add humour and during the 'sometimes heated' debates in either Chamber their light-hearted approach can enliven an otherwise dry, dull topic.



### WOMEN'S RIGHTS

White women in Australia have had the right to vote in Commonwealth elections since 1902, one year after Federation. Australia was one of the first countries in the world to achieve this milestone, although it took another 60 years for Indigenous women (and men) to gain the same right. At the 1943 election, Enid Lyons and Dorothy Tangney became the first female parliamentarians to enter federal politics. Seated in different chambers, they faced serious challenges entering a profession previously dominated by males. Although Australia has had its first female prime minister, Julia Gillard, and over the years an increase in the representation of women in parliament, but there is still a long way to go.



## THE ENVIRONMENT

Debate around the natural environment has resulted in a number of milestone decisions being made in federal parliament over the years. In the early 1980s, the intervention of the federal government in state issues such as the construction of the Gordon-below-Franklin Dam in Tasmania caused great controversy. In more recent times, global warming has fuelled debates around renewable energy, preserving the Great Barrier Reef, whalehunting and mining. Concern for the natural environment, and over our obligations regarding it, appears to be growing stronger, and this is one issue which may well continue to dominate parliamentary debates in the years to come.

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## INDIGENOUS RIGHTS

Indigenous Australians have a long history of protesting for equality in Australia – from the opening of Parliament House in 1927, when Jimmy Clements and John Noble walked over 150 kilometres to the federal capital, to the establishment of the Tent Embassy at the front of Parliament House in the early 1970s. While Indigenous Australians did finally gain the right vote with the passage of the Commonwealth Electoral Act 1962, it was not until after the 1967 referendum that they were included in the census and the Commonwealth was able to make laws on their behalf. The first Indigenous person elected to parliament was Neville Bonner, who became a senator in 1971. The first female Indigenous member of parliament was Nova Peris, elected in 2013.



## IMMIGRATION AND REFUGEES

Today Australia has developed into a successful multicultural nation, but it has had a long history of controversial migration policies and debates along the way. In 1901, one of the first Bills debated in the newly formed federal parliament concerned the introduction of a 'White Australia policy'. The Immigration Restriction Act 1901 formally established this policy. Many Australians – in fact, the majority of Australian citizens – have grandparents or great-grandparents who were born overseas and migrated here. In recent times, a number of parliamentarians were caught out by the dual citizenship controversy and forced to resign. An ongoing debate, which has divided the nation, has been that surrounding the arrival of refugees to our shores and the managing of their processing.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### HANSARD

Hansard is a window into Australia's political system, a record of the robust debates which occur in both the House of Representatives and Senate Chambers, and of the final decisions made by our federal politicians.

### WHAT IS HANSARD?

Hansard is the official written record of debates from parliament including the House of Representatives, Senate, Main Committee and Parliamentary Committees. It is not a verbatim record, as the final printed transcript corrects errors in facts, grammar and all the 'ums' and 'ahs' which happen naturally – not to mention any slight slip of the tongue which may occur during especially heated debates.

### MORE INFORMATION ON HANSARD

#### **Hansard**

<https://peo.gov.au/understand-our-parliament/how-parliament-works/parliament-at-work/hansard>

### ACCESSING HANSARD RECORDS

Hansard records are available through the Parliament of Australia website via:

[https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary\\_Business/Hansard](https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Hansard)  
<https://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/search.w3p>

Both websites make it easy to search for records based on politician, chamber, Bill title, date range and/ or topic.

# HANSART - INTERPRETING HANSARD RECORDS

## CREATIVE RESPONSE

### An introductory activity

This activity seeks to familiarise students with the format, style and content of Hansard records in a fun, creative and interactive way.

### INVESTIGATE

MoAD staff have trawled through over 100 years of parliamentary records to collect excerpts relating to six key themes. These themes recur throughout Hansard and continue to be discussed in parliament today:

- An iconic building
- Sport and culture
- Women's rights
- The environment
- Indigenous rights
- Immigration and refugees.

Teachers and students can visit <https://www.moadoph.gov.au/learn/activities-and-resources/hansart-interpreting-hansard-records> to find a selection of Hansard excerpts and graphics from MoAD's collection linked to these six themes.

### CREATE

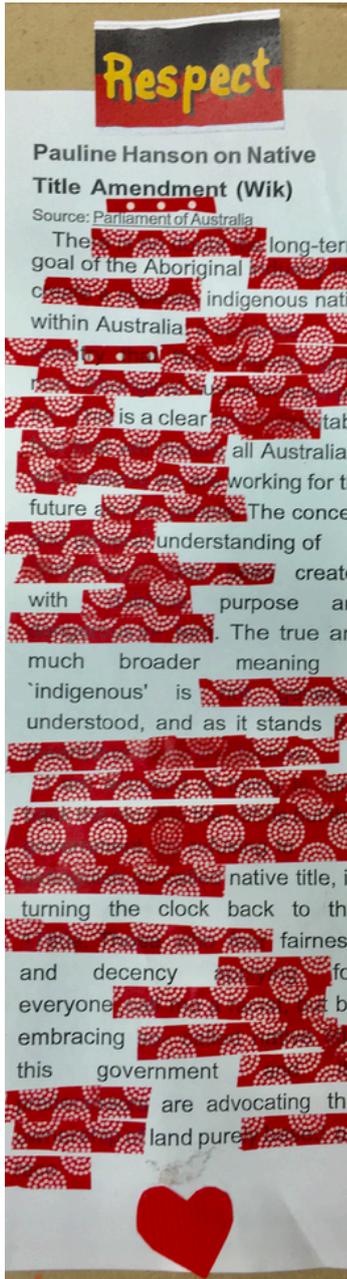
Have students choose a theme and use the Hansard excerpts and graphics to create an artwork. This might be a physical artwork, using printouts of the material, or a digital one, using computer graphics software. Encourage students to rearrange, remix and reframe the written word to craft their own record. Consider providing additional elements to help students create their artwork, such as:

- Markers/pencils
- Glue
- Sticky tape
- Washi tape
- Scissors
- Craft paper (various colours)
- String/yarn
- Cardboard
- Felt

## REFLECT

Have your students talk about their piece with the class. Think about prompting them through questions that help them to talk about their work:

- What theme did they choose, and why?
- What words from their excerpt did they include, and which did they exclude?
- Which colours did they choose to use in their creations? Why?
- How do they feel about the theme they have chosen? Is this conveyed in their artwork? How?



Example: Selectively choosing which words to include or redact (block out) can dramatically change the meaning of Hansard documents.

Additional examples and inspiration are located in the Appendix - Creative Responses.

## THE INQUIRY PROCESS

This resource draws on an inquiry approach to support students' exploration of Hansard. This approach requires students to take ownership of, and be responsible for, their learning, while the teacher facilitates the process. The booklet provided will help students move through each stage of the process, and outline what is expected of them. Detailed information is also provided to guide teachers through each stage.



## PLANNING FOR INQUIRY

There are some important decisions teachers need to make before students can begin the For the Record inquiry activity.

- Will students focus on only one of the themes, or have the opportunity to choose which theme they would like to explore?
- Will it be a guided inquiry (with teachers formulating the driving question), or an open inquiry whereby students create their own questions?
- Will students have access only to the Hansard resources provided, or will they use these simply as a starting point before searching Hansard for themselves?

## STAGES OF INQUIRY

Before undertaking their inquiry, students need to be 'hooked', in the sense that they are motivated to want to know more about the theme. Here are some suggestions for how to draw them in and spark interest.

- On the [website](#), select one Hansard excerpt to read to students
- Explore the creative responses provided in this resource
- Watch a clip from Australian Parliament, such as:
  - Julia Gillard's 'misogyny speech'
  - Kevin Rudd's apology to the Stolen Generations
  - Linda Burney's maiden speech
  - Pauline Hanson's 'burka stunt'
  - Pauline's Hanson's maiden speech on immigration
  - Paul Keating's republic debate and Opposition Leader John Howard's reply
  - Bronwyn Bishop's 'Hogwarts' speech
  - Josh Frydenberg's migration legislation speech.

## DRIVING QUESTION AND GUIDING QUESTIONS

The inquiry process is based on responding to a given question. This driving question can either be developed in conjunction with students (guided inquiry), or if students are already familiar with the inquiry process (open inquiry) then they can come up with their own.

The driving question itself needs to have depth, and not be something that can be readily answerable before the inquiry has even started. It also needs to be open-ended, to support vigorous research and result in a meaningful response. The supporting questions are there to help guide students and keep their research focused towards answering the driving question. Examples of driving questions may include:

- How have women's rights changed since Federation?
- Has federal parliament succeeded in creating equality for Indigenous Australians?
- What constitutional changes have been made for Indigenous Australians?
- Why is climate change an important political question?
- What impact did the arrival of boats along Australia's coastline have on our refugee policy?

## INVESTIGATE

The investigation part of the inquiry process will take up the most time. Once the driving and guiding questions have been selected, teachers need to decide whether any explicit teaching needs to occur for some (or all) students before they start researching for themselves. To support students' inquiry, the class as a whole may need to be taught how to unpack political speeches, or how to effectively search Hansard records online.

Throughout this stage of the inquiry, teachers should encourage students to constantly refer back to their questions and to reflect on whether they are focusing their research on answering the driving question. Throughout this process, students should also keep a record of all the sources they have used. This will be beneficial down the track, when they may wish to use parts of Hansard in their presentation; keeping a record of the searches they have made, and hence of the speeches they have drawn on for information, will render this process much quicker and more efficient. Students may choose to source information from external websites or from other speeches delivered by politicians to support their understanding of a theme, or to enhance their arguments. A record should also be kept of such material.

## DESIGN

The design stage provides students with an opportunity to analyse their research and identify key pieces of information they want to share with other students. This needs to be undertaken while critically assessing whether the information they have gathered answers the driving question. The critical thinking process will help them determine the essential content which best answers the driving question, and disregard any irrelevant information.

This is also the point at which students brainstorm ways to effectively communicate their findings. Presentations can take many forms, including creating an artwork, developing an infographic or using digital technologies. Students need to consider who the audience is, and what they will find engaging and relevant. At the end of this resource are examples of students' creative responses using the Hansard as the main subject matter.

## CREATE

During this stage, students take the time to create a detailed, high-quality response to share with their audience. They need to consider the materials they will use, the time it will take to make and its overall readability. Students should also have discussions about how the presentation will run; this should include considering who will be responsible for presenting particular pieces of information and whether speeches need to be written out to ensure a more polished performance.

Once again this is an opportunity for students to reflect on whether what they have created in fact answers the driving question, and whether it is clear, concise and engaging.



## PRESENT/DISCUSS

This stage is all about students sharing their learning with each other, unpacking their creative responses and the significance behind their choices. While they are listening to the presentations, students should make a record of any comments and questions, to fuel further discussion around the theme. Presenting can also include students sharing their learning beyond the classroom.

## REFLECT

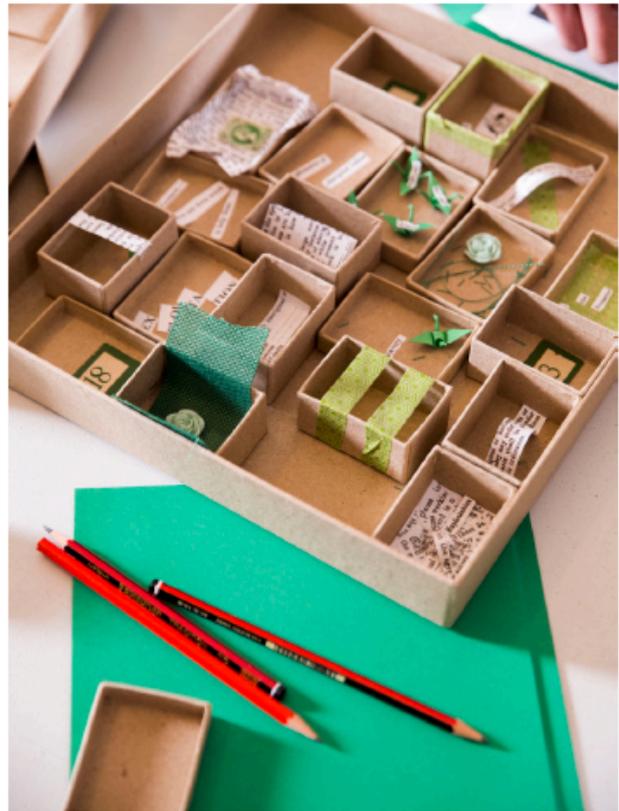
Although students will have been actively reflecting throughout each stage of the inquiry process, this stage is an opportunity for them to pull all of their learning together and to take a moment to reflect on what they got out of the experience. They can do this either as part of their inquiry group or independently. This will allow each student to take the time to reflect not only on the specific theme and on their participation as part of a group, but also on what they might do differently next time. This can also be an opportunity for students to identify any new questions they have based on their group's investigatory process or from hearing other student's presentations.

## APPENDIX - CREATIVE RESPONSE EXAMPLES

This activity seeks to familiarise students with the format, style and content of Hansard records in a fun, creative and interactive way.

What additional materials do you have in the classroom to facilitate your student's creative response?

- Markers/Pencils
- Glue
- Sticky tape
- Washi tape
- Scissors
- Craft paper - various colours
- String/yarn
- Cardboard
- Felt



**Note:** The views expressed in these works of art are that of the students/artists who created them and do not represent the Museum of Australian Democracy.

## APPENDIX - CREATIVE RESPONSE EXAMPLES

Ask your students to consider what they choose to include in their creative response, and what they choose to exclude. Which topic interests them most?

Have they chosen to use specific colours? What do those colours symbolise? Which words in the Hansard records mean the most to them? Why? Does their creation convey their point of view clearly?



**MoAD collection:** Images of HansART created by students at National Constitutional Convention, 2017.

## APPENDIX - AN ICONIC BUILDING

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**MoAD collection:** HansART created by MoAD visitors during Enlighten Festival, 2017.

# APPENDIX - SPORT AND CULTURE

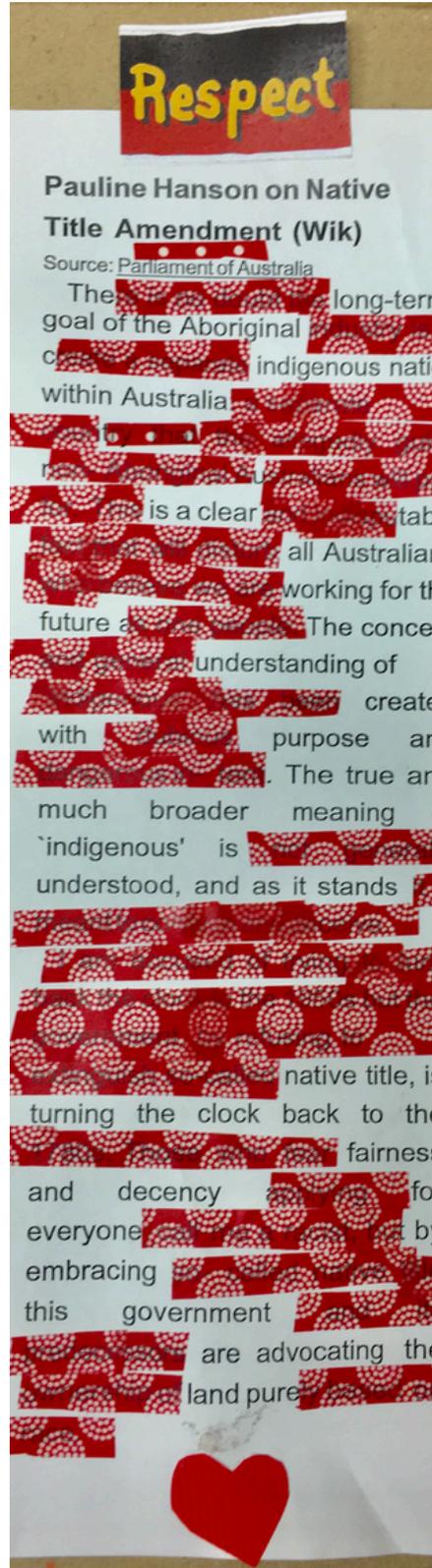
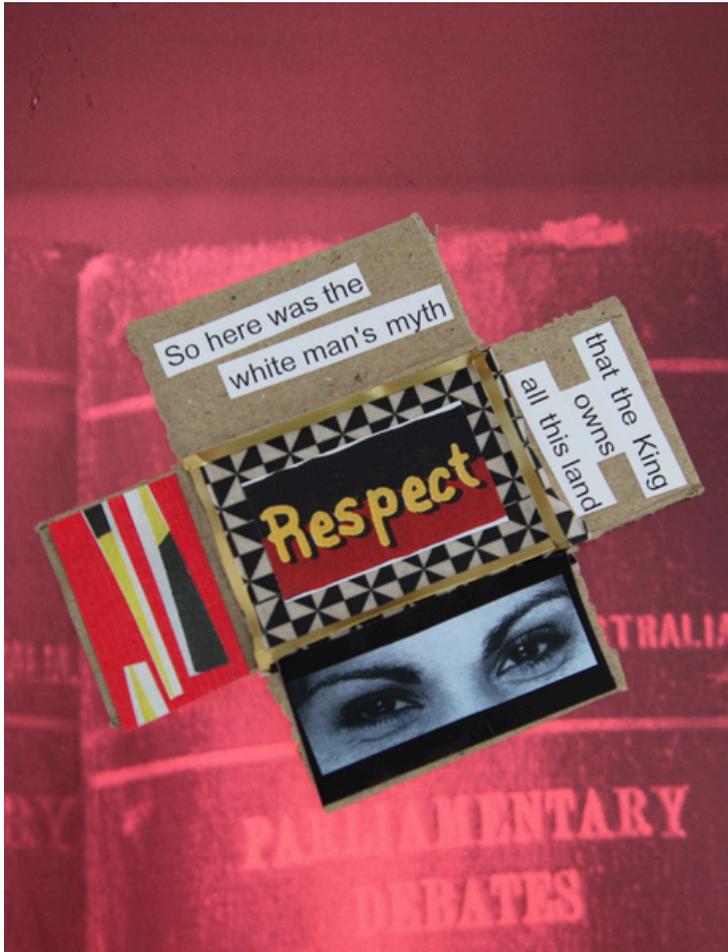


MoAD collection: Sport and Culture themed HansART examples made by MoAD visitors.

## APPENDIX - THE ENVIRONMENT

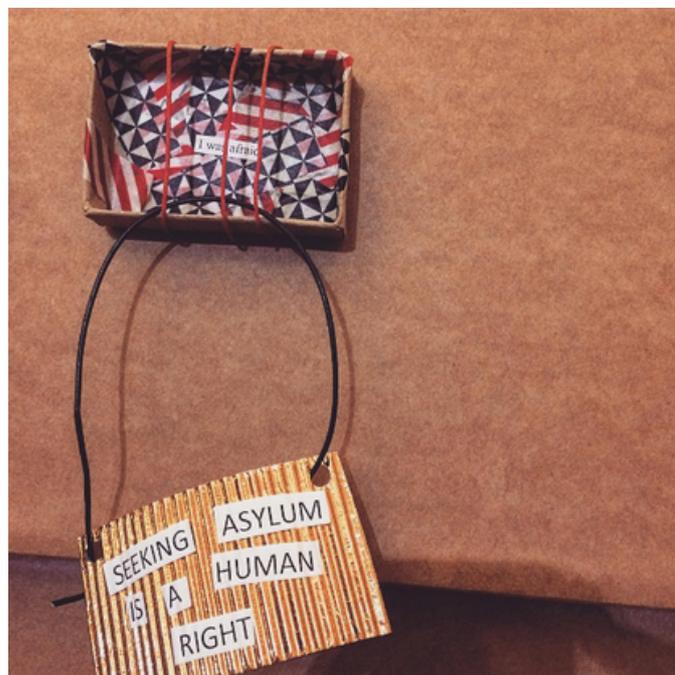
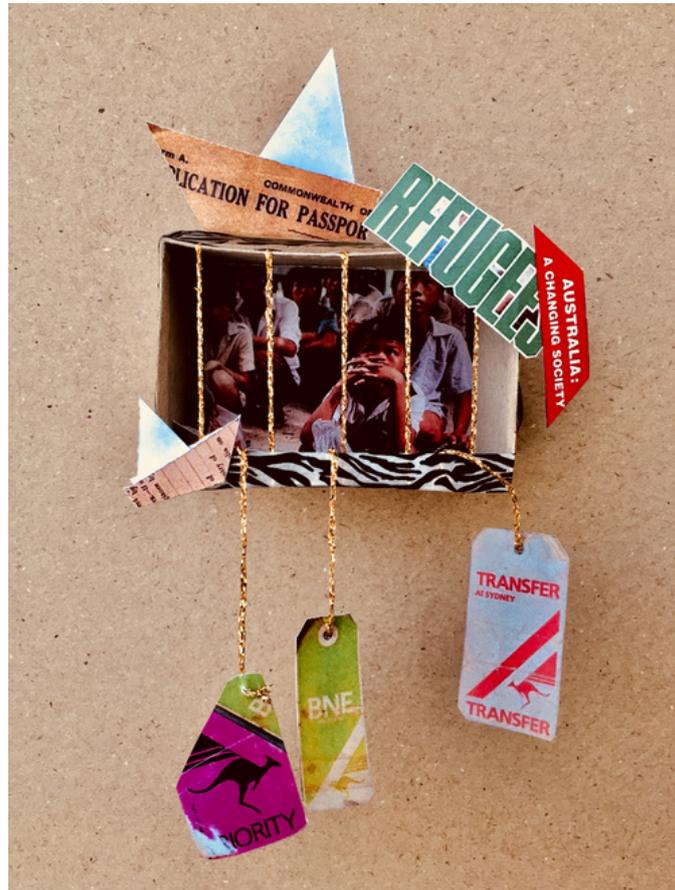


**MoAD collection:** Environment themed HansART examples made by MoAD visitors during Enlighten Festival, 2017.



**MoAD collection:** Indigenous Rights themed HansART examples created by participants in the National Indigenous Youth Parliament, 2017.

## APPENDIX - IMMIGRATION AND REFUGEES



**MoAD collection:** Immigration and Refugee themed HansART examples created by MoAD visitors during Enlighten Festival, 2017.



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