
Governor of New South Wales

Learning Resource 2 - Australia as a Nation

Past and Present Role of the Governor of New South Wales

Stage 3 History

These learning experiences support studies on **Australia as a Nation**. The focus is on students using primary sources to investigate continuities and changes between the past and present in examining the role of the Governor of New South Wales. Teachers may wish to incorporate these activities into their class unit of work.

Key Inquiry Questions

- How did Australian society change through the twentieth century?
- What contribution have significant individuals and groups made to the development of Australian society?

Current Role of the Governor of New South Wales



Her Excellency The Honourable Margaret Beazley AO QC

The Governor is appointed by the Sovereign and is her representative in New South Wales. The formal head of state in New South Wales, the role of Governor has changed greatly over the years.

- Students use information and photographs sourced from the Governor of New South Wales webpage to create an annotated visual text illustrating and explaining the three current roles of the Governor of New South Wales: Constitutional, Ceremonial and Community.
- In the context of the Governor's Constitutional role, discuss the three levels of government in Australia: local, state and federal.

Constitutional Role of the Governor of New South Wales

The Role of Governor has changed greatly over the years. The Governor today has an important constitutional and ceremonial role in New South Wales, but acts according to the advice given to them by the Government of Parliament. The Governor is also deeply involved in community organisations and events.

- Students examine Sources 1 to 5 depicting the ceremony of the opening of Parliament by the Governor of New South Wales. They answer the questions on p.3 to guide their analysis.



Source 1 – Opening of Parliament by Governor Lord Wakehurst, Parliament House Sydney, 4 August 1937

From the collections of the State Library of NSW
<http://www.acmssearch.sl.nsw.gov.au/search/itemDetailPaged.cgi?itemID=29607>



Source 2 – Opening of Parliament by Governor Sir Eric Woodward, Parliament House Sydney, 16 August 1961, by Barry Newberry

From the collections of the State Library of NSW
<http://www.acmssearch.sl.nsw.gov.au/search/itemDetailPaged.cgi?itemID=87214>



Source 3 – Opening of Parliament by Governor Sir Roden Cutler, Parliament House Sydney, 15 August 1978

From the collections of the State Library of NSW
<http://www.acmssearch.sl.nsw.gov.au/search/itemDetailPaged.cgi?itemID=330669>



Source 4 – Opening of the 56th Parliament by His Excellency General The Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Ret'd), inspecting the Tri-Service Honour Guard, Parliament House Sydney, 5 May 2015

[http://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/prod/web/common.nsf/cbe381f08171c2e8ca256fca007d6044/adf44b31ba14a6d6ca257e3d00825456/\\$FILE/BTP-150505-7987.jpg](http://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/prod/web/common.nsf/cbe381f08171c2e8ca256fca007d6044/adf44b31ba14a6d6ca257e3d00825456/$FILE/BTP-150505-7987.jpg)

Tuesday 5 May 2015

His Excellency General The Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Ret'd), Governor of New South Wales, accompanied by Mrs Linda Hurley, attended the Ceremonial Opening of the First Session of the Fifty-Sixth Parliament of New South Wales. The Governor met with the newly elected Presiding Officers and Members of the Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly.

...His Excellency formally opened the Parliament, delivering an Address to all Members at a Joint Sitting in the Legislative Council chamber.

Source 5 – Governor of New South Wales, Vice-Regal Program, 5 May 2015

From Governor of New South Wales <http://www.governor.nsw.gov.au/governor/vice-regal-program/tuesday-5-may-2015/>

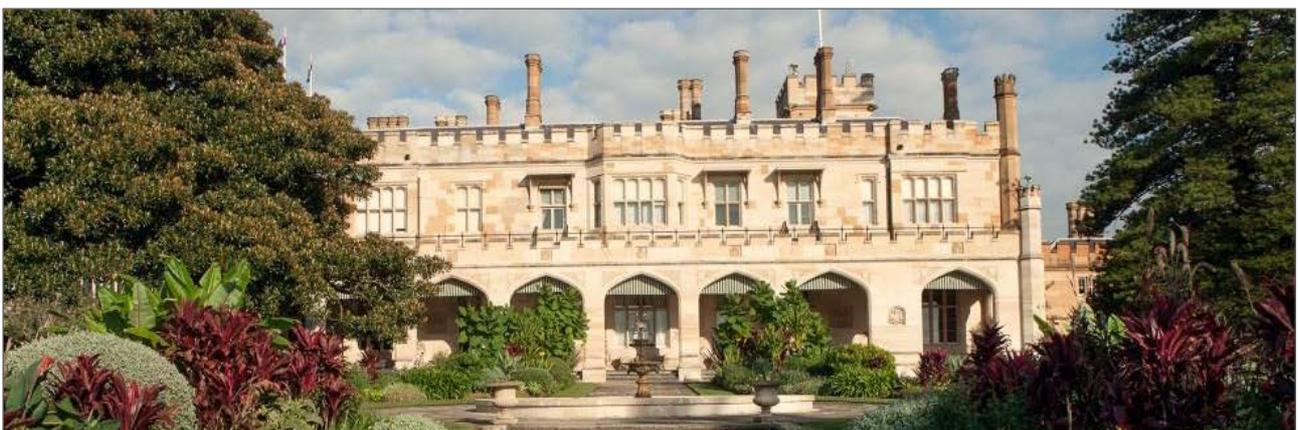
Source analysis

- **Observe** – Which person is the Governor in each image? What services are represented? Look for interesting details in the uniforms. Look for similarities and differences between the images (continuities and changes).
- **Interpret** – How has the ceremony of the opening of Parliament changed and remained the same through the 20th century to the present?
- **Question** – What do you want to know more about after viewing these sources?
- **Explain** – Imagine you are a media reporter covering the opening of Parliament. Use the sources, as well as research into the role of the Governor of New South Wales, to write a short news item about the event. Refer to traditions and include information on the Constitutional Role of the Governor.

Government House Sydney

Government House Sydney serves as the official residence of the Governor of New South Wales and is used by the Governor for official Vice Regal ceremonies, receptions, luncheons and dinners, and the weekly meeting of the Executive Council. Also a centre for cultural events, Government House is located in the Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney.

- Students use online maps to locate Government House Sydney. View the map, satellite image, photographs and street views to explore current features of the building, gardens and the surrounding area.



Governors of New South Wales

The Office of Governor of New South Wales is the oldest public office in Australia, dating from 1786 when Captain Arthur Phillip was issued a Commission appointing him Governor of the then colony of New South Wales.

His Excellency General The Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Ret'd) is the 38th Governor of New South Wales.

- Students, individually or in pairs, use an historical inquiry process to research a Governor of New South Wales. The list of former Governors is available on the Governor of New South Wales website.
- Using a range of sources, students research the role and activities of the Governor. Students identify the Governor's contribution to the development of Australian society.



Sir Roden Cutler, the longest serving Governor of New South Wales, 23 Sept 1977

From the collections of the State Library of NSW

<http://www.acmssearch.sl.nsw.gov.au/search/itemDetailPaged.cgi?itemID=368151>

Terminology

The Governor of New South Wales has an important constitutional and ceremonial role in the state as well as being closely involved in the activities of community organisations and events.

- In understanding the current and former roles of the Governors of New South Wales, students will need to be familiar with the following terminology.

ceremonial
constitution
constitutional monarchy
'courtesy calls'
democracy
diplomatic

Executive Council
government
investiture
Legislative Assembly
monarch
Order of Australia

parliament
patron
receptions
Sovereign
'The Honourable'
Vice-Regal

Ceremonial Role of the Governor - Investitures

Australia has a system of honours and awards to recognise Australians for excellence, achievement and meritorious service.

The Governor of New South Wales holds Investiture Ceremonies at Government House, Sydney to present honours and awards. The recipients are principally being invested in the Order of Australia, however there are also a number of service and bravery awards.

- Students examine Sources 6 to 9 of Investiture Ceremonies at Government House. They answer the questions on p.6 to guide their analysis.



Source 6 – Former Governor, Sir John Northcott, presents Imperial Service Medals, March 1957, by Ken Redshaw

From the collection of the State Library of NSW
<http://www.acmssearch.sl.nsw.gov.au/search/itemDetailPaged.cgi?itemID=73481>



Source 7 – Former Governor, Sir Roden Cutler, presents Imperial Service Medals to police, 30 November 1969, by Jack Hickson

From the collection of the State Library of NSW
<http://www.acmssearch.sl.nsw.gov.au/search/itemDetailPaged.cgi?itemID=125738>



Source 8 – Former Governor, Dame Marie Bashir, presents Mr Ricky Ponting OAM with his Order of Australia honour, September 2012 by Rob Tuckwell

From Governor New South Wales collection



Source 9 – Investitures in the Order of Australia and other Awards presented by former Governor General The Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Ret'd), 9 September 2015, by Rob Tuckwell

From Governor New South Wales collection

Source analysis

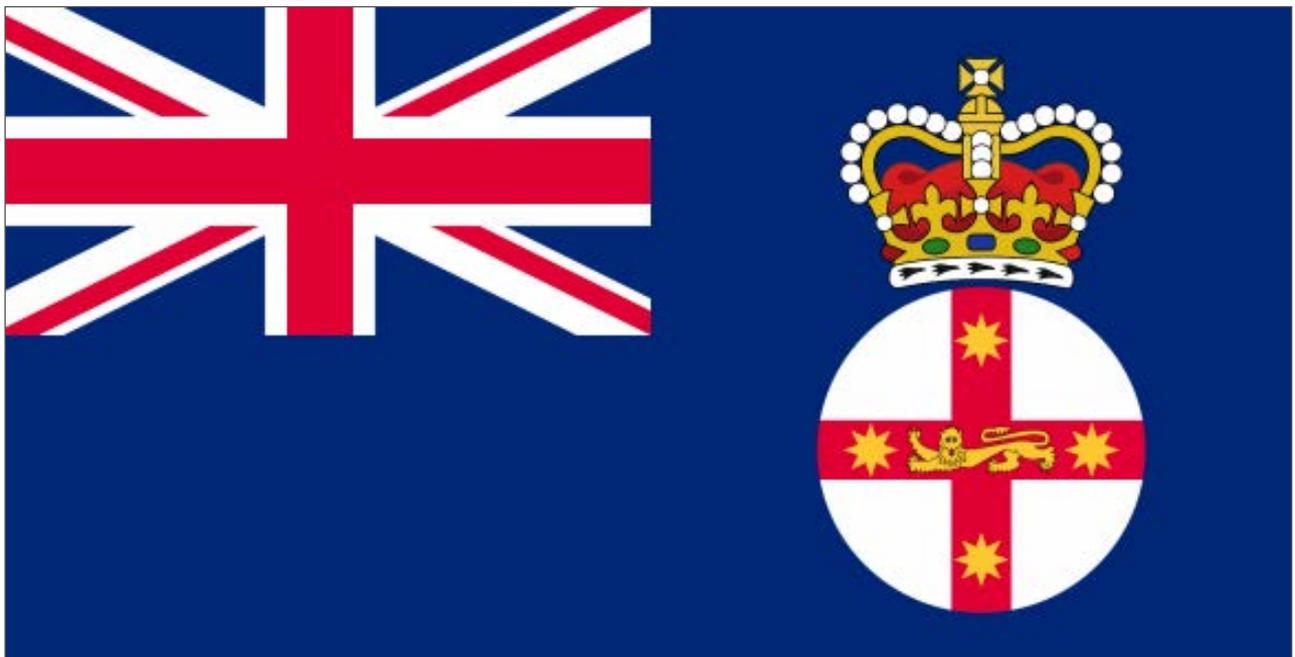
- **Observe** – Which person in each image is the award recipient? On what side of the chest are medals worn? Look for similarities and differences between the images (continuities and changes).
- **Interpret** – What would the Governor say to each award recipient as the medal is being given to the awardee? What emotions would the recipients be experiencing at the Ceremony?
- **Question** – What do you want to know more about after viewing these sources?
- **Research** – Using the Honoured Australians list on the It's an Honour website, students select an award recipient and compose a paragraph summarising their actions and contributions to society. Students write this as a citation that could be read out at the awardee's Investiture Ceremony.
- **Perspectives** – In role as an Honoured Australian, present a statement to the local media about how it felt to receive your award at an Investiture Ceremony.



Order of Australia Medal

Badges, Standards and Coats of Arms

The current Personal Standard for the Governor of New South Wales was adopted on 15 January 1981. The State Badge of New South Wales, on the right of the flag, has eight-pointed golden stars representing the Southern Cross. The golden lion and the St George Cross reflect the British heritage of the first European colonists. The St George Cross is also the traditional badge of the British Navy. Above the State Badge is St Edward's crown.



Coats of arms, badges and other heraldry are embedded into the fabric of the exteriors and interiors of Government House Sydney. Wall carvings, lead-light windows and painted panels show the coats of arms of the Governors of New South Wales. Each represents their family history, interests and achievements. Recent Governors have contributed to the design of their own coat of arms.



Former Governor Lord Jersey's Coat of Arms, located on exterior of southern wall of the arcade, Government House Sydney



Painted Coats of Arms of former Governors located in the Main Hall, Government House Sydney

- In the context of local, state and federal government in Australia, students compare and analyse:
 - Their local government's logo
 - Personal Standard of the Governor of New South Wales
 - New South Wales badge, flag and emblems
 - Australian flag and emblems.
- Students identify British symbolism in the flags. This analysis can form part of an inquiry into the influences of Britain on Australian democracy.
- Students work collaboratively to design a flag for their local government area which represents the function and unique features of the area.
- Students research heraldry symbols and their meanings and either design and create their own personal coat of arms.

Resource Links

Governor of NSW

<http://www.governor.nsw.gov.au>

Honoured Australians

https://www.itsanhonour.gov.au/honours/awards/medals/order_of_australia.cfm

NSW State Flag and Emblems

<http://www.nsw.gov.au/your-government/nsw-state-flag-emblems>

Syllabus Links

History K-10

Stage 3 Outcomes

HT3-3 identifies change and continuity and describes the causes and effects of change on Australian society.

HT3-5 applies a variety of skills of historical inquiry and communication.

Historical concepts

Continuity and change; cause and effect; perspectives; empathetic understanding; significance.

Historical skills

Comprehension: chronology, terms and concepts; analysis and use of sources; perspectives and interpretations; research; explanation and communication.

Content

Key figures and events that led to Australia's Federation, including British and American influences on Australia's system of law and government (ACHHK113).

Students:

- Identify the influences of Britain and the USA on Australian democracy.
- Outline local, state and federal government structures and responsibilities.

The contribution of individuals and groups, including Aboriginal people and /or Torres Strait Islanders and migrants, to the development of Australian society, for example in areas such as the economy, education, sciences, the arts, sport (ACHHK116).

Students:

- Using a range of sources, research and describe the contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and other groups to Australian society.

Learning Across the Curriculum – Civics and Citizenship

Students:

- Explore how their own society has organised itself.
- Examine how the ideals and practices of their own democratic society have evolved over time.
- Examine political and social life in the past and the present.