



**TEACH • LEARN • UNDERSTAND**

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Welcome to the first edition of the [Seriously Social](#) newsletter for 2025. We hope that your return to school has been as smooth as possible to set you and your students up for a great year of learning and discovery.

In this month's newsletter you will find an invitation to enter the [Great Student Debate](#) competition, with finalists joining us in Canberra in September 2025. The Great Student Debate is part of the [Social Sciences Week](#) events taking place from 8-14 September 2025.

This newsletter also features a new debate kit and an early release preview of upcoming curriculum resources.

Additionally, you'll find more opportunities to participate in Social Sciences Week.

We look forward to remaining in contact to provide you with the latest updates from Seriously Social throughout the year.



**Professor Barry McGaw** AO, FASSA, FAPS, FACE

Chair, Education Committee, former President  
Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia

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## Events and Opportunities

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### The Great Student Debate Competition

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Here is your chance to dive into debating with the Seriously Social Great Student Debate for Social Sciences Week 2025!

### **What is the Great Student Debate?**

An exciting national competition where students in **Years 8, 9 and 10** engage in spirited debate and develop essential skills while exploring key issues in Australian history.

This year's debate will address the statement: *"That Australian history unites us."*

**Eligibility:** Open to students in Years 8, 9 and 10 who are new to competitive debating.

### **Prizes:**

- a contribution towards costs to attend the final competition in Canberra,
- a debate coaching workshop before the competition led by experts,
- the opportunity to showcase debating skills at the National Library of Australia during Social Sciences Week!

For more information email [info@socialsciences.org.au](mailto:info@socialsciences.org.au)

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# THE GREAT STUDENT DEBATE

*'THAT AUSTRALIAN HISTORY UNITES US'*

An exciting national competition where students in Years 8, 9 and 10 engage in spirited debates, developing their skills while exploring key issues in Australian history!

**Eligibility:** Open to students in Years 8, 9 and 10 who are new to competitive debating.



## 2025 COMPETITION DATES

Date	Information
12 February	Competition opens - visit (website)
1 April	Free Research Webinar - hosted by the National Library of Australia Register here: <a href="https://bit.ly/40Zj5qB">https://bit.ly/40Zj5qB</a>
1 May	Entries close at 10am AEST
16 May	Winners informed
3 June	Public announcement of winning teams and advertisement of the Social Sciences Week - Great Debate Competition
9 September	Great Debate Competition - National Library of Australia, Canberra

## WINNING TEAMS WILL RECEIVE:

- a debate coaching workshop led by experts ahead of the competition,
- a contribution to travel costs to attend the debate workshop and competition in Canberra,
- the chance to showcase their skills at a live debate at the National Library of Australia!



FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE EMAIL: [info@socialsciences.org.au](mailto:info@socialsciences.org.au)

Proudly supported by the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia, the University of Canberra and the National Library of Australia



## NLA Education Research Skills Seminar

**APRIL 1**

**1.00PM  
AEST**

## The Great Student Debate Research Skills Webinar

Register here: <https://bit.ly/40Zj5qB>

For more information: [info@socialsciences.org.au](mailto:info@socialsciences.org.au)



To help your students prepare for the Great Student Debate, Seriously Social is partnering with the National Library of Australia to provide a free webinar on digital research skills!

### What is the NLA Education Great Student Debate Research Skills Webinar?

A live, online event led by experts from the National Library of Australia that will show your students how to access and navigate the National Library collection through gallery objects, library services, eResources, Digital Classroom, the catalogue and Trove.

### Who should attend?

Australian school students and teachers. This webinar will provide valuable learning for those who wish to take part in the Great Student Debate during Social Sciences Week 2025.

### When is it?

April 1, 1.00PM AEST/2.00PM ADST

### How much does it cost?

Attendance is FREE for school students and teachers.

**seriously social**

# DEBATE KIT: THAT AUSTRALIAN HISTORY UNITES US

TEACHING RESOURCE

**DEBATING**

**Example arguments**

**Debate topic: That Australian history unites us**

Affirmative arguments	Negative arguments
There is room for all perspectives in the process of recording historical events. Including as many perspectives as possible can allow for a more unifying approach to historical narrative reflects Australia's constantly changing society.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>People will have different perspectives about historical events due to their background, prior knowledge, attitudes and many other factors. Agreement on history as unifying or otherwise will be difficult to reach because of this.</li> </ul>
Australia has a history of facing overcoming difficulties, such as Great Depression, World War II and natural disasters. These events show the resilience and strength of Australians. Events demonstrate that united across history diversity brings people through times of crisis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Australian history has been taught with a bias, focusing more on the achievements of European settlers while downplaying or ignoring other parts of history, such as Indigenous cultures and events like the Stolen Generations. This selective approach creates history as a source of conflict rather than unity.</li> </ul>
History is filled with triumph and sorrow. Over time, we have learned people from all backgrounds, worlds, and these struggles help bring everyone together.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The colonisation of Australia led to the displacement and suffering of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The ongoing impact of this history, including debates around reconciliation and recognition, shows that history can be a source of division rather than unity.</li> </ul>

**DEBATE KIT: THAT AUSTRALIAN HISTORY UNITES US**

**Table:**

Title / Explanation	Web link
The national history curriculum should not be used and shared and altered as an education tool	<a href="https://thesession.com/files/national-history-education-tool-shd-not-be-used-and-altered-as-an-education-tool-26783">https://thesession.com/files/national-history-education-tool-shd-not-be-used-and-altered-as-an-education-tool-26783</a>
Interactive timeline: Defining moments in Australian history	<a href="https://www.cse.unsw.edu.au/defining-moments-in-australian-history">https://www.cse.unsw.edu.au/defining-moments-in-australian-history</a>
Rethink the story? Let's change how we understand the story of Australia's history	<a href="https://www.independent.com.au/news/2023/09/26/change-the-story-of-australia-how-we-understand-the-story/">https://www.independent.com.au/news/2023/09/26/change-the-story-of-australia-how-we-understand-the-story/</a>
Guide to the History of Australian Aborigines	<a href="https://indigenoushistory.com.au/about-guide-to-aust-aboigines/">https://indigenoushistory.com.au/about-guide-to-aust-aboigines/</a>
Australian history	<a href="https://www.bbc.com/history/australia/australia-history-090808">https://www.bbc.com/history/australia/australia-history-090808</a>
What makes a good history?	<a href="https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2023/aug/22/what-makes-a-good-history">https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2023/aug/22/what-makes-a-good-history</a>
How do we know what happened in the past?	<a href="https://www.abc.net.au/news/2023-09-26/how-do-we-know-what-happened-in-the-past/103244883">https://www.abc.net.au/news/2023-09-26/how-do-we-know-what-happened-in-the-past/103244883</a>
How do we know what happened in the past?	<a href="https://www.abc.net.au/news/2023-09-26/how-do-we-know-what-happened-in-the-past/103244883">https://www.abc.net.au/news/2023-09-26/how-do-we-know-what-happened-in-the-past/103244883</a>

[seriouslysocial.org.au](http://seriouslysocial.org.au)

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Support your students to consider different perspectives and develop skills in researching and debate planning with the new kit on the topic *"That Australian History Unites Us"*.

## Explore the Australian History Debate Kit

# New Resource Development

## Year 6 Plants and Life in Space

Seriously Social subscribers are offered a sneak preview of the Year 6, cross-curriculum learning resource *Plants and Life in Space*.

This is a unique, real-world teaching resource developed in collaboration with the ARC Centre of Excellence in Plants for Space (P4S) and Seriously Social, an initiative of the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia. This resource, produced at no cost to schools, brings together the expertise of both science and social science research experts. The content is peer-reviewed and offers real-world learning opportunities, helping students explore potential career paths in space research, sustainable farming and related fields.

The resource is still in development and currently includes reading articles and engaging learning experiences. Linked to the Australian, NSW and Victorian Curriculums, the module is designed for Year 6 students, focusing on Science, Humanities and Social Sciences (HASS) and Technology.

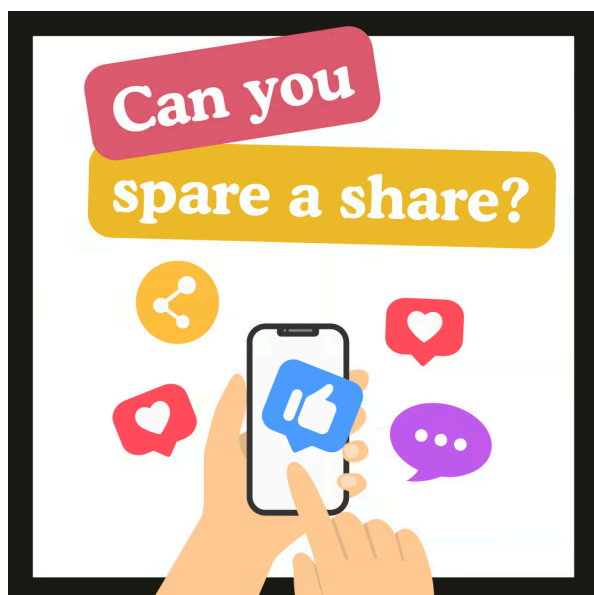
Teachers can adapt the resources to meet the diverse needs of their students, with flexible learning experiences that cater to various learning styles and abilities. Educational videos to complement this learning module are currently in development and will be circulated in the very near future.

If you would like to register your interest to be a trial school for this learning module, email us at [info@socialsciences.org.au](mailto:info@socialsciences.org.au)

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**Take a sneak peek at the Plants & Life in Space module in development**

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Do you follow Seriously Social on LinkedIn, Youtube or Facebook?

Interactions from our followers ensure that more people see the free educational social science resources that we offer.

If you see us in your feed, please give us a like or share and help us to spread the word!

Click below to follow and share.





# Social Sciences Week 2025



Social Sciences Week (SSW) will take place **8-14 September 2025**. We will have a range of options for schools to get involved in SSW and invite you and your school community to connect with us to promote events that you may wish to lead.

Here are just some of the ways your students can join in the fun:

# 5 WAYS TO GET INVOLVED AT SCHOOL

## 1. Host your own debate

Head to our debate section for topic ideas and tips to run a great debate in your classroom.



## 2. Profile careers

Profile your own career as a teacher, or the careers of people in the community. You could download our A-Z of social science careers for inspiration.

## 3. Host your own event

Choose a date during SSW and host a talk, workshop, podcast, film screening, panel – the possibilities are endless!



## 4. Attend an event

Check out the calendar of upcoming events [on our website](#) and choose



## 5. Watch a webinar

Visit [Seriously Social Schools](#) to find resources supporting schools to teach the social sciences, including webinars for students.



**RESOURCES, EVENTS, & MORE:**  
**[socialsciencesweek.org.au](https://socialsciencesweek.org.au)**

**Explore Social Sciences Week for Schools**

## Connect

Feedback and further inquiries are welcome via email: [info@socialsciences.org.au](mailto:info@socialsciences.org.au).

## Subscribe to stay up to date

Please help to spread the word—educators are invited to [subscribe](#) to the Seriously Social mailing list to keep informed of developments in the Academy's school program.

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