

Policy.

for Schools

General resources for using Policy.nz



This teacher resource is designed to provide starting points when guiding students to engage with the policies on Policy.nz, the complete guide to Election 2023

- Go to [Policy.nz](https://www.policy.nz)
- Use the party profiles to learn about the parties
- Browse each parties policies across a range of topics and issues
- Click on policies to read more detail. Save policies by clicking the heart icon.

We suggest that you first model the process with your students (you choose one issue and move through this together as a class) and then ask them to carry-out their own social inquiry into a particular policy area or series of policies that are meaningful to them. For example, an inquiry into the issues that will affect children and young people.

For each of the issues, you will need to guide students through a discussion of values, priorities, impacts upon different groups of people - both potential benefits and harms. These discussions will lead to strengthening students' ability to make value-based decisions and understand why different people and groups make decisions that are different to their own. It is also important that students see the varied positions that people have on the policy issues. When you lead discussions and set activities for students, move away from simplistic for/against arguments and foster critical thinking that grapples with the complexities of the issues. This is the perfect opportunity to bring the structure of the MMP system into your lessons; to critically evaluate what it means to have representation or be represented in parliament; to look at policies of the smaller parties and discuss why it is important for smaller parties to have a voice.

Throughout this process the role of the teacher is to make it clear that there are no right or wrong answers. Remind students to keep discussions about the issues rather than attacking people and groups of people. Disagreement and dissent is a necessary part of the democratic process, but prejudice and personal attacks are not acceptable.

For further professional reading we recommend 'Issues-based social inquiry in social studies and citizenship education' by Andrea Milligan, Philippa Hunter and Michael Harcourt: chapter 3 in [Teaching social studies for critical, active citizenship in Aotearoa New Zealand](#).

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Questions for understanding political agendas

1. Based on the policies for each major topic can you tell what priorities each political party has? Discuss.
2. What do the set of policies each party has tell us about who they are appealing to? What demographics do you think different parties appeal most to?
3. What insight do the parties' policy priorities give us into the overarching political agenda of the parties?
4. Look at the party profile pages. Do the parties' policies seem to line up with their histories?

Questions for looking at policies through different lenses

1. Select an issue that you are interested in, or will affect your community, and compare the policies between two parties. What are the differences in the policy? How do you think these will affect your community?
2. On an issue of interest to you – save the policies that you agree with by clicking the heart icon. Explain what you perceive the benefits of these policies to be. Discuss with another person in the class. Have you learnt anything new about this person as a result of this discussion? Have you learnt something about yourself as a result of this discussion?
3. As a class, select an issue that affects children and young people. Save the policies that you think will clearly benefit children and young people. Do you have any suggestions for how to make the policies on your chosen issue more beneficial for young people's lives?
4. As a class, select an issue that affects the environment. Save the policies that you think will clearly benefit the environment. Find someone in your class who has saved different policies to you. Talk to them about why they have made their selections. What have you learned about their values (what is important to them) in your discussion? Has the conversation made you think about why you chose the policies you did? Has it made you want to change the policies you have selected? Do you have any suggestions about how to make the policies on your chosen issue more beneficial for the environment?



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Continuum activity: take a stance and be prepared to justify it

Note for teachers: This activity should be completed after students have completed their inquiry into the issue and can be used to prompt meaningful reflection. Students could also draw a continuum and place themselves on it initially, before browsing the Policy.nz tool, and then place themselves on the continuum again in a different colour after the inquiry to reflect upon any changes to their position on the statements. Doing this privately rather than publicly will encourage deeper reflection.

1. People should vote for the party that benefits them the most personally.
2. People should vote for the party that will have the most benefit for the most people.
3. People should vote for the party that will benefit the most vulnerable.
4. People should vote for the Prime Minister they want rather than the party whose policies appeal to them.
5. People should only take policies into account when deciding who to vote for.
6. Policies are not important. It is more important that voters trust the people they vote for.
7. Policies are not important, because after the election the government doesn't necessarily enact the policies it campaigned on.
8. Politicians' life experiences are more important than their level of expertise in policy.
9. Policy.nz expertise is the most important quality a politicians should have.
10. Health policies should be designed to prevent people from getting sick rather than waiting for them to be sick and then trying to help them.
11. The most important issue for New Zealanders voting in this election is poverty.
12. The most important issue for New Zealanders voting in this election is Covid-19.
13. The most important issue for New Zealanders voting in this election is climate change.
14. The voting age should be reduced to 16.