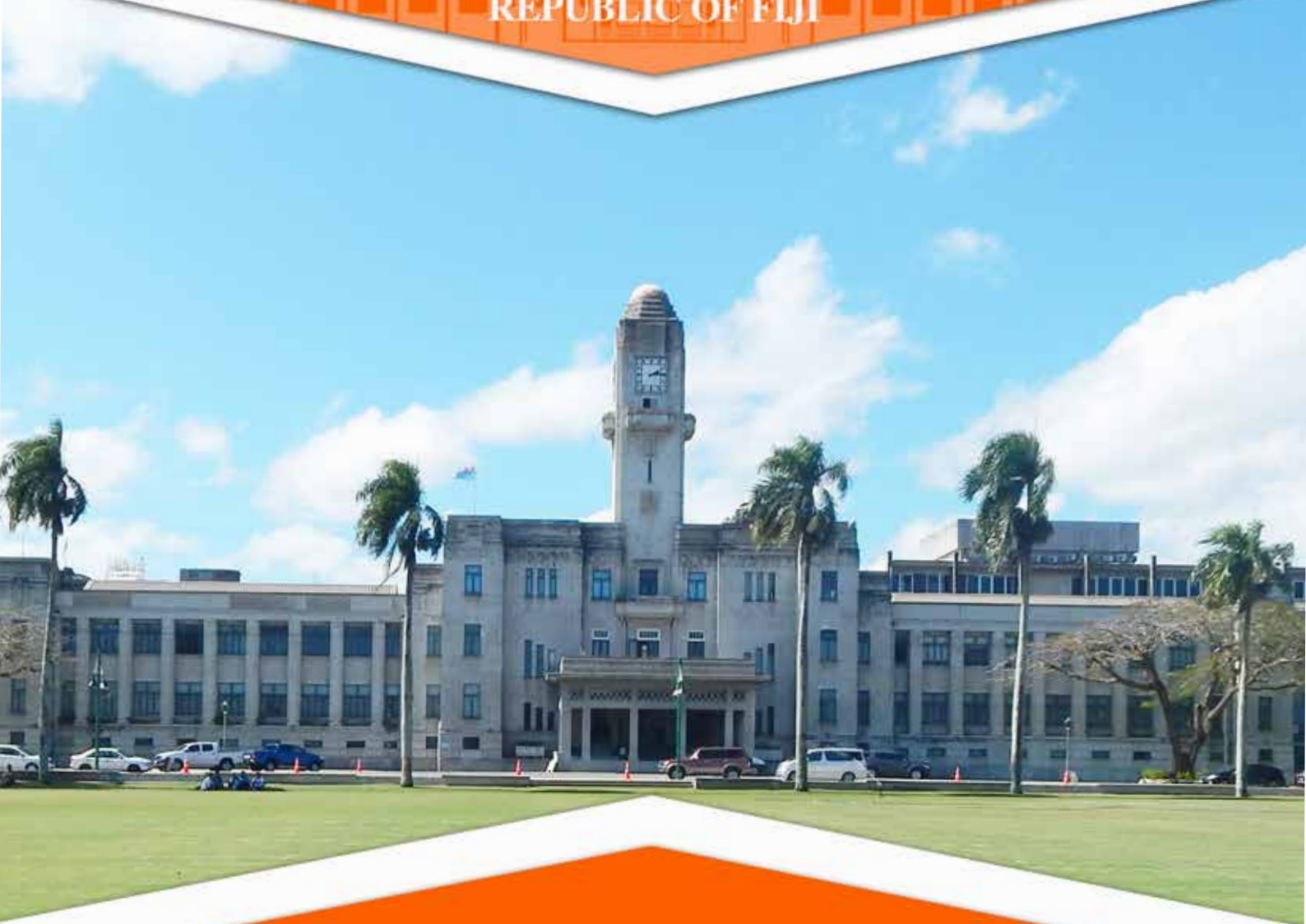




PARLIAMENT  
OF THE  
REPUBLIC OF FIJI



**'Our S.a.Y'**  
**Modules**  
**for Secondary Schools**



# **‘Our S.a.Y’ Modules for Year 9-10**



Civic Education and Media Unit  
Parliament of the Republic of Fiji, Suva  
2019 Reprint

# Acknowledgements

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Note :

The 2019 Reprint version reflected additional notes for ‘Discussion and Activities’ to ensure clarity and few typos in the ‘Introduction’ section.

This does **not** render the 2017 version void.

Additional Parliament education resources are available on the Parliament website : [www.parliament.gov.fj](http://www.parliament.gov.fj) under Education.



# Introduction

These Modules have been designed to educate Year 9-10 school students about our own parliament. It is important to engage our citizens from young age to learn and be part of the decision making processes that affect their lives. By learning about Parliament and how it works, students will see that Parliament is a crucial element in our democracy – ensuring that our laws are just and reasonable and there is accountability in the way our taxes are spent. They will also see that a healthy democracy needs its citizens, including its young people, to be informed and involved. Students can find ways of participating now – in their schools and communities – and, in doing so, develop the knowledge and confidence to play their part as adult citizens in the future.

The Civic Education and Media Unit in Parliament is responsible for educating the public particularly the students and youth to carry out their roles as citizens in relation to the functions of parliament; organise and develop programmes, publications to increase public awareness; and educate people to be involved; and to participate in parliamentary processes through the programme called 'Our S.a.Y.' (Student and Youth). This engagement programme aims to encourage young people to recognise that they have a say through their parliament.

'Our S.a.Y' Modules specifically targets school children. The aim is to bring awareness and educate students with the knowledge of the Fijian parliament which they often hear about and see on the media. Parliament related topics sits within the Social Science Syllabi designed as per the Fiji National Curriculum Framework 2012. These Modules complements the teaching of Strands and Learning Objectives which is listed on the first page of each module.

### **Concepts and vocabulary**

Some of the ideas and concepts or terms used in these Modules are quite sophisticated for many students in Years 9-10. Therefore it is recommended to make reference to glossary provided in our publication, Discover Parliament Teachers' Guide.

### **Useful Teaching Strategies**

It is important to make our teaching and learning process interesting. At the end of each Module there is Discussion and activities which has some teaching-learning activities. Samples and templates are attached where possible and we encourage you to use them. These teaching strategies can be used in other subjects as well.

### **Building knowledge in advance**

Unless your students have already learned something about Parliament at school or come from families that regularly discuss politics, they are unlikely to have much prior knowledge of the topic.

If this is the case, you could introduce your students to basic information and/or show them streaming or other material from the parliament website. [www.parliament.gov.fj](http://www.parliament.gov.fj)

You could also use information that is readily available on the Internet, in newspapers, and on television to introduce them to ways that Parliament is visible in the various media.

# ‘Our S.a.Y.’

## Year 9 Social Science



PARLIAMENT  
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### **Strand: Social Organisation and Processes**

**Outcome:** Investigate why and how people organise themselves into cultural and social groups and the processes involved demonstrating acceptable cultural and social behaviours.

**SS9.1.1.2** – Investigate and report on how a local leader has effectively contributed to the development of a society.

**SS9.2.2.1** – Select and use information to make informed decisions about events and people in the changing world.

# Four forms of government: Traditional, colonial, democratic and communist

Traditional rule involves adherence to customs and traditions that have emerged in a society. Traditional systems developed around bonds of kinship. Decisions would be made at a local community level, with the leaders chosen from within families.

Colonial rule involves rule by another country. Decisions are taken by the controlling power, based on the laws and practices of the other country. Some local input to decision making can occur through an advisory body of local leaders. Fiji was a British colony for 96 years from 1874 to 1970.

Democracy is a system of government under which the citizens of a country have a say in how they are governed, usually through elected representatives. The elected assembly

of representatives – the Parliament – makes laws that determine how the nation is governed. The first Fiji Parliament was established in 1970 following independence. The most recent Parliament was elected in 2014.

Communism is a system of government based on community ownership of property and collective decision making. The Soviet Union, which existed from 1922 to 1991, was established as a communist state.

Each form of government generally provides for some form of assembly of people who discuss and make decisions for the nation. But who has the ultimate power of decision making is one of the key differences between the various systems.



# Local leaders and their roles and responsibilities

## Local leaders responsibilities:

- Make the rules under which the community operates;
- Discuss future plans for the community;
- Deal with issues raised by the community; and
- Check on the way community finances are spent.

At the national level, Members of Parliament have similar responsibilities to local leaders, but need to consider how their decisions impact on communities across Fiji.

## Members of Parliament:

- Make laws;
- Debate issues of national importance;
- Check on the way the Government manages the nation's finances; and
- Investigate issues of concern to the community.

# Discussion and activities

## 1. Chart

Using a data chart, students research the four forms of government.

FOUR FORMS OF GOVERNMENT DATA CHART				
Information and Source	Traditional Government	Colonial Type of Government	Democratic Government	Communism
1. The main features of...				
2. How does this Government function?				
3. Title of the Leader and the role they undertake				
4. Who makes the law?				
5. Who has a role to play on deciding which laws are passed?				
6. Who enforces the law?				
7. List weaknesses of this type of Government				
8. List the strengths of this type of Government				

## 2. Head and Heart

Using the data chart, students select one type of government to write a persuasive text about what type of government would be best to live in and why.

## 3. Biography and Character Profile

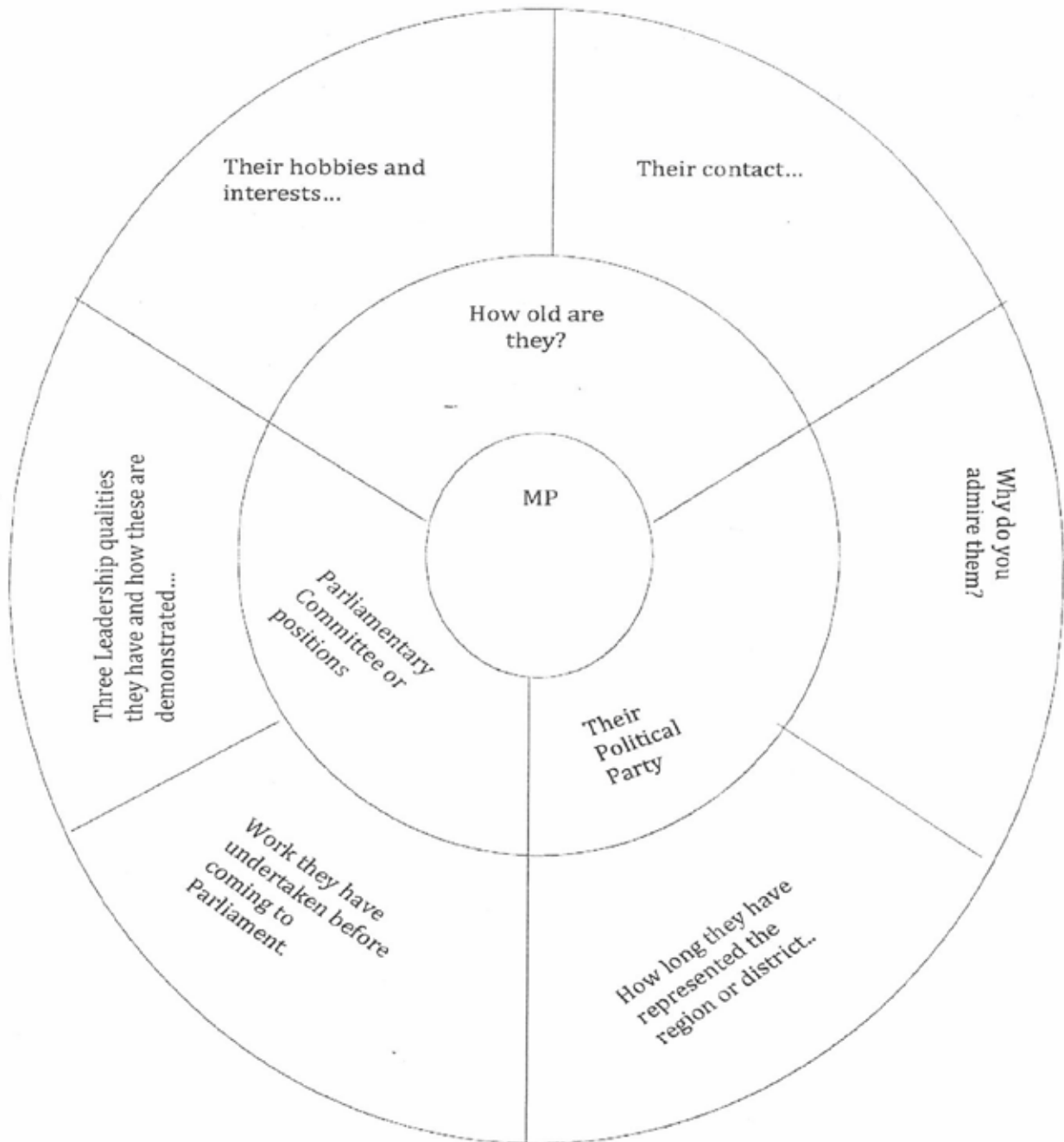
Students choose an MP to learn more about. Students use a character profile to prepare and present a biography. (Enlarged version on page 11)



# Four Forms of Government Data Chart

FOUR FORMS OF GOVERNMENT DATA CHART				
Information and Source	Traditional Government	Colonial Type of Government	Democratic Government	Communism
1. The main features of...				
2. How does this Government function?				
3. Title of the Leader and the role they undertake				
4. Who makes the law?				
5. Who has a role to play on deciding which laws are passed?				
6. Who enforces the law?				
7. List weaknesses of this type of Government				
8. List the strengths of this type of Government				

# MP BIOGRAPHY



# ‘Our S.a.Y.’

## Year 9 Social Science



PARLIAMENT  
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### **Strand: Social Organisation and Processes**

**Outcome:** Investigate why and how people organise themselves into cultural and social groups and the processes involved demonstrating acceptable cultural and social behaviours.

**SS9.2.2.1** – Select and use information to make informed decisions about events and people in the changing world.



# From candidate to Member of Parliament

As well as the criteria that need to be met before someone can stand for election to Parliament, anyone wanting to be a Member of Parliament also needs to consider the skills that are required in the job. Often candidates will demonstrate those skills at the local level before they seek election to Parliament.

In the community, Members of Parliament undertake the following work:

- Give assistance and advice to those who come to them with an issue or problem;
- Act on behalf of local interest groups;
- Communicate their party's policies; and
- Participate in community activities.

At Parliament, Members:

- Debate proposed laws;
- Discuss issues of national and public importance;
- Check on how the government is spending public money and administering its programmes; and
- Investigate issues of national and public importance, including through parliamentary committees.

In their political parties, Members:

- Contribute to debates on policies; and
- Serve as spokespeople on particular issues.

# From local to national leadership

To get elected, a candidate for Parliament needs to be known within the community. A party can only be elected to Parliament if they receive at least 5 per cent of the national vote.

Fiji uses a **proportional representation system** for national elections. Under this system the number of candidates elected to Parliament from a political party matches the percentage of votes that the party receives. If a party receives 60 per cent of the vote then it would get around 60 per cent of seats in Parliament.

Often Members of Parliament are chosen because they have developed strong links within a community of people and have demonstrated that they can represent the people of that community.

Candidates for Parliament must have Fiji citizenship and cannot be bankrupt or have a conviction.

At the September 2014 election political parties wishing to register had to collect 5,000 signatures from people and independent candidates had to collect 1,000 signatures.

# Discussion and activities

## 1. Chart

Using a data chart, students research the skills and qualities needed to be a Member of Parliament.

Role of a Member of Parliament	Skills and qualities needed	Demonstrating this in the community
Debate laws		
Discuss issues of national importance		
Deal with community issues		
Keep a check on Government spending and programs		
Help people understand how Parliament works		
Help develop policies		
Spokesperson		

## 2. Head and Heart

Using the data chart, students write a speech or presentation outlining the skills and qualities they could demonstrate if they stood for Parliament.

## 3. Biography and Character Profile

Students choose an MP to learn more about. Students use a character profile to prepare and present a biography. Use MP Biography template on page 11.



# ‘Our S.a.Y.’

## Year 10 Social Science



PARLIAMENT  
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### **Strand: Social Organisation and Processes**

**Outcome:** Investigate why and how people organise themselves into cultural and social groups and the processes involved demonstrating acceptable cultural and social behaviours.

**SS10.1.2.1** – Analyse and discuss the structure of Parliament in Fiji in the effective administration of Government for transparent leadership.

# The Structure of Parliament in Fiji

The Constitution of the Republic of Fiji establishes Fiji's system of Government. It provides for three separate arms of the State – the Legislature (or Parliament), the Executive (or Government), and Judiciary (or Courts).

## Parliament

Elected by the people of Fiji, Parliament is the legislative branch.

Parliament's proceedings are chaired by an independent Speaker who is not a member of Parliament.

Members from the political party with the majority of seats in Parliament form the Government. The party/parties which are not part of the Government form the Opposition.

## Executive

The Executive is the administrative arm and is responsible for putting into operation the laws passed by Parliament and administering the

programmes and services that are delivered by Government.

Executive authority is vested in the President, who acts on the advice of the elected Government.

The Cabinet is the decision making body of the Government and is chaired by the Prime Minister. Cabinet comprises Ministers appointed by the Prime Minister from among the members of Parliament who belong to the Government party.

Ministers are responsible for administering specific areas of Government activity, known as portfolios.

## Judiciary

The Judiciary is the judicial branch and is responsible for interpreting the laws of Fiji.

Judicial power and authority is exercised by the courts.

The courts are independent of Parliament and the Executive.



# Separation of Powers and Responsible Government

The origins of the principle of the separation of powers can be traced back as far as ancient Greece. It was made popular much later by French philosopher Charles de Montesquieu in his 1748 work *De l'esprit des lois* (the Spirit of the Laws). He wrote that a nation's freedom depended on the three powers of governance—legislative, executive and judicial—each having their own separate institution. This principle has been widely used in the development of many democracies since that time. Under this principle, the power to govern should be distributed between the Parliament, the Executive and the Judiciary to avoid one group having all the power. Each group should work within defined areas of responsibility so that each keeps a check on the actions of the others.

Under the Westminster system there is not a complete separation of powers because some of the roles of the Parliament, the Executive and the Judiciary overlap. For example, the Prime Minister and Ministers are part of the Executive and the Parliament. However the principle remains and checks and balances exist to maintain accountability and transparency.

The separation of powers works together with another principle known as responsible government, to guide the way law is made and managed. Responsible government means that a party, or coalition of parties, must maintain the support of the majority of members of the House of Representatives in order to remain in government. This provides another check on the Executive, ensuring they remain accountable to the Parliament and do not abuse their power.

# Discussion and activities

## 1. Wondering

Students write one or two questions they have about the three arms of the State. Questions are then considered during a classroom discussion.

## 2. Research project

Students investigate the different strata of government and discuss the need to separate powers. Why is the separation of powers so important? Can you think of any countries where there is no separation of powers? How are those countries organised? Has Fiji always had a separation of powers?

## 3. Who's got the power?

Working in groups, students identify which branch possesses each of the powers.

Who's got the power?	
Power	Branch of the State (executive, legislative, judicial)
Introduces laws	
Declares laws unconstitutional	
Signs bills into law	
Declares war	
Interprets/makes meaning of laws	
Issues a pardon	
Makes treaties	
Imposes sentences in court cases	
Borrows money on behalf of Fiji	



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Youtube: [Parliament of the  
Republic of Fiji](https://www.youtube.com/ParliamentoftheRepublicofFiji)

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