

The image features two large, thick black L-shaped brackets. One is positioned on the left side, with its vertical bar extending downwards and its horizontal bar extending to the right. The other is on the right side, with its vertical bar extending upwards and its horizontal bar extending to the left. These brackets frame the central text.

PARTICIPATING IN DEMOCRACY

8HASS

Democracy

- Democracy means to rule by the people
- Australia is a **representative democracy**. This means that we elect people to represent us, our views and our values, in parliament
- If our government represents us (and our wishes), we should be able to influence and have a say in the decisions that the government makes.

Brainstorm- how might citizens influence the Australian government and the decisions that the government makes?

Direct Action

- Citizens can participate in Australia's democracy, and try and influence government decision making, in many ways, including **direct action**.
- **Direct action:** when citizens use a form of public demonstration (such as protests or strikes) to bring their views to public attention
- This is most effective when it attracts attention from the media.
- If a cause gains public support, the government may be influenced to take action or change the law.

Types of direct action

■ Demonstrations-

- **Public protest** in which people take to the streets to protest against the actions of the government.
- Usually involves marching through city streets or standing outside a significant public location



Climate protests on the steps of parliament house

■ Defiance of the law-

- **Deliberately breaking the law** is a very public way of signaling disapproval of government actions
- Believe that if enough people break the law, the government will change the law
- The arrest of people who deliberately break the law brings added attention to the law and the issue

E.g. 1960s- Australian soldiers were conscripted (forcibly sent) to the Vietnam war. Many refused (breaking the law)- the imprisonment of these men helped turn public opinion against the war

Activity 1

- In small groups, plan a form of direct action (protest/demonstration/defiance of the law) to influence the government to take action on an issue. You need to:
 1. Identify the issue you want the government to take action on, and explain what you want the government to do about it (i.e. climate change/fossil fuels- want them to introduce mining regulations)
 2. plan the direct action:
 1. Will it be a protest? Will you defy the law in some way?
 2. Think about the location/time
 3. Will it be ongoing? Or a one-time thing?
 3. Create a poster/advert that encourages other people to join your action and informs people of the issue

Be prepared to share with the class :)