# 1975 Prime Minister Dismissed!—program outline

How was the Whitlam Government dismissed in 1975? What can this event tell us about Australian democracy? Recreate the drama using authentic speeches in the places where key events happened.

***Duration: 60 minutes   
Suitable for: Years 10-12  
Maximum: 45***

## Learning aims

Students will learn about the Whitlam Dismissal in 1975 and will develop an understanding of:

* Why and how the Whitlam Government was dismissed
* The power of the House of Representatives and the Senate
* The historical environment and the nature of historical inquiry
* The people and places associated with this significant national issue
* The role played by individuals and groups in the democratic process

## Strategies

Students will have the opportunity to:

* explore an issue of significance in Australia’s democratic history
* form and express opinions or ideas about democratic issues
* build historical empathy with a range of view points
* Engage with people and events of the past through archival material, speeches and heritage spaces
* Appreciate the Museum of Australian Democracy as an intriguing and dynamic place to learn and Old Parliament House as a nationally significant heritage site

## Curriculum links

### The Australian Curriculum

#### History

Historical skills (years 7–10)

* Use chronological sequencing to demonstrate the relationship between events and developments in different periods and places
* Use historical terms and concepts
* Process and synthesise information from a range of sources for use as evidence in an historical argument
* Identify and analyse the perspectives of people from the past
* Identify and analyse different historical interpretations (including their own)

### State Curricula year 11/12

#### New South Wales

*Modern history: Australia (3) from Whitlam to Fraser*

Students study the Labor Party in power: social, political and economic policies; the 1975 ‘dismissal’ of the Whitlam government; an historical assessment of the Whitlam government, and the nature and impact of social and economic change under Whitlam and Fraser

#### Western Australia

*Politics and law: UNIT 3APAL*

The context of this unit is **political and legal power**, with a focus on Australia’s political and legal system. Essential to the understanding of political and legal power is the knowledge of responsible government, representative government, separation of powers, division of powers and Westminster conventions.

#### South Australia

*Stage 2 Australian and international politics*

Students examine the Australian system of government through topics that cover the constitution and federalism, political representation, the executive and parliament, voting and elections, and political parties.

#### Victoria

*Units 3 and 4: Australian history debating Australia's future 1960–2000*

Key skills:

* apply historical concepts related to the period (1960–2000);
* analyse and evaluate written and historical evidence;
* synthesise material and evidence to draw conclusions;
* analyse the way that the experience of the period (1960–2000) has been interpreted and understood over time by historians and other commentators