**VICTORIAN STUDENTS’ PARLIAMENTARY PROGRAM (VSPP) 2025:**

**ONLINE PRIMARY SCHOOL CONVENTION**

**Topic**

*Should public transport be free in Victoria?*

A green and white train on a city street

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

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| **TEACHER RESOURCE** |

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## IMPORTANT INFORMATION

The pre-convention activities and resources provided to support the VSPP are **suggestions** only.

They have been developed to help students prepare for the Primary School Convention to debate this topic in more detail.

The pre-convention activities and resources provided can be completed independently of each other at the teacher’s discretion and choice. This means the teacher may choose to do **one**, **some**, **or all** of the activities to help build students’ knowledge and to prepare them to be active participants in the Convention.

In using these suggested pre-convention activities and resources, teachers should make themselves aware of the content contained and the complexity of it to ensure it is appropriate for their student cohort within the school context.

Teachers should plan for appropriate support to prepare their students for the Primary School Convention by adapting, updating, extending, or removing activities *(including task instructions)* and any resources contained in this pack.

Students are ***not*** expected to complete all activities prior to participating in the Convention, nor are they expected to complete all post-convention activities.

## CONTEXT OF THE TOPIC

The debate about whether public transport should be free in Victoria, particularly in Melbourne, has gained significant attention due to a range of socio-economic factors and the pressing need for improved public transport services. Advocates of free public transport argue that it could ease the financial burden on low income residents and families, reduce traffic congestion and promote environmental sustainability by encouraging more people to use trams, trains or buses rather than their cars.

The demographic changes to Melbourne also influence this debate with the city experiencing rapid population growth leading to predictions of increased road congestion by as much as 50% by 2036 if no improvements are made to our current public transport system. This situation creates an urgent need for solutions that can adapt quickly to changing demand such as increased bus routes or further rail expansion.

Recent surveys indicate widespread dissatisfaction with the current public transport system due to infrequent services and ongoing issues related to the Myki ticketing system, which has faced criticism for its limitations such as the inability to tap with a credit card.

However critics argue that making public transport free is not the solution as it does not address the underlying issues of poor quality and reliability. They argue that people choose not to use public transport because of poor service rather than the cost of fares. Funding for public transport relies on fare revenue and removing fares will lead to budget shortfalls requiring alternative funding sources.

The debate around making public transport free in Victoria includes economic considerations, social equity issues, environmental impacts and operational challenges that exist within the current public transport structure.

## LINKS TO THE CURRICULUM v2.0

The is a strong link between the topic for this Convention on whether public transport should be free in Victoria and levels 5 and 6 of the Civics and Citizenship strand of the F-10 Victorian Curriculum Version 2.0.

This debate encourages students to think about their roles as active citizens within their communities. They learn how free public transport can affect different demographics including low-income families, students and the elderly. This aligns with the curriculum's focus on civic engagement, where students understand their rights and responsibilities and how they can advocate for policies to promote equality and inclusion within our society.

The idea of free public transport relates to social justice. It raises questions about fairness and equality, helping students see how transportation costs can affect different groups in society. This connects to lessons about identifying social issues and finding solutions that promote fairness.

Discussing free public transport ties into community responsibility—a key component of civics education. Students learn that decisions made at a governmental level impact their local communities directly. The debate encourages them to think about how accessible public transport can lead to stronger community connections, reduced traffic congestion, lower environmental impacts due to fewer cars on the road, and improved overall quality of life. This understanding promotes a sense of responsibility among students to engage in discussions about important local issues.

Participating in this debate also helps student develop their critical thinking skills as outlined in the curriculum. Students are encouraged to analyse different viewpoints regarding public transport funding—considering economic implications versus social benefits—and develop informed opinions based on evidence. This analytical approach is essential for developing informed citizenship.

**Achievement standard – Levels 5 and 6**

**By the end of Level 6, students can:**

* explain the values and features of Australia’s democratic institutions and systems, including the three levels of government
* explain the different meanings of citizenship and the roles and responsibilities associated with different kinds of citizenship
* develop questions to investigate civics and citizenship issues, using different sources
* explain the values and features of democratic institutions and processes through contemporary issues
* use their knowledge and different perspective from sources to explain contemporary civic and citizenship issues

**Level 5 and 6 Content Descriptions**

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| **Government and Democracy**  Code: VC2HC6K03  *Students learn about the roles and responsibilities of the 3 levels of government in Australia.*  **Elaboration:**   * sorting the roles and responsibilities of the 3 levels of government (local, state/territory and federal) * categorising the different types of laws and regulations in their community, which level of government makes those laws, and who enforces them, for example car parking laws, health laws and pollution laws   **The link to the topic:**  In Australia, the government operates at three distinct levels of government: local, state/territory, and federal. Each level has specific roles and responsibilities that contribute to the management of the country. Understanding these roles is essential for grasping how laws are made and enforced within communities. Local councils manage urban planning, public health, waste management, community services, and enforce by-laws such as car parking regulations. State governments oversee education, health services, transport infrastructure, and law enforcement; they also handle pollution laws and their enforcement through environmental organisations. The federal government manages national defence, foreign affairs, immigration policy, and taxation; it can create overarching laws that the states must follow. The question of whether public transport should be free in Victoria overlaps with the responsibilities of both state and local governments. Public transport is primarily managed by the state government through agencies like Public Transport Victoria (PTV). Arguments for making public transport free often centre around increased accessibility for low-income individuals, reduced traffic congestion, environmental benefits from encouraging the public to use trains, trams and buses over personal vehicles, and overall improvements in urban mobility. However, funding such initiatives would require careful consideration of budget allocations from state revenue or potential increases in taxes. Understanding the roles of local, state/territory, and federal governments helps clarify how various laws are created and enforced within communities like Victoria. This knowledge is crucial when discussing policies such as free public transport. |

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| **Laws and Citizens**  Code: VC2HC6K05  *Students learn about: the legal rights and responsibilities of citizens in Australia.*  **Elaborations:**   * explaining the responsibilities that citizens have, such as voting, paying taxes and keeping the government accountable   **The link to the topic:**  The debate over whether public transport should be free in Victoria is closely tied to the responsibilities of citizenship. Supporters of free public transport argue that it would improve accessibility for everyone, especially for low-income individuals who may struggle with the cost of travel. This view reflects the civic responsibility to promote fair access to essential services. On the other hand, critics raise concerns about the financial impact on taxpayers and whether service quality might decline if funding is reduced or redirected from other areas. This highlights a key element of active citizenship: thinking critically about policies and balancing individual rights—such as access to affordable transport—with shared responsibilities like paying taxes. Ultimately, this discussion shows how citizen responsibilities—particularly voting and civic participation—are vital in determining public policies that reflect the community’s values and priorities. Citizens hold important legal rights along with basic responsibilities, including voting, obeying laws, paying taxes, holding governments accountable, and contributing to community life. These responsibilities are directly connected to ongoing debates about public services like transport. |

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| **Citizenship, diversity and identity**  Code:VC2HC6K07  *Students learn about the meanings of ‘citizenship’ and the rights and responsibilities of different kinds of citizenship, including local, state, national, global and digital citizenship.*  **Elaborations:**   * describing the rights, responsibilities and shared values of Australian citizenship and examining ways in which Australian citizens can participate in society * comparing the responsibilities that students have as national citizens to those as global citizens * considering the differences between different kinds of citizenship in different contexts, for example who is included and who is excluded and why   **The link to the topic:**  Citizenship in Australia means having certain rights and responsibilities at different levels-local, state, national, global, and online. As Australian citizens, people can vote, use public services, and share their opinions, but they also need to follow the law, respect others, and take part in community life. Important values like fairness, democracy, and respect for diversity help everyone feel included. National citizenship is about duties within Australia, like voting and paying taxes, while global citizenship means caring about worldwide issues such as climate change and human rights. Not everyone has the same access to citizenship-some groups, like refugees or people without internet, may be left out. The discussion about making public transport free in Victoria connects to these ideas, as it raises questions about fairness, government responsibility, and making sure everyone can take part in society. Understanding what citizenship means helps people get involved and work towards a fairer community. |
| **Skills**  **Investigating contemporary civics and citizenship issues**  Code: VC2HC6S02  *Students learn to locate, select and organise information, data and ideas from different sources to explain a contemporary issue*  **Elaboration:**   * explaining the democratic values relevant to a contemporary issue * summarising how citizens have worked together to achieve a civic goal in relation to a contemporary issue   **The link to the topic:**  The debate over free public transport in Victoria centres on key democratic values such as equity, sustainability, participation, and accountability. Advocates believe that making public transport free would increase usage, reduce reliance on private vehicles, ease traffic congestion, and improve air quality, while also promoting social equity and accessibility for low-income individuals. However, opponents raise concerns about the substantial financial costs, the potential for overcrowding, and the challenge of securing alternative funding sources, questioning whether free transport alone is enough to shift travel habits. Citizens in Victoria have actively engaged in this issue through advocacy groups, petitions, public consultations, and community meetings, seeking to improve affordability and accessibility. Ultimately, the debate is about finding a balance between affordability, accessibility, environmental goals, and the government’s responsibility to find a suitable solution. |

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| **Skills**  **Evaluating democratic institutions and systems**  Code: VC2HC6S04  *Students learn to explain connections between contemporary issues and democratic institutions and systems.*  **Elaboration:**   * explaining the focus of the federal or Victorian government’s response to a contemporary issue   **The link to the topic:**  The debate over whether public transport should be free in Victoria provides a clear example of how democratic institutions and systems respond to contemporary issues. In 2024, members of the Victorian Parliament, particularly from minor parties, pushed for free bus travel to address concerns about equity and accessibility, arguing that affordable public transport is essential for all citizens. This proposal was debated in Parliament, with some MPs supporting the need for a more accessible network, while the majority rejected the idea, raising concerns about taxpayer costs and the effectiveness of free fares in addressing deeper service issues. The Victorian government’s response was to cap daily fares and provide limited free travel on special occasions, rather than making the entire system free reflecting a balancing act between economic responsibility, social equity, and service quality. This process demonstrates how democratic systems allow for public debate, advocacy, and parliamentary scrutiny, ultimately shaping policy decisions that aim to address the needs and interests of diverse community groups. |
| **Skills**  **Participating in civic processes**  Code: VC2HC6S05  *Students learn to deliberate about an issue that affects their communities.*  **Elaboration:**   * discussing different communities’ responses to a contemporary issue and deciding which community they agree with and why   **The link to this topic**  The debate about whether public transport should be free in Victoria shows how different communities take part in important discussions about issues that affect them. Some people, like MP Rachel Payne and her supporters, want free and more frequent buses, especially in areas where it’s hard to get around. They believe this would help people save money, use cars less, and make it easier for everyone to join in community life. They say cheaper or free transport encourages more people to use buses and trains. On the other hand, the Victorian government has decided to limit fares instead of making transport free because of the high costs involved. They also offer free travel on special days like Christmas and New Year’s Eve. By looking at these different views, students can think about which idea they agree with and why. This helps them understand how communities work together to make decisions about issues that affect their everyday lives. |

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| **Skills**  **Communicating**  Code: VC2HC6S07  *Students learn to explain contemporary civics and citizenship issues using ideas, knowledge and perspectives from different sources.*  **Elaboration:**   * creating a pamphlet to describe different political parties’ position on a proposed law or recent policy on a contemporary issue * presenting a speech on why they should be elected as a leader, drawing on democratic values and active citizenship   **The link to the topic**  The proposal for free public transport in Victoria aims to improve accessibility, particularly for low-income residents, and could stimulate local economies by increasing public transport usage and reducing transportation costs. Free public transport promotes social equity by ensuring all community members have access to essential services and opportunities, aligning with democratic values of equality and active citizenship. Environmental benefits include a potential reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and improved urban air quality, as increased travel on trains, trams and buses can lead to fewer private vehicles on the road. Political perspectives on this issue vary, with some parties supporting it for climate action and social equity, while others express concerns about funding sources and service quality. Successful implementation will require careful consideration of economic implications, funding structures, and engagement with diverse political viewpoints. |
| **Skills**  **Communicating**  Code: VC2HC6S07  *Students learn to explain contemporary civics and citizenship issues using ideas, knowledge and perspectives from different sources.*  **Elaboration:**   * creating a pamphlet to describe different political parties’ position on a proposed law or recent policy on a contemporary issue * presenting a speech on why they should be elected as a leader, drawing on democratic values and active citizenship   **The link to the topic**  The proposal for free public transport in Victoria aims to improve accessibility, particularly for low-income residents, and could stimulate local economies by increasing public transport usage and reducing transportation costs. Free public transport promotes social equity by ensuring all community members have access to essential services and opportunities, aligning with democratic values of equality and active citizenship. Environmental benefits include a potential reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and improved urban air quality, as increased travel on trains, trams and buses can lead to fewer private vehicles on the road. Political perspectives on this issue vary, with some parties supporting it for climate action and social equity, while others express concerns about funding sources and service quality. Successful implementation will require careful consideration of economic implications, funding structures, and engagement with diverse political viewpoints. |

## LEARNING INTENTIONS FOR THESE STUDENT ACTIVITIES

By the completion of these activities students will be able to:

* Identify and analyse the structure of arguments including a conclusion and supporting reasons based on the topic of should public transport be free in Victoria
* Improve their critical thinking skills by evaluating different perspectives on the topic of should public transport be free in Victoria
* Construct their own arguments regarding this debate topic
* Participate in peer and class discussions sharing their ideas and opinions to improve their communication skills and to promote collaborative learning
* Reflect on the social, economic and environment implications of making public transport free in Victoria

## SUCCESS CRITERIA FOR THESE STUDENT ACTIVITIES

**Students will be able to:**

* List at least three key reasons to support their chosen position on this topic i.e. that public transport should be or should not be free in Victoria
* Construct a clear point of view own whether public transport should be free in Victoria supported by a range of reasons or arguments
* Actively participate in the debate and group discussion listening to the different viewpoints of participants in the Convention and to other students

## Activity 1: Introductory Activities

### Activity 1a: Public Transport Trivia Quiz – General Knowledge Test

**Learning Intentions**

* We will increase our awareness and knowledge about the Victorian public transport system by answering engaging trivia questions.

**Success Criteria**

* I will attempt all the questions on the trivia quiz.

**Task Instructions:**

**1. Listen to your teacher read out the questions and circle the correct answer to test your knowledge about Victoria’s public transport system.**

**2. Share your answers with the rest of the class.**

**CORRECTED RESPONSES ARE BOLDED BELOW:**

**Question 1**

What type of public transport is most commonly linked to Melbourne?

1. Buses
2. Trains
3. Ferries
4. **Trams**

**Question 2**

The name of the card used for fare payments on public transport in Victoria is:

1. Go Card
2. Opal Card
3. **Myki Card**
4. Smart Rider Card

**Question 3**

In which year did the first electric tram service begin in Melbourne?

1. **1889**
2. 1900
3. 1910
4. 1920

**Question 4**

Which popular tram route is known as the “City Circle”?

1. **Route 35**
2. Route 48
3. Route 86
4. Route 96

**Question 5**

What is the name of the underground train station located beneath Flinders Street Station

1. Southern Cross Station
2. Flagstaff Station
3. **City Loop**
4. Parliament Station

**Question 6**

A major event led to significant upgrades and an expansion of Melbourne’s public transport system during the early 2000s. Was it the:

1. **Commonwealth Games**
2. World Expo
3. AFL Grand Final
4. Australian Open Tennis Tournament

**Question 7**

Which Victorian public transport service provides access to popular tourist destinations like Phillip Island, Bendigo gold mines and Geelong?

1. Sky Bus
2. **V/Line**
3. Metro Trains
4. Yarra Trams

**Question 8**

To get to Marvel Stadium which station would you get off at?

1. Richmond train station
2. Collingwood train station
3. **Southern Cross station**
4. Flinders Street station

**Question 9**

How many free tram zones are there within Melbourne CBD?

1. **1**
2. 2
3. 3
4. 4

**Question 10**

Which public transport app is the official journey planner for Victoria?

1. Trip Mate
2. Moovit
3. Transit Tracker
4. **PTV App**

**Question 11**

Which type of public transport can you use to go from the Melbourne CBD to Melbourne Airport?

1. Train
2. **Bus**
3. Ferry
4. Tram

**Question 13**

Which transport themed museum is located in Newport Victoria?

1. National Transport Museum
2. Melbourne Tram Museum
3. **Newport Railway Museum**
4. Railway and Steam Heritage Centre

**Question 14**

Which regional Victoria town is known for its vintage Puffing Billy steam train?

1. Ballarat
2. Bendigo
3. **Belgrave**
4. Bairnsdale

**Question 15**

What colour are the traditional Melbourne W- Class trams?

1. Blue and White
2. **Green and Yellow**
3. Red and Black
4. Purple and Gold

### Activity 1b: Three Levels of Government- Interactive Activity, Quiz & Scenarios

\*\* Linked to the Parliament Education Office website

**Learning Intentions**

* We will understand the responsibilities of each level of government in Australia.

**Success Criteria**

* I will complete the interactive activity, quiz and scenario-based tasks to demonstrate my understanding of how each of the three levels of government deals with specific areas.

**Task Instructions:**

**1. Visit the Parliamentary Education Office website and complete the three activities attached to the link below. They can be found half way down the page.**

**2. Share your answers with the rest of the class.**

**Teacher’s note: The three activities are self-explanatory and provide the answers online once the student has completed the tasks.**

[**The Three Levels of Government – PoV**](https://peo.gov.au/teach-our-parliament/education-resources/interactive-posters/three-levels-of-government)

**Activity 1** - Interactive Activity to understand what each of the three levels of government are responsible for

**Activity 2** - Three levels of government quiz

**Activity 3** – Scenario- based activity

### Activity 1c: Would You Rather – Public Transport Edition Poll

**Learning Intentions**

* We will consider two options in relation to each question and select the one we prefer and be able to give reasons for our choice.

**Success Criteria**

* I will be able to explain by choice for each poll question and share by thoughts with the rest of the class.

**Task Instructions:**

**1. Visit the poll on the link below and decide which option you prefer.**

**2. Share your answers with the rest of the class.**

**STUDENT ANSWERS WILL VARY**

[**Would You Rather – Public Transport Edition - Survey Monkey**](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/HG5J9X8)

## Activity 2: Unpacking the Topic- Think Pair Share Discussion

**Learning Intentions**

* We will understand and analyse the advantages of implementing a free public transport system in Victoria**.**

**Success Criteria**

* I will be able to identify and explain the benefits and effect of free public transport in Victoria.

**Task Instructions:**

**1. Think about a free public transport system in Victoria and write down your ideas for each of the four questions in this activity.**

**2. Share your ideas and thoughts with another student and list any differences in the third column.**

**3. Share with the rest of the class to create a pros/cons list which your teacher will list on the board.**

**SAMPLE RESPONSE (STUDENT ANSWER WILL VARY)**

**Think-pair-share activity**

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| QUESTION  Help outline | I THINK…  Thought outline | MY PARTNER THINKS….  Dance with solid fill |
| What are the benefits of free public transport? | * Reduced traffic jams as more people will use buses, trains and trams * Less pollution from cars * Low-income families save money using public transport * Greater access to jobs, education and services for everyone * Improved public health as people do more walking rather than sitting in cars |  |
| Who would free public transport help the most? | * Low-income families and individuals * Students and young people * Seniors and pensioners * People with disabilities * Job seekers who do not have a car * People who live in the outer suburbs of Melbourne and rely on public transport to get to their jobs |  |
| What are the possible downsides? | * High cost for the government to operate and maintain * Increased overcrowding on buses, trams, and trains * Overuse of the system with people making unnecessary trips * Less funding to improve or expand the public transport network * Could affect the quality or frequency of services |  |
| How would the government pay for it? | * Will use money from taxes (e.g. income, fuel or property tax) * Move funds from other community services to pay for free public transport * More tolls on busy roads to raise more money to cover the costs * Apply to federal government for extra funding |  |

## Activity 3: Role Play Activity

**Learning Intention**

* We will understand the different perspectives of community groups about free public transport, and how these viewpoints can influence public debate and decision-making.

**Success Criteria**

* I will be able to identify and explain the different views of specific community groups on this topic.

**Task Instructions:**

**1. Your teacher will set up the classroom to look like a local community meeting where each person will share arguments either supporting or opposing the idea of making public transport free.**

**2. You will be allocated a specific role and given a cue card to read aloud to the class, sharing that community member’s opinion on what free public transport would mean.**

**3. Think about your community member and add more points to your cue card if you like.**

**4. All the odd numbered cue cards are *in favour* of free public transport. (1, 3,5,7,9,11,13)**

**All the even numbers *are against* public transport being made free. (2,4,6,8,10,12,14)**

**5. The community meeting will have the following representatives (2 of each) students, parents, teachers, public transport drivers, unions, government officials and environmentalists.**

**6. Listen to the arguments being presented and list these in the table found on page 12 in the correct column – are the arguments in favour or do they support public transport being free or are they against public transport being free?**

**SAMPLE RESPONSE (STUDENT ANSWERS WILL VARY)**

**CUE CARDS FOR ACTIVITY 3 – ROLE PLAY ACTIVITY**

**CUE CARD 1: STUDENT 1**

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| Free public transport would mean:   * Saving money on daily travel to and from school * Improving access to education and choices regardless of parent’s financial background * Less stress to manage MYKI cards as there is no need for top ups or worry if the cards are lost or misplaced |

**CUE CARD 2: STUDENT 2**

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| Free public transport would mean:   * More passengers using trams, trains and buses leading to increased overcrowding, a lack of seats and greater discomfort for travelers * Delays and a poor-quality public transport system if the government does not invest money in more trams, trains and buses * Increased dangers on public transport with more young people using trams, trains and buses leading to increased crime as there would be less monitoring |

**CUE CARD 3: PARENTS**

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| Free public transport would mean:   * Helping to reduce or lower household costs especially if there is more than one family member using public transport * Less stress about a child or adult losing their MYKI card or not having it topped up so at risk of getting a fine * Easier planning of family travel using public transport instead of relying on a car which has additional costs like petrol, wear-and-tear of the family car, etc. |

**CUE CARD 4: PARENTS**

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| Free public transport would mean:   * Concerns that taxes may increase to cover the cost of free public transport which will reduce the family budget and income * Unsupervised teens could misuse public transport, affecting other users and raising safety concerns * Overcrowding on trams, buses and trains so children will not be able to get a seat, and the journey would be very stressful or there could be service delays |

**CUE CARD 5: TEACHER**

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| Free public transport would mean:   * Student attendance and punctuality improving especially as this could encourage more students to be at school * Reducing the cost of school excursions and activities as students can use free public transport to get to different locations, making the excursions more affordable for everyone * More help for lower income families who may struggle to put petrol in the car to get their children to school |

**CUE CARD 6 – TEACHER**

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| Free public transport would mean:   * More crowded public transport which could delay students causing them to arrive late to school and their classes * The need for additional government funding to make sure that the service quality matches the increased demand * Students deciding to avoid school and instead go on trips with no fare controls in place |

**CUE CARD 7: PUBLIC TRANSPORT DRIVER (bus, tram or train)**

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| Free public transport would mean:   * More people using public transport * Increased job security and expanded public transport routes * Less stress as no need to check or worry about fares and the MYKI card reader * More job opportunities for people to become drivers of buses, trams and trains |

**CUE CARD 8**: **PUBLIC TRANSPORT DRIVER (bus, tram or train)**

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| Free public transport would mean:   * Greater risk of overcrowding, especially during peak times making the journey more stressful, with delays and overfilled trams, buses or trains * Increased potential for unruly passengers with no supervision possible as overcrowding * Without fare revenue, pay or safety measures may not improve |

**CUE CARD 9: UNION (an organisation or body that looks after the interests of employees)**

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| Free public transport would mean:   * Greater access to public transport by everyone regardless of their financial background * Creation of more jobs as extra drivers will be needed to match the increased demand as more people use public transport * The government will need to consider a more sustainable public transport system |

**CUE CARD 10: UNION (an organisation or body that looks after the interests of employees)**

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| Free public transport would mean:   * The government pushing for more cost cutting measures to fund free public transport risking staff jobs * Staff safety and working conditions affected with increased use of public transport due to higher demand * Those regional areas that have few public transport options would feel disadvantaged * Staff shortages if there are not enough drivers available to keep the public transport system operational or going |

**CUE CARD 11: GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL**

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| Free public transport would mean:   * Promotion of climate goals and social fairness so government will gain public support and votes * Easier fare system as less need for ticket inspectors who can be given other roles like driving buses, trains or trams * Increased public transport users so less taxpayers’ money spent on road maintenance * Less traffic jams as more people would use public transport instead of their cars |

**CUE CARD 12: GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL**

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| Free public transport would mean:   * Huge losses in fare revenue which will have a major impact or effect on the government’s budget and spending in other areas like schools and hospitals * Negative community reactions over service issues if poorly planned * That it may not deliver real change unless linked to upgrades of the public transport system * More crime and vandalism as less supervision on public transport |

**CUE CARD** **13: ENVIRONMENTALIST**

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| Free public transport would mean:   * Less cars on the road so lower greenhouse emissions and better air quality * It’s a more effective way to deal with climate change concerns * Reduced traffic and congestion in cities like Melbourne caused by an increase in cars on the road |

**CUE CARD 14: ENVIRONMENTALIST**

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| Free public transport would mean:   * Still not addressing the cost of driving cars such as pollution and congestion with many people still choosing to use cars rather than public transport to get to their destination * More manufacturing or making of buses, trams or trains can cause an increase in carbon emissions * Need to consider other more environmentally friendly forms of transport such as bicycles and walking to reduce pollution, and get people to do more exercise |

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| Small Group People Silhouette Stock Illustrations – 2,332 ...  COMMUNITY GROUP | Thumbs up sign with solid fill  ARGUMENTS MADE IN FAVOUR OF FREE PUBLIC TRANSPORT | Thumbs Down with solid fill  ARGUMENTS MADE AGAINST FREE PUBLIC TRANSPORT |
| STUDENTS | * Allows me to save money on daily travel to and from school * Better access to education and more choices if public transport is free * Less worry about topping up my MYKI or losing it so I do not get a fine | * More people using trams, trains and buses will make them overcrowded and less comfortable * May cause delays as more people including other students will use public transport so more stops * Safety concerns and more crime on public transport if less ticket inspectors and less monitoring |
| PARENTS | * Help to reduce household costs and expenses for lower income families who need to use public transport * Less stress about getting a fine a MYKI card is lost or not topped up * Easier to plan family travel using public transport instead of the car as petrol is costly | * If taxes increase to pay for free public transport this will reduce the family budget and income * Unsupervised teens may damage buses, trams and trains or graffiti more * Travelling on public transport may become less safe if increased numbers of young people and others use it and are involved in bad behaviour or cause fights * Overcrowding of trams, buses and trams so children will not be able to get a seat and travel safely |
| TEACHERS | * Student attendance and punctuality should improve if they have better access to public transport * Reduces the cost of excursions and activities as free public transport means they will become more affordable for parents * More help for lower income families who do not have to rely on driving children to school | * More crowded public transport may mean more delays for students causing them to be late to school * Will the government put more money into public transport to match increased demand? * Some students may decide to skip school and go on trips with no ticket inspectors to check tickets |
| PUBLIC TRANSPORT DRIVERS | * More people using public transport means more jobs and increased public transport routes * Less stress to check or worry about fares and MYKI card readers working * More job opportunities for people to become tram, train or bus drivers | * More overcrowding especially in peak times, causing overfilled trams, trains and buses * More unruly passengers with no supervision and more people on public transport * Pay and safety issues for drivers |
| UNIONS | * Better access to public transport by everyone no matter what their financial situation * More jobs as extra drivers will be needed because more people will use public transport * Government needs to consider current transport system and how it can be maintained or improved | * Government may cut other jobs and funding to be able to afford free public transport * Concerns about staff safety and working conditions as there will be more shifts to cover with increased numbers of people using public transport * May lead to staff shortages if not enough drivers for trams, trains and buses |
| GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL | * Help government achieved climate goals and more fairness so increased public support and votes * Less need for ticket inspectors so they can be trained to be drivers of buses, trains and trams * More people using public transport so less money needed to fix roads * Less traffic jams as more people using trams, trains and buses instead of driving their cars | * Huge losses in fare revenue so will have to find other ways to fund schools, hospitals and other services for Victorians * If poor service and high demand may lead to negative community feedback * Still need to upgrade public transport system so may not make a difference with people still driving cars * More crime and vandalism as less supervision on public transport especially with more young people using trams, trains and buses |
| ENVIRONMENTALIST | * Less cars on the road so better for the environment as more people will use public transport * Government is addressing climate change more * Less cars on the road means less congestion, accidents and traffic jams | * Still have issues of too many cars causing pollution and traffic jams especially if people use their cars rather than public transport * Need more buses, trams and trains so may cause more pollution to make them * Need to also push bicycles and waling to reduce pollution and get people to do more exercise |

## Activity 4: Media Analysis - Headline Hunt and Summary Activity

**Learning Intention**

* We will work collaboratively to read, understand and summarise key facts and arguments in relation to this topic of should public transport be free in Victoria.

**Success Criteria**

* I will be able to identify key facts in the article and write a summary of the arguments in favour or against this topic together with another student.

**Task Instructions:**

**1. Working in pairs, you will be allocated an article to read on this topic of should public transport be free in Victoria.**

**2. Underline the key facts or arguments in the article.**

**3. Create a headline (i.e. heading for your article) and a one – two sentence summary of the article in your own words.**

**4. Share with the class.**

**SAMPLE RESPONSE: (STUDENT ANSWERS WILL VARY)**

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| **Article 1: Victoria children to get free public transport in cost-of-living budget relief**  [Victoria children to get free public transport in cost-of-living budget relief – ABC News](https://www.abc.net.au/news/2024-05-13/should-public-transport-be-free-in-australia-train-bus-tram/103621040)  **Summary:** From January 1, 2026, those aged under 18 will be able to travel free across Victoria public transport network seven-days per week using a youth myki card, saving families up to $755 per child per year. It is expected that this will benefit up to 1 million young people and their families. Seniors will continue to travel free of charge on weekends. |

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| **Article 2: 50 cent fares are here**  [50 cent fares are here – Translink](https://translink.com.au/tickets-and-fares/50-cent-fares)  **Summary:** Instead of making public transport free in Queensland the government has introduced a flat 50 cent fare for trams, trains, buses, ferries across all the state. |

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| **Article 3: Here’s why some people still evade public transport fares – even when they’re 50 cents**  [Here’s why some people skill evade public transport fares – even when they’re 50 cents – The Conversation](https://theconversation.com/heres-why-some-people-still-evade-public-transport-fares-even-when-theyre-50-cents-249739)  **Summary:** Even though Queensland has 50 cent fares now people still avoid paying fares. There are different types of fair evaders (avoiders), those that want to protest against poor service, those that think they will not get caught and those that simply forget to tap or top up their travel cards. |

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| **Article 4: Queensland’s 50-cent public transport fares made permanent**  [Queensland’s 50-cent public transport fares made permanent - 9 News](https://www.9news.com.au/national/queenslands-50c-fares-made-permanent-by-state-government/935271bd-d101-414a-9dc0-2df234e378ba)  **Summary:** The Queensland government has committed $1.5 billion to keep the 50-cent public transport scheme permanent in that state. Public transport usage has increased 18% since the introduction of the cheaper fares saving over $180 billion in fare costs for Queenslanders. |

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| **Article 5: What’s better than $4 train fares? Public transport that works**  [What’s better than $4 train fares? Public transport that works – The Guardian](https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2022/oct/24/whats-better-than-2-train-fares-public-transport-that-works)  **Summary:** Public transport is usually late, dirty, dangerous for women to use especially at night and affected by extreme weather conditions. Public transport should be a first choice for travellers to protect the environment, improve air quality and promote community health which are all strong arguments for it to be free for everyone. |

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| **Article 6: As the cost of living continues to rise, should public transport be free in Australia?**  [As the cost of living continues to rise, should public transport be free in Australia? ABC News](https://www.abc.net.au/news/2024-05-13/should-public-transport-be-free-in-australia-train-bus-tram/103621040)  [Note: please focus only on the relevant sections about Australia – not overseas]  **Summary:** Free public transport makes life easier and simpler for everyone encouraging people to use it more reducing cars and pollution. However, it would be quite costly for the government of each state and territory, and they would have to move funding from other areas of need or increasing taxes to pay for it. |

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| **Video Clip 1: Push for public transport to be free in Australia**  [Push for public transport to be free in Australia – The Project](https://youtu.be/EWQRTlPohJI?si=otNjaB6KRJmgENjg) **(4.10 minutes)**  **Summary:** Public transport in Australia is too expensive and should be free given the rising cost of living. A one-year trial of free travel for all Australians would cost the Federal government $2.2 billion but the current public transport systems would not cope/deal with the increased demand by users. |

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| **Article 7: Why free public transport is a bad idea**  [Why free public transport is a bad idea: RMIT expert – RMIT University](https://www.rmit.edu.au/news/media-releases-and-expert-comments/2022/mar/free-pt)  **Summary:** Free public transport would benefit some users who live in the inner suburbs, but not those in the outer suburbs of Melbourne who have poor services. The government should instead invest in more public transport services to make it a fairer system for all Victorians. |

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| **Article 8: We need better public transport, not free public transport**  [We need better public transport, not free public transport – Daniel Bowen](https://danielbowen.com/2018/06/14/pt-better-not-free/)  **Summary:** Free public transport would be too costly and may lead to higher taxes for the people of Victoria. The public transport system would not cope with the increased demand and would not change the use of cars by people living in the outer suburbs of Melbourne. |

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| **Article 9: Myth: making public transport free will encourage use and political support**  [Making public transport free will encourage use and political support – Public Transport Users Association](https://www.ptua.org.au/myths/free/)  **Summary:** People prefer to use their cars rather than public transport because of the lack of travel times, poor timetables and service rather than the cost. Improved regular services, better timetables that link public transport and a greater staff presence will increase the usage of public transport rather than cutting the cost of travel. |

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| **Article 10: Push for free Melbourne buses shot down in Parliament**  [Push for free Melbourne buses show down in Parliament - Australasian Bus & Coach](https://www.busnews.com.au/push-for-free-melbourne-buses-shot-down-in-parliament/)  **Summary:** Two Victorian members of parliament have pushed for a trial to make buses free for all Victorians to improve public transport services. This motion was debated in parliament, but other MPs believe the bus network needs to be updated rather than made free to provide a better bus service for all the suburbs of Melbourne, so the motion was lost. |

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| **Media Release 1:** Free Transport for Seniors on Weekends – Everywhere  [Free Transport for Seniors on Weekends – Everywhere – Premier of Victoria](https://www.premier.vic.gov.au/free-transport-seniors-weekends-everywhere)  **Summary:** To help with the rising cost of living public transport will be free anywhere in Victoria for senior card holders saving them more than $360 per year. This will allow senior to visit family and grandkids without the extra expense whether they live in Morwell, Bendigo anywhere in country Victoria. |

## Activity 5: Understanding Public Transport Costs, Benefits and Government Decisions - Paragraph Writing Activity

**Learning Intention**

* We will work consider the cost of making public transport free for the Victorian government and the community.

**Success Criteria**

* I will be able consider the data/information provided about the cost of making public transport free in Victoria and write a paragraph clearly stating my opinion on this Convention topic.

**Task Instructions:**

**1. Imagine you are a member of the Victorian government, and you have been given the following information about the cost of making trams, trains and buses free for everyone.**

**2. Write a paragraph of between 5 and 8 sentences to answer the following questions:**

**\*Do you think public transport should be free for everyone? Why or why not?**

**\*If you were in charge, how would you find the money to pay for this free service?**

**\*What other things might the government have to spend less money on if they make public**

**transport free in Victoria?**

**\*How would you feel if your favourite things like local parks or sporting venues got less money**

**so that public transport could be free for everyone in the state?**

**3. Share your point of view with another student or the rest of the class.**

**Public Transport Costings:**

A pie chart of a bus service

AI-generated content may be incorrect.The pie chart provides an approximate annual cost summary for the Victorian government to fund free public transport, based on estimated or likely expenses from the data or information that is available on the Public Transport Victoria website.

* The cost of Victoria’s bus service is about $200 million per year
* Train and tram services are significantly more expensive to operate, with an estimated cost of trains at $500 million for trains and $300 million for trams each year
* Other costs, including administration and maintenance (repairs etc.) are estimated at $100 million each year

Results:

* **Train Service:** 45.5%
* **Tram Service:** 27.3%
* **Bus Service:** 18.2%
* **Other Costs (administration, maintenance, etc.):** 9.1%

**Source**: [Metropolitan Fares – Public Transport Victoria](https://www.ptv.vic.gov.au/tickets/fares/metropolitan-fares/)

**Imagine**

The government has to pay to run all the trains, trams, and buses in Victoria — just like how families pay for electricity or water at home. Trains cost the most money to run, then trams, then buses. There's also a small amount used for other things like cleaning and upgrading stations.

If we wanted to make it free for everyone to ride, it would cost about **$1.1 billion every year**. That’s like saying:

* **Most of the money** would go to **trains**
* **Some** would go to **trams**
* **A bit less** would go to **buses**
* **A small piece** would be for **other jobs** (like cleaning, repairs and administration)

**Where could the money come from?**

The Victorian government would need a lot of money to pay for free public transport each year. Here are some ways they could get that money:

**1. Taxes**

The government collects money from people and businesses through taxes. This is like everyone putting some money into a big money box. The government could use some of this money to pay for free public transport.

**2. Spending Less on Other Things**

The government spends money on lots of things, like schools, hospitals, and roads. If they want to pay for free public transport, they might have to spend less money on something else.

**3. Borrowing Money**

Sometimes, the government can borrow money from banks or other countries. This is like taking out a loan that they have to pay back later with interest.

**4. Making New Rules**

The government could make new rules to collect more money, like adding a small tax on certain things (for example, on sugary drinks or big companies).

So, to make public transport free, the government would have to find money by using taxes, spending less on other things, borrowing, or making new rules to get more money.

**SAMPLE RESPONSE (ANSWERS WILL VARY)**

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| **My opinion:**  I believe public transport should be free for everyone in Victoria, as it would greatly benefit people who need to travel to school, work, or other important places without the problem of ticket costs. If I was in charge, I would fund this initiative by allocating a portion of the taxes collected from individuals and businesses. Additionally, I would consider reducing government spending on areas such as advertising or large-scale events to make more room in the budget for free public transport.  Of course, making public transport free might mean the government would have to cut back on other projects, such as building new parks or upgrading local sports facilities. While I’d feel disappointed if my favourite park didn’t get new equipment, I understand that providing free public transport could make a big difference for families who don’t own a car or struggle to afford fares. In the end, I think ensuring that everyone can travel safely and easily is a priority worth making some sacrifices for. |

## Activity 6: Compare Victoria with the World –PMI Chart Activity

**Learning Intentions**

* We will compare Victoria’ public transport system with those of other regions around the world focusing on systems that offer free public transport.

**Success Criteria**

* I will be able to present the positives and negatives of free public transport using overseas examples.

**Task Instructions:**

**1. Working in groups of 3-4 students you will be allocated either an article or a video clip to complete this task.**

**2. Use the PMI template, provide the positives and negatives of free public transport in Victoria using overseas countries as examples. Include any interesting points you come across to complete the mind map.**

**3. Share your answers with another student pair and then the class.**

**SAMPLE RESPONSE: (STUDENT ANSWERS WILL VARY)**

**Newspaper articles:**

[As the cost of living continues to rise, should public transport be free in Australia? ABC News](https://www.abc.net.au/news/2024-05-13/should-public-transport-be-free-in-australia-train-bus-tram/103621040)

[Are free fares the go? Government News](https://www.governmentnews.com.au/free-public-transport-the-pros-and-cons/)

[All aboard! Can Luxembourg’s free public transport help save the world? The Guardian](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/sep/20/all-aboard-can-luxembourgs-free-public-transport-help-save-the-world)

**Video clips:**

[The country where all public transit is free – Tom Scott – YouTube](https://youtu.be/feCQPD9DSOA?si=hmWh-ScAND8DHd-I) **(6.26 minutes)**

[Luxembourg to trail free public transport to tackle congestion – Sky News – YouTube](https://youtu.be/UxKsk6qezKU?si=8GWp-RAl-x335jIo) **(3.05 minutes)**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| PLUSBadge Follow outline | MINUSBadge Unfollow outline | INTERESTINGInformation outline |
| * Free public transport has been trialled in other countries * Increased use of public transport reduces carbon emission because there are less cars on road * The main reason for some free public transport in states and other countries is to reduce traffic congestion * Queensland’s 50 cent fares have increased public transport usage * Free public transport mean that providers do not need to deal with cash, cards or machines for fares * Free public transport reduces the cost-of-living pressures | * Australia has some of the most expensive public transport fares in the world * Tourists who travel to the capital of Estonia (Tallinn) still must pay for public transport * There is no guarantee that free public transport will reduce the number of cars on the road * The quality of service is a major issue for public transport users not the cost * Given the size of Australia, it would be too difficult to have free fares for everyone * Data from Luxembourg shows that 75% of journeys are still made by cars even if public transport is free * Some people will benefit more than others if public transport is free depending on their access to public transport * The quality of the public transport service i.e. frequency of buses, trams and trains, reliability and coverage are more important than the cost * Luxembourg still has a high number of car users despite free public transport * Luxembourg has not overcome the issues of overcrowded trains or traffic jams * With public transport systems whichever the option, the public still pays either through taxes or fares | * Luxembourg, which is a small European country, is the first in the world to make public transport free for everyone * Tallinn which is Estonia’s capital city has free fares but only for registered residents * Only first-class passengers are required to pay for public transport in Luxembourg * Montpellier in Southern France has also made public transport free * Belgrade in Serbia with a population of 1.7 million people has free public transport * Kansas Missouri in the USA offers free public transport since 2020 * Since March 2020 all public transport is free in Luxembourg to reduce traffic jams, reduce inequalities and reach climate targets * Travellers in Luxembourg do not have to book seats, use cards or cash, or try to work out confusing ticket zones or price lists * Free public transport has helped the unemployed and low-income earners in Luxembourg save money * Spain, Germany and Austria are trialling free public transport or reduced fares to meet climate change targets and reduce the cost of living * Luxembourg still has issues of too many cars, peak hour traffic jams and overcrowded trains despite free public transport * People use cars because it is quicker and more convenient as public transport can be unreliable * $700 million euros paid by taxpayers in Luxembourg to fund the free public transport |

## Activity 7: Free Tram Zone In Melbourne – Case Study Activity

**Learning Intentions**

* We will investigate the success of the Free Tram Zone in Melbourne and whether this can be extended to all public transport in Victoria.

**Success Criteria**

* I will be able to discuss the pros and cons of the Free Tram Zone and share my opinion on whether the Free Tram Zone is a good idea.

**Task Instructions:**

**1. Think about the Free Tram Zone in the city and list some pros/advantages or cons/disadvantages in the table below.**

**2. Read one of the articles on the Free Tram Zone and highlight the pros and cons that are listed.**

**3. Write them in the table and share with another student.**

**4. Decide whether the Free Tram Zone is a good or bad initiative and write a paragraph about your opinion which you can then share with the class.**

**SAMPLE RESPONSE: (STUDENT ANSWERS WILL VARY)**

**Introduction:**

The Free Tram Zone in Melbourne commenced on January 1, 2015, allowing riders to travel for free within the central business district (CBD)/the city. The aim of this program was to improve the enjoyment of the inner city by increasing foot traffic (pedestrians) to local businesses and attractions like Docklands and the Queen Victoria Market. It intended to promote the use of public transport by offering a convenient option instead of people driving cars to reduce the traffic in the city. The zone was also created to make travel easier for tourists, so they could explore the city without the need for tickets or fares.

**Articles:**

[A decade into Melbourne’s free trams experiment, has it been worth it? The Guardian](https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2025/jan/12/melbourne-free-trams-experiment-decade-critics)

[Free tram rides to the MCG, Victoria Market come at a price – The Age](https://www.theage.com.au/national/victoria/free-tram-rides-to-the-mcg-victoria-market-come-at-a-price-20240919-p5kbxh.html)

[The pros and cons of the new #FreeTramZone – Daniel Bowen](https://danielbowen.com/2015/01/19/free-tram-zone-pros-cons/)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| PROS OF THE FREE TRAM ZONE | CONS OF THE FREE TRAM ZONE |
| * The Free Tram Zone is very popular with tourists and visitors to the CBD * Current Lord Mayor Nicholas Reese wants the zone to expand further to provide better commutes/travel into the city * The Lord Mayor says it has improved the city’s economy, helped tourists get around and helps reduce the cost of living * Data shows that when public transport is free (e.g. New Year’s Eve) there is increased usage * Calls for increased services rather than an ending to the Free Tram Zone to deal with the overcrowding issue * The number of trips in the Free Tram Zone increased from 18.5 million to 35.5 million in 2019 * Has relieved some of the overcrowding on the city circle tram * Can help reduce congestion in the CBD as less demand for short distance taxi trips * More people are using trams where they would normally not get on public transport * Clear signage of where the Free Tram Zone starts and stops * Benefits tourists, CBD residents, international students and car drivers the most | * Trams are more crowded and slower * Not an improvement for paying customers who are travelling outside the free tram zone * Expanding the Free Tram Zone would cost $28 million instead of the current $14 million per which would also reduce fares by a further 10% * Too many passengers using the free tram rides for short distances instead of walking slowing trams even more and adding to the overcrowding issue * People are still driving into the city as well as using the free trams * High yearly cost to the government is a strong reason to scrap it all together * Peak hour is too hard with increased overcrowding in the city * Creates issues for the elderly, disabled and those with prams as the trams can be so overcrowded * Tram patronage/usage has dropped since COVID (2022) as more people are still working from home * People doing less exercise as relying on trams instead of walking during lunch breaks which add to the overcrowding * There is a need for more trams on the CBD route to cope with demand * Someone is still paying for this service (taxpayers) * Overcrowding is getting worse on Tram Routes 86 and 96 along Bourke Street * The Free Tram Zone causes a bank up of trams with longer waits in between if they all come at the same time * The Free Tram Zone does not go as far as the Casino, the Melbourne Museum and the National Art Gallery which are all other major tourist attractions in Melbourne |

**Reflection: (Student answers will vary)**

Melbourne's CBD Free Tram Zone offers free transport for residents and visitors, making it easier to move between popular attractions without needing a Myki card. This can encourage more people to use public transport and reduce taxi congestion. However, there are significant downsides. Overcrowding on tram lines, especially along Bourke Street, has increased wait times and the discomfort of passengers. The free rides may promote shorter trips that could be walked, potentially leading to more car use. Regular travellers often face disruptions due to the flood of short-distance users, affecting service quality and reliability. Overall, while the Free Tram Zone aims to improve accessibility and public transport use, it has led to major problems for regular public transport users.

## POST CONVENTION ACTIVITIES

### Activity 1: Reflection Journal

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| **Learning Intentions**   * We will be able to reflect or think about the Convention topic of ‘should public transport be free in Victoria’ and express our opinion and understanding of both the advantages and disadvantages.   **Success Criteria**   * I can explain what I learned about this topic from participating in the Convention. * I can provide both advantages of disadvantages of public transport being free in Victoria. * I can clearly state my own opinion and support this with reasons. |

**Task Instructions:**

**1. Think about the pre-convention activities and the debate at the Convention on the topic of ‘*should public transport be free in Victoria?’.***

**2. Complete the reflection journal using the template provided.**

**3. Share with another class remember and discuss what was similar and what was different.**

**STUDENTS ANSWERS WILL VARY**

**WHAT IS A REFLECTIVE JOURNAL?**

A reflective journal is a personal record where you can write your thoughts, opinion and learning experiences after the Convention. It allows you to think about the arguments for and against public transport being free for everyone and to decide on your opinion giving reasons for your choice.

**DEBATE REFLECTION JOURNAL WORKSHEET**

**Topic:** *Should public transport be free in Victoria?*

**1. What did I learn from the debate?**

(Write a 3-4 sentences about what you found out from listening to both sides about this topic.)

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**2. What did I say (or hear) that was most convincing?**

(Write down the strongest argument you heard about this topic or an example you remember from the Convention)

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**3. How did I feel during the debate?**

(Tick all that apply or add your own)

☐ Nervous  
☐ Excited  
☐ Confident  
☐ Unsure  
☐ Curious  
☐ Confused  
☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**I felt this way because:**

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**4. What would I do differently next time?**

(Think about your speaking, listening, or preparation for the Convention.)

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**5. My final opinion (after the debate):**

☐ Yes, public transport should be free in Victoria.  
☐ No, it should not be free in Victoria.  
☐ I'm not sure yet.

**Explain why you feel this way:**

### Activity 2: Design a Poster Campaign

|  |
| --- |
| **Learning Intention**   * We will effectively communicate our opinions and ideas on the Convention topic through a visual presentation.   **Success Criteria**   * I will be able to design an interesting poster that clearly communicate my opinion on this topic. |

**Task Instructions:**

**1. Decide whether your poster will support or oppose the idea of free public transport in Victoria.**

**2. Sketch ideas on a blank sheet of paper producing a slogan and three arguments to support your point of view as well as images to make the poster visually appealing.**

**3. Create your poster to clearly communicate your opinion on this topic (can be through drawing tools on the computer or freehand with images downloaded and printed).**

**Programs such as** [**Abode Express**](https://www.adobe.com/express/create) **or** [**Poster My Wall**](https://www.postermywall.com/) **or** [**Photo Room**](https://www.photoroom.com) **may help**

**4. Once completed give your poster to the teacher to be displayed on the wall for the gallery walk.**

**STUDENTS ANSWERS WILL VARY**

**Steps to Creating your poster**

1. Propose or suggest a catchy title for your poster e.g.

* Freedom to Move: Public Transport is a Right
* "Public Transport: The Ticket to Equality
* "Ride for Free
* "No Fare, No Fear: Free transport for everyone
* Free Public transport – at what cost?
* Taxpayers should have a say: no free transport
* You use, you pay, no free public transport

**2. List the advantages to support your title:**

**Possible Advantages:**

* **Environmental Benefits** – less cars so less greenhouse emissions if people use buses, trams, and trains to get to their destinations
* **Less Traffic Congestion or Jams** – as there are fewer cars on the road
* **Helps with the Cost of Living** – low-income families, students, jobseekers, and people on pensions benefit more as public transport is more accessible
* **Improves public health** – as people walk more to and from stops and stations
* **Savings on Fare Collections** – as no need for to ticket inspectors and makes it easier to hop on and off public transport

**Or list the possible disadvantages to support your title:**

**Possible Disadvantages:**

* **High cost to the government** – so less taxpayer money going to other areas like schools, hospitals, or roads
* **Overcrowding Issue** – more passengers using public transport which will mean service delays and problems unless more public transport is provided
* **No guarantee of car use reductions** – some may still prefer to drive especially if they live in the outer suburbs and away from the city or they are not close to train, tram or bus stops
* **Potential problems with poor behaviour** – less monitoring of public transport can lead to more crime on public transport and increased vandalism

### Activity 3: Creating a Gallery Walk

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| **Learning Intention**   * We will participate in the gallery walk and practice giving and receiving feedback.   **Success Criteria**   * I will participate in the gallery walk and provide constructive feedback to other students. |

**Task Instructions:**

**1. Move from poster to poster and look at the information provided on each poster.**

**\*You may be allocated to 3-4 posters, or your teacher will instruct you to look at all the posters produced by the students who attended the Convention.**

**3. Complete the feedback form on the posters you have looked at.**

**4. Share with the rest of the class providing your opinion on which arguments were the most convincing and which designs stood out for you.**

**What is a gallery walk?**

A gallery walk is a teaching method where student work (i.e. the posters) is displayed around a room, and students move from one display to another to view, discuss, and respond to the content. It is like visiting a museum or art gallery, but in a classroom setting.

**STUDENTS ANSWERS WILL VARY**

|  |
| --- |
| **Gallery Walk Feedback Sheet**  **Topic:** *Should Public Transport Be Free in Victoria?*  **Your Name:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ **Poster Number:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  **1. Main Message**   * What is the main argument of this poster?  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_   **2. Evidence & Arguments**   * Did the poster use convincing facts or examples? ☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No * If so, what did you think of the evidence: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_   **3. Design & Presentation**   * Is the poster visually interesting and easy to read? ☐ Excellent ☐ Good ☐ Needs Improvement * What design elements worked well in your opinion (e.g., colours, layout, visuals)?  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_   **4. Convincing or Not Convincing**   * How convincing were the arguments in the poster?   ⭐ Rate from 1 (Not convincing) to 5 (Very convincing): ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5   * Suggest one way to make it more convincing: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_   **5. A Positive Comment –** Something you really liked about this poster was:  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |

**FINAL VOTE ON SHOULD PUBLIC TRANSPORT BE FREE IN VICTORIA**

Indicate where you sit on the continuum/ range for this topic by circling the most appropriate response.

**Strongly Disagree Do Not Agree or Agree Strongly**

**Disagree Disagree (neutral) Agree**

## ADDITIONAL TEACHER REFERENCES:

You may find these resources helpful to unpack the topic as you prepare for the Convention with your students.

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| --- | --- |
| **Suggested Resource** | **Overview** |
| [Australian cities offer free public transport to fill empty seats, ease cost of living pain | The Straits Times](https://www.straitstimes.com/asia/australianz/australian-cities-offer-free-public-transport-to-fill-empty-seats-ease-cost-of-living-pain) | An article published in Singapore exploring the various approaches to public transport fare policies in Australia |
| [The case for making public transit free everywhere – Wired](https://www.wired.com/story/free-public-transit/) | The article focuses on the European experience and the countries that currently offer free or low-cost public transport services. |
| [All aboard! Should public transport be free for everyone? The University of New South Wales](https://www.unsw.edu.au/newsroom/news/2023/03/all-aboard--should-public-transport-be-free-for-everyone-) | Some relevant points raised in this article about the New South Wales experience relating to public transport. Funding for free public transport would be like Medicare – paid through taxes and some people will use it more than others. |
| [The case for making public transit free: is it a good idea? Modeshift](https://www.modeshift.com/the-case-for-making-public-transit-free-is-it-a-good-idea/) | Good article about the American experience of public transport referring to both pros and cons of a free public transport system and also using examples of Luxembourg and Australia. |
| [Public transport can save our cities – Tedx Talks – YouTube](https://youtu.be/KuB9Hbzq_3E?si=n5dFNW9ztbNu_Vf0) (9.33 minutes) | A civil engineering student explores the importance of a public transport system set against his own family experience of being driven everywhere as he was growing up. |
| [Public transport fares in Victoria – The Free Tram Zone – Taitset – YouTube](https://youtu.be/6uH1C6TC8bg?si=LAuqXrMUOxuhnwRI) (11.07 minutes) | Interesting video that looks at the public transport system, MYKI cards and the Free Tram Zone – good to use as an introduction to the topic. |
| [Pros & cons: making public transportation free – Gov1](https://www.gov1.com/community-development/articles/pros-cons-making-public-transportation-free-Jz3LDt1L3yUKgv0o/) | The article looks at the pros and cons of free public transport after Kansas City was the first US city to make it free in 2019. |
| [Should public transit be free? Freaknomics Radio](https://freakonomics.com/podcast/should-public-transit-be-free-update/?trk=public_post_comment-text) | A podcast episode focused on public transit in the USA, looking at how public transit impact different states like New York, Kansas City, LA, among others. Each guests discusses the pros and cons of making public transit free. |