**INTRODUCTION**

**Preparing for Your Visit to the States Chamber**

This introduction is intended to prepare class teachers for the States visit.

**1. Key Tasks to be Undertaken in Advance**

1. Fix date for visit with the States Greffe administration team and confirm transport requirements. Dates will be allocated on a first come, first served basis.
2. Choose a debating topic, allocate key roles to children and prepare the class for the debate.
3. Download the two templates (see 8 below) from the States Assembly website, complete them electronically and email them, along with your list of parents attending the session to the States Greffe at [SGRadmin@gov.je](mailto:SGRadmin@gov.je) b***y 9.00 a.m. on Wednesday the week before your visit.***
4. Brief children on the three important rules of the visit, see 11 below.

**2. Choosing a Topic**

It is important to select a topic for debate which will be of interest to the children and which will generate a variety of opinions. Topics might include subjects specific to schools (e.g. school uniform, longer/shorter school days, etc), or they can include topical subjects which may connect with other work in the curriculum if schools wish.

Please ***do not*** choose historical topics which involve arguments from, for instance, the Victorian period. This is important because we will be discussing ways in which the States today has changed since the Victorian period.

**3. Allocation of Roles in Debate**

The following roles should be allocated to pupils:

1. **Proposer**: This role involves speaking for up to three minutes in support of the proposition. The Proposer carries the responsibility of persuading the Assembly to approve the proposition and responds briefly at the end of the debate to any points raised. Choose a confident speaker for this role.
2. **Seconder**: The Seconder supports the proposition by speaking in favour straight after the Proposer. Choose a confident speaker for this role.
3. **Dean**: The Dean reads the Lord’s Prayer in French before the debate begins. The Dean can participate in the debate but not vote. Choose a student who can read French for this role.
4. **Greffier**: The Greffier reads the roll call and the details of the proposition, manages the vote and assists with writing notes. The Greffier does not participate in the debate. Choose a confident reader and writer for this role.
5. **Usher**: The Usher calls for silence upon the entry of the Presiding Officer and assists with passing messages. The Usher does not participate in the debate. Choose a pupil with a loud voice and a responsible attitude for this role.

Note: A Presiding Officer (Bailiff) and an Assistant Greffier will be provided for your class.

**4. Preparing the Rest of the Class**

Encourage the remaining students to prepare contributions supporting or opposing the proposition. Wil not all children are obligated to speak, all interested students will have the opportunity to participate. For larger classes, please ensure that speeches are not too lengthy to allow time for questions.

**5. The Visit**

a) Upon arrival at the Royal Square, an officer from the States Greffe will meet you near the golden statue of King George II and take you into the States Building and the States Chamber.

b) Once inside the Chamber the children will be asked to take their seats in the places allocated in advance. The group will then be welcomed, a short history of the States Assembly given, and the following explained:

i) How the microphone/lights operate so that the children will be familiar with them during the debate.

ii) How the voting buttons operate.

iii) The roles of the different members, including the Dean, Greffier and Usher.

iv) Some of the rules of debate – see 7, below.

c) There will be a break, for students to enjoy any refreshments in the downstairs members’ room and use the toilets. Schools are asked to bring refreshments with them for this break.

d) The children will then return to their places in the States Chamber and the debate will begin, following the schedule in 6, below.

e) At the end of the debate, there will be an opportunity for children to ask questions. Each student will receive a certificate of participation as well as some items to commemorate their visit.

f) A few days after the visit, you will receive a copy of the ‘official’ minutes of the States Meeting in which the children have taken part. This records the ‘decision’ taken in the debate with a note of the way in which the children voted. You will also receive an audio recording of the meeting.

**6. The Debate**

The debate will follow the order of a normal States meeting. The Order Paper (*Resource 6: Sample Order paper)* and the school’s proposition *(Resource 7: Sample Projet)* will be on the desks in the Chamber when students arrive.

The proceedings during the debate will be as follows:

1. The Usher announces the entry of the Presiding Officer. Everyone stands and takes their seats when the Presiding Officer sits.
2. The Presiding Officer asks the Greffier to take the roll call. The Greffier stands and reads out the names of the members.
3. Each member switches on his/her microphone to reply ‘Present’ (pronounced without the ‘t’ for boys) or ‘Presente’ (pronounced with the ‘t’ for girls) when their name is called.
4. If a member of class is off sick, another member will be asked to advise the Greffier of the fact by calling out ‘malade’ (‘ill’) when that person’s name is called. It would be helpful to have identified a volunteer in advance to say ‘malade’ when the absent pupil’s name is called out.
5. When the roll call has been completed, the Presiding Officer will declare that the States is properly constituted for the meeting.
6. The Presiding Officer asks the Dean to read the Lord’s Prayer in French, and everybody stands.
7. The Presiding Officer makes introductory remarks including welcoming any guests before moving to Public Business. He will ask the Greffier to read the proposition.
8. He will then invite the proposer to speak. The proposer will switch on his/her microphone, stand and speak.
9. The Presiding Officer will then ask for a seconder who will speak.
10. The debate will then be open to all members and the Presiding Officer will choose members who attract his attention with their microphone light. The process will continue until all children who wish to speak have had the opportunity.
11. When there are no more contributions, the proposer will be invited to respond. They should thank all members who have participated, answer any arguments against the proposition and remind members (briefly) why they should vote for the proposition.
12. The Presiding Officer asks the Greffier to open the voting which activates the voting buttons on the desks. When all members have voted the result will be announced.
13. The Presiding Officer will then declare the meeting adjourned until the next States meeting and the meeting is finished.

**7. Rules of Debate in the States Chamber**

1. The Presiding Officer chooses members to speak; they should stand when speaking and ensure that their microphone is switched on.
2. Members should not interrupt each other.
3. Members should be polite at all times.
4. When speaking, members should remember that they should *not* speak directly to a fellow member, addressing him/her as ‘you’. Instead, they should refer to them by title (Deputy Smith, Connétable Jones etc). For example, one does not say: “I disagree with what you said” but rather “I disagree with what Deputy Smith said”.
5. Members should not talk to each other while the debate is in progress but should listen to the comments of other members.
6. Members can only speak ***once***on a proposition (except for the proposer who replies at the end of the debate).

**8. Details to Email from the School in Advance**

**i) The proposition and report**

Once you have agreed the topic for debate, please download from the States Assembly website and complete electronically (*Resource 3: Details of Proposition)*.

It will be set out and printed by the States Greffe for your visit in the form of a States projet *(See Resource 7: Sample Projet)* expressed as follows:

“The Assembly are asked whether they are of opinion” followed by the proposition on which the class will be asked to vote. For example:

*“The Assembly are asked whether they are of opinion –*

*to ban crisps, chocolate bars and fizzy drinks from all Jersey schools.”*

Please send a short report (approximately 100 words), prepared by the teacher, for inclusion with the proposition. It should explain the background to the proposition, including information about why the topic is important to the class. It will be printed as part of your proposition.

**ii) The pupil details**

To allocate seats within the Chamber, download *Resource 5: Pupil details*. Fill in the grid with students’ names, starting at number 1, designating each pupil a Connétable or Deputy, depending on their seat. Spaces are also provided in the grid for details of the Dean, Greffier and Usher. Refer to *Resource 4*, the seating plan, to locate specific seats.

Upon arrival in the Chamber, they will receive details of the member whose seat they are occupying. The voting record, which the school will be sent later, reflects the votes cast in the specific seats occupied by the children. For those who wish to research that member’s background later, information is available on the States website [www.statesassembly.je](http://www.statesassembly.je).

**iii) List of parents/caregivers attending**  
  
Compile a list of names of any parents/caregivers wishing to attend and send this to the States **no later than 9.00 a.m. on the** Wednesday before the visit. Parents should have been advised to gather at the **Information Centre, Ground Floor, Morier House opposite the public entrance** **one hour after the start of the school’s visit**, for entry to the Public Gallery.

**IMPORTANT:** Please complete Resource 3 and Resource 5 electronically, save them, and email both documents, **along with the list of attending parents/carers**, to SGRAdmin@gov.je **no later than 9.00 a.m. on the** Wednesday before the visit.

**Parents/caregivers not on the list will not be allowed to attend for safeguarding of all pupils.**

**9. Points to brief children on in advance**

Every effort is made to make the visit as relaxed and enjoyable as possible. However, we ask that three important rules are observed:

1. The microphones in the States Chamber are extremely fragile (and expensive!). Please ask the children ***not to touch them***, or the buttons on the desks, until they have been asked to do so.
2. The drawers under the desks contain papers and personal possessions belonging to States Members. Please ask the children **not** to open these drawers.
3. Because other activities, including sittings of the Royal Court, will be taking place in the building at the same time as the visits, it is important that noise is kept to a minimum on the stairs up to the States Chamber and also in the toilets downstairs.