The Australian Government recognises the importance of all young Australians being able to visit the national capital as part of their Civics and Citizenship education. To assist families in meeting the cost of our camp the Australian Government contributed funding of $240 per student under the Parliament and Civics Education Rebate program.

**Perth Airport**

We arrived at the Perth Airport Terminal 4 at 1.30pm. We had to wait 2 hours to board our plane. Our flight number was QF718 with Qantas Airlines. There were different food choices including fish curry, salad and pasta. We were on the plane for just over 4 hours. Some of the movies we saw were Inside Out, Minions and Aloha. We also had several music options. We safely landed in Canberra at 10.30pm and we travelled to the Gold Creek Resort which was where we stayed for 5 days.

**Mount Ainsley**

On day two, we drove to Mount Ainsley. The view was simply spectacular. Whilst we were there, we had a delicious lunch! At Mount Ainsley we saw a cute little rabbit jumping around which stole our hearts. There was also a beautiful view of the Parliamentary Triangle and the landscape of Canberra. We thoroughly enjoyed our time there!

**Electoral Education Centre**

On Wednesday the 4th of November we went to the Electoral Education centre. We went by bus; excited to see what it would be like inside the building. First we listened to a presentation about the Federation of Australia and voting. After around 20-30 minutes everyone voted to elect their favourite fruit, we had the choice of peach, orange, banana or apple. Then we all participated in a ‘question’ session where we would have to answer questions posed to us. It was a very interesting experience.

**Parliament House**

After visiting the Museum of Australian Democracy we made our way to Parliament House. When we arrived we had a tour of the massive building and its surroundings. We had the opportunity to go into the Senate and House of Representatives and many other rooms. In Parliament House we learned how Parliament is run and how the different rooms are used. We were even lucky enough to meet our Federal Member for Stirling, Michael Keenan. We felt very honoured to have the privilege of being in this building in Canberra, Australia’s capital.

**Museum of Australian Democracy**

After the Electoral Education Centre we were off to the Museum of Australian Democracy, also known as Old Parliament House. At the museum, the tour guide Nelson showed us several rooms around the building including the old Senate. We were even able to use some interactive screens to answer questions about Australian Democracy.
National Museum of Australia
On the 3rd day we went to the National Museum of Australia. Our tour guide told us about many historical things such as the use of old cameras and cars. He told us a tragic story about a man who loved photography and sadly lost most of his work when his ship became frozen in the Arctic Circle and the sailors had to abandon ship. Later we explored the museum.

Geoscience
After visiting The National Museum of Australia we drove to Geoscience. It was spectacular! We were able to see many different types of minerals, crystals and rocks. We learned lots of facts about the special types of rocks and we also saw some fossils. The best part was when we learned about the use of the ‘seismograph’. This machine detects earthquakes across the world. Later we discussed the importance of rocks and how the Earth was formed. After touching and feeling some of the different rocks, we realised that they all had unique features.

AMF Bowling
Tonight our coach captain lan drove us to AMF Bowling. When we arrived at AMF Bowling Mr Ingersole checked us in and we sorted out our teams. After a couple of minutes of confusion, our game of bowling commenced. It was an amazing and challenging game! Once we got on the bus Mr Ingersole announced the winners (Mrs Panting and he won a game too!). Overall, it was an enjoyable night!

Black Mountain
We were lucky enough to visit the Black Mountain Tower (Telstra Tower). This was located near an acorn playground we had visited earlier in the day. We made our way to the top in an elevator (instead of climbing up the nine hundred stairs). After reaching the top of the tower we saw some amazing views, including Parliament House and City Centre. The view was incredible so we took lots of photos. We had a superb time.

Government House
Today we went to the Government House. We were greeted by another school from Victoria who joined us on our tour through Sir Peter Cosgrove’s (The Governor General) house. After a quick stroll through the beautiful, large front garden we stopped at the entrance of the house. We were addressed by Robert the Butler and Kathy who was chosen by Sir Peter Cosgrove to make executive decisions in the Navy. After a brief video about the Governor General’s job, we had an informative tour around the 1st story of his house. We even got the opportunity to see the Rolls Royce that the Governor General is driven in! We ended the tour with a scenic photo with the house and our group.
The Royal Australian Mint
As we arrived at the mint, we saw a massive, modern building. We walked into the building and met our tour guide Eddy, he showed us up the stairs that were full of 5 cent coins and blanks. We found out that the blanks were coins that hadn’t been pressed yet. After we had walked up the stairs, we entered a room that held the coins from the past. After Eddy taught us about the history of coins, we walked over to the area where the coins are designed. Some of the designs are not used in modern times like now. The class then went to a large room with three robots working inside. Those robots names are: Titan, Penny and Robby. Titan started dancing and everyone started to laugh with joy. After Titan stopped dancing the class walked down the stairs and into the gift shop. All in all the Royal Australian Mint was amazing.

Embassy Drive
After visiting the Royal Australian Mint we went for a drive to see the Embassies. An Embassy is where the representatives from allocated countries meet to discuss important government issues. We went for a drive to see all Embassies and their surroundings. We learnt about what an Embassy is, who works in an Embassy and we learnt about the culture of each different country. We felt very intrigued and happy to have been there!

Arboretum
When the class arrived at the Arboretum, we got off the bus and had afternoon tea. Afternoon tea consisted of: shapes, popcorn, juice and water. The reason we went to the acorn playground was because it was highly recommended... and Ms Allsop wanted to go on the slide! After we finished eating we walked to a lookout and took a photo. We walked around the inside and outside of the building until we came across the playground. Some people played chasey and some just swung on the swings. We had an amazing time!

ANZAC - Parade Memorial
On our last full day, the 6th of November at 2pm-3pm we drove down ANZAC Parade on Ian’s coach. There were 7 or 8 Memorials on ANZAC drive and 3 of them were dedicated to the Army, Air force and the Navy. There were memorials for wars like the Vietnam and Korean Wars which were probably the best memorials. There were areas reserved for memorials that hadn’t been built yet that had red gravel where it was going to be built. The Army Memorial had 2 huge statues of soldiers from World War One (WW1) that had to be lifted in by cranes. The Navy Memorial had water splashing down on it and it was MASSIVE! There was also a memorial dedicated to the women who risked their lives to look after the troops in World War One, World War Two and many other wars. ANZAC Parade is an elegant and sombre place. Once we had explored the memorials Ian dropped us off at the Australian National War Memorial so we could commence our tour.
**Australian War Memorial**

Today we have the privilege of going to the National War Memorial of Australia. At the Memorial, we went on a tour and learnt about the different wars, the weapons and people who played a part in the results of these wars. Our tour guides Alan and David made the experience so amazing by giving us useful and extensive information. At the memorial, two of our lucky students got to participate in a prestigious Last Post Ceremony by laying a wreath at the Pool of Reflection to pay our respects to the people who fought for our freedom and country. Overall, we had an amazing time at the Australian War Memorial and learnt many new facts about the ANZACs.

**National Capital Exhibition**

On our last day of camp, we went to the National Capital Exhibition. We learnt about the history of Canberra and how it was made. After a brief video explaining the history of Canberra we gathered around a 3D model of the layout of Canberra. On this model there was a projector showing us the important landmarks of Canberra. Soon after we were put into groups of 4 and we made Lego buildings we think Canberra needs to have. Students came up with brilliant ideas for example: a soccer stadium, nature dome, animal welfare centre, new houses and many, many more. We ended the tour by thanking our guide Lilly for her time.

**National Portrait Gallery**

On the last day we went to the National Portrait Gallery. At the National Portrait Gallery there were paintings of famous Australians such as Ned Kelly, Captain Cook, British sailors, politicians, Kings, Queens and knights. Some of the materials used to create these artworks consisted of clay, steel, metal, wood, gold, silver, paint, copper and many other materials. It was very informative.

**Questacon**

On day 5, our last venue was Questacon and it was a very exciting event! Many of the students were looking forward to participating in the ‘free fall’ slide and countless other activities. All of our classmates enjoyed the trip as we were able to view caged lightning and many other scientific experiments and games.

*Written by A1 - November 2015*