



**YOUR VOICE,
YOUR CHOICE**

votes for women



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YOUR VOICE, YOUR CHOICE

VOTES FOR WOMEN

Introduction

On 19 September 1893, when the Governor, Lord Glasgow, signed the Electoral Act into law, New Zealand became the first country in the world where all adults, including women, had the right to vote in parliamentary elections.

Votes for Women provides a range of activities designed to develop students' understanding of the suffragists' achievement 125 years ago and to encourage voter participation today. The focus of the resource is on the right to participate and engage in the democratic process.

Votes for Women is aligned with the values and key competencies of *The New Zealand Curriculum*. The resource is aimed at level 4 of the curriculum. However, you are encouraged to adapt the activities to meet the specific needs and experiences of your students.

Votes for Women is designed as a stand-alone resource, but it can also sit alongside the *Your Voice, Your Choice* teaching units (available for download from the Electoral Commission website <http://www.elections.org.nz/resources-learning/school-resources>).

Links to *The New Zealand Curriculum*

Values

The values of students, whānau and community are expressed through thoughts and actions. In this resource, students will be supported to value:

- innovation, inquiry and curiosity, by thinking critically, creatively and reflectively on the issue of participation in society
- community and participation for the common good
- respect for themselves, others and human rights.

Key competencies

Students will be supported to develop the key competencies of:

- thinking, by considering different viewpoints people have and deciding what they think about the topic themselves
- relating to others, by listening to and understanding other people's points of view
- participating and contributing, by evaluating the issues and understanding the importance of participation in the electoral process.

Achievement objectives

This resource supports the following level 4 achievement objectives from the social sciences learning area. Students will:

- understand how the ways in which leadership of groups is acquired and exercised can have consequences for communities and societies
- understand how formal and informal groups make decisions that impact on communities
- understand how people participate individually and collectively in response to community challenges.

Social inquiry

This resource is based on a social inquiry approach. Social inquiry is a process for examining social issues, ideas and themes.

During a social inquiry, students:

- ask questions and find out information
- explore and analyse people's values and perspectives
- consider the ways in which people make decisions and participate in social action
- reflect, evaluate and communicate what they have learned.

For further information on the social inquiry approach, see *Approaches to Social Inquiry* (Ministry of Education, 2008). This can be downloaded from <http://ssol.tki.org.nz>

Conceptual understandings

Students will understand that:

- people's beliefs and values towards certain issues in society can be different
- laws in society can be changed by people who work collectively to bring about change
- when you gain a right, it usually has an associated responsibility, for example, gaining the right to vote also brings the responsibility of participating in the voting process
- democracy is an inclusive process in that it gives the people a say in who makes the rules of a country.

Getting started

To assess students' existing conceptual understanding and knowledge about Votes for Women, select one or more of the following starter activities:

Facilitate a class discussion about Votes for Women.

ASK Why are we celebrating? What are we celebrating?

1. Introduce the concept of suffrage and explain that it means the right to vote. Ask the students to share what they know about the New Zealand suffragist movement.
2. New Zealand women were the first women in the world to get the right to vote.

ASK What does that mean to us today?

3. Hand out Graphic organiser A. Have students look at the images on the front of the ten dollar note.

ASK Who is the person commemorated on this note? What do you know about her? Why is she a part of New Zealand history?

SAY The New Zealand ten dollar note also has an image of three flowers – what are they and what do they signify?

4. Read the following statement to your students:

In 1918, the *White Ribbon* editor, Nelly Perryman, wrote 'We, the mothers of the present, need to impress upon our children's minds how women of the past wrestled and fought, suffered and wept, prayed and believed, agonised and won for them the freedom they enjoy today'.

ASK What was she writing about?

Learning experiences

Choose the most appropriate learning experiences for your students from the activities below. You are encouraged to adapt the learning experiences to suit the specific needs of your students.

1. Finding out information: Timeline

Facilitate a class discussion.

ASK When did women in New Zealand gain the right to vote? Do women in every country have the right to vote? If New Zealand women were the first in the world to gain the right to vote, when did women in other countries gain this right?

Have students read Factsheet A and the world suffrage timeline information on <http://www.nzhistory.net.nz/politics/womens-suffrage/world-suffrage-timeline>

Using the information, have students pin or stick small date labels on a map of the world to show when each country or region granted women the right to vote.

2. Finding out information: How New Zealand democracy works

ASK What do you know about how the New Zealand democratic system works? Have students share their knowledge.

ASK Do you think the system was the same in the 1890s when New Zealand women gained the right to vote? Have students read Factsheet B. Discuss how the system has changed. List the changes on a chart.

ASK Do you think the system was better then or now? Have students explain their opinions.

3. Participating in society: Role play – voting

To have your students experience exclusion, separate the class into two groups. Number the groups 1 and 2. Tell them that they are going to vote on something that is important to the class, such as choosing between two art or sport activities or choosing between two DVDs the class can watch. Give students time to decide how they will vote. Then tell them that only the students in group 1 can vote on the issue. Have the group 1 students vote and declare that the majority vote ‘wins’.

ASK How fair is that to the members of group 2? How did the group 2 students feel about being excluded from the decision?

ASK Is it a sensible idea to exclude some people when the decision affects everyone? Explain that in the 1890s, women felt that they were being excluded from decision-making. They felt that it was unfair and unjust that they did not have the right to vote for their representatives and on issues that affected everyone.

Repeat the activity allowing everyone to vote. Did the outcome change? Explain that when women got the vote, they could influence the outcome of elections.

4. Finding out information: The white camellia

The white camellia became the symbol of the New Zealand women’s suffrage movement. Give students Factsheet D and Graphic organiser B. Have students read the background information before making the camellia. Discuss why they think the camellia was chosen.

Note: If students will be participating in the debate (activity 5) some students will need to colour the layers red before constructing the flower.

5. Exploring values and how people participated in the past: Debate

Have students explore the different opinions of the leaders and participants in the suffrage debate. What were the arguments for and against women getting the vote? Use www.nzhistory.net.nz and www.teara.govt.nz for background information on the arguments and issues in the 1890s. Organise the class into two teams to debate the topic: 'Women should have the right to vote'. Remember to have students wear the camellia during the debate – white in support and red against.

You may prefer to debate a contemporary topic about the right to participate such as: 'Sixteen- and seventeen-year-olds should be able to vote'.

6. Exploring how people participated in the past: Petitions

ASK What is a petition? How does it bring about change? What was the process in 1893? Investigate the suffrage petition of 1893 (see Factsheet A).

ASK Is this how we would gather signatures for a petition today?

Discuss how online/social media petitions work. Use Graphic Organiser C to make a comparison between the 1893 suffrage petition and modern-day online/social media petitions.

Note: To find out if their family were part of this historic event, students can search the petition online at <https://nzhistory.govt.nz>

7. Exploring how people participate now: Referenda

ASK In democracy today, a petition is still the mechanism that voters can use to force an issue onto Parliament. This can result in a Citizens Initiated Referendum, where the voters can have their say on an issue that affects their community.

Have students investigate the referenda process and recent New Zealand Citizens Initiated Referenda and Government Initiated Referenda. They will find information at:

- <http://www.elections.org.nz/voting-system/referenda>
- <http://www.justice.govt.nz>

ASK What are the benefits/disadvantages of a referendum?

8. Finding out information: Women in Parliament

SAY Women gained the right to vote in 1893 but were not eligible to stand for Parliament until 1919. Elizabeth McCombs, the first female Member of Parliament, was elected in 1933. The first Māori woman to win a seat in Parliament was Iriaka Rātana in 1949.

Display the graph of women in Parliament <https://teara.govt.nz>

Facilitate a class discussion on why they think the number of women in Parliament remained low until the 1990s.

9. Finding out information: Women in politics

Have students research and write profiles on prominent women in the suffrage movement (such as Kate Sheppard, Helen Nicol, Amey Daldy, Ada Wells, Harriet Morison and Meri Te Tai Mangakahia) and recent high-profile women in New Zealand government (such as Dame Catherine Tizard, Dame Silvia Cartwright, Dame Sian Elias, Helen Clark, Dame Jenny Shipley and Whetu Tirikatene-Sullivan).

10. Finding out information: Māori women and the vote

SAY In the nineteenth century, Māori women were involved in two suffrage movements: the right of women to vote, and the right of Māori women to vote and stand as members of the Te Kotahitanga (Māori Parliament). A leader in the successful fight for these rights was Meri Te Tai Mangakahia.

Have students research the political voice of Māori women. Discuss how Māori are represented in the electoral system today.

11. Exploring values and decision-making: How can you participate?

We live in a democracy in which everyone over the age of 18 can take part in the election process.

ASK How do you know when you are eligible to vote? How do you enrol to vote? Visit <http://www.elections.org.nz/voters/get-ready-enrol-and-vote/enrol-and-vote-first-time> to read and discuss the information with your students.

ASK What can you do if you are too young to vote? How can you participate? To explore how students can participate, go to Section 10 of the *Your Voice, Your Choice* resource: 'How can young people participate in Government?' available from <http://www.elections.org.nz/resources-learning/school-resources>

12. Exploring values: Equity for all

New Zealand was the first country in the world to give adult women the right to vote. We have legislation that ensures equity and equality for all New Zealanders (such as equal pay rates and employment opportunities). Have students use Factsheet C to help them investigate the New Zealand legislation. Facilitate a class discussion on how this is different from other parts of the world.

13. Communicating learning: Student writing

Have students write, or create a graphic presentation, about their understanding of the suffrage movement or participation and engagement in the democratic process from 1893 to now. Encourage students to use images from the 'Women and the Vote Media Gallery' at https://nzhistory.govt.nz/media_gallery/tid/66 to illustrate their presentations.

Reflection on learning

Have students reflect on what they've learned about the importance of having a voice in decision-making.

- How do people have a say in decision-making in our democratic society?
- In what ways can you voice your opinions to decision-makers when you are not yet eligible to vote?
- What are the possible consequences of non-participation in the election process?

Resource links

Camellias and Kate and Rare Breeds

<http://silkanthreads.wordpress.com/tag/womens-suffrage/>

Citizens Initiated Referenda Act 1993

<http://www.legislation.govt.nz/>

Constitution Act 1986

<http://www.legislation.govt.nz/>

Electoral Commission: Votes for women

<http://www.elections.org.nz/votes-women>

Human Rights Act 1993

<http://www.legislation.govt.nz/>

Human Rights Commission: Human rights environment

<http://www.hrc.co.nz/>

Ministry of Women's Affairs: Māori women and the vote

<http://mwa.govt.nz/m%C4%81ori-women-and-vote>

New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990

<http://www.legislation.govt.nz/>

New Zealand History Online:

- **New Zealand women and the vote**
<http://www.nzhistory.net.nz/politics/womens-suffrage>
- **Women and the vote media gallery**
http://www.nzhistory.net.nz/media_gallery/tid/66
- **Women's suffrage petition**
<http://www.nzhistory.net.nz/politics/womens-suffrage/petition>

New Zealand Parliament

<https://www.parliament.nz/en/footer/about-us/>

Reserve Bank of New Zealand: Explaining New Zealand's currency (Information on ten dollar note)

<http://www.rbnz.govt.nz/>

Te Ara:

- **Voting rights**
<http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/voting-rights/page-4>
- **Ngā Māngai – Māori representation**
<http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/nga-mangai-maori-representation>

National Library of New Zealand: Women's Suffrage Petition

<https://natlib.govt.nz/he-tohu/about/womens-suffrage-petition>

FACTSHEET A

The New Zealand women's suffrage movement

- In nineteenth-century New Zealand, women were excluded from voting and politics, along with men under the age of 21, lunatics and criminals.
- Women were expected to look after the home and raise children while men worked.
- In the late nineteenth century, a group of women decided to fight for more opportunities for women and equal political rights, including the right to vote (suffrage).
- This campaign was called the 'suffrage movement' and the campaigners were called 'suffragists'.
- At first, the suffragists were motivated by family welfare. If they could vote, they could influence social reforms, such as the movement against alcohol (the temperance movement).
- As the campaign went on, equality and inclusion were motivation enough.
- The suffrage movement was led by Kate Sheppard, who was one of the founders of the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU).
- Kate Sheppard campaigned by travelling around New Zealand and rallying supporters. She wrote to newspapers, handed out pamphlets, held public meetings and lobbied (tried to influence) members of the House of Representatives.
- There was a lot of opposition to the movement. Opponents thought that families would be abandoned and the economy would be destroyed.
- In 1891, the suffragists presented a petition signed by 9,000 women to Parliament. A petition is a formal written request or appeal to authority signed by several people.
- As a result, the Female Suffrage Bill was passed by the House of Representatives (lower house), but defeated by the Legislative Council (the upper house).
- In 1892, the suffragists presented a much bigger petition, with 20,000 signatures, but the same thing happened.
- In 1893, they tried again. This time, they had a 766-foot (233-metre) long petition with 31,872 signatures, almost one-quarter of the adult female population of New Zealand. It was so long that it had to be unrolled across the chamber floor. Provision for petitions to prompt Citizens Initiated Referenda was introduced in 1993.
- On 19 September 1893, the Electoral Act 1893 was signed into law by the Governor, Lord Glasgow. New Zealand became the first country in the world to grant women the right to vote.
- Sixty-five per cent of women in New Zealand voted in the 1893 general election. This included approximately 4,000 Māori women.
- The New Zealand suffrage movement inspired suffrage movements all over the world.
- Kate Sheppard and others continued to campaign for women's rights, including freedom from having to wear corsets. She became president of the National Council of Women of New Zealand and editor of *The White Ribbon*, the first New Zealand newspaper to be owned and operated solely by women.
- In 1909, Kate Sheppard was elected honorary vice-president of the International Council of Women. She died on 13 July 1934.

- Kate Sheppard is on the New Zealand ten dollar note to commemorate her contribution to New Zealand's history. The note also features white camellia flowers – a symbol of the fight for women's suffrage. In 1893, white camellias were given to members of the House of Representatives who supported the suffrage bill.
- Even though they could vote, women could not stand for Parliament until 1919.
- The first female Member of Parliament (MP), Labour's Elizabeth McCombs, entered Parliament in 1933.
- Labour MP Mabel Howard became New Zealand's first female Cabinet Minister in 1947.
- In 1949, Labour's Iriaka Rātana became the first female Māori MP, succeeding her deceased husband, Matiu, in the Western Māori seat.
- In 1972, Whetu Tirikatene-Sullivan, Labour MP for Southern Māori, became the first female Māori Cabinet Minister.
- At the first election held under New Zealand's new Mixed Member Proportional (MMP) system in 1996, 35 female MPs were elected, making up almost thirty per cent of Parliament.
- Jenny Shipley became New Zealand's first female Prime Minister in 1997, after replacing Jim Bolger as leader of the National Party.
- In November 1999, Labour's Helen Clark became New Zealand's first elected female Prime Minister. She was Prime Minister for nine years, becoming New Zealand's fifth longest-serving Prime Minister.
- In October 2017, Jacinda Ardern, leader of the Labour Party, became the third female Prime Minister of New Zealand. In June 2018, Jacinda Ardern was the second head of government to give birth while in office. The first was the Prime Minister of Pakistan Benazir Bhutto in 1990.

Sources

<http://www.elections.org.nz/votes-women>

<http://www.elections.org.nz/votes-women/movement-emerges>

<http://www.nzhistory.net.nz/politics/parliaments-people/women-mps>

<http://www.nzhistory.net.nz/politics/womens-suffrage>

<http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/biographies/2s20/sheppard-katherine-wilson>

<http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/voting-rights/page-4>



Kate Sheppard photographed in 1905

FACTSHEET B

History of the New Zealand democratic system

Since 1854, New Zealand has had some form of elected government that makes laws and represents New Zealanders. Very few countries have such a long and uninterrupted history of democracy.

1840 On 6 February 1840, Māori chiefs sign the Treaty of Waitangi which gives the British sovereignty (supreme power) over New Zealand. New Zealand becomes a dependency of New South Wales, Australia – a British Crown Colony.

1841 New Zealand becomes a separate Crown Colony and is no longer connected with New South Wales.

1842 New Zealand is divided into two provinces (New Ulster and New Munster).

1852 New Zealand settlers want an elected or representative government, instead of being ruled by the Crown. A system of representative government for New Zealand is established under the New Zealand Constitution Act (UK). This system follows British parliamentary tradition, known as the Westminster system, which includes regular elections, politicians representing local constituencies, a Speaker, rules of procedure and a Prime Minister wielding power through a Cabinet (the executive). Political parties compete for power, attained by a simple majority in the House.

A national General Assembly is established, made up of a Governor (representing the Crown), Legislative Council (upper house) and House of Representatives (lower house). The Legislative Council is appointed by the Governor, and the House of Representatives is elected every five years by men aged 21 and over who own or occupy a property of certain value.

Six (eventually ten) provinces are created, with elected superintendents and councils.

1853 The first elections of the House of Representatives are held. Thirty-seven members are elected under the First Past the Post (FPP) system.

1854 The first General Assembly meets in Auckland, the capital city at the time and home to Parliament.

1856 Henry Sevell becomes the country's first Premier and forms the first 'Responsible' government – a system with an executive that needs the support of a majority of the members of the House of Representatives. The Governor retains responsibility for defence and Māori affairs.

1858 Waikato chief Pōtatau Te Wherowhero is named the first Māori king. Kingitanga, the Māori King Movement, was a direct challenge to the Crown. Kingitanga's aims were to unite tribes under a single Māori king and to unite them against selling land to Pākehā.

1864 Colonial government asserts its responsibility over Māori affairs.

1865 Parliament moves to Wellington, which is now the capital city.

1867 Māori are given four parliamentary seats and all Māori males over the age of 21 are allowed to vote.

1868 The first Māori elections are held.

1870 The method of voting changes from verbal voting to secret ballot.

1876 The provinces are abolished. A central government is now the single legislative authority. Hundreds of local government bodies are created in towns and areas throughout the country.

1879	All males over the age of 21 are granted the right to vote (previously they had to own or rent property of a certain value).
1893	Women are granted the right to vote. New Zealand becomes the world's first true democracy.
1907	New Zealand ceases being a colony and becomes a dominion – a self-governing territory of the British Commonwealth. The Premier is replaced by a Prime Minister and members of the House of Representatives are replaced by Members of Parliament (MPs).
1919	Women are able to stand for Parliament.
1933	The first female MP is elected to Parliament.
1950	An act is passed to abolish the Upper House of Parliament, the Legislative Council.
1969	The voting age is lowered to 20.
1974	The voting age is lowered to 18.
1993	New Zealand's voting system changes from FPP to Mixed Member Proportional representation (MMP), bringing 120 MPs and more parties into the house and changing the style of politics and parliament.
1993	The Citizens Initiated Referenda Act becomes law, allowing citizens to start a petition that can lead to a referendum.
1996	First MMP election held.
2004	The Supreme Court Act 2003 establishes a New Zealand-based court of final appeal, the Supreme Court.
2011	MMP is confirmed as New Zealand's voting system in a referendum held at the same time as the general election.

Sources

<https://www.parliament.nz/en/footer/about-us/>

<http://www.parliament.nz/en-nz/features/OONZPHomeNews150920091/international-day-of-democracy>

<http://www.nzhistory.net.nz/politics/history-of-parliament/quick-history>

<http://www.nzhistory.net.nz/politics/milestones>

<http://www.nzhistory.net.nz/politics/history-of-parliament/useful-terms>

<http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/history>

<http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/colonial-and-provincial-government>

<http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/constitution/page-7>

FACTSHEET C

New Zealand legislation on equity and equality

New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990

The New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990 affirms a range of civil and political rights and freedoms for people in New Zealand, including:

- the right not to be deprived of life
- the right not to be subjected to torture or cruel treatment
- electoral rights
- freedom of thought, conscience and religion
- freedom of expression
- freedom of peaceful assembly
- freedom of movement
- freedom from discrimination
- freedom from unreasonable search and seizure
- the right not to be arbitrarily arrested or detained
- the rights of people who are arrested or detained
- minimum standards of criminal procedure
- the right to justice.

It does not deal with other human rights, such as:

- the right to food
- the right to adequate housing
- the right to education.

The New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990 is separate from the Human Rights Act 1993.

Sources

<https://www.justice.govt.nz/justice-sector-policy/constitutional-issues-and-human-rights/>

<http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1990/0109/latest/DLM224792.html>

Human Rights Act 1993

The Human Rights Act 1993 protects people in New Zealand from discrimination based on certain personal characteristics, including:

- sex, including pregnancy
- marital status, including being in a civil union
- religious and ethical beliefs
- colour, race, ethnic or national origins
- disability
- age
- political opinion
- employment status
- family status
- sexual orientation.

The Act states that it is unlawful to discriminate in a number of areas of public life, including:

- government or public sector activities
- employment
- access to education
- access to public places, vehicles and facilities
- provision of goods and services
- provision of land, housing and accommodation
- industrial and professional associations, qualifying bodies and vocational training bodies
- partnerships.

Sources

<https://www.justice.govt.nz/justice-sector-policy/constitutional-issues-and-human-rights/>

<http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1993/0082/latest/DLM304212.html>

The Human Rights Commission

The Human Rights Commission was created in 1977 to provide better protection for human rights in New Zealand. The Human Rights Act 1993 sets out the primary functions of the Commission:

1. to advocate and promote respect for human rights in New Zealand society

2. to encourage the maintenance and development of harmonious relations between individuals and among diverse groups in New Zealand society.

In order to carry out these functions, the Commission also has other functions such as:

- inquiring into breaches of human rights
- making public statements on human rights and race relations
- conducting human rights programmes, activities and education
- publishing guidelines and voluntary codes of practice
- resolving disputes relating to unlawful discrimination.

New Zealand is signed up to a number of international human rights agreements and belongs to the United Nations. On 26 June 1945, New Zealand was one of 51 countries to sign the United Nations charter in San Francisco, USA. Those countries declared: 'We, the peoples of the United Nations, are determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war'.

Sources

<http://www.nzhistory.net.nz/politics/new-zealand-and-the-united-nations>

<https://www.hrc.co.nz/about/>

<https://www.justice.govt.nz/justice-sector-policy/constitutional-issues-and-human-rights/>

FACTSHEET D

The white camellia

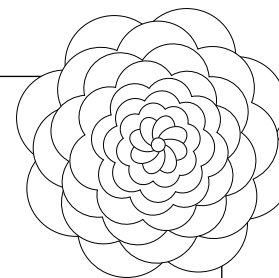
In 1893, the suffragists presented white camellias to the members of the House of Representatives who supported the Electoral Bill that brought in women's suffrage. The members wore the flowers in their buttonholes. The members who did not support the Bill wore a red camellia in their buttonhole.

A deputation from the Wellington Women's Franchise League waited on the Hon. R. Oliver yesterday, and presented a congratulatory address, also a basket of white camellias (20) for presentation to each Legislative Councillor who voted in favour of the Women's Franchise. Each camellia had attached the name of the gentleman for whom it was intended, and was tied with white ribbon.

The Evening Post, 13 September 1893, page 3

The white camellia (or *Camellia japonica alba plena*) became a symbol of New Zealand women's struggle for the right to vote. It features on the New Zealand ten dollar note alongside Kate Sheppard, the leader of the Suffrage Movement. In 1993, on the 100th anniversary of women's suffrage, a new variety of white camellia was created and named after Kate Sheppard. A memorial was also unveiled in Christchurch. Parliament celebrated the centenary by planting 'Kate Sheppard' camellia shrubs in Parliament's garden.

19 September is known as Suffrage Day or White Camellia Day. Every year on this day, Cantabrians place white camellias at the Kate Sheppard memorial.



Make a camellia

To make a white camellia (Graphic organiser B):

1. Cut out each of the petal layers and the small bud. If you are debating against the right of women to vote, colour the petal layers red before cutting them out, or cut your layers out of red paper.
2. Starting with the largest layer, glue the layers together in order of size. Use the centre mark as a guide for where to glue and place the petal layers.
3. Glue the small petal bud onto the middle of the top layer.
4. When the glue is dry, gently pull up each petal to curl the edges and raise the layers. This will give the flower a more natural look.
5. Use a loop of sellotape to attach the back of the camellia to your clothes.

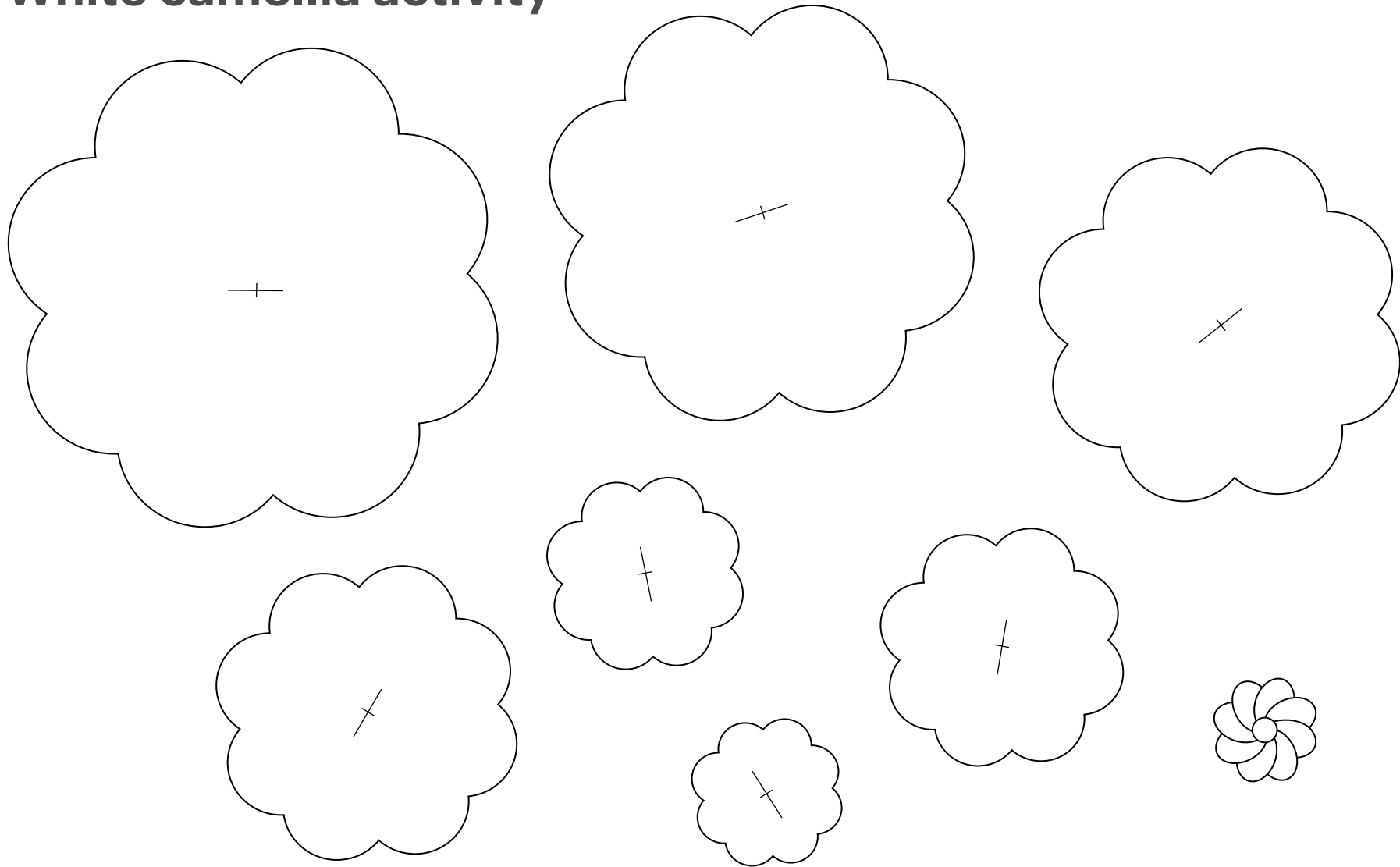
GRAPHIC ORGANISER A

New Zealand ten dollar note



GRAPHIC ORGANISER B

White camellia activity



GRAPHIC ORGANISER C

Petition – differences and similarities

1893

NOW

