

## | Unit 3: Elections: *A look into two different systems.*

### Objectives:

To define *Democracy*

To compare two different electoral systems.

To provide arguments to support the choice of a particular electoral system.

To talk about obligations and necessities.

### 1. Warm-up:



Image taken from: Freepik.com

- Do you think democracy is important? Why?
- Are all electoral systems the same? Can an electoral system impact democracy? How?

### 1.1 Watch the following video about democracy in Australia and answer the questions below:

- a. **Before watching:** Do you know these words or expressions? If you know them, write their meaning in the corresponding space. If you don't, look them up in a dictionary and write their meaning next to them as well.

To do something on somebody's behalf.	
Dissent	
March	



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Eu6G5YrBt4>

a. According to the video, who governs citizens in a democracy?

b. How are *politicians* defined in the video?

c. How many types of democracy are mentioned in the video? Name them.

d. What type of democracy do we have here in Chile? Why?

e. Finally, how would you define the concept of *democracy*? Write your definition here:

**2. Voting systems:** You are going to watch a video about four different voting systems countries have created to make decisions.

- a. Before watching:** Read the following extracts from the video. Do you know the meaning of the expressions in bold? Discuss with a partner and use the context to help you:
- "We are **holding a vote** to determine the location".
  - "The most **straightforward** solution".
  - "This voting system **accounts** for the **full range** of people's preferences".
  - "These votes **get allocated** to the voter's second choice".
  - "Voters can still **skew the results** in their favor".
  - "First, voters **rank** their preferences from 1 to 4".
  - "The top winners will proceed to an **instant runoff**".

Some sentences that can help you:

I think it means...

I'm not sure, but I guess it is...

It's probably...

It might be...

I have no idea. Do you know? Let's look it up.

- b.** With a partner, choose 3 of these expressions and write 3 sentences about the previous election/referendum in Chile

1.

2.

3.

Some words or expressions to remember before watching the video:

Ballot

To cast a ballot

North/West/East/South

Preference

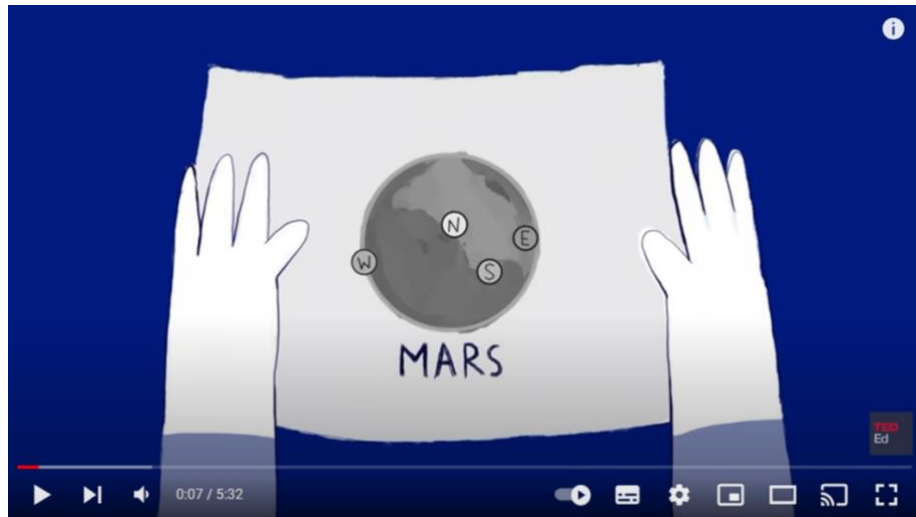
To vote

Base (N)/ To base (V)

To win

To matchup

- c. **First part:** Watch the first half of the video (2:15) and answer the following questions:



[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PaxVCsnox\\_4&ab\\_channel=TED-Ed](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PaxVCsnox_4&ab_channel=TED-Ed)

1. What are the people from the video trying to decide?

2. What is plurality voting? Why does the narrator say it is not fair?

3. What is **instant runoff voting** and why does the narrator say it is not fair?

- d. **Second part:** Now watch the second part of the video until minute 4:04 and answer the questions ([https://youtu.be/PaxVCsnox\\_4?t=135](https://youtu.be/PaxVCsnox_4?t=135)):

4. What is multiple rounds voting and why does the narrator say it is not fair?

5. What is Condorcet voting and why does the narrator say it is not fair?

6. Why does the speaker state that these voting systems are not always fair?

- e. **After watching:** In groups, choose two voting systems and compare them using your previous answers. Look at the example and the grammar box to help you.

**Grammar tip (Comparatives):**

When you compare two things, people, etc., remember that there are changes to the adjective:

- My classmates are **nicer than** yours
- Catalina's major is **more interesting than** mine.

**Irregular adjectives:**

Good	-	<b>better than</b>	-	the best
Bad	-	<b>worse than</b>	-	the worst

*E.g.: "Representative democracy is **more efficient than** direct democracy because the government saves time and money"*

Voting systems:

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.

**f. After watching the video:** In your opinion, which of the four voting systems does Chile have? Give two reasons to support your choice.

g. From your perspective, could Chile benefit from the other voting systems? In what contexts/situations could we use these different systems? Talk to a partner and give reasons to support your choice.

Write down some notes with your opinions

#### Language resources:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expressing opinion:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ I (don't) think...</li> <li>○ I (strongly) believe...</li> <li>○ I'm not sure, but...</li> <li>○ In my opinion...</li> <li>○ From my point of view...</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Useful connectors:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Because...</li> <li>○ However...</li> <li>○ On the one hand.../On the other hand...</li> <li>○ Due to...</li> <li>○ Although...</li> <li>○ In spite of...</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |
|--|---|

**3. Read the following text titled: *From voter registration to mail-in ballots, how do countries around the world run their elections?***

**a. Before reading:**

1. What is the meaning of “run” in this case?
2. Discuss with a classmate: Do you identify yourself or someone from your family with any of the following quotes? Why?



Image taken from: Freepik.com

*“I never voted for anybody. I always voted against”*

— W.C Fields

*Further discussion: Do you think this is a common feeling in other countries? How so?*

*“The best argument against democracy is a five-minute conversation with the average voter.”*

— Winston S. Churchill

*Further discussion: Do you think voters in other countries are as informed as in Chile? Why?*

3. The text you are going to read is divided into 5 subsections. Based on the title of each subsection and what we have learned in this unit, create a list of words and concepts that you think may appear in each of them.

**A. *More than half of all countries and territories have compulsory voter registration.***

**B. *The vast majority of countries and territories have a minimum voting age of 18 for national elections.***

- C. Before the coronavirus outbreak, about a quarter of countries had used postal ballots in their national elections.*

- D. Paper ballots are by far the most common form of voting.*

- E. Most countries and territories allow voters abroad to cast ballots in some capacity.*

Based on the subsections and what we have learned in this unit, create a list of words you think that may appear in each part of the text

**b. Reading:**

## **From voter registration to mail-in ballots, how do countries around the world run their elections?**

BY SHANNON SCHUMACHER AND AIDAN CONNAUGHTON

**The 2020 U.S. presidential election was run in the middle of a pandemic** and public uncertainty over some aspects of the voting process itself. Here's a look at how **elections are run** in the United States and other countries around the world. **All findings are based on a Pew Research Center analysis** of data from the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, the ACE Electoral Knowledge Network and the Electoral Integrity Project.



## 1. More than half of all countries and territories have compulsory voter registration.



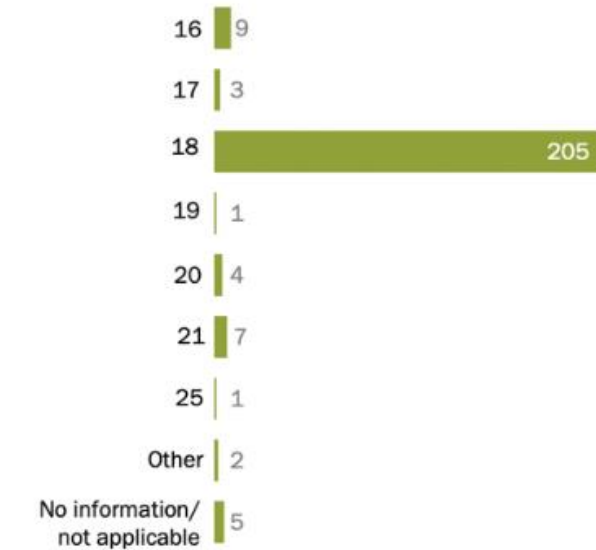
Though the exact policy varies from one place to another, 122 of the 226 countries and territories in the ACE Electoral Knowledge Network have some form of compulsory voter registration. In Argentina, Chile, Hungary, Israel, the Netherlands and elsewhere, such registration is automatic, based on government records such as census counts. In other cases, **qualified residents are required to register themselves**. Failing to register is punishable by a fine in some places, including New Zealand, Tonga and the United Kingdom.

Another 90 countries and territories have no laws requiring all qualified residents to register to vote, though **registration may be required in order to vote**. In India – the world’s *largest* democracy – and Mongolia, voter rolls are compiled automatically through census data collection, though registration is not compulsory. In Austria, voter registration and voting itself were compulsory in at least one province until 2004; today, there is no requirement to register or to vote in Austrian elections. There is no compulsory voter registration in the U.S., though registration is necessary in order to vote in nearly all states and U.S. territories (North Dakota does not have voter registration).

## 2. The vast majority of countries and territories have a minimum voting age of 18 for national elections.

### Minimum voting age is 18 in most countries and territories

Number of countries and territories where the minimum voting age in national elections is \_\_\_ years old



Note: Data available for 237 countries and territories.  
Source: ACE Electoral Knowledge Network database. Accessed October 2020.

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The U.S. aligns with most other places in this respect. Out of 237 countries and territories for which the ACE Electoral Knowledge Network has data, 205 have a minimum voting age of 18. Just 12 countries or territories allow people *younger than* 18 to vote in national elections.

Worldwide, *the lowest* minimum voting age for national elections is 16, including in Argentina, Austria and Brazil. *The highest* is in the United Arab Emirates, where citizens **must** be 25. In Italy, there is a split voting age: The minimum voting age for the lower house of Parliament is 18 years old, while voters **must** be 25 to vote in Senate elections.

### 3. Before the coronavirus outbreak, about a quarter of countries had used postal ballots in their national elections.

Out of 166 countries for which data is available, 40 used postal ballots in their most recent national election, according to country experts surveyed before the COVID-19 outbreak by the Electoral Integrity Project. **Postal ballots were used most widely in Europe and North America** and are also common in some countries in the Asia-Pacific region, such as India, Indonesia, South Korea and Sri Lanka. Postal ballots were not available in most African and Caribbean countries, and not available in any Middle Eastern or Latin American countries.

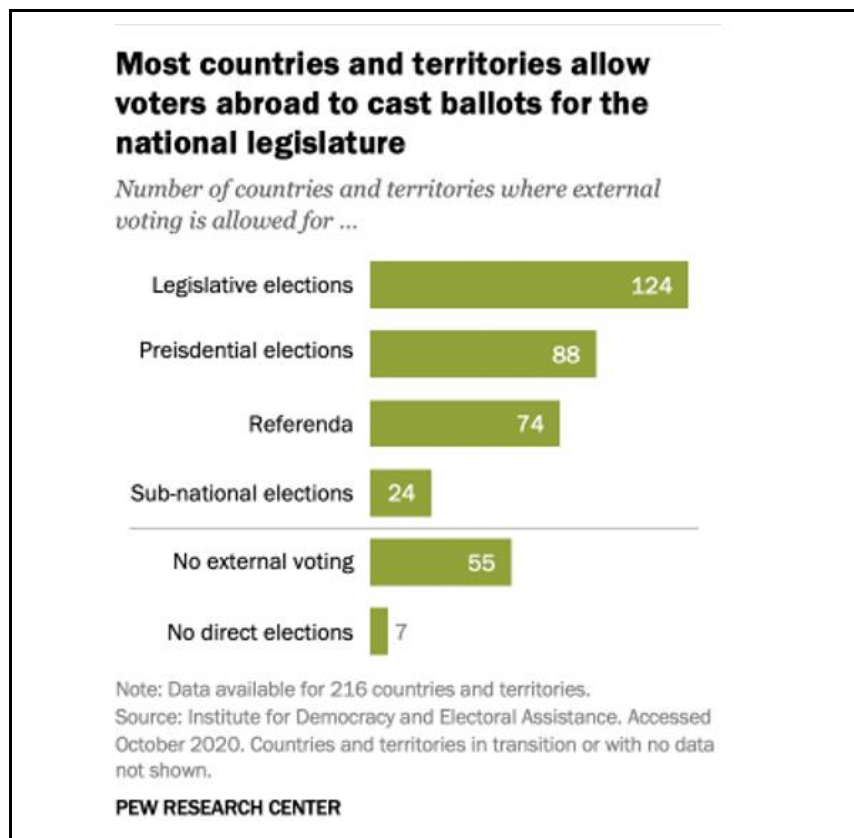
#### 4. Paper ballots are by far the most common form of voting.

**Votes are cast by manually marking ballots** in 209 of the 227 countries and territories for which the ACE Electoral Knowledge Network has data. In some places, voters make their selection by placing a symbol – such as an X, cross or checkmark – on a paper ballot that contains the entire list of candidates and/or parties. In a few countries, including Israel and Mali, voters select a ballot for a particular political party, put the ballot in an envelope and then deposit the envelope in a ballot box.

Some countries use a mix of methods. In addition to paper ballots, **electronic voting machines are used in about 10% of the countries and territories for which data is available. Electronic voting machines are used in some large countries**, such as India and the U.S., as well as in *smaller* ones like Singapore.

**Voting by internet is used in four countries:** Armenia, Canada, Estonia and Switzerland. In Gambia, meanwhile, *the most recent* presidential election relied on a system of placing marbles into drums. The system was established in the 1960s to address high levels of illiteracy.

#### 5. Most countries and territories allow voters abroad to cast ballots in some capacity.



That's the case in the U.S. and another 151 of the 216 countries and territories evaluated by the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, at least for national

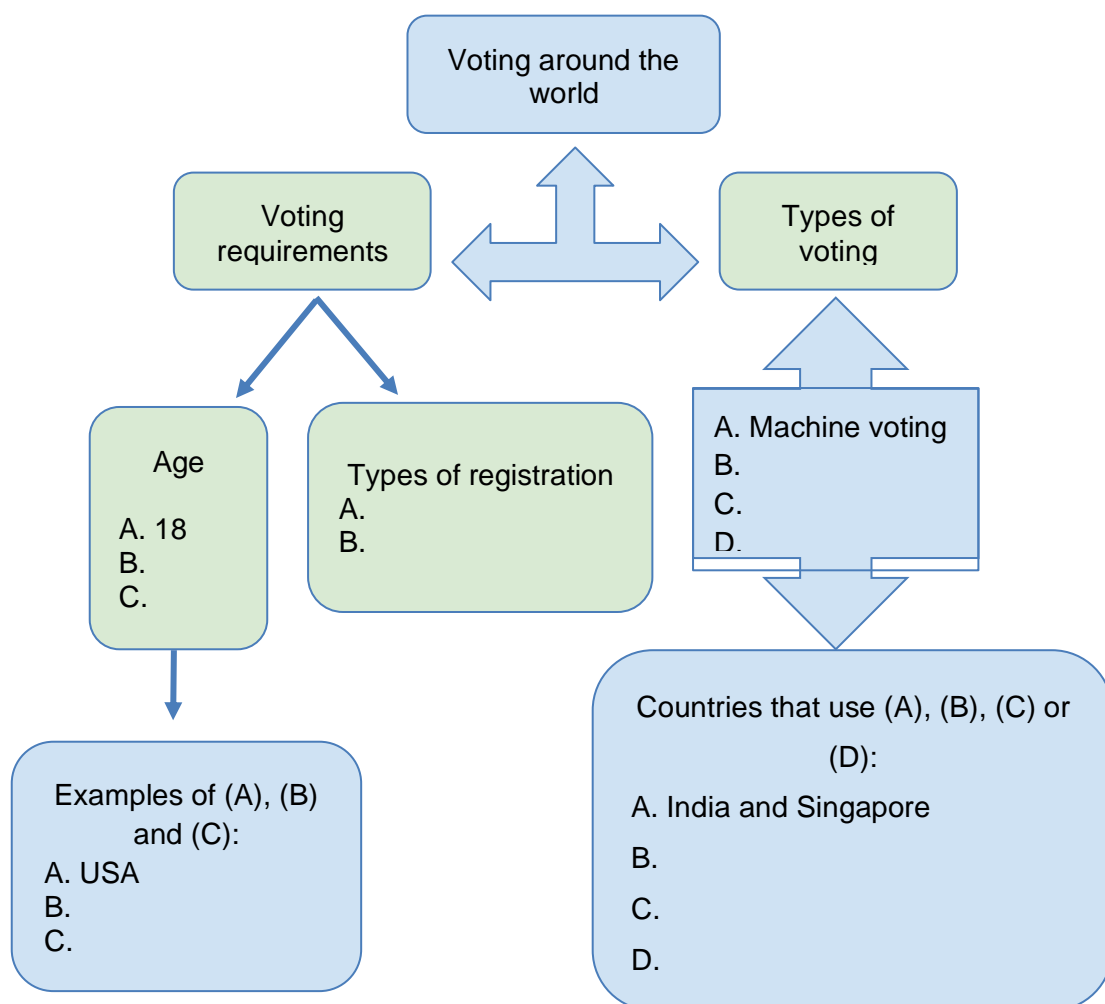
legislative, European Parliament or presidential elections. Among those, many allow external voting for legislative elections (124), presidential elections (88) or referenda (74), and just 24 allow it for sub-national elections.

Nearly every country in Europe provides for some form of external voting, and many allow citizens to vote from abroad for multiple types of elections. Most European Union countries (23 of 27) also allow citizens abroad to vote in European Parliamentary elections.

Around the world, 55 countries and territories do not allow any voting from abroad. Many of these countries are located in Latin America, sub-Saharan Africa and the Asia-Pacific region.

Taken and modified from: <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/10/30/from-voter-registration-to-mail-in-ballots-how-do-countries-around-the-world-run-their-elections/>

c. Complete the following diagram with the information presented in the text. Then, compare your answers with your partner:



d. Look at **subsection 1** and answer the questions in full sentences. Use the modal verbs we learned in the previous unit when needed:

*E.g. In Chile voting is not mandatory.*

*E.g. In Chile citizens **do not need to** register because it's automatic.*

1. The text mentions that there are countries where registration is compulsory and others in which it is voluntary. Mention countries where registration is compulsory.

- a.
- b.
- c.

2. Mention countries in which citizens *need to* / *don't need to* register.

- a.
- b.
- c.

e. Look at **subsection 2**: which are the countries with the lowest and highest voting age? Remember to answer in full sentences.

- a.
- b.

- f. Look at **subsection 4**: Why do you think these voting systems are used? Justify your answer and use the grammar box (passive voice) to help you:

E.g.: *Postal ballots **were used** most widely in Europe and North America **because of** the COVID-19 pandemic.*

We use *passive voice* when:

We don't know or we don't want to say **who** did something

E.g.: *The election **was manipulated**.*

When we are interested in **what** happens but not in **who** was responsible for it.

E.g.: *The concept of democracy **was defined** in ancient Greece.*

- In your opinion, why is each voting system used? Give at least one reason per system to support your answer.

a. Internet voting:

b. Machine voting:

c. Paper voting:

- The text mentions 3 forms of voting: internet, machine and paper voting. Where is each voting system used? Remember to answer in full sentences.

a.

b.

c.

g. Read the following extract from the text and discuss with a partner:

*Around the world, 55 countries and territories do not allow any voting from abroad. Many of these countries are located in Latin America, sub-Saharan Africa and the Asia-Pacific region.*

- In your opinion, why don't these countries allow external voting?

h. Compare voting systems: work with a partner and find similarities and differences among these voting systems. Please, include reasons to support your ideas.

Make 3 comparisons per topic using vocabulary from the box (15 sentences in total). Remember to use both **comparatives** and **superlatives**. Look at the example below to help you:

*E.g.: Compulsory voting is **better than** voluntary voting **because** the result is more representative*

*E.g.: Electronic voting machines are **the least common** voting system in the world **because** only 10% countries use them.*

Vocabulary box:

*common - effective - efficient - fair - fast - important - old - reliable - safe - slow - young*

**Irregular adjectives:**

Good	-	Better than	-	<b>the best</b>
Bad	-	Worse than	-	<b>the worst</b>

**Grammar tip (superlatives):**

When you compare more than two elements, remember that there are changes to the adjective:

Comparison between two elements:

- Catalina's major is **more interesting** than mine.

Comparison among several elements:

- Javier is **the nicest** person in the class.
- Public administration is **the most interesting** program in UChile. Isn't it?



Compulsory vs voluntary voting

a.

b.

c.





Voting vs external voting

a.

b.

c.



 <p>Electronic vs paper ballots</p>	<p>a.</p> <p>b.</p> <p>c.</p>
 <p>Over 18 vs under 18 voting</p>	<p>a.</p> <p>b.</p> <p>c.</p>

**Discussion:** discuss the following question with a partner:

- In your opinion, can Chile benefit from any of the voting systems described in the reading? Which ones and how so? Justify your answer.

Language resources:

Expressing opinion:

think... I (don't)

(strongly) believe... I

perspective... From my

opinion... In my

point of view... From my

Useful connectors:

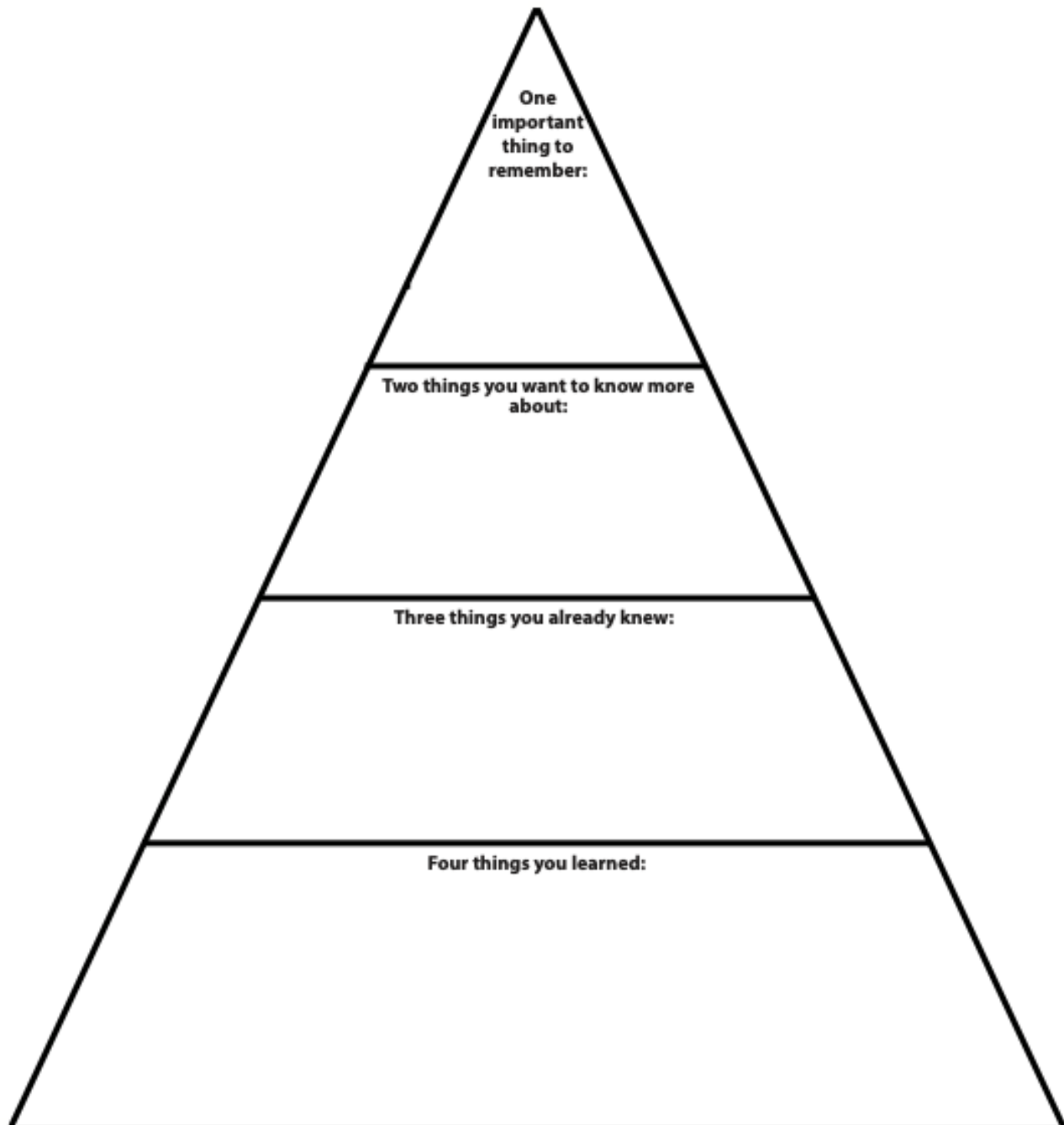
Because...

However

a.

**Self-evaluation:**

Complete the following reflection pyramid:



Taken from: [https://prod-media.coolaustralia.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/27144937/SRF\\_ReflectionPyramid.pdf](https://prod-media.coolaustralia.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/27144937/SRF_ReflectionPyramid.pdf)