

# JOAN KIRNER

---

**Class grouping:**

whole class and four groups

**Time:**

60–90 minutes

**Purpose:**

The purpose of this activity is to introduce students to the context of Joan Kirner's life as a political activist for gender equality and the environment, and as Victoria's first female Premier. Born in Essendon, Joan began her career as a teacher, participating in educational boards before moving into politics. Students should be familiarised with Joan's achievements prior to visiting the *Her Place* exhibition. Specifically, students will collate information and discuss Joan's ongoing legacy in Victoria and Australia.

The activities in this resource work well if you are able to access to YouTube in the classroom. After watching initial videos (encouraged but not necessary), the class should be divided into four groups with either laptops or exercise books to take notes. This resource is inquiry based and provides students with leading questions for discovery and discussion.

**Activities:**

- 1. Watch YouTube clips**
- 2. Group reading and note-taking**
- 3. Class sharing**
- 4. Discovery and discussion questions**

**Preparation and Materials:**

Print copies of the four readings – one set of readings per group. Try to organise internet access to YouTube. If unfamiliar, look up the polka-dot dress, EMILY's List and Landcare prior to the session.

## Procedure:

---

### Activity 1

Watch the following videos as a class. Have a short discussion about the kind of woman Joan Kirner might have been.

- Reflection of Joan Kirner:  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DO6NNgSJw\\_M](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DO6NNgSJw_M)
  - Joan Kirner – I love rock n roll: /  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XGyD2hn7d3Y> (Lateline)
  - Joan Kirner and Lady Gaga:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ITH5INMioMg>
- 

### Activity 2

Divide the class into four equal groups. You might like to sit them around tables, or push the tables aside and have them make circles on the floor with their chairs.

Each group receives a set of one of the articles. Students take turns reading their article aloud to their group. Together, the students decide upon and write down 10-15 facts from their article in their workbooks.

- Victoria's first female premier Joan Kirner dies aged 76  
By Aisha Dow  
<http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/victorias-first-female-premier-joan-kirner-dies-aged-76-20150601-ghefxh.html>
- Joan Kirner dies: the former premier remembered  
By Shane Green  
<http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/joan-kirner-dies-the-former-premier-remembered-20150601-ghefj2.html>
- Joan Kirner, a pioneering leader for the Left as well as women  
By Geoffrey Robinson  
<http://theconversation.com/joan-kirner-a-pioneering-leader-for-the-left-as-well-as-women-42639>
- Joan Kirner obituary: the woman premier who represented many firsts  
By Jennifer Curtin  
<http://www.smh.com.au/comment/obituaries/joan-kirner-obituary-the-woman-premier-who-represented-many-firsts-20150601-ghe9nh.html>

---

## Activity 3

Whole class activity: Each group nominates a speaker to briefly describe to the rest of the class what their article was about. The speaker then shares their group's facts with the rest of the class.

---

## Activity 4

Questions for group discussion (you may like students to answer these questions in their books, following discussion):

1. What was the polka-dot dress and why was it so offensive? HINT: Julia Gillard would, on occasion, wear a polka-dot dress in public (Why would she do this?!)
2. What is EMILY's List and what good has it done for women in politics? You may like to look this up as a class.
3. What do you think Landcare is? Have you heard of it before? If not, look it up as a class.

