

SECTION B**Instructions for Section B**

Examine the representation and answer the following questions.

Social disadvantage and Aboriginal health

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They entered the world in the same week – and their parents hope and dream each will have a long and happy life.

But the truth is that these two healthy infant boys, born two days apart in Alice Springs hospital, are already divided by the colour of their skin.

While each can assume better living standards than their parents' generation, little Lachlan Williams can expect to live to 77 years of age. Thane Sampson, the official statistics say, will be lucky to celebrate his 60th birthday.

Despite the approach of the 40th anniversary of the referendum that began the reconciliation process, little has changed in the life expectancy of the

indigenous community. But there is a renewed political momentum to tackle the problems of indigenous disadvantage.

John Howard has asked all government departments to draw up reconciliation action plans for the anniversary of the May 27, 1967, referendum in which more than 90 per cent of voters said yes to the proposition that Aborigines be counted as citizens and the commonwealth be given the power to make laws for them . . .

Aboriginal leader Mick Dodson wants the nation to focus on the 17 years that separate the life expectancy of black and white Australia. "There should be one simple objective for Australia as

a nation," he said. "We should say that within 10 years we're going to halve the life-expectancy gap; and within 20 years we're going to try to achieve parity of outcomes in life expectancy." . . .

At present indigenous boys are twice as likely to die before their fifth birthday as non-indigenous boys, while the figure for indigenous girls is three times.

The typical indigenous male born today can expect to live to 59; the typical indigenous female should get to 65. For non-indigenous Australians, it's 77 years and 82 years respectively.

Productivity Commission chairman Gary Banks said there was no hard evidence

the life-expectancy gap had narrowed since the 1967 referendum, because there was no comparable data to cross-check.

But he is an optimist about the future because he says governments have begun using their economic brains as well as their social policy brains . . .

Mr Banks said "Most advances are occurring in the economic area. I think indigenous people are sharing in a buoyant economy over that period, but even in all of those areas like employment and participation . . . there is still a big gap between indigenous people and the rest of the community".

Adapted from:
The Australian,
5 May 2007

SECTION B – continued

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SECTION C**Instructions for Section C**

Examine the representation and answer the following questions.

Students reaching age of intent

Helen Westerman

Adapted from: *The Age*, 17 May 2007

CAMBERWELL High School student Ellen Coulter, 17, was so keen to ensure she didn't miss out on voting in the coming federal election she has already enrolled provisionally.

This means she will automatically be entitled to vote after her 18th birthday in two weeks.

"I think people see it as more of a hassle than I do," Ellen said. It was important to vote because if you chose not to and you didn't like the election result, "you can't blame anyone but yourself," she said.

While labor MPs said yesterday they feared young voters would be disadvantaged by new laws that close the electoral rolls on the day an election is officially called, senior Camberwell High students have already had a reminder.

The office of the liberal member for Kooyong, Petro Georgiou, confirmed he had been invited several weeks ago by the school to talk about the changed laws.

Other Camberwell High students said they planned to enroll provisionally

after learning of the changed deadline. Charlie Sexton, who turns 18 in September, said he took his right to vote seriously.

"It's a chance to determine who is going to run the country. You know what you want from leaders and what parties you want to become government, but you don't get a say at all until you're 18," he said.

Miles Colman, who turns 18 in July, said he had "fairly particular political views" about whom he wanted to see in power, although he was still to

sign up.

Would he feel cheated if he missed the deadline? "A bit. I suppose so."

Only Josi Bruce admitted to being slow to act. "I suppose voting hasn't always been something that I think, 'I can't wait to vote'.

"But it's something important that we'll have to do eventually and we'll all have to decide which political party we want to support and who we want to see in power."

