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LEARNING ACTIVITIES

'Democracy'

Key Learning Objectives:

Citizenship



- To know why and how laws are made (2b)
- To know what democracy is, and about the basic institutions which support it locally and nationally. (2g)
- To recognise the role of voluntary, community and pressure groups. (2h)

Other subjects

- Pupils should be taught to:
 - listen and respond appropriately to adults and their peers
 - ask relevant questions to extend their understanding and knowledge
 - articulate and justify answers, arguments and opinions (English: Spoken Language)
- History helps pupils to understand the complexity of people's lives, the process of change, the diversity of societies and relationships between different groups, as well as their own identity and the challenges of their time. (History: Purpose of Study)
- Pupils should be taught to solve problems involving the calculation of percentages for example, of measures and such as 15% of 360 and the use of percentages for comparison. (Maths: Ratio and Proportion Yr 6)

Key Vocabulary:

Democracy

Election

Representative

Candidate

Policy

Ballot

Majority

Constituency

Bill

Scrutinise

Welfare

Vulnerable

Trade Union

Petition


Criticise

This lesson contains a lot of opportunities for learning. If possible it should be delivered in three parts.

Part 1: Slides 4 – 13

Part 2: Slides 15 - 29

Part 3: Slides 31 – 33

Where **green arrows**  appear on some slides, click for additional information if this is considered appropriate for the learning group.

Key Questions:

Part 1:

Who rules Britain?

How are our representatives elected?

Part 2:

What are the three governments to which we send our representatives?

What is each government responsible for?

Part 3:

How does our system of democracy protect our human rights?

How can citizens participate in politics?

How can children take part?

Part 1

Activity

Through whole class discussion, make a list of issues the children would like to vote on. Mark beside each whether they would favour a secret ballot. Ask them to give their reasons.

Carry out a ballot on the most popular issue (using the Go-Givers Ballot Box if you have a subscription (<http://www.gogivers.org/teachers/nifty-gear/>) on a stand alone computer (for secret ballot) or on the iwb.

Discussion

Winston Churchill (1874 – 1965) once said:

"The best argument against democracy is a five minute conversation with the average voter."

What do you think he meant by this? Stress the importance of voters taking responsibility for being informed.

Activity

Ask the children if they have heard of the film 'Suffragettes'. Do the children know who the suffragettes were? (A *suffragette* was a woman who worked to get voting rights for women when women were not allowed to vote. It comes from the word *suffrage*, which means the right to vote in elections.)

If you can access youtube show the following clip:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3HdQ0iVrl2Y>.

Read the sheet 'The Suffragettes' together as a group (having prepared sufficient photocopies).

Discuss:

- The reasons why men thought women were not capable of voting.

- Whether it is ever right to use violence to achieve political goals.
- The non-violent tactics the suffragettes used. Were there any other non-violent tactics they could have used to get the vote?
- What Emily Davison was hoping to achieve by throwing herself under a horse.
- Why parliament changed its mind and gave women the vote immediately after the war.
- The issues that the children feel strongly about today, and what they can do to bring about change.

Part 2

Challenge the children to research the names of their MP, ward councillor and MEP (Homework?). Display these in the classroom.

Activity

Working in groups (maximum 6), ask each child to tabulate an issue of concern to them on the sheet 'Whose Problem?'.

Ask the group to decide whether each issue is of concern to the local community or whether it is a national or international problem.

Most decisions will require discussion. For example if the children think there are not enough police on the streets, it might be a national issue, but equally it could be to do with the way police are managed locally (e.g. do they spend too much time in their cars. on traffic control, or policing particular neighbourhoods). How will they find out?

MAIN ACTIVITY

Preparation:

To support the children in this activity, if you have a Go-Givers subscription, download:

- Designing a Leaflet
- Tips on Public Speaking

- Managing your meetings from the **Toolkit** in the Go-Givers Kids' Zone (<http://www.gogivers.org/kids/toolkit/>).

1. Working in small groups (preferably 4) ask the children to **plan an election campaign for an imaginary new party** on the sheet 'A New Political Party'.
2. Allocate sufficient time for the children to carry out their tasks.
3. Agree a time and place for the political rally with the party agents.
4. Gather the whole class to watch how the candidates are introduced by their agents, and listen to the speeches. Give the children time to read the publicity material and ask the candidates questions.
5. Carry out a secret ballot to find out which candidate has the most popular manifesto using the Go-Givers Ballot Box (<http://www.gogivers.org/ballotBox.cfm>) on a stand alone computer.
6. Is the winning candidate able to make an acceptance speech, reiterating what s/he will do for his/her electorate in parliament?
7. Hold a plenary session in which children provide constructive feedback to each team.

Part 3

Print slides 45 and 46, and copy for each pair of children. Discuss each point.

Slide 43

Discuss how freedom for all is a balance between rights and responsibilities. Everything we do has an impact on others. Ask each pair to complete the sheet 'Rights and Responsibilities', with examples relating to their own lives at home and at school.

Rights	Responsibilities
To make jokes and have a laugh	Not to laugh at people or have a laugh at others' expense.
To ride a bike on the road	To keep to the side. Not to ride on the pavement. To use lights at night. To obey traffic lights.
To own a pet dog	To clean up the dog's mess. To keep it on the lead in public places.

Examples:

Slide 47

Discuss the importance of fairness in our democracy.

Why is it so important that we are considered innocent until proven guilty?

How do people feel when they are not treated equally with others?

Slides 44/45

Discuss how many people together have a louder 'voice' than individuals on their own. Talk about how:

- Trade Unions have won rights for workers.
- The number of signatures on a petition shows how many people are affected by the issue
- Protest marches can demonstrate the strength of people's feelings.
- Pressure groups can make political representatives listen.

Using the School Council Checklist (Slide 48):

... ask the children to draw up a short list of questions to find out how effective their School Council is.

Discuss how big the sample will need to be in order to get a valid result. Who will be included: KS1? The Midday Supervisors? The Headteacher?

Ask the children to collate the results and draw conclusions. They could perhaps send a list of recommendations to members of the School Council and the teacher with responsibility for running it.

If there is currently no School Council, the children could devise a campaign for initiating one.

The Suffragettes

Most men in Parliament used to believe that women would not understand how Parliament worked and therefore should not take part in elections. Women became very angry about this.



In 1903 **Emmeline Pankhurst** and her daughters founded the Women's Social and Political Union, whose members became known as The Suffragettes.

In 1905 **Christabel Pankhurst** and a friend interrupted a political meeting in Manchester to ask two

politicians if they believed women should have the right to vote. When they didn't get an answer, the two women shouted at them to reply to their question. They were thrown out of the meeting and were arrested for causing an obstruction. Both women refused to pay the fine they were charged, preferring to go to prison to show how unfair the system was.



The Suffragettes became violent. Politicians were attacked on their way to work, and their homes were fire bombed. Some women chained themselves to Buckingham Palace because the royal family were seen to be against women having the right to vote. Some Suffragettes sailed up the river Thames and shouted abuse at parliament through loud hailers. Others refused to pay their taxes.

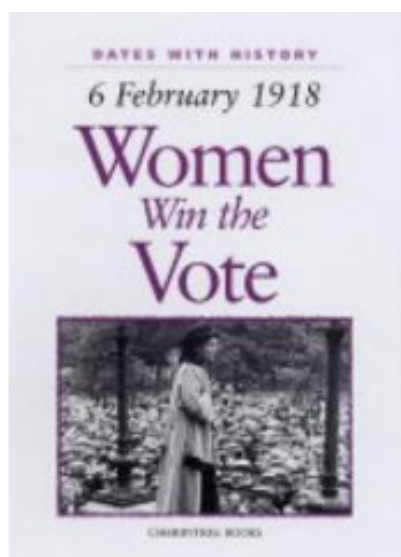
The Suffragettes were quite happy to go to prison. Here they went on a hunger strike and refused to eat. Ministers were worried that the women might die in prison, and that this would make the government unpopular, so prison governors were ordered to force feed the Suffragettes. However this act of violence made the public angry.

In June 1913 Emily Wilding Davison drew more attention to the cause when she threw herself under the king's horse during a horse race. She was killed.

In August 1914 Britain was plunged into the first world war. Emmeline Pankhurst told the suffragettes to stop their campaign of violence, and to support the war effort. The work done by women during the war proved to be very important. They had proved how capable they were.



In 1918, immediately after the end of the war, parliament passed the Representation of the People Act, giving women the vote.



Whose Problem?

Issue	Local Councillor	National M.P.	International M.E.P.

A New Political Party!

About the party

Will it be a single issue party like the Green party, which is mostly concerned about environmental issues, or will it be about lots of issues?

The name of the party

The name should give us a clue about what the party stands for. For example the Labour Party got its name because when it started it represented labourers (workers). The Conservative Party was originally concerned about conserving (keeping) the best things about Britain.

The Manifesto

A manifesto is a statement of intentions. Write four intentions (promises) to show what your party will do if elected. These should be short and simple. The statements could be about what you will do about schools, hospitals, children and young people, immigration, the army, the environment etc.

1.

2.

3.

4.

Your Slogan

The name of your constituency

This could be the name of your town/village or a made-up name.

About your candidate

Choose one person from the group to stand as the candidate. This must be someone who is prepared to make a speech.

Name

Qualities

What special qualities does this person have which might make people want to vote for them (e.g. honest, hardworking)?

Previous Experience

Has the candidate done anything which will help him/her to be a good M.P. for your area?

Meetings

Give dates, times and places of any meetings you will hold.

Contact Details

Create an imaginary address, tel. no and email address so that people can contact the party.

Website address of your party

Logo

This should be simple, easy to remember and tell us something about the party. E.G.The Liberal Party chose a bird, to show the importance of liberty (freedom).

Who will be:

The chairperson

The agent

The person in charge of publicity

Tasks:

Now you have the information you need on this form, the **chairperson** must chair a meeting to decide exactly how the group is going to work together and the tasks they will undertake. This will probably include:

- **The agent:** arrange the meeting (with the class teacher), and think about how s/he is going to introduce the candidate.
- **The person in charge of publicity:** design a poster and/or leaflet using the information you have put on this sheet.
- **The candidate:** prepare a speech, which should include the intentions in the manifesto

Is there anything else you could prepare in the time available? How about making up a special piece of music to play before the introduction of your candidate? Could you make some sashes or flags bearing the name of the candidate, your slogan and/or logo?

Rights and Responsibilities

RIGHTS	RESPONSIBILITIES



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Kind Regards,

The Go-Givers Team

