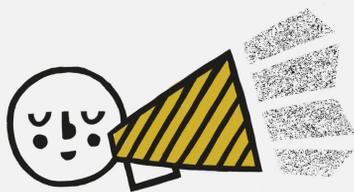


JULY

Democracy



In a fair world, we should all have a say about the things which affect us. When everyone is involved in making decisions, the decisions reached are more likely to be fair than if a small group of people decides for everyone else.

Democracy is when everyone has a say in decision making, usually through voting.

Almost half the countries in the world do not have democracy, and many that do still stop certain groups of people from voting, such as women, indigenous people and young people.

Even if you cannot vote yet, you should still be able to share your opinion to influence decisions that affect you.

Conversation starter

Where can you speak up about issues that affect you?

Class activity

Harkness Discussion: who is responsible for protecting our planet?

Seat your students in a circle, where everyone can see and make eye contact with each other. You should remain outside of the circle.

Draw a circle on a piece of paper, noting down everyone's names or initials at their corresponding point around the circle.

Explain that, during the discussion, you will map the path of the conversation by drawing lines between the people who speak. As a team, the class should try to make sure that the map is evenly spread between everyone, by ensuring everyone joins in and everyone has an equal opportunity to speak.

Pose the question: **"Who is responsible for protecting our planet, and how can they do it?"**

After 5-10 minutes, ask them to stop and think for a moment about which voices are not represented around the circle - this might include perspectives from other countries, cultures, abilities, genders, lifeforms, landforms, and others.

Ask: **"When you spoke, were you considering other perspectives? How might they be different to yours? What might happen if some perspectives are not heard?"**

Invite students to consider this whilst continuing their discussion.

THIS MONTH'S CHALLENGES

Democracy

Complete one or more of the challenges below as a whole class, or choose 2 or 3 pupils to complete one each month over the course of the year.

Creative challenge

Art and Politics

Art has often been used as a way for people to express their opinions and to comment on issues that are important to them. It is also used to help other people to understand important social and political issues and injustices.

Choose an issue which is important to you. Create a piece of artwork which helps others to understand and feel emotionally connected to that issue.

Research challenge

The History of Democracy

Where does the word "democracy" come from, and what does it mean?

Research the history of democracy and create a timeline of key events.

Action challenge

Invite your local MP to school

Even if you cannot vote, you are still represented by your local Member of Parliament (MP) - and their job is to represent your concerns and interests in parliament.

As a class, invite your MP to a meeting at your school. Before they arrive, agree on 3 questions, interests or concerns that you would like to talk to them about.