

WELCOME TO
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The
Electoral
Commission

Welcome to your vote

Learning sequence

Suitable for Year 10+

Linked to the national curriculum



electoralcommission.org.uk/learning

YOUR VOTE MATTERS
DON'T LOSE IT



Curriculum mapping

These resources can be used to support teaching across the curriculum, including statutory requirements for literacy and students’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Lesson	KS4 Citizenship	SMSC	Literacy
1: Your vote	<ul style="list-style-type: none">parliamentary democracy and the key elements of the constitution of the United Kingdomthe different electoral systems used in and beyond the United Kingdomlocal and regional governance (AO1)	<p>Social: engagement with democracy</p> <p>Cultural: knowledge of Britain’s democratic parliamentary system and its central role in shaping our history and values, and in continuing to develop Britain</p>	Vocabulary development
2: Our democracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">parliamentary democracy and the key elements of the constitution of the United Kingdomthe role of citizens and Parliament in holding those in power to accountactions citizens can take in democratic and electoral processes to influence decisions locally, nationally and beyondlocal and regional governancehuman rights (AO1, AO2)		<p>Reading comprehension</p> <p>Vocabulary development</p> <p>Spoken language: group discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">justify ideas with reasonsask questions to check understandingevaluate and build on the ideas of othersselect the appropriate register for effective communication

Curriculum mapping

Lesson	KS4 Citizenship	SMSC	Literacy
3: People power	<ul style="list-style-type: none">the different electoral systems used in and beyond the United Kingdom and actions citizens can take in democratic and electoral processes to influence decisions locally, nationally and beyond (AO2, AO3)	<p>Social: engagement with democracy</p> <p>Cultural: knowledge of Britain's democratic parliamentary system and its central role in shaping our history and values, and in continuing to develop Britain</p>	Spoken language: debate
4: Campaigning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">parliamentary democracy and the key elements of the constitution of the United Kingdom, including the role of citizens and Parliament in holding those in power to account (AO1, AO2)		Spoken language: group discussion



Curriculum mapping

Lesson	KS4 Citizenship	SMSC	Literacy
5: Campaign planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">the different electoral systems used in and beyond the United Kingdom and actions citizens can take in democratic and electoral processes to influence decisions locally, nationally and beyondinternational law (AO2)	<p>Social: engagement with democracy</p> <p>Cultural: knowledge of Britain's democratic parliamentary system and its central role in shaping our history and values, and in continuing to develop Britain</p>	<p>Vocabulary development</p> <p>Spoken language: group discussion</p>
6: Democracy in action	<ul style="list-style-type: none">parliamentary democracy and the key elements of the constitution of the United Kingdom (AO2, AO3)		<p>Spoken language: presentation</p>

01.

Your vote

Students will use comprehension and analysis skills to identify and understand how politics affects their lives and which politicians represent them

Learning objective

Students will be able to identify issues controlled by the local councils and the UK Parliament, and understand how their vote is counted.

Resources required

- [Your Vote film](#)
- Highlighters / coloured pens
- Who represents you? worksheet
- Internet access

Key vocabulary

- UK Parliament
- Member of Parliament (MP)
- Constituency
- Councillor
- Senedd
- Northern Ireland Assembly
- Scottish Parliament

Time needed

60 minutes

Differentiation

Extension and challenge activities are suggested throughout.

If necessary, copy the key vocabulary page and make available on each table or a display board.

Curriculum links**KS4 citizenship**

Pupils should be taught about:

- parliamentary democracy and the key elements of the constitution of the United Kingdom, including the power of government and the role of citizens and Parliament in holding those in power to account
- the different electoral systems used in and beyond the United Kingdom and actions citizens can take in democratic and electoral processes to influence decisions locally, nationally and beyond



01.

Your vote

Starter

Gauge students' understanding of and attitudes towards politics using a 'washing line'. Students stand one side of the classroom if they agree strongly and the opposite side if they disagree strongly, or somewhere in the middle. Read out the following statements and ask students why they have chosen their position along the spectrum.

- I am interested in politics
- Politics affects my life
- Everyone should vote

Alternatives for this activity could include 'thumbs up, thumbs down' or paired discussion.

Everyday politics – group activity

In pairs or small groups ask students to write out the timetable for their typical day. Using highlighters or coloured pens have them mark or label any activities which are affected by politics.

Challenge: can students identify who is responsible for each area they have labelled? For example, the local council or the UK Parliament.

Everyday politics examples

7am – get the bus to school

School bus services are controlled by local councils

12.15pm – have a school dinner

Guidelines for healthy eating in schools are published by the UK Parliament

4pm – go to the park

Parks, leisure and libraries are managed by the local council

6pm – watch BBC news

The BBC is funded by the UK Parliament

Feedback as a class to identify the different areas of students' lives affected by politics.



01.

Your vote

Your Vote film

[Watch the Your Vote film](#) and ask students to make a note of the different areas managed by local councils and the UK Parliament.

Watch the film again if needed and then discuss as a class:

- Are there any words or terms they did not understand? (See vocabulary box on next page)
- Was there anything in the film they didn't know before?
- What are some of the differences between local councils and the UK Parliament?
- Get students to look back at their timetable and update any activities with the ways politics affects them.

Challenge: How are Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland governed? Introduce the names of the governments in each devolved nation using a game such as hangman or similar: Senedd (Wales), Scottish Parliament (Scotland) and Northern Ireland Assembly (Northern Ireland).

Research

Using the internet, get students to complete the Who represents you? worksheet.

If students have time, ask them to think about the final question: three things they would do if they were Prime Minister, and share with the class.

Plenary

Ask students to write down any questions or uncertainties they have about politics. These can be anonymous and collected in a box to be looked at in later lessons.

Remind students to register to vote at gov.uk/register-to-vote



01.

Key vocabulary

**UK Parliament**

The law-making body of the UK, which looks after issues like defence and foreign affairs.

Member of Parliament (MP)

Person who represents you in the UK parliament.

Constituency

The local area which your MP represents.

Councillor

Elected representatives of the local council who are responsible for issues including roads, leisure and recycling.

Senedd

The Welsh Parliament which makes decisions about issues like education, housing and the NHS for Wales.

Northern Ireland Assembly

The parliament of Northern Ireland, based at Stormont, which makes decisions about issues like education, housing and the NHS for Northern Ireland.

Scottish Parliament

The Scottish law-making body which makes decisions about issues like education, housing and the NHS for Scotland.

Devolution

The transfer of power from a central government to local.



01

Who represents you?

My name is

The date that I will be eligible to vote at an election is

My UK Parliament constituency is

My MP is

My local council is

My ward is

My councillors are

Three things I would do if I were Prime Minister:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.



Top tip

The following links might be helpful:

- [Find your MP](#), or search ‘UK Parliament find my MP’
- [Find your councillors](#), or search ‘gov.uk find my councillors’



02.

Our democracy

Students will explore how democracy functions in their local community, the UK and internationally. They will be introduced to the concept of suffrage

Learning objective

Students will be able to discuss how democracy works in their community.

Resources required

- [Letter from Bertha Brewster](#)
- [Campaigning video](#), on the Electoral Commission's website
- Timeline activity – card sort or worksheet options
- Completed Who represents you? worksheets from lesson 1
- [Quiz](#), on the Electoral Commission's website

Key vocabulary

- Democracy
- Suffrage
- Suffragist / suffragette
- Representation of the People Act
- Campaigning

Time needed

60 minutes

Differentiation

For the timeline activity there are two options – a card sort or a worksheet with dates on to match.

Curriculum links

KS4 citizenship

Pupils should be taught about:

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02.

Our democracy

Starter

Introduce the word 'suffrage' using a dictionary race, a game of hangman or using the key vocabulary sheet for this unit.

Share the letter by Bertha Brewster with the class and discuss what the writer is asking for and how she is making her point.

Prompt questions might include:

- any words or phrases students didn't already know?
- what were the suffragists (and suffragettes) fighting for?
- what emotions do you feel as a reader? Why do you think Bertha tried to evoke these emotions?

Timeline – group activity

In small groups provide students with the cards from the timeline activity. They should arrange the events in chronological order.

Once you've been through the correct answers with the class, discuss. Prompt questions might include:

- are there any dates that are surprising?
- do they notice any patterns or any gaps?

- are there any other election 'firsts' they would be interested to find out more about?

Discussion

How do politicians get elected? Discuss as a class to generate initial ideas.

Remind students that in some elections we are voting for a person, but often we are voting for the representative of a political party. [Watch the introduction of this film about campaigning during political elections](#) and address any questions that arise.

Who represents you?

In pairs students should look at the list they produced for the Who represents you? worksheet.

Through discussion, students should decide whether they feel the list is representative of their community. Useful prompts might include:

- do the people listed have a similar family and educational background to you or to someone in your community?

[Continued on next page]



02.

Our democracy

- are there any similarities or differences between the representatives on your list?
- is there an equal number of men and women on the list?
- do you agree with the political views of the people representing you?

Challenge

- would everyone in your community feel represented by the people on this list in some way?
- if someone did not feel represented by the people on the list, what possible actions could they take? (For example, use their vote or stand for election themselves.)

Plenary

[Take this quiz](#) (at the bottom of the webpage) as a class and discuss any incorrect answers.

Alternatively, pull out some of the anonymous questions. Answer them yourself, give students the chance to answer them or look up the answers online together.

Remind students to register to vote at gov.uk/register-to-vote

Key vocabulary

Democracy

A system of government where people vote to elect the people who represent them.

Suffrage

The right to vote in a political election.

Suffragist / suffragette

The names given to women who campaigned for their right to vote. Suffragists took a peaceful approach whereas suffragettes were willing to take any action necessary to achieve their goals.

Representation of the People Act

The law passed in 1918 that gave permission for some women to vote. The law was updated in 1928 to allow all women over 21 years old to vote.

Campaigning

Activities that encourage people to support an issue or political party.



02.

Our democracy

Cut out the events and put them in chronological order from earliest to most recent

The first country lowered the voting age to 16 years

Aboriginal people won the right to vote in Australian elections

The first ever recorded election

16 and 17 year olds first vote in a Scottish Parliament election and a Senedd election

First election in India after independence from British colonial rule

Voting age in the UK lowered from 21 to 18 years

Some women allowed to vote in UK elections

The first recorded election in which Black South African citizens were able to vote

First national parliament to elect more female representatives than male

First devolved elections in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland

The first women in the world allowed to vote, without any conditions

First Black MP elected in the UK



02.

Our democracy

Correct answers for timeline activity.

The first ever recorded election	754 BC in Ancient Greece
First Black MP elected in the UK	1832 - John Stewart, Conservative MP for Lymington, 1832-1847
The first women in the world allowed to vote, without any conditions	1893 – both indigenous Maori and European settlers in New Zealand won the right to vote.
Some women allowed to vote in UK elections	1918 (women were granted the same voting rights as men in 1928)
First election in India after independence from British colonial rule	1951 – 52
Aboriginal people won the right to vote in Australian elections	1962
Voting age in the UK lowered from 21 to 18 years	1969
The first country lowered the voting age to 16 years	1984 - Nicaragua
The first recorded election in which Black South African citizens were able to vote	1994 – the ANC were elected and Nelson Mandela became President
First devolved elections in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland	1997- 1999
First national parliament to elect more female representatives than male	2008 – in Rwanda
16 and 17 year olds first vote in a Scottish Parliament election and a Senedd election	2016 for Scotland and 2021 for Wales (Senedd)



02.

Our democracy

Match the election to the correct year.

The first country lowered the voting age to 16 years	754 BC
Aboriginal people won the right to vote in Australian elections	1832
The first ever recorded election	2008
16 and 17 year olds first vote in a Scottish Parliament election and a Senedd election	1893
First election in India after independence from British colonial rule	1918
Voting age in the UK lowered from 21 to 18 years	1951 – 52
Some women allowed to vote in UK elections	1962
The first recorded election in which Black South African citizens were able to vote	1969
First national parliament to elect more female representatives than male	1984
First devolved elections in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland	1994
The first women in the world allowed to vote, without any conditions	1997 – 99
First Black MP elected in the UK	2016 and 2021

03.

People power

Students will gather explore the role of voting by preparing for and participating in a debate

Learning objective

Students will be able to discuss the importance of voting.

Resources required

- Four sheets of paper labelled 'mad', 'bad', 'sad' and 'glad', or individual whiteboards
- Materials to prepare for a debate, for example, access to the internet, sticky notes or coloured pens
- [Register to vote film](#)

Time needed

60 minutes

Differentiation

Extension and challenge activities are suggested throughout.

Curriculum links

KS4 citizenship

Pupils should be taught about:

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03.

People power

Ground rules

Establish ground rules for discussions. Remind students that they don't have to agree with each other, but they do have to be respectful of each other's opinions.

It might be useful to keep this list of ground rules on a working wall or somewhere visible in the room to refer back to throughout this unit.

Starter

Place a volunteer student at the front of the room and provide them with four signs: 'mad', 'bad', 'sad' and 'glad'.

Share a range of different statements with the student. Ask them to hold up the sign that best describes how they feel about the statement and explain their response.

Statements might include:

- voting should be made compulsory
- young people are not interested in politics
- young people in Wales and Scotland can vote at the age of 16
- the minimum age for voting in UK elections is 18

- politics is boring
- not everyone in the world has the right to vote

Give other students the chance to sit in the hot seat and respond – they may want to respond differently to some of the same statements. Encourage the rest of the class to pose statements about politics.

Alternatively, you could give the whole class the chance to respond by using individual whiteboards or label the four corners of the room 'mad', 'bad', 'sad' and 'glad' and ask students to move to the corner that describes their response.



03.

People power

Preparation for debate

Divide the class into two teams and give them time to prepare for a debate on the following statement:

“Everyone should use their vote”

They may need access to the internet, sticky notes and large sheets of paper, for example.

Debate

Run a class debate in whatever format you typically use.

Alternatively, select one of the options from the box below.

Ask students to reflect on whether they personally agreed or disagreed with the outcome of the debate.



Whole class debate

Divide the class into two teams and ask them to elect two representatives. The first proposition speaker will make opening remarks, followed by the first opposition speaker, second proposition speaker and second opposition speaker. The discussion then opens to the floor with teams given a chance to make statements and ask questions challenging each others' position. A chair (teacher or student panel) will summarise and decide the winning team.

Plenary

[Watch the Register to Vote film](#)

Explain to the class that they are going to design a campaign to encourage young people to register to vote.

Remind students to register to vote at gov.uk/register-to-vote

Homework (optional)

Before the next lesson, they should produce a list of some of the possible barriers they might need to overcome in their campaign.

Goldfish bowl

A small group of students sit in the middle of the room and debate opposing positions, while the rest of the class actively listens around the outside. Listeners might support their candidate by providing sticky notes. Excellent for modelling good discussion and providing stretch.

Talking threes

In groups of three, students take it in turns to take on the role of supporter, opposer and summariser. The supporter and opposer argue for their position and the summariser displays active listening skills and asks probing questions.



04.

Campaigning

Students will gather information and consider the key message for their own campaign to get young people registering to vote

Learning objective

Students will be able to analyse where power is held in their community.

Students will explore what campaigning techniques are used by political parties and what influences them.

Resources required

- Political bingo worksheet
- What influences? cards

Time needed

60 minutes

Differentiation

Extension and challenge activities are suggested throughout.

Curriculum links

KS4 citizenship

Pupils should be taught about:

- parliamentary democracy and the key elements of the constitution of the United Kingdom, including the power of government and the role of citizens and Parliament in holding those in power to account
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04.

Campaigning

Starter

Give each student a political bingo worksheet and allow them to move around the room to find a classmate for each statement. They should aim to have a different name for each one. Set a time limit and provide a small prize for the person who completes their worksheet fastest.

What influences? group activity

In small groups give students a set of What influences? cards.

It may be helpful to start with a class discussion about what influences decision making in our everyday lives. For instance, how do we choose what to watch on television or what we are going to do at the weekend?

In their groups students should imagine that there is an election tomorrow and they have decided to vote. Ask them to pick the three main things that might influence which candidate or political party they vote for.

Come back together as a class and discuss why they picked particular influences.

Challenge: are there any other influences not listed on the cards that might affect their choice?

Research

Remind students that they will be planning a campaign to encourage students over the age of 16 to register to vote.

The first step is for them to identify the possible barriers that might prevent young people from registering to vote. They can do this by interviewing their classmates. (This could also be extended as a homework task to enable students to gather more data.)

Remind students of the importance of asking open questions and, if necessary, generate research questions as a class. Examples might include:

- (if students are aged 16 or over)
Have you registered to vote? Why / why not?
- do you intend to register to vote when you turn 16 / before the next election? Why / why not?
- what might stop you or your friends from registering to vote?



04.

Campaigning

Campaign planning

Put the class into campaign teams. Once they have completed their research, ask the team to compare the responses and generate a list of barriers young people face in registering to vote. Did any of these barriers come up more than once?

Teams should choose the most significant barrier they want to challenge with their campaign and design a key message – the idea they want people to take from their campaign.

They should then plan activities that they think will encourage young people aged 16 or over to register to vote. It might be helpful to remind students that they can register to vote at 16 and can start casting their votes at 18.

Additional support: students can use the What influences? cards and look back at the film about political campaigning from the second lesson in this unit to help them generate ideas for their campaign.

Plenary

Give each team 60 seconds to share their findings and pitch their campaign key messages.

The rest of the class may have the opportunity to provide positive and constructive feedback using whatever feedback framework they are familiar with.

Remind students to register to vote at gov.uk/register-to-vote

Success criteria

- List of barriers
- Key message
- Campaign activities plan



04.

Political bingo

Find someone who has met a politician

Name:

Find someone who can name the Prime Minister

Name:

Find someone who has taken part in a mock election at school or college

Name:

Find someone who has signed a petition

Name:

Find someone who can name their Member of Parliament (MP)

Name:

Find someone who has gone on a march

Name:

Find someone who has made a speech

Name:

Find someone who intends to vote or has registered to vote

Name:

Find someone who has donated money to a charity in the last three months

Name:

Find someone who is interested in environmental issues

Name:

Find someone who can name four political parties

Name:

Find someone who can name their local councillor

Name:



04.

What influences? cards

The views of adults at home	What candidates say they are going to do for young people	Political party leaders	Who is the most popular	The views of my friends
How trustworthy I find a political candidate or political party	What I have seen on TV	My personal experience of political party or candidate	What I have read online and in newspapers	The election campaign
A candidate's former job	My job	Talking to a political party campaigner when they knock on my door	The political parties' policies or manifestos	Meeting a candidate
A candidate's age	My age	A candidate's educational background	My gender	Celebrities or influencers
Leaflets	Where a candidates lives	My background	A candidate's background	What a candidate looks like



05.

Campaign planning

Students will work together in teams to produce campaign materials

Learning objective

Students will be able to produce persuasive campaign materials.

Resources required

- Campaign poster example worksheets
- Materials for making posters – sugar paper, felt pens
- Access to internet

Time needed

60 minutes

Differentiation

Extension and challenge activities are suggested throughout.

Curriculum links

KS4 citizenship

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- the different electoral systems used in and beyond the United Kingdom and actions citizens can take in democratic and electoral processes to influence decisions locally, nationally and beyond



05.

Campaign planning

Starter

In groups of three or more, give students paper or whiteboards with the numbers 16, 18 and 21.

Read out the countries listed opposite as a quiz. Each team should raise the number they think shows the voting age for that country. Give a small prize to the winning team.

Poster analysis

In pairs ask students to look at the examples of campaign posters provided. They should aim to analyse how effective the poster is. The following prompt questions might be helpful:

- which country is this campaign poster from? How can you tell?
- what colours have been used? Why?
- what images or symbols have been used? What message does this give the viewer?
- how does the text appear? What impression does this give the viewer?
- what does the text say? What message does this give the viewer?

Voting age quiz with answers

- UK (18)
- Tanzania (18)
- France (18)
- Lebanon (21)
- New Zealand (18)
- China (18)
- Nicaragua (16)
- Singapore (21)
- Poland (18)
- Scotland (16 for Scottish Parliament and local elections)

- does the poster's size and location affect or support its message?
- is the campaign poster effective? Why / why not?

Join pairs together to compare their posters and decide which poster is more effective.

Extension: several of the posters have been taken from news articles discussing election or political campaigns. Students could look at these articles as research for their own campaigns.

Posters are from elections or campaigns in USA, Poland, China (1971), Lebanon, Tanzania and UK.



05.

Campaign planning

Campaign planning – group activity

In their campaign teams, students should look back at the activities they planned and start work on producing any materials. These could include campaign posters, writing a speech or presentation for an assembly. They may also need to think about securing permission to put up a display in the school library.

Remind students to look back at the key message they generated in their last lesson and to stay focused on the aim of their campaign: to encourage students aged 16 and over to register to vote at [gov.uk/register-to-vote](https://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote)

Some possible roles for the team are outlined below, each team is likely to need a campaign manager and a designer, but the other roles are optional depending on their campaign plan.



Campaign manager

Responsibilities include: leadership and making final decisions, ensuring that the planned activity goes ahead, contacting any senior stakeholders such as a local councillor or MP.

Designer

Decides which colours, images and symbols will be most effective, produces materials such as posters, flyers, or display boards.

Speech writer

Writes speeches or prepares presentations which will be delivered to other students either by themselves or by the campaign manager. Might also write letters to stakeholders like form tutors or prefects.

Fixer

Secures the relevant permissions, e.g. for the use of display boards, to hold an information session in the library, or for the group to deliver speeches in form time.

Researcher

Tests materials (such as posters or lines from a speech) to check they convey the key message effectively. Talks to students during or after campaign events to check whether they have decided to register to vote and collect feedback on the campaign.

Media / social media manager

Writes an article for the school blog or newspaper, plans a takeover of the school Twitter account for a day, writes a letter to a local newspaper or other publication that is widely read by students to promote the campaign.



05.

Campaign planning



Taken from [ideas.ted.com](https://ideas.ted.com/gallery-12-colorful-posters-to-inspire-you-to-turn-out-and-vote) 'Gallery: 12 colorful posters to inspire you to turn out and vote'



05. Campaign planning



Taken from lbbonline.com 'Your Shot: VMLY&R Is Voting for Love in the Polish Elections'



05.

Campaign planning



Taken from alrabiya.net 'Record women candidates in Lebanon vote, but you can't tell from TV'



05.

Campaign planning



Taken from [the Guardian](#) 'The Sleeping Giant: how Chinese posters pushed products and propaganda'



05.

Campaign planning



The Electoral Commissions’ ‘Got 5?’ voter registration campaign, 2021



06.

Democracy in action

Students will present their campaigns, reflect on what makes a successful campaign, and have the opportunity to register to vote

It might be helpful for this lesson to take place a number of weeks after the students have delivered their campaign in school to give them a chance to discuss any feedback or successes.

Learning objective

Students will be able to reflect on the effectiveness of their campaigns.

Resources required:

- Materials to produce a presentation of each campaign if necessary (this could be set as a homework task ahead of the lesson)
- Access to the internet to register to vote

Time needed

60 minutes

Differentiation

Extension and challenge activities are suggested throughout.

Curriculum links

KS4 citizenship

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06.

Democracy in action

Starter

By show of hands ask students the following questions:

- who intended to register to vote or had already registered to vote before this term, if over 16?
- who plans to register to vote now?
- who is not planning to register to vote?

Ask students to share their reasons (reminding them of the ground rules for respectful discussion if necessary).

Team presentations

Ask each team to present their campaign to the rest of the class. It would be useful for them to include:

- what was their key message?
- what materials did they use (they could share posters or an extract from a letter or speech)
- what campaign activities did they deliver?
- what was really effective about their campaign?

- what didn't work or was more difficult than they expected?
- did anything change from their campaign plan?
- did they receive any feedback about the campaign? Do they know of any students who have registered to vote as a result of their campaign?

Vote

As a class or in groups, discuss which campaigns were most effective. Why was this? Were there similar elements in the most successful campaigns?

As a class, vote for the most successful campaign, using the campaign managers' names on the ballot papers.

Register to vote

Give students aged 16 and over a chance to register to vote online at gov.uk/register-to-vote

[Watch the Register to Vote film](#) again if useful.



06.

Democracy in action

Ask the class to vote for their favourite campaign. Put the campaign managers' names in the left-hand column.

Vote for your favourite candidate by putting an 'X' in the box
