

# Recipes introduction

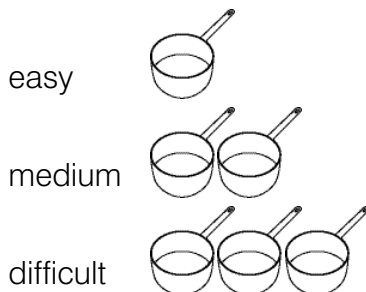
Our recipes feature tried and tested activities that will help you to explain democracy and politics to young people.

We have provided you with a range of worksheets and prompt cards which you can simply photocopy, cut out and run with straight away. You can adapt any of the recipes to your own needs, or chop and change the content we have provided with other information from the *Democracy Cookbook* Ingredients.

The recipes are listed in alphabetical order but feel free to shuffle them about. You may want to place your favourite ones at the front and even add your own adaptations.

Download new recipes from [www.dopolitics.org.uk](http://www.dopolitics.org.uk). You can also submit your own recipe ideas on this website to share with others working with young people.

To help you work out which recipes to use for your democracy menu, our recipes have been rated by difficulty:



and divided into the following categories:

- Awareness raising
- Creative
- Discussion and group work
- Evaluation tools
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## Quizzes

## Rating

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Political call my bluff



Political squares





# A short game about voting

**Overview** This game introduces the concepts of majority rule, representation and voting. It can last for any length of time and can lead the group into many discussions, including: power, consensus, majority and minority.

**Materials** One large dice.

**Timing** Any length of time.

**Instructions** Players form a circle and take turns rolling a dice. If you roll a five you can suggest a rule. The rest of the group must vote on whether or not to accept the rule. If accepted, the rule is retained unless someone else rolls a five, suggests a change to the rule and this is carried by the majority. Players can vote to end the game at any time.

This resource was adapted from Thinkbucket: creative resources for community relations, [www.thinkbucket.org](http://www.thinkbucket.org).

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# Agree or disagree?

**Overview** This activity uses contentious statements to encourage young people to think about where they stand on different political issues.

**Materials**

- Room for people to move about;
- 'agree' and 'disagree' signs; and
- list of statements (examples supplied).

**Timing** The length of the game depends on how long you let discussion go on for and how many statements you use.

**Instructions** Stick the agree/disagree signs on opposite sides of the room and ask everyone to congregate in the space between the two.

Read out a statement and ask participants go to the end of the room that best reflects their opinion. The stronger they feel about the issue, the further they should go to the end of the room.

Encourage discussion about why they have chosen their position. If someone is undecided they may remain in the middle and listen to contributions from either side of the floor before making up their minds.

Once discussion on the topic has drawn to a close, begin again with another statement.

It might be interesting to make a note of the results. With this you can build up a picture of the attitudes and opinions of the group and use this information for further work later on.

We have provided some statements on issues around voting and political engagement. Think up statements regarding hot issues in your local area or discussions in the news.

# Statements and discussion points

## The voting age should be lowered to 16

- You can leave school, get married (with parental permission), join the army and pay income tax at age 16.
- In the United Kingdom (UK) the voting age is 18.
- Most democracies in the world have a voting age of 18.
- Countries that have a lower voting age include Iran at 15, Brazil at 16 and East Timor at 17.
- In 2004, The Electoral Commission recommended that the voting age should, at the moment, be retained at 18, but that it should be reviewed again in the future.

## Voting at elections should be made compulsory

- Voting is compulsory in a number of countries including Australia, Belgium, Cyprus, Greece, Luxembourg and Italy.
- Voting is not compulsory in the UK. It is, however, an offence not to supply an Electoral Registration Officer with your details if you are sent a voter registration form.
- A survey in 2001 found that 49% opposed compulsory voting while 47% agreed with it.
- Advocates of compulsory voting argue that: it raises turnout; makes elections more representative; relieves parties of the task of 'getting out the vote', enabling them to concentrate on the issues; encourages a more informed debate and raises levels of political awareness.
- Opponents object that: it would be contrary to British political culture; it would be unpopular; is wrong in principle (the right to vote implies the right not to vote); would be difficult to enforce and would encourage ill-considered votes to be cast by reluctant or apathetic voters.

# Statements

## Young people are not interested in politics

- An estimated 37% of 18-24 year olds voted at the 2005 UK Parliamentary general election. This makes young people among the least likely of all people to vote.
- Seventy-five per cent of people aged 65 or older claim to have voted at the 2005 UK Parliamentary general election.
- Research by The Electoral Commission shows that young people are very interested in 'issues-based' politics but turned off by party politics in general.
- Research also shows that young people aren't apathetic, but feel strongly about issues that are of importance to them.
- More than 75% of young people have taken part in some form of civic activity.

## Other suggested statements could include:

- Politicians should be made to retire at the age of 60.
- Young people care more about what happens in Big Brother than they do in elections.
- People should be able to vote using the internet or text message.
- There should be an equal number of male and female politicians.
- On election day polling stations should be set up in shopping centres.

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**Overview** This quiz can be used to work out what young people have learned in a workshop on democracy and politics. Because it is jumbo-sized, the group have to work together to figure out the answer. This makes it more interactive than a standard quiz.

**Materials**

- Quiz questions and answers provided on the worksheet; and
- scissors to cut the questions up.

**Timing** About 10 minutes.

**Instructions** Photocopy and enlarge the quiz question and answer cards provided onto A3 paper and lay them out on a table or on the floor.

Ask participants to work together and answer the questions by placing the correct answer card in the blank space.

Impose a time limit to keep the pace going.

We have provided a range of suggested questions and answers. Pick and choose between questions that are relevant to where you live and the work you have been doing.

## Guide to answers

In a UK Parliamentary general election people vote to decide which politicians get elected to the **House of Commons**.

The **Prime Minister** is the leader of the party with the most **Members of Parliament** in the House of Commons.

Before an election, political parties usually publish a **manifesto** to explain their views on different issues.

If you have a problem with a local service you should contact your local **councillor**.

To vote at an election or referendum you have to be **registered** to vote.

When you vote at an election you are given a **ballot** paper and you vote in a **polling** booth.

There are **646** parliamentary constituencies in the UK.

A **floating voter** is someone who does not identify strongly with one party in the run-up to an election.

The Scottish Parliament is based in **Edinburgh**.

The National **Assembly** for Wales represents people in Wales.

When a **bill** passes through Parliament and becomes law it is called an **act**.

The UK is represented by **78** MEPs (Members of the European Parliament).

There are **25** different countries in the European Union.

People that sit in the House of Lords are called **peers**.

In a UK Parliamentary general election people vote to decide which politicians get elected to the .

The  is the leader of the party with the most  in the House of Commons.

Before an election, political parties usually publish a  to explain their views on different issues.

If you have a problem with a local service you should contact your local .

To vote at an election or referendum you have to be  to vote.

When you vote at an election you are given a  paper and you vote in a  booth.

There are  parliamentary constituencies in the UK.

# A3

A  is someone who does not identify strongly with one party in the run-up to an election.

The Scottish Parliament is based in .

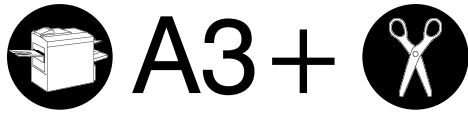
The National  for Wales represents people in Wales.

When a  passes through Parliament and becomes law it is called an .

The UK is represented by  MEPs (Members of the European Parliament).

There are  different countries in the European Union.

People that sit in the House of Lords are called .



## Answer cards

Photocopy, enlarge and cut out the cards below and ask young people to place them on the correct place on the question cards. Refer to the guide to answers for correct positioning.

House of Commons

registered manifesto

Prime Minister

Members of Parliament

act 646 78 25

councillor ballot polling

floating voter

Edinburgh bill

Assembly peers

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# Build your own parliament

**Overview** This activity challenges young people to explore the functions and purposes, and creatively express their vision, of how our democratic institutions should look and work.

**Materials**

- One bucket;
- water;
- card;
- pens;
- brushes;
- aprons;
- a large quantity of modroc;
- scissors;
- paper;
- paint;
- polythene sheeting; and
- photographs of UK, European or Scottish Parliaments, Northern Ireland Assembly or Welsh Assembly buildings – inside and out.

**Timing** Two to three hours.

**Instructions** Study the different photos and think about things like:

- the age of the building;
- the different kind of rooms and their functions;
- the size;
- the purpose of the building;
- who uses the building;
- why we have these buildings; and
- the style of architecture used.



Record the different shapes, colours and textures that you can see. Then think about:

- What do you think a parliament should look like?
- If you had to design one what kind of rooms should it have?
- How would you create a building that best served the purpose of a parliament?
- Who would use your parliament and how?

You now need to make your own parliament that reflects these thoughts and feelings. Think about if you are going to make one room or illustrate the whole building.

- Draw the main shapes of your building onto card.
- Cut out the outline of your building.
- Cut away inside shapes like windows and hinge doors by leaving one side uncut.
- Soak strips of modroc in the bucket of water.
- Cover the cardboard with the modroc.
- Paint when dry.

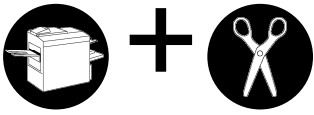
Ask the young people to present their building and explain why they have chosen their particular design.

To speed up the drying process, try using a hairdryer. You can use collage or paints as a variation to this activity.



# Build your own political party

- Overview** This activity is designed to help young people think about the role of political parties in our democracy.
- Materials**
- Worksheets provided; and
  - scissors.
- Timing** About 30 minutes.
- Instructions** Break participants up into small groups of around three people. Ask them to imagine they are forming a new political party.
- Photocopy and cut out the worksheet provided. Distribute one set to each group and ask them to consider the issues highlighted in the questions.
- Compare notes on the focus and type of political party you have formed. Is it similar or different to other groups? Did you have to compromise? If you were to make up your own party as an individual, would you have done things differently?
  - Some people in your group may have had different ideas about the priorities of the political party you formed. Within any political party people have different opinions from other members. This can be a healthy thing as it means that important issues are frequently debated and compromises are reached.
  - There is a diverse range of political parties in the UK, around 300 at the last count. List all the ones that you can think of. Do you know what their main policies are? You can find this information on political parties' websites, or by telephoning or emailing them.



What is your party going to be called?

Design a logo that your party can use.

Who, if anyone, is going to be your leader?

What are your top three policies?

What do you have to do to become an official political party in the UK?

Which elections are you going to stand in?

Who are your main political rivals?

What will you do if you are elected into office?

What tactics will you use in your election campaign?

How will you encourage people to become members of your party?



# Build your own politician

**Overview** This activity encourages young people to explore ideas about who their representatives are, what they do and what qualities make for a good politician.

You can do this activity using the development stages only or you can turn it into an art project using modroc or paper.

**Materials** Attributes cards (provided).

If you decide to go down the creative route you'll also need:

- pens;
- paint;
- brushes;
- glitter;
- scissors;
- polythene sheeting;
- aprons;
- glue;
- sticky tape; and
- coloured paper.

## Paper version:

- Large sheet of paper (big enough to draw around a person on); and
- colour magazines and newspapers.

## Modroc version:

- One bucket;
- a large quantity of modroc;
- water;
- old newspapers;
- egg cartons; and
- chicken wire.

**Timing** Thirty minutes to three hours.

**Instructions** Split participants into groups and ask them to imagine their ideal politician using the development ideas provided overleaf.

## Development idea one

Give each group a set of 'qualities' cards (provided, see overleaf) and ask participants to choose the top 10 attributes their ideal politician would possess.

The process they use to choose the cards can be an important part of the activity. For example, do they vote on which ones to keep and which ones to reject, or do they try to negotiate or barter?

Ask each group to feed back their ideas and get someone to scribe on flipchart paper.

Compare each team's top 10 attributes. What similarities are there? What differences?

Discuss why these attributes are important. Are there any political figures they admire with these characteristics?

## Development idea two

Ask participants to lie on the floor and close their eyes. Get them to visualise a person they admire. This could be a member of their family, a famous pop star or football player. Ask them to think about why they admire that person.

Give each participant a post-it note and ask them to write down three attributes that describe their 'admired' person. Ask the participants to pair up and discuss the exercise.

Now ask them to think about someone who represents them – a politician, a class or youth representative or even the captain of their sports team.

What qualities do they possess? Are they similar or different to the qualities in their first choice?

Discuss the choices in a whole group. Use the attributes cards provided to help spark discussion.

Now use the creative activities overleaf to challenge participants to express the attributes that they think are important when building their ideal politician.

## Paper version

- Draw around a person on the large sheet of paper.
- Fill the person with cut up pictures, drawings, symbols and bits and pieces that represent the attributes of an ideal politician.

## Modroc version

- Put down polythene sheeting – this can get quite messy.
- Participants need to build a skeleton out of old newspapers or other kinds of junk like egg boxes or chicken wire. To hold it all in place you can use sticky tape, glue or string.
- Once they are happy with their skeleton they can begin to cover them in with the modroc.
- Soak the strips of modroc in the bucket of water.
- Then wrap the strips round the skeleton. The most effective technique to ensure everything stays together is wrapping the strips in a criss-cross pattern like wrapping a mummy.
- Once they are complete they need to be left to dry. This takes between 20 minutes and an hour depending on how many layers have been used.
- Once they are dry, the politicians are ready for decorating.

Note: Try using a hairdryer to speed up the drying process.



# Attributes cards

Has many years  
experience in politics

Male

Female

Aged 16–18

Aged 18–22

Aged 22–30

Aged 30–40

Aged 40–50

Aged 50–60

Aged 60–70

Aged 70+

Is married

Has a degree

Is friendly and  
approachable

Knows a lot about  
the local area

Was born in  
the local area



# Attributes cards

Is good at  
public speaking

Can keep a secret

Knows a lot of people

Is determined

A member of  
a political party

Wears a suit

Knows about  
popular culture

Has good dress sense

Likes animals

Is ambitious

Knows a lot about  
national politics

Knows a lot about  
global politics

Lives in the local area

Is diplomatic

Is hardworking

Can use a computer



# Attributes cards

Is loyal to their political party

Is fit and healthy

Can talk to young people

Can talk to business people

Owns a business

Understands figures

Uses the local shops

Is punctual and reliable

Has always voted  
in elections

Follows all the rules

Uses unconventional  
methods

Can skateboard

Can make tough  
decisions regardless  
of the consequences

Donates money to charity  
on a regular basis

Can talk to old people

Has children



# Attributes cards

Is independently minded

Can chair meetings

Can speak another language

Has worked in the service industry

Attends regular events to meet people in between election times

Visits people at election time

Supports the local football or rugby team

Knows about the European Parliament

Can deal effectively with journalists

Has a full-time job

Has a part-time job

Is retired

Is not involved in scandals

Looks good on television

Runs regular surgeries for local residents

Deals quickly with people's problems



# Attributes cards

Understands how the local council works

Knows local dignitaries

Is honest and trustworthy

Does voluntary work

Can be tough if required

Will tackle problems head on

Is happy to work hard for little reward

Wants to be the Prime Minister

Will represent your interests

Will represent their own interests



# Conundrums

**Overview** These conundrums have a local government focus and get young people thinking about how tough political decisions are made.

**Materials**

- Flip chart paper; and
- pens.

**Timing** Twenty minutes to an hour.

**Instructions** Use the conundrums below, or create your own, to spark group discussion.

For conundrum one, each participant has to come to an individual decision. In conundrum two, participants should come to a group decision. Afterwards, it might be useful to reflect on how and why decisions were made.

# Conundrum one

## Who you are

You have been a local councillor for just over a year. You won the election – but only just! You had 75 votes more than the candidate who came second.

## Your achievements so far:

- Improvements have been made to a local community centre.
- You helped a local primary school recycle their old computers and get money back for new ones.
- You influenced a committee to increase the budget for meals on wheels – a service in your area for isolated older people.

## The issue and dilemma

There are proposals to build a drug rehabilitation centre on the boundary of your ward. Drugs are a problem in your area. However, some local residents feel that the rehabilitation centre could cause problems and are concerned that younger children could come into contact with patients.

## The views of people in the local area

‘There are a lot of vulnerable people in this area that deserve the chance for treatment and rehabilitation.’

‘Everyone deserves a second chance, but I don’t want those sort of people around here, they drag the neighbourhood down.’

‘People around here do not understand the sorts of problems that drug-users face. We need to educate everyone in the community about these issues. They are not going to go away if we bury our heads in the sand.’

‘They thief, lie and cause nothing but problems for us. I don’t want anything that encourages them round here.’

As the local councillor you will be expected to take a position.

## Questions

- What things do you have to think about when you decide whether or not to support the rehabilitation centre?
- Which of these things is most important?
- How will you convince those that will disagree with your position?

## The decision

What is your decision and why?

## Conundrum two

Split the participants into groups. Ask for each group to come to a final decision on the conundrum. Is it more difficult to make a decision in the group setting? What processes were used to ensure that the group came to a final decision?

### Who you are

A committee of local councillors looking into crime and safety issues in your area.

### The issue and dilemma

There has been an increase in crime in your area. Muggings and vandalism have become particular problems. The council has asked your committee to recommend how a small crime prevention fund should be spent. There are lots of options but due to the limited budget you will have to choose only a couple of ways forward. People in your area have different views on the causes of the crime, who is responsible and how the problems should be tackled.

As a committee you must agree on your recommendations to the council. You will have to compromise, as there is not enough money to do everything.

### The views of people in the local area

'It is the same kids who always cause the trouble. What we need is to spend money on a scheme to encourage people to report known trouble makers and then name and shame them!'

'I don't feel safe on the streets, if only there was more CCTV to deter people from criminal activity.'

'There is no point taking a short-term view of this. We should be funding education schemes to help people understand the effects of their crimes and give them alternatives to this behaviour.'

'It is only boredom that causes people to get involved in vandalism. Let's provide better leisure facilities and get people off the streets.'

'Prevention is better than cure. It is because people are not careful when using mobile phones that they get mugged. Let's do an awareness campaign to encourage people to be more careful.'

'It is important to improve the look of the area to make it clear that we will not tolerate crime. We should spend some money on cleaning up the graffiti and fixing streetlights and bus stops.'

### Questions

- Who should the committee consult before making their decisions?
- How will you reach a compromise on the problem?
- What will be the main factors in making your decisions?
- How will you explain your decision to the community, especially to those people who disagree with you?
- What are the cost implications of the different approaches?

### The decision

How will you spend the money and why?





# Democracy tree

**Overview** The democracy tree is a visual representation of the different democratic institutions in the UK. It provides an opportunity to discuss who is responsible for making decisions which impact on our lives.

**Materials**

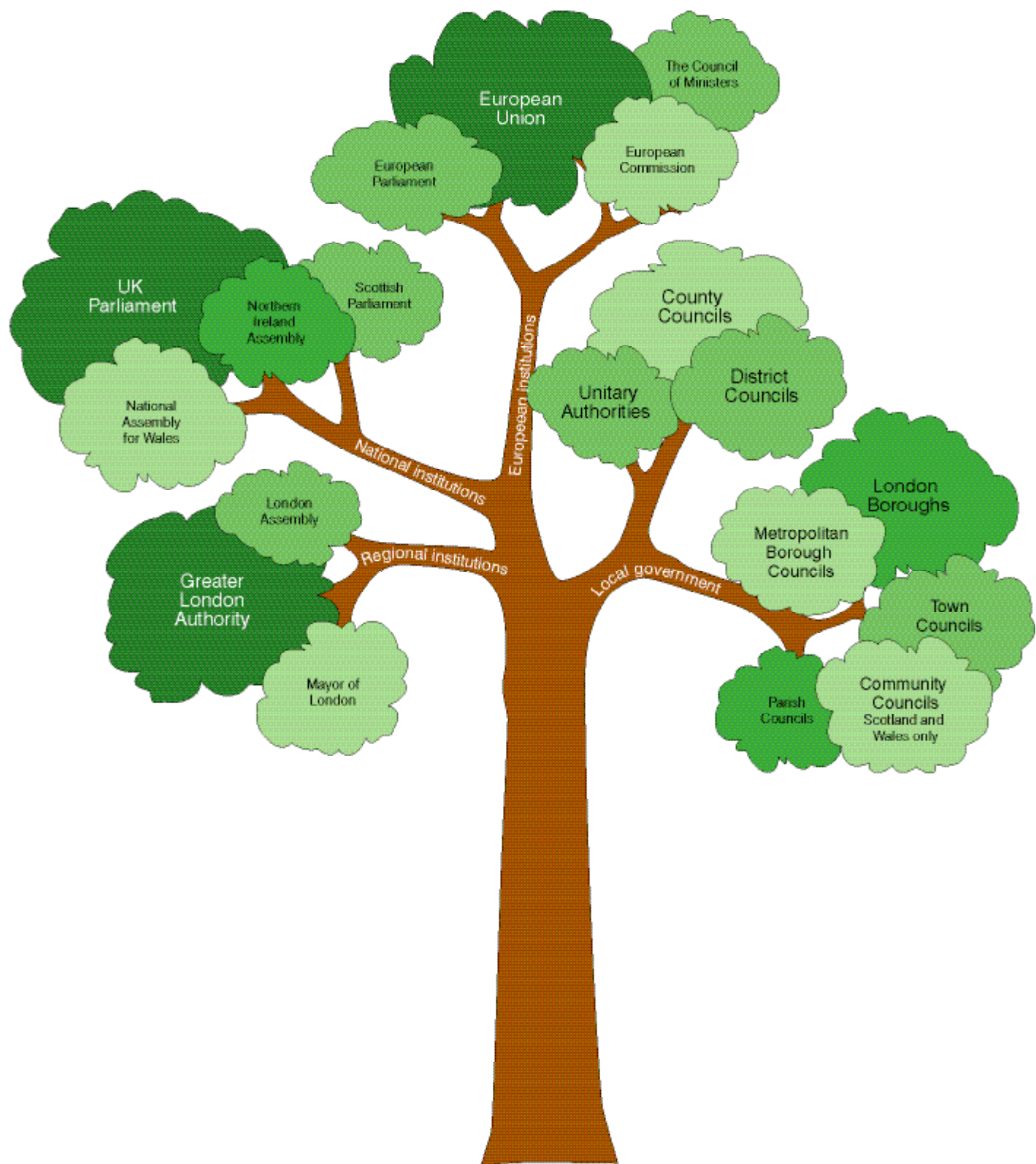
- Democracy tree poster (supplied with *Democracy Cookbook*);
- post-it-notes; and
- pens.

**Timing** About 20 minutes.

**Instructions** Distribute post-it-notes to the group. Ask them to write down issues that they think are important, such as health care, local leisure facilities, defence, etc. Encourage participants to think of local, UK-wide and European issues.

Get participants to stick their post-it-notes on the branch of the democracy tree that they think is responsible for that issue. There may be some cross over between the different institutions.

Thanks to Shoreditch Youth Forum for coming up with the idea for this activity. If you don't have a copy of the democracy tree poster, or would like additional posters, email [\*\*dopolitics@electoralcommission.org.uk\*\*](mailto:dopolitics@electoralcommission.org.uk)





# Desert island run by referendum

**Overview** This activity uses the idea of being stranded on a desert island to explore decision-making by referendum.

**Materials**

- Photocopies of referendum questions provided; and
- flip chart paper.

**Timing** Up to one hour.

**Instructions** You can do this activity with one large group or split the group up into smaller 'islands'. If you go for the second option it is possible to compare results.

Explain that there has been an accident and they are now stranded on a desert island. They are the only inhabitants of this island. It is miles away from anywhere and there are no boats, planes or telephones to summon people or arrange an escape!

The people on the desert island are strangers, flung together with no shelter, and very little food or water. There are no rules or regulations and they are going to have to build a new community of their own.

They have been there for a few weeks now and things keep going wrong. No one is taking responsibility for making decisions and people are not getting on.

They can't agree on an appropriate leader for the community and so someone suggests that decisions are made by referendum instead.

Organising the island by referendum means that everyone can input into decision-making by having a chance to make their view known.

We now start the activity with the first meeting of islanders where decisions will be made by referendum.

## Rules

Each member decides upon one rule or regulation that they feel will benefit all of the islanders.

Use the suggested rules overleaf to help prompt ideas. The group can then discuss the advantages and disadvantages of each proposed rule. **The rule is then voted on in referendum style: Yes/No or Accept/Reject.**

Nominate one person per group to write up the rules that are accepted and rejected. This will give the young people a good idea of what their island is starting to look like. By the end you should have a well-organised structure for your community.

## Discussion points

- Think about the process of decision-making. Does this seem a fair way of organising the community?
- Will the community have to compromise on some issues?
- Do people resent rules that they do not agree with?
- How frequently will the group meet to review their decisions?
- Will the process slow down activities that need to be performed quickly in order for the island to run smoothly?
- How did the way the referendum question was asked influence the outcome?
- Did anyone propose that a leader should be chosen to make decisions on the island? Does this conflict with the idea of making decisions by referendum?

## Referendums in the real world

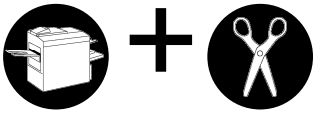
Referendums are one way to make sure that everyone has their say. It can, however, slow down processes because decisions need to be run by everyone all at once.

Think about the wider implications for referendums in a local, regional and UK context.

- Do you think it would be good for democracy if there were more referendums held on issues?
- Do you think people would be more likely to vote if they made the decisions themselves?
- Do you think that people would tire of being consulted every time something needed to happen?

For more information, see the Elections and referendums section of the *Democracy Cookbook* Ingredients.

This resource was adapted from the 'Stranded!' activity in The National Youth Agency's 'Young People and Citizenship Handbook' by Vanessa Rogers.



Three people should be responsible for collecting all the water required by the islanders.

Yes  No

Each person is responsible for cooking breakfast, lunch and dinner for the islanders once a week.

Yes  No

Everyone on the island must learn to swim.

Yes  No

All islanders should be awake and ready to work by 8am each morning.

Yes  No

All female islanders are obliged to have a baby to ensure that the island community continues.

Yes  No

Stealing on the island will be punishable by 50 lashes.

Yes  No

We should have a 'rotating' leadership of the island so everyone has a chance to show what they can do.

Yes  No

All children on the island must study for five hours per day.

Yes  No

A religion must be established to ensure that all islanders have basic moral education.

Yes  No



# Do you do politics... evaluation?

**Overview** A quick and useful way of finding out the impact of an activity or workshop on participants' understanding of and interest in politics and democracy.

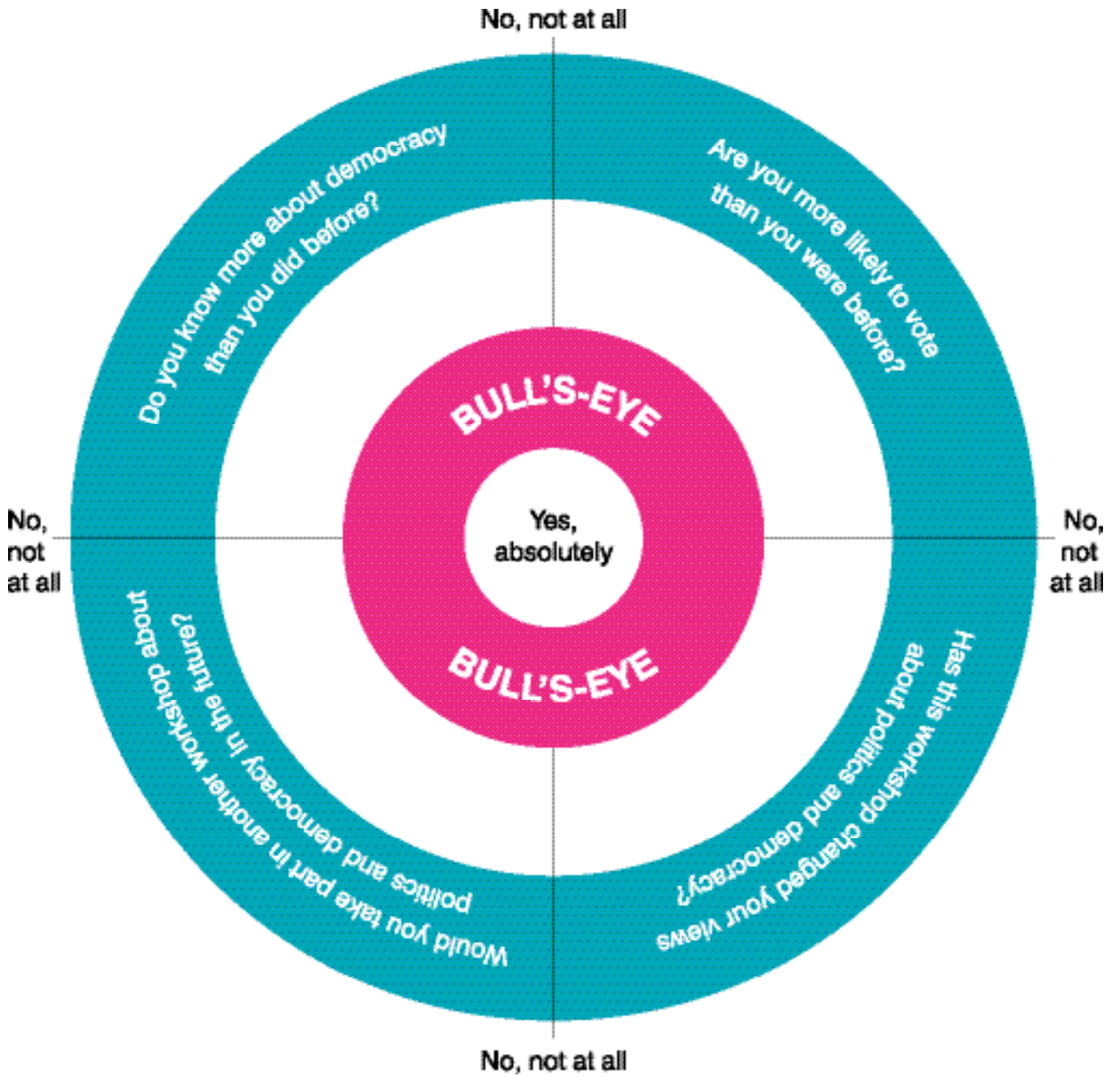
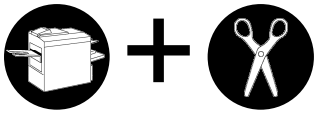
**Materials**

- A print-out or hand-drawn copy of the target on a large sheet can be adapted from the template supplied, or one A4 target per young person; and
- sticky dots or marker pens.

**Timing** Five minutes.

**Instructions** The template can be changed to ask the questions best suited to your needs. Ask participants to place a sticky dot or cross in each of the four sections of the 'dartboard'. Place it near the bull's-eye for a positive response and towards the outside for a more negative one. Use either one sheet per person or get everyone to mark one larger sheet to see an overall response.

Thanks to Kate Scully from DAFBY for coming up with this idea.





# Electing the Scottish Parliament and National Assembly for Wales

**Overview** The Scottish Parliament and National Assembly for Wales use the same kind of voting system to elect representatives. This is called the additional member system. This activity aims to increase young people's understanding of how this system works.

**Materials**

- Ballot papers (samples supplied);
- pens;
- calculators;
- ballot box;
- worksheets; and
- a prize.

**Timing** 60 minutes.

**Instructions**

1. Prepare participants by explaining what the Scottish Parliament or National Assembly for Wales do (see *Who decides?* and *Who represents me?* in the *Democracy Cookbook* Ingredients) and the voting system they use – the additional member system (see explanation overleaf).
2. Split participants into groups and ask them to imagine they are taking part in an election for the Scottish Parliament or National Assembly for Wales.
3. Ask for some volunteers to act as election official (returning officers). They will get to count the votes and announce the results.
4. Hand out two ballot papers, one for a constituency election and one for a regional election (samples provided). These should be on different coloured paper.
5. Explain how to mark the ballot paper – by putting an 'X' next to the candidate of their choice on the constituency ballot paper; and party or independent candidate on the regional ballot paper.
6. Ask participants to cast their votes.
7. Get the returning officer to count up the votes for the constituency and regional votes. The winner of the constituency seat is simply the candidate with the most votes. To work out who gets the regional seats is more complicated...
8. Now comes the tricky part – working out which party has won regional 'additional member' seats. We've provided an explanation of how this works overleaf. In a real election this would be the job of the returning officer, but to explain the additional member system you can get everyone involved. Ask participants to form small groups to work out the results. They will need calculators, pencils and a blank results table. The first group to finish gets a prize!

## How the additional member system works

When you vote in an election for the Scottish Parliament or National Assembly for Wales you have two votes. The first vote is for a constituency member and the second vote is for regional members. See *Who represents me?* in the *Democracy Cookbook* Ingredients for the difference between these kinds of members and information on what they do.

The constituency member is elected using a simple majority system called first past the post, meaning the candidate with the most votes wins. This is the same system used to elect members to the UK Parliament.

Working out who wins the regional seats is a bit more complicated and this is where the additional member system comes in.

In Scotland there are eight regions. Each region is represented by seven members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs).

In Wales there are five regions. Each region is represented by four Assembly Members (AMs).

On the ballot paper for the regional members you will see the name of a party and a list of their candidates.

To work out how many regional seats each party wins you divide the number of votes each party gets in the regional ballot (your second vote) by the number of constituency seats the party has won (your first vote), then add one. You add one so that parties which have not won any constituencies can be included in the calculation for the regional seats.

After you have done this calculation the party that ends up with the highest result wins the first regional seat.

To work out which parties win the remaining seats you have to redo this calculation, but each time add in any additional seats won. Remember that in Wales there are four seats per region, which means you have to do the calculation four times and in Scotland there are seven seats per region, which means you have to do the calculation seven times.

The regional seats each political party wins are filled by the candidates in the order they appear on the regional ballot paper. This order is decided by the political party.

We've provided a sample results sheet and ballot papers to show you how it works.

## Sample results table

	Franz Ferdinand	The Zutons	Scissor Sisters	Girls Aloud
Constituency seats won (first vote)*	4	0	2	2
Total regional votes received (second vote)	116	63	61	56
1st regional seat	$\div 5 = 23.2$	$\div 1 = 63$ <i>elected</i>	$\div 3 = 20.3$	$\div 3 = 18.7$
2nd regional seat	$\div 5 = 23.2$	$\div 2 = 31.5^{**}$ <i>elected</i>	$\div 3 = 20.3$	$\div 3 = 18.7$
3rd regional seat	$\div 5 = 23.2$ <i>elected</i>	$\div 3 = 21$	$\div 3 = 20.3$	$\div 3 = 18.7$
4th regional seat	$\div 6 = 19.3$	$\div 3 = 21$ <i>elected</i>	$\div 3 = 20.3$	$\div 3 = 18.7$
For the Scottish Parliament you will need to continue the calculation for another three regional seats (seven in total).				
<b>Number of regional seats won</b>	1	3	0	0
<b>Total number of representatives (MSPs or AMs)</b>	5	3	2	2
*If your mock election is for just one area or constituency you will need to make up the number of constituency seats a party has won so you can complete this calculation. If you have enough young people (say 50-100) participating you might want to break them up into different constituencies (you will need a different ballot box for each constituency) to get a real result.				
** You add an extra 'one' for each regional seat won in previous rounds.				

In our sample calculation The Zutons won the most regional seats. To work this out we divided the number of regional votes each party received by the number of constituency seats won by each party, **plus one**.

For example Franz Ferdinand won 116 regional votes in your area and had four constituency members elected over the country as a whole. So to get the result for the first calculation we divided 116 by 4 **plus one** giving a total of 23.2.

After doing this calculation for each party The Zutons got the highest result so they win the first regional seat. To work out the rest of the seats we repeated this calculation **adding any regional seats won in previous rounds**.

## Sample constituency ballot paper

VOTE FOR ONE CANDIDATE ONLY MARK YOUR X IN A BOX	
<b>Campbell, Niki</b> Scissor Sisters	
<b>Deeley, Cat</b> Girls Aloud	
<b>Finnegan, Judy</b> Franz Ferdinand	
<b>Nadia</b> The Zutons	

## Sample regional ballot paper

MARK YOUR X IN A BOX	
Paul, Robert, Nicolas, Alexander <b>Franz Ferdinand</b>	
David, Abi, Boyan, Sean, Russell <b>The Zutons</b>	
Nadine, Cheryl, Kimberley, Sarah, Nicola <b>Girls Aloud</b>	
Jake, Baby Daddy, Ana Matronic, Del Marquis, Patrick <b>Scissor Sisters</b>	



# Election campaign

**Overview** Introduce young people to different campaign techniques used during an election. This activity provides a good opportunity to talk about methods of communication and what young people feel are the best ways for political figures to talk to them.

**Materials** Campaign prompt cards supplied.

**Timing** Thirty minutes.

**Instructions** Break into small groups and ask participants to discuss any political campaigns they have seen or heard. Think about the ways in which the campaign was presented, how long a campaign runs for and the different methods used.

Now each group has to come up with their own campaign plan. Ask them to decide what techniques they are going to use to encourage people to vote for them. They also need to think about the timing of the activity, for example they may decide to poll in week one to find out the best way to speak to specific types of voters or they may use text messages on the actual election day to remind people to vote.

Once each group has finished, compare campaign plans and discuss why different methods were used.

Use the campaign prompt cards for ideas.



# Campaign prompt cards

Internet and websites	Photo opportunities
Speeches	Hustings
Party political broadcasts	Canvassing
Whistle stop bus tours	Themed days
Large public meetings	Opinion polls
Focus groups	Text messages
Press conferences	Leaflets
Billboards	Research
Posters	Celebrity endorsement
Writing letters to newspapers	Publicity stunts
Television chat shows	Newspaper advertising
Meet and greets	Manifestos
Exit polls	Email
Websites	Weblogs



# Europe vision

- Overview** This is a quiz to find out how much young people know about their continental neighbours!
- Materials** Question sheet provided.
- Timing** Twenty minutes.
- Instructions** Hand out the question sheet provided.  
Answers are overleaf.

## Europe vision answers

1. c) 25.  
On 10 May 2004, 10 new countries joined the European Union (EU). The countries that are members of the EU are: Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, The Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and the UK.
2. b) Waterloo.  
The service takes around two and a half hours on the Eurostar.
3. b) Six months.  
Each country can use their presidency to concentrate on particular policy issues that they are interested in.
4. c) 78.  
The number of MEPs for the UK was reduced in May 2004 as 10 new member states joined the EU.
5. a) 475 million.  
The EU is expected to expand further in the future with other nation states wishing to join.
6. a) 8%.
7. c) Switzerland.  
Switzerland borders four other countries, all of which are members of the EU.
8. c) 1986.  
The UK joined the European Community (now European Union) in 1973.
9. b) 12 countries.  
The Euro was placed into circulation in January 1999.
10. a) 2004.  
This was the first time Greece had won a major football tournament.
11. c) 2009.  
By 2013, the marketing of cosmetics developed using animal experiments will be prohibited even if there are no alternative methods available.
12. a) Christianity.  
However, Islam is the fastest growing religious faith in the EU.



# Europe vision question sheet

1. How many countries now have representatives elected to the European Parliament?
  - a) 15.
  - b) Three.
  - c) 25.
  
2. From which of these London train terminals can you catch a train to Brussels?
  - a) Paddington.
  - b) Waterloo.
  - c) Liverpool Street.
  
3. How long does each country hold the European Union (EU) presidency for?
  - a) Two years.
  - b) Six months.
  - c) Five years.
  
4. How many Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) does the UK have?
  - a) However many suits them.
  - b) 15.
  - c) 78.
  
5. How many people does the European Parliament represent?
  - a) 475 million.
  - b) 15 million.
  - c) 300 million.
  
6. What percentage of the earth's surface does the continent of Europe cover?
  - a) 8%.
  - b) 15%.
  - c) 29%.
  
7. Which of these countries is not a member of the EU?
  - a) Ireland.
  - b) Spain.
  - c) Switzerland.
  
8. In what year did Spain and Portugal join the EU?
  - a) 1968.
  - b) 1992.
  - c) 1986.



# Europe vision question sheet

9. How many EU countries use the Euro as their currency?
  - a) Three.
  - b) 12.
  - c) 25.
  
10. In what year did Greece win the European Championships in football?
  - a) 2004.
  - b) 2000.
  - c) 1996.
  
11. In what year will a European law banning the testing of cosmetic products on animals come into force?
  - a) 2005.
  - b) 2025.
  - c) 2009.
  
12. What is the most common religion in the EU?
  - a) Christianity.
  - b) Islam.
  - c) Buddhism.

## How did you score?

0-4: Some more homework needed. Find out more about the European Union by visiting [www.europa.eu.int](http://www.europa.eu.int).

5-8: Good general knowledge, but you could brush up on a few areas.

9+: Congratulations, you are a whiz kid when it comes to all things European!



# European challenge

**Overview** A series of challenges to get young people thinking about the European Union.

**Materials**

- List of challenges (supplied);
- stop watch;
- flip chart paper;
- tracing paper – one for each team; and
- map of the European Union (supplied separately with the *Democracy Cookbook*).

**Timing** Thirty minutes.

**Instructions** Divide the participants into teams of an appropriate size. Introduce the different challenges to the teams, making sure you are clear about what is expected of them and the time limits.

Time limit	The challenge
1 minute to...	name as many EU member states as possible.
2 minutes to...	draw a picture of the European flag.
3 minutes to...	draw a map of Europe (use tracing paper over map and when the time is up take away the map).
4 minutes to ...	name as many capitals as possible on the traced map. Mark on the tracing paper where the European Parliament is based.
5 minutes to ...	draw pictures to represent as many issues as you can think of that the European Parliament is responsible for.
6 minutes to ...	design a new European Union flag.

The winning team is the one that performs most consistently in the tasks and remains within the time limits for the challenges. You can decide this by a vote if you want.

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# First past the post

**Overview** This activity aims to increase young people's understanding of the electoral system used in UK Parliamentary general elections.

**Materials**

- Worksheet (supplied);
- calculator;
- ballot papers; and
- ballot box (you can make this from a cardboard box).

**Timing** Fifteen to twenty minutes.

**Instructions** Get participants to imagine that they are taking part in a UK Parliamentary general election. They are going to vote in the election, but also be responsible for counting the votes.

Have a look in the *Democracy Cookbook* Ingredients: Who represents me?, Who decides? and Elections and referendums to find out more about how Members of Parliament are elected and what they do.

First past the post is one of the simplest voting systems to understand. The candidate who gets the most votes wins.

**For example:**

	Candidate A	Candidate B	Candidate C
Number of votes	10,000	11,000	9,000

Candidate B wins the election.



# Worksheet

Vote using an X for your favourite character:

- BEAR Yogi (Picnic party)
- BUNNY Bugs (Carrot party)
- DOO Scooby (Hotdog party)
- MOUSE Mickey (Cheese party)
- SIMPSON Homer (Doughnut party)

Collect the voting papers and add up the votes.  
Write down the number of votes cast for each character:

BEAR Yogi	
BUNNY Bugs	
DOO Scooby	
MOUSE Mickey	
SIMPSON Homer	

The character with the most votes is elected to represent your constituency.

For that character's party to win the election overall they would need to have the most number of representatives elected.

For example if the majority of constituencies elected characters representing the Carrot Party then Bugs and his colleagues would become the Government!



# Five pounds game

- Overview** If you had £5,000 to spend on your area what would you do?
- This activity puts participants in the position of decision makers and gets them to think about the impact of politics on their local areas.
- Materials** £5 gift voucher.
- Timing** Fifteen to twenty minutes.
- Instructions** Participants sit in a circle. The facilitator introduces a £5 gift voucher and asks them to imagine it is £5,000. How would you spend it to benefit your local community?
- Get young people to hand the voucher around the circle, making a statement on how they would spend it. Encourage participants to be realistic about what they can achieve with the amount of money.
- Write up each statement on a flip chart and the name of the person who said it. Use this as an opportunity to discuss some of the most pressing issues in the local area.
- Once all the ideas are gathered together get the group to vote on which idea they like the most. They can do this by a show of hands, secret ballot, or by placing a sticky dot next to their choice.
- You may want to introduce a rule that you can't vote for your own statement. You may also want to stress that all the ideas are good but that you need to work out the best way of spending the money as a group.
- If there is a tie you can eliminate other ideas and ask the group to vote again.
- The person whose idea gets the most votes wins the voucher.





# Full house

**Overview** This activity helps participants to identify the different functions of a range of political positions.

**Materials**

- Political job descriptions;
- bingo card; and
- pens.

**Timing** Twenty minutes.

**Instructions** Give each participant a bingo card. Each card lists a number of political jobs. You will also find a list of descriptions of what these positions mean and do. Cut this up and place the descriptions in a container. The caller picks out a random job description and reads it out. If the participant thinks the description matches a political position they have on their card, they cross it out. The winner is the first person to cross off all of the positions on their card and shout 'politics' at full volume.



# Full house descriptions

The leader of the political party that has won the most 'seats' or constituencies at a general election. **The Prime Minister**

The head of the Treasury, responsible for managing the Government's budget. **The Chancellor of the Exchequer**

The head of the party with the second highest number of MPs in Parliament. **Leader of the Opposition**

Travels to Strasbourg and Brussels regularly to represent people from one of 12 areas in the UK. **Member of the European Parliament**

Works in a building called Holyrood and represents people in Scotland. **Member of the Scottish Parliament**

Decides who can speak during a debate in the House of Commons and calls MPs to order. **The Speaker**

Represents an area called a ward and has responsibility for lots of issues that affect your community. **Local councillor**

Elected approximately every four or five years at the UK Parliamentary general elections. **Member of Parliament**

Sits in the chamber that has red seats, also called the Upper House. **Peer (or Lord)**

Meets in Cardiff to represent the people of Wales. **Assembly Member for Wales**

Stands for election and campaigns to get your vote. **A candidate**

Responsible for the counting of votes in an election. **Returning Officer**



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# Full house bingo cards

The Chancellor of the Exchequer	A candidate	Member of the European Parliament
Peer (or Lord)	Leader of the Opposition	The Speaker
The Prime Minister	Local councillor	Member of the Scottish Parliament

Peer (or Lord)	A candidate	Returning Officer
The Chancellor of the Exchequer	Member of Parliament	The Prime Minister
Assembly Member for Wales	Leader of the Opposition	Member of the European Parliament



# Full house bingo cards

A candidate	The Speaker	Returning Officer
Leader of the Opposition	Local councillor	The Prime Minister
Assembly Member for Wales	Member of Parliament	Member of the Scottish Parliament

The Chancellor of the Exchequer	The Speaker	Assembly Member for Wales
Returning Officer	Peer (or Lord)	The Prime Minister
Local councillor	Member of the Scottish Parliament	A candidate



# Hold your own referendum

**Overview** Gets participants to explore how referendums work by running their own.

**Materials**

- Ballot papers;
- ballot boxes; and
- materials for making posters.

**Timing** You can do this activity in one hour or over several sessions.

**Instructions** You will need to allocate people to particular tasks – there are lots of ways in which young people of all abilities can take part in the mock referendum, from being part of a campaign group to designing the ballot papers and, most importantly, voting!

## 1. What is the question?

You must first decide the issue on which you want to hold your referendum. You could choose a national issue such as whether or not smoking should be banned in public places. Or you could choose an issue that only affects the people in your local area or youth group.

Think carefully about how you word the question. You must be careful to ensure that your question is easy to understand and that the language used does not lead people to vote one way or the other.

## 2. Who can vote and when can you vote?

Decide how wide your referendum will be. Who will be able to vote?

Decide on the day that you are going to hold your mock referendum.

Is your mock referendum going to be held on one day or over a period of time? People need to know when they are voting and what they are voting about.



Design a poster that advertises when people can vote in your mock referendum. Think of an image and a slogan to help get the message across.

### 3. The campaign

Organise two 'camps' – those who will campaign for a 'Yes' vote to the question and those who will argue for a 'No' vote. How are they going to construct a convincing campaign in order to get the result that they want?

### 4. Have a debate

This is a good way to present the arguments on both sides of the question. Think about how you will encourage people to vote for your side of the argument.

### 5. The voting process

Design a ballot paper using a computer. Remember to include the referendum question and boxes for 'Yes' and 'No'. Write simple instructions to tell people how to vote. For example:

To vote in the mock referendum mark a cross (x) in the 'Yes' or 'No' box. You can vote for one option only. Mark your vote clearly and in secret.

Make sure you have enough ballot papers for all eligible voters but remember that each person only gets one ballot paper.

### 6. The count

A team of people need to count the votes once the polls have closed. They will need to be organised to make sure that all the votes are counted properly.

Add up all the votes cast in your mock referendum. What percentage of the votes are for 'Yes' and what percentage are for 'No'?

Calculate the turnout for your referendum – this is the percentage of people who voted out of all the people who were eligible to vote. For example, if 10 people were eligible to vote in your referendum and five people voted you would have a 50% voter turnout.

### 7. Announcing the result

What is the best way of letting everyone know the result of your mock referendum?



# How can I be a political animal?

- Overview** This activity highlights the many different ways participants can become 'a political animal'. This gets participants to think about their level of engagement and how they can become more involved.
- Materials** List of political activities.
- Timing** Twenty minutes.
- Instructions** Share out the different political acts amongst the group (they may have three or four each).
- Ask the group to form into pairs and talk about their political acts. How much time would you need for different types of involvement? Do some seem easier than others? What are the likely impacts and outcomes of the different acts? Which are most effective and why?
- Using the list of activities overleaf ask the group to order the political acts along a scale from **easy to do** to **difficult to do**.
- Ask each member of the group to come and place their 'political acts' at some point in the scale. They may move the previous participants up or down the scale according to their views.
- Once all of the activities have been placed on the scale the group have to decide together if they are happy with the order. Each member of the group can make one change only.
- You can then ask the group to order them along a scale from **high impact** to **low impact**.
- At the end of the activity you can facilitate a discussion about whether or not the participants have had experience of any of these activities and how effective they think they are in terms of creating political change. This is a useful activity if you are looking at recent history.



# List of political activities

Vote in an election	Stand as a candidate for a political party in an election	Stand as an independent candidate in an election
Campaign door-to-door on behalf of a candidate or party	Attend a protest	Go to a public meeting and ask a question
Write to your local representative	Set up a petition	Sign a petition
Submit a petition to Parliament	Join a pressure group	Join a political party
Get your MP or local councillor to visit your school/college/youth club	Submit evidence to a select committee or local council consultation	Set up a campaign group



# How politics affects...

**Overview** This activity is designed to help young people identify how politics impacts on just about every aspect of their life.

**Materials**

- Flip chart paper; and
- pens.

**Timing** Twenty minutes.

**Instructions** **Option A**

Divide participants into small groups and ask them to think about how politics affects our everyday lives. You could download the Do Politics posters from [www.dopolitics.org.uk](http://www.dopolitics.org.uk) for inspiration. These posters cover how politics affects sport, the food you eat, music, where you live, how you get about and your night out.

Ask participants to pick one of these themes and draw how it is affected by politics on flip chart paper. Alternatively, you could get them to map a typical night out.

**Option B**

Divide participants into small groups and ask them to outline an average day in their life. They should be encouraged to use pictures to illustrate the various parts of their day.

Participants should then decide what parts of their day are affected by politics and how.

Example:

- 7.30am – I woke up and had breakfast.

The time that school starts and therefore the time I have to get up is affected by politics and the quality, cost and labelling of the food I eat is affected by politics.

Once everyone has finished get them to feed back to the wider group.

You can take this activity a step further by identifying which level of democracy is responsible for each issue.

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# If a politician was a...

**Overview** This activity is designed to help young people to think creatively about their representatives, institutions and system of governance. A keen imagination is required!

There are two possible routes – one is to ask participants to think and share their ideas, the other is to use theatre to express them.

**Materials**

- Suggestion sheet (supplied);
- flip chart paper; and
- a hat.

**Timing** Twenty minutes.

## **Instructions** Option A

Ask young people to sit in a circle. Each participant draws a slip of paper out of a hat. They then have two minutes to come up with their ideas; the more imaginative the better.

Starting from the left, go round the group and ask each member to read out their slip of paper. Record ideas on some flip chart paper.

For example, if my ideal politician was a car they would be an Aston Martin because they are good quality, stylish, impressive to the opposite sex, but reliable!

You can vote in the group as to whose contribution was the most imaginative and/or accurate representation.

It is more useful to do this activity at the end of a session, allowing participants to have a greater chance to understand what their representatives and institutions do on a daily basis. It is also a good idea to vary the 'type of representative', i.e. local councillor, MP, Prime Minister, or the institution i.e. Houses of Parliament, Welsh Assembly, European Parliament, etc.

## **Option B**

You could also ask participants (if they are feeling confident) to act out what their suggestion slip says. Other members of the group try to guess the link between the word and the acted representation. This can be very funny! If someone guesses or is close to the action they can go next. If the group is flummoxed, the participant can have another go.

Finish the activity with a group discussion about representatives, institutions and their role in a community.



# Suggestion sheet

If **democracy** was a **car**  
it would be...

If **democracy** was a **hairstyle**  
it would be...

If **democracy** was a **piece  
of clothing** it would be...

If **democracy** was a **style  
of music** it would be...

If **Parliament** was a **television  
programme** it would be...

If **Parliament** was an **animal**  
it would be...

If a **politician** was a **food**  
they would be...

If a **politician** was a **mode of  
transport** they would be...



# Let's get moving!

- Overview** This is a short, fun activity to get brains working and limbs moving! It introduces the concept of improvisation and develops trust in a group. It works well with any group size.
- Materials** ● Whistle or klaxon.
- Timing** Five to ten minutes.
- Instructions** Ask the participants to begin walking around the room – any pace is fine. Explain that when you blow the whistle you want everyone to stop and change speed and direction.
- As they stop, call out how you would like them to walk in the next round.
- For example, walk like you:
- are the Prime Minister;
  - are on a protest march;
  - are the Queen;
  - have won an election;
  - are a defeated Parliamentary candidate; or
  - are late for an important meeting.
- You can, of course, make up your own suggestions or ask participants to contribute. Keep going with as many suggestions as possible and finish by inviting everyone to walk like themselves.

This resource was adapted from The National Youth Agency's *Act Out* by Vanessa Rogers.

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# Mad, bad, sad or glad

**Overview** Get young people thinking about how political issues make them feel. This can be used effectively with groups that have little background knowledge of politics. It is great for encouraging discussion about a wide range of topics.

**Materials**

- Four chairs;
- four A4 sheets; and
- marker pen.

**Timing** Twenty minutes.

**Instructions** With the marker write on the sheets 'mad', 'bad', 'glad' and 'sad'.

Get participants to sit in a circle in front of the four chairs and place one A4 sheet on each of the chairs.

Introduce an idea or a statement, for example 'voting should be made compulsory' or 'young people are not interested in politics' and ask four of the participants to come up and sit on a chair that best reflects how they feel on the issue.

The rest of the group can then ask them questions about their choice in a whole group discussion.

Once you have exhausted a topic ask the four participants on the chairs to rejoin the group and start again.

**Variation** You can place the chairs in four corners of the room and ask the participants to all join in by standing next to the chair that best reflects their feelings on the issue.

This resource was adapted from the activity 'Mad, bad, sad or glad' in The National Youth Agency's *Act Out* by Vanessa Rogers.





# Meet your local councillor

**Overview** Tips on how to set up a meeting between young people and their local councillor.


**Instructions** **Before the day**

Preparation is key to any meeting in order to provide focus and structure. This will put people at ease and make sure that everyone gets the best out of the encounter.

Before you meet with the councillor organise a round table discussion with young people. Ask young people to highlight the three 'top' issues that concern them in their local community. Are there similarities? What differences are there? In order for the meeting to be really productive it may be useful to limit discussions to four or five common points. It can be useful to structure your issues into questions or a list of bullet points.

It is also important that the young people understand the basic structure and function of their local council. This means that their expectations can be met and the questions are relevant and focus on what the councillor can actually do something about! For more information on how local government works and what local councillors do, see *Who represents me?* and *Who decides?* in the *Democracy Cookbook* Ingredients.

Identify and invite your councillors. It is also useful for the young people to find out about their councillor and their role. What political party, if any, do they represent? What committees do they sit on? How long have they been a councillor? When were they elected? Don't forget to think about their personal interests or campaigns that they have been involved in. What football team do they support? What is their favourite food? This type of information can make them seem more human!



Any media coverage of the meeting may be useful, your local paper will know who the councillor is and a positive story about young people is always refreshing. Send out a media release. Telephone a week before the meeting and on the day before to keep it fresh in reporters' minds.

### **On the day**

Make sure that the time and place of the meeting is suitable for the young people involved.

It is probably better if the councillor comes to your youth centre rather than you go to them.

At the meeting make notes, particularly if there is an issue that the councillor agrees to address in the future. You can hold them accountable for issues young people raise and any actions promised.

### **After the day**

After the meeting send a thank you letter outlining the points raised in the meeting.

Have a wrap-up discussion with the young people involved. Was there anything they didn't understand? Try to remain in contact with your councillor and keep them updated on things you are doing as well.



# My democracy

- Overview** This activity allows young people to create a personal record of the representatives and institutions that impact upon their lives. It can be added to as they learn more about politics and democracy.
- Materials** Worksheet supplied.
- Timing** Ongoing.
- Instructions** Encourage participants to fill in the 'My democracy' form by researching the people and institutions that represent them.



# My democracy worksheet

## England

My name is \_\_\_\_\_

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

My UK Parliamentary constituency is \_\_\_\_\_

My Member of Parliament (MP) is \_\_\_\_\_

My local council is \_\_\_\_\_

My ward is \_\_\_\_\_

My councillors are \_\_\_\_\_

My European Parliamentary region is \_\_\_\_\_

My Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) are \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**London only:** My Member of the London Assembly (MLA) is \_\_\_\_\_

(don't forget you have an extra 11 London-wide MLAs who represent you)

Three ways I could get involved in politics

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Three questions I have about politics

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Three things that I can do to improve my local area

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Three things that I would do if I was Prime Minister

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_



# My democracy worksheet

## Scotland

My name is \_\_\_\_\_

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

My Scottish Parliamentary constituency is \_\_\_\_\_

My constituency member of the Scottish Parliament (MSP) is \_\_\_\_\_

My regional constituency is \_\_\_\_\_

My regional MSPs are \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

My UK Parliamentary constituency is \_\_\_\_\_

My Member of Parliament (MP) is \_\_\_\_\_

My local council is \_\_\_\_\_

My ward is \_\_\_\_\_

My councillor is \_\_\_\_\_

My European Parliamentary region is \_\_\_\_\_

My Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) are \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Three ways I could get involved in politics

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Three questions I have about politics

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Three things that I can do to improve my local area

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Three things that I would do if I was Prime Minister

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_



# My democracy worksheet

## Wales

My name is \_\_\_\_\_

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

My National Assembly for Wales constituency is \_\_\_\_\_

My constituency Assembly Member (AM) is \_\_\_\_\_

My regional constituency is \_\_\_\_\_

My regional AMs are \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

My UK Parliamentary constituency is \_\_\_\_\_

My Member of Parliament (MP) is \_\_\_\_\_

My local council is \_\_\_\_\_

My ward is \_\_\_\_\_

My councillors are \_\_\_\_\_

My European Parliamentary region is \_\_\_\_\_

My Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) are \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Three ways I could get involved in politics

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Three questions I have about politics

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Three things that I can do to improve my local area

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Three things that I would do if I was Prime Minister

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_



# My democracy worksheet

## Northern Ireland

My name is \_\_\_\_\_

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

My Northern Ireland Assembly constituency is \_\_\_\_\_

My Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) are \_\_\_\_\_

My UK Parliamentary constituency is \_\_\_\_\_

My Member of Parliament (MP) is \_\_\_\_\_

My local council is \_\_\_\_\_

My ward is \_\_\_\_\_

My councillors are \_\_\_\_\_

My European Parliamentary region is \_\_\_\_\_

My Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) are \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Three ways I could get involved in politics

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Three questions I have about politics

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Three things that I can do to improve my local area

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Three things that I would do if I was Prime Minister

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

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# Political bingo

**Overview** This game works particularly well for groups of young people who do not know each other. Participants are given a bingo sheet of statements such as 'Find someone who has met a politician.' (see overleaf). They have to race around the room finding people who meet the criteria of each statement.

**Materials**

- One bingo sheet per person; and
- a small prize for the winner.

**Timing** About 10 minutes.

**Instructions** Placing people's names next to the statements is a good way of introducing young people to each other. The first to complete their card is the winner.

Medium levels of literacy are needed for this activity. You can change statements according to the skill level of participants.

This resource was adapted from the 'People Bingo' activity in The National Youth Agency's *Young People and Citizenship Handbook* by Vanessa Rogers.



# Political bingo sheet

<p>Find someone who has met a politician.</p> <p>Name _____</p>	<p>Find someone who can name the Prime Minister.</p> <p>Name _____</p>
<p>Find someone who has taken part in a mock election at school or college.</p> <p>Name _____</p>	<p>Find someone who has signed a petition.</p> <p>Name _____</p>
<p>Find someone who can name their Member of Parliament.</p> <p>Name _____</p>	<p>Find someone who has gone on a march.</p> <p>Name _____</p>
<p>Find someone who has had to make a speech.</p> <p>Name _____</p>	<p>Find someone who intends to vote or has voted at an election.</p> <p>Name _____</p>
<p>Find someone who has donated money to a charity in the last three months.</p> <p>Name _____</p>	<p>Find someone who is interested in environmental issues.</p> <p>Name _____</p>
<p>Find someone who believes that you should <b>not</b> be able to vote at 16 years old.</p> <p>Name _____</p>	<p>Find someone who can name four political parties.</p> <p>Name _____</p>
<p>Find someone who believes you <b>should</b> be able to vote at 16 years old.</p> <p>Name _____</p>	<p>Find someone who can name three countries in the European Union.</p> <p>Name _____</p>



# Political call my bluff

**Overview** Ever wondered what politicians are up to when they are filibustering? Or who on earth Blackrod or the Chief Whip are? Well now you can find out with our political call my bluff. Fleece your opponents as they try to match obscure political words and phrases to their correct meaning.

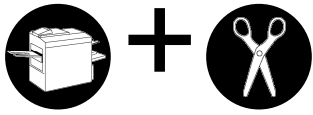
**Materials** ● Political call my bluff cards.

**Timing** Twenty to thirty minutes.

**Instructions** Split into teams. Each team is dealt an equal number of political call my bluff cards. One member of the team reads out the political word or phrase as well as three possible definitions. The opposition has one minute to consult before deciding what they think is the correct definition. The winners are the team who guess the most bluffs correctly.

We have provided some political bluffs below but feel free to make your own.

A good place to get inspiration is the BBC's A-Z of Parliament [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk\\_politics/a-z\\_of\\_parliament/default.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk_politics/a-z_of_parliament/default.stm).



# Political call my bluff cards

## Blackrod

- A A senior official who is responsible for the day-to-day management of the House of Lords. (correct)
- B The Speaker's second in command.
- C The man who looks after the pigeons roosting in the roof of the House of Commons.

## Chief Whip

- A The Prime Minister's personal assistant.
- B The person responsible for maintaining discipline in their political party in the House of Commons. (correct)
- C An old fashioned term used to refer to the head of the Opposition.

## Guillotine motion

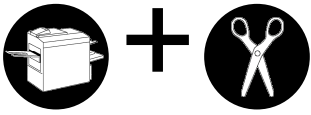
- A A barbers shop in the House of Commons.
- B A motion used to cut short a lengthy debate. (correct)
- C Something that removes an MP's privileges when they have been convicted of a criminal offence.

## Annunciators

- A Member of the Commons who announces the date of a general election.
- B Staff who advise MPs about how to pronounce difficult words.
- C Television screens in the UK Parliament that provide MPs with details of what is being discussed in the Commons and the Lords. (correct)

## Backbencher

- A An MP who is rewarded for their long service in the House of Commons.
- B MPs who are ordered to sit at the back of the Houses of Parliament because they have been naughty.
- C MPs who are not ministers or shadow ministers. (correct)



# Political call my bluff cards

## Gangway

- A The aisle in the middle of the Commons chamber. (correct)
- B The bridge crossing the moat that surrounds the House of Commons.
- C The public viewing gallery.

## Bisque

- A An old fashioned term for the Queen's Speech.
- B When MPs get permission to miss important votes or debates. (correct)
- C The gold lettering on an MP's letterhead.

## Green Paper

- A A research report produced by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.
- B The paper MPs use to write notes to each other during parliamentary sessions.
- C A document containing policy proposals which are debated before a final decision is made. (correct)

## Mace

- A A chemical in aerosols held by security guards throughout the House of Commons.
- B A metal bar used by the speaker to bang on the desk to impose order in the House of Commons.
- C An ornamental club, dating from the time of Charles II that symbolises the royal authority of Parliament. (correct)

## Portcullis

- A A metal gate that is locked at night to prevent people crossing the moat that surrounds the Houses of Parliament.
- B The official emblem of the Houses of Parliament. (correct)
- C The House of Commons' restaurant and bar.



# Political call my bluff cards

## Prorogation

- A When a parliamentary session is officially brought to a close by the Queen. (correct)
- B A term used to describe a heated argument between MPs.
- C A royal address from the reigning monarch to the House of Commons, more commonly known as the King or Queen's speech.

## A Writ

- A A party political broadcast.
- B Someone who follows the Prime Minister around all day writing down everything he says.
- C A legal document required before a general election can be held. (correct)

## Filibustering

- A When MPs secretly try to get members of their family voted into office.
- B When MPs try their hardest to waffle and make irrelevant points so that they can delay a debate. (correct)
- C When an MP brings their pet into parliament.



# Political lucky dip

**Overview** This game introduces the concept of politics and asks the group to consider which issues are, and are not, political.

**Materials**

- Sticky tape or elastic bands;
- Blu-tack;
- flipchart and markers;
- prizes such as sweets, pens and pencils or other items;
- a list of political items; and
- a large container.

**Timing** Fifteen to twenty minutes.

**Instructions** Prepare the lucky dip by typing up a list of political and non-political issues relevant to the group, for example public transport or housing, and attach them to prizes. Put the prizes in the container.

Draw two columns on the flipchart. Call one column 'political' and the other 'non-political'.

Invite participants to choose an item from the container and ask them if they think the item attached to the prize is political or not. The group are asked whether they agree or disagree and as a group stick the item to the flipchart in the appropriate column.

Once all the items are removed from the lucky dip ask the group to review their decisions about whether the items covered are political or not, and give them a final opportunity to move any of the items on the flipchart.

**Development ideas**

1. Wrap up objects and get participants to pick them out and decide which are political and which are not. For example, a lipstick could be categorised as political because of cosmetic testing on animals. Or, cut out pictures from a magazine, stick them on card and wrap them up. Participants need to decide whether the pictures are political or not.
2. Wrap up the prizes and tape a quiz question to it (use questions from other activities in this resource). If a participant gets the answer right they get to keep the prize.





# Political speed dating

**Overview** Political speed dating is a fun and light-hearted way for participants to interact with their representatives. Like conventional speed dating each session consists of a series of three minute 'dates' (or interactions). During this time you can ask your partner anything except their age, party affiliation and place of residence. The idea is to focus on what the person is really like. When the gong sounds, regardless of how engrossing the conversation, you move on.

**This activity sheet contains everything you need to run your own political speed dating session.**

**Materials**

- Photocopies of scoresheet (supplied); and
- pens.

**Who can take part?** This activity is aimed at any kind of decision makers and the people they represent. For ease of use we will refer to local councillors and participants, but the activity could just as easily be used to facilitate interaction between MPs and their constituents, school governors and students, youth workers and members of a club – the possibilities are endless.

Ideally, there should be an equal number of councillors and participants (if this is not the case, see the note overleaf).

**Where can it take place?** In theory political speed dating can take place anywhere. However, the ideal venue would promote an atmosphere of relaxed informality, for instance, a restaurant, youth club, student union, or night club.

## Preparing for the session

When setting up the event the following factors need to be kept in mind:

- Decide when and where you are going to hold the event. Remember to provide a comfortable, young person-friendly and safe environment served by public transport.
- Remember to organise refreshments.
- Introduce the idea to councillors carefully and decide how many to invite. Most will respond positively to an invitation and relish the chance to talk to young people in their area.
- Brief participants properly beforehand on what local councillors do and what they are responsible for (see the section Who is my local councillor?). This will enable participants to ask questions that councillors can answer!
- You will need enough chairs for each participant. Set these up in pairs in a clearly defined circuit.
- If any of the participants are particularly shy or unconfident pair them up with someone. Everyone should do their best to put other people at ease!

## The event

- As people arrive, have music playing and refreshments available.
- Encourage people to chat informally before the 'dating' begins.
- Gather all of the participants together and go through how the event will run.

**Then:**

1. Give each councillor a sticker with a letter on it.
2. Give each participant a sticker with a number on it and a political speed date score card.
3. Ask each participant to sit at a table and decide where each councillor will start.
4. Sound a bell to begin the three minutes of discussion.
5. When the bell sounds to finish discussions it is important to move on quickly to keep the process going.
6. Have a break after five 'dates' – it can be quite exhausting chatting so much! Give people a chance to mingle and compare their 'dates'!
7. Remind participants to fill in their scorecard after each 'date'. This will be the way to provide feedback to participants and councillors about the impressions participants have had of them.

8. At the end of the evening you can gather everyone involved in a circle and ask them to identify one surprising or positive thing that they have discovered in the course of the event. You can decide if it is appropriate to reveal the results of the participants' score cards.
9. Thank everyone for their time and effort. You can ask councillors and participants if they want to exchange e-mail addresses in case anyone wishes to extend their discussions further!

## Tips for chatting

- Be friendly and approachable, remember to smile!
- Have some questions in mind in case the conversation tails off.
- If you have a specific query or want a response to a particular question don't just launch into it straight away – give people time to warm up a bit first.
- Don't be rude if you don't like what you hear – everyone is entitled to their opinion even if it is very different to yours.

## The results

The overall results from the score cards can be calculated on the grid provided. An Excel spreadsheet is available from this website: [www.solentpeoplestheatre.com](http://www.solentpeoplestheatre.com)

## Note

In the event of having unequal numbers of councillors and participants, the smallest group should be the ones that remain seated. An overflow area will need to be created at the end of the circuit with refreshments for the participants while they wait until another seat becomes available.

**This game was designed and constructed by the Solent People's Theatre Company in conjunction with the Local Government Association.**

A DVD is available to help you run a political speed dating event. To get the DVD, contact:

Solent People's Theatre  
114 Victory House  
Somers Rd North  
Portsmouth PO1 1PJ  
[www.solentpeoplestheatre.com](http://www.solentpeoplestheatre.com)  
[info@solentpeoplestheatre.com](mailto:info@solentpeoplestheatre.com)  
Telephone 023 9282 6972



# Score sheet

Councillor		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
	Approachability										
	Listening skills										
Participant 1	Ability to understand issues										
	Ability to answer specific questions										
	Likelihood of voting for them										
	Approachability										
	Listening skills										
Participant 2	Ability to understand issues										
	Ability to answer specific questions										
	Likelihood of voting for them										
	Approachability										
	Listening skills										
Participant 3	Ability to understand issues										
	Ability to answer specific questions										
	Likelihood of voting for them										
	Approachability										
	Listening skills										
Participant 4	Ability to understand issues										
	Ability to answer specific questions										
	Likelihood of voting for them										
	Approachability										
	Listening skills										
Participant 5	Ability to understand issues										
	Ability to answer specific questions										
	Likelihood of voting for them										
	Approachability										
	Listening skills										
Participant 6	Ability to understand issues										
	Ability to answer specific questions										
	Likelihood of voting for them										
	Approachability										
	Listening skills										
Participant 7	Ability to understand issues										
	Ability to answer specific questions										
	Likelihood of voting for them										
	Approachability										
	Listening skills										
Participant 8	Ability to understand issues										
	Ability to answer specific questions										
	Likelihood of voting for them										
	Approachability										
	Listening skills										
Participant 9	Ability to understand issues										
	Ability to answer specific questions										
	Likelihood of voting for them										
	Approachability										
	Listening skills										
Participant 10	Ability to understand issues										
	Ability to answer specific questions										
	Likelihood of voting for them										
Overall score											
Average score											



# Political spin the bottle

- Overview** A warm up-activity which can be used to test your group's basic knowledge of politics and elections.
- Materials** Empty plastic bottle.
- Timing** Five minutes.
- Instructions** Ask the participants to sit on the floor in a circle, put the bottle in the middle and get one participant to ask a question.
- For example, 'who is the Prime Minister?' The participant then spins the bottle and the person it lands on has to answer.
- If they do not know the answer they can spin the bottle again or ask someone to help them out. If the group is not very confident or cannot think of questions then the youth worker should take on this role pitching the questions at a suitable level.
- Variations**
1. Try using politicians' names. For example, the spinner says: 'Winston' and the person it lands on has to say: 'Churchill'. Use photos or pictures to help you along.
  2. Pick a policy area such as health or education. Participants have to come up with one problem in this area. For example, 'school meals are not nutritious'. They then spin the bottle and the person it lands on has to come up with a policy that combats the problem.

This resource was adapted from an activity in The National Youth Agency's series by Vanessa Rogers.

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# Political squares

**Overview** This activity is a fun way to test general knowledge about politics among participants. It is useful to put participants into teams and provide a small prize.

**Materials**

- Question sheet; and
- letter matrix.

**Timing** Twenty-five minutes.

**Instructions** Put participants into two teams. Each team chooses a question square and is asked a question by the quizmaster. The aim is to join five squares in a row horizontally, vertically or diagonally. The first team to join up the squares are the winners.

Some of the questions are a bit tricky so it is good to do some preparation work first.



# Game board

H	M	E	L	R
B	M	S	A	P
C	D	E	F	T
W	B	R	C	O
I	T	B	P	Q

# Questions

What H is the official report of parliamentary business? **(Hansard)**

What H is the elected chamber of the UK Parliament? **(House of Commons)**

What M reports politics to the people? **(media)**

What M is a member of the government? **(minister)**

What E is held to choose our democratic representatives? **(election)**

What E is a type of poll taken on election day? **(exit)**

What L sit in the upper chamber of the Houses of Parliament? **(lords)**

What L is the political party associated with the colour red? **(Labour)**

What R is a public vote on one issue? **(referendum)**

What R is when MPs are on holiday? **(recess)**

What B do you put your vote in at a polling station? **(ballot box)**

What B is presented to the House of Commons from a red box? **(budget)**

What M is produced by a political party to outline their policies before an election? **(manifesto)**

What M is the first name of the UK's first female Prime Minister? **(Margaret)**

What S is the time when MPs make themselves available in their constituencies to answer enquiries from the public? **(surgery)**

What S is the 'chairperson' of the House of Commons? **(Speaker)**

What A is a change to a piece of legislation passing through the Houses of Parliament? **(amendment)**

What A is the name of a piece of legislation? **(act)**

What P are organisations that try to get you to vote for them at elections? **(political parties)**

What P is a group that tries to influence the government and political parties? **(pressure)**

What C happens after polls close in an election? **(count)**

What C is the political party associated with the colour blue? **(Conservative)**

What D do election candidates have to pay before standing for election? **(deposit)**

What D is the transfer of decision-making powers from one democratic institution to another? **(devolution)**

What E was increased to include another 10 member states in May 2004? **(European Union)**

What E is the youngest age at which you can vote? **(18)**

# Questions

What F is the Secretary of State responsible for international affairs? **(foreign)**

What F is the MP who has served the longest in the House of Commons? **(Father of the House)**

What T is the proportion of the registered electorate that vote in a given election? **(turnout)**

What T were first allowed into the House of Commons in 1988? **(television cameras)**

What W is the big red square cushion found in the middle of the House of Lords? **(woolsack)**

What W is an MP appointed by political parties in the Houses of Parliament to organise its business? **(whip)**

What B is held when an MP resigns or dies? **(by-election)**

What B divides up constituencies geographically? **(boundary)**

What R is the colour of the seats in the House of Lords? **(red)**

What R do you have to do if you wish to vote in elections in the UK? **(register)**

What C is the city in which the National Assembly for Wales is located? **(Cardiff)**

What C describes someone standing for election? **(candidate)**

What O is the party with the second most seats in the House of Commons? **(opposition)**

What O does the Speaker shout to keep MPs in line? **(order)**

What Q delivers a speech at the state opening of Parliament every year? **(Queen)**

What Q can MPs ask orally or in written form in the Houses of Parliament? **(questions)**

What P do you sign to show your support for an issue? **(petition)**

What P is the leader of the UK Government? **(Prime Minister)**

What B is where the Northern Ireland Assembly is based? **(Belfast)**

What B is a piece of proposed legislation? **(bill)**

What T was Guy Fawkes guilty of? **(treason)**

What T is an agreement between states? **(treaty)**

What I is a candidate who does not belong to a political party? **(independent)**

What I do select committees hold? **(inquiries)**



# Political true or false

**Overview** Use this activity at the start of a workshop to find out how much young people know about voting, or at the end to see what they have learnt in the session.

**Materials**

- Worksheets; and
- pens.

**Timing** Ten minutes.

**Instructions** Split participants into pairs or small groups. Photocopy and hand out the worksheet below.

	True	False	Don't know
1. The voting age was lowered from 21 to 18 in 1970.			
2. The older you are, the more likely you are to vote.			
3. If you pay council tax you are automatically registered to vote.			
4. You need to 'take your vote with you' by registering to vote every time you move house.			
5. You can vote by post in elections.			
6. You can only register to vote in one place.			
7. You don't have to take your poll card with you when you vote.			
8. You can cast your vote at any polling station.			
9. You can only register to vote during the annual canvass in the autumn.			
10. You have to be 18 to register to vote.			

## Answers

1. The voting age was lowered from 21 to 18 in 1970. **True.**  
A law was passed to lower the voting age for men and women to 18 in 1969. This took effect from 1970.
2. The older you are, the more likely you are to vote. **True.**  
75% of people aged 65 and over claim to have voted at the 2005 UK Parliamentary general election compared with 37% of 18–24 year olds.
3. If you pay council tax you are automatically registered to vote. **False.**  
Voter registration is not linked to council tax.
4. You need to 'take your vote with you' by registering to vote every time you move house. **True.**  
Send an electoral registration form to your local electoral office every time you change address. Visit [www.aboutmyvote.co.uk](http://www.aboutmyvote.co.uk) to download a form.
5. You can vote by post in elections. **True.**  
There are three ways you can vote in all elections: in person, by post or by proxy.
6. You can only register to vote in one place. **False.**  
If you are a student living away from home, you can register to vote at more than one address. So you can be registered where you live at home and at university. But you can only vote once in any single election.
7. You don't have to take your poll card with you when you vote. **True.**  
You don't need to take anything to the polling station to vote unless you live in Northern Ireland where you need to take an approved form of ID.
8. You can cast your vote at any polling station. **False.**  
You must vote at the polling station indicated on your polling card. If you can't make it to the polling station apply to vote by post or proxy.
9. You can only register to vote during the annual canvass in the autumn. **False.**  
You can register to vote at any time of the year. Visit [www.aboutmyvote.co.uk](http://www.aboutmyvote.co.uk) to download a form.
10. You have to be 18 to register to vote. **False.**  
You can register to vote if you are 17. Depending on the time of year; some 16 year-olds can also register to vote. The date that you turn 18 will be shown on the electoral register. You can vote as soon as you are 18. Contact your local electoral office for more information.



# Reasons to vote

**Overview** What would influence your decision to vote in an election? This activity provides an opportunity to explore reasons for voting. It allows participants to express their views and helps you to address negative ideas about voting in a structured way. The reason cards are based on responses from young people across the UK.

**Materials**

- Photocopies of 'reason cards' worksheet; and
- scissors.

**Timing** Ten minutes near the beginning and end of your workshop.

**Instructions** This activity should be approached carefully as it can potentially take a negative slant. We recommend that it is used alongside the What influences? activity.

Cut up the worksheet into individual reason cards and lay them out on a table so the group can see them all. You or one of the young people can read out each one in turn, if necessary. Ask participants to pick a card that reflects their opinion on voting. They should put this card in their pocket until the end of the workshop.

These reasons are based on group discussions with young people from across the UK, but if anyone feels their opinion isn't reflected they can make their own card. If you are using this with the What influences? activity, ask them to pick their top three influences as well.

At the end of your workshop ask participants to remove their cards and explain in turn:

- why they chose their cards;
- who or what they were influenced by;
- if they have found out more about how to vote;
- if their opinion has changed during the workshop;
- what will help them make up their minds between the parties or candidates; and
- if they want to keep their card, or if they'd prefer to swap it!



# Reasons cards

## Reasons to vote

If you don't vote you shouldn't complain.	It is my right in a democratic society.	It gives you a say in how things are run.
To break the stereotype that young people are not interested in politics.	It is the responsibility of a person living in a country to vote.	It doesn't take long and it's not much of an effort to vote.
People died so that we can have the vote.	Politicians are in charge of a lot of our money. Voting influences how it is spent.	Voting is a way of representing my views on issues.
The winners represent you regardless of whether you voted for them or not, so it is better to be involved in the decision.	Elected politicians make decisions that affect my life so it is important that I help choose them.	You can get rid of people that you don't agree with.
My vote counts as much as anyone else's.	If I don't vote, people who I might not agree with will be making the decision for me.	Many people across the world don't have the right to vote.

## Reasons not to vote

I am not registered to vote.	None of my friends will vote.	I am not interested in politics.
My vote won't make a difference.	I don't know who to vote for.	All political parties are the same.
I don't understand what politicians do.	I don't know how to vote.	It takes a lot of effort to vote.



# Ringling the changes

- Overview** An activity to get young people thinking about which democratic institutions are responsible for the different issues affecting their lives and what they can do to influence change.
- Materials**
- Worksheet provided; and
  - pens.
- Timing** Twenty minutes.
- Instructions** As a group or individually, start by filling out the 'Things we would like to see changed' column. Then discuss which democratic institution you think is responsible and how you would get your representatives to act on the issue.



# Worksheet

Things we would like to see changed	Who can change this?	How can we make a difference?



# Single transferable fruit

- Overview** This game looks at the single transferable vote (STV) voting system used in Northern Ireland for local government, Northern Ireland Assembly and European Parliamentary elections. It attempts to explain a complicated system in simple steps. We have used fruit in this example, but you can use anything that appeals to group participants, such as sports teams, music artists, etc.
- Materials**
- STV ballot papers for each participant – template attached;
  - STV count table – template attached;
  - STV bar chart – template attached;
  - signs for each fruit name;
  - flipchart and pens; and
  - calculator.
- Timing** Fifteen to twenty minutes.
- Instructions** An STV count takes place in stages. Each stage is an opportunity to count the number of votes each candidate has, transfer surplus votes from elected candidates to others, or eliminate the candidate with the least votes. The STV count table helps the group understand what action needs to be taken at each stage and the bar chart helps them to visualise the results.
- Use the working example to help you understand the process. In order to involve the group in the count process it is helpful to draw up the STV count table and bar chart on flipchart paper and add the totals as the count progresses.
- It is also helpful if the participants move with their ballot paper throughout the count. So, when Raspberry is eliminated in the example overleaf the participants for whom Raspberry was first preference move to their next available preference in the room. Do this by placing a sign for each fruit around the room.

This game was adapted from the Thinkbucket website [www.thinkbucket.org](http://www.thinkbucket.org).

## A working example

Using the STV count table and bar chart below as an example we will now apply the STV system.

Give participants a copy of the STV ballot paper and ask them to rank the candidates, which in this example are fruits, in order of preference. They must place a 1 beside their first preference and can rank as many candidates as they wish. Once all participants have completed their ballot paper the count can begin.

Firstly, the total number of valid votes must be counted, and the quota calculated using the following formula:

$\frac{\text{Total number of valid votes} = 30}{\text{Number of available seats} = 3 ( + 1 ) = 4}$	Is equal to 7 remainder 2	Then discard the remainder and add 1 = ( 7 + 1 ) = 8
--	------------------------------	---

In this example the quota, or number of votes required to be elected, is eight. Enter this number, the total number of valid votes and number of seats in the STV count table.

Second, sort all 30 ballot papers into their 1st preference candidates and complete stage one of the count table. At the end of Stage 1, Apple has received 10 first preference votes and is deemed elected. Mango has received no votes and is eliminated. Because Apple has received two votes over the quota, we must now transfer the surplus votes to the remaining candidates.

A surplus is when a candidate receives votes over and above the quota. Any votes received over the quota must be transferred to other candidates at the appropriate transfer value. The transfer value is calculated using the following formula:

$\frac{\text{Total number of surplus votes} = 2}{\text{Total number of votes received} = 10}$	Transfer value = 0.2
---	----------------------

Because the second preference of each ballot paper could be different, it is not possible to simply choose two ballot papers from Apple's 10 first preference votes and transfer those votes to their second preference. Instead we must transfer all votes to the second preference at the transfer value of 0.2. This is shown in the count table at Stage 2.

At the end of Stage 2 no other candidate has reached the quota. We must now eliminate the candidate with the lowest number of votes, Raspberry, and transfer all votes to the next available preference on each ballot paper. Votes must be transferred at the same value as they have been received, thus Raspberry has two votes at a full value of one, and three votes at a value of 0.2. These are transferred in Stage 3.

No candidate reaches the quota following the transfer of Raspberry's votes and so again we must eliminate the candidate with the least votes, Orange. Orange received two votes at a full value of one, and seven votes at a value of 0.2. These are transferred in Stage 4.

On receipt of two full votes from Orange, Pineapple reaches the quota and is deemed elected. We have now successfully elected two candidates and have only one further candidate to elect.

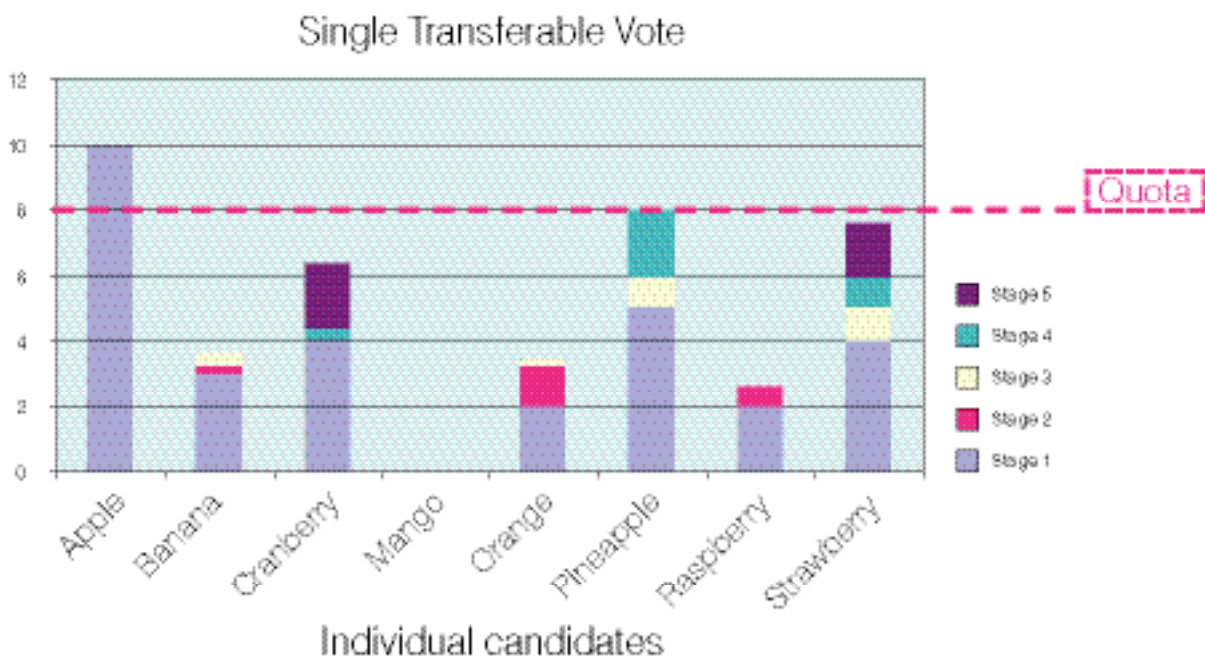
As Pineapple did not exceed the quota there are no further votes to be transferred. There are three remaining candidates in the election, and the candidate with the least votes must now be eliminated.

In Stage 5 Banana is eliminated and, as in previous stages, votes are transferred to the remaining candidates at the value at which they were received. Neither of the remaining candidates has obtained the quota but as there are now only two candidates remaining for one place there is no need to go any further. The candidate with the higher total, Strawberry, is deemed elected.

The STV election is now complete. Below is an example of the STV count table and bar chart that will help you complete the process. The total counter on the bottom of the table is a helpful way of ensuring that you have counted, transferred and calculated any surplus values correctly.

## Count bar graph

Below is an example of the bar graph that can be used to display the results of the count as it happens.



## Count table

Below is a completed example of the count table that can be used to record the results of the count as it happens.

Single Transferable Vote count table							Date of poll: March, 2005				
Valid votes: 30		Number of seats: 3				Quota: 8					
Names of candidates	Stage 1	Stage 2		Stage 3		Stage 4		Stage 5		Stage 6	
	1 <sup>st</sup> preference votes	Transfer of Apple's surplus at value of 0.2		Transfer of Raspberry, 2 votes at 1, 3 votes at 0.2		Transfer of Orange, 2 votes at 1, 7 votes at 0.2		Transfer of Banana, 3 3 votes at 1, 3 votes at 0.2		Elimination of Cranberry	
		Result		Result		Result		Result			
Apple	10	E *	8	E	8	E	8	E	8	E	8
Banana	3	1x 0.2	3.2	2x 0.2	3.6	0	3.6	Eliminated		----	----
Cranberry	4	0	4	0	4	2x 0.2	4.4	2	6.4	Eliminated	
Mango	0	Eliminated		----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----
Orange	2	6x 0.2	3.2	1x 0.2	3.4	Eliminated		----	----	----	----
Pineapple	5	0	5	1	6	2	8	E	8	E	8
Raspberry	2	3x 0.2	2.6	Eliminated		----	----	----	----	----	----
Strawberry	4	0	4	1	5	5x 0.2	6	1.6	7.6	E	
Total	30		30		30		30		30		

\* E = Elected

## STV ballot paper

Below is an example of the STV ballot paper used in this election.

Candidate Name	Preference
APPLE	
BANANA	
CRANBERRY	
MANGO	
ORANGE	
PINEAPPLE	
RASPBERRY	
STRAWBERRY	





# Spot the politics

**Overview** Get young people thinking about how politics impacts on their daily lives.

**Materials**

- Video or DVD player; and
- a video or DVD of a soap opera. Make sure you have an episode that is filmed in a variety of locations like the pub, the square, the market or on the bus.

**Timing** Ten to thirty minutes

**Instructions** Start the video and ask young people to yell 'politics!' and stop the video whenever they think they can identify an issue, location or conversation that involves politics.

Use this as an opportunity to explore the issue being shown and how the participants feel about it.

Ask the young people to identify which democratic institution(s) is responsible for the problem or issue.

Once the discussion has finished restart the video and continue with the activity.

Alternatively, you can use the worksheet below to ask young people to identify the 'politics' in the soap opera. After 15 minutes you can stop the programme and ask them to compare sheets. Have they identified the same issues as each other? Who has spotted the most politics?



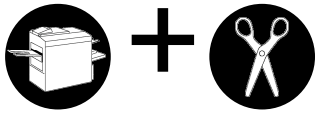
Scene and characters	Example of 'politics'	Democratic institution responsible for this issue
Dennis having a pint of beer in the Queen Vic in the afternoon.	Drinking laws and licensing restrictions impact on Dennis.	Overall policy is the responsibility of the UK Government. Local councils are responsible for the licensing of pubs in their area.
Walford market: Martin is selling fruit and vegetables.	As a self-employed person running a business Martin is subject to trading standard regulations and limits as to when and where he can sell his goods.	Trading standards laws are made by Parliament and are enforced by a government agency.



# Status quota

- Overview** The aim of this game is to help the group think through skills or qualities required in leadership. Often the words power and credibility have different meanings for different people: this helps the group refine their understanding of these words and to explore these qualities in relation to politicians.
- Materials**
- Status quota template for each participant (provided);
  - pens or colouring pencils; and
  - an A4 printout of each of the five words.
- Timing** Fifteen minutes.
- Instructions** Each participant is given 20 'credits' that they have to allocate between each of the five qualities:
- power;
  - credibility;
  - authority;
  - status; and
  - popularity.
- Give participants a template to fill in and ask them to decide how to split up their credits. For example, if they feel that all the qualities are equally important they would allocate four credits to each.
- Place pages with each of the five qualities on the floor of the room. Then ask young people to stand by the word they gave the highest score and discuss how they came to their decision.
- How did you make your decision?
  - Do you feel your local politicians meet your requirements?
  - Is there a difference between the qualities that men and women prioritise?

This game has been reproduced with permission of Thinkbucket [www.thinkbucket.org](http://www.thinkbucket.org).



# Status quota template

Photocopy a status quota card for each participant and ask them to place an 'X' in the boxes next to the word they feel is most important. They have up to 20 'Xs' or credits.

Power	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Credibility	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Authority	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Status	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Popularity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Power	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Credibility	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Authority	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Popularity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Power	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Credibility	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Authority	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Status	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Popularity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



# Storytime

**Overview** Develop ideas and stories about important political issues.

**Timing** Fifteen to twenty minutes.

**Instructions** The aim is to weave a story around an issue to explore different ways of solving it. Everyone in the group has ownership of the story and has to work together to keep it going.

It is best to keep the game moving as quickly as possible to encourage people to think on their feet and come up with creative solutions to a problem.

Invite the participants to sit in a large circle.

Get them to choose an issue or idea the group can tackle.

Start the story. Making the first statement quite contentious can help start off the game! Then pass the story to the person sitting on your left – you should ask for contributions of around about 20 seconds and ask the participants to think of a cliffhanging end to their contribution to help the next person.

This carries on until everyone in the circle has had a chance to contribute. By the time the story arrives back at the start some kind of resolution to the issue should have been reached. If the group wishes to continue with their story you can send it back around the circle the other way.

See overleaf for an example of this activity.

## Storytime example

The local council has decided to close down a local youth club. The council thinks that the money could be better spent on other things including an extension to the local sports centre...

... but the council did not count on how strongly young people who go to the youth club felt about having their own space...

... after all not everyone is into sport and the sports centre has already had loads of money given to it recently. Other people were also concerned that closing the youth club would mean that young people had nowhere to go...

... and youth workers would lose their jobs! Since the youth club has been running in the area there have been less complaints about people hanging about and being annoying...

... we decided to get together and complain to our local councillors. They were sympathetic but explained that the sports centre would be of benefit to all people that live in the area not just young people....

And so on...

It is important to explore different ways of trying to tackle an issue or problem in your local community with the participants. Your story can also go off at a tangent at any time to explore other issues and problems.

**This resource was adapted from the 'Storytime' activity in The National Youth Agency's Act Out by Vanessa Rogers.**



# The 'P' word

- Overview** This activity uses scripts from The Electoral Commission's radio campaign Voter Awareness to get young people thinking about how politics affects almost every aspect of life.
- Materials** Scripts.
- Timing** Twenty minutes preparation.  
Five to ten minutes performance.
- Instructions** Ask participants to act out the scripts provided. Encourage participants to use different accents and tones of voice. As a group, discuss what the adverts mean.
- Development** In groups, ask participants to write and record their own radio adverts to encourage people to vote.  
You can listen to the actual adverts on The Electoral Commission website [www.electoralcommission.org.uk](http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk).



## Script one: Favourite colour

**Characters:** Presenter  
Jim  
Tracy  
Malcolm  
Voiceover

**Presenter:** (sounds upbeat) Hi, I'm Frank Morton and you're tuned to Radio Chit Chat, the phone-in show for people who don't do politics. If it's remotely political we won't go there. On line one we have Jim, Jim from Blackpool.

**Jim:** Err yeah I wanted to talk about the price of –

**Presenter:** Oh let me stop you there Jim. You're getting a bit political now. Let's go to our next caller, Tracy.

**Tracy:** Yes I just wanted to mention that our local playground –

**Presenter:** I'll have to stop you there as well Tracy. On line three we have Malcolm.

**Malcolm:** Well I discovered what my favourite colour is.

**Presenter:** Really, what is it?

**Malcolm:** It's beige.

**Presenter:** Why beige?

**Malcolm:** Well I was in a supermarket when I was seven and I saw a beige carrier bag and I quite liked it.

**Presenter:** Now that's the kind of caller we like here on Radio Chit Chat. If anyone else has a favourite colour they'd like to tell me about call in now.

**Voiceover:** If you don't do politics, there's not much you do do.



## Script two: Peas

**Characters:** Presenter  
Joan  
Kevin  
Voiceover

**Presenter:** (sounds upbeat) Welcome back to Radio Chit Chat – the call-in show that doesn't drone on about politics. We'll continue our scouring pad discussion at the same time next week but now, let's go to the phones. Line one, Joan.

**Joan:** Have other listeners noticed that organic food –

**Presenter:** (klaxon or bell) Order in the house. You drifted into politics there Joan. Let's go to our next caller, Kevin.

**Kevin:** Does no-one seem to care about the watershed these days?

**Presenter:** (klaxon or bell) Yawwwwwn. I can hear the 'p' word there Kevin. We've received a text from Phil. Peas, which are better, marrowfat or mushy? At last – a topic we can discuss. It's over to you, listeners.

**Voiceover:** If you don't do politics, there's not much you do do.



## Script three: Drawing pins

**Characters:** Presenter  
George  
Sarah  
Steve  
Voiceover

**Presenter:** (trying to sound upbeat) I'm Frank Patterson and you're tuned to Chit Chat – the phone show that won't bore you by talking about (yawn) politics. I'm joined in the studio today by Martin Hamshell, a drawing pin expert. On line one we have George, George from Birmingham.

**George:** Hello Frank. I heard that drawing pins were banned in some –

**Presenter:** Oh contentious, let me stop you there George. On line two we have Sarah.

**Sarah:** In Europe –

**Presenter:** Get off your soap-box Sarah! Line three, Steve.

**Steve:** Why are some drawing pins shinier than others?

**Presenter:** Good question Steve. I'll hand you over to the man in the know, Martin.

**Voiceover:** If you don't do politics, there's not much you do do.



## Script four: Cup holders

**Characters:** Presenter  
Pramod  
Julie  
Mike  
Voiceover

**Presenter:** (trying to sound upbeat) Welcome to Radio Chit Chat – the politics-free chat show. Yes listeners, if it's political we won't go there. Let's take our first caller, Pramod. Pramod is in a service station on the B347.

**Pramod:** Yeah hi Frank. I thought that I would just warn people that the road is very congested.

**Presenter:** Sorry Pramod, our listeners are not interested. Far too political. Now we have Julie on line 4.

**Julie:** It's quite hard to find a parking space –

**Presenter:** Julie, Julie, this show is for people who don't do politics. Our last caller for the afternoon is Mike.

**Mike:** Have you ever noticed that some cars don't have enough cup holders?

**Presenter:** That's very interesting Mike, do go on.

**Voiceover:** If you don't do politics, there's not much you do do.



## Script five: Wood chip

**Characters:** Presenter  
Joyce  
Tony  
Bill  
Voiceover

**Presenter:** (trying to sound upbeat) You're tuned to Radio Chit Chat – the call-in show that doesn't let politics get in the way of great conversation. We'll continue our rice versus couscous discussion at the same time next week but now, let's go to the phones.

**Joyce:** I spend a lot of time gardening.

**Presenter:** Yes Joyce?

**Joyce:** Since I retired –

**Presenter:** Oh you've gone all political on us now Joyce. Line seven, Tony from West Yorkshire.

**Tony:** I live in what used to be a small mining community and –

**Presenter:** Woah, woah Tony! On line four we have Bill, Bill from Bracknell.

**Bill:** Yes Frank I think wood chip wallpaper is highly underrated.

**Presenter:** Now we're talking. I'm going to throw that one out to you listeners. Wood chip – you would or you wouldn't? Ha ha ha...

**Voiceover:** If you don't do politics, there's not much you do do.



# Turning opinion into action

- Overview** This activity gets young people thinking about issues affecting their lives and how they can use the democratic process to act on their opinions.
- Materials** Worksheets provided.
- Timing** About 20 minutes.
- Instructions** Photocopy and cut up the opinion and action cards. Divide participants into small groups and give each group one set of cards. Get them to lay the opinions out first and ask them to match up the actions and opinions that they think go together best.
- Come back together as a group and brainstorm what issues affect young people in your area. Get participants to think about how they can use democracy to turn these opinions into actions.



# Worksheets

## Opinion

We need some more leisure facilities and five-a-side football pitches. We haven't got anywhere to go.

## Action

Approach the local council and suggest that they consult young people on activities in the area.

## Opinion

I always get charged more than I should on the bus.

## Action

Ask your local councillor to help you complain to the bus company. Ask for an ID scheme to be introduced.

## Opinion

I strongly agree with the policies that one of the political parties has put forward in its manifesto.

## Action

Join that political party.



# Worksheets

## Opinion

I think everyone should have a say in who represents us.

## Action

Vote in elections and encourage your friends and family to vote as well.

## Opinion

I don't think Parliament listens to young people enough and I heard there is an inquiry being held into youth homelessness.

## Action

Give evidence to a Parliamentary select committee on your experiences of housing or homelessness.

## Opinion

I'm concerned about drug use in my area and want to know what is being done about it.

## Action

Go to your MP's surgery to find out what they are doing about it.



# Worksheets

## Opinion

I want to see how Parliament works and get my MP to hear about issues that concern young people in my area.

## Action

Write to your MP requesting a visit to Parliament. Your MP can arrange to meet you there to discuss the issues that matter to you.

## Opinion

I believe very strongly in one of the political parties and want to make a difference in my local area.

## Action

Stand for election for the local council.

## Opinion

I don't feel safe when I go out at night and think there should be more CCTV on the street.

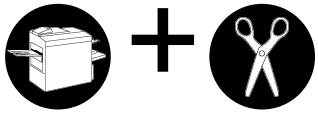
## Action

Make a petition to give to your local council and your MP. Organise a public meeting so you can get people to support your campaign.



# Vote by numbers

- Overview** Many young people will be unsure on what happens once they step into a polling station. This activity helps them to understand the voting process.
- Materials** Picture cards provided.
- Timing** About 10 minutes.
- Instructions** Lay the picture cards at random on the floor. Ask participants to place them in the correct order. Information about the images can be found on the worksheet. For more information on voting, including voting by post or proxy, see *How do I vote?* in the *Democracy Cookbook* Ingredients.
- Note** In Scotland, polling stations are called polling places. In Northern Ireland, you must bring one of the following forms of identification with you to be able to vote:
- A current UK or European Union passport;
  - A Translink Senior SmartPass (bus pass for people aged 65+);
  - a current photographic UK driving license; or
  - an electoral identity card.



# Worksheets

1. Register to vote

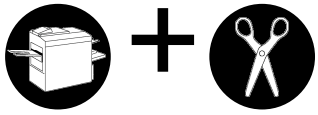


2. Receive your poll card



3. Head to the polling station



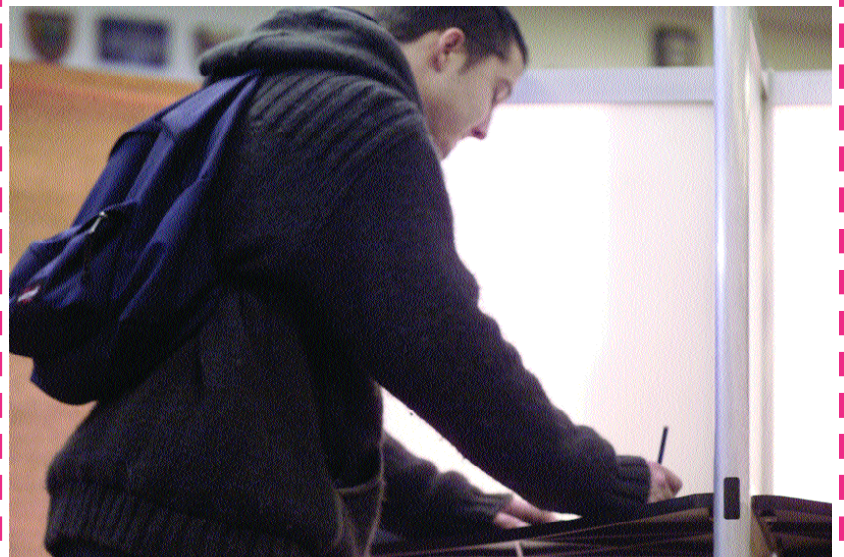


# Worksheets

4. Collect your ballot paper

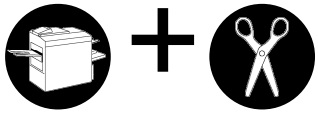


5. Go into a polling booth



6. Mark your ballot paper





# Worksheets

7. Cast your vote



8. Polls close



9. The count





# Voting timeline – Northern Ireland

- Overview** This short game helps the group understand the background to the Northern Ireland Assembly.
- Materials** Worksheets provided.
- Timing** Fifteen minutes.
- Instructions** You can use this resource in two ways.
1. Print each date on an A4 page and lay the pages out chronologically on the floor. Print out the events on separate pieces of paper and hand out. Ask young people to guess which date each event belongs to by placing it on the correct date.
  2. Break the group into pairs and hand out the timeline worksheet provided. Hand out one set of events per pair and ask young people to guess which date each event belongs to by placing it on the correct date.

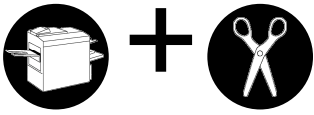
This game has been adapted from the leaflet A Guide to the Northern Ireland Assembly. For more information about the Assembly, visit [www.niassembly.gov.uk](http://www.niassembly.gov.uk).



# Timeline

Hand out a copy to each group.

1921	1922	1932	1939–45
1972	1973–4	1973–98	1982–6
1995	1998	10 April 1998	22 May 1998
25 June 1998	1 July 1998	31 July 1998	29 November 1999
2 December 1999	6 December 1999	14 October 2002	26 November 2003



# Event sheet

Cut this sheet up and place the right event on the right year.

Northern Ireland Parliament first established.	Construction of Parliament building begins.	Parliament building officially opened by then Prince of Wales (later King Edward VIII).	The Parliament building houses an RAF operations room during WW2 and the whole building is painted black using tar.
Northern Ireland Parliament dissolved.	A power-sharing executive is formed as part of the Sunningdale Agreement.	Parliament building is used by Northern Ireland civil service.	As part of an experiment in devolution the Northern Ireland Assembly is first established.
The Assembly Chamber is destroyed in an accidental fire.	Restoration completed following fire.	The Belfast Agreement, also known as the Good Friday Agreement is signed by political parties and British and Irish governments.	In a referendum the Belfast Agreement is endorsed by a majority of people in Northern Ireland.
First elections to new Northern Ireland Assembly.	The new Assembly first meets in shadow form.	House of Commons introduces legislation to give effect to the Belfast Agreement.	Ministers, chairpersons and deputy chairpersons appointed to the new Assembly.
Power officially devolved to new Northern Ireland Assembly.	First meeting of Assembly with full devolved powers.	Northern Ireland Assembly suspended.	Second elections to the Northern Ireland Assembly.

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# Voting timeline – Scotland

- Overview** This activity is designed to highlight key events in the history of democracy in Scotland.
- Materials** Worksheets provided.
- Timing** Fifteen minutes.
- Instructions** You can use this resource in two ways:
1. Print each date on an A4 page and lay the pages out chronologically on the floor. Print out the events on separate pieces of paper and hand out. Ask young people to guess which date each event belongs to by placing it on the correct date.
  2. Break the group into pairs and hand out the timeline worksheet provided. Hand out one set of events per pair and ask young people to guess which date each event belongs to by placing it on the correct date.



# Timeline

Hand out a copy to each group.

1314	1320	1603	1641
1651	1660	1707	1979
1997	1998	6 May 1999	12 May 1999
2000	2003	2004	2005



# Event sheet

Cut this sheet up and place the right event on the right year.

Scotland defeats England in the Battle of Bannockburn. This ensures Scottish independence.	The Declaration of Arbroath sets out the monarch's relationship with the people of Scotland.	James VI, King of Scotland, becomes King of England. Scotland and England are unified under one monarch.	Scotland's first official Parliament building is opened.
Scotland loses against Cromwell in the Battle of Worcester and the Scottish Parliament is dissolved. Scotland is allowed to send 30 MPs to Parliament in Westminster, England.	Monarchy is restored. The Scottish Parliament is allowed to meet the year after.	The Act of Union. Scottish and English Parliaments merge to establish a British Parliament.	In a referendum Scotland votes yes to devolution but fails to meet the 40% rule.*
In a referendum the overwhelming majority of voters in Scotland support devolution.	The Scotland Act receives Royal Assent. This outlines the powers and responsibilities of the new Scottish Parliament.	Scottish Parliamentary elections are held for the first time.	The Scottish Parliament meets for the first time in 300 years.
Construction of a new Scottish Parliament building at Holyrood begins.	Scottish Parliamentary elections are held for the second time.	The Queen opens the new Scottish Parliament building in Holyrood.	The age of candidacy for local elections in Scotland is reduced from 21 to 18.

\* The '40 per cent rule' or 'Cunningham amendment', meant that if less than 40% of the electorate voted 'Yes' in the 1979 referendum, then devolution could not happen and a Scottish Parliament would not be established.





# Voting timeline – UK

- Overview** This activity is designed to highlight the key events in the history of democracy in the UK.
- Materials** Worksheets provided.
- Timing** Fifteen minutes.
- Instructions** You can use this resource in two ways:
1. Print each date on an A4 page and lay the pages out chronologically on the floor. Print out the events on separate pieces of paper and hand out. Ask young people to guess which date each event belongs to by placing it on the correct date.
  2. Break the group into pairs and hand out the timeline worksheet provided. Hand out one set of events per pair and ask young people to guess which date each event belongs to by placing it on the correct date.

This resource was adapted from the voting timeline activity by The Citizenship Foundation 2003.



# Timeline

Hand out a copy to each group.

Thirteenth century	1430	1430–1831	1832
1867	1872	1884	1892
1913	February 1918	November 1918	1919
1928	1969	1979	1997



# Event sheet

Cut this sheet up and place the right event on the right year.

<p>Two knights are elected from each county by the county courts. Not all local communities can afford to elect representatives. This results in inequalities in representation across the country.</p>	<p>Only owners of freehold land worth over forty shillings a year (a great deal of money in those days!) are eligible to vote in county elections.</p>	<p>About one in every five adult males can vote. In some areas every male head of household is eligible to vote. In other areas voting is restricted to those who pay local taxes or are in possession of property.</p>	<p>The Reform Act cleans up corruption in the voting system. Every male who pays more than £10 a year in rates or rent can now vote. This raises the number of eligible voters by 38%.</p>
<p>The next Reform Act enables over two and a half million men to vote, but this only applies to certain areas. The Act denies the vote to anybody claiming poor relief.</p>	<p>The 'secret ballot' is introduced. Before this the entire community would be watching to see how people voted on polling day!</p>	<p>The next Reform Act means that over 50% of the adult male population over 21 can now vote.</p>	<p>Dadabhai Naoroji, the first MP of Indian origin is elected.</p>
<p>Emily Davison runs in front of the King's horse at the Epsom Derby to protest for votes for women. She is trampled and dies a few days later.</p>	<p>The Representation of the People Act gives the vote to women over the age of 30.</p>	<p>A bill is passed making women eligible to become Members of Parliament.</p>	<p>Lady Astor wins the Plymouth by-election and is the first woman to take her seat in Parliament.</p>
<p>The Equal Franchise Act lowers the voting age for women to 21.</p>	<p>The voting age is lowered to 18.</p>	<p>The first female Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, is elected.</p>	<p>Paul Boateng becomes the first black person to be given ministerial office in a UK Government.</p>

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# Voting timeline – Wales

- Overview** This activity is designed to highlight key events in the history of democracy in Wales.
- Materials** Worksheets provided.
- Timing** Fifteen minutes.
- Instructions** You can use this resource in two ways.
1. Print each year on an A4 page and lay the pages out chronologically on the floor. Print out the events on separate pieces of paper and hand out. Ask young people to guess which year each event belongs to by placing it on the correct year.
  2. Break the group into pairs and hand out the timeline worksheet provided. Hand out one set of events per pair and ask young people to guess which year each event belongs to by placing it on the correct year.



# Timeline

Hand out a copy to each group.

1404	1536	1964
1979	1997	1998
1999	2003	2004



# Event sheet

Cut this sheet up and place the right event on the right year.

<p>Wales' first Parliament is set up by Owain Glyndwr in Machynlleth.</p>	<p>The Act of Union, a series of laws, formally unites England and Wales. Counties and boroughs in Wales are given representation in the English Parliament and English, not Welsh, becomes the first language.</p>	<p>The Wales Office and the post of the Secretary of State for Wales is created by the Government.</p>
<p>In a referendum the people of Wales vote against establishing an Assembly for Wales.</p>	<p>A second referendum on devolution is held in Wales. The majority of voters support the establishment of an Assembly for Wales.</p>	<p>The Government of Wales Act is officially passed setting up a National Assembly for Wales.</p>
<p>The first elections are held to choose the members of the Assembly for Wales.</p>	<p>The Assembly holds its second set of elections.</p>	<p>The Richard Commission on the powers of the National Assembly recommends that the Assembly be given full lawmaking powers by 2011.</p>

















# What do MPs do all day?

- Overview** An activity to get participants thinking about the work of their Member of Parliament.
- Materials**
- Photocopies of worksheets supplied; and
  - scissors.
- Timing** About 15 minutes for the main activity and 20 minutes for the development activity.
- Instructions** Divide the group into pairs or small groups. Provide each with a timing sheet and a set of task cards.
- Make sure that everyone understands what the tasks are before they start.
- Ask them to work out which tasks they think their MP should do and at what time of day. There are more tasks than hours in the day so the least important tasks will have to be left out. Also ask them to think about where their MP is – can they make a meeting in their constituency in the morning and a vote in Parliament in the afternoon?
- Come back together as a group and discuss which tasks participants have prioritised and why, and if they feel that there are any tasks missing.
- Development** Ask participants to ‘act out’ their politician’s day. This could include a conversation with a constituent in a surgery, a debate in Parliament, or a photo opportunity. Encourage them to be as creative as possible!



# What do MPs do all day?

8am 	9am 	10am 
11am 	12 noon 	1pm 
2pm 	3pm 	4pm 
5pm 	6pm 	7pm 



Answer emails from your constituents.

Run a surgery for your constituents (answer questions from people in the local area).

Write an article for your local newspaper.

Have coffee with someone important in your political party.

Visit a local hospital.

Meet with representatives from an international business and try to persuade them to invest in your area.

Go for a run.

Go to a press launch of a new initiative.

Visit a local school and answer questions from pupils.

Ask a question in Parliament about your local hospital.

Attend a branch meeting of your local party members.

Vote in Parliament for the introduction of a new law.

Attend a Select Committee about after-school provision for young people.

Read the newspapers.

Have lunch.

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# What influences?

- Overview** How do you decide who to vote for? This activity is designed to help participants think about the different influences on how they would vote.
- Materials** Photocopies of worksheet provided.
- Timing** Ten to twenty minutes.
- Instructions** Photocopy and cut out the influences cards on the worksheet provided. Divide participants into small groups and give them one set of cards each.
- It may be helpful to start with a group 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 on the weekend?
- Then move on to discuss what might influence their decision-making about politics. This may help young people to connect the decisions they make about politics more readily to other aspects of their everyday lives.
- Ask participants to imagine for a moment 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 group and discuss why they picked particular influences. Ask if there are any other things that might influence them and add them to the cards for the next time you run this activity.



# Worksheet

The views of my  
parents, guardians  
or carers

The views of  
my friends

Who is most popular  
in the opinion polls

Political party leaders

The state of  
the economy

The election  
campaign of a  
political party



+



# Worksheet

What I have read  
in newspapers

Talking to a political  
party campaigner  
when they knock  
on my door

My personal  
experience of the  
political party or  
candidate

What I have seen  
on the television

How the  
candidates look

The political  
parties' policies  
or manifestos



# Worksheet

Trustworthiness  
of a candidate or  
political party

Celebrities  
that endorse a  
political party

Meeting a candidate

My job

A candidate's  
former job

My gender



+



# Worksheet

A candidate's  
gender

My religion

A candidate's  
religion

A candidate's  
educational  
background

Where I live

Where a  
candidate lives



# Worksheet

My age

A candidate's age

My background

A candidate's  
background

What I have read  
on the internet

Leaflets about  
a candidate



# Who's got the power?

**Overview** This activity explores who has power in our society.

**Materials** Printed list of character profiles. These can be adapted to fit the number of young people and local context.

**Timing** Ten to twenty minutes.

**Instructions** Using the template supplied, write a character profile for each group member. Use the examples we've provided if you want.

Ask the group to stand in the centre of the room and indicate an invisible line on the floor that represents a power scale. One end of the scale represents those with the most power and the opposite end those with the least power.

Give everyone a character profile and ask them to read it out. Ask each participant to stand on the power scale in the order of who they believe has the most power.

Have a group discussion about why the group arranged themselves in this order, and the power relationships that they believe exist.

Finish by summing up the variety of factors that they have identified during the exercise. How do these influence how much power they have?

**Development** To promote more discussion ask participants to reveal only one 'fact' from their character profile at a time. After each round of 'facts' is revealed participants can move themselves up or down the invisible line to modify how much power they have.



# Sample character profiles

1. Carla, aged 28.
2. Lives in Richmond, London.
3. Has a criminal conviction for possession of Class A drugs.
4. Is university educated and has a well paid job in financial markets in the City of London.

1. Jason, aged 15.
2. Lives in Fife, Scotland.
3. Has not been to school for two months as he is a full-time carer for his disabled mother.
4. Rides a motorbike under supervision at a project at his local youth club.

1. Seamus, aged 45.
2. Lives in Enniskillen, Northern Ireland.
3. Has completed four marathons and runs five miles a day.
4. Is the local mayor for his town.

1. Rosie, aged 68.
2. Lives in Cardiff, Wales.
3. Was an MP for twenty years before retiring.
4. Once went to prison for non-payment of a tax she did not agree with.

1. Tweedie, aged 18.
2. Lives in Manchester, England.
3. Has lived in five different countries before coming to the UK. The family has just moved from Africa.
4. Mother is a very important diplomat for the United Nations.

1. Maggie, aged 39.
2. Lives in Shetland Islands, Scotland.
3. Is a newspaper reporter for the local paper.
4. Has arthritis in her fingers.



# Character profile template

1. _____ _____	1. _____ _____
2. _____ _____	2. _____ _____
3. _____ _____	3. _____ _____
4. _____ _____	4. _____ _____
1. _____ _____	1. _____ _____
2. _____ _____	2. _____ _____
3. _____ _____	3. _____ _____
4. _____ _____	4. _____ _____
1. _____ _____	1. _____ _____
2. _____ _____	2. _____ _____
3. _____ _____	3. _____ _____
4. _____ _____	4. _____ _____
1. _____ _____	1. _____ _____
2. _____ _____	2. _____ _____
3. _____ _____	3. _____ _____
4. _____ _____	4. _____ _____

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# Who's in charge?

- Overview** This activity is a fun way of addressing how decision-making works.
- Materials** Ballot papers.
- Timing** Twenty minutes.
- Instructions** Get the group to sit in a circle. Designate two people as decision makers for the group. These two people are in charge of the group for the next two minutes. They have to identify three tasks, issues or rules that they are going to make decisions on. All members of the group have to follow these decisions.
- Each member of the group gets to be in charge for at least two minutes; they can stick to the rules that their predecessor made or scrap them all and make a new set.

## For example:

- Only people whose names begin with the letters P and R can talk.
- Only the decision maker is allowed to sit down for the next two minutes.
- Only the decision maker is allowed to smile for the next two minutes.

After several participants have taken charge of the group and activities, you can explore alternative methods of putting people in charge, for example:

- The decision is made by lottery.
- Everything must be decided by a vote.
- Only half the group may vote at any one time. Or,
- You decide that one person is going to be the leader all of the time.



Think about the impact that the process of decision-making has on the group:

- Is it important that everyone has a turn at being in charge?
- Are decisions made by the whole group more valid than those taken by one person?
- What happens if anyone objects to the rules?

Decide as a group when it is appropriate to finish the activity.



# Who's who

- Overview** This activity encourages young people to find out who is involved in politics and what their backgrounds are. It helps get participants thinking about politicians as real people.
- Materials** Access to the internet.
- Timing** One or two hours.
- Instructions** Ask young people to find an MP that match one of the criteria. If you have the facilities they could print out pictures of the politician to stick next to each criteria below. Make sure participants understand what all the criteria mean before you start. You can also make up your own criteria depending on the interests of the participants. Depending on where you live you could also do this activity with local councillors, or other elected representatives. You will find lots of useful websites in the Chef's suggestions section of the *Democracy Cookbook*.
- Criteria** Find an MP who:
- used to be a teacher;
  - is interested in sport;
  - has been in the UK Parliament for over 10 years;
  - is a woman;
  - is a government minister;
  - is a shadow minister;
  - is the youngest in Parliament;
  - is the oldest in Parliament; or
  - is interested in youth issues.





# Women and the vote

**Overview** During the early twentieth century the suffragist movement campaigned for women's right to vote. The activity looks at this historic struggle. It can be used to promote discussion of equality issues and encourage young women and men to value their vote.

**Materials** Worksheets provided.

**Timing** Twenty minutes.

**Instructions** You can use this resource in two ways.

1. Print each year on an A4 page and lay the pages out chronologically on the floor. Print out the events on separate pieces of paper and hand out. Ask young people to guess which year each event belongs to by placing it on the correct year.
2. Break the group into pairs and hand out the timeline worksheet provided. Hand out one set of events per pair and ask young people to guess which year each event belongs to by placing it on the correct year.

During the activity encourage discussion about:

- the meaning of the terms 'suffragette', 'equal franchise' and 'suffrage';
- campaigning tactics used to support or resist change;
- how people value their vote in current times.

Thank you to the Fawcett Society and The Women's Library for providing information for this activity. For more information on the suffragist movement, visit [www.votesforwomen.org.uk](http://www.votesforwomen.org.uk)



# Timeline

Hand out a copy to each group.

1832	1838	1851	1865
1866	1867	1869	1870
1881	1894	1897	1903
1905	1906	1907	1908
1909	1910	1913	1913
1918	1919	1928	1969



# Events sheet

Cut this sheet up and place the right event on the right year.

The Great Reform Act openly excludes women from the franchise by defining voters as 'male persons'.

The Chartist movement demands universal suffrage, later altered to universal male suffrage.

Anne Knight forms the Sheffield Female Political Association, the first women's suffrage organisation in Britain.

The Kensington Society forms in London and advocates women's suffrage. Emily Davies, Barbara Bodichon and Elizabeth Garret are active members.

Members of the Kensington Society organise a national petition appealing for the franchise to be extended to women. 1,499 people sign the petition.

John Stuart Mill MP presents the petition and franchise amendment to Parliament, which is defeated. The London National Society for Women's Suffrage forms; Millicent Fawcett joins its executive committee.

Women ratepayers are given the right to vote in local elections.

The Education Act permits women ratepayers to stand for, and vote in, elections for local school boards.

Women gain the vote in the Isle of Man.

The Local Government Act grants married women the right to vote in local elections.

The National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies (NUWSS) is founded in London under the leadership of Millicent Fawcett. Its members become known as suffragists.

The Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU) is founded in Manchester, led by Emmeline Pankhurst.

The first militant action takes place: Christabel Pankhurst and Annie Kenny disrupt Sir Edward Grey's speech at a Liberal meeting in the Free Trade Hall, Manchester, and are arrested. They are fined, but their refusal to pay results in seven days imprisonment.

The NUWSS campaign for the first time in a general election, pressing candidates to pledge their support for women's suffrage. The Liberal Party wins a landslide victory, with a majority of MPs pledging support for women's suffrage.

On 9 February 3,000 women march from Hyde Park to the Strand in support of women's suffrage. The Mud March is the largest street protest held on the issue and attracts widespread press coverage.

Flora Drummond chains herself to railings in Downing Street. On 21 June, the Women's Sunday procession takes place in London culminating in a rally in Hyde Park attended by 250,000 people.

Suffragettes attack public buildings: the windows of government offices and department stores are smashed.

The Conciliation Bill, a women's suffrage bill, is debated in Parliament but fails. On 18 November, 'Black Friday', a women's deputation to Parliament turns into a riot: 120 protestors are arrested and the police assault many women.

Suffragettes vandalise paintings in Manchester and Birmingham. Racecourses, churches and the empty homes of politicians are targeted in the suffragettes' arson campaign.

Emily Wilding Davison runs in front of the King's horse at the Epsom Derby: she dies from her injuries. On 14 June Davison's funeral procession takes place in London.

Women aged 30 and over are granted the vote. Countess Constance Markiewicz stands as a Sinn Fein candidate for Parliament. She is elected but, as an Irish Nationalist, refuses to take up her seat.

Lady Astor wins the Plymouth by-election and is the first woman to take her seat in Parliament.

The Equal Franchise Act is passed and women aged 21 or over gain the right to vote. Women have the same voting rights as men.

The voting age is lowered to eighteen for both men and women.

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# Word wall

- Overview** This is a short activity that can be used as an alternative to, or in addition to, more formal methods of evaluation.
- Materials**
- Pens;
  - post-it notes (shaped like speech bubbles); and
  - flipchart paper.
- Timing** Ten minutes.
- Instructions** Stick up the sheets of flipchart around the room. At the beginning of the session hand out the post-it notes and get participants to write a word on them to describe:
- how they feel about politics;
  - one thing they would like to know about politics; and
  - the first word that enters into their head when you say 'politics'.
- Then get them to stick each comment on a sheet of flipchart paper.
- At the end of the session repeat the exercise by asking participants to write up:
- how they now feel about politics;
  - one thing they learned about politics in the session; and
  - the first word that enters into their head now when you say 'politics'.
- Variations** If you want to be flash you can buy magnetic hexagons and group comments in themes.
- If you are creative you could paint polystyrene bricks, decorate them with comments and build them up into an actual wall.

