



Key Stage 2 Teachers' Notes – *Election! Britain Votes*

Many of the activities will work with students working individually, in pairs and in small groups. There are six activities which focus on each section of the exhibition. There is also a floor plan showing which sections correspond to the activities.

We would advise that the class be divided into smaller groups and start with different activities, sharing your created work with each other at the end of your visit.

Several activities could be recorded by video, audio or by photograph. Feel free to do this and use the recorded material as a stimulus for writing or other work in the classroom after your visit.

Around the gallery there are several discussion questions. It may be useful to conduct small debates at each of these points.

We have included EXT (extension) activities if you have time.

1. The Polls Close – *The Amazing Journey of Your Vote* (in infographics section)

- Check that the children understand the concept of voting and what it means for the running of the country. Ask them if they know which party is in power and who is Prime Minister.
- Show the children the voting booth and demonstrate how to cast a vote into an original voting box. Explain that voting is secret.
- Explore the display showing what happens to a person's vote after it has been cast. Explain that as a group you are going to make a story called '*The Amazing Journey of Your Vote*' to show the journey each vote takes.
- Now organise the children into five small groups and give one picture card showing each voting stage to each group. Ask each group to create a mini performance to demonstrate what is happening to the vote on their picture card. Get them to use their bodies - for instance they can pretend to be the votes tumbling out of a box or even the voting boxes themselves!
- When the groups have created their performance, get them to perform in chronological sequence. Students can narrate their actions as they perform them.

EXT: Use a tablet/camera to record these pieces of drama and use as a stimulus for other work in the classroom. Why not tweet us a picture @PHMMcr

Devised by Matthew Hallsworth in association with the People's History Museum.

The work of *Election!* artist-in-residence Alex Gardner has been supported through Arts Council England's [Grants for the arts](#) scheme.

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2. Suffrage Sound Collage (in infographics section)

- If you have not already done so check that the children understand the concept of voting and what it means for the running of the country. Ask them if they know which party is in power and who is Prime Minister.
- Show the children the voting booth and demonstrate how to cast a vote into an original voting box. Explain that voting is secret.
- Using the 'lift the flap interactive' get the children to guess who can and can't vote in British elections. Leave the women voting flap to last.
- Using the information boards in the **timeline section** about each election on the displays, ask children to find the first election to have a female MP. If you don't have time look at the exhibition next to the 'lift the flap interactive'.
- Explain that the first woman to be made an MP was Constance Markievicz of the party Sinn Féin in 1918, but she did not take up her seat. This was also the first year that women were allowed to vote in an election, but only if they were over 30 years of age and only if she or her husband met the property qualification. It was 10 years later in 1928 that all women gained voting equality with men.
- Ask the students how they think women before this time felt about not being able to vote? Ask them to describe their feelings in just one word. Position the group in a circle. Ask each student to say their word three times one at a time around the circle to create a sound collage.

EXT: Record the sound collage using a tablet/camera to use back in the classroom as a writing stimulus or play to the children in the next activity. Why not tweet us a picture @PHMMcr

3. Election Key Words

Get the students to divide into groups of twos or threes. Divide the pack of key words (but not the definitions) in the folder amongst the students. There are ten key words to find.

Ask group to move around the gallery looking for definitions and explanations of the keywords they have. When the group has reconvened, place the definitions on the floor and get the small groups to find the one relating to their key word. Discuss this as a group and move definitions around as necessary.

Here is the list of correct definitions:

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House of Commons

A body with 659 members who have been elected by residents of an area to represent them in parliament.

House of Lords

A body made up of Lords. There is no limit on the number. Their job is to double check the work of the government.

Constituents

People who live in a particular electoral district.

Constituency

An electoral district represented by a politician or politicians.

Candidate

A person who seeks to be elected to Parliament.

Democracy

A system of government in which all people are involved in the decision making.

Coalition Government

Government in which several political parties have an agreement to work together.

Politician

A person who wants or holds an elected position in Parliament.

Member of Parliament (MP)

A person who has been elected to parliament to represent a constituency.

Manifesto

A declaration of policy and aims issued before an election by a political party or candidate.

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4 Voting: What's the Point? (in infographics section)

A) Allow students to read Russell Brand's statement about democracy. Ask why they think he might feel this way? Now look at the Forms of Government section of the exhibition. How is democracy defined here?

Do you agree or disagree with Russell Brand's statement?

'Democracy is a pointless spectacle where we choose between two indistinguishable political parties, neither of whom represent the people'

Split your group into 'agree' and 'disagree.' Discuss why you think this is the case.

B) Many people choose not to vote in general elections and have many reasons for doing this. Highlight some of these reasons that are listed on the display.

Now pose the question – '*Is there any point in voting?*' Staying in your groups of agree/disagree, play 'argument tennis'. Line each group up facing one another. State reasons one at a time, back and forth, both for and against voting.

EXT: When you have finished exploring the exhibition, come back to this point and see if the students' opinions have changed. Try repeating the activity to see how the group's opinions changed.

5. Election Top Trumps (in timeline section)

Split students into groups of 3. Explain the rules to the group before they start.

- One player will act as the 'public' while the other two players will be representing a political party presenting arguments to get their vote.
- 'Public' player gives out the two cards from the same election year. Give party players a minute to read through the information card of the party/leader they have been given.
- Each player will state why they think the 'public' player should vote for them and at the end, the public player will decide who they would vote for.
- Look in the timeline section to see if the result you picked was the result in real life. If not, why not?

EXT: Use the blank cards to create some of your own cards for the upcoming election. Use the information in the middle section of the exhibition to help.

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6. 1945 Hot-Seating

Split students into groups of 3/4. Give the students a scenario card of a voter from 1945 and ask them to read the card as a group. Imagine what it must have felt like from that person's perspective. Discuss this as a group. Have one student play the role of that person and other members of the group ask questions to explore how that person may have felt at the time.

Show the other groups this improvised performance.

7. Tableaux/Frozen Pictures

- Give students a card explaining the battle for women's suffrage throughout the 19th and 20th centuries.
- Ask students to read their scenario cards and create a set of four freeze frames using their bodies to express what is happening at each stage of their scenario. At this point you could also use the dressing up box and 10 Downing Street door in the middle section of the exhibition to help the students with the freeze frames.
- Each group should show the rest of the group their freeze frames, with each frame lasting for around 10 seconds. Discuss with each other what these freeze frames may represent.

EXT: You could take photos of the freeze frames your group make and share them with us on Twitter - @PHMMcr.

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Curriculum Links

History

Pupils should be taught about:

- A local history study
- a study of an aspect or theme in British history that extends pupils' chronological knowledge beyond 1066
 - an aspect of social history
 - a significant turning point in British history

English – Spoken Language

Pupils should be taught to:

- listen and respond appropriately to adults and their peers
- ask relevant questions to extend their understanding and knowledge
- use relevant strategies to build their vocabulary
- articulate and justify answers, arguments and opinions
- give well-structured descriptions, explanations and narratives for different purposes, including for expressing feelings
- maintain attention and participate actively in collaborative conversations, staying on topic and initiating and responding to comments
- use spoken language to develop understanding through speculating, hypothesising, imagining and exploring ideas
- speak audibly and fluently with an increasing command of Standard English
- participate in discussions, presentations, performances, role play, improvisations and debates
- gain, maintain and monitor the interest of the listener(s)
- consider and evaluate different viewpoints, attending to and building on the contributions of others
- select and use appropriate registers for effective communication.

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Citizenship/Physical, Social, Health Education (C/PSHE)

Although no longer a statutory subject, the PSHE Association guidelines to develop the PSHE curriculum in your school.

Living in the wider world

Pupils should be taught:

- about respect for self and others and the importance of responsible behaviours and actions
- about rights and responsibilities as members of families, other groups and ultimately as citizens
- about different groups and communities
- to respect equality and to be a productive member of a diverse community.

Citizenship

Pupils should be taught about:

- the development of the political system of democratic government in the United Kingdom, including the roles of citizens, Parliament and the monarch
- the operation of Parliament, including voting and elections, and the role of political parties
- the precious liberties enjoyed by the citizens of the United Kingdom
- the roles played by public institutions and voluntary groups in society, and the ways in which citizens work together to improve their communities, including opportunities to participate in school-based activities
- the functions and uses of money, the importance and practice of budgeting, and managing risk.

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7.



Independent, Academies and Free Schools – Improving the Spiritual, Moral Social and Cultural (SMSC) Development of Pupils

- Standard 5(1)(a)(i): enable pupils to develop their self-knowledge, self esteem and self-confidence
- Standard 5(1)(a)(iii): encourage pupils to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative and understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the locality in which the school is situated and to society more widely
- Standard 5(1)(a)(vi): encourage pupils to respect the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs

13. The list below describes the kinds of understanding and knowledge that can be expected in pupils as a result of schools meeting this part of the standard.

- An understanding as to how citizens can influence decision-making through the democratic process;
- An understanding that participation in elections by those opposed to democracy should be allowed by law, but the success of such candidates is undesirable for the well-being of society if it would lead to the end of democracy;
- An appreciation that living under the rule of law protects individual citizens and is essential for their well-being and safety;
- An understanding that bodies such as the police and the army can be held to account to the people, through the democratic organs of government;
- An understanding that the freedom to hold other faiths and beliefs is protected in law, and an acceptance that other people having different faiths or beliefs to oneself (or having none) should not be the cause of prejudicial or discriminatory behaviour;
- Some understanding of the problems of identifying and combating discrimination (based on protected characteristics as listed in the Equality Act 2010). Attempts to promote systems that undermine the principles comprising these fundamental British values would be inconsistent with this part of the standard.

14. There are many different actions that schools can take to meet this part of the standard, such as:

- Include in suitable parts of the curriculum, as appropriate for the age of pupils, material on the strengths, advantages and disadvantages of democracy, and how

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democracy works in Britain, in contrast to other forms of government in other countries;

- Ensure that all pupils within the school have a voice that is listened to, for example by having democratic processes such as a school council whose members are voted for by the pupils;
- Organise visits to local councils, Parliament and places of worship of other faiths,
- Standard 5(1)(b) – [the proprietor] precludes the promotion of partisan political views in the teaching of any subject in the school
- Standard 5(1)(c) – [the proprietor] takes such steps as are reasonably practicable to ensure that where political issues are brought to the attention of pupils—
 - (i) while they are in attendance at the school;
 - (ii) while they are taking part in extra-curricular activities which are provided or organised by or on behalf of the school;
 - or (iii) in the promotion at the school, including through the distribution of promotional material, of extra-curricular activities taking place at the school or elsewhere; they are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views.

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