



Democracy

Aims:

To reflect on the importance of giving everyone a say in important decisions

Preparation and materials:

- YouTube video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u6jgWxkbR7A> (Democracy -A Short Introduction) [Accessed 07-20]

Assembly:

1. “The first duty of a man is to think for himself” — **Jose Marti** “Elections belong to the people. It's their decision. If they decide to turn their back on the fire and burn their behinds, then they will just have to sit on their blisters.” — **Abraham Lincoln** // Display these quotes as students enter the assembly. Ask students how do these quotations relate to the realities of living in a democratic society? Do you agree with their sentiment? Why? Take some feedback.
2. Ask students to identify countries in the world or times in history where democracy has not been in place. What other leadership styles have countries employed? What have been the challenges with this?
3. Democratic countries have elections in order to try to change their countries for the better. We live in one of the world's oldest democracies. Some historians argue that the first moves towards democracy in this country took place with the signing of a treaty called the Magna Carta in 1215. The treaty required the king of England at the time, King John, to have a duty to protect certain rights of his subjects, and restricted his powers under the law
4. During this new school year, we want you to think about your likes and dislikes in this school environment. We would like you to have your say. Do you feel that it is an attractive place to be in? Do you have enough computers? Do you have any ideas for improving this school? *They will be presented to our school governors and you will have an opportunity to vote on which idea could be put into practice in the future.*
5. Watch the introduction to democracy video. ‘It is the duty of the government to make it difficult for people to do wrong, easy to do right’ – William Gladstone (former prime minister). We need good leaders in society. Without good political and other form of leadership the country would descend into a very unstable place where the most vulnerable in society would not be protected. What character virtues does a good leader need? Which are the most important?
6. This might be a good opportunity to interview some of the student leaders in the school. What has motivated them to take on a leadership role? How might they encourage other students to follow in their footsteps?





Reflection:

When did you last show some leadership initiative? What virtues did you have to use in order to lead in that situation?

Challenge:

Challenge yourself to step up and take responsibility for something at school or at home? Write a reflection on how you felt and what you did in the scenario?

