



What's going on this week?

In April, Prime Minister Theresa May announced a general election would be held on Thursday 8th June. A general election gives the UK a chance to have a say on who runs the country. Adults over the age of 18, who are registered to vote, are able to vote for who they'd like to be their MP (Member of Parliament), usually representing a party. You may have noticed that there has been a huge amount of coverage in the news and lots of people have been discussing politics and the general election over the past few weeks – the person in charge of running our country has a very powerful role, so it's important people think carefully about who gets their vote!

Main question:
Does politics matter?

Listen, think, share

Ask children what they know about the general election, where have they heard about it or seen it? Ask the children if they know the names of any of the party leaders. Explain that this week, after the voting on the 8th June, we will know who will be leading our country for the next 5 years. Explain that adults each vote for an MP, who will usually belong to a political party. To win, a political party needs to reach 326 votes, (which is half +1 to provide a majority). If they don't, usually the party with the most MPs will join with another party to form what's known as a coalition government.

The children may have seen a lot of coverage, discussions even some heated debates about lots of different issues from our hospitals to schools and the numbers of people we allow to live in the UK from other countries. Ask the children how they think politics and some of the decisions our government makes affects our everyday lives? Talk about how important we think politics is. Look at the assembly resource and explain that all of the examples are influenced or controlled by our government. Are there any that may surprise us? Explain that in the House of Commons, where all the MPs and the Prime Minister meet to discuss important issues, things can often get quite heated. Do you think it's important so many people, with different opinions are involved in making decisions on things like new laws, where houses are built and how much money schools receive?

Reflection

It's easy to think that politics is a subject that doesn't affect us, particularly as we aren't allowed to vote in the general election until we are 18. However, we are often asked our opinions and asked to vote on things such as school council members or what we'd like to see on the school lunch menu. Our opinion and votes do matter.

This week...

We will think ahead to the next time we will have a vote, this could be at school, home or part of a group or club. We will think about our voting options carefully and be sure to make a well-informed choice!



KS1 Focus

Question:
Why is it important to ask questions?

Listen, think, share

Ask the children what they might know about politics. Ask if they know who is in charge of our country? Explain that we have a Prime Minister, who adults have voted for, and this person then makes lots of important decisions about how things are run. Explain that the Prime Minister isn't allowed to make all of the decisions on her own and that she has a lot of other people helping her, called MPs. Look at the image of the House of Commons from the KS1 resource. Ask the children why they think that lots of people come together to discuss important issues, such as how many schools or hospitals we have and why do we think she doesn't make these decisions on her own? Tell the children at the start of each day in the House of Commons they have a question time, where the MPs are allowed to ask questions about the things being discussed. Do you think this is important? Look at the picture of the House of Commons again, what questions do the children have. Write them down and then research the answers and discuss the power and importance of questions.

Reflection

As we grow older and learn more about the world around us, we will learn that there are people with very important roles, who will have to make decisions about how our country is run. Often, we will get a choice in who these people are.

It's important to always ask questions and find out as much as we can so we are able to make sensible choices.

This week...

We will think about something that we find interesting, this could be a sport, a subject in school or a different place in the world and think of lots of questions we would like to know! What can we find out and how? Can you share your new knowledge with friends?



KS2 Focus

Question:
Why is debating such an important part of politics?

Listen, think, share

Ask children to think about a time when they disagreed with someone; what was it about and what happened? Talk about how we feel when we get angry or upset and how it might mean that we need to discuss the differences between an argument and a debate. Explain that many important decisions on things like hospitals, schools and immigration are made in the House of Commons. The MPs will spend long periods of time discussing and considering different perspectives.

Ask the children if they've ever taken part in a debate. What was it about, why do you think it took place? Look at the KS2 resource and explain that we are going to have a debate in a similar format to those that take place in the House of Commons. Ask the children to come up with some rules for the debate e.g. don't talk over others, stand when speaking etc. Go through the structure and then decide. After the debate – ask if the children think it was worthwhile? What did it achieve? Did anyone change their minds because of the debate?

Reflection

Everyone has different opinions, from views on how important they think things are like schools or hospitals to how important it is to take care of the environment around us. Sometimes, we feel very passionate about issues and it can be easy to get upset or not want to hear any other views. There are times when we need to listen, to hear balanced views as everyone's views are equally important.

This week...

The next time we feel angry or upset we will wait until we are able to sort out our thoughts and in a position where we can discuss things calmly and understand that everyone is entitled to their own opinion.



KS2 Cross-Curricular Ideas

English: This is a great opportunity to give children time to read and research current political issues and look through some of the promises each party is making - should adults choose to vote for them? Ask the children to select the things that are important to them such as NHS, schools, immigration or the environment. Work as a group to create their own political party. Create a persuasive speech to put forward their own manifesto. Make leaflets and posters too. You could share these with the class or school or even invite parents in. They could vote!

Maths: Use the link from this week's useful websites. There are some fantastic ideas for maths work linked to the general election.

DT/Art: Design and make things to help with their canvas – a logo, badges, rosettes, boards. Ask the children to consider the importance of a powerful image and the use of colour.

ICT: Use image or animation to create something to support their own political party. This could be shown when they share their ideas with others.

History: Look into the history of politics in Great Britain. Ask the children to create a timeline of who our ex-prime ministers were and which party they stood for. Ask them to research into voting and discuss the fact, it really wasn't that long ago that certain people didn't have the right to vote.

Geography: Print off or let the children explore some online election maps. Focus on general elections. Discuss places where certain parties won their vote. Did they win the time before?



KS1 Cross-Curricular Ideas

English: Questions are important. Re-cap the 'This week...' section of the KS1 Focus. Ask children to think about something they would like to know more about. Record questions in their Literacy book. This could be used to create a piece of non-fiction work. Children could display their findings as a poster, a leaflet or using sentences and pictures in their book.

Maths: Give the children an opportunity to vote for how to spend some treat time. Offer them four options such as: extra playtime, computer time, indoor toys, parachute games. Give them a ballot paper where they put a X next to their chosen activity. Remind children this is an anonymous vote just like the general election. Sort the votes into piles and ask groups of children to count them. Display the results. Which was the most/least popular? What was the difference between the most and least popular? Did everyone in the class vote? How do you know? Is the vote fair?

Role play: Create an election corner. Put up signs, rosettes and boards. Add a polling station. You could even link with your KS2 children and allow them to canvas in your role play area!

Art: Discuss what a logo is. Look at some of the logos used by some of the political parties. Look at your school logo. Ask the children why places, companies and people use logos. Ask the children to draw or paint a logo to represent themselves and what they think is important. For children struggling with their design, allow them to create theirs using a shield shape.

Geography: Look at a map of the UK. Locate Scotland, England, Wales and Northern Ireland. People who live here can all vote in the general election.



This Week's Useful Websites

This week's news story
www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/39884371

KS2 Maths
<http://bit.ly/2ssXvc1>



This Week's Useful Videos

A guide to how politics affects us
(suitable for KS2)
www.truetube.co.uk/film/idiots-guide-politics

General election 2017 – what do the words all mean?
www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/40048773