



Democracy



In this lesson we will be exploring **democracy** and how it works





Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, you will understand:

- What democracy means.
- How a general election works.
- The role of an MP, and the Prime Minister.
- What political parties are.
- How I can find out about the views of politicians, and why this is important.
- What a secret ballot is.



Who rules the UK?





Democracy comes from two Greek words

Dêmos means **people**

Krátos means **rule or strength.**

So, democracy means
'rule by the people'



Watch these clips to find out more:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/z87tn39/articles/z8q8wmn?epik=dj0yJnU9dUdOTzlhS19wY2VkNy1NLWZiMU1GV0dIVFJ3LXQyYmsmcD0wJm49VGplZIFoUXZibE10OFhELTZQZkVKUSZ0PUFBQUFBROFhc2JV>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbbc/watch/horrible-histories-songs-democracy-song>



But what does that mean?

Does **everybody** rule at the same time?

How can we make decisions that **everyone** agrees with?

Yes!

I Disagree!

I have a
better
idea

NO!

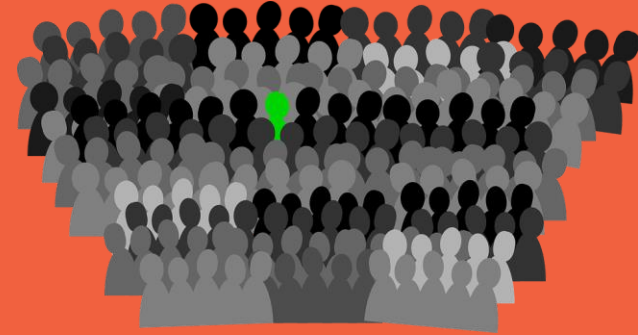
Rubbish!



If everyone was in charge it could be difficult to get anything done.

So instead we hold a general election to choose people who can represent us.

The people who we elect are called Members of Parliament or MPs.



Their job is to listen to us and then speak on our behalf.



Let's find out about general elections

In the UK they happen at least every five years.

Anyone who wants to become an MP must stand as a candidate.

British citizens over 18 vote for the candidate they want to represent their local area.





The UK is split into areas called constituencies. There are 650 in total.

Several candidates compete for votes in each constituency.

The candidate who wins the most votes at the election becomes the MP for that area.



Most MP candidates who 'stand' for election belong to a **political party**.

Although some people do stand as an 'independent' candidate.



A **political party** is a group of people who share similar views about the changes they would make if they were elected.

The actions that they agree to take are called **policies**.



Can you name the three main political parties and their leaders?



Keir Starmer



Prime Minister
Boris Johnson



Nicola Sturgeon



Election Day!

Election Day is also called **Polling Day**.

On Election Day, people go to a **Polling Station** to vote ('cast a ballot') for the candidate of their choice.

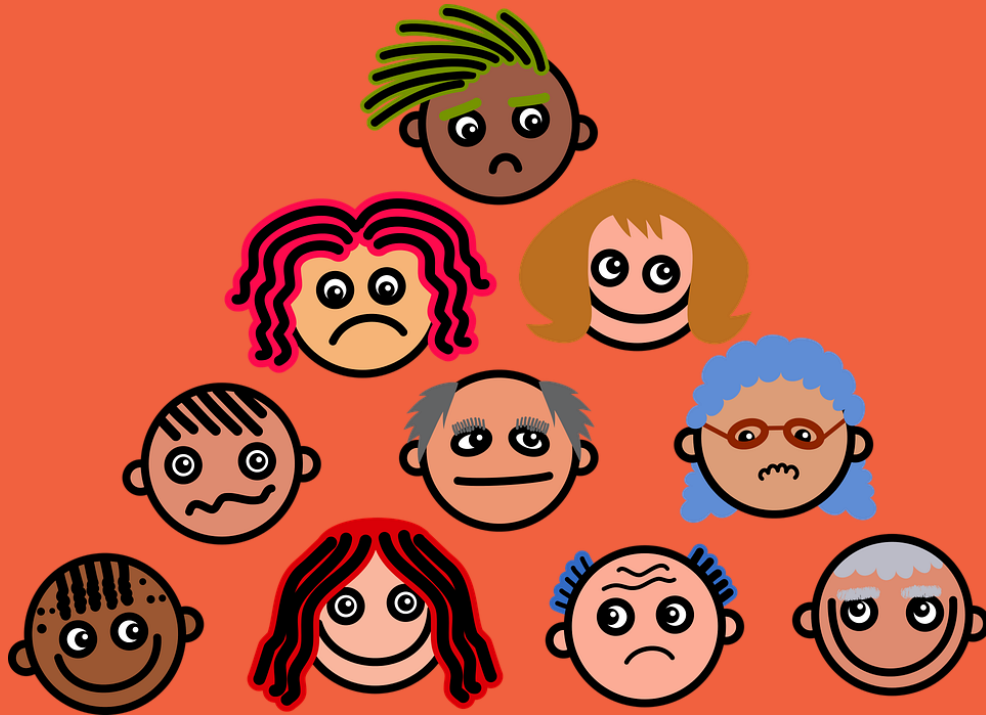


Individuals cast their ballots in a private booth so that no one can see who they are voting for.

This is called a 'secret ballot'.



At the end of the election day the votes are counted and the candidate with the most votes (the **majority**) in each constituency is declared the winner.



Do you think
everybody
who voted is
happy with the
result?



At the end of an election, the political party with the most MPs wins.

The leader of the winning party becomes the prime minister.

Who is the prime minister?

**Boris
Johnson**



© AFP/N. Halle'n



Why is it important to find out the views of the different parties and candidates before voting?



Where can people find out about the views of different political parties and candidates?



Online

- News websites
- Social media
- Political party websites



TV

- The news
- Live debates



Newspapers



What would you like to change?





Democracy is about more than just voting.

There are lots of ways that people can **participate** and **make their voice heard!**

You can **email your MP**



You can **petition the government**





You can **campaign** for a cause that you think is important.



If you disagree with the government, you can join a peaceful **protest march**.



You can **lobby** your MP about local and national issues.





Keep informed.
Watch and read the news.



Practice your listening and
public speaking skills.



Vote in your school council
election. Or stand as a candidate.



Research your rights
and responsibilities.





Are all countries ruled by the people?

Each country in the world has its own special laws that affect their people and how they live. Their laws come from the country's unique history and culture.



In **Saudi Arabia**, the king rules. The people are not allowed to vote or participate to make changes.



In **China**, the people are not allowed to vote for a different government.



In **Thailand**, the army seized power in May 2014. The power of the people is limited.



Questions to consider...

Can you describe three new things you have learnt today?

What does democracy mean?

How can you take part in democracy?

What do the letters MP stand for? What does an MP do?

Why is it important to find out about the views of MPs and political parties?

List 3 places you can find out this information?



Now can you match the terms to the correct definition?

Democracy

Election

Prime Minister

Candidate

Polling Day

Rule by the people.

A system of selecting a representative.

The leader of the winning political party.

Someone who is standing for election.

The day of the election.