

**KS4 key enquiry:**  
**What are the strengths and weakness of the UK as a parliamentary democracy?**

**National Curriculum links**

Politics, Parliament and government – parliamentary democracy and the key elements of the constitution of the United Kingdom, including the power of government, the role of citizens and Parliament in holding those in power to account, and the different roles of the executive, legislature and judiciary and a free press

Lessons	<p><b>Lesson 1: How can we tell if a country is democratic?</b></p>	<p><b>Lesson 2: What Is Parliament and what are its functions?</b></p>	<p><b>Lesson 3: How can we hold our leaders to account?</b></p>	<p><b>Lesson 4: What is a free press and why is it important for democracy?</b></p>	<p><b>Lesson 5: Are democracies making the most of digital technology?</b></p>	<p><b>Lesson 6: How can I take part in the democratic process?</b></p>
Overview	<p>This lesson provides students with the opportunity to discuss the concept of democracy. They explore the key features of a democratic society and begin to identify whether different countries are democratic.</p>	<p>In this lesson, students recap knowledge from the previous lesson and develop critical thinking about the link between Parliament and democracy. They find out about parliamentary functions and consider whether there are enough checks on the prime minister.</p>	<p>In this lesson, students explore how other countries hold their leaders to account in comparison to the UK. They then apply this knowledge in an extended piece of writing using a clear set of criteria.</p>	<p>Students investigate the importance of having a free press in a democracy. They consider the characteristics of a free press in a democracy and how free the press is around the world. They explore if there are ever times when it is acceptable to use censorship.</p>	<p>In this lesson, students explore the relationship between digital technology and democracy. They find out how digital technology is used in democracies worldwide, evaluate the benefits and risks, and consider the UK's use of digital technology for democracy.</p>	<p>This lesson introduces students to select committees. By taking part in a simulated select committee inquiry, they learn that this is a way for them to become part of the democratic process. To end the lesson, they focus on the big question for this scheme of work: Should the UK be called a democracy?</p>
Learning questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What do we mean by 'democracy'?</li> <li>• What are the key features of a democracy?</li> <li>• Is a democracy always better than other forms of government?</li> <li>• How can you judge how democratic a country is?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the link between Parliament and democracy?</li> <li>• What is Parliament's purpose?</li> <li>• How are the UK Parliament and government organised?</li> <li>• Are there enough checks on the prime minister?</li> <li>• How do the monarch, legislature, executive and judiciary work together?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How are leaders held to account in the UK?</li> <li>• How are leaders held to account in other countries?</li> <li>• How effective are the checks and balances in different political systems?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is a free press?</li> <li>• Why is press freedom important in a democracy?</li> <li>• How free is the press in different countries?</li> <li>• Why might information be censored?</li> <li>• Is it ever acceptable to control the media?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How can digital technology be used to support democracy?</li> <li>• How is digital technology already being used in democracies worldwide?</li> <li>• What are the benefits and risks?</li> <li>• Could the UK be making better use of digital technology to support democracy?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are select committees and how are they run?</li> <li>• How can we measure the success of select committees?</li> <li>• How can I take part in the democratic process through select committees?</li> <li>• Should the UK be called a democracy?</li> </ul>
Concepts and skills	<p>Democracy, values, freedom, rule of law, rights and responsibilities, critical thinking, investigation, analysis</p>	<p>Critical thinking, power, democracy, separation of powers</p>	<p>Power, advocacy</p>	<p>Media literacy, democracy, bias, censorship, validity, reliability</p>	<p>Authenticity, media literacy</p>	<p>Democracy, action, rights, problem solving, enquiry, debate</p>
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exploration of the term 'democracy'</li> <li>• Discussion of features of democracy</li> <li>• Review of case studies to identify whether countries are full democracy, flawed, hybrid, or authoritarian</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recap on prior learning</li> <li>• Discussion of the link between Parliament and democracy</li> <li>• Writing about Parliament's purpose</li> <li>• Understanding UK political structure</li> <li>• Scavenger hunt to retrieve facts about checks and balances</li> <li>• Discussing and writing about checks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retrieval tasks</li> <li>• Review and discussion of case studies about checks and balances in different countries</li> <li>• Extended piece of writing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retrieval tasks</li> <li>• Discussion of free press</li> <li>• Writing challenging questions</li> <li>• Producing a mind map</li> <li>• Reviewing case studies</li> <li>• Short writing task</li> <li>• Continuum task</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retrieval task</li> <li>• Discussion of digital technology and democracy in pairs, small groups and as a class</li> <li>• Producing a mind map</li> <li>• Research based on case studies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Select committees briefing</li> <li>• Case study discussion</li> <li>• Select committee inquiry</li> <li>• Writing a report</li> <li>• Big question plenary</li> <li>• Researching democratic indices</li> </ul>
Resources (in addition to slide presentation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Country case studies (eight)</li> <li>• Worksheet: Democracy analysis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worksheet and PDF for a scavenger hunt on parliamentary checks</li> <li>• <i>How Parliament Works</i> booklet</li> <li>• <i>Your UK Parliament: the essentials</i></li> <li>• SEND/EAL guide to Parliament</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Videos about how four different countries hold their leaders to account</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worksheet to prompt challenging question writing</li> <li>• Case studies about four countries</li> <li>• Agree/disagree cards</li> <li>• Link to World Press Freedom Index</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Video about online democracy</li> <li>• Worksheet exploring digital democracy in action</li> <li>• Case studies</li> <li>• Research task worksheet</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Video clips</li> <li>• Case studies focusing on digital security and privacy</li> <li>• Writing worksheet</li> <li>• Links to more information</li> </ul>
Differentiation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assign case studies with an appropriate level of accessibility (a range is supplied)</li> <li>• Direct students to a specific takeaway challenge</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask students to form questions for peers about the main function of Parliament, opening up discussion</li> <li>• Use different levels of tasks</li> <li>• Use the SEND/EAL guide provided</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide sentence starters and scaffolding for extended writing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback a summary of the group discussion to teacher</li> <li>• Scaffold mind map</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share and justify ideas for laws on press freedom</li> <li>• Extend evaluation of the risks and benefits of using digital technology for democracy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allocation of roles in simulated select committee activity</li> </ul>
Assessment opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge check self-assessments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hinge questions and micro scripts</li> <li>• Knowledge checks</li> <li>• Self-assessment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completion of retrieval tasks</li> <li>• Peer assessment of extended piece of writing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completion of a retrieval task and a mind map to improve upon with further knowledge</li> <li>• Short written responses</li> <li>• Questioning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completion of a retrieval task and a mind map to improve upon with further knowledge</li> <li>• Questioning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Baseline assessment at the start of the lesson</li> <li>• Report on the select committee inquiry</li> </ul>
Takeaway task	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Watch and make notes on a video for discussion in the next lesson</li> <li>• Choose a challenge and bring answers to the next lesson</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate in the 'MP for a week' online game</li> <li>• Take a virtual tour of Parliament</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visit websites and prepare to discuss content</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read and review the NUJ Code of Conduct</li> <li>• List all the issues you think the press should be free and not free to discuss</li> <li>• Create your own law on press freedom</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research the work of select committees</li> <li>• Research a current inquiry and be ready to report back in the next lesson</li> </ul>	