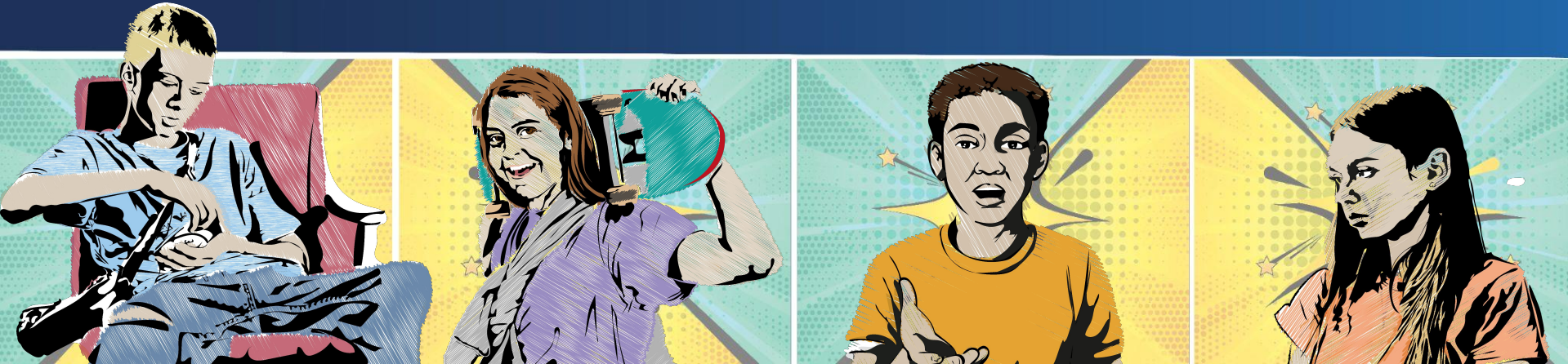


Why should you vote?

Citizenship 13 - 14



Guidelines for a safe and respectful space

Be kind

Respect everyone's views and feelings. Show appreciation and encouragement.

Be brave

Have a go, even if you're unsure. Everyone's voice matters.

Listen well

Give your full attention when someone else is speaking.
Let's create space for every voice.

Ask with curiosity

Be open-minded. Can you build on someone's idea?
What respectful questions could help us go deeper?

No Judgement

We don't laugh at, put down, or dismiss others—verbally or nonverbally. Every contribution is valid.

You always have a choice

You never have to share personal stories.
You can pass at any time.

Take care of yourself

If anything feels uncomfortable or upsetting, that's okay. You can take a break or speak to a trusted adult.



Part one: **THINK**



Children's Law Centre

“

Being able to vote from age 16 would ensure that politicians take us young people seriously in the matters that affect us, giving us a say on issues that will impact our present and future.

- Eva Bradley



childrenslawcentre.org.uk



© Republishing for schools

“

Something I often hear from people who are opposed to lowering the voting age is that 16 and 17-year-olds are too immature... Giving our young people the right to vote would be a crucial aspect of political education... Many young people aged 16 and 17 are already highly politically engaged.

”

Analyse the artefact

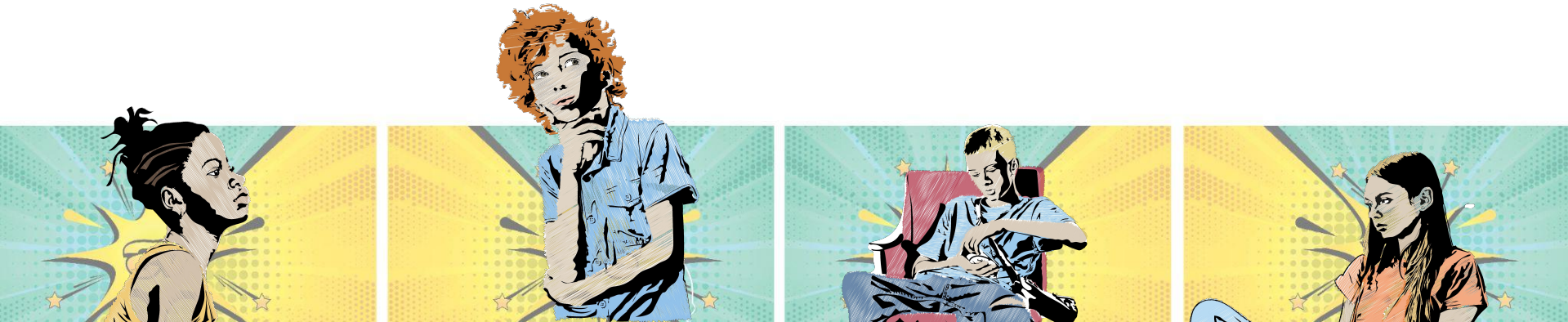
Instructions

- Think about the quotes provided using these questions
- Fill your sheet with thoughts or ideas
- Consider what the implications of this quote might be for young people like yourself!



Questions

1. What feelings or thoughts do these quotes bring up?
2. What assumptions or values do they challenge?
3. Who might agree or disagree - and why?



Children's Law Centre

“

Being able to vote from age 16 would ensure that politicians take us young people seriously in the matters that affect us, giving us a say on issues that will impact our present and future.

- Eva Bradley



childrenslawcentre.org.uk



© Republishing for schools

“

Something I often hear from people who are opposed to lowering the voting age is that 16 and 17-year-olds are too immature... Giving our young people the right to vote would be a crucial aspect of political education... Many young people aged 16 and 17 are already highly politically engaged.

”

What is Eva Bradley's message?

**Can you guess what this lesson
might be about?**

**What might the key
message be?**

Eva Bradley is a teenager who believes 16 and 17 year olds should be allowed to vote.

- **Fairness:** At 16, you can get a job, pay taxes, and even join the army — so you should also get a say in how the country is run.
- **Other countries do it:** Places like Scotland, Wales, Austria, and Brazil already let 16-year-olds vote.
- **Young people care:** Many teenagers are already interested in issues like climate change, education, and the cost of living. In Scotland, most 16- and 17-year-olds who voted said they'd do it again.
- **Rights:** Young people deserve to have their voices heard, especially on decisions that affect their futures.

Why should you vote?



Lesson Objectives

In this lesson, you will explore:

- The debate about lowering the voting age to 16.
- The responsibilities young people already hold at 16.
- How voting gives citizens a voice in shaping the future.

By the end, you'll be able to:

- Explain the main arguments for and against Votes at 16.
- Discuss why voting matters in a democracy.
- Share your own opinion about whether young people should be allowed to vote at 16.



Key Ideas

- **Franchise** = the right to vote.
- In the UK, the **voting age** was lowered from 21 → 18 in 1969.
- **Scotland & Wales** allow 16- and 17-year-olds to vote in some elections.
- **Arguments for lowering the voting age:** fairness, responsibilities at 16, strengthening democracy.
- **Arguments against lowering the voting age:** maturity, life experience, risk of influence.
- **Democracy** means citizens have a voice in government decisions
- **Representation** = having someone speak for your interests in Parliament or your local government
- **At 16 you can:** work, pay income tax, join the army (with parental permission)
- **At 18 you can:** buy alcohol, get married, get full legal independence



Real World Example - The UK as a Democracy



Part two: **APPLY**



For & Against Line Debate

Activity Instructions:

You will be asked to stand on a line from
Strongly Agree → Strongly Disagree with a range of statements.

For **each** statement read out: move to where you stand on the line.

Be ready to explain why you are there.





“
**At 16 you should
have the vote because
you pay taxes.**
”

A comic book style explosion graphic in the top left corner. It features a bright yellow starburst with a black outline, surrounded by several smaller yellow stars and blue motion lines. The background is a green field with a halftone dot pattern, separated by a diagonal line from the white background.

“
**Young people aren’t
experienced enough to
make political decisions.**
”



“
**Votes at 16 would
strengthen democracy.**
”



**“
Schools should teach
more politics if the
voting age is lowered.
”**



“16-year-olds are more likely to care about issues like climate change and the future.”



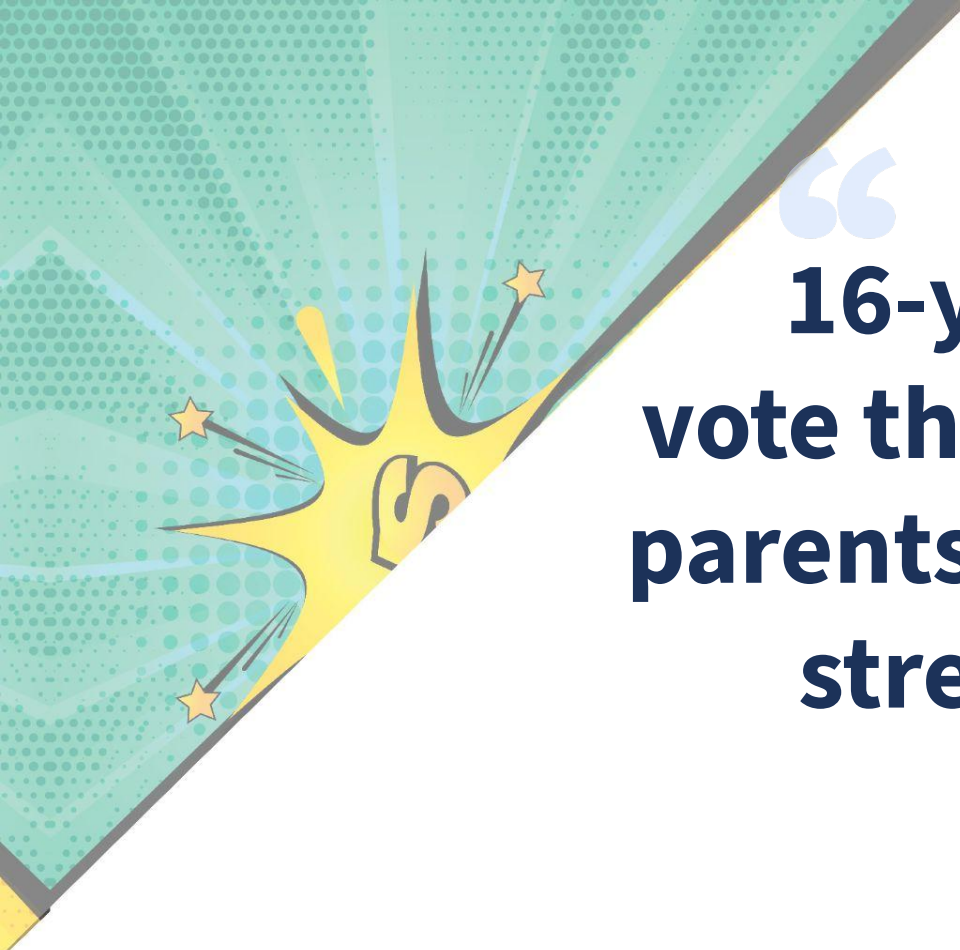
**“
Politicians might not
listen to young people,
even if they could vote.
”**



**“
Voting should stay
at 18 because that’s when
most people leave school.
”**



**“ Lowering the voting
age would make young
people feel more
respected and included. ”**

A comic book style illustration of a yellow explosion with three orange stars, set against a background of green and blue halftone dots and diagonal lines.

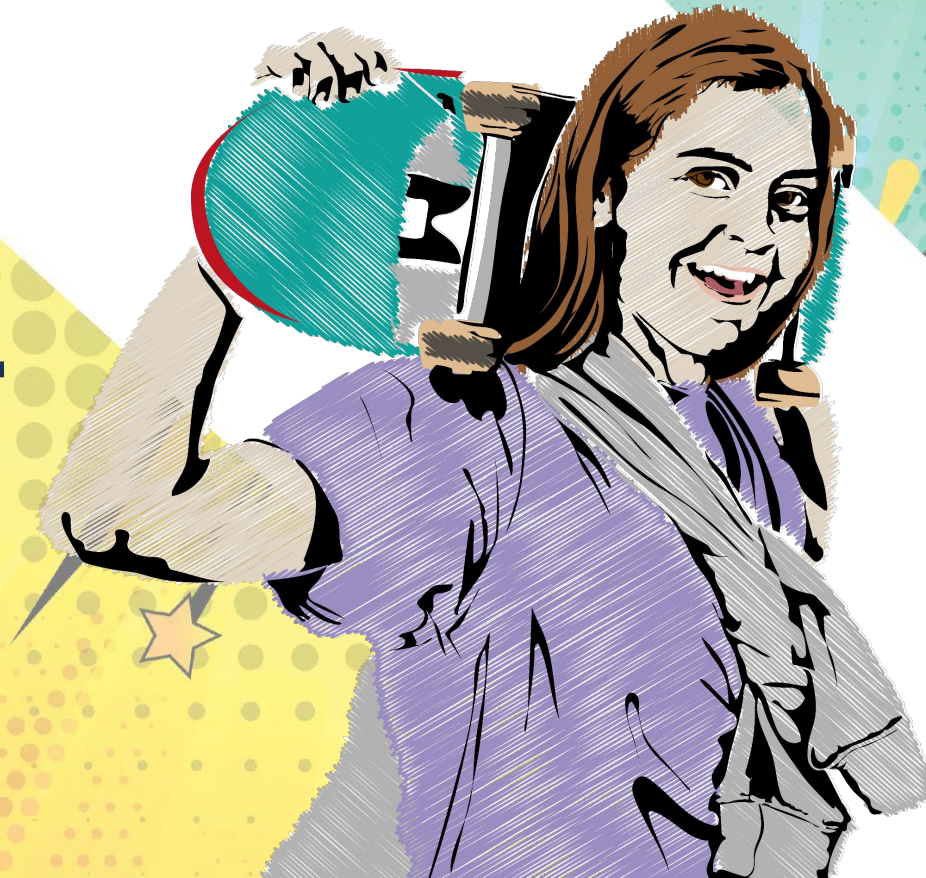
“16-year-olds would just vote the same way as their parents - this won’t help to strengthen democracy.”



Debrief

1. What was the most difficult statement to decide on? **Why?**
2. Did anyone change their mind during the activity?
3. What's one thing you see differently now about voting at 16?
4. How did you show respect for views that were different from your own?

Part three: **REFLECT**



Reflect

Not sure what to write?

Use these to help you get started:

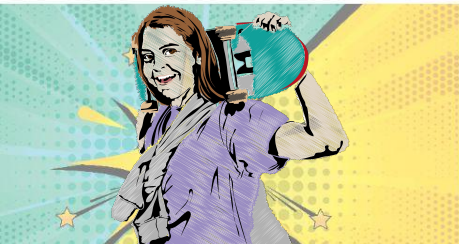
I used to think..., but now I see...

One thing that stuck with me was...

This matters because...

I felt ___ when we talked about...

Someone else said... and it made me think...



Teacher Notes

KS3 PSHCE Lesson: Votes at 16

Ages 13 - 14: Why should you vote?

Learning Objective:

To explore the arguments for and against lowering the voting age to 16, understand why voting matters in a democracy, and reflect on the role of young people in shaping society.

CURRICULUM LINKS:

This lesson supports the statutory Programme of Study for Key Stage 3 Citizenship by covering:

- The meaning of democracy and the role of the franchise in the UK.
- The historical development of the voting age and debates about Votes at 16.
- How citizens can influence decisions through voting and participation.
- Encouraging pupils to form, express, and justify their own opinions.

British Values

This lesson also supports the school's statutory duty under The Prevent Duty (DfE) to actively promote British Values:

Democracy

- Examines why voting is important and how young people might strengthen democracy.

Individual Liberty

- Encourages students to form, articulate, and defend their own views respectfully.

Mutual Respect and Tolerance of Different Faiths and Beliefs

- Line debate activity promotes listening and valuing different perspectives, even in disagreement.



About this lesson

This Ages 13-14/Year 9 lesson builds on prior learning about democracy and citizenship by exploring the question: Why should you vote? Framed around quotes from young activist Eva Bradley, the lesson introduces key arguments for and against lowering the voting age to 16.

Students engage in critical thinking through analysis of the quote, participate in a structured For & Against line debate, and reflect on their own position. The lesson highlights the importance of voting as a means of having a voice in democracy.

The core message students are encouraged to take away is:
"Voting is your voice — use it to shape your future."

TIMINGS	RESOURCES REQUIRED	BEFORE YOU TEACH THIS LESSON
This lesson is designed for delivery over a 50-minute Citizenship lesson. It includes three sections, with suggested timings as follows: • THINK – 20 minutes • APPLY – 22 minutes • REFLECT – 7 minutes Use these timings flexibly based on your group and the time available. While we recommend delivering the PSHE curriculum through standalone lessons, this session can also be adapted for tutor time if needed — e.g. delivering each section separately over a week.	Resources required • These Teacher Notes • PowerPoint Presentation slides with teacher notes • Pens, paper, journals Handouts • Artefact Sheet • The Fight for Young People's Political Voice in the UK • For & Against statements (printed or displayed from slides) • Reflection Sheet	✓ Read through the slide deck and teacher notes ✓ Print 1 x Artefact Sheet per student (Eva Bradley's quote) ✓ Prepare For & Against debate statements (to project or print) ✓ Print 1x The Fight for Young People's Political Voice in the UK sheet per student ✓ Print 1 Reflection Sheet per student 🕒 Recommended prep time: 15 minutes

Main Activities within the lesson

Part one: THINK

Slide	Title	Time	Description
5	Analyse the artefact	3 mins	Personal Reflection Students annotate Eva Bradley's quote individually, using guided prompts, exploring their thoughts and feelings before giving their ideas about what the quote means.
6	What is the message?	3 mins	Opinion and Reasoning Students share their ideas on the meaning of the quote and their reasoning. The teacher prompts reflection to build resourcefulness and critical thinking.
7	What is Eva Bradley's message?	2 mins	Prediction and Reflection Teacher explains the background: Eva Bradley is a teenager campaigning for Votes at 16. Key arguments include fairness, international examples, young people's engagement, and rights. Students predict what they think will be the key theme of the lesson.
8	Big idea	2 mins	Takeaway message The teacher introduces the core message: "Democracy in the UK is based on citizens having a voice, making choices through elections, and holding leaders to account." The teacher explains why this message matters.
9	Learning Objectives	1 min	Learning Objectives The teacher outlines what students will explore and be able to do by the end of the lesson.
10	Key Ideas	4 mins	Key Ideas The teacher introduces key concepts: franchise, democracy, representation, and the arguments for and against lowering the voting age. Q&A using True/False questions can be used to check understanding before moving on.
11	Real World Example - The Fight for Young People's Political Voice in the UK	5 mins	Case Study Using a case study, students explore the fight for young people to have political rights in the UK. Reflection questions are included to encourage critical thinking.

Part two: **APPLY**

Slide	Title	Time	Description
13	For & Against Line Debate	15 mins	Structured dialogue Students move along a line from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree in response to statements. They must be ready to explain their reasoning. This promotes critical thinking and respectful debate.
14-22	For & Against Statements	N/A	Slides 14 to 22 each have a statement which can be displayed whilst students position themselves along a line from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree in response to statements.
23	Debrief	7 mins	Whole Class Reflection Students reflect on the dialogue using guided prompts to deepen self-awareness, explore different perspectives, and practise oracy and critical thinking.

Part three: **REFLECT**

Slide	Title	Time	Description
25	Reflect	7 mins	Individual reflection Students complete a short written task to consolidate learning. They reflect on a key idea, the core message, and one personal insight or skill they developed.

Key Life Skills and Learning Habits developed in this lesson

This lesson is designed to develop both transferable **Life Skills** and core **Learning Habits**. While Life Skills are the capabilities students are building (*what they walk away with*), Learning Habits shape *how* they engage with each stage of the lesson.

Here's a snapshot of how they're being developed in this lesson.

Life Skills:

- **Team-working** – Engaging respectfully in the line debate, contributing to group dialogue.
 - **Critical thinking** – Interpreting the quote, weighing up different perspectives, and analysing arguments.
 - **Confidence** – Practising low-risk speaking in the line debate, building trust in personal opinion.
 - **Information literacy** – Understanding key democratic concepts and drawing on evidence in argument.
 - **Oracy** – Explaining reasoning clearly during the debate and listening to others' justifications.
-

Learning Habits:

- **Reflectiveness** – Pausing to examine assumptions and personal growth during **THINK** and **REFLECT** stages.
- **Resilience** – Staying engaged in debates where opinions differ, and responding constructively to challenge.
- **Resourcefulness** – Drawing on prior knowledge, empathy, and creativity when analysing and debating.
- **Reciprocity** – Practising respect, empathy, and collaboration in group tasks and discussions.

