



Can Anyone Hear Me? Is Anybody Listening?

Preston Lodge High School

Pupil Handbook

“The world is too dangerous to live in – not because of the people who do evil, but because of the people who sit and let it happen.”

Albert Einstein

So, What Are My Options?

By the end of this section, you will be able to: Name three methods of participation. Give three examples of how people in the UK and abroad participate in these ways. Give answers to interview questions about various examples of participation across the world.

What Is Participation?

Before we can begin to understand *how* we can participate, we need to understand what the word actually means. The dictionary defines participation as ‘the act of sharing in the activities of a group’ – basically, it means **getting involved**. We all participate in something – whether that’s a sports team, a club, or just a family meal at home. In Modern Studies, we look at people’s **participation in society**. As scholars of Modern Studies, we are interested in **how, where,** and most importantly **why** people participate in **shaping the society** they live in.

Can We Really Shape Our Society?

It may feel like we can’t really have much **effect on events** and laws in the UK and internationally. In fact, sometimes it seems like only a very few people – like David Cameron, Alex Salmond and Rupert Murdoch can actually make a difference. While these people do have a lot of **power and influence**, ordinary people can participate in society in a number of different, and often surprising ways

How Has Participation Changed Over the Years?

It’s often said that the Ancient Greeks invented democracy, but the form of democracy practiced in Athens looked very different to what we see today. Only **adult male Athenian citizens** were allowed to vote, and anyone else in the city was effectively a second-class citizen. Since then, opportunities to participate have **multiplied exponentially**. Thanks to **new technology**, we are able to participate and make a difference in Britain and across the world. Here are some examples of some recent forms of participation you may not have considered.

Martha Payne, NeverSeconds Blogger

Martha, just 9 years old, **started a blog**, which catalogued the meals she was given every day at school. She began publishing photographs of her Lochgilphead Primary School lunches on 30 April 2012 giving each meal a ‘food-o-meter’ and **health rating**, and counting the number of mouthfuls it took her to eat it. The blog became incredibly popular, and brought **serious criticism** of Argyll and Bute council for the **extremely poor quality** of the meals, as well as raising money for charity. The council



decided to **ban Martha** from taking photographs, in an effort to shut her blog down. This brought massive **public and media attention**, including from Jamie Oliver, who urged his 2.5 million followers on Twitter to tweet ‘Stay Strong Martha’. Finally, the council reversed its decision.

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Occupy Wall Street



In July 2011, a Canadian-based **protest magazine**, *Adbusters*, ran a poster reading ‘What is Our One Demand? #OccupyWallStreet. September 17th. Bring Tent.’ In early August, a small number of **experienced protesters** met to try and decide what the protest would look like. Initially planned as an ordinary rally, people like David Graeber, an academic, pushed it towards something different - a **long-term encampment** in a public space without specific leaders, and committed to a general complaint — the U.S. **economy is broken**, politics is **corrupted** by big money — but with no immediate call for specific action. David Graeber also coined the term that came to define the revolution ‘**We are the 99%**’.

Initially, the protest got little attention. The first few days of the occupation of Zuccotti Park went by almost unnoticed, but over time, the camp became **more organised**, arranging seminars, speeches, and creating an **intricate decision-making process**

that involved long discussions and complicated hand-signals. They also created a library with over 5,000 books. The movement gathered steam, attracting both **intense criticism and fiery praise** both domestically and internationally. Similar protest camps sprung up in over 80 countries, including Scotland, Nigeria and Chile. In November, armed police raided the encampment, arresting over **200 people**, including several members of the media. They closed down the Zuccotti Park camp, although attempts are since been made to ‘re-occupy’ Wall Street.

Tahrir Square and the Arab Awakening

Before 2012, Egypt had **never had democratic elections** in its 3000-year history. In 2011, the dictator **Hosni Mubarak** ruled the country, propped up by a ruthless military. Egypt was one of the most corrupt countries in the world, and the brutal police force were one of the worst institutions. Towards the end of 2010, a young man named **Khaled Said** hacked a police officer’s phone and lifted a video showing officers displaying piles of drugs and cash. He was promptly arrested, and **beaten to death** while in custody. His death sparked outrage, and a protest was planned for January 25 in Tahrir Square in the centre of Cairo. Thousands streamed into the square, and most surprisingly, they were **hugely varied** – men, women, Christian, Muslim – but they were mainly young and all were passionate and determined.



The regime responded in predictable fashion with a brutal crackdown. As the response escalated, from tear gas to rubber bullets to real bullets, to a nationwide shutdown of Internet connections, to armed camel riders rampaging through Tahrir — so did the number of protesters in Cairo and all over the country. At least **4.5 million** Egyptians protested over the three weeks before, finally, the military declared that it would no longer support Hosni Mubarak. 11 days later, he stepped down.

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Invisible Children and Kony 2012



In 2004, an organisation known as 'Invisible Children Inc' was founded in America. Its stated aim was to put an end to the activities of the warlord **Joseph Kony** and his group, the '**Lord's Resistance Army**'. The LRA abducts and abuses children from Uganda and the countries around it, using them as soldiers. Invisible Children was relatively successful in raising awareness of the LRA in America, visiting schools and producing a book. In March 2012, however, they produced a 30-minute film called 'Kony 2012', which was eventually seen by over **100 million people**. It went viral through social networks such as Facebook and Twitter, with people sharing it throughout the world.

Viewers of the video were not only asked to share it online, but also to act in their local communities. Groups in a number of different countries held rallies, distributed information and organised events. This pressure led to a resolution in the US Congress calling on America to act against Kony. The African Union has also recently sent **5,000 troops** from

Uganda and the surrounding area to hunt for Joseph Kony and 'neutralise' him.

Why Should I Care?

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

Give three arguments why people should participate in society.

Analyse a chart, discuss with peers, and present conclusions to the class. Prepare a two-minute speech aimed at convincing someone to vote.

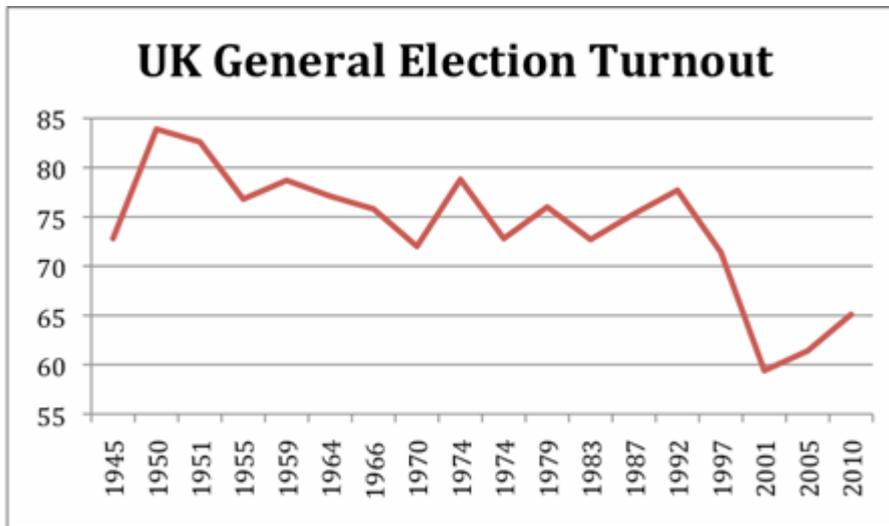
Does it Really Make A Difference?

A lot of people would argue that participation is **largely irrelevant** in modern society. Recent studies have shown that **social mobility** – the ability of people to change their social class or standing across their lifetime has never been lower. The government's advisor on social mobility, **Alan Milburn**, has said that there is increasing evidence that people from poorer backgrounds, and those who live outside the South-East of England are being left behind. Against this background, it is perhaps unsurprising that **voter apathy has never been higher**.

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John Bercow, the Speaker of the House of Commons, has argued that many people are "suspicious or even despairing" about the political system, and that they feel that voting is pointless, and won't really change anything. The number of people voting in elections has been **steadily declining** since the Second World War.



Is It Worth Voting?

The picture when it comes to local and council elections is even worse – the turnout in the last English council elections was only **32%**. Many people expressed opinions similar to the one below:

“What’s the point? I’m not going to change the outcome, anyway. Even if I did vote, who am I going to vote for? All the parties are basically the same, and they’re all crooks, anyway.”

Jenny Voss, 23

The Responsibility to Vote

Though it may seem like it’s a waste of time, voting is incredibly important. The following are some opinions in support of this:

If you don't vote you don't have the right to criticise what the government does. People have died in the past fighting for the right to vote.

It will ensure that the UK and Scotland stay democratic.

If the turnout is very low those elected may not represent the views of the electorate.

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But Does It Actually Work?

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

Create a policy statement that is clear, concise, and appropriately targeted. Craft a party identity based on values and persuasive techniques.

Complete an extended piece of persuasive writing

Create a video advertisement and a debate speech.

Voting As Participation

As we have seen in the previous section, one of the most effective, and most important methods of participation is voting. Across the world, there are 78 full or flawed democracies, of which most are in North America and Western Europe. There are a number of different styles of democracy – for instance, the UK is a constitutional monarchy, while the USA is a presidential republic – but they all involve voting for people who represent the voter’s interests at a national level. In this section, we will investigate the election process, as well as holding our own election. Here you will act as candidates, campaign managers, publicity secretaries and many other key roles as you work together to get your candidate elected!

How Do Elections Work?

We will be using the **First Past the Post** voting system to elect a representative. In this system, all the people in a constituency are given one vote, which they can use to cast a preference for a single candidate. The candidate with the most votes wins the election and gets to represent the constituency in Parliament. Our constituency will be Currie Community High School, and all of the candidates will come from S3. This system is the same as that used in elections to the UK Parliament.

Who Are The Candidates?

There are over 400 political parties in the UK, from established and well-known parties like the Conservatives and the Greens to more fringe organisations like the Pirate Party of the United Kingdom and Veritas. Each party is allowed to have one candidate in any election – the larger parties will aim to have a candidate on every ballot, whereas the smaller parties will only focus on constituencies where they have a chance of winning. In the UK, candidates tend to be disproportionately white, male, privately educated and rich. They are the face of the party in that constituency, so need to be comfortable giving speeches, convincing people to vote for them and fundraising.

The Role of the Media

Each election, candidates try and find new ways of convincing people to vote for them. In this country, election campaigns traditionally last around six weeks, but in America, they can last up to two years. Winning an election requires a dedicated team, public support, but mainly, it requires a lot of money. From paying for adverts in newspapers to refueling the campaign bus, it’s incredibly expensive running a campaign. In 2008, Barack Obama spent almost a billion dollars on his presidential campaign, and the 2012 campaigns look set to far outstrip that. One of the most effective campaigning techniques, and therefore the one candidates often spend most on is television adverts. While a candidate giving a speech may only reach a few thousand, a well-crafted television advert may reach hundreds of thousands, if not millions. TV Ads are often the things people remember most about

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election campaigns, and if done well, can swing the opinions of many voters.

In the UK, political advertising is illegal on TV and radio, but every party is given one slot on terrestrial television to air a ‘party political broadcast’. This broadcast is usually about five minutes in length, and often uses celebrities, music, slogans and other techniques to try and convince people to vote for that party.

Political adverts generally fall into one of three categories:

Positive

- These adverts are generally upbeat, extolling the virtues of the candidate, and explaining why he or she would be the perfect choice for the role.

Negative

- These adverts normally focus on the opposition – pointing out their flaws, explaining why they are bad people and trying to smear them.

Combination

- These adverts are the hardest to pull off, but can be the most effective. They try to strike a balance between positive and negative.

How Do Candidates Connect With Voters?

Although the media is incredibly influential, and has a huge impact on an election, the power of a speech given by the candidate should not be underestimated. In British Parliamentary elections, candidates in an election take part in events called hustings. Each candidate has an opportunity to give a short speech, after which the other candidates have the opportunity to question them, and respond to points they have made. This can often be one of the most persuasive parts of the campaign, as it is the only opportunity candidates have to directly challenge each other on the issues and their policies.



The hustings involve more than just the speech, however. Each candidate will have their own banners, posters and rosettes, taking every opportunity to get people’s votes.

Election Day

Election day is often the most frantic of the campaign – candidates try to speak to as many people as possible, rushing around their constituency, as well as giving interviews in local and national media. The actual process of voting is different in different countries, but in the UK, a secret ballot is conducted at a number of different polling stations throughout a given constituency. A returning officer is appointed to oversee the process, ensuring that it is conducted fairly and appropriately. People can vote throughout the day, and those constituents who know they won’t be able to vote on the day can vote via postal vote or appoint a proxy.

Would you Risk your Life for it?

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- Give a detailed account of the events in Tunisia in Spring 2011. Show evidence of note taking from a video.
- Analyse and assess the situation in Tunisia.

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Well, Would, You?

We have seen how many people take their vote, and their ability to participate in general, for granted. In many countries across the world, citizens are not only unable to vote, but participation in society as a whole is highly restricted. While there are 78 full or flawed democracies across the world, there are over 100 countries where participation is a distant dream. Recent events have shown the power of people, but it often comes at a heavy cost – conservative estimates of the death toll in the recent Arab Awakening number in the thousands. All too often, those who hold power are very unwilling to relinquish it

Tunisia Forever

In 2011, the world's perception of the Middle East was turned upside down by the events of the Arab Awakening, also known as the Arab Spring. Throughout the region, governments that were previously thought of as unshakeable were toppled, not by military coup or foreign invasion, but by their own people standing up and saying "Enough. No more".

Tunisia is often seen as the catalyst of the Awakening, sparking off uprisings in more than a dozen countries in the region. Over the course of 3 months, a country that had only known two leaders in the 55 years since it gained independence from France rose up and deposed Zine Ben Ali, a man who had promised them a new dawn of freedom and equality, but had delivered an oppressive police state, ruled over.

Task Two

- Write the title '**Tunisia – The Death of Fear**' in your jotter.
- Watch the first section of the documentary – 'The Death of Fear'.
- Take notes under the heading '**Mohammed Bouazizi**'
- In your groups, discuss:
 - o Who was Mohammed Bouazizi?
 - o What was his position in society before his death?
 - o What happened to Mohammed that drove him to act?
 - o After his request for help was turned down three times, what did Mohammed do?
- Make sure that everyone in your group has notes in their jotter that answer the questions.
- Watch the second section of the documentary.
- Take notes under the heading '**The Power of Social Networking**'
- In your groups, discuss:
 - o Previously, acts of civil disobedience went relatively unnoticed – why was this time different?
 - o What was the government's response? How did they try to control the blogosphere? How did bloggers and other activists react?
 - o How did activists use Facebook to keep people informed of what was happening? How important were Facebook and other social media tools to the revolution?
- Make sure that everyone in your group has notes in their jotter that answer the questions.
- Watch the third section of the documentary.
- Take notes under the heading '**The Final Straw**'
- In your groups, discuss:
 - o How do you think the use of live ammunition affected what people thought about the revolution?
 - o How did Ben-Ali, the dictator of Tunisia respond to the crisis? How did people feel about his public statements?

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Part 1 – How Can I Participate?

- Why were people willing to risk their lives in order to protest?
- Watch the fourth section of the documentary.
- Take notes under the heading **'The Fall of Ben Ali'**
- In your groups, discuss:
 - Ben-Ali unleashed the police force, giving them orders to shoot to kill. Why do you think he did this? What was he trying to prove?
 - Whose decision finally convinced Ben-Ali that he had to make concessions? Why couldn't he go on without the support of these people? What were his concessions?
 - Did people accept what he said?
 - What was the people's response to Ben-Ali stepping down?
 - Why do you think the documentary is called 'The Death of Fear'?
- Make sure that everyone in your group has notes in their jotter that answer the questions.

Why Aren't We Helping?

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- Explain the voting system in the UN Security Council
- Compare and contrast facts and viewpoints about the Syrian crisis.
- Use the viewpoints to answer an Option Choice question.

The

Problem with Syria

Since March 2011, over 20,000 people have been killed in violence in Syria. In July 2012, 131 people were killed every day. Constant fighting across the country has trapped millions of Syrian civilians in their homes, and hundreds of thousands have fled as refugees to nearby countries. Countless world leaders have spoken out against the regime and its leader, President Bashar al-Assad, calling for him to resign from the presidency and, in the words of the US Press secretary, 'Stop killing your people'.

The Story So Far

For fifty years, Syria has been run by the Ba'ath party, and ruled by members of the Assad family, who essentially functioned as dictators. When Bashar al-Assad came to power, he was seen as a potential reformer – someone who could change Syria for the better, and make it more democratic. He was even nicknamed 'The Hope'.

Unfortunately, this nickname turned out to be very far from the truth. After protests connected to the Arab Awakening in March 2011 turned into a nationwide uprising, Assad responded with sickening violence. The Syrian Army were unleashed on the protestors, besieging cities and attacking groups labelled as 'rebels' and traitors. Assad reportedly gave orders to open fire on civilians.

Opposition to Assad came together under the flag of the 'Free Syrian Army' (FSA), and violent clashes between the two have since claimed between 20,000 and 33,000 lives.

Many members of the FSA have appealed to the UN for help. As of yet, that help has not yet been forthcoming. To understand why not, we need to understand the structure of the UN.



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The United Nations

The United Nations was set up in the aftermath of the Second World War, in an effort to ensure that never again could such a conflict occur. It has 193 member states, each of which has one vote in the General Assembly. The General Assembly votes on observations and **recommendations** – these are **non-binding**, which means that countries don't have to follow them if they don't want to.

The Security Council holds the real power in the UN. This is made up of five permanent members – France, the UK, China, Russia and the USA, and ten non-permanent members, elected every two years by the General Assembly. The Security Council decides on **resolutions** – these are **binding**, which means every country *must* follow them.

The Power of the Veto

The permanent members of the UN Security Council have a 'veto'. This means that if they don't want to follow a resolution, they can cancel it, even if the other 14 members of the Security Council want to pass it. This makes the Permanent Members very powerful indeed, and allows them to essentially stop any new resolutions from passing.

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