



PRE-TOUR LESSON 2

DEMOCRACY CHANGING

GRADES 9-12



Key Questions

- How did democracy change over time?
- What were key moments in democracy's development?
- How did these key moments impact/lead to democracy today?

Students will...

- Understand that democracy went through a variety of developments.
- Understand how/when/where each milestone event happened in democracy's evolution.
- Connect milestone events to the modern democratic principles.

Teacher Primer

There were a number of key events in history that contributed to our present-day standard for what democracy should be. These include but are not limited to: the signing of the Magna Carta (1215), the first elected Parliament in England (1265), the passage of *Habeas Corpus* (1679), the passage of the English Bill of Rights (1689), the United States Revolution (1776), the French Revolution (1789-1799), and the introduction of the secret ballot (1850 in Australia, 1890 in United States). These events challenged the state of democracy, or lack thereof, in their respective regions. Democracy was forever changed and enhanced in their wake.

Set

Ask students to consider a butterfly. It begins its life in the caterpillar stage, but eventually goes through changes in the cocoon to emerge as something new. The caterpillar/butterfly evolution is a good metaphor for understanding our democracy today — changing as it outgrows its environment and evolving into something more advanced. Explain to students that, in the previous lesson, they learned about democracy in its caterpillar stage. This lesson is about the changes it encountered during its cocoon phase. Note: The butterfly stage will come in the next lesson.

Development

Explain that democracy developed in fits and starts throughout time. Certain events took place in certain places, which pushed democracy forward in its evolution. As these events took place and then the transfer of ideas happened from place to place, humanity's collective understanding of what democracy should and should not be continued to develop.

Students will be responsible for creating a timeline of these events. Hand out a copy of "Democratic Evolution Timeline" to each student (printed on A4 paper). Explain that students are to complete the timeline by putting information in each of the boxes about the event in question. Ensure that students include:

- Information about the event itself
- Information about how the event impacted democracy:
 - What lasting effects did it have on democracy as a whole?
 - Did it instill a new value into democracy?
 - Did it enshrine a principle into democracy forever?

Give students time to complete this project. Time required will vary.

Closure and Assessment

When assessing the timelines, look for these key facts/concepts from each of the following events listed:

- Signing the Magna Carta: Magna Carta was the first written constitution and provided the foundation of English common law. It prevented the King from exploiting his power by limiting his power and stating that all people are subject to the law.

Closure and Assessment (cont'd)

- First Elected Parliament: The first elected parliament (Model Parliament) included representatives from various regions of England. This formed the model that the Commonwealth would later follow.
- Habeas Corpus is passed: It protected an individual's personal liberty by giving them the right to question the lawfulness of their imprisonment.
- English Bill of Rights is passed: Established the idea of frequently meeting parliaments, free elections, and freedom of speech within Parliament. It includes freedom from government interference, the right to petition, and the prohibition of cruel and unusual punishment by courts. It also limited the Crown's ability to impose taxes without Parliament's approval.
- United States Revolution: Established the United States of America as an independent nation separate from British colonial rule. It created a representative republican democracy that was dedicated to the interests of ordinary people rather than the interests of the Crown.
- French Revolution: Limited the power of the monarchy within France. Marked the beginning of representational, democratic governments in Europe. Established social equality among all citizens, property rights, and the separation of church and state.
- Introduction of the secret ballot: Prevented attempts to influence the voter by intimidation or blackmailing, allowing for a true representative democracy.

DEMOCRATIC EVOLUTION

Name: _____

TIMELINE

Signing the Magna Carta (1215)

The First Elected Parliament (1265)

Habeas Corpus is Passed (1679)

The English Bill of Rights is Passed (1689)

The United States Revolution (1776)

The French Revolution (1779-1789)

Secret Ballot (1850 and 1890)