

Youth Voice Network for Scotland

Political education lesson
plan for schools

Making informed decisions
about voting





About the lesson plan

Members of the Youth Voice Network for Scotland designed this lesson plan at an in-person meeting of the group. Members agreed that lessons that helped pupils to understand who they are voting for when they vote would be helpful.

This lesson was designed with that aim and allows pupils to review a series of policies and decide which they support and which they do not. These policies correspond to political parties and will help pupils to understand in the event of an election which party would mostly align with their own views.

To help uphold political impartiality, we've created fake political parties that are not associated with any existing political parties.

Summary

Year group	S5, S6
Time	c. 45 minutes or one timetable period
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Policy cut outs (for as many groups as required)• Answer sheet• Paper• Scissors
Outcomes	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Pupils can engage with example policy ideas in the UK and actively reflect on their own political beliefs.2. Pupils can better understand how policies are endorsed by political parties to form manifestos.



Lesson plan

Time

10 minutes

Activity

Overview of activity

Suggested script to introduce activity:

“When you are able to vote, you will be expressing who you wish to make decisions about the country on your behalf. Your Member of Parliament or Member of the Scottish Parliament will most likely be a member of a political party that has particular policy priorities it will implement if they win the election and are able to form a government.

It can be useful then, to think about how different policies and ideas about how a country should work align with different political parties to keep you informed and confident to vote.

Thinking about what your own political ideas and views are can help you decide who you are going to vote for and for what reasons.

This activity allows you to review a set of policy ideas selecting up to nine that you feel most match your own beliefs. You should discuss these with whoever is in your group and keep a note of the numbers attached to each policy.

We will then review these to tally up which policies belong to three of the fake political parties. The party that endorses the most policies you selected will give you a good idea of who you should vote for if these parties were to run for election.

So, by the end of the activity, you should have a good idea of you are a Badgers, Rabbits, or Fox party voter!”

- Ask class to split into groups of two or three
- Handout the policy option cut outs
- Ask pupils to cut them out.

Time	Activity
15 minutes	<p>Activity 1: reviewing policies</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask pupils to look at all 20 policy options, discuss them with their group and select the ones they feel aligns with their own political views and ideas. 2. Allow 15 minutes for pupils to select up to seven policies – pupils can select the same policies. Ask them to keep a note of the numbers attached to the policies they have selected.
10 minutes	<p>Activity 2: Who should you vote for?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Handout or present answer sheet to the class. 2. Ask pupils to calculate how many policies align with the three fake parties. 3. The highest number of policies from one party indicates that a pupil's personal political beliefs. <p>Suggested script for teachers:</p> <p>“Once you’ve calculated who your personal beliefs most aligned with, you will have a good indication in the event of an election who you hypothetically might be best voting for.</p> <p>You can see that different political parties have different approaches to politics and policies. It can be helpful to think of these when deciding who to vote for. Some issues are more important to some people than others and this can encourage them to vote for particular parties in an election.”</p>
10 minutes	<p>Activity 3: Reviewing the real thing</p> <p>Suggested script for teachers:</p> <p>“To bring this to life a bit more, we can review the political manifestos of real political parties. A political parties’ manifesto lays out all their ideas to achieve their political vision. Some will support the same policy ideas whereas some will differ significantly.</p> <p>You can look at the manifestos of all the major political parties in the UK online. Take a look at some of them to see how they present their vision and the key policies they are supporting.”</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask pupils to use personal digital devices to access the most recent manifestos of the major political parties in the UK. 2. Write the names of these political parties as a reference point for pupils to search.



Policies for Activity 1

1: The Government should control and own the ways we create energy to keep prices low.

2: The Government should allow some businesses to control energy sources to boost efficiency.

3: The Government should not be involved in the control of energy to allow businesses to invest in new energy sources.

4: Everyone above the age of 16 should be able to vote in all elections.

5: Citizens of the UK above the age of 16 should be able to vote in all elections.

6: Citizens of the UK above the age of 18 should be able to vote in all elections.

7: Medication charges should not apply to anyone who needs medicine in the UK.

8: Those who can afford it should pay small charges for medication so that not everyone has to.

9: Everyone should pay a small charge for medication to support the costs of the NHS.

10: Universities and colleges should remain free for everyone who want to go.

11: Those who can afford it should pay for university or college so that others should not.

12: Everyone should pay for university or college to make sure education standards are high.

13: Disposable vapes should be banned entirely.

14: Disposable vapes should be made available only through prescription for those addicted to nicotine.

15: Disposable vapes should be available to buy to over 18s only – just like cigarettes.

16: All public transport should be free to those under 22.

17: Only buses should be free to those under 22.

18: Public transport is a service, and everyone should pay for it.

19: Every young person should be given the opportunity to participate in the arts e.g., learn an instrument, paint, write etc.

20: Young people who show an early talent in the arts should be fully funded to pursue that art.

21: Supporting every young person to participate in the arts is too expensive and the money can be better spent elsewhere.



Policy answers sheet for Activity 2



The Badgers

Policies endorsed:

- Policy 1
- Policy 4
- Policy 7
- Policy 10
- Policy 13
- Policy 16
- Policy 19



The Foxes

Policies endorsed:

- Policy 2
- Policy 5
- Policy 8
- Policy 11
- Policy 14
- Policy 17
- Policy 20



The Rabbits

Policies endorsed:

- Policy 3
- Policy 6
- Policy 9
- Policy 12
- Policy 15
- Policy 18
- Policy 21