

Lesson plan

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<p>Title of Activity: Democracy @ School</p>	<p>Subject area: People and society/ citizenship</p>
<p>Grade Level(s): Lower Secondary Education (approx. 13–14 years)</p>	<p>Duration: lesson periods (±100 minutes) + optional extension</p>

Learning objectives:

After this activity, pupils will be able to:

- explain what democracy is and what its **basic principles** are (elections, majority, representation, coalitions);
- experience how **different opinions** coexist;
- **express and defend** their own opinions;
- treat other points of view with respect;
- understand that decisions are often the result of **consultation and compromise**.
- experience democracy not only as a concept, but as a **process**: forming opinions, making choices, persuading others, voting and reaching compromises.

The activity is closely linked to their everyday lives and encourages active citizenship.

Teaching method:

- Active and experiential learning
- Cooperative learning (working in small groups)

Teaching techniques

- Group work
- Role play / simulation
- Short pitch (campaign speech)
- Voting procedure (ballot papers)
- Class discussion
- Reflection questions - Discussion and reflection

Materials / Resources / Technology use:

- Board or digital screen
- Paper and pens (or tablets/laptops)

- Worksheet Democracy@schools (Appendix 1)
- Template for group work (Appendix 2)
- Ballot paper template (Appendix 3)
- PPT Democracy@schools (Appendix 4)

Activity Description:

Motivational phase: Introduction (10 minutes)

Educational discussion

PPT Democracy (Appendix 4)

Teacher: Who makes the decision?

Who decides what you eat at home?

Who decides where you go on trips?

Who decides what time you have to go to bed?

Are there certain rules that apply?

Is everyone allowed to have a say?

Are these rules written down or unwritten?

Students: free answers

Teacher:

Who decides when break time is at school?

Whether you are allowed to eat during lessons?

Where you go on school trips?

Pupils: free answers

Teacher: Are there certain rules that apply?

Pupils: yes

Teacher: Are those rules written down? Who decides?

Pupils: School rules – the head teacher

Teacher: Can everyone have a say? Do pupils have a say?

Pupil: Vote in the pupil council

Teacher: Can anyone be on the student council?

Pupil: You have to be elected

Teacher: elections – pupil representatives

Teacher writes key words on the board:

rules, voting, majority, deciding, democracy

Learning phase:

Teaching/educational discussion (15 minutes)

PPT Democracy (Appendix 4)

Pupils complete the worksheet after the teacher's synthesis question.

Definition of the concept of democracy: The word 'democracy' derives from the Greek words 'demos' ('people') and 'krateo' ('to rule' or 'to govern').

Literally translated, it means 'rule by the people'.

The first democracy arose in ancient Greece. In the Greek city-states, important decisions were made by the citizens.

Because the people had a direct say in matters of state, we call this a direct democracy.

Over the centuries, democracy has developed from pure direct democracy to a more indirect form of democracy.

Indirect democracy: citizens appoint representatives through elections to represent their interests.

Indirect or 'representative' democracy is the most common form of democracy.

The people elect a number of representatives who make decisions on behalf of the people about the governance of the country.

Elections must meet a number of requirements in order to be considered democratic.

For example, elections must be free; every citizen with the right to vote must be able to freely determine their choice.

And, of course, there must be something to choose from; independent groups or parties must be able to compete with each other for power.

Elections must also be secret. If they are not, voters could be held accountable for their voting behaviour, which could influence their choice.

Furthermore, it is necessary that elections are conducted fairly; the results of the elections must not be tampered with, because then the parliament would not be a true reflection of the will of the voters.

Finally, elections must be held at regular intervals so that voters can express their opinion on the work of parliament and the government.

Another aspect of democratic elections is, of course, universal suffrage: no groups may be excluded from the elections. In a democracy, the right of citizens to vote freely is linked to the right of citizens to stand for election.

Sources:

<https://www.montesquieu-instituut.nl/id/vjntb0w9l0ni/democratie>

<https://prodemos.nl/kennis/informatie-over-politiek/wat-is-een-democratie/>

See PPT slide 6

Synthesis questions:

From which words does democracy derive?

Where did the first democracy originate?

Give the literal translation of the term democracy.

Describe what direct democracy is.

What is the difference between direct and indirect democracy?

What requirements must democratic elections meet?

Students: Fill in: *Worksheet Democracy@school: (Appendix 1)*

Teacher: How are decisions made in society?

Pupils: Elections, voting, majority

Teacher: How do you determine the majority?

Pupils: half +1

Teacher: Decisions are made democratically
(when the majority agrees).

Teacher: How does democracy work in practice?

We will find out with Democracy @school.

See PPT slides 7-8

Teacher: "Today, you will experience for yourselves how democracy works.

The head teacher is asking for your advice on:

mobile phone use, homework, healthy snacks at school, classroom rules

He/she expects your class to take a clear stance.
How do we proceed? 5-step plan

Teacher hands out worksheet Groupwork (Appendix 2).

Step 1. Formation of political parties (5 minutes)

Divide the class into groups of 2–4 pupils.

Each group forms a 'party' (like political parties).

Each party receives a worksheet. (distribute worksheets)

Teacher:

Choose a name for your group.

Choose a chairperson to represent your group.

Come up with a slogan (what does your party stand for?).

Use your creativity!

Write it down on the worksheet.

Step 2. Write a mini party programme (15 minutes)

Choose a theme:

Go through the worksheet with the pupils.

Together with the teacher, choose three themes from the list below:

healthy snacks at school

homework policy

class rules (board, order)

Each party develops a concrete proposal for each chosen theme and fills it in on the worksheet.

What do we want to change compared to the current situation, and what do we want to keep?

Why change? Why keep?

Who benefits?

The teacher goes around, supports groups that get stuck and keeps an eye on the time.

Step 3. Election campaign

(20 minutes, depending on the number of groups)

Teacher: Each party has **5 minutes** to introduce themselves and present their ideas for each of the 3 issues.

Students: The chair introduces the party (who they are, slogan).

Members each propose an idea.

They try to **convince** other pupils of their programme.

Creativity is allowed: slogans, posters, short sketches... (if you choose this option, allow extra time!)

The rest of the class listens as 'voters'.

The teacher notes down each group's ideas on the board (in table form)

Group name

Key concept per idea (in table form) on the board.

Board diagram 1:

	Healthy snacks	Homework	Class order
Group 1 Name			
Group 2 Name			
Group ...			

After all the groups have presented their proposals, the teacher will go over the table with proposals again before handing out the voting slips.

Step 4. Voting (10 minutes)

Once all parties have presented their ideas on the three topics, the vote will take place. Teacher provides an empty shoebox (as a ballot box) and places it at the front of the classroom.

The teacher explains why voting must be secret.

The teacher distributes ballot papers (Appendix 3).

When all pupils have a ballot paper: fill it in and fold it.

The chairpersons of each party are the first to deposit their ballot papers in the ballot box and remain seated at the front of the classroom by the ballot box provided by the teacher.

Everyone votes individually and places their ballot paper in the ballot box.

Step 5. Counting the votes (10 minutes)

Procedure: each party chairperson may take 4 ballot papers from the ballot box

and count the votes from 4 ballot envelopes.
All pupils follow the count and act as witnesses.

The teacher stands at the board and notes the votes per idea.
(one tick per vote, to be added to table borschema 1)

Which idea per theme has the most votes?

Formulate the class's advice to the management: complete the advice form in Appendix 3.

Final phase:

Synthesis PPT slide 10.

Reflection: pupils explain that the voting process was democratic.

They can apply the requirements formulated in the learning process to the election process during Democracy@school.

Optional extension:

Extension of the lesson: (20 minutes)

An extra slide has been added to the PPT. Slide no. 9

When counting the votes, we now look at **which party** gets the most votes in total.

Key concept per idea (in table form) on the board.

	Healthy snacks	Homework	Class order	Total
Group 1 Name				
Group 2 Name				
Group ...				

Which party has the most votes?

Lkr.: Does one party have the majority?

How do you calculate the majority of votes here?

$(3 \text{ votes} * \text{number of pupils}) / 2 + 1 =$

If yes: that party's ideas can be passed on to the management.

Pupil: Fill in the advice form (Appendix 3)

Teacher: No party has obtained a majority of the votes.

Party... did receive the most votes, but not a majority.
This party has the right of initiative.
What will this party have to do to obtain a majority?

Students: It must cooperate with other parties.

Teacher: The parties must form a coalition.
Which parties can join forces to form a majority?
Investigate possible coalitions. (arithmetic)

Which ideas will they choose?
To do this, they will need to hold discussions.

Tip: each party in the coalition chooses the idea that received the most votes.
They must make agreements with other parties:
Which ideas will we adopt? Which will we discard?

Once agreed: complete the recommendation form.

Final phase:

Synthesis PPT slide 10.

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Feedback:

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=wxLA5YicUUGxofy7tigPKdAUtP7RNGxKioYHLGL7ZVBUODJYUVkxSzBEWkUwMFIEVjhPTDNMSzkwQS4u>