



CAMPAIGNING FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS:

Votes for women & the struggle for sex equality

SESSION 6: Participating In Our Future

SESSION OUTCOME FOR STUDENTS:

Consider the vote, how we are represented and the campaign for 50:50 parliaments and councils.

SESSION LENGTH: Designed for 45 minutes, activities can be extended

CURRICULUM & KEY STAGE: All of the sessions in the Rise Voice Vote toolkit are generic, and can be taught as part of a number of key stages. A range of resources are provided that would support making the session suitable for different key stages and abilities.

CRITICAL QUESTIONS:

- Does having the vote matter?
- Why are people campaigning for 50:50 parliament and councils?
- What gets in the way of equal political representation of women and other groups of people?
- What issues might you contact your local representative about?

SESSION PLAN:

ITEM		TIME ESTIMATED	WORKSHEETS & DOWNLOADABLE RESOURCES
1.	Introduce session	5 mins	
2.	<p>SHARE: Suggested resources on voting and women's representation.</p> <p>DISCUSS: Why does 50:50 matter? Create a list of what might get in the way of equal political representation for women and other groups of people.</p>	15 mins	<p>100 women on 100 years of women's vote</p> <p>Fawcett: Where are the women in local government infographics</p>
3.	<p>TASK: Find out more about your local politicians and MPs</p>	10 mins	
4.	<p>TASK: Write a letter to your MP or another locally elected representative</p>	15 mins	

ADDITIONAL OPTIONS & ACTIVITIES:

- Invite in a local politician to speak to students
- Work with The Politics Project to arrange a digital surgery with a politician.
- **WATCH:** [talking heads](#) from British Council Women, Power, Politics: what change do we need in the next 10 years?

WORKSHEET 6: Contacting your local representative

ABOUT:

- A number of politicians are elected to represent your views at a local, regional and national level. This is based on where you live. These politicians are your local councillors, your elected Mayor for Greater Manchester and your MP. Although you may be under the legal age of voting (18 in England) you can still contact your representatives about issues that you care about. These issues could be local to your community, national or international. Your representative should respond to you.

TASK

1. Find out using the internet who the representatives for where you live are:
 - Use the www.parliament.uk/mps-lords-and-offices/mps MP finder to find your Member of Parliament
 - Find your local councillors at www.gov.uk/find-your-local-councillors
 - You can find out how to contact the Mayor of Greater Manchester at <https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/the-mayor/>
2. Find out some more about what issues your local representatives are campaigning about - you can do this at their website, via twitter or other sources
3. Use the tips below to create a letter that you could email to one or more of your local representatives about an issue that you care about. If the issue is local you may want to contact a local councillor or your MP, if the issue is national or international you will contact your MP.
4. You could send your letter and share any response you receive

TIPS FOR WRITING A LETTER TO YOUR ELECTED REPRESENTATIVE

- Make sure you identify who the right person is for where you live
- Identify the right email (or postal) address
- ALWAYS tell them where you live, with the postcode - elected representatives need to know that they are the right person to respond to you
- Tell them how you want to be responded to - email or postal address
- Identify what the problem is - be as specific as you can be - and include what the impact is on you, your family and/or your community if you can
- Tell them clearly what you would like to have happen
- Provide them with any sources for more information, in case they are not familiar with the issue
- If you have evidence of others who support the same thing let them know - this could be a petition, a meeting or on-line campaign you want to draw their attention to
- Keep the letter short and clear
- See also the UK Feminista Guide to Lobbying for more inspiration and informatio