Power & Influence – Knowledge Organiser

Taking part in democracy

Voting is not the only way to take part in politics. You can join the political life of your community by fundraising, supporting a political party, joining a political party, standing for election, becoming an activist or working as a public servant. People often have personal reasons for wanting to take part in democracy e.g. feeling strongly about a local hospital closing. Since 1969, people have been able to vote once they turn 18, although because elections are every 5 years, you may not be able to vote until your twenties. Prisoners are not allowed to vote. Some people think that 16- and 17-year olds should be able to vote.

Labour and Lib Dem are for Votes @ 16

Conservatives are against Votes @ 16

Pressure groups

Advocacy	Publically supporting an issue or proposal
Lobbying	Trying to persuade the government to change a law or take action
Direct action	Action to bring about change e.g. strike
Indirect action	Making your case by persuasion rather than action

A pressure group is a group of people that tries to change public opinion or government policy. They are not trying to gain power, they want change.

Examples of pressure groups: Jamie Oliver (school meals) Fathers 4 Justice (campaigning for better parental rights)

Pressure group – putting pressure on the government to change something.

Improving voting turnout

Turnout	The & of people who vote in an election

Voter turnout

2015	66.1%
2010	65.1%
2005	61.4%
2001	59.4%

Voting turnout in the UK is poor. People might not vote because they are apathetic, their vote will not count, do not understand the process, have not registered or they do not trust any political party.

Some people think you could improve voter turnout by voting by post, voting on a Sunday or making voting compulsory.

Digital democracy	Use of online methods to support elections and voting.

Voting online might improve voting turnout as it is quick and easy, but it could cause issues with hacking or fraud.

Supporting democracy

A country may have elections, but if they are not free and fair, the country is not democratic e.g. North Korea. In many countries, citizens are not free to vote as they wish. A dictator government, rules by making their own laws, is an absolute ruler of state, ignores the rule of law and is often fraudulent.

Human rights that support democracy are 'freedom of speech' and 'freedom of thought'.

This table shows degrees of democracy and highlights global inequality.

Region	2014	Region	2014
Asia & Australasia	5.70	N America	8.59
E Europe	5.58	W Europe	8.41
Latin America	6.36	Sub-Saharan Africa	4.34
Middle E & N Africa	3.65	World average	5.55

Supporting society

Volunteer	Someone who works for free for a community
Charity	Organisations providing help and raising money for those in need
Public institutions	Services provided by the government e.g. schools
Public services	Services provided by the state
Voluntary organisations	Not for profit organisations with no government funding.

People volunteer for a variety of reasons. The value of volunteering is huge. The annual bill for volunteers (if they were paid) would exceed %50 billion. This has a positive impact on the economy as well as helping communities be more sustainable.

Trade unions

Throughout history, people have fought hard to have rights at work. Trade Unions encourage employers to offer fair pay and good working conditions. They support individuals and large groups. If there is a large-scale conflict, the Union might call for a strike, this is a type of collective bargaining (group of workers negotiating together) People can be dismissed if they are unable to do their job properly. They can be made redundant if their job has ended. If there is a disagreement between an employee and employer, it might go to an employment tribunal. ACAS is an organisation that tries to resolve disputes in the workplace.