

# What's happening in the news this week?



Jane Campbell/Shutterstock

Let's have a look at this week's poster!

15th - 21st September 2025

# This week's story looks at events related to ...

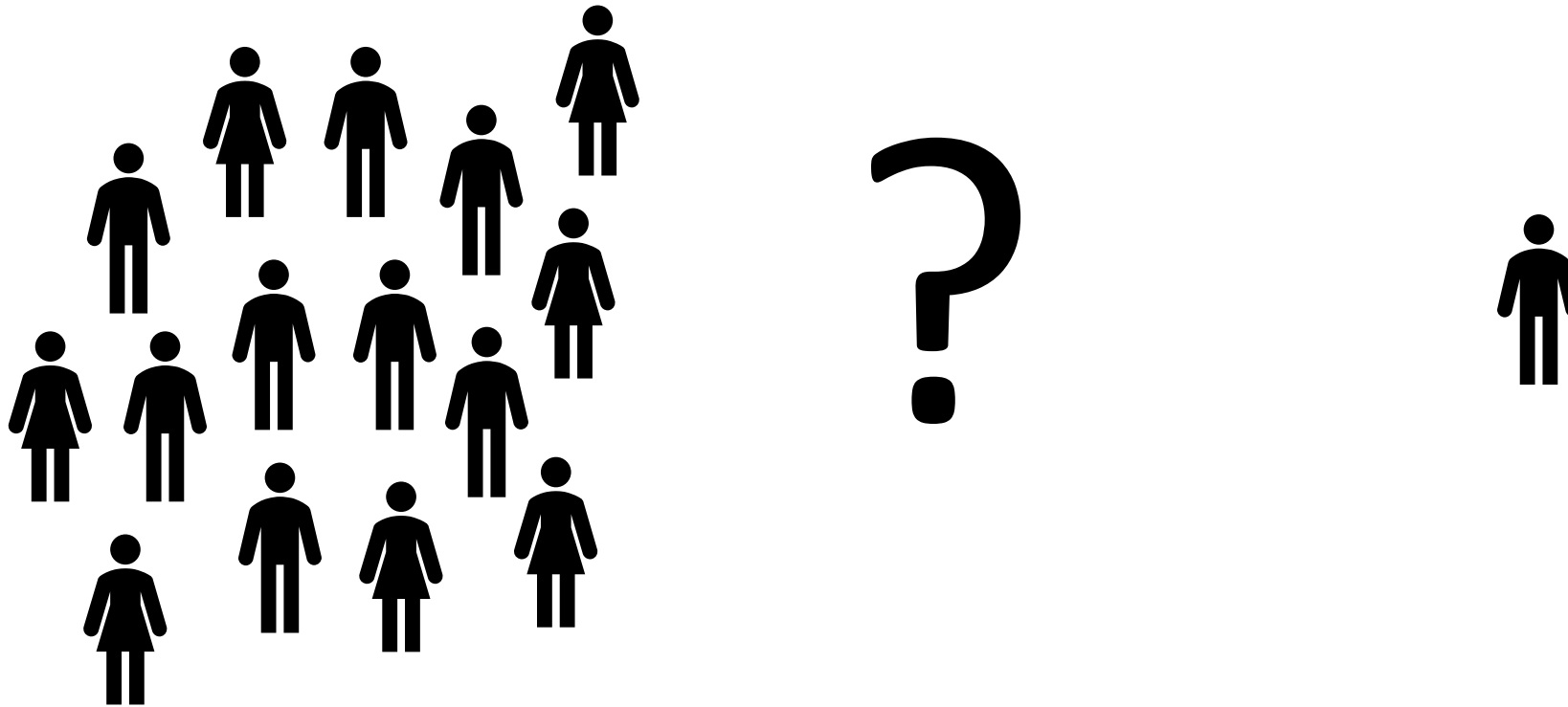




# Why do we vote?

VOTES  
AT  
16

**Democracy** – ‘rule by the people’



**Democracy** – ‘everyone can share their views and opinions’



## Let's look at this week's story

Schools in the UK will soon need to give more lessons on **democracy**, how voting works, and how the country is run. This is because the voting age for the general election is being **lowered** to 16. Many agree that young people need to be ready to make informed **decisions**. At first, these lessons will be for children aged 14 and over, but the plan is to begin teaching these **issues** from 11 years of age, so everyone has plenty of time to learn.



Learn more about this week's story [here](#).  
Watch this week's useful video [here](#).  
This week's Virtual Picture News [here](#).





Read through the information below, which explains more about this week's story.

## Votes for 16-year-olds



### What's happening?

For the first time, 16-year-olds will be able to vote in the next UK general election in England and Northern Ireland (they are already able to in Wales and Scotland). At the moment, you need to be 18 before you can vote.

### What will change?

- Vijay Rangarajan, who is in charge of the Electoral Commission (the organisation that runs elections in the UK), has said that to help prepare for the younger voting age, children will begin learning more about voting and democracy from 11 years of age in schools.
- Teachers will be asked to explain the voting system fairly, without sharing their own opinions.
- There could be separate lessons for democracy and politics within the school day, where children will be given the chance to debate, vote, and learn all about politics in the UK.



### For (supporting the change):



"I think it's a good idea because young people have to live with the decisions politicians make about schools, the environment and our future. If we learn about voting from 11, we'll be ready to make good choices by 16."

Cassie, age 15

### Against (against the change):



"I'm not sure 16 is old enough. Lots of teenagers are still in school and might not know enough about politics yet. Maybe we should wait until 18, when people have had more life experience."

Max, age 11

**Do you think it's important young people should learn about voting and democracy from the age of 11?**

# If you could vote to make a change, what would it be?



**Something that  
could make life  
fairer for all...**

**Something that  
could life more  
fun...**

# Reflection



Voting is one way to make things fair as it allows voters to have a voice. Learning about democracy can help us be ready to make informed choices when it's our turn to vote.





## Democracy

Learning how to vote helps young people see their views matter. When we respect their voices and give them the chance to take part, we help build a fairer future together.



Look at the resource below, which shows some examples of things we can vote for.



School council

School values



School rules



Lunch choices

Name for a class pet or mascot



Golden time

Language the register is taken in



PE games

Class treat



Story to read or song to sing



Class monitors

Can you think of a time when you have voted in school? What was the outcome?

# How does it make me feel?



## sad

despondent  
disconsolate  
dismal  
doleful  
downhearted  
forlorn  
gloomy  
melancholic  
miserable  
woeful  
wretched

## angry

aggrieved  
annoyed  
discontented  
disgruntled  
distressed  
exasperated  
frustrated  
indignant  
offended  
outraged  
resentful  
vexed

## happy

beaming  
buoyant  
cheery  
contented  
delighted  
enraptured  
gleeful  
glowing  
joyful

## confused

addled  
baffled  
bemused  
bewildered  
disorientated  
indistinct  
muddled  
mystified  
perplexed  
puzzled

## excited

animated  
elevated  
enlivened  
enthusiastic  
exhilarated  
exuberant  
thrilled

## worried

agitated  
anxious  
apprehensive  
concerned  
disquieted  
distraught  
distressed  
disturbed  
fretful  
perturbed  
troubled  
uneasy

## overwhelmed

engulfed  
inundated  
overburdened  
overloaded  
saturated  
submerged  
swamped

## afraid

alarmed  
apprehensive  
daunted  
fearful  
frantic  
horrified  
petrified  
terrified

## guilty

ashamed  
compunctious  
contrite  
culpable  
penitent  
responsible  
rueful

## jealous

bitter  
covetous  
desirous  
envious  
envying  
resentful  
wary

## thankful

appreciative  
grateful  
gratified  
indebted  
obliged  
relieved

## shocked

astonished  
astounded  
disconcerted  
distressed  
dumbfounded  
horrified  
staggered  
startled  
stunned  
surprised

## disgusted

affronted  
appalled  
horrified  
repelled  
repulsed  
revolted  
sickened

## inspired

activated  
encouraged  
exhilarated  
galvanised  
influenced  
motivated

## embarrassed

ashamed  
awkward  
chagrined  
demeaned  
discomposd  
humiliated  
self-conscious  
uncomfortable  
uneasy  
unsettled

## interested

absorbed  
captivated  
curious  
engaged  
enthralled  
fascinated  
gripped  
intrigued  
riveted



Look at the resource below, which shares some information about famous votes around the world which have led to big changes.

### Brexit Referendum UK, 2016



People in the UK voted on whether to stay in or leave the European Union.

**Result:** Leave won.

**Impact:** The result led to the UK leaving the European Union, and making changes to how it trades and works with other countries.

### East Germany Election 1990



The Berlin Wall had split Germany into East and West for nearly 30 years. People in East Germany could not vote freely. After the Wall was brought down in 1989, East Germany held their first (and only) free election.

**Result:** Most people voted for parties that supported East and West Germany joining together.

**Impact:** Later that year, East and West Germany became one democratic country (Germany), giving people new freedoms and opportunities.

### Universal Declaration of Human Rights United Nations, 1948



After the Second World War, countries around the world agreed on a set of rights to protect all people.

**Result:** Most countries voted 'yes' to the rights.

**Impact:** For the first time, human rights such as freedom and equality were recognised and promoted worldwide.

### South Africa Democratic Election 1994



In South Africa, Black people were discriminated against and were unable to take part in politics, under a system called Apartheid. In 1994, for the first time, all South Africans could vote in democratic elections.

**Result:** Nelson Mandela was elected the president of South Africa.

**Impact:** Mandela's leadership guided the change from Apartheid to democracy, to build a fairer country.

How do you think people felt after these votes were decided?  
What changes might these votes have brought to people's lives?



# Why do we vote?

VOTES  
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# Media Literacy

## Can you respect the ideas and contributions of others?



**Explanation:** Let's think about how listening to different views helps us make fair choices when we vote.



Analyse



Evaluate



Research



Act

### Questions to Discuss

- How can learning to vote at school help us act fairly and respectfully as we grow older?
- Why is it important to listen to others' opinions before making a decision?
- What skills help you share your views respectfully with someone else?

### Reflection

We can learn a lot about ourselves and the people around us when we take time to hear and respect the views of others.

### Activity

Work in small groups. One half of the group thinks about the positive impact of the lowered voting age, and the other half thinks about possible concerns.

Share your ideas and listen to each other. How can you respect each others' opinions, even if you don't agree?

# Protected Characteristics



Lowering the voting age highlights the importance of listening to young people and their ideas. Valuing people of all ages helps us recognise that everyone has something to contribute.





# UN Rights of the Child



As children grow, they start to learn how choices shape their lives. Adults can guide children to understand voting, while showing respect for their views and encouraging them to take part with confidence.



# Useful Vocabulary



## Debate

To formally express different ideas and give reasons to explain viewpoints, to help decide what is best.

There could be separate lessons for democracy and politics within the school day, where children will be given the chance to **debate**, vote, and learn all about politics in the UK.

## Democracy

The way a country is run, so that people get a chance to have their say by voting.

Schools in the UK will soon need to give more lessons about **democracy**, how voting works, and how the country is run.

## Informed decision

To make a choice after listening and learning first.

Many agree young people need to be ready to make **informed decisions**.

## Issue

A topic or problem people care about, talk about, or want to fix.

At first, these lessons will be for children aged 14 and over, but the plan is to begin teaching these **issues** from 11 years of age, so everyone has plenty of time to learn.

## Life experience

The things that happen to someone in their life that help them learn and understand the world.

Maybe we should wait until 18, when people have had more **life experience**.

## Prepare

To get ready for something.

Vijay Rangarajan, who is in charge... has said that to help **prepare** for the younger voting age, children will begin learning more about voting and democracy from 11 years of age in schools.

**Can you use them in your writing this week?**

# Picture News



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Schools in the UK will soon need to give more lessons on democracy, how voting works, and how the country is run. This is because the voting age for the general election is being lowered to 16. Many agree that young people need to be ready to make informed decisions. At first, these lessons will be for children aged 14 and over, but the plan is to begin teaching these issues from 11 years of age, so everyone has plenty of time to learn.



- Look at this week's poster and make a prediction about the story – what could the sign mean? The poster shows a young person campaigning for the right to vote from the age of 16.
- Share any prior knowledge you have about voting. Can you think of a time when you have taken part in a vote? Talk about how you may have used voting in your classroom.
- In your opinion, why do people vote? Do you believe voting is the fairest way for countries or groups of people to make decisions? Explain your response.
- Discuss some of the pros and cons of voting to make decisions, e.g., fairness, giving everyone a voice, it could take longer to reach a decision, etc.
- Read through the information found on the assembly resource, which explains more about this week's story. Do you think it's important that young people should learn about voting and democracy from the age of 11?
- Watch this week's useful video, and discuss some of the reasons for and against 16-year-olds being able to vote. Share your thoughts on the change. Overall, do you think it is a positive one?

### Reflection

Voting is one way to make things fair as it allows voters to have a voice. Learning about democracy can help us be ready to make informed choices when it's our turn to vote.

# Picture News



## KS1 focus

What are some examples of when we vote?



- Sometimes we need to make choices together. Can you think of choices you've made as a class or at home, such as what story to read or what game to play?
- People can have different opinions. When we don't all agree, we can try to make a choice that feels fair for everyone. How can we do this? Why might voting be a good way to decide on something?
- How does it feel when your choice is picked? How does it feel when it isn't?
- Look at and discuss the examples on resource 1, which show some of the things children often vote for in school. Compare these examples to what you vote for in school. Are there any you would like to try? Which do you think is the most important? Why?
- Do you have a school council or class monitors in your school? How are they chosen? Would you change how this decision is made?
- Do you think it would be fair if only some children were allowed to vote, while others were not? Why? What do you think would happen if nobody was given a chance to vote at all?
- Imagine you're in charge of your school for the day. What rules would you make or change? If you could hold a vote for anything, what would it be?
- Why might teachers ask children to vote instead of just choosing for themselves?

### Reflection

In school, we vote to choose things like stories, games, or class helpers. In life, people vote to help make bigger decisions too. Voting means everyone gets to share their ideas and feel part of the choice.

# Picture News



## KS2 focus

What are famous votes from around the world that have led to big change?



- Recap on what it means to vote, and times when voting has happened within school. Have these votes always been fair, in your opinion? Explain your thoughts. How did you feel about the outcome? Did others agree with you?
- People vote on many different things. Some votes can create big changes for people. What does 'big change' mean to you? Have you ever experienced a 'big change' in your life?
- Voting happens around the world. Are there other ways decisions can be made?
- Look at resource 2, which shares examples of famous votes which happened around the world and led to big changes. Did you know about any of these already?
- What does it mean if something has a 'big impact'? Think about the outcome and impact of each vote shown on resource 2. Which do you think made the biggest difference to people's lives, and why? Which vote do you believe would have been the hardest to decide on? Why? Does everyone agree?
- Imagine you could ask someone who lived through one of these votes a question. What would you want to know?
- Why do you think it is important to remember votes from the past? Explain how they can help us make decisions for the future.

### Reflection

Votes can shape history and change how people live. From choosing new laws to deciding on independence, they give people a voice for important decisions. We can be reminded that voting is a powerful way to decide the future.



## KS2 follow-up ideas

### Option 1

Hold a class debate on the question, 'Should homework be banned?' (or a different question of your choice).

Split into two groups – for and against. Then, plan your argument, ready to start your debate. Think about:

- What reasons will you give to express your argument?
- Can you use facts, examples, or personal experiences in your argument?

Remember to ensure your debate is respectful and that you listen carefully to the views of other people.

After everyone has shared their arguments, has anyone changed their mind?

### Option 2

Did you know not every country has the same voting age? Some allow people to vote at 16, while most wait until 18.

Work with a partner or small group. Use books or the internet to discover the voting ages in different countries. You could research the following:

- UK
- Austria
- Brazil
- Japan
- USA

Then, find the countries on a world map, and annotate it by adding the voting age next to one to show your research.



## KS1 follow-up ideas

### Option 1

Sometimes people don't agree, so we need a fair way to decide. In this activity, you will explore different situations and share your ideas. Put a note which says 'Fair' at one side of the room, and 'Not fair' at the other side. Listen to the scenarios, and move to the side of the room you agree with.

- One child always chooses the game at playtime.
- The whole class votes on a story to read.
- Only the teacher chooses the Golden Time activity every week.
- Everyone gets a turn to be the line leader.
- Some children are allowed to vote, but others are not.
- Everyone votes for a PE game, but the teacher changes it.
- Two books get the same number of votes.
- The class votes for a playground game, but the losing side refuses to play.

Can you think of any more as a class? Be ready to explain your choice and listen to what others think.

### Option 2

As a class, come up with three things you feel would make school a better place.

For example:

- 'Should we have a friendship bench?'
- 'Should we have a kindness actions box?'
- 'Should we share a picnic with the other classes to get to know everyone better?'

Then, make your own paper hat with 'Yes' at the front and 'No' at the back. Wear your hats to vote on each question and count the responses.

Present the idea with the most votes to a teacher or headteacher in school, to see if your idea can become a reality!



## This week's useful websites

### This week's news story

<http://bit.ly/4oZqTDZ>

### This week's useful video

<https://youtu.be/vxe05M3Lwgo>

### This week's Virtual Picture News

[www.picture-news.co.uk/discuss](http://www.picture-news.co.uk/discuss)

### This week's vocabulary

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# TAKEHOME

15th - 21st  
September



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### Things to talk about at home ...

- Talk to someone older at home, and ask them to share their experiences of voting and their thoughts on the news that 16-year-olds will be able to vote.
- Can you think of times when you have taken part in a vote? What was the outcome?
- Do you believe it's important for young people to learn about voting and democracy? If so, what age do you think the lessons should start?

Please note any interesting thoughts or comments

Share your thoughts and read the opinions of others

[www.picture-news.co.uk/discuss](http://www.picture-news.co.uk/discuss)



## Glow For It!

A new science story is lighting up the news! Scientists in China have made special succulent plants that glow in the dark. The trick? Tiny glowing particles go inside the leaves. After soaking up sunshine in the day, the plants shine at night. They can glow for hours, in lovely colours such as green, blue, red, or yellow.

One day, these glow plants might be used as little streetlamps. Lead scientist, Shuting Liu, says, 'Imagine glowing trees replacing streetlights.' That would be *tree-mendous!*

For now, the glowing succulents live safely in a lab. Scientists hope they could one day grow bigger plants, bright



**Pictured:** A glowing succulent plant.  
**Source:** Canva.

enough to light paths, parks, and even whole streets. Glow plants could also help save electricity and make cities greener. Now that's what we call a *bright idea!*

**Did you know some animals glow in the dark too? Fireflies, glow worms and even some jellyfish can make their own light!**

## Cuthbert's Big Surprise!

The supermarket, Aldi, has given its famous Cuthbert the Caterpillar Cake a special makeover, to celebrate September being the most popular birthday month! Inside the cake is a sweet little surprise: when you cut into it, you'll find pink filling for a girl or blue filling for a boy. Aldi ran a special competition this month, giving away free limited-edition cakes to some lucky winners! Aldi's boss, Julie Ashfield, says, 'We know how special gender reveal moments can be



**Pictured:** Limited edition gender reveal Cuthbert cake!  
**Source:** Aldi UK on Facebook.

for expectant parents, so we wanted to offer something fun... transforming our popular Cuthbert Cake!' So, whether it's pink or blue, this new cake makes baby news extra exciting! ***If you could design a caterpillar cake, what flavour would it be?***

### What do you think makes something a wonder of the world?



A wonder of the world is something that is really special!  
**Polly**

Let us know what you think about this week's news



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[help@picture-news.co.uk](mailto:help@picture-news.co.uk)



[@HelpPicture](https://twitter.com/HelpPicture)

## New Giraffes

Giraffes are loved by many people and were always thought to be just one species. However, scientists at the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) now say they have identified three more species of the world's tallest mammal. Researchers studied giraffes closely and compared their skulls and head shapes. They also looked at how natural features, such as rivers, deserts and mountains, may have separated giraffes in the past, meaning they evolved differently.

Southern giraffes live in South Africa,



**Pictured:** Northern giraffes (left) and a Masai giraffe (right). **Source:** Canva.

Angola, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Zambia, and Mozambique. Reticulated giraffes are found in Kenya, Somalia and Ethiopia. Northern giraffes live in Ethiopia, Kenya, South Sudan, and Uganda. Finally, Masai giraffes (with their leaf-pattern hide) live in Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda. The IUCN says this discovery is very important. Michael Brown, co-author of the report, said, 'The more precisely we understand giraffe taxonomy, the better equipped we are to assess their status and implement effective conservation strategies.'

**Do you think it is important to protect giraffes? Why?**



**Pictured:** A Southern giraffe (left) and Reticulated giraffes (right). **Source:** Canva.

## 'Golden' Movie

KPop Demon Hunters has become Netflix's most-viewed movie ever! Since it was released in June, the animated musical has been watched more than 236 million times. The film tells the story of K-pop girl band, Huntr/x, who use their music and fighting skills to protect humans from demons. It was made by Sony Pictures Animation and has been praised for its bright animation and showing both traditional and modern Korean culture. The songs from the movie are very popular, with 'Golden' reaching number one on the Billboard Hot 100. Other tracks by Huntr/x and their rival, Saja Boys, appeared in Spotify's Global Top 10. Many of the soundtrack's producers have worked with famous K-pop groups, like BTS and Twice. Netflix released a sing-along version in cinemas, which also became the number one film at the US box office.



**Pictured:** KPop Demon Hunters poster. **Source:** @Netflix on X.

Plans for a sequel are reportedly in the early stages!

**Have you watched the film? Which song from the film is your favourite?**

### What do you think makes something a wonder of the world?



A wonder of the world is something that you can't stop looking at. It is beautiful!  
**Effie**