



Activity Pack: Ordinary People, Extraordinary Change



HM Government





This is the fourth, and final, additional activity pack aimed at youth leaders working with groups of Democracy Ambassadors.

The activities in this pack aim to inspire young people with real stories about ordinary people who have made a difference to their local communities, to the country, or even internationally, and to help them believe that they can do this too. It also includes some practical advice about how they can deliver change and where to start. The session should take around an hour to deliver, although you can adapt activities to fit the time and resources you have available.

Aims & Objectives

By the end of this topic Democracy Ambassadors should:

- feel inspired to effect change
- believe that you don't have to be in a position of authority (or an adult) to have your say
- understand the power of group action
- have considered different organisations they can join who campaign for causes particularly relevant
- have explored some useful tools such as e-petition platforms
- have gained some ideas of ways to share what they have learnt through the creative and expressive arts

Session overview



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Resources you will need

- Group agreement if needed
- Flipchart paper and marker pens
- Screens/laptops and access to the internet – enough one per pair or small group (phones are fine)
- Copies of the Ordinary People, Extraordinary Change case studies – one per small group
- Paper and pens
- Copies of the peer to peer handout Creative Sharing

Activity 1: Ordinary People, Extraordinary Change

40 mins



1. Revisit the group agreement if need be. Go through the aims of the session. Explain also that this is the last training session on the Democracy Ambassadors programme, and whilst the others have been more overtly linked to understanding and using the political system to have your say, this final session looks more widely at what it is to be a democratically engaged citizen and to effect change in all kinds of situations – political or not.
2. Write the following quote up on flipchart paper, and ask if anyone knows who said it (answer: Mahatma Gandhi).

‘Be the change you want to see in the world’

Ask and discuss with participants what they think Gandhi meant when he said it.

Ask participants whether they can share any examples of things that have made them cross/indignant/uncomfortable in either in their local community or the wider world. Perhaps an injustice/discrimination/something that really doesn't sit right with them? You may need to be ready to provide your own example first, such as feeling uncomfortable that so many older people in the village are reported as being alone at Christmas.

Ask: What stops you taking action to change this? Answers may include:

- believing that their one voice alone has no power
- feeling that no one would listen to a young person
- believing that something is so ingrained into society that it's impossible to change.

3. Divide participants into pairs or small groups. Allow each group to choose one case study to focus on. Explain that you'd like them to spend some time investigating the 'ordinary' person or group of people in their case study, and to answer the accompanying questions. Explain that some of the case studies require politicians to act, but others don't specifically. What all the case studies have in common is that the people involved were ordinary, everyday people who identified an issue or a problem and did something about it. At the end of their investigations they will need to present what they find out to the rest of the room.
4. Allow around 30 minutes for this, before asking each group to present their findings. As a group discuss their reactions and feelings about the different people involved. Don't rush this part of the conversation – it's cultivating a feeling of 'You CAN do it!' that's really important here.

Activity 2: Tools for the job

10 mins



1. Ask participants: What did all the case studies have in common? Say that, to give them a clue to the answer to this, they should listen to the following story as you read it aloud:

<https://www.cityyear.org/about-us/culture-values/founding-stories/starfish-story>

Answer: One person or a small group of people, with a belief in something, started things off – other people got involved and between them they were able to create a change.

So how do you do this?

- Explain that there are many ways to inspire support for a campaign including protest marches, organising events and creating leaflets/posters to raise awareness.
- As previously covered in the Local Government Activity Pack, there are lots of organisations young people can join that can support them campaigning about issues they care about, including their local youth council or Youth Parliament. British Youth Council also has lots of campaigns that young people can take part in:
<https://www.byc.org.uk/campaigns>.
- There are a huge range of opportunities on offer to young people interested in social action. A large number of young people have signed up to the #iwill campaign to make a positive difference to their communities and take action on issues they care about. The campaign is run by Step Up To Serve and you can find out more about opportunities run by a number of partners at <https://www.iwill.org.uk/get-involved/young-people/>.
- Point out also that young people don't just have to get involved in existing campaigns – they can also start their own. Programmes like the National Citizen Service help you design your own social action campaign based on an issue that you feel passionate about. The programme is open to young people aged 15-17, find out more at <https://www.ncsyas.co.uk/>.
- Another easy way to spread the word, as we know, is by using technology – using websites such as They Work For You* to contact your MP, or by creating (or joining) online petitions.

***Note to youth leader:** If you wanted to spend more time now exploring this website then it's worth showing young people the following clip too:

Inform yourself, get yourself heard (My Society) bit.ly/2KyR3uy.



2. The two most popular platforms for e-petitions are www.change.org and www.gov.uk/petition-government, although many individual charities and social action programmes will also have their own.

Encourage participants to explore one or both of the platforms, to see what kinds of petitions are currently in operation, and how the two sites work. If you have time, and/or they already have something in mind that they want to campaign about, participants could register a new petition now, or return to the site later.

www.change.org

A for-profit organisation based in America, launched in 2002

You can create or join a petition about any issue across the world

It is possible to link your campaign to Facebook, Twitter and email

Current petitions include calls to protect models from getting dangerously skinny, calls to force supermarkets to tackle food waste in supply chains, and for the NHS to provide a test for newborns to prevent Group B strep infections and death.

www.gov.uk/petition-government

For campaigns directed specifically at the UK government – to try and change a law or government policy

Any petition with 10,000 signatures receives a response from government

Any petition with 100,000 signatures will be considered for debate in Parliament

You must be a British Citizen or UK resident to create or sign a petition on here

Current petitions include calls to ban the sale of fireworks to the general public, calls to force supermarkets to offer plastic free options for fruit and veg, and greater control over dangerous dogs.

Activity 3: Peer to peer sharing – Creative Sharing



Feeling inspired? In the last of our series of skills handouts for Democracy Ambassadors, we give some ideas for peer to peer sharing using creative and expressive arts.

1. Give each participant a copy of the handout, Creative Sharing, and discuss. Spend the rest of the session planning what activities they will undertake next as Democracy Ambassadors.

Don't forget that this is also a good time to collect in information from your Democracy Ambassadors regarding the peer to peer sharing they have carried out this month.

Case Study

Ordinary People, Extraordinary Change



Sal's Shoes

Unable to get a definitive answer from any charity about the destination of her son's outgrown shoes, CJ decided to rehome them herself. Five years on, the UK charity 'Sal's Shoes' has just delivered its 1 millionth pair of preloved shoes to children who desperately need them in the UK and around the world ...



- Sal's Shoes: Our story bit.ly/2BxYPBR
- Finalists, Inspirational Women of the Year Awards bit.ly/2SjvctR
- Sal's Shoes Cape Town 2017 bit.ly/2AqKYf7

Questions

- What's the story?
- What motivated this person/group?
- What barriers did/might they have found along the way?
- What help/support would they have needed to start their campaign and maximise their chance of success?
- How successful was their campaign?

Case Study

Ordinary People, Extraordinary Change



Lucy Gavaghan

Lucy Gavaghan was just 14 when she took on Tesco's and other big supermarkets to try and get the sale of caged hens' eggs banned. This was just the beginning ...

- End the sales of eggs from caged hens in Tesco bit.ly/2zsYkaW
- Meet the girl who convinced Tesco bosses to stop selling 'caged eggs' bit.ly/2SekMeW
- End the sale of eggs from caged hens in Morrison's and Asda bit.ly/2BytNda
- Viva! meets Lucy Gavaghan bit.ly/2QhHuFl



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Case Study

Ordinary People, Extraordinary Change



The Suffragettes and Suffragists

The Suffragettes were a group of women in the early 20th century who fought tirelessly for equality for women in the UK. They broke away from the peaceful campaign group who fought for women's right to vote, the Suffragists (also profiled here). They wanted to use direct action to promote their cause and used shock tactics to get their campaign noticed. Both the Suffragists and Suffragettes were instrumental in helping women secure the right to vote.



Unknown author, via Wikimedia Commons

- How the suffragettes won British women the vote bit.ly/2TNLVXM
- Start of the suffragette movement bit.ly/2Sf1ZQn
- Early suffragist campaigning bit.ly/2RdpIQV
- The women who risked all to get the vote bit.ly/2DW6w7j

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Note to youth leader: If you have time and wanted to look at the work of the suffrage movement in more detail then there are free resource available via <https://www.suffrageresources.org.uk/> including further case studies that you may wish to use in this section.

Case Study

Ordinary People, Extraordinary Change



Jacob Rabi-Laleh

Seven-year-old Jacob Rabi-Laleh was determined to do something after he saw homeless people living on the streets in his town centre ...

- Maldon boy's backpack project to help homeless bit.ly/2AqJW2J
- Appeal to help the homeless in Essex bit.ly/2P5SdhT
- 'It's very simple to be kind' bit.ly/2SaLB3q

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Photo by Jon Tyson on Unsplash

Creative Sharing



Are you creative? Do you enjoy expressing yourself through the performing or creative arts? Then why not use your skills to share what you've learnt as a Democracy Ambassador? Here are some suggestions as to how ...

Getting started in ...

Events/Theatre/Performance/Gallery

Why not host an event at school, local community centre or arts cafe? This could be an event with speakers, an art exhibition or theatrical or poetic performance to spread your message throughout the local community. Take photos or footage of the event and share your message on social media for more reach.

Here are our top tips for hosting an event:

- What are you exhibiting/showing/doing? Make a list and contact people to be involved.
- Make a plan and schedule for your event. Break the day down into 30 minute chunks. Ask your friends/family to help you and give them specific roles to get started on.
- Make some posters and ask local cafes/school to put them up. Check out this free online tool to help you make posters: www.Canva.com.
- Share your poster on social media and in online community groups. Remember to check with the admin of online groups that you are allowed to advertise your event, but if you don't ask – you don't get!
- Line up some freebies for people to take away at your event. Bake some cakes? Ask a local shop to donate something you can give out?
- Take photos of your event, Insta stories or Live FB, so you can promote your message even further.

Get Inspired ... Poetry

Honey Birch – The struggles of being a Chinese kid in a white family bit.ly/2TQ5C19

SLAMbassadors 2017: Eben Roddis – Dust in the wind bit.ly/2P3PzJo

Get Inspired ... Photography

Moving Forward: photo exhibition by homeless young people bit.ly/2FGEApH



Getting started in ...

Art Walls/Murals

Art walls (including graffiti walls and murals) can be an exciting and creative way to share messages at a youth centre or in a community space. The most important thing is to keep art walls legal by asking permission from the person who owns the building before working on a space. Be upfront about what you want to visibly show and how big it will be, so they don't have any surprises. Share your draft plans, discuss and agree how long you expect it will take, and how you will gain access to do it.

Love the idea but can't find a space? You can also work on temporary art wall installations by using large canvases to display. As always, don't forget to take photos of the process and share your messages on social media for more reach.

Here are our top tips for a successful art wall:

- Find a space that you can work on and get permission from the owner of the building/wall. If using temporary canvas, find a space you can exhibit this.
- Get creative! Want to work on the artwork on yourself? Or would you rather find someone else? Find out who is going to create the work and creatively think of some ideas/rough plans.
- Have they/you experience in this kind of work before? Don't worry if not – just research the best ways of pulling it off and get experimenting.
- Don't forget the aims of the art wall – make your message clear.
- Take photos, short videos and get sharing on social media.

Get Inspired ... Street art

10 British Artists You Need to Know
bit.ly/2YIzEv4

Getting started in ...

Zines and Blogging

By definition, Zines are non-professional, not for profit mini-magazines that can be produced by anyone at home – in order to make your voices heard. Perfect for sharing your messages in a fun and creative way.

Similarly, if you love writing then why not start a blog to get your message out there? A blog is simply a website or page which you update regularly, a bit like a diary. You write in an informal style and add photos and links to illustrate what you're talking about.

Get inspired ... Zines

How to make a zine bit.ly/2BxPdHx

Get inspired ... Blogs

NeverSeconds bit.ly/2Bx7Efa
P.S Bipolar bit.ly/2DK0tSs

