

# Making sense of democracy: It's my Welsh Assembly

FIVE NATIONS NETWORK



## AIMS

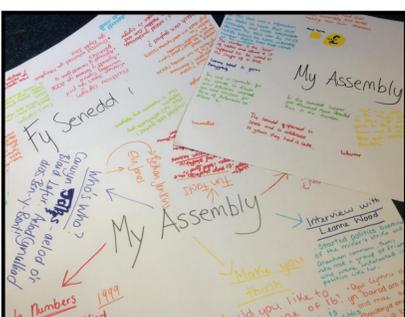
1. To underpin pupils' knowledge of Wales' political landscape since devolution.
2. Underline the importance of participating in the process as a means of creating a prosperous Wales for their generation and those that follow.

## OBJECTIVES

1. Research the role of the Assembly during classroom based tasks and a visit to the Senedd.
2. Create a bilingual pamphlet and lesson activities that clarify the system to pupils of the same age-range.
3. Use resources during 1 hour sessions with all year 7 pupils.

## ACTIONS

- 10 pupils, year 7-10 received a guided tour of the Assembly. The tour equipped them with an understanding of the five main political parties in Wales, key roles within the assembly such as the First Minister, Ilywydd and the assembly member in their constituency.
- They received information on how the voting system works, a brief overview of devolution and a tour of key areas in the building such as the debating chamber and the area where the petitions committee sits.
- Pupils met their local Assembly Member Leanne Wood who was able to answer questions on her role within Wales' political system.
- These pupils then represented their findings in a small *First News* inspired pamphlet before creating activities such as crosswords, word searches and treasure hunts.
- These were then completed by 114 pupils in year 7 as part of their citizenship day in the summer term.
- Year 7 consolidated their learning by completing the treasure hunt and creating a poster.



“Young people like myself need to understand how the democratic system in Wales works so that we can take part in the process”

*Pupil, Yr.10, YGCR*

“I used think politics was boring and difficult but we've had so much fun today.”

*Pupil, Yr. 7, YGCR*

## IMPACT

- A short questionnaire conducted with year 7 before and after sessions shows 112 out of 114 pupils (98.2%) felt they had an increased understanding of Welsh politics.
- Pupils displayed enthusiasm when participating in the treasure hunt and the posters they created.
- Pupils' pamphlet and resources created will contribute to the legacy of the project because they will be used on an annual basis.
- Pupils' engagement with their Assembly Member encouraged exciting discussions that may be used to form policy in the next couple of years. For example, votes for 16 year olds – as the pamphlet shows.
- Pupils demonstrated an eagerness to vote in future elections *if* they receive the information to help them prepare
- The project's success has sparked another initiative called 'Newsreader.' With funding and guidance from the *Teach First Innovation Unit*, the pilot newspaper will be created *by* pupils *for* pupils. It will seek to improve pupils' engagement with reading and equip them with the information they need to understand the world around them. I strongly believe pupils should develop the habit of discussing current affairs, understand different opinions and subsequently instigate the change they want to see in the world.

## Contact

Miss Carly Jones  
@carlydawnn

English teacher and Teach First 2015 Participant  
Ysgol Gyfyn Cymer Rhondda, South Wales