

## Austria lowered the voting age for young people like me, and transformed politics. The UK should do the same

### Level 3: Advanced – Teacher's notes

**Article summary:** The writer makes the case for lowering the voting age in the UK. She cites arguments like more prolonged political engagement and the youth being more affected by the government's decisions and actions in their lifetime.

**Time:** 60–90 minutes

**Skills:** Reading, Speaking

**Language focus:** Vocabulary: collocations

**Materials needed:** One copy of the worksheet per student

#### 1. Warmer

- a. The purpose of this activity is to introduce the topic of legal age and get students to think about when maturity is reached.

#### 2. Key words

- a. Ask students to do the exercise individually and compare their answers in pairs or small groups. Elicit what students know about each word's pronunciation, meaning and use. See the notes in brackets.

**Key:**

1. *stark*
2. *project, projected* (As a verb, the stress is on the second syllable.)
3. *grant*
4. *deem, deemed*
5. *overwhelmingly*
6. *eligible*
7. *turnout*
8. *engagement*
9. *curriculum*
10. *drain*
11. *threshold*
12. *burden*
13. *demonise, demonising*
14. *Dickensian*

#### 3. Comprehension check

- a. Ask students to read the article and identify key words. Then ask them to scan the text and find the relevant information in each sentence to complete the task.

**Key:**

1. *Opinion*
2. *Fact*
3. *Fact*
4. *False. They are expected to experience a five-fold increase.*
5. *False. According to studies, voting at an earlier age increases social engagement.*
6. *False. They can vote in national elections.*
7. *Opinion*
8. *Opinion*
9. *False. The repayment threshold has been lowered, so more students have to pay back their debt.*
10. *Opinion*

#### 4. Key language

- a. Students could be asked to do this exercise in pairs and highlight the phrases in the article.

**Key:**

- |                      |                       |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. <i>tackle</i>     | 6. <i>effect</i>      |
| 2. <i>be deemed</i>  | 7. <i>lower</i>       |
| 3. <i>be granted</i> | 8. <i>burden</i>      |
| 4. <i>drive</i>      | 9. <i>demonise</i>    |
| 5. <i>acquire</i>    | 10. <i>be allowed</i> |

- b. Ask students to do this individually and then peer-check their sentences in pairs or small groups. Monitor and provide as much individual feedback as possible.

#### 5. Discussion

- a. Allow students time to note down their ideas about each statement and encourage them to say why they agree or disagree with each one.

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#### 6. In your own words

- a. Have students work in pairs to research the topic. They can divide up the points to save time.
- b. First, have students reflect on their opinions individually before putting them into small groups. Allow them to discuss the different points and encourage them to provide examples and arguments to support their views.

#### Extension

Ask students to write a response with their opinion on one of the issues raised in the discussion. This can be an email to the *Guardian's* letters section.