**Democracy**

**POWERPOINT NOTES**

1. Democracy is a system of government. The word democracy comes from the Greek words ‘demos’ (people) and ‘kratia’ (rule). So democracy meant the rule of the people. A number of city-states in ancient Greece had a democracy the best known of these is Athens.
2. We live in a democracy but Athenian democracy was different from our democracy because it was direct rather than representative. In practice that meant that every citizen had a say in how the city-state was run and could vote on how the city-state was run. Our democracy today is representative because we elect an MP to vote on our behalf.
3. Another difference was that in ancient Athens only men could vote – women were not allowed to have any say in the democracy. Slaves and foreigners (with a few exceptions) could not vote either.
4. These fragments of broken pottery are called ostraka. They are clear evidence of ancient Athenian democracy in action. Ostraka are fragments of broken pottery which have the names of politicians scratched on them.

Ostracism was the process of getting rid of an unpopular politician from Athens. They would have to go away for 10 years and could not come into the city at all in that time. This prevented any single man from becoming too powerful and trying to overthrow the democracy.

In an ostracism every Athenian citizen could vote – but remember a citizen had to be an adult, and a man! Each citizen had a small piece of pottery (ostrakon). They would scratch the name of the politician they wanted to be ostracised on it, they would also add the politician’s father’s name to act like a surname today. The politician with the most votes would be made to leave Athens.

1. The citizen assembly was central to the Athenian democracy. The assembly met at a place called the Pynx and every male citizen could attend and speak and vote (by raising their hand) on all aspects of the running of the city-state. The assembly met around every ten days.

We know most about life in ancient Athens where democracy was invented. We live in a democracy today but women are allowed to vote too

1. The speaker would stand on a platform called a bema. It would once have had metal railings around it.
2. The law courts in the Athenian Agora (market place) were also a very important part of the democracy.

All Athenian citizens could act as a member of the jury in the law court. A jury is a group of people who are randomly selected and decide if a person is guilty or innocent. In our law courts today we have a jury of 12 but in ancient Athens the jury was made up of at least 201 men.

1. In ancient Athens a special machine was used to make sure the selection of men for the jury was totally random. It was called an allotment machine and was used to choose the jury or people who were going to be magistrates.
2. Bronze tickets, called pinakia, were placed at random in the slots of the allotment machine.

Marbles, some black and some white, were placed in the funnel. The marbles dropped down one by one in line with a row. If a row had a white marble next to it all of the people with tickets in the row became jurors. Those with black marbles against their row were not chosen.

1. The jury in the law courts would decide whether the person on trial was innocent or guilty. Each juror had two ballots. One ballot had a hub with solid ends, and the hub of the other ballot was hollow. Each juror would hold one of each type of ballot in his hands with the thumb and forefinger covering the ends of the hubs. This was so that no-one could see how he was going to vote. He would put one ballot in the ballot box and discard the other. If the juror chose the ballot with the solid hub, he was saying that he thought the person on trial was innocent. If he chose the ballot with the hollow hub, he thought they were guilty.
2. This is a ballot box which was found in the Athenian Agora – the main market place in Athens. You can see the ballots inside it.

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1. The famous Athenian philosopher Socrates was found guilty in the law court and he was sent to prison. Philosophy is a Greek word which means ‘love of wisdom’. Philosophers think a lot. We know what Socrates thought because it was written down by his pupil Plato. Socrates was born in 469 BC and died in 399 BC. He died in prison when he was forced to drink poison because he was seen to be against the democracy in Athens.

**Now try the topography of democracy worksheet or one of the creative activities**