

EPISODE 7:
**Youth Empowerment
for the Future**

CHAPTER 1:
Old Enough to Vote?

Originally Aired:
3/08/2020



TERM TO KNOW—*Suffrage*

Suffrage refers to the right to vote. A timeline of suffrage in the U.S. can be found below.

In 1789, only white, property owning men who were 21 years or older could vote - about 6% of the population. Over the course of U.S. history, suffrage has expanded to include more U.S. citizens since the ratification of the Constitution.

- By 1856: all white men over the age of 21 could vote in all US states.
- 1870: No state could deny citizens the right to vote on the basis of race following the ratification of the 15th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. However, no women could vote, and after Reconstruction ended in 1876, Southern states enacted barriers to prevent Black men from voting.
- 1920: No state could deny citizens the right to vote on the basis of sex following the ratification of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Despite Black women’s efforts to gain *suffrage* since 1848, many Black women were still denied the right to vote because of states’ discrimination.
- 1924: Indigenous people were granted citizenship and suffrage with the Indian Citizenship Act. Nonetheless, many states still disenfranchised (prevented from voting) Native Americans.
- 1952: The McCarran-Walter Act overturned previous federal legislation that denied Asian Americans access to naturalization (citizenship). By 1952, naturalized Asians could vote.
- 1965: The Voting Rights Act, a critical achievement of the Civil Rights Movement, placed federal enforcement behind voting and illegalized methods to disenfranchise Black Americans such as poll taxes, literacy tests, and grandfather clauses (if your grandfather could not vote, then you could not).
- 1971: During the Vietnam War and the increasingly popular opposition to it, voting rights were extended to any citizen 18 years or older through the 26th Amendment.

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FOR DISCUSSION

In this episode, we learned that sixteen-year-olds in eleven countries can vote, and in most of those places the youth vote is dependent upon specific conditions. Conversely, the United Arab Emirates has the oldest voting age at twenty-five. Students can discuss or write about the following prompt with at least two supporting arguments:

- Do you think sixteen-year-old citizens should be able to vote?



ACTION ITEM

Check out organizations like vote16usa.org and the National Youth Rights Organization (youthrights.org) and learn their arguments for *why* the voting age should be lowered to sixteen. Do you agree with these arguments?

What are the arguments to keep the voting age at eighteen years old and not lower it?

Sources: "Four Reasons to Lower the Voting Age to 16," vote16.org, vote16usa.org/reasons-for-lowing-voting-age-16/. Accessed 9 November 2020.

"Timeline shows how voting rights have changed over time," *Business Insider*, 18 August 2020, www.businessinsider.com/when-women-got-the-right-to-vote-american-voting-rights-timeline-2018-10?utm_source=copy-link&utm_medium=referral&utm_content=topbar. Accessed 10 November 2020.

"Top Ten Reasons to Lower the Voting Age," *National Youth Rights Association*, www.youthrights.org/issues/voting-age/top-ten-reasons-to-lower-the-voting-age/. Accessed 9 November, 2020

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CHAPTER 2:
**Sourcing Through
Sources**

Originally Aired:
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TERM TO KNOW—*Skeptical*

Being doubtful about whether—an idea, statement, or claim—is true.

Skepticism initially emerged in philosophical thinking in ancient Greece by thinkers driven to “enquire” about truth. During the Enlightenment, skepticism was a radical trait, challenging long-held religious views about the natural world.



FOR DISCUSSION

In response to teenagers’ questions about trustworthy sources, BBC journalists Rachel Schraer and Amol Rajan offer tips for responsible media consumption. Encourage your students to unpack the observation, “Are you sharing something because it’s really true or just because you want it to be?” through a discussion or a writing reflection.



INVESTIGATIVE QUESTION

In this segment, BBC journalist, Amol Rajan suggests that the mark of a trustworthy news organization is their willingness to admit when they are wrong, and to do so quickly. Can you recall an example of a news organization retracting or correcting news in the past six months?

- Was the correction, in your estimation, quick and clear?
- Could the news organization done anything differently to improve their response?

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CHAPTER 3:
**Sisters in a Refugee
Camp: Rapping and
Forward Thinking**

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TERM TO KNOW—*Refugee*

Someone who is forced to flee their country for reasons of persecution, war, or violence.

The United Nations describe refugees as having a ‘well-founded fear’ of persecution because of being a member of a political group, or because of religious, national, or sexual identity. It is important to note that unlike other immigrants, refugees cannot return to their homes because of their ‘well founded fear(s).’



FOR DISCUSSION

In this segment, we follow Hiba and Rama, two sisters who live in the Za’atari refugee camp in Jordan. Prompt your students to discuss or write about the following:

- Did any aspect of growing up in a refugee camp feel familiar to your own experience? What felt different?



LINK TO ADDITIONAL SOURCE

According to The UN Refugee Agency, the Syrian civil war has displaced over 5.6 million people, like Hiba and Rama, since it began in 2011.

The sisters spoke about their education and their aspirations for the future. NGOs (non-government organization) worry that without access to education, Syrian refugee children might be a “lost generation.” Check out infographics, photos, and videos about education initiatives in the Za’atari refugee camp: Education at Za’atari Camp.

www.unhcr.org/7steps/en/education/

Sources: “Education at Za’atari Camp,” *UNHCR—The Refugee Agency*, www.unhcr.org/7steps/en/education/. Accessed 10 November 2020

“Refugees and resettlement,” *International Rescue Committee*, www.rescue.org/frequently-asked-questions-about-refugees-and-resettlement. Accessed 10 November 2020.

“Syrian Emergency,” *UNHCR—The UN Refugee Agency*, www.unhcr.org/en-us/syria-emergency.html. Accessed 10 November 2020.

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CHAPTER 4:
Opening Up About
Mental Health

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TERM TO KNOW—*Stigma*

When a person bears shame, is judged differently, or faces discrimination based on a real or perceived illness or condition.



FOR DISCUSSION

In this segment, we learn about initiatives to talk about mental health in schools in Nigeria and New Zealand. Until now, mental health has been *stigmatized* in Nigeria and at the time of taping, New Zealand had the highest youth rates of death by suicide in the developed world. Encourage your students to discuss or write about why people struggling with mental health issues avoid seeking help.



INVESTIGATIVE QUESTION

In 2018 Olympic champion swimmer Michael Phelps shared with the world that he struggled with depression and thoughts of suicide. Under immense pressure to succeed in the competitive world of sports, other elite athletes have said they share Phelps' experience. Research athletes who have struggled with their mental health.

- Who are they?
- What did they experience?
- What help, if any, did they seek?
- Why did they decide to share their struggles?

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CHAPTER 5:
Futurists' Plans

Originally Aired:
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TERM TO KNOW—*Water Scarcity*

A lack of potable (drinkable) water.

While this will become a greater problem in the future, water scarcity already impacts 1/5 of the world's population. Causes include climate change, pollution contaminating the water supply, and overuse of limited water supply.



FOR DISCUSSION

One thing that futurists consider in their planning is the world's population. At the time of recording, humanity numbered 7.8 billion. In 30 more years, the world's population is projected to grow to 10 billion. Students can discuss or write about the following prompt:

How will a rapidly growing human population impact resources such as:

- Water;
- Livable spaces;
- Cities;
- Food; and/or
- Energy consumption?

How will a rapidly growing human population impact the potential for conflict and affect the earth's climate?



WRITING PROMPT

Invite students to imagine the future, 100 years from now, in a richly written or visual format. Students can include ideas for water sources, housing patterns, and food consumption. Extension prompts can include:

- References to potential conflict or cooperation
- Impact on the environment
- Use of artificial intelligence and other technology