

Topic: Freedom of speech

Lesson: Freedom of speech	KS or Year Group: KS 3
Resources: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Resource 1 - Timeline2. Resource 2 - Timeline (answers)3. Resource 3 - Definitions of freedom of speech4. Resource 4 – Examples of free speech5. Resource 5 - Advantages6. Resource 6 - Disadvantages7. Resource 7 – Appropriate comments sheet8. Post-it notes, glue, scissors and sugar paper	Outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be able to explain to other students what freedom of speech is.• Be able to explain to other students what the pros and cons of freedom of speech are.

National Curriculum

Key Concepts: 1.1b, 1.1c, 1.2a & 1.2c

Key Processes: 2.1a & 2.2b

Range and Content: 3a & 3h

Lesson 1

During this lesson, students will find out about the history of freedom of speech. They will also develop an understanding of what it is and what it is not. They will explore the pros and cons of free speech using a series of examples. Finally, they will examine different types of free speech and engage in a circletime class discussion about which types they feel to be appropriate in modern Britain.

Starter

- Provide students with copies of **Resource 1 – Timeline** and ask them to match up the numbers with the letters (in order to produce a timeline of the history of freedom of speech).
- Students are asked to produce a definition of ‘freedom of speech’ as they work through the timeline. For teacher’s reference, a good working definition might be the right to speak freely without fear of censorship or intimidation.
- As a class, students quickly share their answers orally. Work is peer-marked through use of **Resource 2 - Timeline (answers)**.
- Ensuring that weaker readers are paired with stronger readers, students are given the information from **Resource 3 – Definitions of freedom of speech**.

Main activity

Freedom of speech

- It is explained to students that they are going to create a class montage focusing on the pros and cons of freedom of speech.
- Show students **Resource 4 – Examples**. Each of these examples should be cut out (perhaps magnified on the photocopier) and glued onto separate A4 sheets. For each of the seven scenarios, they then need to think of an advantage and a disadvantage of that person speaking freely. Students write down these pros and cons onto post-it notes (i.e. they will produce 14 each).
- They add these post-its to the relevant sheet throughout the activity. If necessary, examples are available for the students (see **Resource 5 – Advantages** and **Resource 6 – Disadvantages**).
- As students work, they are asked to explain their ideas to their peers and to absorb other people's ideas.
- The teacher is best placed in a co-ordinating role to ensure that students' efforts result in a structured visual learning aid! For example, they could write "Pro" on the left side of the statement on the sheet and "Con" on the right side. They should ensure that the post-it notes are stuck on the correct side of the sheet.

Plenary

- Students form a circle for circle time (rules such as 'one person speaks at a time' and 'face the person who is talking' are reinforced).
- Each student is given **Resource 7 - Appropriate comments sheet** and given a few minutes to take in the information.
- A discussion is held about why certain comments on the sheet might be deemed to be appropriate or inappropriate by different people. Why this is so should be probed.
- A few students are asked to summarise the learning by defining freedom of speech and explaining the pros and cons which arise through people exercising this right.

Aim high

Students who are working at a high level should be asked to produce their own scenarios as examples. They should then swap these with other G and T students and respond to each other's scenarios through post-its.

Assessment

As students come to affix post-it notes or read other people's ideas, the teacher should aim to engage them in conversation:

Students who can clearly explain their opinions about free speech (as a general concept) are working at level 5.

Students who can understand how people's opinions about free speech are influenced are working at level 6.

Students who can empathise with the views of students who disagree with them about free speech (and stand up for these students' viewpoints) are working at level 7.

Students who spontaneously ask the teacher questions about current affairs issues involving the right to free speech are working at level 8.

Summary of key learning

- Students are able to define what 'freedom of speech' means.
- Students can recognise that there are advantages and disadvantages to letting people express their opinions.

Resource 1 – Timeline

This table shows some of the history of freedom of speech. Read the unfinished sentences in the left-hand column. Next, complete the sentences using the right-hand columns. The first has been done for you...

A 399BC A Greek philosopher called Socrates was put on trial because he said that he did not believe in a group of Gods. Before he was put to death, he...

4 1 ...should be allowed to express themselves freely.

B 1215 The 'Magna Carta' (an English charter which stated that the King...

2...during Stalin's era. This put his life in danger and he had to flee Russia in the 1970s.

C 1633 An Italian physicist called Galileo Galilei was arrested and hauled in front of the Inquisition. They were livid....

3 ...would have less power and that the people would have more) was signed.

D 1770 The French author Voltaire wrote a letter to Monsieur l'Abbé explaining that...

4 ...stated that if he could be set free on the condition that he would stop speaking his mind, then he would rather die.

E 1789 'The Declaration of the Rights of Man' was created in France. This said that people...

5 ...for those who agree with us but for those whose thoughts we hate."

F 1791 'The First Amendment of the US Bill of Rights' paved the way for four freedoms:...

6...with him because he had claimed (quite correctly) that the sun did not revolve around the earth.

G 1859 Charles Darwin published 'On the Origin of Species' which talked about natural selection. Huxley..

7...British Parliament (unless the protestors had sought permission first).

H 1929 An American judge called Justice Holmes made his thoughts on free speech clear. He claimed that "free thought is not just...

8 ...he totally disagreed with Monsieur l'Abbé's views. However, he claimed that he would rather die than have the other man stopped from speaking his mind.

I 1948 'The Universal Declaration of Human Rights'

9...speech, religion, press and meeting in groups.

Freedom of speech

was accepted by...

J 1960 Following a court case in London, 'Penguin' gained the right to publish a sexually explicit...

K 1962 The Russian novelist Solzhenitsyn wrote about life in a labour camp...

L 1992 American lecturer Noam Chomsky argued that if you supported free speech then you supported the right...

M 2002 A journalist from Nigeria called Isioma Daniel made Muslims angry because they felt that he...

N 2005 The 'Serious Organised Crime and Police Act' banned protests within 1km of...

10 ...dozens of countries. It listed many rights including that of freedom of speech.

11...of those who agreed with, for example, the Nazis to say exactly as they wished.

12...publicly defended Darwin when religious fundamentalists wanted to stop Darwin's views being shared.

13 ...novel called 'Lady Chatterley's Lover'.

14...had spoken with disrespect about the Prophet Mohammed. This provoked riots and over 200 people ended up dead.

Now double check your answers and transfer them into the table below so that they can be checked very quickly.

Letter	Number	Letter	Number
A	4	H	
B		I	
C		J	
D		K	
E		L	
F		M	
G		N	

Resource 2 – Timeline (answers)

Letter	Number	Letter	Number
A	4	H	5
B	3	I	10
C	6	J	13
D	8	K	2
E	1	L	11
F	9	M	14
G	12	N	7

Resource 3 – Definitions of freedom of speech

What exactly is freedom of speech?

- Freedom for people to say what they think
- Sometimes called 'freedom of expression'
- A human right.

Advantages:

- Listeners can feel trusted to make up their own mind about what someone else is saying.
- **Prejudiced people can be recognised and thus other people can protest against their ideas.**
- People can access the ideas of millions of international citizens through the internet.
- **Information about events such as the Holocaust can be shared in the hope that history will not repeat itself.**
- If governments are corrupt, then citizens can speak out against them.
- **Free speech is restricted by police (e.g. in situations where there is danger of violence).**

Disadvantages:

- **Free speech does not happen in a vacuum; people who are easily influenced might mistake opinions for facts.**
- Hitler may not have had so much support had he not spoken so freely to the masses.
- **One person's opinion can be incredibly hurtful in the eyes of the person next to them.**
- Lots of people are unclear about the difference between free speech and racist, homophobic or sexist comments.
- **Certain TV programmes, radio shows, websites and newspapers might offend people.**

What do freedom of speech laws **NOT** allow?

Speeches which encourage terrorism	The sharing of company secrets
Defamation of character	Perjury (lying in court)
Obscenities in a public place	Infringing copyright law
'Hate speeches' which incite violence	Treason

Resource 4 – Definitions of freedom of speech

7 examples of FREEDOM OF SPEECH...

- For each question, you will need two post-it notes
- On one post-it note, write down the advantages of free speech
- On the other, write down the disadvantages of free speech



1. Naomi Campbell

A teenager (in a year 11 citizenship lesson) says that models who are thinner than a size 10 should be banned from working. She claims that women less than a size 10 looks 'disgusting' and should be forced by a doctor to put on weight.

2. Police Officer

A pub landlord tells his customers that he doesn't agree with people aged over 40 working in the police force. He states that Polish police officers should not be allowed either in case they don't understand English.

3. Missing children

A teacher speaks in a year 6 assembly about 'stranger danger' and tells the children about Madeleine McCann and Shannon Matthews. She says that she blames the parents for the girls' disappearances.

4. Sugary/fatty foods

A businesswoman says at work that she thinks that people who eat 'junk food' are lazy and unintelligent. She claims that people who eat unhealthy foods are filling their bodies with rubbish.

5. Respecting the environment

A protestor stands outside a corner shop and says to every customer that the owner is destroying the world through giving out free plastic carrier bags. The protestor keeps repeating 'make people pay for plastic!'.

6. Animal cruelty

A vegetarian goes into a busy restaurant and starts talking loudly to his friend. He says that everyone in there who is eating meat is a vicious murderer. He also says that all meat-eaters should be tortured live on national TV.

7. News reporting

A newsreader on the 6 o'clock news reads a story about a gay couple who have just won a court case. They are now allowed to go and stay at a particular hotel (from which they had previously been banned due to their sexuality).

Resource 5 – Advantages

Naomi Campbell

- Students might realise that there are lots of body types.
- Students might talk about media-induced pressure.
- Students might think about eating disorders.

Police Officer

- Customers might think about the importance of fitness and of the police.
- Customers might have the chance to persuade the barman that humans should be employed according to individual merits rather than treated as stereotypes.

Missing Children

- Children might become more aware of personal safety issues.
- Teachers might help students to get involved in missing children charities after assembly.

Sugary/Fatty Foods

- People in the meeting might decide to eat more healthily.
- Employees might enquire about a more healthy canteen.
- Workers might start to think about how food affects their work rate.

Respecting The Environment

- Customers might put pressure on the shopkeeper to become more environmentally friendly.
- Customers might start bringing their own bags.
- The protestor might prove that peaceful actions can get people's attention.

Animal Cruelty

- Diners might welcome the opportunity to oppose the vegetarian's opinions about meat-eaters.
- Diners might approach the vegetarian for information on the benefits of vegetarianism.
- The owner might take the chance to defend how the meat is sourced at her restaurant.

News Reporting

- People might be happy that homosexuality is 'normalised' on the news.
- Gay citizens might realise that they have certain rights in Britain that they were not previously aware of.
- Hotel owners might realise that they cannot discriminate on the grounds of sexuality.

Resource 6 – Disadvantages

Naomi Campbell

- Students who are naturally slim might feel offended.
- Students might worry that body size is really important to other people.
- Students who are thinking of becoming models might feel ashamed.

Police Officer

- Customers might feel worried that the landlord is ageist.
- Customers might feel worried that the landlord is racist.
- Customers might start expressing prejudiced views in the pub because they believe that the landlord has 'set the ball rolling'.

Missing Children

- Some children/staff might know the family of one of the girls and feel uncomfortable.
- Some students might become frightened about how well their own parents look after them.
- Some children/staff might think that it is distasteful to discuss missing children in front of lots of people.

Sugary/Fatty Foods

- Workers who eat unhealthy foods might feel victimised.
- Employees might feel angry about someone 'telling people how to live'.
- People might lose sight of the fact that unhealthy foods can be eaten in moderation.

Respecting The Environment

- Shoppers might feel that they are being judged if they don't re-use bags.
- The shopkeeper might lose trade.
- Customers might feel that the protestor is intruding upon their right to make decisions.

Animal Cruelty

- The vegetarian might be seen to be inciting violence.
- The owner and meat-eaters in the restaurant might feel frightened.
- Diners might feel annoyed that they are not able to enjoy their meal in peace.

News Reporting

- People might be upset that homosexuality is 'normalised' on the news.
- Young viewers might believe that homosexuality is wrong if they hear that certain places do not allow gay couples.

Resource 7 – Appropriate comments

Maths should be taught at school on a daily basis.

Straight couples in Britain should have the right to get married in holy buildings.

Teachers should be allowed to use the cane on teenagers who make spelling mistakes.

People who commit murder should be put to death.

Which of these statements (if any) do you feel people should be allowed to say?

Which of these statements (if any) do you feel that people should not be allowed to say?

Why?

Children whose parents are obese should be adopted.

Britain is crowded and no adult without a job should be allowed here.

Children whose parents sexually abuse them should be adopted.

The bible should be taught at school on a daily basis.

Gay couples in Britain should have the right to get married in holy buildings.

Teachers should be allowed to use the cane on teenagers who are bullies.