BRITISH COUNCIL

SchoolsOnline

Magna Carta: My Digital Rights
Teacher Resources

# What has the Magna Carta done for me?

Magna Carta is one of the world's most important and influential documents. It was granted by King John of England on 15 June 1215. In doing so, the King agreed to demands from Barons and Bishops to limit his powers. Among the clauses the charter gave all 'free men' the right to justice and a fair trial and established for the first time that everybody including the king was subject to the rule of law.

Magna Carta has inspired people across the centuries and is regarded by many as the foundation of democracy in England. Its principles are reflected in the United States Bill of Rights and other constitutional documents around the world, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

To commemorate the 800th anniversary of this historic document, and the 25th anniversary of the World Wide Web, the British Council and The British Library, The World Wide Web Foundation and the Southbank Centre have collaborated together to provide opportunities for pupils across the globe to learn more about Magna Carta and its legacy as a symbol of liberty and human rights and to think about what a Magna Carta in todays digital world might look like.

As part of the project, this resource pack for pupils aged 7-14 will help young people contribute to the debate about what clauses a Magna Carta for the digital age might contain. The resources link to curriculum subjects, help to develop transferable skills, and provide opportunities to engage in activities and debates about digital rights and responsibilities. They provide a brief introduction to Magna Carta and focus on two issues which are key for the future of the web in the 21st century - protection and privacy and affordable access to the web as a human right.

Resources written by Alison Willmott.
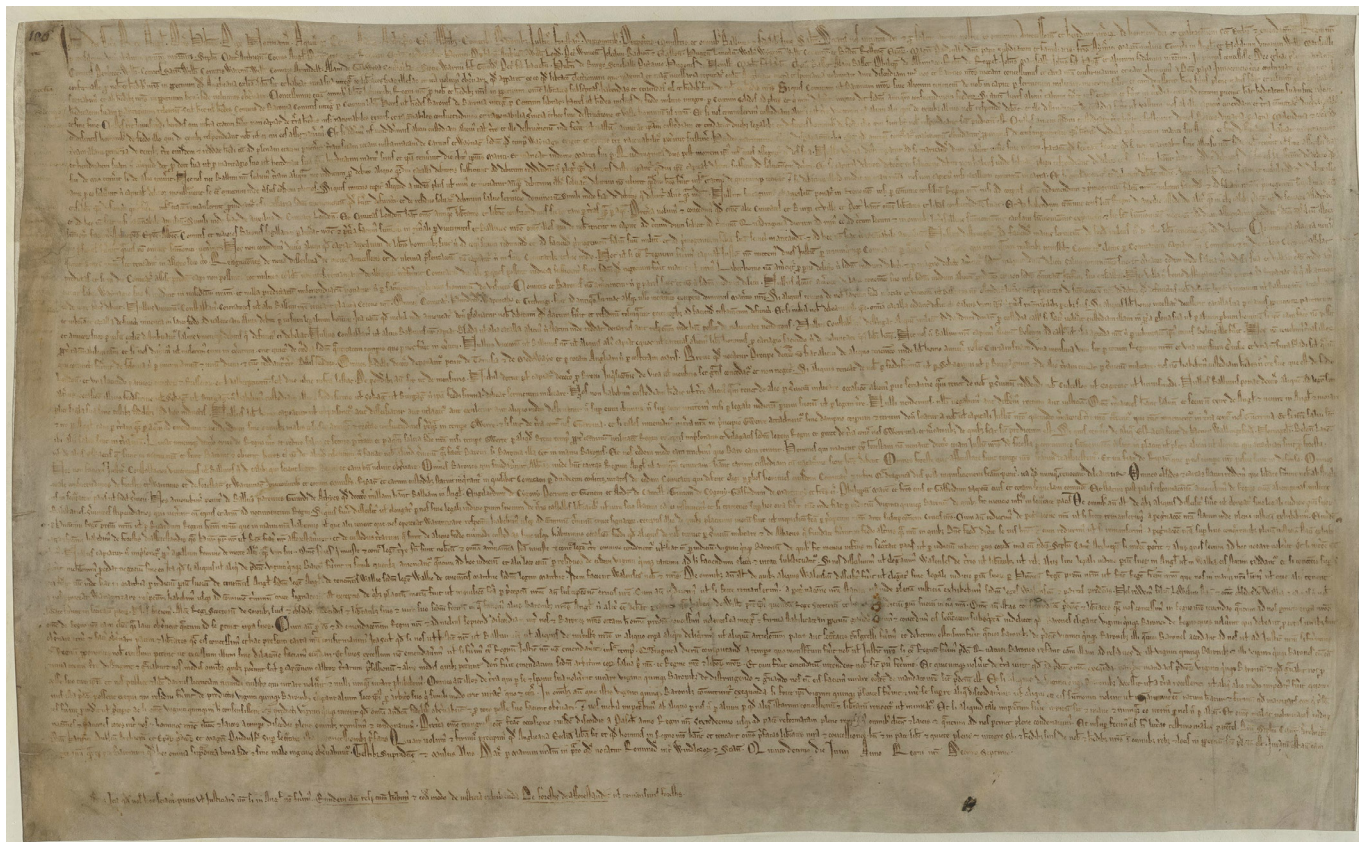
Magna Carta' on display at the British Library.

Background information

In 1215, 39 barons and their forces rebelled against King John. They captured the Tower of London, took control of the city and forced him to negotiate a peaceful resolution by agreeing to the clauses set out in Magna Carta. The document was written by scribes in Latin on a piece of parchment made from dried sheepskin.

When the royal seal was placed onto the document, letters were sent around the country ordering that it should be read out publicly across the land. Today four of these copies survive; two are held at the British Library in London and the other two are kept at Salisbury and Lincoln Cathedrals.

Learning aims and objectives: To raise awareness of Magna Carta and its key principles and to discuss its legacy in today's world.

Skills and values: Communication, empathy, collaboration

Age group: 11-14

Resources: Large sheets of paper, access to the Internet, Ipads/cameras

'King John signs the Magna Carta window at Worcester Cathedral'
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Activities

Start by asking your students to write on a large sheet of paper any words, names, dates or phrases they associate with Magna Carta. Discuss what they know already and what they would like to find out. Record their responses, perhaps in the form of a wordle or post it notes and exchange with your partner school if you have one.

Show an image of Magna Carta on display at the British Library. http://www.bl.uk/collection-items/magna-carta-1215#

Explain the historical background of what was happening in 1215, why this rather plain looking document was created and why it has become one of the most celebrated documents in history as a symbol of freedom and human rights. Perhaps show one of the short films or animations produced by the British Library on these topics as part of your discussions. These are available at http://www.bl.uk/my-digital-rights

Questions to discuss in small groups:

- Why do you think the Barons rebelled against King John?

- Why was it important for copies of Magna Carta to be carried throughout the kingdom in 1215 and read out to the people?

- What do we mean by freedom and Human Rights?

- What is democracy? Why is it important?

- If you had the opportunity to make one law, what would it be?

- Why does Magna Carta matter today?

Additional activities

Carry out some of the activities developed for the Magna Carta 800th Commemoration Committee. These are free for schools to download at: magnacarta800th.com/schools and include devising and filming an imaginary historical news report about the events leading up to the sealing of the Magna Carta in 1215 and exploring the craft of Illuminated lettering and seals. These films and artworks could be exchanged with your partner school if you have one along with your wordles and thoughts about laws.

A Magna Carta for the internet

Learning Aims and objectives: To raise awareness of the uses and abuses of the internet and social media and issues related to protection and privacy. To discuss whether there should be a charter for the Internet.

Skills and values: Communication, empathy, collaboration, critical thinking

Age group: 7-14

Resources

Large space, masking tape, large paper, pens, post it notes, two cards saying **Strongly Agree** and **Strongly Disagree**

Move classroom furniture or work outside so that you have a large space in which pupils can move around. Use masking tape or chalk to create a line running across the space with a sign saying 'Strongly agree' at one end and 'Strongly disagree' at the other.

Introduction

Divide the class into small groups. Discuss how and why the students use the Internet and social media. Ask them to record their responses on post it notes and large sheets of paper and then report their thoughts and ideas back to the rest of the class.

Use the following questions to trigger discussions:

- When, how and how often do you access and use the Internet and social media? Did anyone log on before school this morning? Be honest! Can you tell us why?

- Have you changed the way you use social media over time? Why do you think certain social media platforms go in and out of fashion?

- Are there differences between how boys and girls use the Internet and social media?

Activities

What is the Internet?

Share the following two descriptions of the World Wide Web:

"When I first began tinkering with a software program that eventually gave rise to the idea of the World Wide Web, I named it Enquire, short for Enquire Within upon Everything, a musty old book of Victorian advice I noticed as a child in my parent's house outside London. With its title suggestive of magic, the book served as a portal to a world of information, everything from how to remove clothing stains to tips on investing money." Sir Tim Berners-Lee, inventor of the World Wide Web.

The web is "just a world passing around notes in a classroom." Jon Stewart, Comedian.

Discuss these quotes. How would your students define and draw a picture or diagram of the Web for someone who had never heard of it?

Why might the Web need a charter for the 21st century?

Read out one of the scenarios listed below and ask a group of students to move to a point on the line that best represents their opinion described in the statement – somewhere between strongly agree, and strongly disagree. Once they have stopped moving, ask one or more of them to explain why they have chosen this position and respond to questions from the rest of the class. Give them a chance to change their minds and move up and down the line if they are convinced by other students' ideas.

Repeat the activity for other scenarios and statements.

Scenario 1

Imagine that... a student is skateboarding across the playground after school. He is stopped by a teacher and the skateboard is confiscated. When he gets home, the student talks about the incident on social media, and makes derogatory remarks about the teacher in the incident. Members of staff from the school spot this and the student is suspended.

Statement 1: The student should be suspended from school for making personal remarks about a member of staff on a social media site.

Scenario 2

Imagine that... a teenager uploads images of her holiday onto a photo-sharing site. Another pupil from her school views the images and makes unkind remarks about them online.

Statement 2: You should have the right to air your views freely on the Web.

Discuss the actions of all involved in these scenarios, the importance of thinking carefully before posting something in the digital sphere and of being alert to the importance of protecting your privacy on profile settings.

What might the students have done differently with hindsight? Talk about the flexibility of opinion. Explain that if they form an opinion today, with more information, further discussion and changing circumstances it is fine to change their mind and this is an important part of being an astute, open-minded individual.

The students could devise and write their own scenarios and statements for Down the Line.

Plenary

Ask all students to respond to the statement:

"There should be a charter for the Internet setting out rules and responsibilities in a series of clauses."

Each clause should be a single sentence beginning with the phrase: "The web we want will..." For example -"The web we want will... be safe and secure for all young people " or The web we want... should be freely available for all young people across the world

The web as a human right

Introduction

Computers and a home Internet connection have become increasingly important for young people wanting instant access to information and to complete schoolwork. A recent report from The Children`s Commission on Poverty noted that three in ten children in the UK whose family is 'not well off ' said they had fallen behind at school because their family couldn't afford necessary computer or internet facilities at home.

Discuss with your students what they think the term Digital Divide means (the gap between people with ready access to computers and the internet and those who do not) and the following scenario…a student was asked to go on a Spanish dictionary website to complete a homework assignment. The link didn't work on the old computer that she had at home and the library was closed. She was given a detention (made to stay behind after school) for not completing her work on time. Is this fair? Should Internet access be provided free for all children of school age?

Aims: To raise awareness of issues relating to the digital divide and affordable access to the web as a human right

Skills and values: Enquiry, communication, empathy, critical thinking

Age group: 7-14

Resources

Clip of BBC/BC film Digital Divide, slides/copies of table and map from International Telecommunications Union, cards, and pens

Activities

Background information

14-year-old Parveen attends a village school in India where there are three computers, but she cannot afford the money needed to use them. Find out what happens when a new computer is installed for free public use in her village by watching the British Council/BBC short film Digital Divide at: https://schoolsonline.britishcouncil.org/classroom-resources/schools-world-service/resources/digital-divide

Discuss the impact of the village`s first computer and how it might help transform the lives of Parveen and others in the village. Do your students think Professor Mitra's experiment will succeed? Have they ever taught themselves something using only information from the Web? Do they think this would be possible in another language?

The gap between people with Internet access and those without, is one of many aspects of the digital divide. Share the estimated figures and map from the International Telecommunications Union seen below, which charts the growth of internet use per 100 inhabitants in different regions around the world from the years 2005 to 2013 and Internet use as a percentage of a country's population.

Internet users by region

Region	2005	2010	2013
Africa	2%	10%	16%
Americas	36%	49%	61%
Arab States	8%	26%	38%
Asia and Pacific	9%	23%	32%
Commonwealth of Independent States	10%	34%	52%
Europe	46%	67%	75%

Stats from http://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Pages/stat/default.aspx
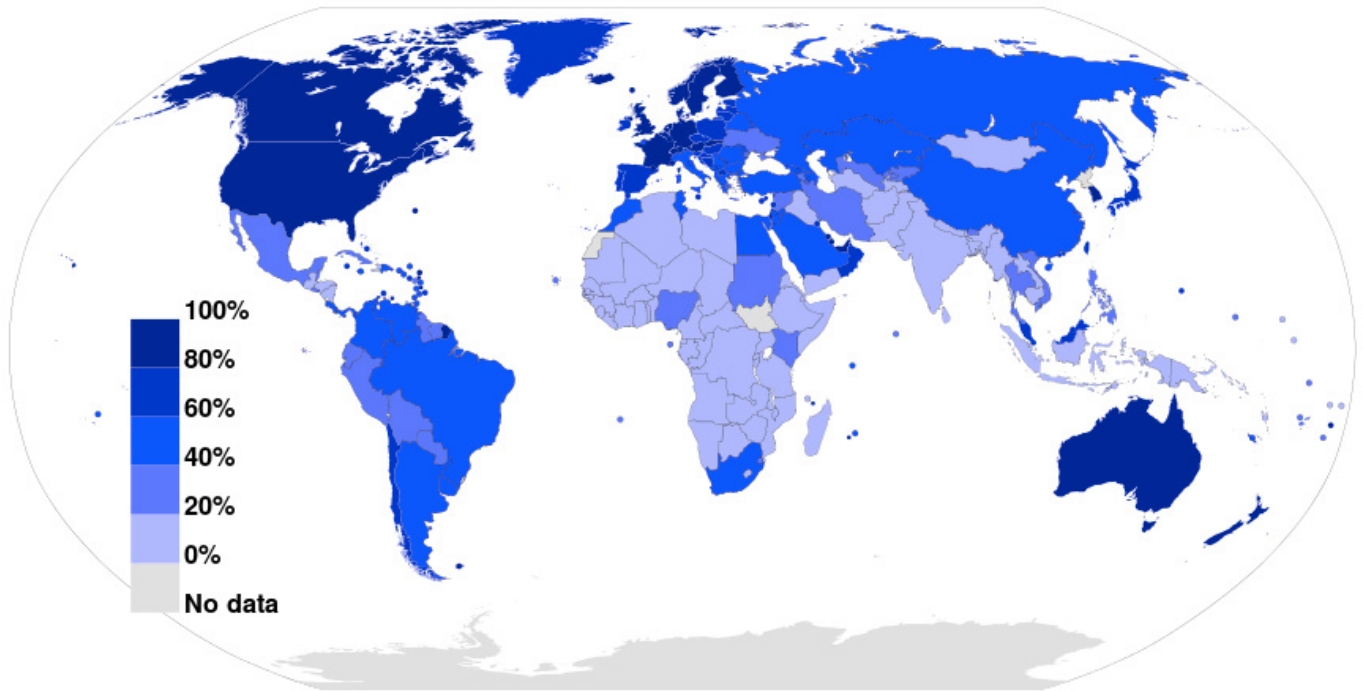
Internet users in 2012 as a percentage of a country's population

Map from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Digital_divide

Ask the students to come up with three conclusions that they can draw from this information.

Reasons given why "bridging the digital gap" is important include:

• Social mobility: Internet use is seen as important to development and success. Young people in some parts of the world are not getting as much IT education as others.

• Democracy — Some believe that eliminating the digital divide would help to increase democracy by allowing people to become more involved in events such as elections or decision making.

• Economic growth — It is believed that countries could gain quicker access to economic growth if their information infrastructure were to be developed.

Divide the class into small groups and give each group some cards with these three titles written on them. Ask them to discuss and rank which they think are the most important reasons to bridge the digital divide. Add any other reasons they can think of and then report their thoughts back to the rest of the class.

Some have suggested that Internet access for all should become a civil or perhaps a human right. What do you think? Is this realistic? Discuss and record views and report back to the rest of the class.

Find out more

To learn more about the Magna Carta, the people involved and its legacy visit the British Library website at: http://www.bl.uk/magna-carta

http://magnacarta800th.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/KS2-Teaching-Ideas.pdf

Eight lesson ideas across a range of key National Curriculum themes developed by Nicola Doughty and Sitwell Junior School, for the Magna Carta 800th Anniversary Committee can be found at http://magnacarta800th.com/schools/

More about Professor Mitra's hole in the wall computer experiments can be found at: http://www.ted.com/speakers/sugata_mitra

If you do not currently have a partner school but would like to find one and set up a collaboration space to work together, information can be found at: https://schoolsonline.britishcouncil.org/find-a-partner

The idea for this project has been jointly conceived by the World Wide Web Foundation, the British Council, the British Library and the Southbank Centre as part of a collaborative programme to celebrate the 800th anniversary of the Magna Carta and the 25th anniversary of the World Wide Web. The World Wide Web Foundation is a foundation set up by Sir Tim Berners-Lee the inventor of the World Wide Web to defend, claim and change the future of the Web. WebWeWant is the Web Foundation's global campaign around digital rights. One result of this collaboration has been the creation of Magna Carta: My Digital Rights by the British Library as well as the Web We Want Festival at the Southbank Centre.

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