

Democracy, Tyranny, and Liberty****

Ripe for tyranny, pages 24-25

100 minutes
individual and group work

Introduction

Do democracies promote freedom? Consider the democracy that you live in. According to Prof. Aeon Skoble, it is definitely possible for democracies to promote freedom, but it is not a guarantee. This is due to a few flaws inherent in democratic systems. These flaws were already mentioned in Plato's *Republic*.

The *purpose* of this web task is to practice your (public) speaking skills. The *theme* of the web task is *democracy, tyranny, and liberty*. The *final task* is to debate a classmate on the topic tyranny as it relates to your choice of Donald Trump, Napoleon, or Julius Caesar. Suggested Internet resources are given.



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Exploration

1	Watch https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9PbbiAMhEKY . What are the flaws inherent in democratic systems, according to Prof. Skoble?
2	Watch https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=enzo9qXLFUo . How do the flaws that Prof. Skoble mentions in his video relate to the rise and power of Donald Trump?
3	In your opinion, is Trump the beginning of a line of tyrants to come, or can democracy 'regress'? Explain your answer.

Final task

Suggested resources:

- <https://www.wikihow.com/Perform-Well-in-a-Debate>
- https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/how-trump-is-helping-to-save-our-democracy/2017/09/22/539b795e-9a1f-11e7-82e4-f1076f6d6152_story.html?utm_term=.babe9aa7a93b
- <https://www.napoleon.org/en/history-of-the-two-empires/articles/the-empire-dictatorship-monarchy/>
- http://www.pbs.org/empires/romans/empire/julius_caesar.html

1	You have taken a college class on Political Science and another class on Debating. For their final class projects, your two professors have decided to combine their assignments into one. Your task is to debate a classmate on the following topic: <i>Donald Trump (or Napoleon, or Julius Caesar): tyrant or not?</i> One of you will take the stance of qualifying the person of choice as a tyrant; the other
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	<p>will dismiss that qualification by highlighting how Trump, Napoleon, or Caesar benefit(ed) their respective democracies.</p> <p>It is important to avoid expressing your opinions; your viewpoints should be based on the research needed to do this task.</p> <p>Use the resources listed above. They are hyperlinks to how to perform a debate and links to examples of articles you could use to research Trump, Napoleon, or Julius Caesar.</p>
2	<p>Making index cards with facts, statistics, vocabulary, etc. is an important step in preparing for your debate. Practise, practise, practise, until you feel good about what this debate will look like in front of an audience.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make a list of relevant vocabulary. • Write important facts on index cards, which you may use during the debate. • Look up YouTube videos with examples of (political) debates. Mind you, there are many useless videos!
3	<p>Perform your debate in front of an audience. Your teacher will help you with this. It could be an audience of one; it could be your entire class. The objective is to deliver your argument as persuasively as possible.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be persuasive, but listen carefully to your opponent. • Make good use of the Wikihow breakdown of how to perform a debate. • Afterwards, solicit feedback from your audience
4	<p>To unwind, watch this timeless Monty Python video. Have a good laugh!</p> <p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wxrbOVeRonQ</p>