

Youth Engagement in Politics: The Rise of Young Voices

COMPREHENSION • VOCABULARY • DISCUSSION

INTERACTIVE ONLINE TEST

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Reading Passage

Read the passage carefully. Each paragraph is labelled with a letter for easy reference.

- A** In recent years, there has been a significant increase in youth engagement in politics. Young people, particularly those aged between 18 and 30, are becoming more vocal about issues that affect their lives, such as climate change, gun reform, and social justice. This shift can be seen globally, with movements like Fridays for Future, led by Greta Thunberg, inspiring millions to advocate for climate action and environmental sustainability. In the United States, the March for Our Lives movement, initiated by students from Parkland, Florida, has highlighted the urgent need for gun reform and has mobilized young people to demand safer schools and communities. These movements demonstrate that young voices are not just participating but are often at the forefront of political change, demanding accountability from leaders and pushing for policies that reflect their values and concerns.
- B** Moreover, social media plays a crucial role in this engagement. Platforms like Twitter and Instagram allow young activists to share their messages widely and connect with like-minded individuals across the globe. They can organize events, share information, and raise awareness about critical issues affecting their generation. In 2020, voter turnout among young Americans reached an all-time high, with over 50% participating in the presidential election, a marked increase from previous years. This surge indicates that young voters are increasingly aware of their power and influence in shaping the future. As they continue to mobilize and organize, it is clear that the political landscape is changing, with young people leading the charge toward a more equitable and sustainable world. Their activism not only influences policy but also inspires future generations to engage in the democratic process.

Vocabulary Glossary

Key words and phrases from the passage. Study them before attempting the exercise below.

WORD / PHRASE	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
vocal	speaking out strongly or clearly about something	<i>She was very vocal about wanting to save the park.</i>
advocate	to speak in favor of something or someone	<i>He advocates for animal rights and helps find homes for stray dogs.</i>
sustainability	the ability to keep something going for a long time without harming nature	<i>Growing your own food can help with sustainability.</i>
mobilize	to organize and prepare people or groups to take action	<i>The community mobilized to clean up the local park.</i>
accountability	being responsible and able to explain actions or decisions	<i>The manager took accountability for the mistake.</i>
equitable	fair and treating everyone in the same way	<i>They aimed to create an equitable system for all students.</i>
engagement	being involved or interested in something	<i>Her engagement in the project helped it succeed.</i>
influence	the power to have an effect on people or things	<i>Parents have a big influence on their children's behavior.</i>

Vocabulary Exercise — Fill in the Blank

Use one word or phrase from the glossary above to complete each sentence. Each item is used only once. Answers are on the final page.

1. The teacher was very _____ about the need for more books in the library.
2. Many young people _____ for better climate policies.
3. Recycling is one way to help with environmental _____.
4. The group worked hard to _____ volunteers for the charity event.
5. The CEO promised more _____ in the company's financial reports.
6. The new law aims to create a more _____ society.

Comprehension Questions

These questions are different from the online practice test. Choose the best answer (A, B, C, or D). Answers and explanations are on the final page.

Question 1

What has been a significant trend in youth political involvement in recent years?

- A. A decrease in youth voter turnout.
- B. An increase in youth engagement in politics.
- C. A shift towards more conservative views among the youth.
- D. A lack of interest in social media activism.

Question 2

What role does social media play in youth activism, according to the passage?

- A. It limits the reach of youth activism.
- B. It helps young activists connect and organize globally.
- C. It is not used much by young activists.
- D. It mainly serves as a platform for entertainment.

Question 3

Why are young people at the forefront of political change?

- A. They have more free time than older generations.
- B. They want to maintain the status quo.
- C. They demand accountability and policies that reflect their values.
- D. They are not interested in changing any policies.

Question 4

What is a key reason for the rise in youth voter turnout in 2020?

- A. A decrease in political issues.
- B. Increased awareness of their power and influence.
- C. Less use of social media.
- D. More restrictions on voting.

Question 5

What is the main purpose of the March for Our Lives movement?

- A. To promote climate action.
- B. To demand gun reform and safer communities.
- C. To increase voter turnout in elections.
- D. To advocate for social media use in politics.

Discussion & Writing Prompts

Each prompt references a specific detail from the passage above. Use for classroom discussion or a short written response (150–200 words).

1. The passage describes the Fridays for Future movement led by Greta Thunberg. How has this movement influenced environmental policies in your country, and what could be done to increase its impact?

2. Paragraph 2 mentions that social media helps young activists connect globally. How do you think this global connection changes the way political movements develop?

3. In 2020, over 50% of young Americans voted in the presidential election. What strategies could be used in your country to encourage similar participation among young voters?

Answer Key

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

Q1 B

Q2 B

Q3 C

Q4 B

Q5 B

VOCABULARY EXERCISE

FIB1 vocal

FIB2 advocate

FIB3 sustainability

FIB4 mobilize

FIB5 accountability

FIB6 equitable

Comprehension Question Explanations

Why the correct answer is right — and why each wrong option is incorrect.

1. What has been a significant trend in youth political involvement in recent years?

✓ B — An increase in youth engagement in politics.

The passage mentions a significant increase in youth engagement in politics.

✗ A — A decrease in youth voter turnout.

The passage states there was an increase, not a decrease.

✗ C — A shift towards more conservative views among the youth.

The passage does not mention a shift towards conservative views.

✗ D — A lack of interest in social media activism.

The passage highlights the role of social media in activism.

2. What role does social media play in youth activism, according to the passage?

✓ B — It helps young activists connect and organize globally.

The passage states that social media helps young activists share messages and organize.

✗ A — It limits the reach of youth activism.

The passage says social media extends the reach of activism, not limits it.

✗ C — It is not used much by young activists.

The passage indicates that social media is widely used by activists.

✗ D — It mainly serves as a platform for entertainment.

The passage focuses on social media's role in activism, not entertainment.

3. Why are young people at the forefront of political change?

✓ C — They demand accountability and policies that reflect their values.

The passage explains that young people demand accountability and policies that reflect their concerns.

✗ A — They have more free time than older generations.

The passage does not mention free time as a reason.

✗ B — They want to maintain the status quo.

The passage describes them as wanting change, not maintaining the status quo.

✗ D — They are not interested in changing any policies.

The passage shows that young people are very interested in policy change.

4. What is a key reason for the rise in youth voter turnout in 2020?

✓ B — Increased awareness of their power and influence.

The passage states that young voters are more aware of their power and influence.

✗ A — A decrease in political issues.

The passage does not mention a decrease in political issues.

✗ C — Less use of social media.

The passage highlights more use of social media, not less.

✗ D — More restrictions on voting.

The passage does not mention more voting restrictions.

5. What is the main purpose of the March for Our Lives movement?

✓ B — To demand gun reform and safer communities.

The passage states that the March for Our Lives movement focuses on gun reform and safety.

✗ A — To promote climate action.

The passage associates climate action with Fridays for Future, not March for Our Lives.

✗ C — To increase voter turnout in elections.

The passage does not link March for Our Lives with increasing voter turnout.

✗ D — To advocate for social media use in politics.

The passage does not mention social media use as a main focus of March for Our Lives.

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Letters Refugee Camp Family Story Hope — <https://www.esl-tests.com/reading/b2/letters-refugee-camp-family-story-hope>

Global Health Preparedness Lessons Recent Pandemics — <https://www.esl-tests.com/reading/b2/global-health-preparedness-lessons-recent-pandemics>

Climate Migration Communities Move — <https://www.esl-tests.com/reading/b2/climate-migration-communities-move>