

Citizenship in Action: Citizens working together to bring about change

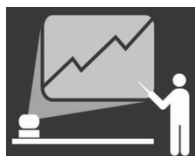


Presentation by Duncan Bunce

Read & Précis: Chapter 6, Issue 2, pages 273-294

Welcome

- Ensure mobile phones are off.
- No eating in the classroom.
- You may take notes.



Topic Aims

- How do citizens bring about change?
- What are the key factors in successful campaigning?
- The impact of campaigns on political decision making and political attitudes.



Extended Reading

The following textbooks and periodicals are in the College Library and will deepen your knowledge:

- AQA Citizenship AS. Watts, D. Nelson Thornes (Chapter 11 & 12).
- Essentials of UK Politics. Heywood, A. Palgrave Macmillan (Chapter 5).

How can citizens campaign for change?

The methods a group decides to use are dependent on various factors:

- The **overall objective** of the group.
- The **number of people** involved and their **motivation**.

If the aim is to amend legislation, contact with members of the Government must be made.

Additionally, actions must be **legal** to present legitimacy.

Direct and indirect action

- **Direct action** refers to activities that target individuals, organisations or political groups to seek immediate remedies.

➤ **Can you give an example?**

- **Indirect action** can mean voting in general or local elections (a citizen can vote out a representative they don't like). **What is the biggest criticism with this?**

- As a consequence, citizens may choose to join a pressure group.

Direct and indirect action

➤ **Group Activity:** Research and present the following (i.e. how *effective* are they?) (see pages 274-279):

- (1) Voting
- (2) Letter writing
- (3) Boycotts
- (4) Petitioning and leafleting
- (5) Demonstration
- (6) Strike action

Direct and indirect action

Activity: Undertake **activity 1** and **2** on **page 279**.



Key factors in successful campaigning?

(1) Membership

- Establishes weight of public support.
- Provides citizens with an organisation outside of parliament.
- High profile celebrity members can raise awareness.
E.g. Joanna Lumley and the Ghurka Justice Campaign
- An emotive campaign can also garner passionate support.

Key factors in successful campaigning?

(2) Nature of the cause

- A campaign at odds with government policy may struggle to achieve its objectives.
- Strength of alt. campaigns may undermine success.

E.g. Campaign to save Hatfield Forest vs. Campaign to Protect Rural England.

- **How can events have an impact? Can you think of an example?**
- **Arguable core demographic worth reaching?**

Key factors in successful campaigning?

(3) Methods

- Some may try physical means (if radical, may attract media attention).

E.g. Fathers 4 Justice attack the PM/storm the National Lottery television programme...

E.g. Greenpeace ramming whaling ships.

- However, it must attract the public's attention in a positive manner to hope to achieve legislative change.

Key factors in successful campaigning?

(4) Finance

- The amount of money and resources are most important.
- This is used to create campaign materials and websites, pay for staff etc.
- A large amount of money can pay for political consultancies. **Why are these useful?**

Key factors in successful campaigning?

(5) Role of the media

- Effective use can target a large audience or specific demographic.
- *For example, campaigning for road traffic cuts during Top Gear would be pointless.*
- However, how the media report and their political bias can also effect the campaign.
- Undertake **Activity 1** on **page 284**.
- How has the internet changed things?

Pressure Group Case Studies

Students to present to class their presentations on the following pressure groups:

- The Countryside Alliance
- Fathers 4 Justice
- Stop the War Coalition

Be prepared for the teacher to ask questions.

Just to remind you...

- For the Unit 2 exam, you should be able to **know, understand** and **discuss**:
 - Different methods of direct and indirect action.
 - The key factors in successful campaigning.
 - Three case studies for pressure groups.
