EXHIBIT EXPLORATION

Thinking critically, comparing perspectives, and connecting with the past

Name _____

INSTRUCTIONS

1. **Walk through the exhibit carefully.**
2. **Work with a partner or small group.**
3. **Write short answers using evidence from the panels, quotes, or objects.**
4. **Be ready to share one surprising thing you learned about democracy.**

Colonial Complaints: Find the section about colonists and their disagreements with Britain.

What was one major grievance colonists had with Parliament? Why did they think this was unfair?

Creating the Constitution: Look for information about the 1787 Constitutional Convention

Find one example of an issue that was debated during the drafting of the Constitution.
Find one example of a compromise the drafters came up with?

Who Gets a Voice?: The exhibit shows a timeline of voting rights.

List two amendments or laws that expanded voting rights. Who gained the right to vote in each case?

Power of Protest: Find an example of people using protest to expand democracy.

Who protested? What were they demanding? Was it successful?

Freedom of the Press: Look for newspapers or pamphlets from the 18th and 19th centuries.

How did the press help spread ideas about independence or democracy? Can you think of a modern version of this?

Defining Citizenship: Find the section that discusses definitions and rights.

What is one right of being a citizen? How has the definition of citizenship been expressed over time?

Your Voice Today: The exhibit offers many reasons why people vote.

Why do you think voting is important in a democracy? What are other ways, besides voting, that people can make their voices heard?

What Do You Think?: *"We have it in our power to begin the world over again."*
- Thomas Paine, 1776

What do you think Paine meant? Do you see any connections to issues people care about today?

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FACILITATOR GUIDE

INSTRUCTIONS

1. **Walk through the exhibit carefully.**
2. **Work with a partner or small group.**
3. **Write short answers using evidence from the panels, quotes, or objects.**
4. **Be ready to share one surprising thing you learned about democracy.**

Colonial Complaints: Find the section about colonists and their disagreements with Britain.

What was one major grievance colonists had with Parliament? Why did they think this was unfair?

Possible answers: a) Colonists objected to taxation without representation — Parliament taxed them even though colonists had no representatives in Parliament. b) They believed government was only legitimate if it represented the people.

Creating the Constitution: Look for information about the 1787 Constitutional Convention

Find one example of an issue that was debated during the drafting of the Constitution. Find one example of a compromise the drafters came up with?

Possible answers: Debate - slavery, women's vote, direct representation, Native American rights; Compromise - electoral college, Bill of Rights

Who Gets a Voice?: The exhibit shows a timeline of voting rights.

List two amendments or laws that expanded voting rights. Who gained the right to vote in each case?

Answers (from timeline): 15th Amendment (1870): African American men gained the right to vote; 19th Amendment (1920): Women gained the right to vote; 26th Amendment (1971): Lowered voting age to 18; Voting Rights Act (1965): Prohibited racial discrimination in voting

Power of Protest: Find an example of people using protest to expand democracy.
Who protested? What were they demanding? Was it successful?

Possible answers: a) Women suffragists picketed the White House demanding voting rights; it led to the 19th Amendment. b) Civil rights activists marched in Selma in 1965 demanding equal voting rights; this led to the Voting Rights Act

Freedom of the Press: Look for newspapers or pamphlets from the 18th and 19th centuries.
How did the press help spread ideas about independence or democracy? Can you think of a modern version of this?

Possible answers: a) In the 1700s–1800s, pamphlets like Common Sense by Thomas Paine and newspapers spread revolutionary ideas. b) Modern examples: social media, TV news, blogs, podcasts.

Defining Citizenship: Find the section that discusses definitions and rights.
What is one right of being a citizen? How has the definition of citizenship been expressed over time?

Possible answers: a) Freedom of speech and religion, Right to bear arms, access to education. b) Through American history, in symbols and songs, in citizenship tests, advertisements and calls to action

Your Voice Today: The exhibit offers many reasons why people vote.
Why do you think voting is important in a democracy? What are other ways, besides voting, that people can make their voices heard?

Possible answers: a) Voting ensures people choose leaders and influence laws. b) Other ways: writing petitions, peaceful protests, volunteering, speaking at meetings, social media advocacy.

What Do You Think?: *"We have it in our power to begin the world over again."*
- Thomas Paine, 1776
What do you think Paine meant? Do you see any connections to issues people care about today?