**Aim: How does democracy develop?**

**Topic: English Democracy**

**Document #1: History of English Democracy**

England, was one of the first countries with democratic ideals. In 1215, English nobles forced King John I to sign **The Magna Carta,** which gave the nobles and people rights, and forced the king to consult a council before raising taxes. This council eventually became known as **Parliament** and slowly began to have more power. England even developed a **bi-cameral or Two House system --** the House of Lords and House of Commoners – everyone had a voice in government. However, ruling England was still the Kings and Queens.

**1) How was England a democratic country?**

**2) How was England not a democratic country?**

**Document #2: The English Civil War**

After Elizabeth I, **James I** came to power and he believed in **absolutism.** He frequently clashed with Parliament over finances and tried to **dissolve (get rid of them).** His son, Charles I did the same and also raised taxes and put his enemies in prison without trial. In 1640 Parliament raised an army to try to overthrow Charles. Charles I’s army were called **The Cavaliers (noblemen)** and Parliaments army were called the “**Roundheads”** – made up of Puritans (a religious group persecuted by Charles and James), country land-owners (who were heavily taxed), town-based manufacturers (also heavily taxed) and were led by General Oliver Cromwell. Parliaments’ army defeated Charles I and in 1649 put him on trial and beheaded him. Charles I was the first king ever to be tried and executed by his own subjects. This event shocked other European monarchies and signified that absolutism would not work in England.

**1) Why do you think the people revolted against Charles I?**

**2) What was the result of the English Civil War?**

**Document #3: Oliver Cromwell ‘s reign**

After the war was over, Parliament’s House of Commons abolished the monarchy, the House of Lords and the Official Church of England and created a new **republic (democracy)**, known as **The English Commonwealth,** with Oliver Cromwell as its leaders. However, people loyal to Charles I’s son (Charles II) and who did not like the Puritans in charge of the government, attacked England from Ireland and Scotland. Cromwell used the army to crush the rebellions, and then used the army to make himself stronger. He became known as **The Lord Protector** and ruled like a dictator and used the army to control England.

**1) How did Cromwell rule England?**

**Document #4: The Glorious Revolution**

After Cromwell dies, the people were happy to see a king once again. Parliament asked Charles II, son of Charles I, became king. Parliament went back to its usual pattern of struggling with the king about money matters.

Charles II was followed by his brother James II in 1685. He was sincere and honest, but also narrow and stubborn. He was very much like his father, Charles I. He had no idea what people wanted and never tried to find out. He had decided to become an absolute ruler and restore the Roman Catholic Church to England. But the English people found these two things unacceptable. They would not agree to be ruled by an all- powerful Catholic king.

Leaders of Parliament felt that drastic steps had to be taken. In 1688 they asked William of Orange (of the Netherlands) to come and rule England. William was married to James’ Protestant daughter, Mary and was acceptable to the English people. William landed in England and James II fled to France. This marked a very important step in the march of English democracy. Parliament had shown that it had the rights to crown and remove the crown of the country’s rulers. This nonviolent transfer of power became known as **The Glorious Revolution.**

Before William and Mary could take power, Parliament forced them to accept the **The English Bill of Rights –** a set of acts passed by Parliament to ensure its superiority over the monarchy. These rights included:

1) the king must work regularly with Parliament

2) the king must give the House of Commons financial control

3) there are no excessive fines or cruel punishment

4) the king must follow **habeus corpus –** no person can be held in jail without first being charged a crime.

With this bill of rights, England was no longer an absolute monarchy, but instead a **limited monarchy – a government in which a legislative body limits the monarch’s powers.**

**1) Why did the people not like James II?**

**2) What was the Glorious Revolution?**

**3) Why was it known as “the Glorious Revolution?”**

**4) What was the English Bill of Rights?**

**5) How did the English Bill of Rights make England a limited monarchy?**