

Growing in Commitment



Coming of Age



Voting is a **commitment** to making sure that the country you live in is the best place it can be for everybody who lives there.

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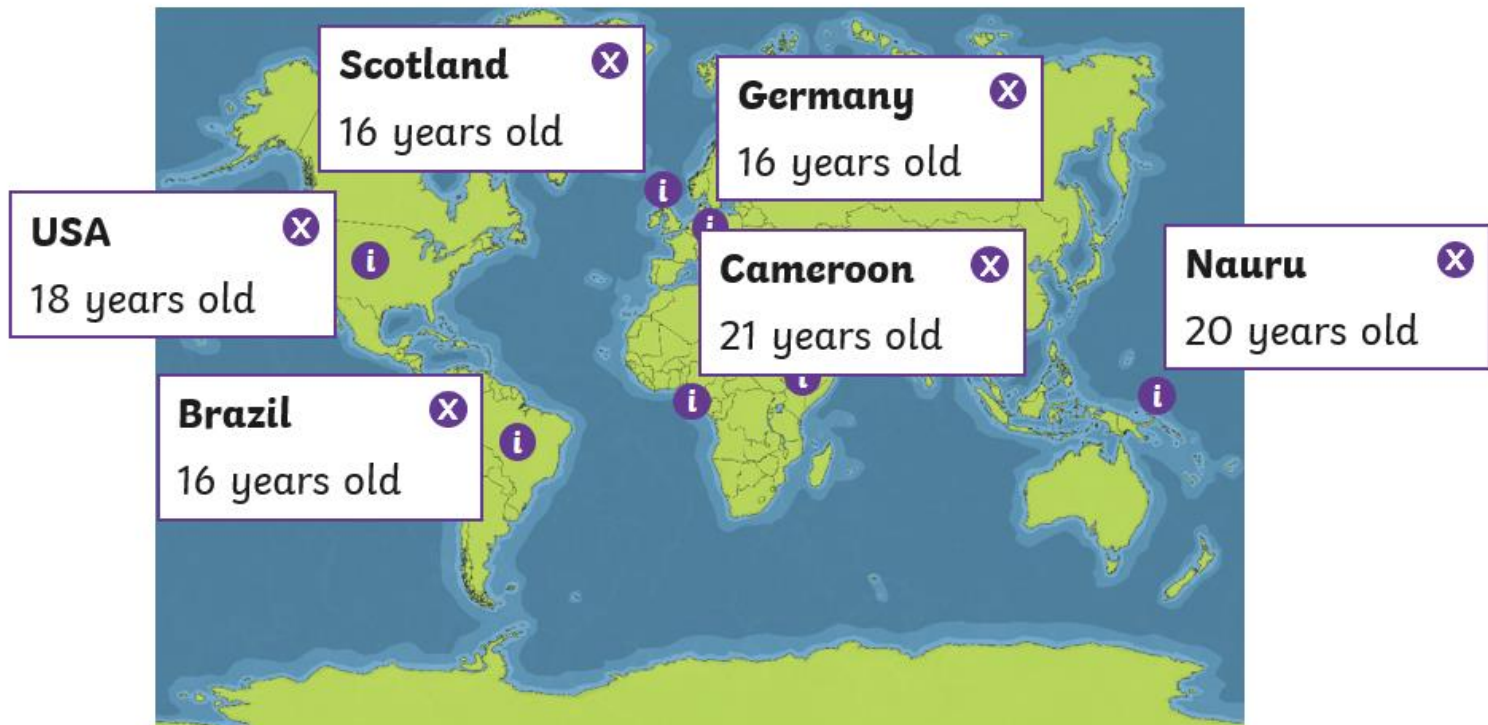
How old do you think you need to be to make this commitment?



Coming of Age




In England, the age when people can place their first vote is 18 years old. But this is not the case in every country. Click on the countries below to find out the age at which their citizens become eligible to vote.



Coming of Age



Around the world, placing your vote in an election for the first time can be seen as a coming-of-age **ritual**. 

It marks your first **commitment** to making sure your country is the best place it can be.

However, if the voting age is different around the world, this must mean that different countries have a different view of when someone becomes an adult and can make commitments.



Coming of Age



There are also different **religious** views about when someone becomes an adult. There are special **rituals** that people do when they come of age to show **commitment** to their faith.



Committed Characters

Let's meet four people who are ready to take part in their first coming-of-age ritual. Click each person for more information.



Zainab
Age: 17



Jeremy
Age: 12



Esther
Age: 11



Mei
Age: 7

Committed Characters



My name is Zainab. I am 17 years old. I am about to **vote** for the first time in the UK elections.

To make sure that you make the best choice, you can research all of the different parties and decide which one will make the country the best place it can be.

Placing your first vote isn't as simple as putting a cross in a box. It involves a lot of research, thought and reflection before the day.



How does Zainab show commitment through her coming-of-age ritual?

Committed Characters



My name is Jeremy. I'm almost 13 years old.
When I become 13, I will become a **Bar Mitzvah**.

In my Jewish faith, when boys become 13 years old they are viewed as old enough to be responsible for their actions. They are responsible for following the commandments given in the Torah, following Jewish traditions and being an active part of the community. At the age of 13, Jewish boys **must** make a **commitment** to their faith. They become a Bar Mitzvah, which means 'son of the commandments'.



Committed Characters



At the synagogue, the Bar Mitzvah recites a portion of the Torah, the Jewish holy book.

It takes a lot of practise to get the portion right as the Torah is written in Hebrew. The **Bar Mitzvah** needs to **commit** to studying Hebrew so that they can learn how to read the Torah. They need to regularly practise the portion of the Torah they will be reading, making sure they know what each word means.



Committed Characters



A **Bar Mitzvah** also needs to plan and practise the speech they will be giving at their ceremony. They must regularly attend Shabbat services so that they know lots about their faith and have learned everything they can about it before becoming a **Bar Mitzvah**.



How does Jeremy show commitment through his coming-of-age ritual?

Committed Characters



My name is Mei and I am seven years old. I am **Catholic**. When I was born, my parents made my first **commitment** for me – they baptised me.

Now that I am seven years old, the Catholic church thinks that I have reached the **Age of Reason**. This means I am responsible for my thoughts, actions and choices. I am now old enough to make the first of my own commitments to my faith. I have been invited to take my **First Holy Communion**.



Committed Characters

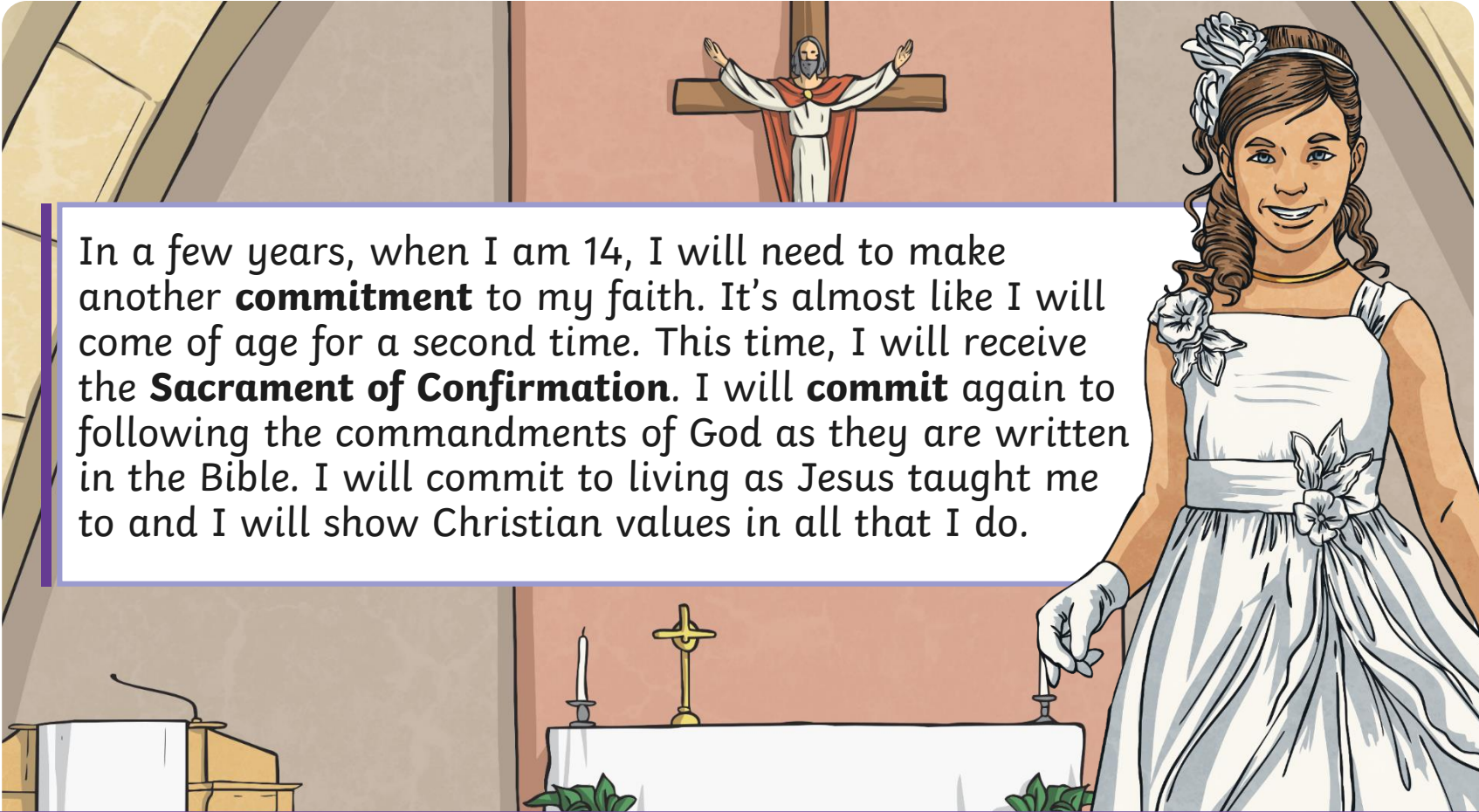


First, I must make my first confession. I must think about anything I have done wrong and confess these things to a priest. The priest prays for me so that God will forgive my sins and give me a fresh start. I need to promise to try my best not to do anything wrong from now on.

Then I need to go to lessons. These lessons will teach me all about the Bible and the beliefs of the Catholic church. When I have a good understanding of what I am **committing** to, I will be allowed to make my First Holy Communion, where I will receive the symbolic gifts of bread and wine.



Committed Characters



In a few years, when I am 14, I will need to make another **commitment** to my faith. It's almost like I will come of age for a second time. This time, I will receive the **Sacrament of Confirmation**. I will **commit** again to following the commandments of God as they are written in the Bible. I will commit to living as Jesus taught me to and I will show Christian values in all that I do.



How does Mei show commitment through her coming-of-age rituals?

Chatting about Commitments



You might want to ask:

- ✓ What **coming-of-age ritual** will you take part in?
- ✓ What do you need to do before your **ritual**?
- ✓ How will you show **commitment** through your actions?
- ✓ How will you know that you are fully **committed**?



