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ASSIGNMENT - Lincoln and a Theory of Civic Engagement

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ACTIVITY

Threats to Democracy

CLASS OBJECTIVES

- Summarize democratic principles.
- Identify threats to democracy.
- Identify the impact these threats pose to democracy.
- Discuss ways to mitigate these threats.

For this civic engagement assignment, you will examine threats to democracy.

Start with the principles of democracy, so you can put into context what is lost if democracy fails. Make a short list (5) of these principles of democracy. Add two that are missing from your research of the democratic principles.

Research the threats to democracy. Peter Levine, author of *What Should We Do: A Theory of Civic Life*, includes a few threats (Levine, Peter. 2020. "[Four Threats to American Democracy](#)"). You can also examine more recent threats (Waldman, Michael. 2024. "[Threats and Intimidation Are Distorting US Democracy](#)") and (Fields, Gary and Linley Sanders. 2023. "[Americans Agree That the Future of Democracy Is on the Line in the 2024 Election But Disagree about Who Poses the Biggest Threat](#)." PBS News Hour.). A longer investigation into the threats to democracy can be found at the Brookings (Brookings. 2022. "[Threats to American Democracy](#)").

Make a short list of the threats (3 or 4 items) you find in your research. Then, note one threat that is missing. Add it to your list.

Share your list with a classmate. Work with a classmate to narrow your lists to one threat that seems especially egregious but fixable. With your classmate, propose a solution to this threat.

The proposal, about 300 words, needs to name the specific threat, outline why it is a threat, summarize previous solutions to this threat (if applicable), and announce a solution to this political threat. Explain why this solution can mitigate this threat to democracy.

Share the proposal through the online discussion.