

Anti-oil protestors try to damage the Magna Carta

13th May 2024



Two climate activists have tried to damage one of the world's oldest and most famous documents – the Magna Carta. The women are both in their 80s. They went to the British Library in London and attacked the glass case that contained the Magna Carta. The women used a hammer and a chisel to try to break the glass. Police have charged the women with criminal damage. The British Library said its security staff, "intervened, to prevent further damage to the case". It added that the "Magna Carta itself remains undamaged". The women are from the Just Stop Oil protest group. They held up a sign that read: "The government is breaking the law." The women also glued themselves to the case.

The Magna Carta is a royal charter that was agreed to by King John of England on the 15th of June 1215. It stated that everyone was equal under the law. It also guaranteed that everyone should have a fair trial, with a jury. Historians say the Magna Carta was the foundation for the development of Western democracy. In particular, it influenced the U.S. Constitution. The two protestors said: "The Magna Carta is...of great importance to our history, to our freedoms and to our laws. But, there will be no freedom, no lawfulness, no rights, if we allow climate breakdown to become the catastrophe that is now threatened." They added: "Our government is breaking its own laws against climate change."

Sources: [theguardian.com](https://www.theguardian.com) / [foxnews.com](https://www.foxnews.com) / [wikipedia.org](https://www.wikipedia.org)

Writing

We should all protest against oil. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

climate activists / documents / libraries / hammers / chisels / criminal damage / oil / royal / kings / England / a fair trial / jury / democracy / constitution / freedom / laws

True / False

- 1) Twelve climate activists attempted to damage the Magna Carta. T / F
- 2) The protestors were aged between 80 and 89 years old. T / F
- 3) The protestors used chainsaws to try to damage the Magna Carta. T / F
- 4) The protestors stuck themselves to the Magna Carta case with glue. T / F
- 5) The Magna Carta is from the year 1215. T / F
- 6) The Magna Carta says all humans are equal under the law. T / F
- 7) The U.S. Constitution was influenced by the Magna Carta. T / F
- 8) The protestors said they were not breaking any laws. T / F

2. SYNONYM MATCH: (The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. activists | a. hearing |
| 2. contained | b. additional |
| 3. intervened | c. stuck |
| 4. further | d. shaped |
| 5. glued | e. held |
| 6. equal | f. basis |
| 7. trial | g. identical |
| 8. foundation | h. campaigners |
| 9. influenced | i. calamity |
| 10. catastrophe | j. got involved |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think about what you read?
- b) In practice, is everyone equal under the law?
- c) What are trials and juries like in your country?
- d) What do you know about the U.S. Constitution?
- e) What catastrophes will happen because of climate change?
- f) Should governments be put on trial for climate change?
- g) How can we reduce our dependence on oil?
- h) What questions would you like to ask the two women?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. climate | a. charter |
| 2. the glass case that | b. and a chisel |
| 3. The women used a hammer | c. remains undamaged |
| 4. Police have charged the women | d. now threatened |
| 5. the Magna Carta itself | e. with a jury |
| 6. The Magna Carta is a royal | f. activists |
| 7. everyone should have a fair trial, | g. breakdown |
| 8. the foundation for the development | h. contained the Magna Carta |
| 9. if we allow climate | i. of Western democracy |
| 10. the catastrophe that is | j. with criminal damage |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you know about the Magna Carta?
- What do you think of climate activists?
- How much of a climate activist are you?
- What are the world's most famous documents?
- What do you think of the attempted attack on the Magna Carta?
- What should happen to the women?
- What things would you protest against?
- What advice do you have for anti-oil protestors?

Spelling

- climate svaicistt
- The women used a hammer and a helsci
- aicmnilr damage
- its security staff neentiedvr
- Magna Carta itself remains edamndaug
- eldug themselves to the case
- The Magna Carta is a royal atrcreh
- It also egnraudtea
- the tfuanodoni for the development
- Western eracdmocy
- it influenced the U.S. ociitttuosnn
- the harstecotap that is now threatened

Answers – Synonym Match

1. h	2. e	3. j	4. b	5. c
6. g	7. a	8. f	9. d	10. i

Role Play

Role A – Oil

You think oil is the best reason for street protests. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their reasons. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): food prices, the environment or war.

Role B – Food Prices

You think food prices is the best reason for street protests. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their reasons. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): oil, the environment or war.

Role C – The Environment

You think the environment is the best reason for street protests. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their reasons. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): food prices, oil or war.

Role D – War

You think war is the best reason for street protests. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their reasons. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): food prices, the environment or oil.

Speaking – Protests

Rank these with your partner. Put the things you would protest about at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|----------------------------|---------------|
| • The environment | • Oil |
| • Freedom of speech | • Food prices |
| • Your nation going to war | • Taxes |
| • Corrupt government | • Equality |

Answers – True False

1	F	2	T	3	F	4	T	5	T	6	T	7	T	8	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.