

POLITICS

A The British political system

In the United Kingdom (the UK), **elections** are **held** about every five years. The UK is divided into 646 political areas, called **constituencies**, and in each constituency people **vote for** one person **representing** the **political party** they want to see **in power**. The **politician** with the most votes becomes the **Member of Parliament** (known as an **MP**) for that area. Parliament, therefore, **consists of** 646 MPs, and the party with the **majority** of MPs forms the **government**. The leader of that party also becomes **prime minister**.

Glossary

election the time when people choose individuals to speak for them and act for them. **elect** v.

hold sth organize an event such as an election.

constituency one of the areas into which the country is divided for voting in political elections.

vote for sb/sth choose sb/sth in an election. **vote** n.

represent sb/sth act officially for people or an organization.

political party a group of people with the same ideas who want to win an election (e.g. the Labour Party, the Conservative Party).

in power in political control of the country.

politician a person with a job in politics.

parliament the group of people elected to make the laws in a country.

consist of sth be formed or made up of sth.

majority the largest number or part of sth. **opp minority**.

government the group of people in control of a country. **govern** v.

prime minister (or **PM**) the leader of the government in some countries.

1 True or false in Britain? Write T or F.

- The British parliament consists of 646 elected representatives. T
1 Elections must be held every four years. _____

- 2 People can only vote for one person in this election. _____
3 Two or three people may be elected in each constituency. _____
4 If you are a Member of Parliament, you are in the government. _____
5 The leader of the largest political party in parliament becomes prime minister. _____
6 The party with the minority of elected MPs forms the government. _____

2 Complete the sentences.

- PM is an abbreviation of prime minister.
1 How often do you hold _____ for parliament?
2 Parliament _____ of people from a number of different political _____.
3 In the UK, the Conservative Party was in _____ from 1979 to 1997.
4 Who did you _____ for in the last election?
5 Politicians _____ the people who elect them.
6 She had over 50 per cent of the votes, so a _____ of the people voted for her.

3 ABOUT YOUR COUNTRY Write your answers, or ask another student.

- 1 How often does your country usually hold elections? _____
2 Which political party is in power at the moment? _____
3 How long have they been in power? _____
4 What is the title of the leader of the party? _____
5 How many people are in parliament? _____

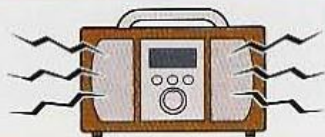
B Political objectives

The government has **announced** that its first **priority** will be education, and today the prime minister will **focus** on the **need for** more young people to go to university.

A new transport **policy** will be announced today, which aims to **persuade** motorists to leave their cars at home.

The government will **face** strong **opposition** to their new **immigration** policy.

An Olympic athlete has been chosen to **launch** the government's new fitness **campaign**.



Glossary

objective	• a thing you are trying to do. SYNS aim, goal.
announce sth	• say sth officially and in public. announcement N.
priority	• a thing that is important or that you must do before anything else.
focus on sth	• give all your attention to sth. focus N.
need for sth	• a situation in which you must have or do sth.
policy	• a plan to do sth, agreed by a government, company, etc.
persuade sb (to do sth)	• give reasons to make sb agree (to do sth).
face sth	• have to deal with a difficult situation.
immigration	• the process of coming to live in a country that is not your own (the people are called immigrants).

spotlight *oppose, opposition*

To **oppose sth** means to disagree with something and try to change it. **opposition** N. The main political party in parliament, but not forming the government, is called **the Opposition** (used with a singular or plural verb).

launch sth	• start sth new, especially a campaign or product.
campaign	• (often used in politics or business) a plan to do a number of things with a specific aim.

4 Circle the correct answer.

- If you persuade somebody to do something, they do/don't do it.
- 1 If you announce something, you say it in public/private.
- 2 A priority is important/not important.
- 3 If you face a problem, you avoid it/deal with it.
- 4 If you launch something, you start it/finish it.
- 5 Immigration is the process of coming/going to live in a foreign country.
- 6 If you oppose something, you agree/disagree with it.

5 Complete the sentences.

- Helping poor people is a major priority for the government.
- 1 Do you agree with the government's economic _____?
- 2 They've launched a _____ to educate people about the tax system.
- 3 Some MPs already agree with the prime minister, but he still has to _____ others.
- 4 The USA received a lot of European _____ in the early twentieth century.

WAR AND PEACE

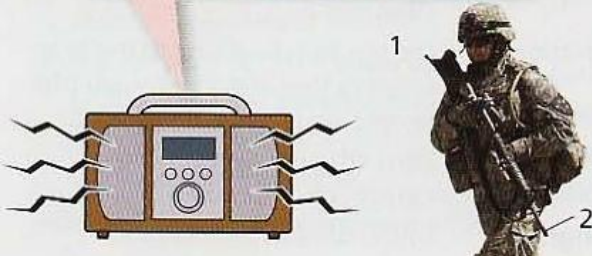
A Conflict

...The **bomb exploded** in the city centre killing at least a **dozen** people ...

... **Soldiers** ¹ **fought** a two-hour **gun** ² **battle** and **captured** a number of enemy fighters ...

...The **army** have captured the airport and **are now in control** of the situation. Most enemy soldiers have now **surrendered**.

...If the current **crisis** gets worse, **civil war** could **break out** at any time ...



Glossary

conflict an angry argument or state of fighting between people or countries. (**War** is fighting between countries or groups using guns, etc.)

bomb a container packed with materials that can burst out with force.

explode burst with force and a loud noise. **SYN go off. explosion** N.

dozen twelve or a group of twelve (**half a dozen** = 6).

soldier (see picture) a person who is a member of an army.

fight **PT fought** When people **fight**, they try to hurt or kill each other (sb who fights is a **fighter**). **fight** N.

battle a fight between armies in a war.

capture sb/sth 1 catch and keep sb so they can't leave. 2 take control of sth.

enemy the people your army or country is fighting against.

be in control of sth have the power or ability to deal with sth.

surrender stop fighting and admit you have lost. **SYN give up.**

crisis a time of great danger or difficulty. **critical** ADJ.

civil war a war between groups of people who live in the same country.

break out (used about fighting, wars, fires, etc.) start suddenly.

1 Match 1–6 with a–g.

- | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| ► They're in control <u>d</u> | a surrendered. |
| 1 The conflict | b the main port. |
| 2 Soldiers fought | c guns were found. |
| 3 Two bombs | d of the city. ✓ |
| 4 Soldiers captured | e a long battle. |
| 5 The soldiers | f exploded. |
| 6 A dozen | g lasted many years. |

2 Replace the underlined phrases with a single word that has the same meaning.

- They were physically trying to hurt each other.
fighting

- They were the men we fought against.
- It's a dangerous and difficult period.
- Many fighters have given up.
- They took control of the city.

3 Complete the sentences.

- It has become a serious crisis and could end in war.
- Why did war break ?
 - The exploded at 10.15.
 - Fifty people died in the first of the war.
 - There are 50,000 in the army.

B Compromise

Example

The US and its European **allies** are both **determined** to find a solution.

Word and meaning

ally a country that agrees to support another country.
determined having a strong desire to do sth and be successful.

The two countries **involved** are hoping they can **reach an agreement**.

involved taking part in sth or connected to sth.
reach an agreement arrive at a decision that both sides agree on.

Leaders from the two main parties are now **negotiating**, and there is some hope of a **peace settlement**.

leader a person who is in charge or control of sth.
negotiate talk to sb in order to decide or agree on sth.
peace settlement an official agreement that ends a war (peace is a time when there is no war).

The two **sides** have finally agreed a **ceasefire**.

side either of two or more groups who are arguing or fighting with each other.
ceasefire an agreement between two sides to stop fighting.

If both sides are **willing to compromise**, there could be a settlement fairly soon.

willing to do sth happy and prepared to do sth. **OPP unwilling**.
compromise accept less than you want in order to reach an agreement. **compromise** N.

4 Cover the table above. Match 1–7 with a–h.

- | | |
|-----------------------|--|
| ▶ settlement <u>c</u> | a taking part in something |
| 1 ceasefire _____ | b having a strong desire to do something |
| 2 ally _____ | c an agreement to end a war or argument ✓ |
| 3 determined _____ | d happy and prepared to do something |
| 4 willing _____ | e accept less than you want |
| 5 negotiate _____ | f an agreement to stop fighting |
| 6 compromise _____ | g talk to somebody in order to agree something |
| 7 involved _____ | h a country that has agreed to support you |

5 Complete the texts.

The civil war has now lasted almost ten years.

▶ Allies of the two (1) _____ in the conflict have managed to get them to agree to a temporary (2) _____ on several occasions, but they have never been able to get the two (3) _____ of the sides to negotiate a peace (4) _____. It seems they are both (5) _____ to carry on fighting to the bitter end and are completely (6) _____ to compromise.

The two countries (7) _____ in the conflict have finally agreed to come to the negotiating table. Neither will be willing to (8) _____ very much, but there is now at least the possibility that the two leaders could (9) _____ an agreement that will lead to a more lasting (10) _____ settlement.