ПОЛИТИЧЕСКОЕ УСТРОЙСТВО
ВЕЛИКОБРИТАНИИ

Учебное пособие
по английскому языку для студентов II – III курсов
вечернего отделения гуманитарных факультетов университета

Ростов-на-Дону
2002
Учебное пособие обсуждено и утверждено на заседании кафедры английского языка гуманитарных факультетов РГУ.

Протокол № 2 от 13 сентября 2002

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Методическая записка
Пособие состоит из 7 разделов (Units). Каждый раздел включает оригинальные тексты, дающие описания структуры британского правительства, и снабжен серией упражнений, направленных на развитие навыка говорения, ведения дискуссии и проверку понимания прочитанного.
Содержание текста и структура упражнений первых двух разделов дает возможность использовать их для развития устной речи студентов, тогда как остальные три раздела могут использоваться для различных видов чтения, как углубленного, изучающего, так и для ознакомительного. Тексты этих разделов можно рекомендовать и для домашнего чтения.
Все тексты взяты из современных оригинальных источников и предваряются вопросами, стимулирующими самостоятельное высказывание студентами собственного мнения, что может быть толчком для ведения дискуссии. Послетекстовые упражнения носят коммуникативный характер и рассчитаны на активизацию лексического материала. Авторы надеются, что иллюстрации, кроссворды вызовут интерес у студентов и преподавателей, работающих с данным пособием.
UNIT 1
PARLIAMENT

1. Before reading the text, match a word on the left with a definition on the right.
   
   1. Constitution  
      a) a national body which represents the people of a state and has supreme legislative powers within the state
   
   2. Parliament  
      b) a large room used for formal meetings
   
   3. Policies  
      c) a document which defines the composition, powers and relations of the head of state, legislature, executive and judiciary
   
   4. Chamber  
      d) a formal statement of a proposed new law which is discussed and voted on
   
   5. Authority  
      e) an independent, politically organized community of people living in a fixed part of the world under the authority of a sovereign government
   
   6. M.P.  
      f) a set of ideas agreed on by people in authority
   
   7. Bill  
      g) the head of the UK government
   
   8. Monarch  
      h) the right or power to act, command, judge, etc.
   
   9. P.M.  
      i) a person elected by voters in a UK constituency to represent them in the House of Commons
   
   10. State  
      j) the head of state

1.1. Now read the text and see if you were right.

THE BRITISH PARLIAMENT

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland is a constitutional monarchy. This means that it has a monarch (a king or a queen) as its Head of State. The monarch has very little power and can only reign with the support of Parliament.

There is no written constitution in the United Kingdom. The United Kingdom constitution is not embodied in a single document. It is a set of rules, many of which are customs or 'conventions' (unwritten rules) that have come to be accepted through the fact of being observed though they have no defined authority. Acts of Parliament (also called 'laws' or 'statutes') have defined some aspects of the constitutional system. This system is flexible and can be altered by Act of Parliament, or by general agreement to create, change or abolish a convention.

Parliament is the supreme legislative body and the supreme authority in the United Kingdom.

Parliament in the United Kingdom is based on the principle that the people of the country hold ultimate power. They can exercise this power at least every five years, by voting for the person that they want to represent them in Parliament, and by voting in a Government.

Parliament's main functions are law-making, authorizing taxation and public expenditure and examining government policy, especially proposals for expenditure.
It discusses what the Government has done, is doing and intends to do, points to the Government's errors and attempts to change and modify its policies.

The British Parliament is made up of three institutions. They are the monarchy and two chambers. The upper chamber is known as the House of Lords. The lower chamber is called the House of Commons. Parliament and the monarch have different roles in the government of the country, and they only meet together on symbolic occasions such as the coronation of a new monarch or the opening of Parliament. The House of Lords, which is an unelected chamber, has only limited powers. In reality, the House of Commons, which is made up of the elected members known as Members of Parliament (abbreviated to MPs), is the only one of the three which has true power. It is here that new bills are introduced and debated. If the majority of the members are in favour of a bill it goes to the House of Lords to be debated and finally to the monarch to be signed. Only then does it become law. Although a bill must be supported by all three bodies, the House of Lords cannot reject the bills that the House of Commons wants to pass, and the monarch has not refused to sign one since the modern political system began over 200 years ago.

The British democratic system depends on political parties, and there has been a party system of some kind since the 17th century. The political parties choose candidates in elections. There are sometimes independent candidates, but they are rarely elected.

The party which wins the majority of seats in the House of Commons forms the Government and its leader usually becomes Prime Minister. The most senior members of the Government are called the Cabinet.

The largest minority party becomes the Opposition. In doing so it accepts the right of the majority party to run the country, while the majority party accepts the right of the minority party to criticize it. Without this agreement between the political parties, the British parliamentary system would break down. The Opposition develops its own policies. It is the aim of every opposition party to gain power at the next election and it therefore, has to make sure that it is properly prepared to govern the country. The most senior members of the Opposition are called the Shadow Cabinet which is headed by the Leader of the Opposition.

It is the job of Parliament to make sure that the Government is working properly and in the public interest. Every Member of Parliament, no matter what political party he or she belongs to, has to examine the work of the Government. The Opposition plays the leading part in this.

1.2. What order do you think the following statements concerning the main political institutions in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland should be?

1. In reality, the House of Commons is the only one of the three which has true power.
2. The most senior members of the Government are called the Cabinet.
3. The Opposition is the major political party opposed to the party in power.
4. The House of Lords is an unelected upper chamber.
5. The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland is a parliamentary monarchy.
6. The party which wins the majority of seats in the House of Commons forms the Government.
7. The House of Lords only has limited powers.
8. The House of Commons is a lower chamber made up of the elected members.
9. The monarch has very little power and can only reign with the support of Parliament.
10. The leader of the majority party in the House of Commons becomes Prime Minister.
11. The British Parliament is made up of three institutions: the monarchy, the House of Lords and the House of Commons.
12. It has a monarch (a king or a queen) as its Head of State.

1.3. **Answer the following questions:**
1. How can the people of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland exercise their power?
2. When do Parliament and the monarch meet?
3. When did the monarch refuse to sign a bill last time?
4. When did a party system appear in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland?
5. What are the duties of Members of Parliament?

1.4. **Review.**
Complete the following puzzle. The definitions are given below. The first letter of each word is given to you.

| 1 | P | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 2 | C | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 3 | O | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 4 | B | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 5 | S | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 6 | C | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 7 | M | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 8 | P | - | - | - | - | M | - | - | - |
| 9 | L | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |

1. The Monarch + the House of Lords + the House of Commons.
2. An unwritten rule.
3. The largest minority party.
4. A formal statement of a proposed new law which is discussed and voted on.
6. The most senior members of the Government.
7. The system of government in which a single person called King or Queen holds the office of head of state.
8. The head of the British Government.
9. The act or process of passing a law.

1.5. **Talking point.**
1. Briefly describe the British Constitution. What advantages and disadvantages do you see in the British constitutional system?
2. The House of Lords is the only non-elected second chamber among all the democracies in the world, and some people in Britain would like to abolish it. How useful do you think the House of Lords is in Britain today?
UNIT 2
MONARCHY

2. Before reading the text, match a word on the left with a definition on the right.

1. commonwealth  a) a title of nobility which may be granted by the Crown.
2. dissolve b) to bring a session of Parliament to an end
3. monarchy c) to end the life of a Parliament by public announcement of the Sovereign, leading to a General Election
4. peerage d) an association of the United Kingdom with various independent states (previously subject to Britain) and dependencies
5. prerogative of mercy e) the power of the Crown to excuse a criminal offence or reduce a punishment on the advice of the Home Secretary
6. prorogue f) the system of government in which a single person called King or Queen holds the office of head of state for life, usually by hereditary
7. remit g) the special powers and rights which still belong to the British Crown and are exercised today by the Sovereign in person
8. royal Assent h) to govern a state
9. royal Prerogative i) the approval by the British Sovereign of a Bill which has been passed by both Houses of Parliament so that it becomes law as an Act of Parliament
10. rule j) to free someone from a punishment or to cancel part of a prison sentence.

2.1. Now read the text and see if you were right.

THE BRITISH MONARCHY

The monarchy is the most ancient secular institution in the United Kingdom, with a continuous history stretching back over a thousand years. The monarchy is hereditary. It has evolved over the centuries from absolute personal authority to the present constitutional form.

The powers of the monarch are not defined precisely. Although in speeches, the King or Queen calls the Government ‘my Government’, the monarch does not have any power.

At present the official head of state is Queen Elizabeth II, who succeeded to the throne in 1952. The full royal title of the Queen is: Her Most Excellent Majesty Elizabeth the Second, by the Grace of God of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and of Her Other Realms and Territories Queen, Head of the Commonwealth, Defender of the Faith.
In law, the Queen is an integral part of the legislature, the head of the judiciary, the commander-in-chief of the armed forces of the Crown and the temporal head of the established Church of England.

But the Queen is only a formal ruler: she reigns but does not rule. The United Kingdom is governed by Her Majesty’s government in the name of the Queen. In actual fact everything that she does is done on the advice of her ministers, who are responsible for the royal acts.

Thus, most of the functions of the Queen are purely of a symbolic nature.

Theoretically every act of Government is done in the Queen’s name - every letter sent out by a government department is marked ‘On Her Majesty’s Service’ - and she appoints all the ministers, including the Prime Minister. In reality, everything is done on the advice of the elected Government, and the monarch takes no part in the decision-making process.

However, the monarch does have great influence and it would be wrong to underestimate the role of the monarchy in Britain. There are still important acts of government which require the participation of the Queen. The Queen summons, prorogues (discontinues until the next session without dissolution) and dissolves Parliament; she usually opens new sessions of Parliament with a speech from the throne (which is written by the Prime Minister) in which the major governmental policies are outlined. These acts form part of the Royal Prerogative. The power to restrict or abolish a prerogative right belongs to Parliament. Prerogative rights are of legislative, executive and judicial character. The Monarch must give a Royal Assent to Bills passed by both Houses of Parliament. As Head of State the Monarch has the power to sign international agreements, to cede or receive territory, and to declare war or make peace. The Monarch's approval is required for appointing every important office holder, including government ministers, judges, officers of the armed forces, diplomats and bishops. The Monarch confers peerages, knighthoods and other honours. It is only the Monarch who is able to remit all or part of the penalties imposed upon persons convicted of crimes through the exercise of the prerogative of mercy on the advice of the appropriate minister.

The Monarch retains an important attribute of power - information. The Queen is regularly informed and consulted on many aspects of public affair. She sees all Cabinet papers and reads dispatches and correspondence. The Prime Minister keeps her well informed about political events. Her views on a subject can effect the way the Prime Minister acts. So, the Monarch has the right to be consulted, the right to encourage, the right to warn.

The social influence of the Monarch is great. The Royal Family is the principal aristocratic house in the United Kingdom, closely connected with other members of the hereditary aristocracy, and with vast areas of land in England and Scotland, as well as valuable city property in London, including Regent's Park, parts of Pall Mall, Picadilly, Holborn and Kensington. The Queen’s residence in London is Buckingham Palace; her other homes are Windsor, Sandringham and Balmoral Castle in Scotland.

2.2. **Answer the following questions:**

1. What forms of the Monarchy do you know?
2. What is the Monarch’s name at present?
3. How long has Elizabeth II been the Queen?
4. Could you name the powers of the monarch in law?
5. Which acts of government require the participation of the Queen?
6. When does a Bill become law?
7. How are the special powers of the Crown called?
8. What prerogative rights can you name?
9. Can you list office holders who are appointed only with the Monarch’s approval?
10. What titles are granted by the Crown?
11. How does the Monarch exercise the prerogative of mercy?
12. What sort of information does the Queen get?
13. What property does the Queen own?

2.3. Complete the sentences below.
1. In law, the Queen is _____.
2. The full royal title of the Queen is _____.
3. The Queen reigns but _____.
4. _____ governs the UK in the name of the Queen.
5. The Monarch appoints _____.
6. The Queen opens _____ of Parliament with _____.
7. Prerogative rights are of _____ character.
8. As Head of State the Monarch has the right _____.
9. _____ keep the Queen well informed about political events.
10. The Royal family is closely connected with _____.

2.4. Put the correct word in the crossword grid.
Across:
1. Various independent states which used to be subject to Britain.
2. An office holder who is appointed with the Monarch’s approval.
3. The system of government with King or Queen as head of state.
4. An important attribute of power.
5. The right to command, judge etc.
6. The special power and rights.
7. The prerogative of the Crown to remit the penalty.
8. Not religious or spiritual.

Down:
1. A title of nobility which may be granted by the Crown.
2. To be developed naturally and gradually.
3. A superior group or class.
4. A punishment for committing a crime.
5. It must be given a Royal Assent.
6. One of the Queen’s residences.
7. Kingdom, region.

2.5. Talking point.
Some people think that the monarchy should be abolished because it has no power and it costs the State a lot of money to maintain. How useful do you think the monarchy is in Britain today?
UNIT 3
THE HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT

3. Before reading the text, match a word on the left a definition on the right.

1. throne  a) a member of one of the five degrees in British nobility
2. amendment  b) a long seat occupied by persons on their official capacity
3. peer  c) the act of changing or improving a law
4. bench  d) the chair occupied by a sovereign
5. inherit  e) to watch and direct
6. supervise  f) receive as property, rights or duties from an ancestor
7. debates  g) making laws, the laws made
8. judge  h) an application to a higher court to examine again a case decided by a lower court and possibly give a different decision
9. legislation  i) a formal discussion in parliament
10. appeal  j) a person with authority to hear and decide disputes brought before a court for decision

3.1. Now read the text and see if you were right.

THE HOUSE OF LORDS

The House of Lords chamber is similar to that of the Commons, except that prevailing colour is red, while that of the Commons is green. At the end of the rectangular chamber is the Throne from which the Queen reads her speech at the opening of Parliament. In front of the Throne is the seat of the Lord Chancellor, the speaker of the House of Lords, who supervises the debates. He sits on the woolsack, a seat which contains wool from all the Commonwealth countries. The peer’s benches, upholstered in red leather, are arranged on both sides of the House; the Government benches are on the right of the Throne, and the Opposition benches are on the left. The galleries on either side of the chamber are reserved for diplomats and “Distinguished Strangers”, and the gallery on the northern end is for reporters and other members of the public.

There are over 1,000 members of the House of Lords. They are an unelected group of people who have either inherited their seats or have been given them by the Government. Their seats are between the Throne and the Government benches, facing the Opposition benches. They are Lords Spiritual and Lords Temporal. Lords Spiritual are the archbishops and bishops of the Church of England. There are 2 archbishops (the Archbishops of Canterbury and York) and 24 senior bishops. Their seats are between the Throne and the Government benches, facing the Opposition benches. The Lords Temporal are Hereditary peers, Law Lords and Life peers and peeresses. Hereditary peers constitute the largest class – about 800 members. There are 5 ranks in the peerage: Dukes, Marquesses, Earls, Viscounts and Barons. All
peers, whatever their rank, have the same rights in the House of Lords. Law Lords are distinguished judges created peers for life (life peers) to assist the House of Lords in the performance of its judicial duties as the highest court of the land. Life peers and peeresses receive their peerage as a reward for service, and their children do not inherit the title.

The House of Lords shares in the making of laws, the examination of the Government’s work and in debating important matters of the day. The main work of the House of Lords consists in considering the bills in committee and in making amendments. But the chamber is not as powerful as the House of Commons. It can suggest changes in laws, but it is restricted to laws that have nothing to do with the finance of the country (for example, it cannot suggest any changes to the Budget, the annual statement of the Government’s financial plans). The House of Lords cannot reject laws that the House of Commons wants to pass, though it can amend them. Even then, the Commons can reject these amendments. The main function of the House of Lords is legislation, i.e. reviewing and giving further consideration to Bills sponsored by the Government. Another function of the House of Lords is examining the work of the Government by debate. The work of this House also includes examining European proposals. In addition to its parliamentary duties, the House has important legal functions, e.g. hearing legal appeals. It is the final court of appeal for civil cases in the whole of the United Kingdom, and for criminal cases in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

3.2. Name the benches in the House of Lords:

3.3. Explain these words in your own language.
1. “Distinguished Strangers”
2. the Lord Chancellor
3. woolsack
4. Lords Spiritual
5. Lords Temporal
6. Law Lords
3.4. **Answer the following questions:**
1. How are members of the House of Lords elected?
2. What sorts of Lords are there?
3. Who constitutes the largest class in the House of Lords?
4. What are the judicial duties of the House of Lords?
5. What does the main work of the House of Lords consist in?

3.5. **Before reading the text, match a word on the left with a definition on the right.**

1. scrutinize a) to give up wholly
2. gangway b) an area of the United Kingdom for which a representative is elected to the House of Commons
3. constituency c) examine in detail
4. abandon d) an aisle separating the opposition party from the Government Party
5. assess e) to manage to get
6. session f) rule made by authority for the proper regulation of a community or for correct conduct in life
7. Chancellor of the Exchequer g) a period of time during which a legislative body meets
8. law h) to put forward for opinion, discussion, decision, etc.
9. submit i) to appraise, to test the value of
10. raise j) the Cabinet Minister, the head of the Treasury, responsible for the control of national finances, e.g. public spending and tax

3.6. **Now read the text and see if you were right.**

**THE HOUSE OF COMMONS**

The House of Commons meets in a building called the Houses of Parliament in Westminster, London, in a specially designed chamber. The chamber is rectangular in shape. The Speaker's Chair stands at the north end, and in front of it is the Table of the House, at which the Clerk of the House sits. The benches for members (upholstered in green) run the length of the chamber on both sides, facing each other across a broad gangway known as the «floor of the House». The benches to the right of the Speaker are used by the Government and its supporters; those to his left are occupied by the Opposition and members of any other parties. The front bench on the Government side, known as the Treasury Bench, seats the Prime Minister and other ministers. They are known as «front benchers». Those who do not hold posts in the Government sit on the back benches and are known as «back benchers». The front bench facing the Government side seats the leaders of the Opposition. The whole arrangement of the House suggests the two-party system.
The chamber has a gallery, part of which is kept for the use of «strangers» (i.e. the public). Opposite the public gallery is the Hansard and press gallery. Hansard is the stenographic record (Official Report) of the proceedings of the House. It records all words spoken in debate as well as voting members.

Seating accommodation falls far short of providing a seat for all members. The chamber was built to hold only 437 of a total 651 MPs. MPs do not have specially reserved seats and the Commons was purposely made too small in order to keep its club-like atmosphere. This creates better conditions for discussions than would be possible in a larger chamber.

The House of Commons meets every Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday at 2.30 p.m. and normally sits until 10.30 p.m., although it may continue until well after midnight. On Fridays it meets at 11 a.m. and finishes at 4.30 p.m. The mornings are taken up with constituency work. Many members return to their constituencies during the weekends.

The life of Parliament is divided into periods called «sessions», each terminated by a «prorogation»; this means that all business that has not been completed is abandoned. Parliament can only meet again when it is formally summoned by the Queen. A session lasts from the end of October to roughly the same date of the next year. There are breaks for holidays at Christmas, Easter, Whitman (the 7th Sunday after Easter) and in the summer. The periods when Parliament is not sitting are known as «recesses».

The beginning of a new session is marked by the State Opening of Parliament. A debate on particular aspects of the Queen's Speech follows, usually lasting 5 or 6 days, after which Parliament begins with the work of the session. Except on Fridays, each day's business begins with «Question time». This is a period of 45 minutes during which MPs may address questions to ministers.

The House of Commons is the main place where legislation and other decisions of the Government are criticized and assessed. It is often referred to as «the Legislative» - the body which makes laws. A proposal for a new law is known as a «bill». Bills may be introduced in either House, though the most important bills are submitted to the House of Commons first. Bills dealing with money are an exception and are always introduced in the Commons by a member of the Government, usually the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The work of the Commons includes controlling finance. Before the Government can raise or spend money, it must have permission from the House of Commons. Another important function of the Commons is controlling the Government in power and scrutinizing its policies by asking questions, by holding debates and by committee work. Apart from these functions, the Commons also discusses the Government's administrative policies - foreign affairs, educational problems, etc.
3.7. Name the benches in the House of Commons:

![Diagram of House of Commons benches]

3.8. Explain these words in your own language:

«front benchers»
«back benchers»
«strangers»
«session»
«recess»
«prerogation»
«Question time»

3.9. Answer the following questions:
1. Why was the Chamber of the House of Commons made too small?
2. How many times a week does the House of Commons meet?
3. Which House may a bill be introduced in?
4. Who can become a member of the House of Commons?

3.10. Find the differences and the things which are similar in the House of Commons and the House of Lords. Look at the sentences. Match whether they are true (T), false (F), probably true (PT) or probably false (PF).

1. Both chambers are rectangular in shape.
2. The arrangement of both chambers suggests the two-party system.
3. Both chambers were purposely made too small.
4. Both Houses have about 1,000 members.
5. Both chambers have galleries for the public.
6. Both Houses deal with making laws.
7. They can reject laws.
8. Both Houses meet four times a week.
9. Both Houses must be summoned by the Queen.
10. Members of both Houses are elected.

3.11. These words all concern aspects of politics in Britain. Use them to complete the sentences below.

Opposition
Parliament
House of Commons
House of Lords
MP
Government
a. The parties which are not part of the government are called the ___________.
b. The ___________ makes the important decisions about how the country is run.
c. _________ is made up of the various bodies which must approve the Government’s decisions, and has the power to force the Government to change its mind.
d. The _________ is the place where the Government decisions are criticized and assessed.
e. The _______ is the chamber where changes in laws can be suggested.
f. A _________ represents one of the UK’s 651 constituencies.

3.12. **Put the correct word in the crossword grid.**

Across:
1. The building of the British Parliament is situated in …
2. The Queen reads her … from the Throne.
3. A hereditary peer … his seat in the House of Lords.
4. … are members of the House of Lords.
5. Ministers sit on … benches.
6. The House of Lords cannot suggest any … to the budget.
7. A new session begins in …
8. Law Lords … the House of Lords in the performance of its judicial duties.
9. To examine the work of the Government by … is the function of the House of Lords.
10. Barons, … and Earls are peers.

Down:
1. Parliament does not meet at …
2. The Prime Minister sits on the … bench.
3. “Question Time” is a period during which MPs address questions to …
4. The life of Parliament is divided into …
5. Breaks for holidays are called …
6. All peers, whatever their … have the same rights in the House of Lords.
7. The members of the Opposition … their seats on the left of the Throne.

Write a paragraph explaining the difference between the House of Commons and the House of Lords.
UNIT 4
ELECTIONS

4. Before reading the text, match a word on the left with a definition on the right.

1. election  a) voting
2. polling  b) the right to represent people as a Member of Parliament
3. certified lunatics  c) the person in charge of the election area
4. by-election  d) paper on which you indicate your choice in a secret vote
5. seat  e) the process of choosing candidates for an office by vote
6. Returning Officer  f) people formally declared insane by a doctor
7. ballot paper  g) an election in the whole of a country to elect a new Parliament
8. electorate  h) an election in one or more constituencies during the life of a Parliament
9. general election  i) the group of all people who have the right to vote in an election
10. vote  j) to express an opinion or will for or against something or somebody by ballot

4.1. Now read the text and see if you were right.

THE ELECTION PROCEDURE

The system whereby a political party comes to rule the country is the result of centuries of development. The country is divided into 651 constituencies and each constituency elects one member of the House of Commons. Everyone over 18 has the right to vote, except criminals and certified lunatics. Members of the House of Lords are not allowed to vote either. Voting is not compulsory.

There are two types of parliamentary election: a general election and a by-election. A general election may be called by the Government at any time but must be within five years of the previous one. Voting takes place in all 651 constituencies on one day. A by-election is held when a Member of Parliament dies, retires or resigns between general elections. Voting then only occurs in the constituency without a member.

The maximum legal life for a Parliament is five years. A general election is held either when the limit for the duration of Parliament has been reached, or when the Queen, on the advice of the Prime Minister, dissolves Parliament. The Prime Minister is bound to do this if his Ministry is defeated on an important issue by the vote of the House of Commons.

When it is decided to hold a general election, the old Parliament is dissolved and 20 clear days must elapse before the new Parliament meets. A notice, or writ, has to
be sent to each constituency, where the Returning Officer makes provisions for the
holding of the election. Approximately three weeks before the day of the election,
people in each area receive brochures from each political party, giving details of their
policies. People also receive an official polling card to stop people voting more than
once. On the election day, the voters go to the polling stations and tell the clerks their
names and addresses. This is checked against the electoral register, and the voter is
given a ballot paper containing a list of all the candidates in that area. The voter
marks the paper in private. The paper then goes into a sealed ballot box. When the
polling station is closed, all the boxes are taken to one central point, usually a town-
hall, and opened. This happens in all 651 constituencies. After all the votes have been
counted in each constituency, the Returning Officer announces the result.

According to this system, the candidate who gets most votes in a particular
constituency wins the seat in Parliament. It does not matter whether the winning
candidate gets 20% or 70% of the total votes, provided he gets at least one more vote
than each of the other candidates. The party that wins the greatest number of seats in
Parliament takes power.

There are very few parliamentary democracies with this method of choosing a
winner. Critics say it is unfair, because the proportion of seats which a party holds
does not reflect the proportion of votes which that party received in the nation as a
whole. To counteract this, the Liberal Democrats want to introduce a new system
called Proportional Representation. In this system, the number of MPs representing
each party is in proportion to the number of votes that the party received in the whole
country. The existing system benefits the leading parties and discriminates against the
smaller parties. Some argue that this keeps radical parties at bay.

4.2. Answer the following questions.
1) Who has the right to vote in the United Kingdom? Is voting compulsory?
2) Who is not allowed to vote?
3) How do you understand the difference between a general election and a by-
election?
4) When is a general election held?
5) Can you name the duties of the Returning Officer?
6) How does the Proportional Representation system differ from the existing one
in the United Kingdom?
7) Which system do you think is fairer? Why?
4.3. *Put the correct word in the crossword grid. If you put it correctly, you’ll get a word on the first line that is frequently used in the text above.*

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1. … don’t have the right to vote.
2. The returning … announces the result.
3. The voters must tell the clerks their ….
4. The party which wins the greatest number of … on Parliament takes power.
5. Boxes with ballot papers are usually taken to a ….
6. The Liberal Democrats want to … Proportional Representation.
7. The winning candidate may get even 10 % of the … votes.
8. Some critics say that the existing election system is ….
9. The group of all people who have the right to vote in an election is called ….
10. A … has to be sent to each constituency when the Returning Officer makes provisions for the holding of the elections.
11. The … who gets most votes in a constituency wins the seats in Parliament.
12. A general election is held every five ….

4.4. *Written Practice.*

Write a paragraph describing general elections in the United Kingdom and explain the difference between the election procedure in the United Kingdom and in your country.
5. Before reading the text, match a word on the left with a definition on the right.

1. conservative  a) sovereignty, rule
2. labour        b) freedom to try new projects and businesses, using boldness and initiative
3. liberal       c) cautions, moderate, opposed to great or sudden changes
4. party         d) Workers as a class
5. royalist      e) Favouring moderate democratic reforms
6. reign         f) Supporter of a king or queen
7. reform        g) of the present time only, and to be changed or replaced later
8. provisional  h) Change made in order to remove imperfections
9. manifesto    i) a group of persons united in policy and opinion, in support of a cause
10. free enterprise  j) a written statement saying what the aims of a political party are

5.1. Now read the text and see if you were right.

SYSTEM OF POLITICAL PARTIES

The main parties in the UK are the Conservative party (right wing), the Labour party (left wing) and the Liberal Democrats (centre). The Conservative and Liberal parties are the oldest, and until the last years of the 19th century they were the only parties elected to the House of Commons. Once working-class men were given the vote, however, Socialist MPs were elected, but it was not until 1945 that the UK had its first Labour Government. At this election, the number of Liberal MPs was greatly reduced and since then Governments have been formed by either the Labour or the Conservative party. Usually they have had clear majorities - that is, one party has had more MPs than all the others combined.

The Conservative party goes back to the Tories, or Royalists, who originated in the reign of King Charles II (1660-1685). The Tories were the party that supported Church and King. The other main party at the time was the Whigs, who were a group eager for political reform. The Tory party gave way to its successor, the Conservative party, in around 1830. The Conservative party believes in free enterprise and the importance of a capitalist economy, with private ownership preferred to state control. It can broadly be described as the party of the middle and upper classes although it does receive some working class support. Most of its voters live in rural areas, small towns and the suburbs of large cities. Much of its financial support comes from large industrial companies.

The Labour party, on the other hand, has always had strong links with the trade unions. In 1899, the Trade Union Congress summoned a special conference of trade
unions and socialist bodies to make plans to represent Labour in Parliament. The proposal for such a meeting had come from Thomas Steels, a member of the Independent Labour party which had been formed in 1883. The conference met in February 1900 in London and has always been looked at as the foundation of the Labour party. However, the name 'the Labour party' was not adopted until 1906. The Labour party believes that private ownership and enterprise should be allowed to flourish, but not at the expense of their traditional support of the public services. While many Labour voters are middle-class or intellectuals, the traditional Labour party support is still strongest in industrial areas. It receives financial support from the trade unions.

There has been a Liberal party in Great Britain since 1868 when the name was adopted by the Whig Party. The Whig party was created after the revolution of 1688 and aimed to subordinate the power of the Crown to that of Parliament and the upper classes. In 1981, a second centre party was created by 24 Labour MPs. It was called the Social Democratic party, and soon formed an alliance with the Liberal party. They formed a single party which became the Liberal Democrats after the 1987 election. The Liberal Democrats and other small minority parties in the House of Commons would like to change the electoral system; they want MPs to be elected by proportional representation. Under this system, the number of MPs from each party would correspond to the total number of votes each party receives in the election. The Liberal Democrats believe that the state should have some control over the economy, but that there should also be individual ownership.

There are other political parties within the UK. The Green party offers economic and industrial policies that relate directly to the environment. The Scottish Nationalist party wants independence for Scotland within the European Community. Plaid Cymru, the Welsh Nationalist party, is determined to preserve the Welsh language and culture as the foundation of a distinctive Welsh identity within the UK. Its radical wing has resorted to arson attempts as a means of protest. The Protestant community in Northern Ireland is represented at Westminster by MPs who are in favour of the maintenance of Northern Ireland as part of the UK. They belong to the Ulster Democratic Unionist party. The Catholic minority are represented by the Social Democratic Labour party. Provisional Sinn Fein is the political wing of the Irish Republican Army (the IRA), that campaigns openly, sometimes by force, for the withdrawal of British troops from Northern Ireland.

A party's political philosophy dictates what its politicians intend to do if they are elected to government. The document that describes these policies is called a manifesto, and gives a general statement of that party's objectives. If the party comes to power, the manifesto becomes a set of rules and instructions for how that party should behave.

There are many influences that affect the way a party thinks. The Conservative party tends to listen to people in business and in the financial markets, whereas the Labour party will listen more to what the Trade Unions are saying. A newer kind of influence is a think-tank. This is a group of people who work out policy for a particular party. The Institute of Economic Affairs and the Centre for Policy Studies are two influential Conservative think-tanks. The Fabian society is a great influence
hi the Labour party. A new left-wing think-tank is called the Institute for Public Policy Research. The greatest influence on policy, though, is public opinion. All political parties want to be popular in order to be elected to government. As they all try to please the public, it can sometimes be difficult to see the difference between the parties.

5.2. **Answer the following questions:**
1. What sections or society might the Conservative party influence when it is deciding its policies?
2. What is the background of the Labour party?
3. What may influence its policies?
4. What are the main aims of Plaid Cymru, the Scottish Nationalist party and the Provisional Sinn Fein?

5.3. **Here is a brief description of the British party system. Complete the sentences below using the following names of the parties.**

- The Conservative Party
- The Labour Party
- The Liberal Party

1. The main parties in the United Kingdom are ...
2. ... were the only parties elected to the House of Commons until the last years of the 19th century.
3. Since 1945 Governments have been formed by either ... or ...
4. ... goes back to the Tories.
5. The Tories gave way to ... in 1830.
6. ... has always had links with the trade unions.
7. ... believes that private ownership should be preferred to state control.
8. ... believes that private ownership should not be allowed to flourish at the expense of its support of the public services.
9. ... dates back to the Whig Party.

5.4. **Try to find the differences and the things which are similar in the Conservative and the Labour Parties. Put a V next to the statements which are true.**
1. Both parties are the oldest in the United Kingdom.
2. Both parties were formed in the 17th century.
3. Originally both parties had other names.
4. Both parties have had links with trade unions.
5. Both parties receive support from large industrial companies.
6. They both believe in private ownership.
7. Both parties have formed Governments in the United Kingdom since 1945.
8. Both parties are the main ones in the country.
9. Both parties tend to listen to people in business.

5.5. **Match the names of the parties and their main aims.**
1. The Welsh National Party a) campaigns for the withdrawal of the British troops from Northern Ireland
2. The Scottish Nationalist Party b) represents the Catholic Minority
3. The Green Party c) wants independence for Scotland
4. The Ulster Democratic Unionist Party d) offer policies that relate to the environment
5. The Social Democratic Labour Party e) maintain Northern Ireland as part of the United Kingdom
6. Provisional Sinn Fein f) wants to preserve the Welsh language and culture

5.6. Complete this word puzzle.

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1. Thomas Steels was a ____ of the Independent Labour Party.
2. The ____ party is one of the main parties in the UK.
3. The ____ party of one of the oldest ones in the UK.
4. Provisional Sinn Fein is the political wing of the ____ Republic Army.
5. The Institute of Economic ____ is one of the two influential Conservative think tanks.
6. The ____ party offers policies that relate to the environment.
7. The ____ Nationalist party wants independence for Scotland.
8. The Social Democratic Labour party represents the ____ minority.
9. Provisional Sinn Fein campaigns for the withdrawal of British from Northern Ireland.
10. ____ The document that describes a party’s policies.

5.7. Written practice.
Write a short paragraph explaining the dependence of the parties’ policies on the society and their influence on the latter. Compare the party system in the UK with that in your country.
UNIT 6
GOVERNMENT

6. Before reading text, match a word on the left with a definition on the right.

1. Minister  
2. Office  
3. Convention  
4. The Civil Service  
5. Spokesman  
6. Confer  
7. Duty  
8. Responsible  
9. Litigation  
10. Prosecute

a) a person speaking, chosen to speak, on behalf of a group
b) the process of proceeding against someone in a court action
c) what one is obliged to do by morality, law, a trade, calling, conscience, etc.
d) a public position of authority, especially as part of government
e) a person at the head of a department of state
f) to take criminal proceedings against someone
g) a rule or practice which regulates the conduct of the Crown and state organs where there are no formal legal rules
h) legally or morally liable for carrying out a duty
i) all government departments except the Navy, Army and Air Force
j) to give or grant

6.1 Now read the text and see if you were right.

SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT

Her Majesty's Government is the body of ministers responsible for the administration of national affairs. The ministers are appointed by the Crown on the recommendation of the Prime Minister, who is appointed directly by the Crown and is the leader of the party which secured a majority of seats in the House of Commons as a result of a general election.

The office of the Prime Minister dates from the 18th century and is the subject of a number of constitutional conventions. The Prime Minister is the head of the Government. By convention he always sits in the House of Commons. The Prime Minister is also, by tradition, First Lord of the Treasury and Minister for Civil Service. He consults and advises the Monarch on Government business, supervises the work of the ministries and departments and is the principal spokesman for the Government in the House of Commons. He also makes recommendations to the Monarch on many important public appointments, including the Lord Chief Justice, Lords of Appeal in Ordinary, and Lords Justices of Appeal. The Prime Minister's unique position of authority derives from majority support in Parliament and from the power to choose ministers and to obtain their resignation or dismissal individually.

The nucleus of government is the Cabinet. It was originally a small body of royal advisers, a committee of the Privy Council. Until the 18th century the Privy Council was the chief source of executive power in the state. As the system of Cabinet government developed, however, the Privy Council declined in importance. The
Privy Council is the body on whose advice and through which the Monarch exercises most statutory and many prerogative powers. There are about 330 members of the Privy Council. All Cabinet ministers are Privy Counsellors; other members are appointed by the Monarch on the recommendation of the Prime Minister.

The Cabinet is the executive organ of government. It is a body of senior ministers selected by the Prime Minister, most of them are heads of departments. Each new Prime Minister may make changes in the size of his Cabinet. There are usually about 25 members of the Cabinet. It is the most important body in the British system of government since it is the Cabinet that formulates the policy of the Government. The Cabinet and its committees work in great secrecy; no vote is taken, and collective responsibility is assumed for all decisions taken. British Government is often referred to as ‘Cabinet Government’. The Cabinet meets at No 10, Downing Street, the official residence of the Prime Minister.

The central government ministries and departments give effect to government policies and have powers and duties conferred on them by legislation, and, sometimes, under the Royal Prerogative. Each is headed by a minister who is in most cases a member of either the House of Lords or the House of Commons. There are over 100 ministers of the Crown at the present time; they include departmental ministers, non-departmental ministers, ministers of state and junior ministers. Departmental ministers (e.g., the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth affairs, Chancellor of the Exchequer, Secretary of State for Social Services) are those in charge of government departments, they are usually members of the Cabinet. Non-departmental ministers (e.g., Lord President of the (Privy) Council, Lord Privy Seal, Ministers without Portfolio) are the holders of various traditional offices; they may have few or no departmental duties and are therefore available to perform any special duties the Prime Minister gives them. Ministers of State are additional ministers in departments who usually work with the departmental ministers and are responsible for specific functions. Junior ministers (usually known as Parliamentary Secretary or Parliamentary Under-Secretary) work in all ministries and departments and share in parliamentary and departmental duties. The Lord Chancellor and the Law Officers of the Crown deserve special mentioning. The Lord High Chancellor of Great Britain presides over the House of Lords both in its legislative capacity and as a final court of appeal; he is a member of the Cabinet and also has departmental responsibilities in connection with the appointment of certain judges. The four Law Officers of the Crown represent the Crown in civil litigation, prosecute in certain exceptionally important criminal cases and advise government on points of law. The main government departments include Treasury (responsible for public finance and expenditure), Ministry of Defence (defence policy and armed forces), the Lord Chancellor's Office (administration of the courts and the law), Foreign Office (conduct of British overseas relations), Home Office (administration of law and order including criminal justice, police service and prisons). The UK has no Ministry of Justice. Responsibility for the administration of the judicial system in England and Wales is divided between the courts themselves, the Lord Chancellor and the Home Secretary.
Britain does not have a written constitution, or set of rules, that the Government must obey. Theoretically, the Government has almost unlimited power. However, it can be made to account for its actions. The Prime Minister is also accountable, and twice a week is subjected to detailed questioning in the House of Commons.

There are other ways in which the Government's power is restricted by what is called checks and balances via:

   a) the second chamber one of the functions of the House of Lords is to look at what the House of Commons has done and suggest a different way of approaching problems;
   b) public opinion: this is a very powerful force. (One can argue that it was public opinion on the poll Tax that forced Margaret Thatcher to resign in 1990). The Government finds out what the public is thinking through the MPs (who listen to their constituents), from by-elections, from public opinion polls and from the media. People also go to Westminster to lobby their MPs: to attempt to influence them with their opinion. The word «lobby» comes from the name of the parts of the Houses of Parliament -the lobbies - where people have to wait to speak to their MP. In a democracy, however, the real test of popularity is what happens to party candidate during an election.
   c) the monarch: although the King or Queen hardly has a y power, the monarch does have great influence. Queen Elizabeth is known to be concerned about certain kinds of issue, for example, maintaining the Commonwealth. Her views on a subject can affect the way the Prime Minister acts.
   d) top civil servants: these people who administer the country on behalf of the Government have no power but great influence because of their experience. Indirect influences are very important in affecting the way the Government behaves, and are in some ways as important as the more direct influences of power.

   The British Government is commonly referred to as 'Whitehall', which is connected with the site of the old departments.

6.2. Here are some words and phrases which describe the system of government in the United Kingdom. What do they mean and how important do you think they are in Britain’s politics?

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Prime Minister</th>
<th>the Privy Council</th>
<th>MPs</th>
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<td>the Monarch</td>
<td>Ministers</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Cabinet</td>
<td>the House of Lords</td>
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6.3. Answer the following questions:
1. Who appoints the Prime Minister?
2. Why is the Prime Minister First Lord of the Treasure and Minister for Civil service?
3. How has the Cabinet changed since the 18th century?
4. What is the difference between the Cabinet and the Privy Council?
5. Why do you think British Government is referred to as “Cabinet Government”?
6. Whom is each ministry or department headed by?
7. Can you name ministers of the United Kingdom and their duties?
8. Can you list the main government departments?

6.4. Explain these words in your own language:
1. Her Majesty’s Government
2. the Prime Minister
3. the Cabinet
4. the Privy Council
5. departmental ministers
6. non-departmental ministers
7. ministers of state
8. junior ministers
9. the Lord Chancellor
10. the Law Officers

6.5. Complete the sentences below with one of the following words: the Prime Minister, the House of Commons, the Crown, the Cabinet, the Privy Council
1. … is the principal spokesman of the Government in the House of Commons.
2. … formulates the policy of the Government.
3. There are 330 members of …
4. The Prime Minister sits in …
5. … appoints the ministers.

6.6. Match the department on the left with its duties on the right.
1. Minister of Defence a) administration of the courts and the law
2. Treasure b) conduct of British overseas relations
3. the Lord Chancellor’s office c) administration of law and order
4. Foreign office d) defence policy and armed forces
5. Home Office e) responsible for public finance
6.7. **Wordsearch.** Find thirty words (across, down or diagonally) connected with the political set-up of the UK in the puzzle below.

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  g o v e r n m e n t s w j a f
  q c a b u h t l l e z e c o m
  w h i t e h a l l e y v r k a
  x i d r s w o t c f c e o v j
  j e e x e c u t i v e i t w a e
  a f a a p o i w y g p e n o s
  p l u s i a m o n a r c h y t
  o y d u t y r m i n i s t r y
  w l o r d d i t i q m o e w d
  e a v y e e a z m t e z r a v
  r b i r k f g e v e t u m u t
  a o q u f e c a b i n e t i l
  m u y a o n i t x o l t t t q t
  e r i a n c h a n c e l l l o r
  c r t x l e l o p s e j l x f
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6.8. **Written Practice.**

Write a paragraph explaining how the Crown, the Prime Minister, the Cabinet, MPs and the House of Lords are important in politics in Britain. What bodies are very powerful in making decisions? Which of them have no power at all? How does this compare with your country?
UNIT 7
LOCAL GOVERNMENT

7. Before reading the text, match a word on the left with a definition on the right.

1. Refuse a) an estimate of probable future income and expenditure
2. Council b) aids, circumstances, which make it easy to do things
3. Consumer c) waste or worthless material
4. Compulsory d) a person who uses goods
5. Facilities e) organized welfare efforts carried on under professional auspices by trained personnel
6. Budget f) the business of supplying an essential commodity, as gas or electricity, or a service, as transportation, to the general public
7. Run g) to give work to, usually for payment
8. Social service h) that must be done, required
9. Public service i) a group of persons appointed or elected to give advice, make rules, carry out plans, manage affairs, etc.
10. Employ j) to organize, manage, cause to be in operation

7.1. Now read the text and see if you were right.

SYSTEM OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Local government is a system of providing, operating and maintaining the majority of public services people use in their everyday life. The UK is divided into areas, each run by a local council. These are the administrative centres of local government; together they employ about 2 mln people. The services they provide include most things that make communal life possible, such as education, social services, libraries, town planning, parks, traffic, refuse, consumer protection, police, fire, airports, housing, environmental health, cemeteries, theaters and cinemas. Local councils (or authorities) have two types of functions: compulsory and permissive. The majority of functions are compulsory, e.g., providing schools and teachers. Providing a town museum, however, is something many local authorities can do if they want to, but they are not forced to do it by law.

The three major types of local authority date back to the 15th century. They are: the parish (the area served by a local church), the shire (or the county) and boroughs (areas of high population which had special rights given originally by the Monarch). Each of these areas had different functions; they all provided some public services but there were wide variations between them.

It was not until the 19th century that a standard structure began to develop. All the local authorities began to provide such things as water, schools, housing and hospitals. But the system became inadequate. At the beginning of the 19th century, the growth of industry brought huge numbers of people from the country to the towns and cities. The local authorities could not cope with the new problems of poverty, disease, crime and inadequate drains and water supplies. In 1845, only six of the 50
large towns in England and Wales had a pure water supply and none had a good drainage system. Cholera was a real danger.

Various laws were passed in Parliament to try and improve the standard of services and, at the same time, to make the system fair, e.g. the Public Health Act of 1848 and the Education Act of 1870, which set up special boards to run health and education services. In 1888, the Local Government Act created county councils with members elected by the public. The London County Council was set up for the capital and elected urban district councils and rural district councils were created.

Over the next 40 years, local authorities were given greater powers, including responsibility for the police and housing.

In the 20th century advances in transport and communications made many of the original local government boundaries meaningless. Local authorities of the same type now had widely differing numbers of people living within them. It resulted in the changes of the local government structure. The most radical reorganization, however, did not come until the 1970s. Several new counties were created and the number of counties in England and Wales was reduced.

At present, despite attempts to standardize the system, the structure of local government still varies from one part of the country to another, reflecting the numerous historical developments the system has gone through. In Wales and England, except London and six large cities, local government operates at two levels, called county councils and district councils. (Northern Ireland and Scotland have their own systems, although the differences are superficial).

County councils provide major services, such as schools, social services, planning at county level, controlling highways and traffic, organizing rubbish disposal, the police and the fire brigade - all functions that cover large areas or need substantial amounts of money. District councils provide services that cover a smaller area, where local knowledge and control are important. They include housing, rubbish collection, sports facilities, local planning and public health. The functions of a borough council are exactly the same as those of a district council. Parish councils have limited functions. What they do is a matter of local arrangement and convention between the parish and the district. Parish councils are only involved in small scale local activities, as they have very small budgets. The system in the larger cities is different. London consists of 32 units called boroughs, and a special area called the City of London which covers the area of London within its ancient boundaries and is an independent unit. Most of the London boroughs have a population of between 150,000 and 300,000 people and their councils run all the services in the area. A few services, such as transport and the police, are excluded, as they concern the whole of the capital city. Six large cities of England – Birmingham, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester, Newcastle and Sheffield – have similar systems.

When the structure of local government in England and Wales changed in 1972, areas which had historically been called boroughs wanted to preserve their privileges, which had been given to them centuries ago by Royalty, e.g., to have mayors who perform ceremonial duties. But the functions of a borough council are exactly the same as those of a district council.
Local government in Northern Ireland is a special case. Most major services, such as education and health, have been transferred to either central government agencies or nine area boards. There are also 26 district councils which collect rubbish and provide recreation facilities, such as sports halls. They also set the rate of local taxes and collect them.

Local authorities are independent administrative bodies created by and carrying out duties given by Parliament in Westminster. Parliament can exercise its own power over local government. It can even abolish a particular authority if it wants to. The Minister with prime responsibility for local government is the Secretary of State for the Environment. However, there is no detailed supervision at the local level.

Councillors consist of elected members called councillors, who work voluntarily, and are elected for four-year terms. County councils consist of a chairman and vice chairman plus a number of county councillors, who are elected by the people. The system is the same in London where the mayor and councillors are elected. Council officers are paid local government officials who are appointed by the authority to run the authority on a day-to-day basis.

Any British subject who is at least 18 years old and who is eligible to vote nationally can vote at a local election, to choose the people who will be councillors for the area.

Councillors are ordinary citizens who devote part of their time to the services of local authorities. They do not draw salaries but can be paid allowances for loss of working time and to cover travelling and subsistence. A candidate for election to sit on a council must be over 21 and must fulfil various criteria, such as being an elector in the area. Because they are not paid, councillors are frequently people with the time and money to devote themselves to council work. A criticism of the system is that they may not be representative of the whole community.

A councillor’s primary function is the control of council affairs, making key decisions and monitoring progress. They also have to watch the work of council officers to ensure that agreed policy is carried out, that local tax payers have value for money, and that there is no waste or dishonesty.

Different local authorities have different needs and some areas may be more expensive to run than others. In the inner cities, for example, education and policing costs may be high, but in the country it may be more expensive to collect rubbish, because the houses are less accessible.

The government assesses how much it costs to provide a standard level of service in each area. Then it sees how much the local authority can raise from the people who live in the area, through local taxes.

Another source of income is from a tax on businesses, called business rates. This is collected by all the local authorities and paid into a central fund. The money is then paid out again to all local authorities. Rich boroughs may get back less than they paid in.

Local authorities also get revenue from services that people buy, such as local transport (buses and trains), car parks, swimming pools, theatres, evenings classes and council house rents. The council tax depends on the number of people living in a house and on the value of property the people live in.
The Government then looks at the difference between what the local authority needs and what it has raised from its local taxes, the business rates and its services. The difference between the figures is made up by government grant. This is fixed by a system of complex formulae and comes from the general pool of taxation. Central government needs to supplement local government revenue because many local authority services, such as education and the police, can affect the popularity of the Government nationally.

7.2. **Answer the following questions:**
1. What is local government?
2. Which services does local government provide?
3. Could you name compulsory and permissive functions of local government?
4. Has the structure of local government changed over the last centuries? Why?
5. Why does the structure of local government differ from one part of the United Kingdom to another?
6. What are the major types of local authority?
7. How does local government operate in Wales and England?
8. What do you know about councillors? How are they paid?
9. How is local government funded? List the main sources for local government funding?
10. How can Parliament exercise its own power over local government?

7.3. **Complete these sentences below:**
The Minister who is responsible for local government is the Secretary of State for the _____.
The local authority pays _____ to run the authority on a day-to-day basis.
_____ work voluntarily.
Councillors _____ the work done by council officers.
A councillor must be at least _____.

7.4. **Match the type of local council on the left with the service it offers on the right.**
1. County council  a) housing, rubbish, collecting, sports facilities
2. District council  b) street lighting, small budget activities
3. Parish council   c) schools, social services, traffic control, police and fire brigade services, rubbish disposal
7.5. Complete the word puzzle.

1. London boroughs do not run this service (it concerns the whole of the city).
3. This area of the United Kingdom has its own system of local government.
4. One of the three major types of local authority.
5. An area of high population (large cities of England consist of these units).
6. This type of local authorities dates back to the 15th century.
7. They make it easy to do things.
8. One of the two levels of local government.
9. One of the main services of a district council.
10. A person who uses goods.
11. They are provided by local councils.

7.6. Talking point.

Give a brief description of the structure of local government in the United Kingdom. How does the system differ in your country? List the main difference and similarities.
REVISION
How important are 1-8 in Britain’s politics? Are they a, b, c or d?
a) very powerful in making decisions
b) have a strong influence in final decisions
c) have some influence over certain decisions but do not have much power
d) have no power at all

1. The House of Lords
2. The opposition parties
3. The King or Queen
4. MPs
5. Parliament as a whole
6. The Prime Minister
7. The people of the country
8. Civil servants

How does this compare with your country?
How is the Government prevented from becoming too powerful in the UK?
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