

POLITICAL LIFE IN GREAT BRITAIN

1. Find the appropriate definitions to the words below

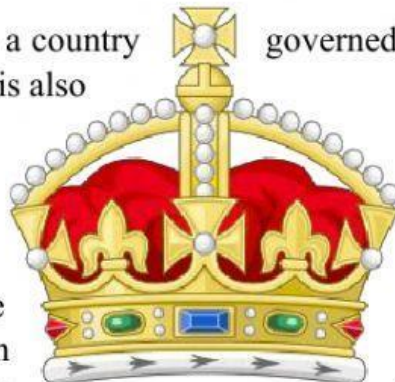
reputation	to say what you think is wrong or bad about something.
To criticize	a feeling that you do not trust someone or something
trustworthiness	not allowed by the law
suspicion	the opinion that people have about how good or how bad someone or something is
illegal	cruel, violent, or unfair treatment, especially of someone who does not have the power to prevent it
To abuse	able to be trusted as being honest, safe, or reliable

2. Look at the pictures. Do you know their names? What are their positions in the nowadays Britain? Discuss with your classmates.

Politicians in Britain **do not have a good reputation**. To describe someone who is not a professional politician as 'a politician' is to criticize him or her, suggesting a lack of **trustworthiness**, it is not that people hate their politicians. They just regard them with a high degree of **suspicion**. They do not expect them to be corrupt or to use their position as personal wealth, but they do expect them to be frequently dishonest.

People are not really shocked when the government is caught lying. On the other hand, they would be very shocked indeed if it was discovered that the government was doing anything actually **illegal**. A scandal such as the Watergate affair in the USA in the early 1970S would endanger the stability of the whole of political life. A June 1972 break-in to the Democratic National Committee headquarters led to an investigation that revealed multiple **abuses** of power by the Nixon administration.

Britain is a **constitutional monarchy**. That means it is a country governed by a king or queen who accepts the advice of a parliament. It is also a **parliamentary democracy**. That is, it is a country whose government is controlled by a parliament which has been elected by the people. In other words, the basic system is not so different from anywhere else in Europe. The highest positions in the government are filled by members of the **elected parliament**. In Britain, as in many European countries, the official head of state, whether a monarch directly (as in Belgium, the Netherlands and Denmark) or a president (as in Germany, Greece and Italy) has little real power.



However, there are features of the British system of government which make it different from that in other countries and which are not 'modern' at all. The most notable of these is the question of the constitution. Britain is almost alone among modern states in that **it does not have 'a constitution' at all**. Of course, there are rules, regulations, principles and procedures for the running of the country - all the things that political scientists and legal experts study and which are known collectively as 'the constitution'. But there is **no single written document** which can be appealed to as the highest law of the land and the final arbiter in any matter of dispute.

3. Look at the logotypes of different British parties. Can you predict what are their main ideas and principles?

4. Watch https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RAMbIz3Y2JA&ab_channel=UKParliament the video: and answer the questions below.

- What historical events did the process of parliament formation start?
- How many parts has the Parliament got?
- What's the difference between House of Commons and House of Lords?
- How do people choose the Prime Minister?
- How many senior ministers does the Prime Minister have?
- Who are "life peers"?
- How often does the monarch meet with the Prime Minister?

5. Choose one as you think the most interesting and powerful political figure in the UK history. Tell the class the most interesting facts about his life.