

A

Elections in the UK

When you **vote for** someone, you choose them by putting a cross (X) on an official piece of paper (called a **secret ballot** because no one knows who you vote for), or by putting up your hand. In the UK, a **general election** is when the people **elect**¹ the next **government**². These **elections** are **held**³ at least every five years. Each **constituency**⁴ elects one person from one **political party**. That person then becomes the **MP** (Member of Parliament) for that area, and the political party with the most MPs – there are 650 at the moment – forms the next government. The **leader**⁵ of the party **in power**⁶ is the **Prime Minister**.

¹ choose by voting

² the group of people who control the country

³ organised

⁴ an area where people vote

⁵ the person in control

⁶ in control (of the country)

Language help

noun	person	adjective
politics	politician	political
power		powerful

B

Political policies

People usually vote for a political party because they **believe in** the party's ideas [think the ideas are good or right], and these ideas become **policies** [sets of plans and ideas that a political party has agreed on].

¹ give something to those who need it (also **provide** someone **with** something)

² looking after people, especially old people

³ help (sometimes in the form of money)

⁴ old

⁵ make less; *syn* **cut**

⁶ dealing with everyone in the same way; *opp* **unfair**

⁷ money people must pay the government

⁸ most importantly

⁹ behave or deal with someone in a particular way

¹⁰ having the same importance; *adv* **equally**

Language help

verb	noun
believe in sth	belief
reduce	reduction

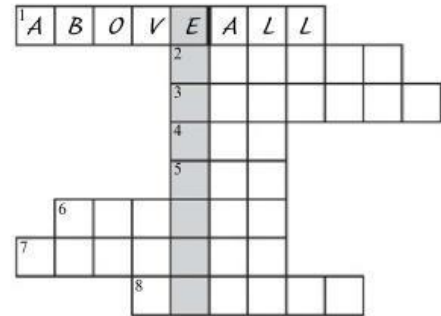
Exercises

57.1 Complete the sentences using the correct form of the word on the right.

- | | |
|--|----------|
| 1 Have they set the date for the <u>election</u> ? | ELECT |
| 2 Employment is an important issue. | POLITICS |
| 3 My political are important to me. | BELIEVE |
| 4 The president is a very man. | POWER |
| 5 I hope there will be a in my tax. | REDUCE |
| 6 Do you believe what say? | POLITICS |

57.2 Complete the crossword. What is the vertical word in grey?

- Most importantly
- Person in control of a political party
- Another word for 'old'
- A synonym for 'reduce'
- Money people must pay to the government
- A set of plans and ideas that a group agree on
- Help, often in the form of money
- Not fair



57.3 Rewrite the sentences on the left starting with the words given. Keep a similar meaning.

- | | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| 1 They are in control of the country. | They are in <u>power</u> |
| 2 They elected her. | They voted |
| 3 Elections take place every five years. | Elections are |
| 4 They will give hospitals more money. | They will provide |
| 5 No one knows who you vote for. | It's a secret |
| 6 It's a fair system for everyone. | The system treats |
| 7 Our policy is to look after old people. | Our policy is to provide |

57.4 Complete the text.

In Canada, ¹ elections work in a similar way to the UK. Canada is divided into 308 political ², but they are called 'ridings' in Canada, and altogether there are 19 registered ³ parties in the country. ⁴ are held every five years, and people ⁵ for just one person in each riding to become their member of ⁶ The ⁷ that wins the most ridings is then asked by the Governor-General to form the next ⁸, and the leader of that party becomes ⁹ Minister.

57.5 Over to you

Answer the questions. If possible, ask someone else the same questions.

- How many major political parties are there in your country?
- Which party is in power at the moment?
- When were they elected?
- Who is the leader of this party?
- Did you vote in this election?

57.6 Over to you

Look at the policies in section B on the opposite page. What do you think of them? If you were in power, would you have these policies? What policies would you have? If possible, compare your answers with someone else.