

Введение

Настоящее пособие предназначено для студентов юридической специальности, для тех, кто овладел основами английской грамматики и лексическим минимумом в объеме около двух тысяч слов.

Цель пособия – углубление языковых знаний и понимание оригинального английского текста, обогащение словарного запаса, а также дальнейшее развитие навыков устной речи и перевода.

Содержание пособия составляет государственное устройство Великобритании. Лексическими темами пособия являются: монархия, законодательная власть, выборы в парламент, члены парламента, принятие законопроекта.

В каждом разделе представлен неадаптированный текст, дающий необходимую информацию по данной лексической теме. Тексты сопровождаются словарем и упражнениями для закрепления и активизации лексики.

Развитие навыков устной речи осуществляется в процессе выполнения упражнений, пересказа текста с последующим его обсуждением.

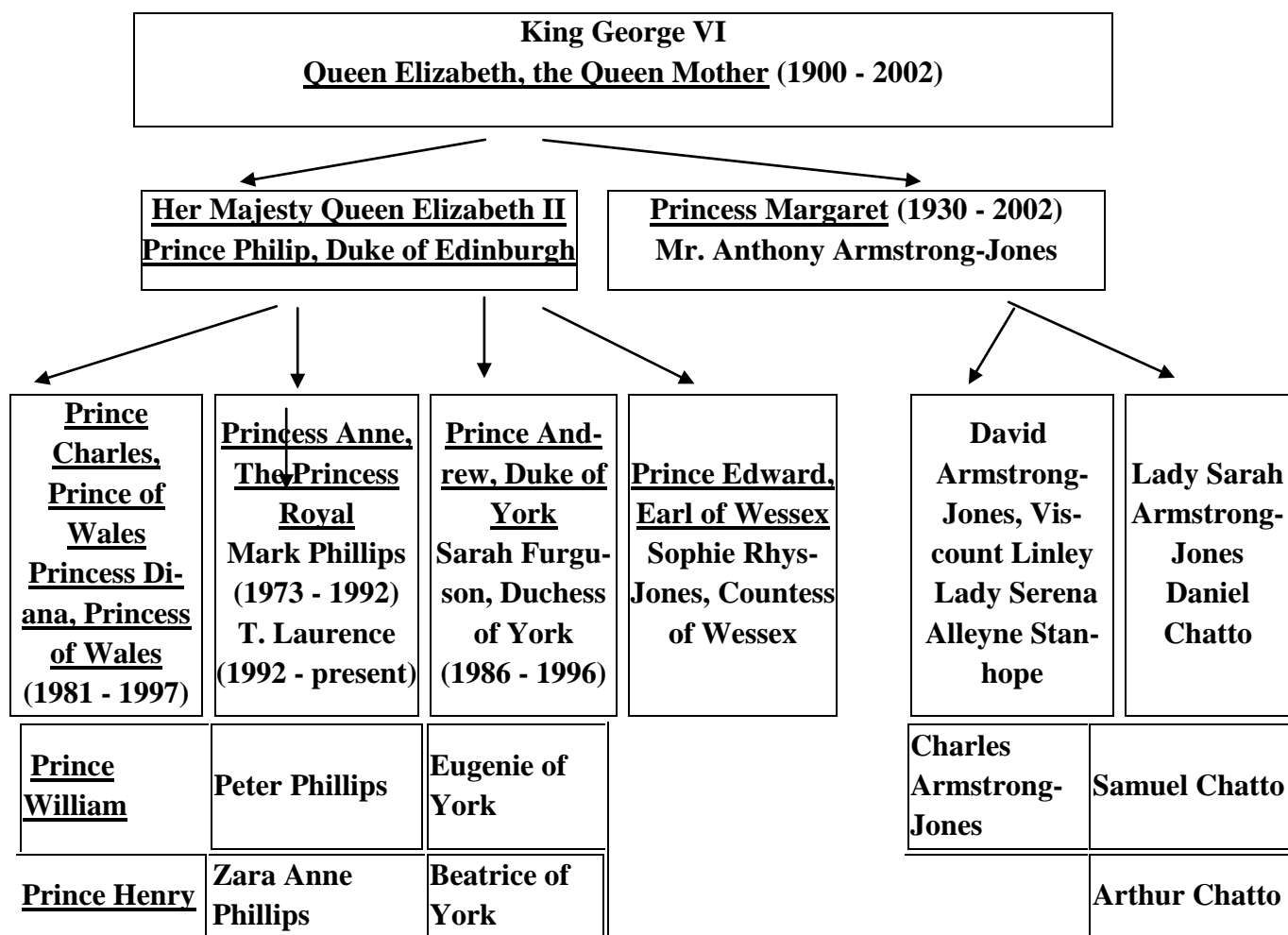
LESSON 1

The Royal Family

1. Read and memorise the active vocabulary to the text:

1. secular	мирской, светский
2. to derive	происходить, устанавливать
3. to succeed	наследовать
4. to summon	созывать
5. to prorogue	назначать перерыв в работе парламента
6. to dissolve	распускать
7. to assent	согласие, санкция
8. to cede	сдавать (территорию)
9. Privy Council	тайный совет

2. Royal family members





3. Match a word on the left with a definition on the right:

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| 1. Monarchy | a. having limitless power; |
| 2. Queen | b. the government power of a kingdom; |
| 3. Ruler | c. able to be passed down from parent; to a child; |
| 4. Succeed to the throne | d. small power; |
| 5. Royal family | e. came successfully to the position of of a king or a queen; |
| 6. Crown | f. a person who rules an area or people; |
| 7. Hereditary power | g. a state ruled by a king or a queen; |
| 8. Absolute | h. a female ruler of a country who is not elected but is usually the daughter of a former king; |
| 9. Limited by Parliament | i. family connected with a king or a queen. |

4. Pre-reading task:

1. Do you know the name of the present Queen?
2. When was she born?
3. What year did she succeed to the throne?
4. Who is her apparent?

The Monarchy is the most ancient secular institution in the United Kingdom. The Monarchy is hereditary and the present title of the Crown derives from provisions of the Act of Settlement of 1701.

Queen Elizabeth II succeeded to the throne in 1952. She is 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. The Queen reigns but does not rule. Her Majesty's government governs in the name of the Queen who must act on the advice of her ministers. The Queen summons, prorogues (dismisses at the end of a session) and dissolves Parliament; she usually opens new sessions of Parliament with a speech from the throne in which the major governmental policies are outlined. These acts form part of the Royal Prerogative. Prerogative rights are of legislative, executive and judicial character. The Monarch must give the Royal Assent before a Bill which has passed all its stages in both Houses of Parliament can become a legal enactment (Act of Parliament). The Monarch's consent and approval is required before a Cabinet can be formed or a minister takes up office. 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 makes appointments to all important offices of state, including judges, officers in the armed services, diplomats and the leading positions in the Established Church. It is only the Monarch who is able to remit all or part of the penalties imposed upon persons convicted of crimes.

At the present time the Monarch is regularly informed and consulted on many aspects of public affairs. 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, which however, only meets as a full body on the death of the Monarch. It conducts much of its business in committees at which the Monarch may not constitutionally be present. All Cabinet ministers are members; other members are appointed by the Monarch on the recommendation of the Prime Minister.

- *Study in detail:*

1. Word study:

- Which phrase of the text means “became queen”?
- What is the difference in meaning between the two verbs in the phrase “the Queen reigns but does not rule”? Why is the difference vital to the British constitution?
- What do you understand by “advice”? Is the word normally used in exactly this sense?
- Use the context to decide what a “Bill” is?
- What role does the Monarch have in legislating?

2. Using the box, match the sentences on the left with the numbers on the right to form three true statements about some of the Queen’s duties:

A. Parliament is prorogued by the Queen.	1. before a new legislature can be elected.
B. Parliament is summoned by the Queen.	2. when the Prime Minister requests an General Election.
C. Parliament is dissolved by the Queen.	3. at the end of the year’s session.

3. Complete the sentences:

- The Queen’s power in the United Kingdom is
- The Queen has the power
- Her Majesty’s government governs
- The Monarch makes appointments
- The Privy Council is the body

4. Mark the statements that are “true”:

- The Monarchy is the most ancient secular institution in the United Kingdom.
- The Queen’s powers are unlimited.
- The Queen opens new session of Parliament with a speech from the throne.
- Her only prerogative is to give a Royal Assent to a Bill.
- The Privy Council is responsible for all government measures.
- The Privy Council conducts much of its business in committees at which the
- Monarch may not constitutionally be present.

5. *Answer the following questions:*

- a) How has the role of the monarchy changed over the centuries?
- b) What are the functions of the Queen?
- c) What do you understand by the Royal Prerogative?
- d) What are the powers of the Queen?
- e) What can you say about the Privy Council?

6. *Transfer the main points of the text to the chart, showing the main points of the monarch:*

the Monarch	
* head of State	
* Hereditary Protestant succession	
*	
*	
*	
*	
*	

7. *Use the information in your chart and vocabulary you have learnt in the exercises above to describe the British monarchy:*

Start like this: “Succession to the British monarchy is hereditary ... “

Include the following points:

The Head of State: appointment, functions and powers, relationship with other state organs.

- *Discussion.*

Work in pairs:

What do you see as the advantages and disadvantages of having a monarchy?

Would you exchange lives with a member of the British Royal Family? Why? (Why not?).

Which members of the British Royal Family are best known in your own country? Why?

What powers does the Queen have in government?

Do you think being a member of the Royal Family is a “proper job”? What sort of work do they do?



The Queen's Official Birthday, sometimes known as "Queen's Birthday", is celebrated as a public holiday in several Commonwealth countries (usually Commonwealth Realms). It is also celebrated in Fiji, now a republic. The exact date celebrated varies from country to country, and is usually not the current Queen's actual birthday, April 21 (born 1926). "King" is used instead of "Queen" when it is appropriate.

In the United Kingdom, the Queen's Official Birthday is now celebrated on the first, second, or third Saturday in June (in 2006 it is the 17th), and is marked in London by the ceremony of Trooping the Colour, which is also known as the Queen's Birthday Parade. Edward VII (who reigned 1901–1910) moved the ceremony to that date in the hope of good weather.

The Birthday Honours is also announced at the time of the UK Official Birthday celebrations. In British diplomatic missions the day is treated as the National Day of the United Kingdom. Although it is not celebrated as a public holiday in the UK (as it is not a working day), civil servants are given a "privilege day" at this time of year, which is merged with the Spring Bank Holiday (last Monday in May) to create a long weekend.

Several Commonwealth Realms celebrate the Official Birthday as a public holiday, and most release a Birthday Honours List at this time.

8. Write your summary of the text emphasizing in it (a) its subject matter, (b) the facts discussed, (c) the author's point of view on these facts.

Елизавета II

Женщина на престоле: хорошо это или плохо? Во многих странах есть законы, запрещающие наследование престола женщине. В Великобритании все наоборот. Иначе, наверное, и быть не могло. Недаром же британцы не один век противопоставляют себя остальной Европе, которую слегка пренебрежительно называют Континентом.

Девизом всей жизни королевы Елизаветы II служат слова, произнесенные ею, тогда еще двадцатилетней принцессой, в Кейптауне, где она узнала о смерти своего отца. «Я обещаю, - сказала она, обращаясь к своим будущим подданным, - посвятить всю свою жизнь, независимо от того, длинной или короткой она будет, служению вам. Но для того, чтобы сдержать свое слово, мне понадобится ваша помощь. Без нее мне не обойтись!» И этому своему обеща-

нию королева следует все пятьдесят лет своего правления. Помимо народа, к которому она обращалась в далеком 1947 году, ей помогает править страной ее многочисленная семья.

Все ее родственники должны выполнять определенное количество «королевских поручений». За это они получают от главы семейства Видздров - Елизаветы денежное вознаграждение, которое является средством воздействия на семейство. Уменьшая или увеличивая довольствие, королева дает понять, устраивает ее поведение того или иного члена семьи или нет.

Со слугами она еще более строга. Королевские слуги – а их у нее около семисот человек – получают минимальную зарплату и при приеме на работу заполняют анкеты, дающие право на получение материальной помощи от государства. Такую свою прижимистость Елизавета, кстати, одна из богатейших женщин мира, объясняет тем, что зарплату и слугам и собственным детям приходится платить из денег, выделяемых на содержание всего королевского двора. Львиная доля этих денег уходит на поддержание в порядке королевских замков и различные поездки.



ПРИНЦЕССА ДИАНА (1961-1997)

Диана Спенсер. Бывшая жена принца Чарльза, наследника британского престола. Она вышла замуж за принца Уэльского в 20-летнем возрасте, он был старше ее на 12 лет. Вскоре она стала самым популярным членом королевской семьи. Диану даже называли «королевой сердец». В 1982 году у супругов родился сын Уильям, а двумя годами позже - Генри. Через какое-то время выяснилось, что любимая принцесса Британии

несчастлива в браке. Их союз с Чарльзом распался в 1996 году. Титул принцессы Уэльской за ней сохранили. Последние годы своей жизни Диана посвятила благотворительной деятельности. Она боролась за запрещение противопехотных мин и помогала больным СПИДом. Диана погибла в автокатастрофе в Париже 31 августа 1997 года. Ее смерть вызвала широкий отклик в сердцах людей всего мира и заставила задуматься о роли и месте монархии в британском обществе.

LESSON 2

Legislature

1. Read and memorise the active vocabulary to the text:

1. legislation	законодательство
2. ruling party	правящая партия
3. to run	править, руководить
4. the House of Commons	палата общин
5. hereditary	наследственный
6. authority	власть, полномочие

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

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| 1. legislation | a) a large town or area which can elect someone to represent them in parliament. |
| 2. debates | b) a large room used for formal meetings. |
| 3. policies | c) the act or process of passing a law, or laws that are passed by government |
| 4. chamber | d) a formal statement of a proposed new law which is discussed and voted on. |
| 5. amendment | e) a written statement saying what aims of a political party are. |
| 6. constituencies | f) a set of ideas agreed on by people in authority. |
| 7. Bills | g) a formal discussion in parliament. |
| 8. manifesto | h) the act or process of changing or improving a law. |

Read the text and answer the questions followed below:

Parliament in the UK 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 person that they want to represent them in Parliament, and by voting in a Government. The Government is made up of around 100 people from the ruling party, chosen by the Prime Minister. The most senior members of the Government are called the Cabinet.

The Government – the elected party – makes all important decisions about how country is run. However, these decisions have to be approved by parliament, which has the power to force the government to change its mind when necessary.

It is the job of parliament to make sure that the Government is working properly and in the public interest. Parliament is made up of three institutions: the House of Commons, which has 651 elected representatives called Members of Parliament (or MPs); the House of Lords, which is an unelected second chamber; and the monarchy: the King or Queen.

Every Member of Parliament, no matter what political party he or she belongs to, has to examine the work of the Government. The Opposition, which consists of all those parties which are not part of the Government, plays the leading part in this.

Vocabulary notes on the text

- ultimate – окончательный

- *Comprehension check:*

1. What principle is Parliament based on in the UK?
2. Who is the Government made up?
3. What is the Cabinet?
4. What are the main institutions of the British Parliament?
What is the job of Parliament?

Pre-reading exercises:

1. Read the text quickly and try to understand what it is about and what information is of primary importance or new to you.
2. Pick out an idea or a phrase, which you think is most informative from each paragraph.
3. Read and memorise the active vocabulary to the text.

To exceed

Lords Temporal and Spiritual

Lords of Appeal in Ordinary

Lord Chancellor

Archbishop

Concurrence

превышать

лорды светские и духовные

назначенные члены палаты лордов
по рассмотрению апелляций

лорд-канцлер

архиепископ

согласие

LESSON 3.

British Parliament



Parliament – is the legislative organ and is constitutionally composed of the Monarch, the House of Lords, and the House of Commons. The Queen in Parliament represents the supreme authority within the United Kingdom.

The Parliament at Westminster legislates for the United Kingdom, for any one of the constituent countries, or for any combination of them. The Parliament Act, 1911 provides that the life of one Parliament may not exceed five years.

Parliament consists of two Houses: the House of Lords and the House of Commons.

There are about 1,000 members of the House of Lords. It is for the most part still a hereditary body. It consists of the Lords Temporal and the Lords Spiritual. The Lords Temporal include hereditary peers and peeresses, life peers and peeresses, and the Lords of Appeal in Ordinary. The House of Lords is presided over by the Lord Chancellor who sits in the middle and supervises debates. He sits on “the woolsack”, a seat which contains wool from all the Commonwealth countries. The Lords Spiritual include the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, the Bishops of London, Durham and Winchester, and the 21 most senior diocesan bishops of the Church of England. This second chamber is not as powerful as the House of commons. It can suggest changes in law, but is restricted to laws that have nothing to do with the finances of the country. 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 work of the House of Lords includes:

a) legislation: reviewing and giving further consideration to Bills sponsored by the Government;

- b) examining the work of the Government by debate;
- c) examining European proposals;
- d) hearing legal appeals.

The House of Commons is an elected and representative body; members (at present 650) are elected by almost universal adult suffrage to represent constituencies in England (523), Scotland (72), Wales (38) and Northern Ireland (17). Any British subject aged 21 or over, not otherwise disqualified (as for example, members of the House of Lords, certain clergy, discharged bankrupts, civil servants, holders of judicial office, members of the regular armed services and the police forces) may be elected a Member of Parliament (MP).

Members are paid a salary and an allowance for secretarial and office expenses; after a Parliament is dissolved all seats are subject to a General Election. By-elections take place when a vacancy occurs during the life of Parliament, as when a member dies, is elevated to the House of Lords or accepts an “office of profit” under the Crown.

The Speaker of the House of Commons is elected by the members from the members to preside over the House immediately after each new Parliament is formed. He is an impartial arbiter over Parliamentary procedure and the traditional guardian of the rights and privileges of the House of Commons.

The supremacy, or sovereignty, of the United Kingdom Parliament is probably the most basic principle of British constitutional law. Parliament has of its own will settled the duration of the life of a Parliament, acts in such way as not to bind its successors in the manner or form of their legislation, and, in the Parliament Acts of 1911 and 1949 has provided that in certain circumstances a Bill may become a law without the concurrence of all the component parts of Parliament. These two Acts have clarified the supremacy of the House of Commons over the House of Lords, which can only delay the passage of Public Bills for a maximum period of one year and cannot delay at all the passage of Money Bills (financial measures).

Study in detail:

Word study:

1. Use the context to help you to decide what the following words probably mean:

peer/peeress
constituencies
suffrage
by-election

2. Find words or phrases in the text that mean the following:

- a) to place under legal obligation
- b) agreement, accord
- c) to cause something to wait

3. Many words belong to families. If you know just one word in a family, you will be able to work out the function and meaning of many other members of that family. Quickly scan the text to find one other word which is related to each of the following:

- a) judiciary
- b) constitution
- c) guard
- d) represent
- e) supreme
- f) elect
- g) amend

Can you think of other words in each family?

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

Parliament	House of Commons	MPs
Government	House of Lords	

- a) The _____ makes the important decisions about how the country is run.
- b) _____ is made up of the various bodies which must approve the Government's decisions, and has the power to force Government to change its mind.
- c) The _____ is the place where Government decisions are criticised and assessed.
- d) The _____ is the second chamber where changes in laws can be suggested.
- e) _____ represent one of the UK's 651 constituencies.

5. Read once again the text carefully to answer the following questions:

Is the UK legislature composed only of the House of Lords and the House of Commons?

- a) Is Parliament a democratically elected body?
- b) What is the difference between the Commons and the Lords?
- c) Which of the three categories of Lords Temporal do you think are called “The Law Lords”?
- d) Can a judge become a Member of Parliament?
- e) People who work in government departments cannot become Members of Parliament. What are they called?
- f) Can Parliament pass any law it chooses, or are there constitutional limits on its power?
- g) From what you have read, can you see any external limit to Parliamentary sovereignty?

6. *Transfer the main points of the text to the chart, showing the main components of the Parliament in the UK.*

Parliament

* Queen in Parliament (Monarch, House of Commons, Lords) is supreme authority

*
*
*

<i>The House of Lords</i>	<i>The House of Commons</i>
* not elected, mainly hereditary	*elected by almost universal adult suffrage
*	*
*	*
*	*
*	*
*	*

7. *Use the information in your chart and the vocabulary you have learnt to describe the UK legislature.*

Start like this: “The UK legislature is also called the Queen in Parliament. It is composed of the Monarch, the House of Lords and the House of Commons. One Parliament cannot last for more than

Members of Parliament

Members of Parliament (MPs) represent one of the 651 constituencies in the UK. British elections are usually fought between political parties, not individuals. Therefore, people who want to get elected to parliament need to be nominated by one of the main political parties.

There is nothing to stop unconventional candidates from standing for election, however. A candidate has only to put down a deposit of 500 and collect ten signatures from residents in the constituency where they want to stand. A candidate who gets less than 5% of the total votes loses their deposit. For somebody who is standing for election for publicity purposes, this is a small price to pay. It is rare for candidates who are not nominated by one of the main parties to keep their deposit.

MPs do not represent a political party; they are elected to be the Member of Parliament for a constituency. Although MPs will support a particular party, they are not controlled by that political party and theoretically do not have to vote with their party in parliament. MPs represent everyone in the constituency, not just the people who voted for them.

MPs` Work

This principle means that a lot of an MP`s work has nothing to do with voting in parliament. There are hundreds of things MPs have to deal with in the day-to-day business of constituency life, such as housing or health problems. MPs are there to help people and to try to make sure they get their entitlement under the law.

Some MPs hold an advice bureau, or surgery, in their constituencies, where people can go for advice or to question them. Anyone who feels they have been unfairly treated by central government can complain to their local MP who will do their best to see that problem is solved.

MPs have to work long hours and it is a stressful job. They do not do it for money.

What type of people might stand for parliament in Britain?

Is it a job you would like to do?

Minority Representation

There is concern that there are few women and members of the ethnic minorities in parliament. In 1979, Margaret Thatcher became the first woman Prime Minister, yet she never appointed a woman to her Cabinet, and until 1983 the proportion of women elected to the House of Commons was under 5%. In the election in 1992, 52 women were elected to the House of Commons. This total is still below the proportion in other European countries.

Although the Conservatives choose few women as their candidates for House of Commons' seats, women are very active in the affairs of the party as a whole. Labour have also tried to appeal to women voters by giving women prominent positions. In all parties, a higher proportion of women is elected to local councils than to the House of Commons.

The House of Commons had two members of Indian origin in the 1890s but there were none from 1929 to 1987. In the 1980s people complained that local parties would only choose black or Asian candidates for seats which they could not win. There was even a demand for a certain quota of black MPs to be present in the Labour party, but this plan was rejected. In 1992 five black or Asian Labour candidates were elected to the House of Commons and a further four were defeated. The Conservatives had seven black or Asian candidates – all but one were defeated.

1. Pick out from the text "Minority representation" all the word combinations with the following words:

minority	position
proportion	council
appoint	origin

2. Make the following sentences complete by translating the words and phrases in brackets.

1. There is concern that there are few women and members (этнических меньшинств) in Parliament.
2. Until 1983 (соотношение женщин), elected to the House of Commons was under 5%.

3. Labour have also tried to appeal to women voters by giving women (руководящие должности).
4. There was a demand for a certain quota of Black MPs to be present in the Labour Party, but this plan (был отвергнут).
5. The Conservatives had seven black or Asian candidates – all but one (проиграли).

3. *Answer the following questions:*

1. What is there concern about a number of women in Parliament?
2. Who was the first woman Prime Minister in the UK? When did she become Prime Minister?
3. Is the proportion of women in the House of Commons below or above the proportion in other European countries?
4. Is a higher proportion of women elected to local councils or to the House of Commons?
5. How many black or Asian candidates were elected to the House of Commons from the Labour party? From the Conservative party?

Is there a woman in the house?

Women have been taking up seats in Parliament since 1920. You are going to read an interview below with five women MPs about the pressure and prejudice they still face today.

Edwina Currie

This place is full of people whose way of thinking is amazingly old-fashioned. When my novel was published, I was talking to a journalist friend when a male colleague came and put his arm around me. I introduced him to the journalist and the MP said: “I’ve always said we shouldn’t have women in this place. They aren’t suited for it. They ought to be at home looking after the children”. The journalist’s mouth dropped open. My own feeling is that when we get 200 women here, this tone will disappear.

Being a Parliamentarian is a very demanding job. It means conflict between home and occupation for both men and women. It is no ordinary job – you must have a huge amount of commitment and energy.

Harriet Harman

If Parliament is to include women, it has to be run in a different way. The issues for me are different to the issues for male MPs because they might have a wife who's taking responsibility for their children, whereas I don't, I became a new MP and a new mother at more or less the same time. Both of these were overwhelming experiences. One of the critical things for me is that my constituency and home are in London and only 15 minutes from the Houses of Parliament.

In the future women in Parliament will not be an issue. We'll be here in equal numbers and on equal terms.

Tessa Jowell

I do feel fortunate that I am a London MP and live at home. My little boy is very interested in politics and likes coming along. But it's not a building which is terribly well organised for children. There's only one family room. I manage because my husband is incredibly supportive.

What I'm doing is what so many women up and down the country are doing with no recognition at all. It is a fact that as women increasingly combine home and career they are coming under pressure to strike a balance between the two jobs. There are some wonderful women in Parliament and I think we're working co-operatively more and more. That's something women are better at doing than men.

Anne Coffey

I think my career has made life very difficult for my 17-year-old daughter. She was 14 when I was elected and it was very disruptive for her since I had to leave her during the week. Her exam results were terrible. I'm convinced that if she had had a more stable situation, she would have done better.

I think it's very difficult to escape from this type of guilt if you are a woman, but if I hadn't become a politician and stayed at home I would simply have ended up reproducing my mother's life. If you put your children first, then you limit the world for yourself. Nothing prepares you for the complexity and enormity of this place, and I had problems at first due to ignorance of how things work.

Diana Maddlock

I knew that Parliament would be a strange place and I would be surrounded by arrogant men, but the reality was 20 times worse. Gaining my seat has been quite an upheaval. I have a pager, so my two teenage daughters can always get a message to me.

As I've become more involved with politics over the years it has played a greater part in their life. But they both did well in their exams this year, so it can't have affected them academically.

During my campaign newspapers described me as a "nice, grey-haired granny type". Yet I see these characteristics as being important as it means I can relate to people.

1. *Whom do these words about Parliament belong to?*

Old-fashioned way of thinking, demanding job, ordinary job, strange place, arrogant men, complexity and enormity of the place.

2. *For the following questions choose from the list of women (A-E) :*

A Edwina Currie

D Tessa Jowell

B Harriet Harman

E Anne Coffey

C Diana Maddlock

Which of the women MPs:

- is also a writer?
- complain about the attitude of male MPs to women?
- think there will be no problem with female MPs in the future?
- mention women's difficulties in other areas as well?
- thinks it is an advantage to be an older-woman in Parliament?
- complains about the arrangements for children in Parliament?
- feels female MPs work together more than men do?
- feels that her work has harmed her family?
- thinks Parliament should change fundamentally?
- thinks male and female MPs face the same type of difficulty?
- live near the Houses of Parliament?

Electoral System

1. Read the text quickly and try to understand what it is about and what information is of primary importance or new to you.
2. Write down the names of Britain's political parties at the time of writing.
3. Read the text quickly to decide if the UK electoral system is generally fair or unfair. Find at least three reasons for the answer. Do not try to understand the text in detail for this activity.
4. Pick out an idea or a phrase, which you think is most informative from each paragraph.
5. Read and memorise the active vocabulary to the text.

eligible	подходящий, могущий быть избранным
constituency	избирательный округ
delimitation	определение границ
reselection	перевыборы
expenditure	трата, расход
bribery	взятка
obtain	достигать, добиваться
rival	соперник
accentual	подчеркивать, выделять
impetus	импульс, толчок

Every British citizen aged eighteen years or over who is not serving a sentence of imprisonment and is not a peer is eligible to be placed on the electoral register in a constituency. Normally this involves residence in the constituency on a certain day (10 October) but members of the armed forces and now British citizens who live abroad but have been registered within the previous five years can be entered on the register. At the moment there are 651 constituencies, the boundaries being drawn by impartial Boundary Commissions whose recommendations need the approval of both Houses of Parliament. Their impartiality has not prevented their recommendations being highly controversial as the way the boundaries are drawn can profoundly affect the electoral prospects of a particular area and can turn a safe seat into marginal one and vice versa.

Not only the delimitation of boundaries but the choice of candidates by the parties profoundly affects the extent to which the voters' wishes are reflected in the House of Commons because the voter can only choose between rival candidates. Unlike the USA where in some states voters through primaries have a voice in choosing between the parties candidates, each party here has its own method for choosing candidates. The Labour Party insisted that all Labour MPs must undergo a reselection process if they wished to be candidates at the next General Election. Anyone can form a political party, as happened in 1981 when the Social Democratic Party (SDP) was launched. Though election law puts strict limits on expenditure during an election campaign, to prevent bribery and corruption, it is very expensive to fight an election, particularly as national propaganda does not count towards election expenses. The Labour and Conservative parties draw their financial support mainly from the trade unions and industry respectively. The other parties have no such firm financial base and to that extent suffer a considerable electoral disadvantage. Their main disadvantage is, however, the British electoral system. Electors vote in their constituency and whichever candidate obtains most votes is elected an MP, even if he or she obtains only one vote more than his or her nearest rival and only a small percentage of the total vote. This system works best when there are only two parties, though even then it is possible for a party to obtain more votes over the country as a whole but have fewer seats in the House of Commons because its support may be unevenly distributed, so that it obtains big majorities in some seats and loses narrowly in others. This result is accentuated when there are three or more parties. A third party like the Liberals or now the Social Democratic and Liberal Alliance, whose support is spread fairly evenly throughout the country, is likely to win few seats but some second in many. Thus in the General Election of 1993 the Alliance obtained 25 per cent of the vote but only 4 per cent of the seats. Small parties like the Scottish National party, whose support is concentrated in a particular part of the country, are more likely to win seats.

It is this lack of correlation between votes and seats which has given a strong impetus to the call for a different electoral system which would allow voters to express preferences between candidates so that if their first-choice candidate is not elected or has not received sufficient votes to be elected, his second-preference votes can help to elect that candidate. Thus these votes are not completely wasted and a candidate may be elected because more voters have put him as their second choice. This system of voting can be used for one MP, i.e. in single-member constituencies (the alternative vote), or for several MPs, i.e. in multi-member constituencies (the single transferable vote). These systems give more chance to a third party such as the

Alliance to win seats, because its candidates can be elected by being the voters' second choice.. If this system were adopted in this country it would be very unlikely that either of the two main parties would win an overall majority of seats (i.e. more seats than all other parties combined) and this would have a profound effect on who would form the government.

1. *In the sentences below, fill each blank space with a suitable word from the word family given in CAPITALS on the right:*

- a) Members of the lower house of the American Congress are called _____ (REPRESENT).
- b) Nearly all British citizens over the age 18 are members of the _____ (ELECT).
- c) The district _____ is the official who _____ births, marriages and deaths in a certain area (REGISTER).
- d) In the British constitution the Queen in Parliament is the legislative _____ (SOVEREIGN).
- e) Many British _____ are in favour of changing the _____ system (VOTE, ELECT).
- f) Sums of money which are _____ to pay fees to lawyers are called legal _____ (SPEND).
- g) Dangerous criminals are always sent to a/an _____ where there is very strict security (PRISON).
- h) For the purposes of tax, a person is _____ in the UK if she/he stays there for more than six months of the year (RESIDE).
- i) Parliament _____ the _____ of the special Commission last week (APPROVE, RECOMMEND).
- j) Direct _____ to the European Parliament are held every five years (ELECT).

2. *Match each word to the correct definition from the list below:*

- a) eligible
- b) constituency
- c) boundary
- d) impartial
- e) safe seat
- f) marginal seat

Choose from:

- 1) electoral area in which an MP is elected by only a small majority

- 2) suitable, with the right qualifications
- 3) electoral area in which it is certain that the candidate of one particular party, e.g. Labour, will win
- 4) dividing line that marks the limit between two areas
- 5) electoral area in the UK which is represented by a member of Parliament
- 6) fair, not favouring one more than another

3. *Work out the meaning of the following words, then choose the correct form of one of them to complete the sentences which follow:*

- 1) reconsideration
- 2) reorganisation
- 3) to re-state
- 4) to rewrite
- 5) to rearrange
- 6) to remarry

- a) There are three spelling mistakes in this letter, will you _____ it, please?
- b) He _____ soon after his divorce from his first wife.
- c) She is ill, so her appointments will have to be _____ .
- d) After careful _____ of the facts, the Committee changed their original decision.
- e) At the protest meeting last Monday the council representative _____ the official arguments in favour of the new road.

4. *Read the text carefully and for each of the following choose one correct answer from the four alternatives:*

1) The Boundary Commissions

- a) decide the exact boundaries of constituencies;
- b) draw their support from different sections of the electorate;
- c) make recommendations about constituency boundaries which people do not always agree with;
- d) make recommendations which favour the Conservative Party.

2) Party candidates

- a) are chosen by voters;
- b) are chosen differently in each party;
- c) reflect voters' wishes in the Commons
- d) must be reselected if they want to be candidates in more than one General Election.

3) Expenditure during an election campaign

- a) officially includes national propaganda;
- b) encourages corruption;
- c) does not include election expenses;
- d) is strictly limited by law.

4) The money needed by political parties in Britain comes from

- a) different sources;
- b) national propaganda
- c) industry
- d) the trade unions.

5) In Britain

- a) to be elected, a candidate must have more than a small percentage of total votes in a constituency;
- b) it is always a disadvantage for a party to have unevenly distributed support in the country;
- c) the Social Democratic and Liberal Alliance became the second party in 1993
- d) it is possible for a party to obtain a large percentage of total votes, but only a small percentage of seats in the House of commons.

6) Many British people are in favour of changing the electoral system because they want

- a) a system which would give a single party an overall majority in the Commons;
- b) to elect the Alliance;
- c) a system in which the number of seats a party obtains corresponds to the number of votes they win;
- e) to elect second-choice candidates.

5. Read the text and answer the following questions:

- a) Who makes the recommendations which Parliament must approve?
- b) Do voters help to choose electoral candidates in some USA states? In the UK?
- c) What kind of party will not win many seats at an election even if it has quite a lot of support in the country?
- d) Why is the Scottish National Party more likely to win seats in Parliament than a party like the Liberals?

- e) If there are two parties in Britain, when can the one which gains more than 50 per cent of the votes obtain less than 50 per cent of the seats in the House of Commons?

8. *Using the text and information from the completed exercises above be ready to talk about the UK electoral system. Include the following points:*

- a) The Electorate: who can vote?
- b) Parliamentary constituencies: number of constituencies, role of the Boundary Commissions, political effects of drawing boundaries.
- c) Parliamentary candidates: who chooses candidates, now?
- d) Financing political parties: expenditure during election campaigns, who finances parties?
- e) The electoral system: which candidates are elected? the importance of the distribution of political support in the country.
- f) Electoral reform: reason for changing the system, possible alternative systems, possible effects of electoral reform on UK constitution.

Complete the sentences using the words given in the box.

Controlled, collect, hold, constituencies, put down, deposit.

- 1. Members of Parliament represent one of the 651 _____ in the UK.
- 2. A candidate has only to _____ a deposit of £500 and _____ ten signatures.
- 3. A candidate who gets less than 5% of the total votes loses _____.
- 4. Although MPs will support a particular party, they are _____ by that political party.
- 5. Some MPs _____ an advice bureau, or surgery, in their constituencies.

How Laws Are Made

Once MPs take their seats in parliament their most important job is to participate in parliament's main role, which is to make legislation. Every year, parliament passes about a hundred laws directly, by making Acts of Parliament. Because this can be a long process, parliament sometimes passes a very general law and will leave a minister to fill in the details. In this way, it indirectly passes about 2,000 additional rules and regulations.

No new law can be passed unless it has completed a number of stages in the House of Commons and the House of Lords. The monarch also has to give the Bill the Royal Assent, which is now just a formality. Since the sixteenth century the monarch has never refused assent. Whilst a law is still going through parliament it is called a Bill. There are two main types of Bill – Public Bills and Private Bills.

Public Bills

These are the most important, as they are intended to affect the public as a whole. They can be either be sponsored by the Government, when it wants to put new policies into effect, or they can be sponsored by an individual MP. These are then called Private Member's Bills and often concern moral issues. The Murder (Abolition of the Death Penalty) Bill began as a Private Members Bill. These should not be confused with Private Bills.

Private Bills

These give particular powers or benefits to any person or body. They are intended to affect only one particular area or organisation, not the whole country. The stages through which they pass are essentially the same as for Public Bills.

Before a Bill Reaches Parliament

Bills are prepared by a Department of State, such as the Department of Education and Science, the Home Office or the Foreign Office. A Bill can be preceded by a Green Paper, which gives a general idea of what the Government intends to do. At this stage, people who might be affected by the new law are invited to give their views. However, it is more common for a White Paper – a more definite statement of what the Government plan – to precede a Bill.

Before a Bill can go through all its stages in parliament it has to be written down, or drafted. The Bill has to be exact, so that no misunderstandings can occur and so it can be understood by as many people as possible.

First and Second Readings

In the days before printing, the only way MPs could find out what a Bill contained was by having the contents read out to them. Therefore the next stages within parliament are known as `readings`, although now MPs do have a printed copy! The first reading lets MPs know that the Bill is coming up for discussion. There is no voting at this stage. The second reading explains the purpose of the Bill, and the House has to vote on it. If the House votes for the Bill, it proceeds to the Committee stage.

Comprehension Check:

Answer the questions:

1. What is a Bill?
2. Who may introduce a Bill?
3. What types of Bill are there?
4. What body are Bills prepared by?
5. What is a Green Paper?
6. What is the purpose of the three readings?
7. What happens when a Bill passes through all stages?
8. In what case does a Bill become a law and out of Parliament?

Briefly describe how a Bill goes through parliament in your own words. How efficient and democratic is this process, in your opinion?

The Executive

1. Read the text quickly and try to understand what it is about and what information is of primary importance or new to you.
2. Write down the law terms, known to you, in Russian.
3. Write a list of international words used in the text. Use the dictionary to check their exact meaning.
4. Pick out an idea or a phrase, which you think is most informative from each paragraph.
5. Read and memorise the active vocabulary to the text.

The Lord Chief Justice	Лорд-главный судья
Lords of Appeal in Ordinary	Назначаемые члены палаты лордов по рассмотрению апелляций
Lords Justices of Appeal	Лорды - апелляционные судьи
Chancellor of the Exchequer(Treasure)	Министр финансов
Attorney-General	Генеральный атторией (англ. приблизительно соответствует ген. прокурору)
Solicitor-General	Генеральный солиситор, заместитель генерального атториея
Lord Advocate	Лорд-адвокат, ген. прокурор по делам Шотландии
Solicitor-General for Scotland	Генеральный стряпчий по делам Шотландии

The government consists of the ministers appointed by the Crown on the recommendation of the Prime Minister, who is appointed directly by the Crown and is the leader of the political party which for the time being has a majority of seats in the House of Commons. The office of Prime Minister dates from the eighteenth century and is the subject of a number of constitutional conventions. The Prime Minister is the head of the government and presides over meetings of the Cabinet; by convention he is always a Member of the House of Commons. He consults and advises the Monarch on government business, supervises and to some extent co-ordinates the work of the various 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 Cabinet is the nucleus of government, its members consist of a small group of the most important ministers who are selected by the Prime Minister. The size of the Cabinet is about 23 and its principal function, much of the work being carried out in Committee, is to determine, control and integrate the policies of the government for submission to Parliament. The Cabinet meets in private and its deliberations are secret; no vote is taken, and, by the principle of “Cabinet unanimity”, collective responsibility is assumed for all decisions taken. If a minister cannot agree with all the others, he usually resigns from the Cabinet.

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 (e.g., the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs; Chancellor of the Exchequer (Treasury); Secretary of State for Social Services); non-departmental ministers (e.g., Lord President of the (Privy) Council, Paymaster-General, Ministers without Portfolio); ministers of state (additional ministers in departments whose work is heavy); and junior ministers (usually known as Parliamentary Secretary or Parliamentary Under-Secretary) in all ministries and departments.

The Lord Chancellor and the Law Officers of the Crown deserve special mention at this point. 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 for certain judges. He advises on, and frequently initiates, Law reform programmes with the aid of the Law Commissions, the Law Reform Committee and ad hoc committees. The four Law Officers of the Crown include, for England and Wales, the Attorney-General and the Solicitor-General for Scotland. The English Law officers are usually members of the House of Commons and the Scottish Law Officers may be. They represent the Crown in civil litigation, prosecute in certain exceptionally important criminal cases, and advise government on points of Law. They may appear in proceedings before the International Court of Justice, the European Commission of Human Rights and Court of Human Rights. They may also intervene generally in litigation in the United Kingdom as representatives of the public interest.

The United Kingdom 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. The Lord Chancellor is concerned with the composition of the courts, with civil law, parts of criminal procedure and law reform in general; the Home Secretary is concerned with the prevention of criminal offences, the apprehension, trial and treatment of offenders, and with the prison service.

Study in detail:

Word study:

1. Choose the right meaning. Find and study the sentences in the text containing the words in capitals in this exercise. First decide from the context what you think the word could mean, then choose the appropriate dictionary definition.

a) OFFICE

- 1) room used as a place of business
- 2) buildings of a government department
- 3) public position of authority

b) SUBJECT

- 1) any member of a State except the supreme ruler
- 2) a topic or argument which is talked, written about, or studied

c) SEAT

- 1) something for sitting on, e.g. a chair
- 2) a place where something is located or based
- 3) a parliamentary constituency
- 4) membership in a legislative body

d) BUSINESS

- 1) buying, selling, commerce, trade
- 2) affairs, matters
- 3) shop, commercial or industrial enterprise

e) APPOINTMENT

- 1) arrangement to meet somebody
- 2) position or office

f) SUBMISSION

- 1) act of accepting the power or authority of another
- 2) legal theory, opinion presented to a judge or jury
- 3) the act of presenting something, e.g. a plan or document, for consideration

2. Comprehension check

Read the text and answer “true” or “false”

- a) The Prime Minister is appointed directly by the Crown
- b) The Prime Minister’s party has the majority of seats in the House of Commons
- c) The office of Prime Minister dates from the sixteenth century
- d) The Prime minister is a member of the House of Lords
- e) The Cabinet is chosen by the voters
- f) All Cabinet ministers must agree in public
- g) The Prime Minister does not have to explain his or her actions
- h) The Lord High Chancellor of Great Britain is a member of the Cabinet.

3. Answer the following questions

How is the Prime Minister selected in the UK?

- a) What is the relationship between the Prime Minister and the monarch?
- b) What is the relationship between the Cabinet and Parliament?
- c) What is the vital difference between the role of the Cabinet and the role of government ministries or departments?
- d) What is the role and functions of the Lord Chancellor in the UK?
- e) Who is the UK Minister of Justice?

4. *Transfer the main points of the text to the chart showing the main components of the system of government in the UK.*

The Government

Ministers appointed by monarch on PM’s recommendation

*
*
*

The Cabinet

* about 23 most important ministers
*
*
*
*

The Prime Minister

* head of Government
*
*
*
*
*

5. *Use the information in your chart and vocabulary you have learnt in the exercises above to describe the UK executive.*

List of Sources

1. Britain Now. – BBC English, 2004.
2. Riley A. English for Law. – New York, London: Phoenix, 1996.
3. Paul Harvey, Rhodri Jones. – Britain Explored. – Longman, 2006.