

Topic: The British Parliament: A journey of a bill into a law

Level: B2/upper-intermediate

Time: 1h (60 min)

Aims:

- To develop students' ability to listen to and extract information from a video clip
- To practise students' speaking skills for giving opinions and justifying them
- To develop students' knowledge of British culture

Introduction:

This lesson focuses on developing students' knowledge of the UK, in particular of the British parliamentary system. It also aims to develop and practise students' communication skills through watching a video about the British Parliament and discussing current political issues in a students' home country. The video clip can be accessed from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1KFGt9M-j28>

Preparation:

Task 3 – Listening: The stages of passing a bill into a law.

For this task, cut up '**Task 3 – Listening**' (at the end of this lesson plan) into sets of 9 strips each. Prepare one set of strips per pair or small group.

Optional: Instead of cutting the stages up, you can ask students to write their answers on their Students Worksheets.

Procedure:

Warmer – Speaking: Government in your country (5 mins)

- Put up the word 'government' on the board and elicit from students any words related to this topic.

Suggested answers: democracy, election, opposition, MPs, political party, the Speaker, Houses, vote, ballot, bill, law, debate, sessions, pass a new law, constituency, agreement

- Get students into the groups of 4. Ask them to discuss the questions in **Warmer – Speaking: Government in your country** task.
- Collect class feedback.

Task 1 – Pre-listening: Quiz about the British Parliament (10 mins)

- Divide students into pairs and give each pair a copy of **Task 1**.
- Students need to choose a correct answer to the quiz questions about the British Parliament. They compare their answers with another pair. Don't give them the correct answers yet.

Answers: 1a 2b 3b 4a 5b 6a 7b 8a

Task 2 – Listening: The British Parliament Quiz (10 mins)

- Students watch the video to check their answers to Task 1.

Task 3 – Listening: The stages of passing a bill into a law (10 mins)

- For this task you can either give students a set of cut-up stages of a bill or get them to write their answers on the Student Worksheet.
- Ask students to discuss in pairs the likely order of these stages first.
- Get students to watch the video again and put the strips in the correct order.

Answers: 1g 2c 3a 4b 5e 6f 7d 8h

Tip: Weaker students might need to watch the video twice for this task.

Task 4 – Post-listening: Summary completion (5 mins)

This task aims to consolidate students' knowledge about the parliamentary system in Britain and to give students more practice of the new vocabulary from the listening stage.

- Give students a copy of **Task 4**. Ask students to complete the text with the correct words from the box. Remind them that there are three extra words in the box which are not used in the text.

Tip: With stronger students, you can encourage them to complete the text without looking at the word box. They can check their answers with the box once they've filled in the gaps.

*Answers: 1bill 2 government 3 MPs and Lords 4 amendments 5 both Houses
6 accepted 7 agreement 8 say 9 monarch 10 Royal Assent*

Words not used in the text: improvements signed decision

Task 5 – Speaking: Group discussion (20 mins)

- Get students into groups of four. Give each student a copy of **Task 5**.
- Tell them to decide on two issues from the box which are top priorities in their group.
- Ask them to think about their reasons for choosing these topics and suggest some possible solutions to the problems.
- Once they're ready, students share their group's ideas with the whole class.
- Feed back on any errors that occurred during the discussion stage.

Possible follow-up task - Writing: An article about parliament in your country

This task can be set up as homework to consolidate students' knowledge of parliamentary systems and the lexis related to this topic.

- Ask students to write an article (250 words approx.) about the parliament (or government) in their country for a well-known travel company. They need to include some information about the structure of the government, number of members and their job, and the procedure of introducing new bills. Encourage students to compare any similarities between this parliament and the one in the UK.

a) The bill is closely examined in both Houses of Parliament.

b) MPs and Lords make changes to the bill.

c) A government minister explains reasons for the bill and answers any questions.

d) The bill is sent to the monarch for final approval.

e) MPs and Lords take a vote on the bill.

f) Both Houses have to agree on the bill before it becomes a new law.

g) A new bill gets introduced in Parliament.

h) The bill officially becomes a new law of the land.
