

### 1. A new government

This week's lesson is about the recent British general election, which provoked renewed debates about the merits of the electoral system and eventually resulted in something very unusual in British political history: a coalition government.

### Level

Upper intermediate and above (equivalent to CEF level B2 and above)

### How to use the lesson

1. Ask your students what they know about British politics. Are they aware that there was recently a general election? Do they know what the result was? Do they know anything about the parties, or individuals, who took part? Are they aware of any differences, or similarities, between the political system in Britain and the one in their country?
2. Give your students between five and ten minutes to read through Worksheet A, encouraging them to look up new vocabulary. Tell them they are going to answer a series of questions on the text, but that they shouldn't write anything down at this stage.
3. Divide the students into pairs and hand out Worksheet B. Ask them to work together to complete the different types of comprehension questions in Exercises 1 and 2.
4. Check answers in open class. At this point, based on the text, you could again invite comparisons between political situations in Britain and in your students' country.
5. Next, ask the students to turn over their copies of Worksheets A and B or to hand them back to you temporarily. Keeping the students in their pairs, ask them to attempt Exercise 3 on Worksheet C, which contains the text from Worksheet A with 30 mistakes that they have to identify and correct. Point out that the mistakes are not evenly spaced: some lines in the text might have more than one mistake, and some have none. Also explain that the mistakes are all grammatical or lexical, and that no correction requires them to write more than one additional word.
6. Check answers in open class. If you wish, hand out Worksheet D, which contains the full text with all the mistakes corrected in bold.

## Answers:

### Exercise 1

1. F 2. T 3. D 4. F 5. F 6. T 7. T 8. D 9. F 10. T 11. D 12. T

### Exercise 2

1. Smaller parties.
2. They have both become more moderate.
3. A hung parliament is a situation in which no party has a majority in parliament, or in other words, no party has more votes than all the other parties put together.
4. Because their share of seats in parliament is significantly lower than their share of the national vote (which derives from there being 650 separate local elections in which only the winning parties send a representative to parliament, rather than a system of proportional representation).
5. In the way that the 'alternative vote' system would be more proportional than the present system, but not as proportional as the system the Lib Dems wanted.

### Exercise 3

See Worksheet D.

## 2. Related Websites

Send your students to these websites, or just take a look yourself.

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk\\_politics/election\\_2010/default.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk_politics/election_2010/default.stm)

Comprehensive coverage of the British general election from the BBC. Challenging for upper intermediate level.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/general-election-2010>

The *Guardian*'s election coverage. Challenging for upper intermediate level.

<http://ukelection.blogs.cnn.com/>

For a slightly different perspective, a CNN blog (videos and text) provides a view of the British election from the United States. Challenging for upper intermediate level.