

What Is the UK Parliament?



EDUCATION
SERVICE

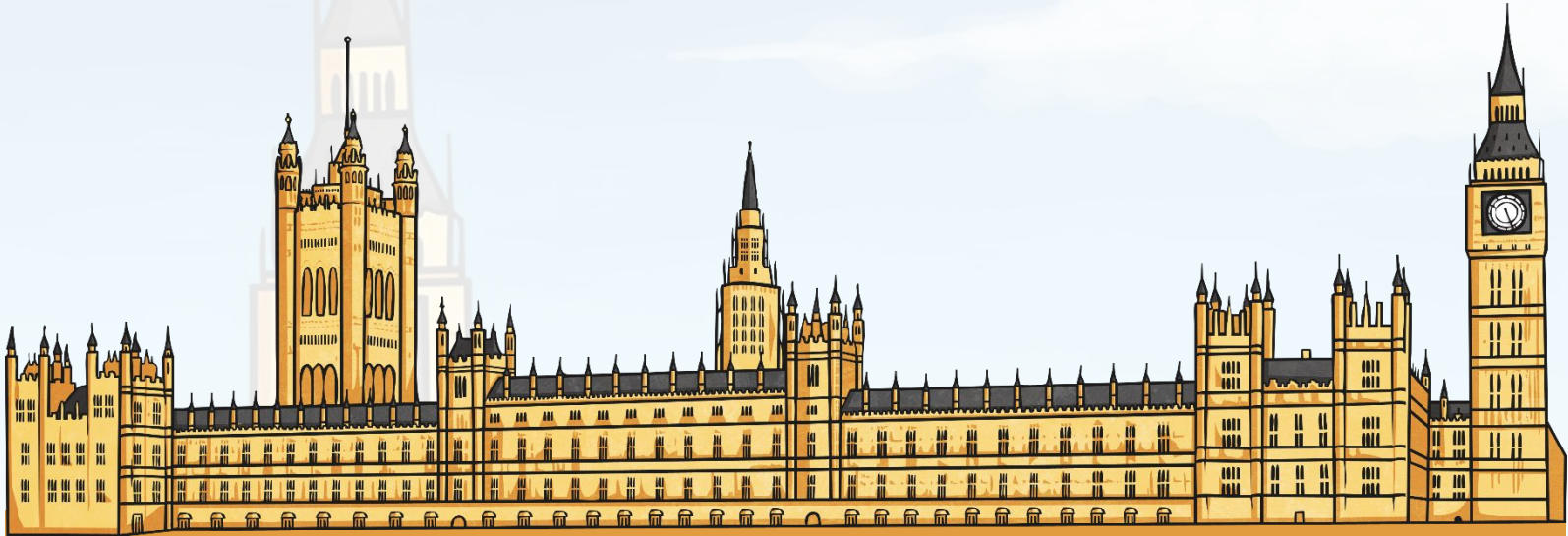
Aims

- To explain the structure of Parliament (including the House of Commons, the House of Lords and the Monarch), the role of Parliament and how it differs from that of the Government.

Success Criteria

- I can identify the three parts that make up Parliament: the House of Commons, House of Lords and the Monarch.
- I can explain what happens in Parliament and what each of the three parts is responsible for.
- I can differentiate between the role of Parliament and the role of the Government.

UK Parliament



Lots of things that affect our lives, such as schools, hospitals and the environment, are discussed in Parliament. But what is Parliament?

Key Words

House of Lords

Member of the
House of Lords

Government

Parliament

Law

Election

MP

Debate

House of
Commons

[Key Words List](#)

Where Is the UK Parliament?

The Houses of Parliament, also known as the Palace of Westminster, is in the centre of London.

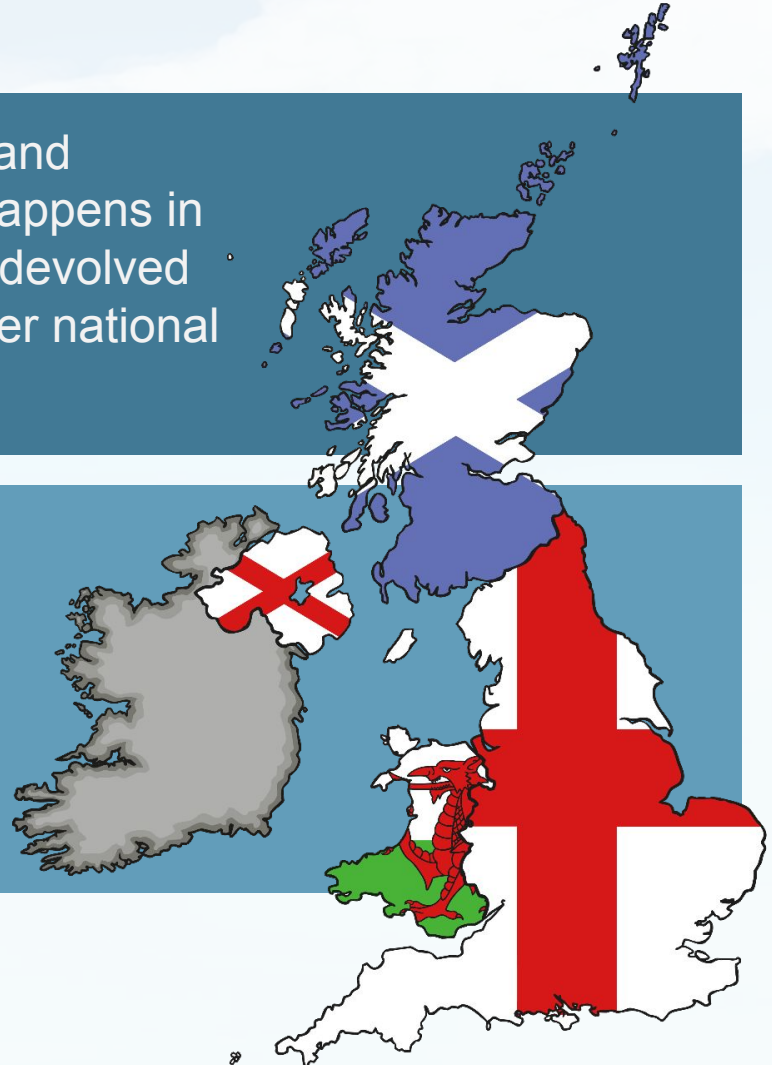
It is one of the most iconic buildings in the world and includes the green-coloured benches in the House of Commons Chamber and the red-coloured benches in the House of Lords Chamber. It also includes the famous clock tower, popularly known as Big Ben.



Where Is the UK Parliament?

To give the people of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland more say over what happens in their countries, the UK Parliament has devolved (given away) some of its powers to other national and regional bodies.

For example, in Scotland there is a Scottish Parliament, which has elected members who make some decisions for Scotland. There is also the National Assembly for Wales and the Northern Ireland Assembly.



What Is the UK Parliament?

Parliament is made up of three parts: the House of Commons, the House of Lords and the king or queen – known as the Monarch.

The House of Commons is made up of Members of Parliament (MPs). MPs are elected to represent our views in the House of Commons.

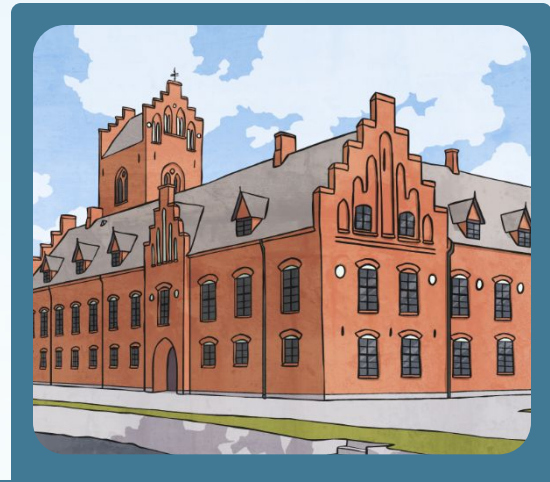
In the House of Lords, members are appointed from inside and outside of Parliament, based on their special experience and knowledge, to check and challenge the work of the Government.

The role of the Monarch is mainly ceremonial these days. The Monarch meets the **Prime Minister** once a week to hear what's going on in Parliament, signs new laws (gives Royal Assent) and attends the State Opening of Parliament.

What Does Parliament Do?

The main work of Parliament is to:

- check and challenge the work of the Government;
- make and change laws;
- debate the important issues of the day.



The issues discussed in Parliament affect us all and include health, the environment, transport, jobs, schools and crime.

Is Parliament Different from the Government?

Yes! The Government's job is to run the country. Parliament's job is to check and challenge what the Government does.

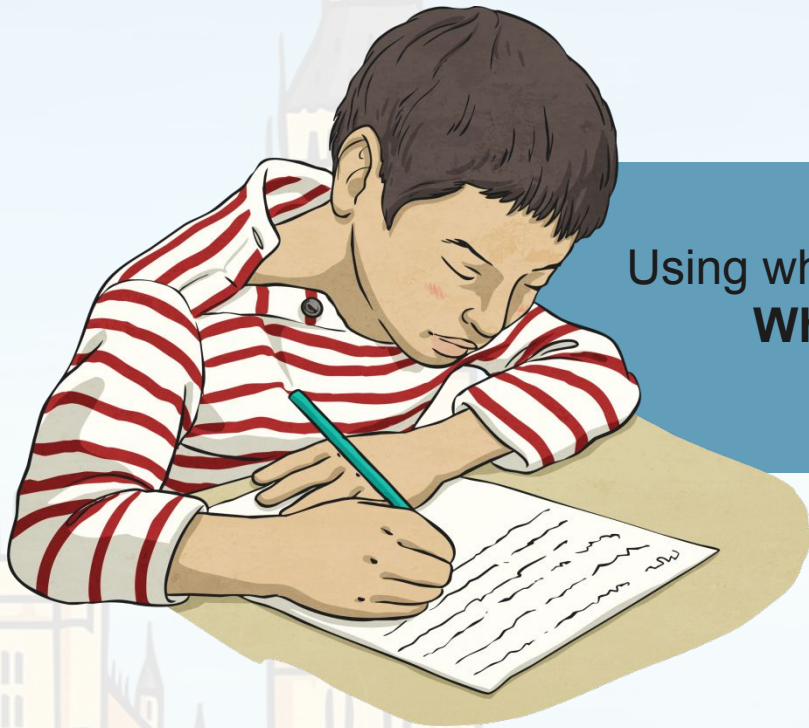
The UK usually holds a general election every five years. After the election, the party with the most MPs can then form the Government.

The leader of the winning party becomes the Prime Minister and chooses a team of MPs and members of the House of Lords to form the Government.

MPs and Lords who are not part of the winning party become the Opposition. They check and challenge the ideas of the Government through debates and questions.

There are also many Lords who are not members of either the Government or the Opposition. They don't belong to any political party. They are called 'crossbenchers' as they sit across the middle of the House of Lords Chamber.

What Is the UK Parliament?



Using what you have learnt, complete the
What Is the UK Parliament?
Activity Sheet

[MORE ABOUT THE PARLIAMENT](#)



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