

Topic: Systems of government

Lesson 1: What is the role of an MP?	KS or Year Group: KS 3
Resources: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Resource 1 - What does an MP do?2. Activity 1 (students' version)3. Activity 1 (teachers' version)4. Resource 2 - MP job description	Outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• All students will have an understanding of what an MP is, be able to give at least one way in which an MP works and understand some of the arguments over who an MP works for.• Most students will have good understanding of what an MP is, be able to give several ways in which an MP works and give an argument over who an MP works for.• Some students will have good understanding of what an MP is, be able to give several ways in which an MP works, and make a judgment over who an MP works for.

National Curriculum

Key Concepts: 1.1d, 1.2b

Range and Content: 3c

Lesson 1

This lesson aims to give students an overview of what an MP is and what they do. They should also be able to consider in what ways MPs represent them, and also in what ways MPs do not help them. The plenary discussion also aims to stretch the more able students.

Starter

Distribute copies of **Resource 1 - What does an MP do?**

- Sentence rearranging: students should rearrange the sentences so they make sense. This can also be done as an ICT activity, using Magnet.
- This should introduce students to the very basics of the topic (e.g. what MP stands for).
- This can be either projected via an interactive whiteboard or handed to students on printouts. More adventurous teachers can cut up the individual words and ask students in small groups to rearrange them if you want a more kinaesthetic activity.

What is the role of an MP?

Main activity

Activity 1:

- The aim of this activity is to present students with the basics of what MPs do and who they represent. It is also a more inventive way of presenting them with the information needed to complete Activity 2.
- Using the resource **Activity 1 (students' version)**, students should attempt to match up each sentence to the correct picture. The sentences can be cut up by students and then stuck down next to the appropriate picture. There are two sets of sentences on the page to allow for easier photocopying.
- Teachers can check against **Activity 1 (teachers' version)** to check what the correct order is.

Activity 2:

- This section serves to consolidate students' knowledge of the role of the MP. Students should complete the activity in **Resource 2 - MP job description**. They should outline what the role of an MP is, along with thinking about what qualities an MP has or should have (e.g. 'devoted to helping people', 'loyalty', etc).
- This activity can be done in pairs, although for ease of assessment it may be better suited to an individual task which the teacher can mark at the end of the lesson.
- As a point of information, MPs do not have an official job description nor is there a defined list of things which MPs have to do. Like many other things to do with Parliament, it is decided by convention and history.

Plenary

In this activity students should discuss the role of the MPs. In groups of three, students should debate the loyalty of MPs and who they really serve. One person in the group should act as the MP, one person should act as a constituent and the other person should act as the leader of the party. They should discuss the question *'Who should the MP be more loyal to - their party or their people?'*

Teachers can use prompting statements for students to use for the less able and may prefer to give the more difficult role of deciding the answer to the more able students. Prompt questions could include 'As a constituent you voted the MP in to power. Without you, the MP wouldn't have any power.' Or 'The people didn't just vote for an MP, they voted for the party too.' Teachers may also prefer to base the discussion around an issue, whether national (e.g. the Iraq war) or local (e.g. closing a local hospital).

Aim high

Most differentiation will occur in the plenary, where there is a chance for much more discussion. The nature of the roles in the discussion can be changed and the level/simplicity of the prompt questions can be changed too.

What is the role of an MP?

Assessment

Assessing the MP's job description will serve as a useful chance to see how much of the first activity has sunk in.

Check the web

<http://www.explore.parliament.uk>

<http://www.parliament.uk/about/how/members.cfm>

http://www.parliament.uk/documents/upload/YAYMP_English.pdf

<http://www.theyworkforyou.com/>

Summary of key learning

- Students will understand what an MP does.
- Students will be able to debate who an MP works for.

What is the role of an MP?

Resource 1 - What does an MP do?

Rearrange the five sentences below to make a proper sentence:

1. Member stands Parliament MP for of.

.....

2. vote MPs Elections our We at for General.

.....

3. is 60,000 one people MP There for very roughly.

.....

4. areas represent MPs are which constituencies local.

.....

5. party MPs political represent a also.

.....

What is the role of an MP?

Activity 1 – Students' version

			
			

What is the role of an MP?

MPs can help their constituents by holding surgeries where local people can discuss their problems...	BUT, MPs aren't always the best person to see. If you have a local problem (like not having your bins collected) you should see your local councillor.	... and represent the concerns of their constituents in Parliament by asking questions in the House of Commons.	MPs can help their political parties by becoming Ministers (people who run government departments like the Treasury).
Sometimes they must support a policy their party tells them to – even if you don't agree! It is up to MPs to decide who to stay loyal to – you, or their political party.	If a candidate wins the most amount of votes, they will represent their constituency .	MPs stand for election every time there is a General Election (normally every 4 or 5 years).	Once elected they will sit in the House of Commons representing their chosen political party.

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What is the role of an MP?

Activity 1 – Teachers’ version

			
<p>MPs stand for election every time there is a General Election (normally every 4 or 5 years)</p>	<p>If a candidate wins the most amount of votes, they will represent their constituency.</p>	<p>Once elected they will sit in the House of Commons representing their chosen political party.</p>	<p>Sometimes they must support a policy their party tells them to – even if you don’t agree! It is up to MPs to decide who to stay loyal to – you, or their political party.</p>
			
<p>MPs can help their political parties by becoming Ministers (people who run government departments like the Treasury)</p>	<p>BUT, MPs aren’t always the best person to see. If you have a local problem (like not having your bins collected) you should see your local councillor.</p>	<p>MPs can help their constituents by holding surgeries where local people can discuss their problems...</p>	<p>... and represent the concerns of their constituents in Parliament by asking questions in the House of Commons.</p>

What is the role of an MP?

Resource 2 – MP job description

Job Title: Member of Parliament



Your role:

Outline here what you would be expected to do.

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-
-

Your qualities:

Say here what would make a good MP.

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-
-

Interested in becoming an MP? You will have to:

How do people become MPs? Write down what they have to do to become one.

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