

50 The British Houses of Parliament

Asking questions

This party of school students from Manchester are visiting London. They're at the Houses of Parliament. Their teacher takes them inside and their local MP (Member of Parliament) meets them. They ask lots of questions.



Enter ★

1 Make these statements into questions to ask the MP.

a) Those are the Houses of Parliament.

Are those the Houses of Parliament?

b) The Queen is the head of State.

c) There are three main political parties.

d) There are more women MPs than men MPs.

e) There are a lot of black and Asian MPs.

f) There is tight security at the House of Commons.

We expect the answer *Yes* or *No* to this kind of question.

Can you answer your questions?

2 Work in pairs. One of you is a student and the other is the MP. Take turns to ask questions about these things. Use these question words: *who what how where*

a) number of MPs

b) home of the Prime Minister

c) name of the bell in the clock tower

d) name of the river next to the House of Commons

e) leader of the government

f) MPs have lunch

Take turns to ask and answer. Choose from the following answers.

659 No 10 Downing Street Big Ben
Thames in restaurants around Westminster
The Prime Minister

Can you answer this:

Who is the British Prime Minister today?

Step up ★★

1 Read about the students on page 123. Make these statements into questions for the MP.

a) Visitors are allowed to watch MPs debating.

Are visitors allowed to watch MPs debating?

b) You can vote when you are 16.

c) You have to be searched before you go into the House.

d) Elections have to be held every four years.

e) There are a lot of civil servants.

We expect the answer *Yes* or *No* to these kind of questions.

Answer your questions and then add this information to your answers:

Nearly 500,000 18 Public Gallery every time 5

2 Work in pairs. Ask each other these questions about your own country.**3** The students listen to a talk by a historian about the battle for votes for women in Britain.

In 1903 a group of women led by Mrs Sylvia Pankhurst began a long campaign to win votes for women. They were called the suffragettes. The women didn't just write letters and have meetings. They took direct action. They needed publicity. They had to make people listen. They chained themselves to railings. One went to the National Gallery in London and cut a painting of a naked woman with a knife. They marched through the streets. They set fire to letters in post-boxes. One threw herself in front of the king's horses.

Many suffragettes died for their cause. Others were arrested, kicked and beaten by the police. The public watched and laughed at them. They were taken to prison. They went on hunger strike and refused to eat. The prison doctors fed them by force, pushing a tube down into their stomachs. One woman was force-fed 232 times.

The First World War (1914-18) helped the suffragette cause. While the soldiers were away in France, women took over men's jobs, like farming and making bullets. Men had to agree that women contributed as much as men. Women finally won equal voting rights with men in 1928.



Now write five questions about the suffragettes, using these question words:

who what when why where

Work in pairs. Take turns to be the historian and one of the students.

Ask and answer your questions.

Fly ★★★

1 Read about the students on page 123. The MP is now asking them questions about their visit. Make question-and-answer dialogues with this information.

a) You've been to London before. (No)

- Have you been to London before?
- No, we haven't.

b) You've been on the London Eye. (Not yet, this afternoon)

c) You've travelled on the Underground. (You got lost!)

d) You've visited Madame Tussaud's. (The queues were too long.)

e) Londoners have been friendly. (Most of them)

f) You'll come to London again (?)

2 Read the information about Guy Fawkes. Write ten *Wh-* questions about him and 5 November with the question words below. Then compare your questions with a partner's. Choose the best ten to ask another pair.

How Where Whom What Which Whose When Who Why

On the night of 5 November, 1605 Guy Fawkes and a group of Catholic gentlemen crept into the cellars under the Houses of Parliament. It was dark and quiet. They had brought barrels of gunpowder with them. They positioned the barrels carefully to cause maximum damage.

Why? Well, the king, James I, was a Protestant. Guy Fawkes and his friends wanted a Catholic king. So it was about religion.

Guy Fawkes had been betrayed, however. When he struck a match to light the fuses, the king's soldiers jumped out from the shadows. They had been waiting for him. He was caught, tortured and executed. His head was stuck on a pole for everyone to see.

We still celebrate his failure in Britain today. On the evening of 5 November there are fireworks and big bonfires all over the country. And before the Queen officially opens Parliament each autumn, her guards check in the basement of the Houses of Parliament for barrels of gunpowder.



3 Now ask another pair your questions. This time add 'Do you know' to the beginning of each one. Look at these examples. What happens to the verb after 'Do you know'?

When did Guy Fawkes try to blow up the Houses of Parliament?

Do you know when Guy Fawkes tried to blow up the Houses of Parliament?

What was it like in the cellars?

Do you know what it was like in the cellars?