

What affects the choices that voters make in General Elections?



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QdQ8R4ECxfM>

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- Watch this video carefully!! You are listening out for answers to the questions below.
 - What did Rishi Sunak say about why he decided to call a General Election?
 - What claims did he make to support his view that he is the best person to lead the country for another 5 years?
 - What national and international problems did Rishi Sunak discuss – and what does he say about the impacts they have had on the UK and its people?
 - What did Rishi Sunak NOT say about the problems that the UK has faced since 2019?
 - Extra challenge – what music starts to play? Why was this significant?

Core information on General Elections – as we discuss this, add additional points to your notes

- They are usually held every 5 years
- They are elections to choose Members of Parliament, who represent different constituencies across the UK
- The UK is divided into 650 constituencies each containing around 73,000 registered voters
- Generally speaking, those over 18 are able to vote, but must register to do so and must now provide ID when they cast their ballot.
- Most people vote in person at a polling station but some choose to use postal votes which have to be submitted by 10pm on Election Day. Other people might choose to nominate a proxy – someone they trust to cast their vote for them.
- Voters are able to choose from candidates from different political parties
- Political parties campaign for around 4-6 weeks on manifestos – these contain promises that they aim to implement if they win.
- To win a constituency (also referred to as a seat), candidates must win a simple majority of the votes cast. They then become the MP for that constituency.
- To win the election, parties must win an absolute majority of the 650 seats in the Commons. This is 326 seats.
- If no party wins 326 seats, the largest party can form a government, either on its own (called a minority government) or by having an agreement to work with a smaller party who will support the government. The smaller party will usually want concessions from the larger party in order to secure their support. This is called a coalition.



What affects the ways in which people vote in General Elections?

- The study of elections and voting is called PSEPHOLOGY. Psephologists are interested in two big questions. What influences the choice to vote at all? What influences the way in which people vote? (Who they vote for)
- If you could vote – would you? If not, why not?
- If you would vote, do you know who you would vote for?
- How have you reached this decision?
- Think about family and friends who are old enough to vote – think about how they might answer the questions above? Would they be different?



Two models of voting...

- Long term sociological – PRIMACY factors

- Short term – RECENCY factors



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aTYDgj84j2w>

Professor Sir John Curtice of Strathclyde University

Expert in psephology – what this man doesn't know about voting behaviour in the UK is not worth knowing....



- Who are Conservative voters and why?
- Who are the groups that are likely to vote for Labour or other left-wing parties?
- Which three groups are less easy to predict and why?
- What do you notice about what kinds of vote are more split – on the left or on the right? For which part(ies) does this matter more?
- What does Curtice say is the big reason why the campaigns have not engaged more disengaged voters?
- Why does this matter?
- **Annotate your six core voting groups sheet with answers to these questions.**



Over the summer....

- Read the resource list on the school website. Make sure you turn up in September with the required equipment!
- Start to listen to ONE of the recommended UK podcasts. You won't understand all of it (or even most of it!!!) to begin with but you'll learn fast.
- Read the General Election workbook and complete all tasks in it. You can do this electronically or print yourself a paper version. You will need to bring this to your first Politics lesson in September.
- And a date for your diaries – Wednesday 6th November – trip to Parliament and the UK Supreme Court. Details to follow in September.