Why vote?

Topic

General elections

Aims

- To give learners an insight into how UK general elections work
- To develop learners' knowledge of political lexis and give them the opportunity to use it
- To develop learners' awareness of the use of the first conditional and to allow them to practise this in a semi-structured speaking activity.

Age/level

Teenagers and adults
CEFR level B1

Time

80 minutes

Materials

1. *General Election Explained* video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XySYvf8nBD0
2. vocabulary cards (one set per three learners, cut up)
3. worksheet (one per learner)
4. role cards (one set per three learners, cut up)

Introduction

This lesson gives learners an insight into how UK general elections work and helps them develop their knowledge of political lexis and practise their speaking skills.

In the lesson, learners watch the beginning of a short video entitled *General Election Explained*, which can be used to spark debate and provide background knowledge. They will consider why it is important to vote and take part in a role play in which political candidates try to persuade people to use their vote.

Procedure

Warmer: Discussing reasons to vote (5 minutes)	• Tell learners that they are going to learn about general elections and voting. Elicit the meaning of the verb *to vote* (to choose the political candidate you think is best). • Write the lesson heading, *Why vote?*, on the board and give learners two minutes to work in groups of three and discuss possible answers to this question. • Ask learners to report back to the class on their ideas. Possible answers include:

	➢ You can vote for the kind of government which will make life better for you and the people around you. ➢ In a democratic country everyone's vote is important. ➢ It is important to care and take an interest in how your country is run. ➢ Across the world people have died fighting for the right to vote.
Task 1: Vocabulary – politics (10 minutes)	• Tell learners that they are going to watch a video and that you are going to give them some vocabulary which will help them understand the video. • Distribute the cut-up vocabulary cards and ask learners to work in their small groups to match the cards as quickly as they can. • Conduct class feedback. Model and drill the correct pronunciation of the new vocabulary (ask learners to help you mark word stress on the board). Answers: ➢ 1f, 2d, 3a, 4b, 5j, 6i, 7h, 8g, 9c, 10e • Learners continue working in their groups, taking it in turns to 'test' each other on the new vocabulary by saying one of the words and asking others in their group to remember what it means.

Task 2: Video – General understanding (15 minutes)	• Tell learners to work in pairs to write down questions they would like to ask about UK general elections, e.g.
	    ➢ *What do candidates do before an election?*
	    ➢ *What are the main political parties in the UK?*
	 • Write learners' questions on the board.
	 • Play the first 3.16 minutes of the video. Learners discuss with their partners which of their questions have been answered.
	 • Conduct feedback. Ask learners to tell you which of their questions have not yet been answered. (You can try to answer learners' questions yourself or you can set this as a homework activity.)

Task 3: Video – Detailed understanding (15 minutes)	• Learners watch the video again until 3.16 and complete the exercises on the worksheet. (Although there are three different exercises, the answers come chronologically in the video, i.e. you can answer all the true or false questions before choosing the names of the candidates, and you hear the two pupils last.)
	 • If necessary, play the video again, pausing to allow learners to check their answers.
	 • Learners compare answers in groups then check together as a class. Answers:
	    ➢ 1. false (2010), 2. false (a comedian), 3. true, 4. true, 5. false (six), 6. true
	    ➢ a. Daisy, b. Naz, c. Adrian
	    ➢ i. You get to make a choice about what your country's going to be like.
	      ii. If you want to make a change and you want what you want to happen, then you have to vote.

Task 4: Vocabulary review (10 minutes)	• Elicit some of the vocabulary that learners learned at the beginning of the lesson, e.g. *politician*, *election*, *candidate*, etc. • Tell learners that they have two minutes to work with their groups and write as many sentences as they can about the video they have just watched. Each sentence must contain one of the new words. • Conduct feedback, writing learners' sentences on the board and awarding points for sentences which are correct and use the new vocabulary accurately. Examples:

	➢ *There are six candidates in the election.* ➢ *The candidates want to be MPs.* ➢ *The candidates speak to the voters.* ➢ *The general election was in 2010.*

Task 5: Role play – preparation (10 minutes)	• Elicit the terms *voter* and *candidate* from the learners. Ask learners, *Who votes at an election? Who wants to be elected?* Recap how people in the video (both candidates and young people) answered the question, *Why vote?*
	• Write the question *Why should I vote?* on the board. Give learners one minute to work in pairs and brainstorm as many negative answers to this question as possible. Write all ideas on the board. Possible answers:
	  ➢ *I don't trust politicians. What's the point?*
	  ➢ *The parties are all the same.*
	  ➢ *My vote won't make any difference.*
	• Write the following sentences on the board and elicit the name of this structure (first conditional):
	  ➢ *If you vote for me, you won't regret it.*
	  ➢ *If you don't vote, you won't be able to complain about the result.*
	• Elicit why the first conditional is being used here (we use this for promises, predictions and warnings). Drill the sentences chorally and individually, focusing on pronunciation and sentence stress.
	• Write the following sentence heads on the board and ask learners to complete with their own ideas, using the first conditional structure:
	  ➢ *If you vote for me, ...*
	  ➢ *If you don't vote, ...*
	  ➢ *If candidates meet a lot of voters, ...*
	  ➢ *If you go to the polling station on election day, ...*
	• Conduct feedback and write learners' ideas on the board. Example answers:
	  ➢ *If you vote for me, I'll build better hospitals.*
	  ➢ *If you don't vote, you won't have a voice.*
	  ➢ *If candidates meet a lot of voters, they'll win a lot of votes.*
	  ➢ *If you go to the polling station on election day, you'll have to give your address.*

Task 6: Role play – planning and speaking (15 minutes)	• Divide the class into two groups. Give each learner in one group role card A. • Divide the second group in half. Give half the learners role card B each and half the learners role card C each. • Give learners five minutes to read their role and discuss in their groups what they are going to say (although it's important that each learner has their own ideas). • Conduct the role play either in pairs (one learner A with one B or C) or as a class mingle. If in pairs, rotate the learners so that each A talks with several Bs and Cs. Monitor and offer support where necessary. • Feed back any common errors you notice (in particular with the new vocabulary and the first conditional). Ask learners if they would vote, who for and why.
Extension activity	• Learners could make a leaflet or design a Facebook page encouraging young people to become more politically active.