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# THE LONG JOURNEY

**100 YEARS OF DEMOCRACY IN BRITAIN**  
EFL/ESOL VERSION FOR ADVANCED LEARNERS



**Part 1** 40mins x 2 session on voting in general elections

**Part 2** 40mins x 2 session on local government democracy

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# PART 1: ROLE-PLAY EXERCISE

To proceed, we will have to hand out a number of papers.

*Hand these out in this order, explaining what they are as you do so:*

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**1.** A small slip of paper that gives you the identity of a resident in the borough of Makebelieve in January 1906. For the purposes of this election you will adopt the identity of this person. Try to think your way into the mindset of this person and how he or she would vote in 1906.

*You could turn the slips over, or conceal them in a hat or container. Offer them to participants as if they were choosing a card or a raffle ticket. This means that the slips for males and females can be handed to either male or female students. Thus either sex could end up role-playing the other – indeed the exercise will be more effective if some gender roles are reversed*

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**2.** Here are the manifestos of the two candidates. Read the lists of policies and decide who you wish to vote for.

**3.** Here is a ballot paper each where you put a cross beside the name of the person you want to vote for. Please note that since 1872 the ballot has been secret, so you do not have to show your slip to anyone else.

*Give the participants enough time to study the candidates' manifestos. Try to answer any questions they may have. Note that the manifestos are based on authentic policies of the time.*

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Please put your cross beside your preferred candidate, fold it in two, and then queue up to cast your vote, which will go into the ballot box in front of me. Also bring your identity slip with you.

*The participants form a queue.*

*When they have done so (deliver this part slowly and clearly):*

---

Oh, by the way, as this is an election in the year 1906, there are certain laws in place about who exactly is allowed to vote. You will have to look at your identity slips to see if you qualify.

**1.** If you are a ratepayer (a local tax payer), that is, if you own a house in the borough, or if you pay rent, then you may vote. So all those who do not own a house or pay rent, please stand over there.

*Indicate a spot in the room where all non-voters may stand together.*

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**2.** If you are under 21 years of age, you may not vote. Please stand aside if you are under 21.

**3.** If you are a graduate of a university you may vote.

**4.** If you have not been resident in the borough for at least 12 months, you may not vote. So please stand aside.

**5.** If you are a woman, you may not vote. Please stand aside.

# PART 1: ROLE-PLAY EXERCISE

*You should now be left with about 30% of the participants who are qualified to vote. If in doubt, check the colour-coding on the ID slips. Only those with a blue identity slip may vote. Make sure that you keep those who can vote physically separate from those who may not, e.g. a group on the left and group on the right.*

---

Please go ahead and place your votes in the ballot box. Thank you.

*If available, other presenters can play the roles of counting officers and the seminar leader can play the role of returning officer. The counters count the votes for each candidate. The returning officer will announce the result. If others are unavailable the presenter can play both roles.*

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***Address all the participants***

---

Would the result have been the same if all of you could have voted?

*Use a show of hands to see if the same candidate would have won. The likelihood is that the other candidate would have won.*

---

***Address those who were not allowed to vote.***

---

How did you feel about not being able to vote?

*Elicit replies. Point out to the indignant that this is probably how many Britons felt in 1906.*

---

***Turn to those who did have the vote.***

---

How did you feel about having a vote when so many others did not?

*Elicit replies*

---

I should now point out that those of you who were allowed to vote here, may also vote in other constituencies if you own property there. This was called plural voting rights for property owners. If this really were 1906 you could now go off and vote in as many constituencies as you have properties. How many of you could do that? How many places can you vote in?

*(Elicit answers)*

---

What do the voters and voteless think about that?

*(Elicit answers)*

---

***Address the voteless group:***

---

Still imagine it's 1906.

# PART 1: ROLE-PLAY EXERCISE

Do you want to do anything about not having a vote?

*(Elicit brief replies)*

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**Address the voting group:**

---

Would you wish to do anything to help the others get a vote?  
What could you do?

*Ask participants to form small groups, say 4-6 strong, to brainstorm what they could do to win votes for all. Point out that they are still playing the roles indicated on their identity slips. This may mean that boys play the roles of women seeking the vote.*

*Allow groups to read their lists to the others. Encourage discussion of practicalities and the likely effects of their strategies and tactics.*

*Point out what actually happened in the case of votes for women. Hand out copies of "The Long Journey to Universal Democracy in Britain", especially the section on "The Struggle for Women's Right to Vote". Compare these with the students' comments on how they would have conducted such a campaign and invite discussion. Of particular interest is the question of whether violence, militancy and extra-legal behaviour delay reforms or speed them up.*

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*Repeat the vote taken at the outset:*

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Please raise your hands all those who think it is important to vote in general elections.

*Record the result. Again, you could also record the views expressed by male as opposed to female students.*

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All those who think it's important to vote in local elections.

*(Record the result.)*

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All those who think it's important to vote in European elections.

*(Record the result.)*

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*Compare the results.*

*Have some participants changed their minds about the importance of voting?*

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Has this role play changed your mind, or reinforced your views about the importance or not of voting? Why do you think there is so much apathy among British voters, especially among younger voters? Are there similarities or parallels in your own country?

*(Elicit answers)*

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*Copy and handout "Why so many British people do not vote"*

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# THE LONG JOURNEY: 100 YEARS OF DEMOCRACY IN BRITAIN

## LANGUAGE PRACTICE

THE FOLLOWING LANGUAGE EXERCISES ARE BASED ON THE LANGUAGE TO BE FOUND IN THE LONG JOURNEY HANDOUT PAGES.

### COMPREHENSION

Read the text 'Why so many British people do not vote'. Say whether the statements below are true or false. Put T or F beside them. If they are false, write a sentence or two to explain why.

- 1 All of the cynical non-voters are apathetic.
- 2 A blank vote in Britain would make a point.
- 3 Many voters are put off voting by the behaviour and tactics of politicians.
- 4 Being 'telegenic', that is attractive on television, is a disadvantage to ambitious politicians.
- 5 The first-past-the-post system means that it is easy for a new party to win seats in parliament.
- 6 Power in Britain is widely shared across Parliament, the regions and local government.
- 7 People's reasons for not voting can be contradictory.
- 8 Multinationals are always stronger than governments.
- 9 It is impossible to win an election if a candidate does not belong to a big party.
- 10 For some people not voting is a positive act.

### WORD BUILDING

#### A Fill in the noun forms of the verbs in brackets.

- 1 The \_\_\_\_\_ of the television revolutionised the way political parties conducted their campaigns. (invent)
- 2 The \_\_\_\_\_ of women is a big issue in democracies. (treat)
- 3 The \_\_\_\_\_ of a new government always raises people's \_\_\_\_\_ (elect, expect)
- 4 The new democracies of the early twentieth century had to fight for their \_\_\_\_\_ (survive)
- 5 In a democracy, citizens can take their \_\_\_\_\_ to their elected \_\_\_\_\_ . (complain, represent)
- 6 In Britain \_\_\_\_\_ are taken by Ministers sitting in Cabinet meetings. (decide)
- 7 Pressure for the \_\_\_\_\_ of slavery in the USA in the 1850s and 1860s led to civil war. (abolish)
- 8 Party manifestos show the \_\_\_\_\_ the party intends to take if it gets into power. (direct)

#### B Find more examples of nouns in the hand-out texts and create an exercise similar to A above. Hand this to a partner to fill in. Take this back when your partner has finished and check the answers.

#### C Fill in verb forms of the nouns in brackets.