

# An introduction to Parliament – Level 1 walkthrough

This guide offers a suggested user path suitable for 7–11 year olds

This walkthrough covers:

1. Getting started

2. Main menu

3. House of Commons

4. House of Lords

5. Monarch

6. Parliament and government

7. Next steps

## 1. Getting started

The first screen introduces you to the resource and allows you to choose your **level** settings and **on-screen prompt** preferences.

Level 1 is suitable for 7–11 year olds and it is the default setting for the resource.

On-screen prompts suggest an activity path for you to follow through the resource. They are turned 'on' as the default setting and are recommended for first time visitors.

To change your settings preferences at any time click on the **settings** box in the side menu. Within the settings box you can also select your preferences for **text colour** and **sound effects**.



### An introduction to Parliament

What's in the red box? Enter the famous Houses of Parliament to explore:

- what happens in Parliament
- how Parliament is different from government
- Parliament's three parts: House of Commons, House of Lords and the monarch

Click on the red Parliament box to start now, or customise your settings below.

Level  1  2  3

On-screen prompts  on  off

save settings



### Settings 1/2

Close X

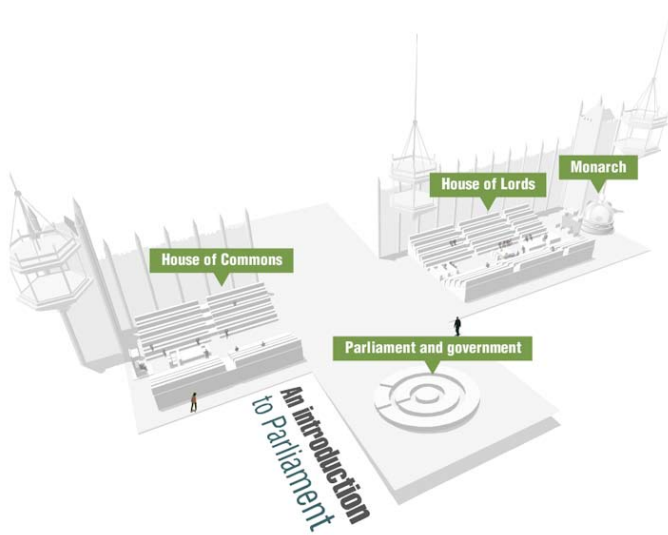
Select your settings and click Save. Please note, changing settings mid-activity will reset the resource and your work will be lost. Click Next to change Sound and Text colour settings.

Level	On-screen prompts
<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1	<input checked="" type="radio"/> On
<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> Off
<input type="radio"/> 3	

Save settings

To enter the Houses of Parliament, click on the red box. If you've already rolled over the red box with your mouse, it will have expanded to reveal an outline of the Palace of Westminster – click on this to start.

## 2. Main menu



An introduction to Parliament's four primary activities can be accessed from the **main menu**.

Question 1/5 close X



Where is the UK Parliament?

- Cardiff
- London
- Edinburgh

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reveal answer

When you first arrive at the main menu, you are presented with a five-question quiz about Parliament. Use the arrow icons to click through the question screens. Check your responses using the **reveal answer** button.

You can access these questions at any time from the **resources** box in the side menu.

Explore Parliament close X

Visit the **House of Commons** to find out about MPs.

You can also skip the questions – by closing the question window – and move straight to the main activities.

When you've finished with the questions and return to the main menu, an on-screen prompt will appear. This prompt will guide you through the four activities in the order outlined below.

Explore Parliament close X

click to expand

You can click on the title bar to minimise (or hide) a prompt and click on the bar again to maximise (or reveal) it.

### 3. House of Commons

**House of Commons: test your knowledge** close X



Politicians who work in the House of Commons are called Members of Parliament, or MPs.

**How much do you know about MPs?**

Try this quick quiz...

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From the main menu, click on **House of Commons**. You are now within the House of Commons Chamber. When you first arrive you're presented with a three-question quiz. You can either answer these now or close the question window and access the quiz any time via the **resources** box in the side menu.

EDUCATION SERVICE

**MPs and the House of Commons** close X



Level 1

- Commons Chamber
- main menu
- resources
- settings
- links

rotate >

There are six information points to discover in the House of Commons:

- Government front bench
- Opposition front bench
- Prime Minister
- Leader of the opposition
- Speaker
- House of Commons Chamber

Click on the **rotate >** icon to see three different views of the chamber. You can access all six information points from each perspective.



**Government front bench** close X

MPs that help the Prime Minister run the country are called government ministers.

find out more

rotate >

Initially, information points are shown as spheres. When you click a sphere it will transform into an icon, with a title bar.

Click on the title bar to reveal the description panel. You can then click **find out more** to reveal an image and extra information.

When you've accessed all six information points and finished exploring the House of Commons, click **main menu** to continue.

## 4. House of Lords

Question 1/3 close X



Most Lords are appointed by the Prime Minister. Approximately how many people belong to the House of Lords?

- 850
- 750
- 650

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reveal answer

From the main menu, click on **House of Lords**.

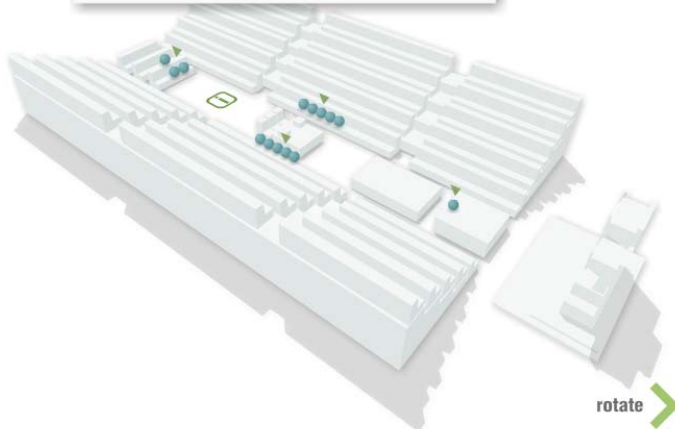
You are now in the House of Lords Chamber.

Like the House of Commons, this activity starts with three questions. You can either answer these now or close the question window and access the quiz any time via the **resources** box in the side menu.

**Inside the House of Lords** close X

Click on each icon to learn more.

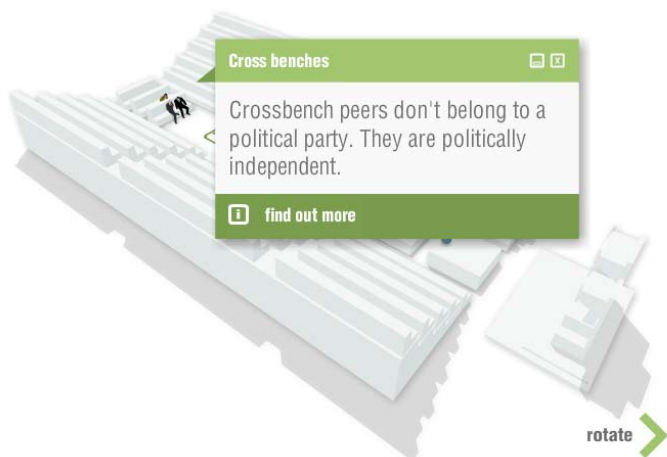
When you've finished, return to the main menu.



There are five information points to discover in the House of Lords:

- Government benches
- Opposition benches
- Cross benches
- Lord Speaker
- House of Lords Chamber

There are three views of the House of Lords Chamber. Use the **rotate** > icon to switch between views.



As with the House of Commons, click on the spheres to reveal icons, titles and key facts.

Click on **find out more** to access images and further information.

When you've accessed all five information points and finished exploring the House of Lords, click on the **main menu** to continue.

## 5. Monarch

Parliament and the monarch close X



Queen Elizabeth performs several duties that contribute to how the UK is governed and how Parliament goes about its work.

**So what does the monarch do in Parliament?**

See if you can answer these questions...

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From the main menu, click on **Monarch**.

This launches a window containing information and a three-question quiz about the role of the monarch in the UK parliamentary system

Question 3/3 close X



Who does the Queen summon to Buckingham Palace following a general election?

- leader of the party with the most MPs elected
- Lord Speaker
- Archbishop of Canterbury

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reveal answer

These questions are **not** available via the resources box, so you may choose to focus on them now.

When you have answered the questions about the monarch, click on the **main menu** to continue.



## 6. Parliament and government

**Activity: Parliament and government** close X



Confusing Parliament and government is easy. Both are made up of MPs and Lords. Both get involved in making laws. But not every member of Parliament is a member of the government.

Play with the icons in this activity and explore which is which.

Click close to start exploring.

From the main menu, click on **Parliament and government**.

This launches a window introducing the activity.

This activity is different from the previous ones and is designed to explore the differences between Parliament and the government.

EDUCATION SERVICE

House of Commons 1/9

Level 1  
Parliament and government  
main menu  
resources  
settings  
links  
+ □



Government ministers

Prime Minister

MPs and Lords

Individuals groups departments highlight mode delete mode reset

In this activity you build up a picture of both Parliament and the government by adding icons to the three concentric circles or rings. (Instructions on how to add, move or delete icons are shown below.)

You have the option of building your diagram with the help of on-screen prompts or working without on-screen guidance.

### On-screen prompts

On-screen prompts guide you through the activity step-by-step with a set of nine instruction slides. Additional guidance and support for each prompt is provided in the Parliament and government walkthrough below.

You can work through these steps at your own pace using the arrows to move back and forth through the prompts.

Prompts can be turned 'on' or 'off' in the **settings** box in the side menu. You may wish to work without on-screen guidance once you're familiar with the activity, or if you'd prefer to develop your own approach.

While the on-screen prompts offer a suggested way of building a picture of Parliament and the government, there's no set way of using the icons or building your picture. The resource will not evaluate your finished diagram. Levels 2 and 3, however, do provide pre-prepared diagrams with which to compare your own picture.

## Parliament and government – level 1 walkthrough

These notes will help you make the most of the resource.

The **prompt instructions** below mirror the on-screen prompts. They also provide guidance and suggestions for adding icons, labels and descriptions. The **key points and notes** indicate relevant learning points to support your lesson and linking notes act as signposts allowing you to make connections within the activity itself.

Prompt/ slide number	Instruction	Key points and notes
1	<p><b>House of Commons</b></p> <p>Drag some icons to represent MPs onto the <b>MPs and Lords</b> ring.</p> <p><b>Suggestion:</b></p> <p>Add individuals and/or groups of MPs to the ring.</p> <p>You might group them together on one side so they can represent the House of Commons on the <b>MPs and Lords</b> ring.</p>	<p><b>Key points:</b></p> <p>There's one MP for every constituency in the UK.</p> <p>Each MP is elected to the House of Commons at a general election by the people in their constituency.</p> <p>Most MPs belong to a political party.</p> <p>When MPs get to Parliament they help to make laws and important decisions on behalf of the people of the UK.</p> <p>They also represent their constituents' interests in Parliament.</p>
2	<p><b>House of Lords</b></p> <p>Add some Lords icons to the <b>MPs and Lords</b> ring.</p> <p><b>Suggestion:</b></p> <p>Add individuals and/or groups of Lords to the ring.</p> <p>You might group them separately from the MPs, so they can represent the House of Lords on the <b>MPs and Lords</b> ring.</p>	<p><b>Key points:</b></p> <p>The House of Lords has about 750 members.</p> <p>Lords aren't elected like MPs. Most are appointed by the Prime Minister.</p> <p>Some people are Lords because of the positions they hold – such as the Church of England bishops.</p> <p>Because Lords have often had distinguished careers they can bring expertise in all kinds of areas to the work of Parliament, particularly debates and lawmaking.</p> <p>Most Lords belong to one of the main political parties (Labour, Conservative and the Liberal Democrats), or are independent 'crossbenchers' – they don't have a political affiliation.</p> <p>A smaller number of Lords are bishops, or don't fall into one of the above categories.</p>

Prompt/ slide number	Instruction	Key points and notes
3	<p><b>The Prime Minister</b></p> <p>Add an icon to represent the Prime Minister to the centre ring, next to the 10 Downing Street icon.</p> <p><b>Suggestion:</b></p> <p>You might want to select an individual icon already on the MPs and Lords ring to become your Prime Minister.</p> <p>Click on 10 Downing Street for more about the Prime Minister's duties and office.</p>	<p><b>Key points:</b></p> <p>The leader of the party with the most MPs elected to the House of Commons is asked by the Queen to form a government. He or she then becomes Prime Minister.</p> <p>The government – or executive – is in charge of running the country. In the UK, the government is drawn out of the legislature, or Parliament.</p> <p><b>Linking note:</b></p> <p>The next slide looks at government ministers and departments.</p> <p><b>Student question:</b></p> <p>Does the Prime Minister run the country alone?</p>
4	<p><b>A government minister's duties</b></p> <p>The Prime Minister chooses MPs and Lords to be government ministers and help run the country. The top ministers run government departments.</p> <p>Click on each government department icon on the <b>government ministers</b> ring to find out more about that department's purpose and some of its areas of responsibility.</p> <p><b>Suggestion:</b></p> <p>Explore the different ways in which these areas of government impact students' lives.</p>	<p><b>Key points:</b></p> <p>Government touches on almost all areas of life. Each government department has several ministers running it.</p> <p>The top minister running each government department is called a secretary of state.</p> <p><b>Linking note:</b></p> <p>Slide 6 asks you to think about other areas of government responsibility and gives you the option to add new departments to your diagram.</p>
5	<p><b>Who's who in the government?</b></p> <p>You can click on each minister to see who is currently in charge of these government departments.</p>	<p><b>Key points:</b></p> <p>The Prime Minister chooses MPs and Lords from Parliament to join the government. They become ministers and help run the country.</p> <p>Government ministers, then, are almost always drawn out of Parliament.</p> <p>They are still members of Parliament, however, and continue to represent their constituents if they are MPs, or sit in the House of Lords if they are peers.</p>



Prompt/ slide number	Instruction	Key points and notes
6	<p><b>What else does government do?</b></p> <p>There are more than 20 government departments. Can you think of any others?</p> <p><b>Suggestion:</b></p> <p>You might want to add more department and minister icons to your diagram's <b>government ministers</b> ring.</p>	<p><b>Key points:</b></p> <p>A website listing all the current government departments and ministers can be found in the <b>links</b> box.</p>
7	<p><b>Parliament or government?</b></p> <p>Turn on highlight mode in the menu across the bottom of the screen.</p> <p>Highlight the rings that you think show the government.</p>	<p><b>Key points:</b></p> <p>Parliament is made up of all the MPs who belong to the House of Commons and all the peers who belong to the House of Lords.</p> <p>The leader of the political party with the most MPs in the House of Commons is asked by the Queen to form a government.</p> <p>About 100 of those MPs and Lords are selected by the Prime Minister and other senior ministers to become part of the government. The government runs the country and takes charge of government departments.</p> <p>All the other MPs and Lords approve laws proposed by the government and check the government's work to make sure it's doing a good job.</p>
8	<p><b>Parliament or government?</b></p> <p>Everything in the diagram is part of Parliament. Only the two inner rings show the government.</p>	<p><b>Key points:</b></p> <p>See the key points for the previous slide.</p>
9	<p><b>Summary</b></p> <p>Well done! You now know that Parliament is made up of MPs and Lords and that some of them are chosen by the Prime Minister to form a government that runs the country.</p> <p>The other MPs and Lords approve laws proposed by the government and keep a check on government departments to make sure they're doing a good job.</p>	<p><b>Key points:</b></p> <p>See the key points for slide 7.</p>

## Adding icons

This interactive resource allows you to add, move and delete an assortment of icons that can be used to represent different elements of Parliament and government. There are three types of icon: **individuals**, **groups** of people and **departments**.



Click on the icon types to see the available options.

- To add an icon to your diagram, use your mouse to drag it onto a circle. When you're happy with its position, release your mouse button to drop it into place.
- If you are using a keyboard, tab to the icon you'd like to use and click **enter** to select it. Use your cursor keys to move it into position on a circle, then click **enter** again to drop it into place.

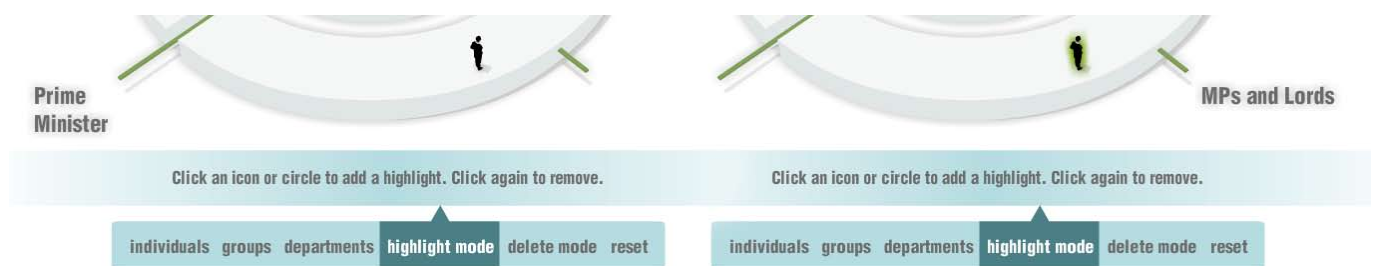
## Highlighting and deleting

There are three icon modes in this activity: **highlight**, **delete** and **reset**.

### Highlight mode

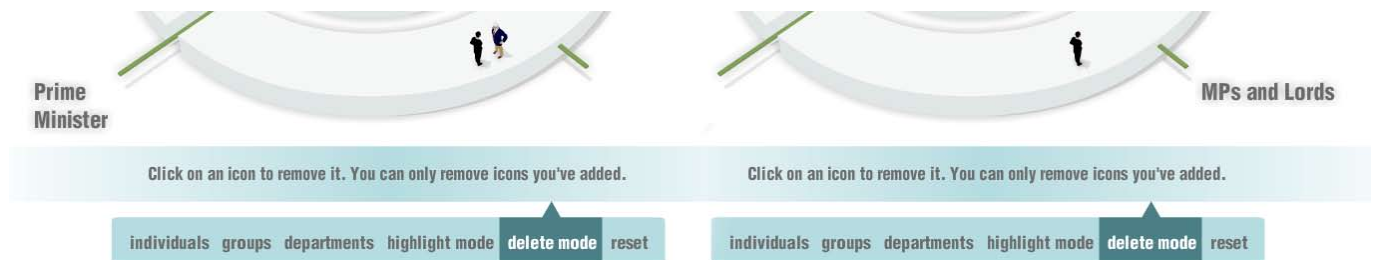
The highlight tool is great for making connections between people and departments within Parliament and government.

You can highlight any icon placed on the circles and you can also highlight each circle. Click on **highlight mode** then click on what you'd like to highlight. To remove the highlight, click on the highlighted icon or circle again.



### Delete mode

You can delete any icon that you have added to the circles. Click on **delete mode** then click on the icon you'd like to delete.



## Reset

Reset mode allows you to delete all the icons on your diagram in just two clicks. Click on **reset** then click on the dark blue reset bar. Although this function can't be undone it's a useful way to clear your screen to quickly create a different view of Parliament and government.



When you've finished building your picture of Parliament and government, click **main menu** to continue.

## 7. Next steps

### Level 1



The side menu helps you navigate your way in and out of the activities, but it also allows you to return to quizzes and gives you access to worksheets, web links and other resources for further study.

Use the **main menu** box to visit each activity as many times as you like.

Click on the **resources** box to download lesson plans and walkthroughs for this resource. This is also where you can access and revisit the various quizzes that introduce Parliament, the House of Commons and the House of Lords.

Links 1/2 close X

**Useful links and websites for further study**  
All links will open in a new window.

Links to other parts of Parliament's website

[Her Majesty's Government \(the current list of cabinet ministers\)](#)  
[Definitions of Parliament and Government](#)  
[Take virtual tours of Parliament](#)  
[Find your local MP](#)  
[Find out what's happening now in Parliament](#)

Click the next arrow for **external links**.

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For more information and links to ideas for further study, click on **links**.

All links will open in a new browser window.

When you have finished your session or wish to leave the resource, close the browser window.

Please note, however, when you close the browser window, any data you entered during the session will be lost.