

**The
Economist**

**EDUCATIONAL
FOUNDATION**

Birchwood Primary School

Cowes Enterprise College

Hammond Junior School

Graveney School

Arnhem Wharf Primary School

BURNET NEWS CLUB 2019-20 • ISSUE 3



POLITICIANS AND POWER



**BURNET
NEWS CLUB**

The political climate is changing faster than ever, but the behaviour of politicians remains in the spotlight. Recent months have seen an emphatic ruling on a prime minister's prorogation of Parliament and a US president impeached for only the third time in history.

This half term, the Burnet News Club gave their verdicts on these, and other instances, where

politicians let their standards slip. After debates on the concepts of power, democracy, justice and responsibility, students created an artwork to represent their learning. In this edition of Hub Highlights, we showcase a selection of the best contributions on this timely topic.

SEE EDITOR'S PICKS
bit.ly/EP-Politics

THE EXPERT VIEW

Best of the questions



warm_cricket, Brompton Westbrook Primary School
to Jeremy Paxman, broadcaster

Did your job make it easier or harder to decide who to vote for?



easygoing_hen, Noel Park Primary School
to Emma Barnett, broadcaster

Should you always keep a certain distance from your interviewees?



artistic_opinion, Arnhem Wharf Primary School
to Kathryn Stone, Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards

How did you feel when you saw John Bercow shout "ORDER"?



generous_speech, Michael Faraday School
to Dr Ingrid Wolfe, children's doctor

What is something you have always wanted in a children's hospital but MPs do not agree on?



trustworthy_robin, Hillyfield Primary Academy
to Dr Emre Aytumur, lecturer

Why does the public need Prime Ministers, MPs and Parliament?



courageous_impression, Halsnead Primary School
to Jon Ungoed-Thomas, Sunday Times Chief Reporter

Why did governments accept the misuse of expenses?



genuine_cat and versatile_molecule

Are MP checkers a good idea?

PRIMARY SCHOOL
Hammond Junior School

POLITICS IN the UK is far from perfect. Here are three changes to make it work better:

Firstly, we would make it law to behave well in the House of Commons. We would do this because if a bill needs to be passed quickly then bad behaviour will slow the process down. Lack of productivity might also mean MPs do not have enough time to raise important issues and the constituents they are representing might not get their voices heard. Secondly, MPs are meant to be role models and so therefore should conduct themselves in a civilized way.

Secondly, we would make it law that politicians must tell the truth and tell their constituency what they want to do. The constituents elected this person, and therefore it's their right to know what their MP intends to do. Politicians must not mislead the public with half-truths. If the politician is dishonest then they are risking their job and their constituency's faith in the party.

Thirdly, there should be an MP checker, who would check that the MPs actions are in the best interest of their constituency. This is similar to a shadow minister, except that MP checkers would check all individual MPs. MP checkers would be elected by members of the MP's constituency. The MP checker would make sure that the MP is properly supporting their constituency. This would mean that the constituents would feel more reassured. ■

Poll

Do politicians deserve more respect?

Yes 23%

No 32%

I'm in the middle 45%

Comments

plucky_yuzu

Bruntcliffe Academy

I think politicians deserve more respect as things aren't always what they seem at first sight. Most of the time we don't know what goes on in Parliament - we just see how the news presents it to us. As a result, we might think about this situation in a totally different way, and shift our viewpoints to be in line with a news organisation's bias.

jubilant_horse

Birchwood C of E Primary School

Politicians work hard trying to represent their constituents but they are only human. Some people will agree with them and some won't. When people do disagree with them, they can be placed in real danger. Politicians such as Nigel Farage and Stephen Timms have been attacked in public, and on occasions these attacks have been serious. A 2016 study found that one in five MPs had been subjected to an attack or attempted attacks. Because of the risks they take, I believe that politicians should get more respect.

stellar_lion

Arnhem Wharf Primary School

I'm in the middle because politicians are well-educated people who have been chosen by their constituency to represent them. Therefore, they deserve some respect for winning votes. However I also believe that some politicians act for their own benefit over the benefit of the people. Politicians can easily make false statements to improve their reputation, and to make the majority of people accept them as their MP or Prime Minister.

memorable_orchard

Michael Faraday School

When we grow in our respect towards some politicians, they can lose their respect towards us. For example, we gave respect to Boris Johnson by voting for him to be Prime Minister. After this, he dared to prorogue Parliament, which did not follow the law. Another reason why some politicians do not deserve respect is that they can take advantage of their power, thinking that now that they are at this level of strength, they can gain more. For example, the more power Donald Trump gets, the more selfish he can be. This resulted in an impeachment trial.

centered_mode

Politicians and Power

SECONDARY SCHOOL
Cowes Enterprise College

THE CLARINET represents the opposition. They start timid, whilst the other two instruments (a bassoon to represent the speaker and a trumpet as the party in power) are playing louder. Throughout, the trumpet and clarinet repeat a phrase the other instrument has played but slightly differently to show their disagreements. Occasionally, the speaker interrupts when the call and response between the clarinet and trumpet becomes heated. Every time the two instruments begin again the clarinet becomes slightly more confident and becomes slightly louder until, at the end of the piece, it is the same volume as the trumpet. Later, the two opponents finally come to a decision, shown by the instruments playing in harmony with each other. ■



THE BNC TEAM:

Thank you for this wonderful piece of music - you have clearly put a lot of effort into making it!

LISTEN HERE
bit.ly/BNC-composition



skillful_passionfruit and lovable_writer

Can you hear our voices?

SECONDARY SCHOOL
Graveney School

THIS ARTWORK is about public voice and the concepts of responsibility and power. A crowd of protesters is a good way to represent the public voice, because what represents the power of the people more than a demonstration?

We have used grey and black for the background crowd to make their appearance irrelevant, because you see them in the picture as a group who move as one. We have used colour and detail for the girl in the middle to represent how every one of the protesters is a different person with a different identity.

She is pictured crying because she represents us, the younger generation, fearing for our futures. The one solitary piece of colour and detail in the middle of a grey mass.

You could imagine that the person in the middle is an MP. It shows the pressure put on them by the constant demands of their people, but they don't have the power or the voice to speak up. In desperation, they cry. The protagonist in the middle could be anyone. We have left her identity uncertain so that every reader of this piece can imagine someone new in the young woman's identity. ■

Can politicians be too honest?



Comments

generous_queen

Cuddington Croft Primary School

I think politicians can be too honest as they could share their opinions from the heart and offend people. Honesty can also lead to some politicians, such as Boris Johnson, appearing too determined. I think a good example was set by Theresa May. She gave up her position on Brexit to try and get it done.

alert_reindeer

Whyteleaf School

Politicians can hide things to make sure it will not be held against them. They are terrified that what they have done will come back to haunt them in later life. However, I think politicians should not

hide anything and be honest. Even if honesty costs them their job, many would respect them for it.

serious_badger

Highdown School

In a perfect world there would never be a thing as "too honest". It should be seen as a good quality as it makes people more trustworthy. However, in today's world, politicians say what they think people want to hear, or say things to "get the edge" on an opponent. If a politician is too honest it can cause them to lose their role as an MP. I understand why people need to be shielded from some truths. If a pandemic were to break out, the government may hide the truth to calm the country down and avoid an economic dip with millions of people afraid to go outdoors.