

The Humours of an Election

Vocabulary exercises

Introduction

Match these parliamentary words with their definitions.

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|------------------|---|
| 1. constituency | a system of voting in writing and in secret |
| 2. MP | a person who is trying to be elected |
| 3. secret ballot | the people in a country who have the right to vote |
| 4. candidate | a district that elects its own representative to parliament |
| 5. electorate | a Member of Parliament – a person who has been elected to represent the people of a particular area in Parliament |

Match these negative words used to describe the election with their meanings.

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|-----------------|--|
| 6. bribery | a strong desire for more food, drink, wealth, power, possessions etc. than a person needs |
| 7. intimidation | intending to trick people |
| 8. greed | giving money to people to persuade them to do something for you, especially by doing something dishonest |
| 9. dishonesty | frightening or threatening someone so that they will do what you want |

Scene 1

10. The entertainments became more and more **extravagant** as the political parties tried to **outdo** each other.

- What is the meaning of **extravagant**?
- a) ridiculous
 - b) attracting more violence
 - c) costing a lot more money than you can afford or is necessary
 - d) illegal

11. What is the meaning of **outdo**?
- a) show off to someone else
 - b) do better than someone else
 - c) destroy someone else
 - d) make more money than someone else

12. The young candidate is **exquisitely** dressed.

- How is he dressed?
- a) in old-fashioned clothing
 - b) in very colourful clothing
 - c) in a way that shows his class
 - d) in a way that is extremely beautiful

13. He is **reluctantly** embracing the ugly pregnant woman.

- How is he embracing her?
- a) he is enjoying the physical contact
 - b) he has no choice
 - c) he doesn't want to do it
 - d) he is doing it for his country

14. The other candidate is listening to a drunken **bore** and a drunken **cobbler**.

Who is a **bore**?

- a) a person who is very boring because they talk too much
- b) a person who is very boring because they are from a different social class
- c) a person who is very boring because they do a very boring job
- d) a person who is very boring because they don't have much money

15. Who is a **cobbler**?

- a) someone who talks a lot about themselves
- b) someone who sells cobbles
- c) someone who lives in the neighbourhood
- d) someone who repairs shoes

16. The drunken cobbler is **clasping** the candidate's hand.

How is he holding it?

- a) gently
- b) tightly
- c) carefully
- d) forcefully

17. Because the candidates are so keen to collect votes, the usual **social conventions** are **abandoned**.

What are **social conventions**?

- a) the way things are expected to be done in a particular society
- b) the way the upper classes do things
- c) the legal way to do things
- d) the old-fashioned way to do things

18. What is the meaning of **abandoned**? a) suspended temporarily
b) followed to the letter
c) no longer used or needed
d) only used when other people are looking

19. The mayor has been **gorging** on oysters.

What is the meaning of **gorging**? a) fishing successfully
b) buying too many
c) feeling sick
d) eating too many

20. In the foreground are two **bruisers** employed by the Whigs to force people to vote for them.

Who are **bruisers**? a) large strong aggressive men
b) very persuasive men
c) men who are very good at talking
d) men who have special qualifications

21. One of them is a **butcher** by trade.

What does a **butcher** do? a) treats people with medicines and herbal remedies
b) brews and sells alcohol illegally
c) cuts up and sells meat in a shop
d) bakes cakes and bread and sells them in a shop

22. The alderman is **inferring** that the young woman has traded sexual favours for votes.

- What is the meaning of **infer**?
- a) make very clear
 - b) suggest indirectly that something is true
 - c) tell lies about someone
 - d) make things up

23. The Puritanical tailor's wife is **chastising** him for not accepting the money.

- What is the meaning of **chastising**?
- a) encouraging
 - b) praising
 - c) criticising
 - d) shouting at him

24. The attendees at the 'entertainment' are having '**a whale of a time**'.

What is the meaning of the idiom '**a whale of a time**'?

- a) a great time
- b) a disastrous time
- c) a very unhappy time
- d) an illegal time

Scene 2

25. **Canvassing for votes** – what is the meaning of **canvassing**?

- a) paying
- b) bribing
- c) asking for support for a political party
- d) threatening people

26. In front of *The Crown* is a rowdy mob?

What is a rowdy mob?

- a) a noisy large crowd of people who may become violent or cause trouble
- b) a group of noisy supporters
- c) a group of people interested in politics
- d) a group of people who want to overthrow the government

27. The lower classes are raging against the imposition of taxation.

What is the meaning of raging against?

- a) refusing to pay
- b) shouting angrily about
- c) arguing sensibly about
- d) being mistaken about

28. What is the meaning of imposition?

- a) corruption
- b) enforcement
- c) penalty
- d) introduction of a new law or rule

29. The Tory candidate has gone to buy trinkets for the ladies on the balcony.

What are trinkets?

- a) very expensive objects
- b) snacks
- c) jewellery or small decorative objects that are not worth much money
- d) accessories such as gloves or stockings

30. The Independents reject party affiliations and factional interests.

What is the meaning of reject?

- a) refuse to accept
- b) throw away
- c) turn down an invitation
- d) ignore

31. What are **party affiliations**? a) official connections to a political party
b) friendly relations with a political party
c) financial contributions to a political party
d) promises to help a political party

32. What are **factional interests**? a) where smaller groups within a larger group have different aims and beliefs
b) where groups of people want to raise higher taxes
c) where the upper classes rule society
d) where bribery is a common occurrence

33. The Independents provide the only example of political **integrity**.

What is the meaning of **integrity**? a) corruption
b) reliability
c) honesty and strong moral principles
d) ability to govern

34. The alehouse is frequented by the common man with no **pretensions**.

What are **pretensions**? a) intelligence
b) ideas not appropriate for his class
c) trying to appear more important or intelligent than you are in order to impress other people
d) claims that he is richer than he really is

35. The cobbler 'turned a blind eye' to his conscience.

What is the meaning of the idiom 'turn a blind eye'?

- a) get your eyes tested
- b) cover your eyes so you can't see
- c) pretend to see something you can't see
- d) pretend not to notice something bad that is happening

36. What is his conscience?

- a) his anxiety over his personal situation
- b) the part of his mind that tells him whether his actions are right or wrong
- c) his thoughts and feelings
- d) his financial situation

37. A well-to-do young farmer is being pestered for his vote.

What is the meaning of well-to-do?

- a) very poor
- b) having a lot of money
- c) land-owning
- d) intelligent

38. What is the meaning of pester?

- a) ask once
- b) annoy someone by asking them many times
- c) offer money
- d) threaten

39. The farmer is slyly contemplating how to make the most of the situation.

What is the meaning of slyly?

- a) carefully
- b) quickly
- c) in a secret or dishonest way
- d) obviously

40. What is the meaning of **contemplate**? a) calculate
b) plan
c) predict
d) think about

41. Hogarth demonstrates his **pessimistic** view of the British state.

What is the meaning of **pessimistic**? a) expecting good things to happen
b) expecting bad things to happen
c) expecting nothing to happen
d) expecting things to get better

42. The voter is just as **complicit** as the political parties in the **debasement** of the democratic political system.

What is the meaning of **complicit**? a) involved with other people in something wrong or illegal
b) not responsible
c) in agreement with
d) supportive of

43. What is the meaning of **debasement**? a) improvement
b) destruction
c) reduction
d) making something less valued or respected

Scene 3

44. The artist has produced an **unflattering** caricature of the candidate.

- What is the meaning of **unflattering**?
- a) making someone look more beautiful than they really are
 - b) making someone look scarier than they really are
 - c) making someone seem worse or less attractive than they really are
 - d) costing a lot of money

45. There is a queue of electors arriving to vote who are '**in no fit state**' to exercise their judgment in this matter.

- What is the meaning of '**in no fit state**'?
- a) not in the right mental, emotional or physical condition
 - b) not a British citizen
 - c) not of the right social class
 - d) have no understanding of politics

46. The one on the right, **presumably** representing the Tories, is pointing angrily at the hook believing it to be **insufficient** for swearing the oath.

- What is the meaning of **presumably**?
- a) you are sure something is true
 - b) you think something is probably true
 - c) you think something is not true
 - d) you have no idea

47. What is the meaning of **insufficient**?
- a) not enough
 - b) more than enough
 - c) not ideal
 - d) perfect

48. Barely visible in the shadow of the booth, there is an orange Whig rosette on the floor.

- What is the meaning of barely visible?
- a) it is hidden from view
 - b) it is clear to see
 - c) it isn't at all possible to see
 - d) it is only just possible to see

49. The four wooden sticks at the bottom suggest that there are violent thugs ready to prevent people from voting for the 'wrong' party.

- Who are thugs?
- a) protesters
 - b) supporters of the political parties
 - c) violent people, especially criminals
 - d) people who collect sticks

50. To the left of the polling booth is an elaborate coach, carrying Britannia.

- What is the meaning of elaborate?
- a) broken down
 - b) very complicated and detailed
 - c) very plainly decorated
 - d) golden

51. Who is Britannia?
- a) a former queen of Britain
 - b) a figure of a woman used as a symbol of Britain
 - c) King Charles's sister
 - d) the old name for Scotland

Match these words with their definitions.

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| 52. clinging | trying hard to do something difficult |
| 53. clutching | not aware of something |
| 54. struggling | holding on tightly to something so as not to fall |
| 55. symbolic | holding something firmly; gripping |
| 56. oblivious | a person, object or event that represents a more general quality or situation |

Scene 4

57. Hogarth portrays the chairing of the new Tory Member of Parliament as a scene of **catastrophe** and **utter chaos**.

What is the meaning of **catastrophe**?

- a) excitement
- b) enjoyment
- c) liveliness
- d) disaster

58. What is the meaning of **utter chaos**?

- a) a state of complete confusion and lack of order
- b) a state of complete joy
- c) an exciting scene
- d) a happy occasion

59. On the left is a red-brick building which is a bit of a **mishmash** of architectural styles.

What is a **mishmash**? a) a very modern collection

- b) an old-fashioned group
- c) a confused mixture
- d) an unfinished collection

Match these words with their definitions.

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| 60. consecrated | regularly found in a particular place and difficult to get rid of |
| 61. desecrated | stated officially in a religious ceremony that something is holy and can be used for religious purposes |
| 62. endemic | likely to happen very soon – usually something unpleasant |
| 63. unimposing | not impressive in appearance |
| 64. imminent | damaged a holy place or treated it without respect |

65. The Whigs are going to have a feast rather than **commiserate** with each other over their loss.

- What is the meaning of **commiserate**?
- a) show someone sympathy when they are upset or disappointed about something
 - b) celebrate a happy occasion
 - c) blame someone else for something that has gone wrong
 - d) get drunk

Match these verbs with their definitions.

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|--------------|--|
| 66. brandish | to walk or move in an unsteady way and almost fall |
| 67. stumble | to take part in a noisy and violent fight, usually in a public place |
| 68. topple | to put something over the mouth of an animal to stop it from biting people |
| 69. brawl | to become unsteady and fall down |
| 70. muzzle | to hold or wave a weapon in an aggressive or excited way |

71. A butcher is carrying a load of **offal**. What is **offal**?

- a) the best bits of beef
- b) bacon, ham and pork
- c) the inside parts of an animal, such as the heart and liver
- d) whatever the butcher has left at the end of the day

72. **Incensed**, one of the Tory chimney sweeps urinates onto the monkey.

- What is the meaning of **incensed**?
- a) desperate to go to the toilet
 - b) very angry
 - c) very cheeky
 - d) losing all control

73. The whole group is symbolically led by a blind fiddler who is clearly **oblivious** to the chaos and disorder behind him.

- What is the meaning of **oblivious**?
- a) not worried about
 - b) not aware of
 - c) not responsible for
 - d) not bothered about

74. On the left of the painting is a **brawny**, shirtless soldier.

- What is the meaning of **brawny**?
- a) unintelligent
 - b) tired
 - c) weak
 - d) having strong muscles

75. The second candidate's shadow is cast on the wall of the town hall. He is quite literally a **shady character**.

Who is a **shady character**?

- a) someone who wears dark clothes
- b) someone who lives in the shadows
- c) someone who works in the dark
- d) someone who is dishonest or acts illegally

76. On the left is an empty beer barrel into which a **reveller** has crawled to drink the **dregs**.

Who is a **reveller**?

- a) a protester
- b) a violent thug
- c) a person who is having fun in a noisy way, usually with a group of people and drinking alcohol
- d) someone who attends a lot of parties and drinks a lot of beer

77. What are the **dregs**?

- a) the last drops of a liquid, mixed with the solid pieces at the bottom of the container
- b) what is left when people have finished eating or drinking
- c) a mixture of different types of alcohol
- d) the best bits

78. In Oxfordshire in 1754 the Tories won the election but the **poll** was so close that the **returning officer** sent all four candidates to Parliament.

What is a **poll**?

- a) a big, long stick
- b) an entertainment
- c) the corruption at an election
- d) the number of votes in an election

79. Who is the **returning officer**?

- a) the official who comes back every year
- b) the official who is responsible for arranging an election and announcing the result
- c) the official who arranges the parties after an election
- d) the official who pays the candidates

80. If the candidate for Guzzledown looks up, he will be reminded that his life and **triumph** is **fleeting**.

What is the meaning of **triumph**?

- a) imminent downfall
- b) elaborate chair
- c) great success
- d) important position

81. What is the meaning of **fleeting**?

- a) eternal
- b) long-lasting
- c) lasting only a short time
- d) very important