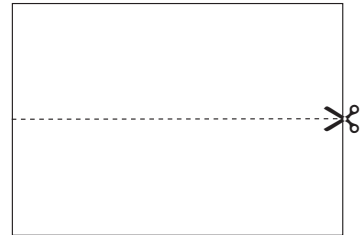


# Votes for women

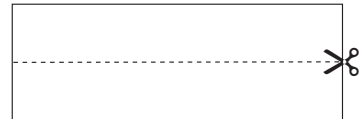
- ▶ Look at the picture showing a suffragette. The rosette she is wearing would have been purple, green and white – the colours of the 'Votes for Women' campaign at the beginning of the twentieth century.
- ▶ Make a rosette to show which political party or other group you support. You will need card, glue, felt pens, a safety pin and some ribbon.



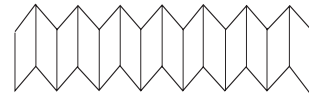
1. Cut a sheet of A4 paper in half lengthways.



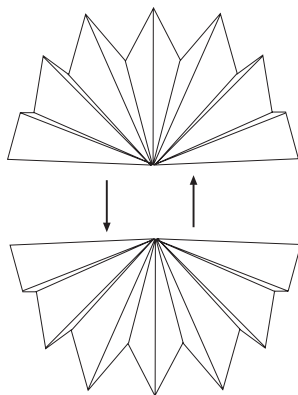
2. Take one of the pieces of paper and cut it in half again, to make two long strips.



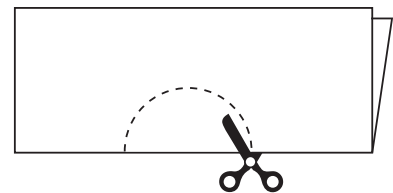
3. Colour your 2 strips in purple, green or white, or in other colours. Fold each strip in concertina folds.



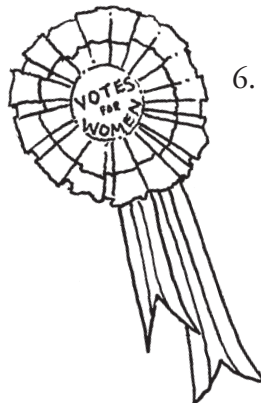
4. Make both strips into a fan shape, then glue them together to make a rosette.



5. Cut a disc for the middle and write a slogan on it, then stick it on the rosette.



6. Attach two lengths of ribbon.



# I'm Writing to My MP!

## Programme outline

The idea of representation is examined through the experiences of MPs for the Westminster Parliament. We meet Roseanna Cunningham, MP for Perth, in her constituency and at Westminster. Angus MacAngry appears with the children, who have also decided to elect a representative, and Zoe visits London and learns about party politics and the formation of governments, about debates and about the making of laws. In Westminster she again meets Roseanna, who explains debates and the workings of Parliament.

## Key questions

- ▶ What are the basic facts about constituencies and their MPs?
- ▶ What sort of people are suited to becoming MPs?
- ▶ How is the result of an election worked out?
- ▶ What range of responsibilities does an MP have for his or her constituents?
- ▶ How does the Westminster Parliament operate?

## Key vocabulary

constituency, National Health Service (NHS), represent, party, representative, candidate, election, surgery, majority, website, haemophilia, email, health trust, House of Commons, debate

## Before viewing

- ▶ Find out the name of the school's local MP and constituency (see factfile 2 for information).
- ▶ Find Perth (Roseanna Cunningham's constituency) on a map of Scotland.
- ▶ Find London on a map and discuss the length of journey between the pupils' home area and London.
- ▶ Discuss the meaning of debate.

## After viewing

### Mathematics and Language

- ▶ Show pupils the examples of election results and have them work out majorities, first and second place, and so on. They could also make a presentation of the results as if for a local radio station.

### Social Subjects, Geography, and History

- ▶ Have pupils make up a factfile on the town of Perth, with information about its important situation on the River Tay, its size, population, football team and so on. They should include something of its history as one of the chief towns of Scotland, formerly known as St John's Town. On the outskirts of Perth is Scone, once the coronation place for Scottish kings. The factfile might also include something about the famous Stone of Scone (or Stone of Destiny).

### Art and Design and Drama

- ▶ Look at some pictures of Westminster and Parliament and discuss them with the class. Television coverage of Parliament could also be recorded and looked at in conjunction with the plan of the House of Commons in Activity sheet 4.
- ▶ Pupils could make a shoebox model of the Commons and show where their own MP sits. The seating (benches) is coloured green and the Mace, a symbol of authority, is placed on the table between the front benches. A similar layout was used for the old Scots Parliament, which was dissolved in 1707.
- ▶ The pupils could be on the look-out for how the chamber of the new Scots Parliament will look. The Assembly Hall, its temporary home, is being laid out in a semicircular shape, unlike the rectangular shape of the House of Commons at Westminster.
- ▶ Have a class debate and arrange seating in a similar way to the Commons.

## factfile 2

### **Language**

► Ask pupils to imagine that one of their parents has been elected to Westminster and that they have gone to London. Based on Roseanna Cunningham's experience, make up a diary or series of emails home to Scotland, telling of their first impressions of Parliament.

### **History and Technology**

The logo of the Commons is a portcullis gate. In a Norman castle this gate was placed at the castle end of the drawbridge, the only way into the castle. The portcullis was a thick, iron-plated wooden door that could be raised to clear the entrance and lowered when danger threatened. It is a symbol of strength and safety.

► Have pupils find out what a portcullis's function was and try to make a model of one using cardboard, with the gate raised and lowered by string.

### **Recording**

► Ask the pupils to add the name of their MP to their Personal Representation File. They should now have their local councillor and MP.

► Have pupils write a letter to their MP. The subject could be one of local interest, a personal matter, or to do with what the pupils have learned while watching these programmes. An alternative would be to send an email message if the pupils are familiar with this method.

Parliament is the supreme legislature of the United Kingdom. It has three parts – the Crown, the House of Lords, and House of Commons – but only the second and third are actually involved in making laws. Today the main part is the House of Commons; its members are called Members of Parliament (MPs). The Commons makes the laws and levies taxes to pay for the cost of running the country. Cabinet members, including the Prime Minister, can be members of the Commons or the Lords, but are collectively responsible to the House of Commons. The House of Lords is the highest court of appeal.

### **House of Commons**

The House of Commons has 651 members. The maximum life of a parliament is five years. The date of a General Election is set by the Prime Minister.

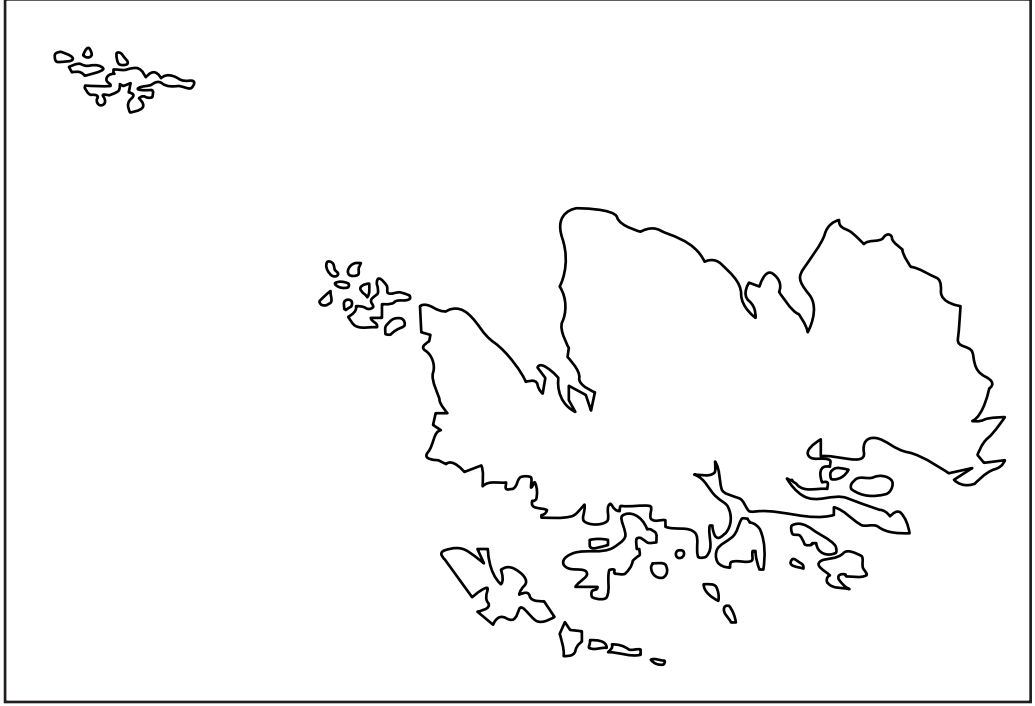
If the Cabinet, formed by the leading party in the Commons, loses a vote of confidence or fails to pass its legislation in the Commons, it must resign or request a dissolution of Parliament. Because of the strict party discipline, there are MPs known as Whips, who try to ensure that MPs vote the way that their party leaders want. This is known as 'toeing the party line'. (When you take part in a race, you put your toe to the starting line.)

### **How to discover the names of constituencies and MPs**

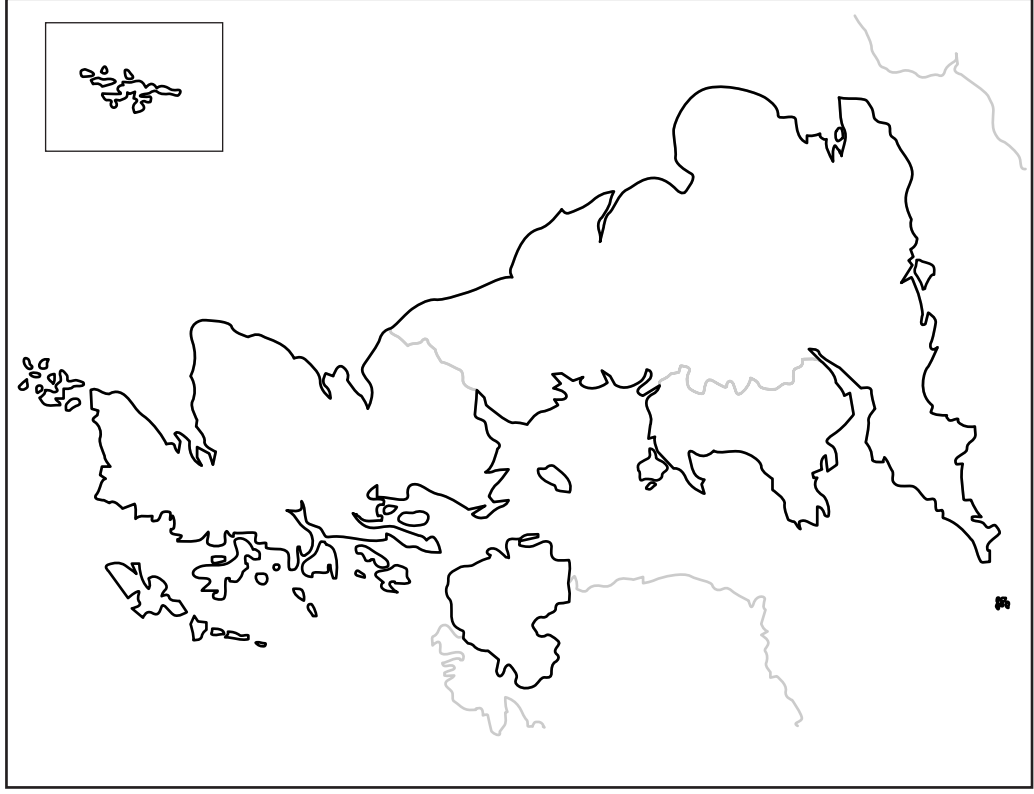
If you log on to the House of Commons website you will find 'Constituency Locata'. This helps you to find an MP if you know the name of the constituency or vice versa. You can search using your postcode, your street and your town, or your MP's name.

# Where do you come from?

- ▶ Look at the blank maps of Scotland and of the UK and mark the position of your MP's constituency on both maps.
- ▶ Now mark the position of the Perth constituency of Roseanna Cunningham, whom you saw in Programme 2.
- ▶ Next, mark Edinburgh on both maps and London on the UK map.
- ▶ Now label these constituencies and add any other facts you have learned during the broadcast, including any other places mentioned.



Map of Scotland



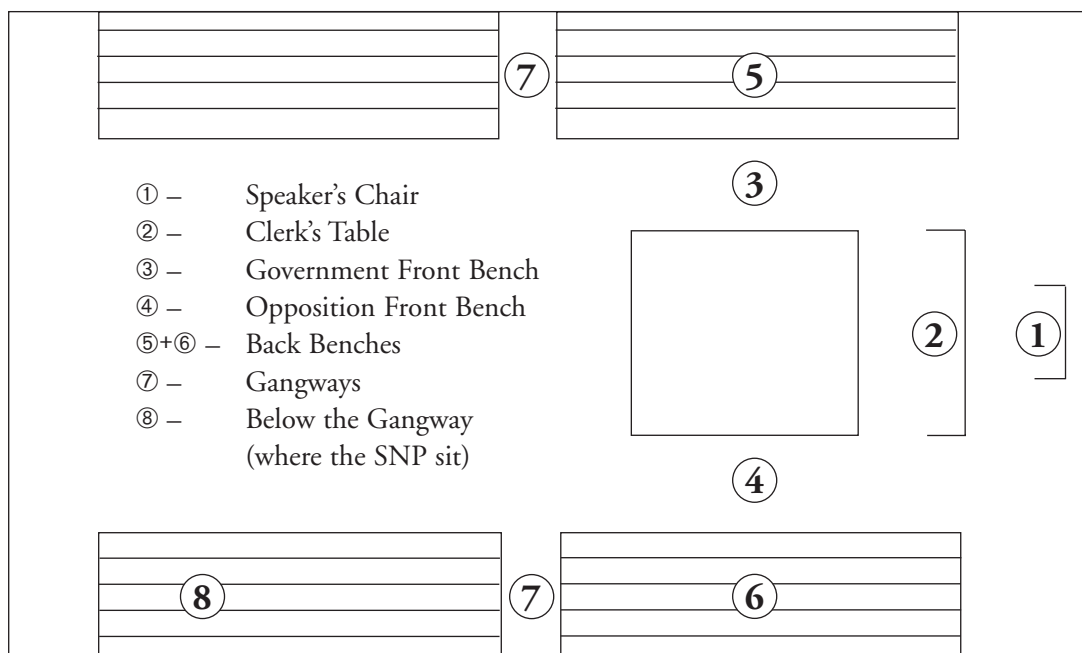
Map of the United Kingdom

# A busy MP

- On this chart of Roseanna Cunningham's working week, match each day with what she does on it. Friday is already matched up for you.

Monday	①	The day when the sitting of the Commons is early, so that MPs can leave in time to travel home to their own constituency.
Tuesday	②	The first day of the new Parliamentary week begins at 2.30 p.m.
Wednesday	③	A day for being at home with their families.
Thursday	④	The day before MPs return to their constituencies.
Friday	⑤	The day when many MPs have a surgery for their constituents.
Saturday	⑥	A day for being at home with their families.
Sunday	⑦	The day of Prime Minister's Question Time.

- Roseanna Cunningham is an MP for the Scottish National Party (SNP). The area of seating in the House of Commons Chamber where members of the SNP sit is shown below. You can also see where the Government and the Opposition sit. Members of the Cabinet and the Shadow Cabinet sit on the Front Benches.
- Colour the plan, then mark where the MP for your area would sit. You need to know which party he or she is a member of, and if they are members of the Cabinet or the Front Bench.



# If I Were Running the Country...

## Programme outline

This programme looks at the idea of leaders or rulers in democratic government. MacAngry reckons things would be better if he were running the country. Zoe and the children find that the part played by the monarch has changed considerably over the years and much of the power and responsibility now rests with Her Majesty's Government, with the Cabinet and with the Prime Minister. Zoe visits the Houses of Parliament and we hear about the Prime Minister's busy life. The children and MacAngry have an exchange about why we need to pay taxes – to fund public services and the administration of government.

## Key questions

- Who is the leader of the political party in government, and how are MPs of the different parties represented in the House of Commons?
- How powerful are the Prime Minister and the Commons compared with the House of Lords and the Monarchy?
- What is the role of the Cabinet?
- What is Prime Minister Tony Blair's job?

## Key vocabulary

monarch, head of state, political parties, Civil Service, Cabinet, Minister, exempt

## Before viewing

- Remind pupils of what they learned in the last episode about Westminster and the House of Commons, from the constituency MP's point of view.
- Discuss with pupils how the terms 'Lords' and 'Commons' might have arisen, and how they have to do with a gradual move of authority away from the monarchy and towards a democracy.
- Ask the pupils if they know who the Prime Minister is, and any other facts they know about him and his home and family.
- Decide on some questions the pupils would like to ask the PM, if they were to meet him. (Later, they can compare their questions with those actually asked on the programme.)

## After viewing

### Recording

- Ask pupils to add the name of the Prime Minister to their Personal Representation File. (Perhaps the Secretary of State for Scotland also.)

### History and reference skills

- Ask pupils to find out the names of some Prime Ministers of the past. To help you, the 10 Downing Street website has some information about this.

### Geography

- Have pupils locate on a map the places mentioned in the programme during the interview with the PM.

### Drama, Art and Design, and Technology

- Ask pupils to imagine that they are members of the Cabinet and are discussing a new project for the Millennium Dome. They have to come up with ideas for a section of the display in the Dome – one which is intended for young people of primary-school age. They can brainstorm for ideas for its design, and decide which of them are to make sketches, which to write descriptions, and so on. Finally they could design and make a working model (perhaps from a construction kit) and they could give the display a name.

