

Multiple-Choice Questions

- Which of the following best describes the United Kingdom's transition to democracy?
 - tumultuous
 - gradual
 - alternating between violence and peaceful change
 - rapid
 - causing dissent among the population
- What is an argument in favor of moving toward proportional representation?
 - It provides a more accurate representation of the views of the population.
 - It provides better district representation.
 - It is more efficient.
 - It better represents larger, broader political ideologies.
 - It provides better checks and balances.
- A welfare state is most likely to do which of the following?
 - ensure a high life expectancy for its people
 - guarantee full employment
 - provide social services to its citizens
 - create a collectivist consensus
 - intervene to assist other nations
- Which of the following is the best definition of a *corporatist system*?
 - a country where many interest groups battle for political power and ultimately share it equally
 - a system of government in which certain large interest groups are given power to write legislation
 - a country where corporations dominate the political process
 - a country with nationally owned industries
 - a country without environmental regulations

5.

	Labour	Conservative	Liberal	Others
Share of the Vote (percentage)	35.3%	32.3%	22.1%	11.3%
Number of Seats	356	198	62	30

According to the table above, which party has the most to gain if a proportional representation voting system is adopted?

- Labour Party
- Conservative Party
- Liberal Democratic Party
- Scottish National Party
- Plaid Cymru Party

6. A country with a single-member district, first-past-the-post electoral system is most likely to have which form of party rule?
- (A) a smaller number of parties with broad ideological consensus
 - (B) a multitude of parties with meaningful contrasting positions on issues
 - (C) a one-party dominant system
 - (D) single-party rule
 - (E) a three-party system
7. Which of the following is an accurate description of a vote of no confidence?
- (A) The government proposes a major piece of legislation but fails to pass it in Parliament, forcing new elections.
 - (B) A referendum supported by the majority party is held, but it fails.
 - (C) The opposition votes against the confidence of the government.
 - (D) A national election takes place, and the opposition wins.
 - (E) A divided government takes hold.
8. Which of the following is NOT part of the Constitutional Reform Movement in the United Kingdom?
- (A) moving to a proportional representation voting system
 - (B) devolution to Scotland and Wales
 - (C) having an elected mayor of London
 - (D) adopting the euro
 - (E) adopting fusion of power
9. What is the most important purpose of the question hour?
- (A) It provides good entertainment for British citizens.
 - (B) It allows members of Parliament to challenge the government.
 - (C) It provides a mechanism for politicians to work out disputes.
 - (D) It forces the prime minister to think on his feet.
 - (E) It increases the level of respect for the prime minister.
10. Which of the following cleavages has been most prominent in the history of the United Kingdom?
- (A) income
 - (B) education
 - (C) class
 - (D) race
 - (E) religion
11. Which of the following is the best description of the arrangement of power in the United Kingdom?
- (A) It is a strict federal system.
 - (B) It is a strict unitary system.
 - (C) It is a federal system that has experienced centralization of power.
 - (D) It is a unitary system that has experienced devolution.
 - (E) It is confederal.

12. Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher was most known for which of the following policies?
- (A) supporting corporatism
 - (B) nationalizing major industries
 - (C) promoting privatization
 - (D) reducing the armed forces
 - (E) integrating into the European Union
13. Which of the following best defines legitimacy?
- (A) the belief that government leaders have the right to rule
 - (B) voter turnout
 - (C) the belief that citizens can make a difference in public policy
 - (D) level of patriotism
 - (E) a type of political cleavage
14. Which of the following is true of UK referenda?
- (A) They are used frequently to change the constitution.
 - (B) They are advisory only.
 - (C) They get high levels of voter turnout.
 - (D) The Conservative Party advocates a referendum for euro currency adoption.
 - (E) The Labour Party currently supports a referendum for proportional representation.
15. Which of the following best describes the UK party system?
- (A) multiparty
 - (B) two-party
 - (C) democratic consolidated party system
 - (D) pluralistic
 - (E) corporatist

Free-Response Questions

1. Define *devolution*, and describe devolution in the United Kingdom.
2. The UK has an ongoing Constitutional Reform Movement. Identify three proposals to change the unwritten constitution in the UK and discuss the progress of each.

Answers

MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

1. (B) The United Kingdom's transition to democracy has been gradual. This has occurred in part because the geographic isolation of the UK has allowed it to be relatively free of foreign invaders (Hauss, p. 67; Kesselman et al., pp. 48, 52, 58).
2. (A) Proportional representation systems more accurately reflect the ideologies of the population as a whole. This is because smaller parties with broad bases of support are more likely to win seats in proportional systems than they are in single-member district systems (Hauss, pp. 24–26; Kesselman et al., pp. 78–79).
3. (C) A welfare state refers to a country like the United Kingdom that provides many social services (such as health care and education) to its citizens (Hauss, pp. 67–69, 74, 79, 94–95; Kesselman et al., p. 52).
4. (B) Corporatist arrangements occur when a government deliberately gives power to certain interest groups to write legislative proposals (Hauss, pp. 87, 100; Kesselman et al., pp. 68–69).
5. (C) The Liberal Democratic party would increase its membership in Parliament most substantially by an increase to proportional representation. This party has long advocated such a switch to the proportional system of voting (Hauss, pp. 37, 79; Kesselman et al., pp. 77–80).
6. (A) Single-member district systems are more likely to lead to two-party systems or party systems with larger parties more broadly ideologically based (Hauss, pp. 23, 84, 86, 89; Kesselman et al., pp. 78–80).
7. (A) A vote of no confidence is called for by the majority party in a parliamentary system. If the vote fails, the government is forced to resign and hold new elections (Hauss, pp. 88–90; Kesselman et al., pp. 67–71).
8. (E) Constitutional reform in the United Kingdom refers to proposed adoption of a wide variety of legislation, including devolution, adoption of proportional representation, and more. It does NOT include a fusion of power, which is a long-standing part of parliamentary rule in the UK (Hauss, p. 93; Kesselman et al., pp. 74–77, 84).
9. (B) Question hour occurs weekly in a parliamentary system and allows members of Parliament to question the prime minister in public about policies. Because of parliamentary sovereignty, the majority party in a parliamentary system has much power. The most significant way to challenge a majority party in a

parliamentary system is through forcing a vote of confidence or a vote of no confidence. During the weekly question hour, the opposition attempts to create an environment in which such a vote may be held (Hauss, p. 91; Kesselman et al., pp. 67–71).

10. (C) Social class has long been a cleavage in British society (Hauss, pp. 69–70, 85–86; Kesselman et al., pp. 55–57, 81).
11. (D) The United Kingdom is a unitary system of government. However, during the Constitutional change movement, the central government voluntarily gave power away to subnational governments, including allowing Scotland to have a parliament with taxation powers (Hauss, p. 87; Kesselman et al., pp. 65–66).
12. (C) Prime Minister Thatcher adopted a privatization policy (Hauss, pp. 82, 94; Kesselman et al., p. 53).
13. (A) Legitimacy is defined as a belief held by citizens that the government has the right to rule. Legitimacy tends to be high in developed democracies (Hauss, pp. 29–35, 92–98; Kesselman et al., p. 10).
14. (B) National referenda can be held in the United Kingdom; however, due to parliamentary sovereignty, they are officially only advisory (Hauss, pp. 84–88; Kesselman et al., pp. 65–66, 74, 77).
15. (B) While the UK has a strong third party (the Liberal Democrats), it is still classified as a two-party system because only two parties (Labour and Conservative) have ever controlled the government (Hauss, pp. 74, 83; Kesselman et al., pp. 77–78).

FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS

1. *Devolution* is the transfer of power from a central government to subnational governments. In the United Kingdom, the central government has given power to Scotland. Scotland now has its own local parliament, the Scottish National Parliament (SNP), with the power to tax and make local laws (Hauss, p. 85; Kesselman et al., pp. 72–73).
2. There have been several proposals to change the unwritten constitution in the United Kingdom. Some of these proposals have been adopted, while others have only been discussed. Three of these include changing to a proportional representation electoral system, adopting the euro currency, and removing the voting power of the House of Lords.

Change from a single-member district system to a proportional representation voting system is under consideration in the UK. Those who advocate such a system include the Liberal Democrats and other small parties. Should such a system be adopted, the small parties would get a boost in the number of seats they could win in Parliament. Many argue that this system is more democratic because it more accurately reflects the will of the population.

Others argue that it would make it more difficult to form a majority and harder to govern as a result.

It has been suggested that the majority party hold a referendum to move the country away from the pound and to adopt the euro currency. Proponents argue that the UK will be closer to Europe and the economy will improve. Those who oppose the euro adoption argue that there will be a loss of sovereignty for the country as economic decisions will be made in Brussels. The referendum has not been held.

Recently, Parliament voted to remove voting power from the hereditary peers (Lords). This was done in the name of democracy. Since these lords get their power by birthright, it was believed that they should not have power in the legislative process. While the lords merely can delay a vote, they still have some power and this was recently taken away, changing the unwritten constitution of the United Kingdom (Hauss, p. 93; Kesselman et al., pp. 71–76).