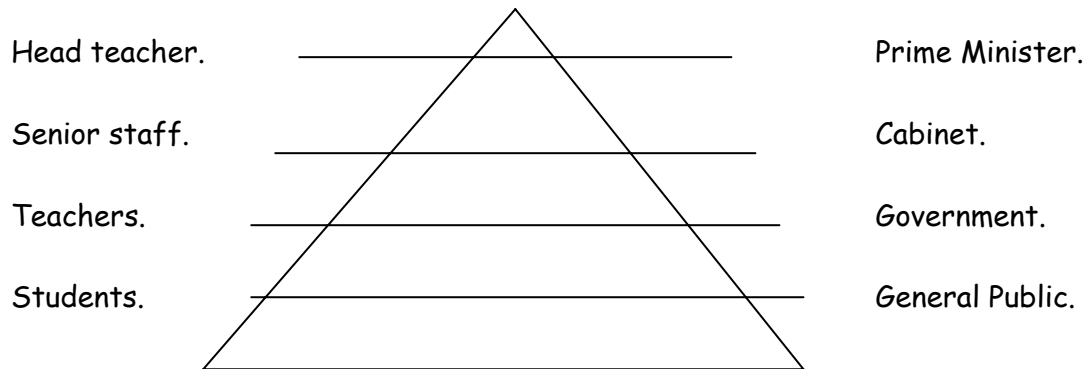


An idiot's guide to Power and democracy.

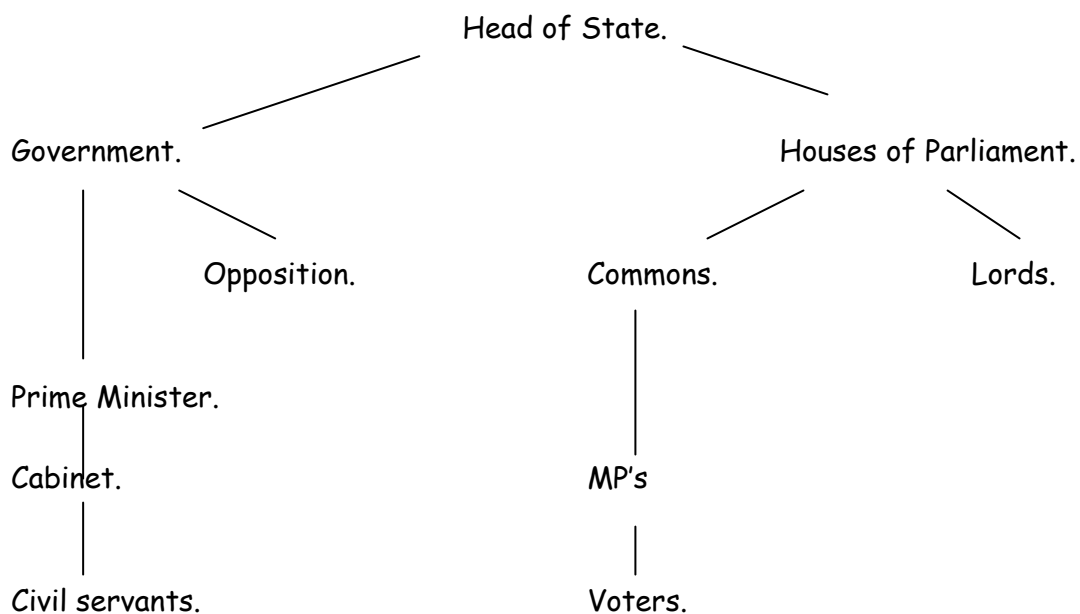
To fully understand how power is shared out in the community it is best to start with one that you all have experience of - School! We can use school as an example of how power is structured within a school. For example:



We live in a society where we are all governed by rules. Yet when it is challenged it calls into question how we deal with the situation. In school there are various stages to go through. When talking about bullying the school policy allows both parties to be counselled and treated fairly. Within society this is reflected by the court system. All people are innocent until found guilty.

UK Politics:

Below you will see the structure within our society where government is concerned.



For the UK politics this is the main diagram you will need to help you with understanding how it all works. Try this exercise to see how much you already know.

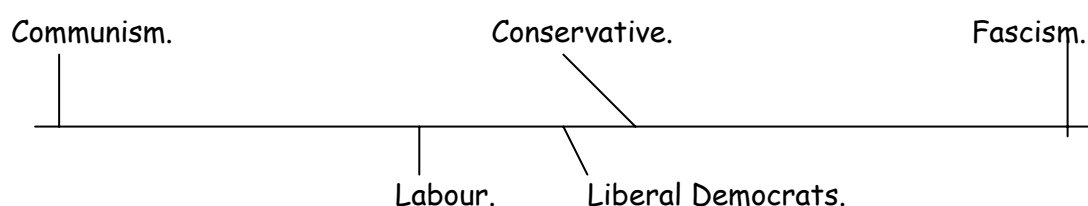
- a. Task a large piece of paper and draw the diagram on to it.
- b. Use the bullet point below and arrange them where you think they should go. Some of these will be easy to do!

- The Head of State opens and closes parliament every year. They have very little power within government.
- The house is split into Commons and Lords.
- The Commons is made up of 659 members.
- The PM chooses the cabinet ministers.
- This group makes sure that government policies are carried out.
- The Opposition examine government plans and takes action when they believe the government to be wrong.
- MP's mainly look after the interests of constituents.
- Cabinet in charge of large government departments like health and education.
- This groups works with the PM to decide major policies.
- House of Lords is made up of Peers (people with titles), judges and Church of England bishops.
- The British public vote in elections.
- The Government is made up of three main political parties.
- The job of this house is to check the laws made by the Commons.

From this we can see that the UK is classed as a democracy. This means that those in society who are aged 18 or over vote for the person to lead the country. This implies that the majority of people are happy with the result. Yet there may be people who did not vote for the winners.

Yet within government there are different political ideologies and all views will be heard. This means that people's opinions will be heard, discussed and may even influence the ruling party to change their policies.

Look at the diagram below to see the main political ideologies.



So let's look at some of these terms:

Communism:

- Based on the writings of Karl Marx.
- Believe in equality where wealth is concerned therefore everything is owned by the government.
- First communist country was the USSR.

Fascism:

- Anti - communist and anti - democratic.
- Stamped out all dissent.
- Extreme nationalism.

Conservatives:

- Inequality is necessary and desirable.
- Powerful ruling class to govern others.

Labour:

- Ensure that all are treated fairly.
- Equal rights for all.
- Judge people on merit rather than wealth.

Before any political group can pass a law, parliament have to consult a wide range of people who may be affected by the law. Civil Servants (people employed by the government to help with the work) usually carry out research to find people's opinions. Once these have been collected they carry the suggestions to a green paper. Government ministers in charge of that area read the proposals and create a white paper for government to discuss. The proposals contained in this are returned into a bill and debated in the House of Commons. Once the MP's in this house have voted it is passed onto the House of Lords. Once they have agreed it goes to the head of State (King or Queen) to be signed. However, if the House of Lords do not agree with the proposals they can return to the House of Commons to be changed. It is also important to note that the Head of State can refuse to sign the bill to make it into a law. This has not happened since 1707ce.

When talking about political groups it is also important to mention two other main groups of people. The first groups are called New Social Movements (NSM's). NSM's include:

- Environmental groups.
- Feminist groups.
- Peace movements.
- Animal rights.

Most NSM's have a small agenda and focus on one issue. They are often short lived but can spark off dramatic events. NSM's use different tactics depending on what they hope to achieve. Some of these tactics have included:

- Breaking into labs.
- Blocking ports so animals cannot be taken for slaughter.
- Destroying genetically modified crops.

When dealing with these groups, police have difficulties as there is no leader to negotiate with.

The other type of groups are pressure groups. These too can be divided into areas:

- Interest groups: represent a particular group (for example the AA, RAC and trade unions).
- Promotional groups: represent a particular belief (Amnesty international)

How much these groups influence the government depends on the tactics used. If they break the law then they will not be listened to. To gain more information on this, log on to the internet and look to see what work they do:

<http://www.amnesty.org.uk/>

<http://www.greenpeace.org.uk/>

Below you will see a timeline of events in the rise to Hitler's power and how he governed until the end of WWII.

1918:

Kaiser Wilhelm fled to Holland.
New government took over.
Criticised due to agreeing to the treaty of Versailles.

1924:

Hitler began to rebuild the Nazi party after his release from prison.

1929:

A 'Depression' hit due to the collapse of the New York Stock Market.
Germany affected most.
Himmler made SS leader.

1933:

Hitler is appointed Chancellor.
Reichstag fire.
Government voted themselves out of power.
Goebbels is made minister of propaganda.

1939:

70% of Germany is listening to short wave German propaganda on their radios.
Nazi's own 2/3 of the press.

1944:

War not going well for Germany.
Hitler begins to make fewer public speeches.

1923:

Hitler enters the political scene.
Invented a new form of fascism called Nazism.
Gained support for the party by blaming the government.
Put in prison for trying to take power.

1925:

Creation of the SS.

1932:

Nazi party is the largest in Germany.

1936:

Made attendance to the Hitler Youth compulsory.

1941:

First Jews are sent to the concentration camps.
Involved in fighting the USSR.

1945:

War ends.
Hitler and main leaders dead.
6 million Jews dead.

To fully understand how the Nazi party ruled we must look at specific examples from history. Below you see that I have concentrated on 5 main areas:

Grip on Power:

In February 1933 the Reichstag was burnt. According to Hitler and his party at the time this was said to have been the work of a communist called Marinus Van der Lubbe. He was tried and executed. However this act came as a shock to the communists as well as the rest of the political parties in Germany at the time. As Chancellor, Hitler managed to convince President Hindenburg that there was a real threat and that the country should be declared as being in a state of emergency.

This one act alone was the beginning of Hitler and the party getting what they wanted. Hitler created a 'Decree for the Protection of the people of the State'. This not only entitled Hitler to govern by himself, but he also created new laws to attempt to consolidate his power. These included:

- Restricted freedom of speech.
- Restricted freedom of the press.
- Imprisonment without a trial was now acceptable.
- The government was allowed to confiscate property.

In the run up to the elections Goebbels banned the communist party. He ordered 50,000 Prussian SA members to act as policemen within Germany. He ordered 50 politicians dead and with the use of propaganda the Nazi party secured 5.5 million votes.

Police State:

Himmler (the head of the SS) used the SS as a police force. They divided people into two groups. They were those who supported the Nazi's (friends) and those who did not support the Nazi's (enemies). Himmler was responsible for the creation of the first concentration camp - Dachau. Those who did not agree with the Nazi party were sent there for 'their own protection'.

The other threat within this type of rule was from the Gestapo (the secret police). Goering was in charge of this group and they were given licence to do whatever they wanted to, to protect the state.

Propaganda:

Goebbels was the minister for propaganda and it was his job to make sure the Nazi party was shown in the right light. He controlled what was said about the party and that the right message was being put across to the public.

To ensure that the party message spread even further he commissioned the making of short wave radios to ensure that, that was all the German people could listen to. By 1939 the Nazi party had control over 2/3 of the German news papers.

Hitler youth:

'The weak must be chiselled away. I want young men and women who can suffer pain. A young German must be as swift as a greyhound, as tough as leather and as hard as Krupp's steel' (Hitler).

By 1936 the Hitler Youth was made compulsory. There were two separate groups for boys and girls. Whilst the boys were taught and trained in the ways of the army, the girls were taught about motherhood. The aim was to ensure that Germany continued to strive and that the Nazi message would continue.

Due to poor attendance to extra meeting, Hitler passed a law in 1938 which made it compulsory for all to attend these meetings. However although to the outside world the Hitler Youth appeared to promote German discipline, in reality life was a lot harder. Those who attended often turned up to school late and tired due to the long meetings they were expected to attend.

Education;

Nazi's controlled this as well. Not only did they change the curriculum to ensure that the Nazi message was being taught, they also taught about race relations. They promoted the idea of Germans being superior to the rest of the world and they openly showed their contempt for the Jews.

As an incentive for those students there were special schools set up for those who would succeed into the next political leaders.

Below you will see a comparison between the UK and Nazi Germany. I have started this, see if you can fill in the rest of the information:

	UK	Germany under Hitler.
Who is the leader?		
How many parties are there?		
What way did they govern?		
What are the implications of this?		
Any other information		