



Home news



Boris Johnson (left) and Jeremy Corbyn (right).

DID YOU KNOW?
The first televised leaders debate in UK history took place in 2010.

Lord Buckethead gets a new name



The unusual candidate.

Lord Buckethead has competed in the same constituency (area) as the Prime Minister (PM) of the time in three previous general elections. This year, Buckethead will stand against PM Boris Johnson, but will do so under the new name of Count Binface. Buckethead is a character from a film and the director has now said the name cannot be used.

Leaders do battle in live TV debate

On 19 November, Prime Minister Boris Johnson and Jeremy Corbyn, the leader of the Labour Party, took part in the first live televised debate of the general election campaign.

What is a general election?

This is when the public votes for a new Government. The public chooses Members of Parliament (MPs) to sit in the House of Commons, where they take part in debates and make laws. The House of Commons has 650 MPs. Each MP represents an area of the UK known as a constituency, or seat. Whichever party wins more than half of the seats (at least 326) is asked by the Queen to form the Government.

What did the leaders say in the debate?

The main two topics of the debate were Brexit and the National Health Service (NHS). Brexit is the word used to describe the UK leaving the EU (an

organisation of 28 European countries who trade together and follow some of the same rules). A majority of voters (52%) in the UK voted to leave the EU during a referendum held in 2016. Johnson said he had a plan to deliver Brexit and would make sure it happened. Corbyn said he would let the public vote on a Brexit deal with the EU, to see if people still want to leave, or if they want to remain. Both leaders said they would spend more money on the NHS.

Who won the debate?

A YouGov poll after the debate found that 51% of those who watched the leaders thought Johnson performed the best, whereas 49% preferred Corbyn. Viewers thought Johnson was more convincing when he spoke about Brexit but Corbyn had better ideas and plans for the NHS. The debate was watched by about 6.7 million people.

Where were the other parties?

The Liberal Democrats and the Scottish National Party (SNP), were both angry at not being included in the debate. They say their opinions are different to those of Corbyn and Johnson, and the public should have the chance to hear them. The two parties launched a legal challenge against ITV, the channel that hosted the debate. However, the court said that the channel could invite whichever leaders it wanted.

What else has been happening?

Before the election on 12 December, political parties have been presenting their plans for what they will do if they win. The Labour Party says it would give every home and business free high-speed internet access by 2030. The Conservative Party says this will cost too much, but that it would spend £5 billion on improving internet access across the country.

WORD OF THE WEEK

CLINKABELL

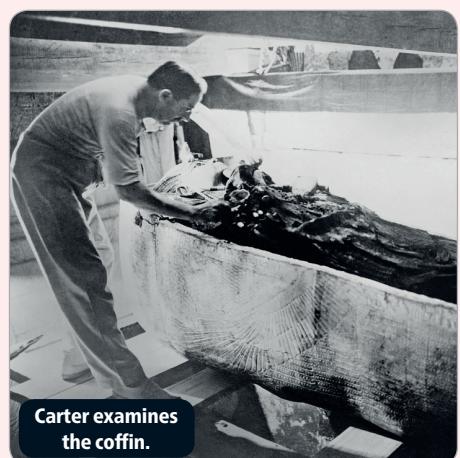
As winter frosts begin to set in, we may begin to see spiky icicles forming outside. Across Britain, there are many beautiful words for icicle. Clinkabell is an old term from the West Country, but other local words include aquabob, ice-candle and ice-shoggle.

THE WEEK IN HISTORY

26 November 1922

Tutankhamun's tomb is discovered

On 26 November 1922, Howard Carter discovered the entrance to Tutankhamun's tomb in Egypt. Tutankhamun became a pharaoh (the ancient Egyptian equivalent of a king) at the age of nine in 1333BC, and died aged 19. Carter had been searching for the tomb in the Valley of the Kings – a royal burial ground for pharaohs. Inside the tomb, Carter found the well-preserved mummy of Tutankhamun, jewellery and gold. It was one of the most spectacular finds of the 20th century.



Carter examines the coffin.

Leaders do battle in live TV

Read the article and then try the following activities...



Hold a debate

A general election is an extremely important event because it means that everyone of voting age (18 and over) gets the chance to have a say on who runs the country. In this country, we are not forced by law to have a vote but some say we should. They say that not voting is an insult to the many people who fought really hard to keep our country a democracy (a place where leaders are chosen by the people, not crowned because of who their parents were). It would also make people think more carefully about who they choose. Others argue that everything should be a choice, including the decision to vote or not. In any case, what if you didn't like the ideas of any of the people you could vote for? Should you be forced to vote for someone you didn't like? What do you think?

Writing challenge!

Choose one of the following writing warm-ups.

1 Imagine you were standing for election. What would you want to change about our country. Make a list of your top five promises, giving persuasive reasons for each.

2 Write a (pretend) letter to your local MP (member of parliament) saying whether you think children should get the vote. Make sure you explain your reasons clearly and respectfully.

Investigate

Who is your local MP? Create a fact file about the person who represents your area, including which political party they belong to and any interesting issues they seem to be particularly passionate about.