EPISODE 9
LEVEL B2

READING COMPREHENSION

ELECTIONS

Presidential elections are **held** (= organized) every five years in our country. There are usually a few candidates who **run/stand for** (= 'apply for') the presidency. They **launch** (= start, introduce) their election **campaigns** months before the election day. They've got their **spin doctors** who advise them what to say and how to behave in order to make people **vote for** (= choose) them. When the election day comes, citizens all over the country go to **polling stations** (= places where we vote) and put their votes into **ballot boxes**. As life shows, it's not always the candidate whom the **opinion polls** (= surveys carried out to find out what people in general think about a subject) predicted to win that is in fact elected as new president.

More contexts for the new words:

• They are planning to **launch** a new model of the car next year. (= introduce onto the market)
• He **held office** of President for 10 years. (= was in the office, had the position)

EXERCISE 1
Match the expression halves.

1. to hold
2. to run for
3. to launch
4. a spin
5. to vote
6. a polling
7. a ballot
8. an opinion

a. a campaign
b. box
c. doctor
d. elections
e. for sb
f. poll
g. presidency
h. station

EXERCISE 2

Use the words from Exercise 1 to complete the questions and then answer them.

1. Have you ever taken part in an ………………………… poll?

2. Which candidate did you vote ………………………… in the last elections?

3. Where is your nearest ………………………… station?

ENGLISH IN USE

Today is the second lesson that will deal with relative pronouns. Let's look at the sentence below:

*As life shows, it's not always the candidate **WHOM** the opinion polls predicted to win that is in fact elected as new president.*

WHOM is used when it is the object of a verb (the opinion polls predicted *someone* to win). In spoken English WHOM is usually reduced to WHO, so you often end up with such sentences:

*This is the girl **WHO**(M) I met at the party last week. (= I met her)*
*It's ideal to marry the person **WHO**(M) you love. (= you love him/her)*
*Why didn't you talk to the teacher **WHO**(M) I told you about? (= I told you about him/her)*

IDIOM CLOSE-UP

A/ Did you expect Smith to win the elections?
*B/ No, never. He really was a **DARK HORSE**!*

A **dark horse** is a horse or a politician who wins a race or competition although no one expected them to.

PHRASAL VERBS CLOSE-UP

1. If you VOTE something DOWN, you defeat something such as a law or plan by voting against it.

*He wanted to introduce freedom of information, but they **voted** him **down.***
*The proposal to build a new road through the forest was **voted down** by the local council.*

2. If you VOTE something THROUGH, you accept and make possible something such as a law or plan by voting for it.

*We **voted** the changes **through**.*
*The committee **voted through** a proposal to cut the defence budget.*

EXERCISE 3
Complete the sentences. The number of missing letters is given.

1. There were lots of hopes connected with the new law proposal, but it was voted _ _ _ _ by the Parliament.
2. The new budget has successfully been voted _ _ _ _ _ _ _.
3. Opinion polls did not give him much chances of winning. He really turned out to be a _ _ _ _ horse when he won the election.

NEWS

BUYING VOTES

Last weekend's election will probably **go down in history** as one with the biggest scandals in history. Both major parties tried to **ensure** victory by **purchasing** votes. Especially the elderly were offered minor sums of money in order to **cast their vote** for the right party. Needless to say, the procedure is illegal for both sides. However, it is estimated that at least a few thousand voters have been **bribed** to elect a particular candidate. This event raises questions concerning the **feasibility** of traditional elections, and reopens the discussion on internet-based voting. It is assumed that – if all voting was done online – there would be less room for bribery and **foul play**. Only the future will show if this is indeed the case.

GLOSSARY

- **go down in history** – be remembered
- **ensure** – to make sure that sth happens
- **purchase** – buy
- **cast a vote** – to vote
- **to bribe sb** – to pay sb to do sth
- **feasibility** – whether sth is reasonable
- **foul play** – unfair behaviour

KEY TO EXERCISES

Ex.1

1. d
2. g
3. a
4. c

5. e
6. h
7. b
8. f

Ex.2
1. opinion
2. for
3. polling

Ex.3
1. down
2. through
3. dark