

The Dilemma

Ryan looked at his watch which was ticking eagerly. “Not long to go now,” he thought. He was stood waiting outside the Methodist church in the village, beside a sign declaring that the church was indeed a “polling station” for today only. Having waited outside in the sunshine for what felt like an eternity, the doors opened and in drifted the people. Holding his polling card, Ryan approached the table where two stern looking people sat. In exchange for his polling card, Ryan acquired his first ballot slip, and stumbled nervously towards the booth.

On the ballot slip were some simple instructions (thankfully) that read; “Vote only once by putting a cross in the box next to your choice.” Easy. Or not so easy. There were only two options to choose from so why was he sweating so much, he wondered. He hesitated with his pencil hovering over one box and then the other. He was so pleased to have an opportunity to vote now he was eighteen, however, how can people make such a big decision that will affect the whole of the UK? He ticked a box, popped the ballot paper into the sealed box and walked towards the door, feeling relieved.

For the last three months the debate had increased in momentum. Constantly on the radio, the television, the news and even in the post office, conversations (or more like arguments) were being held on whether we should vote to leave or stay in the European Union. Britain seemed to be saturated with EU discussions and it was all anyone seemed to want to talk about. The speculation had been that it would be a split vote and a close decision. Despite the allegations that many young people were not interested in politics and therefore would not be voting, Ryan wanted to have his say. After all, the Prime Minister David Cameron himself wanted people like Ryan to vote. Having already decided to vote, Ryan was bombarded by the television about how this was “the biggest decision of a generation” and that this vote “really matters to you”.

After hearing that there was going to be a referendum back in February, Ryan had registered to vote and spent some of his time trying to research as much information as possible. With his dad, moaning in the background that “we should leave the EU” and that “there was no decision to make”, Ryan devoured each referendum debate programme, news article and website he could find. If he was going to vote, he wanted to make sure he made the right choice. He was aware, though, that people had different priorities in their lives meaning that people had different opinions on how we should vote on the 23rd June.

Ryan’s mum was proud. She liked the fact that her son was interested in the future of the UK, in fact she liked it when Ryan would explain both sides of the arguments across the dinner table as there were times when Ryan’s mum did not understand what the politicians were talking about. Ryan was exceptional at explaining things simply and to the point.

The days passed. The weeks passed. The months passed. As time ticked on, Ryan’s head grew with knowledge not only about the EU debate, but about the EU countries, their policies and their systems. He learned things from his research he never knew existed, such that the EU has its own anthem, and flag, amongst other interesting things. It seemed as though sticking with the EU would not be plain sailing, but then again neither would be leaving the EU. After months had passed Ryan was still no closer to a decision to the dilemma. What’s more, the debate between the politicians was starting to heat up. It was becoming a popularity contest between the main public supporters which seemed to be tainting the debate. Ryan was not interested in personal comments against other people, he just wanted the facts.

Back in the polling station, Ryan felt satisfied. Not only had he made a challenging decision on which way to vote, but more importantly he had taken an interest and learned more about the topic before he made his decision. He wanted to be a part of the UK’s future and the UK wanted him to be a part too!

Why has the author given the story the title “The Dilemma”?

How do the longer and shorter sentences change the pace of the story?

How is the importance of being well informed emphasised in the text?

What difference does culture and setting make to how the character made his decision to vote?

Can you think of another story that has the theme of making a decision?

Where has the author used repetition and what effect does this have on the reader?

Give some examples that show how the character is feeling in the story.

Give a direct quote from the text to show the opinion of Ryan's Dad.

Why did the author introduce the text with the end of the story?

Were you surprised by the ending? Explain.

As a reader, how has the author made you feel about the character? How has the author made you feel this way?

The Dilemma – Vocab 1

Write the meaning of each of the words.

acquired _____

polling station _____

ballot slip _____

momentum _____

saturated _____

speculation _____

devoured _____

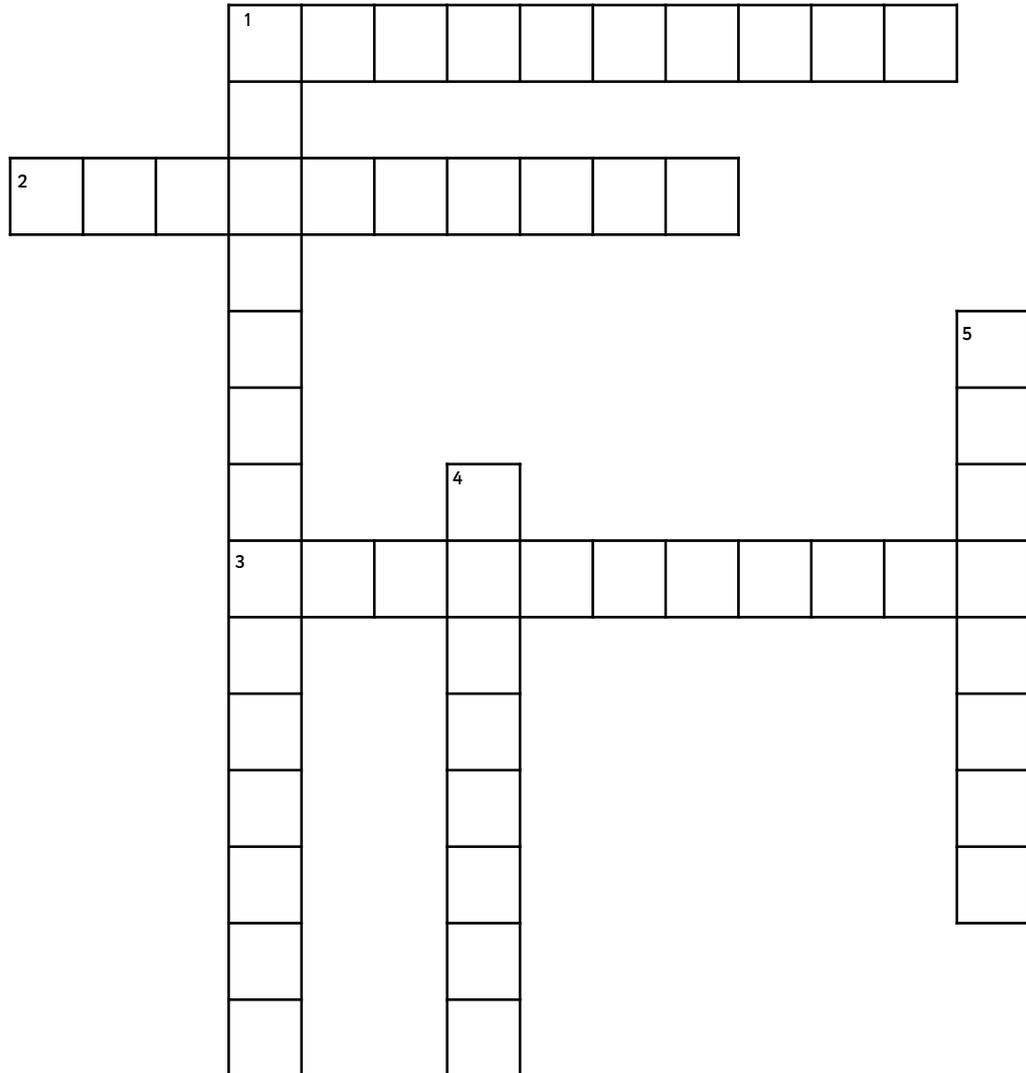
priorities _____

referendum _____

tainting _____

The Dilemma – Vocab 2

Use the clues to find the missing words in the crossword.



Down

1. a place in the community where you can go to vote
3. believing something is true without any evidence
2. the name of the piece of paper that you write your vote onto

Across

1. things that you believe are more important are your _____
4. having obtained something for yourself
5. a bad or undesirable thing that overshadows something else

Re-write the sentences below. Add in a subordinate clause to turn them into complex sentences.

Ryan registered to vote.

The EU referendum took place on the 23rd June.

The politicians debated on if the UK should stay or leave the EU.

Here is a passage from the story:

After hearing that there was going to be a referendum back in February, Ryan had registered to vote and spent some of his time trying to research as much information as possible.

Here is a quotation from the passage:

After hearing that there was going to be a referendum... Ryan had registered to vote and spent some of his time trying to research as much information as possible.

Why is the ellipsis used in this quotation?

Write a complex sentence using the word after as a subordinating conjunction.

The Dilemma – SPAG 2

Which part of the sentences below should be enclosed in brackets? Tick one box for each sentence.

The referendum was announced back in February after David Cameron made a deal with the EU.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

On the ballot slip were some simple instructions thankfully that were easy to understand.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

The polling station a church was full of people who were keen to vote.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Which sentence begins with a subordinate clause? Tick one box.

He wanted to vote so he could make a difference.

Ryan, who was eighteen years old, voted in the EU referendum.

After making a deal with the EU, David Cameron announced a UK referendum.

Ryan researched all the information he needed to make an informed choice.

Re-write the sentence below in its passive form.

The people decided the fate of the UK.

The Dilemma – Oral Teacher Questions

Why has the author given the story the title “The Dilemma”? **The character has a dilemma and researches the facts in order to make a decision.**

How do the longer and shorter sentences change the pace of the story? **The mixture of long and short sentences keep the reader’s interest. They are used to create effect when reading the story.**

How is the importance of being well informed emphasised in the text? **At the end of the story it states Ryan is proud because he researched information and discussed it with his family before he made his decision.**

What difference does culture and setting make to how the character made his decision to vote? **Set in the present day so the character could use television, media and internet to make an informed decision. It is set in the UK when both male and females over 18 can vote. If it was set in the past, less information would be available, (no internet or TV) and women may not be able to vote. The character may not have voted or have been able to vote in a different culture to the UK or a different time period.**

Can you think of another story that has the theme of making a decision? **Personal response.**

Where has the author used repetition and what effect does this have on the reader? **“The days passed. The weeks passed. The months passed.” Creates the effect of time passing slowly whilst waiting for something important.**

Give some examples that show how the character is feeling in the story. **...stumbled nervously..., ...sweating so much..., he hesitated..., he was so pleased..., ...feeling relieved...**

Give a direct quote from the text to show the opinion of Ryan’s Dad. **With his dad, moaning in the background that “we should leave the EU” and that “there was no decision to make”...**

Why did the author introduce the text with the end of the story? **To create suspense and interest in the main part of the story. Hopefully the reader wanted to know how he got to his decision at the polling station, and the reader may have wanted to find out which way the character voted, which wasn’t revealed at the start.**

Were you surprised by the ending? Explain. **Personal response. The reader may have expected to find out which way the character voted at the end of the story, but this wasn’t revealed.**

As a reader, how has the author made you feel about the character? How has the author made you feel this way? **Positive about the character as he was trying to make a difference to the country and was finding out information for himself. The author has made sure the character stayed impartial throughout the story leaving it open to interpretation on which way the character voted.**

Write the meaning of each of the words.

acquired – to obtain something for yourself

polling station – a public building used for voting in during a referendum or election

ballot slip – the paper that you state your vote on

momentum – the driving force behind a series of events

saturated – having or holding as much of something as possible

speculation – forming a theory without evidence to support it

devoured – to read something fully and quickly, cannot get enough

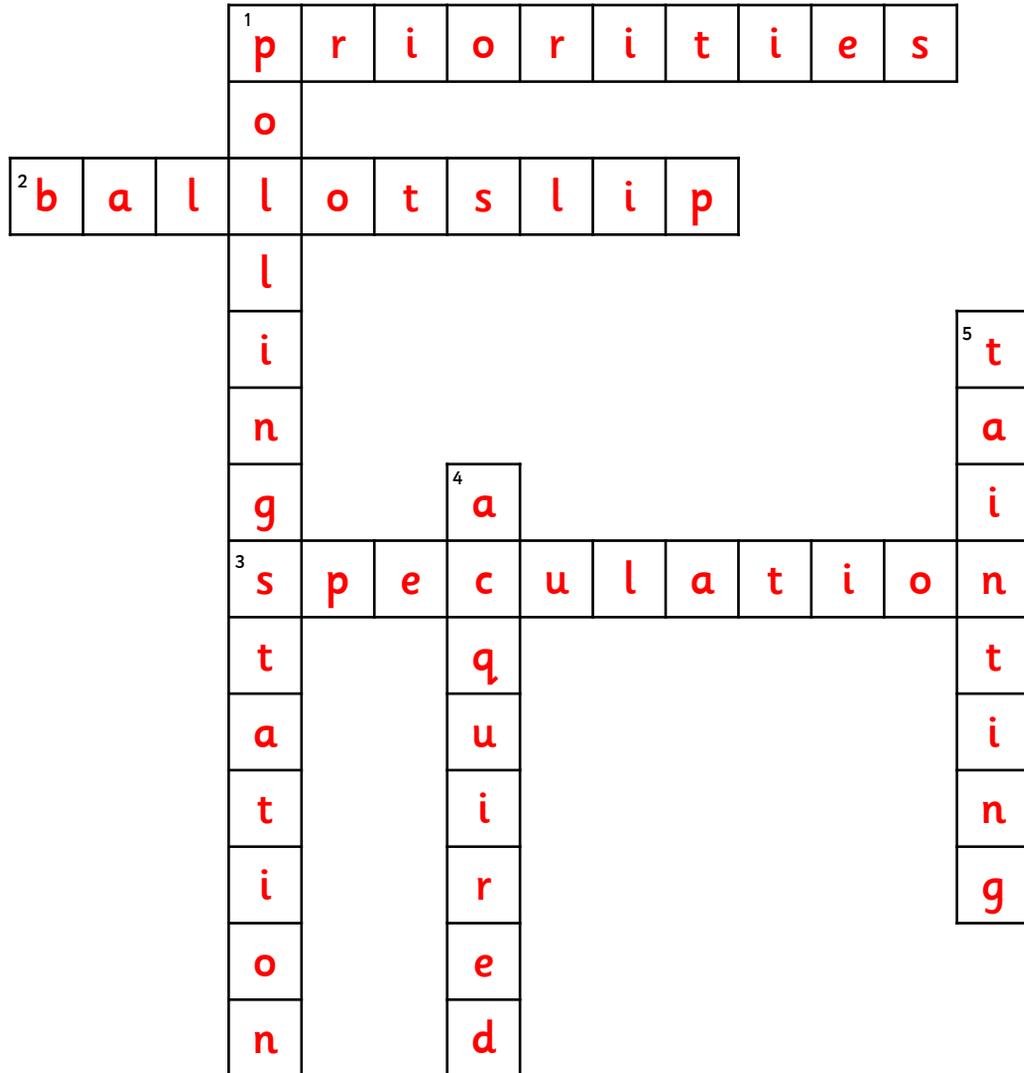
priorities – things that are thought of as more important than other things

referendum – a general vote to answer a question asked by the government

tainting – a bad or undesirable thing that can influence something else

The Dilemma – Vocab 2

Use the clues to find the missing words in the crossword.



Down

1. a place in the community where you can go to vote
3. believing something is true without any evidence
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4. having obtained something for yourself
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The Dilemma – Vocab 3

Select the correct word from the box to complete the sentences.

I cast my vote onto the **ballot slip**.

The popularity contest was **tainting** the campaign.

I was **saturated** with knowledge around the EU referendum.

It was merely **speculation** that the UK would vote to leave the EU.

Ryan **acquired** a lot of knowledge around the EU referendum before he voted.

The campaigns were gaining **momentum** as time went on.

My **priorities** for the UK involve making our economy stronger.

It was known that he **devoured** all of the information he could.

Ryan was voting in the EU **referendum** because he wanted a say in the UK's future.

acquired	polling station	momentum	saturated	speculation
devoured	ballot slip	priorities	referendum	tainting

Write a paragraph about the story using all of the words in the box above.

Ensure use of all words from the box above and that the paragraph summarises the story clearly.

Re-write the sentences below. Add in a subordinate clause to turn them into complex sentences.

Ryan registered to vote.

Ryan registered to vote, before completing his research on the debate.

The EU referendum took place on the 23rd June.

The EU referendum, which was a nationwide debate, took place on the 23rd June

The politicians debated on if the UK should stay or leave the EU.

After a long campaign, the politicians debated on if the UK should stay or leave the EU.

Here is a passage from the story:

After hearing that there was going to be a referendum back in February, Ryan had registered to vote and spent some of his time trying to research as much information as possible.

Here is a quotation from the passage:

After hearing that there was going to be a referendum... Ryan had registered to vote and spent some of his time trying to research as much information as possible.

Why is the ellipsis used in this quotation?

To omit information that is not important to the meaning of the sentence.

Write a complex sentence using the word after as a subordinating conjunction.

Accept any correct complex sentence, for example 'After researching the policies for 'leave' and 'stay', Ryan had made his decision.'

The Dilemma – SPAG 2

Which part of the sentences below should be enclosed in brackets? Tick one box for each sentence.

The referendum was announced back in February after David Cameron made a deal with the EU.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

On the ballot slip were some simple instructions thankfully that were easy to understand.

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Which sentence begins with a subordinate clause? Tick one box.

He wanted to vote so he could make a difference.

Ryan, who was eighteen years old, voted in the EU referendum.

After making a deal with the EU, David Cameron announced a UK referendum.

Ryan researched all the information he needed to make an informed choice.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Re-write the sentence below in its passive form.

The people decided the fate of the UK.

The UK's fate was decided by the people.