BLAIR AND THE 2005 GENERAL ELECTION[1]

I- Background on Blair's previous terms

a- The electoral system
b- Achievements
c- Bones of contention

II- The 2005 polls

a- The 2005 results
b- The New Cabinet

III- A third term: the Queen's Speech

a- What is the Queen's Speech
b- Third term: the agenda

Notes typographiques

. *Le vocabulaire thématique en gras ; je vous recommande de vous constituer des FICHES THEMATIQUES de vocabulaire. L'enrichissement de votre vocabulaire passe nécessairement par l'apprentissage par cœur de telles listes. Toutefois, il peut être plus facile de retenir le vocabulaire en contexte, d'où son inclusion ici au sein de phrases rédigées.*

. *Les informations les plus importantes sont soulignées.*

. *Le vocabulaire en italique est utile pour les essais (mots de liaison, connecteurs logiques etc)*

Les notes de bas de page :

. *les notes en rouge concernent la civilisation et l'histoire*

. *les notes en vert concernent le vocabulaire, les questions de langue, la grammaire*

[1] Please note THE SINGULAR in English :

En français	les élections présidentielles / législatives
Aux Etats-Unis	the presidential election / the mid-terms
En Grande-Bretagne	the general election (the leader of the winning party becomes Prime Minister)

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2. 2005 Election and results

The general election was **held** on **May 5th**.

2.a- 2005 election results

	Compare 1997	Compare 2001	2005 Seats	2005 Gain/ Loss
LABOUR	418	413	356	-47
CONSERVATIVES	165	166	197	+33
LIBERAL DEMOCRATS	46	52	62	+11
OTHERS		28	30	

Labour now enjoys a majority of 66 seats, which is undoubtedly a disappointment compared to the 2001 167-seat-majority! It is clear the British voters sent a message of dissatisfaction to their government. For lack of a strong and credible opposition, Labour was able to remain afloat but is the lesson going to be learnt?
Nevertheless a 66-seat-majority is comfortable enough to meet no trouble in passing laws.

The Conservatives have not been able to make the most of the loss of popularity of Blair and his party. They only gained 33 seats. The opposition may be described as being in shatters: after William Hague's defeat in 2001, the Tories chose Ian Ducan Smith and then Michael Howard as their leader. Quite a few changes in such a short time.
In spite of his party **gaining ground**, Howard has announced he will be standing down from the job before the next election. He thinks he will too old (he is in his late 60s) to continue untl the next election.

The Liberal-Democrats are the emerging force in Britain today. The country used to be strictly bipartite. The "Lib-Dems" as they are called have been gathering momentum since 1997 as a possible "third force" on the political scene. They are the victims, however, of the "**first-past-the-post**" system. Their leader is Charles Kennedy.

The "first-past-the-post" system and its flaws[2].
The electoral system is *that of*[3] a **single uninominal ballot**; the system is also called "**first-past-the-post**". *Therefore* a candidate does not need 50% of the votes to be elected, the one who comes first is elected. There isn't a second turn as in France, which allows alliances between smaller candidates and parties and thus coalitions in the Chamber and government.

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[2] **a flaw** : un défaut, une lacune
When weighting down the arguments on a topic, try these alternatives instead of « the advantages and the inconvenients » :

the **assets** (les atouts) and the **downfalls** / **flaws**.

[3] that of = celui de. Please do not use "the one of" in that case.

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