### **U.K. to lower voting age from 18 to 16**

The British government has announced a lowering of the voting age to 16. This is two years lower than the current age at which a person can cast their vote. This "seismic" change is part of a package of reforms that will give the electoral system greater integrity, while including more young people in the democratic process. The first chance 16- and 17-year-olds will have to exercise their right to vote will be in the UK's next general election. The government said: "We are modernizing our democracy, so that it is fit for the 21st century. By [extending] the vote to younger people, we are taking a generational step forward in restoring public trust and boosting engagement in UK democracy."

There has been a mixed reaction in Britain to the change. Supporters contend that 16-year-olds in Britain work and pay taxes, so they should be allowed to vote. UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer agreed. He said: "If you pay in, you should have the opportunity to say what you want your money spent on." The UK's deputy prime minister said: "Young people already contribute to society by working, paying taxes, and serving in the military. It's only right that they can have a say on the issues that affect them." However, there are many critics. Some point to the fact that 16-year-olds cannot drink alcohol, buy a lottery ticket, or get married without their parents' consent, yet they will be able to vote.

**Homework:**

1. Write a full sentence answer for each question below.
2. What is the current age at which people in the UK can vote?
3. What does the UK government want to give to the electoral system?
4. When will 16-year-olds have their first chance to vote?
5. What did the UK government say it is modernizing?
6. What does the UK want to restore?
7. What kind of reaction has there been to the lowering of the voting age?
8. Why does the UK leader think 16-year-olds should be able to vote?
9. Who said young people contribute to society by serving in the military?
10. What kind of ticket did critics say young people cannot buy?
11. What do people in the UK need to be able to get married at 16?

**Free Writing**

* Write about the voting age for 10 minutes.