

Landmarks of British history: The monarchy

Possible answers and solutions

- Point out the various reasons why, according to Roy Hattersley’s article, the British monarchy might be at risk. (*Comprehension*)
 - The republican principle is against the monarchy.
 - The public is upset about the high cost of the extravagant lifestyle of the royals.
 - A hereditary head of state is old-fashioned, an anachronism.
 - There is a contradiction between the monarch as a human being and his high position.
 - But above all the monarchy becomes the target of ridicule because of the wrong approach in explaining the high costs (not explaining the costs can be seen as arrogant, but explaining them is embarrassing, which is worse).
- Analyse the stylistic devices Hattersley uses to make his point more forcefully. (*Analysis*)

Alliterations	render Hattersley’s statement more forceful
“wastrel princelings prejudice the public” (ll.2–3)	reinforces the mocking tone
“blood and birth” (ll.3)	emphasis
“neither right nor reasonable” (ll.3-4)	emphasis
“Subaru salesman” (l.16)	emphasis comparison salesman = Reid sceptical customer = public
“gluttony of the guests” (l.38)	emphasis
“myth of monarchy” (ll.45-46)	emphasis

Other devices	
<i>Personification:</i> “Even today, a monarchy can survive being hated or despised. But being the object of ridicule is lethal.” (ll.41–42)	Both “survive” and “lethal” imply that the monarchy is alive, thus heightening the danger the monarchy is in.
<i>Contrast:</i> Prince Charles “pontificates” (l.31) his views but produces “embarrassingly silly” (ll.31-32) results.	The dogmatic way of expressing his views contrasts with their silliness, thereby heightening it.
<i>Irony:</i> “A spokesman, demonstrating a grasp of arithmetic that is beyond question ...” (ll.39-40)	The irony exposes how trivial the calculation is, thereby ridiculing the court.

- Some Australian republicans demand that Australia should become a republic when Elizabeth II, Australian Head of State, dies. Evaluate the pros and cons of this idea. (*Evaluation: comment*)

Pros:

- This means a compromise for both monarchists and republicans.
- The monarchy is not abolished at once, the chosen date is (probably) not too soon and not too far in the future.
- Republicans can hope for the future. Monarchists are comforted by the thought that the monarchy will probably remain for several, maybe even many more years.
- It shows respect towards the present Queen.

Task 1 aims at *Anforderungsbereich 1*, the content of the text.

Point out means you have to find and explain certain aspects.

It may help to underline the key terms in the text. Then take notes on the most important reasons (see the examples below), which will help you to phrase your written summary. Use your own words as far as possible.

Task 2 also aims at *Anforderungsbereich 2* (text analysis).

In Hattersley’s article a single stylistic device predominates. Have a closer look at the examples you have found in the text. Does the effect change if you replace them by synonyms, e.g. *Toyota car dealer* instead of *Subaru salesman*?

Task 3 aims at *Anforderungsbereich 3* and requires you to write a pros-and-cons comment.

To do so, collect arguments for and against the thesis in a list, as shown on the left. Order your arguments and turn them into full sentences and paragraphs.

Cons:

- The decision on a constitutional change is taken out of the hands of the Australians.
- This idea just means postponing an important decision.
- The monarchy is personalized, not treated like an institution.

4. Which advantages and disadvantages do you see in having a hereditary head of state? Give your own opinion. (*Evaluation: comment*)

Disadvantages:

- Most European countries have economic problems and democratically elected heads of state are cheaper, as there is no royal court or family to support.
- Electing the head of state, e.g. a president, is more democratic.
- Birth as a member of the royal family does not guarantee that a prince/princess is suited to become head of state.
- The religious background of monarchies, which stated that the monarch was chosen by God, is not very strong any more.

Advantages:

- The long tradition of monarchy strengthens the representative function of the head of state.
- No elections and election campaigns are necessary.
- The monarch stands above political parties and is not involved in their disagreements.
- The crown prince/princess is being prepared for his/her high office from childhood.
- The glamour accompanying hereditary heads of state, i.e. monarchs, is attractive for tourists.

Task 4 also aims at *Anforderungsbereich 3*.

First collect advantages and disadvantages, as shown on the left. Then write a comment using your arguments.