



ROAD TO THE REFERENDUM

This week sees the greatest political question in Scotland's, and the UK's, history for the last 300 years; Should Scotland be an independent country? There has been a long road to reach this point which we are going to discuss today.

How things stand

- Read the text below. What is the current prediction of the outcome of the referendum?
- Have a look at the text again. With a partner, discuss what you think the missing words are

At the moment, Scotland has a **devolved** parliament, thanks **a bill** which was passed in 1997 and became The Scotland **Act**. That means that the country has control over things like health, education and transport., there are still a great many **reserved powers** in Westminster such defence, tax and welfare. When the SNP won the election with **a majority** in 2011, part of their **manifesto** was to hold independence referendum. They wanted three options on the **ballot paper**; yes, no **devo max**, which would see more powers being given to Scotland but staying within the UK. However, the **coalition** government decided that it couldn't be an option.

The agreement was had to be **a majority** in favour of independence. It is now **too close to call** the result. Scotland the last few years has become more **left leaning** the rest of the UK, in terms of how they have voted. Although the No campaign has been the lead, many think there has been **a swing in opinion** and that the electorate may vote yes. **Polls** tend to **be in favour** no, although yes was recently ahead, once **undecided voters** were removed.

With all the media **spin** it is difficult to know what the result will be, although what is certain is that people are extremely engaged with..... debate, thanks mainly to the **grass roots movements** started a couple of years ago.

- Look at the words in blue. Can you define them?
- Look at the 3 expressions in orange. What do they mean? Write an example sentence for each one.

Do you know why Scotland and England formed a union? Discuss with a partner. Now read the text below. Where you correct?



The Forming of a Union

Scotland and England had always been independent countries, although often at war over territory. The first union was the Union of the Crowns in 1603. Queen Elizabeth I of England died with no children, and the next in line to the throne was King James 6th of Scotland. He then also became King James 1st of England and was king of both countries. However, Scotland and England were still independent. The English never conquered Scotland. This is something

often misunderstood by both Scottish and English people. The reason that the two countries became a union was actually because of money.

In 1698, Scotland decided that it wanted their own empire, so they found an area which could work as a trade link between the West and the East and connect the Pacific and Atlantic oceans. In theory it was a fantastic idea. Almost every Scot who had an extra £5 to spare invested in the scheme, but especially the rich and aristocrats. The location they chose was called Darien, and the project was called The Darien Scheme.

However, it was a complete disaster. Many died on the journey to the colony. Once they arrived, they realised it was not the paradise they expected, but a mosquito infested land with little chance of development. Soon many more died from illness and hunger. The ones who survived had to deal with the hostile Spanish forces who did not like them being in the area. Of the 16 ships which left for Darien, only 1 came back.



This bankrupted the country. The rich landowners wanted to get their money back. So, they did a deal with England. In 1707, the Scottish Parliament closed and all political decisions were moved to Westminster.

Originally, the union was viewed as a positive thing, at least by the rich. However, over time a lot of English policies became very unpopular such as the treatment of Highlanders.

The modern reason Scotland has problems with Westminster though is because of Thatcherism and the politics of the 1980s. Since then, Scotland has not voted for Conservative governments for many years, however the country has had to live with their policies.

How much do you know about the end of the British Empire and the Welfare state? Discuss with a partner



A Sense of Unity

“In the world that my grandparents knew and understood, Scotland, like the rest of Britain, was locked into a vast global trading bloc that preferred to bring frozen lamb and butter half way round the world from New Zealand than buy the same products from neighbouring France; that imported dried fruits from Australia rather than from the countries of the Mediterranean. It

was a trading system based on protective tariffs and trade barriers known as Imperial Preference. Britain chose to trade with the old “kith and kin” territories of the English-speaking world rather than with its European neighbours.

The Empire, the powerful, binding economic force of it, had, for generations, given Britons a common purpose, an enormous shared enterprise. It gave Scottish merchants access to trade with all the continents. The city of Glasgow, before its days as an industrial powerhouse, was built on trade - sugar and tobacco in particular.

But by 1974 the Empire was gone. Imperial Preference was gone. When Britain joined the European Economic Community in 1973, many of its old trading partners around the world - especially Australia and New Zealand - regarded it as a betrayal. The Empire became the Commonwealth, a community not of real economic power but of shared memory, of common values, of fellow feeling - in essence a

community of sentiment. Many people of my grandparent's generation felt Britain's role in the world had been diminished

In the 1970s, politics seemed preoccupied with the management of national decline. In my first year as an undergraduate at Edinburgh University, as the **Winter of Discontent** * took hold, we debated in our politics class whether Britain had become "ungovernable". It was in that context that the SNP emerged as a new force in electoral politics.

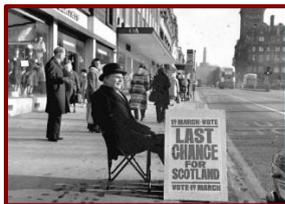
If the glue of British union for my grandparents had been the common enterprise of empire, for my parents, born in the 1930s, it was the sense of unity and welfare after the 2 world wars. In 1945, Britain emerged from the conflict with a moral stature unequalled across the continent due to standing up against the Nazis.



That generation was also bound together by what came after the war, the welfare state. The NHS, state pensions, child benefits, free education, increased social mobility - this was the Britain my parents inherited as young adults and it, like the Empire before it, had been a truly British enterprise. And this is the world into which my generation was born and in which we grew into early adulthood."

Adapted from Scotland's decision, by Alan Little http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/special/2014/newsspec_8699/index.html

***The Winter of Discontent was the widespread strike movement that occurred during the winter of 1978-1979 in Britain**



2 Referendums, 2 campaigns – Different results?

In 1979, there was a referendum on whether Scotland should have their own assembly. The outcome was no. Many people said that it was an unfair result as the vote was technically a majority, just not a majority of the registered electorate. Others say it was because there was not enough interest. Either way, it was certainly very different from the 2014 campaign.

i) Watch the video clip. What did they say devolution would mean? What did opponents think would happen? http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/special/2014/newsspec_8699/index.html **NEWSROUND CLIP**

Scotland and Wales did not get devolution, but the entire country did get Thatcherism. Margaret Thatcher's policies are either the worst or best in the world, depending on your politics. However, they certainly did have an effect on British traditional industries like steel, coal and ship building.



ii) Watch the video clip. What happened to the mine? Do you know anything else about this period of British politics? http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/special/2014/newsspec_8699/index.html **CLOSURE OF COLLINERY CLIP**

This was the start of the decline of Conservative support in Scotland. Both Labour and SNP parties warned of the possible dangers of the Conservative government.

iii) Watch the clip. What did Alistair Darling and Alex Salmond warn against? Which one came true?

- **ALISTAIR DARLING**
- **ALEX SALMOND**

In 1999, the Scottish parliament finally opened. No one thought that there would ever be an independent referendum, partly because the Scottish voting system was designed to make sure the SNP could never achieve a majority. However, then the Iraq war happened. This was the first step of the Labour party losing its traditional strong hold in Scotland, allowing the SNP to form first a minority government, and then a majority in 2011.

This time round, the referendum had been extremely different to 2014, and the difference has been the engagement of the population, both for yes and no. 97% of the population have registered to vote, with an estimated 80% turn out.

iv) Look at the vocabulary below. Which words would you use to describe the 1979 referendum, and which ones for 2014.

Unengaged	inspiring	lack lustre	creative	engaging	out spoken
Marginal	controversial	relevant	hopeful	uninspired	irrelevant

Comparing and contrasting the referendums

Write down 4 differences between the 1979 and 2014 referendums. Discuss them with a partner

USEFUL LANGUAGE – Comparing and Contrasting

On the one hand/on the other hand	while.....	This is.....whereas.....	The same as
different from	as.....as	COMPARATIVES	SUPERLATIVES

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)

There are many unknowns for both a yes and a no outcome. What are your concerns? Imagine you have an opportunity to speak to Alistair Darling and Alex Salmond. With a partner, write down 2 questions for each of them

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)

