Grade 9- Social Studies

Topic: The structure of Government in Jamaica

Students should be able to define the following terms:

1. Government
2. Democracy
3. Parliament
4. Bicameral legislature
5. Constitution
6. Constituency
7. Westminister model
8. Election
9. Electorate
10. Manifesto
11. Franchise
12. Universal adult suffrage
13. Floating voter
14. Landslide victory

CONTENT SUMMARY

The Jamaican Parliament consists of two Houses – the Senate, also called the Upper House, and the House of Representatives, also known as the Lower House – and the British Monarch. The Governor-General represents the Monarch in Parliament. Once a year, at the official opening of Parliament, the Governor-General delivers the “Throne Speech”. Beyond this, his/her parliamentary function is limited to his/her formal assent to Bills passed by the two Houses of Parliament.

The maximum life of a Parliament is five years, at the end of which Parliament must be dissolved and a general election held. However, the Prime Minister may advise the Governor-General to dissolve Parliament at any time within the five years and name a date for a general election

ACTIVITIES

1. Write a letter to your Member of Parliament and present your concerns and proposal for improvement in you constituency
2. Carry out some research into the activities of the opposition in your country and decide how effective you think they have been.