

**Raw Deal or Truth Told? Young People in the Media
Lord Speaker's Competition for Young People 2009
Student Brief**

Do you think young people get a bad press, or do you think newspapers in the UK present an accurate picture of you and your friends? How do you feel about the way that people your age are portrayed on TV, in films or on the radio? The House of Lords wants to hear from you.

We know that young people care about how they are portrayed in the media, as it was one of the six campaign priorities – voted on by over 1000 young people - that the UK Youth Parliament debated in the House of Lords in May last year. That's why we're giving more young people the opportunity to communicate directly with Members of the House of Lords about this issue.

The House of Lords is the second chamber of the UK Parliament and plays a crucial role in making the laws that people in the UK have to live by. It also keeps a check on public policy and government activities, often through its Committees. The Communications Committee is made up of Members of the House of Lords who have substantial experience and interest in media, broadcasting and communications. They would like to hear from you about young people's representation in the media, through this competition for schools which is sponsored by the Lord Speaker and organised by the Hansard Society.

Entering the competition

- Ask your teacher to register online at <http://www.parliament.uk/holcompetition>
- Get into a group of classmates. As long as there are at least two people, there is no limit to the group size, however please bear in mind that a maximum of five young people per winning team will be able to visit the House of Lords and receive the prize money. So if you enter as a whole class, you or your teacher will have to decide how to select five students to represent you!
- You may want to focus on a particular issue relating to young people in the media, that you are interested in, or perhaps know lots about already. There are lots of ideas on the next page of this document.

- Decide how you want to submit your views: will you create a presentation, make a film, write an essay or write a newspaper article? It's up to you how you present your ideas, as long as you stick to the competition rules.
- Do your research: look at newspaper articles about young people, find out statistics on young people and crime, education, volunteering etc. or interview local politicians, journalists or other young people.
- When you've done your research and got your submission together, make sure your teacher sends it in by the deadline of **Friday 15 May 2009!**

Getting started

You and your teacher will probably have lots of ideas for how to explore this issue, but the questions below could be a good starting point for your research:

- Are fictionalised portrayals of youth culture in **TV and film** based on real life? How do television programmes like *Skins*, *Hollyoaks* or *East-Enders* get their ideas for their young characters? How could young people influence TV programming?
- What do you think about the way young people are portrayed in **print media** such as newspapers and magazines? What positive articles have you seen recently? What about negative stories? How could you and other young people help to improve the way you are presented in the media?
- The growing use of the **internet** undoubtedly changes the way young people *consume* media, but does it also have an impact on how young people are represented? What about the use of web technologies enabling you to create your own media?
- How do you think you are affected by young people in the media, such as musicians, sports-stars or other celebrities? Should they be **role models**? Do they influence behaviour or make children and young people feel under pressure to look, dress and act in a particular way?

What do I get if I win?

You and up to four of your team members will be invited to the Houses of Parliament in London to present and discuss your submission with Members of the House of Lords Committee. You will also receive a tour of the Houses of Parliament and £25 each.

What if I don't win?

All submissions will be considered in detail and we will produce a report that summarises all of the entries received. You will also receive a signed

certificate from the Lord Speaker and Lord Fowler, Chair of the Committee, acknowledging your contribution. So get involved and have your say!

Register for the competition and submit your entry at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/holcompetition>