

Although still able to do the occasional walkabout and shake hands with dwindling crowds of fawning subjects, the Queen is already reported to be handing over her responsibilities to Prince Charles. If the Queen Mother is a guide, the Queen could be on the throne for another twenty years, yet with every year that passes she will be less and less able to perform the duties that are required of her as monarch. It is quite unacceptable for Charles 5 to be taking on any of the Queen's duties. Not only does he have no official constitutional position, there is also widespread unease about the man who will be King. It is time that monarchists, and the Queen, accept that the hereditary system is clearly failing. The Queen is Head of State for Britain, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and many other nations around the world. If she is no longer fit for duty she needs to begin considering her position. What she cannot do is ask her son to take on any of her work. Such a move would be no more 10 acceptable than a Prime Minister asking his son to chair cabinet meetings or attend international summits. If the work of the Head of State is as important as monarchists and republicans both claim, we must be clear about who is our Head of State. It would not be unreasonable to ask the Queen to retire to make way for her successor. But this begs another question; are we happy with the prospect of King Charles III (or King George VII, a title he has been reported to prefer)? The role of King is to be 15 impartial and apolitical, which Charles has not been in the past. Clearly, judging from his recently publicised diaries, he is not likely to embrace impartiality in the future. He has made his choice regarding his role in life, and it does not fit with the idea of monarchy. It is no good arguing he will change his ways when he becomes King; the damage is done. [...]

Assignments: 1) Point out the subject matter of the article. 2) Analyse rhetorical devices and argumentation to capture the author's view of the monarchy. 3) What reactions would you expect from the general public (including the media) in the United Kingdom?