

1. **contrasting** (adjective) – differing clearly; opposing, disagreeing.
2. **whittle down** (phrasal verb) – reduce, cut down, decrease/scale down (something in size gradually).
3. **stance** (noun) – attitude, outlook, point of view.
4. **moderate** (adjective) – average, modest, ordinary.
5. **face off** (phrasal verb) – compete, contend, vie/confront.
6. **predecessor** (noun) – previous holder of the post; forerunner, precursor, antecedent.
7. **flamboyant** (adjective) – showy, swashbuckling, energetic/vibrant.
8. **overwhelmingly** (adverb) – with a great majority.
9. **successor** (noun) – heir, next-in-line, descendant.
10. **see through** (phrasal verb) – realize, fathom, understand.
11. **of a lifetime** (phrase) – of a chance/opportunity which does not happen more than one time in a life.
12. **advocate** (noun) – supporter, champion, upholder.
13. **hardliner** (noun) – a group/a political party with people who support a strict ideas and they are extreme & uncompromising.
14. **erroneously** (adjective) – incorrectly, in a mistaken way.
15. **referendum** (noun) – public vote; a direct vote in which people cast ballots to decide on a specific issue or policy.
16. **Brussels** (noun) – The headquarters of the European Union. Brussels is a **metonym** of the European Union.
17. **xenophobic** (adjective) – prejudiced, intolerant, ; hyper-nationalist, racist, jingoistic.
18. **flood** (verb) – arrive in large numbers; crowd, surge.
19. **heavyweight** (noun) – very important person, leader.
20. **venture** (noun) – task, pursuit, endeavour.
21. **prospects** (noun) – chances, opportunities, possibilities.
22. **steer** (verb) – guide, conduct, direct/take.
23. **relevance** (noun) – significance, importance, appropriateness.
24. **dismal** (adjective) – bad, poor, awful/terrible.
25. **rank and file** (phrase) – ordinary members of a party.
26. **haemorrhage** (verb) – it figuratively means a sudden, uncontrollable loss of something valuable. (it generally means a heavy bleeding within or from a body).
27. **at any price** (phrase) – regardless, no matter what the cost, at whatever cost.
28. **stronghold** (noun) – bastion, hotbed; fortress, fort.
29. **resurrection** (noun) – revival/renewal, restoration, re-establishment.
30. **contentious** (adjective) – controversial, disputable, debatable.
31. **Irish backstop** (noun) – a position of last resort, to maintain an open border on the island of Ireland in the event that the UK leaves the EU without securing an all-encompassing deal. (Courtesy:BBC).
32. **recess** (noun) – adjournment, break/interlude, interval/rest, intermission.
33. **turnaround** (noun) – an unexpected change.

Down to two: U.K. Conservatives' contrasting candidates

The leadership battle of the U.K. Conservatives is now between contrasting candidates

The leadership race in the U.K.'s ruling Conservative party has been whittled down to two candidates with contrasting personal styles and political stances. The current Foreign Secretary, Jeremy Hunt, is a moderate and will face off against his predecessor, the flamboyant and controversial Boris Johnson. Over 100,000 overwhelmingly pro-Brexit party members will, in mid-July, choose Prime Minister Theresa May's successor via a postal ballot. One option to see through their project of a life-time is to elect Mr. Hunt, a one-time advocate of remaining in the European Union (like Ms. May), and risk not realising the end goal. The other alternative is to choose the hardliner Mr. Johnson, who famously, and erroneously, claimed during the 2016 referendum that London was sending £350 million a week to Brussels. His xenophobic remark about Turkish immigrants flooding the U.K. was said to be among the factors that tilted the 2016 outcome. The principal architect of the leave campaign assured partymen before the current contest that Britain will exit by the October 31 deadline, deal or no deal. Mr. Johnson, a two-time London Mayor, has emerged a clear favourite, polling the highest in all the elimination rounds among Conservative MPs over the past days. Mr. Hunt, on the other hand, is seen as a heavyweight whose vast experience in promoting business ventures could refresh the party's market-friendly image. As Health Secretary he had secured additional funding for the NHS. Mr. Hunt has warned of the dangers of leaving the EU without an agreement, including another general **election** that could damage the Conservatives' prospects.

The contest is above all else really about picking a leader who can steer the party through Britain's next general election and ensure its future relevance. That means somebody who can stop Jeremy Corbyn, the Labour leader, from entering 10 Downing Street. After a dismal showing in the May polls to the EU Parliament, the Conservatives also fear support among the rank and file haemorrhaging to Nigel Farage's Brexit Party. Delivering on the 2016 referendum result, in whatever form and at any price, is seen in Conservative strongholds as the ultimate route to resurrection. Meanwhile, there are not many who seriously believe that Britain can realistically renegotiate before the end of October the withdrawal agreement Ms. May signed with the EU last year. Brussels has repeatedly stressed its unwillingness to reopen the deal, still less the contentious Irish backstop. The Prime Minister's election in July would be followed by Parliament's summer recess, allowing MPs little time for legislative business. Short of a spectacular turnaround, the outcome of the Conservative contest looks fairly predictable. Conversely, the course of Brexit is anything but certain, irrespective of whether Mr. Johnson or Mr. Hunt wins the battle of the ballot.