



Transition materials for A Level Politics



Longsands Academy
Politics

A Level Politics: Course Overview

UK Politics	
<p>Paper 1: Breadth Study</p> 	<p>33% 2 hours</p> <p>Students will study: democracy and participation, political parties, electoral systems, voting behaviour and the media.</p> <p>Students will also study 3 core political ideas: conservatism, liberalism, and socialism.</p>
UK Government	
<p>Paper 2: Depth Study</p> 	<p>33% 2 hours</p> <p>Students will study: the constitution, parliament, Prime Minister and executive, relationships between the branches of government.</p> <p>Students will also study the political idea of feminism.</p>
US Politics	
<p>Paper 3: US politics</p> 	<p>33% 2 hours</p> <p>Students will study: the US Constitution and federalism, US Congress, US presidency, US Supreme Court and civil rights, democracy and participation.</p> <p>Each of these areas of US politics will be compared and contrasted to UK politics.</p>

Introduction

Welcome to the A Level Politics pack preparing you to start your A Level Politics course.

This pack contains a step by step programme of activities and resources created to prepare you for the academic demands of A Level Politics study.

All activities are aimed to be used now during the lockdown and should be completed in stages throughout the remainder of the summer term and over the summer holidays to ensure you are ready to start your course in September.

We look forward to working with you.

Ms Howell
2 i/c History and Politics

Reading List

This is not intended to be a reading list that you read in its entirety. You should use this as a resource to help you. Why not consider reading one of the following books over the summer.

Books – Non Fiction

1. UK Politics.

- **British Politics: A very short introduction: Tony Wright.** This book is exactly as it says – a good short introduction. It will introduce to you the main workings of parliament, government, and elections. A great place to start.
- **Fall Out: A Year of political mayhem- Tim Shipman.** This book covers the momentous events following the EU referendum of 2016 and the ‘snap’ election of 2017.
- **British Prime Ministers: Robert J Parker-** The author traces the major events and political context of each Prime Minister from Walpole to Cameron.
- **Coalition: David Laws-** The former Liberal Democrat minister offers an ‘insiders’ view’ of how coalition government worked between 2010-15.
- **May at 10: Anthony Seldon –** This is a recent history of Theresa May’s time in office. It will give a good insight into the last few years of politics.

2. US Politics

- **Double Down: Mark Halperin and John Heilemann-** How did Barack Obama defeat Mitt Romney in 2012? This book recounts all the drama of the election race.
- **Fire and Fury: Inside the Trump White House- Michael Wolff.** Trump’s first year as President.
- **Shattered: Inside Hillary Clinton’s doomed campaign- Jonathan Allen.** How did Clinton lose? This book explains how it happened.

Books – Fiction

- **House of Cards: Michael Dobbs-** Written by a former advisor to Margaret Thatcher and now a member of the House of Lords, this is a gripping political thriller about Chief Whip Francis Urquhart who will do anything-up to and including murder-to become Prime Minister. The book has also been adapted for TV in both the UK and USA (the latter with Kevin Spacey).
- **Primary Colours: Joe Klein-** This book recounts the tale of a charismatic Southern US presidential candidate with feet of clay. A thinly disguised portrait of Bill Clinton. Also a movie with John Travolta.
- **The Race: Richard North Patterson-** A maverick candidate enters the US presidential race. But can he overcome the dark forces conspiring against him?

Films and TV

- **Question Time** most Thursdays BBC1 or BBC2 at around 10.30pm

- **Andrew Marr show** – Sunday morning at 9am.
- **The Iron Lady**- Oscar-winner Meryl Streep portrays Margaret Thatcher in a film which traces the rise and fall of the 20th century's longest serving Prime Minister.
- **The Deal**- Michael Sheen plays Tony Blair in this gripping drama about his 'pact' with Gordon Brown which led to a struggle for power between the two for more than a decade.
- **House of Cards Trilogy**- with Ian Richardson as the evil Francis Urquhart. Also recommended is the current US version with Kevin Spacey.
- **All the Presidents' Men**- based on the Pulitzer Prize-winning book by journalists Woodward and Bernstein, this thriller tells the story of the Watergate scandal which led to the resignation of President Nixon in 1974.
- **The Ides of March**- George Clooney plays a US presidential candidate who is not what he seems.
- **Frost/Nixon**- This film recounts how British journalist David Frost secured the exclusive rights to interview Richard Nixon after his resignation as president and the duel of wits that then ensued!

Documentaries.

- **How to be Prime Minister**- Michael Cockerell traces how different occupants of Number 10 have interpreted the role of 'First Among Equals'.
- **Inside the Commons**- Cockerell's most recent BBC series takes a behind the scenes look at the inner workings of the Commons and Lords.
- **The Rise and Fall of Tony Blair**- Journalist Andrew Rawnsley examines how Blair won three elections for Labour yet left office unpopular amongst many in his own party.
- **Margaret Thatcher: The Downing Street Years**- A three-part BBC series based on the former Prime Ministers' memoirs.
- **Heath v Wilson: The 10-Year Dual**- For a decade British politics was dominated by the struggle for power between two very different men.
- **Inside Obama's White House**- A four-part series follows the first black president in US history as he experiences the highs and lows of the most powerful job in the world.
- **Tea Party America**- Andrew Neil examines the rise of the conservative movement which since 2010 has opposed much of the Obama agenda.
- **Bush v Gore: The Endless Election**-This programme recounts how for six weeks in 2000 Americans had no idea who their next president would be as the result hung on recounted votes in Florida.
- **Ronald Reagan: American Idol**- This BBC documentary looks at 'The Great Communicator' who many historians now rate as the most successful president since FDR.
- **LBJ (PBS series)** - From the historic achievements of Civil Rights to the tragedy of Vietnam.

Websites

- <http://ukpollingreport.co.uk/> is an excellent site that shows the most current opinion polls for the main political parties.
- "The Guardian UK: Politics Weekly" podcast. A great round up of UK politics that week.
- "NPR politics" podcast. Their weekly round-up is a useful summary of US politics.
- <http://www.livingroomcandidate.org/> This is an excellent website for all the US presidential ad campaigns since 1952.

SUMMER PREP – to be handed in first lesson back. 8 tasks.

These tasks should take somewhere in the region of 10 hours to complete when they are done well. Please give them the time they need to be done well, to the best of your ability

- 1. Create a timeline from 1970- 2019.** Place onto it each Prime Minister from Heath to Johnson and add three bullet points for each which highlight the key developments/events of their period in office. Add the turnout figure for each General Election and the winning party's majority.
- 2. Write a one page summary of the 2024 general election.** Include reference in your summary the following issues; the key manifesto pledges for the two main parties – Conservative and Labour, the key slogans used by the two main parties, the key issues that voters were influenced by, turnout figure, vote share for each party, number of seats vs number of votes for Conservative and Labour. You can also add any other interesting facts. Make sure you use reliable websites for your research.
- 3. Watch the video and create a timeline of political representation.** Add three bullet points to each date outlining the development.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Yr1Dj8jKv8&list=PLj3mInRJqIenDVcuoOiOzO6GliVnNrgri>
- 4. Watch the following video and create a diagram of how UK Parliament is structured.**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SIPSAOa4vR4&list=PLj3mInRJqIembDRZ2kdbf6oPbjkqNsPyb&index=2>
- 5. Read section 1 of the article below (The European Union in brief) and note down 10 key points about the role of the EU, its origins and its members.**
<https://op.europa.eu/webpub/com/eu-what-it-is/en/>
- 6. Watch this lecture about democracy and how it can function alongside war and times of crisis. Should government govern *with* the people, or *for* the people? Take notes, summarising Professor Strachan's main points in 10 bullet points.**
<https://www.gresham.ac.uk/lectures-and-events/strategy-and-democracy>
- 7. Glossary of key terms - create a glossary of the following words: Your definitions should be detailed.**

- Parliament
- Government
- Bicameralism
- Legislature
- The executive

- Conservatism
- Liberalism
- Socialism
- Sovereignty
- Devolution

- Pluralism
- Elitism
- Factionalism
- Scrutinise
- Mandate