

A Level Politics Year 11

Transition Pack

"This isn't quite the same as being Mayor of London, is it?"



Journalism, author or the lucrative speaking circuit, or a combination of all of these... or even a future return to frontline politics?

You are required to complete ALL the activities in this transition pack. The tasks on page 7 and 8 should be submitted in the first week of the new academic year. **A Level in Politics is a fun, embracing yet challenging qualification.** It will develop your thinking skills and vastly expand your knowledge of politics both in the UK and in the US political system of government. There will be nine taught hours per fortnight. It is then expected that students do three to five hours per week of independent study at home.

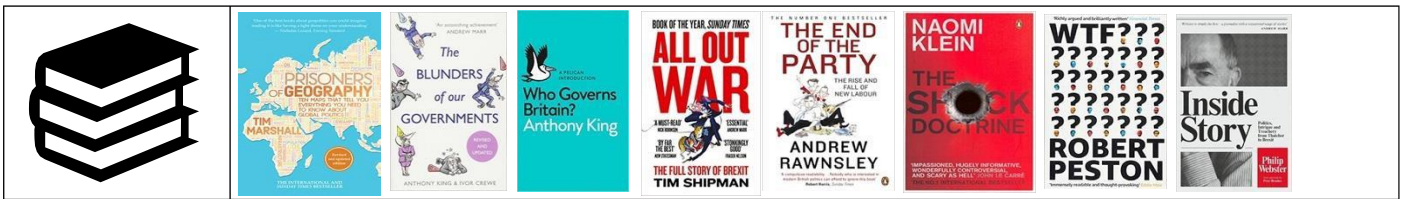
You will need to read (and listen to) the news! See the next page for suggestions to get started. It cannot be over-emphasised how important it is to follow current political affairs as it will help you to master the subject so much more quickly and effectively.

GETTING READY FOR POLITICS A-LEVEL

The politics department would love for you to use this time over the coming weeks and months to get interested in Politics. Start to develop your interest in the subject and build your general political knowledge. The following are suggestions, they are not compulsory, but we would love for you to engage in any that you find interesting.



Pick 1 book, podcast, and TV programme.



	<p>Stitcher – A-level politics podcast Beyond Westminster BBC politics podcasts The Westminster Hour Politics.co.uk podcasts</p>	<p>Guardian ‘politics weekly’ podcasts Going the way of the dodo 10 of the best podcasts Takes from the lobby Learn out loud podcasts</p>
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	<p>iPlayer Climate Change Playlist World economic forum videos Politics Live – BBC iPlayer The Andrew Marr Show The Politics Show</p>	<p>Question Time BBC Parliament Cabinet Confidential <div style="border: 2px solid orange; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;">Obama ‘s Whitehouse</div></p>
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If you would like to share what you’ve learnt, we’d love for you to produce a piece that we could share with other students.

Politics in the UK

This is a detailed and comprehensive assignment that you have been given. **Do not rush it.** We advise that you complete different parts of the transition pack at different points in the summer holiday, rather than leaving it all until the final week of your break. **You should expect to spend longer on these tasks than any homework you have completed before.** A Level Politics will be a significant step up from the work you have completed in Year 11. The challenge tasks on page 7-8 are meant to be written up, ready to bring to your first lesson with Mr McLean, to be collected in, marked and with feedback. Activities 1-5 should be undertaken though there is no requirement to hand in evidence that you have done so,

Activity 1 – People in Politics

Look at the below photographs of British politicians. You must identify who they are, which party they belonged to and whether they were Prime Minister (PM) or Leader of Her Majesty's Opposition (HMO). Get your family involved in this task – your parents will remember many of these faces, and some of them might be better suited even to your grandparents!



Activity 2 – News and Elections

Politics is a subject which cannot be unplugged from news and current affairs. Twitter is seen by some to be the future of Politics – it is used by journalists, politicians, and politicians alike to share news and information as well as discuss political issues. I would advise that you create for yourselves Twitter accounts as soon as possible and follow the below users for Political information and news:

@Britainelects (for news and updates on all things electoral in the UK)

@BBCNews / @SkyNews (or any other news station of your choice – or even more than one!)

@bbcquestiontime (the UK's most-watched political talk-show: BBC Question Time)

@RishiSunak (prime minister)

@politicshbk (social Science Dept)

@POTUS (the president of the United States of America)

Activity 3 - Twitter

To keep an eye on these Twitter accounts (as well as wider sources – the news and shows on TV, newspapers, and others) over the summer holidays and make a note of any particularly interesting news that is relevant to Politics in the UK. You may even find some stories which are interesting internationally, particularly if you choose to follow Donald Trump. America is gearing up already for the 2024 Presidential election. In year 13 the focus will be predominantly on US Politics, so starting to take an interest now is a really good idea.

Activity 4 – British Political History

You need to create an A3 or A4 Political History timeline for the UK. On your timeline you should include several key milestones in British political history.

The signing of the Magna Carta, the opening of the House of Commons, the introduction of the Bill of Rights, the Act of Union, Representation of the People Acts and European Communities Act. This will be the focus of the first topic we will study next year.

Activity 5 – Parties and Issues

To start, you should quickly research the Conservative, Labour, and Liberal Democrat parties. What do they stand for? What were their manifesto policies which they fought the 2019 election on? Specifically on areas such as **education, law and order, the economy and health.**

There are some links on the next page but do not feel you have to limit your research to just these links.

Challenge tasks:

These challenge tasks should be treated as part of your actual summer assignment, and therefore you must bring this work to your first lesson in September.

Complete the **THREE** tasks below and bring on paper to class:

1) Current affairs

As a Politics student, you need to keep up to date with news and current affairs. Each week records **at least one news** article or report that has influenced UK Politics.

Date	News source	Summary of news	Impact on UK Politics
<input type="text"/>	BBC news website	What happened? Why?	This has meant that...

2) Analysing political information

Complete the questions below on 'Votes at 16.'

3) Research skills

Your task is to investigate the **three key questions** below. There are several sub-questions to help focus your research. Produce **notes** in a format you prefer. For example, you could create a **table** or a **mind map**.

Your research will be checked in September. There will be a **quiz** based on the research questions.



Research questions:

1. Who runs the country?
2. How does Parliament work?
3. How is power shared between Westminster and the devolved administrations?

Who runs the country?

1. Parties and candidates

- What are the key differences between the major political parties in the UK?
- How are candidates selected to stand for a constituency?

2. Elections and voting systems.

- What is democracy? What is the difference between representative democracy and direct democracy? What are the strengths and weaknesses of each type?
- How does the Westminster-first-past-the-post system operate? Who can and cannot vote in general elections and why? Should the vote be changed? What is the frequency of general elections?

3. Forming and organising the work of government

- How is a government formed? What is the role of the monarch? What happens when no single party can form a government and a coalition government is formed?
- How is government organised into departments and ministries? What are civil servants?

The Westminster Parliament

- What is the difference between the executive, legislature, judiciary, and monarchy?
- What are the roles of the Houses of Commons and Lords? What is the relationship between the House of Commons and the Lords? How does debate contribute to shaping policy and laws?
- What are the roles of: the prime minister, cabinet and ministers, the opposition, speaker, whips, front bench and backbench MPs and the ceremonial role of Black Rod? What is the role of an MP? in representing constituents' interests?

4. Making and shaping law

- How does a bill become law? What is debate in the House of Commons and the House of Lords? How do committees scrutinise? What is royal assent?

5. The Constitution

- What is an uncodified constitution? How has the constitution changed recently including because of devolution and membership of the EU?
- What is parliamentary sovereignty? Explain checks and balances, including the role of judicial review. How does Parliament hold government to account through oversight and scrutiny?

How is power shared between Westminster and the devolved administrations?

6. Government in constituent parts of the UK

- What are the powers of devolved bodies in Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland?
 - How are relations changing between England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland, including views on devolution and independence.
- How does Parliament work?

Good Luck and
see you in
September!

