

Year 11-12 Transition to Politics A Level



Welcome to Year 12!

Politics is exciting & dynamic because people disagree- they disagree about how people should live, what principles should guide behaviour, who should get what and how society should be organised. This aims to help kick-start understanding of new and specialised vocabulary, as well as offer an overview of how we got to the current state of British politics.

Historical context of UK political system



Until the Magna Carta, England was an absolute monarchy – the King was sovereign. Today the monarchy is limited and sovereignty has passed to parliament. Separate nations have become part of UK (although there are demands for independence). Unlike many nations, there is no single point at which the UK became a modern democracy, thanks to its uncodified constitution.

Democracy in the UK.

Explore the websites and produce the following

1. A comparison table between direct & representative democracy. What are they and their advantages/disadvantages
2. A glossary of key concepts - legitimacy, constituents, accountability, polls, representation, pluralism, decentralism, civil society, the rule of law, parliamentary sovereignty and constitution.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7xo4tUMdAMw>

<https://www.britpolitics.co.uk/uk-elections-voting-direct-democracy>

<https://www.tutor2u.net/politics/reference/democracy>

<https://assets-learning.parliament.uk/uploads/2019/12/How-it-Works-booklet.pdf>

The 2024 election - voting behaviour. Use the BBC or The Guardian newspaper as an online source

1. What was the turnout for the general election?
2. Can you identify any particular trends based on age, class and education?
3. Find 1 thing that was surprising/interesting to you



The UK political system

The traditional way of understanding British politics is the Westminster model, that is an uncodified constitution, doctrine of parliamentary sovereignty, an independent judiciary uphold the rule of law, a single party government given the plurality electoral system and a representative democracy.



The explanation (above) has a considerable number of terms, find out what they and those below mean (add to your glossary)

Elective dictatorship legislature judiciary Referendum uncodified
 electoral system convention prorogative powers devolution
 bicameral Fixed Term Parliament Act a select committee

The Parliamentary system



Britain has a bicameral legislature and both the House of Commons and House of Lords, make laws, check & challenge the government and represent views

Using the booklet (above) and the links below, answer the following:

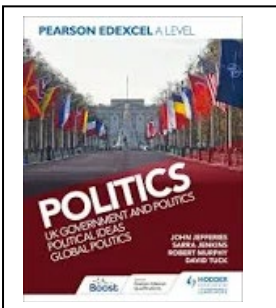
1. What are the roles of MPs?
2. What are the functions of politics parties?
3. What does parliament do?

<https://www.parliament.uk/about/how/role/> - use links on this page to explore UK parliament

have a go - play the game! <https://learning.parliament.uk/en/resources/mp-for-a-week/#cta-target>

Recommended course text

Other essential components



Blogs: <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/politicsandpolicy/>

What could I watch? The news! Have I got news for you, Question time, PMQs, the Mash report, The Left Leg, Panorama, Dispatches, Andrew Marr making of modern Britain,

What can I do? Keep an actual or virtual scrapbook of articles, headlines, current issues

Pearson Edexcel A Level Politics: UK Government and Politics, Political Ideas and Global Politics Paperback - 26 May 2023 by David Tuck (Author), Sara Jenkins (Author), John Jefferies (Author), Rob Murphy (Author)

Reading List - recommended

UK politics & Political ideas	Global Politics
This Land Owen Jones	The Shock Doctrine Naomi Klein
The Life of an MP Jess Phillips	Prisoners of Geography Tim Marshall
Politics: Ideas in Profile David Runciman	The Power of Geography: Ten Maps That Reveal the Future of Our World - Tim Marshall
Politics Andrew Heywood (new version Nov 2024)	The New Cold War: How the Contest Between the US and China Will Shape Our Century
British Politics: The Basics, Bill Jones	Robin Niblett
Essentials of Political Ideas: For Pearson Edexcel, Kathy Schindler, Andrew Heywood	The Return of Great Powers: Russia, China, and the Next World War Jim Sciutto
50 Politics Classics: Your shortcut to the most important ideas on freedom, equality, and power (50 Classics) Tom Butler-Bowdon	Not Enough: Human Rights in an Unequal World Samuel Moyn