



Wigston College

Transition Pack

A Level Government and Politics



2021

Name: _____

Welcome to A Level Politics!

If you have chosen to join us, then you no doubt already possess an interest in current affairs and politics. Included in this transition pack are a few activities for you to complete in preparation for next year. There is also information on the required year 12 textbook that will cover most of the first year.

Course Details: We follow the Edexcel A Level Course

UK Politics and core political ideas

• Democracy and participation • Political parties • Electoral systems • Voting behaviour and the media • Core ideas: Liberalism, Conservatism and Socialism

UK Government

• The constitution • Parliament • The Prime Minister and executive • Relationships between the branches • Non-core idea: Feminism

Comparative politics: Global Politics (Year 13)

• The state and globalisation • Global governance: political and economic • Global governance: human rights and environmental • Power and developments • Regionalism and the European Union • Comparative theories (realism and liberalism)

If you have any further questions and queries whilst you are enjoying your summer then please don't hesitate to contact me via email.

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Mrs Sperring

Task 1: Keywords

In your own words explain the meaning of the following key terms

Term	Explanation
Power	
Citizenship	
Participation	
Representation	
Pluralism	
Civil Liberties	
Authority	
Legitimacy	
Democracy	
Mandate	
Manifesto	
Constitution	

Separation of powers	
Presidential Government	
Judicial Independence	
Judicial Neutrality	
Sovereignty	
Elective Dictatorship	
Codified constitution	
Uncodified constitution	
Scrutiny	
Rule of Law	
Parliamentary Government	
Unitary	
Federal	
Accountability	

Representative democracy	
Direct democracy	
Referendums	
First Past The Post (FPTP)	
Party list system	
Alternative vote	
Pressure group (with example)	
Insider pressure group (with example)	
Outsider pressure group (with example)	
Sectional pressure group (with example)	
Cause/promotional pressure group (with example)	
Lobbying	

Task 2: Watching, Listening and Reading about Politics

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 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)

@BorisJohnson (prime minister)

@Keir_Starmer (Sir Keir Starmer)

@NicolaSturgeon (Nicola Sturgeon)

@10DowningStreet (UK Prime Minister)

@HouseofCommons (House of Commons)

@HouseofLords (House of Lords)

@ElectionMapsUK (election statistics)

@easypoliticsUK (Simple Politics)

@jon_bartley (Jonathon Bartley, co leader of Green Party)

@TheGreenParty (The Green Party)

@UKLabour (The Labour Party)

@Conservatives (The Conservative Party)

@LibDemWhips (Liberal Democrats)

@BBCNewsnight (Newsnight Programme)

And a range of political journalists like Lewis Goodall, Owen Jones, etc...

Podcasts like [Talking Politics](#) or [The A-Level Politics Show](#) (Spotify link)

Your second task is to keep an eye on these Twitter accounts (as well as wider sources – the news and shows on TV, newspapers, podcasts and others) over the Summer holidays and make a note of any particularly interesting news that is relevant to Politics in the UK.

Task 3: British Politics

You should complete some basic research about British Politics. Consider the following:

- What is the structure and role of the House of Commons and House of Lords?
- What do the main political parties stand for (economy, health, education, foreign affairs)? These include Conservative, Labour, Liberal Democrat, Green Party, SNP.
- Find out about your local MP, use [They Work For You](#) to get information about their views and voting record.

Task 4: Pick one pressure group that currently exists in the UK. Create a poster/power point/mind map about the following;

- Who are they?
- What type of group are they? (promotional, sectional)
- What are they campaigning for and why?
- What methods have they used to campaign?
- Do you think they have been successful so far?

Task 5: Picking out arguments from a source

Answer the following question as best you can on lined paper. You should aim for 3 paragraphs for your answer and try to only use information from the source.

Source 1 is adapted from a report published by the Electoral Reform Society – an independent campaigning organisation working to champion the rights of voters and build a better democracy in Britain. The report reflects on the outcomes of the 2015 General Election.

Source 1

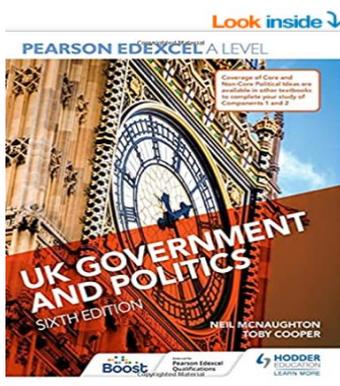
The first past the post (FPTP) system is out of date and unfit for purpose. The system cannot cope with the choices voters are making in this multi-party era. People are choosing to vote for a wider range of parties and our electoral system should be able to reflect that in the composition of Parliament. Millions of voters are angry with a system that marginalises their views. Nearly half a million people signed petitions calling for electoral reform in the fortnight after the election – petitions which were handed in to 10 Downing Street by representatives from five political parties. 2015 must be the last General Election under our broken voting system, a system which is artificially dividing the UK by exaggerating political differences and leaving millions of voters without representation; in effect their votes are wasted. Multi-party politics looks firmly established in the UK and yet we continue to use an electoral system designed for a time when just two political parties shared nearly all the votes; a situation that has not existed in the UK for decades. We need a system where everyone's vote can count, and which ensures MPs are returned to Parliament with the backing of their constituents.

(Source: adapted from The 2015 General Election: A voting system in crisis, Jess Garland & Chris Terry)

Using the source, explain the problems which arise from using the first past the post system for General Elections. (you should pick out 3 problems with FPTP voting and 3 arguments that defend FPTP and then reach a conclusion) In your response you must use knowledge and understanding to analyse points that are only in the source. You will not be rewarded for introducing any additional points that are not in the source. (10)

Resources needed:

It is a requirement of the course that by the end of the second school week in September you have purchased the compulsory Year 1 textbook. There are other textbooks available for this course – it is important that the correct one is purchased. An image has been attached below. This textbook will cover us from September until Easter.



Pearson Edexcel A Level UK Government and Politics Sixth Edition Paperback – 30 April 2021

by Neil McNaughton (Author), Toby Cooper (Author), & 1 more

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This fully updated Textbook for Pearson Edexcel A-level Politics will help your students develop a critical understanding of the latest developments in UK Government and Politics. This trusted textbook by Neil McNaughton, revised by Toby Cooper, is specially designed to reflect the Edexcel specification and help your students approach complex topics with confidence. This Student Textbook: