

Transition work for Politics A Level 2022

Welcome to Politics!

You have chosen a brilliant new subject to study at A Level. We're looking forward to teaching you politics in the coming years. Politics will help you to make sense of the world. It explains how power is acquired and used in Britain and the United States. Politics is a fast-changing subject, so we are always discussing current issues, events and developments. We hope to make sense of the news. Our aim is to bring politics alive. Politics is also fun. If you engage with the subject, we hope you will learn to enjoy it as much as we do.

What is the transition work?

The aim of this work is to give you a head start for September. Because Politics is a new subject (for everyone), getting started can sometimes seem a bit daunting. A key reason for this is because you are learning a number of new words and concepts. The more quickly you understand them, the sooner you will access the course. We want to help you grow in confidence and understanding.

We have put together a series of tasks that we hope will enable you to get started. We suggest that you print off all of the sheets and complete most of the work (about 20 hours work).

We will collect the work in at the start of Y12 and grade it on a 5-1 scale:

5 = Outstanding

4 = Very good

3 = Good

2 = Some concerns

1 = Serious concerns

Tasks

Complete the following sheets about the UK and US political systems using either the information provided or websites such as www.bbc.co.uk and www.politics.co.uk. The worksheets will help to structure your work. Do your best. Good luck.

1. Who are the main political leaders of the post-war era?

| United Kingdom | | |
|-----------------------|---------------|-----------|
| Prime Minister | Party | Term |
| <i>Clement Attlee</i> | <i>Labour</i> | 1945-51 |
| | | 1951-55 |
| | | 1955-57 |
| | | 1957-63 |
| | | 1963-64 |
| | | 1964-70 |
| | | 1970-74 |
| | | 1974-76 |
| | | 1976-79 |
| | | 1979-90 |
| | | 1990-97 |
| | | 1997-2007 |
| | | 2007-10 |
| | | 2010-16 |
| | | 2016-19 |
| | | 2019- |

| United States | | |
|----------------------|-----------------|-----------|
| President | Party | Term |
| <i>F D Roosevelt</i> | <i>Democrat</i> | 1945 |
| | | 1945-53 |
| | | 1953-61 |
| | | 1961-63 |
| | | 1963-69 |
| | | 1969-74 |
| | | 1974-77 |
| | | 1977-81 |
| | | 1981-89 |
| | | 1989-93 |
| | | 1993-2001 |
| | | 2001-09 |
| | | 2009-17 |
| | | 2017-21 |
| | | 2021- |

2. Who's who in UK politics today?

| Person | Party | Position / Role / Title | Main aims |
|-------------------|-------|-------------------------|-----------|
| Jeffrey Donaldson | | | |
| Caroline Lucas | | | |
| Dominic Raab | | | |
| Jonathan Bartley | | | |
| Kier Starmer | | | |
| Michelle O'Neill | | | |
| Nicola Sturgeon | | | |
| Angela Rayner | | | |
| Priti Patel | | | |
| Rishi Sunak | | | |
| Sadiq Khan | | | |
| Andy Burnham | | | |

3. How is political power devolved across the UK?



Task

| <i>Use these captions to label the map showing the UK's four main political centres; research the information.</i> | Location | Institution | Voting system | Title | Nos of Reps |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|-------------|---------------|-------|-------------|
| | Belfast | Holyrood | FPTP | MSP | 129 |
| | Cardiff | Stormont | STV | MP | 60 |
| | Edinburgh | Westminster | AMS | MA | 650 |
| | London | Senedd | AMS | MLA | 90 |

[C] What kinds of governments have we had in recent years?

| Dates | Type of government | Prime Minister | Share of Vote | Share of Seats | Majority |
|---------|--------------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|----------|
| 2001-05 | Labour majority | Tony Blair | 40.7% | 62.7% | 167 |
| 2005-10 | | | | | |
| 2010-15 | | | | | |
| 2015-17 | | | | | |
| 2017-19 | | | | | |
| 2019- | | | | | |

[D] How well do our MPs reflect UK society?

| | | 2010 | 2015 | 2017 | 2019 | % of UK population in 2019 |
|-----------|-----------------|------|------|------|------|----------------------------|
| | Women | | | | | 52% |
| | Ethnic minority | | | | | 14% |
| | LGBT | | | | | 6% |
| Education | Private | | | | | 10% |
| | State | | | | | 90% |
| | University | | | | | 20% |

[E] What results of some recent referendums?

| Date | Issue | Turnout | Result | |
|------|------------------------------------|---------|--------|---------|
| | | | For | Against |
| 2011 | Change to AV for general elections | | | |
| 2014 | Scottish independence | | | |
| 2016 | Remain or leave the EU | | | |

[F] How else can people participate in politics?

Find out about these organisations (pressure groups)?

| Group | Campaigns on what? | What methods does it use? | Examples of successes? |
|----------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Age UK | | | |
| Extinction Rebellion | | | |
| Stonewall | | | |

Extension

If you would like to do more work in on UK Politics, then it would be useful to do some research into one or more of our recent Prime Ministers. This task, however, is optional.

Task

1. Decide which Prime Minister you would like to research:
 - a. Margaret Thatcher
 - b. John Major
 - c. Tony Blair
 - d. Gordon Brown
 - e. David Cameron
 - f. Theresa May
 - g. Boris Johnson

2. Find out about their main policies in the following areas:
 - a. Economy
 - b. Welfare
 - c. Law and Order
 - d. Environment
 - e. Foreign Policy

3. What were their main achievements / successes? What were their main failures?

4. Decide how best to present your information:
 - a. A double-sided A4 Information Sheet
 - b. Single A3 sheet
 - c. A summary poster

5. Alternatively you could produce a time-line of our PMs from Thatcher to Johnson including a summary some of the information above. The more you can do at this stage, the better placed you will be when you start the course.

USA Transition Work (2022)

(1) Fact-file on the USA

| | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|--|
| | Total Population | |
| | Number of states | |
| | Most recently added states | |
| | POTUS | |
| | FLOTUS | |
| | SCOTUS | |
| | Capital | |
| | Official language | |
| | Name of flag | |
| | Share of world's energy consumption | |
| | Share of world's GDP | |
| | National animal | |
| Presidents on currency | \$1 | |
| | \$5 | |
| | \$10 | |
| | \$20 | |
| | \$50 | |
| | \$100 | |
| | First president | |
| | Youngest ever president | |
| | Youngest elected president | |
| | Oldest ever president | |
| | Oldest elected president | |
| | Longest-serving president | |
| | Shortest-serving president | |
| | Richest president | |
| | Poorest president | |
| | Number of assassinated presidents | |
| | Number of presidents who've resigned | |
| | Presidents who've been impeached | |
| Constitution | 2nd amendment | |
| | 13th amendment | |
| | 15th amendment | |
| | 19th amendment | |
| | 22nd amendment | |

(2) US Elections

| How do they work? |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Watch:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. https://youtu.be/uRu_JcarCDY 2. https://ed.ted.com/lessons/why-do-americans-vote-on-tuesdays |
| <p>Due to their system of government, Americans vote a lot more frequently than we do in the UK. There are two main types of elections for their federal (Washington DC) government.</p> <p>Presidential - An election for president of the United States happens every four years on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November. The next presidential election will be November 3, 2020. At the same time 1/3 of the Senate and the entire House are elected. This can change which party controls both houses of Congress.</p> <p>Midterms – These are in the middle of a presidential term. So every 2 years. 1/3 of the Senate and the entire House are elected. This can change which party controls both houses of Congress.</p> |

| Date | President | Congress | |
|----------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|------------|
| | | House of Representatives | Senate |
| 2008 | Barack Obama (Democrat) | Democrats | Democrats |
| 2010 (Midterm) | | | |
| 2012 | | | |
| 2014 (Midterm) | | Republican | Republican |
| 2016 | | | |
| 2018 (Midterm) | | | |
| 2020 | | | |

(3) Summary of the Presidential Election 2020

| | Democrat | Republican |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|------------|
| Watch: https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2020/nov/07/joe-biden-wins-us-election-donald-trump-loses-final-result-2020 | | |
| Candidates | | |
| VP candidates | | |
| Main policies | | |
| Turnout | | |
| Electoral College Votes | | |
| States won | | |

(4) Summary of the Democrat Presidential Primaries 2020

| Candidate | Age | Background | Key Policies |
|-------------------------|-----|------------|--------------|
| Bernie Sanders | | | |
| Elizabeth Warren | | | |

| | | | |
|------------------------------|--|--|--|
| Michael Bloomberg | | | |
|------------------------------|--|--|--|

| | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| Joe Biden | |
| Watch: https://youtu.be/SzBFR2EE8hM | |
| How old is he? | |
| Where was he born? | |
| What did he do prior to 2008? | |
| What was his role in the Obama administration? | |
| What are his key policies? | |
| What are some of his key policies since he became president? | |

(5) History of the Presidency 1789 – 2020

| | |
|-------------------------------------------------|--|
| What is the minimum age for a President? | |
| How many Presidents have there been? | |
| How many have been male? | |
| How many have been lawyers? | |
| How many have been Harvard educated? | |

The Obama Presidency (2008 – 2016)

Watch: Obama The Final Year (Netflix)

If you don't have a Netflix account you may skip this section

| | Question | Answer |
|----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|
| 1 | How did John Kerry first meet Obama? | |
| 2 | When did Obama win the Nobel Peace Prize? | |
| 3 | What role did Samantha Power have at the time of filming? | |
| 4 | What role did John Kerry have at the time of filming? | |
| 5 | What does Ben Rhodes, Deputy National Security Advisor to Obama, describe his role as including? | |
| 6 | What role did Susan Rice have at the time of filming? | |
| 7 | Why did John Kerry initially get into politics? | |
| 8 | Where did diplomats meet to discuss Syria? | |
| 9 | What happened to a group of 276 girls in Nigeria in 2014? | |
| 10 | What does John Kerry says makes a big difference in avoiding war? | |
| 11 | Where does Obama say there was a secret war held between 1964-1973? | |
| 12 | What role did John Earnest have at the time of filming? | |
| 13 | Obama became the first President to serve two full terms during a time of _____. | |
| 14 | What is the UN General Assembly jokingly described by the Secretary of State? | |
| 15 | How many people were displaced in the world at the time? | |
| 16 | Who was the first female Secretary of State? | |

(6) What are the main functions of the different branches of government?

| Watch: https://ed.ted.com/lessons/how-is-power-divided-in-the-united-states-government-belinda-stutzman | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|-------------|
| <i>Sort the captions below into the different columns:</i> | | |
| Executive | Judiciary | Legislature |
| | | |

Captions

| | | | |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Making legislation | Representation of constituents | Supreme Court | Controls the Budget |
| Commander in Chief | President | Senate | Highest court in the land |
| Congress | Interpret the Constitution | Head of Government | House of Representatives |

(7) Congress

| | Congress | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------|------------|
| | The House of Representatives | The Senate |
| How many members? | | |
| How many per state? | | |
| How often are they elected? | | |
| Name one power they hold? | | |
| Speaker | | |
| Majority Leader | | |
| Minority Leader | | |

(8) Federalism

Watch: <https://youtu.be/bO7FQsCcbD8>

What is Federalism?

Federalism is the process by which two or more governments share powers over the same geographic area. It is the method used by most democracies in the world. For example we have Parliament in Westminster but in Scotland they have the Scottish Parliament in Holyrood.

While some countries give more power to the overall central government, others grant more power to the individual states or provinces.

In the United States, the Constitution grants certain powers to both the U.S. government and the state governments. So there is a Federal government based in Washington DC but each states also have their own government. The two different layers of government have different powers and responsibilities.

Federal v State Power

Key (colour code each box according to whether they are a power held by the federal, state or both layers of government)

| Federal Government | State Government | Both |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| Print money | Maintain law and order | Print money |
| Establish and maintain schools | Declare war | Ratify (approve) changes to the constitution |
| Raise taxes | Maintain an army | Conduct foreign relations |

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



(9) The Supreme Court

What is the Supreme Court? The Supreme Court of the United States (or SCOTUS) is the highest federal court in the country and the head of the judicial branch of government. Established by the U.S. Constitution, the Supreme Court has the ultimate jurisdiction over **all laws** within the United States and is responsible for deciding whether these laws are **constitutional**. The Supreme Court can declare actions or laws made by the President and Congress **unconstitutional**.

Elena Kagen – 2010 – Barack Obama



Here are the 9 justices of the US Supreme Court. Find their names, the year they were appointed and who appointed them.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-33103973>

How does the Supreme Court work?

Watch: <https://ed.ted.com/lessons/how-do-us-supreme-court-justices-get-appointed-peter-paccone>

How many justices are there?

What are three main things that happen before you become a justice?

What requirements does a justice have to meet?

What can influence why a President picks a justice?

What types of questions are nominees asked about during their Senate hearing?

How long do you have the job for?

What is the fundamental role of the Supreme Court?

How has the Supreme Court changed America?

Watch: https://ed.ted.com/best_of_web/BOC7SbYP

| Case name | How did it change America? |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Brown vs. Board of Education 1954 | |
| Roe vs. Wade 1973 | |
| Obergefell vs. Hodges 2015 | |



Glossary

| Term | Definition |
|--------------------------|------------|
| Congress | |
| Democratic Party | |
| Electoral College | |
| Executive | |
| Federal Government | |
| House of Representatives | |
| Midterm | |
| Primary Election | |
| Republican Party | |
| Senate | |
| Unconstitutional | |
| US Constitution | |