

Politics

Subject level A-level

Resource site www.wqe.ac.uk/tasteractivities

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Subject context At its heart, A-level Politics is the study of the political ideologies, beliefs and systems that constitute modern democracies. As well as offering modules on the technical and legal aspects of modern politics (for instance: on voting behaviour, the role and regulation of the media, and constitutional law), the course will also set contemporary politics in its historical context and will explore in depth the philosophical foundations of modern political thought.

Not only will you learn about UK politics and government, but you will also get the opportunity to discover your own political beliefs and get a better understanding of current political affairs. The course is especially suitable for those who already have some interest in politics and who are interested in having a better understanding of the political world.

Estimated time required to complete activity 3 hours

Submission instructions Bring this work to your first Politics lesson.

Feedback Your work will help prepare you for our induction lessons and we will spend time discussing the themes exploring in this work.

Resources required Laptop (or pen and paper)
Internet (desirable not essential)
Edexcel endorsed A-Level Politics textbook, preferably Pearson's A Level Politics book (ISBN 978-1-292-18702-0 (desirable not essential at this stage – although you will need to have your own copy by September 2020).

Assignment details

TASK 1

In the first section of the A-level politics course, you will learn about the concept of democracy and political participation.

1. Do some research and find out what is meant by the following terms. Define them:
 - Direct democracy
 - Indirect democracy
 - Pressure groups
 - Think tanks
2. With regards to political participation, can you make a list of 3 ways in which you as a young person could participate and get involved in politics?
3. Choose a pressure group in the UK of your own choice (e.g. RSPCA, British Medical Association, Black Lives matter UK, etc.). Write a short description about this pressure group: what are their main aims? How successful have they been in achieving their aims?

TASK 2

In Politics, textbooks go out of date the day they are published. Why? Because the political landscape changes every day, with new examples appearing constantly in the media. Picking which examples to use in your answers to essay questions is really exciting as something that has happened on the day you are taking your A Level exams can appear in your response!

Get use to keeping your finger on the political pulse. Download some news apps on to your phone and **write down 3 interesting political stories you find**. The BBC News app is highly recommended as one of them (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/politics>). At least two of the stories should be related to UK politics, but you may choose to do one of the three stories from US politics (as you will be studying this in your 2nd year).

TASK 3

You will be learning about the UK political institutions: parliament, government, and the supreme court. Find out a little bit more about who is in our current government. Use www.gov.uk to research who is in the Boris Johnson's cabinet (names and positions).

TASK 4

Write a 500-word mini essay on a political topic of your choice. Choose an analytical question, (not a descriptive one).

Analytical (good) – “Has the UK government handled the coronavirus pandemic well?” This allows you to look at both sides of the argument and come to a judgment.

Descriptive (bad) – “What has the government done to handle the coronavirus pandemic?” This question will only lead to you explaining things, not analysing.