



Tauheedul Girls

# POLITICS

**AS Level**

## SUMMER TRANSITION BOOKLET

We hope you enjoy completing this activities pack and look forward to welcoming you in September!  
Don't forget to bring this to your first Politics lesson!

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## **A Huge Welcome to the Cohort of 2021-22 !**

**It has been a very unusual year, in `normal times` you would now be sighing with relief having finished your exams and looking forward to a blissful Summer break before you join us at TIGHS.**

**Choosing the `right` subjects can be a tough decision – hopefully this week of `Taster Sessions` will help you select the subjects that are right for you and your future career ambitions.**

**We have compiled this transition booklet for you to start over the next week and then complete in your own time over the Summer break. We expect that you will enjoy completing the tasks and reading about Politics. Completing this now (to a high standard) will ensure that you are ready and prepared to embrace learning in September.**

**Please bring this completed booklet into TIGHS on your first day, we look forward to meeting an enthusiastic and well informed group of learners.**

**Do get in touch if you have any questions!**




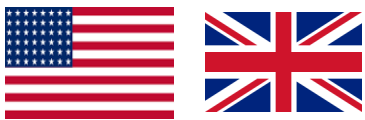

**Enjoy!**

*Mrs Rizwana Patel*



**Government and Politics A Level Topics Overview**  
**Spec: AQA 7151.**

For a detailed breakdown of the specification, please see:  
<http://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/government-and-politics/as-and-a-level>

<b>AS POLITICS</b>	<p><b>Key issues to be studied</b></p> <p><b><u>There is no external exam at AS Level. You will be assessed by a rigorous internal exam in June</u></b></p>
<p>The government of the UK</p> 	<p><b>In this section, we examine the way in which the UK is governed.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The nature and sources of the British Constitution</li> <li>2. The structure and role of Parliament</li> <li>3. The Prime Minister and Cabinet</li> <li>4. The judiciary</li> <li>5. Devolution</li> </ol>
<p>The politics of the UK</p> 	<p><b>In this section, we will examine the different ways in which we participate in the political process.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. Democracy and participation</li> <li>7. Elections and referendums</li> <li>8. Political parties</li> <li>9. Pressure groups</li> <li>10. The European Union</li> </ol>
<b>A-LEVEL POLITICS</b>	<p><b><u>At A level Politics you will be examined on all learning from your AS year plus the topics outlined below.</u></b></p> <p><b><u>You will have 3 two hour exams – each worth 77 marks.</u></b></p> <p><b><u>The papers will consist of 9 and 25 marks.</u></b></p>
<p>Government and politics of the USA</p> 	<p><b>In this section, we will examine the governance and political processes in the USA.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. US Constitution</li> <li>2. The legislative branch of government: Congress</li> <li>3. The judicial branch of government</li> <li>4. The electoral process and direct democracy</li> <li>5. Political parties</li> <li>6. Pressure groups</li> <li>7. Civil rights</li> </ol>
<p>Comparative politics</p> 	<p><b>In this section, we compare the governance and political processes in the USA and UK.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Constitutional arrangements</li> <li>2. The executives</li> <li>3. The judiciaries</li> <li>4. Electoral and party systems</li> <li>5. Pressure groups</li> <li>6. Civil Rights</li> </ol>
<p>Political ideas</p> 	<p><b>In this section we examine at ideologies that have influenced politics in the UK and US</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Liberalism</li> <li>2. Conservatism</li> <li>3. Socialism</li> <li>4. Feminism</li> </ol>



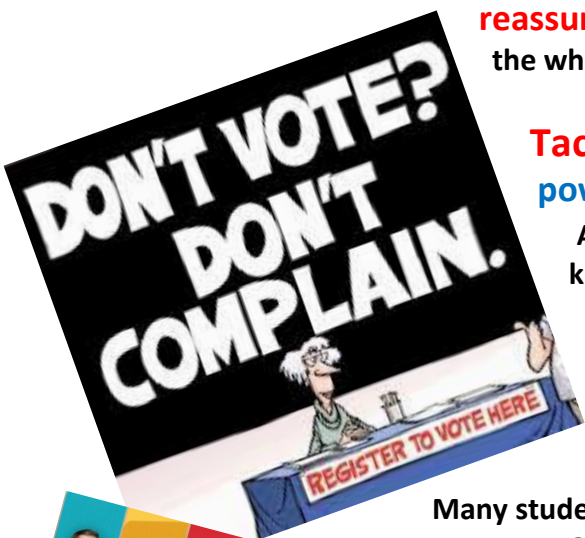
# Why Study Politics???



We **don't always like** politicians and the things that governments do... but the business of **politics touches every aspect** of our lives. And whilst we might criticise governments for some of their policies, it has to be better than having no government at all.

Society just **wouldn't function** without an elected body to decide, say, what taxes will be levied, how those taxes will be spent on things like health and education or how the country will be defended. But no matter whether government makes you **feel angry or**

**reassured**, it's worth having knowledge of how the whole process of an elected government works.



**Tackle MPs.** Or maybe become one. **Knowledge is power.**

A Level **Politics and Government** gives you the knowledge to understand how government works, particularly in the UK, but also in other countries. If you want to work in local or national government and make a **difference to society**, this course is a valuable first step. There are other career options as well.



Many students who have taken the A Level Government and Politics go on to study Politics at university. From there you might become a researcher, join local or national government or even start on the path to become a **future Prime Minister!**



But there are other job options too. If you fancy a career **in journalism** or the media, this course is very useful. Students also go on to become teachers or work in the legal profession.

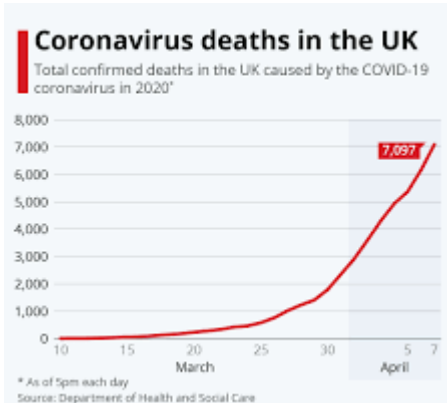
What skills will I learn? Government and Politics helps develop a number of new skills: • Undertaking research and analysis • A deeper **understanding** of governments • Finding out about careers in politics • holding politicians to **account** • Being able to **analyse and evaluate** news headlines



# Politics is Everywhere

Politics is **everywhere**, it affects s effects every component of our lives – what we eat, when we study even what we wear and listen to. Therefore politics is the easiest subject to **keep up to date** with using media resources. **Enthusiasm** for the subject will ensure success and nothing will promote this more than keeping up to date with the **everyday occurrences** of politics.

It will no doubt be another exciting year in politics



- The impact of Corvid 19 will no doubt have a lasting influence on our government and politics – there are so many urgent questions – how will our economy recover? Are we set for further austerity cuts – that may possibly affect your generation more than any other group? What will be Westminster’s relationship be with the devolved nations after our different approaches to lock down?
- Will Bo Jo (and his cabinet) last the full 4 years – or has their handling of the pandemic meant that they are forced to resign ... or be reshuffled ?
- Will Keir Starmer

effectively hold the government to account ? Will he be able to unite the party in a way that his predecessor Jeremy Corbyn never could?

- And of course, we have left the EU after 47 years, the fractious deal negotiated has obvious weaknesses – seen notably in Northern Ireland and staff shortages as European workers return to their countries.
- In the United States of America we had Presidential elections in November 2020 –



- Will Joe Biden, who broke records with a Female, ethnic minority VP Kamala Harris manage to succeed with his ambitious plans?
- Will Trump who appears to have torn up the rule book – both in domestic and international politics, attempt to win another 4 more years in the 2024 election?
- What key cases will the Supreme Court hear in 2020 – With a conservative majority there is potential scope to change key decision on a range of cases including abortion and gay rights.
- All this and so much more... will no doubt provide us with **masses of resources** for our A level.



# Getting Prepared to Study A Level Politics

To be able to **fully take part in class debates**, **write convincing essays** illustrated with contemporary political events, and **get an A\* grade** in A Level Politics it is **essential** that you watch/ listen/ follow /read the news and other specialist politics programmes. There may be issues that I have discussed in the extracts above that are new to you – **Google them, find out more !! Politics is everywhere!** It is so easy to keep up to date. All A level Politics learners are expected to keep a Politics journal – in which you will jot down key events and how this information can be relevant to your essays.

**Get a step ahead, a start now!**

## Reading List

**The National Newspapers** – downloading apps is the easiest way to access the papers

- *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Sun*, and *The Times* –all have a Conservative bias.
- *The Mirror* has a Labour bias.
- *The Guardian* and *Independent* tend to support the Liberal Democrats.
- *The Week* is a concise but informative summary of world events



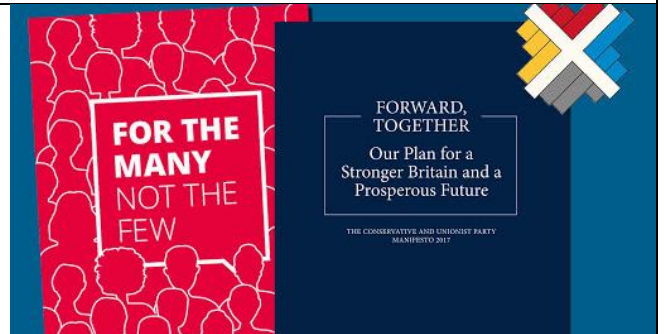
Compare and contrast newspaper headlines;

It may be a good idea to keep a political journal outlining relevant key events that you could use in your essays. Try to engage with the news daily

**The Political Parties**

- [www.conservatives.com](http://www.conservatives.com)
- [www.labour.org.uk](http://www.labour.org.uk)
- [www.libdems.org.uk](http://www.libdems.org.uk)

Have you ever thought about joining a political party?



**The BBC site**

[www.bbc.co.uk](http://www.bbc.co.uk) Is excellent for in-depth coverage of all topics. It has a dedicated politics page which is a must read.

**A level Politics**

- <https://www.alevelpolitics.com/online-classes> - This is an online resources specifically for A level students, it discusses some key questions.
- <https://app.senecalearning.com/classroom/course/ec7b79d0-a0e9-4dba-aa43-b93ee5289edb/section/852e475e-69ad-48df-aa57-80810751717b/session> - This resource gives you an overview of all the different topics that we will be studying

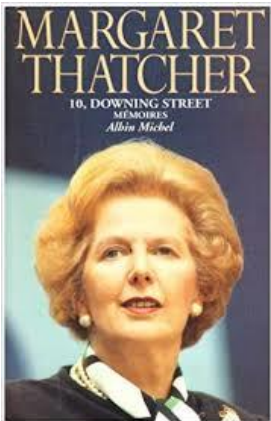
**TV /Radio News Programs**





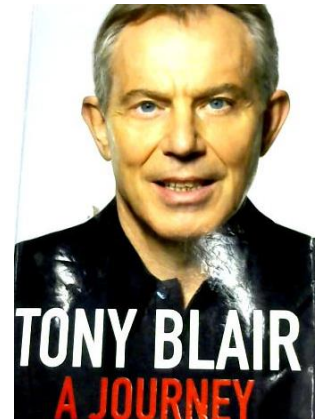
- *Channel 4 News* (19.00 daily) and *News Night* (22.30, BBC2 Mon- Fri) are fantastic for behind the headline analysis.
- *Question Time* (Thursdays, 22.45, BBC1) - guests from the worlds of politics and the media answer questions posed by members of the public

**Wider Reading** - (some books available in class)



Biographies provide unparalleled insight into the world of politics.

- *A Journey: My Political Life* by Tony Blair
- *Life at the heart of New Labour*- Peter Mandelson
- *In It Together: The Inside Story of the Coalition Government* – Mathew D Ancona
- *Margaret Thatcher: A Portrait of the Iron Lady*- By John Blundell
- Visit <http://www.bbc.co.uk/archive/collections.shtml> - for clips, speeches made by past Political figures.



### General Election Archive Material

- <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/election/2015>
- <http://www.britishelectionstudy.com/news-category/2015-general-election/>
- <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/general-election-2019>

Follow your local MP on Twitter – You can follow Kate Hollern MP for Blackburn on [@CllrKate](https://twitter.com/CllrKate)



### US Politics

All the national papers have a page on US politics - spend some time skimming over headlines. The A\* student is the one who can make comparisons to other political systems

In addition to this <http://www.nytimes.com/>

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/>

[https://www.theguardian.com/us?INTCMP=CE\\_US](https://www.theguardian.com/us?INTCMP=CE_US)



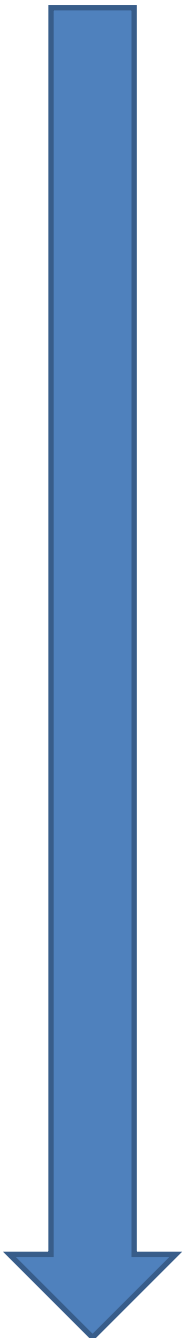


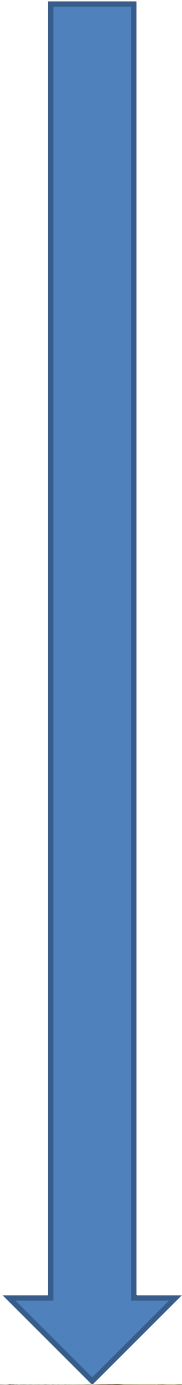
## Activity 1

## How do Elections Work?

<https://www.britannica.com/video/187571/elections-United-Kingdom>

In the UK, something amazing happens every five years - we hold a general election. On this one day, every eligible person in the UK can place a vote and be part of electing their local representative to Parliament. Parties and candidates campaign to win votes by visiting constituents door to door, holding debates, and publishing manifestos - a bit like a shopping list of what they plan to do if they're voted in. Outline the trajectory





### What is the House of Commons? And what does it do?

<https://learning.parliament.uk/en/resources/what-is-the-house-of-commons-video/>

history, role, work and membership of the Commons and how it holds the government to account.

<b>Outline 3 roles of the House of Commons</b>	<b>Who is your MP?</b>	<b>Wat does it mean “to hold the Government to account?”</b>
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**PMQ`s - what are the functions? Are they effective?**


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



## How Parliament Works

### Watch the video

<https://learning.parliament.uk/session-workshop/learn-live-how-laws-are-made/> and answer the following questions.

<p>What is the role of the House of Commons?</p>	<p>What is a constituency?</p> <p>Who is your MP?</p> <p>What is the role of an MP?</p>	<p>What does the word <b>Democracy</b> mean?</p>
<p>At what age can you vote in the UK?</p>	<p>What is the difference between government and parliament?</p>	<p>What is a manifesto? Look through the Labour and Conservative manifesto – If you could have vote in the 2019 election who would you have voted for?</p> <p>Cons manifesto: <a href="https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/election-2019-50501411">https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/election-2019-50501411</a></p> <p>Labour manifesto: <a href="https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/election-2019-50524262">https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/election-2019-50524262</a></p>
<p>What is the role of the opposition?</p> <p>Who forms the opposition today?</p>		<p>What is the role of backbenchers and House of Lords in Parliament?</p>
<p>Is there a concern you would like to raise with your MP? Why not email him/ her and explain your concerns.</p>	<p>Research the composition of the current House of Lords.</p> <p>How many Labour members?</p>	<p>How many Conservative members?</p> <p>How many cross benchers?</p>

You may want to read this guide too : <https://assets-learning.parliament.uk/uploads/2019/12/KS3-Booklet-Get-to-know-your-UK-Parliament.pdf>



### Analysing the 2019 election

Read the Guardian article on the following page and the article

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/ng-interactive/2019/dec/13/boris-johnson-achieves-landslide-victory-visual-guide>

and answer the following questions – You may need to use other online resources.

1. Outline the number of seats each political party has in the House of Commons.
2. The Conservative party gained 44% of the popular vote, Labour received 32%. Yet despite the 8% difference in the popular vote, Conservatives won 365 seats whilst Labour won 203 (. Briefly outline the reason for this. (Tip: Think FPTP)
3. Why do you think Boris Johnson decided to hold an election?
4. Explain the term presidential-style campaign.
5. Outline and explain three reasons that you think led to Boris Johnson’s victory.
6. Outline and explain three reasons that you think Labour lost.
7. Ask at least 4 people which party they voted for in the 2019 election – complete the table below. Now analyse the different factors that impacted on the voting behaviour of this group of voters. Write 2 paragraphs in response the question “Explain the different factors that impact on voting behaviour.” Your response should be based on the findings of your research and further online research

**KEY TERM**  
 Popular vote:  
 the total  
 number of votes  
 cast for a party

Age	Gender	Ethnicity	Party voted	Reason
37	female	Indian	Labour	Better policies – I liked the fact that Labour planned to scrap tuition fees.



## **A focused campaign, the promise to ‘get Brexit done’ and playing it safe helped Tories to victory**

### **1. Brexit**

Boris Johnson’s message that he would “get Brexit done”, repeated over and over again, appears to have resonated with a public weary of the lack of resolution over the UK leaving the EU.

He stressed throughout the campaign that he would sort out the issue quickly with his “oven-ready” deal, even though the UK is heading for years of trade negotiations and uncertainty at the end of next year when the transition period comes to an end. And he repeatedly stressed the prospect of a Labour government leading to another referendum.

### **2. Simplicity of message**

The Tories’ message was much more focused than Labour’s. Johnson focused relentlessly on the “get Brexit done” slogan as well as pledges about more police officers and nurses. In contrast, Labour had a multiplicity of huge policy offers from mass nationalisation to free broadband and compensating women born in the 1950s for the rise in the pension age. Ultimately, concentrating on a small number of core pledges seems to have given Johnson the cut-through he needed.

### **3. A safety-first strategy**

The Conservatives launched a manifesto that was short on eye-catching policy offers, beyond a small tax cut to national insurance and a very modest increase in public spending. The party was keen to avoid the disaster of Theresa May’s 2017 manifesto when she unveiled an unpopular policy on social care that was soon dubbed a “death tax” by Labour. This time, the party steered clear of any controversial pledges. The manifesto was so cautious it even contained promises not to do things, such as a pledge not to bring back fox-hunting.

### **5. Labour’s weakness**

The Labour vote dropped dramatically in many areas. In some places, the Conservative vote did not go up hugely but Johnson’s candidate came out on top because traditional Labour voters appeared to have stayed at home or voted for the Brexit party. Defeated MPs have variously blamed the party’s Brexit position and Corbyn’s leadership for the suppression of the Labour vote.



## 5. Boris Johnson

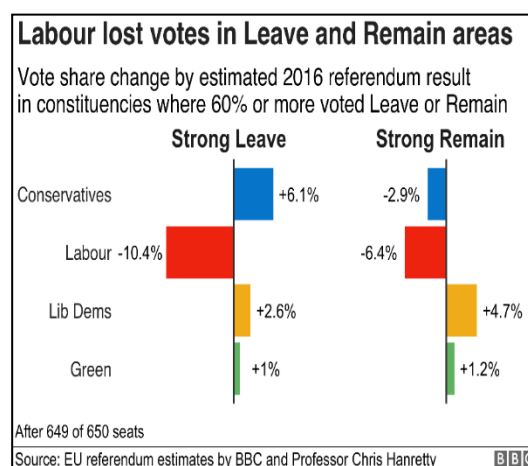
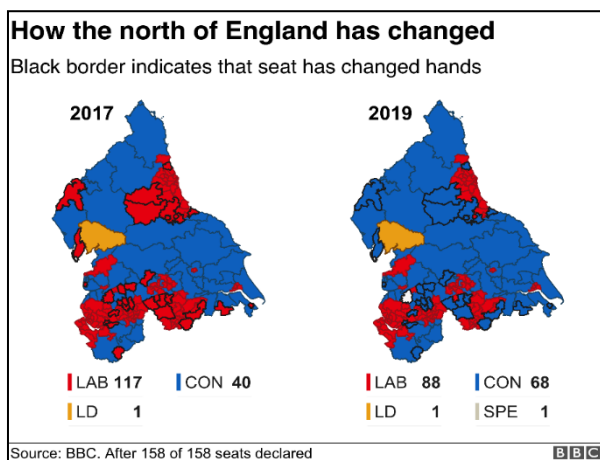
Candidates said throughout the election that while Jeremy Corbyn was unpopular on the doorstep, there was little enthusiasm for Johnson either. However, he was clearly a stronger candidate throughout the campaign than May in 2017, submitting to two head-to-head leadership debates in which he made no major slip-ups. The gaffe-prone prime minister also stayed on message until almost the end of the campaign, when he was pilloried for [refusing to look at a picture](#) of a small boy on a hospital floor and [hiding in a fridge](#) to escape a TV interviewer. Throughout, his leadership ratings were substantially higher than Corbyn's.

## 6. Working-class and middle-class voters

Support for the Conservatives rose by four points in the Midlands, the North East and Yorkshire - the regions of England that voted most heavily in favour of Leave.

In contrast, the party's vote fell back by a point in London and the South East. And in Scotland, the party's vote fell by as much as four points.

Conversely, Labour saw its vote fall by 12 to 13 points in the North East and Yorkshire, while it fell by only six or seven points in London and the South of England. The result also saw Labour lose ground heavily in its traditional working-class heartlands.



## 8. Liberal Democrat losses

One of the SNP's biggest scalps was the Dunbartonshire East seat of Liberal Democrat leader Jo Swinson - a defeat that capped a miserable night for the Liberal Democrats.

Despite advancing more strongly in pro-Remain areas, the party seems likely to end up with only 11 or 12 seats.

This will be no more than the number they won in 2017, even though their share of the vote is up by four points. None of the many MPs who defected to the party during the last Parliament have been able to retain their seats.



## 7. An emboldened SNP

The success of the Conservatives in England and Wales was matched by that of the SNP in Scotland. The party has won 48 of the 59 seats north of the border, and 45% of the vote across Scotland as a whole.

### Scotland vote share


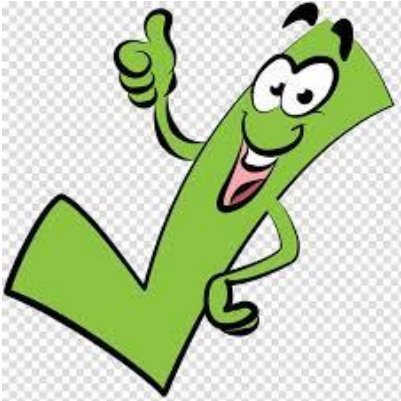
After 59 of 59 seats

Party	% share
SNPScottish National Party	45.0%
CONConservative	25.1%
LABLabour	18.6%
LDLiberal Democrat	9.5%
GRNGreen	1.0%
BRXThe Brexit Party	0.5%





Activity 5

<p>Who am I?</p> 	<p>Who are the Labour party - What do they stand for and who is their core voter base?</p>	<p>Outline the general election results 2019?</p>
<p>Explain the term devolved government</p>  <p>Define Coalition</p>	<p>Who am I? What is my role? Michael Gove MP</p>	<p>List the last 6 Prime Ministers of the UK, their time in office and their political parties</p>
<p>Who is your Local MP? What is his/ her role?</p>	<p><b>How Politically Savvy Are You???</b></p>  <p><b>Take the test and find out!</b></p>	<p>Explain why you chose to study A level Politics.</p>



## Analyzing the Media

Analyse 2 political stories either in



- The Daily Telegraph or The Times and
  - The Independent or BBC.
- Compare and contrast the ways in which the political story is covered. Consider
- The language used



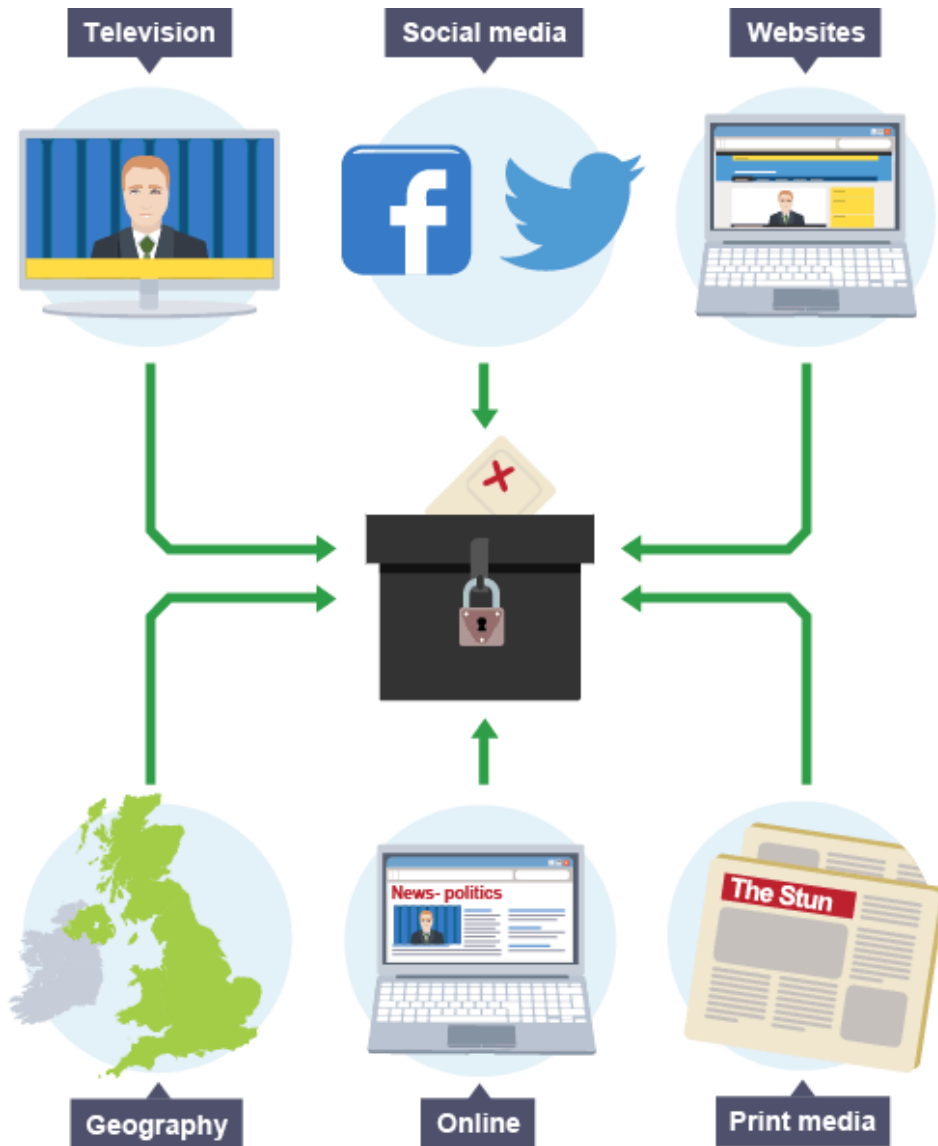
- Is the story covered positively or negatively?
- Consider how pictures are used
- Research the political bias of the newspapers (you can use wiki for this)
- What judgement do you reach about newspaper reporting of the `news`

Record your findings in the table below.

The Daily Telegraph or The Times	The Guardian or BBC



**The Influence Of The Media and Pressure Groups on Political Life In The UK**  
**Read the following extracts and answer all the questions in detail.**



**Factors influencing voting behavior**

## The Media in the United Kingdom

The UK has a strong, independent media history with many different newspaper titles, television and radio channels. The media's role is to inform the public on important issues that affect them whether these issues are local, national or international.

Newspapers remain an important source of political information with thousands sold and read online every day. In the UK, the most widely read 'popular' newspapers are the Sun and the Daily Mail. The most widely read 'quality' newspapers are The Telegraph and the Times.

Within the laws of the land newspapers can print more or less what they like. This means different newspapers can choose to report the news in different ways. In their choice of stories, pictures and headlines, newspapers can take a one-sided approach to news reporting.

At the time of an election newspapers are often very clear as to which political party they support urging their readers to vote for one political party or another. However, this does not mean that all voters are persuaded by the newspaper they read. Many people buy a newspaper for other reasons, such as sport, or are not influenced by what they read.

Television (and radio) political news reporting is different from newspapers as the law requires television news to be fair and balanced. Television companies are expected to report the facts and to be balanced in their analysis. Different representatives from different political parties are each expected to be allowed to give their views on important issues.

In recent years, a number of TV debates have been broadcast involving the leaders of different parties. Each of these debates were watched by millions of voters. However, post-debate analysis has suggested that most people who watched the debates had already made up their minds and were not influenced by what they heard. This meant that although one party leader or another may have appeared to have 'won' the debate, overall the debates had little impact on the election result.

Visit a 'popular' and a 'quality' paper.

List three differences between them?

Which political parties did some of the major newspapers support?

Watch the highlights of the televised debates  
<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/video/2019/nov/19/boris-johnson-and-jeremy-corbyn-clash-in-itv-election-debate-video-highlights>

Which party leader do you think won?



Identify 3 ways in which social media influences our political views

<https://www.kqed.org/education/311498/how-does-social-media-shape-our-political-views>

Increasingly people use the internet as a source of information, especially social media. As the internet allows almost anyone to post almost anything they choose, some of the information on the internet is not accurate. However, the internet does allow people almost unlimited access to information which means people are better informed than ever before. For political parties this offers the chance to connect directly with voters and to get their opinions across.

Why may engaging with the voter directly be preferred by party leaders?

<https://twitter.com/jeremy Corbyn>

## Pressure groups in United Kingdom

At elections the people decide which representatives they want to make decisions on their behalf. Elections can be as much as four or five years apart so people must have other ways of influencing their representatives.

One way is through pressure groups. Pressure groups are organisations of people with similar opinions. Pressure groups do not want power for

themselves instead they want to influence those in power. They also encourage responsible participation in the democratic process.

Why may individuals choose to join a pressure group?

The way a pressure group works



Pressure groups use a number of different legal methods to put their views across:

1. Posting leaflets through doors or canvassing door to door.
2. Taking part in demonstrations, marches or attending rallies.
3. Organising petitions.
4. Lobbying (speaking directly to) MSPs or councillors.
5. Writing letters to politicians or to newspapers.
6. Giving interviews which are reported in the media (radio, TV and publicity stunts to gain media attention).



Which method do you think may be more successful? Why?

Developments such as Freedom of Information laws, the internet, social networking and a 24/7 media, mean pressure groups are aware of their power and are becoming increasingly professional in the way they work.

### Types of Pressure Groups: Outsider and Insider groups

Outsider pressure groups are those whose aims do not have the support of the government. They tend to adopt media-based, high profile campaigns to capture public attention.

For example, in recent years a range of pressure groups such as Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth have organised protests against the use of fracking as a way of getting gas from underground.



Research a pressure group that you are familiar with

1. What are the aims of the pressure group?
2. How many members does the pressure group have?
3. Has the pressure group been successful in achieving its aims?
4. Why do you think that some pressure groups are more successful than

By contrast, insider pressure groups have the support and attention of government and officials who will often approach them for advice as well as having regular discussions.

One example of an insider group is the Confederation of British Industry (CBI). Insider groups will rarely organise demonstrations or marches. Instead they may be involved in meetings



with the UK government, often behind the scenes and away from the cameras, to influence decision making.

### Key Question

**Are the media and pressure groups a help or a hindrance to democracy in the UK? Outline and analyse 3 reasons for both sides of the argument.**

## Prime Ministers and Presidents

One of the most important and interesting sections in A Level Government and Politics is learning about Prime Ministers and Presidents. We will analyse the different factors that make them powerful leaders and weak leaders. Complete the quiz by researching the different leaders.



Baroness Margaret Thatcher, known as the 'Iron Lady', became the first female UK Prime Minister after winning the 1979 General Election. How many years was she in office as PM? BONUS : What led to the PM's departure?

Which PM is the odd one out and why?

Tony Blair, John Major, Gordon Brown, James Callaghan

Which PM resigned after the Brexit referendum result which was 52% in favour of leaving the European Union and 48% against?

BONUS: Did the PM do the right thing?

"What does the Conservative Party offer a working class kid from Brixton? They made him Prime Minister." In which election campaign did the Conservative party use this slogan, and who were they referring to? BONUS: How long was this PM in power?

Which Prime Minister said "we will govern from the radical centre" – What does this mean? BONUS : Why was this a very significant statement?

Which President is the odd one out, Donald Trump, Bill Clinton, Barak Obama, Franklin D. Roosevelt

Whose much awaited appointment as Prime Minister coincided with the global recession, during which the PM introduced a bank rescue package worth around £500 billion?

Which PM held a general election in a bid to increase the parliamentary majority, but which actually resulted in a hung parliament? BONUS: What is a hung parliament?

There is a presidential election planned for Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2020. Which of these is not standing for presidency? Joe Biden, Donald Trump, Bernie Sanders



### Key Question

Select a recent Prime Minister and write up a 500-word biography about their time as PM. Discuss their manifesto pledges, their successes and weaknesses.

# What Will I Need to Bring to my First A-Level Politics Lesson ?

Here is a short list of things to get ready for September!

To Buy:

- Lever Arch Folder
- Plastic Wallets
- Dividers
- Writing Pad
- Stationary Selection including a stapler
- A notebook or an academic diary

To Do:

- Complete all the activities in this booklet – feel free to use online resources to help you, and do try to complete all the tasks - but do not worry if some things appear complicated! We will soon fix that in class!!
- Spend some time looking through a range of politics resources as outlined on page 4
- Keep up to date with the news – everyday – Make notes in your notebook/ diary

- **And, of course ... you must come brimming with lots of enthusiasms and a commitment to doing really well!**

