



A Level Politics

Yes we can!

Barack Obama



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Please note: the activities in this booklet can be completed in any order.

Course Details

Exam Board: Edexcel

Year 12 Content

UK Politics

- democracy
- political parties
- electoral systems
- voting behaviour and the media

UK Government

- the constitution
- parliament
- the Prime Minister
- relationships between the different branches of government

Year 13 Content

Core Political Ideas

- conservatism
- liberalism
- socialism

Non-Core Political Ideas*

- anarchism
- ecologism
- feminism
- multiculturalism
- nationalism

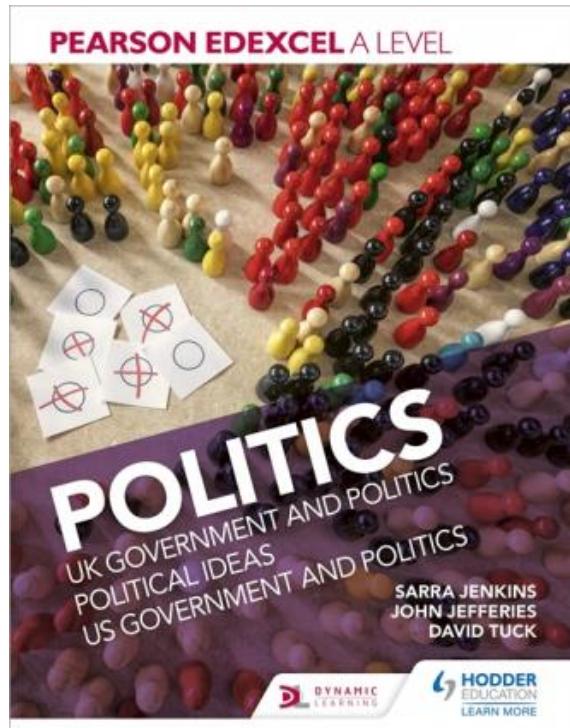
Government and Politics of the USA

- the US Constitution and federalism
- US Congress
- the President
- US Supreme Court and civil rights
- democracy and participation
- comparative theories between UK and US

*We study one non-core political idea only.

All students will need to purchase a copy of the course textbook. This covers both years.

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Some Key Terms

In your own words try to define what each of the following are or what they mean. You may need to do some research and you may need more space to write down your answers.

1	Politics	
2	Government	
3	Democracy	
4	Political Party	
5	Pressure Group	
6	General Election	
7	By-election	
8	Member of Parliament	
9	House of Commons	
10	House of Lords	
11	Suffrage	
12	Electorate	
13	Referendum	
14	Manifesto	
15	Constitution	
16	Legislative Branch	
17	Executive Branch	
18	Judicial Branch	
19	Constituency	
20	Frontbencher	
21	Backbencher	
22	Life Peer	
23	Hereditary Peer	
24	Party Whip	
25	Common Law	
26	Statute Law	
27	Supreme Court	
28	Devolution	
29	EU Single Market	
30	EU Customs Union	

UK Prime Ministers

Choose at least one of the prime ministers below and produce a short profile. You could do this as a poster, a PowerPoint or a Word document. You can make profiles for as many prime ministers as you wish. You might like to include the following:

1. Family background and education.
2. Non-political achievements.
3. Career before becoming prime minister.
4. Dates of their premiership.
5. Successes as prime minister.
6. Problems faced as prime minister.
7. Legacy.
8. Anything else you consider interesting.



UK Political Parties

Choose at least one of the parties below and then produce a profile of that party which answers the following questions. You could do this as a poster, a PowerPoint or a Word document. You can make profiles for as many parties as you wish.

1. When, how and why was the party founded?
2. What has the party achieved in the past?
3. Who are the party's traditional supporters?
4. How is the party funded?
5. Where does the party sit on the left-right spectrum?
6. What are the party's current key policies? You could look at their 2019 General Election manifesto.
7. For Conservatives, Labour and Liberal Democrats: what are the different factions within the party?
8. Who are the key people in the party?
9. What are the main criticisms made of the party?
10. How well is the party currently doing in opinion polls?



2019 UK General Election

Look at the information below and answer the following questions.

2019 UK General Election Results				
Party	Seats	Votes		
Conservatives	365	56.2%	13,966,565	43.6%
Labour	202	31.1%	10,269,076	32.2%
Scottish National Party	48	7.4%	1,242,380	3.9%
Liberal Democrats	11	1.7%	3,696,423	11.6%
Democratic Unionist Party	8	1.2%	244,128	0.8%
Sinn Féin	7	1.1%	181,853	0.6%
Plaid Cymru	4	0.6%	153,265	0.5%
Social Democratic and Labour Party	2	0.3%	118,737	0.4%
Green Party	1	0.2%	835,579	2.7%
Alliance Party of Northern Ireland	1	0.2%	134,115	0.4%
Speaker*	1	0.2%	26,831	0.1%

*The Speaker of the House of Commons is traditionally re-elected unopposed.

1. What do we call the electoral system used for UK General Elections?
2. Do the results above look fair to you? Why/why not?
3. Who are the biggest winners and losers?
4. Does anyone seem to have an unfair advantage?
5. Why does the percentage share of the vote a party receives rarely match up with the percentage share of the seats it wins?
6. Was the outcome of this election what the public wanted it to be?
7. Was the result widely expected/predicted before the election?
8. Do you think the current electoral system works well?
9. What were the main political issues this election was fought on?
10. What did the three main UK parties (Conservatives, Labour and Liberal Democrats) promise the electorate during this election campaign?

Political Posters

Have a look at the following images. Who created them (i.e. which party/organisation)? Who were they aimed at? What message were they trying to get across? Were they successful? Why/why not?

UK General Election 1979



UK General Election 2017



UK General Election 2010



EU Referendum 2016



BREAKING POINT

The EU has failed us all

We must break free of the EU and take back control of our borders.

Leave the European Union
ON 23RD JUNE

votetoleavetheeu.co.uk

THE LEAVE CAMPAIGN'S PLAN FOR BRITAIN OUTSIDE OF EUROPE.

YOUR FAMILY'S FUTURE IS TOO IMPORTANT TO RISK.



Political Speeches

Listen to some of the speeches below. Except for Sir Geoffrey Howe, they are all quite short. Who is the person making the speech? Who are their words aimed at? Was the speech successful or not? What was the impact of the speech? Did it change anything?

UK

Margaret Thatcher, 1980

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rQ-M0KEFm9I>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H_fbASHIMJc

Neil Kinnock, 1985

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v9d7ahKWcsM>

Sir Geoffrey Howe, 1990

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Aw1pcAzjRnc&t=505s>

Tony Blair, 1996

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-oDB667TB18>

Theresa May, 2016

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FDyZ8trge2E>

Jo Swinson, 2019

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Lzy-U3BKf8>

USA

George HW Bush and Bill Clinton, 1992

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

George W Bush, 2003

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=niWvafMn-J4>

Howard Dean, 2004

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l6i-gYRAwM0>

Barack Obama, 2009

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KzZofo_ezVk

Hillary Clinton, 2016

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PCHJVE9trSM>

Congressman Ken Buck, 2020

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

Research Questions

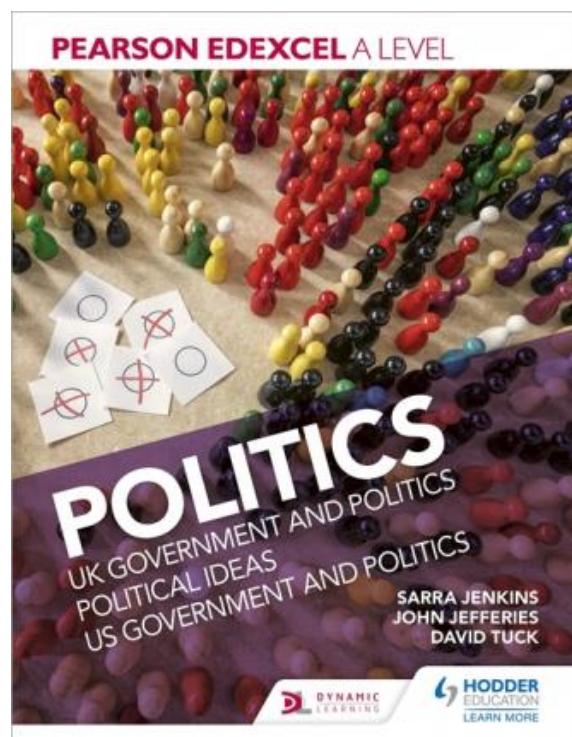
Here are some questions which will require a bit of research if you are to answer them well. Remember to back up your points with examples and explanations.

1. Who would you consider to be the three most successful UK prime ministers? You must justify your choices.
2. Excluding prime ministers, who has been the most important UK politician of the last one hundred years?
3. Of the last eight leaders of the Labour Party only one has won a General Election. Why has the party been so unsuccessful?
4. Should sixteen-year olds be given the right to vote in UK elections?
5. Should the House of Lords be abolished?
6. What are the three most important issues which the UK government should be dealing with now?
7. What is *Magna Carta* and why is it still considered important today?
8. How democratic is the United Kingdom today?
9. What role do you think the media plays in the political life of the UK? Is its effect on our democracy positive, negative or neutral?
10. If you could introduce one new law for the United Kingdom what would it be? You must explain and justify your answer.

Further Reading

All students will need to purchase a copy of the course textbook. This covers both years.

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You do need a good knowledge of current affairs to study politics so watching the news and reading a (good quality) newspaper is important.

There are literally thousands (if not millions!) of political biographies/autobiographies. Reading these can be a great way to learn. Just choose someone you find interesting!

In addition, any of the books below would be well worth reading.

