

Y11 Politics A-Level Prep

This summer gives you a golden opportunity to look at all things political! I have included a number of tasks that I want you to complete in order for you to be ready for September and to give you some background which will help you with the course. There are 3 main things that we study:

- Government and politics of the UK
- Government and politics of the US and comparative politics
- Political Ideas I am giving you something to do on each of these key areas.

This involves some doing, some viewing or listening and some reading. Don't let this list restrict you, as you can do as much as you want. This is the basics of what you will need to make a great start to Politics A Level.

Part A: Government and politics of the UK

1. Watch some episodes of 'The Thick of It'. What does this teach you about British politics? Write down your thoughts about what you have seen. It is available on BBC iplayer.
2. Read a different newspaper each week. Try different kinds. What do you learn about British politics from these? You can look at the online rather than physical addition if you prefer. Obviously, the stories need to be political and based around the UK government

Part B: Government and politics of the US

1. Watch a drama like 'House of Cards' or 'The West Wing'. These give fabulous insight into the workings of the US government. Write down your thoughts about what you have seen. Be careful- they are very addictive!
2. There are some great memoirs from US politicians that give insights into US political life. I have included some ideas here and I want you to read at least one book. However, please feel free to select your own and fill in the book review. Ideas: Hillary Clinton recently published *What Happened* (2017) about the events of 2016. Bernie Sanders also wrote a book, *Our Revolution* (2016), a blistering attack on the US political system. For a critique of US politics, it is certainly worth a read. Of the many books about US politics written by journalists and newspaper columnists, Thomas Frank's *What's the Matter with Kansas?* (2004) is interesting and very useful for explaining the emergence of working-class conservatism, and in some ways, it foresees the rise of Trump. Many novels have had US politics as a backdrop. Joe Klein's book *Primary Colors* (not a typo, this is the US spelling) is a satire based on a charismatic Democratic party politician with a striking resemblance to Bill Clinton. It was also made into a film

Part C: Government and politics of the US

1. Rather than watching, this time I want you to listen. There is a brilliant series on the BBC World Service called 'A History of Political Thought'. Listen to as many of the 12 episodes as you can. They are an excellent introduction to the greatest classical and modern political thinkers. Most are less than 15 minutes in length and can be god bedtime listening! [BBC World Service - A History of Political Thought - Available now](#)

Enjoy! I look forward to discussing it with you

Miss Baker, July 2022