

Politics Introductory Work

Welcome to the summer work for Politics A Level.

SWAY LINK: This link will take you to all the work and allow you to scroll through information on your phone and click links taking you to articles, videos and readings. The same information on the Sway is presented to you here. The Sway is easier to use on your phone.

<https://sway.office.com/7k7kxYVx369uf1AM?ref=Link>

Politics summer work tasks:

Phase 3

Task 9: Source analysis example (Both topics)

a) Read the source and answer the following questions

In the UK, the minimum voting age is 18, except in Scotland, where 16- and 17-year-olds have been given the right to vote in local and Scottish parliamentary elections. By and large, 16-year-olds haven't yet entered the world of home ownership, employment, tax or pensions but these economic issues are often at the forefront of election campaigns. The main argument against lowering the voting age is that a lack of experience in these matters prevents young people from making a considered judgement at the ballot box.

Opponents also point to the fact that 18- to 24-year-olds have the lowest turnout of any age group in elections, reflecting an apparent lack of interest in politics. These critics question whether an even younger generation would be any different. And there are concerns that teenagers who do want to cast their votes would be impressionable and easily influenced by radical politics, or would not fully think things through and would blindly vote for the same party as their parents.

But calls to lower the voting age come from a range of sources – adults as well as teenagers themselves, backed up by youth organisations, pressure groups and politicians. 16 and 17 year olds in the Isle of Man, Jersey, Guernsey, Brazil and Austria already have the vote. They can also vote in some elections in Germany, Malta and Norway. Evidence from the Scottish independence referendum, substantiated by research from Austria and Norway, shows – aided by the encouragement of families and schools – 16 and 17 year olds have higher rates of turnout than 18 to 24 year-olds.

For supporters, it's about giving young people a say in matters that directly affect them, such as tuition fees. It's also thought that lowering the limit will encourage civic-mindedness at an earlier age and establish an interest in the political system, which will be continued throughout a person's life. Scotland's positive experience of including 16- and 17-year-olds in the 2014 independence referendum led to the lowering of the voting age for local and Holyrood elections.

A study by the University of Edinburgh during the referendum found that some teenagers were initially doubtful of their own abilities to make the right decision, but that this led them to actively seek out information to help inform their judgement. In some cases, teenagers even influenced their parents' voting intentions with their new-found knowledge.

But as there are no immediate plans for the UK government to debate lowering the voting age for general elections, it is unlikely that all 16-year-olds will get the chance to put that to the test any time soon.

Sources: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/guides/zsbtbk7> and <https://www.electoral-reform.org.uk/campaigns/votes-at-16/>

b) Define these words from the source

Parliamentary elections	
Forefront	
Ballot box	
Turnout	
Impressionable	
Radical politics	
Blindly	
Pressure groups	
Substantiated	
Tuition fees	
Civic-mindedness	
Referendum	
Holyrood	
Voting intentions	

c) Using two differently coloured highlighters, indicate:

- i) The arguments in the source that support the view that 16 to 18 year olds should be given the vote
- ii) The arguments in the source that support the view that the voting age should remain at 18

d) Match up 3 arguments that support the view that 16 to 18 year olds should be given the vote with 3 counter-arguments that support the view that they should not.

Arguments that support the view that 16 to 18 year olds should get the vote.	Counter-arguments that support the view that the voting age should remain at 18

Create a table showing three arguments for the view and three arguments against the view similar to the one above

e) Finish by writing a conclusion that sums up which side of the argument you fall on and why

Task 10: Democracy and participation (Topic 1) Which three types of democracy from this list, best describes the UK. Write a sentence for each explaining why

Democracy means rule by the people, coming from the Greek words *demos* for people and *kratia* for power. This means that power is held by the people, rather than by an individual (monarchy or dictatorship) or a small group of people (aristocracy or oligarchy). However, there are many different types of democracy.

In a **liberal democracy** the right to vote is widespread and representatives act in the interests of everyone in society.

In a **majoritarian democracy** the 'will' or desire of the majority of the population are the prime considerations of the government.

In a **parliamentary democracy** Parliament is the highest authority. The executive branch is drawn from and accountable to the people's representatives in Parliament.

In a **presidential democracy** the executive is elected separately from the legislative body and is therefore accountable directly to the people.

Direct democracy involves the citizens directly in the decision-making process.

Representative democracy refers to any system where the people transfer decision-making powers to elected representatives.

Task 10a: Democracy and participation (Topic 1)

Using the following table answer these questions

Table 1

Aspect of democracy	Positive elements	Negative elements
Turnout	Since 2001 turnouts in the UK have increased in successive general elections.	General election turnout is still below the averages of 1945–92 and turnout is very low in other elections.
Voting rights	There is universal suffrage, meaning everyone aged 18 and over has the right to vote, with a few exceptions.	Prisoners and the under-18s are not allowed to vote, while the homeless are effectively excluded by the requirement to have a registered address.
Parties	Britain has a multi-party system, with many parties contesting elections and 10 parties currently represented in Parliament.	In terms of gaining power, only the two main parties have a chance of winning the election, meaning minor parties are effectively excluded.
Pressure groups	There are thousands of pressure groups representing a variety of specific interests and people.	Only a few wealthy and powerful groups seem able to exert power and influence over British politics.
Parliament	The House of Commons is filled with elected representatives who work on behalf of the people who elected them.	The House of Lords is fundamentally undemocratic and Parliament has been marginalised by the growth of spatial leadership and losses in sovereignty.
Devolution	Devolution has created institutions which can better respond to local needs. It has also provided another layer of representation.	Devolution has created an imbalance in British politics, with different areas having different degrees of control, the problems of the West Lothian question and the role of English Votes for English Laws in Parliament.

A. What is turnout and why is it important?

B. How can pressure groups improve democracy in the UK?

C. How do pressure groups undermine democracy in the UK?

D. Explain two advantages and two disadvantages to British democracy of the current House of Lords

Task 11: Hot topic

Pick one issue that interests you about current politics (it could be from news over the summer or a big national/international problem) Make a note of the issue ready for a debate in our first week.

- a) State what the issue is about
- b) Where you came across it - news or a magazine or online article
- c) Argue why you are so passionate about it and what your opinion about it is

Task 12: Overview quiz

Having completed the above tasks, complete this quiz online and we shall look over the results upon the start of the A Level Course.

a) **Summer Review Quiz 01** <https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=ALV0CGtJAKCS-T05uDMt-qa-7jXvnQJOuxDFBURqXptUQ1Y0R1kyOU84WVU3TVQ3TDZYQkxJTU5MWS4u>

b) **Summer Review Quiz 02** <https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=ALV0CGtJAKCS-T05uDMt-qa-7jXvnQJOuxDFBURqXptUOTBXRkdaRDQwMEoyVVZBV0dNUkpMQ1pVNC4u>

MICROSOFT FORM REVIEW OF PHASE 3 WORK.

Complete the form to show what you can recall and to evaluate this first phase of work. Click the link or enter the url

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=ALV0CGtJAKCS-T05uDMt-qa-7jXvnQJOuxDFBURqXptURjRLMEM0TVVLV0JCSTVDQUpWV01OM0FNWS4u>

EXTENSION TASKS FOR THE HARD-CORE POLITIC STUDENT

TED TALKS

Why is the US Constitution so hard to amend? <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FwREAW4SIVY>

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

What is democracy?

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=5&v=u6jgWxkbR7A&feature=emb_logo

Why nations should pursue soft power <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EiTrl0W1QrM>

SUGGESTED READING



TV AND MOVIE RECOMMENDATIONS



Yes Minister and Yes Prime Minister

The West Wing

House of Cards

In the Loop

Made in Dagenham

The Queen