



History and Government & Politics Department



Student Name

G&P Transition Workbook

Welcome to G&P at Wyke College

As it is highly likely that you will all miss Wyke Start this year, we open here with a warm welcome, and a summary of what the History and Government & Politics Department at Wyke College can offer you:

Staff for 2020/21: Each of you will be allotted one of the three Teachers within the Department – James Goodchild; Pete Carpenter, and Andy Bentley.

Resources: The Government & Politics Moodle site is packed full of superb material to assist with your studies over the next two years, including all lessons and plenty of extra reading. There are plenty of books that can be borrowed from the Department.

Support Sessions: We run weekly Master Classes for students with high expectations. These sessions are designed to allow students to explore in depth many of the primary issues covered in the module. These sessions are therefore pitched at a higher level than standard lessons. Additional reading is expected in preparation for these sessions, and some extra periodical homework is set, but is not compulsory. There are also skill and content revision lessons offered before each assessment and exam.

Government & Politics Trips: The annual trip to Washington is highly recommended for 1st year G&P students as it has great relevance to the USA module. We also take students to London to visit the Houses of Parliament and the Supreme Court. G&P students are also eligible to participate in any of the History trips if they wish to – Battlefields tour to Belgium, and trip to Auschwitz in Poland.

A-Level G&P Programme Schedule: Students will study two modules on UK Government and Politics in their 1st year programme here at Wyke College, and then study Comparative Politics in the 2nd year programme. The UK modules – the first on politics, the second on government – include close analysis of elections and electoral processes, pressure groups, political parties, media impact, structures of government, core and non-core ideologies (the selected non-core ideology is nationalism), civil rights, and much more besides. The comparative politics module will compare UK government and politics with that of the USA, in which you will study Presidents, structures of Federal and State governance, Congress, Supreme Court, elections and electoral processes, parties and pressure groups, and so on. The course is 100% exam-based, and we will work closely with you throughout the two-year study programme to ensure that you are ready for those exams. This is a fascinating subject, and we are confident that you will find it hugely rewarding, as well as exciting!

Why Do You Wish to Study A-Level Government & Politics?

In at least three sentences, please explain why you wish to study G&P at A-Level:

In at least three sentences, please explain why you think that studying Government and Politics (at any level) is important?

What in your opinion is the best aspect of UK politics, and what is the worst? Provide examples, and analytical judgement, in your answers.

What is Your Current Impression of Government & Politics?

In at least three sentences, please discuss your favourite UK politician, and explain why he or she is your favourite?

In your opinion, what has been the most significant political event in the last decade to occur in the UK, and why?

In at least three sentences, please discuss your favourite US politician, and explain why he or she is your favourite?

Presidents of the USA

The following tasks will serve as an ideal taster for the Comparative Politics module that you will study in Y2 A-Level Government & Politics at Wyke College. After closely examining UK Government and UK Politics in Y1, you will then compare UK democracy with American democracy. The following tasks are a taster of how American politics has evolved over time:

Agenda for this section:

- **Which American Presidents do you know?**
- **What Constitutes a ‘Good’ President?**
- **Ten Best Presidents Video (6 mins).**
- **Five of the Most Famous Presidents – but what did they do?**
- **Who are the Presidents?**

To begin this section, please complete the boxes below. You may have to think carefully about your answers – perhaps plan your answers first by undertaking some online research into what people have said about the various Presidents in History: The following links are ideal to get you started:

Miller Center: <https://millercenter.org/president>

Ten Best Presidents: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_xFovzUrCcg

25 Best Presidents: <https://www.businessinsider.com/the-top-20-presidents-in-history-according-to-historians-2017-2?r=US&IR=T>

Who in your opinion was the best President, and what did they do?

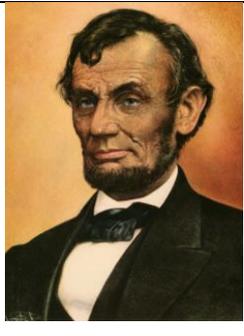
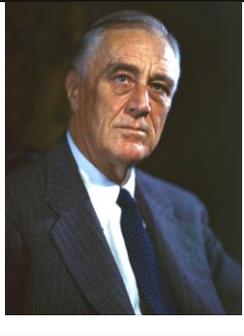
What Constitutes a 'Good' President?

What Constitutes a 'Bad' President?

The Most Famous Presidents of the USA

What do you know (or can find out) about the five most famous Presidents listed below?

Please consider their successes and failures, and why they are so important:

| | |
|---|---|
|  | <p>George Washington</p> |
|  | <p>Abraham Lincoln</p> |
|  | <p>Franklin Delano Roosevelt</p> |
|  | <p>John F. Kennedy</p> |
|  | <p>Barak Obama</p> |

How does Donald Trump Compare with Past Presidents?



As you can see from the cartoon above, Donald Trump is a prime target for media ridicule. Many would argue that he deserves this, and creates it himself – others would disagree and instead argue that the Trump administration has ‘Made America Great Again’. What are your views:

Prime Ministers and Presidents



Who do you think is more powerful?

This is a most interesting question. The immediate response from most people would be the President of the USA, but that answer is highly debatable when we examine the constitutional strengths and limitations. Please consider the following statements, then perhaps undertake a little more research on their powers, and then formulate your own answer to the question:

- Both can hire and fire anyone in government.
- Both are Commander-in-Chief of their Armed Forces.
- Both represent their nations in foreign relations with other countries.
- Only the Prime Minister can declare war on another nation.
- Only the Prime Minister can create new laws that their party promised in an election.
- Neither can instruct the police and courts to arrest and convict particular people.

Who do you think is more powerful – Prime Minister or President? Please explain your answer.

The Political Spectrum

Left

Right

All people have differing views on how their country or community should be governed. Such political diversity is good for vibrant politics in a democracy. Some people steer more to the left-wing of the spectrum, some are in the middle, while others steer to the right-wing of the spectrum, but what does this mean? Please watch the following two videos, and then formulate your own explanation of the political spectrum in the box below:

Political Spectrum: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WeaEs0lgXsM>

Spectrum Explained in Four Minutes: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JIQ5fGECmsA>

**In at least five sentences, please explain what is meant by the 'political spectrum'.
Perhaps provide examples to support your views:**

Report on the 2019 General Election

The following research task will be an ideal introduction to UK Politics.

Please research the 2019 General Election online, and then produce a report on the electoral campaigns undertaken by the leading parties, and on the actual election that took place in December 2019.



Your report should be between 1500–2000 words and may include relevant images and graphs. There is no required format for your report. Your report should end with a substantial conclusion paragraph about what the 2019 election informs us about UK politics.

There are plenty of possible research avenues for you to explore. Listed below are a range of questions to get you started. Please feel free to choose any (or all) of these aspects, and others not listed, to research and write about in your report. Possible questions for you to consider in your research:

- How important were the roles of the Labour and Conservative leaders?
- What policies did the main parties propose?
- What role did the media (TV debates, newspapers, social networks) play in the election?
Consider both the campaign period, and the result.
- How did different groups vote (such as young people, working class, voters in the north, women & men, and so on)?
- How did smaller parties do in the election?
- What was the result of the election, and how much change was there in the composition of Parliament?
- How did the election turnout (amount of people that voted) compare to previous elections?

Listed below are a range of web links that you may find useful. Please research more widely on the internet to help you with your report. Please also include a bibliography so we can see the resources you consulted in researching your report.

- BBC News: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/election-2019-50770798>
- The Guardian on the Leaders Debate:
<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/nov/19/general-election-leaders-debate-who-won-jeremy-corbyn-boris-johnson>
- Sky News: <https://news.sky.com/story/general-election-2019-compare-policies-in-our-interactive-manifesto-checker-11864909>
- The New Statesman: <https://www.newstatesman.com/politics/uk/2019/12/case-you-missed-it-2019-general-election-s-key-moments>

There are also plenty of video clips that you can watch to gauge the context, and enhance your understanding of the 2019 General Election:

- Election 2019 Results Live: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GBpXBxK1H2M>
- How the Tory triumph unfolded: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v7ZiIfcBkpU>
- Where did it go wrong for Labour?: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v6rj8-9aZI>
- How Boris Johnson won: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YpGSb75AMaI>

Summer Work for Prospective Government & Politics Year 1 Students

As part of your preparation for the study of A-Level Government and Politics, you are required to undertake two assignments:

- An essay comparing the British Prime Minister with the American Presidency.
- A commentary on five contemporary political themes, based upon your reflections from online clips.

For the first assignment, please undertake some research on British Prime Ministers and American Presidents. This can be looking at specific leaders in the last few decades and their aims/achievements, or looking at the role of the Presidency/Prime Minister and what powers each role includes, as well as the limits to their powers. For example, you might research Theresa May's efforts to achieve Brexit, or Tony Blair's achievement of peace in Northern Ireland, or Donald Trump's aim to build a wall along the Mexican Border. Then answer the following essay question:

**‘When it comes to passing domestic policy, British Prime Ministers are more powerful than American Presidents’:
To what extent do you agree with the view?**

There is no word count, although your essay should comprise of three themed paragraphs in addition to an introduction and conclusion.

Contemporary Political Themes

Your second assignment is reflection and commentary on contemporary political themes. Politics includes the study of a range of themes and topics. It will enable you to understand how our own political system works, and how our country is governed. It investigates how another democratic country (USA) is governed in comparison to Britain. It encourages you to

consider different ways people participate in politics – through protests, petitions and joining parties and pressure groups. And it invites you to explore some of the big ideas that motivate people to get elected. Studying Politics requires you to think about these themes and topics and to build your own opinions, as well as listening to the views of others who will hold quite different views to your own. This helps you to reflect on what you think about these issues, sometimes persuading others of your views, and sometimes being persuaded yourself to develop and change in your political ideas. Please watch each of the video links below, and write some notes explaining your own thoughts and reflections on the issue, either as a paragraph or a few bullet points. Feel free to digress beyond the question if you have additional points you want to include on each topic, and include as much or as little of your own opinion in these commentaries as you like.

Why is Trump popular with many Americans? What is your judgement of Trump as president?

Highlights of one of President Trump's rallies: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c5FkHuwR0Ec>

- Why do you think most people voted for the Conservative Party in the 2017 General Election? What do people think about when they vote?

Conservative party election broadcast: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YTis-nZ7LcE>

- What do you think about this type of political action (protest)? Is it effective in helping people get their voice heard, or in getting things changed?

Extinction Rebellion protests in London:

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/apr/22/people-arrested-at-london-climate-protests>

- Do you think Thatcher was right to fight against people working in the mines and their Trade Unions?

Thatcher's legacy with the unions: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=on7v6h5_4eI

- What did Mill say a government should be allowed to do, and not do? How limited do you think a government should be?

BBC on J.S. Mill: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-25207049>

We Look Forward to Teaching You!

Please learn through fun with these assignments, and submit your work on Enrolment Day, which is likely to place in late-August (or early September) 2020.

If you wish to learn more on the Government & Politics modules you will study at Wyke College, then the textbooks can be found in the following links:

UK Politics Textbook: https://www.amazon.co.uk/UK-Government-Politics-level-Fifth/dp/1471889238/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=uk+government+and+politics&qid=1590056043&s=books&sr=1-1

US Politics Textbook: https://www.amazon.co.uk/US-Government-Politics-level-Fifth/dp/147188936X/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=us+government+and+politics&qid=1590055973&s=books&sr=1-1

And if you wish for more work from us, then please do not hesitate to contact us by email at:

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We very much look forward to meeting you, and to working with you over the two years to 2022, in order to ensure that you succeed in A-Level Government & Politics.