

# Government & Politics: summer preparation

*Building the basics in order to get into the fun of debating issues sooner!*

Below is a list of tasks to complete over the summer to prepare for your Government & Politics A' Level. The 'must' section has compulsory tasks that you are required to do and, for 1 and 2, hand in when you arrive in September. The 'strongly advisable' section is exactly that; if you do both of them, then a) you will hopefully find it interesting, and b) it will put you in a really strong position to start the A' Level. One of the key routes to facilitating A\* performances is building genuinely detailed political knowledge about the recent past, and the below documentaries and reading will provide an excellent opportunity to do exactly that without being strenuous as you enjoy your holiday!

The 'a real challenge' section is also exactly that; there is no expectation that you are equipped to tackle these difficult primary texts yet, but some of you may well be up of the challenge already, getting to grips with some of the key political ideas of our civilisation!

## **Must:**

1. Complete the following essay: "To what extent was Tony Blair more aligned to the Conservative Party than the traditions of his own party?"
2. Keep up to date with current affairs via Newspapers and/or websites such as BBC News, Sky News etc.

## **Strongly advisable:**

1. Watch the following documentaries if you have access to BBC iPlayer: **Thatcher: A Very British Revolution** [3 episodes] and/or **Margaret Thatcher: The Iron Lady** [1 episode] on Netflix or Amazon Prime; **Blair & Brown: The New Labour Revolution** [5 episodes]; **The Cameron Years** [2 episodes]
2. Look through the below list of questions and try to answer them if you have time, using reliable online sources to answer them.

## **A real challenge:**

1. Read Anthony Seldon, 'The Impossible Office?'
2. Read any of the following: Karl Marx, *Das Kapital*; J S Mill, *On Liberty*; J-J Rousseau, *The Social Contract*; Isaiah Berlin, *Two Concepts of Liberty*

## **\*AO1-Building Questions:**

1. What does 'First Past the Post' (FPTP) mean in politics?
2. How was the voting franchise extended in 1832, 1918, 1928, and 1969?
3. Name five referenda that have occurred since 1997 (either national or regional).
4. What is parliamentary sovereignty?
5. What is the different between a codified and uncodified constitution?
6. What is one advantage of a codified constitution?
7. What is one disadvantage of a codified constitution?

**Challenge task:** Find something that comes up in the news over the summer holidays, and write a paragraph about how it links to the concepts of either parliamentary sovereignty, uncodified constitution, representative democracy, judicial independence, elective dictatorship, collective ministerial responsibility, OR individual ministerial responsibility.