

# An Introduction to Higher Politics

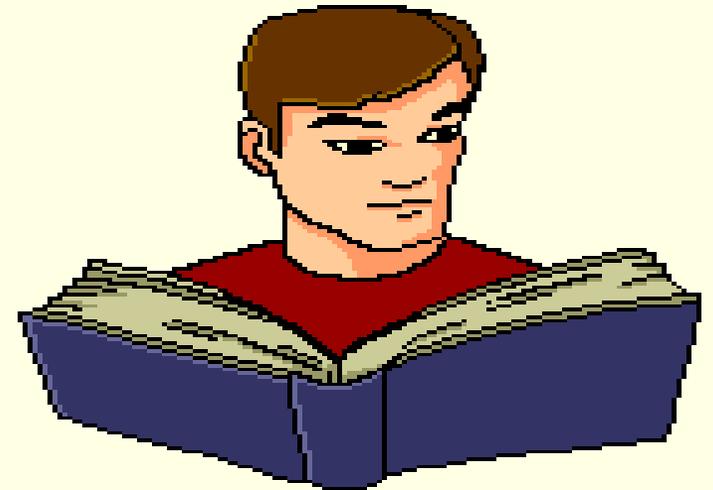
Higher Politics will develop your knowledge and understanding of how differing political **theories** and **ideologies**, systems and parties resolve the timeless pursuit of **power**, **authority** & **legitimacy**.

The course will encourage you to develop important attitudes, including an open mind and respect for the values, beliefs and cultures of others, openness to new thinking and ideas, and a sense of responsibility and global citizenship.



# Is Higher Politics Different?

- Same expectations as Higher History and Modern Studies
- Some cross over with topics- US political systems and voting behaviour, political parties etc. Focuses more on **theory and organisation** of political systems rather than the policies and actions of Governments
- Independent research required
- Assignment - essay not report (more like History extended essay)
- Skills questions (TWE/Conclusions like in Mods)
- Exam Questions will be 12 or 20 mark essays or skills



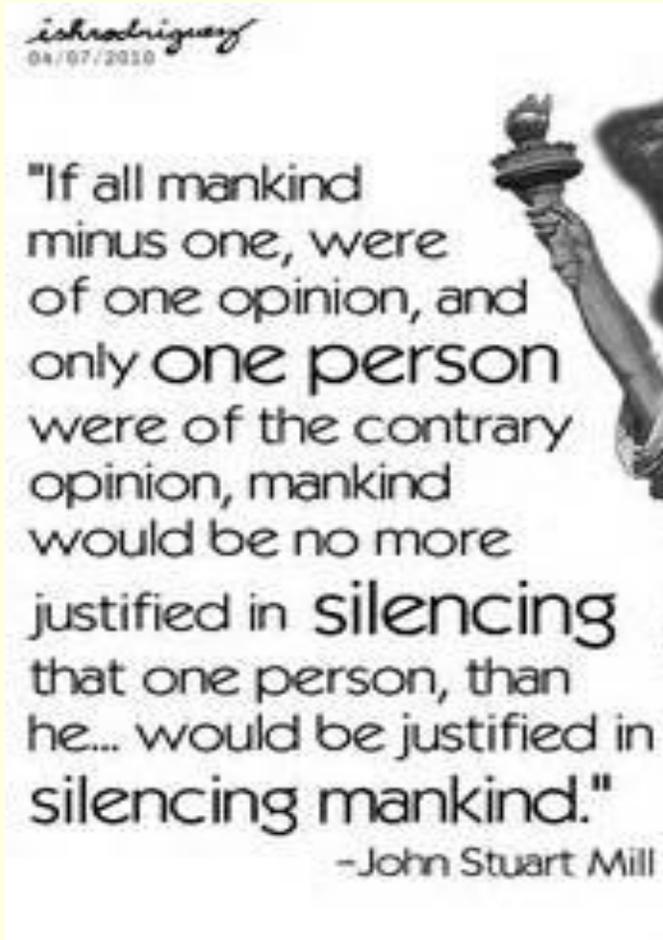
# What is expected from you?



- A mature attitude - this is senior school now and it is your choice to be here
- Excellent attendance - it is YOUR responsibility to catch up and to make me aware if you are out of school for any reason
- 100% effort and excellent behaviour at all times
- Weekly homework completed to the best of your ability
- Independent research and reading carried out at home
- Regular revision at home
- Attendance at supported study/ Easter Study where recommended



# Structure: 3 units



Political Theory

Political Systems

Political Parties  
&  
Elections





# Marks



Question Paper 1 (Essays)	52 marks		1 hr 45
Question Paper 2 (Skills)	28 marks		1 hr 15
Assignment	30 marks		1hr 30





# The Question Papers



2 x20 mark Essays

1 x12 mark Analysis/Evaluation

1 x8 mark comparing & contrasting  
(2 sources)

1x 20 mark interpreting, synthesising &  
evaluating  
(7 sources)

# What does Politics mean to you?



In your groups, mind map your ideas on the following:

- What is politics?
- Why study it?
- Is it important?
- What do you hope to learn?
- What do you want to do when you leave school?

Debates

Trying to make a change in society

Decision making

System that keeps everything under control

Parties (political ones)

Laws

Disagreements

Keeps the country fair

Parliament

Constituencies

The way we run things

Deciding what's best for everyone



# What is Politics?

- Politics has been defined as “the activities of the government, members of law-making organisations, or people who try to influence the way a country is governed”.
- Politics is linked to both conflict and cooperation.
- The fact that there are opposing and diverse opinions, needs and interests guarantees disagreement about these rules.
- Spin is a part of politics
- People recognise that, in order to influence these rules, or ensure that they are upheld, they must work with others.
- Politics is often described as a process of conflict resolution despite the fact that not all conflicts can, or ever will be, resolved.

## Concepts

Power  
Authority  
Legitimacy

## Steven Lukes

Three Faces of Power  
Decision making, non-  
decision making &  
manipulating desires

## Max Weber

Three Types of  
Authority  
Traditional, Charismatic  
& Legal-Rational

## Max Weber

The sense of rightfulness  
The ways in which legitimacy  
may be enabled & the impact on  
a political system when  
legitimacy is lost

## Democracy

Direct Democracy  
Representative Democracy  
Theorists: Plato,  
Schumpeter & Dahl

# POLITICAL THEORY

## Key Political Ideologies

### Liberalism

Key ideas: rationalism,  
individualism, toleration,  
consent, freedom, rights  
Theorists: Locke, Mill

### Conservatism

Key ideas: human  
imperfection, tradition,  
security, authority, organic  
society, private property  
Theorists: Burke, Disraeli

### Socialism

Key ideas: co-operation,  
collectivism, equality,  
class, common ownership  
Theorists: Marx, Lenin

# A STUDY OF 2 POLITICAL SYSTEMS

USA & UK

## Constitutional Arrangements

Origins/Development  
Underlying principles  
Safeguarding rights

## Sources of power

Within the 2 political systems

# POLITICAL SYSTEMS

## Legislative Branch

Key functions  
Comparison between the US Congress & the UK Parliament

## The Judicial Branch

Key functions  
Comparison between the UK Supreme Court & the US Supreme Court

## Executive Branch

Key functions of political executives  
Comparison between the US Presidency & the PM/Cabinet

A STUDY OF THE  
DOMINANT IDEAS  
WITHIN A UK  
POLITICAL PARTY



POLITICAL  
PARTIES &  
ELECTIONS



The impact of political campaign  
management strategies

Media strategies such as TV,  
Newspapers, Radio, New Media  
Use of focus groups to target  
key electoral groups  
Use of technology to translate  
support into votes

Theories of voting behaviour

Rational choice  
Sociological theory  
Party identification

Scottish National Party

Such as;  
Nationalists  
Left of Centre Social Democrats

Labour

Such as;  
Collectivist  
Social Democratic  
New Labour

Conservative

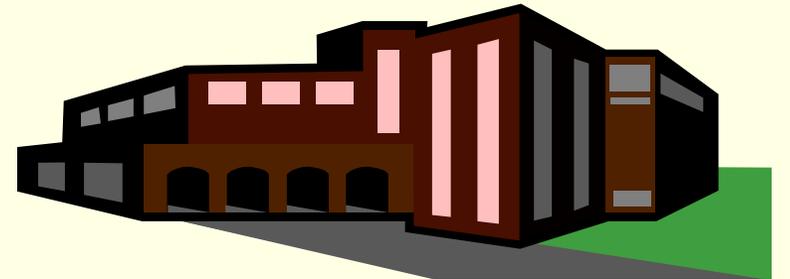
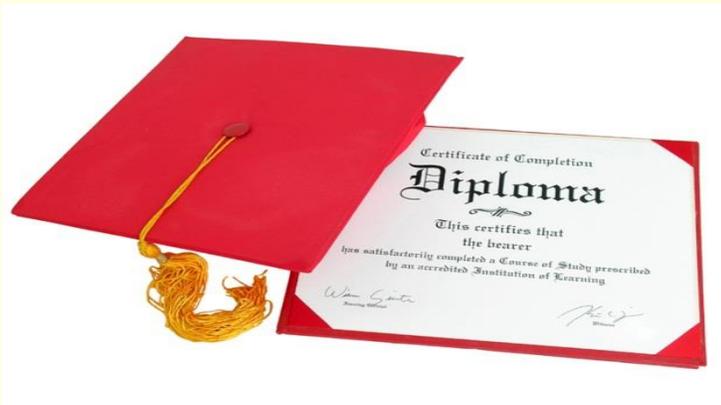
Such as;  
One nation Conservatism  
Thatcherism

Liberal Democrat

Such as;  
Liberalism  
The Radical Centre

# What are the options after Higher Politics?

- Apply for any other university course/job - your politics qualification will count towards the entrance qualifications for most courses at college/university



# Some big questions..

- Do we need politicians?
- Is the UK a democracy?
- Do we really have freedom of thought and speech?

