


A-LEVEL POLITICS (US GOV) @ WBS YEAR 13 ROADMAP

AIM

Second year of the A-level focuses on a mixture of US Government and Politics and Political Ideologies. Through the year, students will study various aspects of political and democratic life within the USA, they will apply this knowledge in an analytic and evaluative manner through a series of questions and debates aimed at exploring the depths of their understanding- they will be required to compare various aspects with their British counterparts. Debates will be harder to perform for this side of the course; more emphasis will be placed on the theoretical approaches needed within this paper. Throughout the year, they will be expected to use relevant and up to date examples which give a broader understanding to that which they gain from the information laid out in the AQA specification. As the UK political system and the US political system are in a state of flux, students will be expected to have some understanding of current affairs and be able to apply these in the correct manner- this is especially the case as the USA will be experiencing the run-up to the 2024 Presidential election

		ASSESSMENT
SUMMER TERM	TOPIC 1: THE CONSTITUTION -The nature and significance of the US Constitution -Framework and significance of principles -Federalism -Amendment process -Civil liberties and the protection of rights -Is it fit for purpose in the 21st century?	Lesson time is specifically used to teach the examination style and technique, and includes opportunities to write responses outside of the formal key assessments. You will sit several key assessments across the year and these will alternate between the three sides of your taught content (UK, USA and Political Ideas) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MOCK WEEK: 26th June • KA ONE: 7th November • KA TWO: 11th January • MOCK WEEK: 4th March 
	TOPIC 2: CONGRESS -Structure, role and powers of the US Congress -Composition, party allegiance and terms in office -How effectively does Congress perform its functions? -Party and Committee systems– how significant? -The role of Senators and Representatives -Strengths and weaknesses -Relationship with the other branches	
TOPIC 3: THE PRESIDENCY -Sources of Presidential power -Formal and informal powers -Constraints on the Presidency -Relationship with the other branches -Imperial vs. Imperilled -Case studies of various Presidents analysing their successes and failures (inc. Biden)		
TOPIC 4: SUPREME COURT AND CIVIL RIGHTS -Process and appointment– current composition -Nature of judicial power -Constitutional role: guardians or interpreters? -Landmark rulings and related controversies -Civil Rights: abortion, race, immigration, freedom of speech, LGBTQ+, the right to bear arms...		
AUTUMN TERM		HOMEWORK AND REVISION Revision sessions will run weekly on a Thursday afterschool in B6– the agenda for these sessions will be published on BS in advance so you can schedule your week and decide which is most beneficial for you. Homework will be set periodically and will be a mixture of discussion, reading and preparation for upcoming sessions
SPRING TERM		ENRICHMENT THEMES Variety of debates throughout the course to allow students to build up ability to formulate and deliver developed arguments to ‘big issue’ questions. Students to create and manage a system which builds up a bank of relevant examples for use within the exams themselves and beyond! Opportunity to visit Parliament in Y13

WHERE NEXT?

Students will sit their terminal exams at the end of their two year study. Paper One uses the content from Y12, addressing UK Government and Politics. Paper Two builds on knowledge of the UK political system and compares it with the US political system. Paper Three addresses Political Ideologies across a wide range of political systems, a holistic approach is required when addressing this paper. Students will be able to face these exams with confidence having received advice, feedback and guidance for all three of these papers across the two years.

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TOPIC 1: ELECTIONS

- Electoral systems in the US
- Main characteristics of presidential and congressional elections
- How to become President: requirements, primaries and caucuses
- Is the Electoral College fit for purpose?
- Factors that determine electoral success
- Debates around campaign finance
- The use of direct democracy in the USA
- Voting behaviour and the main variables affecting the way people vote
- Links between parties and their core voting coalitions
- Factors in voting behaviour: issues, candidates etc
- Historic case studies of elections

TOPIC 2: POLITICAL PARTIES AND PRESSURE GROUPS

- The make-up and formation of the two main parties in the USA- where do they come from and what do they stand for?
- How much have the parties changed in 50 years?
- Factionalism and internal divisions
- Party decline or party renewal?
- Two party dominance- is there any place for a third party?
- The extent of political pluralism
- Types of pressure groups
- Methods and tactics used to influence decision making
- Pressure group funding of elections- too much power?
- PACs and Super PACs

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ENRICHMENT THEMES

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