Preparing to study Government and Politics at A-Level

1. Buy a lever arch folder and set of dividers. Prepare your folder by labelling the dividers as below:
    - 1 - Democracy & Participation
    - 1 – Electoral Systems and Referendums
    - 1 – Political parties
    - 1 – Voting behaviour and the media
    - 2 - The constitution
    - 2 – Parliament
    - 2 – PM and executive
    - 2 – Relationship between branches

2. Read 'Studying politics: A beginner's guide,' *Politics Review*, Vol. 27, No. 1 (September 2017), pp. 6 – 7 and file it at the front of your folder

3. Create a timeline of post-war (from 1945) British politics. This should include:
    - General elections
    - Changes of prime minister
    - Which party/parties is in government and their initial majority in the House of Commons
    - UK wide and national/regional referendums
    - Major events, such as Queen Elizabeth II coronation and the Good Friday Agreement

    To help you, you can watch Andrew Marr's *History of Modern Britain* documentary series which aired in 2007, or read the book which was updated in 2017 and includes a new chapter charting the period of time between Blair leaving office and the Brexit referendum. You can replace or supplement this with your own research.

4. Put your feet up on the sofa and watch your choice of informed political drama and / or documentary from Political Gogglebox. Be ready to share your reviews with us in your first Politics lesson in September.

5. Continue (or start!) following day-to-day British politics. Read a quality newspaper, either in print or online, and keep either a real or virtual scrapbook of the stories you find most interesting.

    - Watch the BBC Parliament channel; as well as broadcasting live proceedings from the Houses of Commons and Lords and their committees, it screens coverage from past general elections at weekends and on bank holidays
    - Read, listen, and watch BBC News on politics; by law it is neutral:
        - Yesterday in Parliament, 08:30 on weekdays on Radio 4
        - The Week in Westminster, 11:00 on Saturdays on Radio 4
        - Westminster Hour, 22:00 on Sundays on Radio 4
        - Question Time, 22:30 on Thursdays on BBC1
        - Newsnight, 22:30 on weeknights on BBC2
        - Podcasts such as Newscast, Nick Robinson's Political Thinking ,the News Agents and the News Agents USA, and The Rest is Politics.
    - Read a quality newspaper on a regular basis, either in print or online. Keep an (online) scrapbook of stories which you find particularly interesting. The left-leaning Guardian and

Independent are still free online. The right-leaning Telegraph offers a free trial for a month. Lots of subscription newspapers offer free politics podcasts, e.g. the Times' Politics Unpacked or The State of It podcasts and the New York Times Daily.

- Test yourself on the week's political news by taking the A Week Is A Long Time – UK Politics Quiz
- Read recent political history, analysis, and memoir, for example:
    - Vernon Bogdanor, *Beyond Brexit: Towards a British Constitution* (2019)
    - Alistair Campbell, *Alistair Campbell Talks Politics* (2024)
    - David Cameron, *For the Record* (2019)
    - Isabel Hardman, *Why We Get the Wrong Politicians* (2018)
    - Steve Richards, *Turning Points* (2023)
    - Anthony Seldon, *Johnson at 10: The Inside Story* (2023)
    - Anthony Seldon, *Truss at 10* (2024)
    - Tory Stewart, *Politics on the Edge* (2024)

Please bring your folder, together with your timeline of post-war British politics, to your Politics lessons in September. We look forward to seeing you!