



Subject: Politics Pre-University (Extension Material)

Essentially, the key preparation for undergraduate Politics is to keep your eyes in a book while simultaneously listening to the world around you. Please find below a collection of works that should enable you to do just that.

The Origins of Totalitarianism – Hannah Arendt (1951)

An iconic piece of political philosophy that may seem quite old but in regards to the overall political history of the world up until now, it is considered as modern and is relevant particularly, in the light of Trump's election). While you may not agree with her views on certain issues (and some experts don't) it is an interesting read that gives great insight into the totalitarian governments that may be being established around the world today.

Article about this on the Guardian linking her book to the Age of Trump:

<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2017/feb/01/totalitarianism-in-age-donald-trump-lessons-from-hannah-arendt-protests>

Prisoners of Geography – Tim Marshall (2015)

I read this book when it first came out as a recommendation from a friend and I wasn't disappointed. While it may not be the most comprehensive book about geopolitics that has ever been written, I do think that it is a great introduction to how geography can affect the paths of success or failures that nations and continents may take. It is very useful for A level Geography too and there are a number of copies in the library.

Why Nations Fail – Daron Acemoglu & James A. Robinson (2012)

This is a fascinating book as it connects economics with politics to examine why various nations do not succeed while others do. Again, you might not agree with their interpretation but I feel like having various point of views is good to have a general knowledge of politics as a whole.

The Origins of Political Order & Political Order and Political Decay – Francis Fukuyama (2011, 2014)

In this two book series, acclaimed political scientist. Francis Fukuyama attempts to tackle how political society evolved to what it is today. In the first book, he investigates political systems from prehistoric times to the French Revolution which marks a key event in a shift of political thought. In his second book, he takes up where he left off and investigates political systems today and the advent of globalisation's effect on the evolution of politics.

Profit Over People – Noam Chomsky

Chomsky is a little bit like Marmite to Political readers in that his views are quite extreme; however, as a political scientist you need to be able to consider alternative viewpoints particularly when they encourage international attention.

We Should All Be Feminists – Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

'It's a great short read and one I wish every person was made to read' - Adichie talks of her experiences of growing up in Nigeria and how the impact of sexism in her daily life.



The Art of War – a Sun Tzu

A classic. Short and concise, it is a military strategy book which is still relevant to this day. Every politics student and their dog has probably read it. Although it is 1500 years old, you will be shocked by how reflective it is of the 21st century.

On Liberty AND Utilitarianism – John Stuart Mill

Relevant to democracy and ideology. Mill had a beautiful view and refined understanding of politics and the political system; he was truly ahead of his time. Utilitarianism is more philosophical than political, but it helps in understanding Mill and his writing.

The Audacity of Hope – Barack Obama

A splendid book! Well-written and a perfect mix between personal and political that is sure to entertain you. Obama has a 'charismatic' writing; chances are that you will love it.

Becoming – Michelle Obama

You cannot have one without the other; honestly, this book should be read by every little girl who didn't believe she was 'good enough' and every misogynist who believed it was ok to hold women back.

My Life – Bill Clinton

It is a useful context for understanding the 'High Tide OF Liberalism' that we speak so much about.

World Order – Henry Kissinger

Relevant to our current political climate. It can double as a 'historical' view to an extent as it walks us through things that go as far back as the Peace of Westphalia, ending with world order in our time.

In the Skin of a Jihadist – Anna Erelle

It is a book written by a French journalist who creates an online persona and meets a man from ISIS who wants to marry her. It deals mostly with how terrorist groups recruit nowadays.

Understanding International Relations – Chris Brown and Kirsten Ainley

A really strong introduction to International Relations with regular updates.



Beyond the A-level Politics Curriculum

A critical part of your Politics' studies is the ability to draw on a wide range of contextual materials. Whilst your lessons will include a number of case studies, the top grades in A-level Politics are awarded to those students who can synoptically weave between significant case studies drawing on a range of critical viewpoints. Please find below, a number of links that will help you develop your understanding of contextual events that you can use to justify points in assignments.

<p style="text-align: center;">UK Broadsheet newspapers</p> <p>The Times: https://www.thetimes.co.uk</p> <p>The Independent: https://www.independent.co.uk</p> <p>The Guardian: https://www.theguardian.com/uk</p> <p>The Telegraph: https://www.telegraph.co.uk</p> <p>The Financial Times: https://www.ft.com</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Useful websites</p> <p>BBC: https://www.bbc.co.uk News https://www.bbc.co.uk/news and politics https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/politics from the UK and around the world.</p> <p>Liberty: https://www.libertyhumanrights.org.uk Civil and human rights campaign movement.</p> <p>UK Parliament website: https://www.parliament.uk Live debates and news from the House of Commons and Lords, information on upcoming legislation and bills, clear explanations on the structure and running of government and ways to get involved in politics.</p> <p>Reform Acts and representative democracy: Overview, key dates and other resources from UK Parliament website. Follow Link 1 (at the end of this table)</p> <p>Democratic Audit UK: http://www.democraticaudit.com/2016/06/06/how-effective-is-parliament-in-controlling-uk-government-and-representing-citizens/ Independent research unit based at the London School of Economics that monitors 'democracy' and 'freedom' in Britain and produces a range of blogs http://www.democraticaudit.com/our-work/the-2017-audit-of-uk-democracy/ assessments, reports and election data.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Magazines and Periodicals</p> <p>The Economist: https://www.economist.com Broadly liberal freemarket weekly publication offering news and views on international current affairs, politics, business, finance, science, technology and the arts, established 1843.</p> <p>The Spectator: https://www.spectator.co.uk Right-wing weekly magazine on current affairs, politics and culture, published since 1828.</p> <p>NewStatesman: https://www.newstatesman.com/uk Largely left-wing magazine focusing on current affairs, world politics, science, technology and the arts. Established in 1913.</p> <p>Private Eye: https://www.private-eye.co.uk Weekly satirical current affairs magazine taking a poke</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Television, Radio and Podcasts</p> <p>Newsnight: https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006mk25 Current affairs programme (on BBC 2) famous for rigorous cross-examination of senior political figures and news analysis.</p> <p>Question Time: https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006t1q9 Topical news debate (BBC 1), presented by David Dimbleby, featuring key political and public figures who answer questions posed by the public.</p> <p>Panorama: https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006t14n Current affairs programme (BBC 1) featuring interviews and investigative reports on a wide range of issues.</p> <p>Sophy Ridge on Sunday: Political correspondent Sophy Ridge covers the major political issues of the week on Sky's Sunday news</p>



at the establishment and exposing what's really going on behind the scenes.

Foreign Affairs: <https://www.foreignaffairs.com>

US foreign policy and international affairs publication and website, established in 1922.

programme.

Follow **Link 2** (at the end of this table)

Peston on Sunday: <https://www.itv.com/news/topic/peston-on-sunday/>

ITV political discussion programme on the week's news led by Robert Peston and featuring politicians and public figures.

The Andrew Marr Show:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b0080bbs>

Andrew Marr, former BBC Political Editor, explores the week's current affairs and interviews key political figures.

Have I Got News for You:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006mkw3>

Comedy news quiz (BBC 1) with celebrity guests and regulars Ian Hislop and Paul Merton.

PM: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b09295dd>

Daily news/current affairs coverage from BBC Radio 4.

Today in Parliament:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b09295dd>

News, views and features on today's stories in Parliament from the BBC.

In Our Time: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006qykl>

Highly acclaimed BBC Radio 4 discussion programme presented by Melvyn Bragg exploring the history of ideas.

The Week in Westminster:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b011290g>

Guest political journalists take a look behind the scenes this week in Westminster, BBC Radio 4.

The News Quiz:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006r9yq>

Topical news quiz (BBC radio 4) where the players offer a humorous take on the week's events.

Politics UK Archive:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p002vsn2/episodes/player>

Weekly view inside British politics from the BBC. The archive includes a wide range of issues.

Political Thinking with Nick Robinson:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p04z203l>

Former BBC Politics Editor reviews the week in politics.

Further links to websites and broadcasts used in this A-level enrichment sheet:

Link 1: <https://www.parliament.uk/about/living-heritage/evolutionofparliament/houseofcommons/reformacts/>

Link 2: <https://news.sky.com/story/sophy-ridge-on-sunday-politics-live-10738566>