

Scheme of work: Paper 2 – Government and politics of the USA and comparative politics

This scheme of work suggests how to deliver the government and politics of the USA and comparative politics section of our A-level Politics specification (7152).

Assumed coverage

This scheme of work assumes coverage of the politics of the USA aspect of the specification and should be read alongside the overarching scheme of work for two years.

It covers three different teaching models:

* solo teaching model
* dual teaching model (i)
* dual teaching model (ii).

Solo teaching model

Taught by a single teacher over two years: during the summer term in Year 1 and the autumn term in Year 2.

3.2 Year 1: summer term

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| Week | Specification content  | Activities | Notes | Resources |
| 1 | The constitutional framework of US government ([3.2.1.1](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):* nature and significance of US Constitution
* significance of constitutional principles
	+ separation of powers
	+ checks and balances
	+ federalism
* framework of government laid down in the constitution.
 | Introduction to studying US politics – students should read *‘A beginner’s guide to studying US politics’* and *‘US politics: Ten things you need to know’*.Students should examine the nature and significance of the US Constitution. They should outline the features of it as a codified constitution. Students should learn a solid definition of each of the constitutional principles. The strengths and weaknesses of each principle should be evaluated.Students should examine the aims of the Founding Fathers and the framework of government they laid down. They should identify strengths and weaknesses of their aims, taking into account conservative and liberal perspectives. | Students should understand that the US constitution is codified, entrenched and judicable within a federal system of government. Students should also consider the importance of the US constitution, both historically and in the present day. In particular, students should consider whether the US constitution remains, or ever was, a beacon of democracy.It is important, when learning about the principles of the US constitution that students distinguish between the concepts separation of powers and checks and balances. Within the study of separation of powers, an emphasis should be placed on separation of personnel, and shared powers between the three branches of government. Students should understand the full range of checks and balances available to each branch to check the power of the other two. In particular, students should consider how Congress is able to check the power of the President and vice versa. It should also be understood that the Supreme Court can check the power of both branches through judicial review. Students should focus on the extent to which the three branches of the Federal government effectively check each other. Finally, students should consider whether these constitutional principles help or hinder the US system of government.Students should be able to evaluate whether or not the aims of the Founding Fathers should be adhered to in the twenty-first century. In particular, students should show an appreciation of competing views on whether or not the Founding Fathers’ views should be taken into account when interpreting the constitution today. Students should focus on conservative and liberal perspectives and later link this to strict and loose constructionism when studying the US Judiciary. | Politics Review Volume 26, Number 1, September 2016 (extra resources archive): [US politics: A beginner’s guide to studying US politics](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2026%20No%201/PoliticsReview26_1_US-politics_beginners.docx?ext=.docx). Jeremy TaylorPolitics Review Volume 24, Number 4, April 2015 (extra resources archive): [US politics: Ten things you need to know](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2024%20No%204/PoliticsReview24_4_US_politics_Ten_things.doc?ext=.doc). Simon Lemieux. An article offering essential insights into the sometimes puzzling world of US politics.Chapter 2: ‘Beliefs, Values and American Society’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Chapter 1: ‘The Constitution’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 3: ‘Constitutional government’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 23, Number 4, April 2014 (extra resources archive): [Revision: The US Constitution](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2023%20No%204/PolRev-23_4-US-Constitution.ppt?ext=.ppt). Rowena Hammal |
| 2 | The constitutional framework of US government ([3.2.1.1](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):* federal system of government and federal state relations
* amendment process.
 | Students should examine the extent to which the federal government’s influence over the states has increased in recent years and whether or not this undermines the importance of the constitutional principle of federalism. Students should learn about the amendment process. They should examine the advantages and disadvantages of the process. | Students should understand how and why federalism is enshrined in the constitution, even though it is not explicitly mentioned. Students should also learn about the devolvement of federalism and the idea of new federalism. In particular, students should consider whether or not the principle of federalism has been eroded due to the expanse of federal government power.Students will be required to learn about the relationship between the federal government and the states in recent years. Students will be required to understand the methods available to amend the US constitution. This will require an understanding both formal methods available to amend the constitution, involving Congress and the states as well as the option involving a constitutional convention. However, it should also be stressed that the constitution can be amended informally through judicial review. In particular, students should consider whether it is too difficult to amend the US constitution. | Chapter 1: ‘The Constitution’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 3: ‘Constitutional government’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Chapter 4: ‘Federalism: Why the States Still Matter’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 25, Number 4, April 2016: *Is the US federal government too powerful?* Ross Maggs and Simon Lemieux |
| 3 | The constitutional framework of US government ([3.2.1.1](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):* debates concerning the importance of the US Constitution to the working of contemporary US government
* protection of civil liberties and rights under the Constitution, Bill of Rights and Supreme Court rulings.
 | Students should evaluate the overall strengths and weaknesses of the US constitution.Students should debate if the US constitution remains fit for purpose in the 21st century.Students should examine the Bill of Rights and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the document as well as the extent to which it has been upheld.Students should finish their study of the US constitution by practicing a 9 mark past paper question. | Students should focus on a number of key debates and criticisms of the US constitution. Students should consider if the constitutional principles of separation of powers and checks and balances are an obstacle to effective government. Students should also consider if the modern constitution has been transformed beyond recognition from the vision of the Founding Fathers. In particular, students should consider if this is positive or negative development.Students should understand that as well as the Bill of Rights, other rights exist in subsequent amendments and as a result of Supreme Court rulings. It should be stressed that all of these rights come under the heading of constitutional rights. Students should focus on whether or not constitutional rights, including rights detailed in the Bill of Rights, have been effectively upheld in recent years. Students should consider barriers to civil liberties being protected such as anti-terrorism legislation. More of this will be taught in the next topic ‘the judicial branch of government’ as well the topic ‘civil rights’ | Chapter 1: ‘The Constitution’ in A2 US Government and Politics by Anthony J BennettChapter 3: ‘Constitutional government’ in American Politics and Society by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 23, Number 3, February 2014: *The US Constitution: does it ensure limited government?* Robert SinghPolitics Review Volume 25, Number 3, February 2016: *The US Constitution: a protection against the growth of the security state?* Andrew Colclough |
| 4 | The judicial branch of government ([3.2.1.4](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):* process of selection and appointment of supreme court judges
* current composition.
 | Students should learn about the current Supreme Court justices including which President appointed them and their ideological leaning. Students should learn about how justices are appointed, factors taken into account when appointing justices and the role of the Senate in the process.Students should learn definitions for the concepts of strict and loose constructionism, and judicial activism and restraint, including the merits and drawbacks of each approach. | Students should focus on the current composition of the Supreme Court. In particular, students should look at recent appointments to the court and their impact. Students should consider why the nomination process is so politically controversial and has been criticized. It should be stressed that justices can be placed on an ideological spectrum according to how liberal or conservative they are in their decision making. The current court is split into two ideological blocs – a conservative quartet and a liberal quartet. The two blocs are separated by a single justice, sometimes described as the ‘swing justice’. Students should understand the significance of the ‘swing justice’. However, it should also be stressed that this can change over time – justices can become more or less liberal and conservative. It is also dependent upon the cases the justices hear in a particular court term. Students should understand that the constitution is a vague document that can be interpreted in a number of ways, both depending on the specific case and on the views of the individual justices sitting on the Supreme Court. Students should understand that the judicial philosophy of the Supreme Court justices can be based on both their views on how the constitution should be interpreted as well as their political views – justices can, at times, reflect the views of the President who appoints them. | Chapter 7: ‘The Supreme Court, and the protection of rights and liberties’ in A2 US Government and Politics by Anthony J BennettChapter 14: ‘The Supreme Court and Judicial Politics’ in American Politics and Society by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review March 2016 e-review: *Death of a Supreme Court justice*: Emma Kilheeney considers what the death of Justice Antonin Scalia means for the US Supreme Court and for ObamaPolitics Review Volume 24, Number 3, February 2015: *The Supreme Court: a political, not judicial, institution?* Robert Singh |
| 5 | The judicial branch of government ([3.2.1.4](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):* the significance of judicial review
* the nature of judicial power and the constitutional role of the Supreme Court as:
	+ guardian of the constitution; constitutional interpretation.
	+ protector of citizens’ rights.
 | Students should learn a definition of judicial review and examine how it came about. Students should learn that judicial review provides the Supreme Court with quasi legislative powers and that this has led to the court been accused of being political due to the ideology of the justices. Students should evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of this. Students should learn about the roles of the judiciary in protecting civil liberties and checking executive and legislative power.Students should evaluate the extent to which rights are adequately protected by the Supreme Court.Students should examine the extent to which the Supreme Court acts as a sufficient check and balance on the elected branches of government.Students should debate if the Supreme Court has become too powerful for an unelected body in a democracy. | Students should learn about what judicial review is and how it began in Marbury v Madison in 1803. Students should be aware that through judicial review, the Supreme Court can check the power of the legislature and executive, as well as protect civil liberties. Students should appreciate the significance of judicial review as well as the controversy surrounding it. Students should understand that the Supreme Court uses judicial review, within the constitutional principle of checks and balances, to check the power of the other branches of government. As such, students should learn about significant cases relating to this. However, it should also be stressed that the executive and legislature can challenge the Supreme Court, either by amending the constitution or in other ways. Students should examine the extent to which the Bill of Rights has been protected by the Supreme Court. This should then be expanded to cover all constitutional rights. Students should consider if all groups in society have their rights equally protected by the court. Students should focus on whether the court can be correctly described as ‘a political, not a judicial institution’ and whether it can be described as an ‘imperial judiciary’. | Chapter 7: ‘The Supreme Court, and the protection of rights and liberties’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 14: ‘The Supreme Court and Judicial Politics’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 23, Number 2, November 2013 (extra resources archive): [US politics: The US Supreme Court — bastion of conservatism or beacon of liberalism?](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2023%20No%202/PolRev-23_2-The-US-Supreme-Court.doc?ext=.doc) Simon LemieuxPolitics Review Volume 26, Number 2, November 2016: *The US Supreme Court: an effective protector of civil rights and liberties?* Robert SinghPolitics Review Volume 22, Number 4, April 2013: *Does the US Supreme Court have too much power?* Kaylan Billingsley and Anthony Bennett |
| 6 | The judicial branch of government ([3.2.1.4](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):* debates about the political significance of the Supreme Court:
	+ landmark rulings and related debates and controversies
	+ for example, shaping public policy in terms of federalism and civil rights, race, gender and punishment.
 | Students should study a number of landmark rulings made by the Supreme Court. Students should learn about the outcome of each case, why it was politically significant and which justices voted in favour and against the decision.Specifically, students should focus their learning on two examples of landmark rulings and examine, in depth, related debates and controversies.Students should also choose one area of public policy to focus on and assess the significance of the judiciary in shaping it.Students should evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the Supreme Court and its ability to shape public policy and check government power.Students should finish their study of the US judiciary by practicing a 9 mark past paper question. | Students should understand that a number of Supreme Court cases are politically significant – either in relation to citizens’ rights or as a check on executive or legislative power. However, it should also be stressed that not all cases are as politically significant as each other. Students should focus on recent cases, as well as older ones, that shape public policy in terms of civil rights, federalism and executive power. In particular, students should understand that some cases are politically significant because they split the court, sometimes ideologically. However, it should also be stressed that a high number of cases are decided in a unanimous manner. When deciding what a landmark ruling is, students should consider Court decisions which establish a significant new legal principle or concept, or otherwise substantially change the interpretation of existing law. Examples could be:* The Warren Court (1954–1969)
* Brown vs Topeka Board of Education (1954)
* Miranda vs Arizona (1966)
* The Burger Court (1969–1986)
* Roe vs Wade (1973)
* United States vs Nixon (1974)
* The Rehnquist Court (1986–2005)
* Texas vs Johnston (1989)
* Bush vs Gore (2000)
* The Roberts Court 2005 – present
* District of Columbia vs Heller (2008)
* Obergefell vs Hodges (2015)
 | Chapter 7: ‘The Supreme Court, and the protection of rights and liberties’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 14: ‘The Supreme Court and Judicial Politics’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 24, Number 1, September 2014 (extra resources archive): [US politics: Campaign finance in the USA and the First Amendment](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2024%20No%201/PolRev24_1_USPoliticsCampaignFinance.doc?ext=.doc). Simon Lemieux |
| 7 | The legislative branch of government – Congress ([3.2.1.2](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):* the structure, role and powers of US Congress
* composition of Congress, the different terms of office and part allegiance.
 | Students should learn about the powers that each chamber has, as well as the joint powers that the House of Representatives and Senate share. Students should evaluate the extent to which the Senate has more power and influence than the House.Students should learn about the composition of Congress including how many seats each party has in each chamber, the terms of office and requirements set out to become either a Congressman or a Senator.Students should also learn about significant posts within each chamber including the Speaker, Majority and Minority leaders and whips. Students should know who currently holds each post and provide an example of what they do in their role and how effectively they do it. | In particular, students should consider the Senate’s power to filibuster legislation and appointments as well as ratifying treaties and confirming Presidential appointments. Students should also consider the key factors that affect the relationship between the Senate and the House.In particular, students should learn about leadership in Congress, understanding the roles and significance of the Speaker, Majority and Minority leaders and the whips. Students should understand the power that each party leader exerts in Congress. Students should also consider the significance of political parties within Congress. | Chapter 5: ‘Congress’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 9: ‘Congress as Legislature: Functions and Powers’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 26, Number 4, April 2017 (extra resources archive): 2016 *US election results*. Emma KilheeneyPolitics Review Volume 24, Number 2, November 2014 (extra resources archive): [Colourful characters in Congress](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2024%20No%202/PolRev24_2_USPoliticsCongress.doc?ext=.doc). Simon LemieuxPolitics Review Volume 23, Number 4, April 2014 (extra resources archive): [US politics: Filibuster or filibluster?](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2023%20No%204/PolRev-23_4-Filibuster-or-filibluster.doc?ext=.doc) Rowena Hammal |
| 8 | The legislative branch of government – Congress ([3.2.1.2](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):* debates concerning the functions, powers and effectiveness of Congress in legislation, oversight and the power of the purse
* party system and committee system and their significance within Congress.
 | Students should understand the legislative process within Congress and understand why so few bills are passed.Students should also understand the ways in which Congress has oversight over the executive. Students should evaluate the extent to which Congress performs its roles of legislation and oversight effectively.Students should understand the factors that influence how members of Congress vote.Students should learn about the different types of committees in Congress and evaluate to what extent they help Congress to legislate and scrutinize the executive. | Students should understand that Congress is often accused of being an ineffective legislator. Students should learn the percentage of bills passed in Congress. In particular, students should understand the legislative process and the blocking points which contribute to Congress passing so few bills. In particular, students should consider Congress’ power of the purse. Recent examples should be used to illustrate the difficulty that the President can have in getting Congress to pass their budget. However, it should also be stressed that the power of the purse enables Congress to check Presidential power, especially in relation to executive orders and foreign policy. Students should focus on the impact of increasing partisanship on the ability of Congress to fulfill all of its functions. Finally, students should understand the oversight role Congress has and the ability of Congress to impeach the President and members of the Supreme Court. In particular, students should understand the extent to which are parties the most significant influence on voting in Congress. Students should understand the different committees that exist in Congress and consider how committees help Congress to fulfil its roles of representation, legislation and scrutiny. In particular, students should understand the role of Committee Chairmen in Congress, their influence and why have they been the subject of criticism. | Chapter 5: ‘Congress’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 9: ‘Congress as Legislature: Functions and Powers’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 26, Number 1, September 2016: Is Congress overly dysfunctional and partisan? Anthony Bennett |
| 9 | The legislative branch of governments – Congress ([3.2.1.2](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):* representative role of senators and representatives
* relative strengths of House of Representatives and Senate
* relationship of congress to the executive branch of government and the Supreme Court.
 | Students should evaluate the extent to which Congress is representative.Students should evaluate the overall effectiveness of Congress and debate if Congress has become ‘the broken branch’.Students should evaluate the extent to which Congress effectively performs its role of scrutinizing the executive.Students should finish their study of the US Congress by practicing a 9 mark past paper question. | Students should understand that if Congress is to be representative, it needs to fulfill a number of functions. It needs to contain Congressman and Senators who represent the views of their constituents, it needs to be socially representative and it needs to have districts and states which are fair and competitive. Students should consider if the House of Representatives carries out its representative role more effectively than the Senate. Students should also consider if members of Congress are out of touch with the people who elect them and are more concerned with local issues than national or international issues. Students should also consider the impact of pork barrel politics on representation and the effectiveness of Congress overall.Students should understand the criticisms leveled at Congress – that it is significantly less effective when different parties control its two chambers, that it lacks effective leadership, it has no meaningful foreign policy role and that it is the broken branch. Students should consider these criticisms and focus on if Congress remains a powerful branch within the US system of government. Students should identify the checks that Congress places on the executive and Supreme Court. In particular, students should consider the ability of Congress to affect foreign policy and challenge a recent increase in executive power, particularly in relation to executive orders and executive agreements. Students should also consider the extent to which the President is able to circumvent Congress and if this renders Congress ineffective. | Chapter 5: ‘Congress’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 9: ‘Congress as Legislature: Functions and Powers’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Chapter 8: ‘US Legislators and Their Constituents’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 24, Number 3, February 2015: *Gerrymandering in the USA*. Katie ShapiroPolitics Review Volume 24, Number 2, November 2014: *Congress: why is it so unpopular?* Anthony BennettPolitics Review Volume 23, Number 4, April 2014: *Split ticket voting*. Katie ShapiroPolitics Review Volume 23, Number 4, April 2014: *Is Congress the ‘broken branch’?* Rowena Hammal and Andy Baker |
| 10 | The executive branch of government – President ([3.2.1.3](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):* sources of presidential power
* difference between:
	+ formal powers (enumerated and inherent powers outlined in Article 2 of the constitution)
	+ informal powers (President as de facto party leader, agenda setter, world leader, modern developments such as the stretching of implied powers and the creation of institutions such as EXOP)
* constraints on President’s ability to exercise the those powers:
	+ the effectiveness of formal checks and balances
	+ key variable such as party support in Congress
	+ the prevailing orientation of the Supreme Court
	+ the attitudes of the media and public opinion.
 | Students must select two relevant examples to demonstrate how sources of presidential power have been used by different presidents.Students should examine the formal powers awarded to the President, as set out in the constitution.Students should also examine the informal powers used by the President.Students should examine constraints on presidential power, assessing which is most effective and when. Students should look over their Supreme Court and Congress notes to remind themselves of the checks that the judiciary and legislature place on the President.Students should debate whether Congress or the President has the upper hand in domestic and foreign policy. | Students should draw upon their Constitutional knowledge to examine the executive branch in relation to the other branches of government. Students should understand the concepts and implications of the constitutional principles of checks and balances and separation of powers. In particular, students should understand that this means that the President often has to rely on the power to persuade.Students should learn what formal powers the Constitution sets out for the President – both in relation to domestic and foreign policy. As such, students should learn about the President’s ability to veto and pocket veto legislation. In particular, students should consider how much influence the President has over the legislative process. Students should also look at the President’s ability to appoint individuals to the executive and judicial branches. Students should also look at the foreign policy powers the President is granted in the constitution and the constraints on the President’s role as commander in chief. In particular, students should consider the effectiveness of each of the constitutional powers awarded to the President.Students should focus on Article II and consider whether the vagueness of this has allowed the President to expand his powers in recent years. Students should learn about mechanisms available to the President to expand their powers such as the Executive Office of the President (EOP), and how this came about. Students should focus on methods the President uses to circumvent Congress such as executive orders, signing statements and executive agreements. Students should focus on the factors which limit the President’s power. In particular, students should consider if a President’s power inevitably declines in a second term in office and whether Presidential careers can ever live up to expectations. Students should understand the constraints placed on the President in both domestic and foreign policy. Students should consider the extent to which Presidents control foreign policy. In particular, students should consider whether the President is stronger abroad than at home.Students should learn about the powers which Congress and the Supreme Court have to check presidential power. Students should then consider the extent to which these powers are effective. In particular, students should consider the ability of Congress to check the Presidents foreign policy and informal powers. Students should also consider Presidential influence on the Supreme Court through appointments. | Chapter 6: ‘The Presidency’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 10: ‘The Presidency’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 26, Number 3, February 2017 (extra resources archive): *What can we expect from President Trump?* Jeremy TaylorPolitics Review October 2016 e-review: *What is post-truth politics?* Emma Kilheeney considers why lying is a key tool of today’s politicians, and looks at the overturn of Obama’s veto in Congress.Politics Review Volume 26, Number 1, September 2016: *Recess appointments*. Mark RathbonePolitics Review Volume 23, Number 4, April 2014: *The modern President: transformational leader or facilitator?* Neil Whiskerd |
| 11 | The relationship between the presidency and other institutions ([3.2.1.3](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):* Vice president
* cabinet
* Executive Office of the President
* federal bureaucracy
* federal agencies.
 | Students should understand the role and significance of the Vice President. Students should understand the role and significance of the cabinet. Students should understand the role and significance of the executive office of the President. Students should understand the role and significance of the federal bureaucracy. Students should understand the role and significance of other federal agencies. Students should examine why the relationship between the president and these institutions varies from one president to another. | Students should focus on the importance of the role of Vice President and factors which affect it. Students should then look at the factors taken into account when the President chooses their cabinet. In particular, students should focus on the significance of the cabinet in the executive branch. Students should also understand what the EOP is and the significance of it both as a whole and the individuals within it. Students should consider how the role of such individuals is dependent upon each President and can vary over time.Students should understand what the federal bureaucracy is and how it can enhance presidential power. Students should also focus on other federal agencies and their ability to enhance presidential power. | Chapter 6: ‘The Presidency’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 10: ‘The Presidency’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 23, Number 4, April 2014 (extra resources archive): [US politics: The role of the vice president.](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2023%20No%204/PolRev-23_4-Role-of-vice-president.doc?ext=.doc) Andrew Axelby |
| 12 | The relationship between the presidency and other institutions ([3.2.1.3](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):* evidence of waxing and waning presidential power
* the debate about the ‘Imperial versus Imperilled Presidency’.
 | Students should examine case studies of recent Presidents and focus on one example that shows the waxing and waning of presidential power. Students should debate to what extent the modern presidency is an ‘imperial presidency’ or an ‘imperilled presidency’?Students should consider whether the President is more powerful in their first or second term.Students should finish their study of the US Presidency by practicing a 9 mark past paper question as well as a 25 mark stimulus question | Historical examples of presidential power waxing and waning include Franklin D. Roosevelt and the Executive Office of the President, John F. Kennedy and the Cuban missile crisis, Ronald Reagan and Bill Clinton’s relationships with Congress depending on which party controls Congress.Students should clearly understand definitions of the terms ‘imperial presidency’ and ‘imperilled presidency’ and which presidents are most associated with these terms. | Chapter 6: ‘The Presidency’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 10: ‘The Presidency’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 26, Number 4, April 2017: *Obama’s second term: success or failure?* Edward AshbeePolitics Review Volume 25, Number 4, April 2016: *The US Presidency: are second-term Presidents lame ducks?* Anthony BennettPolitics Review Volume 24, Number 2, November 2014 (extra resources archive): [*President Obama*](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2024%20No%202/PolRev24_2_ActivityObama_1.doc?ext=.doc). Katy Ivey. In this exercise you will look at the highs and lows of Obama's presidency so far.Politics Review Volume 24, Number 2, November 2014: *Is Obama too cautious a president?* Simon Lemieux and Ruth TarrantPolitics Review Volume 22, Number 4, April 2013 (extra resources archive): [US politics: An assessment of Obama's first term](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2022%20No%204/PolRev-22_4-US-politics_Obama-s-first-term.pdf?ext=.pdf). James SimpsonPolitics Review Volume 22, Number 4, April 2013: *Obama’s first term: promise unfulfilled?* Anthony Bennett |

3.2 Year 2: Autumn term

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| Week | Specification content  | Activities  | Notes | Resources |
| 1 | The electoral process and direct democracy ([3.2.1.5](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):* electoral systems used in the USA
* main characteristics of presidential and congressional elections and campaigns.
 | Students should understand the definitions of the following political concepts and why they are important in US elections: primaries, caucuses, national conventions, Electoral College, propositions and initiatives.Students should learn about the types of elections that take place in the US. They should examine the factors that affect the result as well as the strengths and weaknesses of mid-term and Presidential elections. | Students should study the different types of primaries/caucuses including invisible primaries, the national conventions, presidential debates and the Electoral College (this may include congressional elections and major propositions/initiatives). In particular, students should consider the advantages and disadvantages of the electoral system and initiatives.Students should learn about how often elections occur and what the requirements are for candidates stand. In particular, students should focus on recent elections, both Presidential and mid-term. Students should understand what mid-term elections are, when they occur and what offices are being filled. Students should consider why mid-term elections are potentially, but not necessarily, important. Students should focus on the results, campaigns and factors which have affected the outcome of recent mid-term elections. Students should also consider the impact of a lack of congressional term limits. Students should consider the factors shaping the outcome of the most recent elections, both Presidential and mid-term. Students should understand the reasons for incumbent advantage. They should also learn the similarities and differences between mid-term and presidential years. Students should also consider the possible implications for future elections. | Chapter 2: ‘Elections and Voting’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 6: ‘Elections and Political Participation’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 26, Number 4, April 2017 (extra resources archive): 2016 *US election results*. Emma KilheeneyPolitics Review Volume 24, Number 4, April 2015: *The 2014 mid-term elections: How significant are they?* Edward Ashbee |
| 2 | The electoral process and direct democracy ([3.2.1.5](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):* candidate selections and nomination:
	+ primaries
	+ caucuses
	+ national nominating
	+ conventions
* debates concerning the workings, outcome and impact of the electoral college system on campaigns.
 | Students should examine the methods for selecting Presidential candidates and evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of each method – primaries, caucuses and national conventions.Students should learn about how the Electoral College works and debate if it should be reformed. | Students should learn what the requirements are for Presidential candidates. In particular, students should focus on how Presidential candidates are selected and how the Electoral College system works. Students should understand the procedures for primary elections (closed and open) and caucuses. Students should focus on the advantages and disadvantages of each. Students should understand the pattern of primaries and caucuses and the extent of 'frontloading’. Students should also understand conventions, their frequency and when and where they are held. Students should also understand that although the traditional functions of conventions have declined, they remain important.Students should understand the advantages and disadvantages of the Electoral College. Students should consider possible replacements for the Electoral College and focus on why it is unlikely to be reformed or abolished. | Chapter 2: ‘Elections and Voting’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 6: ‘Elections and Political Participation’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 24, Number 1, September 2014 (extra resources archive): [US politics: Campaign finance in the USA and the First Amendment](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2024%20No%201/PolRev24_1_USPoliticsCampaignFinance.doc?ext=.doc). Simon LemieuxPolitics Review Volume 24, Number 1, September 2014: *Ballot measures in the USA: good or bad for democracy?* Andrew Fearnley |
| 3 | The electoral process and direct democracy ([3.2.1.5](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):* factors determining electoral outcomes:
	+ money
	+ media
	+ issues
	+ leadership
	+ the significance of incumbency
* debates about campaign finance
* direct democracy at state level: referenda, initiatives, propositions, recall elections and debates concerning their use.
 | Students should understand the methods which determine electoral outcomes and evaluate to what extent each has been significant in recent elections. Students should study propositions, referendums and recall elections and evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of each.Students should debate which issue was most important in the outcome of the two most recent elections. | Students should understand the different methods of financing campaigns such as matching funds, federal grants and self-financing. Students should consider the arguments for and against each method. Students should learn about the role of campaign finance as well as the extent of its success and recent attempts at reform. Students should understand the significance of the role of televised Presidential debates and the media in general.Using examples, students should consider the impact of leadership on the outcome of recent elections.In particular, students should understand how states use propositions. Students should consider the advantages and disadvantages of this. Students should also focus on the contribution of referendums, initiatives, propositions and recall elections on direct democracy. Students should consider the advantages and disadvantages of each. | Chapter 2: ‘Elections and Voting’ in A2 US Government and Politics by Anthony J BennettChapter 6: ‘Elections and Political Participation’ in American Politics and Society by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 24, Number 1, September 2014 (extra resources archive): *US politics: Campaign finance in the USA and the First Amendment*. Simon LemieuxPolitics Review Volume 24, Number 1, September 2014: *Ballot measures in the USA: good or bad for democracy?* Andrew Fearnley |
| 4 | The electoral process and direct democracy ([3.2.1.5](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):* voting behaviour and the main variables affecting the way people vote in the USA
* links between parties and their core voting coalitions
* recent factors in voting behaviour:
	+ issues, candidates
	+ significance of recent (post 1980) and historic (eg 1932 and 1968) re-aligning election and the factors that influenced voting
* Split-ticket voting and high levels of abstention in US elections.
 | Students should understand the factors that explain voting behaviour, both in Presidential and Congressional elections. Students should use examples from recent elections to identify recent factors in voting behaviour.Students should use examples from recent elections, as well as historical examples, to identify factors that lead to changes in voting behaviour. Students should understand what split ticket voting and split districts are, as well as gerrymandering. Students should consider their impact on elections and representation.Students should debate why turnout is so low in US elections and if this matters.Students should finish their study of US elections and referenda by practicing a 9 mark past paper question. | Students should consider which factors are most significant in determining voting behaviour.Students should understand the links between parties and their core voting coalitions. Students should consider to what extent they have strengthened or weakened in recent years.Students should consider whether candidates or issues have played a more significant role in voting behaviour in recent elections.Students should consider the extent of split-ticket voting and why this is. In particular, students should consider the consequences of split-ticket voting. Students should learn why gerrymandering takes place and the impact of this on elections and representation. Students should understand that there are high levels of abstention in US elections and low turnout in primary and general elections. Students should consider the reasons for this and consequences of it. | Chapter 2: ‘Elections and Voting’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 6: ‘Elections and Political Participation’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 23, Number 4, April 2014: *Split ticket voting*. Katie ShapiroPolitics Review Volume 24, Number 3, February 2015 (extra resources archive): [US politics: The values of Republican and Democrat voters](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2024%20No%203/PoliticsReview24_3_Republicans_Democrats_values.doc?ext=.doc). Katie ShapiroPolitics Review Volume 23, Number 3, February 2014 (extra resources archive): [US politics: Turnout in US elections](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2023%20No%203/PolRev-23_3-US-turnout.doc?ext=.doc). Katy Ivey |
| 5 | Political parties ([3.2.1.6](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):* the two main political parties (Democratic and Republican):
	+ ideologies
	+ values
	+ policies
	+ traditions
	+ party organisation
* ideological changes in both the Democrat and Republican parties making them more distinct and polarised.
 | Students should create a profile of what the Democrat and Republican parties stand for. They should identify the values and policies of both parties today, including similarities and differences.Students should understand how the two major parties are organised.Students should learn about the concepts ‘red America’, ‘blue America’ and ‘purple America’. | Students should learn about the traditions and ideologies of the two major parties. In particular, students should understand the evolution of the main political parties from ‘umbrella’ parties to increasingly ideological/partisan parties. Students should understand the transformation of the two major parties from broad non-ideological coalitions of 1950s and 1960s into more ideologically cohesive parties of today. Students should learn that traditionally the two major parties covered a wide ideological spread. Democrats included liberals from the West coast and North-east America as well as conservatives from the South. Republicans included conservatives from the Midwest as well as moderates from the North-east. Students should learn about the importance of the Solid South in the 1990s and how its break up contributed to both parties becoming ideologically cohesive. This resulted in some conservative Democrat politicians switching to the Republicans and some moderate Republicans switching to Democrats. | Chapter 3: ‘Political parties’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 5: ‘The Changing Role of Political Parties’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 23, Number 1, September 2013 (extra resources archive): *Revision: US political parties - what’s the difference?* Rowena HammalPolitics Review Volume 25, Number 4, April 2016 (extra resources archive): *US politics: 2016 Republican candidates*. Clare StansfieldPolitics Review Volume 25, Number 4, April 2016 (extra resources archive): *The main ideas and policies of the Democratic Party*. Kay Moxon |
| 6 | Political parties ([3.2.1.6](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):* factionalised nature of the parties and internal divisions
* debates concerning party decline or renewal – weakness of US parties.
 | Students should learn about the current ideological divisions within the two main parties and factions within them, including the Freedom Caucus and Tea Party in the Republican party and the Congressional Progressive Caucus in the Democrat party.Students should debate the extent to which US parties are in a period of decline or renewal. | In particular, students should understand the differences between the fiscal conservatives, social conservatives and moderates in the Republican Party, as well as between liberal activists, centrists and moderates in the Democratic Party. In particular, students should focus on the values, influence and success of the different factions within each party.Students should learn about the debate that begun in 1970s over the continuing relevance of political parties. Students should focus on the extent to which parties continue to carry out their core functions and the extent to which these have been taken over by other bodies such as pressure groups. | Chapter 3: ‘Political parties’ in A2 US Government and Politics by Anthony J BennettChapter 5: ‘The Changing Role of Political Parties’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition) |
| 7 | Political parties ([3.2.1.6](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):* two party dominance in US politics
* significance of third parties and independent candidates.
 | Students should define a two-party system and debate to what extent there is one in the US.Students should study examples of third parties and the different types in the US. They should evaluate the extent to which they have influenced US politics and elections.Students should finish their study of US political parties by practicing a 9 mark past paper question. | In particular, students should focus on the extent to which there is two-party dominance of state politics, Congress and the Presidency. They should understand the role played by third parties and the influence they have been able to exert despite a lack of electoral success. In particular, students should learn about the impact third parties have had in state and national politics, including in Congressional and Presidential elections. Students should learn the reasons why the minor parties have been unable to break the dominance of the Democrats and Republicans and factors which limit the success of minor parties. Students should consider the policy impact of third parties and independent candidates even when their electoral impact is limited. | Chapter 3: ‘Political parties’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 5: ‘The Changing Role of Political Parties’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition) |
| 8 | Pressure groups ([3.2.1.7](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):* the extent of political pluralism in the USA
* typologies of pressure groups.
 | Students should learn why pressure groups exist and why the US political system provides so many ‘access points’ for them to exert influence. Students should learn about the different types of pressure group and how they can be categorized. | Students should understand the functions pressure groups perform and how they operate. Students should focus on the institutional, demographic and cultural factors which give US pressure groups a significant role in US politics. | Chapter 4: ‘Pressure groups’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 13: ‘Organized Interests: The Real Power?’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition) |
| 9 | Pressure groups ([3.2.1.7](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):* methods and tactics used by pressure groups to influence decision making
* pressure group funding of elections:
	+ funding of Washington insiders
	+ iron triangles
	+ reinforcing incumbency
	+ relative power of pressure groups vis-à-vis political parties.
 | Students should examine case studies of significant pressure groups and consider the extent to which they can influence policy and why this is.Students should debate if pressure groups help or hinder policy making in the US.Students should examine pressure group funding of elections.Students should debate if pressure groups or political parties are more powerful.Students should debate if pressure groups or political parties are more able to represent the views of the electorate on key policy issues.Complete the pressure groups quiz to test students’ knowledge. | Students should learn why each of the federal branches of government offers different opportunities for pressure groups to advance their agendas. In particular, students should learn about the different access points within the federal system which pressure groups seek to influence and the motives for choosing particular access points. Students should also understand the different methods used to influence each branch such as lobbying, campaign donation and direct action. Students should consider the extent to which activity by opposing groups is self-cancelling, and factors which conduce to the pre-eminence of some groups such as the NRA. Students should learn about the ability of pressure groups to dominate in Washington DC. Students should understand that this encompasses the three branches of the federal government - the Executive, Congress and the Supreme Court. Students should learn about policy making and enactment as well as policy execution, enforcement and interpretation. Students should understand what an ‘iron triangle’ is and have recent examples to illustrate this.Students should understand the power of pressure groups relative to other representative bodies such as political parties. | Chapter 4: ‘Pressure groups’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 13: ‘Organized Interests: The Real Power?’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 25, Number 1, September 2015 (extra resources archive): [Activity: Pressure groups in the USA](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2025%20No%201/PoliticsReview25_1_Pressure_groups_quiz.pptx?ext=.pptx). Katy Ivey. A quiz to test your knowledge. |
| 10 | Pressure groups ([3.2.1.7](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):* debates concerning the power of pressure groups in the USA
* role and significance of Political Action Committees and Super PAC’s regarding electoral finance.
 | Students should debate the extent to which pressure groups are anti-democratic and too powerful. Students should understand measures taken to limit the influence of pressure groups and their effectiveness.Students should understand what political action committees are and their significance on US elections.Students should finish their study of US pressure groups by practicing a 9 mark past paper question. | Students should understand the debate over the role of pressure groups within the political system. Students should consider how far they enhance democracy, provide the opportunity to further the interests of all groups in society, stimulate political participation and disperse power rather than concentrating it in the hands of a few. Students should consider if pressure groups are anti-democratic and work to concentrate power for a few. Students should understand the role that PAC’s and Super PAC’s play in electoral finance. Students should distinguish between ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ money by using recent examples. Students should consider the significance of PACs.  | Chapter 4: ‘Pressure groups’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 13: ‘Organized Interests: The Real Power?’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 23, Number 1, September 2013: *Super PACs*. Andrew Colclough |
| 11 | Civil rights ([3.2.1.8](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):* protection of civil liberties and rights under:
	+ the constitution
	+ Bill of Rights
	+ subsequent amendments
	+ landmark rulings of the Supreme Court
* the role of pressure groups in promoting and supporting rights.
 | Students should draw upon knowledge acquired in the Constitution and Supreme Court topics to evaluate to what extent civil liberties are protected in the US.Students should also draw upon their knowledge of pressure groups to assess the extent to which they promote and support civil liberties | Students should consider this question in light of 9/11 and methods to reduce terrorism, Presidential executive orders, racial and ethnic politics, LGBT rights and abortion.Students should consider if pressure groups are able to represent the views of the electorate more accurately than political parties on the key policy issues that dominate US politics including the environment and global warming; the economy and taxation; law and order and capital punishment; social policy such as immigration and healthcare; moral issues such as abortion, euthanasia; and equality and rights such as gay marriage, gun control, affirmative action and freedom of speech. | Chapter 8: ‘Race and ethnic politics’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 12: ‘The Security State’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Chapter 15: ‘Regulating Morality: Civil Rights, Liberties and Conscience Issues’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 25, Number 3, February 2016: *The US Constitution: a protection against the growth of the security state?* Andrew ColcloughPolitics Review Volume 26, Number 2, November 2016: *The US Supreme Court: an effective protector of civil rights and liberties?* Robert Singh |
| 12 | Civil rights ([3.2.1.8](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):The impact of salient political issues concerning civil rights and liberties on US politics in relation to one of the following:* abortion
* race
* immigration
* religion
* freedom of speech
* gender
* sexual orientation
* privacy
* disability
* the right to bear arms.
 | Students should consider to what extent the Bill of Rights, subsequent amendments and Supreme Court rulings have protected civil liberties on a number of issues. Students should finish their study of US politics by practicing a 9 mark past paper question on civil rights as well as a 25 mark stimulus question. | Students should focus on the impact of salient political issues concerning civil rights and liberties on US politics in relation to one topic. It is recommended that students focus on a number of Supreme Court cases in relation to that one topic over a period of time. Particular attention should be paid to the most recent cases. | Chapter 8: ‘Race and ethnic politics’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 12: ‘The Security State’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Chapter 15: ‘Regulating Morality: Civil Rights, Liberties and Conscience Issues’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 25, Number 3, February 2016 (extra resources archive): [US politics: Gun ownership](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2025%20No%203/PoliticsReview25_3_US_Gun_ownership.pdf?ext=.pdf). Jeremy TaylorPolitics Review Volume 24, Number 1, September 2014 (extra resources archive): [US politics: Campaign finance in the USA and the First Amendment](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2024%20No%201/PolRev24_1_USPoliticsCampaignFinance.doc?ext=.doc). Simon LemieuxPolitics Review Volume 26, Number 3, February 2017: *US immigration reform*. Sarra JenkinsPolitics Review Volume 26, Number 4, April 2017: *Has affirmative action been good for the USA?* Katie Shapiro and Kay MoxonPolitics Review Volume 25, Number 2, November 2015 (extra resources archive): [US politics: Race in the USA](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2025%20No%202/PoliticsReview25_2_US_Race.docx?ext=.docx). Simon LemieuxPolitics Review Volume 23, Number 3, February 2014 (extra resources archive): [US politics: Five things you need to know about race](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2023%20No%203/PolRev-23_3-US-race.doc?ext=.doc). Rowena Hammal |

Dual teaching model (i)

Under this model, it is assumed that two teachers will share responsibility for the Paper 2 component, taught in the summer term of Year 1 and the autumn term of Year 2.

3.2 Year 1: Summer term

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Week | Teacher | Specification content  | Activities | Notes | Resources |
| 1 | A | The electoral process and direct democracy ([3.2.1.5](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):* electoral systems used in the USA
* main characteristics of presidential and congressional elections and campaigns.
 | Students should understand the definitions of the following political concepts and why they are important in US elections: primaries, caucuses, national conventions, Electoral College, propositions and initiatives.Students should learn about the types of elections that take place in the US. They should examine the factors that affect the result as well as the strengths and weaknesses of mid-term and Presidential elections. | Students should study the different types of primaries/caucuses including invisible primaries, the national conventions, presidential debates and the Electoral College (this may include congressional elections and major propositions/initiatives). In particular, students should consider the advantages and disadvantages of the electoral system and initiatives.Students should learn about how often elections occur and what the requirements are for candidates stand. In particular, students should focus on recent elections, both Presidential and mid-term. Students should understand what mid-term elections are, when they occur and what offices are being filled. Students should consider why mid-term elections are potentially, but not necessarily, important. Students should focus on the results, campaigns and factors which have affected the outcome of recent mid-term elections. Students should also consider the impact of a lack of congressional term limits. Students should consider the factors shaping the outcome of the most recent elections, both Presidential and mid-term. Students should understand the reasons for incumbent advantage. They should also learn the similarities and differences between mid-term and presidential years. Students should also consider the possible implications for future elections. | Chapter 2: ‘Elections and Voting’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 6: ‘Elections and Political Participation’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 26, Number 4, April 2017 (extra resources archive): *2016 US election results*. Emma KilheeneyPolitics Review Volume 24, Number 4, April 2015: *The 2014 mid-term elections: How significant are they?* Edward Ashbee |
| 1 | B | UK judiciary (nearing end of Paper 1 content) ([3.2.1.4](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)) |  |  |  |
| 2 | A | The electoral process and direct democracy ([3.2.1.5](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):* candidate selection and nomination
	+ primaries
	+ caucuses
	+ national nominating conventions.
 | Students should examine the methods for selecting Presidential candidates and evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of each method – primaries, caucuses and national conventions. | Students should learn what the requirements are for Presidential candidates. In particular, students should focus on how Presidential candidates are selected and how the Electoral College system works. Students should understand the procedures for primary elections (closed and open) and caucuses. Students should focus on the advantages and disadvantages of each. Students should understand the pattern of primaries and caucuses and the extent of 'frontloading’. Students should also understand conventions, their frequency and when and where they are held. Students should also understand that although the traditional functions of conventions have declined, they remain important. | Chapter 2: ‘Elections and Voting’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 6: ‘Elections and Political Participation’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 26, Number 3, February 2017: *The 2016 presidential election: ‘Make America Great Again’.* Clodagh HarringtonPolitics Review Volume 26, Number 3, February 2017: *Are presidential campaigns too long?* Charlie Barrowcliff and Anthony BennettPolitics Review Volume 24, Number 4, April 2015: *Is the process for nominating presidential candidates hopelessly flawed?* Neil Whiskerd and Anthony Bennett |
| 2 | B | UK judiciary (end of Paper 1 content for teacher B) ([3.2.1.4](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)). |  |  |  |
| 3 | A | The electoral process and direct democracy ([3.2.1.5](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):debates concerning the workings, outcomes and impact of electoral college system on campaigns. | Students should learn about how the Electoral College works and debate if it should be reformed. | Students should understand the advantages and disadvantages of the Electoral College. Students should consider possible replacements for the Electoral College and focus on why it is unlikely to be reformed or abolished. | Chapter 2: ‘Elections and Voting’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 6: ‘Elections and Political Participation’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 23, Number 2, November 2013: *Should the Electoral College be replaced by a national popular vote?* Justin Whitton and Alastair Endersby |
| 3 | B | The constitutional framework of US government ([3.2.1.1](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):nature and significance of the US constitution. | Introduction to studying US politics – students should read ‘A beginner’s guide to studying US politics’ and ‘US politics: Ten things you need to know’.Students should examine the nature and significance of the US Constitution. They should outline the features of it as a codified constitution. | Students should understand that the US constitution is codified, entrenched and judicable within a federal system of government. Students should also consider the importance of the US constitution, both historically and in the present day. In particular, students should consider whether the US constitution remains, or ever was, a beacon of democracy. | Politics Review Volume 26, Number 1, September 2016 (extra resources archive): [US politics: A beginner’s guide to studying US politics](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2026%20No%201/PoliticsReview26_1_US-politics_beginners.docx?ext=.docx). Jeremy TaylorPolitics Review Volume 24, Number 4, April 2015 (extra resources archive): [US politics: Ten things you need to know](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2024%20No%204/PoliticsReview24_4_US_politics_Ten_things.doc?ext=.doc). Simon Lemieux. An article offering essential insights into the sometimes puzzling world of US politicsChapter 2: ‘Beliefs, Values and American Society’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Chapter 1: ‘The Constitution’ in *A2 US Government & Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 3: ‘Constitutional government’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition) |
| 4 | A | The electoral process and direct democracy ([3.2.1.5](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):* factors determining electoral outcomes:
	+ money
	+ media
	+ issues
	+ leadership
	+ the significance of incumbency
* debates about campaign finance.
 | Students should understand the methods which determine electoral outcomes and evaluate to what extent each has been significant in recent elections. Students should debate which issue was most important in the outcome of the two most recent elections. | Students should understand the different methods of financing campaigns such as matching funds, federal grants and self-financing. Students should consider the arguments for and against each method. Students should learn about the role of campaign finance as well as the extent of its success and recent attempts at reform. Students should understand the significance of the role of televised Presidential debates and the media in general.Using examples, students should consider the impact of leadership on the outcome of recent elections. | Chapter 2: ‘Elections and Voting’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 6: ‘Elections and Political Participation’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 24, Number 1, September 2014 (extra resources archive): [US politics: Campaign finance in the USA and the First Amendment](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2024%20No%201/PolRev24_1_USPoliticsCampaignFinance.doc?ext=.doc). Simon Lemieux |
| 4 | B | The constitutional framework of US government ([3.2.2.1](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):* significance of constitutional principles:
	+ separation of powers
	+ checks and balances
	+ federalism
* framework of government laid down in the constitution.
 | Students should learn a solid definition of each of the constitutional principles. The strengths and weaknesses of each principle should be evaluated.Students should examine the aims of the Founding Fathers and the framework of government they laid down. They should identify strengths and weaknesses of their aims, taking into account conservative and liberal perspectives. | It is important, when learning about the principles of the US constitution that students distinguish between the concepts separation of powers and checks and balances. Within the study of separation of powers, an emphasis should be placed on separation of personnel, and shared powers between the three branches of government. Students should understand the full range of checks and balances available to each branch to check the power of the other two. In particular, students should consider how Congress is able to check the power of the President and vice versa. It should also be understood that the Supreme Court can check the power of both branches through judicial review. Students should focus on the extent to which the three branches of the Federal government effectively check each other. Finally, students should consider whether these constitutional principles help or hinder the US system of government.Students should be able to evaluate whether or not the aims of the Founding Fathers should be adhered to in the twenty-first century. In particular, students should show an appreciation of competing views on whether or not the Founding Fathers’ views should be taken into account when interpreting the constitution today. Students should focus on conservative and liberal perspectives and later link this to strict and loose constructionism when studying the US Judiciary. | Chapter 2: ‘Beliefs, Values and American Society’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Chapter 1: ‘The Constitution’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 3: ‘Constitutional government’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 23, Number 4, April 2014 (extra resources archive): [Revision: The US Constitution](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2023%20No%204/PolRev-23_4-US-Constitution.ppt?ext=.ppt) Rowena Hammal |
| 5 | A | The electoral process and direct democracy ([3.2.1.5](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):direct democracy at state level: referenda, initiatives, propositions, recall elections and debates concerning their use. | Students should study propositions, referenda and recall elections and evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of each. | In particular, students should understand how states use propositions. Students should consider the advantages and disadvantages of this. Students should also focus on the contribution of referendums, initiatives, propositions and recall elections on direct democracy. Students should consider the advantages and disadvantages of each. | Chapter 2: ‘Elections and Voting’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 6: ‘Elections and Political Participation’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 24, Number 1, September 2014: *Ballot measures in the USA: good or bad for democracy?* Andrew Fearnley |
| 5 | B | The constitutional framework of US government ([3.2.2.1](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):federal system of government and federal state relations. | Students should examine the extent to which the federal government’s influence over the states has increased in recent years and whether or not this undermines the importance of the constitutional principle of federalism. | Students should understand how and why federalism is enshrined in the constitution, even though it is not explicitly mentioned. Students should also learn about the devolvement of federalism and the idea of new federalism. In particular, students should consider whether or not the principle of federalism has been eroded due to the expanse of federal government power.Students will be required to learn about the relationship between the federal government and the states in recent years. | Chapter 1: ‘The Constitution’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 3: ‘Constitutional government’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Chapter 4: ‘Federalism: Why the States Still Matter’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 25, Number 4, April 2016: *Is the US federal government too powerful?* Ross Maggs and Simon Lemieux |
| 6 | A | The electoral process and direct democracy ([3.2.1.5](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):* voting behaviour and the main variables affecting the way people vote in the USA
* links between parties and their core voting coalitions.
 | Students should understand the factors that explain voting behaviour, both in Presidential and Congressional elections. Students should use examples from recent elections to identify recent factors in voting behaviour. | Students should consider which factors are most significant in determining voting behaviour.Students should understand the links between parties and their core voting coalitions. Students should consider to what extent they have strengthened or weakened in recent years. | Chapter 2: ‘Elections and Voting’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 6: ‘Elections and Political Participation’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 24, Number 3, February 2015 (extra resources archive): [US politics: The values of Republican and Democrat voters](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2024%20No%203/PoliticsReview24_3_Republicans_Democrats_values.doc?ext=.doc). Katie Shapiro |
| 6 | B | The constitutional framework of US government ([3.2.2.1](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):amendment process. | Students should learn about the amendment process. They should examine the advantages and disadvantages of the process. | Students will be required to understand the methods available to amend the US constitution. This will require an understanding both formal methods available to amend the constitution, involving Congress and the states as well as the option involving a constitutional convention. However, it should also be stressed that the constitution can be amended informally through judicial review. In particular, students should consider whether it is too difficult to amend the US constitution. | Chapter 1: ‘The Constitution’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 3: ‘Constitutional government’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition) |
| 7 | A | The electoral process and direct democracy ([3.2.1.5](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):* recent factors in voting behaviour
* issues, candidates
* the significance of recent (post 1980) and historic (eg 1932 and 1968) re-aligning election and the factors that influenced voting
* split ticket voting and high levels of abstention in US elections.
 | Students should use examples from recent elections, as well as historical examples, to identify factors that lead to changes in voting behaviour. Students should understand what split ticket voting and split districts are, as well as gerrymandering. Students should consider their impact on elections and representation.Students should debate why turnout is so low in US elections and if this matters.Students should finish their study of US elections and referenda by practicing a 9 mark past paper question. | Students should consider whether candidates or issues have played a more significant role in voting behaviour in recent elections.Students should consider the extent of split-ticket voting and why this is. In particular, students should consider the consequences of split-ticket voting. Students should learn why gerrymandering takes place and the impact of this on elections and representation. Students should understand that there are high levels of abstention in US elections and low turnout in primary and general elections. Students should consider the reasons for this and consequences of it. | Chapter 2: ‘Elections and Voting’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 6: ‘Elections and Political Participation’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 23, Number 4, April 2014: *Split ticket voting*. Katie ShapiroPolitics Review Volume 23, Number 3, February 2014 (extra resources archive): [US politics: Turnout in US elections](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2023%20No%203/PolRev-23_3-US-turnout.doc?ext=.doc). Katy Ivey |
| 7 | B | The constitutional framework of US government ([3.2.2.1](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):debates concerning the importance of the US Constitution to the working of contemporary US government . | Students should evaluate the overall strengths and weaknesses of the US constitution.Students should debate if the US constitution remains fit for purpose in the 21st century. | Students should focus on a number of key debates and criticisms of the US constitution. Students should consider if the constitutional principles of separation of powers and checks and balances are an obstacle to effective government. Students should also consider if the modern constitution has been transformed beyond recognition from the vision of the Founding Fathers. In particular, students should consider if this is positive or negative development. | Chapter 1: ‘The Constitution’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 3: ‘Constitutional government’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 23, Number 3, February 2014: *The US Constitution: does it ensure limited government?* Robert Singh |
| 8 | A | US political parties ([3.2.1.6](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):* the two main political parties (Democratic and Republican):
	+ ideologies
	+ values
	+ policies
	+ traditions
	+ party organisation.
 | Students should create a profile of what the Democrat and Republican parties stand for. They should identify the values and policies of both parties today, including similarities and differences.Students should understand how the two major parties are organised. | Students should learn about the traditions and ideologies of the two major parties. In particular, students should understand the evolution of the main political parties from ‘umbrella’ parties to increasingly ideological/partisan parties. | Chapter 3: ‘Political parties’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 5: ‘The Changing Role of Political Parties’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 23, Number 1, September 2013 (extra resources archive): [Revision: US political parties - what’s the difference? Rowena Hammal](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2023%20No%201/PolRev-23_1-US-politcal-parties.ppt?ext=.ppt)Politics Review Volume 25, Number 4, April 2016 (extra resources archive): [US politics: 2016 Republican candidates](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2025%20No%204/PoliticsReview25_4_US_Republican_candidates.pdf?ext=.pdf). Clare StansfieldPolitics Review Volume 25, Number 4, April 2016 (extra resources archive): *The main ideas and policies of the Democratic Party.* Kay Moxon |
| 8 | B | The constitutional framework of the USA ([3.2.2.1](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):the protection of civil liberties and rights under the Constitution, Bill of Rights and Supreme Court rulings. | Students should examine the Bill of Rights and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the document as well as the extent to which it has been upheld.Students should finish their study of the US constitution by practicing a 9 mark past paper question. |  | Chapter 1: ‘The Constitution’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 3: ‘Constitutional government’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 25, Number 3, February 2016: *The US Constitution: a protection against the growth of the security state?* Andrew Colclough |
| 9 | A | US political parties ([3.2.1.6](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):the ideological changes in both the Democrat and Republican parties making them more distinct and polarised. | Students should learn about the concepts ‘red America’, ‘blue America’ and ‘purple America’. Students should look at the recent Democrat and Republican parties, comparing them to the parties historically, and identify any ideological changes. | Students should understand the transformation of the two major parties from broad non-ideological coalitions of 1950s and 1960s into more ideologically cohesive parties of today. Students should learn that traditionally the two major parties covered a wide ideological spread. Democrats included liberals from the West coast and North-east America as well as conservatives from the South. Republicans included conservatives from the Midwest as well as moderates from the North-east. Students should learn about the importance of the Solid South in the 1990s and how its break up contributed to both parties becoming ideologically cohesive. This resulted in some conservative Democrat politicians switching to the Republicans and some moderate Republicans switching to Democrats. | Chapter 3: ‘Political parties’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 5: ‘The Changing Role of Political Parties’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 23, Number 1, September 2013 (extra resources archive): [Revision: US political parties - what’s the difference? Rowena Hammal](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2023%20No%201/PolRev-23_1-US-politcal-parties.ppt?ext=.ppt)Politics Review Volume 25, Number 4, April 2016 (extra resources archive): [US politics: 2016 Republican candidates](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2025%20No%204/PoliticsReview25_4_US_Republican_candidates.pdf?ext=.pdf). Clare StansfieldPolitics Review Volume 25, Number 4, April 2016 (extra resources archive): The main ideas and policies of the Democratic Party. Kay Moxon |
| 9 | B | The judicial branch of government ([3.2.1.4](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):* process of selection and appointment of Supreme Court judges
* current composition of the Court.
 | Students should learn about the current Supreme Court justices including which President appointed them and their ideological leaning. Students should learn about how justices are appointed, factors taken into account when appointing justices and the role of the Senate in the process. | Students should focus on the current composition of the Supreme Court. In particular, students should look at recent appointments to the court and their impact. Students should consider why the nomination process is so politically controversial and has been criticized. It should be stressed that justices can be placed on an ideological spectrum according to how liberal or conservative they are in their decision making. The current court is split into two ideological blocs – a conservative quartet and a liberal quartet. The two blocs are separated by a single justice, sometimes described as the ‘swing justice’. Students should understand the significance of the ‘swing justice’. However, it should also be stressed that this can change over time – justices can become more or less liberal and conservative. It is also dependent upon the cases the justices hear in a particular court term. | Chapter 7: ‘The Supreme Court, and the protection of rights and liberties’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 14: ‘The Supreme Court and Judicial Politics’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review March 2016 e-review: *Death of a Supreme Court justice*: Emma Kilheeney considers what the death of Justice Antonin Scalia means for the US Supreme Court and for ObamaPolitics Review Volume 24, Number 3, February 2015: *The Supreme Court: a political, not judicial, institution?* Robert Singh |
| 10 | A | US political parties ([3.2.1.6](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):factionalised nature of the parties and internal divisions. | Students should learn about the current ideological divisions within the two main parties and factions within them, including the Freedom Caucus and Tea Party in the Republican party and the Congressional Progressive Caucus in the Democrat party. | In particular, students should understand the differences between the fiscal conservatives, social conservatives and moderates in the Republican Party, as well as between liberal activists, centrists and moderates in the Democratic Party. In particular, students should focus on the values, influence and success of the different factions within each party. | Chapter 3: ‘Political parties’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 5: ‘The Changing Role of Political Parties’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition) |
| 10 | B | The judicial branch of government ([3.2.1.4](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):current composition – ideology of the justices and ways in which the constitution can be interpreted. | Students should learn definitions for the concepts of strict and loose constructionism, and judicial activism and restraint, including the merits and drawbacks of each approach. | Students should understand that the constitution is a vague document that can be interpreted in a number of ways, both depending on the specific case and on the views of the individual justices sitting on the Supreme Court. Students should understand that the judicial philosophy of the Supreme Court justices can be based on both their views on how the constitution should be interpreted as well as their political views – justices can, at times, reflect the views of the President who appoints them. | Chapter 7: ‘The Supreme Court, and the protection of rights and liberties’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 14: ‘The Supreme Court and Judicial Politics’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition) |
| 11 | A | US political parties ([3.2.1.6](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):debates concerning party decline or renewal – weakness of US parties. | Students should debate the extent to which US parties are in a period of decline or renewal. | Students should learn about the debate that begun in 1970s over the continuing relevance of political parties. Students should focus on the extent to which parties continue to carry out their core functions and the extent to which these have been taken over by other bodies such as pressure groups. | Chapter 3: ‘Political parties’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 5: ‘The Changing Role of Political Parties’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 25, Number 2, November 2015: *US political parties: the source of dysfunction in US government?* Robert Singh |
| 11 | B | The judicial branch of government ([3.2.1.4](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):* significance of judicial review
* the nature of judicial power and the constitutional role of the Supreme Court as:
	+ guardian of the constitution; constitutional interpretation
	+ protector of citizens’ rights.
 | Students should learn a definition of judicial review and examine how it came about. Students should learn that judicial review provides the Supreme Court with quasi legislative powers and that this has led to the court been accused of being political due to the ideology of the justices. Students should evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of this. Students should learn about the roles of the judiciary in protecting civil liberties and checking executive and legislative power.Students should evaluate the extent to which rights are adequately protected by the Supreme Court.Students should examine the extent to which the Supreme Court acts as a sufficient check and balance on the elected branches of government.Students should debate if the Supreme Court has become too powerful for an unelected body in a democracy. | Students should learn about what judicial review is and how it began in Marbury v Madison in 1803. Students should be aware that through judicial review, the Supreme Court can check the power of the legislature and executive, as well as protect civil liberties. Students should appreciate the significance of judicial review as well as the controversy surrounding it. Students should understand that the Supreme Court uses judicial review, within the constitutional principle of checks and balances, to check the power of the other branches of government. As such, students should learn about significant cases relating to this. However, it should also be stressed that the executive and legislature can challenge the Supreme Court, either by amending the constitution or in other ways. Students should examine the extent to which the Bill of Rights has been protected by the Supreme Court. This should then be expanded to cover all constitutional rights. Students should consider if all groups in society have their rights equally protected by the court. Students should focus on whether the court can be correctly described as ‘a political, not a judicial institution’ and whether it can be described as an ‘imperial judiciary’. | Chapter 7: ‘The Supreme Court, and the protection of rights and liberties’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 14: ‘The Supreme Court and Judicial Politics’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 23, Number 2, November 2013 (extra resources archive): [US politics: The US Supreme Court — bastion of conservatism or beacon of liberalism?](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2023%20No%202/PolRev-23_2-The-US-Supreme-Court.doc?ext=.doc) Simon LemieuxPolitics Review Volume 26, Number 2, November 2016: *The US Supreme Court: an effective protector of civil rights and liberties?* Robert SinghPolitics Review Volume 22, Number 4, April 2013: *Does the US Supreme Court have too much power?* Kaylan Billingsley and Anthony Bennett |
| 12 | A | US political parties ([3.2.1.6](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):* two party dominance in US politics
* significance of third parties and independent candidates.
 | Students should define a two-party system and debate to what extent there is one in the US.Students should study examples of third parties and the different types in the US. They should evaluate the extent to which they have influenced US politics and elections.Students should finish their study of US political parties by practicing a 9 mark past paper question. | In particular, students should focus on the extent to which there is two-party dominance of state politics, Congress and the Presidency. They should understand the role played by third parties and the influence they have been able to exert despite a lack of electoral success. In particular, students should learn about the impact third parties have had in state and national politics, including in Congressional and Presidential elections. Students should learn the reasons why the minor parties have been unable to break the dominance of the Democrats and Republicans and factors which limit the success of minor parties. Students should consider the policy impact of third parties and independent candidates even when their electoral impact is limited. | Chapter 3: ‘Political parties’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 5: ‘The Changing Role of Political Parties’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition) |
| 12 | B | The judicial branch of government ([3.2.1.4](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):* debates about the political significance of the Supreme Court:
	+ landmark rulings and related debates and controversies
	+ shaping public policy in terms of, for example, federalism and civil rights, race, gender, punishment.
 | Students should study a number of landmark rulings made by the Supreme Court. Students should learn about the outcome of each case, why it was politically significant and which justices voted in favour and against the decision.Specifically, students should focus their learning on two examples of landmark rulings and examine, in depth, related debates and controversies.Students should also choose one area of public policy to focus on and assess the significance of the judiciary in shaping it.Students should evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the Supreme Court and its ability to shape public policy and check government power.Students should finish their study of the US judiciary by practicing a 9 mark past paper question. | Students should understand that a number of Supreme Court cases are politically significant – either in relation to citizens’ rights or as a check on executive or legislative power. However, it should also be stressed that not all cases are as politically significant as each other. Students should focus on recent cases, as well as older ones, that shape public policy in terms of civil rights, federalism and executive power. In particular, students should understand that some cases are politically significant because they split the court, sometimes ideologically. However, it should also be stressed that a high number of cases are decided in a unanimous manner.When deciding what a landmark ruling is, students should consider Court decisions which establish a significant new legal principle or concept, or otherwise substantially change the interpretation of existing law. Examples could be:* The Warren Court 1954–1969

• Brown vs Topeka Board of Education (1954)• Miranda vs Arizona (1966)• The Burger Court 1969–1986• Roe vs Wade (1973)• United States vs Nixon (1974)• The Rehnquist Court 1986–2005• Texas vs Johnston (1989)• Bush vs Gore (2000)• The Roberts Court 2005 – present• District of Columbia vs Heller (2008)• Obergefell vs Hodges (2015) | Chapter 7: ‘The Supreme Court, and the protection of rights and liberties’ in *A2 US Government & Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 14: ‘The Supreme Court and Judicial Politics’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 24, Number 1, September 2014 (extra resources archive): [US politics: Campaign finance in the USA and the First Amendment](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2024%20No%201/PolRev24_1_USPoliticsCampaignFinance.doc?ext=.doc). Simon Lemieux |

3.2 Year 2: Autumn term

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| Week | Teacher | Specification content  | Activities | Notes | Resources |
| 1 | A | US pressure groups ([3.2.1.7](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):the extent of political pluralism in the USA. | Students should learn why pressure groups exist and why the US political system provides so many ‘access points’ for them to exert influence. | Students should understand the functions pressure groups perform and how they operate. Students should focus on the institutional, demographic and cultural factors which give US pressure groups a significant role in US politics. | Chapter 4: ‘Pressure groups’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 13: ‘Organized Interests: The Real Power?’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition) |
| 1 | B | The legislative branch of government – Congress ([3.2.1.2](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):* the structure, role and power of the US Congress
* composition of congress, the different terms of office and party allegiance.
 | Students should learn about the powers that each chamber has, as well as the joint powers that the House of Representatives and Senate share. Students should evaluate the extent to which the Senate has more power and influence than the House.Students should learn about the composition of Congress including how many seats each party has in each chamber, the terms of office and requirements set out to become either a Congressman or a Senator.Students should also learn about significant posts within each chamber including the Speaker, Majority and Minority leaders and whips. Students should know who currently holds each post and provide an example of what they do in their role and how effectively they do it. | In particular, students should consider the Senate’s power to filibuster legislation and appointments as well as ratifying treaties and confirming Presidential appointments. Students should also consider the key factors that affect the relationship between the Senate and the House.In particular, students should learn about leadership in Congress, understanding the roles and significance of the Speaker, Majority and Minority leaders and the whips. Students should understand the power that each party leader exerts in Congress. Students should also consider the significance of political parties within Congress. | Chapter 5: ‘Congress’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 9: ‘Congress as Legislature: Functions and Powers’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 26, Number 4, April 2017 (extra resources archive): *2016 US election results*. Emma KilheeneyPolitics Review Volume 24, Number 2, November 2014 (extra resources archive): [Colourful characters in Congress](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2024%20No%202/PolRev24_2_USPoliticsCongress.doc?ext=.doc). Simon LemieuxPolitics Review Volume 23, Number 4, April 2014 (extra resources archive): [US politics: Filibuster or filibluster?](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2023%20No%204/PolRev-23_4-Filibuster-or-filibluster.doc?ext=.doc) Rowena Hammal |
| 2 | A | US pressure groups ([3.2.1.7](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):typologies of pressure groups. | Students should learn about the different types of pressure group and how they can be categorized. | Students should study case studies of a variety of pressure groups to enable them to assess different typologies of pressure group. | Chapter 4: ‘Pressure groups’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 13: ‘Organized Interests: The Real Power?’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition) |
| 2 | B | The legislative branch of government – Congress ([3.2.1.2](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):debates concerning the functions, powers and effectiveness of legislation, oversight and the power of the purse. | Students should understand the legislative process within Congress and understand why so few bills are passed.Students should also understand the ways in which Congress has oversight over the executive. Students should evaluate the extent to which Congress performs its roles of legislation and oversight effectively.Students should understand the factors that influence how members of Congress vote. | Students should understand that Congress is often accused of being an ineffective legislator. Students should learn the percentage of bills passed in Congress. In particular, students should understand the legislative process and the blocking points which contribute to Congress passing so few bills. In particular, students should consider Congress’ power of the purse. Recent examples should be used to illustrate the difficulty that the President can have in getting Congress to pass their budget. However, it should also be stressed that the power of the purse enables Congress to check Presidential power, especially in relation to executive orders and foreign policy. Students should focus on the impact of increasing partisanship on the ability of Congress to fulfil all of its functions. Finally, students should understand the oversight role Congress has and the ability of Congress to impeach the President and members of the Supreme Court. In particular, students should understand the extent to which are parties the most significant influence on voting in Congress. | Chapter 5: ‘Congress’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 9: ‘Congress as Legislature: Functions and Powers’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 26, Number 1, September 2016: *Is Congress overly dysfunctional and partisan?* Anthony Bennett |
| 3 | A | US pressure groups ([3.2.1.7](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):methods and tactics used by pressure groups to influence decision making. | Students should examine case studies of significant pressure groups and consider the extent to which they can influence policy and why this is.Students should debate if pressure groups help or hinder policy making in the US. | Students should learn why each of the federal branches of government offers different opportunities for pressure groups to advance their agendas. In particular, students should learn about the different access points within the federal system which pressure groups seek to influence and the motives for choosing particular access points. | Chapter 4: ‘Pressure groups’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 13: ‘Organized Interests: The Real Power?’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition) |
| 3 | B | The legislative branch of government – Congress ([3.2.1.2](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):party system and committee system and their significance within Congress. | Students should learn about the different types of committees in Congress and evaluate to what extent they help Congress to legislate and scrutinize the executive. They should also learn about the party system in Congress. | Students should understand the different committees that exist in Congress and consider how committees help Congress to fulfil its roles of representation, legislation and scrutiny. In particular, students should understand the role of Committee Chairmen in Congress, their influence and why have they been the subject of criticism.In particular, students should understand the extent to which are parties the most significant influence on voting in Congress. | Chapter 5: ‘Congress’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 9: ‘Congress as Legislature: Functions and Powers’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition) |
| 4 | A | US pressure groups ([3.2.1.7](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):* pressure group funding of elections:
	+ funding of Washington insiders
	+ iron triangles
	+ reinforcing incumbency
	+ relative power of pressure groups vis-à-vis political parties.
 | Students should examine pressure group funding of elections.Students should debate if pressure groups or political parties are more powerful.Students should debate if pressure groups or political parties are more able to represent the views of the electorate on key policy issues.Complete the pressure groups quiz to test students’ knowledge. | Students should also understand the different methods used to influence each branch such as lobbying, campaign donation and direct action. Students should consider the extent to which activity by opposing groups is self-cancelling, and factors which conduce to the pre-eminence of some groups such as the NRA. Students should learn about the ability of pressure groups to dominate in Washington DC. Students should understand that this encompasses the three branches of the federal government - the Executive, Congress and the Supreme Court. Students should learn about policy making and enactment as well as policy execution, enforcement and interpretation. Students should understand what an ‘iron triangle’ is and have recent examples to illustrate this.Students should understand the power of pressure groups relative to other representative bodies such as political parties. | Chapter 4: ‘Pressure groups’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 13: ‘Organized Interests: The Real Power?’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 25, Number 1, September 2015 (extra resources archive): [Activity: Pressure groups in the USA](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2025%20No%201/PoliticsReview25_1_Pressure_groups_quiz.pptx?ext=.pptx). Katy Ivey. A quiz to test your knowledge |
| 4 | B | The legislative branch of government – Congress ([3.2.1.2](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):representative role of senators and representatives. | Students should evaluate the extent to which Congress is representative. | Students should understand that if Congress is to be representative, it needs to fulfil a number of functions. It needs to contain Congressman and Senators who represent the views of their constituents, it needs to be socially representative and it needs to have districts and states which are fair and competitive. Students should consider if the House of Representatives carries out its representative role more effectively than the Senate. Students should also consider if members of Congress are out of touch with the people who elect them and are more concerned with local issues than national or international issues. Students should also consider the impact of pork barrel politics on representation and the effectiveness of Congress overall. | Chapter 5: ‘Congress’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 9: ‘Congress as Legislature: Functions and Powers’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Chapter 8: ‘US Legislators and Their Constituents’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 24, Number 3, February 2015: Gerrymandering in the USA. Katie ShapiroPolitics Review Volume 23, Number 4, April 2014: *Split ticket voting*. Katie Shapiro |
| 5 | A | US pressure groups ([3.2.1.7](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):debates concerning the power of pressure groups in the USA. | Students should debate the extent to which pressure groups are anti-democratic and too powerful. Students should understand measures taken to limit the influence of pressure groups and their effectiveness. | Students should understand the debate over the role of pressure groups within the political system. Students should consider how far they enhance democracy, provide the opportunity to further the interests of all groups in society, stimulate political participation and disperse power rather than concentrating it in the hands of a few. Students should consider if pressure groups are anti-democratic and work to concentrate power for a few. | Chapter 4: ‘Pressure groups’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 13: ‘Organized Interests: The Real Power?’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition) |
| 5 | B | The legislative branch of government – Congress ([3.2.1.2](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):relative strengths of the House of Representatives. | Students should evaluate the overall effectiveness of Congress and debate if Congress has become ‘the broken branch’. Students should also examine the House and the Senate separately. | Students should understand the criticisms levelled at Congress – that it is significantly less effective when different parties control its two chambers, that it lacks effective leadership, it has no meaningful foreign policy role and that it is the broken branch. Students should consider these criticisms and focus on if Congress remains a powerful branch within the US system of government. | Chapter 5: ‘Congress’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 9: ‘Congress as Legislature: Functions and Powers’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Chapter 8: ‘US Legislators and Their Constituents’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 24, Number 2, November 2014: *Congress: why is it so unpopular?* Anthony BennettPolitics Review Volume 23, Number 4, April 2014: *Is Congress the ‘broken branch’?* Rowena Hammal and Andy Baker |
| 6 | A | US pressure groups ([3.2.1.7](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):role and significance of Political Actions Committees and Super PAC’s regarding electoral finance | Students should understand what political action committees are and their significance on US elections.Students should finish their study of US pressure groups by practicing a 9 mark past paper question. | Students should understand the role that PAC’s and Super PAC’s play in electoral finance. Students should distinguish between ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ money by using recent examples. Students should consider the significance of PACs.  | Chapter 4: ‘Pressure groups’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 13: ‘Organized Interests: The Real Power?’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 23, Number 1, September 2013: Super PACs. Andrew Colclough |
| 6 | B | The legislative branch of government – Congress ([3.2.1.2](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):relationship of Congress to the executive branch of government and the supreme court | Students should evaluate the extent to which Congress effectively performs its role of scrutinizing the executive.Students should finish their study of the US Congress by practicing a 9 mark past paper question. | Students should identify the checks that Congress places on the executive and Supreme Court. In particular, students should consider the ability of Congress to affect foreign policy and challenge a recent increase in executive power, particularly in relation to executive orders and executive agreements. Students should also consider the extent to which the President is able to circumvent Congress and if this renders Congress ineffective. | Chapter 5: ‘Congress’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 9: ‘Congress as Legislature: Functions and Powers’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Chapter 8: ‘US Legislators and Their Constituents’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition) |
| 7 | A | US civil rights ([3.2.1.8](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):protection of civil liberties and rights under the constitution. | Students should assess to what extent civil rights are protected under the constitution. | Students should consider this question in light of 9/11 and methods to reduce terrorism, Presidential executive orders, racial and ethnic politics, LGBT rights and abortion. | Chapter 8: ‘Race and ethnic politics’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 12: ‘The Security State’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Chapter 15: ‘Regulating Morality: Civil Rights, Liberties and Conscience Issues’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 25, Number 3, February 2016: *The US Constitution: a protection against the growth of the security state?* |
| 7 | B | The executive branch of government – president ([3.2.1.3](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):* sources of presidential power
* formal powers (enumerated and inherent powers outlined in Article 2 of the Constitution).
 | Students must select two relevant examples to demonstrate how sources of presidential power have been used by different presidents.Students should examine the formal powers awarded to the President, as set out in the constitution. | Students should learn what formal powers the Constitution sets out for the President – both in relation to domestic and foreign policy. As such, students should learn about the President’s ability to veto and pocket veto legislation. In particular, students should consider how much influence the President has over the legislative process. Students should also look at the President’s ability to appoint individuals to the executive and judicial branches. Students should also look at the foreign policy powers the President is granted in the constitution and the constraints on the President’s role as commander in chief. In particular, students should consider the effectiveness of each of the constitutional powers awarded to the President. | Chapter 6: ‘The Presidency’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 10: ‘The Presidency’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review October 2016 e-review: *What is post-truth politics?* Emma Kilheeney considers why lying is a key tool of today’s politicians, and looks at the overturn of Obama’s veto in CongressPolitics Review Volume 26, Number 1, September 2016: *Recess appointments.* Mark Rathbone |
| 8 | A | US civil rights ([3.2.1.8](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):protection of civil liberties and rights under the Bill of Rights and subsequent amendments. | Students should assess to what extent civil rights are protected under the Bill of Rights and subsequent amendments. | Students should consider this question in light of 9/11 and methods to reduce terrorism, Presidential executive orders, racial and ethnic politics, LGBT rights and abortion. | Chapter 8: ‘Race and ethnic politics’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 12: ‘The Security State’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Chapter 15: ‘Regulating Morality: Civil Rights, Liberties and Conscience Issues’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 25, Number 3, February 2016: *The US Constitution: a protection against the growth of the security state?* |
| 8 | B | The executive branch of government – President ([3.2.1.3](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF))informal powers (President as *de facto* party leader, agenda setter, world leader, modern developments such as the stretching of implied powers and the creation of institutions such as EXOP). | Students should also examine the informal powers used by the President including executive orders, signing statements and executive agreements. | Students should focus on Article II and consider whether the vagueness of this has allowed the President to expand his powers in recent years. Students should learn about mechanisms available to the President to expand their powers such as the Executive Office of the President (EOP), and how this came about. Students should focus on methods the President uses to circumvent Congress such as executive orders, signing statements and executive agreements. | Chapter 6: ‘The Presidency’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 10: ‘The Presidency’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 26, Number 3, February 2017 (extra resources archive): *What can we expect from President Trump?* Jeremy Taylor |
| 9 | A | US civil rights ([3.2.1.8](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):protection of civil liberties and rights under the Supreme Court. | Students should assess to what extent civil rights are protected by the Supreme Court. | Students should assess the limitations of the Supreme Court’s ability to protect civil liberties. | Chapter 8: ‘Race and ethnic politics’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 12: ‘The Security State’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Chapter 15: ‘Regulating Morality: Civil Rights, Liberties and Conscience Issues’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 25, Number 3, February 2016: *The US Constitution: a protection against the growth of the security state?* Andrew ColcloughPolitics Review Volume 26, Number 2, November 2016: *The US Supreme Court: an effective protector of civil rights and liberties?* Robert Singh |
| 9 | B | The executive branch of government – President ([3.2.1.3](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)): * constraints on President’s ability to exercise those powers:
	+ the effectiveness of formal checks and balances
	+ key variables such as party support in Congress
	+ the prevailing orientation of the Supreme Court
	+ the attitudes of the media and public opinion.
 | Students should examine constraints on presidential power, assessing which is most effective and when. Students should look over their Supreme Court and Congress notes to remind themselves of the checks that the judiciary and legislature place on the President.Students should debate whether Congress or the President has the upper hand in domestic and foreign policy. | Students should draw upon their Constitutional knowledge to examine the executive branch in relation to the other branches of government. Students should understand the concepts and implications of the constitutional principles of checks and balances and separation of powers. In particular, students should understand that this means that the President often has to rely on the power to persuade.Students should focus on the factors which limit the President’s power. In particular, students should consider if a President’s power inevitably declines in a second term in office and whether Presidential careers can ever live up to expectations. Students should understand the constraints placed on the President in both domestic and foreign policy. Students should consider the extent to which Presidents control foreign policy. In particular, students should consider whether the President is stronger abroad than at home.Students should learn about the powers which Congress and the Supreme Court have to check presidential power. Students should then consider the extent to which these powers are effective. In particular, students should consider the ability of Congress to check the Presidents foreign policy and informal powers. Students should also consider Presidential influence on the Supreme Court through appointments. | Chapter 6: ‘The Presidency’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 10: ‘The Presidency’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 23, Number 4, April 2014: *The modern President: transformational leader or facilitator?* Neil Whiskerd |
| 10 | A | US civil rights ([3.2.1.8](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):the role of pressure groups in promoting and supporting rights. | Students should draw upon their knowledge of pressure groups to assess the extent to which they promote and support civil liberties. | Students should consider if pressure groups are able to represent the views of the electorate more accurately than political parties on the key policy issues that dominate US politics including the environment and global warming; the economy and taxation; law and order and capital punishment; social policy such as immigration and healthcare; moral issues such as abortion, euthanasia; and equality and rights such as gay marriage, gun control, affirmative action and freedom of speech. | Chapter 8: *‘Race and ethnic politics’* in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 12: ‘The Security State’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Chapter 15: ‘Regulating Morality: Civil Rights, Liberties and Conscience Issues’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition) |
| 10 | B | The executive branch of government – President ([3.2.1.3](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)): * the relationship between the presidency and other institutions
	+ Vice President
	+ Cabinet.
 | Students should understand the role and significance of the Vice President. Students should understand the role and significance of the cabinet. | Students should focus on the importance of the role of Vice President and factors which affect it. Students should then look at the factors taken into account when the President chooses their cabinet. In particular, students should focus on the significance of the cabinet in the executive branch. | Chapter 6: ‘The Presidency’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 10: ‘The Presidency’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 23, Number 4, April 2014 (extra resources archive): [US politics: The role of the vice president.](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2023%20No%204/PolRev-23_4-Role-of-vice-president.doc?ext=.doc) Andrew Axelby |
| 11 | A | The impact of salient political issues concerning civil rights and liberties on US politics in relation to one of the following ([3.2.1.8](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):* abortion
* race
* immigration
* religion
* freedom of speech
* gender
* sexual orientation
* privacy
* disability
* the right to bear arms.
 | Students should consider to what extent the Bill of Rights, subsequent amendments and Supreme Court rulings have protected civil liberties on a number of issues. | Students should focus on the impact of salient political issues concerning civil rights and liberties on US politics in relation to one topic. It is recommended that students focus on a number of Supreme Court cases in relation to that one topic over a period of time. Particular attention should be paid to the most recent cases. | Chapter 12: ‘The Security State’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Chapter 15: ‘Regulating Morality: Civil Rights, Liberties and Conscience Issues’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 25, Number 3, February 2016 (extra resources archive): [US politics: Gun ownership](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2025%20No%203/PoliticsReview25_3_US_Gun_ownership.pdf?ext=.pdf). Jeremy TaylorPolitics Review Volume 24, Number 1, September 2014 (extra resources archive): [US politics: Campaign finance in the USA and the First Amendment](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2024%20No%201/PolRev24_1_USPoliticsCampaignFinance.doc?ext=.doc). Simon LemieuxPolitics Review Volume 26, Number 3, February 2017: *US immigration reform.* Sarra Jenkins |
| 11 | B | The executive branch of government – President ([3.2.1.3](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):* the relationship between the presidency and other institutions:
	+ Executive Office of the President
	+ federal bureaucracy
	+ federal agencies.
 | Students should understand the role and significance of the executive office of the President. Students should understand the role and significance of the federal bureaucracy. Students should understand the role and significance of other federal agencies. Students should examine why the relationship between the president and these institutions varies from one president to another. | Students should understand what the EOP is and the significance of it both as a whole and the individuals within it. Students should consider how the role of such individuals is dependent upon each President and can vary over time.Students should understand what the federal bureaucracy is and how it can enhance presidential power. Students should also focus on other federal agencies and their ability to enhance presidential power. | Chapter 6: ‘The Presidency’ in *A2 US Government & Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 10: ‘The Presidency’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition) |
| 12 | A | US civil rights ([3.2.1.8](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):* the impact of salient political issues concerning civil rights and liberties on US politics in relation to one of the following:
	+ abortion
	+ race
	+ immigration
	+ religion
	+ freedom of speech
	+ gender
	+ sexual orientation
	+ privacy
	+ disability
	+ the right to bear arms.
 | Students should consider to what extent the Bill of Rights, subsequent amendments and Supreme Court rulings have protected civil liberties on a number of issues. Students should finish their study of US politics by practicing a 9 mark past paper question on civil rights as well as a 25 mark stimulus question. | Students should focus on the impact of salient political issues concerning civil rights and liberties on US politics in relation to one topic. It is recommended that students focus on a number of Supreme Court cases in relation to that one topic over a period of time. Particular attention should be paid to the most recent cases. | Chapter 8: ‘Race and ethnic politics’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 15: ‘Regulating Morality: Civil Rights, Liberties and Conscience Issues’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 26, Number 4, April 2017: *Has affirmative action been good for the USA?* Katie Shapiro and Kay MoxonPolitics Review Volume 23, Number 3, February 2014 (extra resources archive): [US politics: Five things you need to know about race](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2023%20No%203/PolRev-23_3-US-race.doc?ext=.doc). Rowena HammalPolitics Review Volume 25, Number 2, November 2015 (extra resources archive): [US politics: Race in the USA](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2025%20No%202/PoliticsReview25_2_US_Race.docx?ext=.docx). Simon Lemieux |
| 12 | B | The executive branch of government – President ([3.2.1.3](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):* evidence of waxing and waning presidential power
* the debate about the ‘Imperial versus Imperilled Presidency’.
 | Students should examine case studies of recent Presidents and focus on one example that shows the waxing and waning of presidential power. Students should debate to what extent the modern presidency is an ‘imperial presidency’ or an ‘imperilled presidency’?Students should consider whether the President is more powerful in their first or second term.Students should finish their study of the US Presidency by practicing a 9 mark past paper question as well as a 25 mark stimulus question | Historical examples of presidential power waxing and waning include Franklin D. Roosevelt and the Executive Office of the President, John F. Kennedy and the Cuban missile crisis, Ronald Reagan and Bill Clinton’s relationships with Congress depending on which party controls Congress.Students should clearly understand definitions of the terms ‘imperial presidency’ and ‘imperilled presidency’ and which presidents are most associated with these terms. | Chapter 6: ‘The Presidency’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 10: ‘The Presidency’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 26, Number 4, April 2017: *Obama’s second term: success or failure?* Edward AshbeePolitics Review Volume 25, Number 4, April 2016: *The US Presidency: are second-term President’s lame ducks?* Anthony BennettPolitics Review Volume 24, Number 2, November 2014 (extra resources archive): [President Obama](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2024%20No%202/PolRev24_2_ActivityObama_1.doc?ext=.doc). Katy Ivey. In this exercise you will look at the highs and lows of Obama's presidency so farPolitics Review Volume 24, Number 2, November 2014: Is Obama too cautious a president? Simon Lemieux and Ruth TarrantPolitics Review Volume 22, Number 4, April 2013 (extra resources archive): [US politics: An assessment of Obama's first term](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2022%20No%204/PolRev-22_4-US-politics_Obama-s-first-term.pdf?ext=.pdf). James SimpsonPolitics Review Volume 22, Number 4, April 2013: *Obama’s first term: promise unfulfilled?* Anthony Bennett |

Dual teaching model (ii)

Under this model, it is assumed that two teachers will share responsibility for the Paper 2 component, with both teaching Paper 2 material in the summer term of Year 1 and Teacher B continuing to teach Paper 2 material in the Autumn and Spring terms of Year 2, at which stage Teacher A has moved on to delivering Paper 3 content.

### 3.2 Year 1: Summer term

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Week | Teacher | Specification content and skills | Activities | Notes | Resources |
| 1 | A | The electoral process and direct democracy ([3.2.1.5](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)): * electoral systems used in the USA
* main characteristics of presidential and congressional elections and campaigns.
 | Students should understand the definitions of the following political concepts and why they are important in US elections: primaries, caucuses, national conventions, Electoral College, propositions and initiatives.Students should learn about the types of elections that take place in the US. They should examine the factors that affect the result as well as the strengths and weaknesses of mid-term and Presidential elections. | Students should study the different types of primaries/caucuses including invisible primaries, the national conventions, presidential debates and the Electoral College (this may include congressional elections and major propositions/initiatives). In particular, students should consider the advantages and disadvantages of the electoral system and initiatives.Students should learn about how often elections occur and what the requirements are for candidates stand. In particular, students should focus on recent elections, both Presidential and mid-term. Students should understand what mid-term elections are, when they occur and what offices are being filled. Students should consider why mid-term elections are potentially, but not necessarily, important. Students should focus on the results, campaigns and factors which have affected the outcome of recent mid-term elections. Students should also consider the impact of a lack of congressional term limits. Students should consider the factors shaping the outcome of the most recent elections, both Presidential and mid-term. Students should understand the reasons for incumbent advantage. They should also learn the similarities and differences between mid-term and presidential years. Students should also consider the possible implications for future elections. | Chapter 2: ‘Elections and Voting’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 6: ‘Elections and Political Participation’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 26, Number 4, April 2017 (extra resources archive): *2016 US election results* Emma KilheeneyPolitics Review Volume 24, Number 4, April 2015: *The 2014 mid-term elections: How significant are they?* Edward Ashbee |
| 1 | B | UK judiciary (nearing end of Paper 1 content) ([3.1.1.4](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)). |  |  |  |
| 2 | A | The electoral process and direct democracy ([3.2.1.5](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)): * candidate selection and nomination:
* primaries
* caucuses
* national nominating conventions.
 | Students should examine the methods for selecting Presidential candidates and evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of each method – primaries, caucuses and national conventions. | Students should learn what the requirements are for Presidential candidates. In particular, students should focus on how Presidential candidates are selected and how the Electoral College system works. Students should understand the procedures for primary elections (closed and open) and caucuses. Students should focus on the advantages and disadvantages of each. Students should understand the pattern of primaries and caucuses and the extent of 'frontloading’. Students should also understand conventions, their frequency and when and where they are held. Students should also understand that although the traditional functions of conventions have declined, they remain important. | Chapter 2: ‘Elections and Voting’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 6: ‘Elections and Political Participation’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 26, Number 3, February 2017: *The 2016 presidential election: ‘Make America Great Again’.* Clodagh HarringtonPolitics Review Volume 26, Number 3, February 2017: *Are presidential campaigns too long?* Charlie Barrowcliff and Anthony BennettPolitics Review Volume 24, Number 4, April 2015: *Is the process for nominating presidential candidates hopelessly flawed?* Neil Whiskerd and Anthony Bennett |
| 2 | B | UK judiciary (end of Paper 1 content for teacher B) ([3.1.1.4](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)). |  |  |  |
| 3 | A | The electoral process and direct democracy ([3.2.1.5](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)): debates concerning the workings, outcomes and impact of the electoral college system on campaigns. | Students should learn about how the Electoral College works and debate if it should be reformed. | Students should understand the advantages and disadvantages of the Electoral College. Students should consider possible replacements for the Electoral College and focus on why it is unlikely to be reformed or abolished. | Chapter 2: ‘Elections and Voting’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 6: ‘Elections and Political Participation’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 23, Number 2, November 2013: *Should the Electoral College be replaced by a national popular vote?* Justin Whitton and Alastair Endersby |
| 3 | B | The constitutional framework of US government ([3.2.1.1](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):nature and significance of the US Constitution. | Introduction to studying US politics – students should read ‘*A beginner’s guide to studying US politics’* and *‘US politics: Ten things you need to know’.*Students should examine the nature and significance of the US Constitution. They should outline the features of it as a codified constitution.  | Students should understand that the US constitution is codified, entrenched and judicable within a federal system of government. Students should also consider the importance of the US constitution, both historically and in the present day. In particular, students should consider whether the US constitution remains, or ever was, a beacon of democracy. | Politics Review Volume 26, Number 1, September 2016 (extra resources archive): [US politics: A beginner’s guide to studying US politics](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2026%20No%201/PoliticsReview26_1_US-politics_beginners.docx?ext=.docx). Jeremy TaylorPolitics Review Volume 24, Number 4, April 2015 (extra resources archive): [US politics: Ten things you need to know](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2024%20No%204/PoliticsReview24_4_US_politics_Ten_things.doc?ext=.doc). Simon Lemieux. An article offering essential insights into the sometimes puzzling world of US politicsChapter 2: ‘Beliefs, Values and American Society’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Chapter 1: ‘The Constitution’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 3: ‘Constitutional government’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition) |
| 4 | A | The electoral process and direct democracy ([3.2.1.5](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)): * factors determining electoral outcomes:
* money
* media
* issues
* leadership
* the significance of incumbency
* debates about campaign finance.
 | Students should understand the methods which determine electoral outcomes and evaluate to what extent each has been significant in recent elections. Students should debate which issue was most important in the outcome of the two most recent elections. | Students should understand the different methods of financing campaigns such as matching funds, federal grants and self-financing. Students should consider the arguments for and against each method. Students should learn about the role of campaign finance as well as the extent of its success and recent attempts at reform. Students should understand the significance of the role of televised Presidential debates and the media in general.Using examples, students should consider the impact of leadership on the outcome of recent elections. | Chapter 2: ‘Elections and Voting’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 6: ‘Elections and Political Participation’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 24, Number 1, September 2014 (extra resources archive): [US politics: Campaign finance in the USA and the First Amendment](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2024%20No%201/PolRev24_1_USPoliticsCampaignFinance.doc?ext=.doc). Simon Lemieux |
| 4 | B | The constitutional framework of US government ([3.2.1.1](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):* significance of constitutional principles:
* separation of powers
* checks and balances
* federalism
* framework of government laid down in the constitution.
 | Students should learn a solid definition of each of the constitutional principles. The strengths and weaknesses of each principle should be evaluated.Students should examine the aims of the Founding Fathers and the framework of government they laid down. They should identify strengths and weaknesses of their aims, taking into account conservative and liberal perspectives. | It is important, when learning about the principles of the US constitution that students distinguish between the concepts separation of powers and checks and balances. Within the study of separation of powers, an emphasis should be placed on separation of personnel, and shared powers between the three branches of government. Students should understand the full range of checks and balances available to each branch to check the power of the other two. In particular, students should consider how Congress is able to check the power of the President and vice versa. It should also be understood that the Supreme Court can check the power of both branches through judicial review. Students should focus on the extent to which the three branches of the Federal government effectively check each other. Finally, students should consider whether these constitutional principles help or hinder the US system of government.Students should be able to evaluate whether or not the aims of the Founding Fathers should be adhered to in the twenty-first century. In particular, students should show an appreciation of competing views on whether or not the Founding Fathers’ views should be taken into account when interpreting the constitution today. Students should focus on conservative and liberal perspectives and later link this to strict and loose constructionism when studying the US Judiciary. | Chapter 2: ‘Beliefs, Values and American Society’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Chapter 1: ‘The Constitution’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 3: ‘Constitutional government’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 23, Number 4, April 2014 (extra resources archive): [Revision: The US Constitution](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2023%20No%204/PolRev-23_4-US-Constitution.ppt?ext=.ppt). Rowena Hammal |
| 5 | A | The electoral process and direct democracy ([3.2.1.5](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)): direct democracy at state level: referendums, initiatives, propositions, recall elections and debates concerning their use.  | Students should study propositions, referendums and recall elections and evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of each. | In particular, students should understand how states use propositions. Students should consider the advantages and disadvantages of this. Students should also focus on the contribution of referendums, initiatives, propositions and recall elections on direct democracy. Students should consider the advantages and disadvantages of each. | Chapter 2: ‘Elections and Voting’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 6: ‘Elections and Political Participation’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 24, Number 1, September 2014: Ballot measures in the USA: good or bad for democracy? Andrew Fearnley |
| 5 | B | The constitutional framework of US government ([3.2.1.1](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):federal system of government and federal state relations.  | Students should examine the extent to which the federal government’s influence over the states has increased in recent years and whether or not this undermines the importance of the constitutional principle of federalism.  | Students should understand how and why federalism is enshrined in the constitution, even though it is not explicitly mentioned. Students should also learn about the devolvement of federalism and the idea of new federalism. In particular, students should consider whether or not the principle of federalism has been eroded due to the expanse of federal government power.Students will be required to learn about the relationship between the federal government and the states in recent years.  | Chapter 1: ‘The Constitution’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 3: ‘Constitutional government’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Chapter 4: ‘Federalism: Why the States Still Matter’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 25, Number 4, April 2016: *Is the US federal government too powerful?* Ross Maggs and Simon Lemieux |
| 6 | A | The electoral process and direct democracy ([3.2.1.5](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)): * voting behaviour and the main variables affecting the way people vote in the USA
* links between parties and their core voting coalitions.
 | Students should understand the factors that explain voting behaviour, both in Presidential and Congressional elections. Students should use examples from recent elections to identify recent factors in voting behaviour. | Students should consider which factors are most significant in determining voting behaviour.Students should understand the links between parties and their core voting coalitions. Students should consider to what extent they have strengthened or weakened in recent years. | Chapter 2: ‘Elections and Voting’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 6: ‘Elections and Political Participation’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 24, Number 3, February 2015 (extra resources archive): [US politics: The values of Republican and Democrat voters](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2024%20No%203/PoliticsReview24_3_Republicans_Democrats_values.doc?ext=.doc). Katie Shapiro |
| 6 | B | The constitutional framework of US government ([3.2.1.1](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):amendment process.  | Students should learn about the amendment process. They should examine the advantages and disadvantages of the process. | Students will be required to understand the methods available to amend the US constitution. This will require an understanding both formal methods available to amend the constitution, involving Congress and the states as well as the option involving a constitutional convention. However, it should also be stressed that the constitution can be amended informally through judicial review. In particular, students should consider whether it is too difficult to amend the US constitution. | Chapter 1: ‘The Constitution’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 3: ‘Constitutional government’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition) |
| 7 | A | The electoral process and direct democracy ([3.2.1.5](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)): * recent factors in voting behaviour
* issues, candidates
* the significance of recent (post 1980) and historic (eg 1932 and 1968) re-aligning election and the factors that influenced voting
* split ticket voting and high levels of abstention in US elections.
 | Students should use examples from recent elections, as well as historical examples, to identify factors that lead to changes in voting behaviour. Students should understand what split ticket voting and split districts are, as well as gerrymandering. Students should consider their impact on elections and representation.Students should debate why turnout is so low in US elections and if this matters.Students should finish their study of US elections and referenda by practicing a 9 mark past paper question. | Students should consider whether candidates or issues have played a more significant role in voting behaviour in recent elections.Students should consider the extent of split-ticket voting and why this is. In particular, students should consider the consequences of split-ticket voting. Students should learn why gerrymandering takes place and the impact of this on elections and representation. Students should understand that there are high levels of abstention in US elections and low turnout in primary and general elections. Students should consider the reasons for this and consequences of it. | Chapter 2: ‘Elections and Voting’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 6: ‘Elections and Political Participation’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 23, Number 4, April 2014: Split ticket voting. Katie ShapiroPolitics Review Volume 23, Number 3, February 2014 (extra resources archive): [US politics: Turnout in US elections](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2023%20No%203/PolRev-23_3-US-turnout.doc?ext=.doc). Katy Ivey |
| 7 | B | The constitutional framework of US government ([3.2.1.1](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):debates concerning the importance of the US Constitution to the working of contemporary US government.  | Students should evaluate the overall strengths and weaknesses of the US constitution.Students should debate if the US constitution remains fit for purpose in the 21st century. | Students should focus on a number of key debates and criticisms of the US constitution. Students should consider if the constitutional principles of separation of powers and checks and balances are an obstacle to effective government. Students should also consider if the modern constitution has been transformed beyond recognition from the vision of the Founding Fathers. In particular, students should consider if this is positive or negative development. | Chapter 1: ‘The Constitution’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 3: ‘Constitutional government’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 23, Number 3, February 2014: *The US Constitution: does it ensure limited government?* Robert Singh |
| 8 | A | US political parties ([3.2.1.6](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):* the two main political parties (Democratic and Republican):
* ideologies
* values
* policies
* traditions
* party organisation.
 | Students should create a profile of what the Democrat and Republican parties stand for. They should identify the values and policies of both parties today, including similarities and differences.Students should understand how the two major parties are organised. | Students should learn about the traditions and ideologies of the two major parties. In particular, students should understand the evolution of the main political parties from ‘umbrella’ parties to increasingly ideological/partisan parties. | Chapter 3: ‘Political parties’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 5: ‘The Changing Role of Political Parties’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 23, Number 1, September 2013 (extra resources archive): [Revision: US political parties - what’s the difference? Rowena Hammal](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2023%20No%201/PolRev-23_1-US-politcal-parties.ppt?ext=.ppt)Politics Review Volume 25, Number 4, April 2016 (extra resources archive): [US politics: 2016 Republican candidates](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2025%20No%204/PoliticsReview25_4_US_Republican_candidates.pdf?ext=.pdf). Clare StansfieldPolitics Review Volume 25, Number 4, April 2016 (extra resources archive): *The main ideas and policies of the Democratic Party*. Kay Moxon |
| 8 | B | The constitutional framework of US government ([3.2.1.1](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):the protection of civil liberties and rights under the constitution, Bill of Rights, and supreme court rulings.  | Students should examine the Bill of Rights and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the document as well as the extent to which it has been upheld.Students should finish their study of the US constitution by practicing a 9 mark past paper question. |  | Chapter 1: ‘The Constitution’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 3: ‘Constitutional government’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 25, Number 3, February 2016: *The US Constitution: a protection against the growth of the security state?* Andrew Colclough |
| 9 | A | US political parties ([3.2.1.6](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)): the ideological changes in both the Democrat and Republican parties making them more distinct and polarized. | Students should learn about the concepts ‘red America’, ‘blue America’ and ‘purple America’. Students should look at the recent Democrat and Republican parties, comparing them to the parties historically, and identify any ideological changes.  | Students should understand the transformation of the two major parties from broad non-ideological coalitions of 1950s and 1960s into more ideologically cohesive parties of today. Students should learn that traditionally the two major parties covered a wide ideological spread. Democrats included liberals from the West coast and North-east America as well as conservatives from the South. Republicans included conservatives from the Midwest as well as moderates from the North-east. Students should learn about the importance of the Solid South in the 1990s and how its break up contributed to both parties becoming ideologically cohesive. This resulted in some conservative Democrat politicians switching to the Republicans and some moderate Republicans switching to Democrats. | Chapter 3: ‘Political parties’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 5: ‘The Changing Role of Political Parties’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 23, Number 1, September 2013 (extra resources archive): [Revision: US political parties - what’s the difference? Rowena Hammal](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2023%20No%201/PolRev-23_1-US-politcal-parties.ppt?ext=.ppt)Politics Review Volume 25, Number 4, April 2016 (extra resources archive): [US politics: 2016 Republican candidates](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2025%20No%204/PoliticsReview25_4_US_Republican_candidates.pdf?ext=.pdf). Clare StansfieldPolitics Review Volume 25, Number 4, April 2016 (extra resources archive): *The main ideas and policies of the Democratic Party*. Kay Moxon |
| 9 | B | The judicial branch of government ([3.2.1.4](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):* process of selection and appointment of Supreme Court judges
* current composition of the Court.
 | Students should learn about the current Supreme Court justices including which President appointed them and their ideological leaning. Students should learn about how justices are appointed, factors taken into account when appointing justices and the role of the Senate in the process. | Students should focus on the current composition of the Supreme Court. In particular, students should look at recent appointments to the court and their impact. Students should consider why the nomination process is so politically controversial and has been criticized. It should be stressed that justices can be placed on an ideological spectrum according to how liberal or conservative they are in their decision making. The current court is split into two ideological blocs – a conservative quartet and a liberal quartet. The two blocs are separated by a single justice, sometimes described as the ‘swing justice’. Students should understand the significance of the ‘swing justice’. However, it should also be stressed that this can change over time – justices can become more or less liberal and conservative. It is also dependent upon the cases the justices hear in a particular court term.  | Chapter 7: ‘The Supreme Court, and the protection of rights and liberties’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 14: ‘The Supreme Court and Judicial Politics’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review March 2016 e-review: *Death of a Supreme Court justice*: Emma Kilheeney considers what the death of Justice Antonin Scalia means for the US Supreme Court and for ObamaPolitics Review Volume 24, Number 3, February 2015: *The Supreme Court: a political, not judicial, institution?* Robert Singh |
| 10 | A | US political parties ([3.2.1.6](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)): factionalised nature of the parties and internal divisions.  | Students should learn about the current ideological divisions within the two main parties and factions within them, including the Freedom Caucus and Tea Party in the Republican party and the Congressional Progressive Caucus in the Democrat party. | In particular, students should understand the differences between the fiscal conservatives, social conservatives and moderates in the Republican Party, as well as between liberal activists, centrists and moderates in the Democratic Party. In particular, students should focus on the values, influence and success of the different factions within each party. | Chapter 3: ‘Political parties’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 5: ‘The Changing Role of Political Parties’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition) |
| 10 | B | The judicial branch of government ([3.2.1.4](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):current composition – ideology of the justices and ways in which the constitution can be interpreted. | Students should learn definitions for the concepts of strict and loose constructionism, and judicial activism and restraint, including the merits and drawbacks of each approach. | Students should understand that the constitution is a vague document that can be interpreted in a number of ways, both depending on the specific case and on the views of the individual justices sitting on the Supreme Court. Students should understand that the judicial philosophy of the Supreme Court justices can be based on both their views on how the constitution should be interpreted as well as their political views – justices can, at times, reflect the views of the President who appoints them. | Chapter 7: ‘The Supreme Court, and the protection of rights and liberties’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 14: ‘The Supreme Court and Judicial Politics’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition) |
| 11 | A | US political parties ([3.2.1.6](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):debates concerning party decline or renewal ‒ weakness of US parties. | Students should debate the extent to which US parties are in a period of decline or renewal. | Students should learn about the debate that begun in 1970s over the continuing relevance of political parties. Students should focus on the extent to which parties continue to carry out their core functions and the extent to which these have been taken over by other bodies such as pressure groups.  | Chapter 3: ‘Political parties’ in *A2 US Government & Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 5: ‘The Changing Role of Political Parties’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 25, Number 2, November 2015: *US political parties: the source of dysfunction in US government?* Robert Singh |
| 11 | B | The judicial branch of government ([3.2.1.4](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):* significance of judicial review
* the nature of judicial power and the constitutional role of the Supreme Court as:
* the guardian of the constitution/constitutional interpretation
* protector of citizens’ rights.
 | Students should learn a definition of judicial review and examine how it came about. Students should learn that judicial review provides the Supreme Court with quasi legislative powers and that this has led to the court been accused of being political due to the ideology of the justices. Students should evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of this. Students should learn about the roles of the judiciary in protecting civil liberties and checking executive and legislative power.Students should evaluate the extent to which rights are adequately protected by the Supreme Court.Students should examine the extent to which the Supreme Court acts as a sufficient check and balance on the elected branches of government.Students should debate if the Supreme Court has become too powerful for an unelected body in a democracy. | Students should learn about what judicial review is and how it began in *Marbury v Madison* in 1803. Students should be aware that through judicial review, the Supreme Court can check the power of the legislature and executive, as well as protect civil liberties. Students should appreciate the significance of judicial review as well as the controversy surrounding it. Students should understand that the Supreme Court uses judicial review, within the constitutional principle of checks and balances, to check the power of the other branches of government. As such, students should learn about significant cases relating to this. However, it should also be stressed that the executive and legislature can challenge the Supreme Court, either by amending the constitution or in other ways. Students should examine the extent to which the Bill of Rights has been protected by the Supreme Court. This should then be expanded to cover all constitutional rights. Students should consider if all groups in society have their rights equally protected by the court. Students should focus on whether the court can be correctly described as ‘a political, not a judicial institution’ and whether it can be described as an ‘imperial judiciary’. | Chapter 7: ‘The Supreme Court, and the protection of rights and liberties’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 14: ‘The Supreme Court and Judicial Politics’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 23, Number 2, November 2013 (extra resources archive): [US politics: The US Supreme Court — bastion of conservatism or beacon of liberalism?](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2023%20No%202/PolRev-23_2-The-US-Supreme-Court.doc?ext=.doc) Simon LemieuxPolitics Review Volume 26, Number 2, November 2016: *The US Supreme Court: an effective protector of civil rights and liberties?* Robert SinghPolitics Review Volume 22, Number 4, April 2013: *Does the US Supreme Court have too much power?* Kaylan Billingsley and Anthony Bennett |
| 12 | A | US political parties ([3.2.1.6](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):* two party dominance in US politics
* significance of third parties and independent candidates.
 | Students should define a two-party system and debate to what extent there is one in the US.Students should study examples of third parties and the different types in the US. They should evaluate the extent to which they have influenced US politics and elections.Students should finish their study of US political parties by practicing a 9 mark past paper question. | In particular, students should focus on the extent to which there is two-party dominance of state politics, Congress and the Presidency. They should understand the role played by third parties and the influence they have been able to exert despite a lack of electoral success. In particular, students should learn about the impact third parties have had in state and national politics, including in Congressional and Presidential elections. Students should learn the reasons why the minor parties have been unable to break the dominance of the Democrats and Republicans and factors which limit the success of minor parties. Students should consider the policy impact of third parties and independent candidates even when their electoral impact is limited.  | Chapter 3: ‘Political parties’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 5: ‘The Changing Role of Political Parties’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition) |
| 12 | B | The judicial branch of government ([3.2.1.4](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):* debates about the political significance of the Supreme Court:
* landmark rulings and related debates and controversies
* shaping public policy in terms of, for example, federalism and civil rights, race, gender, punishment.
 | Students should study a number of landmark rulings made by the Supreme Court. Students should learn about the outcome of each case, why it was politically significant and which justices voted in favour and against the decision.Specifically, students should focus their learning on two examples of landmark rulings and examine, in depth, related debates and controversies.Students should also choose one area of public policy to focus on and assess the significance of the judiciary in shaping it.Students should evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the Supreme Court and its ability to shape public policy and check government power.Students should finish their study of the US judiciary by practicing a 9 mark past paper question. | Students should understand that a number of Supreme Court cases are politically significant – either in relation to citizens’ rights or as a check on executive or legislative power. However, it should also be stressed that not all cases are as politically significant as each other. Students should focus on recent cases, as well as older ones, that shape public policy in terms of civil rights, federalism and executive power. In particular, students should understand that some cases are politically significant because they split the court, sometimes ideologically. However, it should also be stressed that a high number of cases are decided in a unanimous manner. When deciding what a landmark ruling is, students should consider Court decisions which establish a significant new legal principle or concept, or otherwise substantially change the interpretation of existing law. Examples could be:* The Warren Court 1954–1969

• Brown *vs* Topeka Board of Education (1954)• Miranda *vs* Arizona (1966)• The Burger Court 1969–1986• Roe *vs* Wade (1973)• United States *vs* Nixon (1974)• The Rehnquist Court 1986–2005• Texas *vs* Johnston (1989)• Bush *vs* Gore (2000)• The Roberts Court 2005 – present• District of Columbia *vs* Heller (2008)• Obergefell *vs* Hodges (2015) | Chapter 7: ‘The Supreme Court, and the protection of rights and liberties’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 14: ‘The Supreme Court and Judicial Politics’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 24, Number 1, September 2014 (extra resources archive): [US politics: Campaign finance in the USA and the First Amendment](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2024%20No%201/PolRev24_1_USPoliticsCampaignFinance.doc?ext=.doc). Simon Lemieux |

Year 2 : Autumn term

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| Week | Teacher | Specification content | Activities | Notes | Resources |
| 1 | A | Paper 3 only (see relevant SOW). |  |  |  |
| 1 | B | The legislative branch of government – Congress ([3.2.1.2](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):* the structure, role and powers of the US Congress
* composition of congress, the different terms of office and party allegiance.
 | Students should learn about the powers that each chamber has, as well as the joint powers that the House of Representatives and Senate share. Students should evaluate the extent to which the Senate has more power and influence than the House.Students should learn about the composition of Congress including how many seats each party has in each chamber, the terms of office and requirements set out to become either a Congressman or a Senator.Students should also learn about significant posts within each chamber including the Speaker, Majority and Minority leaders and whips. Students should know who currently holds each post and provide an example of what they do in their role and how effectively they do it. | In particular, students should consider the Senate’s power to filibuster legislation and appointments as well as ratifying treaties and confirming Presidential appointments. Students should also consider the key factors that affect the relationship between the Senate and the House.In particular, students should learn about leadership in Congress, understanding the roles and significance of the Speaker, Majority and Minority leaders and the whips. Students should understand the power that each party leader exerts in Congress. Students should also consider the significance of political parties within Congress. | Chapter 5: ‘Congress’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 9: ‘Congress as Legislature: Functions and Powers’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 26, Number 4, April 2017 (extra resources archive): *2016 US election results*. Emma KilheeneyPolitics Review Volume 24, Number 2, November 2014 (extra resources archive): [Colourful characters in Congress](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2024%20No%202/PolRev24_2_USPoliticsCongress.doc?ext=.doc). Simon LemieuxPolitics Review Volume 23, Number 4, April 2014 (extra resources archive): [US politics: Filibuster or filibluster?](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2023%20No%204/PolRev-23_4-Filibuster-or-filibluster.doc?ext=.doc) Rowena Hammal |
| 2 | A | Paper 3 only. |  |  |  |
| 2 | B | The legislative branch of government – Congress ([3.2.1.2](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):debates concerning the functions, powers and effectiveness of congress in legislation, oversight and the power of the purse. | Students should understand the legislative process within Congress and understand why so few bills are passed.Students should also understand the ways in which Congress has oversight over the executive. Students should evaluate the extent to which Congress performs its roles of legislation and oversight effectively.Students should understand the factors that influence how members of Congress vote. | Students should understand that Congress is often accused of being an ineffective legislator. Students should learn the percentage of bills passed in Congress. In particular, students should understand the legislative process and the blocking points which contribute to Congress passing so few bills. In particular, students should consider Congress’ power of the purse. Recent examples should be used to illustrate the difficulty that the President can have in getting Congress to pass their budget. However, it should also be stressed that the power of the purse enables Congress to check Presidential power, especially in relation to executive orders and foreign policy. Students should focus on the impact of increasing partisanship on the ability of Congress to fulfil all of its functions. Finally, students should understand the oversight role Congress has and the ability of Congress to impeach the President and members of the Supreme Court. In particular, students should understand the extent to which are parties the most significant influence on voting in Congress.  | Chapter 5: ‘Congress’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 9: ‘Congress as Legislature: Functions and Powers’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 26, Number 1, September 2016: *Is Congress overly dysfunctional and partisan?* Anthony Bennett |
| 3 | A | Paper 3 only. |  |  |  |
| 3 | B | The legislative branch of government – Congress ([3.2.1.2](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):party system and committee system and their significance within congress.  | Students should learn about the different types of committees in Congress and evaluate to what extent they help Congress to legislate and scrutinize the executive. They should also learn about the party system in Congress. | Students should understand the different committees that exist in Congress and consider how committees help Congress to fulfil its roles of representation, legislation and scrutiny. In particular, students should understand the role of Committee Chairmen in Congress, their influence and why have they been the subject of criticism.In particular, students should understand the extent to which are parties the most significant influence on voting in Congress.  | Chapter 5: ‘Congress’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 9: ‘Congress as Legislature: Functions and Powers’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition) |
| 4 | A | Paper 3 only. |  |  |  |
| 4 | B | The legislative branch of government – Congress ([3.2.1.2](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):representative role of senators and representatives.  | Students should evaluate the extent to which Congress is representative. | Students should understand that if Congress is to be representative, it needs to fulfill a number of functions. It needs to contain Congressman and Senators who represent the views of their constituents, it needs to be socially representative and it needs to have districts and states which are fair and competitive. Students should consider if the House of Representatives carries out its representative role more effectively than the Senate. Students should also consider if members of Congress are out of touch with the people who elect them and are more concerned with local issues than national or international issues. Students should also consider the impact of pork barrel politics on representation and the effectiveness of Congress overall. | Chapter 5: ‘Congress’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 9: ‘Congress as Legislature: Functions and Powers’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Chapter 8: ‘US Legislators and Their Constituents’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 24, Number 3, February 2015: *Gerrymandering in the USA*. Katie ShapiroPolitics Review Volume 23, Number 4, April 2014: *Split ticket voting*. Katie Shapiro |
| 5 | A | Paper 3 only. |  |  |  |
| 5 | B | The legislative branch of government – Congress ([3.2.1.2](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):relative strengths of the House of Representatives and the Senate.  | Students should evaluate the overall effectiveness of Congress and debate if Congress has become ‘the broken branch’. Students should also examine the House and the Senate separately.  | Students should understand the criticisms levelled at Congress – that it is significantly less effective when different parties control its two chambers, that it lacks effective leadership, it has no meaningful foreign policy role and that it is the broken branch. Students should consider these criticisms and focus on if Congress remains a powerful branch within the US system of government.  | Chapter 5: ‘Congress’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 9: ‘Congress as Legislature: Functions and Powers’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Chapter 8: ‘US Legislators and Their Constituents’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 24, Number 2, November 2014: *Congress: why is it so unpopular?* Anthony BennettPolitics Review Volume 23, Number 4, April 2014: *Is Congress the ‘broken branch’?* Rowena Hammal and Andy Baker |
| 6 | A | Paper 3 only. |  |  |  |
| 6 | B | The legislative branch of government – Congress ([3.2.1.2](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):relationship of congress to the executive branch of government and the supreme court. | Students should evaluate the extent to which Congress effectively performs its role of scrutinizing the executive.Students should finish their study of the US Congress by practicing a 9 mark past paper question. | Students should identify the checks that Congress places on the executive and Supreme Court. In particular, students should consider the ability of Congress to affect foreign policy and challenge a recent increase in executive power, particularly in relation to executive orders and executive agreements. Students should also consider the extent to which the President is able to circumvent Congress and if this renders Congress ineffective.  | Chapter 5: ‘Congress’ in *A2 US Government & Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 9: ‘Congress as Legislature: Functions and Powers’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Chapter 8: ‘US Legislators and Their Constituents’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition) |
| 7 | A | Paper 3 only. |  |  |  |
| 7 | B | The executive branch of government – President ([3.2.1.3](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):* sources of presidential power
* formal powers (enumerated and inherent powers outlined in Article 2 of the constitution) .
 | Students must select two relevant examples to demonstrate how sources of presidential power have been used by different presidents.Students should examine the formal powers awarded to the President, as set out in the constitution. | Students should learn what formal powers the Constitution sets out for the President – both in relation to domestic and foreign policy. As such, students should learn about the President’s ability to veto and pocket veto legislation. In particular, students should consider how much influence the President has over the legislative process. Students should also look at the President’s ability to appoint individuals to the executive and judicial branches. Students should also look at the foreign policy powers the President is granted in the constitution and the constraints on the President’s role as commander in chief. In particular, students should consider the effectiveness of each of the constitutional powers awarded to the President. | Chapter 6: ‘The Presidency’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 10: ‘The Presidency’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review October 2016 e-review: *What is post-truth politics?* Emma Kilheeney considers why lying is a key tool of today’s politicians and looks at the overturn of Obama’s veto in CongressPolitics Review Volume 26, Number 1, September 2016: *Recess appointments*. Mark Rathbone |
| 8 | A | Paper 3 only. |  |  |  |
| 8 | B | The executive branch of government – President ([3.2.1.3](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):informal powers (President as de facto party leader, agenda setter, world leader, modern developments such as the stretching of implied powers and the creation of institutions such as EXOP).  | Students should also examine the informal powers used by the President including executive orders, signing statements and executive agreements. | Students should focus on Article II and consider whether the vagueness of this has allowed the President to expand his powers in recent years. Students should learn about mechanisms available to the President to expand their powers such as the Executive Office of the President (EOP), and how this came about. Students should focus on methods the President uses to circumvent Congress such as executive orders, signing statements and executive agreements.  | Chapter 6: ‘The Presidency’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 10: ‘The Presidency’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 26, Number 3, February 2017 (extra resources archive): *What can we expect from President Trump?* Jeremy Taylor |
| 9 | A | Paper 3 only. |  |  |  |
| 9 | B | The executive branch of government – President ([3.2.1.3](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):* constraints on President’s ability to exercise those powers:
* the effectiveness of formal checks and balances
* key variables such as party support in Congress
* the prevailing orientation of the Supreme Court
* the attitudes of the media and public opinion.
 | Students should examine constraints on presidential power, assessing which is most effective and when. Students should look over their Supreme Court and Congress notes to remind themselves of the checks that the judiciary and legislature place on the President.Students should debate whether Congress or the President has the upper hand in domestic and foreign policy. | Students should draw upon their Constitutional knowledge to examine the executive branch in relation to the other branches of government. Students should understand the concepts and implications of the constitutional principles of checks and balances and separation of powers. In particular, students should understand that this means that the President often has to rely on the power to persuade.Students should focus on the factors which limit the President’s power. In particular, students should consider if a President’s power inevitably declines in a second term in office and whether Presidential careers can ever live up to expectations. Students should understand the constraints placed on the President in both domestic and foreign policy. Students should consider the extent to which Presidents control foreign policy. In particular, students should consider whether the President is stronger abroad than at home.Students should learn about the powers which Congress and the Supreme Court have to check presidential power. Students should then consider the extent to which these powers are effective. In particular, students should consider the ability of Congress to check the Presidents foreign policy and informal powers. Students should also consider Presidential influence on the Supreme Court through appointments. | Chapter 6: ‘The Presidency’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 10: ‘The Presidency’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 23, Number 4, April 2014: *The modern President: transformational leader or facilitator?* Neil Whiskerd |
| 10 | **A** | Paper 3 only. |  |  |  |
| 10 | B | The executive branch of government – President ([3.2.1.3](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):* the relationship between the presidency and other institutions:
* Vice President
* Cabinet.
 | Students should understand the role and significance of the Vice President. Students should understand the role and significance of the cabinet.  | Students should focus on the importance of the role of Vice President and factors which affect it. Students should then look at the factors taken into account when the President chooses their cabinet. In particular, students should focus on the significance of the cabinet in the executive branch. | Chapter 6: ‘The Presidency’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 10: ‘The Presidency’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 23, Number 4, April 2014 (extra resources archive): [US politics: The role of the vice president.](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2023%20No%204/PolRev-23_4-Role-of-vice-president.doc?ext=.doc) Andrew Axelby |
| 11 | A | Paper 3 only. |  |  |  |
| 11 | B | The executive branch of government – President ([3.2.1.3](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):* the relationship between the presidency and other institutions:
* Executive Office of the President
* federal bureaucracy
* federal agencies.
 | Students should understand the role and significance of the executive office of the President. Students should understand the role and significance of the federal bureaucracy. Students should understand the role and significance of other federal agencies. Students should examine why the relationship between the president and these institutions varies from one president to another. | Students should understand what the EOP is and the significance of it both as a whole and the individuals within it. Students should consider how the role of such individuals is dependent upon each President and can vary over time.Students should understand what the federal bureaucracy is and how it can enhance presidential power. Students should also focus on other federal agencies and their ability to enhance presidential power. | Chapter 6: ‘The Presidency’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 10: ‘The Presidency’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition) |
| 12 | A | Paper 3 only. |  |  |  |
| 12 | B | The executive branch of government – President ([3.2.1.3](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):* evidence of waxing and waning presidential power
* the debate about the ‘Imperial versus Imperilled Presidency’.
 | Students should examine case studies of recent Presidents and focus on one example that shows the waxing and waning of presidential power. Students should debate to what extent the modern presidency is an ‘imperial presidency’ or an ‘imperilled presidency’?Students should consider whether the President is more powerful in their first or second term.Students should finish their study of the US Presidency by practicing a 9 mark past paper question as well as a 25 mark stimulus question | Historical examples of presidential power waxing and waning include Franklin D. Roosevelt and the Executive Office of the President, John F. Kennedy and the Cuban missile crisis, Ronald Reagan and Bill Clinton’s relationships with Congress depending on which party controls Congress.Students should clearly understand definitions of the terms ‘imperial presidency’ and ‘imperilled presidency’ and which presidents are most associated with these terms. | Chapter 6: ‘The Presidency’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 10: ‘The Presidency’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 26, Number 4, April 2017: *Obama’s second term: success or failure?* Edward AshbeePolitics Review Volume 25, Number 4, April 2016: *The US Presidency: are second-term President’s lame ducks?* Anthony BennettPolitics Review Volume 24, Number 2, November 2014 (extra resources archive): [President Obama](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2024%20No%202/PolRev24_2_ActivityObama_1.doc?ext=.doc). Katy Ivey. In this exercise you will look at the highs and lows of Obama's presidency so farPolitics Review Volume 24, Number 2, November 2014: *Is Obama too cautious a president?* Simon Lemieux and Ruth TarrantPolitics Review Volume 22, Number 4, April 2013 (extra resources archive): [US politics: An assessment of Obama's first term](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2022%20No%204/PolRev-22_4-US-politics_Obama-s-first-term.pdf?ext=.pdf). James SimpsonPolitics Review Volume 22, Number 4, April 2013: *Obama’s first term: promise unfulfilled?* Anthony Bennett |

Year 2: Spring term

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Week | Teacher | Specification content  | Activities | Notes | Resources |
| 1 | A | Paper 3 only (see relevant SOW). |  |  |  |
| 1 | B | US pressure groups ([3.2.1.7](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):the extent of political pluralism in the USA.  | Students should learn why pressure groups exist and why the US political system provides so many ‘access points’ for them to exert influence.  | Students should understand the functions pressure groups perform and how they operate. Students should focus on the institutional, demographic and cultural factors which give US pressure groups a significant role in US politics.  | Chapter 4: ‘Pressure groups’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 13: ‘Organized Interests: The Real Power?’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition) |
| 2 | A | Paper 3 only. |  |  |  |
| 2 | B | US pressure groups ([3.2.1.7](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):typologies of pressure groups. | Students should learn about the different types of pressure group and how they can be categorized. | Students should study case studies of a variety of pressure groups to enable them to assess different typologies of pressure group. | Chapter 4: ‘Pressure groups’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 13: ‘Organized Interests: The Real Power?’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition) |
| 3 | A | Paper 3 only. |  |  |  |
| 3 | B | US pressure groups ([3.2.1.7](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):methods and tactics used by pressure groups to influence decision making. | Students should examine case studies of significant pressure groups and consider the extent to which they can influence policy and why this is.Students should debate if pressure groups help or hinder policy making in the US. | Students should learn why each of the federal branches of government offers different opportunities for pressure groups to advance their agendas. In particular, students should learn about the different access points within the federal system which pressure groups seek to influence and the motives for choosing particular access points. | Chapter 4: ‘Pressure groups’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 13: ‘Organized Interests: The Real Power?’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition) |
| 4 | A | Paper 3 only. |  |  |  |
| 4 | B | US pressure groups ([3.2.1.7](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):* pressure group funding of elections:
* funding of Washington insiders
* iron triangles
* reinforcing incumbency
* relative power of pressure groups vis-a-vis political parties.
 | Students should examine pressure group funding of elections.Students should debate if pressure groups or political parties are more powerful.Students should debate if pressure groups or political parties are more able to represent the views of the electorate on key policy issues.Complete the pressure groups quiz to test students’ knowledge. | Students should also understand the different methods used to influence each branch such as lobbying, campaign donation and direct action. Students should consider the extent to which activity by opposing groups is self-cancelling, and factors which conduce to the pre-eminence of some groups such as the NRA. Students should learn about the ability of pressure groups to dominate in Washington DC. Students should understand that this encompasses the three branches of the federal government - the Executive, Congress and the Supreme Court. Students should learn about policy making and enactment as well as policy execution, enforcement and interpretation. Students should understand what an ‘iron triangle’ is and have recent examples to illustrate this.Students should understand the power of pressure groups relative to other representative bodies such as political parties.  | Chapter 4: ‘Pressure groups’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 13: ‘Organized Interests: The Real Power?’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 25, Number 1, September 2015 (extra resources archive): [Activity: Pressure groups in the USA](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2025%20No%201/PoliticsReview25_1_Pressure_groups_quiz.pptx?ext=.pptx). Katy Ivey. A quiz to test your knowledge |
| 5 | A | Paper 3 only. |  |  |  |
| 5 | B | US pressure groups ([3.2.1.7](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):debates concerning the power of pressure groups in the USA. | Students should debate the extent to which pressure groups are anti-democratic and too powerful. Students should understand measures taken to limit the influence of pressure groups and their effectiveness. | Students should understand the debate over the role of pressure groups within the political system. Students should consider how far they enhance democracy, provide the opportunity to further the interests of all groups in society, stimulate political participation and disperse power rather than concentrating it in the hands of a few. Students should consider if pressure groups are anti-democratic and work to concentrate power for a few.  | Chapter 4: ‘Pressure groups’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 13: ‘Organized Interests: The Real Power?’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition) |
| 6 | A | Paper 3 only. |  |  |  |
| 6 | B | US pressure groups ([3.2.1.7](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):role and significance of Political Action Committees and Super PAC’s regarding electoral finance. | Students should understand what political action committees are and their significance on US elections.Students should finish their study of US pressure groups by practicing a 9 mark past paper question. | Students should understand the role that PAC’s and Super PAC’s play in electoral finance. Students should distinguish between ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ money by using recent examples. Students should consider the significance of PACs.  | Chapter 4: ‘Pressure groups’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 13: ‘Organized Interests: The Real Power?’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 23, Number 1, September 2013: *Super PACs*. Andrew Colclough |
| 7 | A | Paper 3 only. |  |  |  |
| 7 | B | US civil rights ([3.2.1.8](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):protection of civil liberties and rights under the constitution. | Students should assess to what extent civil rights are protected under the constitution.  | Students should consider this question in light of 9/11 and methods to reduce terrorism, Presidential executive orders, racial and ethnic politics, LGBT rights and abortion. | Chapter 8: ‘Race and ethnic politics’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 12: ‘The Security State’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Chapter 15: ‘Regulating Morality: Civil Rights, Liberties and Conscience Issues’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 25, Number 3, February 2016: *The US Constitution: a protection against the growth of the security state?* |
| 8 | A | Paper 3 only. |  |  |  |
| 8 | B | US civil rights ([3.2.1.8](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):protection of civil liberties and rights under the Bill of Rights and subsequent amendments. | Students should assess to what extent civil rights are protected under the Bill of Rights and subsequent amendments. | Students should consider this question in light of 9/11 and methods to reduce terrorism, Presidential executive orders, racial and ethnic politics, LGBT rights and abortion. | Chapter 8: ‘Race and ethnic politics’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 12: ‘The Security State’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Chapter 15: ‘Regulating Morality: Civil Rights, Liberties and Conscience Issues’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 25, Number 3, February 2016: *The US Constitution: a protection against the growth of the security state?* |
| 9 | A | Paper 3 only. |  |  |  |
| 9 | B | US civil rights ([3.2.1.8](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):protection of civil liberties and rights under the Supreme Court. | Students should assess to what extent civil rights are protected by the Supreme Court. | Students should assess the limitations of the Supreme Court’s ability to protect civil liberties.  | Chapter 8: ‘Race and ethnic politics’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 12: ‘The Security State’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Chapter 15: ‘Regulating Morality: Civil Rights, Liberties and Conscience Issues’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 25, Number 3, February 2016: *The US Constitution: a protection against the growth of the security state?* Andrew ColcloughPolitics Review Volume 26, Number 2, November 2016: *The US Supreme Court: an effective protector of civil rights and liberties?* Robert Singh |
| 10 | A | Paper 3 only. |  |  |  |
| 10 | B | US civil rights ([3.2.1.8](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):the role of pressure groups in promoting and supporting rights. | Students should draw upon their knowledge of pressure groups to assess the extent to which they promote and support civil liberties. | Students should consider if pressure groups are able to represent the views of the electorate more accurately than political parties on the key policy issues that dominate US politics including the environment and global warming; the economy and taxation; law and order and capital punishment; social policy such as immigration and healthcare; moral issues such as abortion, euthanasia; and equality and rights such as gay marriage, gun control, affirmative action and freedom of speech.  | Chapter 8: ‘Race and ethnic politics’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 12: ‘The Security State’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Chapter 15: ‘Regulating Morality: Civil Rights, Liberties and Conscience Issues’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition) |
| 11 | A | Paper 3 only. |  |  |  |
| 11 | B | US civil rights ([3.2.1.8](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)): * the impact of salient political issues concerning civil rights and liberties on US politics in relation to one of the following:
* abortion
* race
* immigration
* religion
* freedom of speech
* gender
* sexual orientation
* privacy
* disability
* the right to bear arms.
 | Students should consider to what extent the Bill of Rights, subsequent amendments and Supreme Court rulings have protected civil liberties on a number of issues.  | Students should focus on the impact of salient political issues concerning civil rights and liberties on US politics in relation to one topic. It is recommended that students focus on a number of Supreme Court cases in relation to that one topic over a period of time. Particular attention should be paid to the most recent cases. | Chapter 12: ‘The Security State’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Chapter 15: ‘Regulating Morality: Civil Rights, Liberties and Conscience Issues’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 25, Number 3, February 2016 (extra resources archive): [US politics: Gun ownership](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2025%20No%203/PoliticsReview25_3_US_Gun_ownership.pdf?ext=.pdf). Jeremy TaylorPolitics Review Volume 24, Number 1, September 2014 (extra resources archive): [US politics: Campaign finance in the USA and the First Amendment](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2024%20No%201/PolRev24_1_USPoliticsCampaignFinance.doc?ext=.doc). Simon LemieuxPolitics Review Volume 26, Number 3, February 2017: US immigration reform. Sarra Jenkins |
| 12 | A | Paper 3 only. |  |  |  |
| 12 | B | US civil rights ([3.2.1.8](http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF)):* the impact of salient political issues concerning civil rights and liberties on US politics in relation to one of the following:
* abortion
* race
* immigration
* religion
* freedom of speech
* gender
* sexual orientation
* privacy
* disability
* the right to bear arms.
 | Students should consider to what extent the Bill of Rights, subsequent amendments and Supreme Court rulings have protected civil liberties on a number of issues. Students should finish their study of US politics by practicing a 9 mark past paper question on civil rights as well as a 25 mark stimulus question. | Students should focus on the impact of salient political issues concerning civil rights and liberties on US politics in relation to one topic. It is recommended that students focus on a number of Supreme Court cases in relation to that one topic over a period of time. Particular attention should be paid to the most recent cases. | Chapter 8: ‘Race and ethnic politics’ in *A2 US Government and Politics* by Anthony J BennettChapter 15: ‘Regulating Morality: Civil Rights, Liberties and Conscience Issues’ in *American Politics and Society* by David McKay (2017: 9th Edition)Politics Review Volume 26, Number 4, April 2017: *Has affirmative action been good for the USA?* Katie Shapiro and Kay MoxonPolitics Review Volume 23, Number 3, February 2014 (extra resources archive): [US politics: Five things you need to know about race](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2023%20No%203/PolRev-23_3-US-race.doc?ext=.doc). Rowena HammalPolitics Review Volume 25, Number 2, November 2015 (extra resources archive): [US politics: Race in the USA](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/Politics%20Review/Pol%20Rev%20Vol%2025%20No%202/PoliticsReview25_2_US_Race.docx?ext=.docx). Simon Lemieux |