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POLITICS

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INTRODUCTION

THE EXAM AND THE ASSIGNMENT

PAPER 1

Each candidate will have to answer one question from each of the three sections and will have 1 hour and 45 minutes to complete all three. There will be two 20-mark essays and one 12-mark question. Candidates will have a choice of two questions in each section. Therefore, candidates should spend 40 minutes on each 20-mark essay, leaving 25 minutes for the 12-mark answer.

In terms of structure, candidates can follow the 'P.E.E.A.R.E.E.A.C.' paragraph format for both types of question, but there are many different structures used by schools.

Point – an opening sentence introducing the paragraph with a detailed description

Explain – a well-developed explanation of the Point sentence

Example – specific exemplification to prove the Explain sentence (a statistic, quote or event)

Analysis – 'do something' with the Example using analytical language (see Analysis Alphabet and the SQA definition of analysis below)

Rebuttal – balance the paragraph by providing a detailed description of an alternative argument

Explain – a well-developed explanation of the Rebuttal

Example – specific exemplification to prove the second Explain sentence (a statistic, quote or event)

Analysis – 'do something' with the Example using analytical language (see Analysis Alphabet and the SQA definition of analysis below)

Conclusion – an evaluative comment about the whole paragraph linking to the specific wording of the question (some schools call this a 'Link' sentence)

DON'T FORGET

Many schools simply teach the P.E.E.A. structure for 12-mark answers and encourage candidates to write four shorter paragraphs.

ONLINE

To view Analysis Alphabet, go to the link on our Digital Zone www.brightredbooks.net/subjects

ONLINE

For a full overview of the SQA arrangements, click the link on our Digital Zone www.brightredbooks.net/subjects

DON'T FORGET

One of the key differences between Higher Politics and Modern Studies is that overall conclusions (evaluations) should be longer, as they are worth 4 separate marks.

SQA Analysis

'Candidates will identify parts of an issue, the relationship between these parts and their relationships with the whole; draw out and relate implications.'

- **links between different components**
- **links between component(s) and the whole**
- **links between component(s) and related concepts**
- **similarities and contradictions**
- **consistency and inconsistency**
- **different views/interpretations**
- **possible consequences/implications**
- **the relative importance of components**
- **understanding of underlying order or structure**

20-mark Essays

Ideally, candidates should write an introduction, **four** P.E.E.A.R.E.E.A.C. paragraphs and an overall conclusion. Students who struggle to write this amount in the allocated time could sacrifice a paragraph in the 20-mark essays if necessary.

12-mark Answers

There is no need for an introduction or overall conclusion in a 12-mark answer, so two good paragraphs would suffice for full marks. But given that there are 6 marks available per paragraph, it is sensible to write three P.E.E.A.R.E.E.A.C. paragraphs.

contd

Marking

The SQA breakdown for marks is slightly different for 20-mark essays and 12-mark questions:

	12-mark answer	20-mark essay
Knowledge	8	8
Analysis	4	6
Evaluations (Conclusions)	0	4
Structure	0	2

DON'T FORGET

The 12-mark question used to always be in Unit 3, but it can now be asked in any section of Paper 1.

PAPER 2

The second component of the exam is designed to test skills. No prior knowledge is required to answer these types of questions, as all the information that should be used is provided. Each candidate will have two source questions to answer in 1 hour 15 minutes – one 'Comparisons' question worth 8 marks and one 'Electoral Data' question worth 20 marks.

Comparisons

These source questions are text-based and will compare two different issues, for example, comparing socialism to conservatism or the UK Prime Minister to the US President. They will be political in nature, but no longer based on specific course content. Candidates should spend 25 minutes answering this question and write four paragraphs – three points of comparison and an overall conclusion. See pages 62–63 for more details.

DON'T FORGET

Remember to bring a few highlighters to help identify key information when reading the source questions.

Electoral Data

These source questions involve analysing a lot of numerical data from past elections and will take 50 minutes to complete. Candidates will need to write at least five paragraphs plus an overall conclusion to achieve full marks in this 'To what extent?'-type question. Calculators are not permitted by the SQA. It should be noted that there are two possible approaches to this question – evaluating at the end of each paragraph, or having a separate evaluation (overall conclusion) paragraph at the end. See pages 68–69 for more details.

The Assignment

Given the interruptions to learning caused by the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, the SQA made some changes to assessment to ensure that pupils were not disadvantaged. One of the most significant alterations was the removal of the assignment, which was not reinstated for the 2023 diet. However, this may return in some form in the future, so Unit 5 can be used as an independent learning resource that will help build on knowledge and skills.

DON'T FORGET

Source questions cannot be 'revised' as such, so knowing the structure followed by timed practice is crucial.

THINGS TO DO AND THINK ABOUT

Task

Try to write a P.E.E.A.R.E.E.A.C. paragraph based on your school:

'To what extent is X High School the best in the local area?'

P – One reason that X is the best school in the local area is ...

E – This makes it the best because ...

E – For example ... (great facilities/good exam results/excellent staff)

A – This demonstrates that ...

R – However, something that makes it less good is ...

E – This is because ...

E – For example ... (poor facilities/bad exam results/average staff)

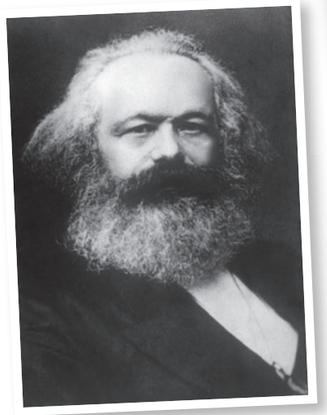
A – This shows that ...

C – Overall, X High School is/is not the best to a small/large extent because ...

POLITICAL THEORY

IDEOLOGIES — SOCIALISM

The works of Karl Marx, particularly his writings of *Das Kapital* and the *Communist Manifesto*, were a political response to the rapidly changing conditions in Europe during the industrial revolution of the 19th century. Marx believed that class conflict moved history forward, and the last stage of historical development before communism was capitalism. Indeed, Marx believed capitalism was necessary before the working class realised that they should completely control the products of their own labour and fully realise their own humanity. Socialism is a more widely accepted form of his theory, given that it involves democratically-elected governments ensuring that citizens equally share in the resources and wealth created by citizens, rather than being controlled by a state dictatorship.



ECONOMY - COMMON OWNERSHIP

A key tenet of socialism is common ownership. This is based on the idea that wealth is not produced by individual people but is reliant upon the products of the workers. As a result of this, socialists believe that enterprise should be commonly owned, and profits shared among the people. The creation of the National Health Service in Britain after 1945 is a clear example of the belief in the importance of common ownership and in shared responsibility. The NHS was introduced after the Second World War to try to improve the lives of the British people and to remove health inequalities between rich and poor, and indicates that this aspect of socialism is deemed hugely important in British society.

However, others argue that common ownership is flawed, and that people should have the right to private ownership. They argue that the government should provide limited support and that people should take responsibility for themselves. Margaret Thatcher was a firm believer in this viewpoint and introduced the 'Right to Buy' policy in the 1980 Housing Act, allowing many working-class people to buy their council houses. This gave millions of working-class people the opportunity to own their own home for the first time. Socialists would argue that this action eroded common ownership and claim that this policy created a shortage of affordable houses which continues today, forcing many people to live in terrible conditions and creating an unequal society. Common ownership is a key aspect of socialism, as many believe that it is essential to create a fair and equal society as Marx proposed.

DON'T FORGET

There are many different strands of ideology that have evolved from Marx's theory, such as Third Way Socialism (New Labour), Social Democracy (Scandinavia), Leninism/Trotskyism (Russia) and Maoism/State Capitalism (China).

SOCIETY - CLASS DIVISION

Marx believed that the removal of class division is vital to create a socialist society where all citizens are treated equally. He argued that traditional society was based on a hierarchical structure where the bourgeoisie (rulers) benefited from the labours of the proletariat (workers) and exploited their workers for their own benefit. He argued that the workers of the world had more in common with each other than with their bourgeois compatriots. Many across the British Isles shared this belief, as could be seen by the thousands of British men who became conscientious objectors during the First World War, as they refused to fight against German men whom they considered to be the same as them. Further evidence of this class solidarity can be found in the numbers of men and women who travelled across Europe to join the 'International Brigades' fighting against General Franco in the Spanish Civil War in the 1930s.

On the other hand, some believe that class division is a natural part of society and that there is a natural hierarchy which divides society based upon ability and wealth. It can be argued that Thatcher blurred the class divide in British society, as there was once a clear distinction between those who worked in 'blue collar' (manufacturing industries) and those who worked in 'white collar' (professional) jobs.

contd

DON'T FORGET

Margaret Thatcher famously said the NHS was 'safe in her hands', such is the strength of feeling towards socialised health care in the UK, even she knew that she couldn't privatise the NHS.

However, the move from an economy based upon manufacturing to an economy based on the service sector during the 1980s has meant that this is no longer as clear in British. society, with fewer people identifying themselves as working class. Despite this blurring in class awareness, Marxists maintain that there remains a divide between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, and that the history of the world can be explained by class conflict. The removal of class division is a key component of socialist ideology and is in stark contrast to an adherence to a hierarchical society

HUMAN NATURE VS NURTURE

Another key component of socialist ideology is the belief that human behaviour is determined by social factors rather than innate qualities – the idea of nurture over nature. Socialism is based on a belief that communities working together can achieve more than individuals working by themselves. This can be seen in the strength of the trade union movement in the UK. Trade unions aim to protect the proletariat from exploitation by their bosses – and, with over 6 million UK members, they remain influential in improving workers' conditions and protecting the community of workers from exploitation at the hands of profiteers. The large number of unionised workers (10% of the whole UK population) shows that people still believe they can achieve significantly more by working together, organising themselves and nurturing the next generation to think collectively.

But critics of socialism argue that people are naturally imperfect and selfish. Opponents suggest that left-wing ideas sound good in theory but not in practice, given that human beings have proven themselves willing throughout history to commit crimes to better themselves. The best example of this is the fact that there has never been a completely Marxist country that has been 'successful', and when communist regimes have been tried in places like Russia and China, they have quickly become dictatorships and the citizens have suffered human-rights abuses. This shows that the socialist belief in fraternity – working together for the common good – is perhaps naïve given that human nature has proved itself to be selfish and cruel.

However, socialists would counter this by arguing that human beings can be nurtured to believe in a more equal society, rather than a materialistic society that celebrates individual success over communal good.

THINGS TO DO AND THINK ABOUT

Questions

1. What did Karl Marx think that capitalism would be replaced by?
2. Describe what socialists think about private property.
3. What names did Marx give workers and rulers to explain class conflict?
4. Approximately how many people are members of trade unions in the UK?
5. Cuba is said to be a communist state, but can you name any others?

Tasks

1. Using the notes above, create a plan for a 12-mark answer on socialism, then use it to help answer question 2(b) of the 2017 SQA Past Paper. Be sure to include an overall conclusion.
2. Write a fourth P.E.E.A.R.E.E.A.C. paragraph on socialism focusing on equality or collectivism.

DON'T FORGET

There is no need to study all five ideologies prescribed by the SQA; but be sure to understand at least two ideologies to allow you to answer a 20-mark comparison essay, e.g. Marxism vs Conservatism or Nationalism vs Fascism. For a 12-mark question, you should focus on just one ideology.

VIDEO LINK

Go online to our Digital Zone at www.brightredbooks.net to watch the 1954 cartoon film *Animal Farm* based on the novel by George Orwell, which is widely seen as promoting Marx's theory of communism.

VIDEO LINK

Go online to our Digital Zone at www.brightredbooks.net to watch a documentary on YouTube about Marx and his theory. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d6TZi9w6j-A&feature=youtu.be&app=desktop

ONLINE TEST

To test yourself on this topic, go to our Digital Zone at www.brightredbooks.net/subjects

POLITICAL SYSTEMS

UK — PASSAGE OF LEGISLATION

Although there are some opportunities for others in parliament (and beyond) to recommend new legislation, for example opposition debate days, Private Members Bills or Public Petitions, the overwhelming majority of bills in the UK originate from the Executive. However, they must pass through several stages before being signed off by the monarch and being written into statute to formally become a law. This process is intended to ensure that legislation is not rushed and can be properly scrutinised by the House of Commons and the House of Lords, although the former retains superiority due to the Salisbury Convention.

DON'T FORGET

The Salisbury Convention/ Doctrine ensures that major Executive Bills can pass through the Lords with there being no opposition to the second or third reading of legislation promised in the government's election manifesto.

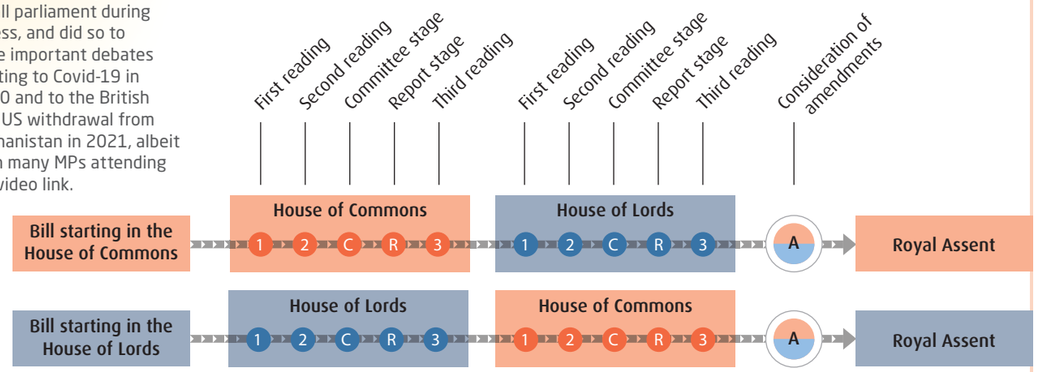
DON'T FORGET

The Speaker of the House of Commons has the authority to recall parliament during recess, and did so to have important debates relating to Covid-19 in 2020 and to the British and US withdrawal from Afghanistan in 2021, albeit with many MPs attending via video link.

PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES

This committee stage is very important in the UK parliament when passing a bill. This is because, once it has passed the formalities of the first and second readings in the chamber, each bill is scrutinised line by line, and amendments can be made by MPs or Lords. There are around 22 of these committees, and membership ranges between 16 and 50 on each, which is based on the party strength in the Commons. Although MPs are expected to scrutinise bills, the membership of committees in the UK shows that the government still has significant influence over proceedings, given that the majority party proposes and scrutinises most of the bills.

Therefore, the passage of legislation in the UK and the USA is similar insofar as they both rely heavily on the committee stage before a bill can be made a law; however, it is substantially more difficult to pass legislation in the USA because often the committees are run by a party that is not in government, whereas in the UK it is the opposite.



VIDEO LINK

Go online to our Digital Zone at www.brightredbooks.net/subjects to watch the 2021 State Opening of Parliament - the first after the outbreak of the Covid-19 coronavirus pandemic.

STATE OPENING OF PARLIAMENT

The Head of State in the UK must also give a speech, but since the monarch is historically not allowed to enter the House of Commons, she gives it in the House of Lords. This is because the UK is constitutional monarchy, and parliament must obtain the permission of the monarch to pass laws, known as Royal Assent. Queen Elizabeth never actually vetoed any laws passed by parliament, but it should be noted that she had the ear of the Prime Minister, having had weekly meetings with all 14 PMs during her reign. This demonstrates how the monarch's role in passing legislation is largely ceremonial in the UK, with 'His/ Her Majesty's Government' writing their speech for the state opening of Parliament and then being 'allowed' to govern with their consent.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

In contrast to the American system, the majority of UK legislation is initiated by the executive. But, like the US legislative process, a bill can start in the Commons or the Lords and must be approved in the same form by both Houses before becoming an Act (law). For example, Theresa May initiated the bill for EU withdrawal after 52% of the British electorate voted in June 2016 to leave the European Union. The problem she had, though, was getting her bill through parliament, given the opposition to her so-called Brexit bill, with MPs and Lords from all sides arguing about the future arrangements with the European Union. This shows just how powerful the House of Commons can be, demonstrating its authority in relation to the most important UK political issue of modern times – 'Brexit'.

HOUSE OF LORDS

The House of Lords is the upper chamber in the UK Parliament, but it is not as powerful as the US Senate. This is because it only has the power to delay the passage of legislation; it can't fully block bills being passed, since the elected Commons has more authority. For example, a bill may go back and forth between the two houses (known as 'parliamentary ping-pong') if the Lords try to amend the Commons bill too much, but this can only happen three times before the Commons overrules the Lords. This shows how the House of Lords can significantly delay the passage of legislation but not completely block it. Although the Lords receive a lot of bad press for being unelected, having experts who can take time to scrutinise bills is a very effective check on the legislative process.

THINGS TO DO AND THINK ABOUT

Questions

1. Who signs off bills once they have been passed in both Houses of Parliament?
2. Roughly how many committees are there in the UK Parliament?
3. What percentage of voters chose to 'Leave' the European Union in 2016?
4. Who does not receive a wage but can claim up to £323 per day in attendance expenses in the UK Parliament?
5. In your own words, define what 'scrutinise' means.

Tasks

1. Think of five laws you would like to introduce to make the UK a better place if you were Prime Minister, and make a campaign poster 'selling' your proposed laws to the electorate.
2. Debate these possible new laws with a partner – you don't need to agree with them, just try to imagine the advantages and disadvantages:
   - Introduce a 4-day working week
   - Have a maximum wage of £1 million per year
   - Nationalise the railways and utility companies
   - Ban fast-food advertising
   - Make the UK a nuclear-free country
   - Reintroduce making 'National Service' (joining the military) compulsory for every adult for one year

DON'T FORGET

There are still around 90 hereditary peers in the House of Lords, meaning they inherited their title and privileges from a parent.

VIDEO LINK

Go online to our Digital Zone at www.brightredbooks.net/subjects to watch *How Laws Are Made.*

DON'T FORGET

When writing a 20-mark essay based on the passage of legislation, merge the UK and US processes to create four P.E.E.A.R.E.E.A.C. paragraphs.

ONLINE TEST

To test yourself on this topic, go to our Digital Zone at www.brightredbooks.net/subjects

POLITICAL PARTIES AND ELECTIONS

CAMPAIGN METHODS 2

MODERN TECHNOLOGY

Political parties have had to embrace modern technology as a form of campaigning in recent years, and it appears that this will only become even more important as voters' lives increasingly move online. Effective social-media campaigns, as well as utilising voter-targeting software, can dovetail with more traditional forms of campaigning to help parties win local and national battles if they get 'the message' right.

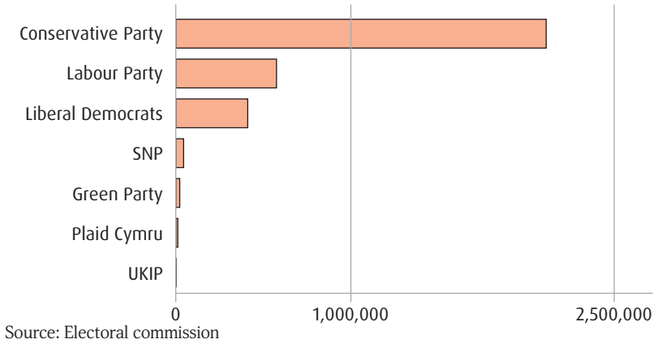
SOCIAL MEDIA

Political parties seem to have recognised the growing importance of social media in society and, as such, are increasingly campaigning online. Social media is fast becoming one of the most important factors influencing voting behaviour, so political parties must now utilise this as part of a modern campaign. With so many voters – particularly young people – using sites like Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, parties have to take their message online so that they maximise exposure and get their message across to a broader section of the electorate.

In 2015, the Conservative Party recognised the importance of campaigning on Facebook and Twitter as they aimed to get their message to their voters, while other parties were less likely to do so. The Tories spent £1.2m on Facebook campaigning, while Labour spent £16,000. By 2017, all parties had increased their spending, and a total of £3m was spent on Facebook campaigns, with the Conservatives spending more than double the amount spent by all others. This shows the importance of campaigning on social media, as all parties are now targeting this as they realise that it can help them get their message across to voters in a modern way that is not reliant upon local volunteers. Indeed, the former deputy leader of the Scottish Conservatives, Jackson Carlaw MSP, stated in a interview that it cost him approximately £7,000 to do a leaflet drop in his Eastwood constituency, but only £100 to send a similar message on Facebook.

Which party spent most on Facebook adverts?

Amount paid to Facebook during 2017 general election campaign (£)



Source: Electoral commission

On the other hand, many commentators argue that grassroots campaigns remain most important, as it is difficult to target new voters on social media. Social-media organisations use algorithms which tailor information that users receive to ensure that adverts are likely to be of interest to them. This has led to what is known as an 'echo chamber', where people continually see the same types of information.

In an interview while she was SNP MP for East Renfrewshire, Kirsten Oswald said that she often 'felt like she was talking to herself in the mirror' while on social media. This shows that social media can be effective – but, as people are unlikely to follow a party that they

contd

DON'T FORGET

This area of politics is forever changing, with new technology being used to fundraise, collect data, influence voters and embrace American-style negative campaigning known as 'attack ads'.

DON'T FORGET

You could carry out an investigation into local candidates in your area and find out how they use modern technology to campaign during elections.

ONLINE

Go online to our Digital Zone at www.brightredbooks.net/subjects to click the link to the Democratic Dashboard website, which has lots of good data about all constituencies' election results in recent years.

DON'T FORGET

The use of modern technology by political parties during elections continues to evolve, so you could research their use of Instagram or Snapchat in more recent elections to target younger voters in particular.

do not support, it is not successful in helping political parties attract new voters. It is becoming increasingly clear that social media is an important campaign tool for parties and that it is helping target voters; however, it does have limitations, as people who do not support the party are unlikely to see their messages. Indeed, younger people don't tend to use Facebook or Twitter and prefer Instagram, TikTok and Snapchat so parties have a lot of catching up to do to engage with 18–24 year olds in particular.

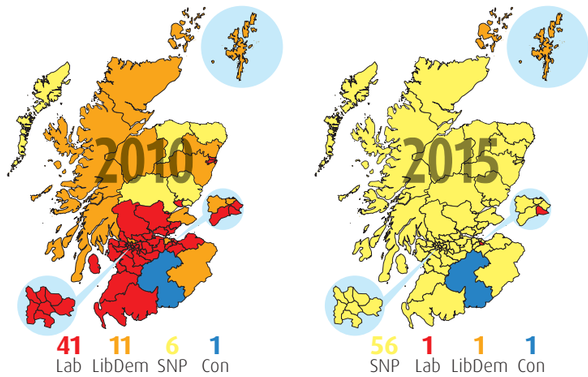
VOTER TARGETING SOFTWARE

Voter-targeting software is arguably the most important weapon used by the SNP when campaigning for votes. The nationalists have a system called 'Activate', which is essentially a database of all voters in Scotland that tells their activists what particular towns, streets and voters they should target by using an app that points them to the doors they should knock on when canvassing. There are 3.9 million people in the electorate, and Activate splits them into 44 demographics. The SNP specifically target 20 of these demographics, and this method no doubt helped them win 56 of the 59 Scottish seats in the UK General Election in 2015. It can, therefore, be argued that this software has helped the SNP gain success in recent elections, as they have been the largest party in Scotland since 2011.

However, such a system raises ethical questions about the data held by political parties and whether it is kept securely. In addition, it can be argued that the success of the SNP is not due to voter targeting but is due to their message. In 2015, the party campaigned on a 'Stronger for Scotland' message. They also offered an 'alternative to austerity'. It can be argued that these policies, and not the party's use of software, were the reason that the SNP gained 50% of the Scottish vote in 2015. Overall, targeting software can be successful in helping parties target voters, but it must be combined with traditional methods like canvassing and with a strong party message.

All parties must embrace all forms of media and utilise the 'air war' effectively if they are to get their message across and win an election. As the campaign manager for former MP Paul Masterton said, 'the most important thing when encouraging people to vote is **visibility**, both in the air **and** on the doorsteps'.

Scotland then and now: how the 2015 result compares to the 2010 result



DON'T FORGET

For your assignment, you could focus on the impact of social media in various countries, including the USA (Trump/Twitter) and China (censorship).

DON'T FORGET

Paul Masterton won the constituency of East Renfrewshire in 2017, but then lost the seat to Kirsten Oswald in 2019 after the snap General Election, as it seemed the looming issue of Brexit became more important to East Renfrewshire voters than independence at that time.

THINGS TO DO AND THINK ABOUT

Questions

1. How much money did the Conservatives spend on Facebook in 2015?
2. What is the term used for reinforcement or repetition of beliefs, often on social media?
3. What is the name given to the SNP's voter-targeting software system?
4. What percentage of the vote did the SNP win in 2015?
5. Why do you think modern technology is becoming more important to political parties?

Tasks

1. Conduct a study into Cambridge Analytica and its influence on the 2016 EU Referendum. The videos can be found on YouTube and Channel 4 On Demand.
2. Publish a simple Yes/No poll on your social-media page, and ask your followers if they have seen any 'promoted' political adverts on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram.
3. Invite local party campaign managers into your school, and find out what they think is the most effective campaign method in your area.

VIDEO LINK

Watch the HBO film *Brexit: An Uncivil War*, featuring Benedict Cumberbatch, to gain a greater understanding of how the Leave campaign used social media to win the 2016 EU Referendum.

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POLITICS

Gerry Moore

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