

Welcome to History

We do require that you purchase one textbook to cover your Year 12 studies. This can be either in print or as an e-book: **Democracies in Change: Britain & the USA in the Twentieth Century**, published by Hodder Education. ISBN-10: 1471837688. <https://www.hachettelearning.com/history/history-for-edexcel-a-level-democracies-in-change-britain-and-the-usa-in-the-twentieth-century> or <https://www.ebooks.com/en-uk/book/2131085/history-for-edexcel-a-level-democracies-in-change-britain-and-the-usa-in-the-twentieth-century/nick-shepley/?c=1> You are encouraged to purchase a secondhand copy using sites such as World of Books. Please let the department know in advance if purchasing this will be a problem for your family. You may also wish to purchase an online version of the textbook written by Rosemary Rees: <https://www.hive.co.uk/Product/Rosemary-Rees/Edexcel-ASA-Level-History-Paper-12-Democracies-in-change-Britain-and-the-USA-in-the-20th-century-eBook/20608118>

Section 1: Britain Transformed 1918-97

- (15 minutes)** Watch this clip from the ITV Drama series: *Downton Abbey* and answer these questions: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CAdKh5t7TxM>
 - Was there a class system in Britain at the start of the war? How do you know this?
 - Do you think the war changed the lives of the characters in *Downton Abbey*? What evidence do you have?
 - Do you think the war might have changed the class system?
- (1 hour) Digging deeper.... What was Britain like in 1918?** That was a fictional drama, now watch the episode *The Great War* presented and written by Andrew Marr from the BBC documentary series: *The Making of Modern Britain* <https://youtu.be/88OiGypD8s4>
After watching, pause and reflect for a moment. Pick 5 Words you would use to describe Britain in 1918 and justify each one.
Extension: Who were Asquith and David Lloyd George?
- (30 minutes)** Read <https://www.historyhit.com/ways-world-war-one-transformed-british-society/> and this information from the BBC website. After WWI, "The country was £900 million in debt to the US for war loans, which were to be repaid immediately. Britain's enviable worldwide investments were wiped out; its coal and cotton export markets had collapsed." This would be compounded by the need to pay war and widow pensions and to care for the wounded of WWI.
- (30 minutes)** Using all your reading and research write a summary of Britain at the start of our course in 1918 (maximum work count 500)

Section 2: The USA 1955-92 – Conformity & Challenge

- <https://www.loc.gov/classroom-materials/united-states-history-primary-source-timeline/post-war-united-states-1945-1968/overview/> Read this **Overview** (10 minutes):

The entry of the United States into World War II caused vast changes in virtually every aspect of American life. Millions of men and women entered military service and saw parts of the world they would likely never have seen otherwise. The labor demands of war industries caused millions more Americans to move--largely to the Atlantic, Pacific, and Gulf coasts where most defense plants located. When World War II ended, the United States was in better economic condition than any other country in the world. Even the 300,000 combat deaths suffered by Americans paled in comparison to any other major belligerent.

Building on the economic base left after the war, American society became more affluent in the postwar years than most Americans could have imagined in their wildest dreams before or during the war. Public policy, like the so-called GI Bill of Rights passed

in 1944, provided money for veterans to attend college, to purchase homes, and to buy farms. The overall impact of such public policies was almost incalculable, but it certainly aided returning veterans to better themselves and to begin forming families and having children in unprecedented numbers.

Not all Americans participated equally in these expanding life opportunities and in the growing economic prosperity. The image and reality of overall economic prosperity--and the upward mobility it provided for many white Americans--was not lost on those who had largely been excluded from the full meaning of the American Dream, both before and after the war. As a consequence, African Americans, Hispanic Americans, and American women became more aggressive in trying to win their full freedoms and civil rights as guaranteed by the Declaration of Independence and U.S. Constitution during the postwar era.

The postwar world also presented Americans with a number of problems and issues. Flushed with their success against Germany and Japan in 1945, most Americans initially viewed their place in the postwar world with optimism and confidence. But within two years of the end of the war, new challenges and perceived threats had arisen to erode that confidence. By 1948, a new form of international tension had emerged--Cold War--between the United States and its allies and the Soviet Union and its allies. The Cold War spawned many tensions between the two superpowers abroad and fears of Communist subversion gripped domestic politics at home.

In the twenty years following 1945, there was a broad political consensus concerning the Cold War and anti-Communism. Usually there was bipartisan support for most US foreign policy initiatives. After the United States intervened militarily in Vietnam in the mid-1960s, however, this political consensus began to break down. By 1968, strident debate among Americans about the Vietnam War signified that the Cold War consensus had shattered, perhaps beyond repair.

2. (45 minutes) Using Khan Academy, read the three sections on the presidency of Eisenhower, <https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/us-history/postwarera/1950s-america/a/the-presidency-of-dwight-d-eisenhower> popular culture <https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/us-history/postwarera/1950s-america/a/popular-culture-and-mass-media-cnx> and women and family <https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/us-history/postwarera/1950s-america/a/women-family-and-society-in-the-1950s>.
3. (30 minutes) Using all your reading and research, create a mindmap to summarise American society at the start of our time period (so the 1950s). How would you characterise it socially, politically and economically?

Optional Extra Task:

- Read novels written or set in our period of study from both America and Britain.
- Watch films such as *King's Speech*, *Made in Dagenham*, *Misbehaviour*, *Pride*.
- Explore the period through Back in Time for Dinner https://era.org.uk/tv-radio-resources/?keyword=back+in+time+for+dinner&era_subject=&level=&era_content_type=&source=&length=&sort_by=relevance

We look forward to teaching you from September! 😊