

## Year 11 Summer Task: History A-level

Although John Mason, Fitzharrys and Larkmead do a selection of different topics at A-level the most important thing at this stage is that you start accessing academic-level history. Both courses teach England and a New Century 1900-51 and so a book relevant to that unit might be helpful if you do not know which school you will be attending.

If you do know which course you will be doing, then you could ask your teacher for a recommendation relevant to a different unit.

Over the summer you need to read a book and produce a brief report on the book and what it tells you about the period. The book must be of a suitable level for an A-level historian. We would recommend one of the following:

### Basic Reading

Aiken, K.W.W., *The Last Years of Liberal England 1900-1914*

Rees, Rosemary, *Britain 1890-1939*

### Greater Challenge

Adelman, Paul, *The Decline of the Liberal Party 1910-31*

Adelman, Paul, *The Rise of the Labour Party 1880-1945*

Brittain, Vera, *Testament of Youth*,

Hattersley, Roy, *The Edwardians*

Jenkins, Roy, *Churchill*

Lee, Stephen J., *Aspects of British Political History 1815-1914*

Lloyd George, Robert, *David and Winston: How a Friendship Changed History*

### Biographies

As well as specific titles mentioned above, you might want to look out biographies on some or all of the following:

David Lloyd-George

Herbert Henry Asquith

Ramsay MacDonald

Winston Churchill

Do go and look on this topic in bookshops and libraries; there are a huge number of books on the decline of the liberals, rise of the Labour Party, suffragettes, impact of World War 1 and World War 2 etc.

## Structure and Presentation

As with book reviews that you have done in the past, there are different ways to write a good review. If you're not sure, you should look at some book reviews online and model yours on a suitable style and approach. However, here are some key tips:

- 1) The book review should address the whole book, not just the first (or first and last) chapter.
- 2) The book review should give an impression of how you responded to the book; feelings, engagement, critical analysis of the key ideas, whether you would recommend it to others and why.
- 3) The book review should include a summary of what you have learned from reading the book.

Other ideas may vary depending upon the type of book you have chosen, however you may want to consider:

- Describe the author's viewpoint and purpose for writing; note any aspects of the author's background that are important for understanding the book.
- Note the most important evidence the author presents to support his or her argument.
- Evaluate the author's use of evidence, and describe how he or she deals with counter evidence.
- Is the book's argument convincing? If so why, if not, why not. Use examples...

If in doubt, or in need of further advice and guidance about appropriate books, including a wider selection than those on this sheet, you can contact Mr Conway on [rcon7543@johnmason.oxon.sch.uk](mailto:rcon7543@johnmason.oxon.sch.uk).