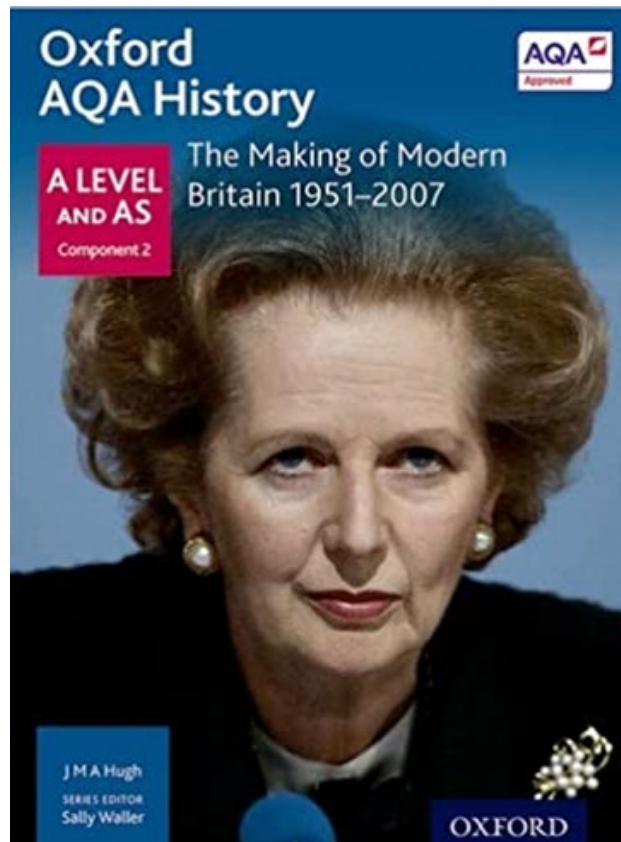


# The Making of Modern Britain: The affluent society: Britain 1951-64



Name:

Teacher:

L.O: To know the reasons the conservatives were dominant in the years 1951-64.

**Lesson 1 - The Conservative governments: Reasons for political dominance**

To understand the political changes during this course it is important that you understand the British political system.

**Fill in the boxes with a definition of each part of the system.**

**The major political parties**

**The Commons**

**The Lords**

**Local government**

**Post war Britain**

L.O: To know the reasons the conservatives were dominant in the years 1951-64.

### Lesson 1 -The Conservative governments: Reasons for political dominance

Complete the source evaluation for source one:



#### **SOURCE 1**

Douglas Jay was a Labour Party MP from 1946 until 1983. He served in the cabinets of Attlee from 1947 to 1950 and of Wilson from 1964 to 1967. He was a follower of John Maynard Keynes' economic theories. He wrote his autobiography which chronicled his political career in 1980:

1951 was the most fiercely fought, passionate, neck-and-neck campaign of all the parliamentary elections I contested. But we had almost everything against us –the **Bevanite quarrel**, the loss of Ernest Bevin and the swing back of votes due to the revival of the anti-Labour propaganda in the national press. The result was very close – Labour won more votes than ever before – but the 1951 election determined the course of British politics for thirteen years afterwards. The Conservative government that won in 1951 was destined to coast along into the economically easy years of the 1950s. Thanks to the tough policies followed by the Attlee governments, there was the first real rise in living standards since the 1930s and a relaxation in restrictions and controls. If Attlee had not felt compelled to call an election in 1951, the Labour government itself might have coasted through to the easy years.

#### **A CLOSER LOOK**

The **Bevanite** quarrel refers to the split in the Labour Party in 1951 when Aneurin Bevan resigned as Minister of Labour over the Labour government's decision to introduce charges for prescriptions.

Content	
Provenance	
Language and tone	

L.O: To know the reasons the conservatives were dominant in the years 1951-64.

### Lesson 1 - The Conservative governments: Reasons for political dominance

How valuable is Source 1 to an historian studying the significance of the 1951 election?

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#### **Conservative governments and reasons for political dominance**

In 1951 it was not immediately obvious that there would be a long period of Conservative dominance. Some Labour politicians were convinced they would soon return to power. Labour actually won more votes than the Conservative Party but the first-past-the-post electoral system meant that the Conservative Party won the most seats in the general election of that year and Winston Churchill became the new Conservative prime minister. Many Labour politicians regarded Churchill as a tired, old force and believed that the Conservatives would struggle with the intense economic difficulties Britain faced. They were wrong. Labour would not return to power for another 13 years.

**What is the first past the post system? What did it mean for the conservative party? Explain your answer.**

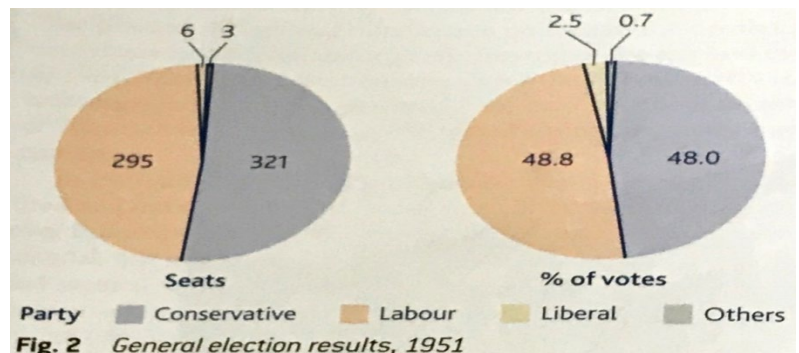
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**KEY TERM**  
**first-past-the-post:** a voting system whereby the candidate with the most votes in each constituency wins a seat in Parliament



Analyse the 1951 election results. What can you see? What is interesting or surprising?

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L.O: To know the reasons the conservatives were dominant in the years 1951-64.

## Lesson 1 - The Conservative governments: Reasons for political dominance

### Churchill, Eden, Macmillan and Home as political leaders

Study the profiles of each of the key figures. Make notes on each of the key figures below.

KEY CHRONOLOGY	
1951	Bevanite quarrel Churchill becomes prime minister for second time
1955	Eden becomes prime minister
1956	Suez Crisis
1957	Eden resigns; Macmillan becomes prime minister
1963	Britain's EEC application rejected Macmillan resigns

#### KEY TERM

**Great Depression:** this started in the United States with the Wall Street Crash when the value of shares on the stock exchange collapsed; economic activity was reduced across the whole world which led to mass unemployment in the 1930s; in Britain unemployment affected 25 per cent of the workforce

**one-nation Conservative:** believes that all classes in society have obligations to one another and that there is a particular responsibility for those who are better off to ensure the well-being of those who are worse off

#### KEY PROFILE



Fig. 3 Churchill led Britain through the Second World War

**Winston Churchill (1874–1965)** had been a cabinet minister in both Liberal and Conservative governments between 1906 and 1940. He became prime minister in the war crisis of May 1940 and led Britain to victory by 1945. After the war, he continued to play the role of world statesman even though the Conservatives were in opposition. He was prime minister again from 1951 to 1955.



Fig. 5 Butler was twice passed over for prime minister

**R. A. Butler (1902–82)** has become famous as 'the best prime minister the Conservatives never had'. He came to prominence as architect of the 1944 Education Act and played a key role in the reorganisation of the party and its policies in preparation for returning to power in 1951. He was chancellor from 1951 to 1955 and seen as a possible leader of the party both in 1957 after the fall of Eden and again in 1963 when Macmillan resigned.

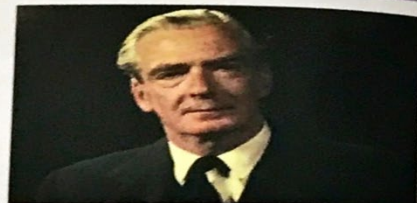


Fig. 4 Conservative politician Eden served three periods as foreign secretary

**Anthony Eden (1897–1977)** was a talented politician who had always been thought of as a future prime minister. He was a rising political star in the 1930s and played a key role in the Second World War as Winston Churchill's Foreign Secretary. On several occasions between 1951 and 1955 he was the acting prime minister in Churchill's absence. He became prime minister in 1955 but resigned in January 1957 after the Suez crisis, due to ill health.

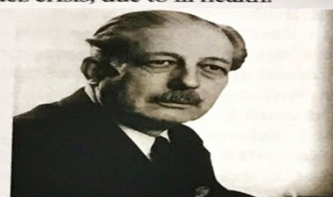


Fig. 6 Macmillan was known for his pragmatism and wit

**Harold Macmillan (1894–1986)** was MP for Stockton-on-Tees and was Churchill's military liaison officer during the Second World War. He was a housing minister in Churchill's government from 1951 and Foreign Secretary in the Eden government. In 1957, he 'emerged' as the new Conservative prime minister after Eden's resignation. Macmillan's politics were shaped by two world wars and by the **Great Depression** of the 1930s when he was MP for Stockton-on-Tees in the depressed northeast. Attlee said in 1951 that Macmillan had very nearly joined the Labour Party in the 1930s. He was very much what has been described as a **one-nation Conservative**.

Key word	Definition	Sentence
Great depression		
One-nation Conservative		

L.O: To know the reasons the conservatives were dominant in the years 1951-64.

**Lesson 1 - The Conservative governments: Reasons for political dominance**

**Churchill, Eden, Macmillan and Home as political leaders**

**Study the profiles of each of the key figures. Make notes on each of the key figures below.**

**Churchill**

**Eden**

**Butler**

**Macmillan**

L.O: To know the reasons the conservatives were dominant in the years 1951-64.

## Lesson 2 - The Conservative governments: Reasons for political dominance

### Churchill as political leader

Winston Churchill had gained his reputation for leading wartime Britain to victory but the Churchill of 1951 to 1955 was not really a great post-war prime minister. He was an old man (80 years old when he finally retired in 1955) with many serious ailments. He suffered a serious stroke in 1953 that left him with impaired speech, although this was kept secret at the time.

There were also other reasons for Churchill's inactivity in domestic politics beyond age and illness. Churchill had always thought of himself as an international statesman, not a domestic politician. He spent more time abroad, meeting world leaders or relaxing at his favourite holiday spots, than in Downing Street. He believed that his key priority was to help ensure that no new conflict would break out, particularly because of the dangers of nuclear war.

Churchill also believed that he was above party politics. He had started off as a Conservative but had joined the Liberals in 1904 and served as a Liberal cabinet minister before the First World War before rejoining the Conservative party in 1924. As prime minister in the 1950s he attempted to persuade Liberals to join his cabinet. He also used non-Conservative peers to oversee ministries. His absenteeism meant that day-to-day government was often left with the acting prime minister, Anthony Eden, and key ministers such as Rab Butler, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Harold Macmillan, minister for housing.

**Read the information on Churchill. What were his strengths and weaknesses?**

#### KEY TERM

**Chancellor of the Exchequer:** the government minister responsible for economic and financial policy; the chancellor is often the most powerful person in the government after the prime minister

Strengths	Weaknesses

Key word	Definition	Sentence
Chancellor of the Exchequer		

L.O: To know the reasons the conservatives were dominant in the years 1951-64.

## **Lesson 2 - The Conservative governments: Reasons for political dominance**

Churchill aimed to avoid any controversy with these appointments: although Butler was not an economist Churchill believed that he would work well with Parliament and the trade unions and avoid any social and industrial conflict. Conservatives who were more critical of the post-war consensus had more limited roles in his government and suggestions of a radical break from the post-war consensus were rejected.

There were tensions within Churchill's government. Butler, Macmillan and Eden did not get on well; these rivalries lasted throughout the 13 years of Conservative rule. Relations also became strained between Churchill and Eden; as Churchill's heir-apparent, Eden frequently became impatient as he waited for Churchill to step down.

**What problems did Churchill have with his cabinet?**

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**How did Churchill contribute to Conservative dominance?**

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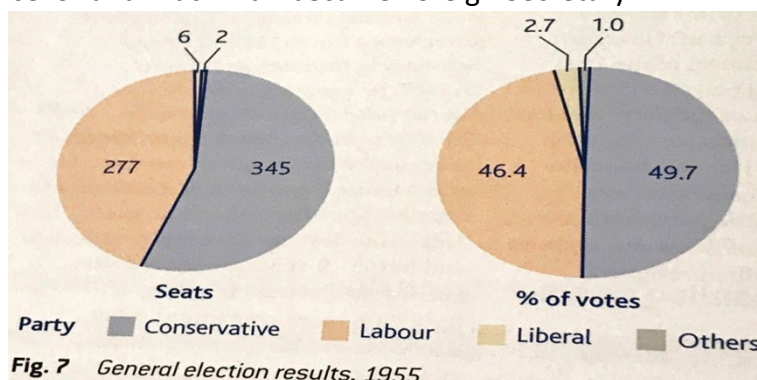
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### **Eden as prime minister**

When Eden at last took power in 1955, there were initially high hopes in the Conservative Party, especially when Eden called a general election and increased the Conservative majority from 17 seats to 60. Butler became Chancellor and Macmillan became Foreign Secretary.

**Analyse the 1955 results.**



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L.O: To know the reasons the conservatives were dominant in the years 1951-64.

## **Lesson 2 - The Conservative governments: Reasons for political dominance**

Almost all of Eden's previous political experience had been in foreign policy and within six months some in the Conservative Party were voicing disquiet with his leadership as his lack of experience and interest in domestic affairs became more apparent. He was anxious about making decisions, and was particularly conscious of his lack of knowledge on economic issues. Like Churchill he aimed to prevent industrial conflict, and this led to criticism that he was too conciliatory with the trade unions. His weakness as leader was exemplified by his attempt to move Macmillan from the Foreign Office to the Treasury in October 1955. Macmillan did not want to move and managed to delay it until December.

**What were Eden's abilities and weaknesses as leader?**

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However, it was Eden's decision to take military action during the Suez crisis in 1956, ending in disaster, which soured his reputation as leader. While Suez was first and foremost a diplomatic and military fiasco and a turning point for Britain's illusions of imperial power, it was also a political crisis. Eden came under attack from the Labour Party and from sections of the national press, notably the Manchester Guardian. He was accused of lying to the House of Commons and his reputation was badly damaged.

Suez also caused problems within the Conservative Party. Colonial minister, Anthony Nutting, resigned from the cabinet. There was a rebellion by nearly 40 Conservative MPs. The Chief Whip, Edward Heath, who was responsible for keeping the party in line was himself strongly opposed to Eden's actions. Worst of all for the government, the pressure from the United States had exposed Britain's financial weakness. Eden never recovered from Suez and he resigned early in 1957, over ill health. The Conservative Party was not, however, seriously damaged by Suez and although Macmillan had initially supported the intervention into Suez, he succeeded Eden as prime minister.

**What did Suez damage Eden's premiership?**

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Macmillan's main rival was R. A. Butler. But Butler was not nearly as popular within the Conservative Party as he was with the country. His reputation had been damaged by introducing tax cuts shortly before the 1955 election which then had to be reversed after the election as the economy overheated. Most of Eden's cabinet preferred Macmillan and so he 'emerged' as the leader. Macmillan was seen as a safe choice and he had few enemies. There were also memories of the past: Macmillan had disagreed with the Conservative government in the 1930s, over both the policy of appeasement and the way to deal with the Great Depression and high unemployment. Butler, however, had been closely linked to the policy of appeasement.

**What was the issue around Eden's successor?**

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### **KEY TERM**

**appeasement:** a policy of making concessions in order to avoid conflict; in the 1930s the British government had aimed to prevent a war with Nazi Germany by following this policy, but failed

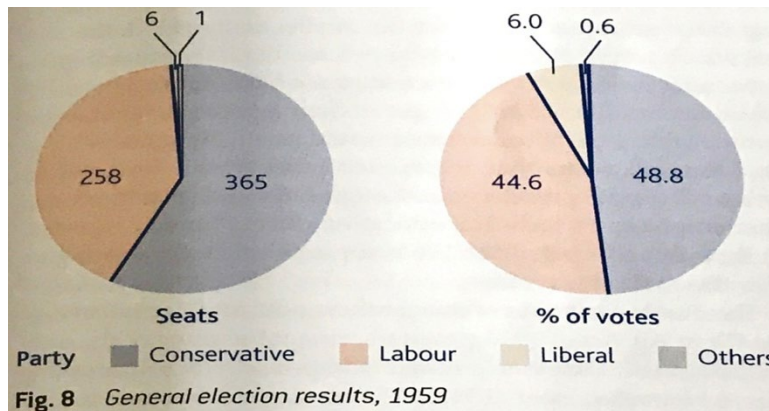
L.O: To know the reasons the conservatives were dominant in the years 1951-64.

## Lesson 2 - The Conservative governments: Reasons for political dominance

Key word	Definition	Sentence
Appeasement		

### Macmillan as prime minister

Party unity was restored, without lasting splits. Apparent economic prosperity continued to gain approval from the voters. For five years, Macmillan appeared to be in full control of affairs. Butler became Home Secretary. In October 1959, Macmillan called a general election. Macmillan, by now nicknamed 'Supermac', led the Conservatives to a comfortable victory, pushing the Conservative parliamentary majority up to 100 seats.



### Analyse the 1959 election results:

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The post-war economic boom was continuing. The Labour Party was in disarray, increasingly preoccupied with its own internal battles. Macmillan seemed to have the media in the palm of his hand, using the new political opportunities provided by television with flair.

### How did Macmillan contribute to Conservative dominance?

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L.O: To know the domestic policies brought in by the Conservative 1951-64.

### **Lesson 3 - The Conservative governments: Domestic policies**

#### **Domestic policies**

Most Conservatives had accepted many of the reforms of the previous Labour government. Attitudes towards industry, the trade unions and social policy were going to have to be very different from the 1930s because the experiences of the war years had made people far more ready to accept the need for state intervention and planning. The National Health Service (NHS) had already assumed iconic status. Partly by conviction and partly by necessity, the new government accepted the existence of the so-called post-war consensus.

**What was the domestic situation like in 1951?**

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#### **Post-war consensus**

This is an understanding that after the WW2 there was a great deal of agreement between the main political parties on the major issues. There is dispute amongst historians regarding what level of a consensus there was and, if there was a consensus, when it ended. The key elements normally identified as part of this consensus are:

- a belief in a mixed economy: involvement by the State as well as private enterprise
- support for the NHS and the welfare state
- a wish to ensure full employment and to avoid the mass unemployment of the 1930s
- working with both trade unions and employers.

The post-war consensus is sometimes called Butskellism, after the Conservative politician R. A. Butler and the Labour leader Hugh Gaitskell. But within both the Labour and Conservative parties there were different opinions about all of these areas of policy.

**What was Post-war consensus?**

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**What were the key elements identified as part of this consensus?**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

**What was Post-war consensus sometimes called? Explain your answer.**

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L.O: To know the domestic policies brought in by the Conservative 1951-64.

### **Lesson 3 - The Conservative governments: Domestic policies**

**Housing:** In 1951 the Conservative manifesto promised to build 300,000 houses a year. This would rebuild the housing stock destroyed during the war and replace many of the slums that people had lived in before the war. Macmillan, as housing minister, oversaw the success of this.

**How did housing change under the Conservatives? What would the impact of this be?**

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**Education:** Conservatives also continued the tripartite system in education which had developed after the Butler Act of 1944. Three kinds of school emerged: the grammar school for the intellectually gifted; the technical school which would concentrate on practical and vocational skills; and the secondary modern which would give a basic education to the majority. Children would take an 11+ test in their last year of primary school to determine what type of school they would go to. Financial restraints under Churchill meant that, in practice, most schools were either grammar schools or secondary moderns, although Eden did start to try and promote a greater emphasis on technical education during his brief time as prime minister. By the beginning of the 1960s some people were starting to question whether this system was fair.

**What was the education system that the Conservatives continued to use? How did this system work?**

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**Social reforms:** There were a number of social reforms during Macmillan's premiership. The Clean Air Act of 1956 aimed to prevent the smog of the early 1950s and the Housing and Factory Acts aimed to improve living and working conditions. Butler as Home Secretary (1957—62), was more liberal than many other Conservatives and action started to be taken on some more controversial social issues such as homosexuality and the death penalty. Homicide Act of 1957 restricted when the death penalty would be imposed and in 1957 the Wolfenden Commission recommended that homosexual behaviour should no longer be a criminal act. These issues would return in the 1960s.

**What social reforms are seen under the Conservatives? What would the impact of this be?**



Fig. 9 Smog in London in the 1950s

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L.O: To know the domestic policies brought in by the Conservative 1951-64.

### **Lesson 3 - The Conservative governments: Domestic policies**



**Consider domestic policies from 1951 to 1964 and create a timeline to illustrate the main developments? Make sure you add on the prime minister responsible for each policy.**



L.O: To know the domestic policies brought in by the Conservative 1951-64.

**Lesson 3 - The Conservative governments: Domestic policies**



**'Neither Churchill nor Eden were effective political leaders in the years 1951 to 1956.' Explain why you agree or disagree with this view.**

Use the space below to plan an answer to the question

L.O: To know the divisions in the Labour party 1951-1964.

#### **Lesson 4 - The Conservative governments: Labour divisions**

##### **Internal Labour divisions**

Labour Party had only narrowly lost the 1951 election. The total Labour vote, 14 million, was actually larger than in any of Labour's previous election. Many Labour activists believed they might soon return to power. In fact, the Labour Party was suffering from deep internal problems and these problems intensified during the 1950s. Attlee continued as leader until 1955 but the great wartime generation of Labour leaders was ageing and often in poor health. Party unity had been well maintained while in government but there was a growing split in the party, both in ideology and in personalities.

**What problems did Labour face as they entered the 1950s?**

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The key figures in this split were Aneurin ('Nye') Bevan and Hugh Gaitskell and the split seriously harmed the effectiveness of Labour's opposition to the Conservative government in the 1950s.

##### **KEY PROFILE**

**Aneurin ('Nye') Bevan (1897–1960)** had been minister of health in the Attlee government and was the architect of the NHS. He was a hero to the Labour Left. When Bevan resigned from the government in 1951 to protest against the introduction of prescription charges, he gained the support of many Labour MPs and trade unionists.

**Hugh Gaitskell (1906–63)** was the Chancellor of the Exchequer from 1950 to 1951 who introduced prescription charges. He was on the Right of the Labour Party and became the leader in 1955, defeating Bevan in the election. He attempted to reform the Labour Party but was unsuccessful.

**Read the profiles of the two Labour leader candidates. Summarise each candidate:**

Bevan	Gaitskell

**Who do you think was the better Labour leader candidate? Why?**

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L.O: To know the divisions in the Labour party 1951-1964.

#### Lesson 4 - The Conservative governments: Labour divisions

The splits in the Labour movement widened during the later 1950s. Both Gaitskell and Bevan stood for the Labour Party leadership in 1955 when Attlee stepped down. Gaitskell, who was seen as being on the right of the Labour Party, defeated Bevan, who was seen as the leader of the left-wingers in the party.

The left-wingers wanted the Labour Party to be more socialist. In addition there was growing opposition to the party leadership from the trade unions and simmering divisions over Britain's nuclear weapons. Initially Bevan opposed Britain developing nuclear weapons but in 1957 he announced his opposition to unilateral nuclear disarmament, arguing that 'it would send a British Foreign Secretary naked into the conference-chamber'. However, many Labour left-wingers joined the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) and the links between CND and the Labour Left may well have turned some voters away from Labour.

**Explain why the Labour party was split with focus on left wingers:**

##### KEY TERM

**unilateral nuclear disarmament:** the policy of renouncing the use and possession of nuclear weapons without waiting for any international consultation or agreement

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Key word	Definition	Sentence
Unilateral nuclear disarmament		

Until the late 1950s, the unions had been happy with full employment and their leaders were essentially moderates. In 1956, however, a left-winger, Frank Cousins, became leader of one of the most powerful unions, the TGWU (Transport and General Workers Union). Cousins then led fierce union opposition to Gaitskell over Britain's nuclear weapons.

##### KEY PROFILE

**Frank Cousins (1927–92)** became leader of the TGWU in 1956. In 1958, he led an unsuccessful bus strike against the Macmillan government. In the Labour Party conference in October 1960, Cousins bitterly opposed Gaitskell's leadership of the Labour movement, specifically over nuclear weapons. Cousins had led the unions into taking left-wing positions hostile to the party leadership. These divisions carried on into the 1970s and 1980s.

**Who was Cousins? How did the face of the unions change?**

Cousins

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L.O: To know the divisions in the Labour party 1951-1964.

#### **Lesson 4 - The Conservative governments: Labour divisions**

Despite this, Labour entered the 1959 election campaign with some optimism. Gaitskell was a confident and effective campaigner, Promoting moderate policies that Labour thought would be popular with voters. The extent of the defeat for Labour was a genuine surprise as well as a disappointment.

**Why was the 1959 election defeat a surprise?**

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After this defeat the divisions became even more apparent and battles over the future direction of the Labour Party were fought out at the annual party conferences at Blackpool in 1959 and at Scarborough in 1960. At the 1959 conference, held just before the general election, Gaitskell put forward the idea of abolishing Clause IV of the party constitution, the clause that committed the party to nationalisation. It soon became clear, however, that opposition from the left wing and from some union leaders would be fierce; Gaitskell backed down without putting it to the vote. The Scarborough conference of 1960 became a legend in Labour's history because of Hugh Gaitskell's emotional speech when trying to convince the conference to reject unilateral nuclear disarmament. Although he lost the vote in 1960 he succeeded in overturning that result a year later.

**What issue was discussed at the 1959 conference that continued during the 1960 conference?**

#### **KEY TERM**

**nationalisation:** State ownership of key industries; the demand for the State to control 'the commanding heights of the economy' had been a central principle of the Labour Party from its beginning

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**Why did this issue cause divisions in the Labour party?**

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Labour's political position slowly improved after 1960. It appeared more united. Cultural shifts in the country made the public more critical of the Conservative government by the beginning of the 1960s. And, in 1963, the death of Hugh Gaitskell allowed Labour to elect Harold Wilson as leader.

**Bullet point the reasons Labours political position started to change:**

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**Read source 2. What are Gaitskell's key arguments?**

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**Lesson 4 - The Conservative governments: Labour divisions**

Complete the source evaluation for source two:



**SOURCE 2**

In the debate over nuclear disarmament at the Labour Party conference in Scarborough in 1960, the leader Hugh Gaitskell tried to convince the party not to support unilateral nuclear disarmament:

We may lose the vote today, and the result may deal this party a grave blow. It may not be possible to prevent this, but there are some of us, I think many of us, who will not accept that this blow need be mortal: who will not believe that such an end is inevitable. There are some of us, Mr Chairman, who will fight, and fight, and fight again, to save the party we love. We will fight, and fight, and fight again, to bring back sanity and honesty and dignity, so that our party – with its great past – may retain its glory and its greatness.

Content	
Provenance	
Language and tone	

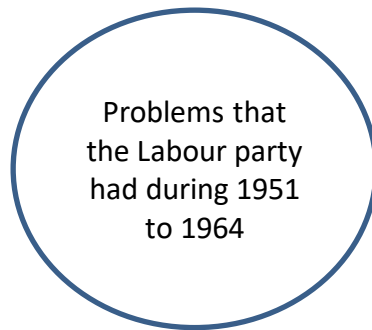


L.O: To know the divisions in the Labour party 1951-1964.

**Lesson 4 - The Conservative governments: Labour divisions**



**Summary task: Draw a spider diagram that identifies the problems that the Labour Party had during the period 1951 to 1964.**



L.O: To know the reasons the Conservative party fell from power in 1964.

## **Lesson 5 –The Conservative government: Reasons for the Conservative fall from power**

### **Reasons for the Conservatives' fall from power**

Harold Macmillan's nickname, 'Supermac', reflected his sure touch in politics and his flair for presentation. From 1962, however, this began to slip. Macmillan's own classic explanation of the causes of political ups and downs had always been: 'Events, dear boy, events'. In 1961 to 1963, numerous events came together to weaken his grip on government, leading finally to his resignation as prime minister in October 1963.

By the early 1960s there were growing concerns over the economy. Britain made an application to join the EEC in 1961; this application was rejected in 1963.

**When did Macmillan resign? What was the first event that caused this?**

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**How useful is source three when assessing the success of Macmillan's premiership?**

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Macmillan himself seemed to have lost his political touch. In response to the problems his government was facing, Macmillan radically reshuffled his cabinet in July 1962, sacking a third of it. This became known as the 'Night of the Long Knives'. It was intended to rejuvenate the government but it actually weakened it. Macmillan was made to seem clumsy. He also appeared increasingly out of touch. His image as an Edwardian gentlemen and his marriage into the aristocracy made him appear out of date. The economic situation also continued to cause concern.

**What was the Night of Long knives? Why was this a problem for Macmillan?**

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Worse still, in the early 1960s came a series of spy scandals: George Blake was convicted of being a Soviet double agent in 1961; and in 1962 John Vassall, a civil servant, was discovered to have been blackmailed, on the basis of his homosexuality, to pass information onto the Soviet Union. But the most infamous scandal, combining sex, spying and high politics was the Profumo affair in 1963.

L.O: To know the reasons the Conservative party fell from power in 1964.

**Lesson 5 –The Conservative government: Reasons for the Conservative fall from power**

Complete the source evaluation for source three:



**SOURCE 3**

Macmillan recorded his thoughts in his diary after Britain's application to join the EEC was rejected in 1963:

All our policies, at home and abroad are in ruins. Our defence plans have been radically changed, from air to sea. European unity is no more; French domination of Europe is the new and alarming feature; the popularity of our government is declining. We have lost everything except our courage and determination.

Content	
Provenance	
Language and tone	

L.O: To know the reasons the Conservative party fell from power in 1964.

## **Lesson 5 –The Conservative government: Reasons for the Conservative fall from power**

The politician at the centre was Macmillan's Secretary of State for War, John Profumo. In his statements to Parliament, and in his personal assurances to the prime minister, Profumo lied about his actions. A public inquiry, headed by a high court judge, kept the affair in the headlines for weeks on end. The political impact of the Profumo affair was actually short-lived but the image of Macmillan and the Conservative government as old and out of touch was reinforced.

**What was the Profumo affair? Why was it such a big scandal for Macmillan?**

### **A CLOSER LOOK**

#### **The Profumo affair**

John Profumo, the Defence Secretary, had a brief relationship with Christine Keeler. She was also sleeping with a Soviet spy called Ivanov, which raised questions about possible leaks of Cold War secrets. Profumo was forced to resign in disgrace.

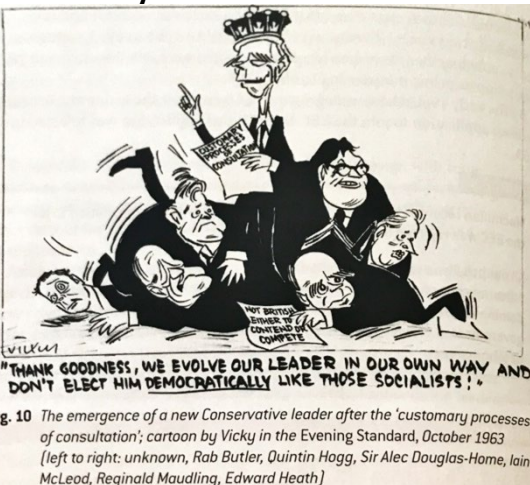
Macmillan's position was finally undermined by a serious illness. He had a major abdominal operation that kept him in hospital for weeks in the autumn of 1963 and he resigned in October. Macmillan had not prepared the way for anyone to succeed him, and the Conservative Party faced a divisive power struggle. There was strong opposition to the two most obvious candidates, Rab Butler and Lord Hailsham, and, in the end, a compromise candidate, Lord Home, a peer, emerged as the leader. The whole business made the Conservative Party seem trapped in a bygone age.

**What was the final event that caused Macmillan to resign? Who emerged as his successor? What was the criticism of the new leader?**

### **KEY PROFILE**

**Sir Alec Douglas-Home (Lord Home) (1903–95)** served as Foreign Secretary under both Macmillan and under Edward Heath (1970–74). When he was chosen to be the Conservative Party leader in 1963 he gave up his peerage so that he could sit in the House of Commons rather than the House of Lords. He also introduced elections for the Conservative leadership, as a formal system hadn't existed before 1965.

**Who do you think the best candidate was for the new Conservative leader? Explain your answer.**



L.O: To know the reasons the Conservative party fell from power in 1964.

## **Lesson 5 –The Conservative government: Reasons for the Conservative fall from power**



**With reference to these three sources and your understanding of the historical context, assess the value of these three sources to an historian studying why the Labour Party was unable to challenge the Conservative Party's political dominance between 1951 and 1964?**

You will notice that the question mentions three sources yet there is only two below. This is a big question worth 30 marks. We are going to have a go at answering the question with just two sources for the first few attempts. Once we feel confident with the demands of the question we will add another source.

### **SOURCE 1**

Douglas Jay was a Labour Party MP from 1946 until 1983. He served in the cabinets of Attlee from 1947 to 1950 and of Wilson from 1964 to 1967. He was a follower of John Maynard Keynes' economic theories. He wrote his autobiography which chronicled his political career in 1980:

1951 was the most fiercely fought, passionate, neck-and-neck campaign of all the parliamentary elections I contested. But we had almost everything against us –the **Bevanite quarrel**, the loss of Ernest Bevin and the swing back of votes due to the revival of the anti-Labour propaganda in the national press. The result was very close – Labour won more votes than ever before – but the 1951 election determined the course of British politics for thirteen years afterwards. The Conservative government that won in 1951 was destined to coast along into the economically easy years of the 1950s. Thanks to the tough policies followed by the Attlee governments, there was the first real rise in living standards since the 1930s and a relaxation in restrictions and controls. If Attlee had not felt compelled to call an election in 1951, the Labour government itself might have coasted through to the easy years.

### **SOURCE 2**

**In the debate over nuclear disarmament at the Labour Party conference in Scarborough in 1960, the leader Hugh Gaitskell tried to convince the party not to support unilateral nuclear disarmament:**

We may lose the vote today, and the result may deal this party a grave blow. It may not be possible to prevent this, but there are some of us, I think many of us, who will not accept that this blow need be mortal: who will not believe that such an end is inevitable. There are some of us, Mr Chairman, who will fight, and fight, and fight again, to save the party we love. We will fight, and fight, and fight again, to bring back sanity and honesty and dignity, so that our party – with its great past – may retain its glory and its greatness.



L.O: To know the reasons the Conservative party fell from power in 1964.

**Lesson 5 –The Conservative government: Reasons for the Conservative fall from power**



**The Conservative Party lost the 1964 election because they were outdated and out of touch with the electorate. Assess the validity of this view.**

Use the space below to plan an answer to the question

L.O: To know what a post-war boom meant for Britain.

**Lesson 6 –Economic developments: The post-war boom**

Complete the source evaluation for source one:



**SOURCE 1**

Harold Macmillan, addressing a large audience of Conservative supporters at Bedford football ground, July 1957. This was at a rally to celebrate 25 years of service by the local Conservative MP:

Let's be frank about it; most of our people have never had it so good. Go around the country, go to individual towns, go to the farms, and you will see a state of prosperity such as we have never had in my lifetime – nor indeed ever in the history of this country. What is beginning to worry some of us, 'Is it too good to be true?', or perhaps I should say, 'Is it too good to last?' For amidst all this prosperity there is one problem that has troubled us ever since the war. It is the problem of rising prices. Our concern today is, 'Can prices be steadied while at the same time we maintain full employment in an expanding economy?' For if **inflation** prices us out of world markets we shall be back in the old nightmare of unemployment. The older ones among you will know what this meant. I hope the younger ones never have to learn it.

Content	
Provenance	
Language and tone	

L.O: To know what a post-war boom meant for Britain.

## Lesson 6 –Economic developments: The post-war boom

**What can be learned about Macmillan's attitude to the economic situation in the 1950s from Source 1?**

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**In what ways is this source valuable for an understanding of economic developments in the 1950s?**

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WWW

EBI

### A CLOSER LOOK

#### Inflation and deflation

**Inflation** is the increase in the price of goods and services which occurs when people have more money to spend than there are goods available. Some inflation can help an economy because it encourages manufacturers to expand their businesses and employ more people but too much can lead to the economy overheating as workers demand higher wages because of higher prices.

**Deflation** is a fall in the price of goods and services; inflation controls that curb spending such as 'freezing' wage rises, increasing taxation or making borrowing harder so that goods cannot be bought on credit bring down prices. Deflation can lead to unemployment as people have less money to spend so less goods and services need to be produced.

Key word	Definition	Sentence
Inflation		
Deflation		

The Britain of 1951 had been shaped by three episodes of its recent history. The first episode was the Great Depression of the 1930s, seen in 1951 as an awful time of misery, mass unemployment and a failure by government to solve or alleviate problems. The second episode was the Second World War where all parts of the nation had worked together to defeat the forces of evil by a heroic national effort and shared sacrifice. The third episode was the rebuilding of post-war Britain under Attlee's Labour governments between 1945 and 1951, above all the establishment of the welfare state. Public and political opinion in Britain believed that never again should there be anything like the 'Hungry thirties' or the terrible war that followed. Victory in the war and the sacrifice that enabled this should lead to a better, fairer Britain in the future. This was the basis of the so-called 'post-war consensus'.

L.O: To know what a post-war boom meant for Britain.

## Lesson 6 –Economic developments: The post-war boom

### Post-war boom

In some ways the Conservative government was lucky in its timing, coming to power just as the beginnings of the post-Second World War economic recovery were beginning to show through. The general pattern of the 1950s was one of continued economic improvement. Food rationing finally came to an end in July 1954. The austerity of wartime was over and the British people were set to enjoy a higher standard of living than ever before.

**Look at the pictures below. Why would the end of food rationing help the Conservative government?**



#### A CLOSER LOOK

During the Second World War there was a shortage of many foods including meat, butter and sugar. **Rationing** was introduced to prevent the price of food rising so much that only rich people would be able to afford to buy it. The rationed allowance was based on people's nutritional needs and although it was unpopular, it meant that many people's diets were healthier than before the war.

There was a swift acceleration in the birth rate at the end of the Second World War leading to a fast-growing population. By 1961 there were 51 million people in Great Britain, which was 5 per cent (2 million) more than in 1951.

The global economy was booming as countries rebuilt after the war. This led to a sustained increase in overseas trade which brought high levels of earnings from exports and investments. This, together with the rising demand at home, ensured plentiful employment. By 1955 it was estimated that full employment had been achieved, with only 200,000 unemployed, less than 1 per cent of the workforce.

**What is full employment? What were the reasons for full employment?**

Key word	Definition	Sentence
Full employment		

L.O: To know what a post-war boom meant for Britain.

## **Lesson 7 –Economic developments: The post-war boom**

Although the numbers employed in traditional occupations, such as agriculture, fishing, coal mining and shipbuilding, fell during this period, there was a huge expansion in electrical and engineering work, and more jobs in industries relating to cars, steel and other metals.

In addition, service industries that ranged from financial and professional services to transport and sales were growing. By 1960 nearly 5 million people were employed in service industries — this was 1 in 5 of the population and roughly the same number as in all heavy industry.

**How did employment change during the period? Give examples.**

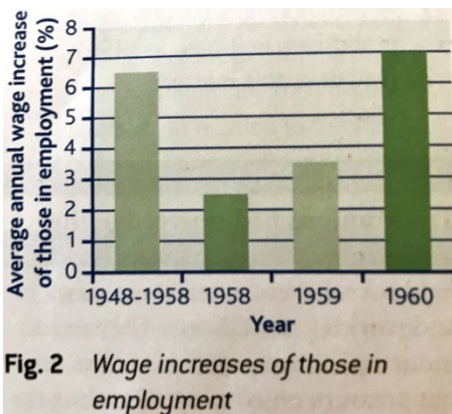
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Economic growth and low unemployment brought rising wages and most people enjoyed a spectacular rise in income. In the run-up to the 1955 election, Rab Butler, the Chancellor, was able to boost Conservative election prospects with a 'give-away' budget that provided the middle classes with £134 million in tax cuts. People felt more affluent and there was a growth in consumerism.

**What was a give away budget? Look at the graph below. What does it tell us about wage increases?**



The improvement in the terms of world trade in the late 1950s enabled Britain to import about 29 per cent more goods than it had in 1951 for the same number of exports.

Britain enjoyed a higher income per head than any other major country, except for the United States. However, this does not mean that the UK's growth rates exceeded those of elsewhere.

**What does table one tell us about Britain's industrial production?**

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**Table 1** A comparison of the industrial production 1952–59, using 1950 = 100 as a baseline

	1952	1955	1957	1959
West Germany	126	179	204	225
France	110	131	156	170
Italy	117	153	177	202
Netherlands	103	134	143	158
USA	111	124	127	133
UK	101	121	123	129



L.O: To know what a post-war boom meant for Britain.  
**Lesson 7 –Economic developments: The post-war boom**

**What happened to Britain's share of world trade during this period?**

	1950	1951	1959	1962
UK	25	22	17	15
USA	27	26	21	20
West Germany	7	10	19	20
Japan	3	4	7	7

**Table 2** A comparison of shares in world trade in percentages, 1950–62

**Look at Tables 1 and 2. Is it useful to compare Britain's performance to other countries? Explain your answer.**

So the late 1950s were years of optimism. The British enjoyed more jobs, more money, more goods, better housing and the provisions of the new welfare state. The adults, who had been used to wartime deprivation, suddenly found themselves with money to spend on cars, new appliances, luxuries and entertainment, while the younger generation, growing up amid plenty and oblivious to past shortages and fears, sought to enjoy life to the full.

**Why would this economic environment be favourable circumstances of the Conservative party. Explain your answer using examples.**



**The surprise of her life—and the best!**

Here's the latest present that ever surprised a wife. It's the electric **ELECTRIC** E-42. Convenient, she'll be amazed and grateful for the things this glowing beauty can hold—enough even made to make a banquet. Why, even the door is a larder! Lots of refrigerated storage space means lots of advantages. You can do a week's food shopping in a day. You can plan your meals well ahead. Leftovers won't "go off". Cakes, meats and vegetables can be prepared today and stored until required.

Here is the refrigerator to give you a fresh interest in food, more fun and more leisure. One more surprise. It only occupies just over 5 square feet of floor space—its tiny moderate sized kitchen comfortably!

**TO READ AND THINK ABOUT**

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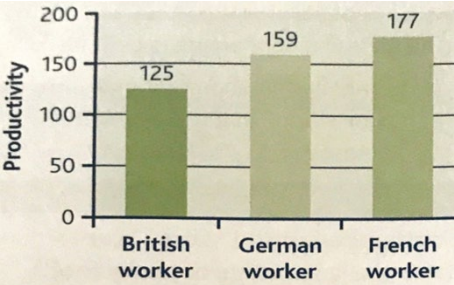
L.O: To know what Balance of payments and stop go policies are and the impact of them of Britain’s economy.

**Lesson 8 –Economic developments: Balance of payments and stop- go policies**

**Balance of payments issues and 'stop-go' policies**

However, the economic picture was not as positive as the growth in affluence might have suggested. The growth in wages was outstripping the rate of increase in production and this brought inflation. The Conservative government was constantly faced with the task of how to maintain growth and employment at the same time as keeping prices steady. Macmillan's answer was partly in an appeal to industry and the public: 'What we need is restraint and common sense — restraint in the demands we make and common sense in how we spend our income.'

**Look at figure three. What does it tell us about Britain’s productivity? Why does it matter?**



**Fig. 3** Worker productivity by 1960, using 1950 = 100 as a baseline

KEY TERM	Key word	Definition	Sentence
	Productivity		

productivity: efficiency, i.e. getting more produced per worker, per shift, per hourly wage; in this way, costs are reduced, profits are increased and workers are freed up for other uses

But it was difficult to persuade the trade unions that their members should not have high wage increases, particularly in some industries such as coal where miners felt that they were not gaining as much as other workers. Government controls had to be used to curb excessive inflation and taxation remained high, both to control excessive spending that would lead to an unwanted increase in imports and to pay for the rising costs of public services.

**What problems did the government face whilst trying to control the economy?**

A CLOSER LOOK

Trade unions had emerged in the nineteenth century to protect and fight for workers' interests in pay and working conditions. They used industrial action, such as strikes, to put pressure on employers and/or the government.

Key word	Definition	Sentence
Trade unions		

L.O: To know what Balance of payments and stop go policies are and the impact of them of Britain's economy.

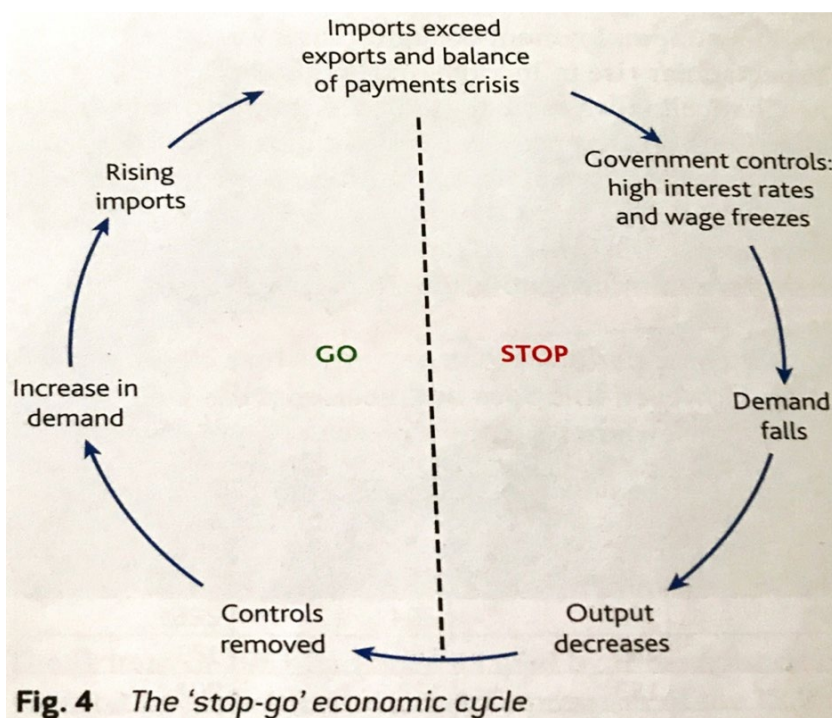
### Lesson 8 –Economic developments: Balance of payments and stop- go policies

This pattern, where the government attempted to control growth when the economy was in danger of overheating, is known as 'stop-go' economics.

#### KEY TERM

**'stop-go' economics:** the economics of 'stop-go' derived its name from the tensions between an expanding economy, with low interest rates and rising consumer spending ('go') and the results of the economy overheating, with wages and imports exceeding productivity and exports, necessitating a deliberate slowing down, or deflating of the economy ('stop') through higher interest rates and spending cuts

Key word	Definition	Sentence
Stop-go economics		



Look at figure four. On the lines below explain what the diagram shows you about stop-go economics:

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L.O: To know what Balance of payments and stop go policies are and the impact of them of Britain’s economy.

**Lesson 8 –Economic developments: Balance of payments and stop- go policies**



**Summary task: Create a flow chart to show the stop-go economic policies in this period.**

WWW	
EBI	32

L.O: To know what Balance of payments and stop go policies are and the impact of them of Britain's economy.

### Lesson 9 –Economic developments: Balance of payments and stop- go policies

Although higher salaries had created a large internal consumer demand, they did not encourage manufacturers to increase their export trade which would have helped bolster the export industries. This led to a trade deficit which helped to cause problems with the balance of payments.

#### KEY TERM

**balance of trade:** the difference between the goods that a country imports and what it exports; if a country imports more than it exports it is said to have a trade deficit; if it exports more than it imports it has a trade surplus

**balance of payment:** this includes invisible imports and exports i.e. services such as shipping, banking and insurance; the balance of trade is part of the balance of payments

Key word	Definition	Sentence
Balance of trade		
Balance of payment		

	Balance of visible trade	Balance of invisible trade	Overall trade balance
1946–50	–160	+104	–56
1951–55	–345	+326	–19
1956–60	–94	+226	+132

**Table 3** The UK **balance of trade**, 1946–60, in £m

Look at table three. What has happened to the UK's overall trade balance?

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What has caused the overall trade balance to change in this way?

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Do you think politicians would have been pleased with these trade figures? Explain your answer.

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L.O: To know what Balance of payments and stop go policies are and the impact of them of Britain’s economy.

**Lesson 9 –Economic developments: Balance of payments and stop- go policies**

The pressure from the United States over the Suez crisis exposed Britain's financial weakness and started a run on the pound. Macmillan's Chancellor, Peter Thorneycroft, believed in what a later generation would have called 'monetarism': he wanted to limit wage increases and to cut the money supply. Other cabinet ministers, such as Iain McLeod, who were one-nation Conservatives, were opposed to such a policy because it would lead to increased unemployment and cutbacks in housing.

**Give an advantage and a disadvantages of monetarism:**

Advantages of monetarism	Disadvantages of monetarism

KEY TERM	Key word	Definition	Sentence
<b>run on the pound:</b> a term describing a rapid fall in the value of the pound in international currency markets, especially in relation to the US dollar	Run on the pound		

KEY PROFILE	KEY PROFILE
<b>Peter Thorneycroft (1909–94)</b> was a Conservative MP from 1938. Although he resigned as Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1958, he returned to the cabinet in 1960. He was later a great supporter of Margaret Thatcher and served as chairman of the Conservative Party from 1975 to 1981.	<b>Enoch Powell (1912–98)</b> was a Conservative MP from 1950 to 1970. He held a number of ministerial posts but was a critic of the post-war consensus. He became notorious for a speech he made about immigration in 1968 after which he was sacked from the shadow cabinet (see pages 47–48). In February 1974 he left the Conservative Party, instead urging people to vote for the Labour Party in the March election, because he was opposed to entry into the EEC. In the October 1974 election he was elected as an MP for the Ulster Unionist Party.

The crisis and the divisions in the cabinet carried on throughout the summer of 1957. It was a row that symbolised the problems of 'stop-go' economics.

In the end Macmillan sided with those who wanted to keep up an expansionist economic policy. When Thorneycroft proposed drastic spending cuts in 1958, Macmillan overruled him. Thorneycroft resigned, together with his junior ministers, Enoch Powell and Nigel Birch. Post-war consensus had remained.

**Why did the split on opinions around economic policies continue to cause problems for Macmillan?**

Five key words to sum up Thorneycroft	Five key words to sum up Powell



L.O: To know what Balance of payments and stop go policies are and the impact of them of Britain's economy.

**Lesson 9 –Economic developments: Balance of payments and stop- go policies**

Complete the source evaluation for source two:



**SOURCE 2**

In January 1958, Peter Thorneycroft said the following in a speech in Parliament, shortly after he resigned as Chancellor of the Exchequer:

We have slithered from one crisis to another. Sometimes it has been the balance of payments crisis and sometimes it has been an exchange crisis. It is a picture of a nation in full retreat from its responsibilities. It is the road to ruin. I do not believe that the problem is technical at all. I do not believe in an answer to the question whether we should use bank rate or physical controls. To tell the truth, neither of them works very well. The simple truth is that we have been spending more money than we should.

Content	
Provenance	
Language and tone	

L.O: To know what Balance of payments and stop go policies are and the impact of them of Britain’s economy.

**Lesson 9 –Economic developments: Balance of payments and stop- go policies**

Sources one and two give different interpretations of Britain’s economic position during the 1950s. Explain what these interpretations are and why they might be different.

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This financial crisis did not do lasting harm to the popularity of the Conservative Party, which improved dramatically by 1959. Typically, Macmillan shrugged off the resignations of Thorneycroft and Powell as 'a little local difficulty'. Sterling regained its value against the dollar. The economy expanded so much that the budget of April 1959 provided tax cuts of £370 million - even more than the Butler 'election give-away' budget of 1955. The general air of consumer affluence reflected in the budget is generally accepted as the key factor in Macmillan's comfortable re-election in October 1959.

Explain the reasons why the economy helped Macmillan’s 1959 re-election campaign:

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KEY TERM	Key word	Definition	Sentence
sterling: a term used by economists for the British currency, the pound sterling	Stirling		



What does this 1959 election poster tell us about the Conservative campaign? What did they want Britain to think?

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Fig. 5 A Conservative poster from the 1959 General Election

L.O: To know what Balance of payments and stop go policies are and the impact of them of Britain's economy.

### **Lesson 10 –Economic developments: Balance of payments and stop- go policies**

The British economy continued to grow and was at its peak between 1960 and 1964. However, the government became further trapped in a cycle of 'stop-go' policies in an attempt to maintain economic stability. In 1961, worries about the economy overheating forced the government to introduce a 'pay pause' to hold down wage inflation, and to ask for a loan from the IMF (International Monetary Fund). The economic difficulties facing the Conservatives by 1962 were familiar ones: the balance of payments problem and the economics of 'stop-go'.

**What would be the problems with a pay pause and a loan from the IMF?**

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It was also becoming clear that economic growth in Europe, especially in West Germany, was leaving Britain behind and that trade with the Empire and Commonwealth was not sufficient to keep up. Therefore, Macmillan reversed his party's previous policy and decided it was essential for Britain's economy to be joined with Europe's. The 1961 application was a symbol of the sense of failure in bringing about economic modernisation.

**Why did Macmillan decide that now was a good time to join the EEC despite Britain previously declining? What did the application say about the Conservatives economic policies?**

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To address this Selwyn Lloyd, Macmillan's third Chancellor of the Exchequer, set up the National Economic Development Council (NEDC, known as Neddy). This consisted of government representatives, academics, employers and the trade unionists, and it was made responsible for long-term planning. A National Incomes Commission (known as Nicky), to keep an eye on wages and prices, was added in 1962.

**What was the purpose of NEDC?**

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**How valuable is Source three to an historian studying Britain's economic position in 1962?**

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L.O: To know what Balance of payments and stop go policies are and the impact of them of Britain's economy.

**Lesson 10 –Economic developments: Balance of payments and stop- go policies**

**Complete the source evaluation for source three:**



**SOURCE 3**

In April 1962 the left-leaning newspaper, *The Guardian*, reported:

**BRITAIN BOTTOM OF THE CLASS**

Britain economically came bottom of the class in the annual report published here tonight by the Secretariat of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe. Britain has the 'sorry distinction of being the only Western country whose volume of national output was practically unchanged from the previous year' and is, 'the one country where the employment situation has seriously deteriorated'.

Content	
Provenance	
Language and tone	

L.O: To know what Balance of payments and stop go policies are and the impact of them of Britain's economy.

### **Lesson 10 –Economic developments: Balance of payments and stop- go policies**

The rejection of Britain's application to join the EEC in January 1963 was a serious setback for Macmillan's economic policies. In his memoirs, Edward Heath claimed that he never saw Macmillan as bitterly depressed as he was after de Gaulle's veto.

**Why did Macmillan's attempt to get into the EEC fail?**

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In the autumn of 1963, the Beeching Report was published as part of a review into cutting public expenditure. It recommended massive cuts in Britain's rail network, including the closure of more than 30 per cent of the rail network, provoking public outrage. Hundreds of branch lines and thousands of stations were axed, causing fundamental social change, and leaving many rural areas more isolated. The government was no longer surfing on a wave of prosperity and economic success.

**What was the Beeching report? What were the social problems that came from this economic cut?**

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Reginald Maudling, who had replaced Lloyd as Chancellor of the Exchequer, pushed the economy into a 'go' phase by lowering the bank rate to encourage consumer spending. Britain's growth rate rose from 4 per cent in 1963 to nearly 6 per cent in 1964. Nevertheless, while exports rose just over 10 per cent between 1961 and 1964, imports remained nearly 20 per cent higher.

**How did Maudling try to improve the economy in the run up to the 1964 election?**

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### **Summary**

Although the British economy was still growing and living standards were still going up, the cycle of 'stop-go' economics had not been broken.

Economic growth would still lead to the overheating of the economy through excessive, expensive imports and rising wage demands. Britain continued to slip behind foreign competitors such as West Germany, the United States and Japan. The economic problems apparent in the 1950s had not been solved.

## Lesson 10 –Economic developments: Balance of payments and stop- go policies



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- This image shows a full page of blank, lined paper. It features approximately 20 evenly spaced horizontal black lines across its entire width, typical of notebook or legal stationery. The background is a solid off-white color, and there are no margins, text, or other markings present.

40



L.O: To know what Balance of payments and stop go policies are and the impact of them of Britain's economy.

### **Lesson 10 –Economic developments: Balance of payments and stop- go policies**



With reference to these three sources and your understanding of the historical context, assess the value of these three sources to an historian studying the success of the British economy between 1951 and 1964.

#### **SOURCE 1**

Harold Macmillan, addressing a large audience of Conservative supporters at Bedford football ground, July 1957. This was at a rally to celebrate 25 years of service by the local Conservative MP:

Let's be frank about it; most of our people have never had it so good. Go around the country, go to individual towns, go to the farms, and you will see a state of prosperity such as we have never had in my lifetime – nor indeed ever in the history of this country. What is beginning to worry some of us, 'Is it too good to be true?', or perhaps I should say, 'Is it too good to last?' For amidst all this prosperity there is one problem that has troubled us ever since the war. It is the problem of rising prices. Our concern today is, 'Can prices be steadied while at the same time we maintain full employment in an expanding economy?' For if **inflation** prices us out of world markets we shall be back in the old nightmare of unemployment. The older ones among you will know what this meant. I hope the younger ones never have to learn it.

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L.O: To know what Balance of payments and stop go policies are and the impact of them of Britain's economy.



**Lesson 10 –Economic developments: Balance of payments and stop- go policies**

**'The Conservative Party won elections between 1951 and 1964 as a result of voters' increasing prosperity.' Assess the validity of this view.**

Use the space below to plan an answer to the question

L.O: To know what living standards were like during the 1950s and early 60s

**Lesson 11 –Social developments: Rise of live standards, affluence and consumerism**

Complete the source evaluation for source one



**SOURCE 1**

*Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* is a novel, set in Nottingham, written by Alan Sillitoe and published in 1958. Sillitoe left school at 14 and went to work in a bicycle factory with his father. In this extract the main character, Arthur, reflects on the impact of the 1950s on his father:

The old man was happy at last, and he deserved to be happy, after all the years before the war on the dole, five kids and the big misery that went with no money and no way of getting any. And now he had a sit-down job at the factory, all the Woodbines he could smoke, money for a pint if he wanted one, a jaunt on the firm's trip to Blackpool, and a television set to look into at home. The thousands that worked at the bicycle factory took home good wages. No more short-term contracts like before the war. If the gaffer got onto you now you could always tell him where to put the job and go somewhere else. With the wages you got you could save up for a motor-bike or even an old car.

Content	
Provenance	
Language and tone	

L.O: To know what living standards were like during the 1950s and early 60s

**Lesson 11 –Social developments: Rise of live standards, affluence and consumerism**

**Make a list of all the ways that Arthur's father's life had changed, as stated in Source 1.**

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**Can novels can be useful sources for historians? Identify all the advantages and disadvantages you can think of.**

Advantages	Disadvantages

Britain in 1951 was a country still shaped by the experience of the Second World War. There were widespread visible signs of war damage. Much of British social life looked to the past. Regional and class loyalties were strong; it was usually easy to recognise people's origins and social background from their dress or accent. These class attitudes were reinforced by the familiar stereotypes that were commonly seen in films and on the radio. But British society in 1951 was not static. The experiences of the war had caused significant social change; so had the introduction of the welfare state in the post-war years. Many of the people who attended the Festival of Britain in 1951 felt that they were on the edge of a new modern world, a world of technological and social progress. Children born in the 'baby boom' after the war would grow up in a very different society than that of their parents' generation. In the years to 1964, there were to be significant shifts in population, growing social tensions including immigration and violence, and changes in attitudes to class.

**What does the above passage tell us about the post war society?**

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KEY TERM	Key word	Definition	Sentence
<b>Festival of Britain:</b> held a century after the Great Exhibition of 1851, this was intended to mark Britain's recovery from the war and to look forward to the future celebrating new design, culture and industry	Festival of Britain		
<b>baby boom:</b> in the years after the end of the Second World War there was a rise in the number of babies born; those born between 1946 and 1964 are usually seen as the 'baby boomers'	Baby boom		



L.O: To know what living standards were like during the 1950s and early 60s

## **Lesson 11 –Social developments: Rise of live standards, affluence and consumerism**

### **Rising living standards**

In 1951 Britain's infrastructure was run-down and it badly needed modernising. There was a desperate need for housing development to replace war damage and to deal with the decay of the housing stock that had been neglected for the previous decade. Pre-war slums were cleared and new towns were built, such as Harlow in Essex and Kirkby on Merseyside. The new towns, planned by Labour in the 1940s, such as Stevenage, Crawley, Corby and Cwmbran in South Wales, grew rapidly. The shifts in population as the slums were cleared meant that established traditional communities were broken up. This trend was intensified by the impact of private car ownership

### **What was the impact of new towns and housing?**

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From 1952, most economic indicators pointed upwards. Men's weekly wages were going up (£8.30 in 1951 went up to £15.35 ten years later). There were massive increases in private savings. Farmers did very well economically, encouraged by the continuation of generous state subsidies. Food rationing ended completely in 1954.

Homeownership increased, helped by easy access to cheap mortgages, but people living in council houses and rented accommodation still substantially outnumbered homeowners in Britain in the 1950s.

### **Explain how living standards rose for British people. Did everyone experience a higher level of standards?**

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KEY TERM
<b>infrastructure:</b> the physical environment of a modern developed society including the network of communications, such as roads, railways, airports and telecommunications, the industrial base, the public buildings, the schools and the housing stock
<b>council house:</b> a house built by local authorities to house the working classes, often to replace slums; rents tended to be lower than in privately rented accommodation

Key word	Definition	Sentence
Infrastructure		
Council house		

L.O: To know what living standards were like during the 1950s and early 60s

## Lesson 11 –Social developments: Rise of live standards, affluence and consumerism

### The impact of affluence and consumerism

The most obvious sign of the new affluence was the surge in ownership of consumer goods: televisions, washing machines, refrigerators and new furniture bought on hire purchase. A visible symbol of the affluence was the advertising industry, especially after ITV launched in 1955 and people became accustomed to the glossy adverts during and between popular Programmes.

### How did hire purchase change Britain?

#### KEY TERM

**hire purchase:** a system whereby a buyer pays a deposit on an expensive item and then pays monthly instalments (including interest) to hire the item over the length of a contract; at the end of the contract the buyer can pay the remaining balance or return the item

Key word	Definition	Sentence
Hire purchase		



Fig. 2 Post-war prosperity: a 1950s refrigerator advertisement

What does this advert tell you about what people in Britain wanted in the 1950s?



L.O: To know what living standards were like during the 1950s and early 60s

## **Lesson 11 –Social developments: Rise of live standards, affluence and consumerism**

Affluence also enabled new leisure opportunities. Between 1957 and 1959 the number of households owning a television rose by 32 per cent and by 1960 there were ten million television sets in use; it was estimated that 50 per cent of the population watched television in the evening. The television was becoming more important than the radio. People also had more time and money to develop hobbies such as DIY and gardening which both became popular in the 1950s and television programmes started to reflect these interests.

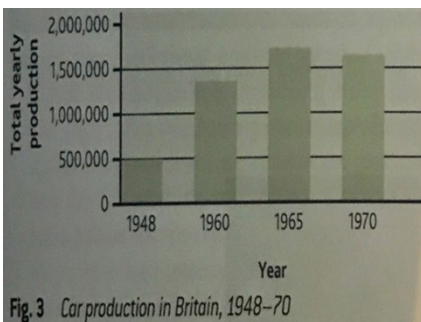
### **How did leisure activities change?**

#### **A CLOSER LOOK**

At the beginning of the 1950s television programmes were only broadcast from 3–6pm and then from 7–10:30pm. There was only one channel. Commercial television was introduced in 1955 and the later 1950s saw a much greater variety of programming including US-style game shows and the first soap opera, *Coronation Street*. The Queen's coronation in 1953 was televised and this proved a great spur to the purchase of television sets, demonstrated by the fact that 56 per cent of the population watched the coronation on television.

There was a boom in car ownership, which rose by 25 per cent between 1957 and 1959, creating greater demand for new roads to be built, including the novelty of motorways. Car travel changed ideas of holidays and leisure and commuting by car began to push housing developments further outside towns and cities. Construction of the motorway system (the Preston bypass) began in 1958. Work on the M1 (London-Birmingham) commenced soon afterwards. Between 1957 and 1963, 1200 miles of new or upgraded main roads were completed.

### **Why did car ownership change British peoples use of time?**



Holiday camps reached their peak of popularity in the 1950s: 60,000 people holidayed each week with Butlins, as people had both paid time off work and enough disposable income to be able to afford to go away on holiday. Foreign holidays were possible but still a luxury enjoyed by less than 2 per cent of the population.

### **How did people holiday in the 1950s?**

#### **KEY TERM**

**Butlins:** a chain of holiday camps founded by Billy Butlin in 1936; camps were built at popular seaside resorts like Skegness, Clacton and Blackpool; guests stayed in chalets and entertainment and activities were provided

L.O: To know how opinions around class and establishment started to change in the 1950s

## **Lesson 12 –Social developments: Class and the establishment**

### **Class and the 'Establishment'**

Britain in 1951 was a deferential and conformist society, with an ingrained respect for authority. Class loyalties were strong when it came to general elections; it's estimated that at the 1951 election, 65% of working-class voters voted for Labour and 80% of middle-class voters voted for the Conservatives.

**At the beginning of the period how did most British people feel about class?**

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By the late 1950s, there were signs of a shift in attitudes, a gradual breakdown of social restrictions and a loss of deference. The Suez Crisis of 1956 exposed lying and manipulation by the government. The rise of CND encouraged the challenge of authority. Britain appeared to be becoming a more individualist and less conformist society which was less willing to follow the lead set by Britain's Establishment.

**Why did attitudes start to change?**

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### **The Establishment**

The 'Establishment' was a term for the informal networks that connected the social and political elites. These were privileged people (overwhelmingly male) who had influence and who 'knew the people who mattered'. The Establishment included the aristocracy, politicians, civil servants, judges, diplomats, officers in the armed forces, and leaders of business and the media. Most were well off, but wealth was less important than background and connections. The natural progression was from the most exclusive public schools, to Oxbridge universities, and then into positions of power and influence. Because they had often been to the same schools and universities, it is sometimes called 'the old boys network'.

**What was the establishment?**

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The press coverage of the Profumo affair showed this decline in deference. While the security aspects were found not to be serious, they provided an excuse for the popular press to investigate the sexual behaviour of those involved, and other prominent figures. Christine Keeler and her friend, Mandy Rice-Davies, became celebrities. Previous tactics used by governments to prevent the publication of sensitive or embarrassing information no longer worked.

**What was the impact of the Profumo affair on the establishment?**



**Fig. 4** Christine Keeler at the height of the Profumo affair

L.O: To know how opinions around class and establishment started to change in the 1950s

### **Lesson 12 –Social developments: Class and the establishment**

By 1960 there was also a 'satire boom'. Peter Cook, Dudley Moore, Jonathan Miller and Alan Bennett made a big impact with their satirical stage show *Beyond the Fringe*. From 1961, the magazine *Private Eye* rapidly established a loyal following for its witty disrespect for the great and famous. In 1962, the ground-breaking TV show, *That Was The Week That Was*, made its debut on BBC television, satirising and lampooning public figures.

**What was satire? How did it start to change people's opinions of class and the establishment?**

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Critics of the Establishment believed that Britain was being held back by its ruling elite. Their perception of the ruling elite was that it: emphasised arts education in preference to science; blocked talent from outside the Establishment; and tried to hide its own mistakes.

The Conservative governments between 1951 and 1964 appeared to be dominated by the Establishment. Macmillan's government included a duke, the heir to a barony, a marquess and three earls; Sir Alec Douglas-Home, prime minister from 1963 had been the fourteenth Earl of Home, before giving up his peerage.

Social scientists such as Richard Hoggart (*The Uses of Literacy*, 1957), Anthony Sampson (*The Anatomy of Britain*, 1961) and C. P. Snow (*The Two Cultures*, 1959) provided evidence of Britain's 'class-ridden' society, its entrenched attitudes and the lack of social mobility. What Britain needed, it was argued, were leaders who had earned their positions through their personal merit and who better understood the modern, technical age in which they were living.

**What did critics of the Establishment argue?**

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By the late 1950s a group of writers, who came to be known as the 'angry young men', led the way in using the arts to attack the behaviour and attitudes of the established upper and upper-middle classes. The first of these was a play called *Look Back in Anger* by John Osborne, staged in 1956 (see Source 4). It was controversial. One critic called it 'the best young play of its decade'; another called it 'more than slightly distasteful'. However, although these attacks may have led to some changes in social attitudes the class system was certainly not broken.

**Who were the 'angry young men'? Give some examples of their work:**

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#### **A CLOSER LOOK**

##### **Angry young men and rebel literary figures**

The 'angry young men' is a term given to a group of writers who rebelled against traditional theatre and literature and produced plays and books that, they felt, reflected contemporary society. Their writing was sarcastic, bitter, intense and often bleak. Mundane settings and everyday language were used to show contemporary Britain. As well as John Osborne's play *Look Back in Anger* (1956), other notable works include: John Braine's *Room at the Top* (1957), Harold Pinter's *The Birthday Party* (1958); Alan Sillitoe's *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* (1958); David Storey's *This Sporting Life* (1960); and Stan Barstow's *A Kind of Loving* (1960).

L.O: To know women's position in society in the 1950s  
**Lesson 13 –Social developments: The position of women**

**The position of women**

Women were seen primarily as housewives in the 1950s. The ideal woman was a wife and mother. The average age of marriage was 21 and 75 per cent of all women were married. Only 1 in 5 women went out to work in 1951.

In 1951 the Mass Observation Survey captured a woman's typical day. It was based on 700 working-class housewives in London:

Morning	Afternoon
Got up; washed	Started to cook lunch; cleaned hall while lunch cooked
Cooked and ate breakfast	Ate lunch; washed up lunch
Dressed baby	Ironing
Cleared breakfast	Brought in washing
Tidied and swept nursery	Tidied self and baby
Made children's beds	Fetched child from school
Put baby out in pram	Tea
Got dressed herself	Wrote letter
Made own bed; tidied bedroom	Went to post
Tidied bathroom; cleaned basin; polished floor	Cleared tea
Cleaned out fire grate; tidied living room	Bathed children and put them to bed
Tidied kitchen; washed up breakfast	Washed up tea
Laundry; hung out washing	Cooked supper
Took out rubbish	Supper
Brought in coal	Sat and knitted
Went out to shop	Read evening paper
More laundry	Went to bed

**Use the results of this survey to try and work out how much time a typical woman spent cooking and cleaning in 1951.**

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**Write a brief profile of a typical woman's day in 2020 and then compare it to that of a woman in 1951.**

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L.O: To know women's position in society in the 1950s

### **Lesson 13 –Social developments: The position of women**

Family allowance, which was paid to women, was supposed to ensure that women did not need to work and the welfare state was based on the nuclear family and full employment for men. Mortgages and bank accounts were in men's names making women largely financially dependent on their husbands.

**What does the paragraph above tell us about the position of women?**

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**KEY TERM**

**family allowance:** a weekly benefit paid for each child in a family; it was renamed child benefit in 1977

Key word	Definition	Sentence
Family allowance		

Although by 1964 the number of women working had risen, it was still uncommon for married women, especially those with children, to work. Trade unions tended not to support women working as they believed that this would lower wages. Many people believed that it would be damaging for children if their mothers worked. For those women who did work there were some improvements, though mainly for the middle classes, as equal pay for teachers (1952) and for civil servants (1954) was introduced.

**What problems that women have in the workplace?**

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However, women's lives in the home were improved by new labour-saving devices. Between 1957 and 1959 the number of households owning a washing machine rose by 54 per cent and a refrigerator by 58 per cent. One Hotpoint washing machine was even called 'The Liberator'. Without a washing machine, washing clothes would take a whole day and without a fridge, women needed to shop for fresh food each day.

Nevertheless, by the end of this period second-wave feminism, which argued that women were unfulfilled and trapped by the homemaker role, was beginning in the United States and would spread to Britain by the later 1960s.

**What was the impact of labour – saving devices?**



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## Lesson 14 –Social developments: Attitudes to immigration and racial violence

### Attitudes to immigration and racial violence

At Queen Elizabeth II's coronation in 1953, there was evident enthusiasm for the Commonwealth ideal. Such ideas had to be balanced, however, against fears of Britain having to absorb too many new citizens at once. The New Commonwealth immigrants who followed in the wake of West Indian migrants who arrived on the Empire Windrush in 1948, were a cause of both social change and social

#### KEY TERM

##### New Commonwealth: those

countries which had recently gained independence, India, Pakistan, the West Indies and so on, as compared to the 'Old Commonwealth' countries such as Australia, New Zealand, Canada and South Africa; the term became a useful, indirect way of differentiating between non-white and white populations

Key word	Definition	Sentence
New Commonwealth		



A group of well-wishers greet new arrivals from the West Indies at London's Waterloo Station, 1961

#### A CLOSER LOOK

The *Empire Windrush* sailed from Kingston, Jamaica, to London in May 1948, carrying 492 migrant workers seeking a new life in Britain. Although the numbers were small, the *Windrush* voyage became a symbol of a new wave of Afro-Caribbean immigration into Britain.

There was a continuing flow of arrivals from the Irish Republic and, starting in 1948, about 250,000 immigrants arrived in Britain from the West Indies and other parts of the New Commonwealth.

### Define the Empire Windrush:

By 1958, about 210,000 Commonwealth immigrants had settled in Britain. Seventy-five per cent of them were male, working to support families back home. The largest number came from the West Indies, though the numbers coming from India and Pakistan was beginning to rise.

Public attitudes to immigration were mixed. For some there was a general feeling of tolerance and 'getting along'. But there were many unpleasant examples of outright racism from the host communities and instances of friction and resentment against immigrants.

### Why were attitudes to immigrants mixed?

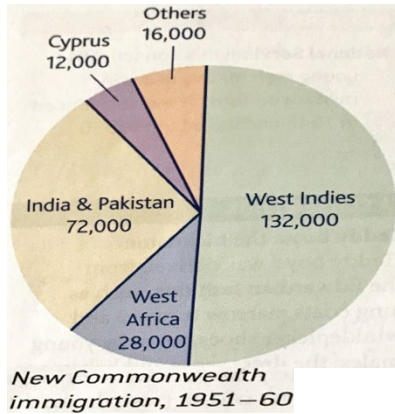


L.O: To know British attitudes to immigration in the 1950s

### **Lesson 14 –Social developments: Attitudes to immigration and racial violence**

At the same time there was considerable outward migration from Britain. In the 1950s, Australia was particularly keen to attract new citizens, offering assisted passages and help with jobs and housing. There was also a steady flow of British emigrants to North America. In the 1950s, Britain received a total of 676,000 immigrants seeking permanent residence, while 1.32 million Britons left for a new life abroad. In the 1960s, total inward migration was 1.25 million and outward migration was 1.92 million.

**Why did outward migration impact on Britain? What do the official figures tell us?**



The authorities regarded immigration as economically desirable (immigrants filled many important low-wage jobs) and hoped that the social tensions would ease gradually over time. But by the late 1950s, perceptions were altered by racial tension. In August 1958 in Nottingham gangs of white youths on hunts for immigrants after pub brawls and in Notting Hill, London, riots broke out in the same year.

**Why did the authorities regard immigration as important?**

#### **A CLOSER LOOK**

##### **The Notting Hill riots, 1958**

At the end of August 1958 there were outbreaks of serious violence in Notting Hill, an area that had a large concentration of people from the Caribbean. The area was very run-down and unscrupulous landlords exploited tenants with overcrowded and badly maintained housing. At first, the violence was mostly white youths attacking West Indians; later there was some concerted violence in the other direction. The police were unprepared and lacked experience of dealing with race riots.

**Explain the Notting Hill riots of 1958:**

L.O: To know British attitudes to immigration in the 1950s

### **Lesson 14 –Social developments: Attitudes to immigration and racial violence**

The leader of British fascism, Oswald Mosley, tried to use the issue by standing as the Union Movement candidate in the 1959 election for Kensington North, which included the area of Notting Hill, on a platform of repatriation.

#### **Who was Oswald Mosley ?**

##### **KEY PROFILE**

**Oswald Mosley (1896–1980)** was elected as a Conservative MP in 1918 but joined the Labour Party in the 1920s. Dissatisfied with the Labour government's response to the Great Depression in the early 1930s he set up the New Party, which later became the British Union of Fascists. He was interned during the war but in 1948 set up the Union Movement.

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##### **KEY TERM**

**repatriation:** returning someone to their place of origin

Key word	Definition	Sentence
Repatriation		

This racial violence brought to national attention a problem that many politicians would have preferred to leave alone. In 1962, the Commonwealth Immigrants Act was passed. There had been a reluctance to use legislation to control immigration from countries with close historic links to Britain. The Labour Party strongly opposed the 1962 Act, but did not repeal it after the 1964 election. Government and local communities muddled along towards a multicultural society without any clear sense of direction.

#### **Why was the Commonwealth act passed? Why did some criticise it?**

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#### **How valuable is source two to an understanding of racial tension in the period 1951 to 1964?**

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**Lesson 14 –Social developments: Attitudes to immigration and racial violence**

Complete the source evaluation for source two:



**SOURCE 2**

A reporter for the *Kensington News* described what he saw of the 1958 Notting Hill riots. This report appeared in the newspaper on 1 September 1958:

I saw a mob of over 700 men, women and children, stretching 200 yards along the road. Young children of ten were treating the whole affair as a great joke and shouting, 'Come on, let's get the blacks and the coppers'. In the middle of the screaming, jeering youths and adults, a speaker from the Union Movement was urging his excited audience to 'get rid of them' (the coloured people). Groups of policemen stood at strategic points carefully watching the 'meeting'. Within half an hour the mob which had swelled to uncontrollable numbers had broken scores of windows and set upon two negroes who were lucky to escape with just cuts and bruises. As the crowd swung into Blenheim Crescent milk bottles rained down from the tenement buildings where coloured men were sheltering. Accompanied by a dozen bottles, down came a petrol bomb in the middle of the mob.

Content	
Provenance	
Language and tone	

## Lesson 15 –Social developments: youth culture and changing social attitudes

### The emergence of the 'teenager' and youth culture

During the 1950s there was, for the first time, a discernible youth culture. Young people increasingly had more time: new labour-saving devices meant that girls did not need to help their mothers at home as much; boys no longer had to take part in National Service after 1960. They dressed differently to their parents, listened to different music, went to the new coffee bars rather than the old tea houses. The post-war baby boom had swelled the number of teenagers. One survey in 1959 about the lives of teenagers estimated that there were 5 million teenagers in Britain, about 10 per cent of the population. This made them more visible and more economically important. Young people had money to buy records and fashion, helping to create their own culture. By the late 1950s there were magazines and TV programmes aimed specifically at this group. Changes in technology like the transistor radio helped spread the culture.

### What were the causes of the teenager?

Causes  
of the  
teenager

#### KEY TERM

**National Service:** this conscripted young men for two years in military uniform; it was introduced in 1947 and lasted until 1960

Key word	Definition	Sentence
National service		

In the early 1950s, Teddy boys were the most obvious youth subculture. They were seen as a worrying phenomenon and were linked with juvenile delinquency and rising crime. By the later 1950s they were replaced with first the Rockers and then the Mods.

### What were Teddy boys?

#### A CLOSER LOOK

**Teddy boys:** the nickname 'Teddy boys' was derived from the Edwardian fashions, such as long coats, narrow trousers and winklepicker shoes, worn by young males; the dress sense and behaviour of the Teddy boys was seen as a challenge to older people and their ideas about social order

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L.O: To know how youth culture and social attitudes changed

### **Lesson 15 –Social developments: youth culture and changing social attitudes**

Rock and roll reached Britain in 1955 with Bill Haley's Rock Around the Clock, closely followed by Elvis Presley. Rockers rode heavy motorcycles, wore leather and listened to rock and roll music. In contrast, Mods rode scooters, wore smart suits and preferred 'sophisticated' pop music.

**What was the difference between mods and rockers?**

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There were numerous clashes between Mods and Rockers in the early 1960s but the event that caused a national sensation was the large-scale, organised rioting in the south-coast holiday resorts of Clacton, Margate and Brighton, in May 1964. In Brighton, the fighting went on for two days, with large contingents of police struggling to restore order. The public reaction to these events has been described as a moral panic with hysterical descriptions of knife-wielding hooligans undermining the very foundations of society. The actual levels of violence were vastly exaggerated.

**What was the impact of Mod and Roker tensions?**



**Fig. 7** 'The trouble with young people today': fighting between Mods and Rockers at Margate

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**Lesson 15 –Social developments: youth culture and changing social attitudes**

**Changing social attitudes and tensions**

All of these changes in British society affected attitudes, sometimes leading to increased tensions. This was reflected in popular film and television programmes. Racial tension was the theme of *Sapphire*, a 1959 crime thriller with a then rather daring portrayal of sex and violence. On television, the cosy and comforting police series *Dixon of Dock Green* was shouldered aside by the gritty realism of *Z Cars* set in a new town on Merseyside. Gang violence was chillingly portrayed in Anthony Burgess's 1962 novel *A Clockwork Orange*. Television also produced campaigning programmes designed to raise controversy about social issues, such as *Cathy Come Home*, a drama about homelessness by Ken Loach in 1962.

**How did film and TV highlight changes in social attitude?**

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There was also a drive to break down censorship and social taboos. *A Taste of Honey* (1958), a play by Shelagh Delaney, told the story of a young unmarried woman who becomes pregnant after a relationship with a black sailor. *Victim* (1961), starring Dirk Bogarde, was the first English-language film to mention 'homosexual'. In 1962, Penguin Books caused a storm by publishing a paperback edition of D. H. Lawrence's sexually explicit novel *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. The result was a high-profile court case under the Obscenity Act. Penguin won the case and 2 million copies of the book were sold.

But this new culture was not universally popular and there was a backlash against the new 'immorality and depravity', led by Mary Whitehouse and supported by parts of the national press. There was also criticism from the left wing that the concentration on material affluence had also had negative effects, undermining decency in society. In general, the majority opinion in Britain remained socially conservative.

**Why was there criticism of this new social attitude?**

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**Summarise the criticism in source three. What does your own knowledge tell you that either supports or challenges the view in this source?**

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**Lesson 15 –Social developments: youth culture and changing social attitudes**

Complete the source evaluation for source three:



**SOURCE 3**

In 1960 the left-wing journal, the *New Statesman*, looked back at the previous decade:

Few tears will be shed for the fifties. Cynical, flashy, selfish, the decade made the rich richer, the poor poorer. To the advanced countries of the West it brought unprecedented prosperity, achieved largely at the expense of the vast and growing working classes of Africa or Asia. The Tories imprisoned homosexuals and prostitutes and pacifists. But they allowed the striptease joint and the drinking club to multiply. They made Britain into a windfall state, a national casino with loaded dice; and when violence and dishonesty increased they clamoured for corporal punishment.

Content	
Provenance	
Language and tone	

**Lesson 15 –Social developments: youth culture and changing social attitudes**

Complete the source evaluation for source four



**SOURCE 4**

In the play, *Look Back in Anger* (1956), Jimmy has married the upper-middle-class Alison. In this section she and her father, the Colonel, are talking about Britain in the 1950s. He had been a senior official in India until the country gained independence from the British Empire in 1947:

**COLONEL** Perhaps Jimmy is right. Perhaps I am a – what was it? an old plant who can't understand why the sun isn't shining any more. You can see what he means, can't you. I left England in 1914, and I didn't see much of my own country until we all came back in '47. Oh, I knew things had changed of course. People told you all the time the way it was going – going to the dogs. But it seemed very unreal to me, out there. I think the last day the sun shone was when that dirty little train steamed out of that crowded, suffocating Indian station. I knew in my heart it was all over then. Everything.

**ALISON** You're hurt because everything is changed. Jimmy is hurt because everything is the same. And neither of you can face it. Something's gone wrong somewhere, hasn't it?

Content	
Provenance	
Language and tone	

## Lesson 15 –Social developments: youth culture and changing social attitudes



1. Find evidence to support these views and complete the following table:
2. Write a paragraph explaining why both the Colonel and Jimmy might be unhappy with Britain in the 1950s.

[illegible]

## Lesson 15 –Social developments: youth culture and changing social attitudes



With reference to these three sources and your understanding of the historical context, assess the value of these three sources to an historian studying the impact of social change in the period 1951 to 1964.

### **SOURCE 1**

*Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* is a novel, set in Nottingham, written by Alan Sillitoe and published in 1958. Sillitoe left school at 14 and went to work in a bicycle factory with his father. In this extract the main character, Arthur, reflects on the impact of the 1950s on his father:

The old man was happy at last, and he deserved to be happy, after all the years before the war on the dole, five kids and the big misery that went with no money and no way of getting any. And now he had a sit-down job at the factory, all the Woodbines he could smoke, money for a pint if he wanted one, a jaunt on the firm's trip to Blackpool, and a television set to look into at home. The thousands that worked at the bicycle factory took home good wages. No more short-term contracts like before the war. If the gaffer got onto you now you could always tell him where to put the job and go somewhere else. With the wages you got you could save up for a motor-bike or even an old car.

### **SOURCE 2**

A reporter for the *Kensington News* described what he saw of the 1958 Notting Hill riots. This report appeared in the newspaper on 1 September 1958:

I saw a mob of over 700 men, women and children, stretching 200 yards along the road. Young children of ten were treating the whole affair as a great joke and shouting, 'Come on, let's get the blacks and the coppers'. In the middle of the screaming, jeering youths and adults, a speaker from the Union Movement was urging his excited audience to 'get rid of them' [the coloured people]. Groups of policemen stood at strategic points carefully watching the 'meeting'. Within half an hour the mob which had swelled to uncontrollable numbers had broken scores of windows and set upon two negroes who were lucky to escape with just cuts and bruises. As the crowd swung into Blenheim Crescent milk bottles rained down from the tenement buildings where coloured men were sheltering. Accompanied by a dozen bottles, down came a petrol bomb in the middle of the mob.

### **SOURCE 4**

In the play, *Look Back in Anger* (1956), Jimmy has married the upper-middle-class Alison. In this section she and her father, the Colonel, are talking about Britain in the 1950s. He had been a senior official in India until the country gained independence from the British Empire in 1947:

**COLONEL** Perhaps Jimmy is right. Perhaps I am a – what was it? an old plant who can't understand why the sun isn't shining any more. You can see what he means, can't you. I left England in 1914, and I didn't see much of my own country until we all came back in '47. Oh, I knew things had changed of course. People told you all the time the way it was going – going to the dogs. But it seemed very unreal to me, out there. I think the last day the sun shone was when that dirty little train steamed out of that crowded, suffocating Indian station. I knew in my heart it was all over then. Everything.

**ALISON** You're hurt because everything is changed. Jimmy is hurt because everything is the same. And neither of you can face it. Something's gone wrong somewhere, hasn't it?

L.O: To know how youth culture and social attitudes changed

**Lesson 15 –Social developments: youth culture and changing social attitudes**



**'The decline in deference was the most significant social change in the period 1951 to 1964'. Assess the validity of this view.**

Use the space below to plan an answer to the question



L.O: To know the events around Britain's attempt to join the EEC  
**Lesson 16 – Foreign relations: EFTA and attempts to join the EEC**

Complete the source evaluation for source one:



**SOURCE 1**

The Future Policy Study was presented to Harold Macmillan's cabinet in 1960. It highlighted the key principles of British foreign policy:

The core of our policy is the **Atlantic Alliance**. Our main task in the next decade will be to maintain, and to make even closer, the association between North America, the United Kingdom and the continental countries of Western Europe. We must therefore work to ensure continuation of the United States presence in Europe and the development of an economic and political community of interests embracing both the United States and Western Europe. We must also do all we can to strengthen the Commonwealth, which can be a valuable instrument for maintaining our influence as a Power with worldwide interests and for promoting our ideals, and can form a bridge between the Western world and the developing countries of Asia and Africa.

Content	
Provenance	
Language and tone	



L.O: To know the events around Britain's attempt to join the EEC

### Lesson 16 – Foreign relations: EFTA and attempts to join the EEC

**Explain what Source 1 tells us about Britain's position in the world. What limitations, as a source to learn about Britain's position in the world, does it have?**

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WWW	
EBI	

KEY TERM	Key word	Definition	Sentence
	Atlantic Alliance		
	Superpower		

**Atlantic Alliance:** a term used to refer to NATO – North Atlantic Treaty Organisation; formed in 1949 to defend the Western alliance in the Cold War, it was made up of 12 countries including Britain; it created a collective defence policy, i.e. if any one of its members was attacked it would be defended by all of them

**superpower:** an extremely powerful nation with influence on other countries

The Second World War had left Britain badly damaged, burdened with massive debts, and in the shadow of two new military superpowers, the United States and the USSR In 1947, Britain's ambassador in Washington had to inform the Americans that Britain faced bankruptcy and would have to withdraw from commitments in Greece, Turkey and Palestine. In the same year, independence was granted to India and Pakistan, marking the start of Britain's 'retreat from Empire'. Nevertheless, political and public opinion was slow to see the implications for the future in terms of British foreign policy. The Future Policy Study (Source I) presented to Macmillan's cabinet in 1960 showed Britain had accepted some but not all of the implications of the retreat from Empire. In 1962, Dean Acheson, who had been the US Secretary of State between 1949 and 1953, stated that 'Britain has lost an empire and has not yet found a role'.

**How had Britain's position in the world started to change?**

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**Lesson 16 – Foreign relations: EFTA and attempts to join the EEC**

**EFTA and attempts to join the EEC**

The Schuman Plan of 1950, named after the French foreign minister, Robert Schuman, set out the proposals for a Coal and Steel Community that would integrate French and German heavy industry in order to promote rapid economic reconstruction and also to bind together the historic enemies, France and Germany, and eliminate the dangers of future wars between them.

This was to be the foundation of the European Economic Community (EEC).

**What were the foundations of the EEC?**



**Fig. 1** Edward Heath negotiating entry into the EEC

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This scheme was strongly supported by Britain and the United States as an important contribution to the security of Europe. This was seen as vital at the beginning of the Cold War. However, Britain did not initially become involved. There were a number of reasons for this:

- There were very few politicians or journalists in favour of Britain taking up the leadership role in Europe that was on offer.
- The Left tended to be suspicious of the free-market principles behind the Common Market: the response of the Labour politician Herbert Morrison was that: 'the Durham miners won't wear it, I'm afraid'.
- The Right tended to regard the preservation of traditional trade links with Australia, Canada and New Zealand as far more important than those with Europe.
- There was a belief that this was an issue for continental Europe: the Germans had been deadly wartime enemies; France had been overrun and occupied; in contrast Britain had 'won the war'.
- There was an assumption that Britain was still a great world power.

Britain wanted to balance its involvement in Europe with maintaining the 'special relationship' with the United States.

**Looking at the reasons above. Which do you think is the most significant reason that Britain did not become initially involved? Explain why you have chosen this reason.**

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L.O: To know the events around Britain's attempt to join the EEC

### **Lesson 16 – Foreign relations: EFTA and attempts to join the EEC**

The EEC took shape at an international conference at Messina, in Sicily, in 1955. A British delegation was present to observe and encourage but not to join. These agreements were then developed in detail and the Treaty of Rome launched the EEC, without Britain, in 1957. EEC was dominated by the partnership between France and Germany. The French president from 1958, Charles de Gaulle, was determined to protect this partnership from 'les Anglo-Saxons' (Britain and, through Britain, the influence of the US).

At that time, it was not clear how successful 'The Six' would become. But within a very short space of time, British attitudes began to shift. In 1959, Britain took the lead in the formation of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA). This was only moderately successful and the new organisation was not able to match the economic growth of the EEC.

**What does Britain's changing attitude infer?**

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In 1961, the Macmillan government submitted Britain's application to join the EEC. The reason for Britain changing its mind about the EEC was economic. It was hoped that joining the EEC would:

- boost industrial production for a large-scale export market
- increase industrial efficiency with greater competition
- stimulate economic growth with the rapid economic expansion already seen in the EEC.

The United States was also keen to see Britain join the EEC for strategic reasons, seeing Britain as a link between Europe and America. Tensions were rising in the Cold War. Finally, belief in Britain's imperial power had been shaken by Suez and by the accelerating pace of decolonisation in Africa.

**Looking at the reasons for Britain's entry into the EEC. Why do you think Britain felt that 1961 was the right time to join? Explain your answer.**

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Despite the application to join the EEC, Britain wanted to keep its position in two other areas of world affairs: the Commonwealth and the United States. This made the negotiations with the EEC extremely complex and difficult. The EEC had already developed detailed economic structures, especially the Common Agricultural Policy, that Britain found difficult to conform to. Special exemptions for Britain's Commonwealth trade partners, such as lamb exports from New Zealand, which would have been blocked by EEC rules, had to be sought. This took many months of hard bargaining, led on the British side by Macmillan's chief negotiator, Edward Heath.

The negotiations seemed to have reached a successful conclusion in January 1963; but the French President Charles de Gaulle exercised France's right of veto and blocked Britain's application.

**Explain why entry into the EEC failed:**

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L.O: To know the events around Britain's attempt to join the EEC  
**Lesson 17 – Foreign relations: EFTA and attempts to join the EEC**

Complete the source evaluation for source two



**SOURCE 2**

Edward Heath, the chief negotiator for Britain, wrote about the veto in his autobiography which was published in 1998:

When the Brussels negotiations resumed in January 1963 we were all very optimistic and an official English translation of the draft treaty was arranged. The French foreign minister was not present; we were told he had to attend de Gaulle's press conference. I concluded the meeting in an upbeat mood, saying: 'We all seem to be in complete agreement'. Immediately afterwards we were told what de Gaulle had said in his press conference. He claimed the negotiations had shown that Britain could not adapt to the ways of the Six; and criticised Britain's unwillingness to give up its 'special political and military relations' with the United States. We were all astonished and very worried about the future.

Content	
Provenance	
Language and tone	

L.O: To know the events around Britain's attempt to join the EEC

### Lesson 17 – Foreign relations: EFTA and attempts to join the EEC

How valuable is Source 2 for an historian studying Britain's failure to join the EEC in 1961?

WWW

EBI

De Gaulle's intervention was a bombshell. The other five members of the EEC were as shocked and disappointed as the British negotiating team but were unable to persuade de Gaulle to carry on with the negotiations. His intervention caused bad relations between France and Britain for some time. It also meant that Britain remained outside the EEC.

**What was the impact of De Gaulle's intervention?**

Read and make notes on the key figures:

#### KEY PROFILE

**Charles de Gaulle (1894–1970)** was leader of the Free French Forces who fought on after France surrendered in 1940. He had many rows with his main allies, Winston Churchill and Franklin Roosevelt, and remained suspicious of 'les Anglo-Saxons', especially the Americans, in his later career. He led France through the transition from dictatorship to democracy after the liberation of France in 1944. He retired in 1946 but returned as president in 1959, remaining in that position until 1969.

Charles de Gaulle

Edward Heath

#### KEY PROFILE



**Fig. 2** Heath implemented major reform to Britain's system of local government

**Edward Heath (1916–2005)** was the Conservative MP for Bexley, Kent from 1950 to 2001. He served as Chief Whip under Eden and shadow Chancellor under Douglas-Home before becoming leader of the Conservative Party from 1965 to 1975. He was prime minister from 1970 to 1974 but lost the party leadership to Margaret Thatcher in 1975, and was openly critical of her policies. Always pro-European throughout his life, he oversaw the entry of Britain into the EEC in 1973.



**Lesson 17 – Foreign relations: EFTA and attempts to join the EEC**

**KEY TERM**

**EEC (European Economic**

**Community):** an economic union, often known as the Common Market, first established by the Treaty of Rome in 1957; its six founder members were France, Germany, Italy and the 'Benelux' countries – Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg; the EEC became the European Union in 1992

**Cold War:** a term used to describe the tension between the West (the US, Western Europe including Britain, Canada) and the Communist states (the USSR and its allies) after the Second World War; it lasted until the collapse of communism in 1989 to 1990 and had a great impact on Britain's foreign policy throughout this period

**'special relationship':** term used to describe the close relationship between the United Kingdom and the United States, based on historical, diplomatic, cultural, economic, and military ties between the two countries; it was strengthened by being key allies during the Cold War, sharing the common objective of resisting the power of the USSR

**EFTA (European Free Trade**

**Association):** created in 1960 by Britain along with Austria, Denmark, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, and Switzerland as an alternative to the EEC; these were sometimes referred to as the 'outer seven' as opposed to the 'inner six' of the EEC; it created a free trade area, although each EFTA member could negotiate separately with non-EFTA members

Key word	Definition	Sentence
EEC European Economic Community		
Cold War		
Special relationship		
EFTA European Free Trade Association		

L.O: To know the events around Britain's attempt to join the EEC

**Lesson 17 – Foreign relations: EFTA and attempts to join the EEC**



**How important is President de Gaulle in explaining Britain's exclusion from the process of European integration between 1951 and 1963?**

Use the space below to plan an answer to the question

L.O: To know the relations and policies Britain had with the USA and USSR

## **Lesson 18 – Foreign relations: Relations with, and policies towards the USA and USSR**

### **Relations with, and policies towards, USA and USSR**

British relations with, and policies towards, the United States and the USSR were dominated by the early Cold War years. Britain, the United States and the Soviet Union had been allies during WW2. Britain and the United States stayed allies in opposing the expansion of communism across Europe. Britain had become a founder member of NATO in 1949 and British troops were stationed in West Germany.

### **Why was relations with the USA and USSR important?**

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Britain and the United States remained close allies in the Cold War throughout the period, Britain supported the United Nations in Korea. It also worked with the United States to sustain West Berlin. Harold Macmillan was involved in plans for a summit conference with Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev in 1960. He also established a particularly good relationship with President Eisenhower's successor, John F. Kennedy. Kennedy kept Macmillan informed with the events of the Cuban Missile Crisis, although the British Chancellor Peter Thorneycroft described Britain as 'bystanders' during the crisis. Nevertheless, in many respects, it appeared that Britain had kept its place at the international 'top table'.

What was the special relationship with the USA?



Fig. 3 A special relationship: Harold Macmillan and John F. Kennedy at Downing Street, June 1963

#### **A CLOSER LOOK**

The **Cuban Missile Crisis** occurred when Cuba, which was communist, requested the USSR to station nuclear weapons in Cuba. The United States feared this, Cuba being only 90 miles away, and set up a blockade to prevent Soviet ships from reaching Cuba. Tense negotiations eventually resulted in the Soviets withdrawing weapons from Cuba, while the United States secretly agreed to withdraw weapons from Turkey and Italy. It has been seen as the closest the world came to a nuclear war.

However, this does not mean that the special relationship was not sometimes placed under strain. Examples include: the Burgess and Maclean affair; Britain's relationship with the EEC; and the Suez crisis. On the other hand, Britain was still militarily overstretched and very dependent on American power. This was demonstrated by the costs of Britain's independent nuclear deterrent.

### **Explain the strains on the special relationship:**

#### **A CLOSER LOOK**

##### **The Burgess and Maclean affair**

Guy Burgess and Donald Maclean were highly placed officers in British intelligence. They defected to the Soviet Union in 1951. For years afterwards, there were concerns about finding the 'Third Man' who had tipped them off. The revelation that British spies had been leaking vital secrets to Moscow deeply worried the Americans, who became much less ready to share intelligence secrets with Britain.

L.O: To know the arguments for and against nuclear deterrent in the 1950s

### **Lesson 18 – Foreign relations: Debates over the nuclear deterrent**

#### **Debates over the nuclear deterrent**

The post war Labour government after the war had committed Britain to developing an independent nuclear deterrent. The United States had stopped sharing its nuclear secrets with Britain so if Britain wanted to become a nuclear power then it would have to do so itself. Labour Foreign Secretary, Ernest Bevin, had famously said in 1946: 'I don't want any other foreign secretary of this country to be talked to or at by a secretary of state in the United States. We've got to have this thing over here whatever it costs. We've got to have the bloody Union Jack on top of it.'

**What do you think Bevin means in this quote?**

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Churchill continued this policy and Britain's first atomic bomb tests were in 1952. This made Britain the third country in the world to develop nuclear weapons, after the USA and the USSR. But by this point the USA and the USSR were already developing the more powerful hydrogen bomb; Britain's 'H' bomb was tested in 1957.

**What problem can you see for Britain's nuclear programme?**

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Concerns over these developments led to the formation of CND (Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament) in 1958. CND rapidly became the most powerful pressure group in Britain, backed by many intellectuals and middle-class protesters. They wanted Britain to reject nuclear weapons and follow a policy of unilateral nuclear disarmament. Around 8000 people took part in a demonstration at the weapons research base at Aldermaston in Berkshire in 1958; a second march in 1959 was even bigger. CND's 'unilateralism' became a powerful magnet for anti-government protest and many Labour left-wingers joined in.

**What is the significance of the CND?**



Fig. 4 CND on the march to Aldermaston, Easter 1958

By 1958, the United States had once again agreed to share nuclear technology with Britain under the Mutual Defence Agreement. Britain's rocket project, Blue Streak, was abandoned in 1960. It was replaced by dependence on the American Polaris submarine weapons system. It became clear that Britain would not have an independent nuclear deterrent, some in the Labour Party started to be more sceptical of supporting a pro-nuclear policy.

**What were the positives and negatives of the Mutual defence agreement?**

Positives	Negatives
	73

L.O: To know the impact of the Korean war and Suez crisis for Britain

### **Lesson 19 – Foreign relations: The Korean war and Suez crisis**

#### **The Korean war, 1950-53**

At the end of the Second World War, Korea, which had previously been ruled by Japan, was occupied by the Soviet Union in the north, and by the United States in the south. Two separate governments were subsequently set up, each one claiming to be legitimate. In 1950, forces from north Korea, supported by the Soviet Union and China, invaded the south. The United Nations Condemned the action and sent UN forces to combat the invasion. Over 20 countries supplied troops. Britain sent over 90,000 soldiers, the second biggest contingent after the United States.

**What would concern Britain about north Korean troops invading the south?**

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There was heavy fighting resulting in a stalemate. A ceasefire was agreed in 1953. Over 1000 British troops had died. Under the terms of the ceasefire it was agreed that Korea would be split between a communist North Korea and a non-communist South Korea.

The Korean War showed how the Cold War was being fought across the whole world. It also demonstrated Britain's willingness to continue to play a major role in world affairs, despite economic constraints. However, it was also clear that the United States was the greater power.

**What was the impact of the Korean war? How did it change the world? How did it change Britain?**

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#### **Suez, 1956**

The Suez Canal was the main artery connecting trade routes from the Mediterranean through to the Indian Ocean and beyond to Asia, Australia and New Zealand. Above all, the Suez Canal was the vital route for oil shipments: 80 per cent of Western Europe's oil imports passed through the canal.

**What was the significance of the Suez canal?**

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The emergence of Egyptian independence under a new nationalist leader, Colonel Nasser, was deeply worrying for Britain's strategic interests. The United States and Great Britain had planned to invest in the Aswan Dam, but pulled out in 1956. In response, Nasser announced the nationalisation of the Suez Canal Company to provide finance needed for the Aswan Dam.

**Who was Colonel Nasser?**

#### **KEY PROFILE**

**Colonel Gamel Abd al-Nasser (1918–70)** was one of the leaders of a nationalist revolt against the old Egyptian monarchy. He became Egypt's president in 1956, remaining in that position until his death in 1970. He was neutral in the Cold War which concerned Britain and the United States.



L.O: To know the impact of the Korean war and Suez crisis for Britain

### **Lesson 19 – Foreign relations: The Korean war and Suez crisis**

Nasser's action seemed to place Egypt on the Soviet side of the Cold War. Anthony Eden, was considered an expert on foreign policy. But his understanding of the situation was influenced both by his belief that Britain was an imperial power and his experience in fiercely opposing appeasement in the 1930s. Eden saw Nasser as 'an evil dictator who could not be allowed to get away with unprovoked aggression'. Most of Eden's cabinet, including the Chancellor, Harold Macmillan, agreed with him.

**Why would Nasser's announcement cause issues for Britain? What was Eden's opinion of Nasser?**

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Eden was encouraged by both France and Israel. A top-secret meeting was held at Sèvres, in Paris, at which Britain, France and Israel agreed a plan of action. Israeli forces would invade Egypt; British and French forces would then intervene. The excuse for intervention would be to enforce peace on Egypt and Israel; the real effect would be to seize control of the Suez Canal zone. The details of this plan were concealed from Parliament and from the Americans.

**What was the plan Eden created with France and Israel?**

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This plan was put into operation on 29 October when the Israeli attack was launched and the Anglo-French invasion followed. The military action did not go as smoothly as planned, though it might well have succeeded in the end. But it also caused a storm of political protest in Britain. The Labour Party opposed the conflict, anti-war protests were held and public opinion was split on the need for intervention. Even more importantly, the United States opposed the action. And Britain was simply not strong enough in 1956 to stand up to American pressure; it was plunged into a serious financial crisis. Macmillan, one of the strongest supporters of the invasion, was the first to realise that it was essential to pull out, even though this meant accepting failure and humiliation.

**Why did the operation fail?**

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Eden's reputation was fatally damaged. Suez also meant that Britain's position in the world now had to go through a fundamental reassessment in a number of ways. Firstly it brought into question Britain's reputation as a force for good in the world. Secondly, it highlighted the inability of Britain to act without, at least, the tacit support of the United States. Thirdly, it brought into sharp relief the impact that Britain's economic and financial policy had on the direction of foreign policy. Finally, it started to undermine the belief that, in the new global situation after the Second World War, Britain was still one of the world's major powers.

**What was the impact of Suez of Britain?**

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L.O: To know how Britain started to decolonise its empire

## Lesson 20 – Foreign relations: Winds of change and decolonisation

### The 'winds of change' and decolonisation

By 1951, Britain's retreat from Empire had already begun. The decision to withdraw from India in 1947 was the most dramatic example of this. During the 1950s, the pressures of colonial independence movements became harder and harder to contain. British forces found themselves fighting against national independence movements in Malaya, Kenya and Cyprus. It was not just Britain which faced these pressures: France faced even bigger challenges in Vietnam and in Algeria; Belgium and Portugal had to deal with revolts in their African colonies.

### What was decolonisation?



Fig. 5 President of Tanganyika, Julius Nyerere greets General Sir Richard Turnbull, the British governor of Tanganyika, prior to the proclamation of the country's independence with the new name, Tanzania, 1961

#### KEY CHRONOLOGY

##### Decolonisation, 1947–64

- 1947** Withdrawal from India
- 1952** Start of Mau Mau rebellion in Kenya
- 1957** Independence granted to Ghana
- 1960** Macmillan's 'wind of change' speech
- 1960** Independence granted to Nigeria and Cyprus
- 1961** South Africa leaves the Commonwealth
- 1963** Independence granted to Kenya

In the early 1950s, Britain's rulers believed they could manage a gradual transition from the Empire to the New Commonwealth and that colonial resistance movements could be controlled until their peoples were 'ready' for independence. Nobody had any idea of the sudden rush to independence that was waiting to happen. When the Mau Mau rebellion broke out in Kenya in 1952, it was assumed that it could be quashed by the military. At that time, independence for Kenya was unthinkable - but that was before Suez.

Why did the gradual tra

#### A CLOSER LOOK

##### The Mau Mau rebellion

The Mau Mau revolt in Kenya was one of several violent nationalist uprisings against British colonial rule after 1945. The leader of the revolt, Jomo Kenyatta, was imprisoned by the authorities but later emerged as president of an independent Kenya. In the 1950s, the struggle led to great bitterness on both sides. The Mau Mau fighters were accused of committing atrocities; on the other hand, revelations about brutal treatment of captives held at the Hola prison camp badly damaged Britain's reputation.

au rebellion as an example.

L.O: To know how Britain started to decolonise its empire

## Lesson 20 – Foreign relations: Winds of change and decolonisation

The difficult struggle to contain the Mau Mau rebellion in Kenya had already demonstrated the problems with Britain's colonial policies. After the Suez fiasco, British policymakers began to reconsider the pace of decolonisation. In 1957, Ghana (formerly the Gold Coast) became the first of Britain's African colonies to be granted independence. Nigeria and Cyprus also gained independence in 1960, Tanganyika and Sierra Leone in 1961, Uganda in 1962, Kenya in 1963. This shift in British policy was signalled by Macmillan's famous 'wind of change' speech.

**How did policy change after the Mau Mau rebellion?**

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### **A CLOSER LOOK**

#### **Macmillan and the 'wind of change'**

Before 1960, the central aim of British imperial policy was to defeat nationalist revolts and to maintain control over Britain's African colonies. Other European colonial powers, including Belgium, France and Portugal, were fighting similar wars against nationalist uprisings. Macmillan's speech at Cape Town, describing the 'wind of change' blowing through the whole African continent was a significant change of policy, calling for decolonisation and recognition of independence movements. He was also seeking to persuade these countries to accept majority rule. South Africa preferred to follow minority white rule and voted in a referendum later that year to break all ties with Britain.

**Why was Macmillan and wind of change significant?**

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**How valuable is Source 3 to understand Britain's policy of decolonisation?**

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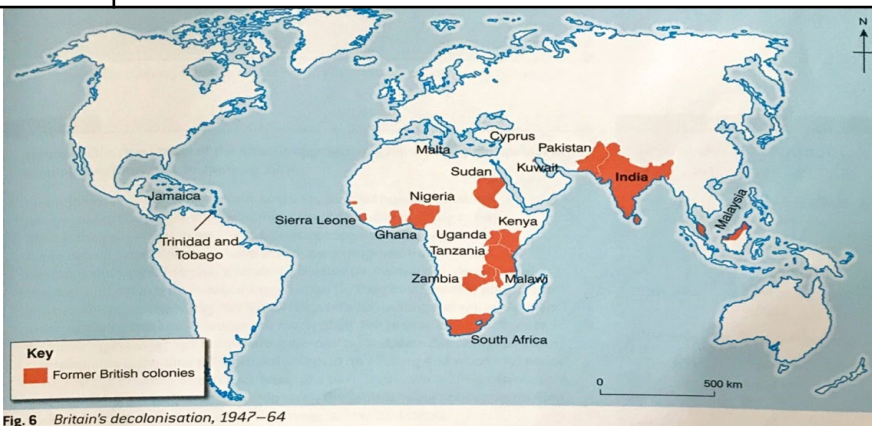
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WWW

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In retrospect, the policy was extremely successful. The process did not always go as planned, but British decolonisation was completed more swiftly and with far less violence than was the case with other colonial powers such as Belgium and Portugal. By 1964, the transition from Empire to Commonwealth seemed to represent a significant achievement.

L.O: To know how Britain started to decolonise its empire  
**Lesson 20 – Foreign relations: Winds of change and decolonisation**

Complete the source evaluation for source three



**SOURCE 3**

In 1960 in Capetown, South Africa, Harold Macmillan made a famous speech on foreign affairs, known ever since as the 'wind of change' speech:

The world today is divided into three main groups. First there are what we call the Western Powers. We in Britain belong to this group, together with our friends and allies in the Commonwealth. In the United States of America and in Europe we call it the Free World. Secondly there are the

Communists – Russia and her satellites in Europe, and China. Thirdly, there are those parts of the world at present uncommitted either to Communism or to our Western ideas. The great issue is whether the uncommitted peoples of Asia and Africa will swing to the East or to the West. Will they be drawn into the Communist camp? Or will the great experiments in self-government that are now being made in Asia and Africa, especially within the Commonwealth, prove so successful, that the balance will come down in favour of freedom and order and justice? What is now on trial is much more than our military strength or our diplomatic and administrative skill. It is our way of life.

Content	
Provenance	
Language and tone	

## Lesson 20 – Foreign relations: Winds of change and decolonisation



1. Create a timeline of the key events in British foreign affairs between 1951 and 1964. Beside each event, comment on the ways in which it was significant for Britain.
2. Below the timeline, list the key factors shaping British foreign policy during this time and explain their importance.

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. A single vertical blue line runs down the left side of the page, creating a margin. The bottom right corner of the page contains the number "79".



L.O: To know how Britain started to decolonise its empire  
**Lesson 20 – Foreign relations: Winds of change and decolonisation**



With reference to these three sources and your understanding of the historical context, assess the value of these three sources to an historian studying British foreign policy objectives between 1951 and 1964.

**SOURCE 1**

The Future Policy Study was presented to Harold Macmillan's cabinet in 1960. It highlighted the key principles of British foreign policy:

The core of our policy is the **Atlantic Alliance**. Our main task in the next decade will be to maintain, and to make even closer, the association between North America, the United Kingdom and the continental countries of Western Europe. We must therefore work to ensure continuation of the United States presence in Europe and the development of an economic and political community of interests embracing both the United States and Western Europe. We must also do all we can to strengthen the Commonwealth, which can be a valuable instrument for maintaining our influence as a Power with worldwide interests and for promoting our ideals, and can form a bridge between the Western world and the developing countries of Asia and Africa.

**SOURCE 2**

Edward Heath, the chief negotiator for Britain, wrote about the veto in his autobiography which was published in 1998:

When the Brussels negotiations resumed in January 1963 we were all very optimistic and an official English translation of the draft treaty was arranged. The French foreign minister was not present; we were told he had to attend de Gaulle's press conference. I concluded the meeting in an upbeat mood, saying: 'We all seem to be in complete agreement'. Immediately afterwards we were told what de Gaulle had said in his press conference. He claimed the negotiations had shown that Britain could not adapt to the ways of the Six; and criticised Britain's unwillingness to give up its 'special political and military relations' with the United States. We were all astonished and very worried about the future.

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