

Politics Initial Assignment 2023

Complete the below tasks and hand in to your Politics Teacher at your first lesson.

1. **Instagram** - Follow **@asfc_politics** on Instagram. This is essential for helping keep up to date with current affairs, course updates and getting involved with Politics here at ASFC!
2. **Key Terms** - research and provide definitions for the following terms:
 - a. Democracy
 - b. Election
 - c. Suffrage
 - d. Pressure Groups
 - e. Members of Parliament
 - f. General Election
3. **Local Politics Research – In May 2023, there were local elections in your local area**
 - a. If needed, find your local electoral ward by using:
<https://www.electoralcalculus.co.uk/newseatlookup.html>
 - b. What was the local election May 2023 % turnout for your ward?
 - c. What was the 2019 general election % turnout for your ward?
 - d. Reasons for the low turnout?
4. **National Politics Research –** The next United Kingdom general election is scheduled to be held no later than 28 January 2025. This will determine the composition of the House of Commons. The Labour Party and the Conservative Party have already started their election campaigns for the next general election.
 - a. What are the Labour Party's key pledges/missions?
 - b. What are the Conservative Party's key pledges/missions?
5. **Analysis** - Read the below BBC article about the pressure group Just Stop Oil and answer the following questions:
 - a. What methods have the pressure group Just Stop Oil used to get their message across?
 - b. What are the positives of using these methods?
 - c. What are the negatives of using these methods?
 - d. What is the government response to Just Stop Oil?
 - e. Do you feel Just Stop Oil is a successful pressure group?
 - f. Is the mentioned Public Order Act 2023 a breach of democracy?
 - g. What is significant about the author of the article?

Just Stop Oil: What is it and what does it want?

Published by the BBC July 2023

5 days ago Just Stop Oil has repeatedly hit the headlines in recent months after a series of high-profile protests, including disrupting play at Wimbledon. The group is campaigning for more action on climate change, but its tactics - which have also included blocking major roads - have faced criticism.

What is Just Stop Oil?

Just Stop Oil is an environmental activist group founded after Extinction Rebellion and Insulate Britain, with organisers from both at the helm.

The movement first came to attention following a series of protests in March 2022. This included pitch invasions at several Premier League football grounds.

There have been other notable protests since then, including disruption at oil terminals and on some of the country's busiest motorways. It has also targeted major sporting events.

What does Just Stop Oil want?

The group wants the government to halt new licences for the exploration of oil and other fossil fuels in the UK. It describes itself as "a coalition of groups working together to ensure the government commits to halting new fossil fuel licensing and production". The government plans to license more than 100 new oil and gas projects by 2025. Unlike Extinction Rebellion, which campaigns on the single big issue of climate change, Just Stop Oil's protests have a more specific focus. Just Stop Oil activists have staged a series of high-profile protests in recent months. Many of these closed roads, including the M25 motorway. They have also interrupted play at Wimbledon by throwing orange-coloured confetti and jigsaw pieces on to Court 18 at the All England Club in London disrupted the first morning of the second Ashes Test, at Lord's cricket ground, in London thrown soup at Vincent van Gogh's Sunflowers, at the National Gallery in London glued themselves to other paintings interrupted play at the World Snooker Championship in Sheffield attempted to disrupt the British Grand Prix targeted the RHS Chelsea Flower Show in London A protestor throws sand in the air while sat on table one at the snooker World Championship

Like Extinction Rebellion and Insulate Britain, Just Stop Oil activists claim to be willing to use "non-violent civil resistance" to make their point in public spaces. The group says it is committed to ending its protests as soon as the government comes up with a solution to end fossil-fuel production.

Government response to Just Stop Oil

Business Secretary Grant Shapps called the M25 protests "completely outrageous". "Don't go disrupting other people's lives," he told LBC. The Metropolitan Police has also highlighted the number of officer shifts spent policing Just Stop Oil protests.

"These are officers who would otherwise be dealing with issues that matter to local communities, such as knife crime, safeguarding and responding to burglaries," Assistant Commissioner Matt Twist said. But the group's activists point to a Supreme Court ruling in

2021 which found there should be a "certain degree of tolerance to disruption to ordinary life, including the disruption of traffic", as a result of non-violent protest. What else is the government doing about the group's protests? Home secretary Suella Braverman condemned the Wimbledon protests as "unacceptable". Writing on Twitter, she said she had chaired talks at Downing Street with representatives of various sports organisations "to help tackle serious disruption of this kind". Dealing with these protests is proving very difficult for the authorities, despite several arrests and court action.

Under existing legislation, the police can generally restrict a protest only if they can show it may result in "serious public disorder, serious damage to property or serious disruption to the life of the community" but No 10 wants the police to be able to shut down a protest before it causes disruption. As a result, the government has pushed through new anti-protest legislation. The newly passed Public Order Act grants new powers to prosecute someone who interferes with the operation or use of key national infrastructure in England and Wales - whether on the roads, railways, or air transport infrastructure.

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