



Y12 Reading List

Topics:

Y12:

- Y113 – Britain 1930-1997- **P2**
- Y213 – The French Revolution and the rule of Napoleon 1774–1815-**P6**

Unit 1- Britain 1930-1997

For the OCR A-Level History course **Y113 – Britain 1930-1997**, the reading list focuses on key political, social, economic, and cultural developments in Britain during this period. This includes the interwar years, the Second World War, the post-war welfare state, decolonization, the Thatcher years, and the transition to a more multicultural society. The following reading list is designed to help students understand the broader context of these historical periods.

Section A- Churchill 1930-51:

Primary Sources

- "The Second World War" by Winston Churchill**
 - Churchill's own six-volume account of World War II is a must-read. It provides insight into his perspective on the war, his leadership style, and the decisions that shaped the outcome.
 - Vols. 1–6** (1948–1953) cover the military, political, and strategic aspects of the war.
- "My Early Life" by Winston Churchill**
 - Although this book primarily covers Churchill's early years (up to 1900), it provides useful context for understanding his character, ambitions, and formative experiences that influenced his later career.
- "The Churchill Documents" edited by Martin Gilbert**
 - This collection of Churchill's personal papers, speeches, letters, and official documents provides valuable primary material that will give you insights into his decision-making process, personal views, and political career.
- Speeches of Winston Churchill (1931–1951)**
 - Churchill's speeches are key primary sources for understanding his public persona and political agenda. The period from 1931 to 1951 is marked by his speeches on rearmament, appeasement, the war, and post-war reconstruction.

Secondary Sources

- "Churchill: A Life" by Martin Gilbert**
 - A comprehensive biography that covers Churchill's life in detail, including his time in the 1930s and 1940s. Gilbert provides a balanced perspective on Churchill's leadership and political ideology.
- "The Second World War" by John Keegan**
 - A well-regarded account of the Second World War, which includes analysis of Churchill's role. Keegan explores military strategy and the global conflict, with reference to Churchill's decision-making.
- "Churchill: The Prophet of Power" by Richard Toye**
 - Toye's work focuses on Churchill's political career and the image he crafted as a leader. It is especially useful in understanding how Churchill presented himself in the political sphere during the 1930s and 1940s.
- "The Storm of War" by Andrew Roberts**
 - An excellent analysis of World War II that also looks at Churchill's leadership, his decisions, and his role in the larger strategy of the Allies.
- "Churchill: Walking with Destiny" by Andrew Roberts**
 - A more recent biography, which covers Churchill's entire life, but provides particularly insightful commentary on his political leadership during the 1930s and 1940s. It offers a modern perspective on his legacy and character.
- "The Sinews of Peace" by Winston Churchill (Speech)**
 - The famous "Iron Curtain" speech delivered by Churchill in 1946. This speech is a key text to understand Churchill's post-war views on Soviet expansion and the beginning of the Cold War.
- "The Gathering Storm" by Winston Churchill**
 - This is the first volume of Churchill's memoirs of the Second World War, and it covers his leadership during the period leading up to the war, including the challenges of the 1930s (e.g., the rise of Nazi Germany, the policy of appeasement, and the Munich Agreement).

8. "Winston Churchill: A Political Life" by David Cannadine

- This biography provides a detailed political analysis of Churchill's career, including his shifting political ideologies and strategies from the interwar period through to the early Cold War years.

Articles and Online Resources

1. **Churchill Archives Centre** (University of Cambridge)
 - The Churchill Archives contains a vast number of primary sources (letters, speeches, documents) that will help you explore specific themes or events related to Churchill's life.
2. **BBC History: Winston Churchill**
 - The BBC has a variety of accessible articles and resources on Churchill, including his political career, his wartime leadership, and his post-war years. These are good starting points for broader overviews of key themes.
3. **"Churchill and the Empire" by K. J. N. Austin**
 - This article explores Churchill's views on the British Empire and imperialism, which were central to his political worldview during this period.
4. **JSTOR Articles on Churchill**
 - JSTOR provides a range of academic journal articles analyzing Churchill's policies and legacy, which are particularly useful for in-depth research on specific topics such as his domestic policies, foreign relations, and his post-war career.

Specific Topics for In-Depth Study:

- **The Policy of Appeasement (1931–1939):** Explore Churchill's opposition to appeasement in the 1930s, his speeches against Neville Chamberlain, and his advocacy for rearmament.
- **World War II Leadership (1939–1945):** Focus on Churchill's strategic decisions, his relationship with other Allied leaders (e.g., Franklin D. Roosevelt, Joseph Stalin), and his impact on the military and political outcomes of the war.
- **Post-War Politics (1945–1951):** Study his time after losing the 1945 election, his role in the opposition, and his return to power in 1951, focusing on his policies towards the Soviet Union and the early Cold War.

Section B- British politics- 1951-1997

1. Core Textbooks and Overviews

- **"Britain 1945-1997" by Peter Clarke**
 - This book provides an excellent overview of British history post-1945, covering political, economic, and social developments. It's clear, concise, and an excellent starting point.
- **"The English: A Social History 1066-1945" by Christopher Hibbert**
 - Though it goes beyond the 1931-1997 period, this provides vital context about Britain's history leading up to the 20th century.
- **"Britain: 1930-1990s" by John Shepherd**
 - A textbook designed specifically for A-Level students that covers key topics such as the impact of the world wars, the rise and fall of the welfare state, and the influence of Thatcherism.

2. Key Academic Books

- **"The British Economy Since 1945" by Peter McPhee**
 - This book delves into the economic challenges Britain faced post-World War II, including the decline of the Empire, the growth of the welfare state, and the economic crises of the 1970s and 1980s.
- **"The Labour Governments 1964-70" by D. S. Margach**
 - A detailed account of Harold Wilson's first Labour government and its policies in the 1960s, particularly concerning social and economic issues.
- **"The Rise and Fall of the British Empire" by Lawrence James**

- This text provides broader context on Britain's imperial history, essential for understanding the post-empire era from 1931 onwards.
- **"The Thatcher Revolution: Margaret Thatcher, from 1975 to 1990" by John Campbell**
 - A definitive biography of Margaret Thatcher, crucial for understanding the political shift during her premiership and her impact on British society and politics.

3. Political History

- **"A History of Modern Britain" by Andrew Marr**
 - This book provides a readable narrative of modern British history from the end of the Second World War up until the 21st century, with a focus on key political figures and events.
- **"The Making of Modern Britain" by Andrew Marr**
 - Covers the social and political transformation in Britain from the end of World War II to the present, with a focus on the centrality of key political figures, such as Churchill, Attlee, Wilson, Thatcher, and Blair.
- **"The Politics of the Labour Party" by Neil Kinnock**
 - A closer look at the political dynamics of the Labour Party, its evolution through the 20th century, and its place in post-1931 Britain.

4. Social History and the Welfare State

- **"The Welfare State: A Very Short Introduction" by David Garland**
 - A concise and readable exploration of the British welfare state, its development after World War II, and the challenges it faced from the 1980s onwards.
- **"Post-War: A History of Europe Since 1945" by Tony Judt**
 - While not solely focused on Britain, this book offers a broad context for understanding the development of European welfare states and the evolution of social policy.

5. Cultural and Social Developments

- **"The Sixties: Cultural Revolution in Britain, France, Italy, and the United States" by Arthur Marwick**
 - An exploration of the cultural revolution during the 1960s, which was crucial for shaping the post-war era in Britain.
- **"Women, Work, and Representation: Needlewomen in Victorian Art and Literature" by Jennifer H. Davis**
 - Though not directly related to the 1931-1997 period, this book provides an exploration of gender roles and representation in Britain, which can help frame societal changes in later decades.
- **"The British at War: A Social History of World War II" by Norman Longmate**
 - Provides a detailed look at Britain during the Second World War and its impact on British society, especially the role of women and class relations.

6. Primary Source Collections

- **"The British Prime Minister 1931-1997: Documents and Debates" by John W. Young**
 - This collection provides essential speeches, documents, and debates that illustrate the evolving role of the prime minister and their political and social influences.
- **"The Diaries of Harold Macmillan"**
 - First-hand accounts from one of Britain's key political leaders during the 1950s and 1960s, shedding light on the political climate of the time.

7. Additional Books on Key Figures

- **"Churchill: A Life" by Martin Gilbert**
 - A detailed biography of Winston Churchill, key to understanding Britain's political developments during and after World War II.
- **"Harold Wilson: The Iron Prime Minister" by Jenny Hocking**

- Focuses on the premiership of Harold Wilson, offering insight into the domestic and international challenges Britain faced in the 1960s and 1970s.
- **"Tony Blair: Prime Minister" by Anthony Seldon**
 - An analysis of Tony Blair's time in office and the shift to a more modern political landscape with New Labour.

8. Documentary and Media

- **BBC Documentary: "A History of Britain" by Simon Schama**
 - A visual companion to the history of Britain, which covers the political, social, and cultural developments from the late 19th century through the 20th century.
- **"The Rise and Fall of the British Empire" (Documentary Series)**
 - This series gives a good contextual understanding of Britain's post-imperial period, with insights into the social and political ramifications of decolonization.

Unit 2- French Revolution and Napoleon

For an A-Level History course focusing on the **French Revolution and Napoleon** (OCR Course Code: Y213), the reading list needs to cover the key events and themes surrounding the French Revolution (1789-1799), the rise of Napoleon Bonaparte, and his reign as Emperor of France (1799-1815). The topics range from political theory and social upheaval to the wars of the Revolution and the Napoleonic Empire. Below is a reading list that includes textbooks, academic works, and primary source materials to help you build a comprehensive understanding of this period.

1. Core Textbooks for A-Level

- **"The French Revolution: A Very Short Introduction" by William Doyle**
 - This concise yet authoritative book gives a clear overview of the French Revolution, covering the causes, key events, and outcomes, with a focus on the social and political transformations in France.
- **"The French Revolution and Napoleon" by Peter McPhee**
 - A textbook specifically designed for A-Level students, covering the revolution's causes, events, and aftermath, as well as Napoleon's rise to power and his impact on France and Europe.
- **"The French Revolution: 1789-1799" by Colin Jones**
 - A comprehensive and in-depth study of the French Revolution, offering a detailed analysis of political events, social dynamics, and the roles of key figures.
- **"Napoleon: A Life" by Andrew Roberts**
 - A well-regarded biography of Napoleon Bonaparte that explores his rise to power, his military genius, and the political and social implications of his reign, suitable for understanding his role in both the revolution and the subsequent empire.

2. Key Academic Books

- **"The Origins of the French Revolution" by William Doyle**
 - An essential academic book that delves into the causes of the French Revolution, looking at the long-term social, economic, and political factors that led to the outbreak of revolutionary events.
- **"The French Revolution: A History" by Thomas Carlyle**
 - One of the classic works on the French Revolution, though written in the 19th century, Carlyle's vivid narrative provides a compelling view of the revolution's drama and turmoil.
- **"The Fall of the French Monarchy: Louis XVI and the Revolution" by James A. F. Thomson**
 - This book focuses on the key political figure of Louis XVI and his downfall during the revolution, offering important insights into the dynamics of the monarchy's collapse.
- **"The Napoleonic Wars: A Global History" by Alexander Mikaberidze**
 - This book provides a global perspective on the Napoleonic Wars, exploring the geopolitical impact of Napoleon's military campaigns across Europe, Africa, and beyond.
- **"Napoleon Bonaparte: A Political Life" by Steven Englund**
 - An insightful analysis of Napoleon's political career, this book considers his domestic policies, military strategies, and his lasting influence on European politics.

3. Key Primary Source Collections

- **"The French Revolution: A Documentary History" edited by Keith Michael Baker**
 - A primary source anthology that includes key documents, speeches, and writings from the period of the French Revolution, helping students engage directly with the historical sources.
- **"Napoleon: A Life in Letters" edited by David Bellos**
 - This collection of letters written by Napoleon gives a personal insight into his thoughts, military strategies, and policies, offering a unique perspective on his life and reign.
- **"The Revolution in France 1789-1799: Documents in History" edited by J. G. A. Pocock**
 - A comprehensive collection of primary source materials, including documents from revolutionary leaders, which provide insight into the intellectual, social, and political currents of the time.

4. Political and Social Context

- **"The Social Origins of the French Revolution" by Georges Lefebvre**
 - A seminal work in understanding the class structure and social tensions that contributed to the outbreak of the revolution, focusing on the role of the bourgeoisie, nobility, and peasants.
- **"The Coming of the French Revolution" by Georges Lefebvre**
 - Lefebvre explores the factors leading to the revolution, highlighting the political and economic crises and the failure of the monarchy to address the problems facing France.
- **"The Ancien Régime and the French Revolution" by Alexis de Tocqueville**
 - This classic work examines the political and social structures of pre-revolutionary France and offers an analysis of the causes of the revolution.

5. Napoleon's Empire and Military Campaigns

- **"Napoleon and His Marshals" by A. A. L. C. de Brienne**
 - A fascinating exploration of Napoleon's relationships with his top generals, offering insights into his military strategies and how his leadership shaped the Napoleonic Empire.
- **"The Napoleonic Wars: A Short History" by Michael Broers**
 - A concise yet informative history of Napoleon's military campaigns, ideal for students who need to understand the wider European context of the revolution and Napoleon's wars.
- **"Napoleon: On War" by Martin van Creveld**
 - This book focuses on Napoleon's military strategies and how his approach to warfare changed the course of European history. It's crucial for understanding Napoleon's military genius and the impact of his wars.

6. Biographies of Key Figures

- **"Louis XVI: The Silent King" by J. M. Thompson**
 - A detailed biography of King Louis XVI, shedding light on his personal and political role in the French Revolution and his complex relationship with the revolutionaries.
- **"Marie Antoinette: The Journey" by Antonia Fraser**
 - A well-known biography of Marie Antoinette, exploring her life as the queen of France, her role during the revolution, and the political circumstances surrounding her execution.
- **"Talleyrand: The Unlikely Survivor" by David Lawday**
 - A biography of Talleyrand, the French diplomat who navigated the political upheavals of the Revolution and Napoleon's rule. His survival and influence make him a fascinating figure of the period.

7. Historical Perspectives

- **"The Age of Revolution: 1789-1848" by Eric Hobsbawm**
 - A Marxist interpretation of the revolutionary period, Hobsbawm places the French Revolution within the broader context of social and political upheaval across Europe.
- **"The Revolutionary Ideas of the French Revolution" by Jonathan Israel**
 - A thought-provoking analysis of the revolutionary ideas that inspired not only the French Revolution but also subsequent political movements across Europe.
- **"The French Revolution: Ideology and History" by François Furet**
 - Furet challenges traditional interpretations of the French Revolution, arguing that the revolution was driven more by ideological motivations than by social or economic factors.

8. Documentaries and Visual Resources

- **BBC Documentary: "The French Revolution" (DVD)**
 - A detailed and accessible documentary series providing an overview of the key events, figures, and ideological struggles of the French Revolution.
- **"Napoleon: The Battle for Europe" (History Channel Documentary)**
 - A documentary exploring Napoleon's military campaigns and the wider impact of his wars across Europe.