



	Questions	Answers
Presidents since 1992 and their aims: Biden	What was the situation in the House and Senate when Biden came to power? Did he have a united or divided government?	
	How big was his personal mandate?	
	Name one key policy success, and explain what factors made it successful.	
	Outline any two key policy proposals made by President Biden and evaluate their success.	
	Name one major event that happened outside of the president's control. How did this affect his popularity?	
	Name one major policy proposal and explain why it failed.	



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Presidents since 1992 and their aims: Biden	What was the situation in the House and Senate when Biden came to power? Did he have a united or divided government?	The Democrats retained control of the House, and gained control of the Senate in a late upset, after winning two special elections in Georgia where the incumbents had been Republicans.
	How big was his personal mandate?	Very big – Biden secured the most votes of any candidate in a US presidential election.
	Name one key policy success, and explain what factors made it successful.	Biden's \$1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan, aimed at restarting the US economy after the coronavirus pandemic crisis, was passed through Congress quickly – but only thanks to unified Democrat government, as the votes fell along party lines.
	Outline any two key policy proposals made by President Biden and evaluate their success.	Biden sought and achieved a bipartisan infrastructure bill, which secured enough Senate Republican support to overcome the filibuster. This was regarded as a win for Biden, as it represented a type of legislation on which cross-party cooperation had become rare.
		Biden wanted to re-engage with international allies and restore multilateralism in contrast to Trump. Rejoining the WHO and the Paris Agreement, and hosting a climate summit demonstrated this approach. But unilateral withdrawal from Afghanistan may have also undermined it.
	Name one major event that happened outside of the president's control. How did this affect his popularity?	Unusually, the second impeachment trial of Biden's predecessor, Donald Trump, took place during the early days of his presidency. Biden had sought to focus on his own agenda and made minimal comment on the matter, attempting to avoid being drawn into a divisive debate.
Name one major policy proposal and explain why it failed.	The withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan was perceived by some as a mistake, as it allowed the Taliban to regain control of the country faster than US citizens could leave. Some argue that more planning and a less rushed withdrawal timetable would have reduced the chaos.	

			Questions	Answers
Comparing UK and US upper and lower chambers (cont.)	Give one strength and one weakness of each upper house for the following issues.	House of Lords	Representation	Strength: Weakness:
			Legislation	Strength: Weakness:
			Checks and balances	Strength: Weakness:
		The Senate	Representation	Strength: Weakness:
			Legislation	Strength: Weakness:
			Checks and balances	Strength: Weakness:

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Comparing UK and US upper and lower chambers (cont.)	Give one strength and one weakness of each upper house for the following issues.	House of Lords	Representation Strength: As it's not elected by the people it can represent long-term interests of the UK and can be more independent of party politics. Weakness: The members are unelected so are not accountable to the British electorate. They cannot be removed by the public if they are perceived to be doing a bad job.
			Legislation Strength: Has more time to scrutinise bills and the members usually have a greater level of expertise than those in the lower house. Weakness: They can't block legislation and have no power over financial bills.
			Checks and balances Strength: Their knowledge means amendments to bills can be more persuasive. But because they lack power this does lead to less gridlock and more legislation passed. Weakness: Checks are limited and members cannot ensure their proposals are put into practice by the government.
		The Senate	Representation Strength: Senators are more representative of state interests as there are an equal number per state. They also help to represent more long-term views as they have a longer tenure than House members. Weakness: Some may argue that small states are over-represented and have too much power in the Senate.
			Legislation Strength: Legislation is highly scrutinised and debated to a great level in the Senate. No House Rules Committee means all discussion happens in public on key legislation. Weakness: Their power of filibuster used in debates is seen as undemocratic.
			Checks and balances Strength: It provides high levels of checks and balances to limit power, including the power to ratify treaties. This is an important check on the executive. Weakness: Too many checks and balances often leads to gridlock, which is made worse by the partisan nature of the Senate.