



Politics

A Level | AQA | 7152



Activity Pack for A Level AQA

Core Ideologies

Conservatism

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Teacher's Introduction

Welcome to your activity pack for the subject of Conservatism for the A Level AQA Politics specifications. In this pack, you will find activities that cover all the key topics: the key concepts of conservatism, differing views and tensions within conservatism, and key conservative thinkers and their ideas.

There is a combination of activities, including self-contained work for students (perfect for cover lessons) and more open-ended activities which will require some element of research to complete them. The pack provides opportunities for individual, pair and group work as well as activities which allow for class discussion, all essential to A Level Politics.

Remember!


Always check the exam board website for new information, including changes to the specification and sample assessment material.

The activities cover the key concepts of conservatism, the two main branches of conservatism and the different conservative thinkers. The activities provided aim to act as overviews of the topics and to be useful and concise revision-style activities.

A comprehensive teacher's section is included, providing answers to the tasks in the student pack.

January 2021


Activity-by-activity

Spec area	Topic	Activity description	Notes	
Conservatism	Activity 1 – The History of Conservatism	Research the origins and development of conservatism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could be set as a solo task but has the potential to be done in pairs. Activity also includes a discussion task and preferably the Internet will be important to this task • Potentially a homework task • Extension can be done alone or in pairs 	✓
	Activity 2 – Human Imperfection	Gap-fill activity on human imperfection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best for solo work • Extension discussion task to be done in pairs 	✓
	Activity 3 – Pragmatism	Short writing tasks with prompts on pragmatism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ideally to be a solo task, but answers could be discussed in pairs • Extension task best to be discussed in pairs 	✓
	Activity 4 – Tradition	A brainstorming task and some short writing tasks on tradition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ideally to be a solo task, but answers could be discussed in pairs • Extension task best to be discussed in pairs 	✓
	Activity 5 – The State and Society	Match-up activity followed by a correct-the-statements activity on the organic state	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best for solo work • Extension discussion task to be done in pairs 	✓
	Activity 6 – Essay Question: Conservatism as an Ideology	Essay-style question on the extent to which conservatism is an ideology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be done quietly alone • Potentially a homework task 	✓
	Activity 7 – Revision Task: Key Concepts	Table fill activity on key concepts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Useful to have activities 2–5 to hand • Could be done alone or in pairs 	✓
	Activity 8 – Liberty and Economy	Verbal diagram comparing libertarianism and neo-liberalism followed by a correct-the-statements activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best for solo or partner work • Extension discussion task to be done in pairs 	✓

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Spec area	Topic	Activity description	Notes	
Conservatism	Activity 9 – Different Conservatisms	Match concepts to the correct strand of conservatism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best for partner work • Extension to be done in pairs 	
	Activity 10 – Manifesto	Writing task on manifesto for one of the conservatisms followed by debate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write manifesto in small groups and then debate in plenary group (extension) • Useful to have previous activity to hand 	
	Activity 11 – Revision Task Conservatism and Conservatism	Complete a revision task where each conservatism matches up to the different concepts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best as a solo revision activity but useful to compare at the end • Useful to have previous activities to hand, particularly no. 7 	✓
	Activity 12 – Quote Bank	Match quotes and identify relevant concepts and branch of conservatism and key ideas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best for partner work • Research for quotes necessary 	
	Activity 13 – In-depth Thinker Profile	Profile creation of one of the key thinkers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best for solo research • Access to textbooks and preferably the Internet will be important to this task • Best to divide up the five thinkers between the class • Potentially a homework task • For the extension, pair students with someone who has done a different thinker 	✓
	Activity 14 – Conservatism vs Liberalism	Venn diagram comparing elements of conservatism and liberalism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best for partner work • A good amount of liberalism needed 	✓
Activity 15 – Conservatism Grid	Question grid on conservatism concepts/terms/thinkers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best for solo or partner work, but could be a race to see who finds the middle word first • Best done once students are familiar with conservatism as a whole 	✓	

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Activity 1: The History of Conservatism

Conservatism developed more as a response to the rise of other ideologies rather than in this context that its origins should be seen.

Task

Read the descriptions below and research which events they describe. Then, below each event, list the events that influenced the development of conservatism.



Name and date of event	Description and impact on conservatism
	<p>Religious movement begun when the monk Martin Luther nailed his 95 theses on a church door in Germany, stating the complaints against the Catholic Church. This marked off the rise of other churches in the following years and decades throughout Europe and Rome.</p>
	<p>English conflict between Crown and Parliament which challenged the divine right of kings which stated that kings were legitimized by God.</p>
	<p>Time period which saw the development of modern political thought. These ideas emphasized analysis and reason and the rejection of absolute authority. Rationalism, individualism, and democracy were among the important and at the time were espoused at this time.</p>

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Name and date of event	Description and impact on
	Conflict that saw the Thirteen Colonies separate applying some of the Enlightenment's liberal ideas
	Influenced in part by the events in America, this was the most important events in history. Seen as the first gave many people fresh experience of politics and an enduring governmental option. A key result was the old system of hierarchies and all the privileges
	Period that saw the advent of steam power and led to the class focus of conservatism as more wealth became concentrated within a growing capitalist class
	This year saw revolutions break out all across Europe against liberalism across the continent. While many revolutions defeated, some minor changes were in precedent had been set for granting people more rights and politically.

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Name and date of event	Description and impact on
	This ideology championed the working classes numerous and important as industrialisation ha
	This ideology in contrast confused conservative op focus on similar points that the conservative re... and small business owners for instanc what found this ideology appealing, the very gro conservative.
	This development in conservatism echoed the identities were breaking down.
	The last decade or so has seen, in the UK at lea centre of all the major political parties.

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Conservatism through History
Consider which of the five key thinkers was/were active or influential at which

Activity 2: Human Imperfection

Conservatism has a more pessimistic attitude to human nature than most ideologies.

Task

Fill in the gaps in the sentences below from the words in the box underneath. Note that there are more words than gaps!

- Human nature is inherently _____, and the ideologies that say _____ are flawed. People are self-seeking, untrustworthy and irresponsible.
- The thinkers of the Enlightenment made a mistake when they postulated that humans are rational creatures. Rather, people are simply ruled by their base appetites and _____.
- These include things such as _____, wealth and property. They are not _____ but are trusted _____ in the interests of _____ as they would use a _____ for their benefit instead.
- As a result, _____ government is required to keep humanity in check. _____ is the product of this flawed nature and so needs to be controlled.
- Human imperfection can be divided into three categories. First, people are _____ in that they fear being isolated and insecure and wish to have stability in their lives.
- Second, people are also _____ limited in that they are selfish and care more about themselves more than moral considerations. Third, people are _____ limited in that they cannot comprehend the world, which is simply too complicated.
- In short, conservatives believe that people are inherently more focused on their own interests; therefore, _____ the interests of the wider community that they belong to.

morally	flawed	themselves
logical	crime	neglect
rational	psychological	utopian
limited	interests	uphold

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- Discuss with the person next to you in what ways the negative conservative view of human nature impacts on and explains other conservative views.
- Now compare how this conservative belief compares to the liberal view of human nature. Explain differences between the two ideologies?

Activity 3: Pragmatism

Conservatism holds a strong belief in being pragmatic as the best way to ensure

Task 1

What is pragmatism? Come up with your own definition making sure to include all

realism not idealism	precedent	
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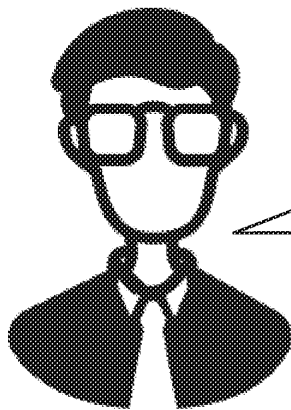
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Task 2

Consider the following statement. Following the notion of pragmatism, how would



*Ideological opinions are
to political decision making.
When deciding on new
you should apply the theory
your preferred ideology.*

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Task 3

Below are two historical instances of the pragmatism of conservatism, both related to the welfare state. Research **how** they responded in these situations (and why they responded in that way) and then discuss **how** you would **expect** them to respond, as conservatives.

1. The Conservative Government came to power after the radical Labour reforms of 1945–1951	2. By the 1970s it was clear that class division was still a major problem in Britain
--	---

Situation 1

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Situation 2

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- 1) Discuss with a partner **one** reason why pragmatism implies less reliance on tradition
- 2) Briefly define the concept of ‘change to conserve’ and give **one** way that it can be applied to the welfare state

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Activity 4: Tradition

Conservatism maintains a strong belief in the importance of tradition.

Task 1

When considering tradition, we can separate it into two categories: institutions and customs. List two examples of each.

Institutions	Customs

Task 2

How did the conservatives use the concept of tradition? Use the words below in your answer.

order	quality

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Task 3

Considering the conservative preference for upholding tradition, what criticism could you make of the French Revolution of 1789?

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- 1) Consider how and why conservatives considered that those with private property were (A) more likely to be mindful of law and order, and (B) well placed to defend the status quo.
- 2) Discuss with a partner whether you think that the conservative adherence to 'no change' is justified.

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Activity 5: The State and Society

Conservatism holds a belief in what it calls the 'organic' state and society.

Task 1

Match the concepts below to their correct definitions on the right.

Organic Society/State	A system where there is a set social hierarchy that is in place from birth and it is virtually impossible to change of this hierarchy.
Feudalism	An idea that states that those with higher status are allowed to rule over the rest of the society, similar to that of a father looking after his children.
Hierarchy	An idea that society is greater than the sum of the individuals who live within it and its interests are more important than individual interests.
<i>Noblesse Oblige</i>	Power over others, often as a result of wealth or status.
Paternalism	An idea that those higher up in society have a responsibility towards those lower down to look after their welfare.
Authority	An idea that the primary component of a society is the family, which is equal and self-interested.
Atomism	A concept that means that there are no natural divisions between some classes of people but that individuals are free to move between them.

Task 2

The statements below are incorrect. Correct them and then explain **why** they were incorrect.

- The conservative notion of organic society is contradicted by the conservative view of hierarchy.
- Paternalism and *noblesse oblige* are the same thing.

- Why do conservatives consider that strong authority (of government) is crucial for maintaining society?
- Why did some conservatives change their opinion of society in the 1970s? What does conservatism demonstrate about this?
- Compare the conservative notion of an organic society with the liberal egalitarian view.

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Activity 6: Essay Question – Conservatism as an ideology

The writing frame below is a suggestion for how to approach this essay question.

‘As conservatism is characterised by its resistance to change, it cannot be an ideology.’
How far is this statement a fair analysis of the views of conservatism?

Introduction: Show your awareness of the meaning of conservatism and of ideology.

First section: Discuss the ways in which conservatism is an ideology.

Second section: Discuss the ways in which conservatism is not an ideology.

Conclusion: Come to a brief conclusion about your view on the question, remembering to refer to the question.

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Activity 7: Revision Task – Key Concepts

Task

Using your answers for Activities 2–5, complete the table below. In the far-right column include at least one

Concept	Definition	How it was used in con
Human Imperfection		
Pragmatism		
Tradition		
Private Property		
Organic Society/State		
Authority		

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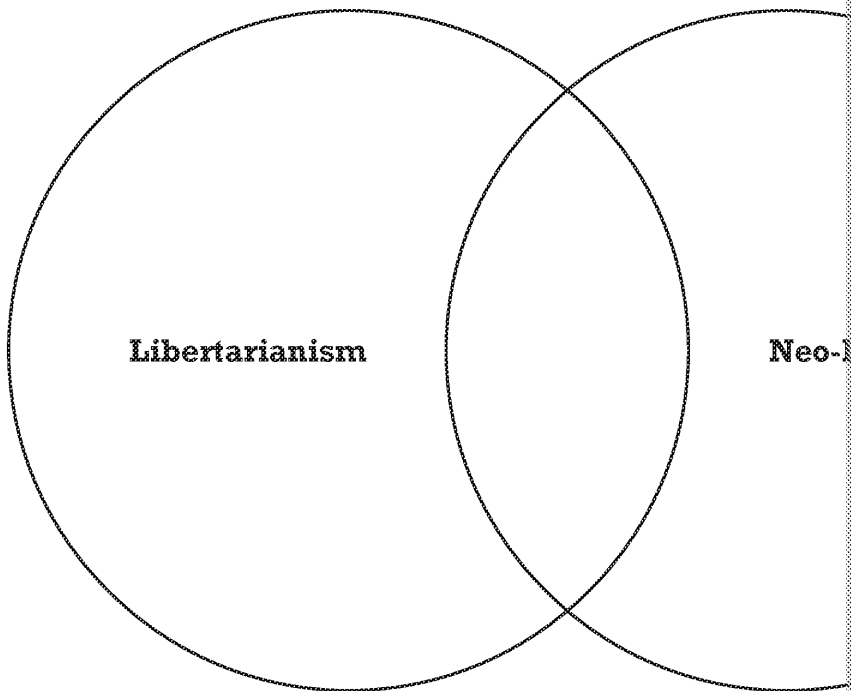
Activity 8: State and Economy

Conservatism developed in the 1970s and 1980s to encapsulate some more traditional views particularly in relation to views on the role of the state in society and the economy.

Task 1

Both libertarianism and neo-liberalism are strands of liberal thought that are more associated with conservatism. There are many similarities but some key differences too. Match the statements below in the Venn diagram.

1. Favours the free market / laissez-faire economics	2. Revival of classical liberalism	3. State should enforce morality
4. State should enforce morality	5. Support for a limited state	6. Became popular in the 1970s
7. Became popular in the 1970s	8. Robert Nozick is a leading advocate	9. Robert Nozick is a leading advocate



Task 2

The statements below are incorrect. Correct them and then explain **why** they were incorrect.

1. Neo-liberalism and libertarianism are essentially the same.
2. Libertarians ideally want there to be no state at all.

Discuss with a partner **why** these two strands of liberalism are more associated with conservatism.

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Activity 9: Different Conservatisms

Conservatism has several different branches that have developed over time.

Task 1

Put the following statements into the correct column. Some might fit in more than one.

1) Revival of past traditions now including classical liberalism and conservatism	8) Favours pragmatism and prefers a market economy
2) Has strong philosophical roots and draws its ideas from a combination of other political traditions	9) Believes in a natural order and that people need to be educated to fit in
3) Advocates paternalism, a political style where the relationship between ruler and ruled is like that of a father and his children	10) Includes neo-liberalism and individualism (atomism)
4) Includes neo-conservative ideas such as the enforcement of law, order, and morality (anti-permissiveness)	11) Believes in a social contract
5) Aims to reach out to all sections of society. To do this, welfare must be provided for all	12) Includes the concept of a social contract which implies a responsibility for the welfare of all
6) Capitalism is a threat to society as it encourages people to follow their own interests and so they lose their sense of society	13) Believes in an organic society where the interests of the society are more important than the interests of the sum of its parts
7) Focuses on maintaining order	14) Pro-property rights

Traditional Conservatism	One-nation Conservatism	Neo-conservatism

Task 2

- In what way do these three strands arise?
- Which conservative thinkers are associated with which strand?

- Using the table you have filled, discuss with a partner one important clash between two branches of conservatism.
- A common discussion is whether conservatism is actually an ideology. Do any of the strands resemble an ideology more than the others? Why?

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Activity 10: Manifesto

Task

In groups, write a manifesto for either **traditional, one-nation, or New Right** conservatism in a debate with groups writing for the other sides later. Give a name to your position. You should aim to promote your strand as the best one and explain how you will achieve your ideology. Use your answers for Activity 9 to help you.

MANIFESTO FOR THE

The state...



The economy...

The individual and society...

Signed and approved by the



Now debate with other groups and present arguments for why your version is better and why theirs is worse!

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Activity 11: Revision Table – Conservatism and Concepts

Task

Complete the table below, explaining how each of the three branches of conservatism views each of the (I will remind yourself which these are).

	Traditional Conservatism	One-nationism
Human Imperfection		
Pragmatism		
Tradition		
Private Property		
Organic Society/State		
Authority		

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Activity 12: Quote Bank

Task

Conservatism had many important thinkers! Complete the table.

Name of philosopher or thinker	Summarise their most influential idea(s)	The context (of conservatism) this applies to (see Activity 7)	The branch of conservatism
Thomas Hobbes			
Edmund Burke			
Michael Oakeshott			
Ayn Rand			
Robert Nozick			

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Activity 13: In-depth Thinker Profile

Task

Conservatism has many key thinkers, five of whom are on the specification: Thomas Michael Oakeshott, Ayn Rand and Robert Nozick. Choose **one** and complete a profile using the framework.

<p>Profile Picture</p> 	<p>Name:</p> <p>Dates:</p> <p>Nationality:</p>
<p>Profession</p>	<p>Contributions to Conservatism / Liberalism</p>
<p>Background</p>	
<p>Legacy</p> 	

Play one of the following games in pairs:

- **Guess Who:** Read each other parts from your profile, using them as clues, guess the other's profile in fewer clues.
- **Twenty Questions:** Ask each other questions about the other's profile and questions as possible (guessing the name counts as a question!).

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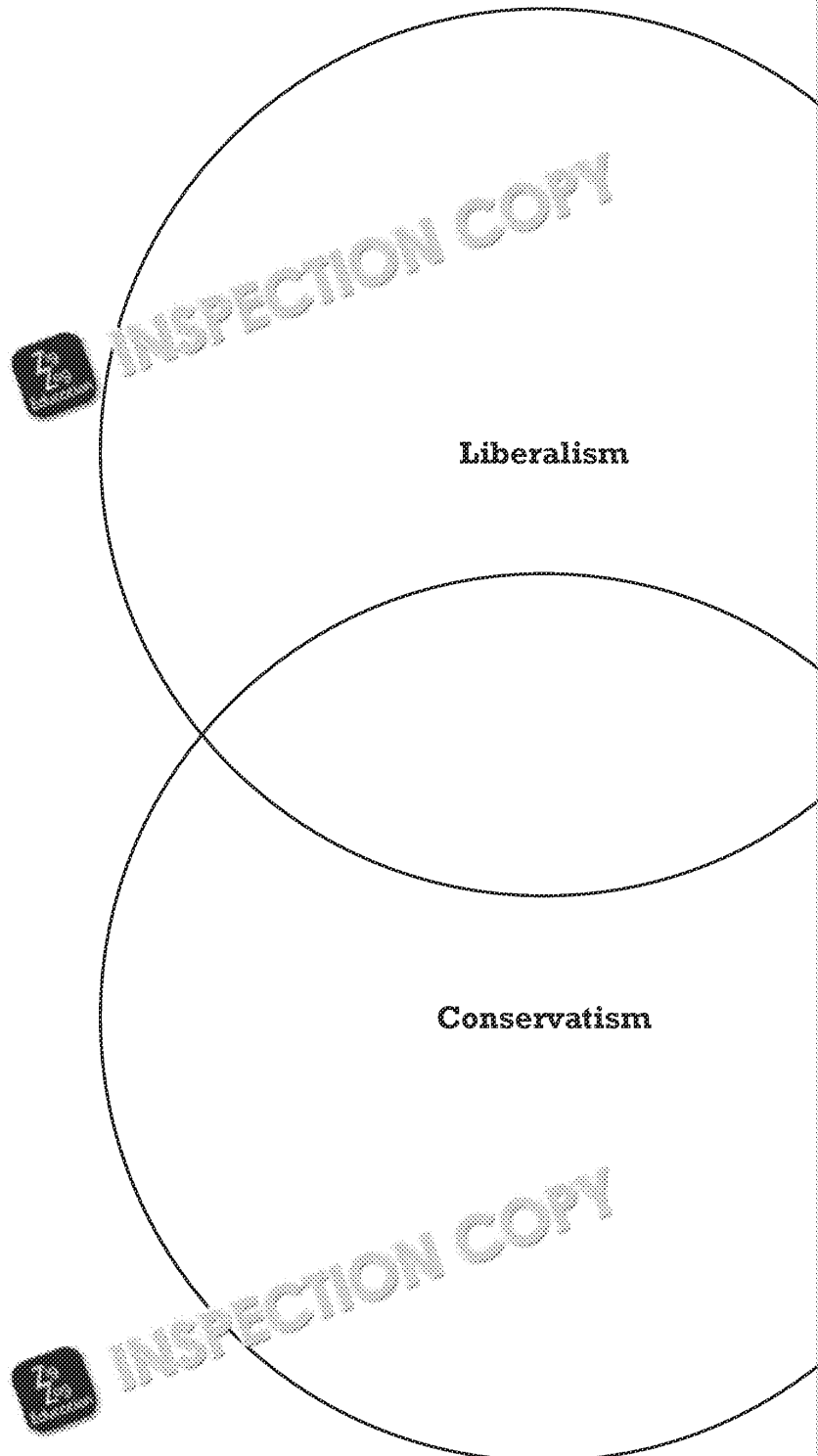
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Activity 14: Conservatism vs Liberalism

Task

- a) It is important to understand how conservatism compares to liberalism. Of course, both have developed over time and this will affect such an exercise. Your initial task is to write down general ideas of each compare and contrast in the Venn diagram below.



- b) Now consider how the later forms of each, especially **modern liberalism**, or **new right** have changed the differences and similarities between the two. Use the Venn diagram to reflect this but ensure you mention that these only apply to specific branches of each ideology.
- c) As an extension, discuss with a partner how some of the ideas of the key thinkers of each ideology overlap with the other ideology.

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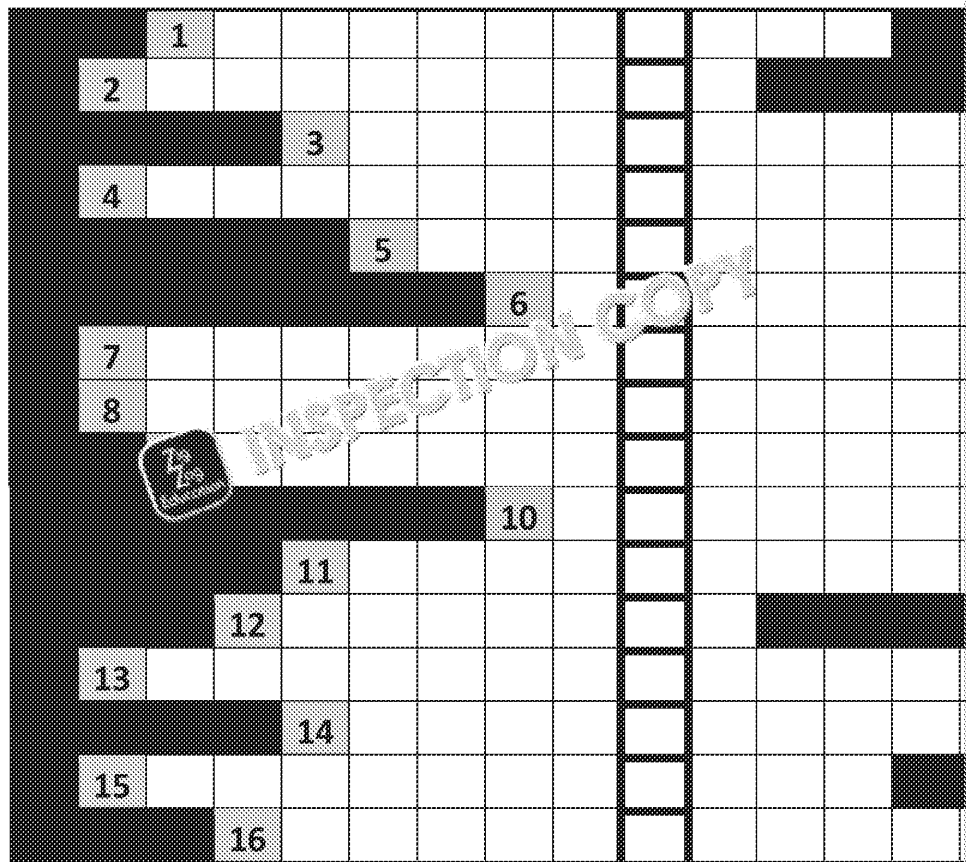
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Activity 15: Conservatism Grid Fill

Task

Fill in the grid using the clues underneath.



Clues

1. Idea that all knowledge comes mainly, if not entirely, from experience.
2. Concept meaning that there are inequalities in society with some classes of people.
3. English political philosopher who advocated that humans were driven by the passions.
4. Former British Prime Minister who believed that the ruling class could not only rule the country, but also had a responsibility to the people.
5. A flexible approach that advocates realism over idealism.
6. Branch of conservatism that advocates the primacy of the individual in respect of the traditional class society.
7. Former British Prime Minister who famously said that 'There is no such thing as a free lunch'.
8. British political philosopher who advocated adherence to tradition based on the wisdom of the ancients and the unknown.
9. Idea that individuals come together to form something that is greater than the sum of the sum of those individuals.
10. Refers to the traditional form of conservatism, including a focus on pragmatism and nationalism.
11. Irish statesman and political theorist who supported the idea of empiricism.
12. Idea that the primary component of society is the rational, equal and self-interest.
13. Idea that those higher up on the social ladder have a responsibility to look after those lower down.
14. Term that refers to an extreme form of liberalism more closely associated with the 19th century.
15. Idea that neutral knowledge can be obtained through rationalism.
16. Term that refers to an economic system with minimal state intervention.

BONUS: What is the word in the middle? Make your own clue for this word.

.....

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Answers

Activity 1: The History of Conservatism

These are just suggested answers to the research activity and not intended as a conclusive

The Reformation, sixteenth century

The Counter-Reformation followed, which saw the establishment fight back by promoting a balance between the new ideas and the old order.

The English Civil Wars, 1642–1651

The reaction to this event ultimately saw the restoration of the monarchy in England as a compromise as more power went to Parliament.

Thomas Hobbes

The Enlightenment, eighteenth century

This saw the first, greatest conservative response as the established order/class saw new challenges by focusing on respect for tradition and the order of hierarchy, as liberalism introduced new ideas such as damaging social unity through increased economic freedom.

Edmund Burke

The American War of Independence, 1765–1783

Some of the Founding Fathers aimed to avoid the excesses they perceived in liberal government by creating a strong government that did not give the people too much power.

Edmund Burke

The French Revolution, 1789

The perceived excesses of the Revolution saw criticism from conservatives who felt that they had thrown away order for untested utopian ideas.

Edmund Burke

The Industrial Revolution, early–mid nineteenth century

Conservatives therefore sought to justify more strongly the power of the ruling class as the old order was responsible for the longstanding and enduring order of society.

The Revolutions of 1848

The victory of the conservative establishment nevertheless saw this very establishment introduce some changes to prevent such outbreaks in future.

The Rise of Socialism, early twentieth century

Conservatism this time found itself fighting the extension of state control by promoting and opposing socialist egalitarianism by focusing on individualism, essentially becoming a form of capitalism.

Ayn Rand

The Rise of Fascism, early–mid twentieth century

As fascism's totalitarian and authoritarian nature became more widely understood, conservatism became more liberal yet again, advocating democratic liberalism, state and individual liberties.

Ayn Rand, Michael Oakeshott

The New Right, 1970s–1980s

Conservatism in the 1970s and 1980s emphasised a class outlook but this was becoming more individualistic. The New Right emerged as strongly in favour of individualism, finally ending the dominance of class, as well as in favour of privatisation, thereby greatly reducing the role of the state.

Robert Nozick

Consensus politics, present day

Ideology should not be seen as dead, but there have been observations that we have moved towards consensus politics, with fewer ideological debates occurring in mainstream politics. The Conservative Party has moved to the centre, having far fewer differences to Labour than it had in the past.

Extension

See italics above.

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Activity 2: Human Imperfection

Task

1. Human nature is inherently **flawed**, and the ideologies that say otherwise are self-seeking, untrustworthy and irresponsible.
2. The thinkers of the Enlightenment made a mistake when they postulated that. Rather, people are simply driven by their base appetites and **desires**.
3. These include things such as **power**, wealth and property. People at large can govern in the interests of **others** as they would use any power they gain for themselves.
4. As a result, **strong** government is required to keep humanity in check. In addition, a flawed nature and so needs to be punished.
5. Human imperfection can be divided into three categories: First, people are **psychologically** limited in that they fear being isolated and insecure and wish to seek stability in their lives.
6. Second, people are also **morally** limited in that they are selfish and greedy, and do not take moral considerations. Third, people are **intellectually** limited in that they are not rational, which is simply too complicated.
7. In short, conservatives believe that people are inherently more focused on fulfilling their own interests than the interests of the wider community that they live in.

Extension

Suggested answers

- 1) The conservative notion that human nature is imperfect impacts their other views.
 - As humanity is imperfect it is even more important to trust in the enduring wisdom passed up by the past. Throwing this away and trying to apply a new ideology would be in the hands of the people, who are imperfect, and therefore society would suffer.
 - Humanity's imperfect nature means that it is important to focus on society's needs rather than imperfect individuals. Traditional hierarchies and systems of authority also help to maintain order.
 - As people cannot be trusted to govern in others' interests, a benevolent government is needed to maintain the interests of society as a whole, justifying the existence of a conservative government.
- 2) Liberalism maintains that humans act in their own self-interest but does not believe that conservatives do. However, classical liberals, such as John Locke, did still think that a government were better placed to lead society. Liberals believe that humanity is driven by self-interest, therefore, it differs from conservatism in that it believes people can rule themselves better than conservatism does.

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Activity 3: Pragmatism

Task 1

Suggested definition

Pragmatism takes into account what has gone and worked before when making decisions. It places these real considerations of what extent the status quo is both popular and successful. It places these real considerations on theories and, therefore, is a flexible approach that values realism over idealism.

Task 2

Suggested response.

Political action should not be drawn from conflicts over political theories but rather from the relationship between the governed and government. This relationship should cultivate conversation (see Michael Oakeshott). A good conservative politician should cultivate a relationship that allows for decisions to be based on knowledge of their own time, as well as their own experience, to be the basis, above any ideological considerations of the politician. This can also mean that a politician should follow a tried and tested system of laws rather than some abstract ideal.

Task 3

Situation 1: The Labour governments of 1945–1951 had introduced wide-ranging changes to the National Health Service. The Conservative Government that followed could have reversed these changes following conservative principles of limited government intervention. However, these changes were not only popular but seemed to be working well, so they not only remained but were promoted themselves.

Situation 2: The realisation that the idea of a society based on classes was losing popularity led to a huge shift in conservatism that saw the adoption of the traditionally liberal notion of individualism. This was most aptly reflected in Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's statement that 'There is no such thing as society. There are only families. There is no such thing as society.'

Bonus point: In fact some elements of the welfare state were actually introduced by the Conservative government – a pragmatic approach!

Extension

Suggested discussion points

- 1) Since pragmatism prefers reliance on realism rather than idealism, it definitely represents a departure from ideologies. Ideologies prefer following their theories of how society should be, while pragmatism advocates an approach that focuses on what really works or what has been successful in the past. Pragmatism sees factors that could restrict ideological considerations such as popular opinion and practicality.

Bonus point: The 1970s episode illustrated above shows that the adherence to pragmatism can lead to change as well.

- 2) 'Change to conserve' simply means compromise. It is the pragmatic middle ground between radical change and rigid conservation of the status quo. Effectively reform, the concept means that if a great change, a minor change may be proposed by the establishment in order to maintain the status quo.

Bonus point: In fact this is one of the reasons that conservatism itself can be seen to be advocating pragmatism!

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Activity 4: Tradition

Task 1

Suggested answers

Institutions: Monarchy, Church, Army, Political Constitution, Aristocracy, Private

Values: Marriage, Religion, Morality, Family, Lifestyle

Task 2

Suggested answer

The conservative use of tradition is closely linked to their interest in maintaining or maintaining continuity with past societies, it is possible to maintain a stable society without shattering the status quo and, therefore, may cause chaos. Tradition should be re-evaluated. Values that have so far stood the test of time are clearly of high quality; therefore, they should not be discarded.

Bonus point: The novelist, poet and philosopher G.K. Chesterton referred to tradition as 'the wisdom of our ancestors' which meant that it allowed the wisdom of previous generations to assist the present.

Task 3

The French revolutionaries were too quick to abandon long-standing traditions and to experiment with untested theories. This is exactly the criticism raised by Edmund Burke at the time: 'The generation should be so rash as to consider itself superior to its predecessors'.

Extension

1) *Suggested answers:*

- (A) People who owned property did not want it to be violated and so would support measures promoting law and order and be more mindful of the private property rights of others.
- (B) People who owned property had a stake in the well-being of that country and would support the best interests of that country (especially stability and security) because their own property was at stake.

2) *Suggested discussion points:*

- By adhering to tradition, the conservatives definitely appear to be a reaction to the French Revolution, being suspicious of change and of promoting the maintenance of the status quo.
- On the other hand, however, this adherence to tradition can be seen as just a way of trying to dilute the radical ideas of new ideologies to more manageable levels.

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Activity 5: The State and Society

Task 1

- **Organic Society/State** – An idea that society is greater than the sum of the individuals and its interests are superior to those of the individuals.
- **Feudalism** – A system where there is a set social hierarchy that everyone fits into and it is impossible to shift to another part of this hierarchy.
- **Hierarchy** – A concept that means that there are inequalities in society with some people higher up than others.
- **Noblesse Oblige** – An idea that those higher up on the social ladder have a responsibility beneath them, to look after their welfare.
- **Paternalism** – An idea that states that those in government are smarter and better than the people. It implies a relationship akin to that of a father looking after his children.
- **Authority** – Power over others, often associated with the government.
- **Atomism** – An idea that the primary concern of a society is the rational, self-interest of the individual. (Note that this concept does not apply to all forms of conservatism, only classical liberalism.)

Task 2

Suggested answer

1. The conservative notion of organic society is contradicted by the conservative notion of hierarchy.

The conservative belief in hierarchy upholds the organic society. As conservatives believe there is a place for everyone in society, it is normal for such a society to be divided into different classes, with some higher up than others. This hierarchy supports the organic society by promoting conservative values.

2. Paternalism and *noblesse oblige* are the same thing.

These are two different concepts. Paternalism specifically refers to a political style where the government is superior in knowledge and also able to care for those they rule. *Noblesse oblige* is a sense of responsibility that the upper classes have for the welfare of the lower classes. While it has its origins in the chivalry of the medieval period, it was primarily appropriated by conservatives to justify the superior status of the aristocracy.

Extension

Suggested discussion points

- 1) Authority is seen as important because humanity is imperfect and selfish; if there was no authority, people would live in constant fear of each other. Therefore, a strong government is needed to protect people from each other. This way the security needs of the community are met.
- 2) The conservatives changed their opinion of society in the 1970s because of the breakdown of class divisions in society, which meant that their traditional view of society was no longer viable. This demonstrated conservative pragmatism.
- 3) Liberalism places a much greater importance on the individual, and the individual's rights, than the community as a whole. They do not believe in the need for hierarchies in society as individuals are seen as the most important.

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Activity 6: Essay Question – Conservatism as an Ideology

Indicative content

These are suggested responses only. Students may find alternative ways to answer the question.

Indicative content for how conservatism is an ideology:

- Conservatism has a theory of human nature as imperfect and that people can do other than act in their own interests. Every other ideology similarly has a view of human nature as a basis for many of their other arguments; therefore, conservatism can be seen as a common feature of all other ideologies.
- Conservatism advocates pragmatism. This should be considered in itself as a view of society and the world and it also means that conservatism is not about just political change; change is pragmatic, change is sought. Conservatism can, therefore, be seen as a view of the definition of ideology as a theory that advocates a certain view of the world.
- Libertarianism and neo-liberalism may have liberal origins but are closer to conservatism. They have a different view of the world and distinct ideas about the role of the state, and as a result, what makes an ideology, conservatism is defined by its values.
- Ideologies advocate certain government forms over others, certain relationships with the government, and certain ways of life; conservatism does all of these things: a limited government, a supervisory role for government, and respect for traditional values.

Indicative content for how conservatism is not an ideology:

- Conservatism is essentially reactionary. Without the existence of other ideologies, conservatism as there would be nothing for it to rise in reaction to. It seeks reform rather than change as much as possible in opposition to ideologies such as liberalism, and its main aim is to preserve, especially a belief in tradition and a natural order in an organic society. It shows signs of a reaction to ideologies rather than an ideology itself as it reacts against the proposed changes rather than being radical as ideologies tend to be.
- Conservatism believes in pragmatism. By definition, this implies a preference for practicality over idealism. An ideology, by definition, looks to an ideal, and aims to change society to bring about that ideal. Conservatism therefore does not share the idealism that defines other ideologies.
- Conservatism changes often to reflect changes in society and thought over time. It has adopted liberal traits in the form of neo-liberalism, and this questions to what extent it is a coherent and continuous movement or simply as a compilation of various reactions over time. It is difficult, therefore, to classify it as an ideology because it can change and develop and all of this change is from external factors and not from its own internal principles.
- The fact that order and tradition are some of conservatism's main principles should be considered. Conservatism adheres to what has gone before and maintains this as much as possible, while it also seeks to change and improve what has gone before and, therefore, conservatism is different from other ideologies.

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Activity 7: Revision Task – Key Concepts

As these are complex concepts, the below should simply be seen as a guide to one way that students can approach them.

Concept	Definition	How it is used in conservatism
Human Imperfection	The idea that people are not necessarily inherently good and are capable of making mistakes or having flaws.	People are driven by their base instincts rather than by reason. This self-interest means that they cannot be trusted to govern as they will abuse power for their own benefit.
Pragmatism	Pragmatism is based on what is seen to work, and it involves testing ideas and suggestions on realism rather than idealism.	Political action should be based on the relationship between the government and the governed, rather than on theoretical ideologies. This can sometimes mean that the ideas and actions of opposition have proved successful.
Tradition	Lifestyle, culture, customs etc. that have been in use for a long time in a particular society and/or state.	Preserving the status quo is a good way of maintaining order; in addition, if a tradition has been in place for a long time it must have been successful, and it is not necessary to change things that are not broken.
Private Property	Property (including houses and wealth) that is owned by a private individual.	The existence of private property is essential for the maintenance of law and order as it gives people a vested interest because they seek to protect their property. Those with property also have a stake in the stability of the state.
Organic Society/State	The idea that society is something that grows naturally from the collection of individuals, and that there are natural hierarchies within such a system.	The existence of an organic society means that there is a reality and interests beyond the individual that are greater than individual interests. There is a natural hierarchy within such a society, and that there is a clear, superior ruling class.
Authority	Power over others, often associated with government.	A powerful ruling class is needed to control the people from each other and is better able to rule in the best interests of society.

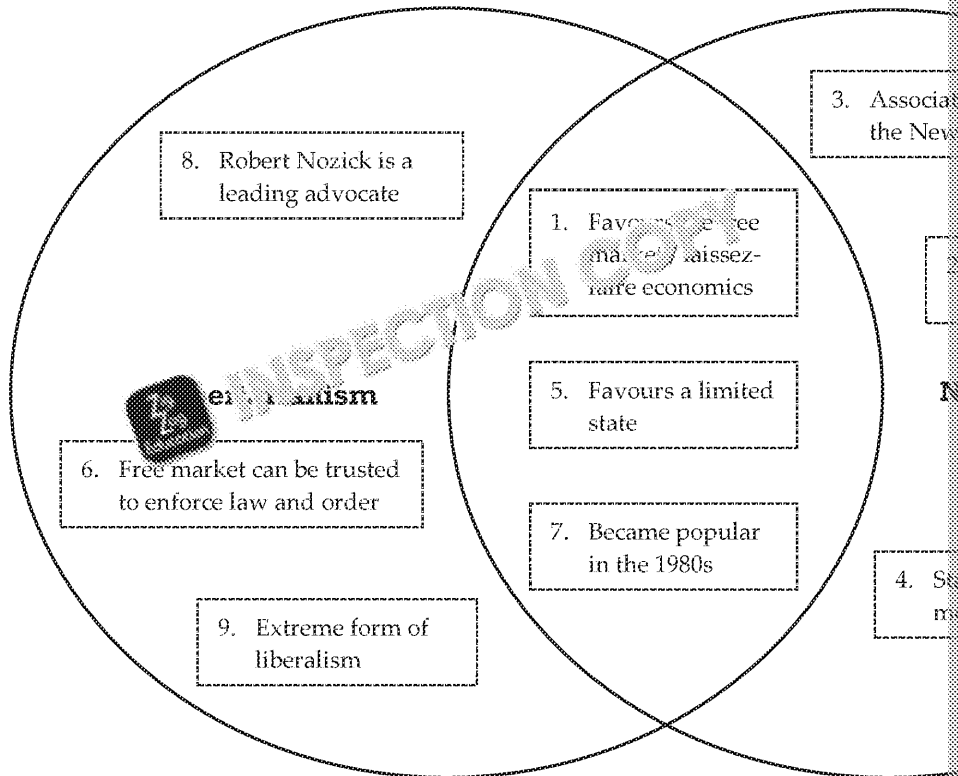
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Activity 8: Libertarianism and Neo-liberalism

Task 1



Task 2

1. Neo-liberalism and libertarianism are essentially the same.

These two strands of liberalism do share many similarities but they should not be confused. They share opinions of free trade, they differ greatly in terms of wider government. Neo-liberals consider it necessary for the government to involve itself in law and order, while libertarians are more extreme in thinking that even these aspects can be left to the free market.

2. Libertarians ideally want there to be no state at all.

While libertarians do advocate a much smaller role for the state than other branches of liberalism, they still think there needs to be a state, even if just to provide for law and order.

Extension

Suggested discussion points

Libertarianism and neo-liberalism are more often associated with conservatism for liberal ideas, they arose in the 19th century when such ideas had been mostly accepted as part of the liberal tradition (in the West). The rise of conservatism results in switches to match reality and so the more limited role for the state reflect this.

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Activity 9: Different Conservatisms

Task 1

Traditional Conservatism	One-nation Conservatism	
Favours pragmatism, which means that realism is preferred over idealism	Favours pragmatism, which means that realism is preferred over idealism	Is in
Believes in a natural order in society, a hierarchy, and that people need to be aware of their position within it	Advocates paternalism, a political style where the relationship between ruler and ruled is like that of a father and his children	Fav
Advocates paternalism, a political style where the relationship between ruler and ruled is like that of a father and his children	Aims to reach out to all sections of society. To do this, welfare must be provided for all	Incl be
Includes the concept of noblesse oblige, which implies a responsibility for the upper classes for the welfare of the lower classes	Capitalism is a threat to society as it encourages people to follow their own interests and so they lose their sense of society	In sa
Pro-property and anti-taxation	Focuses on maintaining order	Be
Focuses on maintaining order	Believes in an organic society, which is when the interests of the society are more important than those of the sum of the individuals within it	Has dra

Task 2

- Traditional Conservatism, One-nation Conservatism, New Right
- Traditional Conservatism – Thomas Hobbes, Edmund Burke, One-nation Conservatism – Michael Oakeshott, New Right – Robert Nozick, Ayn Rand

Extension

Suggested discussion points

- The most important clash is between one-nationism and the New Right. The New Right considers the free market to be a positive thing and should be left in its hands, with the state only focusing on defence, law, order and national security. One-nationism distrusts the free market due to its tendency to create inequalities and believes that government should monitor it and at least ensure welfare is provided for all.

Another clash is between traditional and one-nation conservatism. Traditional conservatives favour gradual reform as they believe it will lead to social stability, while one-nationists consider radical change necessary; they advocate the use of state power to change to conserve.

Opinions also differ on how to change from traditional conservatism to New Right. Traditional conservatives accept capitalism and laissez-faire economics, while more traditional conservatives favour state intervention and control to account for selfish and greedy human nature.

- The New Right fits this definition best as it encompasses more ideas of how to change society and less of a focus on the status quo than the other two strands.

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Activity 10: Manifesto

Below are just suggested responses to the exercise.

Traditional Conservatism

- *The state:* We will protect the property rights of the people and not restrict them. The upper class will govern as it has the accumulated wisdom of the past and is disinterested, is capable of governing in the interests of society as a whole.
- *The economy:* The state will not concern itself too greatly with economic matters, the property of the people. You will not be burdened with taxation as you would be under socialism.
- *The individual and society:* Society is more important than the sum of the individuals. A strict and unchanging hierarchy. Maintaining this promotes order and we will, therefore, not court chaos.

One-nationism

- *The state:* We shall ensure that the state takes care of absolutely everyone in society, truly fulfilling the duty role it should have. Under traditional government, the poor would be cared for.
- *The economy:* The economy cannot be allowed to run rampant and unchecked inequalities, which will lead to discontent. We must therefore ensure that no one is left behind. Capitalism is the best way to ensure economic growth, but we will not challenge capitalism itself and acknowledge the role of the middle class in society.
- *The individual and society:* We must maintain a notion of society that would be rejected by individualists of the New Right. We should bring all the people together, to ensure that everyone has a voice.

The New Right

- *The state:* We advocate a minimal role for the state, only focusing on crucial elements such as law and order, and enforcing a sense of morality and community. Freedom is encouraged everywhere else, particular in the economy.
- *The economy:* We shall allow the free market to dictate the economy and the government should not involve itself in this sphere. The free market is the best way to ensure economic growth.
- *The individual and society:* The individual is the most important element of society. The state should be paramount to us. This is reflected in our insistence on the state providing a minimal role.

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Activity 11: Revision Table – Conservatism and Concepts

	Traditional Conservatism	One-nationism
Human Imperfection	Humanity is imperfect. It is not driven by reason but by lust for power and so it cannot be trusted to rule in the interests of anyone else. Power will be abused for personal gain.	People are self-interested though naturally, at least, on the growth of the state means that the state needs to be in inequality in order to prevent the disillusionment of the lower classes.
Pragmatism	Pragmatism has been largely as being about accepting the status quo and the wisdom of the past which should not be discarded lightly. Also, reform is considered a potential problem as it may lead to revolution.	Pragmatism is seen as accepting social developments and finding responses to their shortcomings. The negative aspects of capitalism and proper responses need to be found. The popularity of other ideologies is also a concern.
Tradition	Tradition is seen as gospel, something to revere and stick to religiously as the culmination of the wisdom of past generations. It has stood for so long because it is good.	Tradition is seen as a good starting point. Reference for what has worked in the past changes must be made in order to meet the needs of the present. As much as possible and so preservation is considered as a method of avoiding revolution.
Private Property	The ownership of private property gives people a stake in their society and so makes them wish for order, law, and stability. Only those with private property can be trusted to govern in the interests of society due to this stake. With property comes responsibility.	Private property is seen as a foundation for order and the increasing pursuit of wealth. The rise of free market capitalism must be balanced with an obligation to the wider society.
Organic Society/State	Society is greater than the sum of the individuals within it. The interests of society come before the interests of the individuals within it. There is a natural hierarchy in society and this should be adhered to in order to preserve order.	Society is important and should be considered as greater than the interests of the individuals within it but there is less of a hierarchy given that the acceptance of individualism allows for social mobility.
Authority	The ruling class naturally fits this role as it is economically disinterested and so is able to govern in the interests of all and to care for them, which is their responsibility (<i>noblesse oblige</i>).	The state still has natural authority that of a father to its children (paternalist) and perhaps even more so than before. The state has a more active role to ensure nobody is left badly under capitalism, though it is necessary in order to preserve order.

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Activity 12: Quote Bank

Below are suggested possible answers. Some other points could be made, and the quotes are just examples.

Name of philosopher or thinker	Summarise their most influential idea(s)	The concept can apply to
Thomas Hobbes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Humans are driven by the pursuit of power but are also vulnerable and are not very rational Absolute government is the best way to avoid disorder in society There must be a centralised order and freedom People have no right to their state 	Tradition Humanism Imperfect Organic
Edmund Burke	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Politics should be based on the practical experiences drawn from the past (empiricism) Order and security in society are paramount, and so change must be done very carefully Tradition should be respected as it represents the culmination of the wisdom of past generations 	Pragmatism Tradition Organic
Michael Oakeshott	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Politics should not have a particular fixed goal or a rigid sense of direction Pragmatism should be followed not ideology in people's actions Reality is complex and the theories posited by ideologies oversimplify reality Governments should govern to what is the best for the people and not what politicians think is best for the people People are imperfect in that they are not capable of understanding the complex world around them 	Pragmatism Tradition Humanism Imperfect
Ayn Rand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> People should be aiming to achieve purpose and productivity through hard work People's highest moral aim should be the pursuit of their own happiness Objectivism: the central basis of morality is reason, which we can use to gain objective knowledge People should be free to involve themselves as they see fit in their own lives 	Humanism Imperfect
Robert Nozick	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Argued for a very minimal state, meaning no taxation, no welfare and ideally no laws on human behaviour; the state should just focus on defence Argued for an individual rights-based libertarian system People own their labour, abilities and selves and should not be treated or used as objects (self-ownership) 	Pragmatism

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Activity 13: In-depth Thinker Profile

Below are suggested answers for this activity.

Name and Dates:	Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679)
Nationality and Profession:	English political philosopher
Background:	Little is known about his early life but he did study at the University of Oxford and later undertook a tour of Europe, where he explored European critical thinking methods.
Contributions:	A largely negative view of human nature where it is focused on self-interest rather than rationalism. Also the idea that there must be a hierarchy of order, something that a strong government can ensure.
Life Events:	He was alive during the English Civil Wars, and while not in Paris for much of the time, he did associate himself with the intellectual circles of the time.
Legacy:	Considered one of the founders of modern political philosophy and a key aspect of later liberal thought.
Name and Dates:	Edmund Burke (1729–1797)
Nationality and Profession:	Irish statesman and political theorist
Background:	Born in Ireland to a Church of Ireland family and educated in England. He travelled in Europe before being elected to the House of Commons in 1764.
Contributions:	Promoting the idea of empiricism, which meant a belief that knowledge comes from past life experiences. In addition, he advocated the importance of tradition in society and feared change that was not undertaken carefully.
Life Events:	He was a Member of Parliament and lived through an interesting period of his life. He expressed support for the American side in the American War of Independence. He felt that their grievances were well founded. However, he was a critic of the French Revolution (especially the revolutionary Jacobins), as he considered that they had foolishly abandoned past traditions that had served them well for centuries in favour of untested and risky new theories. Such views led to a break with the Whigs, leading the conservative faction.
Legacy:	He was looked to for inspiration by both liberals and conservatives in the nineteenth century, and in the twentieth century he came to be seen as a key figure in the development of conservatism.
Name and Dates:	Michael Oakeshott (1901–1990)
Nationality and Profession:	British political philosopher
Background:	Studied history at Cambridge, where he later became a fellow. He was a proponent of pragmatism and empiricism, which are opposites. Considered ideology and pragmatism to be opposites. They simplified the world. Politics can only be successful if it takes account of the state can deliver what it needs to without losing sight of the individual. He contributed to conservative ideas on human nature.
Contributions:	He was a proponent of empiricism, which meant a belief that knowledge comes from past life experiences. In addition, he advocated the importance of tradition in society and feared change that was not undertaken carefully. He was a Member of Parliament and lived through an interesting period of his life. He expressed support for the American side in the American War of Independence. He felt that their grievances were well founded. However, he was a critic of the French Revolution (especially the revolutionary Jacobins), as he considered that they had foolishly abandoned past traditions that had served them well for centuries in favour of untested and risky new theories. Such views led to a break with the Whigs, leading the conservative faction.
Life Events:	Joined the army during the Second World War and was on the front lines.
Legacy:	Best known for his critique of rationalism.

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Name and Dates:	Ayn Rand (1905–1982)
Nationality and Profession:	Russian-American novelist, philosopher, playwright and screenwriter
Background:	Born to a fairly well-off Russian Jewish family in St Petersburg, her family fled to the Crimea in the wake of the October Revolution. She lived in St Petersburg, though they lived in poverty. She studied history and literature, before going to the United States to visit relatives. She ended up staying in the US.
Contributions:	Promoted the idea of objectivism, which implied that reason alone allows one to gain neutral or objective knowledge. In addition, she advocated a form of personal freedom free from any moral obligations to others, and so the rights of the individual should be central to the moral system. Her work all involved a heavy focus on the individual as opposed to a collective.
Legacy:	Influential in libertarianism, though her ideas have had very little impact on academics, having been rejected outright by many.

Name and Dates:	Robert Nozick (1938–2002)
Nationality and Profession:	American political philosopher
Background:	Born to a Jewish family in America, he gained a bachelor of science degree from MIT.
Contributions:	One of the key New Right thinkers, he advocated a very minimalist form of liberalism, which would limit itself to focusing on the defence of individual rights. To support his position, he also advocated the idea of a 'night watchman state.' To support his position, he also advocated the idea that individuals own themselves entirely, including their talents and labour.
Legacy:	Important influence on the New Right and politicians who favour a small state and conservatism, notably Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan.

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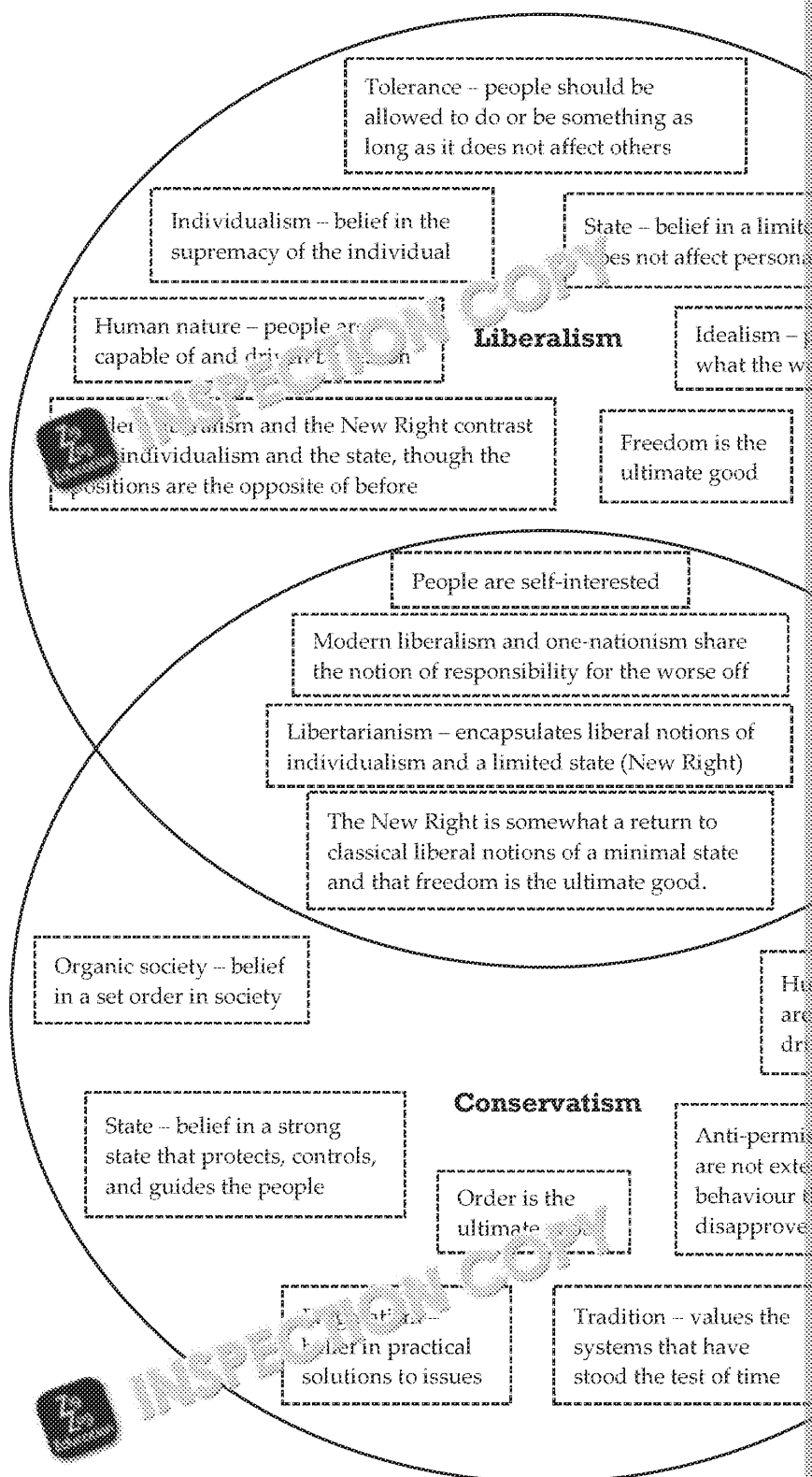
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Activity 14: Conservatism vs Liberalism

Task

There are many points that could be raised. The most important have been included below.



Thinkers overlap (suggested points):

- **Robert Nozick** – While associated with the conservative movement (New Right), he is an extreme form of liberalism, especially the call for a very minimal state to allow individuals to live as they see fit.
- **Thomas Hobbes** – While predating both ideologies, his ideas have formed the key tenets of both liberalism and conservatism, especially social contract theory.
- **John Locke** – A liberal who advocated that those with property were better placed to govern. He also held some conservative ideas such as those arguing that there is a natural hierarchy.

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Activity 15: Conservatism Grid Fill

	1	E	M	P	I	R	I	C	I	S	M		
2	H	I	E	R	A	R	C	H	Y				
			3	T	H	O	M	A	S	H	O	B	
4	B	E	N	J	A	M	I	N	D	I	S	R	
					5	P	R	A	G	M	A	T	I
							6	N	E	W	R	I	G
7	M	A	R	G	A	R	E	C	T	H	A	T	
8	M	I	C	H	A	T	L	O	A	K	E	S	
		9	O	F	A	N	I	C	S	O	C	I	
							10	T	O	R	Y	I	S
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				12	A	T	O	M	I	S	M		
13	N	O	B	L	E	S	S	E	O	B	L	I	
				14	L	I	B	E	R	T	A	R	I
15	O	B	J	E	C	T	I	V	I	S	M		
			16	L	A	I	S	S	E	Z	F	A	I

Suggested answer for bonus:

A conservative policy that advocates making a small change in order to placate or maintain the status quo as much as possible and reduce the risk of a huge change. (This idea was suggested by Edmund Burke: 'A state without the means of some of its own conservation.')

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