

FT Secondary Schools**School politics: Democrats open new phase in Donald Trump impeachment inquiry**

FT articles with classroom tasks

JANUARY 1 2017

EdExcel Component 3, Section 2.2.3: Oversight: the checks on the other branches of government

AQA Component 2, Section 3.2.1.1: The constitutional framework of US government and Section 3.2.1.2 The legislative branch of government: Congress

Background: what you need to know

Three committees of the US House of Representatives began a joint inquiry in October 2019 to decide whether there are grounds for an impeachment of President Trump. This was formalised by a 232-196 vote in the House on 31 October. Make sure you know what impeachment is and all the stages of the impeachment process.

Using the articles

This article, [House votes to open new phase in Trump impeachment inquiry](#) reports on the House vote to formalise the inquiry:

This article, [White House official was 'concerned' about Trump's Ukraine call](#), evaluates the significance of testimony by Alexander Vindman, a US army officer and National Security Council official:

This [Explainer guide](#) is a very clear explanation of the leading figures involved in the 'Ukraine-gate', of the stages in the impeachment process and of events up to the start of the inquiry:

Read the three articles cited above and then answer one of these questions, depending on which exam board specification you are studying:

Question in the style of Edexcel Politics A-level: Paper 3

- Evaluate the extent to which the US Congress's power of impeachment is an effective check on the Executive Branch. You must consider this view and the alternative to this view in a balanced way. (30 marks)
- TIP: As well as considering the current impeachment inquiry into President Trump, you should also look at the evidence of the two previous unsuccessful attempts to impeach

presidents Andrew Johnson in 1867 and Bill Clinton in 1998, as well as the example of President Richard Nixon, who resigned in 1974 rather than face impeachment.

Question in the style of AQA Politics A-level: Paper 2

- Explain and analyse three ways in which congressional checks on the power of the executive branch may be significant in US politics. (9 marks)
- TIP: As well as considering impeachment, you need to choose two other congressional checks on the executive branch, such as the Senate's power to confirm or reject some presidential appointments and the House of Representatives' power to scrutinise the budget.

Mark Rathbone

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