**Democracy & Participation: 5.3 Interest Groups in the USA**

**Noting guidance**

1. What are interest groups and why are they so significant to US politics?

(p. 433).

Watch and use with video to help your notes – ensuring that you understand and have defined the terms *Pluralism*, *Elitism Iron triangles*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o9pDXMcu_j4>

**Case Studies**

1. Using the information in the box on the AFL-CIO professional interest group (pp. 433-434), answer the two questions (p.343)
2. Summarise the tactics used by interest groups (pp. 435-435)
3. Watch: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dj8760sKCwc>. Note down the various tactics used by the NRA, so you are able to assess why this group is so influential.

Extension: <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/film/gunned-down/>

A great documentary on the issue of guns, NRA and politics in the USA. Watch this and evaluate the key reasons why politicians continuously refuse to take on the issue of guns in the USA.

1. Using the box on page 436 on the League of Conservation Voters (LCV), answer the two questions at the bottom of the box.
2. Using the box on page 438 on the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), answer the two questions at the bottom of the box.

**Theoretical perspectives**

1. a) Summarise the arguments that interest groups enhance democracy.

b) Summarise the arguments that interest groups restrict democracy (pp 438-439).