**5. Towards a new Consensus, 1987-1997**

**Practice essay question with sources**

With reference to the sources and your understanding of the historical context, assess the value of these three sources to a historian studying the 1997 British general election.

**Source A**

*Source: John Major, address to 1993 Conservative Party Conference in Blackpool, 8 October 1993*

In housing, in the ‘50s and ‘60s, we pulled down the terraces, destroyed whole communities and replaced them with tower blocks and we built walkways that have become rat runs for muggers…In our schools we did away with traditional subjects – grammar, spelling, tables – and also with the old ways of teaching them. Fashionable, but wrong. Some said the family was out of date, far better rely on the council and social workers than family and friends. I passionately believe that was wrong.

Others told us that every criminal needed treatment, not punishment. Criminal behaviour was society’s fault, not the individual’s. Fashionable, but wrong, wrong, wrong …

It is time … to get back to basics, to self-discipline and respect for the law, to consideration for others, to accepting a responsibility for yourself and your family and not shuffling off on other people and the state.

**Source B**

*Source: Tony Blair on arriving at 10 Downing Street, 2 May 1997*

Today we have set objectives for new Labour Government – a world class education system. Education is not the privilege of the few but the right of many.

We will work in partnership with business to create the dynamic economy, the competitive economy of the future. The one that can meet the challenges of an entirely new century and new age…

And it shall be a government, too, that gives this country strength and confidence in leadership both at home and abroad, particularly in respect of Europe.

It shall be a government rooted in strong values, the values of justice and community, the values that have guided me all my political life. But a government ready with the courage to embrace the new ideas necessary to make those values live again for today’s world – a government of practical measures in pursuit of noble causes.

**Source C**

*Source: Liberal Democrat 1997 British General Election Manifesto*

We are in politics not just to manage things better, but to make things happen. To build a more prosperous, fair and open society. We believe in the market economy as the best way to deliver prosperity and distribute economic benefits. But we recognise that market mechanisms on their own are not enough; that the private sector alone cannot ensure the=at there are good services for everyone, or promote employment opportunities, or tackle economic inequality, or protect the environment for future generations.

We believe in a society in which every citizen shares rights and responsibilities. But, we recognise that a strong country is built from the bottom, not the top; that conformity quickly becomes the enemy of diversity. And that the imposition of social blueprints leads to authoritarian centralised government. Liberal Democrats believe that power and opportunity, like wealth, should be widely spread.