Chapter 3

**Knowledge based**

1. Why is the ‘art of comparing’ not only useful for *explicit* comparison, but also an *implicit* part of the toolkit of any political scientist?
2. Can you explain why the comparative method is often called ‘*quasi*-experimental’? Can you argue *why* this would justify the use of statistics in comparative politics?
3. What exactly is the difference between internal and external validity? Why is this distinction important? Can you give an example of each type of validity?
4. If you examine the debate on ‘does politics matter?’ can you describe the research design used? Are you able to develop an alternative one—in terms of variables and cases—to test the same issue of this debate?
5. What is a comparative variable and what is the relation between a concept and an indicator?

**Critical thinking**

1. What is a case? Can you elaborate what the case is in terms of unit of observation and level of measurement if it concerns a comparative investigation of party government?
2. There are different options as regards the type and number of cases needed to develop a research design. Can you think of a research question that would justify the choice of a single-case study where ‘time’ is relevant *and* ‘inter’-system references are necessary?
3. Globalization is considered not only to grow but also to produce biased results due to diffusion. Can you discuss this problem in relation to the relationship between national policy formation of membership states and the EU?
4. Describe the basic differences between the Methods of Agreement and Difference. Give an example of each, demonstrating this difference.
5. A constraint of the comparative method is ‘conceptual stretching’ and the solution may lie in extending the number of cases by means of ‘family resemblance’ or ‘radial categories’. Can you think of an example of each to extend the number of valid cases?