How well did Pitt cope with the revolutionary threat to 1801?

- Radical groups lacked unity nor violence  
  - Threat was never very great, peaceful petitioning for Parliamentary reform, not wanting to overthrow Pitt
    - So Pitt did not have much effect, fortunate to have strong body of support on his measures - wasn’t that successful, treason trials all acquitted
- Spies utilised, make government aware of meetings or likely disorder
- Repression  
  - Suspension of habeas corpus
- Show-trials
- Accused radials of seditious libel  
  - Arrest suffered temporary imprisonment, loss of income whilst in prison and on trial – disrupt radical cooperation
  - Deterrent
- The Treasonable Practices Act; forbade correspondence with French political societies
- The Seditious Meetings Act; giving powers to magistrates to control holding of political meetings
- Propaganda against French Revolution when it becomes violent
- Rebellion in Ireland against British rule
- Royal Proclamation against Seditious Writing
- Doesn’t repress to early, waits to see what happens
- Protestantism define opinion, wins Pitt support and makes it easier for him against the French Catholics
- Suspension of gold standard, improved economy for middle classes – increasing money supply, people not starving
- Income tax

Explain how Britain avoided Revolution in the period 1789-1801

- Britain avoided Revolution in a number of different areas from a whole series of groups formed by radicals. The principal reasons why the radicals failed were because: they lacked unity, coherence and mass support; government repression and legislation made the radicals’ tasks much more difficult, preventing the momentum of the radicals to continue from solely talks to violent action; and the conservative propaganda which persuaded the radicals that they had nothing to gain and a lot to lose by emulating the French. All of these combined guaranteed failure for the Revolution.
- One of the main reasons why the radical movement never expanded further than a phase of split groups and societies is because they lacked unity or a drive forward which would mean any risk at all. They didn’t: try to have a mass strike or
With being arrested, even if they were not put on trial, they suffered from arrest, temporary imprisonment and loss of income whilst awaiting trial or to be cleared. Even though the number of convictions was only around 200, they acted as a basic deterrent from radical thoughts and activities. This intimidated many radical theorists and propagandists and organisers as many were outspoken critics and often had elevated status which they would risk losing or damaging if they were convicted of radical activity. Their silence was then viewed as a victory in Britain avoiding a rise in the spread of radicalism and an early step in cutting out a Revolution.

The government looked to repressive legislation which was designed to crush all manifestations of political dissent and in order to convince parliament they needed evidence and witnesses before Secret Committees of the House of Commons to be able to arrest the radicals without trial. They introduced several bills which they passed through Parliament and easily became Acts by majorities: The Treasonable Practises Act of 1795 forbade correspondence with French political societies as it extended the definition of treason substantially; The Seditious Meetings Act of 1795 gave powers to magistrates to control the holding of political meetings. These two Acts which were introduced were opposed by not only the radicals but also those with moderate opinion as well. Although these did little to change radical activities, it showed the government’s frame of mind towards the radicals and that they were trying to deal with it. Though these Acts only had one person convicted under their terms, it still acted as a warning for the radicals and a general deterrent which helped avoid Revolution by stemming down the radicals’ activities. In 1799 the leading radical societies were formally banned by law and trade unions. One of the principal reasons by radicalism failed was that the conservative reaction to the French Revolution was immensely popular throughout British society and was shown through the use of conservative propaganda.

The majority of conservative propaganda was to convince the middle and lower classes that the French principles posed a real threat to the British society, so that they could see the true difference between the benefits of British society and the horrors and tyranny of the French. This propaganda was produced in vast numbers though conservative newspapers and magazines which greatly outnumbered and outsold their radical rivals. The government excited loyalist support, assisting 2000 loyalist associations to be set up in the form of Church and King Clubs. Many loyalist supporters turned their attention towards the war effort as an armed defence force repelled invaders of Britain and protected property from the lawless rabble.

Loyalism triumphed as when the Brits looked at their enemy they saw a country suffering from terror, tyranny and turmoil and so resistance to French principles and to French aggression appeared to be a patriotic duty for all true Britons.