

Growing isolation and unpopularity	April 1989, by-election in Vale of Glamorgan, Labour won by 6000 votes and overturned a Tory 6200 majority; elections to European parliament, in June 1989, showed Labour to win with 38.7% whereas Tory's had 33.5%; Mid Staffordshire by-election, March 1990, a Conservative majority of 14,600 became a Labour majority of 9400; by June 1990, Labour was 16 points ahead in opinion polls; many Tory MP's feared they would lose with Thatcher in charge; autumn of 1989 Meyers challenged for leadership of the party; he won 33 votes and further 30-odd abstained; the idea of a challenge at all is what struck fear for the Tories	He fall was triggered by Howe; once an ally, disliked her strident tone and her hatred towards the policies over Europe; his resignation in November 1990 caused a sensation; showed Thatcher's government to be clearly divided; he called obliquely for a challenge against her leadership
Heseltine's impact	Heseltine announced his candidature for leadership of Conservatives; she tried to drum up support but was advised she would not win by her cabinet ministers	Thatcher won the vote but not by a large enough margin; announced her resignation on 22 November and was replaced by Major on the 28 November 1990

Assess the reasons for Thatcher's resignation in 1990

There were many factors that contributed to Thatcher's resignation in November 1990. Her resignation was influenced by the Poll Tax, economic difficulties as well as divisions over Europe, however the most significant was her growing personal isolation and unpopularity amongst not only the public, but her own Party.

The Poll Tax definitely contributed to Thatcher's resignation in 1990 as it caused great unpopularity and disagreement amongst the people of Britain. The Local Government Finance Act of 1988 introduced the Community Charge, also the Poll Tax, which introduced a flat rate tax on every individual. It was believed to be very unpopular before it was even implemented, even by the MP's in her cabinet, but Thatcher's stubbornness carried on with the policy. It was introduced in Scotland first in 1989, and millions of Scots were encouraged by the Scottish National Party to refuse to pay. Thatcher should have realised here that this new tax system would not work in her favour, yet she carried it on and later tried to implement it in April 1990. However, on the 31st March, a large demonstration against it was located in Trafalgar Square but turned violent, causing 400 policemen to be injured and 300 people to be arrested. With this all happening, Thatcher was still determined to press ahead with the policy which showed her out to be increasingly dictatorial. This caused a major loss of support for the Thatcher government, which the Conservatives feared would make them lose the 1992 election. It was at this point when the Party, as well as external influences, started trying to persuade Thatcher that her time as a leader was running out, as she was not as popular as she once was.

The economic state at the time also contributed to Thatcher's resignation as with the economic state, those who she intended on supporting ended up being harmed by additional costs. With the stock market crash in October 1987, 24% was wiped from share prices which Lawson feared may trigger a recession. To tackle this, in his 1988 budget he reduced income tax rates, however, this only triggered a consumer spending boom which increased prices. By June 1989, inflation had been pushed up to 8.3%. Lawson was determined to control the inflation by raising interest rates and by October 1989 had reached 15%. Thatcher's home-buyers, those who she believed were hardworking and deserved easy homing, found themselves paying heavily for the houses they felt they had been encouraged to buy. This damaged the support for Thatcher as her primary voters,