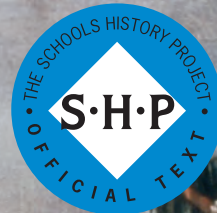




OCR SHP
GCSE



THE ELIZABETHANS

1580–1603

The background of the cover is a detailed historical painting of a naval battle, likely the Spanish Armada. It depicts numerous large sailing ships with multiple masts and sails, engaged in combat on a choppy sea. Smoke from gunpowder is visible, and smaller boats are seen in the foreground. The scene is set against a cloudy sky.

JAMIE BYROM
MICHAEL RILEY



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THE ELIZABETHANS

1580–1603

JAMIE BYROM
MICHAEL RILEY

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The Schools History Project

Set up in 1972 to bring new life to history for school students, the Schools History Project has been based at Leeds Trinity University since 1978. SHP continues to play an innovatory role in history education based on its six principles:

- Making history meaningful for young people
- Engaging in historical enquiry
- Developing broad and deep knowledge
- Studying the historic environment
- Promoting diversity and inclusion
- Supporting rigorous and enjoyable learning

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CONTENTS

	Introduction	2
I	Majesty	8
	How did Elizabeth use her power?	
	Closer look 1– Elizabeth in film and on television	
2	‘Dangerous people’	26
	Why were there so few Catholics in Elizabeth’s kingdom by 1603?	
	Closer look 2 – ‘Little John’ and how he is remembered	
3	Daily lives	44
	What mattered to the Elizabethans?	
	Closer look 3 – Inside Montacute House	
4	Merry England?	62
	What lay behind changes in popular culture?	
	Closer look 4 – May Day and the myth of ‘Merry England’	
5	Going global	80
	What did the Elizabethan adventurers achieve?	
	Closer look 5 – Dead and <i>not</i> gone	
	Preparing for the examination	98
	Glossary	106
	Index	108
	Acknowledgements	110

Introduction

Making the most of this book

Where this book fits into your GCSE history course

The course

The GCSE history course you are following is made up of five different studies. These are shown in the table below. For each type of study you will follow **one** option. We have highlighted the option that this particular book helps you with.

OCR SHP GCSE B		
(Choose one option from each section)		
Paper 1 1 ¾ hours	British thematic study 20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The People's HealthCrime and PunishmentMigrants to Britain
	British depth study 20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The Norman ConquestElizabethan EnglandBritain in Peace and War
Paper 2 1 hour	History around us 20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any site that meets the given criteria.
Paper 3 1 ¾ hours	World period study 20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Viking ExpansionThe Mughal EmpireThe Making of America
	World depth study 20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The First CrusadeThe Aztecs and the Spanish ConquestLiving under Nazi Rule

The British depth study

The British depth study focuses on a short time span when the nation was under severe pressure and faced the possibility or actual experience of invasion. The point of this study is to understand the complexity of society and the interplay of different forces within it. You will also learn how and why historians and others have interpreted the same events and developments in different ways.

As the table shows, you will be examined on your knowledge and understanding of the British depth study as part of Paper 1. You can find out more about that on pages 98 to 105 at the back of the book.

Here is exactly what the examination shows for this depth study.

The Elizabethans, 1580–1603

The specification divided this period study into five sections:

Sections and issues	Learners should study the following content:
Elizabeth and government <i>Issue: the power of the Queen</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Elizabeth and her court including the Privy Council and the rebellion of the Earl of EssexElizabeth and her parliaments including opposition from PuritansElizabeth and her people including local government and propaganda
Catholics <i>Issue: the nature and extent of a Catholic threat</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The enforcement of Elizabeth's religious settlement after 1580Catholic links abroad, plots against Elizabeth, and the Elizabethan spy networkMary Queen of Scots, the Armada and war with Spain
Daily lives <i>Issue: the nature and dynamics of Elizabethan society</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The contrasting lives of rich, middling and poor ElizabethansFamily life: husbands and wives, parents and children, wider kinshipPoverty: its causes, Elizabethan explanations and responses
Popular culture <i>Issue: 'Merry England'</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Theatres and their opponentsThe Puritan attack on popular cultureThe persecution of witches
The wider world <i>Issue: the significance of England's connections with the wider world</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Imperial ambition: the motives and achievements of Elizabethan adventurersRoanoke: England's attempt at an American colonyTrade with the east, including first contacts with India

You need to understand the interplay between these forces in society:

- Political
- Religious
- Economic
- Social
- Cultural

You need pay special attention to this underlying issue:

How and why late Elizabethan England has been interpreted as a 'golden age' and the reasons why this interpretation has been challenged.

You should study a range of types of interpretation including:

- academic (historians)
- educational
- popular (e.g. television)
- fictional.

The next two pages show how this book works.

● **How this book works**

The rest of this book (from pages 000 to 000) is carefully arranged to match what the specification requires. It does this through the following features:

Spreads to be inserted once finalised and arrows adjusted to point at correct feature

Enquiries

The book is largely taken up with four 'enquiries'. Each enquiry sets you a challenge in the form of an overarching question.

The first two pages of the enquiry set up the challenge and give you a clear sense of what you will need to do to work out your answer to the main question. You will find the instructions set out in 'The Enquiry' box, on a blue background, as in this example.

Record tasks

From that point, the enquiry is divided into four sections. These match the bullet points shown in the specification on page 3. You can tell when you are starting a new section as it will start with a large coloured heading like the one shown here. Throughout each section there are 'Record' tasks, where you will be asked to record ideas and information that will help you make up your mind about the overarching enquiry question later on. You can see an example of these 'Record' instructions here. They will always be in blue text with blue lines above and below them.

Reflect tasks

At regular intervals we will set a 'Reflect' task to prompt you to think carefully about what you are reading. They will look like the example shown here.

These Reflect tasks help you to check that what you are reading is making sense and to see how it connects with what you have already learned. You do not need to write down the ideas that you think of when you 'reflect', but the ideas you get may help you when you reach the next Record instruction.

Review tasks

Each enquiry ends by asking you to review what you have been learning and use it to answer the overarching question in some way. Sometimes you simply answer that one question. Sometimes you will need to do two or three tasks that each tackle some aspect of the main question. The important point is that you should be able to use the ideas and evidence you have been building up through the enquiry to support your answer.

Closer looks

Between the enquiries you will find pages that provide a 'Closer look' at some aspect of the theme or period you are studying. These will often give you a chance to find out more about the issue you have just been studying in the previous enquiry, although they may sometimes look ahead to the next enquiry.

We may not include any tasks within these 'closer looks' but, as you read them, keep thinking of what they add to your knowledge and understanding. We think they add some intriguing insights.

One very important final point

We have chosen enquiry questions that should help you get to the really important issues at the heart of each period you study, but you need to remember that the examiners will almost certainly ask you different questions when you take your GCSE. Don't simply rely on the notes you made to answer the enquiry question we gave you. We give you advice on how to tackle the examination and the different sorts of question you will face on pages XXX to XXX.

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England in 1580



This is a full-sized, modern replica of the *Golden Hind*, the ship in which the Elizabethan sailor, Francis Drake, famously sailed around the world. The original ship, like the replica, was just 31 metres long. It set off on its voyage from Plymouth in December 1577. When it returned on 26 September 1580, its holds were packed with Spanish treasure, stolen for the Queen.

It is hard to imagine but Drake and his crew of 80 men were completely out of touch with events in England for all that time. There was no ship radio or mobile telephone technology. As the ship drew close to English land for the first time in almost three years, Drake's mind must have been racing with questions, but one mattered more than all the others. He saw a fisherman mending his nets and leant out over the rails of the *Golden Hind*, calling out ...

Is the Queen still alive?

Drake could not take this for granted. Elizabeth had nearly died of smallpox in 1562 and plague could strike anyone at any time. (In fact it was raging in Plymouth even as he called out his question.) She was 47 years old by now and many women died by that age in the sixteenth century. But even if she were alive, maybe she had married. If so, who was her husband? A French duke? An English earl? Drake would need to win his favour or his career could be over.

The fisherman gave his reply: the Queen was alive and well – and unmarried.

▲ A reconstruction of the *Golden Hind* at sea, c.1987

Drake would have been delighted. Elizabeth meant so much to her people. Each year, on 17 November, they celebrated the anniversary of the day when she became queen in 1558. She and her chosen advisers had guided the nation so carefully since then. In these Accession Day festivities, church bells rang, bonfires blazed, fireworks exploded. And there were church services and sermons too. Everyone was reminded that this was God's chosen queen!

But Drake may have wondered ...

Which queen is alive? Is it Queen Elizabeth Tudor or Queen Mary Stuart?

If Elizabeth's heir, Mary Queen of Scots, had somehow become Queen of England, Drake's career would be over. He should simply turn his ship around and head back out to sea. As a firm Protestant, he could not serve a Roman Catholic like Mary and she would not want him to. If she were the Queen, the churches he could see in Plymouth and every church in the land would have gone back to the old Latin service of Mass. In Drake's eyes this would be a return to the superstitious beliefs of the Middle Ages. Worse still, Mary would have allowed the Pope to control the nation's religion. It was unthinkable.

All was well: it was Queen Elizabeth, not Queen Mary who ruled.

As Drake's ship approached the harbour and he saw more and more signs of life going on, another question must have formed in his mind:

How much had life in England changed during his three years away?

Drake might have looked closely at the roofs of Plymouth for signs of change. When he left in 1577 a new book had described a 'Great Rebuilding' of England. Old buildings were being knocked down and smart new ones, with modern stone chimneys, were taking their place. Only the rich could afford these of course. Poverty was becoming a serious problem when Drake left the country. Maybe Plymouth had built one of the new 'houses of correction' where the poor could be put to work rather than be left to beg or steal.

Most people on land looked busy enough: people were probably carrying on with their daily business much as always. Most would be working on the land to grow food while others were making, buying and selling goods in the towns. Maybe merchants were trading in new goods from foreign lands using routes opened up by English explorers, including many of Drake's own friends.

It was not all work of course. People would still be enjoying their usual pastimes: singing, dancing, drinking and watching bears or bulls defend themselves against dogs. And what about theatres? In the year before Drake left, two of these extraordinary new buildings had appeared in London. They were very popular with the rich and poor alike. But maybe nothing had come of this. Maybe they were just a passing fad.

And with thoughts of London, Drake must have prepared in his mind for the journey he would soon make, by horse, to visit the Queen at Whitehall or Richmond, or whichever great palace she and her splendid court were staying in. He would take packhorses loaded with just some of the treasure he had stolen from her Spanish enemies. Queen Elizabeth would be delighted. It was good to be back. 'Long live the Queen!' ...



▲ The port of Plymouth in Devon from a drawing made c.1540

Majesty

How did Elizabeth use her power?



▲ Elizabeth I in procession through the streets of London. Painted c.1601, probably by Robert Peake

Reflect

How has the artist tried to suggest Elizabeth's 'perfection, popularity and power'?

There is no doubt who is the centre of attention in this remarkable picture. It is Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth I of England. She looks remarkably upright and youthful at the age of 66. In her stunning white silk dress, woven with gold thread and covered in precious gems, she is lifted high above her loyal and loving subjects. As she makes her way through the streets of London, bathed in sunlight from the heavens above, almost every eye is turned on her. It is a scene carefully designed to show her perfection, her popularity and her power.

The Enquiry

The painting on page 8 certainly creates a strong impression of Elizabeth I's majesty and power. But image and reality are not always the same. In this enquiry you will be discovering what powers over her people Queen Elizabeth really had, how she used them and why she used them in that way.

Historians cannot agree about this. They have reached many different interpretations over the years. Some have been quite critical of Elizabeth and the way she used her power. In his book *Elizabeth I*, historian Christopher Haigh called her both 'a bully' and 'a show-off'.

As you work through the enquiry you will be asked to identify evidence that will help you decide whether or not you agree with Haigh's view.

Make notes in a table like this one:

Was Elizabeth I a bully and a show-off?	
Reasons for agreeing	Reasons for disagreeing

The enquiry is divided into these three parts:

- Elizabeth and her court
- Elizabeth and her parliament
- Elizabeth and her people.

Elizabeth and her court

Government through patronage

Today, elected politicians govern our nation. Every four or five years there is a general election when voters in each area decide who will represent them as members of parliament. The largest group in Parliament then forms a government until there is another election. This is a system of democracy, where power comes from the bottom up.

In the time of Elizabeth I, it was very different. Power came from the top down by a system known as 'patronage'. God appointed the monarch (the king or queen). The people were expected to be loyal to their God-given ruler and Elizabeth took every opportunity to remind her subjects of this fact in her speeches.

Just as God had chosen the Queen and had given her great power, so the Queen could choose whoever she wanted to help her rule the kingdom. She had far greater powers of patronage than any of her subjects. Elizabeth usually gave positions of power to wealthy nobles – and took it away if they upset her.

These nobles then gave responsibility and official jobs to the gentry. This group was mainly made up of knights, lawyers and rich merchants. The gentry took responsibility for watching over the population in their own locality and working to keep society running smoothly.

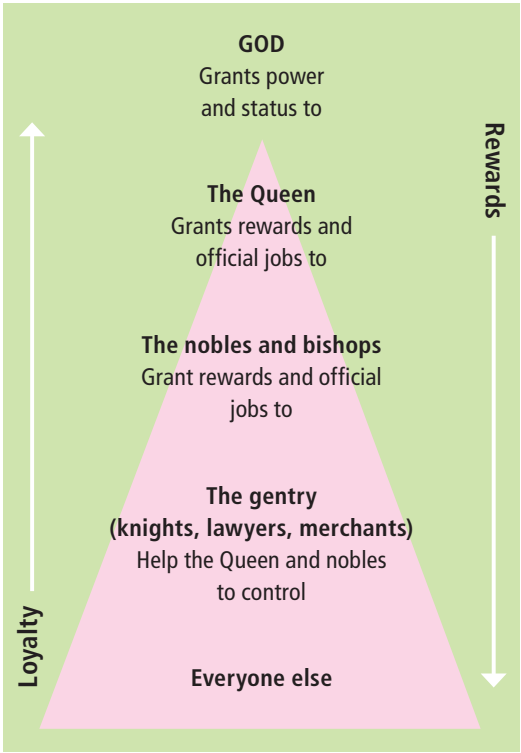
It's who you know

Patronage meant that friendship and favour mattered more than qualifications or talent. Personal relationships were at the heart of government, especially personal relationships with the Queen. This is why every noble wanted a place at Elizabeth's royal court and why Elizabeth made it very clear that she was the centre of attention.

Record

Start to make notes in your table. Use both columns if you can.

▼ The Elizabethan hierarchy and the system of patronage



The court

The court was a gathering of nobles and higher gentry favoured by the Queen.

It met wherever Elizabeth was staying, with her hundreds of servants and guards. Elizabeth's main London palace was at Whitehall but she had over 60 residences in total. The palaces she used most often were at Whitehall, Windsor, Richmond, Greenwich and

Nonsuch. She rarely stayed more than a few weeks in any one place, partly because the drains could not cope with longer visits.

The Queen decided which nobles would have the honour of joining her at court. Her most favoured courtiers were given accommodation. Others were told to find lodgings nearby. Some even built their own grand London houses near Whitehall.

Business and pleasure

When the full court met it was quite a spectacle. Elizabeth's father Henry VIII had always used the court to show his power, but Elizabeth did the same with even more glamour. If the Queen was at Whitehall there would be:

- dances, plays, and musical performances in the Great Hall
- feasts in the Banqueting House
- open-air sermons in the main courtyard
- jousting tournaments in the tilt yard
- hunting expeditions in St James's Park.

Elizabeth was highly educated and was genuinely interested in art, religion, dance and sport. She loved to be seen dancing or to be heard speaking to ambassadors in their own language or Latin. She prided herself in her ability to ride and hunt. But court events mixed business with pleasure. Elizabeth used them to impress her nobles with her wealth, power and personality, while the nobles were looking to gain from her patronage.

Reflect

Why do you think Elizabeth held so many different types of event at court?

Queen Elizabeth and courtiers on a hunt. From a popular manual on hunting, first published in 1575. The man kneeling before the Queen is the book's author. He has shown himself seeking patronage.

Catching the Queen's eye

Nobles had great influence in their lands around the country. The Queen relied on them to keep the peace and to let her know the mood among her people. But they needed the Queen even more than she needed them. Although hundreds of nobles attended court, relatively few gained positions of real power. A well-worded remark in a rare conversation with Elizabeth, or an impressive display at a dance or in a tournament could open the way to a rewarding career. If a nobleman was clearly in favour with the Queen he could more easily build a network of his own loyal supporters among the gentry to keep his lands and wealth secure. If he lost the Queen's favour these people might seek patronage from other leading families. With growing interest in women's history, historians are now beginning to explore how nobles' wives helped to build and maintain these networks.

Balancing act

Elizabeth could have restricted her use of patronage to just a few noble families, but she preferred to offer titles, jobs, grants and pensions more widely. She tried to keep the support of all of them, as it was dangerous to allow separate groups of nobles to join forces against each other. Earlier Tudor monarchs had serious problems when rival groups, or factions as they were called, plotted to increase their power. Elizabeth used favour and firmness to balance different groups at court. Although she was a Protestant, for example, she allowed some Catholic noble families to attend court so that she did not lose their loyalty entirely. Patronage had to be handled with care and self-discipline.



Record

Use pages 10 to 11 to add more notes to your table.

- A Privy Chamber (Elizabeth's own rooms)
- B Great Hall
- C Council Chamber
- D Banqueting House
- E Tilt Yard (where jousts were held)



Reflect

Find ...

- the Queen's private stairs from the River Thames
- deer in St James's Park
- the Old Palace, where the Houses of Parliament now stand.

Whitehall Palace at Westminster in 1593

The courtiers

The painting on page 8 gives an idea of what these courtiers were like and how they built their power. Elizabeth liked to be seen in public. She knew that her predecessor Mary I had been criticised for isolating herself from her people. But in fact the painting captures a very specific incident.

In 1866, an art historian discovered a letter written in 1600. It described how Elizabeth had just attended the wedding of two young courtiers at Blackfriars in London.

The art historian interpreted the painting very differently thanks to this new evidence. He showed that the two figures in white behind the Queen are actually the bride and groom, Anne Russell and Henry Somerset. Each belonged to a noble family. The man

standing in front of Elizabeth was the groom's father, the Earl of Worcester. In 1601 Elizabeth granted him an important job at court. He had this painting made to flatter the Queen, thank her for her patronage and to boast about his powerful court connections. Many of his closest court friends and relations are shown near the front of the picture.

Reflect

1. How does the painting on page 8 help us to understand patronage and the Tudor hierarchy?
2. Does the painting help us to decide whether Elizabeth was a bully and a show off?

Record

As you read this page, add more ideas to your table.

▼ Elizabeth I meets ambassadors from the Netherlands, c1570



The Privy Chamber

Elizabeth's household was at the heart of the court. Wherever she went she would spend most of the day in her Privy (private) Chamber talking, reading, playing music, playing card games or enjoying the company of her pet dogs, birds and apes.

A small group of ladies-in-waiting looked after the Queen. One was Anne Russell, the young bride from the painting on page 8. Some historians believe that another lady-in-waiting may have painted this unsigned image of Elizabeth's Privy Chamber. She was Levina Teerlinc, an artist from the Netherlands.

The women usually came from favoured noble families. They had to show complete loyalty to the Queen. Elizabeth once broke the finger of a lady-in-waiting who married without her permission. Elizabeth ordered the ladies-in-waiting to keep her informed about court conversations and opinions. Some earned money from nobles for praising their qualities to Elizabeth.

Elizabeth would sometimes conduct royal business from her Private Chamber. Only her most trusted courtiers were invited to discuss business with her in her own rooms. Some of the men shown standing behind Elizabeth belong to the small group of advisers that did more than anyone else to help the Queen govern her country: the Privy Council.

The Privy Council

This group of the Queen's most trusted courtiers met almost every day, although it was rare for them all to attend. Its main job was to offer her advice on matters including finance, trade, law enforcement and defence. Even if Elizabeth decided to reject their advice, they still faithfully put her chosen policies into action.

Privy councillors were selected directly by the Queen and could be dismissed by her at any time. Earlier Tudor monarchs had allowed individual councillors to gain too much power or had allowed the council to ignore their wishes. Elizabeth tried to avoid similar problems by:

- limiting the council to about nineteen members, with just seven or eight at most meetings
- appointing councillors with different viewpoints, leaving herself free to decide between them
- sometimes attending small meetings herself
- showing her fierce temper for no apparent reason
- dismissing councillors from court if they offended her
- discussing policies with courtiers who were not councillors
- encouraging loyalty by flattering privy councillors and rewarding them with jobs that allowed them to grow rich
- refusing to marry her beloved Robert Dudley, the Earl of Leicester, a leading member of the Privy Council.

Reflect

What is the difference between the Privy Chamber and the Privy Council?



▲ A painting of a meeting of the Privy Council in 1604, just after Elizabeth had died. This group of councillors was chosen by her successor, King James I. His Secretary of State, Robert Cecil, is at the bottom right corner.

Elizabeth's secretaries of state

The official who organised the work of the Privy Council was the Secretary of State. We can learn a lot about how Elizabeth used her power by looking at the careers of two men who served in this role. They both came from gentry families. Elizabeth believed that highly educated gentry were better at day-to-day government than nobles.



◀ Sir Francis Walsingham painted in c.1589. To help you understand his nickname of 'The Moor', compare this portrait with that of the Ottoman ambassador on page XX.

Sir Francis Walsingham (Secretary of State, 1572–90)

Background: A well-educated lawyer. Spoke several languages.

Religion: A strong Puritan. Believed English Catholics were a threat to the nation's stability and must be speedily repressed. Wanted to support Protestant rebels in Scotland and the Netherlands so that they would be allies against Catholic Spain.

Character: Cold and distant. Never tried to flatter or charm the Queen. Nicknamed 'The Moor', as he had dark hair and displayed the sort of secrecy and cunning that Tudors associated with the growing power of the Muslim Ottoman Empire.

His view of his role: Firmly believed he was a servant of the state, not the personal servant of the Queen. Sometimes used Parliament or courtiers to pressurise the Queen, such as when he persuaded her to drop her plan to marry the Duke of Anjou in 1580.

How Elizabeth responded to him: Admired his appetite for work. Valued his complete loyalty. Respected his direct, honest advice.

But ... Was enraged when he spoke too directly: once threw a slipper at his head for daring to criticise her. Was angered by his impatience in the early 1580s when she felt he was rushing her into repressing English Catholics and sending troops to aid Protestants in the Netherlands. Never warmed to him as a person but often ended up doing what he advised in the interests of her people.

Death: Had a fit, probably caused by exhaustion. The Queen still sent him work and four days later, on 7 April 1590, he died. Elizabeth showed no obvious sign of grief and turned to her former Secretary of State, William Cecil to take on the role again.

Record

Use what you learn about Walsingham and Cecil to add more notes to your table.



◀ Sir William Cecil, Lord Burghley painted c.1587. You can see his son Robert, who took over as Secretary of State in 1598, in the painting on page 12.

Sir William Cecil, Lord Burghley (Secretary of State, 1558–72 and 1590–98)

Background: A gentry family. Well-educated lawyer.

Religion: A moderate Protestant but favoured Puritans more than Elizabeth did. Also more ready to repress English Catholics than she was. Tried hard to avoid involvement in foreign religious disputes as that could lead to expensive wars.

Character: An intelligent, serious, thoughtful man but capable of charming courtiers and ambassadors as well as the Queen. Elizabeth called him her 'spirit', a nickname that suggests she and he were in tune on most matters.

His view of his role: Very similar to Walsingham, Cecil was never a mere 'yes-man' to the Queen. Used Parliament and courtiers to try to change the Queen's mind on some issues such as the need to execute Mary Queen of Scots in 1587.

How Elizabeth responded to him: Delighted by his classical education. Trusted him more than any other adviser. Shared his cautious approach to decision-making and desire to avoid expensive wars. Expected him to work extremely long hours, which he did. Continued to consult him when he was Lord Treasurer, 1573–90.

But ... Once rebuked him by telling him that she had 'lifted him from the dirt and was able to cast him down again'. Refused to see him for months in 1587 when she believed he had effectively tricked her into executing Mary Queen of Scots.

Death: Died of exhaustion in 1598, aged 77. Elizabeth wept bitterly at the news. She turned to William's son Robert to take over as her new Secretary of State.

Record

This case study shows how dangerous it could be if Elizabeth's decisions allowed factions to build at court.

Continue the notes in your table using examples from the story of Essex's rebellion.

The rebellion of the Earl of Essex

By the 1590s Elizabeth and her government faced serious difficulties: she was growing old and so was William Cecil. She had no husband and no heir. The country was weakened by war with Spain, rebellion in Ireland, high taxes and bad harvests. Elizabeth's normal careful control over faction broke down. This led to the greatest crisis of her final years: the rebellion of the Earl of Essex in February 1601.

The Queen's new favourite

Robert Devereux, the Earl of Essex, first appeared at Elizabeth's court in 1584 when he was about eighteen years old. He quickly became a favourite of the Queen for many reasons:

- He had been brought up by his step-father, Elizabeth's great favourite, Robert Dudley.
- His youthful strength and good looks added a touch of glamour to the court – and to the Queen.
- He had great skills at jousting and hunting.
- He would spend hours charming the Queen and often played cards and other games with her until the early hours of the morning.

▼ Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex, painted c.1595



Essex the soldier

In 1587, Elizabeth appointed Essex as her Master of the Horse, a court position that meant he spent a lot of time with her in the royal household organising hunts and royal visits.

Essex was an ambitious soldier. In 1589 he lost the Queen's favour for a while when he defied her wishes and joined Sir Francis Drake's attack on the Portuguese city of Lisbon. He upset her again when he married in 1590 without first gaining her permission. This broke the custom of the court, but Elizabeth soon forgave him for both offences. His skill as a soldier and his knowledge of foreign affairs won him a place on the Privy Council in 1593. This is when the real power struggles began.

Rivalry in the Privy Council

Essex realised that William Cecil would soon die and that he was preparing the way for his son Robert to take over as the Queen's most trusted adviser. But this was the position that Essex wanted. At first Essex and the Cecils managed to work together but this changed in 1596 after Essex led a successful attack on the Spanish port of Cadiz. He returned to the sort of public acclaim that military or sporting heroes might expect

today. Maybe this popularity made Elizabeth jealous. Maybe she preferred Robert Cecil's suggestion of a money-saving peace with Spain. Or maybe she was angry that Essex paid his soldiers with captured Spanish gold that she thought should come to her. Whatever the reasons, she appointed Robert Cecil as her new Secretary of State. Essex was outraged.

Insult and injury

From 1596 to 1600, Essex and Robert Cecil each tried to build their own support at court, creating just the sort of factions that Elizabeth had tried so hard to avoid. In June 1598, in a meeting where Elizabeth was clearly favouring Cecil, Essex rudely turned his back on her. She punched him on the ear and he started to draw his sword, but stopped himself just in time and stormed out of the room. For this he was banned from court and only returned in September, soon after Lord Burghley had died. Elizabeth's anger had waned and she knew that she needed Essex's skills as a soldier. She also missed him.

Failure in Ireland and crisis at court

In another effort to impress the Queen, Essex offered to lead an expedition to put down a serious rebellion in Ireland. He left with a considerable army of loyal followers in March 1599. While he was away, Cecil did all he could to strengthen his position at court. Essex, on the other hand, weakened his own position by failing to crush the rebellion and by daring to award knighthoods to some of his followers in the name of the Queen. Elizabeth sent him a fierce rebuke. Essex then abandoned his army in Ireland and sailed back to London.

On 28 September 1600, when his ship arrived he rushed directly to the court and forced his way into Elizabeth's bedchamber. At first she appeared to accept this astonishing behaviour. (In a 1939 Hollywood movie version of events, the Queen even agreed to marry Essex at this point before changing her mind. This added to the excitement in the film, but is pure fiction.) In fact, she banned him from court within just a few hours and took away all his government jobs. She also took away his main source of income by saying that he no longer had the monopoly (sole right) over the import and sale of sweet wines in England. This left him bankrupt but she did not care.

Reflect

Why do think Elizabeth at first seemed to forgive Essex for storming into her bedchamber?

The rebellion of 1601

For several years, Essex had been communicating with James VI of Scotland, who was next in line to the English throne. It seems that Essex was trying to win James's favour so that he would become the new king's leading minister after Elizabeth's death. Now

that he was bankrupt, Essex felt that he could not afford to wait for this. It seems that he either wanted to make the Queen restore his own wealth and power at court or force her to give up her throne to James.

In **January 1601**, Essex started to gather large groups of supporters at his London home. It was a dangerous mix that included:

- powerful courtiers such as the Earl of Southampton who, like Essex, were heavily in debt and out of favour at court
- leading Catholics and Puritans who hoped that Essex would allow greater tolerance of their religious views if he had more power
- many unemployed soldiers who were keen to serve the most successful military leader of the day.

In **February 1601**, Essex arranged for a production of Shakespeare's play *Richard II* at the Globe Theatre in London. This included a scene where the king was forced to give up his throne. This seemed to be intended as a threat to Elizabeth. She ordered Essex to appear before the Privy Council. When he refused, she sent four privy councillors to arrest him, but he simply locked them up at his house and took to the streets of London. He rode through the city to Whitehall with his 300 supporters and clearly expected the mass of the people to join him. They did not.

The Privy Council cleverly promised to pardon any Essex supporters who would immediately desert his cause. The rebellion collapsed. Essex managed to make his way back to his house. He quickly tried to burn his private letters, including copies of those sent to James VI, but was arrested and imprisoned.

Execution

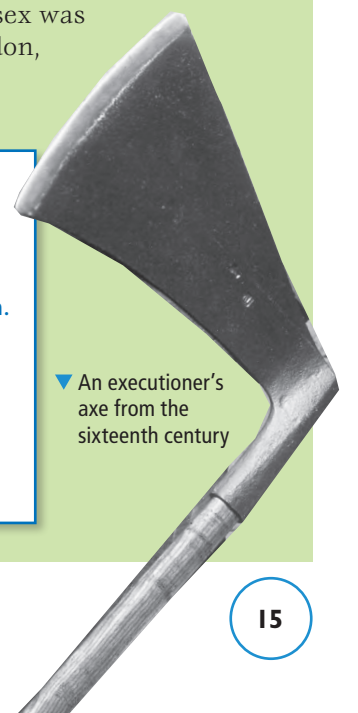
The Queen now made an example of him for all to see: on **25 February 1601**, Essex was beheaded at the Tower of London, guilty of treason against his queen and country.

Reflect

Films, novels, television dramas and even operas have been made about Essex and Elizabeth.

1. Why do think it has been such a popular theme?
2. Does it matter if these interpretations are not strictly accurate?

▼ An executioner's axe from the sixteenth century



Record

Use pages 16 to 18 to consider whether Elizabeth bullied or showed off to Parliament. Add your ideas to your table.

Elizabeth and her parliament

Theory

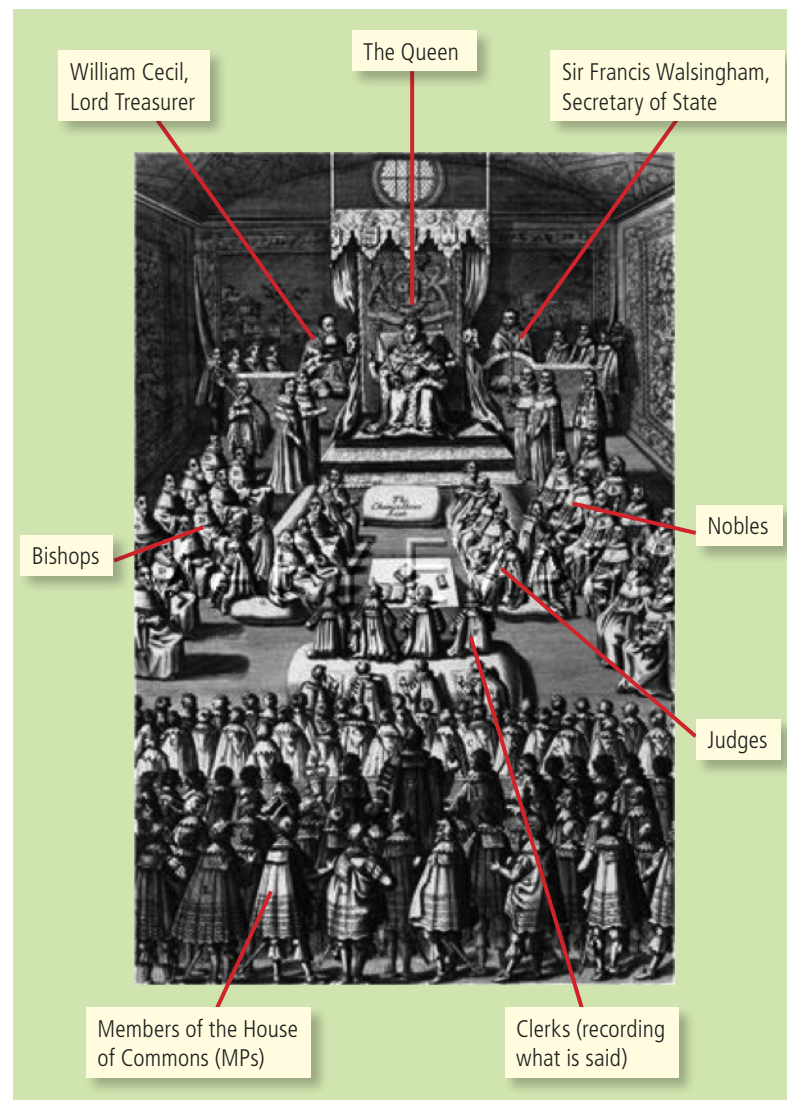
Parliament had far less power in Tudor times than it does today. The Privy Council met almost every day, but Parliament only met when the monarch called its members together. Elizabeth used Parliament less than earlier Tudors. In her reign of almost 45 years, Parliament only spent 35 months in debate and discussion.

When Parliament did meet it was composed of three elements:

1. The monarch, who only appeared at meetings on rare and special occasions.
2. The House of Lords, made up of the nobles and bishops.
3. The House of Commons, made up of members of the gentry who had been selected to attend by other wealthy citizens.

For most business, the Queen ruled by proclamations—royal orders that had the force of law. But if she wanted to make major changes to the laws of the land, introduce new punishments or to raise new taxes, Parliament had to meet to give her people's approval.

▼ An early seventeenth century engraving of Elizabeth and her Parliament



Practice

When Parliament was sitting, Elizabeth set strict limits on what it could discuss. She insisted that it must not attempt to bring forward its own views on anything to do with religion, her marriage, the succession (who would take the throne when she died) and foreign policy. She said that these were matters for her alone to decide, just like any other monarch.

Elizabeth had various ways of trying to keep some control over what happened in Parliament:

- MPs were not really elected; they were selected. Local lords were expected to ensure that suitable people were chosen.
- Several privy councillors served as MPs in the House of Commons. Others sat in the House of Lords.
- The Privy Council organised daily business in Parliament.

If MPs did not do as she wished, the Queen could always reject a law by refusing to sign it or simply closing the Parliament. But her usual solution was to offer a compromise so that they won some of what they wanted but she still gained the taxes and laws that she needed.

Reflect

Which of these methods do you think would be most likely to help Elizabeth control Parliament?

Puritan opposition

Despite her attempts to control Parliament, Elizabeth found it increasingly difficult to stop MPs from discussing sensitive matters. Although patronage generally brought dependable gentry to Parliament, lords who were out of favour could select MPs who would speak against the Queen's policies. Even those privy councillors such as William Cecil and

Criticism in speech

Many of Elizabeth's noisiest and most troublesome critics in Parliament were Puritans. These were convinced Protestants who were delighted that England had broken away from the Roman Catholic Church, but who wanted more.

- They wanted Elizabeth to marry a Protestant prince and to make arrangements for her successor to be a Protestant as well.
- They wanted Elizabeth to change the way the Church was organised, doing away with bishops and allowing local church groups to choose their own leaders. This 'bottom-up' way of organising the Church was called Presbyterianism.
- They insisted that MPs had complete freedom of speech and that they must be allowed to say whatever they liked in Parliament without any fear of arrest or punishment.

Criticism in writing

Even when Parliament was not sitting, Puritans found other ways of voicing their concerns. In November 1579, a Puritan, John Stubbes, wrote a pamphlet criticising Elizabeth for considering a marriage with a French Catholic, the Duke of Anjou. The pamphlets were destroyed and Stubbes was arrested. At first Elizabeth wanted him hanged, but she then ordered a different punishment for Stubbes and for his colleague, William Page. An Elizabethan historian, William Camden, was an eye-witness:

Upon a stage set up in the market place at Westminster, Stubbes and Page had their right hands cut off by the blow of a butcher's knife, with a mallet struck through their wrists. I can remember that Stubbes, as soon as his right hand was off, put off his hat with the left, and cried aloud, 'God save the Queen!'

After this brutal punishment, Stubbes was imprisoned. On his release in 1581, he carried on writing (presumably left-handed) and in 1589 he became an MP, continuing his criticism of the Queen in the House of Commons. But at no point did his criticism become treasonous. Unlike some Catholics, Puritans never openly expressed a desire to replace Elizabeth with another monarch.

Walsingham used their influence over MPs to stir up debates that would make the Queen take their views on foreign policy or the succession more seriously. Although the great majority of MPs could be relied on to vote as the Queen wished, it was the ones who had grievances who tended to speak more often in debates.

▼ An illustration of Stubbes' punishment from a *History of Britain*, 1923



Reflect

Study the image above. How closely has the artist kept to the eye-witness account given by Camden? Does it matter if the artist's version is different?

The business of Parliament

The years between 1580 and 1603 were dominated by concerns over religion and war with Spain. This meant that Elizabeth needed to call Parliament more often. In the early seventeenth century, the very first historians of Elizabeth's reign praised the way she worked with Parliament. This was mainly because they thought that the kings of their own day, James I and Charles I, should learn from her example. In fact, as the chart below shows, Elizabeth faced quite a lot of opposition in Parliament. This should not hide the fact that most day-to-day business in Parliament passed without any difficulty.

Opposition over religion

The Puritan MPs were a particular nuisance. In 1584 and again in 1586, they MPs demanded that the Church of England do away with bishops. (See page XX). At first the other MPs ignored these demands but when they later decided to discuss the matter, Elizabeth banned the debate. Three MPs discussed the ideas outside Parliament and she had them imprisoned for a month. Two Suffolk Puritans had been hanged in 1583 for spreading similar views without the protection of being an MP.

In 1593, the Puritan MP Peter Wentworth urged Elizabeth to reassure her people and name a Protestant as her successor. Elizabeth was furious at his intrusion and imprisoned him in the Tower of London. He died there four years later.

Opposition over money

Many MPs were angry at how Elizabeth granted 'monopolies' to keep her courtiers happy. These monopolies allowed the courtier to be the only person to sell or make a product. Without any competition, the price usually went up.

In 1601, Elizabeth accepted that she had to cancel some monopolies. She made a famous 'Golden Speech' to Parliament that flattered MPs and boasted about how much she loved her people. This speech was printed by the Privy Council and issued for anyone to read. Its message was clear even though its language was dull. Most historians quote from a livelier account written soon afterwards by an MP who heard the speech.

An extract from an MP's account of Elizabeth's 'Golden Speech' to Parliament, 1601

I do assure you there is no prince that loves his subjects better ... No Queen will ever sit in my seat with more zeal to my country, or care for my subjects or who will sooner with willingness venture her life for your good and safety than myself. For it is my desire neither to live nor reign longer than my life and reign shall be for your good. And though you have had, and may have, many princes more mighty and wise sitting in this seat, yet you never had nor shall have, any that will be more careful and loving.

Reflect

- 1. Why do you think the speech has won the nickname 'Golden'?
- 2. Why do you think historians rarely quote from the official version of Elizabeth's 'Golden Speech'?
- 3. How does the nineteenth-century engraving make Elizabeth seem firmly in charge of her Parliament?

Record

Finish adding notes on whether Elizabeth was a bully or a show off in her treatment of Parliament.



▲ A nineteenth century engraving of Elizabeth addressing her Parliament

Elizabeth and her people

Local government

Elizabeth was at the centre of government but she needed others to control the different areas of her kingdom where her three million subjects lived. The two most important roles are described here.

Lords Lieutenant

These were the officers who had overall responsibility for each county. The Earl of Worcester, shown with the Queen in the painting on page XX, was the Lord Lieutenant for Glamorgan and Monmouthshire. Elizabeth usually chose the most powerful nobleman in each area for this role. It was a great honour. He, or his deputy if he spent a lot of time at court, was expected to inform the Privy Council of any local problems. He also had to ensure that his county could provide well-trained, part-time soldiers to serve the Queen in an emergency. Within the counties, town affairs were run by councils elected by wealthy citizens.

Justices of the Peace

The men who did most to keep Elizabethan society running smoothly were the Justices of the Peace (JPs). There were about 40 in each county and it was up to them to keep Elizabethan society running smoothly. They usually came from educated gentry families. The Queen appointed them on the advice of a trusted courtier who knew them in person. Becoming a JP gave a man considerable influence in his locality, but the work was unpaid so he needed to have income from land or other business.

William Lambard was a JP in Kent and wrote a 600 page book that described the many duties of a JP. They enforced the Poor Laws, collected taxes, set wage levels and arranged road repairs. They constantly received new orders from the Privy Council. Every three months at the quarter sessions, they judged crimes such as assault, burglary, alehouse brawls and slander against the Queen. Twice a year judges from London visited each county to hear more serious cases.

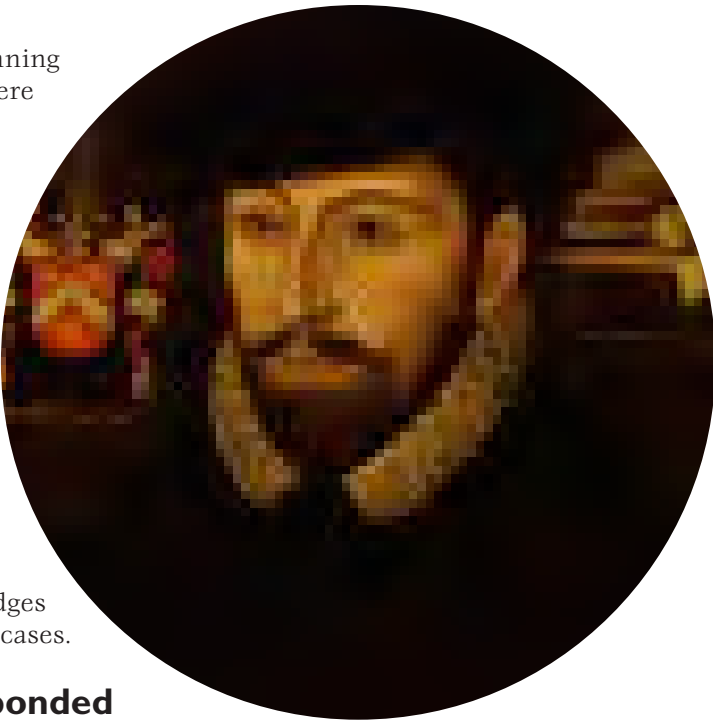
Unjust justices and how Elizabeth responded

Some early histories of Elizabeth's reign relied too heavily on Lambard's book as a source and created the impression that all JPs were loyal and hardworking. Many were, but recent research into local documents shows that other JPs were lazy or favoured powerful families. For example, they turned a blind eye to Catholics who failed to attend church or deliberately under-estimated how much tax wealthy neighbours should pay. Elizabeth could remove a JP from office whenever she wished and she did so on many occasions. But she compromised if she thought the dismissal would make her dangerously unpopular in that JP's area.

There was no police force to help the JPs keep law and order and catching criminals was not easy. This is why national and local government largely relied on public punishments, such as the pillory, to deter people from wrongdoing. Minor crimes might be punished by a time in the public pillory. For more serious offences, Elizabeth encouraged the use of fines as this also added to her royal finances.

Record

Under the sub-heading 'Local government', add to your notes using ideas from this page.



▲ William Lambard JP, painted c. 1600

Record

- 1. For each of the boxes on pages 20 to 22, make a summary card. On one side, do a simple drawing that sums up what the box is about. On the other side, say whether you think this shows Elizabeth using propaganda or censorship. Add examples to support your ideas.
- 2. When you have finished, add more notes to your table to help you decide whether Elizabeth was a bully and a show off.



▲ Elizabeth's kingdom

Reflect

How does the map above show that Elizabeth needed more than royal progresses to show her wealth and power to her people?

Powers of persuasion

Elizabeth wanted her people to see her as a strong ruler who could keep the kingdom safe and wealthy. This involved two approaches:

- 1. Actively promoting a positive image of herself (propaganda).
- 2. Controlling the spread of other, conflicting views (censorship).

Even after considering all the evidence carefully, historians may disagree about which of these approaches Elizabeth used most. In this sense, interpretations of history are matters of opinion. The panels on pages XX to XX summarise how Elizabeth tried to persuade people that she was a fine queen.

Progresses and pageants

Each summer, when roads were in better condition and when outbreaks of plague might hit London, Elizabeth went with most of her advisers, officials and servants on a royal tour. They all stayed in the country houses of noblemen. These tours were known as progresses. As she travelled she made a point of being seen by as many of her people as possible. She tried to leave a lasting impression of majesty and affection. She sometimes stopped to speak with the people she passed.

Elizabeth expected her hosts to provide comfortable accommodation and impressive entertainment for her court. It was an expensive business. The engraving below shows a pageant held in her honour during her four-day stay with the Earl of Hertford in June 1591. The earl created an enormous artificial lake, castles and a warship. On the left of the picture, mermaids are playing music for the Queen on her throne. Hertford was flattering the Queen while showing his own education, wealth and power. Elizabeth saw advance plans for the plays and pageants and cut anything that might seem to criticise her.



▲ Print showing entertainment on a royal progress, c.1591

Very few subjects ever attended these great entertainments so the Privy Council deliberately developed Accession Day pageants. On 17 November each year, towns and villages tried to outdo each other with bell-ringing and great bonfires, remembering the day when Elizabeth first took the throne.

Publications and plays

There were never more than 60 printing presses in England in Elizabeth's reign. It was relatively easy for the Privy Council to censor publications they disapproved of, punishing the writers and printers severely. (See John Stubbes on page XX). They published their own books defending policies such as the execution of Catholic priests. Elizabeth's final speech to Parliament in 1601 (see page XX) was published by her own printer, Robert Barker, and was circulated within two days. The Privy Council was keen to spread the speech's message: she loved her people.

The Privy Council also encouraged others to spread favourable views of the Queen to all who could read. Elizabeth helped Edmund Spenser's epic poem *The Faerie Queene* to become popular as it praised a queen very like her.

Nobles knew that Elizabeth enjoyed plays and often brought acting groups to court. Their plays often showed how kings and queens gave society order and prosperity. If the Queen liked a play, it would soon appear in print. Educated people around the country bought copies and arranged performances in their own homes. The government encouraged this.

The Queen and her government allowed favourable plays to spread. The Spanish Ambassador was upset at the way his king, Philip II, and the Pope were mocked in English plays. The government allowed this but they briefly shut down London's theatres in 1597 when a play seemed to criticise the Queen. The theatres soon re-opened and the playwrights only spent a short time in prison.

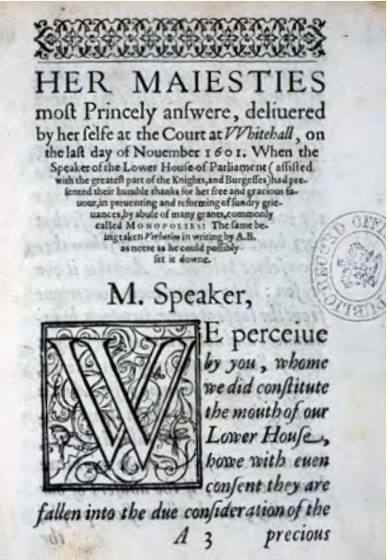
Portraits and pennies

Very few of Elizabeth's people ever had the opportunity to see a painting of her. By 1580 even the official parish bibles no longer included the image of the Queen that had previously appeared on the inside cover. So most Elizabethans probably gained an impression of what their queen looked like from the humble penny: it was hardly a flattering picture.

About 135 paintings of Elizabeth survive from her time but there must have been many more. The Queen and her Privy Council did relatively little to spread her image, but they certainly tried to control the number and quality of the portraits that could be seen:

- In 1584 they considered controlling her image by giving just two artists, Nicholas Hilliard and George Gower, the sole right to make miniature and larger portraits of the Queen. The idea was dropped.
- In 1596 they ordered that portraits of the Queen that caused her "great offence" should be burned. These included any where she looked old and likely to die without an obvious heir to her throne.
- Also in 1596, a new pattern of Elizabeth's face was created to replace one issued in 1575. The new pattern made Elizabeth look far younger than she was. This was to hide the fact that she was 63 years old with blackened teeth and false hair.

The portrait on the right was found in a Sussex cottage where an Elizabethan farmer lived. In 1889, some Victorian workers were repairing the cottage. They removed a blackened panel from above the fireplace. When cleaned, it turned out to be this oil painting of Elizabeth. If a Tudor farmer owned it in the 1580s, then the Queen's image did reach quite a long way down society, but some historians cannot believe the painting was in the farmhouse at that date.



▲ A printed copy of the official version of Elizabeth's 'Golden Speech' to Parliament, 1601.



▲ An Elizabethan penny

▼ A portrait of Elizabeth I, c.1585



Most high-quality images of Elizabeth were made by and for the wealthy in society. Elizabeth expected all courtiers to wear miniature portraits of her, at least while they were at court. She had some miniatures made for her favourites but she never commissioned her own full-size portraits. That was an expensive business that she left to the courtiers themselves.

Portraits commissioned by courtiers tried to flatter the Queen. They often included emblems and symbols as a sort of code that educated Elizabethans would understand but that modern historians still interpret in very different ways. Some say they stress her purity like the Virgin Mary. Others say they try to show her strength as a Protestant queen sent by God. The symbols include:

Symbols	What they stood for
Tudor roses; crown; orb; sceptre; sword	Elizabeth's rightful place as queen
White clothing; pearls; thornless roses	Purity and strength
Ermine (an animal that Tudors believed would die rather than dirty its pure white fur) Pelican (a bird that Tudors believed would peck at its own flesh to feed its young)	Self-sacrifice and commitment to her people
Globe; fans with exotic feathers	English power overseas
Sunshine; rainbows	Peace and stability
Goddesses and women from Bible stories	God-given strength to rule

This portrait was made for the Queen by Sir Henry Lee. He had served her at court for many years and had introduced the great jousting competition that was held at Westminster each Accession Day. This was the most splendid of all the Queen's court celebrations. When he retired in XXXX he went back to Oxfordshire to live with his mistress. The Queen was angry with him and made her displeasure public. Lee won his way back to favour by hosting a royal progress at his home at Ditchley in Oxfordshire where he showed off this portrait that he had commissioned. It shows Elizabeth standing tall over the kingdom, with her feet in Oxfordshire. The main message is about the Queen's forgiving nature and how she turns storms to glorious sunshine.



▲ The Ditchley portrait of Elizabeth I, painted c. 1592

Prayers and preaching

The law required everyone to attend church each Sunday and to use the same prayer book. At every service the worshippers would say this “Prayer for the Queen's Majesty” (below). It reinforced in people's minds their duty of loyalty and gratitude to Elizabeth, God's chosen ruler.

A service of thanksgiving was held in every church each year on Accession Day. The Queen's carefully chosen church leaders wrote special sermons, prayers and songs for priests to use at these services. They thanked God for providing a strong Protestant queen and for protecting her from Catholic threats. All preachers had to have a government licence.

O Lord, our heavenly father, high and mighty king of kings, lord of lords, the only ruler of princes ... most heartily we beseech thee to behold our most gracious sovereign Lady Queen Elizabeth ... Fill her plentifully with heavenly gifts; grant her in health and wealth long to live; strengthen her that she may vanquish and overcome all her enemies. And finally, after this life may she attain everlasting joy and felicity through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



▲ An Elizabethan sermon, from the opening page of a Bible published c.1560

Reflect

Based on pages 20 to 23, which do you think Elizabeth used more: propaganda or censorship?

Record

Finish adding notes on whether Elizabeth was bully or a show off in her use of local government and her ‘powers of persuasion’.

Review

By now you should have lots of examples that you can use to help you decide whether you agree with Christopher Haigh that Elizabeth I was a ‘bully’ and a ‘show-off’.

First read the views of another historian Susan Doran below. Then do the tasks that follow.

At times Dr Haigh seems to be taken in by Elizabeth's love of theatricality. Always on public display, she deliberately played a part for public consumption and it is disputable whether or not her behaviours on any single occasion was spontaneous or contrived. Was she as evil-tempered, for example, as Dr Haigh declared, or were at least some of her public rages an instrument of public management?

- a) How does Susan Doran disagree with Christopher Haigh?
- b) What words does Susan Doran use to suggest that she does not disagree completely with Haigh?
- c) Now write your own summary of what you have decided. Be sure to look at both sides of the question by giving reasons for agreeing that Elizabeth was a bully and a show-off as well as reasons for disagreeing with that view. At the end, be sure to give your own conclusion and your main reasons for reaching this judgement.
- d) Compare your summary with those of fellow students. How similar are your views?

Elizabeth in film and on television

Artistic licence

Historians are not the only ones who interpret the past. Playwrights, novelists and film or television directors have often set their stories in the past, blending historical fact with their own inventions or insights. They call this their 'artistic licence', their freedom to interpret the past and to achieve their aims without keeping to the strict methods used by historians.

These 'popular' television and film dramas or comedies can reach enormous audiences. They can spark an interest in the past and they can be enormously moving and entertaining. But they can also mislead. Someone once said that most people do not learn history, we just catch it in the same way that we might catch a cold: without any effort on our part we are exposed to a view of the past and it takes hold of our minds. We are not always aware of what is fact and what is fiction, or of what has been left out or what has been exaggerated, or why the director has done this. We may also be unaware of how events, ideas and values of the time when the programme or film was made have affected its message. Without realising it, we may get a distorted view of the past.

Elizabeth on screen

Elizabeth Tudor was such an unusual woman, living through so many dramatic events that her life story has often been retold on screen. Here are summaries of three well-known examples.

Elizabeth R

In 1971, the BBC made six dramas that took viewers through the events of Elizabeth's life from her teenage years to her death. The same actress, Glenda Jackson, played Elizabeth from her youth to old age. The series received enormous praise for the way it tried to take historical scholarship seriously. Characters often spoke words taken more or less unchanged from documents made at the time. Its central theme was the way Elizabeth had to use her wits and her sense of duty as queen to operate in a man's world and to steer herself and her country through dangerous times. It was made at a time when the women's liberation movement was establishing itself and some say Elizabeth seems too much in control of the men around her. One historian, Susan Doran, wrote that the true Elizabeth 'was not the Glenda Jackson of *Elizabeth R* whose snarl could tame a cast of courtiers'.

▲ Glenda Jackson as Elizabeth in her old age in *Elizabeth R*, 1971

Blackadder II and 'Queenie'

In 1986, Queen Elizabeth appeared as a central character in the comedy series *Blackadder*. Historians made no fuss about its obvious inaccuracies. It was clearly not to be taken seriously as it was made purely to entertain and amuse.

The actor Miranda Richardson portrays Elizabeth as 'Queenie', a spoiled little girl, who must always get her own way. She has a terrible temper and has a crush on a new man in most episodes. In an interview on how she developed the character of 'Queenie', Richardson said:

I think I knew that this was someone with a lot of power but far too young to deal with it. I thought of her as someone who everyone was saying 'Yes' to ... always knowing they could have their head snipped off on a whim.

Clearly this was very different from the carefully researched *Elizabeth R*, but it is interesting to see how Miranda Richardson drew on the history she had 'caught' to develop the character of the Queen.



▲ *Blackadder II* DVD, 1986

Elizabeth

This film was made in 1998 by director Shekhar Kapur. He shows a young Elizabeth becoming caught up in the world of politics. She sees that she must choose between her personal desires and her duties as queen. The final scenes show her making a conscious decision to become a 'Virgin Queen' to her people, like the Virgin Mary is to Catholics. The picture below shows her appearing for the first time before her court in her pure white dress, with her powdered white face. She wears a wig because she has cut off her long hair, like a nun taking a vow of obedience to God. She walks the room from a bright heavenly light. She has taken on the role of a goddess, a divine ruler.

Kapur said his film was an exploration of power. He had researched paintings of Elizabeth and the works of historians who for many years had written about the 'cult of the Virgin Queen'. Unfortunately, most historians now reject the idea that Elizabeth herself deliberately created this image. Even if she did, the image developed over many years and was only obvious much later in her reign than the film suggests. Kapur would not be bothered by this. He said that the film tried to explore emotions rather than the details of history.

The film has been highly praised for its storytelling, acting, costumes and fine photography. But Kapur has drastically altered historical timings and events, even showing Francis Walsingham as a murderer. He would claim that none of this matters. What do you think?

▼ Cate Blanchett as *Elizabeth*, 1998



‘Dangerous people’

Why were there so few Catholics in Elizabeth’s kingdom by 1603?



▲ ‘The Forty Martyrs of England and Wales’ by Daphne Pollen, 1968

This picture shows a scene that is entirely imaginary but it is based on grim truth. Against the background of the English countryside stands a hangman’s scaffold. At the very centre of the image, on a household cupboard covered by a white linen cloth, stands a crucifix, with the figure of Christ dying on the cross.

Although the artist has brought 40 real people together in this painting, they never all gathered like this. Some of them had died before others were even born. The diverse mix includes men and women, English and Welsh, educated and uneducated, wealthy and humble. But they do have one thing in common: they were all Catholic martyrs. They were brutally executed for refusing to give up their Roman Catholic faith and for their loyalty to the head of their Church, the Pope.

This explains many of the strange features that appear in the painting:

- the Tower of London which is where many of these martyrs were held and tortured
- the scaffold which shows the ropes by which they were lifted and hanged
- the bonfire which is where their internal organs were burned in front of the large crowds who watched them die.

Despite these references to cruelty, pain and death, the artist has shown the group gathered rather like ghosts around the simple altar, looking calm and untroubled.

The painting was specially made for an event in 1970, almost 300 years after the last of the people in the picture was executed. At a special ceremony in Rome, Pope Paul VI declared the 40 people shown in the image to be official saints of the Roman Catholic Church. The group had been carefully selected to represent a far larger number of Catholics who were put to death in England and Wales between 1535 and 1679. Seven different monarchs ruled the country over that period but nineteen of the 40 martyrs in the picture were executed in the reign of just one ruler: Queen Elizabeth I.

In total, Elizabeth ordered the execution of at least 200 Roman Catholics during her reign. But these deaths do not explain why there were so few Catholics in her kingdom by 1603. Just before Elizabeth became queen in 1558, the vast majority of the nation’s 3 million people were Roman Catholic. By 1603, when Elizabeth died, there were only about 40,000. In this enquiry you will learn how and why Elizabeth felt threatened by the Roman Catholic faith of so many of her people and how she set about its destruction, creating one of the deepest and long-lasting shifts in British history, the move from Catholicism to Protestantism.

Reflect

People have described the painting as:

- strange
- ghostly
- dream-like
- quietly sinister.

Which of these descriptions do you think best fits the painting and why?

The Enquiry

An Act of Parliament passed in 1593 described Roman Catholics in England and Wales as ‘dangerous people’. Most of them would have been puzzled and alarmed to be described in this way. They were simply trying to get on with their lives as their parents and grandparents had done for centuries. But the world was changing around them and forces they could not control turned their religious faith into a political threat to the authority, and even the life, of their Queen. They had to change their ways or suffer the consequences.

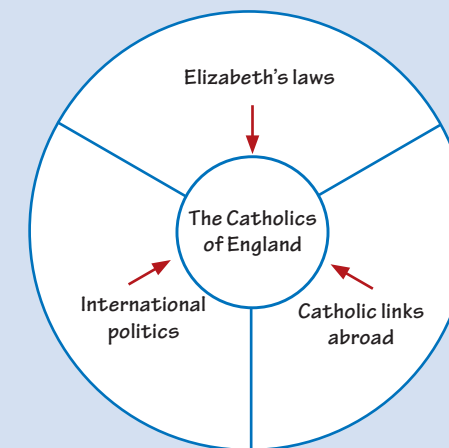
Your challenge at the end of this enquiry is to produce a mind map that summarises the years between 1580 and 1603, showing the links between:

- Elizabeth’s laws on religion and how they were enforced
- the work of English Catholics who spent time in exile overseas
- the world of international politics, especially the part played by Mary Queen of Scots and the kings of Spain.

As you learn about each of these, you should make notes using a timeline explanation chart like the one shown below. Start a new chart for each section.

Section 1 – Elizabeth’s laws and English Catholics

Date	Event/development	How this affected English Catholics



When your three timeline explanation charts are finished, you will review what they show and select from them the best evidence to explain why there were so few Catholics in England by 1603.

Then you will create your mind map, based on a large version of this diagram. Your finished mind map will show the links between the three sections and how they combined to increase the supposed Catholic threat to the Queen and, as a result, to reduce so drastically the number of Catholics in England.

Record

Start making the first of your timeline explanation charts (see page 26). As you read pages 28 to 30, look for key events and developments. For each one, note the date, describe briefly what happened and explain how you think it affected English Catholics.

Faith and enforcement: Elizabeth's laws and English Catholics, 1580–1603

Elizabeth's religious settlement

This curious image shows Sir Thomas Tresham, a Catholic gentleman. In 1580, Thomas was 37 years old. He was a wealthy landowner and keen farmer in Northamptonshire. He came from a strong Catholic gentry family. Although they were all Catholics, Thomas and his family attended the parish church each Sunday and worshipped according the Protestant Book of Common Prayer. They were still Roman Catholics at heart but were prepared to go along quietly with the laws that had governed religion since the start of Elizabeth's reign in 1558. The two main laws were:

- 1. **The Act of Uniformity (1559)** – This said that all worship should be the same (uniform). Each week, everyone had to attend a church service that followed the Book of Common Prayer in English. Those who did not attend had to pay a fine.
- 2. **The Act of Supremacy (1559)** – This said that Elizabeth was the supreme governor of the Church in England. She was the head of the Church just as she was head of the state. Any Roman Catholic who insisted that the Pope was the head of God's Church on Earth was, in effect, a traitor for daring to challenge the Queen's supremacy over all her nation's affairs.

Unlike Thomas Tresham, many English Catholics had completely dropped their old faith by the 1570s. There were several reasons for this:

- Most priests accepted Elizabeth's changes.
- Weekly Protestant sermons gradually altered people's beliefs.
- Few Elizabethans could afford the fines for non-attendance at church.
- All marriages and baptisms had to follow the Protestant prayer book.

Millions of English Catholics, however, were still like Tresham. On the outside, they showed loyalty by attending Protestant church services. On the inside, they were still Catholics and loyal to the Pope, but they did nothing to challenge the Queen. Elizabeth was happy with this. She allowed Catholics to attend court and, in strong Catholic areas, she did not even insist that Justices of the Peace should strictly enforce church attendance. She believed that, given time, the English Catholic community would quietly die away.

Reflect

- 1. On the left of the image, a hand offers Tresham a globe symbolising the world and its pleasures. What do the objects below the globe tell us about Tresham's 'wordly' interests?
- 2. Which do you think mattered more to Elizabeth, the Act of Uniformity or the Act of Supremacy?



▲ Portrait of Thomas Tresham, 1585

Catholic resistance builds from 1580

Around 1580 the situation was changing. Elizabeth and her government could no longer sit quietly and wait for Catholicism to wither away. Thomas Tresham's story gives a sense of what was happening. For years he had attended church regularly as the law required. During the Protestant services, confident Catholics made little attempt to hide their real feelings: some read old Latin prayer books to themselves, others used their rosary beads during the prayers and a few even refused to take Holy Communion. But Tresham had never displayed even this sort of quiet resistance. He had always made a good outward show of worshipping as the Queen wished. His loyalty brought rewards: even though his private Catholic faith was well known, Elizabeth had made him Sheriff of Northamptonshire in 1573.

Then, sometime in 1580, Tresham had a meeting that changed his life. You will learn more about this shortly, but it strengthened his Catholic faith and he became one of the Catholics who refused to attend church. These were known as 'recusants' from the Latin word for refuse. Recusants needed to be fairly wealthy as they had to pay a fine of 12d for each service they missed. This was about three or four days' wages for a labourer. Despite the fine, the numbers of recusants began to rise around 1580 as more Catholics stood up to be counted. They were no longer quietly in decline. By disobeying her rules about worship, they were posing a real threat to the Queen's authority.

Even after becoming a recusant, Tresham still proclaimed his complete loyalty to the Queen. But other Catholics went further and plotted to overthrow Elizabeth and to return her kingdom to Catholic ways. These plotters were usually recusants, but some were church papists. The four main responses of Catholics to Elizabeth's religious laws by 1580 are shown below:

<p>Conformers</p> <p>Number: A large proportion of English Catholics, especially in the south and east</p> <p>Actions: Chose to drop their Catholic faith and to conform, that is to become Protestants</p> <p>Reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● It made life easier.● They avoided the social and financial costs of hanging on to Catholicism.● Persuasive sermons from Protestant preachers, with no Catholic priests to argue back, made people believe that the old Catholic ways were superstitious and corrupt.	<p>Church papists</p> <p>Number: Most English Catholics, especially in the north and west</p> <p>Actions: Attended Protestant church services, but kept Catholic beliefs with some loyalty to the Pope</p> <p>Reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● They valued the centuries-old catholic teachings.● It avoided social and financial costs of being a recusant.● They hoped that the country would return to Catholicism when Elizabeth died as her successor would be the Catholic, Mary Queen of Scots.
<p>Plotters</p> <p>Number: Very, very few English Catholics, probably never more than X hundred</p> <p>Actions: Usually refused to attend Protestant church services</p> <p>Fiercely loyal to Catholic beliefs and to the Pope</p> <p>Reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● They valued the centuries-old catholic teachings.● They believed Elizabeth was not the rightful queen ever since her excommunication in 1570.● Were not prepared simply to wait for Elizabeth to die. They felt a duty to God and to the Pope to replace her with the Catholic, Mary Queen of Scots.	<p>Recusants</p> <p>Number: Several thousand English Catholics, especially in the north and west; usually wealthy</p> <p>Actions: Refused to attend Protestant church services Kept Catholic beliefs with some loyalty to the Pope Arranged their own services of Mass</p> <p>Reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● They valued the centuries-old catholic teachings.● Could afford to pay recusancy fines and had high social status especially with other Catholics.● They hoped that the country would return to Catholicism when Elizabeth died as her successor would be the Catholic, Mary Queen of Scots.

Reflect

The right-hand side of the image of Thomas Tresham shows signs of his deepening Catholic faith.

Can you find:

- signs of Christ's crucifixion
- rosary beads
- a chalice (cup) used in the service of Mass
- a sign that Tresham was ready to die for his faith?

Reflect

Why might the presence of just a few plotters make life harder for all English Catholics?

Reflect

How would each of these measures have encouraged Catholics to give up their faith?

Tighter controls, 1581–85

Elizabeth's government had to find some way of ending the revival of Catholic recusancy. In 1581, Parliament passed the **Act of Persuasions**. This:

- raised the fine for recusancy by 10,000 per cent to £20 per month, roughly the income of most landowning gentry families
- added an extra fine of £200 each year for persistent recusants
- imposed a fine of £66 on anyone who attended a service of Mass
- allowed the imprisonment of recusants who failed to pay their fines within three months
- said that anyone who persuaded a Protestant to become a Catholic was guilty of treason against the Queen's supremacy and should be put to death.

Only the wealthiest Catholics could pay these new fines. Thomas Tresham was one of these and so he still refused to attend church. This cost him both money and reputation. William Cecil ended his patronage of Tresham and added his name to a list of Catholics who were suspected of disloyalty to the Queen.

Arrests and imprisonment

In 1581, Tresham was arrested along with other influential Catholics. He was sent to prison in London. He was charged with allowing Catholic priests to stay secretly in his home. He explained that this might have happened without his knowledge as many people stayed at his house. He still swore that he was loyal to Queen Elizabeth, however, and was released after paying yet another fine.

Over the next fifteen years, Tresham, like many recusants from the gentry, was constantly in and out of prison. Each time they were released, these Catholics paid another fine but the richest still refused to attend church. Some even attended secret services of Mass in prison, taken by priests who were fellow prisoners. In 1582, four priests even broke into York prison to say Mass with the Catholics there. One was captured as they climbed out.

The government saw priests as the heart of the Catholic resistance. In 1585, an **Act against Priests** allowed the death penalty for anyone who offered shelter or aid to a Roman Catholic priest. Acting on information from neighbours or informers, soldiers might appear at a Catholic house at any time and carry out a search. In 1585, Thomas Tresham organised a petition to the Queen promising the loyalty of her Catholic subjects. It made no difference. The arrests continued.

Reflect

How useful would the above image be to a historian studying life for Catholics in Elizabethan England?



▼ This image shows English Catholics being arrested and taken to prison. It is from a book of Catholic propaganda that was published in Europe in XXXX. In the upstairs room of a private home, soldiers arrest a priest who is saying Mass. The men of the house are being shoved through a doorway on the right, while the women and another priest are also being led away.

Greater suffering, 1586–1603

Financial suffering

The repression of Catholics tightened still further. The Queen wanted to increase her income from fining Catholics. In **1587**, another **Recusancy Act** allowed the government to take two-thirds of the land owned by any recusant who had fallen behind with paying fines. Even the wealthiest Catholics like Tresham were being driven into debt. Poorer Catholics suffered even more.

Physical suffering

In 1586, Margaret Clitherow, a butcher's wife from York, was accused of sheltering priests. She knew that the law said she could not be executed if she refused to plead either guilty or not guilty at her trial. But the law also allowed her captors to encourage her to enter a plea. They did this by 'pressing': she was stretched out in her prison cell with a large, sharp stone beneath her back. A door, possibly from her own house, was placed over her and enormous weights were added. She still refused to plead and died as her ribcage burst and the air was pressed from her body.

In 1588, the Catholic king of Spain, Philip II, sent his enormous Armada in an attempt to invade England and return it to the Catholic faith. Elizabeth's government arrested all the most influential Catholics so that they could not lead an uprising in England in support of the Spanish. Eleven Catholic laymen (that is not priests) were executed in that year for aiding priests or for encouraging Protestants to convert to Catholicism.



▲ This image shows how Margaret Clitherow became the first woman Catholic Martyr of Elizabeth's reign. It comes from a book of Catholic propaganda that was published in Europe in 1587.

Social suffering

Thomas Tresham was among those arrested in 1588. He was held at Ely in Cambridgeshire on and off over the next two years. On his release in 1590, he caught the mood of all Catholics when he described himself as 'disgraced, debased and scorned'. In **1593** the government added to Catholics' social isolation by passing the **Act Restraining Recusants**. This required Catholics over the age of sixteen to stay within five miles of their home at all times. It also banned them from holding large gatherings.

Elizabeth could rightly claim that she never made it illegal to hold Catholic beliefs, but by enforcing worship at Protestant church services, crippling them with debt and isolating them socially, her government was crushing the Catholic community just as Margaret Clitherow had been crushed in her prison cell.

Once again, Thomas Tresham serves as an illustration of what was happening to English Catholicism at this time. In 1599, he was in prison again but this time he was being held for debt, not for recusancy. He managed to outlive the Queen but when he died in 1605, his fortune was gone and so was the respect of his family name. He was still a Catholic, but that put him among a tiny minority, barely one or two per cent of the entire population. Despite the hardships he suffered for his faith, he declared his complete loyalty to Elizabeth and to her successor King James.

Reflect

Why might Elizabeth's government have wanted to restrict the freedom of Catholics to move around and meet each other?

Record

Complete your timeline explanation chart on 'Elizabeth's laws and English Catholics'.

Record

On a new sheet of paper, start making your second explanation chart as described on page 27. Use the section heading 'The work of English priests, 1580-1603'.

Reflect

Do you think it is possible for someone who is a 'saint' (living a good and holy life) to be a 'traitor', betraying his or her country?

Saints and traitors: the work of English priests, 1580–1603

The Pope and his priests

Most English priests who refused to accept Elizabeth's new Protestant Church in 1559 left the country and became exiles working in universities abroad.

Elizabeth must have been especially pleased that these exiles had left when, in 1570, Pope Pius V excommunicated (expelled) her from the Roman Catholic Church. He told English Catholics that she was therefore not the rightful queen of England and ordered them not to obey her laws. Without the leadership of their priests, very few English Catholics paid much attention to this.

The most important English priest in exile was William Allen. He saw how English Catholics desperately needed priests if they were to keep their faith and to worship God at the service of Mass. In the mid-1570s, largely thanks to his efforts, deeply committed young English priests started to arrive in England from France. This really worried Elizabeth's government. There were two types of priest:

I. Seminary priests

These were young English Catholics who trained at seminaries (colleges) abroad. William Allen ran two seminaries by 1580. One was at Rheims in France and the other was at Rome in Italy. By 1603, 438 priests had been sent to England.

Seminary priests were trained to support Catholics in England, especially by leading them in services of Mass and hearing confessions of their sins. They were told not to try to convert Protestants to Catholic ways.



▲ Seminary priests praying with the Pope. From a Catholic book published in 1584

2. Jesuit priests

Jesuits were priests who were specially trained to persuade people either to become Catholics or to deepen their existing Catholic faith. Jesuits also had a direct loyalty to the Pope.

The first two Jesuits to return to England were Robert Persons (sometimes called Parsons) and Edmund Campion. They arrived in 1580 and they came in heavy disguise. This was a secret mission.



▲ Robert Persons and Edmund Campion from a Protestant propaganda book, 1627

The secret priests arrive in 1580

The Jesuits Robert Persons and Edmund Campion were smuggled in disguise into England in June 1580. They knew their lives were in danger. Two seminary priests had already been executed as traitors in 1577. In the eyes of the English government, all Catholic priests were traitors serving the Pope and challenging the rule of Elizabeth I.

Priests generally stayed at the country houses of wealthy gentry families, such as the Treshams, celebrating Mass and teaching Catholics. In 1580, Robert Persons met Thomas Tresham and changed his life. His Catholic faith came alive and he dared to stand up against Elizabeth's religious laws. This was exactly what alarmed the government. Over 100 new priests had arrived from Europe by 1580 and their work meant recusancy was increasing.

William Allen and the Pope ordered the priests to concentrate their work on wealthy Catholic gentry who could influence other Catholics and whose educated sons might enter the priesthood. The priests travelled in disguise under false names, helped by Catholic tradesmen and servants. But as Campion said in November 1580:

I cannot long escape the hands of the ... enemies [who] have so many eyes, so many tongues, so many scouts and crafts.

Knowing that the local Justice of the Peace might search the house while priests were staying, many gentry families created secret hiding places called 'priest's holes'. Their visitors might have to hide for days in tiny spaces behind walls or below floorboards with very little food or water until the coast was clear.

Walsingham's spies

In 1580, Elizabeth's Secretary of State was Sir Francis Walsingham. He built up a remarkable network of spies and informers to learn about the plans and movements of Catholic priests. This was a murky world where it was hard to know who could truly be trusted. Here are a few details of just four of the hundreds of agents who acted as Walsingham's eyes and ears:

Anthony Munday

The son of a London tradesman.

When in Rome, he pretended to be a Catholic and heard English priests planning to re-convert England. He told Walsingham what he knew.

Wrote a very influential anti-Catholic propaganda book that earned him lots of money and went on to be a successful poet and playwright.

Charles Sledd

From a humble background.

Working as a servant for a Catholic Englishman in Rome, he overheard plans to kill the Queen. He passed these plans on in great detail in a file that named over 300 disloyal English Catholics.

Sledd seems to have acted from a genuine desire to keep England Protestant.

William Parry

Son of a Welsh gentry family.

When he was deep in debt and needed money he offered to spy on Catholics abroad.

He seems to have joined the Catholic side as a double agent. In 1585 he was caught plotting to kill the Queen but claimed this was a ruse to impress the Catholics.

He was tried as a traitor and executed.

George Eliot

Worked as the steward for a Catholic gentry family in England. He committed a murder and went to the Earl of Leicester for help.

In return for a royal pardon, he passed on secrets about Catholic gentry families who hid priests. Eliot became a full-time *poursuivant* (priest-catcher). Catholics called him Judas Eliot.



▲ Baddesley Clinton manor house. This was the home of a Catholic gentry family in Elizabeth's time. It had at least three different priest's holes, one in a toilet.

Reflect

Which of these four spies do you think was most valuable to Walsingham and Elizabeth's government?

The mission of Edmund Campion, 1580-81: a case study

Campion's story reveals the difficulties faced by the English Catholic priests.

Capture

After months of travelling in disguise between gentry houses, Campion was captured in July 1581 at Lyford Grange in Oxfordshire. George Eliot, the priest-catcher, arrived at the house, probably acting on a tip-off. Eliot needed two days and many assistants to find Campion and three other priests hiding in a hollow space behind a wall. All four were taken to London to be tried.

Status: saint or traitor?

In August 1580, a pamphlet written by Campion was printed and distributed by Catholics from a secret printing press in Oxfordshire. In it he said he had come

to preach the Gospel (and) to give a spiritual warning against the foul vice and proud ignorance by which many of my dear countrymen are abused. I never intended, and am strictly forbidden by the Pope who sent me, to deal with matters of state or policy of this realm. They have nothing to do with my work.

In his own mind, Campion was a loyal Englishman who simply believed that Elizabeth was wrong about religion. To Elizabeth and her government he could not be loyal if he opposed her supremacy over the Church and took orders from the Pope. Religion and politics could not be separated: he was a traitor.

Torture and trial

Campion was tortured on the rack, a machine that slowly stretched his arms and legs out of joint. He revealed the names of Catholics who had helped him. One was Thomas Tresham, which explains why he and others were arrested. (See page 28.) But, even under torture, Campion insisted that he never encouraged rebellion against Elizabeth.

At his trial in November 1581, the only witnesses who swore that they had heard Campion call on Catholics to rebel against their Queen were the government's own spies Andrew Munday, George Eliot and Charles Sledd. Despite this he was found guilty of treason and condemned to death.

Execution

On 1 December 1581, Campion and two other priests were dragged by horses to their place of execution at Tyburn in London. His captors told him to beg for the Queen's forgiveness. Campion said he had no need of forgiveness from Elizabeth as he had done her no wrong. He prayed that she should have a long and prosperous reign.

Religious heretics would be burned alive, but the priests were executed as traitors, that is they were hanged and taken down to be cut open while still conscious. Their internal organs were burned in front of them and in front of a large crowd. Parts of their body were then put on public display to deter anyone from following their example.

Reflect

1. Why would the government have been angry that the Catholics had their own printing presses?
2. Do these words of Campion's prove that he really was a loyal subject of Queen Elizabeth?



▲ This is another Catholic propaganda image from 1584. It shows the different stages in the hanging, drawing and quartering of Campion and the other priests in December 1581. It creates a much more brutal impression than is suggested by the painting at the start of the enquiry on page 26. In that image, Campion is shown to the left of centre wearing a blue cloak.

Propaganda and persistence, 1581-95

Robert Persons managed to leave England in 1581 without being captured. So did another English Catholic called Richard Rowland, who had dared to publish a short account of Campion's death that accused Elizabeth of murdering Campion for his beliefs rather than for any act of treason. In 1587, Rowland (using his Dutch grandfather's name of Verstegan) published a book called *The Theatre of Cruelties* that claimed to show how Elizabeth treated Catholics. The image on page 32 is taken from his book. Torture was used far more under Elizabeth than any other English monarch and Rowland particularly criticised her chief torturer, Richard Topcliffe, a deeply sadistic man who sometimes tortured prisoners in his home.

Elizabeth's government countered this Catholic propaganda by publishing books that gave its own viewpoint. It even wrote a pamphlet to justify its use of torture.

Robert Persons and William Allen became more extreme in their opposition to Elizabeth after the death of Campion. They sent many more priests to England. In 1585, Elizabeth's Act against Priests (see page 30) said that any priest ordained under the authority of the Pope was guilty of treason just for setting foot in England. If caught, the priests were sure to be executed. But they still came.

The 'Bloody Question'

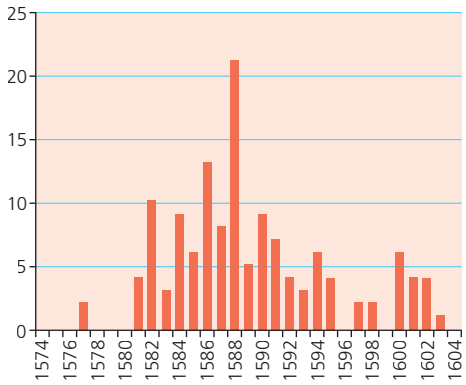
When put on trial after 1585, priests always had to answer what became known as the 'Bloody Question'. This asked them whose side they would take if a foreign power were to obey the Pope and invade England to remove Elizabeth from the throne. If they replied that they would support Elizabeth, their credibility as a priest was gone. If they declared their support for the Pope, they had shown themselves to be traitors.

As the graph shows, most priests were executed in the late 1580s. This was the time, as you will see later, when England was most at risk of an actual invasion by Spanish forces acting with the Pope's blessing. The numbers also rose again towards the end of Elizabeth's reign when it was clear that she would soon die.

Final years of failure, 1596-1603

The number of Catholic priests in England rose again towards the end of Elizabeth's reign when it was clear that she would soon die, but they achieved very little. Their attempts to rebuild the Catholic faith in their homeland had failed by 1603. Historians give different reasons for this:

- Some say the priests failed because they did not concentrate their work in the north and west where recusancy was strongest. They spent too much time near London and failed to build a strong base.
- Others say that priests like Campion were too saintly to have a realistic chance of overcoming the weight of Elizabeth's government's power. Whether they liked it or not, they were involved in a political struggle.
- Some say the seminary priests and the Jesuits spent too much time squabbling over what they should try to do. Even when many of them were in prison together at Wisbech in Cambridgeshire in the 1590s they constantly argued. The seminary priests said they should simply support existing Catholics while Jesuits were more radical and wanted to convert Protestants. In 1598, the Pope appointed a special Archpriest to decide on how to support English Catholics but the two groups argued about him as well. As they bickered, their threat to Elizabeth declined and so did the number of English Catholics.



▲ Number of Catholic priests who were either executed or died in prison during the reign of Elizabeth I

Reflect

Why do you think there were so many executions and deaths of priests after 1585?

Record

Complete your timeline explanation chart on 'The work of English priests, 1580-1603'.

Record

On a new sheet of paper, start making your final explanation chart as described on page 27. Use the section heading 'International affairs: the Scottish queen and the Spanish king'.

International affairs – the Scottish queen and the Spanish king, 1580–1603

By now you will have realised that the experiences of Catholics in England were greatly affected by the arrival of priests who had been trained overseas. In this section you will see how the world of international politics also added to the pressures on English Catholics, whether they liked it or not. At the centre of the story is one woman: Mary Queen of Scots.

Mary Queen of Scots – a dangerous cousin

There were two queens in England in 1580. One was Queen Elizabeth and the other was her cousin Mary Queen of Scots. Mary had fled from Scotland to England in 1568 after powerful Protestant lords rose up against her Roman Catholic rule. Instead of helping her cousin to regain her throne, Elizabeth kept her prisoner. She did not want to start a war with Scotland. Besides, Mary had ruled badly and was accused of murdering her own husband, so there were good reasons for not sending her back. But the decision to keep Mary in England created all sorts of problems:

- 1. Mary was directly descended from the first Tudor King, Henry VII. If Elizabeth died without children, Mary was next in line to the English throne – and she would turn England back to Catholicism. Keeping Mary in England gave English Catholics hope and encouragement.
- 2. Almost as soon as Mary arrived, English Catholics started causing trouble for Elizabeth. A Catholic rebellion in the north of England was put down in 1569 and a plot to murder Elizabeth was discovered in 1571. Even if Mary had no direct part in planning these, her presence as a figurehead for revolt was stirring trouble from

English Catholics in ways that Elizabeth had been able to avoid until her cousin arrived.

- 3. Mary's presence in England as a ready-made Catholic replacement for the Protestant Queen Elizabeth led the Pope to excommunicate Elizabeth in 1570. He ordered English Catholics to disobey her laws. As you learned on page 32, this led to a new wave of English Catholic priests working secretly in England, strengthening Catholic resistance. This then led to increases in recusancy fines.

By 1580, Mary had been living in fairly comfortable captivity in England for twelve years. She refused to allow any English court to put her on trial for the murder of her husband in Scotland. Elizabeth used this fact to justify keeping her cousin in captivity. This turned some English Catholics against their own queen and a few were drawn into plots to release Mary. Her presence meant all English Catholics were under suspicion. This is why Walsingham's spies kept them and Mary under such close observation, especially after 1580 when Pope Gregory XIII announced that it was not a sin for a Catholic to murder Elizabeth.

Reflect

What made Mary's presence in England such a threat to Elizabeth?



▲ Mary Queen of Scots. A miniature portrait by Nicholas Hilliard, 1578

The Throckmorton Plot, 1583

In 1583, Walsingham's spies told him that the Jesuit Robert Persons had recruited a young English Catholic, Francis Throckmorton, into a plot against Elizabeth. Throckmorton was arrested and tortured. He confessed to working with the Duke of Guise, a powerful French Catholic who was a relative of Mary Queen of Scots. The Duke was planning to invade England and put Mary on the throne, with support from the Pope and the Spanish king, Philip II.

Throckmorton was executed but Mary was safe: there was no proof that she had set up the plan. William Cecil persuaded a reluctant Elizabeth to let Parliament pass a Bond of Association. This said that anyone plotting to kill Elizabeth should be hunted down and executed and so should any person 'for whom such a detestable act shall be attempted'. In other words, Mary could be executed even if she knew nothing about a plot to put her on the throne.

Reflect

- 1. At first, Robert Persons had steered clear of plotting against Elizabeth. What had changed his mind?
- 2. Why was the Bond of Association made in 1584?

Mary's trial and execution

On 12 October 1586, Mary was put on trial at Fotheringhay Castle in Northamptonshire. She skilfully fought her own case, arguing that:

- God had made her a queen and no court had the right to try her. (Elizabeth agreed.)
- No original messages existed. Evidence could have been forged. (Some was.)
- Babington, Ballard and others gave their evidence against her under torture.

Mary was found guilty. Elizabeth refused to sign a warrant for Mary's death for several weeks. She hated the idea of killing another queen. When she eventually did sign the warrant, William Cecil immediately sent it to Fotheringhay. Mary was executed on 8 February 1587. Elizabeth was furious. She said she never gave the order to send the warrant and was innocent of her cousin's death, but many historians think Elizabeth knew exactly what she was doing.

The Babington Plot, 1586

By 1586, Mary's presence in England meant that Walsingham had agents all over England and around Europe looking for the slightest sign of danger to Elizabeth. It is no wonder that Catholics in England felt under pressure to give up their faith. One careless word might lead to prison or execution.

In July of that year, a rich young Catholic, Anthony Babington, met a Jesuit priest called John Ballard. Ballard persuaded Babington to join a plot to kill Elizabeth and place Mary on the English throne. Babington found what he thought was a safe way of communicating secretly with Mary. He placed coded letters inside waterproof tubes and hid them in beer barrels that went in and out of the house in Staffordshire where she was then being held.

Ballard and Babington had no idea that one of Walsingham's cleverest spies, Thomas Phelippes, knew all about their secret messages. He intercepted them all, broke the codes and made copies before sending the original messages on. In early August, Babington and Ballard were arrested and, under torture, they confirmed that Mary had agreed to the plan. In September they were executed.

Reflect

In the image below, the artist shows Mary Queen of Scots as a brave, proud woman arguing her case at her trial. How does he achieve this?

▼ Mary Queen of Scots defends herself during her trial. From a history book published in 1920





▲ The 'Armada Portrait' of Elizabeth I, c.1588

The impact of international politics

This famous image of Queen Elizabeth I shows her as a world leader: one hand rests on a globe and the other on a sword, the crown of an emperor sits next to her and the mermaid carved onto the arm of the chair suggests her power over the seas. Behind her two paintings show the arrival and the destruction of the Spanish Armada in 1588. But although she looks confident here, England was never really secure in international affairs at any point during her reign.

Roots of rivalry with Spain

England was a Protestant nation but Europe's two great powers, France and Spain, were Catholic. By 1580, France was divided and distracted by her own struggles between the ruling Catholics and the Protestants. Meanwhile, England and Spain were quickly becoming serious enemies. There were several reasons for this:

- Elizabeth I had refused to marry Philip II of Spain at the start of her reign.
- Throughout the 1570s, English sailors such as Drake and Hawkins acted like pirates, attacking Spanish ports and ships in the New World.
- Spain owned the Netherlands and Philip II was angry when Elizabeth sent money to aid Protestant Dutch rebels there in the 1570s.
- Philip II was a deeply religious Catholic and in 1580, when Pope Gregory said that it would not be a sin to kill Elizabeth, Philip started to support plotters who wanted to replace her with Mary Queen of Scots.

Reflect

Why might England's bad relations with Spain have made Elizabeth more worried about a threat from English Catholics?

The Anglo-Spanish war begins, 1585

In 1584, a Catholic subject of Philip II shot and killed the leader of the Dutch Protestant rebels, Prince William of Orange. The murder shocked Elizabeth. She knew the same could happen to her.

Elizabeth's advisers had been trying to get her to send an army to help the Dutch rebels for many years and after this murder she finally decided to do so. In 1585, she signed a treaty with the Dutch rebels and sent the Earl of Leicester with an army of 7,000 men to fight against the Spanish in the Netherlands. England and Spain were at war.

Despite Leicester's poor leadership, the English troops did stop Spanish advances in the Netherlands. At the same time, Francis Drake sailed to the West Indies and attacked Spanish ports there and returned with treasure from Spanish ships.

The Spanish Armada, 1588

In Spain, Philip II decided to launch a crusade: medieval knights had obeyed the Pope by fighting Muslim 'unbelievers' in the Holy Land, and his Catholic army would serve the Pope by invading England and defeating its Protestant heretics.

He started to build an armada, an enormous fleet of ships. It was to sail from Spain to the Netherlands and collect an army of 20,000 troops led by Philip's best general, the Duke of Parma. The Armada would then carry his army to England.

A surprise attack by Francis Drake on the Spanish port of Cadiz in 1587 damaged many of the Armada's ships and delayed its sailing by months. This, and the execution of Mary Queen of Scots in that same year, made Philip even more determined to succeed. By July 1588, his great Armada was ready to sail.

In England, the government's campaign to catch Catholic priests reached new heights in 1588. You can see this by the graph on page 35. More recusants than ever were rounded up by Justices of the Peace and put in prison. These included those like Thomas Tresham who still insisted that they were loyal to Elizabeth. The government was determined to stop any English Catholics from leading a rising in support of an invading Spanish army.

In the end, Philip's army failed to land in England. His Armada was defeated by a mixture of bad planning, bad luck and skilful tactics from the English sailors and their Dutch allies. For example:

1. Philip put the Duke of Medina Sidonia in charge of the Armada, but he had little experience of sailing.
2. The Armada of 130 ships sailed up the English Channel chased by English ships. It waited at Calais for the Duke of Parma's army.
3. Dutch ships stopped the Duke of Parma's army in the Netherlands from joining up with the Armada.
4. The English set fire to some old ships and let them drift into the Armada as fireships. The Spanish panicked, cut their anchors and sailed north.
5. Near Gravelines, the English ships attacked the Spanish. One Spanish ship sank. The Spanish guns were unreliable but the English ones worked well. 1,000 Spanish men died and only 50 English were killed.
6. The Armada was driven north by the winds and headed back to Spain by sailing north around Scotland.
7. Powerful storms wrecked about 44 Spanish ships off Scotland and Ireland. About 80 ships eventually struggled back to Spain.



▲ Gold coin showing Philip II of Spain, 1557



▲ A map of western Europe in the 1580s showing routes of the Spanish Armada

Reflect

Which do you think did most to cause the failure of the Armada:

- bad luck
- bad planning
- skilful tactics shown by the English and Dutch?

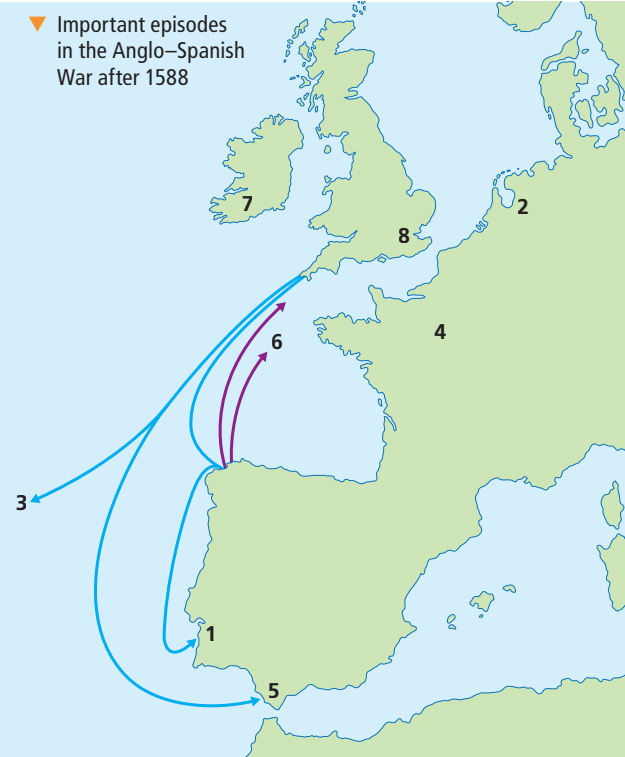
Myths about the Armada

The story of the Armada's defeat has been passed down over the years. The version that most people know is often full of myths such as:

Reflect

Why do you think myths like these last so long?

The myth	What most historians say
1. The English calmly waited for the Armada to arrive – Drake finished a game of bowls.	The English wanted to attack the Armada before it got into the English Channel, but the wind kept their ships in Plymouth.
2. Drake commanded the English fleet and brought England victory.	Sir Howard of Effingham was the commander.
3. The Armada heavily outnumbered the English fleet.	The Armada had many troop-carrier ships but each side had about 30–35 warships.
4. Smaller English ships pluckily defeated large Spanish ones.	The ships were about the same size, but the English ships changed direction more easily and had better guns.
5. The tactic of sending fireships into the Armada while it waited at Calais made all the difference.	If Dutch ships had not blocked the Duke of Parma’s armies at Bruges, the Armada would have picked up the troops and would not have been anchored at Calais.
6. Elizabeth made a stirring speech at Tilbury that gave the English confidence.	Elizabeth made her speech days after the Armada cut its anchors and was driven north by the wind. It was near Scotland when Elizabeth made her speech!
7. If the Armada had succeeded, England would have become a Spanish colony.	Philip II did not want to rule England. He just wanted to restore the Catholic faith.
8. The English suffered barely any casualties.	Elizabeth kept the sailors on board ship for weeks after as she could not afford to pay them. Thousands died of hunger and disease.
9. The defeat of the Armada meant that Britain ruled the waves.	Britain only achieved control of the seas in the eighteenth century.



The war continues

The defeat of the 1588 Armada did not end England's war with Spain. It dragged on until 1604, a year after Elizabeth died. Here are some of the main events of those years.

1. **1589** – Francis Drake led an ‘English Armada’ to attack Portugal and stir the Portuguese to revolt against Spain. It was an expensive failure.
2. **1594** – The northern Netherlands became a secure Protestant state, independent from Spain. Spain still ruled a weakened southern Netherlands but was much less likely to attack England.
3. **1595** – Francis Drake and John Hawkins died at sea while attempting to raid Spanish ships and ports in the New World
4. **1596** – England formed an alliance with France and with the Protestant Netherlands against Spain.
5. **1596** – The Earl of Essex led a successful raid on the Spanish port of Cadiz.
6. **1596 and 1597** – Philip II sent Spain’s second and third Armadas against England – but both were wrecked by storms.
7. **1601** – A Spanish army landed in Ireland. The Earl of Tyrone had started a Catholic rebellion against English rule in 1594 and the Spanish hoped to help him win and create a base for an invasion of England. The Spanish force was defeated and Tyrone’s rebellion finally ended in 1603.
8. **1604** – One year after Elizabeth’s death, the war with Spain was ended by the Treaty of London. It had lasted almost twenty years.

England’s Catholics by 1603

By 1603, when Elizabeth died, almost all England's Catholics had given up their faith or were attending Protestant church services each week without complaint. Philip II died in 1598 and his son Philip III was a weak ruler. Since the death of Mary Queen of Scots there was no obvious Catholic leader to replace Elizabeth. The heir to her throne was almost certainly Mary's son, James VI of Scotland, who was a Protestant. The English Catholics were under constant pressure from the state and from their neighbours to make them conform. But a small core of English Catholics remained. In 1605, just two years after Elizabeth died, a few of these die-hards planned the famously unsuccessful

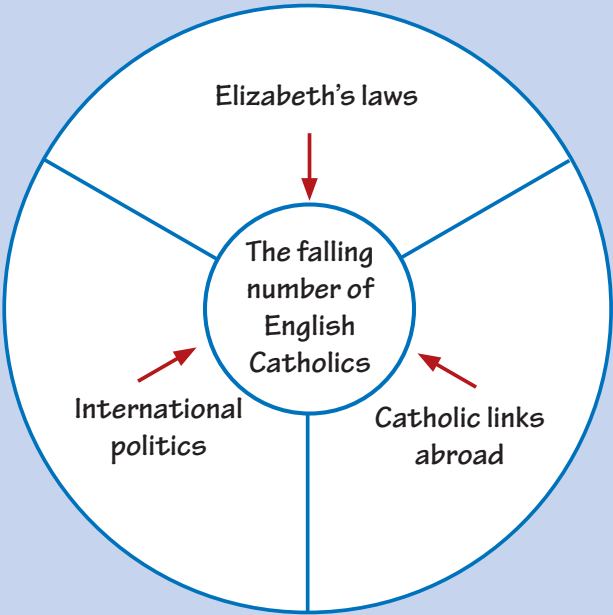
Gunpowder Plot that aimed to assassinate King James and his government. One of the plotters was Francis Tresham. He was the son of Thomas, who you learned about at the start of this enquiry. Unlike his father, he obviously was a real threat to the monarch's safety. For the next two hundred years, English Catholics were sneered at as ‘Papists’, treated as second-class citizens and were still suspected of being ‘dangerous people’.

Record

Complete your timeline explanation chart on ‘International affairs: the Scottish queen and the Spanish king’.

Review

1. Make a large version of this diagram with lots of space in each of the three segments.
2. Now study the three timeline explanation charts you have made. From each one, choose between three and six really important events or developments that help to explain why there were so few Catholics in England by 1603. Write them into the relevant segment of the diagram.
3. Now draw lines to connect statements that you think are connected in some important way. For example, if you have written that ‘In 1580 the Pope said it was not a sin to murder Elizabeth’, you could connect that with ‘Walsingham’s spy network kept a very close watch on English Catholics’. On the line that you draw between events, write a simple explanation of **why** they are connected.
4. Now compare your finished diagram with ones that others have made. Decide why your diagrams may differ and whether you should change your diagram in any way.



And finally ...

5. You have been thinking mainly about why the number of English Roman Catholics fell so sharply between 1580 and 1603. This is, of course, very closely tied to the fact that Catholics were seen as a threat to Queen Elizabeth. Test how good your notes are by using them to plan answers to these two questions:
 - a) When, if at all, do you think English Catholics offered a really serious threat to Elizabeth's rule?
 - b) “Elizabeth and her government over-reacted to the supposed ‘Catholic threat’”. How far do you agree with this statement?



▲ Monument to Nicholas Owen at St Mary's Church, Harvington, c.XXXX

'Little John' and how he is remembered

This fine wooden carving is set into a niche in the wall at St Mary's Roman Catholic Church at Harvington in Worcestershire. It was made in XXXX to commemorate the life and work of a man named Nicholas Owen, known to many in his lifetime as 'Little John'. He was, apparently, really very short.

Owen was probably born in Oxford in 1562. He was from a quite humble background. His father, Walter, was a carpenter and in 1577 Nicholas started an apprenticeship to become a joiner. (This was a rather more skilful form of carpentry.) We do not know whether he was raised in a Catholic household or was converted by priests from abroad, but he clearly had a very deep faith. He became a Jesuit lay-brother, which means he swore the Jesuit oath of total commitment to God, but never trained as a priest.

By 1588, evidence in letters written by Jesuits show that he had blended his faith with his skills at working in wood and stone: he was building remarkably clever priest's holes in gentry houses all over England. He continued this work until 1606 when he was finally arrested after the Gunpowder Plot.

The monument

The monument shows Owen dressed in the clothes of an artisan (skilled worker) of his day. In his hand he holds his saw and his foot secures a plank on his workbench. Behind him in the lower part of the carving are:

- the horse that carried him all over England
- his bag of carpentry tools
- tree branches that provided his timber
- immediately above the tree branches is Hindlip Hall where he and two Jesuit priests were arrested in 1606.

To the left we see:

- a priest (or possibly Owen) kneeling in prayer in a priest's hole
- three prisoners being escorted up a hill by a guard.

At the top, behind him, we see the Tower of London where Owen died, almost certainly while he was being tortured on the rack, although the torturers claimed he killed himself. Some people say the object above the priest's hole represents the rack on which he died.

Statues, monuments and interpretations of history

Monuments, including statues of famous men and women all over Britain, are another way of passing on a particular interpretation of history. The person's character and achievements are always suggested by their posture and by the objects that are included.

In this case, there is nothing sinister or devious in Owen's appearance. He is portrayed as a humble, working man. This is not surprising as the monument is in a Catholic church and was placed there to honour Owen. You can also see him in the painting of English and Welsh martyrs on page 26. He is kneeling at the front with just a small, sharp knife in his belt to suggest his skills at working with wood.

Historic sites and interpretations

Very near to St Mary's Church is Harvington Hall. In the sixteenth century, this large Elizabethan country house was owned by a recusant family called the Pakingtons.

In 1580, Humphrey Pakington pulled down the fourteenth-century manor house that stood on the site and replaced it with this fine hall. It now belongs to the Roman Catholic Church.

Like many similar properties, Harvington Hall helps to pay for its upkeep through tourism. One of its attractions for tourists is that the house may have more priest holes than any other property in Britain. Nicholas Owen probably made some or all of these. One is reached by a fake fireplace. After searching houses like this, priest-catchers used to stand outside and check whether all the fireplaces they had seen inside matched the position of the chimneys.

School groups have the opportunity to visit and to take part in events run by historical re-enactors who take the parts of people who lived and worked at the site in the past. Re-enactment is another form of historical interpretation. Some people find it a really helpful way of understanding how life was lived long ago. Others would prefer to let their own imagination do the work, guided by some carefully worded leaflets, display boards or perhaps an audio guide.

As with all historical interpretations, there is always the need to be true to the history and to avoid over-simplified or exaggerated versions of the past.



▲ A historical re-enactor emerges from a priest's hole at Harvington Hall, through a very narrow opening. The 'door' is a swivelling oak beam

Reflect

What factors may affect the strict historical accuracy of interpretations given in monuments and at historical sites?

▼ Harvington Hall, Worcestershire



Preparing for the examination

The British depth study forms the second half of Paper 1: British History. It is worth twenty per cent of your GCSE. To succeed in the examination you will need to think clearly about different aspects of The Elizabethans, 1580–1603 and support your ideas with accurate knowledge. This section suggests some revision strategies you might like to try and explains the types of examination questions that you can expect.

Summaries of the five key issues

Your study of The Elizabethans, 1580–1603, has covered five important issues from that time:

1. Elizabeth and government – the power of the Queen
2. Catholics – the nature and extent of the Catholic threat
3. Daily lives – the nature and dynamics of Elizabethan society
4. Popular culture – Merry England?
5. The wider world – the nature and significance of England's connections with the wider world.

In the specification for your GCSE course, each of the five issues is divided into three sections. We

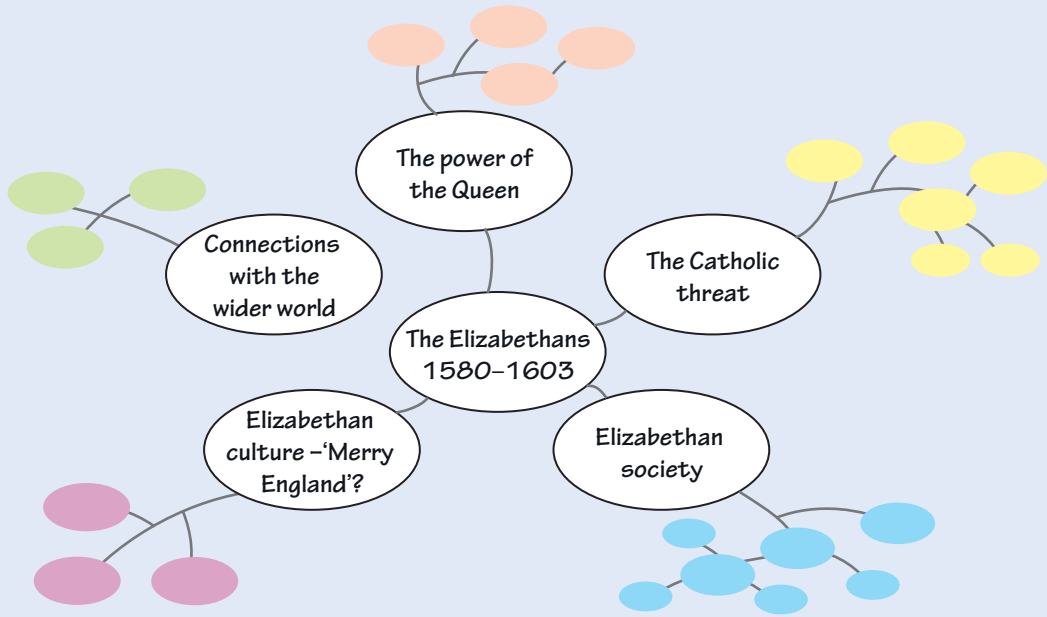
divided each enquiry in this book into three stages to match these sections and to help you build your knowledge and understanding step by step. Now you can use your knowledge and understanding to produce a detailed and accurate summary for each of the five issues. You will also need to be clear about how the five issues are connected. Here are four suggestions for structuring your revision notes and showing the connections between the issues. Choose the one that is best for you or use a variety if you prefer.

1. Mind map

A mind map on A3 paper (or even larger) is a good way to summarise the important points about a particular issue. It allows you to show connections between different points. This is especially important in the British depth study as you are expected to show the interplay between issues (that is how one issue may affect others).

You could use colour-coding to identify a few really good examples of where in your mind map each of the following forces are at work:

- Political
- Religious
- Economic
- Social
- Cultural



2. Chart

If you find it easier to learn from lists then a summary chart for each issue you have studied might be best for you. You can use the format shown below or design your own. Just make sure that you include clear summary points for each of the three sections in each enquiry you studied.

To help you to remember how the issues are connected, you could use the colour-coding idea explained under 'Mind maps' on page XX.

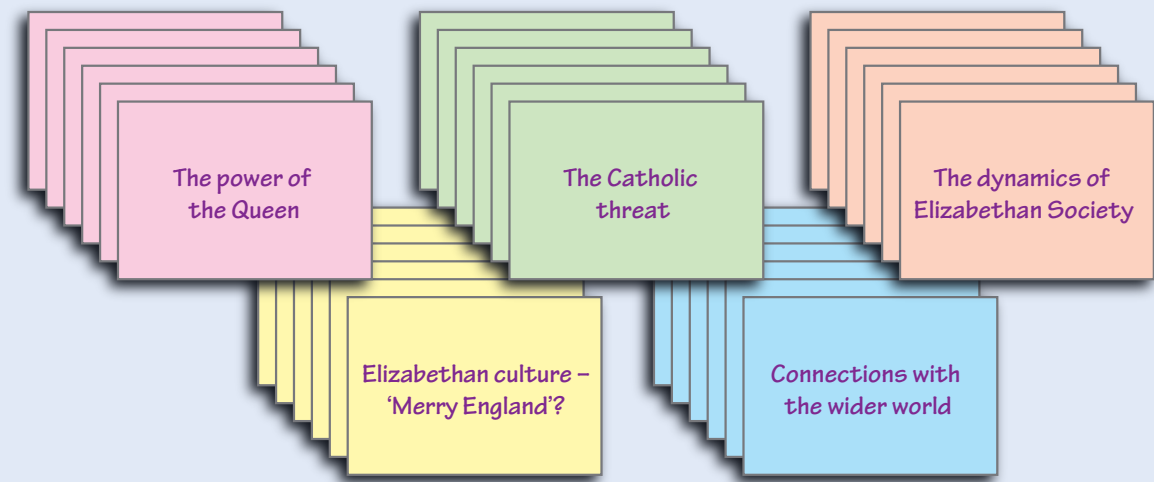
Issue : Connections with the wider world		
Issue : Elizabethan culture – 'Merry England'		
Issue : The dynamics of Elizabethan society		
Issue : The Catholic threat		
Issue : The power of the Queen		
Elizabeth and her court, patronage, the Privy Council and the rebellion of the Earl of Essex.	Elizabeth and her Parliament, including opposition from Puritans.	Elizabeth and her people, including local government and propaganda.
●	●	●
●	●	●
●	●	●
●	●	●
●	●	●
●	●	●

3. Small cards

Small cards are a flexible way to make revision notes. You could create a set of revision cards for each of the five main issues/enquiries you have studied. It would be a good idea to use a different colour for each set of cards.

If you find it easier to learn from lists, a summary chart for each issue you have studied might be best for you. You can use the format shown below or design your own. Again, just make sure that you include clear summary points for each of the three sections in each enquiry you studied.

To help you to remember how the issues are connected, you could use the colour-coding idea explained under 'Mind maps' on page XX.




4. Podcasts

If you learn best by listening to information and explanations, you could record your knowledge and understanding by producing podcasts to summarise what you have learned about each of the five main issues. You could produce your podcast with a friend using a question and answer format.


To help you to remember how the issues are connected, you could produce a sixth podcast where you explain how each of the forces listed under ‘Mind maps’ on page 98 affected different aspects of Elizabethan life.

To be well-prepared for the examination you need revision notes that summarise the main points and provide detailed examples in a format that works best for you.




The power of the Queen

DOWNLOAD




The Catholic threat

DOWNLOAD




The dynamics of Elizabethan society

DOWNLOAD



Elizabethan culture – ‘Merry England’?

DOWNLOAD



Connections with the wider world

DOWNLOAD

Understanding interpretations

To prepare for the examination, you will need to be clear about ‘interpretations’ of history. Here are some simple explanations and some suggestions for your revision.

What we mean by ‘interpretations’ of history

An interpretation of history is any version of events in the past that has been created at some later time. The interpretation can be made and shared by all sorts of people, in all sorts of ways, for all sorts of reasons. Here are some examples:

People or groups who create or advise on interpretations of the past	Ways in which interpretations may be shared	Reasons for creating interpretations of the past
Academics (professional historians, museum curators or archaeologists)	Non-fiction books	To educate or inform
Lecturers and teachers	Fiction books	To entertain or amuse
Writers and artists	Websites	To persuade
Tourist organisations	Blogs	To commemorate
Individuals or groups who are tracing the history of a family or an organisation	Exhibitions and displays	
	Magazines	
	Formal reports and articles	
	Plays	
	Films	
	Tourist information resources	
	Television/radio documentaries	
	Television dramas	
	Television light entertainment	
	Advertisements	
	Background to news reports	
	Drawings and paintings	
	Computer games	
	Theme parks	
	Souvenirs	
	Monuments	
	Ceremonies	

- These tasks will help to sharpen your thinking about historical interpretations:
1. Try to match up each of the people or groups in the left-hand column with the methods you think they might use to share their interpretations and the reasons why they have created them.
 2. Look back through this book to find examples of historical interpretations. For each one that you find:
 - briefly summarise what historical point it makes
 - list who created it, how it was shared with other people and what its purpose was.

How interpretations of the past may differ

People who look back on the past often disagree about what they find. They may disagree about all sorts of issues including:

- what actually happened and when
- whether an event or type of behaviour was ‘typical’ of the period in history when it happened
- why events or developments happened at all or why they happened at a certain time
- which person, factor or consequence was most significant and why
- how much change was happening, how quickly and how it affected different groups of people at the time
- what sources should be used and what they reveal
- what (if anything) we can learn from the events of the past.

Why interpretations of the past may differ

There are many different reasons why people offer different interpretations of the past. Here are a few suggestions:

- They may use different sources, for example someone working at a later date may be able to use newly discovered documents or new scientific techniques to throw more light on the issue.
- They may be faced with gaps in the evidence and may make different but reasonable guesses based on the sources they have.
- They use the same sources very carefully but honestly reach different conclusions.
- They are affected by their own background or context, for example the age in which they were working, their nationality, personality, beliefs and values may all affect their judgements.
- They may be creating their interpretation for different audiences, for example young children or foreign tourists rather than professional historians.
- They may be creating their interpretations for different reasons, for example to provide light-hearted entertainment rather than precise historical understanding.
- They may simply be less careful in applying good historical methods, for example failing to consider all available sources, misunderstanding what sources say, reaching conclusions that cannot be supported by the sources or failing to make their conclusions clear.

Look at the list you made of some historical interpretations that you found in this book (see page 101). Can you see any signs that any were affected by any of the influences listed above?

Exam guidance

The thematic study forms the first half of Paper 1: British History. It is worth twenty per cent of your GCSE. The whole exam lasts for 1 hour 45 minutes so you will have just over 50 minutes to answer the four questions on the Elizabethans.

Question 6a

You will be shown an interpretation of some aspect of Elizabethan history between 1580 and 1603. The interpretation may be in text form or an image. The question will start by telling the point that the interpretation is making. You will have to show that you understand how it does this. The question will usually begin ‘In Interpretation A the historian ... Identify and explain one way in which the historian does this.’

Example

- 6 (a) In Interpretation A the illustrator portrays the wealth and comfort of an Elizabethan gentleman’s house. Identify and explain one way in which the illustrator does this. (3 marks)



Devise five questions like this using five different interpretations that you can find in this book. Try to use images with one or two and text with the others.

Question 6b

For this question you will be asked to suggest an area of further research into an aspect of the historical situation or issue that is the focus of question 6a. You will have to justify the suggestion you make. The question stem will usually be ‘If you were asked to do further research on [Interpretation A], what would you choose to investigate? Explain how this would help us to analyse and understand [the topic in 6a].’

- 6 (b) If you were asked to do further research on one aspect of Interpretation A, what would you choose to investigate? Explain how this would help us to analyse and understand daily life in Elizabethan England. (5 marks)

For each of the questions you invented for 6a, write a brief 6b-style question.

Question 7

Question 7 requires you to explain how far and why two given interpretations differ. A typical stem is ‘Interpretations B and C both focus on ... How far do they differ and what might explain any differences?’

Example

- 7 Interpretations B and C both focus on the power of Elizabeth I. How far do they differ and what might explain the difference? (12 marks)

Interpretation B – An extract from *The Making of the United Kingdom, 1500–1750*, a secondary school textbook written by J.F. Aylett in 1992.

Elizabeth I was England’s only unmarried queen. Perhaps she knew that if she married an English nobleman, she would offend others. If she had married a foreigner she would not have been able to follow her own policies. And those policies were successful. When she died in 1603, England was one of the world’s leading trading nations. It had also become a major power in Europe. Above all, she handed over a country that was more peaceful and united than ever before. Many people thought that she was wonderful. No wonder they looked back on her reign as a Golden Age.

Interpretation C – An extract from *A Brief History of Britain, 1485–1660*, written by the historian Ronald Hutton in 2010.

During her last years, her government was starting to show signs of strain. The Spanish war had reached stalemate, with the English more anxious to make peace than their opponents. Court politics had become unusually divisive and embittered, leading to the rebellion and execution of her final toy-boy, Essex, and then a monopoly of power by Burghley’s son, Robert Cecil. The last Parliament of the reign turned directly upon the Queen over the issue of economic monopolies that she was granting as rewards to her followers; and she was forced to surrender to its demands. Her splendid costumes made an ever more glaring contrast with her physical decay: one Venetian ambassador reported that she stank so much it was wise to stand upwind of her.

Practise this type of question by using the example above. Find differences in:

- what the two interpretations say
- what one interpretation includes that the other does not
- how the two interpretations are written, that is their style and tone.

Then try to explain why these differences might exist. You could use the list on page 102 to get you started but you should only use an idea from that list if you can back up your suggestion with good reasons to show that it might apply in this particular case.

Question 8/9

You have a choice of two judgement questions. Question 8 or Question 9. These questions in the second part of Paper 1 are the most challenging. They ask you to make a judgement about a particular interpretation of an aspect of life in Elizabethan England, 1580–1603. You need to save enough time for this question because it is worth 20 marks.

Example

- 8 In his 2012 book, *The Watchers*, the historian Stephen Alford argued that the threat from Catholics created ‘dangerous and uncertain times’ in Elizabethan England. How far do you agree with this view? (20 marks)
- 9 In his 1974 school textbook, *Tudors and Stuarts*, R.J. Unstead stated that Elizabethan adventurers ‘successfully increased English trade in all parts of the world’. How far do you agree with this view? (20 marks)

Depending on the interpretation given in the question, you may wish to agree completely, disagree completely or take a position where you can see some reasons for agreeing and some for disagreeing. You can get full marks for any of these types of answer provided that you:

- Show that you have understood exactly what the interpretation is claiming.
- Show that you understand any particularly important words, phrases or dates that the interpretation uses.
- Use very clear explanations and suitable, accurate supporting evidence to persuade the examiner that you are giving a very reasonable answer.
- Keep closely to the point all the way through your answer.

In the examples above, are there any words, phrases or dates in the interpretations that you would need to address in your answer?

Choose one of the example questions above and write a plan of how you would answer it. It is helpful to plan each paragraph in your answer so that it has a very definite main point that is clearly supported with accurate and appropriate evidence chosen from your knowledge of the period. Do this planning before you start to write in the exam.