

Unit 5 Elizabeth I: how successfully did she tackle the problems of her reign?

About the unit

In this unit pupils use a range of sources to explore some of the key issues facing Elizabeth I. They learn about the consequences of the Reformation in England and Europe, relations with other European countries in the sixteenth century, the succession, and the growing problem of poverty.

This unit is expected to take 10–15 hours. There is scope to adjust some of the teaching activities to take account of time constraints in different schools.

Where the unit fits in

This unit builds upon prior work on medieval Britain. Some links can be made with unit 7 'Images of an age 1500–1750'. Contrasts and connections with aspects of Islamic history can be made by using unit 6 'Islamic civilisations 600–1600'.

Expectations

At the end of this unit

most pupils will: demonstrate knowledge of some of the main challenges faced by Elizabeth I; explain the importance of religion in the sixteenth century and the range of religious opinions current during the reign of Elizabeth; describe some of the different causes of the break with Rome and the Reformation in Europe; explain how Elizabeth I dealt with a range of problems; select and organise information to produce structured accounts of aspects of the reign of Elizabeth I

some pupils will not have made so much progress and will: demonstrate knowledge of some key events in the life of Elizabeth I; describe some of the different, strongly held religious views held by people in Elizabethan England; describe some of the difficulties faced by a Tudor monarch; identify some reasons why Henry VIII made himself head of the church in England; describe how Elizabeth reacted to some of the difficulties she faced; combine information from different sources when describing incidents from the life of Elizabeth

some pupils will have progressed further and will: demonstrate detailed knowledge of the main challenges faced by Elizabeth I and make links between them; analyse the causes of the English Reformation, identifying some interconnections between causes and commenting on their relative significance; assess aspects of the domestic and foreign policy of Elizabeth; analyse relationships between features of the Tudor period and the challenges faced by a Tudor monarch; select, organise and deploy information in well-structured accounts of aspects of the reign of Elizabeth I

Prior learning

It is helpful if pupils have:

- studied in some depth the medieval church and the role of women in medieval society
- considered questions of causation, made and analysed links between and across characteristic features of historical periods
- some experience of role play

Language for learning

Through the activities in this unit pupils will be able to understand, use and spell correctly words relating to:

- religious groups, *eg Catholic, Protestant, Lutheran, Puritan*
- historical concepts, *eg Reformation, Dissolution, turning point*
- politics and religion, *eg excommunication, papal bull, treason, diplomacy, deserving poor*

Speaking and listening – through the activities pupils could:

- collaborate with others to share information and ideas, and to solve problems

Reading – through the activities pupils could:

- find information using contents, index, glossary, keywords, hotlinks, etc

Writing – through the activities pupils could:

- join ideas within sentences including using links of time and cause

Resources

Resources include:

- textbooks, library non-fiction, ICT-based resources
- family tree

Out-of-school learning

Pupils could visit parish churches to explore the impact of the religious changes at a local level.

Future learning

This unit sets the scene for the study of the difficulties faced by the monarchy in the seventeenth century covered in unit 8 'The civil wars'. Pupils will also build on their understanding of causation from this unit and on the tentative nature of conclusions in history.

Why was religion a life-or-death problem in Elizabethan England?

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that religion was an important issue in the sixteenth century • that religious tolerance was not common in the sixteenth century and that people were expected to belong to the state church or religion | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell the story of Edmund Campion. Use visual sources to reinforce the story and the reasons for Campion's execution. • Ask pupils to speculate about why someone who professed loyalty to Elizabeth was executed. • Reinforce with the story of the Puritan John Stubbs. • Ask pupils to discuss why they think religion was so important in this period. Make a class list of reasons. Discuss why tolerance was rare and everyone was expected to belong to the state religion. |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • infer from the sources and the narratives why religious belief was so significant in the sixteenth century • infer from the sources and narratives that religious beliefs and political structures were linked | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The purpose of this activity is to use a vivid story to grab the attention of the pupils. For many pupils the significance of religion in past societies is a difficult concept. The narrative and sources are used to build deeper understanding. • John Stubbs had his right hand cut off for printing a book supporting Puritanism and immediately cried 'God save the Queen'. • Although in Western Europe religious tolerance is now not questioned, it is still an issue in other countries, <i>eg the Russian Federation, India</i>. Teachers may also find it useful to point out that in the sixteenth century Islamic societies were sometimes more tolerant than Christian ones. |
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When and why did religion first cause a problem for the Tudors?

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • about the story of Henry VIII's divorce and its impact on religious policy • to examine the causes and some of the results of the break with Rome • to recall prior knowledge and use it to build more detailed knowledge | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce this section by asking pupils to recall knowledge of Henry VIII from their work at key stage 2. • Remind pupils about Henry's marriage to Catherine of Aragon and the survival of only one child, the Princess Mary, his need for a male heir, his affair with Anne Boleyn and her pregnancy. Explain why Henry needed to marry Anne to make the unborn child legitimate, and why he needed the Pope's permission to divorce Catherine of Aragon. • Pose some of the potential problems involved in overthrowing the Pope's power in England to set up a church that would give Henry a divorce, <i>eg rebellion at home, aggressive alliances of foreign states against England</i>, and some of the advantages, <i>eg control of the church, subjects with sole loyalty to the Crown, money from the monasteries, a possible male heir</i>. • Ask pupils to use this information to suggest what advice one of Henry VIII's courtiers might have given him using key vocabulary, sequencing the advice so that it is persuasive. • Tell pupils about Henry's decision and give them a set of cards detailing causes of the break with Rome, <i>eg the king's need for money, his desire for a divorce, religious ideas</i>. • Ask pupils to work in groups to create a causation diagram from the cards, showing the relative significance of the causes. Ask them to group the causes into long-term and short-term, and to identify a trigger point. Pupils compare their diagrams as a whole-class activity. • Pupils produce a class-annotated diagram explaining how several causes led to the break with Rome. • Tell pupils about the main effects of the break with Rome. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explain some of the prevailing attitudes towards girls and women in the early sixteenth century • give reasons for the break with Rome • infer the potential advantages and disadvantages and explain the king's policy • link their knowledge to prior work on the medieval church • describe several relevant reasons for the break with Rome • make some links between the causes and some of the consequences of the break with Rome | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The purpose of this section and the following one is to provide pupils with the background knowledge for their study of religious issues in the reign of Elizabeth I. • It would be helpful for the class to work with a family tree of the Tudors. • Links should be made with unit 2 'Medieval monarchs' and unit 4 'Medieval church' to enable pupils to build on concepts and make comparisons. • The purpose of the storytelling is to set the scene using question and answer. Short sources could be introduced to keep the pace of the lesson going and maintain pupils' interest. • There is continuing academic controversy about the significance of the royal divorce in bringing about the English Reformation. • Language for learning: pupils collaborate with others to share information and ideas. • ICT: pupils use a drawing program to create their diagram of causes of the Reformation. The diagram design should stress long- and short-term causes and the trigger point. |
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Was England the only country to break away from the Catholic Church?

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • about the main events of the Reformation and the role of Martin Luther • to evaluate the extent and significance of the changes brought about by the Reformation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell pupils the story of Martin Luther, and the pinning of the 95 theses to the door of the church in Wittenburg. • Give pupils a list of Luther's complaints against the Catholic Church and discuss the implications of his complaints. • Ask pupils to turn the complaints into a list of possible changes, <i>eg end of papal indulgences, Bible in German</i>. • Discuss pupils' decisions with the class as a whole. • Tell pupils about the impact of the Reformation. Use a map of Europe to show the spread of the Reformation. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify some religious changes in Germany • suggest reasons why Luther was successful in his protest against the Catholic Church | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This section provides an opportunity to set the history of England in its European context. It can also be used as a basis for a study of the Reformation as a European study before 1914. • As many pupils find theological issues complex, it can be useful to simplify the changes and concentrate on concrete changes. |
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What did Elizabeth do about the religious problem in England?

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that there were key points of disagreement between Catholics and Protestants in the sixteenth century • to select and record information and reach a conclusion | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Briefly tell pupils about the religious changes during the reigns of Edward and Mary, emphasising that Edward and his advisers were Protestants and that Mary was Catholic. • In telling the story, begin to build up a grid showing what the Catholics believed the church should be like and what the Protestants believed the church should be like, <i>eg Catholics – churches should be highly decorated and services full of ceremony; Protestants – churchmen should wear plain robes and churches should not be decorated</i>. • Ask pupils to use reference books/school library/textbooks to complete the grid and show them how to locate evidence by using contents, index, glossary, keywords, etc. • Provide pupils with written and visual source material about the Elizabethan church. Make a third column on the grid and fill in details of the Elizabethan church. Ask pupils to decide whether the Elizabethan church was Catholic or Protestant. • Ask pupils to explain why some English people, such as Jesuits and Puritans, were unhappy with Elizabeth's policy. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • describe accurately some of the key disagreements that developed during the Reformation in England and Wales • explain how Elizabeth I tried to manage the church and how this created opponents • use organisational features to locate texts and information | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take into account that theological differences can be extremely difficult for pupils to understand. One approach is to emphasise less what people believed and more what they did. By looking at the actions of Edward, Mary and Elizabeth, pupils can develop a sense of the key differences between Catholics and Protestants. Another way of making these ideas accessible is to consider how church furnishing, design and layout and decoration changed from one monarch's reign to another. • 'Telling the story' could be enlivened and/or extended by the judicious use of source material. • ICT: pupils use a presentation program to create a 'storyboard' describing the religious changes experienced during the reigns of Edward and Mary and in the final frames summarise Catholic and Protestant beliefs. |
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Were Catholics or Puritans the greater threat to Elizabeth's religious settlement?

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • about Catholics and Puritans in the reign of Elizabeth I • to make comparisons based on evidence and reach a conclusion • to use sources of information to investigate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the position and treatment of Catholics in England – the position and treatment of Puritans in England | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look at examples of how the government of Elizabeth punished people for failing to support the Anglican Church, <i>eg fines for non-attendance at church; the painful deaths of some Jesuit missionaries</i>. Refer back to the death of Edmund Campion. • Provide pupils with a set of sources about Catholics in England, <i>eg the role of the gentry, the need for concealment, priest's holes, the work of Walsingham and his spies</i>. Explain that in law Catholic priests were executed not because of their religious beliefs but for treason. • Ask pupils to write advice that might have been useful to a Jesuit about to set off to spread/support Catholicism in England. • Remind pupils of the threat posed by Puritans. Unlike the Catholics they did not challenge Elizabeth's claim to the throne and they could not be accused of working for a foreign power. However, Puritans did challenge the authority of Elizabeth to impose her religious settlement and her control over the church in her own country. They also had links with other countries. • Provide pupils with a range of sources showing the spread of Puritan ideas in England, <i>eg attitudes to the theatre</i>, and the treatment Puritans received, <i>eg John Stubbs</i>. • Pupils, either individually or in groups, draw up a case for who poses the greater threat, Puritans or Catholics. Ask them to debate the issue and reach a supported conclusion. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use information gained to produce structured work on the position of the Catholics in England • combine information from sources to produce a substantiated conclusion about the different threats posed by Catholics and Puritans • describe and explain differences between the position and treatment of Catholics and Puritans | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language for learning: pupils may need guidance on how to write instructions, <i>eg</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – include detailed information about how, where and when – link words to do with time – use the present tense and active voice There are opportunities for pupils to read and use key vocabulary, and they could use various strategies to attempt and check spellings. • Key skills: these activities will provide opportunities for pupils to demonstrate evidence of working with others and communication (writing, debating). |
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Why did Mary, Queen of Scots pose such a big problem to Elizabeth I?

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to evaluate the causes of the execution of Mary, Queen of Scots • about the debate concerning Mary's involvement in plots to kill Elizabeth • to recall, select and use information for persuasive writing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell pupils the story of the death of Mary, Queen of Scots at Fotheringhay in 1587. Emphasise both the drama of Mary's execution and Elizabeth's reaction. Explain that Mary and Elizabeth were cousins. Why would one cousin be involved in the killing of another? • Describe briefly the career of Mary, Queen of Scots, her marriage to the Dauphin, her return to Scotland, her marriage to Darnley, his murder at Kirk O'Field and Mary's subsequent marriage to Bothwell and flight to England. Use vivid imagery to characterise Mary. Stress key issues such as her religion and her claim to the throne of England. • Ask the pupils to work out why the royal cousins became enemies. • Ask pupils whether Elizabeth should have executed Mary. Give pupils a range of sources mainly about Mary's character, life, the situation in Europe and Mary's possible involvement in plots against Elizabeth. • Consider the controversy about how involved Mary was in plots to assassinate her cousin. Tell pupils to work in groups and to act as members of the Privy Council that advised Elizabeth. They must decide whether the evidence shows that Mary plotted to kill Elizabeth and sum up their views in a report to Elizabeth. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify a variety of causes that led to Mary and Elizabeth becoming enemies • evaluate sources relating to Mary's involvement in plots against Elizabeth • select and organise information to produce a structured report on Mary's behaviour | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This section reinforces pupils' understanding of religious issues as well as providing opportunities to make comparisons between Elizabeth and other monarchs when tackling problems. |
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Why did Philip of Spain pose such a big problem to Elizabeth I?

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how the relationship between England and Spain changed over time • to classify reasons for the war between England and Spain • to evaluate reasons for the Armada's defeat | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain that at the beginning of her reign, England was at peace with Spain and Philip offered to marry Elizabeth. Thirty years later they were deadly enemies and at war. Pose the question <i>What went wrong?</i> • Provide pupils with a list of key events and issues for them to research why and how relations with Spain deteriorated. • Pupils produce a chart showing the steps to war. How far was religion a factor? • Tell the story of the Armada. Ask pupils to analyse the narrative of events and identify as many reasons as they can to explain the defeat of the Armada. Decide which reasons were most important. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explain and analyse the way Elizabeth and Philip became enemies • identify and prioritise reasons for the defeat of the Armada | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extension work could be undertaken on the role of Sir Francis Drake as Elizabeth's 'little pirate' in 'singeing the King of Spain's beard' and in the defeat of the Spanish Armada. • Language for learning: pupils could join ideas within sentences using links such as time (then, later, meanwhile) and cause (so, because, since) when writing about the Armada or they could identify these by highlighting the narrative of events. • ICT: pupils analyse a word-processed story of the Armada campaign. They use 'bold' to highlight Spanish mistakes and 'italic' to highlight English strengths. Pupils either copy and paste the highlighted text into a table and decide which were the most important factors or the highlighted text is copied and pasted into an essay template. Pupils add their own words of analysis to indicate which were the most important reasons for the Armada's defeat. |
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How did Elizabeth deal with the problem of marriage?

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • about the advantages and disadvantages to Elizabeth of marrying • to evaluate sources and select and organise information to reach a conclusion | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk about the ways in which young people meet and form lasting relationships nowadays. • Tell pupils that, for women of wealth and position in Elizabethan times, marriage was rarely a matter of personal attraction and that love, if it came at all, came later. Talk about the reasons for marriage, <i>eg succession, alliances with other countries, religious settlement, money, threats to the throne</i>. Go through the potential advantages and pitfalls for Elizabeth. • Re-emphasise the need to secure the succession (refer back to Henry's need for a male heir), the pressures Parliament tried to put on Elizabeth to marry, and her response. • Supply pupils with 'Proposal' cards for each of her known suitors, <i>eg showing their portrait, attributes by way of wealth and land</i>. • Pupils, in groups or individually, take each suitor in turn and work out the advantages and disadvantages, to Elizabeth and to England, of marriage. <i>What advice would they have given Elizabeth?</i> • Compare pupils' advice with what actually happened. Briefly discuss the problems and opportunities created by the fact that she did not marry. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discuss reasons why Elizabeth should or should not marry, showing period knowledge • summarise information to support a point of view | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The story of Elizabeth's reaction to Parliament's pressure to marry can be enlivened by the judicious use of source material. Potential suitors should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Philip of Spain – the Duke of Alençon – the Earl of Leicester – the Earl of Essex – the Prince of Orange • Extension work could include an investigation into the death of Amy Robsart, the wife of Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester. |
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How did Elizabeth deal with the problem of poor people and beggars?

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • about the principles of the Elizabethan Poor Law • how the treatment of the poor changed during the sixteenth century • to apply knowledge in the context of new information about the poor • to balance evidence about the Elizabethan Poor Law and reach a conclusion | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe how increasing numbers of beggars and vagrants were causing problems for successive Tudor governments. • Explain the distinction made at the time between the deserving and undeserving poor. Describe, using source material, how the government of Elizabeth changed provision for the poor and established new systems for taxing better-off people to support the 'deserving poor through the collection of a compulsory poor rate'. • Look at the key points of the Poor Law of 1601. • Give pupils information relating to a number of individual poor people who could have been living in Elizabethan England. Individually or in groups, pupils decide whether an overseer of the poor would be likely to have decided whether each poor person was 'deserving poor', who could be given some money from the poor rates, or a 'sturdy beggar' who should be punished. This could be done as a role play. • Compare findings and discuss differences to reach a consensus about the way in which the Elizabethan Poor Law worked. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • describe the changing nature of the treatment of the poor during the sixteenth century • demonstrate understanding of the way different groups of poor people were treated under the terms of the Poor Law of 1601 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government response to poverty is a topic that invites comparison with modern attitudes towards similar issues. These are sensitive issues and will require skilful and tactful handling. |
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Pupils should learn:

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Did Elizabeth successfully solve the problems that beset her during her reign?

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to recap and draw together previous work • to produce a reasoned judgement about the effectiveness of the solutions to the problems that beset Elizabeth's reign | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a class, recap on the problems that faced Elizabeth during her reign. • Working in groups, pupils create annotated posters showing the problems Elizabeth faced, the solutions she implemented and the outcomes of those solutions. • Pupils compare posters and discuss similarities and differences, arriving at a class consensus. |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • draw on detailed knowledge to summarise the problems facing Elizabeth throughout her reign • reach a substantiated conclusion that begins to show awareness that conclusions in history are often tentative | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ICT: pupils conclude this section of work and begin to prepare for the next by entering on to their computer timeline significant individuals and events that they remember. This is a particularly useful time for this activity as by the end of this unit pupils will know about Tudor kings and queens and significant religious characters of the medieval and early modern period as well as the events and characters of the Reformation. The teacher may wish to manage this activity in a similar way to the introductory unit. |
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