What was life like in Tudor England?| History | Years 5 & 6 | Spring Term 2026-27

1509 AD	1536 AD	1547 AD	1547 to 1553 AD	1553 AD *(disputed)*	1553 to 1558 AD	1558 AD	1564 AD	1603 AD
Reign of King Henry VIII begins.	Anne Boleyn is executed.	Death of King Henry VII.	Reign of King Edward VI.	Lady Jane Grey reigned for 9 days in July of this year.	Reign of Queen Mary I.	Queen Elizabeth I ascends to the throne.	William Shakespeare is born on 23rd April.	Death of Queen Elizabeth I.

National Curriculum History

Pupils should continue to develop a chronologically secure knowledge and understanding of British, local and world history, establishing clear narratives within and across the periods they study. They should note connections, contrasts and trends over time and develop the appropriate use of historical terms. They should regularly address and sometimes devise historically valid questions about change, cause, similarity and difference, and significance. They should construct informed responses that involve thoughtful selection and organisation of relevant historical information. They should understand how our knowledge of the past is constructed from a range of sources.
In planning to ensure the progression described above through teaching the British, local and world history outlined below, teachers should combine overview and depth studies to help pupils understand both the long arc of development and the complexity of specific aspects of the content.

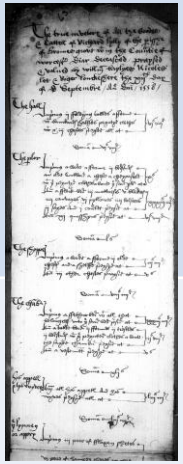
Artefacts

Anonymous engraving

By Hans Holbein

Above: Portraits of Henry VIII

Left: Portrait of Elizabeth I c. 1570 AD



Left: A Tudor household inventory.

Below: Picture of the Royal Progress of Elizabeth I

Cause and Effect

Who was Henry VIII?

Henry VIII was the King of England from 1509 to 1547. He married six times in his desire to obtain a male heir. He used portraits of himself to portray himself as a powerful king.

Who was Anne Boleyn?

Anne Boleyn was the second of Henry VIII's six wives and the mother of Elizabeth I. She was strongly Protestant and tried to influence Henry VIII to change his religious views, which were originally Catholic.

Who was Elizabeth I?

The daughter of Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn, Elizabeth I ruled from 1558 to 1603. She used portraits, royal progresses and coins as propaganda to show her power and authority as queen. Famously, she did not marry or produce an heir so is known as the 'Virgin Queen'. Elizabeth I was the last monarch of the House of Tudor.

Vocabulary

Monarch: A sovereign head of state, especially a king, queen or emperor.
Ascend (to the throne): To become king or queen.
Reign: The period of rule of a monarch.
Heir: A person who inherits money, property or a title after a family member dies.
Inventory: A list of all the items belonging to a person.
Portrait: A painting or drawing of a person's face and expression.
Progress: A monarch's tour of the kingdom, accompanied by his/her court.
Propaganda: Information given out, that may not be accurate, intended to make people believe something or hold a particular point of view.
Tyrant: A person or ruler who uses their authority cruelly to seize or hold onto power.
Bias: A preference for one thing over another in a way that is unfair or inaccurate.
Parliament: A group of people who make laws.

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Key Learning: When did this event happen? Beyond Living Memory (Early Modern Era) 1485 AD to 1603 AD	
1	**Henry VIII – Fair ruler or tyrant?** Investigate whether the reputation of Henry VIII as a tyrant is justified. Use different types of evidence (including portraits and written primary sources) to interpret the character of Henry VIII and draw own conclusions by extracting to explain and justify their interpretations.
2	**Why did Henry VIII have so many wives?** Understand why Henry VIII had many wives by analysing sources to investigate who Henry VIII's ideal wife was, evaluating which of his wives best met his requirements. Apply learning by participating in a royal matchmaking activity.
3	**Why was Anne Boleyn executed?** Make deductions about Anne Boleyn using a range of sources, then interpret primary sources to investigate why Anne Boleyn was killed, supporting these interpretations with evidence.
4	**How did Queen Elizabeth I use a Royal Progress?** Use a range of primary sources to extract evidence and step back into the time of Elizabeth I and investigate her Royal Progresses.
5	**How did Queen Elizabeth I use a Royal Progress? (continued)** Continue learning from previous lesson. Investigate a range of primary sources and select the relevant evidence required to reconstruct Elizabeth I's entrance into Worcester. Learn about the splendour of the Elizabethan court.
6	**What can inventories tell us about life in Tudor times?** Make deductions using inventories to identify / judge whether Tudor people were poor or rich and what Tudor houses were like. Explain how inventories are useful to historians.