

Early Modern History

**This booklet should take approximately 4 hours to complete**

**Task 1: Henry VII: A Wise or Wicked Ruler?**

**Read the bullet and points and primary sources below and then answer the question in the table**

* On the death of Edward IV in 1483, his young sons, Edward and Richard, were usurped by their uncle, Richard, Duke of Gloucester. He proclaimed himself Richard III and imprisoned the Princes in the Tower, where, he probably had them murdered.
* Henry Tudor, as the head of the House of Lancaster, now had a claim to become king. Margaret Beaufort began plotting with various other opponents of Richard, to place her son on the throne. Negotiations took place and in December 1483 he vowed to marry Elizabeth of York, the daughter of Edward IV.
* The regents of the young King Charles VIII saw the advantage of supporting Henry Tudor against Richard III and provided him with money, ships, and men to seek the crown. In August 1485, arrived in Wales with 2,000 of his supporters. He also brought with him over 1,800 mercenaries recruited from French prisons. While in Wales, Henry also persuaded many skillful longbowmen to join him in his fight against Richard. By the time Henry Tudor reached England the size of his army had grown to 5,000 men.
* On 21 August 1485, King Richard's army positioned themselves on Ambien Hill, close to the small village of Bosworth in Leicestershire. Henry arrived the next day and took up a position facing Richard. Henry Tudor's forces charged Richard's army. Although out-numbered, Richard's superior position at the top of the hill enabled him to stop the rival forces breaking through at first.
* When the situation began to deteriorate, Richard's advisers told him that he must try to get away. Richard refused, claiming that he could still obtain victory by killing Henry Tudor in personal combat. He argued that once the pretender to the throne was dead, his army would have no reason to go on fighting. With a loyal squadron of his household, he swept through to Henry's immediate bodyguard, striking down his standard-bearer. At this moment his horse died under him. Polydore Vergil later reported that "King Richard alone was killed fighting manfully in the thickest press of his enemies."

**A person wearing a hat

Description automatically generated with low confidencePrimary Sources**

**(Source 1) Henry VII, by unknown artist (1505)**

**(Source 2) David Starkey, Six Wives: The Queens of Henry VIII (2003)**

In 1483 Edward IV died prematurely, of gluttony and lechery, and his young sons, Edward and Richard, were usurped by their uncle, Richard, Duke of Gloucester. He proclaimed himself Richard III and imprisoned the Princes in the Tower, where, almost certainly, he had them murdered.

Richard's usurpation split the Yorkist party down the middle and transformed Henry Tudor's position. Swearing to marry Edward IV's eldest daughter, Elizabeth, Henry set sail for England in the summer of 1485. The expedition was funded by the French and most of the troops were French mercenaries.

**(Source 3) Antonia Fraser, The Six Wives of Henry VIII (1992)**

In August 1485, Henry of Lancaster had established himself on the English throne as Henry VII, the first Tudor monarch. It was, in the final analysis, an accession secured at the point of the sword he wielded at Bosworth Field. For there were undoubtedly other individuals with a superior dynastic claim - not only the girl he married, Elizabeth, daughter of Edward IV, but other representatives of the house of York.

**(Source 4) John Edward Bowle, Henry VIII (1964)**

Henry VII had won the throne by conquest. His hereditary claim was weak, for the Tudors came of obscure origins... Though few contemporaries expected his regime to last, the history of England had taken a decisive turn. The direct Plantagenet line was finished; though insecure until the end of the century, Henry consolidated his success... Henry Tudor... he could hold aloof and inspire fear, and he became the greatest architect of the Tudor fortunes.

**(Source 5) Polydore Vergil, English History (c.1530)**

Henry VII's body was slender but well built and strong... His appearance was remarkably attractive and his face was cheerful... his eyes were small and blue, his teeth few, poor and blackish; his hair was thin and white; his complexion sallow... his mind was brave and resolute and never, even at the moments of greatest danger, deserted him... In government he was shrewd... He was kind to his visitors... But all these virtues were obscured in later life by greed.

**(Source 6) John Major, History of Greater Britain (1520)**

In every action of his life Henry proved himself a man of good judgement; he showed much wisdom in the suppression of rebellion, and he caused many nobles to be beheaded; yet he was given too much to greed, for he raised vast sums of money from merchants and other wealthy men.

**(Source 7) Alison Weir, The Six Wives of Henry VIII (2007)**

Henry VII was tall and lean, his seeming fragility concealing a sinewy strength. He had gaunt, aquiline features, with thinning, greying hair and grey eyes. He presented to the world a genial, smiling countenance, yet beneath it he was suspicious, devious and parsimonious. He had grown to manhood in an environment of treachery and intrigue, and as a result never knew security. For all this, he ruled wisely and well, overcome plots to depose him, and put an end to the dynastic warfare that had blighted England during the second half of the fifteenth century.

Henry was miserly by nature, but he was also highly sensitive about the dubious validity of his claim to the throne, and therefore took much care to emphasise his majesty on as grand a scale as possible, thus setting a precedent for his Tudor successors. He was prepared to spend huge sums to impress the world.

**(Source 8) Christopher Morris, The Tudors (1955)**

Henry VII... was an extremely clever man, possibly the cleverest man who ever sat on the English throne. But the English do not like their kings to be too clever. It was one of the things they held against Richard II and against James I. Henry's genius was mainly a genius for cautious manoeuvre, for exact timing, for delicate negotiation, for weighing up an opponent or a subordinate, and not least, a genius for organisation. It was allied to great patience and great industry. He was a competent soldier, but always chose peace instead of war as being so much cheaper and so much safer. These are admirable and invaluable qualities for a political leader in troubled times. They would also constitute a compelling case for making a man director of a great industrial concern. But they do not make a king seem a dashing or a glamorous figure.

The mask he wore was to some extent deliberately inhuman. He wished to be remote and incalculable; he wished to be more feared than loved. He could not afford to be generous without seeming to be weak. Yet Henry was generous to Lambert Simnel and, at first, to Perkin Warbeck, although ruthless and relentless enough in his treatment of Suffolk (the son of Edward IV's sister) who was kept in prison for years after being hunted all over Europe, and of Warwick (son of the Yorkist Duke of Clarence) who was executed after fourteen years in the Tower. There was no serious evidence of treason against either, although their blood made them a potential cause of treason in others. Nor is it quite certain that it was not Henry who killed the Princes in the Tower. Yet the mask was a mask. The conventional picture of of the cold, calculating, thin-lipped, skinflint king will not quite so.

**(Source 9) Jasper Ridley, Henry VIII (1984)**

Henry VII... was not a vindictive man, and his style of government was quiet and efficient, never using more cruelty or deceit than was necessary. When he captured Lambert Simnel, the young tradesman's son who led the first revolt against him and was crowned King of England in Dublin, he did not put him to death, but employed him as a servant in his household. When he defeated and captured a second and far more dangerous pretender, Perkin Warbeck, he spared his life, and it was only after Warbeck had twice tried to escape that he was executed.

**(Source 10) John Guy, Tudor England (1986)**

Of the revolts faced by Henry VII, the most serious were those with dynastic intentions. The imposture of Lambert Simnel as the imprisoned nephew of Edward IV, Edward, earl of Warwick, however exotic, was much more menacing, because it occured within two years of Bosworth. Perkin Warbeck's imposture as Edward IV's younger son, Richard of York, during the 1490s was more easily contained, despite Scottish and European intervention. Simnel was routed at the battle of Stoke: his promoters were slain or imprisoned, and the young imposter was taken into the royal household as a servant. Warbeck fell into Henry's hands in October 1497; before long he had abused the king's leniency and so was hanged (23 November 1499).

**(Source 11) Christopher Urswick was Henry VII's almoner. He has left this record of a meeting between Henry VII and an astrologer (c. 1509)**

Henry had been for some time in a declining state of health, and this encouraged an astrologer to foretell his death, and that it would happen before the end of the year... So the king sent for this man... The king gravely asked him whether any future events could be foretold by the stars; "Yes, Sir." "Come then," says the king, "tell me where you are to be in the Christmas holidays that are now coming." The man faltered at first, and then plainly confessed he could not tell where. "Oh!" says the king, "I am a better astrologer than you. I can tell where you will be - in the Tower of London."

Questions

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| Question 1: Read the introduction and study sources 2, 3 and 4.  Give as many reasons as you can why Henry Tudor became king of England. |  |
| Question 2: Why did Henry VII marry Elizabeth of York? |  |
| Question 3: Study sources 5, 6, 7, 8 and 11.  Use these sources to describe the appearance and personality of Henry VII. |  |
| Question 4: Jasper Ridley (source 9) says that "Henry VII... was not a vindictive man". Find evidence from the sources to support this statement. |  |

**Henry VIII**

**Task 2: Read the bullet and points and primary sources below and then answer the question in the table**

* Henry, the second son of Henry VII, was born in Greenwich, in 1491. Henry, who had become king in 1485, was determined that the Tudor family should rule England and Wales for a long time. To do this he needed to protect himself from those who had the power to overthrow him. His first step was to marry Elizabeth of York, a member of Richard Ill's family.
* Henry was also worried that England might be invaded by Spain, the most powerful country in Europe. In 1488 Henry signed a treaty with King Ferdinand of Spain. By this treaty Henry VII agreed that his eldest son, Arthur, should marry King Ferdinand's daughter, Katherine of Aragon.
* On 14 November 1501, Arthur, who was just fifteen, married Catherine at St Paul's Cathedral in London. Five months later Arthur died of tuberculosis. Henry VII was keen that England and Spain should remain united and arranged for his other surviving son. Henry, to marry Catherine. At that time, Christians believed it was wrong for a man to marry his brother's wife. Henry VII therefore had to gain special permission from the Pope before the marriage could go ahead.
* In 1509 Henry VII died. His son Henry now became king of England. Henry VIII was only seventeen but the English people appeared to be happy that they had a new king. For years Henry VII had been imposing heavy taxes on the English people. One of the first things Henry VIII did when he became king was to order the execution of the two men his father had employed to organise this taxation.

**Primary Sources**

**(Source A) Drawing of Henry VIII (1886)**

**(Source B) In 1509 Thomas More wrote a poem to celebrate the coronation of Henry VIII.**

The King stands out the tallest, and his strength fits his majestic body... There is fiery power in his eyes, beauty in his face... He has immediately arrested and, imprisoned anyone who had harmed the realm.

**(Source C) Edward Hall, *The Union of the Lancaster and York Families* (1542)**

The king spent his time hunting, hawking... singing, dancing, wrestling... playing at the flute and writing songs.

**(Source D) Richard Morrison, *A Remedy for Sedition* (1536)**

He (Henry VIII) is the noblest king that ever reigned over the English nation... whose virtue, learning and noble courage... has brought England freedom.

**(Source E) Gilbert Burnet, *History of the Reformation* (1679)**

The king was now overgrown with fatness... he became more and more unwieldy. He could not go up or down the stairs, unless he was raised up or let down by an engine.

**(Source F) Pasqualigo was the Venetian ambassador to England during the reign of Henry VIII. In 1515 he wrote a letter describing Henry VIII.**

He plays well on the lute and harpsichord, draws the bow with greater strength than any man in England, and jousts marvelously.

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| **Question 1:** What evidence is there from these sources than Henry’s appearance changed as he got older? |  |
| **Question 2:** Study sources B and D. According to these writers, what changes did Henry VIII make when he became king? |  |
| **Questions 3:** What evidence is there from these sources that Henry VIII was a good king? |  |

**The French Revolution**

**Task 3: Read the text below and complete the crossword**

Qr code

Description automatically generatedScan the QR code to listen to this text:

The French Revolution was a period of time in France when the people overthrew the monarchy and took control of the government. The French Revolution lasted 10 years from 1789 to 1799. It began on July 14, 1789 when revolutionaries stormed a prison called the Bastille. The revolution came to an end 1799 when a general named Napoleon overthrew the revolutionary government and established the French Consulate (with Napoleon as leader).

**The French Estates**

Before the French Revolution, the people of France were divided into social groups called "Estates." The First Estate included the clergy (church leaders), the Second Estate included the nobles, and the Third Estate included the commoners. Most of the people were members of the Third Estate. The Third Estate paid most of the taxes, while the nobility lived lives of luxury and got all the high-ranking jobs.

**Revolutionary Government**  
  
The French Government was in constant turmoil throughout the revolution. At the start of the revolution, representatives from the Third Estate established the National Assembly where they demanded that King Louis XVI give them certain rights. This group soon took control of the country. They changed names over time to the Legislative Assembly and, later, to the National Convention. After the Reign of Terror, a new government was formed called the Directory. The Directory ruled until Napoleon took control.  
  
**Reign of Terror**  
  
The darkest period of the French Revolution is called the Reign of Terror which lasted from 1793 to 1794. During this time, a man named Robespierre led the National Convention and the Committee of Public Safety. He wanted to stamp out any opposition to the revolution, so he called for a rule of "Terror." Laws were passed that said anyone suspected of treason could be arrested and executed by guillotine. Thousands of people were executed including Queen Marie Antoinette and many of Robespierre's political rivals.  
  
**Political Clubs**  
  
Many of the new political ideas and alliances of the French Revolution were formed in political clubs. These clubs included the powerful Jacobin Club (led by Robespierre), the Cordeliers, the Feuillants Club, and the Pantheon Club

**Outcome**  
  
The French Revolution completely changed the social and political structure of France. It put an end to the French monarchy, feudalism, and took political power from the Catholic church. It brought new ideas to Europe including liberty and freedom for the commoner as well as the abolishment of slavery and the rights of women. Although the revolution ended with the rise of Napoleon, the ideas and reforms did not die. These new ideas continued to influence Europe and helped to shape many of Europe's modern-day governments.

**Complete the crossword**

Chart

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**Task 4: Watch this video and use it to summarise the causes and consequences of the French Revolution**

**Scan QR code or search YouTube for ‘The French Revolution oversimplified.’ There are two parts to watch**

**Part 1Qr code

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| **Causes** | **Consequences** |
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