

History A Level

Introductory

Work: Tudors



King Egbert School

Work booklet

Section one: What was England like at the time of the Tudors?

The years 1485-1603 were a different world from the England and Europe we know today. In order to be successful historians of the Early Modern period, we need to approach the study of the period through the lens of the time rather than through the lens of today.

The activity for this week, will help you gain an overall feel for what England was like when the Tudors came to the throne.

Task:

Read through the information below that has been scanned from the textbook 'The Tudors' by D Ferriby, A Anderson & Timperato. Then use that to create a large mindmap titled 'England in the 1500s'. Add information to this mindmap on the following stalks:

- The Geography and England
- Economy (what areas people worked in)
- Society (groups of people and their roles)
- Power and authority
- Religion

Extract from the textbook to help with the task

1 England in 1485

Before you begin to study the Tudors, you need to have a clear picture in your mind of what life was like in England in 1485. What did the countryside look like? How did people live and earn their living? What did they believe? Were ideas fixed or open to change? In politics, what had adults lived through which would affect their views about events under the new king, Henry VII?

The countryside, the economy and English society

What was England like in 1485?

So what was this country of England like in 1485? Its landscape would, in the hilly and mountainous areas, be familiar to the England of today. But in every other respect life was unrecognisable. The total population was about three million, 90 per cent of whom lived in very rural communities. Towns were small: a very large town, such as Norwich, had a population of 12,000 – more than enough to be considered a city. London was the largest by far, but this had only about 60,000 residents, living in very cramped and overcrowded conditions. Other urban settlements such as Salisbury had about 5,000 inhabitants. These larger urban settlements were not evenly distributed across the country, with the result that some very small settlements assumed considerable importance as centres for local government as well as for the sale of goods at markets and fairs. These occurred mostly in the more sparsely populated areas of the country. For example, there were no large towns in Sussex, and Lewes, with a population of under 1,000, was important as a commercial centre as well as for local government.

Farming

Arable farming – Labour-intensive farming which produced crops using basic tools including ploughs.

Enclosure – The fencing off of land from open fields with the ending of all common rights over it.

Rural communities varied enormously across the country, depending largely on the terrain and the landscape. In parts of southern England and the Midlands open field **arable farming** with a variety of crops was common. Elsewhere, fens, marshes, forests and uplands all had their own identities. In the more hilly areas, for example, livestock farming (cattle, sheep and pigs) was common. Woodland and forests were important for timber as well as grazing animals. Fishing was important in the rivers, lakes and marshes. People, especially the poor, had to be resourceful in order to survive, and the geography and climate of England provided plenty of opportunities for specialisation.

The large open fields were common in many areas of arable farming. The land was divided into strips and given by the local landowner to tenants. Most villages also had common land – land where all villagers had the right to graze their animals. However, this description is over-simplified. Even in the late fifteenth century there was some concern about **enclosure**. Enclosure involved putting a fence around a field so that either one crop could be produced on a larger scale or the field could be used for livestock. This was especially popular in parts of the Midlands where some farmers were moving from arable to pasture farming because sheep farming was more profitable. Tenant farmers could lose their strips of land when landowners wanted to change farming methods. Sometimes the common land was enclosed, and this was likely to provoke fierce opposition, as villagers claimed customary rights of access to common land. Fencing off these areas deprived villagers of land for their animals, cutting timber, or for fishing and hunting. There was an early attempt in 1489 to deal with the perceived problem when an anti-enclosure law was passed, but it had little practical effect.

Cloth industry

Linked with farming, England's major industry was cloth, accounting for nearly 80 per cent of England's exports. Although agriculture provided the main livelihood for people in Tudor England, the woollen cloth industry created the most wealth. Different types and sizes of cloths were exported mainly to the Netherlands, but also to Spain, the Holy Roman Empire (see page 28) and Venice. Most of this trade was controlled by the Merchant Adventurers, a powerful company based in London. It exported the cloth and imported foreign goods in return. The quality of wool produced by English sheep made both the raw material and cloth woven from it greatly in demand at home and abroad. Tudor governments from Henry VII onwards would all be keen to encourage this sector of the economy because its success brought in valuable income to the Crown from **customs duties** on exports. In the Middle Ages, raw wool was a primary export, but increasingly governments tried to discourage this as it meant that the **finishing** work to produce a piece of cloth was being done elsewhere, costing the Crown export income and hampering the development of a domestic finishing industry. All this, of course, brought the industry into conflict with arable farmers who objected to farmland being converted into sheep-runs, or enclosed.

Woollen cloth production was widely scattered, but the best quality cloth came from the west of England – from towns and villages along the Welsh borders and down into Gloucestershire, Wiltshire and Hampshire. Production was specialised but not intensive. Most cloth was made by hand, either in a room in a peasant cottage or in a small workshop within the cloth merchant's house. Few people worked full-time in the woollen industry, although there were 'journeymen' who travelled to make a living, hiring out their skills.

Customs duties – Money paid on goods entering or leaving the country. Money came from tunnage (taxes on exports) and poundage (taxes on imports).

Finishing – The final stages of woollen production when spun yarn is converted into cloth by weaving, which includes fulling (cleansing the wool to eliminate oil, dirt and other impurities) and dyeing it.

English society

It was expected that everyone recognised their place in society – from the King, downwards through the ranks of clergy, nobles, gentry, merchants, commoners, servants and paupers. It was generally accepted that ‘The Great Chain of Being’ had been ordered by God with a strict hierarchy of ranks. Social status dominated society. This put the Church in a powerful position to control the people by preaching obedience to the will of God and it made the Church an indispensable ally of the government.

The nobles were few in number – just over 50 – who owned large areas of land which provided power and influence in the localities. Strict inheritance rules of **primogeniture** meant that estates were passed down intact to the eldest son or the nearest male relative. The King relied on the support of these noble families to maintain law and order in their areas of the country, otherwise rebellions could easily occur. A successful monarch, therefore, ruled co-operatively with the nobles and it was one of his duties to make sure that was possible. Some monarchs in the fifteenth century had tried to ‘buy’ support by granting many new titles. Henry VII did the opposite; he created only three Earls in his reign, thus making the honour very special and ensuring that those who wanted the

Primogeniture – The eldest son or nearest male relative inherited everything.

title were loyal and supportive of him. Important nobles maintained extensive households, consisting of all family members, friends and servants. For example, Richard, Duke of Northumberland, had 187 household members in 1503–04.

Below the nobles were the gentry, the merchants, the commoners (ranging from those who farmed on small areas of land down to those who were landless and worked for others) and the beggars. In the Tudor period the commoners often suffered badly because of changes in agriculture, such as enclosure, and because of the rise in prices that was a major feature of the period (see Chapter 6, pages 170–71).

Divine Right of Kings – The belief that monarchs were ruling on behalf of God. They were therefore answerable to God, and the monarch’s subjects were expected to obey the monarch, otherwise they were disobeying God.

At the pinnacle of the social hierarchy was the monarch. He ruled under God, though the later theory of **Divine Right of Kings** had not been fully set out. These theoretical powers did not mean that the monarch could be a dictator. He needed the support of leading nobles to provide law and order and an army in times of war. Indeed, he was expected to consult with his advisers who would largely be drawn from the nobility. Henry VII was fortunate to have loyal noble advisers whom he could trust. Henry also needed to summon Parliament from time to time to get support and to pass laws.

The country of England was more unified than countries in Europe such as France. In England there was a common law; there was an accepted language (except in the peripheries such as Cornwall). Wales was regarded as a part of England, in spite of the Welsh language that predominated in some parts. In theory the monarch controlled the whole country, but in practice some areas were semi-independent, either under the control of leading nobles or ruled by the Church from Durham or York.

The Catholic Church

Why was the Catholic Church so powerful? And why had it been criticised?

In this section you will examine how powerful the Church was in late fifteenth century society – and why it was being criticised. However, it is important not to view the situation through the eyes of a twenty-first century student living in a society where religion is often not so central. Try to understand how it was five hundred years ago.

Secular – The opposite of 'sacred', i.e. worldly things, not spiritual.

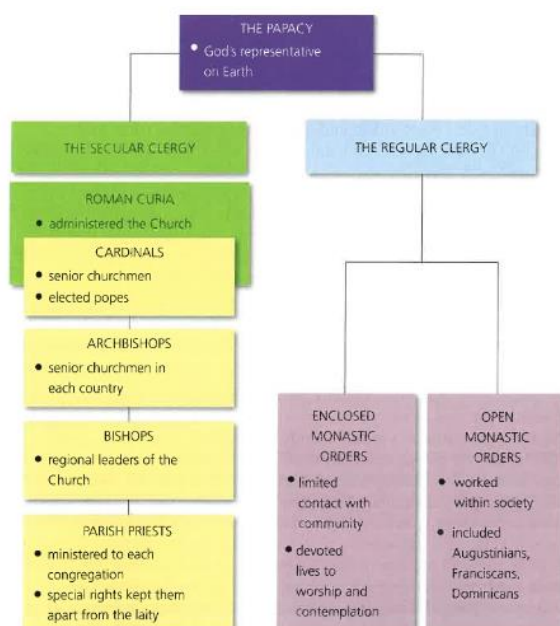
The Catholic Church was immensely powerful in the late fifteenth century. It owned about one-third of the land and had considerable wealth. Mirroring the structure of **secular** society, the Church had a hierarchy from Archbishops to Bishops, all the way down the chain to poor parish priests who earned less than £15 a year. There were about 35,000 ordained clergy and about 10,000 monks and nuns. The Church had its own legal system, and clergy were tried in Church courts. In theory, the Pope in Rome decided on all matters both religious and political. There was a constant flow of paperwork between England and Italy, dealing with legal cases and administrative issues. As such, England was a fully integrated part of the international Catholic Church. However, often the Pope's primary political focus was on the Papal States which were frequently in conflict with neighbouring states.

The power of the Catholic Church stemmed from people's beliefs and fears. Life was often short, disease was common and medicines were few. People needed certainties and the Church provided for this. Many church walls had contrasting and lurid pictures of heaven and hell. Others, such as the wall paintings at Pickering in Yorkshire, showed scenes of the life of Christ, with

special emphasis on his suffering and crucifixion. Illiterate peasants could easily understand where they wanted to go after death, but their religious beliefs were of necessity rather simple and sometimes close to what we would term 'folk religion'. Their lives were dominated by the seasons of the year and the contrasts of the weather. Priests tried hard, by using paintings and statues, to explain Christian beliefs, but it is hardly surprising if beliefs focused more on the god of nature and the fear of going to hell than on the subtleties of Christian belief centring on the death of Jesus on a cross 1,500 years earlier.

Therefore at the beginning of the sixteenth century, English people, with few exceptions, followed the teachings (or doctrines) of the Catholic Church. This meant that they accepted the following:

- The Pope, in Rome, was head of the Church and had supreme authority over all spiritual matters. The Papacy was also recognised as a Court of Law. The *Papal Curia* under the Pope also acted as a Court of Appeal.
- There was an elaborately organised hierarchy of churchmen, many of whom worked in the community tending to the spiritual needs of ordinary people. These included clergy attached to parishes and also friars and nuns. Some, including monks, closed themselves off to concentrate on prayer. Even those were often active in the local community and owned large estates, which they managed.



▲ Figure 1 The structure of the Catholic Church in England at the beginning of the sixteenth century.

- The clergy held a special and powerful place within the community. Only formally ordained appointed priests could conduct services in church. Access to the Bible, written in Latin, was limited to priests and others who could read the language. Priests interpreted what it said for the benefit of their parishioners. The unique role of the priesthood was confirmed by their appearance at church services (they wore particular clothes – vestments – to conduct services) and their status set them apart (they were not allowed to marry or have sex).
- People should submit to the authority of the Church in their lives. According to the teachings of the Catholic Church there were seven essential sacraments which the Church performed. These were:
 - the eucharist (the commemoration of the Last Supper of Jesus with his disciples)
 - baptism
 - holy orders (the granting of the status of priest to someone who had completed their religious training)
 - confirmation (the recipient confirming the acceptance of God's spirit in their hearts)
 - marriage
 - confession, leading to penance (doing tasks to show repentance)
 - unction (otherwise known as the anointing of the sick, part of the Last Rites).
- For their souls to be saved, people should attend church regularly, believe in the sacraments and show their faith in God.

Churches within the community

The church was also part of the social fabric of the community. It was the most common building to be found across the country, an easily identifiable landmark in nearly every village and town. Great pride was taken by the community in building and maintaining their church as a sign of their devotion to God. In Louth, Lincolnshire, for example, fundraising produced £305 to build the parish church and more money was raised between 1501 and 1515 to construct a magnificent spire. Nearly two-thirds of English parish churches were built or rebuilt during the fifteenth century. There were many gifts to churches of vestments, plate and jewels. All this suggests that most people still supported the Church in the same way as in previous centuries. It was only when Henry VIII wanted a divorce, leading to what became the Reformation, that the focus was on criticisms of the Church. This has often led historians to paint a picture of church life in the early sixteenth century that was excessively focused on the failings of some church officials.

Most people went to church regularly, because the church was a special place and most of the population believed in its basic teaching. Think for a moment about how the interior of a parish church, with its large open space, ornate windows, images, statues and many decorations, must have seemed to its congregation. It was probably the most impressive building they would ever enter. From constructing and maintaining the building through to the emphasis on communal rather than individual worship, the church helped communities, especially villages, to find a sense of identity and collective purpose. In church, the village gathered together to worship but also to celebrate Holy Days and other festivals with dancing and drinking. In an age long before summer vacations and Bank Holidays, the church organised the days in the year when the daily routine was broken. In these ways, it bound villagers together into one community. There were in fact quite a few such days during the year, some local and some common throughout the country. Two examples of the latter were 23 April, St George's Day, which had been declared a saints' day in 1222, and May Day, with dancing round the maypole and much merry-making.

The Church was powerful, but it also suffered from faults. Indeed, its very power encouraged corruption. Some clergy were absent from their parishes (yet claiming the **stipend**); some clergy were pluralists (that is, claiming the stipends from several parishes); some clergy were immoral (they had mistresses) and some clergy were ignorant and could not even recite the Lord's Prayer.

Historians have held different views about the state of the pre-Reformation Church. Some, such as Professor A.G. Dickens, looking at the evidence from a Protestant perspective, found plenty to suggest that the Catholic Church in England faced much criticism because of the faults and shortcomings that undoubtedly existed in some parishes. These historians saw the Reformation process and England becoming a Protestant nation as a logical consequence. Other more recent historians have argued that shortcomings in the Church were nothing new; the Catholic Church had strength and vitality and much active support, both in worship and in outward signs such as church building projects. These historians argue that the Reformation's origins were primarily political – that is, Henry VIII's wish for a divorce – and this political reformation by coincidence happened at the same time as the European Reformation had started under Martin Luther.

The Church's political sphere

In these different ways the Church had become an accepted and intrinsic part of the lives of ordinary people. However, it was also a force in national and international politics. Since the **Norman Conquest** the Church had operated its own law courts to try crimes involving priests or breaches of doctrine. These were still active in the fifteenth century, although medieval kings had done their best to weaken the Church courts' independent power. Bishops and abbots had a political role; they sat in the House of Lords. Churchmen were often the best educated, most literate people in the country, so their skills as administrators were valued. In the early Tudor period it was not uncommon to find that government advisers and ministers were also members of the clergy. Henry VII promoted Bishop Morton to Archbishop of Canterbury and then Lord Chancellor, where he had an important role in advising the King. Henry was keen to work closely with the Church because it could be used as a powerful ally if his claim to the throne were to be challenged. The Church also offered an additional service to monarchs. Its power over people's minds through its teachings created a channel through which obedience to the will of the King could also be taught.

Stipend – The term used for the payment received by a priest for his appointment to a parish.

Norman Conquest – The events in which William came from Normandy and defeated the English King, Harold, in 1066. William and his successors imposed their own laws and system of government.

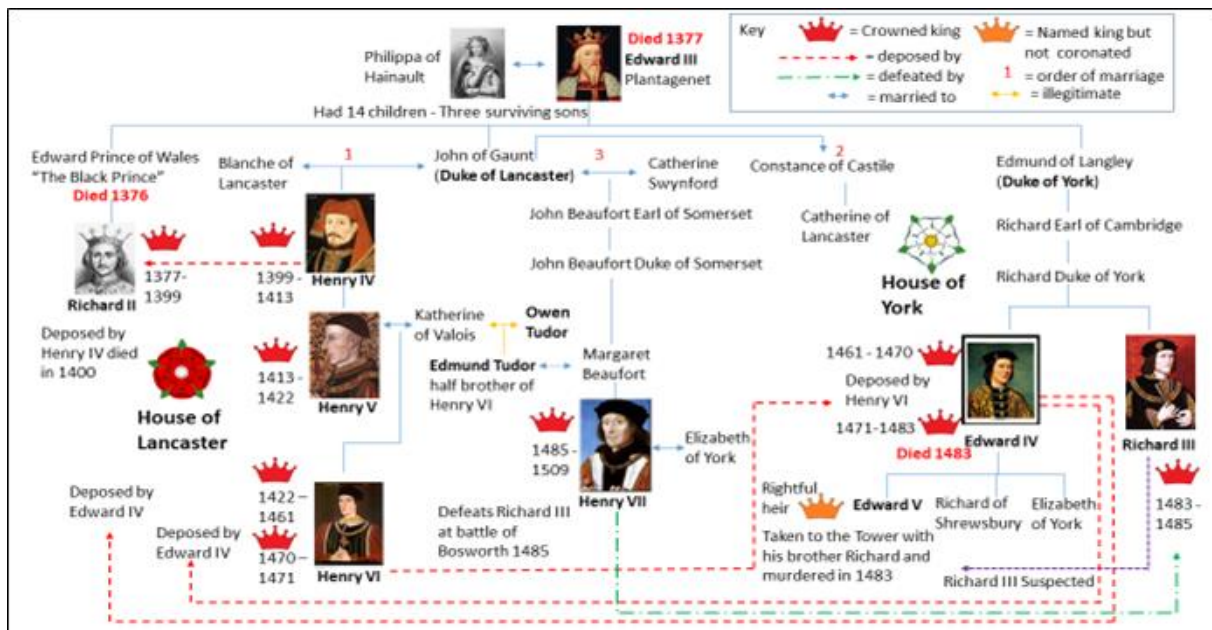
Source A How our view of the Catholic Church c.1500 has been changed by events that followed. From *The English Reformation Revised* by C. Haigh, (Cambridge University Press), 1987, p.58.

Relations between priests and parishioners were usually harmonious, and the laity complained astonishingly infrequently against their priests. There were local tensions, certainly, but they were individual rather than institutionalized, occasional rather than endemic. In a frantic search for the causes of reformation, we must not wrench isolated cases of discord from their local context, and pile them together to show a growing chorus of dissatisfaction.

Why do you think there are differing views on the state of the Church in c.1500 [Source A]?

Section two: What were the Wars of the Roses?

Task one: Take some time to examine the family tree of the Houses of Lancaster and York.



Task two: Use the family tree to answer the follow questions.

1. How many surviving sons did Edward III have?
2. Who was the heir to the throne when Edward III died?
3. Who took the throne from Henry VI?
4. What happened when Edward IV died?
5. How was Henry VII related to Edward III?

Task three: Read the information below.

In 1453, after one hundred years of England and France fighting each other there was peace. Unfortunately, in 1453 the English King, Henry VI, also went insane.

As the English nobles returned from France, they started fighting each other in England. This civil war was about who should rule the country. One side wanted the Duke of York to be king and were called Yorkists. The other side supported Henry VI. His family name was Lancaster, so his followers were called Lancastrians.

The ordinary people of England did not really care who was king if they were left in peace and not taxed too heavily. However, the nobles kept fighting, and many important nobles were killed. Each side had its own badge. The red rose was the badge of Lancaster and the white rose was the badge of York. The wars later became known as the Wars of the Roses.

Lancastrians **Yorkists**

Henry VI

1422-1461 Start fighting against Henry VI when he went mad in 1453

Edward IV

1461-1470

Henry VI

1470

Edward IV

1471-1483

Defeated Henry VI in battle and ruled until he died. Sent Henry VI to the Tower of London, where he was murdered.

Edward V

1483

When his father died, Edward V was only 12. His Uncle Richard took over the country instead.

Richard III

1483-1485

Richard's nephew (Edward V) and his little brother were sent to the Tower of London where they disappeared, never to be seen again. Many historians say they were murdered.

Task four: Answer the following questions.

1. Which king went insane?
2. What did Richard III do with Edward V and his little brother?
3. How was Richard III related to Edward V?
4. What did the ordinary people think about who should be king?
5. Why was the Earl of Warwick called the kingmaker?
6. Which side was the white rose for?
7. Which side was the red rose for?
8. Which side wanted Henry VI to be king?
9. Which side wanted the Duke of York to be King?
10. Can you explain what the Wars of the Roses were? Why did they begin?

Task five: Organise the events below into chronological order - (Y) shows they are Yorkist and (L) Lancastrian

In 1470 **Edward IV (Y)** had to run away from England as he was betrayed by his brother. **Henry VI (L) becomes king again!**

In 1483 **Edward IV (Y)** dies from old age. His 12-year-old son becomes king **Edward V (Y)**. He mysteriously disappears on his way to be crowned king.

Henry VI (L) captured in the **Battle of Northampton (1461)** and taken prisoner. **Edward IV from the House of York** wins and becomes king of England.

The Wars of the Roses begins at the Battle of St Albans in 1455. The **House of York** do not like having an insane king and think they could do a better job!

Between 1461- 64 there are 3 more battles between **Edward IV (Y)** and supporters of **Henry VI (L)**. **Edward IV wins them all easily.**

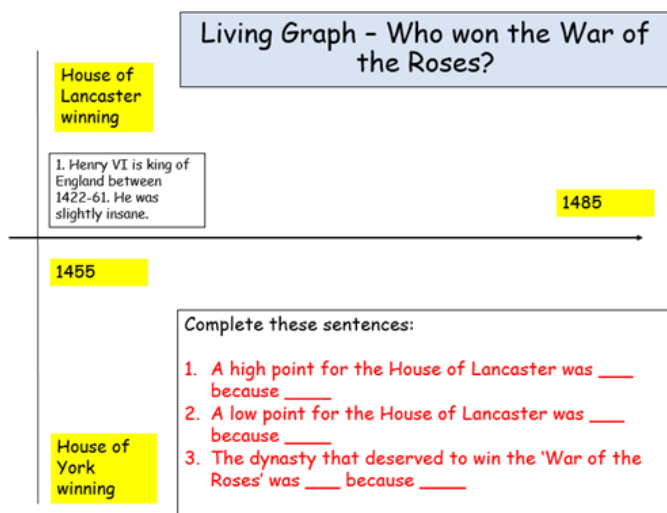
Henry VI is the King of England between 1422-61. He is from the **House of Lancaster**. He is slightly insane.

At the Battle of Barnet in 1471 **Edward IV (Y)** becomes king again! **Henry VI (L)** is murdered to prevent him becoming king again

Richard III (Y) dies at the Battle of Bosworth in 1485. **Henry VII (Henry Tudor)** becomes king. The War of the Roses is finally over!

Task six: Analysis

- When are the Lancastrians winning? When are the Yorkists winning? Colour code the statements above with a red or white rose.
- Create a 'living graph' for The Wars of the Roses, like the one below.
- Complete the sentences below.



- Research 'The Battle of Bosworth' and how the Wars of the Roses came to an end.

Section three: Who was Henry VII?

Task:

Watch the documentary on Henry VII called 'The Winter King' (link below). As you watch it, answer the following questions. You may find it easiest to either watch it all and then watch it again to answer the questions or pause and rewind as you go to complete the questions.

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=aBpSRQ6wVPU>

1. Part one: Battle of Bosworth

- a) How is Henry VII described?
- b) What was Henry's army like?
- c) Why did Henry choose to land in Pembrokeshire (Wales)?
- d) Why was the Stanley family important to Henry's victory?
- e) How were they connected to Henry?
- f) How was Henry victorious? How was he made 'King'?

Key question – why does the end of Richard III actually make Henry worried for the future?

2. Claim to the throne

- a) How does Henry claim a connection / claim to the English throne?
- b) Which previous relation gave Henry a link to the throne?
- c) Where had Henry spent most of his childhood?
- d) Why is a genealogical roll important? What does it tell us?
- e) Why would people pay to have genealogical rolls created?

3. First Parliament

- a) Why was calling Parliament a significant event in Henry being the rightful King?
- b) Why was Parliament worried about the dating of the start of the reign? If the Battle of Bosworth was after Henry's reign started how did it help him?

4. War of the Roses

- a) Why was Richard III unpopular?
- b) Why is the Tudor Rose significant?
- c) What does the emblem represent?

5. Heir

- a) Why was an heir important to Henry VII?

Section four: Who were some of the key individuals who played a role in the reign of Henry VII?

Task:

Research each of these key individuals. Limit your research to a 100 word profile explaining the following:

- their role in government (or the Church),
- key beliefs or ideas,
- major political events in which they were involved.

Remember, only events relevant to the dates 1485-1509. Do not just copy and paste, be selective and understand what you are recording, it will help during your studies in Y12.

- Thomas, Lord Stanley (1435-1509.)
- William Stanley (1435-95)
- John de la Pole, Earl of Lincoln (1460-87.)
- Lambert Simnel
- John Morton (d. 1500)
- Sir Reginald Bray
- Richard Empsom
- Edmund Dudley
- Maximilian I (1459-1519) Holy Roman Emperor.
- Charles VIII (1470-98) France
- James IV (1473-1513) Scotland
- Gerald Fitzgerald (1456-1513.)
- Giles, Baron Daubeney (1451-1508)
- Richard Fox (1447-1528.)
- John Colet (1467-1519)
- Sir Thomas More (1478-1535)
- Thomas Cromwell
- Thomas Cranmer
- Cardinal Wolsey

Section five: Big picture of the Tudors

Before you start on the study on any period of time, it is really useful to have the 'big picture' clear before you start. This does not need to be detailed, but show an outline. This will help you place all the details you will learn on to this outline. That is what this task is designed to do.

Task

Create a large timeline of the Tudors (1485-1603). It must highlight:

- Dates of the monarchs (Henry VII, Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary I & Elizabeth I)
- Significant events at home and abroad
- Summary of personalities / characteristics of each monarch.

Resources

You can always use other resources as well, but these links to BBC bitesize pages provide a really good summary to help you get this big picture. You do not need any more detail, but feel free to add to it with your own research if you wish!

Henry VII - <https://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/tudor-england/henry-vii/> (only site not from the BBC but a decent overall summary can be found here)

Henry VIII - <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zghrd2p/revision/1>

Edward VI - http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic_figures/edward_vi_king.shtml

Mary I - http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic_figures/mary_i_queen.shtml

Elizabeth I - <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zcn4jxs/revision/1>

Extra resources

Taking time to become even more familiar with the topic and time period is always beneficial and aids with the transition in to Y12 so in addition to the activities we have set out, students can read and / or watch some of the resources mentioned below (or anything else of interest relevant to the Tudor period in England). Enjoy!

Books:

John Guy – *A Short Introduction to the Tudors*

Hilary Mantel - *Wolf Hall*

Phillipa Gregory novels (*The White Queen* (some context from the Wars of the Roses), *The Red Queen*, *The Other Boleyn Girl*, *The Boleyn Inheritance* etc)

Alison Weir novels and books

Horrible Histories – *The Terrible Tudors*

Videos:

Mind of a Tyrant (David Starkey on Henry VIII) Episode 1: <https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x20nxy2>

Mind of a Tyrant Ep2: <https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x20yb7l>

Mind of a Tyrant Ep3: <https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x20yc5z>

Mind of a Tyrant Ep4: <https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x20ycvr>

Edward and Mary: The Unknown Tudors (Starkey documentary) Ep 1

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5mRFbmSga_4

Edward and Mary: The Unknown Tudors (Starkey documentary) Ep 2

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EB8qQpnn7eA>

Elizabeth documentary (Starkey again!) Part 1 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ahOvTUkzwgg>

Elizabeth documentary Part 2 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TdDIm1zIloA>

Elizabeth documentary Part 3 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JClqvThA1zU>

Elizabeth documentary Part 4 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pogWK0Cyz7U>