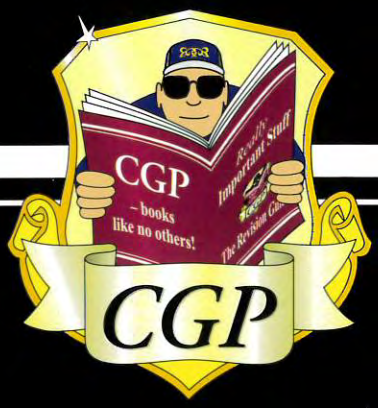
AQA



GCSE History
Elizabethan England

c1568-1603

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Exam Hints and Tips

GCSE AQA History is made up of two papers. The papers test different skills and each one covers different topics. These pages give you more information about each exam so you'll know what to expect on the day.

You will take Two Papers altogether

Paper 1 covers the Period Study and the Wider World Depth Study

Paper 1 is 2 hours long. It's worth 84 marks — 50% of your GCSE. This paper will be divided into two sections:

- Section A: Period Study.
- Section B: Wider World Depth Study.

It's really important that you make sure you know which topics you're studying for each paper.

Paper 2 covers the Thematic Study and the British Depth Study

Paper 2 is 2 hours long. It's worth 84 marks — 50% of your GCSE. This paper will be divided into two sections:

- Section A: Thematic Study.
- Section B: British Depth Study. This also includes a question on the Historic Environment.

This book covers the British Depth Study Elizabethan England, c1568-1603.

Depth Studies are about knowing a Short Period in Detail

1) Depth Studies cover a short period of history (less than 100 years) in detail. They focus on understanding how the main features and events of the period affected one another.
2) You'll need to have a detailed knowledge of the period — this means knowing the main developments and important events that took place. It also means understanding how important features of Elizabethan England (e.g. political, social, economic and religious issues) helped to shape events.
3) You should know the causes and consequences of the main events really well.

British Depth Studies include questions about Interpretations

1) Interpretations express opinions about an event or issue in the past. For example, an interpretation could be an extract from a textbook written by a historian or a cartoon drawn by a modern artist.
2) Historians and artists study sources when they're writing interpretations — sources help them to understand the past and develop their point of view.
3) Different historians and artists might come up with different interpretations of the same topic. There are lots of reasons why this might happen:
   - They might have used different sources when doing their research.
   - They may disagree over how important a particular source is.
   - They may have different opinions about how significant a certain event was.
4) For the British Depth Study part of the exam, you'll be asked to evaluate how convincing you think an interpretation is (see p.4 for more on this).

Exam Hints and Tips

Remember these Tips for Approaching the Questions

Stay focused on the question

- Read the questions carefully. Underline the key words in each question so you know exactly what you need to do.
- Make sure you directly answer the question — don't just chuck in everything you know about Elizabethan England.
- You've got to be relevant and accurate — make sure you include precise details in your answers.
- It might help to try to write the first sentence of every paragraph in a way that addresses the question, e.g. "Another reason why the Elizabethan Poor Laws were important was..."

For example, you should include the dates of important events in the history of Elizabethan England and the names of the people who were involved.

Plan your essay answers

- You don't need to plan answers to the shorter questions in the exam.
- For longer essay questions, it's very important to make a quick plan before you start writing. This will help to make your answer well organised and structured, with each point leading clearly to your conclusion.
- Look at the key words in the question. Scribble a quick plan of your main points — cross through this neatly at the end, so it's obvious that it shouldn't be marked.

Organise your Time in the exam

1) Always double check that you know how much time you have for each paper.
2) Learn the rule — the more marks a question is worth, the longer your answer should be. The number of marks available for each question is clearly shown in the exam paper.
3) Try not to spend too much time on one question — you need to leave enough time so you can answer all of the questions.
4) Try to leave a few minutes at the end of the exam to go back and read over your answers.

Always use a Clear Writing Style

1) Try to use clear handwriting — and pay attention to spelling, punctuation and grammar.
2) If you make a mistake, miss out a word or need to add extra information to a point, make your changes neatly. Check that the examiner will still be able to easily read and understand your answer.
3) Remember to start a new paragraph for each new point you want to discuss.
4) A brief introduction and conclusion will help to give structure to your essay answers and make sure you stay focused on the question.

Learn this information and make exam stress history...

Jotting down a quick plan of the different points you're going to make before you start writing can really help you to make sure your answer is clearly written and has a nice logical structure.

Skills for the British Depth Study

This page will give you some advice on how to approach the British Depth Study, as well as how to find your way around this book. The activity types are colour-coded to help you find what you need.

The British Depth Study tests Three Different Skills

The activities in this book will help you to practise all the different skills you'll need for the exam.

Knowledge and Understanding

1) You'll need to use your own knowledge and understanding of the topic to back up your answers in the exam.
2) It's important for you to use accurate and relevant information to support your ideas.

The Knowledge and Understanding activities in this book will help you to revise key features and events from the period — what was happening, when it was happening, who was involved and all the other important details.

Interpretation

1) You'll be given one interpretation about Elizabethan England in the exam. This could be a written extract or an image.
2) You'll be asked how convincing the interpretation is in presenting an aspect of Elizabethan England.
3) For this question, you'll need to use your own knowledge and analyse the interpretation to explain how accurate it is.

To what extent is Interpretation 1 convincing about exploration during Elizabeth's reign? Use Interpretation 1 and your own knowledge to explain your answer. [8 marks]

The Interpretation activities in this book will help you to analyse written and visual interpretations.

Thinking Historically

1) In the exam, you'll need to use historical concepts to analyse key events and developments. These concepts include cause, consequence, change and continuity.
2) One of the questions in the exam will ask you to explain how an event or development was important in Elizabethan England.
3) For this question, make sure you cover a range of ways the event or development affected Elizabethan England. Make sure you explain why each effect that you cover was important.
4) Another question in the exam will ask you to write a narrative account of developments that took place between c1568 and 1603.
5) When you're answering this question, don't just describe what happened — analyse every development that you write about. Think about the impact that it had and explain how different developments were related.

How were the Poor Laws important in Elizabethan England? Explain your answer. [8 marks]

Give an account of the ways that the Earl of Essex's rebellion affected Elizabethan England. [8 marks]

The Thinking Historically activities in this book will help you to practise using historical concepts to analyse different parts of the topic.

Studying the Historic Environment

In the exam, you'll have to answer a 16-mark essay question about the historic environment. The next few pages are full of great advice on how to write about the Elizabethan historic site that you've studied.

The Key Features of a Site can tell you a lot about its History

The key features of a historical site are any details, characteristics or features that stand out and make the site, or part of it, special. They are the main or most important characteristics of the site. These features can show how people lived and help to paint a picture of their culture, values and fashions.

Sites like theatres, settlements and manor houses (and their gardens) can tell you a lot about how people lived in Elizabethan England.

Use these questions to help you to identify the key features of your site...

1) How was the site used? Did this change over time?
2) Where is the site located? What was that location like?
3) Is there anything significant about the structure of the site? E.g. a theatre's layout was usually centred around its stage.
4) What were the key design features of the site? Think about big and small features (e.g. a manor house might have impressive tall towers and glass windows, but it might also have more intricate details like family crests and initials carved in stone).
5) Who used, designed and/or built the site? What do the site's features tell you about these people? For example, lots of manor houses were built by nobles who wanted to show off their wealth and status. Glass windows were expensive, so putting many in a manor house was a sign of great wealth.
6) Is the site connected to any key events or developments during the period?

For example, some manor houses were used as defensive strongholds as well as homes in the medieval period. In more peaceful times, they were just used as homes. As a result, the original location of a manor house might have been chosen because it was easy to defend.

You can use Key Features as Evidence of Change and Continuity

1) You need to know which key features of your historic environment site changed between c1568 and 1603.
2) Look for features that were different in an earlier period. Think about what this tells you about the way that society and culture changed in Elizabethan England.
3) Think about what had stayed the same. These continuities might also reflect the society and culture of your site.
4) Use your knowledge of key features to support your arguments about change and continuity.

Make sure you understand why these features changed — consider whether the changes are linked to any major events or developments that happened in Elizabethan England. This will help you to put the changes into context.

Historic Sites can influence Key Events and Developments

1) The nature of a historic site can influence the events and developments which happened there.
2) Understanding the key features of a site can help you to explain how and why certain events or developments happened the way they did.

Key events like battles are often influenced by the place where they happen. The location, layout and conditions of a site can all make a difference to how an event turns out.

In 1588, the English attacked the Spanish Armada at Calais while it was waiting to pick up more Spanish soldiers, and it fled into the English Channel. After this, the Armada wanted to return to Calais, but the wind was blowing the wrong way. This meant they ended up fighting the English at Gravelines.

The leaders of the Armada were forced to fight when they weren't ready. After Gravelines, they decided to retreat. Therefore, the weather conditions of the English Channel were directly linked to the defeat of the Spanish Armada.

Make sure you know your site like the back of your hand...

Don't worry if you live really far away from the historic site that you're studying — you don't need to visit the site as part of the course, and you won't lose marks if you haven't been to it.

Writing About the Historic Environment

These useful pages explain how to choose relevant key features, and how to write about them in the exam.

Talk about Relevant Key Features in the Exam

In the exam, you'll be asked about the site that you've studied. You'll need to use your own knowledge of the key features of your site to answer an essay question. In your essay, you'll be asked to link the historic environment (your site) to an aspect of Elizabethan England that you've looked at in your Depth Study.

1) The question might focus on a key change or period of continuity, or it could ask you to examine the causes or consequences of an event or development.
2) Only write about features of your site that are relevant to the question that you've been asked and to the points that you're making in your answer.
3) You need to select pieces of information that support your arguments.

See p.7 for some examples of how to use key features in your answer.

Different Features can tell you Different Things

When you're talking about key features, you could choose something quite broad, like the physical location of a site, or focus on very small details, like a specific type of window on a building.

1) Consider the location of your site and what was around it. There's often a reason why a certain place was chosen (e.g. it was easy to defend), and this can reveal things about the lives of those who used the site.
2) Think about how a site is used over time — changes in function can reflect gradual changes in society, or be a result of upheaval or a significant event.
3) Design features often reflect key attitudes or changes in the owners' lives.
4) They can also tell you a lot about the motives of the people who used or created the site. Think about the physical structure of your site and what it tells you about the way it was used and the people who designed it.
5) Pick out features that are representative of Elizabethan England. Some features might be unique to your site, while others might be typical of the period and pop up in lots of sites.

For example, a family crest might be added to the wall of an Elizabethan manor house. This might suggest that the owner wanted to show off their long-standing family connections and nobility in a time when new members of the gentry were rising.

Use your Own Knowledge to put Key Features into Context

1) Use what you know about Elizabethan England to put the key features of your site into context.
2) Talk about your site's development in the context of wider changes or events in Elizabethan England.
3) For example, design choices often reflect wider cultural changes — fashions change over time and key features can be used as evidence of how and when these changes affected a particular site.
4) When you identify a feature, talk about what it might suggest about the people who used the site, then link it to wider developments.

For example, new design features like fireplaces might have been added to an Elizabethan manor house by a particular owner — this could be a sign of the growing wealth of the owner. It might also show that the owner wanted to keep up with changing fashions in building design.

A key feature of the Elizabethan period was the rise of the gentry and their increasing wealth. New design features can be evidence of this wealth being used to improve living conditions. They're often evidence of owners wanting to show off their wealth by spending money in a way that was visible to everyone around them.

Writing About the Historic Environment

You'll need to use your Knowledge of Key Features in the Exam

You'll get one question in the exam about your historic site. It'll look a bit like this:

'The main change that Elizabethan theatres demonstrated was the increasing popularity of plays as a form of entertainment.'

To what extent does a study of the Globe Theatre support this statement?

Explain your answer, referring to the Globe Theatre and your knowledge of Elizabethan England. [16 marks]

The question starts by making a statement that's linked to a particular type of site (e.g. theatres)

The question will name a specific site (in the exam, it'll be the one that you've studied).

You'll need to use evidence from your site to answer the question. Always support your points by drawing on your knowledge of your site's key features.

Use the Key Features of your site to Support your Answer

Select key features that are relevant to the question and use them to support your points. Explain how the key features of your site support (or go against) the statement in the question.

The Globe was designed to be permanent. This suggests that the theatre was becoming more popular as a form of regular entertainment. The Globe was a wooden structure that was used as a permanent theatre venue in Elizabethan London. This meant that plays could be performed more regularly and in a fixed place. As a result, its owner and designer, Richard Burbage, could make a steady and reliable income out of the theatre. He couldn't do this when plays were performed across the country in inns and village squares in the earlier part of Elizabeth's reign.

The design of the Globe shows that theatre was becoming popular among both the rich and the poor. Richer people sat underneath a thatched cover that stretched around the edge of the theatre. Poorer people, known as groundlings, stood around the apron stage. This was an open air stage that pushed into the crowd. This meant that everyone in society could enjoy plays, without having to mix with each other and weaken the gap in social status that existed between the rich and the poor.

You can also use your knowledge of the period to support your arguments and link your site to wider developments. Don't just write down everything you know about the period — you need to answer the question.

You can use the actions or motives of people who were linked to your site to support your arguments. Try to link their actions to events in wider society.

Burbage used classical features like pillars when he built the Globe to try to make theatre seem more respectable and improve its status. These design features were popular and well-respected in Elizabethan England, so he hoped they would improve the reputation of the Globe. The Globe also had to be built outside the City of London, because the London authorities and the Puritans disapproved of the theatre. They thought that it encouraged poor behaviour. This shows that, although the popularity of the theatre was growing, not everyone in Elizabethan London approved of it.

Some key features — small, metal, good at opening doors...

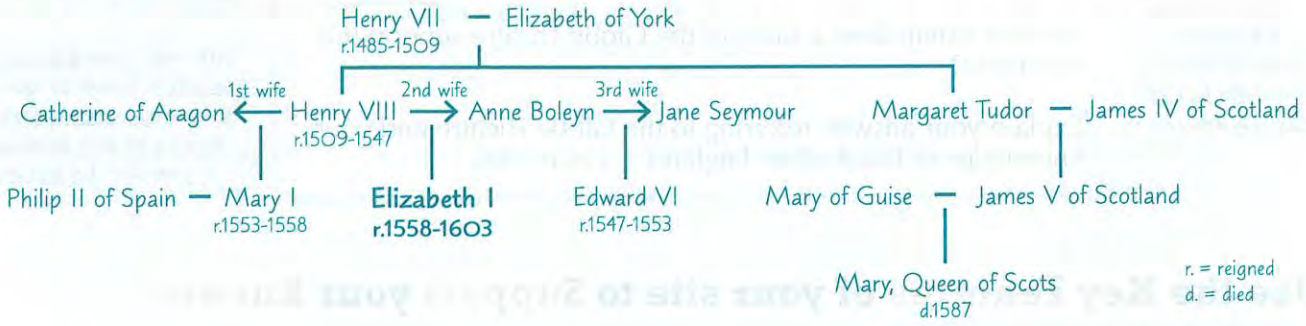
There are different types of historic site you might study — yours might be a specific building like a manor house, or it might cover a larger area like a town or the site of a rebellion or battle.

Elizabeth's Background and Character

Elizabeth I became queen in 1558. She reigned for almost 45 years, until her death in 1603. She had a rocky start in life and faced some pretty serious problems when she first became queen.

Queen Elizabeth I was from the House of Tudor

The Tudor family had ruled England since Henry VII became king in 1485. Here's their family tree:



Elizabeth I was Cautious, Intelligent and Powerful

1) Elizabeth was Henry VIII's second child, the daughter of his second wife, Anne Boleyn. As a child, she was third in line to the throne (behind Edward VI and Mary I), so no one really expected her to become queen.
2) Elizabeth had a difficult upbringing and sometimes feared for her life. In 1554, she was accused of conspiring against her half-sister, Queen Mary I, and placed under house arrest for almost a year.
3) Elizabeth was very cautious and only trusted a few close advisors. She could also be indecisive — she was reluctant to make decisions without carefully considering their possible consequences.
4) She was intelligent, confident and very well educated. Despite having had little training in how to govern, she became a powerful and effective leader.

© Mary Evans / Iberfoto

Some people Didn't want Elizabeth to be Queen

Gender

1) In the 16th century, most people believed the monarch should be a man. They thought that rule by a woman was unnatural.
2) Most people expected Elizabeth to act as a figurehead, without any real power. They thought she should let her male counsellors take control or find a husband to govern for her (see p.16).
3) However, Elizabeth was determined to rule in her own right and refused to let her counsellors take over.

Illegitimacy

1) In 1533, Henry VIII had divorced his first wife, Catherine of Aragon, and married Anne Boleyn.
2) Divorce was forbidden in the Catholic Church, so many Catholics believed Henry's marriage to Anne was not valid and their daughter, Elizabeth, was illegitimate.
3) Illegitimate children weren't usually allowed to inherit, so the issue of Elizabeth's legitimacy weakened her claim to the throne. Some people thought that Mary, Queen of Scots (see p.38) had more right to rule.

Elizabeth's Background and Character

SKILLS PRACTICE

Although she ruled England for almost 45 years, Queen Elizabeth I didn't have a smooth start to her reign. Take a look at the following activities to help you learn about who she was and what problems she faced.

Knowledge and Understanding

1) Which four Tudor monarchs ruled England before Queen Elizabeth I? Give the dates of their reigns.

2) Why wasn't Elizabeth expected to become queen?

Thinking Historically

1) Copy and complete the table below, explaining how each characteristic might have affected Elizabeth's ability to rule.

Characteristic	How it might have affected Elizabeth's ability to rule
a) Cautious	
b) Confident	
c) Intelligent	

Interpretation

The interpretation below is about the challenges Elizabeth faced as Queen of England.

> For most people in 16th-century England, the idea of being ruled by a woman was unthinkable. But that wasn't the only obstacle Elizabeth had to overcome. There was also the difficult question of whether she had the right to inherit the throne at all. Her father's multiple marriages complicated the issue, as did differences in religion, with Catholics and Protestants often holding different views on the matter. The uncertainty over Elizabeth's claim to the throne created a rival in the form of her cousin Mary, who some people argued had a stronger claim.

1) Explain whether you think the interpretation is convincing about the following subjects. Use information from page 8 to help you.

a) How people viewed Elizabeth's gender

b) How people viewed Elizabeth's legitimacy

c) How Elizabeth was affected by other claimants to the throne

EXAM TIP

It's not so easy being queen...

In the exam, interpretations are either visual or written. You'll only see one interpretation about Elizabethan England, but you'll need to prepare to answer a question on either type.

The Elizabethan Court

Elizabeth's court was the heart of social and political life — everyone who was anyone could be found there.

The Court was the Centre of Elizabethan Social Life

1) The royal court was a large group of people who surrounded the monarch at all times. More than 1000 people attended the court, including Elizabeth's personal servants, members of the Privy Council (see p.12), members of the nobility, ambassadors and other foreign visitors, and Elizabeth's 'favourites'.

Some courtiers became Elizabeth's 'favourites'. Early in her reign, Elizabeth was very close to Robert Dudley. She made him Earl of Leicester in 1564 and may have considered marrying him (see p.16). Christopher Hatton was another of her 'favourites'. In 1587, she made him Lord Chancellor, even though he had little relevant experience. Walter Raleigh came to Elizabeth's court in 1581. Elizabeth gave him many valuable gifts, including the right to colonise the New World (see p.32).

2) Courtiers were expected to flatter Elizabeth, shower her with gifts and pretend to be in love with her.
3) Courtly pastimes included plays, concerts, hunting, jousting and tennis. There were also balls and grand meals.
4) Members of the court travelled with Elizabeth when she moved between her palaces, and when great processions were held. They also went with her when she travelled around the country visiting the houses of wealthy noblemen (these trips were known as royal progresses).

Comment and Analysis

The entertainments and fashionable clothes on show at court were a way for Elizabeth to impress her subjects and foreign visitors by displaying her wealth and power.

Political Power relied on Access to the Queen

1) The Queen was the centre of government, and political power revolved around her. This meant that those closest to Elizabeth had the greatest influence and power.
2) The court was the centre of political life. Anyone who wanted to get ahead and increase their political power had to have a place at court.
3) Courtiers didn't necessarily hold government positions — they became powerful through their close relationship with the Queen.

Courtiers had to compete with one another for the Queen's attention and favour. Towards the end of Elizabeth's reign, this competition led to growing conflict at court (see p.18).

Elizabeth used Patronage to ensure Loyalty and Stability

1) Patronage involved handing out titles, offices or monopolies (see p.22), which gave men a source of income. Elizabeth had a lot of these offices to give away, including high positions in the Church. Royal patronage was distributed at court.
2) Elizabeth's use of patronage helped to ensure loyalty. Those who received patronage became dependent on Elizabeth for some or all of their income and status, so they were likely to be loyal to her.
3) Elizabeth distributed patronage very widely. This helped to ensure political stability — all members of the elite felt they had a chance to be rewarded by the Queen, so they were unlikely to rebel against her.
4) Patronage was a way for Elizabeth to reward her courtiers without spending royal revenues. This was important because the English economy was weak during Elizabeth's reign and her income was limited.

Comment and Analysis

Traditionally, the elite was dominated by noble families. Their power didn't come from the monarch — it mainly came from the large amounts of land that they inherited. By promoting men who relied on her for their wealth and influence, Elizabeth limited the power of the traditional noble families and made the new elite more loyal to her.

The Elizabethan Court

SKILLS PRACTICE

These activities are all about court life — who was in the court, what they did, and what they got in return.

Knowledge and Understanding

1) Copy and complete the mind map below, adding information about the following aspects of Elizabeth's court. Give as much detail as possible.

Elizabeth's Court

a) Who attended the royal court?

b) What courtly pastimes were there?

c) Where was the royal court located?

2) How did people gain political power in Elizabethan England?

3) What is meant by the term 'patronage'? How did Elizabeth use it to create stability?

4) How did Elizabeth limit the power of traditional noble families? Explain your answer.

Interpretation

The interpretation below shows Walter Raleigh at Queen Elizabeth's court.

a) Elizabeth's courtiers are wearing fashionable and expensive-looking clothes.

b) Elizabeth is accompanied by a number of courtiers.

c) Walter Raleigh is in a more prominent position than the other courtiers.

© Look and Learn

1) Explain whether you think each labelled feature is convincing about Queen Elizabeth's court. Use information from page 10 to help you.

EXAM TIP

Court, courtier, courtiest...

If you get an image as an interpretation in the exam, don't just describe what's in the image — you should link features of the interpretation to your wider knowledge of Elizabethan England.

The Elizabethan Government

The Queen was the head of government. She was advised by her Privy Council, which included her key ministers. Parliament could be involved in granting taxes, passing laws and giving advice.

The Privy Council was Central to Elizabethan Government

1) The Privy Council had two main roles. It gave advice to the Queen and managed the administration of government.
2) The Council was made up of around twenty men, all chosen by Elizabeth. Members of the Privy Council were the Queen's closest and most trusted advisors. Some key ministers served on the Council for many years.
3) The Queen didn't have to follow the advice of the Privy Council. Counsellors were expected to carry out her instructions, even when doing so went against their advice.

This involved making sure that Elizabeth's policies were enforced. The Council oversaw many different areas of government, including religion, the economy, the military, foreign policy and the Queen's security.

William Cecil was Elizabeth's Closest Advisor

1) When she became queen in 1558, Elizabeth made William Cecil her Principal Secretary. He became her closest advisor, leading the Privy Council and making sure the government ran smoothly.
2) In 1571, Elizabeth gave Cecil the title Lord Burghley. The next year she made him Lord High Treasurer, giving him greater control over royal finances. Cecil continued to serve Elizabeth until his death in 1598.
3) Elizabeth's other key ministers included Nicholas Bacon, who was Lord Chancellor from 1559 to 1579, and Francis Walsingham, who became Principal Secretary in 1573.

Comment and Analysis

Cecil was a highly skilled politician and administrator. Some historians argue that Elizabeth's success as queen was as much due to Cecil's remarkable skills as it was to Elizabeth's own talents.

There were Two Chambers of Parliament

1) The House of Lords was not elected — it was made up of members of the nobility and senior churchmen.
2) The House of Commons was elected, but only men who owned property over a certain value were allowed to vote. Elections weren't free — the Crown controlled who got elected in some areas, and in others powerful local figures controlled who was chosen.

Parliament's functions were Advice, Taxation and Legislation

Advice

Parliament was an important point of contact between central government and the leading figures in local government throughout the country. It enabled the Queen and her counsellors to gauge the mood of the country and levels of support for their policies.

Taxation

When the Queen needed extra revenue, she had to ask Parliament's permission to raise taxes.

Legislation

The Queen needed Parliament's approval to pass new laws. However, she could bypass this function by issuing royal proclamations instead.

Comment and Analysis

Elizabeth took little interest in the advice of Members of Parliament (MPs), and she could bypass Parliament's role in passing new laws. For Elizabeth, Parliament's main purpose was to grant her taxes.

The Elizabethan Government

SKILLS PRACTICE

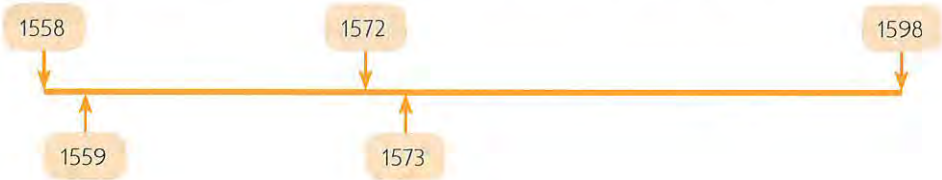
There was more to England's government than the Queen — Elizabeth also relied on people under her to run the country. Have a go at these activities to make sure you know how the government worked.

Knowledge and Understanding

1) Give the two main roles of Elizabeth's Privy Council.

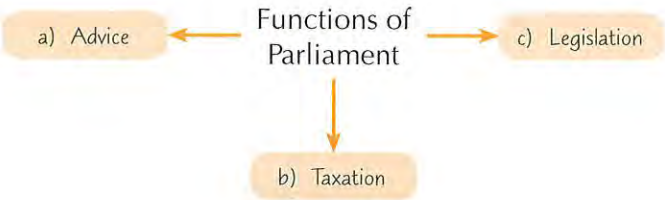
2) What sort of people were on the Privy Council?
How were they chosen to serve on the Council?

3) Copy and complete the timeline below by adding information about the changes to Elizabeth's Privy Council that took place in each year.



4) In your own words, write a short explanation for each of the following key terms.
   a) House of Lords
   b) House of Commons

5) Copy and complete the mind map below by adding information about the different functions of Parliament in Elizabethan England.



6) What was the most important function of Parliament from Elizabeth's point of view? Explain your answer.

EXAM TIP

Elizabeth was very powerful, but she didn't rule alone...

To really ace the exam, you need to understand the key features of Elizabeth's government — make sure you know the role of the Privy Council and Parliament, as well as Elizabeth herself.

The Elizabethan Government

Unlike today, in the 16th century Parliament was only a secondary part of government. Its sessions were temporary and occasional, and its powers were limited.

Parliament's Powers were Limited

1) Elizabeth had the power to summon and dismiss Parliament. She disliked working with Parliament and tried to use it as little as possible — she only called 13 sessions of Parliament during her 44-year reign.
2) Parliament was not free to decide what topics it debated. It had to have permission from the Queen to discuss matters of state (e.g. religion, the succession, foreign policy). As a result, most parliamentary business focused on local matters and social or economic issues, which it could discuss without royal permission.

Comment and Analysis

Elizabeth believed in Divine Right — that rulers were sent by God to govern their country. She believed that this gave her a royal prerogative — the right to decide about matters of state without interference from Parliament.

© Mary Evans Picture Library

Elizabeth I in Parliament

The Privy Council helped Elizabeth to Manage Parliament

1) The Privy Council managed relations between Elizabeth and Parliament very effectively. In particular, Cecil was highly skilled at convincing MPs to support the Queen's policies.
2) Some members of the Privy Council sat in Parliament. They acted as royal spokesmen and helped to steer debates in favour of royal policies.
3) The Speaker, who kept order in the House of Commons, was chosen by the Queen and closely monitored by members of the Privy Council. This helped the Queen's counsellors to control Parliament and convince MPs to support royal policy.
4) Elizabeth was a strong public speaker. She made a number of powerful speeches in Parliament which helped to persuade MPs to obey her wishes.

Elizabeth stayed In Control, despite some Disagreements

During Elizabeth's reign, Parliament didn't always agree with her policies:

- Throughout her reign, MPs were concerned about who would rule England after Elizabeth's death — they repeatedly tried to persuade her to marry or name an heir (see p.16).
- Some Puritan MPs challenged the religious settlement (see p.36) and tried to make England more Protestant.
- MPs were worried about the threat from Mary, Queen of Scots and the Catholic plots surrounding her (see p.38). They tried to convince Elizabeth to take action against Mary.

Occasionally, MPs tried to force the Queen to change her mind by threatening to refuse taxation. Elizabeth never gave in to this kind of parliamentary pressure. Effective management by the Privy Council, combined with Elizabeth's powers to dismiss Parliament and select the topics it debated, meant that she remained firmly in control.

The Elizabethan Government

SKILLS PRACTICE

Parliament wasn't used a lot, but it was still important. These activities cover Elizabeth's relationship with it.

Knowledge and Understanding

1) Why did most parliamentary business focus on local matters and social or economic issues?

2) In your own words, write a short explanation for each of the following terms.

a) Divine Right

b) Royal Prerogative

3) Describe the role of Elizabeth's Privy Counsellors in Parliament.

4) In Parliament, what was the role of the Speaker? How did Elizabeth use the Speaker to maintain control of Parliament?

5) Copy and complete the mind map below by describing issues that Elizabeth and Parliament disagreed over during her reign.

Disagreements between Elizabeth and Parliament

Thinking Historically

1) Copy and complete the table below, giving evidence for and against the argument that the monarch was the most important part of the government in Elizabethan England. Use information from pages 12 and 14 to help you.

You should try to write about both Parliament and the Privy Council.

For	Against

EXAM TIP

Going to work 13 times in 44 years sounds alright to me...

It's important to read the question carefully in the exam so that you only write about things that are relevant to the topic — it might help you to underline the key words in the question.

Marriage and the Succession

One of Elizabeth's biggest headaches as queen was the issue of marriage and the succession. She faced constant pressure to marry or name her successor, but was very reluctant to do so.

Elizabeth was expected to Marry and produce an Heir

1) Because people believed that women couldn't rule effectively (see p.8), there was pressure for Elizabeth to find a husband who could rule for her.
2) There were also concerns about the succession. If Elizabeth died without an heir, there would be a risk of civil war, with different groups competing for the throne. To prevent this, Elizabeth was expected to marry and produce an heir as quickly as possible.
3) The Privy Council and Parliament were deeply concerned about the succession. They repeatedly asked the Queen to marry or name her heir, but she always refused. When they asked Elizabeth to find a husband in 1563, she refused to even discuss the matter.

It was Difficult to find a Suitable Husband

1) If Elizabeth married a European prince or king, this could give a foreign country too much influence over England. In the past, Queen Mary I's marriage to King Philip II of Spain had forced England to become involved in an expensive war with France.
2) If Elizabeth chose a member of the English nobility, this would create anger and resentment among those who weren't chosen.
3) The religious settlement had made England a Protestant country (see p.36), so it was difficult for Elizabeth to marry a Catholic. Growing anti-Catholic feeling in England would have made a Catholic husband unpopular and might have undermined support for Elizabeth's rule.
4) Elizabeth was reluctant to marry anyone — women were expected to obey their husbands, so she would lose much of her power and freedom if she married.

Elizabeth Considered many Suitors, but she Rejected them All

1) Early in her reign, Elizabeth received proposals from foreign rulers, including King Philip II of Spain, Archduke Charles of Austria and King Eric of Sweden. She and her Privy Council seriously considered King Eric's proposal, but in the end all these early suitors were rejected.
2) Elizabeth seems to have been in love with her 'favourite', Robert Dudley, and seriously considered marrying him. However, members of the Privy Council and the nobility, including Cecil, were strongly opposed to this match and it did not go ahead.
3) In the 1570s, Elizabeth was courted by Duke Francis of Anjou, brother of the King of France. Although there was some support for the match, there was also strong opposition to the idea of Elizabeth marrying a French Catholic, and in the end the marriage negotiations were abandoned.

Comment and Analysis

Marriage negotiations could be a useful tool in foreign policy. Anglo-Spanish relations were breaking down in the 1570s (see p.48), and England needed a new European ally. The proposed marriage to Duke Francis played an important role in efforts to create an alliance with France.

By the late 1570s, Elizabeth was in her mid-forties and it was clear that she would never have children. The issue of the succession still needed to be resolved, but Elizabeth refused to name a successor. She was concerned that a successor might become the focus of plots to overthrow her. Towards the end of her reign, her advisors began secret negotiations to make James VI of Scotland (son of Mary, Queen of Scots) heir to the throne. When Elizabeth died in 1603, James became King of England.

Marriage and the Succession

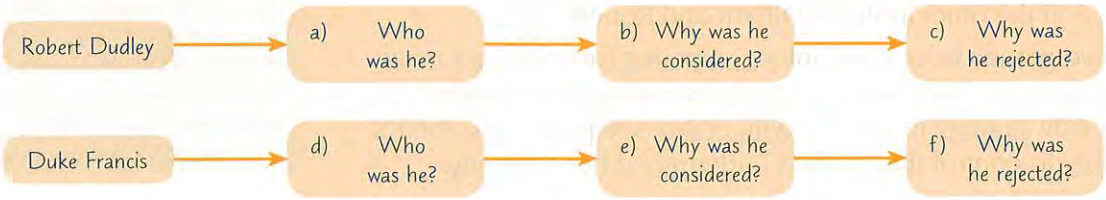
SKILLS PRACTICE

The issues of marriage and the succession troubled Elizabeth throughout her reign. The activities on this page will help you to understand why she was under pressure to marry, and why she never did.

Knowledge and Understanding

1) In what way did Queen Mary I's marriage to Philip II of Spain highlight a potential risk of marriage for Elizabeth?

2) Copy and complete the diagram below by explaining who each person was, why he was considered as a husband for Elizabeth, and why he was rejected.



3) Give the names of three other suitors who tried to marry Elizabeth.

4) Why did Elizabeth refuse to choose a successor to the throne in the 1570s?

5) How was the issue of the succession resolved at the end of Elizabeth's reign?

Thinking Historically

1) Copy and complete the table below by giving the possible advantages and disadvantages of Elizabeth choosing a husband and getting married. Give as much detail as possible and add as many rows as you need.

Advantages	Disadvantages

EXAM TIP

An independent queen who don't need no man...

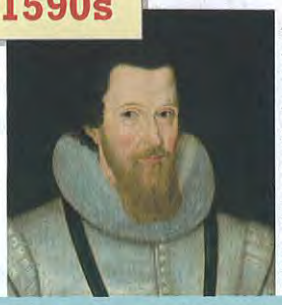
Include specific details if you're asked to give an account of something like the issue of marriage and the succession. Give the names of key figures like Robert Dudley to show your knowledge.

The End of Elizabeth's Reign

The last 15 years or so of Elizabeth's rule were so different to her early years that they're sometimes called her 'second reign'. One of the main differences was the growth of competing groups at court.

Elizabeth's Court split into Rival Groups in the 1590s

1) The make-up of Elizabeth's Privy Council changed towards the end of her reign. Several of her key ministers, including Christopher Hatton and Francis Walsingham, died around 1590. William Cecil died in 1598 and was succeeded by his son, Robert Cecil.
2) In 1593, Elizabeth made Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex, a member of the Privy Council. Essex's rise led to the growth of two conflicting groups at court, one around the Earl of Essex and the other around William and Robert Cecil.
3) The two groups were constantly competing for royal patronage and influence. They also disagreed over important matters, especially strategy in the war with Spain (see p.48). Elizabeth's inability to control this conflict undermined her authority.



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Essex was the stepson of Elizabeth's earlier 'favourite', Robert Dudley. He came to court in 1584 and quickly became a 'favourite' himself. He was extremely ambitious for military success and could be arrogant and disrespectful, even towards the Queen.

Essex launched a Rebellion in 1601

1) In 1599, Elizabeth sent Essex to Ireland at the head of a huge army. His task was to crush Tyrone's Rebellion (also known as the Nine Years' War), which had been going on since 1594.
2) Essex made some limited attempts to fight the rebels, but when these were unsuccessful, he made a truce with them. He then abandoned his post and returned to England without the Queen's permission.
3) As a punishment, Elizabeth put Essex under house arrest for a time, banished him from court and took away most of his public offices. In November 1600, she also took away his main source of income, a monopoly (see p.22) on the distribution of sweet wines.
4) The loss of his political power and his income drove Essex to revolt. On 8th February 1601, he launched a rebellion in London. Essex aimed to seize the Queen and force her to replace her closest advisors, especially Cecil, with himself and his followers.
5) Essex's rebellion failed within just a few hours. He received no support from ordinary Londoners, and most of his own supporters quickly abandoned him too. Essex was arrested, tried for treason and executed on 25th February 1601.

Comment and Analysis

In her later years, Elizabeth rarely appointed new men to the Privy Council, which created resentment among some courtiers. These men became frustrated at Elizabeth's refusal to promote them to government posts, and so they encouraged Essex's rebellion.

The Conflict at court Undermined Elizabeth's Authority

1) The lack of popular support for Essex's rebellion shows that it wasn't a serious threat to Elizabeth's rule. She was still a popular and respected queen, and there was no desire to overthrow her or her government.
2) However, the rebellion does suggest that Elizabeth's authority over her court became weaker towards the end of her reign. By the 1590s, she was no longer using patronage as effectively as she had in the past.
3) Instead of balancing the different groups at court, she let the Cecils become too powerful, while failing to promote many others. This led to a build-up of anger and resentment, which risked fuelling challenges to her authority — like Essex's revolt.
4) The conflict at court in the 1590s also made Elizabeth's government less effective. Constant competition and in-fighting between groups made it more difficult to make decisions and get things done.

The End of Elizabeth's Reign

SKILLS PRACTICE

Elizabeth faced difficulties towards the end of her reign. This page will make sure you know what happened.

Knowledge and Understanding

1) Who was the Earl of Essex? When did he join the Privy Council?

2) How did the Earl of Essex's rise to power affect Elizabeth's court?

3) Using the following key words, describe the Earl of Essex's expedition to Ireland.

Tyrone's Rebellion truce England

4) Copy and complete the mind map below by adding the punishments that Elizabeth gave to the Earl of Essex after he returned from Ireland.

5) What was the aim of Essex's rebellion in 1601? Why did it receive support from some of Elizabeth's other courtiers?

6) In your own words, explain why Essex's rebellion failed.

Thinking Historically

1) Copy and complete the table below by explaining how each factor weakened Elizabeth's authority towards the end of her reign. Use information from earlier in the section to help you.

Factor	How it weakened Elizabeth's authority
a) Elizabeth's use of patronage	
b) Competition at the royal court	

EXAM TIP

It looks like Essex isn't the only way after all...

You need to know the Earl of Essex's rise and fall in full for the exam. Make sure you know the order in which events happened, the names of key figures and the roles these figures played.