Worked Exam-Style Question

The sample answer below shows you how to approach a question about how convincing an interpretation is.

Interpretation 1

Elizabeth I orders the arrest of the Earl of Essex after his return from Ireland in 1599.

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To what extent is Interpretation 1 convincing about the Earl of Essex's career? Use Interpretation 1 and your own knowledge to explain your answer. [8 marks]

Interpretation 1 is convincing because it shows Essex's loss of Elizabeth's favour following his failure to crush Tyrone's Rebellion in Ireland in 1599 and his abandonment of duty there. It shows Essex being held by the guards, who are ready to act on Elizabeth's authority. This shows one of the lowest points in Essex's career, when Elizabeth had him placed under house arrest, banished him from court and eventually took away his main source of income. These punishments ultimately led to his rebellion and execution in 1601.

This refers to the details of the image to work out what it is trying to show or say.

The image does not, however, convincingly represent Essex's career as a whole. For example, there is no hint of Essex's role on the Privy Council, his rivalry with the Cecils for Elizabeth's favour, or Elizabeth's support and patronage of him in the decade or so before the events in the image. As a result, this image is more convincing as a representation of the end of Essex's career and does not visually represent the more positive side of his career.

This uses knowledge of Essex's career to show what is missing from the interpretation.

This judges how accurately the image represents Essex's career.

While this image shows a specific, low moment in Essex's career, it also hints that there were times when Essex successfully pleaded for Elizabeth's forgiveness. The interpretation focuses on their gestures towards each other. Essex extends his arm towards Elizabeth as if asking for her forgiveness or mercy, while Elizabeth points towards the door, banishing Essex from her presence and favour. Essex had been disrespectful and arrogant towards Elizabeth before, yet she had still allowed him to serve her. This is reflected in the image, as Essex clearly hopes that Elizabeth will forgive him yet again.

This looks at what the image emphasises to decide what it is trying to say.

Therefore, while the interpretation only shows a specific moment in Essex's career, it is still convincing as a symbolic representation of the role of Essex's personal relationship with Elizabeth in his career as a whole.

This makes a final judgement about how convincing the image is as a depiction of Essex's career.

Exam-Style Questions

This page will help you to practise answering 8-mark questions similar to the ones that you'll get in the exam.

Interpretation 1

Queen Elizabeth and Parliament didn't always see eye to eye when it came to governing the country, but the Queen managed to keep England's MPs in check throughout her reign. This was mostly down to the skill of her Privy Counsellors. If it wasn't for the Privy Council's clever manipulation of parliamentary debate, MPs could have effectively held the Queen to ransom until she agreed to compromise with them on a range of issues. Thankfully for Elizabeth, the Privy Council stopped this from ever happening.

Exam-Style Questions

1) To what extent is Interpretation 1 convincing about Elizabeth's relationship with Parliament? Use Interpretation 1 and your own knowledge to explain your answer. [8 marks]

2) How was patronage important to Elizabeth's rule? Explain your answer. [8 marks]

3) Give an account of the ways that the royal court changed during Elizabeth's reign. [8 marks]

Poverty

The growing number of people living in poverty was a major problem in Elizabethan society.

Religious Changes meant there was Less Support for the Poor

1) Between 1536 and 1541, Henry VIII had closed down England's monasteries and sold off most of their land (this was called the 'dissolution of the monasteries').
2) The monasteries had performed important social functions, including providing support for many poor, ill and disabled people. The dissolution of the monasteries removed a valuable source of assistance for people in need.

Population Growth led to Rising Prices

1) In the 16th century, England's birth rate increased and the death rate fell. This led to huge population growth — during Elizabeth's reign, the English population grew from around 3 million people to at least 4 million.
2) Food production didn't keep pace with the growth in population. As a result, food prices rose and sometimes there were food shortages.
3) Prices for food and other goods rose much more quickly than wages. Standards of living fell for many workers as they struggled to afford the necessities — many were forced into poverty.
4) Because of the rapid population growth, there was growing competition for land, and so rents increased. This trend was made worse by changes in farming practices.

Monopolies

Elizabeth often rewarded her courtiers with monopolies, which gave them the exclusive right to produce or distribute a particular item. Monopolies were unpopular with many people because they made the problem of rising prices worse. Since monopoly-holders had no competition, they could fix high prices for their goods.

Developments in Agriculture left many people Unemployed

1) Traditional farming methods involved many farmers renting strips of land in large open fields. This was subsistence-level farming — each farmer only grew enough crops to supply himself and his family.
2) This kind of farming was very inefficient, and in the 16th century landowners began changing their farming techniques to try and make more money from their land. Instead of sharing open fields among many farmers, they enclosed these fields to create a few large farms.
3) These new, enclosed farms required fewer labourers, so farmers who rented land were evicted, leaving them unemployed and homeless.
4) Exporting wool to Europe was more profitable than selling grain, so many landowners stopped growing grain and began sheep farming. This fall in grain production contributed to rising food prices. It also meant that there was a higher risk of food shortages when there was a bad harvest.

Comment and Analysis

These enclosures of farm land forced many people to leave their villages and migrate to towns or cities in search of work. The government viewed these migrant workers as 'vagabonds' and feared that they would encourage riots and rebellions.

Poverty got Worse in the 1590s

The problem of poverty reached a crisis point towards the end of Elizabeth's reign. In the late 1580s and 1590s, England suffered several failed harvests, which led to food shortages and even higher food prices. This pushed even more people into extreme poverty — in some areas people starved to death.

Poverty

SKILLS PRACTICE

Have a go at these activities to check you understand why poverty levels increased in Elizabethan England.

Knowledge and Understanding

1) How did Henry VIII's actions affect poor people before Elizabeth became queen?

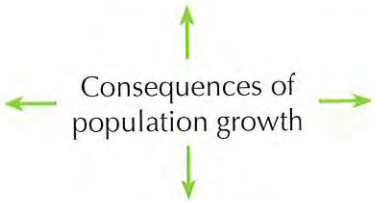
2) What is a monopoly? Why were monopolies unpopular in Elizabethan England?

3) Using the following key words, explain how farming methods changed in the 16th century.

open fields | subsistence-level farming | enclosed

Thinking Historically

1) Copy and complete the mind map below by giving the consequences of population growth in the 16th century. Give as much detail as possible.



2) Copy and complete the table below by explaining how each change in agriculture led to an increase in poverty.

Change	How it led to an increase in poverty
a) The use of enclosed farming.	
b) An increase in wool exports.	
c) Failed harvests in the 1580s and 1590s.	

3) Do you think that population growth or change in agriculture was the more important reason for the increase in poverty in the 16th century? Explain your answer, using the mind map and table above to help you.

EXAM TIP

The enclosures closed the door to a lot of farm workers...

In the exam, try to spend roughly the same amount of time on each 8-mark question. If you're spending too long on one question, finish your paragraph then move on to the next question.

Poverty

Elizabeth's government introduced a series of Poor Laws to try and tackle the problem of poverty.

The Government became More Involved in Poor Relief

1) Traditionally, the main source of support for the poor was charity — rich people made donations to hospitals, monasteries and other organisations that helped the poor. However, during Elizabeth's reign the problem of poverty became so bad that these charitable donations by individuals were no longer enough.
2) People began to realise that society as a whole would have to take responsibility for helping the poor, and so the government began to take action to tackle the problem of poverty.

Comment and Analysis

The government feared that the rising poverty levels were a serious threat to law and order. As poverty levels rose, crime rates increased and there were food riots in some places. The government feared that the poor might rise up in rebellion if the problem of poverty wasn't tackled.

People believed the Poor could be split into Three Categories

The Helpless Poor

Those who were unable to support themselves — including young orphans and the elderly, sick or disabled.

The Deserving Poor

People who wanted to work, but weren't able to find a job in their home town or village.

The Undeserving Poor

Beggars, criminals and people who refused to work. Also migrant workers ('vagabonds') who left their homes and travelled around looking for work.

The Poor Laws gave Help to the Helpless and Deserving Poor

1) From the 1560s onwards, the government brought in a series of Poor Laws to deal with the growing problem of poverty.
2) Because voluntary donations were no longer sufficient to fund poor relief, in the 1560s the government passed a Poor Law which introduced a tax to raise money for the poor (known as the 'poor rate').
3) Further Poor Laws were passed in 1597 and 1601 in response to the poverty crisis of the 1590s (see p.22). Under these laws, the poor rate became a national system of compulsory taxation. It was collected locally by an official called the Overseer of the Poor.
4) Poor rates were used to provide hospitals and housing for the elderly, sick and disabled. Poor children were given apprenticeships, which usually lasted at least seven years, and local authorities were expected to provide financial support or work for the deserving poor. Poor people could be sent to prison if they refused to take work.

Comment and Analysis

The Privy Council researched how local government had tackled the problem of poverty. They based the national Poor Laws on the local policies that seemed to be most effective. For example, towns like London, Norwich, Ipswich and York had been using compulsory poor rates to pay for poor relief since the mid-16th century.

The Undeserving Poor were treated Harshly

Under the Poor Laws of the 1590s, the undeserving poor were to be publicly whipped and then forced to return to their home parish. Repeat offenders could be sent to prison.

Comment and Analysis

The undeserving poor were treated so harshly because they were seen as a serious threat to society. Many people believed that poor criminals and vagabonds had encouraged the Northern Rebellion in 1569 (see p.40). In response to the Rebellion, the government introduced particularly harsh punishments for the undeserving poor in 1572.

Poverty

SKILLS PRACTICE

Pages 22 and 23 should have given you a good understanding of why poverty levels rose in Elizabethan England. This page focuses on how the government responded to the problem.

Knowledge and Understanding

1) Why did the government become more involved in providing support to the poor?

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

a) Helpless Poor b) Deserving Poor c) Undeserving Poor

3) What changed as a result of the Poor Laws introduced in 1597 and 1601?

4) In what way were the Poor Laws influenced by local government policies?

5) Copy and complete the mind map below by giving examples of what poor rates were spent on.

What poor rates were spent on

6) Give three examples of punishments that were given to the undeserving poor.

Interpretation

The interpretation below is about the reasons for the Elizabethan Poor Laws.

a) It is true that Queen Elizabeth's government introduced laws which helped to ease the burden of poverty for large parts of the population from the 1560s onwards. However, these laws were introduced less out of concern for the poor, b) and more out of concern for the Queen's own security. In search of someone to blame for the early instability of her reign, Elizabeth turned on those who were least able to defend themselves. Many were punished for the 'crime' of poverty, and the punishments only got worse as the threat to the Queen increased. c)

1) Explain whether you think each highlighted phrase is convincing about the Elizabethan Poor Laws. Use information from page 24 to help you.

EXAM TIP

The Poor Laws helped some people, but punished others...

Don't forget that you can make links in your answers to the important events happening at the time — many people blamed vagabonds for the Northern Rebellion, for example.

A 'Golden Age'

Despite the very high levels of poverty, Elizabeth's reign is often seen as a 'Golden Age'. The growing prosperity of the elite contributed to a flourishing in architecture, the arts and education.

The Gentry became Richer during Elizabeth's reign

1) Population growth and changes in farming practices (see p.22) were good for landowners, especially members of the gentry.
2) The enclosures meant that land was farmed more efficiently. At the same time, rents were increasing and prices of agricultural products like grain were rising, so landowners were earning a lot more money from their land.
3) As a result, the land-owning gentry became much wealthier during Elizabeth's reign, and members of the nobility also saw their incomes increase.
4) The growth of towns and the development of national and international trade allowed some merchants to become very rich. They often used their money to buy land and become part of the gentry.

The gentry were part of the social elite in Elizabethan England, below the level of the nobility. Members of the gentry were people who owned land and lived off the income it provided. They didn't have to do other work to survive.

Some members of the Elite built New Houses

1) From the 1570s, many members of the gentry and nobility improved their homes or built new ones. This is sometimes called the 'Great Rebuilding'.
2) These building projects enabled members of the elite to show off their wealth. New houses often had many large windows — glass was very expensive, so using a lot of it was a sign of prosperity. Large landscaped gardens were also a popular way to display wealth.
3) The 'Great Rebuilding' improved living standards for the wealthy, because the new houses were much more comfortable. The large windows made them lighter, and bigger chimneys and fireplaces meant they were better heated.

Some members of the nobility built huge, elaborate houses. Burghley House in Peterborough, built for William Cecil, is a well-known example.

Art, Literature and Education were all highly Fashionable

1) The nobility and gentry had money to spend on elaborate decorations for their homes. Portraits, miniatures (very small portraits), tapestries and embroidery were all popular.
2) It was also fashionable to take an interest in literature — some people collected large libraries, and members of the elite supported the work of poets and playwrights. Elite support for playwrights and acting companies contributed to the flourishing of Elizabethan theatre (see p.28).
3) More people could afford to give their children an education. Some noble families employed a private tutor, while a growing number of children from the nobility and gentry went to grammar schools and on to university.

A miniature of Elizabeth's 'favourite', Robert Dudley, painted by Nicholas Hilliard.

© Granger / Shutterstock

Comment and Analysis

Many elite fashions started at the royal court. For example Nicholas Hilliard was employed as Queen Elizabeth's miniaturist in the 1570s and painted many miniatures of Elizabeth and her courtiers. This encouraged the growing popularity of miniatures among the nobility and gentry.

Members of the elite wore elaborate clothing to show off their wealth and status. Their clothes were often made of expensive fabrics like silk, satin, velvet and lace, and were decorated with detailed embroidery. Women's dresses had very full sleeves and a large skirt, supported by a hoop-skirt, which gave it shape (see the portrait of Elizabeth on p.8). Both men and women wore wide, ruffled collars, called ruffs.

A 'Golden Age'

SKILLS PRACTICE

This page will make sure you understand why the elite were so wealthy, and what they did with their wealth.

Knowledge and Understanding

1) Who were the gentry? How were they different from the nobility?

2) Why did each of the following groups become wealthier in Elizabethan England?
   a) Landowners
   b) Merchants

3) What is meant by the term 'Great Rebuilding'? Why did the elite take part in it?

4) In what way did the 'Great Rebuilding' improve the living standards of the elite?

5) In your own words, explain how each of the following areas developed in Elizabethan England.

a) Art b) Literature c) Education

Interpretation

The interpretation below shows members of the elite at the royal court.

© Look and Learn

1) Give three features of fashion in Elizabethan England that are shown in the interpretation.

2) Overall, do you think that the interpretation gives a complete view of fashion in Elizabethan England? Explain your answer.

EXAM TIP

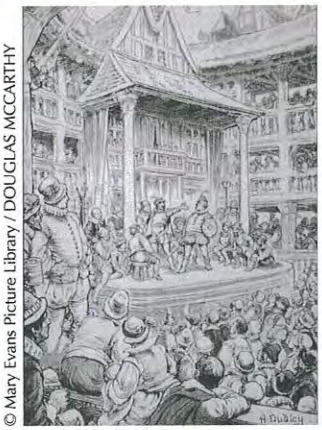
Gentry does it now...

When you're answering a question, start each new point by referring back to what the question is asking — it'll help to keep you on track and to show the examiner why each point is relevant.

Elizabethan Theatres

The theatre became incredibly popular in the second half of Elizabeth's reign.

There were No Permanent Theatres in England until the 1570s



© Mary Evans Picture Library / DOUGLAS MCCARTHY

A performance at The Globe Theatre.

1) At the start of Elizabeth's reign, England didn't have any permanent theatres. Instead, companies of actors travelled around, performing in village squares or the courtyards of inns.
2) The first theatres were built in London in the 1570s. They included The Theatre and The Curtain. They were usually round, open-air buildings with a raised stage that stretched out into the audience (known as an 'apron stage').
3) The stage usually had a roof, called the 'heavens'. Actors could be lowered onto the stage from the heavens, or enter through a trapdoor in the stage floor. There were also several entrances at the back of the stage. Behind the stage was the 'tiring house' where actors got dressed and waited to enter.
4) Some theatres were very large — The Globe could hold around 3000 people. Poorer audience members, called 'groundlings', stood in the open yard around the stage, while richer people sat under cover around the theatre's walls.

Elizabeth's reign was a 'Golden Age' for Playwrights

A huge number of plays were written in the Elizabethan era, many of which are still performed today. William Shakespeare is the best-known Elizabethan playwright. He wrote 38 plays, including comedies (e.g. 'Twelfth Night'), tragedies (e.g. 'Macbeth') and histories (e.g. 'Henry V'). Other famous Elizabethan playwrights include Christopher Marlowe and Ben Johnson.

1) Plays were performed by acting companies. They often worked on a shareholder system, where members of the company contributed to its costs and received a share of its profits. Two of the most important Elizabethan companies were The Admiral's Men and The Lord Chamberlain's Men (Shakespeare's company).
2) Women weren't allowed to perform on stage, so actors were all male — boys played the female roles. One of the most famous actors was Richard Burbage. He was a member of The Lord Chamberlain's Men, and he played the lead in many of Shakespeare's plays.

Comment and Analysis

Support from the elite was essential to Elizabethan theatre — acting companies relied on members of the elite to fund or promote their performances and protect them from opponents of the theatre. Several companies were supported by members of the Privy Council.

The theatre was Very Popular, but it faced some Opposition

1) The theatre appealed to both rich and poor. Ticket prices started at just 1 penny, so it was affordable for most people. However, different social groups sat in different parts of the theatre and didn't usually mix.
2) Elizabeth enjoyed plays — she never attended a public theatre, but she often had plays performed at court. She supported her favourite performers and even set up an acting company, The Queen's Men.

The theatre wasn't popular with everyone though:

- The City of London authorities were opposed to it because they thought it was disruptive and encouraged crime. As a result, many theatres, including The Globe, were built just outside the City in Southwark.
- Some members of Elizabeth's government were worried that the theatre might be used to spread pro-Catholic or anti-government messages. As theatres grew in popularity, the government introduced censorship measures to try and control what playwrights wrote.
- Many Puritans also opposed the theatre because they thought it encouraged immorality.

Elizabethan Theatres

SKILLS PRACTICE

Take a look at these activities to boost your knowledge about how theatre developed in Elizabethan England.

Knowledge and Understanding

1) Where did actors perform before the 1570s?

2) Give two examples of permanent theatres built in the 1570s. Where were these theatres built?

3) Copy and complete the mind map below, adding common features of theatres in Elizabethan England. Give as much detail as possible.

Features of theatres in Elizabethan England

4) Why did the theatre appeal to poor people as well as rich people?

5) Give the names of three acting companies in Elizabethan England.

6) Give two reasons why support from the elite was important for acting companies.

7) In your own words, explain who the following people were. Give as much detail as possible.

a) William Shakespeare

b) Richard Burbage

8) Copy and complete the table below, explaining why each group worried about the impact of the theatre.

Group	Why they worried
a) The City of London	
b) The Government	
c) Puritans	

9) Give two ways in which opposition to the theatre affected its development.

EXAM TIP

If you do enough revision, the exam won't end in tragedy...

In Elizabethan England, people had different experiences of things like the theatre depending on what part of society they belonged to. It might be useful to bear this in mind in the exam.

Elizabethan Sailors

English sailors weren't that interested in voyages of discovery at first, but once they recognised the economic opportunities on offer in the Americas and Asia, there was no stopping them.

The English were Slow to take an interest in Exploration

1) The Portuguese and Spanish were the first to explore the world beyond Europe. By the time Elizabeth became queen in 1558, both countries had established many colonies in the Americas.
2) It was only from the 1560s that English sailors began to take an interest in global exploration.

Explorers were Attracted by Economic Opportunities

Spanish trade with its American colonies was very profitable — their treasure ships returned to Europe full of silver and gold. The wealth of the region attracted English privateers (men who sailed their own vessels) who hoped to get rich by trading with Spain's colonies and raiding Spanish settlements and ships.

- John Hawkins was the first English privateer to take part in the Atlantic slave trade. In the 1560s, he made three slave-trading voyages. On two of these trips, he bought slaves in West Africa, transported them across the Atlantic and sold them to Spanish colonies in the Americas.
- The Spanish didn't want English sailors to trade with these Spanish colonies, so his activities fuelled growing tensions between England and Spain (see p.48).
- Hawkins's first two voyages were very profitable, but on his last expedition he was confronted by Spanish ships in the Battle of San Juan de Ulúa and most of his fleet was destroyed.

From the 1570s, English merchants also became interested in trade with Asia, and began exploring routes to the region. Some tried to find the so-called North West passage around the top of North America, while others sailed through the Mediterranean and then went overland to India. In 1591, James Lancaster sailed to India around the Cape of Good Hope (the southern tip of Africa). Following Lancaster's success, the East India Company was set up in 1600 to trade with Asia.

Francis Drake was the Second man ever to sail Around the World

1) Francis Drake was John Hawkins's cousin, and had travelled with Hawkins on two of his slave-trading expeditions. Between 1577 and 1580, Drake circumnavigated the world (sailed all the way around it).
2) Drake probably wasn't trying to sail around the world. It seems that he was sent by Elizabeth to explore the coast of South America, looking for opportunities for English colonisation and trade. He may have planned to make money from his expedition by raiding Spanish colonies and treasure ships.
3) Drake explored the South American coastline, raiding many Spanish settlements as he went. In the Pacific, he captured two very valuable Spanish treasure ships. In order to get this treasure safely home, Drake had to return by a different route — the Spanish had sent ships to intercept him off the South American coast, so he couldn't return the way he had come.
4) Instead, Drake sailed west, across the Pacific to Indonesia. He then made his way across the Indian Ocean, round the Cape of Good Hope and back to England.
5) When he returned, Drake was knighted by Elizabeth aboard his ship, the Golden Hind. This royal recognition and the vast wealth that Drake brought back from the journey encouraged more English sailors to set out on long-distance journeys.

© Mary Evans Picture Library

Drake was involved in many other important naval expeditions. In 1587 he led a raid on the Spanish port of Cadiz (see p.48), and in 1588 he played a key role in the defeat of the Spanish Armada. He died of disease in 1596 while trying to conquer Spanish colonies in the Americas.

Elizabethan Sailors

SKILLS PRACTICE

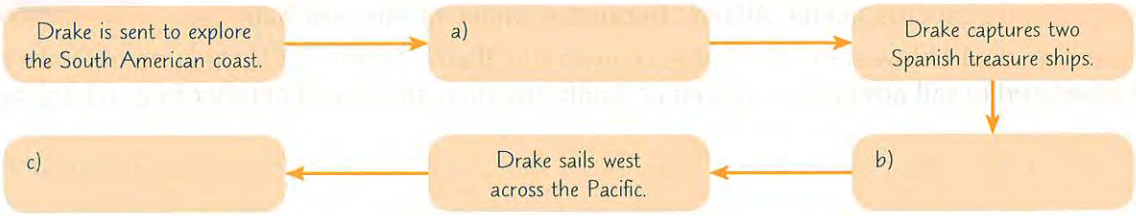
The English hadn't ventured far from Europe at the start of Elizabeth's reign, but they took a lot more interest in global exploration from the 1560s. This page will help you to get to grips with the facts.

Knowledge and Understanding

1) Which two countries were the first to explore the world beyond Europe?

2) In your own words, explain who John Hawkins was and describe his role in the slave trade.

3) Copy and complete the flowchart below by filling in the missing information about Francis Drake's circumnavigation of the globe.



4) Why did Drake's achievements encourage other sailors to start exploring?

5) What did Drake do in each of the following years?

a) 1587 b) 1588 c) 1596

Thinking Historically

1) Copy and complete the diagram below, explaining the consequences of each development for England's involvement in global exploration.

EXAM TIP

Circumnavigation — taking the roundabout route...

Make sure that you're able to use language to link an event to its causes and consequences — linking words and phrases like 'as a result', 'despite this', and 'therefore' can help you to do this.

Elizabethan Sailors

After Drake's circumnavigation, England tried to challenge Spain's dominance as an imperial power by establishing a colony in North America. But creating a permanent settlement turned out to be pretty tricky...

Drake's Circumnavigation was a Huge Achievement

Drake's expedition was only the second successful global circumnavigation, and the first by an English sailor. He and his crew had to overcome some major challenges in order to complete the expedition.

1) Navigating across vast oceans was extremely difficult. Elizabethan sailors knew how to use the Sun and stars to work out how far north or south of the equator they were (their latitude), but they couldn't measure how far east or west they had travelled (their longitude).
2) Many of the places Drake visited had never been explored by European sailors before, so there were no detailed maps or charts to help him navigate.
3) Many sailors died of disease during long journeys — one of Drake's ships had to be abandoned after crossing the Atlantic because so many of the crew had died.
4) Bad weather could blow ships off course, or even sink them. Storms destroyed one of Drake's ships as it attempted to sail around the bottom of South America, and forced another to turn back to England.

The challenges of navigation, bad weather and disease had to be faced by all Elizabethan sailors who set out on long-distance voyages.

Raleigh's attempts to Colonise Virginia were Unsuccessful

Walter Raleigh was a member of a gentry family from Devon. His family were involved with international exploration, and Raleigh first visited America in 1578. From the early 1580s, Raleigh had a powerful position at court as one of Elizabeth's 'favourites'.

1) In 1584, Elizabeth gave Raleigh permission to explore and colonise unclaimed territories. She wanted him to establish a colony on the Atlantic coast of North America.
2) In 1585, Raleigh sent 108 settlers to establish a permanent colony on Roanoke Island, Virginia (Raleigh named his colony after Elizabeth, who was known as the 'Virgin Queen'). However, the settlers (or planters) soon ran low on supplies, and when Francis Drake visited Roanoke in 1586, most of them abandoned the colony and returned to England.

Comment and Analysis

An English colony would have challenged Spain's dominance in the Americas and could be used as a base for attacking Spanish treasure ships. The colony might also provide opportunities for trade.

3) A second group of planters reached Roanoke in 1587. They were expecting supplies from England in 1588, but the fleet was delayed by the Spanish Armada (see p.50-52).
4) When the supply ships reached Roanoke in 1590, all the planters had disappeared. They were never found, and Roanoke became known as the 'Lost Colony'.
5) Raleigh was partly responsible for the colony's failure — his funds were too limited and the whole project was poorly planned. However, other factors like bad luck and a lack of supplies also played a part.

Raleigh's Career had Ups and Downs

1) Despite the failure of the Roanoke colony, Raleigh remained one of Elizabeth's 'favourites'.
2) However, in 1592 he was disgraced when Elizabeth found out that he had secretly married one of her ladies-in-waiting. As a punishment, Raleigh was banished from court and briefly imprisoned.
3) This wasn't the end of his career though — after his release he continued to play an important role in politics. He became a Member of Parliament and was still heavily involved with the Royal Navy.

Elizabethan Sailors

SKILLS PRACTICE

Explorers experienced a lot of successes during Elizabeth's reign, but there were a few failures as well. This page will help you to learn why Elizabeth wanted a colony, and the challenges that this presented.

Knowledge and Understanding

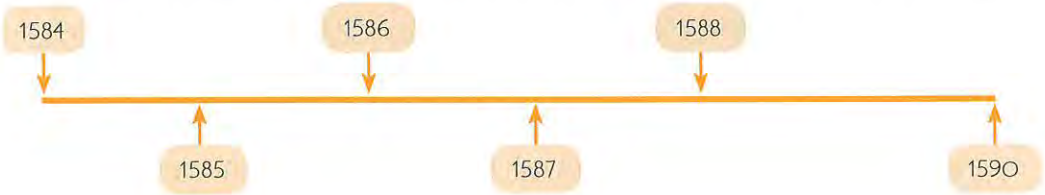
1) Copy and complete the table below by explaining why each factor was a major challenge for Francis Drake when he circumnavigated the globe.

Factor	Why it was a major challenge
a) Navigation	
b) Disease	
c) Weather	

2) Why did Elizabeth want to establish a colony in the Americas? Give as much detail as possible.

3) Why did Walter Raleigh name his North American colony 'Virginia'?

4) Copy and complete the timeline below about Raleigh's attempts to colonise Virginia. Fill in all of the key events between 1584 and 1590, giving as much detail as possible.



5) How did Raleigh's career change in the 1590s? Give as much detail as possible.

Thinking Historically

1) Which of the following people do you think was the most important for Elizabethan England? Explain your answer, using information from pages 30 and 32 to help you.

John Hawkins | Francis Drake | Walter Raleigh

EXAM TIP

As Raleigh learned, if you fail to plan, you plan to fail...

It's important to remember the order that things happened in — for example, Raleigh's attempts to colonise Virginia happened after Francis Drake's journey around the world.

Worked Exam-Style Question

One question in the exam will ask you to explain why an event, issue or development was important in Elizabethan England. The sample answer below will show you how to tackle this type of question.

How were Francis Drake's achievements important for Elizabethan England? Explain your answer. [8 marks]

Francis Drake's achievements were important because they encouraged other sailors to explore the world. Drake circumnavigated the world between 1577 and 1580, which was an impressive achievement as sailing was extremely difficult in the 16th century. Sailors were unable to measure their longitude, making it difficult to navigate vast oceans, and there were no maps or charts to guide them in previously unexplored areas. However, Drake's circumnavigation showed sailors it was possible to overcome these difficulties. In addition, after returning from his circumnavigation, Drake was knighted by Queen Elizabeth in recognition of his achievements. This royal recognition, as well as the vast wealth that Drake brought back from his journey, encouraged other sailors to follow his example by setting out on their own long-distance journeys. Drake's achievements were therefore important in contributing to England's efforts to expand its power and influence across the world.

Drake's achievements were also important because they added to the tension between England and Spain. During his circumnavigation, Drake raided several Spanish settlements in South America and captured two valuable Spanish treasure ships. The relationship between England and Spain was already tense at this time because Philip II disagreed with Elizabeth's religious settlement and had become involved in Catholic plots against her. The actions of other Englishmen had also created tension with Spain. For example, John Hawkins had traded with Spanish colonies against Spain's wishes and fought against Spanish ships at the Battle of Juan de Ulúa in the 1560s. Drake's actions were therefore important because they made an already tense relationship even worse.

Although Drake's achievements added to the tension between England and Spain, Drake was also important in helping England to overcome the Spanish threat. Elizabeth sent Drake to disrupt Spain's preparations for the Armada, which he did by leading a raid on Cadiz in 1587, where his fleet destroyed around thirty ships and seized many tonnes of supplies. This gave England an extra year to prepare for the Armada's arrival. When the Armada finally reached England in 1588, Drake also played a key role in defeating it. As a result, Drake's actions were important in protecting England from a dangerous enemy.

The first sentence in each paragraph addresses the question.

This explanation links the point back to the question.

The answer gives a range of different reasons why Drake's achievements were important for Elizabethan England.

The answer links the importance of Drake's achievements to the wider historical context of Elizabethan England.

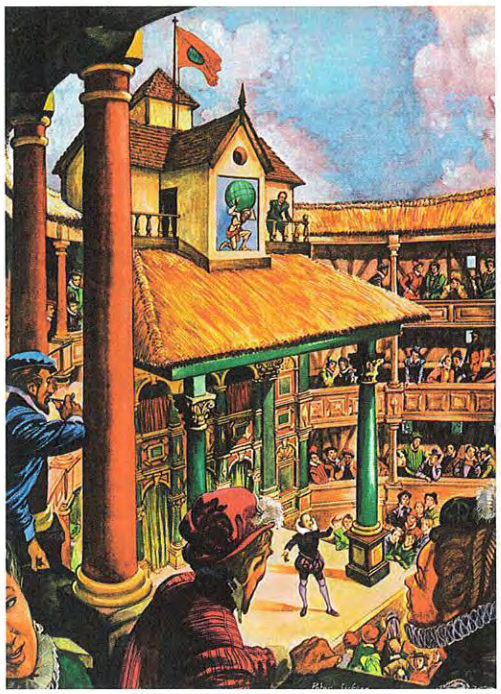
Using specific facts and details shows a good understanding of the period.

Exam-Style Questions

Use what you know about people's lives in Elizabethan England to answer the exam-style questions below.

Interpretation 1

The interpretation below shows the Globe Theatre in London. The figure on the stage is William Shakespeare, who is introducing a play to the audience.



Exam-Style Questions

1) To what extent is Interpretation 1 convincing about theatre in Elizabethan England? Use Interpretation 1 and your own knowledge to explain your answer. [8 marks]

2) How was the growing wealth of the elite important for Elizabethan England? Explain your answer. [8 marks]

3) Give an account of the ways that poor people's living standards changed during Elizabeth's reign. [8 marks]

The Religious Settlement

By 1558, England had experienced decades of dizzying religious changes. Elizabeth's religious 'settlement', passed in 1559, aimed to put a stop to these changes and bring religious stability to England.

There had been constant Religious Changes since the 1530s

When Elizabeth became queen in 1558, England had suffered 30 years of religious turmoil, with the national religion switching repeatedly between Catholicism and Protestantism.

Henry VIII

Until the 1530s, England was a Catholic country, and most people were Catholics. However, in the early 1530s Henry VIII broke away from the Roman Catholic Church. He rejected the Pope's authority and made himself head of the Church of England.

→

Edward VI

Edward VI was a strong supporter of Protestantism. When he became king, he tried to reform the English Church to make it more Protestant.

→

Mary I

Mary I was a devout Catholic. As queen, she made England Catholic again — she restored the Pope as head of the English Church and removed Edward's Protestant reforms. Protestants were harshly persecuted under Mary — more than 280 were executed, and many more fled to Protestant countries in Europe.

Elizabeth had been raised as a Protestant. She was deeply religious and committed to Protestantism. But she was also determined to end the constant religious changes of the last 30 years by creating a stable and lasting religious settlement.

→ Protestants questioned the authority of the Pope and rejected some Catholic beliefs — e.g. they believed that Christians were saved by faith, not by good deeds. They encouraged ordinary people to read the Bible by translating it from Latin, and thought churches should be plain and simple, unlike highly decorated Catholic churches.

The Religious Settlement was designed for Religious Stability

The Act of Supremacy gave Elizabeth Control over the Church

1) Henry VIII and Edward VI had used the title Supreme Head of the Church of England. In her Act of Supremacy (passed in 1559), Elizabeth altered this title to make herself the Supreme Governor of the English Church.
2) This gave Elizabeth control of the English Church, without actually calling her its 'Head'. This compromise satisfied those who believed a woman couldn't lead the Church.

The Act of Uniformity made Moderate Protestant Reforms

The Act of Uniformity and the Royal Injunctions, both passed in 1559, imposed moderate Protestant reforms on the English Church, but they also made some concessions to English Catholics:

Reforms

- Going to church was compulsory — there were fines for missing a church service.
- A new Book of Common Prayer was issued, which had to be used in all churches.
- All parishes had to have a copy of the Bible in English.

Concessions

- The wording of the communion service (an important Christian ceremony) was kept deliberately vague, so that it could be accepted by both Protestants and Catholics.
- Churches were allowed to keep some decorations, and priests had to wear certain Catholic vestments (robes).

Comment and Analysis

The religious settlement made England a Protestant country, but allowed some elements of Catholic belief and practice to continue. This 'middle way' was designed to satisfy the majority, who held moderate religious beliefs and were willing to make some compromises for the sake of peace and stability. But it couldn't win over the more extreme Catholics or the Puritans (see p.46).

The Religious Settlement

SKILLS PRACTICE

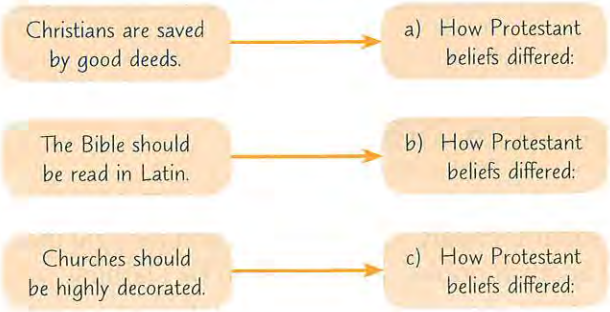
There were lots of different parts to Elizabeth's religious settlement — each one was supposed to make sure there was religious stability in England. Try these activities to make sure you know all the important details.

Knowledge and Understanding

1) Copy and complete the timeline below by giving the name of the monarch ruling in each period and describing what, if any, changes to the national religion occurred.

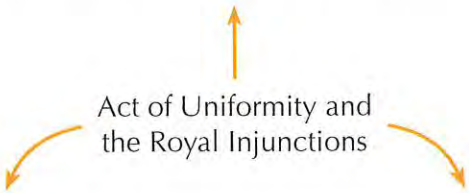
You can use the information about the different monarchs on page 8 to help you.

2) Copy and complete the diagram below by explaining how the Protestants' beliefs differed from each Catholic belief.



3) Explain why Elizabeth changed her title from Supreme Head of the Church of England to Supreme Governor of the Church of England.

4) Copy and complete the mind map below by giving the reforms introduced by the Act of Uniformity and the Royal Injunctions.



5) Write down the concessions made by the Act of Uniformity and the Royal Injunctions. For each one, explain how it helped to satisfy English Catholics.

6) Why was Elizabeth's religious settlement described as a 'middle way'?

EXAM TIP

Sometimes the 'middle way' is the only way...

After learning about the religious turmoil in England before c1568, you'll find it much easier to understand why Elizabeth faced challenges from different religious groups throughout her reign.

Mary, Queen of Scots

Even though Elizabeth and Mary, Queen of Scots were cousins, Elizabeth wasn't too pleased when Mary arrived in England unexpectedly in 1568. In fact, she was so unimpressed, she put Mary in prison...

Mary, Queen of Scots had a Strong Claim to the English Throne

1) Mary was the only child of James V of Scotland. She was related to the Tudors through her grandmother, Margaret Tudor. Margaret was Henry VIII's sister, the wife of James IV and mother of James V (see p.8).

© Mary Evans Picture Library

2) As a granddaughter of Margaret Tudor, Mary had a strong claim to the English throne. Because Mary was a Catholic, her claim was supported by many English Catholics.
3) Mary became Queen of Scotland in 1542 when she was just six days old. Her mother acted as regent (she ruled on Mary's behalf), while Mary was raised in France.
4) In 1558, when Mary was 15 years old, she married the heir to the French throne. However, her husband died suddenly in 1560, and Mary returned to Scotland.

Comment and Analysis

Mary wanted to be named as heir to the English throne, but Elizabeth was unwilling to do this. She feared that making Mary her heir would encourage Catholic plots, both at home and abroad, to overthrow her and make Mary queen.

Mary Fled to England in 1568

1) In 1565 Mary married the Scottish nobleman Lord Darnley. The marriage was not a happy one. Darnley hated Mary's personal secretary, David Rizzio, and thought that the two were having an affair. In 1566 a group of Scottish nobles, accompanied by Darnley, stabbed Rizzio to death.
2) In 1567, Darnley was murdered. Many people believed that Mary and her close friend, the Earl of Bothwell, were behind the murder. Their suspicions seemed to be confirmed when Mary married Bothwell a few months later.
3) This marriage was unpopular with the Scottish nobles, who rebelled against Mary. They imprisoned her and forced her to abdicate (give up the throne) in favour of her one-year-old son, James. In 1568, Mary escaped from prison and raised an army. Her forces were defeated in battle and she fled south to England.

Some people (including Elizabeth) thought that the Scottish nobles had no right to overthrow Mary. As a result, they didn't accept her abdication, and still viewed her as the legitimate queen of Scotland.

Mary was Imprisoned, but still posed a Threat

1) Mary hoped that Elizabeth would help her regain control of Scotland. Elizabeth was not willing to do this — Mary's claim to the English throne meant that there would be a constant threat of invasion from the north if Mary regained power in Scotland.
2) Instead, Elizabeth had Mary imprisoned and set up an inquiry to investigate whether she had been involved in Darnley's murder.
3) Elizabeth didn't want the inquiry to find Mary guilty. A guilty verdict would lend support to the actions of the Scottish nobles, who had overthrown Mary, their legitimate queen.
4) However, Elizabeth didn't want a not-guilty verdict either, because this would force her to release Mary. Once free, Mary might use her claim to the English throne to try and overthrow Elizabeth.
5) In the end, the inquiry didn't reach a verdict — this enabled Elizabeth to keep Mary in captivity. Elizabeth hoped that imprisoning Mary would prevent her becoming the centre of Catholic plots, but Mary's presence caused problems for Elizabeth throughout the next 20 years (see p.40-44).

The so-called 'Casket Letters' were presented to the inquiry. They included several letters apparently written by Mary to Bothwell, which implicated the pair in Darnley's murder. Mary's supporters insisted that the letters were forgeries, but most members of the inquiry believed they were genuine.

Mary, Queen of Scots

SKILLS PRACTICE

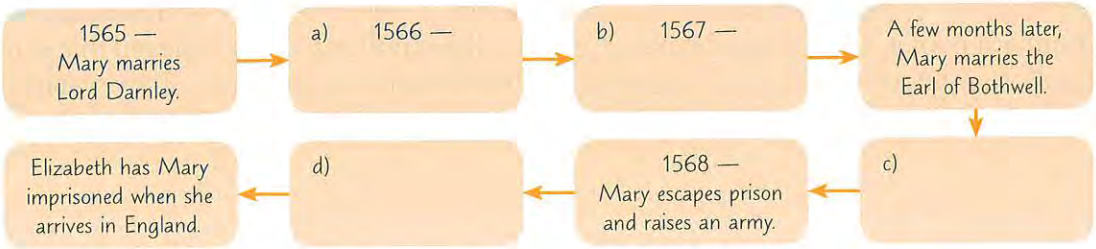
Mary, Queen of Scots was a big problem for Elizabeth. Try these activities for a recap of the reasons why.

Knowledge and Understanding

1) Describe the key events of Mary's childhood before she returned to Scotland in 1560.

2) In your own words, explain why Elizabeth was unwilling to make Mary, Queen of Scots the heir to the throne of England.

3) The flowchart below shows the key events in Mary's life between 1565 and 1568. Copy and complete the flowchart by filling in the missing information. Give as much detail as possible.



4) What were the 'Casket Letters'? Give as much detail as possible.

Thinking Historically

1) Explain how each of the factors below made Mary, Queen of Scots a threat to Elizabeth.

a) Mary's relationship to Margaret Tudor

b) Mary's religion

c) The possibility of Mary regaining the Scottish throne

2) When Mary faced an inquiry into Lord Darnley's murder, either a verdict of 'guilty' or 'not guilty' might have caused problems for Elizabeth. Copy and complete the table below by explaining what these problems were.

Verdict	Why it might have caused problems for Elizabeth
a) Guilty	
b) Not Guilty	

3) What was the outcome of the inquiry? Why was this outcome important for Elizabeth?

EXAM TIP

Elizabeth really wasn't a fan of uninvited guests...

When you're asked to explain how an event or development was important in the exam, you'll need to cover at least two different aspects. If you don't, you can't get more than half marks.