

History: The Renaissance



The Tudors 1485-1603

Henry VII paved the way for the Renaissance: he strengthened the monarchy and encouraged trade. **Henry VIII** became king in 1509 and looked at Italian Renaissance for guidance in politics and diplomacy. Henry was married to Catherine of Aragon and had a daughter, Mary, but no male heir to continue the dynasty. For this reason he wanted to divorce his wife and marry Ann Boleyn. The pope refused and Henry separated the Church of England from Rome.

In 1534 the Parliament passed the *Act of Supremacy*, stating that the king was the head of the English church. Ann Boleyn had a daughter, Elizabeth, but was executed for treason in 1536. Henry married again another four times and had a son from Jane Seymour, his third wife.

Edward VI became king at the age of nine in 1547. A council of Protestant Lords ruled for him.

Mary became queen in 1553 and restored Catholicism. She persecuted the Protestants and was nicknamed Bloody Mary.

Elizabeth I became queen in 1558 and, with the *Act of Supremacy and Uniformity* (1559), she was made governor of the English church. She restored Protestantism, but kept part of the Catholic ritual. In 1588, Philip II of Spain attacked England at sea with the *Armada* to restore Catholicism, but was defeated. Elizabeth, the Virgin Queen, never married and had no heir.

The Stuarts and the Civil War 1603-1653

In 1603, James VI of Scotland became king **James I**. He believed in the divine right of kings and dismissed the Parliament.

Charles I became king in 1625 and he had his father's ideas.

In 1642 *Civil War* broke out between the Crown and the Parliament. **Oliver Cromwell**, backed by the Parliament, set up a New Model Army and defeated the king's army.

Charles was executed in 1649. Cromwell became Lord Protector in 1653 and ruled as a dictator.



British Colonies 1607-1664

In 1607 the first permanent English settlement in America was established in *Jamestown*, in south-east Virginia.

In 1619 the first representative assembly, the House of Burgesses, met in Virginia and the first African slaves arrived to Jamestown.

In 1620 the **Pilgrim Fathers** arrived on the *Mayflower*, established the Plymouth Colony and signed the Mayflower Compact, an agreement that formed the basis of the colony's government. In 1650 the colonial population was estimated at 50,400 people.

In 1664 the English seized New Amsterdam from the Dutch and renamed it *New York*.



*The arrival of the pilgrim fathers
(A. Gisbert)*



*King Henry VIII
(H. Holbein the younger, c.1540)*



1 Read these extracts and decide to which documents they belong. Then, answer the questions.

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| 1. 1534: Henry VIII – Act of Supremacy | 3. 1603: James I – Parliament speech “On kingship” |
| 2. 1559: Elizabeth I – Act of Supremacy | 4. 1605: James I – Parliament speech “On the nature of Parliament” |

- “I ... do utterly testify and declare in my conscience that the queen’s highness is the only supreme governor of this realm and of all other her highness’s dominions and countries, as well in all spiritual or ecclesiastical things or causes as temporal, and that no foreign prince, person, prelate, state, or potentate hath or ought to have any jurisdiction, power, superiority, pre-eminence, or authority, ecclesiastical or spiritual, within this realm.”
- As to the nature of this high court of Parliament, it is nothing else but the King’s great Council, which the King does assemble either upon occasion of interpreting, or abrogating old laws, or making of new, according as ill manners shall deserve, or for the public punishment of notorious evildoers, or the praise and reward of the virtuous and well deservers ... As for the thing itself, it is composed of a head and a body: the head is the King, the body are the members of the Parliament.
- I do acknowledge, that the special and greatest point of difference that is between a rightful king and an usurping tyrant is in this: that whereas the proud and ambitious tyrant does think his kingdom and people are only ordained for satisfaction of his desires and unreasonable appetites; the righteous and just king does by the contrary acknowledge himself to be ordained for the procuring on the wealth and prosperity of his people, and that his greatest and principal worldly felicity must consist in their prosperity.
- Albeit the king’s Majesty justly and rightfully is and ought to be the supreme head of the Church of England, and so is recognized by the clergy of this realm in their convocations, yet nevertheless, for corroboration and confirmation thereof, and for increase of virtue in Christ’s religion within this realm of England, and to repress and extirpate all errors, heresies, and other enormities and abuses heretofore used in the same, be it enacted, by authority of this present Parliament, that the king, our sovereign lord, his heirs and successors, kings of this realm, shall be taken, accepted, and reputed the only supreme head in earth of the Church of England, called *Anglicans Ecclesia* ...

- What is the difference between a tyrant and a rightful king according to James I?
- What is the role of Parliament according to James I?
- What metaphor does James use to describe the relationship between the king and the parliament?
- What is the role of the king in religious matters according to Henry VIII?
- Which extract is a formula used to swear loyalty to the sovereign? Who do you think had to pronounce it?



2 Read a short introduction on the Pilgrim Fathers. Then, watch this video to complete this summary on the Pilgrims in America.



► [21st December 1620: the first Mayflower Pilgrims land at Plymouth to establish the Plymouth colony posted by HistoryPod](#)

The group of Pilgrims included **1**, servants, farmers, adventurers and tradesmen. They crossed the sea for **2** days, and after they had settled they wrote the Mayflower **3**, a self-governing charter for the colony. During the first few months, the Pilgrims found a **4** abandoned by the natives and decided to settle there because of its good **5**, The first winter was hard and many settlers soon **6**, The others survived because they signed a peace **7** with local tribes who helped them build their **8**



3 Watch this video to get more info on the Mayflower and answer the questions.

► [Deconstructing History: Mayflower posted by History](#)

- How many people were there?
- Were they men, women or children?
- How old were they?
- What was the ship like?
- How long did the journey last?