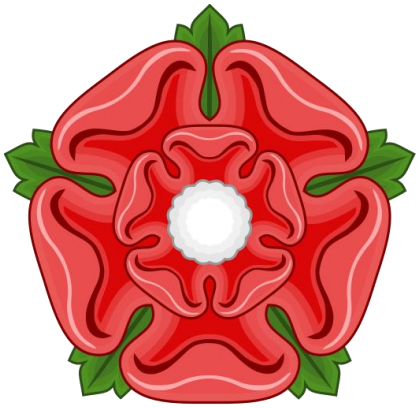
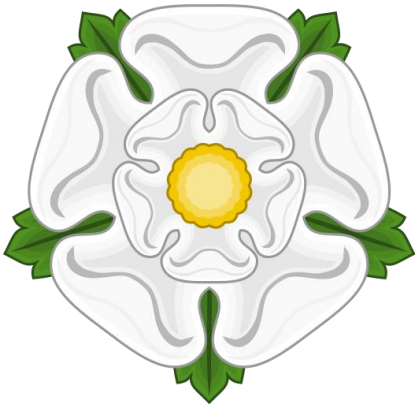
History Summer Reading

Tudors





AQA
Realising potential

Welcome to Tudor History!

Firstly, congratulations on completing your GCSE'S and we're so pleased you've chosen History! History is a challenging A-Level which involves lots of content and so you will need to take some time to read and prepare.

Key things to do before September:

- Got yourself a folder and dividers- there is a lot to learn so it is best to be organised from the very start. You will need a separate folder for the Tudor and Russia side of the course.
- Read this booklet carefully and work through the readings and tasks. These are all compulsory so please make sure they are done. **Please bring this to your first lesson in September.**
- Want to build up your knowledge of the Tudors? Use the suggested reading/TV/film/podcasts lists to get yourself ahead. This is not compulsory but will be incredibly beneficial even if you engage with one or two of the suggestions.

We want you to start in September with some understanding of the background to the Tudor period. In this pack you will find some readings and tasks that will introduce you to the Wars of the Roses- a civil war fought between the rival houses of York and Lancaster. The better your understanding of these events, the better you will understand the reign of the early Tudors.

Your Tasks:

1. Complete the reading on the Wars of the Roses. Read, highlight and annotate carefully. When annotating you need to pick out key details such as key dates, terms, people and events. You should not highlight everything. This is an important skill to practice at A-Level. Then, complete the tasks at the end.

2. Complete the reading on the Henry VII and the Battle of Bosworth. Read, highlight and annotate carefully. Then, complete the questions at the end.

3. Complete the reading by Richard Rex. Read, highlight and annotate carefully. Then, complete the mind map thinking about what problems Henry VII faced at the start of his reign.

4. Have a look at these two extracts. Pick out the main argument of each one in relation to what they view is Henry VII's biggest problem when he becomes King. The main argument is not always in the first line- look carefully at what the historian is saying. Once you have picked out the arguments of each, pick out a quote that supports what the Historian is arguing.

Have a great summer and enjoy ☺

It's a long summer so why not...?

You will receive a reading list created by the exam board but in addition here are some suggestions from us.

Non-fiction:

- Bosworth: The Birth of the Tudors by Chris Skidmore
- Winter King by Thomas Penn
- The Plantagenets, Dan Jones (2013)
- The Hollow Crown: The Wars of the Roses and the Rise of the Tudors, Dan Jones (2015)
- The Wars of the Roses, Michael Hicks (2012)

Historical Fiction:

- Wolf Hall Trilogy by Hilary Mantel
- Anything by Philippa Gregory
- Matthew Shardlake Series by C.J. Sansom

Film:

- Mary, Queen of Scots (2018)
- The Other Boleyn Girl
- Elizabeth: The Golden Age

TV:

- Wolf Hall
- The White Queen- available on Amazon.
- The Winter King- available on YouTube- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dmHhqVGTHhA

Podcasts:

- Not Just the Tudors- episode 268 Henry VII is a good link but any of the episodes on the monarchs would be good.
- The Rest is History- look for the episodes on The Six Wives of Henry VIII, Lady Jane Grey, Elizabeth I, Mary, Queen of Scots.
- You're Dead to Me- Rise of the Tudors.

Task 1- Read the information (highlight, underline and annotate key pieces of information) and then complete the tasks at the end.

The Wars of the Roses: the 15th-century clash of kings that heralded the dawn of the Tudor dynasty

Published on History Extra, April 14, 2021

What were the Wars of the Roses?

Although popularly seen as a long, dynastic struggle between the houses of Lancaster and York, the Wars of the Roses were in fact three separate wars, each with different causes, fought in the 15th-century.

Why is it called the Wars of the Roses?

This was a civil war fought between two roses – the household of York, which was which now has come to be symbolised by a white rose, and the household of Lancaster, which has come to be symbolised by a red rose – hence the name Wars of the Roses.

Although the title 'Wars of the Roses' only comes into use in the early 19th century, the idea of two different dynasties represented by roses does go all the way back to the 15th century.

Edward IV is initially known as the Rose of Rouen, because he was born in Rouen in Normandy and his family symbol is a white rose. And there are ballads from this time in praise of him that address him as that, and describe England as a garden with the rose being planted in it. And one of the family symbols of the House of Lancaster is the red rose.

The imagery is there, and it's picked up very early on: probably the most important person in terms of creating the idea of the Wars of the Roses is Henry VII, who has a Lancastrian claim. He marries a princess of the House of York called Elizabeth of York, thus uniting the roses, which he demonstrates by placing the Tudor rose – a combined red and white rose – everywhere.

There's a huge amount of written imagery from Henry VII's time, and particularly from when Henry VIII takes the throne, that combines these two rival bloodlines in one peaceful, lovely family.

Wars of the Roses timeline: the three phases of fighting

Phase one: the ire of Richard of York

The initial conflict was caused by the inadequacies and poor mental health of the Lancastrian Henry VI of England, and the ambitions of Richard of York, great-grandson of Edward III, a leading English magnate who demanded a top role in government. This tense situation was exacerbated by rivalries among the country's aristocratic families.

In May 1455, York and the noble Neville family attacked the royal court at St Albans, killing a number of leading Lancastrian nobles. Conflict broke out again in 1459 and, the following July, York captured the Henry VI at the battle of Northampton and then later claimed the throne for himself.

Eventually, a compromise was agreed, which allowed Henry VI to remain king, but with York installed as his heir. However, Henry's wife, Margaret of Anjou, refused to accept the disinheritance of her son, Edward Of Westminster, Prince of Wales, and raised an army to fight for the Lancastrian cause. York was defeated and killed at the battle of Wakefield, West Yorkshire, in December. But the crushing victory won by York's son, Edward IV, at the battle of Towton in March 1461, effectively settled the issue in favour of the Yorkists, although occasional fighting would continue in the North East for a further three years.

Phase two: the defection of the Earl of Warwick

The second war was primarily caused by the discontent of the mighty nobleman Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick. Warwick 'the Kingmaker', as he's often known, had been a supporter of Edward IV but, following the king's marriage to Elizabeth Woodville, Warwick saw his influence slip away. In 1469, he rebelled, briefly taking Edward prisoner. The following year, Warwick made an extraordinary alliance of convenience with his former foe, Margaret of Anjou, forcing Edward IV into exile and temporarily restoring Henry VI to the throne.

In 1471, the exiled Edward returned to England and brought his enemies to battle separately, defeating and killing Warwick at the battle of Barnet, now in Greater London, and beating Margaret at the battle of Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire, where her son was killed. Edward then had Henry VI quietly done away with and ruled unchallenged as Edward IV until his early death in 1483. He was succeeded by his 12-year-old son, Edward V.

Phase three: the conflict shifts from Yorkists vs Lancastrians, to Tudors vs Royals

Edward IV's death, on 9 April 1483, took everyone by surprise. His brother Richard of Gloucester was in the north, while his heir, the 12-yearold Edward, Prince of Wales, was at Ludlow, Shropshire, in the care of his mother's family, the Woodvilles – a house among Richard's enemies. As the Woodvilles travelled to the capital, they were intercepted by Richard, who took

charge of his nephew and arrested members of the Woodville faction. Richard of Gloucester assumed Protectorship of the Realm.

Over the following month, preparations were made for the young King's coronation but, on 13 June, Edward IV's old friend William Hastings, who had supported Richard against the Woodvilles, was seized and summarily executed in the Tower. Richard claimed that Hastings had been plotting with the Woodvilles against him, but it may be that Richard had already decided to make himself king and realised that Hastings would never accept the deposition of Edward V.

On 16 June, the Archbishop of Canterbury persuaded Elizabeth Woodville to hand over her other son Richard, Duke of York, so he could attend his brother's coronation. The two boys were then housed in the royal apartments in the Tower of London. The coronation never took place. On 22 June, it was declared that, because Edward IV had been pre-contracted to marry another woman before he wed Elizabeth Woodville, his marriage to her was invalid and the boys were illegitimate.

On 26 June, Richard assumed the throne and, ten days later, he and his wife were crowned in a lavish ceremony. But Richard's support was limited. Many of Edward's supporters, especially in the South, were alienated by Richard's actions. They fatally split the old Yorkist establishment and enabled Henry Tudor – a largely unknown exile – to mount a challenge for the throne.

In 1483, many of Edward IV's former servants rebelled against Richard III. The rising was stamped out, but dissatisfaction was rife. Richard had alienated many by favouring men in his own Northern power bloc. Further grants of confiscated rebel land and property to his supporters only added to his unpopularity. As a result, although few nobles were prepared to openly support Henry Tudor in his bid, few supported Richard, either.

On 22 August 1485, Richard was killed at the battle of Bosworth, and Henry seized the throne. Two years later, on 16 June, Henry VII defeated a rebellion by some of Richard III's former supporters at Stoke, near Newark. After some 30 years of intermittent conflict, the final battle had at last been fought.

Who are the key figures in the Wars of the Roses?

Henry VI (1421–71)
Henry was nine months old when he succeeded his father Henry V. His adult years were punctuated by periods of insanity. He was overthrown by the Yorkists in 1461, reinstated in 1470, but then murdered in the Tower of London after the Lancastrian defeat at Tewkesbury.

Margaret of Anjou (1430–82)
The French wife of Henry VI, she ruled in his place during his insanity. A determined woman, she tried to exclude Richard of York from government and fought vigorously to secure the succession of her son, Edward of Westminster, until his death at Tewkesbury in 1471.

Richard, Duke of York (1411–60)
Richard was a descendant, through both his parents, of Edward III. He was the leading opponent of royal policy in the 1450s and claimed the throne himself in 1460. He was killed at the battle of Wakefield that December.

Edward IV (1442–83)
Tall, strong and popular with his men, Edward IV became Yorkist leader after his father Richard's death at Wakefield. His victory at Towton secured him the throne. Briefly exiled in 1470, he returned to defeat his enemies at Barnet and Tewkesbury and ruled for a further 12 years before unexpectedly dying at the early age of 41.

Elizabeth Woodville (1437–92)
The widow of a Lancastrian knight, Elizabeth married Edward IV in 1464. He favoured her family, thus alienating Warwick 'the Kingmaker'. Her sons, Edward V and Richard Duke of York, disappeared in mysterious circumstances after her husband's death in 1483. Her daughter, Elizabeth, later married Henry VII, uniting the warring factions.

Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick (1428–71)
The most powerful noble in the country, Warwick 'the Kingmaker' helped Edward IV attain the crown in 1461. When he saw his influence being eclipsed by the Woodville family, he allied with his former enemy, Margaret of Anjou and restored Henry VI to the throne, only to be killed at the Battle of Barnet in 1471.

Anne Neville (1456–85)
Anne Neville married Edward of Westminster, Prince of Wales, to cement an alliance between her father, Warwick 'the Kingmaker', and Edward's mother Margaret of Anjou. After her husband's death at Tewkesbury she married Richard of Gloucester (the future Richard III) and was crowned queen alongside him in 1483.

Richard III (1452–85)
Although as Duke of Gloucester he had loyally served his brother Edward IV, on the latter's death he ousted his nephew, Edward V, and assumed the throne. Unable to rally much support during his short reign, he was defeated and killed by Henry Tudor at Bosworth in 1485.

Henry VII (1457–1509)
Returning to Britain after years of exile, Henry Tudor won the crown at Bosworth. By marrying Elizabeth, the daughter of Edward IV, he united the houses of Lancaster and York. He died in 1509 when the throne passed to his surviving son, Henry VIII.

Margaret Beaufort (1443–1509)
A descendant of John of Gaunt, Margaret was married to Edmund Tudor at the age of 12. By 13 she was a widow and a mother – of the future Henry VII. She later married Sir Henry Stafford and finally Thomas Stanley, and was involved in the plot to place her son on the throne.

Who won the Wars of the Roses: Lancaster or York?

Henry Tudor wins at Bosworth. Now, is he a Lancastrian or a Yorkist? That's the difficult question because through his mother, Margaret Beaufort, he has a Lancastrian claim to the throne. But it's absolute rubbish. It's incredibly distant. It's arguably illegitimate.

Effectively, the reason that he is considered the victor is because he is king by conquest, the same as William the Conqueror, and at the time this is seen as God shining a light on him and choosing him as the future. But Henry chooses to marry Elizabeth, a Yorkist princess, because he knows he needs the support of the Yorkists.

His children all therefore inherit both sides of the dynasty. His son Henry VIII is acclaimed as the union of these two roses, as someone who has the bloodline of the rival families in his veins. His sister Margaret goes on to become queen of Scotland and, ultimately, it's through her dynasty that the Stuarts coming to power in England and in Scotland again. She is a product of both York and Lancaster. So you could say, that ultimately peace wins.

Your Task:

1. Complete the table below using the specific details provided in the reading:

Phase	Cause/Trigger	Key Individuals Involved
1455-1461		
1469-1471		
1483-1487		

2. Answer the questions:

1) The text states that Henry Tudor's Lancastrian bloodline claim via his mother was "absolute rubbish" and "incredibly distant." If his genealogical claim was so weak, by what primary right did he legally claim to be king after August 22, 1485?

2) Why did Henry VII immediately marry Elizabeth of York and place the newly invented "Tudor Rose" everywhere? Explain the political purpose behind this specific piece of branding.

Task 2: Read the information (highlight, underline and annotate key pieces of information) and then complete the questions at the end.

Bosworth: The Dawn of the Tudors

Chris Skidmore | Published in BBC History Magazine June 2013.

From childhood imprisonment in Brittany to the violent execution of Richard III in a Leicestershire field, Henry Tudor's passage to the throne was lengthy and labyrinthine. Chris Skidmore charts the origins of the Tudor dynasty.

Wales, 7 August 1485. As the sun lowered beneath the horizon across the Milford estuary, a flotilla of ships drifted across the mouth of the Haven. It had been a week since the fleet had sailed from the shelter of the Seine at Honfleur, but the ships had made fast progress in the balmy August weather. Onboard, the soldiers waited. They included a rabble of 2,000 Breton and French soldiers (many only recently released from prison and, according to the chronicler Commynes, "the worst sort... raised out of the refuse of the people"). There were also a thousand Scottish troops and 400 Englishmen, whose last sight of the country had been two years previously, when they had fled in fear of their lives.

The ships entered the mouth of the estuary where, looking leftwards, the dark red sandstone cliffs, several hundred feet in height and impossible to scale, gave way to a small cove hidden from sight from the cliffs above. High tide had passed an hour previously, enabling the ships to creep silently to the edge of the narrow shoreline, allowing the troops to disembark. Their

arrival stirred no one. The waters soon clouded with sand as the men began to heave cannon, guns and ordnance from the boats, leading horses from the ships and onto land.

From one of the boats stepped a 28-year-old man. Pale and slender, above average height with shoulder-length brown hair, he had a long face with a red wart just above his chin. Yet his most noticeable feature to those who met him was his small blue eyes, which gave out the impression of energy and liveliness whenever he spoke.

Stepping from his boat, the man took a few steps forward on land upon which he had last set foot 14 years before. Kneeling down in the sand, he took his finger and drew a sign of the cross, which he then kissed. Then, holding up his hands to the skies, he uttered words from the first line from the 43rd Psalm: "Judge and revenge my cause O Lord," which the soldiers now began to sing. As the words of the psalm echoed around Mill Bay in the darkening evening, one line in particular must have stood out above all others: "O deliver me from the deceitful and unjust man."

Moment of reckoning

The journey across Wales to win a kingdom had only just begun. For Henry Tudor, his arrival to claim the crown of England was the end of a journey that had lasted his whole life. The moment of reckoning had arrived.

The remarkable rise of the Tudors to prominence is shrouded in fable. Long before Henry Tudor's landing in 1485, the family had nearly driven itself into annihilation due to their support of Owain Glyndwr's disastrous rebellion in 1400. It would take a scandalous affair to trigger a remarkable turnaround in the Tudors' fortunes.

Owen Tudor was a household servant in Henry V's court. After the king's premature death, his widowed queen, Katherine of Valois, took a shine to the handsome Welsh page, supposedly after he had drunkenly fallen into her lap dancing at a ball. Their illicit union, later formalised by a secret marriage, produced several children, including Edmund and Jasper Tudor, recognised by Henry VI as his half-brothers when he created them the earls of Richmond and Pembroke.

Edmund had his own ambitions for self-enrichment: his means would be marriage, namely to the wealthiest heiress in the land, Margaret Beaufort, the sole inheritor of the Beaufort family fortune, who had her own claim to the throne. Margaret was just a child, but when it came to marriage, land took precedence over love for Edmund. Aged just 12, Margaret found herself pregnant. Edmund, however, would not live to see the birth of his heir.

Although Edmund Tudor is reported to have died of the plague, this obscures the fact that he had been recently arrested by adherents of the king's rival, Richard, Duke of York; his treatment in prison, many suspected, hastened his death. Already divisions between the houses

of Lancaster and York had been exposed to full glare at the first battle of St Albans in 1455, where Jasper Tudor himself witnessed the Lancastrian king Henry VI being injured in the fight. Civil war would soon erupt as the Duke of York claimed the throne for himself.

With Edmund's death, Jasper Tudor would assume the mantle of the head of the family. He had Margaret swiftly married to Henry Stafford, the second son of the wealthy Duke of Buckingham. But any newfound stability was to be short-lived. Despite an attempt at reconciliation, factionalism between the Lancastrian court and York's supporters erupted into open warfare in the late 1450s and into 1460, when the Yorkists secured a crushing victory at Northampton, capturing Henry VI. York was declared Henry's successor, only for a dramatic reversal in fortune when the duke was executed after the battle of Wakefield in December 1460. York's son and heir, Edward, Earl of March, wreaked his revenge two months later when, at the battle of Mortimer's Cross in early 1461, he routed the Lancastrian forces, killing 3,000 Welshmen. One of the victims was an elderly Owen Tudor, who was executed at the market cross in Hereford, his last words reportedly being "That head shall lie on the stock that was wont to lie on Queen Katherine's lap". Jasper was forced to flee, promising to avenge his father's death "with the might of the Lord."

Vengeance would be a long time coming. Edward's crushing victory at the battle of Towton a month later heralded a decade of Yorkist rule, as Edward acceded to the throne as Edward IV. In exile first in Wales and later France, Jasper was stripped of his earldom, while his young nephew Henry was placed in the charge of the new Earl of Pembroke, William Herbert, where he was brought up at Raglan Castle, under the care of Herbert's wife, Anne. His mother, Margaret, paid occasional visits to her son. However, mother and son weren't reunited until 1470, when the defection of Warwick 'the Kingmaker' forced Edward IV from power and returned Henry VI to the throne. Margaret could now pay for a bow and sheaves of arrows to keep Henry amused. She even arranged for an audience with Henry VI, who is reported to have foretold that Henry Tudor would one day inherit the kingdom.

Jasper was restored to his earldom and given extensive powers under the restored Lancastrian regime, but it was not to last. In March 1471, Edward IV launched a remarkable comeback, returning from exile in Holland. Within the space of a month, two critical battles at Barnet and Tewkesbury resulted in the deaths of Warwick, Margaret Beaufort's husband Stafford and Henry VI's son Prince Edward, shortly followed by Henry VI's own suspicious end in the Tower. The Lancastrian dynasty had run into the sand. Through the brutal consequences of war, Henry Tudor was rapidly becoming one of the last remaining members of the royal family, although his claim to the throne was hardly taken seriously at the time.

Blown off course

After the crushing defeat of the Lancastrian forces at Tewkesbury, Jasper had no choice but to flee into exile again. This time, sailing in a small boat from Tenby bound for French shores

where he hoped to enlist the support of Louis XI, he took his 14-year-old nephew Henry with him. Yet when a storm blew them off course, they found themselves washed up on the shores of Le Conquet in neighbouring Brittany. At the time, Brittany was an independent duchy separate to France and relations between the two were openly hostile, perfectly understandable given French ambitions to unite the two countries.

The Breton ruler, Duke Francis II, recognising the value of the Tudors as diplomatic pawns, welcomed Jasper and Henry to his court. Francis understood that these new arrivals could be used to bargain with Edward IV, who was desperate to have both returned to England. He remained determined to keep both under close supervision, separating uncle and nephew, with Henry sent to the isolated Tour d'Elven, where he was imprisoned on the sixth floor of its keep. Henry's exile in Brittany over the next 14 years would be spent as a prisoner, albeit with household expenses totalling £2,000, along with £620 for his own personal use.

Edward IV made repeated failed attempts to entice Francis to hand over the Tudors. In 1476, he persuaded the duke that he intended for Henry to marry his daughter Elizabeth and requested his return. Francis fell for the trap and Henry was taken to St Malo, ready to be boarded onto a ship to transport him back to England. But Henry feigned illness and, in the ensuing delay, managed to escape into sanctuary in the town.

Edward IV's death in April 1483 marked a turning point in Henry's fortunes. Following the mysterious disappearance of Edward V and his brother in the summer of 1483, together with Richard III's seizing of the crown, a massive rebellion led by the Duke of Buckingham broke out in October 1483. Spurred on by his mother, Margaret Beaufort, who appears to have been strongly involved with the organisation of the rebellion, Henry decided to sail to the English coast with a fleet of Breton ships in the hope of invading. But the rebellion collapsed and, with Buckingham's execution, Henry had no option but to return to Brittany.

Silver linings

Henry's aborted attempt to claim the crown may have ended in disaster, but its consequences were to prove highly advantageous. Hundreds of exiles fleeing from England soon arrived at Henry's 'court', many of whom were former household men of Edward IV, distraught at Richard's usurpation. They had now switched sides, backing the Lancastrian Henry Tudor. Henry also pledged an oath on Christmas Day 1483 to marry Elizabeth of York, Edward IV's eldest daughter, thereby uniting the houses of Lancaster and York.

But Henry's time in Brittany was soon to be cut short. When Richard offered to provide a force of several thousand archers to aid Brittany in their conflict with France, in return Henry and Jasper were to be arrested. Henry was tipped off about the plan with just hours to spare and managed to flee to France where he was received by the French court of Charles VIII. As a pawn in the diplomatic chessboard played out between France, Brittany and England, Henry's arrival

was a gift for the French regime, who agreed to equip Henry with money, ships and mercenaries "of the worst sort" to launch an attack on Richard. At the last moment, though, they held back on their promises of funding, forcing Henry to borrow from brokers in Paris. He set sail with his army on 1 August 1485.

Richard III was reportedly "overjoyed" at news of Henry's landing. Yet, as Henry's march along the coastline of Wales went unhindered, Richard grew nervous, becoming suspicious of the involvement of Henry's step-father, Thomas Stanley (who had become Margaret Beaufort's third husband), and his brother Sir William Stanley in the lack of resistance to Henry's growing band of men as he travelled through north Wales and to the gates of Shrewsbury. The key defections of Welsh landowner Sir Rhys ap Thomas and Sir Gilbert Talbot provided Henry with the momentum he needed to push forward towards London, planning to march down Watling Street, the current-day A5.

Richard had spent the summer at Nottingham, waiting to see where Henry might land, but now he hurried down to Leicester where he amassed a force of some 15,000 men – at the time, one of the largest armies ever assembled on one side. On 21 August, both armies drew closer, camping the night overlooking the marshy terrain known as 'Redemore' near the villages of Dadlington, Stoke Golding and Upton.

Still, Henry could not be sure of the Stanleys' final support at Bosworth. Suspecting treachery, Richard had kept Thomas Stanley's son, George Lord Strange, imprisoned as a hostage to ensure his father's good behaviour. Henry held a clandestine meeting with both brothers the night before, and when morning came, Stanley refused to march his forces into line, preferring to remain upon the brow of the surrounding hills, between both armies.

Richard, meanwhile, had slept badly, supposedly haunted by nightmares. He woke to find that his camp was unprepared to hear mass or eat breakfast. As both sides lined up for battle in the early hours of 22 August, it was clear that Richard's army was vastly superior, with his "countless multitude" of men. In contrast, Henry had at best 5,000 men, of which his French mercenaries had to be kept apart from his native soldiers, for fear of them falling out.

Henry's vanguard was led by the Earl of Oxford, the Lancastrian commander who had managed to escape imprisonment to join Henry in France. Oxford's expertise saw Richard's vanguard routed and the death of its commander, the elderly Duke of Norfolk. By now, Richard had begun to realise that many on his own side, particularly those led by the Earl of Northumberland in his rearguard, were standing still, refusing to fight. He was offered the chance to flee yet refused, preferring to fight to the death.

Spotting Henry at the back of the battlefield, surrounded only by a small band of soldiers, Richard charged on horseback towards its ranks. After unhorsing Sir John Cheney, at 6ft 8ins one of the tallest soldiers of the day, Richard's men managed to kill Henry's standard-bearer, Sir

William Brandon, while Richard's own standard-bearer, Sir Percival Thirlwall, had both his legs hacked away beneath him.

With Henry fearing imminent death, the sudden charge of Sir William Stanley's 3,000 men saw Richard swept into a nearby marsh, where he was killed as the blows of the halberds of Henry's Welsh troops rained down on him. Thanks to Richard's remains having recently – and finally – been discovered under a Leicester car park, we know that the king suffered massive trauma to the head, including one wound which cut clean through the skull and into his brain. With the king dead, after two bloody hours the battle was over: on the nearby 'Crown Hill', Henry was proclaimed king by Thomas Stanley.

Two months later, Henry was officially crowned Henry VII at Westminster Abbey. The following January, he married Elizabeth of York, thereby fulfilling his promise to unite the houses of Lancaster and York. After decades of uncertainty and exile, the Tudor dynasty was finally born.

Questions:

1. What was the composition of the army Henry Tudor landed with at Mill Bay on 7 August 1485?

2. What long-term family disaster did the Tudors experience in 1400?

3. What scandalous affair turned the Tudors fortune around?

4. What do the financial arrangements made for Henry Tudor, during his 14-year captivity in Brittany, suggest about his status as a prisoner?

5. How did King Edward IV used in 1476 to try and lure Henry Tudor back to England, and how did Henry manage to sabotage the plot at St Malo?

6. Why was April 1483 a turning point for Henry's fortunes? How much of a success was this?

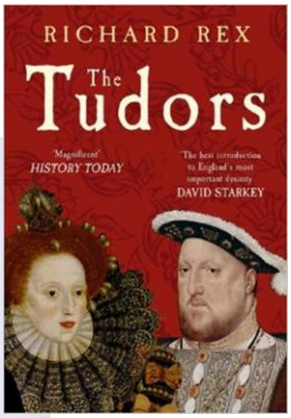
7. Why was Henry forced to leave Brittany?

8. When was the Battle of Bosworth?

9. What was the turning point in the Battle of Bosworth that led to Henry's victory?

10. Why do you think Henry had himself crowned King before his marriage to Elizabeth of York?

Task 3: Read the information (highlight, underline and annotate key pieces of information) and then complete the task at the end.



1

HENRY VII

ACCESSION

Henry Tudor was one of the unlikeliest men ever to ascend the throne of England. Royal blood ran thin in his veins – drawn ultimately from illegitimate origins and filtered through the female line – and he was one of the few men in late medieval England with absolutely no claim to the throne whatsoever: his Beaufort ancestors, John of Gaunt's bastards by Catherine Swynford, had been legitimised by an Act of Parliament, but had subsequently been specifically excluded from the succession. Nevertheless, this trickle of Lancastrian blood was a valuable political asset in that intermittent series of dynastic struggles we call the 'Wars of the Roses', especially once the blood of the last direct heir of the House of Lancaster, the young Prince Edward, had been spilled on Tewkesbury Field in 1471.

After that final and catastrophic defeat for the Lancastrian cause, Henry's powerful and ambitious mother, Lady Margaret Beaufort, had spirited him away from England. For the next dozen years he was sheltered in the relative security of the court of Brittany, over which presided Duke Francis, a prince almost independent of his notional sovereign, the king of France. The insecurity of Henry's early life, measured out in plot and intrigue, left a permanent mark on him. By the time he launched what would turn out to be his triumphant bid for the throne in 1485, he was for all the world a sorry figure, a nobleman long separated from his domains, a refugee who knew more of France than of his native Wales or of the England he hoped to rule. His accession owed less to the innate strength of his claim or of his position than to the staggering ineptitude of his predecessor, Richard III, in dissipating within just a couple of years the legacy of political consensus which Edward IV had painstakingly accumulated for the Yorkist dynasty.

For all the trouble Henry took to bolster his dubious legitimacy, his reign was always overshadowed by the fact that he was little more than a noble adventurer who got lucky: the first dozen years of his reign were spent scheming and fighting against pretenders whose claims were only slightly more ridiculous than his own.

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Henry VII was haunted by an awareness of the political realities of his own success, as we can see in the suspicion, verging at times on paranoia, with which he viewed the governing class of his own country.

The family name of Tudor was of course Welsh, and the male line which Henry represented was of princely descent. After the destruction of the Glendowers (thanks to their disastrous revolt against Henry IV), the Tudors became the focus of the almost messianic political hopes and dreams (still preserved in a mass of bardic literature) with which the Welsh compensated themselves for military defeat and political impotence. Henry's Welsh ancestry, though of doubtful worth in English politics, was to prove invaluable in his bid for power in 1485. It was no accident that Henry landed in Milford Haven, and that Welshmen were numerous in his army. The troops brought to his banner by his uncle, Jasper Tudor, and by the Welsh magnate Rhys ap Thomas were the core of the force which faced Richard III at Bosworth Field. Indeed, much of the general success of the Tudor regime in Wales can be attributed to the Welsh origins of the new dynasty, and this loyalty, subsequently bolstered by the twin processes of union with England and religious reformation, was maintained under the Stuarts. Welsh troops were a major factor in the Wars of the Roses, and Henry's Welsh ancestry certainly helped him recruit the support of this crucial military constituency. Much later, Welsh troops were to be the core of Charles I's army in the first English Civil War, from the recourse to arms in 1642 to final defeat at Naseby in 1645.

Welshness was less of a recommendation to Henry's English constituency, although the evergreen Arthurian legends provided a useful way of bridging the cultural gap. 'Arthur' was a well-chosen name for his eldest son. Thomas Malory's hugely popular *Morte d'Arthur* had recently revived the Arthurian cycle's appeal to an English audience. Nor, thanks to his long exile, did Henry in fact bring with him the sort of personal following of Welsh hangers-on that might have offended English sensibilities in the way that James VI and I's band of Scottish freeloaders and carpetbaggers managed in the early seventeenth century. All Henry brought with him was a handful of English exiles.

Richard's reckless squandering of the political resources carefully built up by his brother opened the door to Henry. His first raid, launched from Brittany in 1484, achieved nothing more than to cause Richard to pursue his elimination through diplomatic manoeuvres. Henry had to flee Brittany for France. But in 1485 he had another go. His mother, whose various marriages had brought her a huge personal fortune along with a vast web of useful family connections, had negotiated an informal agreement with Edward IV's widow, Elizabeth Woodville, by which elements of the Yorkist connection would support Henry Tudor on the understanding that he would take Edward's daughter, Princess Elizabeth, as his wife. Encouraged at least by the evident lack of enthusiasm for Richard's regime, Henry set sail with a small band of loyal friends and mercenaries.

Landing in Milford Haven on 7 August 1485, Henry moved north and east through Wales, calling upon the Tudor connection in Pembrokeshire but also recruiting from

the clients of the late Duke of Buckingham (executed by Richard III in 1483) and eventually securing the allegiance of the powerful Welsh magnate Rhys ap Thomas, who held Carmarthen Castle. His large Welsh force came together at Shrewsbury and then marched across the Midlands, encountering Richard's predominantly northern army near Market Bosworth in Leicestershire. Although most of the English peerage refrained from committing itself to either side, two large forces from the north also converged on this area: Yorkshiremen and Borderers under Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland, and men from Lancashire led by Thomas Lord Stanley (Margaret Beaufort's third husband and thus Henry Tudor's stepfather). In the ensuing battle, Stanley's decision to support Henry was no great surprise. Percy's refusal to commit himself to Richard was the decisive moment. It cost not only the king's but also his own life. Four years later the Earl of Northumberland, left conspicuously undefended by his own retainers, was lynched at Topcliffe in Yorkshire by a mob protesting against tax assessments. The underlying bitterness of the north against his betrayal of a man who, for all his faults, was certainly a northerners' king fuelled both the rage of the mob and the indifference of the retainers.

Richard III's death in action (outcome of a characteristic recklessness) made Bosworth Field a decisive battle. Henry took possession of London, summoned Parliament, and backdated his reign to the day before Bosworth: a legislative sleight of hand which enabled him to pass an 'act of attainder' against those who had opposed him. (An act of attainder was a statute declaring named individuals guilty of treason, and subjecting them to a range of penalties, most importantly the confiscation of all their property and goods.) The vast majority of the peerage had studiously held aloof from the Bosworth campaign. The Wars of the Roses had taught them that the risks of fighting on the losing side outweighed the benefits of fighting on the winning side. But they now thronged to demonstrate their loyalty by attending Henry's coronation on Sunday 30 October 1485.

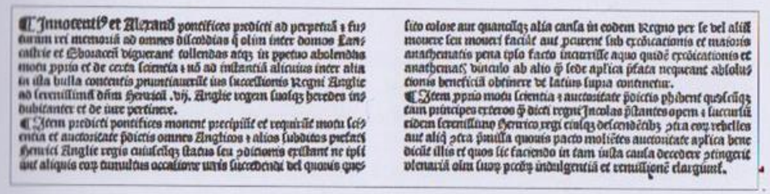
Throughout his reign Henry was anxious to establish continuity with both of the preceding dynasties, the Yorkist as well as the Lancastrian. His marriage to Elizabeth of York, celebrated on 18 January 1486, sealed the loyalty of many of those Yorkists who had supported him against Richard III. More importantly, it added considerably to the perceived legitimacy of their children. The reconciliation of Lancaster and York in Tudor through this royal marriage was a recurring note of Tudor propaganda, vividly expressed in the full title of Edward Hall's chronicle, *The Union of the Two Noble and Illustre Famelies of Lancastre and York*, and ultimately canonised in Shakespeare's history plays.

Henry also emphasised his affiliation with the Lancastrian house by encouraging the cult and canonisation of Henry VI (who, like Charles I after him, was far more esteemed after his tragic death than he had ever been in his lifetime: bad kings make good martyrs, and the incessant stream of miracles reported by his hagiographer, John Blacman, contrasts strangely with Henry's lifetime record of passivity and detachment). Indeed, the story was put about that when the young Henry Tudor was paying a visit to Henry VI's court, the saintly king prophesied that one day the

A drawing of Henry VII by a French or Flemish artist.

boy would wear the crown. Perhaps the most remarkable feature of Henry's own presentation of his claim to the throne was that it was principally founded not upon his genetic, but legally questionable, descent from John of Gaunt through his mother, Lady Margaret, but upon a more tenuous family connection with an altogether more impressive royal figure, Henry V, through his father, Edmund Tudor. For Edmund was the son of Owen Tudor, a Welsh gentleman, by Queen Catherine de Valois, the daughter of Charles VI of France, the widow of Henry V, and the mother of Henry VI. Henry VII liked to refer to Henry VI as his uncle, which was strictly true (his father was Henry VI's half-brother), but tended to suggest a blood link to the Plantagenets through the male line – which was not true.

Henry devoted enormous energies to buttressing his flimsy dynastic status. Right of conquest, or at least trial by battle, constituted his initial title to the throne, and this violent foundation was at once glossed over and indirectly acknowledged in the declaration of his first Parliament that his reign had commenced the day before Bosworth Field. The fact that Parliament was the recognised organ of national consent thus lent further weight to his claim. At the same time, Henry sought sanction from the highest accessible authority. If God's decision had been given in battle, the decision of his vicar on earth, Pope Innocent VIII, was deemed almost equally valuable, not least in securing the obedience of the clergy, who still commanded considerable landed wealth and thus the political power which accompanied land in medieval society. Henry's appeal for papal confirmation of his title, incidentally, though far from an acknowledgement of the more extreme formulations of papal



Papal support for Henry VII publicised in an official broadside, probably issued when Perkin Warbeck landed in Cornwall in 1497. Innocent VIII and Alexander VI had formally confirmed Henry VII's right to the crown, and this notice summarises their decree of excommunication against his enemies and their grant of indulgences to his supporters.

authority which still commanded some theoretical support in the papal curia, is nevertheless a more than adequate answer to those who, despite two generations of modern research, still insist on the outdated notion that medieval England resented and where possible resisted the claims of the papacy.

But Henry also had to convince his own people that he was their rightful king, and one of the traditional means of doing this was by displaying the king in person before his people on a royal progress. So on 10 March 1486 he set off on the first, and perhaps the greatest, Tudor royal progress. The first leg took him up to York, roughly following the line of the Great North Road, and calling at most of the major towns on or close to that route, such as Cambridge, Stamford, Lincoln, Nottingham and Doncaster. The second leg swept down across the Midlands to Bristol, by way of Nottingham, Birmingham, Worcester and Gloucester. The third and final leg took him across the country down the Thames Valley to London, by way of Abingdon. He was back at Westminster by June. The receptions in the greater towns were an opportunity for his new subjects to demonstrate their loyalty, and for the king to give earnest of his goodwill by confirming civic privileges and offering redress to grievances. They were also an opportunity for the king to make a timely demonstration of his power. In April 1486, Viscount Lovel and two gentlemen named Humphrey and Thomas Stafford, who had availed themselves of ecclesiastical sanctuary after fighting on the wrong side at Bosworth, broke out and tried to raise Yorkist support against Henry in Yorkshire and Worcestershire. Henry spent a good few days at both York and Worcester on his tour. Finally, visits to shrines en route saw him set up many votive candles in thanksgiving for his victory at Bosworth and in hope of the safe delivery of his wife, who was already pregnant with their first child.

What problems did Henry VII face after the Wars of the Roses?

Populate this spider diagram with information from the reading.

Task 4

Have a look at these two extracts. Pick out the main argument of each one in relation to what they view is Henry VII's biggest problem when he becomes King. The main argument is not always in the first line- look carefully at what the historian is saying. Once you have picked out the arguments of each, pick out a quote that supports what the Historian is arguing.

Extract 1:

The absolute priority for Henry VII on his accession was not the simple military suppression of his rivals, but the systemic reconstruction of the fractured relationship between the Crown and the English nobility. Decades of shifting dynastic allegiances had left behind a highly dangerous political culture, in which the great regional magnates had grown accustomed to functioning as independent warlords. These noblemen possessed vast private armies, dominated local justice, and viewed the occupant of the throne as temporary. Henry's throne could never be secure while the nobility remained unaccountable to the law. His primary challenge was therefore structural: he had to tame his own aristocracy, deploy aggressive financial penalties to enforce obedience, and rebuild a stable framework of domestic governance from within. Until the English barons were forced to accept the absolute sovereignty of the King's law, any dynastic peace would remain entirely illusions.

From Christine Carpenter, *The Wars of the Roses: Politics and the Constitution in England, c. 1437–1509* **(1497).**

In one sentence, summarise the main argument of Extract 1:

Find and write down two pieces of criteria each historian uses to support their overarching theory (How does Carpenter describe the behaviour of the nobility that made them so dangerous?):

Extract 2:

It is a mistake to view Henry VII's early instability as a consequence of domestic institutional failure or widespread noble defiance. Left to their own devices, the remaining Yorkist sympathizers within England lacked the military capacity and the political will to mount a credible challenge against the new regime. The true, existential threat to the Tudor dynasty lay in the volatile combination of dynastic pretenders and foreign intervention. Fake claimants like Lambert Simnel and Perkin Warbeck were only dangerous because they acted as magnets for European rulers who wished to destabilize England. Without the vital injection of foreign mercenary troops, ships, and international funding provided by Burgundy, France, and Scotland, these domestic conspiracies would have amounted to nothing more than isolated riots. Henry's security was ultimately decided not in the halls of English administration, but on the international stage, where his primary battle was to isolate his rivals diplomatically.

From Jez Ross, Henry VII, ***Pretenders and Rebellions*** **(2012).**

In one sentence, summarise the main argument of Extract 2:

Find and write down two pieces of criteria each historian uses to support their overarching theory (What specific assets did foreign powers provide that transformed minor threats into existential ones?):