

## The Trial of King Henry VIII: Hero or Villain?

The Tudors were the royal family who ruled England throughout the 16<sup>th</sup> Century. They continue to fascinate historians, novelists and film-makers, largely because they were so dynamic and did so much to shape the modern world we live in today. The most famous Tudor is probably Henry VIII, who you will learn about in this investigation.

### Procedure

#### 1. Paired Work

- Working in pairs, you will be given a sheet of evidence. Cut the sheet into slips.
- Read through each slip as a class (**your teacher will show you an image to accompany each slide and provide extra detail**), and as you do so put the slips into three columns:

- Evidence **criticising** Henry;
- Evidence **supporting** Henry.
- Evidence suggesting nothing very clearly.



- Now order the first two columns so that the strongest evidence is at the top of each pile, and the weakest at the bottom.

- Finally, think through each piece of evidence in the final column a bit more carefully and aim to reduce it down to no more than one or two slips.

- If you do this quite quickly, compare your ideas with the other pairs of students sitting nearby. Try to reach an overall agreement.

1. As a young man, Henry enjoyed sports and parties more than paperwork.

2. Henry had a carnival and a wrestling match with the King of France – the “Field of the Cloth of Gold”.

3. Henry was happy to leave the more boring business to his able minister, Cardinal Wolsey

4. Henry was said to be very handsome and charming as a young man

5. Henry was given the title title “Fidei Defensor” (Defender of the Faith) by the Pope for being so religious

6. Henry married Catherine of Aragon, who gave birth to the future Queen Mary. She was the widow of his brother

7. When she failed to produce a baby boy after 20 years, he wanted to divorce her and marry Anne Boleyn

8. The Pope refused to give Henry a divorce. So Henry created the “Church of England” and gave himself a divorce

9. Henry closed down the monasteries, saying they were evil. He used their money to fight wars

10. Henry sold the land of the monasteries to the people of England at cheap prices, making himself rich

11. Henry’s best friend, Thomas More, refused to accept Henry's divorce. So Henry beheaded him

12. Henry worked closely with the English people: he used Parliament to carry out his changes

13. Anne Boleyn gave birth to a girl – the future Queen Elizabeth. Henry said Anne was a witch, and had her executed

14. He then married Jane Seymour, who died giving birth to the future King Edward VI. Henry was very upset by her death

15. After a serious riding accident, Henry put on a lot of weight and eventually couldn’t even walk by himself

16. Thomas Cromwell persuaded Henry to marry Anne of Cleves, whom Henry called a “Flanders Mare” (Dutch horse!)

17. Henry executed Cromwell for letting him down. He also sacked the artist, Hans Holbein, who had painted Anne of Cleves' picture

18. He divorced Anne of Cleves but gave her a large pension and a house. She looked after Princesses Mary and Elizabeth

19. He then married the teenager Catherine Howard, but executed her for having an affair

20. Henry executed Protestants when he was a Catholic and Catholics when he was a Protestant

21. His final wife was Catherine Parr, who looked after him like a nurse. He died in 1547. His young son Edward VI became King