

TEACH THE SIX QUEENS DIFFERENTLY

This set of resources supports educators in teaching the six Tudor queens and strengthening the place of women's history within the curriculum. The collection uses individual stories to explore wider historical themes and highlights the work of female historians and performers who help bring the Tudor period to life.

Start here! If you have...

20 MINS

Challenge misconceptions

- Recap the '*divorced, beheaded, died*' rhyme
- Show one video
- Discuss the usefulness of the '*divorced, beheaded, died*' rhyme

ONE LESSON

Focus on one queen

(see example on page 8)

- Pick one queen and enquiry question
- Watch video (use Watch-Along Guide to pause and discuss)
- Analyse 1 source
- Use 1 biography
- Return to enquiry question

SEVERAL LESSONS

Overview of six queens

(see example on page 9)

- Pick one overarching enquiry question
- Study one queen per lesson
- Compare queens
- Return to enquiry question

While the six queens represent high-status European women, the series also includes some other perspectives. Katherine of Aragon's story includes links to a woman of North African heritage, and Catherine Howard's life is told with reference to the experiences of women of lower status.



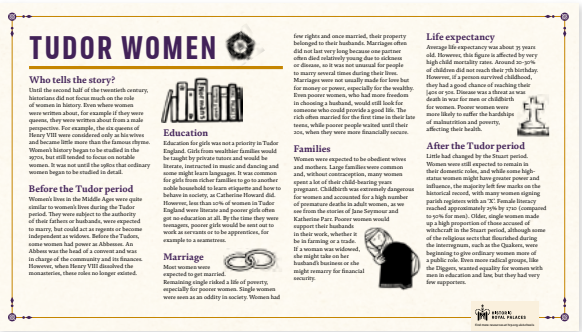
Available resources about the six Tudor queens to support your lessons



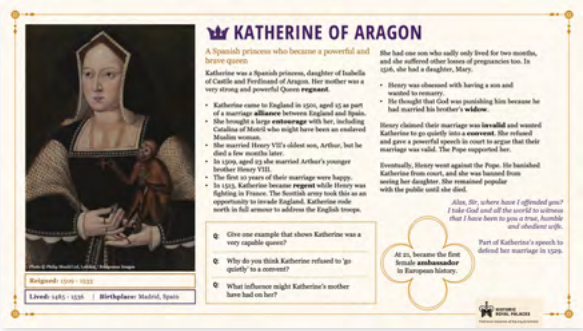
Fact Sheet – quick overview or starter



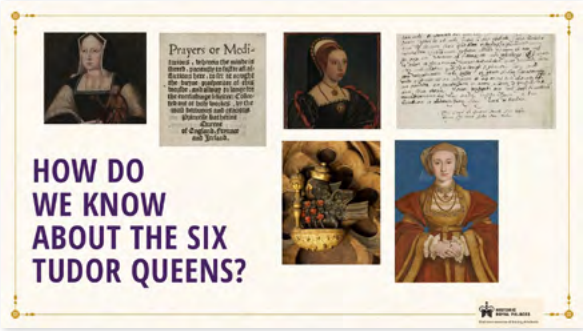
Watch-Along Guides – educator guided discussion



Knowledge booster – support educator subject knowledge



Biographies – reading and research tasks



Source Bank – evidence and analysis



Catalina of Motril – exploring diversity in the Tudor world



Videos – hook and narrative



Quiz – recap/assessment

Suggested enquiry questions

OVERARCHING QUESTIONS ACROSS THE TOPIC

The queens' stories

- How should the six Tudor queens be remembered?
- To what extent is '*divorced, beheaded, died...*' the right way to remember the six Tudor queens?
- What does the evidence reveal about what the six Tudor queens were really like?



Comparison

- Which Tudor queen held the most power?
- Which Tudor queen had the most influence over Henry VIII?
- How different were the six Tudor queens?



Wider themes

What do the lives of the Tudor queens tell us about <choose one> in the 16th century?

- women's education
- women's power
- religion



KATHERINE OF ARAGON

Key themes – migration & power

- What does Katherine of Aragon's story reveal about how the world was connected in the 16th century?
- How far does Katherine of Aragon's story show that women could be powerful in the 16th century?

Source Bank

- Katherine's speech in court
- Portrait of Katherine

ANNE BOLEYN

Key themes – religious changes & women's connections

- How far did Anne Boleyn help bring about religious change in 16th century England?
- How was Anne Boleyn shaped by the people and experiences around her?

Source Bank

- Anne's letter to her father
- Carving of H&A

JANE SEYMOUR

Key themes – using sources as evidence

- How much can the evidence tell us about what Jane Seymour was really like?
- What do portraits reveal, and not reveal, about Jane Seymour?

Source Bank

- Letter about Jane
- Portrait of Jane

ANNE OF CLEVES

Key themes – independence & alliances

- What does Anne of Cleves' life reveal about how far women could be independent in Tudor England?
- What does Anne of Cleves' story reveal about how the world was connected in the 16th century?

Source Bank

- Letter written about Anne
- Portrait of Anne

CATHERINE HOWARD

Key themes – daily life & interpreting sources

- How typical was Catherine Howard's childhood for girls Tudor England?
- What does Catherine Howard's life reveal about women's freedom and choice in Tudor England?

Source Bank

- Catherine's letter to Thomas
- Portrait of unknown woman

KATHERINE PARR

Key themes – education & influence

- What does Katherine Parr's life reveal about women's education in the Tudor period?
- How did Katherine Parr influence the people and ideas around her?

Source Bank

- Elizabeth's letter to Katherine
- Katherine's book

Teaching strategies

01

Using the videos and source bank together

Each video includes a source that also appears in the source bank. This creates a very effective opportunity for students to explore evidence for themselves alongside hearing a historian's interpretation.

Option 1: Predict and compare

- Watch the video up to the point where the source is introduced.
- Give students the source and ask them to analyse it using guiding questions.
- Resume the video and compare students' ideas with the interpretation given by the actor and historian.

Option 2: Deepen understanding

- Watch the full video first to introduce the queen and key ideas.
- Then give students the matching source from the source bank.
- Use the source questions to help students explore the evidence in more detail.

02

Group work

- Divide the class into groups
- Give each group one queen (video, biography and/or source)
- Ask groups to investigate their queen and create a timeline of their lives
- Ask groups to create a 30-word summary of their queen's life
- Groups present their summaries in chronological order

Source analysis

Use these questions to help students analyse sources and think like historians.

What are the limitations?

- What can't the source tell us?
- What are we less certain about?

What can we learn?

- What does the source tell us?
- What can we be certain about from this source?

How does it fit with other knowledge?

- Does it match what we already know from other sources or information?

How strong is the evidence?

- How representative is it? (Does it show one view or many?)
- How typical is it? (Is it similar to other evidence?)

Who created it and why?

- Who created the source?
- Whose view does it show?
- Might the creator have had a reason to misrepresent the truth?

Comparison

If you are teaching an overview of all six queens, a comparison table can help students gather information and draw conclusions.

	Education	Religion	Power & influence	European connections	Other
Katherine of Aragon					
Anne Bolyen					
Jane Seymour					
Anne of Cleves					
Catherine Howard					
Katherine Parr					

Looking beyond the queens – diversity in Tudor England

While the six Tudor queens are valuable for teaching women's history, they represent only one part of Tudor society as high-status European women. The story of Catalina of Motril helps broaden this picture. She was possibly an enslaved Muslim woman who travelled to England as part of Katherine of Aragon's household.

Our Catalina of Motril resource includes a video and biography, making it easy to incorporate her story into lessons about Tudor England, diversity and global connections.

Ideas for the classroom

- Compare Catalina's experiences with those of Katherine of Aragon. What was different about their lives and opportunities?
- **Discuss:** What does Catalina's story tell us about diversity in Tudor England?
- **Discuss:** Why are some people remembered in history while others are less well known?

Explore the Catalina of Motril resource: <https://www.hrp.org.uk/schools/learning-resources/catalina-of-motril-video-and-biography/>



This is not an image of Catalina. But it is a representation of what women from Grenada may have looked like at the time. Woman from Grenada Germanisches National Museum

Inclusion: sensory Tudor collection and sentence starters

You could create a small sensory Tudor collection linked to the queens' stories and sources.

- Monkey toy – Katherine of Aragon's portrait
- Wooden object – Anne Boleyn's wooden carving
- Letter with a wax seal – letter about Jane Seymour
- Playing cards – Anne of Cleves's hobbies
- Tudor music (e.g. Greensleeves) – Catherine Howard danced with Anne of Cleves
- Old book – Katherine Parr's book
- Velvet, lace or feathers – to explore Tudor clothing and status
- Replica pearls – to explore wealth and appearance
- Spices (e.g. cinnamon, cloves) – Tudors loved imported spices

You could use these sentence starters alongside the videos and fact files to help draw out key messages.

Katherine showed power when she...
(was regent, fought back in court)

Anne learnt new ideas when she...
(went to Europe, became friends with powerful women)

We don't know very much about Jane Seymour because...
(we don't have many sources by her)

After her marriage ended, Anne...
(was independent, had a fun life)

Catherine did not have a choice when...
(she got married, she was executed)

Katherine Parr shared her ideas by...
(being close to Elizabeth, writing a book)

Lesson plan 1: great for a single lesson focusing on one queen

Enquiry question – How much can the evidence tell us about what Jane Seymour was really like?

Starter (5-10 minutes)

- Find out what students already know about Jane Seymour (if anything)
- Introduce the enquiry question and explain that students will investigate this using evidence

Main (30-40 minutes)

1. Introduce the narrative

- Show the Jane Seymour video
- Use the Watch-Along Guide to pause at key points for discussion

2. Build knowledge

- Provide students with the Jane Seymour biography page
- Students use this to gather key information about her life

3. Source analysis

- Give students one or two sources from the source bank
- Different groups can analyse different sources
- Use guiding questions to support analysis

Plenary (5-10 minutes)

Return to the enquiry question

Ask students to summarise:

- What types of power did women have?
- What limits did they face?
- Which Tudor queen best represents women's power? Why?

Lesson plan 2: great for a single lesson focusing on Tudor women's power

Enquiry question – What do the lives of the six Tudor queens reveal about female power in the 16th century?

Starter (5-10 minutes)

- Find out what students already know about the six Tudor queens and women's power in the 16th century
- Introduce the enquiry question and explain that students will investigate this using evidence

Main (30-40 minutes)

1. Build overview knowledge

- Provide students with biography pages (or fact sheet)

Ask them to identify across the queens:

- examples of women having power
- examples of limited power

Optional: use a comparison table to organise ideas

2. Whole-class discussion

- Draw out key themes:
 - different types of power (regent, influence, independence)
 - differences between queens
 - limits placed on women

3. Extend with evidence (optional)

- Use one or two sources from the source bank
- Discuss: What does this add to our understanding of women's power?

Extension: Students choose one queen video to watch as a final activity.

Plenary (5-10 minutes)

Return to the enquiry question

Ask students to summarise: What types of power did women have?

What limits did they face? Which Tudor queen best represents women's power? Why?

Lesson plan 3: great for source analysis

Enquiry question – What does the evidence reveal about the six Tudor queens?

Starter (5-10 minutes)

- Ask: What types of evidence do we have for the Tudor period?
 - Clarify time and place, addressing any misconceptions
 - Introduce the enquiry question
 - Explain that students will use sources to investigate
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Main (30-40 minutes)

1. Distribute sources

- Give each student one source from the source bank
(There are 12 sources – 2 per queen)

2. Independent analysis

- Students analyse their source using: Questions from page ...
- or selected prompts from the source bank

3. Pair/share and compare

- Students: compare with someone who has the same source
- or contrast with someone using a different source

4. Whole-class feedback

- Work through the sources together
- Students share what their evidence reveals

Extension: Students choose one queen video to watch as a final activity.

Plenary (5-10 minutes)

Return to the enquiry question

Students make a judgement: What does the evidence reveal about their Tudor queen?

Scheme of learning: great for a series of lessons

Enquiry question – How should we remember the six Tudor queens?

Lesson 1

Introduce the enquiry question

Explore how the queens are commonly remembered (the rhyme)

Establish key background:

- chronology of the six queens
 - Tudor context (religion, social expectations)
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Lessons 2-4

Explore the lives of the six queens in more depth

Use:

- videos
- biographies
- sources

Possible approaches:

- different groups study different queens
- or focus on one queen per lesson

Key question: What more is there to each queen beyond the word in the rhyme?

Final lesson

Return to the enquiry question

Discuss: is the rhyme a fair way to remember the queens?

Task: Students create their own improved version of the rhyme

Further subject knowledge

Online articles

[Henry VIII's wives: six queens, six women | Hampton Court Palace | Historic Royal Palaces](#)

[Katherine of Aragon | Hampton Court Palace | Historic Royal Palaces](#)

[Anne Boleyn | Tower of London | Historic Royal Palaces](#)

[Jane Seymour | Hampton Court Palace | Historic Royal Palaces](#)

[Anne of Cleves: The Great Survivor | Hampton Court Palace | Historic Royal Palaces](#)

[Catherine Howard | Hampton Court Palace | Historic Royal Palaces](#)

[Katherine Parr: Scholar, Stepmother, Survivor | Hampton Court Palace | Historic Royal Palaces](#)

Podcast

[Apple The Six Tudor Queens – Historic Royal Palaces Podcast – Apple Podcasts](#)

[Spotify The Six Tudor Queens – Historic Royal Palaces Podcast | Podcast on Spotify](#)