



KATHERINE PARR

WATCH-ALONG GUIDE

BEFORE WATCHING

Key themes

✚ Education

In the 16th century education depended on your class and gender. Boys got a better education than girls and the rich were better educated than the poor. However, the printing press did mean that literacy rates were rising.

✚ Women's power

In the Tudor period, society was controlled by men. However, some queens had power when they acted as regent.

✚ Influence

Some people, including women, influence others through education, ideas and relationships. This influence could shape decisions, beliefs and even future rulers, showing that power is not always visible or formal.

Who was she?

Katherine Parr believed that education was important for girls and loved reading and writing. She ruled as regent, helped keep the country running, and became one of the first female authors to publish a book in England.

She was Henry VIII's sixth wife, and they were married for four years until Henry died. They had no children together.

SIX the Musical

A modern musical that retells the stories of the wives of Henry VIII's. In this video, an actor from the show explores the real history behind her character with a historian.



Source used in the video

A letter written by a young Elizabeth I to Katherine Parr.

Vocab

✚ Protestant

A type of Christianity that believes people do not need officials (like the Pope or Bishops) to communicate with God

✚ Regent

Person who rules when the king or queen is unable to



WHILE WATCHING

00:58 Why is Katherine often remembered only as “survived”?
What’s missing?

Talking points: oversimplification; male-focused narratives; ignores character and influence

01:32 How did Katherine’s mother influence her education and outlook?

Talking points: value of learning; women’s influence; lifelong education

03:18 Although this might seem unusual today, how do you think people in the Tudor period felt about marrying for money/power?

Talking points: normal for elite society; love was seen as less important; there was little choice

04:10 Why was it significant that Katherine published books in her own name?

Talking points: rare for women; public voice; influence over readers

06:14 Why might seeing Katherine rule as regent have been important for Elizabeth?

Talking points: female leadership; inspiration; future queen

07:45 How should Katherine Parr be remembered today, and why?

AFTER WATCHING

How do we know?

Use the Source Bank to explore a letter written to Katherine Parr and a book that she published.

Key events

1512 – Born

1529 – Marries for the first time

1534 – Marries for the second time and becomes a stepmother

c.1543 – falls in love with Thomas Seymour

July 1543 – Marries Henry VIII

1544 – Acts as regent, ruling while Henry VIII is away

1545–1547 – Publishes books in her own name

1546 – Survives a plot against her at court

1547 – Henry VIII dies; Katherine marries Thomas Seymour

30th August 1548 – Gives birth to a daughter

5th September 1548 – dies aged 36

