

Content of GCSE course – Elizabethan era 1558-88

Specification content			
<p>Key Topic 1.1 The situation on Elizabeth's accession</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elizabethan England in 1558: society and government. 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Virgin Queen: the problem of her legitimacy, gender, marriage. Her character and strengths. Challenges at home and from abroad: the French threat, financial weaknesses. 			
<p>Key Topic 1.2 The 'settlement' of religion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Religious divisions in England in 1558. Elizabeth's religious Settlement (1559): its features and impact. The Church of England: its role in society. 			
<p>Key Topic 1.3 Challenge to the religious settlement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The nature and extent of the Puritan challenge. The nature and extent of the Catholic challenge, including the role of the nobility, Papacy and foreign powers. 			
<p>Key Topic 1.4 The problem of Mary, Queen of Scots</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mary, Queen of Scots: her claim to the English throne, her arrival in England in 1568. Relations between Elizabeth and Mary, 1568–69. 			
<p>Key Topic 2.1 Plots and revolts at home</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The reasons for, and significance of, the Revolt of the Northern Earls, 1569–70. The features and significance of the Ridolfi, Throckmorton and Babington Plots. Walsingham and the use of spies. 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The reasons for, and significance of, Mary Queen of Scots' execution in 1587. <p>Key Topic 2.2 Relations with Spain</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Political and religious rivalry Commercial rivalry. The New World, privateering and the significance of the activities of Drake. 			
<p>Key Topic 2.3 The outbreak of war with Spain, 1585–88</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> English direct involvement in the Netherlands, 1585–88. The role of Robert Dudley. Drake and the raid on Cadiz: 'Singeing the King of Spain's beard'. <p>Key Topic 2.4 The Armada</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spanish invasion plans. Reasons why Philip used the Spanish Armada. 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The reasons for and consequences of the English victory. <p>Key Topic 3.1 Education and leisure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education in the home, schools and universities. Sport, pastimes and the theatre. 			

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<p>Key Topic 3.2 The problem of the poor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The reasons for the increase in poverty and vagabondage during these years. The changing attitudes and policies towards the poor. <p>Key Topic 3.3 Exploration and voyages of discovery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Factors prompting exploration, including the impact of new technology on ships and sailing and the drive to expand trade. 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The reasons for and significance of Drake's circumnavigation of the globe. <p>Key Topic 3.4 Raleigh and Virginia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The significance of Raleigh and the attempted colonisation of Virginia. Reasons for the failure of Virginia. 			