Henry VIII

The MAN of the HOUR...
Rights of the Crown vs. Rights of the Pope

- **Late medieval** England: CROWN VS. POPE
  - Pope Boniface VIII (1230-1303; Pope: 1290-1303) pushes to eliminate secular taxation of the clergy.
  - Edward I (1272-1307) rejects Pope Boniface VIII’s efforts.
  - Parliament passes laws in the mid-14th century, curtailing payments and judicial appeals to Rome, as well as papal appointments in England.
  - Piety, humanism, and widespread, **anticlerical** sentiment prepare the way (both religiously and intellectually) for Protestant ideals in the early 16th century.
Henry Rules!

- **Henry VIII (1491-1547)** becomes king in 1509; he is the second monarch in the Tudor dynasty.

- Known for his many marriages and his role in the English Reformation:
Marriage to Catherine of Aragon

- In 1509, Henry VIII marries Catherine of Aragon, daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain.
- Catherine was Henry’s brother’s widow, and their union was more an alliance compact than a marriage.
- Catherine produces only one surviving child, a daughter, Mary (in essence, no male heir for Henry 😞).
The King’s Affair

- By 1527, Henry was thoroughly enamored of Anne Boleyn, one of Catherine’s ladies-in-waiting.

- In Catholic England, an annulment of a King’s marriage could not occur without papal approval.

- Will Henry be able to marry the one he “loves”???
Divorce... Annulment... Defiance...

- Henry asks Catherine for a divorce.
- Henry claims that his union with Catherine, who had many miscarriages and stillbirths, is cursed by God, because Catherine had first been the wife of his brother, Arthur.
The Reformation Parliament

- When the king’s advisors could not obtain a papal annulment, they conceived of a plan to declare the king supreme in English spiritual affairs. In 1529, Parliament convened for what would be a seven-year session that earned it the title the “Reformation Parliament.”
In January 1531, the Convocation (a legislative assembly representing the English clergy) publicly recognized Henry as Head of the Church in England “as far as the law of Christ allows.”

The Church of England is now PROTESTANT.

In 1533 Catherine and Mary are sent into exile. Catherine dies in 1536.
In January 1533, Henry wed the pregnant Anne Boleyn, with Thomas Cranmer officiating.

They had one child, Elizabeth.
Acts of Succession & Supremacy

- 1531—1533: The Act of Supremacy declares Henry “the only supreme head” to the Church of England, and the Act of Succession makes Anne Boleyn’s children legitimate heirs to the throne.

- Those who opposed these acts were killed.
The Six Wives of Henry VIII
To satisfy his desires and to secure a male heir, Henry married six times:

1. His marriage to **CATHERINE OF ARAGON** is annulled 1533.
2. In 1536, **ANNE BOLEYN** is beheaded for alleged treason and adultery, and her daughter Elizabeth is declared illegitimate.
3. **JANE SEYMOUR** dies in 1537 shortly after giving birth to the future Edward VI, Henry’s only surviving son.
4. Henry weds **ANNE OF CLEVES**, sight unseen on the advice of Oliver Cromwell, the purpose being to create a marriage alliance. The marriage is later annulled by Parliament.

5. **CATHERINE HOWARD** is beheaded for adultery in 1542.

6. Henry’s last wife, **CATHERINE PARR**, a patron of humanists and reformers, **survives** him.
Edward VI (1547-1553)

- When Henry dies, his son and successor, Edward VI, is only ten-years-old. Under the regencies of the duke of Somerset and the duke of Northumberland, England fully enacts the Protestant Reformation.
Mary I (1553-1558)

- In 1553, Catherine of Aragon’s daughter, Mary, succeeds her half-brother, Edward, becoming Mary I.
- Proceeding to restore Catholic doctrine and practice, Mary I becomes known as ‘Bloody Mary.’
It is not until the reign of Anne Boleyn’s daughter, Elizabeth I (1558-1603), that a prolonged religious settlement is worked out.

Elizabeth I merges a centralized Episcopal system, which she firmly controls, with broadly defined Protestant doctrine and traditional Catholic ritual.

Elizabeth I is known as the ‘Virgin Queen.’
Shakespeare (under Patron Elizabeth I)

- Produces many plays: *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, *Henry IV*, *Love’s Labour’s Lost*, etc.

- The Chamberlain's Men: performed in Queen Elizabeth’s court
Stuart Monarchy

- James VI of Scotland, cousin of Elizabeth I, son of Mary “Queen of Scots,” “inherits” the throne, becoming James I of England in 1603.
Shakespeare
(under Patron James I)

- The King’s Men: King James’s acting group—Shakespeare as “head”
- Produces a play about James I…
  - Hence, James I’s lineage is where Shakespeare draws his inspiration for *Macbeth*. 
William Shakespeare

- Misconceptions???:
  - He was well educated…
  - He did NOT write some of the plays for which he is credited…
  - He was a lover of both sexes (genders)…
  - He had many affairs while in London…

- Side note: The Globe Theatre
Literature-Era Connections

- Henry and Anne’s Love:
  - Letters by Henry VIII
  - Poems by Anne, concerning her pending death…

- Shakespeare’s Sonnets
  - Concepts of Love

- History behind Macbeth
  - Holinshed Chronicles