

Tudor Life and Legacy: A Historical Investigation

Learning objective: To analyse the social hierarchy, daily life, and historical impact of the Tudor period in England.

Read each question carefully and use your knowledge of Tudor history to provide detailed, evidence-based responses. Ensure your handwriting is clear and your explanations are thorough.

The Tudor period (1485–1603) was a transformative era in English history, marked by significant changes in religion, exploration, and the daily lives of its people. From the opulent courts of Henry VIII and Elizabeth I to the simple timber-framed homes of the peasantry, society was strictly structured. While the wealthy enjoyed elaborate feasts and fine clothing, the majority of the population relied on farming and local trade to survive. Technological advancements in navigation allowed for daring sea voyages, while the invention of the printing press began to change how information was shared across the kingdom.

Word bank: monarch · hierarchy · exploration · galleon · pottage · portrait · reformation · sovereign

1. Explain why the Tudor social hierarchy was structured like a pyramid, with the monarch at the very top. Who held the most power, and how did they maintain control? (3 marks)

2. Compare and contrast the daily diet of a wealthy Tudor noble with that of a typical peasant farmer. Why were their meals so different? (3 marks)

3. Ellie the elephant is studying Tudor exploration. Justify why the development of the galleon ship was a turning point for the English economy and global influence. (3 marks)

4. What might happen if the printing press had not been invented during the Tudor era? Consider how this would have affected the spread of ideas and literacy. (3 marks)

5. Look at a famous portrait of a Tudor monarch. Describe two specific items of clothing or jewellery shown and explain what these items tell us about the person's status. (2 marks)

6. If you were a merchant living in the Tudor period, what goods would you hope to trade, and which English port city would you use to export your items? Explain your reasoning. (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a 'Tudor Street Scene' showing the contrast between a wealthy merchant's half-timbered house and a small peasant cottage. Include details such as leaded glass windows, thatched roofs, and people in period clothing.



Extension challenge: Imagine you are an advisor to Queen Elizabeth I. Write a short diary entry (150 words) detailing a challenge you faced at court today, such as a difficult trade negotiation or a preparation for a royal banquet. Use at least four words from the word bank in your writing.