

'Elizabethan England, 1568-1603' Revision Tasks

The Elizabethan Court and Parliament

2. Life in Elizabeth's Court

- Elizabeth was given advice by her royal court and her government.
- The royal court was made up of around 1000 people including powerful nobles, government officials, ladies-in-waiting, servants and advisors. It was the centre of political power but also set trends in fashion for the country.
- The Privy Council was Elizabeth's most trusted group of advisors and was made up of 12 men who were close to the Queen. Along with Elizabeth, this group made up the government.
- Power in England was split between four key groups of people:
 - **Parliament:** this group controlled taxes and made laws. The queen decided when to call parliament meetings and could **prorogue** (close) parliament if she wanted to.
 - **The Privy Council:** responsible for the day to day running of Britain and advised on war, religion, foreign policy, and security. The council was led by a Secretary of State.
 - **Lord Lieutenants:** appointed by Elizabeth to control an area of the country, settle disputes, and collect tax. They helped the queen gather an army. Many were on the Privy Council.
 - **Justice of the Peace (JP's):** each county had several JP's who enforced the laws. One JP could put someone in prison. More than one JP could decide to give the death penalty.
- Elizabeth used a system of **patronage** to keep people loyal. She would appoint people to positions of power in return for their loyalty and could take that power away if they offended her.

Life in Elizabeth's Court:

6. Who was in the Royal Court?

7. What was the Privy Council?

8. What were Parliament responsible for?

9. What were Lord Lieutenant's responsible for?

10. What job were Justices of the Peace given?

3. Key ministers in Elizabeth's court

- Many men served on the council in parliament or as Lord Lieutenants – these men had close relationships with the queen. These men include:

Sir William Cecil (1520-98)	Sir Francis Walsingham (1532-90)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Secretary of State (twice!) and privy councillor.• Elizabeth's most trusted advisor.• Encouraged Elizabeth to take control of Catholic Ireland and fight Catholics abroad.• Helped develop laws to help the poor and changes to religion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Secretary of State, Privy councillor, and 'Spymaster'• One of Elizabeth's closest advisors from 1573-1590.• Controlled a network of spies that gave information to Elizabeth.• Helped increase England's power at sea and dealt with rival countries.• Played a key role in the execution of Mary Queen of Scots.

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Key ministers in Elizabeth's court:

Read through these statements and tick the boxes to show whether the information applies to Sir William Cecil, Sir Francis Walsingham, or both of them!

	Cecil	Walsingham	Both
He was Secretary of State during Elizabeth's reign.			
He was Elizabeth's most trusted advisor.			
He was Elizabeth's spymaster.			
He helped England develop their power at sea.			
He encouraged Elizabeth to take control of Ireland.			
He was part of Elizabeth's Privy Council			
He played a key role in Mary Queen of Scots' execution.			
He helped develop laws to help the poor.			

4. Elizabeth's relationship with Parliament

- Parliament in Elizabethan times was less powerful than it is today. It had no Prime Minister and Members of Parliament (MPs) were men who had been voted into power by wealthy landowners.
- Parliament could only meet when Elizabeth called a meeting and would only be allowed to discuss issues that were chosen by the Queen.
- Elizabeth could also **prorogue** (close) Parliament at any time. In Elizabeth's 44-year reign, Parliament only met 13 times in total.
- Elizabeth mainly used Parliament to grant her money raised from taxes – this was the income that she lived off. To ensure that Parliament would approve giving her money, Elizabeth also made sure that her most loyal members of the Privy Council controlled meetings.
- Elizabeth stopped Parliament talking about her marriage, religion, and the conflict between Catholics and Protestants. MPs that didn't follow these orders, like Peter Wentworth, were arrested.
- Some MPs criticised Elizabeth for giving nobles the right to be the only people making and selling goods like wine (known as **monopolies**). Elizabeth often gave people monopolies in exchange for money. When MPs refused to give Elizabeth any more money until she removed monopolies, she agreed. This shows that she was prepared to listen to parliament when she needed to.

Elizabeth's relationship with parliament:

1. Was Parliament in Elizabethan times more or less powerful than it is today?
2. When were Parliament allowed to meet during Elizabeth's reign?
3. Elizabeth could **prorogue Parliament**. What does this mean? Use a statistic.
4. What did Elizabeth mainly use Parliament for?
5. What did Elizabeth stop Parliament from doing?
6. Why did some members of Parliament criticise Elizabeth?