

Knowledge Organiser: Challenges to Elizabeth at home and abroad, 1569-88

Elizabeth faced challenges throughout her long reign - from Mary, Queen of Scots, to the Spanish Armada. She was a cautious ruler who acted carefully to preserve England's security.

Summarise your learning

Topic 1: Plots and revolts at home

Mary Queen of Scots – She was a Catholic Queen and was a direct descendant to Henry VII. Mary's position was strengthened as she had an heir to the throne, James I, and had strong alliances with France and Spain.

Ridolfi (1571) – Carried secret letters from Mary Queen of Scots to King Phillip II of Spain, the Pope and the Duke of Alva in the Netherlands asking them to invade England and overthrow Elizabeth.

Throckmorton (1583) – Planned a Catholic rebellion in the north of England, supported by Catholic nobility. At the same time, there would be a French invasion. They would then break Mary free from prison and put her on the throne.

Babington (1585) – The plan was to murder Elizabeth and make Mary the Queen of England and bring back Catholicism.



Chronology: what happened on these dates?

1568	MQS was forced to abdicate the throne and was imprisoned, but she fled to England where she sought refuge from Elizabeth.
1569	Two leading Catholic nobles, the 7 th Earl of Northumberland, Thomas Percy, and the 6 th Earl of Westmorland, Charles Neville, led a revolt against Elizabeth.
1587	Mary was put on trial, found guilty of treason and was executed on the 8 th February.
1588	The Spanish Armada set sail for England.

Who or what were these people/events?

Mary Queen of Scots	Elizabeth's cousin and queen of Scotland, who was Catholic. Some Catholics believed that Elizabeth was illegitimate so they thought MQS should actually be Queen. Mary also had a male heir whereas Elizabeth did not.
Sir Francis Walsingham	Elizabeth's Secretary of State from 1573, known as the 'spymaster'. He employed a network of spies and agents, intercepted coded letters and interrogated and tortured to extract information about plots against Elizabeth.
King Philip of Spain	In 1558, Phillip II sailed with 30,000 soldiers up the English Channel to link up with the forces in the Netherlands. From there they invaded England to bring the country under Catholic rule, but the plan failed.

Topic 3: Outbreak of war with Spain, 1585-88

1585 – Drake led an attack on the Spanish West Indies as the Queen's admiral – Drake sailed with 30 ships and 2,300 men. Drake failed to attack the Spanish treasure fleet but he did capture 2 wealthy towns and returned to England with Spanish treasure worth £30,000.

1587 – Drake's attack of Cadiz – Drake raided Cadiz and attacked the Spanish naval forces assembling at Cadiz. Much of the Spanish fleet was destroyed, and substantial supplies were destroyed or captured.

Topic 4: The Armada

Philip created an Armada of 130 ships. About 30,000 soldiers would sail to collect another 20,000 waiting in the Netherlands, and then invade in England. However, the Armada failed because of 4 reasons – the Spanish plan, tactics, the wind and weather, and the quality of leadership.

Vocabulary: define these words

Revolt	To take violent action against an established government or ruler.
Plot	A plan made in secret by a group of people to do something illegal or harmful.
Execution	The order to behead a monarch.
Privy Council	A body of advisers, largely from the nobility, appointed by a monarch.
Excommunication	When someone is banned from going to church, which meant you would go to hell.
Armada	A fleet of warships.
Beacon	A fire or light set up in a high or prominent position as a warning.
Galleon	A sailing ship in use (especially by Spain) from the 15th to the 18th centuries, originally as a warship, later for trade.
Privateers	An armed private ship licensed to attack enemy shipping.
Calais	A city in north-eastern France with a large port.

Spain	England
Commanders	
Fleet	
30,000 on ship 20,000 on land	14,000 on ship 20,000 on land
Sailors and soldiers	
Food supplies	
Weapons	
Tactics for fighting at sea	
£3,000,000	£300,000
Annual income	

