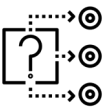


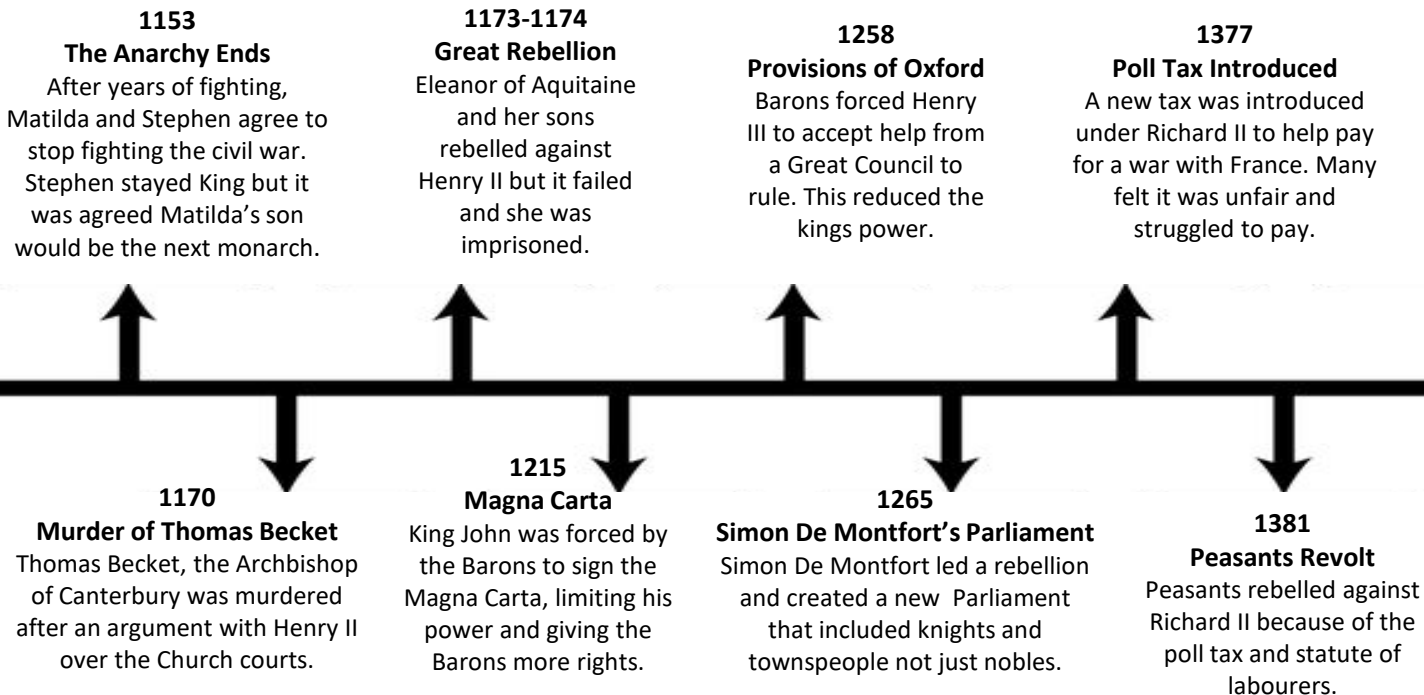
Knowledge Organiser: Why was the power of the monarchy challenged during the Medieval Period?



Topic Summary:

During the Medieval period there was a continuing power struggle between the King, the Church, the Barons and the people. Ultimately it would result in the creation of Parliament and the King accepting that the Church should govern its own affairs. This topic will look at the different causes of the power of the monarchy being challenged and the consequences this had for their power.

Key Dates:



Key People:

	Empress Matilda Daughter and heir of Henry I. Many barons refused to accept her as Queen.
	Stephen (1135-1154) Fought his cousin Matilda for the throne in a civil war called the Anarchy.
	Eleanor of Aquitaine A powerful noblewoman, she led a rebellion against her husband Henry II.
	Henry II (1154-1189) Son of Matilda. He argued with Thomas Beckett over the power of the Church.
	Thomas Beckett Archbishop of Canterbury, who was murdered after challenging Henry II.
	John (1189-1216) An unpopular King who was forced to sign the Magna Carta which limited his power.
	Henry III (1216-1272) Son of John. Barons rebelled and forced him to sign the provisions of Oxford.
	Simon De Montfort Leader of the Barons rebellion against Henry III. He created the first Parliament.
	Richard II (1367-1399) A young king who was challenged during the Peasants Revolt.
	Wat Tyler A medieval peasant who lead the peasants revolt against Richard II.

Vocabulary:

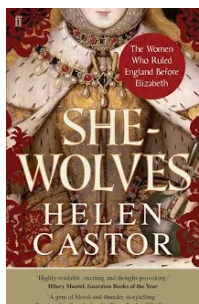
Authority		The right to rule and make important decisions, which could be challenged by the Barons, Church or People.
Legitimacy		The belief that a ruler has a rightful claim to the throne. If questioned, people may challenge their right to rule.
Regent		A person who rules on behalf of a monarch if they are too young, absent, or unable to rule.
Jurisdiction		The area where someone has power or control causing arguments between the King and the Church.
Counsel		Advice given to a monarch by powerful barons, ignoring this advice could lead to anger or rebellion.
Constraint		A limit placed on a ruler's power or actions, often forced by barons to control the King's authority.
Representation		When people are chosen to speak or act for others, giving them a say in decisions like Parliament.
Levy		A demand for money or service made by the King, often causing anger among the people.
Grievance		A strong complaint about unfair treatment or decisions which could build up and lead to a rebellion.
Causation		The reasons why something happened in the past. For example, reasons why monarchs were challenged in the medieval period.

Core Knowledge:

Lesson 1: How powerful were medieval monarchs?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In order to become powerful, a monarch needed the support of their Family, Barons, the Church, a strong Army and contented Peasants.. This combination was not always easy to achieve.• The 'Mirror for Princes' consisted of advice aimed at princes or rulers which offered guidance on governing and leadership - War / Territory / Religion / Taxes / Law & Order / Law Making• The 'Mirror for Ladies' was a similar text which advised female rulers or those aspiring to positions of power – Wife / Mother / Religion / Peace / Fashion / Regent
Lesson 2: Why was Matilda never crowned the first Queen of England?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In 1135, Henry I died and the succession for the throne of England was disputed. Although his daughter, Matilda, had birthed a son (Henry II) through her second marriage he was only two years old and too young to rule England. Matilda was therefore supposed to be Queen.• However, Henry I's nephew, Stephen, broke his promise to support Matilda and raced to London to be crowned King of England on 22nd December 1148. Matilda fought him for the Crown.• Finally in 1153, after 18 years of fighting a bitter civil war, Stephen and Matilda reached an agreement. Stephen would remain the King of England but when he died, Matilda's son Henry would inherit the throne.• She was not able to be queen due to being a woman in a patriarchal society and her strong personality.
Lesson 3: Why was Henry II's power challenged by the Church?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Henry II and Becket were originally best friends and Becket was Henry's Chancellor.• Henry II tried to gain more control over the Church by making Becket Archbishop of Canterbury.• However, Becket became very holy and took his role of Archbishop seriously.• They argued over tax policy and control of church land but their biggest conflict was over Church Courts and the legal rights of the clergy. Becket claimed that if a church official was accused of a crime, only the church itself had the ability to put the person on trial.
Lesson 4: How did Becket's murder affect Henry II's power?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In 1164, Becket fled into exile in France and remained in exile for several years. Becket returned in 1170 and excommunicated all the bishops who had helped Henry II to run Church business whilst he was away.• When Henry II found out, he was furious and shouted, "who rid me of this troublesome priest?" Four knights overheard and believing the king wanted Becket out of the way, murdered Becket brutally on 29th December 1170 in Canterbury Cathedral.• Henry was horrified and sought repentance by walking to Canterbury barefoot and praying at Becket's tomb.• The Pope forgave Henry and Henry stopped his plans to change the Church courts or to control the Church.
Lesson 5: How powerful was Eleanor of Aquitaine?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Eleanor of Aquitaine was considered another strong-willed and powerful Medieval Queen.• After her father's death in 1137 she inherited his lands and titles and became Duchess of Aquitaine (an area in Modern day France). She was the richest and most powerful woman in Europe during the high Middle Ages.• In 1137 She became the 'Queen Consort of France' through her first marriage to King Louis VII. In 1154 she became Matilda's daughter-in-law and Queen Consort of England through her second marriage to Henry II.• She led several armies throughout her life and was the leader of the Second Crusade.• In 1137, Eleanor led three of her sons in rebellion against Henry II to protect her rights, responsibility and agency over Aquitaine. Her rebellion failed and she was imprisoned for the next 16 years.• Later, Eleanor was mother to Richard I and ruled England whilst he was away on the Third Crusade. She raised his ransom when he was captured and travelled Europe to manage his armies. She also helped support her second son, John, when he was king.
Lesson 6: Why did the Barons rebel against King John?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Barons rebelled against King John of England primarily due to his ineffective and tyrannical (harsh) rule, which led to widespread discontent among the nobility.• The Barons were unhappy with John due to the heavy taxes he charged and wasted, the loss of French lands, conflict with the Pope and Church and his abuse of power. He also had an unpopular marriage and was suspected of murdering his nephew.• This led to the Barons rebelling in 1214 and forcing him to sign the Magna Carta in 1215.• This event had shown that the barons were a real threat to the king's power. If they were not respected, they could summon armies and threaten the king's throne.

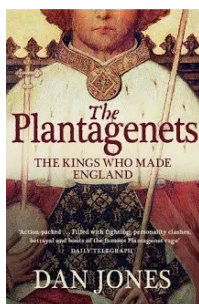
<p>Lesson 7: How did the Magna Carta affect King John's power?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Magna Carta was the first time that the king was forced to accept that all people, even himself, were subject to the law. He could no longer do whatever he wanted. The king now had to ask for advice from the barons, not rule only by himself. Magna Carta only protected 'freemen'. Since most people were 'unfree' peasants at the time, it didn't help them at all. It therefore only seemed to protect the rich barons and bishops and did nothing to help the rights of women or children. However, it did help more peasants as they became 'free' over the next 200 years.
<p>Lesson 8: Why did Henry III argue with the barons?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> King Henry III fell out with the Barons for several reasons, but the main factors stemmed from his poor rule, financial mismanagement, and a growing sense of anger among the nobility over issues such as: favouritism towards his friends and family, heavy taxes, and failures in France. By 1258 the Barons had had enough and threatened to fight Henry III unless he accepted the terms of the Provisions of Oxford. This said that the King could not make decisions without the Great Council's agreement and that the Great Council should choose the monarch's advisors. This gave the Barons a lot more power.
<p>Lesson 9: Why did the creation of Parliament change the power of the monarchy?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 1264, Henry III fought the Barons who were led by Simon de Montfort, a powerful landowner who was married to the King's sister. The barons won the Battle of Lewes and Henry III and Prince Edward were taken prisoner. In 1265, Simon de Montfort called 'the First Parliament' which was meeting of the Great Council that included barons, bishops and two ordinary people from each town (burgesses) and two knights from each country. This was the first time ordinary people could discuss the running of the country. Although Edward escaped and killed de Montfort in battle, Edward had to continue using Parliament to keep the peace. Parliament was powerful as they controlled the King's money and could make new laws. This has continued until today.
<p>Lesson 10: How did the Peasants Revolt challenge the Power of the Monarchy?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 1381, peasants rebelled against King Richard II. They were led by Wat Tyler. The peasants were angry about a range of issues, such as low pay due to the Statute of Labourers and the introduction of a Poll Tax. They demanded changes were made. A priest called John Ball also preached that God saw everyone as equal, and that peasants were unfairly treated. His ideas encouraged peasants to demand changes. The revolt did not achieve all of the peasants' aims and the leader, Wat Tyler, was killed. In the longer term, there were some changes and improvements to peasants' rights.

What do historians say?



She-Wolves: Helen Castor.

Helen Castor is a historian who studies powerful medieval queens. In her book 'She-Wolves', she explains how Queens like Empress Matilda struggled to gain support because rulers were expected to be men. This meant that their power and legitimacy was likely to be challenged.



The Plantagenets: Dan Jones.

Dan Jones is a historian who write about medieval kings and queens. In his book 'The Plantagenets', he tells the story of how Plantagenet monarchs depended on support from the barons, Church and the people. When Kings lost this support, they faced rebellion and challenges to their power and authority.

How can I find out more?

Documentary:

She Wolves – England's early Queens.



BBC Bitesize:

Henry II and Thomas Becket.



BBC Bitesize:

King John and the Magna Carta.



BBC Bitesize:

The Peasants Revolt.

