When Elizabeth became the Queen of England in 1558, she succeeded her elder sister, Mary. Her father, along with many others, had been convinced that no woman could successfully rule a country, and Mary had done nothing to change people’s view.

### Objectives
- **Explore** some of the challenges that Elizabeth faced during her reign.
- **Explain** why she faced these challenges.
- **Evaluate** the significance of these challenges.

### What problems did Elizabeth face in the first ten years of her reign?

When Elizabeth came to the throne in 1558 aged 25, she was surrounded by men, many of whom had been powerful figures during the reigns of her father, Henry VIII, and both Edward VI and Mary. From the beginning and throughout her reign, Elizabeth faced challenges as a female ruler in a world where men had always held the power. Elizabeth was keen to assert her authority over Parliament and was not afraid to arrest those who questioned her policies.

One big problem Elizabeth faced was who would succeed her. Her heir, when she came to the throne, was her cousin Mary, Queen of Scots. For many Englishmen, the prospect of the Scottish Queen Mary, a Catholic who had once been married to the King of France, becoming queen was something to be avoided at all costs. The way to avoid this was for Elizabeth to marry and give birth to a son, who could succeed her.

#### Source B
*
*Adapted from The First Blast of the Trumpet against the Monstrous Regiment of Women by John Knox (1558)*; Knox was a Scottish Protestant who wrote the book during the reign of Mary I of England:

To promote a woman to rule and have superiority over any nation is insulting to God because it goes against His design for order and government. It is the overturning of good order and all principles of justice. For no man ever saw the lion bow down to the lioness.

#### Source C
*_An assessment of the state of the nation made by one of Queen Elizabeth’s privy councillors, Armagil Waad, in 1558:*

The Queen and the nobility are poor and the country is exhausted. There is a lack of good leaders and soldiers. The people are disorderly. The law is not properly enforced. All things are expensive. There are wars with France and Scotland. The French king threatens the country, having one foot in Calais and the other in Scotland. We know who our enemies are abroad, but we are not sure who our friends are.

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**Interpretation A** *Queen Elizabeth in Parliament from The Journals of All the Parliaments during the Reign of Queen Elizabeth by Simonds D’Ewes (1682)*
Succession

Henry VIII had done all he could to ensure the future of the Tudor line but Edward VI and Mary had died childless and Elizabeth had yet to produce an heir. In the past, there had been wars when people were not sure who would become ruler after a monarch's death. In 1562, Elizabeth contracted smallpox and nearly died. This drew attention to how uncertain the future was. Parliament and others were keen for Elizabeth to marry and have a child as soon as possible.

Mary, Queen of Scots

Without a direct heir, the next in line to the throne was Elizabeth's Catholic cousin Mary. In 1568, Mary was exiled from Scotland to England and became a real threat to Elizabeth’s rule. Catholics now had an alternative queen to fight for.

Ireland

Like her predecessors, Elizabeth considered herself to be Queen of Ireland. Unfortunately, many of the Irish disagreed. A major problem was a revolt in northern Ireland in 1559, the first of several during her reign. She spent thousands of pounds and sent many of her best soldiers to try to limit Irish rebellion but nothing seemed to work in the long term.

Elizabeth’s problems

The government needed money and one of the few ways to get it was through taxes. Unfortunately, at a time of great poverty taxes would be very unpopular with the people of England, so raising taxes would be very dangerous for a new monarch.

Taxation

Religion

Elizabeth’s father had broken from the Catholic Church in order to obtain a divorce. After Henry’s death, Edward continued to establish the Protestant faith. When Mary came to the throne she tried to undo what had gone before and re-establish Catholicism. Elizabeth was a Protestant but she was also practical. She did not want to make her enemies angry immediately. She allowed Catholics to follow their faith privately, but many Catholics remained unhappy, with some believing she had no right to be queen as they did not recognise Henry’s second marriage to Elizabeth’s mother, Anne Boleyn. In addition, the growing popularity of Puritanism, an extreme version of Protestantism, was seen as a threat.

Foreign policy

Elizabeth had to deal with powerful countries that wanted influence over England. France and Spain, which were both Catholic and had the support of the Pope, saw Protestant England as a target. One major area of disagreement was the Netherlands. The mainly Protestant population was in conflict with the Catholic Spanish who ruled most of the area. Elizabeth would eventually need to decide how to deal with these concerns but initially her priority was keeping England secure.

Practice Question

Write an account of the problems Elizabeth faced in the first ten years of her reign. 8 marks

Study Tip

Remember to include plenty of specific detail, including any key dates.

Extension

Historians need to be able to evaluate the relative importance of issues in the past. For example, they might make judgements about Elizabeth’s problems. Which problem do you think could be the biggest threat to Elizabeth's rule? Give reasons for your choice.

Work

1. When did Elizabeth I become queen?
2. Look at Source B. Why is John Knox so opposed to the idea of a female ruler?
3. Look at Interpretation A and Sources B and C. What problems did Elizabeth face?
4. Create a poster to illustrate Elizabeth’s problems. You can use a maximum of ten words and one image for each problem.
Chapter 2
The difficulties of a female ruler

One of the biggest issues facing Elizabeth was that of marriage. Without an heir, the Tudor line would come to end. So from the day she became queen, her advisors were keen to find a suitable husband for her. Marriage also had another purpose. It was a way to secure alliances and increase influence at home and abroad.

Recall why the issues of succession and marriage were so important.
Explain the arguments for and against Elizabeth’s potential marriage, particularly in relation to succession.
Assess Elizabeth’s possible suitors and evaluate the arguments for and against marriage.

Interpretation A
A still from a 2005 television drama about Elizabeth; The Virgin Queen focuses on her relationship with Robert Dudley and suggests that the two were in love.

Arguments for marriage
- Marriage could create an alliance with a foreign country or win the support of a powerful English family.
- By marrying, Elizabeth could produce an heir to succeed her and continue the Tudor line.
- Marriage and children would prevent Mary, Queen of Scots [a Catholic and Elizabeth’s cousin], from ruling England after Elizabeth’s death.

Arguments against marriage
- Marrying a foreign prince or king could lead to England falling under their control.
- Marrying an Englishman could create problems over who had authority.
- Remaining unmarried meant that Elizabeth kept her independence. Marriage in the sixteenth century was not a partnership, as the husband legally had authority over the wife. It is possible that Elizabeth did not want to be answerable to her husband.
- Giving birth was risky for women at this time, often resulting in the death of the mother.
- Her sister Mary’s marriage to King Philip of Spain was widely seen as a disaster and failed to produce an heir.

Why was marriage so important?
In Elizabeth’s time, marriage, particularly for royalty, was less about love and more about making political deals between families and nations. As a young princess and then queen, who Elizabeth chose to marry could have a huge impact on England. She could choose to marry an Englishman and secure the support of an important family or she could marry a foreign prince and join two royal families together, and then their son would rule two countries. However, her choice was not quite so straightforward. If she married a foreign royal she risked losing control of England to her husband. Marrying an Englishman would avoid this but would lead to its own complications. As queen she would have authority over her husband but as a wife she must promise to obey him.

Source B
Elizabeth replies to a call from Parliament for her to get married in 1566:

At present it is not convenient; nor never shall be without some peril unto you and certain danger unto me.
Who could be worthy of marrying a queen?

Throughout her reign, many men became potential husbands to Elizabeth. Some would be entirely political matches but others were more personal. There were three suitors who were particularly notable.

Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester

As the queen’s childhood friend and one of her favourites throughout her reign, many assumed that they would marry. When his wife died after a fall he was free to marry once again, but the scandal of her death (some thought he killed her deliberately) meant that marriage became almost impossible. Dudley was also a key figure in the royal court. As a Privy Councillor he wielded great power and influence in government.

King Philip II of Spain

As King of Spain, Philip was one of the most powerful men in the world, as well as one of the wealthiest: Spain’s control of South America and its resources had made the country very rich. Philip was in fact Elizabeth’s brother-in-law having been married to Queen Mary I, but had spent very little time in England. The biggest barrier between Elizabeth and Philip was religion: Philip was a Catholic and Elizabeth was a Protestant. This created many problems, not least of which was the issue of which religion their children would be raised in.

Francis, Duke of Anjou and Alençon

As the French king’s brother, marriage to Francis could lead to influence in France. As his brother was childless, Francis was also heir to the throne. The risk, however, was significant. By the time their marriage was considered, Elizabeth was 46 and most assumed she was beyond having children. If she died childless while married to the French heir, England could fall under French control. For this reason, and the fact that Francis was a Catholic, many influential people and the public were against the marriage.

Work

1. What were the main arguments in favour of Elizabeth getting married?
2. Look at Source B. What possible ‘peril’ is Elizabeth describing?
3. Consider the three suitors on these pages. Create a dating website profile for each of the men. Do the same for Elizabeth. Who do you think is the best match for her?
4. Write a letter to Elizabeth explaining which (if any) of the suitors she should marry. Give reasons for your choice.
5. Look at Interpretation A. How convincing do you think the idea of a love story between Elizabeth and Dudley is based on what you know so far?

Study Tip

Use specific examples of possible marriages to explain your points: for example, ‘Marrying Francis, Duke of Anjou and Alençon, could lead to an alliance with France.’

Practice Question

Explain what was important about Elizabeth’s decision regarding her marriage. 8 marks
Elizabeth and the importance of marriage

Queen Elizabeth’s marriage was not simply a matter of personal choice; it was about securing the future of the country. It was everyone’s concern, from members of her Privy Council to Members of Parliament. How did Elizabeth react? What does this tell us about Elizabeth and her Parliament?

Parliament as matchmakers?

After Elizabeth almost died of smallpox in 1562, Parliament became increasingly concerned about the lack of an heir. Many in Parliament saw it as their duty to find a match for Elizabeth and guarantee stability for England. The smallpox scare was not the only concern. By the time of her illness, the queen was almost 30, by no means old, but the likelihood of her producing an heir was getting smaller. By 1566, Parliament began to openly discuss potential matches. Elizabeth was furious with what she saw as an unacceptable interference and she banned Parliament from ever discussing the issue again. One politician, Peter Wentworth, ignored Elizabeth’s orders and argued that Parliament should be able to discuss what it liked. Realising how the queen might react, the rest of Parliament had him arrested and placed in the Tower of London before Elizabeth blamed them all for his opinions. No matter how important the issue of marriage was to the country, it was clear that Elizabeth considered it a decision that she alone should make. This is an example of how Parliament and the queen clashed over the role Parliament should take. Elizabeth believed that there were certain matters that were entirely hers to consider, without any interference from Parliament. Marriage was one of these.

Why didn’t Elizabeth get married?

Despite the best efforts of Parliament and the Privy Council, Elizabeth never married. Historians have argued over why this was. At the time, some people felt that she was not doing her duty to her country while others felt that her decision was very clever indeed. The sources and interpretations opposite show some of the arguments and explanations that were put forward at the time.
**SOURCE B** Sir James Melville, Scottish ambassador to England, in conversation with Elizabeth, 1564:

You will never marry. The Queen of England is too proud to suffer a commander. You think if you were married, you would only be Queen of England, and now you are king and queen both.

**INTERPRETATION C** Written by the historian Hugh Oakeley Arnold-Forster, in A History of England (1898):

Who was the queen’s husband to be, and what power was he to have over the government of the country? If he were a foreigner there was no knowing what power he might get over the queen, power which he would very likely use for the good of a foreign country, and not for the good of England. On the other hand, if he were an Englishman, he must be chosen from among the queen’s subjects, and then it was certain that there would be jealousy and strife among all the great nobles in the country when they saw one of their number picked out and made king over them.

**INTERPRETATION D** Elizabeth and Dudley were very close friends and many believed that they were in love. This description of the death of Dudley’s wife Amy is from Spartacus Educational, a history website:

Amy Dudley insisted that everyone in the house attend a local fair in Abingdon. When her servants returned that evening, they found her lying dead at the foot of the staircase, her neck broken. Rumours began to circulate that Dudley had murdered his wife so that he could marry Elizabeth. It was now politically impossible for Elizabeth to marry Dudley.

**SOURCE E** Queen Elizabeth in a letter written to Parliament, 1564:

I have already joined myself in marriage to a husband, namely the kingdom of England.

**INTERPRETATION F** From a newspaper interview with Alison Weir who wrote a novel based on Queen Elizabeth’s life:

Although Elizabeth loved Dudley she certainly did not want to marry him, or any other man. The reason goes back to a childhood that would have been considered highly dysfunctional in modern terms. Elizabeth hated the idea of marriage. This is understandable when you consider that her father was Henry VIII and her mother was his second wife Anne Boleyn whom her father ordered beheaded when Elizabeth was just three. Her stepmothers didn’t fare so well either. At the age of eight she declared she would never marry.

**WORK**

1. Why was Peter Wentworth arrested?
2. Look at Interpretation A. What do you think is meant by the painting’s subtitle?
3. Look at the sources and interpretations on these pages. What different reasons do they give for Elizabeth not getting married?
4. If Elizabeth was in love with Robert Dudley, why didn’t she marry him?
5. What would be the advantages of Elizabeth getting married? Answer in as much detail as you can.

**PRACTICE QUESTION**

How convincing is Interpretation C about the reasons why Elizabeth did not get married?

Explain your answer using Interpretation C and your contextual knowledge.

**8 marks**

**STUDY TIP**

The interpretation puts forward a reason for Elizabeth not getting married. Aim to say whether you think this gives a fair and full explanation of why she never married or whether there are reasons that it does not mention.
Norfolk’s rebellion

It is clear that Elizabeth faced opposition throughout her reign. One major figure who rebelled against her rule was the Duke of Norfolk. He was involved in not one, but two plots against her. Who was the Duke of Norfolk? Why did he become involved in both rebellions?

Challenges to Elizabeth’s rule

After Elizabeth’s coronation, she faced particular opposition from Catholics who felt that she had no right to be queen. Many believed that her father’s marriage to her mother, Anne Boleyn, was illegal because Henry broke sacred laws by divorcing his first wife, the Catholic Catherine of Aragon. Increasingly, these opponents looked to Elizabeth’s Catholic cousin, Mary, Queen of Scots, as an alternative monarch.

The first rebellion: the Northern Rebellion, 1569

Despite the official religious changes, many people in northern England retained their Catholic beliefs and there was support for the idea of Mary, Queen of Scots, replacing Elizabeth on the throne. Although many northerners were torn between loyalty to Elizabeth and their religious beliefs, they nonetheless questioned her right to rule. Elizabeth was fully aware of the threat. She kept Mary under a close watch to prevent a possible rebellion while she debated how to deal with her. She even stopped her marrying the Duke of Norfolk. Norfolk left the royal court without permission and headed north. Taking this as a sign, a group of northern lords led by Westmorland (Norfolk’s brother-in-law) and Northumberland began a rebellion against Elizabeth. They took control of Durham Cathedral and celebrated an illegal Catholic mass. They then began a march south with around 4600 men. Elizabeth struggled to gather an army to resist them but eventually one of her loyal lords, the Earl of Sussex, raised an army and the rebels disbanded. The leaders of the rebellion fled to Scotland where Northumberland was quickly captured and executed. Westmorland escaped to France, where he lived until he died in poverty.

The rebels

The Duke of Norfolk

- He became the Duke of Norfolk after the death of his grandfather in 1554.
- He was Queen Elizabeth’s second cousin and the leading English nobleman.
- He was raised as a Protestant despite being from a Catholic family.
- His Catholic background led to many people distrusting him.
- He was made Lord Lieutenant of the North.

The Earl of Northumberland

- His father was executed for leading a rebellion against Henry VIII.
- He was not allowed to inherit his father’s title until the reign of Mary I.
- He was a Catholic but was treated well by Elizabeth.

Objectives

- Examine the events of the Northern Rebellion and the Ridolfi Plot.
- Explain the causes of the rebellions.
- Assess the significance of the rebellions and what it can tell us about Elizabeth’s authority.
The Earl of Westmorland

- A Catholic who had become powerful under Mary I’s rule.
- He lost influence when Elizabeth was crowned.
- He remained powerful in the north.
- His wife was a member of the powerful Howard family to which three of Henry VIII’s wives had ties.

The second rebellion: the Ridolfi Plot, 1571

Norfolk spent ten months in the Tower of London but was eventually released and kept under house arrest, meaning that he was forced to stay inside his home at all times. He quickly became involved in another plot, this time led by a Catholic banker from Florence named Roberto Ridolfi. Having seen the Northern Rebellion fail, Ridolfi felt that foreign support was needed. In 1570 the Pope had commanded Catholics in England not to obey Elizabeth, giving English Catholics the dilemma of choosing between their religion or their country. As a banker, Ridolfi was able to travel freely across Europe building support. The plan was for the Netherlands to invade England at the same time as another northern rebellion. Elizabeth would be murdered and replaced by Mary, Queen of Scots, who would then marry Norfolk.

Elizabeth’s network of spies proved too much for the plotters and a bag of gold coins with some coded letters was discovered on its way north. The code was cracked when the cipher key (secret instructions) was discovered under a doormat at Norfolk’s house. Norfolk confessed to his involvement and was executed on 2 June 1572.

Roberto Ridolfi

- An Italian banker who travelled widely across Europe.
- It is believed that he sent money to support Catholic rebels in England.
- It is likely that he worked as a spy for the Pope for many years.

Key Words

mass

Extension

Historians are interested in evaluating the importance of particular events and comparing them with each other. For example, they might look at the two rebellions and consider which posed the biggest threat. Challenge yourself by answering the question: ‘Was the Northern Rebellion or the Ridolfi Plot the biggest threat to Elizabeth’s rule?’ Think about the details of each plot: for example, one took place entirely in England, while the other involved the possibility of foreign invasion.

Work

1. Why were some people keen to replace Elizabeth with Mary?
2. How was the Duke of Norfolk involved in the two plots?
3. Why do you think an Italian banker wanted to become involved in a plot against the English queen?
4. Working with a partner, study the two plots carefully. One of you should look at the Northern Rebellion and the other the Ridolfi Plot. You need to record:
   - when the plot happened
   - how it occurred
   - the reasons behind it (why did they want to overthrow Queen Elizabeth?)
   - why it failed and what happened to the rebels.
   Now share your notes with your partner.
5. Why do you think Norfolk became involved in a second rebellion having failed in his first attempt to overthrow Queen Elizabeth?
Chapter 2

2.4 Essex's rebellion

The rebellions that Elizabeth was forced to deal with in her early reign did not disappear. Towards the end of her reign she faced a rebellion led by a man who was at one time considered as a potential husband for her, the Earl of Essex. Although the cause of many rebellions against Queen Elizabeth focused on religion, Essex's rebellion was all about power and influence.

Objectives

- **Recall** the events of Essex's rebellion.
- **Explain** the causes of the rebellion.
- **Assess** what the rebellion tells us about Elizabeth's authority.

Most beloved Essex

Robert Devereux was born in 1566 and inherited his title of Earl of Essex in 1573 when his father died. His father had been a loyal and respected member of the royal court who had helped to put down the Northern Rebellion in 1569. When Essex's mother remarried it was to the Earl of Leicester, who introduced Essex to the queen in 1587. Although more than 30 years older, Elizabeth took an immediate interest in the young earl. Essex made the most of being Elizabeth's latest favourite and in 1595 she made him a privy councillor. Essex's power grew further when the queen gave him the monopoly of sweet wine in England. This meant that by law anyone who wished to bring in sweet wine from abroad would have to pay him a tax, which made Essex lots of money. During this time, Essex developed a rivalry with another young man at court, Robert Cecil, who was a member of a very powerful family. Cecil, with his crooked back, could not have looked more different from the handsome Essex; this may well have played a role in Essex gaining the queen's attention. Essex won Elizabeth's further respect and admiration with his military success against the Spanish in 1596.

A quarrel with the queen

Essex returned to England a hero but things soon began to go wrong for the queen's favourite. In 1598, he became involved in an argument with Elizabeth during a Privy Council meeting about Ireland. In a fit of anger, Essex turned his back on the queen and she retaliated by hitting him on the side of his head. He almost drew his sword, but was stopped by the other privy councillors. Elizabeth put him under house arrest but he still refused to admit he was wrong. However, Elizabeth took no further action against him. Many contemporaries thought that he had been lucky to escape with his life.

Essex in Ireland and his return to England

In January 1599, Elizabeth made Essex the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. He was reluctant to go at first, fearing that Cecil would become more powerful while he was away, but he eventually agreed. It was his job to crush the rebellious Irish, but not only did he fail to defeat the Irish rebel leader, he also made a truce with him, completely against the queen's orders. He knighted some of his army leaders in Ireland, which the queen had forbidden him to do.

To make matters worse, when Essex returned to the queen's palace, dishevelled and dirty, he rushed into her private quarters and caught her without her wig! Essex experienced a spectacular and rapid fall from Elizabeth's favour and she did not renew his sweet wine monopoly. This caused him problems as he had large debts.

His position, wealth and all of his influence gone, Essex faced financial ruin. Angry, and with little left to lose, Essex was determined to remove his long-term rival, Robert Cecil, from power. In February 1601, he began to gather supporters.
Essex’s rebellion

1. Essex took four of the queen’s privy councillors hostage and with 200 followers marched to his London house with them.

2. Robert Cecil responded quickly; he labelled Essex a traitor and many of the rebels abandoned the march.

3. Essex returned to his house where he found that the hostages had been released by supporters who had abandoned his cause.

4. Essex and his remaining supporters were arrested.

Executive Essex

Two weeks after the disastrous rebellion, Essex was put on trial for treason. In an attempt to save his soul (although not his life) he agreed to identify many other members of the rebellion, including his sister, Penelope. He was executed on 25 February 1601. In exchange for his information, Elizabeth allowed Essex to be executed in private, rather than suffer a public beheading. Several other rebels were executed but most of them were simply fined.

Practice Question

1. Retell the story of Essex’s rebellion in the most creative way you can. You could create a play, a giant storyboard, a newspaper article or something else.

2. Create a table in your book to show the reasons for the rebellion’s failure. In one column list the mistakes and failings of Essex and in the other list the strengths of Elizabeth’s court.

3. What does Essex’s rebellion tell us about the authority of Elizabeth and her court?

4. Look back at your work on the Norfolk rebellions. Do you think Essex was more or less of a threat than Norfolk? Explain your answer.

Key Word

monopoly

Study Tip

Remember to explain why Essex was such an important figure; don’t just tell the story of his life.
Why did rebellions against Elizabeth fail?

During her reign, Elizabeth faced many challenges and a number of rebellions. There were rebellions from Catholics who questioned her right to be queen and there were rebellions from nobles who wanted to increase their own power. Despite these challenges Elizabeth not only remained in power until the end of her reign, but her position never really looked vulnerable. How was this possible?

**Objectives**

- Recall several rebellions that Elizabeth faced during her reign.
- Explain how these rebellions and plots were foiled.
- Assess why none of the challenges were ever successful.

**Interpretation A**

A portrait of Elizabeth in old age, painted nearly 20 years after her death

A tired queen and a weary nation

By the end of her reign many people’s attention had moved on from Elizabeth and become focused on the future. After four decades people were ready for a change. Whether at the beginning of her rule as a young and inexperienced monarch, in the middle at the height of her powers or at the end, Elizabeth still needed to control and command the loyalty of her subjects. In her 45 years as queen she faced a number of rebellions.

Why did the plots and rebellions against Elizabeth fail?

For a plot or rebellion to succeed, secrecy is needed. Messages need to be sent and plans made without any outsider knowing what is intended. The problem for those who tried to plot against Elizabeth was that she had the largest and most effective network of spies and informers that England had ever seen. These were not spies in the modern sense; they were employed through much less formal arrangements. Francis Walsingham, Elizabeth’s Chief Minister, oversaw the network. Everyone from nobles, who might have the trust of plotters, to innkeepers and servants, who could overhear whispered conversations, could potentially be kept in Walsingham’s pay.

The second thing necessary for a plot to succeed is popular support. All of the rebellions relied on others seizing the opportunity and joining the fight. The problem was that most people were happy with the way things were. For the first time in many years people were able to live in relative religious freedom. The brutality of Mary I’s reign was something that no one wished to return to and even many Catholics preferred an English queen over Mary, Queen of Scots, or a foreign ruler like Philip of Spain. For many in England, it seemed that they had never had it so good. There simply was not the general appetite to change things.
Why did plots against Elizabeth fail?

Spies
The network of spies headed by Walsingham meant that very few plots ever got beyond their earliest stages.

Religious settlement
Elizabeth’s religious policy kept most of the population happy. Although things became tougher for Catholics as her reign went on, there remained a level of tolerance. In areas where Catholicism was more popular, the new settlement was often not enforced to the same extent.

Unconvincing alternatives
Regardless of their religion, most people preferred an English queen over the alternatives: Mary, Queen of Scots, or a foreign king like Philip. Mary was not only a former Queen of France but was also blamed by many for her second husband’s death. Philip had been King of England before and had shown little interest in the country, while his wife oversaw the brutal execution of hundreds of Protestants.

A skilled politician
Elizabeth dealt with her most difficult relationship, the one with her Parliament, very effectively. She was skilled at getting her own way while still allowing Lords and MPs to feel influential. The issue of marriage and succession is a perfect example of this. She would listen to Parliament’s advice but was clear where its power ended.

Punishments
Elizabeth took swift action against traitors. Rebels were tortured and put to death. Her former favourite, Essex, whose plot never aimed to remove her from the throne, was beheaded and her own cousin, Mary, Queen of Scots, was kept locked up for many years before she was executed. For those who challenged Elizabeth, the consequences of failure were plain to see.

Work
1. Look at Interpretation A.
   a. Describe what you can see in the painting. Look carefully at what surrounds the queen, as well as the queen herself.
   b. Look at Source B on page 145. How does this image of Elizabeth compare to Interpretation A opposite?
   c. This painting was created 20 years after her death. Can you suggest reasons why it was not created while she was alive?
2. Explain two reasons why rebellions against Elizabeth failed.
3. Look back at the Northern Rebellion earlier in the chapter. Explain why this failed with reference to the factors in the spider diagram above.
4. Would a successful rebellion ever have been possible? Explain your answer.
5. Working with a partner, choose one of the rebellions that you have studied and create the script for a television news report about it. You should explain what happened, who was involved and then give a detailed account of why it failed.

Practice Question
Write an account of a rebellion you have studied that took place in Elizabeth’s reign. 8 marks

Study Tip
You could consider including the following: the causes, the key people involved, the events of the rebellion itself and both the immediate and longer term consequences.