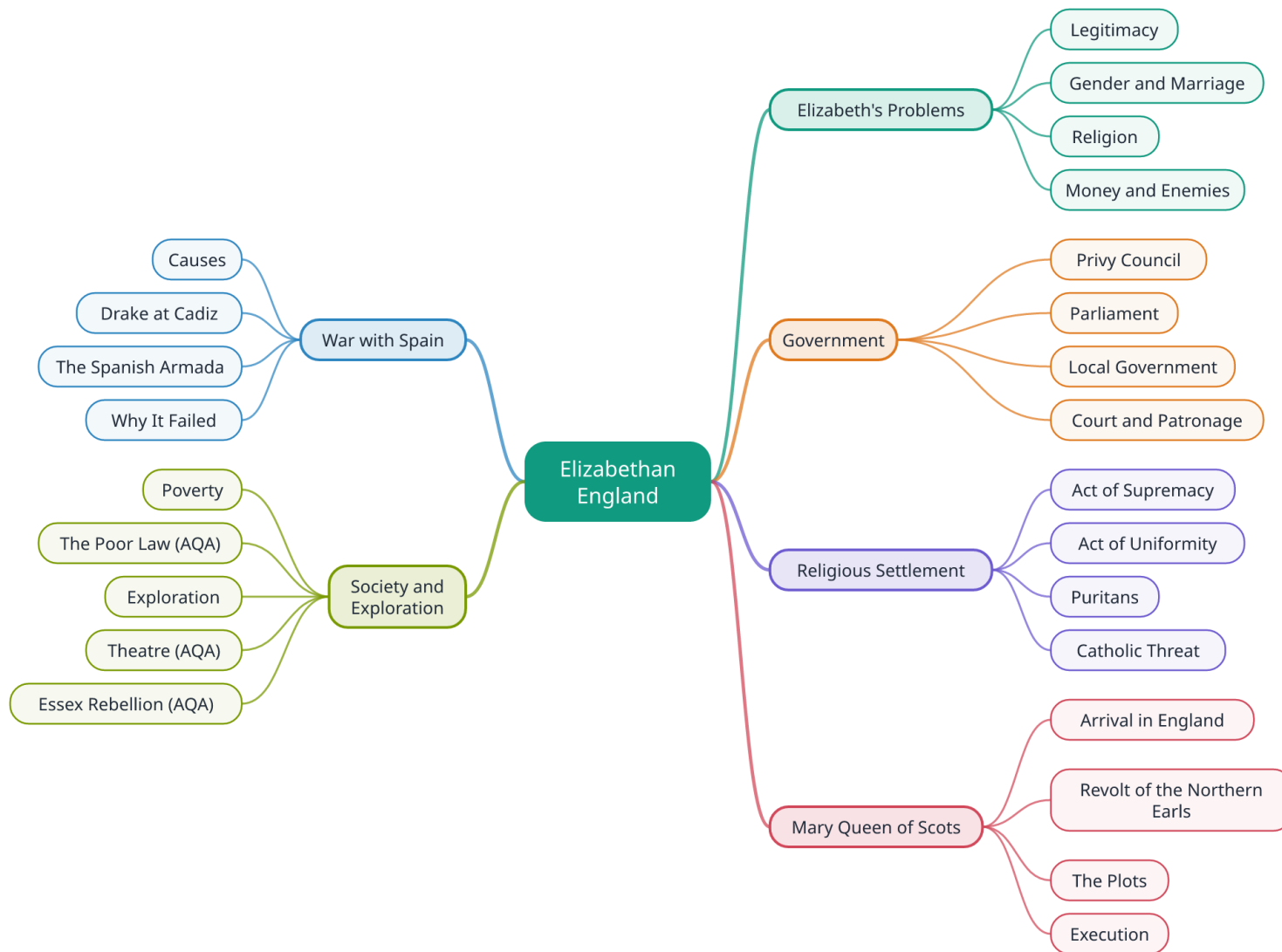


Elizabethan England Mind Map (GCSE)

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Elizabethan England mind map explained

Elizabeth's Problems

Elizabeth became queen in November 1558, aged 25, and faced problems on every side.

Legitimacy

Catholics did not recognise Henry VIII's marriage to her mother, Anne Boleyn, so they saw Elizabeth as illegitimate.

Gender and Marriage

Many believed a woman could not rule alone. She was expected to marry and produce an heir, and the question of succession hung over her reign.

Religion

England had switched between Protestant and Catholic under her father, brother and sister, and the country was deeply divided.

Money and Enemies

The Crown was in debt, around £300,000, and France, Scotland and Spain were Catholic powers that threatened England.

Government

Elizabeth ruled through her Court, the Privy Council, Parliament and local officials.

Privy Council

Her closest advisers, including William Cecil (her chief minister), Robert Dudley and Sir Francis Walsingham (her spymaster).

Parliament

Called to pass laws and grant taxes. It clashed with Elizabeth over her marriage and the succession, which she saw as her business alone.

Local Government

Justices of the Peace kept order and enforced laws in each county.

Court and Patronage

Elizabeth controlled her nobles by giving and withholding favours, titles and jobs. Royal progresses, journeys around the country, showed her to her people.

Religious Settlement

Elizabeth's 1559 settlement aimed at a middle way that most people could accept.

Act of Supremacy

Made Elizabeth Supreme Governor of the Church of England, a title designed to be less offensive to Catholics than Supreme Head.

Act of Uniformity

Set out how services should be held, using the Book of Common Prayer. People who did not attend church, called recusants, were fined 12 pence (one shilling).

Puritans

Strict Protestants who wanted to remove remaining Catholic features, such as vestments, from the Church.

Catholic Threat

The Pope excommunicated Elizabeth in 1570. Missionary priests, including Jesuits such as Edmund Campion (executed 1581), came to keep Catholicism alive in England.

Mary Queen of Scots

Elizabeth's Catholic cousin and heir, and the focus of plots against her.

Arrival in England

Mary fled Scotland in 1568 and was held captive in England for almost nineteen years.

Revolt of the Northern Earls

In 1569, Catholic nobles in the north rebelled, planning to free Mary and restore Catholicism. The revolt was crushed.

The Plots

- Ridolfi Plot (1571)
- Throckmorton Plot (1583)
- Babington Plot (1586)

Each planned to put Mary on the throne, with Spanish or French help. Walsingham's spies uncovered them.

Execution

The Babington Plot proved Mary had approved Elizabeth's murder. She was executed in February 1587, removing the Catholic heir.

War with Spain

Rivalry with Philip II of Spain grew into open war in 1585.

Causes

Religion, trade, Drake's raids on Spanish ships and colonies, and English help for the Protestant Dutch rebels against Spain, made official by the Treaty of Nonsuch (1585).

Drake at Cadiz

In 1587, Drake attacked the Spanish fleet at Cadiz, "singeing the King of Spain's beard" and delaying the Armada by a year.

The Spanish Armada

In 1588 Philip sent a fleet, led by the Duke of Medina Sidonia, to escort an invasion army from the Netherlands. English fireships at Calais broke its formation, and it was beaten at the Battle of Gravelines.

Why It Failed

Spanish planning problems, English ships and tactics, the fireships, and storms as the fleet sailed home around Scotland and Ireland, where many ships were wrecked.

Society and Exploration

Often called a Golden Age, but life was hard for the poor.

Poverty

A rising population, rising prices, enclosure and bad harvests increased poverty. Vagabonds were feared and punished, for example under the Vagabonds Act of 1572.

The Poor Law (AQA)

AQA only. The 1601 Poor Law made each parish responsible for its poor, paid for by a local tax, the poor rate.

Exploration

Francis Drake sailed around the world in 1577 to 1580. Walter Raleigh sponsored the attempt to found a colony in Virginia, at Roanoke, in 1585.

Theatre (AQA)

AQA only. Theatres such as The Theatre (1576) and the Globe (1599) drew huge crowds to plays by writers like Shakespeare, though Puritans opposed them.

Essex Rebellion (AQA)

AQA only. In 1601 the Earl of Essex, a former favourite, led a failed rebellion in London and was executed.

How to revise with this mind map

1. Know your dates. Edexcel covers 1558 to 1588; AQA covers about 1568 to 1603. Focus on the branches your exam actually tests.
2. Link causes and consequences. The plots, Mary's execution and the Armada are a chain of events: be able to explain how each led to the next.
3. Learn precise evidence: the names of the plots and their dates, the 1559 settlement's two Acts, and the reasons the Armada failed.
4. Practise judging importance. Questions ask, for example, whether religion was the main cause of war with Spain. Weigh at least two causes and reach a clear judgement.
5. Make it yours. Build your own Elizabethan England map in Mindmapi from your class notes, and ask the AI about any branch you are unsure of. The answer is saved into that branch's notes for next time.