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| A-Level History  **Year 12 Section Two:**  **The Reign of Henry VIII**  A guide to essays and exams |

Revision Plan – Part One: Section Two: Henry VIII, 1509 – 1547

1. What was Henry VII’s legacy? How different was Henry VIII to his father? What were his aims and ideas for his kingship?
2. Thomas Wolsey – how and why did he rise to prominence? How effective was his foreign and domestic policy? Was his fall from power a result of his own mistakes?
3. Thomas Cromwell – How and why did he rise to power? Was there a ‘revolution in government’ under Cromwell? How far did Royal Government change under Cromwell? How effective was foreign policy under Cromwell?
4. Comparison of Cromwell and Wolsey – How far did each serve the king well? What similarities and differences were there in their careers?
5. Religion in Henry VIII’s reign – What was the state of the Church when Henry came to the throne? What were the changes and continuities in terms of religion under Wolsey? The break from Rome, the religious changes, the impact of dissolution, opposition to the religious changes, and the scale of resistance. How far had religion and culture changed by 1547?
6. Government in Henry VIII’s last years – The fall of Anne Boleyn, marriage to Jane Seymour, factions at court, the downfall of Cromwell, and factionalism in Henry’s last years. Why did factionalism cause such problems for Henry VIII when it didn’t for Henry VII?
7. Foreign policy 1540-47 – how and why did Henry’s foreign policy become more aggressive in his later years? How successful was his foreign policy?
8. English society and economy – for society; nobles and gentry, commoners, regional issues, creating a unified state, border administration, the Council of the North and the impact of the religious upheaval. For the economy; trade, exploration, prosperity and depression, the impact of enclosure and population. What were the key changes and continuities in terms of social and economic development?
9. Rebellions during the reign of Henry VIII – how effectively did Henry VIII deal with rebellions? Particular focus on the Pilgrimage of Grace and how threatening it was.
10. Be aware of these six key questions:-

How effectively did the Tudors restore and develop the powers of the monarchy?

In what ways and how effectively was England governed during this period?

How did relations with foreign powers change and how was the succession secured?

How did English society and economy change and with what effects?

How far did intellectual and religious ideas change and develop and with what effects?

How important was the role of key individuals and groups and how were they affected by developments?

These questions are important as the examiners will base their questions around them!

**Checking your subject knowledge**

Look at the following check list and determine how confident you are:-

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **CONTENT** | **Confident** | **OK** | **Not sure** | **I need to find out about...** |
| Legacy of Henry VII, aims and ambitions of Henry VIII |  |  |  |  |
| Government under Thomas Wolsey |  |  |  |  |
| Government under Thomas Cromwell |  |  |  |  |
| Comparison of Cromwell and |  |  |  |  |
| Religion in Henry VIII’s reign |  |  |  |  |
| Government in Henry VIII’s last years |  |  |  |  |
| Foreign policy 1540-47 |  |  |  |  |
| English society and economy |  |  |  |  |
| Rebellions during the reign of Henry VIII |  |  |  |  |

If you are not confident about a certain area, go back and refresh your memory; add to your notes and do some additional reading.

Have you read around the subject? While your booklets provide the majority of the information needed ensure you read the textbook and use the books in the library to strengthen your overall knowledge and understanding. The following books are available for you to borrow:-

* Nicholas Fellows – Disorder and Rebellion in Tudor England
* Penry Williams – The Later Tudors
* Christopher Haigh – Tudor Reformations
* John Guy – The Tudors
* Susan Doran – The Tudor Chronicles
* Lotherington – The Tudor Years

**Now consider these essay questions:-**

**2015 Spec**

‘The foreign Policy of Henry VIII failed to achieve its objectives in the years 1509 to 1547’. Assess the validity of this view. [25 marks]

**Potential Questions**

1. ‘Henry VIII was personally responsible for the failures of English foreign policy during his reign’. Assess the validity of this view. [25 marks]
2. ‘The foreign policy of Henry VIII failed to achieve its objectives in the years 1509 to 1547’. Assess the validity of this view. [25 marks]
3. ‘Administrative reform was the most significant development in government during Henry VIII’s reign until 1547’. Assess the validity of this view. [25 marks]
4. ‘English society in the reign of Henry VIII was characterised more by disorder than by order’. Assess the validity of this view. [25 marks]
5. ‘Henry VIII might have made himself supreme head of the Church of England, but he did little else to change the Church’. Assess the validity of this view. [25 marks]

Note that;

All essay questions are worth 25 marks and you have approximately 45 minutes to answer them. In the examination you will have to answer two of these questions, as well as a source question. You will have 2 ½ hours.

Anything can be examined; religion, royal authority, foreign policy, rebellions, governmental policies, culture, trade and exploration, social and economic development. So you need to know it all!

There could be a link with the years of Henry VII. See potential questions below:-

1. Henry VIII’s actions as king destroyed Henry VII’s legacy’. Assess the validity of this view of the years 1485 to 1514. [25 marks]
2. ‘The people of northern England, Cornwall and Wales had little reason to be grateful for the rule of Henry VII and Henry VIII’. Assess the validity of this view. [25 marks]
3. ‘The performance of the English economy remained weak throughout the reigns of the first two Tudors’. Assess the validity of this view. [25 marks]
4. ‘The Catholic Church in England in the period 1485 to 1529 was criticised primarily because of the failings of the clergy’. Assess the validity of this view. [25 marks]

There could also be a link with the period 1547-1563:-

1. ‘English government dealt effectively with domestic problems which it faced in the years 1529 to 1553’. Assess the validity of this view. [25 marks]
2. ‘The English Church in 1553 was vastly different to the English Church in 1532’. Assess the validity of this view. [25 marks]
3. ‘English foreign policy failed in the years 1529 to 1558’. Assess the validity of this view. [25 marks]
4. ‘Religious changes in the years 1532 to 1558 enjoyed little popular support’. Assess the validity of this view. [25 marks]
5. ‘English government in the years 1540 to 1562 was consistently weak’. Assess the validity of this view. [25 marks] ‘The Tudors faced instability and crises between 1540 and 1563 primarily because of economic factors’. Assess the validity of this view. [25 marks]
6. ‘The main cause of rebellions in the years 1536 to 1558 was religious disagreements’. Assess the validity of this view. [25 marks]

You always need to balance the information you provide.

So how do I answer an A-Level essay question?

In a very similar way to the AS essay questions – Make a **p**oint, back it with **e**vidence and then **a**nalyse it. Remember to PEA in every paragraph! Also you need a balance but this can be 30/70 or 40/60 depending on the strength of your view.

Look at the exam boards generic mark scheme below:-

* Nothing worthy of credit. 0 MARKS
* L1: The question has not been properly understood and the response shows limited organisational and communication skills. The information conveyed is irrelevant or extremely limited. There may be some unsupported, vague or generalist comment. 1-5 MARKS
* L2: The answer will be descriptive or partial, showing some awareness of the question but a failure to grasp its full demands. There will be some attempt to convey material in an organised way although communication skills may be limited. There will be some appropriate information showing understanding of some key features and/or issues, but the answer may be very limited in scope and/or contain inaccuracy and irrelevance. There will be some, but limited, comment in relation to the question and statements will, for the most part, be unsupported and generalist. 6-10 MARKS
* L3: The answer will show an understanding of the demands of the question and will supply a range of largely accurate information which will show an awareness of some of the key issues and features, but may, however be unspecific or lack adequate precision or detail. The answer will be effectively organised. There will be a good deal of comment in relation to the question and the answer will display some balance, but a number of statements may be inadequately supported and generalist. 11-15 MARKS
* L4: Answers will display a good understanding of the question. It will be well-organised and effectively communicated. It will supply a range of accurate information which will show a good awareness of the key issues and features, together with some conceptual awareness. The answer will be effectively organised and show adequate communication skills. There will be analytical comment in relation to the question and the answer will be well balanced. However, there may be some generalisation and judgement which may be only partially substantiated. 16-20 MARKS
* L5: Answers will display a very good understanding of the full demands of the question. They will be well-organised and effectively communicated. There will be a range of clear and specific supporting information showing a good understanding of key features and issues, together with some conceptual awareness. The answer will be fully analytical with a balanced argument and a well-substantiated judgement. 21-25 MARKS

So what do you need to do to gain a good mark for an A-Level essay?­­­­­­­­­\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

So basically:-

**C grade A-Level answers need:-**

* A good understanding of the demands of the Q
* Carefully selected evidence which supports the argument
* Links back to the Q
* Independent judgement which runs throughout the essay
* Reasonable organisation and skills of written communication

**B grade A-Level answers need:-**

* A very good understanding of the demands of the Q
* Carefully chosen and precise evidence which supports the argument
* Clear links back to the Q
* Independent judgement which runs throughout the essay
* Clear organisation and good skills of written communication

**A grade A-Level answers need:-**

* A full understanding of the demands of the Q
* Wide ranging, specific and precise evidence which supports the argument
* Excellent links back to the Q
* Independent and well substantiated judgement which runs throughout the essay
* A very good structure and fluent written skills

What are the grade boundaries:-

A = 22/25

B = 18/25

C = 15/25

D = 12/25

E = 10/25

U = below 9

Please note that these are liable to change depending upon exam board requirements.

‘**2015 Spec**

‘The foreign Policy of Henry VIII failed to achieve its objectives in the years 1509 to 1547’. Assess the validity of this view. [25 marks]

1. Henry VIII was personally responsible for the failures of English foreign policy during his reign’. Assess the validity of this view. [25 marks]
2. ‘The foreign policy of Henry VIII failed to achieve its objectives in the years 1509 to 1547’. Assess the validity of this view. [25 marks]
3. ‘Administrative reform was the most significant development in government during Henry VIII’s reign until 1547’. Assess the validity of this view. [25 marks]
4. ‘English society in the reign of Henry VIII was characterised more by disorder than by order’. Assess the validity of this view. [25 marks]
5. ‘Henry VIII might have made himself supreme head of the Church of England, but he did little else to change the Church’. Assess the validity of this view. [25 marks]

A-Level Source Questions

Note that;

All source questions are worth 30 marks and you have approximately 60 minutes to answer them.

Anything can be examined; religion, royal authority, foreign policy, rebellions, governmental policies. So you need to know it all!

There could be a link with the years of Henry VII or with the Mid Tudor Era.

You always need to balance the information you provide.

So how do I answer an A-Level source question? Look at the top tips below:-

* There are 3 extracts for the A-Level, compared to just 2 for the AS.
* There is no need for an introduction
* Start each paragraph with a reference to part of the extract. So for example, ‘Extract A is unconvincing because……………………….’ or ‘extract A is convincing because………’
* Ensure you don’t confuse the message of the extract. E.g. if the source says ‘Henry never secured the loyalty of the realm through stable and representative rule’ it means that the author is critical of Henry’s failure to gain loyalty as his rule was unstable and unrepresentative. If you confuse the message and tell the examiner that Henry’s rule was ‘stable and representative’, you may well be quoting from the source but the message of the source is WRONG and so you will lose marks as you are not understanding the interpretation.
* You don’t have to quote from a source you can paraphrase instead. E.g. Extract B is unconvincing as it is critical of Henry’s desire to avoid war as war was popular, especially when successful.
* If you use a treaty as evidence for one point, try not use it again immediately afterwards. E.g. If you use the Treaty of Medina del Campo of 1489 to show that Henry ‘was on good terms with most of Europe’, don’t use it to show that ‘his dynasty was secure and recognised by other rulers’. Use the Treaty of Etaples, 1492 instead.
* Capital T for names, e.g. the **T**reaty of Etaples. Use DATES too, e.g. 1492.
* Ensure you analyse. E.g. if you say that ‘extract A is unconvincing because it says that Henry did not drain ‘the treasury of it’s hard won treasure’ and you use the fact that he gave Maximilian £250,000 over a number of years for the return of the Earl of Suffolk’ as evidence to prove that the extract is wrong make sure you say that ‘this therefore suggests that extract A is wrong and therefore unconvincing as Henry was prepared to sacrifice treasure in order to gain security, therefore the treasury was to an extent ‘drained’ of treasure’. THIS IS ANALYSIS AS IT ANSWERS THE QUESTION.
* In the time allowed in the exam, you won’t be able to analyse the extract sentence by sentence. Instead choose the key sentences to agree with/disagree with.
* You will probably only have time to give one or two pieces of evidence in support of each point. This is fine as long as you use the evidence effectively and DO NOT keep using the same piece of evidence.
* Ensure that you balance your answer – try to show how each extract has elements which are convincing as well as elements which are unconvincing.
* There is no need for a CONCLUSION.

Look at the exam boards generic mark scheme below:-

Target: AO3

Analyse and evaluate, in relation to the historical context, different ways in which aspects of the past have been interpreted.

**L5:**

Answers will display a good understanding of the interpretations given in all three extracts and combines this with a strong awareness of the historical context to analyse and evaluate the interpretations given in the extracts. Evaluation of the arguments will be well-supported and convincing. The response demonstrates a very good understanding of context. 25-30

L4:

Answers will display a good understanding of the interpretations given in all three extracts and combines this with knowledge of the historical context to analyse and evaluate the interpretations given in the extracts. Evaluation of the arguments will be mostly well-supported and convincing, but may have minor limitations of depth and breadth. The response demonstrates a very good understanding of context.

19-24

L3:

The answer will provide some supported comment on the interpretations given in the extracts and comments on the strength of these argument in relation to the historical context. There is some analysis and evaluation but there may be an imbalance in the degree and depth of comments offered on the strength of the arguments. The response demonstrates an understanding of context. 13-18

L2:

The answer will show some accurate comment on the interpretations given in at least two of the extracts, with reference to the historical context. The answer may contain some analysis but there is little, if any, evaluation. Some of the comments on the strengths of the arguments may contain some generalisation, inaccuracy or irrelevance. The response demonstrates some understanding of context. 7-12

L1:

The answer will show a little understanding of the interpretations given in all of the extracts. There will be only unsupported, vague or generalist comment in relation to the question. The response demonstrates limited understanding of context. 1-6

So what do you need to do to gain a good mark for an A-Level essay?­­­­­­­­­\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

So basically:-

**C grade A-Level answers need:-**

* Supported comment on the interpretations given in all three extracts.
* Understanding of the strength of the argument in relation to the historical context
* Clear analysis and evaluation
* An understanding of context.

**B grade A-Level answers need:-**

* A good understanding of the interpretations given in all three extracts.
* Knowledge of the historical context to analyse and evaluate the interpretations given in the extracts.
* Evaluation of the arguments will be mostly well-supported and convincing.
* A very good understanding of context.

**A grade A-Level answers need:-**

* A good understanding of the interpretations given in all three extracts.
* A strong awareness of the historical context to analyse and evaluate the interpretations given in the extracts.
* Evaluation of the arguments will be well-supported and convincing.
* The response demonstrates a very good understanding of context.

What are the grade boundaries:-

A = 27/30

B = 23/30

C = 19/30

D = 15/30

E = 12/30

U = below 12

Please note that these are liable to change depending upon exam board requirements.

Henry VIII

A-Level Source based mock paper

**Extract A**

For fifteen years Henry and Wolsey governed as a partnership. The king required a minister to accomplish ‘his will and pleasure’ and Wolsey triumphantly succeeded. Not everything was plain sailing. Tensions occasionally arose in the fields of military strategy and church patronage. But only rarely did Henry and Wolsey overtly disagree – as in the summer of 1521 when Wolsey was visiting Calais and was therefore unable to ride to Court, or in the spring of 1522 when he urged a surprise attack on the French navy, but Henry thought the plan too dangerous.

It follows from this interpretation that Wolsey, whom foreign ambassadors depicted as ‘alter rex’ or ‘second king’ was more the loyal servant of the Crown than conventional historiography has suggested. That does not imply that Henry VIII knew or approved of everything Wolsey did, nor did it oblige Henry to stand by his minister when things went wrong. When Wolsey……. Seemingly achieved ‘universal peace’ in Europe by a miracle of diplomacy, Henry was first to claim the credit.

A verdict on Henry VIII’s relationship with Wolsey. From *Henry VIII and his Ministers* by John Guy

**Extract B**

For much of his career as Chancellor, it was Wolsey who alone guided English affairs. His quick, strong hands grasped everything because Henry seemed unable, or unwilling, to make the smallest decision himself. Who should attend upon the Princess Mary? What shall he reply to the regent of the Netherlands?.......All these Wolsey had to decide for him, for they were problems which this apparently helpless man, for all his bluster and swagger, could not resolve. Wolsey must be servant and master, creature yet impresario; he must abase himself and yet dominate, playing a part which only a man of superlative energy, self-confidence and loyalty could have endured. Yet the king who so often seemed to want nothing more than to dance and to hunt, and to only have the feeblest grip on royal duties, was also the man who, time and time again, could show a detailed grasp on foreign affairs and hold his own with, if not undo, foreign ambassadors;…….. who could pounce on something Wolsey had missed;……. assess a situation exactly, confidently overrule his minister …… There is no doubt that, at times, Henry was furiously involved in public business and in commanding partnership with Wolsey; and that he could break into his minister’s conduct of foreign affairs with decisive results.

Another verdict on Henry VIII’s relationship with Wolsey. From *Henry VIII* by J. J. Scarsibrick

**Extract C**

The king took a more consistent and informed interest in foreign policy than in most other areas of government, and this both eased and complicated Wolsey’s task. King and Cardinal could work together as a very effective double-act, using audiences with the king, ‘simple and candied by nature’, to encourage ambassadors frustrated by the cardinals obstructiveness. Wolsey could use the king’s disapproval as an excuse for refusing to contemplate concessions, or win goodwill from an ambassador by stressing the trouble he had had in persuading Henry to accept a proposal. Henry enjoyed lecturing envoys as such themes as the benefits of universal peace, but he was equally happy to leave the grind of detailed negotiations to his minister.

Another verdict on Henry VIII’s relationship with Wolsey. From *Cardinal Wolsey: Church, State and Art* by S. J. Gunn and P. G. Lindley

1. Using your understanding of the historical context, assess how convincing the arguments in these three extracts are in relation to Henry VIII’s relationship with Wolsey. [30 marks]

Henry VIII

A-Level Source based mock paper

**Extract A**

He played the leading part in subordinating the clergy to the crown; he orchestrated the press campaign in defence of the break with Rome. Above all, he enforced the Royal Supremacy by means of oaths of allegiance and extension to the treason law. When Henry repudiated Anne Boleyn in the spring of 1536, Cromwell was deft enough to obtain the evidence needed to destroy Anne and her court allies, in order that Henry might marry Jane Seymour. But he also took his opportunity to drive his own political opponents from court on the grounds that they had plotted to restore Princess Mary to the succession.

The *putsch* of mid-1536 gave Cromwell the pre-eminent ascendancy that he had hitherto lacked. His power was real, but it was less secure that Wolsey’s…..’

A verdict on Henry VIII’s chief minister, Thomas Cromwell. From *Cromwell and the Reform of Government* by John Guy

**Extract B**

Certainly Henry VIII was a king willing to allow his ministers to rid him of the daily toils of government, and……….there were areas over which Cromwell had very real influence – even a measure of independence. With regards to Crown lands, for example, on at least one occasion Henry refused to make a decision without first taking Cromwell’s advice. He has also been shown promoting legislation in parliament of which the king had very little knowledge. But more often than not, Cromwell’s independence was over the execution of policy, not its formulation. The significant point to emerge here is that during the years 1531-1534, Cromwell was working for, and taking his lead from, his royal master.

Another verdict on Henry VIII’s chief minister, Thomas Cromwell. From *The Rise of Thomas Cromwell* by M Everett

**Extract C**

Cromwell…….was not Wolsey in lay grab, and not merely because of his lower profile….. First, the shift of power back to the court, the immediacy of the king’s matrimonial problem and its knock-on effects on foreign policy and finance meant that Henry, willy-nilly, was much nearer to decisions on detail than he had been. Second, the 1530s required minister who would be pro-active, not reactive. Thirdly, Cromwell was in a different league from the Cardinal when it came to political originality. He needed to be. He did not have the advantages of age, European recognition and ‘magnificence’ which helped Wolsey impress the king for so long. What is more, the greater involvement of the king meant that Cromwell’s arrival did not marginalise the council attendant in the way Wolsey had done. It was not enough, therefore, to mediate joint royal and ministerial directions to a team of councillors. Cromwell had also to manage an inner ring whose members saw the king more regularly than he did.

1. Using your understanding of the historical context, assess how convincing the arguments in these three extracts are in relation to Cromwell’s period as Chief Minister? [30 marks]

Henry VIII

A-Level Source based mock paper

**Extract A**

That the reign of Henry VIII was enormously significant is beyond question. His rejection of western Christendom in favour of a national Church, the innovative use of statute law and the resulting changes in the qualitative role and importance of parliament, all of these left a deeper mark on English history than any monarch since the Norman Conquest and any who followed him. Even more profound has been the consequence of Henry’s decision to require, for the first time ever, that subjects should accept any belief as defined by the State. For that point on it ceased to be sufficient any longer to offer the Crown loyalty and ability; the monarch needed to search hearts. Ideological conformity and nonconformity became substantial and permanent features of English life.

A verdict on Henry VIII’s reign. From *Henry VIII* by Eric Ives

**Extract B**

Throughout his reign Henry kept an eye on some details and dealt with some business, but he never did enough of either to save himself from having to take the lead given by his ministers. He delegated power in the confidence that he could rely on his advisors and agents; he knew he could always discard the policy with the minister. His attitude to business shows he was wise enough to realise that there are other things in life. But the evidence is strong that while a minster held power it was he and not the king who controlled and devised policy. In the hands of Henry VIII, personal monarch did not mean personal attention to the business of government. It meant the putting of the king’s personal force behind policies not of his devising. It is doubtful if he was the architect of anything, least of all the English Reformation.

Another verdict on Henry VIII. From *Henry VIII* by G R Elton

**Extract C**

Monarchy was personal. Everything, therefore, depended upon the king’s willingness to devote himself to business. Most State papers were read or summarised to him and he did almost all his work by word of mouth. Only on issues which engaged him personally was he willing to become fully committed. On the other hand, Henry was not willing to delegate consistently. He also reserved the freedom to intervene as and when he wanted. The need to accommodate Henry’s particular version of personal monarchy explains much. In essence, there were two options. The first was that the Royal Council should attempt to provide some continuity in government and the second that a chief minister should take over, leaving the king as overall director. Neither met the difficulties fully and the story of the reign is of fluctuation as the options were tried in turn and successively broken down.

Another verdict on Henry VIII’s kingship. From *Henry VIII* by E W Ives

1. Using your understanding of the historical context, assess how convincing the arguments in these three extracts are in relation to Henry VIII’s rule of England. [30 marks]

Henry VIII

A-Level Source based mock paper

**Extract A**

In foreign affairs, where Henry VIII was most continuously and most personally active, he followed the devices and desires of his own heart. Before 1527 his object was to establish his credentials as a monarch of European standing. From 1527 policy became dominated by the ‘King’s Great Matter’ and the need to protect the action he had taken. In the 1540s, the revival of Henry’s personal obsession with winning territory in France led him to mishandle opportunities.

A verdict on Henry VIII’s reign. From *Henry VIII* by Eric Ives

**Extract B**

Left to himself, King Henry VIII turned his hand to the search for personal glory and national aggrandisement, playing a part he had always fancied and never been fit for either in his personal capacities or the resources of his realms. His achievement must strike the reflective mind as remarkable: a grave threat of invasion from France, continuous threat of invasion from Scotland, the wasting away of the Crown’s recently enlarged resources, a country drained by the heaviest taxation for centuries [some dubiously legal], and a major crisis in what had been the least crisis-prone of the economies of Western Europe. That his achievements did not destroy the monarchy which his father, Wolsey and Cromwell had fashioned, nor produce a real collapse and a class war in England, was none of his doing.

Another verdict on Henry VIII. From *Henry VIII* by G R Elton

**Extract C**

To contemporaries, Henry was everything a king should be. For them, whether they might like or loathe his policies, Henry was everything a king should be; he had all the monarchical virtues in full measure. The first was magnificence, immediately obvious in his personal appearance. The reputation of the Field of the Cloth of Gold spread throughout Europe, not simply as a costly expensive exercise in image building, but as regal glory in action. A second contemporary royal virtue was military power and success. Henry’s fascination with military technology, most notably heavy guns on board ship and the consequent need to encourage cannon-founding, was entirely in the kingly tradition. So was war. No one was allowed to forget Henry’s triumph at the Battle of the Spurs, even though it was a skirmish fought in his absence. His armies not only won massive victories which culled two generations of Scottish nobles, in 1544 they savaged the lives of ordinary Scots and ruined the lowland economy. Supremely, with the capture of Boulogne, Henry became the only king to win territory in France for more than a century.

Another verdict on Henry VIII’s foreign policy. From *Henry VIII* by E W Ives

1. Using your understanding of the historical context, assess how convincing the arguments in these three extracts are in relation to Henry VIII’s foreign policy. [30 marks]