

Year 7

**Independent Learning Booklet**

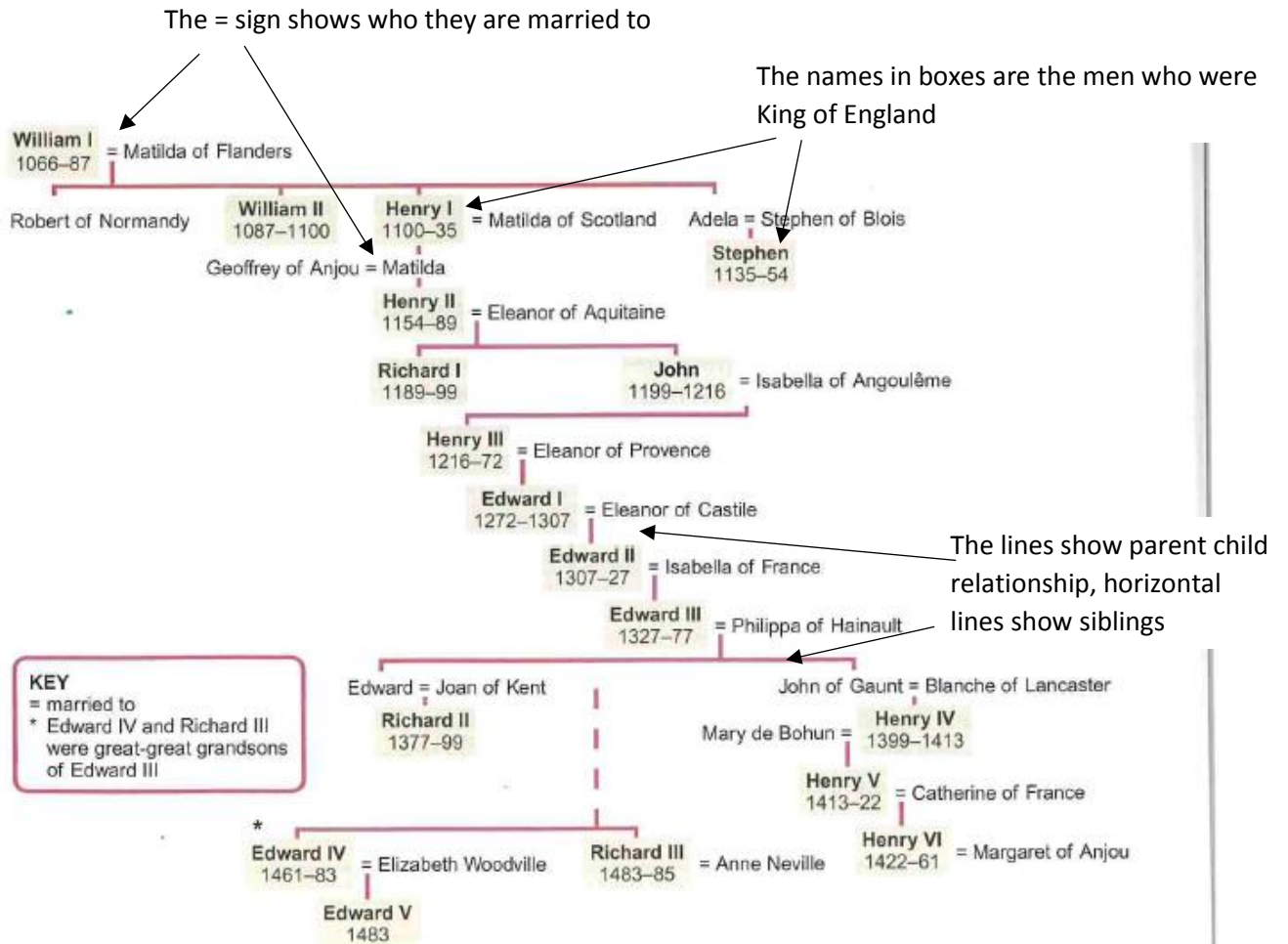
**Medieval Monarchs**



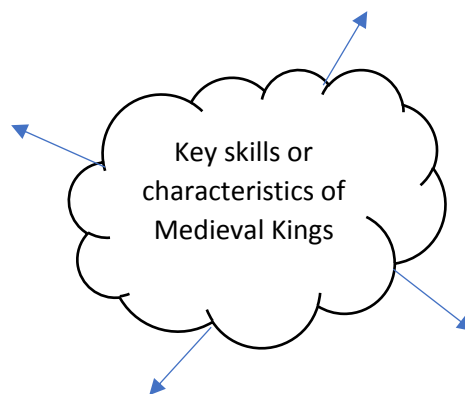
Name:

History Teacher:

Task: In this booklet you will be researching and learning about the Medieval rulers of England. You will need to research and record key facts about their reign, the successes they had and then decide for yourself whether they were successful monarchs and which monarch was most successful.



Task: complete the spider diagram below to show the key skills a Medieval King would need



## William II

William was born in around 1056 and almost nothing is known about his childhood. At his death in 1087, William gave England to William, his third and favourite son, who was crowned in September 1087. In 1088, William faced a rebellion inspired by his uncle, Odo of Bayeux, in favour of Robert – William II's older brother. But Robert failed to appear, and the revolt soon collapsed. In 1089, William tried to take over Normandy in France and started a war against Robert, who he successfully defeated.

William faced opposition from Scotland and in 1091 he forced Malcolm III, King of the Scots to recognise him as his king. Malcolm revolted in November 1093, but William's forces crushed his army near Alnwick and Malcolm was killed. Thereafter, William maintained the support of the Scottish Kings.

William also had difficult relations with the church he had numerous arguments with Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury from 1093. When Anselm left for Rome in 1097 to seek the advice of the pope, William took all his land and houses.

On 2 August 1100, William died when he was shot by an arrow while out hunting. It was accepted as an accident but could have been an assassination. It has been suggested that his alleged killer, Walter Tirel, was acting under orders from William's younger brother, Henry, who promptly seized the throne as Henry I.



### **Questions:**

**What years was William II king of England?**

**Why was he not expected to be King of England?**

**Why did his father choose him as King of England?**

**How did William II ensure he maintain control of Scotland?**

**What problems did William II face with the church?**

**How did he die?**

**Do you think William I or William II was a better king? Why?**


## Henry I



Henry I was the fourth son of William the Conqueror and Matilda of Flanders and was born between May, 1068 and May, 1069 probably at Selby in Yorkshire.. On the death of his father, Normandy was given to his eldest son, Robert Curthose , England was left to the third son, William Rufus (William II) (a second son, Richard, had been killed whilst hunting in the New Forest) and to the youngest, Henry, he left a large sum of money.

Henry seized England's crown on the death of his brother, William II on 2 August 1100. He had been present on the hunting expedition in the New Forest which resulted in William's death, either by accident or design and left quickly to seize the treasury at Winchester. Henry was accused of being involved in his brother's death as he refused to allow Henry to marry the (half Saxon) Scottish Princess Edith.

Although he had many illegitimate children, Henry had only two children by his wife, Edith. A son, William, and a daughter Matilda, Tragedy struck when Henry's only remaining legitimate son, William, was drowned in the English Channel in the wreck of the White Ship. William had got away in a lifeboat but went back for his illegitimate sister, the Countess of Perche, when his boat was overturned. In the hope of getting another male heir to secure the succession, the King married for a second time to the young and beautiful Adelia of Louvain, but the marriage produced no children.

In 1135, Henry again crossed to Normandy to see his two grandsons. During his visit, he quarrelled violently with his daughter Matilda and her husband. Henry was now an ageing king, these quarrels with his daughter affected him badly and he died in Normandy on 1st December 1135 at St. Denis le Fermont, from food poisoning, due to overindulging of his favourite dish of lampreys, which his doctors had forbidden him.

**Task: Complete the table below selecting evidence from the story above to show whether Henry I was an unlucky king or a foolish king who made many mistakes:**

Evidence of Henry I being unlucky	Evidence of Henry I making mistakes

**Was Henry I unlucky or did he make many mistakes?**




## King John


Historians often argue over whether King John was a useless or just an unlucky king.

**Task: Read all the reason why John was an unpopular king, then number them one to six to show which is the most important (1) to least important (6).**

He married Isabella of Angoulême. This should have helped secure his lands in France, but it upset the king of France because Isabella had been promised to one of his nobles.

He taxed his barons heavily in order to pay for his wars. They had to pay more tax to him than they had to any other king. This upset them, particularly since he was defeated.

He tried to run the country without the barons. Instead of appointing the most powerful ones to important positions, he ignored them and their advice.



He ordered the murder of his nephew, Arthur. This should have removed any possible threat to his throne, but it disgusted barons in Britain and France. French barons were happy to support the French king in his wars against John.

He went to war twice against France in order to defend his French lands, and lost both times. By the end of his reign, he had lost almost all England's lands in France.

He quarrelled with the pope about who was to be the next archbishop of Canterbury. The pope banned all church services in England. People were afraid they would go to hell. John was excommunicated, which meant that all his nobles were absolved from their oaths of loyalty to him, allowing them to rebel.

Figure 4.7: How King John became unpopular.

**Task 2: For the box you labelled as the least important – explain below why you think this is the least important?**


**Task 3: for the box you labelled as the most important – Explain below why you think this is the main or most important reason why John was unpopular.**


**Task 4: Using the information here and the boxes above decide for yourself whether you think John was unlucky or useless – Explain why.**


In 1199, King John inherited the throne from his brother Richard I.


Potential problems:

1. In order to take over French land John had to promise to be loyal to the King of France, but the King of France didn't want John to be king
2. John's brother, Richard I, had left huge problems from John to sort out, as he had been away fighting and the barons had gained lots of power, which they didn't want to give up
3. Richard's wars had been expensive, and the country was left with little money.



## Henry VI

Henry VI is often considered a very weak medieval King. He was nine months old when his father, Henry V, died from dysentery (severe diarrhoea) while campaigning in France. The baby Henry inherited the throne of England.



**Powerful nobles**  
When he was a child, a council of nobles ruled for him. This council, and individual nobles, especially Richard of York from 1450, were very strong. Henry could not control them.

**Deeply religious**  
He was a deeply religious man who was trusting and faithful. He hated rich clothes and jewels, and avoided hurting anyone. He would not dismiss ministers even when they were incompetent.

**Family man**  
He married Margaret of Anjou, a strong-willed and determined woman, and had one child. He valued the children from his mother's secret marriage to Owen Tudor, and made two of his half-brothers earls.

**Civil war**  
Civil war broke out in 1460 between two noble families, the Yorkists and the Lancastrians. Henry's son was killed, probably by Yorkist nobles, after the Battle of Tewkesbury in 1471. In the same year, Henry was imprisoned in the Tower of London, and murdered there. The civil war was later called the Wars of the Roses.

**King of two countries**  
In 1429, when he was eight years old, Henry was crowned king of England. A year later, he was crowned king of France.

**Hated war**  
He was a king who hated violence in any form. By 1453, all land in France held by England had been lost, except Calais.

**Mentally unstable**  
He had bouts of mental illness throughout his life, during which time Richard of York governed England.

**Supported education**  
He founded Eton College and King's College, Cambridge and was deeply interested in education.

**Task: What one thing would you pick out as being the most important in making him a weak King? Write a paragraph to explain why you chose this**


**Task 2: Do you think Henry VI was a weak king or not? Use the table above to explain why you think this.**

