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Oxford Cambridge and RSA

GCSE (9–1) History B (Schools History Project)

The Elizabethans, 1580-1603

Question Papers & Model Answers



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The Elizabethans, 1580-1603 (Sample Question Paper)

Answer questions 6 (a-b) and 7.

- 6 (a) In **Interpretation A** the illustrator portrays the wealth and comfort of an Elizabethan gentleman's house.

Identify and explain **one** way in which the illustrator does this.

[3]

Interpretation A

An illustration from 'Tudor Gallery' by James Mason, a history book aimed at young children published in 1997.



- (b) If you were asked to do further research on **one** aspect of **Interpretation A**, what would you choose to investigate?

Explain how this would help us to analyse and understand daily life in Elizabethan England.

[5]

7 **Interpretations B and C** both focus on the power of Elizabeth I.

How far do they differ and what might explain any differences?

[12]

Interpretation B

An extract from ‘The Making of the United Kingdom, 1500–1750’, a secondary school textbook written by J F Aylett in 1992.

Elizabeth I was England’s only unmarried queen. Perhaps she knew that, if she married an English nobleman, she would offend others. If she had married a foreigner she would not have been able to follow her own policies. And those policies *were* successful. When she died in 1603, England was one of the world’s leading trading nations. It had also become a major power in Europe. Above all, she handed over a country that was more peaceful and united than ever before. Many people thought that she was wonderful. No wonder they looked back on her reign as a Golden Age.

Interpretation C

An extract from ‘A Brief History of Britain, 1485–1660’, written by the historian Ronald Hutton in 2010.

During her last years, her government was starting to show signs of strain. The Spanish war had reached stalemate, with the English more anxious to make peace than their opponents. Court politics had become unusually divisive and embittered, leading to the rebellion and execution of her final toy–boy, Essex, and then a monopoly of power by Burghley’s son, Robert Cecil. The last Parliament of the reign turned directly upon the queen over the issue of economic monopolies that she was granting as rewards to her followers; and she was forced to surrender to its demands. Her splendid costumes made an ever more glaring contrast with her physical decay: one Venetian ambassador reported that she stank so much it was wise to stand upwind of her.

Answer **either** question 8 **or** question 9.

8* In his 2012 book ‘The Watchers’, the historian Stephen Alford argued that the threat from Catholics created ‘dangerous and uncertain times’ in Elizabethan England.

How far do you agree?

[20]

9* In his 1974 school textbook ‘Tudors and Stuarts’, R J Unstead stated that Elizabethan adventurers ‘successfully increased English trade in all parts of the world’.

How far do you agree?

[20]

The Elizabethans, 1580-1603 (Practice Paper 1)

Answer questions 6 (a-b) and 7.

- 6 (a) In **Interpretation A**, the author H.E. Marshall suggests that Elizabeth I had a good relationship with her people.

Identify and explain **one** way in which she does this.

[3]

Interpretation A

An extract from Our Island Story: A History of Britain for Boys and Girls from the Romans to Queen Victoria, by H.E. Marshall, published in 1905.

Elizabeth loved fine clothes and she dressed in the most splendid silks and satins and jewels. Her courtiers told her that she was the most beautiful lady on earth. This was not true. Elizabeth was not really beautiful, but she was vain and liked to hear people say she was lovely. And her people loved her so much that very likely they really thought that she was beautiful.

Whenever it was known that the Queen would pass through the streets, the people would gather to see her. They would stand for hours waiting until she came. When she at last appeared, they would wave their hats and shout, 'God save your Majesty!' Then the Queen would stop, and looking round on them, would smile and reply, 'God bless you all, my good people. You may well have a greater Prince, but you will never have a more loving Prince.'

Then when she had gone again the people would go to their homes talking of what a splendid Queen she was, and of how they would die for Good Queen Bess, as they loved to call her.

- (b) If you were asked to do further research on **one** aspect of **Interpretation A**, what would you choose to investigate?

Explain how this would help us to analyse and understand the popularity of Elizabeth I.

[5]

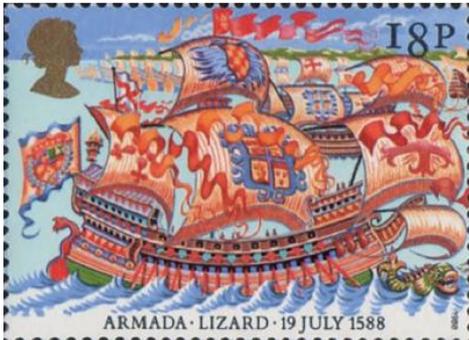
7 Interpretations B and C both focus on the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588.

How far do they differ and what might explain any differences?

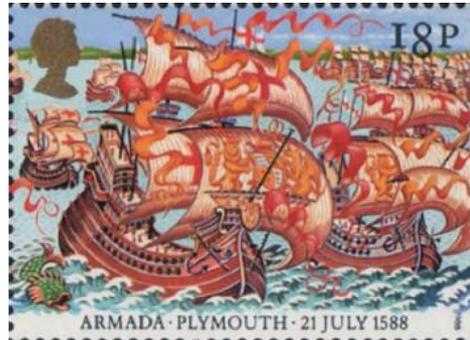
[12]

Interpretation B

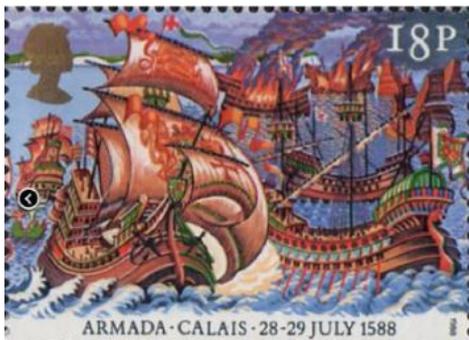
A set of stamps, issued by Royal Mail in 1988, to mark the 400th anniversary of the defeat of the Spanish Armada.



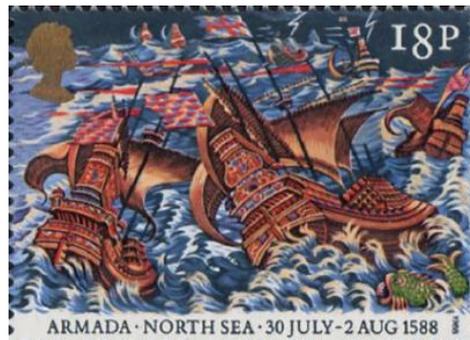
Spanish Armada sighted off the Lizard in Cornwall



The English fleet leave Plymouth



Attack of the English fire ships at Calais



Armada in storm in the North Sea

Interpretation C

An extract from *Elizabeth I*, written by the historian Christopher Haigh, in 2014.

The defeat – mainly by sea and storm – of the Spanish Armada in 1588 solved nothing. There was still a successful Spanish army in the Netherlands, still Spanish support for French Catholics against the French Protestants, and still a risk of Spanish invasion. There were further armadas in 1596.

Answer **either** question 8 **or** question 9.

- 8*** In her article 'Witches, Wives and Mothers' published in 1995, the historian Louise Jackson argued that witchcraft persecutions were 'an attempt to control, and to reassert male power over, women.'

How far do you agree with this view?

[20]

- 9*** In her 2001 school textbook *The Reign of Elizabeth, England 1558–1603*, Barbara Mervyn stated that responses to poverty during the period 1580–1603 'reflected a considerable shift in the attitudes of those in government'.

How far do you agree with this view?

[20]

The Elizabethans, 1580-1603 (Practice Paper 2)

Answer questions 6 (a-b) and 7.

- 6 (a) In **Interpretation A**, historian Jessie Childs tries to portray the drama of the Catholic threat against Elizabeth.

Identify and explain **one** way in which she does this.

[3]

Interpretation A

An extract from the introduction to her book *God's Traitors: Terror and Faith in Elizabethan England* by the historian Jessie Childs, published in 2014.

My book explains how acts of religion became acts of treason. It follows the story of one Catholic family into the heart of the underground movement and explores the conflicts of loyalty that they, as Catholics and Englishmen, faced in a violent, unstable world. It is a story of stately homes and riverside taverns, spy rings and torture chambers, priest hunts, exorcisms and a swashbuckling escape from the Tower of London: sensational stuff that was sensationalised at the time. I hope that it might throw a shaft of light on a rather murky corner of England's past, one that was for a long time kept hidden.

- (b) If you were asked to do further research on **one** aspect of **Interpretation A**, what would you choose to investigate?

Explain how this would help us to analyse and understand the nature and extent of the Catholic threat in Elizabethan England between 1580 and 1603.

[5]

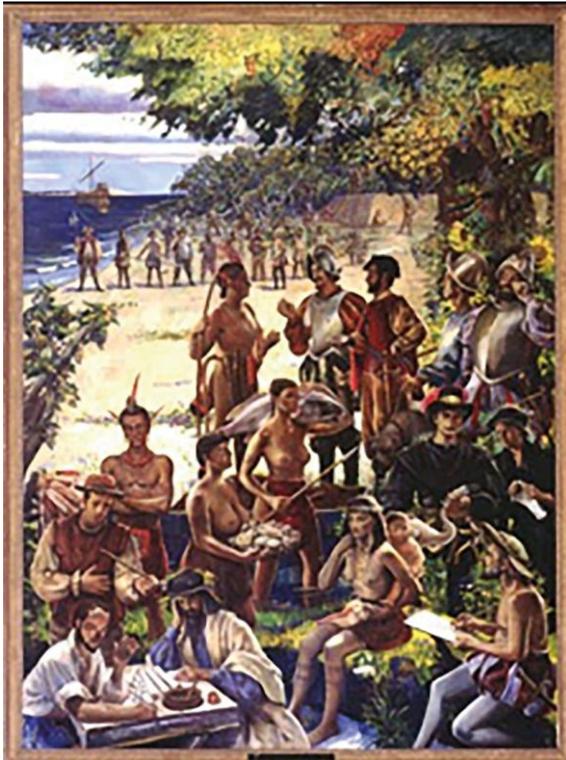
7 **Interpretations B** and **C** both focus on England's attempt to establish a colony on Roanoke Island in 1585.

How far do they differ and what might explain any differences?

[12]

Interpretation B

A painting entitled *The First English Colony*, painted in 1954 to be displayed in a university building in North Carolina. The painting is one of a series of fourteen, which all show events and themes important to the development of North Carolina (where Roanoke Island is located).



Interpretation C

An extract from a book by historian James Horn called *A Kingdom Strange: The Brief and Tragic History of the Lost Colony of Roanoke*, published in 2011.

To the English, colonisation and seeking treasure were closely connected. However, the expedition up the Roanoke River to find gold had been frustrating, like so much else about the colony's first nine months. The colonists had not made any spectacular discoveries of gold or minerals and during the last few months they had been short of food and in continual danger of attack by local peoples. To their weary eyes the appearance of Sir Francis Drake must have been a magnificent sight. The colonists were leaving less than one year after they had arrived. Most of them were probably glad to be going home.

Answer **either** question 8 **or** question 9.

8* According to the website www.elizabethanenglandlife.com, 'daily life in England was very difficult for Elizabeth's subjects'.

How far do you agree with this view of Elizabethan society between 1580 and 1603? **[20]**

9* On their 'Bitesize' history website, the BBC claims that 'Merry England' is a 'mythical society which never existed'.

How far do you agree with this view of popular culture in England between 1580 and 1603? **[20]**

The Elizabethans, 1580-1603 (2018)

Answer questions 6 (a-b) and 7.

- 6 (a) In **Interpretation A**, the historian argues that most people in Elizabethan England did not share the views of the Puritans about dancing.

Identify and explain **one** way in which she does this.

[3]

Interpretation A

An extract from an article by the historian Mary Pennino-Baskerville published in 1991.

It is no exaggeration to say that Elizabethan England was gripped by a dance mania that claimed high born and low, urban and rural, young and old. While commoners danced their morris dances and jigs, the nobles danced their elegant dances, prompting one visitor from Germany to remark that the English 'excel in dancing and music'.

However, not all those who observed the enthusiasm of the English for dancing did so with admiration. Puritan moralists criticised dance on several counts: for the injuries it caused leading to lost work, for the social and economic problems it caused, and especially for the moral threat it posed. This hardly served to endear them to the population.

- (b) If you were asked to do further research on **one** aspect of **Interpretation A**, what would you choose to investigate?

Explain how this would help us to analyse and understand popular culture in Elizabethan England.

[5]

7 Interpretations B and C both focus on Elizabethan adventurers.

How far do they differ and what might explain any differences?

[12]

Interpretation B

An adapted extract from an article on the BBC Devon website from 2005.

ROYAL CEREMONY FOR RALEIGH STATUE

A £30,000 statue of Sir Walter Raleigh has been unveiled in a Devon village by the Duke of Kent.

The life-size statue in East Budleigh in Devon, where Raleigh was born, marks the end of a 12-year campaign to celebrate the famous explorer. It is sponsored by British American Tobacco in honour of Raleigh who brought tobacco from America. The explorer was knighted by Queen Elizabeth I in 1587.

Local MP Hugo Swire said: 'I am delighted that we have a lasting memorial to one of our local heroes.'

Interpretation C

An extract from an article in the online newspaper International Business Times in July 2015.

We have an unhealthy habit for nostalgia in Britain. Rosy-eyed remembrance of British history – the Empire, Blitz spirit, and all the rest in between. This week, David Cameron, the Prime Minister, said 'I think of the Age of Discovery, when our great explorers took to the waves. We need to employ some of that Elizabethan endeavour today.'

But the old English explorers of the Elizabethan era such as Sir Walter Raleigh and Sir Francis Drake went around the globe, pillaging far-flung, newly discovered lands and colonising every tribe, town and civilisation they came across. Raleigh's trip to colonise what he called Virginia in the Americas, ended with violence against natives. He brought back potatoes and tobacco (thanks Walt). And worse than Raleigh was Drake, a glorified pirate who loved nothing more than a seafaring life of robbery and violence.

Answer **either** question 8 **or** question 9.

- 8*** In his 1956 book, *A History of the English-Speaking Peoples*, former Prime Minister and historian Winston Churchill argued that there was 'harmony' between Elizabeth and Parliament during her reign.

How far do you agree with this view?

[20]

- 9*** In her 2014 book *God's Traitors: Terror and Faith in Elizabethan England*, historian Jessie Childs argues that Elizabeth I was 'determined to kill off Catholicism in her country.'

How far do you agree with this view?

[20]

The Elizabethans, 1580-1603 (2019)

Answer questions 6 (a-b) and 7.

- 6 (a) In **Interpretation A**, the illustrator portrays how an Elizabethan noblewoman tried to impress guests.

Identify and explain **one** way in which he does this.

[3]

Interpretation A

An illustration by Peter Urmston, drawn for the organisation Historic England. It shows Bess of Hardwick, Countess of Shrewsbury, entertaining guests in the Great Chamber at Hardwick Hall in Derbyshire in 1590.



- (b) If you were asked to do further research on **one** aspect of **Interpretation A**, what would you choose to investigate?

Explain how this would help us to analyse and understand the nature of Elizabethan society.

[5]

7 **Interpretations B** and **C** both focus on the threat which Mary Queen of Scots posed to Elizabeth.

How far do they differ and what might explain any differences?

[12]

Interpretation B

From the website *www.newadvent.org*, which describes itself as a Catholic Encyclopaedia.

The frequent plots that Protestant historians so often speak about are empty rumours which will not stand historical investigation.

In 1586, Anthony Babington wrote to Mary to inquire whether she would reward loyal supporters who set her free and killed Elizabeth. It is likely that Babington was persuaded to ask this question by Elizabeth's spies, although proof of this has not yet been found. Mary answered this letter, promising to reward those who aided her escape, but said nothing about the assassination of Elizabeth.

At her trial, Mary protested that she had never plotted to hurt Elizabeth, which was perfectly true. During the whole process of her trial and execution, Mary acted with magnificent courage worthy of her noble character and queenly rank. There can be no question that she died as a martyr.

Interpretation C

An extract from the history book *Elizabeth's Spy Master: Francis Walsingham and the secret war that saved England* by Robert Hutchinson, published in 2007.

After the failed Throgmorton Plot, there were very real fears that an assassin would succeed in his attempts to kill Elizabeth. Walsingham needed once and for all to stop the threat of Mary Queen of Scots as a successor to the throne in order to defuse the conspiracy which threatened the survival of Protestant England.

Mary's reply to Babington's letter takes up six and a half pages. Its dramatic contents were finally to seal her fate and so became a matter of controversy – at the time, and later for historians. Mary's letter certainly encourages the conspirators and discusses the mechanics of the plot to overthrow Elizabeth. Her words show how experienced she had become in the ways of intrigue and conspiracy. At the end of the letter she returns to the issue of her rescue and suggests three alternative plans.

Answer **either** question 8 **or** question 9.

- 8*** According to the book *Travel: London*, Elizabethan theatres 'had the support of everyone from the Queen to the peasants.'

How far do you agree with this view of people's attitudes towards theatres between 1580 and 1603? **[20]**

- 9*** According to the website www.elizabethan-era.org.uk, Elizabethan adventurers were motivated by the belief that 'new discoveries could bring untold riches.'

How far do you agree with this view of the motives of adventurers between 1580 and 1603? **[20]**

The Elizabethans, 1580-1603 (2020)

Answer questions 6 (a-b) and 7.

- 6 (a) In **Interpretation A**, the film makers portray Elizabeth as a powerful queen.

Identify and explain **one** way in which they do this.

[3]

Interpretation A

A still from the 2007 film *Elizabeth: The Golden Age*.



- (b) If you were asked to do further research on one aspect of **Interpretation A**, what would you choose to investigate?

Explain how this would help us to analyse and understand the power of Queen Elizabeth.

[5]

7 Interpretations B and C both focus on Elizabethan adventurers.

How far do they differ and what might explain any differences?

[12]

Interpretation B

An extract from the *Life in the UK Test Handbook*. This was published by the UK government in 2018 for people taking the UK Citizenship test.

Elizabeth became one of the most popular monarchs in English history. The Elizabethan period in England was a time of growing patriotism: a feeling of pride in being English. English explorers sought new trade routes and tried to expand British trade into the Spanish colonies in the Americas. Sir Francis Drake, one of the commanders in the defeat of the Spanish Armada, was one of the founders of England's naval tradition. His ship, the Golden Hind, was one of the first to sail right around ('circumnavigate') the world. In Elizabeth I's time, English settlers first began to colonise the eastern coast of America. This colonisation greatly increased in the next century.

Interpretation C

An extract from a recent blog by the writer Tim Vicary.

When I was a boy, growing up in Devon, I loved reading historical novels about men like Sir Francis Drake. They were great Elizabethan heroes. Drake was the first Englishman to sail around the world, to return with untold riches and be knighted by Queen Elizabeth on the deck of his ship, the Golden Hind. These men were pioneers, adventurers, founders of the British Empire.

I'm sure today's history is taught differently to the way I learned it; and to an extent, quite right too. For Francis Drake was a pirate, licensed by the Queen to steal, burn and destroy Spanish ships and colonies in the New World. For the Spanish, he was as much of a menace as the Vikings once were to English monks, or Somali pirates are today. He sailed with his cousin John Hawkins, too, on the third of his three slaving voyages.

Answer **either** question 8 **or** question 9.

- 8*** In her book *Elizabeth I and Religion 1558–1603*, published in 1993, historian Susan Doran argued that 'the danger from English Catholics was exaggerated'.

How far do you agree with this view of the nature and extent of the Catholic threat in England between 1580 and 1603? [20]

- 9*** According to the website *www.enotes.com*, 'it was a good time to be English during the Elizabethan era'.

How far do you agree with this view of people's daily lives between 1580 and 1603? [20]

The Elizabethans, 1580-1603 (2021)

Answer questions 6 (a-b) and 7.

- 6 (a) In **Interpretation A**, historian Antonia Fraser argues that Mary Queen of Scots was treated unfairly at her trial.

Identify and explain **one** way in which she does this.

[3]

Interpretation A

An extract from 'Mary Queen of Scots', a 1969 book by historian Antonia Fraser.

At the trial Mary was allowed neither lawyer nor witnesses in her defence; she was not even allowed a secretary to help her prepare her own case as her own secretaries were imprisoned in London. She was left totally alone, a sick woman and a foreigner, who knew nothing of England, its laws, or customs, and had only begun to learn its language comparatively late in life. She was left alone to conduct and manage her own defence against the best legal brains in the country.

- (b) If you were asked to do further research on **one** aspect of **Interpretation A**, what would you choose to investigate?

Explain how this would help us to analyse and understand the problems that Mary Queen of Scots caused Elizabeth.

[5]

7 **Interpretations B and C** both focus on daily life in Elizabethan society.

How far do they differ and what might explain any differences?

[12]

Interpretation B

An image and extract from the website for Kentwell Hall in Suffolk. Kentwell Hall is a stately home where the public can pay to see re-creations of daily life in Elizabethan times.



STEP BACK IN TIME

At Kentwell, our Tudor days are the biggest and most authentic Tudor experience you will get anywhere. Everywhere around you is the Tudor age. Relax into it and spend a day in the sixteenth century! Our Tudors re-create a whole Tudor community: the dress, speech, food, drink, music, dance, crafts, activities, pleasures and way of life. Visitors feel they have been transported back to a real sixteenth-century community, where everyone depended on and looked after each other.

The Tudor period was the period 1485 to 1603 when the monarchs were all from the Tudor family (including Elizabeth I).

Interpretation C

An extract from a BBC history programme for secondary school students, based on the book 'The Time Traveller's Guide to Elizabethan England' by historian Ian Mortimer.

Elizabethan society is dominated by the rich and powerful, but this is a world enjoyed by a privileged few. For most people, life is very different.

There is widespread poverty, and many people struggle to feed and house their families. The punishments for even the smallest crimes are harsh, and disease is everywhere. It has been known for some people feeling the symptoms of plague to simply wait for death.

On arrival in any town, you'll be drawn instantly to the hustle and bustle of the market. Cooked meats, pies and pasties are all on offer, and so are tasty treats. But they are expensive – you might only stretch to buy some herbs or an onion to make a soup. And as the day ends, the town seems less friendly and safe. In fact, after dark, it's terrifying. Where there is poverty, there is often crime. Most young men carry a dagger.

Answer **either** question 8 **or** question 9.

- 8*** In an article for a British newspaper in 2016, historian John Guy argued that 'to see Elizabeth as all-powerful is a big mistake'.

How far do you agree with this view of the power of Elizabeth between 1580 and 1603? **[20]**

- 9*** According to the website www.elizabethanenglandlife.com, the Elizabethan explorers were successful in 'exploring distant lands to gain wealth and power'.

How far do you agree with this view of the achievements of Elizabethan adventurers between 1580 and 1603? **[20]**

The Elizabethans, 1580-1603 (2022)

Answer questions 6 (a-b) and 7.

- 6 (a) In **Interpretation A**, the author H.E. Marshall gives the impression that England was brave in standing up to Catholic Spain in 1588.

Identify and explain **one** way in which she does this.

[3]

Interpretation A

An extract from 'Our Island Story: A History of Britain for Boys and Girls' by H.E. Marshall, published in 1905.

THE STORY OF HOW ENGLAND WAS SAVED FROM THE SPANIARDS

Philip, King of Spain, hated the English people and the Protestant religion. He decided to conquer England. He gathered together a large number of soldiers and sailors and guns and ships, and got ready to invade England. King Philip called his fleet the 'Invincible Armada'. Once again our little green island in the lonely sea was threatened by conquerors coming in great ships.

The English people had been slow to believe there was any danger from the Spaniards and they were unprepared. But when they realised that the Spanish were really coming, the country rose like one man. Catholics and Protestants forgot their quarrels and remembered that they were all Englishmen. Men, young and old, flocked to fight for their Queen and country.

- (b) If you were asked to do further research on **one** aspect of **Interpretation A**, what would you choose to investigate?

Explain how this would help us to analyse and understand the threat from Catholic Spain to Elizabethan England.

[5]

7 **Interpretations B** and **C** both focus on accusations of witchcraft in Elizabethan England.

How far do they differ and what might explain any differences?

[12]

Interpretation B

From the back cover of a book called ‘Lewd women and wicked witches: a study of the dynamics of male domination’ by Professor Marianne Hester, published in 2003.

Professor Hester specialises in researching violence against women.

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries almost all the people persecuted as witches were women. In this book, Marianne Hester uses revolutionary feminist thinking to show how witches were victims of the oppression of a male dominated society. Using the source material, Hester shows how witch-hunts were part of the ongoing attempt by men to maintain their power over women.

Lewd means rude and bad mannered.

Interpretation C

An extract from ‘The Witchcraze of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries’ by historian Alan Farmer, published in 2016.

Given that around 80 per cent of the people accused of witchcraft were women, some historians have argued that the witch-hunts were a hate campaign, or war, against women. However, this feminist view is not at all convincing: for example, many of the witnesses who testified against female witches were women themselves.

Ultimately, witches were persecuted because they were regarded as witches, not because they were women. Misogyny may have been prevalent in the early modern period but this did not mean that witch-hunts were simply male attacks on women. Most historians today accept that the witchcraze resulted from various factors such as village tensions, religious beliefs, the impact of catastrophes like crop failures, as well as attitudes towards women. There is no single, universal explanation.

Misogyny means the hatred of women.

Answer **either** question 8 **or** question 9.

- 8*** According to the Historical Association's website, Elizabethan views about the poor were 'compassionate' (kind and caring) towards the end of the reign.

How far do you agree with this view of Elizabethan responses towards the poor between 1580 and 1603? **[20]**

- 9*** According to the BBC Bitesize website, it was the Puritans who posed the 'greatest threat' to Elizabeth **within Parliament and the Court** between 1580 and 1603.

How far do you agree with this view of threats to Elizabeth from within Parliament and the Court between 1580 and 1603? **[20]**

The Elizabethans, 1580-1603 (2023)

Answer questions 6 (a-b) and 7.

- 6 (a) In **Interpretation A**, the author A N Wilson depicts the Elizabethan age as an important age of exploration.

Identify and explain **one** way in which he does this.

[3]

Interpretation A

An extract from the introduction to a 2011 book called 'The Elizabethans' by the author A N Wilson.

The Elizabethan Age was a time of exceptional wealth creation and expansion which make this period of English history more colourful and remarkable than any other. This was the age when modern Britain was born, and established independence from mainland Europe. British explorers went out to every corner of the known world. This was the age which saw the origins of English sea power. After Sir Walter Raleigh established the colony of Virginia, English was destined to become the language of the great globe itself, and the foundations were laid not only of later British imperial power but also of American domination of the world.

Imperial power means the power that comes from controlling an empire.

- (b) If you were asked to do further research on **one** aspect of **Interpretation A**, what would you choose to investigate?

Explain how this would help us to analyse and understand England's connections with the wider world between 1580 and 1603.

[5]

7 **Interpretations B** and **C** both focus on the power of Elizabeth.

How far do they differ and what might explain any differences?

[12]

Interpretation B

An extract from an article entitled ‘The Indomitable Female Fortress: Queen Elizabeth I’, published in 2013 on the Women’s Media Centre website. The Women’s Media Centre is an American organisation which aims to promote women's stories and roles.

Elizabeth I has always inspired me and reinforced the idea that women can do anything despite opposition. She was a successful monarch who, against all odds, led her country to a golden age while battling against the acute disadvantage of being a woman. In a time when gender inequality was widely accepted, Elizabeth I was a strong monarch who was able to control her subjects. She was determined to remain free from any man who would inevitably seize hold of her power over England. While other European female monarchs often had little political power, Elizabeth took centre stage by carrying out all the duties of a ruler, while neglecting the feminine duties of marrying and producing heirs. She did this to protect her power.

Indomitable means someone who is difficult to defeat or conquer.

Interpretation C

An extract from an Interview with historian Anna Whitelock about the Tudor monarchs, broadcast on a 2021 podcast called ‘History Hit’. Anna Whitelock is a historian who specialises in researching the British Monarchy, especially the Tudors.

Elizabeth I does not deserve her reputation. Her role and significance in things like the defeat of the Spanish Armada have been entirely overstated. There was instability across her reign as she differed about marriage candidates and about the execution of Mary Queen of Scots.

By 1580, she was an old, childless, unmarried Queen, which was not a position of strength. It was at this time that the people around her tried to put a positive spin on her position, calling her the ‘Virgin Queen’, making a virtue out of what was essentially a weakness. The main task of any monarch was to provide an heir and Elizabeth didn't even try. Elizabeth is seen as the poster girl of Tudor monarchy but she ultimately failed; she allowed the throne to pass to the King of Scotland and the Tudor monarchy died out with her.

Answer **either** question 8 **or** question 9.

8* According to the website, 'elizabethi.org', Elizabethan I was 'remarkably tolerant'.

How far do you agree with this view of Elizabeth I's **treatment of Catholics** between 1580 and 1603? **[20]**

9* In his 2016 article 'The dark side of Elizabethan England', historian James Sharpe argues that life for the poor was dominated by 'violence, vagrancy and crushing hunger'.

How far do you agree with this view of **daily life for the poor** in Elizabethan society? **[20]**

(**Vagrancy** is the condition of being homeless without regular employment.)

The Elizabethans, 1580-1603 (2024)

Answer questions 6 (a-b) and 7.

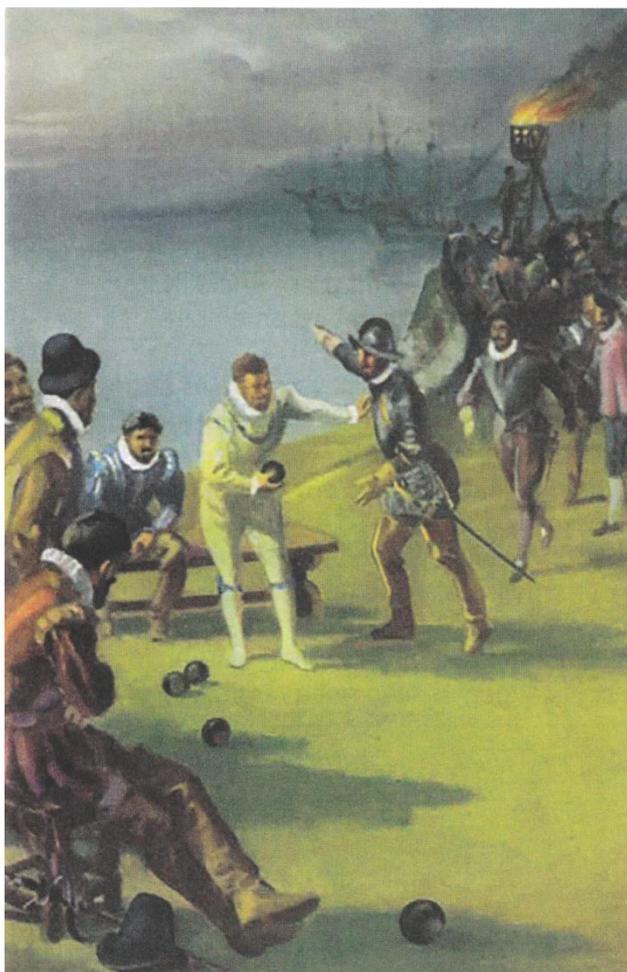
- 6 (a) In **Interpretation A**, the book depicts Francis Drake as an impressive leader.

Identify and explain **one** way in which it does this.

[3]

Interpretation A

An image and extract from a 1957 book written for children. Francis Drake is the person holding a bowling ball.



In 1588 the King of Spain gathered a fleet of 130 ships and thousands of sailors and soldiers.

The fleet was called the Armada, and when it appeared off the coast of Plymouth in July, Francis Drake and other English captains were playing bowls.

Some of them wanted Drake to sail at once to meet the enemy, but Drake said, 'No – there is time to finish our game and beat the Spaniards too'. So the game went on.

- (b) If you were asked to do further research on **one** aspect of **Interpretation A**, what would you choose to investigate?

Explain how this would help us to analyse and understand England's war with Spain. [5]

7 **Interpretations B and C** both make judgements about the reign of Elizabeth I.

How far do they differ and what might explain any differences?

[12]

Interpretation B

An extract from an article published in a national British newspaper on 24 March 2003 to mark the 400th anniversary of the death of Elizabeth I.

Tolerance and religious balance emerged during Elizabeth's reign. Seas were navigated and an empire embarked upon. Our small nation defended itself against larger enemies and found a voice and a purpose. Something in Elizabeth's reign taught us what our country is, and why it matters. And as her reign created a sense of national identity that had not existed before, so Elizabeth herself came to represent our best qualities: courageous, independent, eccentric, amusing and reasonable. The greatest prince this country has produced was a prince in skirts.

Interpretation C

An extract from the introduction to a recent book called 'Elizabeth I' by the historian Christopher Haigh.

For many years, historians have portrayed Elizabeth as an English heroine. They say she healed the wounds of religious division; brought order and stability; defeated the threat from Catholic Europe; and sent ships to set up an empire.

But now it all looks different. We now know that Catholic loyalties remained strong. We now know that Puritans who wanted further religious change were not just a minority who could be ignored - they were in Elizabeth's Court and Council, as well as in Parliament. We now know that the nobility remained powerful, and could be driven to plot against Elizabeth. We now know that England was militarily weak, that wars were badly planned, and that fear of invasion was often serious. It now seems that attempts to set up colonies were small-scale and unsuccessful.

There is not much sign of a golden age. Elizabeth I was a very smart woman in a very difficult situation. But she was not a political genius who got everything right.

Answer **either** question 8 **or** question 9.

8* According to the history website, 'BBC Bitesize', Elizabethan society was 'characterised by extremes of rich and poor'.

How far do you agree with this view of the **structure** of Elizabethan society between 1580 and 1603?

Give reasons for your answer.

[20]

9* According to the website, 'www.elizabethan-era.org.uk', 'Elizabethan people loved entertainment'.

How far do you agree with this view of Elizabethan **pastimes, festivities and theatres** between 1580 and 1603?

Give reasons for your answer.

[20]

The Elizabethans, 1580-1603 (Sample Question Paper)

- 6 (a) In **Interpretation A** the illustrator portrays the wealth and comfort of an Elizabethan gentleman's house.

Identify and explain **one** way in which the illustrator does this.

[3]

The illustrator shows servants at work in the house. This **suggests** the owner is wealthy enough to employ a large number of servants because there are four in this room alone. They are all doing different activities. This **suggests** wealth and comfort because they are all at work on different tasks, meaning that every job is being taken care of for the owner. For example, one of the servants is keeping the fire going to ensure that the room is always comfortable for the owner.

Optional: This is not surprising because the gentry used servants to not only do key jobs but also show-off their wealth.

- (b) If you were asked to do further research on **one** aspect of **Interpretation A**, what would you choose to investigate?

Explain how this would help us to analyse and understand daily life in Elizabethan England.

[5]

I would choose to research how far this type of scene **CHANGED** at different times. This is **important** because it would tell us **how** typical this sort of scene was for the rich in Elizabethan England. For example, are the servants preparing because a specific high-ranking visitor is coming to the house, or because of specific feast such as Christmas, or is this simply an everyday task in this household? I would like to research what is going on in other rooms in the house – is the dining room the only one receiving this attention or is the same occurring in the main hall, the chambers and in the garden? It would be interesting to know if the same number of servants are evenly spread elsewhere.

- 8* In his 2012 book 'The Watchers', the historian Stephen Alford argued that the threat from Catholics created 'dangerous and uncertain times' in Elizabethan England.

How far do you agree?

[20]

Plan

Agree

- Excommunication > Secret Priests & Spies.
- Mary Q of Scots.
- Armada.

Disagree

- Elizabeth actions – Recusancy Act, Act against Priests, never more than 100 plotters.

9* In his 1974 school textbook 'Tudors and Stuarts', R J Unstead stated that Elizabethan adventurers 'successfully increased English trade in all parts of the world'.

How far do you agree?

[20]

<u>Plan</u> <u>Agree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">James Lancaster – Bantam, East India Company (though 1603).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Raleigh – Roanoke failed, Drake rescued.Fitch – India, Myanmar but stopped by Portuguese.Humphrey Gilbert -Newfoundland, sank – never competed with Spain, Portugal, most trade still Europe.

The Elizabethans, 1580-1603 (Practice Paper 1)

7 Interpretations B and C both focus on the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588.

How far do they differ and what might explain any differences?

[12]

The stamps in interpretation B show that the defeat of the Spanish was caused mostly by the skills and tactics of the English. For instance, the early sighting off Cornwall gave the English a chance to leave Plymouth and intercept the Armada. They then broke up the Armada with fire ships before the defeat was finished off by a storm. The suggestion is that this was a total defeat for Spain as there is no suggestion of them recovering.

Haigh interprets the reasons **differently** in C. He omits the role of the English, saying that the defeat was 'mainly by sea and storm'. It also states that the defeat of the Armada 'solved nothing' as the Spanish were still able to threaten England with their 'successful army in the Netherlands' and launch 'further armadas' over the next few years. Although the differences are significant, they do agree that the weather played some part in the defeat of the Armada, even though B prefers to emphasise the role of England's fleet.

The reason that the two interpretations are so different is because they were intended for different **audiences**. B was created by the Royal Mail to celebrate the 400th anniversary of the defeat of the Armada for the British public. This means it is more likely to focus on English glory to reinforce patriotic pride in England's history. The Armada is often used as a symbol of the period when England began to rule the seas through heroic figures such as Francis Drake, one of the English commanders. C is the work of an academic historian, so will be a more objective and balanced view based on skilful research of a wide variety of sources as his audience is those who already know a little about the Armada and wish to gain further depth.

The Elizabethans, 1580-1603 (Practice Paper 2)

- 6 (a) In **Interpretation A**, historian Jessie Childs tries to portray the drama of the Catholic threat against Elizabeth.

Identify and explain **one** way in which she does this.

[3]

Interpretation A portrays the drama of the Catholic threat against Elizabeth by telling us "it was a violent and unstable world" that featured "torture chambers, priests hunts". This suggests that the Catholic threat was very real, and that violence was required to find out the truth.

- (b) If you were asked to do further research on **one** aspect of **Interpretation A**, what would you choose to investigate?

Explain how this would help us to analyse and understand the nature and extent of the Catholic threat in Elizabethan England between 1580 and 1603.

[5]

I would do further research about the causes of the dramatic Catholic Threat. This is important because it would help me understand why it became so violent and dramatic. For example, I would want to know how if a specific event, such as the imprisoning of Mary Queen of Scots, meant that the violence increased? I would want to know if Elizabeth herself ordered the violence and torture or if it came from Walsingham. Were many Catholics involved in hiding priests and that is why the violence increased or was it only a small number that led to the change in policy? Was there an increase in plots to kill Elizabeth and this caused the change?

- 8* According to the website www.elizabethanenglandlife.com, 'daily life in England was very difficult for Elizabeth's subjects'.

How far do you agree with this view of Elizabethan society between 1580 and 1603?

[20]

Plan	
<u>Agree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Labouring poor.• Y/N Poor Law – needed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gentry lifestyle.• Middling Sort – lifestyle.• Poor Law improved things.

- 9* On their 'Bitesize' history website, the BBC claims that 'Merry England' is a 'mythical society which never existed'.

How far do you agree with this view of popular culture in England between 1580 and 1603?

[20]

Plan	
<u>Agree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Growing puritan influence on festivals & theatre.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tallis, Byrd, Hilliard, Marlowe, Shakespeare – culture.• Past times, ale houses, festivals.• Theatres – successes and associated fun.

The Elizabethans, 1580-1603 (2018)

- 6 (a) In **Interpretation A**, the historian argues that most people in Elizabethan England did not share the views of the Puritans about dancing.

Identify and explain **one** way in which she does this.

[3]

Source A tells us that most people in England did not share Puritan views about dancing as it says the people were “gripped by a dance mania” and that this included “commoners” and “nobles”. This suggests that this love of dancing was widespread across the country and by a wide range of people.

- (b) If you were asked to do further research on **one** aspect of **Interpretation A**, what would you choose to investigate?

Explain how this would help us to analyse and understand popular culture in Elizabethan England.

[5]

If I was going to research the differences between Puritans and others' views about dancing, I would want to find out more about the **CONSEQUENCES** of this disagreement. This would be important because it would be helpful to find out the impact on Elizabethan culture. For example, I would like to find out if the Puritans were able to make changes to dancing. I would like to research if the people, who had previously shown love for dancing, started making changes. I would be interested to find out if the consequences of Puritan opposition had a bigger impact on commoners or on nobles. Did dancing cease to play a role in events such as Christmas or May Day?

- 7 **Interpretations B and C** both focus on Elizabethan adventurers.

How far do they differ and what might explain any differences?

[12]

Source B gives a positive impression of Elizabethan adventurers saying that the statue is to “celebrate the famous explorer”. It also focuses on the positive by describing the statue as a “lasting memorial to one of our local heroes”. As such, it portrays Drake as a very positive example of Elizabethan explorers.

On the other hand, Source C is different because it describes explorers as “pillaging” with “violence against natives”. It goes on to describe Drake as “a glorified pirate”. As such, it differs greatly because here all the focus is negative.

Overall, these sources differ greatly. This is because the purpose of B is to celebrate a statue for a local hero, one which cost a lot of money and therefore the purpose is to celebrate and focus all on the positive because the local people and the MP want this focus. As such it is quite nostalgic about Drake. On the other hand, the purpose of C, as an international article, is to be more analytical and realistic. Its purpose is to focus on the often-hidden negatives behind the nostalgia.

- 8* In his 1956 book, *A History of the English-Speaking Peoples*, former Prime Minister and historian Winston Churchill argued that there was 'harmony' between Elizabeth and Parliament during her reign.

How far do you agree with this view?

[20]

It could be argued that there was harmony between the Queen and Parliament. Elizabeth did recognise the importance of Parliament through the selection of MPs (who were not voted but instead selected by local lords who often owed patronage to Elizabeth). She could also gain some control by having her own Privy Councillors as Members of Parliament so they could influence their decisions. This shows that Elizabeth did see Parliament as having an important role, even if she tried to reduce this through her own influence.

On the other hand, it could be argued that Elizabeth tried to dominate Parliament and that there wasn't harmony. It only met when called by Elizabeth and spent less than 35 months in debate during her 45 years. Instead, Elizabeth showed her power through Royal proclamation and only called Parliament when major changes of law were needed.

Further control of Parliament can also be shown that even when Parliament was sitting, there were strict guidelines on what Parliament could discuss with Elizabeth insisting that it had no right to debate her marriage, succession or foreign policy following in the line of monarchs who had gone before her. Even if Parliament did go against Elizabeth, she could always reject their decision by refusing to sign their law or simply closing Parliament down. However, she normally opted for a compromise by allowing some parts of what they wished for whilst still getting what she wanted.

Another sign of lack of harmony is shown that towards the end of her reign, despite her best efforts, Elizabeth started to lose control of Parliament. Lords could raise issues they wanted raising through their MPs and this even included those under the influence of Cecil and Walsingham to force debates on foreign policy or the succession which became increasingly important as time went on. Puritans in Parliament caused increasing amounts of difficulty by forcing issues such as her marriage to a protestant, the end of the role of Bishops and argued for increased freedom for MPs without fear of arrest. They began to do this even when Parliament was not sitting with John Stubbes punished by having his hand cut-off for publishing a leaflet which criticised Elizabeth's planned marriage to a Catholic. In 1593 another puritan was imprisoned and died in the Tower of London for urging Elizabeth to name a protestant as a her successor. Others were unhappy about her use of "monopolies" for her favourites and pressurised her to end these. This would have such a significant impact that Elizabeth was forced to give, and to later publish, the "Golden Speech" which flattered MPs and boasted she loved her people. Clearly, Parliament was not unimportant to Elizabeth.

Overall, it can be argued that Parliament was never in harmony with Elizabeth but that in the early stages of her reign Elizabeth could afford to call it infrequently and to use her supporters to keep a control over its debates. However, as time went on and the issue of her succession became ever more important, Elizabeth found herself under pressure to listen more and more to the debates. This reached the stage where she had to physically punish MPs and then to issue a speech, published across the land, which stated how highly she rated MPs and Parliament.

9* In her 2014 book *God's Traitors: Terror and Faith in Elizabethan England*, historian Jessie Childs argues that Elizabeth I was 'determined to kill off Catholicism in her country.'

How far do you agree with this view?

[20]

There is evidence that was "determined to kill off Catholicism". Firstly, the Act of Persuasions passed in 1581 raised the fine which recusants had to pay and allowed the imprisonment of recusants. The Act against Priests was also passed in 1585, and the Act Restraining Recusants passed in 1593. The passing of these laws shows us that the government must have felt threatened by the danger and persistence of Catholic recusancy, especially as the Pope had told Catholics that Elizabeth was not the rightful Queen of England and that they should disobey her laws. Her actions led there to be a decrease from 3 million Catholics to only around 40,000 by the end of her reign.

On the other hand, it could be argued that Elizabeth was forced into taking action against Catholics because of aggressive actions by Secret Priests. Seminary and Jesuit priests (like Robert Persons) had arrived in England to lead Catholic Mass and to persuade people to become Catholics. To the government, this was undermining Elizabeth's authority. The Jesuit priests encouraged people to stand up against Elizabeth's religious laws and were therefore seen as challenging Elizabeth's rule. Francis Walsingham built up a network of spies and local JPs would search houses to find hidden priests, so people would certainly have felt like they were living through dangerous and uncertain times when their homes were searched. Elizabeth felt the need to act to combat this threat and over 100 priests died in prison or were executed in Elizabeth's reign, most when England was under threat of invasion from Catholic Spain.

Elizabeth also felt the need to act because of the threat from Mary Queen of Scots. If Elizabeth had died without children, Mary would have been the next Queen of England, and her presence in England as a Catholic figurehead gave English Catholics confidence to strengthen resistance against Elizabeth. Some Catholics were drawn into plots to release Mary. In 1583 and 1586, plots to kill Elizabeth and put Mary on the throne were exposed, leading to Mary's trial and execution. So these plots and Mary's presence in general meant that all English Catholics were under suspicion, adding to their danger and the general uncertainty in the country.

Finally, the very real threat of invasion from Spain and a Catholic uprising, also forced Elizabeth to take action. Mary's execution led to Phillip II of Spain deciding that Catholicism needed to return in England. His sending of the Armada in 1588 brought England to the real risk of invasion forcing Elizabeth to act against her initial wishes. She increased fines against recusants and banned Catholics from moving away from their homes in a bid to avoid rebellion.

In conclusion, early in the reign, Elizabeth had not shown the desire to completely kill off Catholicism. However, after the Pope excommunicated Elizabeth, the threat from Catholics did create a threat which Elizabeth felt the need to respond to. This was especially the case in the 1580s when priests entered the country and there was a threat of rebellion with plots involving Mary Queen of Scots and the Spanish Armada. The threat was still very real, even if there were not more than a handful of plots and it was this Catholic threat that forced Elizabeth to take actions to bring in laws and to use spies, torture and executions to ensure her throne remained safe rather than to deliberately "kill off Catholicism".

The Elizabethans, 1580-1603 (2019)

- 6 (a) In **Interpretation A**, the illustrator portrays how an Elizabethan noblewoman tried to impress guests.

Identify and explain **one** way in which he does this.

[3]

In Interpretation A, the illustrator shows how an Elizabethan noblewoman tries to impress her guests by portraying minstrels and musicians playing for the guests. This suggests that the noblewoman has enough money to afford such entertainment and shows that she cares for them. The artist also portrays large, glazed windows and an extravagant sculptured fireplace. This suggests that the noblewoman is again showing off her wealth because these were both very expensive and are set behind and alongside the main table so they can be noticed by all who enter.

- (b) If you were asked to do further research on **one** aspect of **Interpretation A**, what would you choose to investigate?

Explain how this would help us to analyse and understand the nature of Elizabethan society.

[5]

I would choose to investigate how typical this scene is for the everyday life of an Elizabethan noblewoman and how it compares to other days. This is important as it would allow us to understand what daily life was like for a noblewoman. For example, were minstrels invited every time a guest came or did it depend on the importance of the guest. Is this a special event like Christmas or a special feast? Would this room be used every day or only on special occasions. And how has the room changed over time – when and why were the windows and decorations added.

- 7 **Interpretations B and C** both focus on the threat which Mary Queen of Scots posed to Elizabeth.

How far do they differ and what might explain any differences?

[12]

Interpretation B suggests that Mary Queen of Scots did not pose a major threat to Elizabeth saying that suggesting that talk of threats was based on “empty rumours”. It also says, “At her trial, Mary protested that she had never plotted to hurt Elizabeth, which was perfectly true”. This clearly sides with Mary. This is further backed up by praising her for her “noble character” and suggesting she did nothing wrong as she “died as a martyr”.

On the other hand, Interpretation C says Walsingham was worried by the “threat of Mary”. It says that Mary wrote 6 pages which “encourages the conspirators” and it says that Mary had become “experienced...in the ways of intrigue”. This strongly suggests Mary was a serious threat.

Interpretation C strongly disagrees with the level of threat Mary posed to Elizabeth. B suggests there was little or no threat and an unfortunately accused Mary whilst C suggests a very real threat in which Mary was actively involved. The reason for the disagreement partly comes down to the origins of the sources. B is from a Catholic website looking to excuse Mary of the accusations. C on the other hand is from a book all about Walsingham. As he is the spymaster who discovered the plot it is understandable that the focus is more on Mary’s threat. A final reason for the difference between the two is that whilst B focuses the accusations Mary faced to do with assassination, C’s focus is on Mary’s active role in the plot to escape rather than the assassination attempt.

8* According to the book *Travel: London*, Elizabethan theatres 'had the support of everyone from the Queen to the peasants.'

How far do you agree with this view of people's attitudes towards theatres between 1580 and 1603? [20]

Some people were clearly in support of the theatres. This was the time of famous playwrights such as Shakespeare. The popularity of theatre can be seen through the work of writers like Marlowe and Shakespeare, and the building of theatres such as The Globe and The Rose. Crowds could be as big as several thousand people which shows how popular it was. There were all different kinds of plays such as comedies like *A Midsummer's Night Dream* and tragedies such as *Romeo and Juliet*. People not living in London were also able to experience theatre through the travelling companies of actors who toured the countryside.

These theatres were popular to a great range of people. People would often spend the whole day on the "theatre experience" with many visiting alehouses and gambling pits in the area. For the less well-off, there was access as "groundlings". This was the cheapest place to stand and watch the play and to buy food from vendors. For the 'middling sort' there was access to the stalls where seats were raised and often covered and a better, but more expensive view possible. Many gentry and even the Queen herself were supporters of the theatre with Elizabeth known to have visited and only to have shut the theatres at a time of plague in London. They were catered for in seats that were situated above the stage with direct views to the actors. In this way, the theatre catered for all sorts and could be said to be great supported by a range of people.

For some, however, these developments in theatre were not welcome. Theatres were often considered disreputable places, where drunkenness and pickpocketing were common events. In particular, Puritans disapproved of what they saw as inappropriate and bawdy plays, and the fact that many prostitutes and beggars would be seen there. In London, there were increasing protests against the theatres, both from religious groups, and also from some who believed that theatre performances were causing disasters such as the plague. Fortunately, Queen Elizabeth supported this element of popular culture, and so the theatres remained open during her reign.

Theatres were also not popular amongst the aldermen and Mayor of London for similar reasons. These people felt that the attraction of the theatre and its associated drunken activities was a distraction and worried that many working days would be lost as a result. As the theatres were built outside the city of London, there was little that could be done to stop theatregoers.

Overall, it can be seen that the theatres were very popular and did attract a range of different people. These would mostly have been London dwellers as there was less access to those in the countryside. The theatres were not universally supported as Puritans and aldermen were opposed to them for moral and economic reasons. However, it was also the fact that they were so popular that caused them a concern which does suggest that overall the theatres were well supported by a great range of people.

- 9* According to the website www.elizabethan-era.org.uk, Elizabethan adventurers were motivated by the belief that 'new discoveries could bring untold riches.'

How far do you agree with this view of the motives of adventurers between 1580 and 1603?

[20]

One adventurer who left England in search of "untold riches" was Ralph Fitch. He had attempted to set up trade links with India, South-East Asia and China when he sailed to Syria in 1583. Fitch and his companions travelled through the Mughal Empire and into Burma and picked up valuable information about the sea trade with China and the Spice Islands. Ultimately, despite his sights and his gathering of treasures, he was stopped by the Portuguese and forced to return. His stories inspired many others to venture into the region, despite the fact that this area was long dominated by Spain and Portugal. This would later lead to the setting up of the East India company.

The exploits and stories of "untold riches" from Ralph Fitch, led to an expedition by James Lancaster. In 1600, Elizabeth gave a charter to the East India Company to develop trade in the East. The Company's first fleet left England in 1601 under Lancaster and established England's first successful trading warehouse in the East on the island of Java in Indonesia. This meant that English ships could start to bring back lots of spices which were used in the preparation of food in Elizabethan England. However, it should be said that this level of riches was only really fully established after Elizabeth's death. The East India Company would go on to be one of the most successful trading companies the world has ever seen but this only occurred much later.

On the other hand, although the search for riches was important, other explorers were motivated by the quest to found new colonies and to compete with Spain and Portugal. The journeys funded by Walter Raleigh and led by Richard Grenville to North America built up useful knowledge of the continent, but the all important attempt at establishing an English colony at Roanoke in 1585 failed, the colonists being rescued by Francis Drake in 1586. However, such acts, in the longer term, helped to inform and enable England's first successful colony at Jamestown Virginia in 1607, this was 4 years after Elizabeth died. Other adventurers also attempted to set-up colonies and new lands such as Humphrey Gilbert totally failed to establish a colony and had to abandon their mission, dying in storms on the way home.

However, it should be said that even when trying to set up an empire and gaining new land, this often went hand-in-hand with the secondary hope of discovering "untold riches". Raleigh had hoped to find gold in Guiana in 1595 but no gold was discovered and no one ever found the fabled "El Dorado". Raleigh's journey and experience inspired others to explore and attempt empire-building in the centuries which followed, but there was no immediate trade benefit.

In conclusion there is no doubt that Elizabethan adventurers were, at least in part, inspired by hope of finding "untold riches" and this is certainly seen in the later adventures of Fitch and Lancaster. However, it should be said that even when riches were important, many early adventurers were also motivated by the Queen's will to found new colonies and establish a new British empire. This was important to early adventurers such as Drake, Raleigh and Gilbert but, even so, they were still hoping that the new lands would bring new riches, even if this was only a result of Elizabeth's gratitude. As time went on, this focus switched from colonies and empire to riches and trade as the wealth of the East were revealed.

The Elizabethans, 1580-1603 (2020)

- 6 (a) In **Interpretation A**, the film makers portray Elizabeth as a powerful queen.

Identify and explain **one** way in which they do this.

[3]

Interpretation A *shows* Elizabeth as powerful because she is featured in armour, on horseback. This *suggests* that she is able to fight and lead the army herself. [could also include hand punching; use of the flag; supporters in background].

- (b) If you were asked to do further research on one aspect of **Interpretation A**, what would you choose to investigate?

Explain how this would help us to analyse and understand the power of Queen Elizabeth.

[5]

I would choose to *investigate* the *causes* of Elizabeth wishing to be seen as powerful. [Could also focus on consequences/change/compare investigations]. This is important because it would allow historians to understand the reasons why being seen as powerful was so important to Elizabeth. For **example**, I would want to investigate if these were very special circumstances such as invasion was likely. Or perhaps this is the way that Elizabeth always appeared? I would wish to investigate if Elizabeth wanted to be seen like this because of an internal threat of rebellion or if she was only worried about how she was seen by enemies abroad.

- 7 **Interpretations B and C** both focus on Elizabethan adventurers.

How far do they differ and what might explain any differences?

[12]

Interpretation B tells us that adventurers “sought new trade routes and tried to expand British trade into the Spanish colonies in the Americas”. It also tells us that one of these adventurers, Drake, was “one of the founders of England’s naval tradition”. These quotes suggest the adventurers were very successful.

Interpretation C is different because it tells us that “Drake was a pirate, licensed by the Queen to steal, burn and destroy Spanish ships and colonies”. It also says that he went on “three slaving voyages”. These quotes are much more negative and suggest that these adventurers were not “great”.

The reason for the differences can be seen in the origins of these sources. Interpretation B is from the “UK citizenship test” and therefore will want to focus on the positives of the adventurers. On the other hand, Interpretation C is from a more recent blog which looks at new evidence which includes looking at the truth of the adventurers’ achievements.

8* In her book *Elizabeth I and Religion 1558–1603*, published in 1993, historian Susan Doran argued that ‘the danger from English Catholics was exaggerated’.

How far do you agree with this view of the nature and extent of the Catholic threat in England between 1580 and 1603? [20]

There is some compelling evidence that the threat from Catholics was exaggerated. For example, there were actually very few Catholic plotters, probably never more than around two hundred. Although there were far more recusants, many of these, such as Thomas Tresham, still proclaimed complete loyalty to the Queen. Also, it was clear by the 1590s that the attempts to rebuild the Catholic faith in Britain had failed and the priests had achieved very little. Even the threat of assassination was controlled largely by Walsingham’s spies. For example, the Babington Plot was discovered through the interception and decoding of secret messages that passed between Mary Queen of Scots and Babington. Indeed, there is a suggestion that all along, Walsingham was in control of the facts and could have intervened earlier.

There is evidence that the government felt that there was a real threat that was not exaggerated. Firstly, the Act of Persuasions passed in 1581 raised the fine which recusants had to pay and allowed the imprisonment of recusants. The Act against Priests was also passed in 1585, and the Act Restraining Recusants passed in 1593. The passing of these laws shows us that the government must have felt threatened by the danger and persistence of Catholic recusancy, especially as the Pope had told Catholics that Elizabeth was not the rightful Queen of England and that they should disobey her laws.

The arrival of secret priests also led to a real threat. Seminary and Jesuit priests (like Robert Persons) had arrived in England to lead Catholic Mass and to persuade people to become Catholics. To the government, this was undermining Elizabeth’s authority. The Jesuit priests encouraged people to stand up against Elizabeth’s religious laws and were therefore seen as challenging Elizabeth’s rule. Francis Walsingham built up a network of spies and local JPs would search houses to find hidden priests, so people would certainly have felt like they were living through dangerous and uncertain times when their homes were searched. It was certainly dangerous and uncertain to be a priest at this time – over 100 died in prison or were executed in Elizabeth’s reign, most when England was under threat of invasion from Catholic Spain.

The existence of Mary Queen of Scots also made for a real threat. If Elizabeth had died without children, Mary would have been the next Queen of England, and her presence in England as a Catholic figurehead gave English Catholics confidence to strengthen resistance against Elizabeth. Some Catholics were drawn into plots to release Mary. In 1583 and 1586, plots to kill Elizabeth and put Mary on the throne were exposed, leading to Mary’s trial and execution. So, these plots and Mary’s presence in general meant that all English Catholics were under suspicion, adding to their danger and the general uncertainty in the country. Mary’s execution led to Phillip II of Spain deciding that Catholicism needed to return in England. His sending of the Armada in 1588 brought England to the real risk of invasion bringing truly dangerous and uncertain times.

In conclusion, the threat from Catholics was real and not really exaggerated, although it should be said that foreign threats made the government more wary of English Catholics. Even though the threats such as plots to kill the Queen and the Spanish invasions did not materialise, **the threat was still very real, even if there were not more than a handful of plots.** The work of the spies to expose the priests and the plots also meant that the threat was very real even if many Catholics were never involved in such a plot.

9* According to the website www.enotes.com, 'it was a good time to be English during the Elizabethan era'.

How far do you agree with this view of people's daily lives between 1580 and 1603? [20]

During this period, people ranged from the "good time" for the gentry to the struggling poor.

It was clearly a "good time" for the gentry and many of the middling class. The gentry had 20-50 rooms and the grandeur of decoration such as coats of arms. They also had access to meats, fish and wine. However, it is worth considering that they made up only 2% of the population. Luxury was also enjoyed by the middling sort to an extent as the richest of these also had meats and servants, although there was no wine and little ceremony at mealtimes with servants joining the family for food. Although these groups made up a much smaller part of the population than the poor, this evidence would go against the view that this was a period of crisis.

On the other hand, poverty increased rapidly with 50% of the population in poverty at the late stages of Elizabeth's reign. This was attributed to the long-term effects of the population rising from 2.4 to 4.1 million from 1520 to 1600, almost doubling. This allowed for scarcely any work and less food for poorer families. Poor harvests in the 1580s and 1590s, also provided a catalyst for poverty with prices for food rising.

Additionally, the poor were forced to live in poorly built cottages with only 2 rooms and poorly constructed straw beds. Food had to consist of only vegetables in pottage and basic rye of barely bread. However, the poor did have to access to beer and mead for merry-making if that was possible. However, the poor had little access to food, especially with poor harvests. At this time, vagrancy was also a growing concern which again agrees with the argument through the desperation of the poor in this period. However, to an extent, the poor did have some enjoyment from merry making and drinking at special times of the year such as Christmas, May Day and Midsummer.

The fact that a new Poor Law was needed during this time period, also shows that it was not a "good time" for many. This 1601 law looked after the impotent poor who couldn't work with the Poor Rate collected by the local Justice of the Peace. On the other hand, the able-poor were also forced to work and to provide for themselves. In this way, this is a sign that society was beginning to take care of the lower members of the hierarchy. The fact that these measures had to be enforced in the first place shows the severity of the issue of poverty and arguably only made things more miserable and dire for the majority of the poor with vagrants whipped and able-poor forced into hard labour.

In conclusion, I mostly disagree with the statement. The fact that 50% of Elizabethans were in poverty and a "Poor Law" had to be introduced, shows a severe point that society had to try to control the issue. The poor's diet of pottage and beer in cramped 2-room-cottages shows the desperate nature of these people. The high number of people affected suggests the statement "good time" is not supported. It should be noted that it was only in 1601, right at the end of this period, that the Poor Law came in. Therefore, for the most part of this period, it is largely true that it was not a "good time" for most people.

The Elizabethans, 1580-1603 (2021)

- 6 (a) In **Interpretation A**, historian Antonia Fraser argues that Mary Queen of Scots was treated unfairly at her trial.

Identify and explain **one** way in which she does this.

[3]

Interpretation A tells us that Mary was treated unfairly at her trial because she was “allowed neither lawyer nor witnesses in her defence”. This suggests that the court did not allow her a chance to even put up a defence of her actions meaning she was treated unfairly and perhaps that they had already decided she was guilty.

- (b) If you were asked to do further research on **one** aspect of **Interpretation A**, what would you choose to investigate?

Explain how this would help us to analyse and understand the problems that Mary Queen of Scots caused Elizabeth.

[5]

I would choose to research the causes of this unfair trial. This is important because it would help the historian to understand why it was so important that Mary was found guilty. For example, I would want to investigate how far Mary had been involved in plotting against Elizabeth. I would want to know the evidence used against her such as letters or things overheard. I would want to investigate how far Mary did really want to replace Elizabeth as Queen and how far this was just a plot by Catholics.

- 7 Interpretations B and C both focus on daily life in Elizabethan society.

How far do they differ and what might explain any differences?

[12]

Plan

Interpretation B

“relax”; “dress, speech, food, drink, music” – lots of fun. PLUS “everyone depended on and looked after each other”.

Interpretation C

Different because “enjoyed by a privileged few”; “terrifying”; “crime”; “Most young men carry a dagger”.

Reason for differences

B purpose = light entertainment; offers best (rich) life to make people pay and visit.

C, on other hand, more objective, focuses on poor versus rich, purpose is to educate accurately.

8* In an article for a British newspaper in 2016, historian John Guy argued that ‘to see Elizabeth as all-powerful is a big mistake’.

How far do you agree with this view of the power of Elizabeth between 1580 and 1603? [20]

Plan	
<u>Agree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Limited by Parliament “Golden Speech” 1601.Rebellion by Earl of Essex.Pressure to marry – e.g. John Stubbes.Catholic Threat – Armada, Q of Scots.Relied on nobility – JPs, progresses, Church.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">SoS - Walsingham and Cecil died of exhaustion.Broke finger of maid – privy chamber.Controlled Privy Council.Used paintings and progresses.Controlled Printing Press and theatres.

9* According to the website www.elizabethanenglandlife.com, the Elizabethan explorers were successful in ‘exploring distant lands to gain wealth and power’.

How far do you agree with this view of the achievements of Elizabethan adventurers between 1580 and 1603? [20]

Plan	
<u>Agree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">James Lancaster, Bantam, 1603, East India.Raleigh - First colony – Roanoke, abandoned by led to Jamestown later on.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Raleigh – cities of gold, El Dorado, legendary fail.Drake – robbed Spanish, Albion, circumnavigate world (2nd man) but nothing established.Humphrey Gilbert – Newfoundland, ship sank.Ralph Fitch – India, Indonesia but Portuguese stopped.

The Elizabethans, 1580-1603 (2022)

- 6 (a) In **Interpretation A**, the author H.E. Marshall gives the impression that England was brave in standing up to Catholic Spain in 1588.

Identify and explain **one** way in which she does this. [3]

Source A tells us that all England “forget their quarrels” as “Men, young and old, flocked to fight for their Queen and country” against “the invincible Armada”. This *suggests* that England was united against a superior force. This shows them as brave.

- (b) If you were asked to do further research on **one** aspect of **Interpretation A**, what would you choose to investigate?

Explain how this would help us to analyse and understand the threat from Catholic Spain to Elizabethan England. [5]

If I was going to do further research about Source A and the threat from Catholic Spain, I would look into *causes* of the threat. For example, I would want to know how far this was a result of Elizabeth being Protestant. I would also like to find out if the raids of Spanish gold from their ships was one of the most important *causes*. [Rejection of marriage, killing of M Q of S]

Alternative: I would like to research the *consequences* of the threat of Catholic Spain. I would like to know what the impact of the defeat of the Armada was on Spain and on England. I would like to research what affect the threat of invasion had on Catholics in England such as did they revolt.

- 7 **Interpretations B and C** both focus on accusations of witchcraft in Elizabethan England.

How far do they differ and what might explain any differences? [12]

Interpretation B tells us about witchcraft saying that it was an “ongoing attempt by men to maintain their power over women”. It also tells us that witches were the “victim of a male dominated society”.

Interpretation C tells us that the “feminist view is not at all convincing” so it directly opposes Interpretation B. It instead argues that the *causes* were more to do with “village tensions, religious beliefs...”

The reason for the difference is down to the purpose of the sources. B is by a professor that specialises in researching violence against women and this is the reason for her focus. On the other hand, the purpose of Source C is to give a more accurate big picture as it is by an historian who wanted to portray all accounts.

- 8* According to the Historical Association's website, Elizabethan views about the poor were 'compassionate' (kind and caring) towards the end of the reign.

How far do you agree with this view of Elizabethan responses towards the poor between 1580 and 1603? [20]

Plan <u>Agree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Poor Law 1601 – first help for lame or old people who could not work.• Gentry would employ poor as servants.• Theatres were accessible to poor – groundlings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Poor Law ONLY for those who were lame or old – those who could work would be put in Bridewells or burnt through ear, whipped, and hanged.• Living conditions – no windows, no chimney, starve in poor harvests, not allowed to live common ground, many died of starvation.• ONLY at end of reign 1601 Poor Law.• Only did because of towns like York who trialled early versions of the Poor Law.

- 9* According to the BBC Bitesize website, it was the Puritans who posed the 'greatest threat' to Elizabeth **within Parliament and the Court** between 1580 and 1603.

How far do you agree with this view of threats to Elizabeth from within Parliament and the Court between 1580 and 1603? [20]

Plan <u>Agree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Constant pressure on parliament to ban drinking, Christmas, Midsummer and Theatre.• Stubbes – hands cut off for leaflet against the Queen.• Pressure from Puritans to marry a Protestant and to get rid of Bishops.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Earl of Essex – favourite, invaded bedroom, failed rebellion in 1601 and executed.

The Elizabethans, 1580-1603 (2023)

- 6 (a) In **Interpretation A**, the author A N Wilson depicts the Elizabethan age as an important age of exploration.

Identify and explain **one** way in which he does this.

[3]

Interpretation A tells us “British explorers went out to every corner of the known world” and began “the origins of English sea power”. This suggests that the explorers went everywhere and were successful in their voyages. It also suggests that the impact was significant and long-lasting.

- (b) If you were asked to do further research on **one** aspect of **Interpretation A**, what would you choose to investigate?

Explain how this would help us to analyse and understand England’s connections with the wider world between 1580 and 1603.

[5]

I would choose to investigate the consequences of this exploring. For example, I would want to find out if this led to lots of new colonies and whether England became richer as a result. This would be important because it would tell me if the consequences were long term. I would also want to know how these consequences ranked against other nations such as Spain and Portugal. This would give me context to the voyages.

- 7 **Interpretations B** and **C** both focus on the power of Elizabeth.

How far do they differ and what might explain any differences?

[12]

Source B tells us that Elizabeth was a “successful monarch” who “took centre stage” but avoided the “feminine duties of marrying and producing heirs” to “protect her power”. This suggests she was strong, powerful and remarkable given that she was female.

Interpretation C disagrees arguing that her decisions caused “instability” and that she “ultimately failed”. It also says she “does not deserve her reputation.” This suggests that she was unsuccessful in terms of power and has been falsely remembered.

The reason for the difference is the purpose of the sources. Interpretation A is very positive because it is from a website that “aims to promote women’s stories and roles” so it naturally wants to focus on what Elizabeth did well. On the other hand, interpretation C is done by a historian who is trying to deal with the myths around Elizabeth. As such, it wants to analyse the image that Elizabeth was totally successful and therefore is more objective and negative.

8* According to the website, 'elizabethi.org', Elizabethan I was 'remarkably tolerant'.

How far do you agree with this view of Elizabeth I's **treatment of Catholics** between 1580 and 1603? [20]

Plan	
<u>Agrees</u>	<u>Disagree</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Little punishment before 1570s and Secret Priests after excommunication.• Mary Queen of Scots – only after Ridolfi, Throckmorton and Babington plots.• Event at time of Armada, no open killings apart from those found plotting. Catholics given curfew.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Act Against Priests & Bloody Question – torture and executions.• Recusancy Act -fines went up 1000%.• Walsingham Spy Network saw 100s captured and tortured.

9* In his 2016 article 'The dark side of Elizabethan England', historian James Sharpe argues that life for the poor was dominated by 'violence, vagrancy and crushing hunger'.

How far do you agree with this view of **daily life for the poor** in Elizabethan society? [20]

(**Vagrancy** is the condition of being homeless without regular employment.)

Plan	
<u>Agrees</u>	<u>Disagree</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Poor houses – dark, cold, simple. Die in time of poor harvests or famine.• Punishments for vagrants – burn through ear then hanged.• Need for change to Bridewells	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Poor Law changes 1601.

The Elizabethans, 1580-1603 (2024)

- 6 (a) In **Interpretation A**, the book depicts Francis Drake as an impressive leader.

Identify and explain one way in which it does this.

[3]

Interpretation A depicts Drake as an impressive leader as it shows him playing bowls whilst a messenger points to the Armada in the background. This suggests that Drake is brave and confident in his skills as a leader in that he refuses to be scared by the Armada. It suggests that he is confident in victory over the Armada.

- (b) If you were asked to do further research on one aspect of **Interpretation A**, what would you choose to investigate?

Explain how this would help us to analyse and understand England's war with Spain. [5]

I would choose to investigate the causes of England's war with Spain. I would like to know how far the war was caused by Elizabeth killing Mary Queen of Scots. Or how far it was caused by the fact that Elizabeth was Protestant ruler and Phillip II of Spain was Catholic. I would also want to know how far the attacks on Spanish ships had been a cause of the war. All of this would be important to help understand of how far the wars were about religion rather than power.

- 7 **Interpretations B and C** both make judgements about the reign of Elizabeth I.

How far do they differ and what might explain any differences?

[12]

Interpretation B tells us that Elizabeth's reign was successful as it saw "an empire embarked upon" and "created a sense of national identity which had not existed before". It calls Elizabeth "the greatest prince".

Interpretation C is different because it says there were significant negatives such as divisions with Catholics and Puritans, that "England was militarily weak" with "not much sign of a golden age". This is very different to all the positives of Interpretation B.

The reason for the differences is that they are written for different purposes. Source B is written to focus on the positives as it is a newspaper written to mark the 400th anniversary of Elizabeth's death. As such it deliberately focuses on the positives of Elizabeth. Interpretation C is written by a historian for those who want to research the truth about Elizabeth. As such it is balanced and includes more negatives which are not included in the wholly positive Interpretation B.

8* According to the history website, 'BBC Bitesize', Elizabethan society was 'characterised by extremes of rich and poor'.

How far do you agree with this view of the **structure** of Elizabethan society between 1580 and 1603?

Give reasons for your answer.

[20]

In some ways, this was true, especially of the gentry class. This group made-up around 2% of the whole population and lived life extreme wealth. Their houses could have 20-50 rooms with same amount of servants. They were waited upon and didn't have to work and enjoyed a varied diet which included great banquets with a range of meats, vegetables and sugared desserts, all served with great ceremony. Unlike the rest of the population they enjoyed wines from Europe.

There were also great extremes of poverty. The very poorest existed in hovels without windows, often with one or two rooms with smoke from a central fire leaving through the holes in the ceiling. They would die when harvests failed and were constantly looking for work to just survive. They were the opposite extreme to the gentry.

On the other hand, there were those who lived in neither extreme of wealth or poverty. The 'Middling sort' were a growing class of people who own businesses. They lived in houses with chimneys and glazed windows and often had a handful of servants who dined with them. They enjoyed a good life without the extremes of wealth of the gentry or the poverty of the peasants.

Finally, there was a move during this period to reduce some of the extremes of poverty. The Elizabethan Poor Law of 1601 looked to provide support for those poor who could not work through age or illness. They still lived a difficult life but not as extreme as the very poor.

Overall, it would be correct to say that there were extremes of wealth and poverty. However, it should be said that the gentry were a tiny part of civilisation and that there was a significant class of middling sort who were beginning to lead a life away from such extremes.

9* According to the website, 'www.elizabethan-era.org.uk', 'Elizabethan people loved entertainment'.

How far do you agree with this view of Elizabethan **pastimes, festivities and theatres** between 1580 and 1603?

Give reasons for your answer.

[20]

It would be true to say that Elizabethan people loved entertainment when it comes to the theatre. This was entertainment for people of all class including the very poor. Those who went to the theatre would often combine this with gambling or a visit to a prostitute or an alehouse. The poor were catered for via the "groundlings" admission which saw an affordable payment to go watch the theatre from ground level. Poor people would often join-in by cheering or booing as the play continued.

The theatre also appealed to more wealthy people as seats were available higher up and, for the very rich, even behind the stage as a sign of their status. Queen Elizabeth and her courtiers were even known to visit the theatre and notably the theatres were only ever closed during times of plague.

However, on the other hand, the theatres were unpopular among puritans and city aldermen. The puritans hated the low morals that were associated with the day out and the theatres traditional association with Catholicism. The aldermen hated that working men would go to the theatre leaving work undone. Both tried to control and shut down the theatres.

Finally, Elizabethan people loved festivities and pastimes. Dancing, visiting alehouses, bear baiting, football and other activities were all popular. Meanwhile great feasting and celebrations took place at Christmas, Midsummer and at other times. However, as a sign of how this was not shared by everyone, puritans again tried to have these stopped with some success. Again, they saw such activities as un-Christian and of low morals.

Overall, it is clear that many Elizabethans did enjoy entertainment, with evidence suggesting that "loved" would be correct. It was part of ceremony for the rich, an escape for the poor and enjoyable for the vast majority. However, it should not be ignored that there was growing group, especially Puritans, who saw such acts as immoral and wrong and opposed them taking place.