

Name \_\_\_\_\_



# King Henry VIII

By Sharon Fabian

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King Henry VIII, even though he was king of England, is better known for a few events in his personal life than for historical events like wars or politics. Those few events were his marriages. Not just one or two of them. King Henry VIII was married six times!

The first wife of King Henry VIII was Catherine of Aragon. Catherine was first married to Arthur, Henry's older brother. If Arthur had lived, he would have been the next king of England. His death made his younger brother, Henry, the successor to the throne.



When young Henry became the next in line to the throne, he also became engaged to Catherine. This was considered a good match for England because it would provide an alliance between Henry's England and Catherine's Spain. Henry married Catherine in 1509, the same year that he became king.

Henry and Catherine had a daughter, Princess Mary, but one thing that Henry wanted badly was a son " a son who would one day succeed him as king. A son could carry the throne into future generations, keeping it in the Tudor family.

In 1533, Henry decided that it was time for a new queen. He wanted to marry Anne Boleyn. However, the Roman Catholic Church refused to let Henry divorce Catherine. Henry did what he wanted anyway. He divorced Catherine and married Anne. Anne was crowned queen and had a baby daughter, Princess Elizabeth. Henry was excommunicated, or put out of the Catholic Church, for his actions.

King Henry's excommunication was the one event in his personal life that had far reaching effects for his country. At that time, there were already reform movements going on in parts of Europe. These reformers were groups of people who wanted to see changes in the church, but they had not had much effect in England yet. However,

once Henry was excommunicated, he began a series of actions that eventually separated England from the Catholic Church.

Henry had his government pass laws, 132 of them in just 7 years, that said the Roman Catholic Church was no longer in charge of England. A new church, the Church of England, was formed. This is how England became a protestant country " not by protest movements or reformers, but by King Henry's laws. It was King Henry's most lasting effect on the country he ruled.

Meanwhile, Henry had his eyes on a new bride. He wanted to marry Jane Seymour. This time, his "old" wife was to die. Henry had her charged with treason and executed. The next day, Henry was engaged to Jane.

Jane and Henry had a son, just what Henry had always hoped for. However, their son, Edward, suffered from a serious illness that would keep him weak and unhealthy for the rest of his life. Jane died from childbirth, just a few days after her son was born.

Next, Henry married Anne of Cleves. This marriage lasted only a very short time.

After that, he married Catherine Howard. Catherine was also executed.

Finally, Henry married Catherine Parr. By this time, Henry was not in good health himself. Catherine stayed married to Henry and took care of him until he died.

Henry's son, Edward, was only 9 years old when his father died. However, by the laws of England, he became king, King Edward VI. Since he was too young to rule, his uncles ruled for him. Edward reigned for only a short time, until his death at age 15. He left the throne to his niece, Lady Jane Grey, who ruled for only a few days. After her, the English throne passed to Henry's daughter Mary, and then to his daughter Elizabeth. Elizabeth was the final ruler of the Tudor dynasty in England.

Name \_\_\_\_\_



King Henry VIII

## Questions

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Henry's first wife, Catherine of Aragon, had first been married to \_\_\_\_\_.  
A. Henry's brother  
B. a commoner  
C. the King of Spain  
D. Henry's father
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. In 1509, Henry \_\_\_\_\_.  
A. married Catherine  
B. became king  
C. both  
D. neither
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. King Henry's family name was \_\_\_\_\_.  
A. Gray  
B. Aragon  
C. Monarch  
D. Tudor
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. According to the Catholic Church, Henry could not marry Anne Boleyn because \_\_\_\_\_.  
A. he was already married  
B. he was king  
C. he was too young  
D. she was not from a royal family
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. The word *excommunicate* means \_\_\_\_\_.  
A. to put someone out of the church  
B. to crown someone queen  
C. to sentence someone to jail  
D. to crown someone king

- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. England became a \_\_\_\_\_ during the reign of Henry VIII.  
A. Catholic country  
B. democracy  
C. Protestant country  
D. monarchy
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. King Henry VII hoped for a son but never had one.  
A. true  
B. false
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. King Henry VIII was married eight times.  
A. false  
B. true

**Do you think it was a good idea to have the leadership of a country pass down through the generations of a family? Give reasons for your answer.**

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