

Year 7 to 8 Bridging Work in History

Aim of the work = To learn more about conflict and monarchy in the Medieval period.

Instructions = For each story below, read the information and do the task after it. Do this on paper. Bring this to your first history lesson in September and stick it into your exercise book.

Story 1

The Anarchy: Queen Matilda's war with King Stephen

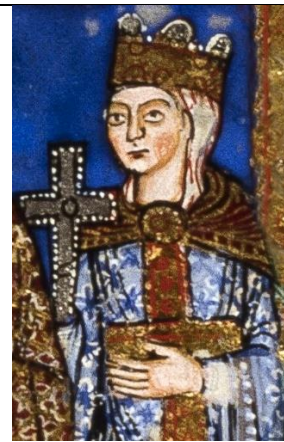
Henry I (4th son of William the Conqueror) was king from 1100 to 1135. He had 20 children, but only one of these was **legitimate**. That was Matilda.

Matilda was also known as Empress Maude, because she had been married to the **Holy Roman Emperor** Henry V. He had died in 1125 and Matilda's father, King Henry I, then ordered his barons to accept her as the **heir** to his throne.

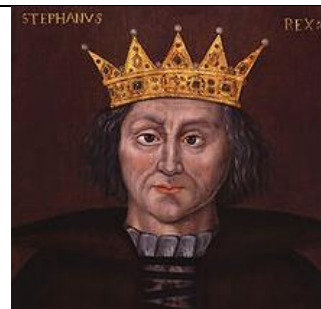
To create an alliance with the kingdom of **Anjou** in France, Henry made Matilda marry the son of Anjou's ruler – his name was Geoffrey Plantagenet and he was 14 years old. Matilda was about 26.

Before he died, Henry had argued with Matilda and Geoffrey, but he still wanted her to rule England after him. However, many barons were now less willing to be loyal to her.

Henry had a nephew, Stephen of Blois, who believed that he should be the next **monarch** of England instead of Matilda. He had the support of the people of London and his brother, who was Bishop of Winchester. Together they persuaded the **Archbishop of Canterbury** that King Henry had changed his mind (as he lay dying) about who should be the next ruler and he now wanted Stephen to be king. The Archbishop therefore crowned Stephen as the new King of England.



Matilda



Stephen

England's and Normandy's most powerful barons agreed to accept Stephen as king. This made things very difficult for Matilda, who believed that she should be queen. However, 3 years later, the powerful Norman baron, Robert of Gloucester, decided to support Matilda's claim to the English throne. She landed in England and was accepted as Queen of England by Robert and his many supporters.



Robert of Gloucester

This led to a **civil war** in England between supporters of Stephen and supporters of Matilda. Stephen was defeated in the Battle of Lincoln and put in prison. On Matilda's orders, he was chained up for ten months there, which many saw as a disrespectful way to deal with a defeated king. Many people were unhappy that Matilda could be nasty in her actions and in things she said to people.

The people of London were now ready to accept Matilda as queen, and she arrived there to be crowned in Westminster. However, she offended them by rudely telling them to go away when they asked her politely to reduce how much tax they had to pay. As a result, a big crowd of armed Londoners marched to Westminster before she could be crowned Queen and she had to quickly escape the city for her own safety.



A few months later, her most powerful supporter, Robert of Gloucester, was captured by Stephen's supporters. Matilda agreed to swap prisoners – Robert for Stephen – so both were freed.

The civil war continued, with neither side winning, as it was so hard to successfully attack the castles that each one used as bases. At one point, Stephen's armies surrounded Matilda in a castle in Oxford and she had to escape from a high tower using a rope and get away through the snow, dressed in white so she could not be seen.

After Robert of Gloucester died in 1147, Matilda left England and joined her husband Geoffrey in Normandy, where he had been fighting to keep power himself. She said that she no longer wanted to fight to be queen of England.



In 1152, Geoffrey Plantagenet died and his and Matilda's son Henry became Duke of Anjou and Normandy. Henry Plantagenet then claimed to be King of England, as his mum had previously claimed to be queen. So, Henry led armies into England to fight Stephen and take his crown.

The final battle was at Wallingford in 1153, but barons on each side had secretly made **truces** with each other and so refused to fight. They wanted an end to the many years of warfare, which had been fierce and had spread across the country. This period of time was known as **The Anarchy** because law and order had broken down.

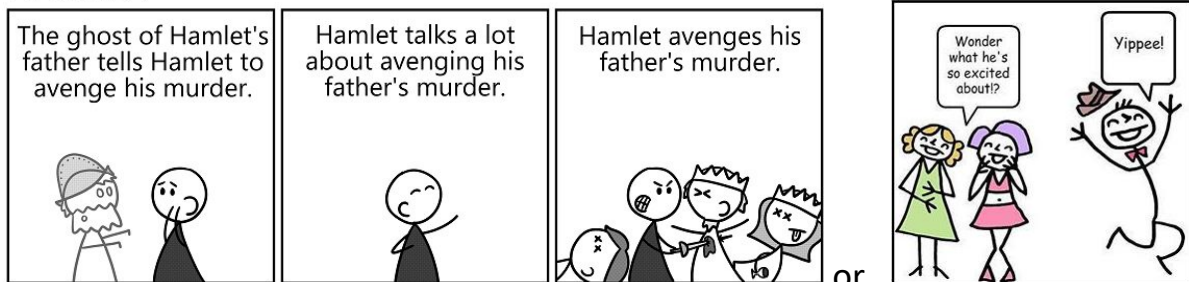
As a result of this battle not being fought, King Stephen and Henry Plantagenet had to make an agreement. In the Treaty of Westminster, they agreed that Stephen should remain King and adopt Henry as his heir. The following year, Stephen (aged around 60) died and Henry became King Henry II of England – the first English monarch from the Plantagenet family. The **Plantagenets** ruled England for the next 331 years when they were replaced by the Tudors.



Henry II (Plantagenet)

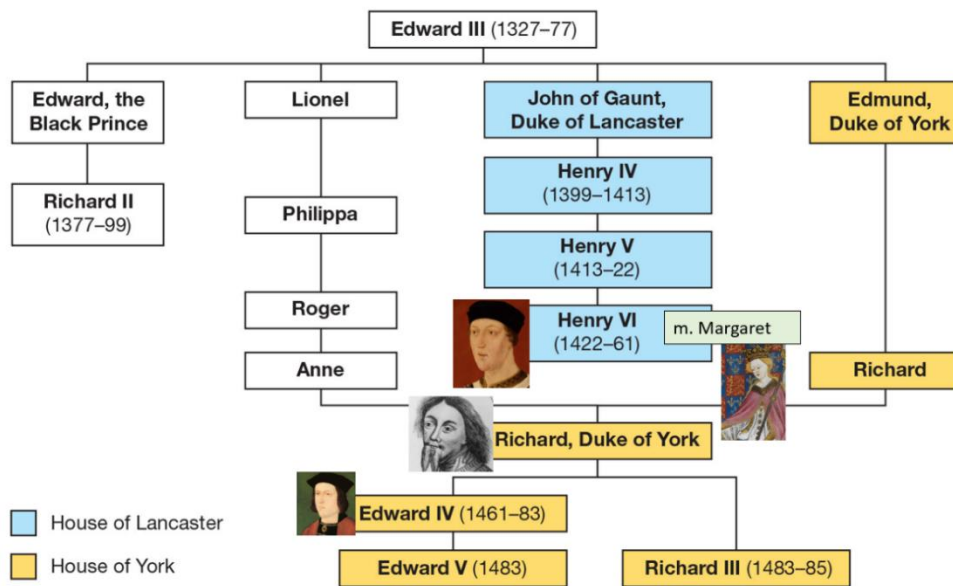
Task for story 1

Create a comic strip to show this story. Use drawings (even stick men and women will do) with speech bubbles. For example:



Story 2: The Wars of the Roses

The Houses of Lancaster and York*



*Dates indicate years of reign

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The Background

When Henry VI became king in 1422, he was only 9 months old. This meant that England's leading barons, competed to have influence. This continued when Henry became an adult, because he was a weak ruler with little interest in politics. His wife, Margaret of Anjou, was an intelligent and strong-willed French noble woman.

Due to Henry's weak rule, there was lots of crime in England. During his reign, England finally lost the Hundred Years War to France. He also ordered the people to pay more tax. This made him unpopular.

Richard of York

Henry was part of the "Lancaster" branch of the Plantagenet family. A rival branch of the family was the "Yorkists" led by Richard, Duke of York. Richard and Henry were both direct descendants of King Edward III. As a result of all the problems Henry had ruling England, Richard of York claimed he should be king. In fact, he did rule England for a short while in 1454-5, when Henry suffered from "a bout of madness" (which is how his mental health was described at the time.) He was known as 'Protector' of England at this time

The first Battle of St Albans

Richard of York wanted to keep control after King Henry VI's recovery, so he teamed up with the Earl of Warwick and fought a violent battle against Henry's forces in the

streets of St Albans. As a result, King Henry was wounded and taken prisoner by Richard. Richard became Protector of England again.

Queen Margaret

Henry's wife, Margaret, raised an army of Lancastrians to fight Richard's Yorkists. Several battles were fought over the next few years. In one battle, Richard of York was killed, but the Yorkists were more successful overall. They were now led by Richard's son, Edward of York.

The 2nd Battle of St Albans and the Battle of Towton

In a 2nd battle in St Albans (1461), Henry and Margaret celebrated a victory over the Yorkists. However, in the next battle, at Towton, they were heavily defeated in what became the bloodiest one-day battle in English history. 28,000 soldiers were killed that day. Henry, Margaret and their son escaped to Scotland. This left Edward of York as King Edward IV of England.

Queen Margaret's Return

Margaret organised help from the French, while she was in Scotland. With this help, the Lancastrians invaded England and defeated the Yorkists. King Edward IV was now forced to escape and Henry VI became king once again.

The Yorkist Victory

However, Edward of York returned and defeated the Lancastrians in the Battle of Tewkesbury in 1471. He captured Henry VI and Margaret and their son was killed. (He was also called Edward and had been the rightful heir)

The End of the Story

Edward IV was crowned king in 1471. The old king Henry VI died (and was possibly murdered) in the Tower of London in the same year. Margaret was eventually allowed to return to France.

Task for story 2

- Find a map of Britain and identify where each place in the story is on that map.
- Make a copy careful of the map and add those places.
- Draw arrows to the places and write a short explanation of what happened in each place in this story.