

Anne Boleyn



Anne Boleyn was the second wife of Henry VIII and Queen of England from 1533 to 1536. Her relationship and marriage to Henry was the cause of the Reformation and because of this, she has been referred to as 'the most important queen consort England has ever had'.

Early Life

Anne was born at Blickling Hall in Norfolk around 1501, though the exact date isn't known. Anne grew up with her brother George, sister Mary and their parents, Thomas and Elizabeth Boleyn, at Hever Castle in Kent.

Around 1513, Anne was given a place in the household of Margaret of Austria, Duchess of Savoy in the Netherlands. She stayed with Margaret until the following year, when she travelled to France as maid of honour to Henry VIII's sister, Mary, who married the King of France, Louis XII. After Louis' death, Anne was maid of honour to Queen Claude, the wife of the next French king, Francis I.

At Henry VIII's Court

Anne was called back to England by her father in 1521 and became one of the most stylish and admired women at Henry VIII's court. During this time, she became lady-in-waiting to Henry's wife, Queen Catherine of Aragon.

In 1526, Anne caught the attention of the king who began to pursue her affections. Within a year, he proposed marriage to Anne and set about trying to divorce Catherine. Both Anne and Henry thought that the divorce would take only a matter of months, however that was not to be the case.

Reformation

As divorce was not allowed in the Catholic Church, Henry had to ask special permission from the Pope to end his marriage. The Pope refused, supporting his marriage to Catherine, which infuriated Henry. Anne showed Henry a book by the Protestant author William Tyndale, 'The Obedience of a Christian Man', which introduced him to the idea of a monarch answering to no one except God. Henry then decided to break away from Rome and the Catholic Church, creating

the Church of England with himself as Supreme Head, no longer needing the Pope's permission to divorce. This was known as the Reformation.

Queen of England

On 1st September 1532, Henry granted Anne the title 'Marchioness of Pembroke', giving her a rank appropriate for a future queen. They were married in secret on 14th November 1532 after Anne fell pregnant but had to hold a second wedding the following January to legalise their marriage. On 23rd May 1533, Archbishop Cranmer declared that Henry's marriage to Catherine was void and five days later, declared Henry's marriage to Anne lawful.

Anne was officially crowned Queen of England on 1st June 1533 in a magnificent ceremony. In her role as queen, she showed a great deal of intelligence in political matters, though this often led to arguments with Henry and his advisors.

On 7th September 1533, Anne gave birth to a daughter, Elizabeth. Henry was disappointed he did not have the son he desired but reassured Anne that a son would follow. Anne fell pregnant several more times, but lost each child before they were born.



Downfall and Execution

Due to Anne's failure to give Henry a son, he began courting one of Anne's ladies-in-waiting, Jane Seymour, in early 1536, sending Anne into a furious rage. Henry claimed that he had only married Anne due to 'witchcraft' and Jane was soon moved into royal quarters close to the king. Rumours soon started to follow that Anne had been having relationships with other men during her marriage and, on 2nd May 1536, she was arrested and taken to the Tower of London.

Throughout her imprisonment, Anne protested her innocence, writing a letter to Henry asking for mercy and a fair trial. After two weeks of imprisonment, Anne, and four men accused of having a relationship with her, were found guilty of high treason and sentenced to death.

On 19th May 1536, Anne was executed. Her final words were to ask the gathered crowd to pray for the king, wishing him a long life, and also for them to pray for her. As she was a queen, she was beheaded by an expert swordsman from France rather than by a common axe.

After her daughter was crowned Queen Elizabeth I in 1558, Anne was thought of as a heroine of the Reformation and that all accusations against her were false. As the mother of Elizabeth, she is also the mother of one of the most important monarchs in history. She has remained a popular historical figure and has had many artworks, books and films produced about her.



Anne Boleyn Questions

1. Where did Anne grow up? Tick **one**.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hever Castle | <input type="checkbox"/> Windsor Castle |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tower of London | <input type="checkbox"/> Buckingham Palace |

2. Name two queens Anne served as maid of honour or lady-in-waiting.

- * _____
- * _____

3. Look at the paragraph called **Return to England**.

How did Anne encourage Henry to break England away from the Catholic Church?

4. Who declared Henry's marriage to Anne lawful?

5. 'Henry was disappointed as he wanted a son but reassured Anne that a son would follow.'
Which of these is closest to the meaning of reassured?

- | | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> shouted | <input type="checkbox"/> comforted |
| <input type="checkbox"/> annoyed | <input type="checkbox"/> upset |

6. In your own words, describe what the Reformation was.

7. In Tudor times, women were expected to keep their opinions to themselves and were seen as less important as men. How did Anne challenge this expectation during her life?

8. At the end of the text, it says that Anne was thought of as a 'heroine of the Reformation'. Why do you think this is?

9. At the start of the text, it says Anne is sometimes credited as 'the most important queen consort in history'. Do you agree? Explain using evidence from the text.

10. Why do you think Anne has remained a popular historical figure?

Anne Boleyn Answers

1. Where did Anne grow up? Tick **one**.

- Hever Castle** Windsor Castle
 Tower of London Buckingham Palace

2. Name two queens Anne served as maid of honour or lady-in-waiting.

**Accept any two of: Queen Mary, Queen Claude, Queen Catherine of Aragon.
Do not accept Margaret of Austria, who wasn't a queen.**

3. Look at the paragraph called Return to England.

How did Anne encourage Henry to break England away from the Catholic Church?
Anne showed Henry a book which introduced him to the idea of the monarch only answering to God and no one else, meaning he wouldn't have to have the Pope's permission to divorce Catherine.

4. Who declared Henry's marriage to Anne lawful?

Archbishop Cranmer

5. 'Henry was disappointed as he wanted a son but reassured Anne that a son would follow.'

Which of these is closest to the meaning of reassured?

- shouted **comforted**
 annoyed upset

6. In your own words, describe what the Reformation was.

Pupil's own response, such as: The Reformation was when England broke away from the Catholic Church in Rome. As the Pope, head of the Catholic Church, had refused Henry his divorce from Catherine, he formed the Church of England with himself as Supreme Head. This meant that Henry could have his divorce without permission from the Pope and could marry Anne.

7. In Tudor times, women were expected to keep their opinions to themselves and were seen as less important as men. How did Anne challenge this expectation during her life?

Pupil's own response, such as: Anne challenged the expectation of keeping her opinions to herself by showing herself to be intelligent, especially with political matters. This led to arguments with Henry and his advisors. The text also says that Anne flew into a 'furious rage' when she found out the King was courting Jane Seymour, showing that she had a temper.

8. At the end of the text, it says that Anne was thought of as a 'heroine of the Reformation'. Why do you think this is?

Pupil's own response, such as: I think Anne was thought of as a heroine of the Reformation as it was Henry's desire to marry Anne that led to the break with the Catholic Church and the creation of the Church of England.

9. At the start of the text, it says Anne is sometimes credited as 'the most important queen consort in history'. Do you agree? Explain using evidence from the text.

Pupil's own response, such as: I think Anne is sometimes called 'the most important queen consort in history' because it is due to her that the Church of England was created. She is also the mother of Elizabeth I who is one of the most important monarchs in history.

10. Why do you think Anne has remained a popular historical figure?

Pupil's own response, such as: I think Anne has remained a popular figure because she was a central figure in an important time in history. Also, there is the romance of her falling in love with Henry as well as the drama of her downfall and execution - it was very rare for a queen to be executed. She was also mother of Elizabeth I who is also an important and popular figure.