

Aim: To evaluate the reliability and usefulness of a range of sources relating to the mystery of the Princes in the Tower and focus on King Richard III's reign and legacy.

Step / skill focus:
Knowledge
Sources
Interpretations

Key Vocabulary:
Regicide
Dynasty
Plantagenet
Tudor
Propaganda

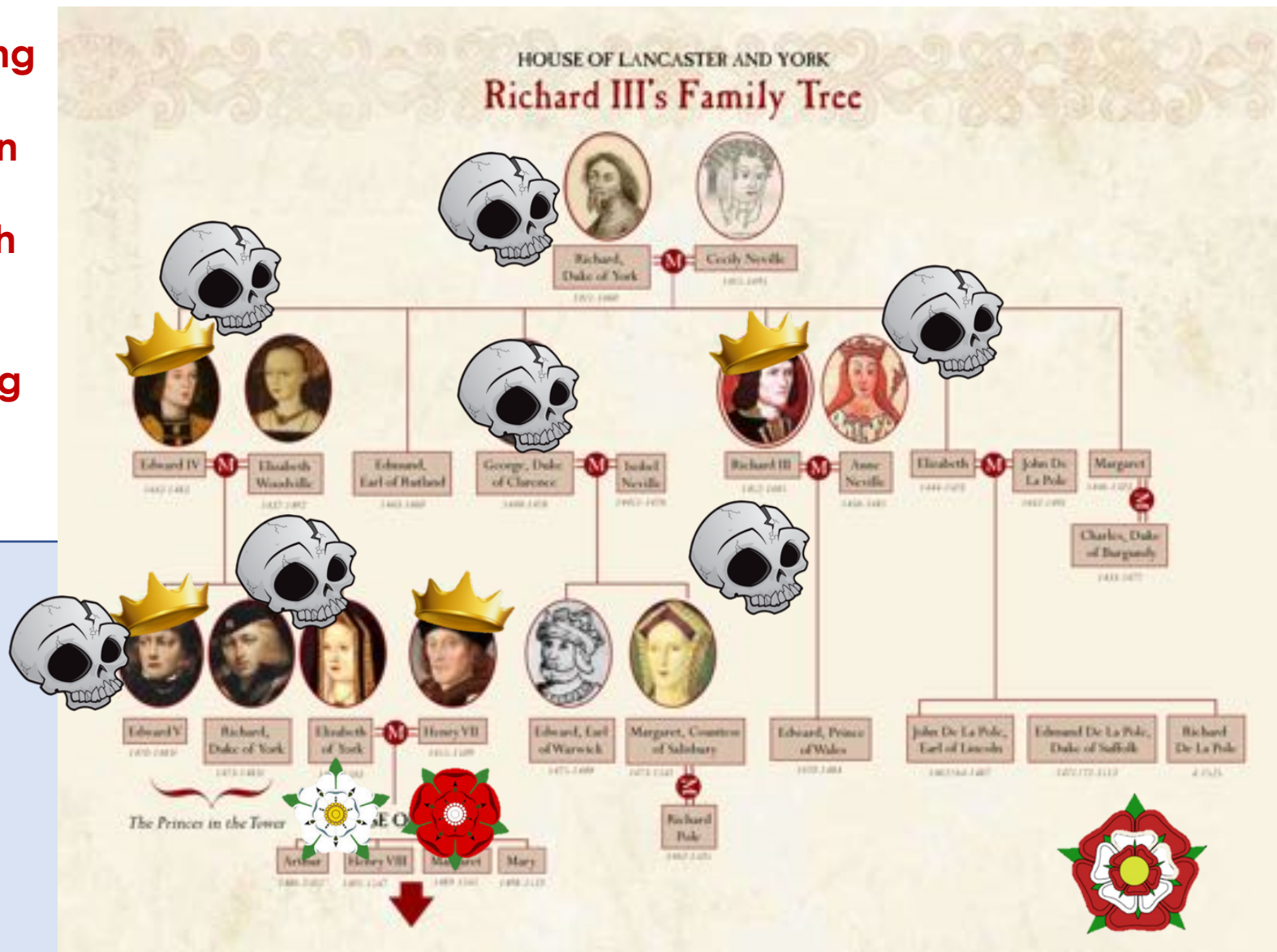
Was King Richard III responsible for the deaths of the Princes in the Tower?



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Who was Richard III and how did he become King?

Whilst building up an interpretation of Richard, let's start with some facts. How did he become King Richard III?



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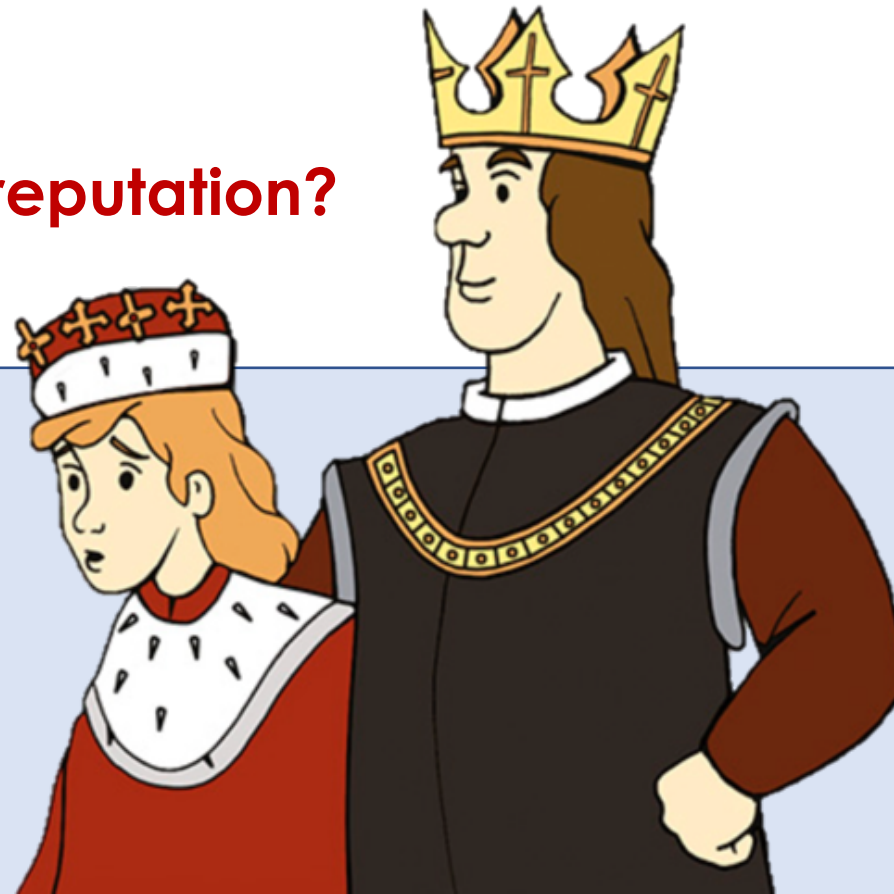
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Task: Listen carefully to the Horrible Histories song about Richard III.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o9iQvu3IUcM>

- Any accusations / allegations against Richard III
- Positives of Richard III
- Negatives of Richard III
- Who might have affected his reputation?

You may want to create a key



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Propaganda:

Much of what we know about King Richard III comes from William Shakespeare's play 'Richard III'. These plays were designed to give a particular message or idea, whether true or not. This is called Propaganda.

Things to consider then:

- Shakespeare worked during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I (Elizabeth Tudor)
- He bases his work on the information from Tudor Historians (Thomas More)
- Henry VII (Henry Tudor) defeated the Tudor family enemy Richard Plantagenet at the Battle of Bosworth

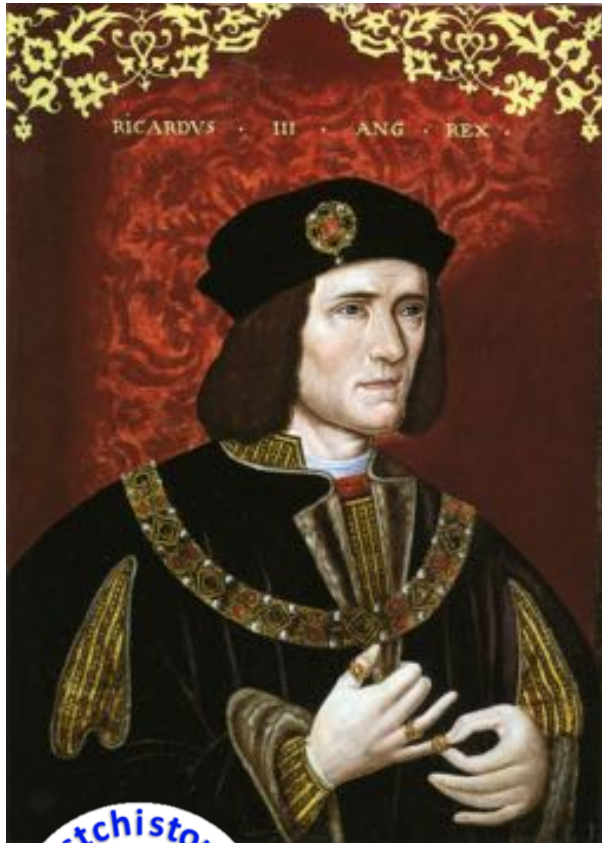
Task: Write a short paragraph explaining why these considerations might make Shakespeare's presentation of Richard III less reliable than we first might think?



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Task: Look carefully at the following images of Richard III. Try to think of a few words that come to mind when looking at each of them...



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Task: Look carefully at the following images of Richard III. Try to think of a few words that come to mind when looking at each of them...

Nervous

Anxious

Reliable

Friendly

Worried

Cunning

Afraid

fierce

Cruel

Happy

Sly

Trustworthy

Scared

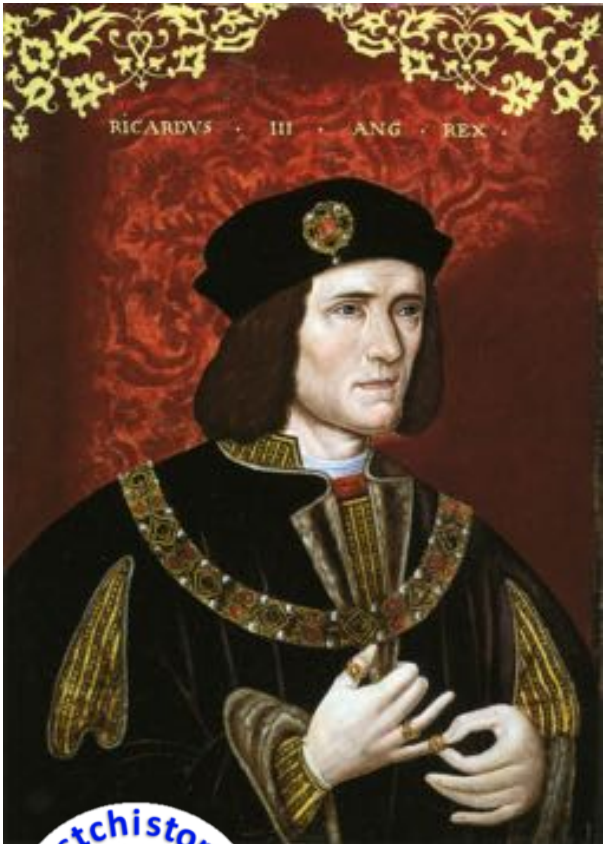
Responsible



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Task: Which image is the most useful to an Historian studying Richard III?



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Task: Put the following events in your book in the correct chronological order

6th July 1483 Richard III was crowned

August 22nd 1485 Richard III is Killed in the Battle of Bosworth.

June 25th 1483 The two Princes, Edward and Richard were declared illegitimate by law in Parliament thanks to their uncle Richard.

August 1483 the Princes disappear having last been seen by Londoners playing in the Tower of London gardens.

April 1483 King Edward IV suddenly died. Richard III asked to 'protect' the Princes, his nephews, until Edward V is old enough to rule himself

July 1485 A Lancastrian Rebellion led by Henry Tudor rose against Richard III.



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Did Richard III murder his nephews, the Princes in the Tower?

You will get into groups shortly as we begin our investigation into the mystery of the Princes in the Tower.

You will be given information as a starting point. You should organise your notes as follows...

Richard is bad	Richard is good



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What do we need to know?:

In April 1483 King Edward IV suddenly died. His son Prince Edward was only 12 and too young to rule England by himself.

King Edward IV asked his brother Richard III to protect young prince Edward and so he moved to the Tower of London to get ready for his Coronation. His younger brother Prince Richard soon joined him.

Richard III was trusted as the Protector of the two princes, however he wanted to become the King of England himself.

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What do we need to know?:

On June 25th 1483 the two Princes were declared illegitimate and couldn't be King. Therefore Richard III was next in line for the throne.

However Richard III was always threatened by the Princes and people still thought they had a claim to the throne despite the illegitimacy.

Suddenly the princes disappeared. Many people think Richard III ordered the two princes to be murdered.

200 years later the Skeletons of the two princes were found underneath the Staircase in the Tower of London. A few people say the Princes escaped to France secretly, though most people believed they were murdered!
Was Richard III responsible for the murder of the Princes?

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What do we need to know?:

Between 1455 – 1485 England was engulfed in a Civil war – This was known as the War of the Roses.

Richard III who was crowned 6th July 1483 had the responsibility of protecting England against further Rebellions.

A Lancastrian Rebellion led by Henry Tudor rose against Richard III (Yorkist).

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What do we need to know?:

Richard III and his men bravely met Henry in the battle of Bosworth on August 22nd 1485.

He was fighting courageously but was eventually struck with a poleaxe and killed defending his position on the Throne.

Richard III was the last King of England to die on the Battle field.



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**Hands up if you think
Richard is a good king and
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**Hands up if you think
Richard is a bad king and
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In 1483 king _____ died suddenly. His _____ prince Edward was only 12 and too young to be king. The boys uncle _____ was asked to _____ the prince until he was older. He was taken to the _____ of London with his younger brother Prince Richard. For a few months the Princes were seen _____ in the Tower _____, but suddenly they just _____, never to be seen again!

Son Protect Gardens Edward IV Disappeared Playing Richard III Tower



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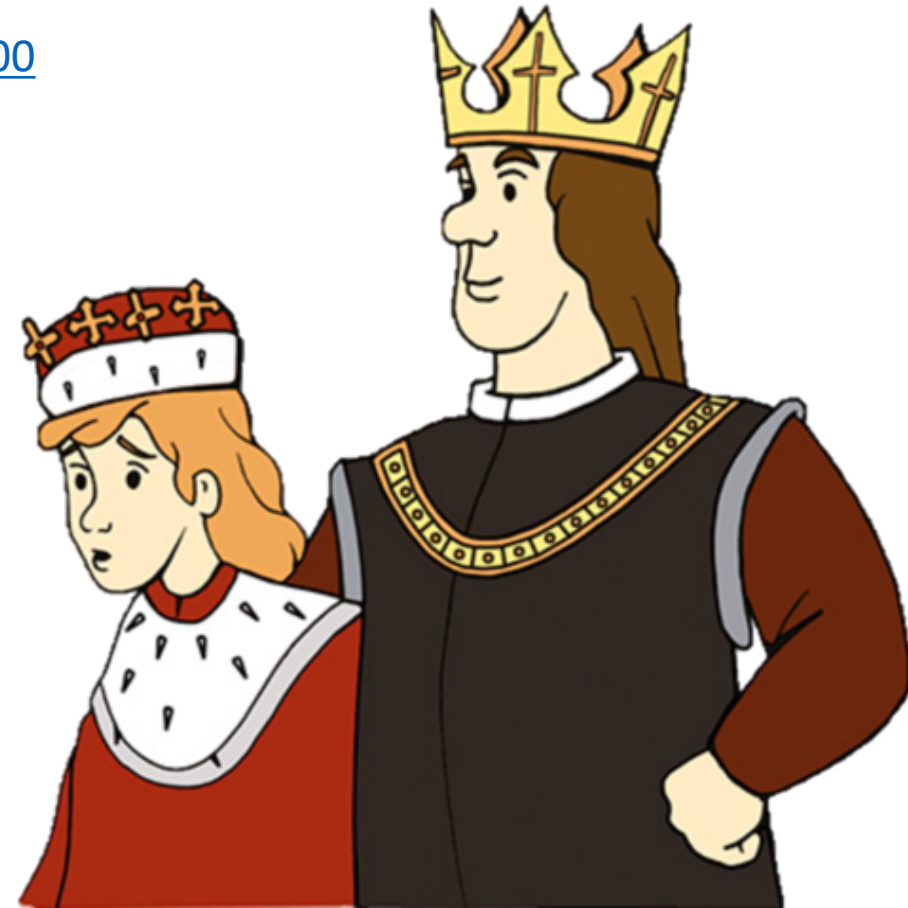
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Did Richard III murder his nephews, the Princes in the Tower?

Watch the following clip '1. killing the princes' – use it as a basis for your investigation...

The only thing that is clear is the boys disappeared one day!...

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d3bYh29LA00>



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Trial Task:

You will now be given a range of sources that you need to organise and use to help you put Richard III on trial. **Find pros and cons of each sources**

Everyone in your group needs to contribute (share the sources around to firstly analyse their information and value).

Once you have worked out the **content** of the sources (what they tell you), decide how **reliable** they are looking at who made the source or when it was made etc...? Don't forget your own knowledge too!

Have a discussion with your group on most important evidence for the trial



Source A: “King Richard III” by Sir Thomas More, Lawyer and teacher in Tudor England, 1512. Thomas More was born in 1478 and died in 1532.

After His Coronation, King Richard sent John Green to Sir Robert Brackenbury, Constable of the Tower, with a letter asking Sir Robert to put the two children to Death. Brackenbury plainly answered that he would never put them to death.

John Green reported this to King Richard, was most angry and said to a page, “Whom shall a man trust?”.

“Sir” said his page, “there is one person who would refuse hardly anything to please you.” He meant Sir James Tyrell.

On the morrow, the King sent Tyrell to Brackenbury with a letter commanding him to give Sir James Tyrell all the keys of the Tower for the night, so he could carry out the Kings wishes. After the letter was delivered, Sir James Tyrell received the Keys.

Sir James Tyrell planned that the Princes should be murdered in their beds. To do this he picked Miles Forest, one of the four men that kept them, a man who had murdered before. He also picked John Dighton, his own horse keeper, a big, strong man.

About midnight, Miles Forest and John Dighton came into the room where the Children lay in their beds, and suddenly forced the feather bed and pillows hard into their mouths. Within a while, smothered and stifled, they died.

They laid their bodies out naked on the bed, and fetched Sir James Tyrell to see them. Upon seeing them he got the murders to bury them at the foot of the stairs, deep under a great heap of stones.

Then Sir James Tyrell rode in great haste to King Richard and told him about the murder. But he said he wanted them buried in a better place because they were the Kings sons.

So they say that a priest of Sir Brackenbury dug up the bodies. He secretly buried them in a place which only he knew. Once he was dead, it could never be known.

Source B: Discovery of two skeletons in the Tower of London. *It was noted that the skeletons were of young children.*

In 1674 The bones of two other children were found behind a wall in a passage not far from the Royal rooms. One French writer said the boys had been locked up in a room and starved to death.

Source C: Discovery of two skeletons in the Tower of London whilst King Charles II (Stuart) was renovating the Tower of London.

In 1674 - a chest full of bones were found 3 meters underground below a staircase in the Tower of London. This matched the Sir Thomas More theory. However, In 1933 the bones were re-examined and it was said that the bones were too young to be the Princes and could be the bones of girls. Also the stain on the skull was not caused by suffocation.

Source D: Investigation into James Tyrell by King Henry VII's men 1502. *It should be considered Tyrell has confessed to the killing of Richard, but whilst being tortured? Note the date of the investigation.*

Many years later, James Tyrell was in prison. Whilst being tortured, he admitted to Killing Prince Richard but not Prince Edward (he apparently died of natural causes).

Tyrell was suspected of doing it under the orders of someone else.

Source E: History of Sir George Buck, published 1646.

In 1646 Sir George Buck had a relative who worked for Richard III. He said that Prince Edward had not been healthy and had died a natural death, whilst his younger brother Richard was secretly taken abroad and lived for years after.

Later there were people who pretended to be Prince Richard but no-one ever pretended to be Prince Edward.

Source F: King Richard III, A Biography. Published 1927 *(Consider the tone of someone writing a biography, would it be positive?)*

... It is probable that King Richard III kept the Princes in the Tower for their own safety and protection and they were alive in 1485. However in 1485 King Richard III was Killed in the Battle of Bosworth by King Henry VII armies. King Henry then Killed the Princes as they were a potential threat to his position as King.