

KS3 History Curriculum - The Stuarts, Gunpowder Plot & English Civil War

Autumn Term 2026 | 14 sessions | 1 x 45-minute lesson per week

Mondays: 7 September - 14 December 2026 | Half term: 26-30 October

Week	Date	Lesson	Curriculum objectives
1	7 Sept	The End of the Tudors & Rise of the Stuarts	Explain why the Tudor dynasty ended in 1603. Understand how James VI of Scotland became James I of England. Explore the challenges facing a new dynasty ruling England, Scotland and Ireland.
2	14 Sept	James I: What Kind of King Was He?	Investigate James I's beliefs about monarchy and the Divine Right of Kings. Explore his relationship with Parliament. Use historical evidence to assess James's strengths and weaknesses as a ruler.
3	21 Sept	Religion in Stuart England	Understand religious divisions between Protestants, Catholics and Puritans. Explain why religion created tension under James I. Explore the treatment of Catholics and why some hoped James would introduce greater religious tolerance.
4	28 Sept	The Gunpowder Plot: Why Did It Happen?	Examine the religious and political causes of the Gunpowder Plot. Investigate Robert Catesby, Guy Fawkes and the other conspirators. Explain why a group of Catholics believed violence was necessary.
5	5 Oct	The Gunpowder Plot: What Really Happened?	Reconstruct the events of 1605 using historical evidence. Examine the anonymous Monteagle Letter and the discovery of Guy Fawkes. Distinguish between established evidence and later stories surrounding the plot.
6	12 Oct	Was the Gunpowder Plot a Government Conspiracy?	Examine competing interpretations of the Gunpowder Plot. Evaluate evidence used to support conspiracy theories. Consider reliability, provenance and purpose when analysing historical sources. Reach and justify an evidence-based conclusion.
7	19 Oct	Charles I & Parliament: Why Did Relations Collapse?	Understand Charles I's belief in royal authority. Explore disputes over taxation, religion and Parliament. Explain Charles's decision to rule without Parliament during the Personal Rule and why opposition increased.
8	2 Nov	Why Did the English Civil War Begin?	Identify the long- and short-term causes of the Civil War. Examine political, religious and financial tensions. Explore the significance of Charles I's attempt to arrest the Five Members. Assess which factor was most important in causing war.
9	9 Nov	Cavaliers vs Roundheads: Choosing Sides	Identify the Royalists and Parliamentarians and the groups that tended to support each side. Explore regional, social, political and religious divisions. Understand that people's reasons for choosing sides were complex.
10	16 Nov	Fighting the English Civil War	Explore how Civil War armies fought and the weapons and tactics they used. Examine significant battles including Edgehill, Marston Moor and Naseby. Explain why Parliament gradually gained the military advantage.
11	23 Nov	What Was the Civil War Like for Ordinary People?	Investigate the impact of war on civilians. Explore experiences of women, children, soldiers and local communities. Use contemporary accounts and other evidence to understand the human cost of the conflict.
12	30 Nov	Trial & Execution of Charles I	Explain why Charles I was put on trial for treason. Examine arguments for and against executing the King. Understand why the execution of a reigning monarch in 1649 was historically significant. Reach a judgement on whether Parliament was justified.
13	7 Dec	Oliver Cromwell: Hero or Villain?	Understand how England became a Commonwealth and how Cromwell became Lord Protector.

			Investigate Cromwell's rule, including his relationship with Parliament, Puritanism and his campaign in Ireland. Compare contrasting interpretations and form an evidence-based judgement.
14	14 Dec	Did the Civil War Change England Forever?	Examine the consequences of the Civil War, execution of Charles I and Commonwealth. Explore the eventual Restoration of Charles II in 1660. Assess what changed and what remained the same. Draw together evidence from the unit to answer the enquiry question.

Historical skills developed: chronology; causation and consequence; source analysis; provenance and reliability; interpretations; change and continuity; evidence-based judgement.