

Why did Henry VIII marry six times?

Learning Objective:

To learn about the reasons for and results of Henry's marriages to Anne Boleyn and Jane Seymour.

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Henry divorced Catherine of Aragon in 1533 which left him free to marry the woman he had fallen in love with: Anne Boleyn. Henry hoped that Anne would give him the son he so desperately wanted.



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Anne had spent some time in the French court and when she returned to England she was considered to be very fashionable, beautiful and accomplished. She was everything Henry wanted for a wife.

Anne gave birth to a daughter, Elizabeth (later Queen Elizabeth I), in September 1533. She also gave birth to a son but unfortunately he was stillborn.



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Throughout the marriage Anne had several other pregnancies but she always miscarried or had stillborn babies. By now, Anne was very unpopular with the English people and with many of the courtiers. Lots of people believed she had bewitched Henry into marrying her. There were also rumours that she had an extra thumb.



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Henry's roving eye had now fallen on Jane Seymour, one of Anne's ladies-in-waiting. With no male heir and an unpopular wife, Henry no longer loved Anne and wanted rid of her. When rumours that Anne had been unfaithful to Henry circulated, she was arrested on charges of treason and adultery. Anne was sent to the Tower of London where she awaited execution.



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The Beheading of Qq: Anne Bullen



Anne was beheaded on May 19th 1536. Death by beheading was painful as the executioner often had to chop three or four times at the neck before the head rolled. Anne requested that an expert swordsman from France be summoned so she could have a swift death.

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Ready to do some face acting?!

How do you think Anne Boleyn would have felt when...



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Were any of Henry's
problems solved through
his marriage to Anne
Boleyn?

Think, pair, share your ideas.

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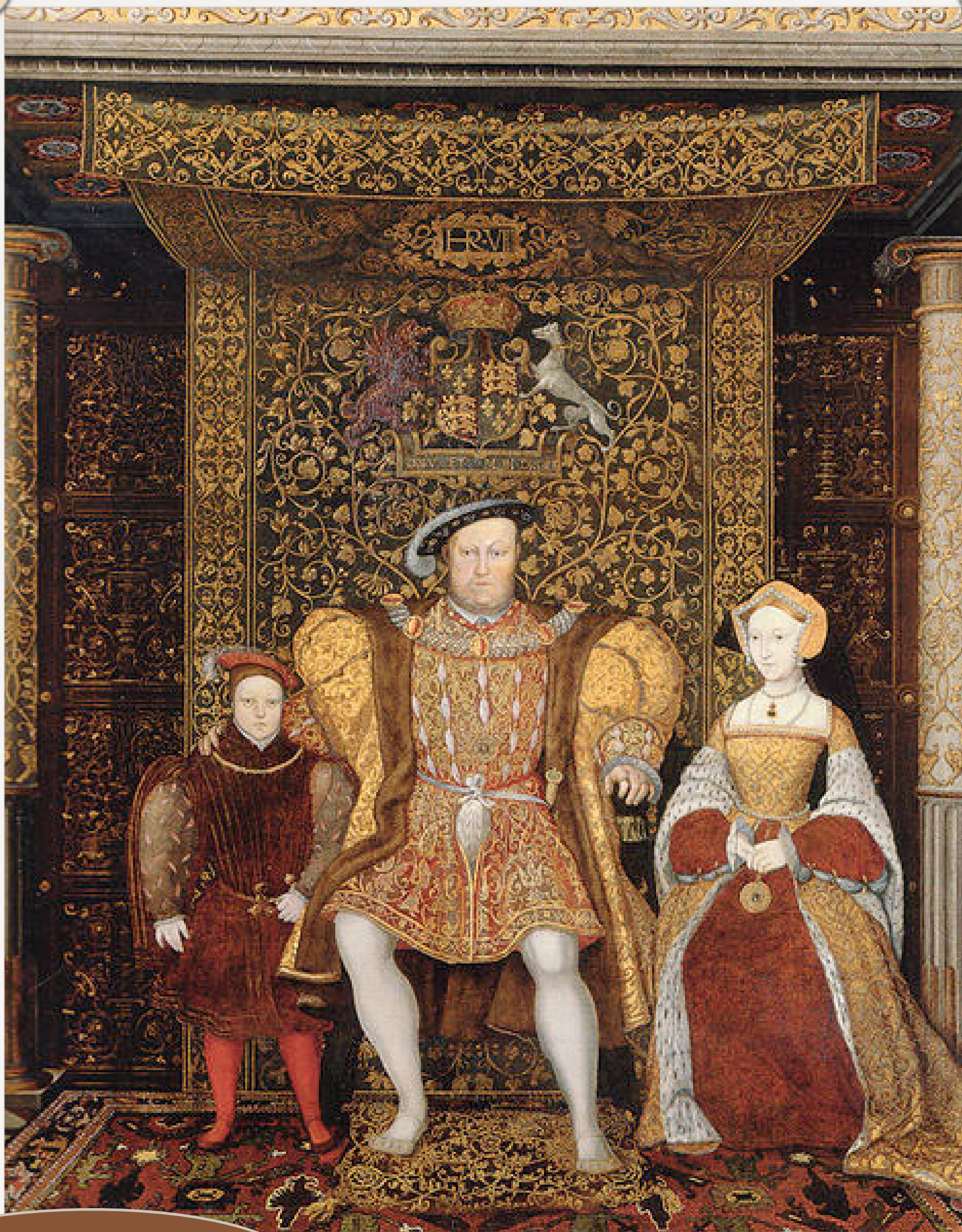
Henry and Jane Seymour were married just ten days after Anne Boleyn died. Soon after they married she became pregnant.



She gave birth to a son, Edward, at Hampton Court Palace in October 1537. Henry was delighted to have the male heir he had been waiting for.

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However, his happiness was short-lived when Jane became very ill. She died just 12 days after Edward was born and was buried at a chapel in Windsor Castle.



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Have his
problems been
solved now?

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