

Henry II was a great reformer. He developed much of the legal system as we know it in Great Britain, introducing both judges and trial by jury. In addition, he introduced the 'rule of law', the idea that nobody, not even the king, should be above the law. Fair laws, and not individuals, were to rule the country. This was a popular development because it replaced the brutal tradition of 'trial by ordeal'. These were a series of cruel and superstitious ways to assess whether someone was guilty, such as making suspects hold red hot iron bars, and seeing how quickly their burns healed to assess whether they were guilty.

See page 163 of *What Your Year 3 Child Needs to Know*.

Learning Objective	Core Knowledge	Activities for Learning	Related Vocabulary	Assessment Questions
To gain an overview understanding of the Wars of the Roses.	<p>During the middle ages, legal cases were decided by 'trial by ordeal', deciding a suspect's guilt through ordeals such as holding a red hot iron bar, or plunging their arms in boiling water.</p> <p>Henry developed trial by jury instead, and employed judges to travel the country hearing court cases.</p> <p>Therefore, many of the right that we enjoy today, such as the right to a fair trial, trial by jury, date back to the reign of Henry II.</p>	<p>Explain some of the most common 'trial by ordeal' methods, such as trial by hot iron, trial by boiling water, or trial by water.</p> <p>Pupils write an explanation of why 'trial by ordeal' was so cruel and ineffective, and why trial by jury was more fair.</p> <p>There are many good documentaries on this topic. This is a clip from the recent BBC documentary, <i>The Strange Case of the Law</i>, about trial by ordeal. This is about the development of the Jury. This is from a Tony Robinson documentary, and there is also the classic 'burn the witch' scene from Monty Python.</p>	<p>jury</p> <p>judge</p> <p>trial by ordeal</p> <p>the rule of law</p>	<p><i>What was 'trial by ordeal'?</i></p> <p><i>Give an examples of 'trial by ordeal' in medieval England?</i></p> <p><i>What did Henry II replace this with?</i></p> <p><i>Why was trial by jury more fair than trial by ordeal?</i></p>



History

Law and
Power

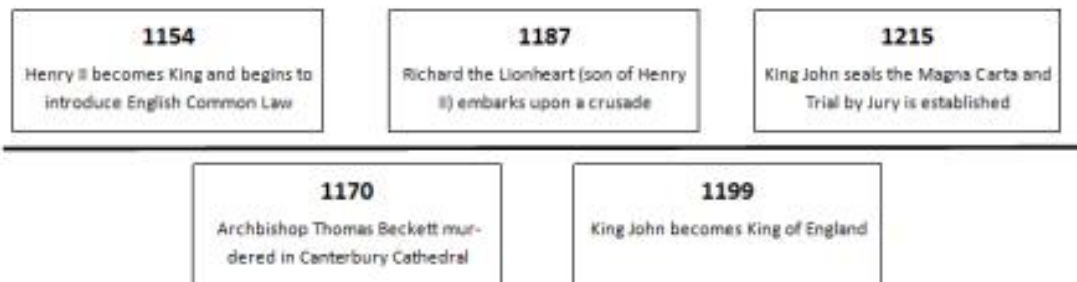
Kings, Queens and Leaders

1. Henry II is remembered for:	A	Using trial by ordeal	
	B	Throwing people in jail for no reason	
	C	Using Trial by jury	
	D	Having a great singing voice	
2. Where was Thomas Becket murdered?	A	In the woods	
	B	At the palace	
	C	In Canterbury cathedral	
	D	In his bed	
3. People call Richard I:	A	Richard the Lion	
	B	Richard the Lionheart	
	C	Richard the Tiger heart	
	D	Bad King Richard	
4. King John I sealed the Magna Carta in:	A	1215	
	B	2018	
	C	1290	
	D	1650	
5. Who is remembered for setting up the first parliament?	A	Thomas Becket	
	B	Simon de Montfort	
	C	King John	
	D	The King	

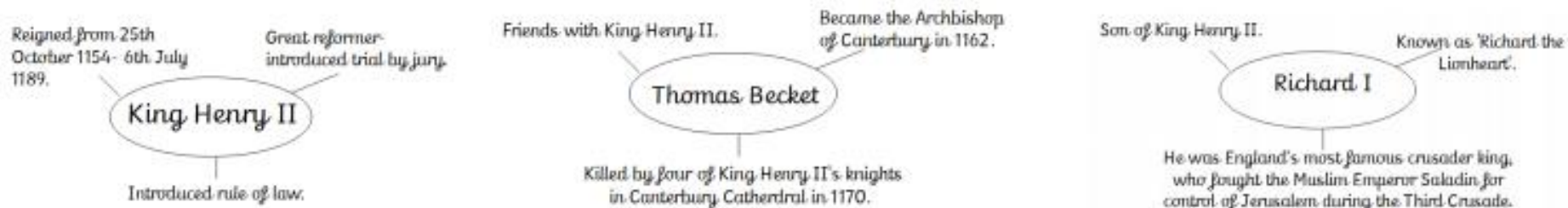
Year 3 Knowledge Organiser- History- Law and Power



Key Vocabulary	Definition
jury	A group of people that make a decision on someone's guilt based on evidence given
Rule of law	A set of rules that must be followed
Trial by ordeal	To decide someone's guilt by use of a cruel test
crusade	Series of invasions of Muslim controlled territory in the Holy Land by Christian armies
Holy Land	Modern day Israel and Palestine
knight	The King's soldier who wore armour
tyrant	A cruel ruler
Baron	A very powerful and wealthy landowner
burgh	A medieval area of land
parliament	The highest legislature, consisting of the Sovereign, House of Lords and the House of Commons
Magna Carta	A document of rules sealed by King John in 1215.



Key information:



Archbishop of Canterbury The head of the English church. Thomas Beckett was the Archbishop of Canterbury from 1162-1170.	
King John King of England from 1199-1216. He signed the Magna Carta in 1215.	
Pope The head of the Catholic church. Pope Innocent III was the Pope between 1198-1216.	

Prior Learning: In Year 1 we learnt about Kings and Queens



Prior Learning: In Year 2 we learnt about William the Conqueror



Key vocabulary to learn and use:

Judge

Jury

Trial by ordeal

Trial by jury

The rule of law

Court

Add these to your dictionary please



King William died in 1087.
Just as he had done, the kings that followed ruled England and parts of France. However, none of these kings were as strong as William the Conqueror, and that caused problems in England.

Why would a weak King cause problems?

Over time, various nobles, seeing that William's **successors** were weak, tried to seize power. This led to constant warfare and a general breakdown of law and order. Without a strong king to hold them in line, these power-hungry lords fought each other, and the king.

For ordinary people, these were hard times. Armies robbed people and killed anyone who resisted. Lords needed money to fight their wars, so they increased taxes on their estates. Trade could not be conducted safely, so businesses suffered.



Henry II challenged the lords who threatened him.

Henry II

A Strong King Makes Order

Once again, as in 1066, a hero arrived from across the English Channel.

Henry II was the great-grandson of William the Conqueror. When Henry was only two, his grandfather, Henry I, died. Because of Henry's young age, the throne was taken by one of his cousins. However, when Henry was twenty-one, he won the support of a number of nobles and was crowned King Henry II in Westminster Abbey, in December of 1154.

Bright and well-educated, Henry spoke French and Latin, but he did not speak much English. Usually he was good-natured and gentle, but he was known to have a terrible temper.

A Man of Pleasure

Henry loved to hunt, and he loved to go hawking. Hawking was a sport that used trained falcons and birds of prey to capture other birds. These hunting birds were treated with care, like expensive hunting dogs. Henry loved to travel around with a favourite bird perched on his leather glove. He and his nobles often brought their trained birds to the banquet hall and fed them treats.

The King Is Number One

Henry was full of energy and ideas. He was determined to end the wars that had plagued England. He also intended to make sure the king would always be stronger than the lords who served him.

One of his first acts as king was to take to the field of battle and go after lords who had grown greedy and too powerful



Law and Order

Henry soon realised that he needed more than a good army to be a strong leader. He needed laws and **government** to make sure the kingdom ran in an orderly manner. Henry turned his attention to the way the laws and courts worked in England.

government, n.
a small group of people who have the authority to make rules for a much larger group, such as people living in a particular city, region, or country

The **court** system was very confusing. Lords were in charge of the courts for certain types of crimes in certain places. The king was in charge of other courts, and the Church was in charge of still others.

court, n. a place where legal matters are presented and decisions made about disputes or people who have broken the law

Trial by ordeal

There were also different types of **trials**. In some trials, people accused of crimes might be forced to “prove” their innocence through combat; or they might be forced to pick up a red-hot piece of iron with a bare hand. If the hand didn’t heal quickly, the person was considered guilty. They may be put in water. If they floated, they were guilty!

trial, n. a legal process used to decide if a person is guilty or innocent

jury, n. a group of people who listen to information presented during a trial in a court and make decisions about whether someone is guilty or innocent

Talk task

A trial by ordeal.

Do you think this was fair?
What do you think would have
been better?

Trial by jury

What a mess! Henry II set up a group of **administrators** who could run the legal system.

He held several conferences with nobles and Church leaders. In these meetings, Henry ordered a fairer legal system and the right to trial by **jury**. The job of people on a jury is to first hear evidence and then decide whether they think the accused person is guilty or innocent. The jury system Henry began is still in use today.

A Long Line of Kings

Henry and the kings who came after him were known as the Plantagenet **dynasty**, or rulers belonging to the same family. The name *Plantagenet* probably came from a yellow flower called *Plantagenista* that Henry's father liked to wear as a sort of badge or emblem. Henry II was the first Plantagenet king of England.

Henry II is remembered for:

Creating a fairer legal system and the right to **trial by jury**.

dynasty, n. a series of rulers who are all from the same family

Key vocabulary learned?

Judge

Jury

Trial by ordeal

Trial by jury

The rule of law
court

Task

Write an explanation explaining why trial by ordeal was so cruel and ineffective.

What was it replaced with?

Was this better?

Step for Depth

Look at the extract and explain the role of priest in trial by ordeal. How did this change over time?