



What were Elizabeth's initial problems when she became Queen in 1558?

How this topic might look as an exam question:

Explain why Elizabeth faced problems at the start of her reign [12]

The main issue Elizabeth faced at the start of her reign was... Do you agree? [16]

Who shall I have in my Privy Council?
Elizabeth had to decide on the composition of her Privy Council. Her choice of councillors would be an early indication of the religious settlement and her style of government.

Which sort of religious settlement should I impose?
Elizabeth had to decide on the nature of the religious settlement she would introduce. She could follow the English Catholicism of her father, the Protestantism of her brother, the Roman Catholicism of her sister or develop something of her own. She also had to take into account the fact that the Pope might excommunicate her at any moment, as he would regard her as illegitimate.

What shall I do about the disputed succession?
Elizabeth was not regarded as the legitimate heir to the English throne by the Roman Catholics, who supported her cousin, Mary, Queen of Scots. Mary also had the backing of Henry II of France.

What do I do about the unrest in Ireland?
Ireland are unhappy with the way Mary I tried to colonise them, They are also Catholic and refuse to accept me as head of the Church



What do I do about the French troops in Scotland?
In 1558, Scotland was ruled by the French regent and widow of James V, Mary of Guise, on behalf of her daughter, Mary, Queen of Scots, who was being brought up in France. The traditional 'Auld Alliance' between Scotland and France and the presence of French troops in Scotland posed a threat to English security.

How do I keep relationships with Spain strong?
England has traditionally been in alliance with Spain against France, but now England is Protestant, this could affect relations with Philip II and Spain

How can I pay off the crown's debts and restore the royal finances?
Royal finances had been severely strained by the war with France. Mary Tudor had left a debt of £300,000 and had resorted to selling crown lands which only served to weaken the monarchy's finances in the long run.

How do I end the war with France?
In 1558, England was still technically at war with France. Mary Tudor had sent forces to aid her husband, Philip II of Spain, in his war against the French. During the course of this war England's last garrison on foreign soil, Calais, was captured. Elizabeth needed to make peace with France, but the permanent loss of Calais would be seen as a humiliation.

Look at Elizabeth's early problems and rank them in order of importance (to be dealt with first).

Then justify why you've chosen your top 3 immediate issues.



Let's meet the Queen a little closer



She poisoned herself using lead oxide as makeup to hide smallpox scars

She took a long time to make up her mind & was very indecisive

5ft 3"

She was incredibly frustrating

Vain

She had an awful temper

She was feared

Very superstitious

Afraid of Black Magic

She had halitosis and black teeth

What do you think so far...?

Only bathed once every few weeks

Swore a lot and spat when angry





What do you think now...?

Let's meet the Queen a little closer

Very religious

Charismatic

Confident

Well educated

Highly intelligent

Spoke Latin, Greek, French & Italian

An eye for detail

Great at speeches

Excellent grasp of politics

Had experience of being a prisoner in the Tower

Understood the dangerous world of Court politics



1. Was she legitimate? (The rightful queen)...

Was her mother, Anne Boleyn and father, Henry VIII married when she was born?

What happened to her mother? How might that affect Elizabeth's claim to the throne?

Catholics don't accept King Henry's first marriage to Katherine of Aragon was officially over. This meant Anne Boleyn was just a mistress of Henry therefore their child was an illegitimate 'bastard' and as such could not be an heir to the throne.

Catholics also don't accept the monarch as head of the Church, they still believe The Pope is the head of The Church

Henry himself excluded Elizabeth from the throne (although he later reinstated her)

Explain why some people (Catholics) might see her as illegitimate?

2. She was a woman...

A queen ruling in her own right was very unusual and **unnatural** to 16th Century society. Women had a role to play, but it was most certainly not in ruling anything, let alone the country, especially when you think the monarch was expected to lead their armies into battle!

John Knox



To promote a woman to bear rule, superiority, dominion, or empire above any realm, nation, or city, is repugnant to nature; contumely to God, a thing most contrary to his revealed will and approved ordinance; and finally, it is the subversion of good order, of all equity and justice.

What do you think about this? Is he alone?

Women are weak and foolish by nature

The Creator made women subject to man

All women suffer dominion (domination) by men because of Eve's sin

Did 'Bloody' Mary help this view of women in power?



Explain why Elizabeth's gender was a problem at the start of her reign

Elizabeth's was expected to get **married** hand over the role of running the country to her husband and produce a male heir...

What should she do?

Pros	Cons
<p>My husband could fulfil the role of military leader in war, which is an important part of a monarch's role</p>	<p>Who would I marry? I am queen, and yet wives are expected to be obedient to their husbands. I would be side-lined; He would be seen as the authority</p>
<p>Having children will ensure England's stability with an heir to the throne</p>	<p>The only man of suitable rank I could marry would be foreign, putting England's needs second to his own country</p>





What is the view of this interpretation of Elizabeth? Is it positive? Negative?

Elizabeth sought to present herself, woman though she was, as a fit occupant of the throne of England, and she did not propose to confuse the issue by recruiting a husband or an heir. ... This was done not by an attack upon the sixteenth century stereotype of a woman. Elizabeth accepted the image and often derided her own sex... she did not seek to change the ideal, but to escape from it, by suggesting that she was no ordinary woman.