Crown and Church

Tracing the struggle over religious authority in England

MWH.C.2.3.C "Describe tensions between religious and secular authorities contributing to the English Reformation."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline Henry's goals, circle actions by church leaders, and number the two laws that shifted church authority toward the English crown to trace the conflict over who could make decisions.

Who Had the Final Word?

1. In 1527, King Henry VIII wanted his marriage to Catherine of Aragon declared invalid. They had a surviving daughter, Mary, but no surviving son, and Henry feared a disputed succession. Henry argued that Catherine's earlier marriage to his brother made their union unlawful under church law, although a pope had granted permission for it. Only church authorities could grant the ruling Henry sought. Pope Clement VII did not approve the annulment. His decision was shaped by church law and by politics: Catherine's nephew, Emperor Charles V, held powerful influence in Italy. A royal family problem had become a struggle over who could decide a marriage's validity.

2. Henry's advisers found a different path. Henry married Anne Boleyn in early 1533. Parliament's Act in Restraint of Appeals that year barred appeals to Rome in church cases, keeping final decisions in England. Archbishop Thomas Cranmer then declared Henry's marriage to Catherine invalid. In 1534, Parliament named Henry the supreme head of the Church of England. These laws shifted authority once claimed by the pope to the English crown. Parliament also stopped payments to Rome. Henry could now claim that an English ruler, rather than a distant pope, had the final word in his realm's church affairs.

3. The change did not mean that everyone in England accepted royal control of religion. Thomas More, a former lord chancellor, refused to recognize Henry as head of the church and was executed in 1535 for treason. Some people believed the pope, not a king, held ultimate authority over the church. From 1536, Henry's government closed monasteries and took their lands and wealth, expanding royal power over religious institutions. The English Reformation thus involved more than one king's marriage. It exposed a lasting question: when a ruler's goals conflict with church authority, who gets to decide religious matters, and who must obey?

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did Henry's goal for his marriage bring him into conflict with the pope's authority?

2. How did Emperor Charles V's influence add a political tension to the pope's decision?

3. How did the laws of 1533 and 1534 shift authority over church matters?

4. How did Thomas More's response show that Henry's new religious authority was contested?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a four-sentence exchange between an adviser to Henry and a defender of papal authority in 1534. Give each speaker two sentences, and use at least two accurate details from the passage to show why they disagree about who should control church decisions.

ANSWER KEY

Crown and Church

HIGH SCHOOL · MWH.C.2.3.C

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline Henry's goals, circle actions by church leaders, and number the two laws that shifted church authority toward the English crown to trace the conflict over who could make decisions. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did Henry's goal for his marriage bring him into conflict with the pope's authority?	**Henry wanted his marriage declared invalid, but church authorities controlled that ruling, and Pope Clement VII did not approve it.**
2	How did Emperor Charles V's influence add a political tension to the pope's decision?	**Charles V was Catherine's nephew and held powerful influence in Italy, so the pope's decision was shaped by politics as well as church law.**
3	How did the laws of 1533 and 1534 shift authority over church matters?	**The 1533 law barred appeals to Rome, keeping final decisions in England. In 1534, Parliament named Henry head of the Church of England, shifting authority from the pope to the crown.**
4	How did Thomas More's response show that Henry's new religious authority was contested?	**More refused to recognize Henry as head of the church. His refusal showed that some people still believed the pope held ultimate authority.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Adviser: Parliament has barred appeals to Rome, so English church cases can end in England. It has also named Henry head of the English church, giving our king the final word. Defender: A vote in Parliament cannot make a king the rightful leader of the church. The pope should retain authority over church matters, even when the king dislikes his decisions.

Accept responses that accurately explain competing claims to authority, even if they use different wording. For the exchange, look for two distinct viewpoints, four sentences, and at least two accurate passage details.