Coley Primary School – Knowledge Organiser

SUBJECT FOCUS:	History	YEAR 5	TERM 3

Key Knowledge

Who was Henry I?

Henry was the son of William the Conqueror. Henry had two older brothers – Robert and William. When their father, King William I died, Henry's older brother, Robert inherited the title of Duke of Normandy, and brother William became King of England.

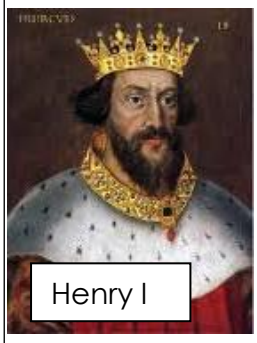
As the youngest brother, Henry grew up without major lands or political power, but took every opportunity to improve his position. He took the English crown as soon as William II died – killed in a hunting accident in 1100 – and fought Robert to become Duke of Normandy in 1106.

Reading Abbey

- Reading Abbey is a large ruined abbey in the centre of Reading, Berkshire and located between the rivers Kennet and Thames. It was founded by Henry I in 1121.
- It was one of Europe's largest royal monasteries.
- The Abbey was designed to have a large and impressive church and living quarters for dozens of monks, who would worship in the church.
- King Henry I died in 1135 before his Abbey was complete and was buried here in 1136 in front of the high altar.
- Building work was still going on when the Abbey church was officially opened by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Becket, in 1164. The ceremony was attended by King Henry II (grandson of Henry I) and his noble followers.
- Reading Abbey was frequently visited by kings and others, including Henry III who visited numerous times a year and staying for several weeks when he visited.
- Monks lived, worked and worshipped here for more than 400 years. Royal funerals and weddings and meetings of court and Parliament were held at the Abbey.
- The abbey was mostly destroyed in 1538 during Henry VIII's Dissolution of the Monasteries.

Key vocabulary

- **Inherited -** to receive from a person who has died.
- **Royal Abbey –** a religious community centred round a magnificent church.
- **Founded –** set up, created, established.
- **Monastery -** a community of monks, or the buildings used by such a community.
- **Vatican –** where the Pope lives in the Vatican City.
- **Institution –** an organisation set up for a specific purpose.
- **Abbot –** a man who is the head of an abbey of monks.
- **Annual wealth –** the amount of money earned each year.
- **Campaign –** a series of planned actions carried out in order to reach a particular goal.
- **Heir -** a person who receives or has the right to receive another person's property or title after that person's death
- **Dissolution –** the act of ending something.
- **Executed –** to put to death.



Henry I





Key Knowledge

Who was Henry VIII?

Henry VIII became King of England in 1509.

In the reign of Henry VIII, the Pope was the head of all the Christian Church and lived in the Vatican.

Henry VIII had inherited a considerable amount of money from his father Henry VII.

By the mid-1530s Henry had spent a great deal of his inheritance. However, he would have known the monasteries were the wealthiest institutions in England and Wales. His advisor, Thomas Cromwell told him that a large amount of their annual wealth went to the Vatican. This made people support the King's campaign against the Pope. However, it was known by the government that little of the monasteries' wealth left England for the Vatican and they were, in fact, very wealthy.

Henry VIII wanted to divorce his first wife, Catherine of Aragon, who failed to give him a male heir. When the Pope refused to allow a divorce, Henry created the Church of England.

The Dissolution of the Monasteries

As he declared himself Head of the Church, he closed hundreds of abbeys in England and Wales in the 1530s. In doing this, he gained the wealth of the abbeys. This event was known as the Dissolution of the Monasteries.

The dissolution of the monasteries was one of the key features of the reign of Henry VIII.

In 1939, over 400 years of monastic life at Reading Abbey suddenly came to an end. On the orders of King Henry VIII, the Abbey was closed. Henry took the Abbey's valuable possessions. The monks scattered. The last abbot (Hugh Faringdon) was executed.

By 1540, over 800 monasteries had been dissolved. The process had taken about four years.

Reading Abbey after the Dissolution of the Monasteries

The Abbey took on new uses. The abbot's lodgings were converted into royal accommodation. Henry VIII's daughter, Elizabeth I was a frequent royal visitor of Reading.
The inner rubble cores of the walls of many of the major buildings of the abbey still stand. Reading Abbey's ruins have recently been opened for tours to the general public.



Henry VIII



Reading's last Abbot, Hugh Faringdon

Know how to…

- **Understand an aspect of history dating beyond 1066 that is significant to the local area.**
- **Identify key people from a period in history and their impact on people's lives.**

Possible experiences:

- **Visit Reading Abbey's ruins and explore the grounds with a tour by Reading Abbey Quarter.**