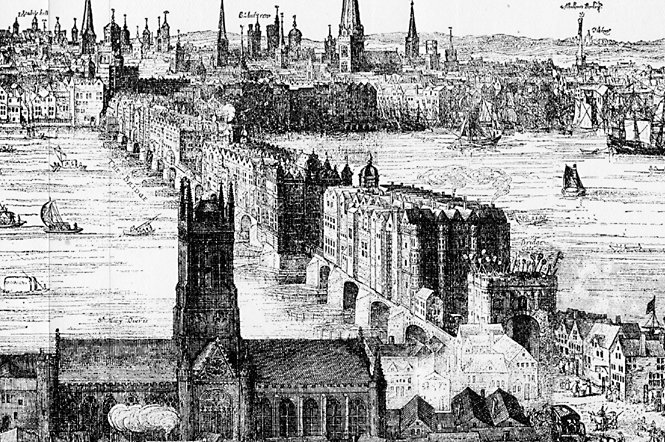
**Topic 3**

**Elizabeth’s management of financial, economic and social affairs.**



|  |
| --- |
| ***The financial and economic situation in 1558*** |
| ***Sources of Crown income*** |
| ***The problem of inflation*** |
| ***The Methods of raising finance***   * ***Ordinary revenue*** * ***Parliamentary taxation*** |
| ***Methods of reducing financial costs and financial administration*** |
| ***The impact of war*** |
| ***Overseas trade*** |
| ***The Monopolies*** |
| ***The Statute of Artificers*** |
| ***Poverty and the poor law*** |

Reference to the the scheme of work above, and past questions on page three show that to write effectively on this unit of study you need to be able to understand the different financial and economic problems that faced Elizabeth’s regime, and then consider how successfully these were addressed. An important starting point is to remember that the following terms are not interchangeable.

**Economics**



**Finance**

**A glossary of useful economic terms**

**You should aim to understand and use them as appropriate when you write.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Term** | **Meaning** |
| Arable farming | The growing of food crops such as wheat and barley. The price of food was determined by the interaction of its supply (the amount produced) and the demand (the population). |
| Customs duties | These were taxes on imports. The most important was the Tonnage and Poundage duties. At the start of each reign, Parliament voted the profits from these to the monarch. They were an essential part of Elizabeth’s ordinary revenues. |
| Debasement | The act of adding non-precious metals (such as lead) to the coinage of the land. This increased the spending power of the monarch, but led to inflation. |
| Enclosure | The act of hedging, ditching and fencing the Medieval open fields and Common land into self contained private farms. |
| Inflation | An increase in prices. |
| Monopolies | This was “royal patent for the sole right of exporting, importing, manufacturing, or distributing some particular article”; (S Atkins). Monopoists could thus set their own prices, and were often very unpopular as a result – in 1601 one MP famously called them “the bloodsuckers of the commonweal”. Elizabeth often used monopolies as a free form of patronage. For example, the Earl of Essex held the monopoly right for the import of sweet wines (sherry) until it was withdrawn from him as a punishment for disloyalty in 1601. |
| Pastoral farming | The keeping of animals. In Elizabethan England this usually meant sheep for the wool trade. Often the sheep were kept in enclosed fields. |
| Purveyance | This was the right of the Court to buy commodities at a price they themselves set. It was meant to be used only in extraoridary times, such as war. However Elizabeth used purveyance more widely (for example when on royal progress). It was possible to appeal against the prices set by royal purveyors in the Board of Green Cloth. However, as this was run by the royal household, few appeals were successful. |
| Rack renting | A form of tenure where the rent was not fixed. In theory this allowed for flexibility depending on economic climate. In practice however, many landlords kept rent at a maximum. |
| Subsidy | A parliamentary taxation round. Sometimes known as supply or Tenth and Fifteenths (tax was meant to be a tenth of the value of moveable goods in urban areas and a fifteenth in rural areas). |
| Tillage | Land under plough in arable farming. |
| Usury | The act of lending money at a unreasonably high rate of interest. |
| Wardships | Principle landowners were technically tenants in chief of of Crown, who held their land in return for military service. Underage heirs could not do this military service, so the land was held under royal ward. This wardship could be sold, or exploited for profit. As such, they were a useful additional to the Crown’s ordinary revenue. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Exam Season | Question |
| June 03 | How successfully did Elizabeth deal with her financial problems ? |
| Jan 06 | How well did Elizabeth I’s government handle its financial problems ? |
|  | The questions below come from a more detailed unit of study only on the Tudor economy.  They do not fit directly to the F961/01 course. |
| Jun 04 | How significance were changes in agriculture during the period 1547 to 1603 ? |
| Jan 05 | Assess the claim that Elizabeth’s government was completely unsuccessful in dealing with the problem of poverty during her reign. |
| Jan 05 | Assess the reasons why rising prices caused problems for many social groups during the period 1547 to 1603. |
| Jun 08 | How far had the English economy recovered by 1603 from the collapse of the Antwerp cloth market ? Explain your answer. |

January 2010

“Inflation was the most serious financial problem facing Elizabeth I and her government”

How far do you agree ?

January 2011

How successfully did Elizabeth I handle the financial problems she faced?

January 2012

Assess the causes of Elizabeth I’s financial problems

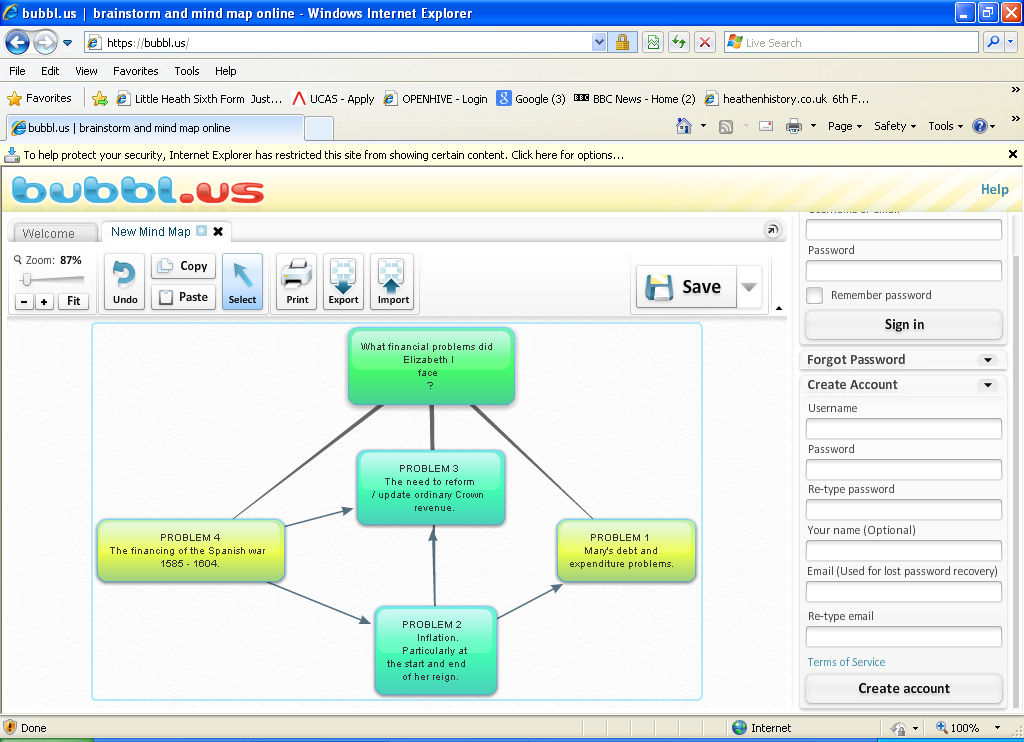
June 2012

How serious were the financial and economic problems during the reign of Elizabeth ?

**Finance**

When historians consider Elizabeth’s reign as a whole, her financial and Irish policies are usually the areas which attract most criticism. **R Sloan** for example is typical when he writes of her financial legacy as “**a poisoned chalice**”...”**in which Elizabeth’s cautious and short sighted approach to government proved most damaging**.”

The problem with this approach is that is rather generalised. Reference to Figure 1 below reflects this. In reality, Elizabeth faced a series of interlinked financial problems, and the quality of her response to them varied. Our task is to consider their relative seriousness, and analyse how successfully the regime met these challenges.



*Figure 1 – a diagram to show the interlinked financial problems that the Elizabethan regime faced. The problems shaded yellow (1 and 4) are sometimes presented as successfully handled, whilst the turquoise problems (2 and 3) are often protrayed as failures. You will need to decide if you agree with this.*

**Problem 1 – The Marian financial inheritance**

In recent years there has been a lot of revisionist work done on Mid Tudor government. As part of this, the financial reputations of Mary I and Edward VI (especially the protectorate of Northumberland) have been more positively appraised. **DM Palliser** reflects this when he states “**fortunately for Elizabeth both Northumberland and Mary kept the realm generally at peace and managed, with the aid of Lord Treasurer Winchester, to reduce expenditure and to increase income**”. The latter point is particularly noteworthy as Winchester took the important but unpopular decision to update the national tax records. These were to be the Marian Book of Rates, subsequently used by Elizabeth throughout her reign. They increased the Crown’s annual income from £29,000 per annum in 1556 to £83,000 in 1557.

These are valid points, but when Mary died in 1558 England was at war, allied with Spain, against France and Scotland. This added a serious debt and an expenditure problem to the spike in inflation she had inherited from the debasement of Henry VIII and Edward VI. The basic problem was that then, as now, war is expensive. Hence, despite updating the tax records, Mary left a debt of £227,000. Worse still £106,000 of this was owed to the Antwerp exchange at 14% interest per annum. This was close to usury. As **Sir Walter Mildmay** would later tell the House of Commons, England in 1558 was “**grievously afflicted with debts; the burden of which...can not be remembered without grief**”.

Elizabeth had two possible ways to deal with this problem. She could have either increased the revenue coming into the Exchequer, or she could have reduced the expenditure going out. As the Figure 2 below shows, Elizabeth chose the latter option.

*Figure 2. A diagrammatic representation comparing the Marian and early Elizabethan exchequer.*

**Expenditure going out**

**The**

**Marian**

**Exchequer**

**Revenue coming in**

**Because Expenditure is >er than Revenue = Growing debt - (in the red)**

**The**

**Early Elizabethan**

**Exchequer**

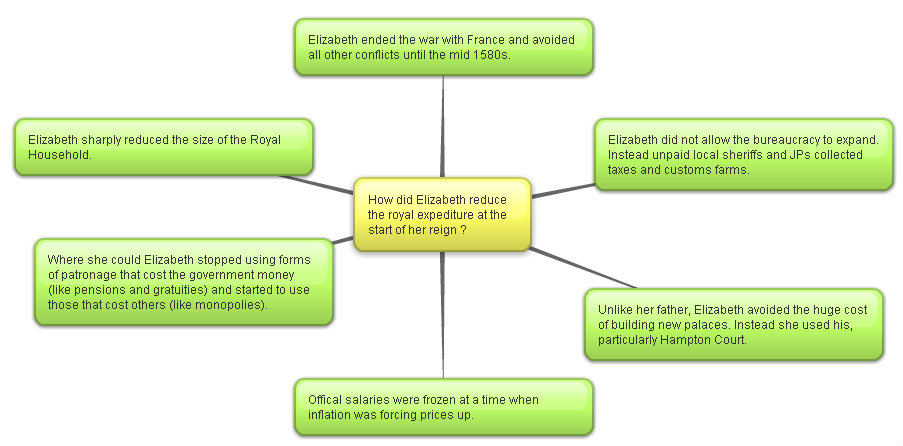
**Less expenditure going out**

**Similiar revenue coming in**

**Because Revenue is >er than Expenditure = Annual surplus and debt paid off**

**By 1585 the Crown had a cash reserve of £300,000 (in the black)**

*Figure 3. A diagram to show how Elizabeth and the Marquis of Winchester (her Lord Treasurer until 1572) made these savings.*

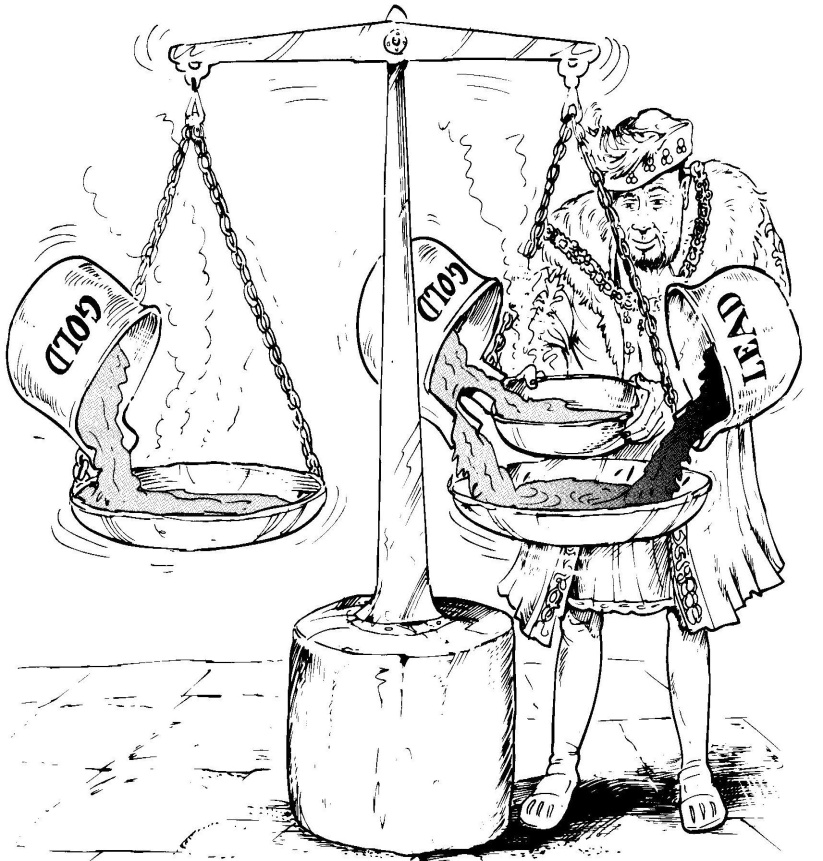
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By reducing expenditure Elizabeth ensured that, unlike France and Spain, England did not go bankrupt in the 1570s. As **Mildmay** continued in his speech to the House of Commons on the matter, “**her majesty hath most carefully delivered this country from a great and weighty debt**”. Indeed, England was debt free by 1574, and by the outbreak of war with Spain in 1585 the Treasury actually held a cash reserve of £300,000. Her contemporary biographer **William Camden**, writing shortly after her death described this as her “**greatest glory**”.

Moreover, historians have united to praise the achievement. **C Russell** reflects on her “**heroic decision to live within the royal income**” whilst **AGR Smith** is uncharacteristically emotive when he writes “**it was largely due to the personal and unremitting vigilance of the Queen that England escaped financial disaster**.”

**Question**

1. **Write a paragraph to explain how Elizabeth addressed the problems of debt and expenditure when she came to the throne.**

Perhaps even more impressive was Elizabeth’s attempt to deal with the problem of inflation in 1560. As we will see, the causes of Tudor inflation were varied, and in the 1590s the regime really struggled to contain it. However, the spike in prices in the 1550s was thought to be overwhelmingly caused by debasement of the coinage in 1544, and again in 1551. As **John Hales** wrote in 1581, “**immediately after the baseness of our coin in the time of King Henry the prices of all things went up**”. Here Elizabeth was very fortunate to be advised by the far-sighted **Sir John Gresham** who argued that “**your Highness hath no other way,**

*Figure 4 – Cartoon representation of debasement (B Mervyn)*

**but when time and opportunity**

**serveth, to bring your money into fine**”.

Elizabeth did this within the first year of her reign. The reform involved bringing in all the debased coins and re-issuing new ones with the proper amount of precious metal. This reduced the Crown’s expenditure in the short term, but it also had the desired effect of slowing inflation in the 1560s and 1570s. As **DM Palliser** comments “**her revaluation did much for England’s international standing**...it...**was also a domestic success, if judged by its effectiveness and permanence**”. The truth of this can be seen on Elizabeth’s tomb, which cites this relaunch of English coinage equal to the 1559 religious settlement and the defeat of the armada, as her greatest achievements.

**Question**

1. **Write a paragraph to explain how Elizabeth addressed the problems of inflation at the start of her reign. How successful was she ?**

However, a bit of context is needed here. This looks like a remarkable achievement for the young monarch, but, it was not a complete success. As **R Sloan** suggests, this “**superficial account disguises some less palatable realities**”. In particular, the start of Elizabeth’s reign saw some missed opportunities.

* Some historians argue that Elizabeth’s early failure to introduce reforms to the system of revenue collection at this time would create long term problems for her. **C Haigh** for example argues that reducing expenditure rather than increasing income in the 1550s created “**a hand to mouth existence**” which”**had worked well only because it had not been tested. From 1585 it was**”. This refers to her need to spend a lot of money to fight the Spanish after this date. She did not have the capcity to increase her ordinary income, and was thus forced to use the damaging extraordinary methods.

* **Sir John Gresham** also wanted to remove the practice of usury (the act of lending money at an unreasonably high rate of interest) in 1561. This was eventually introduced via the **1571 Act against Usury**, which stated that “**any lending upon a loan above the rate of ten pounds for the hundred for one year**” shall render that loan “**utterly void**”. In other words no loan could charge interst above 10% per annum. Had this been introduced in 1561, the Elizabeth could have broken free form the Antwerp money lenders much quicker than she actually did. It is was William Cecil that stopped the Queen, “**resisting as usual any fundamental financial reform**” (**C Read**).

**Question**

1. **How valid do you consider the criticisms to be of Elizabeth’s early financial policy ? Explain your answer.**

**Question**

1. **Now study the diagram below. Label it with the Achievements of Elizabeth’s early financial policy and Failures of Elizabeth’s early financial policy as you think most appropriate (remember the best argument will be the weightiest). Explain your decision.**

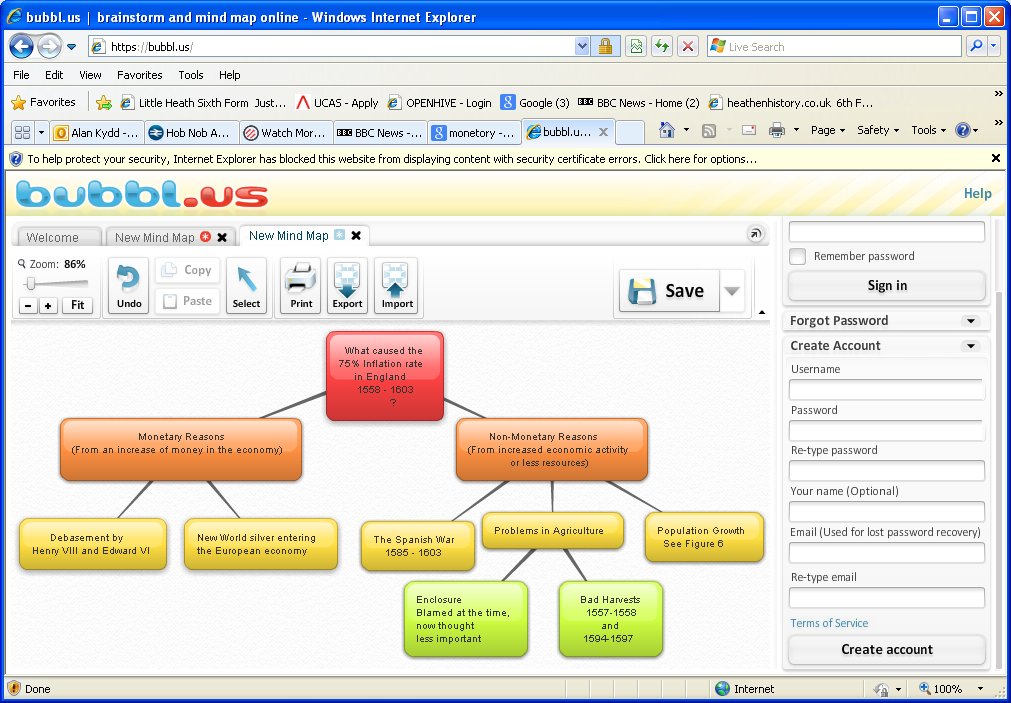
**An analysis of the achievements and failures of Elizabeth’s early financial policy**

**Now label the see saw and explain your choice in the box below**

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**Problems 2 and 3 – Inflation and the failed Elizabethan response**



*Figure 5 – A diagrammatic representation of the causes of inflation in Elizabeth’s reign.*

From the Black Death in the 1340s, to the Wars of the Roses in the1460s prices did not increase in England. For the next two hundred years they rose continually, albeit at different rates. In Elizabeth’s reign prices rose 75% from 1558 to 1603, with two peaks – the 1550s and the 1590s – the latter of which **Andrew Pickering** describes “**close to hyper-inflation**”. Context is important here. It is not just that inflation occurred throughout the Early Modern period of English history, it was, as **G Reagan** suggests “**a pan European phenomenon**”. In fact other countries suffered much swifter rises in prices.

Monetary causes of Inflation

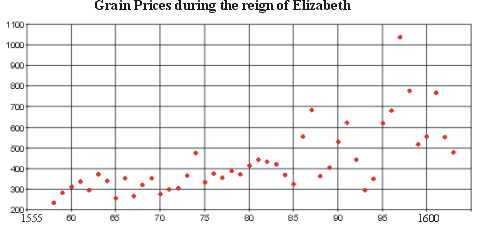
* Debasement was unquestionably an important early cause of inflation. However, after Elizabeth revalued the coinage in December 1560, she then did not allow any fresh debasement to occur. It was therefore not a key cause of the inflation spike in the 1590s.
* Elizabeth’s reign saw the continued Habsburg importation of silver from places like the Spanish mines in Potosi in Peru. **G Woodward** convincingly argues however that “**the impact on England appears to have been negligible**” as the “**Anglo-Spanish wars kept the volume of trade between England and the continent to a minimum**”.

Non Monetary causes of Inflation

* Population increase was the most enduring, and perhaps the most important cause of Elizabethan inflation. As Figure 6 below shows, after the terrible influenza outbreak of the early 1560s, England’s population quickly rose from 3 million in 1561 to 4.1 million in 1601. This meant more mouths to feed, and thus higher grain prices. Figure 7 can be partly understood in these terms. For **RB Outhwaite** this reason “**looks to be by far the most important influence on prices**”. However, it is noteworthy that he continues that “**we must avoid making population pressure do all the work**”. In other words, no one reason can, on its own, explain Elizabethan inflation.

*Figure 6 – Population change in Elizabethan England.*

*Figure 7 – The rising price of grain in Elizabethan England.*



* Problems in agriculture were also important. At the time many blamed the process of enclosure for the problems that they faced. One preacher famously described those who enclosed as “**cormorants, greedy gulls**...and **men without conscience**...who...**leave nothing for others**”. In the context of rising food prices, enclosure often meant the converting of arable open fields into closed fields for pasture (sheep farming). This in turn meant that at the very time that there were more mouths to feed, there was less land under tillage. Elizabeth’s government certainly saw this as a matter of concern, and tried to legislate. In 1563 they passed the Act for the Maintaining of Tillage. This was followed up by the 1598 Statues against Conversions to Pasture and the Engrossing of Farms. Both tried to ensure that no further land would be converted to pasture.

Today, we consider enclosure to be less important. As **B Mervyn** states “**by the end of Elizabeth’s reign the total area enclosed, even in the worst affected regions, was less than nine per cent**”. In other words, the overwhelming majority of farmland was not taken out of arable production. This argument becomes even stronger when one considers that some enclosed fields continued to be used for growing crops. Further, Elizabeth’s reign also saw the extension of the amount of land under cultivation. Clearly enclosure’s importance has been overstated. We now think that is because historians have been drawn to the topic because of the strong political reaction to the rare forced enclosures. For example, in Mary’s reign, Kett’s Rebellion (1549) in Norfolk complained about “**the overgrazing of the commons by greedy landlords**...and...**rising rents**”.

* Consideration of Figure 7 does however suggest a more important short term cause of rising grain prices. Throughout Elizabeth’s reign there were strings of excellent harvest. However, where there were bad harvests, such as in 1594 – 1597 grain prices quickly inflated through the process of supply and demand. There was actually famine in the North West in this period; however, even then, it was enclosure that was commonly blamed. In 1596 for example there were enclosure riots.
* Finally another important short term cause of inflation was the increased expenditure of the government in the Spanish war (1585 – 1604). Reference to figure 8 shows that Elizabeth raised and spent over £4million financing the war. This level of expenditure was obviously inflationary, even allowing for the Crown’s use of purveyance. A further point to make here is that Elizabeth was increasingly forced to use extraordinary forms of finance such as multiple subsidy rounds and monopolies.

*Figure 8 – The cost of the Spanish War – B Mervyn*



**Question**

1. Reread pages 10 to 12. Now complete the tasks below.

* Which three causes of inflation in Elizabethan England do you consider to be most important ?
* Explain your decisions
* Do any of these reasons link together ? Explain your decisions.



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What were the effects of inflation ?

[](http://www.google.co.uk/url?sa=i&rct=j&q=r+h+tawney&source=images&cd=&cad=rja&docid=cuYAWdXEYg3EdM&tbnid=-GodLjmtgPhdEM:&ved=0CAUQjRw&url=http://www.nndb.com/people/457/000094175/&ei=xFMHUtiVJ8i40QW6hoD4Ag&bvm=bv.50500085,d.d2k&psig=AFQjCNE-AIHxhXki-cgh4WU0lkNuHFDaOA&ust=1376298288640347)

[](http://www.google.co.uk/url?sa=i&rct=j&q=hugh+trevor+roper&source=images&cd=&cad=rja&docid=UbGn2acXYcExvM&tbnid=Q-oMx9_6ZFH1hM:&ved=0CAUQjRw&url=http://davidderrick.wordpress.com/2008/07/15/hugh-trevor-roper-on-walter-scott/&ei=RFMHUviiAeXK0AXEyoGAAw&bvm=bv.50500085,d.d2k&psig=AFQjCNEMUIhR3AGWyNIhubcCNm9FTYcDXA&ust=1376298167446110)In 1941 **RH Tawney** (top) argued that inflation changed the balance of power in Elizabethan society. In his famous work “**The rise of the Gentry**” he suggested the inflation led to “**a substantial net swing of capital and income from the aristocracy to the gentry**”. In 1953 **Hugh Trevor Roper** (bottom) challenged this in his work “**The Gentry 1540 – 1640**”. He suggested that the landed gentry were actually unskilled in managing their estates, and thus suffered from falling rent rolls.

*Figure 9 – A diagrammatic representation of the classes in the countryside of Elizabethan England. Below the great landed families of the aristocracy were the gentry. The gentry can be considered those who had more land than they could farm themselves. Yeomen tended to be independent farmers with freeholds to the value of 40 shillings, whilst the husbandmen held small amounts of land by tenure. Labourers were usually landless and paid in wages. They made up two thirds of the population.*

More recently few historians would argue that no one class in entirety rose or fell because of inflation. However, **G Batho** has shown that most landowners, be they aristocracy or gentry, managed to increase their incomes. This was because of the higher food prices shown in Figure 7, and competition for land caused by the rising population shown in Figure 6. Even so, certain trends can still be identified.

* As the nation’s principle land owner, the Crown suffered a weakening of its overall position because of price inflation. Many of the tenant farmers on crown land had leases which ranged from twenty to a hundred years. Rents were quickly devalued by inflation and this forced the cash strapped Crown to sell the land they owned. Thus a downward spiral developed. **S Atkins**, when discussing the impact of inflation in this period, argues that of all the changes it caused the “**most momentous was the weakening of the position of the crown**”.
* As we have seen, the impact of inflation on the aristocracy depended on the extent to which they were tied to similar long term leases as the Crown. Where they were, then they “**lost ground in the face of rising prices**.” (**Tawney**). They would then be forced to sell their land, usually to the gentry, to seek fresh sources of income. However, we now think that that this was not widespread, and some members of the aristocracy actually gained via the practice of rack renting (this was where the rent was increased in difficult times but not reduced when the economic climate improved). Certainly Elizabeth’s reign did not see a large decline in the aristocracy’s numbers. **DM Palliser** estimates that there were 57 great families in 1558, and 55 in 1603.
* The gentry and to a lesser extent the yeomen and husbandmen generally did do best from inflation. They tended to be those who gained from the existing long term leases, and they were then in a good position to pick up cheap land that the Crown and aristocracy needed to sell in a hurry. We still need to be careful here however as there were important local differences. **G Batho** argues the group that suffered the most were the Catholic gentry who, from the 1570s, repeatedly got themselves fined as recusants.
* Perhaps the group that was hardest hit by inflation were wage-earning labourers. They were often paid daily rates, but the rising population kept wages down. Those without any land of their own were most at risk, and in the 1596 for example there were food riots in the affluent county of Oxfordshire.

**Question**

1. Reread pages 14 and 15. Write one to two paragraphs to explain if you agree with **M Saxon** that Elizabethan inflation led to “**a polarisation in late Tudor society between the haves and the have nots**”.

The Failure to reform the Elizabethan system of finance

Inflation in itself was not necessarily a bad thing for the Elizabethan government. However, the problem came because it exposed the complete failure of the regime to update its system of revenue collection to match the rising prices. Figure 10 below reflects this. For example, **Lockyer and O’Sullivan** estimate that if customs revenue had kept pace with inflation, then Elizabeth would, by 1603, have been receiving £168,000 per annum rather than the actual figure of well below £100,000.

The problem infected all the main areas of ordinary revenue shown in Figure 11.

*Figure 10 – A table to show the failure of ordinary revenue to keep pace with inflation.*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Financial Issue | Percentage increase  1558 – 1603 |
| Inflation | 75% |
| Ordianry income | 50% |
| Crown rents | 25% |

*Figure 11. A diagrammatic representation of the Ordinary revenue streams for Elizabethan government.*

**Rental from Crown lands**

**Sources of Ordinary Revenue**

**Wardships**

**Customs Duties**

**Fruits of Justice fines**

What did the government do wrong ?

After her early successes, **TA Morris** reflects that “**Elizabethan finances settled into a characteristically conservative rut**”. He continues that they were marked by “**unimaginantive personnel and machinery**...and most importantly...**static income**”.

* Perhaps the biggest area of criticism was that in Elizabeth’s forty five year reign the tax records were never updated. Elizabeth continued to use the Marian Book of Rates from 1556. Obviously each year that this was used, ownership records were less accurate, and revenue fell. Elizabeth and Cecil seemed to have been reluctant to update the records because this would have been politically unpopular. As **DM Palliser** states, “**administrative interia was the price that the government paid for political stability**”.

* One of the ways that Elizabeth had reduced expenditure was via the false economy of cutting back on state tax collectors. Instead, Elizabeth used local landowners and self declaration to collect her taxes. This was to prove problematical for effective revenue collection.
  + *The tone was set by the Queen herself. She often allowed her favourites to simply keep huge sums. For example the Earl of Leicester owed £35,000 and the Marquis of Winchester (her first Lord Treasurer) was allowed to keep the £34,000 in taxation that he had collected for her on his lands.*
  + *Worse still the system of self declaration was widely abused. The rich and powerful simply did not honestly declare their incomes. In 1534, there were fifteen nobles who were assessed by Henry VIII as having an annual income over £1,000. By 1571 self regulation under Elizabeth meant that this figure had fallen to nine. By 1601 only one noble admitted to such an income. In 1589, at the height of the Spanish War, William Cecil (her second Lord Treasurer) declared his income as £133, 6s and 8d. It is believed that the actual figure was actually closer to £4,000. As the Council complained, there was a “****diminution of men’s values heretofore in their assessments****”.*

Instead the government tried to control inflation by legislation. This can be seen in Figure 12 below. The Statute Regarding the Export of Corn helped to stop grain prices rises, but elsewhere, they failed to stop inflation. Some measures, like the Act for Maintaining Tillage and the Statute against the Conversions to Pasture attacked enclosure. We now know that this was not a main cause of rising prices so it had little impact. Worse, The Statute of Articiers set a maximum, but not a minimum wage rate. Again, rising wages were not a main cause of inflation. The result was that the former slowed much needed modernisation in the countryside, whilst the latter cushioned the landowner’s classes from inflation by passing the cost onto the labourers.

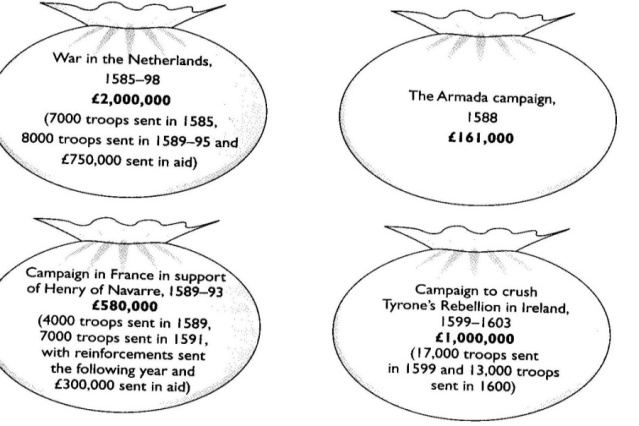
*Figure 12. A table to show economic legislation passed in Elizabeth’s reign (adapted from B Mervyn).*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Year | Act | Key Points | Analysis |
| 1563 | Act For Maintaining Tillage  Statute  Of  Artificers | * All land which had been under tillage for four years since 1528 could not be converted to pasture. * This fixed a maximum (but not a minimum wage). It obliged all unemployed people to seek work. Young men had to accept work as labourers, and young women were expected to go into service. | * Showed the Council’s dislike of rising food prices and enclosure. * This increased poverty for those with work. |
| 1592-3 | Statute  Regarding the export of Corn | * This banned the export of corn unless the home prices was below twenty shillings a quarter. * The Act For Maintaining Tillage was repealed. | * This stopped grain exports as a cause of rising food prices.      * This showed the Council’s confusion of the true causes of inflation. |
| 1598 | Statute against the Conversions to Pasture  Statute Against the Emgrossing of Farms. | * These acts were designed to stop further enclosure after the repeal of the 1563 legislation led to a quickening of the process (particularly in the Midlands – for example Staffordshire enclosure caused real distress 1592 – 1594. | * This further U turn again showed how confused the government was on the issue of enclosure. |

**Question**

1. Reread the table above and colour code it. Blue = unhelpful in the fight against inflation and yellow = helpful.
2. **Elizabeth’s government utterly failed to stop inflation**.

Write two paragraphs to explain how far you agree with this statement.

How successful was Elizabeth at financing the Spanish War ?

Reference to Figure 8 (included again here) shows that in the second half of Elizabeth’s reign war meant that the regime had to spend £3.76 million fighting the Spanish. That Elizabeth managed to raise this huge sum should be seen as a remarkable achievement. However, as Figure 13 shows it required increased use of extraordinary revenue sources.

*Figure 8 – The cost of the Spanish War (B Mervyn).*

*Figure 13. A diagrammatic representation comparing the Marian, early and late Elizabethan exchequer.*

**Expenditure going out**

**The**

**Marian**

**Exchequer**

**Revenue coming in**

**Because Expenditure is >er than Revenue = Growing debt - (in the red)**

**The**

**Early Elizabethan**

**Exchequer**

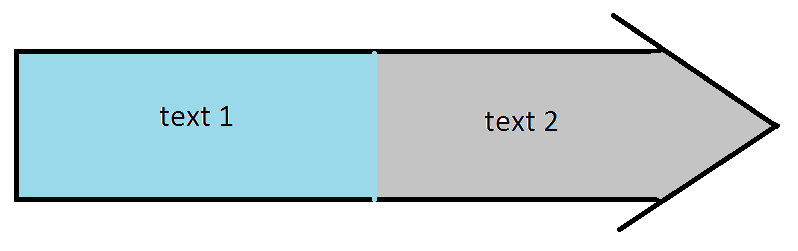
**Less expenditure going out**

**Similiar revenue coming in**

**Because Revenue is >er than Expenditure = Annual surplus and debt paid off**

**By 1585 the Crown had a cash reserve of £300,000 (in the black)**

**Increased expenditure going out**



**The late**

**(wartime) Elizabethan**

**Exchequer**

**Lack of reform means ordinary revenue remains about the same, and can not meet the cost of war**

**Increased use of**

**extraordinary revenue to make up the shortfall**

**Even with increased use of extraordinary revenue the cost of war means Expenditure is >er than Revenue = Growing debt - (in the red again)**

**Questions**

1. Study Figure 13 with care. Write a paragraph to explain what it shows.
2. How far does Figure 13 support **C Haigh’s** argument that the failure to reform finance in the years of peace created “**a hand to mouth existence**” which”**had worked well only because it had not been tested. From 1585 it was**”.

*Figure 14. A diagrammatic representation of how the government raised extraordinary revenue to finance the Spanish War.*

* **Monopolies**

Because financing the war was so expensive, Elizabeth increasingly used monopolies as a free form of patronage. **S. Atkins** defines a monopoly as a **“royal patent for the sole right of exporting, importing, manufacturing, or distributing some particular article”**. This meant that the monopolist could set prices without fear of competition. Unsurprisinglywhilst monopolies were popular in Court, (where, for example, Raleigh had a monopoly on tavern licences, and the Earl of Essex had a monopoly on the import of sweet wines) they were hated in the country because they were often abused and damaged the economy.

This resentment was most clearly seen in 1601, when Elizabeth and Robert Cecil lost control of Parliament. When a list of the monopolies created since 1597 was read out, one MP, **William Hakewill**, interrupted, **"Is not bread there?"** and to then add, **"If order be not taken for these, bread will be there before the next Parliament."** Another MP dubbed the monopolists the **"bloodsuckers of the commonwealth."** **Robert Cecil** dammed the behaviour as **“more fit for a grammar school as a parliament house”.** Elizabeth finally gave in, and had to address Parliament personally, giving her famous **Golden Speech**. She then cancelled twelve monopolies overnight, halted others in the works, and made monopolists answerable to the common law courts.

Thus monopolies caused serious economic and political problems for the government.

* **Purveyance**

Purveyance was the right of the Court to buy commodities at a price that they themselves set. It was meant to be used only in extraordinary times, such as war. However even before 1585 Elizabeth used purveyance widely (for example when on royal progress). **Lockyer and O’Sullivan** estimate that it saved the queen £40,000 p/a. It was possible to appeal against the prices set by royal purveyors in the Board of Green Cloth. However, as this was run by the royal household, few claims were successful.

After 1585, the war meant that the government started using purveyance legitimately, but on an even greater scale to purchase the materials needed to fight the Spanish. At times this had a disastrous impact on the economy. A good example here was iron production in the Weald area of Kent. **Garrett Mattingley** argues that the strength and purity of the metal produced there was central to the English defeating the Spanish (as it allowed the cannon on their ships to work in rollers and thus they could be fired three times faster than the Spanish cannon). Indeed, the Crown did actually own a couple of foundries in the area. However, the war meant that Weald iron was in great demand, and the Crown’s purveyors were sent to fix the purchase price. The problem was that they set it so low that a number of foundries went out of business.

At the same time local areas were increasingly expected to raise their own taxes to pay for fortifications and militia, whilst ship money was extended to inland counties. Thus, just like monopolies, purveyance and increased local taxation did political damage to the government because it was seen as greedy and exploitative. Perhaps more importantly, purveyance distorted the economy, and in extreme cases, forced businesses to close down.

* **Forced Loans**

As costs of war rose Elizabeth was increasingly forced to resort to borrowing. The corporation of London lent her £200,000, but she also levied forced loans on her richer subjects. **Lockyer and O’Sullivan**  estimate that this raised a further £330,000. Below is a typical Privy Seal for a forced loan from 1589.

***...the intended invasion of this realm, upon the great preparations made by the King of Spain...***means we need**...*loving* *subjects to furnish us by way of a loan. Wherefore we require you to pay the sum of £25.***

Forced loans did little damage to the economy; however they made the Privy Council in particular unpopular with those receiving the orders to pay up.

* **Selling of Crown lands**

In an attempt to raise quick money, and to avoid increased taxation or forced loans, Elizabeth allowed the selling of over £600,000 of Crown lands to raise revenue. This had the advantage of being popular, but it was very short-sighted. It greatly undermined the future financial independence of the monarchy, as future monarchs would not get the rent from this land. As such, they would have to increasingly depend on Parliament. As **R Sloan** suggests, it was “**a poisoned chalice**” for the early Stuart monarchs.

* **Multiple Subsidies**

By far the bulk of this increased revenue (estimated at £2.5 million) came from extra supply from Parliament. Elizabeth became the first monarch in English history to be awarded multiple subsidies by the House of Commons. This was necessary because she had failed to update the Marian Book of Rates, but even so, in **1589** and **1593** Elizabeth was offered **double subsidy** rounds. In **1597** she was awarded a **triple subsidy** round, and in **1601**, after the Monopolies Crisis and the Golden Speech, Elizabeth was awarded a **quadruple subsidy**.

The problem with this was that this was again unpopular and, as suggested, it increased the monarch’s dependence on Parliament. This was not really an issue in Elizabeth’s reign, but as **Sloan** continued, “**Elizabeth’s success in papering over the cracks without major innovation created the mistaken impression that the Stuarts sought new taxes for selfish or dangerous purposes**”.

**Question**

1. Reread pages 18 to 21. In 1603, after 18 years of war against Spain Elizabeth only left a debt of £350,000. Write a paragraph to explain your answers for each of the following questions.
   * 1. What is the best argument that this was a success ?
     2. What is the best argument that it was a failure ?
     3. Now complete the ranking task on the following page. Do any of these methods of raising finace link together ?

**An analysis to contrast the achievements and failures of Elizabeth’s attempt to finance to Spanish War 1585 – 1603**

**Now label the see saw and explain your choice in the box below**

**(remember the heavier argument is the better argument)**

****

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**Question**

1. Revisit Figure i on Page 4. What are the three most serious financial problems that Elizabeth faces in her reign ? Explain your decision below, and then explain any links between them. Then complete the table on the following page.



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|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Factor to show success** | **Examples** | **Factor to balance** | **Examples** |
| Increased sources of revenue |  | Although revenue increased the methods were short term and didn’t keep up with inflation |  |
| Judgement on this issue (dominant theme): | | | |
| Decreased expenditure |  | Methods used to decrease expenditure unpopular and caused unrest |  |
| Judgement on this issue (dominant theme): | | | |
| Collected large subsidies |  | Failed to reform taxation system and allowed corruption |  |
| Judgement on this issue (dominant theme): | | | |
| Improved financial admin’ |  | Cecil wasn’t the right man for the job |  |
| Judgement on this issue (dominant theme): | | | |
| OVERALL judgement – how successfully did Elizabeth handle her finances including thoughts on relative importance and linking: | | | |
|  | | | |

January 2010

“Inflation was the most serious financial problem facing Elizabeth I and her government”

**Now attempt to complete the questions planning exercises.**

How far do you agree ?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Examiner Guidance  No set answer is looked for but candidates will need to address the question.  There is a range of financial problems that candidates can consider, but they must give due attention to the named factor, even if they argue that it was not the most important. Inflation had a major impact on crown revenue and impacted on the cost of warfare, which would be a major item of expenditure at the end of the period. Inflation also had an impact on taxation returns, although some may suggest that it was Elizabeth’s failure to update assessments that was the bigger problem. Some may consider the problem of crown expenditure and selling of crown lands, others may look at customs or monopolies as issues.  Examiner Report  Most candidates were able to discuss a range of financial problems, although the degree of detail and precise support varied considerably.  There was usually a reasonable understanding of inflation, re-coinage was mentioned, but knowledge of earlier policies was thin and frequently inaccurate. Many answers argued that the cost of war was the most serious financial problem and were usually able to support this view with reference to the cost of the Spanish conflict and how it contributed to the debt Elizabeth left. The question of the taxation system was often well explained and the problems this created was often supported by reference to Cecil’s self-assessment for the subsidy. This was the ideal opportunity to link inflation and the problems of the tax system, but few seized the chance. | | |
| Key Words and Phrase: | | |
| Key issues to be discussed: | | |
| Linking and Relative Importance: | | |
| Line of Argument | | |
|  | Argument | Evidence deployed | |
| Introduction Tie the question to the factors |  |  | |
| 1 |  |  | |
| 2 |  |  | |
| 3 |  |  | |
| 4 |  |  | |
| 5 |  |  | |
| Conclusion Direct answer to the question |  |  | |
| StudentConcerns |  |  | |

**The economy**

The forty five year period of Elizabethan England inevitably saw economic and thus social change. The government was not, like today, expected to have a joined up economic policy, however, they were expected to take responsibility for the following.

* As the earlier notes suggest, they were meant to control public expenditure and raise revenue when required.
* They were meant to control wages and prices.
* They were meant to relieve poverty and maintain public order.
* They were meant to protect and promote overseas trade.

Above all, the Tudors craved stability in economic and social matters, with the former informing the latter. Indeed, as Shakespare states in Troilus and Cressida ***“take but degree (the social hierarchy) away, untune that string, and hark what discord follows”***. Thus, we need to address the nature and extent of this change, and consider how the differing aspects of the economy link together. We need to understand the economic and social problems of the period, and ask how successfully the government dealt with them ?

Figure 15 below shows these problems faced as a series of seperate economic and social challenges. In reality they were often linked. For example, increased continental demand for English wool products such as the new draperies and the broadcloths led to enclosure in the countryside. Some argue that this in turn led to rising food prices and more poverty and thus the need for new poor laws in the 1590s.

What is clear, is that we need to investgate the links between the different social and economic problems as well as the problems themselves.

*Figure 15. A diagrammatic representation of the differing social and economic problems faced in Elizabethan England.*

**Trade**

**How to respond to the closure of Antwerp ?**

**The different social and economic problems**

**Agricultural change**

* **Enclosure**
* **Rising food prices**
* **The development of new practices**

**Industry**

* **How to encourage new industries**
* **The impact of the rise of London**

**“Sturdy beggars”**

**What to do about the rise of poverty ?**

**See separate notes**

**Questions**

1. Write a paragraph to explain what the role of the government was in the Elizabethan economy.
2. Study figure 15 – can you suggest any other ways that these differing aspects of the economy may link together.

**How significant were changes in agriculture during the period 1553-1603 ?**

“**Our multitudes do infect our country with poverty. Our land hath not milk sufficient in the breast to nourish all**”.

As the quotation above from Elizabeth’s contemporary **Robert Gray** suggests, the need to feed the growing population (see figure 6) and the rising food prices that this caused (see figure 7) were the major challenges for agriculture in the period. We need to understand how this “**overwhelmingly agricultural country**” (**D Murphy**) responded. In particular, we must consider the two major agricultural developments – the continued move to enclose fields and the local embrace of new agricultural methods.

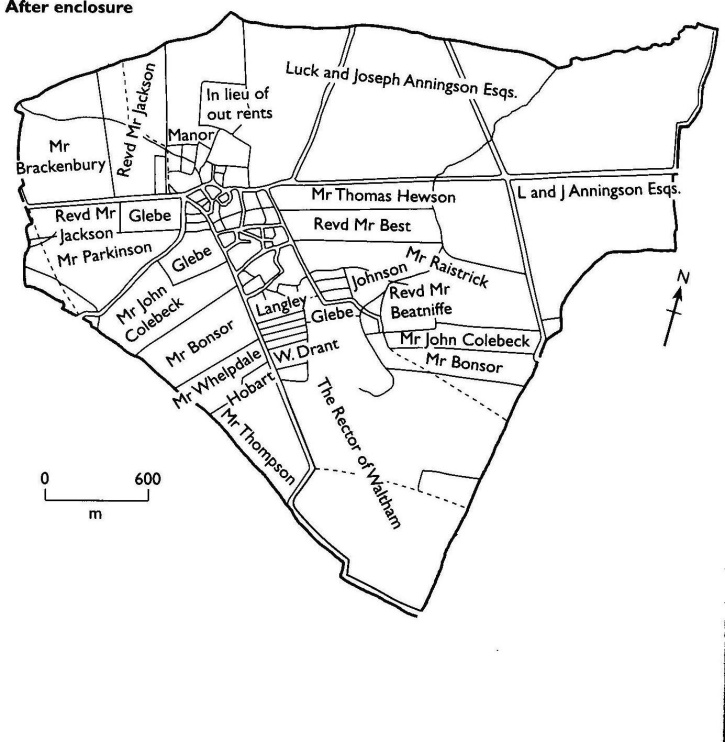
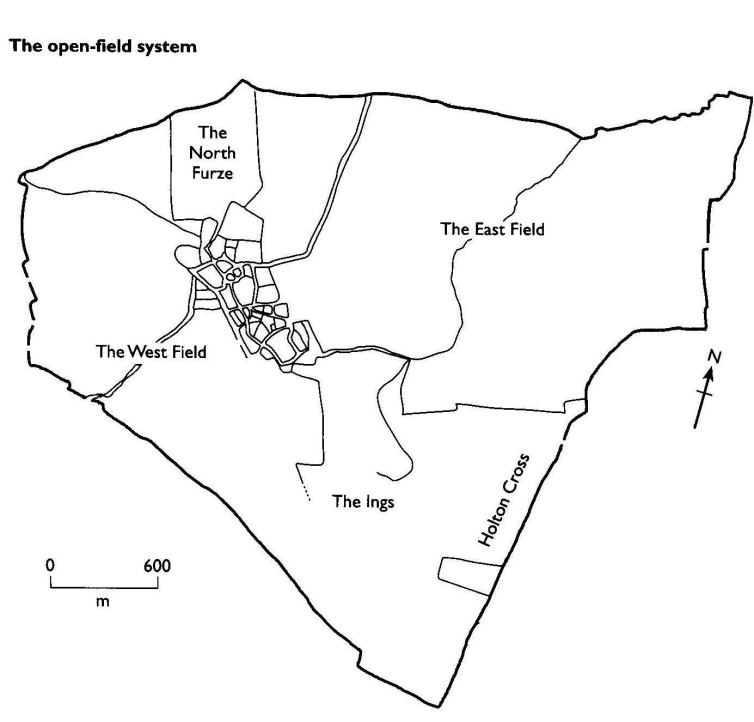
**Enclosure**

**“The poor at enclosing do grutch because of abuses that fall,**

**Lest some men should have but too much and some again nothing at all”**

As consideration of figure 16 suggests, enclosure is a general term for the act of hedging, ditching and fencing the medieval open fields, common land and wasteland into consolidated and self contained private farms. This was a controversial process which pre-dated Elizabeth’s reign, and continued into and beyond the Stuart age. At the time, as **Thomas Tusser** (above) suggests, it was certainly unpopular with many, and was often blamed for rising grain prices. The actions of the “**grasping men**” (**Clapham**) had led to Kett’s Rebellion in 1549, there were local anti-enclosure riots in 1597.

*Figure 16. A village before (left) and after (right) enclosure*



**Why was enclosure so unpopular ?**

* The fencing and hedging of common land meant that the very poorest lost their rights to graze their livestock. In times of shortage owning a goat or a cow could be the difference between life and death, and for this reason labourers fought hard to defend their common land rights.
* Another flash point was that tenants (the people who rented their land) had no legal claim to the land that they rented. This meant that they could face summary eviction and the destruction of their way of life by enclosure.
* If enclosure led to a move away from arable (crop) farming to pastoral (sheep) farming then many of the evicted would be left without jobs. This often increased the ranks of the urban poor – much to the concern of both the government and contemporaries.
* Finally enclosure was blamed – wrongly – for rising prices.

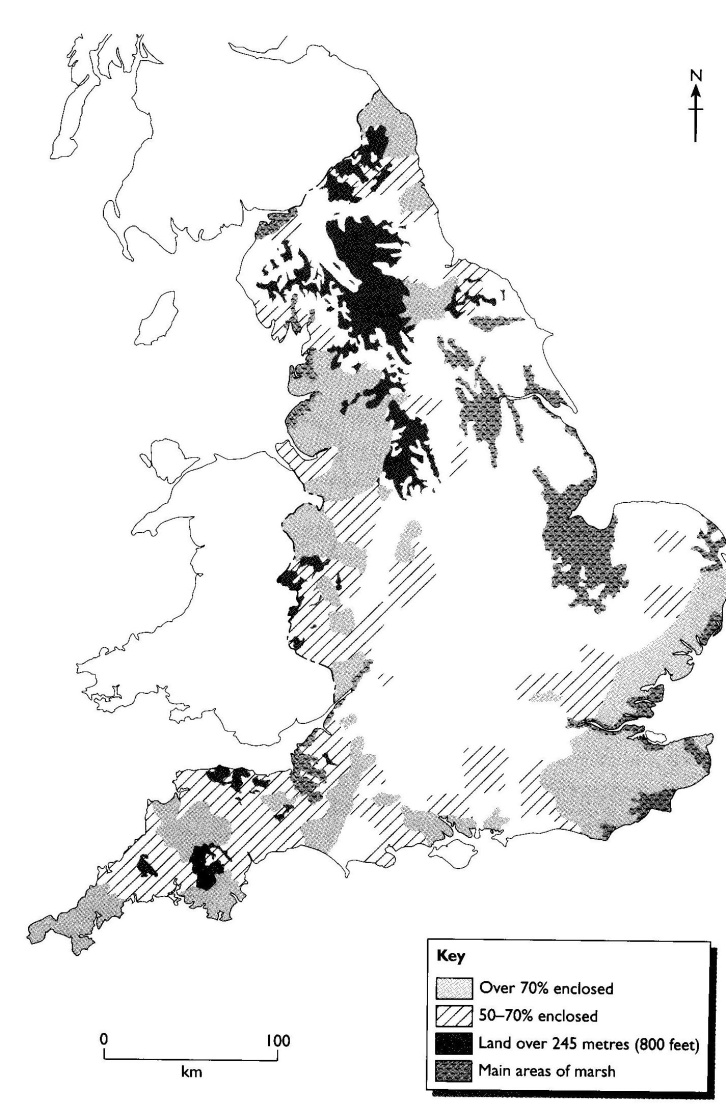
**Why did landlords want to enclose their fields ?**

The simple answer to this was that it usually was very profitable.

* The increased demand for English wool meant that the move to pastoral farming was rarely a risk. Moreover, sheep farming required far fewer labourers and thus had lower overheads.
* In addition, more recently historians have stressed that enclosure was followed by landlords to increase the amount of land under cultivation.

**So was enclosure really a problem ?**

*Figure 17. A map to show the extent of enclosure by 1600*

The most common charge against enclosure was that it turned crops into sheep pastures because wool was a more profitable commodity. This led to the landowners profiting at the expense of the tenant farmers and labourers. In other words agricultural labourers were driven from their land by greedy sheep farmers.

Today few historians accept this argument. AGR Smith is typical when he describes this as “**exaggerated and misleading**”. As figure 17 shows, there were very real regional differences in the amount of enclosure undertaken. In addition, it is important to note that in Elizabeth’s reign “**enclosures were usually carried out to increase the efficiency of arable farming”**... because... ”**the increase in population meant that corn was more profitable than wool**” (**B Mervyn**). Thus, the policy that was blamed for rising prices in the food riots of 1595 – 1597, probably helped grain production to keep pace with the rising population.

However, in the as the the case study below show, locally enclosure could be very unpopular.

**Case study– 1602 – Robert Cecil and the enclosing of the Royal Park Brigstock**

In 1602 the royal deer parks at Brigstock were granted by the Crown to Sir Robert Cecil with permission to enclose them. This effectively removed the rights of the villagers of Brigstock and Stanion within the parks. The pasturing of cattle and gathering of fuel were a crucial part of the village economy and the deer a valuable, if illegal, supplement to the diet. The community strongly resented the loss of these rights and were further incensed when Cecil promptly set about cutting down and selling the timber and underwood from Great Park. He also intended removing all the deer from Great to Little Park and leasing it to Sir Thomas Tresham.

There were protests, some of which escalated into riots. Cecil’s officers were attacked, deer were killed and carried home and at one point a ‘troop of lewd women of Brigstock’ were brought in to pressure the workmen in the parks! By the middle of 1603 the ‘bad people of Brigstock’ had by a combination of threat and persuasion been appeased, enabling Cecil’s enclosure and agricultural improvement to proceed.

**So what should we think about enclosure ?**

Today enclosure is not seen as a major economic problem for the Elizabethans. We think that by 1603, only 9% of England’s farmland had been enclosed. Moreover, there were no wholesale depopulation of villages in the reign. It was, at worst a local problem which hit the very poorest hardest because access to the common land was disproportionally important to them. Ironically, enclosure probably helped to create larger and more efficient arable farms. In addition, enclosure allowed new crops such as woad (used in dying) coleseed (used as fodder) and even tobacco to be experimented with. Moreover, where land was converted to pasture, it was often unsuitable for crops. The wool produced was usually exported, thus bringing European wealth into the country.

The picture is further muddled because the government was so confused about enclosure. As reference to Figure 12 shows, in 1563 they tried to legislate against it in the Act for Maintaining Tillage. The 1592 – 3 Statute regarding the Export of Corn repealed this law, and then in 1598 – after the food rits - the Statute against the Conversions to Pasture and the Statute Against the Emgrossing of Farms again tried to outlaw enclosure.

**An analysis to contrast the advantages and diadvantages of Enclosure**

**Now label the see saw and explain your choice in the box below**

**(remember the heavier argument is the better argument)**

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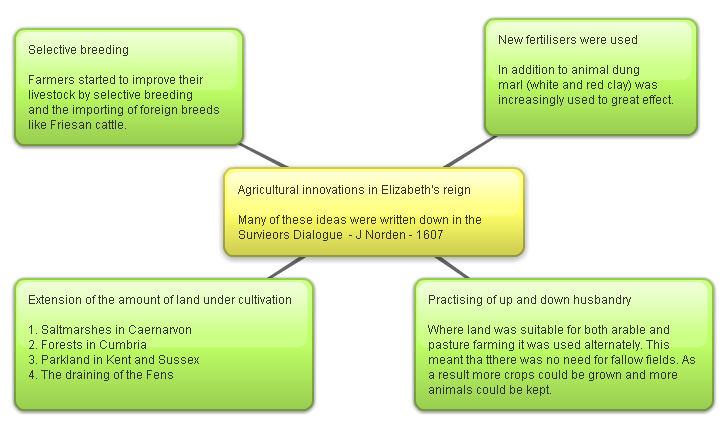
**What other changes were there in agriculture in Elizabethan England ?**

Perhaps more significant than the emotive topic of enclosure where the other agricultural innovations that were happening across England at this time.

**Task**

1. Study Figure 18 with care. Rank these four improvements in order of importance (where 1= most important). Then write a paragraph below to explain your decisons.

*Figure 18. A spider-diagram to show other agricultural innovations in Elizabeth’s reign.*



In addition, as London grew, the countryside of the Home Counties increasingly saw the development of specialised maket gardens to keep the capital supplied with fresh fruit and vegetables. As **William Lambarde** described in his 1576 text **A perambulation of Kent**, there were “**orchards of apples and gardens of cherries**”.

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**How far reaching were these changes ?**

For **Eric Kerridge** these changes were substantial and of great importance. He went so far as to argue that “**the agricultural revolution took place in England in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries**” (from his 1968 work **The Agricultural Revolution**).

Today few would share this view, with **G.E.Mingay** and **J Thirsk** suggesting that he goes too far. **Mingay** arges that the rise of modern farming “**can be seen as stretching back to the Sixteenth Century**” but the important changes “**gather pace later**”. **Thirsk** sees the developments of the Elizabeth countryside as part of a broader Tudor “**continuum**” (i.e. it was not revolutionary). **A.G.R Smith** finds a comprise between these views by arguing that “**we do not need to accept the concept of an agricultural revolution in early modern England to agree that during the sixteenth century English agriculture responded in notable ways to the challenges imposed by a rising population**”.

**Task**

1. Study again AGR Smith’s comments at the bottom of page 33. How far do you agree with him ? Write a paragraph blow to explain our answer.

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**How significant were changes in industry during the period 1553-1603 ?**

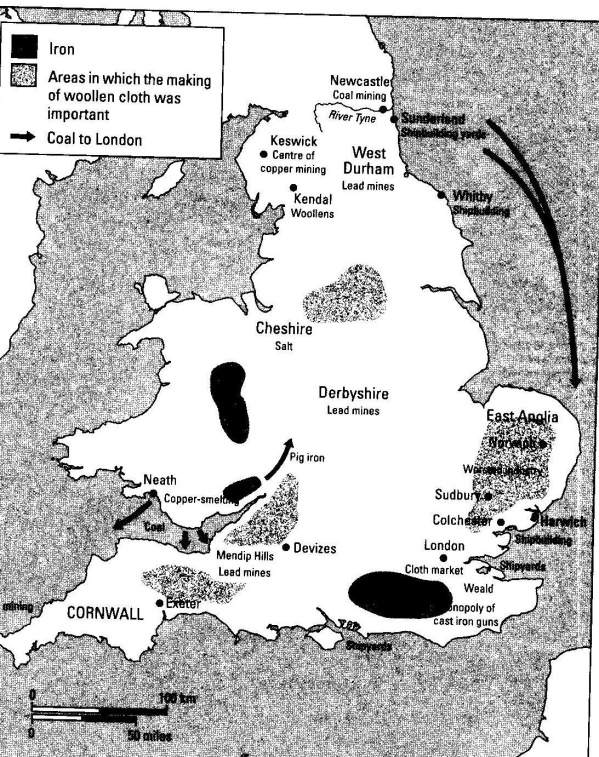
In the mid-Twentieth Century, **J.U.Nef** argued that Elizabethan England saw “**a first industrial revolution**”. He suggested that the development of coal and capitalism led to a change in the structure and organisation of industry as English manufacturing specialised and moved towards the factory system and the modern world.

Today few historians would accept such bold claims. Most coal was used for domestic heating (much of it was imported from Sweden) and the main sources of industrial power were water and wind. Elizabethan England was really still a pre-industrial society, where much of what was manufactured “**consisted of the direct processing of agricultural products**” (**D.C.Coleman**). As such, many brewers, millers, builders and above all textile workers also worked in agriculture as well as in industry. There was not really a clearly defined industrial sector. Rather, most industries were family businesses run by craftsmen (artificers). It was often seasonal, casual and labour-intensive work in a number of craft industries. Moreover, as Figure 19 suggests, most manufacturing processes were carried out in the home. This was known as the domestic or cottage system.

*Figure 19 – a 1990s school history book’s representation of the domestic system in the production of broadcloths.*



**How did industry change n Eizabethan England ?**

1. **The Textile industry**. By far the most significant industry in Elizabethan England was the textile industry. This included spinning, weaving, and dyeing (all shown in Figure 19 above) as well as tailoring and hatting. It was the biggest source of employment after agriculture, and, as Figure 20 shows, it was particularly important in East Anglia, the West Country and Yorkshire.

At the start of Elizabeth’s reign, England was noted throughout Europe for the production of broadcloths. These were thick woollen cloths which were usually exported unfinished.

However, whilst there was no major technical innovation in the industry in the reign, the migration of fleeing European Protestants from northern France and the Spanish Netherlands bought new skills and trading links. In particular, it led to the development of lighter fabrics known as the new draperies. From the 1560s, this industry sprang up in East Anglia and the South East. The thinner product was very popular in the warmer (and rich) southern European markets. At the same time, enclosure ensured that the English textile industry had the cheapest raw wool in Europe. As such, this was a time of growth and progress for the English textile industry.

*Figure 20 –*

*a map to show woollen cloth, coal and iron production in Elizabethan England.*

1. **Coal and metal production**. The production of coal and iron was already well established in 1558. The main coal producing areas of England were Tyneside and Durham, and as Figure 20 suggests, 163,000 tonnes was shipped from Newcastle to London in 1597 – 1598 alone. Today it is thought that the sharp increase coal production shown in Figure 21 was not evidence of Nef’s “**first industrial revolution**”, but rather the consequence of the rising population shown in Figure 6.

At the same time, war with Spain from 1585 onwards contributed sharply to the increased demand for iron from the Weald in Kent. In 1560 there were only three iron smelting furnances in the county. By 1590 this had risen to twenty six. By the 1590s London, Sheffield and Birmingham were all developing metal working industries. Equally, lead was required for shot, and from the 1580s production in the Mendip hills sharply increased.

Finally, the Privy Council itself deserves credit for encouraging foreigners with special skills to settle in England. They did this by giving them monopolies and patents. Perhaps the best example of this was that the copper industry in Cumbria was first developed by **Daniel Hochsetter** from the Tyrol region of Austria.

*Figure 21. Two tables to show the increased production of coal and metal goods in Elzabethan England,*

*Figure 21a. A table to show English and Welsh coal and iron output 1550 – 1650 (adapted from* ***S.J.Lee’s******The reign of Elizabeth I****). In tonnes per annum.*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Year** | **Coal extraction** | **Iron production** |
| **1550** | **170,000** | **5,000** |
| **1650** | **2.500,000** | **24 ,000** |

*21b - A table to show English and Welsh mining output 1500 – 1600 (adapted from* ***DM Palliser****’s* ***Age of Elizabeth****). In tonnes per annum.*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Year** | **Lead** | **Tin** | **Copper** |
| **1500** | **625** | **600** | **3,300** |
| **1580** | **3,300** | **660** | **9,620** |
| **1600** | **12,400** | **550** | **11,860** |

**Questions**

Reread pages 34 to 36, and then write a paragraph to answer each of the following questions.

1. Why do few historians now accept Nef’s idea of a “first industrial revolution” ?
2. “War was the only cause of increased industrial activity in Elizabeth’s reign”. How far do you agree ?

**Did the growth of London harm industry in the rest of England ?**

Whilst England remained an overwhelmingly rural country, Elizabeth’s reign was marked by Londons grow with mounting speed. In 1550, its population was thought to have been 120,000. By 1600 this had risen to 200,000, with 6,000 migrants arriving each year. Most of the newcomers came from the countryside. Some were the surplus population produced by enclosure looking for work. Others were the sick and poor hoping for relief or charity.

In 1598 **John Stow** produced his **Survey of London**. It described the fastest growing city in Europe as a commercial power house with over sixty craft and trading guilds. This diverse economy also meant that some areas were becoming associated with specialised trades and crafts; for example Islington was the centre of the brick and tile making trade, whilst a shipbuilding industry was growing on the banks of the Thames. At the same time the power of the Merchant Aventurers Guild ensured that London was England’s greatest port.

**Questions**

1. Today historians disagree about the impact of London on other cities. Was London’s growth built at the expense of other cities ? Consider the two arguments below. Which do you agree with more ? Explain your answer.

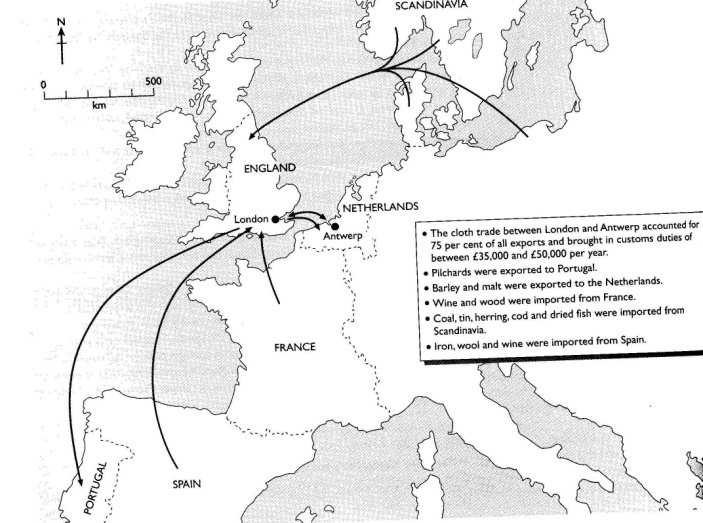
|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Yes** | **No** |
| The only English industry of any note was the textile industry. The London-based Merchant Adventurers had a monopoly on cloth export, and shipped it in protected convoys from London. By the 1590s 93% of cloth exports went from London. This reflected much provincial decline. Smaller ports such as Rye and King’s Lynn complained that London took their trade.  Finally, as London was four times bigger than the next English city it had economies of scale. Migration meant that it had a never-ending suppy of cheap labour, whilst banking, shipbuilding, brewing, catering and leisure industries grew up around the docks. No other city could compete. | However, it is important to note that some towns gained from the growth of London. Newcastle provided the capital with coal, whilst Manchester sent all its cloth there.  Moreover, whilst some provincial ports declined, others, such as Exeter and Bristol flourished with the new trade routes. Moreover, some inland towns also began to specialise. Nantwich grew up as the centre of the salt industry, whilst Reading developed a large leather and tanning business.  As such, the picture was mixed, and to claim London snuffed out other towns and cities is an unhelpful generalisation. |

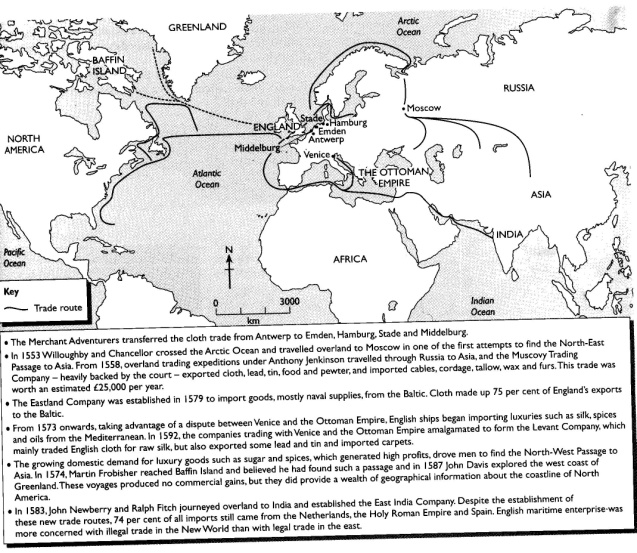
**How did English trade change in the Elizbethan period ?**

**Task**

Study the two maps in Figure 21. In your table groups list as many differences as you can.

*Figure 21. Two maps to show the change in English trade (from B Mervyn). The first shows English trade in 1558, the second in 1603.*





It was an objective of all sixteenth century goverments to promote exports and reduce imports to create a favouralbe balance of trade. This woud give them the financial independence.

Foe Elizabethen England



**Further Reading**

**There are copies of these book (and lots of others on Elizabeth) in the school library**

**The Later Tudors – P Williams**

Chapter VI – Tudor Society

**The Emergence of a Nation State –AGR Smith**

Chapter XX - Population, prices and agriculture

Chapter XXI – Industry and trade

**England and Wales under the Tudors – S Atkins**

Chapter XVII – Economic and social history in Tudor England

**Or online you could click onto the following site**

**An excellent site from JP Somerville**

<http://faculty.history.wisc.edu/sommerville/361/361-02.htm>

<http://faculty.history.wisc.edu/sommerville/361/361-19.htm>

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| TITLE:  **June 2012**  **How serious were the financial and economic problems during the reign of Elizabeth I ?** | | |
| **Examiner Guidance**  At the higher levels candidates should address the question of ‘how’ and not simply list the financial and economic problems. Candidates might argue that, until 1588, the financial problems were not serious and even afterwards they were handled well so they were not serious.  However, some may argue that they were serious as Elizabeth failed to tackle them and allowed them to worsen. This could be supported by the large debt of £350,000 she left her successor. Some might balance this against her inheritance and argue that because it was not much larger than the one she inherited and was considerably less than continental rulers the problem was not serious. The problem of the taxation system was serious as it had not been updated. It could be argued that by asking fewer to pay subsidies she made the problem worse. At the same time, Crown lands were sold, reducing royal income; it may have reduced the seriousness in the short term, but added to long term difficulties.  Candidates may point to the high rates of inflation, particularly at the end of the period, which were the worst of the century. Agricultural prices were rising at an alarming rate and, added to harvest failures made the 1590s the worst decade of the century. This problem cannot be overestimated as there is evidence of people dying from starvation. The problems were made worse by the continued expense of war with Spain and the problem of dealing with unrest in Ireland.  **Examiner’s Report**  This question produced many general answers and some strong responses. Informed answers discussed social and economic issues – decline of cloth trade; moving the staple from Antwerp due to Netherlands Revolt; the rising population; Inflation; the effects of the long war against Spain 1585-1604; social instability and the Poor Laws of 1598 and 1601; the drift to the towns.  Some answers failed to distinguish between financial and economic problems. Those that did so seemed better equipped to deal with the latter. Although candidates were aware of the importance of inflation, they seemed uncertain about its effects. In particular, few candidates were aware of the dramatic fall in the value of the subsidy or of the weakness of the system of assessment which was too deeply ingrained in the structure of local government to be eradicated. Some candidates looked at Elizabeth’s financial problems and others discussed England’s as a whole. However, the greatest discriminator was whether candidates were able to assess the severity of the problems, rather than simply explain what the problems were or what had brought them about. Many tried to compare these problems with others like religion and hence had long irrelevant sections. It was a common tactic to look at causes of problems, such as foreign policy, rather than consider how serious the problems were. Above all there was little understanding or discussion of inflation in the period. Many candidates don’t know the difference between economic and economical. | | |
| Key Words and Phrase: | | |
| Key issues to be discussed: | | |
| Linking and Relative Importance: | | |
|  | Argument | Evidence deployed | |
| Introduction Tie the question to the factors |  |  | |
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| Conclusion Direct answer to the question |  |  | |
| StudentConcerns |  |  | |

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| TITLE:  **“Enclosure was the most serious economic problem that Elizabethan England faced”**  **How far do you agree ?** | | |
| Key Words and Phrase: | | |
| Key issues to be discussed: | | |
| Linking and Relative Importance: | | |
|  | Argument | Evidence deployed | |
| Introduction Tie the question to the factors |  |  | |
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| Conclusion Direct answer to the question |  |  | |
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