**Spartacus Educational Classroom Activity**

# [The Marriage of Prince Arthur and Catherine of Aragon](http://spartacus-educational.com/ExTEU21.htm) (Questions & Answers)

<http://spartacus-educational.com/ExAnTEU21.htm>

**Q1**: Read the introduction and explain why Henry VII started arranging the marriage of his son soon after he was born.

**A1**: [Henry VII](http://spartacus-educational.com/TUDhenry7.htm) became king of England and Wales after defeating [Richard III](http://spartacus-educational.com/TUDrichard3.htm) at the [Battle of Bosworth](http://spartacus-educational.com/TUDbosworth.htm). Henry feared that he would be overthrown by other powerful figures in England. He was also worried about the possible invasion by France. Spain was the other powerful country in Europe. Henry hoped that an alliance with Spain could be sealed by the marriage of his son with the daughter of the king of Spain.

**Q2**: Study sources 3 and 4. Explain why Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella of Castile were worried about sending their young daughter to England.

**A2**: Henry VII had only recently gained power by killing Richard III. During the 15th century English kings were often in danger of being overthrown. [Roderigo de Puebla](http://spartacus-educational.com/Roderigo_de_Puebla.htm) (source 3) makes this point when he says: "Bearing in mind what happens every day to the kings of England, it is surprising that Ferdinand and Isabella should dare think of giving their daughter at all". [David Loades](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_Loades) (source 4) argues that royal marriage agreements were often broken. This was because the political situation was constantly changing. It would have been very difficult for Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella of Castile to have cancelled the marriage agreement once Catherine of Aragon was living in England.

**Q3**: Why were arranged marriages between the sons and daughters of European royal families often cancelled?

A3: Marriage agreements between European royal families were often signed when children were very young. Until the marriage could be consummated the monarchs continued to look for a better arrangement. For example, Ferdinand of Aragon would have cancelled the agreement if Henry VII had been overthrown.

**Q4**: Describe the feelings of Prince Arthur that are expressed in source 7.

**A4**: Arthur complains about his annoyance (vexatious) about the delay (procrastination) in their marriage. Prince Arthur was probably asked by Henry VII to write this letter as he was very keen for the marriage to take place.

**Q5**: Do sources 1 and 6 support the opinions expressed in sources 8 and 9?

**A5**: [Alison Plowden](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alison_Plowden) (source 8) claims that Catherine of Aragon was "pretty, small and well-made, with a clear pink and white skin and quantities of russet-coloured hair". [Hilary Mantel](http://www.guardian.co.uk/profile/hilary-mantel) (source 9) says she was a "tiny auburn-haired beauty". Russet and auburn both mean "reddish-brown". This is supported by both sources 1 and 6. So does the claim that she had "clear pink and white skin".

**Q6**: Study sources 2 and 5. Create a timeline entitled "The marriage of Arthur Tudor and Catherine of Aragon" that includes the dates: 1487, 1488, 1493, 1498 and 1501.

**A6**: Timeline: The marriage of Arthur Tudor and Catherine of Aragon

1487: Discussions about the possible marriage between Arthur Tudor and Catherine of Aragon.

1488: Roderigo Gonzalva de Puebla sent to England to negotiate with Henry VII.

1493: Queen Isabella decides to send Catherine to England in 1498.

1498: Queen Isabella decides against sending Catherine to England.

1501: Catherine of Aragon marries Arthur Tudor.

**Q7**: Use the information in this unit to explain why Arthur and Catherine did not get married before 1501?

**A7**: Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella of Castile were worried about Henry VII being overthrown. (source 3) They also thought they might be able to arrange a better deal with another European monarch. (source 4) They were also aware that the marriage could not be consummated until Catherine and Arthur had entered puberty (the process of physical changes through which a child's body matures into an adult body capable of sexual reproduction to enable fertilization). Puberty took place later in the 15th century than it does today. (source 2)