How did King Henry VIII’s personal life affect England?
WHO WAS KING HENRY VIII?

• Image a king who ruled over his country for 36 years, changed the religion of his country, and married six different women (two of whom he beheaded).
• Does this sound like the plotline of a television show or movie?
• This is actually the life of Henry VIII, ruler of England from 1491 – 1547.
BACKGROUND

- Henry was born January 28, 1491, the second son of Henry VII, the first English ruler from the House of Tudor.
- Henry’s older brother Arthur was next in line for the throne of England.
- Arthur had been betrothed since age two to Katherine of Aragon, the daughter of the Spanish rulers Ferdinand and Isabella.
- In November of 1501 the Arthur and Katherine were married.
- Months later, Arthur died of a sudden illness.
- Henry became next in line for the throne and in 1503 was betrothed to his brother’s widow ("Henry VIII").
Henry’s VIII’s legacy as King of England is marked by his infamous divorce from his first wife, his subsequent five marriages, the political and religious ramifications of his divorce, and the “Golden Reign” of his daughter Elizabeth.
Claim #1: Henry’s first marriage was unhappy for many reasons, so he divorced his wife to marry Anne Boleyn.
Henry’s First Wife Cannot Produce a Son

• As the Queen of England, Katherine’s primary duty was both personal and political.
• She needed to bear children, as many as possible and preferably sons.
• This was especially important in England since Henry VIII was the sole surviving son of his father (Hanson, "Katharine / Katherine / Catherine of Aragon")
In the first nine years of their marriage, Katherine conceived at least six times. However, the only surviving child was a daughter, Princess Mary, born in 1516. Henry was not unhappy with the birth of Mary and was growing frustrated with Katherine’s inability to produce a male heir (Hanson, "Katharine / Katherine / Catherine of Aragon")
Henry’s First Wife Cannot Produce a Son

- Henry had an affair with Elizabeth Blount, and she bore him a son.
- It was clear Henry could have sons, but the queen could not (Hanson, "Katharine / Katherine / Catherine of Aragon").
- Henry also worried that his marriage to had been cursed by God because of the Old Testament ban on marrying the widow of one’s brother ("Henry VIII").
- Katherine’s marriage to Henry began to sour and Henry began pursuing her lady-in-waiting, Anne Boleyn ("Catherine of Aragon").
Henry wants to replace Queen Katherine with Anne Boleyn

- Anne’s first years at court were spent in service to Henry VIII’s first wife.
- It was not easy for Henry to persuade Anne to become involved with him.
- When Anne avoided Henry’s company, or when she was sullen and evasive to him, he sent her from court” (Hanson, “Anne Boleyn Facts & Biography of Information”).
Henry wants to replace Queen Katherine with Anne Boleyn

- By the mid-1520s, Anne had become one of the most admired ladies of the court, attracting the attention of many men.
- One man, Henry Percy, the 6th Earl of Northumberland, wanted to marry Anne.
- When Henry VIII caught wind of Lord Henry Percy’s desired marriage with Anne, he ordered against it (“Anne Boleyn Biography”).
Henry wants to replace Queen Katherine with Anne Boleyn.

- King Henry's passion for Anne during this time can be seen to in the love letters he wrote to her when she was away from court.
- Henry hated writing letters, and very few documents in his own hand survive.
- However, 17 love letters to Anne remain and are preserved in the Vatican library (Eakins).
Henry wants to replace Queen Katherine with Anne Boleyn

- Henry was desperate to have Anne, so he quickly designed a way to officially abandon his marriage with Catherine (“Anne Boleyn Biography”).

- In 1527 Henry, still desperate for a son, asked the Pope for an annulment of his marriage to Katherine so he could marry Anne (“Catherine of Aragon”).

- In his petition for annulment he claimed that he and Catherine would never have a son who survived infancy because their marriage was a condemnation in the eyes of God. (“Anne Boleyn Biography”).
Henry divorces Katherine and marries Anne

- However, Catherine refused to give in to Henry, saying her marriage to Arthur had never been consummated.
- She attracted much popular sympathy as she fought for her own rights and those of her daughter Mary.
- For seven years the Pope refused to annul Henry and Katherine’s marriage, as he was afraid of angering Catherine's nephew, the Holy Roman Emperor, Charles V. (“Catherine of Aragon”).
Henry divorces Katherine and marries Anne

• When Anne Boleyn became pregnant, Henry had to act quickly.

• Henry, thinking that Anne had to be pregnant with a son, rushed to have his marriage annulled so that he and Anne’s son would be legitimate.

• Anne and Henry married in secret, and he passed the Act of Supremacy, declaring that he was the head of the English church (“Catharine of Aragon”).
Henry divorces Katherine and marries Anne

- Henry appointed Thomas Cranmer as Archbishop of Canterbury, and he finally annulled Henry’s marriage to Catherine.
- Catherine and Mary were stripped of their titles and had to leave the kingdom (“Catharine of Aragon”).
- Henry VIII went to desperate lengths in order to have a son.
Claim #2: Henry’s marriage to Anne ended in her beheading, and he had four more marriages.
Henry’s marriage to Anne ended in her beheading

• Henry and Anne's daughter Elizabeth (the future Queen Elizabeth I) was born in September 1533.
• Two more pregnancies ended in miscarriage, in the summer of 1534 and in January 1536 (“Anne Boleyn”).
• The Queen was quite upset and blamed the second miscarriage on her state of mind after hearing that Henry had taken a fall in jousting (Eakins).
Henry’s marriage to Anne ended in her beheading

- When Henry discovered the second miscarriage had been a boy, he became convinced the marriage was cursed.
- Henry took on Anne’s lady-in-waiting Jane Seymour as his mistress and looked for a way to end his marriage to Anne (“Anne Boleyn”).
- He then had Anne detained at the Tower of London on several false charges, among them adultery, incest and conspiracy (“Anne Boleyn Biography”).
Henry’s marriage to Anne ended in her beheading

- In April 1536, five men (including Anne's brother Lord Rochford) were arrested on suspicion of having had sexual relations with the Queen.
- Anne was investigated by a secret commission, and on May 2, 1536 Anne was arrested on charges of adultery with five men.
- She was convicted and imprisoned in the Tower of London (“Anne Boleyn”).
Henry’s marriage to Anne ended in her beheading

- Anne had also been accused of witchcraft, as king felt he had been bewitched into marriage with her (Hanson, "The Six Wives of Henry VIII – Facts & Biographies").
- On the 19th of May Anne was granted the 'mercy' of beheading by a French swordsman.
- Anne was the first English queen to be publicly executed ("Anne Boleyn").
Henry’s third and fourth marriages

- Henry married his mistress Jane Seymour ten days following Anne’s execution ("Henry VIII Biography").
- Jane did not receive the same lavish coronation ceremony as Anne when she married Henry.
- It was rumored that Henry had no intention of crowning Jane until she had proved her worth and provided a son.
- If she proved barren, he could annul their marriage (Hanson, "The Six Wives of Henry VIII – Facts & Biographies").
Henry’s third and fourth marriages

• However, Jane was able to provide the king with his fondest wish.
• She gave birth to Edward on October 12, 1537.
• After 29 years as king of England, Henry VIII finally had a legitimate male heir.
• However, Jane did not savor her success for long.
• (Hanson, "The Six Wives of Henry VIII – Facts & Biographies").
Henry’s third and fourth marriages

• Shortly following Edward’s birth, she was struck with a high fever.
• Modern historians believe was puerperal sepsis, or ‘childbed fever,’ which was very common in the 16th century.
• Sadly, Jane was a victim of her times.
• Poor hygiene and medical knowledge could not stop the fever which finally killed her near midnight twelve days after the birth of her son (Hanson, "The Six Wives of Henry VIII – Facts & Biographies").
Henry’s third and fourth marriages

- Henry was deeply grieved by the loss of Jane Seymour, and he did not remarry for three years ("Henry VIII Biography").
- The search for Henry’s next wife began and his ambassadors scoured Europe for possible brides.
- Henry made it known that he needed to first approve of the woman’s looks before agreeing to marry her.
- He had high standards for female beauty and insisted his next wife be physically attractive (Hanson, "The Six Wives of Henry VIII – Facts & Biographies").
Henry’s third and fourth marriages

- However, Henry was having a tough time finding a woman who wanted to marry him.
- The tragic tale of his second queen, Anne Boleyn, had kept European gossips busy for three years now.
- In addition, the king’s poor and disrespectful treatment of his first wife and the quick end of his third only contributed to his low reputation.
- In the end, it was religion which brought Anne of Cleves to England (Hanson, "The Six Wives of Henry VIII – Facts & Biographies").
Henry’s third and fourth marriages

- Henry’s fear that that Spanish king Charles V (1500–1548) might attempt an invasion of England led him to seek an alliance with the Protestant powers of Europe.
- To solidify this alliance, Henry married the Protestant princess Anne on January 12, 1540.
- His realization that Charles did not intend to attack, coupled with his distaste for Anne, led to the annulment of his marriage to Anne on July 9, 1540 (“Henry VIII Biography”).
Henry’s fifth and six marriages

- Henry was soon introduced to the nineteen-year-old Catherine Howard.

- She arrived at court in late 1539 or early 1540 as a lady-in-waiting to Anne of Cleves, and Henry VIII fell in love with her (Hanson, “The Six Wives of Henry VIII – Facts & Biographies”).

- He married Catherine within three weeks of his annulment to Anne of Cleves.

- However, this fifth marriage did not last long.
Henry’s fifth and six marriages

• In 1542, Catherine was beheaded on charges of adultery (“Henry VIII Biography”).
• Despite being one of King Henry VIII’s wives, Catherine Howard did not have an impact upon English history.
• Her reign as queen a very brief eighteen months.
• She bore no children and made no lasting impression upon those who knew her (Hanson, "The Six Wives of Henry VIII – Facts & Biographies").
Henry’s fifth and six marriages

• Henry then married the twice-widowed, childless Catherine Parr on July 12, 1543.
• Though she bore him no children, she made him happy.
• She was an admirable wife to Henry and a loving stepmother to his two youngest children, Elizabeth and Edward.
• She was also the most intellectual of Henry’s wives, caught up in the turbulent religious climate of the times (Hanson, "The Six Wives of Henry VIII – Facts & Biographies").
Henry’s fifth and six marriages

• Catherine was a humanitarian and had a keen interest in the Protestant church (Catz).
• She wrote several small books on religious matters and was one of only eight women who had books published in the sixty-odd years of the reigns of Henry VII and Henry VIII.
• These books showed that she was an advocate of Protestantism (Simkin).
• After years of turmoil in marriage, Henry's final marriage was considered to be harmonious, and Catherine would go on to outlive him when Henry died on 28 January 1547 (“Henry VIII”).
Claim #3:  Henry’s divorce from his first wife and subsequent marriage had political and religious ramifications
The End of Long-Brewing Dissatisfaction

• There were three main factors that motivated England's split from the Catholic church.
  1) Henry VIII’s desire to obtain a divorce and the Catholic Church’s refusal to grant him one
  2) The political ambitions of members of Henry’s court.
  3) The public’s increasing dissatisfaction over the past century with the Catholic Church (“The Reformation and its Impact”).

• The citizens of England believed that the Catholic Church's officials were abusing their power for monetary and political gain (Corbella).
The End of Long-Brewing Dissatisfaction

- The English public had to pay the Catholic church to do many things such as
  - to get married
  - to get a child baptized (which you needed to be if you were to go to Heaven – so the Catholic Church preached)
  - to bury someone on their land (which you had to do as your soul could only go to Heaven if you were buried on Holy Ground) (“The Reformation”).
The End of Long-Brewing Dissatisfaction

- The Catholic Church was very wealthy while many poor remained just that….poor.
- The poor felt that all their money was going to the Catholic Church.
- Therefore, there were no great protests throughout the land as many felt that Henry would ease up on taking money from them.
- Henry knew of the Catholic Church’s unpopularity and, therefore, used this to his advantage (“The Reformation”).
Henry Seizes Religious Control

- The diffusing of the religious power in England that had previously been concentrated in Rome was one of the major effects on England after Henry VIII broke away from the Catholic church.
- In 1532 Henry aligned with Thomas Cranmer, an intelligent clergyman who believed in Henry’s schemes to take over religious power in England (Corbella).
Henry Seizes Religious Control

• Thomas Cranmer compiled documents arguing that, historically, the King of England had imperial power similar to that of the Holy Roman Emperors.

• Therefore, Henry was not subject to the Pope’s jurisdiction.

• Henry had to wait until the death of the Archbishop of Canterbury in 1532 before he could get the English clergy’s support for his judicial autonomy.

• Henry appointed Cranmer the new Archbishop of Canterbury and obtained his divorce from Katherine (“The Reformation and its Impact”).
Henry Seizes Religious Control

- In 1534 Henry issued the Act of Supremacy ("The Reformation and its Impact").
- This act formalized the break with Rome and the Catholic Church official.
- This declared Henry the Supreme Head of the now independent Church of England.
- No longer part of the Catholic empire, England and Henry now had total autonomy.
- The clergy were forced to choose sides between Rome and England, and many who chose Rome were executed (Corbella).
Dissolution of the Monasteries

- Another result of Henry VIII's split from the Catholic church was the dissolution of the monasteries.
- By the time of Henry, many monks had grown fat and were lazy.
- They did not help the community as they were meant to do.
- All they seemed to do was take money from the poor.
- Also some monasteries were huge and owned vast areas of land.
- So here were monks not loyal to Henry who were also very wealthy ("The Reformation").
Dissolution of the Monasteries

• Henry decided to shut down the monasteries of England.
• The monasteries were to disappear.
• This is why Henry’s attack on the monasteries is called the ‘Dissolution’ – they were to be dissolved! (“The Reformation”).
• This was the feature of the split that Henry's court had seen as holding so much potential for profit (Corbella).
Dissolution of the Monasteries

- All monastic lands and possessions were seized by the state and sold.
- The process of shutting down the monasteries and seizing their properties resulted in doubling state revenue for several years.
- The profits were often used to fund the personal projects of members of Henry's court (Corbella).
- To some, Henry VIII was a strong and ruthless ruler, forcing through changes to the Church-State relationship.
- However, these changes strengthened the Crown's position and acquiring the monasteries' wealth ("The Tudors: King Henry VIII").
Claim #4: Henry and Anne Boleyn’s daughter Elizabeth became one of England’s most powerful rulers of all time.
Early Life & Becoming Queen

• Queen Elizabeth I was born to King Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn on September 7, 1533.
• Due to the question of the legality of the King’s annulment of his marriage to Katharine of Aragon, the birth of Elizabeth was considered illegitimate.
• Elizabeth’s early years were full of strife as the King worked to have Anne Boleyn and Elizabeth acknowledged.
• This meant that he had to strip his daughter Mary, by his Catholic wife Katharine, of her title of princess.
• Most of society would not acknowledge Elizabeth or her mother, which caused considerable hardships (Lewis).
Early Life & Becoming Queen

• Under the guidance of Henry’s sixth wife, Katharine Parr, Elizabeth received a tremendous amount of education, which was quite unusual for women during that time period.

• After her father’s death, Elizabeth became third in line to the throne, after her ten year old half-brother Edward and her half-sister Mary; if either of them produced heirs, she became further out of line.

• When Edward became ill and later died, a cousin, Lady Jane Grey, took the throne; her rule lasted only nine days until Mary overthrew her.

• Under Mary’s rule, England was restored to Catholicism (Lewis).
Restoring Order to Church of England

• In 1558, Mary died and Elizabeth became Queen.
• Elizabeth had been raised as a Protestant, but she wanted the country’s religious problems that her father created to calm down.
• Elizabeth quickly consolidated power and returned the country to Protestantism.
• She passed the Acts of Supremacy and Uniformity, although by Reformation standards Catholics fared well under these acts (“The Reformation Short Overview”).
Restoring Order to Church of England

- The Acts of Supremacy made Elizabeth the “Supreme Governor” rather than the “Supreme Head” of the English church.
- The Pope, once again, had no say over the Church of England.
- The Church of England very unusual - it was not Catholic but was also unlike other Protestant churches across Europe.
- Services were in English, not Latin, and priests were allowed to marry.
- However, some more traditional aspects remained, such as church music (“The Reformation Short Overview”).
Restoring Order to Church of England

- The religious compromise was challenged many times.
- Catholics still felt that Elizabeth’s changes went too far, but some Protestants felt she did not go far enough.
- Many Protestants continued to push for further changes but Elizabeth refused to be forced into religious changes that she thought would upset too much of the county.
- In 1570 the Pope excommunicated Elizabeth.
- That meant that England would remain broken from the Catholic Church.
- It also meant that Catholics were supposed to oppose Elizabeth in any way they could. (“The Reformation Short Overview”).
Defeating the Spanish Armada

• The Elizabethan court and Parliament became convinced that there were Catholic plots everywhere.

• In 1585 Elizabeth’s officials uncovered the Babington Plot and named Queen Mary of Scotland, a Catholic, as plotting to kill the Queen and take over.

• Mary eventually executed for treason, spurring the Spanish to send an Armada to invade England (“The Reformation Short Overview”).
Defeating the Spanish Armada

- Spain was the most powerful country in the world.
- Philip II ruled vast territories of land, and had unparalleled wealth from the New World.
- England was a small country, with little wealth, few friends, and many enemies.
- Despite numerous setbacks the Spanish had received, they were determined to set a fleet against England.
- The Spanish Armada set off to attack England in May of 1588 ("The Spanish Armada").
Defeating the Spanish Armada

• The English watched the seas day and night, waiting for the first sighting of the great Armada.
• When at last the great ships appeared on the horizon, beacons were lit on the hillsides.
• These beacons sent the message over the cliffs and throughout the country, that the Spanish were coming.
• As soon as the ships began to make their way up the channel, the fighting began (“The Spanish Armada”).
Defeating the Spanish Armada

- In the English channel, the Spanish were suffering a humiliating defeat.
- The weather was dreadful, with the wind and rain against them, and they were not able to compete with the superior English ships and war tactics.
- They fled in terror when fire ships were aimed at them (“The Spanish Armada”).
Defeating the Spanish Armada

• In the end the English had won, establishing the roots of a long tradition of English naval dominance.
• The defeat of the Spanish Armada is one of the most famous events in English history.
• It was arguably Queen Elizabeth's finest hour (“The Spanish Armada”).
• Elizabeth’s reign as the last of the Tudor monarchs lasted 44 years and brought stability and economic growth to England (Lewis).
CONCLUSION

• Henry VII was King of England from April 1509 until his death January 1547.
• Henry is infamous for his six marriages and beheadings of two of his wives.
• However, these marriages produced three children, including the beloved male heir whom Henry strove to have for so long.
• In his quest to divorce his first wife, Henry changed the religion of England from Catholic to Protestant, which greatly impacted the future of his country.
Conclusion

- Although all three of Henry’s children succeeded him to the throne, Elizabeth’s long and power reign is known as the Golden Age of England.
- One would think that Henry would be proud of his daughter, despite his wish for his son to succeed him.
- Under Elizabeth’s reign England was united, strengthened, and entrenched as a Protestant nation; it prospered and flourished, and defeated the great military superpower of the age, Spain.
- Whether or not people like his image, King Henry VIII remains one of England’s most famous and powerful monarchs in history.