

The Tudors

Learning Objective:

To explore and recreate Tudor portraits.

NEXT

In Tudor times, there were no cameras so rich people would have artists paint their portraits so that future generations would be able to see what they looked like. It was also a good opportunity for people to show how wealthy they were. They would often wear their most impressive clothes and expensive jewellery to show how rich and important they were.





One of the most famous portraitists of the 16th century was Hans Holbein. He was a German artist who came to England in 1526. In 1535 he became King's Painter to Henry VIII, which means he was commissioned to paint portraits of the king and other members of the royal family.

This is a portrait of Henry VIII by Hans Holbein, painted around the year 1537. What a handsome chap!



BACK

NEXT



This is another
portrait of Henry
VIII by Holbein.
What do you think
Henry wanted this
portrait to say about
him?



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This is a
portrait of Jane
Seymour, Henry
VIII's third wife. It
was painted by
Hans Holbein.



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This Holbein
portrait shows Edward
VI, Henry's only son, as
a young child.



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This portrait is of Catherine Howard, Henry's fifth wife. What do you think of this portrait?



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This portrait of Anne of Cleves is the picture that Holbein painted in Germany to show King Henry what she looked like before they were married. When Henry saw her in person, he was cross with Holbein for making her look prettier than she was! He called her the 'Flander's Mare' and divorced her a few months later.



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Hans Holbein was not the only portraitist in the Tudor period. Have a look these other portraits of the Tudor royal family and think about these questions...

What do you think of the style of painting?

What do all the portraits have in common?



What colours have been used and why do you think this is?

BACK

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It is
believed that
this is a portrait
of a young
Catherine of
Aragon, Henry
VIII's first
wife.



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This is Anne
Boleyn, Henry's
second wife.



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This is Mary I.
She was also
known as Bloody
Mary because of
her harsh
treatment of
Protestants.



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This is Catherine Parr. She was Henry VIII's sixth and final wife.



BACK

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This is
Queen
Elizabeth I. She
was the daughter
of Henry VIII
and Anne
Boleyn.



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Are you ready to go
and create some
Tudor portraits of
your own?



BACK

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