

Magna Carta

Rationale for the enquiry

The sequence of lessons is designed to build on pupils' existing knowledge and understanding of the medieval period. In particular it is assumed that pupils will already have an outline knowledge of the main features of medieval kingship and how monarchs exercised their power.

In determining the focus for the enquiry historiographical debates among professional historians were used to inform and guide our decision-making. This suggested that a study of Magna Carta could entail the investigation of a number of potential lines of debate:

- The reasons for Magna Carta's creation
- the consequences of Magna Carta
- The nature of its historical significance in terms of the meaning ascribed to it, both at the time and in later periods.

While any of these lines of enquiry could be pursued fruitfully, the recent research of David Carpenter raised another: the puzzle of why and how Magna Carta (both in the sense of its existence as an artefact and as a set of ideas) survived. Carpenter suggests that in many ways the survival of the charter (let alone its rise to such prominence) seemed extremely unlikely in the days and months following its signing at Runnymede in 1215. A sequence of lessons exploring the reasons for the charter's survival, both in the immediate short-term context of the civil war that followed its signing and John's death in 1216, and its subsequent revival and reinvention within the political and legal life of England during the reigns of later medieval monarchs therefore offered an opportunity to explore a genuinely puzzling question. To make the puzzle explicit to pupils, the following enquiry question was developed:

Why was Magna Carta *not* forgotten?

Exploring the puzzle of the reasons for the charter's survival allows for the development of both depth and overview knowledge. In an increasingly squeezed curriculum, it may seem hard to justify spending six or seven lessons on a single enquiry. Yet pupils will do more than gain an in-depth knowledge of the events leading up to the charter's signing and revival following John's death: in order to answer the question they must also engage with a much broader thematic, geographical and chronological span of history. Most obviously, the enquiry allows for an exploration of English kings' exercise of political power, the limits placed upon that power, and the changing relationship that existed between the monarch and his subjects. Furthermore, in order to understand why the charter came into being, pupils will also develop a broader contextual knowledge of the Angevin empire and the threats it faced from the French kings as well as the relationship between the king and the church and between John and the Papacy in particular. In seeking to situate the charter in its broader context, the sequence also develops an overview narrative of medieval kings from Henry I to Edward II, exploring how the charter was put to different uses in the century following its creation. The enquiry thus also offers a way of introducing pupils to the development of Parliament, helping to explain its rise by situating it within a broader political narrative.

Driven as it is by a historical question rather than by a curricular construct the lesson sequence does not focus on one single second-order concept but rather gives pupils opportunities to explore different concepts in the context of the enquiry question. Foremost the enquiry concerns the second-order concept of causation (encompassing consequences), but it also addresses questions of historical significance and, implicitly, change and continuity and interpretations.

The final outcome activity is an essay addressing the question 'Why was Magna Carta not forgotten?'

Overview of the lesson sequence:

Enquiry question: Why was Magna Carta not forgotten?

Lesson 1: Why was Magna Carta necessary?

Lesson 2: How does the reputation of 'Bad King John' explain why Magna Carta was not forgotten?

Lesson 3: How radical was Magna Carta?

Lesson 4: How was Magna Carta revived?

Lesson 5: Who was Magna Carta reinvented by?

Lesson 6: Why was Magna Carta not forgotten?

Time-line of events: Henry I to John I

- 1100 Henry I becomes king of England following the death of his older brother William in a hunting accident. Henry was the fourth son of William the Conqueror. At the time of his brother's death his older brother Robert still lived, but was away on crusade.
- 1100 Henry seeks to win support from the barons for his claim to the throne by issuing a coronation charter, which made wide-ranging concessions.
- 1101 Robert returns from crusade and invades England. Henry made peace with him by granting him his lands in Normandy.
- 1106 Henry invades Normandy. Robert is captured and held prisoner for the rest of his life.
- 1120 Henry's only legitimate son, William, dies in a shipwreck. Henry's other legitimate child, Matilda, is made heir and his barons made to pay homage to her.
- 1128 Matilda is married to Geoffrey Plantagenet, a member of the Angevin family.
- 1135 Henry I dies. The barons do not want to be ruled by a woman. Matilda's cousin, Stephen of Blois, has himself crowned king.
- 1139 Matilda and her half-brother Robert of Gloucester invade. Civil war breaks out.
- 1141 Stephen is captured at Lincoln. Matilda gains control of the country but is never crowned. Civil war continues.
- 1147 Matilda leaves England for France. The struggle is taken up by her son, Henry but he too returns to Normandy.
- 1150-52 Henry becomes ruler of Normandy and Anjou. He gains Aquitaine through his marriage to Eleanor of Aquitaine.
- 1153 Stephen's son and heir dies. Stephen agrees that Henry should succeed him.
- 1154 Stephen dies. Henry becomes King Henry II.
- 1170 Murder of Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury
- 1173-1184 Family disputes between Henry and his four sons – Henry, Geoffrey, Richard and John – over the division of land between them.
- 1183 Henry's son and heir Henry dies, leaving Richard heir.
- 1187: Saladin captures Jerusalem for Islam.
- 1189 Henry II dies while in France fighting a rebellion by Richard. Richard becomes king Richard I.
- 1190 Richard leaves on crusade.
- 1191 Richard wins the Battle of Acre. The crusade fails to take Jerusalem, however.
- 1192 Richard is captured by the Emperor Leopold, who later hands him over to King Philip of France.
- 1194 Richard is freed from captivity. He returns to England but sails for France just a month later.
- 1199 Richard is killed in a siege in central France. His younger brother John becomes King John I.

1167-1114: Time-line of John's life and reign up to the signing of Magna Carta

- 1167: John is born. He is the fourth child of King Henry II.
- 1189: Henry II dies. Richard I becomes king.
- 1190: Richard I leaves England to go on crusade.
- 1192: Returning from crusade, Richard is captured by the Austrian emperor Leopold, who later hands Richard over to the French king. Richard surrenders England to the French king, and receives it back as a fief. John launches a rebellion against his brother in England.
- 1194: Richard returns to England to put down John's rebellion. The king and John are reconciled. Richard returns to France.
- 1199: Richard dies in France. The succession is disputed between John and his nephew, Arthur of Brittany. The succession crisis divides the Angevin lands in France. In May, John is crowned king in Westminster Abbey.
- 1200: King Philip II of France recognises John as heir to all the lands in France held by his brother Richard I and father Henry II. In return, John has to recognise Philip as his overlord in these territories, and pay huge 'relief' or succession duty.
- 1202: John's lands in Aquitaine, Poitou and Anjou are declared forfeit by King Philip. He launches a campaign against John in France.
- 1203: John's rival for the throne, Arthur, is captured in France and mysteriously disappears. Rumours spread that John had him murdered, or even killed him himself.
- 1204: John loses Normandy to the French.
- 1208: Pope Innocent III lays England under an interdict after John refuses to accept Stephen Langton as Archbishop of Canterbury.
- 1209: The Pope excommunicates John.
- 1213: Philip of France prepares to invade England, John is reconciled with the Pope. He surrenders England and Ireland to the Holy See and receives them back again in return for swearing an oath of fealty and doing homage and paying 1000 marks a year. John's excommunication is lifted. The English fleet destroys the French fleet.
- 1214: John sails to France but his army is beaten by the French and he is forced to return to England in October. At Christmas the barons demand that John confirm Henry I's coronation charter, which gave assurances on baronial rights.

1215-Nov 1116: Time-line: crisis and civil war

Jan 1215	John meets the barons in London. The barons demand the restoration of 'ancient liberties'. No agreement is reached. It is decided to appeal to the Pope.
Mar 1215	The Pope draws up letters that he hopes will resolve the disagreement and writes to the barons forbidding them from plotting against John.
5 May 1215	The barons formally renounce their allegiance to John.
12 May 1215	John orders sheriffs to seize the land and property of his enemies and begins to redistribute it. Civil war erupts.
9 Jun 1215	John meets Stephen Langton, Archbishop of Canterbury, to try to resolve the crisis.
10 Jun 1215	John meets a deputation of barons at Runnymede. A draft agreement is drawn up.
15 Jun 1215	The date on the charter. The royal seal was attached a few days later and copies sent out to the counties.
19 Jun 1215	The ceremony of peace takes place. Rebel barons marched on Rochester Castle soon afterwards, however.
Jun-Jul 1215	Copies of the charter are sent to the counties. Copies are stored in cathedral churches.
Aug 1215	The Pope annuls the charter and criticises the barons' rebellion.
1216	The army of Prince Louis of France arrives in England to support the rebel barons.
May 1216	Prince Louis arrives in England.
19 Oct 1216	King John dies at Newark, most likely of dysentery.

1216-1310: Time-line:revival and reinvention

- 28 Oct 1216 King Henry III is crowned at Gloucester. He is just nine years old. The charter is reissued for the first time by loyal barons in Henry's government in an effort to win support from the rebel barons.
- Sep 1217 The Treaty of Lambeth ends the civil war. Prince Louis is given a generous pay-off and returns to France.
- Nov 1217 The second reissue of the charter. A 'Charter of the Forest' is also issued as a supplement.
- 1225 Henry III issues his own version of Magna Carta. He says he does so of his own free choice.
- 1237 Henry III reconfirms the 1225 charters.
- 1253 The charter is confirmed at Westminster. Witnesses include not just barons, but representatives of the church and town leaders.
- 1258 Henry III faces crisis at home and abroad. A bungled deal with the Papacy results in Henry being threatened with excommunication. He faces a rebellion in Wales and discontent from English barons. The Provisions of Oxford create a Privy Council to advise the king. It also establishes that Parliament is to be held three times a year.
- 1264 Civil War. Simon de Montfort is victorious at Lewes and set up a new government. Henry III's son, Edward was taken hostage to ensure peace.
- 1265 Edward escapes captivity. Simon de Montfort is defeated and killed at Evesham. Edward takes control of the government from his father.
- 1265 The charter is published in the counties.
- 1272 Henry III dies while Edward is on crusade. Edward becomes King Edward I.
- 1274 Edward I returns to England.
- 1277-1301 Edward fights a series of wars to end hopes of Welsh independence and bring Wales into the English legal and administrative system.
- 1296 Edward invades and conquers Scotland.
- 1297 Edward issues a Confirmation of the Charters which accepts that taxation can only be raised by common consent.
- 1300 Edward I reissues the charter. Articles Concerning the Charters set out how the charter will be enforced.
- 1305 William Wallace is captured and executed.
- 1306 Rebellion by Robert the Bruce of Scotland.
- 1307 Edward dies on his way to fight Robert the Bruce. Edward II becomes king.
- 1310 Edward II is accused of repeatedly breaking the terms of the charters. The barons appoint the Lord Ordainers to control the interpretation of the terms of Magna Carta.

Lesson 1: Why was Magna Carta necessary?

Introduction

The lesson gives pupils an overview of the power exercised by medieval kings from Henry I to John I. It sets the signing of Magna Carta in 1215 in context by considering the extent to which kings in the century preceding the charter's signing were already bound by rules and customs and therefore the extent to which attempts to limit John's power marked a new development. Pupils will also look at the restraints on Henry I's power established in his coronation charter. Pupils will use this contextual knowledge in subsequent lessons to evaluate the extent to which Magna Carta can be considered unique.

Lesson objectives

- ▲ Identify rules and conventions that monarchs were meant to follow
- ▲ Evaluate the extent to which medieval kings followed rules and conventions
- ▲ Describe what happened to medieval kings who did not follow rules and conventions

1.1 Resources Henry I's nightmares The terms of King Henry I's coronation charter

1.2 Information cards: three kings

1.3 Living graph

1.4 King John signing Magna Carta

Lesson outline

ISM

Ask pupils to think about rule-making and -breaking in the context of their own school setting:

Q: What rules in school do you have to follow?

Q: What happens if you break the rules?

Q: Who do you think makes the rules?

Q: Do the people who make the rules have to follow any rules themselves? Should they?

Transition

Explain that we are going to be looking at what rules, if any, medieval kings had to follow, and what happened to kings who broke the rules. (Depending on pupils' prior learning you may wish to recap with pupils the powers [law, loyalty and land] that monarchs were able to exercise to maintain control.

Activity 1

Display picture of Henry I's nightmares from John of Worcester's chronicle (**resource 1.1**). Ask pupils to describe what they can see, and therefore what the picture might show. Pupils should be encouraged to identify the figures in each scene. Explain that the pictures show Henry I's nightmares.

Q: What do the pictures suggest about *who* the king had to keep happy?

Q: What does it suggest about *what* the king was afraid of?

Transition

Display terms of Henry I's charter (**resource 1.2**) on the board. Explain that when he was crowned king, Henry I created a charter in which he promised to maintain good laws.

Q: The charter was made in 1100, whereas Henry had his nightmares in 1130. What does that suggest about *why* King Henry was having nightmares? (Elicit idea that he has broken his promises.).

But how typical was Henry? Does the fact that medieval kings were expected to obey certain rules mean that they did? And what happened to those who broke the rules?

Activity 2

Hand out information sheet for Henry I, Henry II, and Richard I (**resource 1.3**). Ask pupils to highlight the information for each king:

- Decisions to do with money
- Decisions to do with land
- Decisions to do with law and order

Pupils should then annotate each highlighted section to show whether the king was following the rules or breaking the rules.

Pupils then plot each monarch on to a living graph (**resource 1.4**) to show the extent to which they think they followed the rules.

Ask students to re-read the information on their cards and use it to label their graph (**resource 1.4**) to show what happened to monarchs who didn't obey the rules.

Plenary discussion

Ask pupils to speculate about why kings who broke the rules were treated in the way they were.?

Conclusion

Show picture of John sealing Magna Carta (**resource 1.5**). Use questioning to elicit what might be happening in the picture and whether or not they think the king is sealing the document voluntarily. Explain that John was forced to seal it by his barons, who wanted to limit his power.

Q: What does this suggest about what kind of a king John was?

Q: What does this suggest is happening to medieval kings' power?

Lesson 2: How does the reputation of 'Bad King John' explain why Magna Carta was not forgotten?

Introduction

The lesson introduces pupils to Magna Carta and asks them to generate hypotheses to explain why it has come to be seen as historically significant. The lesson will also enable pupils to explain why Magna Carta was signed by exploring the events of John's reign and in particular the decisions he made that culminated in the events of 1215. Pupils will also be asked to evaluate the extent to which John deserves his reputation as a 'bad king' and to explain why and how far his reputation explains the fact that Magna Carta has entered into public memory.

Lesson objectives

- Generate hypotheses to explain why Magna Carta has not been forgotten
- Evaluate the validity of the interpretation of John as a 'bad king'

Resources and rationale

1.1 Magna Carta interpretations: quotes about Magna Carta

1.2 Video clip of 'Phoney King of England' song from Disney's *Robin Hood* and copy of lyrics

1.3 Decision-making game on John's reign

1.4 Interpretations scale

Lesson outline

ISM

Ask pupils whether they think people will be reading their exercise books in ten years? A hundred years? A thousand years? Why/why not?

Display quotes about Magna Carta (**resource 2.1**).

Q: On a scale of 0-10, how important do these quotes suggest this document is?

Q: Why might such a document be remembered for so long?

Transition

Introduce Magna Carta. Explain that it was made in 1215 and it set out rules that the king, John, was meant to follow. But why was this *particular* document not forgotten? Indeed, why are we still talking about it 800 years later?

Before we can answer these bigger questions we need to find out why was it needed in the first place.

Activity 1

Show pupils 'The Phoney King of England' song from Disney's *Robin Hood*. Provide students with a copy of the song's lyrics (**resource 2.2**). Ask pupils to think about the following questions as they watch the clip:

Q: Does the song suggest that John was a good or a bad king?

Q: How do you know? Give three things the song tells us about John to support your view.

Transition

Explain that King John, the king who signed Magna Carta, is often remembered as being a very bad king.

Q: How does this explain why Magna Carta was needed in the first place?

Q: Why might this explain why Magna Carta is still remembered?

Explain that we are going to investigate whether John really was such a bad king.

Activity 2

Hand each pupil a copy of **resource 2.3**. Set up the activity by explaining that they are going to put themselves into John's shoes. They will have to deal with the same problems that John faced during his reign, and decide what they would advise John to do. Ask pupils to record what they think John *should* have done and what John did do as they work through the game. For each of John's decisions pupils should explain why it was a good or a bad decision or an unlucky one.

Conclusion

Display **resource 2.4**. Ask pupils which view they most agree with: that John deserved his 'bad' interpretation or that John did not deserve his bad reputation.

Q: How does the fact that John is remembered by history as a terrible king also explain why Magna Carta was also remembered?

Lesson 3: How radical was Magna Carta?

Introduction

The lesson explores the extent to which the ideas and principles enshrined in Magna Carta can be considered radical and therefore how far this explains why it has come to be seen as historically significant. Pupils will be introduced to the main terms of Magna Carta and will compare them with the terms of Henry I's coronation charter in order to consider how far the charter built on historical precedent. Pupils will also look at some of the arguments for and against its terms being considered radical, before making their own judgement.

Lesson objectives

- Recall the major problems of John's kingship
- Explain how Magna Carta was intended to address these problems
- Judge how radical Magna Carta was

Lesson resources and rationale

- 1.1 Photograph of the American Bar Association Magna Carta memorial (No: it's a table of "what happened")
- 1.2 Magna Carta terms: what did Magna Carta actually say?
- 1.3 Magna Carta fact cards
- 1.4 How radical was Magna Carta?

Lesson outline

ISM

Display a photograph of the American Bar Association's Magna Carta memorial on the board (resource 3.1). It is important that students are not given any information about where the memorial is, what it commemorates, or who built it. Ask pupils to look carefully at the photograph, thinking carefully about where it is, what style it is built in and what it shows. On the basis of their observations, pupils should choose from or improve upon the following list of statements:

- ⤴ What happened here was important
- ⤴ What happened here was unique
- ⤴ What happened here was violent
- ⤴ What happened here was inspiring
- ⤴ What happened here matters
- ⤴ What happened was unimportant
- ⤴ What happened here was ordinary
- ⤴ What happened here doesn't matter

Reveal that the monument was paid for and built by the American Bar Association (a group of American lawyers) to commemorate the signing of Magna Carta in 1215.

Ask pupils to recap what they can remember about what Magna Carta was and who signed it.

Q: What questions are you now able to put about the memorial?

Q: What does it suggest the American Bar Association thinks about Magna Carta?

Transition

The memorial suggests that Magna Carta was in some way special. Some people have even said it was *radical*. What does this mean?

Set up a scenario of a 'radical' change in school (e.g. changes to the school day, uniform, canteen, homework – whatever clearly constitutes a radical change). Explain that this change is radical, and

then ask pupils to consider what makes something radical. From the class discussion generate two or three criteria that define what makes something radical (e.g. a lot of people are affected, the changes last a long time, they are noticeable, they are new or unique).

So how radical was Magna Carta?

Activity 1

To work out how radical Magna Carta was, first we need to know what it actually said. Display the barons' complaints and terms of Magna Carta (**resource 3.2**). Which of the charter's terms addressed which of the barons' complaints? Ask pupils to draw a line between each complaint and the term (or terms) of the charter that dealt with it.

Plenary discussion

Check pupils' understanding of the terms.

Transition

Was the *idea* of using a charter completely new? (recap Henry I's coronation charter from lesson 2). But if the idea of using a charter itself wasn't new, how new were the ideas it set out?

Activity 2

Give each pupil a copy of **resource 3.3** (Magna Carta fact cards). Introduce pupils to two competing interpretations: Historian A, who believes that Magna Carta *was* radical, and historian B, who believes it wasn't radical. Ask pupils to decide which interpretation each fact supports and record their answers in the historian's speech bubble. It may be appropriate to record some facts in both speech bubbles.

Extension: pupils could be asked to annotate each fact card to show which 'radical criterion' it relates to.

Conclusion

Revisit criteria for 'radical'. How far can we say that Magna Carta was 'radical'? Ask pupils to record their ideas on the scale (**resource 3.4**).

Lesson 4: How was Magna Carta revived?

Introduction

This lesson moves the narrative on by exploring the immediate aftermath of the charter's signing up to Henry III's reissuing of the charter in 1225. Pupils will investigate why the charter seemed unlikely to survive in the months immediately following its creation at Runnymede, the significance of John's premature death for its survival and the reasons for its revival in the reign of Henry III.

Lesson objectives

- Explain why the charter as a physical artefact survived in the years immediately following its creation
- Explain why the charter as a set of ideas survived in the years immediately following its creation.

Resources

- 4.1 Interpretations of King John
- 4.2 Table showing events in Magna Carta's survival.
- 4.3 Causation scale: why did Magna Carta survive?

Lesson outline

ISM

Show pupils **resource 4.1** (interpretations of King John). Ask them to match each interpretation to an example that supports it. Alternatively, pupils could be asked to recall from memory examples of John's personality and decisions to support each quote:

- John's personality
- The bad decisions he made in his reign
- Who he upset
- What he was made to do

Q: Did King John want Magna Carta? Why?

Q: Based on what you know about John's personality and his decisions, what was he likely to do about it?

Transition

Explain that John had no intention of keeping the promises he made at Runnymede. He was determined that Magna Carta should be forgotten as quickly as possible. So why wasn't it?

Activity 1

Give each pupil a copy of **resource 4.2**, the table charting the story charter's survival between 1215 and 1225. For each event, pupils need to rate the charter's chances of survival and explain their judgement. To help them, pupils should think about the following:

- ⤴ Is it to do with the survival of the charter as a **physical artefact**?
- ⤴ Is it to do with the survival of the **ideas** in the charter?

Next, pupils should colour-code each event to show what it suggests about *why* the charter survived:

- 1) Actions of the king
- 2) Actions of the barons
- 3) Actions of the church
- 4) Luck

Plenary discussion

Q: When did it seem most likely that Magna Carta *would* be forgotten?

Q: Is there a turning point when it became much more likely that Magna Carta would *not* be forgotten?

Conclusion

Display the causation scale (**resource 4.3**). Ask pupils to plot each of the reasons for the charter's survival (actions of the king, barons, church and luck) on to the scale to show how important a role they think it played in the charter's survival. Pupils should annotate the scale to justify their decision.

Lesson 5: Who was Magna Carta reinvented by?

Introduction

Having spent lessons 3 and 4 engaged in a depth study of Magna Carta's terms and immediate survival, in lesson 5 pupils will gain an overview of the century following Magna Carta's creation that situates its survival and consolidation within a bigger narrative of the power struggles between kings and their barons. By studying the ways in which Magna Carta was exploited in the 100 years following its creation in 1215 students are introduced to three different case studies of medieval kingship: the minority kingship of Henry III, the martial kingship of Edward I and the weak kingship of Edward II. As part of the lesson pupils will also be introduced to Simon de Montfort and the birth of Parliament, building a knowledge base that can be used for future study on the evolving importance of Parliament.

Lesson objectives

- To explain how Magna Carta was put to different uses by different people
- To judge whether Magna Carta reinvented more by monarchs or by the barons.

Resources

- 5.1 Chances of survival scale (No: the file provided is "Recap of the main events in the year following Magna Carta's creation)
- 5.2 Images of different copies of Magna Carta
- 5.3 Interpretations and big cards
- 5.4 Time-line: the life of Magna Carta from 1215 to 1315

Lesson outline

ISM

Last lesson we looked at how Magna Carta was revived (recap what we mean by revived). But did that mean that Magna Carta was certain never to be forgotten? Ask pupils to rate this likelihood on a scale (**resource 5.1**). Who or what still threatened its survival?

Set up lesson puzzle: How was Magna Carta's future survival made more certain?

Activity 1

Divide the class into groups. Give each group a small collection of everyday objects (e.g. pencils, cereal boxes, toilet rolls, paper). Ask them what these different objects are used for. Explain that pupils are going to reinvent these objects and ask pupils what they think this might mean (elicit adapting or changing the objects so that they can be used in a different way). Give pupils a couple of minutes to 'reinvent' their objects.

Transition

What does this have to do with Magna Carta? Display four images of different versions of Magna Carta (**resource 5.2**). Ask pupils to spot the differences between them (elicit that they were issued at different times and by different kings). Explain to pupils that Magna Carta's future was secured because over time it was reinvented. But who was it reinvented by?

Activity 2

Display two differing interpretations (**resource 5.3**): one that asserts that Magna Carta was reinvented by clever kings who used it to control their kingdom, the other that it was reinvented by the barons who used it to force kings to limit their power.

Divide pupils into groups. Give each group a large copy of **resource 5.3**. Ask pupils to work in pairs

within each group to decide which interpretation each card most strongly supports. If they feel it could support both interpretations they can place it in the zone of uncertainty for group discussion. They can then glue the cards under the relevant heading, in date order from earliest to latest. (Work can be taken in and photocopied as a set of notes, or pupils can be given a copy of the cards as a time-line [**resource 5.4**].)

Plenary/conclusion

Ask pupils to use their completed diagrams to think about:

Q: Which kings seemed to be able to use the charter to their own benefit? Which kings seemed to have it forced on them?

Q: How did the charter's use change over time?

Q: How did the people reinventing the charter change over time?

Q: Who do they think ultimately managed to reinvent it – the monarchs or the barons?

Lesson 6: Why was Magna Carta not forgotten?

Introduction

This lesson forms the enquiry conclusion. It pulls together the different reasons pupils have explored for Magna Carta's survival (John's reputation, the radical ideas the charter set out, the revival of the charter in the year following its creation, and the charter's reinvention in the century following 1215). The outcome task is an essay addressing the question 'Why was Magna Carta not forgotten?'

Lesson objectives

- Recall reasons for Magna Carta's survival
- Categorise reasons for Magna Carta's survival
- Construct an argument explaining the reasons for Magna Carta's survival

Resources

- 6.1 King John speech bubble
- 6.2 Data capture table
- 6.3 Interpretations speech bubbles

Lesson outline

ISM

Display a section of newspaper headlines and websites devoted to Magna Carta [teacher to choose]. Explain that 2015 was the 800th anniversary of Magna Carta's creation in Runnymede. Are pupils surprised that Magna Carta is still being talked about today? Why? Ask pupils to speculate about why they think it is still remembered *today*.

Show pupils a picture of King John. Ask pupils whether or not they think King John would have been surprised to find that Magna Carta is still remembered. Recap why in 1215 the most likely outcome seemed to be that Magna Carta would be forgotten. Pupils can record their ideas on **resource 6.1**.

Transition

So why wasn't Magna Carta forgotten in the 100 years after it was signed?

Activity 1

Ask pupils to write down as many ideas as they can that explain why Magna Carta was not forgotten in the 100 years following its creation. Build up a list of ideas on the board.

Recap with pupils the four big reasons they have explored over the course of the enquiry that explain why Magna Carta was not forgotten.

- John's bad **reputation**
- The charter's **radical** ideas
- The charter's **revival**
- The charter's **reinvention**

Ask pupils to go back through all the reasons they generated for the survival of Magna Carta and colour-code them to show which of the four big reasons they are to do with.

Transition

How did these factors make sure that Magna Carta was not forgotten? And which was the most important?

Activity 2

Set up activity by explaining that we need to gather evidence to help us decide how each of these big reasons helped Magna Carta survive, and to decide which was the most important reason. Give each pupil a copy of **resource 6.2**. Ask pupils to complete the table by going back through their notes and finding examples.

Plenary/transition

Check the examples that pupils have identified.

But which of the reasons, is any was the most important?

Activity 3

Give pupils the speech bubbles in **resource 6.3** (either in pairs as a set of cut out cards or printed as big cards for a whole-class activity). Ask them to sort the speech bubbles into a line, from what they think is the most important reason for the charter's survival to the least important. Encourage pupils to think about links between the cards (e.g. that Magna Carta's revival made possible its reinvention).

Is there another way of thinking about the reasons? Did they play different roles at different times? Ask pupils to sort the speech bubbles into chronological order.

Conclusion

Set up the assessment: an essay answering the question 'Why was Magna Carta not forgotten?'