Year: 8	Subject: History	Unit title: The English Civil War	Term: Autumn

Knowledge (Learn that):

- Scholars know that James I created mistrust over royal power and religion due to his belief in Divine Right and harsh treatment of Catholics.
- Scholars know that Charles created tension with Parliament as he introduced Catholic-looking reforms, ruled without Parliament and used illegal taxes to raise money.
- Scholars know that as Parliament limited royal power and Charles resisted, England moved towards civil war.
- Scholars know that Charles was defeated in the First Civil War and evidence found after Naseby showed he could not be trusted.
- Scholars know that Charles refused to compromise with Parliament. He continued to plot against Parliament, who decided he was too dangerous to remain king.
- Scholars understand that Parliament did not set out with the intention of executing Charles. This outcome was the result of the events of the Second Civil War and the radicalisation of Parliament.

Core Vocabulary:

Union of Crowns, Divine Right of Kings, Parliament, Gunpowder Plot, Puritan, Eleven Years Tyranny, Ship Money, Star Chamber, Bishops' War, Short Parliament, Long Parliament, Grand Remonstrance, Royalist, Parliamentarian, New Model Army, Naseby, Newcastle Propositions, Pride's Purge, Regicide, Treason

Vocabulary to Encounter:

James I, Robert Catesby, Henrietta Maria, William Laud, John Hampden, John Pym, Earl of Strafford, Cavaliers, Roundheads, Ironsides, Oliver Cromwell, Second Civil War, High Court of Justice, Commonwealth

Vocabulary to Retrieve:

Succession, Monarch, Catholic, Protestant, Martyr, Reformation, Act of Supremacy, Archbishop, Magna Carta, Parliament, Consent, Taxation, Rebellion, Legitimacy

Teaching Sequence:

Lesson 1: The Union of Crowns
Lesson 2: Charles I
Lesson 3: The Road to Civil War
Lesson 4: The English Civil War
Lesson 5: The End of the Civil War
Lesson 6: Knowledge Test/Revision/Buffer Lesson
Lesson 7: Planning Lesson
Lesson 8: Essay Writing Lesson
Lesson 9: Whole Class Feedback Lesson

Disciplinary aims:

The primary disciplinary aim is for scholars to understand **causation, responsibility and historical argument.**
Scholars will be encouraged to:

- Distinguish long-term tensions from the direct causes of Civil War and regicide.
- Trace the cumulative breakdown of trust between monarch and Parliament from James I to 1649.
- Explain how political, religious, financial and military developments interacted.
- Distinguish causes of the Civil War from causes of Charles I's execution.
- Recognise that regicide was a contingent outcome rather than Parliament's original intention.
- Explain how Charles's refusal to compromise and the Second Civil War radicalised the army and Parliament.
- Compare the responsibility of Charles, Parliament and the New Model Army.
- Use counterfactual reasoning to test whether execution would have occurred without particular decisions or events.

This enquiry develops scholars' understanding that historical outcomes can emerge through escalation and repeated choices. It asks scholars to explain why an initially unplanned outcome became possible and then necessary to some contemporaries.

Writing curriculum:

Throughout this unit, scholars use writing to practise causal explanation, responsibility and comparative judgement.

- Scholars use varied causal language including triggered, contributed to, accelerated, deepened, intensified, provoked and resulted in.
- "Because, but, so" structures connect motives, resistance, escalation and consequence.
- Ranking and categorising tasks require scholars to select and justify the strongest evidence.
- Chronological sequencing helps scholars explain how relations deteriorated rather than treating execution as inevitable.
- Writing progresses from explaining individual tensions to comparing Charles's responsibility with Parliament's responsibility.
- The final essay is organised around the actions of Charles and Parliament, using evidence from the whole enquiry.
- The conclusion weighs responsibility and explains why the Second Civil War and radicalisation were decisive.

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Links to other units:

Why this and why now?

The English Civil War is the third Year 8 enquiry and follows the Reformation. It is positioned here to:

- Show how Tudor religious change created enduring mistrust under the Stuart monarchy.
- Extend causation from explaining reform to explaining escalation, responsibility and an unintended outcome.
- Develop the long history of limits on monarchy, consent to taxation and Parliament.
- Provide the essential political context for later Year 8 study of Parliamentary power and constitutional monarchy.

How does this speak to what came before?

- The Reformation and Tudor Big Picture lessons establish Protestant England, Catholic persecution and repeated religious change.
- Medieval Monarchy introduced Magna Carta, Parliament, consent, taxation and challenges to royal authority.
- The Renaissance and Reformation established printing, religious debate and challenges to established authority.
- Earlier causation enquiries provide a foundation for linking long-term conditions, triggers and accelerating events.

How does this prepare scholars for what comes next?

- Later Year 8 study of the Glorious Revolution and Parliamentary government builds on the consequences of regicide and conflict over royal authority.
- The development of constitutional monarchy can be understood against the failed personal rule of Charles I.
- Later enquiries into empire, slavery and revolution draw on questions of sovereignty, resistance and political legitimacy.
- In Year 9, scholars can apply responsibility and contingency to modern conflicts and political change.

Links to the national curriculum:

This unit directly supports the key stage 3 study of the development of Church, state and society in Britain 1509–1745. It examines the causes and course of the English Civil War, the trial and execution of Charles I, and the changing relationship between monarchy, Parliament and the army.

Linking to the KS3 National Curriculum

- Scholars study the Union of Crowns, religious tension and Stuart beliefs about monarchy.
- The unit examines Charles I's Personal Rule, taxation, religious reforms and conflict with Parliament.
- Scholars trace the road to Civil War, Parliament's military victory and the emergence of the New Model Army.
- The enquiry explains the Second Civil War, Pride's Purge, the trial of Charles I and regicide.

Moving Beyond the KS3 National Curriculum

1. Contingency and Escalation

- Regicide is treated as an outcome produced by escalation rather than as an inevitable endpoint.
- Scholars examine moments when compromise remained possible and decisions that narrowed alternatives.

2. Responsibility and Competing Agency

- The enquiry separates responsibility for tension, war and execution.
- It compares the agency of the monarch, Parliament and the army.

3. Religion, Power and Political Legitimacy

- Religious fears are connected to debates about taxation, law, representation and sovereignty.
- Scholars examine how both sides claimed to defend England's legitimate constitution.

4. Disciplinary Literacy and Argument

- A varied causal vocabulary supports precise explanation of different causal roles.
- The final essay requires thematic organisation, comparison and a justified judgement about responsibility.