

The Peasants' Revolt

1 On Thursday, 30 May 1381, Thomas Bampton was collecting taxes in Essex.



He treated the villagers of Fobbing badly.

2 Later that day, Thomas the Baker and one hundred villagers attacked Bampton.



3 Twenty thousand peasants rebelled.



WE ARE NO LONGER PREPARED TO EAT YESTERDAY'S STALE VEGETABLES!

4 On Friday, 7 June 1381, the rebels asked Wat Tyler to be their leader.



They marched to London.

5 On Thursday, 13 June 1381, John Ball preached to the rebels:



GOD CREATED ALL MEN EQUAL. IT IS TIME FOR FREEDOM.

I LIKE HIM. WE WILL MAKE HIM ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.

6 Later that day, three merchants opened the gates of London.



They let in the rebels.

10 Tyler insulted the king.



NO MORE VILLEINS! ALL MEN MUST BE FREE AND EQUAL.

9 King Richard II was only 14 years old. On Saturday, 15 June 1381, he met Tyler at Smithfield.

William of Walworth, the Lord Mayor of London, killed Tyler.



7 The rebels burned the houses of the rich.



11 Richard spoke to the rebels:

I WILL BE YOUR KING AND YOUR LEADER.

The peasants went home.



8 They went to the Tower of London.

9 The Archbishop of Canterbury, who was the king's adviser, was hiding there. The rebels killed him.



12 Many peasants were hanged.

VILLEINS YOU WERE AND VILLEINS YOU WILL STAY.

As historians, you will be used to baronial revolts in the Middle Ages but, in 1381, there was a different kind of rebellion.

Twenty thousand peasants, led by a few soldiers and lower-ranking priests, took London and almost overturned the government.

What caused such an amazing and unprecedented event ?

Here are TEN causes (not in any sort of order) which historians have suggested:

- 1 The villeins hated being villeins. Some had taken their lords to court to get their duties reduced. Others joined together and refused to work for their lords. This had been going on since 1300. Parliament had recently passed a law to stop this, and to imprison 'all such rebels'.
- 2 On Thursday, 30 May 1381, Thomas Bampton tried to collect the Poll Tax from the villagers of Fobbing in Essex. He threatened the men. He lifted the females' skirts to see if they were women (who had to pay) or girls (who did not). This made the villagers angry and they rioted.
- 3 After the Black Death of 1348-50, poor people became rebellious, bitter and angry. They would not take orders from anybody.
- 4 In March 1381 Parliament sent Commissioners to every village to make everybody pay a Poll Tax. It was the third Poll Tax in four years. The tax was hard on the poor people, who became very angry.
- 5 Since 1377, England had been ruled by a boy-king. At the time of the Peasants' Revolt, Richard II was only 14 years old. This meant that the government was weak, and the peasants felt they had more chance of success.
- 6 In 1351, Parliament had passed a law saying that if a workman asked for a wage rise, he could be outlawed or branded. This made the workers angry.
- 7 On Friday, 7 June 1381, the rebels asked Wat Tyler to be their leader. He was an ex-soldier and a good leader.
- 8 Since 1360 a priest called John Ball had criticised wealthy priests and lords. He told the rebels: God created all men equal. It is time for freedom. The rulers are the weeds of England, and you must pick out and throw away the evil lords. The peasants liked him. He encouraged them to rebel.
- 9 Since 1369, England had been fighting — and losing — a war against France. People were angry and blamed the government.
- 10 The merchants and traders of London hated each other. They supported the rebellion because they hoped that the peasants would kill their enemies. On Thursday, 13 June 1381, three of them opened the gates of London for the rebels.

1. Draw a peasant. Annotate the peasant/villain to show why he might have joined a revolt.
2. What do you think was the main cause of the revolt? Explain
3. Look at the storyboard. Describe the Peasants' Revolt in your own words.
4. Make a mind map of everything you know about the Peasants' Revolt. Then annotate that mind map with drawings.

Medieval Life

How important was the Church in the 12th century?

These statements will help you to explore how important the Church was in people's lives.

Give each of these statements a score out of 5.

5 = It makes the Church seem extremely important.

1 = It doesn't make the Church seem important in the slightest!



A. Everyone believed in heaven and hell. They knew they had to obey the teachings of the Church to get to heaven.

Score: 5

I have given this score because:

People were very scared of going to hell, so they would listen to everything the Church told them. This means the Church had lots of power over people's lives.

Score:

I have given this score because:



B. Priests and monks were treated differently to ordinary people if they got in trouble. They were tried in Church courts and more likely to be let off.

C. Churches (even ones in villages) were very big, expensive and awesome!

Score:

I have given this score because:

Score:

I have given this score because:

D. People paid a tax (called a tithe) to the Church as well as to the King. This paid for new churches and monasteries to be built.

E. The Archbishop of Canterbury was in charge of the Church in England.

Score:
I have given this score because:

Score:
I have given this score because:

F. The Pope was in charge of the whole Christian Church.



G. The Archbishop of Canterbury was chosen by the King, but the Pope had to approve.

Score:
I have given this score because:

Score:
I have given this score because:

H. The Archbishop had the power to excommunicate people – cut them off from all religion and damn them to hell!

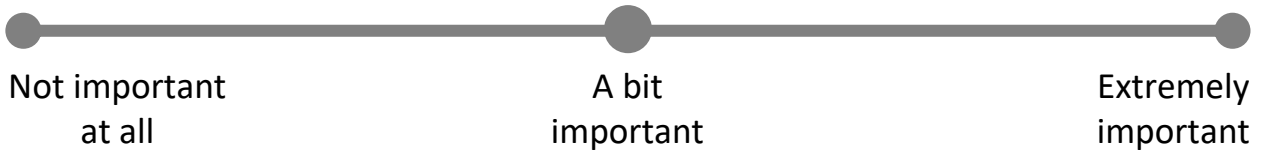
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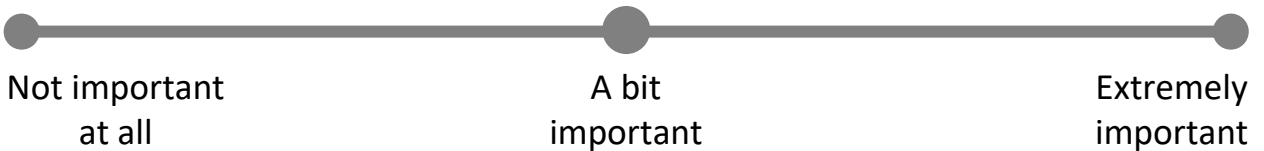
Read each statement and decide how powerful you think it makes the Church sound. Put a mark on the line to show this.



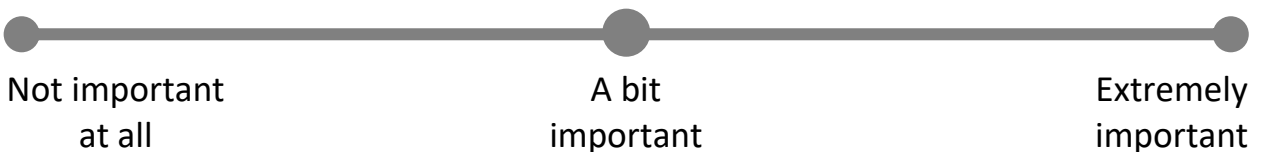
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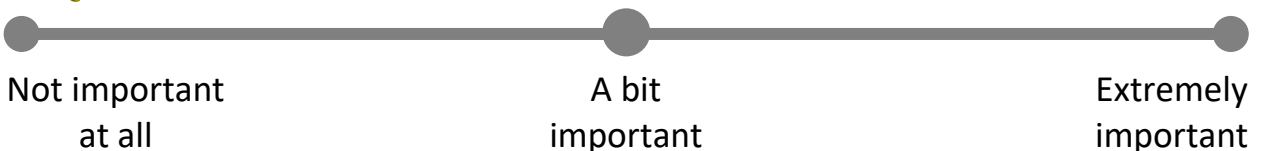
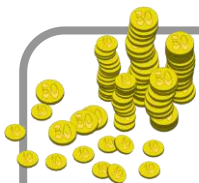
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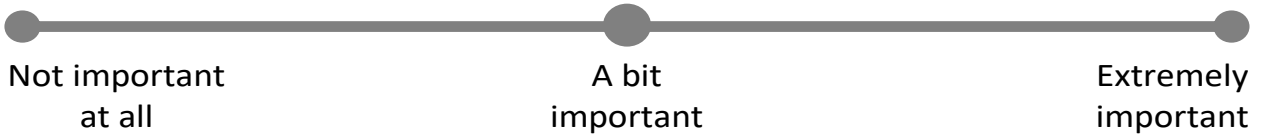
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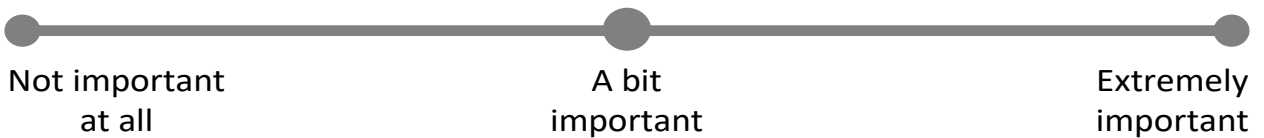
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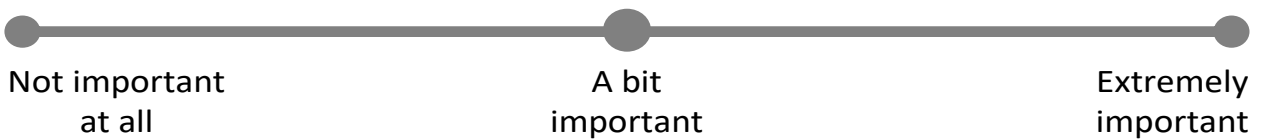
E. The Archbishop of Canterbury was in charge of the Church in England.



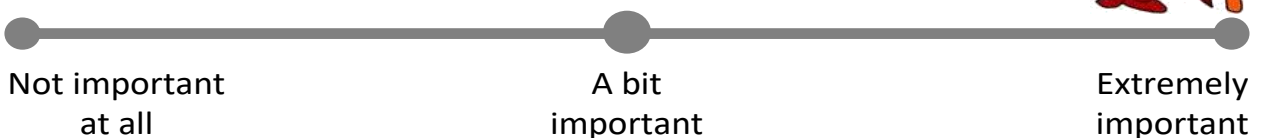
F. The Pope was in charge of the whole Christian Church.



G. The Archbishop of Canterbury was chosen by the King, but the Pope had to approve.



H. The Archbishop had the power to excommunicate people – cut them off from all religion and damn them to hell!



Write an essay to answer the question ‘The Medieval Church was extremely powerful. How far do you agree?’.

You will need:

2 PEE paragraphs arguing it was powerful

2 PEE paragraphs arguing it was not powerful

Conclusion