



Historical Association

The voice for history

AGINCOURT
600

Historical Association & Agincourt 600

Key Stage Three scheme of work

Resource pack

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What happened at Agincourt: data capture sheet

Battle of Agincourt: cartoon script

1. Henry V wanted – no, he *needed* – to reclaim the English lands in France. God was on Henry's side and he also wanted to give his reign legitimacy (his father was Henry IV and he had taken the throne from his cousin Richard II). After months of fraught negotiations Henry V had been unable to get the French to see sense and give him back his land: invasion was inevitable... but risky.
2. Normandy was the target and Henry landed at Honfleur on 14 August 1415. He marched with his army to Harfleur, three miles inland, and prepared the siege. But this would not be an easy siege. Harfleur was well defended and the inhabitants put up fierce resistance. Eventually, after five weeks, the town surrendered. Harfleur would now become a second Calais and act as the port for English supplies to support further advancement into Normandy.
3. BUT Henry would not continue his conquest of Normandy this year. The French had destroyed crops with their scorched-earth policy and Henry's troops were exhausted following their five-week siege. Plus dysentery had set in and many men were given permission to return home. Although victorious at Harfleur, Henry's situation didn't look so good now.
4. Henry and his men had an eight-day march ahead of them and had to cross the river Somme. Any river crossing could be dangerous; getting equipment and men across made an army vulnerable. Henry knew where he wanted to cross but the French were shadowing his army on the northern side of the river. Henry had to keep going, and going!
5. The crossing took place two weeks after leaving Harfleur! In total Henry's army marched 260 miles in 17 days to reach Agincourt. They only had eight days' rations. The French had blocked his path at Agincourt and Henry took his army to the top of the slope towards Maisoncelle. From here he could see the French army.
6. The English army stood in battle formation awaiting a French attack but it never came that afternoon or evening. Both sides camped within earshot of each other. The French camp was noisy but the English were kept quiet in case of attack. It rained, as it had done for several days. The fields were getting muddy.
7. The two sides opposed each other the next morning. They started out of reach of each other, the English with, maybe 8,000 combined men-at-arms and archers (1000+ to 7000), the French with around 12,000 (mainly men-at-arms). Henry's archers had planted their stakes but he had to engage the

French so he ordered the stakes to be taken out of the ground and the army move forward to within reach of the French. The archers replaced their stakes in the ground.

8. The French battle plan was simple: most of their men-at-arms should attack on foot under protection from archers and missiles while some would remain on horseback and attack the English archers on the flanks. It didn't work. The field was too muddy and the French nobles couldn't wait to grab the glory for themselves. They pushed to the front with the result that the French seemed leaderless.
9. From the wings the English archers were able to fire a storm of arrows into the advancing French. French horses and men fell under this onslaught. When the French did reach the English front line they were exhausted from the mud and had trodden over the dead bodies of their comrades. The English line held and Henry was victorious.

Medieval money

Name of coin	Value	How to write it	Remarks	Modern equivalent	How to write it
Pound	20 shillings	£1.0s.0d	Made up of 240 silver pennies (which weighed 1 lb/454gm).A sovereign gold coin was worth one pound	One pound or 100 bronze pence	£1.0p
Guinea	21 shillings		Not a medieval coin. Used from 1663 to 1814. Used to be made of gold from Guinea in Africa. Traditionally used for buying horses – even today.		
Less than a pound but more than a shilling					
Half sovereign	10 shillings	10s 0d or 10/-	Rarely used	50 pence	50p
Crown	5 shillings	5s 0d or 5/-	Also known as a 'dollar'.	25 pence	25p
Double florin	4 shillings	4s 0d or 4/-		20 pence	20p
Florin	2 shillings	2s 0d or 2/-	The two-shilling coin in circulation from 1849 to 1867 was also known as a florin or 'two-bob bit'	10 pence	10p
Half florin	1 shilling	1s 0d or 1/-		5 pence	5p
Half Crown	2 shillings and 6 pennies	2s 6d or 2/6d	A coin of this name and value was in circulation from 1549 to 1967.	12 and a half pence	No modern equivalent
Half guinea	10 shillings and 6 pennies	10s 6d or 10/6d	Usually a guinea cut in half	52 pence plus a half pence	No modern equivalent
Shilling	12 pennies	1s 0d or 1/-	An Anglo-Saxon accounting terms, a <i>scilling</i> being the value of a cow or sheep. Same value as a half florin. Used	5 pence	5p

			to be called a 'bob', from the sixteenth century on (when it was first minted), but the origin of this term is not known for certain. Now replaced by a 5 pence piece.		
Less than a shilling but more than a penny					
Threepence	3 pennies	3d	The twelve-sided threepenny-bit ceased to be legal tender in 1971.	One and half pence	No modern equivalent
Double groat	8 pennies	8d		4 pence	No modern equivalent
Groat	4 pennies	4d	The word also means 'a trifling amount'	2 pence	2p
Half groat	2 pennies	2d		1 new penny	1p
Sixpence	6 pennies (half a shilling)	6d	Familiarly known as a 'tanner' from the early 1800s. This is the coin that was often hidden in Christmas puddings.	2 and a half pence	No modern equivalent
Penny	1 penny	1d	The 'd' is short for <i>denarius</i> , a Roman coin	Half a new penny	No modern equivalent. The decimal half-penny was withdrawn in 1984.
Less than a penny					
Half-penny	Half a penny	½d	Pronounced 'hay-p'ny'	Quarter of a modern penny	No modern equivalent
Farthing	Quarter of a penny	¼d	The name is a corruption of 'fourthing'	An eighth of a modern penny	No modern equivalent. The farthing ceased to be legal tender in 1960.

Medieval cost of goods

(From www.luminarium.org)

A thatcher would earn around 4d per day in c.1390. Can you work provide groceries for him and his family (wife and three children) for a year from the following list:

Wine	cheap	4d per gallon	
	best	10d per gallon	
Ale	medium	1d per gallon	
	good	1s 5d per gallon	
Cow (year)	average	10s	(should provide enough meat for a year)
Pig (month)		2s	(should provide enough meat for a month)
Chicken		5d	(should provide enough meat for three days or will lay one egg per day, average over year, and reduce by 20% per year)
Cheese 80lb		3s 4d	
2 dozen eggs		1d	
Oats – quarter bushel		1s	(this is 16lb)
Cottage – rent		5s per year	
Clothes (peasant)			
Linen Chemise		8d	
Shoes		6d	
Woollen garment		3s	
Tunic		3s	
Peasant's sword		6d	

How did Henry pay for his wars?

1. **Audit of incomes and debt:** Henry ordered his treasurer, Thomas, earl of Arundel, to audit all the departments of state so he could see exactly what income he could expect and what debts he owed. This meant that every clerk knew that they were being watched. Evidence suggests that Henry scrutinised accounts closely. Despite money coming into the exchequer, it was not enough to finance a major campaign outside the realm.
2. **Raise a tax:** No one likes paying tax! Henry knew this so made sure the people who would authorise the tax were on side. Taxes were approved by Parliament and Parliament did not always agree. The years leading up to Henry's reign were marred by conflict between king and Parliament. Henry sought to be on good terms with his.
 - a. Parliament met more frequently
 - b. Sessions were shorter but more efficient and business-like
 - c. Henry actively sought Parliament's advice on matters
 - d. Henry responded to Parliament's concerns
 - e. Henry was prompt to do justice
 - f. Henry was financially efficient

The result of this was that Henry enjoyed an unprecedented level of support from his parliaments. Taxes were levied against most of the population, including the clergy. Furthermore, towns and villages had fixed sums to raise. English wool also had a tax against it as did wine.

3. **Borrow:** Not all of the taxes could be collected in one go so although Henry knew he had money coming in he did not have access to it all at the start of his campaigns. He had to borrow money and he used his personal possessions as guarantee for the loans. For example, Henry used Richard II's gold crown, worth £800, against a loan from the people of Norwich. London was by far the richest city in England and the merchants helped to the tune of approximately £3m in today's money. The biggest loan came from Calais, highlighting just how important this cross-channel port was, not only to the security but also to the finances of England. Wealthy individuals like the merchant Richard Whittington – yes, Dick Whittington – already established as a lender to royalty and twice-mayor of London before Agincourt (his final term was 1419-20), were willing to lend the king money. John Hende loaned £4666 (almost £2m in today's money). Foreign merchants were less willing to lend but Henry made them pay for their freedom so they had little choice! Finally, the Church contributed to the war chest. Funds came from individuals, like the bishop of Winchester (Henry's uncle) who lent £2630, and from church funds.

It is notoriously difficult for historians to convert the value of money in the past to an equivalent value today but it should be clear that Henry was financially able to wage war against France. One chronicler talked of an amount in excess of £69m in today's money. Even if this is high, in the words of Juliet Barker, 'Whatever else dictated Henry's military decisions on the Agincourt campaign, shortage of money was not one of them.'

From Barker, J. (2005) *Agincourt: the king, the campaign, the battle*, London: Little, Brown; see Abacus edition 2015, pp. 103-13.

Joan of Arc in context

Context: The war between France and England had been raging on and off since 1337 (refer back to Lesson 1). This was, initially, a war over the succession to the throne of France. Following the Battle of Agincourt and subsequent military victories by King Henry V of England an agreement was made that he would marry Catherine of Valois, the French king's (Charles VI) daughter and that he or his child would become king of France once Charles VI was dead. This agreement followed an attempt by Charles VI's son to broker a deal between his faction, the Armagnacs, and those of his French rivals, the Burgundians. He was successful (1419) but this broke down when the Armagnacs killed the Burgundian leader, John the Fearless. The Burgundians sided with England and this led to the agreement between Henry V and Charles VI over the succession. Unfortunately, Henry V died first but only two months before Charles VI. This left the French with either Charles' son, Charles (VII) or Henry's son, Henry (VI) as king of France. Simple!

By the time Joan of Arc began to influence events in 1429, nearly all of northern France and some parts of the south-west were under Anglo-Burgundian control. The English controlled Paris and Rouen while the Burgundian faction controlled Reims, which had served as the traditional coronation site for French kings since 816. This was an important consideration since neither claimant to the throne of France had been officially crowned yet. In 1428 the English had begun the siege of Orléans, one of the few remaining cities still loyal to Charles VII and an important objective since it held a strategic position along the river Loire, which made it the last obstacle to an assault on the remainder of the French heartland. In the words of one modern historian, 'On the fate of Orléans hung that of the entire kingdom.' "No one was optimistic that the city could long withstand the siege.

Joan of Arc – background: Joan was the daughter of Jacques d'Arc and Isabelle Romée in Domrémy, a small village. Her parents owned about 50 acres of land and her father supplemented his farming work with a minor position as a village official, collecting taxes and heading the local watch. They lived in an isolated patch of eastern France that remained loyal to the French crown despite being surrounded by pro-Burgundian lands. Several local raids occurred during her childhood and on one occasion her village was burned.

Joan was born around 1412 and she later testified that she experienced her first vision in 1425 at the age of 13, when she was in her 'father's garden' and saw visions of figures she identified as Saint Michael, Saint Catherine and Saint Margaret, who told her to drive out the English and bring the Dauphin (the future Charles VII) to Reims for his coronation. She said she cried when they left, as the visions were so beautiful.

At the age of 16, she went to the nearby town of Vaucouleurs, where she asked the garrison commander, Robert de Baudricourt, for permission to visit the French Royal Court at Chinon. Baudricourt refused. She returned the following January and gained support from two of Baudricourt's soldiers who took her to their commander. Here she made a prediction about a military reversal at the Battle of Rouvray near Orléans several days before messengers arrived to report it. Given the distance of the battle's location, Baudricourt felt Joan could only have known about the French defeat by divine revelation, and this convinced him to take her seriously.

Robert de Baudricourt granted her an escort to visit Chinon after news from Orléans confirmed her assertion of the defeat. She made the journey through hostile Burgundian territory disguised as a male soldier, a fact which would later lead to charges of 'cross-dressing' against her.

Joan of Arc - at the Royal Court: After arriving at the Royal Court she impressed Charles VII during a private conference. During this time Charles' mother-in-law, Yolande of Aragon, was planning to finance a relief expedition to Orléans. Joan asked for permission to travel with the army and wear protective armour, which was provided by the royal government. Historian Stephen W. Richey explains her attraction to the Royal Court by pointing out that they may have viewed her as the only source of hope for a regime that was near collapse:

After years of one humiliating defeat after another, both the military and civil leadership of France were demoralized and discredited. When the Dauphin Charles granted Joan's urgent request to be equipped for war and placed at the head of his army, his decision must have been based in large part on the knowledge that every orthodox, every rational option had been tried and had failed. Only a regime in the final straits of desperation would pay any heed to an illiterate farm girl who claimed that the voice of God was instructing her to take charge of her country's army and lead it to victory.

She arrived at the besieged city of Orléans on 29 April 1429. Jean d'Orléans, the acting head of the ducal family of Orléans, initially excluded her from war councils and failed to inform her when the army engaged the enemy. His decision to exclude her did not, however, prevent her presence at most councils and battles.

The extent of her actual military participation and leadership is a subject of debate among historians. On the one hand, Joan stated that she carried her banner in battle and had never killed anyone, preferring her banner better than a sword; and the army was always directly commanded by a nobleman, such as the duke of Alençon for example. On the other hand, many of these same noblemen stated that Joan had a profound effect on their decisions since they often accepted the advice she gave

them, believing her advice was divinely inspired. In either case, historians agree that the army enjoyed remarkable success during her brief time with it.

Joan of Arc - at the Siege of Orléans: Joan of Arc's appearance at Orléans coincided with a sudden change in the pattern of the siege. During the five months before her arrival the defenders had attempted only one offensive assault, which had ended in defeat. On 4 May, however, the Armagnacs attacked and captured the outlying fortress of Saint Loup, followed on 5 May by a march to a second fortress called Saint-Jean-le-Blanc, which was found deserted. When English troops came out to oppose the advance, a rapid cavalry charge drove them back into their fortresses, apparently without a fight. The Armagnacs then attacked and captured an English fortress built around a monastery called Les Augustins. Armagnac troops maintained positions on the south bank of the river before attacking the main English stronghold called "les Tourelles on the morning of 7 May. Contemporaries acknowledged Joan as the heroine of the engagement. She was wounded by an arrow between the neck and shoulder while holding her banner in the trench outside Les Tourelles, but later returned to encourage a final assault which succeeded in taking the fortress. The English retreated from Orléans the next day, and the siege was over.

Success earned Joan influential supporters such as the Archbishop of Embrun and the theologian Jean Gerson, both of whom wrote supportive treatises immediately following this event. Furthermore, military commanders such as Jean d'Orléans had been impressed with her performance and became her supporters. Joan gave the Armagnac army a much-needed boost and persuaded them to head for Reims in order to crown Charles as Charles VII. This was risky as Reims was deep within Burgundian territory and further away than Paris. Nonetheless, the plan was accepted and with victories en route to keep morale high, Reims was taken on 16 July 1429.

Joan's star had never been higher. Charles's coronation took place on 17 July 1429 and he sued for peace rather than continue the fight to Paris (Joan's advice was to fight on). The French army marched around Paris with some success and eventually the English force inside was tempted out. A siege ensued on 8 September 1429 but ended in a truce. At the end of the year Joan and her family were ennobled by Charles VII as a thank you.

Joan of Arc - post-Orléans: The truce broke down in 1430 and Joan was involved in the unsuccessful attempt to defend Compiègne where she was captured by the Burgundians. While imprisoned she attempted several escapes, on one occasion jumping from her 70-foot (21 m) tower, landing on the soft earth of a dry moat, after which she was moved to the Burgundian town of Arras. The English paid a huge sum to have her placed in their custody.

The English moved Joan to the city of Rouen, which served as their main headquarters in France. Historian Pierre Champion notes that the Armagnacs attempted to rescue her several times by launching military campaigns toward Rouen while she was held there. One campaign occurred during the winter of 1430–31, another in March 1431, and one in late May shortly before her execution. These attempts were beaten back. Champion also quotes fifteenth-century sources which say that Charles VII threatened to 'exact vengeance' upon Burgundian troops whom his forces had captured and upon the English and women of England' in retaliation for their treatment of Joan.

Joan's trial was for heresy (a belief that is at odds with Catholic doctrine). The tribunal was composed entirely of pro-English and Burgundian clerics, and overseen by English commanders including the duke of Bedford and earl of Warwick. Legal proceedings commenced on 9 January 1431 at Rouen, the seat of the English occupation government.

Despite astounding witnesses with the clever way she answered questions, Joan's accusers successfully condemned her to death on charges of heresy and cross-dressing (which was proof of a relapse into heresy). Her execution was by burning on 30 May 1431. She was tied to a tall pillar at the Vieux-Marché in Rouen. She asked two of the clergy and an English soldier also constructed a small cross which she put in the front of her dress. After she died, the English raked back the coals to expose her charred body so that no one could claim she had escaped alive, then burned the body twice more to reduce it to ashes and prevent any collection of relics. They cast her remains into the river Seine.