

Millthorpe School History Department
Year 8 revision guide

Your exam will be split into 3 questions.

- A. One describing an event (*using your own knowledge*). (4 marks)
- B. How accurate is a source? (*testing what a source says against what you know about the topic to see if it is accurate, and looking at the provenance = who wrote it, when & why, to decide if they have reasons to lie or exaggerate that might make it less accurate*). (6 marks)
- C. An essay question (*judging which of two factors is the most important reason for causing an event*). (10 marks)

The content of the exam will all be about the attack of the Spanish Armada. You need to revise all the information on this sheet to help you in the exam.

Background

Ships

1. **The Spanish Armada** consisted of 151 ships, including 68 warships. The rest carried equipment and Parma's soldiers.
2. King Philip's advisors had told him that he would need 500 ships to have a chance of invading England but Spain could not afford this.
3. **The English fleet** consisted of 177 ships, mostly very small, including 34 royal warships.

Soldiers and supplies

1. **Spain** had 7000 sailors and 34,000 soldiers
2. Philip claimed the Armada was a Roman Catholic crusade with the Pope and God on their side.
3. The Armada had enough food, water and ammunition for a 4 week campaign, longer than they thought they'd need.
4. England 16,000 sailors and 76,000 soldiers, most were devout Protestants e.g. Sir Francis Drake
5. Elizabeth's government was mean with supplies and they did not have enough gunpowder, food or water for a long campaign.

Guns

1. Both sides had powerful canons on board the ships.
2. **The Spanish** expected to fire their canon once and then come along side the ships and board them & fight their enemy with swords.
3. Many of the canons were probably not intended for sea battle, but were being transported with a view to using them once they'd landed on English soil.
4. **The English** cannon were designed to use at sea, they could be reloaded in 10 minutes. They were long range guns as they didn't want to get too close to the enemy.

Commanders and communication

Spain

1. The Duke of Medina-Sidonia, the richest nobleman in Spain, had never been to sea and got very sea sick. Most of his commanders were very experienced sailors.
2. Once he'd left Spain he was completely out of touch with Philip and the ships could not communicate with each other once at sea or in battle.

Britain

1. Lord Howard of Effingham, the Queen's cousin, had very little experience at sea and relied on advice from commanders (Sir Francis Drake) to lead the English navy.
2. He did not know the plans of the Armada, e.g. that they were planning to pick up soldiers from the Netherlands and assumed the Armada would try to land on the south coast.
3. He didn't know how skilled the Spanish were but knew how skilled his own men were.

The actual attack

1. **The Armada** sailed in a crescent formation towards the English Channel with slow unarmed transport ships in the middle, faster & heavily armed warships on the sides.
2. **The English** ships separated into 2 fleets behind the Armada.
3. For a week the Spanish ships sailed up the Channel slowly. If the English ships tried to get too close the Armada would fire their guns.

4. One Spanish ship accidentally blew up, otherwise there were no losses.
5. On April 6th the Armada anchored off the French coast near Calais to pick up Parma and his troops. However they were still fighting the Dutch. It would take another 2 weeks to get their army on board the Armada.
6. On the 7th August the English decided to attack. 8 ships loaded with straw, tar, inflammable rubbish and loaded canon were set alight and the wind made them drift towards the tightly packed Spanish fleet.
7. In panic the Spanish captains moved their ships out of the way, some cut their anchor ropes.
8. No ships were damaged, but they lost their formation and were in chaos.

The Battle of Gravelines

1. 8th April the 2 fleets went into battle. English ships fired their canon at a range of 100 metres. This could cause death and damage but was too far away to sink enemy ships.
2. The Spanish could not return fire because their guns were not designed for a sea battle.
3. In the evening the wind rose. With his fleet scattered, Medina-Sidonia set about trying to save as many ships and lives as possible & planned a retreat.
4. His captains told him the wind was too strong to return back along the channel & so he had to take a 3000 km trip around Scotland and Ireland to get back to Spain.

The end of the Armada

1. Some Spanish ships had been damaged by English gunfire, but it was the weather that now took over and brought the campaign to an end.
2. Fierce storms battered Spanish ships.
3. Boats were not equipped for a long voyage. Sailors became too ill to sail their ships properly.
4. The Spanish did not have maps of these waters & 2 boats were wrecked off the Scottish coast & 25 off the Irish coast. Shipwrecked sailors who made it to dry land were hunted down and killed.
5. Only 90 ships returned to Spain and more than 11,000 people lost their lives.