

The Defeat of the Armada

Aim: Identify and prioritise reasons for the defeat of the Armada



In our recent work we have examined the attempted Spanish Invasion of England in 1588. Philip II of Spain was determined to punish Elizabeth for a number of reasons:

- Rejection of his marriage proposal
- Religious differences
- Execution of Mary Queen of Scots
- English sailors robbing Spanish treasure ships

This worksheet helps you identify and prioritise the reasons for the defeat of the Armada:

Why did the Armada fail?

Information and source material

A "I sent you to fight with men, and not the weather."

PHILIP II, talking to survivors of the Armada (1588)

B "God blew with His wind, and they were scattered."

Inscription on the Armada medal issued by Elizabeth I (1588)

C "Though the English ships were smaller and fewer than those opposed to them, they were better built and better manned... their skilful use of artillery gave them a great advantage."

J. Oliphant in his book, *A History of England* (1920)

D "...the Spanish fleet was conquered for the first time. But not by the men, nor by the ships... It was defeated by the weather... Only against the hurricane and the gales did we lose."

L. Ortiz Munoz, *The Glorious Spanish Armada* (1940)

On August 6th 1588, the Spanish Armada anchored at Calais. The English filled eighty ships with flammable material and set fire to them. The ships were allowed to sail towards the Spanish ships. The Spanish panicked and fled to the open sea.

In the open sea, the Armada wasn't in formation, so the Spanish ships were easy targets for the English artillery. The Spanish tried to sail close to the English ships so their soldiers could board them. However the English ships were too quick and could easily keep their distance.

Many Spanish galleons were sunk. The survivors fled north, determined to round Scotland and sail back to Spain.

GLOSSARY

Prioritise	Put in order of importance
Opposed	Against
Artillery	Weaponry
Flammable	Catches fire easily
Slain	Be killed



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The Armada successfully sailed round Scotland. However, as it continued on south towards Spain it encountered terrible weather. Strong winds and terrible rain forced many ships onto rocks near Ireland. Some Spanish made it ashore, only to be killed by English soldiers and settlers.



Over 25,000 men set out on the Spanish Armada - determined to teach Elizabeth I a lesson. Less than 10,000 made it back to Spain safely.

Tasks: Complete the questions and activities below as fully as possible.

Understanding: Fill in the gaps and write the following sentences out:

1. In Source A, Philip blames the failure of the Armada on the _____.
2. Both _____ say that the weather caused the failure of the Armada?
3. In August 1588 the English filled eighty ships with _____ material, set fire to them and allowed them to sail towards the _____ ships.
4. When English ships were firing on the Spanish, the Spanish tried to sail _____ to the English ships so their soldiers could _____ them.
5. The Spanish encountered terrible weather off the coast of _____.
6. Some Spanish made it ashore, but they were _____ by English soldiers and _____.
7. Over _____ men set out on the Armada, less than _____ made it back safely.
8. Source C states the English ships were better _____ and better _____.
9. Three ways Spanish sailors were slain are by _____, by being killed in Ireland, in _____ with the English.

ANSWERS	flammable	close	killed
	board	weather	Ireland
	manned	built	Sources A and B
	Spanish	settlers	25,000
	10,000	battle	drowning

Prioritising:

1. What does prioritise mean?
2. Prioritise the following reasons for the Spanish Armada:

Spanish mistakes

Design of ships

English artillery

Fire-ship tactics

Weather

TIP:

You need to put these five reasons in a list.

1 = Most important

5 = Least important

3. Now write out a sentence for each reason explaining your choice. Use this frame:
I chose _____ as my number _ reason because I think _____.

Final Task: [CHECK: Have you written five sentences for Question 3?]

Using ALL your previous work on the Armada - answer this question in exactly 60 words:

W H Y D I D T H E A R M A D A F A I L ?