

Henry VIII's Personality

Source A: Painting of Henry VIII



Source A: Thomas Moore, 1509.

The King stands out the tallest, and his strength fits his majestic body ... There is fiery power in his eyes, beauty in his face ... He has immediately arrested and imprisoned anyone who has harmed the realm.

Source B: Venetian Ambassador, 1520.

He is extremely handsome and has now got a beard that looks like gold. He is very clever, a good musician, a fine horseman, speaks good French and is very religious. He draws his bow and arrow with greater strength than any man in England.

Source C: John Guy, 1988.

His selfishness, self-importance and often sulks a lot, spring from a condition of a second rate mind and a feeling that he was second best to other people. He ignored the good advice of his friends and wasted men, money and equipment on costly wars.

Source D: Edward Hall, 1542.

The King spent his time hunting, hawking ... singing, dancing, wrestling ... playing at the flute and writing songs.

Source E: Gilbert Burnet, 1679.

The King was now overgrown with fatness ... he became more and more unwieldy. He could not go up or down the stairs unless he was raised up or let down by an engine.

Source F: Richard Morrison, 1536.

(Henry VIII) is the noblest king that ever reigned over the English nation ... whose virtue, learning and noble courage has brought England freedom.

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Source G: David Starkey, Modern historian.

Although he was a great King and a successful leader there are perhaps two versions of Henry. In his youth he was athletic and attractive. It was only in his old age he became the fat grumpy King we think of him today.

Source H: The Tudor Dynasty, 1545. Painted by an unknown artist.



Source I: Written by an English Bishop in 1524.

He is a very well educated man, he speaks four languages. He has a great love of poetry. He is a very religious man....

Source J: From 'Henry VIII' School textbook 2001.

Henry reigned for 38 years. In that time, about 72,000 people were executed.

That's about 1,900 a year, or 5 every day.

Source K: Pope Clement in 1530.

He is England's most cruel and abominable tyrant.