

SIX



TOOLKIT

EXPERIENCE THE
art.
2019/20 Season

American Repertory Theater

by arrangement with Kenny Wax, Andy & Wendy Barnes, George Stiles and Kevin McCollum
in association with Chicago Shakespeare Theater
presents

SIX

by

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First performance at the Loeb Drama Center on August 21, 2019.

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Photo: Liz Lauren

Welcome!

This Toolkit contains fun and informative resources to help you dig deep into **SIX**, hitting the A.R.T. mainstage in August and September, 2019.

“Divorced, beheaded, died, divorced, beheaded, survived.” All this time, the six wives of Henry VIII have been reduced to a single rhyme—so they picked up a pen and a microphone. From Tudor Queens to Pop Princesses, the wives take to the mic to tell their tales, remixing five hundred years of historical heartbreak into a 75-minute celebration of 21st century girl power.

Inside this Toolkit, you’ll find materials on the development and context of **SIX**, including insights from creators Lucy Moss and Toby Marlow, a timeline and background information on the Tudor family, profiles on each of the six wives of Henry VIII, a bit on the history of divorce, and a few interactive activities.

The articles, resources, and activities in this Toolkit are curated for the use of learners of all ages, in and out of the classroom, who are looking to take a deeper dive into **SIX**.

See you at the theater soon!

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SIX TOOLKIT

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**Thank you for participating in the
A.R.T. Education Experience!**

If you have questions about using this Toolkit in your class, or to schedule an A.R.T. teaching artist to visit your classroom, contact the A.R.T. Education and Engagement Department at:

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SIX in Production



Andrea Macasact and the cast of **SIX** performs "Don't Lose Ur Head"

Photo: Liz Lauren

The next pages contain resources for those interested in how a show like **SIX** came to be.

First, review a synopsis of the play and introduction of its main characters in **What is SIX?** (pages 6-7), then take **An Inside Look with the Creative Team of SIX** (pages 8-10) with creators Lucy Moss and Toby Marlow. Finally, dig into the contemporary context of the play with Fordham University Professor of English Stuart Sherman in **What You Really Really Want** (pages 11-13).

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- Where are the inspirations behind this show?
- Who do you think most enjoy this play? Why?
- What might audiences take away from the retelling of these historic stories?



Anna Uzele and the cast of **SIX** performs "I Don't Need Your Love"

Photo: Liz Lauren

What is **SIX**?

A synopsis of the show and introduction to the main characters.

SIX is a pop concert musical about the six wives of Henry VIII. Sick of being overshadowed by the one thing they have in common—marrying the King—each of the Queens competes through song to establish who endured the worst of Henry’s abuses. The Queen who withstood the most hardship will become the leading lady of the band. One by one, through songs inspired by modern-day pop divas, the Queens recount their experiences at Henry’s court before banding together to reclaim their stories.

Catherine of Aragon, “queenspired” by Beyoncé and Shakira, seemed to have it made until she found herself twenty-four years into her marriage with no baby boy to show for it. In “No Way,” she recounts her refusal to agree with the annulment demanded by Henry.

Anne Boleyn was so enticing that Henry separated from the Catholic Church just to be with her, but the honeymoon phase wore off quickly. She sings the Lily Allen and Avril Lavigne “queenspired” song “Don’t Lose Ur Head” to tell the story of their tumultuous relationship from seduction to beheading.

IN PRODUCTION

What is *SIX*? (cont.)

Jane Seymour, “queenspired” by Adele and Sia, was gentle and loving towards Henry. She finally gives Henry a son, Edward, only to die soon after his birth. Her ballad “Heart of Stone” is sung as a reminder of her unwavering heart.

Henry first saw **Anna of Cleves** in a flattering portrait by the painter Hans Holbein. When they finally met in person, they didn’t hit it off, but their wedding date was already set. An independent woman like her “queenspirations,” Rihanna and Nicki Minaj, Anna sets the record straight with her song “Get Down.”

Katherine Howard, “queenspired” by Britney Spears and Ariana Grande, did not know that having flings as a teenager was illegal until it was too late for her. In “All You Wanna Do,” she details her relationships, which all have an eerily similar toxicity.

Catherine Parr had to care for gout- and syphilis-ridden Henry all by herself, even though she did not love him. Her song, “I Don’t Need Your Love,” “queenspired” by Alicia Keys and Emeli Sandé, lays bare her lack of agency to refuse the king’s proposal. She then flips the script to highlight her own accomplishments.

Together, the Queens bring down the house in this glittery celebration of herstory.



A Conversation with the Creators

An Interview with Lucy Moss and Toby Marlow

Tell us about the story of *SIX*. What should we expect?

Lucy Moss: *SIX* is told by the wives of Henry VIII—but as a girl group performing a pop concert for an audience. They're sick and tired of everyone arguing over who's the most important wife, and the Queens decide to hold a competition between them: whoever had the worst time in her marriage to Henry VIII will be crowned the leading lady of the girl group! The pop concert consists of each Queen singing a solo in order to stake a claim for the spotlight—but, without wanting to give too much away, not everything goes according to plan...

Were there any challenges in adapting these historic women's stories into contemporary pop music?

Toby Marlow: When we started writing the songs, it was tricky to find a balance between trying to make them sound like actual pop songs while also achieving the same level of storytelling and humor as our favorite musical theater songs. Given that chart pop songs are usually fairly similar in their structures, we wanted to be sure to avoid the score sounding too repetitive. However, we soon found that the repetitive nature of pop music often proved really useful in our

A Conversation with the Creators (cont.)

storytelling, such as in Katherine Howard’s song, “All You Wanna Do,” in which we gradually subvert the meaning of the chorus throughout the song. At the start, it’s flirtatious and cheeky but, by the end, the chorus becomes a lament about her repeated abuse at the hands of the men in her life. With pop music there are so many tropes and expectations, and so it was really fun during the writing process to play around with those.

How did you make these historical women into six unique theatrical characters?

Lucy: We looked into their biographies, watched documentaries, and picked out the bits of their lives that would resonate for audiences today. One of our major resources was Antonia Fraser’s *The Wives of Henry VIII*. Fraser focuses on the full life of each woman, not just their stories leading up to—and, for three of them, subsequent to—their marriage to the king. Her book was instrumental in helping us separate each Queen’s identity from Henry—especially for his last wife, Catherine Parr, who had an interesting life, of which her marriage to Henry was only a very small part. Fraser also shares loads of small details that found their way into **SIX**. For example, we loved one of Anne Boleyn’s mottoes: “Let them grumble; that is how it’s going to be.” It felt like the Renaissance version of saying “Sorry, not sorry,” so we snuck that version of the original motto into the hook of her song. We also enjoyed the descriptions of Anna of Cleves as a divorcée developing a penchant for drinking, hunting, and partying. Those details had a huge influence on how we wrote her song.

What inspired you to write a musical that tells women’s stories?

Lucy: Toby and I have loads of female friends who are incredible performers. But they don’t often have opportunities to show how funny or brilliant they are because many musicals don’t have complex, comedic parts for women. In our first writing session, we wrote a “manifesto”—our **SIX** Six-Point Plan—of what we were setting out to do. One component was about writing great parts for women. Another was to highlight the parallels we saw between the Queens’ experiences with those of women today.

How does **SIX** bridge these sixteenth-century queens and contemporary pop music?

Toby: Each Queen as we imagined her has a few parallels in the modern-day pop world, and each song is influenced by a number of contemporary singers. Aragon is the Beyoncé of the group. And then there’s Anne Boleyn: traditionally she’s taken very seriously, so we wanted to flip that on its head and make her fun and carefree—like Lily Allen or Avril Lavigne. Jane Seymour is inspired by Adele and Sia. Anna of Cleves’ song is this Rihanna/Nicki Minaj parody. Katherine Howard is inspired by Ariana Grande and Britney Spears—kind of

A Conversation with the Creators (cont.)

“bubblegum pop.” And we’ll subvert that by...well, you’ll see. And then Catherine Parr is like Alicia Keys, the soulful one who brings everyone together at the end. Some audience members might respond to the Beyoncé references while others will relate to Catherine of Aragon or Anne Boleyn as historical figures. There’s a little something for everybody.

Lucy: You can see these parallels in *SIX*’s design, as well. Our costume designer, Gabriella Slade, was inspired by the pop stars we used as the basis for each Queen. So there’s a Renaissance corset paired with the signature Ariana Grande miniskirt, and you’ll see the classic Tudor sleeves along with an ornate Beyoncé-style headpiece—it’s a mash-up between a contemporary pop and Tudor silhouette. That design carries over to the all-female band, the Ladies in Waiting, too.

Tell us about your collaboration and how this play came to be.

Toby: Lucy and I were at Cambridge together. We ended up working on a lot of the same shows—she directed and I acted. We talked about writing a musical together some day. In 2017 the Cambridge University Musical Theatre Society asked for applications to take an original musical to the Edinburgh Festival Fringe, so I applied. When I got the gig I asked Lucy to write it with me. I said, “I have an idea for a pop concert musical with the six wives of Henry VIII. Do you want to write it with me?”

Lucy: And I agreed, even though I had never written anything before!

After the Edinburgh Fringe, *SIX* has toured the UK, premiered in London’s West End, and played at Chicago Shakespeare Theater. How has the show continued to develop over this journey?

Lucy: So much of the show is shaped by the individual six queens performing onstage—and what each brings to her role and to the group dynamic. Even though each Queen had a palette of pop stars who inspired their character, the actual interpretation of them is super malleable. The performers have really made these roles their own—even taking inspiration from artists who weren’t around when we were first writing *SIX*. We have been so excited to see all these incredible performers’ versions of the Queens.

Interview courtesy of Chicago Shakespeare Theater.

DISCUSSION

- Why did Lucy Moss and Toby Marlow decide to adapt a historical story using contemporary pop music?
- Does the inspiration, music, and/or process of creating *SIX* remind you of any other performances (plays, television, film, music, etc.) you’ve experienced or worked on?



Adrianna Hicks and the cast of *SIX* performs "No Way"

Photo: Liz Lauren

What You Really Really Want

By Stuart Sherman, Professor of English at Fordham University

"Tell me what you want, what you really really want." The blazing rap-a-tat-tat with which the Spice Girls delivered that line, in their breakout 1996 hit "Wannabe," has established it as the most ubiquitous earworm in pop-music history. *SIX* echoes the line early, launching an audacious bit of time travel. Over the course of a punchy pop concert steeped in the ethos, fervor, and dazzling popcraft of the Spice Girls and some of their titanic successors (Beyoncé, Ariana Grande, Lily Allen, and Alicia Keyes, amid many others), the show's creators Toby Marlow and Lucy Moss undertake to retell a five-hundred-year-old story, of a king and the six women who married him, that we may think we already know fairly well.

They know exactly what they're doing. One of the things entertainment-junkies have really, unceasingly wanted for a very long time is new shows about Henry VIII. Shakespeare's version (written in 1613 and re-staged by Chicago Shakespeare Theater in 2012) was among the earliest. But on any given night of *SIX*'s run, The Yard will be filled with spectators who remember—in waves probably docketed by generation—other spectacles on the same subject, other tellings of the same tale: films ranging from black-

IN PRODUCTION

What You Really Really Want (cont.)

and-white classic (*The Private Life of Henry VIII*), to Oscar-worthy middlebrow (*A Man for All Seasons*), to simmering potboiler (*Anne of a Thousand Days*); TV series toggling from PBS-earnest (*The Six Wives of Henry VIII*) to Showtime-hot (*The Tudors*). And novels compassing roughly the same spectrum of tastes: Philippa Gregory's mass-market Boleyn series; Hilary Mantel's Booker-anointed trilogy (*Wolf Hall*, *Bring Up the Bodies*, and a third volume still to come). Across many media in many registers, the story retains its power to compel—and to sell.

Why?

Because the story poses an enduring question: What to do about a man who wants everything, secures the power to pursue it, and takes a positive pleasure in destroying lives and upending worlds to grab it?

The hit books and shows about Henry have tended to center on the male lead and the depredations of his leadership: on the intensities, and the costs, of one powerful man's desires—on what he really really wants and inexorably gets.

This show's different. Henry (you'll note) is nowhere in the title and (spoiler alert) nowhere onstage. (He's aurally present, though, via a recurrent earworm of his own creation: Henry really did write the love song "Greensleeves.") The show, instead, belongs exclusively to the six women whose energy and affect flood the stage. The Spice Girls helped posit this pointed autonomy. In "Wannabe," they pivoted fiercely from the question of the man's desire ("what you really really want") to an insistence on their own: "If you wannabe my lover," you'd better do the this, this, and this....

In *SIX*, pop-music history meets Broadway practice. Throughout the mightily mutable history of American musical theater, the lead character's initial song of desire—affectionately dubbed the "I Want" song—has proven the genre's one indispensable staple. "All I want is a room somewhere" is perhaps the classic statement—but once you grasp the pattern of the "I Want" song, you'll recognize it everywhere, from Ariel's "I want to be part of your world" (*The Little Mermaid*) to Audrey's "I dream we'll go / Somewhere that's green" (*Little Shop of Horrors*) to Alexander Hamilton's "I am not throwing away my shot."

The very title of *SIX* might predict that each character in this adroitly balanced sextet will deliver her own "I Want" song. What Marlow and Moss give us instead is a sequence of songs about what each woman got, at the hands of the man who with such prehensile force took them to wife. Only then, and through communion with each other, do they discover what they collectively

What You Really Really Want (cont.)

want. We Six becomes #WeToo.

“What you want,” sang Aretha Franklin, a pioneer of female desire avant les Spice Girls, “Baby, I got it.” She too makes things transactional: what she wants in return for giving him what he wants is respect. If (big, precarious if) the arc of social and sexual justice is bending anywhere these days, this is where it’s bending: toward the respect that everyone desires, recognizes as a right and, with increasing intensity, insists on.

Words can express desire pretty well (think, for example, of Shakespeare’s sonnets). But the right music can ramp up such expression to the umpteenth power. *SIX* wants to do what all musicals want to do—and what we ask all musicals to do for us: to show us more than we knew before of what in our inmost hearts we really really want, and to map, however provisionally, a way for us to get there.

Article courtesy of Chicago Shakespeare Theater.

DISCUSSION

- How would you describe an “I Want” song? What are some other examples of “I Want” songs from different genres (e.g. pop, classical, musical theater, hip-hop, etc.)?
- Why do you think this show connects the six wives of Henry VIII to contemporary pop icons? Does that effect the way you think about these historical figures?

SIX in History



Heinrich VIII. wirbt um Anna Boleyn auf dem Ball bei Kardinal Wolsey
(Henry VIII Courting Anne Boleyn at the Ball of Cardinal Wolsey)
Karl Theodor von Piloty

Image: Karl Theodor von Piloty, Galerie Graef (Munich) [Public Domain]

This section of the Toolkit provides an introduction to some of the events, people, and juicy historical drama that inspired **SIX**.

Brush up on your Tudor history with a **Tudor Family Tree** (page 15) and **Tudor Timeline** (pages 16-17). Then, learn about the history of divorce from Dr. Amanda Foreman in **The Heartbreaking History of Divorce** (page 18). Finally, get to know the six wives with short, individual profiles in **The Six Wives of Henry VIII** (pages 19-25).

GUIDING QUESTIONS

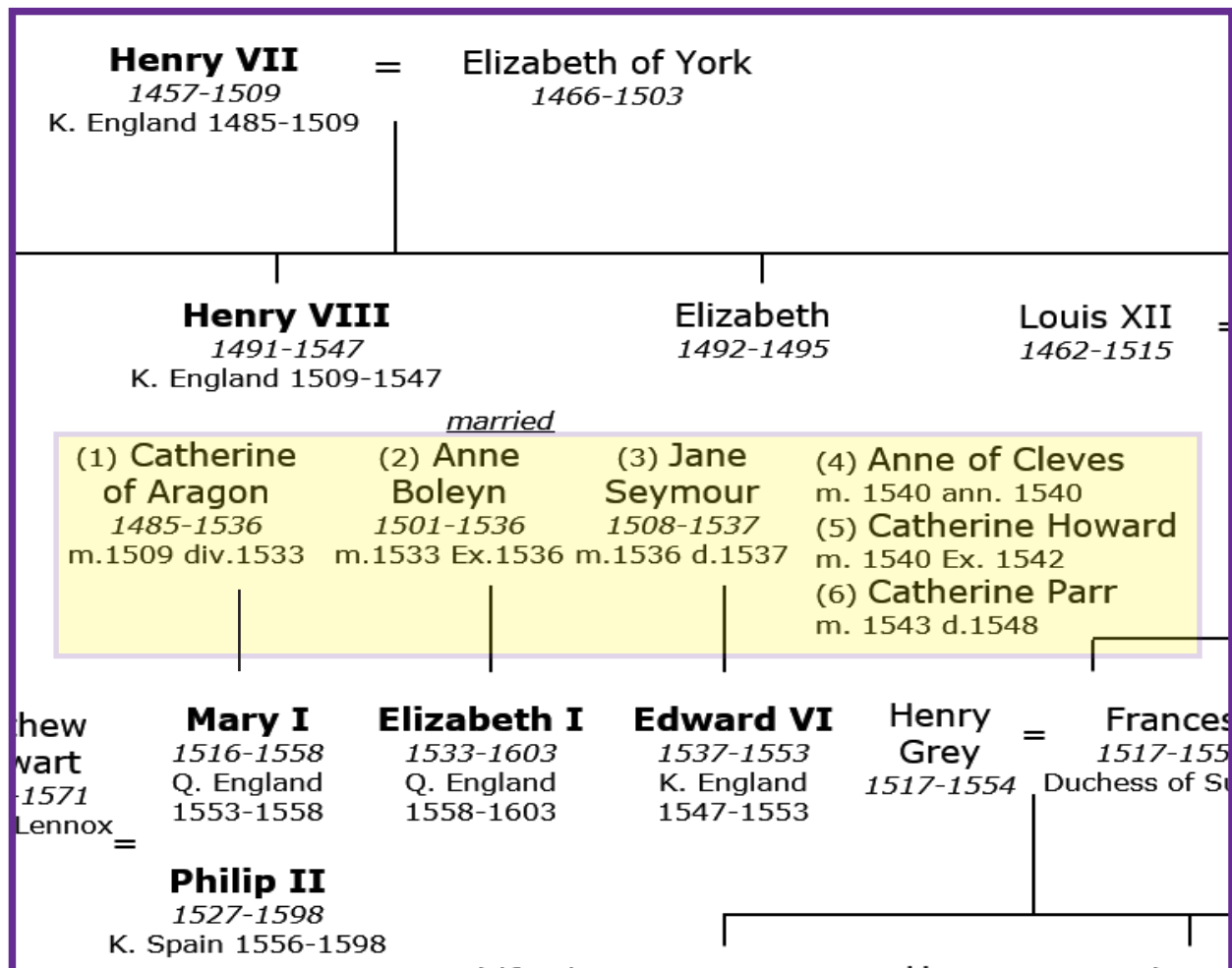
- What aspects of these women's stories are we still missing?
- What common themes can you find in each of the Queens' relationships with Henry VIII?
- What aspects of these complicated relationships are still present in our current time?

Tudor Family Tree

Due to many marriages and re-marriages, the House of Tudor's family tree contains many complex branches. This is an excerpt from chart developed by the History of England Podcast serves as a visual tool to better understand the complex familial situation of which the Queens of **SIX** (highlighted in yellow) were a part.

This chart is a helpful reference tool for tracking the marriages and parentage of the Tudor characters represented and referenced in **SIX**.

To view the full family tree chart, see the appendix on page 35.



Tudor Timeline

The following timeline tracks the course of King Henry VIII's marriages, including historically significant religious, legal, and military events.

If you'd like help tracking the events and people in this timeline, keep the family tree from the previous page on hand as you read.

- 1501** Catherine of Aragon marries Arthur Tudor (Henry's older brother). Anne Boleyn is born.
- 1502** Arthur Tudor dies.
- 1507/8** Jane Seymour is born.
- 1509** Henry VII dies and Henry VIII is crowned king. Catherine of Aragon and Henry are married.
- 1512** Catherine Parr is born.
- 1515** Anna of Cleves is born.
- 1516** Mary Tudor (later Queen Mary I) is born.
- 1517** Martin Luther posts his *Ninety-five Theses*, in which he criticizes the Catholic hierarchy. The theses spread and cause controversy throughout Europe, eventually leading to the Protestant Reformation.
- 1520** Brief alliance between Henry VIII and Francis I of France.
- 1521** Lutheranism begins spreading across England.
- 1522** Anne Boleyn moves in to Henry's court. England attempts to invade France.
- 1523** England abandons failed French invasion. Katherine Howard is born.
- 1525** Pope Clement VII denies Henry's requests to annul his marriage to Catherine of Aragon.
- 1526** Lutheran books are burned in England.

Tudor Timeline (cont.)

- 1527** Jane Seymour moves in to Henry VII's court.
- 1529** Henry VIII breaks ties with Rome over disagreements with the Vatican.
- 1533** January: Anne Boleyn and Henry are married.
May: Henry and Catherine of Aragon's marriage is finally annulled. Five days later, Henry and Anne's marriage is declared valid.
September: Elizabeth (later Queen Elizabeth I) is born to Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn.
- 1534** The First Act of Succession is passed, delegitimizing Mary and placing newborn Elizabeth next in line to the throne.
Henry VIII separates from the Catholic Church, and eventually establishes the Church of England, serving as the Supreme Head of the Church.
Treasons Act 1534 establishes the death penalty for actions going against the word of the king.
- 1535** January: Catherine of Aragon dies.
May: Anne Boleyn is beheaded; Jane Seymour and Henry are married.
June: The Second Act of Succession is passed, giving Henry the power to appoint whomever he pleases as his successor (in an effort to deligitimize Elizabeth).
- 1537** October: Edward (later King Edward VI) is born to Henry and Jane Seymour. Jane dies soon after from complications related to childbirth.
- 1540** January: Anna of Cleves and Henry are married; Katherine Howard moves in to Henry's court.
July: Anna of Cleves and Henry are divorced; Katherine Howard and Henry are married.
- 1542** February: Katherine Howard is beheaded.
- 1543** February: Catherine Parr becomes a part of Mary's household.
July: Catherine Parr and Henry are married. The Third Act of Succession is passed, re-incorporating Mary and Elizabeth into the line of succession behind Edward.
- 1547** Henry dies and Edward is crowned King Edward VI, at the age of nine.



Anne Boleyn In The Tower (1835)
Francois Edouard Cibot

Image: Musée Rolin [Public Domain]

The Heartbreaking History of Divorce

By Dr. Amanda Foreman

This brief article from *Smithsonian Magazine* explores the history of divorce in the Western world, examining the role played by the annulment of Henry VIII's marriage to Catherine of Aragon.

To read the article, visit

www.smithsonianmag.com/history/heartbreaking-history-of-divorce-180949439

DISCUSSION

- Does this history of divorce tell you anything about the historical differences in treatment between men and women?
- What are some of the historic aspects of divorce that are still present today?



The Six Wives of Henry VIII

In the following pages, you will find brief biographies of Catherine of Aragon, Anne Boleyn, Jane Seymour, Anna of Cleves, Katherine Howard, and Catherine Parr: the six wives of Henry VIII.

The profiles illustrate important events in each woman's life, and are intended to supplement the fictionalized portrayals in **SIX** in order to deepen understanding of who these women were in real life.

1. Catherine of Aragon (Catalina de Aragón)

Born: 15 December 1485

Died: 7 January 1536

Catherine of Aragon was born at the Palace of Alcalá de Henares, near Madrid, Spain to Isabella of Castile and Ferdinand of Aragon, joint monarchs of Spain. She was educated in embroidery, dancing, history, poetry, Catholic religion, law, Latin, and French. She wasn't taught English and had to learn how to speak it after moving to England.

Catherine met Henry when he was 9 or 10 and she was 15. She was betrothed to his older brother, Arthur. She married Arthur on November 14, 1501. Five months later, he fell ill and died. Catherine was widowed and had to remain in England until it was determined what would become of her. Her father hadn't completed paying her dowry, so she couldn't go home to Spain. Since she and Arthur never consummated their marriage, she became engaged to Henry but had to wait in England until he was of age to marry. She married him on June 11, 1509 at the age of 23. He was only 18 years old.

Catherine had one child, Mary (later Queen Mary I), born February 18, 1516. She suffered several miscarriages, stillbirths, and infant deaths over two decades. In 1519, while she and Henry were married, he fathered Henry Fitzroy, an illegitimate son, with Elizabeth Blount, one of Catherine's maids of honor.

The fact that she and Henry didn't have a son caused tension in their marriage and later led to the annulment. Henry claimed that because the babies that died were boys, God disapproved of their marriage. He said that God was punishing him for marrying his brother's wife and that their marriage was invalid. Catherine refused to accept that their union was invalid and gave a dramatic speech to Henry during the judgment of their annulment. When the Pope refused to annul the marriage, Henry broke ties with the Vatican and annulled his marriage to Catherine. She lived out the rest of her life at Kimbolton Castle. It is speculated that she died of some type of cancer.



Catherine of Aragon (1514)
Michael Sittow, 1514

Image: National Gallery of Art [Public Domain]

2. Anne Boleyn

Born: 1501

Died: 19 May 1536

Anne Boleyn was born in Blickling Hall, Norfolk, England to Elizabeth, the daughter of the Duke of Norfolk, and Sir Thomas Boleyn, a newly knighted courtier. She was born with a partial extra finger, which she wore extra-long sleeves to cover up.

Anne was educated in the Netherlands and in France on Reformation thinking and debate. The Reformation was a movement in the 1500s catalyzed by Martin Luther's *Ninety-five Theses*, beginning the wide spread of Protestantism.

Anne was fluent in French as she lived in France for most of her childhood. She was known for her sense of fashion and enjoyed dancing and gambling with dice and cards.

Anne's mother was beloved by Henry and Catherine of Aragon. By the age of 15, Anne was maid of honor to Henry VIII's sister Mary Tudor, Queen of France. Later, she became maid of honor to Catherine of Aragon. Anne's sister, Mary Boleyn, was mistress to Henry until she married someone else. At the urging of their father, Anne became Henry's mistress for a few years, hoping that Catherine of Aragon would die when she fell ill in the late 1520s. However, Catherine recovered. Henry gave Anne extravagant gifts, property, and the new title "Marchioness of Pembroke" while they were "courting."

Henry desired to be with Anne so badly that he made a request to the Pope to have his marriage to Catherine annulled. After the Pope refused the annulment, Henry broke England from the Roman Catholic Church and eventually established the Church of England.

Anne married Henry on January 25, 1533 at the age of 31. He was already 41. Their marriage was kept a secret until April 12th of that year. When Catherine of Aragon died in 1536, Anne and Henry wore bright yellow during her funeral.

Anne had one child, Elizabeth (later Queen Elizabeth I), born September 7, 1533. Anne also suffered several miscarriages after the birth of Elizabeth. Her failure to provide a male heir quickly lost her Henry's favor.

She was executed by beheading on Tower Green, London for alleged witchcraft, adultery, and incest. Her brother and other men that were alleged to be her accomplices were executed with her.



Image: National Portrait Gallery [Public Domain]

3. Jane Seymour

Born: 1507 or 1508
Died: 24 October 1537

Jane Seymour was born in Wulfhall, Wiltshire, England to Margery Wentworth and Sir John Seymour, a minor member of the gentry.

Jane was educated in and excelled at the typical female curriculum of the time: running a household and needlework.

She was a lady in waiting to both Catherine of Aragon and Anne Boleyn. After becoming engaged the day after Anne's execution, she and Henry married on May 30, 1536. She was about 28 years old, and he was 44. Henry loved Jane dearly, and she was known for her gentle and even demeanor.

Jane gave birth to Henry's long-awaited male heir. Edward (later King Edward VI) was born on October 12, 1537. Jane was deathly ill after the birth but was forced by Henry to go to Edward's christening festivities. She died two weeks later from complications of the birth.

After Henry's death, Jane's two brothers fought over the regency of Edward VI.



Property of the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art

4. Anna of Cleves

Born: 1515

Died: 16 July 1557

Anna of Cleves was born in Schloss Berg, near Solingen, Germany to Maria, Duchess of Julich-Berg and John III, Duke of Cleves.

Henry remained unmarried after the death of his beloved Jane for four years. Shortly thereafter, Henry was notified of a possible match with Anna of Cleves.

Since the pair had never met, Henry sent the famous painter Hans Holbein to Germany to paint Anna. Holbein wanted to paint a flattering portrait, so he failed to include Anna's pockmarks or the true length of her nose.

In an attempt to be romantic, Henry disguised himself the night he met Anna. He tried to kiss her, but she was mortified. When it was revealed to her that he was the king, she remained unenthused. He found her to be less beautiful than her portrait, which angered him, plus they could not communicate with each other since they did not share a common language. However, their wedding date was already set.

Anna and Henry were married on January 6, 1540. She was 24 and he was 49. Shortly after their wedding, Henry requested an annulment. They never took to each other, so their annulment was mutual and amicable.

After their annulment, Anna became friends with Henry and was referred to as his "sister." Anna was given multiple properties and was often invited to court. She remained close with his children and visited Katherine Howard once she became queen, bowing down to her.

It is speculated that she died of cancer in 1557.



Image: Louvre Museum [Public Domain]

5. Katherine Howard

Born: c. 1523

Died: 13 February 1542

She was born in Norfolk House, Lambeth, London to Joyce Culpeper and Edmund Howard, son of the Duke of Norfolk. Katherine was named after Catherine of Aragon. She was Anne Boleyn's cousin, although they were not close.

She was brought up by her step-grandmother, the Dowager Duchess of Norfolk who often left her residence to attend court. While the Duchess was away, Katherine would spend time with the servant girls and flirt with all of the men who worked for her step-grandmother.

She fell in love a few times, but in her late teens, she was whisked away to court to be a lady-in-waiting to Anna of Cleves.

Despite being in love with a man named Thomas Culpepper and having been twice engaged (unbeknownst to Henry), Katherine married Henry VIII on July 18, 1540. She was 17, and he was 49.

Henry accused Katherine of “promiscuity” with other lovers before they had met and married. Eventually, an act was passed in Parliament that declared it treason for a woman to become the King's wife without “plain declaration before of her unchaste life.” This meant that Henry could have Katherine killed for her earlier indiscretions. Prior to her execution, Katherine was held under house arrest for a few months. She wanted to rehearse her execution and say a few remarks on the green as her cousin, Anne Boleyn, had done but was not granted permission. She was executed on Tower Green in London. Katherine's previous lovers and other confidants were also killed for not disclosing her past relationships.



Portrait of a Lady, perhaps Katherine Howard (1540)
Hans Holbein

Image: Louvre Museum [Public Domain]

6. Catherine Parr

Born: c. 1512

Died: 5 September 1548

Catherine Parr was born in Blackfriars, London to Maud Green and Sir Thomas Parr, both distantly related to the royal family. She was also named after Catherine of Aragon, to whom her mother was a lady-in-waiting.

She was educated in French, Italian, and Latin. She enjoyed writing books, debating Reformation thought, and was an independent intellectual and land owner.

Catherine was the first woman in England to publish books under her own name in English.

Catherine was married four times. The first three were arranged and the last was for love. By 1543, she was twice widowed. That year she became part of Princess Mary's household. Catherine married Henry VIII on July 12, 1543. She was 31 and he was 52. She was in love with Thomas Seymour, Jane's brother, but kept it a secret when she became the object of Henry's desire. Before meeting Henry, she had her own home in which she held frequent meetings for Reformists. She was loved by Henry for her great mind and debates, as they disagreed on most things.

Catherine loved and cared for Henry's children. As Henry was dying, she took great care of him. She was the only one who could soothe him, so he made her his sole nurse. She cared for him until his death on January 28, 1547. Catherine secretly married Thomas Seymour in May of that same year. She died giving birth to their only child.



Image: National Portrait Gallery [Public Domain]

Activities

Lesson Plan Index

SIX AS SOCIAL MEDIA

Pages 27-28

*Students will learn about and discuss the cultural connections within the production of **SIX**. They will use various social media outlets to connect with the complicated and challenging histories of the six Queens.*

*This activity is intended for middle school and high school aged students and should follow a viewing of **SIX**.*

WHO REALLY HAS POWER?

Pages 29-30

*Students will use a theater exercise to explore dynamics of power in conjunction with the themes of **SIX**. The game can be kept lighthearted and fun, and is meant to be followed by a conversation analyzing the power dynamics that emerged during the game.*

*This activity is intended for high school students and can either precede or follow a viewing of **SIX**.*

BREAKING THE NARRATIVE

Page 31-32

*Students will reflect on their own lives and create or identify a personal narrative that they want to reclaim, similar to the characters in **SIX**. Each student will create a written final product that will be edited and revised in collaboration with another student.*

*This activity is intended for middle school and high school students and can either precede or follow a viewing of **SIX**.*

UNCOVERING HERSTORY

Page 33-34

Students will conduct research on historical female figures. They will use various methods to gather research. Using this research, they will prepare a brief presentation.

*This activity is intended for high school students and can either precede or follow a viewing of **SIX**.*

RESOURCES

Page 35-36

Lesson Plan:

SIX as Social Media

OBJECTIVES

Students will learn about and discuss the cultural connections within the production of *SIX*. They will use various social media outlets to connect with the complicated and challenging histories of the six Queens.

*This activity is intended for middle school and high school aged students and should follow a viewing of *SIX*.*

SUGGESTED STANDARDS ALIGNMENT

Reading | Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

R.PK-12.7. Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

Speaking and Listening | Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

SL.PK-12.5. Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

Connections | Concepts of Style, Stylistic Influence, and Stylistic Change

ARTS.C.08.07. Identify works, genres, or styles that show the influence of two or more cultural traditions, and describe how the traditions are manifested in the work.

ARTS.C.08.09. Identify the stylistic features of a given work and explain how they relate to aesthetic tradition and historical or cultural contexts

TIME

60 Minutes

MATERIALS

- Computers (for research if desired)
- Poster sized paper/poster board
- Pencil/pens
- Markers, colored pencils
- Magazines
- Glue

PROCEDURE

1. To start, lead a discussion about what modern-day cultural references they noted while watching the performance. Please use the following questions as a jumping off point.

Lesson Plan: *SIX* as Social Media (cont.)

- Did the music remind you of any current popular artists?
 - Within the music, were there references to other popular songs? Why might the composer and lyricist want to make these references? What does this accomplish? What did the costumes tell you about each of the Queens?
 - What were some of the cultural references, outside of musical references, that each of the Queens made in their lyrics? What effect did hearing those references have on you as you were watching the performance?
2. Following the discussion with the entire class, split the class into six different groups. Each group will be responsible for creating a social media profile for one of the queens.
 - This can be across any of the platforms, i.e. Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Youtube, Twitter, etc.
 3. Encourage students to think creatively about how they want to present this information to the rest of the classroom, whether that be in the form of a written description, a collage, a faux profile, etc. Ask each group to consider the following questions as they are creating these profiles:
 - What form of social media would your specific Queen use based off of what you know about her? Why?
 - What are the important aspects of your Queen's personality that you would like to shine through in their profile?
 - What profile picture might they use based off of what you know about them? What links might they include? What posts might they make?
 4. Following the completion of the activity, have each of the groups present their profiles to the rest of the class. Lead a reflection discussion with the entire class about this activity.
 - What were some of the things that you kept in mind as you were creating the profiles?
 - What information do you wish that you had about your Queen? How would that have helped you better tell her story through this social media platform?
 - What similarities existed between the various profiles for the different queens? What were some of the biggest differences?
 - If social media was accessible to the Queens during their reigns, why might they have used it? How does that compare to how your community uses it?

Lesson Plan: Who Really Has Power?

OBJECTIVES

Students will use a theater exercise to explore dynamics of power in conjunction with the themes of **SIX**. The game can be kept lighthearted and fun, and is meant to be followed by a conversation analyzing the power dynamics that emerged during the game.

*This activity is intended for high school students and can either precede or follow a viewing of **SIX**.*

SUGGESTED STANDARDS ALIGNMENT

Arts Disciplines: Theatre | Acting

ARTS.T01.17. Demonstrate an increased ability to work effectively alone and collaboratively with a partner or in an ensemble.

Arts Discipline: Theatre | Critical Response

ARTS.T.05.13. Use group-generated criteria to assess their own work and the work of others.

National Core Arts Standards

Performing Anchor Standard 4. Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation.

TIME

45 Minutes

MATERIALS

N/A

PROCEDURE

1. Students will play “Who’s Out?”, a status improv game specifically focused on power, dialogue, and eye contact. Have the entire class divide up into groups of three.
2. Each group comes up to the front of the classroom. Students are then given a scenario where each has a differing idea about something that needs to be done. Examples include:
 - You three are planning a trip somewhere and you have to convince each other that your desired destination is the best.
 - You’re Henry VIII, Anne Boleyn, and Catherine of Aragon.
 - You are picking a restaurant but you each want to eat three different kinds

Lesson Plan: Who Really Has Power? (cont.)

- of food.
 - You are ordering toppings for a pizza.
 - You are planning a major event i.e. prom, a wedding, a birthday party.
 - You are trying to decide who has to sleep on the pull-out couch at a hotel.
3. Each group should also be given a relationship to one another. Ideally, there is a clear power dynamic within the trio. Some suggestions are:
 - A king, his wife, and his mistress
 - The president of a company and two senior employees
 - A school principal and two teachers
 - Three friends
 - Two parents and a child
 - Two children and a parent
 4. Within the group, one person is designated as 'out.' The role of this person is to insert themselves into the conversation that the other actors are having using their creativity, compelling arguments, and manipulation methods.
 5. The moment one of the other two actors acknowledges the 'out' actor, the 'out' actor is no longer out; they are in. Now, the person who was in the conversation but is no longer being looked at or listened to is 'out.' The actors should move through the scene, trying their best to not acknowledge the 'out' actor but while also maintaining the conversation and telling a story for the audience.
 6. Allow each group to perform for 2-5 minutes.
 7. Conclude with a discussion of the power dynamics that emerged in these improvised scenes.

REFLECTION

- For those of you who started as the 'out' actor, how did you try to get back in? What techniques did you use?
- Was it more challenging to be the 'out' actor or one of the 'in' actors?
- What kind of power dynamics were at play at the time of the six queens?
- What kind of power or status problems do we have here and now? At school? Within your community?
- If students have seen **SIX**, they could discuss how the dynamics in the play compare to those created in this game. Were any similar dynamics played out by the Queens in **SIX**? Do you think there differences between how they acted and how they really felt?

Lesson Plan:

Breaking the Narrative

OBJECTIVES

Students will conduct research on historical female figures. They will use various methods to gather research. Using this research, they will prepare a brief presentation.

*This activity is intended for high school students and can either precede or follow a viewing of **SIX**.*

SUGGESTED STANDARDS ALIGNMENT

Standards for History and Social Science Practice

Develop focused questions or problem statements and conduct inquiries.

Organize information and data from multiple primary and secondary sources.

Reading | Key Ideas and Details

R.PK-12.2. Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

Reading | Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

R.PK.12.8. Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

TIME

60 Minutes

MATERIALS

Materials for research: computers, encyclopedias, magazines, newspapers, books, etc.

PROCEDURE

1. Students should choose a male historical figure from a time period before the 1940s. You might also choose a specific decade for your students to research. Students can use computers, encyclopedias, magazines, old newspapers, or any other research tool that they have access to.
2. They will then individually research this man and answer the following questions:
 - What is the man known for?
 - What kind of language is used to describe this figure?
 - Why do you think that we still talk about them today?
 - Who are some of his famous acquaintances?
3. As students are conducting their research on the various acquaintances of their

Lesson Plan: Breaking the Narrative (cont.)

famous figure, pose the following questions to them:

- Are any of these acquaintances women?
 - If there are no female acquaintances, are there any other women from this time period that this famous figure might have interacted with?
 - What are these women's reputations? Positive? Negative? Why?
 - What kind of language is used to describe these female figures in history? Who is describing them?
4. Students should gather in small groups, share out their time periods, and list the famous figures, both men and women, that they found in their research. Following the share out with the small groups, have students discuss their research process with the entire group.

REFLECTION

- What was easy about this process? What was difficult?
- What disparities existed when researching women versus men in this time period?
- What parts of history are women well represented in? In what parts of history was it harder to uncover information on them? Why do you think that is?
- Are there other or intersecting identities' experiences that the history books fail to make us aware of?
- How much of our view of the past is formed by what we're able to access via research?

Lesson Plan: Uncovering HERstory

OBJECTIVES

Students will reflect on their own lives and create or identify a narrative in their own life that they want to reclaim, similar to the characters in **SIX**. They will create a written final product that they will edit and revise with another student.

*This activity is intended for middle school and high school students and can either precede or follow a viewing of **SIX**.*

SUGGESTED STANDARDS ALIGNMENT

Writing | Text Types and Purposes

W.PK-12.3. Write narratives to develop experiences or events using effective literary techniques, well-chosen details, and well-structured sequences.

W.PK-12.4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

National Core Arts Standards

TH:Cn10.1.II. Choose and interpret a drama/theatre work to reflect or question personal beliefs.

TIME

60 Minutes

MATERIALS

- Paper
- Pencils/pens

PROCEDURE

1. Have students choose a story from their personal lives or someone else's that they are very familiar with. This could include a real or fictional person. Then write about it in 10 words or less. The key is that they should focus on telling this story in as few words as possible.
 - e.g. "Henry and Jane, together forever"
2. They should then partner up with another classmate. Each pair should read each other's stories independently. While reading, each classmate should keep the following questions in their mind.
 - Who is this story about?
 - What is this story about?
 - Why is this story important?
3. From there, each classmate will write what details they want to know about

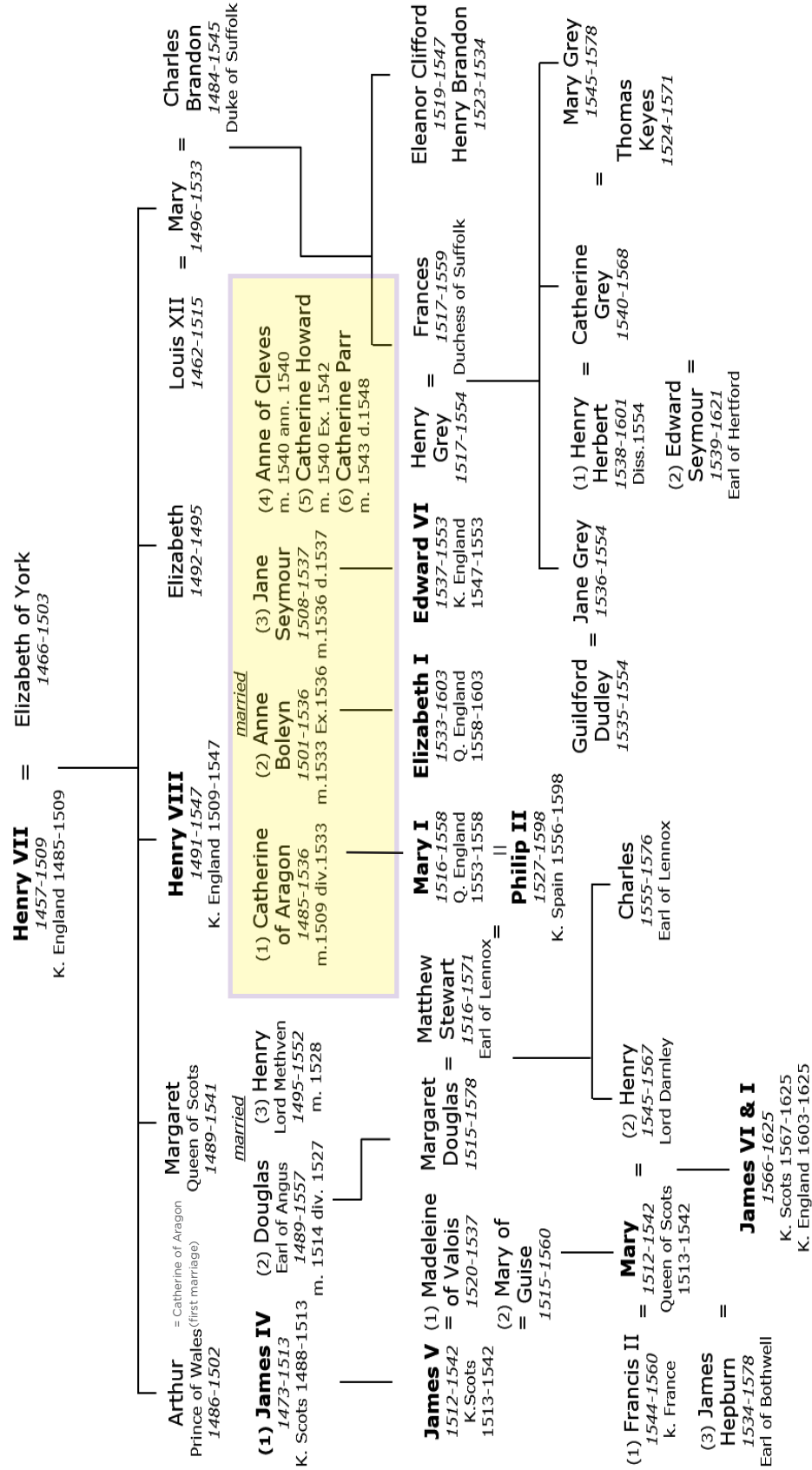
Lesson Plan: Uncovering HERstory (cont.)

their partner's story based off of what they have read thus far.

4. After spending time writing the details they want, each pair will discuss what the next draft of the story should look like. Each student will then go and write more, specifically 10 sentences or less. These next drafts should integrate the details that the reader asked for but also information that the author feels is most important for others to know.
 - For students wanting more of a challenge, they should try to include poetry and lyrical language.
 - e.g. "Henry and Jane wanted to be together forever. They felt that they were a perfect match. They welcomed a bouncy baby boy into the world. All would be well if Jane hadn't fallen ill. Henry didn't allow her the proper time to rest. It was because of his negligence, they couldn't be together forever. Jane died leaving Henry with no queen. But, then again, Henry could always try to find another!"
5. At the end of the exercise, all who feel comfortable sharing, should share.

Appendix: Tudor Timeline

The History of England Podcast Family Trees The House of Tudor



Resources

TO READ

The Wives of Henry VIII

by Antonia Fraser

A narrative that deconstructs the stereotypes the six have been known for centuries.

Divorced Beheaded Survived: A Feminist Reinterpretation of the Wives of Henry VIII

by Karen Lindsey

The stories of the six wives through a feminist lens. Another great insight to how the wives might've felt.

The Six Wives of Henry VIII

by Gladys Malvern

A historical narrative view of the lives of the six wives. It brings to light what their inner thoughts may have been.

Women and Tudor Tragedy: Feminizing Counsel and Representing Gender

by Allyna E. Ward

An academic look at gender in the tudor era. It gives greater context of the society of the wives as a whole.

TO LISTEN

<https://podtail.com/podcast/talks-and-lectures/henry-viii-s-six-wives/>

A recorded lecture/discussion about the six wives and the filming of the mini-series *Six Wives with Lucy Worsley*

<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/henry-viii-and-his-six-wives/id1435699157?i=1000439346145>

A short podcast for children and their parents retelling the story of Henry VIII and his six wives in a narrative fashion.

TO WATCH

Secrets of the Six Wives / Six Wives with Lucy Worsley

A biographical mini-series with historical re-enactments from PBS.

The Ascent of Woman

A four-part documentary series that highlights the importance of women in society over the course of 10,000 years.