Aims & Objectives

- To begin to understand the role of a monarch and the qualities needed to be a good monarch.
- To begin to understand the concept of primogeniture (the system of inheritance/succession by the firstborn, usually the eldest son).
- To develop an awareness of famous monarchs of the past – and how they link in with present-day society.

Resources

- Opening activity props
- Your Match-esty worksheet
- Imperial State Crown worksheet
- coloured paper
- coloured pens
- scissors
- glue
- sticky tape
- BBC Famous People website

Teaching & Learning Activities

OPENING ACTIVITY

1. Place a sword, tiara, pearls, money (coins), bible, crown, school reading book and pen on a desk/table in front of the class.
2. Hold up each item and discuss what they are.
3. Ask the class to think about whom they might belong to.
4. Tell the class that they belong to a ‘monarch’ – a king or a queen.
5. Ask the class to line up in age order.
6. Then tell them that in England the tradition has been that the eldest son of the ruling royal family becomes the next king (unless there are no sons, and then it is the eldest daughter who becomes queen).
7. Place the crown on the head of the eldest boy in the class.
8. Discuss why this may change.
LESSON I – KEY STAGE I

ACTIVITY I

I Get the eldest boy and girl to sit on chairs and be a king and queen. Give them each object in turn and then discuss the following with the class:
- What the crown represents – the monarch’s position.
- What the sword represents – the monarch needs to be able to defend their kingdom from enemies who might want to take it over.
- What the money is for – to pay for things their people need.
- Why the king needs a bible/religious book – to help them do the right thing.
- What the reading book represents – the monarch needs to be able to read the letters and documents people send.
- What the pen represents – the monarch needs to be able to draw up rules and laws for his people.

II Ask the class to discuss why a king needs a queen – eg the king needs to have children who will continue to rule when he dies.

ACTIVITY II

I Split the class into groups and tell them they are going to create their very own crowns.

II Hand out the pictures of the royal objects (eg sword, coat of armour) and the brief descriptions of each object, you could also put the images from the BBC Famous People site on the IWB. Then give each group a number of key words relating to a monarch’s status or qualities, eg ‘Wealthy’, ‘Warrior’, ‘Wise’. Pupils should match the description of each object to the correct word.

III Pupils should then take a piece of paper and draw around their hands with the thumbs of each hand touching. Do this part in pairs, with each person drawing around the other’s hands. They should then write one of the key words on each finger and add two of their own for the thumbs.

IV Ask each pupil to stick the pictures of the royal objects onto their paper hands to form a collage. Then each pupil should carefully cut out their hand-shaped collage.

V The next step is to make a headband for their crown. Ask the pupils to measure their head circumference by holding a piece of string around their foreheads. Again, this can be done in pairs to make it easier.

VI Each pupil should then measure the length of the string which fitted around their head. They must draw a band that is 5cm wide and the same length as the string.

VII Once they have cut out the headband for the crown, ask each child to write a complex sentence about what makes a good monarch around the band.

VIII Help the children to stick the ends of the headbands together. They can then try them on to make sure they fit snugly on their heads.

IX They should then stick their hand-shaped collage onto the front of the band to create their crown.

X The class can then walk around in their creations telling each other what they have written around the headband to explain why they are a good monarch.

ACTIVITY III

I Show the class the pictures of the Imperial State Crown (1937).

II Explain that it is worn at the State Opening of Parliament when the Queen tells the people of Britain the new laws that her government wishes to pass.

III Ask pupils to complete the Imperial State Crown worksheet.

IV When the pupils have drawn the lines onto the worksheet, use the ‘Did you know?’ section to tell them the stories of how the various jewels came to be part of this magnificent crown.
‘Did you know?’
fascinating facts and myths about the jewels in the Imperial State Crown

The Black Prince’s Ruby  The Black Prince (who was around in the 14th century) won this red gemstone when fighting a war in Spain. It was worn in Henry V’s helmet when he was fighting a great battle. Despite its name, this jewel is actually a ‘red spinel’ which looks very similar to a ruby. Until fairly recently any beautiful red stone was referred to as a ‘ruby’. Nowadays people can tell the gems apart.

The Stewart Sapphire  The Stewart Sapphire was acquired by George, Prince Regent (later George IV) and first appeared in the crown of Queen Victoria.

Queen Elizabeth I Pearls  These may also have belonged to Mary Queen of Scots. The four large drop-shaped pearls are thought to have been Elizabeth I’s earrings.

St Edward’s Sapphire  This gemstone is thought to have belonged to the Anglo-Saxon king Edward the Confessor, who lived almost 1,000 years ago! According to various stories, when King Edward was on his way to a church ceremony (at a chapel dedicated to Saint John the Evangelist) he met a beggar and when the King realised his pockets were empty he gave his sapphire ring to the beggar. A few years later, two pilgrims from the Holy Land returned the ring to the King saying that they had met Saint John who had given it to them. The saint had been disguised as the beggar and congratulated the King on his kindness.

Cullinan II  This came from a great diamond that was taken out of a mine in South Africa in 1905. At first people couldn’t believe it was really a diamond and thought it was just a piece of glass. But it was actually the largest uncut diamond ever! It was given to King Edward VII on his birthday in 1907. When it was transported to England it was sent in a plain parcel while a fake diamond was sent on the ship for everyone to see in case someone tried to steal it.

ACTIVITY IV

I  Ask pupils to pick a jewel that represents a quality they wish to have – such as the Black Prince’s Ruby for courage or St Edward’s Sapphire for kindness.

II  Each pupil should then create their own version of their chosen jewel using shiny coloured paper, coloured pens, glitter, etc.

III  Pupils should then stick their jewels onto their crowns.

PLENARY

I  Split the class into groups.

II  Ask each group to prepare a short role play which highlights a quality displayed by a good monarch.

III  The role play could incorporate, for example, the story of King Edward and the kindness he showed the beggar.

IV  The groups could present their mini play to the rest of the class.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

I  Write a story about a famous monarch in which the monarch learns to be a good king or queen.

II  Find out what other jewels are part of the Crown Jewels.

III  Find out more about the Tower of London where the Crown Jewels are housed.