

ELIZABETH - THE GOLDEN AGE

Directed by Shekhar Kapur (2007)

Starring Cate Blanchett, Clive Owen and Geoffrey Rush.

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Elizabeth - the
Golden Age (2007) by
Shekhar Kapur

Elizabeth I and the Spanish Armada

Elizabeth I was one of the greatest monarchs of all time. Her reign saw England emerge as a world power against a background of the flourishing English Renaissance. Her reign, however, was not without problems and in May 1588, the so-called 'Invincible' Spanish Armada with its 130 ships and almost 17,000 soldiers set sail for England. Its mission was to restore Catholicism and conquer the country. England was fighting to defend its freedom. As the ships of the Armada approached the English coastline on 9th August Queen Elizabeth rode out among her troops to rally morale before the imminent sea battles. The English fleet was heavily outnumbered but the Queen's message was convincing: 'While we stand together,' she says 'no invader shall pass.'

▼ Cate Blanchett starring as Elizabeth I in the film by Shakhhar Kapur (2007).



OVER TO YOU

1 Watch the scene twice and complete the Queen's speech with the missing words.

'My loving (1) we see the sails of the enemy approaching. We (2) the Spanish guns over the water, (3) now we will (4) them face-to-face. I resolve, in the midst and (5) of battle, to live or (6) amongst you all. While we stand together no invader shall pass. Let them (7) with the (8) of Hell. They will not pass. And when this day of (9) is ended we meet again in (10) or in the field of victory.

2 How would you describe the tone of this speech? Choose from the following. (More than one is possible.)

☐ nervous
☐ fearless

☐ sad
☐ confused

☐ inspiring
☐ angry

3 Discuss in pairs and answer the following questions.

1. Why do you think Elizabeth chose to wear armour to speak to her soldiers?
2. The Queen describes the Spanish as 'armies of Hell' and then says she may meet her soldiers again in Heaven. What is her underlying message?
3. How is this message further enforced by the colour of her horse?