

Elizabeth I: Ruler and Legend

Exhibit Guide for Kids



This portrait of Queen Elizabeth is one of the most famous paintings of her. It is an "allegorical" image, which means she is shown with symbols of her virtue and power.

The globe in the background symbolizes Elizabeth's importance all over the world. In her left hand she holds a sieve (a strainer that can separate solid materials from liquid or finer materials from a denser one). The sieve is a symbol of Queen Elizabeth's purity and her ability to separate the good from the bad.

What other objects in this picture do you think might be symbolic of the queen's qualities?

Draw your own portrait of Queen Elizabeth based on what you have seen and read in this exhibit.
Think about different symbols that you can include to show her power.



Sieve Portrait of Queen Elizabeth I (c. 1580-1583)
Circle of Quentin Massys the Younger
Private Collection

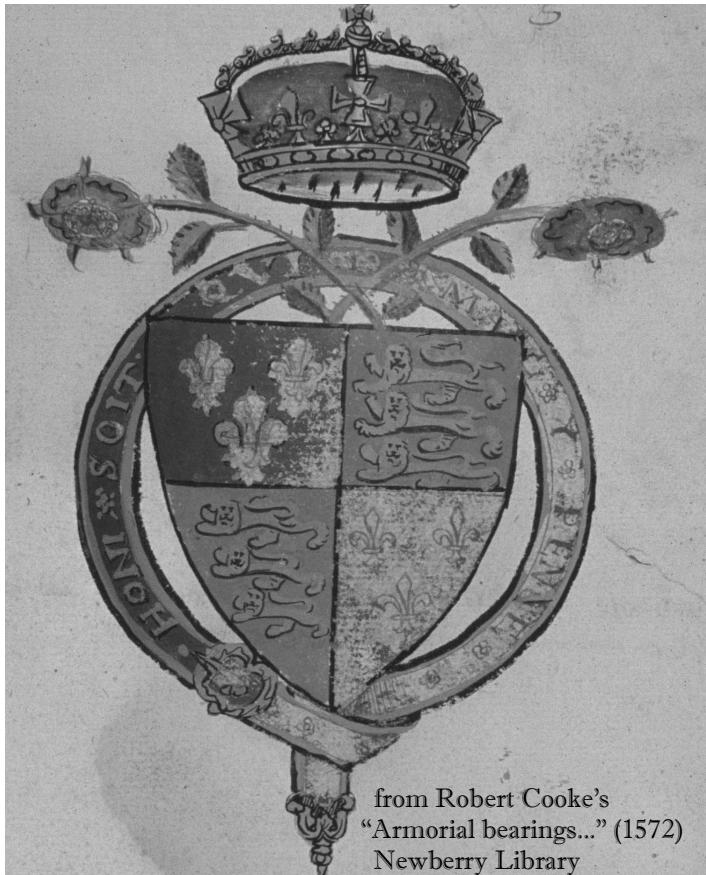
Circle the words that describe Queen Elizabeth in the "Sieve Portrait."

PROUD HAPPY ROYAL

STERN WORRIED

ANGRY TIRED PRETTY

Write other adjectives that describe this painting...



from Robert Cooke's
"Armorial bearings..." (1572)
Newberry Library

This is Queen Elizabeth's coat-of-arms, which was like her own personal flag that symbolized her power.

The center shield is decorated with English lions that represent Elizabeth's rulership over England and French *fleur-de-lys* (flowers) that show her claim to France. A Latin motto surrounds the shield, "Honi Soit Qui Mal y Pense" (Evil to him who thinks evil), as a warning to anyone who would dare oppose the queen. The two roses over the shield are symbols of Elizabeth's family, and are known as Tudor Roses (after Elizabeth's last name). The crown at the top marks Elizabeth's position as queen.

In the space below, create your own personal coat-of-arms. What symbols might represent your family or yourself? Try to include images of things you enjoy, and think about a motto that describes yourself.

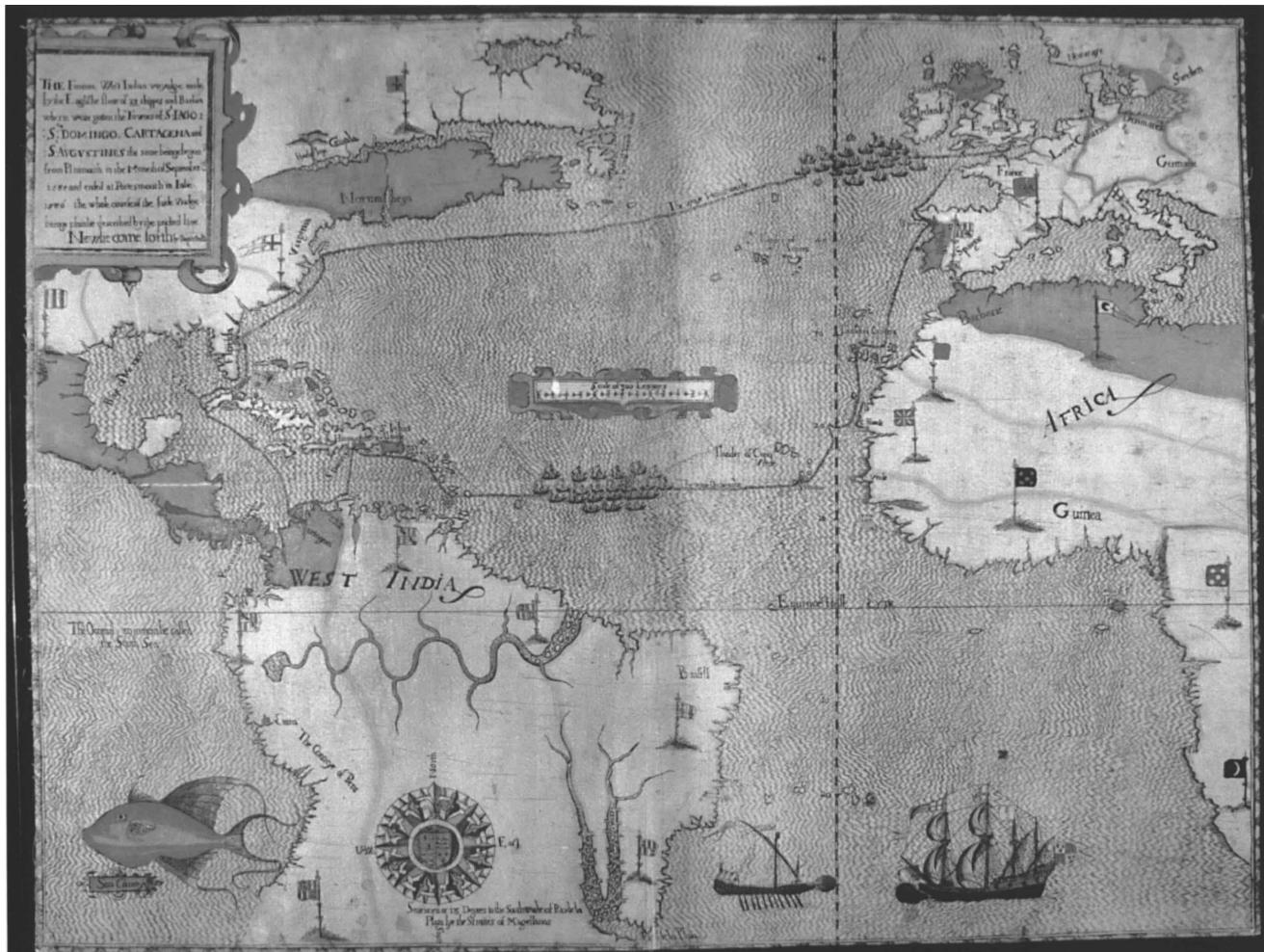
Delivering speeches is an important part of being a ruler. As queen, Elizabeth spoke not just for herself but for her entire nation. When English troops were preparing to fight against the Spanish Armada, Queen Elizabeth addressed her soldiers at Tilbury, a stronghold near London. The excerpt of her famous speech that you see here shows how Elizabeth used words to inspire her loyal subjects to defend their country.

QUEEN ELIZABETH'S TILBURY SPEECH

My loving people: I have been persuaded by some, that are careful of my safety, to take heed how I committed my self to armed multitudes for fear of treachery. But I tell you, that I would not desire to live to distrust my faithful and loving people. Let tyrants fear. I have so behaved my self, that under god I have placed my chiefest strength and safe guard in the loyal hearts and goodwill of my subjects. Wherefore I am come among you at this time, [not] for my recreation and pleasure, [but] being resolved in the midst and heat of the battle to live and die amongst you all, to lay down for my god, and for my kingdom and for my people mine honor and my blood run in the dust. I know I have the body but of a weak and feeble woman, but I have the heart and stomach of a king, and of a king of England too, and take foul scorn that Parma or any prince of Europe should dare to invade the borders of my realm.

Pretend that you are the ruler of a great nation, and use the space below to address your subjects in a short speech. What is the occasion that you are addressing them? A battle? A celebration? An important governmental meeting? Consider the reason for your speech as you write it, and take into account how you want your subjects to react to your words.

Queen Elizabeth's reign was a time of great adventure and exploration. This map shows the year-long journey of Sir Francis Drake, one of the queen's explorers. Starting out from England in 1585, he sailed past Africa to South America and then to what is now the state of North Carolina before returning home in 1586.



Baptista Boazio, Map of "The famouse West Indian voyadge" (1589), Newberry Library

What treasures did Queen Elizabeth's explorers bring back to England?
(Circle the items that English adventurers might have found overseas...)

COMPUTERS

GOLD

TELEPHONES

WOLVES

MONKEYS

SPICES

PUMPKINS

JEWELRY

CORN

PINE TREES

STATUES

VIDEO GAMES

COWS

SKYSCRAPERS