

Key Question 7: Why did the Puritans become an increasing threat during Elizabeth's reign?

KEY EVENTS/ TIMELINE
1566 The Vestments Controversy
1570 Proposals by Thomas Cartwright
1579 French marriage pamphlet of John Stubbs
1583 Three Articles
1588-89 The Marprelate Tracts
1593 The Act Against Seditious Sectaries

KEY VOCABULARY
Puritans - An extreme Protestant who wanted very plain churches and simple services.
Calvinists - Supporters of the French Catholic, John Calvin. He believed in abolishing bishops.
Moderate Puritans - A Puritan who reluctantly accepted Elizabeth's Religious Settlement.
Presbyterians - Wanted even simpler services, established in Scotland.
Separatists - The most radical Puritan who wanted to break away from the national church and run churches parish by parish.
Prophesyings - Meetings of ministers and other interested people in which ministers practised their preaching skills.

KEY PEOPLE	
Thomas Cartwright	A Professor at Cambridge University, he gave a series of lectures calling for a Presbyterian church system. His system would have weakened the power of Elizabeth as Supreme Governor, which is why she bitterly rejected his ideas and he was forced to flee to Geneva.
John Stubbs	A Puritan, Stubbs wrote a pamphlet criticising Elizabeth's marriage talks with the Duke of Anjou, a Catholic. Elizabeth was so unhappy that she had him arrested and charged with 'seditious writing'. He was sentenced to have his right hand cut off and later imprisoned.
Puritan MPs	Some MPs attempted to use Parliament to further their Puritan idea. Elizabeth closed down Parliament before the ideas of Walter Strickland could be discussed. Peter Wentworth demanded MPs be allowed to discuss religion in Parliament and was imprisoned as a result.
Matthew Parker	Archbishop of Canterbury from 1559 to 1575, he issued a book laying down the rules for wearing vestments. Many Puritans refused to follow these rules as they argued the clothing was too similar to Catholic dress. Elizabeth insisted the rules were followed and anyone who refused lost their positions in the church.
Edmund Grindal	As Archbishop of Canterbury, Grindal refused to follow Elizabeth's instructions to put an end to prophesying as he believed it was improving the standard of the clergy. He was suspended from his post and Elizabeth shut down prophesying herself.
John Whitgift	Became the Archbishop of Canterbury after Grindal. He issued the Three Articles and imposed strict controls on the clergy to end all prophesying.
John Penry	A Welsh Puritan martyr who was eventually executed following numerous arrests for publishing pamphlets criticising the state of the church in England and Wales, as well as being involved with secret Puritan printing presses.

KEY EVENTS EXPLAINED
<p>The Vestments Controversy</p> <p>The Vestments controversy of 1566 followed Matthew Parker, the Archbishop of Canterbury's 'Book of Advertisements', which identified the specific clothing (or vestments) which should be worn by priests during services. A number of Puritan priests believed the vestments chosen by Parker were too similar to the clothing of Catholic priests, and refused to wear them. Some priests, such as Thomas Sampson, the Dean of Christ Church, Oxford, was dismissed for refusing to wear the correct clothing. Another 37 priests in London were also dismissed from their jobs for the same reason.</p>
<p>The Marprelate Tracts</p> <p>Puritan pamphlets were produced anonymously in 1588 and 1589. They are known as the Marprelate Tracts and were an attack on the church and its bishops. The content of the pamphlets offended a number of people as the language used was often violent. The pamphlets did not have their desired effect as it turned many people against the Puritans, so they actually lost them support! In response, some Protestants, such as Richard Hooker and Richard Bancroft, published pamphlets criticising Puritanism. The authors of the Marprelate Tracts were never caught so went unpunished.</p>
<p>The Three Articles 1583</p> <p>John Whitgift was a devout Anglican and a member of Elizabeth's Privy Council who became Archbishop of Canterbury in 1583. He had no sympathy for Puritan beliefs at all and issued the Three Articles in 1583. They were designed to ensure uniformity by forcing all clergy to swear an oath accepting bishops, accepting everything included in the Book of Common Prayer and accepting the Thirty-nine Articles. Between 300 and 400 ministers refused and were dismissed from office.</p>
<p>The Act Against Seditious Sectaries</p> <p>This act gave the authorities the power to banish or execute those who refused to go to Anglican Church services. These arrests and executions marked the end of the Separatist movement.</p>

SUMMARY
Puritans became more of a threat to Elizabeth over the course of her reign, as she refused to make changes to her Religious Settlement. Elizabeth demanded uniformity throughout England and Wales, which meant that Presbyterians and Separatists who undermined her had to be stopped. The Act against Seditious Sectaries eliminated the threat posed by Separatist but did not get rid of Puritanism.