History Knowledge Organiser HT3 – How was the power of the monarch challenged in Medieval England?

The Magna Carta 1215

Causes
- King John was unpopular due to high taxes and losses in his war with France. He was a poor soldier in comparison to the previous King, his brother Richard.
- King John angered people by trying to control the Church. This led to the Pope closing all Churches in England for 7 years
- The Barons were angry at paying scutage – a high tax and giving John their best fighting men

Events
In 1215 the barons gave the king a choice: change the way the country was run or face a fight against the barons' armies. The barons came up with 63 rights they thought all barons should have. This list of rights became known as the **MAGNA CARTA**. When John first refused to listen they raised an army and captured London. This meant John HAD to listen.
Key promises included: The King not demanding taxes without the barons' permission, not interfering with the Church, fair trials for all freemen, no inheritance tax and a reduction in fines for crimes.

Impact
- It limited the King's power and John could not back out of the agreement without a war
- The laws covered everyone in society (e.g. fair taxes)
- It was the start of the idea of Parliament – we still have this today
- Countries like America based their constitution on the Magna Carta
- It involved ordinary people in the running of England (e.g. Barons, bishops and knights)
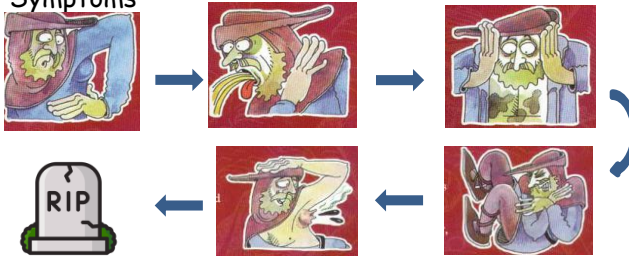
The Black Death 1348-9

Causes
The Black Death was caused by black rats. Their blood contained a poison that was spread to people by the fleas on the rats

What did people believe caused it?
At the time people did not understand dirt, germs and diseases. The Black Death was blamed on: The position of the planets, God, cats and dogs, bad air (miasma), Jews poisoning wells and even bathing too much!

Symptoms

Crazy Cures
- Whip yourself to please God
- Shut off infected villages/towns
- Kill all the cats and dogs
- Carry around herbs and spices
- Cut open a live toad and strap it to the boils
- Pray to God for forgiveness

Impact

Short term	Long term
1/3 of population died – rich and poor alike	Several more outbreaks – only died out in 19th century
Shortage of workers – led to food shortages	Led to Peasant's Revolt
Prices of food increased	Opinions on the Church began to change
Workers could demand higher pay	

The Peasants' Revolt 1381

Causes
- The King introduced a hated tax – the poll tax
- Peasants had to complete Work Service for their lords for free – if not they could be fined
- Peasants wages were kept low by the King and parliament
- The war with France cost a lot of money
- The Black Death made people question God/society
- Some preached about making lives fairer for peasants (e.g. John Ball)

Events
In 1381 the revolt began in Essex. Wat Tyler was chosen to lead the peasants. The peasants marched to London to confront the King – there were over 60,000 and they were armed. They rioted in London. King Richard agreed to meet them at Mile End – he promised to make their lives fairer so many returned home. Some remained so the King met them the next day. At this meeting Wat Tyler was killed – but the King promised to keep his word and improve peasants' lives. The other leaders of the revolt were rounded up and killed. Richard went back on many of his promises.

Impact
- Richard broke many of his promises to the peasants
- The poll tax was removed
- As time went on peasants were allowed to demand and receive higher wages
- Peasants were still controlled by the landowners
- Rebel leaders were rounded up and executed
- Parliament stopped controlling peasants' wages
- Different groups had fought together for one cause

		• Within 100 years all villeins were technically free • The feudal system remained in place