

Who Was King John?

King John reigned (was king) in England from 1199 – 1216 (in medieval times).

At the death of his older brother, he inherited England and large parts of Wales, Ireland and France.

Throne – the chair or place of the king or queen

What Did He Do Wrong?

King John decided to fight a lot. He spent much of his first years as king in battle in France – defending his land and trying to win new lands. He was actually a brave soldier.

Unfortunately, he lost the lands in France. This was very embarrassing for King John. In 1206, he started raising taxes to pay for the weapons, soldiers and equipment he needed in battle. He was determined to win back those lands in France.

taxes – money paid (like a bill) to the king or queen

English people got a bit fed up of paying these taxes, especially when King John kept raising the taxes higher and higher. He wasn't doing a very good job of winning back France, so he needed more and more money to keep going on the battlefield.

What Happened Next?

By 1214, many English people decided to revolt. By May 1215, the rebellion had travelled to London and the city became under the control of the people, not the king.

King John had a big problem. What was he going to do?

King John failed to do what was expected of a good king. The barons rebelled against him and he was forced to make a number of promises to the English people. These promises were written down in the Magna Carta or Great Charter.

One of the most significant was: "no free man was to be arrested, imprisoned or in any other way ruined without a fair trial."

Watch the video about King John

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=7xo4tUMdAMw&safe=active>

Your Task:

Write your own Magna Carta. Write yours for your school.

How could you make your school a better place?

How could you encourage new children at the school to behave in a way that will make your school a nice place to be?

What is your school like?

How would you like to make it better?

What could you change to make this happen?

How could parents help with this?

Now collect signatures from some people on your table who agree that these are good ideas: