This is Canterbury Cathedral. In today’s lesson you are going to learn about something very **SHOCKING** that took place here in the Medieval Period.
On 29 December 1170, a very important man called Thomas Becket was murdered in this very holy place. A monk called Edward Grim watched the murder.

“One of the knights raised his sword and wounded Becket in the head. That same blow almost cut off my arm as I held the archbishop. Then Becket received a second blow, but still he managed to stand. At the third blow he fell. He said, “For the name of Jesus and the protection of his Church I am prepared to die”. Then the third knight struck Becket so hard that his sword broke. The top was cut off the archbishop’s head so that blood stained the cathedral floor. Another man put his foot on Becket’s neck and scattered his brains all over the floor. He called out: “Let us away, knights. He will trouble us no more”.

I am Henry II.
I had an argument with my friend, Thomas Becket, who was the Archbishop of Canterbury. I told my knights ‘will no one rid me of this troublesome priest?’

I am Thomas Becket. Unfortunately for me, King Henry II’s knights thought that the King wanted to get rid of me. So that is what they did.

Today you will use sources to learn about what happened.
Here is another part of the story about the murder of 1170, written by the monk, Edward Grim.

The monks tried to bolt the doors to protect Becket, but he ordered them to open the doors. He said, “It is wrong to make the house of prayer into a fortress.” The knights called out, “Where is Archbishop Thomas Becket, a traitor to his king and country?” Becket answered, “I am here. I am a priest of God, not a traitor. I am ready to die for Him. I will not run from your swords.” The knights told Becket to forgive the people he had expelled from the Church. He refused. They tried to drag him from the cathedral, but he could not be forced away from the pillar. Then he started to lift his hands in prayer.

Source A, by Edward Grim

**TASK 1: Copy & Complete these three sentences in your book**

1. Which part of Grim’s story suggest that Becket was a very religious man?
   “Becket is shown as a religious man in Source A when it says “...”

2. Which parts suggest that he was a very determined man or even a stubborn man?
   “Becket is shown as a stubborn man in Source A when it says “...”

3. Which parts suggest that he was a very brave man?
   “Becket is shown as brave in Source A when it says “...”
What impression does Source B (this picture) give about the murder of Becket?

**Task 2:** Copy and Complete these two sentences, based on Source B picture).

- Source B suggests that Becket’s murder was...
- I can prove this because in the source it shows...
What can you learn from Source C about Henry and Becket’s relationship?

**TASK 3: Copy and complete** the following sentences using Source C.

- Source C suggests that...
- I can prove this because in the source it shows...

**Source C: Henry & Becket**
**Does Source E support Source D about Henry II?**

**CHALLENGE TASK:** Compare these sources about Henry II. How do they agree and disagree? Complete the sentences below. Use quotes to support your answer.

“Henry the Second was big trouble! He was short and stocky with a neck like a bull and blazing grey eyes that flashed in his fiery face. He had vivid red hair and when he was in a rage he threw himself on the floor. But he was also brilliantly clever. He set up new, fairer law courts. But he was also horrible to his wife and children, who rebelled against him. Eventually the country started crumbling, just like his family life.”


“You will know that the lord king has been red-haired so far, except that the coming of old age and grey hair has altered that colour somewhat. His head is round, and great wisdom sits upon it. Our king is peaceable, victorious in war, glorious in peace. He never sits, unless riding a horse or eating, although he has shins greatly wounded and bruised with frequent blows of horses' hooves. No one is more magnificent in gift-giving or kinder to the poor. He is friendly to all in his household.”

**Source E:** Letter to an archbishop in Italy from Peter of Blois in 1177.

**TASK 4 (The challenge task!) - Copy and complete these sentences:**

Source E agrees with Source D because they both say that... I can see this where Source D says... and Source E says...

Source E does not agree with Source D because one says... but the other says...
**FINAL TASK**

In pairs, read the short play about the murder of Becket.

Then write a ‘Point-Evidence-Explain’ paragraph arguing why Becket was killed.
Narrator:  
This is a play about two men who used to be friends. One man was Henry, King of England. The other man, Thomas, Archbishop of Canterbury.

(Henry stands up)

King Henry:  
Hail good people. I am King of England, Ireland and parts of France. Behold my Crown!

(Henry places the crown on his head)

King Henry:  
I have a good friend called Thomas. He helps me to rule the country by ensuring everyone pays me taxes. If I make him Archbishop of Canterbury he will help me to rule the Church!
King Henry: 
(Father Grim set off to find Thomas whilst Henry fetched the Archbishop’s cross)

Father Grim, fetch my friend Thomas

First Monk: 
Yes, your Majesty. I think he is in the counting house

Narrator:

Father Grim set off to find Thomas whilst Henry fetched the Archbishop’s cross

(Thomas arrives panting, in his hat. He bows to Henry.)

Thomas: 
Good day your Majesty. How may I be of service to you?

King Henry: 
My dear friend Thomas, today you are to become the Archbishop of Canterbury. You will be in charge of the church in England. You will tell people to obey ME, not the Pope! When monks do something bad, they will be tried in MY court, not a special court run by the Pope’s men.
Scene 2: King Henry’s Throne room. Tower of London

Narrator:
A few weeks later, Henry called Thomas to his throne room. He was very angry!

(Henry bangs his fist down on the table)

King Henry
I am very angry Thomas. My knights inform me that you have continued to follow the Pope’s rules and not mine – how dare you! You must obey me!

Thomas
Your Majesty. On matters of religion I must obey the Pope. You are still King and are in charge of taxes and laws. You still own all the land.

First knight
That is not acceptable. Your Majesty, this man is a traitor! He is loyal to the Pope and not to you.

Second knight
Indeed, he is a traitor. You can not trust this man your Majesty!
Third knight
He is a thief and a liar! Do not let him fool you your Majesty!

Fourth knight
Our great Archbishop prefers a foreign Pope to his own King. Kill him your Majesty!

(The knights begin to swing their swords)

Henry
Oh, sit down all of you. Let us not be too hasty about all of this.

Narrator
King Henry was sad as well as angry. Thomas had been his best friend and helped him to rule the country. Henry had a plan...

Henry
Stand up, traitor Thomas. You and your friends who obey the Pope will be exiled to France for six years. Go before I change my mind.

(Thomas and the monk pretend to hurry out of the room)
The King kept his word. For six long years Thomas stayed in France. Henry missed his friend. The people of England missed their Archbishop. Henry decided to allow Thomas back.

(Henry and his knights pace up and down.)

Henry
Well, good sirs. Do you think the Archbishop will have come to his senses?

First knight
It is not possible to say your Majesty. We must wait to hear him speak.

Second knight
Once a traitor, always a traitor. That’s what I have to say about the matter!

Third knight
My spies inform me that Thomas is more friendly with the Pope than ever.
Narrator: Thomas and the two monks came in. They looked very tired and sad.

Thomas
Your Majesty, you look well.. It does not seem six years since we last met

(Thomas and the monks bow before Henry)

Henry
Well, six years it is and another sixty years it will be if you still support the Pope!

Thomas
I support you both, King Henry. The Pope is the leader of the church. You, the King, are leader of our country. If bishops in England are not doing what the Pope wants them to do, then I should stop them. That is all I have to say.

The Monk, Edward Grim
Your Majesty, please leave the Archbishop alone. He is very tired after our long journey. The people of Canterbury want to see the Archbishop. Let us go on our way. He will do you know harm.
The two monks took Thomas by the shoulders and led him away. The king lost his temper. He began to stamp and shout.

Henry
How dare he say that!

(Henry banged his fist down on the table)

Henry
How dare Thomas say that he supports both of us! I am more important than the Pope!!

First knight
You are right your Majesty. The Pope is wicked. He collects taxes to go to his Church in Rome that are rightfully yours.

Second knight
The Pope is a traitor to the church. Some say that he eats live frogs!

Third knight
The Pope AND Becket are traitors. Only YOU, the King, can be trusted.
Narrator
King Henry stood up and roared…

Henry
Will nobody rid me of this turbulent priest?

Knights together
Your wish is our command!

Narrator
The knights rushed off. Henry sat and put his head in his hands
Scene 4: Outside Canterbury Cathedral

Narrator

Whilst this was happening. Thomas and the two monks had reached Canterbury. They had gone into the Cathedral to pray. Suddenly there was a great noise and a lot of shouting.

The Monk, Edward Grim
Thomas, Thomas, come quickly

Second monk
Quick Thomas, the knights dare not hurt you when we reach the altar

(the two monks dragged Thomas to the Altar)

Thomas
Let the knights in. They will do no harm inside God’s house. Perhaps they will pray with me?

(Thomas kneels at the Altar to pray)
Narrator
*The knights came crashing into the cathedral. They shouted out:*

Knights together
Where is Thomas Becket, traitor to the King and country?

Thomas
Here I am. I am no traitor to the King. I am priest.

Knights together
You shall die in an instant!

First knight
Die traitor!

*(Thomas is hit over the head with a sword)*

Second Knight
You asked for this, Thomas Becket. May your brains rot and the worms eat them. Death to the Archbishop!

*(Thomas is again hit over the head with a sword)*
For the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ, I am ready to die

(Thomas falls to the ground)

Let us give his brains to the dogs of Canterbury

(They cut Thomas’ head in two)

Long live King Henry!

(Thomas lies dead and the knights stand over him in triumph)

So the friendship ended in death. King Henry was devastated. Henry said he had not meant for Thomas to be killed.

Becket was made into a saint. One year after Becket’s death, Henry came to Canterbury and was flogged by the monks as punishment. Pilgrims flocked to Becket’s tomb at Canterbury – and still do.

80 Churches and 2 hospitals were named after Becket. The clergy were still tried in Church courts.
So why was Becket murdered?

Point: There are many reasons to explain why Thomas Becket was murdered in 1170.

Evidence: The first reason is that...

Also...

In addition...

A final reason for the murder is...

Explain: Therefore there are many reasons why Becket was killed; the most important reason was...