



# YOU ARE KING JOHN

Will you make wise decisions to  
keep your crown and remain the  
King of Britain?





## You are King John – are you the weakest link?

*In your group you need to consider how King John should react to various situations.*

*Record your decisions on your sheet – you will later get a score for each answer*

### **Your aims as king are:**

- 1. Always appear to be strong and powerful**
- 2. Stop other rulers stealing your land or interfering in your rule**
- 3. Keep the Empire together – lose no land**
- 4. Keep the barons on your side – you need them to fight for you and pay taxes**
- 5. Keep your promises so people trust you**



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## DECISION 1

It is 1199. Your brother Richard has just died. Arthur - your 12 year old nephew – says he should be king. He is supported by most of the barons of the Empire in France, and by the king of France. You are supported by the barons in Normandy and England. Do you:

- a) **Agree to share the Empire with Arthur**
- b) **Have yourself crowned king and then meet Arthur to discuss an agreement**
- c) **Have yourself crowned king and then go to war against Arthur and France**



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## Decision 1

a. Lose 2 crowns - what a weak choice!

b. Lose 1 crown - not quite as bad as (a)

c. Gain 1 crown - good choice - makes you look strong



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## DECISION 2

Arthur allied with the king of France against you. You capture him. He is only 14, but he has just led an army against you. What should you do with him?

- a) **Make him promise to be loyal to you and then set him free**
- b) **Keep him prisoner**
- c) **Secretly execute him**



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## Decision 2

a. Lose 3 crowns – are you mad to set him free?

b. Gain 1 crown – make sure he can't escape

c. Lose 1 crown – executing him means he won't be a problem – but will people ever trust you again?



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## DECISION 3

You have lost the war against France and so lost all your lands in France. What will you do about this?

- a) **Accept this defeat and give up hope of having an Empire like your brother and father**
- b) **Discuss the problem with your barons and accept their suggestions**
- c) **Plan to win the lands back – whether the barons support you or not**



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## Decision 3

- a. Lose 2 crowns – you would look like a weak failure!
- b. Gain 1 crown – it's your best chance
- c. Lose 1 crown – you can't win without barons' support



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## DECISION 4

You need money to pay soldiers to fight for you.  
How do you raise money?

- a) **Ask the barons about how much tax they will pay**
- b) **Double the amount of tax paid by landowners when they inherit land**
- c) **Make the tax paid when land is inherited ten times what it used to be – or even more if you can get away with it.**



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## Decision 4

- a. **Gain 1 crown - you really must consult the barons about tax**
- b. **Lose 1 crown - everyone will hate double taxes**
- c. **Lose 2 crowns - Everyone will be furious**



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## DECISION 5

The Archbishop of Canterbury has just died. The monks at Canterbury have chosen who they want to be the next archbishop. In the past, the king has been able to choose the Archbishop. What do you do?

- a) **Accept the man the monks want**
- b) **Make your own choice and force the monks to accept your man**
- c) **Ask the Pope to make an arrangement**



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## Decision 5

- a. Gain 1 crown - you will look a bit weak, but it won't cause any further problems
- b. Gain 1 crown - a bit risky but you'll probably get away with it
- c. Lose 1 crown - it looks as though you're giving power away to the Pope



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## DECISION 6

The Pope chooses Stephen Langton to be next archbishop. He says you must accept Langton or he will close down all churches in England

- a) Refuse to accept Langton because the Pope has no right to interfere in your reign**
- b) Accept the Pope's choice because Langton will be a good Archbishop**



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## Decision 6

a. Lose 2 crowns – you really don't need another problem right now!

b. Gain 1 crown – at least it keeps the Pope on your side



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## DECISION 7

You are just about to invade Wales when you hear that some of your barons are planning to murder you. What do you do?

- a) **Order the rebellious barons to send their sons as hostages and carry on with the invasion. Then tell the barons you will kill their sons if they carry on rebelling**
- b) **Abandon your invasion and deal with the problem of the barons instead**







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## DECISION 8

You are still worried about rumours of rebellions and plots among your barons. What do you do?

- a) Agree to discuss the way you are ruling the country with the barons**
- b) Bring in foreign advisers and soldiers you can trust. Give them castles and important lands to keep them loyal.**



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## Decision 8

- a. **Gain 1 crown – a difficult choice but you might be able to reduce the opposition!**
  
- b. **Lose 2 crowns – bringing in more foreigners will increase people's distrust**



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## DECISION 9

You want to invade France to win back some of the land you lost. The barons will not support you. They also will not pay scutage – a tax paid by lords who did not want to fight themselves

- a) **Threaten the barons who won't fight or pay with really harsh punishment**
- b) **Abandon the plans to invade France**



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## Decision 9

a. Lose 3 crowns – do you really want the barons to rebel – that's what will happen!

b. Gain 1 crown – you have so many problems you will have to forget about France for now



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## DECISION 10

You invaded France, but the French troops defeated your army in battle. The barons are still complaining about high taxes, foreign advisers and the way you run the country. There are still no church services in England and the Pope is threatening to help the French King. The Pope suggests a peace agreement if you accept Langton. What will you do?

- a) **Agree reluctantly to the agreement**
- b) **Refuse the pope's offer**



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## Decision 10

- a. **Gain 1 crown – at least that gets the Pope on your side!**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- b. **Lose 2 crowns – refuse the Pope's offer? – you're in big trouble now!**



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## DECISION 11

The King of France is threatening to invade England and some of the barons might help him. They want you to lower taxes, get rid of foreign advisers and soldiers, and agree to consult them about how to govern. What do you do?

- a) **Agree reluctantly with them**
- b) **Tell them you were chosen by God and can do whatever you want.**







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## DECISION 12

You agree to Magna Carta only because you were forced to. Now the barons are having their own discussions. What do you do?

- a) **Hold meetings to get the barons to work together in the hope that they will help you win back land in France**
- b) **Build up your army to attack the rebel barons and put an end to Magna Carta**



