

## PHILIP II and THE SPANISH ARMADA

In 1556, Charles V abdicated and passed his territories in Spain, Italy, Flanders and the Americas to his son, Philip II. The empire of Philip II was the most powerful of the time. So Philip II was the son of a Portuguese princess and he inherited the Portuguese kingdom when his grandfather died. Portugal's possessions extended through Africa, Asia and Brazil.

Philip II's empire was the largest the world had ever known. The king ruled all his territories from The Escorial (Madrid), where he installed his court.

Philip II had two policies objectives: to preserve his territories and to defend Catholicism. These objectives determined Philip II's foreign policy and were the reasons for many of the wars and problems during his reign: he had some wars against France, against the Turks (he defeated the Turks at the Battle of Lepanto), against the northern provinces of the Low Countries which wanted the independence and against England (the Invincible Armada).

**Why the Spanish Armada attacked England?** The Spanish monarch, Philip II, was angry with the Queen Elizabeth because she had not punished Sir Francis Drake and other English pirates for ransacking Spanish ships. In May 1588, a massive invasion fleet or 'Armada' sailed from the port of Lisbon (130 ships carried 30,000 soldiers and sailors). At that time England was a small nation with a little navy, but they defeated Spain, the greatest power in the world, with help from Mother Nature. Strong winds and terrible rain forced many ships onto rocks near Ireland. Also the English people filled eighty ships with flammable material and put fire to them. They sent fireships against the Spanish Armada. The Spanish fled in panic to the open sea, where the Spanish ships were easy targets for the English artillery.

Video: The Spanish Armada

<http://embedr.com/playlist/the-invincible-armada>

### Activities:

#### 1. Read the sentences. What do they refer to?

- a) Philip II's mother was this nationality:
- b) Portugal had possessions in these countries:
- c) This was the place where Philip II established his court:
- d) These were the main objectives of Philip II's policies:
- e) It is the name of the Turks defeat in 1571:
- f) The name of the powerful Spanish navy:
- g) It is the reason for the attack to England:
- h) This event aided the English in defeating the Armada: