



Background to Richard's rise: Edward IV's rule and deathbed speech (pp. 99-104)

1. At first view, the opening paragraphs seem to give a favorable description of Edward IV. Could any expressions or details be taken ironically, however? If so, how do they complicate or undercut a positive view and judgment?
2. The opening sentence has this obvious error: Edward in fact died when he was forty, not fifty-three. Is this simply an error on More's part? Can you think of any literary reason an author might include such an error?
3. The narrator says he is uncertain about many things. About what *is* he certain in the first few paragraphs describing Richard? Why focus on Richard's brothers and father? What is the "sure ground for the foundation of all [Richard's] building" (102/23-24)?
4. Why give prominence to Edward's deathbed speech and attempt at "atonement" (104/62, 105/22)? What does it reveal? How does it relate to the history as a whole? Compare this speech with its counterpart in Sallust's *Jugurtha* 9-10.

Richard's strategy to gain control over young Edward V (104-106)

1. What is Richard's overall strategy to gain control over young Edward V, according to the narrator?
2. How is this strategy put into effect in regard to Queen Elizabeth? and in regard to her relatives?

The Queen and her son Prince Richard enter sanctuary (106-112)

1. What role does Lord Hastings play in what unfolds? Who else allows Richard's plan to succeed?
2. The narrator wonders whether it was destiny or folly whereby "the lamb was betaken to the wolf to keep" (108/47-48). This is typical Morean irony; explain. (Hint: How could it be anything but folly to *give* a lamb to a wolf?)

The Queen and the Cardinal debate (112-115)

After Queen Elizabeth articulates legitimate reasons whereby her son should have the protection of sanctuary, why does she finally give him up? Was this a prudent decision? Does the narrator give any indication of his own judgment on this issue? What role do the many proverbs play in this narrative here, and throughout the *History*?

How Richard extends his control; the demise of Hastings (115-121)

1. How does Richard win Buckingham to his side? What moves Buckingham?
2. What is Catesby's role in what transpires? Does he play a role in later events or is this his only decisive function? What is his profession at this time?
3. Why does the narrative focus at length on the warnings ignored by Hastings?

"Digression" on Jane Shore (121-23)

Why include the long digression on Jane Shore? Does she represent an aspect of English society? What is her relation to the commoners? to the nobles? to the royalty? to the clergy?

Richard's next step to the crown: deny legitimacy of Queen Elizabeth's marriage to Edward IV (123-127)

1. Why give so much background information on King Edward's marriage? How does the *History* probe marriage?
2. What does King Edward think of political marriages? Is his marriage to Elizabeth one of love?

Richard's and Buckingham's "performance" at Guildhall; "kings' games...upon scaffolds" (127-133)

1. How effective is the rhetoric of Dr. Shaa compared to the rhetoric of Buckingham or of Richard?
2. Are we to admire or criticize the commoners' silence in responding to Dr. Shaa's "performance" as they watch "kings' games...played upon scaffolds" (133/27)? What is the "wise" response to such things?

The "mockish election" and its aftermath (133-135)

Who seems most responsible for Richard's "election" as king? What obstacles does he have to overcome afterwards? Who helps him and why?

Murder of the young princes in the Tower of London; aftermath (135-136)

1. How certain is the narrator in regard to how the princes were murdered?
2. What is emphasized in this account? What is the main point the narrator wishes to make?

Buckingham turns against Richard; Bishop Morton's role (136-138)

1. What leads Buckingham to betray Richard III? What impression are we given of Bishop Morton?
2. Why end a history in this way? Granted, most say the history is unfinished, but taking the work as it is, what is the literary effect of such an ending? What are some of the things you are left "thinking about" as the *History* ends?

Questions on the work as a whole: According to More's account, how is the tyrant Richard able to come to power, despite the laws and customs that existed in England to prevent such a rise? How would you describe the narrator's tone and character? How does the narrator compare to Richard and the others?