

# How similar were the succession crises of 1066 and 1087?

## Task 1: Nail the concept!

In 1087 there was another succession crisis (another way of saying this is that there was a disputed succession). You've already studied one succession crisis - the one that happened in 1066. Explain in your own words what a succession crisis was here:

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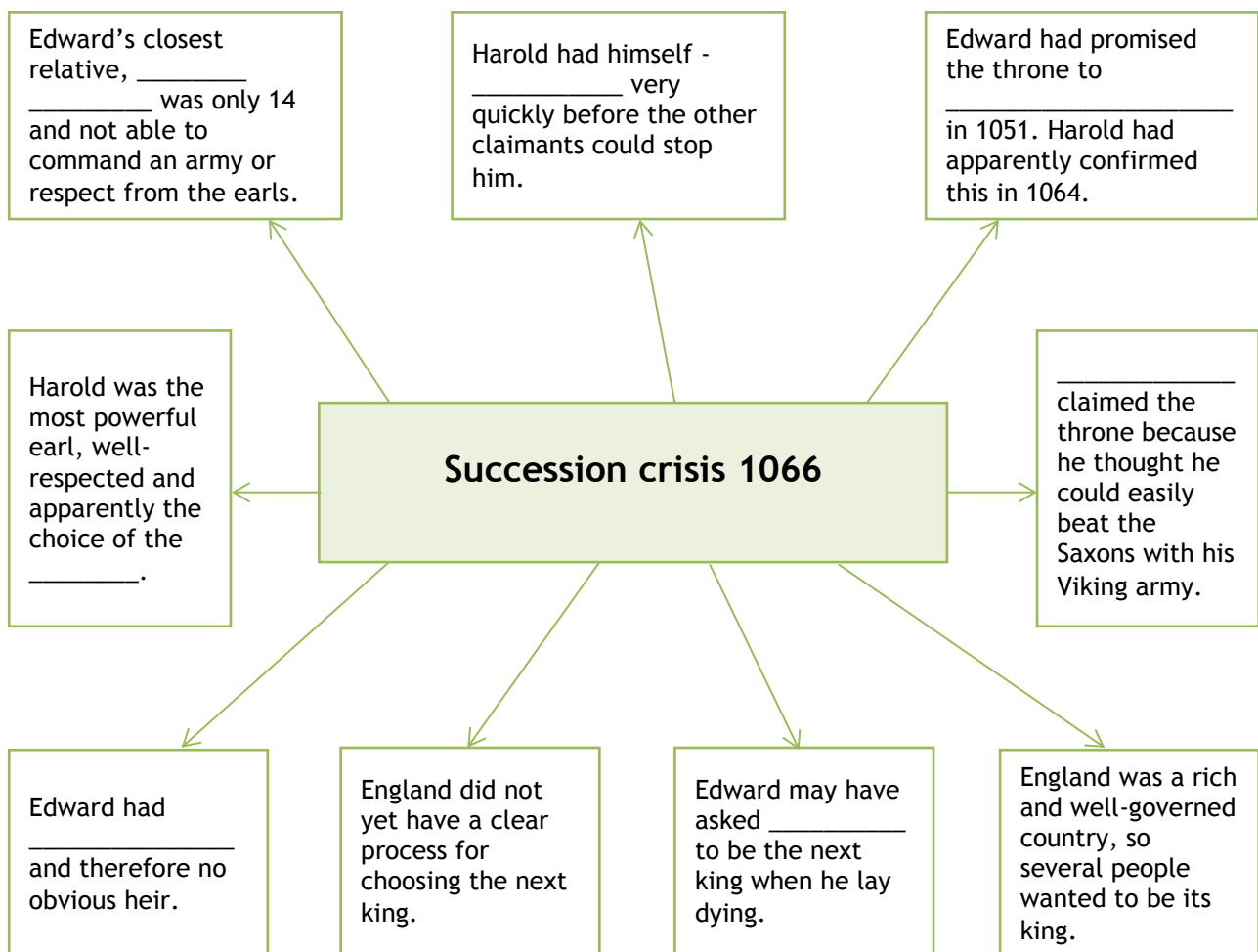
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When you've written your explanation, check the box at the bottom of this page to see how accurate your understanding of a succession crisis is. Add points to yours if necessary.

## Task 2: Refresh your memory of the 1066 succession crisis

The spider diagram below highlights many of the different reasons for the succession crisis before and after the death of Edward the Confessor in 1066. Fill in the gaps to recap this issue.



Answer: A succession crisis happens when it isn't clear who the next king or queen should be. This could be for many reasons, but the outcome is often a struggle for the throne between rival claimants.

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### Task 3: Turn into big reasons

The first column of this table is for the bigger, over-arching reasons behind the 1066 succession crisis, ready for you to compare them with the reasons for the 1087 dispute between William I's sons. Some are filled in for you - notice how they've been broadened out so they could apply to another situation. Think of suitable broader reasons for the other two.

Reasons/situation in 1066	Similar reason in 1087?
No suitable blood relative of the king	
More than one man thought he had a good claim	
England was wealthy and well-governed so many people wanted to be its king	

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### Task 4: Compare with 1087

1066 involved several men who didn't know each other well. In 1087 the dispute was between two brothers, William I's oldest sons, Robert and William Rufus (he is called Rufus here to avoid confusion with his father).

Cut out the cards below. After reading each card and discuss with a partner:

1. Decide whether it explains the **reasons**, the **events** or the **outcome** of the succession crisis.
2. Place on the continuum of similarity below.
3. When you're happy with your placements, add the points to the second column of the table above. You may need to add more to your 1066 column to make a full comparison. Make sure you use helpful comparison words like *very*, *moderately*, *somewhat*, *partially*.

The usual practice in Normandy was to leave your lands to your oldest son when you died. However, having lands in both Normandy and England was a new situation and it was not clear how William should divide them up.	There was already rivalry between the two brothers. Rufus had taken his father's side during Robert's revolts in 1077-80.
England remained a wealthy country in 1087. Norman control had been effectively established and William's power in England was secure.	Despite William reconciling with his son Robert in 1080, he clearly did not think it was a good idea to leave England <i>and</i> Normandy to Robert. He reluctantly agreed that Robert would be Duke of Normandy, but not King of England.
Rufus was with William as he lay dying (after getting a nasty injury while on horseback). William gave Rufus a letter to deliver to Lanfranc, asking him, as Archbishop of Canterbury, to arrange for Rufus to be crowned as soon as possible.	Robert was in exile again when William died, so he only received the news after Rufus had been crowned.
Norman nobles were unhappy with the way England and Normandy had been divided up. Most had lands in both places, and to get this land they'd have to swear homage to Rufus <i>and</i> Robert. Both brothers expected their barons to fight on their side if needed!	William's half-brother, Odo of Bayeux, had a solution to this problem: one brother should rise against the other and the nobles should back one to be both King of England and Duke of Normandy! Odo chose Robert to do this because Rufus was more cunning and clever and would not need or want Odo's advice.
Rufus realised something was wrong when hardly any nobles turned up to his court at Easter 1088. He then received news of small rebellions in the Midlands and a larger one, led by Odo who had taken over Rochester Castle.	Rufus took decisive action. He marched to Rochester Castle and laid siege to it. The defenders surrendered because they had no food and Odo was exiled.
Odo's rebellion had been in support of Robert, but he never arrived in England to lead it himself. This contributed to the defeat of the rebels and victory for Rufus in the succession crisis.	Rufus listened to his advisers and decided not to punish the nobles who had rebelled too harshly. As a result, England quickly settled down again. This did not stop Robert trying to rebel against their other brother Henry when he became king several years later!

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### Continuum of similarity

Decide how far the reasons, events and outcomes of the 1087 succession crisis were similar or different to 1066.



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### Answer to Task 2.

