

# KING JOHN

## THE DECISION-MAKING GAME



# KING JOHN'S OBJECTIVES:

- always appear strong and powerful to stop other rulers trying to steal your lands or interfere in your country
- keep the Angevin empire, all the lands ruled by your father and brother
- keep the barons on your side because you need them to fight for you and pay taxes
- keep your word so your barons trust you.

# Decision 1:

Your brother, King Richard, has died. Arthur, your 12-year-old nephew, says he should be king. He is supported by the barons in Brittany, Anjou and Poitou and by Philip Augustus, the King of France. You are supported by the barons in England and Normandy.

# 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

# Decision 2:

Arthur allied with the King of France against you. You capture him. He is now 14 and was leading an army against you.

What should you do with him?

# Do you:

- a) set him free after he swears to be loyal to you in future
- b) keep him prisoner
- c) execute him in secret

# Decision 3:

You have lost the war with France and all your lands across the Channel.

What will you do about this?

# Do you:

- a) accept your defeat and give up hope of winning back the empire your father and brother built up
- b) discuss the problem with your barons and accept their decisions because you need them to fight and pay taxes for your army
- c) plan to win back your lands, whether the barons support you or not.



# Decision 4:

You need money to pay soldiers to fight for you.

Do you raise money by:

# Do you:

- a) consulting the barons about how much tax to collect
- b) doubling the taxes paid by landowners when they inherit their lands
- c) multiply by ten the taxes paid by landowners when they inherit their lands or even more if you can get away with it.

# Decision 5:

The Archbishop of Canterbury has died.  
The monks at Canterbury have chosen a new archbishop although in the past the king has claimed the right to choose the Archbishop.

# Do you:

- a) accept the monks' choice
- b) make your own choice and force them to accept your man
- c) ask the Pope to arrange an agreement

# Decision 6:

- The Pope chooses Stephen Langton as the new Archbishop.
- He says that if you do not accept Langton he will announce an interdict on England.
- This means no church services can be held so no one can be married, christened or buried on church land.

# Do you:

a) refuse to accept Langton because the Pope has no right to interfere in your country

b) accept the Pope's choice because Langton will be a good Archbishop.

# Decision 7:

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

# Do you:

- a) order the rebellious barons to send their sons as hostages and carry on with the invasion. Tell the barons you'll execute their sons if they rebel against you.
- b) abandon your invasion of Wales and return to deal with the barons themselves .



# Decision 8:

You are still worried about rumours of rebellions and plots among your barons.

# Do you:

a) agree to discuss the way you are ruling the country.

b) bring in foreign advisers and soldiers who you can trust. Give them important castles and lands to make sure they are loyal.

# Decision 9:

You want to invade France to win back your lands but the barons in the north are refusing to fight for you or to pay scutage, a tax paid by lords who do not join your army themselves.

# Do you:

- a) threaten the barons who do not fight or pay scutage with severe punishments.
- b) abandon your plans to invade France.

# Decision 10:

- You invaded France but the King of France beat your army at the battle of Bouvines.
- The barons are still complaining about high taxes, your foreign advisers and the way you run the country.
- There are still no church services being held because of your quarrel with the Pope and he is threatening to help the King of France invade England.
- However, the Pope suggests a peace agreement if you accept Langton as archbishop.

# Do you:

a) agree to Langton becoming archbishop.

b) refuse the Pope's offer to end the quarrel.

# Decision 11:

- The King of France is threatening to invade England and some of the rebellious barons might help him if you do not make an agreement with them.
- They want you to reduce taxes, throw out your foreign advisers and soldiers and agree to consult the barons about how you govern the kingdom.

# Do you:

- a) agree reluctantly to the agreement.
- b) tell them you were chosen by God to be king and can do whatever you wish.



# Decision 12:

- You agreed to Magna Carta but only because you were forced to.
- Now the rebels are starting to disagree among themselves.

# Do you:

- a) hold meetings to get the barons to work together in the hope that they will help you invade France and win back your lands there.
- b) build up your army to attack the rebel barons and put an end to the agreement in Magna Carta.

# Decision 1:

a) Lose 2 crowns if you share the empire with Arthur. This is weak, feeble choice.

b) Lose 1 crown if you meet Arthur to discuss and agreement.

Not quite as bad as (a)

c) This choice makes you look strong and decisive. (John's choice)

## Decision 2:

a) Lose 2 crowns. Are you mad to set him free?

b) Good choice - keep him prisoner but make sure he cannot escape

c) Lose 1 crown - executing him stops him being a problem but will anyone trust you again? (John loses 1 crown)

# Decision 3:

- a) Lose 1 crown for accepting defeat. You look weak and a failure
- b) Probably the best choice to consult your barons
- c) Lose 1 crown - you can't win without the barons' support. (John loses a second crown)

# Decision 4:

- a) It's sensible to consult the barons about taxes.
- b) Lose 1 crown as everyone will object to you doubling taxes.
- c) Lose 2 crowns for multiplying taxes by ten. This will anger everyone (John loses two more - now has lost 4 overall).

# Decision 5:

- a) Accepting the monks' choice looks weak but won't cause you great problems. (John's choice)
- b) A little risky to force them to accept your man but you'll probably get away with it.
- c) Lose 1 crown for looking as if you are giving away power to the Pope.

# Decision 6:

- a) Lose 1 crown. Ok, you look weak if you accept Langton but you've got plenty of problems building up. You don't need another one! (John loses 1 - now 5 down)
- b) Probably the better choice as it keeps the Pope on your side.



# Decision 7:

a) Lose 1 crown. You look strong but they won't trust you again and they'll dislike you even more.

(John loses another - now minus 6)

b) It looks weak to abandon your invasion of Wales but you're right to deal with the threat from the barons.

# Decision 8:

a) A difficult choice; but, if you talk, you might reduce the opposition.

b) Lose 1 crown for bringing in foreign advisers and soldiers. This only increases suspicion and distrust.

(John's choice - now minus 7, only 3 left)

# Decision 9:

- a) Lose 1 crown for threatening the barons.  
You are pushing them closer to rebellion.  
(John loses another one - only 2 left)
- b) Your problems are so great it's probably better to abandon your plans to invade France.

# Decision 10:

- a) Agree to Langton becoming archbishop - at least the Pope's on your side now. (John's choice)
- b) Lose 1 crown for refusing the Pope's offer. You're in big trouble!

# Decision 11:

a) You don't have any choice! Agree reluctantly to the agreement.

(John's choice)

b) Lose 2 crowns if tell them you can do whatever you wish. There will be a civil war.

# Decision 12:

- a) hold meetings to get the barons to work together stops them attacking you.
- b) Lose 1 crown if you attack the rebel barons and put an end to the agreement in Magna Carta. Now they'll want to get rid of you - permanently! (John loses 1 more - down to his last crown as civil war begins).