



Lesson 2: THE CAPETIANS - TASK 1

When the Carolingians died out in 987 AD, the lords of France met to choose a new king. They chose a man named Hugh Capet. Hugh Capet was picked for being weak, so the lords could do whatever they wanted and the king wouldn't be able to do anything about it. His successors, also didn't have much power. Some of the lords in their kingdoms controlled more land than the kings did, and were more powerful. Mainly the Capetians succeeded because they lived a long time and always had sons to succeed them, so there were not many other king on the throne.



Meanwhile, the French lords tried to govern their own provinces, more or less independently. Some did better than others, but gradually the lords figured out a good system. They got some cash income for themselves through charging tolls on roads, charging fees for establishing markets and fairs, and from selling what their tenants grew on their own land. They required and enforced regular military service from their vassals. By 1100, most of France was peaceful and rich, even without the power of the king. Some lords were even strong enough to be attacking other places. The dukes of Normandy conquered England in 1066, and sent some younger sons to take over southern Italy about the same time. The great lords of France were almost entirely independent of the king, who had very little power outside his own land around Paris.

Read the questions and tick the correct true/false box	T	F
1. The Carolingian dynasty died without heirs		
2. Hugh Capet was thought to be the most powerful of French Lords		
3. His successors were all powerful and rich.		
4. The dynasty survived because they always had long lives and male heirs		
5. The French Lords ruled their lands without the influence of the King		
6. They got their incomes directly from taxes on roads and markets		
7. Because of their independence France lived a period of political instability		
8. Some Lords like William of Normandy expanded their possession outside France		