**RIASSUNTO ELIZABETH I**

In 1558 Elizabeth I became queen of a divided nation. She was the daughter of Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn. E. was 25, she had a strong personality and an excellent education and she was a political genius. She solved the religious problem because she decided that Protestantism was the official religion in England, but she gave Catholics freedom of worship. She never got married and she said that she was married to her people. People called her the “Virgin Queen”. She went on many progresses to meet her people and she inspired literature, music and poetry. She also protected the artists (like Shakespeare).

Spain was the main rival of England in this period. E. supported the English pirates secretely, they attacked the Spanish ships that carried precious metals, tobacco and slaves between America, Africa and Europe. Because of these pirates, in 1588 Spain decided to invade England with the “invicible Armada”. The English ships defeated the Armada and so England became the most powerful nation in Europe.

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