Name _____ Date _____ Class _____ Period ____

To Be or Not To Be a Monarchy

Directions: Read about the British Monarchy and then, using that information, your knowledge of English/British history, and your own thoughts, write half a page in response to the question, "Should the Monarchy continue? Why or why not?

Linking TO Today

The British Monarchy

Should the United Kingdom still have a king or queen? Ever since the conflict between king and Parliament in the 1600s, the monarch has had a restricted role in the government.

Critics of the monarchy sometimes claim that the royal family is an expensive luxury. Monarchy's defenders reply that Queen Elizabeth II's wealth—perhaps about $500 million—allows her to pay her own way. Her accountants agree. In 2006 a report from the office of Royal Public Finances stated that Queen Elizabeth II and her family cost each citizen of the United Kingdom only about $1.13 per year. In addition, the monarchy's supporters point out that the tourist industry, which is worth more than $300 billion per year, would suffer if the romance of royalty were eliminated. Elizabeth II can also sometimes defuse a touchy situation with other heads of state, since she does not represent a particular political viewpoint.

Perhaps the best argument for the monarchy is its power as a symbol. It represents continuity—the ability of the kingdom's people to survive centuries of global turmoil and still live in relative peace with each other.

Draw Conclusions Should the monarchy continue? Why or why not?

Queen Elizabeth II greets crowds celebrating her eightieth birthday. ▶