



Year 5/6

Anglo-Saxons and Vikings

NC Objective

The Viking and Anglo-Saxon struggle for the Kingdom of England to the time of Edward the Confessor

Visits/Visitors/Immersion days

Jorvik Viking Centre – York

Focus areas

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| Struggles | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Britain's appeal to the Vikings• Raids on Britain – Lindisfarne• Constant struggle for power – Kingdoms• Monarchy struggles• Alfred the Great |
| Influences on Britain | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Changes in the way of life• Trading – worldwide opportunities• Progression of transport links across the world• Place names• Creation of a unified Britain |

Enquiry Question

How did the Viking invasion on Britain affect/influence life for us today?

Rationale for studying in Year 5/6

This unit chronologically follows on from the Anglo-Saxon and Picts topic, which is studied previously and allows children to see the development of British history in chronological order. It also links with the four invasion topics which are planned chronologically across KS2. Whilst most lessons will centre around comparing Anglo-Saxons with Vikings, references to the Romans will be made to contextualise their understanding and to see how, in many ways, Britain actually regressed. The topic will combine the study of Anglo-Saxons and Vikings, but will first consider Anglo-Saxon Britain. This is due to the Anglo-Saxons' arrival to Britain before the Vikings. Continual references to both Anglo-Saxons and Vikings will be made in lessons to depict their similar/varying natures when living with each other and fighting for control over Britain. The enquiry question will allow children to



consider the changes Vikings brought to Britain, considering the struggles they had with the Anglo-Saxons and how they influenced and progressed life in Britain.

Subject Knowledge

The Anglo-Saxon period has been broken into two parts in the National Curriculum, differentiating between the periods before and after the main Viking invasions. Several Viking raids took place during the 8th Century, with increasing numbers towards the end of the century. The period is often considered to have begun with the raiding of Lindisfarne in 793. Vikings were largely from Denmark, Norway and Sweden and it is not known for certain why they began to raid other lands and settle in places such as England. Within a century Vikings had taken over large parts of the land in northern England, although failed to overrule the large kingdom of Wessex. By 884, after years of battles, a treaty was agreed that left Vikings ruling over 'Danelaw' in the north of England.

Vikings have traditionally had a fierce reputation as invaders and for violent attacks. While these are not entirely unfounded, there is certainly evidence that some attacks including that at Lindisfarne in 793 were. The Vikings occupied much of north-eastern England, including their stronghold of York. We now know that the city was a busy place with up to 15,000 inhabitants. Gradually as the Vikings spread, in between skirmishes with Saxons elsewhere in England, the Viking farming, language and laws spread across the north and east. Traditional Viking families had men working the land, with a wife taking care of the home and of the family valuables. Clothes and housing were not dissimilar from those in the rest of England. There was little furniture in the single-room homes and certainly no bathroom: most families used a cesspit for discarding waste. When they first arrived, most Vikings followed pagan religions, but soon converted to Christianity as they became settled in England. With some invasions in the 10th Century, invaders were bought off with silver, known as Danegeld, which was raised by taxing locals. The Danegeld land tax became permanent tribes of Scotland.

After years of small-scale attacks and invasions, and the commencement of the main attacks in 793, Viking incursions continued into the 9th Century. In 865, a substantial army was raised to conquer England, known in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle as the Great Heathen Army. The Army landed in East Anglia and reached York by the following year. Over the next 10 years the Vikings took over more land, leaving Wessex as the only unconquered kingdom. Battles between the two groups continued until the Battle of Edington, at which King Alfred (the Great) defeated the Vikings. Consequently, the Treaty of Alfred and Guthrum was agreed which essentially separated England into parts ruled by the Saxons and by the Vikings. The two populations co-existed, although not without on-going battles, until 954. In this year, Eric Bloodaxe, king of the Vikings, was killed, perhaps as part of an internal Viking feud, from which time the Saxon king, Eadred took control of the kingdom. Following this period, a series of Saxon kings ruled, interrupted by the reign of Danish king Sweyn and later Cnut and his grandsons, before Edward the Confessor.

King Alfred: King of Wessex from 871 to 899, defended Wessex from the Viking conquest. Athelstan: First King to unite English kingdoms, 927.
 Guthrum: King of the Vikings in Danelaw at the time of the treaty with the Saxons.
 King Cnut: King of England, Denmark and Norway 1028 to 1035.
 Edward the Confessor: penultimate Saxon King of England (before Harold II who lost at Hastings).

Previous learning in Year 4

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| Invasion | Roman invasion of Britain and investigations looking at the reason why. This unit also puts the collaboration vs resistance in context. The Roman army is explored and ways of invasion considered. The children are also introduced to the difference between an invasion and a raid. |
| Transport and trade | The Roman topic considered the ways the Romans improved British infrastructures, especially their development of the roads. Trade opportunities for the Celts were studied and how these improved with Roman influences. The Egyptian topic introduced the theme of trading between countries and how the Egyptians used boats to move goods around the Mediterranean. |
| Political and monarchy | Both the Roman and Egyptian topics looked at hierarchy structures. They explored the rights of different people within these eras and the way people were considered by others in society. Leaders and rulers were studied and the impact they had on their kingdoms. |
| Social and cultural | Investigated the social systems within the Roman and Egyptian units in Year 4. During the Egyptian topic, achievements such as agriculture were studied in depth providing contextualisation to the environment, these skills can be transferred to aid understanding of the struggles within Britain. |
| Comparisons and influences | The influences of the Romans on Britain were studied in depth. The building of Hadrian's Wall will provide the children with some knowledge of the boundaries within Britain at that time. |

New learning within the topic

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| Invasion | Viking invasion of Britain Raid on Lindisfarne Struggle for power Death of Edward the Confessor – Battle of Hastings and Norman Conquest |
| Transport and trade | How Vikings travelled to Britain – longboats How Vikings developed trade across the world |
| Political and monarchy | Tensions between A/S and Vikings Peace treaty |

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| | Alfred the Great How England became a unified country Death of Edward the Confessor – Battle of Hastings |
| Social and cultural | What life was like for Vikings in Britain How England became a unified country Place names Artefacts including games |
| Comparisons and influences | Viking influence on Britain Comparison of Anglo-Saxon and Vikings eg homes, lifestyle |

Historical Skills that will be covered

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| Historical Knowledge | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give reasons why changes may have occurred, backed up by evidence. • Describe similarities and differences between some people, events and artefacts studied. • Describe how some of the things studied from the past affect/influence life today. • Make links between some of the features of past societies. |
| Historical Enquiry | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use documents, printed sources (e.g. archive materials) the Internet, databases, pictures, photographs, music, artefacts, historic buildings, visits to museums and galleries and visits to sites to collect evidence about the past. • Can reach a valid conclusion based on devising and answering questions relating to historical enquiry. • Can accept and reject sources based on valid criteria when carrying out particular enquiry. |
| Chronological Understanding | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Order and explain significant events, movements, themes, societies, people and dates on a timeline using appropriate dates, period labels and terms. |
| Historical Interpretation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand that some evidence from the past is propaganda, opinion or misinformation, and that this affects interpretations of history. • Give reasons why there may be different accounts of history. • Know that people both in the past have a point of view and that this can affect interpretation. • Can explain why there may be different accounts of history, linking this to factual understanding of the past. |



Vocabulary

Artefact An object that is made by a person, such as a tool or a decoration, especially one that is of historical interest.

Angles Tribes from an area today known as modern day Denmark that settled in Britain from around AD 450. They were one of the tribes that became known as the first Anglo-Saxons.

Saxons A tribe from the north coast of Europe, especially Germany, that settled in Britain from around AD 450. They were one of the tribes that became known as the first Anglo-Saxons.

Picts Tribes originally from Scotland who were often feared.

Scots People from Ireland who, like the Picts, were fierce and powerful fighters.

Invaders People who enter an area and take control of it by force.

Kingdom An area ruled by a king or queen.

Pagan Someone who follows the Paganism religion and worships many gods and goddesses.

Christianity A religion based on the teachings of Jesus Christ.

Mrs Quinlan

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