



# Anglo-Saxons and Vikings

*A study of the Viking and Anglo-Saxon struggle for the Kingdom of England up until the time of Edward the Confessor.*

## History

### Key Questions

- What caused the fall of the Roman Empire?
- Why is the period known as the 'Dark Ages'?
- Why did Anglo-Saxon tribes relocate to Britain?
- How was life in Roman Britain different from Anglo-Saxon Britain?
- Which religions were followed in Anglo-Saxon Britain?
- Who were the Anglo-Saxon kings? Why was there conflict between them?
- How and where did the Vikings trade?
- What did the Vikings value?
- What was the Danelaw and how was it established?

### Timeline

410 AD – Roman rule in Britain ends.  
449-550 AD – Angles and Saxons invade.  
455 AD – Kingdom of Kent formed.  
477 AD – Kingdom of Sussex formed.  
495 AD – Kingdom of Wessex formed.  
527 AD – Kingdom of Essex formed.  
547 AD – Kingdom of Northumberland formed.  
575 AD – Kingdom of East Anglia formed.  
586 AD – Kingdom of Mercia formed.  
597 AD - St. Augustine came to England and introduced people to Christianity.  
787 AD – First recorded Viking attack.  
793 AD – Viking raid on Lindisfarne.  
867-878 AD – Series of big Viking victories.  
871-899 AD - Alfred the Great ruled.  
1016-1035 AD - Cnut the Great ruled as the first Viking king.  
1066 AD - The Battle of Hastings, resulting in the Normans defeating the Anglo-Saxons.

### Key Vocabulary

Danelaw	The part of England in which the Danes (Vikings) held power.
Longship	A fast, light and easy-to-move ship used for raiding.
Norse	Relating to ancient or medieval Norway or Scandinavia.
Dark Ages	The term used to describe the period after the fall of Roman Britain in which there was an economic and cultural decline.
Pagan	The religion of the early Anglo-Saxon people was Paganism. Paganism is a polytheistic religion, which means many gods are worshipped including Woden, Frigg, Thunor and Tiw.
Thane	An Anglo-Saxon nobleman who owned land.

## Substantive Concepts

Settlement	Understand Anglo-Saxon and Viking settlements following Roman Britain.
Politics	Understand how each of the 7 Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms are ruled by different Kings, creating struggle.
Warfare	Understand the invasion of the Anglo-Saxons and Vikings.
Monarchy	Understand the concept of different Anglo-Saxon Kings ruling simultaneously.
Religion	Understand Anglo-Saxon paganism and the subsequent conversion to Christianity.
Trade	Explore the concept of Viking trade and navigation.
Culture	Explore Viking artefacts, including pottery, runes, sagas.

### Key Content: Anglo Saxons

The last Roman soldiers left Britain in 410. Britain no longer had the strong Roman army to defend it from the invaders. New people came in ships across the North Sea: **the Anglo-Saxons**. The Anglo-Saxon age in Britain was from around AD410 to 1066.

They were a mix of tribes from Germany, Denmark and the Netherlands. The three biggest were the Angles, the Saxons and the Jutes. They thought the Britons were weak and easy to beat without the Romans around. Others came peacefully to find land to farm. Anglo-Saxon Britain wasn't ruled by one person and the Anglo-Saxons were not united.



### Key People

**Edward the Confessor** - The last but one of the Anglo-Saxon kings of England, Edward was known for his religious faith.

**Alfred the Great** - Alfred was one of the greatest Anglo-Saxon kings. After years of fighting, Alfred made peace with the Vikings.

**Guthrum the Viking King** – King of East Anglia who worked with Alfred the Great to write a peace agreement.

**William the Conqueror** - The first Norman King of England.

**Saint Bede** – An English monk in the Kingdom of Northumbria during the Anglo-Saxon era.

### Key Content: Viking Raids

The Vikings were famous for sailing huge distances from their home in **Scandinavia** between AD 700 and 1066 to raid and plunder, but they also traded with people from other countries. The Vikings left their homeland because they were looking for better places to farm than the kind of terrain that Scandinavia had.

Over time, the Vikings took control of several Anglo-Saxon kingdoms. Eventually the Anglo-Saxons and Vikings made a peace agreement, but the fighting continued for many years.

The Vikings and Anglo-Saxons divided up Britain with the Anglo-Saxons living mainly in the west and the Vikings in an area to the east, known as the **Danelaw**.

### Home Learning Suggestions

1. Design and make a model Viking longship, helmet or shield.
2. Research and make a booklet, poster or PowerPoint about Anglo-Saxon or Viking gods.
3. Read and retell some Norse myths.
4. Create a board game inspired by the Vikings and/or Anglo-Saxons.