

The Vikings Knowledge Organiser

Key knowledge

- ✓ The Anglo-Saxons were a group of farmer warriors who lived in Britain. Made up of three tribes who came over from Europe, they were called the Angle, Saxon and Jute tribes. The two largest were the Angles and Saxons which is why we call it the Anglo-Saxon period. They conquered the Romanised Britons who came before them.
- ✓ Vikings were largely from Denmark, Norway and Sweden. Over a period of around 100 years the Vikings invaded large parts of northern England but there were large areas in the south (Wessex) that they never managed to invade. By 884AD an agreement was signed so that the Vikings could rule over "Danelaw" in the north of England.
- ✓ To make the journey from Denmark, Norway and Sweden, the Vikings had to make a treacherous journey across the North Sea. They were expert boat builders. We know what their boats looked like from examples that archaeologists have discovered.
- ✓ The name 'Viking' comes from a language called 'Old Norse' and means 'a pirate raid'. People who went off raiding in ships were said to be 'going Viking'. But not all the Vikings were bloodthirsty warriors. There were farmers, who kept animals and grew crops, and skilful craft workers, who made beautiful metalwork and wooden carvings. Everyone lived together in a large home called a longhouse.
- ✓ The Vikings also brought with them their way of life and beliefs. The Norse people worshipped many gods and loved to tell stories of magic and monsters.
- ✓ In AD793 the Vikings famously attacked a monastery at Lindisfarne in Northumbria, north-east England. The Vikings were pagans, not Christians like most people living in Britain at the time. They did not think twice about raiding a monastery.

Key Events Timeline

700AD	The Viking Age begins
793AD	First invasion of Britain - raiding monasteries on the coast
866AD	Danes capture York (Jorvik) and make it their kingdom
876AD	Vikings settle permanently in Britain
886AD	King Alfred defeats the Vikings but allows them to settle in Eastern England
1001AD	Vikings land in America and establish settlement
1014AD	King Canute of Denmark becomes King of England
	Battle of Hastings and William the Conqueror is crowned king
1100AD	End of Viking era

Our Texts



Key Vocabulary	
AD	A.D. means Anno Domini in Latin which stands for 'in the year of our lord'. A date such as 2018 AD means 2018 years after Jesus is believed.
Anglo Saxons	The main group of people living in Britain when the Vikings invaded.
archaeologist	Someone who studies the buildings, graves, tools, and other objects of people who lived in the past.
Danelaw	The area in Britain that the Danish Vikings ruled over.
invade	To enter and occupy land.
Jorvik	The city of York.
longship	A long, wooden, narrow boat used by the Vikings.
monastery	A place where people who have dedicated their lives to religion, such as monks or nuns, live.
pagan	A person who believes in many gods.
pillaged	To violently steal something.
primary evidence	Provides original information on an event, topic, or era from that period in time.
primary source	Provides original information on an event, topic, or era from that period in time.
rune	A letter from the alphabet used by Vikings.
secondary evidence	A second-hand account of history.
secondary source	A second-hand account of history.
settlement	A place where people make their homes.

Key people	
King Alfred—King of Wessex 871AD– 899AD. Defended Wessex from Viking invasion.	Athelstan—First king to unite the English kingdoms in 927AD
Guthrum—King of the Vikings in Danelaw at the time of the treaty with the Saxons.	King Canute—King of England, Denmark and Norway between 1028AD and 1035AD.
Edward the Confessor—penultimate Saxon King of England (before Harold II who lost at the Battle of Hastings).	

BIG Questions

Were the Vikings history's greatest invaders?

Who were the Saxons and why did they come to Britain?

What happened at the monastery at Lindisfarne?

How did the Vikings trade and explore?

What was life like in Viking Britain?

