



Has Britain always been a multi-cultural society? Anglo Saxons



Sticky Knowledge

- After the Roman left Britain, it became open to invasion (401-410AD)
- Anglo Saxons came to Britain from across the North Sea in the middle of the 5th century from Scandinavia.
- The Anglo-Saxons were made up of three tribes: the Angles; Saxons; and, Jutes
- For a long time, England was not one country- Anglo-Saxon kings ruled lots of small kingdoms across the land
- Many of the names of our counties today originate from the Anglo Saxon period.
- The word 'English' derives from Angles and 'England' from Angle-land
- The Anglo-Saxons were fierce people who fought many battles, including fighting each other.
- Anglo Saxons lived in small villages near river, forests and other important resources that gave them everything they needed to care for farm animals, grow crops and make things to sell.
- Anglo-Saxon rune were symbols used by the Anglo Saxons as an alphabet in their writing system.
- The Vikings first invaded Britain in 793AD
- The Anglo-Saxon period ended when the Normans conquered Britain in 1066

Prominent Figures / Events

Alfred the Great

King of Wessex from 871AD to 886AD and then King of the Anglo-Saxons from 886AD to 899AD. Alfred was the first king to believe in the idea of a united England and worked relentlessly to bring the kingdoms together. He drove the Vikings back into the north during his campaigns. Alfred was deeply religious and he understood the value of a written record, commissioning the Anglo-Saxon Chronicles.



Athelstan

King of the Anglo-Saxons from 924AD to 927AD and then King of the English from 927AD to 939AD. He was the first person to rule over the whole of a united England. Athelstan centralised government control for the first time, generated vast amounts of legal documents and had his own royal mint. He was also the first king to reach out to European neighbours and was considered a great statesman of his time. He was only 47 when he died.



Edward the Confessor



Last of the Wessex kings and one of the last Anglo-Saxon kings of England, he ruled from 1042 to 1066. He was deeply religious and commissioned Westminster Abbey; he remains the only King

of England to be canonised by the Catholic Church. As a young king, Edward was forced into a marriage he did not want and resolved never to have children which led to great confusion about who was to inherit when he died.

William of Normandy, Harold of Wessex and Harold Hardrada, King of Norway

These three men all believed they should inherit the throne of England after King Edward died. William of Normandy was the first cousin of Edward and claimed that Edward had previously promised him the throne. Harold Godwinson was Edward's brother-in-law and a powerful Anglo-Saxon noble who was elected by the Anglo-Saxon nobility to take the throne. Harold Hardrada, encouraged by Tostig Godwinson (brother of Harold), claimed the throne on the grounds of an agreement from 1038 between the two kings of the time.



Subject Specific Vocabulary

Tribes	 Germanic Tribes Angles, Saxons, Jutes	The three main tribes who came here during this time were the Angles, the Saxons and the Jutes. Hence the name Anglo-Saxons!	When? From the departure of the Romans in the 5 th century	Key Fact: They came from Denmark and Germany to serve as armies for local landowners and leaders.
The Anglo-Saxon Chronicles		These recorded events as they happened and are some of our first sources of historical evidence.	When? Around 890 for King Alfred the Great	Key Fact: They were written to show one side of history and are deeply biased
Settlement		A place where people establish a community. Anglo Saxon villages were usually very small. The largest villages had no more than a few hundred people living there. The villages were built near natural resources.	Where? Kent, Mercia, Northumbria, East Anglia	Key Fact: The Anglo Saxons first settled in eastern England.
Legacy		The long-lasting impact of particular event. The Anglo Saxons left a legacy which included the language we speak, culture and politics.	What? Language, culture, politics, land boundaries.	Key Fact: The Anglo Saxons built the basis for the Monarchy and law.
Runic Alphabet		This was the earliest form of English! It was written in Runes and then Latin.	Where? It was spoken in England and parts of Scotland.	Key Fact: Many of our place names and days of the week are still based on Old English.
Sagas		Stories, often passed on through oral storytelling, which shared the adventures of great heroes, stories of the gods or family histories.	What? One of the most well-known sagas is Beowulf.	Key Fact: Sagas were a way of passing information between families and tribes.
Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms		There were four main Anglo-Saxon kingdoms: East Anglia, Mercia, Northumbria and Wessex. Three smaller kingdoms of Sussex, Kent and Essex also existed.	How? The different kingdoms reflected the original tribes.	Key Fact: Each of the kingdoms had their own monarchy and laws.
Thane		A man who held land granted by the King.	Where? In charge of each village	Key Fact: Thanes were very powerful and everyone in the village had to do as they said.
Shires		Saxon lands were divided into shires, which helped to make up the counties we have today.	Where? Buckinghamshire, Staffordshire	Key Fact: Many of the Shires are used as boundaries today.

Anglo-Saxon Timeline

