

Year 7 Term 1: Was Anglo Saxon England a 'Golden Age'? + Who should be the next King?

410-1066 A.D

What are the big historical questions we will be answering this term?

Was Anglo Saxon England a 'Golden Age'?

Who should be the next King?

How will I be assessed?

This term you will be assessed on A01: Knowledge and Understanding. This is how well can you recall facts and demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the key features and characteristics of the periods studied.

You will have 2 x 10 question knowledge tests

You will also be expected to answer the two questions below with historical facts and details in full paragraphs. You could challenge yourself by presenting an argument.

Explain what it was like to live in Anglo-Saxon England.

Explain who wanted to be King after Edward the Confessor died.

How can I prepare for my assessments?

Revision Cards – Use the Knowledge Organisers to create revision cards on key individuals and events involved in all the key topics

BBC Bitesize – Go to <http://www.bbc.co.uk/guides/zqrc9j6> and complete the activities on this BBC website.

Quiz – Create your own quizzes and test your friends.

I want to get ahead! What will I learn next term?

Your enquiry question will be “Did the Normans bring trouble?” and you will be learning about the Battle of Hasting, the Harrying of the North, Norman castles, the Feudal System. You will also learn about the Black Death which happened later in 1348.



Year 7 Term 1: Was Anglo Saxon England a 'Golden Age'?

Key Terms/Concepts

Ceorl	Peasant Farmers
Thegn	Loyal to the Earl
Slaves	Bottom of the status ladder bought and sold
Burh	Fortified town
Earldom	A large area of land controlled by an Earl
Writ	Orders from the King
Housecarl	Professional soldiers
Fyrd	Peasants called up to fight part time soldiers
Shield Wall	Tactic used by Anglo-Saxons
Feigned retreat	Tactic used by the Normans
Shire	Earldom was divided up into shires
Shire Reeve (Sheriff)	Responsible for kings orders locally
Hide	Measurement of land
Embassy	Diplomatic mission to meet with another ruler
Oath	A promise to do something
Witan	Kings council

How were people ruled?

The King

- He could raise a large army from his earls and their thegns – this was important as kings needed to give land won in battle to their followers.
- He was a respected law-maker who kept family quarrels between land-owners in check.
- He was very religious (pious). Kings were believed to be a representative of Christ on Earth

The Witan



These were a council made up of the most important earls and archbishops (church leaders) – it advised the kings on issues such as:

- Religion
- Arguments over land
- Possible threats from abroad

The King did not have to follow the Witan's advice, and chose who was in it and when it met.

Were there laws?

The King made the laws in order to keep peace.

The people of England expected the King to keep peace and to provide justice.

Blood feuds and the Wergild

If a family member was attacked or killed, the rest of the family would find and attack someone from the criminal's family and carry out the **same offence to gain revenge**.

Feuds could last for long periods.

The Wergild was introduced to prevent long-running blood feuds.

The criminal would pay a fine to the victim's family based on their status:

- A ceorl – 20 shillings
- A thegn -1,200 shillings
- An earl or archbishop – 3,600 shillings
- 1 shilling is roughly £100 today.

Collective responsibility:

All people in a tithing had to hunt for a criminal – called the **hue and cry**.

The men of each tithing were responsible for their behaviour together, if someone from the tithing was proved to have done wrong, they all had to pay a fine.

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Economy – Trade and Farming

- England traded with other nations.
- Most of its silver came from Germany, and other objects were imported such as wine, whetstones and millstones.
- Western England was well suited to sheep rearing, for wool
- Eastern England had fertile, drier soils that were important for growing crops.

Economy – Trade in towns

- Burhs were trading hubs – the king's laws demanded that all trade worth more than a set amount must take place there (to be taxed)
- Towns grew when trade with other countries grew e.g. York with Denmark; London with Germany, Flanders, France, Normandy.



Towns and Villages

- By 1066 c. 10% of the population lived in towns. Most people lived in villages.

Burhs:

- Fortified towns every 15 or 20 miles apart.
- Designed to protect people from Viking raids.
- Linked by roads so that troops could move quickly between them.
- Strong walls and ramparts.

Villages:

- Houses made of wood and thatched with straw.
- Thegns lived in manor houses that were large and well built, and sometimes fortified.
- Thegns would often build a church on their land to hold services for their household and the surrounding area.

The Church

- Traditional, focused on Anglo-Saxon and Celtic saints linked to the local area.
- Divided into large areas controlled by a bishop.
- Local priests were usually local community members, with wives and landholdings. They were not especially well educated.
- Monasteries and nunneries existed
- Religion was important and the influence of the Church was high because ordinary people worried about the afterlife.
- Everybody believed that they would spend time in the afterlife being punished for their sins, so they spent time praying and other religious activities to reduce this punishments.



Year 7 Term 1: Who should be the next King?

Edward the Confessor was king of England between 1042-1066. Edward married but had no children. For a king to die without an heir was a disaster. A strong ruler, preferably with experience, good at fighting and leading armies and related to the king was required. Here are the candidates:

Claimants to the Throne 1066

Harold Godwinson



- English
- Popular
- His family had been Edward's advisors
- Powerful and experienced
- Edward's brother-in-law
- Good soldier
- Claimed Edward had promised him the throne just before he died

Harald Hardrada



- Related to one of England's previous kings
- King of Norway - Norway used to rule England
- Quite popular with people in the north of England
- Good soldier
- Powerful and experienced

William Duke of Normandy



- Edward promised him the throne
- England had close ties with Normandy and
- Edward had lived there for a while
- Powerful and experienced
- Good soldier
- Had helped Edward out of trouble when he had quarrelled with the Godwinson family

Edgar the Aethling



- Edgar was the great-nephew of Edward the Confessor and was the last Anglo-Saxon prince alive after his father was killed in 1057.
- He was only 14 and he was not considered strong enough to hold the kingdom together in 1066.