



Knowledge organiser:



How much of Anglo-Saxon England survived the Norman Conquest?

Topic Summary:

Edward the Confessor died in 1066 with no heirs, leaving a disputed succession. William of Normandy defeated Harold Godwinson at the Battle of Hastings. 1066 saw monumental change in English history. The invasion of the Normans ended 500 years of Anglo-Saxon rule, and led to a new phase of English history. Historian Marc Morris argues that the Norman Conquest was not just one battle, but a long and violent process that slowly changed England.

Key Dates:

Jan. 1066 – Death of Edward the Confessor. He was 62 year old and left no children behind.

14 Oct. 1066 – Battle of Hastings. William defeated Harold Godwinson.

1069 – Northern Revolt and Harrying of the North. William’s response to a rebellion in the North was to destroy the crops and damage the land.

1085 – Surveying for the Domesday Book begins. This was a survey to determine how wealthy the Kingdom was, and how much the king could raise through taxes.

25 Sept. 1066 – Battle of Stamford Bridge. Harold Godwinson defeated Harald Hardrada.





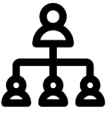





1086 – Domesday Book completed.

1066-1087 – The Normans built nearly 700 motte and bailey castles.

Key People:

<p>Edward the Confessor</p> 	<p>King of England from 1042 until his death on 5 January 1066. He had no children and his closest heir was not prepared for the role of king.</p>
<p>Harald Hardrada</p> 	<p>A Viking and king from Norway. He was also a distant relative of King Cnut, who had previously been king of England. Hardrada was supported by Godwinson’s brother, Tostig.</p>
<p>Harold Godwinson</p> 	<p>Godwinson was from Wessex, in England. He was a wealthy nobleman, and it was claimed that Edward the Confessor named Godwinson as his successor on his deathbed.</p>
<p>William, Duke of Normandy</p> 	<p>William was a distant relative of Edward the Confessor and claimed Edward had promised him the throne in 1051. He also aid that Godwinson had sworn an oath that he would help William take the throne.</p>

Vocabulary:

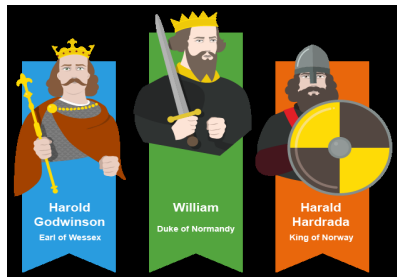
<p>Monarch</p> 	<p>The king or queen of a country.</p>
<p>Contender</p> 	<p>Someone who competes to be the next king of England.</p>
<p>Conquest</p> 	<p>To take over a country by force.</p>
<p>Interpretation</p> 	<p>One historian’s view of the past based on the evidence she/he has chosen to use.</p>
<p>Feudalism</p> 	<p>A system in which people were given land and protection by people of higher rank, and worked and fought for them in return.</p>
<p>Peasant</p> 	<p>A poor person of low social status who works on the land.</p>
<p>Lord</p> 	<p>A man who owned land or property and who had power and authority over people.</p>
<p>Domesday Book</p> 	<p>The record of a survey of the land of England carried out by the commissioners of William I in 1086</p>
<p>Castle</p> 	<p>A large building with defensive features.</p>
<p>Rebellion</p> 	<p>A violent organized action by a large group of people who are trying to change their country’s political system.</p>

Core Knowledge:

Lesson 1: What was Anglo-Saxon England like?

- In 1042, Anglo-Saxon England was peacefully united under one king – **Edward the Confessor**. He was helped by a group of advisors, called the **Witan**, who came from rich, important families.
- The population of the whole of England was about **1.5 million people**. Nearly everybody worked on the land and lived in small villages. **There were only 15 towns**.
- Anglo-Saxons **produced their own coins in the 700s** to make trading easier.
- The Anglo-Saxons were **highly skilled craft workers** – metalworkers, woodworkers, jewellers.
- Some educated Anglo-Saxons wrote books, but most would gather to sing **songs and share poems or stories**.

Lesson 2: Who will be the next King of England in 1066?



- In January 1066, Edward the Confessor died. He was 62 years old and **left no children or an heir behind**.
- His great-nephew, **Edgar**, was only a teenager and **lacked the experience of military skill** to become king.
- Instead, **Harald Hardrada, Harold Godwinson and William of Normandy** believed that they had the best claim to be the next king.
- When Edward died, **Godwinson had one big advantage** over his two rivals – **he was already in England** so he wasted no time and was crowned king the next day. But he knew the other two would invade.

Lesson 3: What happened when Harald Hardrada invaded England?

- On the 18 September 1066, **300 Viking longboats carrying Hardrada's army invaded the north of England**.
- Near York, two English earls, Morcar and Edwin, attacked Hardrada with an army of 3500. They were defeated in the **Battle of Fulford**.
- King Harold's army rushed north to meet Hardrada's army at **Stamford Bridge**. The speed of King Harold's advance surprised the Vikings.
- **Hardrada and Godwinson's brother, Tostig, were killed**. The news came that **William of Normandy had landed near Hastings**.

Lesson 4: Why did William win the Battle of Hastings?



- William invaded the South so **Harold marched his army 250 miles from the North to confront William and the Normans at the Battle of Hastings**.
- Harold positioned his army on top of **Senlac Hill**.
- On the 14 October 1066, William ordered his archers to fire at Harold's men, but **the English had formed a shield wall**. William's foot soldiers and knights could not break the shield wall.
- **William's army retreated**, causing the English to break their shield wall and run down the hill.
- **William defeated Harold, who was killed in the battle**. Some said he had been shot in the eye by an arrow.

Lesson 5: How did William take control of England forcefully?

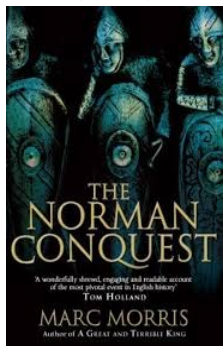
- Anglo-Saxon rebellions forced William to act forcefully against the English and led to the **Harrying of the North**.
- William ordered **villages to be destroyed and people killed. Crops were burnt and animals were slaughtered**. Many of those who survived then starved to death – it is estimated that the **population was reduced by 75%**. William also **ordered the land to be poisoned** to prevent people growing crops in the future.

Core Knowledge:

Lesson 6: How did castles help William control the English?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">From 1066 to 1087 William and the Normans also built nearly 700 motte and bailey castles, which were relatively quick to build, but difficult to capture, and helped William control England.They became the focus for local trade, which the baron could then tax.The castles demonstrated to the English just how strong and powerful the Norman invaders were.
Lesson 7: How did William take control of England peacefully?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The Normans introduced the Feudal System to ensure allegiance. This was a system in which landholders provide land to tenants in exchange for their loyalty and service.William also did a survey of land in England which was recorded in the Domesday Book. This allowed William to work out how much to tax each person, the number of soldiers he had and he could easily settle quarrels over who owned which bit of land.
Lesson 8: What was Anglo-Saxon England like just after the Norman Conquest?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">William promised to keep Edward the Confessor's laws, but he took land from Anglo-Saxon nobles and removed leaders like Archbishop Stigand.He quickly built castles at places like Pevensey, Hastings, Dover, and Winchester to control key areas, and took hostages from English families to make sure they stayed loyal.Despite this, rebellions broke out in 1067 in places like Kent and the Welsh borders, showing that many people were angry about Norman rule.
Lesson 9: What was Anglo-Saxon England like in the years after the Norman Conquest?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">After the conquest, almost all Anglo-Saxon lords lost their land, Norman bishops took over the Church, and French and Latin replaced English in government and important jobs.Castles and churches were rebuilt in the Norman style, but some Anglo-Saxon customs, decorations, and laws remained. English people kept speaking their language at home.Over time, Normans and English began to marry, share customs, and even names. This slowly created a new shared English identity, with English returning as an official language by the 1300s.
Enquiry Outcome: How do I complete the enquiry outcome well?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Create a book with a front cover, title, and image, explaining how Anglo-Saxon England changed after the Norman Conquest.Summarise life in Anglo-Saxon England before, immediately after, and in the years following the conquest, using Marc Morris' tree metaphor to show what survived and what changed.Include an annotated tree drawing to represent the final state of Anglo-Saxon England, and conclude with a judgment on how much of it survived based on the evidence.

What do historians say?

Marc Morris, *The Norman Conquest* (2012)



Marc Morris argues that the Norman Conquest wasn't just one big event but a long process. While the Normans quickly took control, it took years for them to fully establish their rule. Some things changed, like the replacement of Anglo-Saxon leaders and the introduction of Norman customs, but many aspects of Anglo-Saxon life, like the language and local systems, survived and mixed with Norman influences to create a new English identity.

How can I find out more?

- BBC Bitesize - Claimants to the throne in 1066



- BBC Bitesize – The Battle of Hastings

