

Viscious Vikings



Lesson 5: Kings and Vikings

In History IALT: understand how Kings dealt with the Vikings.

I can understand why the Vikings were a problem.

I know the role of a King.

I can think about how the Kings would have felt.

I understand how Kings dealt with the Vikings and why.

I can identify key leaders and how they reacted.

Kingdoms

The kings of Anglo-Saxon Britain each ruled their own kingdom and the people in it. They also controlled their own army. Kings constantly fought to control other kingdoms and defend their land. They were known as warrior-kings.

When the Anglo-Saxons first settled in Britain there were seven kingdoms. However, by AD 878 there was only one kingdom left; Wessex, ruled by King Alfred the Great. The other kingdoms had been overrun by the Vikings who established their own kingdoms.



Who rules our country today?

How is this different to the past?

What 'Kingdom' would we be in?

Why do you think there were Kingdoms?

Some of the Anglo-Saxon Kings are well known for the resistance they put up against the Vikings. They fought hard to keep control of their land and tried to push the Vikings out.

One of the best known Anglo-Saxon kings is King Alfred the Great. He is the only British monarch to have the title 'great' in his name.



What do you think would make a 'great' King?

Activity: Discover what made King Alfred so 'GREAT'!

Anglo-Saxon Kings

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King Alfred the Great

One of the best known Anglo-Saxon kings is King Alfred the Great. He is the only British monarch to have the title of 'great' in his name. So, what made King Alfred so great?

Alfred became king in AD 871 and he is credited with being the first Anglo-Saxon king to defeat the Vikings in battle and buy the people of Britain some peace. In AD 878, when the Vikings invaded Wessex and forced King Alfred into hiding, he was not prepared to give up. In the same year, King Alfred and his small band of followers defeated the Vikings at the Battle of Edington. The Battle of Edington was reported as a fierce and bloody event and King Alfred was reported to charge into battle like a wild boar. Alfred and his men drove back at the attacking Vikings, who surrendered. It is said that the Viking leader of this battle, King Guthrum, immediately converted to Christianity and was baptized by King Alfred himself.

King Alfred knew that although he had been able to stop the Vikings from taking over in Wessex, he would never be able to control them in the rest of England. So, in AD 886 he made a deal with the Viking King Guthrum and established a treaty which gave the Vikings control over Northern and Eastern England, an area which later became known as Danelaw. The treaty allowed King Alfred to keep control over Wessex and he also got to rule over West Mercia and Kent. This arrangement also helped to establish more peaceful relationships between the English and the Vikings. Alfred the Great remained king until his death in AD 899.



Activity:

Read the information (download from Class Pages)



Make a note of key facts that show his 'greatness'.

Activity: Discover what Athelstan did as a King.

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King Athelstan

After the death of King Alfred the Great, his son Edward the Elder took the throne. When Edward died, his son Athelstan (King Alfred's grandson), became the king.

Athelstan was king from AD 924 - 939. During his reign he drove the Vikings back more and more and was able to claim control over a greater area of land. In AD 927, Athelstan won back the kingdom of York from the Vikings. He also established control over King Constantine from Scotland and the other Northern kings. The five Kings of Wales also agreed to pay tribute (money) each year to King Athelstan. At the Battle of Brunanburh in AD 937, Athelstan fought with his Viking and Welsh allies to stop an invasion by the Scottish king.

Athelstan is known for forming good relationships with leaders from other countries. He married his four sisters to important rulers abroad which helped strengthen Britain's position overseas. He also had strong links with religious leaders and he founded many churches.



After the death of King Alfred the Great, his son Edward the Elder took the throne. When Edward died, his son Athelstan (King Alfred's grandson) became king. Athelstan is regarded as the first king of all Britain and he is remembered as a great leader.

- Athelstan was king from AD 924-939.

Was he 'great' too?

What important things did he do?



Activity:

Read fact sheet.

Make note of what important things he did.



Task:

Create a table to record information about both Kings. Use your notes you made from the fact sheet.

King Alfred the Great	Athelstan

Record their achievements.

Include key dates.

Can you compare them?

Brain Bubble:



Do you think Athelstan was a 'great' as King Alfred?
Why?