



HEAP BRIDGE VILLAGE PRIMARY SCHOOL

What happened to Britain when the Romans left?

Year 4 – Autumn Term



Unit overview

Children will be introduced to the idea that people from other societies have been coming to Britain for a long time and put this in context with previous understanding of invasions in Britain. They will learn about some of the tensions involved in the settlement as well as ways of life and matters that impact on us still. Links can be made with other societies that contributed to the formation of the United Kingdom and how Saxons, Vikings and Scots contributed to the development of institutions, culture and ways of life in the country and what they left that can be still seen or used today.

Links to prior/future learning

This unit continues from the Prehistoric Britain topic during the Autumn term.

Period overview, Anglo-Saxon and Viking Britain

The Anglo-Saxons were a group of farmer-warriors who lived in Britain thousands of years ago. Made up of three tribes who came over from Europe, they were called the Angle, Saxon, and Jute tribes. The two largest were the Angle and Saxon, which is how we've come to know them as the Anglo-Saxons today. They were fierce people, who fought many battles during their rule of Britain – often fighting each other! Each tribe was ruled by its own strong warrior who settled their people in different parts of the country. The



Anglo-Saxons first tried invading in the 4th century, but the Roman army were quick to send them home again! Years later – around 450AD – the Ancient Romans left Britain, the Anglo-Saxons seized their chance and this time they were successful! They left their homes in Germany, the Netherlands and Denmark and sailed over to Britain on wooden



boats. Many of them were farmers before they came to Britain and it's thought they were on the look-out for new land as floodwaters back home had made it almost impossible to farm.

The Viking age in European history was from about AD700 to 1100. During this period many Vikings left their homelands in Scandinavia and travelled by longboat to other countries, like Britain and Ireland. When the people of Britain first saw the Viking longboats they came down to the shore to welcome them. However, the Vikings fought the local peo-

How well did the Saxons and Vikings get on with each other?

Around the end of the 8th century, Anglo-Saxon history tells of many Viking raids. These marked the start of a long struggle between the Anglo-Saxons and the Vikings for control of Britain. In the 9th century, the English king Alfred the Great stopped the Vikings taking over all of England. He agreed to peace with them and some Vikings settled down to live in their own area of eastern England, called the Danelaw. The Anglo-Saxons and Vikings became neighbours in Britain, but they didn't always get along peacefully. After Alfred the Great, English kings gradually recaptured more and more land from the Vikings. Alfred's son Edward fought for control of the Danelaw and Alfred's grandson, Athelstan, pushed English power north as far as Scotland. In 954, the Anglo-Saxons drove out Eric Bloodaxe, the last Viking king of Jorvik. Later, when Eric was killed in battle, the Vikings agreed to be ruled by England's king. The most powerful Anglo-Saxon king was Edgar. Welsh and Scottish rulers obeyed him as well as the English, and his court at Winchester was one of the most splendid in Europe. Anglo-Saxon England reached its peak during Edgar's reign.



Chronological Understanding:

410AD	450 AD	597 AD	600 AD
Romans leave Britain	- First invasions of the Jutes from Jutland, Angles from South of Denmark and Saxons from Germany. Britain is divided up into the Seven Kingdoms of Northumbria, Mercia, Anglia, Wessex, Essex, Sussex and Kent.	St Augustine brings Christianity to England from Rome. King Ethelberht of Kent gave him land in Canterbury to build a church. Ethelberht became the first Anglo-Saxon king to turn his back on paganism & become Christian.	Ethelberht is now one of the most powerful kings in England

Was life better in Roman Britain or Anglo-Saxon Britain?

Life in Roman Britain

Most of Roman Britain was a wild place, with forests and mountains where few people lived. People mainly lived in small villages of wooden houses with thatched roofs, much as they had before the Romans arrived. However, some wealthy Romans lived in villas and palaces. Villas were large farms with a big house for the owners. They had lots of servants and farm workers to help run the villa. Most of the Roman villas found by archaeologists are in the south of England. The governor of Britain had a palace in London. Another palace was beside the sea, at Fishbourne (near Chichester in West Sussex). Men were in charge of the family in Roman Britain. Mothers were thought to be less important than fathers. Life for women in Roman times was often hard. Women were expected to run the home, cook meals and raise children. Wealthy women were lucky: they had slaves to do the work for them. Many girls were married at the age of 14. Marriages were often arranged between families. A man could divorce his wife if she did not give birth to a son. Many women died young (in their 30s), because childbirth could be dangerous and diseases were common.

Life in Anglo-Saxon Britain

Anglo-Saxon children had to grow up quickly. By the time they were ten, they were seen as an adult. This wasn't always a good thing. They had to work as hard as any adult and would be punished as adults, if they stole or broke the law. Girls worked in the home. They were in charge of housekeeping, weaving cloth, cooking meals, making cheese and brewing ale. Boys learned the skills of their fathers. They learned to chop down trees with an axe, how to plough a field and how to use a spear in battle. They also fished and went hunting with other men from the village. Only a few girls and boys learned to read and write. The sons of kings or wealthy families might be taught at home by a private teacher. The only schools were run by the Christian church, in monasteries. Some children lived there to train as monks and nuns. Life on an Anglo-Saxon farm was tough. All the family had to help out - men, women and children. Men cut down trees to clear land for ploughing and to sow crops. Farmers used oxen to pull ploughs up and down long strip fields. Children with dogs herded cattle and sheep. They also kept a lookout for wolves - which still lived in Britain at this time. The Anglo-Saxons were great craftsmen too. Metalworkers made iron tools, knives and swords. Woodworkers made wooden bowls, furniture, carts and wheels. Potters made pottery from clay. Jewellers made beautiful brooches, beads and ornaments from gold, gemstones and glass. The Anglo-Saxons had armies too. But their soldiers didn't fight all the time. After a battle they went home as soon as they could and looked after their animals and crops.

Historical vocabulary:

Subject specific vocab (T3)

Vocabulary –

Invalidate - to enter a country or region as an enemy, by force, in order to conquer or plunder

settle - to stay somewhere for a long period of time

Norseman - were a group of Germanic people who inhabited Scandinavia between c. 800 and 1300 AD

Warrior - a brave or experienced soldier or fighter

monastery - a building or buildings occupied by a community of monks living under religious vows

Danelaw - The Danelaw was an area of England under the administrative control of the Vikings from the late 9th century

excavate - to uncover (something) by digging away and removing the earth that covers it

longhouse - type of Viking building that generally consisted of one room and was rectangular in shape

Chieftain - the head of a tribe or clan

Valhalla - The Afterlife of the Vikings, where the dead could eat, drink and fight with the gods every day

scabbard - a cover for a sword or dagger

proW - the bow of a ship

627AD	793 AD	794 AD	866 AD	871 AD	886 AD	1042 AD
Edwin of Northumbria becomes the first Christian king in the north of England	First invasion by the Vikings at Lindisfarne	First raids on Scotland and Ireland.	Danes capture York	King Ethelred, the West Saxon king, and his brother Alfred, defeat the Viking army at the Battle of Ashdown (in Berkshire).	King Alfred the Great defeats the Vikings but allows them to settle in Eastern England	Edward the Confessor becomes King

What did the Anglo Saxons and Vikings leave behind?

The Anglo-Saxons

The Anglo-Saxons were pagans when they came to Britain, but, as time passed, they gradually converted to Christianity. Many of the customs we have in England today come from pagan festivals. Pagans worshiped lots of different gods. Each pagan god controlled a particular part of everyday life: the family, growing crops, love, healing, wisdom, metalworking, the weather, war, day & night and so on. Certain days of the week are named after early Saxon Gods:



Monday: Moon's day - the day of the moon

Tuesday: Tiw's-day - the day of the Scandinavian sky god Tiw, Tiu or Tig

Wednesday: Woden's day - the day of the god Woden

Thursday: Thor's Day - the day of the god Þunor or Thunor

Friday: Freyja's day - the day of the goddess Freyja or Frigg, wife to Woden

Saturday: Saturn's day - the day of the Roman god Saturn, whose festival "Saturnalia," with its exchange of gifts, has been incorporated into our celebration of Christmas.

Sunday: Sun's day - the day of the sun

Anglo-Saxons name for towns was burh. The word 'burh' still appears in place names in Britain - Peterborough and Scarborough are two examples.

The first Anglo Saxon Villages were often named after the Chieftain (Leader of the village). This made it clear which tribe the village belonged to. These places often have the letters 'ing' of 'folk' somewhere in their name, often at the end. The first part of the name was most likely to have been the name of the local chieftain.

The people who lived in the 'village' of Hastings were 'Haesta's people'. Haesta was the chieftain.

The people who lived in the 'village' of Reading were 'Redda's people'. Redda was the chieftain .

Later Anglo Saxon villages were named after a feature in their surroundings rather than the name of the chieftain. Oxford got its name because it was a place where oxen were driven across a ford in a river.

The Romans

The Romans built new towns. These were often protected by walls and there was everything a citizen of Roman Britain would need inside - houses, shops, meeting spaces, workshops, temples and bathhouses.

They also built grand country houses called 'villas'. These had many rooms, some with beautifully painted walls, mosaic floors and even central heating. The Romans were good at building roads and bridges, but not so keen on machines. They had slaves to do the heavy work and nasty jobs.

Although they didn't invent the arch, the Romans were the first people to build arches into big buildings and aqueducts. Romans used aqueducts to supply towns with water from springs, rivers or lakes. Aqueducts were like a bridge with a stone channel to carry water on top.

The Romans liked to keep clean. Towns and forts had underground drains to take away dirty water and sewage. The drain pipes were flushed with water from the baths, so they didn't get too smelly. Fresh water and sewers are important. Without them, people risk catching diseases.

The Romans were most famous for their roads. To make sure soldiers and supplies could move from town to town quickly, the Romans made their roads as straight as possible.

