



Year 3 Spring B Anglo-Saxon Art

Lesson Series:

1. Masterpieces in metal— Sutton Hoo
2. Anglo-Saxon designs
3. Masterpieces in manuscript—The Lindisfarne Gospels
4. Illuminated letters
- 5/6. The Bayeux Tapestry

Name: _____

Class: _____



1. Masterpieces in metal— Sutton Hoo

An Anglo-Saxon king of East Anglia, called Raedwald, was buried in the seventh century. Unlike Tutankhamun, Raedwald was not laid in a sarcophagus, but in a full-sized boat. The boat gives us a clue that he must have had many victories at sea. He was buried with many metal treasures, some of the finest created at that time. The treasures include a cooking pot, helmet, sword and purse. These items were not meant to be used as they were highly decorated; they were there to be admired.



The shoulder clasp found at Sutton Hoo shows how carefully the gold has been shaped to curve and be symmetrical. There has been nothing quite like the shoulder clasps found to have been made before them, this shows that they were amongst the first pieces to be decorated with such skill.

2. Anglo-Saxon designs

The Anglo-Saxons often created metalwork and jewellery with complex looped, geometric patterns known as interlace. Their designs also often included birds and animals, sometimes just the shape of an animal's wing or a horn. The animals are often woven into the patterns which flow and curl around themselves in the interlaced design.

Vines and leaves often feature in Anglo-Saxon art, curling and interlocking too.

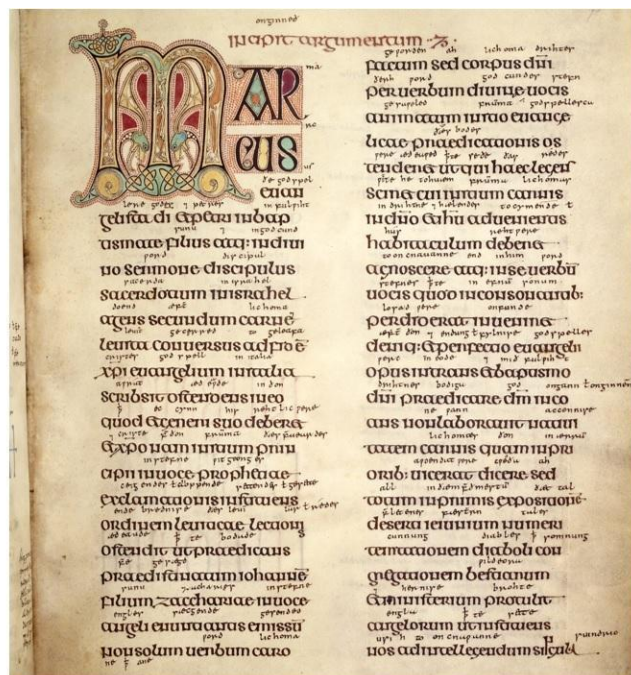


3. Masterpieces in manuscript—The Lindisfarne Gospels

Artists who used paints and inks, also began to focus on intricate decoration by decorating the pages of books to make them look like carefully worked metal or jewellery.

On a small island off the coast of Northumberland in the 8th century, there lived a monk named Eadfrith. He dedicated many, many years of his life to the task of decorating, or illuminating, a book of the Gospels. The Gospels are the four books found in the New Testament; Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

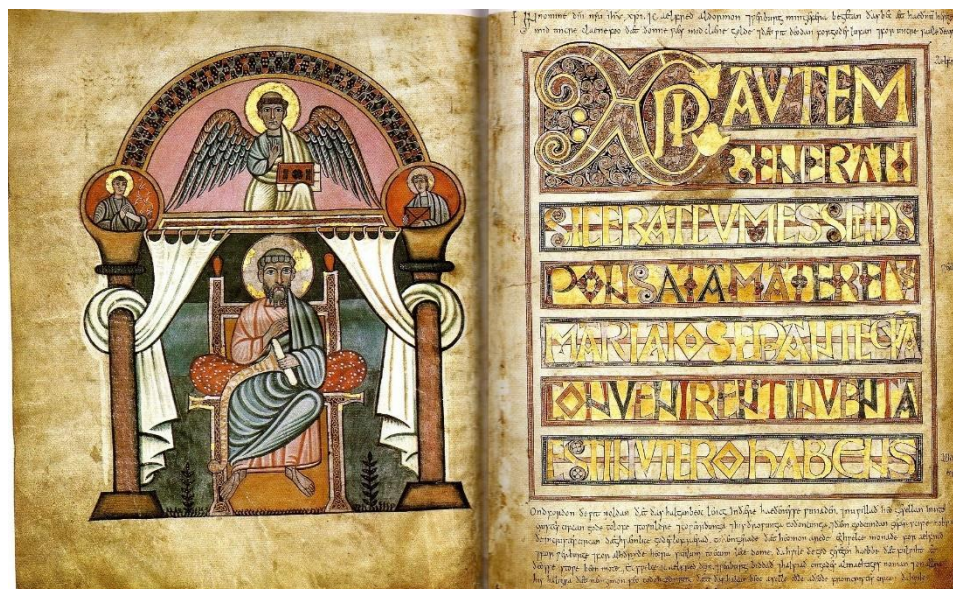
The Lindisfarne Gospels, as they are known, were written in Latin and are illuminated with intricate designs including snakes, swirling patterns and interlocking forms.



4. Illuminated letters

During Anglo-Saxon times, all books were hand written and decorated by hand, usually by priests and monks copying out religious texts. They were seen as very precious works of art, and you had to be very skilled to produce them.

An illuminated letter was usually the first letter of a page or paragraph. It was always enlarged and in jewel-like colour with gold applied in areas, while the rest of the text remained black. The images used to enhance the letters include animals, plants, and mythological creatures.



5/6. The Bayeux Tapestry

The Bayeux Tapestry isn't really a tapestry – it's an embroidered linen cloth. It is about 70 metres (230 ft) long. It tells the story of William the Conqueror's invasion of England and the Battle of Hastings in 1066.

The Bayeux Tapestry was discovered in the 18th century hanging in Bayeux Cathedral. Wool yarn, coloured by vegetable dyes, was used for the embroidery which is divided into fifty panels. The tapestry starts with a scene showing Edward the Confessor sending Harold Godwinson to Normandy and it ends with English troops fleeing the battlefield at Hastings after their defeat.

The appearance of Halley's Comet is also featured. It also shows the arrow in Harold's eye which is said to have killed him. The Bayeux Tapestry was produced by the Normans, the victors in the Battle of Hastings. It is thought that the Bayeux Tapestry was completed in the 1070s, several years after the battle.

