

Primary History

Vikings

Name:

Class:

Knowledge organiser

	Timeline of events
449 CE	Angles and Saxons begin to settle in Britain
793 CE	Viking attack on Lindisfarne
865 CE	Great Heathen Army invades
878 CE	Battle of Edington – King Alfred defeats Guthrum; Guthrum is then baptised
927 CE	Athelstan unites the English kingdoms
991 CE	The English lose a great battle against the Vikings: the Battle of Maldon
1013 CE	King Sweyn Forkbeard invades and becomes King of England
1016 CE	Canute becomes King of England

Imp	ortant people
King Alfred	King of Wessex from 87I to 889 and defended Wessex from the Vikings; Alfred called himself the King of the English
Aethelflaed	Skillful ruler who defended Mercia against the Vikings, and Alfred's daughter who later married Aethelred
Edward	Alfred's eldest son
Guthrum	Viking King of East Anglia at the time of the treaty with Alfred, and a leader of the Great Heathen Army; later called Aethelstan
Athelstan	First king to unite (bring together) all of the English kingdoms, in 927
King Aethelred II (the Unready)	Introduced Danegeld (an official agreement with the Vikings)
King Canute	King of England, Denmark and Norway; he ruled England from 1016 to 1035

	Vocabulary
convert	Persuade someone to follow a religion
Danegeld	Money paid to Vikings by the Anglo-Saxons to stop them invading and raiding England (the word means 'Danish payment')
Danelaw	The part of England which King Alfred agreed belonged to the Vikings
enslave	Make someone a slave (someone who is owned by another person and has to do as they're told)
monastery	Building where monks live and worship their god
pagan	A term that Christian churches gave to religions with more than one god
peace treaty	Agreement to stop fighting, which also tries to fix the cause of the conflict
plunder	Take things by force
raid	Attack by surprise, with the aim of stealing things
Vikings	People from Scandinavia (Norway, Sweden and Denmark); they were also called 'Norsemen' (men of the North) or 'Danes' (people from Denmark)

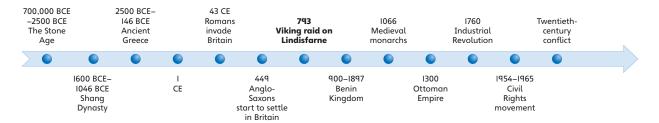
Norse	gods
Odin	Chief god
Frigg	Chief goddess
Freya	Goddess of love, fertility, battle and death
Thor	God of thunder
Loki	God of cunning and fire

Learning review

Lesson	Lesson question	You will learn	Learning review
_	Why did the Vikings raid and invade Britain?	 Where the Vikings came from. What raiding was. 	
		 Why the Vikings raided and invaded Anglo-Saxon England. 	
2	Who were the Norse	 Who the main Norse gods were. 	
	goas	• What the saga of Odin's eye is about.	
		 What happens in the saga of the death of Balder. 	
3	Why did Alfred sign a	 Who King Alfred was. 	
	treaty with Guthrum?	 Why Guthrum and his army were a threat. 	
		 How Guthrum became Athelstan. 	
4	Was Alfred right to	 Why Viking raids stopped. 	
	make a deal with the Vikinas?	 What happened to the Danelaw. 	
		 Who King Canute was. 	
5	What were the	 What the Anglo-Saxons believed in. 	
	similarities and differences between	 What the similarities were between Analo-Saxon and Norse beliefs 	
	Norse and Anglo-Saxon beliefs?	 What the differences were between Anglo-Saxon and Norse beliefs. 	
9	Assessment: 'The Vikings were not just bloodthirs What evidence do we have to support this view?	Assessment: 'The Vikings were not just bloodthirsty warriors.' What evidence do we have to support this view?	

Lesson I

Why did the Vikings raid and invade Britain?



Who were the Vikings?

The **Vikings**' homeland was Scandinavia: an area that included modern Norway, Sweden and Denmark. The Vikings were adventurous explorers, traders, warriors and skilled shipbuilders. From Scandinavia they travelled by sea in their longships. Longships were long and narrow, and could travel up rivers as well as across the sea.





I. Colour in the countries on the modern map that were the Vikings' homeland.



2. Imagine you are a Viking living in Vejle, Denmark. Using the two dots on the map, draw the route you would travel to get to the island of Lindisfarne, England.

Life in Scandinavia

Life in Scandinavia was hard. It was very cold in winter. Farming was difficult, because the plants that people grew for food struggled to grow in the cold. Most Vikings farmed and caught fish, too.

Vikings lived in small settlements. When a Viking father died, the eldest son was given all the family's land. That made life difficult for the families of the



Viking villages in Denmark would have looked like this

younger sons and daughters. If they wanted land of their own, they had to go and take it from someone else.

Raiding and invading

The Vikings were great travellers and explorers. They sailed their longships along the coasts and rivers of Europe. They looked for places to trade but also good places to **raid**.

Viking raids were sudden attacks with the aim of **plundering** places and taking people to **enslave**. The Vikings would arrive without warning, raid a settlement and then leave in their fast longships. In fact, the word 'Viking' meant 'a raid' and 'going Viking' meant 'going raiding'.

One country that the Vikings often raided and invaded was England, because it was a rich country and easy to reach by boat. At that time, the Anglo-Saxons lived in England.

3.	Read the statements below. Tick 'True' or 'False'	for each	one.
	The Vikings lived in cities.	True	False
	Most Vikings farmed and fished for a living.	True	False
	The word 'Viking' meant 'peaceful farmer'.	True	False
	Longships were important in Viking raids.	True	False

The attacks on Lindisfarne

Lindisfarne is an island on the northeastern coast of Northumbria, close to Scotland. There was a **monastery** on Lindisfarne. From the end of the sixth century, most Anglo-Saxons were Christians. They believed a miracle (an extraordinary event caused by God) had happened on Lindisfarne, and many travelled there to worship. This made the monastery rich. It had gold and silver, jewels, valuable books and stores of food and drink.

In 793, the Vikings raided the monastery. Lindisfarne was too far away to be protected by the troops of Northumbria. The Viking warriors killed the monks and stole their treasures. They left Lindisfarne with longships packed with gold, silver and probably people to enslave.

Back in Scandinavia, the word spread that England was rich and easy to raid. There were more and more Viking raids. By 850, Viking armies stayed in England through the winter. By 870, the Vikings had conquered three out of four Anglo-Saxon kingdoms.

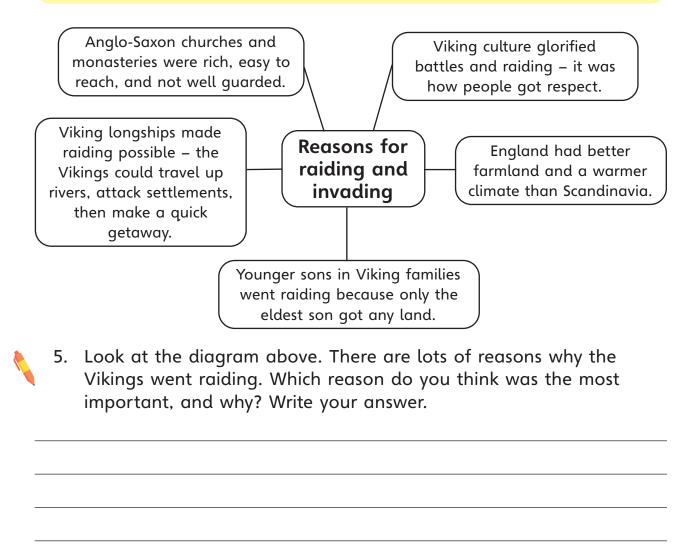


4. Order these events. We've done one for you to get you started.

Viking invaders conquered Anglo-Saxon kingdoms.	
The raiders left Lindisfarne with their longships packed with treasure.	
Viking armies stayed in England rather than going home for the winter.	
The Viking warriors killed monks and stole the treasures of Lindisfarne.	I
There were more and more Viking raids.	

Reasons for Viking raiding and invading

At the time, the Anglo-Saxons believed God must be angry with them and had sent the Vikings to punish them. Today, historians think there were different reasons for the raids and invasions.



Lesson 2

Who were the Norse gods?



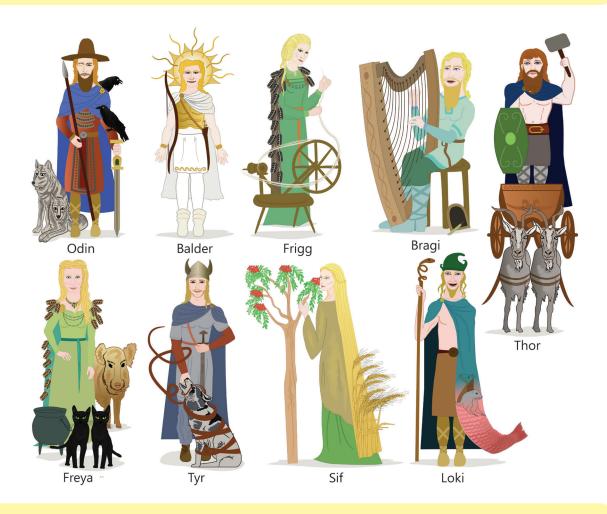


Quiz

١.	Read the statements below. Tick 'True' or 'False' for each one.				one.	
	a. The Vikings o	ame from Scot	tland.	True	False 🗌	
	b. One reason to plunder tr	easure.		was True	False	
	c. Vikings first r year 1066.	alaea Linaistai	rne in the	True	False	
2.	What kind of boat did the Vikings travel in? Write your answer.					
3.	What was the re	ligion of most	Anglo-Saxor	ns? Write your	answer.	
4.	4. What did the Anglo-Saxons believe had happened long ago on Lindisfarne? Tick the correct answer.					
	a. a miracle					
	b. a monastery					
	c. a Viking raid					
5.	Fill in the blanks to complete the sentences.					
	monks	raided	armies	treasure		
	The Vikings	the	monastery	at Lindisfarne	. They	
	killed the	and s	tole their _		After that,	
	Viking	returned	to England	again and ag	jain.	

Viking gods

Another name for the Vikings was the Norsemen (meaning 'men from the North'), or Norse. At the start of the Viking age, the Norse population believed in many gods – we call these the Norse gods. Before they became Christians, the Anglo-Saxons had similar names for the same sorts of gods.



Each of the Norse gods had their own personality and story. The gods did not live forever, but they lived for a very long time and had special powers. There were two clans of gods: the Aesir and the Vanir. The Aesir were the most powerful gods and they included Odin, Thor, Balder and Loki. The Vanir clan included Freya.

These gods lived in Asgard, where each god had their own palace. The Vikings believed that warriors who were bravely killed in battle lived in Valhalla, a great hall, where they feasted every night. Valhalla was also in Asgard.



I. Which Norse gods are being described here? Use the pictures on page 9 to help you. Write their names in the table.

Description	Norse god
The god of thunder and lightning, this god carries a hammer called Mjölnir. He rides in a chariot, pulled by two goats called Tanngrisnir and Tanngnjóstr.	
The chief god. He has one eye and often wears a cloak and a hat. He carries a spear called Gungnir. He has two ravens called Huginn and Muninn, and two wolves called Geri and Freki.	
A cunning, shape-shifting god, who sometimes takes on the shape of a salmon, sometimes a horse, or even a flea. This god plays tricks on the other gods.	
Goddess of love, who wears the necklace known as Brísingamen and a cloak made of falcon feathers. She rides in a chariot pulled by two cats, and has a friendly boar whose name is Hildisvíni.	

Sagas

Sagas are stories that the Vikings told to each other. We know about them because people started to write them down in the 13th century. Here are two sagas about the Norse gods.

The saga of Odin's eye

Mimir was the Norse god of wisdom. One day, Odin, chief of the gods, came across Mimir's well. He knew that one drink would give him all the knowledge in the universe. He asked Mimir for a drink. Mimir refused unless Odin gave him an eye in return.

Odin gouged out one of his eyes and dropped it into the well. Once this sacrifice was made, Mimir dipped his horn into the well and offered Odin a drink.



2. Why did Odin want to drink from Mimir's well? Write your answer.



One-eyed Odin with his ravens, Huginn and Muninn



Can you spot Loki in this picture of the death of Balder?

The saga of Balder's death

Frigg was the chief goddess and Odin's wife. She cast a spell on their son, Balder, to stop anything that might hurt him from touching him. Other gods enjoyed using Balder as a target for fun. They threw darts, knives, arrows and axes at him. Everything bounced off him harmlessly.

Everyone loved Balder – or almost everyone. One day, Loki shapeshifted into an old lady and asked Frigg, 'Did everything agree not to harm Balder?' Frigg said that, yes, everything had, except mistletoe – but how could anyone be harmed by mistletoe?

Loki cut a twig of mistletoe into a dart. He gave it to the blind god Hod who had been left out of the game of throwing things at Balder. 'I'll help you join in!' said Loki. He helped Hod throw the dart at Balder. The dart went straight into Balder's heart, and he died.



3. Who was responsible for Balder's death, and why? Write your answer.

		Fri	99	Loki	Hod	
	I believe because.		was	responsible	for Balder's	death
_						
	draw a c	omic strip	or storybo			s death, and Vrite captions

Lesson 3

Why did Alfred sign a treaty with Guthrum?





Quiz

- I. What was another name for the Vikings? Write your answer.
- 2. What is the name of the stories that the Vikings told? Write your answer.
- 3. Match these sentence starters to the correct endings. Draw a line between them.

Odin wanted wisdom from
The spell on Balder meant that almost
Loki found out that Balder could be hurt by
Loki convinced the blind god Hod to
Mimir was the Norse god of

mistletoe.
wisdom.
throw a mistletoe dart at Balder, which killed him.
the water in Mimir's well.
nothing could hurt him.

- 4. Cross out the incorrect words to complete this sentence.

 Odin, chief of the gods, wanted so much to learn all the knowledge in the universe that he removed his own nose / eye / ear.
- 5. Who was the Norse god of thunder and lightning? Write your answer.

The Great Heathen Army

By 865, the English were used to Viking raids happening most summers. In fact, Anglo-Saxon leaders sometimes paid the Vikings not to raid them. This payment became known as **Danegeld**, meaning gold for the Danes (the Anglo-Saxons often called Vikings Danes, even though not all of them came from Denmark).

But in 865 things changed. A Viking army of around 3,000 warriors came to England with a new invasion plan. The English called this the Great Heathen Army. 'Heathen' meant someone who was not a Christian.

The Anglo-Saxon kingdoms

In 865, England was split into four major kingdoms: Wessex, Mercia, Northumbria and East Anglia. The Great Heathen Army fought its way through East Anglia and stayed in England over winter. In the following years they took control of Northumbria and Mercia.

The Vikings did not attack Wessex because Alfred, King of Wessex, paid them to stay away. Alfred's army was too weak then to fight the Vikings. But in 874, the Viking army split in two. Halfdan led a band of men to Scotland and Guthrum turned his army to Wessex.

	I.	Why did the Great Heathen Army not attack Wessex before 875? Write your answer.
_		



2. This map contains the borders of the kingdoms of East Anglia, Northumbria, Mercia and Wessex. Colour and label the kingdoms.



Guthrum versus Alfred

At first Guthrum fought Alfred's men. Then Alfred and Guthrum agreed a deal. Guthrum would take his army back to East Anglia in return for a share of Alfred's treasure. However, Guthrum did not keep to the deal. He kept on raiding Wessex.



In 878, the two sides fought at the Battle of Edington. Alfred's forces defeated the Great Heathen Army. Guthrum agreed to a **peace treaty** called the Treaty of Wedmore. In this treaty and a later one, Alfred and Guthrum agreed:

- that Guthrum's army would leave Wessex immediately
- that Guthrum would be baptised a Christian, and Alfred would be his godfather. At the time that meant Guthrum became Alfred's adopted son
- the boundaries of their lands. England was divided along a line from London to Chester. The land to the east of that line was for the Vikings. It was called the **Danelaw**.

	3.	Why did Guthrum agree to the Treaty of Wedmore? Write your answer.
_		
_		

What happened next?

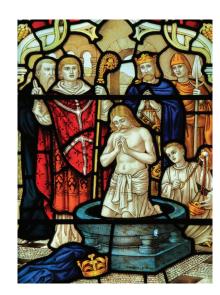
Guthrum was baptised a Christian and took on a new name, Athelstan. He left Wessex and settled in East Anglia as king. He lived there until his death in 890. Alfred built up his kingdom's defences, creating England's first navy. He called himself King of the English.



4. Order these events. We've done one for you to get you started.

The Great Heathen Army arrived in East Anglia.	I
Guthrum was baptised a Christian. His new	
Christian name was Athelstan.	
The Viking army split in two. One part went to raid	
Scotland, while Guthrum led his part of the army	
to Wessex.	
Alfred won the Battle of Edington.	
Guthrum did not keep to his deal with Alfred to	
return to East Anglia.	
Alfred and Guthrum signed the Treaty of Wedmore.	

5.	What does this picture show? Use your knowledge of Alfred and Guthrum to help.



	6.	Alfred and Guthrum signed treaties because
_		
		Alfred and Guthrum signed treaties so
		Alfred and Guthrum signed treaties but
_		

Unit progress check in

a. exploring b. farming _ Why did the Vikings often raid o	c. baking d. fishing and invade England? Write your ansv
Read the statements below. Tick Viking longships could sail only Anglo-Saxon churches and mon well guarded.	on the sea.
Well guarded. Only the eldest sons in Viking fa	
Where did Vikings believe that Write your answer.	
Write your answer.	o their correct endings. Draw a line
Write your answer. Match these sentence starters to	
Write your answer. Match these sentence starters to between them.	o their correct endings. Draw a line
Write your answer. Match these sentence starters to between them. In 793, Vikings raided In the Treaty of Wedmore,	o their correct endings. Draw a line the son of Odin and Frig a large area of land in
Write your answer. Match these sentence starters to between them. In 793, Vikings raided In the Treaty of Wedmore, Alfred gave Guthrum Balder, a favourite of the	o their correct endings. Draw a line the son of Odin and Frig a large area of land in England. persuade them to go ba
Write your answer. Match these sentence starters to between them. In 793, Vikings raided In the Treaty of Wedmore, Alfred gave Guthrum Balder, a favourite of the Norse gods, was The Anglo-Saxons paid	the son of Odin and Frig a large area of land in England. persuade them to go ba home. conquered by the Great
Write your answer. Match these sentence starters to between them. In 793, Vikings raided In the Treaty of Wedmore, Alfred gave Guthrum Balder, a favourite of the Norse gods, was The Anglo-Saxons paid Danegeld to the Vikings to East Anglia, Northumbria	the son of Odin and Frig a large area of land in England. persuade them to go ba home. conquered by the Great Heathen Army. the monastery on Lindisfarne.
Write your answer. Match these sentence starters to between them. In 793, Vikings raided In the Treaty of Wedmore, Alfred gave Guthrum Balder, a favourite of the Norse gods, was The Anglo-Saxons paid Danegeld to the Vikings to East Anglia, Northumbria and Mercia were all	the son of Odin and Frig a large area of land in England. persuade them to go ba home. conquered by the Great Heathen Army. the monastery on Lindisfarne.

Lesson 4

Was Alfred right to make a deal with the Vikings?



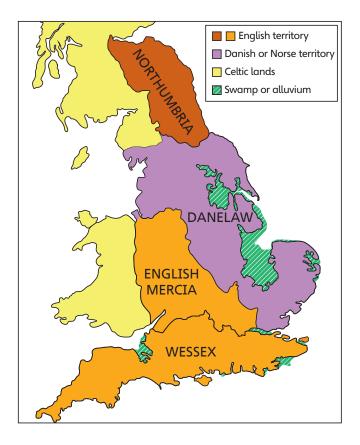


l.	What did the English call the Viking army that invaded England in 865? Write your answer.					
2.	Which of the four major Anglo-Saxon kingdoms of England was Alfred king of at that time? Tick the correct answer.					
	a. Wessex b. Mercia c. East Anglia d. Northumbria					
3.	Read the statements below. Tick 'True' or 'False' for each one. a. The Vikings attacked Wessex first. True False					
	b. Alfred paid the Vikings to stay away from his kingdom. True False					
	c. Guthrum led his army to Scotland. True False					
4.	Complete these sentences with the words from the box.					
	Wedmore navy Danelaw Edington Athelstan					
	a. In 878 Alfred and Guthrum fought at the Battle of					
	b. After Alfred won the battle, Guthrum and Alfred signed the Treaty of					
	c. Guthrum was baptised a Christian and took a new name, which was					
	d. After signing the treaty, Alfred improved Wessex's defences and created a					
	e. Guthrum took his army to East Anglia, which was now in the: the part of England that belonged to the Viking					
	settlers.					

The Danelaw

The Danelaw was the part of England which the Vikings controlled. It was created by the treaties that Alfred and Guthrum signed after the Battle of Edington in 878.

After the Danelaw was agreed there were no more Viking raids under Alfred's rule.



What happened after King Alfred died?

In 899 Alfred died. His son Edward became King of Wessex. Alfred's daughter Aethelflaed was the ruler of English Mercia. Both Edward and Aethelflaed built lots of fortresses to defend their kingdoms. By 917 Wessex and Mercia were strongly defended. Now Edward and Aethelflaed invaded the Danelaw. The Vikings were driven out of England. Only Northumbria remained under Viking control.

In 924 Edward died. His son Athelstan became king. He took control of Northumbria, too, and the kings of Wales and Scotland agreed that he was the most powerful, so Athelstan called himself King of all Britain. In 937 the Vikings and the Scots joined together to invade England again, but Athelstan defeated them.



I. Was Alfred right to sign a treaty with Guthrum and give him the Danelaw? Or should Alfred have driven the Vikings out of England after defeating them at the Battle of Edington? Write your answer.

The return of the Vikings

Athelstan united Anglo-Saxon England against the Vikings. But when he died in 939, Viking raids and invasions began again. In 991, the English lost to the Vikings at the Battle of Maldon. Ethelred, King of England, paid Danegeld to the Vikings. But the raids continued. Ethelred said all Danes living in England must be executed. This led to a massacre on St Brice's Day, on 13 November 1002.



An artist's idea of what the St Brice's Day massacre might have looked like



- 2. 'Viking raids killed innocent people. The St Brice's Day massacre was justified because it was revenge for those raids.'
 - What do you think of this statement? Use your knowledge of the Lindisfarne raid and the picture above to help write your answer.

Danish rule

Horrified by the massacre, King Sweyn Forkbeard of Denmark invaded England repeatedly over the next II years. In 1013 he conquered England. Ethelred fled to northern France and Sweyn became King of England.

Sweyn died the following year, and his son, Canute, became king. He was already King of Denmark, and later became King of Norway, too.

As King, Canute paid the Vikings a lot of Danegeld to return to Scandinavia, so that he could rule England peacefully, from 1016 until 1035.



3. Different rulers tried different ways to take control of England. Which do you think worked best? Write a list of pros and cons.

	Pros	Cons
Treaties and agreements (e.g. Danegeld)		
Raiding and battles		

Lesson 5

What were the similarities and differences between Norse and Anglo-Saxon beliefs?





١.	Rec	ad the statements below. Tick 'True' or 'False' t	for each o	ne.
	a.	There were no more Viking raids while Alfred was king.	True	False
	b.	Edward and Aethelflaed drove the Vikings out of England.	True	False
	c.	Edward and Aethelflaed became King and Queen of Britain.	True	False
	d.	The English won the Battle of Maldon against the Vikings.	True	False
2.	Wh	y did the St Brice's Day massacre happen? Wri	te your ar	nswer.
3.	Но	w did Canute prevent Viking raids? Write your	answer.	

Vikings

4. Match these facts about English rulers to the correct names. Draw lines between them.

He invaded England after t St Brice's Day massacre.	he
He defeated the Danes in Northumbria and became k of all of England.	King
He ordered the St Brice's Domassacre.	ау
They were the son and daughter of King Alfred.	
He was the King of Denma England and Norway.	rk,
He defeated Guthrum's Gre Heathen Army in 878.	at

Alfred
Edward of Wessex and Aethelflaed of Mercia
Athelstan
Ethelred
Sweyn Forkbeard
Canute

Pagans or Christians?

Britain was part of the Roman Empire for nearly 400 years: 43 CE to 410 CE. Towards the end of Roman rule in Britain. Christianity started to be introduced. However, most people in Britain at that time were pagans.

The Anglo-Saxons invaded Britain after the Romans left in 410 CE. At this time, the Anglo-Saxons were pagans, too. Their main god was Woden, who is similar to the Viking god Odin.



• I. Many Anglo-Saxon and Viking gods were similar. Complete the table with the Norse gods. Use your Knowledge organiser, and pages 9 and 10 if you need some help. We've done one for you to get you started.

God of	Anglo-Saxon god	Norse (Viking) god	
Wisdom (and chief god)	Woden		
Cunning	Loki		
Thunder	Thunor		
Immortality (living forever)	Balder	Balder	
Love	Freya		

The return of Christianity

When the leader of the Roman Catholic church, Pope Gregory, discovered that the Anglo-Saxons were pagans, he sent some monks on a mission to **convert** them to Christianity.

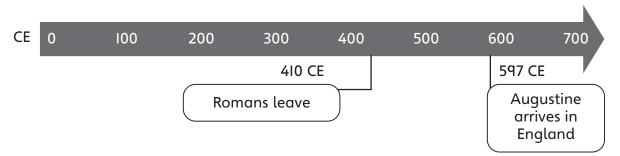
The monk who led the mission was called Augustine. His first target, in 597 CE, was King Aethelbert of Kent. Augustine thought that if he could convert Aethelbert to Christianity, others would do the same.

The king's wife, Bertha, was already a Christian. Augustine and Bertha worked together to convert Aethelbert. Once converted, Aethelbert commanded all of his people to become Christian. More and more monasteries and churches were built across England. By 700 CE, most people living in Britain were Christians.



2. Why was it a good idea for Augustine to try to convert kings first, rather than starting with ordinary people? Write your answer.

3. Complete the timeline below to show the change in religious belief in Britain from the Roman times to 700 CE.



The Vikings and Christianity

What did the Vikings think about Christianity? We don't know for sure, but here are three questions to consider:

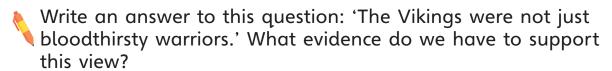
- The Vikings raided monasteries and plundered treasure from churches. Was this because they hated Christianity, or was it because monasteries and churches were not very well guarded?
- The Vikings had a lot of gods, but they had no problem taking on more gods as they travelled. Many Vikings were happy to add the Christian god to the gods they asked for help and protection. Did this make them Christians?
- The Vikings were good at trading as well as raiding. All across Europe, Viking traders dealt with Christians and visited great Christian cities, such as Rome and Byzantium. Some Viking traders converted to Christianity. Did they do this to get better trade deals, or because they had a deep Christian faith?



4. Do you think the beliefs of the Anglo-Saxons and the Vikings were more similar than different, or more different than similar? Use the information on this page to help you write your answer.

Lesson 6

Unit check out



Key words			
Danegeld	Odin	saga	
Danelaw	plunder	trading	
longships	raiding	treaty	
monastery			

Title: 'The Vikings were not just bloodthirsty warriors.' What evidence do we have to support this view?	
IntroductionWhat did the word Viking mean?Were all Vikings raiders?	
Paragraph I Lindisfarne is an example of a bloodthirsty Viking raid. What happened at Lindisfarne?	

 Paragraph 2 Some Norse sagas were very gory. For example, what happened to Odin's eye? But other myths showed how bad it was to kill. For example, what happened to Balder? 	
 Paragraph 3 The Vikings did not always raid and invade. What was Danegeld used for? The Vikings who settled in England were not violent. What was the Danelaw? King Canute was not bloodthirsty. What did he do when he became king? 	
 Extension Discuss whether you think Guthrum was more interested in military success or establishing a settlement. 	
 Conclusion What was the Vikings' overall impact in England? Were the Vikings more peaceful or more violent? 	

Vikings

Vikings			

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Vikings

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