

GCSE Paper 2 - Anglo-Saxon England and the Norman Conquest, c1060 - 1066 Knowledge Organiser

Rationale: Anglo-Saxon and Norman England, c1066 - c1088 is the British depth study and will be examined on Paper 2. The topic is divided into three sections, the first of which focuses on what life was like in England before the Norman Conquest, the succession crisis of 1066 and the Battle of Hastings.

| Key concepts | | Key vocabulary | |
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| 1. Cause | A reason why something happens. | 16. Social system | The way the people who live in a country are organised. It is often a hierarchy with the most powerful people at the top. |
| 2. Consequence | A result of something happening (can be good or bad). | | |
| Key events | | 17. Monarch | A person who rules a country - a king or a queen |
| 3. The embassy to Normandy, 1064 | Harold Godwinson visited William of Normandy. The Anglo-Saxons said it was to recover two hostages from William, the Normans claimed it was to make arrangements for William to become king when Edward the Confessor died. | 18. Earls | The most important men in the country after the king. |
| 4. The rising against Tostig, 1065 | A rebellion by Anglo-Saxons against Tostig Godwinson, Earl of Northumbria. | 19. Earldom | Areas of land controlled by earls. The most important earldom was Wessex. |
| | | 20. Thegn | They were local lords and warriors. |
| 5. Succession crisis, 1066 | When King Edward died, there was no clear heir to the throne. This is called a succession crisis. | 21. Heriot | A tax that required thegns to equip themselves with a helmet, mail, horse, sword and spear. |
| | | 22. Peasant | The biggest group in England. They worked on the land but had little power. |
| 6. The Battle of Gate Fulford, September 1066 | A battle between the Vikings led by Harald Hardrada, and the Anglo-Saxons led by the earls Edwin and Morcar. | 23. Ceorl | A free peasant who could move and work for another lord. |
| | | 24. Slave | People who could be bought and sold. They made up 10% of the population of England. |
| 7. Battle of Stamford Bridge, 1066 | Battle for the English throne at Stamford Bridge, Yorkshire, between King Harold and the King of Norway, Harald Hardrada. | 25. Danelaw | The area of England where the descendants of the Vikings lived. It was used to following its own laws and traditions. |
| | | 26. Witan | A council made up of the most important people in England. They chose the next king when the old one died. |
| 8. Battle of Hastings, 1066 | Battle for the England throne just outside of Hastings between King Harold and William, Duke of Normandy. Harold was defeated and William was crowned king of England. | 27. Shire | A division of land. Earldoms were divided into shires. |
| | | 28. Hides | A unit of land, shires were divided into hides. |
| | | 29. Hundred | A division of land made up of 100 hides. |
| Key people | | 30. Tithing | Group of a hundred households |
| | | 31. Shire reeve | The king's representative in the shire |
| 9. Edward the Confessor | King of England from 1042-1066. He had no children, so when he died there was no clear heir to the throne. | 32. Select fyrd | An army that could fight anywhere in England and was made up of thegns; they only had to serve for 40 days so that they get back to running their farms |
| 10. Earl Godwin | The Earl of Wessex and the most powerful earl in England. | 33. General fyrd | An army that only fight locally and was made up of ordinary men |
| 11. Harold Godwinson | He became the Earl of Wessex after Earl Godwin's death - he became King of England in 1066 when Edward the Confessor died. | 34. Geld Tax | A land tax |
| | | 35. Blood feud | Issues between two families that could lead to murder and acts of revenge; could go on for centuries. |
| 12. Tostig Godwinson | The brother of Harold Godwinson. | 36. Wergild | The compensation received by the family of someone who was murdered. This was paid by the family of the murderer. |
| 13. William of Normandy | King Edward's second-cousin, who fought King Harold for the English throne in 1066. He was crowned King of England on Christmas Day 1066. | 37. Hue and cry | When a crime was committed, it was the duty of all members of a tithing to hunt for the criminal |
| 14. Harald Hardrada | The Viking King of Norway, who believed that an old pact between the kings of Norway and England gave him the right to the English throne. | 38. Housecarl | Professional and highly trained Anglo-Saxon soldiers |
| | | 39. Succession | When a new king replaces the old king. |
| 15. Edgar Aethling | King Edward's great-nephew, who was given the title 'Aetheling', meaning 'of royal blood'. | 40. Oath | A sacred promise often sworn on holy relics. |
| | | 41. Feigned retreat | A tactic used by the Normans. They pretended to flee so the Anglo-Saxons would run after them, breaking their shield-wall |