

Year 7 History - Autumn 1A: Who had the most significant impact in changing England: the Romans, Saxons, or Vikings?

Key Words

Mercia	Mercia was one of the big Anglo-Saxon kingdoms in early England.
Huscarl	A huscarl was a strong, professional soldier who protected a king or lord in Viking and Anglo-Saxon times.
Fyrd	The fyrd was a group of ordinary men called to fight when there was danger. They weren't full-time soldiers — more like farmers and villagers helping defend their land.
Sagas	Long stories from Viking times that talk about heroes, battles, and adventures.
Monastery	A special religious place where monks live, work, study, and pray.
Legionary	A professional soldier in the Roman army. They trained a lot and were very disciplined.
Danelaw	The part of England that Vikings controlled and lived in. Their laws and customs were used there.
Aqueduct	A long structure (like a bridge or channel) the Romans built to carry clean water from one place to another.
Monk	A man who lives in a monastery, spends time praying, studying, and helping others, instead of having a regular job or family life.

Key Knowledge

Key historical terms	<p>BC= Before Common Era Used for dates before year 1. CE = Common Era- Used for dates from year 1 onward. It matches the old system AD (Anno Domini) e.g. 2024 CE is the same as AD 2024. AD = Anno Domini (Latin for "in the year of our Lord") Chronology= the order in which events happen over time.</p>
1. Causes of the Roman invasion	<p>1. Money and resources- Britain had things the Romans wanted — especially gold, silver, iron, grain, slaves, and good farmland. Controlling Britain meant more money for Rome. 2. Expand their empire- Rome liked to show its strength by conquering new lands. Adding Britain made the empire bigger and more impressive. 3. Increase trade- controlling Britain meant the Romans could control trade and make people pay taxes to Rome. 4. Prestige for Emperor Claudius: Emperor Claudius wanted to prove he was a strong leader. Winning a new land helped him gain respect and popularity in Rome.</p>
2. Consequences of the Roman invasion	<p>☉ The Romans built strong, straight roads and many modern roads still follow their routes. They built towns with forums, baths, theatres, and houses made from stone which led to Britain becoming more organised and connected. The Romans brought Latin and some English words today come from Latin like library, justice, court. They introduced new laws, courts, and ways of ruling. They improved technology and engineering by building aqueducts, sewage systems and underfloor heating. This led to better building techniques. More trade with Europe: pottery, wine, olive oil, glass, spices. Christianity was introduced and later became very important in Britain. ☹- British tribes lost control of their own land as Rome decided the laws and taxes. People had to pay Rome money, goods, and sometimes serve in the army. Many people were enslaved or forced to work for Romans. Britain relied on Roman soldiers and systems — when the Romans left, things collapsed quickly.</p>
3. Boudicca's rebellion	<p>After Boudicca's husband (King Prasutagus) died, he left his land to his daughters and the Roman emperor — hoping to keep peace. Instead, the Romans ignored his wishes. Roman officials seized property, took treasure, and treated the Iceni tribe badly. Boudicca was publicly whipped, and her daughters were attacked. This made many tribes angry and ready to fight. High taxes, strict laws, and Roman control made many Britons feel they had lost their freedom, so Boudicca rebelled to protect her people, get revenge, and drive the Romans out. Boudicca gathered a huge army. They destroyed several Roman towns — including Colchester, London, and St Albans — before the Romans gathered their forces and defeated her. After the rebellion, the Romans became stricter, built more forts, and watched tribes more closely. Many tribes lost more land and independence. The Romans rebuilt destroyed towns and strengthened their rule. Even though she lost, Boudicca is remembered as a symbol of resistance and bravery.</p>
4. Causes of the Saxon invasion	<p>The Saxons came from Germany, Denmark and the Netherlands. They came because the Romans left and Britain was harder to defend. At first, they were invited to help, but they saw good land and decided to stay. They came for better farming, more land, and power — which led to fighting and invasion.</p>
5. Consequences of the Saxon invasion	<p>☉ The Saxons built small wooden houses, farms and halls for their leaders. Many English towns and villages grew from Saxon settlements. The Saxons brought their language and over time it became the basis of English e.g. words such as house, man, wife, day all come from the Saxon language. They introduced new kingdoms such as Wessex, Mercia, Northumbria and East Anglia and each had its own king and laws. At first the Saxons were pagans (many gods). Later, missionaries brought Christianity back, and churches and monasteries were built. ☹ Without Roman control towns fell into ruins, roads and buildings were not repaired and trade became smaller and more local. Land was taken from native Britons and there was lots of fighting.</p>
6. Staffordshire Hoard	<p>The Staffordshire Hoard is the largest collection of Anglo-Saxon gold and treasure ever found in Britain. It contained gold and silver pieces from weapons, decorated sword fittings, helmets, crosses and other religious items. It was mostly warrior equipment, beautifully decorated. There were over 3,500 objects, weighing several kilos of gold and silver.</p>
7. Alfred the Great	<p>Alfred the Great was a king of Wessex (in southern England). He ruled from AD 871-899. He is famous because he fought against the Vikings, helped protect English lands, encouraged learning and education. He did this by bringing scholars to his court, he also helped translate important books into English and promoted reading and writing. He also tried to make fairer laws and justice, inspired partly by Christianity.</p>
8. Causes of the Viking invasion	<p>The Vikings came from Norway, Denmark and Sweden. Land here was rocky and farms were small. As families were growing some Vikings wanted new land to farm and live on. Vikings heard that Britain had treasures in churches and monasteries. There was also good farmland and busy towns. Monasteries were especially tempting because they had gold, silver, food — and very few soldiers. Viking longships were fast and could sail on rivers and the sea. They could also land almost anywhere which gave the Vikings a big advantage.</p>
9. Consequence of the Viking invasion	<p>☹- Monasteries and towns were attacked and burned. People were killed or taken as slaves. Large parts of northern and eastern England became the Danelaw — areas ruled by Viking laws and leaders. Anglo-Saxon kings had to fight again and again to defend their lands. ☉- They introduced words such as sky, egg, knife to the English language. Vikings helped build trading towns such as York (they called it Jorvik)- this helped to increase trade with Europe. Many Vikings settled in Britain, mixed with the local people, added new words and place-names, increased trade, and helped shape a more united England.</p>

AD 43 - Romans invade Britain

AD 60-61 - Boudicca's rebellion

AD 410 - Romans leave; Saxons begin invading and settling

AD 600-675 - Staffordshire Hoard (Anglo-Saxon treasure)

AD 793 - Vikings begin invading (first raid at Lindisfarne)

AD 871-899 - Alfred the Great rules

Important people

Julius Caesar	Julius Caesar invaded Britain earlier (55-54 BC), but he did not conquer it – he mostly explored, fought a bit, and then left.
Emperor Claudius	In AD 43, Claudius sent a large Roman army to Britain. They defeated several tribes and began turning parts of Britain into a Roman province.
Boudicca	Boudicca was a Celtic queen who lived in Roman Britain around AD 60-61. She was the queen of the Iceni tribe in eastern England. She led a major rebellion against the Romans in AD 60-61 after they treated her and her tribe unfairly. She was defeated but she became a symbol of resistance.
Alfred the Great	Alfred the Great was the king of Wessex (AD 871-899) who defended his lands from the Vikings and helped make England stronger and better organised.

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Video/podcast links

Alfred the Great	https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/school-radio/articles/zmwbbdm
The Roman empire and it's affect on Britain	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3X7D8yz6QFg
Why did the Roman's invade?	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dv9tldc6Kuk
Horrible Histories- Rotten Romans in Britain	https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/m001y1f1/horrible-histories-series-10-12-rotten-romans-in-britain
Boudicca	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eC7ONgTJGKw
Vikings- Invaders and Settlers	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WAjFKzyunrc

Homework

For this unit your homework will be to **design a coin representing one of the societies: Romans, Vikings and Saxons.**

Success Criteria:

- ✓ To be drawn in a circles
- ✓ Draw both sides of the coin
- ✓ Include a title with the group (Romans, Vikings or Anglo- Saxons) that you have made the coin for
- ✓ Include an image that shows something important in society at the time
- ✓ Include annotation that explain why you have included the words and pictures that you have included
- ✓ Include annotation that explain what your coin is made from and why.
- ✓ Make it colourful.



Wider reading ideas:



- *Horrible Histories: Rotten Romans, Vicious Vikings and/or Smashing Saxons* by Terry Deary
- *Alfred the Great and the Anglo-Saxons* by David Gill
- *Roman Diary: The Journal of Iliona of Mytilini* by Richard Platt
- *Viking Boy and/or Anglo-Saxon Boy* by Tony Bradman
- *The Dragon's Hoard: Stories from the Viking Sagas* by Lari Don