

Year 7 History- Spring term 2A: How did the Normans consolidate their power after the Battle of Hastings?

Key Words

Feudal	A system in the Middle Ages where kings gave land to nobles, and nobles promised to fight for the king.
Consolidate	To make power stronger and more secure.
Tapestry	A large piece of cloth with pictures or scenes woven into it, often showing important events or stories.
Castle	A large fortified building where nobles or kings lived and defended themselves from attack.
Papal	Connected to the Pope, the leader of the Catholic Church.
Hierarchy	A system where people are ranked from most powerful to least powerful.
Harrying	Destroying land, crops, and villages to punish enemies or stop rebellions.
Ecclesiastical	Connected to the Christian Church or church leaders.

Key Knowledge

1. William's problems	William has won the Battle of Hastings but he still had many problems. For example, many English nobles did not accept him, so this victory was only the first step. It gave William the throne, but he then had to secure and defend it.
2. Motte and Bailey castles	William built over 500 castles across England, often in key towns and along important routes. Motte-and-bailey castles could be built quickly and acted as military bases. They housed Norman soldiers who could respond rapidly to rebellion and control the local population. Castles were also symbols of Norman power, reminding people who was in charge. The Tower of London is a lasting example of this strategy.
3. Churches	William replaced Anglo-Saxon bishops with Norman leaders, such as Archbishop Lanfranc. The Church influenced education, law, and beliefs. By controlling church leadership, William ensured religious support for his rule. New churches and cathedrals spread Norman culture and ideas, helping people accept Norman authority and strengthening his hold on England.
4. Rebellions- Harrying of the north	Rebellions broke out across England, especially in the North. In 1069, William responded with extreme force in the <i>Harrying of the North</i> . Villages were burned, crops destroyed, and many people killed. This made large areas uninhabitable. The brutality sent a clear message: resistance would be crushed. Fear reduced the chance of future rebellions and secured his authority.
5. Bayeux tapestry	The Bayeux Tapestry is a 70-metre-long embroidered cloth showing the story of the Norman Conquest. It was made for William and shows his version of events. Harold is shown as a traitor who breaks an oath. William is shown as brave and chosen by God. It acted as propaganda. It helped people accept William as king. This reduced opposition and helped William consolidate power.
6. Feudal system	William reorganised land ownership using the feudal system. He took land from Anglo-Saxon nobles and redistributed it to Norman barons and knights. In return, they swore loyalty and promised military service. This ensured William had an army whenever he needed one. Because nobles depended on him for land and status, their power came from William, strengthening his control over the whole country.
7. Domesday book	William ordered a nationwide survey to record land, wealth, and resources. This became the Domesday Book. It allowed him to tax efficiently and accurately. With increased income, William could pay soldiers, build castles, and govern effectively. The survey also showed that all land ultimately belonged to the king, reinforcing his authority.
8. Genghis Khan	He was born as Temujin in c.1162 in Mongolia. He united the Mongol tribes who had been fighting each other and took the title Genghis Khan, meaning "Great Ruler." He created the largest land empire in history and used clever tactics (e.g. surprise attacks, fake retreats). His conquests were brutal, but he rewarded loyalty and ruled fairly. He improved trade along the Silk Road. He is remembered as a powerful conqueror and important world leader.

1066 - Battle of Hastings- William defeats King Harold and becomes King of England.

1066-1070 - William builds wooden castles quickly across England. They help him control towns and stop rebellions.


1069-1070 - Harrying of the North- People in the north rebel. William burns villages and farms to stop further rebellion.

1070s - Bayeux Tapestry is created- The story of 1066 is stitched in pictures.

1070s-1080s - Feudal System Developed- William takes land from Anglo-Saxons and gives it to Norman nobles. Everyone must be loyal to him in return for land and protection.

1086 - Domesday Book- William orders a survey of all land and wealth in England. This helps him tax people and proves all land belongs to the king.

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Important people	
Odo of Bayeux.	William's half brother and the person who had the Bayeux tapestry created.
Barons / Lords (Nobles)	Given land by the king. Promised to provide knights and support the king.
Knights	Given smaller pieces of land by the barons. Fought for their lord and protected the land.
Peasants / Serfs	Worked the land. Grew food and paid rent or taxes. Had little freedom and served the lord.
Lanfranc (Archbishop of Canterbury)	A Norman church leader who made the Church more loyal to William.
Bishop 	Led the Church in a region (diocese). Made sure churches followed Norman rules. Taught people to obey the king as chosen by God.

Video/podcast links	
How did William secure power after 1066?	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KGDu-vi8sq
What were Motte and Bailey castles?	https://youtu.be/RXXDThkJ3Ew
Revolt & resistance against William	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kNWoxIAZdkM
What was the Domesday Book?	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=om_BIzXaVwU
Life after the Norman invasion	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bxpTxuPTkIA

Homework

For this unit your homework will be to create a time traveller's guide to king William's control over Norman England.

Success Criteria to include:

- ✓ **Rebellions & Control**
Explain how William the Conqueror dealt with rebellions in England, including the Harrying of the North.
- ✓ **Motte and Bailey Castles**
Describe what a motte and bailey castle is, how it was used, and its role in William's control of England.
- ✓ **Feudal System**
Include a clear explanation of the feudal system, focusing on how land was distributed and the roles of lords, vassals, and serfs.
- ✓ **Key Documents & Art**
Mention the Domesday Book and the Bayeux Tapestry, explaining their significance in recording and showing William's rule.
- ✓ **Life in England**
Describe what life was like for different groups in England under William, such as Anglo-Saxons, Normans, and the Church.
- ✓ **Make it colourful, creative and engaging.**

Wider reading ideas:



1066: The Norman Conquest by Jim Eldridge.
 Horrible Histories: Stormin' Normans by Terry Deary
 Explore!: Normans by Izzi Howell
 The Shield Ring by Rosemary Sutcliff
 Knight's Fee by Rosemary Sutcliff