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EBJ Knowledge Organiser History Year 4

Spring Anglo Saxons



Anglo Saxons

The kings of Anglo-Saxon Britain each ruled their own **kingdom** and the people in it. They fought to defend their **kingdom** or take control of other **kingdoms**. When the Anglo-Saxons first settled in Britain, there were seven **kingdoms**, but by AD 878 there was just one **kingdom** left (Wessex) as the others had been overrun by the Vikings. Many Anglo-Saxon kings tried to resist the Vikings and fought hard to keep control of their land. King Alfred the Great was the best known Anglo-Saxon king and the first to defeat the Vikings in battle.

The Anglo-Saxon laws were very similar to some we have today, although the punishments were very different. These were often very brutal and would be carried in public to act as deterrents, to discourage others from committing such crimes. Stoning, whipping and **exile** were common punishments; as well as paying a fine (**wergild**), or receiving reparations in the form of hot or cold water ordeals.



Anglo Saxon Britain

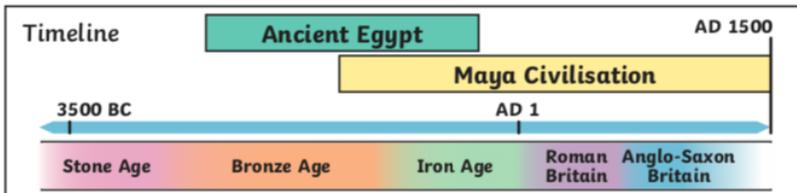
By c. AD 410, the last of the Romans had left Britain. This made Britain vulnerable to invasion. The warriors that **invaded** became known as the first Anglo-Saxons. Most of Britain was divided into seven Anglo-Saxon **kingdoms**.

The **Picts** and **Scots** were a constant threat without Roman support.

The Romans preferred living in towns but the Anglo-Saxons preferred to live in small villages. Anglo-Saxon influence can be seen in place names in Britain today. Wessex was a place named after the West **Saxons** who settled there. Sussex was named after the South **Saxons**.

The **kingdom** of Mercia (which means border people) was named Mercia because it had so many borders with other **kingdoms**.

Timeline



The 7 Kingdoms

- 1 Northumbria
- 2 Mercia
- 3 East Anglia
- 4 Wessex
- 5 Essex
- 6 Kent
- 7 Sussex



Religion

The religion of the early Anglo-Saxons was **Paganism**. They worshipped many gods. Festivals and sacrifices were made to the gods and goddesses. **Pagans** also believed in good and bad omens, lucky charms, spells and magic. They would perform many rituals that they believed would protect them in this life and the next. At the end of this period, **Christianity** became the main religion in Britain.

In AD 597, a Roman monk called Augustine was sent to tell the Anglo-Saxons about **Christianity**. King Ethelbert of Kent was the first to be converted and was baptised along with 10,000 of his people. Over the next 100 years, the rest of the kingdoms converted to Christianity too.



Key Vocabulary

Angles	Tribes from an area today known as modern day Denmark that settled in Britain from around AD 450. They were one of the tribes that became known as the first Anglo-Saxons.
Saxons	A tribe from the north coast of Europe, especially Germany, that settled in Britain from around AD 450. They were one of the tribes that became known as the first Anglo-Saxons.
Picts	Tribes originally from Scotland who were often feared.
Scots	People from Ireland who, like the Picts , were fierce and powerful fighters.
invaders	People who enter an area and take control of it by force.
kingdom	An area ruled by a king or queen.
Pagan	Someone who follows the Paganism religion and worships many gods and goddesses.
Christianity	A religion based on the teachings of Jesus Christ.