



British History: Turquoise Class – The Viking and the Anglo-Saxon struggle for the Kingdom of England at the time of Edward the Confessor.

Were the Vikings always vicious and victorious?

Key Vocabulary

Invasion	Invading a country with armed force.
Empire	A group of states or countries ruled by one monarch or leader.
Conquer	Overcome and take control of (a place or people) by military force.
Civilization	an advanced state of human society, in which a high level of culture, science, in-
Monarchy	supreme power or sovereignty held by a single person. (King or Queen)
Kingdom	a state or government having a king or queen as its head
Scandinavia	Norway, Sweden and Denmark
Conquest	the act or state of conquering or the state of being conquered.
Monastery	a house or place of residence occupied by a community of persons, especially monks,
Conflict	a fight, battle, or struggle, especially a prolonged struggle; strife.



Key People

King Alfred – King of Wessex from 871 to 899, defended Wessex from the Viking conquest

Athelstan – First King to unite English kingdoms, 927

Guthrum – King of the Vikings in Danelaw at the time of the treaty with the Saxons

King Cnut – King of England, Denmark and Norway between 1028 and 1035

Edward the Confessor – penultimate Saxon King of England (before Harold II who lost at Hastings)

Key Places

Britain
Europe
Scandinavia—Norway, Sweden and Denmark

Key Dates

787 CE	First Scandinavian raids
793 CE	Viking attacks on Lindisfarne
842 CE	Viking raids on London
865 CE	Great Heathen Army invade
878 CE	Battle of Edington
927 CE	Athelstan unites English kingdoms
950 CE	Vikings from Ireland & Isle of Man raid the west coast of Wales
991 CE	Battle of Maldon leads to the first payments of Danegeld
994 CE	Danish attack on London fails
1000 CE	Vikings reach Newfoundland
1013 CE	King Sven of Sweden lands and becomes King of England
1016 CE	King Cnut becomes King of England
042 CE	Saxon Edward the Confessor returns to become King of England
1066 CE	Edward the Confessor dies, leading Harold Godwinsson becomes King, but is killed by William the Conqueror at the Battle of Hastings



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Key Knowledge

Vikings were largely from Denmark, Norway and Sweden and it is not known for certain why they began to raid other lands and settle in places such as England. Within a century Vikings had taken over large parts of the land in northern England, although failed to over-rule the large kingdom of Wessex. By 884, after years of battles, a treaty was agreed that left Vikings ruling over 'Danelaw' in the north of England.

Vikings have traditionally had a fierce reputation as invaders and for violent attacks. This was only true sometimes; there is evidence that some attacks were very violent– including that at Lindisfarne in 793.

The Vikings occupied much of north-eastern England, including their stronghold of York. We now know that the city was a busy place with up to 15,000 inhabitants. Gradually as the Vikings spread.

Traditional Viking families had men working the land, with a wife taking care of the home and of the family valuables. There was little furniture in the single-room homes and certainly no bathroom – most families used a cesspit for discarding waste. When they first arrived, most Vikings followed pagan religions, but soon converted to Christianity as they became settled in England.

Key Knowledge

After years of small-scale attacks and invasions, and the start of the main attacks in 793, Viking raids continued into the 9th Century. In 865, an army was raised to conquer England, known as the Great Heathen Army. The Army landed in East Anglia and reached York by the following year.

Over the next 10 years the Vikings took over more land, leading to Wessex as the only unconquered kingdom. Battles with the Saxons continued until the Battle of Edington, at which King Alfred (the Great) defeated the Vikings. In 954AD Eric Bloodaxe – king of the Vikings – was killed, the Saxon king, Eadred took control of the kingdom.

Following this period, a series of Saxon kings ruled, interrupted by the reign of Danish king Sweyn and later Cnut and his grandsons, before Edward the Confessor.