



Y4 History Knowledge Organiser—The Vikings



Key Knowledge

Learn these key facts—key points in red
Invasion

The Vikings— Came from Scandinavia. The first recorded raid was in 787AD.

Reasons for Invasion—lack of good farming land in homelands, not enough space for families, treasures available to be raided in Britain and lack of army influence in Britain.

Viking Life

Homes—Vikings lived in long rectangular houses made with upright timbers called **longhouses**. They used woven sticks covered with mud to keep out the rain. They were often one room with a central fire.

Clothes—The Vikings were skilful weavers and women and children often made clothes for their families. They could also use natural dyes from plants to give colour. Men wore tunics and trousers while women wore long dresses.

Jobs— Many Vikings worked as farmers, growing grains and vegetables and rearing animals. Other Vikings were craft workers. People could take their goods to the market to sell, and sailed further away to trade.

Society— Viking society was made up of a **hierarchical** system. At the top was the king, followed by jarls, karls and thralls.

Key Figures

Alfred The Great- (849AD-899AD) He became King in 871AD. Alfred spent years fighting off the Vikings, building forts and walled towns known as 'burhs'. Eventually he drove them out of western England towards the east, in a place they named Danelaw.



King Canute (995-1035) He was the Viking king of England, Denmark, Norway and part of Sweden. Legend has it that Canute stood in the sea and commanded it to retreat, to show his power, but getting his feet wet only proved to the people that he had less power than God.



Key Locations

Lindisfarne— The Viking attack on the island of Lindisfarne (off the coast of Northumberland) marked the beginning of the Viking age in Britain. Lindisfarne was known as 'Holy Island' and contained monasteries which the Vikings committed violence against.

Hastings— The site of the battle for the throne that took place on 14th October 1066 between William of Normandy and King Harold.

Key Vocabulary

Understand these key words

Word	Definition
Bretwalda	Rulers of large parts of territory in Anglo-Saxon society
Scandinavia	Present day Denmark, Norway and Sweden
Monasteries	Churches and religious buildings which the Vikings raided for valuable treasure
Longhouses	Where Vikings lived. They were made of wood, stone or earth and turf. Fire in the middle of the room. They shared with animals.
Jarls	The wealth nobles in Viking society. They lived in the best houses and reported to the Kings or chiefs.
Karls	The karls were everyday people such as farmers, craftsmen, sailors and warriors.
Thralls	Slaves who were captured, bought or traded
Push and pull	The factors that may cause people to migrate away from their home to another place.
heir	a person who has legal claim to a title or a throne when the person holding it dies
Danelaw	An area that covered the north and east of England in the 9th and 10th centuries, controlled by the Vikings.
Norse	The language the Vikings spoke
raid	An surprise attack on an enemy designed to take or steal something of value or importance
Hierarchical	A type of society where people are placed in order of rank.



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The Events That Led To The Battle of Hastings

Edward the Confessor—Edward became King of England in 1042. He died in 1066, without a clear heir to his throne, leaving no children to inherit it. There were three men who believed they had a right to claim it: William, Duke of Normandy, Harald Hardrada, King of Norway, and Harold Godwinson, Earl of Wessex.



Harold Godwinson—Ascended to the throne after Edward the Confessor, though this was controversial, as both Harald Hardrada (King of Norway) and William (Duke of Normandy) felt they had a claim. Harold claimed that Edward had promised it to him and he was made King.

Harald Hardrada—In 1066, believing he had a right to the throne, he invaded England with 300 long ships, and was killed at the Battle of Stamford Bridge by the army of Harold Godwinson, the last Anglo-Saxon King of England.



William the Conqueror—While Harold II was fighting Harald Hardrada in York, William, Duke of Normandy, attacked the Sussex coast. This meant that Harold had to quickly take his army south. Many were left behind and the others were exhausted. Harold was killed in battle and William became king.

