

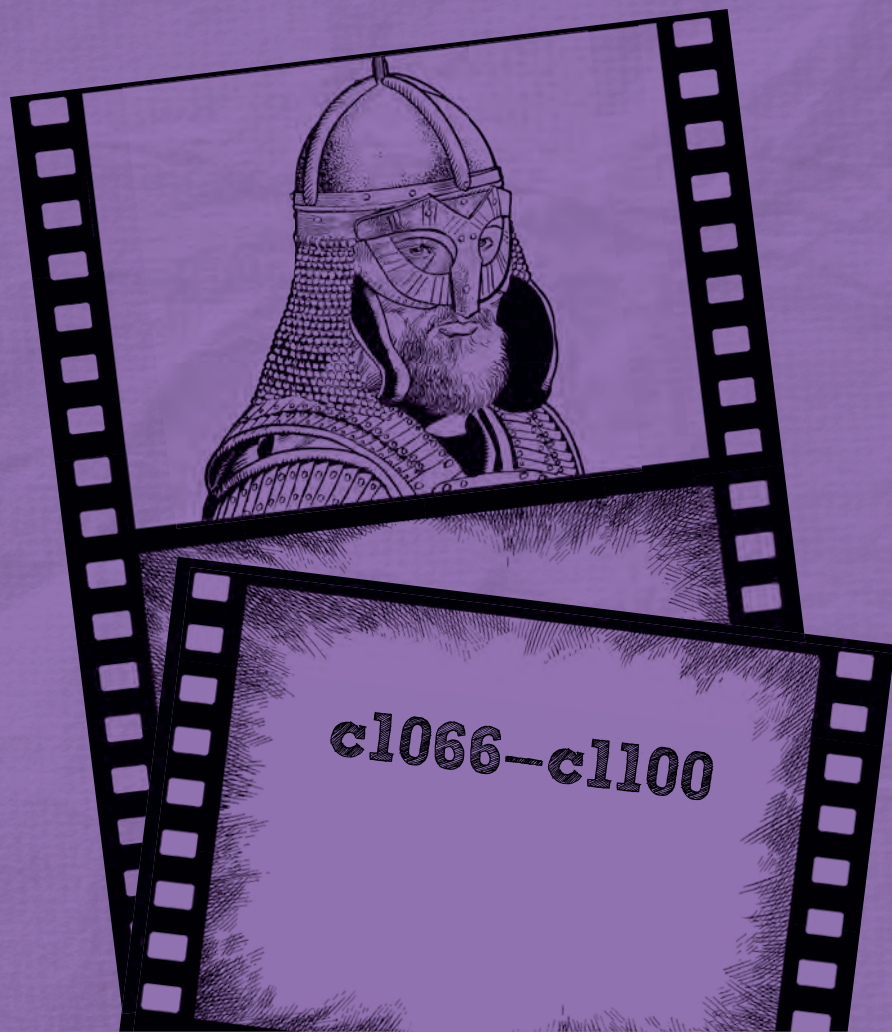
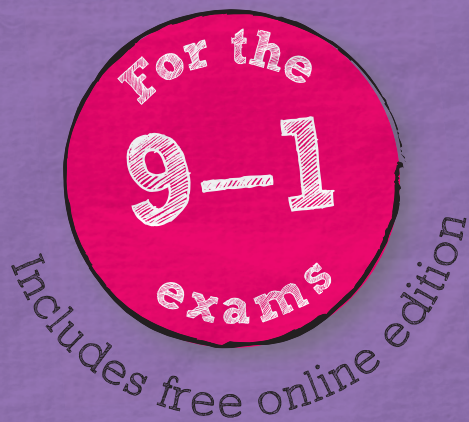
REVISE AQA GCSE (9–1)

History

NORMAN ENGLAND,

c1066–c1100

REVISION GUIDE AND WORKBOOK



REVISE AQA GCSE (9–1)**History****NORMAN ENGLAND, c1066–c1100****REVISION
GUIDE AND WORKBOOK**

Series Consultant: Harry Smith

Author: Sally Clifford

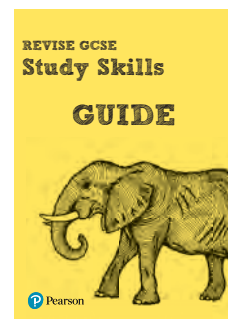
Also available to support your revision:**Revise GCSE Study Skills Guide** 9781447967071

The **Revise GCSE Study Skills Guide** is full of tried-and-trusted hints and tips for how to learn more effectively. It gives you techniques to help you achieve your best – throughout your GCSE studies and beyond!

Revise GCSE Revision Planner 9781447967828

The **Revise GCSE Revision Planner** helps you to plan and organise your time, step-by-step, throughout your GCSE revision. Use this book and wall chart to mastermind your revision.

For the full range of Pearson revision titles across KS2, KS3, GCSE, Functional Skills, AS/A Level and BTEC visit:
www.pearsonschools.co.uk/revise



Contents

SUBJECT CONTENT

The Normans: conquest and control

England before 1066

- 1 Anglo-Saxon England

Causes of the Norman Conquest

- 2 The succession crisis, 1066
- 3 The claimants to the throne

Military aspects

- 4 Preparing for battle
- 5 The Battle of Stamford Bridge
- 6 Before the Battle of Hastings
- 7 The Battle of Hastings
- 8 Reasons for William's victory

Establishing and maintaining control

- 9 William establishes control
- 10 Castles
- 11 Early revolts, 1067–68
- 12 Further rebellion, 1069–75
- 13 The Harrying of the North
- 14 The Norman dynasty

Life under the Normans

Feudalism and government

- 15 The feudal system
- 16 Military service
- 17 Changes to government
- 18 The legal system
- 19 Trials and punishment
- 20 The Domesday Book

Economic and social changes

- 21 Villages
- 22 Towns
- 23 Food
- 24 Work
- 25 Housing

The Norman Church and monasticism

The Church

- 26 The Anglo-Saxon Church
- 27 Lanfranc and Church reforms
- 28 Church building
- 29 William II and the Church
- 30 Relations with the Papacy

Monasticism

- 31 Monastic reform
- 32 New monastic orders
- 33 Monastic life
- 34 Learning and language

The historic environment of Norman England

- 35 Site investigation
- 36 Sample site: Ely Cathedral 1
- 37 Sample site: Ely Cathedral 2
- 38 Sample site: Wharham Percy 1
- 39 Sample site: Wharham Percy 2

SKILLS

- 40 Exam overview
- 41 Interpretation skills
- 42 Interpretation A
- 43 Question 5: Evaluating interpretations
- 44 Question 6: Explaining importance
- 45 Question 7: Narrative account
- 46 Question 8: Historic environment 1
- 47 Question 8: Historic environment 2

PRACTICE

- 48 Practice questions

ANSWERS

- 59 Answers

.....

A small bit of small print

AQA publishes Sample Assessment Material and the Specification on its website. This is the official content and this book should be used in conjunction with it. The questions and revision tasks in this book have been written to help you revise the skills you may need for your assessment. Remember: the real assessment may not look like this.

Anglo-Saxon England

In order to understand the impact of the Norman Conquest, you need to know what England was like before 1066.

Kings of England from 871

Timeline

899–978 The rule of the direct descendants of Alfred the Great.

871–899 Alfred the Great, King of Wessex: fought the Danes and established the dynasty that would unite England.

978–1016 Æthelred the Unready: great, great grandson of Alfred the Great, deposed by Cnut, King of Denmark (a Viking). Æthelred's elder son, Edmund Ironside, keeps Wessex until his death, then Cnut rules the whole of England.

1016–1035 Cnut

1040–1042

Harthacnut, second son of Cnut

1035–1040 Harold Harefoot, elder son of Cnut

1042 Edward the Confessor, Æthelred's younger son, takes the throne.

Although Alfred the Great fought the Danes and began the unification of England, parts of the north of England remained under Danish control – this area was called the 'Danelaw'.

Society in Anglo-Saxon England

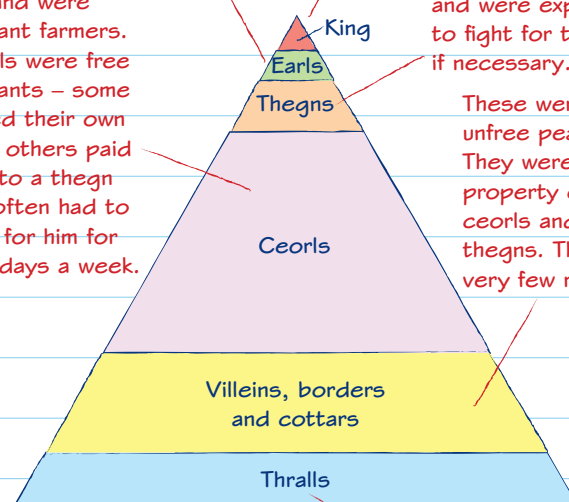
There were just six earldoms, which meant that the earls were very powerful. Together with the leading bishops, the earls formed the **Witan** – the king's advisors. The Witan was very influential, but the king did not have to take their advice.

The king owned more land than anyone else, and controlled the courts. The king could also raise taxes and issue laws. The people relied on the strength of the king.

There were about 4000 **thegns**. They ran the local courts and collected taxes, and were expected to fight for the king if necessary.

Most people in England were peasant farmers. **Ceorls** were free peasants – some owned their own land, others paid rent to a thegn and often had to work for him for 2–3 days a week.

These were unfree peasants. They were the property of the **ceorls** and the **thegns**. They had very few rights.



Anglo-Saxon England was a wealthy country. See page 2 for more.

These were slaves and made up about 10 per cent of the population.

The Church

The influence of Irish missionaries, such as St Patrick (385–461), meant that the English Church developed its own identity, unique from the church in the rest of Europe.

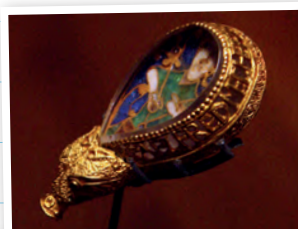
In the 10th century, England had a thriving Church – mainly due to the work of St Dunstan, who was Archbishop of Canterbury from 960 to 978. Dunstan reformed the Church and improved the standard of the clergy.

After Dunstan's death, standards declined due to Viking raids that destroyed most of Canterbury. Cnut and his sons were Christian, and supported the Church, but it never recovered the strength it had under Dunstan.

Culture

Anglo-Saxon England had a flourishing culture.

- There were skilled craftsmen producing high quality art, especially engravings, enamel and metalwork.
- A variety of literature, poems, histories and stories were written, and maps were drawn.
- The most famous Anglo-Saxon work of fiction is *Beowulf*, a story that continues to be read today, and new versions are still published.



The Alfred Jewel is the finest example of Anglo-Saxon art. It features high-quality enamel and intricate metalwork in gold.

Now try this

Some historians describe Anglo-Saxon England as a 'golden age'. Why do you think this is?

The succession crisis, 1066

When King Edward the Confessor died in 1066, it was unclear who should have the throne. This was because England's complicated history led to multiple claimants.

England in 1065

By 1065, England had existed as a single country for just over a hundred years. Before that, it had been divided into regions, each with its own ruler.

King Edward the Confessor ruled England between 1042 and 1066. He was a very religious man, but a weak king. He left the running of the kingdom to his advisors (the Witan) while he focused his energies on the Church.

You won't be asked any questions about the period before 1066 in the exam, but it is still important – you won't be able to understand the events of 1066 without it.

Wealth and trade

England's fertile farmland meant that the economy was based on agriculture. Farmers produced wheat, rye, barley and oats, as well as animal products such as meat, cheese and leather.

Natural resources like timber, iron, lead and copper were another important source of wealth.

During the Anglo-Saxon period, England became an important trading nation, exporting food, raw materials and leather goods. However, the most important trade was the **wool trade** – English woollen cloth was highly valued in Europe.

The earls were the most important men in the country after the king. They governed large areas on the king's behalf: collecting taxes, running the courts and raising the king's army.

External threats

1 Vikings: In the 10th century, England's wealth attracted Viking raiders. The first Viking invasion was led by Svein Forkbeard in 1013. In 1016, Svein's son Cnut succeeded in deposing the English king Æthelred – the father of Edward the Confessor. Cnut and then his sons went on to rule England for 26 years. Although the Vikings lost control of England in 1042, they still saw the kingdom as a valuable prize.

2 Normans: After the death of his father, Edward the Confessor was raised in the Norman court by his uncle, the Duke of Normandy. When he became King of England after the death of Harthacnut, Edward kept good relations with the Norman rulers. These connections led to the threat from Normandy.

Internal threats: the Godwins

The most powerful family in England was the Godwins, the Earls of Wessex. They were always looking to expand their influence.

In 1051, the Godwins rebelled against Edward. The earls of Northumbria and Mercia supported Edward and the Godwins were exiled. Edward appointed Norman advisers, as he felt he could trust them.

The Witan resented Edward turning to the Normans for advice and encouraged the Godwins to return to England, which they did. The Godwin family regained their power, and Edward made Harold Godwinson **sub-regulus** (effectively his deputy).

Why was England such a prize?

The English throne was attractive because:

- ✓ it was wealthy – it had valuable resources and booming trade
- ✓ its kings had much stronger central control than other European rulers, thanks to an efficient administration
- ✓ its efficient administration made it easy to collect taxes, thereby increasing the king's wealth.

Remember: the Normans, the Vikings and the Earls of Wessex had all wanted the English throne for years. When Edward died without a clear heir, they all saw their chance.

Now try this

Pick **one** thing that made England attractive to would-be invaders, and **one** thing that did not. Write a sentence for each explaining why you think this is.

The claimants to the throne

Choosing a king

In 11th century England, when a king died, it was not always straightforward to decide who would be the next king, especially if the dead king had no children.

Who became king was often a matter of luck, force and alliances because there was no set pattern. Ideally, they would be:

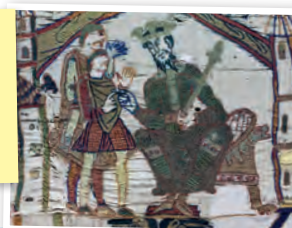
- ✓ a direct relative of the previous king
- ✓ chosen by the previous king
- ✓ supported by the Witan
- ✓ an experienced warrior
- ✓ wealthy and powerful enough to protect England from attack.

Promises and last words

In England, a king's last words before he died overruled any promises he might have made in the past. Harold Godwinson claimed that Edward the Confessor had promised him the throne just before he died.

In Normandy, a promise of the throne was final, and could not be undone – even on the king's deathbed. William of Normandy claimed that Edward had promised him the throne in 1051 – in return for helping him against the Godwins.

Edward the Confessor as depicted on the Bayeux Tapestry.



You can find out more about the Godwin family on page 2.

The four claimants to the throne in 1066

	Edgar Ætheling (c1051–c1126)	Harold Godwinson (c1022–66)	Harald Hardrada (c1015–66)	William of Normandy (c1028–87)
Direct relative of King Edward?	Yes As Edward's great nephew, he was the closest male relative	No But he had acted as Edward's sub regulus	No But King Harthacnut had promised the throne to Hardrada's father – Hardrada believed that he had inherited this claim	No Although William was a distant cousin of Edward's
Chosen by King Edward?	No	He claimed Edward chose him on his deathbed	No	He claimed Edward promised him the throne in 1051
Chosen by the Witan?	Rejected	Accepted	Ignored	Ignored
A strong warrior?	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Wealthy and powerful?	No	Yes	Yes	Yes

Harold's oath

The Normans claimed that Harold had sworn an oath promising to support William's claim to the throne. The pope supported William's claim and gave him the **Papal Banner** (a banner that William could carry to show that he had God's blessing).

The English claimed that Harold had sworn the oath while being held prisoner and being threatened, so he could not be held to it.

Harold is crowned king

Whatever the strengths of the rival claims, Harold had the immediate advantage, and he took it – he was crowned King of England on 6 January 1066: the day after the death of Edward the Confessor.

Harold knew that he would be challenged – this was why he was crowned so quickly.

Now try this

Using the information on this page, write a short paragraph explaining whether you think William or Harold had the stronger claim, and why.

Preparing for battle

When William heard about Harold's coronation in 1066, he was furious. He sent a message to Harold, asking him to honour his oath. Harold ignored this – but knew that an invasion was coming.

Harold prepares for battle

- 1 First, Harold assembled a **navy**. As he had only just become king, he did not have any ships of his own, so he called up ships and sailors from all over the country. He very soon had a large navy.
- 2 Next he gathered his **army**. Anglo-Saxon kings did not have their own army – they had a small band of professional soldiers (the **housecarls**). However, in times of war, the king called on the **thegns** (lords) to fight for him. The thegns would bring ordinary men with them – they formed the **fyrd**.

The housecarls were well-trained and well-armed.

The fyrd were inexperienced fighters, and ill-equipped, but they fought with whatever weapons they could find and could be very effective.

By May, Harold had his navy – and several thousand troops – waiting on the south coast for William to invade. Edwin and Morcar, earls loyal to Harold, were guarding the north of England.

William prepares to invade

Before William could begin to prepare for invasion, he had to win over some of his countrymen, who thought invading England was too risky. Getting the pope's support, and promising land in England if he won, eventually persuaded his fellow Normans to support him.

Like Harold, William had no army of his own, and had to persuade his **vassals** (men who had sworn allegiance to him) to provide soldiers. Assembling his invasion force took time, but eventually William had 7000 soldiers, including **archers** and **cavalry**.

To move the soldiers across the Channel, William needed ships. He ordered hundreds of ships to be built – this was a slow process, delaying the invasion.

William also knew that he would need to secure his men once he got to England. The Normans built wooden castles to control the land and keep troops safe. William built **pre-fabricated castles** to take with him to England, meaning pre-made sections could be quickly assembled.



Norman ships as portrayed in the Bayeux Tapestry.

Harold's problem

While William was assembling his army, building ships and pre-fabricating castles, Harold spent three months waiting on the south coast. On 8 September 1066, Harold disbanded his army because:

- 👉 his soldiers wanted paying
- 👉 they were hungry
- 👉 he was running out of resources
- 👉 the fyrd were needed at home to bring in the harvest.

Harold may have assumed that William's men were also needed for the harvest, and that it was safe to let his army disband.

Now try this

Give **three** reasons why William's preparations took longer than Harold's. Write a sentence for each reason, explaining why it was important.

The Battle of Stamford Bridge

A few days after Harold disbanded his army in September 1066, he heard that Harald Hardrada had invaded and captured the city of York.

Tostig

Harold's brother Tostig had been Earl of Northumbria but had lost his position and been sent into exile. Angry, Tostig went to Harald Hardrada to persuade him to invade England.

Tostig wasn't loyal to the Vikings – he was just looking for an opportunity to regain his own position.

The Battle of Fulford

Hardrada and Tostig's fleet of 300 ships landed at Riccall, near York, and then their soldiers marched towards the city on 20 September 1066.

Earls Edwin and Morcar tried to defend the city but were defeated – although they escaped with their lives. The city of York surrendered to Hardrada.

The Battle of Stamford Bridge

After hearing of Hardrada's arrival, Harold regathers his army and marches north – travelling nearly 200 miles in under a week.

More troops join Harold on his way north.

Harold expects to have to attack York, but finds Hardrada, Tostig and their army have left. He marches his army straight through the city.

Hardrada and Tostig are caught by surprise at Stamford Bridge on 25 September 1066 – the Vikings are not even wearing their **chain-mail**.

The fighting lasts all day – thousands of men are killed, including Hardrada and Tostig. Eventually the English break the Viking shield wall, and the Vikings surrender.



Invasions and Harold's journeys, 1066.

How successful was Stamford Bridge?

Stamford Bridge was a great victory because ...

It was good for morale.

England was safe from Viking invasion.

However ...

It may have made Harold complacent.

England was unprotected against the Normans.

Having to move north and back would have tired Harold's troops.

The many dead and wounded were losses Harold could not afford.

Now try this

Identify **two** reasons why Harold won at Stamford Bridge. Write a sentence explaining each point.

Before the Battle of Hastings

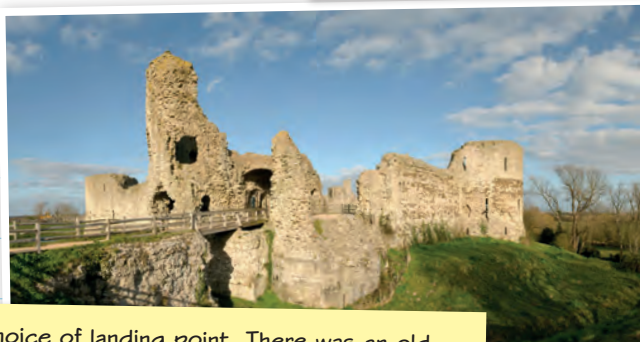
While Harold was occupied fighting Tostig and Hardrada, William prepared to invade England.

For more about William's preparations, go to page 4.

The Normans land in England

The Norman invasion of England was delayed by bad weather. The wind turned in William's favour towards the end of September.

The Norman fleet landed at Pevensey on the Sussex coast on 28 September and William chose it as his base to raid the local area. Harold was still in the north.



Pevensey was a good choice of landing point. There was an old Roman fort, protected by a bay. The Normans built their first castle inside the old fort. Remains of the castle exist today.

Harold's reaction

When Harold heard about the Norman invasion, he was still in the north. He set off towards London again, covering 200 miles in a week.

Harold's housecarls travelled with him. He gathered an army in London, and gave orders for more soldiers to assemble in Sussex. Harold's advisors thought he should wait, but Harold refused.

It was clear that neither William nor Harold was going to give up the English throne without a fight.

Harold arrived near Hastings on 13 October. Despite Harold's hasty arrival, William knew that he was coming and at dawn on 14 October, the Normans marched out to meet Harold's army, who were camped near Senlac Hill.

Some historians think Harold was angry about William's plundering of the south coast. Others suggest that he was hoping to surprise William as he had surprised Hardrada, although it appears they did exchange messages before the battle.

William vs Harold

The two armies were evenly matched.

William's army	Harold's army
<p>👍 About 7000 men</p>	<p>👍 About 7000 men</p> <p>👎 Others were trying to join him but were still a long way away. If Harold had waited, he might have had 14 000 men.</p>
<p>👍 The Norman soldiers were well rested.</p>	<p>👎 Many of the men who had fought at Stamford Bridge were tired or wounded.</p>
<p>👎 William's troops stood at the bottom of the hill.</p>	<p>👍 Harold chose a ridge near Hastings, with a forest behind it – this gave him a strong defensive line.</p> <p>👎 The forest would make retreat difficult.</p>
<p>👍 William's army consisted of knights on horseback, archers and infantry.</p>	<p>👎 Harold had no horsemen or archers.</p> <p>👍 His foot soldiers formed a deep line, protected by a wall of shields.</p>
<p>👍 The Normans fought with swords and wore chain-mail.</p>	<p>👍 The thegns fought with swords and javelins.</p> <p>👍 The fyrd carried weapons like axes, clubs, scythes and pitchforks. These were simple weapons, but very effective.</p>

Now try this

Write a paragraph explaining the advantages and disadvantages of Harold's decision to attack William at once.

The Battle of Hastings

The Anglo-Saxon and Norman armies were the same size, but there were important differences between them. Both had advantages and disadvantages that affected the outcome of the battle.

Key terms

- ✓ **Housecarls** – trained soldiers who were also bodyguards to their lord.
- ✓ **Fyrd** – working men, mainly peasants, who were called to fight for the king in times of war. This allowed the army to be replenished after each battle.
- ✓ **Shield wall** – making a defensive ‘wall’ with shields, to protect the army’s line. Bands within the fyrd would have known each other well, making the shield wall more effective.
- ✓ **Feigned retreat** – pretending to retreat to tempt the enemy to follow so that they could be surrounded and killed. This was a well-known Norman tactic.
- ✓ **Mercenaries** – soldiers who fought for whoever would pay them.

Norman knights vs English housecarls

Norman knights:

- 👍 They were highly trained, heavily armoured and rode horses. They could launch devastating charges using their height to beat down foes.
- 👎 Horses were vulnerable to attack.
- 👎 The advantages of a cavalry charge were lost if horses had to run uphill.

English housecarls:

- 👍 A disciplined **shield wall** was very hard to break. Housecarls knew how to fight together and their axes were highly effective.
- 👎 Housecarls were vulnerable to cavalry and archer attacks if the shield wall broke.

Norman foot soldiers vs English fyrd

William’s foot soldiers were a mixture of Normans and mercenaries from across Europe. There were lightly armoured archers and crossbowmen and heavily armoured foot soldiers. Foot soldiers may not have trained with knights, making coordinated attacks difficult.

The thegns were well-armed with swords and javelins, but the fyrd fought with whatever weapons they had – clubs, axes, scythes and pitchforks. Harold had no archers.

The Battle of Hastings

Harold’s army was able to position itself along a ridge at the top of a hill. That meant that William had to attack uphill.

The battle lasted eight hours – a very long time for a medieval battle. This was perhaps because the two sides were quite evenly matched. There were different phases to the battle.

William’s archers were first to attack, but the archers had to stay out of English javelin range and the English shield wall knew how to catch the arrows on their shields.

William’s foot soldiers and knights were beaten back by the shield wall initially. The English **housecarls** did great damage to horses and men with their two-handed axes.

At one point the Norman army was panicking that William had been killed. William tipped back his helmet to show he was still alive.

The turning point was when the Normans retreated. The English broke ranks to chase them, weakening their line. The Normans were probably carrying out a tactic called a **feigned retreat**.

The shield wall was gradually thinned out. Norman knights then charged through it and caused great damage. Norman archers also became more effective as the shield wall failed.

Harold and his brothers, Gyrth and Leofwine, and their housecarls, made final stands at the top of the hill, fighting to the death. Harold and his brothers were killed.

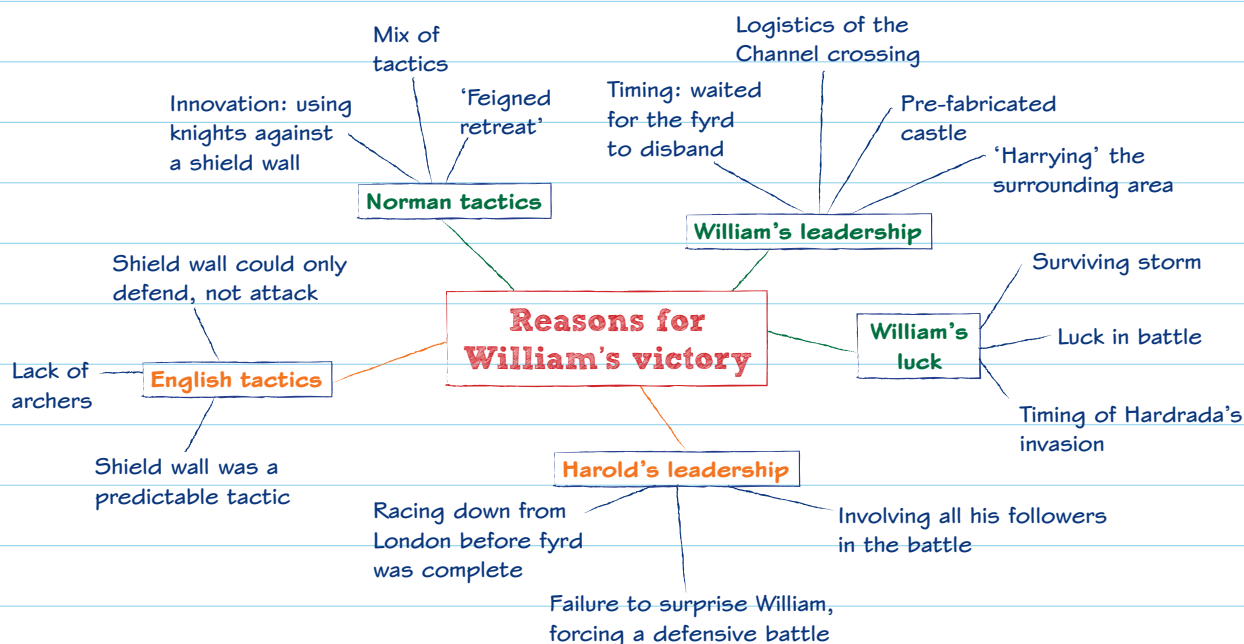
With Harold dead, the rest of the English army began to flee.

Now try this

Describe **one** advantage and **one** disadvantage of the Norman foot soldiers and **one** advantage and **one** disadvantage of the English fyrd troops.

Reasons for William's victory

Harold was ultimately defeated at the Battle of Hastings. Both armies had strengths and skills but the Normans were able to take advantage of Harold's mistakes and William's luck.



Battle advantages

Harold	William of Normandy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Harold was fighting on home ground: Wessex. The housecarls were experienced, disciplined and skilled warriors. The English had the best position on the battlefield: on a ridge at the top of the hill. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> William's troops were trained in tactics that the English had never experienced before, including the feigned retreat. His troops had to fight to survive: they would not be able to retreat or escape. William had obtained the pope's blessing for his invasion and he and his men believed that God was on their side.

Battle disadvantages

Harold	William of Normandy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The men of the general fyrd were inexperienced and lacked discipline. The core of his army was tired from fighting at Stamford Bridge and marching south. They may also have been demoralised by having to fight yet another battle. Harold did not have any archers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Having to fight uphill made knights and archers less effective. Although his knights had trained for years in their battle tactics, many of his foot soldiers were mercenaries who had not trained to fight in combination with knights. Knights had trained to charge against other knights: charging a shield wall was probably something entirely new.

Now try this

What do you think was the most important factor in William's victory? Write a sentence explaining your choice.

William establishes control

William had won the Battle of Hastings but this did not make him king immediately. Before he could be crowned, he had to take control of the kingdom.

William secures the south

6 William was crowned King of England at Westminster Abbey on Christmas Day, 1066. The atmosphere was tense and fighting broke out outside the Abbey.

4 He took the royal **treasury** (where the royal wealth was kept) at Winchester.

1 After the Battle of Hastings, William hoped that the English would surrender. However, the Witan chose to make Edgar Ætheling king.



5 He then headed to London, setting up camp outside the city at Barking. Meanwhile, many nobles became concerned about Edgar's ability to rule. In December, Edgar came to William to surrender the kingdom.

3 He then marched through Kent, looting, terrorising the population and building castles as he went, before taking Canterbury.

2 William took Dover, securing the route back to the coast.

Dealing with the English nobles

William wanted to show that he was the legitimate (entitled) ruler of England, so he tried to make sure there was continuity between Edward the Confessor's reign and his own.

William took control ...

Claiming all English land and giving the land of those who died at Hastings to his supporters.

Putting his closest allies in charge of the south.

Taking Edgar Ætheling, Edwin and Morcar with him to Normandy to discourage rebellion.

But he also ...

Allowed English earls and thegns who had not fought at Hastings to buy back their land.

Allowed English nobles to keep their positions if they submitted to him.

Kept them in comfort rather than having them imprisoned or killed.

Controlling the borderlands

William created three new earldoms (Hereford, Shrewsbury and Chester) to protect the Marches – the border with Wales. The Marcher earls had special rights and privileges. They:

- ✓ could create new towns to promote Norman colonisation of the Marches
- ✓ had total control: their sheriffs reported to them not to the king
- ✓ did not have to pay tax on their lands, so they could invest in defence
- ✓ could build castles as they wished.

Hugh d'Avranches, William FitzOsbern and Roger de Montgomery were followers of William and had supported him in the invasion. They became the first three Marcher earls.

Securing the throne

In March 1067, William returned to Normandy. To secure his throne while he was away, he took several precautions.

As well as appointing the Marcher earls, William put William FitzOsbern, his closest friend, in charge of East Anglia, and his half-brother, Odo of Bayeux, in control of the south east, both vulnerable areas.

How William attempted to secure his throne

William instructed his nobles to build castles on their land to subdue the local people.

William took key English nobles with him to Normandy (see above).

William's precautions were not enough to prevent rebellion, and he soon had to return.

See page 11 for more on the rebellions.

Now try this

Give **three** examples of ways in which William established control over England.

Castles

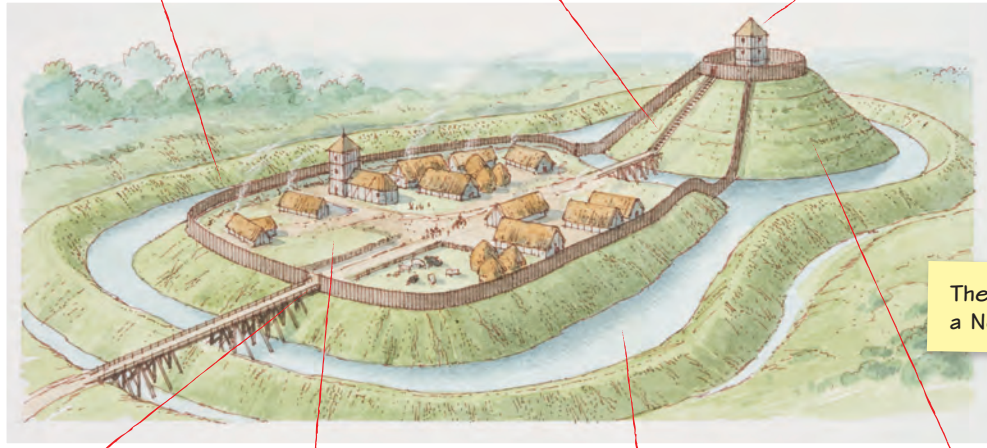
Everywhere the Normans went, they built castles – they were absolutely vital to William's control of England.

Norman castles

A palisade (strong fence) was made of solid timbers driven deep into the ground: it was strong and quick to build. Sometimes a double fence with earth packed in between was built.

Access to the tower was either up steep steps cut into the motte or, in some castles, up a sort of bridge.

A strong wooden tower, sometimes called the keep, provided a lookout point, an elevated attack position for archers to defend the whole area of the castle and a final point of defence from attack.



The key features of a Norman castle

Access into the castle was controlled through the gatehouse. Sometimes a drawbridge over the ditch could be pulled up to defend the gatehouse from attack.

The bailey was the enclosure below the motte and also protected by the palisade and outer defences, where the stables and barracks would be for the garrison of troops. During attacks, local people and livestock could take shelter here.

A ditch was cut that surrounded both the bailey and the motte. Sometimes the ditch was filled with water, protecting the palisade.

The motte was a large mound of earth, typically 5–7 metres high. Because it was earth, it was fireproof. With enough peasant labour a motte was quick to build. Most motte and bailey castles took between four and nine months to construct.

They were used to **garrison** soldiers who could suppress or deter rebellion. A network of castles meant troops could be moved to where they were most needed.

The tower was used as a lookout point, keeping the local population under surveillance.

Castles reminded the English who was in control. They were dominating structures that overlooked the surrounding area. They would have had a huge psychological impact.

The Normans often destroyed houses and workshops to make space for their castles.

Strategy

They were built in **strategically** important places, for example, to ensure that the Normans controlled towns, river crossings and the meeting points of major roads, and could move around the country easily

Why and where the Normans built castles: short-term reasons

Symbolism

Most castles were built with English forced labour, and the English were charged taxes to maintain them, adding to the feeling of Norman dominance.

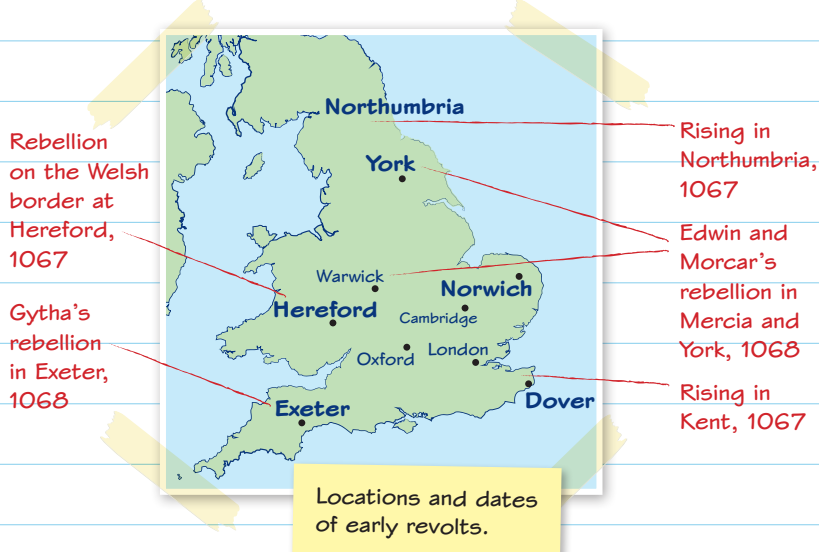
The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle describes the Normans building castles everywhere, oppressing the unhappy local people and making things 'always go from bad to worse'.

Now try this

Describe **three** ways in which castles helped the Normans establish their rule in England.

Early revolts, 1067–68

Despite William's early attempts to win over the English earls, Norman rule was deeply unpopular.



Reasons for rebellion

- Some English people hated having foreigners ruling over them.
- Many Norman lords did not understand local customs.
- The more distant regions were harder to control.
- Many families lost land and titles after the Conquest, which caused resentment.
- Some people had lost relatives at Hastings and wanted revenge.
- William demanded high rates of tax, which caused poverty.

Rebellion on the Welsh border, 1067

The first large uprising against the Normans was in Mercia. It was led by an English thegn called Eadric.

Eadric had lost his land to Norman knights. He joined with two Welsh kings and attacked Hereford, destroying the city. William returned from Normandy. Eadric was never caught and continued his attacks.

Kent and Northumbria, 1067

The people of Kent were angry about their treatment by the Normans. They persuaded a former ally of William's, Eustace of Boulogne, to attack Dover. His attack failed and Eustace went home.

In Northumbria, William's chosen ruler, Copsig, was ambushed and murdered. William allowed Copsig's killer to take over.

Exeter, 1068

King Harold's mother, Gytha, plotted rebellion in Exeter and challenged William's authority. She also tried to persuade the Danish king to invade England.

William was furious and marched an army to besiege Exeter.

The city surrendered after 18 days – Gytha and her family escaped.

The rebels agreed to swear loyalty to William.

William treated the rebels leniently, but he built a castle in Exeter and others around the south west.

Rebellion in Mercia and York, 1068

Several English earls, including Edwin and Morcar, had submitted to William in order to keep their land and power.

In 1068, they realised that their power was being chipped away so they led a revolt against William and several other English nobles joined them.

William marched into Edwin's lands in Mercia, building a castle at Warwick and allowing his men to terrorise the population. He then moved north, building castles at Nottingham, York, Lincoln, Huntingdon and Cambridge.

Edwin and Morcar again submitted to William, who pardoned them.

William decided that he needed to put a trusted ally in charge of the north. He appointed Robert de Comines to the job.

This appointment triggered the next big rebellion. See page 12 for more.

Now try this

Write a paragraph to describe how William tried to deal with these early rebellions. Why do you think he chose to act in this way?

Further rebellion, 1069–75

Opposition to William's rule continued between 1069 and 1075.

Uprising in York

January 1069	February 1069
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Robert de Comines is appointed as the new earl of northern Northumbria. Looting by his men triggers a rebellion in Durham: de Comines and his men are killed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An uprising in York: the governor and Norman troops are killed. Edgar Ætheling comes down from Scotland to join the rebellion. The Norman sheriff and his garrison are attacked.

- William races north with a large army and quickly ends the rebellion.
- William lays waste to the whole city of York and builds new castles.
- William returns south for Easter.

William was able to defeat the rebels in the north easily.

William entrusted York to William FitzOsbern while he went back to Winchester for Easter, to celebrate the festival as England's king.

The Danes attack York, September 1069

- King Sweyn of Denmark sends a large invasion fleet to England.
- The Danish invasion force meets up with Edgar Ætheling.
- 21 September: in the Anglo-Danish attack on York, 3000 Normans are killed.
- The Danes retreat to the Lincolnshire coast.

- William is in trouble. As well as the Danes and the rebels in the north, he is facing opposition elsewhere.
- New rebellions begin in Devon, Shrewsbury and Chester.
- As soon as William's forces subdue unrest in one region, it starts again somewhere else.
- The Danes bide their time, protected by marshland.

William's solutions

(1) Pay the Danes to leave England.

(2) The Harrying of the North.

(3) A symbolic show of power.

William had his crown sent to York and wore it to celebrate Christmas.

Hereward the Wake and rebellion at Ely

- Hereward had returned to Ely around 1069 from exile. He started a rebellion because he had lost his lands to a new Norman lord.
- In 1070 the Danes returned and set up base in Ely. The Danes and Hereward joined forces for a raid on Peterborough Abbey.
- Hereward had hoped to save the treasures of the monastery from the Normans, but the Danes took all the treasure and sailed back to Denmark with it.
- Morcar and his men came to Ely and joined Hereward. They defended Ely but the Normans eventually defeated them.
- Morcar was captured while Hereward escaped – but he was not heard of again.

In 1069, Harold's sons tried to invade the south west. They were unsuccessful, mainly because the city of Exeter refused to support them.

In 1072, Edgar Ætheling who had previously fled to Scotland sparked a revolt there, but it was easily put down.

Revolt of the earls, 1075

One further challenge came from the Normans.

Roger, Earl of Hereford (the son of William's friend William FitzOsbern) was angry at his reduced influence.

He plotted with another earl, Ralph de Gael, and the English earl Waltheof. The revolt was supported by the Danes.

William was able to defeat the rebellion entirely. Waltheof never joined in. The other two earls were cornered before they could attack.

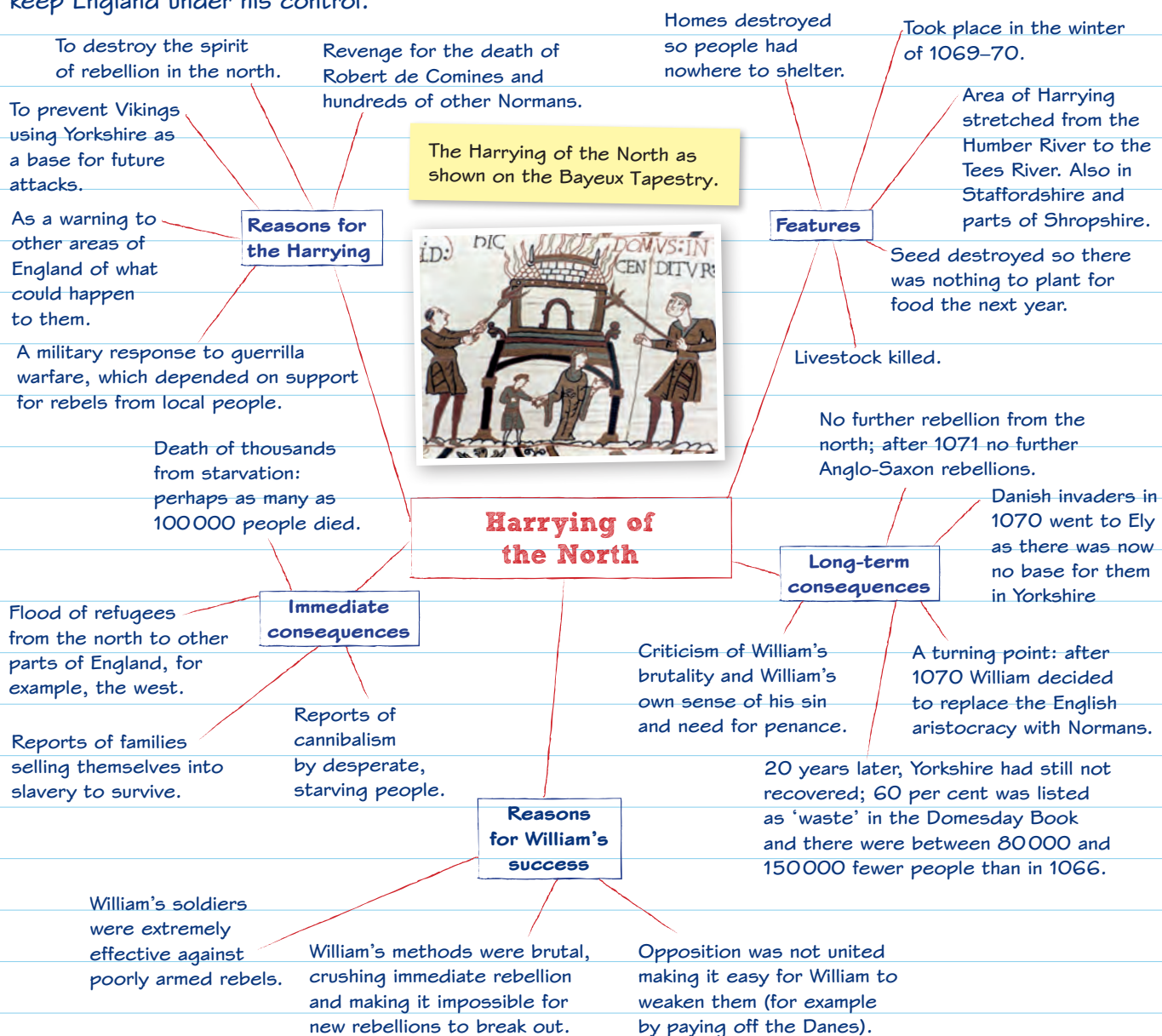
Roger and Ralph lost their land. Waltheof was beheaded.

Now try this

Write a short paragraph explaining how the way William dealt with rebellions changed between 1067 and 1075. Why do you think this was?

The Harrying of the North

The Harrying of the North in 1069 showed that William was prepared to take extreme measures to keep England under his control.



The Harrying of the North as shown on the Bayeux Tapestry.



Harrying of the North

Reasons for William's success

Criticism of the Harrying of the North

The historian Orderic Vitalis was half English, half Norman. He often praised William but was very critical of the Harrying of the North and wrote the following in volume IV of *The Historia Ecclesiastica* between 1123 and 1131:

For this act which condemned the innocent and guilty alike to die by slow starvation I cannot commend him. For when I think of helpless children, young men in the prime of life ... I am so moved to pity that I would rather lament the grief and sufferings of the wretched people than make a vain attempt to flatter the perpetrator of such infamy.

Now try this

In no more than **three** sentences, explain why you think William wanted to make the north uninhabitable.

The Norman dynasty

After the earls' revolt in 1075, William's position in England was secure. This was not the case in Normandy, so he spent most of his time there. In 1087 he was injured at the Battle of Mantes and died six weeks later.

Another succession crisis?

Unlike Edward the Confessor, William had three sons, but it was not clear which one should be king.

- 1 William and his eldest son, Robert, did not get on well. Robert was heir to Normandy, but according to contemporaries, William thought he was 'proud and silly'.
- 2 Instead, William wanted his second son, William (known as 'Rufus'), to rule England. Robert was very unhappy about this.
- 3 William's third son, Henry, was left money but no land.

Although it wasn't clear which son would succeed William, it was accepted without question that England's next king would be a Norman.

Odo's rebellion

William Rufus arrived in England in September 1087 with a letter addressed to Lanfranc, the Archbishop of Canterbury. The letter said Lanfranc should help William Rufus.

William Rufus was crowned king (William II) by Lanfranc on 27 September 1087, but the following year, Bishop Odo of Bayeux plotted a rebellion with six leading barons.

The barons held land in England and Normandy and did not want to swear loyalty to two rulers (Robert was now Duke of Normandy).

William Rufus found out about the plot. He bought the barons off with promises (which he never kept). Odo surrendered and, in 1091, William Rufus and Robert settled their differences.

England in 1087

- William I had ruled both England and Normandy, so he relied on his followers to keep control of his kingdom. He did this through land ownership and by introducing the feudal system. This gave the king very secure control.
- Many English people had opposed Norman rule and William had faced several rebellions. He was able to deal with this opposition using a variety of methods – such as concessions, patronage and intimidation – meaning that there had been no serious rebellion since 1075.
- Castles were a key part of ensuring Norman control of England – they maintained a military presence and were a powerful symbol of Norman domination.

For more on the feudal system, see page 15.

- Although there was some difficulty over the succession when William died, showing that the nobles could still challenge the king, it was clear that the Norman grasp on England was secure.

Find out how William secured his control over the country on pages 15–20.



Silver coins with portraits of William II (William Rufus) and Henry I.

Henry I

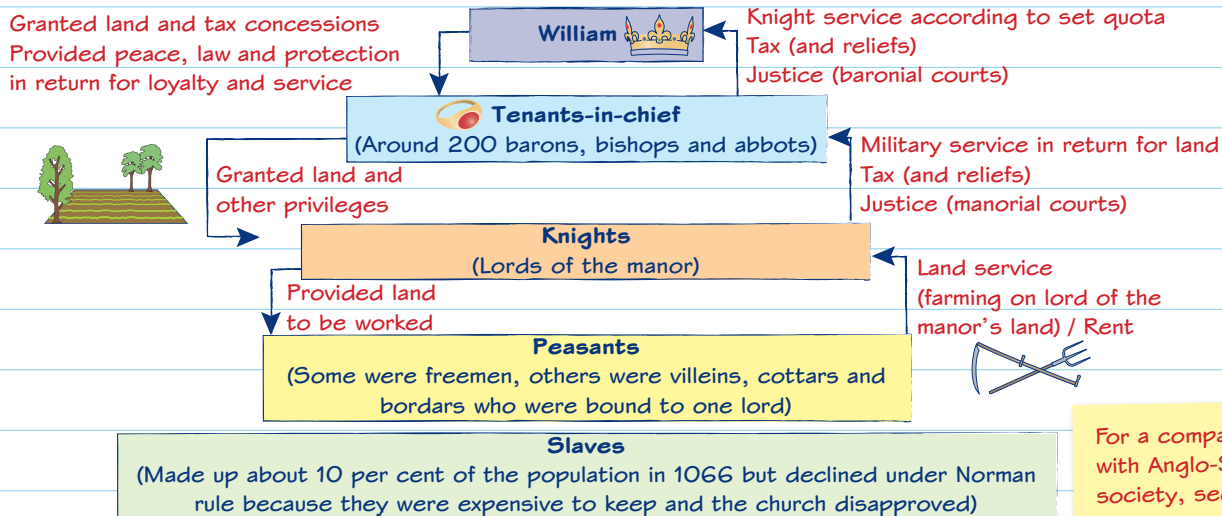
William Rufus was killed in a hunting accident in August 1100. His younger brother Henry claimed the throne – so quickly that he was suspected of plotting his brother's death (although there is no proof of this). Henry agreed with his brother Robert that they would both keep to their own kingdoms. However, he went back on this and defeated Robert in battle in 1106 – meaning that he ruled both Normandy and England, just as his father, William I, had done.

Now try this

What do you think was the most important method William I used to secure control of England for the Norman dynasty? Give **three** reasons for your answer.

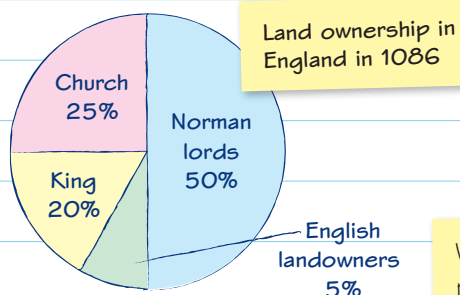
The feudal system

In Anglo-Saxon England, society was based on land ownership. William developed this system and made it more formal, thereby giving himself more power. This was called **feudalism**.



Changes in land ownership

In 1065, about 4000 Anglo-Saxon thegns owned land. By 1086, land ownership was more concentrated and most of it was owned by Normans. This meant that the land was in the hands of people William could trust.



Increased use of patronage

The feudal system – in which everyone depended on the king for their land – gave William enormous powers of **patronage**: controlling access to wealth and power meant that he had a very effective way of rewarding (or punishing) his followers.

William began to assert more control over his tenants. When a tenant died, he charged a fee, decided whether the tenant's widow could remarry, and controlled the land if there was no heir. This increased his powers of patronage even more.

Find out more about William's expansion of patronage on page 17.

William also learned from Edward the Confessor's mistakes – he made sure that none of his barons had too much land. This made it harder for them to build a power base and challenge the king.

Forest Law

William I loved hunting so he created huge hunting reserves, called Royal Forests. These forests had once been common land that everyone could use for hunting and grazing animals, but under the feudal system they belonged to the king. They were governed by **Forest Law** which meant that anyone caught hunting there risked severe punishments, for example, blinding.

Forest Law was extremely unpopular. The rich hated losing their ability to hunt for sport and the poor lost a vital source of food.

Key terms

- ✓ **Patronage** – controlling access to privileges, land or appointments.
- ✓ **Tenant-in-chief** – someone who held their fief (land) directly from the king.
- ✓ **Hierarchy** – a system where people are ranked by status.

Now try this

Describe **two** ways in which the feudal system differed from the Anglo-Saxon social hierarchy and **two** ways in which it was similar.

Military service

In 1067, William was ruling around two million people, most of whom were hostile. To keep control of his kingdom, he needed a supply of soldiers and the feudal system provided them.

Knights for land

- ✓ In return for the land they received from the king, each **tenant-in-chief** promised their loyalty and agreed to provide a certain number of knights.
- ✓ This commitment was binding – it was vital that the tenant could deliver what he promised. Some tenants-in-chief paid troops, others gave land to knights in exchange for military service.
- ✓ These knights were used to **garrison** castles (they lived in the castle to defend it), and they put down rebellions or fought for the king.
- ✓ The king's household knights acted as a bodyguard and the core of the king's army in the same way as the Saxon king's housecarls.

For more information on the role of housecarls, see page 7.

Knights vs thegns

Like the Anglo-Saxon thegns, Norman knights fought for the king in return for their land. However, there were some key differences:

- 1 The increased formality of the feudal system meant that knights always had to perform military service – usually at least 40 days – rather than being called upon when needed.
- 2 Performing military service was now a religious duty – knights **swore an oath** to provide service to their lords. By the end of the 12th century, there were 5000 knights who owed military service.

Securing the border with Wales

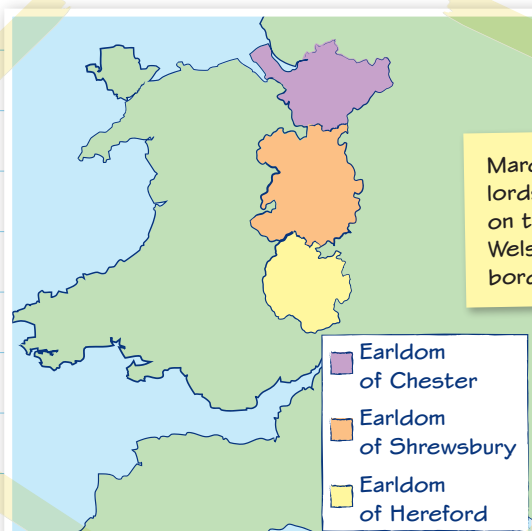
Wales was not a united country in the 11th century – it was ruled by five warrior princes. This meant that William could not conquer it in the same way he had conquered England, and the border between England and Wales (**the Marches**) was constantly under attack.

William didn't want any of his tenants-in-chief to become too powerful and restricted the amount of land they could hold. However, the Welsh Marches were an exception. He gave larger areas of land to his most trusted followers, the Earls of Chester, Shrewsbury and Hereford. These men became known as the **Marcher Lords**.

In return for protecting their areas from Welsh raids, the Marcher Lords could:

- keep their own armies
- build castles without William's permission
- make laws for their areas.

The Marcher Lords did attack parts of Wales and managed to claim some territory there, but they never had secure control over Wales.



Securing the border with Scotland

In 1072, William tried to invade Scotland but was unsuccessful. There were frequent battles with the Scots over the border. The **Prince-Bishop of Durham** was given similar powers to the Marcher Lords in order to protect the border.

The **Treaty of Abernethy** in 1072 made King Malcolm III a client king of the Normans – although the two countries were theoretically at peace, border raids continued.

Now try this

Give **two** reasons why William made the system of military service more clearly structured.

Changes to government

The Anglo-Saxon system of government was efficient but William adapted it to increase his power.

Anglo-Saxon government

The king: Medieval kings were expected to be strong warriors, as well as wise and fair. The king:

- made laws for the whole kingdom
- raised taxes
- heard the most serious legal cases.

The Witan: Anglo-Saxon kings were advised by the Witan – the earls, other nobles and senior churchmen. The Witan did not limit the king's power – he did not have to follow their advice – but they were still an important group.

Government by writ: Anglo-Saxon kings used to issue writs – documents that set out their orders which were then sent around the country. The documents were written by royal clerks in the **Chancery**. The earls had a lot of power to decide how their earldoms were controlled.

Local government: To make sure his orders were carried out, the king needed an effective system of local government. Each shire had a 'capital' where justice and taxation was overseen by a shire-reeve (or sheriff). Shires were divided into smaller areas called 'hundreds'.

Norman changes

Difference: William extended the king's power, constantly reminding his subjects that he had God's approval. He also increased his power of patronage, which gave him more control over the lives of his subjects.

Similarity: William continued to seek the advice of his leading subjects through the **Curia Regis** (king's council).

Similarity: William continued to govern by writ, and he kept the Anglo-Saxon Chancery.
Difference: He issued more orders than the Anglo-Saxon kings, and reduced his nobles' power to strengthen central control.

Similarity: William kept this system. The sheriff acted as the baron's deputy and as a link between the king and the shire.

Difference: He slowly replaced English sheriffs with Normans – loyal sheriffs were vital to maintaining control.

Difference: He also introduced new roles, such as castellans, who looked after royal castles and forests. The role of castellan might be performed by the lord or sheriff.

The Anglo-Saxons divided their property between their sons but the Normans introduced **primogeniture** (everything goes to the eldest son). Large estates were kept together, centralising power.

William introduced new laws called **feudal incidents**. If a tenant died without an heir, their land was returned to the lord, who could keep it, sell it or give it to someone else.

Inheritance

If a tenant died and his heir was underage, the lord could take over the land and keep the profits until the heir was old enough. The king owned the most land so he benefited the most – not only did he get more control over how land was passed on, it gave him an important new source of income.

Patronage

Patronage was an important way to ensure loyalty to the king. Disloyal subjects could expect to lose their land, or worse. Anyone wanting influence or land had to stay loyal to the king.

The feudal system meant that William could offer land in exchange for loyalty but he also made changes to government to increase his powers of patronage. The changes to the laws on inheritance meant that even after land was given, the king's favour was needed to pass it on.

Granting a sheriffdom ensured that the official was loyal directly to the king as well as to the baron he served.

For more on patronage, see page 15.

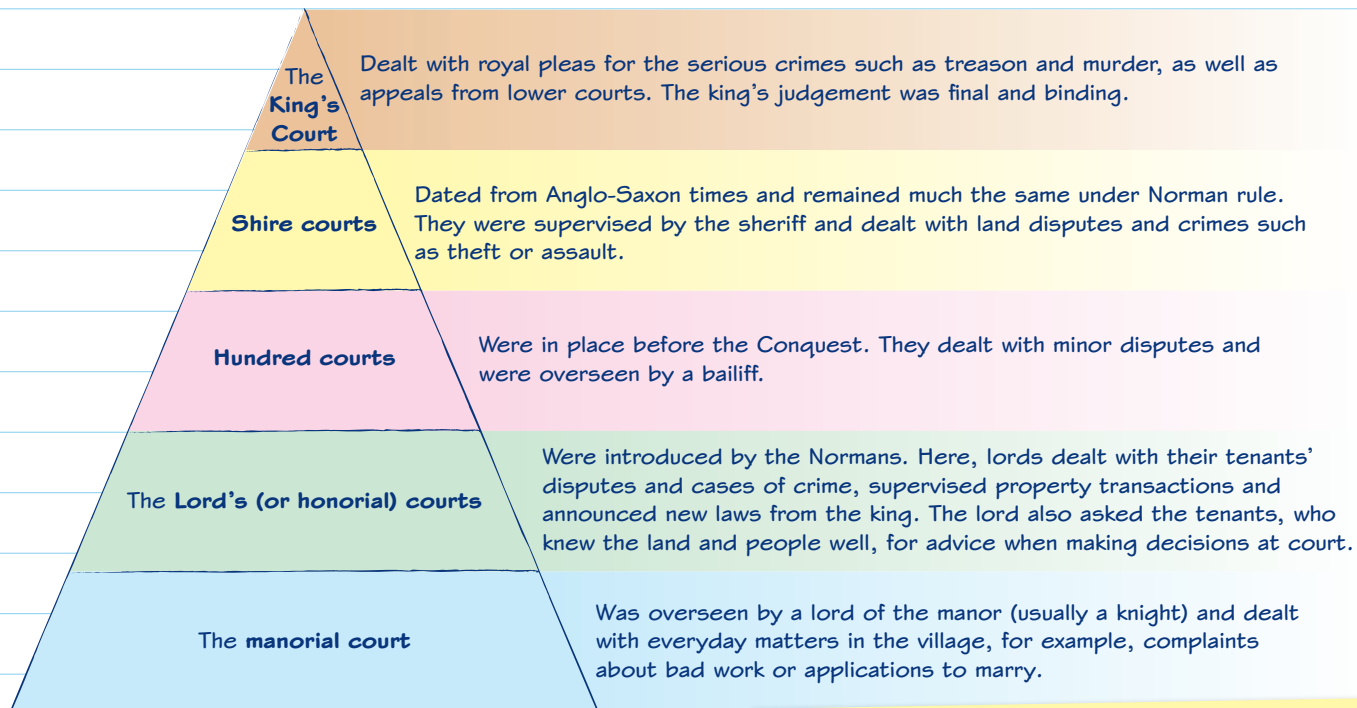
Now try this

List **three** features of Anglo-Saxon government that William kept, and **three** changes that he made.

The legal system

William kept a lot of the features of the Anglo-Saxon legal system. This was partly because it was an effective system, and partly because continuity helped to show that William's rule was legitimate.

How was the legal system structured?



The Normans also introduced new church courts – you can find out about these on page 27.

How was the law enforced?

There was no police force in medieval times. Instead there were a number of different roles and systems for making sure people obeyed the law. These were all Anglo-Saxon systems that the Normans kept.

Constables could arrest people and break up fights. They were also responsible for preventing fires. They could put people in the stocks for minor offences. The job was not well paid so most constables had to do other work as well. The Normans appointed more constables and gave them more powers.

Most towns had a **watchman** who enforced the curfew (rules saying that people could not leave their homes at night). They were supposed to catch criminals, but as they weren't paid, they often didn't take the job very seriously.

Norman law enforcement

There was also a system called **tithing**, where a group of freemen promised to keep each other out of trouble. If one of them committed a crime, the rest had to report him – or the whole group would be punished.

If a crime was committed, the person discovering it had a duty to raise the alarm. Anyone hearing the alarm had to help catch the suspect. This was called the **hue and cry** – anyone ignoring it could be fined.

See page 19 for information about trials and punishment.

Now try this

William made very few changes to the Anglo-Saxon legal system. Give **two** reasons for this.

Trials and punishment

The Normans continued to use the Anglo-Saxon system of trials, but standardised it across the country with the system of sheriffs and honorial courts. They also introduced some changes to both trials and punishments.

Trials

Anglo-Saxon trials varied across the country. Although the watchmen and constables were there to catch criminals, cases were usually brought to court by the victim, or by one of the victim's relatives.

There was often very little evidence, so the courts looked for other ways to decide innocence or guilt.



Trial by cold water.







Trial by hot iron.

Types of trials

Trials used by Anglo-Saxons that died out during Norman times	Trials used by Anglo-Saxons that continued to be used by the Normans	Trials introduced by the Normans
Oaths People who knew the accused person were often asked to comment on his or her character. To ensure that they were honest, they had to swear an oath (a solemn promise) on a holy book or sacred relic.	Trial by ordeal This was used throughout medieval Europe before 1066. The accused would undergo an ordeal (usually administered by a priest). It was believed that God would protect the innocent. In trial by cold water , the accused was dunked into water (which the priest had blessed). It was believed that holy water would repel a sinner, so if the person floated, they were guilty. For trial by hot iron , the accused had to hold a piece of hot iron. Their hand would be bandaged and after three days, the wound was inspected. If it was clean, they were believed innocent; if it was infected, they were found guilty.	Trial by battle This was introduced by the Normans for use in serious cases. The accused and their accuser (or people they appointed to take their place) would fight with pointed sticks or swords. Again, the belief was that God would protect the person who was telling the truth. It was not necessarily a fight to the death, but if someone gave up they were admitting that they were in the wrong. Someone facing a death sentence might prefer to fight to the death than surrender and be executed.

Punishment

Punishments used by Anglo-Saxons that died out during Norman times	Punishments that increased during Norman times	Punishments introduced by the Normans
Under the Anglo-Saxons, if someone was found guilty of a less serious crime, such as theft, they would have to pay compensation to the victim. In cases of murder, the victim's family would have to be paid the wergild – the value of the person's life (which varied according to their rank). If the wergild was not paid the accused faced execution. <div>  <p>Wergild.</p> </div>	Physical punishments such as execution (hanging and beheading) and mutilation (maiming). <div>  <p>Hanging (capital).</p>  <p>Maiming (corporal).</p>  <p>Beheading (capital).</p> </div>	The murdrum fine meant that if a Norman was killed by an English person, the local community had five days to hand over the killer or face a heavy fine. The fine was charged until the killer was brought to justice, making murdrum an effective deterrent – anyone attacking a Norman knew that their chances of being caught were very high.

Now try this

Explain (in one or two sentences) what the introduction of the murdrum fine tells us about relations between the English and the Normans.

The Domesday Book

In 1085, William commissioned the Domesday Book to tell him what land and property there was, who owned it, and what it was worth. It confirmed William's rule and Norman ownership of England.

Commissioning the Domesday Book

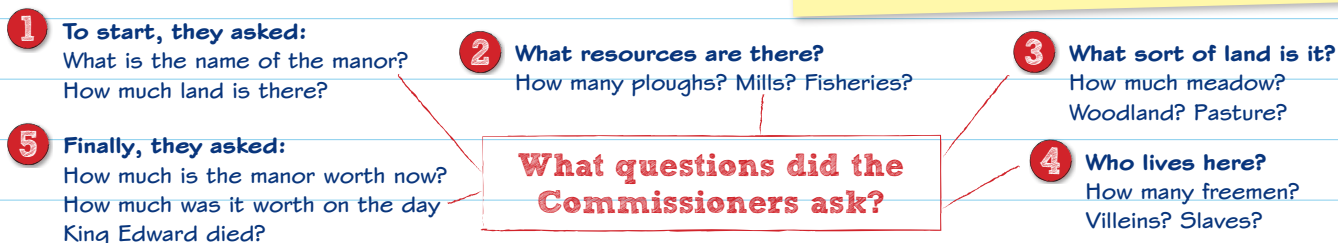
- In December 1085, William met with his advisers. He ordered a survey listing all of the land and property in England, and details of who owned it.
- England's 34 shires were divided into seven regions (or **circuits**).
- There were four commissioners in each circuit. They visited every manor.
- In total, the commissioners visited 13 400 places.
- The 'Domesday Book' is actually two books. Essex, Norfolk and Suffolk are in 'Little Domesday'. 'Great Domesday' covers the rest of the kingdom, except London and areas that the king didn't control directly (for example, the parts of the north ruled by the Prince-Bishop of Durham).
- The whole survey was completed in under a year.

Inquests on land ownership

There had been many changes in land ownership since the Conquest. Some people had written proof that they owned land, but others didn't.

Special sessions of the shire court (inquests) heard evidence and made final, binding decisions about who owned the land. This would have been a stressful process.

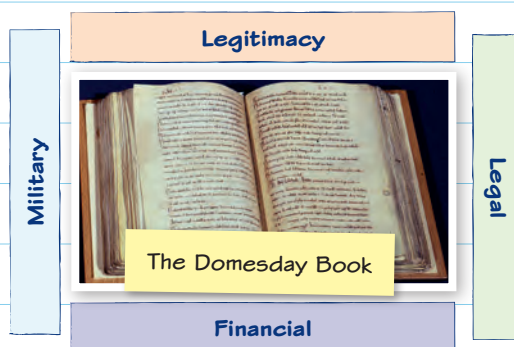
William did not call it the 'Domesday Book'. It was kept in the Treasury in Winchester, so at first it was called the King's Book, the Book of the Treasury or the Book of Winchester. The name 'Domesday' was given later – it means the Day of Judgement. It meant that what was in the book was final.



The uses of the Domesday Book

The Domesday Book established that the Normans were the legal owners of English land, and that William was the legitimate heir to Edward the Confessor. It also showed that everyone who held land did so through the king's authority.

The meeting which decided to carry out the Domesday survey had been called because of the threat of a new Viking invasion in 1085. Although the invasion never happened, it is possible William used the Domesday Book to see how many more knights his tenants could provide for knight service.



The Domesday Book contains records of claims by Anglo-Saxons that Normans had taken their lands. Since the Domesday surveys were made as fairly as possible, with key people from each hundred saying who owned what, the Domesday Book had a role in sorting out legal disputes.

The Domesday Book allowed the king to see where landholders should be paying more tax. The way it is organised also suggests that it was used to calculate feudal incidents, for example, to work out what fees should be charged when land was inherited.

See page 17 for more on feudal incidents.

Now try this

What was the main reason William chose to collect information about England in 1066 and 1086? Write a sentence explaining your view.

Villages

Day-to-day life in villages changed very little – most people were farming the land for a lord, and the work did not change even if the lord did. However, the Normans made several important changes.

Villages before 1066

Most people lived in the countryside and worked for a thegn in exchange for somewhere to live. The legal system was very much in favour of the landowner. The villagers grew crops and farmed animals, and were at the mercy of the harvest; a poor harvest led to starvation.

Each village was surrounded by large fields, which were divided into strips. Each villager was given a few strips to farm – this meant that good and bad land was shared equally. Villagers usually agreed together which crops to grow – wheat, rye and barley were the main crops.

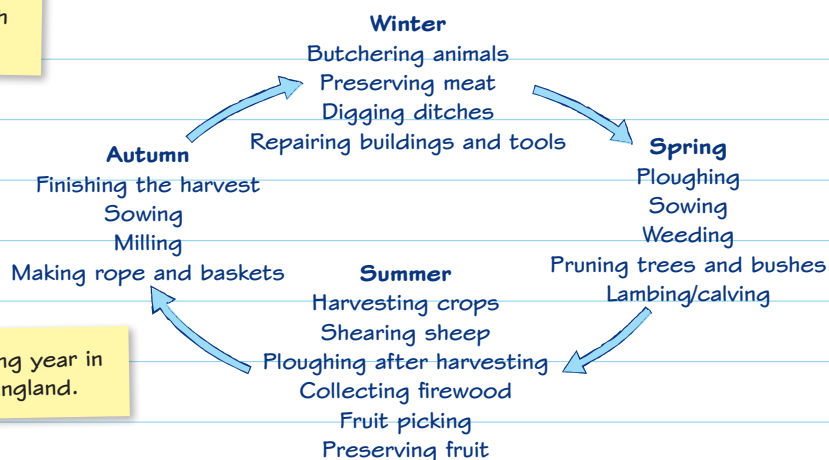


Ploughing and other rural pursuits (11th century).

The farming year

Farming was hard work all year round – the work depended on the seasons. This diagram shows the main tasks. Many of these jobs were done by the whole family.

The farming year in Norman England.



Peasants

Approximately 97 per cent of the population were peasants, but there were several types of peasant.

Freemen (the Anglo-Saxon *ceorls*) paid rent to the lord for their land. Sometimes they had to do work for the lord as well.



Villeins worked on the lord's land and were unpaid, although they were given a small amount of land to farm for themselves. They could not marry without the lord's permission and couldn't leave the village.

Bordars and cottars were also tied to the village. They were poorer and given less land by the lord.

Thralls (slaves) made up about 10 per cent of the population in 1066. Slavery fell rapidly under the Normans – possibly because the Church disapproved but more likely because it was cheaper to give land in return for labour than to support slaves.



Now try this

Do you think there was more change or more continuity in village life in Norman England? Give **three** reasons for your answer.