

Topic 2a knowledge organiser: Key question: Why did William become King of England?

Lesson 1: Who had the strongest claim to be the next king of England?

Key words for this lesson:

Monarch: The ruler of the country: The King or Queen.

Claimant: In today's lesson we will look at 3 people who claimed to be the next king of England.

Heir: When Edward the Confessor died, he had no son. A son was needed to become the heir to the throne and the next King. In 1066, **Edward the Confessor**, the King of England, died. He had no clear heir. As a result, three claimants emerged: **William Duke of Normandy**, (Normandy is in France) claimed Edward promised him the throne. **Harald Hardrada** was a tough Viking. He was already royalty and had the support of Tostig, brother of Harold Godwinson. **Harold Godwinson** of England: His sister was married to Edward. He was one of the most powerful men in England. When Edward died on January 5th 1066, Harold was crowned king the next day.

Lesson 2: Why did Harold Godwinson win the Battle of Stamford Bridge?

Key words for this lesson:

Chain mail: A suit of small metal rings sewn together

Battle-axe: A meter long Axe with a heavy razor sharp blade.

Housecarl: Harold's well paid, fully trained army

300 **Viking longboats** invaded the north of England. At the **Battle of Fulford**, the Vikings defeated Edwin and Morcar's army near York. Harold Godwinson's army had to rush to the north of England (300KM) to face Harold Hardrada at the Battle of Stamford Bridge. The Vikings were caught by surprise, however one Viking guarded the bridge to stop the Anglo-Saxons crossing. An Anglo-Saxon floated below the bridge and killed the Viking. Hardrada and Tostig were killed and only 24 ships returned, however Harold Godwinson heard that William had landed (his boats had arrived) in the south of England, he had to march his troops down to fight William.

Lesson 3: Who had the advantage between William and Harold?

Key words for this lesson:

Fryd: Warriors who fought for Harold. Numerous but not well trained.

Mace: A heavy metal club with spikes that could pierce armour.

Cavalry: Soldiers on horseback. Very powerful, fast and highly trained.

William arrived in the south of England with 300 boats with **Cavalry** (2000 horses) and a 1000 soldiers with a variety of weapons. For example, his foot soldiers had kite shaped shields, his **knights** rode horses and had **chain mail** for protection and had a **mace** (a club with spikes) to fight with. His **archers** could fire six or seven arrows a minute with their wooden bows. Harold Godwinson had 2500 trained soldiers called **Housecarls** who fought with axes but half had been killed at Stamford Bridge. He also had 6000 untrained soldiers called Fryd who fought with Javelins, swords and farming tools.

-5 Jan 1066 Edward the confessor dies.

-Harold Godwinson made King.

-September 1066 Harold Hardrada invades England but is defeated by Harold Godwinson.

-October 1066: William the Conqueror beats Harold Godwinson at the Battle of Hastings.

-William is crowned King of England on Christmas Day 1066.



Lesson 4: Why did William win the Battle of Hastings?

Key words for this lesson:

Tactics: techniques or strategies used in battle to help win the war

Retreat: Go move back to your base after attacking

Charge: Fast paced direct attack on the enemy. William and Harold's armies met at 9am on Saturday 14th October 1066 at the **Battle of Hastings**. William carried the flag of the Pope. Harold Godwinson was positioned on top of **Senlac Hill**. It was difficult for William to attack Harold's army from the sides over boggy land. William had to take his helmet off to show his soldiers he was still alive after a rumour started he had died. William had a **tactic** (plan) where his soldiers pretended to **retreat** (run away). It broke the Anglo-Saxon **shield wall** and Harold Godwinson was killed. Some say he was cut down by a sword, others by an arrow in the eye. William was now king.

