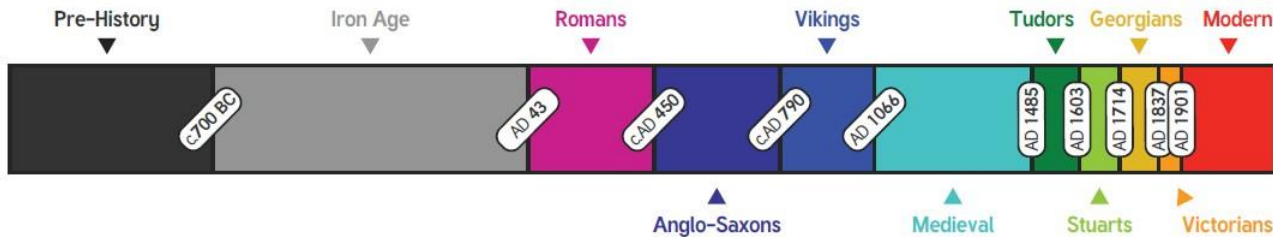


When was the Anglo-Saxon era?

It is believed that the Anglo-Saxon era began around 450 AD. They ruled for approximately 500 years.



Key Vocab

AD	Anno Domini - "in the year of our Lord". AD is used to show dates after the birth of Jesus.
Archaeology	The study of the buildings, graves, tools and other objects that belonged to people who lived in the past, in order to learn about their culture and society.
Invasion	One country attacking another to take it Over.
Settlement	A colony or any small community of people.
Kingdom	A country whose ruler is a king or queen.
Excavation	To expose to view by digging away a Covering.

Who were the Anglo-Saxons?

After the Romans left Britain, it became more open to **invasion**.



The Anglo-Saxons were made up of three groups of people from Germany, Denmark and The Netherlands.

The groups were named the **Angles**, the **Saxons**, and the **Jutes**. The Angles and the Saxon tribes were the largest of the three attacking tribes and so we often know them as Anglo-Saxons. They all shared the same language but were each ruled by different strong warriors.

Where did they settle?

Anglo-Saxon Britain wasn't ruled by one person and the Anglo-Saxons were not united. They invaded as many different tribes and each took over different parts of Britain and created **settlements**.

Each group of Anglo-Saxon settlers had a leader or war-chief. A strong and successful leader became 'cyning', the Anglo-Saxon word for 'king'. Each king ruled a **kingdom** and led a small army.

By around 600 AD, after much fighting, there were five important Anglo-Saxon kingdoms. They were **Northumbria**, **Mercia**, **Wessex**, **Kent** and **East Anglia**.

Sometimes they got along, sometimes they went to war.



Key Dates

401 - 410 AD	The Romans withdraw from Britain
450AD	Anglo-Saxon invaders arrive in Britain
597AD	St Augustine brings Christianity to England from Rome
613AD	Northumbrian kings rule over most of England
633AD	Lindisfarne monastery built
731 AD	Bede completes Ecclesiastical History of the English People
793AD	The Vikings attack and capture the city of York

Sutton Hoo

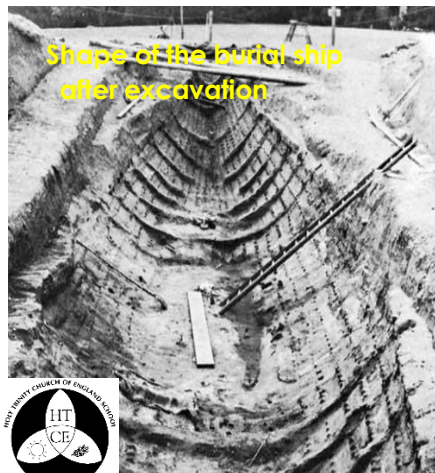
Sutton Hoo is the site of the grave of an Anglo-Saxon king in Suffolk, England. It is very important to historians because it tells them a great deal about the wealth and traditions of early Anglo-Saxon kings.

On the site, **archaeologists** discovered that a huge wooden ship had been buried there in the AD 600s.

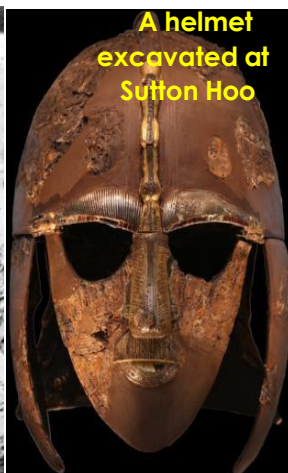
The wood had rotted away, but it had left an impression in the soil showing the shape of the ship.

Ship burials were common with people from northern Europe. A hut had been built in the middle of the ship. Inside it was a coffin and many priceless treasures. The Anglo-Saxons believed that this was the best way for a powerful person to reach the afterlife when he had died.

The treasures found by archaeologists inside the ship included armour, weapons, inlaid ornaments, jewellery, silver and gold tableware, musical instruments, and gold coins. The coins, from the AD 620s, helped to date the burial.



Shape of the burial ship after excavation



A helmet excavated at Sutton Hoo

What did Anglo-Saxons believe?

In Roman Britain many people had been Christians. But the early Anglo-Saxons were not Christians, they were pagans.

After the Romans left, Christianity continued in places where Anglo-Saxons did not settle. When the Anglo-Saxons came to Britain they brought their own gods and beliefs with them.

In 597AD the Pope in Rome decided it was time the Anglo-Saxons in Britain heard about Christianity.

He sent a monk called Augustine to persuade the king to become a Christian. Over the next 100 years, many Anglo-Saxons turned to Christianity and new churches and monasteries were built.

Monasteries were centres of learning. Monks and nuns spent their time in prayer. They also studied and worked in fields and workshops. Monks copied out books by hand and decorated the pages in beautiful colours.

Monasteries were the only schools in Anglo-Saxon England. Boys went to live there to train as monks and some girls became nuns.

Anglo-Saxon Days of the Week

Monandæg	Day of the Moon
Tiwesdæg	Tiw's day
Wodnesdæg	Woden's day
Dunresdæg	Dunor/Thor's day
Frigedæg	Freia's day (Woden's Wife)
Saeternesdæg	Saturn's day
Sunnandæg	Day of the Sun

Who was Bede?

An English monk called Bede lived in the monastery at Jarrow in Northumbria. He went to live with monks in 680, when he was just seven years old. When he grew up, he became a historian.



He wrote a book about the history of the Anglo-Saxons, called 'A History of the English Church and People'. He is now known as the 'Father' of English history.



This is the first page of Bede's 'History of the English Church and People'. It begins with a decorated letter B (from 'Britain'). The book was made in the 9th century.