

# Year 7 Topic 1 History Knowledge Organiser - The Middle Ages

<b>Medieval</b>	The period between 1066-1500
<b>Chronology</b>	Putting events in the order that they happened
<b>Century</b>	100 years
<b>Anglo-Saxons</b>	People that lived in England before the Norman Conquest
<b>Normans</b>	People from the Normandy region of France, led by King William
<b>Bayeux Tapestry</b>	An embroidery telling the story of the Norman Conquest
<b>Conquest</b>	Taking an area by using force
<b>Fyrd</b>	Local farmers that fight for Harold Godwinson's army
<b>Housecarls</b>	Paid, experienced soldiers that fought for Harold's army
<b>Cavalry</b>	William's soldiers that fought on horses
<b>Archers</b>	Norman soldiers with bows and arrows
<b>Pope</b>	Head of the Catholic Church

## 1 Britain before 1066

**Anglo-Saxons:** People who lived in Britain from the 5th century. They included people from Germanic tribes who migrated to the island from Europe.

**Heir:** a person who is legally allowed to take the rank and property of someone who has died.

**Witan:** King's Council, made up of powerful Bishops and Earls, helped the king run the country

**Edward the Confessor: 1042-1066**

- Edward became king of England in 1042 after his half-brother died. Before this he had been living in Normandy and the Vikings had ruled England.
- Edward married but had no children. It was not clear who Edward wanted to be king after him.

## 2 Potential heirs to the English throne in 1066: Who should become king?

**Harald Hardrada**

Viking King of Norway Vikings had ruled Britain before. Most feared warrior in Europe. Harald was supported by Tostig, Harold Godwinson's brother who wanted revenge. Fought against Godwinson at Battle of Stamford Bridge - Lost.

**Harold Godwinson**

Anglo-Saxon. Earl of Wessex, one of the most powerful men in England  
Harold's sister was married to King Edward. Harold was a brave and respected soldier with a tough streak. The Witan, wanted Harold to be the next king.

**William of Normandy**

Duke of Normandy, France.  
William came from a fighting family. He was a brave soldier. Edward's cousin. Edward had lived in Normandy from 1016-1042. Edward had supposedly promised that William should become King of England

## 3 Armies at the Battle of Hastings

William's army	Harold's army
His soldiers were well trained and well equipped. They wore chain mail armour which gave them much protection. His army was made up of infantry, archers and cavalry. His cavalry rode specially bred horses which could carry the weight of these horse soldiers and still ride at speed. They were the elite of William's army.	Harold's army was made up of professional soldiers and conscripts, peasant farmers who were forced to join the army and fight. Harold's best professional soldiers were the Saxon Housecarls. They were the king's elite bodyguard. They fought with large axes and round shields.

## 4. Why did William win the Battle of Hastings?

### Preparations

William - well trained and professional soldiers, fresh and well rested with lots of supplies.  
Harold - untrained Fyrd, tired and reduced in size following the Battle of Stamford Bridge.

### Luck

The weather changed when William was trying to Harold had to fight the Vikings first this gave William the advantage. The Saxons left the shield wall to chase the Normans down the hill. At a key moment in the battle Harold was killed.

### Leadership

William was very brave and led his men very well. He used clever tactics - pretending to retreat. William showed his face during the battle to keep his soldiers from running away.

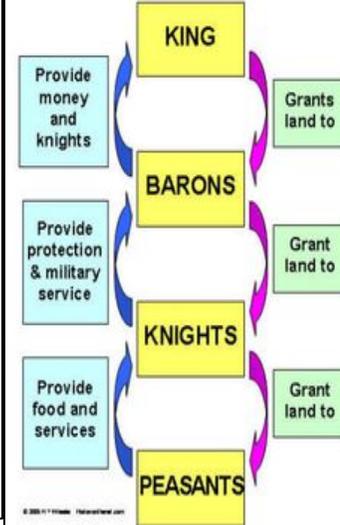
## 5. The Feudal System

After taking the throne in 1066, William has a few problems:

- He does not trust the English lords, who do not like him.
- He has to force the English to accept him as King.
- Many of the English are rebelling and fighting against William.
- He has to pay the French Knights who helped him to win the throne.

**Solution:** William crushes the rebellions and took the land away from the English lords and gave it to his supporters instead. William now has his supporters helping him to control the whole country.

## FEUDAL SYSTEM



## 6. Life for the average medieval person

- Life was very tough for those at the bottom of the feudal system
- They worked long hours from dusk till dawn on their farms
- They would not be able to leave their land as they were 'owned' by the knights and barons
- Their diet often consisted of breads, vegetables and stale meats. Ale was the drink of choice.
- They often lived in small, one-room huts made of wattle (sticks woven together) and daub (the binding 'glue' - often animal dung!) 
- Those higher up the feudal enjoyed diets including wine, red meat and fish.

## 7. Crime and Punishment in Medieval Britain

- The King was in charge of law in the land (the King's Peace) but he relied on individuals to enforce this:
  - Hue and Cry - villagers hunting for the criminal
  - Parish Constable - led the Hue and Cry
  - Sheriff + posse - King's agent in each county
  - Coroner - investigated deaths
  - Courts - Royal Court, Church courts
- Medieval punishment was often used to deter (put off) criminals:
  - Execution - hanging or being hung, drawn and quartered for treason
  - Fines
  - Public humiliation - stocks and pillory

## 8. Did the Middle Ages progress?

- The lives of women were very much 'traditional' - they cooked, cleaned, did housework and raised the children.

### Medieval Democracy

- King John I signed the Magna Carta (Great Charter) in 1215 after the barons threatened to rebel against him.
- Limited his power for the first time.
- The Provisions of Oxford signed in 1258 by King Henry III after barons led by Simon de Montfort threatened war. Created the first ever 'Parliament' in Britain