

1066: the Norman Conquest

How did William become King of England?

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

1 Watch and read

English Heritage — A Brief History of the Normans | <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xCCTJKsLZxE>

Watch twice. First, identify the topic. Then pause and collect evidence. Use the background text as well as the video.

Edward the Confessor died in 1066 without a direct heir. Harold Godwinson became king, but William, Duke of Normandy, also claimed the English throne. Harold defeated a Norwegian invasion at Stamford Bridge before facing William in the south. On 14 October 1066, William defeated Harold at the Battle of Hastings. Harold died, and William became king. The Normans later used castles to establish control over England. Winning a battle and controlling a country were two different challenges.

heir = héritier; claim the throne = revendiquer le trône; defeat = vaincre; army = armée; rule = gouverner; castle = château fort.

2 Check your understanding

1. Who were Harold and William? Give each man's title and location.

2. Put these events in order: Hastings / Edward's death / Stamford Bridge / William becomes king.

3. Why did William cross the Channel? Give a reason, not just a date.

4. From the animation, identify one military advantage of the Normans. Describe what you saw.

5. How could a castle help a small group of conquerors control a larger population?

6. The animation is a modern reconstruction. Explain one difference between a reconstruction and a source made in 1066.

3 Write a short paragraph

Write 6–8 lines answering: How did William become king, and how did the Normans secure their power? Use 1066, Harold, Hastings, castles and at least two linking words.

Useful phrases: In 1066... / William claimed... because... / After... / The victory... / However... / To control England...

Self-check: I have placed events in order, explained a cause and a consequence, and used evidence from the resources.

King John and Magna Carta

Could a medieval king do whatever he wanted?

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

1 Watch and read

British Library — What is Magna Carta? | <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7xo4tUMdAMw>

Watch twice. First, identify the topic. Then pause and collect evidence. Use the background text as well as the video.

John ruled England from 1199 to 1216. He fought expensive wars and demanded money from his barons. His military failures and disputes with powerful groups weakened his position. In 1215, rebel barons forced him to negotiate. John accepted Magna Carta at Runnymede in June 1215. The charter placed limits on royal power and protected certain rights. It did not give everyone equal rights: many protections applied to free men, and most peasants were not free. The settlement soon broke down, although later versions of the charter survived.

baron = grand seigneur; tax = impôt; charter = charte; seal = sceau / sceller; law = loi; trial = procès; free man = homme libre.

2 Check your understanding

1. Who opposed John, and why? Identify two grievances using the text or video.

2. What does Magna Carta mean? Where and when was it agreed?

3. Was the charter signed or sealed? Explain the difference.

4. Identify one protection concerning justice. Explain it in your own words.

5. Did Magna Carta protect everyone equally? Give one reason for your answer.

6. Correct this statement: 'In 1215, England immediately became a democracy.'

3 Write a short paragraph

Write 6–8 lines answering: Why was Magna Carta an important but limited change? Explain the conflict, one limit on royal power and one limit to the charter's protection.

Useful phrases: King John... / The barons opposed him because... / In June 1215... / The charter limited... / However... / Therefore...

Self-check: I have distinguished the king from the barons, explained one protection, and avoided claiming that everyone gained equal rights.

Everyday life in medieval England

Did everyone experience the Middle Ages in the same way?

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

1 Watch and read

English Heritage — What Was Life Like? Meet a Medieval Noblewoman |

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1k-LhWB4QaA>

Watch twice. First, identify the topic. Then pause and collect evidence. Use the background text as well as the video.

Medieval England contained very different ways of life. Lords lived from land and the labour and payments of others. Many peasants grew food and owed work or dues to a lord. Towns supported merchants and craftspeople. The Church shaped religious practices, festivals and learning. A noble household also depended on servants and other workers. Wealth, status, gender and location affected people's opportunities. Evidence about a noblewoman in a castle cannot, on its own, tell us how every medieval person lived.

peasant = paysan; dues = redevances; household = maisonnée; servant = domestique; craftspeople = artisans; evidence = éléments de preuve.

2 Check your understanding

1. Watch once. Who is presented, and where does she live?

2. Watch again. Note two activities, objects or household roles that you can actually identify. Describe each piece of evidence.

3. Use the text to compare a noble household, a peasant household and a town: work, resources or obligations.

4. Give one example of the Church's influence in everyday life.

5. Which group is missing or less visible in the video? Why does that limit what we can conclude?

6. Choose one difficulty and one opportunity in medieval life. Identify whose experience you are describing.

3 Write a short paragraph

Write 6–8 lines answering: Was medieval life equally hard for everyone? Compare at least two social groups and use two precise examples. Finish by explaining one limit of the evidence.

Useful phrases: Life depended on... / Whereas... / For example... / Peasants... / In contrast... / The video shows... but it does not show...

Self-check: I have compared groups, used specific evidence and avoided describing all medieval people as identical.

Background text written for this activity, drawing on English Heritage's medieval teaching guide and the supplied presentation, How hard was life for medieval people?