St Peter's Roman Catholic Primary School

History Class 4 Year A
Vikings vs Anglo-Saxons

Substantive Concept: Migration/Invasion
Disciplinary Concept: Historical interpretation

Summative Question: Were Vikings really brutal invaders?

What is this topic about? In this unit, we will find out about the Viking and Anglo-Saxon struggle for the kingdom of England and how England became a unified country. We will explore where the Anglo-Saxons and Vikings came from, how they fought for territory and power, and how their fighting ultimately led to the kingdom of England we know today. Along the way, we will also find out what life was like for everyday people living in Anglo-Saxon and Viking Britain, exploring things such as Viking runes and Anglo-Saxon stories like Beowulf.

During this topic, pupils will discover:

- How the Anglo-Saxons came to Britain and this period is often referred to as the Dark Ages
- What life was like in the 8th century before the Viking invasions?
- When and why the Vikings first invaded Britain.
- There are different perspectives of the Viking invasions.
- The Vikings settled in Britain after the first raids in the 8th century and gained control of the northeast of England.
- Why King Alfred was called 'Alfred the Great'.
- Some similarities and differences between Viking and Anglo-Saxon life.
- By 1066, Britain was a unified country under the control of a single king.
- The Battle of Hastings ended the era of Anglo-Saxon and Viking rule in Britain.



During this topic, pupils will work historically to:

- Use dates and appropriate historical terms to sequence key events such as the arrival of the Anglo-Saxons, the first Viking raids in AD 793, the rule of King Alfred, and the Battle of Hastings in 1066.
- Identify where people, places and periods of time fit into a chronological framework, including the Anglo-Saxon period, the Viking invasions, the Danelaw, and the unification of England under one king.
- Describe links and contrasts within and across different periods of time, such as life in Britain before the Viking invasions, changes after Viking settlement, and similarities and differences between Anglo-Saxon and Viking life over time.
- Recognise how our knowledge of the past is constructed from a range of sources, understanding that much of what we know about Vikings comes from Anglo-Saxon writers as well as archaeological evidence.
- Evaluate sources and make simple inferences, for example deciding whether a source shows Vikings as invaders or settlers and explaining why it might present that view.
- Discuss and debate historical issues, including different perspectives on Viking invasions and whether they should be seen as raids, migration, or settlement.
- Construct responses to historical questions and hypotheses that involve selecting and organising relevant information, using dates and historical terms to explain events like the Viking invasions and the Battle of Hastings.

Key Knowledge (linked to concepts). What children NEED to know.

Some Vikings did act as **brutal invaders**. They raided villages and monasteries, stealing treasure and sometimes hurting people. These attacks were scary, especially for the **Anglo-Saxons**, who were often the ones being attacked. Many of the stories we have about Vikings were written by monks, so they describe Vikings as cruel and violent. However, Vikings were also **settlers, farmers, and traders**. Many stayed in Britain, built homes, worked the land, and lived alongside the Anglo-Saxons. They set up towns, traded goods, and followed laws. Archaeological evidence, like houses, tools, and everyday objects, shows that Viking life was not always about fighting.

Prior Learning: Migration/Invasion: Britain's settlement by Anglo-Saxons and Scots (KS2), Changes in living memory – food (KS1); Historical interpretation: Significant Explorers (KS1)
Connectivity: Britain's settlement by Anglo-Saxons and Scots (KS2)

Key Vocabulary		
invasion	monastery	unified
settlement	interpretation	Danelaw
migration	kingdom	