

KS2 Anglo Saxons

Ideas to use in the classroom/ for visits

- To introduce a particular part of the topic or to provide a hook into the subject, run a reconstruction relay game with your class. You can find images of Anglo Saxon wall art, object, drawings in documents and sculptures online (try the British Museum and the British Library. After the game, ask groups what they think the picture shows. What would they like to know about it? Compile a list of class questions to shape the enquiry.
- Other ideas for using objects or pictures – odd one out, slow reveal (using the whiteboard).
- Bring the contemporary picture of Queen Emma and King Canute (gifting a cross to New Minster, Winchester) to life. Invite your class to decide what might happen in the picture and then act as the characters (you can choose only some of the characters, not all). You can find the picture on the British Library website, search for ‘Queen Emma, King Canute’
- Explore the stories of the two great archaeological discoveries of Anglo Saxon History - Sutton Hoo and the Staffordshire Hoard. Your students could write newspaper reports or record 60 second news reports of the discoveries. They could also put themselves back in time at the scene and creatively write about what they can see (e.g. the burial of the King Raedwald, the burial of the hoard in time of trouble).
- Investigate Saxon objects like the Alfred Jewel (made in Winchester) and the Franks Casket through the British Museum teaching with 100 objects website: www.teachinghistory100.org . This site contains classroom suggestions and resources.
- After research (e.g. through a site visit, after investigating the life of King Alfred etc.), hot seat a character in class. This can be a pupil (if they are brave enough) or the class teacher. Your pupils can then find out directly from your character about what life was like in Anglo Saxon times.
- Find out if your local museum or heritage site has an Anglo Saxon collection – both Winchester City Museum and Andover Museum have some Anglo Saxon objects. Winchester Cathedral has links to both King Alfred, King Canute and Queen Emma (wife of Ethelred the Unready and King Canute)
- At the end of your topic, ask your class (in groups) to argue whether Anglo Saxon times really were the ‘Dark Ages’ (you can have half the class say Yes, with evidence and half the class arguing No). Invite in an ‘expert’ to decide which is the best argument (this can just be a teacher dressed as an archaeologist, or find a tame archaeologist or museum Learning Officer to visit!).