

TURTON SCHOOL HISTORY DEPARTMENT – KNOWLEDGE ORGANISER – LIFE IN MEDIEVAL ENGLAND

Key events	Key people	Key questions/words
<p>Before 1066 England was very wealthy. It was ruled by Edward the Confessor 1042-1066. The most powerful family were the Godwins but the king also had close ties with the Normans in France after he spent his childhood in exile there. The North of England had a large Viking population.</p> <p>When Edward died 5th January 1066 it was unclear who would be king. There were four main contenders.</p> <p>Edgar Atheling was King Edward's great nephew and closest male relative. However he was only 14 when Edward died and was not chosen as the heir.</p> <p>Earl Harold Godwinson was the most powerful man in England and had served as sub regulus (deputy king) for many years. Harold had the support of all of the English nobles and the Witan, except his brother Tostig. They had fallen out. Harold was crowned as king on the 6th January 1066.</p> <p>Duke William of Normandy was King Edward's distant cousin. Edward had close ties to the Normans through his mother and (according to William) promised William the throne during the 1051 dispute. William was a successful and brutal warrior, having proven himself in many military campaigns. When Harold became king he began to prepare an invasion force.</p> <p>King Harald Hardrada of Norway was a powerful Viking with a large and successful army. He claimed that as Edward had no sons a son of the previous king should be chosen. The previous king was the Viking Harthacnut who (according to Harald) promised the throne to Harald's father Magnus. Harald Hardrada had only the support of the exiled Tostig Godwinson but was determined to seize the throne by force.</p>	<p>During the Early Middle Ages, nobles lived more comfortable lives than the lower classes (peasants), but this did not mean that they were always easier. Nobles had a lot to think about: governing their lands, keeping the loyalty of their workers, and staying in favour with the king.</p> <p>Serfs, the term for the lower classes during the Early Middle Ages, were very busy people, but in different ways. Rather than looking over other people and keeping order, they spent their time planting crops and making clothing for the manor (and everyone who lived there).</p> <p>The Late Middle Ages saw great losses of life, and so the daily life of anyone living during this period might have been focused on trying to eat as well as possible and avoid catching the plague. On the other hand, toward the end of the Late Middle Ages, after The Great Famine and The Black Death, advances in technology, art, and culture meant that a new world was open to the people.</p> <p>Religion played a very important role in shaping the Middle Ages. It influenced education, customs, morals, and routines of nearly everyone in Europe, and from time to time, the rule of a king and the laws of the church came into conflict with one another.</p> <p>The Peasants' Revolt (also known as the Great Rising or Wat Tyler's Rebellion) occurred in 1381. At the time of the revolt, the English population was dealing with the effects of the Black Plague as well as the Hundred Years' War. These two issues led the government to take unpopular steps to deal with problems that arose as a result of these issues. These steps led to the rebellion.</p>	<p>What makes a good ruler? What happened to William Rufus? What was life like for a peasant? Was life the same for everyone in a medieval town? How important was religion in medieval times? How important was the Holy Land to people of all faiths? Why did people go on crusade? What happened to Thomas Becket? Was John a good or a bad king? Why is Magna Carta so important? What was the impact of the Peasants Revolt?</p> <p>Religion, Church, Catholic, Pope, Monarchs, Nobles, Peasants, Feudal system, Crusades and Magna Carta.</p>