

Keystage history

Knowledge organiser

Vikings

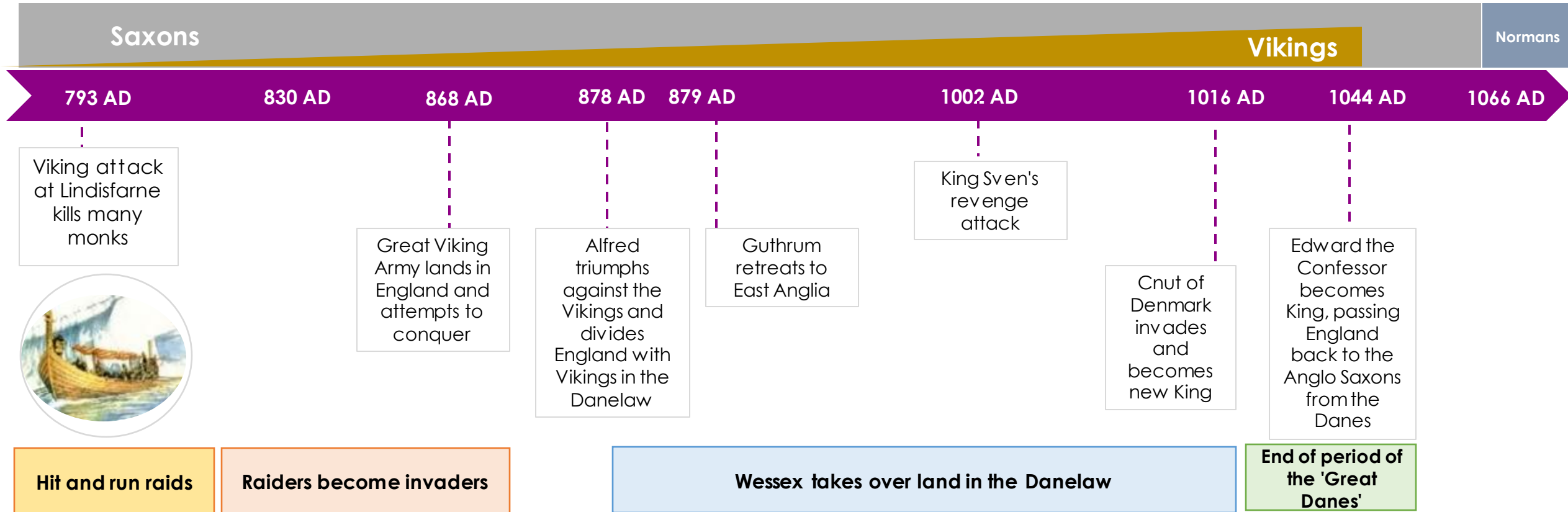
British History



Vikings

Why this period is important

Probably one of the most captivating of KS2 history topics, the Vikings present wonderful opportunities to capitalise on pupils' fascination and to do some in-depth work on using sources and interpretations in particular. Not only do pupils learn that our stereotypical view of the Vikings needs to be challenged they also draw on their knowledge of sources to help them to explain why the Vikings had such a bad press and how recent archaeological finds can be used to restore the Vikings' reputation as settlers, skilled craftsmen and traders, and not just raiders. Best taught alongside the Anglo-Saxons with whom they fought for control for almost two centuries, the period in which England as a nation emerged for the first time.





Who's who?

Alfred	Saxon king who decisively defeated the Viking army in 878 and earned the reputation as 'great'
Cnut	Ruled England from between 10126 and 1035 as well as Norway and Denmark
Guthrum	One of the leaders of the Great Army who was successful before Alfred beat him. He was later baptised as a Christian and retreated to East Anglia in 879
Sweyn Forkbeard	Ruled Denmark and was Warrior King from 986 until 1014 and for a few weeks was King of England

Key vocabulary

Danegeld	protection money paid by Saxons to bribe Vikings not to attack their lands
Danelaw	large part of Eastern England where the Danes settled in the late 9 th century with their own laws and culture
Heathen	person who does not accept a religion that says there is only one god
Hoard	hidden collection of treasure
Pagan	person who believes in more than one god
Runes	Viking writing
Saga	long story about Viking heroes, spoken at first but later written down

Top takeaways

1. The word Viking means raider (and they certainly did a lot of that!) but they were also traders and settlers, especially later in the period
2. They attacked England from Scandinavia carrying out raids on monasteries which is why the monks criticised them so much
3. For many years They fought hard against the Saxons for control of England but were stopped by Alfred. They then settled in the East with some becoming kings of England at the end of the Saxon period
4. They were highly skilled shipbuilders, taking them vast distances across dangerous seas
5. They did not worship a single god but made offerings to a large number such as Odin (Wednesday named after him) Thor (Thursday)and Freya (Friday)