

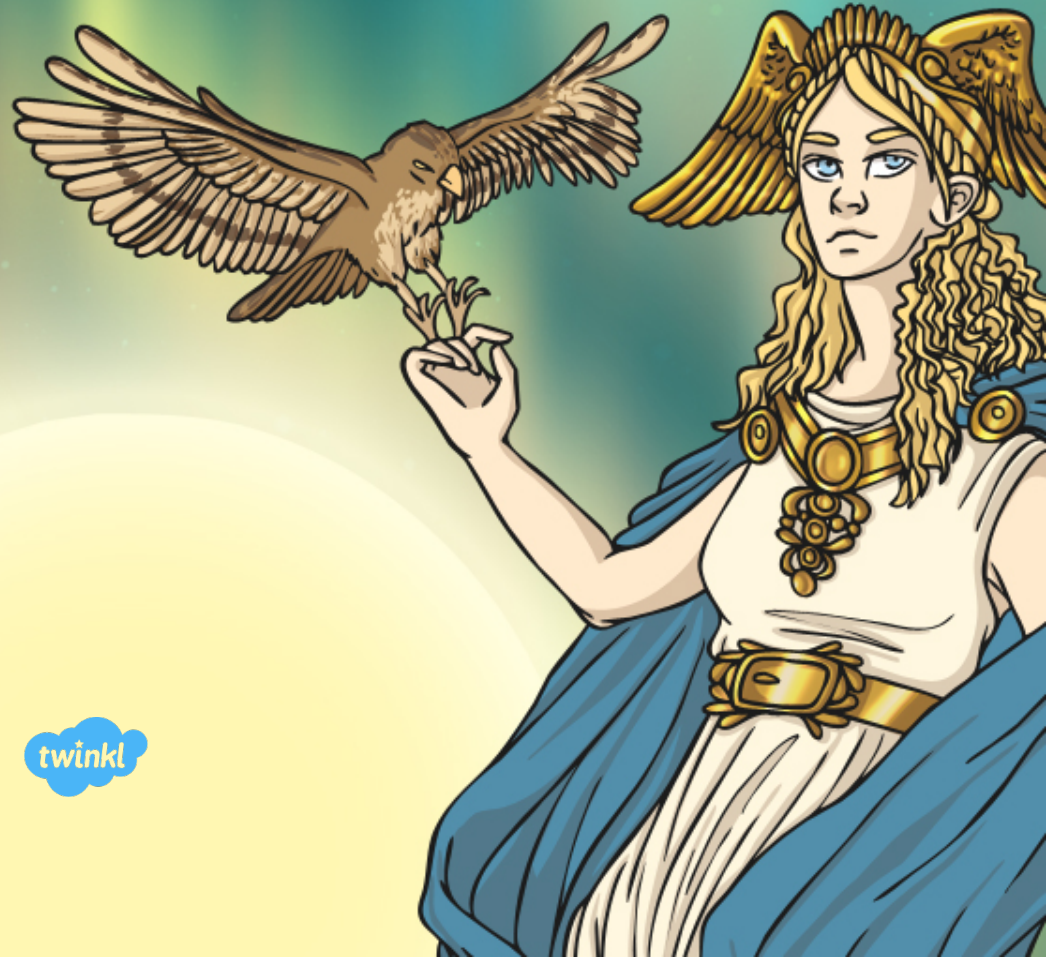


History

Anglo-Saxons and Scots

Anglo-Saxons and Scots

Anglo-Saxon Gods



Aim

- I can explain the religious beliefs and practices of the early Anglo-Saxon people and I know and can describe some of the gods they worshipped.

Success Criteria

- I can identify true facts about Anglo-Saxon religious beliefs and practices and use these to ask and answer my own questions.
- I can use my knowledge and imagination to describe an Anglo-Saxon god in detail.

Quiz Time



Read these statements about Anglo-Saxon religion. Discuss with your partner which you think are true and which you think are false and your reasons for believing so.

Be ready to feed your ideas back to the rest of the class.

1. The Anglo-Saxons were Pagan when they first came to Britain.
2. The Anglo-Saxons believed in many gods.
3. The Anglo-Saxons believed that magic spells and lucky charms would protect them.
4. The Anglo-Saxons thought that burning down crops would keep ghosts away.
5. The Anglo-Saxons believed in dragons and elves.



Paganism

The religion of the early Anglo-Saxon people was Paganism. Paganism is a polytheistic religion, which means many gods are worshipped.



Festivals

There were many Anglo-Saxon festivals throughout the year. During the festivals different gods were worshipped.

The people would pray to the gods and make sacrifices of objects and animals. It is believed that bonfires were common during the festivals and that people would dance around or over them and throw herbs and other offerings into the flames.

Why do you think the Anglo-Saxon people made sacrifices to the gods?

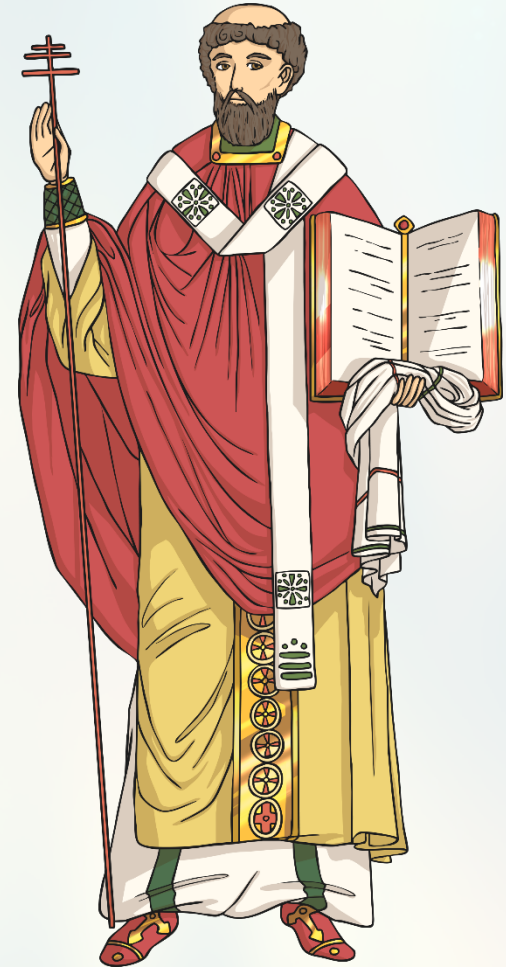


De Temporum Ratione

Most of what we know about the Anglo-Saxon festivals comes from a book called *De Temporum Ratione* (which means The Reckoning of Time). It was written by a Christian monk called Bede in 725AD.

In the book the Venerable Bede describes the Anglo-Saxon calendar and details of the different festivals that were held in the months throughout the year.

What festivals do you celebrate each year?



Modraniht (Mother Night)

Bede said that this was the main Pagan festival which was celebrated on the winter solstice (around the 25th December) each year. It marked the start of the Anglo-Saxon year.

During the festival Bede reports that the Anglo-Saxons would have a big feast, decorate their villages and houses with evergreen branches and burn a yule log.

What Christian festival does this remind you of?



Eostremonath

The most important spring festival was held during Eostremonath (April).

During this festival the goddess Eostre was worshipped and people gave eggs as gifts. The festival celebrates rebirth and marks out the start of the warmer months.

What Christian festival does this remind you of?



Blodmonath

Blodmonath was the Anglo-Saxon month of November. It means 'blood month' or 'month of sacrifice'. During the festival of Blodmonath, people made offerings to the gods by sacrificing their animals.

Why do you think the Anglo-Saxons sacrificed their animals during the Blodmonath festival?



Magic and Spells

The Anglo-Saxon people were very superstitious.

They believed in good and bad omens, lucky charms, spells and magic as they thought that these things could influence what happened in different aspects of their lives.

The Anglo-Saxons performed many rituals that they believed would protect them in this life and the next. This was especially true about the way they dealt with the dead. It was common to bury a person with their belongings as the Anglo-Saxons believed the dead person would need these in the afterlife. Some people were even buried with a slave or pet!



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Anglo-Saxon Gods

The Anglo-Saxons believed in lots of different gods who they believed represented and were responsible for different things.

The people prayed to the gods in hope that they would offer protection or provide them with the things they needed.

Today we are going to learn about some of the main Anglo-Saxon gods.

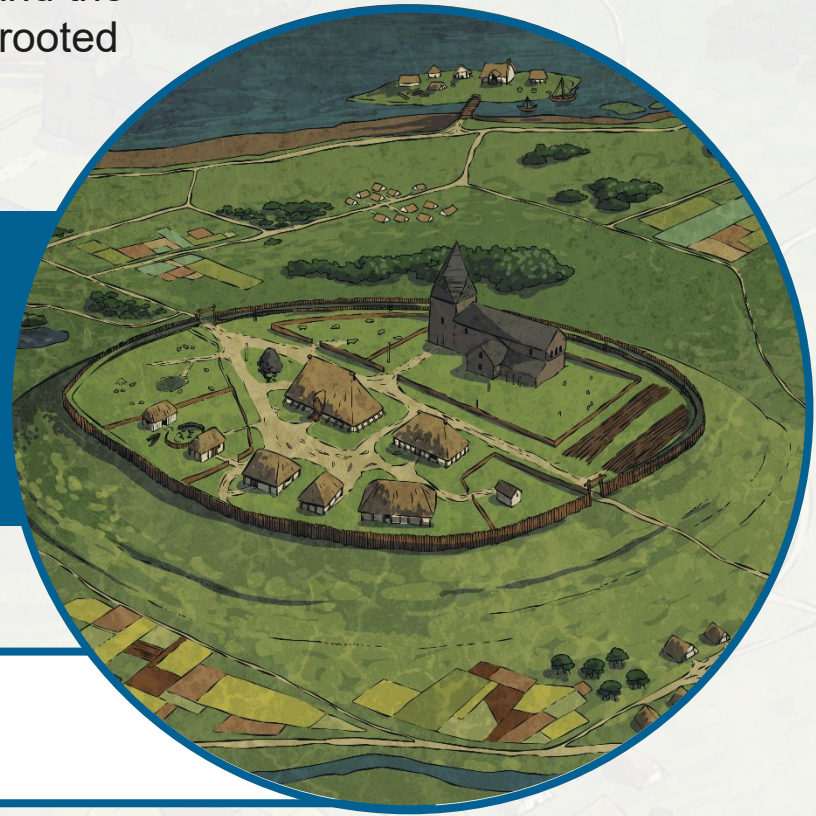


Where Did the Anglo-Saxon Gods Come From?

After the Romans left Britain, the Anglo-Saxons (Angles, Saxons and Jutes) arrived across the North Sea from Germany, Denmark and the Netherlands and with them came beliefs rooted in Norse mythology.

In the Norse legends, there were two groups of gods, whom the Anglo-Saxons called Ese and Wena. In time, Ese won over the Wena and the Ese became the rulers over the Wena.

The leader of the Ese, Woden, became King of all the gods.



Woden – King of the Gods

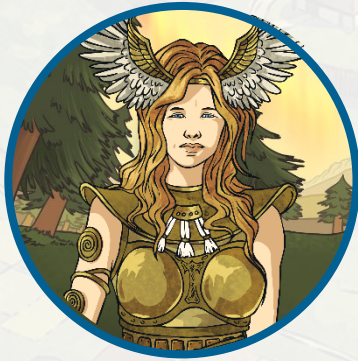
The Anglo-Saxons held the gods in such high esteem that four days of the week were named after them. These also link to how the Romans named the seven-day week.

Day	The Roman name	Roman meaning	The god after whom the Anglo Saxons named their days
Monday	dies Lunae	The Day of the Moon	
Tuesday	dies Martis	The Day of Mars	Tiw
Wednesday	dies Mercurii	The Day of Mercury	Woden
Thursday	dies Iovis	The Day of Jupiter	Thuner
Friday	dies Veneris	The Day of Venus	Frige
Saturday	dies Saturni	The Day of Saturn	
Sunday	dies Solis	The Day of The Sun	

Find out more: Look up the French words for days of the week, what you notice?

Meet the Gods

Click on a god or goddess to find out more about them.



More Gods

Woden – King of the Gods

Name: Woden

Nickname: Grim

Jobs: chief of the gods, god of war

Family: husband of Frige, father of Thunor and Bealdor

Sacred Animals: wolf, raven

Sacred Plant: ash tree

Equivalent Roman God: Mercury

Equivalent Norse God: Odin

Sacred Weapon: spear

Characteristics

Woden was sometimes shown with one eye, two pet wolves and a horse with eight legs.



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Frige – Goddess of the Home

Name: Frige

Jobs: goddess of the home, marriage, childbirth, Earth and harvest

Family: married to Woden, mother of Thunor and Bealdor

Sacred Animal: stork

Sacred Star Constellation: Orion's Belt

Sacred Tool: spinning wheel

Equivalent Norse God: Frigg (married to Odin)

Equivalent Roman God: Venus



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Thunor – God of Thunder

Name: Thunor

Job: god of storms, thunder and lightning

Family: son of Woden

Sacred Animal: goat

Sacred Plant: oak tree

Sacred Weapon: hammer

Equivalent Norse God: Thor

Equivalent Roman God: Jupiter

Characteristics

Thunor was often depicted on a chariot pulled by goats.



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Freo – Goddess of Love

Name: Freo

Job: goddess of love

Family: sister of Ingui

Sacred Animals: cat, boar

Equivalent Norse God: Freya

Equivalent Roman God: Venus

Characteristics

Freo wore a magic cloak of falcon feathers and a necklace called 'Brisingamen'.



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Eostre – Goddess of Spring

Name: Eostre

Job: goddess of spring, goddess of rebirth

Sacred Animal: hare

Sacred Symbol: egg

Equivalent Norse God: Austr

Equivalent Roman God: Aurora

Special Month: April
(around where Easter is now)



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Tiw – God of War

Name: Tiw

Job: god of war, justice and a sky god

Sacred Animal: wolf

Equivalent Norse God: Tyr

Equivalent Roman God: Mars



Characteristics

Tiw was often shown as having only one hand.

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Bealdor – God of Light

Name: Bealdor

Job: god of light

Family: son of Woden and Frige

Equivalent Norse God: Baldr

Equivalent Roman God: Apollo



Characteristics

He gave off light from his good looks, generosity and goodness.

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Other Gods and Goddesses



Name: Hretha

Job: goddess of fame, goddess of war

Special Month: March

Places: The names of places beginning with Rad, Red or Read are probably after her.

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The Arrival of Christianity

The Romans did introduce Christianity to Britain but the Anglo-Saxons mainly kept their pagan beliefs.

Later, in AD 597 the pope in Rome sent a missionary (someone who promotes a religion in another country) to travel to Britain to spread the word of Christianity and help convert people to the religion.

This missionary was a monk named Augustine. He was successful in converting Ethelbert, the King of Kent, to Christianity and King Ethelbert even built Augustine a Church at Canterbury.

Augustine became the first Archbishop of Canterbury and the one named as the founder of the Church of England.



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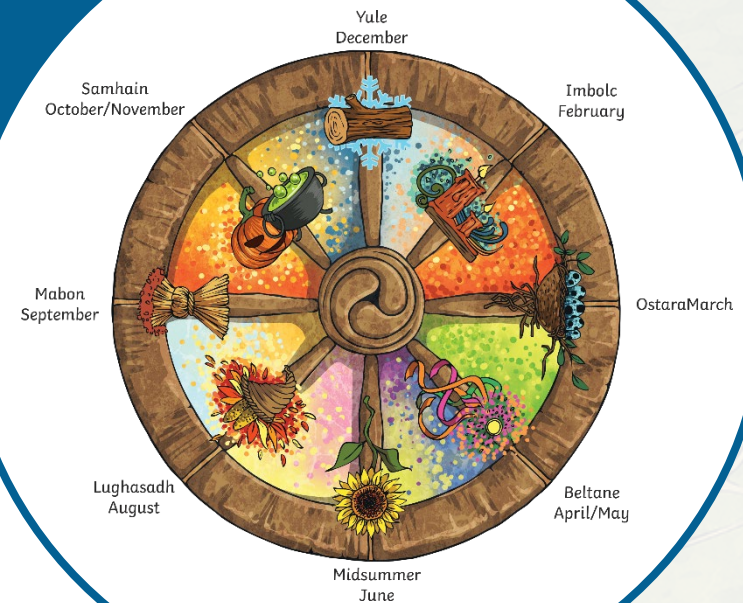
The Arrival of Christianity

The Anglo-Saxons, just like most communities and religions, celebrated festivals during the year.

Anglo-Saxon festivals align with similar Christian festivals and all fit with the changing seasons. Significant points in the year were the summer and winter solstices (near when we find Christmas) and Eostre in the springtime when things started to grow again – when Easter is now.

Find out more:

Look at this pagan 'wheel of the year' and see how it lines up with Christian festivals and the seasons.








Your task:

- Research questions and answers to create a quiz to show your understanding of the Anglo-Saxon Gods and religion.
- One star: Use the example questions to start your sheet off (remember to research the answers).
- Two star: Use the questions on the sheet to give you ideas. Label your questions and research your answers. (Focus on a least 2 different Gods).
- Three star: Research questions and answers for your quiz you can use questions about any of the Gods or things to do with Anglo-Saxon religion

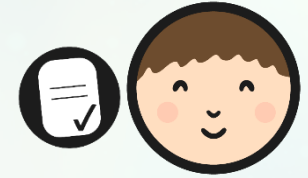
Extension:

Decorate and cut out your cards and stick them in your book.

Anglo-Saxon Religion and Gods Quiz	
 	<p>Anglo-Saxon Religion and Gods Quiz</p> <p>Question 1</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>Anglo-Saxon Religion and Gods Quiz</p> <p>Question 2</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	 <p>Anglo-Saxon Religion and Gods Quiz</p> <p>Question 3</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>Anglo-Saxon Religion and Gods Quiz</p> <p>Question 4</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	 <p>Anglo-Saxon Religion and Gods Quiz</p> <p>Question 5</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>Anglo-Saxon Religion and Gods Quiz</p> <p>Question 6</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	 <p>Anglo-Saxon Religion and Gods Quiz</p> <p>Question 7</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>

http://www.earlybritishkingdoms.com/kids/pagan_gods.html

Great Gods Debate



You are going to imagine you are one of the Anglo-Saxon gods you have been learning about. Use the Great Gods Questions Activity Sheet to help you prepare some information about your god which you will present to the rest of the class later.

You should use your knowledge about the god and also your own imagination to present the information in an interesting and creative way. At the end of the presentation everyone can discuss which gods they think are the most powerful or memorable.



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