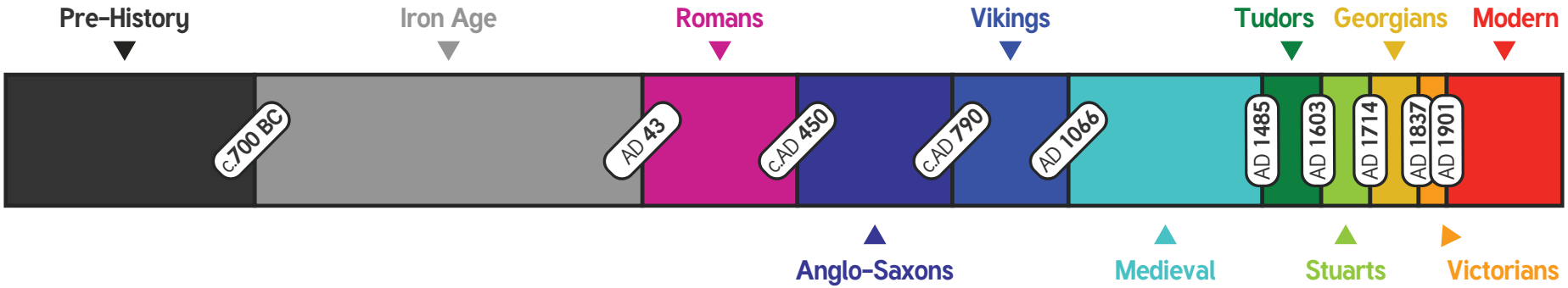
LKS2

The Anglo – Saxons

History

When was the Anglo-Saxon era?

It is believed that the Anglo-Saxon era began around 450 AD. They ruled for approximately 500 years.

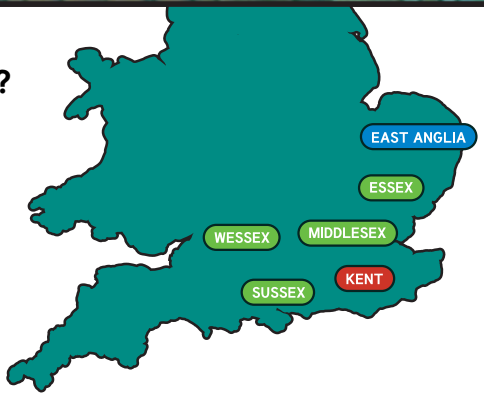


Who were the Anglo-Saxons?

The Anglo-Saxons were made up of three groups of people from Germany, Denmark and The Netherlands. The groups were named the **Angles**, the **Saxons**, and the **Jutes**.
The Angles and the Saxon tribes were the largest of the three attacking tribes and so we often know them as Anglo-Saxons. They all shared the same language but were each ruled by different strong warriors.



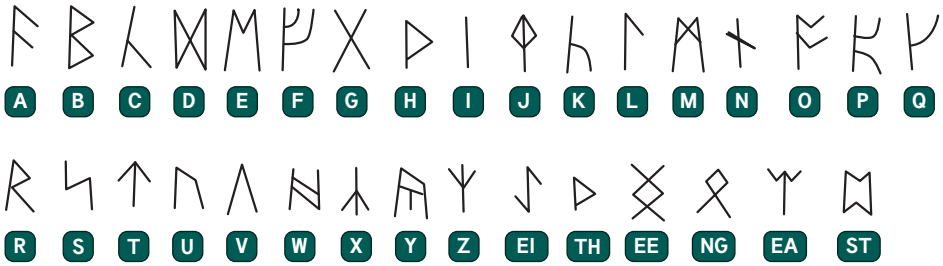
Where did they settle?



The Jutes settled mainly in Kent. However, they did not call themselves 'the Jutes', they called themselves 'the Kentings' because they lived in Kent.
The Angles settled in East Anglia.
The Saxons settled in areas of Essex (East Saxons), Sussex (South Saxons), Middlesex (Middle Saxons), and Wessex (West Saxons).

How did Anglo-Saxons write?

The Anglo-Saxons didn't use the same alphabet that we are used to. They had their own called runes.



Anglo-Saxon Kings

There were many famous Kings in the Anglo-Saxon era. However, the early Anglo-Saxon Britain wasn't usually ruled by one person and the Anglo-Saxons were not united. They formed different tribes and each tribe took over different parts of Britain as shown in the map. Each tribe had a strong and successful leader who they called 'cyning', which is the Anglo-Saxon word for 'king'. Each king ruled a kingdom and led a small army. From time to time, the strongest king would claim to be 'bretwalda', which meant ruler of all Britain.

Where did the Anglo-Saxons live?

They mainly built their houses from wood and their roofs were usually made from thatched straw. They didn't have windows with glass. Windows were usually thin, long slits in the wood. This let the light in but also let in the wind and the rain.







Alfred the Great

There were many famous Anglo-Saxon kings, but the most famous of all was Alfred. Alfred the Great is the only British king to have 'the Great' after their name. The coins used by the Anglo Saxons referred to him as 'King of the English'. Many believe that he was the first true King of England. Alfred made good laws and believed education was important. He had books translated from Latin into English, so people could read them. He also told monks to begin writing the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. To help protect his kingdom from Viking attacks, Alfred built forts and walled towns known as 'burhs'. We now know these as boroughs.