

Anglo-Saxon Period 449-1066 A.D.

- I. Prehistory
 - a. Tribes:
 - i. Celts-original inhabitants
 - ii. Brythons, Gaels (2 tribes)
 - b. Characteristics:
 - i. Tall, red-haired, farmers, traders, craftsmen, Romantic, artisans, and courts
 - c. Architecture:
 - i. Stonehenge- Druid place of worship, sacrifice
 - d. Religion:
 - i. Druids, oak tree, mistletoe, human sacrifice

- II. Romans- invaded 55 B.C. (Julius Caesar invades with the aim of conquest) (400 AD Romans invade again)
 - a. Architecture:
 - i. Hadrian's Wall (120s and 130s AD)
 - ii. Civilization on one side and barbarians on the other
 - b. Effects:
 - i. Highways, public baths, words, Christianity
 - ii. Celts lost ability to defend themselves
 - c. Folklore:
 - i. St. Patrick- drove snakes out of Ireland
 - ii. St. George- dragon

- III. Germanic Tribes- invaded in 5th century
 - a. Angles:
 - i. The name "England" came from the name of their tribe
 - b. Saxons
 - c. Jutes

- IV. Vikings (Danes)- attacked Britain between 8th and 12th centuries
 - a. Raided and pillaged but also engaged in trade

- V. Anglo-Saxon Daily Life
 - a. Characteristics:
 - i. Loyal, courageous, generous, warlike
 - ii. Mead Hall -like a pub/eating and celebrations (MEN only); no utensils, scraps thrown onto the floor to dogs
 - iii. Main Drink -MEAD (fermented honey and grain wine)
 - b. Entertainment:
 - i. Scop – storyteller who recited poetry and stories for entertainment
 - ii. Gleemen –singers
 - iii. Riddles
 - iv. Boasting
 - v. Contests of Strength
 - c. Games and Crafts:
 - i. A sophisticated people who developed board games and fine jewelry and pottery

VI. Anglo-Saxon Religion

- a. Paganism: Practiced between 5th-8th centuries
 - i. Tiw (Tuesday)- darkness, war
 - ii. Woden (Wednesday)- Chief god, god of war
 - iii. Thunor (Thursday)- thunder, sky
 - iv. Frige (Friday)- home, love, festivity
 - v. Daeg- days of week in English come from names of gods/goddesses
 - vi. Wyrð- fate, the unknown
 - vii. Valhalla- afterlife
- b. Christianity: Christianization began in the 6th century
 - i. 597 -Pope Gregory sent St. Augustine to England-- King Ethelbert converted
 - ii. 871-899: Christian King Alfred the Great
 1. United the kingdoms
 2. Established code of law
 3. Defended the country against Viking conquest
 - iii. 1066 A. D. Battle of Hastings- invasion of England by William the Conqueror of Normandy/ marked the end of the Anglo-Saxon period

VII. Anglo-Saxon Code of Justice

- a. Folk moots- town meeting where issues were publicly discussed
 - i. "Moot points"
- b. *Wergild*- restitution payment for stealing property or injuring/ killing someone-or blood revenge

VIII. Structure of Anglo-Saxon Society -Feudalism

- a. King- Chosen by Witan
- b. Earls- appointed by King
- c. Freeman- Thaners (soldier), Athelings, Barons
- d. Churls- Bonded men, worked land
- e. Thralls- slaves

IX. Anglo-Saxon Language

- a. Old English:
 1. Spoke an archaic form of English, closer to German and Icelandic than the English we know today
 1. Many people mistakenly call Shakespeare "old English," but in fact, the language of Shakespeare is MODERN English because we can understand most of it today whereas old English is completely foreign to us.
- b. Runic Alphabet:
 - i. The Anglo-Saxon alphabet that is the "mother" of our modern English alphabet

X. *Beowulf*

- a. Publication:
 - i. Passed down through oral tradition
 - ii. Thought to have been written down between the 8th-11th centuries by an anonymous person- possibly a Christian monk due to Christian elements
 - iii. Only one surviving copy of the manuscript-- housed in the British Library in London