

account

A statement or description of an experience or event.

afterlife

The life that some people believe exists after death.

Angle

A member of a Germanic tribe who invaded and settled in Britain in the 5th century AD.

Anglo-Saxon

Used to refer to the Germanic tribes, and their language and customs, who invaded and settled in Britain from the 5th century up to the Norman conquest.

artefact

An object made by a person, such as a decoration or a tool, which is of historical interest.

Arthurian

Relating to King Arthur of Britain and the legendary stories of his life.

attack

To take violent military action against a place or enemy forces.

battleaxe

A large axe that was arguably the most feared Saxon weapon.

Britannia

The name Romans called the area now known as Great Britain.

charm

An object or saying believed to have magical powers. The Anglo-Saxons believed that lucky charms could protect them from evil spirits or sickness.

chieftain

The leader of a tribe.

conquer

To take control or possession of a place or people, by force.

custom

A traditional way of behaving, specific to a place, time, or people.

Dark Ages

A historical period in European history (AD 476–1000), referring to Early Middle Ages and the fall of the Roman Empire.

defend

To protect or support against attack.

deity

A god or goddess.

Germanic

Relating to people who speak Germanic – a group of languages that include German, Swedish and English.

indigenous

Occurring naturally or originating in a particular place.

invader

A member of an army from one area who uses force to enter and take control of another area.

Jute

A member of a Germanic tribe who invaded and settled in Britain in late 4th century AD. Over time, they were either driven out of the country or merged with the Saxons and Angles.

kingdom

A country, state or territory whose ruler is a king or queen.

legend

A very old story from the past about a famous person or event. Legends are believed by some to be true to an extent, although this cannot be checked.

longhouse

A long house where many people live together. Members of the same extended family would live under the roof of just one Viking longhouse, where they ate, worked and slept with little or no privacy.

Middle Ages

The period in European history from the 5th to the 15th century.

monk

A religious man who does not marry, belonging instead to a religious community made up of other monks, often living together in a monastery. During the Dark Ages, monks were some of the only people who wrote things down.

Offa's Dyke

A raised area of earth (earthwork) that roughly follows the current border between Wales and England. Offa, King of a large part of England (Mercia) in 8th century AD, is believed to have ordered its construction to divide his kingdom from the Welsh kingdom of Powys (Wales).

plunder

To use force to openly steal goods from a place, especially during times of war.

raiders

People who enter a place illegally, and often violently, to steal.

Roman Empire

The largest empire of the ancient world. In what is now western Europe, various countries were conquered by the Roman Army. A Roman way of life was then established in these places.

runestone

A stone carved with the letters of an ancient, northern European alphabet.

Saxon

A member of a Germanic tribe who invaded and settled in Britain in the 5th century AD.

Saxon shore fort

Roman coastal defensive forts, built along the coast by the Romans in the middle of the 3rd century to repel seaborne raiders.

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scholar

A specialist in a particular area of study.

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seax

An Old English word for knife. A type of sword or dagger, typical of the Germanic people during the Early Middle Ages.

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settlement

A place or region where people come to live.

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skald

Viking kings had their own poets called skalds. These poets would create and read poems to entertain the guests, which often focused on how great the king was.

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territory

An area of land or sea belonging to a person or country.

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thegn’s great hall

The home of a village ruler (athane), during the Dark Ages, who was rich enough to regularly feast and entertain his friends.

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traders

People who buy and sell things.

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Viking

A member of a seafaring Scandinavian tribe who invaded and settled in Britain between the 8th and 11th centuries.