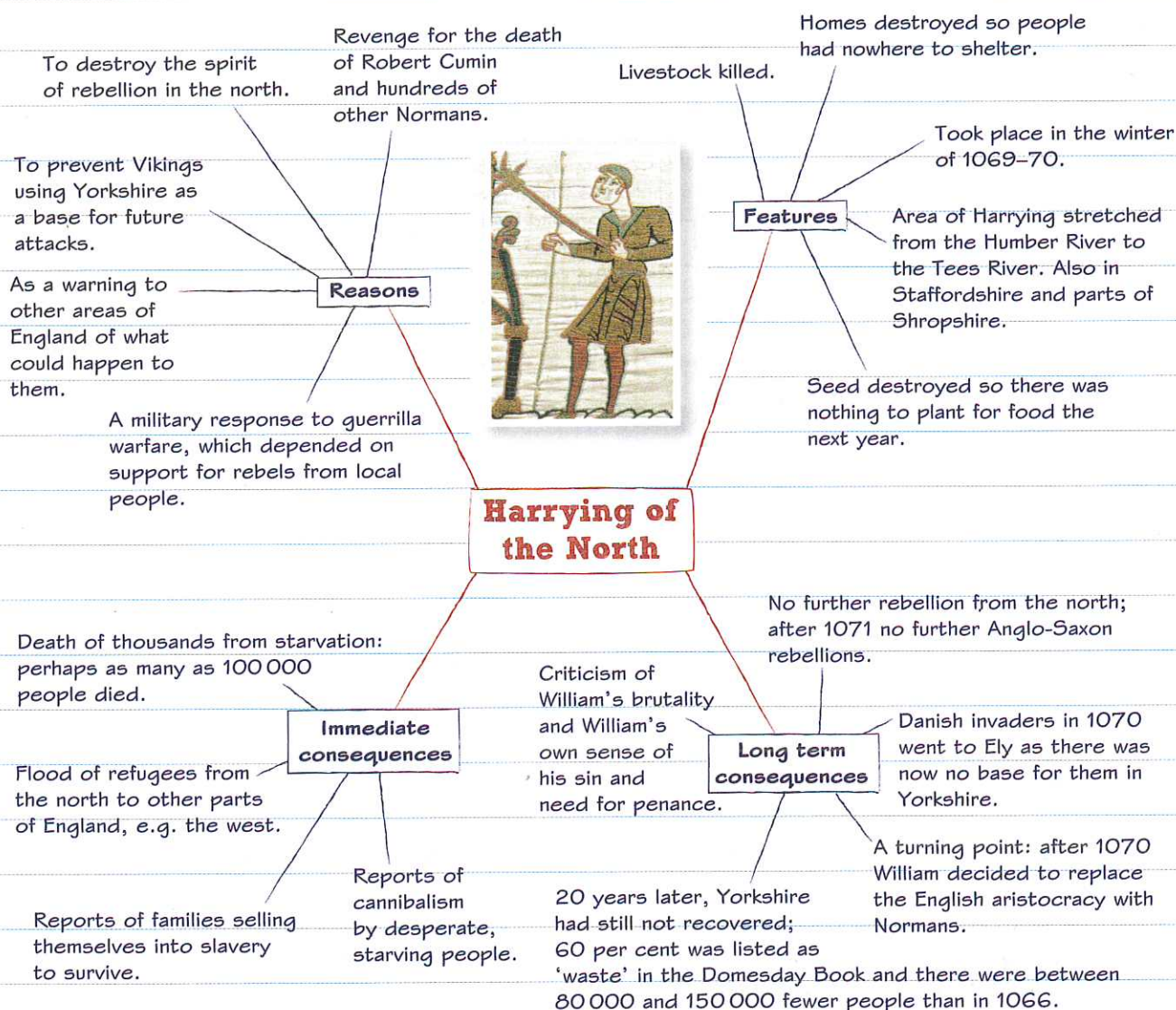


The Harrying of the North

The brutality of the Harrying of the North shows that William was prepared to take the most extreme measures to keep England under his control. His decision to lay waste to the north had both immediate consequences (1069–70) and a longer-term legacy (1069–87).



The early medieval period was a violent time, but William's Harrying of the North was seen as especially brutal, even by his contemporaries. William was criticised by the pope for his actions, and was said to have repented for the deaths of so many people for the rest of his life.

Now try this

Look back at page 13 to answer this.

King Sweyn's invasion in 1070–71 went to Ely rather than to the north. Explain why this shows that the Harrying of the North achieved one of its goals.

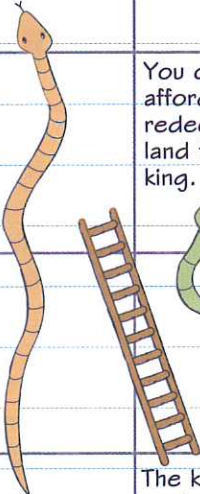
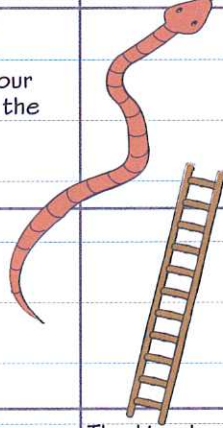

Landownership, 1066–87

One of the legacies (long term consequences) of Anglo-Saxon resistance was the way the Anglo-Saxon aristocracy was removed from power and replaced by Normans. This mainly happened through changes in landownership.

Landownership changes by 1087

- ✓ Over half the land in England in 1087 was held by just 190 of the tenants-in-chief. Only two of these were Anglo-Saxons.
- ✓ Only around 5% of land was still held by Anglo-Saxon aristocrats in 1087, most of it in small estates.
- ✓ The king's own royal estates made up 20% of the land and the Church owned 25%.

Ways land could be lost or gained

You've acted against the king: forfeit all your lands.		The sheriff illegally grabs your land: he's in charge of the law court so there's nothing you can do.
	You can't afford to redeem your land from the king.	
		
	The king has made you 'heir' to a dead Anglo-Saxon thegn. Take over their land.	The king has created a new earldom from forfeited land and made you earl.

More power to the king

- Changes in landownership made William more powerful and rebellion less likely.
- Anglo-Saxons had to pay William to redeem land (get back land they owned before) and heirs paid the king to inherit land.
- When landholders died without an heir, the land went back to the king, and those who acted against the king could forfeit land (have their land taken from them).

Impact on thegns

With Normans becoming the major landholders, English thegns became their tenants. The Normans had followers of their own whom they needed to reward with land.

- When thegns died, Norman followers would 'inherit' their land, not the thegns' children.
- Thegns who did not obey their Norman lords could forfeit their land.

Many thegns left England to work as mercenaries in Europe. Those that stayed were forced to obey their new lords.

Impact on peasants

Life for many peasants probably went on much as it did before the Conquest, since one lord was much like another from the peasants' point of view. However, it is likely that Normans were stricter about their peasants meeting all the obligations due from the land they worked.

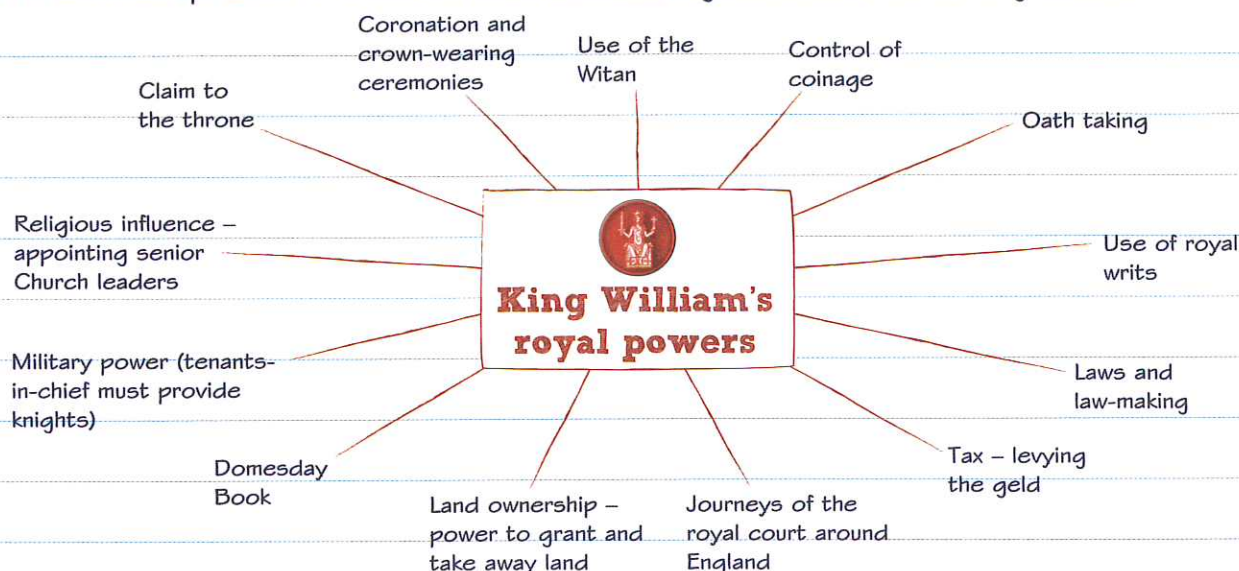
Ceorls – the 'free' peasants who could decide to leave one lord and go and rent land from another – became rarer and rarer. Norman lords worked to reduce the independence of ceorls.

Now try this

Edwin forfeited his lands in 1071 after he died (he was killed by his own men). Morcar forfeited his lands in 1070 after joining which rebellion?

Maintaining royal power

William used force to get control of his new kingdom, but he wanted to rule as England's legitimate king as well as its conqueror. He adopted the powers and symbols of Edward the Confessor and promoted the claim that he was the rightful successor to King Edward.



Royal factors

- 👑 **Claim to the throne:** Norman propaganda stressed that William had been Edward's rightful successor, as well as his relative.
- 👑 **Royal ceremonies:** William began a new ceremony of being seen wearing his crown three times a year, at events where he also consulted with his Witan.
- 👑 **Coinage:** William's coins featured his image, reinforcing his role as king.
- 👑 **Writs:** William's image also appeared on the royal seal of his writs. William used writs to issue his orders across the land. The Anglo-Saxon writ system was designed to maintain royal power across England and William used writs enthusiastically.
- 👑 **Oath taking:** William held oath-taking ceremonies in which landholders swore their allegiance to William as their king.
- 👑 **Journeys around England:** by travelling to different parts of his kingdom, William could show himself as king to his subjects. He could also show favour to important subjects by visiting them and holding talks.

Other factors

- ✂ **William's military strength:** Anglo-Saxons respected great warrior-kings. However, such kings would ideally also show wisdom in their law-making and mercy in their treatment of their subjects, for example, Edward the Confessor was respected for living on the revenues of his own estates rather than benefitting from frequent geld taxes.
- ✚ **Religious influence:** William had control over appointments to senior positions in the Church. His reforms (with Archbishop Lanfranc) of the Church in England increased Norman control of the messages given out in churches, which were used to praise William as king.
- 🐉 **Landownership:** William was able to use forfeited Anglo-Saxon lands to reward his followers. This helped ensure their support for William's rule as England's king. Challenges to William's rule came from those who thought they had not been given enough land.

Now try this

Explain the consequences of William's claim to the throne for landownership in England.

The Revolt of the Earls

In 1075, three of William's own earls tried, unsuccessfully, to remove him from power. This was the last revolt William would face in England before his death a decade later. This page looks at the reasons for revolt; the next page is on its features, its defeat and effects.

The rebel earls and their motives

Roger de Breteuil, Earl of Hereford, was the son of William FitzOsbern. Roger resented the way William had reduced the size of his Hereford earldom after FitzOsbern died. FitzOsbern had been one of William's most trusted followers.

Ralph de Gael, Earl of East Anglia, had grown up in Brittany and became Earl of East Anglia after his father died around 1069. It is likely his involvement in the revolt was for similar reasons to Roger de Breteuil. He married Roger's sister in 1075.

Waltheof, had taken part in the rebellions in the north in 1069, but had submitted to William, was pardoned and made Earl of Northumbria (his father had been Siward, Earl of Northumbria). He was the last surviving Anglo-Saxon earl. Presumably, Northumbrians would have supported their earl if there was a good chance of success against the Normans.

Loss of privileges

One of the features of the Marcher earldoms, which included Hereford, was that sheriffs answered to the earl, not to the king. William changed this so that he had more influence in all his earldoms. Roger resented this loss of privilege and there may have been others, too.



Loss of land

William was concerned that earls should not have too much power. This was why he took the opportunity of their fathers' deaths to reduce the size of Ralph and Roger's land.



William's absence

In 1075, William had returned temporarily to Normandy, leaving the government of England to his regent, Archbishop Lanfranc. The rebels saw his absence as an opportunity to strike.



Reasons for the revolt

Loss of power

Under Anglo-Saxon rule, earls had been very powerful. The three earls planned to recreate this situation by dividing William's kingdom between the three of them.



Anglo-Saxon rebelliousness

The Revolt of the Earls took place soon after the rebellions of 1068-71. The three earls must have assumed Anglo-Saxons would join their revolt, especially with Waltheof involved.



Powerful allies

Ralph contacted King Sweyn of Denmark for support in the revolt. It is likely that Waltheof was important in making this deal with the Danes. King Sweyn's son Cnut put together a large fleet. The rebels also had support from William's enemies in Brittany and France.



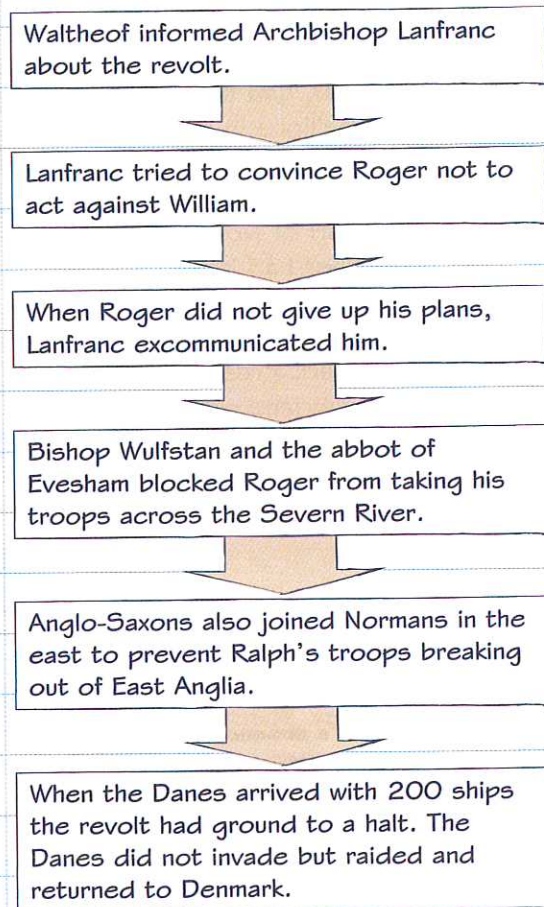
Now try this

Explain **one** reason why William wanted to reduce the power of his own earls.

Features and effects of the Revolt

Unfortunately for Earls Roger, Ralph and Waltheof, their revolt did not succeed and was quickly defeated. Key to their defeat was the way Anglo-Saxons joined Normans to prevent the revolt.

Features of the revolt



Key feature 1: Waltheof decided against being involved in the revolt, perhaps hoping to be rewarded for his loyalty in informing. However, William ordered him to be executed instead.

Key feature 2: Lanfranc had time to prepare for the revolt. His arguments to Roger were that Roger should remember his father's loyalty.

Key feature 3: Although all Anglo-Saxons might have been expected to join the revolt against William, most did not. Even more significantly, Anglo-Saxons in the Midlands joined with Norman garrisons in preventing the revolts from spreading out of Herefordshire and out of East Anglia.

Key feature 4: The Danes had an impressive invasion force but they did not want to engage with the Normans in battle, at least not until Norman forces had already been significantly weakened by Anglo-Saxon uprisings.

The defeat of the revolt

William returned to England before the Danes arrived, and oversaw the defeat of the revolt.

- Roger was captured and imprisoned for life.
- Ralph escaped to Brittany, though William captured some of his Breton followers and punished them by blinding them.
- Waltheof fled abroad, but William tricked him into coming back to England. When Waltheof returned he was imprisoned and then executed.

Challenges to William and his sons were now from William's own earls and barons.

The planned Danish invasion of 1075 was the end of the Viking threat to England.

Significance of the revolt

Anglo-Saxons defended William's rule from revolt, suggesting some English support for William.

Despite Anglo-Saxon support in defeating the revolt, William continued to suppress Anglo-Saxon nobles.

Now try this

Lanfranc excommunicated Earl Roger. Which **one** of the following is the best definition of excommunication?

- Making someone an outlaw, which meant they could then be legally killed.
- Cutting someone off from the Church community, so they could not confess their sins.
- Sentencing someone to pay a fine to the Church in order to be forgiven.

The feudal hierarchy

When William became king, he established himself as the owner of all England's land. His key allies became his **tenants-in-chief**, who received huge grants of land direct from the king in return for their military service. They then granted land out to their followers in turn, creating a feudal hierarchy with the king at the top, with huge power to command and control the system.

Key terms

Barony – lands held by a baron (a major land owner, often a tenant-in-chief).

Fief or feud – land held by a **vassal** in return for service to a lord ('feud' is where feudalism comes from).

Homage – a public display of allegiance (loyalty) to a lord.

Tenant-in-chief – someone who held their fiefs directly from the king.

Vassal – someone who held land from someone else in the feudal system.

Hierarchy – where society is organised into levels of importance with each level obeying the level above them.

Knight service

Knight service was the duty to provide a knight or knights for the king for up to 40 days a year.

Some knights had not much more land to farm than peasants.

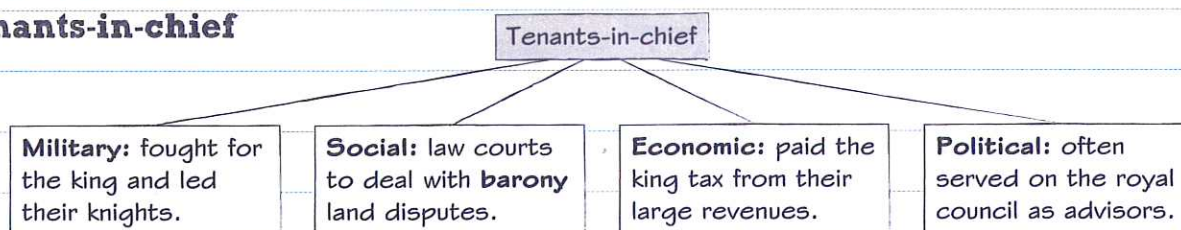
Some knight service involved guarding the king's castles.



Other knights were very powerful Norman nobles.

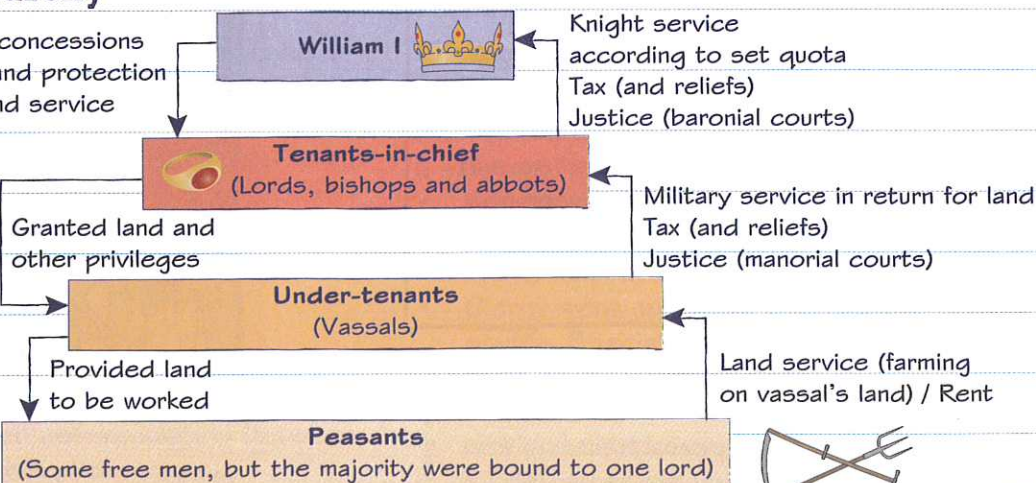
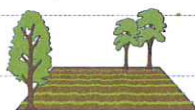
The knights had to be equipped and given money to live on during knight service.

Tenants-in-chief



The feudal hierarchy

Granted land and tax concessions
Provided peace, law and protection
in return for loyalty and service



Now try this

Describe **two** features of the feudal hierarchy that increased William's military strength.

The nature of feudalism

The feudal system probably took several decades to develop as it was something new to both Normans and English. William took the opportunity of the Conquest to clear away the complex relationships between England's landholders and redevelop them to consolidate his power.

Feudalism and military power

The feudal system was a way of ensuring that the king had military power without having to pay for it.

Knights were extremely expensive to equip, train and maintain, but William needed lots of them. The feudal system developed so William received knight service in return for grants of land – both knights to fight in battle and knights to garrison his castles.

The fyrd still continued to operate alongside knight service: probably more of a **militia** provided by the general fyrd. William's son, William Rufus, used English fyrd troops to defeat a rebellion against him after William the Conqueror's death.

Feudalism and political power

Feudalism gave the king political power: he could control his barons through grants of land, reliefs and forfeiture.

William needed to be able to control his barons, or they would get too powerful and demand political power for themselves.

Forfeiture meant that William had the power to punish severely anyone who acted against him by taking away their lands and granting them as a reward for loyalty to someone else.

In both Normandy and in Anglo-Saxon England, noble sons usually inherited their fathers' landholdings automatically. William toughened up the procedures and made inheritance dependent on a formal ceremony of **homage** to the king, and on paying as much for their relief as the king thought was suitable.

Feudalism and the peasants

Feudalism was a social system that made sure the nobility stayed rich and in control.

Just as the vassal provided military service for his **fief**, peasants provided labour service for their lord in return for land and protection from attack, but this came at a cost. Instead of ceorls being able to decide to leave a lord and go and work for another one, peasants were now bound to their lord, unable to leave his or her service.

How 'feudal' was Anglo-Saxon England? It seems likely that most peasants in Anglo-Saxon England were already bound to their lords through obligations and relationships that were very similar to labour service. These were obligations that came with each hide of land and the Domesday Book suggests these obligations continued after the Conquest.



*Instrumentum quo maria le
trinitatis inuenerunt ad*

Vassals swearing allegiance to a medieval king in an act of homage.

Now try this

Explain what was involved in forfeiture.

The Church in England

The Church had a huge influence on society in the early Medieval period, and by 1088 William had ensured that Normans had replaced Anglo-Saxons in almost all the leading roles of the Church. This included Archbishop of Canterbury Stigand being replaced by the reformer, Lanfranc.

The Church helped control society by praising the king and teaching the people about their role in society.

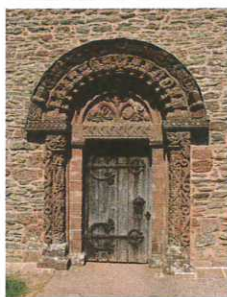
Importance of the Church

The Church taught reading and writing and government depended on Church officials. Church clerks issued the king's writs.

The Church was a major landholder. Church tenants worked for the Church. The Church paid taxes to the king.

In society

Church leaders were involved in shire courts and other legal processes where God's will needed to be interpreted.



In government

Because the Church kept collections of laws, the Church was able to advise on legal matters.

Bishops and abbots were good advisors for the king because they were educated and literate.

Criticisms of Stigand

Stigand was accused of encouraging corruption in the Church.

🔊 Stigand was a **pluralist** – he was bishop for more than one area, increasing his land and revenue.

🔊 He was also accused of **simony**, giving out jobs in the Church in return for money.

His appointment also caused other problems.

🔊 Lanfranc believed only the Church or the king should appoint bishops, but Stigand got his job because of the Godwins.

🔊 Stigand had no real control over other archbishops and bishops in England – there was a lack of discipline.

Lanfranc's reforms: control of the Church

Lanfranc wanted a strict hierarchy in the Church, with the archbishop of Canterbury at the top, answering only to the king and the pope in Rome.

- Lanfranc convinced the king to put the Archbishop of Canterbury in charge of the whole Church in England.
- As head of the Church, Lanfranc then reorganised Church councils, held them more frequently and used them to push through his reforms.
- Archdeacons were brought in to control parish priests.

Normanisation of the Church

- After Stigand had been removed from his role as Archbishop in 1070, only one Anglo-Saxon bishop, Wulfstan, remained in place.
- Every church and cathedral in England was rebuilt in Norman style.
- Lanfranc's reforms put the whole Church under central control.
- The king appointed new bishops, his approval was needed for key Church decisions and Church leaders could forfeit lands if they disobeyed him.
- The king controlled communication between the English Church and the pope.

Lanfranc's reforms: a spiritual Church

Lanfranc wanted the Church to be separate from ordinary society so its members could live a spiritual life of prayer and service to God.

- Priests should be celibate and marriage for priests was banned because priests should live special lives devoted to God.
- Clergy were not to be tried by the 'ordinary' courts. Special, Church-only bishops' courts tried cases involving clergy.
- The number of monasteries and nunneries was increased and monks and nuns no longer mixed so much with ordinary people.

Now try this

Explain why King William wanted to control the communication between his bishops and the pope. How was this connected to William's obsession with control in England?

The extent of change

1066 was certainly an important turning point for England, but how much change was there to England's society and economy? Was England completely transformed, or was there also continuity as well as change? And was any of the change positive for Anglo-Saxons?

Comparing Anglo-Saxon and Norman societies

Anglo-Saxon society



Slaves made up just less than 10% of the population.



Peasants (ceorls) made up around 90% of the population. Some were free.



4-6 thousand thegns; local landowners with more than 5 hides of land. Military service.



Some earls were so powerful and wealthy that they posed a threat to the king.

Norman society



The Normans thought slavery was wrong and freed some slaves.



Feudalism bound peasants to their lords. Norman lords may have worked peasants harder. But not a huge change.



Thegns wiped out as a landowning class and replaced by knights and other Norman vassals of tenants-in-chief.



Earls replaced by Normans, and earldoms made much smaller. Earls were tenants-in-chief, dependent on the king.

Continuity

- **Economic** **Farming life** went on as before, although Normans landlords may have been stricter in demanding the obligations due from each hide.
- **Government:** although William replaced Anglo-Saxons with Normans, the processes of government, such as writs, continued as before because they were superior to Norman government processes.
- **Economic** **Geld tax:** this was a major source of revenue for the king and allowed William to extract money from his new kingdom. Although Edward the Confessor had not over-used the geld tax, previous Danish and Anglo-Saxon kings had levied heavy geld taxes and William definitely continued in this tradition.
- **Towns:** William agreed that towns could keep their trading rights and privileges.

Change

- **Economic** **Trade** with Scandinavia was reduced (impacting the north of England) and trade with Normandy increased (boosting the south of England).
- **Military:** castles dominated the skyline of many English towns and strategic locations. Houses were cleared in burhs to make way for castles.
- **Religion:** Lanfranc's reforms dragged the English Church into the 11th century and every church and cathedral was rebuilt.
- **Social control:** William's imposition of a feudal hierarchy made the king much more powerful and everyone else more dependent on the favour of their lord.
- **Political:** Anglo-Saxons were removed from almost all positions of influence. Those that remained, like Bishop Wulfstan, only did so because they had proved exceptionally loyal to William.

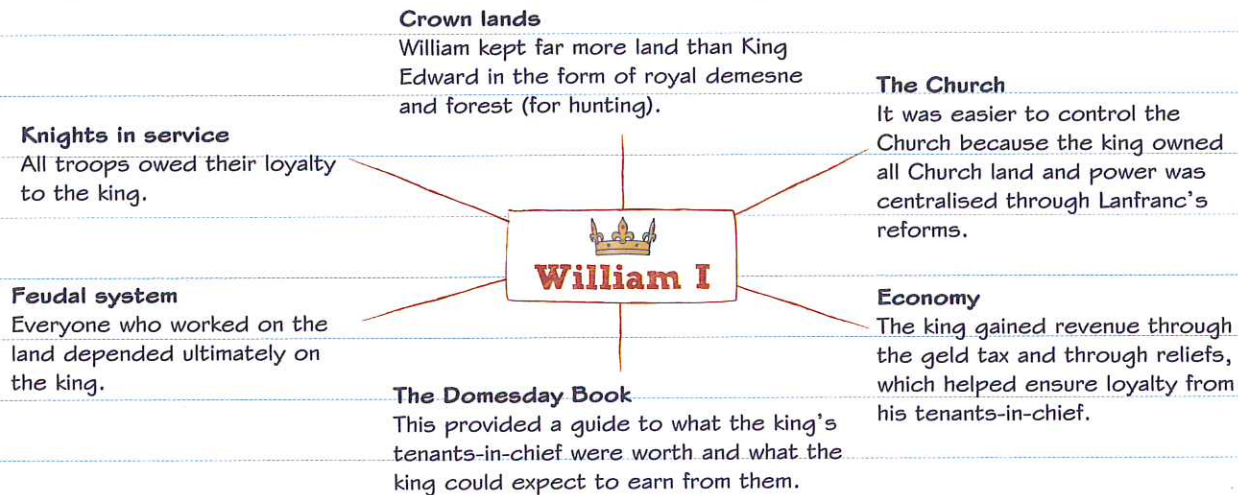
Now try this

Which of the social or economic changes brought about by the Norman Conquest is most likely to be described as 'not negative' for Anglo-Saxons?

Changes to government

William centralised the existing Anglo-Saxon institutions of government to increase his control over England. This gave him and his successors much more power as king than Edward the Confessor had been able to access, and more power than William had as Duke of Normandy.

How power was centralised in Norman England



The role of earls

William's control of Normandy had been challenged many times by rivals, so he understood the dangers of letting even his most loyal followers get too powerful. This is why he reduced the power of England's earls by:

- making earldoms smaller – reduced land meant reduced power
- reducing the number of earldoms, e.g. Wessex and Mercia
- increasing the power of sheriffs, who answered directly to the king
- using knight service to make sure he had a large army as king, but no one else did
- using his powers over tenants-in-chief to make sure his earls were dependent on him for keeping their lands and to be able to pass them on to their heirs.

The Revolt of the Earls (1075) shows that William's reduction of earls' power was resented by some of England's earls.

The role of regents

Because William was both king of England and duke of Normandy he had to rely on regents to run Normandy when he was in England, and England when he was in Normandy. He spent up to three-quarters of his time away from England in the last ten years of his life.

- 1 Odo of Bayeux and William FitzOsbern seem to have done a terrible job as the first regents in 1067, undoing all of William's diplomatic approach towards the Anglo-Saxon nobility and helping to provoke Anglo-Saxon resistance.
- 2 Lanfranc was much more reliable as a regent: in 1075 he managed to contain the Revolt of the Earls until William could return from Normandy. The fact that the rebel earls had timed their revolt for a period when William was away shows how important King William was personally to the central control of England.

William's most trusted regent in Normandy was his wife, Matilda.

Now try this

Describe **one** way in which Norman government relied on the administrative systems that had evolved over many centuries in Anglo-Saxon England.

The sheriff and the forest

Sheriffs had a more significant role in Norman government than in Anglo-Saxon government, and some Norman sheriffs exploited their powers to their own advantage, causing much resentment. Another major focus of English resentment was the royal forest and its laws: the forest became a hated symbol of royal power for ordinary people.

The role of the sheriff

Anglo-Saxon society

The king appointed the sheriff to manage the king's land in the earldom. But the earl was much more important than the sheriff.

Sheriffs were responsible for law and order in their shire, answering to the earl.

Sheriffs were responsible for defence of the shire and gathering together the fyrd.

Norman society

The king appointed the sheriff, who now had much more power: they controlled their shire and answered only to the king.

Sheriffs kept this role, with new laws added that punished anti-Norman rebellion.

Sheriffs kept this role, with new responsibilities as custodian of castles in the shire that belonged to the king.

Why were some sheriffs resented?

- Anglo-Saxon sheriffs were replaced by Normans following Anglo-Saxon resistance (1068–71). Sheriffs had responsibilities for stamping out English rebelliousness.
- Sheriffs took a share of all the revenues they collected for the king. This gave them an incentive to 'squeeze' the locals – the more revenue they got out of the shire, the more the sheriff could keep for himself.
- Sheriffs paid a set sum to manage the king's estates (demesne) and kept any profit the estate made over and above this amount. This also was an incentive to 'squeeze'.
- Sheriffs were involved in many land grabs after the Conquest and their power meant there was very little that victims of their grabs could do to get their land back, unless they had access to the king.

Why was royal forest resented?

- William extended the hunting land he had in his own demesne by taking land away from other landholders and changing it to 'forest': hunting land.
- When land was reclassified as 'forest' it often meant that local people were evicted from the area.
- Forest laws protected quarry (the animals that were hunted), which meant harsh punishments for anyone caught poaching the animals, or who were caught in the forest with tools or dogs that could be used for hunting.
- Forest laws also prohibited damage to the vegetation used by quarry. This meant harsh punishments for people caught cutting wood or clearing land or building houses in the forest.

It undermined William's claim to be just and fair – people suffered just so the king could have deer to hunt.

Made the land grabs of other Normans seem more legitimate – the king grabbed land, too.

Significance of the forest



Harsh punishments (e.g. blinding) for breaking forest laws show the brutal side to Norman rule.

The forest became a source of royal revenue through the fines paid by those caught breaking forest laws and the sale of hunting rights to other nobles.

Now try this

Explain what the introduction of the 'forest' suggests about William's character or personality.

The Domesday Book

The Domesday Book is another example of William's growing power over his conquered kingdom. It was produced as a result of the Domesday survey, ordered by William in December 1085, and told William who held what land and what their obligations were to the king.

The Domesday survey

After a meeting with his advisers at Christmas in 1085, William ordered an investigation of the landholdings of each shire: who held what land, what taxes they owed the king and whether they could pay any more. The results of this survey were written up as the Domesday Book.

There are around two million words in the Domesday Book. Handwriting analysis shows the Domesday Book's records were all written down by one man, almost certainly an Anglo-Saxon because place names and people's names were spelled correctly – Normans tended to spell them incorrectly.

As the work was mostly completed by August 1086, the Domesday Book is a remarkable achievement and shows the efficiency of Anglo-Saxon administration.

Domesday Book facts

- ✓ 13 400 place names are recorded in the Domesday Book.
- ✓ The estimate of England's population being around 2 million in the 1060s comes from analysis of Domesday Book records.
- ✓ The Domesday Book also gives us information about social roles in 11th century England. It lists: 28 235 slaves; 110 000 villeins (peasants bound to their lords through labour service); 14 000 freemen and 24 000 sokemen – a type of ceorl (80% of sokemen were in the Danelaw); 1000 tenants-in-chief and 8000 under-tenants.

Because the Domesday Book doesn't cover the whole area of England, and because it doesn't list whole families, historians have multiplied these figures to produce an estimate for the whole country.

The uses of the Domesday book

The Domesday Book meant the king could see where landholders should be paying more money. It might also have involved ending special tax privileges for tenants-in-chief.

The meeting which decided to carry out the Domesday survey had been called because of the threat of a new Viking invasion in 1085. Although the invasion never happened, it is possible William used the Domesday Book to see how many more knights his tenants could provide for knight service.

Military

Financial



Financial

Legal

The Domesday Book contains records of claims by Anglo-Saxons that Normans had taken their lands. Since the Domesday surveys were made as fairly as possible, with key people from each hundred saying who owned what, the Domesday Book had a role in sorting out legal disputes.

The way the Domesday Book is organised suggests it was a handy guide to working out what reliefs should be charged when land was due to be inherited.

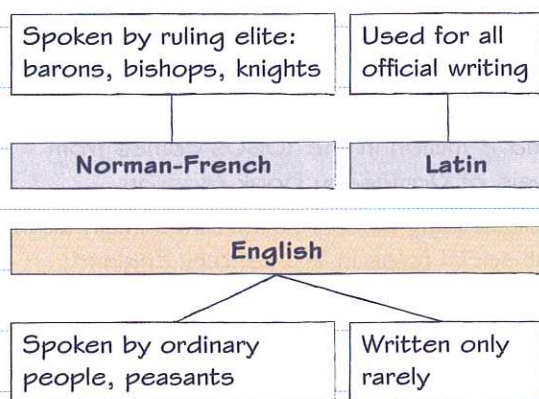
Now try this

Explain **one** way in which the Domesday Book helped William increase his control over England.

The Norman aristocracy

The Normans, as the conquerors and rulers, became the aristocracy in England and influenced language and culture.

Language



Neither King William nor Archbishop Lanfranc could speak English.

Writs were written in Latin, not English. Writs in Anglo-Saxon England had often been written in English.

Because Norman nobles had English nurses for their children, many second-generation Normans understood English.



Aristocratic culture

While Anglo-Saxon aristocrats tended to spend their money on rich clothing, jewellery, gifts and lavish parties, the Norman aristocracy tended to put the huge wealth they extracted from England into buildings, especially churches and cathedrals.

Normans showed off their wealth by building very large structures and using innovative and daring, high-impact architectural methods. The arch of this Norman church doorway has been elaborately carved.

Landholding

The Anglo-Saxon tradition was for earls and thegns to pass on their estates to lots of different family members. Norman culture was different. Norman aristocrats tried to pass on their lands to a single heir so that the whole estate stayed together.

Norman culture

Chivalry – the culture of the knight

Chivalry was a complex moral code about how knights should behave. It combined Christianity, showing mercy and the glorification of extreme violence.

The Church and penance

Normans were very religious and believed that they should atone for the violence they had used in conquering England and establishing Norman control over the country. Penance involved prayer and acts that helped the Church, such as building churches or giving rich gifts to the Church. The Normans looked down on the English and their culture. Anglo-Saxon churches were knocked down and many tombs and relics (preserved body parts) of Anglo-Saxon and Celtic saints were destroyed because the Normans did not think they were holy.

Now try this

- Identify **two** ways in which Norman noble culture was different from Anglo-Saxon noble culture.

Bishop Odo

Bishop Odo of Bayeux was William's half-brother and a loyal supporter throughout the Conquest. William rewarded him with the earldom of Kent, making him one of England's (and Normandy's) richest men.

The career of Bishop Odo

The significance of Bishop Odo

Timeline

c1049 William makes Odo the Bishop of Bayeux.

c1036 Odo born. His mother was Herleva, who was also William's mother.

1066 Odo contributes 100 ships to William's invasion fleet. Odo fights at the Battle of Hastings, and is shown rallying panicking troops in a scene in the Bayeux Tapestry. William rewards Odo lavishly, making him Earl of Kent and many other estates and making him second only to the king in landholdings.



1067 Odo made co-regent of England (with William FitzOsbern) when King William returns to Normandy.

1076 A three-day enquiry is held following complaints to Lanfranc about land seizures by Odo. Odo is forced to return the land.

1082 Odo falls out of favour with William and is imprisoned. He is not released until William's death, after Odo's brother manages to persuade William to show mercy.

1088 Odo leads barons in revolt against William II.

Find out about the revolt on page 30.

William and Odo were half-brothers. William only put his trust in family and a few close friends.

This appointment was significant because Odo's bad reputation would otherwise have kept him out of Church leadership. He was in William's debt.

Odo's contribution to the invasion was significant. William had to reward him, and others like him, with land after England was conquered, which made it difficult to prevent trouble from Anglo-Saxons who had lost land and power. Odo's wealth is an example of how the Conquest rapidly changed the fortunes of some Normans.

Odo commissioned the Bayeux Tapestry as a piece of Norman propaganda, designed to boost the story that William was England's rightful king.

The regency was a disaster for relations between Normans and Anglo-Saxons. The co-regents allowed theft of lands and rape of Anglo-Saxon women. Resentment resulted in Anglo-Saxon resistance.

It is significant that there were limits to what even a Norman like Odo could do, though probably he only got into trouble because he took land from the Church in a way that aggravated Lanfranc.

Likely reasons for William's actions against Odo are mismanagement of his earldom and the claim that Odo tried to take some knights with him to Rome in a bid to become pope. Odo's imprisonment is significant because it shows how William wanted loyalty and obedience above all. Family connections only protected people so far.

Now try this

Explain why William may have been angered by Odo taking knights with him to Rome.

William's personality

Contemporaries described William I as stern, determined and greedy. He had a stormy relationship with his eldest son, Robert.

William's early life

- William was the illegitimate son of Robert, Duke of Normandy. He was only eight years old when his father died, but he had made William his heir.
- William faced numerous assassination attempts as he was growing up.
- As a young adult, William was constantly at war defending his dukedom against rivals.

Contemporary reviews of William

The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle for 1087 calls William 'stern and relentless', a man who imprisoned anyone who might challenge him, even his own half-brother Odo. William of Malmesbury (c1125) noted King William's greed for money, which he explained as being due to William being constantly anxious about being attacked: if he could not beat his enemies with his knights, he planned to buy them off with gold.

William's good points

- 👍 He was devoted to his wife, Matilda, and was devastated when she died. He trusted Matilda's leadership skills: she was his regent many times in Normandy.
- 👍 He was very religious, founded abbeys and was involved in promoting Church reform with his chosen religious leader, Lanfranc.
- 👍 He wanted to be respected as England's legitimate king: he wasn't happy with being just the Conqueror.

William's bad points

- 👎 William was prepared to use extreme brutality to achieve his aims, and the Harrying of the North shows this better than anything else.

William is reported to have repented of his brutal oppression of the English on his deathbed. A Norman monk, Orderic Vitalis, reported that William had regretted that he had 'become the barbarous murderer of many thousands, both young and old, of that fine race of people' – the English.

William's death

- By 1087 William had become very fat and when he was leading an attack against the French castle and town at Mantes, his horse stumbled, throwing William and causing the internal injuries that (eventually) killed him.
- It took from July until September 1087 for William to die, in great pain. When he did die on 9 September, there was panic, as everyone feared that without William it would be every baron for himself!
- At William's funeral his stone tomb was too small to fit him into. His servants tried to squeeze him in, causing his corpse to burst. Everyone ran from the smell.



The death of William I, 1087

Now try this

Orderic Vitalis said William 'would say and do almost anything, although it was unbecoming to his majesty, where the hope of money enticed him'. Explain **one** reason for William's greed.

Robert Curthose and revolt, 1077–80

William bullied his eldest son, Robert, and refused to let him have any real power in Normandy. This led to open rebellion by Robert from 1077–80, to the extent that he even fought his father in battle at Gerberoy, France.

Robert Curthose

Robert Curthose was William and Matilda's eldest son. He was probably born in 1054.

'Curthose' was a nickname William gave him meaning something like 'shorty' or 'dumpy legs'. William of Malmesbury said he was short, with a protruding belly.

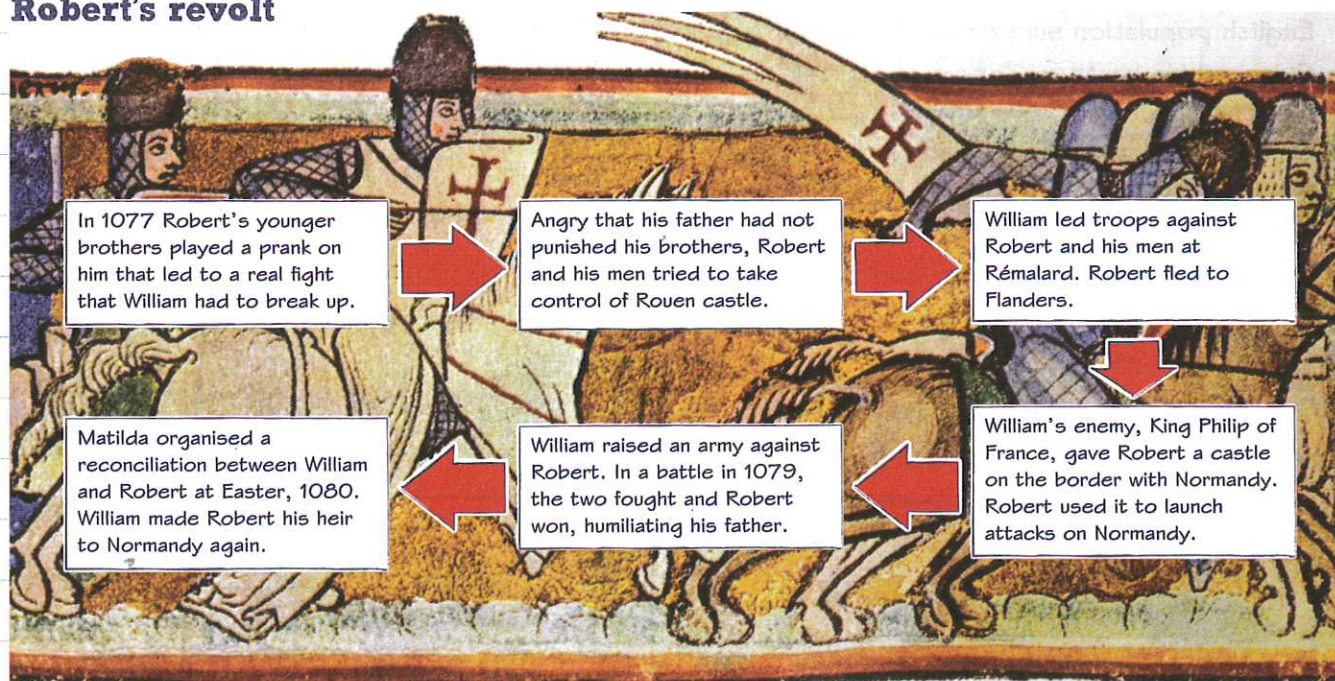


He was a good warrior but William did not think he was ready to lead the Normans against their enemies. Robert was lazy and weak-willed.

Robert had a difficult relationship with his father, but was a favourite of his mother (she had at least nine children to choose from).

Robert Curthose (1054?–1134) is buried in Gloucester Cathedral, with this effigy of him on his tomb.

Robert's revolt



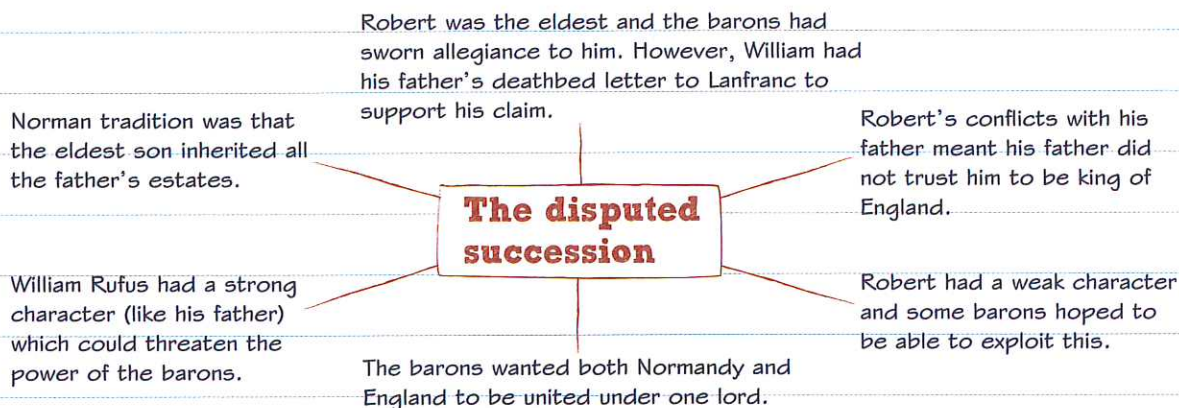
Now try this

Which **two** of the following happened before Robert Curthose's revolt, and which **two** happened after it:

- William orders the Domesday Book survey
- the Revolt of the Earls
- Bishop Odo imprisoned
- Stigand replaced as Archbishop of Canterbury by Lanfranc?

The defeat of Robert and Odo

The conflicts between William and his eldest son Robert meant William did not want Robert to be king of England, preferring his favourite son William 'Rufus'. However, this was not a situation Robert accepted and there were reasons why some Norman barons did not accept it, either.



Key events of the 1088 rebellion

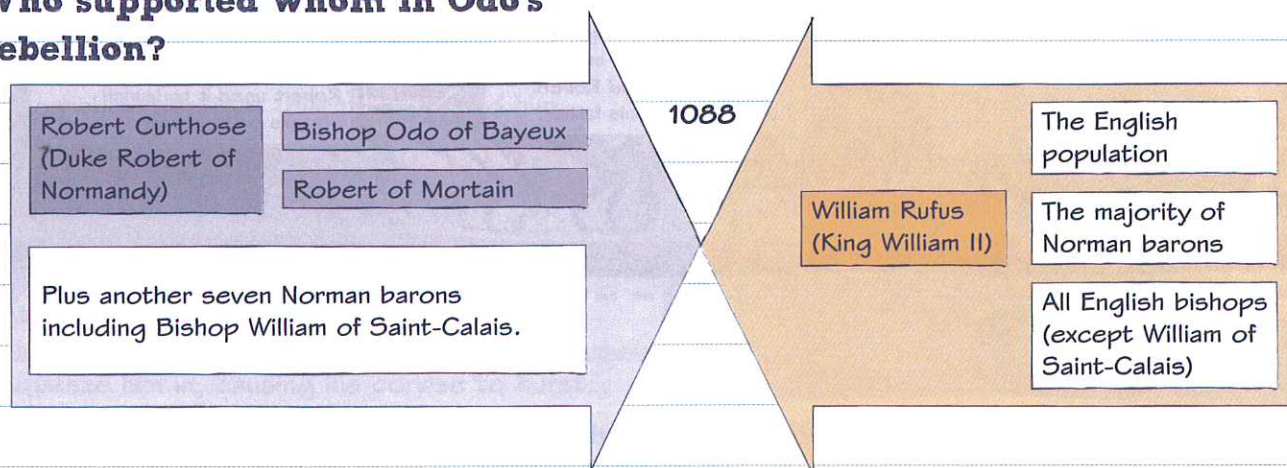
- In 1087 Odo was released from prison.
- In 1088 Odo led a rebellion against William II in support of Robert.
- The majority of English barons and the English population supported William II.
- Odo and his brother, Robert of Mortain, took refuge in Pevensey Castle.
- Odo then escaped to Rochester castle, waiting for Robert Curthose's support.
- Robert never arrived and Odo was forced to surrender. He was exiled.

Explaining the rebellion

- William Rufus was able to defeat Odo and Robert of Mortain, and the many smaller rebellions across England of 1088, because of the support of most Norman barons, almost all the English bishops and the English population.
- Bishop Wulfstan crushed rebellions in the Marcher earldoms.
- The English fyrd helped defeat Odo and his brother in the south.

Odo's rebellion failed because the support he expected from Robert Curthose and Normandy never came.

Who supported whom in Odo's rebellion?



Now try this

Explain why many Norman barons would have preferred England and Normandy to have been under one ruler rather than split between the two brothers, Robert and William 'Rufus'.

Exam overview

This page introduces you to the main features and requirements of the Paper 2 Option B1 exam.

About Paper 2

- Paper 2 is for both your period study and your British depth study.
- Anglo-Saxon and Norman England is a British depth study – it will be in Section B of Paper 2: Medieval depth options.
- Anglo-Saxon and Norman England is Option B1. You will see where it starts on the exam paper with a heading like this:



The Paper 2 exam lasts for 1 hour 45 minutes (105 minutes) in total. There are 32 marks for the period study and 32 marks for this depth study, so you should spend about 50 minutes on each.

Option B1: Anglo-Saxon and Norman England, c1060–88

The three questions

The three questions for Option B1 will always follow this pattern.

Question 4(a)

Describe two features of ...

(4 marks)

Question 4(a) targets Assessment Objective 1 (AO1): it focuses on describing features.

Assessment Objective 1 is where you show your knowledge and understanding of the key features and characteristics of Anglo-Saxon and Norman England, 1060–88.

You can see examples of all three questions on the next six pages, and in the practice questions on pages 38 to 49.

Question 4(b)

Explain why...

(12 marks)

Two prompts and your own information

Question 4(b) targets both AO1 and AO2. It focuses on causation: explaining why something happened.

Question 4(c)

Choice of two questions:

(c) (i) or (c) (ii)

[Statement] How far do you agree?

Explain your answer.

(16 marks)

Two prompts and your own information

You have a choice of two questions for 4(c). These target both AO1 and AO2. You need to make a judgement in this question.

Assessment Objective 2 is where you explain and analyse key events using historical concepts such as causation, consequence, change, continuity, similarity and difference.

Question 4(a): Describing features 1

Question 4(a) on your exam paper will ask you to 'Describe **two** features of...'. There are 4 marks available for this question: two for each feature you describe.

Worked example

Describe **two** features of knight service.

(4 marks)



Links

You can revise knight service on page 19.

What is a feature?

A **feature** is something that is distinctive or characteristic – we can tell one person from another, for example, because of their distinctive facial features. When a question asks for two features of something, think about the special characteristics of that something.

Sample answer

Feature 1

Providing knights to the king, which William imposed to gain greater control on his barons.

Feature 2

The knights had to be equipped and knight service was only for a short time.

This is more of a definition of knight service rather than a feature of knight service.

The student has written an **explanation** of why knight service was imposed. As this is a description question, this explanation is not relevant here.

Two different features have been identified but this answer needs more supporting information.

Don't be tempted to write more than two features – you won't earn extra marks.

Improved answer

Feature 1

Knight service was in exchange for a grant of land. The number of knights that needed to be provided depended on the amount of land that had been granted – usually knight service was levied in units of 10 knights.

The student has correctly identified a feature of knight service (that it was in exchange for land) and has added good supporting information.

Feature 2

Knight service lasted for a maximum of 40 days and knights had to be provided with money by their lord to live on during this time – the king was not responsible for feeding them.

The student has now just picked one feature here and added relevant detail to it in a way that demonstrates their knowledge of the topic and their understanding of how knight service is thought to have worked.

Question 4(a): Describing features 2

Question 4(a) on your exam paper will ask you to 'Describe **two** features of...'. There are 4 marks available for this question: two for each feature you describe.

Worked example

Describe **two** features of the rebellion against William Rufus in 1088. (4 marks)

**Links**

You can revise the rebellion against William II (William Rufus) on page 30.

What does 'describe' mean?

Describe means to give an account of the main characteristics of something. You develop your description with relevant details, but you do not need to include reasons or justifications.

Sample answer

Feature 1

The English helped William Rufus.

Feature 2

Odo escaped from one castle and then went to Rochester castle and waited for Robert Curthose.

This is a correct feature of the rebellion but the answer is rather vague and does not demonstrate enough knowledge.

This does describe events of the rebellion but it needs to be refocused into describing a feature: a special characteristic of the rebellion.

Specific detail has been included – Rochester castle – but more support is needed to back up the description.

Improved answer

Feature 1

Bishop Odo had support from some important Norman barons, especially his brother Robert of Mortain, but most barons, the Church and the English population backed William Rufus.

Feature 2

Odo and Robert of Mortain's use of castles was a key feature of the rebellion. They took refuge in Pevensey Castle but when that was captured, Odo escaped to Rochester castle.

Detail has been added to describe the key feature, which is the extent of support for Odo's rebellion.

This has now been refocused to describe the use of castles as a feature of the rebellion. The student does not explain why castles were used but correctly sticks to a description of this feature.

Question 4(b): Explaining why 1

Question 4(b) on your exam paper is about causation: explaining why. There are 12 marks available for this question and two prompts to help you answer. You must also use information of your own.

Worked example

Explain why castles were important in securing Norman England, 1066–87.

(12 marks)

You may use the following in your answer:

- The Marcher earldoms
- Motte and bailey

You **must** also use information of your own.

What does 'explain' mean?

Explain means saying how or why something happened, backed up with examples or justifications to support the reasons you give. Good ways to get into an explanation are to use sentence starters like, 'One reason for this was...' or 'This was because...'



Links

You can revise the reasons for building castles on page 11.

Sample answer

Right from the start of the Norman conquest, castles were a vital part of securing control of England. William's men constructed a castle at Pevensey, where the invasion force landed, and then at Dover. It is estimated that 500 castles were built during William's reign.

The design of Norman castles was important. A motte, a high mound of earth, was constructed and a wooden keep built on top. A wooden palisade was constructed around the bailey, which was an enclosure below the keep. The garrison of the castle lived in the bailey, kept their horses here with a blacksmith and other services.

Many of the Norman castles were built in the Marcher earldoms of Hereford, Shrewsbury and Chester. In fact, the first castles in England were actually built in Herefordshire before the Conquest, by Normans working for Edward the Confessor. The reason for this was to defend the border with Wales. Chepstow castle is an example of a border castle. It was built by William FitzOsbern. It was unusual because it was built of stone rather than wood.

The Normans used castles to dominate an area. The area controlled by a castle was called a castelry and the Norman controlling the area was called a castellan. The castle was a base for launching attacks: knights could ride out to suppress unrest. When castles were built at Warwick and Nottingham during the revolt of Edwin and Morcar (1068), they were very important in suppressing the unrest.

Compare this answer with an improved version on the next page.

The first paragraph of the answer is very strong. It relates directly to the question and sets up a clear line of argument.

The second paragraph follows one of the prompts: motte and bailey castles. The student demonstrates good factual knowledge (AO1), but does not use this knowledge in an explanation (AO2). This section should be **explaining** why the motte and bailey castles were important in securing Norman control.

The third paragraph picks up the other prompt of the question, the Marcher earldoms. Again, the student demonstrates good factual knowledge but there is only one point at which the student gives any explanation: 'The reason for this was to defend the border with Wales.' This is not enough: details should be used to support the explanation, not the other way round.

Own information is brought into the final paragraph, which is a real strength to the answer. Although the student begins to provide some explanation, generally they again have not got the balance right between AO1 and AO2.

Question 4(b): Explaining why 2

This page has an improved version of the answer given on the previous page.

Improved answer

Right from the start of the Norman conquest, castles were a vital part of securing control of England. William's men constructed a castle at Pevensey, where the invasion force landed, and then at Dover. It is estimated that 500 castles were built during William's reign.

The motte and bailey design of Norman castles was new in England and the English had no tactics for defeating them. The motte was made of earth (fire-proof) and made attacking the keep very difficult. The bailey sheltered soldiers and mounted troops, so Normans could quickly retreat to safety if needed, and could ride out rapidly to put down unrest. This made Norman castles very effective for controlling an area.

Many of the Norman castles were built in the Marcher earldoms of Hereford, Shrewsbury and Chester in order to defend the border with Wales. Attacks from Wales would put pressure on Norman control of England, especially if the Welsh joined Anglo-Saxon resistance. Castles were located at strategic points along roads, rivers and mountain passes, which enabled them to guard against invasions. Marcher castles were also bases for invasions into Wales.

In the revolt of Edwin and Morcar (1068), William responded to the unrest by building castles in Edwin's earldom of Mercia: at Warwick and Nottingham. As soon as castle construction began, Edwin and Morcar submitted to William. This was because they understood the military power that castles gave the Normans. Once a castle dominated a town, the English there were powerless.

Analysis is about examining something carefully in order to identify the reasons that explain it. The most successful answers to 4(b) questions provide an analytical explanation. This means a tight focus on what the question is asking, and careful selection of reasons that provide a well-thought-through explanation.

Causation questions

Question 4(b) is about causation – causes.

These questions have 6 marks for AO1

(accurate and relevant information) and

6 marks for AO2 (explanation and analysis).

Strong answers combine explanation and analysis (AO2) with relevant information (AO1).

This first paragraph is not changed as it provides a strong introduction and sets up the student's analysis of the question.

This is an improved version of the answer on the previous page.

The second paragraph is now refocused on explaining why the design of motte and bailey castles was important in securing control of an area. AO1 detail (accurate and relevant information) is still used but is now there to support the explanation.

The third paragraph also now has a focus on **explaining how** castles helped to achieve control: what the threat from Wales was for securing control of England, and how castles were important in meeting that threat.

In the final paragraph, own knowledge is used to give an example of how castles were used in securing control against unrest. Perhaps a bit more time could have been spent on **reasons why** the castles in Warwick and Mercia had such a dramatic effect.

Making a judgement 1

Question 4(c) on your exam paper involves analysing the statement in the question and deciding how far you agree with it. There are 16 marks available for this question and two prompts to help you answer. You must also use information of your own.

Worked example

'The main threat to Norman control of England was Viking invasion.'

How far do you agree? Explain your answer.

(16 marks)

You may use the following in your answer:

- Edwin and Morcar
- The rebellion at Ely, 1070–71

You **must** also use information of your own.

Analysing the statement

Question 4(c) will always include a statement, which may start with phrases such as 'The main reason for...' or 'The main consequence of...' You decide whether you agree or not by considering whether other aspects or reasons, or other consequences, were more important.



This question covers Anglo-Saxon resistance on pages 12 and 13, and the Revolt of the Earls, page 17.

Remember, for question 4(c) you will choose to answer either option (i) or option (ii).

Compare this answer with an improved version on the next page.

Sample answer

The threat of Viking invasion was a very great threat to Norman control of England. The rebellions in the north in 1069 involved an enormous force of Danes teaming up with Edgar the Aethling and his supporters to form an Anglo-Danish army that attacked York and killed an estimated 3000 Norman troops. The Danes remained in Lincolnshire as William chased around the country suppressing outbreaks of Anglo-Saxon revolt. This was a threat to William too because the Danes were probably waiting for William's army to weaken.

The rebellion at Ely (1071) also involved a Viking (Danish) invasion. This time the Danish fleet, led by King Sweyn, invaded at Ely and made alliances with local rebel leader Hereward the Wake. With Hereward, the Danes raided Peterborough Abbey, and took a lot of valuable treasure away from Norman control.

The Revolt of the Earls (1075) involved a Viking invasion threat too. A huge fleet of 200 Danish ships arrived to support the revolt in the east of Ralph de Gael, Earl of East Anglia. Even though de Gael's rebellion had not linked up with Roger de Breteuil's revolt in the west, the Danish fleet threatened to give de Gael enough men to overwhelm the Norman defences.

The threat to Norman control from a Viking invasion was the main threat because William was always able to defeat Anglo-Saxon resistance.

This answer demonstrates a strong knowledge of the Viking threat to Norman control of England. It can be difficult to keep the details of the different revolts from getting mixed up, but the student provides a very confident account that selects relevant information and uses it accurately.

One of the prompts provided by the question (The rebellion at Ely) is used but not the other. That is not a problem in itself, as own knowledge of the rebellions in the north and the Revolt of the Earls is used to provide alternative points for discussion.

By this point it is becoming clear that there is not enough **analysis** in the answer. Instead of considering other possible threats to Norman control, or weighing up the seriousness of the threat of Viking invasion, this answer is really only listing Viking invasions.

Although the answer provides plenty of evidence that Viking invasions were a significant threat, it is not until the conclusion that other threats are mentioned. This makes it impossible for the student to back up their conclusion with evidence.

Making a judgement 2

This page has an improved version of the answer to 4(c) (i) on the previous page.

Improved answer

The threat of Viking invasion was a very great threat to Norman control of England. The rebellions in the north in 1069 involved an enormous force of Danes teaming up with Edgar the Aethling and his supporters to form an Anglo-Danish army that attacked York and defeated the Norman defenders. The rebellion at Ely (1071) also involved a Viking (Danish) invasion, as did the the Revolt of the Earls (1075): a fleet of 200 Danish ships intended to invade.

However, how serious was the threat of invasion? Although the Anglo-Danish attack on York in 1069 wiped out an estimated 3000 Norman troops, the Anglo-Danish army then split up rather than face William in battle. In 1071, the Danes again combined with English rebels, but abandoned Hereward once they had the treasure from Peterborough cathedral. In 1075 when the Danish fleet arrived, contemporary reports state that Cnut and Hakon did not dare to fight William in open battle. The Vikings were arguably more interested in taking treasure than in an actual invasion that meant facing up against Norman military might.

So was the main threat to Norman control actually Anglo-Saxon resistance? The revolt of Edwin and Morcar (1068) did not involve the Vikings, and although the revolt fizzled out, it brought together Edwin, Morcar, Edgar Aethling, Waltheof and Gospatric. These Anglo-Saxon aristocrats posed a major threat because of the support of their thegns and the local population and because of Edgar Aethling's legitimate claim to the throne.

In conclusion, the Vikings posed a very serious threat to Norman control, but because the Vikings never seemed prepared to take on William in battle, their threat came from the support they gave to Anglo-Saxon resistance. William recognised that he had to take extraordinary measures (the Harrying of the North, paying the Danes to go away) to prevent the Danish threat. That makes the main threat to Norman control not the Vikings alone, or Anglo-Saxon resistance – either of which William was capable of dealing with. It was the combination of both threats.

The balance of Assessment Objectives

Question 4(c) is worth 16 marks in total. Of this, 6 marks are for AO1 and 10 marks for AO2, which shows the importance of analysis and explanation. AO1 information and understanding also needs to be combined with AO2 for the best results.

Note how the student has now condensed the evidence of the Viking threat into the first paragraph, setting up the analysis which makes up the rest of the answer.

Now the answer considers other factors that may have been important, and also evaluates how significant the Viking threat actually turned out to be.

The solid analysis provided leads up to a judgement at the end that the student can justify.