

L.O I can explore crime and punishment in the Anglo-Saxon period

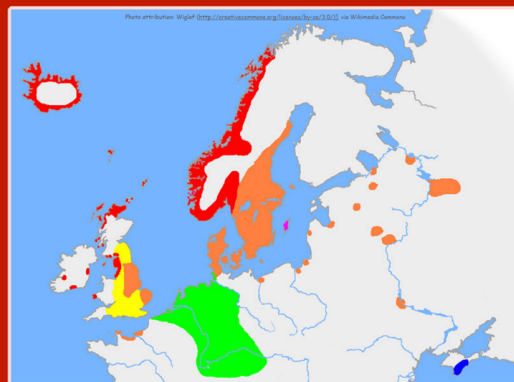


From the Romans to the Anglo-Saxons



What can you remember about Roman crime and punishment?

1. What were Roman laws known as?
2. What types of Roman punishments can you remember?
3. What would happen if you were a wealthy person that committed a crime compared to if you were poor or a slave?
4. What did Roman law consider to be the worst possible crime?
5. Were the punishments fair?



Map.docx

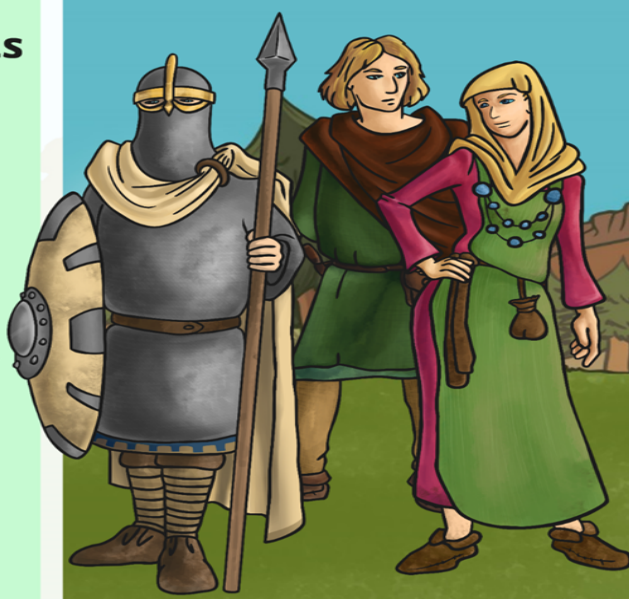
Angles and Saxons (yellow) came from what is now Germany (green). Vikings were mainly from Norway (red) and Sweden (orange).

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From the Romans to the Anglo-Saxons

Germanic tribes had been invading Britain for some time, and without Roman protection they proved to be a formidable force against the Brits.

- These invaders are known to us as the Anglo-Saxons because the two biggest invading tribes were the Angles and the Saxons.
- Other invaders were the Jutes, Franks and Frisians. They came from the modern countries of Germany, Holland and Denmark.



Anglo-Saxon Justice System

Many laws we have in Britain today are not that different from the laws of Anglo-Saxon Britain. However, the punishments were considerably different.

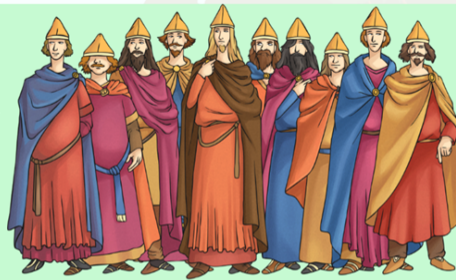
There were no prisons to send criminals to, so punishments were designed to be a huge deterrent to those thinking of breaking the law and they were often pretty brutal!

The different Anglo-Saxon kings and kingdoms had their own laws and punishments.



Anglo-Saxon Justice System

The different villages and communities were divided into **tithings**, made up of 10 men, who were all responsible for each other's behaviour. If a man in that tithing committed a crime, it was up to the other men to bring him to court. If they did not bring them to court, they would face punishment themselves.

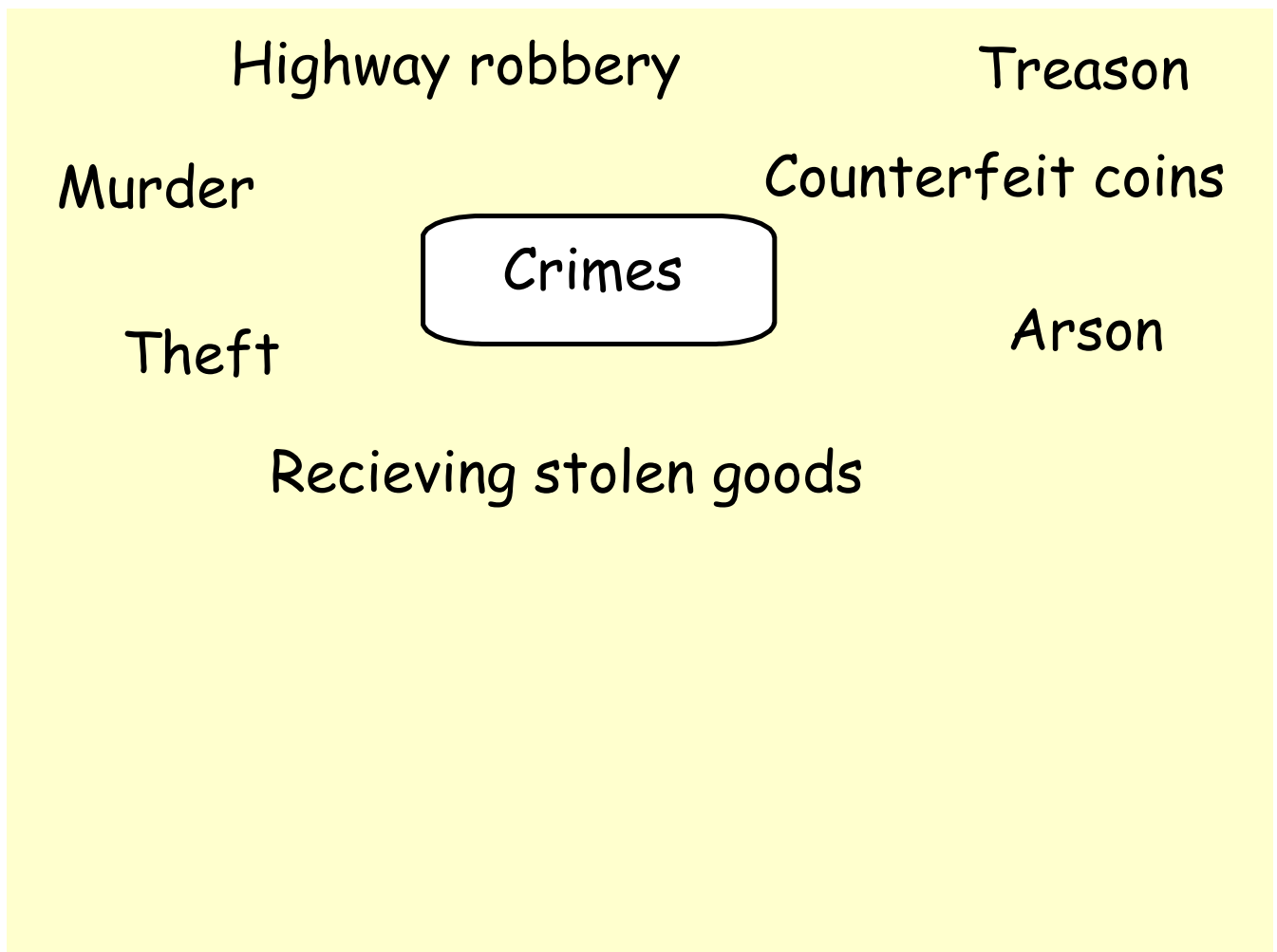


When a village wanted to find a criminal, the people would call upon everyone else in the community to find them. This was called a **hue and cry**.

Do you know of any crime or
punishments in Anglo-Saxon
times?



[https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/
topics/z8w3n9q/articles/zxhqkty](https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/z8w3n9q/articles/zxhqkty)



If there were no witnesses to a crime, or witnesses disagreed, the accused could have a trial by ordeal. This involved subjecting the accused to a dangerous or painful death. The theory was that God would perform a miracle and save them if they were innocent.

One trial by ordeal that was often used was to walk over hot coals or ploughshares.

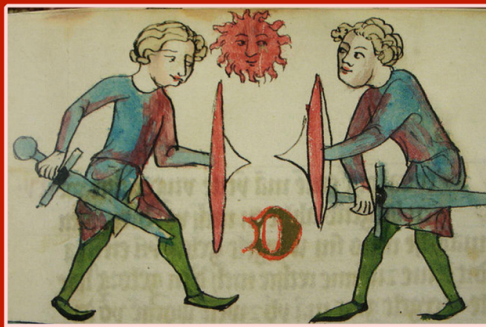
Another popular trial was trial by boiling water. The accused would have to put their hand in boiling water to pick up a stone.

The hand was then bound. After three days, if the hand had healed, they were declared innocent.



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Trial by water also included submerging someone in a river or stream. If they drowned, they were considered guilty but if they survived, they were innocent.



If two people had a dispute, they could prove who was right in a trial by combat. This was like a duel. The winner was declared innocent.



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Anglo-Saxon Justice System

Here are some typical Anglo-Saxon punishments...

Stoning



Paying a fine (if a person could not afford their fine, they could be put into slavery)



Hanging



Drowning



Whipping



Mutilation (bits of the body cut off)



Branding
(burned with a hot iron rod)



Stocks




Exile (being sent away)



Most punishments were carried out in public to make an example of the guilty person and to deter others from committing the same crime.

Case Study

 Crime and Punishment Work3.pdf

Read/act out the stories.

What would the punishment be?

Choose one and write it into your book.

After the Romans left Britain, the Anglo-Saxons and then the Vikings attacked. They had not been ruled by the Romans and so had their own ways of dealing with crime.

Instead of punishment, most crimes demanded that the criminal pay the injured party compensation, known as weregild. 'Gild' meant gold. The amount of compensation a person got depended on their standing in society.



Weregild

- ❖ The standard rate of weregild for killing a man was 200 shillings
- ❖ This was multiplied if a nobleman was killed, generally 1200 shillings were paid to his family
- ❖ It was 30,000 for killing a king, half for the family and half for the country
- ❖ The amount varied for women, in some places it was double, in others, half that of men

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Activity Sheet Wergild for Body Parts.pdf

Wergild for Body Parts



Different parts of the body even had a wergild value. For example, if you lost a finger in a fight, your attacker would have to pay you compensation.

Look at your team's situation card on the **Wergild for Body Parts** sheet. Use your sticky notes to label one person in your team with the amounts they should be paid in wergild. **Which team wins the most money?**

Body Part		Wergild Value
Broken tooth		1 shilling
Broken nose		10 shilling
Lost Finger		6 shillings
Lost thumb		20 shillings
Lost foot		50 shillings
Dislocated shoulder		30 shillings
Blinded eye		50 shillings



1. What was the most common form of crime and how was it punished?
2. Name three officials who were associated with keeping the peace.
3. Explain what trial by ordeal was.
4. What was weregild and how was it used?
5. In what cases could a person be put to death as a punishment?
6. Using what you have learnt so far in topic, compare the 3 legal systems we know about. What was similar and what was different?

	Romans	Anglo-Saxon	Today
Similarities			
Differences			

Comparison table.docx



Attachments

Map.docx

Crime and Punishment Work3.pdf

Activity Sheet Wergild for Body Parts.pdf

Comparison table.docx