



KIBWORTH MEAD
ACADEMY

TALENT KNOWLEDGE SUCCESS

HISTORY

Year 7

Norman Conquest

Edward the Confessor was King of England between 1042-1066. Edward married but had no children. For a King to die without an heir was a disaster. A strong ruler, preferably with experience, good at fighting and leading armies and related to the King was required. Here are the candidates:

Harold Godwinson	William Duke of Normandy	Harold Hardrada
<p>Anglo-Saxon Earl of Wessex, one of the most powerful men in England. Harold's sister was married to King Edward. Harold was a brave and respected soldier with a tough streak. The Witan wanted Harold to be the next king. Edward promised the throne to William on his deathbed.</p>	<p>Norman Duke of Normandy, France. William came from a fighting family. He was a brave soldier. Edward's cousin. Edward had lived in Normandy from 1016-1042. Edward had supposedly promised that William should become King of England. Harold had promised to support William.</p>	<p>Viking King of Norway. Vikings had ruled Britain before. Most feared warrior in Europe – Hardrada means 'hard ruler' and his nickname was 'the Ruthless'. Harold was supported by Tostig, Harold Godwinson's brother who wanted revenge.</p>

Key Vocabulary

Heir	Next person in line to the throne.
Foot soldier	Soldiers fighting on foot.
Cavalry	Soldiers on horseback.
Senlac Hill	Where the Battle of Hastings was fought.
Housecarls	Harold Godwinson's professional soldiers.
Fyrd	Harold Godwinson's part-time soldiers.
Shield wall	The Saxon defensive position.
Normans	William's army from Normandy.
Saxons	Harold Godwinson's army from England.
Pevensey Bay	The coastal area where William landed.

Key Dates

5th January 1066	Edward the Confessor died. The Witan elected Harold Godwinson to be the next King of England.
6th January 1066	Harold was crowned as King of England, probably at Westminster Abbey.
20th September 1066	Harald Hardrada and Tostig invaded, with more than 10,000 men in 200 long ships. Anglo- Saxon Earls Edwin and Morcar were defeated at Battle of Fulford.
25th September 1066	Harold Godwinson travelled north to fight Harald Hardrada. In four days he marched 180 miles to surprise Hardrada and Tostig, east of York. Godwinson defeated Hardrada, but his army was tired and badly reduced in size.
27th September 1066	William, Duke of Normandy, set sail with almost 700 ships. His soldiers landed at Pevensey and made a small castle. The Normans pillaged and burned the surrounding area, in order to force Harold to come south. Having heard of William's landing while at York, he raced south.
12th October 1066	Harold arrives in London to recruit more troops.
14th October 1066	Battle of Hastings—death of King Harold

Why did William win at the Battle of Hastings?

Preparation	Leadership	Luck
William had well trained and professional soldiers. Large parts of Harold's army was untrained and made up of farmers. Many of Harold's men had left the army to collect the harvest in. Harold was not prepared for the battle. William's army was fresh and well rested. He had lots of supplies. Harold's army was tired and reduced in size following the Battle of Stamford Bridge.	William was very brave and led his men very well. William showed his face during the battle to keep his soldiers from running away. William used cavalry & archers to help to win the battle. The tactic of pretending to run away worked perfectly.	The weather changed when William was trying to cross the English Channel. Harold had to fight the Vikings first, giving William the advantage. At a key moment in the battle Harold was killed.