

Saxons Alive!

Suitable for Key Stage 2, adapted to suit the requirements of each individual group. Each school's specific learning objectives are incorporated into the programme plan for their visit.

This programme brings the Anglo- Saxons to life. Children become Saxons for a day and experience a little of what it was like to be a child in Saxon times. Human influences on climate change are included as appropriate in relation to sustainable living.

Key Concepts

Sustainable living and respect for nature and the environment.

Taking personal responsibility for the environment.

Forests have value as habitats for plants and animals, as a source of renewable materials, of medicinal plants and in mitigating the effects of climate change.

We can learn from the past.

Language work can be combined with historical and environmental learning.

Practical skills can be combined with factual learning

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the programme pupils should

- understand the concept of sustainability and the need to live in harmony with nature if there are to be resources for the future.
- have gained an insight into Anglo Saxon life.
- be aware that the forest is managed in a sustainable way.
- have increased their knowledge of trees and forests.
- have a greater respect for the natural world and forests in particular.
- know that forests provide habitats for a great variety of plants and animals.
- know that trees provide us with renewable resources to make things.
- know that trees have an important contribution to make in relation to climate change but that climate change will have a serious effect on today's ecosystems.
- know that forests are exciting places to visit.

Introduction

Learning objective – to prepare pupils for activities in the forest and ensure that safety rules are understood by adults and children.

1. Welcome to Alice Holt - lovely woods; lots of different trees and open spaces; a place for animals; a place for people; a place to produce timber; looked after by the Forestry Commission. Looking after the forest involves cutting down some trees and planting more to replace them. This provides materials for people to use and creates new habitats for other plants and animals.

2. Background to Saxon life and culture:
Who they were, when they lived in England, what their homes were like and how they lived. Food, farming, importance of the forest to them, entertainment, harsh rules, origin of many words and place names used today. Position of children in society
3. Plan for the day
4. Safety, including foxgloves, fungi, slips and trips. Please keep together as a class unless asked to do otherwise. Please don't hold hands in the woods (mainly KS1) and don't overtake the leader. No need to regroup with your assigned adult when moving a short distance within the woods.

Morning (Meadow and Further Beech Wood)

Learning Objectives	Activity
To provide physical activity in the outdoors and to teach children that rats were a problem that needed to be kept under control if people were to be able to eat the food they'd grown.	Whack the Rat game – in pairs , one child with a rolled up newspaper 'whacker' and the other running away with a bean bag on a rope trailing behind. This represents Saxon children chasing rats as there was a need to control vermin and keep them out of the grain stores
To understand the forest provided most of the resources the Saxons needed for life and everything needed to build their homes and meeting places. Keeping animals complemented this. Large hall with smaller dwellings around. Saxon homes changed and developed over time from large dwellings shared with wider family and animals to small family homes.	Base activities at a ' roundhouse ' (a den built in advance with wood from the forest) and help to 'thatch' the house. Explain use of wattle and daub and the use of cow dung in this.
To develop manual dexterity and create something similar to the larger hurdles used by Saxons to fence their fields. To appreciate that materials for all construction came from the forest . To improve co-operation through working with others.	Make mini hurdles , working in pairs. Short hazel sticks with willow withies to weave between. The hurdles are taken back to school at the end of the session and are ideal to demarcate vegetable beds and paths in school gardens.
To encourage creative thinking and writing. To teach children about Saxon culture and ways in which they entertained themselves	Create kennings or longer riddles. Children work in small groups and are given cards with a word on it and are asked to think of 2 words to describe the item for other groups to guess what it is.
To teach about understanding of health and disease in the past and	Make 'medicines' . Discuss Saxon understanding of disease and its

<p>the important role of forests in providing medicines.</p> <p>To encourage creativity and speaking and listening</p>	<p>transmission. Explain that they used many herbal remedies. Think of a disease or disability and create a potion to cure it by collecting pieces of plants, either on a small, sticky herb bag shaped card or in a small cup or yogurt pot. For the latter add some 'medicine mix' – coloured water- and stir. Children take turns to describe their medicine and what it cures.</p>
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Afternoon (Near Beech Wood and Education Centre)

<p>To remind children that the first Saxons came to drive away the existing populations to gain land for their own settlement.</p> <p>To develop balance and large motor skills running over uneven ground and to give children some energy release after lunch.</p>	<p>Play Saxon Invaders - a chasing game in the woods</p>
<p>To teach children that everything had to be made by hand and at home. To encourage observation while looking for sticks and reinforce understanding that all resources came from the forest or the animals kept.</p> <p>To develop small motor skills</p>	<p>Wool weaving on forked sticks. Children find forked sticks in the woods and then use wool in various colours to weave a simple fabric in the fork. Mention that wool from sheep was dyed using plants from the forest.</p>
<p>To learn about old forms of writing</p> <p>To encourage concentration and use of problem solving skills</p>	<p>Runes Challenge in the woods (Everyone or while some complete their weaving). Explain that before modern writing was adopted by the Saxons they had their own writing system known as runes. Provide children in small groups with a runes sheet, showing modern letters with the corresponding rune, and a message written in runes. Children work out the message.</p>
	<p>In the classroom or outdoors at the education centre, choose from a variety of crafts related to the theme and complete as many as time allows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make a mini-roundhouse using clay twigs and string • Write and decorate runes with a quill pen. Decoration of capital letters and initial runes was an art

	form. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Riddle and rune writing • Make necklaces using leather strips and wooden beads
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Other possible activities

These can be included in the programme in place of some of the above to ensure that the content suits the age and ability of the group members and meets the learning objectives of the school. **Ad hoc discussions and activities** often take place in response to children's observations and questions so programmes are adapted 'in the moment' while continuing to work towards achieving desired learning outcomes.

Save the World game – children hold hands in a circle (the world) and move around in a clockwise direction. They are then asked a series of questions about their behaviour which relate to the environment and some questions about Saxon life which ask whether or not it was damaging to the environment. A series of forfeits follows from modern day behaviours which make it increasingly difficult to 'turn the world'. This is followed by a discussion about our responsibility to look after our world and a consideration of what ordinary people, especially the children present, can do to help. What will you do differently now? **Objective** to encourage children to consider their own responsibilities.

Tree Rings, Thinnings and Climate Change – children look at tree rings and see that trees have been cut down to allow the remaining trees to grow well. They are told how using timber in construction or manufacturing locks up carbon while the trees still growing, and newly planted trees, soak up more of it. The Saxons cut down a limited amount and they used the wood to build. They also burned wood but usually no more than re-grew each year. **Objective** to teach about the role of trees in relation to climate change.

Stories from Saxon culture e.g. traditional legends about the Saxon gods before they adopted Christianity. **Objective** to encourage listening and imagination, to teach that Saxon culture involved the telling of stories along with stories told in song and that there was a great deal of 'home' and 'community' entertainment in the absence of radio, television and computers.

National Curriculum Links

KS1 and KS2

Geography, History, Science, Design and Technology, Art, English, Physical Education