

### At this time ...

With Vikings ruling their own territory, which they called 'the Danelaw', life became more peaceful. Towns became bigger and trade developed. The country began to recover from the long years of raids and wars. Learning had been neglected during the war period but under King Alfred it was encouraged again.



### FACTS

**At this time, most people could not read or write. Alfred started a school in his court – the first English school not attached to a church.**

Alfred believed 'all free-born young men' should have a primary education in English.



Alfred ordered books to be translated into English from Latin and other languages, so people could read and learn from them.

*I am King Alfred. I believe that education is important. Many people in this country used to be able to read and write, but the Viking raids changed that by destroying the monasteries where people were taught.*



*I am Edward. I don't want to go to school. I would prefer to be out hunting, fishing or riding – in fact anything but sitting inside, bent over a book. But I am a prince and as my father has explained – many times – I have a responsibility to my people. Worst luck!*



## GOING TO SCHOOL

'I don't want to go to school,' moaned Edward. 'I am a prince. I want to be outside hunting, shooting and fighting. Why would I want to spend my day in that dark room being nagged by the monks? I am bored of reading. And writing – it's impossible! After a few minutes with the quill, my book looks like a spider has walked across it. Please, my lord father, please Sire, don't make me go. Why do I have to?'

Alfred looked sternly at his angry son. 'That's enough, Edward. Until now, there have been no schools in this country

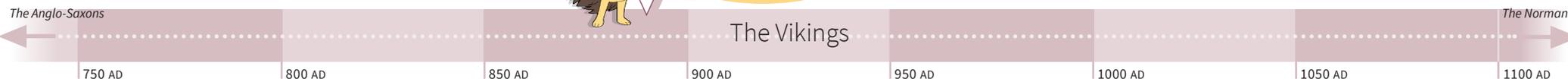
– not since the Danes destroyed the monasteries. People have forgotten how to read and write; even the priests don't know enough Latin to say the prayers in church. We need to change it, you and I.'

'Why me?' asked Edward. 'I'm not going to be a priest.'

'You're my son,' replied Alfred. 'I want you to set an example to our people. It is not enough just to be skilled with the bow and sword. You are the heir to my throne and I want you to be a wise king after I die – loved for his leadership, as well as his strength. So stop whining and make your way to the school – you'll be in trouble with the monks if you are late again.'



We are here!





Read 'Going To School' and the facts; then try these tasks:

HISTORY KEY STAGE 2

The Vikings Britain in Viking Times

5b

Two Nations Living side by side

Find the answers to these questions:

Why did Alfred believe that education was important? .....

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Why was the school he set up different?

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Why had education stopped in England? .....

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Do you think Edward was right to complain?

Explain your answer.

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Explain why Edward didn't want to study:

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List two hopes Alfred had for his son:

1 .....  
2 .....

Something to talk about!

*Why was it important for a king to be a wise leader, as well as a strong leader?*



Draw Edward studying, or draw him doing something he preferred.

