

Group 1

Your task is to ...

show that the old Anglo-Saxon Church was corrupt.

England was fully converted to Christianity in the 7th century AD. The Normans had been Christians for a shorter time, but they worshipped more fervently than the Saxons. This meant that in some cases, the Saxons practised their religion in ways that Normans would consider very improper!

You need to gather evidence to demonstrate that the Anglo-Saxon Church is not properly Christian and needs to be changed - reformed - by the Normans in order to please God. You will be finding, and perhaps even creating, **propaganda** to do this, trying to discredit the Saxon Church.

To do this, use your textbook(s) and websites to find out about:

1. Archbishop Stigand - why is the Pope unhappy with him? What does this say about the whole of the English Church?
2. Pluralism
3. Simony
4. Nepotism
5. Priests being married

Be as convincing as you can to persuade the people of England that their Church needs to change. However, remember that the Normans did use propaganda to support and defend the Conquest - don't assume all the 'spin' is true!

Group 2

Your task is to ...

show that changing Church buildings is desirable.

The Saxons built a number of small parish churches in England. The most impressive building - Westminster Abbey - was founded by Edward the Confessor. However, the Normans were determined to make their own mark on the landscape of England to show they were more dedicated Christians than the Saxons. You need to show how they did this by using your textbooks and websites such as English Heritage's Heritage Explorer (<http://www.heritage-explorer.co.uk/web/he/default.aspx>).

Sometimes the Normans built brand new buildings - churches, abbeys, monasteries and cathedrals. Sometimes they adapted and extended Saxon ones, but sometimes they abolished them altogether! Find out the story of the following buildings and work out which category they fall into: built, adapted or destroyed:

1. Battle Abbey
2. Winchester Cathedral
3. Durham Cathedral
4. Worcester Cathedral
5. Binham Priory.

The way in which Normans built was also very different to the Saxons. They built on a very grand scale in a style called Romanesque. Find some examples of this style to create a diagram and explain what impression you think this would have had on ordinary English people. Think about the height of the largest Norman church buildings!

In your presentation to the rest of the class, explain why, as Normans, you think these physical changes are necessary.

Group 3

Your task is to ...

show that new people are required to run the Church.

Just as the Normans replaced the Saxons as landowners of England, the people in charge of the Church changed too. Lanfranc, the new Norman Archbishop, brought in many reforms to how the Church was run as well as who ran it. Use your textbook(s) and suitable websites to find out about:

1. Lanfranc and his beliefs
2. the roles of the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Archbishop of York, and how these changed
3. Church courts
4. Synods (church councils)
5. Archdeacons
6. Where England's bishops came from.

Finally, consider this report by the English monk William of Malmesbury:

'At the present time there is no English earl, no bishop, nor abbot.'

William was writing in 1132. What do you think this suggests about the changes William the Conqueror made to the Church decades earlier?

In your presentation to the rest of the class, explain why, as Normans, you think these changes to the Church are necessary.

Teaching notes

This resource is a simulation/role-play activity in which students assume the roles of religious advisers to William. It is designed to get students to think about *why* the Normans considered Church reform necessary.

This could be an enrichment opportunity for your most able students, or could be organised as a whole-class activity with the most able students as group leaders.

After dividing the class into three groups, each group takes responsibility for one of the following tasks:

7. show that the old Anglo-Saxon Church was corrupt.
8. show that changing Church buildings is desirable.
9. show that new people are required to run the Church.

The following pages are guidance sheets for each group, with prompt questions and suggested resources. Students could present their findings as PowerPoint presentations.

After the activity, a plenary discussion could consider how far the Normans did change England and which changes they think had the most impact.