

What happened on 14th October 1066 at the Battle of Hastings?

Retreat: Following a charge, a retreat calls the men back, ending that attack

Catastrophic: A very significant, usually very bad decision leading to a bad outcome

Valour: Bravery, usually in battle

Shieldwall: A defensive wall of shields several ranks deep and up to half a mile long



The Battlefield Today – On this site, the future of England would never be the same again!



King Harold was killed
here

The first main problem with our knowledge of the Battle of Hastings is that all but one of the sources of information from 14th October are Norman and even they don't agree with each other! We'll never know for sure what happened. There were no eye witness accounts recorded by the English. As we have seen, the Bayeux Tapestry is the most probable source of what we 'know'.





NEW PAGE

Read through your information cards and arrange them into chronological order, don't stick until your happy or your teacher has confirmed the order.

A. The two armies started shouting rude things at each other. Then a brave young Norman called Tallifer charged out from the Norman lines towards the English. Brave Tallifer was cut down and killed. The battle had begun

B. On 25 September King Harold defeated a Viking invasion led by Harald Hardrada and supported by his brother Tostig at the Battle of Stamford Bridge.

C. In the first part of the battle the Norman archers and cavalry didn't make much impact. It seemed as if William was missing but the great leader took off his helmet to show his troops that we was still alive.

D. On the evening of 13 October, Harold made the stupid decision to fight the battle on Senlac Hill. He placed his army on the high ground, but the position was not suitable for open battle.

E. With many of the English army killed on the slopes of Senlac Hill the fight moved closer to Harold's position. The fearless Normans advanced up the hill and Harold was killed. The battle was over

F. As the sun rose on the morning of the 14 October, William's army prepared for battle. William placed his archers at the front, foot soldiers behind and the cavalry to the rear.

G. William landed with his army at Pevensey on 28 September to rightfully claim his throne.

H. Harold's army arrived on the south coast throughout the day on 13 October but his soldiers were tired. By early evening on 7,500 had arrived.

I. After showing he was alive, William played a cunning trick. The Normans pretended to run away. The silly English fell for the trick and ran down the hill. The Normans then turned and cut them down.

Correct Order:

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The writer of these statements is clearly in favour of one side. Which side is it? Make a list on your title page of words that show the side of the author...



William of Poitiers:

Born around 1020 in Normandy

Job: Knight, soldier, priest, Chaplain (personal priest) to William, Duke of Normandy

Works: The Deeds of William, Duke of the Normans, published 1073

What might suggest that William of Poitiers might be one sided?



William of Poitiers was probably at Hastings, what image of William, Duke of Normandy does he describe in these 3 extracts from his 'Deeds of William..'

Source A:

In the front Duke William put foot soldiers armed with arrows and crossbows. In the second rank came the more heavily armed foot soldiers. Lastly came the group of knights. William rode among them showing great courage.

Source B:


William was a noble general, inspiring courage, sharing danger, more often commanding men to follow than urging them on from the rear



Source C:

Now as the day ended the English army realised beyond doubt they could no longer stand against the Normans. They knew they had suffered heavy losses; that Harold himself was dead; they saw the Normans, with not many dead or injured, threatening them more keenly than in the beginning, as if they had found a new strength in the fight; they saw that fury of the duke who spared no one who resisted him; they saw courage which could only find rest in victory. Therefore the English ran away.

In summary then...

Before	During	End
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Harold's men arrived at Hastings on 14th October 1066 They had already had a battle at Stamford Bridge vs Hardrada They then marched 300 miles in just 8 days Many of his troops were still making their way south leaving Harold's army further weakened 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Harold set up his troops on top of Senlac Hill, in theory giving him the advantage of higher ground Tallifer charged into the English being cut down Norman archers fired arrows at the English Shieldwall, to no avail Norman infantry marched up the ridge to attack but were hit with spears, axes and stones. Their attack met a solid shieldwall and was easily repelled Norman knights advanced throwing javelins and lances. Again Harold's shieldwall held firm, the knights fell back Rumours spread that William had been killed, this was false and William showed himself, encouraging the Normans to keep fighting Half of Harold's shield wall (Fyrds) inexplicably broke rank and chased the retreating Normans down the hill. They were slaughtered easily Normans attacked then fake retreated fooling the English into attacking again, with a similar outcome as previously 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Harold's brothers Gyrth and Leofwine were killed Harold's shieldwall had been damaged by the slaughter of the Fyrd who chased the retreating Normans Late afternoon saw the shieldwall finally broken leaving Harold vulnerable The Bayeux Tapestry seems to show Harold with an arrow in his eye, it then shows Harold being cut down by a Norman knight Harold was disembowelled on the battlefield The English fled Hastings 