

Anglo-Saxon Archaeo-Box (HI00502)

This collection contains a variety of Anglo-Saxon replica artefacts to support and enhance learning about this time in history.

Contents: -

1. 5 x replica Staffordshire Hoard pieces
2. 2 x Chainmail patches
3. 1 x Anglo-Saxon cooking pot
4. 1 x Set of Knucklebones
5. 1 x Anglo-Saxon shield boss (18cm)
6. 1 x Anglo-Saxon brooch
7. 1 x Anglo-Saxon clay pot
8. 1 x Set of Anglo-Saxon Runes in leather pouch
(Contents may vary)



Questions you could ask children about the artefacts

Initial Discussion

- What is this object?
- Does it resemble anything the children have seen?
- What do you think the item was used for and by whom?
- Does anyone know what it is called?

Collect any other questions the children might have about the artefacts and display them as you try to find the answers through your learning sessions.

Other questions to consider:

- Where does the object come from?
- Who might have made this object? And how were they made?
- Why were they made?
- **What do the objects tell us about life in Anglo-Saxon times?** *This last question can be returned to at the end of the investigation.*

All About the Artefacts

1. Staffordshire Hoard Pieces

The Staffordshire hoard is the largest hoard of Anglo-Saxon metal found. It was discovered in a field on a farm by a metal-detectorist in 2009. The hoard contained a number of crosses as well as garnet fittings that most likely decorated religious books and containers. These would provide insight into Anglo-Saxon England and the earliest Christian church.

Visit local museums or historical sites that feature Anglo-Saxon exhibits.

2. Chainmail Patches

Replica of Anglo-Saxon mail. This would have been worn as a crucial layer of defence on the battlefield.

Write a diary entry of an Anglo-Saxon wearing the chainmail.

3. Cooking Pot

Essential for cooking a variety of food, including grains, meat and vegetables. Anglo-Saxons were good at metal work and pottery and a range of pots were used on a daily basis.

4. Knucklebones

Also known as 'tali'. They were sheep or goat's ankle bones and were used by adults for gambling and for a variety of games by children. The games were similar to the game of 'jacks' - the bones would have been placed on the knuckles and flicked into the air. The aim of the game was to try and catch them.

Learn how to play the game and create own versions of it using found objects such as small stones or buttons. Write instructions for playing the game and set up class contests.

5. Shield Boss

Designed to protect the hand holding the shield and also to strengthen the shield.

Look at different Anglo-Saxon shields and get the children to design and make a shield of their own.

6. Anglo-Saxon Brooch

Anglo-Saxons were skilled jewellers who made beautiful brooches. Brooches were used to fasten clothes and to show status.

Make your own Anglo-Saxon brooch.

7. Anglo-Saxon Clay Pot

Essential for everyday life. Used for cooking, storing and even religious ceremonies. Potters would dig clay from the ground, often near rivers and use techniques such as coiling to create pots.

Use clay to make own pots and use the technique of coiling.

8. Runes

Runes are the alphabet used by Anglo-Saxons for writing. The symbols were made from straight lines which made them easier to carve into objects like stone. Runes can often be found on gravestones. Runes means secret or mystery and were thought to hold some religious and magical significance. There were 28 letters in the Anglo-Saxon alphabet.

Create a runic alphabet chart and use it to write and translate names and messages.

Bury the artefacts in sand and create your own class archaeological dig. Make it clear that the artefacts are fragile and need to be excavated with care. Plastic pallet knives and paint brushes are ideal for this activity.

Section up the dig into square areas so that each child or group can work on one area. When they have found their artefact task them to fill out an 'artefact report' where they draw the artefact and describe its features and likely uses. Encourage them to do further research and then report back what they have found out, labelling and displaying their artefact to create a classroom museum of finds.

Read Anglo-Saxon inspired literature such as 'Beowulf' by Michael Morpurgo.

Reference Websites:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/school-radio/articles/zhtdd6f>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zxsbcdm>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/ztyr9j6>