



Oxford Cambridge and RSA

A Level History A

Unit Y101

Alfred and the Making of England 871–1016

Sample Question Paper

Date – Morning/Afternoon

Version 0.13

Time allowed: 1 hour 30 minutes



OCR supplied materials:

- 12 page Answer Booklet

Other materials required:

- None



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First name										
Last name										
Centre number						Candidate number				

INSTRUCTIONS

- Use black ink.
- Complete the boxes above with your name, centre number and candidate number.
- Answer Question 1 in Section A and either Question 2 or Question 3 in Section B.
- Write your answer to each question on the Answer Booklet.
- Do **not** write in the bar codes.

INFORMATION

- The total mark for this paper is **50**.
- The marks for each question are shown in brackets [].
- Quality of extended responses will be assessed in questions marked with an asterisk (*).
- This document consists of **8** pages.

Section A**Alfred the Great**

Study the four sources and then answer Question 1.

- 1 Using these four sources in their historical context, assess how far they support the view that Alfred's success against his Viking opponents was due mainly to his skill as a diplomat and negotiator.

[30]

Source A: William of Malmesbury, a monk and historian, tells a story of how Alfred acted as a spy to gain knowledge about his opponents.

Accompanied only by one of his most faithful adherents, Alfred entered the tent of the Danish king under the disguise of a minstrel; and being admitted, as a professor of the mimic art, to the banqueting room, there was no object of secrecy that he did not minutely attend to both with eyes and ears. Remaining there several days, till he had satisfied his mind on every matter which he wished to know, he returned to Athelney.

William of Malmesbury, Chronicle of the Kings of the English, 1128

Source B: A narrative of how Alfred used his navy to confront the Vikings.

And the same year King Alfred sent a naval force from Kent to East Anglia. As soon as they came to the mouth of the Stour, then met them sixteen ships of Vikings and they fought against them, and captured all the ships, and slew the men. When they were returning homeward with the booty, a great naval force of Vikings met them, and then fought against them on the same day. And in the same year a larger naval force assembled among the Old Saxons; and there was a great fight twice in that year, and the Saxons had the victory; and there were Frisians with them.

Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, 885

Source C: Asser, a monk, writes about the methods Alfred used to win a battle against Vikings at Edington.

Moving his standards thence the next morning, he came to a place called Edington, and with a close shield-wall fought fiercely against the whole army of the pagans; his attack was long and spirited, and finally by divine aid he triumphed and overthrew the pagans with a very great slaughter. He pursued them, killing them as they fled up to the stronghold, where he seized all that he found outside – men, horses, and cattle – slaying the men at once; and before the gates of the pagan fortress he boldly encamped with his whole army. And when he had stayed there fourteen days and the pagans had known the horrors of famine, cold, fear, and at last of despair, they sought a peace.

Asser's Life of King Alfred, 893

Source D: An extract from an official document which outlined the conditions of a peace agreement made between Alfred and Guthrum, a Viking king.

This is the peace that King Alfred and King Guthrum, and the witan of all the English nation, and all the people that are in East Anglia, have all ordained and with oaths confirmed.

1. Concerning our land boundaries: Up on the Thames, and then up on the Lea, and along the Lea unto its source, then straight to Bedford, then up on the Ouse unto Watling Street.
2. And if a king's thegn be accused of man slaying, if he dare clear himself on oath, let him do that with twelve king's thegns. If anyone accuse that man who is of less degree than the king's thegn, let him clear himself with ten of his equals and with one king's thegn.

The Treaty between King Alfred and Guthrum, 878–890 (exact date unknown)

Section B

The Making of England 899–1016

Answer **ONE** question.

EITHER

- 2*** Assess the reasons for the success of Edward the Elder in dealing with the Viking threat from 899 to 924.

[20]

OR

- 3*** 'Edgar's most important achievement was to improve local government and administration.' How far do you agree with this view?

[20]

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Source A: Adapted from J.A. Giles, *William of Malmesbury's, Chronicle of the Kings of England from the earliest period to the reign of King Stephen*, Henry G. Bohn, 1847.

Source B: Adapted from: Swanton, M (2000), *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicles*, Orion Publishing, London UK. Reproduced with permission from The Orion Publishing Group Ltd, UK.

Source C: Adapted from: Asser's *Life of King Alfred*, translated by W.H. Stevenson, Oxford University Press, 1904.

Source D: Adapted from *Alfred and Guthrum's Peace* translated in Albert Beebe White and Wallace Notestein, eds., *Source Problems in English History* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1915). Text prepared by Seth Seyfried of the University of Utah. Internet Medieval Sourcebook, Fordham University Center for Medieval Studies. <https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/source/guthrum.asp>

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