**Year 7**

**Norman Conquest: Why was there a crisis in 1066?**

| Key term | Definition |
|---|---|
| 1. Source | Someone or something you get information from. |
| 2. Crisis | A time of difficulty or danger when important decisions need to be made to solve a problem. |
| 3. Monarchy | When a king or queen is head of a country until they die. |
| 5. Heir | The person who is next in line to the throne. |
| 6. Tax | Money that people and businesses pay to the government. |
| 7. Witan | A group of powerful English leaders. |
| 8. Conquer | To take over or take control. |
| 9. Feudal System | The way people and land were organised, like a pyramid with the king at the top. |

**Why was there a battle for the crown?**

1. King Edward the Confessor died on 5th January 1066.
2. The closest royal relative, Edgar, was only 14 years old, which was considered too young for him to become king.
3. Because there was no clear adult **heir**, a **crisis** broke out as three powerful men claimed they should be the next king.

**Who fought in the Battle of Hastings?**

**Godwinson's army** *(English)*

1. Housecarls – professional, trained, 2500 in the battle.
2. Fyrd – Unpaid, called up when the country was in danger.

**William's army** *(Normans)*

1. Foot soldiers
2. Knights
3. Archers
4. 10,000 men and 2000 horses

**The Three Contenders for the Throne**

**1. Harold Godwinson** *(Earl of Wessex, England)*

• **His Claim:** He was the old King's brother-in-law, second in command of the army, and claimed Edward chose him on his deathbed. He was also supported by the **Witan.**

•**Strengths:** He was a hero to ordinary people, had a large army, and promised not to increase taxes.

• **Weaknesses:** He had previously rebelled against Edward in 1051, and when he visited Normandy, he swore an oath on a saint's bones to support William's claim to the throne. His own brother, Tostig, hated him and supported the Vikings.

**2. Harald Hardrada** *(King of Norway)*

• **His Claim:** He argued that his father had been promised the throne and that England had been ruled by Viking Kings (like King Canute) in the past.

• **Strengths:** He was an established king with a powerful army, and had the support of Godwinson's brother, Tostig.

• **Weaknesses:** He would have two different countries to run and would increase taxes.

**3. Duke William of Normandy** *(Northern France)*

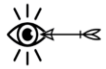
• **His Claim:** He was a cousin of Edward the Confessor, who promised him the throne in 1051 after William helped him put down a rebellion by Harold Godwinson.

• **Strengths:** He was an excellent military leader, had the support of the Pope, and Harold had sworn an oath to support him.

• **Weaknesses:** He was known for extreme violence when angry, would severely punish anyone who stood in his way, and life in England would change a lot if he took over





**Why did William win the Battle of Hastings?**

1. **Harold's mistakes** – too many fyrd, not enough professionals, he wasn't on horseback, broke shield wall, didn't rest and recruit.
2. **Luck** – wind prevented early invasion when Godwinson was at his strongest, Hardrada's invasion meant no one to prevent landing.
3. **William's leadership and preparation** - Pope support, variety of soldiers, he was on horseback, fake retreat.