

Assessment p.1: 'Arrogant, warlike and very pleased with themselves': What were the Normans really like?

This is what historian Marc Morris William says about the Normans, led by William the Conqueror: *'...they come across as arrogant, warlike and inordinately [very] pleased with themselves.'* In this assessment, you're going to decide how far you agree with Morris...

TASK: Let's think back to some of the key events from the Norman Conquest. Categorise the information in the grid below according to whether it describes **positive** aspects of William's rule (therefore **challenging** the historian's argument), or **negative** aspects of William's rule (therefore **supporting** the historian's argument).

A) Brutal murder of Harold at Hastings.	B) Refusal to give Harold's body back to his mother.	C) Paid off Viking rebel King Sweyn, to get rid of him.	D) Successfully dealt with a series of rebellions.
E) Built castles to help with defence.	F) Harrying of the North.	G) Forgave some of the Anglo-Saxon rebels.	H) Built lots of new churches and cathedrals.
I) Confiscated land from Anglo-Saxons, giving it to loyal Normans.	J) Introduced the hated 'Forest Laws'.	K) Carried out the 'Domesday Survey'.	L) Held a big meeting at Old Sarum.

Can you think of any other events?
Note them down here:

Positive (challenge)

Negative (support)

TASK: We need to consider *why* these events were either positive or negative, too. Look at the explanations below. Do any of them 'fit' with the events above? If they do, add the numbers of the explanations into the relevant boxes above.

Positive explanations:

- 1: Helped William to consolidate his authority in England.
- 2: Showed that he was an effective King of England.
- 3: Gave William a chance to reward those loyal to him.
- 4: Introduced greater organisation across the country.
- 5: Showed that he was religious and devoted to God.

Negative explanations:

- 1: Showed that William didn't care about ordinary people.
- 2: Made life harder for the Anglo-Saxons.
- 3: Wasted money, time and/or resources.
- 4: Showed that William was a show-off.
- 5: Showed that being king was the only thing he cared about.

Assessment p.2: 'Arrogant, warlike and very pleased with themselves': What were the Normans really like?

TASK: Look back at the information on the previous page. Overall, do you agree with the historian's interpretation?

YES	NO
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What are your main reasons for this?

TASK: Now that you've done some planning and re-capping, it's time to complete your assessment. Using the space on the next two pages, write your response to historian Marc Morris. Try to make at least three separate points (using different paragraphs), and make sure you outline your own, final judgement.

You could use this structure:

Overall, I [fully/somewhat/partially] [agree/disagree] with historian Marc Morris when he argues that...

My first reason for this is... [use evidence/examples from the grid on the previous page, or ideas of your own]. This showed that William and the Normans were [arrogant/warlike and/or pleased with themselves - or NOT] because... [use the positive or negative explanations on the previous page - or ideas of your own].

My second reason for this is...

Some might disagree with this because...

In conclusion...

Criteria:

Tick:

❖ Have you explained whether you agree or disagree with historian Marc Morris?

❖ Have you included plenty of evidence/examples, to back up your ideas?

❖ Have you included explanations, to say how/why your evidence/examples give either a positive or negative view of the Normans?

❖ Have you considered why some people might have an alternative view, and provided some evidence/examples?

Assessment p.3: 'Arrogant, warlike and very pleased with themselves': What were the Normans really like?

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Teacher feedback: