



How to make Anglo-Saxon poo

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This experiment will encourage you to think about the microscopic evidence that archaeologists find in human poo, and what it tells them about the diets of people from different periods of history and from different places too. In this experiment you will be making Anglo-Saxon poos!

You will need:

- 2 cups of flour
- 1 cup of salt
- 1 tablespoon of vegetable oil (plus a bit extra for oiling the finished poos!)
- Beefy stock cubes (to add colour and a realistic smell!)
- Brown paint (optional)
- Warm water
- Cereal grains (e.g. rye and wheat – you can buy these online or in a health food shop)
- Tiny pieces of stone or grit (the Anglo-Saxons didn't eat stones on purpose, but tiny bits of the quern stones used to grind the grains would have rubbed off and ended up in the flour used for bread – this did mean that Anglo-Saxons often had bad teeth!)
- Apple pips
- Cherry stones
- Plum stones
- Fish bones

Method:



1. Measure out 2 cups of flour and 1 cup of salt and put it into a big bowl.

Add a tablespoon of vegetable oil and mix together.

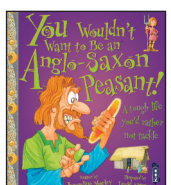


2. Add warm water to the stock cubes to make a thick and gloopy dark brown paste



3. Add this into the floury mixture; you'll need to get your hands in!

You can also add extra water and brown poster paint at this stage if you need to.





How to make Anglo-Saxon pōō (continued)



4. Mix and knead until you have a solid brown lump



5. Add the dietary evidence listed in 'You will need' from the first page of these instructions.

Then carefully roll out sausage shapes for your pōō!
Make sure that the dietary evidence is hidden inside your pōōs.



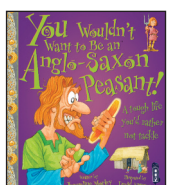
6. Put a little bit of oil on your hands and rub this onto your finished pōōs; this will make them look really realistic and a bit icky!

Congratulations! You've made an Anglo-Saxon pōō.



7. It's time to excavate the pōōs and collect the dietary evidence!
You'll need to use a wooden lolly stick or a blunt cocktail stick to make sure that you don't miss anything.

- Collect and record the evidence that you find.
- Keep a tally of the different types of evidence.
- What does the dietary evidence tell you about what Anglo-Saxons ate?
- Can you explain the tiny stones in the pōōs?!





























Writing in runes

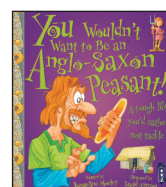
The table below shows the rune alphabet, which was called the *futhark* after the sounds made by the first six letters. Under each rune symbol, you can find the name of the rune, and the modern letter that it sounded most like.

Note: two of the runes are used to represent sounds that are now written using two letters. Thurizaz made a 'TH' sound, and Ingwaz made a 'NG' sound. There are no runes for the modern letters Q and X.

The Anglo-Saxon alphabet was sometimes called the *futhorc* because some of the runes changed their sounds over time. For example, the fourth letter, Ansuz, originally made an 'A' sound, but later became used to represent a sound that was more like our modern 'O' sound.

					
Fehu – F	Uruz – U	Thurizaz – TH	Ansuz – A	Raido – R	Kano – C / K
					
Gebo – G	Wunjo – W / V	Hagalaz – H	Nauthiz – N	Isa – I	Jera – J
					
Eihwaz – Y	Perth – P	Algiz – Z	Sowilo – S	Teiwaz – T	Berkana – B
					
Ehwaz – E	Mannaz – M	Laguz – L	Ingwaz – NG	Othila – O	Dagaz – D

Use the table to help you translate the runes on the activity sheet!





Messages in runes

Name: _____

Use the table on the information sheet to help you translate these messages written in runes:

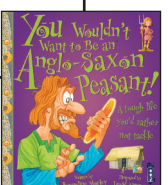
1) R N T M H F R M X R M F T

2) I T O P M T M F R T I X

3) T M H O X F T M A S N O A M P O R T

My name in runes is:

Write your own message in runes in this box. Challenge a friend to read your message!





How to use runes for fortune-telling

As well as being used to write inscriptions, Anglo-Saxons used runes for fortune-telling and as charms. Fortune-tellers would have a set of rune stones, each marked with one of the runes. By choosing rune stones at random, and placing them in a set way, it was thought that it was possible to tell a person's future. Fortune-tellers also used bones thrown into the air to help to predict coming events; the way that the bones landed and the patterns they made could be interpreted to help tell the future.

The three rune cast

To make a three rune cast, ask the person who is having their fortune read to come up with a question or issue that they would like to know the answer to.

They then need to take three rune stones from the bag, and place them in a row. Rune stones are read from right to left. The first (right hand) rune describes the current situation. The middle rune suggests what should be done, and the final (left hand) rune explains what will happen next.

It is important to place the runes without turning them; some of the runes have different (opposite) meanings when they are inverted (or placed upside down).

Below you will find the list of meanings for each rune:

FEHU – The Rune of Wealth and Fulfilment

Meaning: wealth or success. Inverted (upside down) it means the opposite – bad luck or poverty

URUZ – The Rune of Strength

Meaning: Strength, beginnings and endings. Inverted it means beware missed chances

THURIZAZ – The Rune of Chaos, Evil and Temptation

Meaning: time to start something new. Inverted it means beware of false starts and over-reaching

ANSUZ – Odin's Rune, the Messenger Rune

Meaning: knowledge, wisdom, and advice. Inverted it means bad advice and confusing messages

RAIDO – The Traveller's Rune

Meaning: travel, action and starting a quest. Inverted it means beware of losing your way

KANO – The Rune of Fire, the Torch of Enlightenment

Meaning: truth and enlightenment. Inverted it means beware of confusion and gossip

GEBO – The Rune of Love and Forgiveness

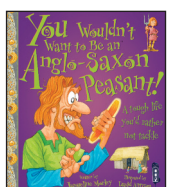
Meaning: love, partnership, forgiveness, gift, talent, skill or ability.

WUNJO – The Rune of Joy

Meaning: happiness and satisfaction; all will be well. Inverted it means you are being tested

HAGALAZ – The Rune of Disruption

Meaning: disruption and interference through natural forces.





How to use runes for fortune-telling (cont)

Meanings of the runes (continued)

NAUTHIZ – The Rune of Necessity

Meaning: need, want, craving, demand and desire, and being driven to great deeds by necessity.

ISA – The Ice Rune

Meaning: lack of change, delays and helplessness.

JERA – The Rune of Success and Continuity

Meaning: harvest and hope for the future. Hard work will see rewards

EIHWAZ – The Rune of Defence

Meaning: defence and prevention, and being strong enough to handle difficult situations.

PERTH – The Rune of Chance, Mystery and Science

Meaning: taking chances. Inverted it means beware of hoping for too much or taking risks

ALGIZ – The Rune of Protection and Opportunity

Meaning: protection and strength. Inverted it means beware of your weaknesses

SOWILO – The Rune of Energy and Revelation

Meaning: wholeness, light, energy, victory and discovery

TEIWAZ – The Warrior's Rune

Meaning: courage and protection against evil. Inverted it means beware of rage and anger

BERKANA – The Rune of Growth and Fertility

Meaning: growth and development. Inverted it means beware of faults within yourself

EHWAZ – The Rune of Momentum

Meaning: movement, travel and progress. Inverted it means beware of barriers

MANNAZ – The Rune of Humanity

Meaning: rely on yourself. Inverted it means beware of your weaknesses

LAGUZ – The Water Rune

Meaning: go with the flow, follow your instincts. Inverted it means beware of ignoring feelings

INGWAZ – The Rune of Peace and Harmony

Meaning: harmony and returning.

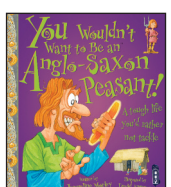
OTHILA – The Rune of Family, Home & Acquisition

Meaning: home and comfort. Inverted it means beware of being tied to old habits and places

DAGAZ – The Rune of Transformation

Meaning: breakthrough, change, opportunities, a new start.

You will need to be creative and imaginative when reading the runes. The meanings above need to be interpreted depending on the question being asked.





Anglo-Saxon burial

You've been asked to choose objects as grave goods for an Anglo-Saxon king.

The king is being buried inside a huge ship, with all of his favourite possessions.

You can put **five** things from the list below into the burial mound. What will you choose – and why?

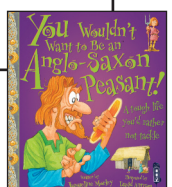
Name: _____

Tick the five items that you have chosen to put inside the Anglo-Saxon king's grave:



- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Large round shield decorated with garnets and metal figures of a bird and a dragon | <input type="checkbox"/> Beautiful sword with a gold and garnet pommel inside a decorated scabbard |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ceremonial helmet | <input type="checkbox"/> Musical instrument called a lyre |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Spears | <input type="checkbox"/> Gem-encrusted purse containing money |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pair of drinking horns | <input type="checkbox"/> Long coat of ring-mail |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Leather shoes | <input type="checkbox"/> Iron axe with a long iron handle |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Antler combs | <input type="checkbox"/> Bronze cauldron |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Horse | <input type="checkbox"/> Carved bone 'king piece' from a set of game pieces |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Textiles – cloaks, blankets and hangings | |

Use this box to explain your choices:





Anglo-Saxon cord winding

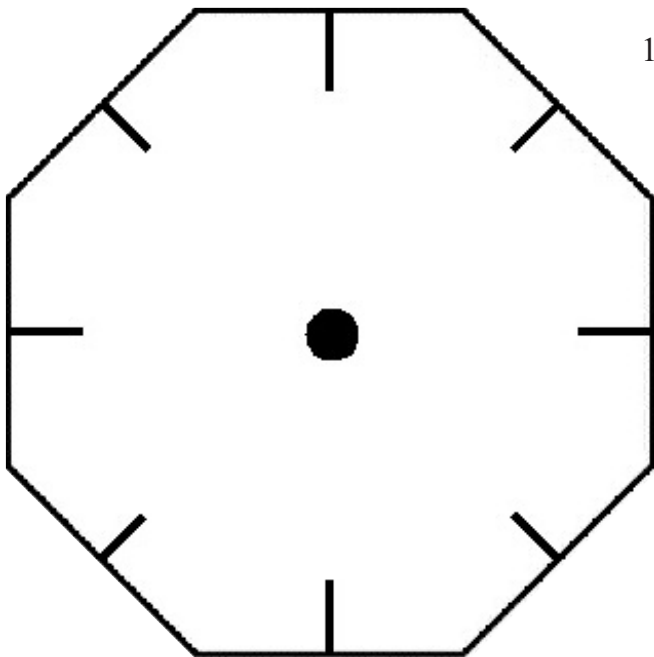
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Cords have been made for many thousands of years. One method for making cords was using a cord-winding tablet. Anglo-Saxons used cord-winding tablets to make lengths of strong cord from wool that they had spun. Try our experiment to have a go yourself!

You will need:

- 7 pieces of wool or embroidery silk, each about 50cm long
- Piece of strong cardboard to make your cord-winding tablet
- Scissors
- Marker pen
- Sharp pencil, single hole punch or awl to make the hole

Method:



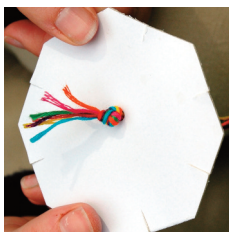
- 1) Draw an octagon like the one pictured (left) on a piece of strong cardboard and cut it out.

Each side should be about 3.5cm long.

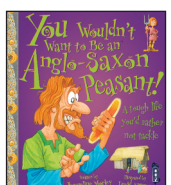
You could cut out this octagon and use it as a template to draw around.

Cut a short slit in the middle of each edge (as marked) and ask an adult to help you to make a hole in the centre of the octagon.

You have now made your cord-winding tablet and are ready to start making cord!

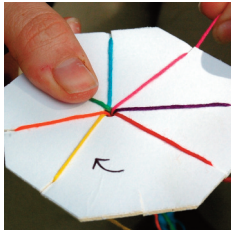


- 2) Cut out 7 lengths of coloured wool or embroidery silk. Each piece should be about 50cm long. Pull all of your pieces of wool through the central hole and tie a knot near the end to stop them pulling back through the hole!





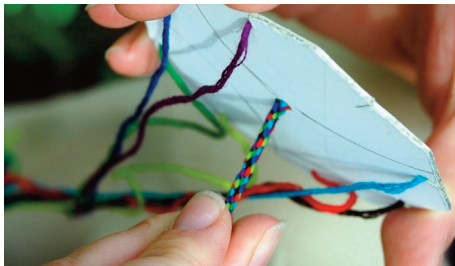
Anglo-Saxon cord winding (continued)



3) Turn your cord-winding tablet back over, put one piece of wool into each slit. You will have one slit left over. Draw an arrow onto your tablet to show which way you will turn it when you start to make your cord. (Most people find it easiest to turn in a clockwise direction, but it is up to you!)

- 4) Hold your tablet horizontally so that the empty slit is facing you and the lengths of wool are hanging down around the outside of the tablet. Count back three slits (in the opposite direction from your arrow). Take the piece of wool out from that slit and move it over the next two pieces of wool, and tuck it in to the empty slit facing you.
- 5) Now you need to turn your tablet in the direction of the arrow until the new empty slit is facing you. Count back three slits again (remember to count back in the opposite direction to your arrow) and once again remove the piece of wool from that slit and move it over into the new empty slit.

Keep on repeating this process. Remember to always turn your tablet in the same direction!



6) Your cord will be emerging from the underside of your tablet. It is important to keep on gently pulling the cord through from the underside.

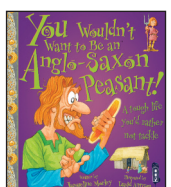
The threads will tangle easily, so run your fingers through them regularly to avoid getting knots!

- 7) When you only have about 5cm of each piece of wool left over in the slits, take all of the pieces out of the slits and pull the cord through the tablet from the underside.

Tie the loose pieces of wool into a knot and trim the ends. You now have a cord!

What happens if you experiment with a different pattern of counting? You could try counting back four slits then two slits, then four slits then two slits, for example.

Does this method of making cords work if you use a tablet with a different number of sides? You could try making a hexagon-shaped tablet instead of this one shaped like an octagon.





Design your own Anglo-Saxon shield!

Name: _____

