Two events mark the beginning of the ME period

- 1054: End of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle
- 1066: Battle of Hastings

1066: Geopolitical Background

- Normandy
  - 9th & 10th centuries: Scandinavians
  - Very powerful
  - Very adaptable
- Normans and English
  - Æthelred the Unready
  - Edward the Confessor
1066: The Players

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Edward</th>
<th>Harold Godwinson</th>
<th>William the Bastard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Confessor</td>
<td>– son of Godwin</td>
<td>– Duke of Normandy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>King of England (1042-1066)</td>
<td>– promise to William</td>
<td>– 2nd cousin of Edward</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No heir</td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Harald – King of Norway

Who becomes king?

- Harold Godwinson
  
- September: King of Norway attacks
  
- October: William attacks

October 14, 1066:
The Battle of Hastings

- Six miles from Hastings
- English seem to be winning
- William feigns a retreat
- King Harold killed
  
- A few weeks later, London collapses
- Christmas Day, 1066
The Bayeux Tapestry: 
Key points in the story

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Key points in the story

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The Bayeux Tapestry: 
Key points in the story

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The Bayeux Tapestry:
Key points in the story
A more realistic battle scene

The Norman Occupation

- A conquest

- Brutally forceful
  - English nobility is wiped out
  - Members of the church
  - Villages

The Norman Occupation: The French language

- French
  - Government
  - Literature, fashion
  - Nobility

- Use of French by the nobility
  - Natural at first: their native language
  - Social class

- Continued until 1204…
The Norman Occupation:  
The French language

• Close contact with the continent
• King of England = Duke of Normandy
• Kings spent much time in France
• Kings married Norman wives
  – No English queen until Edward IV (1461-1483)
• French literature

The Norman Occupation:  
The Attitude toward English

• Uncultivated, socially inferior
• William the Conqueror
• Simple indifference to English

1204: Normandy is lost

• King John of England
  – Falls in love with Isabel of Angouleme
  – Marries Isabel in 1200
  – Preemptive attack on the Lusignan family

• King Philip
  – Summons John in 1202
  – Invades Normandy
  – Normandy surrenders in 1204
English on the rise: 
13th Century

• 1250  Louis IX, King of France
• 1258-1265  Baron’s War; Henry III
• 1250  Manuals about French

English on the rise: 
14th Century

• 1300  English used by nobility
  Translation of French literature into English
  Edward I (1272-1307)
  French is seen as a foreign language
• 1337-1453  Hundred Years’ War
• 1344-1400  Geoffrey Chaucer
• 1348-1350  The Black Death (bubonic plague)
• 1356  Sheriff’s Court, London & Middlesex
• 1362  A speech in English in Parliament
• 1381  The Peasant’s Revolt
• 1385  Education in schools

English on the rise: 
15th Century

• 1400  Personal wills
• 1415  Battle of Agincourt; Henry V
• 1423  Parliamentary records
• 1450  Town laws
• 1476  William Caxton; printing press
• 1489  All statutes