

Sutton Hoo: An Anglo Saxon Mystery?

Just outside the town of Woodbridge in Suffolk (in the East of England), there was a field with many grassy mounds. This site is called Sutton Hoo. No-one knew how old the mounds were and people wondered what might be buried inside them.

The Discovery

In 1939, a group of archaeologists began to excavate (dig up) the largest mound and were amazed at what they found. They discovered the remains of a Saxon boat which was around 27 metres long. As the ship had been made out of wood, it had rotted away but the archaeologists could still see the outline where the wood had made the soil darker.

The Artefacts

Inside the ship, many rare and valuable artefacts were found including a bronze helmet, a sword and a shield. Other things found were:

- cups
- buckles
- coins
- jewellery

What's the mystery?

Only very important Saxons would have been buried in ships with so many valuable treasures but archaeologists can't be sure who was buried at Sutton Hoo. Some people believe it was King Raedwald who was a leader of a tribe in the area.

Reading Comprehension

1. What can be found at Sutton Hoo?

2. Where is Sutton Hoo?

3. Do you think the boat was large or small? Why do you think that?

4. How do you think the archaeologists felt after discovering Sutton Hoo? Explain why.

5. Why do you think the author has used bullet points to list some of the artefacts found?

6. Look at where it says "began to excavate (dig up)" in the 2nd paragraph. Why do you think the author put words in brackets?

7. Explain why the author might have chosen the title "Sutton Hoo: An Anglo Saxon Mystery"?
