

Week 2 Why did the Vikings Raid?

Watch the video on the opening page of the Viking book which explains some of the reasons for Viking raids:

<https://www.curriculumvisions.com/IMT/history/historyVikings/historyVikings.ht>

Then read the following pages and answer the questions on the worksheets.

10

Raiding and Trading

Timeline

AD 600 AD 800 AD 1000 AD 1200 Today

Vikings first raid England

VIKINGS IN ENGLAND

Final Viking attack on England

The Vikings were very successful raiders and traders.

Can you think of any reasons why the Vikings were so successful?

The Vikings' secret weapon

Vikings loved the sea, and they were master sailors. This gave them the opportunity to travel far and wide. The Vikings had two main types of ship:

1. The knarr, which was sturdy and strong for moving cargo and animals.
2. The longship, which was fast, light and easy to move for raiding.

Viking boats were flexible, which meant they could bounce about on the waves in storms. They were made of curved, overlapping wooden planks, joined together with iron fastenings. These planks were so strong that the sides of the boat only needed to be 2-3 cm thick.

The picture below shows a Viking longship kept in a museum in Norway.

What features do you think this longship has that might make it good in a raid?

The structure of the boat means it can be sailed in shallow water right up to the beach. Also, because it's double-ended, it can be quickly pushed off the beach again backwards, and rowed away to sea.

Can you think of any other features Vikings ships might have had to help them sail and raid?

Raiding, trading and slaving

The Vikings traded products from Scandinavia (such as amber, ivory, and animal furs) with countries overseas.

They also traded in slaves. Slavery had been accepted throughout Europe and Asia for centuries. The Vikings captured slaves on their raids into other countries and would sell them in markets abroad. This picture gives an artist's idea of what a slave market might have looked like.



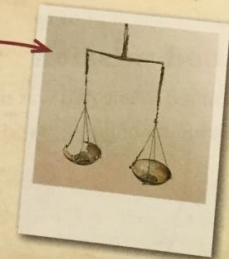
Vikings also took slaves home for their own use.

What do you think the Vikings needed slaves for?

Goods for sale

The Vikings stole items that were of value to them on raids. But they also traded with people for items on trips abroad. In exchange for the goods they traded, the Vikings received things like silver, gold, silk, glass and fine pottery.

Look at this picture.
What do you think this object is?
What do you think it was used for?

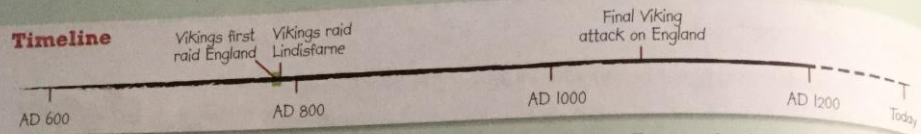


This is a pair of Viking scales. It would have been used with lead weights to measure and work out the value of silver.

Ships and the sea were vital for a Viking's business

Travelling by sea wouldn't have been easy, but the design of their ships probably helped a lot. Sea travel was vital for the Vikings to be able to trade. Once in other countries, they would take what they wanted, or trade the things they'd brought with them.

Viking Visits



This map shows what Europe looks like today. Some modern countries are labelled. The countries the Vikings came from are coloured **orange**.

From the map, can you suggest why the Vikings came to Britain on their early raids?

If you were a Viking, where would you have gone on your raids?

First voyage to England

The first known Viking visit to Britain was in about **AD 787**. The Vikings sailed to Britain and landed at **Portland** on the south coast. The local tax official mistook them for traders, and tried to make them pay taxes. The Vikings killed him, and sailed away. There's no record of whether they took any **loot** with them.

A planned mission

The first planned Viking **raid** was on the island of Lindisfarne, in **AD 793**. A small community of **monks** lived on Lindisfarne in an undefended **priory**.

What do you think Lindisfarne priory had that would have been worth stealing?

Like most monasteries at the time, the priory was **rich** — it had gold and silver treasures, plates, candlesticks and beautiful books.

What did the monks think?

It was recorded in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle that **bad omens** were seen before the Vikings arrived.

Great **lightning storms**, '**whirlwinds**', and '**fiery dragons**' in the sky were some of the things mentioned, as well as a **great famine**. Some Christians believed these had been a **warning** of the invasion, and that the Viking raids were a result of people living **sinful lives**.

The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle is a history of Anglo-Saxon Britain. It was written between the late 8th and early 12th centuries.

So what happened after the Lindisfarne raid?

The Vikings who raided Lindisfarne would have seen that the small church communities along the shores of Britain were **easy targets**. They were all in **isolated** places, far from help.

The raid on Lindisfarne terrified the church. The Vikings didn't just **steal** things and ruin the priory — they also took some monks as **slaves** and **killed** others. This painting shows what an artist thinks the raid on Lindisfarne might have looked like.



The Vikings had not finished with Britain after that one raid.

They continued to raid **monasteries** on the British coast. The monks eventually **abandoned Lindisfarne**.

How do you think the monks felt when they finally left Lindisfarne?

Why do you think they might have felt this way?

Churches were treasure troves for the Vikings

The Vikings' first raid in England targeted the priory on Lindisfarne Island. It wasn't defended and so the Vikings were easily able to take what they wanted. It would have been a worrying time — watching out for more Vikings arriving in their longships.

Raiding and Trading

Vikings were experts at boat building and sea travel.



Archaeologists have discovered some well-preserved Viking longships.

This picture shows what a Viking longship might have looked like.

Read page 10 of the Study Book. Write down two materials that would have been used to make a Viking longship.

Material 1) Material 2)

Use the picture above and page 10 of the Study Book to draw a picture of a Viking longship. Label and explain the features that make the ship suited to raiding voyages.

Would you have wanted to travel across the sea in a longship? Why, or why not?

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The Vikings carried out a lot of trading. One thing they traded was slaves.

Use page 11 of the Study Book to find out if these sentences about slavery during Viking times are true or false. Tick the correct box for each statement.

Slavery was allowed in Europe during the Viking times. True False

The Vikings would always buy their slaves. True False

Vikings would sell slaves in markets in other countries. True False

Slaves were used by the Vikings as farm workers. True False

If you had lived in the Viking times, would you have agreed with slavery?
Why, or why not?

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The Vikings didn't just trade slaves.

Draw a circle around each of the two sentences below that you think are correct.
Use page 11 of the Study Book if you need help.

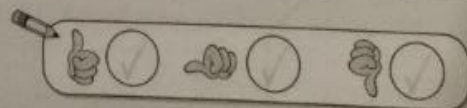
The Vikings couldn't get amber or animal furs from Scandinavia, so they bought them.

The Vikings bought everything they needed.

The Vikings traded with ivory from Scandinavia.

The Vikings often traded for silver and gold.

"I know about how Vikings travelled and how they traded slaves and goods."



Viking Visits

A lot of Viking raids happened in Britain — Scandinavia was so close that the Vikings were able to reach Britain by boat within a few days, if the weather was good.

Use pages 12 and 13 of the Study Book to find out if these sentences about Viking visits are true or false. Tick the correct box for each statement.

The Vikings first visited England in about AD 787.

True False

The Vikings' first visit to England was to Lindisfarne.

True False

The Vikings often raided places on the British coast.

True False

The Vikings settled in Lindisfarne.

True False

Lindisfarne was near lots of other towns.

True False

The Vikings took some of the monks from Lindisfarne priory as slaves.

True False

Some people thought that the Viking raids were a punishment from God for sinning.

True False

The first Viking raid in England was on the priory on the island of Lindisfarne.

Read page 13 of the Study Book and have a look at the picture. Imagine that you are a monk living in Lindisfarne priory during the first Viking raid.

In the speech bubble below, write down how you think you would feel and why.

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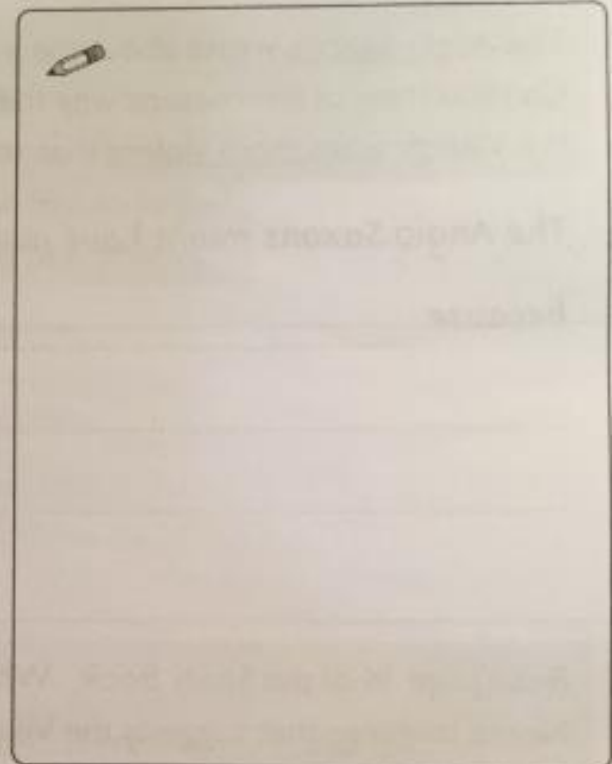
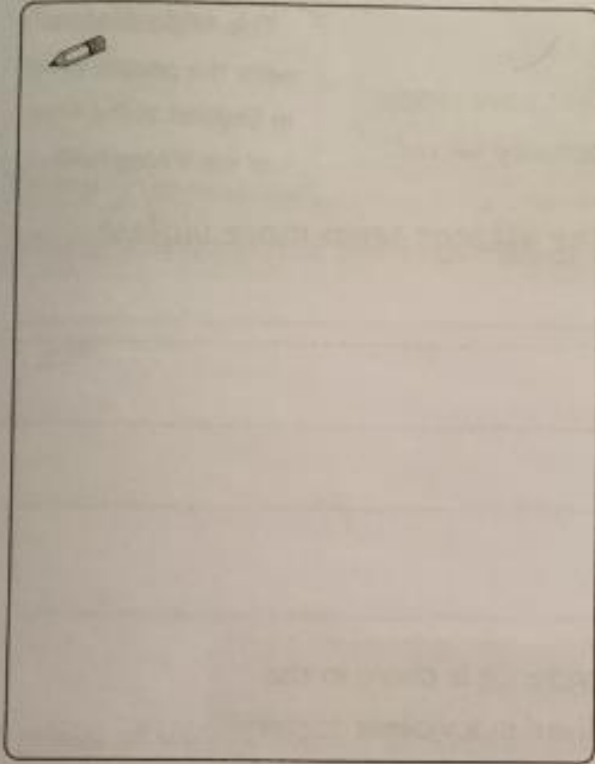
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The Vikings stole lots of things during their raid of Lindisfarne.

Draw a picture of two things that the Vikings might have stolen during their raid on Lindisfarne. Use page 12 of the Study Book to help you.



Imagine you are a Viking who took part in the raid on Lindisfarne. Describe what you would have seen and how you might have felt when you arrived on the shore.

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"I know about the first Viking raid on England."

