

# Viking Beliefs and Gods



# The dead and Valhalla

- A dead person was buried or cremated (burned) with some of their belongings, to take into the next world. Some Viking chiefs were given ship-burials, with treasure, weapons, and favourite dogs and horses buried with them.
- Vikings believed that a warrior killed in battle went to Valhalla, a great hall where dead heroes *feasted* at long tables. Odin sent his warrior-maidens, the Valkyries, riding through the skies to bring dead warriors to Valhalla.

## What is the difference between a Viking burial and a Christian burial?

- We know much more about earlier Vikings than later ones because the Vikings eventually became Christians.
- Why did this make it difficult to find out more about the Vikings?

# The Vikings and Christianity

- The Viking's old pagan customs died out after Vikings became Christians.
- People in Britain had been Christians long before Vikings settled here in the 900s.
- Soon most Vikings also became Christians.
- Viking leaders founded churches and put up painted stone crosses.
- However, some Vikings continued to follow their old religion at the same time.

Do you think it was easy for the Vikings to become Christians? Why?

# The Vikings were Pagans

- What does Pagan mean?
- The Vikings worshipped more than one god
- Lets take a look at some of the gods they worshipped

# Odin

Odin was the ruler of the gods, and the god of magic, poetry and war.

The name Wednesday comes from 'Odin's day'.

Odin had two ravens called Memory and Thought who flew around the world every morning to find out everything that was happening.

Odin gave up his eye in order to gain more knowledge.



**How do you think these birds helped Odin know everything?**

# Thor - God of Thunder

Son of Odin

Red-headed Thor ruled the skies, storms and thunder. He had iron gloves, a magic belt and a hammer.

Thursday originally meant "Thor's day".

Thor was very popular with the Vikings, they often wore his hammer pendant around his neck.

Why do you think the Vikings wore Thor's hammer pendant?

Why do you think that Thor was popular with the Vikings?



# Freyja - Goddess of love and beauty



- Freya was goddess of love and fertility
- She wept golden tears when she was unhappy.
- Freyja also had a coat made of feathers that she could use to fly.
- Friday originally meant Freyja Day

What is the difference between lust and love?

# Freyr



-God of Plenty,  
Agriculture and  
Fertility.

-Freya's twin brother.

- Travelled in a boat  
big enough to hold all  
of the gods but which  
also folded up and  
could fit in his pocket.

# Loki

- The God of fire.
- Very mischievous.
- Could change shape.
- Tricked a lot of the gods into making them give him their weapons.



# Tyr

The original god of war and the patron god of justice, before Odin.

He is the boldest of the gods, who inspires courage and heroism in battle.

Tyr is was a man with one hand, because his right hand was bitten off by the gigantic wolf Fenrir.

Tuesday used to be called Tyr's Day.

