

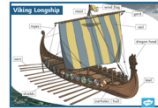
Viking Life

Farms - Vikings lived on farms and kept cows, pigs and sheep for milk, wool and meat.

Houses - Walls made of stone or wood. A straw roof. Wattle and daub (sticks and mud/dung) for the inside of the walls.

Jewellery - Worn to show off how rich a person was. **Pagans** - Vikings arrived as **pagans** but eventually converted to Christianity.

Sagas - Vikings used rhyme to tell stories about adventures and battles against monsters.



Many Vikings were farmers. They kept animals, such as cows, sheep, chickens and pigs. Women spun wool from sheep to make clothes and milked cows to make cheese. Farmers also grew crops, such as wheat, barley and oats. These could be ground into grain to make flour, bread, ale and porridge, important elements of a Viking diet. Children didn't go to school but would instead help with the daily farming tasks. They learnt about religion and history through stories and songs. Other Vikings were craftsmen. They made plates and cups from wood or belts and shoes from leather. Jewellery was made by craftsmen from different metals. An important job in a Viking settlement was the blacksmith. The blacksmith made tools and swords from iron. Tradesmen travelled between Viking settlements selling a variety of goods, such as silk, precious metals and furs.



Viking laws and punishments

Just like their Anglo-Saxon neighbours, the Vikings in Britain also had their own laws and punishments. The Vikings may have had a reputation for being ruthless raiders, but their justice system was fairly civilised. Each Viking community had its own laws. These were not written down, but were passed from person to person and from parents to children by word of mouth. In each community there was a law speaker. This person would remember all the laws of that community. The disputes and punishments for breaking the laws were decided at a thing.



The Early Vikings

The Vikings came from the modern Scandinavian countries of Denmark, Norway and Sweden. They travelled in boats called **longships** and first arrived in Britain around AD 787. The Vikings **raided** places such as monasteries and **pillaged** expensive items to trade. They were looking for valuable goods like gold and jewels, imported foods and other useful materials.

The Vikings also wanted to claim land and tried to take over much of Britain. They **invaded** and settled in Scotland before heading south to places such as York. By AD 878 the Vikings had settled permanently in Britain.



Viking Gods

The Vikings followed Norse mythology, which included a large number of gods and goddesses. These gods and goddesses looked like human beings.

Odin - Odin was the chief and most important god of them all. He ruled in Asgard and is the father of Thor. He rode an eight-legged horse. He liked to roam the Earth in disguise in order to be with women he fell in love with.

Thor - thunder, fertility, the sky and law. Son of Odin and Fjorgyn, he had super strength and an enchanted hammer that could destroy most things. He was the most popular god as he has a good heart.

Loki - mischief and chaos. Loki is known as a naughty god, who lied and betrayed the other Gods.

Freya - love, beauty, fertility and war. She was married to the God Od, who abandoned her. She has been known to appear as a bird to people and made sure the sun shone, rain fell and crops grew.

Frey - fertility. He was the son of Njord. He arrived at Asgard as a hostage along with his sister Freya and his father.



Books about Vikings



Key Vocabulary

Danelaw, Jorvik, chieftain, Scandinavia, Valhalla, blacksmith, invader, merchant, longship, settlement, conquer, raid, myths