Knowledge Mat-Were the Vikings always victorious and vicious?

Life in the Viking Times

Scandinavia		The Vikings descended from all over Scandinavia (now Sweden, Norway, Finland, and Denmark). The terrain of Scandinavia was not great for farming, so Vikings left their homeland in search of more fertile lands.	**Where?** Northern Europe	**Key Fact:** The Vikings were also known by the name 'Norsemen.'
Viking Longships		The Vikings had advanced sailing and navigational skills for the time. They were aided by their longboats, which were long, narrow wooden vessels. These could be sailed in both deep and shallow water.	**When?** The longship first appeared in the 9th Century	**Key Fact:** The methods used in building longships are still used today!
Norse Runes		The Vikings spoke in a language called Norse, and had their own alphabet system (futhark) made up of symbols called Runes. The original futhark had 24 letters, although this was later expanded. Runes were regarded as sacred.	**How?** Vikings would scribe on wood, bone and stone.	**Key Fact:** The word 'futhark' comes from the first 6 letters of the Viking alphabet.
Danelaw		King Alfred the Great defeated the Vikings in 878 AD, and had them sign a treaty, which governed that the Vikings stick to their own land in north and east England – this section of land became known as the Danelaw.	**Where?** North and East England	**Key Fact:** The Vikings did not give up on ruling all of England, and eventually did!
Jorvik		The Vikings invaded York and renamed it Jorvik. Here, a settlement was formed, which reigned prosperously for over 100 years, until Eric Bloodaxe was expelled in 954 AD.	**Where?** York, UK	**Key Fact:** Many streets in York end in 'gate', the Viking word for 'street.'
Valhalla and Odin		Vikings believed that when they died in battle, half of them would go to an enormous, majestic hall called Valhalla. This is where the king of the gods lived, named Odin.	**What?** Vikings believed the other ha	**Key Fact:** The other half were believed to descend to goddess Freyja's field, Fólkvangr.
Battle of Stamford Bridge		This battle took place in the village of Stamford Bridge, in the east riding of Yorkshire. King Harold of England defeated a Viking army led by Harold Hardrada	**When?** 25/09/1066 – widely considered the end of the Viking era	**Key Fact:** Harold's army was defeated only 3 weeks later at the Battle of Hastings.
Viking Homes		Vikings lived in long rectangular houses made with upright timbers. They used woven sticks, covered with mud, to keep out the rain. They were often one room, with a central fire.	**How?** Smoke escaped through a hole in the roof.	**Key Fact:** Animals and people often lived at different ends of the same building.
Weapons		According to custom, Vikings were permitted (and encouraged) to carry a weapon at all times. Weapons included bow and arrows, spears, knives, swords, axes and slings.	**How?** Bow and arrows were made from yew, ash, or elm.	**Key Fact:** Grand, well-finished weapons were seen as a sign of wealth and prestige amongst Vikings.
Life for Children		In old Norse society, formal schooling for children did not exist. Boys worked on farms from a young age, and girls contributed to housework. Many died young.	**What?** Viking children played with wooden toys.	**Key Fact:** Some Vikings who could not support their babies left them out to die.
Food		Vikings ate whatever food they could grow, hunt, or make, for example leeks, nuts, berries, bread, porridge, spinach, deer, boar, trout, chicken, eggs, sheep and pigs.	**How?** Vikings grew grains to make a number of foods.	**Key Fact:** Vikings also ate honey from bees.
Clothes		The Vikings were skillful weavers, and women and children often made clothes for their families. They could also use natural dyes from plants to give colour. Men wore tunics and trousers, whilst women wore long dresses.	**How?** Most clothes were made from wool and animal skin	**Key Fact:** Vikings fastened their clothes with belts and brooches.

Sticky Knowledge

- ❑ Not all Vikings were warriors. Many came in peace and become farmers.
- ❑ The lands that the Vikings occupied were known as Danelaw.
- ❑ Not many Vikings, if any, wore horns in their helmets.
- ❑ Vikings spoke Norse, which had an alphabet made up of runes.
- ❑ Longships were designed to sail in both deep and shallow water so that they could get close to the shore so they could not be easily seen.
- ❑ Vikings were pagans and often raided monasteries, looting gold.
- ❑ The most important Viking British city was York or Jorvik as it was known by the Vikings.

Crucial connections

www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/ztyr9j6

primaryhomeworkhelp.co.uk/viking/websites.html

Diagram – Map of Viking Routes

Map of Viking Routes

The Vikings came from the Scandinavian countries of Norway, Sweden and Denmark. The time between 787AD and 1050AD is known as the time of the Vikings. Initially, they settled in northern Scotland and eastern England, also establishing the city of Dublin in Ireland. Around 1000AD, some Vikings settled in North America, but did not stay long. They also travelled to southern Spain and Russia, and traded as far a Turkey.



Recommended reads







Viking Timeline

787-789 AD – The Vikings begin their attacks on Britain.

840 AD – Viking settlers establish the city of Dublin in Ireland.

866 AD – Danish Vikings establish a kingdom in York, England.

878-886 AD– King Alfred divides England under the Danelaw Act, granting Vikings north & east England.

900-911 AD – The Vikings raid the Mediterranean, and found Normandy in France.

981 AD – Eric the Red discovers Greenland.

1000 AD – Leif Erikson explores the coast of North America

1013 AD – The Danes conquer England. From 1028. Knut rules.

1066 AD – The Vikings, led by Harold Hardrada, are defeated at Stamford Bridge.