

History Knowledge Organiser: Year 5 term 1- Vikings and Anglo-Saxon Struggle

- Include a focus on Viking York



Overview

The Vikings came to Britain from the modern Scandinavian countries of Denmark, Norway and Sweden. They travelled in boats called longships and first arrived in Britain around AD 787. To begin with, Vikings raided places such as monasteries and pillaged expensive items to trade. Due to the harsh, cold climate in their own county, where food was hard to grow, the Vikings soon decided to invade and begin to settle in England where it was warmer and more fertile. Britain at this time had been ruled by the Anglo-Saxons since the 5th Century, however the Vikings gradually took more of the Saxon's kingdoms. By AD 874 the Vikings controlled all of the Kingdoms apart from Wessex, which was defended by its King, Alfred the Great, who defeated the Vikings in battle. In 886 AD Alfred made an agreement with the Vikings, and England was divided into separate areas. The west or Wessex was under the rule of Alfred and the Saxons, and the Vikings ruled an area in the east named 'Danelaw'- its capital being York or 'Jorvik'. Despite this agreement, battles and changes of kings continued right up to 1066 when William the Conqueror invaded Britain and became King of England, signalling the end of Saxon and Viking rule, and the beginning of Norman rule.

Links to other years

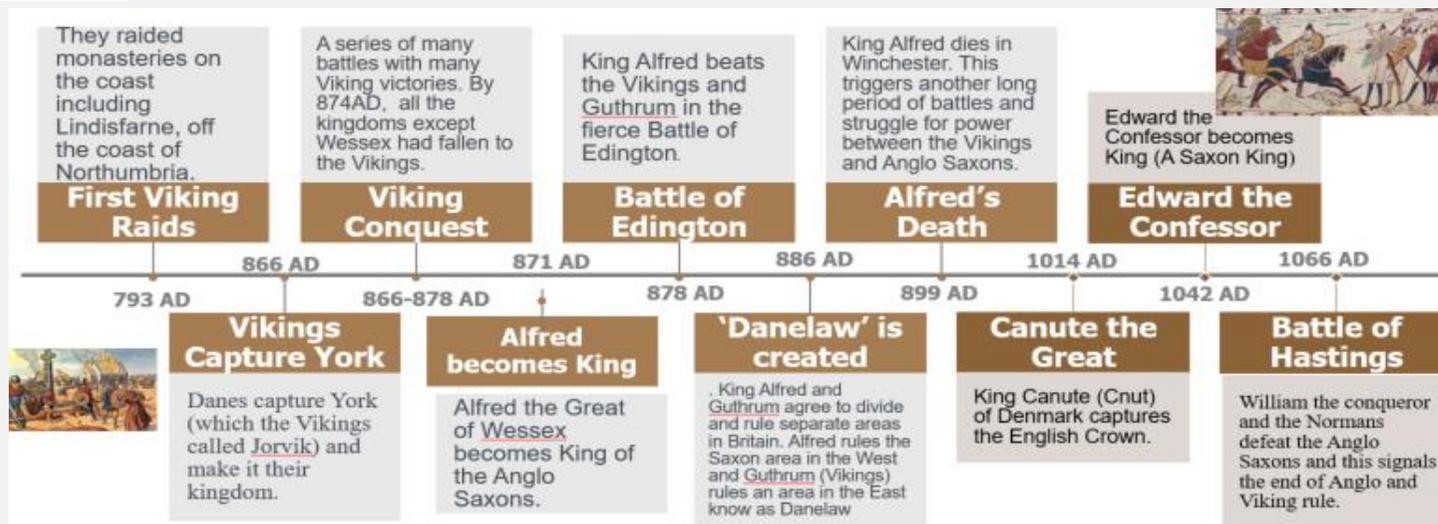
What came before...

Year 4: Anglo Saxons and the Scots- This chronologically precedes (sometimes crossing over) the period of Vikings in Britain and their struggle for power with the Saxons.

What's coming up...

Year 6: World Trade (Geography Topic)- From this topic children will have been given knowledge of what trade is and will have knowledge of its history and how it has been undertaken by humans in the past. Viking world trade could be used as comparison for modern day world trade.

Timeline



Glossary

Anglo Saxon

The people who invaded and settled in Britain from the 5th century up to the Norman Conquest

Conquer

To take control or possession of a place or people, by force.

Invade

To enter a country by force.

Longhouse

A long, single-room building made from wood, stone mud and turf where many Viking people lived together.

Longship

Specialised Scandinavian warship originally built by the Vikings to invade and raid new places.

Monastery

A building which Monks live in and worship.

Pagan

Belonging to a religion that worships many Gods.

Settlement

A place where people live and establish a community

Raid

A surprise attack

Viking

A member of a Scandinavian tribe who invaded and settled in Britain between the 8th and 11th centuries.

History Themes and Curriculum Drivers

What Children Should Learn

Conflict and Culture

Conflict- Wars

Culture- beliefs, home life, occupations, education, rich & poor, exploration

Children should learn about Vikings as raiders, invaders and settlers, and traders; they should know about Viking home life and their beliefs

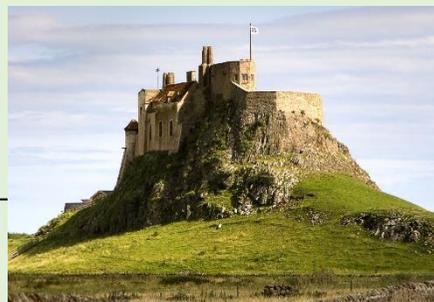
Raiders

The Vikings came from Denmark, Sweden and Norway. The word Viking comes from the Old Norse language and means 'a pirate raid'. This name was given to the Vikings as they often left their homelands on ships to raid and pillage other lands for goods and riches.

The Vikings first raided England (Land of the Anglo Saxons) when they attacked monasteries in Lindisfarne, Northumberland in AD 793. Monasteries were easy targets for the Vikings as the monks had no weapons but lots of riches. They sometimes took the monks as slaves or threw them into the sea! At first the Vikings carried out violent raids, stealing precious items and burning down buildings, before returning home.

However, they eventually conquered land and took over Anglo Saxon Kingdoms.

Teaching Suggestion: Children could complete research on the Lindisfarne raids as a typical example of a Viking Raid. They could present their findings as a local newspaper report, reporting on the violence and actions of the Vikings.





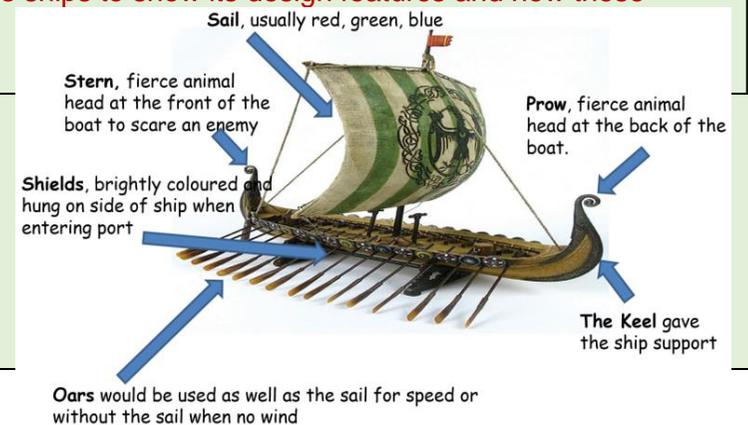
Longships

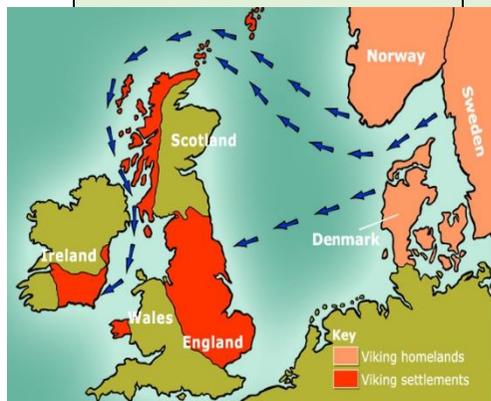
Viking longships were vital in allowing the Vikings to travel long distances, and meant they were able to raid and invade lands many miles away, including England.

The design and its advantages:

- The Viking ships were strong, lightweight and beautifully shaped to skim quickly through the water.
- **Clinker built hull** (overlapping wooden panels) allowed for great speed and strength in stormy seas. Also allowed the ship to be rowed up narrow channels and rivers which meant Vikings could raid and trade with more towns inland. The design also allowed the ships to pull right onto beaches or land, so they could attack their enemies quickly.
- The ship's keel gave the boat stability as it travel through rough oceans and seas.
- The ships were built of wood and made waterproof with tar from pine trees.
- When the wind was wrong for sailing, they were rowed by teams of oarsmen.
- The sail was large and made by wives, daughters and servant girls. Usually made from sheep wool covered with animal fat and tar to strengthen it. Often made from long strips of brightly coloured cloth (blue, green or red) sewn together
- Shields were brightly coloured and were hung over the sides of the ship as it entered port- so they were ready to defend against enemy attacks (and to show their power)
- The prow (front of the ship) carved with a dragon like figure and The Stern (back of the ship) was carved similar to the one on the front. This was done to scare their enemies and show their power as they approached.

Teaching Idea: Get children to design and label their own Vikings ships to show its design features and how these benefitted the Vikings as they raided and invaded.





Invaders and Settlers

In AD 865 an army of Vikings sailed across the North Sea. This time they wanted to conquer land rather than just raid it. Over several years the army battled through northern England, taking control of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms of Northumbria, East Anglia and most of Mercia. In AD 866, The Vikings invaded York which was the most important town to the Vikings. York would become capital Danelaw which was the north-eastern region of England given to the Vikings in 886 AD. By this point most of Britain was under Viking rule.

Why did the Vikings settle in Britain?

- Their land in Scandinavia was not fertile. It was rocky. They found it hard to grow crops.
- Britain was rich with good land for farming and other useful raw materials, such as metals, as well as fine treasures.
- The climate was also much warmer than where they came from, they preferred it and wanted to settle here.

Teaching Idea: Children could create their own colour coded map to show the Vikings' invasions routes from where they settled to the areas of England they settled in.



Traders Again, the Vikings' longships and skills as sailors allowed them to travel around the world, across seas and through rivers to trade in goods. The Vikings traded all over Europe and as far east as Central Asia. They bought goods and materials such as silver, silk, spices, wine, jewellery, glass and pottery. In return, they sold items like honey, tin, wheat, wool, wood, iron, fur, leather, fish and walrus ivory. Everywhere they went, the Vikings bought and sold slaves too. Viking traders carried a set of folding scales which they used to weigh coins to make sure they got a fair deal. York was a key trading city in England for the Vikings.

How they found their way when trading: Vikings sailed close to the coast whenever possible, watching for land marks. Out of sight of land, they looked for the sun: west (towards the sunset) meant they were headed for England; east (towards the sunrise) meant home to Denmark or Norway. The Vikings invented a kind of sun compass to help find their way. At night they watched the skies and could use the position of the stars to determine which direction they were heading. Seamen knew a lot about winds and sea currents. By watching birds or even the colour of the water, an experienced sailor could tell when land was close.



Folding Scales



The Viking way of Life

Home Life

House

- The Vikings lived in large homes, called long houses, which they shared with their animals. Longhouses were built from stone or wood with a thatched or turf roof. They all had a hole in the roof to let out smoke from the fire. A fire was lit in the middle of the home for light and warmth.
- Vikings ate two meals a day, one at mid-morning and one in the evening. Meat was stewed in huge pots called cauldrons, which were made of iron or soapstone. They were hung over the fire from chain attached to the roof or supported by a tripod.

Work

- Many Vikings worked as farmers, growing crops and keeping animals. Women milked cows to make cheese.
- The Vikings were also skilled craftsman and tradesmen. They made strong weapons, fast ships and beautiful metalwork and wooden carvings.
- They also made jewellery from wood, metal and glass.
- Viking women were skilled at spinning wool to weave into cloth and dying fabrics.

Teaching Idea: Show children multiple images of Viking artefacts of their home lives- crafted jewellery, cooking pot, etc and ask children to analyse, discuss and infer what this tells us about the Viking way of life.

Beliefs

Vikings were Pagans who believed in multiple Gods and Goddesses. The three most important gods for the Vikings were Odin (God of War), Thor (God of thunder) and Freyr (God of fertility). Viking thought of gods in much the same way as they viewed themselves, fighting against the powers of evil and darkness.

The reasons Viking warriors were so fierce and fearless is because they believed if they died a hero's death whilst fighting in battle they would join the gods in Valhalla, the Viking heaven.

Gradually, the Vikings became Christian to allow them to live and trade more easily with their neighbours.

Heritage

Viking York

After the invasion and conquest by the Great Heathen Viking Army the Danelaw was created. Vikings settled in England under their own laws and customs. The area of Danelaw stretched from outer London to the tip of Northumbria and covered the whole of Yorkshire. The heavy presence of Vikings in Yorkshire can be seen in Viking names for town and villages that we still use today. For example, the Viking word for farm or village is '-by' so the town of 'Whitby' simply meant 'White Farm' to the Vikings.

Teaching Idea: Using: <http://www.yorkshire-england.co.uk/PlaceNameMeaningsAtoD.html> or a map of Yorkshire, get children to find the names of Viking towns or villages that we still use today.

The most important city in the Danelaw (it's capital) was the city of York, or 'Jorvik' (pronounced 'your-vick'), as the Vikings knew it. Over 10,000 people lived there and it was an important place to trade goods. Under the Vikings, York lay at the centre of a huge area of Scandinavian settlement in north-eastern England; the city had grown larger, and had become a more important centre for manufacturing, crafts and trade than ever before.

Why did the Vikings choose York or Jorvik as their capital?

York had been an important city to the Romans, so it already had strong walls and defences that the Vikings were able to use against enemy attacks from the Anglo Saxons. York's communications were good: roads following natural ridges across the marshy Vale of York linked the city to the fertile lands of East Yorkshire and to the Pennine uplands in the west. The river Ouse linked York to the North Sea, and brought trading ships to the city from many countries. The river also allowed Viking long ships to travel freely in and out of the east coast of England to trade with Europe and further afield.

York: Trading and craftsmanship centre

There is much evidence to show that Jorvik was an important trading port and craftsmanship centre the to the Vikings. Luckily for archaeologists, the damp environment with oxygen-free, organic rich soils protected vulnerable materials such as wood,

Examples:

- *Sheffield*: field by the River Sheaf
- *Harrogate*: Place at the road to the cairn (heap of stones)
- *Whitby*: white farm
- *Scarborough*: the stronghold of *Skarðhi*

Viking word	What it means	Place with this name
thwaite	meadow, clearing or piece of land	
beck	stream	
thorpe/thorp/torp /trap	outlying farm or settlement	
fell	hill or moorland	
by	farm/village/ homestead of	
gate	road	
kirk	church	
toft/tofts	homestead/house/ plot of land	
dale	valley	
ness	headland	
borough/borg	castle or fortified town	
garth	farm or gap in the hills	

<http://www.yorkshire-england.co.uk/PlaceNameMeaningsAtoD.html>
This website explains the origin and meaning of Yorkshire place names.

leather and cloth against decay. There are also many examples of artefacts made out more durable material such as pottery, metal and bone that have been found in York. Here is what we know about the Vikings in York From artefacts:

- At Copper gate (York Centre) only two weapons (swords pummels, which were probably made to be sold) have been found. Instead, artefacts show that, rather than fighting and pillaging, Viking life focused on craftsmanship and trade.
- **Craftsmanship:** A considerable number of tools have been excavated in houses at Jorvik, including a fine set of woodworking tools -- drawknife, chisel axehead, auger. Other finds include sickles, sharpening stones and knives, jewellery moulds, the cores of wooden bowls, scraps of cloth, offcuts of leather, bucket staves. All this provides a picture of a busy community, and a skilful one.
- Baked clay loom weights indicated the production of textiles. Combs, pins and whorls for spindles were made by bone- and antler-workers. Blacksmiths used tin or lead and copper alloys to plate iron, and also worked in gold and silver.
- Traces of wool and bits of fleece give evidence of wool processing and fleece imports, and jewelry scrap showed that decorative pins and brooches were made in Jorvik, together with many items mass-produced for quick, cheap sale. These included buckles and brooches made of lead, gold earrings, glass beads decorated with gold leaf, necklaces of jet and glass beads, and copper alloy and bone pins used as clasps for clothing.



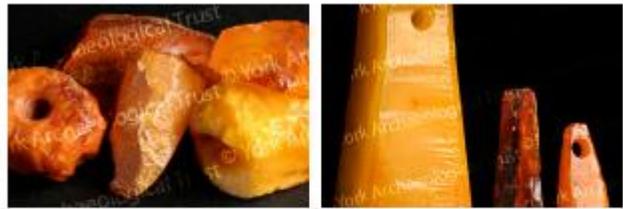
Cutters



Woodworking group

- **Trade:** Vikings' trading covered huge areas of the globe from the Caspian and Black Sea in the East, across Russia and Scandanavia and West to Britain, Iceland, Greenland and Newfoundland. Evidence, of this widespread trading can be found in Jorvik, demonstrating its importance as a trading port.

- Examples of silk made from silkworm cocoons found in York were only made through special skills in the empires of Byzantium, Islam, China and beyond, and instead were brought to York via trading routes.
- Honestones (used for sharpening the edges of tools) came from Norway along a regular trading route.
- Amber found in York came from the shores of the Baltic and were used by craftsmen to make jewelry in York
- Pottery from the Rhineland (Germany) was imported and it contained German wine!



Amber Waste

Amber Pendants

Teaching idea: Use <https://www.yorkarchaeology.co.uk/viking-imagesto> to find images of artefacts and ask children to infer what the artefacts tells you about Jorvik and Viking life there.

Conflict and Culture

Conflict- Wars

Anglo Saxon and Viking Struggle for rule of England

Teaching point: Briefly Recap with children what they should have learnt in year 4 topic 'Anglo Saxons and Scots' about Anglo Saxon rule of England before Viking raids and Invaions. Children should be reminded that; After the Romans left Britain in AD410 three tribes called the Angles, Saxons and Jutes invaded England. BY AD600 the invaders had declared England as their own country and divided it into seven kingdom, each ruled by an Anglo Saxon King.



The first Viking raids around 787AD triggered the start of a fierce struggle between the Anglo Saxons and the Vikings for control of England. 866- 878AD saw a series of many battles with many Viking victories. Over several years, the Viking Army battled through Northern England, taking control of the Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms on Northumbria, east Anglia and most of Merca. By 874AD, Almost all the kingdoms had fallen to the Vikings.

All except **Wessex**. The Viking King/warlord **Guthrum** attacked Wessex which was ruled by **King Alfred the Great** but following several battles King Alfred defeated Guthrum at the battle of Edington, May 878 AD. In 886 AD Alfred and the Vikings agree to divide England and live alongside each other- King Alfred continued to rule Wessex and The Vikings ruled Danelaw. However, the Vikings and Anglo Saxon's continued to fight and, with a strong army and Navy, Alfred began taking back Viking areas of England.

Following King Alfred's death 899 AD, struggle for power between Vikings and Anglo Saxons continued. In 1016, the Viking **Cnut** became king of England. Cnut (also known as Canute) was a Christian and a strong ruler. For the next few years England was part of his Viking empire, along with Denmark and Norway.

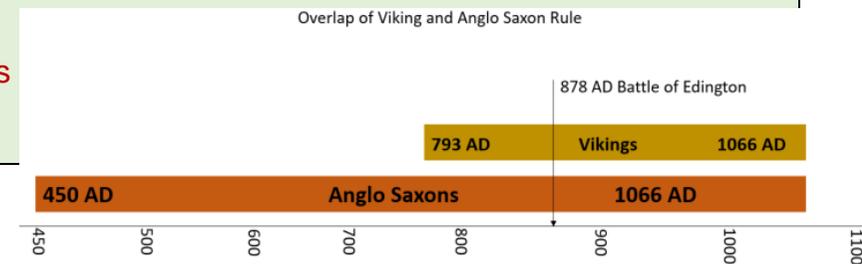
In 1042, **Edward the Confessor (Saxon)** became King of England and when he died he left no heir and King Harold, the son of the Earl of Wessex, became king. Duke William of Normandy and Harald Hardrada, the King of Norway, were not happy with the decision. They believed they had a claim to the throne.

In 1066, England was invaded twice. First, a Norwegian army led by Harald Hardrada landed in the north. Harold killed Hardrada in a battle at Stamford Bridge in Yorkshire.

Three days later William's Norman army landed in Sussex. Harold hurried south and the two armies fought at the Battle of Hastings (14 October 1066). The Normans won, Harold was killed, and William became king.

This brought an end to Anglo-Saxon and Viking rule. A new age of Norman rule in England had started.

Teaching Idea: Good opportunity to develop chronology skills By creating a time line of battles and rulers during the Struggle.





Children should be taught about some of the key Viking and Anglo Saxon Kings and rulers

Rules and Rulers

Alfred the Great

Alfred ruled from 871 until he died in 899. As mentioned above, he defeated the Vikings in battle and made peace with the Vikings by agreeing to divide England. The Vikings ruled Danelaw in the east and Alfred ruled the western area. One reason he was seen as 'great' was because he created laws for Saxons and Vikings to follow that enabled people to live more peacefully. He also translated books from Latin, which only a few people could understand, into English. More people could then read them and this created a new age of literacy and knowledge.



Guthrum- Viking Warlord

Guthrum was a leader of the Viking 'Great Summer Army' that set about conquering English lands. Although Guthrum and his army were able to conquer many Kingdoms, he was defeated by Alfred in 878 at the Battle of Edington when trying to take Wessex. When Guthrum surrendered he made a deal with Alfred that the Vikings would rule the East of England and Alfred would rule the west. Alfred also forced Guthrum to convert to Christianity.

King Canute or Canute the Great

Viking King who became ruler of England in 1016. In 1018, he also went and took the crown in Denmark and Norway and was soon king of Denmark, Norway, England and some of Sweden. He established very good relations with the church and promoted clergy. He is reported by historians as an effective and popular ruler of his time.

Edward the Confessor

Reigned AD 1042-1066



Edward came to the throne after 27 long years of Danish rule. His reign was peaceful and Edward devoted himself to religion. During his reign he oversaw the building of Westminster Abbey. When he died without leaving an heir in 1066, there was a bloody struggle for control of England.



