

YEAR 5 UNIT 2 – THE VIKINGS: Would the Vikings do anything for money?

Related units:

Year 5 Unit 1: The Anglo-Saxons

Unit overview

In this unit, the children will learn about the Vikings, and consider the reasons why they raided and then settled in Britain. They will investigate the popular view of the Vikings as raiders, ruthless in their ways of obtaining wealth. They will study primary sources of evidence, such as accounts by monks of the raid on Lindisfarne, as well as archaeological finds, to understand why this interpretation of the Vikings has become so popular. They will examine King Alfred's struggle and victory over the Vikings, linking back to *Year 5 Unit 1: The Anglo-Saxons*. Links will also be made to *Year 4 Unit 2: Roman Britain*. You may decide to incorporate a visit to a local museum into the unit, and some ideas have been included on potential locations.

In the Big Finish, the children will write a Viking saga, applying the knowledge they have gained during the unit. The completed sagas can be gathered together in a book and presented to the library, or a selection can be performed in an assembly.

Key vocabulary

Raid, raider, monk, monastery, Viking, sacked, looted, abbey, migrate, settle, overpopulation, inheritance, causes, invader, settler, push and pull factors, significant, Wessex, monarch, cult, runes, longhouses, saga.

Knowledge, skills and concepts

In this unit, the children will:

- develop a chronologically secure knowledge and understanding of British history
- understand how our knowledge of the past is constructed from a range of sources
- establish clear narratives within and across the periods
- develop the appropriate use of historical terms
- address historically valid questions about cause and significance
- construct informed responses that involve the thoughtful selection and organisation of relevant historical information
- note contrasts and connections over time.

Cross-curricular links

- **English:** writing kennings, news report of a Viking raid, discussion and debate around the significance of events or individuals, mythology and legend around Sagas
- **DT:** investigate Vikings as craftsmen – design a Viking brooch (based on the Pitney brooch), research Viking diet and plan a Viking feast
- **Geography:** map work, migration settlements (Viking place names)

Related books for wider reading

- *Saving the Unicorn's Horn* by Julia Edwards
- *Myths of the Norsemen* by Roger Lancelyn Green
- *Norse Mythology* by Neil Gaiman
- *The Vikings* by Clare Hibbert (*The History Detective Investigates*)

Places to visit

- National Museum of Scotland
- Jorvik Viking Centre, York
- Danelaw Dark Age Village, Murton Park, York
- Yorkshire Museum, York (Vale of York Hoard)
- British Museum, London (Vale of York Hoard)
- Ancient Technology Centre, Dorset
- The Dock Museum, Cumbria (Furness Hoard)

Assessment

Opportunities for assessment for learning are built in throughout the unit through questioning and activities. The children can both self and peer assess as appropriate using approaches familiar to them. The quiz is intended to be used during week 6, and will review knowledge, skills and concepts acquired during the unit. The Rising Stars Progression Framework area focuses on: *cause and effect; address and devise historically valid questions about cause*. **The assessment should be undertaken in weeks 2 and 3. Detailed information on the task can be found on the key assessment opportunity sheet.**

Subject knowledge and teaching guidance

While teaching this topic, it is important to reinforce the children's understanding of the Anglo-Saxon and Viking periods as concurrent, with power being passed from one side to the other. The struggle for power was complex and is not the focus of this unit, but should be mentioned where appropriate. There is an in-depth view of Alfred the Great, which provides an opportunity to look at this feature of the period. You may decide to use this to study the various Anglo-Saxon kings in more depth, dependent on the time available and the interests of the children. There are many opportunities to refer to prior learning in *Year 5 Unit 1: The Anglo-Saxons* and *Year 4 Unit 2: Roman Britain*, particularly relating to possible reasons for invasion and settlement.

Throughout the unit, there is the opportunity to study local sites, where available. This will provide valuable opportunities for you to personalise your curriculum. Historic England and the Portable Antiquities Schemes websites are both invaluable in developing this aspect of your study. It is also worth contacting your local museum for support. To further enrich the children's studies, it may be possible to organise a visit to a local site or museum.

The unit is fully resourced with images of artefacts, but you may wish to introduce replica items where they are available. It is also worth contacting your local museum to enquire if they loan boxes or provide workshops where the children can handle genuine artefacts. Local university archaeology departments may also be willing to support you in developing this aspect of the unit.

The subject offers many exciting cross-curricular opportunities, for example making a Viking brooch. There are also opportunities for linking the sagas to your literacy texts. It should be stressed, however, that these activities should be in addition to the history content covered here, rather than instead of this material.