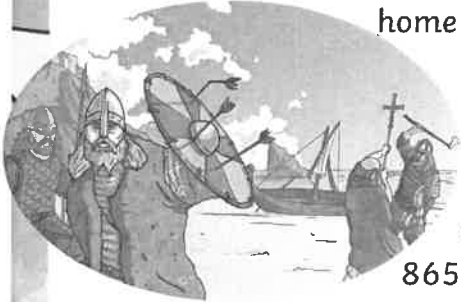


Vanquishing Vikings

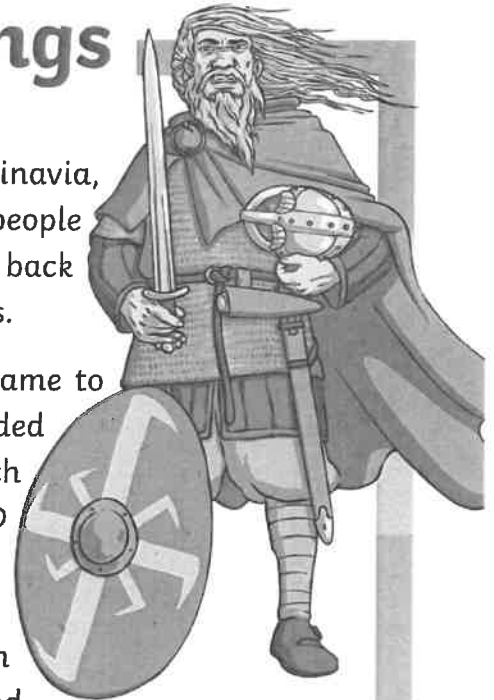
Who Were the Vikings?

The Vikings came from the countries that we now call Scandinavia, including Norway, Sweden and Denmark. Vikings were tradespeople – they travelled the seas to find things that they could take back home with them, such as silks and spices.



They were also raiders and first came to Britain in AD 787, when they raided monasteries for their treasures, such as jewels, gold and books. In AD 865, the Vikings came to Britain again,

this time not just to raid it but also to conquer the land. It is believed that they came to Britain as it was warmer than their countries and the land was better for growing crops and rearing animals. Although they had a reputation for being warriors, some Vikings did come peacefully to settle and live off the land.



Where Did the Vikings Settle?

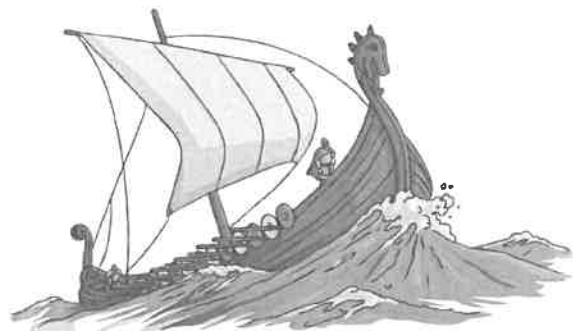
In the years that followed AD 865, the Vikings battled to take over land and they conquered much of the east of Britain. These lands were known as Danelaw and included Northumbria, East Anglia and the Five Boroughs: the towns of Leicester, Nottingham, Derby, Stamford and Lincoln.



A map showing where the Vikings settled in Britain

Viking Money

The Vikings didn't use money as we do today when they first came to Britain. They were only interested in coins for their value in gold and silver. However, as the Anglo-Saxons did use money, once the Vikings came to Britain, they started to make their own. Danegeld was the name given to payments made to the Vikings to stop them from raiding!





Viking Clothing and Jewellery

The Vikings' clothing was all handmade from wool, linen and leather. Occasionally, they may have used silk, which came from abroad from the Viking raids. Clothes needed to be practical, so they were able to work and go about their daily lives, but also needed to keep them warm and dry.

Vikings were also skilled at crafting and made beautiful and ornate metalwork and wooden carvings. Viking jewellery was made from precious metals, such as gold and silver, and even animal bones.



A small Viking brooch made from bronze



Viking Gods

The gods were a huge part of Viking society. The main god was Odin who created Midgard, home of the humans, and Asgard, home of the gods. Thor, another important god, was the god of thunder who, Vikings believed, protected their world. He had a powerful hammer that was said to be able to crush mountains.

If a Viking died bravely in battle, it was believed that they would go to Valhalla, a magnificent hall in Asgard where they could eat, drink and celebrate.



Viking Fun Facts



Vikings did not actually wear horns on their helmets.

- Vikings did not actually wear horns on their helmets. Instead, they wore simple skull caps to protect their heads from any impact.
- The name 'Viking' means 'pirate raid' in the Old Norse language.
- As there were no banks in Viking times, people would bury their valuables to keep them safe.
- When a Viking chief died, his body was put on a burning ship with his jewels and gold and sometimes even his servants!

Questions

1. Which of the countries below are part of Scandinavia? Tick **three**?

- Norway
 Germany
 Sweden
 Denmark

2. In what year did the Vikings first come to Britain?

3. Draw lines to match each word to its definition:

| | | |
|----------|---|--|
| Danelaw | ● | ● god of thunder |
| Thor | ● | ● payment to stop the Vikings from raiding |
| Danegeld | ● | ● home of the Viking gods |
| Asgard | ● | ● lands conquered by the Vikings |

4. What does 'Viking' mean in Old Norse?

5. What is Valhalla?

6. According to the text, why did the Vikings come to Britain? Give **two** reasons.

7. **Although they had a reputation for being warriors, some Vikings did come peacefully to settle and live off the land.**

What do you think the word 'reputation' means?

8. What **three** features of a non-chronological report can you identify? How do these features help to make the text easier to read and understand?

Answers

1. Which of the countries below are part of Scandinavia? Tick **three**?

Norway

Germany

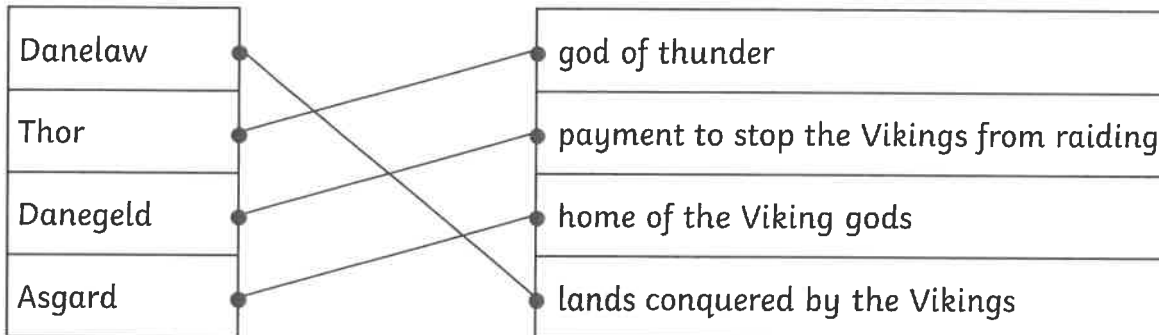
Sweden

Denmark

2. In what year did the Vikings first come to Britain?

AD 787

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4. What does 'Viking' mean in Old Norse?

It means 'pirate raid'.

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It was warmer than the countries they came from and the land was better for farming and rearing animals.

7. **Although they had a reputation for being warriors, some Vikings did come peacefully to settle and live off the land.**

What do you think the word 'reputation' means?

Reputation means beliefs or opinions about someone or something that lots of people have.

8. What **three** features of a non-chronological report can you identify? How do these features help to make the text easier to read and understand?

Accept main heading, subheadings, paragraphs, text in boxes, pictures, captions. They help to break up the text to make it easier to read; they give more information about the text and organise the text into topics.