

Viking Raiders

Who were these legendary people?

These teachers' notes are to be used with Project Pull-out #44, which is found in issue 97 of DMAG. Students will learn about another cultural group, cooperating in communities and the methods used by historians to understand the past.



This supplement encourages students to:

- Investigate another cultural group
- Understand that myths and legends affect the way we see a group of people
- Appreciate that people throughout history have lived in communities
- Imagine what living in a Viking community may have been like
- Discuss the modes of transport the Vikings used
- Discover how various materials such as cloth were made
- Appreciate Viking carvings and jewellery and have a go at creating their own designs

HSIE: Study of a Cultural Group

Ask the class what they know about the Vikings and write this on the board. As a class, read the project pull-out and discuss how this compares to their previous ideas about Vikings.

Why would stories about Viking raids be handed down over generations? Why wouldn't stories of them being great farmers not receive the same treatment?

Over time, would a story about a

Viking raid stay the same, or might the story-teller start to exaggerate it? What happens when the people who witnessed the raid have passed away? How does this relate to how Vikings are perceived today?

Project: Ask the class to split into pairs and each is to find a story or legend from Viking times.

Investigating History

Ask the class how we know what the Vikings did. How do we know they raided places? Are there written accounts? [Answer: yes, the first written account describes the raiding of the Lindisfarne monastery in 793.] Who would have written the accounts given that most Vikings didn't write? [Answer: the people being attacked.] Would this make the account biased? What other sources of information do we have about Vikings? Ask the class to split into pairs and each is to investigate one of the following. Their task is to explain how it provides an insight into how the Vikings lived:

- The Bayeux tapestry
- Viking ships excavated in Roskilde Fjord in Denmark

- Oseberg burial ship and the treasures it held

- Runes and picture stones
- Trelleborg houses and forts

HSIE: Living in communities

Science: Indoors, outdoors

Discuss the fact that most Vikings were farmers, but some were skilled craftsmen. Ask the class to brainstorm some of the people a community might have had.

Look at some of the objects shown and discussed in DMAG. What items were made of metal (as well as armour, swords etc, there were household items like cauldrons and tools made of iron). Who would have made these things? What about shipbuilders? How would people have bought things? [Answer: in markets, which sold fresh produce and other wares.] Where would they have held the markets?

What about clothes shops, did they have them? Did they have schools? Would they have had roads or tracks? What sort of houses would they have had? Would some people have lived in better houses than others?

Tell the class that although the Vikings

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were initially pagan, which means they believed in a variety of gods not related to the Christian tradition, they later converted to Christianity (often while still believing in their old gods such as Thor and Freya). This meant that many towns built churches, which became a focal point for the community.

Major project: Tell the class that they'll be building a scale model of a Viking village and its surrounds. Discuss what "to scale" means. As a class, write a list of all the buildings, areas, and tracks they will have in their model. Assign one area/building per person and ask them to draw that building. After drawings have been "approved" they can build the models and together construct a whole town.

Maths component of above: Ask the students to draw their buildings to scale. Use a scale of 1:20. That means every one centimetre shown on the drawing is 20 centimetres in real life. So one metre in real life would be shown as 5cm on the page. A 3m tall building would thus be 15cm on paper.

Science & HSIE: Transport/ Getting about

Discuss the modes of transport the Vikings had. We know they used ships on the water but what about on land? Did they ride horses? Did they have wagons? What animals could be used to pull carts? Tell the students that in the far north, the Vikings also had another mode of transport, a bit like a cart. It too was pulled by animals, but could only be used on snow. If they can't guess what it is, give them hints



about what Santa rides. Explain that reindeer were used to pull sleighs too. Ask students to add models of various forms of transport to the above village model (e.g. there can be a boat being built on land, a horse pulling a cart etc.)

Extension exercise: Investigate the design of a sleigh. How are they similar to ice skates?

Science: Material world

Ask the students to complete the "Material World" exercise on the Student Worksheet. Discuss the results for clothing. What things weren't around then? [Answer: nylon, velcro and zips had not been invented. Cotton and silk were very rare and had to be traded from Asia.] Read *DMAG* and discuss the materials used to make cloth. Discuss how wool and flax is made into cloth. What is the difference between spinning and weaving?

Bring in some dolls and ask students to dress them as they would have been

dressed in Viking times. The dolls can be added to the village model described in "major project."

Project: Ask pairs of students to draw a flow chart showing the process by which either flax or wool are made into cloth. If possible, obtain samples of raw wool to show the class.

Extension exercise: Ask the class to weave something using everyday wool. Can they think of a better way to weave material? As a class, research the looms that Vikings used to have in their houses. How did they work? Why don't we weave material in our homes these days using looms? Where is material made now?

Art and design

As a class, look at the pictures in *DMAG* of the carved animal head, the wooden carving and the rune stone. What do the carvings have in common? How would the students describe their design?

Ask each student to research Viking art and to print off some examples of it. Paste all the examples at the front of the class and discuss the themes. What images are common? Are the patterns intricate and interwoven? Are they symmetrical? Do they tell stories? Ask each student to design something and decorate it in a similar way to how the Vikings did. Students can choose from brooches, sword scabbards, boat figureheads, shields, rune stones or wooden door frames.

About DMAG

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