

History

Use this lesson plan alongside the fantastic **Eyewitness Encyclopedia of Everything** to teach year 5 pupils all about the popular history topic - the Vikings. This lesson supports national curriculum objectives in history and provides opportunities to develop comprehension and vocabulary skills.

National curriculum history objectives

Pupils should be taught about the Viking and Anglo-Saxon struggle for the Kingdom of England to the time of Edward the Confessor.

Learning outcomes

- Describe where Vikings came from and which countries they travelled to.
- Explain at least two ways in which Vikings shaped life in Britain.
- Create an advert for a Viking longboat and identify its features.

Skills development

- Historical vocabulary development
- Reading and comprehension skills

Resources needed

- A copy of the DK book **Eyewitness Encyclopedia of Everything** (or ideally, a copy per group)
- Lesson PowerPoint
- All About Vikings resource sheet
- Runes Activity resource sheet
- Atlases containing a map of Britain with names of cities and towns or a [map of Britain](#)
- Plenary slips

Key vocabulary

Viking, Scandinavia, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland, runic alphabet, language, Norse, vocabulary, trade, raid, settlement, longboat, sail, hull, navigate, inform, persuade, influence

Prior learning

No prior learning is necessary but it may be beneficial to display some images of Vikings and the key vocabulary for pupils to refer to during the lesson.

Time	Teacher Activity	Adaptations
5 mins	<p>Starter: Display the image of a Viking warrior from the Lesson Presentation. Ask pupils to write down three adventurous adjectives to describe the image.</p>	<p>The number of adjectives required could be increased or decreased to suit requirements of individual pupils.</p>
15 mins	<p>Explain that they are going to be learning about the Vikings today and introduce the learning objectives on the lesson presentation. Read through pages 280–281 of the Eyewitness Encyclopedia of Everything and complete the All About Vikings gap fill activity.</p>	<p>The missing words can be provided or not depending on the needs of individual pupils.</p>
10 mins	<p>Display the map in the lesson presentation. By using the key, ask the pupils to identify the modern nations that Vikings came from and introduce and explain the term Scandinavia.</p> <p>Set pupils the task of defining Scandinavia. Then, ask the pupils to name five countries that the Vikings travelled to. Explain that they travelled to some countries to raid, some to trade and some to settle in. When they came to Britain, they did all three.</p> <p>Select which of the following activities pupils will complete.</p>	<p>The number of countries the pupils are required to identify could be increased or decreased.</p> <p>Activities 1, 2 and 3 can all be attempted or you could attempt one or two activities of your choosing, depending on time constraints and the needs of your individual pupils.</p>
15 mins	<p>Activity 1: Display a modern map of Britain with the names of towns and cities depicted. Hand out atlases containing maps of Britain, or copies of the map you've displayed on the board. Explain that any town or city that ends with "by", "borough" "thorpe" or "kirk" was founded by the Vikings. Ask the pupils to identify and circle or list as many towns or cities founded by the Vikings as they can. They may know of places nearby or places they have visited.</p>	<p>You could model 'finding' one of each of the suffixes before asking the pupils to find more. You could also ask them to find just one of each suffix types depending on time available.</p>

Time	Teacher Activity	Adaptations
15 mins	<p>Activity 2: Ask the pupils to remind you how the Vikings remembered which was their weapon. Display the Norse Runic alphabet and hand out the Runes Activity to pupils. Set the pupils the task of writing their name in runes. Explain that although they used a different written alphabet, many of their words entered the English language and we still use them everyday today. Display the slide that lists some English words that are derived from old Norse. Set then the task of writing a sentence that uses as many of these words as possible. The sentences must obviously make sense!</p>	<p>You could increase this task to be two sentences or even a short story. A prize could be given for the story that contains the most Norse-derived words or for the most entertaining story.</p>
15 mins	<p>Activity 3: Give pupils a copy of the Viking Longboat activity sheet. Display the slide that lists the main features, such as the dragon head (to scare the enemy), the large sail (means it can cross wide oceans), the hull that sits low in the water (so it can travel up shallow rivers), etc. Ask pupils to annotate the image and create an advert as if the longboat were for sale. Their job is to identify and choose just three features and then use persuasive language techniques to influence someone to buy it. Encourage pupils to consider the use of rhetorical questions, 'speaking to the reader', highlighting problems and solutions, and the use of exaggerated and powerful adjectives and verbs. Ensure they include the reasons behind the features.</p>	<p>Select some pupils to explicitly explain why the features of the longboat made it ideal for the Vikings and why this is the most famous of the Vikings' ships.</p>
5 mins	<p>Plenary: Ask pupils to pack away and clear their desks apart from a pen. Hand out the 'What Can you Remember?' Plenary Slips and ask pupils to name as many Scandinavian countries as they can and at least two ways in which Vikings influenced our lives in Britain today.</p>	<p>You may also choose to display the learning outcomes on the lesson presentation and use a random name selector to pick individuals and check if they can achieve them.</p>

Preparation for the next lesson

What learning took place?

Which aspects of this lesson went well?

Which aspects could be improved upon?

Actions for the future

Assessment opportunities

- Can pupils describe where Vikings originated from and where they travelled to?
- Can pupils explain at least two ways in which Vikings have influenced and still influence life in Britain?
- Can pupils describe the key features of a Viking longship and explain which of the features they think are most important?

Further learning opportunities

- Pupils could complete a research task on the Viking gods. Books such as [DKfindout! Vikings](#) is an ideal way to go into more depth.
- Depending on your location, you could do a local history research project on the influence of Vikings in your area.

Home learning opportunities

- Pupils could research Viking voyages to places other than Britain and Ireland. This might include their voyages to North America, for example, or reasons for travelling to Constantinople (Istanbul).

