



# Year 5 and 6 Knowledge Organiser - Vikings



## Key vocab

The Vikings, from Scandinavia, were excellent sailors, explorers and warriors. They colonised large parts of Europe between 790 and 1100 CE and were involved in a long and bloody battle with the Anglo-Saxons for control of Britain. Also known as Norsemen (men from the north), the Vikings belonged to many different clans, led by chiefs who ruled over the lands they had conquered. After battles, the Vikings often forced local rulers to pay a tribute called Danegeld (meaning Danish tax) - a large amount of money that had to be paid so that the Vikings would not attack the locals and destroy their land.

|               |  |
|---------------|--|
| Scandinavia:  | Norway, Sweden and Denmark                                 |
| explorers:    | people who travel to a new place to discover what is there |
| colonised:    | settled in a place   |
| evidence:     | proof, information showing whether something is true       |
| raids:        | enter a place to steal something                           |
| accounts:     | written or spoken reports of something that happened       |
| colonise:     | go and live somewhere and take control of it               |
| seaborne:     | carried on a ship  |
| navigation:   | finding a way, around                                      |
| symmetrical:  | with two halves exactly the same                           |
| colonisation: | taking control of a place and living there                 |
| descendants:  | relative from later generations                            |

## Sticky knowledge

|   |  |
|---|--|
| The Vikings were excellent sailors, traders and explorers who travelled as far as North America in search of lands to colonise and trade with.                  | The Vikings were excellent sailors and very good at navigation.  |
| The famous Viking explorer Leif Eriksson was the first European to set foot in North America, 500 years before Columbus.  | The longship was an essential part of the Vikings' ability to travel and explore. Longships were also perfect for raiding.   |
| Scandinavian countries were rich in timber, iron and fur and the Vikings sold these materials across western Europe.  | A significant feature of the longship was its size - they could hold a large group of warriors and whatever treasure and resources they took from a raid.  |
| The 'Viking' name came from the word 'pirate' in Old Norse and is evidence of their reputation as warriors who would fight and raid as they explored new lands. | Not all Viking expeditions were simple raids, and over time the Vikings began to colonise the places they sailed to.   |
| The Vikings worshipped many gods. Each god had different human strengths and weaknesses.  | The Vikings were also excellent traders. Setting out from Scandinavia, the Vikings established many trading colonies across Northern Europe.   |
| Odin, the god of war, death, wisdom and poetry, was the most important. Thor, the god of thunder, was Odin's son.   | The Vikings' raiding strategy was effective for lots of reasons, but speed and surprise were two of the most significant.  |
| Warriors who fought bravely in battle would be carried to Valhalla - the Viking warrior heaven.   | Before long, much of the north and east of England was under Viking rule (also called Danelaw). The 10th and 11th centuries saw Viking and Anglo-Saxon armies fighting many significant battles for control of Britain.                        |
| When the Vikings first appeared on the coastline of Britain, they did not come to conquer but to steal everything of value and return home.                     | The Vikings' ability to defend themselves and their goods meant that they were able to maintain a trading empire that stretched across northern and western Europe.  |
| While they did colonise some of the lands they sailed to, their place in history will always be connected to these violent seaborne raids.                      | Churches and monasteries were prime targets for Viking raids. They had lots of gold and silver ornaments and little in the way of defences. The famous Viking raid of the monastery at Lindisfarne in 793 CE shocked Christians across Europe. |

## Exciting books!



