

Knowledge Organiser • Vikings • Year 4

Vocabulary

Vikings	People from Scandinavia (Norway, Sweden and Denmark). They were also referred to as 'Norsemen' (men of the North) or 'Danes'.
Danelaw	The Land which King Alfred agreed to give to the Vikings. Here they followed their own laws - not the Anglo-Saxon ones. The most important city in the Danelaw was York (or Jorvik as the Vikings knew it).
Raid	A surprise attack with the aim of stealing things. Vikings would raid homes and even monasteries to steal as much as they could. However, not all Vikings were raiders.
Danegeld	Money paid to Vikings to try and stop them invading and raiding. The Saxons gave them silver to leave.
Longship	Long, narrow boats which the Vikings used for raiding. They could travel up rivers as well as across the sea and were ideal for a quick getaway.
Pagan	During the Viking times, people who believed in multiple gods.
Monotheist	Someone who believes in only one god.
Polytheist	Someone who believes in multiple gods.
Saga	A story or myth, especially about early Viking voyages.
Valhalla	A great hall where dead heroes feasted with the gods.
Asgard	A sky world - where the gods live.

Norse Gods

Odin	Chief god
Thor	God of thunder, fertility, the sky and law
Loki	God of mischief and chaos
Freya	Goddess of love, beauty, fertility and war
Frey	God of fertility (Freya's brother)

Timeline

789 CE	First Scandinavian raids
793 CE	Viking attack on Lindisfarne
865 CE	Great Heathen Army invades (a large Viking army)
878 CE	Battle of Edington - King Alfred defeats Guthrum. Guthrum is then baptised.
927 CE	Athelstan unites the English kingdoms
985 CE	Bjarni Herjolfsson discovers America by accident
991 CE	Battle of Maldon leads to the first Danegeld. Payments had previously been made but they were not Danegelds.
1013 CE	King Sven Forkbeard of Sweden lands and becomes King of England
1016 CE	King Cnut becomes King of England
1066 CE	Edward the Confessor dies, leading to several contenders claiming the throne. Harold Godwinson, a Saxon becomes King, defeats the Viking Harald Hadrada, but is then killed by William the Conqueror at the Battle of Hastings. The Saxon and Viking ages end, and the era of Norman rule in Britain begins.

Important People

King Alfred	King of Wessex from 871 to 889, defended Wessex from the Viking conquest. Labelled himself The King of the English.
Guthrum	King of the Vikings in Danelaw at the time of the treaty with the Saxons.
Athelstan	First King to unite all of the English kingdoms, 927.
King Aethelred II the Unready	Became King at 7 years old. He introduced an official agreement known as Danegeld with the Vikings.
King Cnut	King of England, Denmark and Norway. He ruled England from 1016 to 1035.
Bjarni Herjolfsson	Norse explorer who sighted The Americas in 985.
Leif Erikson	Icelandic explorer who was the first European to set foot in North America.
William the Conqueror	First Norman King of England. This victory marks the end of the Viking age. He invaded England from Normandy* *This area was called Normandy because it was originally a stronghold of the Vikings (Norse Men). So the Normans were actually Vikings!