

# The Vikings: Marauders or Explorers?

**Grade Level:** Third Grade

**Presented by:** Melissa Gambaccini, Shawn Underwood, Park Street Elementary, Marietta, GA

**Length of Unit:** Seven Lessons

## I. ABSTRACT

From their first attacks in 793, the Vikings terrorized northwestern Europe for 200 years. What made them such a feared and powerful force? Students will explore this and many other aspects of the Viking world, including: exploration/trade; family/home life; and mythology/religion. Students will compare and contrast the Viking Era with the Ancient Roman Era, and learn about the influence the Vikings had on America and its history. The following is a unit arranged in lessons, rather than days. Some lessons may take several days/class periods to complete.

## II. OVERVIEW

### A. Concept Objectives

1. The students will use maps to locate Scandinavia and Viking trade routes.
2. The students will study Viking life including: society, homes, crafts, food, and clothing.
3. The students will compare and contrast Viking mythology and Roman/Greek mythology.
4. The students will use computer software, the Internet, and other resources to research and create reports on Viking life.

### B. Core Knowledge Sequence

1. Vikings: also known as Norsemen
2. Eric the Red and Leif Ericson
3. Geography:
  - a. Scandinavia
  - b. Greenland
  - c. Canada;Newfoundland; “Vinland”

### C. Skills To Be Taught

1. Map skills
2. Research skills
3. Computer skills
4. Oral presentation skills
5. Creative writing skills

## III. BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

### A. For Teachers:

1. *What Your Third Grader Needs to Know*, E. D. Hirsch, Jr.
2. Various classroom books (see resources)
3. *Interfact: Vikings*, World Book

### B. For Students:

1. Review the use of timelines
2. Review world geography
3. Review Greek mythology and class system

## IV. RESOURCES

- A. Batey, Colleen E. (ed.) and Graham-Campbell, James (ed.). *The Cultural Atlas of the Viking World*. Facts on File, Inc. c. 1994.
- B. Benchley, Nathaniel. *Snorri and the Strangers*. Harper. c. 1976.
- C. Branston, Brian. *Gods and Heroes from Viking Mythology*. Peter Bedrick Books. c. 1978.
- D. Browne, Dik & Browne, Christopher. *Hagar the Horrible's Very Nearly Complete Viking Handbook*. Workman Publishing Co. c. 1985.
- E. Evans, Cheryl & Millard, Anne. *Norse Myths and Legends*. Usborne Publishing. c. 1986.
- F. Farman, John. *History in a Hurry: Vikings*. Macmillan Children's Books. c. 1997.
- G. Finney, Fred. *Mystery History of a Viking Longboat*. Copper Beech Books. c. 1997.
- H. Fleming, Fergus. *The Viking Invader*. Usborne Publishing. c. 1997.
- I. Hunt, Johnathan. *Leif's Saga: A Viking Tale*. Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers. c. 1996.
- J. James, Louise & James, John. *What We Know About the Vikings*. Peter Bedrick Books. c. 1997.
- K. Jones, Gwyn. *A History of the Vikings*. Oxford University Press. c. 1984.
- L. Jones, Terry & Foreman, Michael. *The Saga of Erik the Viking*. Puffin. c. 1993.
- M. MacDonald, Fiona. *Treasure Chests: The Vikings*. Quarto Children's Books Ltd. c. 1997.
- N. MacDonald, Fiona. *Timelines: Explorers: Expeditions & Pioneers*. Franklin Watts. c. 1994.
- O. Martell, Hazel Mary. *Food and Feasts With the Vikings*. New Discovery. c. 1995.
- P. Martell, Hazel Mary & Stalio, Ivan. *Myths and Civilization of the Vikings*. Peter Bedrick Books. c. 1998.
- Q. Millard, Anne. *Eric the Red: The Vikings Sail the Atlantic*. Raintree Steck Vaughn. c. 1994.
- R. Morley, Jacqueline. *How Would You Survive as a Viking?* Franklin Watts. c. 1995.
- S. Nicholson, Robert & Watts, Claire. *The Vikings*. Scholastic, Inc. c. 1991.
- T. Odijk, Pamela. *Ancient World: The Vikings*. Silver Burdett Press. c. 1989.
- U. Pearson, Anne. *See Through History: The Vikings*. Penguin Group. c. 1993.
- V. Pruneti, Luigi. *Viking Explorers*. Peter Bedrick Books. c. 1995.
- W. Sawyer, P. H. (ed.). *The Oxford Illustrated History of the Vikings*. Oxford University Press. c. 1998.
- X. Simon, Sharman. *The World's Great Explorers: Leif Eriksson and the Vikings*. Children's Press. c. 1991.
- Y. Smith, A. G. *Story of the Vikings Coloring Book*. Dover Publications, Inc. c. 1988.
- Z. Tweddle, Dominic. *Growing Up in Viking Times*. Troll Associates. c. 1994.
- AA. Watts, Franklin & Martell, Hazel Mary. *Everyday Life in Viking Times (Clues to the Past)*. c. 1994.
- BB. Wingate, Philippa & Millard, Anne. *The Viking World*. Usborne Publishing. c. 1994.
- CC. Wisniewski, David. *Elfwyn's Saga, Story and Pictures*. Lothrop, Lee & Shephard Books. c. 1990.
- DD. Computer software such as: Timeliner, Encarta, Inspiration, and Storybook Weaver Deluxe
- EE. See Appendix N

## V. LESSONS

### A. Lesson One: What Do We Know About the Vikings?

1. Objectives:
  - a. The students will create a KWL chart (what do we KNOW, what do we WANT to know, and what have we LEARNED) about the Vikings.
  - b. The students will create a timeline of the Viking era.

- c. The students will locate Scandinavia and Viking trade routes on a world map.
  - d. The students will create a Viking vocabulary book.
  - e. The students will create a salt and flour topographical map of the Scandinavian area.
  - f. The students will record daily entries in their Viking journals.
2. Materials:
- a. Class and student world map (Appendix A)
  - b. *Inspiration* and *Timeliner* computer software
  - c. TV and scan converter
  - d. Student KWL chart
  - e. Salt, flour, water, plywood (for topographical map) (Appendix B)
  - f. Class and student timeline (Appendix C)
  - g. Viking vocabulary book
  - h. *Growing Up in Viking Times* by Dominic Tweddle
  - i. Viking journal
  - j. Overhead projector and Scandinavia transparency
3. Key Vocabulary:
- a. Scandinavian countries: Norway, Sweden, Denmark
  - b. Other geography terms: Greenland, Ireland, Great Britain, Iceland, Newfoundland (Vinland), Atlantic Ocean, North Sea, Volga River, Danube River, Rhine River, Mediterranean Sea, Black Sea, and Caspian Sea
  - c. Trade routes-water routes used by Viking explorers to trade goods
4. Procedures/Activities:
- a. The teacher will introduce the unit by utilizing the *Inspiration* computer software to create a class KWL chart. Students will first brainstorm all prior knowledge of the Vikings (K of the KWL chart). Simultaneously, students will record this information on their individual KWL charts. Students will then determine additional Viking knowledge they wish to obtain during the unit. (W of the KWL chart). This information will be recorded on their individual KWL charts.
  - b. Read pages 4-5 in *Growing Up in Viking Times*. The teacher will initiate class discussion about this era in history. The teacher will introduce timelines. The teacher will create a class timeline highlighting major events/courses of study since the beginning of the school year. This can be done on butcher paper, the chalkboard, or using the *Timeliner* computer software. Assign a weeklong homework project in which students will create a timeline of their life (with the help of their family). Students can use photographs, illustrations, or magazine pictures to enhance their timeline. As projects are turned in, they can be shared with the class. The teacher will explain to the students that they will be creating a class Viking timeline. Students should make note of important Viking dates as they are mentioned in class discussions.
  - c. Read pages 6-7 in *Growing Up in Viking Times*. On the modern-day world map, students will locate Scandinavia and the Viking trade routes. The teacher will then use the overhead to show a map of the Viking era (see Appendix A). Students will then label the countries and waterways on their map of Scandinavia. Next, the teacher will highlight Viking trade routes on the overhead transparency. Students will draw these on their maps. The teacher will lead a discussion about the reasons why the Vikings left their homelands to explore (scarcity of farming land; cold, bitter, climate; and the desire for riches from other lands).
  - d. The teacher will introduce the use of the Viking vocabulary books. Students will list the Scandinavian countries: Greenland, Iceland, Newfoundland, Ireland, and

Great Britain. They will also list the surrounding waterways. They will then define “trade routes.”

- e. The teacher will explain that the class will be making a salt and flour topographical map of the Scandinavian area. She will explain that this map will take the length of the unit to complete and everyone will have the opportunity to participate in its construction (this can be done by choosing two students daily to work on the construction of the map). She will then discuss the procedures for constructing this map (see Appendix B). At this time, the teacher should conduct a brief lesson on working with the salt, flour, and water mixture.
  - f. The students will assist the teacher in using the Timeliner computer software to create a class Viking era timeline, inserting important dates that have been discussed thus far. Other important dates will be added to this throughout the unit. Students will create their own Viking timeline simultaneously (see Appendix C).
  - g. The teacher will introduce the students to their Viking journals. Students will periodically record information learned. They will also record their personal thoughts, feelings and reactions to that day’s Viking activities.
5. Evaluation/Assessment:
- a. At the end of this unit, students will be assessed on their knowledge of Scandinavian geography.
  - b. At the end of this unit, students will be assessed on their knowledge of Viking vocabulary.
  - c. At the end of this unit, students will be assessed on their knowledge of the sequence of major Viking events.
  - d. Throughout the unit, the teacher will respond to each student’s journal entry.
  - e. A teacher checklist will be utilized to assess student’s class work in their Viking folder (see Appendix D).
  - f. Informal assessments, such as anecdotal records and checklists, will also be used to record student participation and understanding.
6. Standardized Test/State Test Connections: Reading maps and diagrams, reading a timeline, vocabulary, evaluation, sequencing, summarizing, and cause and effect

## **B. Lesson Two: Viking Society**

1. Objectives:
  - a. The students will differentiate between the different Viking class systems.
  - b. The students will utilize a variety of materials to research the Viking class systems.
  - c. The students will present an oral report on their assigned class system.
  - d. The students will document learned facts obtained from oral reports.
2. Materials:
  - a. *The Viking World*, an Usborne book by Philippa Wingate
  - b. Research materials such as: the Internet, computer software, encyclopedias, books, and magazines
  - c. Research outline worksheet (Appendix E)
  - d. Viking Class System Study Sheet (Appendix F)
  - e. Chart paper and markers
3. Key Vocabulary:
  - a. Thralls-the lowest class, usually considered to be the slaves
  - b. Karls-usually middle class merchants, landowners, farmers, and craftsmen
  - c. Jarls-upper class, rich, powerful landowners
  - d. King/Queen-rulers of a particular territory
  - e. Class system-the division of citizens in the Viking society

- f. Althing-served as the legal authority, public assembly
  - g. Merchants-people who sold various items
  - h. Craftsmen-people who made various items
  - i. Aristocracy-the wealthy upper class
  - j. Chieftain-the head of a clan or group
4. Procedures and Activities:
- a. The teacher will begin the introduction of the Viking class system by reading pages 20-21 of *The Viking World*. The teacher will write key vocabulary words on chart paper. The teacher will guide students in determining accurate definitions for each of the Viking classes. Students will add these definitions to their Viking vocabulary list. Following this will be a brief discussion on what life would have been like as a member of each of these classes.
  - b. The teacher will explain that each student will be assigned a role in the classroom Viking society. Each student will be designated as a member of a particular class that would mirror a true Viking society. This will be done by the means of a lottery system in which students will randomly draw their role.
  - c. The teacher will explain that students will be assigned topics/projects pertinent to their class system and will be required to present this information to the class at the culminating feast.
  - d. (The teacher will prepare lottery tickets for each role. There will be one king and one queen. The rest of the class will be divided into thirds, with one third each as jarls, karls, and thralls.) The lottery can be done as simply as students drawing their role from out of a basket.
  - e. The students will respond to this lesson in their Viking journal. They will describe the role that they drew and record any thoughts and feelings toward this.
5. Evaluation/Assessment:
- a. At the end of this unit, students will be assessed on their knowledge of Viking vocabulary.
  - b. A teacher checklist will be utilized to assess student's class work in their Viking folder (see Appendix D).
  - c. Throughout the unit, the teacher will reciprocally respond to each student's entry in their journal.
  - d. Informal assessments such as anecdotal records and checklists will also be utilized to assess student participation and understanding.
6. Standardized Test/State Test Connections: evaluation, research, vocabulary, main idea

### **Lesson Three: Life As a Viking**

1. Objectives:
  - a. The students will use a variety of research materials to obtain information on the various aspects of Viking life.
  - b. The students will create projects depicting life as a Viking in their particular class.
  - c. The students will produce oral presentations on their assigned role.
2. Materials:
  - a. Variety of research materials including the Internet, computer software, reference materials, books, magazines, etc.
  - b. Variety of materials for creating projects such as; poster board, butcher paper, markers, toothpicks, modeling clay, aluminum foil, etc.
  - c. Presentation outline and grading rubric(Appendix G)
  - d. Hnefatafl game
3. Vocabulary:
  - a. longboat/longship-long, slender sailing vessels

- b. tunic-an article of clothing worn by women
  - c. brooch-a pin to hold a woman's tunic in place
  - d. thatch-a grassy plant, usually reeds, used in the construction of the roof of a house
  - e. venison-deer meat
  - f. blacksmith-one who works with metal (i.e. iron)
  - g. anvil-a tool a blacksmith uses
  - h. day meal-the first meal of the day
  - i. flax-stringy plant used to make linen
  - j. hull- the body of a ship
  - k. keel-a long timber that runs along the bottom of a ship to keep it balanced
  - l. prow-the front end of the ship
  - m. mead-a Viking drink made from honey
  - n. night meal-the meal eaten after all the work has been completed
  - o. loom-a device used for weaving cloth
4. Procedures/Activities:
- a. The teacher will assign projects to each class system group. (These projects will take several weeks to complete. Lessons D, E, and F can be taught in conjunction with these small group research activities.) Examples of these might include:
    - King and Queen- research their history and create an oral presentation on the history of the kings and queens, research and create examples of jewelry from modeling clay, research and create examples of money from modeling clay, research foods eaten by the Vikings and create a menu for the Viking feast (culminating activity)
    - Jarls-research and create an oral presentation (on the lifestyle of the jarls and on the weapons and ships of the Vikings), research and create models of Viking weapons and longships
    - Karls-research and create an oral presentation (on the lifestyle of the karls and on the homes/villages and games of the Vikings), research and create a model of a Viking village, create and play Hnefatafl (a Viking game)
    - Thralls- research and create an oral presentation (on the lifestyle of the thralls and on the family unit), create a box diorama comparing Viking family life (such as housing) to modern day family life, create a rap, cheer, or song about the Vikings
  - b. Students will brainstorm and record their ideas about their group projects in their Viking journals.
5. Evaluation/Assessment:
- a. At the end of this unit, students will be assessed on their knowledge of Viking vocabulary.
  - b. A teacher checklist will be utilized to assess student's class work in their Viking folder (see Appendix D).
  - c. Throughout the unit, the teacher will reciprocally respond to each student's entry in their journal.
  - d. Informal assessments such as anecdotal records and checklists will also be utilized to assess student participation and understanding.
  - e. Students' oral presentations will be assessed by the scoring rubric in Appendix G.
6. Standardized Test/State Test Connections: research, vocabulary, sequencing, library skills, summarizing and evaluation,

### C. Lesson Four: Writing in Runes

1. Objectives:
  - a. The students will identify various letters of the “Futhark” alphabet.
  - b. The students will practice writing using Viking runes.
2. Materials:
  - a. Large copy and student copy of the Futhark alphabet (see Appendix H)
  - b. *The Vikings*, by Pamela Odijk
3. Vocabulary:
  - a. Futhark-the Viking alphabet
  - b. Runes-Viking alphabet letters
4. Procedures/Activities:
  - a. The teacher will read pages 28-29 in *The Vikings*, by Pamela Odijk. She will then initiate a class discussion on the similarities and differences between the Futhark and our modern alphabet.
  - b. The teacher will introduce the large copy of the Futhark alphabet and distribute the student copies.
  - c. The teacher will model using the runes to write her name. Students will write their names using runes.
  - d. The teacher will instruct the students to write three important facts that they have learned thus far in their Viking journals using runes. Students can exchange journals with another student when they are finished to practice reading runes.
5. Evaluation/Assessment:
  - a. At the end of this unit, students will be assessed on their knowledge of Viking vocabulary.
  - b. A teacher checklist will be utilized to assess student’s class work in their Viking folder (see Appendix D).
  - c. Throughout the unit, the teacher will respond to each student’s journal entry.
  - d. Informal assessments, such as anecdotal records and checklists, will also be utilized to assess student’s learning and understanding.
6. Standardized Test/State Test Connections: vocabulary, main idea, summarizing, and evaluation

#### **D. Lesson Five: Viking Mythology**

1. Objectives:
  - a. The students will identify characters from Norse mythology.
  - b. The students will compare Viking mythology to Roman and/or Greek mythology.
  - c. The students will create their own Viking myths and sagas.
  - d. The students will draw and label the three levels of the “Norse God Universe.”
  - e. The students will read and respond to Norse myths.
  - f. The students will prepare and perform a saga to be videotaped.
2. Materials:
  - a. Various books about Norse mythology (see bibliography)
  - b. Overhead projector and transparency of the “Norse God Universe”
  - c. Materials such as drawing paper, markers, crayons, and computer software for students to use to write, draw, and illustrate their “Norse God Universe” myths and sagas.
  - d. *The Viking World*, by Philippa Wingate
  - e. Saga presentation outline and scoring rubric (see Appendix I)
  - f. Video tape and video camera
3. Vocabulary:
  - a. Yggdrasil-the magic ash tree whose roots hold together the separate levels of the Norse God Universe
  - b. Asgard-the highest level, where the gods lived

- c. Bifrost-flaming rainbow bridge connecting Asgard and Midgard
  - d. Midgard-the middle level, where humans lived
  - e. Jormungand-the serpent that lived in the ocean surrounding Midgard
  - f. Niflheim-one half of the lowest level, an icy place of eternal darkness
  - g. Nidhogg-dragon that lived in Niflheim
  - h. Muselheim-the other half of the lowest level, the land of fire
  - i. Odin-king of the gods
  - j. Frigg-wife of Odin
  - k. Thor-son of Odin
  - l. Frey-god of fertility
  - m. Freya-twin sister of Frey, goddess of love and death
  - n. Loki- son of two giants, trickster
  - o. Myth-an explanation of natural phenomena or a description of the gods behaviors, usually passed on by word of mouth
  - p. Saga-long stories or tales passes down through generations, usually about adventures or battles.
  - q. Mjollnir- Thor's magic hammer
4. Procedures/Activities:
- a. The teacher will introduce Viking mythology by reading pages 24-25 of *The Viking World*, by Philippa Wingate. The teacher will initiate a class discussion about Viking mythology. Students will then compare and contrast Viking mythology to Roman and/or Greek mythology (based on prior Core Knowledge lessons).
  - b. The students will assist the teacher in creating a large web of Viking mythology characters. Students will simultaneously record this information in their Viking journals.
  - c. The teacher will display an overhead of Yggdrasil, showing the Norse God Universe. She will explain the three levels of this universe and the characters that inhabited each level. Students will then create their own replica of Yggdrasil and illustrate it using markers or crayons.
  - d. The teacher will read various Viking myths to the students. After each myth, the teacher will lead a discussion about the lesson learned, or main idea of the myth. Students will then choose a myth to respond to in their Viking journal.
  - e. The teacher will remind students of the components of a myth. Students will then create and illustrate their own myth (this must either explain a natural phenomenon or teach a lesson). These will be shared with the class. The teacher can score this using a rubric (see Appendix I).
  - f. The teacher will define "saga." She will read an example of a saga. She will tell students that they will practice their story-telling skills with a partner or group in preparation for videotaping. The teacher will videotape students sharing their sagas.
5. Evaluation/Assessment:
- a. At the end of this unit, students will be assessed on their knowledge of Viking vocabulary.
  - b. A teacher checklist will be utilized to assess student's class work in their Viking folder (see Appendix D).
  - c. Throughout the unit, the teacher will respond to each student's journal entry.
  - d. Informal assessments, such as anecdotal records and checklists, will also be utilized to assess student's learning and understanding.
  - e. The teacher will score the saga using a rubric (see Appendix J).
  - f. The teacher will score the myth using a rubric (see Appendix I).

6. Standardized Test/State Test Connections: vocabulary, main idea, details, comparing and contrasting, labeling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, spelling, sentence formation, and sequencing

**E. Lesson Six: Marauders or Explorers?**

1. Objectives:
  - a. The students will identify famous Viking explorers.
  - b. The students will analyze the reasons for exploring and raiding.
  - c. The students will create a Viking explorer timeline.
2. Materials:
  - a. Various resources about Viking explorers
  - b. Maps
  - c. Student timelines and *Timeliner* software
  - d. *Leif's Saga: A Viking Tale*, by Jonathan Hunt
  - e. Viking Timeline (see Appendix C)
3. Vocabulary:
  - a. trading-the buying and selling of commodities
  - b. raiding-a surprise attack or invasion
  - c. pillage-to rob of goods by force
  - d. maraud-to rove in search of plunder
  - e. Leif Ericson-a famous Viking explorer, took a maiden voyage to North America
  - f. Erik the Red-Viking explorer who discovered Greenland
4. Procedures/Activities:
  - a. The teacher will read *Leif's Saga: A Viking Tale*, by Jonathan Hunt. She will then initiate a discussion about Viking explorers. She will also review the main reasons for Viking exploration (see Lesson One).
  - b. The teacher will introduce the above vocabulary.
  - c. The students will use a variety of resources to research other famous Viking explorers. They will then record this information on their timelines while the teacher creates a class timeline on the *Timeliner* computer software.
  - d. In their journals, the students will record a journal entry about a day in the life of a Viking explorer.
5. Evaluation/Assessment:
  - a. At the end of this unit, students will be assessed on their knowledge of Viking vocabulary.
  - b. A teacher checklist will be utilized to assess student's class work in their Viking folder (see Appendix D).
  - c. Throughout the unit, the teacher will respond to each student's journal entry.
  - d. Informal assessments, such as anecdotal records and checklists, will also be utilized to assess student's learning and understanding.
6. Standardized Test/State Test Connections: vocabulary, evaluation, reading a timeline, map skills, cause and effect and summarizing

**F. Lesson Seven: Viking Feast (culminating activity)**

1. Objectives:
  - a. The students will present their finished oral presentations.
  - b. The students will take notes on presented information.
  - c. The teacher will review Viking material for final assessment (see Appendix L).
  - d. The students will participate in a typical Viking feast.
2. Materials:
  - a. Presentation scoring rubric (see Appendix G)
  - b. Final menu created in Lesson Three
  - c. Various foods included on the Viking menu

- d. Jeopardy game board (see Appendix K)
- e. Final assessment (see Appendix L)
- f. Viking Feast Appendix (see Appendix M)
- 3. Vocabulary:
  - a. feast-a large elaborate meal
  - b. review all previous vocabulary
- 4. Procedures/Activities:
  - a. The students will present their finished oral presentations (see Lesson Three) to the class. The teacher will grade these according to the presentation rubric (see Appendix G). During these presentations, students will take notes in their Viking journals.
  - b. The teacher will introduce the Jeopardy board game (see Appendix K). This game will be used as a review for the final assessment and can be played for more than one class period.
  - c. The Viking unit final assessment will be given (see Appendix L).
  - d. The students will participate in a typical Viking feast (see Appendix M).
  - e. The students will respond to the Viking feast in their Viking journals.
- 5. Evaluation/Assessment:
  - a. At the end of this unit, students will be assessed on their knowledge of Viking vocabulary.
  - b. A teacher checklist will be utilized to assess student's class work in their Viking folder (see Appendix D).
  - c. Throughout the unit, the teacher will respond to each student's journal entry.
  - d. Informal assessments such as anecdotal records and checklists will also be utilized to assess student's learning and understanding.
  - e. A final unit assessment test (see Appendix L) will be administered.
  - f. An oral presentation rubric will be utilized to assess presentations (see Appendix G).
- 7. Standardized Test/State Test Connections: comprehension, vocabulary, map skills, reading a timeline, evaluation, summarizing, and cause and effect