Vikings

Knowledge Organiser

Vocabulary

Word	Meaning
archaeologist	someone who finds items from the past to learn about what life was like
chieftain	the leader of a tribe or community
conquer	to invade and take over a place
Danelaw	an area in the north of England ruled by the Vikings
invaders	people who attack and try to take land from other people
kingdom	an area ruled by a king or queen
myth	an ancient story or set of stories, especially explaining the early history of a group of people
raiders	people who attack, then take what they find away with them
runes	the symbols used as letters of the Viking alphabet
settlement	a place where people establish a community
society	the people who live in a place and their way of life
tribe	a group of people who belong to the same culture
Wessex	an area in the south of England ruled by the Anglo -Saxons

Before the Vikings

The Anglo-Saxons were a group of farmer-warriors who lived in Britain. Made up of three tribes who came over from Europe, they were called the Angle, Saxon and Jute tribes. The two largest were the Angles and Saxons which is why we call it the Anglo-Saxon period. They conquered the Romanised Britons who came before them.

Danelaw

Vikings were largely from Denmark, Norway and Sweden. Over a period of around 100 years the Vikings invaded large parts of northern England but there were large areas in the south (Wessex) that they never managed to invade. By 884AD an agreement was signed so that the Vikings could rule over "Danelaw" in the north of England.

The Invasion Journey

To make the journey from Denmark, Norway and Sweden, the Vikings had to make a treacherous journey across the North Sea.

They were expert boat builders.
We know what their boats looked like from examples that archaeologists have discovered.

A Reason to Invade

Farming was tough for the Vikings. The northern part of Scandinavia was full of mountains. The soil along the coastline was sandy. It was difficult to grow crops. As the population grew they could not grow enough food for everyone. Around 750AD, some Viking started to explore other places to live and began to settle in Britain where the Anglo-Saxons lived.

History

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Vikings

Viking Time Line

700AD	793AD	866AD	876AD	886AD	1001AD	1014AD	1066AD	1100AD
The Viking Age begins	First invasion of Britain—raiding monasteries on the coast	Danes capture York (Jorvik) and make it their kingdom	Vikings settle permanently in Britain	King Alfred defeats the Vikings but allows them to settle in Eastern England	Vikings land in America and establish a settlement	King Canute of Denmark becomes King of England	Battle of Hastings takes place and William the Conqueror is crowned king	End of the Viking Age

Important People

King Alfred—King of Wessex 871AD—899AD. Defended Wessex from Viking invasion.
Athelstan—First king to unite the English kingdoms in 927AD.
Guthrum—King of the Vikings in Danelaw at the time of the treaty with the Saxons.
King Canute—King of England, Denmark and Norway between 1028AD and 1035AD.
Edward the Confessor—penultimate Saxon King of England (before Harold II who lost at the Battle of Hastings)

Viking Language

The Viking alphabet looks very different to ours. The Vikings used symbols called runes. These symbols are made using straight lines because they are easier to carve into wood and stone. Each symbol represents a different sound.

The English language has lots of evidence of the Viking invasion of Britain. This is especially the case with lots of place names of many towns and villages in the north of England.

The Vikings were also the first group to ever form a parliament—the Tynwald on the Isle of Man.

Extending your learning

5 things you could do at home to extend your learning:

1. Visit the Jorvik Centre in York or the Sutton Hoo site in Suffolk.
2. See what artefacts you can discover in the Viking and Anglo-Saxon areas of the British Museum.
3. Research Viking shields or jewellery and try to design your own shield or piece of jewellery in the same style.
4. Viking myth to your family.
5. See if you can find the names of some English towns that come from the Viking language.

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