

Viking Voyages: The Explorer's Logbook

Learning objective: To analyse the reasons for Viking expansion and identify the characteristics of Viking longships through historical enquiry.

Ellie the elephant is visiting the museum to study Viking history. You are her research assistant! Complete the 'Viking Voyager's Logbook' by identifying whether these statements are True or False. For every 'False' answer, you must provide a historical justification to correct the statement. Then, use the word bank to help you complete the checklist for a Viking longship.

Word bank: Clinker-built · Shallow draught · Dragon head · Longship · Scandinavia · Navigation

1. True or False: The Vikings originated from the warm, southern deserts of Africa and travelled north to find ice. Justify your answer. (2 marks)

2. True or False: Viking longships were designed with a 'shallow draught', allowing them to sail up narrow rivers. Explain why this was a tactical advantage. (2 marks)

3. True or False: Vikings only travelled to trade goods like silk and spices. Compare this to the historical evidence of Viking raids and settlements. (2 marks)

4. What might happen if a Viking ship was not 'clinker-built' (using overlapping wooden planks)? Justify your reasoning regarding the ship's durability at sea. (3 marks)

5. The prow of the ship was often carved into a _____ to intimidate enemies. Why might a Viking leader want to appear fearsome when arriving at a new coast? (2 marks)

6. Justify why the Vikings were considered expert explorers of their time, considering the tools and technology they used for navigation. (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a detailed Viking longship. Include the 'clinker-built' hull, a colourful striped sail, and the carved dragon head at the front. Label at least three parts of the ship using the vocabulary from the word bank.



Extension challenge: Imagine you are a Viking explorer arriving in Britain for the first time. Write a short journal entry (50-80 words) describing the landscape you see from the shore. Use descriptive language to explain whether you think this land is suitable for farming or settlement, and why.