

The Viking Voyagers

Learning objective: To understand the origins, lifestyle, and impact of the Vikings in Britain.

Read the text carefully and answer the questions below using full sentences.

In the late 8th century, a group of people known as the Vikings began arriving on the shores of Britain. Coming from the harsh, cold lands of Scandinavia—modern-day Norway, Denmark, and Sweden—these Norse explorers travelled across the North Sea in their iconic longships. While they are often remembered as fierce raiders who targeted monasteries, the Vikings were also skilled farmers, clever craftspeople, and adventurous traders. They brought new tools, jewellery, and farming techniques to the British Isles. Ellie the elephant, who loves uncovering the secrets of the past, notes that the Vikings did not just come to fight; many stayed to build homes and start families. They established the Danelaw in the north and east of England, where their own laws and customs were followed. Their influence remains today in our language, as words like 'sky', 'egg', and 'window' have Viking origins. By the time the Viking Age in Britain ended in 1066, they had fundamentally changed the culture, geography, and language of the islands forever.

Word bank: Scandinavia · longship · settlement · raid · Norse · raider · trader

1. Which three modern-day countries make up the region known as Scandinavia? (2 marks)

2. Identify two activities, other than raiding, that the Vikings were known for. (2 marks)

3. Why might the Vikings have chosen to use longships to travel to Britain? (2 marks)

4. Based on the text, what evidence is there to suggest that the Vikings settled permanently in Britain rather than just visiting? (2 marks)

5. Do you think the Vikings had a positive or negative impact on Britain? Justify your choice using information from the passage. (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a Viking longship sailing on the sea, adding details like a striped sail and shields along the side of the boat.



Extension challenge: Research three more English words that come from Old Norse and explain how they are used in your daily life.