

Vikings: Raiders, Traders, and Settlers

Learning objective: To analyse the dual nature of Viking society by categorising their activities and justifying the impact of their arrival in Britain.

Ellie the elephant has been researching the Viking Age. She has discovered a list of historical activities. Your task is to classify each activity as 'Raider', 'Trader', or 'Settler'. Once categorised, use your historical knowledge to justify why these activities were significant to the development of Britain.

Word bank: Longship · Danelaw · Barter · Monastery · Silver · Longhouse · Agriculture · Navigation

1. Sort the following into the correct categories: 1) Stealing treasures from a wealthy monastery, 2) Exchanging furs and amber for silver coins, 3) Building a farmstead to grow oats and barley, 4) Establishing the Danelaw legal system in the North. Explain why a Viking might choose to be a trader rather than a raider in a specific region. (4 marks)

2. Compare and contrast the lifestyle of a Viking farmer with that of an Anglo-Saxon farmer. What evidence do historians look for to tell these two groups apart? (3 marks)

3. If a Viking fleet arrived at a coastal village in 850 AD, what might be the immediate consequences for the villagers versus the long-term consequences for the kingdom? (3 marks)

4. Justify this statement: 'The Vikings were not just warriors; they were sophisticated navigators.' Use evidence of their travel technology. (3 marks)

5. What might happen if the Vikings had never settled in Britain? How would the English language or place names be different today? (3 marks)

6. Imagine you are an archaeologist finding a Viking burial hoard. If you find a balance scale next to a sword, what does this tell you about the person buried there? (2 marks)

Draw: Draw a cross-section of a Viking longhouse. Include labels for the central hearth, the raised benches for sleeping, and the area where animals would be kept during the winter.



Extension challenge: Research the 'Danelaw'. Write a short persuasive poem from the perspective of an Anglo-Saxon farmer living under Viking rule, debating whether to view the settlers as a threat or as neighbours who bring new trade opportunities.