Vikings: Raiders, Traders, and Settlers

Learning objective: To analyse the impact of Viking raids and understand the reasons for Viking settlement in Britain.

Read each question carefully and use your knowledge of the Viking Age (c. 793 AD – 1066 AD) to provide detailed answers. Remember to use historical terminology.

Ellie the elephant has been busy researching the Viking Age. She has discovered that the Vikings did not just raid; they were also skilled farmers, traders, and explorers who travelled from Scandinavia to make new homes in Britain.

Word bank: Lindisfarne · Danelaw · Longship · Alfred the Great · Settlement · Scandinavia · Monastery

1. The raid on the monastery at Lindisfarne in 793 AD is often cited as the beginning of the Viking Age in Britain. Explain why monasteries were considered 'easy targets' for Viking raiders. (2 marks)

2. Describe two features of a Viking longship that made it perfectly suited for both ocean travel and river raids. (2 marks)

3. What was the 'Danelaw'? Explain how it changed the map of England during the 9th century. (2 marks)

4. Max the monkey is trying to calculate the cost of a Viking trading expedition. If a trader buys 5 furs for £12 each and sells them for £18 each, what is the total profit made on the furs? (2 marks)

5. Apart from raiding, name two peaceful activities that Vikings engaged in when they settled in Britain. (2 marks)

Draw: Draw a diagram of a Viking longship. Label at least three key features, such as the dragon-head prow, the square sail, and the steering oar.

Extension challenge: Research King Alfred the Great. Write a short paragraph explaining why he is remembered as a significant figure in the struggle against the Viking invaders.