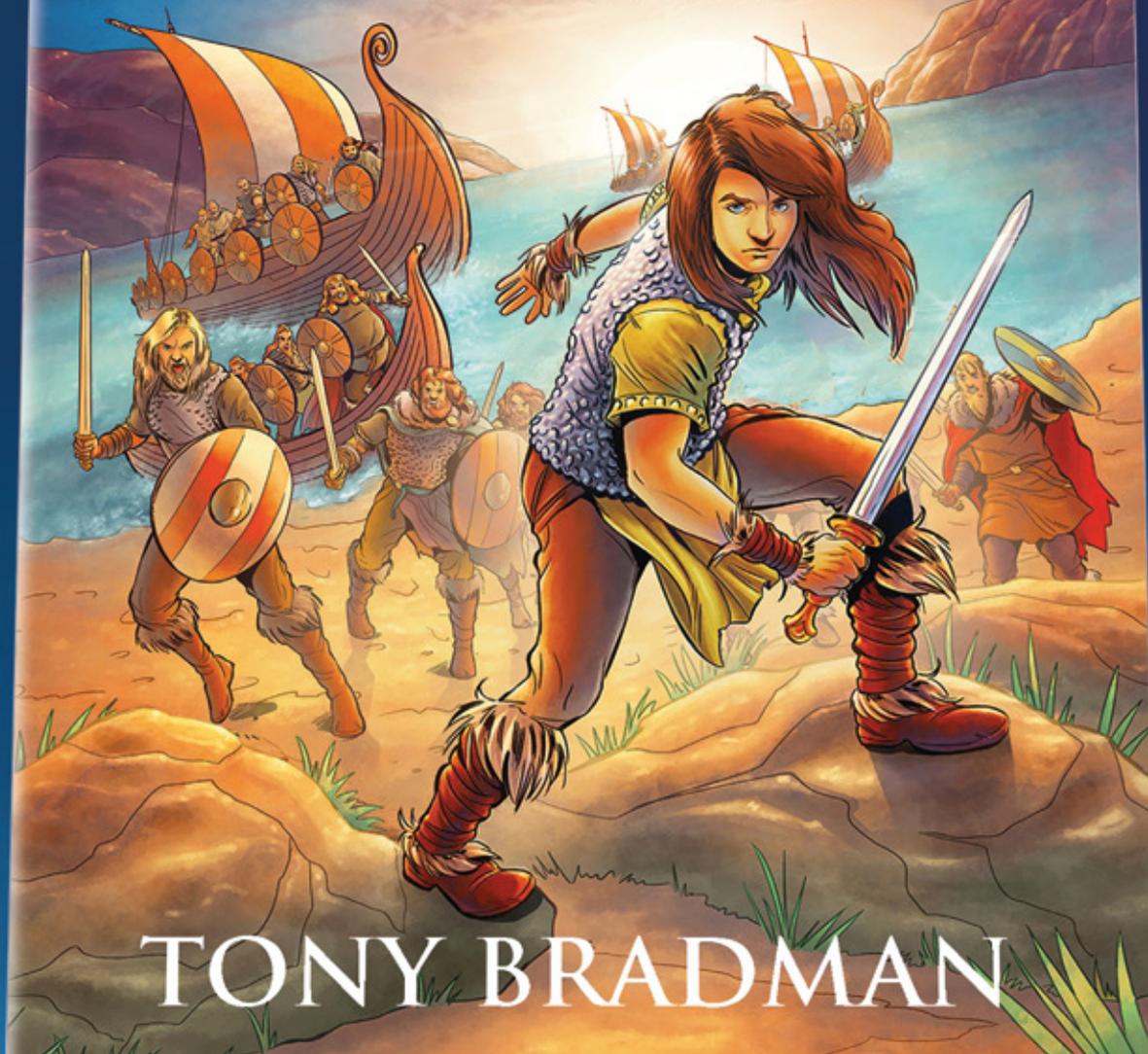


TEACHERS' NOTES

Everything you need to know about THE VIKINGS

VIKING BOY

THE REAL STORY



Viking Boy: the Real Story: Everything you need to know about the Vikings

by Tony Bradman, illustrated by Thomas Sperling

9781406395037 • £6.99 • Paperback • 8 years +

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BOOKS

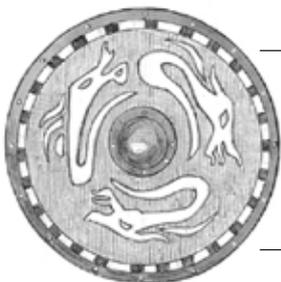
These notes have been written by the teachers at the CLPE to provide schools with ideas to develop comprehension and cross-curricular activities around this text. They build on our work supporting teachers to use quality texts throughout the reading curriculum. They encourage a deep reading of and reflection on the text, which may happen over a series of reading sessions, rather than in just one sitting. We hope you find them useful.

*A sparky non-fiction guide to the Viking world, told by the hero of Tony Bradman's bestselling novel **Viking Boy**. Take a real-life tour of the everyday world of Gunnar, a teenage Viking boy: find out how the Vikings lived, what they believed, how they travelled and fought, and gained their legendary reputation as warriors. Gunnar tells us the real story of growing up as a Viking in an exciting first-hand account, introducing us to family and friends, famous warriors, sea-raiders and even a Norse god! Packed with historical facts, figures and anecdotes, with illustrated information panels on topics from Viking poetry to battle and bloodlust, this is a brilliant new read for Viking fanatics, both at home and in the classroom.*

These notes have been written with children in Key Stage 2 in mind, but you will need to adapt them as appropriate to the age and experience of your children.

Preparing children for the text: responding to the Cover and the Introduction

- Share the front cover of the book with the children and give them time to read the text and explore the illustration (by Judit Tondora). *What does the cover suggest about the book that they're about to read? How does it make them feel? Does it remind them of anything they've already read? Does it seem like the sort of book they would enjoy reading? Why/why not?*
- Discuss the title *Viking Boy: The Real Story*. What do the two halves of the title suggest about the contents of the book? If necessary, explain that the author Tony Bradman has written a novel called *Viking Boy* about a young Viking setting out to avenge his father's death. How might this relate to that story? Read the remaining text on the cover: 'Everything You Need To Know About The Vikings'. *On what sort of book might you expect to read a blurb like that? If this book has 'everything you need to know' and is 'the real story', what do you expect to find inside the book?*
- *What does the rest of the cover suggest we might discover about the Vikings in this book?* Children might draw out aspects of the illustration such as the position, body language and facial expression of the boy who is depicted ahead of the other men (*Is he leading them or running away from them?*), and what that might suggest about the characteristics of that figure. They might consider the way in which the other figures are wielding swords and what that might suggest about where they are or what their purpose is. Children might recognise aspects of the illustration such as the design of the ships and make connections with their knowledge of this period of history.
- Turn to the contents page. *What do we think we will discover in each of the chapters? Are any of the chapter titles harder to predict than others? Are there any words or phrases that puzzle you at this stage? Which section interests you the most? Why?*
- *Has the contents list confirmed our prediction of what type of book this might be? If this is an information text, or non-fiction book, what might we expect to find within it?*
- Read aloud the short introduction (page 10-11). *How does this compare with our expectations for the book? Are our predictions confirmed? What new information do we have? Are there any words that we are less familiar with and would like to explore the definition of?*



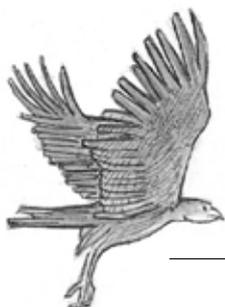
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- Begin by picking out key vocabulary that the children may not be familiar with or may not fully understand in the historical context, for example: *longship, shield-wall, hearth-fire, scabbard* or longer phrases such as *"storm of blades."*
- Note these down and then follow up on deepening children's understanding of new and unfamiliar vocabulary, using artefacts, photographs and video sources to bring these words to life and support the pupils in using them in context.
- Pupils can then begin to take ownership for picking out and discussing word and possible meanings and finding ways to confirm meanings throughout the unit, enriching and enlarging their repertoire of historical vocabulary. They may keep their own individual word book or note vocabulary in their reading journal. Alternatively, you may want to work together to create a shared glossary of the terms related to Viking culture that appear in the text as you read the book.
- Discuss what children already know about the Vikings and this period of history? Children can either work in small groups or you can scribe for the children, generating a simple knowledge organiser that captures what the children know – or think they know – about the period, as well as what they are curious to find out. Support them in generating clear, interrogative questions and listing these somewhere so that they can be returned to, answered or amended as we read more of the book. Discuss where the children have previously found out about Vikings – perhaps they have previously learned about the subject in school, they may have seen a documentary or a film or TV show set within the Viking world or involving Viking mythology, or read books – fiction and non-fiction – which are centred around Viking communities, beliefs and places.
- Finally, return to the short introduction. *What do we discover about our narrator, Gunnar, in this short passage? How do you think he sounds when addressing people in this way?* Divide the text across the group, allocating a short section of the passage to individual children or pairs of children. Give them time to practise a rehearsed performance read of their allocated section. Ask them to think about the meaning behind what they're saying as well as the feeling behind it. *Is it thrilling, exciting, scary or dramatic? How might they alter their pitch, volume or speed to communicate the information clearly as well as expressing the emotion?* After children have had sufficient time to annotate and rehearse their section of the text, bring them back together to share their readings.

Chapter 1: Hard Lands to Live In (page 12-29)

- Start by reading aloud and discussing the title of this chapter. *What do you think this chapter might be about? What might make the lands 'hard' to live in? What does the illustration suggest about these lands? What might you expect to see there? What do they already know about the lands that Vikings lived in?*
- Read aloud page 12, then pause to allow children to respond to what they have heard. Return to their responses from the start of the session. *What are your impressions of the land now? What have you discovered about the places where Vikings lived? Is this somewhere that you think you would like to visit? Why/why not?*
- Watch a short film depicting the mountains, forests and fjords of modern Norway (e.g. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3omnQ9lbaI8>). *How do they feel watching the short film? How does that compare to their response to the text? What similarities and differences might they draw out between the two depictions of this environment?*



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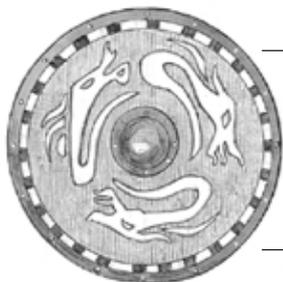
- Turn to the next page, investigating the map and reading aloud the text. Support the children in summarising what they have discovered about the part of the world where the Vikings originally settled. Identify children’s knowledge of other ancient civilisations that were concurrent to this period, and their understanding of the chronology of significant events in European History from the first millennium. The text mentions that the Greeks knew little about Scandinavia and the Romans never conquered it: *Why might that be surprising? Why do you think this was a less explored, less widely-known part of Europe?*
- Compare this map, and the map on pages 18-19, to current atlases or maps of Europe. *Can they identify any familiar place names or unlabelled locations on the map in the book? Can they connect the locations on these maps with a modern atlas? Can they identify the route northwards that was described on page 12?* An online atlas, such as Google Earth, would allow children to virtually fly that route. Note that the place names listed on the map refer to modern names and spelling patterns which may not be how those places were referred to during the period in which our Viking narrator, Gunnar, was alive. The text on page 18-19 suggests how some of these countries may have originally acquired their names. You might use this as an opportunity to discuss the origins of your own town, city, county or school name.
- Give the children time to read page 16-17 and 20-21 and afterwards invite them to share what they have learned about the Viking way of life and their connection to the land. *What elements sound particularly challenging? What do you think the best parts of Viking life would be?* As before, allow time for children to share and discuss any unfamiliar vocabulary, exploring definitions and adding those words or phrases to any ongoing glossary or display.
- Read aloud the text on page 25 describing ‘The Longhouse’. While you read, invite children to close their eyes and picture the scene in their mind’s eye. After reading, invite children to share what they were picturing. *What did you see around you? Did you imagine yourself as one of the people living in the longhouse, or were you only an observer, looking at the scene from above? How do you think it would feel to be there? What would you hear or smell and what textures would you feel?* While discussing what they visualised, ask the children if there were any aspects of the description or any words or phrases that were particularly evocative, that really helped them to imagine the place and how it might feel. *Was there anything else that helped their visualisation? Did it remind them of buildings or places that they have seen in other books, films, television programmes or online – or have they visited a building that felt similar to this?*
- Turn the page and explore the cut-away diagram depicting the longhouse. Discuss any similarities and differences between this depiction and their own visualisation.
- Consider together why they think the author has chosen to include these different methods of presenting information. So far in the text, we have seen maps, diagrams and illustrations, as well as written descriptions. *What role do each of these play? Do they have a preference when reading information texts? How do they like to see information presented? And, when they are producing their own texts, how do they like to present and communicate information to a reader?*
- Establish that there are two voices – some pages are written as if spoken by Gunnar – a young Viking talking about how he and his people live, what he sees, what he does, who he talks to... other pages are written in a more traditional non-fiction voice, speaking about the Vikings from the standpoint of today. What are some of the differences that allow you to know which narrator is writing?
- Discuss which ‘voice’ they prefer and why.
- Finish the session by summarising what the children have discovered about Viking life, homes and the way



in which they interact with and rely on the land. Look back at the questions the children had before they started reading. Have any of those questions been answered? Do they have any further questions they would like to add? Invite children to summarise in writing two or three facts that they found interesting in this chapter and add it to the knowledge organiser.

Chapter 2: Strong Men, Tough Women (page 30-49)

- Read the title for the next chapter and begin to explore children's expectations for gender roles in this era. How would you expect men and women in a Viking homestead or village to behave? What might their daily responsibilities encompass?
- Give children time to read the information presented on pages 30-31 and pages 34-36, then ask children to work together to draw out some of the similarities and differences described in the text. They might use some sort of visual organiser to capture their observations, such as a Venn or Carroll diagram to summarise the two descriptions.
- Afterwards, ask each pair of children to create a **role on the wall** poster to summarise and present the role of men and women in Viking society. To do this, have a simple prepared template of the outline of a person onto which the children can record their ideas. The children might choose whether to complete their role on the wall for a Viking man or a Viking woman, or you might allocate those across the group to get an equal balance. Explain that the children should write words or phrases sharing what they have learned about the outward appearance, actions and responsibilities of the man or woman around the outside of the outline. Then, on the inside of the outline, they should write words to describe their characteristics, e.g. brave, tough, strong-willed, fierce, etc. These might be characteristics that have been described explicitly in the text, or these may be adjectives that they have inferred from the behaviours and actions listed around the outside.
- Afterwards, invite some of the pairs to present their diagrams, explaining how they reached their decisions, and why they selected some of the adjectives, or what they saw in the text that led them to draw particular inferences.
- Discuss the manner in which the information was shared. *Why do you think that Gunnar talks about the role of Viking boys and men, but it is his mother who shares the information about Viking girls and women? How do you think Gunnar might view the differences between these genders in his village? How would you compare the levels of equality described here with your experiences today?*
- After children have read the rest of the chapter, return to the section on pages 39-40 that explains how Viking children were named. Give children the opportunity to share if their own name has a particular meaning or connection with their family history. Consider how different parts or syllables of words might be combined to create whole new names. They might create their own Viking name or nickname inspired by the description in the text. After generating their own Viking name, the children might learn how to represent it in writing using the runic writing system. You can download the late runic alphabet, including a description of how it changed over time, from the Yorkvik Centre: <https://bit.ly/yorvikrunes>
- After reading the description of the Viking board game Hnefatafl, the children may be interested in reading about how to play the game. They can download the instructions and the playing board and pieces from English Heritage (<https://bit.ly/EnglishHeritageHnefatafl>). After reading the rules and playing a few games, children could be challenged to teach the game to others – perhaps taking a copy of the board and pieces home or to another class. They might create a video or audio recording of themselves explaining the rules to others.



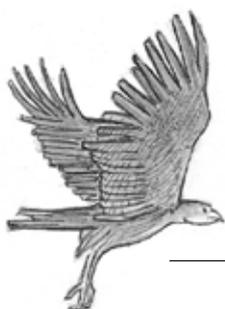
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- Explore the way in which the game is written down: Hnefatafl. *How do we know how to pronounce the name of a game based on an ancient language? How do you know how the word might sound? Can we use a phonemic approach? Do we need to know the language in question?* Comparing how the word sounds with how it is written down might allow the children to make connections with the way languages other than English are communicated in writing, for example other languages that the children speak or write at home.
- At the end of the chapter, it mentions that Viking society at the time commonly included slavery. Were they to hear that Vikings enslaved people? *Does the knowledge that the Vikings were slave owners and facilitated the slave trade change our views and opinions on the era or the characters that we have met so far? Do they know of other historical civilisations, places or periods of history in which slavery was a common practice? What biases or prejudicial behaviours lead to societies accepting practices like slavery? Do you feel that the text tries to excuse this treatment? How might this be phrased differently if written from the perspective of today?*
- You may want to use this as an opportunity to explore the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that was announced in 1948. Article 4 of the declaration states that: No one should be held as a slave, and no one has the right to treat anyone else as their slave. Reflect with the children on why they think an International Body came together to draw this declaration together. *What is its purpose? How does it strive to ensure a better society for all? Why do you think there was such a long duration in time before this legislation came to be?*
- In further PSHE and Citizenship sessions, you may wish to look more broadly at the importance of Human Rights. The Amnesty International resource: Learning About Human Rights in the Primary School provides excellent materials for looking in depth at Human Rights with children of primary school age. This can be found at: <https://www.amnesty.org.uk/resources/learning-about-human-rights-primary-school-resource-pack>

Chapter 3: Gods and Monsters (page 50-69)

- As previously, before reading, use the chapter heading to instigate a discussion about what children already know about 'Gods and Monsters' in Viking culture. Look back at the knowledge organisers the children created before reading the book, and allow children the opportunity to make connections with their knowledge of popular culture as well as ancient history. It will be inevitable that some children will have acquired information from other children's fiction or from the Marvel Cinematic Universe which have made the names of Vikings gods and some related terminology common knowledge, e.g. Thor, Loki, Odin, Asgard, Hela, Heimdall, Bifrost, Fenris, Ragnarok, etc. If children have a degree of knowledge about these figures, their relationships, stories and personalities, then give them time to share those, and later when exploring different versions of the Viking myths give them the opportunity to explicitly consider some of the differences and similarities.
- After children have read pages 50-58, ask them to summarise what they have discovered about the Vikings' belief system and gods. *Why do you think they believed in many different gods? What do the descriptions of these gods suggest about what was valued in Viking society – or what sort of challenges were regularly faced? What was the role of religion in Viking society and how was it organised? How does that compare with other religions that you may know of – from other ancient civilisations or in contemporary Britain?*
- Children may wish to conduct additional research about one or more of the gods of their choosing. *What might they want to find out?* Discuss together some of the areas that they might wish to research as well as different ways of effectively finding answers to their questions. Beyond this book, children might find



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information in other non-fiction texts (see linked texts at the end of this document) or using information found online. Talk about how we can be critical readers of information found online. *Who wrote it? Where was it published? Where did they get their information? How accurate does it seem to be? What websites might we consider to be reliable or trustworthy sources of information?*

- After reading this chapter, you may wish to engage in storytelling with your class. For example, you could learn a Norse myth about one of these gods to retell to the class. There are some published collections of Viking myths and legends listed at the end of this document.
- When preparing to engage in storytelling, ensure that you know the shape of the story well, but don't feel that you need to learn the story 'word for word'. If you know the main events in the story, you will be able to effectively shape it for your audience.
- After telling the class your story, discuss what made it an effective retelling. *What made it different to having a story read aloud? Were there any moments in the story that were particularly memorable? Were there certain phrases or descriptions that were impactful? What was most effective about the way the story was told – how did changes in the voice, altering dynamics or pitch, or using pauses, or body language, gesture or facial expression communicate meaning?*
- Discuss the content of the story and why it might have been passed down through the generations for so long. *Did it have a particular theme or lesson that the audience might learn? Was it promoting a particular characteristic that might have been valued in Viking society? Why do you think stories like this were valued so highly? Did it remind you of other stories that you have heard before?*

Chapter 4: The Way of the Warrior (page 70-83)

- Before reading this chapter, prepare children for what they are going to read by exploring their understanding of the word 'warrior'. Children might point out the significance of the word 'war' within warrior and its possible connection to the definition or shared root. Then, consider the potential meaning of the phrase 'the way of the warrior'. *How might we use the phrase 'the way'? Children might suggest that we talk about stopping somewhere or doing something 'on the way' – "can you put this in the bin on **the way** to the door?" Alternatively, we might talk about 'the way' someone engages in an action or behaviour – "I liked **the way** you asked him if he needed help with that." Does this suggest that the phrase is connected to direction, location, behaviour? What might 'the way of the warrior' entail?*
- After reading page 70-71, ask the children whether they have a clearer understanding of 'the way of the warrior', what that phrase might indicate, as well as what a warrior's role and position was in Viking society. *What would Rurik suggest is the way of the warrior? What characteristics might a warrior have?* Children might want to look back at the role on the wall posters that they produced after reading Chapter 2 to see which characteristics of Viking men and women might also apply to the behaviours and attitudes of the warrior as described by Gunnar and Rurik.
- Ask the children to look back through the text and draw out any words and phrases that describe battles or the people engaged in fighting in them. *How do those words and phrases suggest Gunnar and Rurik feel about fighting? For example, battles are described as "great" – what are the various meanings of that adjective? What might it mean in this context? Gunnar describes a "storm of battle" – what does that use of figurative language suggest about the battle? How do you picture it – with the blades "singing" and arrows "raining"? What impact do those two verb choices have? Rurik suggests that a great warrior who is brave*



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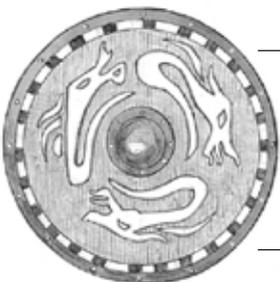
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and reliable will receive great “glory and honour” – what does that suggest about what is being valued most highly? What does Rurik suggest bravery is – is it the absence of fear? Children might also wish to discuss and define two of the hyphenated compound words, the adjective “battle-steeled” and the noun “shield-brothers”. What do these suggest about the qualities of the warrior?

- Ask children to read and then summarise the key points in the story of Ragnar Hairy-Breeches (page 72-73). Does he match up to Rurik’s depiction of the ideal warrior? In what way?
- The note under the story suggests a reason why the story may not be true. Do you think it is a true story? Why/why not? Does the story still have value even if it isn’t true? What is its value as an historical artefact? What is its value as a piece of entertainment? What does it suggest about how we might approach other stories from the past? How do we know what is or isn’t true? How can we find out?
- Before reading the accompanying text, discuss the annotated illustration of the Viking warrior – a Lord of War – on page 76. What can we see in the image? How would you describe his appearance? What seems to be most important? What do you expect to find out from reading this page?
- After reading the accompanying text, invite children to discuss and summarise the advantages and disadvantages of the different items described. Which do you think would be the most important item of attack/ of defence? Why? How might these items connect with the ‘way of the warrior’ or the depiction of Viking society and culture described in the book so far?
- Once they have read the section of the chapter about the making of the sword (page 78-80), consider how this too might add to our understanding of the value of war and fighting within Viking culture. What do we know about the forging of the sword that tells us it is a highly valued object? As well as the time taken over such a complex procedure and the quality of the materials used to make it, children might also draw out the ways in which the sword is personified and given human qualities – in the opening of the chapter the sword ‘sang’, here it ‘hungers’.
- Read aloud the opening line from page 83: “We get the word berserk from the Vikings.” What does that mean – to get a word from the Vikings? Have you heard of the word berserk before? How would you define it? If we know the definition of ‘berserk’, what might that suggest about a ‘berserker’?
- After reading page 83, discuss the meaning and origin of the term. Why might there be some disagreement about the origins of the word? Use the class etymological dictionary – or an online equivalent – to explore and discuss the origins of the word ‘berserk’ and use this to begin to work collaboratively to create a word web or mind map exploring the broader meaning and origins of the word. It might include what we know of the word’s route into modern English, phrases or idioms associated with the word, synonyms for the word, etc.
- After working with the adult to create a word web, children might select another word which has its origins in Old Norse – such as *club*, *ransack*, *husband*, *blunder*, *anger*, etc. – and work with a partner to generate their own map.

Chapter 5: Fire, Blood and Plunder (page 84-99)

- Before children read this chapter, ask them to share their understanding of the word ‘plunder’ from the chapter title, including its use as both a noun and verb. Then, ask the children to share their expectations around how this might relate to the Vikings. If children have already referenced their knowledge of Viking



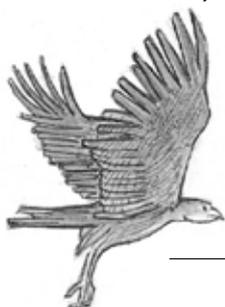
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raids on their knowledge organisers from the start of the unit, then refer back to their original comments and give them space to expand on that information.

- Read the opening of the chapter on page 84–85. *Whose voice is this written in? How do you think Gunnar views the actions taken by Vikings who go raiding? What reasons does he provide for the ‘raiding’ of property belonging to others? Would you challenge this viewpoint? What questions would you ask?* You might also reread more closely and consider what he doesn’t say, as much as what he does. For example, how his choice of vocabulary avoids direct terms such as steal, rob, pillage, murder, etc. He talks instead of Vikings planning to ‘visit’ the monasteries. You might begin to draw out with children the difference between what he explicitly states and what is implied in the text.
- Look back at the idiom evoked near the start of page 84: *“Man is wolf to man, after all, and when times are hard the strong always take from the weak.”* What might this suggest? In what way is a man ‘wolf to man’? What is the implication of the comparison of man to the ‘wolf’? What do we know about how wolves behave? How does that affect our interpretation? Also, is it true that *“when times are hard the strong always take from the weak”*? Why do you think that? Is there another way that we might hope for people to behave when times are hard? What if in difficult times the strong supported the weak: how would that alter the dynamic?
- *Has this description of Viking behaviour changed or added to our characterisation and understanding of Viking culture and civilisation?*
- Later in the chapter, read aloud the description of the longship on page 86–87 without sharing the illustration that follows on the next page. Ask them to listen carefully as you read the passage and then to sketch out a longship for themselves. As they draw, read the passage again and ask them to label their image with the most important terminology. They might write a sentence or two under some labels that captures not only the name for that part of the ship, but also a slightly longer description of its appearance or its purpose. Afterwards, compare their visualisation with the diagram on the following page and discuss what they feel was most significant about this new form of transport. *What made the longship design have such a powerful impact on the Viking people? What did it allow them to do?*
- After reading pages 90–93, invite children to discuss Viglaf’s description of Viking raids. In what ways is his account similar to or different from Gunnar’s description at the start of the chapter? *What are the characteristics of a successful Viking raider? How does this compare with our understanding of Viking men and women, and Viking warriors, as they were depicted earlier in the book? How might a Viking raider view the victims of the raid? Do you feel that the more traditional non-fiction account of the raid on Lindisfarne on the next spread is a more balanced approach? To what extent do you feel it empathises with the monks?*
- Ask the children to watch a short video that explores the famous raid on the monastery at Lindisfarne (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/ztyr9j6/articles/zjcxwty>) and compare this to the depictions in the book. How does this add to our understanding of the event?
- Discuss with the group how they think we know so much about events that happened in the distant past.
- One of the key sources of information about the raid on Lindisfarne is the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle:

“In this year came dreadful forewarnings over the land of Northumbria, terrifying the people most woefully: these were immense sheets of lightning and whirlwinds, and fiery dragons were seen flying through the sky. A great famine soon followed these signs and not long after in the same year, on the sixth day before the ides of January, the harrowing inroads of heathen men destroyed the church of God in Lindisfarne by robbery and slaughter.”



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- However, as that wasn't written until approximately 100 years after the event, how did the writers of the chronicle know what happened? Many stories of the past were passed down orally throughout generations before eventually being recorded in writing – to what extent would details of events be lost or changed over those retellings? We also need to ask ourselves who was doing the telling. Use the format of this book to reflect on the reliability of different sources, as well as how rich the source is in information. *Whose point of view do we see the events from in this book? How might the events be depicted differently through other eyes? We have heard the Viking viewpoint of this attack; how might it be described from the point of view of the monks at Lindisfarne?* Children might engage in further research about life in these monasteries or on Lindisfarne at the time before, writing their own first-person recount from the point of view of someone working in or near the monastery.

Chapters 6 and 7: Sailing the Whale's Road and Kingdoms for the Taking

- The final chapters provide opportunities to explore the different places that Vikings travelled to and the evidence we have of their settlements in Britain, Iceland, Greenland and North America, as well as their impact on modern Britain.
- Start by discussing with the children some of the reasons people might have to move to a different location. Some children might have personal experience of moving either long or short distances for a variety of reasons, and sensitivity will need to be shown around inviting children to talk about this.
- Move on to considering why groups of Vikings might have chosen to create their homes in other countries. *What would it have been like to travel those distances? How would they know what to expect when they arrived? What resources would they find in the new lands? What would be the challenges of setting up a home somewhere new? What do these challenges suggest about the people who were travelling to these distant places? What characteristics would you need to take those risks?*
- After reading about the groups of Vikings who created settlements around the North Atlantic, use maps and atlases to explore the physical geography and climate of these destinations. *What do you think the key attractions were to travel and settle somewhere far away? What did the various countries in which they settled have in common? What sets them apart from one another? Is there a place that you would have preferred to travel to in that time? What makes that place most appealing?* Children might divide into smaller groups and each conduct research into the different places in which Vikings settled before reporting back their findings to the others.
- Use the information in these chapters (as well as on pages 136-137) to consider the influence of different languages on modern English. Discuss the way in which places get their names and how these evolve over time. Children might look into the name of the town, city or village where they live and investigate whether its original name was influenced by a particular society, language or period of history and the extent to which the spelling and pronunciation may have evolved over time.
- After reading the final chapter discuss some of the ways in which Viking civilisation has affected life in Britain, and allow children to make connections with other periods of British history from the first millennium that they may have studied previously.
- Use the timeline on pages 128-129 as a starting point to create a class timeline that encompasses any other periods of world or British history that children may have studied, placing the period of Viking



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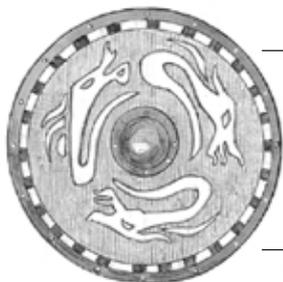
exploration and expansion within that existing knowledge. *When do we generally consider the Viking period to end? What marks the end of that period? Would it have seemed like the end for the people living at that time? How might Viking communities have evolved during the time in which they were settled in Britain (or in other parts of the world)?*

Drawing the learning together:

- Re-read the book and allow the children to begin to explore their responses to the text shared through booktalk with the help of what Aidan Chambers calls ‘the four basic questions’. These questions give children accessible starting points for discussion:
 - *Tell me ... What did you like about the text? Was there anything that you particularly disliked?*
 - *Was there anything that puzzled you?*
 - *Were there any patterns ... any connections that you noticed?*
 - *Did it remind you of anything else you’ve read or seen?*
- The openness of these questions, unlike the more interrogative “Why?” question encourages every child to feel that they have something to say. It allows everyone to take part in arriving at a shared view without the fear of the “wrong” answer.
- Asking these questions will lead children into a fuller discussion than using more general questions. You may, for example, ask the children if they had favourite parts of the story, and why this was.
- Extend the children’s thinking through more evaluative questions, such as: *What do you think about the way in which the historical information is presented in this book? Did you like the use of the images and the text together? Did the layout and structure support your understanding? Did you like the combination of voices, including the use of a fictional character from the past to describe aspects of their society? What do you think the voice of Gunnar – and his contemporaries – added to the book? Why might this be an unusual choice for a non-fiction text?*
- Leave multiple copies of the book in the book corner for the children to revisit and re-read in independent reading time, by themselves or socially in a group.

After reading, you could also:

- Think about different ways to share your knowledge of this period in history. This could include turning your classroom into a class museum at the end of the work and using different activities to share information.
- The information on page 80 and pages 98-99 provides an opportunity to explore kennings and other metaphors and imagery associated with Viking naming, poetry and storytelling, such as the Heiti. Children can try to create their own hyphenated compound descriptors for other Viking artefacts, or for modern -day objects such as mobile phones or motorised scooters. Heiti were such a commonly used form of imagery that nobody needed them to be explained. How have certain types of imagery been absorbed into the English language? Children might explore the origins of phrases such as: *“we’ll cross that bridge when we come to it”* or *“they’re like two peas in a pod”*; or *“I’m jumping for joy”*. Look at other examples of



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kennings here: <https://clpe.org.uk/poetry/poetic-devices/kenning>

- If undertaking a wider study of Viking culture, children could design and build their own model of a longship, longhouse or hall. They might work collaboratively to produce a diorama model of a whole village or steading.
- Children might be inspired to investigate some of the different ways in which people have navigated the land and the oceans in the recent and distant past, perhaps selecting one period or method to research and report back on.
- Provide further opportunities for children to access different retellings of Vikings myths and legends during time set aside for independent reading.
- Children could consider how past civilisations have been stereotyped, or think about how our current period in time will be remembered.
- The class could discuss why archaeology is a vital source of information about ancient people and their lives. Some of the Viking display cases at the British Museum can be explored via Google Street View here: <https://bit.ly/BritishMuseumViking>

Links to support the widening of historical knowledge:

- Teacher Guide to the Vikings - <https://www.history.org.uk/resource/3867>
- BBC Bitesize: Vikings - <http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/topics/ztyr9j6>
- BBC Class Clips - <https://www.bbc.com/teach/class-clips-video/history-ks2--ks3-vikings/zhys92p>
- Jorvik Viking Centre, York - <https://www.jorvikvikingcentre.co.uk/>
- Norse Myths - <http://www.storynory.com/category/norse/>

Selected texts by Tony Bradman:

- *Viking Boy* by Tony Bradman (Walker Books, 2012)
- *Anglo-Saxon Boy* by Tony Bradman (Walker Books, 2017)
- *Attack of the Vikings (Flashbacks Series)* by Tony Bradman (Bloomsbury Education, 2017)
- *1944: Blackout* by Tony Bradman (Scholastic, 2019)
- *Daisy and the Unknown Warrior* by Tony Bradman, illustrated by Tania Rex (Barrington Stoke, 2020)

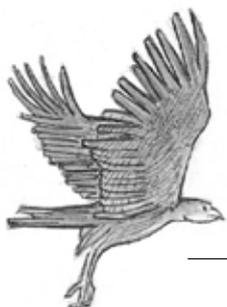
Other linked texts for reading aloud or independent reading:



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- *The Sleeping Army* by Francesca Simon (Profile Books, 2012)
- *Odd and the Frost Giants* by Neil Gaiman and Chris Riddell (Bloomsbury, 2010)
- *The Saga of Erik the Viking* by Terry Jones (Puffin, 1988)
- *Magnus Chase and the Sword of Summer* by Rick Riordan (Puffin, 2016)
- *Arthur and the Golden Rope* by Joe Todd-Stanton (Flying Eye Books, 2018)
- *Norse Myths* by Kevin-Crossley-Holland, illustrated by Jeffrey Alan Love (Walker Studio, 2017)
- *The Dragon's Hoard: Stories from the Viking Sagas* by Lari Don, illustrated by Cate James (Frances Lincoln, 2017)
- *The Vikings (History in Infographics)* by Jon Richards (Wayland, 2018)
- *Viking Longship* by Mick Manning and Brita Granström (Frances Lincoln, 2006)
- *Vicious Vikings (Horrible Histories)* by Terry Deary and Martin Brown (Scholastic, 2016)
- *The Viking Invader (Newspaper History)* by Fergus Fleming (Usborne, 2000)
- *You Wouldn't Want to Be a Viking Explorer!* by Andrew Langley (Book House, 2014)
- *Everything Vikings* by Nadia Higgins (National Geographic, 2015)



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