

## Ashfield Valley Primary School - History - Do Vikings deserve their bloodthirsty reputation?

### Key dates and facts about the Vikings

793AD - the Vikings attacked the monastery on Lindisfarne, an island off North East Britain.

Until The Battle of Hastings in 1066, both Anglo-Saxons and Vikings were living in Britain and had been for 300 years, but they spent a lot of time fighting each other.

In 1066 - William of Normandy came and defeated the King Harold Godwinson. This was the start of Norman rule in England.

Vikings came from Norway, Sweden and Denmark. This area of Europe is known as Scandinavia. They came because there was a population surge in their countries and a shortage of good farming land.

Vikings used longboats to travel and to attack. The boats were narrow and so could move along rivers as well as across the sea.

Vikings were pagans, which means they worshipped lots of different gods.

Vikings were raiders, traders and farmers.

### Vocabulary

Monastery - a holy Christian place, where monks live and worship God. Monasteries would have been very rich at this time.

Raider - raiders would go and attack villages and steal their possessions, often killing the men and stealing the women.

Trader - traders sell or swap things in order to earn a living.

Longboat - a long, narrow, wooden ship, often with a creature carved at the front to ward off evil spirits.

Overpopulation - this is when a country becomes too crowded, which is what was happening in Scandinavia.

Runes - this was the written language of the Vikings.

Asgard - this is the place where the Vikings believed the gods lived.

Valhalla - the great hall where Vikings believed heroes would go when they died.

### 10 of the main gods of Norse mythology:

**Odin** was the wisest god and most powerful god. He was the ruler of Asgard.

**Thor** was the god of thunder and was considered to be the strongest of all beings. He was Odin's son.

**Frigg** was the goddess of love and fate. She was Odin's wife and the queen of Asgard.

**Baldur** was the god of light, beauty, love and happiness.

**Vidar** was the god of vengeance. He was the son of Odin and a giantess.

**Freya** was the goddess of love, but she is also associated with beauty, sorcery and gold.

**Tyr** was the god of war. It was Tyr who decided who would win a war.

**Brage** was the god of poetry and prose. He was very wise and eloquent.

**Sif** is the goddess of grain and fertility. She was married to Thor.

**Idun** was the goddess of spring and eternal youth. In the mythical tales, Idun guards the apples of youth.

### Useful Websites/Reading

[www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics](http://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics)

Book - Odd and the Frost Giants by Neil Gaiman

Book - Viking Boy by Tony Bradman



