

Grade 3 History & Geography

Unit 3: The Vikings

6 lessons and a unit quiz. Use this pack with the **The Vikings Student Reader** (print it, or download it once from the course) to teach the whole unit without the internet.

What is in this pack

- A lesson plan for each chapter: the Big Question, words to know, which pages to read, questions to talk over and the activity pages.
- The unit quiz, ready to print.
- Answers for the teacher at the back: every discussion question and the quiz key.

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Lesson schedule

Two or three lessons a week, about 30 minutes each. Tick each one off as you go.

	Lesson	Reader pages	Activity pages
☐	Chapter 1: The Vikings	PDF pages 8–13	AP 1.1, AP 1.2
☐	Chapter 2: Traders and Raiders	PDF pages 14–19	AP 2.1
☐	Chapter 3: Viking Sailors and Ships	PDF pages 20–25	AP 3.1
☐	Chapter 4: Eric the Red	PDF pages 26–31	AP 2.1
☐	Chapter 5: Leif Eriksson	PDF pages 32–37	AP 1.1, AP 5.1, AP 5.2
☐	Chapter 6: Viking Gods and Myths	PDF pages 38–45	AP 6.1
☐	Unit quiz	—	—

Page numbers are the PDF page numbers of the Student Reader file, so they match what your PDF reader shows.

Chapter 1: The Vikings

THE BIG QUESTION

What did it mean to go “a-viking,” and how does this show the Viking way of life?

Words to know

- **raid** — to attack suddenly and with force *The Viking chief wanted to raid the small village on the coast.*
- **fjord** — a deep and narrow portion of the sea that stretches inland, with high cliffs on either side *Viking longships sailed into the fjord as they approached home.*
- **blacksmith** — a type of craftsman who makes iron tools by hand *Ivar asked the blacksmith to make a new hammer.*
- **jarl** — a Viking chief *As the jarl, Ivar’s father was a powerful leader in the village.*
- **plunder** — to take something by force *One goal of many Viking voyages was to plunder wealthy towns, taking anything of value for themselves.*
- **ransom** — money paid to release someone being held captive *The Vikings held the small child prisoner in exchange for ransom from his village.*
- **rune** — a letter of the Viking alphabet *The archaeologist found the rune carved into a rock.*

Read

Read Chapter 1 in the Student Reader: PDF pages 8–13. Look at the pictures and maps together.

Talk it over

1. Where were the Vikings from?
2. How would you describe the everyday life of Ivar, the Viking boy?
3. Why do you think children were expected to work so hard to support the family?
4. What happened when the Viking men went on a raid?
5. What were runes, and how did the Vikings use them?

Answers are at the back of this pack.

Check for understanding

- Answer the Big Question in a sentence or two: What did it mean to go “a-viking,” and how does this show the Viking way of life?
- Use one of today’s words in a sentence of your own.

Activity pages

- Activity Page 1.1: World Map — Teacher Guide PDF page 66
- Activity Page 1.2: Viking Runes — Teacher Guide PDF page 67

Chapter 2: Traders and Raiders

THE BIG QUESTION

How did the Vikings get the riches they brought back to their homeland?

Words to know

- **oarsmen** — on a ship, those who are responsible for rowing *The young boys looked forward to being oarsmen on a Viking longship.*
- **berserker** — one of the most fearless and frightening Viking warriors *The berserker shocked and frightened the villagers during the raid.*
- **tow** — to drag *Once the Vikings reached shallow water, they stopped rowing so they could tow the boat ashore.*
- **cargo** — goods transported by a ship, plane, or truck *Viking traders brought home cargo such as jewelry, fabric, and wine from their voyages.*
- **goblet** — a large container used for drinking *The jeweled goblet was just one of the many treasures the jarl brought back from the raid.*

Read

Read Chapter 2 in the Student Reader: PDF pages 14–19. Look at the pictures and maps together.

Talk it over

1. What was a berserker?
2. What English word comes from berserker, and what does it mean?
3. How might Ivar have felt when he heard the blast of the Viking longship's horn?
4. What is the meaning of the section title "Mixed Cargo"?
5. Why is "Traders and Raiders" a good title for this chapter?
6. How did the Vikings treat the people they conquered?

Answers are at the back of this pack.

Check for understanding

- Answer the Big Question in a sentence or two: How did the Vikings get the riches they brought back to their homeland?
- Use one of today's words in a sentence of your own.

Activity pages

- Activity Page 2.1: The Viking World — Teacher Guide PDF page 68

Chapter 3: Viking Sailors and Ships

THE BIG QUESTION

Why were ships so important to the Viking way of life?

Words to know

- **moored** — secured in place using chains, ropes, or an anchor *The moored ship stayed in place where the Vikings had fastened it until they were ready to set sail.*
- **prow** — the pointed front end of a ship *The Viking shipbuilder decorated the prow of the ship with the sculpture of a fearsome creature.*
- **mast** — a large vertical post on a ship that helps hold up the sails *The sailor ran the sail of the ship up the tall mast.*

Read

Read Chapter 3 in the Student Reader: PDF pages 20–25. Look at the pictures and maps together.

Talk it over

1. Why did the Vikings need excellent ships?
2. Why did many Viking families move away from their homeland?
3. How did the Vikings navigate?
4. How does Ivar imagine and describe a typical Viking voyage?
5. Why did Olaf the Shipbuilder carve a serpent-like creature on the longship's prow?
6. Why were storytellers important in Viking culture?

Answers are at the back of this pack.

Check for understanding

- Answer the Big Question in a sentence or two: Why were ships so important to the Viking way of life?
- Use one of today's words in a sentence of your own.

Activity pages

- Activity Page 3.1: Domain Vocabulary: Chapters 1–3 — Teacher Guide PDF pages 69–70

Chapter 4: Eric the Red

THE BIG QUESTION

Why did Eric the Red name the land west of Iceland, Greenland?

Words to know

- **feast** — a large meal held to celebrate a day or event *The Vikings spent many hours at the feast, eating and celebrating after their long journey.*
- **hush** — silence *A hush fell over the crowd as the storyteller began to speak.*
- **banish** — to force someone to leave and stay away from a place *The Vikings decided to banish Eric the Red as a form of punishment.*

Read

Read Chapter 4 in the Student Reader: PDF pages 26–31. Look at the pictures and maps together.

Talk it over

1. What was life in Iceland like for the Vikings?
2. Why was Eric the Red banished from Iceland?
3. After Eric the Red was banished from Iceland, where did he settle?
4. What kind of place was Greenland?
5. After the new settlers arrived in Greenland, were they able to produce enough food by farming? What did they have to do instead?

Answers are at the back of this pack.

Check for understanding

- Answer the Big Question in a sentence or two: Why did Eric the Red name the land west of Iceland, Greenland?
- Use one of today's words in a sentence of your own.

Activity pages

- Activity Page 2.1: The Viking World — Teacher Guide PDF page 68

Chapter 5: Leif Eriksson

THE BIG QUESTION

Why might Vikings have once believed that Greenland was the end of the world?

Words to know

- **pasture** — land covered with grass on which farm animals feed *The new farm had a large pasture for the cows to feed on.*

Read

Read Chapter 5 in the Student Reader: PDF pages 32–37. Look at the pictures and maps together.

Talk it over

1. What did Viking storytellers teach Viking children and adults?
2. How did the Vikings learn that Greenland was not the end of the world?
3. Why did Leif call this land Vineland?
4. Why is Leif Eriksson called “Leif the Lucky”?

Answers are at the back of this pack.

Check for understanding

- Answer the Big Question in a sentence or two: Why might Vikings have once believed that Greenland was the end of the world?
- Use one of today’s words in a sentence of your own.

Activity pages

- Activity Page 1.1: World Map — Teacher Guide PDF page 66
- Activity Page 5.1: Viking Voyages West — Teacher Guide PDF page 71
- Activity Page 5.2: More Viking Runes — Teacher Guide PDF page 72

Chapter 6: Viking Gods and Myths

THE BIG QUESTION

How did myths help the Vikings make sense of their world?

Words to know

- **Norse** — people who lived in Scandinavia long ago *The Norse traveled from their homes in Scandinavia to new lands in North America.*
- **myth** — an idea or story that many people believe but is not true *One Viking myth says that the gods create the weather.*
- **underworld** — a place where it was believed that people went when they died *One Viking myth describes which god controls the underworld.*
- **realm** — a kingdom *Odin's realm was very large; he ruled over many gods, people, and creatures.*
- **wisdom** — extensive knowledge or experience *The Vikings believed the gods had great wisdom.*
- **maiden** — a young, unmarried woman *A Valkyrie was a young maiden who carried fallen warriors to Valhalla.*

Read

Read Chapter 6 in the Student Reader: PDF pages 38–45. Look at the pictures and maps together.

Talk it over

1. Why did the Vikings tell stories that we call myths?
2. How did Norse myths describe the creation of the world?
3. Where did the Norse gods live?
4. Who was Thor?
5. How might the use of his hammer help describe the occurrence of rain and thunder?
6. Who are Odin, Thor, and Loki?
7. What do you think is the message behind the story of Loki?
8. What days of the week are named after Viking gods?

Answers are at the back of this pack.

Check for understanding

- Answer the Big Question in a sentence or two: How did myths help the Vikings make sense of their world?
- Use one of today's words in a sentence of your own.

Activity pages

- Activity Page 6.1: Domain Vocabulary: Chapters 4-6 — Teacher Guide PDF page 73

UNIT QUIZ

The Vikings

Name: _____ Date: _____

Circle the letter of the best answer.

1. The area of Europe where the Vikings came from is now called
 - a) England.
 - b) North America.
 - c) Scandinavia.
 - d) the Netherlands.
2. Another name for the Vikings is
 - a) the Norse.
 - b) Icemen.
 - c) trolls.
 - d) Inuit.
3. Which of the following can be used to describe the Vikings?
 - a) builders of great cities
 - b) wise peacemakers
 - c) fierce raiders
 - d) great scholars
4. The Vikings were best known for their great skill in
 - a) drawing and painting.
 - b) shipbuilding and sailing.
 - c) studying and writing.
 - d) singing and dancing.
5. Sailing on a Viking longship required courage and strength because
 - a) they used only the wind and sails to travel.
 - b) they were open to the weather.
 - c) they carried only one sailor.
 - d) they frequently broke up and sank in storms.
6. To go “a-viking” meant
 - a) to wrestle.
 - b) to hunt.
 - c) to raid.
 - d) to farm.
7. The fiercest Viking warriors were known as
 - a) sailors.
 - b) jarls.
 - c) navigators.
 - d) berserkers.

- 8.** Farmland was scarce in the Viking homelands because of the
- a) many mountains.
 - b) many deserts.
 - c) lack of irrigation.
 - d) lack of oxen to pull plows.
- 9.** The letters of the Viking alphabet were called
- a) cuneiform.
 - b) runes.
 - c) cursive.
 - d) jarls.
- 10.** Viking farms were often nestled between
- a) fjords and mountains.
 - b) deserts and sand dunes.
 - c) two large plains.
 - d) two large cities.
- 11.** Besides carrying out raids, what did the Vikings do as they journeyed through Europe?
- a) They traded with the people they met.
 - b) They taught people their religion.
 - c) They offered people help in defeating their enemies.
 - d) They held feasts with the people they met.
- 12.** The Vikings navigated by using
- a) detailed maps.
 - b) a compass.
 - c) their voices.
 - d) the sun and the stars.
- 13.** Eric the Red was banished from Iceland and settled in
- a) Russia.
 - b) Iceland.
 - c) Greenland.
 - d) Norway.
- 14.** Why did the Vikings take birds to sea?
- a) to keep the birds as pets
 - b) to keep the birds from harm
 - c) to eat the birds
 - d) to help them find their direction when they were lost
- 15.** Leif Eriksson was
- a) a farmer.
 - b) an explorer.
 - c) a missionary.
 - d) a Norse god.

- 16.** The Vikings were the first Europeans to set foot in
- a) North America.
 - b) South America.
 - c) Africa.
 - d) Australia.
- 17.** Greenland was given that name in order to
- a) attract settlers.
 - b) emphasize its wide green plains.
 - c) honor Viking gods.
 - d) describe its clover fields.
- 18.** According to Norse mythology, the world was created from
- a) leaves and grass.
 - b) thunder and lightning.
 - c) sand and snow.
 - d) the body of a dead giant.
- 19.** What did Odin and the warriors do in Valhalla?
- a) ate magic apples and prayed
 - b) battled by day and feasted at night
 - c) slept all the time
 - d) carved rune stones
- 20.** Which day of the week is named after Thor, the Viking god of thunder?
- a) Tuesday
 - b) Monday
 - c) Wednesday
 - d) Thursday

Answers

Chapter 1: The Vikings

1. **Where were the Vikings from?**

The Vikings were from Scandinavia, an area that includes present-day Norway, Sweden, and Denmark.

2. **How would you describe the everyday life of Ivar, the Viking boy?**

He worked hard on the farm and for the blacksmith. He played with other boys and learned to hunt, fish, and ride horses.

3. **Why do you think children were expected to work so hard to support the family?**

Possible answer: Life was challenging where the Vikings lived, and all members of the family had to contribute to the family's survival.

4. **What happened when the Viking men went on a raid?**

They traveled along seacoasts and rivers in their longships. They stole, burned, took captives, and demanded ransom. They kept some captives as slaves. People who tried to stop them were killed.

5. **What were runes, and how did the Vikings use them?**

Runes were the letters of the Viking alphabet, which the Vikings used to write about important events and people.

Chapter 2: Traders and Raiders

1. **What was a berserker?**

A berserker was a particular type of Viking warrior who did not use armor for protection when going into battle; he wore only a bearskin shirt and screamed wildly to scare the enemy.

2. **What English word comes from berserker, and what does it mean?**

The word berserk comes from the Viking word beserker. In English, the word berserk means to behave wildly, which also describes the way the berserkers acted.

3. **How might Ivar have felt when he heard the blast of the Viking longship's horn?**

Student responses will vary. Students may explain that Ivar felt excited because he had not seen his father for a long time.

4. **What is the meaning of the section title "Mixed Cargo"?**

The Vikings brought back many different things, including silver coins, candlesticks, goblets, jewelry, silk, glass, and wine. Sometimes they also brought back prisoners as enslaved people.

5. **Why is "Traders and Raiders" a good title for this chapter?**

Possible answer: The chapter talked about Viking warriors and the goods and enslaved people they brought home from their travels. The Vikings acquired the goods they brought home from both trading and raiding.

6. **How did the Vikings treat the people they conquered?**

They stole their treasure and captured prisoners. The people they captured were often taken back to the Vikings' home and belonged to the jarl. Prisoners usually remained slaves unless and until their freedom could be paid for.

Chapter 3: Viking Sailors and Ships

1. **Why did the Vikings need excellent ships?**

The different regions of Scandinavia in which they lived included many islands and other challenging geographical features, such as fjords and mountains. Most travel was by water.

2. **Why did many Viking families move away from their homeland?**

Many Viking families moved away from their homeland to find good land to farm because there was not enough in their homeland.

3. **How did the Vikings navigate?**

They looked at the sun and stars, or they followed birds because they flew toward land.

4. **How does Ivar imagine and describe a typical Viking voyage?**

Ivan makes a typical Viking voyage seem like an enjoyable adventure, with campfires and cooking on the beach. He was able to describe a voyage because he had heard so many stories about sailing.

5. **Why did Olaf the Shipbuilder carve a serpent-like creature on the longship's prow?**

The serpent was meant to scare enemies of the Vikings.

6. **Why were storytellers important in Viking culture?**

Storytellers told stories and recited poems for entertainment. They also carried news of faraway places. Page 19

Chapter 4: Eric the Red

1. **What was life in Iceland like for the Vikings?**

Life was harsh. There wasn't enough good farmland; they needed to fish and to hunt seals and walrus for food.

2. **Why was Eric the Red banished from Iceland?**

He broke the law by killing two men.

3. **After Eric the Red was banished from Iceland, where did he settle?**

Eric the Red settled in Greenland.

4. **What kind of place was Greenland?**

In winter, it was surrounded by ice. There were bad storms. There was not much farmland, but off the coast there were plenty of fish and other sea animals.

5. **After the new settlers arrived in Greenland, were they able to produce enough food by farming? What did they have to do instead?**

No, the new settlers could not find enough good farmland. Instead, they hunted and fished and traded.

Chapter 5: Leif Eriksson

1. **What did Viking storytellers teach Viking children and adults?**

They taught stories about the Viking gods and heroes, and they recited Viking poems. They also told the news from faraway places.

2. **How did the Vikings learn that Greenland was not the end of the world?**

Leif Eriksson, inspired by another sailor's story of seeing land beyond Greenland, sailed past Greenland.

3. **Why did Leif call this land Vineland?**

Grapes grew wild there, and Vikings enjoyed the white wine made from grapes.

4. **Why is Leif Eriksson called "Leif the Lucky"?**

Leif rescued a shipwrecked Viking crew and was given the ship's cargo as a reward.

Chapter 6: Viking Gods and Myths

1. **Why did the Vikings tell stories that we call myths?**

The Vikings used myths to explain the origin of the world and other things about the world that they did not understand.

2. **How did Norse myths describe the creation of the world?**

After Odin, the chief god, killed the evil frost giant, the gods made the world from the giant's huge body.

3. **Where did the Norse gods live?**

The Norse gods lived in Asgard. Odin, the chief god, lived in a palace called Valhalla.

4. **Who was Thor?**

Thor was Odin's son. He was the strongest of the Norse gods and the god of thunder.

5. **How might the use of his hammer help describe the occurrence of rain and thunder?**

Possible answer: Thunder can sound like something is being hit with a hammer. If Thor hit the clouds with his hammer, it could cause the rain to fall out.

6. **Who are Odin, Thor, and Loki?**

Odin, Thor, and Loki are Norse gods. Odin was the chief god, who ruled all the others. Thor was Odin's son, who carried a hammer and protected the Norse people. Loki was a trickster and troublemaker.

7. **What do you think is the message behind the story of Loki?**

Student responses will vary. Students may say that while everyone appreciates a joke, humor that is meant to hurt another person is not okay.

8. **What days of the week are named after Viking gods?**

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday are all named after Viking gods.

Unit quiz key

1. c 2. a 3. c 4. b 5. b 6. c 7. d 8. a 9. b 10. a 11. a 12. d 13. c 14. d 15. b 16. a 17. a 18. d 19. b 20. d