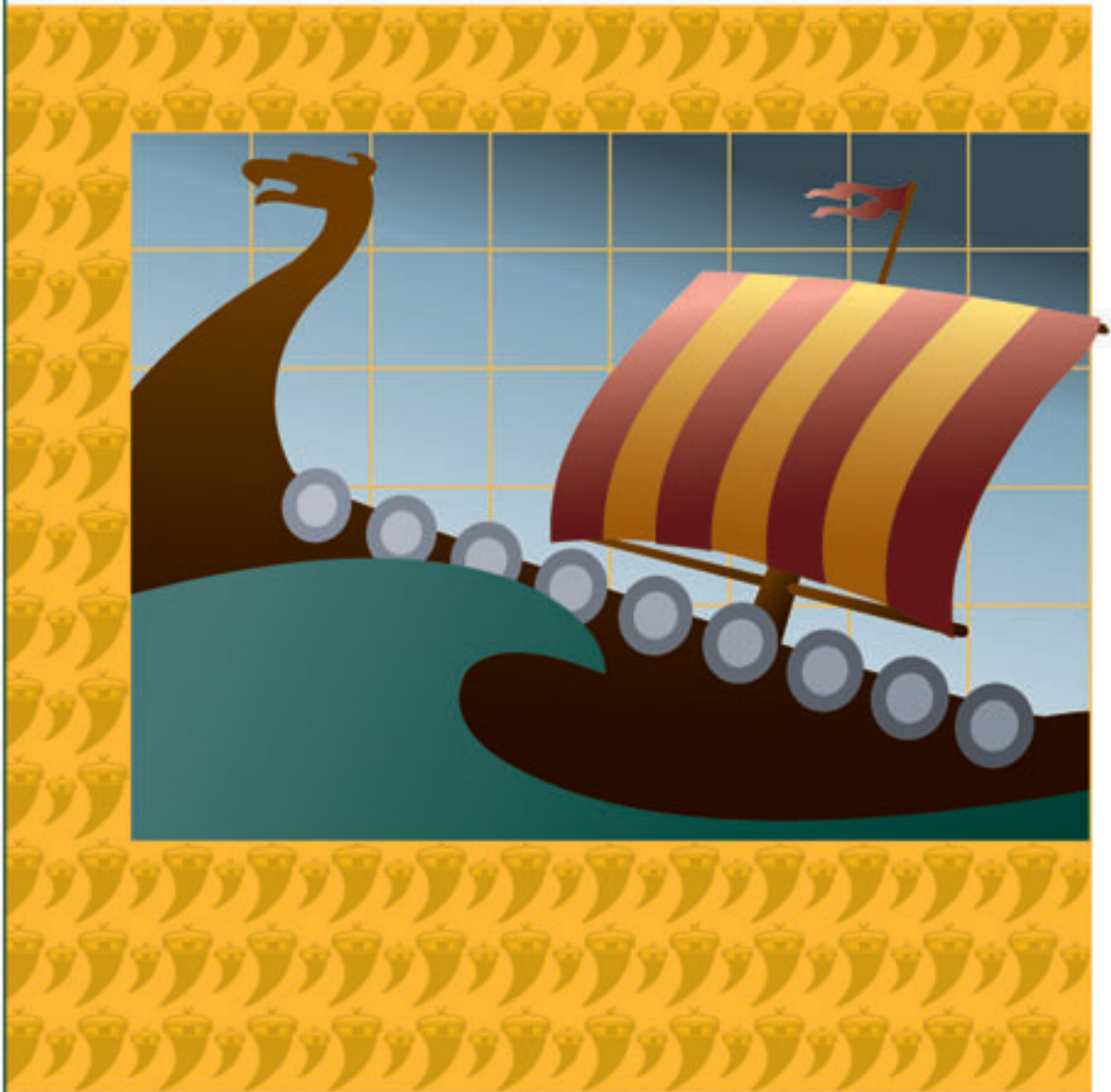


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VIKINGS



A Simulation of the Culture and Contributions of the
Medieval Norse, 800–1100

VIKINGS

**A simulation of the culture and contributions
of the medieval Norse, 800–1100**

BILL LACEY, the author of VIKINGS, has written over 20 simulations and interactive learning units for Interact since 1974. Most recently he wrote GREEKS and co-authored the GREAT AMERICAN CONFRONTATIONS and GREAT AMERICAN LIVES series. Bill is also the Interact historical editor of both the GREAT HISTORICAL ERAS and the WORLD HISTORY TRIALS series. He has taught high school history for over two decades in Fountain Valley, California, where he uses the materials he creates or edits. Bill pursues the Good Life by committing himself to his family in Huntington Beach, by dedicating himself to teaching, and by having several hobbies: running, puttering around the home, and dreaming of adding screen-writing to his busy life.

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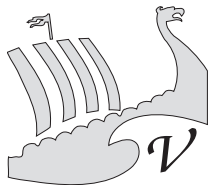
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ISBN 978-1-57336-128-6

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Introduction

PURPOSE - 1

Why study the Vikings?

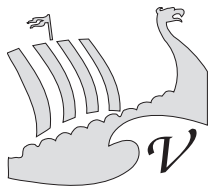
VIKINGS was written to give social studies teachers yet another series of clever strategies with which to teach their subjects. Increasingly, school board and curriculum committees realize the wisdom of having students involved in their own education through debates, trials, panels, historical re-creations, and simulations—strategies which guarantee interaction.

Interactive and cooperative materials of this nature have not always been available for teachers of World and European History as much as for their counterparts in United States History. This simulation on the Vikings will hopefully fill a small void as will others in this Interact world history series: GREEKS, ISLAM, CHRISTENDOM, and RENAISSANCE.

The period of the Vikings is not a shot in the dark, or as one historian has phrased it, “a bolt out of the blue”—a reference to their blitzkrieg raiding style. Indeed, the Norse should be more than a fascinating footnote in history for several reasons.

First, these hardy Scandinavian people have been misunderstood to a point of being maligned, if not by scholars, at least by a gullible public. While they did plunder, kill, and create havoc in the structured and religious European world (a monk’s plea: “Oh, Lord, protect us from the wrath of the Northmen”), they were in fact more than a crazed horde of murderous barbarians. Their contribution to western civilization, while not equal in any way to the Hebrews or Greeks, is significant and thus worthy of students’ study—even if for only five to seven days of class. It is important, then, to clear up the Viking’s image as history’s “bad boys” and make the historic record more accurate.

Second, once the myths about these “salt-water bandits” are exploded, students can sort out the real Viking legacy. Since few of us have ever penetrated this veiled myth, we have not seen the hard-working, progressive farmers and traders the Norse men and women were, living life like the rest of Medieval Europe, except that they ate better food, were cleaner, and in most cases, spoke up on their own behalf among their countrymen, including kings. One could deduce that participatory democracy was possibly advanced enough to ensure every Viking’s right to manage his own destiny. While this deduction might be an exaggeration, the majority of Europeans of this time mostly groveled before corrupt monarchies and waited for death’s liberation. Another reason to spend a week with the Vikings is their contribution to world literature. In spite of (or because of) a rich and colorful pagan religion, Viking poets and story-tellers glorified heroic gods and goddesses



PURPOSE - 2

in works which have endured majestically to this day. Coupled with literature is their achievement in art, especially in their decoration of jewelry, their furniture, and their long ships. This same artistry and skill help make Scandinavian furniture popular today.

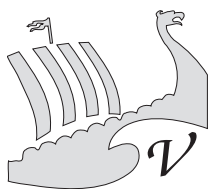
But probably the most important reason to study the Vikings is their legacy on the seas and in seagoing technology. Were there ever better sailors in all history? These men continually crossed cruel oceans to explore, discover, and settle areas the rest of Europe thought to be imaginary and forboding places on mythical maps.

In their wanderings, the Vikings did the following:

- discovered Greenland and North America;
- penetrated the interior of Russia and founded a vast trading empire from Novogorod to Byzantium and beyond;
- sailed into the Mediterranean Sea and opened up markets with both the Italian city-states and Moslem North Africa; and
- settled northwest France, became “Normans,” and in 1066, crossed the English Channel to conquer, rule, populate, and influence England for centuries.

In many ways, the Norse legacy might be likened to a shot of adrenalin in the bloodstream of a European world awakening from the Dark Ages' lethargy. Therefore, we all must rid ourselves of the stereotypical Viking marauders myth, for the Norse actually spent 90 percent of their time as creative, democratic farmers and herdsmen. Dispelling such a myth from young minds is a worthy goal.

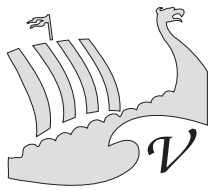




What happens each Phase?

In this unit your students participate in activities which help them understand and appreciate a misunderstood and unappreciated medieval people—the Vikings, Norse, or Northmen. Actually, Norse is the most proper use since most of the time they were not *i viking*, or sea wandering. The simulation will get your students involved firsthand in the adventures and culture of the Norse. All learning styles will be used—tactile, kinesthetic, auditory, and visual. After a pre-phase introduction during which students survey a brief Student Guide, they join one of three groups (**SVs**, **DVs**, or **NVs**—see below) and choose a personal Viking name. They are then ready to begin the gauntlet of phases that make up Vikings.

1. **Phase 1: Becoming a Viking** (1–2 days) Your new Norsemen and Norsewomen read over a brief history of the Viking people and their role in western civilization. Next, they receive a handout detailing the achievements and adventures of either the Swedish-Vikings (**SVs**), Danish-Vikings (**DVs**), or Norwegian-Vikings (**NVs**). Their first challenge is to take a test over the general history and their own nation's specific history. After an explanation of the simulation's point system, NORSEMARKS are awarded to those who proved themselves worthy as an individual and as a member of a separate Scandinavian nation. Last, they read a handout on HOW TO BE A VIKING and are told to go home and search for an appropriate costume they can wear during the simulation.
2. **Phase 2: The Vikings' World** (1–2 days) Having acquired some knowledge about their Norse identities, your students next need to grasp the enduring achievement Vikings made to world geography and the extent of their trading empire. As they work on a map, they learn of the Norse commercial network which was a rectangle of some 6,000 miles by 12,000 miles. Students meet the rivers, medieval cities, trade routes, goods and services of this era; they also chart Viking explorations in North America, Asia, and the Mediterranean. Key economic concepts become clear in the phase and for the best-drawn maps and accurate cartographers, NORSEMARKS cascade into the various groups' coffers.
3. **Phase 3: Viking Challenge Projects** (Optional—number of days will vary) If you decide to do all, or most, of the phases of Vikings, this phase could fit nicely in between Phase 1 and Phase 2 and would give your young Vikings an opportunity to work on unit projects. Working either as individuals, in pairs, or as an entire nation (e.g., Danish-Vikings), they can do one or more of the following:



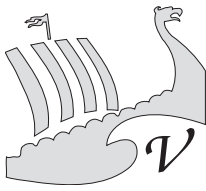
OVERVIEW - 2

Democratic Vikings!

- decipher the mysterious runes the Norse used to write their language;
- write skaldic poetry;
- make Norse jewelry; or
- help construct and decorate a Viking dragonship.

Their finished products can be showcased during the simulation's ending activity—FEASTING A DEAD HERO. The completed longship will be put to use in Phase 5's ACTING OUT A SAGA. Whether or not you have your students use this phase will depend on time and students' interest.

4. **Phase 4: Meeting of the Althing** (2–3 days) Having learned that the Vikings were much more than pirates and barbarians, students enter a phase in which they explore the Norse contributions to participatory government. The Viking Althing was like our national Congress in some ways, but more like a supreme court in other ways. First, students read a handout to learn what the Althing was, the extent of its duties, and how it actually functioned, including the punishments it meted out to transgressors who came before it. Next, the appointed lawspeaker, defendant, oathtakers, and accusers face six interesting and challenging cases. Using clearly written guides, participants follow an agenda just as the Norse would have followed in an identical conclave 900 years ago in Iceland, where, incidentally, the Althing *still* meets! Those who come before the lawspeaker create in-depth characters as they embellish their versions of what happened in each case. Will the defendant be found guilty and lose his hand? Or will the accuser win and be awarded three pigs?
5. **Phase 5: Acting Out a Saga** (2–3 days) As students learned in the Viking history handout, Scandinavians relived stories of their heroic deeds because these tales were written down as sagas. The sagas glorified the Viking Age by describing the adventures, honor, revenge, blood feuds, and death of their predecessors. Your modern Vikings will now take up a new adventure: preparing and acting out a thrilling saga of their own nation—Sweden, Denmark, or Norway. Led by a jarl or chieftain, the three groups take a fairly brief prepared saga, plan their version on a saga script sheet, and then act out scenes, using simple props and a narrator. Spectators will be treated to the adventures of Leif Eriksson's discoveries, the Swedish colonization of Russia, and the Danish pillaging and settlement of France. Your students will thus easily grasp the essence of the multifaceted and complex Viking of that time—part civilizer, part explorer, part barbarian. NORSEMARKS are awarded for outstanding and memorable performances.

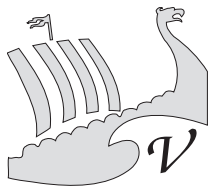


OVERVIEW - 3

6. **Phase 6: Feasting a Dead Hero** (1 day This last phase is a culminating activity celebrating the Viking spirit through skaldic poetry, jewelry, runic inscriptions, and oaths to the recently deceased Viking jarl en route to Valhalla (the Viking heaven). A memorable addition to the celebration can be food from Scandinavian recipes brought by students on one particular day at the end of the unit. If you like, acting out the sagas can be the centerpiece of feast day. Another option on this day might be a detailed review of the information and concepts learned during the simulation. In such a case, you could give a test the next day.

In all, your student Vikings will uncover the truths about one of history's most fascinating and rugged peoples by being *actively involved*. They will work cooperatively in groups, giving short speeches to defend and prosecute their countrymen, constructing and decorating, composing poetry, sharpening their map-making skills, deciphering an ancient language, and dramatizing the essence of a saga. Their interest and intellect will both be captured. And maybe at the end, some of your Ragnars or Olgas may even embody that adventuresome spirit which at the same time thrilled and scared those who shared their era with the Vikings!





SETUP DIRECTIONS - 1

1. **Understanding the simulation:** The adventure your students are beginning will, in many ways, be an adventure for you. First of all, do not be overwhelmed by the size of this notebook. Take enough time to go over its contents rather thoroughly. Doing so will allay your fears and get you excited about what is ahead. Second, as you read, start considering right away which of the several activities and information sheets you think you will want to use. Reflect upon your student's age/abilities and your time constraints. **Note well:** *You do not have to do all of the activities in VIKINGS' 10–15 teaching days or periods.*



2. **Decisions about time:** After studying the unit's activities—and particularly its OVERVIEW CHART found later in this introduction portion—decide between the two following approaches:

- **Using portions with your unit on the Middle Ages:** Decide upon how many teaching days you can give VIKINGS and then reread all phases and activities you would like to use to supplement your existing unit. Particularly recommended are MEETING OF THE ALTHING, ACTING OUT A SAGA, the map assignment, COMPOSING SKALDIC POETRY (homework?), and the brief history in the Student Guide essays. The students could even take on Norse names for a few days.
- **Using the entire simulation:** Using all of VIKINGS is time well spent if your course can afford it. In some states studying the Middle Ages occupies considerable time. In such a case here's a chance to use a detailed simulation to enhance your course. Students will carry away knowledge and *experiences* they will long remember. Of course, feel free to extend or reshape your unit with your own ideas (e.g., see the videos in the filmography later on), audio tape recordings, field trips to museums, or outside speakers you have available. Of course, include your own traditional text assignments if possible.



In California, the HISTORY/SOCIAL STUDIES FRAMEWORK recommends that middle schools study the middle ages during several months' teaching.

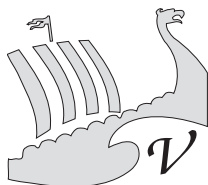
3. **Duplication:** Having made your decisions about time, first duplicate only these items which are common to all phases or are needed in the simulation's introductory segment:

- THE VIKING ROSTER: (*one per class*)
- Student Guide: (*class set*)
- NORSEMARKS BALANCE SHEET: (*class set*)
- **(Optional)** Illustrations—pages 1:17 through 1:20 (*class set*)



Students will love to study and color these illustrations!

4. **Grouping the students:** You decide how to place students into one of the three nationality or ethnic clusters (**SVs**, **DVs**, or **NVs**). THE VIKING ROSTER sheet is provided for this task. *Balance the*



SETUP DIRECTIONS - 2

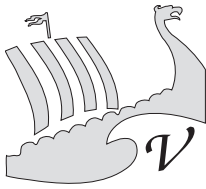
How should I evaluate?

capable, average, and less capable students within each group. If some students are of one of the three Viking ethnic clusters, honor these “roots” and make a few special placements. *Letting students choose their own groups is not recommended.*

5. **Room arrangement:** Use your imagination to decorate your room to resemble a Viking village (Birka, Sweden?) in the 11th century. Butcher paper decorated with designs (see the graphics throughout this simulation for ideas) would be most appropriate. For the Althing and feast phases, perhaps a set of risers could be brought in to elevate certain persons. Since your students are meeting most of the time in large (10–15) groupings, you should move desks into three distinct classroom areas. Loyalties to these factions could be enhanced by a group motto or handshake/salute ... or by banners (“**Be the NV of all Vikings**” or “**Take a liking to a Swedish-Viking**” or “**Danish is more than a sweet roll**”).
6. **Leadership in each group:** You select your three best students to be jarls or chieftains of each group. They should be able to inspire, lead, compute honestly, and guide their charges through the various activities. One of these three could be chosen as law-speaker during the Althing phase. Recognize that the success of this simulation may hinge on your choices for jarls.
7. **Grading and NORSEMARKS:** Students should keep their own points earned during the simulation on personal copies of the NORSEMARKS BALANCE SHEET. Periodically, you and the jarls could monitor these sheets. (Consider collecting them every three days.) Possible grading option: base 50% of their unit grade on a test, 25% on their own evaluation of what they accomplished, and 25% on their balance sheet—*verified* by their jarl. What goes on these balance sheets?

• Costume/portrayal during VIKINGS	10
• Viking challenge test	25
• Viking’s world map	5–10
• Role in Althing cases	10–20
• Deciphering the Runes	10–15
• Skaldic poetry	10
• Role in group’s saga	10
• Decorating objects/projects	10–20
• Simulation self-evaluation	out of 50
• Test/Final Viking Challenge	out of 80

200–250 points possible

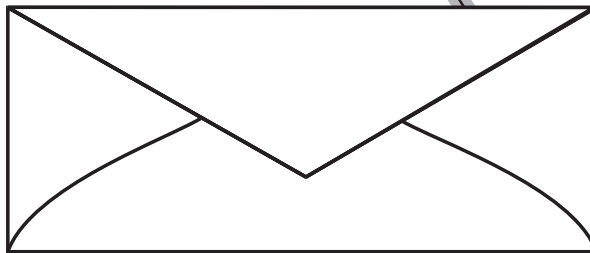


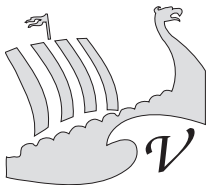
SETUP DIRECTIONS - 3

Keep track of both individual and group-earned NORSEMARKS. To compute points for groups, add up all individual points on a given challenge. Then divide by the number in each group. Track the competition by nation on the chalkboard or large sheets of paper. (Other assignments from your textbook, etc. may be put on same NORSEMARK system.) Finally, you could honor and recognize the high NORSEMARK earners (exemption from cooking?) at the FEASTING A DEAD HERO.

8. **Notifying parents:** Perhaps the week before you start VIKINGS, you should send a brief note or letter home to parents telling them of their student's upcoming challenges and experiences in the simulation. Send along a calendar-grid sheet and a Student Guide asking them to help wherever they can, especially with challenge projects or cooking Scandinavian foods for the FEASTING A DEAD HERO phase. In addition, a handy mom or dad could help whip up a Viking costume with a sword and helmet. (**Remember:** Vikings didn't wear horns like the stereotyped opera divas.) Linkage with home will help make the whole enterprise at school easier.

Dear parent,
We are beginning a unit on the
VIKINGS of many years ago.
Very possibly your student has
already informed you about how
we are ...



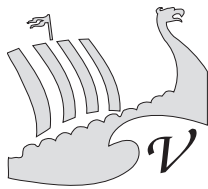


AUDIO-VISUAL



Most film versions of the Vikings perpetuate the crazed and violent stereotype, but they still may convey to your students feelings for costuming, art, ships, values, and interrelationships. Hopefully, you'll be able to locate one or two of these and also find time to show them.

- *The Vikings*—The realistic Kirk Douglas epic released in 1958. Harsh, brutal and atmospheric, it remains a classic, although it does emphasize the violence.
- *The Vikings: NOVA*—A 2000 documentary about Viking achievements.



BIBLIOGRAPHY



†† Indicates books suitable for younger readers.

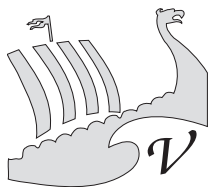
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* These books are packed with interesting illustrations and drawings. Seriously consider ordering several copies of each for student use to supplement what is contained in this Teacher notebook.



Interact wishes to thank **Dover Publications, Inc.**, New York, for permission to reproduce several drawings from their *Story of the Vikings Coloring Book*. (See pages 1:17-20; 4:15-20, and 6:5 in this notebook.) As mentioned directly above, we recommend that you purchase several copies of this inexpensive—but superbly done—book to increase your students' understanding of the Vikings.

- Dover Publications address is 31 E. 2d Street, Mineola, New York, 11501



TIME SEQUENCE

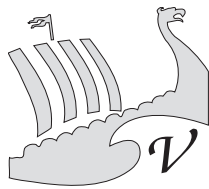
Day 1: Introduction



This film is a visual feast. Don't underestimate the power of film as a motivator within this simulation.

1. Before Day 1 begins, do several things:
 - make sure all necessary forms and handouts have been duplicated, at least for the Introduction and early phases;
 - make sure THE VIKING ROSTER has been filled in (display copy?); and
 - make sure all roles have been selected wisely.
2. Briefly introduce the VIKINGS (perhaps show an excerpt from *The Vikings* film of 1958—the great hall scene?—asking students to describe a Viking as depicted in this movie). Then explain how the upcoming simulation will explode some of the myths and stereotypes movies help to promote. Gauge some views held of Vikings and Viking women.
3. Pass out the Student Guide and briefly go over these sections: Introduction, Simulating the Vikings, Who were the Vikings?, and Uncovering the Viking Past. These sections will get students thinking about their new identities. Assign the rest for homework or collect and finish the Student Guide tomorrow.
4. Using a display copy of THE VIKING ROSTER, show students the lists of who is in what group and who the leaders, or jarls, will be. Adjust as necessary. Tell them that Vikings came from at least three locations: Denmark, Sweden and Norway—plus from a colony on Iceland. Explain that tomorrow they will receive a separate nation's history for each of the three first groups. Also point out that there will be a VIKING CHALLENGE test covering information in these handouts. If you have time, allow the three groups to meet briefly and perhaps design a logo or compose a chant.
5. Assign text homework appropriate to the topic.
6. Use students to rearrange the classroom, put up risers, banners, logos, signs, etc.
7. If time, pass out HOW TO BE A VIKING and NORSE NAMES (duplication instructions and handouts are in Phase 1: BECOMING A VIKING). Briefly explain and then get each student to commit to a new identity. Write these new names on a paper copy of THE VIKING ROSTER sheet and then post it.
8. **Optional—but recommended:** Pass out duplicated pp. 1:17–1:20.

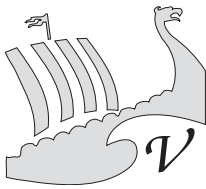
Your students will really enjoy examining the VIKINGS names and choosing their own. Expect plenty of discussion and laughs ...



OVERVIEW CHART

These 10 teaching hours are intended only as an example. Alter them as you desire.
(Perhaps you might want to label the days according to a Norse week?)

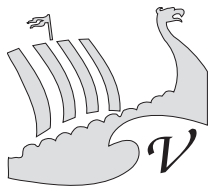
Week 1 Moon's Day: Intro/Setup Student Guide Divide into 3 groups Arrange room Assign read- ing text, etc. 1	Tyr's Day: Phase 1: Be- coming a Viking Viking history Become SV, DV, or NV Challenge test Norsemarks Balance Sheet How to be/ Names 2	Woden's Day: Phase 2: The Vikings' World Geography and map challenge 3	Thor's Day: Phase 3: Challenge Projects Decorating Viking objects 4	Freyr's Day: Phase 3: Challenge Projects Deciphering the Runes Composing Skaldic poetry 5
Week 2 Moon's Day: Phase 4: Meeting of the Althing Setup Handouts and information 1 or 2 cases 6	Tyr's Day: Phase 4: Meeting of the Althing (cont.) Complete the cases Wrap up 7	Woden's Day: Phase 5: Acting Out a Saga Preparation by groups 8	Thor's Day: Phase 5: Acting Out a Saga (cont.) Performances by groups 9	Freyr's Day: Phase 6: Feasting a Dead Hero Finale 10



THE VIKING ROSTER

Class period _____

Norwegian Vikings	Danish Vikings	Swedish Vikings
Jarl (leader)	Jarl (leader)	Jarl (leader)
_____	_____	_____
Karls (freemen)	Karls (freemen)	Karls (freemen)
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
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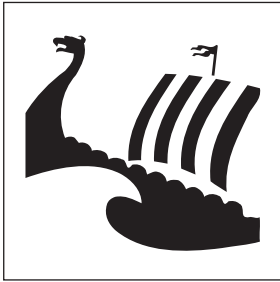


NORSEMARKS BALANCE SHEET

Directions: During VIKINGS all of you will compete for NORSEMARKS, gaining them as you complete various tasks. For much of their history, medieval Norse seemed to have no fixed monetary system. Most trade was based on barter (exchanging one product for another), with silver often being the precious metal used as a standard of exchange by weight. In the late Viking age (c. 1000–1100), a system of weights was developed using marks or notches made of some scalelike apparatus. Hence the word “mark” became used for money.

As a Viking you must work hard to earn this simulation’s equivalent to the money your “ancestral” Scandinavians used a thousand years ago. As you earn them, be sure to enter the exact number of NORSEMARKS *honestly* in the appropriate spaces below. Those who earn the most will qualify for special recognition at the later phase, FEASTING A DEAD HERO.

Items/Challenges	Award	Running Balance
Viking Challenge Test		1
Viking's World Map		2
Role in Althing Case		3
Role in Saga		4
Costume Portrayal of a Viking		5
Skaldic Poetry		6
Deciphering Runes		7
Decorating a Viking Object		8
Final Test		9
Self Evaluation		10
Real name:	Total	



Vikings

A simulation of the culture and contributions of the medieval Norse, 800–1100

STUDENT GUIDE

Introduction: You and your classmates are about to become medieval Scandinavians. These people—called Vikings, Norse, and Northmen by historians—profoundly influenced their time—although they left us a somewhat distorted image of tall, blonde-bearded warriors looting villages or sailing dragonships over rough seas. As you role-play Vikings, you will learn why these daring and resourceful people deserve a more positive legacy in history than the stereotypes we see in the syndicated cartoon, *Hagar the Horrible*, and the Hollywood versions we occasionally see on the screen.

Simulating the Vikings: Depending on the activities your teacher asks you to do (including how long the simulation lasts), you will be immersed in the Viking world of 800–1100 BCE. You will choose a Viking name and then join one of three groups—either the Swedish-Vikings (**SVs**), the Danish-Vikings (**DVs**), or the Norwegian-Vikings (**NVs**). A flurry of exciting activities awaits as you ...

- prepare for and take a Viking Challenge, a test over the history of the Viking people and your particular group's place in history (test scores will earn you NORSEMARKS);
- decipher the mysterious runes the Vikings left all over the northern hemisphere and gain some insight into the Norse mind;
- complete a map of THE VI-KING'S WORLD to gauge the extent of your trade network and how your people's influence is world-wide;
- participate in the meeting of

the Thing, a uniquely-Viking assembly of free citizens that democratically decides a variety of issues;

- build and decorate a dragonship and make simple Viking jewelry;
- act out a thrilling saga of one of your group's most memorable adventures; and
- compose skaldic poetry celebrating the return from the sea of some of your warriors and the journey of a dead jarl to Valhalla.

Who were the Vikings?: The Vikings were fair-skinned Germanic tribes who lived in the cold bleakness of Scandinavia (Norway, Sweden, Denmark, and Iceland) during the medieval era of European history, specifically between 800–1100 BCE. What made them different from their southern neighbors besides the climate was their pagan religion and isolation. Their religion had a warrior code which encouraged bloodshed, violence, and cruelty. Yet Viking men and women produced a splendid civilization in art and literature, advanced participatory government, and created a thriving commercial empire. Thus, the Vikings strangely blended cultural brilliance and barbarism.

Uncovering the Viking past: How do we know about the Vikings? From all over the northern hemisphere, archaeologists have unearthed Viking coins, jewelry, weapons, clothes, entire ships, and even half-decayed human remains. All these have given detailed clues of how Vikings lived. Norse literature (sagas, in particular) sheds further light on who they were.

"Wrath of the Northmen": Perhaps no people in history were actually

feared by so many, except for Attila and his Huns, Genghis Khan, or 20th century Nazis. In the 800s, the Vikings did in fact attack and conquer settlements and cities from England and France to older cities and towns in the Mediterranean Sea. They struck terror, killing monks in prayer, spearing babies, and raping women of royalty. A common plea of that time was: "a furore Normannorum libera nos domine"—"from the wrath of the Northmen, O Lord, deliver us."

Exploding the myth: How could a people have such a split personality, historians have asked? In the first place, those who wrote about the Viking raids were usually monks. They saw only one side and tended to be harsh on the invaders. Furthermore, the myth of Viking barbarism isn't really fair. Most Norse were simple farmers and herdsman who occasionally went *i Viking*, or marauding. For the most part, a certain kind of man was assigned to a pirate's role, a skilled warrior

berserkir

... a skilled warrior
who fought hard
and with abandon ...

who fought hard and with abandon to earn the label *berserkir* (a crazed state = berserk).

Moreover, there was an oversupply of men who, because of a system of *primogeniture* (only the oldest son inherits his father's wealth) were left with little to do and an abundance of energy. Travel and adventure helped relieve this. Last, the Vikings possessed a violent, blood-soaked, and pagan religion. If a berserker died in battle with a sword in hand, his faith promised him a place in Valhalla.

Viking culture: Perhaps more attention should be given to what the Vikings created and produced than their exploits at sea. Although they were devastating marauders, most Norse were homebodies, and there they developed a culture possibly

superior to the rest of Europe. Their remarkable jewelry used gold and silver with elaborate designs and patterns. Their decorations on wood furniture, weapons, and ships show astonishing craft skills. They even invented ice skates, using reindeers' shinbones for "blades."

The Norse made high achievements in literature, especially in sagas, eddas, and skaldic poetry. Eddas were large poems about Norse religion. Sagas were the adventures, legends, and histories of the Vikings and their gods. Originally oral compositions for long winter nights, sagas began to be written in the 12th century in a prose, historical novel, format. The heroes of the sagas embody the Norse virtues of boldness, courage, adventure, and intelligence. In many ways, the Viking sagas are similar to the Greek epics, *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*. Skaldic poetry, recited by professional poets, used colorful language called kennings, or imaginative synonyms and metaphors. A typical kenning might be the use of "falcon's seat" for a man's arm or "reindeer of the deep" for a ship.

Viking democracy: The history of the Norse people is peppered with the names of strong, forceful leaders such as Rollo, Harold Bluetooth, Olaf Trygvasson, Erik the Red, and Knute the Great. Yet most of the decisions affecting the daily lives of Viking communities were made by democratic assemblies all over Scandinavia. In actual practice, the Thing, a meeting of Norsemen, dealt with local matters, much like a New England town meeting in our country. Usually the Thing took place in summer for a few weeks. Impartial judges, accusers, defendants, and even witnesses took part. Punishments were extremely harsh (e.g., eyes were poked out) and tried to equal the other person's losses. Banishment was the ultimate punishment. Erik the Red, convicted of murder, used his exile to sail west and colonize Greenland. Vikings had rules and punishments for every action. We need to realize that the Thing is a forerunner of our representative government.

Norse religion: The Viking gods looked like humans and lived on high in a heaven called Asgard. Here was the residence of many gods, but only one, Odin, ruled over all other gods. He was cunning, wise, and dangerous. Another god, Thor, was god of war, rain, and farming. His supernatural power made most Vikings want to wear a Thor's hammer necklace, much as we today might wear a good luck charm. Other prominent gods included Tyr, Trey, and Balder. Some of the days of our week are named for Norse gods (Tyr's Day, Woden's Day, Thor's Day). Vikings also believed that eventually there would be twilight of the gods (Ragnarok) during which the world would be destroyed. But before this event took place, the Vikings became Christianized around 1100. With that change came a whole new set of religious beliefs.

Explorers, settlers, and traders: Culture and democracy aside, few would doubt the immeasurable contribution of the Vikings in the roles of explorers, colonizers, and merchants. They were clearly masters of seagoing technology. When rugged Norse sailors went *i viking* in their dragonships and knarrs (cargo ships), the world became a smaller place.

Danish Vikings raided and settled England, Ireland, and France. Those Northmen who settled in France became "Normans," and from their new homeland crossed the English Channel in 1066 to permanently impact English history. Norwegians discovered the islands north of England, Iceland, Greenland, and even spent a winter or two in North America. Norse artifacts found in Newfoundland in the 1960s validate the Viking claim as the first European discoverers of America. At the same time, Northmen from Sweden under Rurik began to cruise Russian waterways, exploring, trading, and settling a vast empire from Novogorod to Kiev. Even Constantinople, the flourishing, wealthy center of the Byzantine Empire, beckoned the Vikings to plunder and to trade.

From this base, Swedish Vikings plundered Mediterranean cities and wielded great influence in this region for decades. By 1100 the Norse imprint was nearly world-wide. Oddly, at the same time, the Viking age was ending.

The complex Viking: Thus the Norse were a little bit of everything: peasants, farmers, explorers, colonizers, pirates, merchants, heroes, villains, barbarians, civilizers, artists, craftsmen, organizers, individualists, law-breakers, law-abiders, pagans, and Christians. Their contributions acted as a sort of adrenalin in history's bloodstream.

Your Norse society: Now it's your turn to be a Viking and simulate some of the events and contributions of Norse history. Pick a clever Viking name, help your group as members accumulate NORSE-MARKS, follow your jarl's leadership, but yet maintain your cherished individualism while learning to appreciate and understand these unique medieval people.



And the status
of Viking women?

Recognize, too, that though Viking women were not considered equal in most ways to their men, they were given more freedom and more privilege in their society than most of the world's women—until the 19th century. So girls, you too show your intelligence while you work and face the challenges of the brave persons living in the Scandinavia of a thousand years ago!

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Interact

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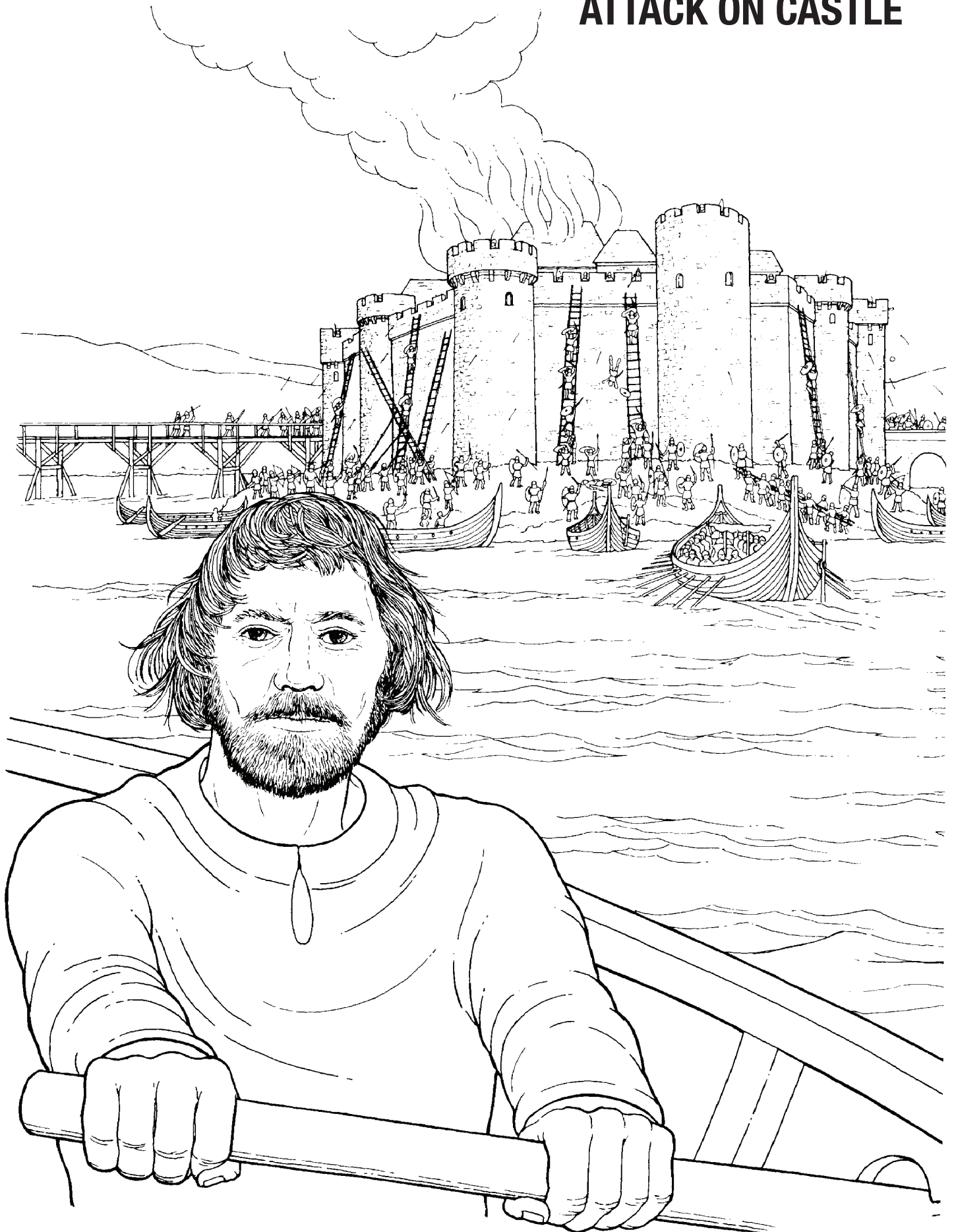
VIKINGS AT HOME



ATTACK ON MONASTERY

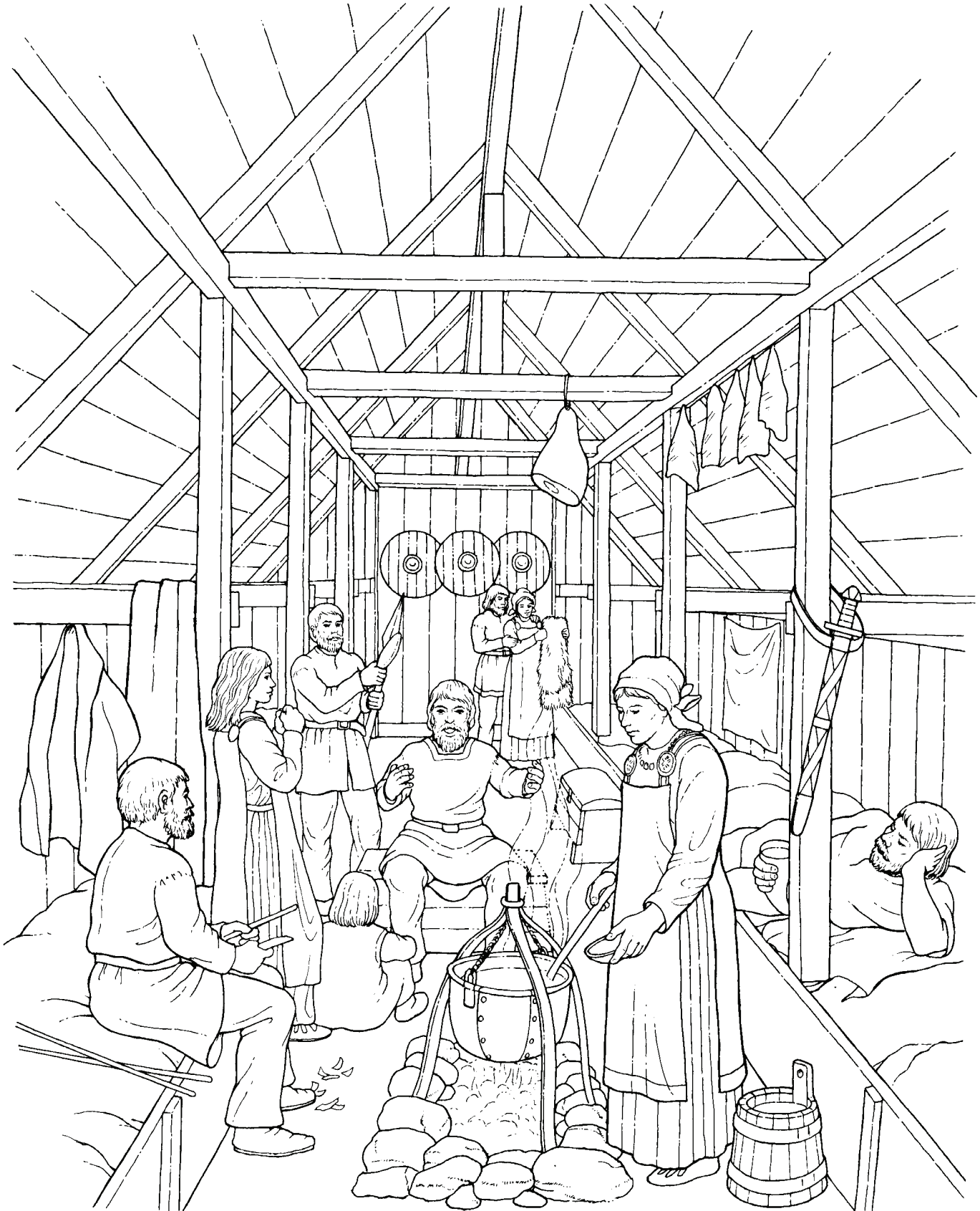


ATTACK ON CASTLE

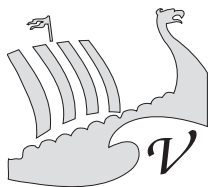


VIKINGS AT HOME

Home life centered around the hearth. Benches along the long hall's walls were used for sleeping as well as sitting. Storytelling was a favored pastime.



2: Becoming a Viking

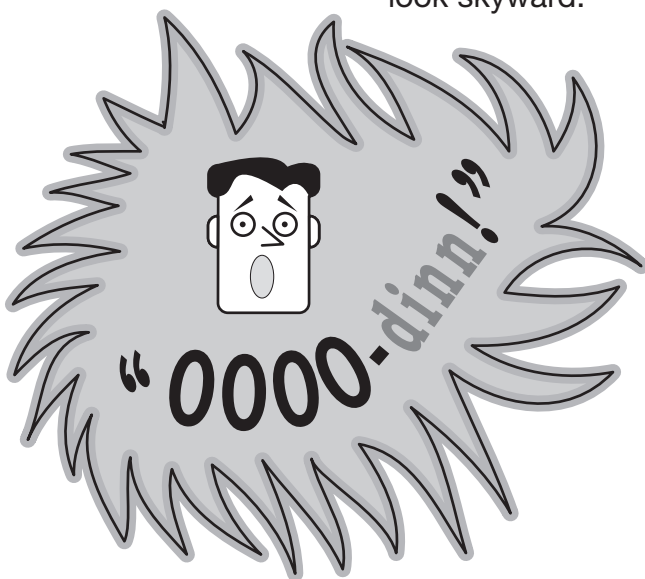


Phase 1 BECOMING A VIKING (1–2 days)

This first phase immerses your students into a Scandinavian village of a thousand years ago. Now that they have at least some familiarity with the Norse, they are ready to learn their place in history. Your students will now study the Student Guide historical essay they looked at only briefly the day before. From this they will receive separate national histories in their three groups: SWEDISH-VIKINGS, DANISH-VIKINGS, and NORWEGIAN-VIKINGS. Follow this reading with A VIKING CHALLENGE TEST for which you award NORSEMARKS. Last, give your students the handouts HOW TO BE A VIKING and NORSE NAMES. With these they begin their individual quests to look and behave like the real Vikings they are simulating.

First flourishes to consider

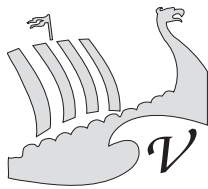
- As teacher, dress yourself like a Viking, make up a salute or handshake, and shout “**Oooo-dinnn!**” several times as you look skyward.
- Have some mottos or credos on the chalkboard when students enter the classroom: “**To Vikings, man’s greatest joy is man,**” “**We are the brotherhood of the blood,**” “**Vikings are the Greeks of the North,**” “**Norwegian-Vikings are the NV of all Norse,**” etc.
- Create some loyalty and competition among the three groups by already having separate sections of the room divided up into three equal areas.
- Place Viking art designs around the room.



Duplication directions

Duplicate the following in the number found in *italics*.

- NORWEGIAN-VIKINGS, SWEDISH-VIKINGS, DANISH-VIKINGS: *10–15 for each participating class (class is divided into thirds)*
- VIKING CHALLENGE TEST: *class set*
- NORSE NAMES: *class set or a display copy*
- HOW TO BE A VIKING: *class set*
- THOR'S HAMMER: *class set*



BECOMING A VIKING - 2

Daily directions

Day 2: (Day 1 introduced the Vikings and the simulation)

1. Begin by reviewing what happened the day before: who the Vikings were ... and what kind of activities they will engage in during VIKINGS.
2. Hand out the Student Guide, which is a combination of both an introduction to the simulation and a history of the Vikings. Wherever in the essay you left off from the day before, continue on, either reading aloud or silently. *Emphasize the indelible legacies the Norse bequeathed to western civilization and how the image of a typical Viking needs to be reassessed.* Ask your students to prioritize these achievements and tell why certain legacies deserve higher rankings than others.
3. If you haven't already shown them THE VIKING ROSTER, do it now, and then divide them into the three separate areas in the classroom. Hand out the three different national identity histories to each group, giving each group the option of having its jarl (YAR-ul) read aloud to them or having them read it silently. Afterward, ask each group to identify who they are and what they achieved. Perhaps a three-column chalkboard ledger could be filled in briefly.
4. Collect the national histories and the Student Guides and administer the VIKING CHALLENGE test. Afterward, collect and score each before the next day. A scantron or other electronic scoring answer sheet would expedite the process. If time, review the answers orally.
5. Go over HOW TO BE A VIKING and NORSE NAMES. Get students to commit to a name by the next day and get them, as a class, to commit to wearing Viking costumes two or three days later. *Encourage them as they search for appropriate clothing to team up with another student in another class period in this quest to find costumes. Two or more students can then wear the same costume.*

Make every effort to consider gender, ability, and leadership qualities when you pre-select these 3 groups' memberships.



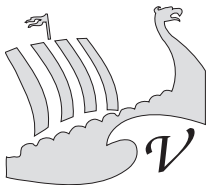
This saves time and develops cooperation!



Note: Be sure each jarl has an artist working on individual Thor's Hammer pendants ... Getting the pendants soon intensifies individual and team pride ...

Day 3

1. You may want to stretch out the previous lesson, giving more time for group interaction, for election of a jarl, and for going over all handouts and directions *slowly*—including having artists make Thor's Hammer pendants for all team members.



DANISH VIKINGS (DVs)

You are proud to be a Danish Viking, for over the years you made many achievements and received much glory. Knowledge of this heritage can only enhance your role as a **DV** in this simulation on the Vikings of Medieval Scandinavia.

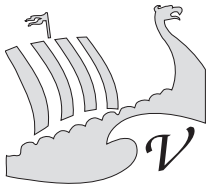
- **DVs** watched their fellow Vikings from Sweden and Norway explore, plunder, and settle east and west respectively, while they raided England, France, Spain, and other areas along the coasts of the Mediterranean Sea. In fact, there weren't too many towns in western Europe that remained untouched (or not pillaged) by Danish Vikings.



- **DVs** sailed up most of Europe's great rivers in their fearful dragonships. Danes, for example, sailed up the Seine River and destroyed Paris at least three times. The last time Emperor Charles the Fat convinced the **DVs** to stay away.
- Viking raiders from Denmark sailed through the famous Strait of Gibraltar into the Mediterranean and plundered southern France, Italy, and even Morocco.



- England became a special target for the **DVs**, and **NVs** as well. Beginning in the late 700s and for the next 300 years, **DV** forces established a Viking base in northeastern England centered at York (Jorvik). Northumbria, East Anglia, and parts of Mercia were Viking conquests under a leader named Danelaw. Within this area, also called Danelaw, **DVs** forced the native English to pay a tax called a Danegeld to their conquerors.
- Viking influence in England was stunted by a strong English king named Alfred the Great, who checked the aggressive **DVs** in his land. Years later, however, a combined force of **DVs** and Norwegian Vikings under Olaf Trygvasson recaptured lost territory, and, along with King Sweyn Forkbeard of Denmark, had several successes in the late 900s.
- Under King Canute (Knute), Sweyn's son, the **DVs** possessed a huge empire around the North Sea, including Denmark, Norway, and England.
- Danish Vikings who conquered and settled in western France became Normans. Under the leadership of Rolf (also called Rollo), they dominated Normandy. A few generations later, in 1066, Rollo's descendent William, Duke of Normandy, crossed the English Chan-



DANISH VIKINGS (DVs) - 2

nel with a huge army and defeated the English king at Hastings. From then on, no army has ever conquered England. England, in a sense, became “Vikingized” over the next century.

As a **DV**, it is your duty to follow the dictates of your leader, called a jarl (YAR-ul). Your responsibility is to work hard, to do battle, to create, to build, or to make fair decisions to earn NORSEMARKS for the Danes.

For now, do the following:

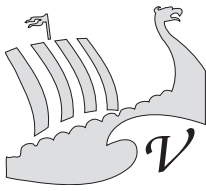
- Thoroughly review the information above.
- From the several suggested, choose a Viking name which captures the Norse spirit as well as your own personality and flair.
- Create a special bond between fellow **DVs** by devising a chant, armband, salute, banner, handshake, or motto for your group to utilize during the simulation.

Daring Danes

Note: This is only a suggestion ...

*If you wish to make a **DVs** banner, design your own banner and add your own imaginative slogan or motto.*





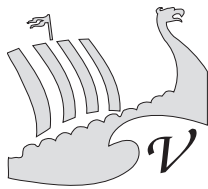
SWEDISH VIKINGS (SVs)

You are proud to be a Swedish Viking, for over the years you made many achievements and received much glory. Knowledge of this heritage can only enhance your role as a **SV** in this simulation on the Vikings of Medieval Scandinavia.



- While **SVs** watched their fellow Vikings from Denmark and Norway explore Western Europe, England, the rugged islands in the North Atlantic, and even Greenland and North America, they themselves raided along the rivers of Germany and explored and settled in the vast area that is now western Russia.
- Small bands of Swedish sailors, called Varangians, settled on the shores of the Baltic Sea, the gulf of Finland, and Lake Ladoga in the 800s.
- With strong and enduring colonies along the bodies of water, **SVs** had bases from which to penetrate Asia, and did so by sailing up the Volkhov and Dneiper rivers.
- Varangians built forts that soon became towns and trading centers. One city, Kiev, became the capital of this new empire. It is probable that the word *Russia* may have originated from the name of one strong Varangian tribe, called Rus, or Rhos. Another theory is that Russia is named for one powerful Swedish jarl (YAR-ul) named Rurik, or Rorik.





SWEDISH VIKINGS (SVs) - 2

- Soon after, colonies of Swedish Vikings appeared along the Caspian and Black Seas. They raided and conquered the entire territory. In the early 900s, **SVs** attacked the holy city of Constantinople, forcing the emperor of the Byzantine empire to pay a large sum of gold to save his capital. Impressed by Viking bravery and skill, the emperor enlisted **SVs**/Varangians to be his personal guards.
- Because of the Viking policy of tolerance and blending in with the population, they merged with the native peoples by 1000. Yet, the spirit of **SVs** remains immense.
- **SVs** were perhaps the best merchants of the Scandinavians. Their far-flung economic empire was molded by gifted traders. The center of this bustling network was Birka, Sweden, where an array of products from all over were bought and sold.

As an **SV**, it is your duty to follow the dictates of your leader, called a jarl (YAR-ul), and your responsibility is to work hard, to do battle, to create, and to make fair decisions to earn NORSEMARKS for the Swedes ("How *Swede* it is!").

For now, do the following:

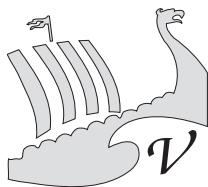
- Thoroughly review the information above.

Swarming Swedes

Note: This is only a suggestion ...
If you wish to make an **SVs** banner, design your own banner and add your own imaginative slogan or motto.



- From the several suggested, choose a Viking name which captures the Norse spirit as well as your own personality and flair.
- Create a special bond between fellow **SVs** by devising a chant, armband, salute, banner, handshake, or motto for your group to utilize during the simulation.

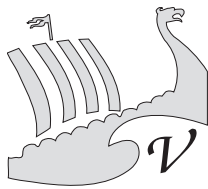


NORWEGIAN VIKINGS (NVs)

You are proud to be a Norwegian Viking, for over the years you made many achievements and received much glory. Knowledge of this heritage can only enhance your role as a **NV** in this simulation on the Vikings of Medieval Scandinavia.



- While Danish-Vikings headed their longships south to continental Europe and Swedish Vikings went east into Asia, Norwegian Vikings ventured west. On a map, one could say that the **NVs** were playing leapfrog as they island-hopped across the North Sea and the northern Atlantic Ocean.
- Specifically, **NVs** traveled to such areas as the Faeroe Islands, the Hebrides and Orkney Islands, Ireland, Iceland, Scotland, Greenland, and the “ultimate outpost,” Vinland, the Viking name for the coast of North America.
- Like the Norse from Sweden and Denmark, the influence of **NVs** in areas where they explored and settled remained immense, especially in Ireland and Iceland. Norwegians founded the Irish city of Dublin and it became a center for Viking power for decades.
- Perhaps the exploration and colonization of Iceland and Greenland are the most solid accomplishments of the **NVs**. In Iceland, **NVs** set up a republic run by a parliamentary body called the Althing, an island-wide assemblage. The Althing has survived for nearly 1000 years, and it is the oldest continuous legislative body in today’s world. Over the years, the Icelanders developed a magnificent oral and written literature in skaldic poetry and heroic sagas. Iceland is considered one of the most civilized nations on earth because of a very high literacy rate and, even with its small population, it has an amazing number of bookstores and outstanding achievements in literature and the other arts.
- Icelandic sagas, finally written down in the 12th and 13th centuries, relate the oral tales of daring Norse explorers. A few of the sagas



NORWEGIAN VIKINGS (NVs)- 2

tell the stories of merchant Bjarin Herjulfsson and adventurer Leif Eriksson. Both men are given credit for sighting North America. Eriksson, around 1000 BCE, actually made a landfall and stayed a winter in Vinland. In the early 1960s, an archaeological dig in the northern tip of Newfoundland revealed Viking artifacts. These finds validate the sagas and give **NVs** the proud distinction of having a descendent (Leif was probably born in Iceland and lived in Greenland for many years with his father, Erik the Red) earn the title *True discoverer of America!*

As an **NV**, it is your duty to follow the dictates of your leader, called a jarl (YAR-ul), and your responsibility is to work hard, to do battle, to create, to build, and to make fair decisions to earn NORSEMARKS for the Norwegians.

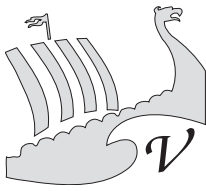
For now, do the following:

- Thoroughly review the information above.
- From the several suggested, choose a Viking name which captures the Norse spirit as well as your own personality and flair.
- Create a special bond between fellow **NVs** by devising a chant, armband, salute, banner, handshake, or motto for your group to utilize during the simulation.

Noble Norwegians

Note: This is only a suggestion ...
If you wish to make an **NVs** banner,
design your own banner and
add your own imaginative slogan
or motto.





VIKING CHALLENGE

Real name: _____ Viking name: _____

Group: _____

Vikings were not always sailing around the then known world. Frequently enough, they stayed home to farm, raise their families, take part in community decisions, and make furniture. But a primary concern was knowing and passing on to their offspring the history and traditions of their people.

Therefore, before you start your new life as a Northman during which you will face the challenges of Viking life, you must pass the test. It is based on the history given or presented to you, and the profile of your particular Viking land (e.g., Swedish-Vikings). All of you must take Section 1 of this test, but when you come to Section 2, take only the part that refers to your group.

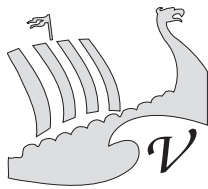
Section 1

True/False

- _____ 1. Vikings were also known as Northmen, or Norse.
- _____ 2. Despite their reputation as violent sea-bandits, the Vikings achieved a brilliant culture in art, poetry and seagoing technology.
- _____ 3. For most of the Viking Age (800–1100 BCE) the Northmen and women were non-Christian and pagan.
- _____ 4. The present-day nations which made up medieval Scandinavia are England, France, Norway, and Sweden.
- _____ 5. Vikings made decisions by voting somewhat democratically in a meeting of the Althing.

Multiple Choice

- _____ 6. The Norse made contributions in all but which one?
A. ship technology B. art and crafts C. democracy D. literature E. tolerance toward other religions and peoples.
- _____ 7. Vikings originally came from all but one of the following countries
A. Iceland B. England C. Sweden D. Norway E. Denmark
- _____ 8. Which was not a major role played by most Vikings?
A. farmer B. settler C. sailor D. raider E. poet



VIKING CHALLENGE -2

Real name: _____ Group: _____

- _____ 9. A Viking legacy to us, the word for one who wears a bear-shirt and goes “crazy” in battle, is a:
A. Norsegeld B. *i viking* C. berserker D. thing
- _____ 10. “Falcon’s seat” for arm, and “reindeer of the deep” for ships, are examples of:
A. poems for Norse epics B. names for King Olaf of Norway’s long ship. C. Viking communities in Denmark D. metaphor-like phrases in skaldic poetry.

Fill-In

We get four days of our week from Norse religion. List the god and the day named for him or her.

11. _____ / _____

12. _____ / _____

13. _____ / _____

14. _____ / _____

15. _____ The primary occupation of most Vikings when not at sea.

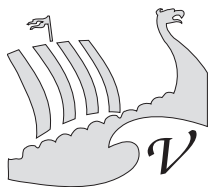
16. _____ The Viking world at one time included Greenland to the west and _____ to the east.

17. _____ The chief god in the Norse religion.

18. _____ The exiled Viking from Norway and Iceland who discovered and settled Greenland.

19. _____ Heroic stories of Viking adventure.

20. _____ Viking heaven, to which every Viking hoped to go after being killed in battle.



VIKING CHALLENGE -3

Section 2

Real name: _____ Group: _____

True/False (For **DVs** only)

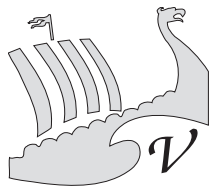
- _____ 21. Danish Vikings settled as far west as Greenland and North America.
- _____ 22. The **DVs** actually conquered Rome and Byzantium in the Mediterranean.
- _____ 23. The **DVs** were the only Norse to build and sail dragonships.
- _____ 24. The **DVs** centered their empire around the North Sea, especially under King Knute.
- _____ 25. The **DVs** occupied and controlled a major portion of England and France for a century or so.

True/False (For **SVs** only)

- _____ 21. For the most part, **SVs** sailed east to conquer and settle the lands we know as Russia today.
- _____ 22. Most of the major cities in the eastern Mediterranean Sea fell to the **SVs**.
- _____ 23. **SVs** were perhaps the best traders and merchants among the Norse, controlling a vast economic empire.
- _____ 24. To conquer the holy city of Byzantium, **SVs** had to secretly murder both the Varangian Guard around the emperor and the emperor.
- _____ 25. The **SVs'** most powerful jarl in western Asia was Rollo, or Rolf, whose daughters and granddaughters married Byzantine emperors over centuries.

True/False (For **NVs** only)

- _____ 21. **NVs** generally established their empire in western Asia, and even conquered Paris, London, and Dublin.
- _____ 22. **NVs** might be called "island hoppers" as they gradually settled land across the North Atlantic.
- _____ 23. **NV** settlers in Iceland might have been the proudest part of **NV** migration, but only if they would have developed a written language.
- _____ 24. One **NV** jarl explored and even settled in North America with his men.
- _____ 25. No one, not even an **NV**, reached North America before Columbus in 1492.



NORSE NAMES

No one can be a proper Viking and be expected to face the many challenges that come with that distinction if he or she does not bear the name of an ancestor. *Therefore, select one of the colorful names below before someone else boldly snatches, like a true Viking, the one you wish to have.* (A member of your group who is artistic will make each of you a Thor's Hammer pendant with your name on it.)

Boys

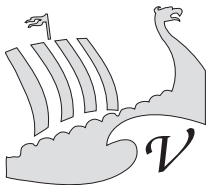


Thoir	Canute the Fearless
Thorolf	Rollo
Thord	Rolf
Floki the Fox	Raud
Gardar	Egil
Gadmund	Turk
Alrik	Bjarni
Thor	Thorfinn
Sokki	Lodbrok
Knut the Hardruler	Ottar the Fat
Odin	Hjalti
Einar Greycoat	Ivar the Boneless
Harald Bluetooth	Gorm Bignose
Gunnar	Thorkild
Erik Bloodaxe	Betric Barelegs
Frey	Ruric
Wotan Redbeard	Siegfried
Torgeis the Bold	Kark
Dane Fairhair	Tykir Oxlegs
Tostig	Horik
Leif	Ak
Sax the Manslayer	Aji
Ivan the Songsinger	Finnar the White
Kon Redhair	Lars
Halfdan	Snorri
Morcar the Hammer	Silkbeard
Magnus	
Ragnar the Short	

Girls



Asa	Skara
Olga	Rurika
Toye	Thana
Helga	Thjodhild
Frigga	Valhalla
Owel	Aud
Ota	Magna
Jocelin	Bergdis
Ingibjorn	Thir
Ingrid	Vedis
Sigrid	Amma
Greta	Gyda
Freda	Halfdana
Marra	Gilda
Floki	Aasta
Thora	Tryka
Rannveig	Brodira
Gunrid	Svenna
Erna	Gallgerd
Haldis	Ivanna
Astrid	Thorfinna
Snoer	Thori
Raghild	



HOW TO BE A VIKING

Appearance

(Consider renting the 1958 film *The Vikings* or check out a book on the Norse for more ideas.)

- Since Vikings were well-built, stalwart, and proud of their appearance, study the suggestions below as you prepare to play the role of a Norse male or female.

Boys



Men were bearded—blonde, red, brown, and an occasional “black” (dark-haired) Viking were most common. Long walrus-type moustaches or full beards and “Van Dykes” were all popular. Males wore long hair, boots, and a mail of chains was put on over a long woolen shirt gathered at the waist by a leather belt. If it was extremely cold, a cloak of wool, or animal skin, clasped with an elaborate broach, was worn over the mail. Ordinary Norse wore simple metal helmets with nose and cheek guards (archaeologists have yet to unearth a helmet with horns, contrary to the popular stereotype). Finally, males might carry an axe, sword, spear, and round shield to be in full regalia.

Girls



Women wore leather or skin full dresses and boots; they put their hair in two or three pigtails. Some Norse-designed jewelry was usually worn to add color and life to their otherwise dull attire. Many women wore a keychain around their necks or attached to a belt to show that they had responsibility for a household. Since women rarely fought in battle, no helmets or chainmail were used. Both sexes wore the Viking good-luck charm—a Thor’s Hammer—around their necks.

Behavior

- Say “**ja**” (Yahhh!) often. Wipe your mouth with your sleeve frequently, especially when you are tossing down a mug or two of mead.
- Swagger around with confidence. You are respected and feared throughout the world.
- Salute each other with your right arm up and say to fellow Vikings: “Hail, Ragnar!” “Hail, Astrid!” Say “by Thor” instead of “by golly” or “by God.”
- Look up at the sky often, especially when you are contented and yell: “**OOOH-Dinn!**”
- *But remember—all this posing and acting must be done within the limits of Thor’s (your teacher’s) rules.*



THOR'S HAMMER

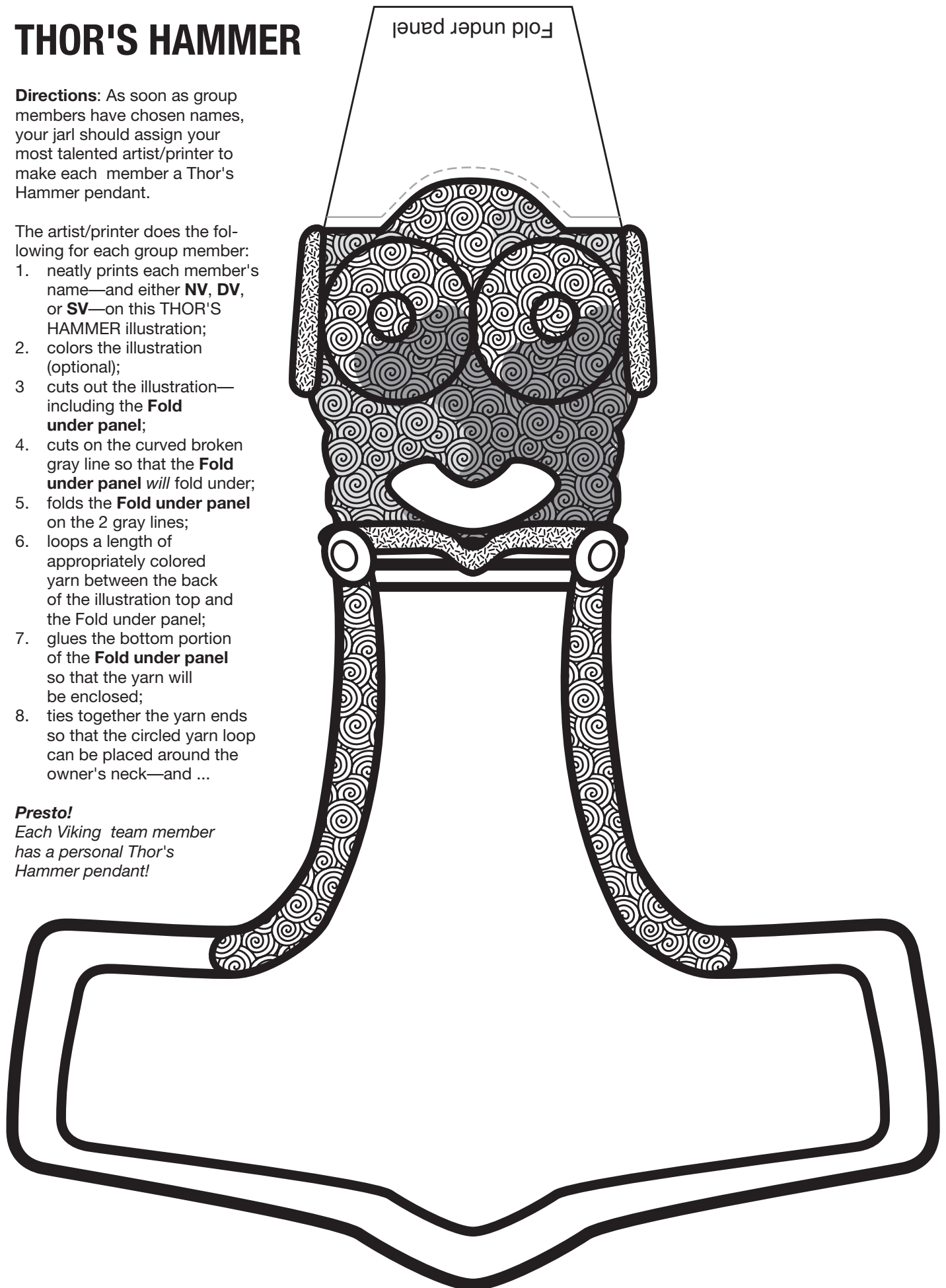
Directions: As soon as group members have chosen names, your jarl should assign your most talented artist/printer to make each member a Thor's Hammer pendant.

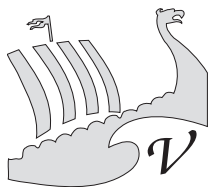
The artist/printer does the following for each group member:

1. neatly prints each member's name—and either **NV**, **DV**, or **SV**—on this THOR'S HAMMER illustration;
2. colors the illustration (optional);
3. cuts out the illustration—including the **Fold under panel**;
4. cuts on the curved broken gray line so that the **Fold under panel** will fold under;
5. folds the **Fold under panel** on the 2 gray lines;
6. loops a length of appropriately colored yarn between the back of the illustration top and the Fold under panel;
7. glues the bottom portion of the **Fold under panel** so that the yarn will be enclosed;
8. ties together the yarn ends so that the circled yarn loop can be placed around the owner's neck—and ...

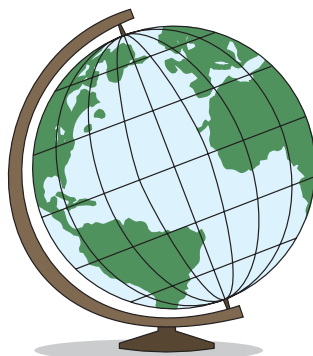
Presto!

Each Viking team member has a personal Thor's Hammer pendant!





Phase 2 THE VIKINGS' WORLD (1–2 days)



This geographic phase should sharpen your students' skills in locating, labeling, and conceptualizing the vastness of the Norse commercial network around the world. It was immense—6,000 miles by 12,000 miles—stretching from North America on the west to the Caspian Sea on the east, and from northern Scandinavia to the southern Mediterranean.

There are only two handouts for this phase, and to accompany them, students must use an atlas or textbook. Try to assemble a class set of atlases, and encourage your students to use the map section of their own textbooks as they complete the assignment.

Flourishes to consider

- Make a display copy of the map and “prime the pump” by doing the first two things in Task No. 1 for them.
- Afterward, trace a completed map on a large piece of butcher paper and display it for the rest of the simulation.
- For below average students, work in cooperative groups with the jarl in the three nations guiding the rest through each task. Of course, you might also shepherd them through each task orally.

Duplication directions

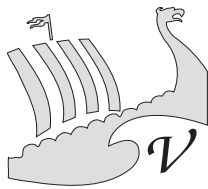
Duplicate the following in the number in *italics*.

- THE VIKINGS' WORLD (task sheet): *class set*
- THE VIKINGS' WORLD MAP: *class set*

Daily directions

Day 1

1. Begin by handing back copies of the VIKING CHALLENGE, review the answers, and award NORSEMARKS to everyone. Individuals receive NORSEMARKS equal to the number of correct answers out of 25. For groups, take the total scores of all, say, e.g., the DVs, and divide up the number of tests taken in their nation. That number in NORSEMARKS is then put on a tallyboard somewhere prominent in the room. Make sure that each Viking fills in NORSEMARKS on his/her individual scoring sheet. *Follow this ritual after completing every task or challenge in VIKINGS.*



THE VIKINGS' WORLD - 2

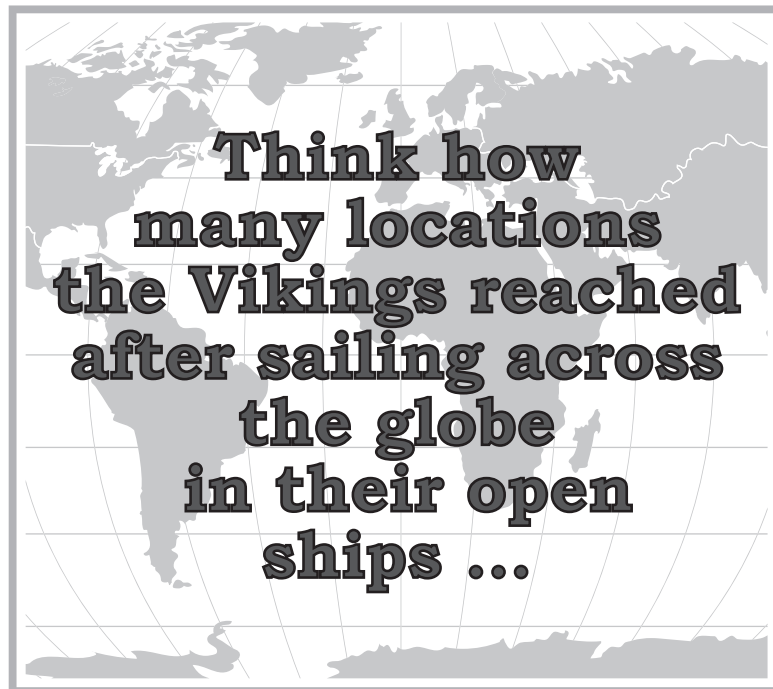
2. Hand out the two sheets THE VIKINGS' WORLD and THE VIKINGS' WORLD MAP. Explain what the assignment is and why they are doing it (see introduction). Depending on class ability, decide how much you, or the jarls, will help. This might be a perfect time for a cooperative learning effort, especially if there is a lack of atlases or books and you don't want to spend more than one day plus overnight on it.
3. Encourage your more artistic students to create colorful and imaginative symbols, designs, figures, and trade routes.

Day 2

1. You may want to extend the work of your young Norse cartographers to another day, especially if you want quality work, and many students have colored pencils or pens. Furthermore, if your students are those who *do not take home books*, they will have to work with school materials while you and the jarls monitor their efforts.
2. Afterward, you may want to have students come up to a large map of THE VIKINGS' WORLD on the bulletin board and locate for the entire class the items and tasks from the assignment.

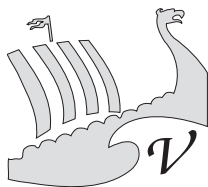
Having read the message inside

THE VIKINGS' WORLD map ...



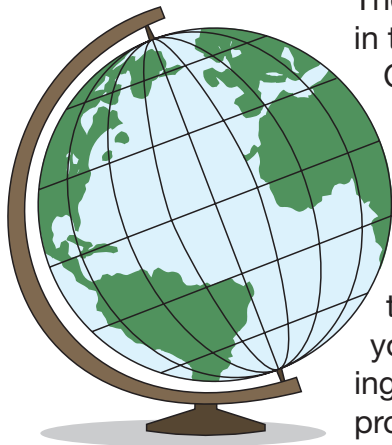
this box, you should be ready

to get your students involved in



THE VIKINGS' WORLD

(To accompany map, THE VIKINGS' WORLD)



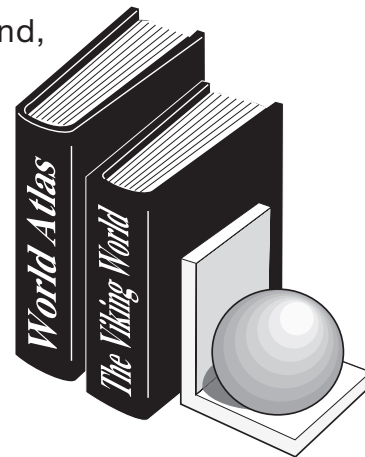
The world of the Vikings or Norse stretched from Newfoundland in the west to the Caspian Sea in the east ... and from the Arctic Ocean in the north to the Arab city of Baghdad in the south. In short, they made their domain a vast geographic rectangle some 12,000 miles by 6,000 miles! In all of history, few people can claim a commercial empire this large.

To grasp the extent of the travels of the Viking explorer, settler and trader, and to review the geography which made up their world, you Vikings are now assigned the task of completing a map showing the place names they visited, the routes they ventured, and the products they traded.

Task No. 1: Locating places

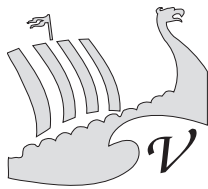
Using an atlas or textbook, locate the following and label on the map given to you.

1. Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Iceland, Greenland, England, Ireland, Spain, France, Germany, Italy, Soviet Union, Finland, Baffin Island, Labrador, Newfoundland (Vinland?), Africa
2. Oslo, London, Paris, Kiev, Rome, York, Baghdad, Byzantium (Constantinople/Istanbul), Novgorod, Dublin, Birka, Uppsala, Bergen, Frondheim, Hedeby, Lindesfarne
3. Orkney Islands, Shetland Islands, Faeroe Islands, Volga River, Dnieper River, Black Sea, Caspian Sea, Mediterranean Sea, North Sea, Baltic Sea, Arctic Circle, Sicily, Sardinia, Cyprus, Danube River, Seine River, Malta, Rhone River



Task No. 2: Tracing Viking routes

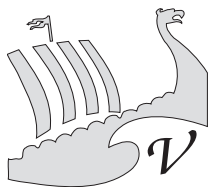
The Vikings, like peoples before and after, traveled along roads and bodies of water we might call historical routes. For reasons clear to them, these routes usually ran along rivers, around deserts, and connected towns and cities like a dot-to-dot game. To illustrate these reasons, you should now trace a few Viking routes coursing through their world. Make sure you have completed Task 1 before starting Task 2.



THE VIKINGS' WORLD - 2

tracing routes ...

1. Using dots (•••••), trace the Swedish Viking route through the Soviet Union to Byzantium. Start at Birka, Sweden, and draw dots across the Baltic Sea to the coast of Asia. Then continue on to the city of Novgorod and on to the Dnieper River. Follow its course to Kiev on the Black Sea. Then make two separate routes. One route should go north and east around the Black Sea to the Tigris River on which the city of Baghdad lies. From Baghdad go west to the eastern shores of the Mediterranean Sea. The second route should go west from the Black Sea to Byzantium. Show an explosion symbol around that city to represent the Vikings' several attacks on it.
2. Using hyphenated lines (- - - -), trace the Danish Vikings routes as they attacked and colonized Europe. Start the route at Hedeby, Denmark, and wind around the Danish peninsula into the North Sea. Cross the sea to England and attack Lindesfarne, York, and London. Return to sea and cross the English Channel, sail up the Seine River to Paris. Attack that city and move along the Seine inland. Return along the river back to the English Channel and sail south and west around the "nose" of France. Then hug the coast as you guide your dragon ship around the Iberian peninsula (Spain). Penetrate the Mediterranean Sea by sailing between Spain and Africa through the Straits of Hercules (Gibraltar). Hug the northern shores of the Mediterranean as you sail east toward Sicily, by going around Sardinia to Italy. Attack Pisa, just north of Rome (they attacked the wrong city!) Next sail to Malta before heading for the cities of Sidon and Alexandria on the shores of the eastern Mediterranean.
3. Using small stars (***), trace the adventurous Norwegian Vikings on their journey from Oslo or Bergen as they leap-frog across the North Atlantic to North America. Start from Oslo and head for the Orkney Islands. Next, sail south to Ireland, found Dublin, attack some other Irish towns and monasteries before heading north to the Faeroe Islands (along the Orkney Islands). Point your dragon ship or commercial knarrs toward Iceland. Settle there before sailing directly west to the large glaciated land called Greenland. From the western settlement, called Brattalid, hug the western shores north to Baffin Island. Then head south along the shores of Labrador (Markland in the sagas) before coming to the northern tip of Newfoundland. Colonize there, and name your settlements Vinland, which it probably was, although some historians believe Newfoundland was merely a way station for Vinland farther to the south (Maine, New York, Minnesota?). Return to your long ships



THE VIKINGS' WORLD - 3

and retravel the same route to Greenland, Iceland, and finally to Norway.

Task No 3:

Understanding economics of the Viking world

The commercial empire of the Northmen was like a network, wherein people of the northern hemisphere traded hundreds of goods and provided services. But it was the Viking merchants who made it work. Their ships were everywhere— Europe, Asia, Africa, and even North America. Appropriately, during this third and final task you must sort out the details of this world of commerce which was stimulated and perpetuated by the Norse at a time when most of the world, including Europe, was somewhat dormant with regard to trade.

1. Make a legend on another piece of paper to show symbols to represent these various products the Norse traders exchanged throughout their journeys.

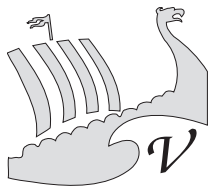
- | | | |
|-----------|----------|-----------|
| • timber | • silk | • wheat |
| • glass | • gold | • tin |
| • silver | • ivory | • falcons |
| • wool | • spices | • cloth |
| • weapons | • honey | • jewels |
| • furs | • amber | • wine |
| • pottery | • hides | • fish |

Create your own symbols (e.g., gold could be shown as gold coins; honey as a bee, etc.)

2. Now place these symbols in the following spots on your map.

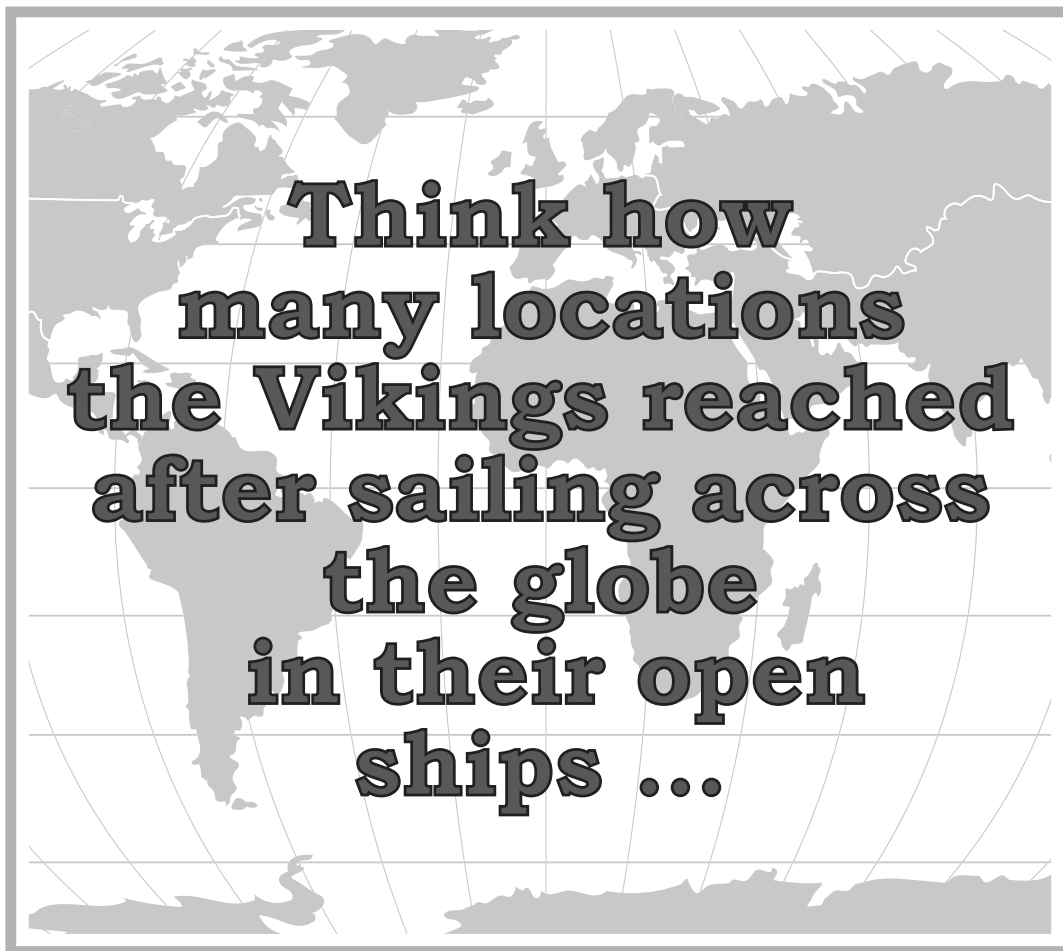
- **Furs:** Northern Sweden, central Norway, Russia (north of Kiev), Greenland, Newfoundland
- **Ivory:** Greenland, Northern Sweden
- **Fish:** Iceland, Norway, Sweden (southern parts), Denmark
- **Timber:** Labrador, Norway, Sweden, along the Danube River, Greenland, Newfoundland
- **Hides:** Greenland, Iceland, Northern Sweden
- **Weapons:** Sweden, France
- **Wine:** France, headwaters of the Danube near Byzantium, Spain, south of Byzantium
- **Gold:** North of the Danube River, Byzantium, Baghdad, west of Kiev

... products traded ...



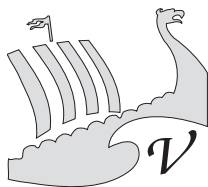
THE VIKINGS' WORLD - 4

- **Silver:** Byzantium, Baghdad
- **Jewels:** Byzantium, Baghdad, France, south of the Danube River
- **Wool:** Scotland, England, Iceland, Ireland
- **Silk:** Baghdad, Byzantium, North Africa
- **Honey:** Northeast of Kiev, England
- **Spices:** Baghdad, Byzantium, south of the Danube River
- **Amber:** Northwest of Kiev, Germany
- **Wheat:** England, France, Denmark
- **Cloth:** Scotland, south of the Danube River, Iceland
- **Glass:** Germany
- **Pottery:** Northern Germany, England
- **Tin:** England
- **Falcons:** Greenland, Iceland



The Vikings' World

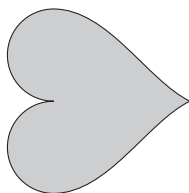




Phase 3 CHALLENGE PROJECTS (Optional)



Time for creativity



Introduction: This phase is placed in the middle of the simulation so you have the option to use it and give your students some time to complete the activities *before* they have to showcase what they have done at the FEASTING A DEAD HERO final phase.

Realize that you may assign these three distinct projects either to individuals, to student pairs, or to “nations” (i.e., DVs, SVs, or NVs). Assigning the challenge projects surely adds two items to the simulation: intellectual and experiential depth and, of course, more substance to the final phase when the atmosphere is festive and you want ambiance and drama.

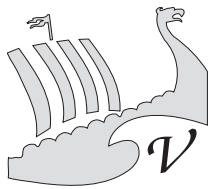
Here are three challenge projects. (Of course, you may create others yourself.)

- **DECORATING VIKING OBJECTS:** Here is an opportunity for your young Vikings to design and make simplified jewelry such as a Thor’s Hammer pendant or to design and construct a small dragon-ship. Students should be able to follow the handout’s instructions. Your more artistic students will be drawn into this project.
- **DECIPHERING THE RUNES:** This language challenge could be done as a separate phase in a heated competition between the three nations, but it is placed here instead. Students who love to solve problems, to read mysteries, or who find language fascinating will enjoy losing themselves in deciphering the old Norse language.
- **COMPOSING SKALDIC POETRY:** While this could be a task for all Vikings as homework, it makes an exciting challenge project for your poets as well. This genre produced by literary Norse centuries ago clearly rounds out the rough edges of the Scandinavian personality. Their poetry is bold, imaginative, and sensitive, and it contributed uniquely to world literature. Many of your students will be drawn to the opportunity to express themselves during this project. The results will likely please them and you.

Duplication directions

Duplicate the following in the number in *italics*.

- DECORATING VIKING OBJECTS: *as needed for each class, but at least 18–20 per class*



CHALLENGE PROJECTS - 2

- DECIPHERING THE RUNES: *as needed for each class, but at least 12–16 per class*
- COMPOSING SKALDIC POETRY: *as needed for each class, but at least 15–20 per class*
- Illustrations found on pp. 4:15 through 4:20: *as needed for students working on these CHALLENGE PROJECTS*

Daily directions (If you decide to implement this phase, allow two days for class work. See the OVERVIEW CHART on page 1:12.)

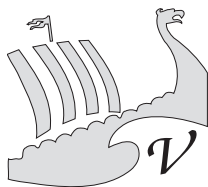
Day 1

1. Review the material and concepts learned the previous day.
2. Introduce this phase with a brief overview of why you've chosen to include the challenge projects, your time frame, and how you'll set up this phase.
3. Make note of student choices and divide the classroom into work stations appropriate to the projects. Perhaps you might label the areas as follows:
 - "The Docks" for those you are building a dragonship
 - "The Studio" for those working on jewelry
 - "Poet's Corner" for the literary set
 - "Rune's Dunes" for the team of deciphering experts.
4. Allow students to discuss their projects for a while, and encourage them to make either a rough draft, template, blueprint, or a first draft of whatever their product will be. Insist that every Viking is accountable to turn in his/her best effort **on a certain due date**.
5. If you choose to extend the in-class work on challenge projects, make sure the Viking youth are told to bring materials, cardboard, paint, paper, brushes, scissors, cutting tools to class the next day.



Day 2

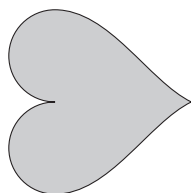
- The second day should see some real progress on all projects. Monitor this time period carefully to ensure completion of in-class-only group work (i.e., the dragonship). Any less-monitored student may need a pep talk from his/her jarl. Perhaps a threat of appearing before the Althing soon for not holding up the Viking spirit of industriousness could be used effectively.



DECORATING VIKING OBJECTS



Sail your soul ...



Despite the general notion that they were merely uncouth barbarians and pirates, Vikings were proud of their appearance. They liked to show off their wealth by wearing attractive clothes and fine jewelry, and by decorating their furniture and ships. They themselves made much of the clothing they wore, but some of their jewelry no doubt came from raids of monasteries and towns. So that you can appreciate the talents of your Scandinavian ancestors, you need to read over the data in this handout and then apply what you learn to various art projects. These projects will enable Viking groups to show off their own talent and help decorate, or spruce up, your great hall (classroom) as you perform the activities in VIKINGS.

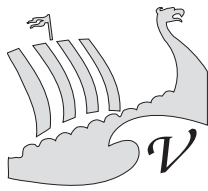
Viking jewelry

Although most Viking art, including jewelry, went through different phases and styles just like today, certain patterns remained constant throughout the Viking era (800–1100 BCE). Both men and women wore jewelry, including finger rings, neck rings, broaches, and pendants. Nearly everyone wore a Thor's Hammer pendant; it became a universal good-luck charm much like a rabbit's foot or St. Christopher's cross today. All jewelry had fancy, definitive Norse decorative patterns on them. Even such weapons as axes, sword handles, and shields exhibited these designs. Viking craftsmen and women used gold and silver, but wood seemed to be a more common material for larger items such as ships and statues. In addition, many Viking women were highly skilled at fabricating beautiful textiles with intricate, geometric patterns. At very few things were Vikings not artistically skilled, especially masterworks by woodcarvers and metal workers.

Most designs utilized busy crossecting and curvy, overlooping lines. Right away you will notice how curvy and overlooping these patterns really are. You will likely have trouble following the lines. Often these overlooping lines are snakes. Other times the designs are serpents, dragons, greyhound dogs, birds, horses or some other unrecognizable beast. In some cases, gods, kings, and other humans were found in the patterns.

Viking ships

In some ways the Viking ships were merely another place for artisans to weave, hammer, or carve their works. Yet these sturdy "steeds of the waves" were much more than that. Winston Churchill, former British prime minister, wrote: "The souls of the Vikings were in their ships." It may be true that they were among the finest wooden ships



DECORATING VIKING OBJECTS - 2

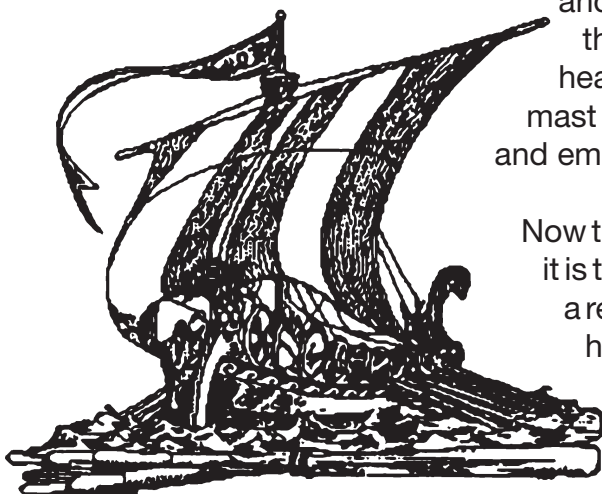
ever built. In most cases, they were constructed with nature's hardest woods—oak planking. In their own times and after, no finer vessels sailed the seas and oceans, which the Vikings called “the whale’s road.” Vikings took great pride in building their ships and then sailing them to the far ends of the earth. Affectionate names like “Sea Snake,” “Surf Dragon,” “Thor’s Raven,” “Elk of the Fjord,” and “Long Serpent” fill up the sagas with marvelous metaphors.

From the sagas and archaeology we find at least three basic kinds of Viking ships:

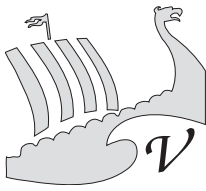
- The long and elegant long ship could reach a size of 90 feet long and 15 feet wide. Each vessel of this type had about 20–30 pairs of oars and a crew of 100. This is the version we expect to see in Vikings movies. It would probably have a dragon’s head on the prow of the ship.
- The smaller, less impressive long ship had up to 20 pairs of oars and reached 50–60 feet in length.
- The cargo vessel was known as a knarr. Merchants use the knarr in their travels. It was only 40 or so feet long, but was very wide in order to accommodate horses, lumber, and heavy supplies. No more than 40–50 men would make up its crew.

Imagine how impressive and even intimidating it must have been to see a large fleet of long ships racing with the wind at perhaps seven knots (seven nautical miles per hour). In a 24 hour day, such a speed could mean 150 miles sailed.

Bright square sails of striped or checkered red and blue, and green and white flapped in a strong wind. The bows were thrust upward for all to see the dragon’s or serpent’s head pointing the ship across the waves. Atop the mast flew the chieftain’s banner, emblazoned with color and embroidered with a personal emblem.



Now that you know something about Viking art and ships, it is time to apply what you have learned by constructing a replica of a Viking longship, complete with a dragon’s head and other authentic parts. Those who feel they are artists rather than builders can decorate the long ship. Others still can make Viking jewelry, including the popular Thor’s Hammer pendant.



DECORATING VIKING OBJECTS - 3

Choice of projects options

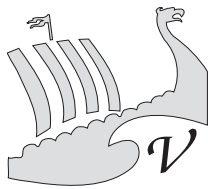
- **Option 1:** Individually or in study pairs or groups do one of the following:
 1. construct a Viking longship;
 2. decorate the longship someone else has constructed; or
 3. make jewelry.
- **Option 2:** Stay in your traditional Viking national groups, and your teacher will dictate which of the above three activities you will do.

In any case, all Vikings will work on one of the three tasks in a cooperative fashion.

Constructing a Viking ship



- Find plenty of cardboard boxes (9-10), or see if you can secure some voting booths or large appliance boxes. Refrigerator boxes are wonderful to cut up!
- Draw up a “blueprint,” using the examples on these pages, or from your own research in books and magazines.
- Use several desks to form the sturdy interior of your ship. Build outward with the cardboard, cutting and taping (masking tape) to mould a hull and mast. You might wish to glue or scotch-tape butcher paper, which comes in large rolls, onto the cardboard and then paint on this paper. *Why paint on butcher paper?* If you do, you or next year’s students could later use the cardboard for the same or other tasks.
- Using the examples of Norse designs you have found, decorate your ship with markers or poster paint. (Don’t forget to add round shields to the sides. Use lines of paint or markers to simulate oak planks.)
- Find an old but not tattered or spotted white sheet for the sail. Paint it with the colors suggested on page 4:4. Be accurate. Then attach it to the mast (a mop or broom handle or a 2x4 stud?).
- Choose an especially-gifted art student to create a dragon’s head for the prow. This could be made at home with papier mache.



DECORATING VIKING OBJECTS - 4

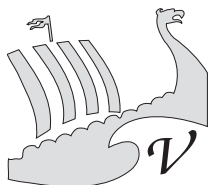
- Once finished, make sure you showcase your creation in one of the dramatic sagas to be performed very soon.

Making Viking jewelry

- Review all the various designs and patterns you have found in your research in order to sense the extraordinarily detailed art the Norse created 1000 years ago.
- Decide what pieces of jewelry you'll make: necklace, pendants, broaches, finger rings, arm rings, bracelets, battle shields (to go on the sides of someone's long ship), battle axes, swords, pieces of clothing, or even household keys all Viking women carried on their belts.
- If you do some extra research, you may wish to discard the Thor's Hammer name tag made earlier and makeyouyrself an *original* Thor's Hammer pendant. (Maybe other group members would like *original* ones, too!) Remember that every Viking wore such a pendant around his/her neck for good luck.)
- Also consider making brooches. (They were used to fasten pieces of clothing as well as to make a fashion statement.) They were very common, much like a today's safety pin or hair pin .
- Stiff cardboard or cardstock paper will help you make both the pendant and the brooch.
- Whatever you create, make certain others see your pieces, get praise from your jarl, and ensure that the pieces are used later in the simulation when the sagas are presented.



Decorate such pendants with intricate designs you have found. Use plenty of loops, curves and dragons' heads or snakes' heads.



DECIPHERING THE RUNES

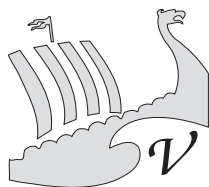
Often persons assume that Vikings were so busy marauding or farming that they had no time—or reason—to read or write. As so frequently happens, myth has covered up another Norse achievement. While the language they wrote and spoke was called Old Norse, the letters they carved in wood and stone were known as *runes*, and their alphabet was called the *futhark*. These runic letters looked like twigs because this writing was designed for cutting with a knife or a chisel on available materials. Cursive writing was avoided.



You will enjoy learning the Norse runic alphabet so that you can translate and write messages ...

To a Viking on the go it seemed easier to carve a simple note, memorial, or even a “short” story on a piece of wood, or on a stone tablet than to go through what a medieval scribe endured elsewhere in Europe. The scribes had to prepare parchment, make ink, fashion a pen from a goose quill, and *spend years* in order to complete a small book.

The Norse runic alphabet had 16 letters. To be sure it was not a perfect, if convenient, alphabet. For example, there are no characters for D, G, and P; nor are there symbols for E or O. To rectify some of these deletions, rune-masters (men who made a career carving runes) often used T to represent D, B for P, and K for G. For vowels, they managed as best they could. For example: King Gorm appears on the runic stones as Kurmr; King Svein is Suin.



DECIPHERING THE RUNES - 2

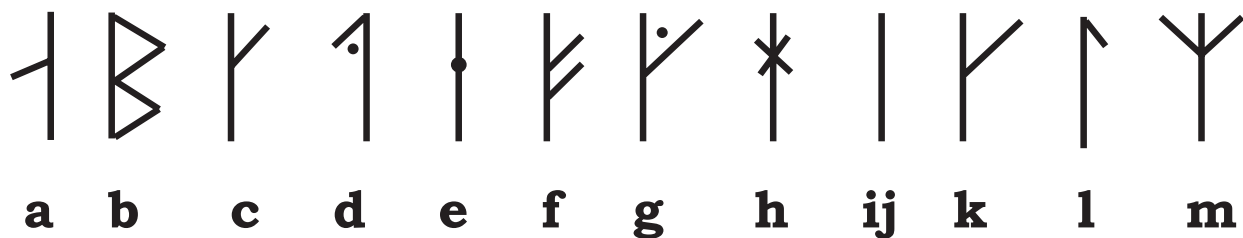
Rune-masters were kept busy carving runes for several needs: letters of business, personal, or political matters; memorials, boundary posts, marker stones for bridges and roads; and even casual graffiti. In any case, runologists—people who study runes—believe that perhaps most runes were meant to be painted. Red, brown, blue, and black were popular colors with the incised letters almost always traditional red.

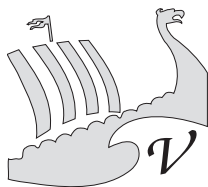
Luckily, thousands of runestones have been dug up for analysis. They have been found wherever the Norse sailed and settled. One famous runestone found in Minnesota, the so-called Kensington Stone, claims that a group of Vikings visited there in 1362. Since the time when this stone was found at the turn of the 20th century, most historians have judged it a forgery. Nevertheless, Swedish-Americans still yearn for further proof that Vikings penetrated the American heartland.

Interestingly, our work “book” comes from an old Norse word, “bok,” meaning a piece of birchbark with runes scratched on it. Moreover, the word “write” originally meant “to score with a sharp tool.”

Now it is time for you Vikings to sharpen up your “knives” and “chisels” so that you can correspond with each other through the futhark on runestones. Your jarl will assume leadership.

Before you practice and write a few simple words using the twiglike runes, *study* the chart below. Then write your first simple words at the top of page 4:9.





DECIPHERING THE RUNES - 3

Writing a few simple words

In the spaces *after* each of the four English words below, write the words using the rune alphabet.

ship

wife

dragon

sun



Writing your rune message

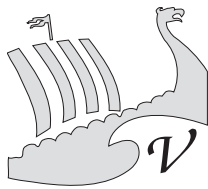
Your task is to make a runestone with a message on it for the other two groups to decipher. Spend no more than 20 to 30 minutes on your message. Follow these **six steps**:

1. As a group, write up at least a 20-word message. It can be either a memorial, boundary marker, piece of personal correspondence, cargo list, tombstone marker, or ???

Sample of a real message on a runestone:

Torsten caused this monument to be made in memory of Sven his father who went to Iceland to colonize with Erik the Red. He died bravely. Carved by Ybber.

2. Divide up the message among group members. Give each person a responsibility to translate certain English words and phrases into Old Norse, with runic letters.

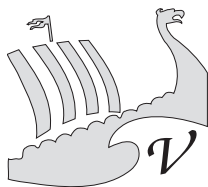


DECIPHERING THE RUNES - 4

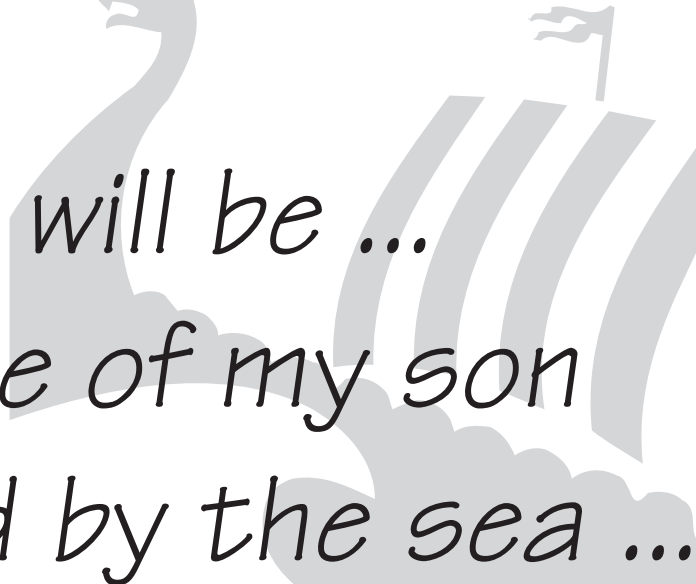
3. Once this second task is done, the jarl (or your best artist) should assemble the parts/phrases and print the entire message on a woodlike surface (cardboard?).
4. Collect these runestones and give them to the two other groups to translate back into English.
5. Each group then translates the runes in an abbreviated time frame in a possible class competition.
6. Whichever group translates the runes in *the shortest amount of time* and in *the most accurate manner* will be awarded the highest number of NORSEMARKS.

Final challenge: Do you want to practice translating a rune message before you go on? If so, try this one!

1*|t|f1|k
141R1t|f1|
B1RN11111NR
N14111111R



COMPOSING SKALDIC POETRY



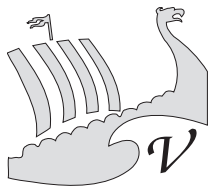
*Empty,
I know it will be ...
The place of my son
Engulfed by the sea ...*

So many years have passed since a father or mother experienced anguish and wrote the short poem above. With these words the parent reaches across the centuries and touches us.

In this activity you will learn to write such poetry. You will use the actual Viking alphabet. One reason you may want to know more about skaldic poetry, aside from what is mentioned in the Student Guide, which contains a brief history of the Vikings, is that you plan on showcasing your talents as a poet at the feast celebrating the simulation's finale—the moment your class buries a Viking chieftain.

Your teacher will organize your class to put on a version of a banquet and funeral. As a skaldic poet or balladeer, you will first compose a few lines of poetry to commemorate the dead. Then you will entertain the assemblage with song. Since most of you will choose poetry over song, you need to do the following:

- Review the section on skalds and skaldic poetry in the Student Guide. Make certain you understand that skaldic verse was not composed in a framework of stressed words or syllables. Rather it used a rigid rule of syllable count, a weaving of rhymes and half-rhymes (“knife” and “fight,” for example).



COMPOSING SKALDIC POETRY - 2

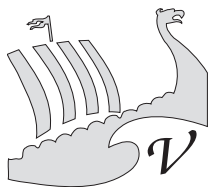
- Compose a stanza or two of verse, combining the themes of Norse religion, character traits of the deceased, and as much about Viking life as you can. (*See suggestions below.*)
- Try to frequently use kennings as you compose your stanzas. Kennings are elaborate metaphors. Most kennings produce vivid imagery.

Examples of kennings in skaldic poetry

- whale's road = open sea
- bones of the sea = rocks
- hill of hair = head
- the one with the cold nose = anchor
- fire of battle = sword
- Odin's mead = poetry
- snake of wounds = sword
- foam-leaper/ Fjord Elk = longship
- reindeers of the deep/Foamy necked wood = ships
- wound bee = arrow
- blood branch = sword
- salmon's roof = sea
- tongue of the scabbard = sword
- tub of the wind/highway of the moon = sky
- whale's bath = the sea
- falcon's seat = right arm
- breaker of the tree/Wolf of the sail = wind
- sun of the sea-kings = shield

Themes/topics in skaldic poetry

- the gods: Odin (god of sky, war, wisdom); Freya (goddess of love and beauty), Frigga (goddess of earth, marriage, and motherly love), Thor (god of thunder, lightning, and the tides), Tyr (god of legal contracts and of truth)
- Scandinavian spring
- Viking honor and courage
- death
- bravery in battle
- jarls
- days of the week
- raiding
- husbands and wives

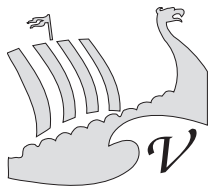


COMPOSING SKALDIC POETRY - 3

- family life
- Viking toughness
- vengeance
- savagery
- loyalty
- thralls (slaves)
- crafts
- long winters
- feasting
- Viking law and justice
- at sea
- sagas
- farming
- traveling to far away places
- health
- berserkirs and bloodshed
- conquest
- heroes
- Viking ships
- individual kings (Leif, Erik, Rollo, Harald Hardrada)

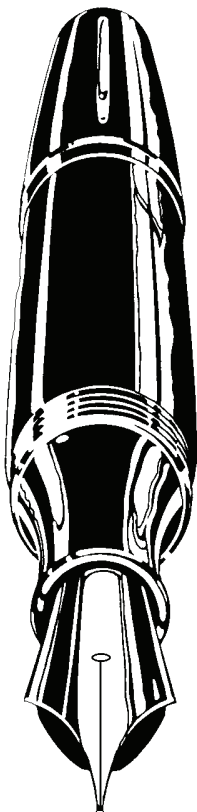
Samples of skaldic poetry

- When the wolf of the sail entered
the highway of the moon,
we brought the cold-nosed one
into the foamy-necked
and passed by the bones of the earth
into the salmon's roof.
- I've been with the sword and spear
slippery with bright blood where
kited wheeled. And how well we
violent Vikings clashed! Red flames
ate up men's roofs, raging we killed
and killed: and skewered bodies
sprawled sleepy in town gate-ways.



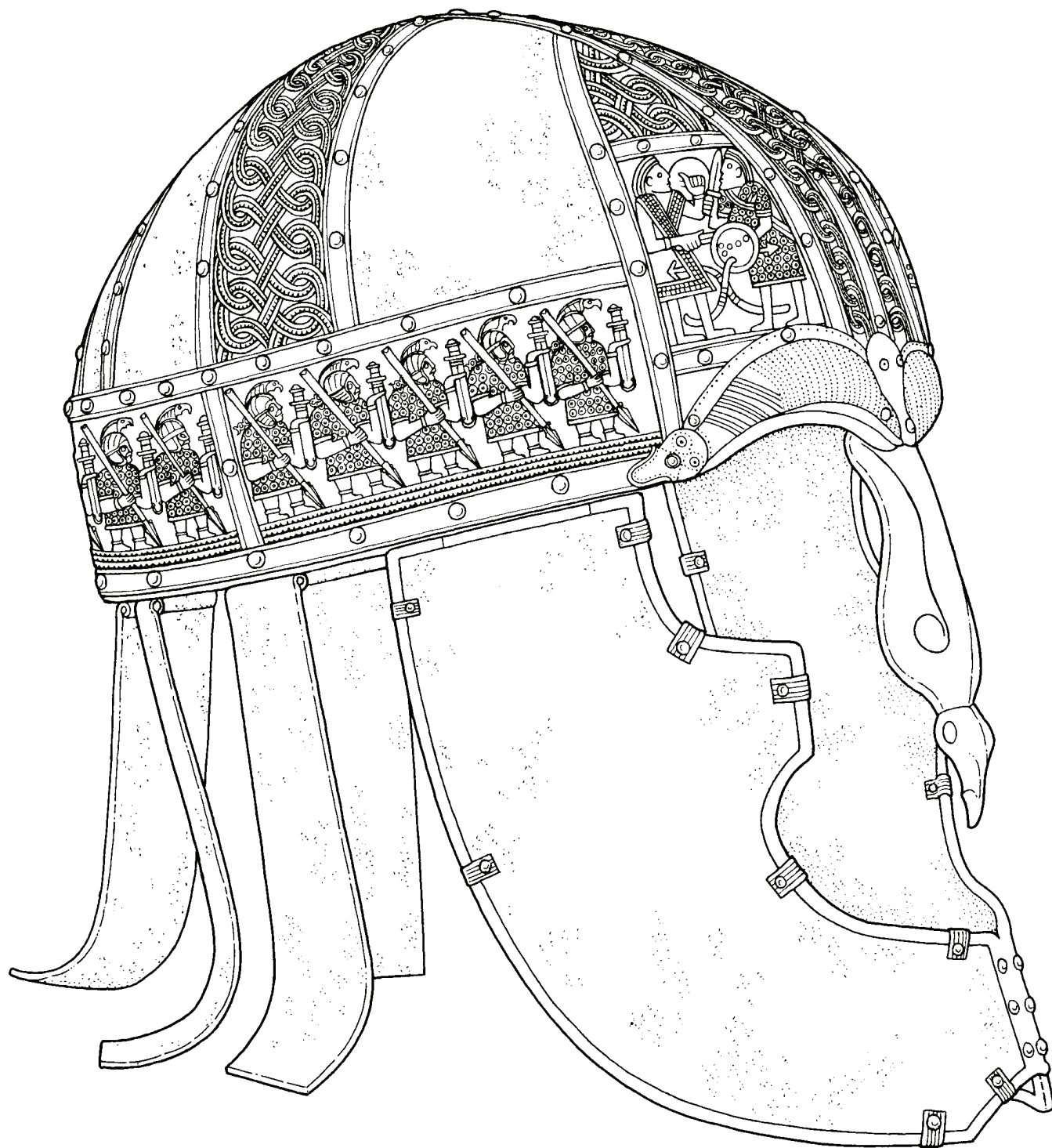
COMPOSING SKALDIC POETRY - 4

- *Wealth dies,
kinsmen die,
a man dies likewise himself;
but fame dies never
for him who gets good fame.*
- *Empty,
I know it will be ...
The place of my son
Engulfed by the sea ...*



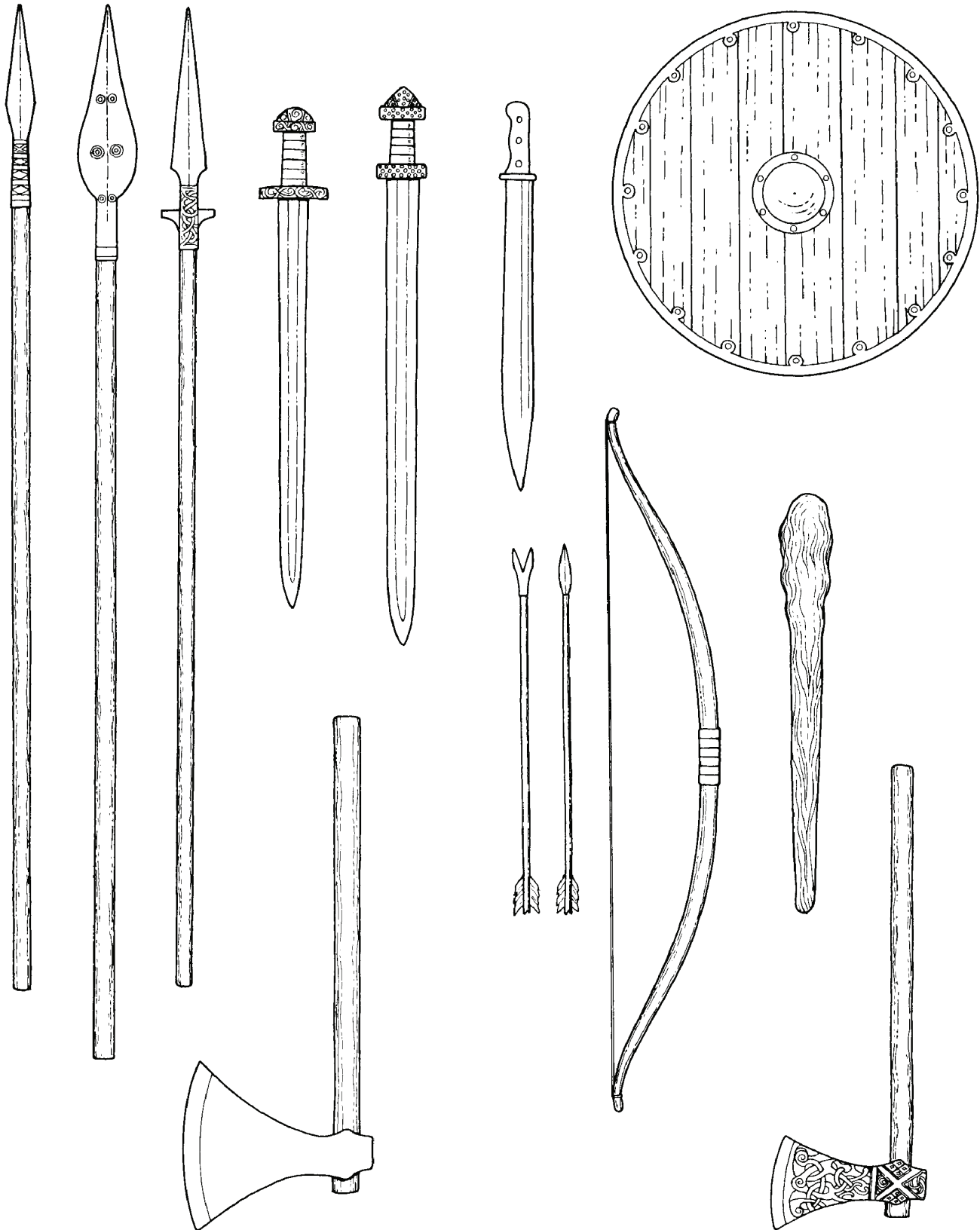
BRONZE ORNAMENTED IRON HELMET

This helmet from the Uppland region of Sweden shows the craftsmanship of early Vikings.



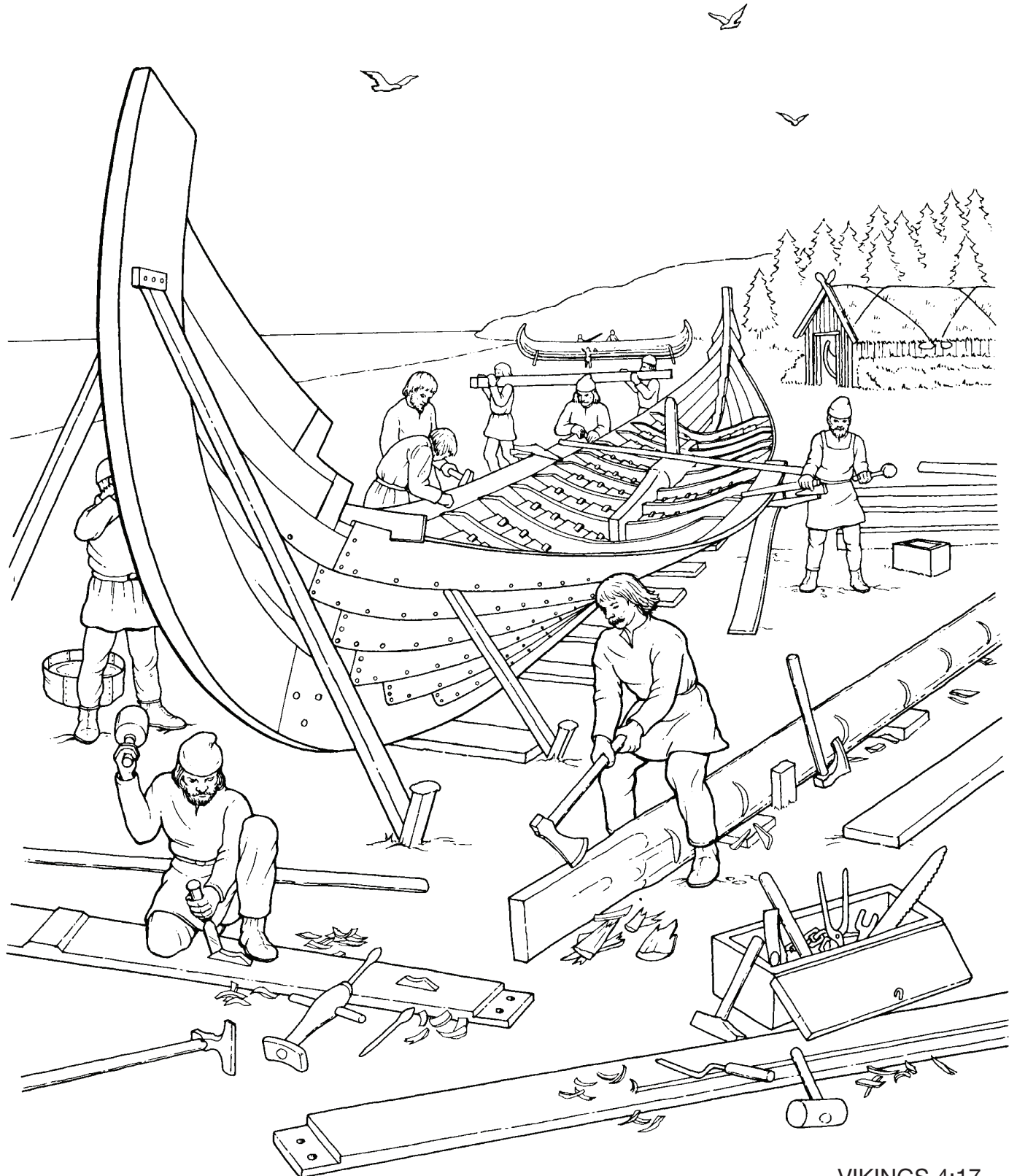
VIKING WEAPONS

Here are examples of weapons the early Vikings decorated with inlays of silver wire and niello (a black alloy). They often used bright paints on their shields.



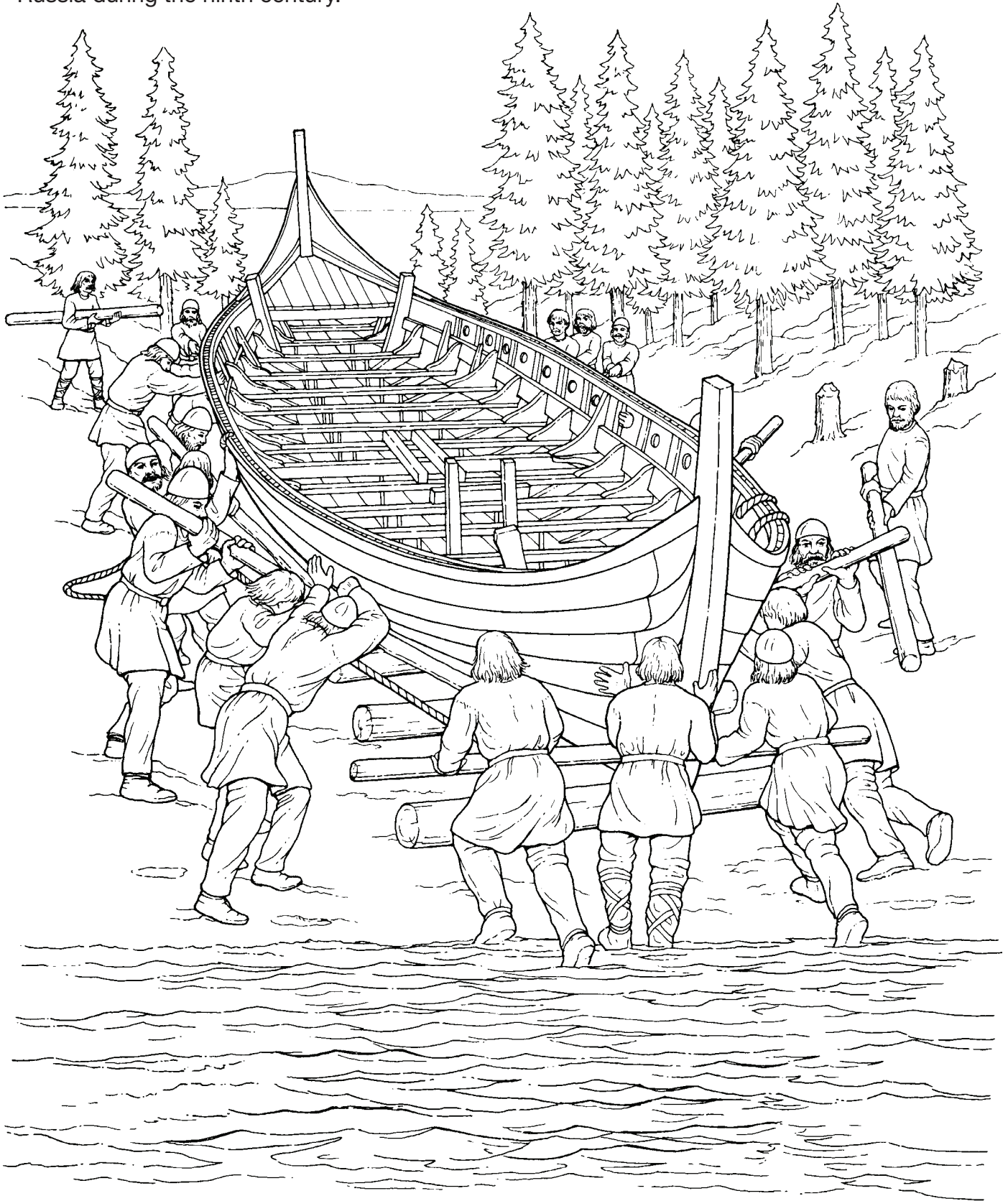
BUILDING A VIKING SHIP

The Vikings were masterful shipbuilders. It took them centuries, but they learned how to develop ships with true keels and with strong hulls. (They overlapped planks and riveted them together.) As a result, their ships were strong and flexible—able to survive angry storms. Because their ships' draft was shallow, their ships could land on nearly any beach and could sail far up shallow rivers. Therefore, they could organize surprise attacks!



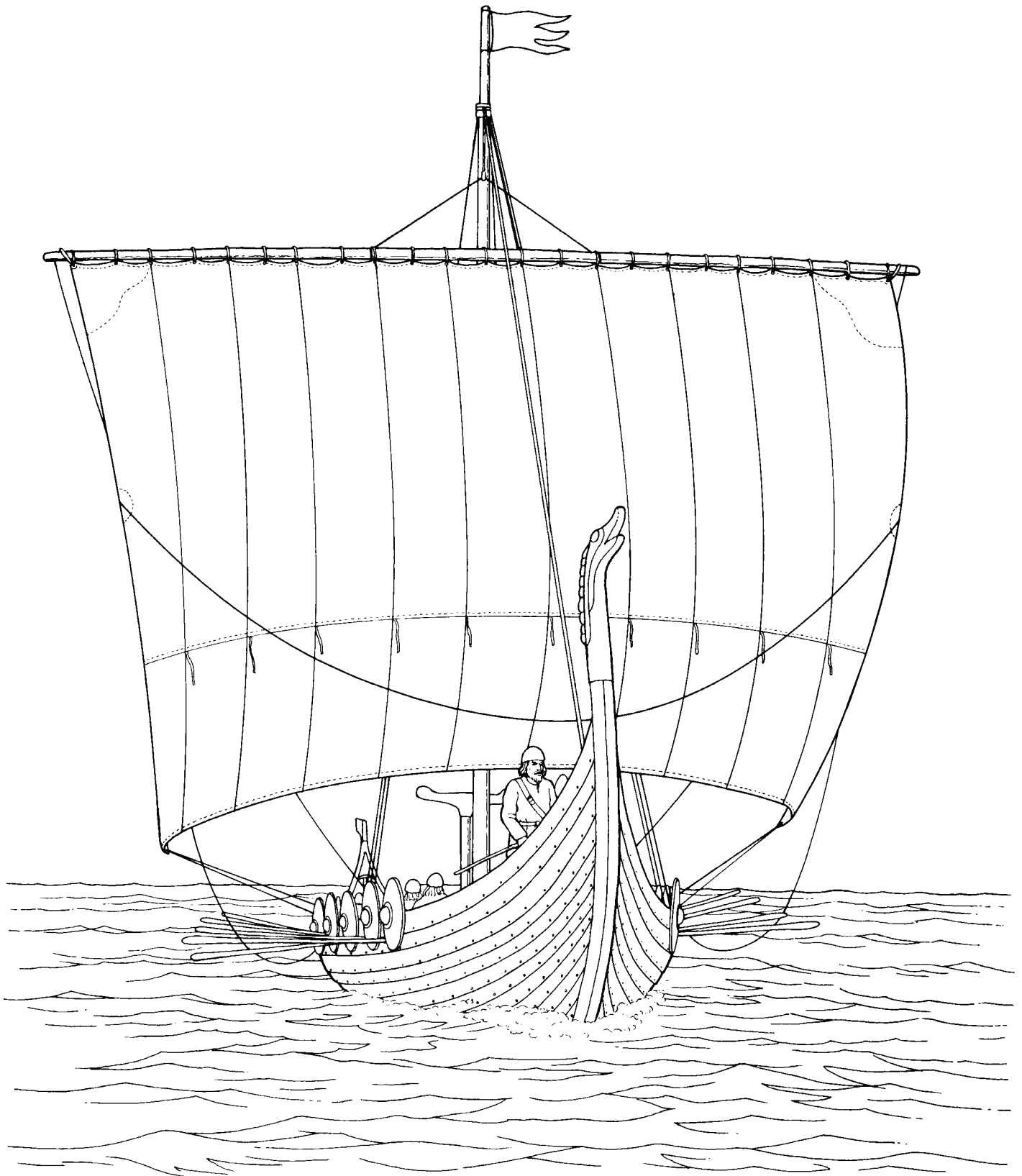
MOVING A VIKING SHIP ACROSS LAND

Since their ships were comparatively light, they could be portaged (moved overland) in order to bypass a river's rapids or to cross a portion of land. This scene depicts such a portage in Russia during the ninth century.



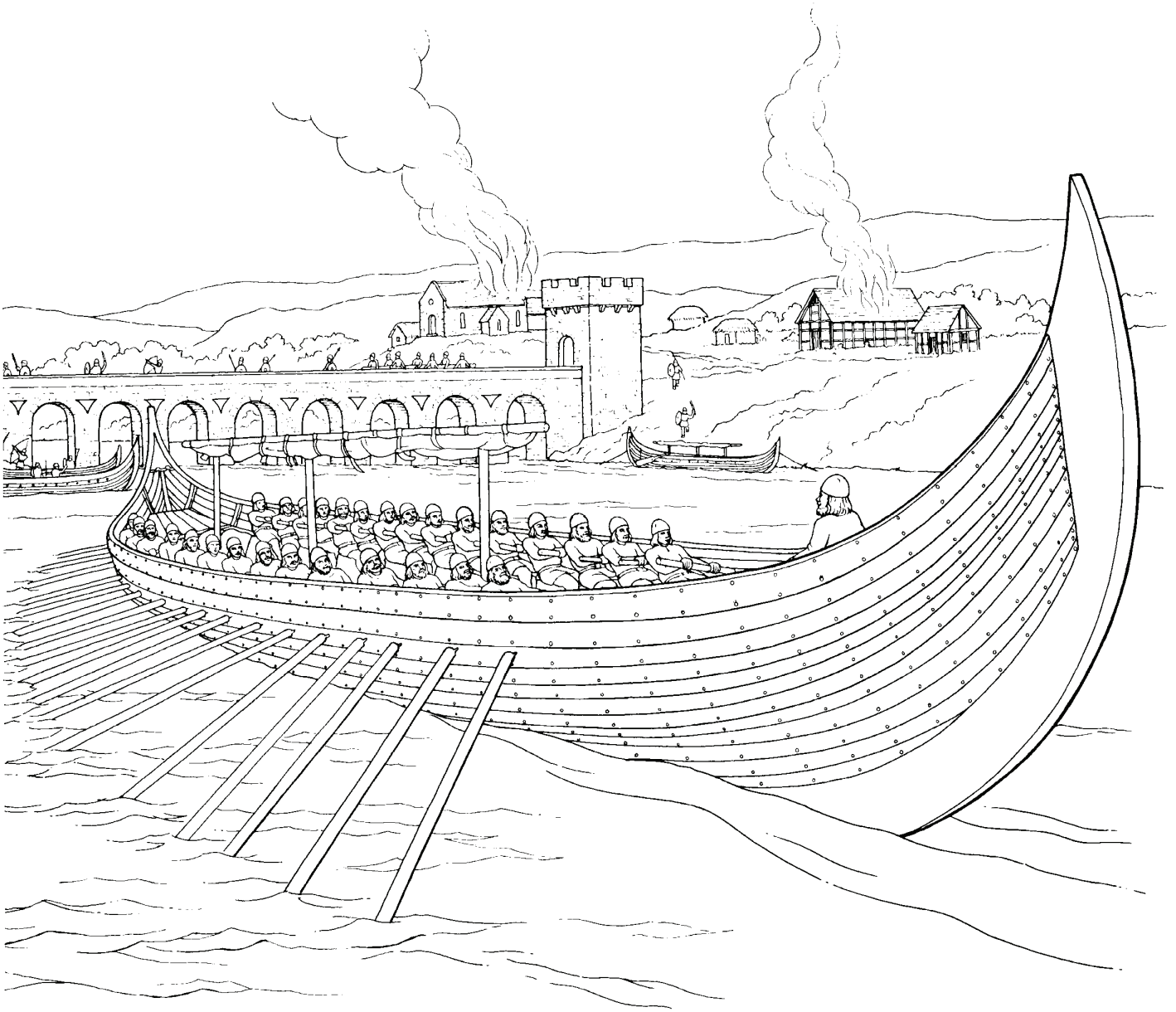
VIKING SHIP WITH SAIL AND OARS

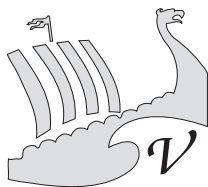
We know a great deal about Viking ships because of actual discoveries of such ships as well as references to them in world literature. Here is a ship with sails to move it across the sea and men at oars to maneuver it near shore or on rivers.



VIKING SHIP ROWING UP RIVER

Imagine how persons feared the Viking ships as their oarsmen pulled the fearsome ships through the water during an attack.





Phase 4 MEETING OF THE ALTHING (1–3 days)

“the Greeks of the North”

Introduction

This can be the most exciting and fun-filled phase of VIKINGS, for it combines all the elements of courtroom drama. From the history read earlier in their Student Guides, your students have learned that the medieval Norse were indeed the first northern Europeans to practice a form of democracy, although different from that of Greeks 1,500 years before. Perhaps for this achievement—and other parallels—the Vikings have been called the “Greeks of the North.”

In this phase you assign many roles. You’ll need a **lawspeaker**, **defendants**, **accusers**, **witnesses**, and **juries** in six different cases dealing with topics relevant to our modern society:

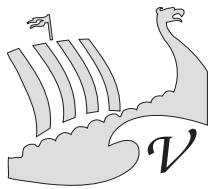
- non-conformity
- divorce and child-support
- the death penalty and cruel and unusual punishment
- rebellious youth
- the environment and local ordinances
- vengeance, murder, and family loyalty.

Background information and characterization are only skeletal and must be “fleshed out.” When students sign up to assume a role, make sure they know that they have to create a detailed story and persona from what has been only only outlined for the case. ***Stress this:*** *In each case all details added must be credible and must dovetail smoothly with the brief information first given.*

Here is **an extra option**: You might want to bring before the assemblage a few students who over the first simulation phases have been reluctant to work and shoulder their burdens in their nations.

Flourishes to consider

- You could play the lawspeaker.
- Set up the room to resemble an outside Althing meeting in Iceland. Or better yet, stage the entire proceeding outside on campus, just like a thousand years ago.
- Allow time for each “case group” to meet—perhaps a few days before the event.
- Allow time for the designated lawspeaker to find appropriate items to mete out punishments after they have been decided.



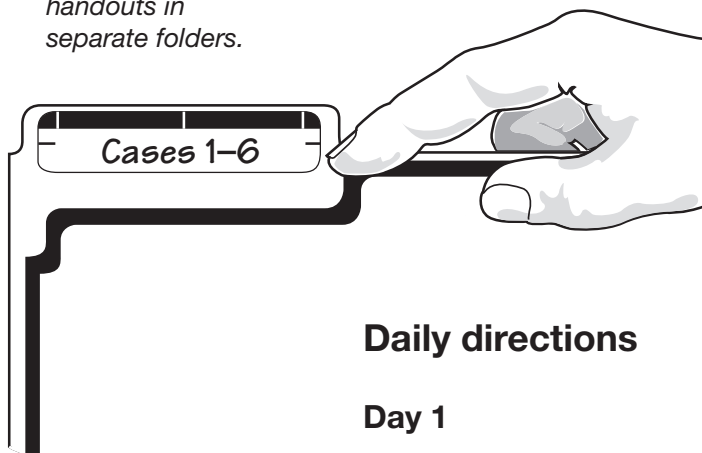
MEETING OF THE ALTHING - 2

Duplication directions

Duplicate the following in the number found in *italics*.

- MEETING OF THE ALTHING: *class set or one per student*
- VIKING PENALTIES & PUNISHMENTS: *2–3 per class*
- ALTHING CASES 1–6: *enough copies (6–7) to cover “characters involved” plus one to lawspeaker ... a total of 8–10 per class*
- LAWSPEAKER’S GUIDE: *one per class (another for backup or understudy?)*
- ADDRESSING THE ALTHING: *35–40 copies per class*

You will likely want to organize the various ALTHING handouts in separate folders.

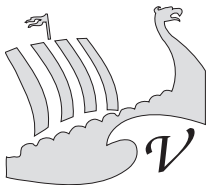


Daily directions

Day 1

1. Award NORESMARKS for achievements in the previous phase, and review the previous lesson.
2. Begin this phase with a brief review of the United States justice system, court procedure, rights of the accused, etc. Then turn to justice Viking style by handing out MEETING OF THE ALTHING and going over its contents.
3. With your lone copy read over the VIKING PENALTIES & PUNISHMENTS SHEET, which will elicit groans and laughter.
4. Next read over Case No. 1 and sign up students to take on the roles in this case. Do the same for Cases 2 to 6. An alternate method of dividing up the cases is this. Give Cases 1 and 2 or 1 and 4 to the SVs; Cases 3 and 4, or 2 and 5 to the DVs; and Cases 5 and 6, or 3 and 6 to the NVs. This alternate thus encourages positive social skills and cooperation.
5. Allow them to work on their cases the remainder of the hour. Before they leave, present a clearly written calendar explaining when each case will be presented.

Case 6 may seem difficult and convoluted. Therefore, it's recommended that you have students do a flow chart or graphic showing relationships.



MEETING OF THE ALTHING - 3



You may wish to provide extra time for preparation if you sense your students are really getting involved in the cases' issues and want to polish their presentations.

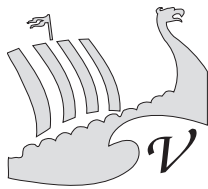
It is possible that this phase simulating the Althing may "take off" and become your students' favorite activity in VIKINGS. If you have some real "hams," watch your class really become involved. As a result, they will truly enjoy themselves while they learn Viking democracy experientially.

Day 2

1. Rearrange your classroom to resemble a meeting of the Althing.
2. Allow some time for each case group to meet.
3. The Althing meets, using the LAWSPEAKER'S GUIDE with agenda and proceeding following the case order you have presented earlier.
4. Review the cases presented this day.

Day 3

1. Continue with the Althing case load with the remaining cases.
2. Upon completion, review the Althing's decisions and Viking justice. Compare it with the United States system discussed earlier. Discuss, too, if any of these cases could be tried today, and, if so, how they would be adjudicated.
3. If time is available, award NORSEMARKS for outstanding and memorable performances.



MEETING OF THE ALTHING

Odd that such an important institutional legacy of the Vikings could have so peculiar a name—the Althing! But as you read earlier in your Student Guide, the Althing was a representative legislative body that has influenced our democratic institutions from western Europe to the shores of North America. If the English Parliament, someone has written, is the mother of parliaments, then the Althing (or Thing) is the grandmother!

In Viking times, the Althing was an assembly of free men in local districts all over Scandinavia. Several times a year, Vikings met to decide important matters of trade, government, and interpersonal relationships. The latter category could be as simple as a complaint made by one man against another over his pet goat!

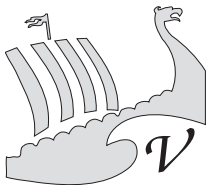
Most often, a meeting of the Althing was accompanied by a festive carnival-like atmosphere, where clowns, magicians, hucksters, and games of mental and physical nature enhanced the interest of the affair. It was “boisterous, vivid, and animated,” and most everyone looked forward to attending the giant gathering of the Althing in Iceland. Once a year, in midsummer, people came from all over the island of Iceland to decide issues, socialize, and break up the routine in their life.



Study carefully these points explaining how your ALTHING is to work.

Since it will be the Thing you Vikings will be simulating, you should know more about the actual workings of that legislative-judicial body:

- The entire proceeding was led by the *lawspeaker* who from memory recited the law. He was elected for a three-year term.
- Most of the legislature was made up of jarls or chieftains, who were accompanied by a few legal advisers.
- Besides occasionally enacting new laws, the Thing participants, for the most part, acted as judges or a large council with the responsibility of giving a verdict in favor of one side or the other.
- Witnesses could be called by the accuser and the defendant, if the decision was not self-evident (i.e., obviously a guilty party and specific fine).
- Usually witnesses were not friends or casual observers. They were people formally called on by a principal in the suit to take note of the facts that have affected the case. In short, these witnesses were professionals.

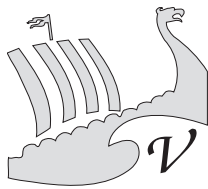


MEETING OF THE ALTHING - 2

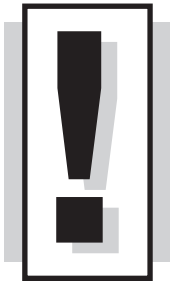
- Some witnesses were called *compugators*. These people verified a person's public faith or support. They were the equivalent of character witnesses.
- Eleven or 12 oath-takers listened after they were sworn in with some pagan oath. Oath-takers were usually comprised of two close kinsmen of the accusers, seven men freely chosen by the accusers, and two men selected from a group of 12, of whom six had been nominated by each side.
- A decision was reached when a simple majority voted for or against.
- If the accused was found guilty, very often he would have to go through an "ordeal." One kind of ordeal was "cauldron-taking," in which a man or woman must pluck a hot stone or rock out of boiling water and then carry it for nine paces before throwing it. If thrown sooner than nine paces, he would be condemned.
- Sometimes the oath-takers weren't completely convinced; therefore, they would recommend to the two principals that they settle their differences by fighting, with the victor awarded the rights by conquest. The result was binding.
- Some verdicts had cash payments attached, while others led to physical punishments, usually whippings or mutilations. In a few cases, the loser was beheaded or hanged. Also recorded were sentences of stoning and drowning. Interestingly, execution was the duty of the one who won the case, and frequently entire families decided what the penalties or punishments would be.
- To Norsemen, the worst sentence was banishment, or outlawry, because the condemned was to be treated "as if he were dead." Some men, however, were given a second chance—a five-day head start—to escape. Erik the Red was one such outlaw, but he made use of his three-year banishment by settling Greenland.
- Payments paid to the victor were in weights (usually silver). They were paid in marks (probably a specific weight on the scale).



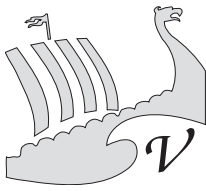
"...the
worst
sentence
was
banish-
ment..."



MEETING OF THE ALTHING - 3



In any case, most of the laws had specific consequences: a man does this or that; the procedure and penalty is this. Murder could be righted with a sufficient payment of pigs or cows. Eyes were worth only half a life, ears, one-quarter. Hacking off noses, hand, feet, or male genitalia was considered equal to a man's whole life. Even body wounds, scars, and insults were precisely classified. *Simple Viking justice!* One last item: If members of the Thing could not decide, they might suggest combat, in which case, the ultimate verdict of guilty rested with the gods, and not mortal men.



VIKING PENALTIES & PUNISHMENTS

If the Vikings had written down their laws and penalties, they would have had *volumes* enumerating every imaginable crime and infraction. They would also have had to list every possible punishment. Clearly, they were hair-splitters in more ways than one! The list below offers the Althing's suggested penalties and punishments for guilty parties. *Don't forget one important aspect of Viking justice: The winning side should help decide and carry out the punishment.*

Minor = (retribution or atonement)

- paying in silver
- paying in goods (e.g., cows, pigs, weapons)
- whipping
- stallion fighting (winner awarded losing horse)
- contesting strength (lifting a large boulder or log)
- wounding body

Serious = (theft, murder of a jarl or king, witchcraft, treason)

- cutting off hands, feet, noses, toes, ears, tongue, and putting out an eye
- branding
- having to undergo an ordeal (being thrown into pond with hands tied, carrying red-hot stones nine paces, combatting hand-to-hand, wrestling)
- stoning or mutilating

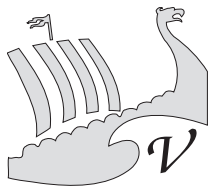
Major = (death)

- beheading
- hanging
- stoning until dead

Ultimate = (banishment or exile)

- treating the punished as an outlaw, as if the person didn't exist, as if he were dead. (This was considered the worst punishment. The punished had no rights of property, and his children were considered illegitimate.)
- exiling for various lengths of time: three years to permanent, depending on the crime and reputation of the guilty.





ALTHING CASE NO. 1

What should be done with Knute Softhands?

Characters involved

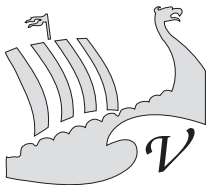
- Lawspeaker of the Althing
- Knute Softhands
- Turk Strongarm

Summary of the case

Knute Softhands doesn't act like a true Viking berserker. He doesn't like to ravage women, kill, pillage, or steal booty from churches and monasteries. He finds it distasteful to wrestle, ski, ride swift horses, throw battle axes, or drink copious amounts of mead. His father, Thorkild, is ashamed of Knute; everyone else seems to ridicule him. All he really enjoys doing is writing skaldic poetry and thinking up intricate mind games. His accuser, a local brute named Turk Strongarm, thinks Knute a misfit dangerous to Norse society, and that, unpunished, this sissy may affect other similarly-sensitive Vikings. (Why he even treats females as equals!). Knute Softhands is no Viking! In fact, this womanish weakling blemishes the name and spirit of true Vikings everywhere!

What should the Althing do to Knute if he is found guilty?

1. Outlaw Knute before he manages to affect others.
2. Tolerate his odd behavior. Vikings come in all kinds, and maybe a little less killing and pillaging could help the Vikings' image abroad, especially among those effeminate Englishmen.
3. Make him live in an isolated camp with some real Vikings like Ragnar the Hairy, Rolf the Bloody, and his accuser, Turk Strongarm. But fine him first.



ALTHING CASE NO. 2

Characters involved

- Lawspeaker of the Althing
- Gudmund the Thrall
- Hallgird, his former wife
- Astrid, the girlfriend
- Gorm the Bignose, town clerk and authority on legal matters.

Summary of the case

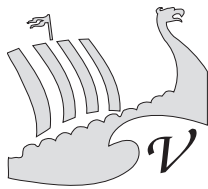
Gudmund the Thrall, a slave, owes his former wife, Hallgird, money for the upkeep of their two children. Gudmund wants to remarry, but he was halted from this action when the community pressured him not to marry. Other Vikings reasoned that Gudmund should not be allowed to remarry because he has not provided economically or emotionally for his former wife and children. Hallgird complained to the community constantly about what a jerk (yerk) her former husband was and how irresponsible he was toward their offspring. Gudmund has now come before the Althing hoping to get its approval so that he can wed Astrid, who says he is a loving and devoted friend to her son, Kark. Gorm the Bignose will testify on what Viking law and tradition is.

What should the Althing do?

1. Give Gudmund the approval to wed Astrid as he wishes.
2. Before he can remarry, force Gudmund to pay enough silver and goods to satisfy Hallgird .
3. Allow him to marry only if he promises to let Hallgird and his two children move in with Astrid and her son—making it one big and happy family of six Vikings!

What should be done with

Gudmund the Thrall?



ALTHING CASE NO. 3

What should be done with Horik the Rock?

Characters involved

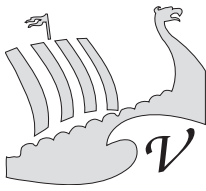
- The lawspeaker of the Althing
- Horik the Rock
- Bork the Executioner
- Horik's friend Sax

Summary of the case

Horik the Rock killed two women while in a crazy, drunken state. The local Thing has sentenced him to die by hanging. But while he was on the scaffold ready for Bork the Executioner to drop the trapdoor on which Horik stood, heavy rains and blizzards suddenly struck the area. So the execution had to be postponed, and this action affected Horik. He began to suffer terrible anxiety and trauma as he waited to die—only to have his execution postponed. On the first clear day, the preparation for the execution was repeated. This time the trap door opened, but the rope broke under the strain of Horik's weight. Horik fell to the ground and broke his leg. Immediately Horik's supporters and friend Sax cried that such mental cruelty was unjust—even for a Viking. Another execution day was arranged for Horik, broken leg and all. This time Horik would be stoned to death. But when the stones were hurled at Horik, all tossers missed their human target; one rock even knocked down a nearby horse. Sax, Horik's best friend, has appealed to Bork the Executioner. Sax stresses what is obvious: *Thor and Odin don't want Horik executed; Horik should be freed.*

What should the Althing do?

1. Disregard Horik's friend's request. Stress how he did murder two women, and he did thus violate Viking law. The execution *must* take place.
2. Acknowledge the request. The two postponements could be legitimate signals from Odin and Thor to cancel Horik's execution.
3. Change the sentence. Allow Horik to live but make him a thrall (slave) after he returns from a three-year exile. Let him spend his days scrubbing, cleaning up, and serving others. Put him in charge of all the out houses and stables in the community.



ALTHING CASE NO. 4

Characters involved

- Lawspeaker of the Althing
- Sven Narroweyes
- Sven's mother Frigga
- Sven's father Kon
- Gunnar's brother, Wotan Redbeard

Summary of the case

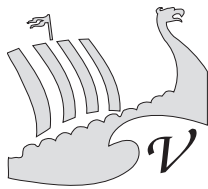
Sven Narroweyes, a troubled 16-year-old boy, has rebelled against his family and community since he was a young lad. He has a violent temper, disobeys his parents, doesn't do his share of chores on the family farm, and refuses to pledge his loyalty and allegiance to the gods, especially Odin and Thor. At public events he makes faces and refuses to salute when everyone else does. Furthermore, at his cousin Gunnar's funeral, he was laughing and disrespectful. All who attended, especially the deceased's relatives, were first embarrassed, then furious. The Viking law is clear: *A son's obligation is to obey, and a Viking's duty is to be attentive and properly solemn at community functions.*

What should the Althing do?

1. Disregard Sven's "bad" behavior because 16-year-old boys have strong and independent natures. He'll come around and eventually be a reverent, cooperative Norseman.
2. He needs to shape up. Put him to work cleaning out houses and stables until he feels more reverent for the gods and community functions.
3. Banish Sven to Greenland for six months. Allow him to return only if he promises upon an oath to Odin to obey his parents and to avoid questioning the wisdom and authority of the Norse gods.
4. Stone him. There is no hope for a rebellious son. In most cases, these sons become murderers, traitors, and nonproductive drones. Viking society needs no such parasites.

What should be done with

Sven Narroweyes?



ALTHING CASE NO. 5

What should be done with Snorri Ulfsson?

Characters involved

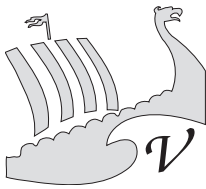
- Lawspeaker of the Althing
- Snorri Ulfsson
- Skane Finnarson
- Erna Finnarson, Skane's wife
- Egil, art and rune critic

Summary of the case

Viking law prohibits showy and inappropriate runes within the town. Snorri Ulfsson disobeyed the law when he began to carve out all kinds of obscene and outrageous rune signs with silly and nonsensical figures on them. While most runemasters carve proud and distinguished animals such as snakes, lions, dragons, serpents, dogs, and horses, Snorri mocks his craft's proud tradition with carvings of pigs, ants, spiders, and other ugly beasts. Moreover, he makes fun of marriage, religion, women, and heroism in his pronouncements on the same markers as the preposterous animals. Equally outrageous is the fact that Snorri is not even a good artist! Egil, the resident authority on art and runestones, thinks the signs are atrocious, but he does admit they show a profound understanding of symbolism. To the contrary, the Finnarsons, Skane and Erna, are offended by the runes, many of which are situated just outside their bedroom window across a field that adjoins the road to town. This couple demands that the ban be upheld, regardless of Snorri's effective symbolism.

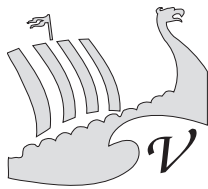
What should the Althing do?

1. Snorri Ulfsson has the right to use his property the way he wants to. Consequently, the law banning such signs is illegal and unnecessary.
2. The runic signs must come down because the neighbors and the rest of the town have the right, over his artistic freedom, to keep their neighborhood from becoming unsightly.
3. Because the runes have at least some artistic merit, they should be allowed to remain. But Snorri is to avoid carving and displaying any more distasteful signs.



ALTHING CASE NO. 5 - 2

4. Snorri's hands are to be cut off, the runes destroyed, and he should give six cows and three pigs to the Finnarsons. However, only one hand, his non-carving hand, should be hacked off at first. If he doesn't obey the verdict, then the other hand should be severed.



ALTHING CASE NO. 6

Characters involved

- Lawspeaker of the Althing
- Alrik the Dane, great grandson to Einar
- Morcar the Swede, great grandson to Ivar
- Bjarni the Norwegian, great grandson to Tostig the Norwegian
- Aud the Flaxen-Haired, great granddaughter of Magnus, jarl of Greenland

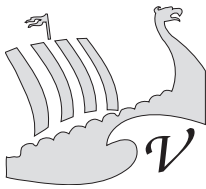
Summary of the case

This case revolved around a bloodfeud that has existed for 100 years. Local Things have tried to deal with the problem, but because their decisions have left the participants unsatisfied, the case is now before the Althing once more. Three generations ago, Einar Greycoat killed Ivar the Boneless. There was apparently no motive. The case was made more complex by the fact that Ivar was a Swede visiting Einar's community in Denmark. Einar, realizing he was to be punished by the local Thing, decided to ship out and escape his pursuers before the case was heard. He hopped a dragon ship from Norway and made his way to Greenland. As if justice were meted out to Einar's family, his own son Canute was lost at sea aboard a ship captained by a Swede. The mysterious drowning took place 20 years after Einar fled to Greenland where it is rumored he became a peaceful farmer and an outstanding saga-song-singer. He never murdered again. Despite the awful events in Einar the Dane's history up to this time, Ivar's descendents want vengeance, and 12 berserkirs arrived two days ago. At this point in time they are only hours away from this meeting. They are intent on murdering some or all of those who are related to Einar. To them this means everyone who has blue eyes and light hair. Bjarni the Norwegian has also just arrived, and he is prepared to relate how his great grandfather was a witness to the murder of Ivar 93 years old. Bjarni's relative was also the captain of the ship which sailed away from Denmark with Einar aboard.

What should the Althing do?

1. First disregard the long-standing bloodfeud. Next convince the Swedes to go home unavenged.
2. Punish Einar's descendents mildly and hope the Swedes are satisfied.

**What should be done about
Einar Greycoat?**



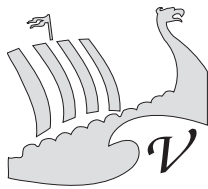
ALTHING CASE NO. 6 - 2

3. Take no part in the feud. Ignore making a decision, but make sure no innocent Vikings are in harm's way when the Swedes arrive.
4. End the blood feud *now*. The hatred between the descendents of Einar, Ivar (and Bjarni?) has lasted far too long, even for Viking families. Round up the men of the community to act as the Althing's protectors when the Swedes are told of your decision.
5. Wait until the Swedes arrive, then execute one or two of Einar's descendents to show that once and for all the feud is over and vengeance is satisfied.



Students:

Because this is a difficult case, you may wish to make a flow chart or some other kind of graphic to help you sort out—visually—the facts and people involved.



ADDRESSING THE ALTHING

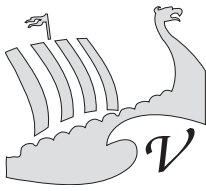
(A copy of this handout should be given to all those involved in any case selected to go before the Althing.)

- Before you come before the Althing and present your case or defend your actions, read over the Althing case ion which you are involved. **Study** it *several times until the case becomes **real** to you and you become that person.*
- Because the summation is sketchy and has many essential details left out, you must embellish the story! In fact, you should make up a credible story with what caused the “incident” and what happened as a result. Write out a detailed scenario, using your imagination to defend your position. It’s your case to win or lose. Be convincing and have fun making up your story, but *never veer from the basic facts of the case given in the summary—and always remain a true Viking!*
- When you are called forward, respect the authority of the Althing and its distinguished lawspeaker. Address him accordingly. Present your case, make comments as your opponent presents his/her case, and be satisfied when the Althing makes its decision.

Speak with **passion** ... 

Speak with **logic** ... 

Speak with **force** ... 



LAWSPEAKER'S GUIDE

The most obvious and knowledgeable person at the meeting of the Althing, the Norse version of our Congress and a court case rolled into one, was the lawspeaker. In a sense he was the main judge and authority of Viking law and justice. Unlike our judges or top legislators today who earn their way up the career ladder after years of public service, the Viking lawspeaker might achieve his exalted position because of his advanced age and his ability to memorize vast amount of law. In fact, the lawspeaker in Iceland was expected to recite—from memory—at least one-third of the law to the assemblage each year of his three-year term.

The lawspeaker most certainly could exert great influence, if not wield power, at the Althing. Most of the power, however, was given to the 36 godar, leading chieftains among the Norse who in effect elected the lawspeaker from among themselves. No doubt they determined what cases came before the body and decided the verdicts.

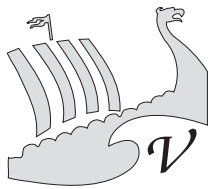
You have been selected to be the lawspeaker in this class, probably because of your skills in elocution, leadership, and personal charisma. In this position, you must guide the Althing through several cases which will come before it. Some are more important than others, but all free men have the right to be heard and have Viking justice meted out.

As lawspeaker

The word is **STUDY** . . .



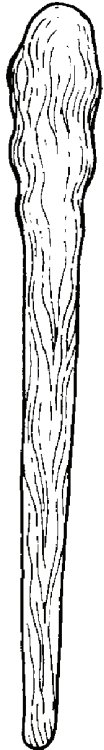
- Carefully **study** this LAWSPEAKER'S GUIDE.
- Carefully **study** the MEETING OF THE ALTHING handout.
- Carefully **study** all the cases (separate handouts).
- Carefully **study** the VIKINGS PENALTIES & PUNISHMENTS handout.
- Try to memorize exact information from the above handouts. Occasionally make comments or mention precedents. For example: "In 943 the Althing found Ottar the Brash guilty of a similar crime" or "I believe it was in 843 when we banished Gorp the Goldenhaired...."
- Dress like an old Viking who has authority. Find a long staff to carry and perhaps wear a crown or special hat.



LAWSPEAKER'S GUIDE - 2

Find or make some kind of staff to use during the trial to symbolize your authority. When necessary, pound it authoritatively on the floor.

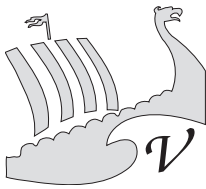
*Never forget:
You are in charge!*



- Follow the agenda in this handout.
 1. Before each case is heard (each side of participants will have its say), you should slowly read aloud to the assemblage the summary of the case.
 2. Make sure the accuser and accused speak to their arguments and that a verdict, decision, and settlement end each case.
 3. Choose an assistant lawspeaker to help you with your many tasks and responsibilities. Let him or her read over your handouts in case your age or infirmities cause you to miss the Althing meeting.

The agenda you follow

1. Proceed to the Thingstead (place) area with your staff or long pole. Eight to 10 chieftains will walk behind you. If the Thingstead is your classroom, arrange with your teacher to have the chairs/ desks on the perimeter of the room with individually decorated round (cardboard?) shields behind and above each chair. Your chair should be elevated.
2. Once everyone is in the room, make them stand in front of their chairs until you pound your staff three times on the floor and say, "All be seated."
3. Then say, "I am _____, and I am your lawspeaker for this gathering of free Vikings in our Althing. We are here today to hear important cases and dispense Viking justice as we see fit, but always according to our law. We should listen carefully to each case, knowing that our decisions will be based on whether the defendants can demonstrate the wrongness or absurdity of the accuser's case. With this clearly in mind, we will now hear the first case. Will the participants come forward and I will read the summary of the case." *(Although there is no logical sequence of cases, you might as well follow the numerical order so that you build up to the blood feud involving all three nations in Case No. 6.)*



LAWSPEAKER'S GUIDE - 3

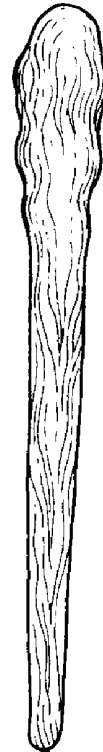
4. After you have read the case, ask each participant to make a brief statement to clarify the case or voice an opinion. When all have spoken, ask members of the Althing to respond in some way, or ask a question. After that, take a vote (raise swords?). Say: "_____, you have been found guilty/innocent of _____. Therefore, we sentence you to: _____."

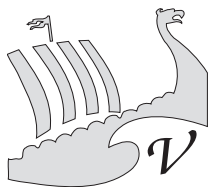
(See the VIKINGS PENALTIES & PUNISHMENTS handout.)
Continue on through all the cases, dismiss the Althing, and walk out first.

And when you leave the Althing, walk out with dignity!



*and maybe pound your
staff one more time ...*





Phase 5

ACTING OUT A SAGA (2–3 days)

Introduction

Besides the popular image of pillaging, bearded Vikings, the Norse are known for their sagas, those laconic tales of heroes discovering new lands such as North America. This phase affords your students an opportunity to get acquainted with at least three sagas by acting each out with a minimum of effort and props.

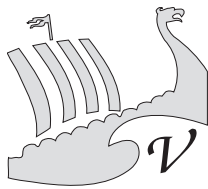


The Norse left little out (well, maybe adverbs and adjectives) in these tales of bravery, lust, murder, discovery, honor, loyalty, and adventure. Since to American youth, the sagas don't seem relevant, the author fictionalized these three more relevant versions for the three national groups to dramatize:

- **The Saga of the Swedes**
- **The Saga of Leif Eriksson**, and
- **The Saga of Rolf the Dane**

The national groups will meet, read, and sort out (rewrite) important scenes and action. Then they will act out the saga of their people as a narrator reads their condensed versions.

As a result of the saga performance, your students will more easily grasp not only how brave and adventuresome their ancestors were; they will also understand how complex and multifaceted we should see them.



ACTING OUT A SAGA - 2

Flourishes to consider

- Collect all scripts and use the best ones for later years whenever students are less capable.
- Don't rush through this phase. Savor the interactive process your students go through as well as the finished "on-stage" products.
- Dress yourself up like a Viking. Encourage students to be in costume and be true Vikings on these days.
- Have the other two spectator groups fill out a form analyzing the virtues and historic person in the sagas they see.
- Try to borrow some school risers, or use a room with a small stage, when groups perform their sagas. Old voting booths make great backdrops and dressing rooms—as well as dragonship "timber" for CHALLENGE PROJECTS.
- Save one saga to be performed on FEASTING A DEAD HERO day.
- Try to use a dragonship, made as a CHALLENGE PROJECT, in all three sagas.
- And of course, consider video taping the sagas for current students to observe (they'll love watching themselves) and for future students (they'll pick up clues of how to do even better jobs to top the earlier students' effort).



Duplication directions

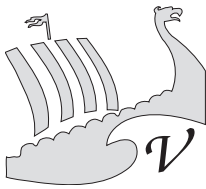
Duplicate the following in the number in *italics*.

- ACTING OUT A SAGA: *class set*
- SAGA SCRIPT SHEET: *one per group per class (and some back-up copies)*
- THE SAGA OF LEIF ERIKSSON: *10–15 per class*
- THE SAGA OF THE SWEDES: *10–15 per class*
- THE SAGA OF ROLF THE DANE: *10–15 per class*

Daily directions

Day 1

1. Finish off any loose ends from previous days—NORSEMARKS, papers returned, reviewing "old" topics, etc.



ACTING OUT A SAGA - 3

2. Begin by reading one brief paragraph from one of the three sagas. (Particularly recommended is paragraph 3 of THE SAGA OF ROLF THE DANE). Ask your Vikings if they could act out what you've just read to them. Then say: "Well, you're going to get the chance in this phase."
3. Hand out ACTING OUT A SAGA and discuss.
4. Have the three nation groups go to their special areas, and then pass out the sagas to the appropriate jarl, who will guide, oversee, and lead the process—and perhaps narrate the saga.
5. Give each jarl a SAGA SCRIPT SHEET.
6. Monitor closely as the jarls read the sagas slowly to each group, noting the action of the character roles about to be sorted out on the SAGA SCRIPT SHEET.
7. The jarl should then preside over a rewrite, scene-tightening session, which should end when the bell rings.
8. If you feel prepared for a performance tomorrow, schedule it.



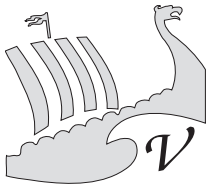
If you sense that your students have little experience in speaking or drama, give them extra time and support ...

Day 2

1. Continue the group sessions until one group feels it is ready to perform—although it would be best to schedule all three on the third day of the phase to ensure adequate preparation time on Days 1 and 2.
2. When a group finally does act out its national saga, you should, just before the performance, articulate some spectator standards to the other two groups.

Day 3

1. Complete the saga performances. However, you may wish to save one for the FEASTING A DEAD HERO phase on the last day.
2. When all are finished, award NORSEMARKS to the best actor, best actress, best script, best set designer, supporting actors, best directors, best costume, most memorable character, most memorable moment, etc. (On the other hand, you may wish to save these and all other awards for the feast phase coming up. Such decisions will be affected by your time constraints.)
3. Collect all the better scripts so you can show them to future years' students to stimulate their creativity.
4. If you're planning to implement Phase 6: FEASTING A DEAD HERO, look it over and get sign-ups for food and beverage—plus commitments from those who did CHALLENGE PROJECTS.



ACTING OUT A SAGA - 1

Your chance to act



As you learned in the Student Guide history of the Vikings, most of the legends and stories of their heroic deeds, to say nothing of an accurate chronicle of their kings and battles, were written down in simple language—and they were called *sagas*. Even today we use the word *saga* to mean an adventurous story. In Icelandic, “*saga*” means “to say” or “to tell.”

In early Scandinavian times the sagas were transmitted orally from generation to generation by storytellers and skaldic poets around fire-sides on cold nights. Eventually—sometime in the 12th century—they were written down. One Icelandic writer, Snorri Sturluson, composed a complete history of the Norwegian kings. Sadly, we have only about 40 of the estimated 400 Icelandic sagas originally composed.

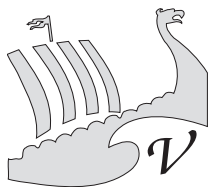
The sagas glorify the Viking Age from 850 to 1050. They describe tales of adventure, legal disputes, revenge, honor, loyalty, death, and even social and cultural conditions of that time. Most sagas relate stories that historians have found to be simply written, accurate histories of the Scandinavians. Others seem to be romantic fiction. A few others are a mixture of fact and fiction, myth and legend. Similarly, some of the characters described were real; some are imagined.

Scholars have been fortunate to have sorted out most of the sagas. They have concluded that the sagas can be used to draw accurate pictures of Viking life and achievements. A sufficient number remains to use sagas as proof, along with archaeological finds, to validate Norse discoveries of North America and other far-flung lands in Europe, the Mediterranean region, and in Russia.

Your task

It will be your task to prepare to act out a thrilling saga. You will need to read over the saga you’ve been given, plan your scenes with some narration, and rehearse until even a real Viking would be satisfied if he sat in the audience like a Broadway critic on opening night. Viking groups will receive the following to act out:

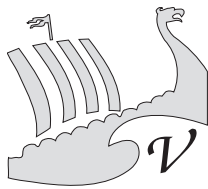
- Swedish Vikings: ***The Saga of the Swedes***
- Norwegian Vikings: ***The Saga of Leif Eriksson***
- Danish Vikings: ***The Saga of Rolf the Dane***



ACTING OUT A SAGA - 2

Here is an illustration of Snorri Sturluson (1179–1241), probably the greatest Viking saga writer. (He is not present in this scene; he is home writing the saga of what happened in *Njal's Saga*—a saga about a family feud.)





SAGA SCRIPT SHEET

Directions: Study the saga *thoroughly* so that you all are well acquainted with the people, events as well as the story itself. Then fill in the information below:

Our narrator/skaldic poet is _____ .

Scenes we will dramatize

1

2

3

#4

#5

#6

#7

#8

#9

Characters who will appear in the scenes

Character

Viking "actor"

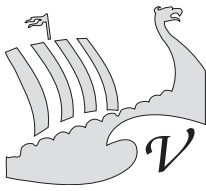
Scene description

Simple props/costumes/sets we'll need

Special dramatic techniques we'll use

Finally, rehearse your dramatic version of the saga as many times as you can.

Remember: Have your skaldic poet/narrator slowly read the saga while the group is acting out certain portions of the saga.



THE SAGA OF LEIF ERIKSSON

General instructions

Your group, the Norwegian Vikings, will act out the saga of one of your own, Leif Eriksson, called also Leif the Lucky. Many historians consider him to be one of the discoverers of America. Rather than performing the saga with elaborate costumes and sets, and memorizing pages of dialogue, you will act out the saga's main scenes as it is narrated by one of your NVs. This process will shorten the dramatization and will make it easier to perform. You will have fun with your classmates, while at the same time you'll learn about Viking character, spirit, and history. Keep in mind that the narrator should read the saga slowly enough so that the action described can be acted out. For example, "He pulled out his sword and slid the blade into the soft belly of the fat, sweating priest."

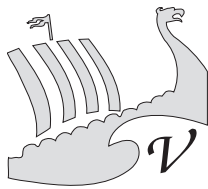
Guidelines/suggestions

- Try to wear some simple costumes and use a simple prop here and there to add realism to your drama.
- Overact your lines and exaggerate your actions to heighten the drama.
- Remember: Only the narrator can speak. Consequently, your play may resemble a silent movie.



Possible roles to be filled

- Narrator
- Bjarni Herjulfsson
- Bjarni's/Leif's crew
- Leif Eriksson
- Erik the Red
- Tyrkir the German
- Others you might want to add.



THE SAGA OF LEIF ERIKSSON - 2

The Saga of Leif Eriksson

(Fictionalized by the author of VIKINGS—but based on a real saga)

Leif the Lucky was the son of Erik the Red, who, after killing some Vikings in Norway and Sweden, was exiled and considered an outlaw. He took his family and several dragonships and knarrs and sailed west.

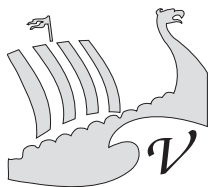
Erik and his people finally sighted land west of Iceland. He decided to settle in this newly discovered land which he called Greenland. It was a name he felt would attract future settlers from Norway.

Erik the Red built a colony at Brattalid in Greenland. He commanded great respect, and all the people on Greenland recognized his authority. He had three sons—Leif, Thorwald, and Thorstein—and Freydis, a daughter.

One day at Brattalid, the people ran to the dock at the fjord to greet the arrival of Bjarni, son of Herjulf. Herjulf was a jarl under Erik. Bjarni told of a land to the west and south of Greenland. He and his men were blown off course while sailing to Greenland with a cargo from Norway. After several days of rain, winds, and fog, the cargo ship came upon this strange land. The men knew it must not be Greenland, for there were no glaciers or mountains. In fact, some of the land was flat and wooded.

Bjarni's men wanted to stop and make landfall. They told Bjarni that they needed firewood and fresh water. Bjarni told them no, ordered them to hoist sail, and continued to sail for Greenland. The men criticized their captain for his decision. Thus, these Vikings never set foot on this land. Days later, Bjarni and his ship entered the Brattalid fjord, where he was able to relate his voyage to Erik and his people.

Years would pass before Erik decided to sail for this land Bjarni had sighted. Leif, the now-grown son of Erik, went to see Bjarni Herjulfsson, bought his cargo ship from him, and engaged most of his original crew. Leif then asked his father to lead the expedition to the west, although Erik was reluctant. Erik was getting old and could endure less hardship than before. Leif, however, convinced him to lead the expedition.



THE SAGA OF LEIF ERIKSSON - 3

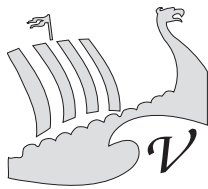
As soon as they were ready to sail, Erik rode to the ship. But the horse he was riding stumbled, and Erik was thrown, injuring his leg. He faced his son and said: "I am not meant to discover more lands than Greenland. Leif, you must go and achieve your destiny."

Leif and his men put out to sea. The first land they sighted days later was the last land Bjarni had sighted. They sailed to the land, cast anchor, and went ashore. Leif called this land Helluland, which means slab-land. They returned to sea and eventually came upon a second land. Once again, they went ashore. This land was flat and wooded with white, sandy beaches. Leif named it Markland (forest-land).

Aboard ship once more, the men sailed for two more days. A new land appeared and they went ashore. The weather was pleasant. There was dew on the grass, and, after some exploration of this place, Tyrkir the German found sweet grapes. The men ate these grapes like wild, hungry animals. Then they decided to winter here and built some houses. There was no lack of salmon in the nearby river.

The winter was spent in pleasant ways. The men often fished the river and ponds, picked countless bunches of grapes, and repaired the ship as needed for their return voyage. In the spring they cut down timber, loaded up the ship, and sailed away for Greenland. Leif named the land after its natural bounties, calling it Vinland (land of grapes).

Several days later, Leif's ship sailed into the fjord at Brattalid. His father Erik rejoiced at seeing his son. Erik ordered a pig to be butchered, and that night great amounts of mead were drunk in celebration of Leif's return.



THE SAGA OF THE SWEDES

General instructions

Your group, the Swedish Vikings, will act out the saga of the Swedes. Swedes were instrumental in exploring and settling a huge land we call Russia, now the Soviet Union. Unlike the Norwegians and Danes, other branches of the Vikings, the Swedes sailed east across the Baltic Sea and then penetrated the rivers and land on the continent of Asia. Eventually they cruised down the waterways and established colonies between the Baltic Sea and the Black Sea.

Rather than performing the saga with elaborate costumes and sets, and memorizing pages of dialogue, you will act out the saga's main scenes as it is narrated by one of your SVs. This process will shorten the dramatization and will make it easier to perform. You will have fun with your classmates, while at the same time you'll learn about Viking character, spirit, and history. Keep in mind that the narrator should read the saga slowly enough so that the action described can be acted out. For example, "He pulled out his sword and slid the blade into the soft belly of the fat, sweating priest."

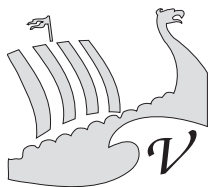
Guidelines/suggestions

- Try to wear some simple costumes and use a simple prop here and there to add realism to your drama.
- Overact your lines and exaggerate your actions to heighten the drama.
- Remember: Only the narrator can speak. Consequently, your play may resemble a silent movie.



Possible roles to be filled

- Rurik
- Oleg
- Ashold and Dir
- Igor
- Harold Hardrada
- Viking soldiers/sailors
- Viking enemies



THE SAGA OF THE SWEDES - 2

The Saga of the Swedes

(Fictionalized by the author of VIKINGS—using actual events)

Swedish Vikings were brave and vigorously enterprising. It was the leader of this breed of Northmen who would take his men into the continent of Asia to explore and settle. His name was Rurik Strongarm. Other jarls, just as mighty, would follow his example after his death.

With their superior weapons and battle strategies, the Swedes crossed the Baltic Sea and fell upon and seized the trading center of Novgorod. The Vikings demanded a ransom. Fearing destruction, the people of Novgorod paid the money.

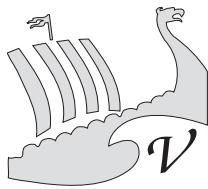
Rurik put together an impressive force of raiders to start a large scaled expedition into Asia. To his surprise the natives of Asia welcomed the Northmen. Said one: “Our great land is rich, but there is no order in it. Come to rule and reign over us.” The Vikings seized this opportunity.

At first, the Vikings, or Varangians, as they now were called, were content to trade with the Slavs. Soon, however, the Vikings pushed southward, using terror and piracy to conquer the locals and seize more trading centers, like Kiev, on the Dnieper River. Some bolder Swedes reached the Black Sea.

From the Black Sea, two of Rurik’s successors led the first Viking attack on Constantinople, the capital of the Byzantine Empire on the Bosphorus. This Golden City excited Northmen like no other dream, for it was a treasure house of ancient riches. Trade goods, like silks, spices, wine, and jewelry attracted them, too.

As the Viking force of 200 ships and thousands of men readied their assault, a sudden windstorm came up and shaped huge waves which confused the Viking attackers. Only when many of the ships were cast upon the rocky shore did the Golden City avoid destruction.

Meanwhile, Rurik the Swede continued to expand and control more territory in Asia. After his death he was succeeded by Oleg. To some, Oleg was deceitful and power hungry. As he could not tolerate rivals, he tricked two such men, Ashold and Dir, into his ship and brutally murdered them. Their heads were decapitated and put on spikes for all to see.



THE SAGA OF THE SWEDES - 3

Oleg then established his Viking, or Rus, capital city at Kiev, set himself up as a prince, and ruled his empire competently until 912. Furthermore, Oleg brought the eastern Slavs under his control, fortified the borders, and guarded his long routes to the riches of the east.

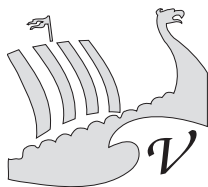
Still, what really tempted Oleg the Bold was the capture and sacking of Constantinople, also called Byzantium. It had wealth beyond a Viking's dream. With perhaps 80,000 men in 2,000 ships, the Rus attacked the Golden City, which was well defended, but the invaders kept pursuing.

At this point the emperor offered a truce and a favorable trade agreement which, when accepted, allowed the Rus to enter the city through one gate only, and in small unarmed groups. Not satisfied, the invaders under Oleg's successor, Igor, made another attempt to take the city, but he too had to be content to plunder the nearby countryside, including churches, monasteries, and villages. Many of the captives were butchered. Others were set up as targets and run through with swords and spears. A few were tied up and had long nails driven through their heads.

After several more years, the Vikings were mostly blended into the Slavic population. One who wasn't was Harold Hardrada, a seven-foot refugee from Norway who wanted to preserve his distinctly Viking ways. He eventually became leader of the Varangian Guard in Constantinople. These were Vikings who watched and protected the emperor as personal bodyguards. Yet, these tall, blonde, strong men were allowed to spend time plundering in the Mediterranean. Harold Hardrada married a Russian princess. He also led warriors in attacks on cities under Arab control, and on Sicily, farther to the west.

On one such invasion of Sicily, Harold Hardrada had his men tunneled through a sunken riverbed under the walls of a castle, only to come up inside a dining hall at mealtime. Another time, he surrounded a city but did not attack. When the curious defenders came outside the walls to watch Harold's Vikings playing games, the attacking Rus, whipped out their swords, and easily took the city. When another city revolted against Harold, he had the prisoners dragged out and personally gouged their eyes out.

Harold soon returned to Norway to become king. Years after that he sailed to England to lead the great Viking invasion of that land in 1066. Among Vikings, Harold Hardrada is a legend. Odin is proud of him and his Viking predecessors who conquered new lands to the east and developed a vast trading network.



THE SAGA OF ROLF THE DANE

General instructions

Your group, the Danish Vikings, will act out the saga of Rolf (later Rollo) the Dane. Unlike the Norwegians who sailed mostly west and the Swedes who generally sailed east into Asia, the Danes went south. These hardy Vikings from Denmark penetrated the waterways of continental Europe and England. Eventually the Danes settled permanently in England and western France, bringing vigor to those two areas in more than just trade.

Rather than performing the saga with elaborate costumes and sets, and memorizing pages of dialogue, you will act out the saga's main scenes as it is narrated by one of your NVs. This process will shorten the dramatization and will make it easier to perform. You will have fun with your classmates, while at the same time you'll learn about Viking character, spirit, and history. Keep in mind that the narrator should read the saga slowly enough so that the action described can be acted out. For example, "He pulled out his sword and slid the blade into the soft belly of the fat, sweating priest."

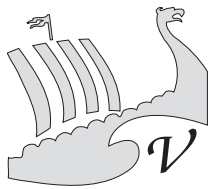
Guidelines/suggestions

- Try to wear some simple costumes and use a simple prop here and there to add realism to your drama.
- Overact your lines and exaggerate your actions to heighten the drama.
- Remember: Only the narrator can speak. Consequently, your play may resemble a silent movie.

Possible roles to be filled



- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| • Rolf/Rollo | • Thorfinn Redhair |
| • Siegfried the Boneless | • an unfortunate child |
| • Bishop Jocelin | • Viking raiders |
| • Kark the Brainless | • Charles the Fat |
| • a fat priest | • Charles the Simple |
| • Gorm Forkbeard | • William the Conqueror |



THE SAGA OF ROLF THE DANE - 2

The Saga of Rolf the Dane

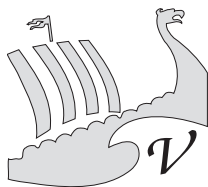
(Fictionalized by the author of VIKINGS—using actual events)

Rolf the Northman was—like many Danes before him—a forceful and brave Viking. He was not the first from the north to attack the empire of the Franks. For years before Rolf, Viking chieftains had tried to settle in the empire but were usually stopped by the Christian armies under Charles the Great and his successors.

In the Christian year 885, a large armada of Viking ships with perhaps 40,000 men appeared at the mouth of the Seine River. The Vikings wanted to reach the rich fields of Burgundy. Paris on the river, where the Franks centered their government, lay in between. To go through Paris, Viking ships would have to go under two bridges which connected the banks of the river with the large Christian church on the island. This church was called Notre Dame. Siegfried the Boneless parlayed with Bishop Jocelin of Paris and offered to spare the city and church if his force were allowed to pass upriver. Since the bishop refused, the Danes assaulted the bridge towers with sling stones, arrows, and small catapults. The invaders were repulsed with boiling oil and pitch. For months the Franks held. Eventually, a flood washed out one of the bridges, enabling some Viking ships to pass upriver into the countryside east of Paris. For the rest, the siege continued.

The next few months saw the Danes, frustrated during the siege, explode in an orgy of vandalism. They went berserk, pillaging the French countryside. Churches were a primary target because they were depositories for relics and treasure. They were also easy to conquer. One berserkir, Kark the Brainless, approached one priest with his broadsword which he called “tongue of the scabbard.” After shredding the monk’s robe, Kark slid the blade into the quivering flesh of the fat cleric, looked at the sky, and yelled at the top of his voice, “Oooo-dinnn!” Other monks watched in shock and quickly ran into the church to pray.

Elsewhere, it was the same story. A nearby village was, like the church, totally unprepared for the attack, thinking that the siege of Paris would occupy the Vikings’ time and attention. In addition, the monks hoped that the often said prayer, “Protect us, oh Lord, from the wrath of the Northmen,” would indeed save them. Gorm Forkbeard and Thorfinn Redhair, after ravaging women of the small village, found a baby not



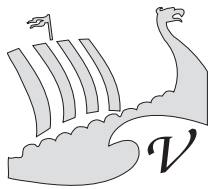
THE SAGA OF ROLF THE DANE - 3

yet a year old. Gorm, in a frenzy, speared the child through the skull. Then he and Thorfinn tossed the child back and forth, sword point to sword point, unaffected by the inhumane deed they were committing. Such acts were not condoned by Rolf and other Viking leaders. Yet such acts of cruelty did equal the Frankish custom of pouring boiling oil on attackers at Paris. As soon as the raiders had enough booty and released their bloodlust, they sailed down the river. Later they set up camp to share their treasure, mend their wounds, and prepare for another lightning-like raid.

Months later the Vikings, still with their goal unattained, decided to accept a payment of 60 pounds of silver, provided they depart. They felt this was not enough, so another deal was soon offered: Charles the Fat, king of the Franks, was willing to pay the attackers 700 pounds of silver if the Vikings agreed to leave in the spring. After spending the winter upriver, the Danes returned in the spring of 889 to collect their booty. This time the Parisians fought, driving the invaders off once and for all. Paris was never attacked by the Vikings again. Soon the Vikings had a new leader emerge, and he had a new strategy.

His name was Rolf and he had legs so long no horse was big enough to carry him. The Franks called this new Viking leader Rollo and his men became known as Normans. They made their base camps on the lower Seine. The new king of the Franks, Charles the Simple—more intelligent than his nickname signified—decided that paying one tribute after another to the Normans was a waste of good silver when the wealth was given to “heathen barbarians.” Therefore, the king offered Rollo and his men a permanent province of their own—all the land between the lower Seine and the coast, a province to be called Normandy, land of the Northmen. For this generous offer, Rollo and his Normans had to become Christians, agree to protect King Charles from other Northmen raids and, more important, swear allegiance to the Frankish monarch.

This last request was not easy for Vikings to do because they believed that every man is his own master. Charles told Rollo that all he had to do was accept the parcel of land and then kiss the king’s feet, as all subjects of Charles were expected to do. Rolf the Dane, the Norman, in his own fashion prepared to do this act of fealty, but instead of

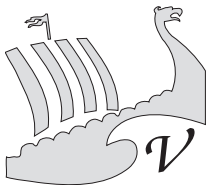


THE SAGA OF ROLF THE DANE - 4

stooping to the royal feet, he picked the king's feet up and lifted them to his mouth, turning King Charles upside down in the process. It was a fitting action for a Viking!

As the Normans lived in the land of the Franks, they became more like their neighbors and more unlike their Viking countrymen to the north. These former Vikings even guarded the land from attacking Northmen. In 1066, a descendent of Rollo, William, sailed across the English Channel and conquered the island. He then introduced Viking law and also the customs, dress, and the language of the Franks. Again, as in other parts of the northern half of the world, Viking influence changed the course of history.





Phase 6 FEASTING A DEAD HERO (1 day)

Introduction

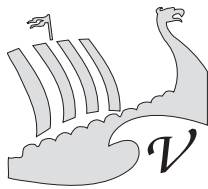
If you have the student/parent support and energy to plan and use this final phase, schedule the day before your unit test on VIKINGS for a banquet/celebration/funeral. This activity is essentially a simulation wrap-up, during which your Norsemen and Norsewomen praise a recently deceased chieftain as he sets sail to Valhalla. Celebrate Viking life with food and drink, and honor the poets, artists, shipbuilders, runemasters among your people. This activity has something for everyone.

To what extent you fulfill the author's vision is based on what you want and feel is right for your students. Asking students and parents to prepare and bring in food, creating a "great hall" ambiance with authentic Norse designs, and coordinating all the efforts of the students who produced challenge projects, is Herculean in scope for any teacher. If you've done this kind of activity before, however, and believe that it is a fitting and educational event, *do it!*

Flourishes to consider

- Get students, parents, and other teachers to help cook, rearrange the classroom, make banners, and set-up the festivities.
- Have those who want to display, explain, and perform their challenge projects sign-up on a sheet in the order they will perform.
- If you worry that your class may not have enough to fill the hour, schedule at least one saga group on this day to accompany the poets and the decorators.
- Make sure you have enough food and beverage.
- Call some parents who are of Scandinavian extraction to suggest some authentic cuisine, or look for a special cookbook with recipes in a library or bookstore. However, most of what is now called Scandinavian cuisine is probably of more modern—not medieval origin.
- Have your best jarl work out an agenda and sequence.
- Send out the FEASTING A DEAD HERO INVITATION to parents, your administrator, a local news reporter, and others whom you would like to invite. (Be careful, however, about the quantity of food you will need to cover all the persons whom you invite.





FEASTING A DEAD HERO - 2

Duplication directions

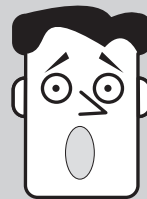
Duplicate the following in the number in *italics*.

- FEASTING A DEAD HERO: *class set*
- FEASTING A DEAD HERO INVITATION: *as needed—see final comment under **Flourishes to Consider** on the previous page*

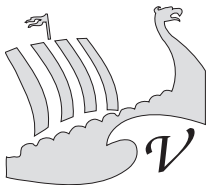
Day 1

1. This is a day when the preparation efforts and time may exceed the activity itself. Consider the **Flourishes to Consider** on page 7:1 before you start.
2. Make an outline of all the festivities you wish to see happen. For example:
 - food and beverage brought in
 - opening remarks/warnings/behavior expectations
 - food served
 - Farewell to the Dead ceremony (See information on the handout. Particularly encourage students to use or make up appropriate toasts.)
 - CHALLENGE PROJECTS
 - poets expound
 - decorators/shipbuilder display
 - runemasters demonstrate/decode
 - NORSEMARKS and Viking awards
 - most NORSEMARKS earned (individual and group)
 - best actor in sagas (see Phase 5)
 - Closing remarks, ending with (in unison) “**Oooo-dinn!**”

In unison



“Oooo-dinn!”



FEASTING A DEAD HERO

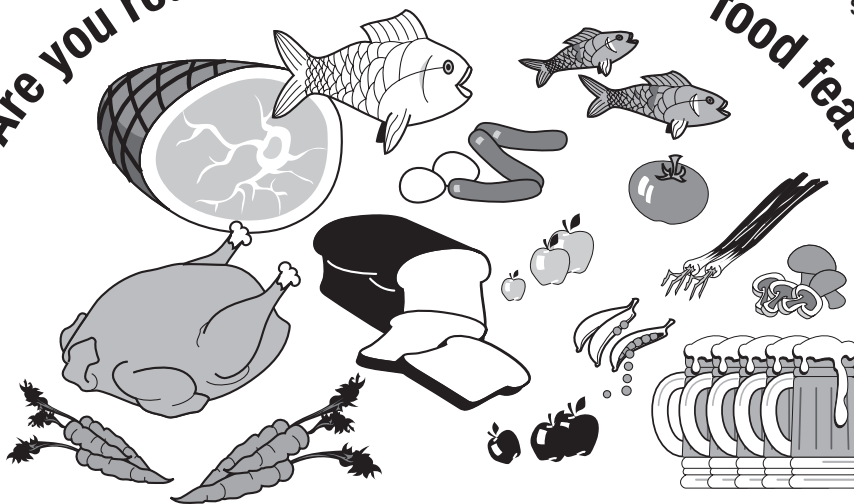
It would be unfair to leave the Vikings' World without a proper feast. The Northmen and Northwomen loved to eat and drink, and, interestingly enough, the food they ate was far more healthy and nutritious than what other Europeans just south of them ate. During this activity you will experience a Viking Feast and, at the same time, say farewell to a chieftain who has died in battle and is about to journey to Valhalla, the Norse word for heaven.

Feasting

Very often feasts were held in a large hall to celebrate the return of the community's sailors in late summer. Usually their long ships were crammed with stolen goods (booty) and prisoners. If they were returning from long trading expeditions, their knarrs might be filled with precious cargo such as furs, silver, wine, or spices. Whatever the case, few needed an excuse to enjoy life and family at a feast.

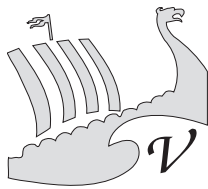
Vikings in attendance always dressed in their best clothes and jewelry. Many men liked to tell stories of their recent adventures, while women, with less exciting and dangerous tales, found eager ears with their own stimulating conversation. Very often, balladeers or skalds entertained the guests with songs and poetry.

Are you ready for a **VIKING** food feast?



Although most people of Scandinavia make "meat and mead" (the latter is an alcoholic drink made from wheat and honey) the "twin joys of life," there were other foods they enjoyed and found in plentiful supply. True to form, Vikings ate huge meals at feasts or banquets. Besides meat

(beef, mutton, deer, elk, pork, bear, lamb, veal, rabbit), they ate a well-balanced diet usually during two main meals a day. Feasts often had more variety: oat porridge, lots of different kinds of breads, butter, cream, eggs, milk, cheeses, cabbage, peas, onions, nuts, beans, apples, berries, and all sorts of fish, including cod and herring. Today, all this could be called Scandinavian cuisine—huge amounts of a great variety of healthful foods.



FEASTING A DEAD HERO - 2

The exaggerated stories of the Vikings' thirst for alcohol might just be true, but not because these vigorous men and women could hold their liquor better. A better reason would be that drinking copious amounts of mead, beer, and wine was part of Viking ritual. Drinking until drunk was common in Norse life, a confirmation of strength and manhood. They felt close to the gods while in a stupor or frenzy resulting from consuming alcohol. Today we would likely condemn this extreme behavior, but it was a part of a way of life for Northmen, and, at feasts they were in their glory as they quaffed horn after horn of foamy mead and beer.

Farewell to the dead

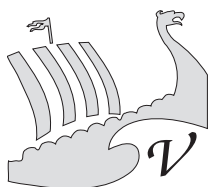
When a Norseman died, his relatives proceeded through a ritual to prepare the deceased for his journey to Valhalla. Once his nostrils, eyes, and mouth were closed and the body was washed and covered with

cloth, the corpse was carried to a grave, usually on a small hill. If the dead was a notable person, he might be buried in his ship, or the rock outline of a ship. In most cases, the wood coffin was common. Moreover, the dead was almost always accompanied by his weapons, tools, horse, and other belongings. This array of objects was supposed to impress Hel, goddess of the Underworld. Interestingly, on some rare occasions, another person was murdered or buried alive with the distinguished dead. This could happen to pets as well. At the same time, a notable Viking usually got a runic marker to commemorate his burial. Found everywhere in Scandinavia are runestones with runic eulogies written on them. Some common words found on these markers are:

good, able, eloquent, gentleness, alert, valiant, liberality with food and drink, bravery, coolness, and courage.

Very often the deceased was given a send off to Valhalla with a banquet or feast. That's the case here. Your teacher will organize such an activity which will combine these three activities—and possibly some others:

- **A feast** (It'll be up to you to prepare some typically Scandinavian foods.)
- **A funeral** (You will all wish a dead chieftain well on his journey to Valhalla.)
- **A poetry presentation** (A few skaldic poets will showcase their talents.)



FEASTING A DEAD HERO - 3

Will you offer a toast?

How can you help? Cooperate with the teacher as he/she implements ideas suggested for this activity found in the Teacher Guide. Here then are some activities you can do to help:

- Volunteer to bake, prepare, and bring in Scandinavian foods.
- Write some skaldic poetry.
- Compose an appropriate toast for the dead. (See * below.)
- Finally, be ready as a member of the feast to lift a horn or two in a celebration of life.

Banquet toasts

Drinking toasts at banquets were popular activities among Vikings. Feeling alive, safe, and full of pride, Vikings were apt to rise, lift their horns of mead, and bellow out some words of advice, praise, or how they felt. Consider these, taken from the Norse epic *Havamal*:

- “No honor without vengeance ... No life without honor.”
- “Too often a man’s tongue has cut his throat.”
- “A man should be wise ... but not too wise.”
- “Praise the day after sundown ... a woman after she is dead ... a sword when it has proved itself.”
- “Confide in one, never two ... Confide in three, and the world knows.”
- “A sleeping dog seldom gets the thigh bone ... A sleeping man seldom wins a victory.”

* You’ll enjoy this final day more if you make up and offer one or more toasts of your own—based on the knowledge and the wisdom you’ve acquired during VIKINGS.

AN INVITATION



You are invited to our classroom, # _____ ,
on _____ , 2____ at _____ .
At that time we will be having a ceremony

Feasting A Dead Hero

that will be the climax of our
study of the VIKINGS, 800–1100 BCE.

We hope you can attend !

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