

Date:

Student Name:

Week 5-Year 2 Developments During the Viking Age

General Information for All Grades

For many years, historians called the first part of the Middle Ages (from the fall of Rome in about 476 to the time of the First Crusade in 1095) the "Dark Ages." The name arose because, except for the deeds of a few heroic men, most of life in Europe during those years was filled with trouble, uncertainty, and death. Relatively speaking, Charlemagne's reign of wide-ranging peace and order was a brief, shining moment in the midst of centuries of general strife. As we saw last week, his successors soon wrangled with one another over how to divide Charlemagne's empire, and then - much as the Romans had fought their ancestors - the relatively civilized Carolingians had to defend their spark of civilized culture from a new barbarian menace: The Vikings. No sooner would a community make progress towards order and prosperity than fierce Norsemen would appear in the night to kill, destroy, and steal what little wealth the parish church had collected, or what few crops had been stored up in barns. In the struggle just to survive, many previous advances of civilization were lost to Western Europe. Except in monasteries, study all but ceased and towns that had no defenses disappeared altogether. Skilled men who had enjoyed the safety and order of the Roman Empire and had worked to create beautiful paintings, buildings, jewelry, and churches now had to work hard every day just to feed themselves and their families. Craftsmen ceased making beautiful things and turned to tilling the ground, or were forced to fight in petty battles as feudal lords fought one another for mastery over small patches of land.

If we limit our view to political structures of this age, the centuries between 500 and 1000 do look pretty dark, even despite Charlemagne's significant reign. But, as modern scholarship has demonstrated, much was going on during these years in Europe. God was busily at work forging the foundations of a new way of life - one that would eventually take European society to greater heights of godliness, quality of life, craftsmanship, and scholarship than did the Roman Empire. However, during these darker centuries, the Viking raiders posed a real, terrifying, and recurring threat - so much so that the years between 793 (when Norsemen suddenly raided an important island monastery called Lidisfarne) and 1066 (when William the Conqueror invaded England and quelled all Viking challengers) have been called the Viking Age.

Who were the Vikings, and what cause them to leave their northern lands to wreak havoc on their weak southern neighbors? Why did they eventually stop raiding? What were the purposes of God in allowing this long-term violence and destruction? We will seek to answer these questions this week as we focus our studies on the Viking peoples of Scandinavia, the British Isles, and the lands now known as Denmark, Sweden, northern Germany, and Russia. We will seek to understand how they organized themselves when at home and why they took to raiding. As we study, we will joyfully see that, though many a priest and missionary were martyred by the Viking raiders, in the end the gospel of Jesus Christ tamed the savage Vikings, bringing peace to European shores.

READING

ALL - ENRICHMENT or READ ALOUD

- Story of the World Vol II Chapters 14, 15 & 16**
- Streams of Civilization Vol 1: 250 - 261 (stop at "The Age of Chivalry")**

LG Reading Assignments:

- Leif the Lucky, by Ingri and Edgar D'Áulaire
- Books about Erik the Red

UG Reading Assignments

- Trial and Triumph by Richard Hannula, Chapter 11
- The Story of Rolf and the Viking Bow, by Allen French
- Where Am I? by A.G. Smith p 34-38

DIALECTIC & RHET. Reading

- The Story of the Middle Ages, by Christine Miller XLIV-XLIX, LI-LV, LVII-LVIII, LXI-LXIX
- The Church in History Chapt 11 (sections 1-4)
- Invitation to the Classics, by Louise Cowan and Os Guinness p 85-88
- The Art of Catapult by William Gurstelle (Week 2 of 3)
- Beowulf: A Translation & Commentary by J.R.R. Tolkien (Week 2 of 2)

• Lower Grammar Words

viking

jarl

tunic

raid

turf

saga

runes

flax

saga

Upper Grammar Words (All Lower Grammar Words +)

archaeologist

boar

amulet

pyre

skald

brooch

karl

thrall

Lower Grammar People (Preschool and Pre-K - would be great to know who Charlemagne is.)

Alfred the Great

Erik the Red

Blank handwriting practice lines consisting of a solid top line, a dashed middle line, and a solid bottom line.

Blank handwriting practice lines consisting of a solid top line, a dashed middle line, and a solid bottom line.

Leif Ericson

Blank handwriting practice lines consisting of a solid top line, a dashed middle line, and a solid bottom line.

Blank handwriting practice lines consisting of a solid top line, a dashed middle line, and a solid bottom line.

Saint Vladimir

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Upper Grammar People (all LG +)

Rolf (Rollo)

Blank handwriting practice lines for the name Rolf (Rollo).

Olaf Haraldsson

Handwriting practice lines for the name "Olaf Haraldsson".

Canute the great

Handwriting practice lines for the name "Canute the great".

William the Conqueror

Accountability Questions

Why do historians call the years from 793 to 1066 the “Viking Age”?

Summarize unique aspects of Viking culture using the culture chart on page 19.

Who was Alfred the Great? Why is he called “the Great”?

Outline developments in Saxony under Henry the Fowler. What dynasty did he found? Who were the Magyars, and what nation did they found?

Summarize the events that resulted in Viking chiefs becoming lords of Normandy. Include details about Rollo and William the Conqueror.

Optional: You were given major dates from the Viking Age on page 6 of this week-plan, but your reading goes into detail concerning the histories of Denmark, Sweden, Norway, and Russia. If your teacher so directs, take time to add significant dates from your reading to your time line and/or list the major figures that hail from these places.

Thinking Questions

How was European civilization weakened during the Viking Age? Summarize the conditions in which Europeans found themselves from about 500 to 1050. Think through these conditions in comparison with the abundant food supplies, safety, and the strong, central government that are necessary for a civilization to flourish.

What is the connection between the Viking Age and the rise of the feudal system in Europe?

How far did the Vikings travel into eastern Europe? What far-reaching effects did they have on Slavic cultures?

Outline the connections between the Carolingians, the Normans, Normandy, and the line of English kings. Prepare to discuss these in class.

What events or changing conditions brought the Viking Age to a close?

Generally speaking, what qualities did the Vikings add to the populations with whom they mingled?