

Students: fill in next to the word answer and return the document for assessment.

History

Vikings

Book: Vikings raiders and settlers

Pages 22-23

Everything here is based on our Curriculum Visions book 'Viking raiders and settlers'.

You can open this book online now by clicking on the book cover. It will open in a new window or tab.

Village life and farming

In this segment we are going to think about the places where the Vikings lived before they started to conquer Britain. There were two kinds of Vikings, those who lived around Denmark, and who conquered south and east England, and this who lived in Norway, and who attacked Scotland, Ireland and north west England. We are going to look at the second group, called the Norse Vikings. They were the people who lived on the slopes of the fjords.

You will need to go to page 16 of the book. This segment will stretch from page 16 to page 19.

Part 1

Think about the land and weather of Norwegian fjords. Why do you think the Norse Vikings would feel comfortable living in the coastal areas of Scotland?

Answer...

Yes, because the steep lock slopes are similar to Norwegian fjords.

Part 2

On pages 16-17 you see an artist's impression of what a Norse Viking village might have looked like.

Look into the background. What is the landscape like?

Answer...

It is forested

Where have the Vikings chosen to have their village?

Answer...

Next to a navigable river.

Why do you think Norse Vikings were people of the sea as well as people of the land?

Answer...

Because the amount of land for farming was very limited.

Read the section on page 17 about the harbour. How do we know where Viking harbours were once located if the wooden jetties have long rotted away?

Answer...

They also left ballast stones behind.

Part 3

In the time of the Norse Viking raiders people used small boats with broad beams and pointed ends. They used two kinds of propulsion. What were those two types?

Answer...

Sail and oars.

If you were out in the open sea on a long voyage, which kind of propulsion would you prefer to use and why? If you were in a narrow river, or coming into a jetty which kind of propulsion would you prefer to use and why?

Answer...

Sail for open ocean because it needed no effort; oars coming into land for greater navigation (and often speed).

Part 4

Norse Vikings were not highly civilised people. What do we mean by civilised?

Answer...

People who could write, and often included people who lived in cities.

They lived in quite small groups. Why was it not possible for them to live in large towns?

Answer...

They could only produce enough food for themselves, so they could not provide much food for people living in towns.

Part 5

Look at the building materials. What did they make their home walls from? What did they make their roofs from?

Answer...

Timber walls and slats made of bark for the roof.

There is a long bank, ditch and fence in the distance. It goes right around the village from riverbank to riverbank. Write down two possible reasons they would have built a fence.

Answer...

To protect against other invaders; to keep out wild animals.

Part 6

Now turn to pages 18-19. Here you see an artist's impression of a farm. In fact there are two kinds of house being built. Each one tells how they built in different places where they landed and settled. They have just been put together here for convenience.

In what kinds of landscape might they have built houses with stone rubble?

In what kinds of landscape might they have built houses with wooden frames? The yellow box has clues.

Answer...

The house type depended on availability of building stone or trees in forests.

In northern areas, winters are long and cold, summers can be short and cloudy. How do you think that affected what crops they grew and whether they had crops or animals on their farms?

Answer...

Only hardy cereals such as oats could be grown, and crops often failed, so they relied more on hay and keeping animals.

If it is very cold in winter what did they do with their animals in winter?

Answer...

Kept them in their houses.

If they could not get all of their animals indoors in winter, what do you think they did with the others each autumn?

Answer...

Slaughtered them and cured the meat.

Part 7

Read the text on pages 18-19 and explain why trading and raiding was as important as farming to many Norse Vikings.

Answer...

Because it was a way to get valuable products that could then be traded for essentials such as food.