

## Who will be king?

1. Draw a large circle on a piece of paper. This represents the island of Thorjik.
2. Divide the island into four quarters. These represent the areas controlled by four clans. Here is some information about them:

The top area on the left is a mountain region where sheep can be grazed. The coast line has high cliffs. Ships cannot land on its shores. There are gold mines in the mountains. It is a region thought to be close to the gods and the clan is led by Gunnar.

The bottom area on the left is a swamp. In the centre of the swamp is an island which is the home of the clan led by Helgi. This island in the swamp is easy to defend and the most difficult place to attack. The swamp is thought to be the home of evil spirits. It is also the best place on the island for hunting birds. There is a marshy coast line where ships can land but they can be blown out to sea again in stormy weather.

The top right area is covered in meadowland. It is the best place for farming. It has a sandy coast where boats can land but they can be blown out to sea again in stormy weather. This area is the home of a clan led by Bjorn.

The bottom right area is covered in low rocky ground where sheep can be grazed. The coastline has many rocky inlets which make natural harbours for ships. They can be kept safely in the inlets in stormy weather. This area is the home of the clan ruled by Steinmod.

3. Make some drawings on your circle to remind you of what each region is like.
4. The leaders of the clans began to quarrel about who should be king of the island. On the back of your sheet, write down reasons why you think each leader should be king.

Who do you think will be king?  .....

Explain your answer



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# Who will be king?

## Age range

- Years 3/4 (SP4/5).
- Years 5/6 (SP6/7).

## Resources

Copies of the worksheet.

## Using the worksheet

This activity focuses on the step from being a chieftain to being a king. It looks at the regions held by four clan leaders and invites the students to assess the strengths of each leader before making a decision. You may also like to use this as a role play exercise. Four students could work with one worksheet. They could argue their case against the other three. Alternatively each one could present their case to the class and the class could vote. You may like to remind the students that although the Vikings did settle disputes at an assembly known as the Thing, claims for kingship were resolved in battles.

## Younger students

The students could make a map of the island with mountains, cliffs, sandy beaches, etc. They may need help in realising the relative strengths and weaknesses of the four chiefs. For example Gunnar may be thought the most powerful because he lives in the mountains nearest to the gods. He has great wealth in gold and places to farm sheep. However he has no direct route to the sea for trade. Helgi lives in the most difficult place to attack and is surrounded by evil spirits. His clan get food from the swamp and in good weather he can sail to and from the island but he has little to trade with. Bjorn has the wealth of a farming community and he can sail ships to and from the island in good weather. However he has no place to defend himself from other leaders.

Steinmod has got the best harbours. His ships can sail to and from the island more frequently than the ships of other clans and so is best able to trade with others. However he does not have a great deal to trade with except wool and meat from his sheep. The hilly region he commands is easier to defend than Bjorn's but more difficult to defend than the lands of Gunnar and Helgi.

## Outcomes

The students can:

- Make a map from information.
- Assess the strengths and weaknesses of the areas controlled by different chieftains.

## Older students

The students can work through the sheet on their own or take part in role play situations. They may look at ways in which the chieftains could trade the advantages of their regions. For example Steinmod could strike a deal with Gunnar to transport his gold in return for some payment in gold. He could strike a deal with Bjorn to transport his farm goods in return for corn. There is something supernatural about the region where Helgi lives and his home is the most secure. He may opt to go on raids into the other regions for gold, corn and sheep and rely on the superstitions of his neighbours to protect him.

## Outcomes

The students can:

- Assess the strengths and weaknesses of the areas controlled by different chieftains.
- Appreciate how leaders may make compromises to keep the peace.