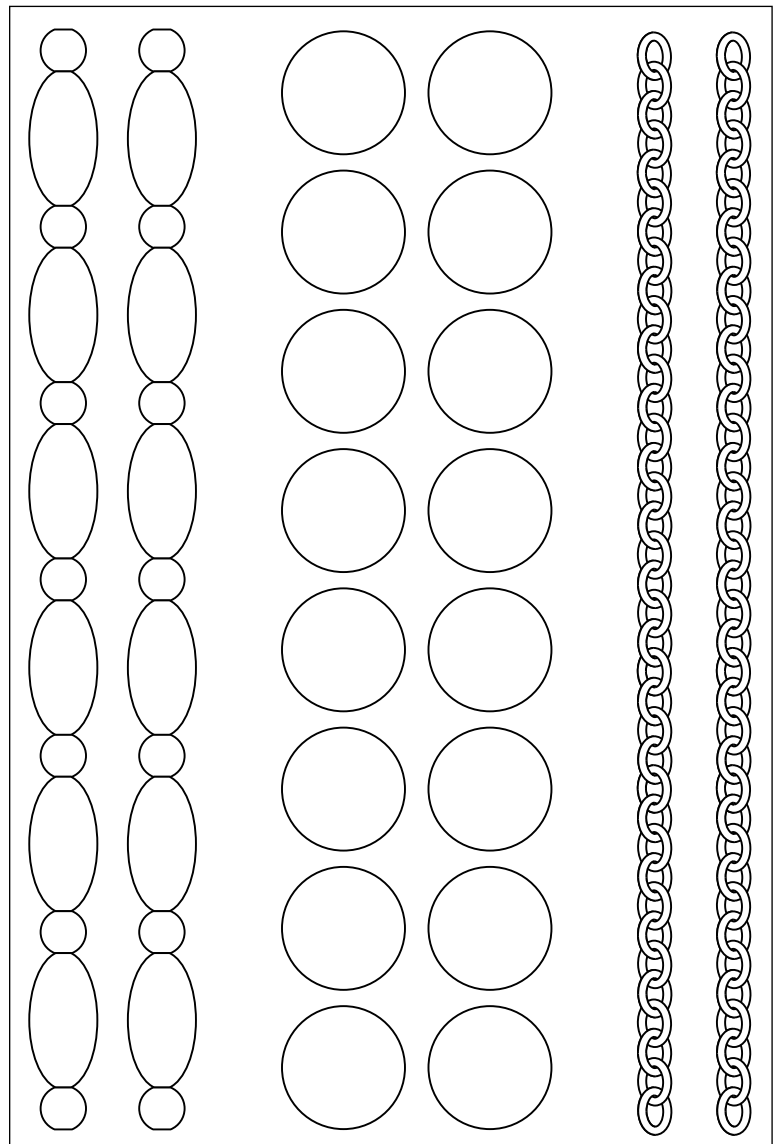


Using Viking scales

Vikings used their scales to weigh hack silver. This was silver from coins and jewellery. When a weight of silver was agreed upon for the sale of something, a weight was placed on one pan of the scales and silver was placed on the other pan until the scales balanced. Pieces of necklace, chain and even coins were cut up to make up the weight of silver.

The units of weight used by the Vikings were öres (pronounced urrs) and örtugars (pronounced urtugar). Three öres were equal to one örtugar.

1. Cut out the rectangle containing the necklaces, coins and chains.
2. Stick the rectangle on card and cut out the necklaces, coins and chains.
3. Collect a Plasticine lump from your teacher and divide it into four equal parts. Each one is the weight of an örtugar.
4. Take one of the örtugar weights and divide it into three. You have now made three öres.
5. Decide on the value of an object you have for sale. Make it cheap, perhaps only one or two öres. Place the weights on one pan of the scales and add pieces of silver until the scales balance. You may have to cut up some of the silver pieces to make the scales balance.
6. Agree on the price in örtugars and öres of another object and try and balance the scales with silver.



Using Viking scales

Age range

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

Resources

Copies of the worksheet. Piece of card, scissors, lumps of Plasticine weighed out by you to be one ounce or 32 grams.

Using the worksheet

This activity can be used only with the scales that were made in the previous activity. You may like to set the scene by saying that the students are in a Viking market and have some objects to trade for silver.

Younger students

Read through the activity sheet with the students then let them make their items of silver. Give out the Plasticine and check that they divide it correctly to make örtugars and öres. Make sure they only use small weights at first. They should place both scale pans on a table top and load one with a weight and the other with some silver, then carefully and slowly raise the scales to see if the pans balance. If they do not, they should lower the scales onto the table again and adjust the amount of silver. This may involve them in deciding which items of silver to cut.

Outcomes

The students:

- Know how to use a pair of scales.
- Can weigh 'silver' in Viking units of weight.

Older students

The students can work through the activity in pairs. You should tell them how to use the balance as explained in the section for younger students. Vikings also used to barter to agree a price. You may like to introduce the students to bartering and let them barter the price of an object before weighing the price in silver.

Outcomes

The students:

- Know how to use a pair of scales.
- Can weigh 'silver' in Viking units of weight.
- Can use bartering and the scales in a Viking business deal.