

## Travelling across Europe

Large amounts of silver coins from Tashkent and Samarkand have been found in Sweden. Coins from Russia have been found too. The coins date from Viking times and suggest that the Vikings travelled through Europe and into the lands beyond the Caspian Sea and traded with the people living there.

Archaeologists working in Europe and Asia have discovered that the Vikings made journeys along rivers, through lakes and across seas to trade. They took furs, walrus ivory, amber, honey and slaves and returned home with pottery, salt, wine and gold as well as silver coins. One of the places they visited to trade was Constantinople.

Two of the main rivers that the Vikings used were the Dnieper and the Volga.

1. In an atlas turn to a map of Europe and find the Black Sea. Look for Odena and to the right of it find the River Diepne. Follow it through lakes to Kiev, a major Viking town. Trace the river northwards to Vozysennost. Here you will see the river Volga close by.
2. Follow the river Volga through the lakes in Russia to Astahan in the Caspian Sea.
3. If you were a Viking about to cross Europe, which river and sea would you use on your way to:

(a) Constantinople?  .....

(b) Tashkent?  .....

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## Age range

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

## Resources

Copies of the worksheet. An atlas.

## Using the worksheet

The Vikings in Norway and Denmark generally travelled westwards in their bid to expand their lands. The Vikings in Sweden generally travelled eastwards and southwards. In their studies of the Vikings, the students may find that some artefacts, such as pottery, come far from Viking homelands. In this activity the students discover some the incredible journeys the Vikings made through Europe and Asia and can use this later to compare with their journeys across the Atlantic. When the Vikings needed to move their boats from one river to another they used logs as rollers (see activity 2B).

## Younger students

You may like to work through the activity with the whole class or enlist helpers to work with small groups. You could ask the students what dangers the Vikings may have encountered in travelling on rivers and look for answers about rapids. These indeed were a real problem to the Vikings and they planned their journeys to avoid shooting the rapids in a river in flood. Students who have been on a white water ride may like to use their imaginations to think what it might have been like being a Viking and travelling along a river in a ship full of goods. Another problem was hostile people on the river banks. These could attack the Vikings and try and rob them of their goods.

## Outcomes

The students can:

- Use an atlas, with help, to locate places.
- Use research skills to find places that Vikings visited.
- Realise that the Vikings travelled a long way from their homeland.

## Older students

The students can work in pairs or on their own in this activity. The Vikings also used the Vistula (Wista) and the Danube (Duna). The students could find these rivers in an atlas and trace their paths to see how much of Europe the Vikings visited.

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