Viking Raids: From Scandinavia to Lindisfarne

Teacher		**Class**	Year 5
Subject	History	**Topic**	Viking raids and invasion
Date		**Room**	
Lesson length	60 minutes	**Country**	United Kingdom

Pupils learn why Vikings crossed the sea to raid Britain and how raids differed from invasion. They label Scandinavia and draw sea routes to Britain.

Curriculum links

- Pupils should be taught about the Viking and Anglo-Saxon struggle for the Kingdom of England to the time of Edward the Confessor [1]
- Viking raids and invasion [1]

Learning objectives

- Students will locate Scandinavia and trace Viking sea routes to Britain.
- Students will place the Lindisfarne raid in 793 on a timeline.
- Students will explain the difference between a raid and an invasion.

Success criteria

- I can point to Norway, Sweden and Denmark and show the sea route.
- I can place Lindisfarne 793 and say why people were terrified.
- I can explain a quick raid and a staying invasion in my words.

What students already know

Ask: who lived in Britain before the Vikings came? Listen for Anglo-Saxons, Scots from Ireland and Picts from Scotland battling among themselves to dominate Britain [1].

Key words

Scandinavia	the cold northern area where the lands now called Norway, Sweden and Denmark are [1]
longship	a narrow wooden sailing ship with oars that could travel far over the sea [3]
raid	a quick surprise attack to steal treasure and take slaves then sail home [1]
invasion	arriving with a large group to take land and stay to live and farm
abbey	a large church home where monks lived, prayed and kept treasure [3]
Danegeld	silver money paid to attackers to make them go away without fighting [1]

Materials

- Outline maps of northern Europe, one per pair
- Blue pencils and arrows cut from card
- Slides 1-4, 7, 10, 11
- Video clip 3 Why Vikings Raided (0:00-0:42)

Before the lesson

- Print outline maps of northern Europe, one per pair, plus a large teacher model
- Cut out card arrows for sea routes and test blue pencils

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- Slide 11 statements for partner talk with no writing
- Mini whiteboards and pens
- Load slides 1-4, 7, 10, 11 and test Video clip 3 (0:00-0:42) with sound
- Arrange tables for pair work ready to discuss Slide 11 statements

Lesson outline

0–8 min **Starter** 8 min · Whole class

To recall Britain before the Vikings and spark curiosity about sea voyages.

YOU DO

1. Show Slide 1 and read the question why they came and who fought for England.
2. Show Slide 2 and share the three aims in your own words.
3. Say the hook and ask pupils to whisper to a partner where they would sail.
4. Remind the class that Anglo-Saxons, Scots and Picts battled among themselves to dominate Britain [1].

STUDENTS DO

1. Listen to the lesson question and aims.
2. Discuss the hook question with a partner and share one idea.
3. Recall who lived in Britain before the Vikings.

Say: If you had no engines and only wind and oars, where could you sail to steal treasure? Today we will learn why Vikings crossed the sea to Britain. We will map their route and learn about a famous attack on monks.

Ask: Where did the Vikings come from? (The lands we now call Norway, Sweden and Denmark, an area called Scandinavia where Vikings were Norsemen meaning Men of the North [1].) · How did they travel to Britain? (They travelled across the seas in longships [1].)

Check understanding: Hands up to name the three lands. If unsure, point to them on the board map and repeat together.

Support: Show a labelled photo map with Norway, Sweden and Denmark in different colours while you talk.
Stretch: Ask why sailing across the sea would be frightening with only sails and oars.

Use: Slides 1–2

8–20 min **Teaching** 12 min · Whole class

To teach the difference between a quick raid and a staying invasion on a timeline.

YOU DO

1. Show Slide 3 and explain the two columns: short summer trips by sea that stole treasure and took slaves and sailed home, and large groups that came to conquer and took land.
2. Show Slide 4 and walk along the timeline from three ships in Weymouth Bay in 789 to the monks home attacked in 793 to short summer raids in the 790s to 850s [1].
3. Model the raid test: came quickly, took things, left.
4. Ask pairs to decide raid or invasion for two examples on mini whiteboards.

STUDENTS DO

1. Compare the two columns on Slide 3 with a partner.
2. Follow the timeline from 789 to the 790s to 850s on Slide 4.
3. Hold up whiteboards to show raid or invasion for each example.

Say: A raid is quick. Vikings arrived by sea, stole treasure and took slaves, then sailed home for harvest [1]. An invasion is different. More people come to take land to farm and live. We will use this test for the rest of the lesson.

Worked example: Lindisfarne in 793: Vikings arrived by sea, the abbey was destroyed and church treasures and monks were taken as slaves [3]. They did not stay to farm, so step 1 quick arrival yes, step 2 took treasure and people yes, step 3 stayed to live no, therefore it was a raid, not an invasion.

Ask: How is a quick raid different from an invasion? (A raid is a short trip to steal treasure and take slaves then sail home [1]; an invasion takes land to stay.) · Why were early raids short? (They would plant crops in spring and then carry out raids until harvest time [1].) · Why was Britain hard to defend? (England, Wales and Ireland were divided into many different warring kingdoms in a state of internal disarray [3].)

Check understanding: Whiteboard vote for Lindisfarne: raid or invasion. Reteach the three-step test if many choose invasion.

Support: Give a two-column word mat with take and leave, and steal, slaves, stay, land with pictures. **Stretch:** Ask whether the three ships in Weymouth Bay counts as a raid, since that incursion may have been a trading expedition that went wrong rather than a piratical raid [3].

Use: Slides 3–4

20–40 min **Main activity** 20 min · Pairs

To locate Scandinavia and trace early raiding routes to Britain.

YOU DO

1. Give out outline maps, blue pencils and card arrows.
2. Model on the large map: label the lands we now call Norway, Sweden and Denmark [1] and shade Scandinavia lightly.
3. Model drawing one blue sea arrow from Denmark across the sea to north-east England and explain innovations in sailing gave Vikings the ability to sail longer to farther places [3].
4. Send pairs to label, place arrows and add two labels for direction and reason for long voyages, then check maps.

STUDENTS DO

1. Label Norway, Sweden and Denmark and shade Scandinavia.
2. Place card arrows and draw blue sea routes to Britain.
3. Add two labels to show direction and one reason long voyages were possible.

Say: Work in pairs. First label Norway, Sweden and Denmark. Then choose a start point and lay a card arrow across the sea to Britain. Draw over it in blue pencil. Add labels to show which way you sailed and why the long trip was possible.

Worked example: Step 1 I find Denmark at the bottom of Scandinavia and write it. Step 2 I write Norway on the left and Sweden in the middle. Step 3 I lay an arrow from Denmark across the North Sea to north-east England. Step 4 I draw the arrow in blue and label it Vikings sailed from Scandinavia to Britain and longships and sails let them sail far [3].

Ask: Which lands did you label and where are they? (Norway, Sweden and Denmark in the area called Scandinavia [1], across the sea north and east of Britain.) · Why could Vikings sail so far? (Innovations in sailing gave them the ability to sail over longer periods to farther destinations [3].)

Check understanding: Walk round with a checklist for three labels and at least one correct sea arrow. Show two good maps on the visualiser and fix errors together.

Support: Provide a map with Norway, Sweden and Denmark already dotted and named for pupils to trace over. **Stretch:** Add a key to show which routes were short raids and which could lead to settling, as Norse people settled in the British Isles by sea from Denmark, Norway and Sweden [3].

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40–50 min **Lindisfarne and why they raided** 10 min · Whole class

To understand the terror at Lindisfarne and why Vikings kept raiding.

YOU DO

1. Play Video clip 3 (0:00-0:42) about why Vikings raided.
2. Explain the Lindisfarne attack on 8 June 793 that destroyed the abbey, a centre of learning on an island off the north-east coast of England that is regarded as the beginning of the Viking Age [3].
3. Describe that monks were killed, thrown into the sea to drown, or carried away as slaves along with the church treasures [3], so never before in Britain had such a terror appeared [3].
4. Show Slide 7 Danegeld fact and Slide 10 cards for rich targets, poor farms and fast ships.

STUDENTS DO

1. Watch the 42-second clip and name one reason for raiding.
2. Listen to the Lindisfarne report and repeat the date 8 June 793.
3. Link Danegeld and the three picture cards to raid or invasion.

Say: On 8 June 793 monks on Holy Island heard the abbey bell ring fast. Vikings took treasure and people. Later a king called Aethelred could not stop the raids and paid Danegeld of 3,300 kg of silver, worth over £1 million today, but it did not work and was paid many times [1].

Ask: What did Vikings want to steal? (Treasure from wealthy towns and monasteries overseas that drew Vikings [3], and on first raids short trips to steal treasure and take slaves [1].) · Was paying Danegeld a good plan? (No, Aethelred paid 3300kg of silver hoping to stop invasions but it did not work and was paid many times [1].)

Check understanding: Cold-call three pupils to give one Lindisfarne fact, one Danegeld fact and one reason for raiding. Re-explain any missing part with the slide.

Support: Give sentence starters such as The monks were frightened because and a word bank abbey, island, treasure, slaves. **Stretch:** Ask pupils to suggest a third plan instead of pay or fight and give one strength and one weakness.

Use: Slides 7, 10, Video clip 3 (0:00–0:42)

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50–60 min **Plenary** 10 min · Whole class

To check the three aims and fix raid and invasion confusion.

YOU DO

1. Show Slide 11 true or false statements and read each one.
2. Ask pairs to discuss Slide 11 statements for 2 minutes, then vote true or false with thumbs.
3. Go back to the three I can statements from Slide 2 and tick them together.
4. Give the exit ticket on mini whiteboards.

STUDENTS DO

1. Discuss Slide 11 statements with a partner with no writing.
2. Vote true or false for Slide 11 and explain one answer.
3. Answer the exit ticket on whiteboards.

Say: Turn to your partner and decide together. Are these lands called Scandinavia? Did the abbey attack happen on 8 June 793? Remember raid means quick and leave, invasion means stay. Be ready to explain your vote in your own words.

Ask: Vikings came from Norway, Sweden and Denmark. True or false? (True, they came from the lands we now call Norway, Sweden and Denmark [1].) · The Viking Age lasted only one year. True or false? (False, it was about 800 to 1050 CE [3], from the end of the 8th century to the middle of the 11th century [1].)

Check understanding: Whiteboard exit answers for all three aims. Keep back pairs who mix up raid and invasion to redraw the timeline.

Support: Read each true or false statement aloud twice and let pupils point to their map for clues. **Stretch:** Ask pupils to rewrite one false statement to make it true using dates or place names.

Use: Slide 11

Common mistakes

Mistake	How to spot it	How to fix it
Thinking a raid and an invasion are the same.	Pupil calls Lindisfarne an invasion or settling.	Use the test: did they take treasure and slaves and sail home [1] or take land to stay. Lindisfarne was a quick raid [3].
Thinking Scandinavia is one country.	Pupil labels only one land or points to Britain.	Point to all three: the lands we now call Norway, Sweden and Denmark in the area called Scandinavia [1].
Thinking Vikings only fought and stole.	Pupil says Vikings never farmed or traded.	Explain most Vikings were also farmers, fishermen, craftsmen and traders [4] and planted crops in spring then raided until harvest [1].

Support

- Pre-labelled maps with dotted country names, word banks for abbey, treasure, slaves and sentence starters.
- Partner reading, picture prompts and mini whiteboards to show raid or invasion without long writing.

Stretch

- Add a map key for short raids and settling routes linked to Norse settlement in the British Isles [3].
- Debate pay or fight using the 3,300 kg Danegeld cost and suggest a third defence plan with strengths and weaknesses [1].

For the LSE or teaching assistant

Stay with the mapping table in the main activity. Help pairs trace Norway, Sweden and Denmark, place arrows and read labels aloud. Prompt raid or invasion choices in teaching and plenary.

Check for understanding

Question	Answer
Name the three lands of Scandinavia and point to the sea route.	Norway, Sweden and Denmark, with a sea arrow from Scandinavia to Britain [1].
When was Lindisfarne attacked and what happened?	8 June 793 [3]; monks killed or taken as slaves and church treasures taken [3].
Explain raid and invasion in your words.	Raid is a short trip to steal treasure and take slaves then sail home [1]; invasion is coming with a large group to take land and stay.

Homework

Draw your sea route again at home and write two sentences to explain raid and invasion to someone at home.

Sources

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