

# Viking warrior

## 9th-10th Century A.D.

The first Viking raid on England was recorded in 793A.D.

This was on the church of **St Cuthbert** in **Lindisfarne** on **Britain's North East Coast**. In **Europe** the **Viking Age** lasted from around **700A.D. to 1100A.D.** In this time, many people left **Scandinavia** and travelled to other countries, like **Britain** and **Ireland**. **Not all Scandinavians were 'Vikings'**. Most were traders, explorers and farmers, seeking to set up home elsewhere. The word '**Viking**' was usually applied to the **violent raiders** who stole from monasteries, **killed people**, took slaves and **burned villages** to the ground.

The people of **Saxon England** called the invaders '**Danes**', but they didn't just come from **Denmark**. **Most** came from **Norway** and **Sweden**.

The people of **Scandinavia** at that time were **expert ship builders**.

Their **large warships** had a **shallow draft**. This meant that they could **travel in shallow water** and so a large ship could go a long way up a river to attack many towns and villages.

These war vessels were sometimes called **long ships** or **dragon ships**.

The **Scandinavian merchants** had larger cargo and passenger ships called **knorrs**.

The **Vikings** raided, traded and **settled** in many countries including, **Britain**, **Ireland**, **Iceland**, **Greenland**, parts of **Europe**, **Russia** and even briefly in **North America**. They established **large towns** like **Jorvik**, (now **York** in **North England**).

The English in **Saxon England** had no navy to fight the Vikings and in **892A.D.** there was a **massive invasion** involving over **300 Viking ships** who came to attack the army of **King Alfred of Wessex**. **Alfred fought the Vikings** hard, **founded a navy** and soon signed a **treaty** with them, agreeing to **peace**. He even gave them a **large part** of **Eastern England** to settle in. This area became known as **Danelaw**. Later, under Alfred's son **Edward** and then Grandson **Athelstan**, the Saxon English fought the **Viking settlers** and took more of their land back. In **954A.D.** The **Saxons** **defeated the Viking king Eric Bloodaxe** in **York**. After this, the Vikings in England were ruled by the Saxon kings. Much later, **England** had a **Danish king** called **King Cnut**. (Often called **Canute**). He was a wise king. By the 11<sup>th</sup> Century many **Vikings** in **Europe** had become **Christians** and in **North France**, the **Vikings** who had settled there became known as **Normans**.

### Why not colour him in?

This Viking is wearing a mailshirt (so use grey as it's probably iron).

His iron helmet is based on a famous Viking age helmet that was found in Buskerud, Norway, called the **Gjermundbu helmet**. As for his clothes, you decide the colours. Bright clothes were a sign of wealth... he looks like he's made a lot of money from raiding wealthy places...

Name \_\_\_\_\_

### Can you label this warrior?

**Hjalmr or Helm** (helmet)

**Skeggja** (battle axe)

**Brynja** (mailshirt made from thousands of tiny iron links)

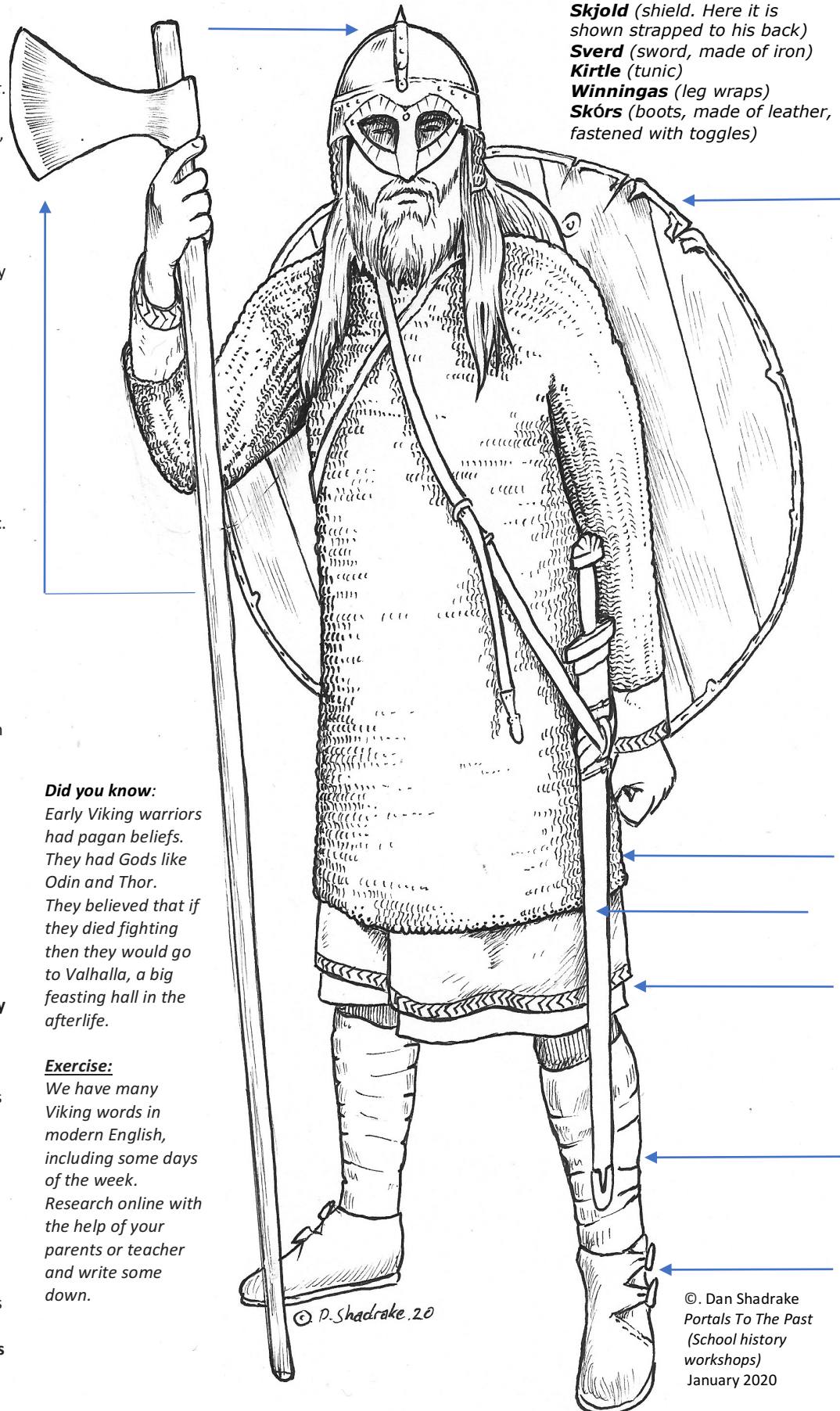
**Skjold** (shield. Here it is shown strapped to his back)

**Sverd** (sword, made of iron)

**Kirtle** (tunic)

**Winningas** (leg wraps)

**Skórs** (boots, made of leather, fastened with toggles)



### Did you know:

Early Viking warriors had pagan beliefs.

They had Gods like **Odin** and **Thor**.

They believed that if they died fighting then they would go to **Valhalla**, a big feasting hall in the afterlife.

### Exercise:

We have many Viking words in modern English, including some days of the week. Research online with the help of your parents or teacher and write some down.

