



About the Book

Text Type: Nonfiction/Informational Page Count: 24 Word Count: 2,142

Book Summary

Vikings is an informational text that describes a group of Nordic men. Hailing from what are now Norway, Sweden, and Denmark, these explorers sailed far from their homeland to discover new parts of the world. They were trained at an early age to be warriors and skilled navigators. Eric the Red's and Leif Ericson's explorations to Iceland and Greenland are highlighted.

Book and lesson also available at Levels T and W.

About the Lesson

Targeted Reading Strategy

- Ask and answer questions

Objectives

- Ask and answer questions to understand informational text
- Identify the main idea and details
- Recognize proper nouns
- Identify and differentiate synonyms and antonyms

Materials

Green text indicates resources available on the website

- Book—**Vikings** (copy for each student)
- Chalkboard or dry-erase board
- Dictionaries
- Thesauruses
- **KWLS / ask and answer questions, main idea and details, proper nouns, synonyms and antonyms worksheets**
- **Discussion cards**



Indicates an opportunity for students to mark in the book. (All activities may be demonstrated by projecting the book on an interactive whiteboard or completed with paper and pencil if the books are reused.)

Vocabulary

*Bold vocabulary words also appear in a pre-made lesson for this title on VocabularyA-Z.com.

- Content words:

Story critical: **berserkers** (n.), **brawling** (v.), **exiled** (adj.), **fearsome** (adj.), **shipwrights** (n.)

Enrichment: *abandoned* (v.), *adventurous* (adj.), *archaeologists* (n.), *attributes* (n.), **banished** (v.), **byrnies** (n.), *chain mail* (n.), *draft* (n.), **excelled** (v.), *fjord* (n.), *hull* (n.), *ideal* (adj.), *monasteries* (n.), *pagans* (n.), *plunder* (n.), *preserved* (v.), **reckless** (adj.), **retaliated** (v.), *roles* (n.), *settlement* (n.), **tolerance** (n.), *uncharted* (adj.)

Before Reading

Build Background

- Write the word *Vikings* on the board. Ask students to share what they know about them. Explain that the *Vikings* were explorers from long ago. Ask students if they have ever heard of Eric the Red or Leif Ericson. Show students pictures of Viking armor and their ships.

- Create a KWLS chart on the board and hand out the [KWLS / ask-and-answer-questions worksheet](#). Review or explain that the *K* stands for knowledge we know, the *W* stands for information we want to know, the *L* stands for the knowledge we learned, and the *S* stands for what we still want to know about the topic. As various topics are discussed, fill in the first section (*K*) on the board with information students know about the topic. Have students complete the same section of their KWLS worksheet.
- Ask students what they would like to know about the Vikings. Have them fill in the second section (*W*) of their worksheet. Write their questions on the class chart.

Preview the Book

Introduce the Book

- Give students their copy of the book. Guide them to the front and back covers and read the title. Have students discuss what they see on the covers. Encourage them to offer ideas as to what kind of book it is and what it might be about.
- Ask students if they think this book is fiction or nonfiction and to explain their reasoning.
- Show students the title page. Talk about the information on the page (title of book, author's name, illustrator's name).
- Ask students to turn to the table of contents. Remind them that the table of contents provides an overview of what the book is about. Ask students what they expect to read about in the book based on what they see in the table of contents. (Accept all answers that students can justify.)

Introduce the Reading Strategy: **Ask and answer questions**

- Discuss how having prior knowledge about the topic, and asking and answering questions while reading, can help readers understand and remember the information in a book.
- Direct students to the table of contents. Use it as a way to model asking questions.
Think-aloud: I can use the table of contents to think of questions I'd like to have answered about the Vikings. For example, the second section is titled "Viking Warriors." I know that the Vikings were explorers, but this section title makes me think that they also fought battles. I'll have to read the book to find out. I'll write that question in the W section of the KWL chart.
- Have students preview the other section titles in the table of contents. Write any questions they have based on the covers and table of contents in the *W* column of the KWLS chart on the board.
- Have students preview the rest of the book, looking at maps, illustrations, and captions. Point out the "Did You Know?" boxes containing more information. Show students the glossary. Have them add any additional questions they might have about the book to their KWLS chart. Write shared questions on the class chart.
- As students read, encourage them to use other reading strategies in addition to the targeted strategy presented in this section.

Introduce the Comprehension Skill: **Main idea and details**

- Review that every book has a main idea that is the most important idea of the book, and that the main idea is often the title of the book. Have students take another look at the book covers. Ask them to predict the main idea of the book.
- Explain that each page gives supporting details that tell the reader more about the book's main topic (Vikings).
- Model using the table of contents to infer supporting details in the text.
Think-aloud: When I look at the table of contents on page 3, I see that the word Discovering is included. I already know that the Vikings explored the seas, so their discoveries are probably a supporting detail in the book. As I read, I know that I will find out even more details about the Vikings. As I read, I will pause after a few pages to review in my mind the important details. This strategy will help me make sure I understand what I'm reading. I know that good readers do this when they read, so I am going to look for supporting details as I read this book.

- Have students turn to the table of contents and list some of the supporting details about the Vikings (new land, Eric the Red, conquests, and so on).

Introduce the Vocabulary

- Write the following words from the content vocabulary on the board: *brawl*, *exiled*, and *fearsome*.
- Give groups of students three pieces of blank paper. For each word, have them write or draw what they know about the word. Create a definition for each word using students' prior knowledge.
- Review or explain that the glossary and a dictionary contain lists of vocabulary words and their definitions.
- Model how students can use a dictionary to find a word's meaning. Explain that they will find the word *exile*, and that suffixes (in this case, *-ed*) are dropped for entry words. Invite a volunteer to read the definition for *exiled* in the dictionary. Then have students look up *exiled* in the glossary.
- Have students compare the definition with their prior knowledge of the word. Then have students follow along on page 13 as you read the section title in which the word *exiled* is found. Read the first paragraph to confirm the meaning of the word *exiled*. Repeat the exercise with the remaining vocabulary words.

Set the Purpose


- Have students think about what they already know about the Vikings as they read the book to find answers to their questions, and write what they learned in the *L* section of their KWLS worksheet.


During Reading


Student Reading

- **Guide the reading:** Have students read to the end of page 11. Remind them to look for information about the Vikings that will answer questions on their KWLS chart. Have students go back and reread the sections if they finish before everyone else.
- When they have finished reading, have students discuss the information in each section and share what they learned about the Vikings' accomplishments and influence. Have students circle any questions on their KWLS chart that were answered and add any new questions that were generated.
- Model answering a question on the KWLS chart and filling in additional information.
Think-aloud: *I wanted to know if the Vikings fought any battles. I found out that the Vikings were brave warriors who learned to fight at an early age and that they seldom lost a battle. I also found out that monasteries were often targets of Viking raids because they had few defenses and many valuable objects. I learned that only the oldest son could inherit a family's land, so many young men went to sea to find their fortunes. Their ships were large and could carry many warriors, and the Vikings were known for quick attacks from the sea. I'll write what I learned in the L section of my KWLS chart. This information made me want to know if there were any famous Viking warriors. I will write this question in the W section of my KWLS chart.*
- Model identifying the main idea and details for a specific section.
Think-aloud: *As I started reading the section titled "Viking Warriors," most of the sentences mentioned something about what Vikings wore when they fought. I read that Viking helmets most likely did not have horns, even though that is how they are often pictured. I will underline this information. I also read that they wore leather caps and used shields and byrnie. Spears and axes were common weapons, but warriors also used swords, knives, and bows. I also read about Berserkers, special Viking warriors who fought without wearing armor. I will underline this information, too. Based on what I've read, I think the main idea of the section is: How Vikings protect themselves.*
- Write the main idea on the board. Ask students to identify details that support this main idea (leather caps, shields, swords, and so on). Write these details on the board.

- **Check for understanding:** Have students read pages 12 and 13. Have them write answers they found while reading in the *L* section of their KWLS worksheet and additional questions they raised in the *W* section. Invite them to share the information they learned and the questions they generated as they read the book. Write shared responses on the class KWLS chart.

 Have students reread the section titled “Discovering a New Land,” underlining the important information. Invite them to work with a partner to identify the main idea of the section. Have them write the main idea in the margin of their book or on a separate piece of paper. Check individual responses for understanding.

 Have students read the remainder of the book. Remind them to look for and write answers to their KWLS worksheet questions. Encourage them to add new questions they might have to their worksheet as they read and to circle the important events.

 Have students make a question mark in their book beside any word they do not understand or cannot pronounce. Encourage them to use the strategies they have learned to read each word and figure out its meaning.

After Reading

- Ask students what words, if any, they marked in their book. Use this opportunity to model how they can read these words using decoding strategies and context clues.

Reflect on the Reading Strategy

- **Think-aloud:** *I wanted to know if there were any famous Viking warriors. I found out that Gardard Svarvarsson and Folke Vilgerdsson both sailed from different lands to discover and settle what is now known as Iceland. I also learned about Eric the Red, a reckless man who was ordered to leave Iceland. He sailed west and discovered and named the island of Greenland. The most famous Viking was Leif Ericson, the second son of Eric the Red. He discovered Vinland, which could possibly be today’s Newfoundland. His many adventures and discoveries earned him the nickname “Leif the Lucky.”*
- Ask students to share questions they added to their KWLS worksheet while reading, and ask them what questions were answered (or not answered) in the text.
- Reinforce that asking questions before and during reading, and looking for the answers while reading, keeps readers interested in the topic. It also encourages them to keep reading to find answers to their questions and helps them understand and remember what they have read.
- Point out to students that all of their questions may not have been answered in this text. Brainstorm other sources they might use to locate additional information to answer their questions. Invite students to fill in the final section (*S*) with information they would still like to know about the Vikings.

Reflect on the Comprehension Skill

- **Discussion:** Talk about how stopping to review the important details helped students remember the facts and better understand the information. Ask them to use the important details they identified to confirm or refine the main idea of the book.
- Have students reread pages 14 and 15, looking for supporting details about the main idea. Write the details about Eric the Red on the board (often in trouble, set sail for an unknown land, and so on). Ask students how this information supports the main idea (the facts are all important to understanding Eric the Red).
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [main-idea-and-details worksheet](#). When everyone has finished working independently, review their answers aloud.

- **Enduring understanding:** In this book, you learned that ancient Vikings could only inherit land if they were a firstborn male. For this reason, younger brothers often took to the seas in search of their own fortunes. Keeping this information in mind, why do you think it was important that all Viking males were trained as sailors and warriors at a very early age?

Build Skills

Grammar and Mechanics: Proper nouns

- Review or explain that a *noun* is a person, place, or thing. Ask students to turn to page 5 and give examples of nouns from the text (*years, lands, warriors*, and so on).
- Review or explain that a *proper noun* is the name of a specific person, place, or thing. A proper noun always begins with a capital letter. Write examples of proper nouns from page 6 on the board (*Vikings, Norway, Sweden, Denmark*, and so on).
- Remind students not to confuse a proper noun with the capital letter used at the beginning of a sentence or with the title of a section. Point out instances in the book where capitals are used but a proper noun is not present.
- **Check for understanding:** Write the following nouns in a column on the board: *explorer, country, ocean, island*. Ask volunteers to give examples of proper nouns for each category, and write them on the board. (*explorer: Leif Ericson, Gardard Svarvarsson, Eric the Red*, and so on)
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [proper nouns worksheet](#). When students have finished, discuss their answers aloud.

Word Work: Synonyms and antonyms

- Write the word *wanted* on the board. Have students locate and read the word in the first paragraph on page 14. Ask students to suggest other words that mean almost the same thing (*desired, longed, wished*). Review or explain that a word that means the same or almost the same thing as another word is called a *synonym*. One reason writers replace words with synonyms is to make a piece of writing more interesting.
- Ask students to think of a word that means the opposite of *wanted* (*rejected*). Review or explain that a word that means the opposite of another word is called an *antonym*.
- Review or explain that a thesaurus is a book that contains synonyms and antonyms of words. Look up *wanted* and model how to use a thesaurus. Point out that dictionaries and thesauruses typically list root words, so the word *want* may be listed instead of *wanted*. Have students work in pairs to find the word *wanted*. Discuss the synonyms and antonyms listed.
- Explain that writers may also use synonyms to explain new vocabulary in text. Have students reread page 4. Point to the word *exploration*. Ask students to identify context clues within the paragraph that could help them understand the word *exploration* (*traveled the world, seek the edges of the unknown ocean*).
- Have students work in pairs to find the word *exploration* in the thesaurus. Have them identify the root word (*explore*). Discuss the synonyms and antonyms listed in the thesaurus.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students turn to page 20 and reread the first paragraph. Point out the word *hungry*. Ask students to suggest other words that mean almost the same thing (*eager, craving*) and the opposite (*unconcerned, disinterested*). Have them use the thesaurus to confirm their synonyms and antonyms for the word.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [synonyms-and-antonyms worksheet](#). When they have finished, review their answers aloud.

Build Fluency

Independent Reading

- Invite students to read their book independently. Additionally, invite partners to take turns reading parts of the book to each other.

Home Connection

- Give students their book to take home to read with parents, caregivers, siblings, or friends. Have students share their KWLS worksheet with someone at home, explaining how it works and what they learned.

Extend the Reading

Informational Writing and Art Connection

Review the timeline of Viking history on page 21. Have students choose one event to research and report. Provide print and Internet sources for students to find out more about their chosen event. Have them look for information to answer such questions as: why did the event occur, who was involved, and what happened as a result. Require that they write at least three sections, including an introduction and conclusion. Encourage them to add illustrations or photographs to their report. Either bind each report separately or bind all of the reports together to make a class book with its own front and back cover.

Visit [Writing A-Z](#) for a lesson and leveled materials on informational writing.

Social Studies Connection

Lead a class discussion about the impact of Viking exploration on the world. Remind students of their motivation for taking to the seas and their expertise as skilled sailors and navigators. Ask questions about how Viking exploration changed the world as we know it today. Refer to a world map as different locations from the text are discussed: Norway, Sweden, Denmark, North America, Great Britain, Iceland, Greenland, Europe, Newfoundland, Mediterranean Sea, Middle East, Africa, Asia, Scotland, Ireland, Spain, Jerusalem, Paris, Hamburg, Dublin, Caspian Sea, Russia, and Sicily.

Skill Review

[Discussion cards](#) covering comprehension skills and strategies not explicitly taught with the book are provided as an extension activity. The following is a list of some ways these cards can be used with students:

- Use as discussion starters for literature circles.
- Have students choose one or more cards and write a response, either as an essay or as a journal entry.
- Distribute before reading the book and have students use one of the questions as a purpose for reading.
- Conduct a class discussion as a review before the book quiz.

Assessment

Monitor students to determine if they can:

- consistently ask relevant questions about the topic prior to and during reading; locate answers to their questions in text during discussion and on a worksheet
- accurately identify the main idea and supporting details to better understand the text through discussion and on a worksheet
- correctly identify proper nouns during discussion and on a worksheet
- correctly use synonyms and antonyms during discussion and on a worksheet

Comprehension Checks

- [Book Quiz](#)
- [Retelling Rubric](#)

