

THE VIKINGS



During the tenth century Charlemagne's empire and Anglo-Saxon England were **attacked by** a new group of **invaders** known as Norsemen, or Vikings. They came from the **far northern part of** Europe now (a) _____ Scandinavia. The tall, **fair-skinned** Vikings **became known as** brutal fighters and robbers. They **spread** fear and (1) _____ throughout Western Europe (b) _____ several hundred years. **At the same time**, however, they **opened up** new **trade routes** and brought shipping **skills** to other Europeans.

The Vikings **captured** parts of Britain and France. They **ruled** cities in Russia and **set up colonies** on islands in the North Atlantic. They (c) _____ **paid a brief visit** to North America. Those who went abroad married the people they **conquered**. They also accepted a new **religion and customs**. (d) _____ stayed in Scandinavia and set up the (2) _____ of Norway, Sweden, and Denmark.

The Viking **hometown** of Scandinavia was an area **mostly of** forests and long, **rugged coastlines**. The (3) _____ part, known as Jutland, or Denmark, had many natural **harbors**. It also had large **plains** where the Vikings grew *oats, barley, rye, and wheat* and **pastured** (e) _____ *cattle, sheep, and pigs*.

The rest of Scandinavia was not as **well suited to** farming. Winters were long and cold, summers short and **mild**, and the **soil** (4) _____. The coastline, however, had (f) _____ *fjords*, or **bays**. So the

people **turned to the sea to making a living**. The Vikings built ships with *timber* from the **dense** forests and sailed out of the fjords onto the sea to make a living. The ships were large and well suited for long **voyages**. The bodies were long and **narrow**. The sides, where a *single row of 16 oars* was placed, were usually **decorated with** black or yellow painted shields. The tall *bows* were carved (g) _____ **the shape of a dragon's head**. This was **supposed to frighten** both **enemies** and the **evil**



spirits of the ocean. The (5) _____ sewn **sails** were square and often **striped** red and yellow. The ships **bore names** like “**Snake** of the Sea,” “**Raven** of the Wind,” and “Lion of the **Waves**.”

An *awning* in the **forepart** of the ship **protected** the sailors (h) _____ bad weather. They slept in leather **sleeping bags** and carried bronze **pots** in which to cook their meals. (i) _____ possible, they cooked their meals **ashore** to **avoid** the danger of a fire on board ship.

The Vikings **plotted their courses by the positions of** the sun and stars. They sailed far out into the North Sea and the Atlantic Ocean **in search of** good (6) _____ areas and **trade**. They (j) _____ most of their traveling and trading in the spring after their fields were sown, or in the fall after their *crops* were harvested. They spent the long winters in their villages **repairing** their boats and **weapons**.

The Vikings were as (7) _____ in trade (k) _____ the *Phoenicians*. Viking (8) _____ carried *furs, hides, fish, and slaves* to Western Europe and the Mediterranean. They **returned from** these areas (l) _____ silk, **wine, wheat, and silver**.

1. Fill in the gaps with **one** suitable word!

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| a) _____ | g) _____ |
| b) _____ | h) _____ |
| c) _____ | i) _____ |
| d) _____ | j) _____ |
| e) _____ | k) _____ |
| f) _____ | l) _____ |

2. Fill in the gaps with **one suitable form** of the words listed below!

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| 1) Destructive | 5) Strong |
| 2) King | 6) Fish |
| 3) South | 7) Success |
| 4) Rock | 8) Trade |

3. Find their English equivalent!

- I. Come back - _____
- II. Looking for - _____
- III. Perfect for - _____
- IV. Trips in the sea, space, ... - _____
- V. Spend a little time - _____
- VI. Had (the) names (of) – _____
- VII. Mobile 'beds' – _____
- VIII. Looks like sg. - _____