

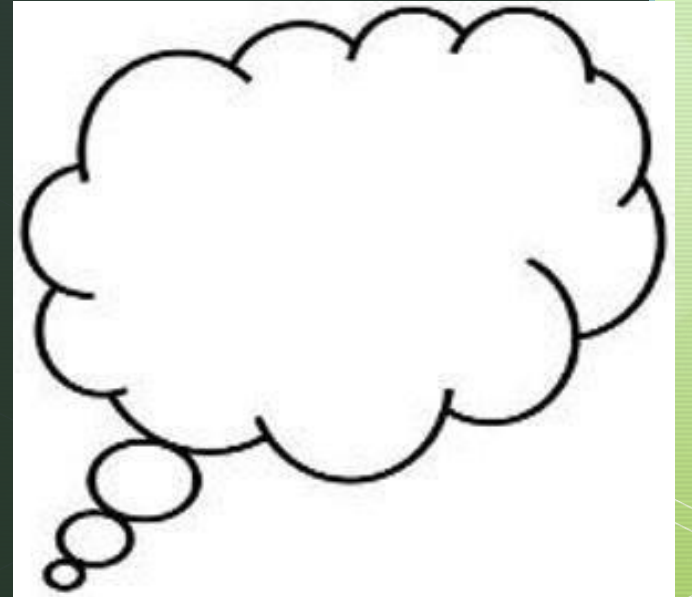


# Viking Longboats

# Have a think...

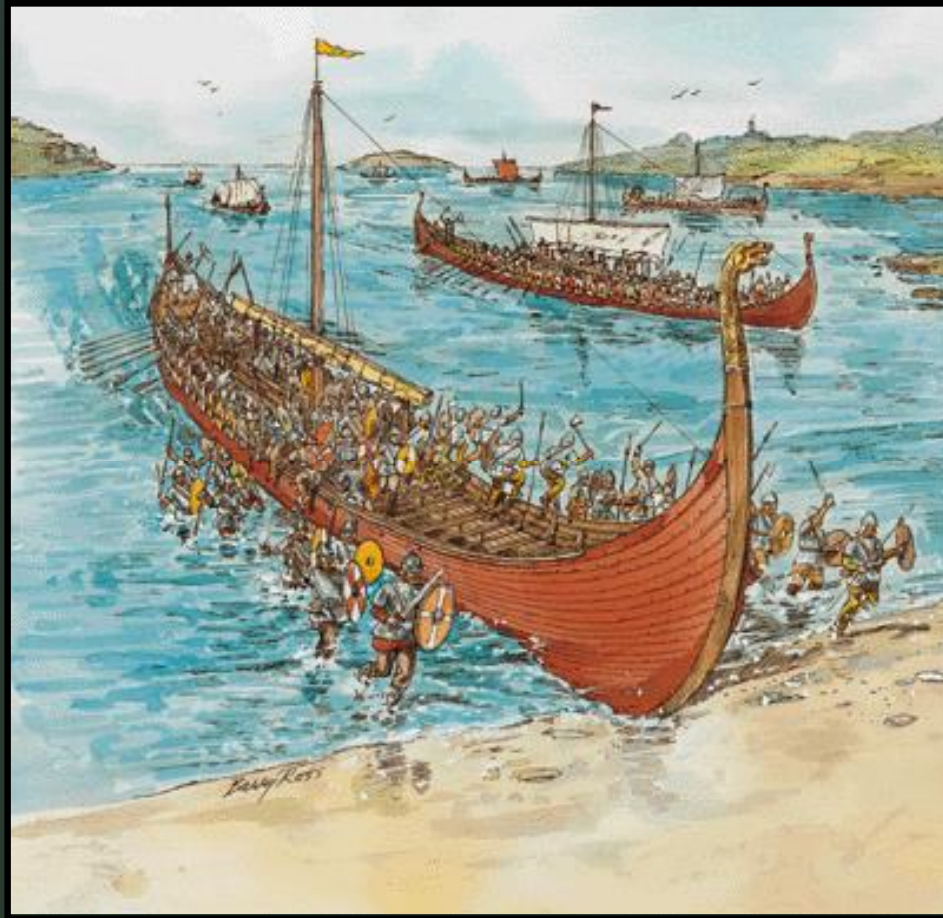
What do you think could have been key to the Vikings' success?

Remember, they had to travel very far through dangerous, stormy Northern seas to invade other lands.





If you said their great skill at sailing  
and building ships, then you would  
be right!



(There were other  
things that were key to  
their success too!)

- These ships were called longboats. Let's find out more!





# Longboats

The Vikings were brilliant ship builders. Their ships were strong, lightweight and beautifully shaped to skim quickly through the water. Warships and raiding ships were designed to come right up on the beach so that men could jump out and start fighting straight away.

The ships were built of wood and made waterproof with tar from pine trees. The square sails were made of woven wool and were often brightly coloured. When the wind was wrong for sailing, they were rowed by teams of oarsmen.



Longboats were also known as **DRAGON SHIPS** to their enemies.

**The Prow** – front of the ship carved with a dragon like figure

**The Stern** – back of the ship with a carving similar to the one on the front



### Question

Why do you think the Vikings carved dragon like figures onto the front and the back of their ships?



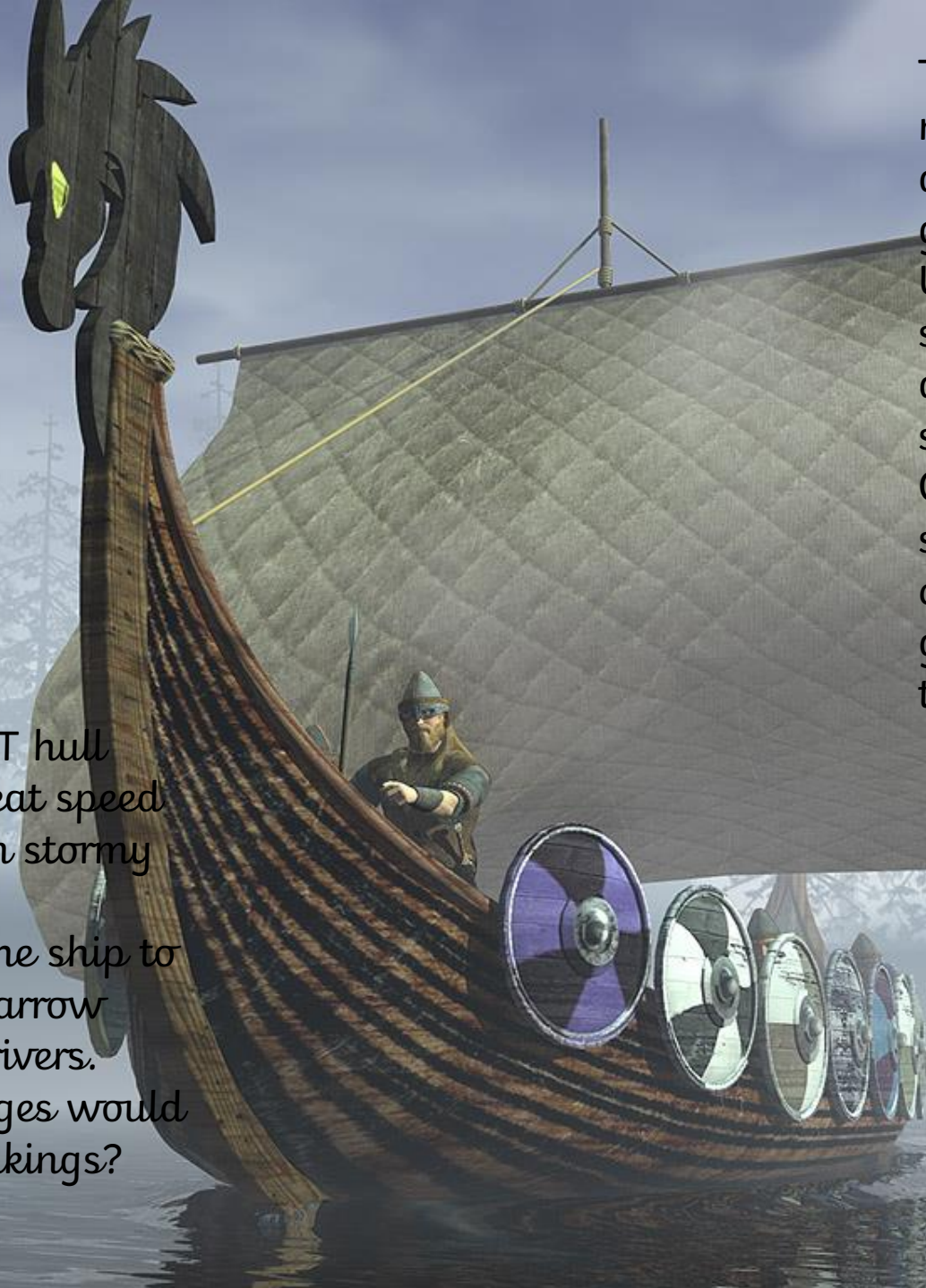
Dragon head  
prow to scare  
enemies and  
see the way!

The sail was large and  
made by wives,  
daughters and servant  
girls.  
Usually made from  
sheep wool covered with  
animal fat and tar to  
strengthen it.  
Often made from long  
strips of brightly  
coloured cloth (blue,  
green or red) sewn  
together.

CLINKER BUILT hull  
allowed for great speed  
and strength in stormy  
seas.

Also allowed the ship to  
be rowed up narrow  
channels and rivers.  
What advantages would  
this give the Vikings?

Shields were  
brightly coloured  
and were hung  
over the sides of  
the ship as it  
entered port





Viking longships were among the first ever ships to have a keel. The keel is extremely important as it provides the ship with support in rough weather. The keel also enabled the ships to travel smoothly and quickly across the sea. A large oar at the stern steered the ship.



So what was life like on a Viking Longboat?

Click the link and scroll down the page to watch the video to find out!

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/primaryhistory/vikings/vikings\\_at\\_sea/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/primaryhistory/vikings/vikings_at_sea/)

# Your Task

Your activity today is to design your own Viking Longboat!

There is a template on the school website that you can add your own figurehead and sail to, or you can draw out your own design.

You need to think about:

- The design on the prow and stern (fierce animal head)
- Sail design and colours
- Shield design and colours



# Remember to label your ship!

