

# Week beginning 18<sup>th</sup> January

**WALT: Draw and name parts of a Viking longship.**

# Viking Longship Facts

Vikings are well known for their ability to travel long distances to gather a fortune and search for better land to settle on. Vikings travelled on vessels called Longships (sometimes called Longboats or Dragon Boats). The ships were super advanced during the Viking age, a skilled navigator could even reach America on one!

## **Use:**

The Vikings used longships for trading, exploring and raiding.

## **Shape:**

Longships were narrow and light making them quick to manoeuvre through water. They could even be carried by Vikings over land, allowing them to sneak up on an enemy by approaching from a different direction.

## **Watertight:**

Longships were built in a 'clinker' style. Wooden planks, usually oak, were overlapped and then nailed together. Any gaps would be filled with tarred wool and handfuls of animal hair, just to make sure the Longship wouldn't leak.

## **Sail:**

They had a single sail in the centre of the boat, often shown striped in red and white. Sails were made from wool or linen and then dyed red. Some archaeologists believe that Longship sails came in many different colours, Vikings were known for liking bright colours.



**Oars:**

In situations of low wind, the crew would row the boat using the oars. Different styles of Longships would have different amounts of oars. For example, the Snekke longboat had space for 18 pairs of oarsmen, whilst the Busse had 34.

**Steering:**

Vikings steered their ship left or right (or port and starboard) using a steering oar at the rear of the Longship.

**Hull:**

Longships had a shallow hull so they could sail in any type of water such as oceans or rivers. Because of this shallow draft Longships could sail on water as shallow as 1 metre. They could also perform beach landings, allowing the Vikings to slide up onto the sand and leap ashore.

**Prow:**

Longships had a dragon's head at the front of the boat to intimidate enemies. This dragon head was also said to scare off evil spirits, ensuring a safe voyage. Longships were also double ended, this meant they didn't have to turn around, they could just reverse. This was much more manoeuvrable.

**Shields:**

Vikings would hang their shields on the side of the boat to protect the hull and save space aboard the deck. Plus, it would make the Longship nice and colourful - Vikings liked bright colours - and all the symbols of the scary animals and creatures on the shields would help scare the enemy.

**Deck:**

Vikings would sleep on the deck of the ship, beneath the stars. There were no cabins, if it was raining then Vikings would just get wet!

**Longship or Longboat:**

Always Longships! Ships are big, carry lots of people and sail out to sea. Boats are small, carry only one or two people and sail close to land. So, it's a Longship, never a Longboat.

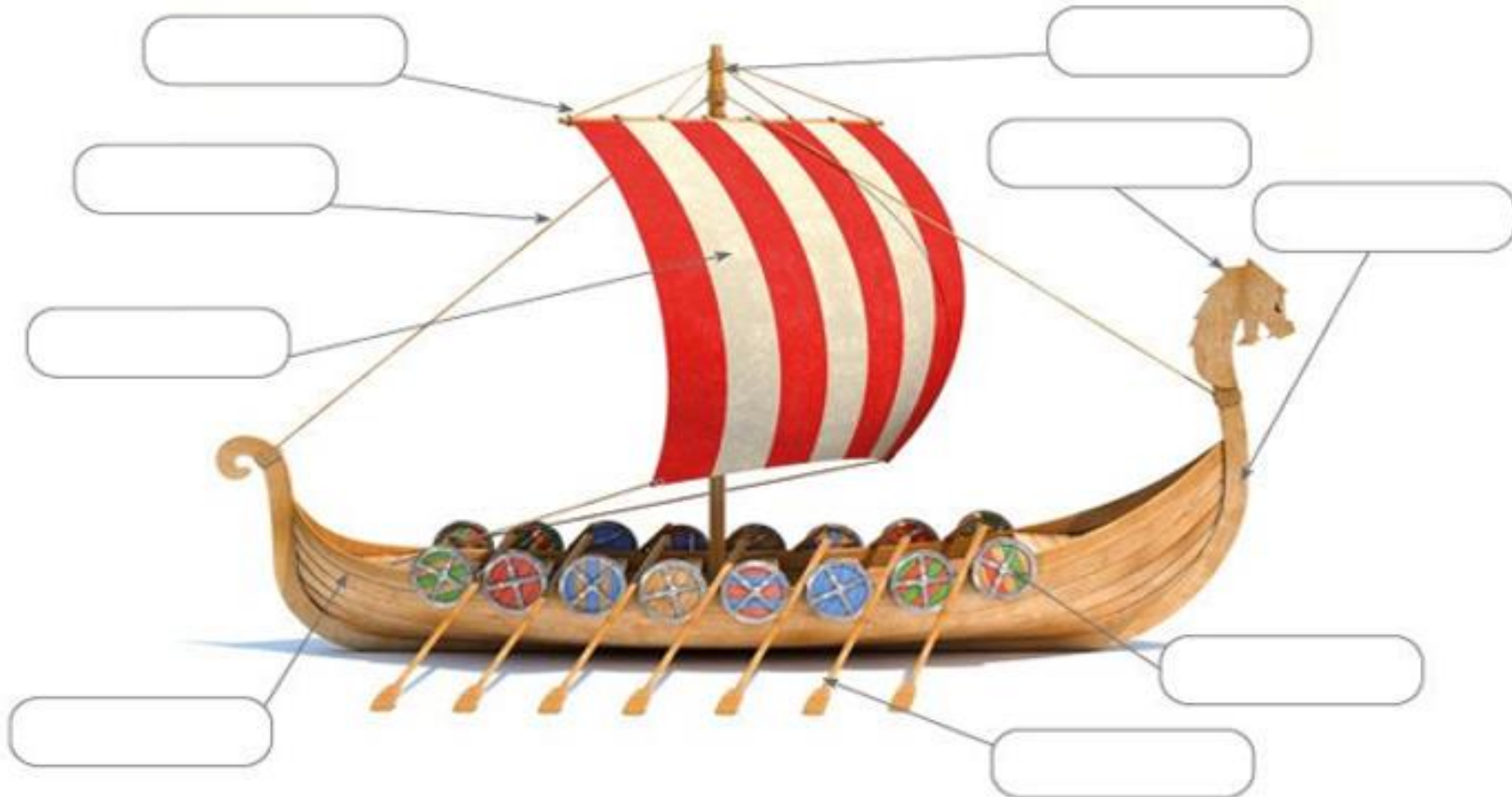


Use the website below to learn more about Viking longships.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/clips/zgmxp4>

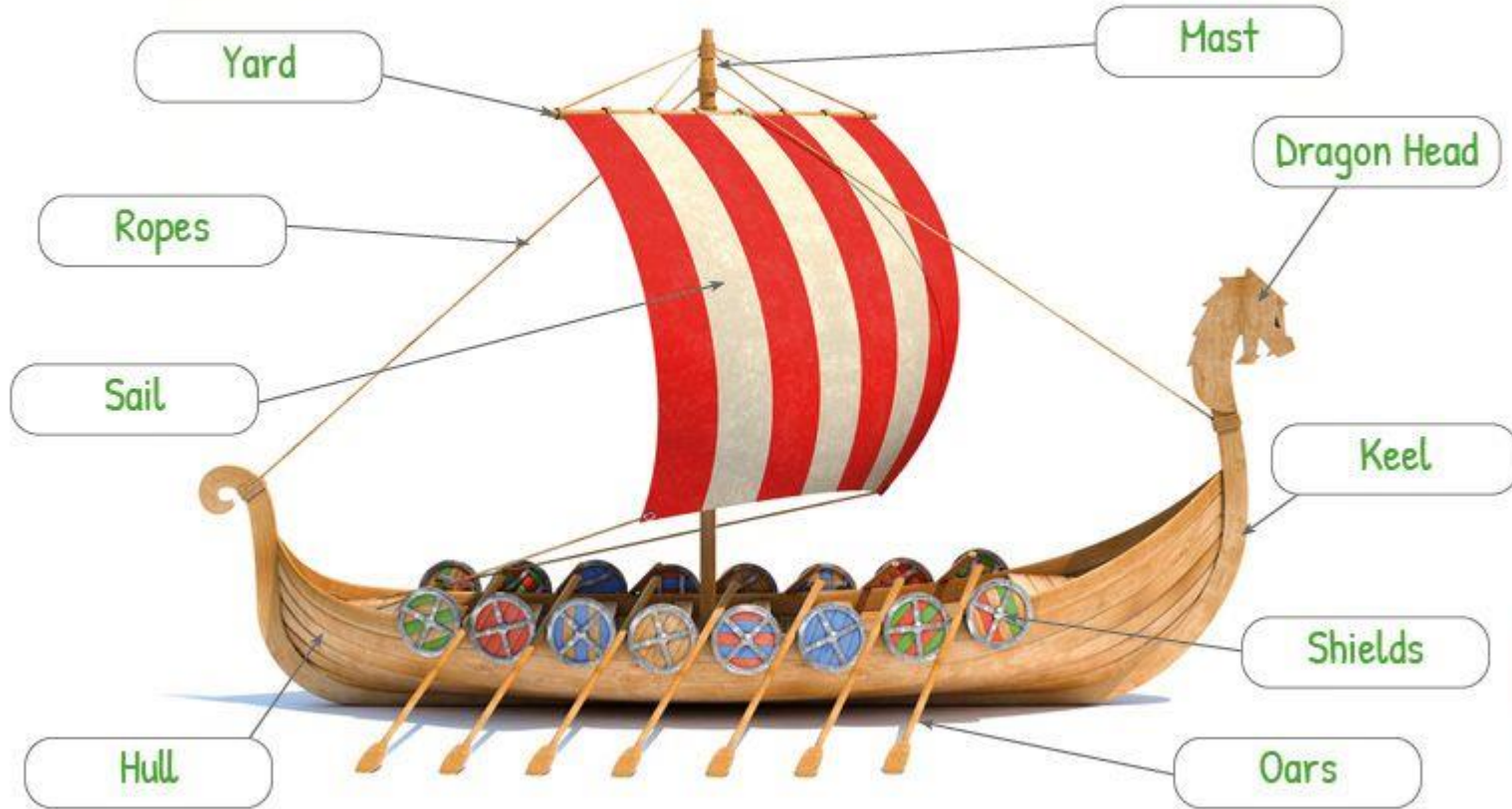


Can you name the parts of a Viking Longship?



- Sail
- Yard
- Dragon Head
- Keel
- Mast
- Hull
- Ropes
- Oars
- Shields

## Viking Longship



Have a go at drawing your own Viking longship. Use the information on the previous slides to add detail and to label the different parts.

