

How did the Vikings fight?

Viking warriors fought using **long swords** and **axes**. A good sword was handed down from father to son, but Vikings also **buried** weapons with their owner when he died.

Vikings did not wear much armour. Some chieftains wore chain mail coats, but most relied on a round wooden shield for protection.

Some Viking warriors went into battle wearing wolf or bear skins. These warriors were called '**berserkers**' because they went 'berserk' (out of control) and charged fearlessly into battle. Berserkers believed that Odin, the god of war, gave them superhuman powers and that they didn't need to wear battle armour for protection

The Vikings did not send many ships on their first raids. They made **surprise attacks** on places like Lindisfarne.

There was no English navy to guard the coasts so it was easy for small groups of Vikings to land on a beach or sail up a river. But it was not long before larger Viking armies attacked Britain.

In AD892, 300 Viking ships invaded Britain to fight King Alfred of Wessex. No one knows how big the Viking army was but if there were 20 men in each Viking ship, the army of AD892 numbered 6000!

That was a **huge army** for the time. Most Viking armies were smaller, perhaps 1000 to 2000 men


- Viking battle tactics were very simple & basic.
- They did not battle in formation.
- Their armies had cohesion because of the loyalty & bonds between the men & lords.
- Weapons training began in their youth.
- Young men dreamed to fight in an army under a famous Viking.
- Younger warriors would create a barrier using their shields on the battle field.
- Older warriors formed in support behind them.
- Battle began by throwing a spear over the enemy line to dedicate them to Odin

Viking Weapons and Battle Tactics – Guided Reading

Name _____

Date _____

RIC

 <p style="font-size: small; margin-top: 5px;">© ITV/REX/Shutterstock Banned: I'm A Celebrity... Get Me Out Of Here! stars will no longer eat live bugs in Bushtucker Trials (pictured: Harry Redknapp holding bugs in his mouth)</p>	<p>R – Who is pictured in the photo and what is he doing?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <hr/> <p>I – How do you think this person feels? Explain.</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <hr/> <p>C – Why do you think the producers of I'm a Celeb have banned the eating of live bugs?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
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Vocabulary

Word	Meaning
Berserk	
Cohesion	

Main Questions

1. Write down 3 weapons the Vikings used. _____
2. How did a Father and Son bond over weapons? _____

3. How did the Vikings feel about wearing armour? _____

4. What piece of armour did most Vikings have? _____
5. How do you know that berserkers believed in Viking gods? _____

6. What are your thoughts about berserkers? _____

7. Find the sentence that starts “The Vikings did not send...” Which 2 words tell us the Viking sailors were a bit sneaky? _____
8. Why was it fairly easy for Viking ships to land on a beach without any problems?

9. How many Viking ships came to fight King Alfred of Wessex? _____
10. True or False? We definitely know there were 6000 Vikings who came to attack. _____
11. Find and copy a phrase that tells us that Viking children trained to fight.

12. Explain how a battle was started. _____

Have a look at these Viking shield designs and then design your own.

