



Hello Friends! Bitty Bull is back from vacation and excited to share more fascinating details related to Scotland. Join Bitty Bull on a journey from Viking times and learn some interesting things along the way.

## VIKINGS

The Vikings or Norsemen, were expert sailors, farmers, and warriors who came by longships to Scotland from Norway, Sweden, and Denmark to raid, settle, and trade in Scotland in the late 8th century. Many were searching for new places to farm and others obtained wealth by pillaging villages and monasteries for treasure.

One such raid happened around AD 795 in Iona, home of the Iona Abbey, founded by the monk Columba. This monastery was an important center of learning and played a huge role in the conversion of Scotland to Christianity. The brutal attack left 86 monks butchered on the beach and priceless manuscripts destroyed. Many monks fled to Ireland and carried with them the Book of Kells, an illuminated manuscript of the four Gospels in the New Testament (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) which now permanently resides at Trinity College in Dublin. Another attack on the monastery came in AD 802.

The Viking Age lasted over 300 years from the 8th to the 11th century. Although feared as ruthless pirates and warriors, they were also great poets, artists, explorers, and lawmakers. Some of their explorations took them as far away as England, Ireland, France, Spain, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Iceland, Greenland, and Russia. They had a well ordered society based on laws and democracy. Problems between people were heard by an assembly of men who used laws to determine the settlement. This is considered the beginning of the modern jury system.

Vikings loved stories and poems and passed them down orally to their descendants. They used their skill with metal and wood to craft beautiful jewelry, ships, and weapons. As the Vikings settled in Scotland, many married into the local people. Over time they converted to Christianity from a belief in many gods. The main gods in Viking culture were Odin (one-eyed god of war), Thor (god of thunder symbolized by a hammer), and brother and sister Frey and Freyja (god and goddess of fertility).

Vikings have left many contributions to our life today. The days of the week are rooted in the names of their gods (Wednesday=Odin's (Wotan's) Day, Thursday=Thor's Day). Parliamentary government is modeled after theirs and some English words have Norse influence, particularly words beginning with sk- or ending with -by.



## Book Nook~

***Leif the Lucky*** by Ingri Daulaire (57 pages, ages 8+)

Beautifully illustrated biography of Leif Erickson including many adventures, his conversion to Christianity, and his colonization of North America.

***The Vikings in Scotland*** by Richard Dargie (32 pages)

An examination of Norse life in Scotland which begins with the attack on the holy island of Iona and the murder and enslavement of the monks who lived there. Illustrated with color and black and white artwork.

***The Vikings*** by Elizabeth Janeway (160 pages, ages 7+)

Stories of Leif the Lucky and Eric the Red. Also includes stories of Norse Mythology.

Each culture creates proverbs or wise sayings about life. Below are some from ***The Havamal***, a poem collection from the Viking age. Can you figure out what they mean? The first one is done for you.

GO YOU MUST.  
NO QUEST SHALL STAY IN ONE PLACE  
FOR EVER.  
LOVE WILL BE LOST IF YOU SIT TOO  
LONG AT A FRIEND'S FIRE.

(Don't wear out your welcome.)

IT IS FORTUNATE TO BE FAVORED  
WITH PRAISE AND POPULARITY.  
IT IS DIRE LUCK TO BE DEPENDENT ON  
THE FEELINGS OF YOUR FELLOW MAN.

ALWAYS RISE TO AN EARLY MEAL,  
BUT EAT YOUR FILL BEFORE A FEAST.  
IF YOU'RE HUNGRY YOU HAVE NO  
TIME TO TALK AT THE TABLE.

BE NOT A BRAGGART FOR IF ANY  
WORK DONE BE PRAISE-WORTHY,  
OTHERS WILL SING YOUR PRAISES  
FOR YOU.



Q: How did the Vikings send secret messages?

A: By Norse code!

Cut out and share some valentines with friends. You can even write them a message in Norse to decode!



I'VE TAKEN A VIKING  
TO YOU!



HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY!



YOU REALLY FLOAT  
MY BOAT,  
VALENTINE!

The Viking alphabet or **runes** were carved into stone to record everyday events such as deaths or trading or to mark belongings. The stories or **sagas** of the Vikings were passed down orally instead of written. Runes were also used to mark weapons to show ownership and to give them magical powers for battle.



The [Rök Runestone](#) in [Östergötland](#), Sweden, is the longest surviving source of early Old East Norse. It is inscribed on both sides.



# VIKING LONGSHIP

by Leslie Frederick  
also found at [www.craftsforkids.com](http://www.craftsforkids.com)



- brown craft paper for boat
- grey or white craft paper for sail
- unsharpened pencil or thin dowel approximately 6" in length
- hole punch
- scissors
- brown yarn
- gold and silver craft paper

1. Trace and cut boat pattern from the brown paper. Using marker, draw wood grain lines on the paper, if wanted.

2. Fold boat together and punch holes along the open outside edge every 1/2" as shown in picture. Using brown yarn or string, lace boat together and tie ends to secure.

3. Trace and cut out sail pattern from grey or white paper. Using markers or crayons, draw a Viking symbol or design on sail. You can also color stripes on the sail. Punch holes in top and bottom center of sail.

4. Fit unsharpened pencil or cut dowel through two holes of sail as shown in picture.

5. Using double sided tape securely fasten the pencil or dowel to the inside of the boat and close the boat over the tape.

6. Using the shield pattern, cut out 2 silver and 2 gold circles and attach to sides of ship with the double sided tape.

Decorate with pattern or design of choice using marker.

\* Bitty Bull editor has modified original supply list and craft instructions for ease of use in this publication.

Viking ships were built beside a river or sea inlet in order to easily slide the vessel into the water upon completion. Vikings used oak trees to make the bottom or keel of the ship and then long pieces of wood for the sides. Wooden pegs and iron rivets fastened the wood together. Animal wool and tar from pine trees were used to waterproof the vessel by filling in cracks. The front of the ship curved up ending in a carved figure head. The sail was made from one large square of woven wool which could be folded down when there was no wind. Wooden oars were used to help propel the ship and an oar on the back or stern of the ship was used for steering.

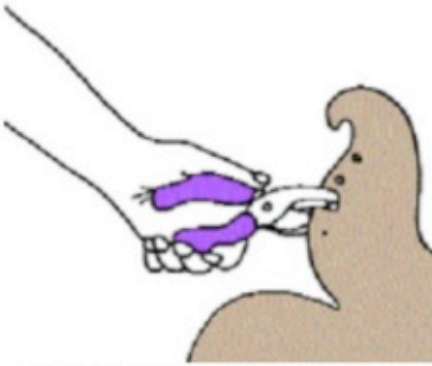
The longships were able to easily sail in shallow water up a river as well as on the ocean. The shallowness of the boat allowed the Vikings to jump out and fight quickly and then board and make a hasty departure.

To navigate, the Vikings used landmarks close to the coast or the sun and stars when further out on the ocean. Watching birds and the color of the ocean also helped them know when land was near.

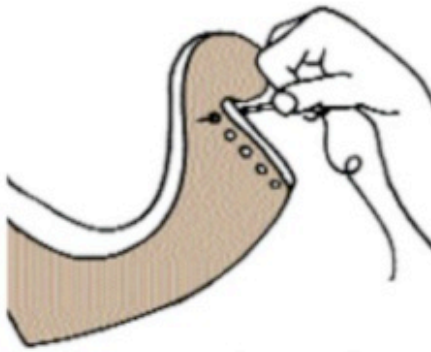


*Wake early if you want another man's life or land. No lamb for the lazy wolf. No battle's won in bed. --The Havamal*

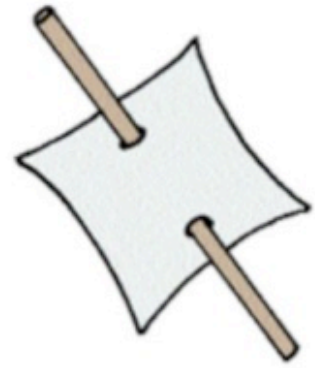




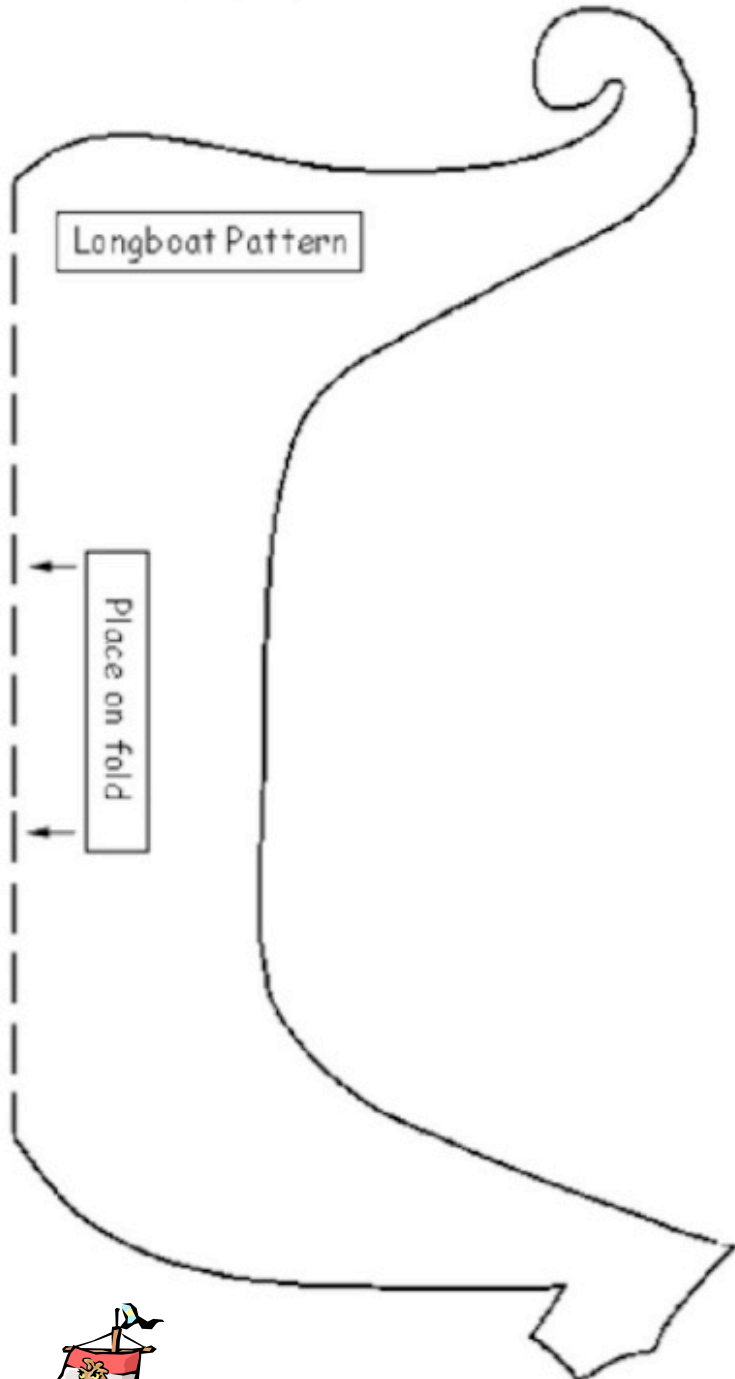
Punch holes along edge of boat.



Lace together with yarn.



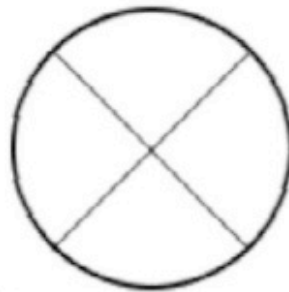
Insert dowel through the holes in sail.



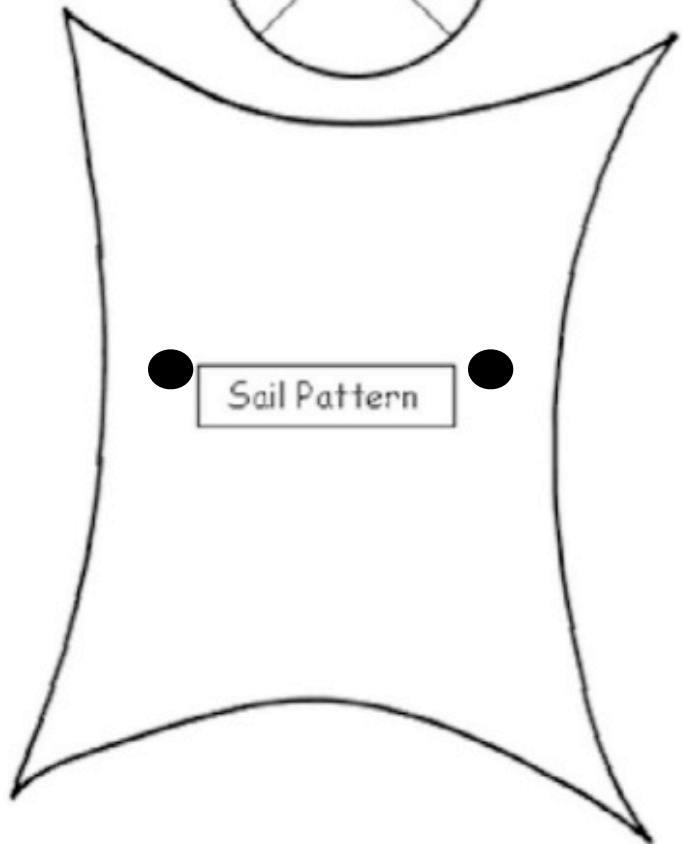
Longboat Pattern

Place on fold

Shield Pattern



Sail Pattern



Decorate the figure head to look like a friendly or fierce dragon.



Never walk away from home ahead of your axe and sword. You can't feel a battle in your bones or foresee a fight. --The Havamal

