

Viking Longship Dug Up After 1000 Years

Who were the Vikings?

- The Vikings came from Scandinavia, modern-day Norway, Sweden and Denmark.
- Many of them raided land and stole from the local people, although some were peaceful traders and settlers.

Almost two years ago, archaeologists in Norway made a rare discovery. They found a Viking longship buried in a place called Gjeltestad using radar.

They recently decided that, after more than 1000 years underground, it was time to dig it up.

After examining the ship with a small trial **excavation**, they saw that it was in poor condition.

They realised a fungus was eating away at the wooden remains. If they left it any longer, there might not be much of the ship left to study.

So, the Norwegian government has given more than £1 million to the project. It will take five months to dig it up this rarity and hopefully it will be money and time well spent.

Even though Vikings came from Norway, finding longboats is very rare. This **artefact**, found in 2018, was only the fourth ever found in Norway. It was also the only one discovered for more than 100 years.

“With so few ships discovered, a new Viking ship will have a great impact on understanding the ships themselves,” said Viking ship expert, Knut Paasche.

He also said the find will “provide valuable information to understand the **historical era** as a whole”.

This is because the ship will have been

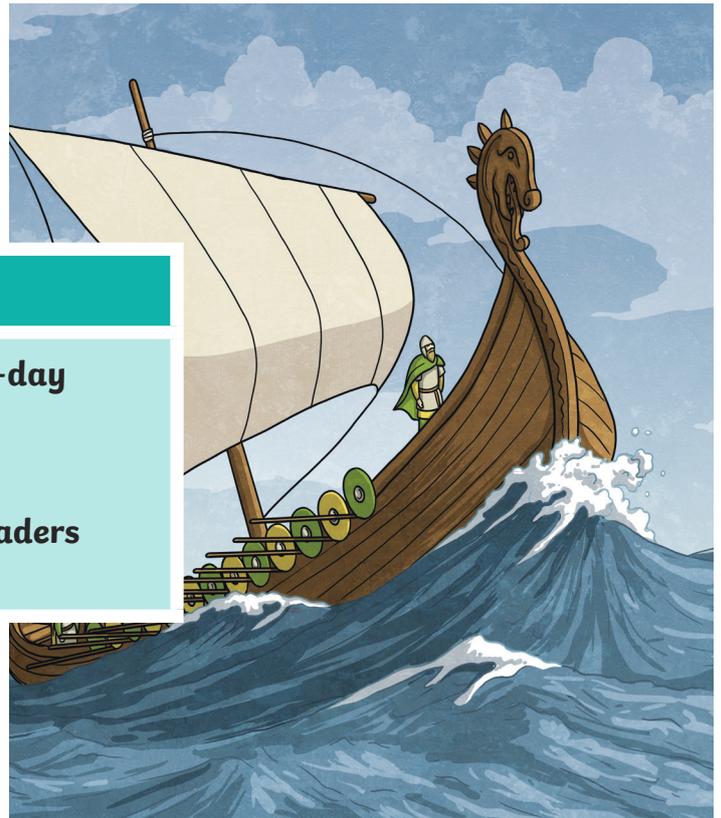


Illustration: A Viking longship.

dragged from the sea and buried as a coffin for someone important. That means other Viking artefacts and remains are likely to be found with it.

Once dug up, the wood will need to be sprayed with chemicals to **preserve** it. They will use the same stuff that has managed to save the famous Tudor warship the Mary Rose.

Let’s hope that they win their race against time to recover and save this important piece of history.

Glossary

excavation	Digging carefully in order to find buried remains.
artefact	Objects made by a human being of historical interest.
historical era	A long and distinct period of history.
preserve	Maintain something in its original or existing state.

Questions

1. In which year did they spot the ship?

- 2016
- 2017
- 2018
- 2019

2. How do you think archaeologists felt when they discovered the ship?

3. In the paragraph beginning “So, the Norwegian government...”, which word means ‘having value because it is unusual’.

4. Tick each statement to show whether it is true or false.

	True	False
Lots of Viking ships have been found.		
The ship was Roman.		
Vikings were sometimes buried in ships.		
The ship was found using radar.		

5. In the final paragraph, why do you think the author used the phrase ‘race against time’?

6. Summarise the key information in the article using 15 words or fewer.

Answers

1. In which year did they spot the ship?

- 2016
- 2017
- 2018**
- 2019

2. How do you think archaeologists felt when they discovered the ship?

Accept any reasonable answer that refers to the archaeologists being excited to discover a rare Viking ship, e.g. I think that archaeologists will have been shocked to find a Viking ship because they are so rare.

3. In the paragraph beginning “So, the Norwegian government...” which word means ‘having value because it is unusual’.

rarity

4. Tick each statement to show whether it is true or false.

	True	False
Lots of Viking ships have been found.		✓
The ship was Roman.		✓
Vikings were sometimes buried in ships.	✓	
The ship was found using radar.	✓	

5. In the final paragraph, why do you think the author used the phrase ‘race against time’?

Accept any reasonable answer that references the phrase, e.g. A race against time is when a person has to do something fast because there is not much time and the archaeologists want to dig up the ship quickly before a fungus eats it.

6. Summarise the key information in the article using 15 words or fewer.

Accept a summary which includes the key information from the article and uses 15 words or fewer, e.g. Archaeologists are hurrying to dig up a Viking ship before fungus rots it all away.