

Over 1200 years ago the Vikings started travelling to Ireland. They came from **Scandinavia**, from countries Norway, Sweden, and Denmark. When they first arrived in Ireland, they attacked **monasteries**. At monasteries, monks and priests lived and prayed but they also had beautiful metal objects made out of **gold** and **silver** that the Vikings wanted.

# THE VIKINGS

After a time the Vikings stopped attacking monasteries and began to live in Ireland. They built their own towns at **Dublin**, **Waterford**, and **Limerick**, which grew into the cities that we know today. With them, they also brought their own religion and beliefs. The Vikings believed in Norse Gods including **Odin**, **Freya** and **Thor**.

Viking sword found at Ballinacorney, County Westmeath



One of the most well-known Viking sites outside of Scandinavia is Dublin. In the 1970s and 1980s, parts of Dublin city around Wood Quay were excavated.

This told archaeologists about what life was like in Dublin when the Vikings settled during the 9th century, over 1100 years ago. Many of the objects found during these excavations are on display in the **Viking Ireland Exhibition** at the National Museum of Ireland – Archaeology. Here there are swords, axes, and spears used by Viking warriors, scales, weights, and silver that were used for trade and brooches and amulets worn by men and women.



**museum**

National Museum of Ireland  
Ard-Mhúsaem na hÉireann

Archaeology

# GODS OF THE VIKINGS

The **Vikings** believed that the world was made up of nine different worlds. Different beings lived in each one. For example, people lived in Midgard, the Gods lived in Asgard and the Giants lived in **Jotunheim**. There was also **Helheim**, where all the thieves and bad people went after they died. Each of these worlds were held in the branches and roots of an ash tree called **Yggdrasil**.



ODIN

In Viking Mythology, **Odin** is the leader of all the Gods and Goddesses. He is the God of knowledge, war, and victory. He lives in Asgard in a silver tower called **Valaskialf**. He has one eye and he sends out two ravens, called **Hugin** and **Munin** that travel across the worlds and come back to Odin to tell him all that they saw and heard. He has a magic spear called **Gungnir** that can hit any target it is thrown at.



FREYA & FREYR

**Freya** and **Freyr** are twins and are the daughter and son of the God called **Njord**. Freya is the Goddess of love and beauty and is incredibly beautiful. She is admired by the gods, dwarves, and the elves. When she cries, her tears turn to gold. Freyr is the God of good harvest and peace. He is also the ruler of the Elves at their home called **Alfheim**.



THOR

**Thor** is the God of Thunder and is one of Odin's sons. He is the strongest of all the Gods and he protects the people in **Midgard**. Thor has a magic **hammer** that only he can lift. It can spark lightning bolts, tear down mountains, and will always return to Thor's hand. It was made by dwarves and it is called **Mjolnir**.



LOKI

**Loki** is known as the **Trickster** as he loves causing trouble for everyone, especially the Gods. He is very cunning and clever and is always looking for new ways to trick people. He is a shapeshifter, allowing him to change into any living creature. He lives in **Asgard**, with all the other Gods, and he is friends with Thor.



Every underlined word in each paragraph on the opposite page is hidden somewhere in the grid – forwards, downwards or diagonally.

There are 20 to find altogether.

**GOOD LUCK!**



We know about Norse Gods and Norse Mythology as many of those stories were written down. Many different creatures appear in Norse Mythology including giants, dwarves, and elves.



## THOR'S HAMMER AMULET

Many of the Vikings that lived in Ireland worshipped Thor. They wore amulets made out of silver or amber in the shape of Thor's hammer. Thor's hammer was the most powerful weapon owned by any of the Norse Gods. People believed that wearing a Thor's Hammer amulet around their neck would give them protection.

In Dublin, archaeologists found lots of Thor's hammer amulets and these can be seen at the National Museum of Ireland – Archaeology in the **Viking Ireland Exhibition**.

When you have finished the wordsearch please let us know how you got on. You can contact us at [bookings@museum.ie](mailto:bookings@museum.ie) or on Twitter using **#MuseumAtHome** or Facebook.