

Making a Viking pendant

What will children learn?

- To use source materials as inspiration for their own pendant design, and to turn their 2D design into a 3D artefact.
- To practice and improve sculpting techniques with clay.

Suitability

Years 4-6

Safety

- Show children how to use tools with sharp points.
- Children must wash their hands with soap and water after this activity.
- Only quick release necklaces can be used.



Equipment per person

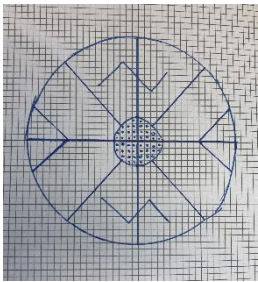
- 50g air-dry clay
- Length of string /cord
- Snap off safety clasp
- Selection of modelling tools
- Acrylic paint (optional)
- Graph / squared paper and pencil
- Viking symbols sheet (optional)

Equipment notes

- You may choose to provide children with pre-drawn circles on graph / squared paper for their designs.
- Modelling tools for clay have different shaped ends. The one you select depends on the job that needs doing, for example, a tool with a straight end is good for cutting out shapes whereas a tool with a curved end is good for scooping out clay. You can buy these tools cheaply but there are a variety of other things you could use depending on what you want to do. Bamboo kebab sticks and cocktail sticks make cheap alternatives for certain tools.
- Work on a smooth surface.
- A snap-off safety clasp must be used to join the necklace. Packs of breakaway connectors can be sourced online.



Procedure

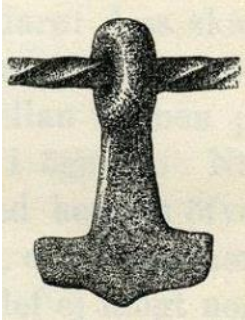
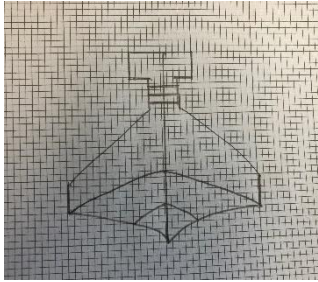
	
1. Sketch out your design, graph paper may help with symmetrical designs.	2. Roll the clay into a ball and then flatten it with the palm of your hand into a disc about 0.5 cm thick.

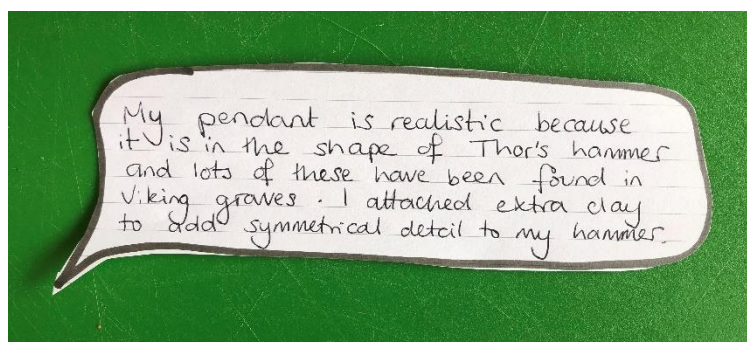
	
3. Make indents into the disc using modelling tools (remove excess clay if necessary).	4. Use additional pieces of damp clay to add adornments. When adding adornments moisten them and press them on gently.
	
5. If you wish to make a different shape score the outline into the clay and then select an appropriate tool to remove the outer edges.	
6. If you are not happy with your pendant, reshape the clay and start again.	
	
7. When you have finished your design, use a sharp tool to poke a hole through the top of the pendant. Wiggle the tool around so that the hole is big enough for the string you are using.	8. Leave to dry for at least 48 hours.
	
9. Paint if desired.	10. Thread through string / cord, attach the safety clasp to each end.

Be aware when doing this practical:

At any point during the modelling process cracks may appear in the clay. To remove these, moisten fingers with water and smooth them over.

What the learning may look like

		
Source Material	My design	Finished pendant



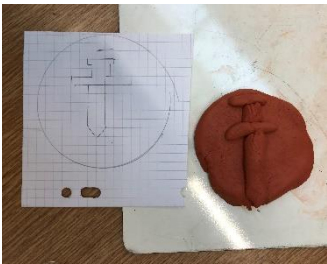
Possible further activities

- Research other Viking artefacts and what the art on them symbolised.
- Learn about how Vikings used their jewellery as currency.
- Find out about runes and write your name using them.

Background notes

Both Viking men and women loved wearing jewellery. They wore brooches, pendants, rings and bracelets to show their status. The jewellery was made from a variety of materials. The rich would make theirs from gold or silver, whereas the poor would fashion theirs from pewter, bronze or animal bones. Many examples of pendants have been found in Viking graves, most have similar designs and shapes.

Over the course of the Viking era, designs changed, but, typically, a Viking design would include geometric interlace and knot patterns, or animal motifs of great fighting beasts (such as lions, birds and serpents). A popular Viking pendant was a likeness of Thor's hammer. The Viking alphabet consists of marks formed of straight lines, called runes. Their straight lines made them easy to carve and so these are often seen on Viking jewellery too.

		
---	---	---

