

## WALT understand Viking people and their social structure

Today we will be learning about the Viking society and the different roles played by Viking people.

### What was the Viking social structure?

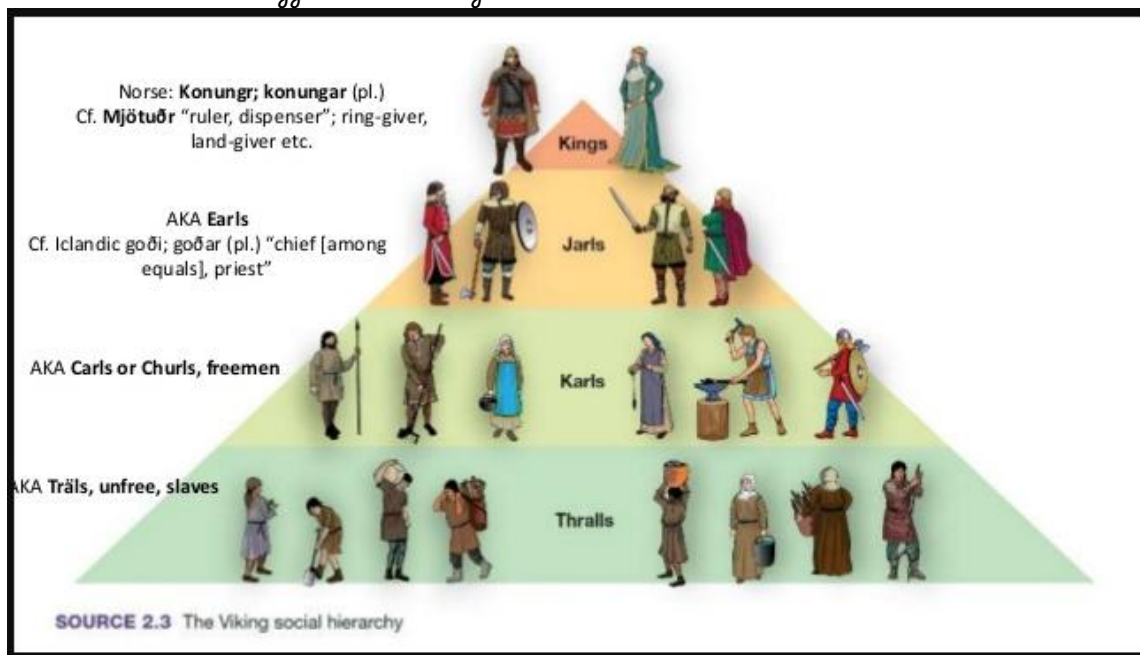
The Viking society was **hierarchical** (arranged in order of rank) and was structured in a very simple way. The class you were in was dependent on how much freedom and riches you had.

**Thralls:** This was the lowest position in Viking society. They were usually slaves who worked long hours. However, Viking slaves had some freedoms. For example, they could go to the market and buy whatever they wanted. Also, they could buy their own freedom if they collected enough money.

**Karls:** They were the middle class in Viking society. They had their own freedom, worked jobs and usually owned a house and a plot of land.

**Jarls:** These were former Karls, but were popular among the people, and had large sums of money. A Jarl normally owned a farm with slaves working on it, a bigger house than a Karl, and a Viking longboat (which were in popular demand at the time).

**Kings:** Viking kings were the highest position in Viking society. Their job was to keep security and peace among the Vikings. They also decided where to raid and whether or not to raid different villages and cities.



**Men:** Most Viking men were all-round handy men, but some had special skills like pottery or metalwork. They could also fight if they had to, to protect their family or to support their chieftain.

**Women:** Viking women did lots of different jobs. They made clothes for the family by spinning and weaving sheep's wool. On the farm, women milked the cows and made cheese.

**Children:** Children didn't go to school. Instead, boys were expected to help out with their parents' work. Boys learned hunting and fighting skills, as well as history, religion and law from spoken stories and songs. Viking girls helped out around the longhouse and on the farmland. Their jobs included weeding vegetable patches and scaring away hungry birds.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/ztyr9j6/articles/z tqbr82>

**Clothes:** The Vikings were skilful weavers and women and children often made clothes for their families. They could also use natural dyes from plants to give colour. Men wore tunics and trousers while women wore long dresses. Follow this link to find out more about Viking families:

**Task:** Can you find out more about the clothes worn by the Vikings?

Follow this link to watch the clip:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/clips/zksfb9q>

Next, **either** draw a Viking man and woman and have a go at labelling their clothes, **or** label the pictures below. You can use the labels underneath the pictures and add your own too

**Extension:** find out about the clothes worn by Thralls, Karls, Jarls and Kings. Draw them and label their clothes.

