



Teachers' Guide *to* Where is Vinland?

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Teachers' Support and The Great Unsolved Mysteries in Canadian History Websites

As the Teachers' Support section of The Great Unsolved Mysteries in Canadian History websites outlines (<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/teachers/indexen.html>), these sites provide five kinds of support for teachers:

- a summary of the Foundational Ideas of history teaching that informs the Mysteries Project;
- a detailed Teachers' Guide for each of the sites;
- short MysteryQuest lesson plans;
- a series of scaffolding activities and briefing sheets to introduce students to Key Concepts in Historical Thinking;
- access to the password protected "Interpretations" portion of the website.

1. Foundational Ideas gives you a thumbnail sketch of the teaching philosophy behind the Great Unsolved Mysteries in Canadian History websites, as well as a more detailed examination of the four different levels at which these sites 'work' as ways to teach and learn about history.

See: <http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/teachers/foundationalideas/indexen.html>

2. Teachers' Guides contain detailed, graduated, multi-lesson, and age-appropriate unit plans as well as free-standing lessons for elementary and secondary students.

See: <http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/teachers/guides/indexen.html>

3. Short, focused, age-specific, single-lesson MysteryQuests include detailed lesson plans and teacher support relating to one or more of the Mystery sites. Each of the MysteryQuest lessons employs the popular and student-friendly Webquest format to present a lesson that uses The Critical Thinking Consortium's "Critical Challenge" approach and a small selection of primary documents from the sites to create short but powerful lessons involving students in thinking critically about history.

See: <http://www.mysteryquests.ca>

4. Concepts in Historical Thinking provides activities and briefing sheets to introduce students to key concepts in historical thinking that they will be using as they work with these Mysteries. This part of the site is in active development at this time and currently includes three exercises: “What are Primary Documents?”, “History vs. the Past”, and “Testimony vs. Evidence”.

See: <http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/teachers/indexen.html>

5. Teachers are also eligible to request access to the password-protected “Interpretations” part of each of the Mysteries Website allowing you to read historians’ interpretations of the documents on the site. This section is password protected in order to encourage students to develop their own interpretations of primary documents, rather than relying on other people’s interpretations.

See: <http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/teachers/secure/indexen.html>

THE UNIT:

Where is Vinland?

~ A unit of study designed to foster critical thinking`in the intermediate and junior secondary level Canadian history curriculum ~

The Story of The Mystery Website “Where is Vinland?”

A thousand years ago, as Europe was emerging from what historians have called the “Dark Ages,” stories began circulating in Europe about a lush, abundant land far across the Atlantic called “Vinland” – the land of wine. For a long time scholars dismissed these stories as fanciful fables but then, in 1961, an indisputable Viking settlement was unearthed at L’Anse Aux Meadows in Newfoundland, Canada. It was true! The Vikings had been to America 500 years before Columbus “discovered” it. But L’Anse Aux Meadows is not a “land of wine”. So where was this idyllic Vinland where Europe first encountered America?

The Vinland stories originated from an expedition of thirty men and possibly some women who set out from southwestern Greenland to explore lands to the west and south led by Leif, son of Erik the Red. Only fifteen years earlier, in 985 or 986, Erik had led a group of Icelandic families to new homes in southwestern Greenland. That same year an Icelandic trader en route from Iceland to visit his father in Greenland was storm-driven to unknown lands in what we now call North America. Leif Eriksson set out to settle them.

This website will take you along Leif’s route to North America and Vinland. Where was this land? Many claim to have found it from northern Labrador all the way down to Virginia. Which is the real Vinland? Leif left only a few tantalizing clues, as do medieval Icelandic manuscripts. Solving the mystery of Vinland requires putting these together with archaeological discoveries, knowledge of what the Vikings were capable of, what their motivations might have been, and an understanding of the people and environment of the land they encountered. To understand the context of the Vinland voyages, this website offers a tour through the Viking world, with brief stops in Europe, Iceland, and Greenland. To allow you to get a better grasp of Viking life, we have recreated the L’Anse Aux Meadows settlement and some of the Viking artifacts in a 3-D format. To understand their encounter with America you will also meet the people already in North America when the Norse arrived: the Aboriginal groups of the eastern seaboard.

There are many mysteries to solve here, and “Where was Vinland?” is just the start. What drove the Vikings to far-away countries? Why did they come to North America? Once here, why did they not stay? What impact did they have? And, why does legendary Vinland continue to have such a strong hold on our imagination?

The specific question addressed in this teaching unit is, as you will see in more detail below: Where is Vinland?

Unit Rationale

This unit uses the Great Unsolved Mysteries in Canadian History website, “Where is Vinland?” to introduce students to historical issues of exploration, early settlement, and ethnic tensions in Canada’s early history. In the process of answering the question posed by this unit “Where is Vinland?” students not only explore these important themes and issues in Canadian history, but they do so by learning to use the wealth of primary documents included in the site including sagas, artifacts, and other archaeological evidence.

Unit Overview: Themes, Issues, Concepts

The teaching unit in this Teachers' Guide invites students to learn about the earliest immigrant community in North America, that of the Vikings, through an examination of a wide variety of rather unusual evidence available on the site: sagas, 3D images of artifacts, photographs of archaeological sites, scientific analysis of material remains, as well as contemporary secondary sources about the Vikings. After learning about the society, economy, and culture of the Vikings from these sources, students will compare ancient descriptions of Vinland found in the Viking sagas to the detailed evidence on this website about the L'Anse aux Meadows archaeological site in Labrador in an attempt to answer the unit's guiding question: "Where is Vinland?"

Students using this unit will:

- Acquire an understanding of historical thinking through the experience of historical research and the exposure to historical explanations;
- Acquire an understanding of the practices and concepts used by archaeologists;
- Acquire an understanding of the challenges and issues facing people coming to and living in Canada more than a thousand years ago, as well as the challenges and issues of this re-settlement on the indigenous peoples already in the area;
- Confront evidentiary challenges, including incompleteness and interpretative errors, differentiate the quality of evidence, and observe inconsistencies in testimony;
- Acquire an understanding of the broader social and historical contexts of early settlement.

Instructional Strategies

Need for Computer Lab Time:

While this entire unit is fully integrated with the “Where is Vinland?” website, most tasks can be completed if the requisite documents are printed ahead of time and given to students. In this way, classes with limited access to computer lab time can still complete the unit.

Assessment & Evaluation:

Because assessment and evaluation standards vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, only generalized guidelines have been included here. Instructors may wish to assign process marks for completion of the various tasks, or not, if their students are sufficiently mature enough to recognize that the successful completion of the various tasks is crucial to successful completion of the culminating activity.

The following skills and habits of mind are ones that should be carefully assessed in the process of evaluating the critical thinking needed in working with this site:

- Issues are analyzed seriously and thoughtfully
- Presentations and talks are given carefully, with materials well-prepared and organized, and points well thought out
- Results are expressed cautiously and are supported with reference to appropriate evidence
- Opinions are reasoned. Reports and narratives are written discerningly, reflecting the above and with care, attention and evident pride in quality work

Instructional Outcomes

- Identify and clarify a problem, an issue, and an inquiry
- Develop a vocabulary for historical documents analysis
- Develop a vocabulary and methodology for the analysis of archaeological evidence
- Plan and conduct research using primary and secondary sources and electronic sources
- Generate and critique different interpretations of primary and secondary sources
- Assess and defend a variety of positions on controversial issues
- Construct a narrative from pieces of evidence that are non-sequential
- Plan, revise, and deliver formal presentations using a variety of media
- Demonstrate leadership by planning, implementing, and assessing a variety of strategies to address the problem, issue, or inquiry initially defined
- Refine abilities to construct and defend an argument

Culminating Activity

Students will create a mock ‘trial by historians and archaeologists’ where students will present evidence for and against the conclusion that the L’Anse Aux Meadow site lies within the area formerly known as Vinland.

In the trial, students will take on the role of present-day historians and archaeologists. They will not only use evidence from archaeological remains, sagas, and the work of contemporary scholars to argue that L’Anse aux Meadow is or is not the Vinland of ancient legend.

Accurate, detailed notes from the completion of all tasks will prove invaluable to students as they complete the culminating activity.

Recommended Time Frame

If you intend to include all instructional strategies, allow the full time recommended for this unit in a junior secondary level course. Adjust as appropriate to meet the needs of different learners and instructional time limitations. Many of the tasks also stand independently and can be pulled out and used as single lessons if required.

Site Organization

First of all, rest assured that no one is expected to read the entire site, not even you. No one is expected to peruse every item in an archive before s/he starts to write a research paper and the same principle applies here. What you, as a teacher, needs is an understanding of the construction of the site in order to guide your students.

For a detailed overview of the site organization and tips on how to use the site, see the “How to Use This Site” section found on the Home page of “Where is Vinland?”.

See: <http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/Vinland/home/howtousesite/indexen.html>

Fitting This Unit into Your Provincial Curriculum

Our Teachers' Guide team has done some research into provincial curricula across Canada; "Where is Vinland?" can be used effectively in the following courses.

Courses marked with an asterisk (*) are ones where the teacher may need to do a little improvising to ensure that the lessons – designed specifically here for intermediate and junior secondary students – are at the appropriate level.

Alberta

Social Studies 7 – People and their Culture

Social Studies 8 – History and Geography in the Western Hemisphere

Social Studies 8 – IOP

Social Studies 9 – Economic Growth: Differing Perspectives

Social Studies 9 – IOP

British Columbia

Social Studies 7 – Ancient World Cultures to 500 AD

Social Studies 8 – World Civilizations 500-1600

Social Studies 11 – Canadian Identity *

Manitoba

Grade 7 Social Studies – Spaceship Earth

Grade 8 Social Studies – People Through The Ages

Senior 3 Social Studies – Canada: A Social and Political History*

New Brunswick

Grade 8 – Atlantic Canada in the Global Community

Grade 10 – Ancient/Medieval History

Grade 12 – Canadian Geography 121*

Grade 12 – Canadian History 122 *

Newfoundland

Grade 7 – Living in North America

Grade 9 – Canada: Our Land and Heritage

Grade 12 – Canadian History 1201*

Canadian Issues 1209 *

Nova Scotia

Grade 7 – Social Studies

Grade 10 – Ancient and Medieval History

Canadian History 11*

Nunavut & NWT

Grade 7 Social Studies – Living in a Circumpolar World

Grade 8 Social Studies – The Changing World

Grade 9 – The Growth of Canada

Grade 10 – Northern Studies 15

Ontario

Grade 7 – Compulsory History and Geography

Grade 8 – Compulsory History and Geography

Grade 11 – Geography: The Americas: Geographic Patterns and Issues*

Canada – History, Identity and Culture, Grade 12 *

Prince Edward Island

Grade 7 – History 100: North American history

Grade 11 – Geography of Canada*

Grade 12 – Canadian History 621*

Québec

Canadian Society to 1920 – 3rd Cycle of Primary School

History of Québec and Canada, Secondary 4*

History of Québec and Canada, New Curriculum, Secondary 3 and 4

Saskatchewan

History 10 – Social Organizations

Social Studies 9 – The Roots of Society

Social Studies 30 – Grade 12 *

Yukon

(see British Columbia)

Unit for Intermediate and Junior Secondary Students: Synopsis, or, The Lessons Summarized

Key Question: Where is Vinland?

Lesson 1:

Historical Contexts: Who Were the Vikings?

4 classes

Students are first given an overview of the Vikings in world history, and the mystery surrounding their settlement in North America. Students then use the primary sources and historian's interpretations available in the Viking Life section of the website as they work in small teams to research aspects of Viking society, culture, and economy. Research teams create a display that will comprise a Viking Heritage Fair to be held on the final day of this four-day lesson.

Lesson 2:

Dimensions of Historical Thinking I: Finding Viking History in Viking Legends

2 classes

In this lesson, students begin with a discussion of inference and its role in what historians and archaeologists do. They then go on to examine the differences between legends and history, and learn how to use the details within a legend to provide documentary historical evidence about a particular place, in this case Vinland. Students will combine their knowledge to write up a collective description, or profile, of Vinland. Students will use this profile in later lessons as they evaluate four sites that claim to be the real Vinland.

Lesson 3:

Dimensions of Historical Thinking II:

Mapping Your World

1 class

In this lesson, students begin by drawing four different maps of a world familiar to them as a point of entry into the concept that mapping is as much about cultural beliefs as 'real' boundaries. Students learn some specific techniques for drawing inferences about the mapmaker's worldview from maps and apply these to their own map, and then to three different maps of Vinland.

Lesson 4:

Dimensions of Historical Thinking III:
Understanding Archaeological Evidence

3 classes

In this lesson, students begin by discussing the difference between documentary evidence and archaeological evidence, and then work in teams to research one of the eight kinds of evidence and research that archaeologists use. They prepare a Powerpoint presentation of each of these to the class. They use two of the general principles of archaeological research to analyze three different sources on the site for evidence about Viking society and economy.

Lesson 5:

Dimension of Historical Thinking IV
Is this Event Historically Significant? The Textbook Test

1 class

In this class, students examine their textbook to explore the way that the Vikings, and/or their settlement in North America, is covered. Whether these topics are covered or not, students go on to debate whether or not the history of Vikings in North America is historically significant.

Lesson 6:

Exploring Personal Experience in History: Writing a Biography of a Viking

2 classes

Over two classes, students will use documents, drawing, plans, and maps from the site to write a 400-500-word biography of a real or fictional Viking. After agreeing what the qualities of a good fictional biography are, and reading some samples from the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, (<http://www.biographi.ca/EN/>) students will read a selection of the suggested documents and write a short biographical sketch.

Lesson 7:

Is this Vinland?

2 classes

Students work in teams on one of the following Vinland sections on the website: Cape Cod, New Brunswick, and Rhode Island. Working with the profile of Vinland that they came up with in Lesson 2, students decide whether each location meets the characteristics of Vinland.

Lesson 8:

The Evidence for L'Anse Aux Meadow

1 class

In this class, students will work on the fourth and last Vinland 'contender' site: L'Anse aux Meadow. They will first look at the different kinds of evidence supporting the theory that Vinland is L'Anse aux Meadow. Afterwards, they will compare their finding from the previous lesson and answer the question "Where was Vinland?"

Lesson 9:

Culminating Event: Trial by Historians and Archeologists

3 classes

In this culminating activity, students participate in a mock trial – a trial with a difference. The goal here is not to imitate or reproduce a court of law, but instead a court of history and archeology. The emphasis will be on document-based evidence as students dramatize a court case that sets out to prove that L'Anse Aux Meadow heritage site is, or is not, Vinland.

Preparatory Exercises

If students have not worked critically with primary source documents before, it is strongly recommended that students do at least one of the preparatory lessons included in the Teachers' Corner section of the Great Unsolved Mysteries in Canadian History Website: <http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/teachers/indexen.html>.

The Lessons

Lesson 1: Historical Contexts: Who Were the Viking?

Days 1-4 of Unit
(Four classes, assuming 75-minute periods)

Overview:

Students are first given an overview of the Vikings in world history, and the mystery surrounding their settlement in North America. Students then use the primary sources and historian's interpretations available in the Viking Life section of the website as they work in small teams to research aspects of Viking society, culture, and economy. Research teams create a display that will comprise a Viking Heritage Fair to be held on the final day of this four-day lesson.

Support Materials used in this Lesson:

(All Support Materials can be found at the end of this Unit in the Teachers' Guide.)

Suggested documents on the Website to use in this lesson:

Secondary Sources:

1. Introductory Essay found in "Home/Welcome"

<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/vinland/home/indexen.html>

2. Introduction to Viking Life

<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/vinland/vikinglife/indexen.html>

Primary Documents:

A wide selection of documents from the Viking Life section of the website should be examined by the students.

Lesson 1, Class 1

(Day 1 of unit)

Activities:

Hook: Tell students that what they are about to study, for the next few classes a foreign culture and society that flourished somewhere on or near the coast of North America hundreds of years ago. They will be learning about this society in its own terms before trying to judge which of four possible locations is the most likely to be the ‘real’ Vinland of Norse Sagas.

Before they start, ask students to write on a piece of paper the first things that come to their mind when they hear the word “Viking”. Give them one or two minutes to this and have them share their answer with the rest of the class. Write everything they come up with on the board while asking questions about where students got their information (television, books, other classes, etc.). Highlight the elements they know and understand as well as the ones they do not, and link the previous question: “Where was Vinland” to the information provided by your students. This will be referred to at the end of the lesson.

Step 1: Explain that in this unit, thanks to a special project called the Great Unsolved Mysteries in Canadian History, they are going to be able to examine many different kinds of evidence that will help them to learn about Viking life in North America. They will use this knowledge to determine which of four possible sites in North America is the ‘real’ Vinland. The project has gathered and digitized primary source material related to the case, including 3D reproductions of key objects from the L’Anse Aux Meadow site, photographs of archaeological evidence, details of scientific evidence documenting plant species that are not native to the area, and details of life in ancient Vinland that are recorded in Norse Sagas.

Step 2: Explain that historians and archaeologists do their work by making inferences about evidence of various kinds left over from the past. (This concept will be explored in more detail in the second class.) Explain that there are two kinds of

sources of evidence used by historians, Primary Documents (which are created at or near the time of the event/issue) and Secondary Documents (interpretations of events/issues in the past). If you have time, work through the lesson What are Primary Documents? in the Key Concepts in Historical Thinking that you can access from the Teachers' Support Section: <http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/teachers/keyconcepts/indexen.html>

Step 3: Divide students into research teams, and explain that each team will conduct research in one of the areas explored in the Viking Life section of the website, using primary and secondary sources available there. Hand out Support Materials 1: Organizing Your Research. Students will benefit from your working through a sample document with them.

Theme A: Origins and physical appearance. Where did the Vikings originate from? How do we know? What did they look like? Did it differ from our present appearance? How do we know?

Suggested documents from the site:

[Scandinavia in "Chapters 24-25, 32-33 & 38"](#)

[The Greenland Norse: A biological-anthropological study](#)

[\[Clothes in\] The Saga of the People of Laxardal](#)

[Swedish Amulets of Female Figures](#)

[Weapons from Norway and Sweden on exhibit at Carnegie Museum of Natural History, Pittsburgh, PA, 1968-1971](#)

[Viking helmet from Gjermundbu, Ringerike, Norway. C 950](#)

Theme B: Viking expansion. What places did the Vikings explore and colonize? What evidence do we have for Viking passage at these places? What motivated them to travel? How can we know?

Suggested documents from the site:

[Going "A-Viking" in "Egil's Saga"](#)

[\[Colonization in\] Egil's Saga](#)

[Greenland, the starting-point for the voyages to North America](#)

Theme C: Language and script. What language did the Viking speak? Do we still understand this tongue? What type of script did they use? Can we still read it?

Suggested documents from the site:

[Language, Script and Sagas](#)

[\[Navigation in\] Kongespejlet — Konungs skuggsjá \[The King's Mirror\]](#)

[Reading, in Icelandic, from The Saga of the Greenlanders. Chapter 2, the finding of grapes](#)

Theme D: Ships and navigation. Vikings were navigators, what type of ships did they use? What were the ships particularities? How do we know? What was their knowledge regarding navigation? How advanced was their knowledge of navigation compared to other people living at the same time?

Suggested documents from the site:

[Laws of Early Iceland, Grágás](#)

[\[Navigation in\] Kongespejlet — Konungs skuggsjá \[The King's Mirror\]](#)

[The Nautical Part](#)

[Unnasigling- the Seaworthiness of the merchant vessel](#)

[Navigation and Vinland](#)

[\[Navigation in\] Egil's Saga](#)

[Ship Types and Sizes AD 800-1400](#)

[Thorlof's Ship in Egil's Saga Chapter XVII \(17\)](#)

[Egil's Saga, Ship Quotes](#)

[The Uunartoq 'Bearing Dial'- not an Instrument for Ocean Navigation? View French Proofread Text](#)

Theme E: The role of women. In Viking society, what was the role of Women? Did they only stay home or did they have an active part in their community? What evidence do we have concerning women's lives at that time?

Suggested documents from the site:

[Laws of Early Iceland, Grágás](#)

[\[Women in\] Scandinavia in the Viking Age](#)

[\[Women in\] Egil's Saga](#)

[Loom in National Museum of Iceland](#)

Theme F: Economy, society and religion. Did the Viking partake in trade? If so, what did they trade and with whom did they do it? What was the religion they followed? What evidence do we have concerning this? How did the society function? What type of government did they have?

Suggested documents from the site:

[Viking Trading in Egil's Saga Chapter XVII \(17\)](#)

See also: documents in the Historical Documents section of the website.

Step 4: Have student read and work on their own topic for the rest of the class. If it is possible, students can look for more information on the Web. It is also a good idea to push your students to have a look at the numerous artifact pictures found on the site. These artifacts provide great additional information and good visual aids for the posters.

Lesson 1, Class 2

(Day 2 of Unit)

Step 1: Students use this time to work in their research teams on the research topic they have been assigned.

Lesson 1, Class 3

(Day 3 of Unit)

Step 1: Students work in their teams to create a poster that represents their research findings in the particular areas. Encourage students to bring in relevant documents and artifacts from the site as well, for the Viking Heritage Fair they will be holding the next class. Students also need to attach one primary document – picture, chart, or written document – that does the best job of explaining their topic.

Homework: Students who didn't finish their poster (or PowerPoint presentations) will need to do so at home as the following class will be the Viking Heritage Fair.

Note: If available, you can have your students create a PowerPoint presentation instead of the poster. Students can then present their PowerPoint presentation to the rest of the class, as they would have done for the poster.

Lesson 1, Class 4

(Day 4 of Unit)

Step 1: Take a couple of minutes for your students to get organized and place their posters all around the class.

Step 2: Divide each team of students in two. The first member of the group of students will stay close to their poster and give short presentations about their research while the rest of the group goes from one poster to the next to listen to them. Allow students time to visit each other's exhibits. Once students have gone around once, have team members exchange their role and give them time to visit the exposition. This way, everybody has a chance to present and to visit the fair.

Step 3: As a final exercise, return to their initial 'brainstorming' sheet, and ask them what they have learned, and what they have changed their minds about. Leave the posters up in the class for the remainder of the unit.

Optional assessment:

Posters can be assigned a group mark, group members can also evaluate their own and others' contributions to the project.

Posters can be presented at lunchtime to other students or parents can be invited in the evening to the Viking Heritage Fair.

Lesson 2:

Dimensions of Historical Thinking I: Finding Viking History in Viking Legends

Days 5 and 6 of the unit
(Two classes)

Overview:

In this lesson, students begin with a discussion of inference and its role in what historians and archaeologists do. They then go on to examine the differences between legends and history, and learn how to use the details within a legend to provide documentary historical evidence about a particular place, in this case Vinland. Students will combine their knowledge to write up a collective description, or profile, of Vinland. Students will use this profile in later lessons as they evaluate four sites that claim to be the real Vinland.

Support Material used in this Lesson:

(All Support Materials can be found at the end of this Unit in the Teachers' Guide.)

Suggested documents on the Website to use in this lesson:

Secondary Sources:

Introductory Essay found in "Vinland Sagas"

<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/vinland/vikingviyages/vinlandsaga/indexen.html>

Primary Documents:

Sagas in Vinland Sagas section

<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/vinland/vikingviyages/vinlandsaga/indexen.html>

Lesson 2, Class 1

(Day 5 of the unit)

Activities:

Hook: Bring in an object, or a photograph of an object, that might be foreign or familiar to the students. Ask them to define what it is, and what it is for. Ask them how they know? Re-introduce the concept of Inference, mentioned in the last class. We make inferences all the time, based on our observations, and our own knowledge and experiences about other things we know about. Provide students with a wildly inappropriate inference, and ask them how they know that it is unreasonable or unwarranted. Ask why this act of inferring might be important to historians and archaeologists (Check to make sure that students know what these people do!) Go on to explain that historians and archaeologists must make inferences from existing evidence because the events, issues, and people they want to know about are in the past, and cannot be observed directly. Explain that historians and archaeologists must rely on traces (material remains) and accounts (written or oral descriptions) from the past; their interpretations provide the substance of history and archaeology.

Step 1: Ask students to speculate or reflect on what kind of evidence might be left over from the Viking's sojourn in North America? In other words, how do we know, or what evidence exists to document, their lives here in North America. Ask students to work in pairs to come up with some of each kind of evidence -- traces and accounts -- that might remain in the present that documents Viking life in Vinland.

Step 2: Students might list old buildings, or remains of old buildings; pottery or metal goods found in particular sites; some might even know about scientific tests to determine what plants were around at the time, and in the places where, Vikings were said to have been in North America. Add to the list of evidence of Viking life "Norse Sagas" or legends. Explain that stories have been passed down through hundreds of years, and have been written down that provide information and insights into Viking life.

Step 3: Ask students to brainstorm the difference between ‘legend’ and ‘history’. After they have given their answers, draw up a set of criteria for “legend” and for “history.”

Step 4: Refer back to the opening exercise to explain that historical investigation, like archaeological, involves reasoned evaluation of evidence or the art of drawing reasonable inferences based on your knowledge and expertise. Emphasize that a key difference is that legends do not depend on the existence of specific pieces of evidence – traces or accounts – for their continued existence, whereas history does. History is based on the interpretation of evidence left over from the past, interpreted in the reasonable contexts of what other people have researched and concluded.

Step 5: Give the students their task: Begin by pointing out that while the Sagas were written long ago, and contain a number of references to things that are clearly fantastic, legendary, or mythical, many of these stories also contain very specific details about life in Vinland, the name given in the sagas, or stories, to the settlement of Vikings across a wide western sea. While these details are far from perfect, they are the only documentary evidence available, and should be used if we can establish that they are reasonable.

Suggested Documents from site: <http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/vinland/vikingviyages/vinlandsaga/indexen.html>

Step 6: Provide students with samples from the Viking Sagas contained on the site, and ask the students to work in groups to decide which details contained in the Sagas might be used as historical evidence, and which kind is clearly legend. To help your students, provided them with Support Material No.2: History or Legend?

Step 7: Debrief with your students and close class by giving examples, using their findings, of the difference between legend and historical evidence.

Lesson 2, Class 2

(Day 6 of the unit)

Activities:

Step 1: Now that students have made some distinctions between legend and history, explain that they are going to look for some specific kinds of historical evidence in the Sagas. Divide students into research teams to examine the Sagas for information about Vinland in the following categories:

- Climate and temperatures
- Flora and fauna
- Geographical information, including landforms, distances from each other, geographic relationships, and natural resources
- Transportation, including evidence about how far a Viking ship could travel
- Any evidence about the kind of people the Vikings were, and how they lived, as families and as individuals.

Step 2: Students will create rubrics that organize their “Saga” research, and will present this to the class. In the process, students work together to create a ‘master list’ of information about Vinland contained in the Sagas in these various categories.

Step 3: This organized and categorized collective description, or profile, of Vinland will go up on the wall. Students will use this profile in later lessons as they evaluate four sites that claim to be the real Vinland.

Lesson 3: Dimensions of Historical Thinking II: Mapping the Viking World

Day 7 of the unit
(One class)

Overview:

In this lesson, students begin by drawing four different maps of a world familiar to them as a point of entry into the concept that mapping is as much about cultural beliefs as ‘real’ boundaries. Students learn some specific techniques for drawing inferences about the mapmaker’s worldview from maps and apply these to their own map, and then to three different maps of Vinland.

Activities:

Hook: Ask students to take out two pieces of blank paper. Tear them in half. Tell students that their task is to draw four maps: the classroom, their neighbourhood, their city, and Canada. Ask students to compare their map with those of two other classmates; why are they not all the same (other than because of differences in drawing abilities!). If possible, show some maps that illustrate the cultural differences of the people doing the mapmaking (see the Great Unsolved Mysteries in Canadian History website, We Do Not Know His Name: Klatsassin and the Chilcotin War. The site has some excellent samples of First Nation vs. European maps of the same place: <http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/klatsassin/archives/map/indexen.html>.) Explain that people use maps to describe and explain the world as they see it, to each other; different land uses, and different economies, cultures and societies, may create maps that reflect their different experience of the land.

Step 1: Explain that people can use some specific techniques to evaluate maps, or, more exactly, to evaluate what maps can tell us about the culture, economy, and worldview of those creating the maps. By noting a) the relative proximity of geographical features; b) any written descriptions included with the maps c) any illustrations on the maps and d) any other geographical or environmental features,

students can make some preliminary inferences about the society that created the map. To help your students organize their idea, provide them with Support Material 3: Reading Ancient Maps.

Step 2: Introduce their task: their task is to compare a Viking map from the Where is Vinland? website, and a contemporary map of the North Atlantic, including Greenland, Europe and the east Coast of North America. Using the rubric provided, students explore the different kinds of information the maps provide about the different peoples creating the maps and knowing the place. Support Material 4: A Map of Iceland and Support Materials 5: A Map of the Icelandic World provide you with maps for this exercise.

Step 3: Students conclude by drawing their own map of Vinland, using the maps on the site, and their knowledge of Vinland from the previous lessons.

Lesson 4: Dimensions of Historical Thinking III: Understanding Archaeological Evidence

Days 8 to 10 of the Unit
(3 classes)

Overview:

In this lesson, students begin by discussing the difference between documentary evidence and archaeological evidence. The distinction between ‘traces’ and ‘accounts’ is introduced. Students work in teams to research one of the eight kinds of evidence and research that archaeologists use and prepare a power point presentation of each of these to the class, using the rubric provided. In the second class, students learn about archaeological methods from student presentations. They use two of the general principles of archaeological research to analyze three different sources on the site for evidence about Viking society and economy.

Lesson 4, Class 1

(Day 8 of unit)

Hook: Divide students in teams or small groups of three. Present different everyday objects, such as an iPod, a television, a shopping basket, a cell phone and so on. Tell students that they will now take the persona of an archeologist living in the year 3500 AD. Looking at the object, they will try to deduce how people at the beginning of the 21st century lived. Make them realized that these objects may not function anymore in 3500 AD. What do these objects/artifacts tell us of their everyday lives? Do they represent the life of the entire population or just a few?

Step 1: As a class, ask students the difference between the work of an historian and the work of an archaeologist. Let students propose their hypothesis and then explain that the most notable difference between the work of an archaeologist and an historian is the type of evidence they use to understand the past. Proceed to explain the difference between traces and accounts:

Traces: Can be defined as visible sign of what existed before. Archaeologists use traces left by past people to understand how they lived. Different types of traces used by archaeologists can be: remains of buildings, pottery, burial sites, etc. Traces are sometimes used by historians, but they are the main sources used by archeologists

Accounts: Can be defined as texts written by people at a given period with the aim of narrating a particular situation. This type of primary source provides us with a record of life in the past. Historians rely heavily on this type of source, which is only occasionally available for archeologists.

Step 2: Explain that archaeologists have developed a number of specific techniques for ‘reading’ the traces that earlier populations have left behind, particularly those who left behind few accounts of their activities. Any good archaeologist will be well acquainted with a number of the specific methods for analyzing ‘traces’ and so your students, as future archaeologists, should know them as well. Place your students in groups of three or four students. Each team will use the documents provided on the

site to research on a specific type of evidence.

[Type 1: Electromagnetic Devices](#)

[Type 2: Environmental Data](#)

[Type 3: Evidence in primary sources \(sagas\)](#)

[Type 4: Skeletal Studies](#)

[Type 5: Building remains](#)

[Type 6: Dating techniques](#)

Type 7: Epigraphical remains

Type 8: Excavations

Step 3: Teams of students read the materials in order to be able to share their findings with the other members of their class. In doing so they can either create a PowerPoint presentation or if accessibility to computers is limited, they can either make a poster or only a short, in front of the class, presentation without any accessories.

Homework: Students who didn't finish preparing their presentation will have to finish them at home for the following class.

Lesson 4, Class 2

(Day 9 of the Unit)

Step 1: Have each team of students present their findings to the rest of the class. This can be done using an overhead projector if students made a PowerPoint presentation or if they made poster by having them present the poster in front of the class and then, having them put the posters on the wall for the rest of the unit.

Step 2: Now that students have a better understanding of the methods that archaeologists can use to interpret types of evidence, tell them that their teams will now use the two basic principles of archaeological investigation to prepare a preliminary report on what their artifact -- which may include anything from a single object or object fragments to an entire town site -- can tell us about Viking society and economy. The two great principles of archaeological research are:

- 1) Look for features that don't naturally belong in the natural landscape
- 2) Look for distinctive features in the man-made artifacts

Step 3: Using the artifacts presented on the Vinland website, give to each team three artifacts to work on. Using Support Material 6, students use the two great principles of archaeology to make sense of the objects.

Lesson 4, Class 3

(Day 10 of the Unit)

Step 1: Students use the first part of this period to finish the work they had started during the previous class.

Step 2: Once students have finished the primary analysis of the artifacts, they can now write an archaeological report on one of their artifacts. In this report, you should find the following information:

1. A drawing of the object with its measurements
2. Where it was found (location and context)
3. Hypothesis on what it is and what was its usage in Viking culture
4. Arguments supporting the hypothesis (at least two)

Reports should be fairly short (1 page or 1 ½ pages long) and can provide an opportunity for teachers to evaluate students' progress. Support Material 7: Writing a good archaeological report can be used as a rubric to help students understand the criteria of a good archaeological report and can be used as a marking ladder for the teacher.

Lesson 5:

Dimensions of Historical Thinking IV:

Is this Event Historically Significant? The Textbook Test

Day 11 of the Unit
(1 class)

Overview:

In this class, students examine their textbook to explore the way that the Vikings, and/or their settlement in North America, is covered. Whether these topics are covered or not, students go on to debate whether or not the history of Vikings in North America is historically significant.

Activities:

Step 1: In pairs, have students examine the coverage of Viking history in their textbooks as well as the coverage on European expansion. What topics are given attention in the 900-1000 period? When the textbooks speak about conquest and American exploration, who do they focus on?

Step 2: In groups, ask students: “Is the settlement of the Vikings in North America Historically Significant?” Why/why not? Does your textbook cover it? Should your textbook cover it? Do you think any other history books cover issues like this?

Step 3: From this discussion, students can generate criteria of what makes an event or an issue historically significant. Summarize or add to the discussion by explaining that historical significance can be evaluated on the basis of three criteria for historical significance developed by Roland Case and Mike Denos in their book: *Teaching About Historical Thinking* (eds. Peter Seixas and Penney Clark; Vancouver: The Critical Thinking Consortium, 2006, p 13):

1. Prominence at the Time – how deeply felt or profound was the impact?
2. Consequences – magnitude of impact; scope of impact; last nature of impact

3. Subsequent Profile – has this even/person/trend been memorialized? Is it emblematic of a particular time, place, or social context?

Step 4: Students can debate the following questions:

1. Who should decide which issues and events are historically significant enough be taught in school?
2. If Columbus (Cartier or Cabot) had not “found” North America, do you think somebody else would have found it? Would life in 2007 be different?
3. If the Viking had settled permanently in “Vinland” do you think our lives would be different today?

Lesson 6:

Exploring Personal Experience in History: Writing a Biography of a Viking

Days 12 and 13 of the Unit
(2 Classes)

Overview:

Over two classes, students will use documents, drawing, plans, and maps from the site to write a 400-500-word biography of a real or fictional Viking. After agreeing what the qualities of a good fictional biography are, and reading some samples from the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, (<http://www.biographi.ca/EN/>) students will read a selection of the suggested documents and write a short biographical sketch.

Lesson 6, Class 1

(Day 12 of the Unit)

Hook: At the computer lab, have students visit the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* website. Ask students to type their family names to see if they can find a trace of their ancestors. Have students read the biography of one or two of their ancestors, or of other people of interest to them from history.

Step 1: As a class, decide on the criteria for including someone in the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*. This list should include criteria like:

1. the person's life should have had an impact on Canadian life, and/or
2. their life should be representative of an important kind of person
3. the biography should be brief (400-1000 words)
4. it should summarize the key information about the person, including (where available):
 - Place of birth
 - Date of birth
 - Parents/spouses/children
 - Job/work
 - Main events in their lives
 - What they were most famous for/what kind of life did they represent
 - How did they die
 - Where they are buried

Step 2: Now that students have the criteria needed to write a good biography, explain that they will now write a 400-word text about either a fictional but realistic Viking (this can be either a man or a woman), or one of the 'real life' Vikings in the Cast of Characters section of the website (you can decide whether or not they can embellish their 'real' biographies in an historically realistic way): <http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/vinland/vinlandvoyages/castofcharacters/indexen.html>. Their biography will have to answer to the criteria of a good biography that have been decided upon above.

If you wish, you can give this activity an art component. Instead of having students write a 400-word biography, you can have them draw a comic book that will answer to the same criteria.

Step 3: In order for the biography to be realistic, students will have to go back to their previous work. They can find information on the posters found in their class, they can go back to the Vinland site or again, find other information in books or other Websites.

Step 4: Students start to write (or draw) their biography.

Lesson 6, Class 2

(Day 13 of the Unit)

Step 1: Let students finish writing their bibliography if they are not quite done.

Step 2: Have students read their biography in front of the class. If your students created a comic book, have the class share them and pass them around for reading.

Step 3: Have teams switch their works for grading. Using Support Material 8: Criteria of a good biography, students write down on the left column the criteria they have decided upon and see if the other team's biography fulfills these.

Lesson 7: **Is This Vinland?**

Days 14 and 15 of the Unit
(2 classes)

Overview:

Students work in teams on one of the following Vinland sections on the website: Cape Cod, New Brunswick, and Rhode Island. Working with the profile of Vinland that they came up with in Lesson 2, students decide whether each location meets the characteristics of Vinland.

Lesson 7, Class 1

(Day 14 of the Unit)

Step 1: Review with your class the sagas of Vinland, letting them know that they will now use their knowledge about Vinland to review three theories around the possible location of Vinland: Cape Cod, New Brunswick and Rhode Island. In order to review these theories, they will need to use their knowledge of history and archaeology to interpret the evidence.

Make sure that every student has in his or her possession a copy of the profile of Vinland that they created in Lesson 2.

Step 2: Using Support Material 9, have students review each site while completing the work sheet. Tell them that they must give out a number of points for each site and at the end add them to see which of the three sites has the most corresponding criteria for being the original Vinland.

Place students in teams of two and have them review the following documents for each site:

Cape Cod: <http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/vinland/lanseauxmeadows/capecod/indexen.html>

New Brunswick: <http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/vinland/lanseauxmeadows/newbrunswick/indexen.html>

Rhode Island

Lesson 7, Class 2

(Day 15 of the Unit)

Step 1: Students are given time to complete the activity started during the previous class.

Step 2: As a class, review students' findings and see which of the three "contender" sites has the most evidence supporting it being Vinland. This exercise can bring students to debate the evidence they found in the texts.

Step 3: Ask your class how the archaeological evidence was used here either for or against the three contenders.

Lesson 8:

The Evidence for L’Anse Aux Meadow

Day 16 of the Unit
(1 classes)

Overview:

In this class, students will work on the fourth and last Vinland ‘contender’ site: L’Anse aux Meadow. They will first look at the different kinds of evidence supporting the theory that Vinland is L’Anse aux Meadow. Afterwards, they will compare their finding from the previous lesson and come up with their own answer to the question “Where was Vinland?”

Step 1: Tell students that they will now look at the evidence surrounding the archaeological site of L’Anse Aux Meadow. In order to make a hypothesis about whether or not this site was Vinland, students will need to use both their abilities at working as an historian and as an archaeologist. Quickly, give your students a brief overview of the L’Anse aux Meadow historical site.

Step 2: In teams of 4, have students review the archaeological site using the maps and the photographs of artifacts found on the website, in the L’Anse Aux Meadow section. They have already worked with most of the materials and this should only be a brief review.

Step 3: Using Support Document 9, students use their previous knowledge of the Vinland saga and other archeological evidence to argue that Vinland was or was not situated at L’Anse aux Meadow.

Note: If you are not proceeding to lesson 9, you should complete this lesson with a horseshoe debate on whether or not L’Anse aux Meadow is Vinland. If you intend on completing lesson 9, a debate would make the ultimate lesson redundant.

Lesson 9:

Culminating Event: Trial by Historians and Archeologists

Days 17-19 of unit
(3 classes)

Overview:

In this culminating activity, students participate in a mock trial – a trial with a difference. The goal here is not to imitate or reproduce a court of law, but instead a court of history and archeology. The emphasis will be on document-based evidence as students dramatize a court case that sets out to prove that L’Anse Aux Meadow heritage site is, or is not, Vinland.

Activities:

Step 1: Ask the students in a whole-class discussion of whether they think that the L’Anse Aux Meadow site lies within the ancient territory of Vinland.

Step 2: Divide the class into four groups and ask each one to find as much evidence as possible to argue that the Canadian Heritage Site is, or is not, Vinland.

Step 3: Ask each group to evaluate their evidence. Each group appoints a leader who summarizes the explanation for the class and gives the group’s assessment of it.

Step 4: Introduce the idea of the mock trial to the class. Explain that as a class, they will take on the roles of the prosecution, the defense or witnesses. Ask staff, parents, or students from another class to take on the role of jury members during the actual trial. The trial will be held using the rules of evidence of the historian.

Step 5: Witnesses: Assign no more than 1/3 of the class to the witness pool. Their job will be to provide the case, for or against, about a particular piece of important historical or archaeological evidence.

Step 6: The Case Against the L'Anse Aux Meadow site being Vinland: Assign 1/3 of the class to the Case Against the L'Anse Aux Meadow Site being Vinland. The Case Against will have only one class to decide what factors they are going to argue are the most significant in disproving that this site is Vinland. They must provide the witnesses with a list of what evidence they will use to prove their points by the end of the second preparation class. This "no" team will need to prepare questions and assign historians and archeologists to the case.

Step 7: The Case In Favour of the L'Anse Aux Meadow site being Vinland: Assign 1/3 of the class to the defense. The defense team must be prepared to defend L'Anse Aux Meadow against other choices for Vinland. It must also build an argument and use evidence that indicates that this site meets a number of key criteria for the site indeed being a part of the territory known as Vinland. They must provide the witnesses with a list of whom they will call by the end of the second preparation class. The defense team will need to prepare questions and assign historians, archaeologists, or even experts in Norse Sagas to the case.

Step 8: On the day before the trial by historians, review trial procedure with the class. The teacher or principal can play the historian presiding over the trial.

Step 9: On the day of the trial, arrange to have appropriate costumes if possible. Limit speaking times to ensure a reasonable resolution. Your panel of jurors may present their findings the same or the following day.

As an optional end of unit, students could be asked to submit an individual argument as to why they do, or do not believe that the L'Anse Aux Meadow site is Vinland, supported by the appropriate evidence.

Support Material 1: Organizing Your Research

Source Name and Source Type:	Who created this source? (or “don’t know”)	Is this a primary or secondary source?	Main points that you have learned about Viking life from this source

SUPPORT MATERIAL 2: HISTORY OR LEGEND?

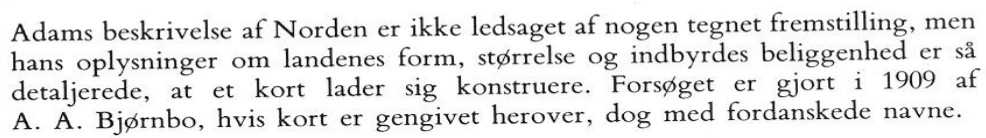
Lesson 2

Name of document	Elements of legend	Explanation/Examples	Historical Evidence?	Explanation/Examples

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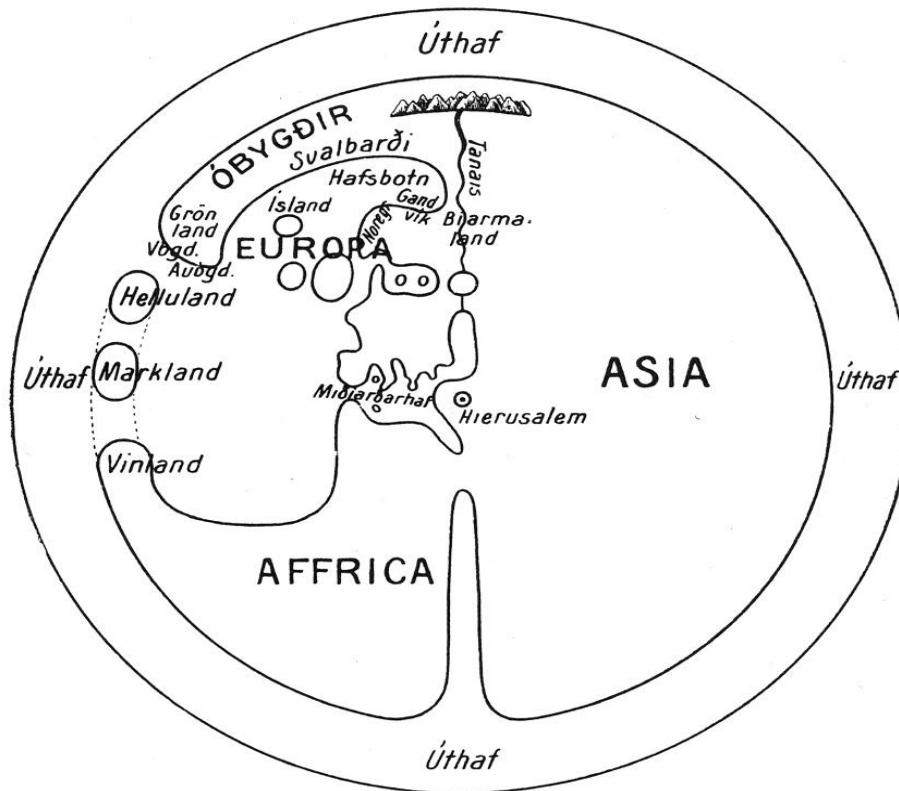
Support Material 3: Reading Ancient Maps

Questions	Details of the map	What can we conclude?
What does the relative proximity of geographical features tell us?		
Are there any written descriptions included with the maps?		
Are there any illustrations on the maps?		
Are there any other geographical or environmental features of interest?		
Other features of interests?		



Where is Vinland?: Teachers' Guide 2007

Support Material 5: Map of the Icelandic World



En videreudviklet version af de klassiske T-kort, eller hjulkort, forestillende verdens kreds. Omkring fastlandscirklen, der indrammer de tre kendte kontinenter, ligger oceanet som en ring. Rekonstruktion af A. A. Björnbo 1909 efter den lærde islandske geografi ca. et århundrede efter Adams tid.

Source: Björnbo, Axel Anthon, 1909, "Adam af Bremens Nordensopfattelesel." *Aarbøger for nordisk Oldkyndighed og Historie*, vol. 24, p.179.

Support Material 6: Investigating Viking Artifacts

<p>Name of the Artifact:</p> <p>Who found it?:</p> <p>Provenance: [where did it come from?]</p> <p>Object's description:</p>		
<p>Distinctive feature in the man-made artifacts and/or features that do not belong in the natural landscape</p>	<p>Inference drawn from the distinctive features and/or features that do not belong in the natural landscape</p>	<p>Hypothesis on the function of the artifact in Viking culture</p>

Support Material 7: Criteria of a good archaeological report

Name of the Writer: _____

<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Excellent</i> 5	Competent 4	<i>Fair</i> 3	<i>Poor</i> 1
A drawing of the object with its measurements and details is given with the report	The drawing is well done, clear with its measurement and other details.	The drawing is good, clear with some measurements	The drawing is sometimes unclear and some measurements are lacking	The drawing is poorly done with no measurements.
Where it was found?	The location of the artefact is clearly given and details of the finding are provided	The location of the artefact is given but with little or no details on the finding.	The location of the artefact remains unclear.	The location of the artefact isn't given in the report.
What hypotheses on Viking society and economy can we draw from the artifact and what could have been its usage in Viking culture?	Hypotheses are clearly specified and are linked to the nature of the artefact.	Hypotheses are somewhat linked to the nature of the artefact	Hypotheses are unclear and don't seem to be derived from the nature of the artefact.	Hypotheses are completely absent or they are not drawn from the nature of the artefact.
Arguments supporting the hypothesis (at least 2)	Both arguments are present in the report and are clearly written	Both arguments are present in the report but are sometimes unclear	One of the arguments is missing and/or they are poorly written	The two arguments are missing from the report
<i>Total score out of 15:</i>				

Support Material 8: Criteria of a good biography

Name of the team members:_____

Names of the correctors:_____

Criteria	Score	Explanations
	<div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>3</div> <div>4</div> <div>5</div> </div> <div>poor</div> <div>excellent</div>	
	<div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>3</div> <div>4</div> <div>5</div> </div> <div>poor</div> <div>excellent</div>	
	<div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>3</div> <div>4</div> <div>5</div> </div> <div>poor</div> <div>excellent</div>	
	<div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>3</div> <div>4</div> <div>5</div> </div> <div>poor</div> <div>excellent</div>	
	<div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>3</div> <div>4</div> <div>5</div> </div> <div>poor</div> <div>excellent</div>	
	<div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>3</div> <div>4</div> <div>5</div> </div> <div>poor</div> <div>excellent</div>	
	<div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>3</div> <div>4</div> <div>5</div> </div> <div>poor</div> <div>excellent</div>	
	<div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>3</div> <div>4</div> <div>5</div> </div> <div>poor</div> <div>excellent</div>	
	<div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>3</div> <div>4</div> <div>5</div> </div> <div>poor</div> <div>excellent</div>	
Overall Score:		

Support Material 9: Evaluating the Evidence

Name of the site claiming to be Vinland:

Your Name:

Evidence for:

Evidence against:

Inference for:

Inference against:

Conclusions: