



TEN14[👑]

Classroom guide



Introduction

Thank you for bringing your class to see The Ark's touring music performance **Ten14**. We hope it was an enjoyable experience for all. This performance includes specially commissioned, new music written by Moya Brennan and Cormac DeBarra to commemorate the 1,000 year anniversary of the Battle of Clontarf. We believe that experiencing a live performance is one of the best ways to inspire and encourage children to appreciate and engage with music.

This pack contains musical exercises and activities, and historical information based on the context of the show. We hope that the pack can be used to further explore the performance with your pupils in the classroom. The music activities are broken into the three curricular strands and the questions are devised under infants, junior and senior classes. You will also find online links for listening and sheet music. We hope that these activities enhance and deepen the children's understanding and benefit from the experience.

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Historical Advisor: Dr. Edel Bhreathnach, CEO of The Discovery Programme

Timeline

- 795-Vikings arrive in Ireland
- 941-Birth of Brian Boru
- 976-Brian Boru crowned King of Munster
- 980-Battle of Tara
- 1002- Brian Boru crowned High King of Ireland
- 1014- Battle of Clontarf and Death of Brian Boru



Historical Background to the Battle of Clontarf

The Vikings

The Vikings came from the Scandinavian countries of Norway, Sweden and Denmark. They were seafaring people and explorers but their formidable reputation as fierce warriors and plunderers exceeded them. Between the 8th and 10th centuries they conducted extensive raids across Europe, looting coastal villages and towns. Many of these raids proved successful due to the Vikings superior knowledge and skills of navigation and engineering.

Their expert ship building enabled them to design large, rowed boats called longboats. These longboats were fast and capable of travelling in both deep and shallow waters. This was very advantageous as it allowed them to get close to land and

negotiate their way through inland rivers.

Viking longboats were often known as dragon boats because many of them had a dragon carved into the bow at the front of the ship. They first arrived on Irish shores in 795 on Lambay Island in Dublin Bay. From then on raids became more frequent along the east and west coast of Ireland and they eventually began to move inland through the rivers of the Liffey and the Shannon. By 812, the Vikings had settlements in Dublin, Waterford, Limerick, Wexford and Cork. These areas evolved into towns as the Vikings established them as important trading ports.

The Vikings brought many new crafts and technologies to Ireland including the minting of coins.



Activity 1

Vikings at Sea

[Link to Image](#)

Infants/Junior Classes:

- a) Look at the picture. What do you see is happening in the picture?
- b) Imagine what sounds you might hear in the scene?
 - Nature sounds: the sea, the wind, the waves...
 - Environment sounds: sails, ropes, creaking of the boat...
 - Vikings-talking, shouting, singing, rhythm of boat hitting the waves...
- c) How could you make these sounds using yourself?
 - Body Percussion: e.g. rubbing hands together to create the sounds of the sea
 - Voice: wind blowing sounds
 - A rhythm (stamping, clapping, using hand percussion instruments) that shows the speed of the boat
 - Singing or humming a sea shanty
 - Using the voice to create sea sounds (waves, splashes etc) or seagull sounds
 - Using rainsticks to create sea sounds. Make your own rainsticks instructions [here](#)
- d) What actions could you make with these sounds?
- e) Can you shape the sounds into two groups of sounds?

Split the class in half. Allocate one half the first group of sounds (eg all the wind and waves sounds) and the other half a different, contrasting group of sounds (eg singing and rhythm sounds) and play the two groups of sounds in turn and together.

Activity 1

Vikings at Sea

Senior Classes:

Create a short soundscape to go with the image.

- What is the feeling/mood of the scene?
- What emotions do you think the Vikings are feeling?
- Use this to help you decide the speed and volume of the music you're making.
- Create different sounds for the picture as above
- choose the sounds and actions/movements that work best

Decide what order the sounds should go in to make three sections – an opening, a middle section and an end section.

- What happens in each section?
- What is the speed and volume in each section?

Add in gradual dynamics of soft and loud. Remember it is important to start from complete silence when performing the music.

Choose someone to be the conductor of your soundscape.

- They will need to remind everyone when to start and stop.
- They can play with volume, when to get loud and soft.
- Take turns with this.

Why not try recording your soundscape?

You could add more images and using a basic video editing program add the music underneath the images and create a slideshow.

Brian Boru-‘The Emperor of the Irish’

Brian Boru is considered to be one of the greatest heroes in Irish History. He was a brave warrior and an astute king with relentless ambition and determination. He succeeded in subduing Viking control and in dominating all the other kings in Ireland to become the first real High King of Ireland.

He was born around 941, near Killaloe in Co.Clare. He came from a small dynasty called Dál Cais. Growing up near a Viking strong hold region on the Shannon River, his family probably suffered at the hands of the Norse men. But Brian learned about Viking weaponry, their ships and their battle tactics from seeing them around his kingdom along the Shannon. In time Brian would adopt similar military strategies against the Vikings and use this knowledge to uncover their weaknesses.

After the death of his father, Brian’s brother Mathgmain succeeded in taking the Kingship of Cashel and was crowned King of Munster, a position that had previously been held by the same dynasties called the Éoganachta for five centuries. This bold accomplishment riled their enemies and in revenge his Irish rival for the kingship of Cashel took Mathgmain’s life.

Brian was determined to avenge his brother’s death and in doing so he seized the title of King of Munster. Brian’s vision was to dominate all the provincial kings of Ireland and make them swear their allegiance to him.

Brian Boru (Continued)

He thought of himself as the greatest king on the island and that his strategy would ensure Irish control of the Viking towns. Brian was a strategic thinker and he used both brute force and diplomacy to achieve this goal.

In 980, the Dublin Vikings lead by Olafr Cuarán, the great Norse king of Dublin, and his son Rag-nall fought and lost against the King of Tara, MáelcSechnaill II at the Battle of Tara. This was a huge defeat for the Dublin Vikings. It stifled their ambitions and heralded a change back to greater Irish control over them. Brian spent ten years campaigning to take over all the Irish provincial kings and in 997 he succeeded in making peace with the King of Tara Máel Sechnaill II. He visited Armagh, the most important church in Ireland, and left a gift of silver on the altar. His scribe

noted the visit in the precious manuscript (now in Trinity College Dublin) calling Brian ‘the emperor of the Irish’.



The Harp

The harp is one of the oldest musical instruments in the world. Its predecessor, an instrument called the lyre existed in many different cultures around the world and can be traced back to the Egyptians. A form of harp with a triangular shape, a pillar and wire strings similar to the Irish harp evolved around the 10th century. The player would have rested it in their lap and plucked the strings with their fingernails. These harps are depicted on many high crosses where King David appears playing a harp.

The harp has always been an important part of Irish musical life. At the time of Brian Ború, harpers and poets were held very highly in society and Irish kings would have employed their own personal harper. One of the oldest surviving Irish harps can be seen at the museum in Trinity Col-

lege. This harp is actually known as the Brian Ború's Harp but evidence has proved that it dates from a later medieval period. It is this harp that has become our national emblem and the one that we see today on our coins, passports and government documents.



<http://irisharchaeology.ie/2014/03/five-ancient-musical-instruments-from-ireland/>

Activity 2

Performing with Brian Boru's March

Brian Boru's March is one of the first traditional Irish tunes that people learn when they first start to learn to play the harp.

Infant Classes

a) Listen to an extract from Brian Boru's March.

LISTENING LINK <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fIlG8Sjlv-w>

b) Have you heard the sound of the harp before? What does it sound like to you?

- Stand and stamp your feet with the natural beat/pulse.
- Can you clap the beat/pulse together?
- Can you hum the tune along with the harp?

Activity 2

Performing with Brian Boru's March

Junior Classes

e) Divide the class into two groups.

f) Devise fun start/stop signals. Choose a conductor who has to show when each group should clap the beat using the start and stop signals.

- Give other children a chance to conduct.
- Use this exercise to emphasise the use of repeated sections in music and concept of music form/structure.
- Try at different speeds (tempos). Ask how does a different tempo or using different instruments change the mood of the piece?

LISTENING LINKS

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dCu1UulgzPA>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0dxUczqkObY>

g) Repeat last activity using percussion and/or singing

Activity 2

Performing with Brian Boru's March

Senior Classes

h) Try singing or playing the piece on an instrument/of your choice.

SHEET MUSIC LINK: <http://www.arcelts.com/bbot1/t73.htm>

i) Compose and perform your own piece of music.

- An easy way to do this is to take an existing melody and add your own words.
- Take the melody of Brian Boru's March. Use what you know about his life to inspire the words for your song.
- It can be fun to add actions and movements into your song too and will help you remember your words.

j) Further composing:

Hand out chime bars in the scale of B minor to the class. Playing the chords to Brian Boru's march on guitar or piano, students make up their own melody that fits over the same chords. This can also be done using other instruments such as tin whistles.

The Battle of Clontarf

Between 1002 and 1013, a rebellion against Brian and Máel Sechnaill was being brewed between the King of Leinster, Máelmórda mac Murchada and Norse king of the Dublin Vikings, Sitric Silkenbeard. Both kings wanted their independence from Brian's rule and their contempt resulted in the Battle of Clontarf on Good Friday in 1014. Huge fleets of ships arrived in Dublin Bay. Sitric enlisted Viking allies from England and Scotland. While Brian's extensive army came from Munster and included Vikings from Limerick and fleets from Waterford.

The battle was intense with many losses on both sides and it was said to have lasted all day. Brian's army was a force to reckon with and Sitric Silkenbeard admitted defeat and his armies began to retreat. Their armies retreated to their ships

in Dublin Bay only to find that their ships were now floating in the high tide. Many of them died drowning as they tried to reach the ships. Legend tells us that Brian was praying in his tent, thanking God for victory when a retreating Viking stumbled upon him. Unaware of the Viking presence, Brian was stuck down and killed.

After ceremonial procession and funeral, Brian and his son Murchad, who also died in the battle, were laid to rest in St. Patrick's Cathedral in Armagh. Brian's triumph brought about a new era in Ireland. Brian's victory may have averted a large scale Viking attack that was being planned on Ireland. Even though Vikings forces were defeated, many Vikings remained in Ireland and assimilated into Irish society.

The Battle of Clontarf (Continued)

Brian's rule as High King of Ireland lasted 12 years and he was succeeded by his son Donnchad. The name Ó Briain or O' Brien was given to the families that descended from Brian Ború. This name is still a very common surname in Ireland today especially in Cos Clare, Cork and Tipperary.



The Battle of Clontarf by Hugh Frazer (1826)
Oil on Canvas

Activity 3

Listening & Responding

Ten14 Theme
Song

Listen to an extract from the piece Ten14

LISTENING LINK: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hcBywGMkkew>

Infant Classes:

- a.) What do you hear? (singing? Instruments?)
- b.) Is it fast or slow?
- c.) What do you like about the music?
- d.) Can you sing the chorus of the song?

Junior Classes:

- d.) How many different sounds/instruments/voices can you hear?
- e.) Do you have a favourite sound?
- f.) Can you hear the harp? How is it played? How would you describe the sound of the harp?
- g.) Can you think of other instruments that are played with strings?

Activity 3

Listening & Responding

Ten14 Theme
Song

Senior Classes

- h) Listen to the lyrics closely - what is the song about?
- i) What is the feeling/mood of the piece? What sounds/instruments create these feelings?
- j) If you had to write music about a battle, what instruments/voices would you use?
- k) Can you learn the song and sing along with the recording (lyrics below)? Can you then perform it yourself in your own way?
- l.) Create your own battle song about a battle
 - Come up with a brief story for each side of the battle-this can be real or imaginary.
 - Write lyrics for a verse and a chorus.
 - Create a melody for each sentence using chime bars, singing or other instruments.
 - Decide how fast or slow it should be.
 - Decide which parts should be quite or loud.
 - Divide the class into the two sides of the battle. Each side sings their own part of the music in turn.
 - Add actions and movements.

Ten14

By Cormac De Barra & Moya Brennan ©2014

Strong the hero marching northwards
Stories will be told
Moving clans along the river
Changing ways of old

Chorus:

Ten14 the first High King
Proud and wise
Strong and true
Ten14 his final battle
Brian Boru
Brian Boru

Tribe of Dal gCais brave in number
Guardians of the land
Harpers, bards and poets praise him
Sword and shield in hand

Chorus

Rí Éireann, (*King of Ireland*)
'Sé a bhí tréan (*He who was strong*)

Rí Éireann (*King of Ireland*)
'Sé a bhí beo (*He who was full of life*)
Rí Éireann
'Sé a bhí tréan
Dílis don tír go deo (*Loyal to his country forever*)

Great the oak tree still is standing
Carries on his name
Cashel, Dublin, Armagh crown him
Tara do the same

Queen of blue betrays his kingship
Wars will rage this land
Viking dragons fiercely fighting
Harp and oak shall stand

Chorus

Rí Éireann,
'Sé a bhí tréan
Rí Éireann
'Sé a bhí beo



Cover images: Moya Brennan &
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We would be very happy to
receive any feedback, images or
recordings made by
the children in your class.

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