



2018

Guts & Glory: The Vikings

Jared Leighton

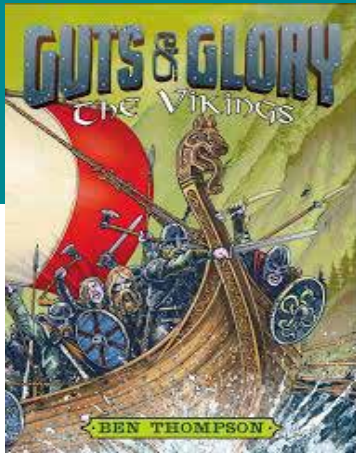
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Leighton, Jared (2018) "Guts & Glory: The Vikings," *Children's Book and Media Review*. Vol. 39 : Iss. 4 , Article 96.

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Book Review

Guts & Glory: The Vikings

Author

Ben Thompson

Illustrator

C. M. Butzer

Reviewer

Jared Leighton

Rating

Excellent

Level

Primary, Intermediate

Pages

280

Year

2015

Publisher

Little, Brown and Com-

ISBN

9780316362382

Guts & Glory: The Vikings is Thompson's second book in his series of fun and compelling history books. Thompson takes you through the rich history of the Vikings, from their discovery of North America five centuries before Columbus to the founding of Russia. The book starts by painting a picture of a typical Viking pillage off the coast of England, and the reader is exposed right away to the pure brutality of these ancient Scandinavians—a great way to set the stage for the rest of the book. Be prepared to learn about their conquered settlements, founding of countries, weapons and boats, women, and everyday life. By the end of the book, the reader should appreciate just how much the Vikings have influenced our history.

Thompson has a very compelling voice in his writing. His clever sense of humor appeals to the targeted age group of fourth to sixth graders. Readers will enjoy the depth of history that Thompson covers about the Vikings. It would have been easy to just focus on really famous Viking warriors, but instead he focuses on the religion, everyday life and the roles of both men and women. This approach not only strengthens Thompson's credibility but also paints a fuller and more accurate picture of what the Vikings accomplished and makes them more relatable to the reader. Another one of Thompson's strengths is cleverly connecting modern day knowledge that a fourth grader would know to the past, which adds meaning to his targeted audience. As a criticism, the illustrations were too randomly placed and the style detracted from the overall feel of the book. This book is recommended for fifth and sixth graders.

*Contains mild violence.