

## St. Colmcille and Iona Monastery

In 563 St. Colmcille arrived in the Scottish island of \_\_\_\_\_ and established a monastery that would go on to be a centre for learning that was famous throughout \_\_\_\_\_. At a time when very few people were educated, monasteries were centres for learning, writing and recording of \_\_\_\_\_. Much of the history of Ireland and Scotland from before the 8th century comes directly from what was written down in monasteries in general, and Iona in particular.

The monks in Iona were held to a very \_\_\_\_\_ standard of behaviour. St. Colmcille's aim had been to create 'a perfect monastery as an image of the heavenly city of \_\_\_\_\_. St. Colmcille intended that people would look up to his monks as the best example of how to behave. The monks were very \_\_\_\_\_; they prayed and worked daily and strictly followed the rules of the church. Just like other monasteries of the time, The buildings of St. Colmcille's Iona would have been made of \_\_\_\_\_. These would have featured wattle and \_\_\_\_\_ construction, or thatched roofs. There would have been a central church (the oratory), a shared kitchen (the refectory), the library (scriptorium) and the monks' cells where they \_\_\_\_\_.

The monks at Iona worked very hard. They were particularly skilled at making beautiful \_\_\_\_\_. The most important early Christian manuscript from this part of the world, the Book of \_\_\_\_\_, is said to have been made here in the 9th century. The Book of Kells is a collection of the four \_\_\_\_\_ and some other writings, hand-written and decorated beautifully on vellum pages. \_\_\_\_\_ is made from animal skin, usually \_\_\_\_\_ skin. The Book of Kells is one of Ireland's most priceless treasures, and is on display in \_\_\_\_\_ College Dublin.

Life on Iona could at times be very \_\_\_\_\_. The monks had to endure a number of \_\_\_\_\_ raids during the 9th century. Sometimes monks were \_\_\_\_\_ during these raids. Eventually the Columban monks moved from Iona to a new monastery in Kells in \_\_\_\_\_. However the monastery in Iona remained in use until the end of the 10th century. The influence of the Columban monks was felt all over Europe, and St. \_\_\_\_\_ is still considered to have been a hugely important figure in the history of Christianity.

Iona	Europe	disciplined	gospels	Trinity
history	high	Meath	dangerous	manuscripts
Jerusalem	daub	Colmcille	vellum	Viking
slept	wood	Kells	calf	killed

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### Answer sheet

In 563 St. Colmcille arrived in the Scottish island of Iona and established a monastery that would go on to be a centre for learning that was famous throughout Europe. At a time when very few people were educated, monasteries were centres for learning, writing and recording of history. Much of the history of Ireland and Scotland from before the 8th century comes directly from what was written down in monasteries in general, and Iona in particular.

The monks in Iona were held to a very high standard of behaviour. St. Colmcille's aim had been to create 'a perfect monastery as an image of the heavenly city of Jerusalem'. St. Colmcille intended that people would look up to his monks as the best example of how to behave. The monks were very disciplined, prayed and worked daily, and strictly followed the rules of the church. Just like other monasteries of the time, St. Colmcille's Iona would have been made of wooden, wattle and daub, or thatched buildings. There would have been a central church (the oratory), a shared kitchen (the refectory), the library (scriptorium) and the monks' cells where they slept.

The monks at Iona worked very hard. They were particularly skilled at making beautiful manuscripts. The most important early Christian manuscript from this part of the world, the Book of Kells, is said to have been made here in the 9th century. The Book of Kells is a collection of the four gospels and some other writings, hand written and decorated beautifully on vellum pages. Vellum is made from animal skin, usually calf skin. The Book of Kells is one of Ireland's most priceless treasures, and is on display in Trinity College Dublin.

Life on Iona could at times be very dangerous. The monks had to endure a number of Viking raids during the 9th century. Sometimes monks were killed during these raids. Eventually the Columban monks moved from Iona to a new monastery in Kells in Meath. However the monastery in Iona remained in use until the end of the 10th century. The influence of the Columban monks was felt all over Europe, and St. Colmcille is still considered to have been a hugely important figure in the history of Christianity.