

RUNES

Early Germanic tribes, Anglo-Saxons and Vikings wrote using letters called “runes”. Wherever they traveled they left inscriptions on great stone monuments and on common household items. Runes were carved in stone, wood, and metal. The runic alphabet, or Futhark, gets its name from its first six sounds (f, u, th, a, r, k). Each rune not only represents a phonetic sound but also has its own distinct meaning often connected with Norse mythology.

WRITE YOUR NAME IN RUNES

Materials:

Index cards

Pencils or pens

Procedure: Have students write their name using the runic alphabet. You will note that there is not a runic letter for every letter in our alphabet. You have to substitute a similar sound or just eliminate that letter from your name. You can also “write” a secret message using the meanings for the runic letters.

Example: The runic letters for M, E, T (men, horse, war) carved on a stone could denote the scene of a battle.

Discussion: Why do you think most of the letters are straight lines?

ƒ F, “Fehu” can mean cattle, gold or wealth in general.

ᚢ U, “Uruz” wild ox, represents strength, speed, and good health.

ᚦ TH, “Thurisaz” refers to the giants of Norse mythology.


















ᚱ A, “Ansuz” Odin, the Viking king of the gods.

ᚷ R, “Raido” a long journey

ᚨ K, “Kenaz” a torch or some other source of light

ᚸ G, “Gebo” denoted a sacrifice to the gods

RUNES (CONTINUED)

	W, "Wunjo" comfort, joy or glory
	H, "Hagalaz" hail, as in the weather or hailing projectiles in battle.
	N, "Nauthiz" need or necessity
	I, "Isa" ice
	Y, "Jera" year or harvest
	EI, "Eithwaz" yew, a sacred tree
	P, "Perth" meaning unknown
	Z, "Algiz" defense, protection, or self-preservation
	S, "Sowilo" the sun
	T, "Tiwaz" the war god Tyr, often carved on weapons
	B, "Berkano" birch tree, fertility, and Idun the goddess of spring.
	E, "Ehwaz" horse
	M, "Mannaz" man or mankind
	L, "Laguz" water
	NG, "Ingwaz" Danes, the Danish hero Ing
	D, "Dagaz" day or daylight
	O, "Othila" inheritance, passing of property or knowledge, native land