

Viking Runes

Like wrestling, swimming and fighting, writing was considered a special **skill** among the Vikings.



What do you notice about these shapes?



When we write music, we use notes. What do we use to write words?

What is the Viking in the picture doing?
What do you think is on the pieces of wood he is looking at?

What letters in our alphabet use lines and not curves?



The Viking letters were called runes. They weren't written with pen and ink on paper. Instead, runes were carved with a knife into stone and wood.

Why do you think there are no curved letters in Viking writing?



The Vikings believed that, Odin hung upside down on the tree of knowledge for nine days. When he saw the runes, he used his sword to carve them into the tree.

Because of this **sacrifice**, the Vikings considered the runes to be **sacred**.



How do you know who owns a P.E bag in lost property?

Runes weren't used to write stories.

They were used for everyday writing such as **labelling** household items and personal **belongings**.

They were also used by **merchants** to keep records of items bought and sold.



Wood tag identifying property, reading "Thorgrim's pile"

What are these?

What do you notice about the shapes On the spear heads?

Viking warriors **decorated** their swords and spears with runic symbols. They are different to the runic alphabet. They use curves. They believed the runes were magical, and made the weapon stronger in battle.

Vikings believed that warriors who knew how to read and write runes could blunt enemies' weapons, break chains, cure illnesses, guard against witches and be protected in battle and on threatening seas.



Do you know what these are?



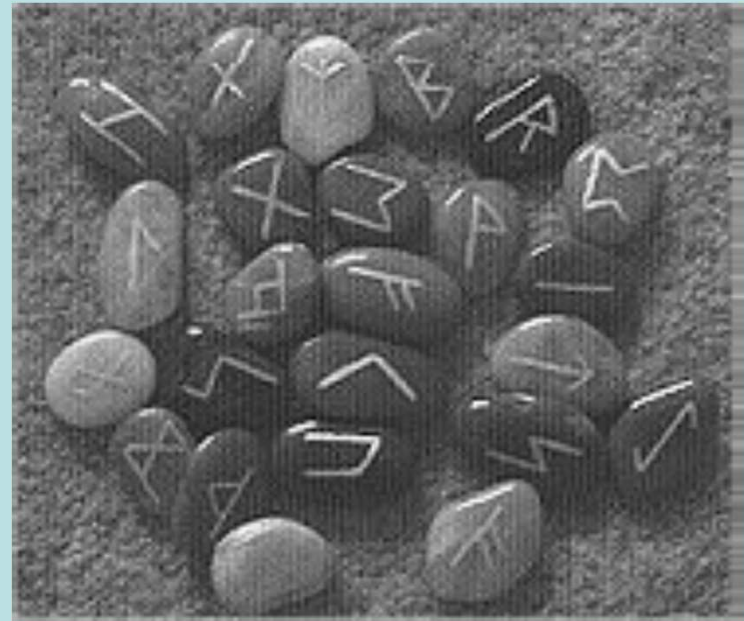
Gravestones give us information about the date of birth and death of the person who is buried there.

Vikings made rune stones. The stones were often **decorated** with black, red, blue and white paint extracted from berries, garden plants and clay-like earth. The stones often depicted snakes, horses and ships along with the inscriptions. They gave information about families, deaths, and name giving.

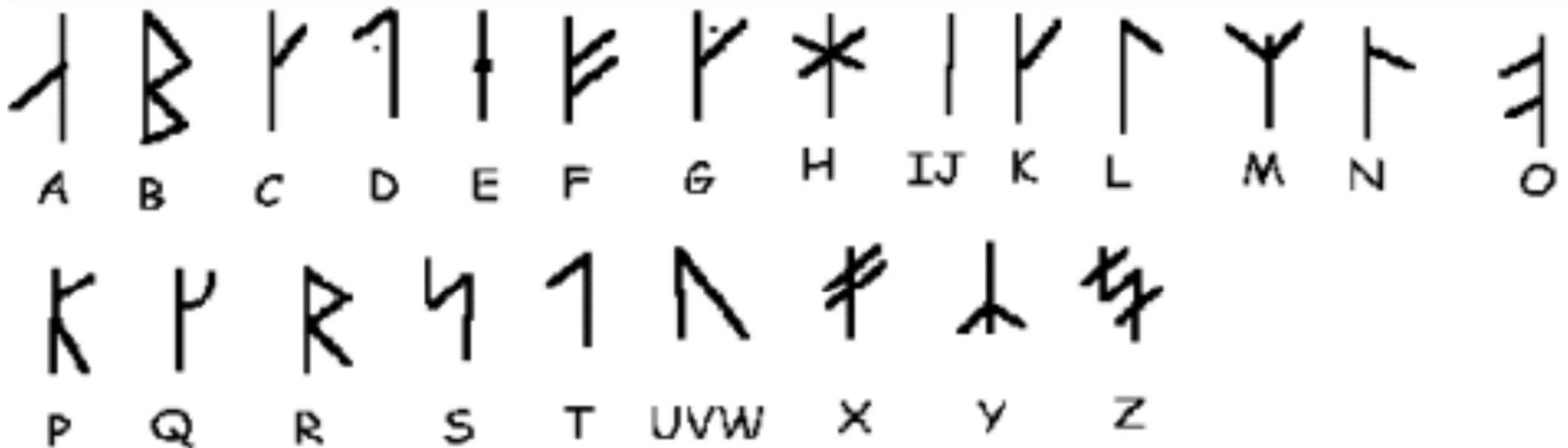


Have you seen these before?

Viking runes were also **inscribed** on thumb sized stones. The stones were placed in bags and removed one by one by Viking fortune-tellers and magicians. The stones were then used to predict the future, heal the sick, **banish** evil, or bless people, places, and things.



Here is the 24 character Viking runic alphabet arranged following our alphabetical order. Can you see any letters that are similar to ours?



The Viking Runic Alphabet

1 B 2 3 4 5 6 * 7 8 9

A B C D E F G H I J K L M

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z