

Anglo - Saxon Runes



Learning Objectives

1. We know that Anglo Saxons used runes as their alphabet.
2. We realise that historians use these runes to find out what happened .

Success Criteria

- 1. We know that runes were used by Anglo Saxons.**
- 2. We can successfully interpret runes.**

Anglo - Saxon Runes

The letters of the alphabets of the Anglo Saxons, were called runes.

Runes were letters used by the Saxons to write short messages of ownership, like "This belongs to Beowulf".

They were also used to write inscriptions on gravestones, like "Here lies Alfred. We miss him".

There are 28 characters in this Runic Alphabet. Although this number seems to vary!

The Alphabet is called a 'Futhork' from the first 6 letters.

Are the letters the same as ours?

F U T H O R C G W H N I J Z

P X S T B E M L R G D Æ

A Æ Y EA

Carving of Runes

- ▶ They were usually carved on wood or stone (not written in books).
- ▶ The runes consist mostly of vertical and diagonal marks, with notably fewer horizontal marks or curves.
- ▶ It is thought that runes were designed this way to help carving in wood.
- ▶ Runes were thought to have magical powers and Saxons thought they would protect them from illness and danger.



What do runes tell us?

- ▶ Historians use runes to find out information from the past.
- ▶ The earliest surviving runes are dated to about A.D. 200.
- ▶ These early runes up to about A.D. 650 appear to all use the same "futhark".
- ▶ Most of these older inscriptions are very short and cryptic, and in most cases it is hard to translate them or even be sure what language they are.

Can we de-code this?

þ M · H P B B I ↑

FR

þ M R M · F + X · B F K h · F X F I †

ƒ ŋ þ ʀ ʁ ʁ X P N † I * Z
f u t h o r c g w h n i j z

ƒ Y † B M P P Γ X H Q
p x s t b e m l n g d æ

ƒ ƒ ŋ Y
a æ y ea

The answer is...

The Hobbit

Or

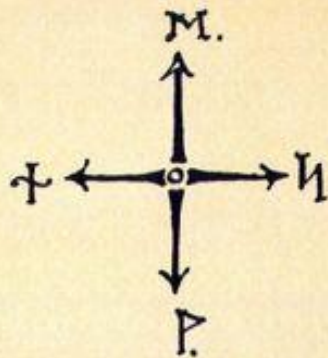
There and Back Again

The Author J.R.R. Tolkien uses a variant of the anglo-saxon runes for the writing on Thrór's map.

Challenge: Could you translate it?

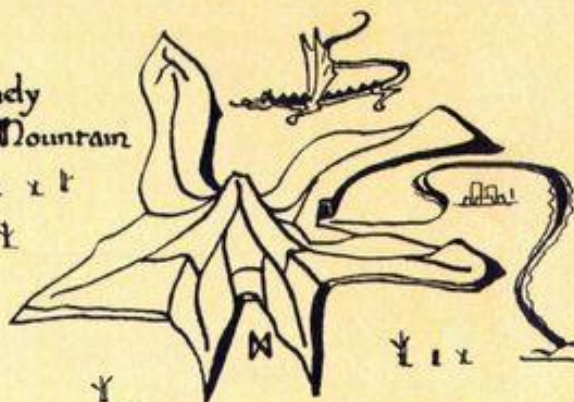
Look at the symbols on the compass points

↑ East lie the Iron Hills
where is Dain.



The
Londy
Mountain

Y I X T
T



Here was Girion
lord in Dale

the Running River

Here is
the gateway
of the Long
Lake

Here of old was Thrain
King under the Mountain

TH
PIMM
PQTHIXH
PMNFRM
MFRQMF
PMHFBRM
FHT: .P.P.

The Desolation of Smaug

Far
to the North
are
the Grey Mountains
the Withered Heath
whence came the



Great Worms.

YHTT. BA. TM. XRM. HT
BTM. HPMT. TM. FRNH. HT
FRHY. FT. TM. YMT. IX. Y
NT. PIT. TM. FFHT. PIXHT.
BF. ANRITH. MFA. PIFT. YH
ITM. NHFT. TM. HMANNFM.

In Esgaroth upon
the Long Lake
dwell Men

Here flows the
Forest River

Elvenking

West lies Mithwood the Great
there are Spiders.

Thor's Map

Can you write using runes?

Task 1:

- ▶ Can you write your name using the runes?
- ▶ You may have to design your own rune if there is a letter missing.

Task 2:

- ▶ Can you write a secret message and then get someone else to de-code it?


Task 3:

- ▶ Can you create your own message to appear above the den that you are going to build on Thursday.
- ▶ **Super Challenge de-code the message on the map!**

F U T H O R C G W H N I J Z

P X S T B E M L R G D Æ

A Æ Y EA



Stand by the grey stone when the thrush knocks and
the setting sun with the last light of durins day will
shine upon the keyhole.

Translation from map