

Lesson Plan

Saga Summaries

Book: *Dwarfs*

Series: Fairy Tale Creatures

Level: Beacon

Objective

To help students explore Norse mythology by writing a short summary of a Viking creation myth.

Supplies

- *Dwarfs* book
- “Odin Creates the World” video from the Viking Sagas collection by BBC Teach: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/school-radio/english-ks2-viking-sagas-1/zrnd92p>
- Paper and pencils

Before the Activity

Read the *Dwarfs* book out loud, or assign it to students to read on their own.

Activity

After reading the book, ask for a volunteer to read the text on page 9 aloud:

“Many stories of dwarfs come from Scandinavia. Some of these stories are thousands of years old. Many are part of the Edda. The Edda is a collection of stories. They come from Norse mythology.”

Turn to the glossary on page 30 and invite additional volunteers to read the definitions for *mythology*, *Norse*, and *Scandinavia* out loud:

- *mythology*: “A culture’s traditional stories that explain the world in some way.”
- *Norse*: “Related to Norway or other parts of Scandinavia.”
- *Scandinavia*: “An area in northern Europe that includes the countries of Norway, Sweden, and Denmark. Finland and Iceland may also be included.”

The Vikings were one group of people who lived in Scandinavia. They told stories called sagas about the adventures of heroes and gods. The video tells a version of a Viking story about how the world was made. Watch the video as a class. Then ask the following questions:

- According to Viking mythology, who made the world? (Answer: the god Odin)
- What are the five things that Odin made? (Answers: the land of the giants [Jotenheim], the land for humans [Midgard], the first humans, the city of the gods [Asgard], and a rainbow bridge)

Then, ask each student to write a paragraph that summarizes the main points of this story. The paragraph should open with a topic sentence. Then, it should describe each of the five things that Odin made. Throughout the paragraph, students should use transitional words and phrases to help readers understand the order in which things happened.

Evaluation

Collect the paragraphs at the end of class. Use the following system (and sample paragraph) to give each student up to 8 points:

- 1 point for starting with a clear topic sentence
- 1 point for accurately describing each of the five things Odin made
- 1 point for using transitional words and phrases
- 1 point for using spelling and grammar that is relatively free of errors

Sample Paragraph:

According to Viking mythology, the god Odin made the world. First, Odin roared loudly, sending a freezing cold wind to make a misty land of ice and frost. This became the land of the giants, who were the gods' enemies. Second, Odin breathed gently to make a warm wind. This wind made a beautiful world full of plants, lakes, and rivers. This world was Midgard, the home for humans. Next, Odin created the first people. He muttered to two trees, which turned into the first man and the first woman. After that, Odin breathed again to make a shining city high in the sky. This beautiful city full of gold and silver palaces was Asgard, the home of the gods. Finally, Odin joined Asgard and Midgard together with a bridge made from a rainbow.

Standards

This lesson may be used to address the Common Core State Standards' reading standards for informational text, grade 3 (RI 3.2, 3.3), and writing standards, grade 3 (W 3.3).