

Sample First Quarter Course in Old Norse. Please feel free to change or alter as you see fit. This course, as it is arranged, is the first of a two semester course series. If one wishes to have just a single semester, please alter to include more lessons. See also the sample Old Norse course syllabi in quarters.



Viking ships of Olaf the Fat (later St. Olaf, King of Norway) attack and pull down fortified London Bridge. The source of the children's song, "London Bridge is Falling Down."

BEGINNING OLD NORSE

Scandinavian 132A – Fall XXXX

Monday & Wednesday 2:00 - 3:15, Royce Hall 148

Course Catalogue ID# XXXXXXXX

Prof. Jesse Byock
Scandinavian Section, UCLA
www.viking.ucla.edu
www.vikinglanguage.com

Dept. Office: 212 Royce Hall
Office Hours at 328 Royce
Wednesdays 1-1:50 and by appointment
byock@humnet.ucla.edu

This course teaches the Old Norse language and runic writing of the Vikings. It is an introduction to the sagas and runes of the Viking Age. The student learns to read Old Norse / Old Icelandic from sagas, myths, and runic inscriptions. We use a new textbook series *Viking Language 1 and 2*, which includes original Old Norse readings and grammar exercises presented in a modern way. The course includes MP3 download pronunciation exercises and Quizlet web exercises. The lessons in the Viking Language textbook include cultural sections and will leave you with insights into the society, language, and culture of the Vikings.

Icelandic sagas and the mythology of the Old Norse gods are one of the world's great literatures. We read short and long passages that take you deep into the world of the Vikings and Old Scandinavia. These Norse texts teach us much about life in the Western Medieval World.

The course has no prerequisites, and the student needs no previous knowledge of other languages. Old Norse is taught in a way that prepares the student to learn Modern Icelandic. This course, Scandinavian 132A, serves as an entry level course for more advanced study of Viking literature, history, mythology, archaeology, language, and society.

Grading:

Based primarily on class preparation, grammar homework, cumulative quizzes, and vocabulary quizzes:

15% Translation preparation and vocabulary

15% Grammar homework

60% Quizzes

10% Participation

Required Texts:

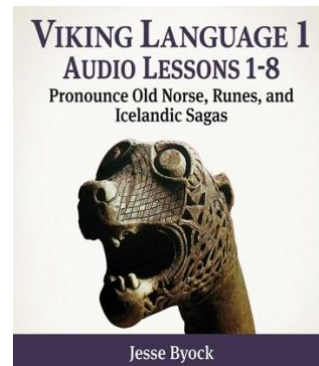
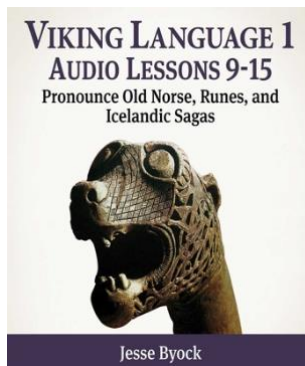
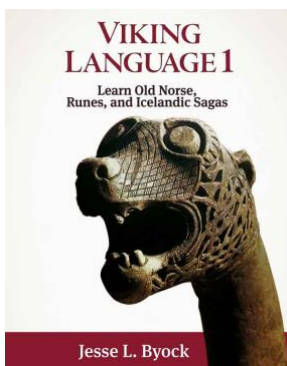
- Byock, Jesse. *Viking Language 1: Learn Old Norse, Runes, and Icelandic Sagas*. Jules William Press, 2013. Available on Amazon.com and in bookstores.
- Viking Language 1: Audio Lessons 1-8 (MP3 download)

The two MP3 Audio Lesson albums (Lessons 1-8 and 9-15) are available for download on Amazon (under "all", "Music", and "Digital Music"), itunes, and www.cdbaby.com

- *Viking Language learning modules on Quizlet* (see <https://quizlet.com/class/1806241/>)

Readings and Homework (HW) are due on the appointed day (meeting) as noted on the syllabus. Students should be prepared to translate in class the reading passages in the assigned lessons. The lessons of *Viking Language 1* are coordinated with:

- **Viking Language Audio Files.** Use the respective audio file each time you begin a new reading passage. The audio files teach both pronunciation and vocabulary.



- Viking Language learning modules on Quizlet**
[\(https://quizlet.com/class/1806241/\)](https://quizlet.com/class/1806241/). For each meeting, study the vocabulary list on Quizlet. The Viking Language Quizlet lessons are prepared by Prof. Lee Forester working with the Viking Language Old Norse Project. The Quizlet vocabulary lists concentrate on teaching the 246 most frequent „saga words“ taught in the Viking Language lessons. We suggest starting with Flashcards, followed by Speller, Learn, and Test. Have fun with the games.

Schedule of Meetings:

<p>MEETINGS 1 & 2 (dates, week 1)</p>	<p>Meeting 1. Introduction to Old Norse. Readings: Introduction to Viking Language 1: Learn Old Norse, Runes, and Icelandic Sagas, pp. 19-38 (About Vikings, Icelandic Sources, and Scandinavian Runes) Meeting 2. Lesson 1: Sailing West. Readings: Lesson 1, including ON Passages, Grammar Explanations, and Exercises. Homework: Audio Lessons tracks 1-3; Quizlet Vocabulary List 1</p>
<p>MEETINGS 3 & 4 (dates, week 2)</p>	<p>Meeting 3. Lesson 2: Norse Settlers in Greenland and Vinland. Readings: Lesson 2.1-2.14 Homework: Audio Lessons track 4; Quizlet Vocabulary List 2 Meeting 4. Homework: 2.15-2.22. Prepare for short Quiz 1 on lessons 1-2.</p>
<p>MEETINGS 5 & 6 (dates, week 3)</p>	<p>Meeting 5. Lesson 3: Denmark: Runes and the First Viking State. In class, Quiz 1 on lessons 1-2. Readings: 3.1-3.13 Homework: Audio Lessons tracks 5-8; Quizlet Vocabulary List 3 Meeting 6. Readings and Exercises: 3.14-3.26</p>
<p>MEETINGS 7 & 8 (dates, week 4)</p>	<p>Meeting 7. Lesson 4: Kings and Heroes. Readings: 4.1-4.16 Homework: Audio Lessons tracks 9-11; Quizlet Vocabulary List 4 Meeting 8. Readings and Exercises: 4.17-4.27</p>
<p>MEETINGS 9 & 10 (dates, week 5)</p>	<p>Meeting 9. Lesson 5: Sweden: A Family Runestone. Readings: 5.1-5.15 Homework: Audio Lessons tracks 12-13; Quizlet Vocabulary List 5 Meeting 10. Reading Chapter 1 Homework: Audio Lessons track 14</p>

	Readings and Exercises: 5.16-5.30
MEETINGS 11 & 12 (dates, week 6)	<p>Meeting 11. Lesson 6: Sacral Kingship in Ancient Scandinavia. Readings: 6.1-6.10 Homework: Audio Lessons track 15; Quizlet Vocabulary List 6</p> <p>QUIZ 2: lessons 1-5</p> <p>Meeting 12. Reading Chapter 2 Readings and exercises: 6.11-6.25 Homework: Audio Lessons track 16</p>
MEETINGS 13 & 14 (dates, week 7)	<p>Meeting 13. Lesson 7: Norway's Harald Fairhair and His Son Eirik Bloodaxe. Readings: 7.1-7.11 Homework: Audio Lessons tracks 17 and 18; Quizlet Vocabulary List 7</p> <p>Meeting 14. Readings: 7.12-7.25 Homework: Audio Lessons track 19</p>
MEETINGS 15 & 16 (dates, week 8)	<p>Meeting 15. Lesson 8: Harald Hardradi in Constantinople. Readings: 8.1-8.11 Homework: Audio Lessons track 20; Quizlet Vocabulary List 8</p> <p>QUIZ 3: lessons 3-7</p> <p>Meeting 16. Readings: 8.12-8.26 Homework: Audio Lessons tracks 21 and 23</p>
MEETINGS 17 & 18 (dates, week 9)	<p>Meeting 17. Lesson 9: Raiding in the West Readings: 9.1-9.13 Homework: Audio Lessons tracks 9.1, 9.12, and 9.25a & 9.25b (download Viking Language MP3 album #2, lessons 9-15 or the individual audio passages for lesson 9. Quizlet Vocabulary List 9</p> <p>Meeting 18. Readings: 9.14-9.25 Audio Lessons, tracks 9.25a and 9.25b Homework: Begin Review of Lessons 6-9</p>
MEETINGS 19 & 20 Dates, week 10	<p>Meeting 19. Review Lessons 1-9</p> <p>Meeting 20. Quiz 4: Lessons 6-9 Homework: review for final quiz</p>

Along with the Icelandic Sagas and the language of the Viking Age, this course teaches **runes**. The sagas tell us: A person should not carve runes, unless he well knows how to control them („Skalat maðr rúnar rísta, nema ráða vel kunni“).

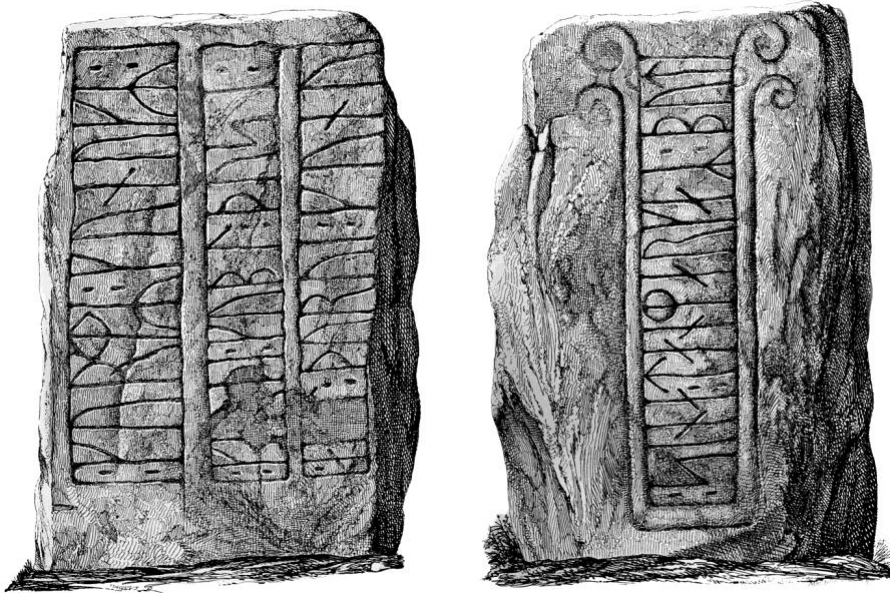


Figure Error! No text of specified style in document..1 The Runestone, front and back, of King Gorm the Old (Gormr inn gamli) at Jelling, Denmark. Gorm was the last pagan king of Denmark.

Ancient Scandinavians wrote in runes, and surviving runic inscriptions are a main source of social, historical, and linguistic information about the language and culture of the Viking Age. Runes are an alphabet, not a pictographic or a syllabic script. Just as we might call our alphabet the ABCs, the runic alphabet was composed of runic letters. It was called the futhark, named after the first six runes or runic characters. Runes were carved on wood, stone, bone, antler, and metal. They are found on weapons, jewelry, everyday items, and on surviving pieces of wood and bark. Runes were used for identification, commemoration, messages, and magic. Runic inscriptions are the closest written sources to the speech of the Viking Age (From the textbook, *Viking Language I*).