

Norse Mythology

The Nine Realms



In the Norse Myths, there are nine worlds in which all the mythical beings we learned of in the last study guide live. They are Asgard, Vanaheim, Midgard, Alfheim, Jotunheim, Nidavellir, Muspelheim, Niflheim, and Helheim. They are all connected by the World Tree and one can travel between worlds through it's branches.

Book List:

1. Hotel Valhalla; Guide to the Norse Worlds by, Rick Riordan
2. Magnus Chase series by, Rick Riordan
3. Treasury of Norse Mythology by, Donna Jo Napoli
4. Norse Mythology by, Neil Gaiman
5. 9 from the Nine Worlds by, Rick Riordan

Website References

<https://norse-mythology.net/>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Norse_mythology

<https://norse-mythology.org/>

Yggdrasil

The World Tree

The nine realms are all connected by the roots of Yggdrasil. Also at the roots of the World Tree is a magical well of knowledge overseen by the god Mimir. Several animals inhabit the branches of Yggdrasil including an eagle, four stags, a squirrel and a dragon (actually said to gnaw at the roots). The Midgard serpent wraps around the realm of Midgard (Earth).

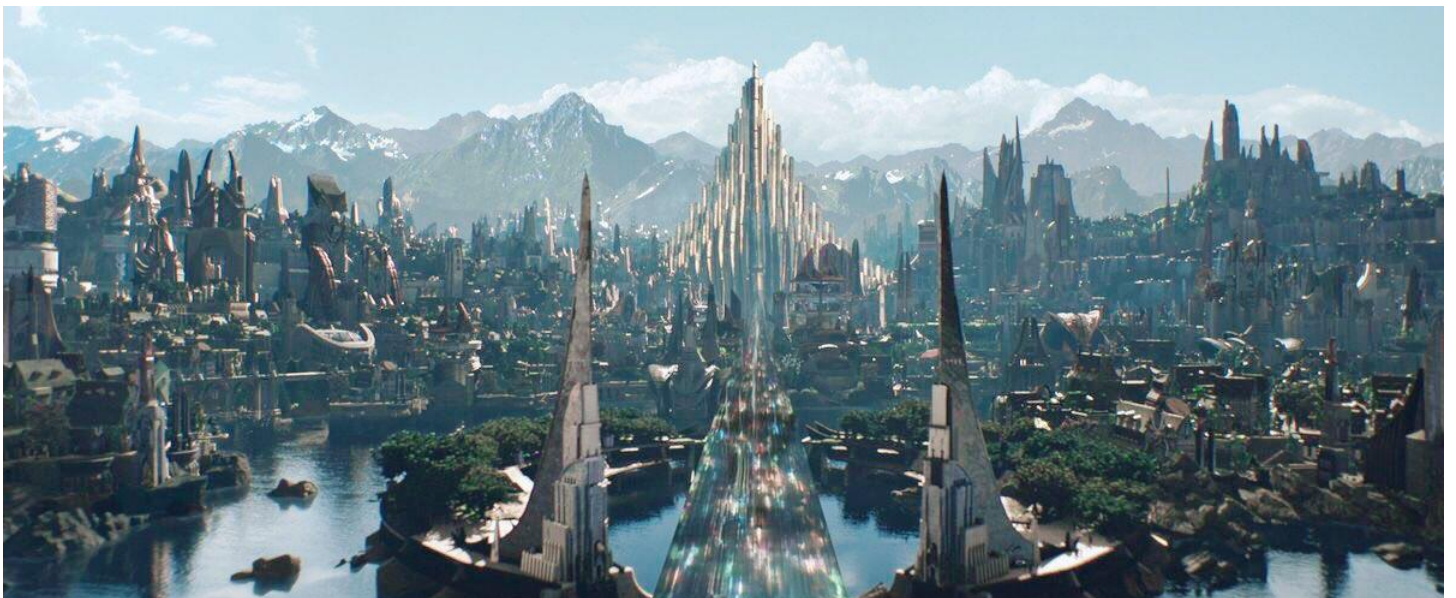


Asgard

Home of the Aesir



High on the World Tree, the warrior gods reside in homes of silver and gold overlooking the rainbow bridge (Bifrost). Inside the gates of Asgard is Valhalla, where Odin's eternal army, the honorable dead who have died in battle (einherjar) wait for Ragnarök.



Vanaheim

Home of the Vanir



The laid-back gods of nature live in a world full of picturesque views of lush meadowlands and forests. In her palace, Sessrumnir, Freya oversees Folkvang. Similar to Valhalla, honorable dead reside in Folkvang to await being used in the god's army during Ragnarök.



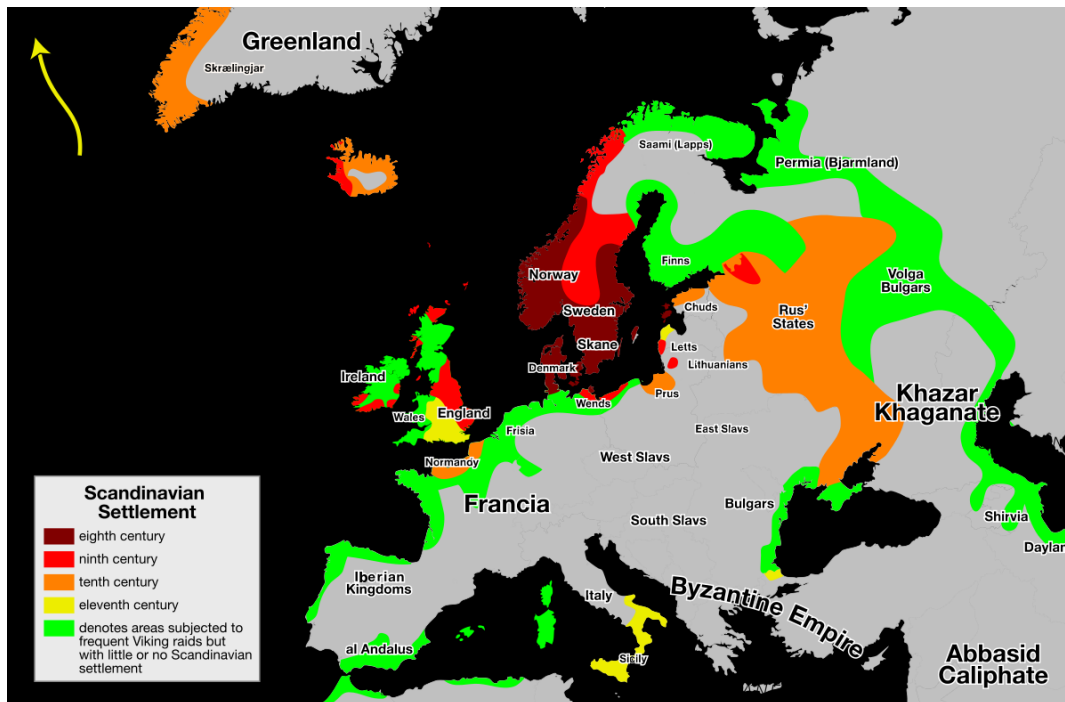
Midgard

Home of the Humans



The Vikings that worshipped the Norse gods and told the stories of the Aesir and Vanir, lived in Scandinavia (present day Denmark, Sweden and Norway) between the 8th and 11th centuries. They were explorers and made their mark all over the world.

The Norse tales of Midgard describe it as a flat world surrounded by an ocean where the Midgard serpent, named Jormungand lives, encircling the world, biting his own tail.



Alfheim

Home of the Light Elves



Said to always be daytime, never night, Alfheim is looked after by the god, Frey, though home of the beautiful, magical elves. The world reflects the nature magic of it's inhabitants, with enchanting forests and mythical waterfalls.



Jotunheim

Home of the Giants



Cold and icy, filled with mountains and frozen lakes and infertile lands, Jotunheim is the home of the giants, or frost giants. The Jotun king lives in a stronghold carved from icicles and blocks of snow called Utgard.

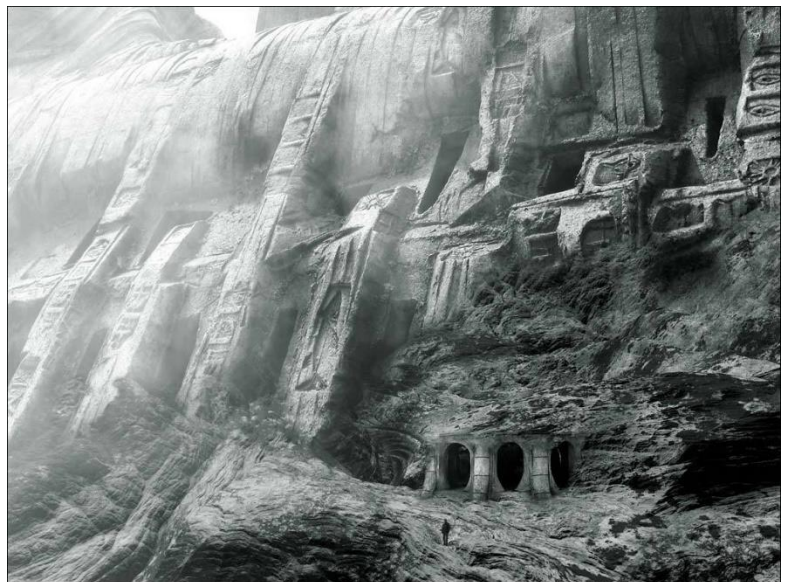


Nidavellir (Svartalfheim)

Home of the Dwarves (Dark Elves)



In some tales it's called Nidavellir, in others it's called Svartalfheim. In some Svartalfheim is only a part of Nidavellir. The Dwarves are referred to as dark elves in some tales, while in others, they are separate species. True in all tales is that this place is an underground world of caves and rocks where the dwarves build their treasures.



Muspelheim

Home of the Fire Giants



A flaming hot world with rivers of lava flowing through it, Muspelheim is the land of fire. Hotter than the surface of the sun, home to the fire giants and demons and ruled but Surtr, the fire giant said to attack Asgard during Ragnarök.



Niflheim

World of Mist and Fog



A dark and cold, inhospitable world. The well, Hvergelmir is in Niflheim from which the eleven rivers in Norse Mythology flow and the roots of Yggdrasil draw water. Some say the frost giants dwell here, others say it's uninhabited.



Helheim

Home of the Dishonorable Dead



A grim, dark world filled with those not brave enough to enter Valhalla or Folkvang. Ruled by Loki's daughter, Hel. It is impossible to be in Helheim and feel joy or happiness.



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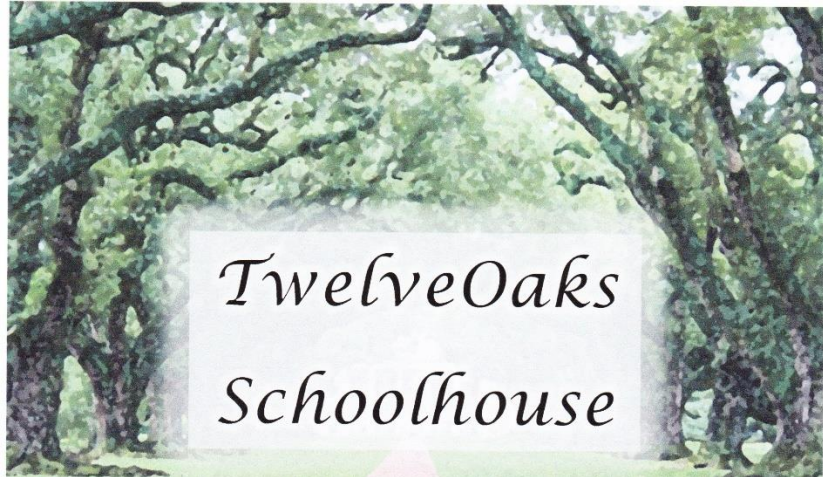
Discussion/ Essay Questions

1. What are the names of the animals of Yggdrasil? What do they do?
2. What are the requirements to enter Valhalla after death? Where do other dead souls go?
3. Who lives in each world?
4. Midgard means what? What classic book series was inspired by Midgard and other Norse Myths?
5. What fairytale is said to be inspired by Yggdrasil? Hint: it has a giant in the sky.

Activities

- Write a story based in one of the nine realms.
- Draw Yggdrasil and all the connected worlds. Don't forget the wells and the animals.
- Draw pictures of the nine worlds. Be creative.
- Read or watch the Lord of the Rings. Compare the worlds and beings of Tolkien to the Norse Myths.





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