



The World of Languages
and Languages of the World

Norse Influence

And The Days of the Week

Let's investigate where the words for the days of the week come from.

Objectives

- We can see that the days of the week in English are named after Norse gods.
- We can see that days of the week are in French are linked to gods as well – but not Norse ones!
- We can recognise parts of words in Hindi and German.
- We can see that Norse language influenced English



Let's Go!

- Why is this Greek letter interesting?
- Where do we get the word alphabet?
- Can you remember three Greek letters? Who can remember more?
- What is the word that means "swapping from one letter to the same in a different alphabet"?

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Vikings and the Norse Influence

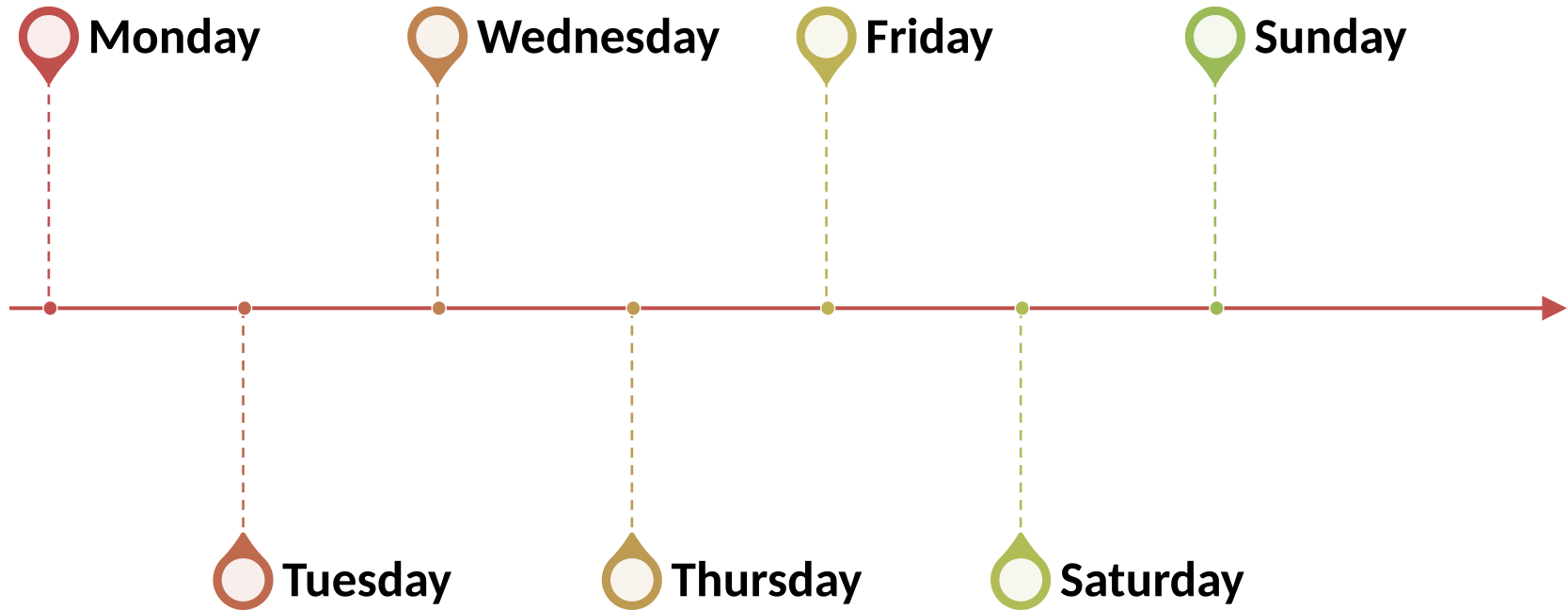
- The Viking raids took place from 800 to 1150 AD.
- They brought linguistic and cultural influences to British shores.
- Old English and Old Norse were both Germanic languages.



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What do you know?

Why are our days of the week named as they are?



Days of the week

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

Sunday

1. Why are there seven days in a week?

2. Monday and Sunday are the easy ones. Why are they so called?

3. What about Saturday? What's that got to do with Saturn?

4. So, what about the other four?





Why 7 Days?

The ancient civilisation, known as the Babylonians lived in what is now Iraq. They were keen observers of the sky and clever interpreters of the heavens.

The Babylonians chose 7 days because they observed seven celestial bodies — the sun, the moon, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter and Sat



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Who's Tiw?

- He's the Anglo-Saxon god of the sky and war.
- Tiw is a one-armed god.
- Tiw is 'twinned' with the Roman god Mars.



Is Woden Odin?

- Woden is Odin.
- Woden is an important Norse god.
- Woden is the god of wisdom, poetry, death and magic.
- Woden is twinned with the Roman god Mercury.
- Woden is the father of Thor.



What's Thor for?

- Thor is a hammer-wielding Norse god: the god of lightning, thunder, storms, tress, the protection of mankind.
- He is twinned with the Roman god Jupiter



Finding Frigg(e/a)

- Goddess of marriage
- Wife of Odin
- Mother of Thor and Baldur
- The Leader of Gods



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Does this help? Or make it worse?

English

French

Monday

lundi

Tuesday

mardi

Wednesday

mercredi

Thursday

jeudi

Friday

vendredi

Saturday

samedi

Sunday

dimanche

1. Where are the similarities?

2. Who has gone missing?

3. mardi, mercredi, jeudi and vendredi are named after Roman gods. Which ones?

4. What were they gods of?

5. Where else can these names be found?

6. What about dimanche?

[The Italian for Sunday is Domenica, the Spanish is Domingo]



How did you do?



- Monday and lundi

Moon and lune (moon in French)

- Tuesday and mardi

Tiw is twinned with Mars - WAR

- Wednesday and mercredi

Woden is twinned with Mercury – WISDOM,
POETRY, DEATH, MAGIC

- Thursday and jeudi

Thor is twinned with Jupiter - STORMS

- Friday and vendredi

Norse goddess Frigg bears similarities to the
Roman goddess Venus - MARRIAGE

- Saturday and samedi

Saturn has disappeared! Samedi comes from
Latin sambatum - “sabbath”

- Sunday and dimanche

Dimanche has nothing to do with the sun, but
means “Lord’s Day”.

Days of the Week

English	Norse	Roman	French	German	Hindi
Monday			lundi	Montag	sōmvār
Tuesday			mardi	Dienstag	mangalvār
Wednesday			mercredi	Mittwoch	budhvār
Thursday			jeudi	Donnerstag	brihaspativā
Friday			vendredi	Freitag	shukravār
Saturday			samedi	Samstag	shanivār
Sunday			dimanche	Sonntag	ravivār

Does this help or make it worse?

English	German
Monday	Montag
Tuesday	Dienstag
Wednesday	Mittwoch
Thursday	Donnerstag
Friday	Freitag
Saturday	Samstag
Sunday	Sonntag

1. What is the German for day?
2. What is the German for 'moon'?
3. What is the German for 'sun'?
4. 'Woche' means 'week' in German, so what does 'mitt' mean?
5. 'Donner' means 'thunder' in German. What's that got to do with Thursday or even Jeudi?
6. Where – and why – are the German days like the English days?



How did you do?

1. What is the German for day?
 2. What is the German for 'moon'?
 3. What is the German for 'sun'?
 4. 'Woche' means week in German, so what does 'mitt' mean?
 5. 'Donner' means 'thunder' in German. What's that got to do with Thursday or even Jeudi?
 6. Where – and why - are the German days like the English days?
- Tag
 - Mond
 - Sonne
 - Mitte means "middle". Mittwoch = Midweek
 - Thor and Jupiter are gods of storms and thunder.
 - Think about the history of English and the Germanic roots of our words.



Can you spot any links to the languages we have investigated?

English	Punjabi	Hindi	Sanskrit	Sanskrit Translation
Monday	sōmvār	sōmvār	sōmvāsaraha	Moon-day
Tuesday	mangalvār	mangalvār	mangalvāsaraha	Mars-day
Wednesday	budhvār	budhvār	budhvāsaraha	Mercury-day
Thursday	vīrvār	brihaspativār	brihaspativāsaraha	Jupiter-day
Friday	shukkarvār	shukravār	shukravāsaraha	Venus-day
Saturday	saniccharvār	shanivār	shanivāsaraha	Saturn-day
Sunday	aitvār	ravivār	ravivāsaraha	Sun-day

Your Languages

- If you are bilingual or multilingual, what are the days of the week in your other language(s)?
- Do they bear any resemblance to the English, German, French or Hindi days that we have looked at today?



Next please! Go and research

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Why are the German and English days of the week similar and English and French days of the week so different?

What other days of the week can you find in other languages?

Are they like English, German and French or different? What do they mean or where do they come from?

Is seven a magic number?

What about the names of the months of the year?



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WoLLoW would like to know...

Why is Thursday called:

Thursday in English?

Donnerstag in German?

Jeudi in French?

Brihaspativār in Hindi?

Torsdag in Swedish

Jueves In Spanish?



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