Unit 2 Lesson 3 Crib Sheet

The Vikings: Villages and Violence

Slide 1: Introduce the lesson objectives – to see how the Vikings influenced English and to investigate Old Norse.

Slide 2: Read out the background information on the slide.

Slides 3 and 4: Introduce the pupils to some English words in use today that come from Old Norse. Traditionally Old Norse/Viking influence on the English language was thought to be all to do with violence. However, many words they introduced were everyday words. This shows just how integrated the Vikings were in life in England.

Slide 5: Gives more background and information about Old Norse.

**Slide 6:** Looks at Old Norse influence on grammar.

Slide 7: Click on the video link and listen to the sounds of Old Norse. Can they follow the words on the left of the screen with the spoken words, spotting the sound/spelling links of Old Norse? Only play this from approx. 2 mins 30 to 3 mins.

Slide 8: This slide looks at prefixes and suffixes from Old Norse in British place names. Can the pupils think of anywhere near them with Old Norse names?

Slides 9 and 10: Pupils look in their workbooks for their task on Runes, the Old Norse form of writing. This puzzle is taken from the UK Linguistics Olympiad. Here are the answers to the puzzle.

a.	ᛒᚨᛚᛞᚢᚱ	Baldur	g.	ᛊᛟᚱᚦ		Earth
b.	ᚦᛟᚱ	**Thor**	h.	ᛞᛖᛚᛚᛁᛟᛗᚱ		Dallinger
c.	ᛁᚦᚢᚾᚾ	Ithun	i.	ᚠᚱᛖᚱ		Freyr
d.	ᛞᚨᚷᚱ	Day	j.	ᛟᛞᛁᚾ		**Odin**
e.	ᚾᛟᛏᛏ	Night	k.	ᛇᛟᛚ		Sun
f.	ᚠᚱᛖᛁᚨ	Freya				

o. Tyr	p. Ran	q. Sif
ᛏᛁᚱ	ᚱᚨᛏ	ᛇᛁᚠ **NB**

The Commentary on how to work out the puzzle is below.

Slide 11: Read out the slide on Kennings. A feature common in both Old Norse and Anglo-Saxon poetry.

Slides 12, 13 and 14 give more detail on Old Norse and Anglo-Saxon poetry.

Slide 15 sets the task to create a kenning poem about the Viking raids.

Slide 16: Ask pupils to read their Kenning poem aloud. Can pupils spot the features of an Old Norse or Anglo-Saxon poem mentioned on the slide?

Slide 17: A final thought about which words survive and why. Introduce the idea that sometimes both words survive and are used in standard English, sometimes the Norse word has been adopted in dialect.

Puzzle Footnotes from the UK Linguistics Olympiad:

We know that the runes are an 'alphabet', so let's assume that each rune corresponds to one sound; and we know that roughly how many sounds each Roman-names has, so we can match the rune-names and Roman-names simply by counting the runes in the rune-names and the sounds in the Roman-names. But that means that we need to think of the Roman-names in terms of their sounds rather than in terms of their letters; for instance, Night has five letters but only three sounds. '

If we know something about the history of alphabets we know that most alphabets have evolved out of earlier ones, so we may guess that runes and the Roman alphabet actually developed out of the same common ancestor. That being so, we can look for clues in the shapes of the runes. Two stand out immediately: one looking like a capital R, and the other like a capital B. The link may turn out to be spurious, but it's worth pursuing.

Following the length clue first, the longest rune-name is (h), with seven runes, and the longest Roman-name is Dallinger, with just six sounds for most speakers in the UK: /daliŋə/. But we also know that some people always pronounce an /r/ at the end (and that everyone inserts /r/ before a vowel, as in Dallinger is dead). So maybe we can recognise seven sounds in the Roman-word: /daliŋər/. Of course, some speakers may feel that the ng spells two separate sounds: /ng/; such speakers will have to think round this, and will certainly be helped by knowing that most speakers have just a single 'velar nasal' /ŋ/ for ng. Suppose, then, that Dallinger does indeed have seven sounds, it seems safe to assume that it matches rune-name (h): (h) = Dallinger - an important breakthrough because this gives us all the other letters in this name.

Following the letter-shape clue, we notice that the last rune in (h) is the one that looks like R, so if (h) really does match Dallinger, this corresponds seems to be for real: the R rune = r. It's always comforting to find a first guess confirmed by independent evidence.

This match also gives us some crucial general information: we read runes from left to right, just like our Roman alphabet. You can't take this for granted in writing systems.

We now have enough clues to finish off most of the first question. But there are several twists where inspired guessing helps, given that the aim is simply to find the most plausible pairing of rune-names and Roman-names:

The rune-name for Baldur has no vowel sign between d and r, so maybe the R rune on its own can indicate a short syllable of some kind.

Conversely, the rune-name for Ithun has a double letter at the end, which is presumably nn.

We notice that another rune-name (e) also ends in a double letter, so maybe this is a regular feature.

The rune-name for Earth seems to have two initial vowels, unlike our modern pronunciation of Earth; but we guess that our modern spelling may reflect an earlier pronunciation where the e and a were pronounced separately.

The rune-name for Freya contains the same vowel rune as we found at the start of Earth, but not corresponding to anything in our pronunciation of Freya.

The most difficult Roman-names to link are those which are common nouns: Day, Night, Sun. Presumably their rune-names are also common nouns, so we're looking for the Old Norse words for 'day', 'night' and 'sun'. Here you just have to guess, using whatever clues are available. You know that there are five unassigned rune-names, and that two of these have Roman-names that are not in the list given; so the task is to find among the five left-over rune-names the three that are most likely to match our three Roman-names.

Just look at the first letters: (b) begins with th (d) begins with d (e) begins with n (j) begins with the second vowel in Earth, which isn't /a/ (for which we have another rune as in Baldur) but might be /o/. So let's assume it's /o/. (k) begins with an unidentified rune whose shape might remind you of S. Of these five, (d) is a good candidate for Day and (e) for Night. For Sun, neither (b) nor (j) looks at all promising, but (k) could start with /s/. Pursuing these leads, (d) spells Da?r – even more plausible as the Old Norse for 'day'; so (d) = Day. (e) spells No??, where the unknown rune looks like an arrow-shaped T; so maybe it's actually Nott – a very plausible word for 'night'. So (e) = Night. (k) spells Sol – strongly reminiscent of our solar (not to mention French soleil and Spanish sol), so (k) = Sun.

The second question asks for the Roman-names for the two as-yet unidentified runenames, which are (b) and (j). o (b) is easy: you can just spell out Thor (bearing in mind, of course, that our th actually indicates just one sound, so it has just one rune). So (b) = Thor. But just in case you didn't know about Thor, the introduction actually mentions him as in "Thor's day" (i.e. Thursday). Always read the introduction carefully because it often contains important clues. (j) is equally easy to spell out: Odin. But who was Odin? You may have heard of him, but just in case you hadn't, the introduction tells you that he's the same as Wodan, as in "Wodan's day" (or Wednesday).

The third question is just fun, building on the runes that you already know about. But notice that it includes the Roman-name Sif, which contains an S. You can see this as confirmation that the rune for S is included in the given word, so it must be the S-like rune at the start of (k).