BBC VİKİNG SAGA SONGS Age 7-9

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Introduction

Viking Saga Songs is an opportunity for children to join in with songs, stories and music-making inspired by the gods and goddesses of Viking mythology.

The songs explore the atmosphere and excitement of a Viking sound-world from over a thousand years ago, while being rooted in familiar modern styles that the children will relate to, such as reggae, rock and lyrical contemporary ballads.

The songs also link closely with the story episodes...making this an ideal resource for exploring the history theme The Vikings through both music and literacy.

The story episodes are drawn from Norse mythology and are narrated for us by Loki - Viking god of fire. The stories build in length and narrative complexity across the resource. The first - *Odin creates the world* - is a single episode which serves as an introduction to the Viking world. In the second - *Freya and the goblins* - we follow the Viking goddess on a visit to the underground world of the goblins, where she pays a heavy price for a beautiful necklace. The third story - *Thor and the giants* - is an adventure set in Jotunheim, home of the giants. And the final story - *Apples of Iduna* - is an extended narrative set over four episodes, with many twists and turns to the plot as Loki strives to resolve a perilous situation.

The stories can be used to extend the music objectives of the Viking Saga Songs website into literacy and are suitable to support text level work across Key Stage 2. The particular focus of each story is:

Odin creates the world – settings (Asgard, Midgard, Jotunheim)

Freya and the goblins – settings (the goblins' underground world)

Thor and the giants – character (and particularly the character of Thor)

Apples of Iduna – plot complications and resolution (the many twists and turns to the story).

Using the Viking Saga Songs website

The website is built around the seven songs to learn and the accompanying story episodes. The Homepage links to seven separate pages through navigation links at the top of the page. There are two additional pages: a Clips page and also a Resources page. You can go straight to the Clips page if there is a particular video you are looking for. The Resources page includes some additional resources not found on content pages.



Use the carousel under the media player navigate between the videos and audio for each content page. Click on the arrows, left or right, to move through the image links one at a time. On the individual content pages you will find links to:



Tutorial player

The **tutorial player**. Clicking on this link will play the tutorial video. The media player is in use throughout the BBC website so you may already be familiar with it. When you click on the 'Play video' icon the video file will begin to play. **NB: you can project the video full-screen by clicking on the expand icon in the bottom right corner of the player.** You will then join our two presenters - Nigel Pilkington and Joanna Riding - teaching the song, with words appearing on screen to cue the class when to join in with the singing.

Viking Saga Songs

Songs written and composed: by Barry Gibson

Dramas: written by Nigel Bryant

Designer: Keltie Cochrane

Video production: Keltie Cochrane

Audio production: Barry Gibson

Editor: Andrew Barnes



Story player

The **story player**. Each content page also has a story, telling a popular episode from Viking mythology. As with the tutorial player, clicking on this link will load a video file. Click the 'Play video' icon to begin. On some pages there are two episodes of the story.



Song player

The **song player**. With this file you can practise each of the songs singing in time to the words and music. This video is the perfect way to rehearse the songs once your group has gained some familiarity with them (having used the tutorials). Click the 'Play video' icon to begin.



Backing track player

The **backing track player**. This version of the song provides the words in time with the music for your group to join in with but does not include the lyrics in the soundtrack. It's ideal for singing the songs once you've rehearsed and become confident with them.



Listening music

The **listening music**. This player launches an audio clip - approximately 1 minute in length - of listening music related to the content theme. There are suggestions for follow-up activities using the listening music in these Notes below.

Download links:

In addition to the audio-visual files above, the Resources page also has links offering:

- A transcript of the tutorial player video. Print this out to follow the video content (for example if you prefer to use it as audio only) and to explore the full content of the video.
- A transcript of the story episode. These can be printed out for additional literacy follow-up.
- The music for each song. The melody and chords for each song are offered in music notation, allowing you to create your own presentation.
- The words for each song. Print these out to use in conjunction with the programme and song players, above.
- · These Teacher's Notes.

In the download section you will also find links to the audio of each song in the following three formats:

- The full vocal version of each song available to download as an mp3 file. This version has both lead vocals and backing vocals.
- The part vocal version of each song available to download as an mp3 file. This version of the song has just the backing vocals.
- The backing tracks for each song, available to download as an mp3 file. This version of the songs has no vocals; it is just the instrumental backing track.

 All the audio and print files associated with each programme to download as a .zip file. Clicking on this link enables a convenient means to download all the files associated with a particular song.

Clicking on the audio links will play the audio in your default media player (e.g. Windows Media Player).

To download the audio using a PC:

- · Right click on the link.
- · Select 'Save Target as...'
- · Save the file to your computer.

Some of the benefits of providing these resources online include:

- No need for pupils to share Pupils' Pamphlets. Use the interactive tools on the website to display the words / music of each song on your IWB. This has the additional benefit of allowing pupils to maintain an upright, open posture.
- Less preparation time...no storage space required! All the
 resources you will need are included in the website, in simple to
 follow steps that mirror the organisation of the audio programmes.
 There's no need for preparation time...or for clearing away
 afterwards.
- The audio downloads of songs allow you to incorporate the music resources into other areas of ICT.
- The resources are available at any time, anywhere. Pupils can even log on at home if they wish to practise the songs and learn more about the music.

Using the online resources:

- Print or download these Notes as your guide to learning the songs that make up *Viking Saga Songs*.
- Use the 'vocal warm up' if you wish or go straight into the main programme player to learn the song (refer to the notes for each song below to check whether the programme player also includes a warm up at the start).
- Use the programme player to begin learning each song: Joanna and Nigel are your vocal coaches and steer pupils through each one methodically...but with passion! Refer to the notes for each song below to establish whether the class needs to be split into groups beforehand. The programme player file is usually about 12 minutes long.
- Use the story player to listen to (and/or read along to) the story.
 Each episode of the story links to the song you will be learning.
 Each episode of the story is approximately 5 minutes long.
- Use the song player to revise each song after you have learnt it, to keep each song fresh in pupils' minds. To ensure pupils really polish their performance the song player offers the backing track only with the words appearing on screen in time.
- Download the audio files and / or the playscript to help with your own concert or performance of *Viking Saga Songs*. These files are in mp3 format and can be transferred onto any portable mp3 device (such as an ipod). Alternatively you can 'burn' the files onto CD as audio and use them with a CD player.
- The song versions on offer include the full vocal version. However, once your pupils have learnt each of the songs it is intended that you should use either the part vocal or the backing track versions to sing to.

There is no set order in which to use the video resources. You may wish to learn the song first then watch episodes of the story...or vice versa! However, once you have watched the 'tutorial player' and learnt the song you are ready to practise the song on its own, first with the 'song player' and then with the backing track only. Once you have mastered the songs you are ready to give a performance of them – and for this you can download the supporting music resources, including the mp3 files of the backing tracks.

Feedback

We welcome your feedback and suggestions. Please write to us at:

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Music skills and concepts

Programme	Performing skills, controlling sounds	Composing skills, creating and developing ideas	Appraising skills, responding and reviewing	Listening and applying knowledge and understanding
Loki the Joker	Singing with energy; singing with mystery; syncopation; rhythm-patterns.	2-note patternsmountain/sea/sky musicshape-shifting music	Loud and quiet; fast and slow; higher and lower.	Listening to a sound-montage; listening to and repeating single phrases; natural sounds; Viking instruments.
Odin, Mighty World-Creator	Strong and quiet voice; varied voice-qualities; up and down; chanting word-echoes; word-rhythms.	 arpeggios repeating patterns shimmering and trembling patterns.	Leaps and jumps; shorter and longer.	indentifying natural sounds and environments; identifying types of instruments (strings, percussion etc).
Goblins a Go-Go!	Syncopation; word-rhythms; varied voice-qualities; singing with actions.	layers of rhythmic sounds (mining music)jazzy "scat" improvisations	Blues style and jazz.	Blues instruments and percussion.
Sing us a Saga	Smooth, controlled, gentle singing; singing to "la"; building phrases; emphasising word-rhythms; singing in parts.	Pentatonic wave-melodiesChanging instrumentsUsing unpitched sounds for atmosphere	Melodic patterns (up/down) Shifting chord-patterns (harmony)	Identifying home-note and key; drones.
Thor on a journey	Clapping word-rhythms; dynamic contrast (soft/loud); changing tempo/speed; pauses; simple 'conducting'.	 fanfares and horn-calls tune-variations (forwards/backwards/upside-down) anvil-music with metal instruments/sounds class "storm" music 	Word-rhythms	Identifying metal instruments; horn-calls, string-sounds and percussion.
Apples of Iduna	Voice-registers (high/low); good diction; singing with 'mystery and magic'; expressive changes to tempo and dynamics.	two-note melodies with repeated notes figarden' music ficy' repeating patterns	Key -changes and home- notes; steady beat.	Identifying various percussion and "glassy" sounds; comparing film-music approaches.
Birds of the North	Gentle, flowing, controlled singing; accurate pitches;	 rising and falling pentatonic tunes flight-patterns up/down, with unpitched wind and sea sounds birdsong music environmental music 	Melodic shape and patterns; rising and falling harmonies; longer and shorter notes.	Identifying natural environments by sound; identifying types of birdsong.
Rehearsing and performing	Planning a performance or production as an 'event'.	 adapting above ideas as 'incidental' music for drama scenes. groups preparing selected compositions for performance. performing 'sound-pictures' to school and to public. 	Using music, words and movement to differentiate character and mood. Deciding - what can be improved? Appraising - what went well?	Identifying song-music extracts used as story-links. Listening to and being aware of each other as performers. Reviewing recording, video, written work etc.

Organising the class

Singing is a physical activity so it is essential to warm up before you start. Some programmes include a warm-up at the start, such as singing up and down a scale, or singing a phrase from the song. Where warm ups are not included in the programme, ideas are suggested under the heading *Before using the resources*.

It is best to stand up when singing:

- back straight
- · ears directly over shoulders
- · shoulders over hips
- feet slightly apart (five minutes to one)
- · hands loosely by sides
- · eyes straight ahead

If this is not possible, then sit on a chair:

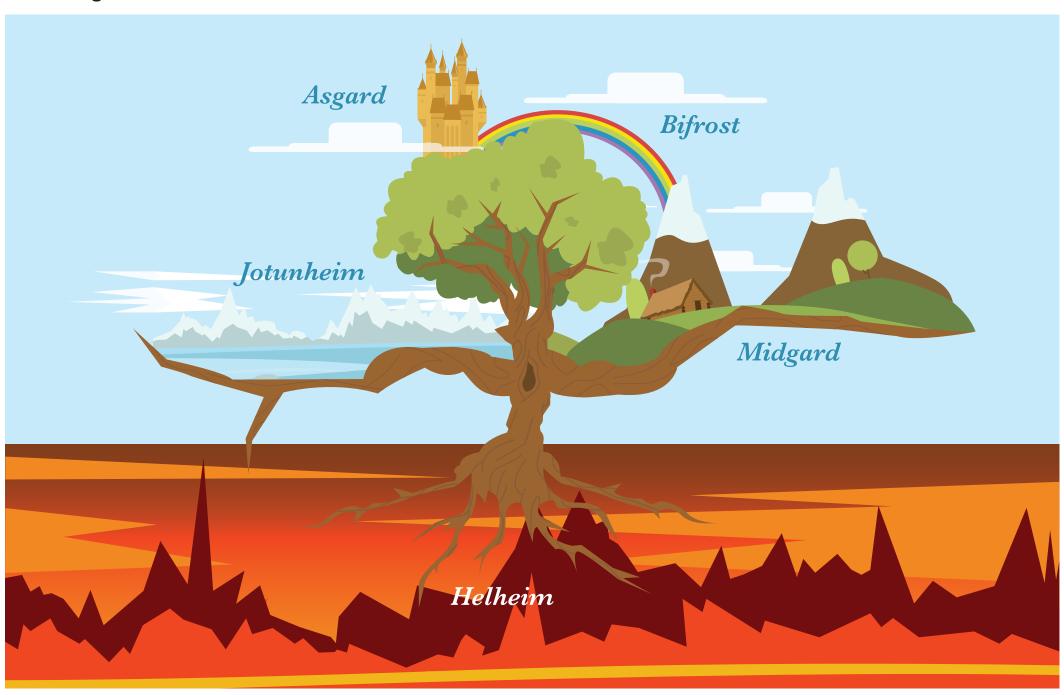
- · shoulders relaxed
- · ears directly over shoulders
- · shoulders over hips
- · feet firmly on the floor
- · heels just behind the front legs of the chair
- · hands on knees
- · eyes straight ahead

Good breathing is essential for good singing:

- exhale to get rid of residual air
- breathe in allowing tummy muscles to relax outwards, and ribs to expand
- sing, keeping ribs pushed out for as long as possible

Encourage children to memorise words through recall and response, or project the lyrics onto a whiteboard. Words / words and music are available as separate files. Don't let children look down at printouts, as they need their heads up to sing well.

The Viking universe



In the stories you will meet...



Odin chief of the gods



Loki god of fire



Freya goddess of weather and seasons



Thor god of thunder



Iduna goddess of eternal youth



Heimdall guardian of the Rainbow Bridge



Odur husband to Freya



Skymnir Giant



Thiassi Giant



Goblins

Loki the Joker

Focus

Rhythm-patterns; faster/slower (speed-changes); louder/quieter (dynamics); higher/lower.

You will need...

Any percussion (e.g. woodblock) to demonstrate rhythms of 'Loki the Joker' and 'Thor the Thunderer'. Any pitched instrument (notes C and B) to demonstrate the two notes of the verse.

Story: Odin creates the world

Loki is the narrator for all the story episodes. For this one he goes back to the very beginning, to a time when there was no earth, no sky, no people. He relates how Odin creates the various elements of the Viking world, the main ones being Jotunheim (home of the giants), Midgard (home for humans) and Asgard (home of the gods).

Before using the resources

- Find out a few basic facts (negative and positive) about the Vikings: where they came from (Scandinavian countries), their seafaring and raiding exploits, their craftsmanship and storytelling. Look at pictures of Viking long-ships and the fjords and mountains of Scandinavia.
- Speak the lyrics of the song together, focusing on tricky words and saying the names carefully.

The tutorial video

Activities

 Before learning the song, the children say the phrase 'Loki the Joker' several times, while finger-tapping in rhythm.

Learning the song:

- This is broken down into sections: chorus; verse 1; verse 2; verse 3; the coda. The chorus should be tight and rhythmic, with a fun sense of syncopation and lots of energy.
- The verses are slower and more mysterious, with a freer rhythm, rocking between two notes (low C and B). Each verse slows down towards the end, then 'pausing' on the last note.
- The song includes optional actions to perform in time with the chorus, when the children really know it: waving hands side-to-side (Loki); stroking beard (Odin); waving fist (Thor); making wave-shapes ('...voyaging forth...'); scary face ('...Gods and Goblins...'); rippling fingers like long hair (Freya); spreading arms up like an apple-tree (Iduna); arching arms out like a rainbow-shape ('...Stories of the North...').
- After you have learnt the song use the 'song player' to sing the song all the way through.

Follow-up ideas

- · Find out about Viking place-names in your area.
- Find Scandinavia on a map or globe and look at some of the continents and countries the Vikings may have reached, from Asia (East) to North America (West), and how they may have got there.
- Look at pictures of Viking and Anglo-Saxon craftwork, especially
 patterns and symbols inspired by the kinds of animals into which
 Loki shape-shifts (e.g. dragons, serpents, birds, fishes, etc).
 Create versions of your own.
- Plan your own class wall-chart or mural of the different Viking realms, all joined by Yggdrasil the great Ash Tree (see page 8 above).
- In a circle, take it in turns to be Loki, making up very short stories on the spot, about shifting shape from one creature or thing to another.
- Research what real Viking music may have been like. Their instruments included drums, bone-whistles, wooden pan-pipes, harps, lyres and huge horns (probably to frighten their enemies).

Listening:

Play the **Listening music** which is an extract from towards the end of Sibelius' En Saga (meaning 'A saga' or 'Story') from 1892, inspired by Norse mythology.

- Do the children think the music is fast or slow?
- Do they think it is from near the beginning or the end of the complete work? (It is building towards the climax).
- · What words can they use to describe it?
- Can they hear any instruments that also feature in our Vikings
 Saga Songs? (Horns in particular.)

The song 'Loki the Joker' uses modern instruments - listen out for flute/whistle notes and bell-sounds (agogo-bells and cowbells) leading into the chorus, which features drums, horn-sounds and harp with dulcimer.

Listen out for the Viking names - gods, goddesses and places...and also for a few natural sounds - seabirds, forests and thunder at the end of the song.

Composing ideas:

In small groups, use classroom instruments to create:

- *Mountain, sky and sea music* going higher and lower, faster and slower, louder and quieter...
- Shape-shifting music to go with your shape-shifting pictures, stories and poems.

Literacy links:

- Collect riddles and find about 'runes', a kind of mysterious Viking writing.
- · Write shape-shifting poems.
- The word 'Fawel' (pronounced 'fa-vehl'), spoken by the presenters at the end of each programme, is still used in modern-day Norwegian and Swedish for 'goodbye' or 'farewell' and may go back to Viking times.
- Using internet examples, can the children try saying a few more Scandinavian words or phrases to each other?

Loki the Joker

Odin, Mighty World-Creator

Focus

Leaps and jumps (pitch); up/down (melodic shape); short/long (rhythm); contrasting strong voice with quiet voice; identifying instrument-types (brass, string etc).

You will need...

Any pitched instrument with notes C and G.

Story: Odin creates the world

Loki is the narrator for all the story episodes. For this one he goes back to the very beginning, to a time when there was no earth, no sky, no people. He relates how Odin creates the various elements of the Viking universe, the main ones being Jotunheim (home of the giants), Midgard (home for humans) and Asgard (home of the gods).

Before using the resources

- Talk about English words for days of the week and where they
 may come from (see follow-up). Look at pictures of Odin ('Father
 of the Viking gods'), Bifrost (the rainbow-bridge) and Scandinavian
 landscapes.
- Read the song-lyrics carefully together and say the Viking names for each realm.

The tutorial video

Activities

- The song begins with an echo-chant of Odin's name on two notes, like a horn-call echoing in the hills (loud, quiet, loud, quiet). Listen out for three drum-beats to bring you in.
- Each new verse follows this pattern (introducing the name of that realm four times) but some rhythms are different (e.g. Odin, Midgard and Bifrost are *long*, *long*; Jotunheim and Yggdrasil are short-short-long).

Learning the song:

- The melody for the verse goes up and down, rather like the shape of a mountain. Each new verse describes a different Viking realm, as created by Odin in Viking mythology.
- Children can vary their voice-quality to suit the different names and places: 1 strong and bold; 2 cold and frosty; 3 gentle and 'blooming'; 4 shiny and confident; 5 bright and shimmery; 6 dark and gloomy; 7 elegantly rising up.
- Once you have learnt the song use the 'song player' to sing it all the way through.

Follow-up ideas

- Find out about cold and hot, weather, climate and changing seasons.
- · Find out about rainbows and the science of colours.
- Explore different kinds of trees in your area, comparing their overall shape (draw silhouettes), branches, roots and leaves. Find out about the life-cycle of a real tree and about all the creatures that live in its world.

Listening:

Play the **Listening music**, which is an orchestral extract from Richard Wagner's opera *Das Rheingold* – part of the 'Ring Cycle' - which also dramatizes Viking mythology. As the opera draws to a close Donner – one of the gods – calls up a storm and the air clears to reveal Bifrost, the rainbow, forming a bridge to the gods' new home. Listen carefully to the extract.

- Can the children hear the lightning strike, followed by a roll of thunder, followed by the shimmering music for Bifrost?
- Can they say why this music is suitable to depict the rainbow bridge?
- · Do they notice again the use of horns in the music?

The programme features a few natural sounds to listen out for: trees rustling, birds singing, wind whistling and winter sounds.

Separate verses feature different kinds of instruments - e.g. brass and horns (1 and 4), percussion (2 and 5), plucked and tapped strings (3 and 7), bass-guitar, low sounds and deep drums (6).

Composing ideas:

In pairs and groups, use classroom instruments and voice-sounds to evoke some of the different Viking realms, e.g. -

- String sounds and 'arpeggios' for the sounds of nature in Midgard and Yggdrasil. (An 'arpeggio' is where the notes of a chord are picked out separately, as if on a harp).
- Repeating-patterns on percussion and metal-sounds (e.g. glockenspiels, bells, triangles, cymbals), for the frost and ice in Jotunheim.
- 'Shimmering' and trembling patterns, getting higher the lower, with different instruments for different colours in Bifrost.

Literacy links:

- Discover how some languages use different shapes for particular sounds. Look at and listen to words from Scandinavian languages, noting how some letters are pronounced differently (e.g. the 'J' of 'Jotunheim' is like an English 'Y') and sometimes there are symbols (circles, dots, etc) above the letters. Play games with Viking runes.
- Say the English days of the week and find out how some are from Viking names (*Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday*) - these are from *Tiw/Tyr, Woden/Odin, Thor* and *Frigg. Saturday* is from the Roman God Saturn, and *Sunday* and *Monday* represent the Sun and the Moon.

Odin, Mighty World-Creator

Goblins a-Go-Go!

Focus

Word-rhythms (sung and spoken); syncopation; varying voice-quality; singing with actions.

You will need...

Any pitched instrument with notes C and B.

Story: Freya and the goblins, parts 1 and 2

The story is about a goddess called Freya - a princess of Asgard - who shelters in a cave during a storm. There she discovers some horrible, lumpy, greasy goblins mining. The goblins hate the gods but they make fantastic jewellery – and these goblins have created a necklace which is so beautiful that Freya really, really wants it. The price is a big, sloppy kiss for each goblin, which Freya pays. Then she runs back to Asgard to her husband Odor, thinking he'll be full of praise. How wrong she is!

Before using the resources

 Find out about some of the beasts and half-human creatures which appear in Norse stories - dragons, serpents, trolls, gnomes, elves, goblins etc.

The tutorial video

Activities

 Before learning the song, the children try out actions in time, improvising to get the jazzy 'feel': finger-clicking, knee-slapping, hand-tapping, chest-beating, cheek-flicking and horrid-facemaking!

Learning the song:

- This is a lively, bluesy song with a shock at the end (the kissing!).
 It's sung 'with gusto' as if by the goblins, so needs lots of character in the voice ('grisly and gurgly'). Verse 1 is made from just three notes (F, D, G) sung jerkily; verse 2 is a little higher; verse 3 higher still; verse 4 has just two low notes (C, B) sung to a more even rhythm.
- The improvisations above are developed into nonsense words spoken in between the verses, with actions: 'Ba goo-ga...' (digging); 'Ta-tap-tap-tap-tap...' (hammering at wall); 'Y-yackity-yickity-yuck, yuck...' (making horrible goblin-face); 'Mwuh mwuh mwuh mwuh...' (air-kissing fingers).
- Once you have learnt the song use the 'Song player' to sing it all the way through.

Follow-up ideas

- Look at pictures of Viking and Anglo-Saxon jewellery and craftwork. Can you create versions of your own with modern materials (e.g. paper, plastics, sweet-wrappers, etc)?
- Find out about real-world mining in different parts of the world today and in the UK, not just for precious metals and gems, but for basic resources such as coal.
- The song mentions goblins having 'bad manners and bad attitude' and being rude. In a circle time, discuss the children's views on using appropriate 'manners' and 'attitude' for different situations.

Listening:

Play the **Listening music** which is 'In the Hall of the Mountain King' by Edvard Grieg, from his famous *Peer Gynt Suite*.

- Note how the music gets faster ('accelerando') and louder ('crescendo').
- What do the children think may be happening in the hall of the Mountain King during this music?
- Grieg also wrote several goblin piano-pieces (e.g. 'Kobold' and 'Goblin's Bridal Procession'.)

Sounds to listen out for in the song include blues instruments (guitar, bass-guitar, saxophone, jazz-organ and drums), as well as percussion for the digging and tapping (woodblocks, shakers, cowbells, tambourine etc).

Composing ideas:

- In small groups, create a 'mining-rhythms' piece, using classroom instruments, metal-sounds (e.g. cutlery and tools), stones and pebbles, etc. The layers of sound can gradually build up, then drop out.
- In pairs, improvise jazzy 'scat' sounds with your voices, making up nonsense-words as if in an invented 'goblin' language.

Text extract

One day, Odin invited Freya and her husband, Odur, to a magnificent feast at his palace. Naturally, Freya's first thought was:

FREYA: What dress shall I wear, Odur?

ODUR: The green and the silver are most beautiful.

FREYA: But everyone's seen them before. I need something new,

like a new necklace!

ODUR: You're so beautiful, Freya. You have no need of jewellery.

FREYA: No! I want something new!

So...off she went over the rainbow bridge from Asgard to Midgard, in search of a new piece of jewellery.

Text extract ideas:

Ask the children to work in pairs to list the details that tell us something about Freya's character in this extract. Pool these ideas and make a class list. Compare it to the list made about the gods' characteristics and discuss the similarities and differences.

Literacy links:

- Write nonsense poems in your invented goblinlanguages.
- Listen to readings influenced by Viking half-human creatures (e.g. from Tolkien's The Hobbit and The Lord of the Rings and from C.S. Lewis' Narnia books).
- Write a description of the goblins' cave and all the precious metals, gold, silver, gems, jewellery, diamonds and treasure to be found there.

Goblins a-Go-Go!

Sing us a Saga

Focus

Smooth, controlled singing; word-rhythms; melodic pattern/up and down (wave-shapes); building phrases; harmony (shifting chord-patterns).

You will need...

A selection of instruments that can play quietly: percussion (e.g. cymbals with soft beaters), stringed (e.g. guitar, ukuleles) and wind (e.g. recorders, panpipes).

Story: *Thor and the giants*, part 1

Thor and Loki are travelling to Jotunheim, the home of the giants. Night falls and they take shelter in the home of a humble villager. They're struggling for an evening meal in the villager's cottage so Thor kills his two goats and they all enjoy a goat stew – Thor having warned both Loki and the villager not to damage any of the bones. Loki, looking to create trouble, encourages the villager to break open a bone and suck out the marrow. In the morning Thor shows off a magic trick – he brings the goats back to life. But there's just one problem – one of the goats is limping. And Thor knows just who to blame!

Before using the resources

· Look at pictures of harps and lyres.

The tutorial video

Activities

The children imagine they are at sea at night, travelling across
the waters in a Viking long-ship. They perform rowing-actions,
forwards and backwards in time, while listening to the songmelody. They then perform finger-actions, as if plucking harpstrings, while singing the tune to 'la'.

Learning the song:

- 'Sing us a Saga' needs a smooth, gentle, flowing voice, especially for the simple words which keep returning in each verse: 'Sing us a Saga, Tell us a story, Sing us a saga...' There are four verses and some of the changing words need a little 'kick' or 'push' in their rhythm 'hammer... dragons... (ad)ventures... battles... fjords... mountains... Goblins... Giants...'
- Encourage the children to visualise what they're singing about, and to slightly 'dramatise' the key words, to suit the different places and characters (e.g. singing verse 3 'icily') as if they're storytelling.
- They can hum the 'home note' (D) softly, in the introduction to each verse.
- For the coda, the class splits into two, to sing a 'round'. The words 'Sing us a Saga, Tell us a story, Sing us a saga' are sung twice but with group two starting just slightly after group one (by half a bar). The idea is to sound like waves folding and rolling, one into the next. The song ends with interweaving 'Shhhhh' sounds between the two groups, fading softly into the distance.
- When you have learnt the song use the 'song player' to sing it all the way through.

Follow-up ideas

- History. Create a class display with discoveries about real evidence of everyday life for Viking people.
- Art and design. Develop your Viking craftwork ideas into individual designs for Viking long-ships and decorated harps or lyres. There are plenty of examples online.
- Dance. Groups can devise a movement sequence about Viking life, including rowing in long-ships in calm and angry seas, raids and battles, and peaceful village life. Music can include the song backing-track and some orchestral sea-music (see below).

Listening:

Play the **Listening music** which is an extract from Benjamin Britten's orchestra suite 'Four Sea Interludes'. The music evokes the North Sea at dawn.

- What sort of atmosphere does the music create?
- · Can the children identify the contrasting high and low notes?
- Do they detect the movement of the wind across the surface of the water?

Music from Finland by Sibelius influenced by the sea includes 'Aallotavet' - also know as 'Spirits of the Waves' or 'The Oceanides' – 'En Saga' and 'The Tempest'. Other orchestral music evoking the sea's changing moods includes Debussy's 'La Mer' and Mendelssohn's 'Hebrides Overture' ('Fingal's Cave'). Listen out for sounds of the sea during the programme. The song-accompaniment also features harp and dulcimer throughout, icy sounds (verse 3) and a low 'drone' note at the beginning of verse 4.

Composing ideas:

- Pairs and small groups can use pitched classroom instruments to create wave-melodies going up and down (the demonstration uses notes from a pentatonic scale: C, D, E, G, A).
- Can they combine their melodies, to weave in and out of each other?
- Can they change or add instruments (e.g. percussion, recorders, panpipes, guitars, ukuleles)?
- Can other performers add unpitched sea-sounds (e.g. cymbals, tambourines, triangles, quiet voice-sounds) to fit in well and build the atmosphere?

Literacy links:

- In circles, develop your storytelling skills by making up fantastical stories on the spot about the sea. Will your stories include real sea-creatures the Vikings may have seen (seabirds, seals, dolphins, whales) or mythical creatures (sea-serpents, dragons, mermaids)?
- Write a 'travelogue' from the point of view of a Viking sailor travelling North, South, East and West.

Sing us a Saga

Thor on a journey

Focus

Soft/loud (dynamic contrast); up/down (melodic leaps); stepwise movement (melody); strict/flexible tempo; pauses; word-rhythms.

You will need...

Any pitched instrument with notes E, F, G and A.

Story: Story: Thor and the giants, parts 2 and 3

Thor and Loki journey on into Jotunheim. As evening falls they find a mansion with a round entrance, an open hall and five narrow rooms. It rocks from side to side as they hear and feel what they think is an earthquake. A huge eye appears in the doorway - the 'mansion' is actually a glove belonging to the giant Skrymnir. Thor challenges him with his hammer. Later Thor and Loki follow the giant to his castle where they interrupt a giants' feast. Thor boasts he can drink like no other god in Asgard but, challenged to drink from a horn drinkingcup, he turns bright red and blue - and the cup is still full! Thor then wrestles - but fails to beat - Skrymnir's cat and 'Hel' -Skrymnir's great, great-grandmother, an old lady like a bag of bones. Thor has failed the challenges...but he has been defeated by magic.

Before using the resources

- Practise clapping the rhythm of the phrase 'Thunder bang 'n' bash' together.
- · Look at and try out the song actions for the chorus.

The tutorial video

Activities

To focus on rhythm, children tap the 'Thunder bang 'n' bash,
 Thunder bang 'n' crash' rhythm several times on their knees. To
 focus on pitch, they touch low, medium and high parts of the body
 as a percussion version goes higher and lower.

Learning the song:

- This is a story-song, with a strong, vigorous chorus that keeps coming back. The melody rises and falls: to help learn the shape, children can hold one hand in the air in front of them, raising it and lowering it with the tune's ups and downs.
- The verses are slower, slowing down ('ritardando') towards each verse-end, finishing with a 'pause' on its last note. The verses need clear 'storytelling' words with lots of character (e.g. verse 3 can begin loud and strong, changing to humorous and playful).
- Display the online version of the song which shows optional actions to perform in time with the chorus, when the children really know it: pointing ('...journey...'); shaking fist in air ('...challenging the giants...'); two hands swinging to left ('...hammer...'); two hands swinging to right ('...bash...'); pointing ('...Bifrost...'); hands making arc-shape ('...rainbow...'); two hands swinging to left ('...hammer...'); two hands swinging to right ('...crash!...').
- When you have learnt the song use the 'song player' to sing it all the way through.

Follow-up ideas

- PSHE/Drama Talk together about some of the differences between being proud, being strong and assertive or being boastful. In groups, devise some sketches for Thor's challenges, either based on the full dramas or devising and acting out your own ideas for his exploits.
- Dance Working with horn-call music and chariot-music composing-groups (see below) small dance-groups can practise and develop gestures, mime-scenes and short dancesequences portraying Thor, his goats and the Giants. Make sure the movements are well 'synchronised' to live-performance of your music-pieces.
- Art & Design Technology and Science Develop your rainbowbridge ideas (from programme 2), further experimenting with the science and art of colours, and finding out about rainbows and the Northern Lights. Explore and make different bridge structures in groups, and create a class Bifrost-bridge, either as a classmural or as scenery for your dance and drama performances.

Listening:

Play the **Listening music** which is an extract from Janacek's *Sinfonietta* – a loud fanfare for brass instruments with kettle drums.

- Can the children say what family of instruments is playing (brass) and any of the individual instruments (horns, trumpets, etc).
- What is a 'fanfare'? What function do they serve and at what sort of occasions would you hear one?

Sounds to listen out for in the song-introduction include metal-instruments (gongs and anvils), loud horn-calls and fanfares. The chorus features electric-guitar and drums. Verse 1 has 'pizzicato' (plucked) string sounds (like creeping feet), a woodblock (for the skull) and a triangle (for the eye).

Composing ideas:

- In pairs, compose 'horn-calls' and fanfares for Thor, using just 2-3 notes on any pitched instruments - e.g. pitched-percussion, recorders, guitars, keyboards and even kazoos. Your fanfareideas should be quite short and can have repeated notes and short mini-tunes played forwards, backwards and upside-down!
- In small groups, create 'Chariot music' for Thor being pulled by his goats. This can have repeating-patterns (e.g. on xylophones) with extra layers of bell-sounds (e.g. sleigh-bells and tambourines) and some extra squeaky-sounds.
- Other groups can devise 'Metal music' based on the rhythms made by Thor hammering on an anvil. As well as metalinstruments (e.g. glockenspiels, triangles, cymbals etc), try including some tools and cutlery in your performance.
- As a class, use instruments and voices to create the atmosphere
 of a storm which starts quietly, gradually builds up to some bangs,
 crashes and bashes...and then fades away... Try having different
 'conductors' to start and stop the various sounds with handgestures.

Literacy links:

- Word-rhythms. Look for and collect rhythm-patterns of sound in our everyday speaking, in our names and in the words we hear and read. Some might be based on natural sounds (e.g. Thunder bang 'n' bash!), and some might be created from everyday or mechanical sounds (e.g. 'Rumble-grumble-squeak!'). Turn some of your rhythm-patterns into poems or songs.
- Find poems and stories that have exciting storms and journeys, to share as a class.
- Write a 'travelogue' from the point of view of Loki or Thor, or one of the goats pulling his chariot.

Thor on a journey

Apples of Iduna

Focus

Higher/lower (especially key-changes and 'home-notes'); up/down (melodic shape and pattern); tempo-changes; louder/quieter (dynamic change); different voice-registers (low to high).

You will need...

Any pitched instruments with notes A, B-flat, B-natural and C (these are the "home-notes" for different verses).

Story: Story: Apples of Iduna, parts 1 and 2

Odin and Loki are on a journey through Midgard. They stop for lunch and Loki intends to cook an ox stew. Above them, a large eagle is watching from a tree. After several hours of cooking the stew is still raw at which point the eagle speaks by magic and demands a share of the meat – only then will the stew cook. The eagle flies down and tries to take it all but Loki attacks him with a tick. The eagle lifts Loki off the ground and drags him through a river and a thornbush. When Loki demands to be released the eagle drops him to the ground...where he reveals he is actually not an eagle but Thiassi – king of the giants – in disguise.

Thiassi demands Loki's help in gaining revenge on the gods...so Loki helps Thiassi to abduct Iduna from her garden. But there's just one problem...the gods – including Loki – are no longer immortal.

Before using the resources

 Read through all the words of the song together and practise clapping and tapping the rhythm 'Apples of Iduna' several times.

The tutorial video

Activities

 Before learning the song, tap the rhythm of the title 'Apples of Iduna...' on different parts of the body: knees, toes, shoulder, nose.

Learning the song:

- This story-song needs a strong sense of mystery and magic. As
 it progresses through verses 1, 2, 3 and 4, it goes 'up a key' each
 time (i.e. a bit higher, from A to Bb to B to C, where it stays).
- Each verse mainly uses just one note, going briefly *up* at the end of the first two lines (bar 18); in bar 22 there is a phrase going upup in verses 1, 5 and 6, and going *up-down* in verses 2, 3 and 4 (i.e. to suit what is happening in the story).
- Note the speed changes for verse 4 (very slow, as the gods grow old), verse 6 (thoughtful) and the coda (slowing down at the end).
- The singing needs to reflect the story events so you could watch the story videos before learning the song.
- Try to make the words crisp and clear: in performance, verses can be split between individuals, pairs, small groups, half-class, etc.
- Once you have learnt the song use the 'Song player' to sing it all the way through.

Follow-up ideas

- Everyone can have a go at creating a 'storyboard' version of the Iduna story, with a sequence of pictures (and just a few words for each image, as short captions and/or speech-bubbles) laid out like the pages of a comic-book.
- The storyboards can then be displayed as an 'exhibition', or brought to life in 'multiple-media', using drama, words, sounds, artwork and music, like in a film. Why not create a class video, powerpoint-sequence or slideshow of the story?
- Break the story up into sections, so that several groups can make a series of simple stop-frame animations for the Iduna story?

Listening:

Play the **Listening music** which is 'The Ride of the Valkyries' – a famous passage of orchestral music from Wagner's *Ring Cycle*, which tells a long sequence of Viking-inspired stories over many hours. The music accompanies a group of Viking goddesses riding on horseback across the sky

- · What words do the children use to describe the music?
- Can they hear the rhythm of the horses' hooves in the music?
- · What pictures does the music create in their imaginations?

During the programme listen out for the natural sounds of an orchard, with birdsong. The song-accompaniment has a 'glassy' feel (to help set a 'magical' atmosphere) and features several percussion instruments - e.g. hand-drum patterns for the ox-stew cooking, woodblocks, for Loki's stick, and a 'bell-tree' for Iduna entering the garden.

Encourage children to discuss and compare their favourite filmmusic. How does this work to create just the right atmosphere for the story?

Composing ideas:

- In pairs, compose two-note melodies, using pitched percussion, recorders, pan-pipes, keyboard, ukulele etc. The pieces can have repeated notes with different rhythms (like in the verses), but also see how much variety the pairs can get from playing the two notes in lots of different ways, changing speeds, loudness, attack (soft/ hard), etc.
- In groups, create 'garden music'. Use bell-sounds, string-sounds rising up like plants growing and whistling patterns (e.g. on panpipes, recorders and real whistling) like birds in the trees. This may develop from the Midgard and Yggdrasil nature-music and 'arpeggios' in programme 2.
- Other groups can create 'freezing river music', with layers of percussion-patterns repeating over and over, like icy water.

Literacy links:

- As the words of the verses are quite complicated, ask some strong readers to help teach some of the lyrics lineby-line to less confident readers, using a 'Follow-myleader' technique (as in all the programmes) - i.e. copying each line immediately by ear while keeping in rhythm (speaking or singing). They may all find it helpful to keep a steady beat underneath, by clicking fingers or tapping feet.
- Remembering words. See if everyone can remember the chorus words 'by heart' after a few times. By splitting the six verses between groups, as above, children can focus on learning to remember just 'their part' of the story-song.

Apples of Iduna

Birds of the North

Focus

Soft, controlled, gentle singing; melodic shape and pattern; singing accurate pitches ('hitting the right notes'); flexible tempo (swaying with body-rhythm); listening skills (related to natural environments and birdsong).

You will need...

Ears and voices!

Story: Story: Apples of Iduna, parts 3 and 4

The extended story of 'Apples of Iduna' continues and is particularly suitable for illustrating the complications to the plot of a story and how these are finally resolved at the end. Iduna is being held captive by Thiassi in his castle in Jotunheim. Loki arrives in the form a falcon, sweeping down through the icy-cold air onto a window-sill, to rescue her. He magically turns her into a tiny sparrow and her basket into an apple-pip, then off they fly back to Asgard. But Thiassi isn't giving up easily. He follows them - in eagle form once again - and as they approach the battlements of Asgard Odin and Heimdall prepare a trap.

Before using the resources

 Say all the bird-names in the song together (sparrow, falcon, swallow, swan, raven, eagle, small birds, seagull, curlew). If possible look at pictures, books and videos and find out what you can about these birds' lives. Discuss which kinds of bird might be seen near your school and homes.

The tutorial video

Activities

- Before learning the song, the children sway their bodies gently in time with the *coda* ('Windward drifting... Windward drifting...' etc) to get a feeling for the slowly shifting harmonies, gradually rising and falling.
- They then 'spot' the sounds of different environments and types of bird (see 'Listening music' below).

Learning the song:

- This evocative song needs a soft, gentle voice but the bird-names need to be sung clearly. The melody rises and falls in a flowing way (like the flight of birds) with 'arpeggios' in the accompaniment.
- First, the children join in with the phrase 'Birds of the North', which is sung four times in the chorus, to the same 3-note tune each time. They then copy the bird-movement phrases: 'swooping, swerving...turning, curving...wing-shapes shifting...windward drifting...', noticing that the last note of all is longer and 'held on' The melody for these phrases rises and falls and the children are encouraged to 'hit the right notes' each time.
- The three verses focus on different bird-names, seasons and places in the Northern lands. After verse 3, add gentle 'swishing' sounds ('Shhhhh...'), to evoke the sounds of waves and the tide turning.
- The coda ends like the chorus, but the last note is even longer, held on so that it fades quietly into the distance.
- When you have learnt the song use the 'song player' to sing it all the way through.

Follow-up ideas

- Look at maps of bird-migrations to see where different birds travel to and from at different times of year, especially in the Spring and Autumn.
- Science What birds can be seen or heard in your area? Are
 any linked with particular environments or 'habitats' near you
 (e.g. school grounds, town-centre, car parks etc, or more rural
 environments)? Are there any special places near you to see and
 hear them (e.g. nature reserves, woodlands, rivers, lakes, coasts),
 to visit and discover more?
- Geography/science Make an ongoing class study of seasons and the weather at your school, to see how they change across the whole year.
- Consider setting up bird-tables and viewing stations at your school grounds, becoming a bird-friendly school (see www. rspb.org.uk/ourwork/teaching/) and taking part in the Big Schools Birdwatch (see www.rspb.org.uk/schoolswatch/).

Listening:

Play the **Listening music** which is an extract from the 3rd movement of the Symphony No 5 by Sibelius. This famous melody – with brass accompaniment – is said to have been inspired by the calls of swans after Sibelius watched a large number of the birds taking off one day.

- What can the children say about the rhythm and tempo (speed) of the music?
- Which part of the music may have been inspired by the swans' call?
- What aspects of the music might be said to create the image of swans in flight?

A wide range of music is influenced by the sound of birdsong, from early recorder music by Couperin ('Le Rossignol en Amour' – 'The Nightingale in Love'), to Sibelius' 'The Swan of Tuonela', Vaughan Williams' 'Lark Ascending' and the 'Cantus Arcticus' by Einojuhani Rautayaara from Finland.

Composing ideas:

- · In pairs, compose five-note tunes which rise and fall.
- In groups, create music for 'Flight patterns', with tunes going up and down to suit different bird-movements (e.g. swooping, swerving, turning, etc). Can you fit some of your melodies together? Accompany with soft, swishing sounds, like the wind and the sea.
- In groups, compose 'birdsong music' with recorders, whistles, ocarinas, panpipes, bottles, real whistling etc. Accompany with 'arpeggios' on string instruments (e.g. guitar, ukulele, autoharp).
- As a class, create 'environmental' music based on contrasts e.g. 'tree-mountain-lake', or 'passing seasons', or 'sea-drift and clouds'. Some children could create a 'graphic score' with simple diagrams in sequence, to remind everyone what happens when. Perform indoors or outdoors for other classes to enjoy.

Literacy links:

- Write poems based on the sounds of birdsong, perhaps including nonsense-words and syllables.
- Imagine you are Iduna, trapped in a giant's castle. Write a letter to the gods of Asgard (to be sent by birds' airmail) asking them to come to rescue you.
- Rhymes and alliteration. Collect environmental words and phrases that rhyme (end in the same sound, e.g. shifting, drifting), or alliterate (start with the same sound (e.g. swooping, swerving). Turn them into poems and songs.
- Find out about Viking and Norse 'kennings', which are a
 way of describing something by an 'allusion' rather than
 its direct name (e.g. the poem Beowulf describes the sea
 as Whale-road, also Sail-road and also Swan-road).
 Make up kennings, riddles and poems for places and
 things in your school and homes.

Birds of the North

Loki the Joker

Loki the Joker,
With Odin the Ancient,
And Thor the Thunderer
Voyaging forth!
With Gods and Goblins,
And Freya the Fair-Hair
And the Apples of Iduna
Stories of the North!

Loki's clever, shifting-shape.
Playing tricks, make no mistake,
Fly or fireball, beyond belief
Loki, Loki makes mischief!

Loki the Joker... (etc)

Loki change if Loki wish:
Eagle, raven, wolf or fish,
Dragon, serpent, bird or beast,
Loki's storytelling feast!

Loki the Joker... (etc)

Over mountain, sky and sea, Shifts to where he wants to be, Wind and rain, or frost and snow, Loki the Joker, on you go!

Loki the Joker... (etc)

(CODA, getting quieter:)

Loki the Joker, Stories of the North

Loki the Joker, Stories of the North

Loki the Joker, Stories of the North!

Loki the Joker, Stories of the North!





Loki the Joker. With Odin the Ancient, And Thor the Thunderer Voyaging forth! With Gods and Goblins, And Freya the Fair-Hair And the Apples of Idunna Stories of the North!

20

Am⁷

 B^7

 B^7

 Am^7

 B^7

1 Loki's clever, shifting-shape. Playing tricks, make no mistake, Eagle, raven, wolf or fish. Fly or fireball, beyond belief Loki, Loki makes mischief!

Loki the Joker... (etc) 2 Loki change if Loki wish: Loki's storytelling feast!

 Am^7

 B^7

 B^7

Loki the Joker... (etc)

3 Over mountain, sky and sea-Shifts to where he wants to be. Dragon, serpent, bird or beast. Wind and rain, or frost and snow. Loki the Joker, Stories of the North Loki the Joker, on you go!

a tempo

Loki the Joker... (etc)

(CODA, getting quieter:)

Loki the Joker, Stories of the North Loki the Joker, Stories of the North Loki the Joker, Stories of the North!

F#m7

VERSE, slowly

CODA (Last time)

And Thor the Thun-der-er

1.Lo - ki's cle- ver, shif-ting- shape.

Em

 B^7

And

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Odin, Mighty World-Creator

2 3

Odin... Odin....
Odin... Odin....
Odin,
Mighty
World-creator,
Viking Norse-God,
Odin.

Jotunheim... Jotunheim... 5
Jotunheim... Jotunheim...
Jotunheim,
Frost and ice,
Cold winds blowing,
Land of Giants,
Jotunheim.

3 Midgard... Midgard...
Midgard... Midgard...
Midgard,
Middle-Earth,
Nature blooming,
Home for humans,
Midgard.

4 Asgard... Asgard...
Asgard... Asgard...
Asgard,
Citadel,
Golden, shining,
Home for Norse-Gods,
Asgard.

Bifrost... Bifrost...
Bifrost... Bifrost...
Bifrost,
Rainbow-Bridge,
Arching over,
Colours shimmering,
Bifrost.

6 Helheim... Helheim...
Helheim... Helheim...
Helheim,
Under-World,
Realm of darkness,
House of Evil,
Helheim

Yggdrasil... Yggdrasil... Yggdrasil... Yggdrasil... Yggdrasil, Ash Tree, Sky-Earth growing, Roots and branches, Yggdrasil.

Odin... Odin... Odin... Odin...

Slow and steady J = 75

Odin, Mighty World-Creator



Words and music by Barry Gibson. © BBC Learning 2013



3 Midgard... Midgard... 5 Bifrost... Bifrost... 7 Yggdrasil... Yggdrasil... 1 Odin... Odin... Bifrost... Bifrost... Midgard... Midgard... Yggdrasil... Yggdrasil... Odin... Odin... Midgard, Bifrost, Yggdrasil, Odin, Rainbow-Bridge, Middle-Earth, Ash Tree, Mighty Arching over, Nature blooming, Sky-Earth growing, World-creator, Colours shimmering, Home for humans, Roots and branches, Viking Norse-God, Midgard. Bifrost. Yggdrasil. Odin. 2 Jotunheim... Jotunheim... 4 Asgard... Asgard... 6 Helheim... Helheim... Jotunheim... Jotunheim... Asgard... Asgard... Odin... Helheim... Helheim... Jotunheim, Asgard, Odin.... Helheim, Frost and ice, Citadel, Odin... Under-World, Cold winds blowing, Golden, shining, Odin Realm of darkness, Land of Giants, Home for Norse-Gods, House of evil, Jotunheim. Asgard. Helheim.

Goblins a-Go-Go!

Goblins a-go-go,
Goblin' around,
Digging the walls,
In a cave underground.
Ba-goo-ga, ba-goo-ga,
Ba-googly-googly-goo-ga
Ba-goo-ga, ba-goo-ga,
Ba-googly-googly-GA!

Picking and shovelling,
We don't mind the cold,
Mining for gems,
And for silver and gold.

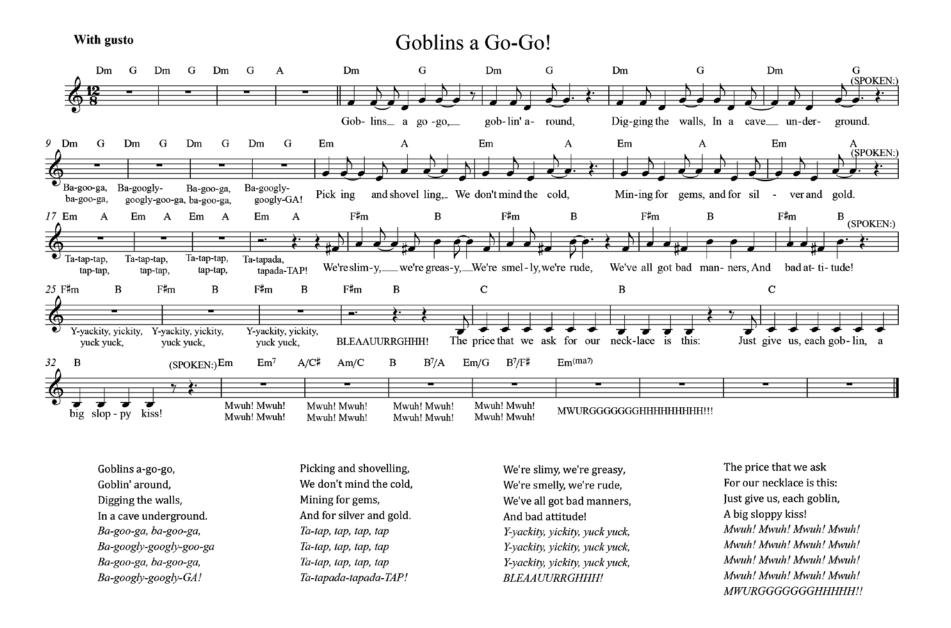
Ta-tap, tap, tap, tap
Ta-tap, tap, tap, tap
Ta-tap, tap, tap, tap
Ta-tapada-tapada-TAP!

We're slimy, we're greasy, We're smelly, we're rude, We've all got bad manners, And bad attitude!

> Y-yackity, yickity, yuck yuck, Y-yackity, yickity, yuck yuck, Y-yackity, yickity, yuck yuck, BLEAAUURRGHHH!

> > The price that we ask For our necklace is this: Just give us, each goblin, A big sloppy kiss!

> > > Mwuh! Mwuh! Mwuh! Mwuh! Mwuh! Mwuh! Mwuh! Mwuh! Mwuh! Mwuh! Mwuh! Mwuh! Mwuh! Mwuh! Mwuh! Mwuh! MWURGGGGGGGHHHHH!!!



Sing us a Saga

Sing us a saga,
Tell us a story,
Tales full of hammers and dragons and stones.
Sing us a saga,
Tell us a story,
Sing us a saga

Sing us a saga,
Tell us a story,
Journeys through fjords and mountains and ice.
Sing us a saga,
Tell us a story,
Sing us a saga

2 Sing us a saga,
Tell us a story,
Viking adventures and battles and ships.
Sing us a saga,
Tell us a story,
Sing us a saga

4 Sing us a saga,
Tell us a story,
Tales full of Goblins and Giants and
Gods.
Sing us a saga,
Tell us a story,
Sing us a saga

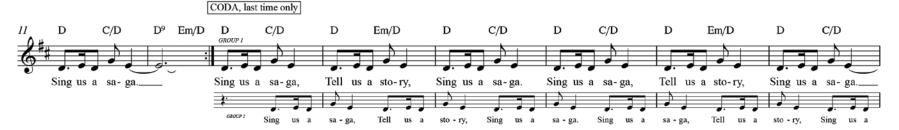
CODA: (in two groups)
Sing us a saga, Tell us a story, Sing us a saga.
Sing us a saga, Tell us a story, Sing us a saga.
Shhhh, Shhhh, Shhhh, Shhhh,
Shhhh, Shhhh, Shhhh,
Shhhh, Shhhh,

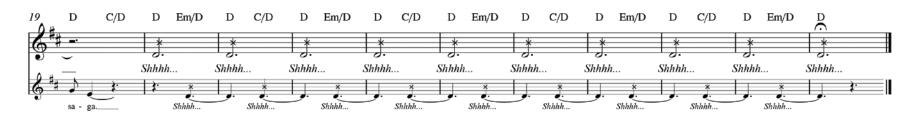


Sing us a Saga



1. Sing us a sa-ga, Tell us a sto-ry, Tales full of ham-mers and drag-ons and stones. Sing us a sa-ga, Tell us a sto-ry,





1 Sing us a saga. Tell us a story. Tales full of hammers
And dragons and stones.
Sing us a saga,
Tell us a story,
Sing us a saga.

2 Sing us a saga Tell us a story Viking adventures
And battles and ships.
Sing us a saga,
Tell us a story,
Sing us a saga.

3 Sing us a saga. Tell us a story. Journeys through fjords And mountains and ice. Sing us a saga, Tell us a story, Sing us a saga.

4 Sing us a saga.

Tell us a story.

Tales full of Goblins

And Giants and Gods.

Sing us a saga,

Tell us a story,

Sing us a saga.

CODA (In two groups as a 'round', half a bar apart:)
Sing us a saga, Tell us a story, Sing us a saga.
Sing us a saga, Tell us a story, Sing us a saga.
Shhhh, Shhhh, Shhhh, Shhhh,
Shhhh, Shhhh, Shhhh,
Shhhh, Shhhh, Shhhh,

Thor on a journey

Thor on a journey,
Challenging the giants
Hammer, hammer,
hammer
Thunder bang 'n' bash!
Chariot over Bifrost
Ride across the rainbow
Hammer, hammer,
hammer
Thunder bang 'n' crash!

Travel to a mansion-hall:
Giant's glove, so wide, so tall,
Giant's head and skull and eye
Far too strong for Thor, oh why?

Thor on a journey... (etc)

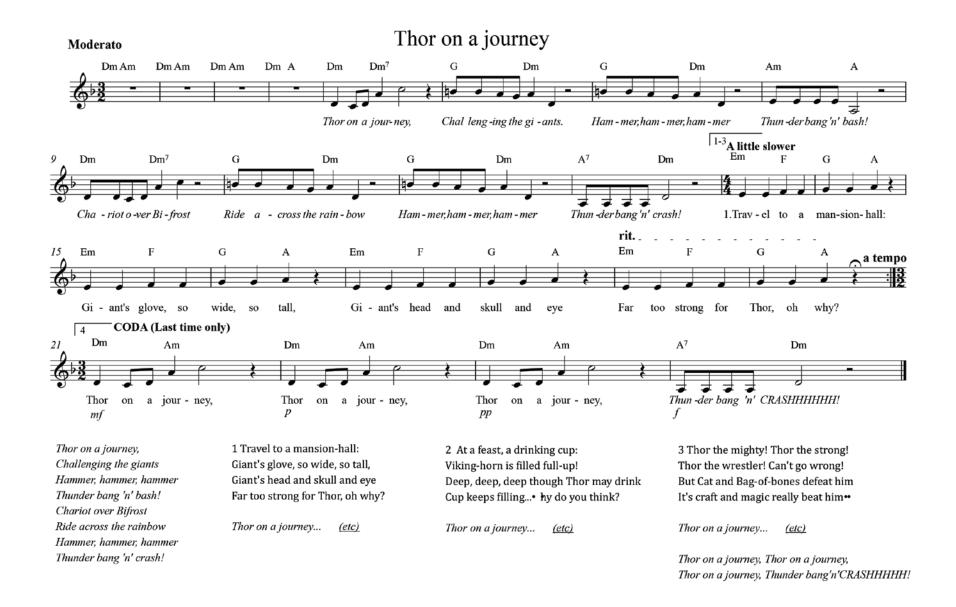
At a feast, a drinking cup:
Viking-horn is filled full-up!
Deep, deep, deep though Thor may drink
Cup keeps filling...why do you think?

Thor on a journey... (etc)

Thor the mighty! Thor the strong!
Thor the wrestler! Can't go wrong!
But Cat and Bag-of-bones defeat him
It's craft and magic really beat him!

Thor on a journey... (etc)

Thor on a journey, Thor on a journey, Thor on a journey, Thunder bang 'n' CRASHHHHH!



Apples of Iduna

Apples of Iduna, what is your secret?

Magic in the garden, shining in the tree.

Gods of Asgard - youth everlasting.

Will they keep it? ...

Wait and see.

Loki and Odin cooking up an ox-stew,
Down comes an eagle, wants his share.
Loki, with a big stick, tries to beat him
Eagle, stick and Loki go up in the air!

Apples of Iduna... (etc)

Down through the river, it's cold and freezing, 6 Then through the thorn-bush: 'Ouch!' with pain Eagle is disguise for a Giant called Thiassi, Drops that Loki down again

Apples of Iduna... (etc)

Off to the garden, tricking Iduna
Eagle lifts her up to the sky
Carries her off, with a basket of apples
Locks her in a tower, as weeks go by.

Apples of Iduna... (etc)

(slowly:)

Old and slow grow the Gods of Asgard Older and slower and short of breath Who will fix this problem quickly? Soon! Before they meet their death!

(picking up speed:)

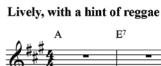
Apples of Iduna... (etc)

Time for Loki to make a shape-change Into a falcon, swooping high Turns Iduna into a sparrow Back to Asgard, off they fly!

Apples of Iduna... (etc)

Eagle-Thiassi is scorched by a bonfire Time for Loki to face the truth. Walk, Iduna, into the garden Pick those apples of eternal youth.

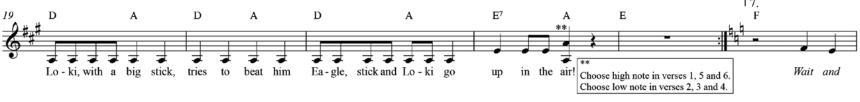
Apples of Iduna, what is your secret?
Magic in the garden, shining in the tree
Gods of Asgard - youth everlasting
Will they keep it? ...
Wait and see...

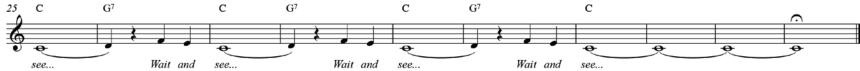


Apples of Iduna









Apples of Iduna, what is your secret? Gods of Asgard - youth everlasting. Will they keep it? ... Wait and see.

1 Loki and Odin cooking up an ox-stew, Magic in the garden, shining in the tree. Down comes an eagle, wants his share. Loki, with a big stick, tries to beat him Eagle, stick and Loki go up in the air! Apples of Iduna... (etc)

2 Down through the river, it's cold and freezing, Then through the thorn-bush: 'Ouch!' with pain Eagle is disguise for a Giant called Thiassi, Drops that Loki down again Apples of Iduna... (etc)

3 Off to the garden, tricking Iduna Eagle lifts her up to the sky Carries her off, with a basket of apples Locks her in a tower, as weeks go by. Apples of Iduna... (etc)

N.B. Key changes: Verse 1 (and next chorus) in A, Verse 2 (and next chorus) in Bb. Verse 3 (and next chorus) in B, Verses 4-6 (and choruses 5-7) in C

4 (slowly:) Old and slow grow the Gods of Asgard 5 Time for Loki to make a shape-change Older and slower and short of breath Who will fix this problem quickly? Soon! Before they meet their death! (picking up speed:) Apples of Iduna... (etc)

Into a falcon, swooping high Turns Iduna into a sparrow Back to Asgard, off they fly! Apples of Iduna... (etc)

6 Eagle-Thiassi is scorched by a bonfire Time for Loki to face the truth. Walk, Iduna, into the garden Pick those apples of eternal youth. Apples of Iduna... (etc) Wait and see ... Wait and see ... Wait and see...

Words and music by Barry Gibson. © BBC Learning 2013

Birds of the North

Birds of the North
Swooping, swerving
Birds of the North
Turning, curving
Birds of the North
Wing-shapes shifting
Birds of the North
Windward drifting...

Sparrow and Falcon
And Swallow and Swan
Tree, mountain, lake
Till it's time to be gone.

Birds of the North... (etc)

2 Raven and Eagle
And small birds that sing
Summer and Autumn
And Winter and Spring...

Birds of the North... (etc)

Seagull and Curlew
Call out as you glide
Sail with the clouds
And then turn with the tide...

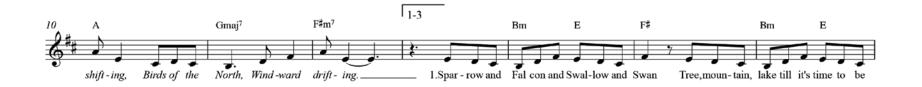
Shhhhh Shhhhh Shhhhh Shhhhh Shhhhh Shhhhh

Birds of the North
Swooping, swerving
Birds of the North
Turning, curving
Birds of the North
Wing-shapes shifting
Birds of the North
Windward drifting...
Windward drifting...
Windward drifting...
Windward drifting...
Windward drifting...

Flowing, with movement

Birds of the North







Birds of the North Swooping, swerving Birds of the North Turning, curving Birds of the North Wing-shapes shifting Birds of the North Windward drifting... 1 Sparrow and Falcon And Swallow and Swan Tree, mountain, lake Till it's time to be gone.

Birds of the North... (etc)

2 Raven and Eagle And small birds that sing Summer and Autumn And Winter and Spring...

Birds of the North... (etc)

3 Seagull and Curlew Call out as you glide Sail with the clouds And then turn with the tide...

Birds of the North
Swooping, swerving
Birds of the North
Turning, curving
Birds of the North
Wing-shapes shifting
Birds of the North
Windward drifting....
Windward drifting....
Windward drifting....
Windward drifting....

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Viking life and music

The Vikings are best known today for their voyages in longships and for raiding and looting a bit like pirates. There is some truth to that reputation, though they also had a complex society with cultural richness, skills in exploring and trading, fine craftsmanship, shipbuilding, carpentry, stone-carving and ingenious poetry. Some of their political and social structures established new forms based around ideas of 'fairness', which eventually developed into modern-day legal and democratic systems.

As well as archaeological evidence from the Viking homelands of Scandinavia (Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, etc) there is a lot of evidence in Britain too, from sites such as York (originally 'Jorvik'), and in museums across the country, as well as Viking language having left its mark on many of our place-names.

Aside from their seafaring adventures, Viking day-to-day life would have revolved around farming, hunting, fishing and building (especially for the men) and weaving, spinning and preserving food (especially for the women). The Vikings used 'rune stones' to predict the future (runes were a kind of alphabet), and played games like 'Hnefatafl' (a board game similar to chess) and arm and leg wrestling. Boasting and drinking 'mead' (a beer-like drink made with honey) sometimes took place at Viking feasts.

Oral storytelling was a vital, binding aspect of Viking society, with stories often told at great length by highly skilled travelling storytellers, or 'skalds'. Strictly speaking, 'sagas' were semi-factual stories based on real or historical events. But over time many of these 'true' stories, characters and heroes became exaggerated into legends and tales of gods, mythical half-human creatures and magical events.

The skalds often accompanied themselves with a small harp or lyre (a wooden instrument with a few gut strings, plucked in a similar way to a guitar or ukulele, and perhaps sometimes also tapped like a hammer-dulcimer). Evidence for other authentic Viking-period musical instruments includes:

 small whistles made from bone and ivory, with a few holes to obtain different notes (sounding similar to a modern recorder, penny-whistle or ocarina); wooden pan-pipes and bone panflutes, with rows of tubes held in the hand and blown across the edges; larger fipple-flutes made from a cow's horn, also similar to a recorder, rather like the mediaeval 'gemshorn'.

- cowhorn-pipes which had reeds attached, played like a 'chanter' in bagpipe-like instruments; blast-horns made from cow-horn buzzed with the lips, like a modern-day brass instrument; and the wooden or bronze 'lur', also buzzed like a modern brass instrument and perhaps used to send messages and warnings, or to summon warriors.
- frame-drums similar to the Irish 'bodhran' and to hand-drums in Greenland, Lapland and the Celtic world; 'snatterpinnar' clappers similar to Irish 'bones'; spinners and rattles made from bone and iron.

Online you'll find a number of websites that contain excellent, detailed illustrations of reconstructed Viking instruments, several with soundclips.

Several museums and heritage organisations also host festivals and special events featuring Viking and Anglo-Saxon music, storytelling and performances - e.g.

www.jorvik-viking-centre.co.uk/viking-festival

www.english-heritage.org.uk/caring/listing/battlefields/battleof-maldon

Throughout the UK, there are also 'living history' and re-enactment groups, some of whom may be able to arrange educational visits.

Dance suggestions

Some of the above music can be a great stimulus for dance activities. In addition, the BBC Schools Radio series *Music for Dance* includes one programme based on detailed ideas for Viking-inspired movement and dance-sequences:

- small groups and pairs in Valkyrie-influenced warrior actions, smooth swooping and battle-pose freeze-frames.
- a whole-class montage depicting life in a Viking village (with actions for farming, ploughing, chopping wood, fishing, hunting, spinning, weaving, jewellery-making and trading).
- strong, powerful movements, travelling steps, gestures, bodyand other Viking gods and goddesses
- group longboat formations and rowing-actions, leading to the enactment of a Viking raid, including exaggeration, slow-motion and freeze-frames. See the following link for detailed notes:

http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/schoolradio/pdfs/musicfordance_summer_2010.pdf

The music suggestions there included Wagner's *Ride of the Valkyries*, Gustav Holst's *Mars* (from *The Planets*) and Sibelius' *Finlandia*. But instrumental music from *Viking Saga Songs* will also work very well for several of the above sequences and also for movement-scenes more closely related to the stories. For example:

- 'Loki the Joker' joky, lively, shape-shifting dances in pairs and small groups; also developments of song-actions (hand-waving, bear-stroking, fist-waving, wave-shapes, scary-faces, handrippling, arm-spreading, rainbow-shapes).
- **2.** 'Odin, Mighty World-Creator' a slow-moving sequence of group-shapes portraying Scandinavian landscape-shapes (mountains and fjords) and the various Viking realms
- **3.** 'Goblins a-Go-Go!' a montage of mythical Viking creatures, with gestures, faces and reggae moves! also developments of songactions (finger-clicks, knee-slaps, hand-taps, chest-beating, cheek-flicks, facial expressions, "air-kissing").

- **4.** 'Sing us a Saga' longboat formations, rowing-actions, seajourneys and sea-creatures...also developments of song-actions (rowing forwards and back, harp-plucking).
- 'Thor on a journey' a recreation of a Viking feast; also developments of song-actions (pointing, fist-shaking, handswinging left and right, arc-shapes).
- **6.** 'Apples of Iduna' dancing the Iduna story, matching movements to the events portrayed in each of the six verses; also tapping different parts of the body (knees, toes, shoulder, nose etc).
- 7. 'Birds of the North' a dance-sequence inspired by observing bird movements in flight and on the ground, including groupmovements in 'canon' suggested by flocking and bird-migration.

Background information about the characters, stories and Norse mythology

Here are descriptions of the main characters:

Loki

A cheeky shape-changer, trickster and mischief-maker, god of fire and sky-traveller, able to turn himself into a fly, a flea, a bird, a ball of fire, a rain-cloud and so on. Always getting into trouble...but a good storyteller.

Odin

Grand and powerful, the 'Mighty World-Creator' all-Father figure, sending roaring winds, god of war, death, poetry and wisdom...but he likes Loki's company and has a sense of humour and justice.

Freya

A rather self-absorbed goddess, aware of her own beauty and appearance, who likes to get her own way.

Odur

Freya's rather upright husband, who is protective and suspicious and who eventually goes off in shame.

Goblins

Horrible, hideous, lumpy, greasy characters, with slimy beards! They huddle in groups around jewels and gems and are excellent craftsmen.

Heimdall

The guardian of Bifrost (the Rainbow Bridge), with a strong sense of justice...and thus not Loki's best friend! His job is to prevent the Giants forcing their way into Asgard.

Thor

God of Thunder, making lots of noise and lightning with his hammer. Rides a chariot pulled by two goats, full of self-confidence and a bit of a show-off and boaster. But also has his moments of insight...as Loki discovers to his cost.

Skrymnir and the Giants

Huge characters with deep voices (could be portrayed with large masks on top of costumes). They enjoy laughing and joking at Thor's challenges.

Hel

An old woman (great grandmother of Giants), like a bag of bones with wobbly legs and no teeth. In fact she is really Death itself.

Iduna

A helpful, friendly goddess, concerned for others. According to Loki she is 'absolutely faultless...a goody-goody...the bee's knees, little Miss Perfect!' Which accounts for why he doesn't like her.

Thiassi (pronounced Thiatsi)

A bad-tempered Giant, who magically disguises himself as an eagle. Wants revenge on the gods, takes what he wants and more...and screeches a lot!

Animals and landscape

These can include various birds (e.g. sparrows, falcons, swallows, swans, ravens, eagles, seagulls, curlews and other small songbirds), horses (to accompany Heimdall), two goats (to pull Thor's chariot), a giant cat (which is actually a serpent-dragon) and some talking trees (e.g. for Iduna's orchard, calling out 'Don't go! Don't go..!')

Norse Saga

Strictly speaking, a Norse 'Saga' was a fairly realistic story about kings, everyday people and colourful characters but the word is often used as a general term for oral storytelling, including myths, legends and folk-tales. The characters in these stories are mainly drawn from Viking traditional mythology from over a thousand years ago.

Myths were made up to explain things which could not be easily understood before we had 'scientific' explanations - e.g. the changing of the seasons, or how the world was created. Natural phenomena were frequently explained through stories about gods and goddesses. In many mythologies these divine beings have special powers, but often have human characteristics and take on human forms. Despite their extraordinariness they display anger, jealousy, love, etc.

Norse mythology and creation

Before the world was created there lived the gods and the giants. The chief of the gods was Odin, the Great All-father. Odin banished the giants to the frozen wasteland of Jotunheim and the gods then began the creation of the world. Firstly, they made the flat circle of the earth. Then they made the Middle Earth, called Midgard which was home to the first human beings and a much more beautiful place than the others. High in the mountains away from Midgard they built a home for themselves, called the city of Asgard. Meanwhile, in Jotunheim, the giants awaited their revenge. The programmes also mention Bifrost, a 'rainbow bridge' connecting Asgard with the Earth (looked after by Heimdall), and Helheim, a gloomy realm of darkness. The various realms were held together by Yggdrasil, a kind of Tree of Life, an ash tree where the gods sat in council at the centre of the Universe, by the Spring of Fate, the source of all wisdom.

Literacy links and language activities

As well as telling elaborate, extended stories, the Vikings enjoyed word-play in riddles, rhymes, charms and chants. Old Norse was very important in the development of Anglo-Saxon, Old English and modern English. One special, short poetic form that Viking people enjoyed was the 'kenning', a way of joining two words together imaginatively, to make a compound word - e.g. 'sea-steed' for 'ship'.

Encourage the children to devise their own kennings, riddles and charms. They might like to write these out in visual designs influenced by the style of runic inscriptions - many examples of these are illustrated online. These activities are also an excellent starting-point for 'performance poetry'. If creating rhymes and chants, the children can perform these in combination with improvised singing or their own original music-accompaniments on instruments.

The stories themselves will make a very good basis for creative language - e.g. retelling in written form (perhaps from the viewpoint of one of the characters) or for improvised oral storytelling. You can help stimulate this and build the children's confidence by setting up a non-threatening format or informal situation - e.g. a storytelling circle, or telling in small groups.

Here are some useful focus-points for literacy and language in each programme :

- **1.** Loki the Joker speaking lyrics and 'tricky' words; saying names; place-names; runes; storytelling; Scandinavian words.
- Odin, Mighty World-Creator story-settings; days of the week; names of Viking realms; word-sounds and written shapes in different languages.
- **3.** *Goblins a Go-Go!* nonsense words; creating nonsense-poems; reading from Tolkien and C.S. Lewis; writing descriptions.
- **4.** Sing us a Saga telling stories in a circle; mythical creatures and fantasy; travelogues.
- **5.** Thor on a journey story-songs; word-rhythms into poems and songs; writing a travelogue; reading about storms and journeys.
- 6. Apples of Iduna creating 'storyboards' and comic-book pages; scripts for video and animation; learning and teaching song-lyrics; remembering words.
- 7. Birds of the North bird-names; poems based on birdsong; nonsense words and syllables; letter-writing; rhymes and alliteration; kennings and riddles.
- **8.** Rehearsal and performance 1 following and adapting drama extracts; narration; drama-improvisation.
- **9.** Rehearsal and performance 2 focusing on clear delivery of song words.
- **10.** Rehearsal and performance 3 performing words and music with conviction and confidence.

Putting on a performance

Depending on your school and situation, you could choose some or sections from all of the stories to present:

- a class-performance of 'bits and pieces' in the classroom, with a special focus on just musical performance. For this, try arranging the musicians in different areas (e.g. percussion in one part of the room, singers in another) and choose poems and narration written by the children to link the different musical items.
- a presentation for other classes and teachers (e.g. an assembly in the school hall). This might involve combining classes to create a cast of characters for a semi-staged performance, with improvised sketches and drama too.
- a grand production for parents, with costumes, props and scenery, e.g. for background mountains and fjords, for some of the different Viking 'realms' and, of course, for Bifrost, the 'Rainbow Bridge'
 these could all be painted onto large sheets of paper or stretched fabric, or alternatively projected from children's artwork via back-projection or whiteboard.

In all cases the children are encouraged to include some of their own ideas and interpretations of the stories (though narration, writings, drama and pictures), and especially some of their own compositions and music.