



Introduction to the

Runes

a Unit Study
from Little Pagan Acorns

This set of printables is intended to work as a study unit for children starting to learn about runes, including their meanings and how to read them.

There are several information pages to be printed out, including a story on the origins of the runes, how to make your own and how to read them for divination. There is also a complete chart with all the symbols and their meanings and English names.

To build familiarity with the symbols, there is a jumble puzzle as well as a simple crossword to do. I have also added a blank chart to be used to write out the meanings and names for practice. You can print out just those pages a few extra times if you need to.

And there is a really short "test" at the end too, but you can choose to use that or not. It's up to you.

How Odin Found the Runes

There is a wonderful story about where the runes came from, and it stars the great God Odin. It goes something like this:

Odin the All-Father wanted to gain further wisdom, and so he hung himself by one foot from a great tree (some say it was the world tree Yggdrasil). He hung there for nine days and nine nights, having no food or no water all that time. He made a promise to himself that he would hang so until he learned what wanted.

After those 9 days, he saw the runes before his eyes and he grabbed them before falling from the tree. He discovered the charms, each with its own sacred meaning. And those are the runes we have today.



The original tale comes from the Havamål, part of the Elder Edda. This is how it starts:

*Wounded, I hung on a wind-swept gallows
For nine long nights,
Pierced by a spear; pledged to Odin,
Offered, myself to myself
The wisest know not from whence spring
The roots of that ancient rood.*








*They gave me no bread,
They gave me no mead,
I looked down;
With a loud cry
I took up the runes;
From that tree I fell.*









The story goes on to describe his impression of each of the runes. And we'll go on to learn what each of them means too.









THE MEANINGS OF THE RUNES

Each one of the runes has a meaning of its own. They can be deep and complicated, but here is a little introduction into each one. The first word in *italics* is the actual meaning of the rune's name, and the rest are the qualities of that symbol.

	Fehu <i>Cattle</i> - wealth, money, luck and success
	Uruz <i>Wild ox</i> - strength, power, energy and changes
	Thurisaz <i>Thorn</i> - reactions, changes and problems
	Ansuz <i>Ancestral God</i> - communication, wisdom, truth and words
	Raidho <i>Wagon</i> - travel, moving, changes and seeing the big picture
	Kenaz <i>Beacon</i> - creativity, knowledge, inspiration and new ideas
	Gebo <i>Gift</i> - giving, balance, partnerships and being generous
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	<p>Wunjo</p> <p><i>Joy</i> - happiness, comfort, success and peace</p>
	<p>Hagalaz</p> <p><i>Hail</i> - trouble, destruction, bad weather and challenges</p>
	<p>Nauthiz</p> <p><i>Need</i> - obstacles, fighting, patience and limits</p>
	<p>Isa</p> <p><i>Ice</i> - being frustrated, delays and challenges</p>
	<p>Jera</p> <p><i>Harvest</i> - success, new interests and the results of hard work.</p>
	<p>Eihwaz</p> <p><i>Yew Tree</i> - being strong, reliable, trusting and not giving up</p>
	<p>Perthro</p> <p><i>Cup</i> - something in secret, a mystery, and special magick</p>
	<p>Algiz</p> <p><i>Elk</i> - protection, staying safe, and contacting the Gods</p>
	<p>Sowilo</p> <p><i>Sun</i> - success, winning, good health and positive changes</p>
	<p>Tiwaz</p> <p><i>Tyr</i> - honor, being a leader, knowing your strengths and victory</p>

	Berkano <i>Birch</i> - growth, birth, new beginnings and meeting new people
	Ehwaz <i>Horse</i> - transportation, vehicles, changes and improvements
	Mannaz <i>Man</i> - you, your friends, your knowledge and skills
	Laguz <i>Water</i> - birth, mysteries, dreams and secret things
	Ingwaz <i>Earth God</i> - family, love, common sense and home
	Dagaz <i>Dawn</i> - new beginnings, understanding things and happiness
	Othala <i>Property</i> - family, ancestors, inheritance and home land

Note: I realize that the runes are a very complex set of symbols and these meanings may not match up with some interpretations. I kept it simple for kids to understand.

Runes are an easy tool you can make yourself without a whole bunch of tools or supplies. In fact, you probably have everything you need already.

First you need to get a collection of 24 things to actually make the runes out of. Your things could be a group of small smooth rocks (try to get them the same size though), little wooden craft tiles, or you could make your disks out of clay. They just need to be smooth enough for you to write or paint on.

Next, get the sheets with they symbols on them to copy from. Use a marker or paint to draw each rune symbol carefully on your pieces.

Take care when you do this and be as neat as you can. You'll be in trouble if you can't tell your fehu from your ansuz.

When they are dry, you can go ahead and use them. A coat of sealer wouldn't be a bad idea to make sure your symbols don't rub off but you can probably do without that if you want.

Find a nice box or bag to keep them in, and you're ready to start reading your own runes.



∴FRHM̥R·FY·THM·HRFXF̥T∴

How to Read Runes

Whether you made a set or have a bought set, now you have to learn how to do readings with them.

There are lots of different ways to use runes, but I'll keep it pretty simple to start with.

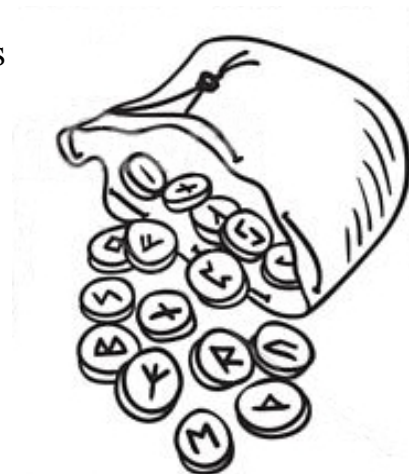
The easiest way to start gaining some wisdom from your runes is a simple 1-rune draw. Shake up your bag of runes and concentrate on a question. Pull out one single rune that should help you find your answer.

Just remember that they aren't really a clear or straight answer all the time. You have to really think about what they are trying to tell you. Single runes aren't always the best way to do a reading because they don't tell you very much by themselves.

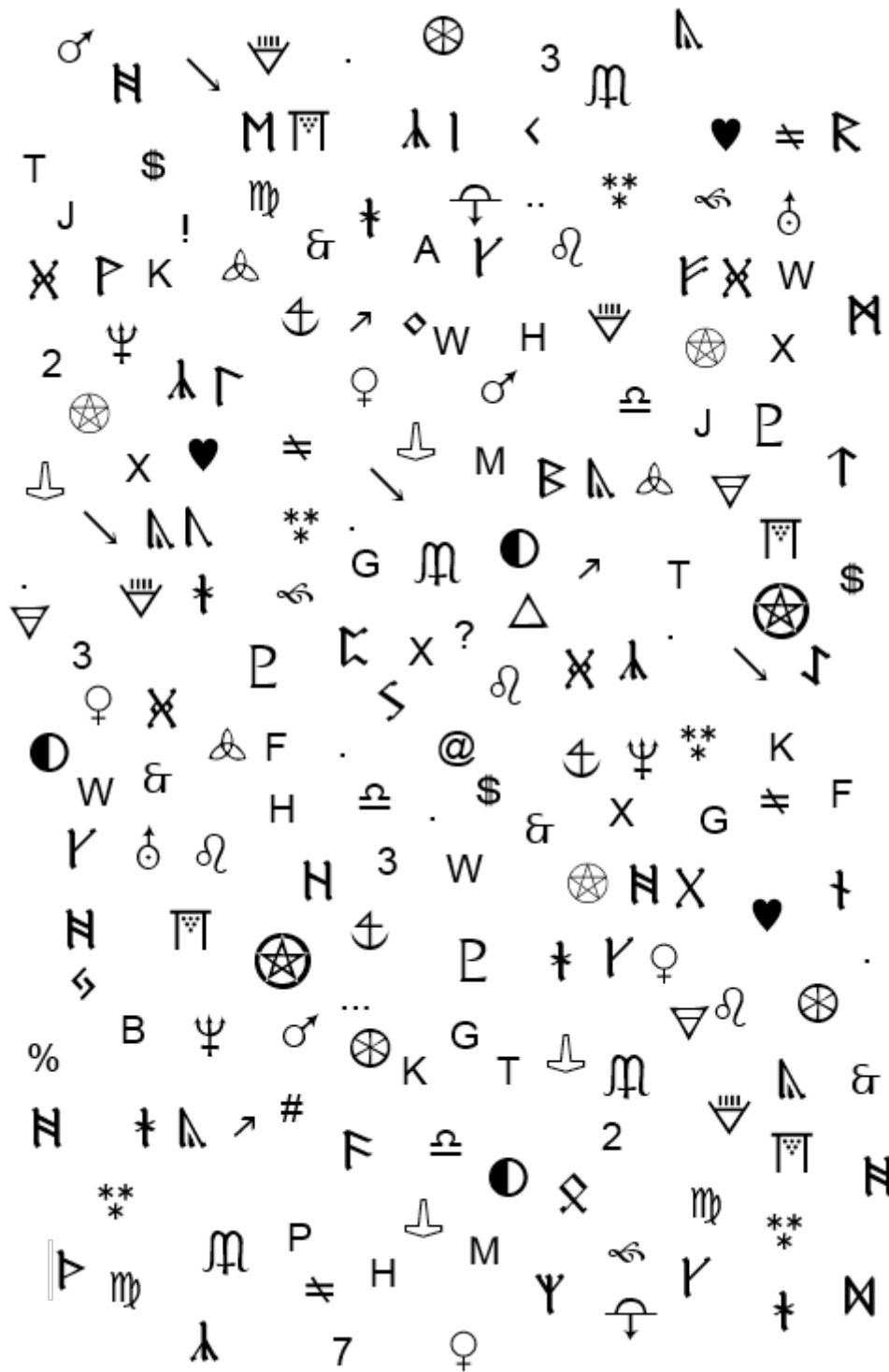
Another type of reading is called Drawing the Norns, which means taking out 3 runes for your question. The first one stands for the past and should show you something important that led up to your question. The second one is the present, for something that is part of the situation right now. The last rune is the future, and it should give you some idea of what will happen soon.

One of the most important things about reading runes is that you have to let your own feelings guide your answers. That can take a lot of practice to build your own personal feelings towards each rune.

Once you get to know the symbols, do readings and keep notes. Maybe even a little journal so you can see what runes you pulled, what they meant and then see how the problem worked out. Were you right? If not, how could you have read your runes differently?



Find all the Runes



Each one is here just *once*, so circle them and check each off as you go.

- Fehu
- Uruz
- Thurisaz
- Ansuz
- Raidho
- Kenaz
- Gebo
- Wunjo
- Hagalaz
- Nauthiz
- Isa
- Jera
- Eihwaz
- Perthro
- Algiz
- Sowilo
- Tiwaz
- Berkano
- Ehwaz
- Mannaz
- Laguz
- Ingwaz
- Dagaz
- Othala

Remembering Runes

Fill in the table with the names and meanings for each of the runes.

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Rune Writing

Now, practice writing each of the symbols until you can do them easily.

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Test Your Runic Knowledge

Can you answer these without looking back?

1. Which 3 runes stand for changes?

2. How long did Odin hang from the tree to learn the runes? _____

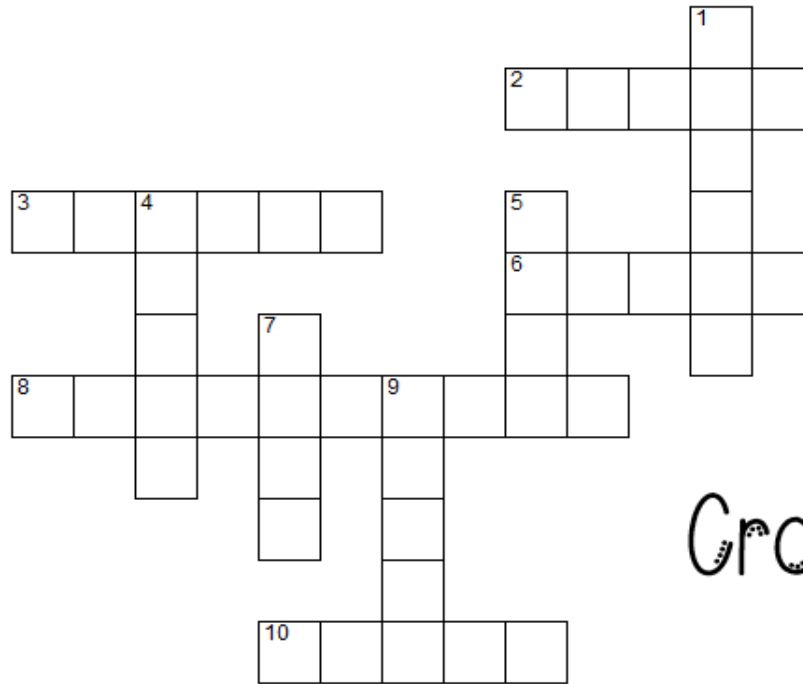
3. How many runes are there? _____

4. Which 2 runes would represent your family?

5. If you did a reading with 3 runes, what would each one stand for?

6. What could you use to make your own set of runes?

∴FRHM̥R·FY·THM·HRFXFT∴



Rune Crossword #1

Across:

2. Which rune stands for new ideas and creativity?
3. The sun is the symbol for this rune.
6. The name of this rune means "horse".
8. The main meaning for Algiz is _____?
10. Which rune is all about happiness and joy?

Down:

1. Which rune might stand for you?
4. What does the rune Raidho mean in English?
5. This is the rune that stands for being a good partner.
7. If you want more money, which rune would you hope to see?
9. Thurisaz is another word for _____?