RICK RIORDAN’S
MAGNUS CHASE
and the GODS of ASGARD

THE SWORD OF SUMMER ACTIVITY KIT
DECORATING IDEAS: In *The Sword of Summer*, Magnus Chase finds himself in Valhalla. To prepare for your Magnus Chase and the Gods of Asgard event, introduce the atmosphere of the Norse longhouse into your space. Backdrops of log walls, evergreen forests, and snowy hillsides will get attendees into the spirit of the journey Magnus Chase takes. Use butcher paper to create your backdrops; adding to the scene with a profile of a longboat deck and the Rainbow Bridge to Asgard will help create the scene for the party.

A NORSE FEAST: Building a civilization (or being the gods worshipped by it) in the frozen climes of far northern Europe is hard work! The Norse offset the cold climate and frequent combat with hearty feasts, so entice your partygoers with a wide variety of foods inspired by Magnus Chase and the Gods of Asgard. To begin, offer treats with a nod to Scandinavian flair, such as Swedish Fish, Swedish meatballs, Danishes, peppermint and spearmint gum, oatmeal cookies, “lefse” (a sweet or savory flatbread you can represent with chips), “seagull eggs” (malt balls), Warheads, and “mead” (ginger ale or lemonade). Follow these with a spread fit for a healthy Viking by offering a choice of fruits, veggies, and nuts (labeled and separated, of course—you don’t want to trigger any allergies).

VIKING HORN BUGLES: For this game, participants circle. Have one of them start the rumor ring with a two-to-three-sentence story excerpt, character summary, or plot blurb from *The Sword of Summer* or one of the Heroes of Olympus or Kane Chronicles books (if attendees haven’t yet read book one of Magnus Chase and the Gods of Asgard). Each participant whispers the story to the person to their right, and when it has made the full circuit, the last person announces what was whispered to them for comparison with the original statement.
The Norse peoples were famous in history for being fierce warriors who terrified those who might fall to one of their raids. But every Viking needs armament! Ask each party participant to design a sword, a shield, or a helmet featuring an original logo and symbol to serve as a source of strength and protection in battle. Provide markers, paint, glitter, glue, tape, construction paper, cardboard, and the like for the task. Spirit animals such as bears, wolves, foxes, serpents, dragons, owls, eagles, and fish were popular among the Norse, as were symbols of raw power in nature such as lightning, fire, mountains, and the sea. Symbols of the gods, of course, were very popular as well. Encourage participants to think out of the box and use a symbol that fits their own personal style and worldview.
The Norse developed a distinctive writing system known as runes, a system that combined ideographic writing symbols that were applied to the sounds of the Norse languages. Download copies of the Norse runic alphabet and provide materials for participants to create nameplates for themselves, write a note to their parents, or redesign the artwork for a favorite book, musician, band, or sports team using runes in the names.

**Runic Word Scramble:** Use runic alphabet symbols for the following clues.

1. Norse sailing vessels known as allowed traders and raiders to sail both on the seas and up shallow rivers.

2. Norse explorers established colonies on the islands of and.

3. Viking warriors fought fiercely and bravely in battle in hopes that they would be allowed into the great hall of the afterlife, .

4. While the Vikings, homelands were in Scandinavia, there were long periods of Norse rule over parts of, , and.

5. While the Vikings were notorious warriors, they were also some of medieval Europe’s most active.

**Answers:**

1. Longboats
2. Greenland and Iceland
3. Valhalla
4. England, France, and Russia
5. Merchants
The Norse cosmology was contained in a great tree, the world tree Yggdrasil. The various levels of the tree held what the Norse saw as nine realms of existence for all of the beings of the universe. How might you organize such a world? Provide participants with a reproducible sheet of the World Tree, and have them place each of the following realms within the tree in the place where they think it fits best. They might include illustrations to signify the realm. Once they are finished, have them compare their trees to an artist’s representation (many of these can be found online).

**Asgard (Level 1):** brilliantly lit realm of the civilized gods of order and stability, and of Valhalla, the hall of the great warriors of the human race.

**Vanaheim (Level 2):** idyllic realm of the gods of agriculture, hunting, and the bounty of nature.

**Alfheim (Level 2):** realm of the white elves, luminous demigods linked to magic and the beauty of nature.

**Midgard (Level 3):** the realm of man, which is encircled by a great serpent that both contains the human world and prevents direct intrusion from the surrounding realms. It is usually associated with the trunk of the tree.

**Bifrost:** the rainbow bridge that occasionally connects the worlds of Asgard and Midgard.

**Svartalfheim (Level 3):** realm of the dwarves and dark creatures such as trolls. They are associated with mining, blacksmithing, and caves.

**Jotunheim (Level 3):** realm of the frost giants, the ancient and wild creatures at the edge of Yggdrasil who are the greatest threat to both the gods and man.

**Niflheim (Level 3):** land of frost, mist, ice, and the mountainous cold of the Norse world.

**Muspelheim (Level 3):** land of fire, steam, and volcanoes.

**Well of Urd (Level 4):** ground spring of water that is the source of life for Yggdrasil.

**Helheim (Level 5):** the place of the dead, the unseen world usually associated with the roots of Yggdrasil.
HISTORY OR LEGEND

How much do you know about the Norse and Germanic worlds? Look at the statements below and circle “History” if you think the statement is true, or “Legend” if you think it is false.

1. In spite of many efforts, the Scandinavian and Germanic worlds were among the few in Europe never to be conquered by the Roman Empire.
   - LEGEND
   - HISTORY

2. Viking warriors wore helmets with large horns to scare their enemies in battle.
   - LEGEND
   - HISTORY

3. In order to go to Valhalla in the afterlife, one had to live a good and productive life.
   - LEGEND
   - HISTORY

4. Viking sailors reached the shores of the Americas almost 500 years prior to Christopher Columbus.
   - LEGEND
   - HISTORY

5. The Norse were a warrior civilization who had to raid neighboring regions for resources since Scandinavia was too cold for farming.
   - LEGEND
   - HISTORY

6. Thanks to abundant forests and because of the cold climate, the Norse people constructed elaborate tree houses for shelter.
   - LEGEND
   - HISTORY

7. Though commonly associated with evil, the Norse god Loki was actually associated more with trickery and mischief and could be involved in harm or good depending on his view of the situation.
   - LEGEND
   - HISTORY

8. The Norse people celebrated a holiday similar to Christmas.
   - LEGEND
   - HISTORY

9. Thor, the Norse god of thunder and lightning, was the king of the Norse gods.
   - LEGEND
   - HISTORY

10. Norse women and girls enjoyed many more rights and freedoms than most other women in Europe in their time.
    - LEGEND
    - HISTORY

11. The Vikings were a strong empire who ruled most of northern Europe in the Middle Ages.
    - LEGEND
    - HISTORY

12. Most of the days of the week are named after Norse gods and goddesses in the English language.
    - LEGEND
    - HISTORY
EXPLORE WITH THE NORSEMEN

The Norse were active traders and explorers, extending their presence to the far reaches of Europe as well as to North Africa, Russia, and across the Atlantic Ocean. Read the descriptions below and locate each historically significant place on the map of the Norse-influenced world. Write the letter of the location in the blank space next to its description.

1. Scandinavia, the present-day countries of Denmark, Sweden, and Norway and the heart of the Norse world ________
2. Remote Swedish Viking trade post that became the center of an active trade in timber, furs, honey, and slaves ________
3. Greatest of the Norse settlements in Russia, this city would become the hub for trade with the Byzantine Empire and the Islamic Caliphates ________
4. Norse merchants brought highly prized northern goods to this great capital of the Islamic Caliphates ________
5. After a rocky start to their relationship, Viking links to the capital of the Byzantine Empire eventually made that culture the greatest influence on Russian civilization ________
6. From a colony outside of this ancient North African city, Norse sailors extended trade and later ferried Crusaders to the Holy Land ________
7. A successful raid on Palermo led to a short period of Norse rule over this island off of the coast of Italy ________
8. The Pope was so terrified of a Viking raid on this holy city that he fled to his fortress in the Alps ________
9. While Spain and Portugal were under Arab rule, Norse raiders repeatedly attacked these wealthy cities and even occupied one for a short time ________ and ________
10. Using river systems, the Norse were able to raid the largest city in northern Europe ________
11. Raids were so successful in this region of northern France that the Norse were able to set up a kingdom from which they would eventually invade England ________
12. Norwegian Vikings established rule over this region composed of southern and eastern Ireland and much of Wales and Cornwall ________
13. Some of the most infamous Viking raids in history led to Danish rule over much of the east coast of England ________
14. Norwegian Viking control over the north coast of Scotland allowed for further exploration across the Atlantic ________
15. Overcrowding and limited farmland in Scandinavia probably prompted Norse colonization of this Atlantic Ocean island ________
16. Though today its massive glacier makes its name seems strange, a warmer climate in the tenth century left productive farmland for Icelandic Viking settler Erik the Red ________

ANSWERS:
SWORD OF SUMMER SCRAMBLE

Oh no! The gods have mixed up the letters for these key words from Magnus’s quest! Unscramble and match the highlighted letters below to solve the bonus question: What is the Sword’s true Norse name?

EXAMPLE:

SMAGNU = M A G N U S

1. SNROE
2. URST
3. AMISAH
4. HHTTNEAORS
5. ROTH
6. ZNTIEBL
7. RNHEEIRJ
8. LAHLAAVL
9. GNTAI
10. DOGS
11. ERYF
12. RKELAIYV

HINT: Its name in Old Norse — Summer Sword.

SUMMARIZED
EINHERJAR WORD HUNT

Search for these words like a Valkyrie searches for their Einherjar!

BLITZEN
CHASE
FREY
HEARTHSTONE
LOKI
MAGNUS
ODIN
SAMIRAH
THOR

Bonus word: What’s a word for “doomsday” in Norse mythology?

ANSWER: RAGNAROK

Bonus Word: Ragnarok
MAGNUS MAD LIBS

Find a friend and fill in the blanks! Without showing the other person, read the prompt below each line to complete your own wacky version of the opening scene of Magnus Chase and the Gods of Asgard.

My day started out ______________ enough. I was sleeping on the ______________ under a bridge in the Public Garden when a guy kicked me awake and said, “__________________.”

By the way, I’ve been ______________ for the past ______________ years. Some of you may think, Aw, how sad. Others may think, Ha, ha, ______________!

But if you saw me on the street, ______________ percent of you would walk right past like I’m ______________.

You’d pray, Don’t let him ask me for ______________.

You’d wonder if I’m ______________ than I look, because surely a teenager wouldn’t be wrapped in a stinky old ______________, stuck outside in the middle of a ______________ winter.

Somebody should ______________ that poor boy!
DON’T LET THE WOLF ESCAPE

Choose a sword and follow the path to see what your destiny holds!

Back at Hotel Valhalla. All is good . . . for now.

Forget the fight—it’s time for Fadlan’s Falafel!

Oops . . . the wolf is free. Ragnarok begins!