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Improving English through the history of English: between Anglo-saxons and Scadinavia

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IMPROVING ENGLISH THROUGH THE HISTORY OF ENGLISH

Between Anglo-saxons and Scandinavians

For Upper-intermediate Students

B2 - C1

by ISABELLE MARIA SOARES



Presentation

The title anticipates that this material is intended for those who want to improve English language skills. Moreover, going beyond language abilities, it offers students an interesting topic that takes up some of the history of English. In this sense, the target public is composed of those who speak and study English as a Foreign Language and have a level beyond Upper-intermediate, and want to know the English language more thoroughly.

In addition, the material aims the independence of teaching-learning process of students by encouraging them to use technology through different virtual tools.

In Lesson 1, you will learn that there are influences from the Old Norse, an ancient language spoken by the Scandinavian people, on the English language. In this way, you will use the TedED platform and read an article in Babel's online magazine. In addition, the activities incites you to research on the Internet to deepen the discussions with your classmates.

The ideas brought in the first Lesson introduce what comes next. In Lesson 2, you will deepen your knowledge through Youtube videos. The focus is to reflect on how the process of the contact between Old English and Old Norse is presented on TV, specifically by the *Vikings* series.

The last two Lessons are more recreational.

Lesson 3 brings the world of music to continue the theme. However, the focus is only on the Scandinavian world. In this Lesson, you will use YouTube and *LyricsTraining* platform to play with your colleagues. Finally, you must produce a short story based on everything new you have learnt.

Finally, the last Lesson will do a review by *quizes* on *Kahoot!* platform. You and your classmates will put all the knowledge you have gained and improved into practice to learn more!

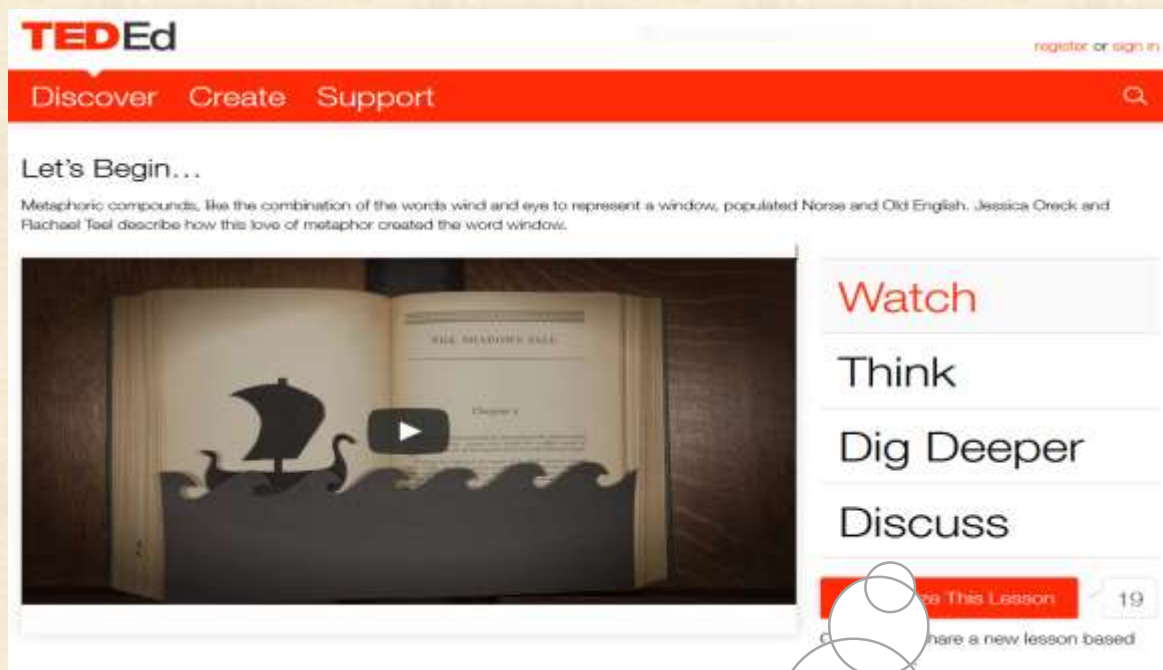
Learn a lot and have fun!

Best regards,

Isabelle Maria Soares

Lesson 1

Old Norse Influences on English Language



The screenshot shows the TED Ed website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'Discover', 'Create', and 'Support' options. Below this, a red banner contains the text 'Let's Begin...' followed by a short introductory paragraph about metaphoric compounds. A video player is embedded in the center, showing a scene with a book and a silhouette of a ship. To the right of the video player, there is a vertical menu with four options: 'Watch', 'Think', 'Dig Deeper', and 'Discuss'. Below the menu, there is a red button labeled 'Share This Lesson' and a small icon of a speech bubble with the number '19' next to it.

1. **Watch** the video "[Mysteries of Vernacular: Window](#)" on **TEDEd.com**.

2. Click on **Think** to improve what you learnt watching the video. You have to answer 3 questions about it.

3. Click on **Dig Deeper** and read a brief text about the issue on the video. Afterwards, use the Internet to look for more about it, note every relevant information and discuss with your classmates.

4. Finally, click on **Discuss**, read the proposed question and try to answer.



Did you already know that the English Language carries Old Norse influences? Discuss with your colleagues.

Read the following [article](#) on Babel Magazine website to find out more about Old Norse influences on English Language.

+Babel MAGAZINE

139 Old Norse Words That Invaded The English Language

Without the Vikings, English would be missing some awesome words like berserk, ugly, muck, skull, knife, die, and cake!

BY JOHN-ERIK JORDAN
FEB 9, 2015



DISCUSS WITH YOUR CLASSMATES:

1. Which **English** words influenced by the **Old Norse** presented by the article did you not know?
2. Which **English words** influenced by **Old Norse** do you consider important in **your use of English**?
3. How do you think **Old Norse influences** are significant for **English nowadays**?



Lesson 2

Anglo-saxons and Scandinavians on TV



“**Vikings (2013)** is a historical drama television series written and created by Michael Hirst for the History channel. [...]

Vikings is inspired by the sagas of the viking Ragnar Lothbrok, one of the best-known legendary Norse heroes and notorious as the scourge of England and France. The show portrays Ragnar as a farmer who rises to fame by successful raids into England, and eventually becomes a Scandinavian king, with the support of his family and fellow warriors. After Ragnar's death, the later seasons follow the fortunes of his sons, and their adventures in England, Scandinavia and the Mediterranean.”

Available in: dragoart.com

Source: [Wikipedia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vikings)

Have you ever watched this series?

Try to find someone who watched to talk about it.

You and your classmates could look for more information on Internet.



Watch on youtube the [Ragnar's death scene](#).

Now, Google “**Ragnar Lothbrok story**”. Try to find out enough information to contrast the character on Vikings series with the “probably” real Ragnar.

Write your considerations to discuss with your classmates.



Watch three more
“**Vikings**” scenes on
Youtube.



1. **Old English** scene



2. **Old Norse** scene



3. **Norse and English** cultural
exchange scene

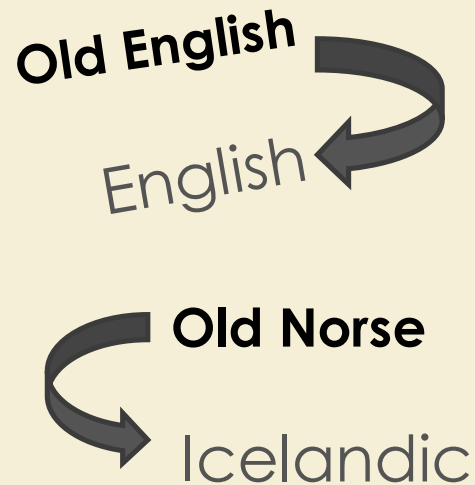
After watching the 3rd
video, think of cultural
exchanges situations that
happen nowadays.
Share examples with your
classmates.



How does **Vikings** series
contribute to learn the
history of English
language?



English language evolution according to traditional view:



- ❖ Watch the video and identify the similar words. Make a **Table** on [Google Docs](#) where you can organize a comparison of the words for each language. Focus on similar words between **English** and **Old English** and between **English** and **Old Norse**.
- ❖ Which old language seems closer to Modern English? You have to think about it and write a brief text showing your opinion according to your analysis from “Lord’s Prayer” organized in a Table.
- ❖ **Share** with your classmates. Compare your works and discuss in class.

Lesson 3

Viking world on current Music world

You have learnt that Vikings contributed with many words to English language. In this Lesson, we will see how Scandinavian culture is still present in the artistic world, specifically, in Music.



“**Leaves' Eyes** is a German symphonic metal band. They were formed in 2003 by Liv Kristine [...]. Most of Leaves' Eyes' lyrics, written by Liv Kristine, concern Norse mythology and the Viking Age.”

Source: [Wikipedia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leaves%27_Eyes).

Available in: [maximumvolumemusic.com](https://www.maximumvolumemusic.com)



WATCH THE FOLLOWING VIDEOCLIPS:



1. My destiny



2. The Waking Eye

Each song and its clip tell us a story. Talk about them to your classmates.

Which one did you like the most?



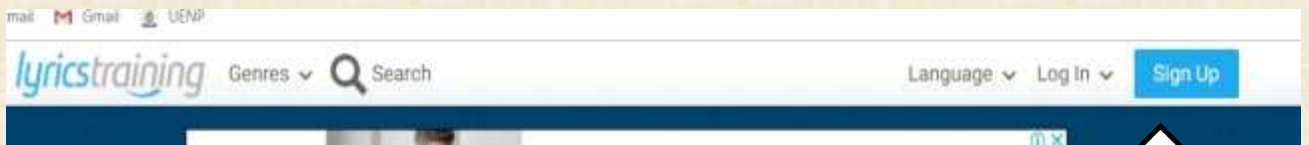
Let's play!

Do you know
LyricsTraining
website?

LyricsTraining is an easy and fun way to learn and improve your foreign languages skills, through the music videos and the lyrics of your favorite songs.

Source: [Lyrics Training](#)

GO to the website and **SIGN UP!**

A screenshot of the 'Create New Account' registration page on LyricsTraining. The page offers two options: signing up with a Facebook account or filling out a registration form. The form includes fields for Username, Password, Confirm Password, Email Address, Country (a dropdown menu), Birthday (Month, Day, and Year dropdowns), Gender (Male and Female radio buttons), and a Security Code field. A large white arrow points from the 'Sign Up' button in the header above to the registration form.

Let's play!

Now, choose a Song to play:

2. The Waking Eye



1. My destiny

Select the Level.

We recommend Intermediate to start.



Let's play!



Score 00000 Gaps 0/47 Hits 0 Fails 0 Bonus x1 ?

LEAVES' EYES - My Destiny (Official)

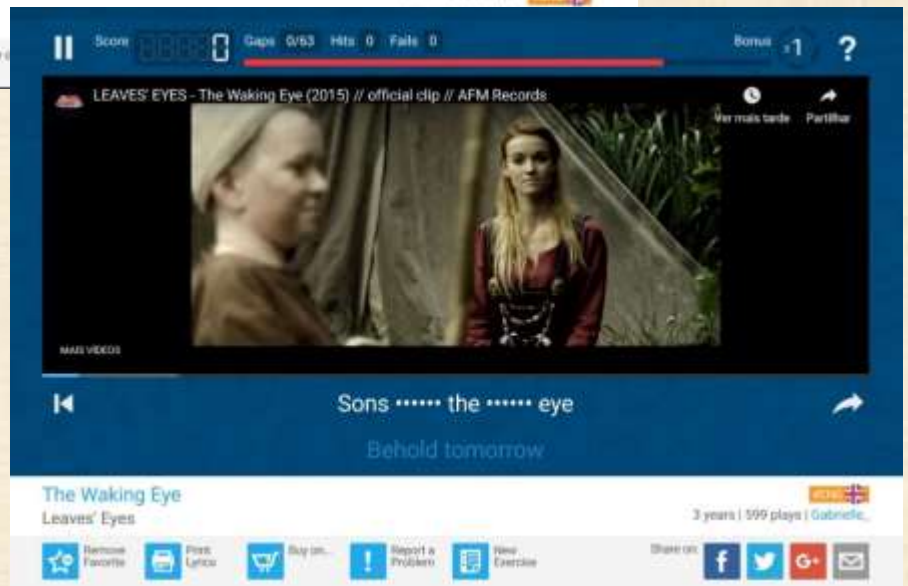
Ver mais tarde Partilhar

MAIS VIDEOS

I made a promise |*
I my love on northern

My Destiny
Leaves' Eyes

Remove Favourite Print Lyrics Buy on...



Score 00000 Gaps 0/63 Hits 0 Fails 0 Bonus x1 ?

LEAVES' EYES - The Waking Eye (2015) // official clip // AFM Records

Ver mais tarde Partilhar

MAIS VIDEOS

Sons the eye
Behold tomorrow

The Waking Eye
Leaves' Eyes

3 years | 599 plays | Gabriela...

Remove Favourite Print Lyrics Buy on... Report a Problem View Exercise

Share on: f t G+ e



You must complete the Lyrics while you are listening to the song. You need to type as quick as you can.

Do a competition with your classmates and have fun!

Read the excerpts from **Ragnars Saga Lodbrokar** focusing on the “kennings”.



And when he came to the wooden fence where the snake was, he attacked it with his spear; he thrust the spear at it and then pulled it back to himself, and then he attacked again. That thrust struck the snake's spine, and then he twisted the spear so that the spearhead came off the shaft; there was such a great din at the snake's death-throes that all the bower shook.

And then Ragnar turned away. Then a jet of blood came and struck him between his shoulders, but that did not harm him, since his clothes that he had made protected him. And those who were in the bower woke with the din and went out of the bower. Then Þóra saw a great man going from the bower and asked him his name and whom he wanted to find. He stopped and he spoke this verse:

*I have risked my famous life, beautiful woman;
fifteen winters old
And I vanquished the earth fish.*
Near misfortune, a swift
Death for me – save
I have pierced well to the heart
The ringed salmon-of-the-heath.†*

* *foldar fiski* – “fish of the land,” a kenning for “dragon.”

† *Hringleginn heidar lax* – “ringed salmon-of-the-heath,” another kenning for “dragon.”

WHEN HE SAID THAT HE LIKED HER WELL and that he thought for certain that she should come with him. But she said it could not be thus. Then he said he wanted her to stay there during the night on the ship. She said that would not happen before he had come home from the journey as he had planned, – “and it may be, that the matter will seem different to you.” Then Ragnar called for his treasurer and told him take that shirt, which Þóra had owned and which was all embroidered with gold, and bring it to him. Then Ragnar offered it to Kráka in this manner:

*Will you receive this shirt
Which Þóra Hjört had?
Marked with silver, this cloth
becomes you very well.
Her white hands worked
this garment; she was dear
to the king of heroes*
until her death.*

Kráka spoke in reply:

*I dare not accept the shirt
Which Þóra Hjört had,
Marked with silver; wretched cloth*

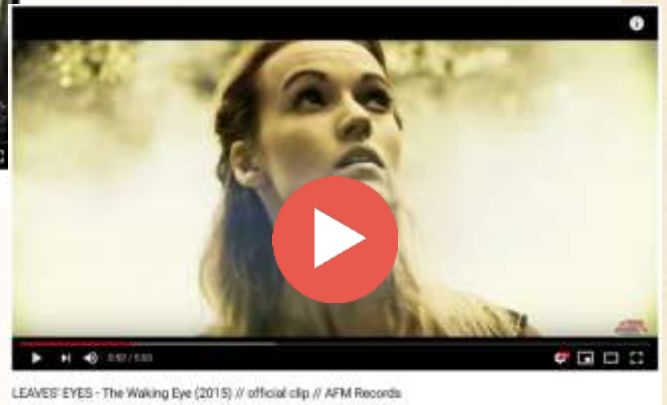
* *blíður buðlungur bragna* – “king of heroes,” a kenning referring to Ragnar.

(ANONIMOUS; DYKE, 2003, p. 13)



NOW, IT'S YOUR TURN!

1. Choose one of the **Leaves' Eyes** videoclips that we watched in this Lesson.



2. Write a **short story** based on the video and its respective lyrics you chose. Use at least **two "kennings"** that you and your classmates have found (in Lesson 1). Find pictures to illustrate it.
3. When you finish, upload your story on your Google Drive and share with your classmates. Read your classmates stories and give your opinion (to help your classmate's work). You need to write your feedback on your classmates works by comments. They will do the same on your work.
4. Now, it's time to write the final version of your short story. When you finish, share with your classmates and teacher on Google Drive.

Lesson 4

What did you learn from this Medieval World?

Let's play!

Do you know [Kahoot!](#) website?

» Go to the site: [KAHOOT](#)

The image shows a sequence of steps for signing up on Kahoot!:

- 1**: A red arrow points to the "Sign up" button in the top right corner of the Kahoot! website header.
- 2**: A red arrow points to the "Sign up" button in the top right corner of the website header.
- 3**: A red arrow points to the "As a student" button in the "I want to use Kahoot!" selection screen.

Other elements include:

- The word "Or" written in the center.
- A "Sign up" modal window with options: "Sign up with Google", "Sign up with Microsoft", and "Sign up with email".
- The "I want to use Kahoot!" screen with four buttons: "As a teacher" (orange), "As a student" (blue), "Socially" (purple), and "At work" (teal).

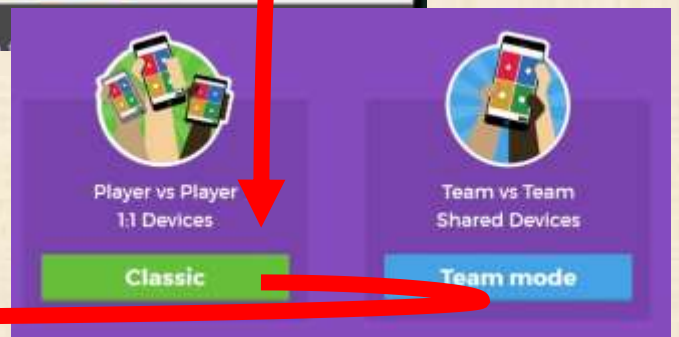
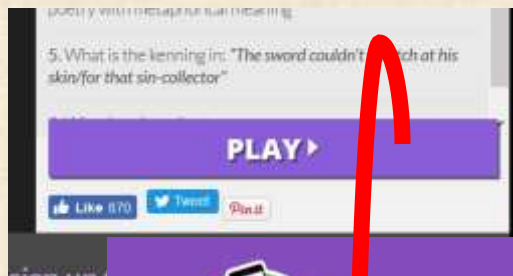
Let's play!



Now, choose a **quiz** to start:

1. Kenning
2. Old English
3. Vikings

Click on **Play**.
Then, select the
Classic mode.



Game options

- Enable Answer Streak Bonus [View details](#) ON
- Name generator [View details](#) OFF
- Podium [View details](#) ON
- Randomize order of questions OFF
- Randomize order of answers OFF
- Enable 2 Step Join [View details](#) OFF
- Display Game PIN throughout OFF
- Show minimized intro instructions OFF

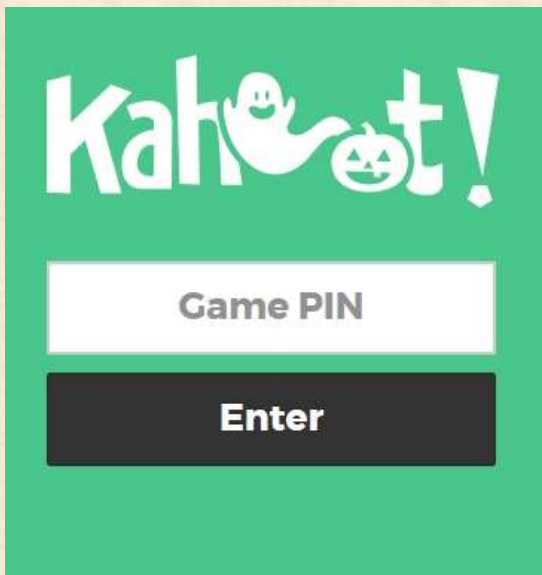
You can set the **game options**, if you want.

Let's play!

» After that, you will get a PIN code. Share the code with your classmates.

Join with the **Kahoot! app** or at **kahoot.it**
with Game PIN:

4401252



Your classmates or students (if you are a teacher) should access the **kahoot.it** website OR download the app **Kahoot!** on their Smartphones. In the PIN field, they must add the number. Then they will need to write a nickname. Once all your friends are connected, click **Start**.

The purpose of these games is to review what you learnt and also complement your knowledge about Old English and Norse world.

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Extra material

If you want to know more about...

[“Old Norse influences on English Language”](#)

Isabelle Maria Soares is a young Brazilian teacher and researcher.

She has:

Degree in *Letras – Português e Inglês* from Universidade Tecnológica Federal do Paraná (UTFPR) and in *Estudos Portugueses e Lusófonos* from Universidade do Minho (UMinho - Portugal);

Master Degree in *Letras* from Universidade Estadual do Centro-oeste (UNICENTRO).

This material is the beginning of a project that pursues to give worth to the history of English language. The idea for its production came from Isabelle while she was doing her Certificate Program course in *Ensino de Língua Inglesa* (English Teaching) from Universidade Estadual do Norte do Paraná (UENP).



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