



# CULTURAL HERITAGE



Storytelling and theater in Norway

Made by Anna, Mehlika and Ksenia



# Norway's storytelling past



## The Sami People of the North

- The Sami people are the indigenous people of Scandinavia. They are descendants of the nomadic people who had lived in the north of Scandinavia for thousands of years. They survived by herding reindeer, its only recently that some Sami people choose to live in cities.
- The Scandinavian countries discriminated against the Sami and tried to get rid of them. Speaking the Sami languages in schools and public life was long forbidden. In the late 1900s, the Sami minority fought to keep their traditional culture through the use of Sami in schools and the protection of reindeer pastures. They have a national congress today and the situation is much better.

## Joik, a storytelling method

- A Sami tradition is to joik. Researchers believe joik is one of the longest-living music traditions in Europe.
- A joik is not a song about the person or place, rather they try to make sounds that feels like the person or the place. Like they are there, a person doesn't joik about their friend, but they joik their friend.
- The joiker is attempting to evoke or depict that person or place through song .
- Originally joiks where used in everyday life, for anything. A joik could be a part of telling stories, when alone on the mountain, to the reindeer, or to a someone they loved. In later years, the joik has been adapted to be performed on a stage.
- STJERNEKAMP 2018 - JOIK - Ella Marie Hætta Isaksen





# Folklore

- A country's mythology and folklore is a window into its culture, society and history. Though the stories told by Norse people and Vikings eventually became written texts, they were first stories told both quietly and dramatically in common homes, in the Viking longhouses, and around campfires in the landscape.
- As all cultures worldwide, folklore was told and dramatized to entertain, remember, and teach lessons.



They told stories of battles, real and imagined. Some of which are still played in outdoor theatres today.



# Battle of Stiklestad



## THE HISTORIC **BATTLE OF STIKLESTAD**

NORWAY'S MOST FAMOUS BATTLE



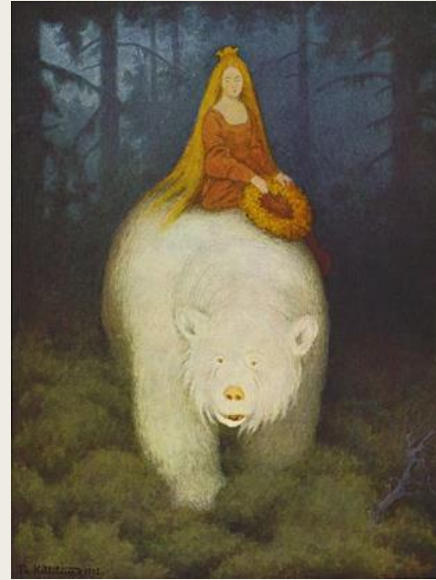
The battle of Stiklestad is a very important battle in Norwegian history. In Stiklestad there is a Viking museum, every year the battle is dramatized and played in an outdoor theatre there.

The Battle of Stiklestad is one of the key events in Norwegian history. It is said to have taken place in July 1030 in central Norway. Here they defeated Christian Viking King, Olav Haraldsson. He wanted to make Norway a Christian country, something the townspeople did not like.

Stiklestad is about a 25 minute drive from our school in Levanger.

# Mythical creatures

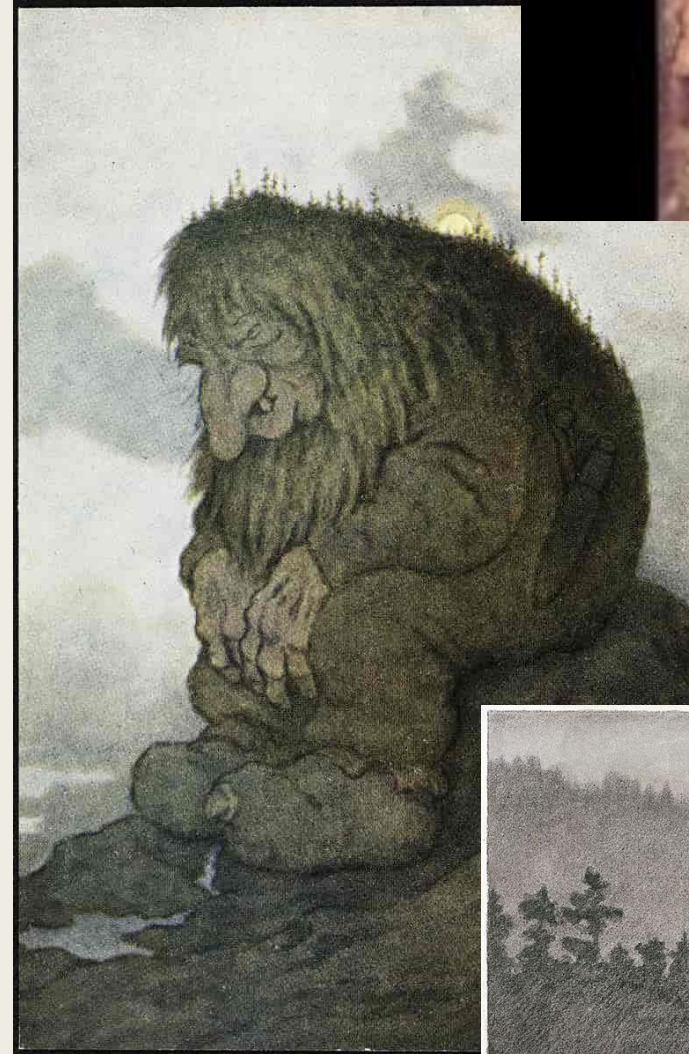
There are many mythical creatures in Norwegian folklore, and stories surrounding them. Here are some pictures:



# Trollet



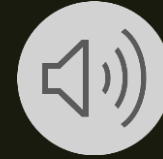
- Trolls are one of the most important mythical creatures in Norwegian folklore. You can find them in the forest, mountains or under bridges.
- Trolls are much bigger than humans, sometimes as big as mountains. They are hard to see because they can blend in well with nature.
- Trolls have a good sense of smell and if they catch your scent, it can be very hard to escape. But don't worry! Since trolls turn to stone in the sun you will be safe if you don't go outside in the forest or mountains in the dark. And why would you even think about doing that?? Troll safari is not safe ;)
- There are many stories about trolls and even a famous song that you have probably heard called "dovregubbens hall" by Edvard Greig from the play Peer Gynt.







# Nøkken



Nøkken is a water spirit that lives in lakes and rivers.

The nøkk can shapeshift, its real form is the one you see at the top. But it can change into a horse or a beautiful young man to lure you into the water and drag you to the bottom.

The nøkk is especially dangerous after the sun goes down. If you see a nøkk or hear its cry it is often a warning that someone is going to drown.

The only way to escape the nøkk, is by saying its name. Then it will immediately leave and go back into the water.

“Sceptics may try and argue that the nøkk is merely a way to keep children from playing near deep water. Arguably, sceptics have kept the nøkk well fed for many years.”

# Norrøn Mytologi (Norse Mythology)



ODIN



THOR



FREYA



LOKI



FREYR



FRIGG



BALDER



TYR

Norse mythology is an old religion which was widespread among the Nordic-Germanic peoples in Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Iceland and the Faroe Islands before Christianity was spread in these countries. The Norse stories and performances developed over time, and they are very different from place to place. Norse mythology can remind you of Greek and Egyptian mythology, because they have some of the same elements and are equally as weird. There are many stories of *æser* (as the Norse gods are called) They are also represented in films. But often the characters in movies are different from the ones in the actual mythology. Stories from Norse mythology can be performed at theaters but was mostly used in storytelling.



## NORSE MYTHOLOGY IN MODERN MOVIES



You may recognize them better from modern Marvel films. There are also many other movies about them.

Today the stories of the gods are still dramatized, though few believe they are true.

# Odin



From earliest times Odin was a war god, and he appeared in heroic literature as the protector of heroes; fallen warriors joined him in Valhalla. The wolf and the raven were dedicated to him. His magical horse, Sleipnir, had eight legs, teeth inscribed with runes, and the ability to gallop through the air and over the sea.

Odin was the great magician among the gods and was associated with runes. He was also the god of poets. In outward appearance he was a tall, old man, with flowing beard and only one eye (the other he gave in exchange for wisdom). He was usually depicted wearing a cloak and a wide-brimmed hat and carrying a spear.





# Thor



- Thor was the most popular of all the gods. He was a god of war and fertility. He created thunder and lightning as he rode over the clouds in a chariot drawn by goats, swinging his hammer Mjöllnir. Thor was physically strong and with his weapon Mjöllnir could do battle with the evil giants who lived in Jötunheimar.
- Thor was worshipped by most Vikings – he was the god of the people. He was comprehensible and could be trusted, in contrast to his father Odin, who could be completely unpredictable. Therefore, Thor's role was also to uphold law and order.

# Freya



Freya is one of the preeminent goddesses in Norse mythology. Freyr is her brother. Freya is famous for her fondness of love, fertility, beauty, and fine material possessions – and, because of these predilections, she’s considered to be something of the “party girl” of the Aesir.

In one of the Eddic poems, for example, Loki accuses Freya (probably accurately) of having slept with all of the gods and elves, including her brother. She’s certainly a passionate seeker after pleasures and thrills, but she’s a lot more than only that. Freya is the archetype of the *völva*, a professional or semiprofessional practitioner of *seidr*, the most organized form of Norse magic. It was she who first brought this art to the gods, and, by extension, to humans as well. Given her expertise in controlling and manipulating the desires, health, and prosperity of others, she’s being whose knowledge and power are almost without equal.





# Loki



- Loki is originally of giant stock but lives in Ásgard and is respected by the gods as he is a blood brother with Odin. Loki is crafty and not to be trusted. On many occasions he cheats both the giants and gods and plays them off against each other.
- Even though Loki is often up to no good, the gods still tolerate his presence. He is sly and lies – abilities that the gods can use to their advantage. This is shown when Loki persuades the equally cunning dwarves to smith various magical objects for the gods – notably Thor's hammer Mjöllnir.



If you want to know more about norse mythology you can watch this video



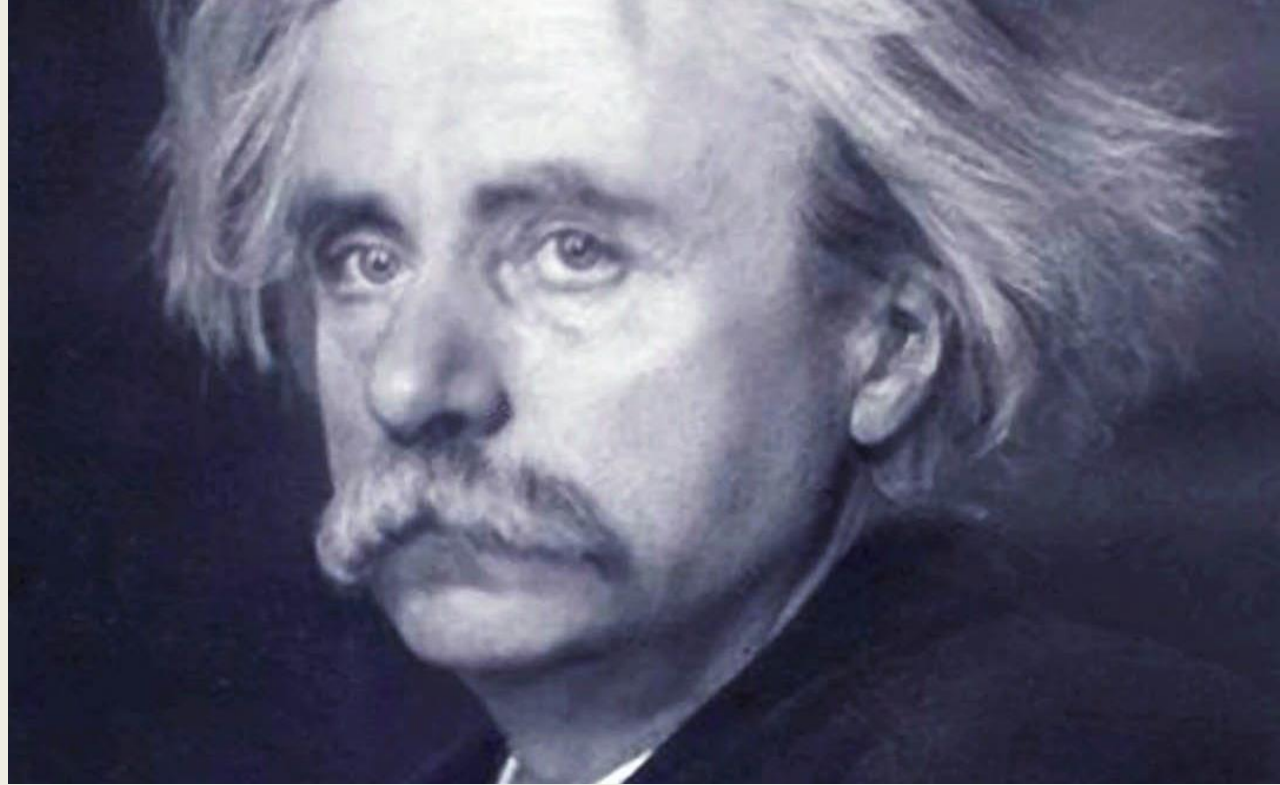


## ***THEATRE IN NORWAY – NEW STORIES AND STAGES EMERGE***





Henrik Ibsen 1828-1906



Edvard Grieg 1843- 1907

## Peer Gynt Festival



- Perhaps capturing the very essence of Norwegian culture, Peer Gynt is a Norwegian play that brings together two of Norway's most famous cultural icons, playwright Henrik Ibsen and composer Edvard Grieg.
- Since we have local tales like this, the people in Vinstra have always loved these stories. Some of these enthusiastic people staged the first Peer Gynt festival in 1927. The next one was in 1936 and since 1967, there has been an annual festival, so there is a long tradition based on local enthusiasm and volunteers.

# Plot summary of The Peer Gynt play



- Peer Gynt, five-act verse play by Henrik Ibsen, published in Norwegian in 1867 and produced in 1876. The title character, based on a legendary Norwegian folk hero, is a rogue who will be destroyed unless he is saved by the love of a woman.
- Peer Gynt is a charming but lazy and arrogant peasant youth who leaves home to seek his fortune. Confident of success, he has one disastrous adventure after another. In one, he attends the wedding of a wealthy young woman he himself might have married. There he meets Solveig, who falls in love with him. He impulsively abducts the bride from her wedding celebration and subsequently abandons her. He then embarks on a series of fantastic voyages around the world, finding wealth and fame but never happiness. Finally, old and disillusioned, he returns to Norway, where Solveig, ever faithful and loving, welcomes him home, and he is redeemed.



*Peer Gynt*



Henrik Klausen as Peer (1876)



peergynt.no



SOME PICTURES FROM  
PEER GYNT FESTIVAL

# Sources

- <https://www.lifeinnorway.net/norwegian-fairytale-creatures/>
- <https://www.lifeinnorway.net/peer-gynt-festival/>
- <https://en.natmus.dk/historical-knowledge/denmark/prehistoric-period-until-1050-ad/the-viking-age/religion-magic-death-and-rituals/the-viking-gods/#:~:text=Thor%20was%20the%20most%20popular,giants%20who%20lived%20in%20J%C3%B6tunheimar.>