

# THRONES & BONES

## FROSTBORN

AN EPIC  
FANTASY  
OF VIKING  
PROPORTIONS

# LOU ANDERS

 CROWN

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GUIDE FOR CLASSROOMS AND BOOK GROUPS

# ABOUT THE BOOK



Grades 3-7  
HC: 978-0-385-38778-1  
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Fans of Rick Riordan's *Percy Jackson* and John Flanagan's *Ranger's Apprentice* series will embrace this first novel in an adventure-filled, Viking-inspired series by a debut author.

Meet Karn. He is destined to take over the family farm in Norrøngard. His only problem? He'd rather be playing the board game *Thrones and Bones*.

Enter Thianna. Half human, half frost giantess. She's too tall to blend in with other humans but too short to be taken seriously as a giant.

When family intrigues force Karn and Thianna to flee into the wilderness, they have to keep their sense of humor and their wits about them. But survival can be challenging when you're being chased by a 1,500-year-old dragon, Helltoppr the undead warrior and his undead minions, an evil uncle, wyverns, and an assortment of trolls and giants.

Antics and hair-raising escapades abound in this fantasy adventure as the two forge a friendship and journey to unknown territory. Their plan: to save their families from harm.

Debut novelist Lou Anders has created a rich world of over twenty-five countries inhabited by Karn, Thianna, and an array of fantastical creatures, as well as the *Thrones and Bones* board game.



## PRAISE FOR *FROSTBORN*

★ "The setting is rich, the characters well-defined, and the danger ever-paramount. It's a strong and thoroughly enjoyable start to the *Thrones and Bones* series."

—*Publishers Weekly*, Starred Review

"Future fans of Tolkien and George R. R. Martin can happily cut their serial-fantasy teeth on this first book of an eventual series."

—*Kirkus Reviews*

"A fun, fast-paced, and highly enjoyable tale."

—Garth Nix, bestselling author of the *Abhorsen* trilogy

"The most delightful fantasy I have read in ages. . . . Put me on the waiting list for book two!"

—Amy Plum, international bestselling author of the *Die for Me* series

# PRE-READING ACTIVITY

Look up information about the Vikings of northern Europe to provide some background for reading this story. Where did the Vikings live? How did they live? There are many misconceptions about Viking culture. Check this website for facts about Vikings:

[history.com/news/history-lists/10-things-you-may-not-know-about-the-vikings](http://history.com/news/history-lists/10-things-you-may-not-know-about-the-vikings)

Look up stories from Norse mythology. Make a list of Norse gods and goddesses and their characteristics.

Check this website to get started: [viking-mythology.com](http://viking-mythology.com)

## VOCABULARY

Look up meanings for these words in the context of the story: *hauld* (p. 8), *jarl* (p. 8), *nemesis* (p. 11), *barter* (p. 16), *foxfire* (p. 104), *runes* (p. 107), and *fjord* (p. 141).

## INTERNET RESOURCES

Information about games of the Norse people:

[hurstwic.org/history/articles/daily\\_living/text/games\\_and\\_sports.htm](http://hurstwic.org/history/articles/daily_living/text/games_and_sports.htm)

[mnh.si.edu/vikings/learning/boardgame.html](http://mnh.si.edu/vikings/learning/boardgame.html)

Daily life of the Norse people:

[livescience.com/32087-viking-history-facts-myths.html](http://livescience.com/32087-viking-history-facts-myths.html)

[hurstwic.org/history/articles/daily\\_living/text/Villages.htm](http://hurstwic.org/history/articles/daily_living/text/Villages.htm)

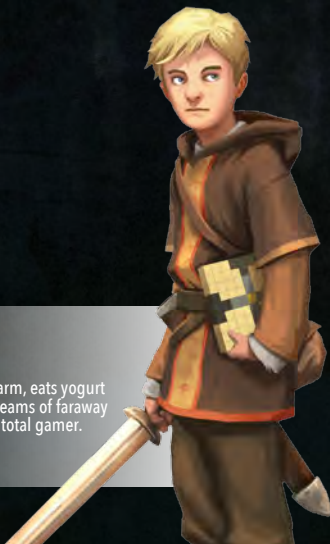
Weapons of the Norse people:

[bbc.co.uk/history/ancient/vikings/weapons\\_01.shtml](http://bbc.co.uk/history/ancient/vikings/weapons_01.shtml)

[topicpod.com/vikings/what\\_viking\\_weapons.html](http://topicpod.com/vikings/what_viking_weapons.html)

### KARN

He lives on a farm, eats yogurt and cheese, dreams of faraway lands, and is a total gamer.



### THIANNA

A twelve-year-old who feels too short at seven feet tall. She is a child of two cultures leaving the only home she knows to step out into the wider world.



# IN THE CLASSROOM

- ◆ Divide into pairs with one person playing the part of Karn and one person playing the part of Thianna. Write character sketches of your character, listing his/her strengths and weaknesses. Pick one scene in the book to act out in character. Pick a scene from school life and describe how your character would react.
  - Correlates to Common Core State Standards RL.4-6.1; RL.4-6.3; W.4-6.9; SL.4-6.1
  
- ◆ Create a list of major adult characters in the book along with their character traits. Cite passages in the story to support your assessment of each character. Compare two of these characters. How are they different? How are they similar?
  - Correlates to Common Core State Standard RL.4-6.3
  
- ◆ Using resources on Norse mythology and folklore, trace the origins of creatures in this story that are based on mythological entities: draug, linnorm, wyvern, frost giants, dwarves. Choose one of these and compare the characteristics of the creature you find in your research to the one in the story.
  - Correlates to Common Core State Standard RL.4-6.4
  
- ◆ Make your own game of Thrones and Bones, laying out the game board as described at the end of the book. Try playing the game according to the rules listed in that section. Then list the times in the story that Karn uses his gaming skills to escape a difficult situation. Discuss how the game is a metaphor for life.
  - Correlates to Common Core State Standard RL.4-6.5
  
- ◆ Describe a scene of conflict in the book from two different points of view, for example: the duel between Helltoppr and Karn, or the fight between Orm and Thianna. Describe the thoughts and feelings of each opponent about the other. What character traits help Karn and Thianna to escape from their adversaries?
  - Correlates to Common Core State Standard RL.4-6.6
  
- ◆ Draw a map of the action in the story. Use the map included in the book as a guide to draw the path of Karn and Thianna's journey on your own map, indicating various conflicts and obstacles they encounter along the way.
  - Correlates to Common Core State Standard RL.4-6.7
  
- ◆ Make a list of themes or ideas that you can identify in this book. What can you learn from Karn and Thianna's adventure that you can apply to your own life experiences?
  - Correlates to Common Core State Standard RL.4-6.2

# BOOK GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- ◆ Compare Karn's father, Korldr, and his uncle Ori. How are the two men similar, and how are they different? What does Ori mean when he says, "I play to win"? Why is Korldr so anxious to teach Karn to barter with other traders and the giants?
- ◆ What does Karn learn from Gindri, the dwarf, when he plays a game with him at Bense? How does this knowledge help him later on?
- ◆ What is Thianna's first reaction to meeting humans? What is Karn's first reaction to meeting giants? How do their views change? Discuss Karn's thought: "To think that someone so strange and irritating had become so close to him." (p. 243) Have you had similar experiences with others in your own life?
- ◆ How does Karn's skill at Thrones and Bones help him when he is facing various opponents—the trader in Bense, the trolls, the draug, the linnorm, Sydia and her soldiers? What life skills does he learn from his understanding of the game?
- ◆ Compare Karn's skill at playing Thrones and Bones to Thianna's skill at playing Knattleikr. How are these games similar, and how are they different? What games are they similar to in our culture? How does Thianna's skill help them get out of difficult situations?
- ◆ Why does Thianna reject her human heritage? Why doesn't Karn want to learn about working the farm? How do their feelings early in the story affect the way they interact with others?
- ◆ What does Eggthoda mean when she says to Thianna: "All creatures behave according to their nature. Find out what their nature is, and you can deal safely with them"? (p. 53) Discuss how this advice helps both Thianna and Karn handle their opponents.
- ◆ What is the importance of the horn that Thianna's mother brought north with her? Why is Sydia looking for the horn? How does Thianna learn that she can use it for her own purposes? What are some of the unexpected consequences of Thianna's use of the horn?
- ◆ What does Karn mean when he says, "The playing field was everything"? (p. 183) Describe the times when Karn uses his environment to outwit an opponent.
- ◆ Discuss this description of Thianna: "She knew now that who she wanted to be could not be separated from who she was." (p. 287) How have Thianna and Karn's adventures throughout the story changed their own ideas about who they are, how they feel about others, and what they want their future to be?



# THE COUNTRY OF NORRØNGARD

**CAPITAL:** Korjengard

**NOTABLE SETTLEMENTS:** Aarvik, Bense, Herkeby, Nilmgård, Oslendholm, Sindholm, Umsborg, Wendholm

**RULER:** High King

**GOVERNMENT:** Regional semi-independent chieftains called jarls, sworn allegiance to a high king

**LANGUAGES:** Norrønian, Dvergrian, Common

**MAJOR RACES:** Human (Norrønir), Dwarf, Elf (Svartálfar)

**RELIGION:** Forn Siðr ("Old Custom")

**RESOURCES:** Fish, lumber, livestock (cows, sheep, oxen, goats, chickens)



The wyvern and Sydia are from a distant land. Why are they in Norrøngard?

“As I developed the culture of my land of Norrøngard, I quickly realized that I would also need to know about their faux Celtic neighbors, their clashes with a faux Roman Empire, and how they dealt with their world’s version of Slavs, Inuit, English, Germans, and on and on and on. . . . The result was a five-thousand-year history that could be traced to a mythological past.”

—Lou Anders



# ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jill Anders



Lou Anders's research on Norse mythology while writing *Frostborn* turned into a love affair with Viking culture and a first visit to Norway. He hopes the series will appeal to boys and girls equally. Anders is the recipient of a Hugo Award for editing and a Chesley Award for art direction. He has published over 500 articles and stories on science fiction and fantasy television and literature. A prolific speaker, Anders regularly attends writing conventions around the country. He and his family reside in Birmingham, Alabama. You can visit Anders online at [louanders.com](http://louanders.com) and [ThronesandBones.com](http://ThronesandBones.com), on Facebook, and on Twitter at [@LouAnders](https://twitter.com/LouAnders).



The author enjoying some delicious skyr!



Overlooking Bergen, one of the largest cities in Norway.



Lou in front of the Stigfossen waterfall on the "Trolls' Path."



Having a bit of Viking-inspired fun on top of a barrow mound at Eidfjord.



Hanging out with one of the many troll statues!



When Lou visited Geiranger, the small village's population went up to 221!



The cruise ship library is an excellent place to research draug, elves, and trolls!

Visit [ThronesandBones.com](http://ThronesandBones.com) for the Knattleikr Training Game, an interactive map, character bios, and more.