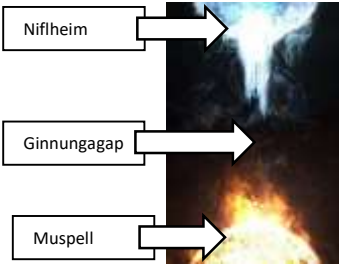













The creation of the world - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2c6Sk8PvA5A>

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| <p>Ginnungagap was the great emptiness before there was a world, or anything living in it. Far to the South of the Ginnungagap was the fiery realm of Muspell, with its long, hot rivers full of poison and vast lakes of fire. Nothing could grow in this burning realm. To the North was the dark and cold realm of Niflheim, where icy fountains spewed forth freezing rivers. Nothing could grow here either, for the sky was always dark and the mountains were blocks of solid ice.</p> |  |
| <p>Slowly, over years and years and years, the fiery blasts from Muspell began to melt the icy mountains of Niflheim. Out of the melting ice, the giant Ymir emerged, the first being of the vast Ginnungagap. Next to him there emerged a cow from the ice. The cow licked the salt from the ice and Ymir drank the cow's milk.</p> |  |
| <p>Ymir grew larger and larger.</p> |  |
| <p>The cow licked away entire mountains of ice. Slowly, she licked the ice from two more beings, this time the god Buri and his goddess wife. They had a son named Bor, and his son was named Odin, who became the king of all the gods.</p> | <p>Odin</p>  |
| <p>Ymir was cruel and brutal. Odin and the other god could no longer abide by his evil acts and together the gods slew him.</p> |  <p>Odin vs Ymir</p> |
| <p>Chopping and hammering, Ymir's huge body formed the earth, with sweeping planes where they bashed it flat, rocky mountain ranges and the deep dry sea beds. Then they squeezed the blood out of his flesh. His blood filled all the oceans, seas and rivers. Then they took his teeth and bones and smashed them up, making all the individual rocks, lofty crags and sea cliffs and by grinding the bone to powder, they formed the sandy beaches and deserts. They used his hair to make trees and bushes.</p> | <p>Ymir is used to create the earth.</p>  |

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| <p>The races of dwarves and trolls were created from the maggots in Ymir's rotting flesh.</p> | <p>Dwarves</p>  |
| <p>Odin and the other gods formed the sky with his skull and to hold the sky in place, Odin ordered four of the recently born dwarves to support its four corners. The dwarves he named North, South, East and West.</p> |  |
| <p>The gods then took some of the glazing sparks that blew from the fiery depths of Muspell and scattered them in the sky creating the stars and moon. As the sun and moon shone over the new world in Ginnungagap, the ice began to melt and plants and trees began to grow.</p> |  |
| <p>The greatest tree of all was Yggdrasil, which grew in the very centre of the earth. Its roots penetrated the bottom of creation and its leaves reached the very top of the sky.</p> |  |
| <p>Odin was satisfied with the new world, and named it Midgard: 'The Middle Land'. But the world still needed people. On one of his walks, Odin found two fallen trees, ash and an elm. He lifted them from the mud and formed the first man and woman from them. Odin breathed life into these beings, gave them reason, and feelings, hearing and sight. He named the man Ask and the woman Embla. From these two sprang the entire human race. The humans had the task of looking after Midgard, while the gods ascended to Asgard, their realm in heaven.</p> |  |
| <p>However, not everyone was pleased with Odin's work.</p> |  |

Ymir's sisters were still mourning his death and were looking for a way to take their revenge on the gods who killed him. They gathered at the foot of Yggdrasil and began carving lines into it. Each line was a human life, filled with twists and turns, beginning with a man's birth, and ending with his death. At the end of each line they made a deep cut to ensure that humans would never be as powerful as the gods. These spells were so powerful that not even Odin could do anything to change them. Thus Yggdrasil became known as 'The Tree of Life' and humans knew death and suffering in their world.

