# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit 1: Mythic Meaning, Structure and Creation (Pacing – 8 Days)</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unit Benchmark Assessment</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 2: The Classical Tradition as a Reflection of Society (Pacing – 18 Days)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit Benchmark Assessment</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 3: The Hero’s Journey (Pacing – 18 Days)</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit Benchmark Assessment</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 4: Epic Literature (Pacing – 10 Days)</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit Benchmark Assessment</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 5: Comparative Mythology (Pacing – 12 Days)</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit Benchmark Assessment</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 6: Mythology Applied: The Art of Allusion (Pacing – 18 Days)</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit Benchmark Assessment</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix A: General Databases for English Classroom Use</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Unit 1: Mythic Meaning, Structure and Creation (Pacing – 8 Days)

Why Is This Unit Important?

This unit will introduce students to the structure and purpose of myths in society. As students become familiar with the enduring patterns and motifs found in mythology, they will gain a greater appreciation for the continuity and tradition of our literary heritage as a reflection of the collective experiences of humankind to make meaning and explain the world around us. In essence, mythologies are stories told to explain things that people have questioned. For instance, every culture has a myth that explains the creation of the earth and the universe. Myths help people to understand the things that they may not be able to explain. In modern society, many scientific explanations of natural phenomena are tried and tested. However, the myths of the past still ring true for many of the cultures who believe in them, especially those myths which tell of the universe and function still as a basis for religion.

Before written language, prehistoric peoples attempted to explain how the world began or the origin of different phenomenon in nature through stories called myths. Myths from around the world reflect the culture of its people—their values, beliefs, and traditions. In the folkloric tradition, myths were handed down from generation to generation by word-of-mouth. Myths from around the world explain creation often using the same or similar elements in their stories. At the same time, myths from around the world often explain the same phenomenon in nature differently. Why are there similarities? Why are there differences? What can myths teach us about the culture it represents?

The big ideas embedded through this unit are:

- Whether passed down orally or retold in a literary format, myths follow identifiable patterns and contain common motifs.
- Myths are stories which provide an understanding of the world around us.
- Myths straddle the line between folklore, religion, fiction, and science.
- The purpose of myths is to explain the unexplainable, to amuse, to unite, and to educate.

Enduring Understandings

- Myths follow specific patterns and contain similar motifs which set them apart from other types of stories.
- Myths are stories meant to entertain and inform.
- Creation myths provide an insight into the workings of the human mind and have been understood to reveal divine mysteries, primitive science, and justifications for human behavior.
Essential Questions

- Why study mythology?
- What are the common patterns and motifs found in myths?
- How do different cultures explain the beginning of the world, the origin of man, or natural phenomenon? How is it explained that each continues to function?
- How do different peoples explain how man was created?
- What are the similarities and differences in creation myths from around the world?
- What unique cultural traits are revealed in myths?

Acquired Knowledge

- Myths from all cultures contain common patterns and motifs.
- The purpose of myths is to explain, inform, and amuse.
- Cultures create stories to interpret their origins.
- Differences in creation myths reflect the uniqueness of the geographic location of each culture.

Acquired Skills

- Identify the structure and purpose of selected myths
- Explain the similarities between myths from different geographic locations
- Form theories about myths from discussions
- Matrix cultural data from myths
- Present findings through a variety of ways: maps, matrixes, oral presentations, murals, books
- Create an original creation myth that is reflective of a particular culture and is consistent with its environment

Major Assessments

- Graphic organizer to classify myths according to purpose (benchmark)
- Class discussions to explore the message of the myths and make personal connections
- Cultural matrixes
- Project: Using knowledge of and references to classical mythology, students will create an original creation myth on a mural which reflects geographic considerations

Instructional Materials

- *World Mythology: An Anthology of the Great Myths and Epics* by Donna Rosenberg
• *Myths and their Meaning* by Max J. Herzberg

  o NOTE: Films will be used to supplement reading material and will not be used to replace reading in this course.

**Interdisciplinary Connections**

• Have students study one type of natural disaster and have them connect the scientific explanation to an ancient myth addressing the same kind of disaster.

• Make artifacts to accompany myths. Include statues and drawings of gods, various kinds of altars built to honor them, or tools or utensils that might have been used to worship them.

**Technology Connections**

• Helpful websites
  o Timeless Myths: Classical Mythology at [www.timelessmyths.com](http://www.timelessmyths.com)
  o Mythology Web Quests at [http://www.k12.hi.us/~konawahs/webquests_on_mythology.htm](http://www.k12.hi.us/~konawahs/webquests_on_mythology.htm)

**Accommodations and Modifications**

• Adjust questions on an assignment or assessment to meet the diverse needs of learners (i.e. short answer vs. essay; multiple choice with five options vs. three options; questions that require recall vs. those that require analysis, etc.)

• Have students work collaboratively to create the criteria for assessment based upon what is learned in class; allow them the opportunity to negotiate the criteria that will be used to determine success.

**Applicable 2010 Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts**

Reading Standards for Literature: RL.9-10.1, RL.9-10.2, RL.9-10.3, RL.9-10.5, RL.9-10.6, RL.9-10.10, RL.11-12.1, RL.11-12.2, RL.11-12.3, RL.11-12.5, RL.11-12.6, RL.11-12.10

Writing Standards: WS.9-10.3a, WS.9-10.3b, WS.9-10.3c, WS.9-10.3d, WS.9-10.3e, WS.9-10.4, WS.9-10.5, WS.9-10.9a, WS.9-10.10, WS.11-12.3a, WS.11-12.3b, WS.11-12.3c, WS.11-12.3d, WS.11-12.3e, WS.11-12.4, WS.11-12.5, WS.11-12.9a, WS.11-12.10
**Mythic Meaning, Structure and Creation [Benchmark Assessment]**

**DIRECTIONS:** Select four myths read in class, one to represent each of the categories listed below. In the table below, categorize each myth and provide information from the text to explain why that particular myth represents the category you selected. Support your categorizations based upon specific evidence from each myth.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Drama Myths</th>
<th>Creation Myths</th>
<th>Threshold Myths</th>
<th>Trickster Tales</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Unit 2: The Classical Tradition as a Reflection of Society (Pacing – 18 Days)

Why Is This Unit Important?

This unit will introduce students to the Greek pantheon and classical mythology so that they will be able to identify two purposes of mythology as maintaining order in society and preserving cultural ideals. The big ideas embedded through this unit are:

- The classical Greek pantheon of gods reflects the overall outlook of its culture.
- Classical mythology provides models for individuality and accountability in society.
- The interactions explored in myths between the classical Gods and Goddesses themselves and the mortals they rule over reflect specific and universal cultural concerns.
- Even if myths aren't real, they reflect real social and ethical concerns throughout time.

Enduring Understandings

- The Gods of ancient cultures reflect the overarching attitudes of the time.
- Cultural tradition and individual responsibility are often addressed and sometimes reconciled through the myths of a culture.
- The attributes, attitudes, and interactions of classical gods display universal and specific cultural concerns.
- While the elements of classical mythology are tied to the core values and experiences of its origin, they may also be applied to society today.

Essential Questions

- How does the Greek pantheon reflect the overall outlook of its culture?
- How does classical mythology reconcile individual responsibility with responsibility to society?
- In what ways does classical mythology suggest humanity embrace and/or rebel against cultural tradition?
- What lessons can we learn from the study of ancient Greek mythology that can be applied today to address social and ethical attitudes?

Acquired Knowledge (The learner will know…)

- The qualities of classical gods and goddesses display the cultural ideals of ancient Greeks.
- Knowledge of the classical pantheon and the myths of its members provide insight to the beliefs of the time as well as today’s common core beliefs.
Interaction between and among gods and mortals display what is important to a person as a member of society and as a member of the human race. Analyzing the ethical and social messages of classical mythology will enhance one’s understanding of the ethical and social concerns in modern society.

**Acquired Skills** (The learner will…)

- Identify the members of the classical pantheon
- Explain the significance of the relationships between and among the Greek gods and goddesses as a reflection of the ancient culture’s social structure and prevailing attitudes
- Analyze the interactions between gods and men and the message such relationships and interactions portray about personal and societal responsibility
- Evaluate current societal concerns and use classical stories to offer solutions that address them

**Major Assessments**

- Graphic organizer to show the relationship between the gods and goddesses
- Journal responses to explore the message of the myths and to make personal connections
- Completed rebellion and responsibility charts
- Project: Using knowledge of and references to classical mythology, students will create an original Public Service Announcement Skit which addresses current societal and ethical concerns
- Unit test including a written response to an open-ended question (benchmark)

**Instructional Materials**

- *World Mythology: An Anthology of the Great Myths and Epics* by Donna Rosenberg
- *The Encyclopedia of Mythology* by Arthur Cotterell
- *Interdisciplinary Unit: Ancient Greece (Challenging)* Published by Teacher Created Materials, Inc.
- *Myths and their Meaning* by Max J. Herzberg

**Interdisciplinary Connections**

- When studying ancient Greek mythology, the study of art would be a clear interdisciplinary connection. Students can locate artistic renderings of a Greek god or goddess and create a PowerPoint that connects the original myths to the work of art. Students can further compare and contrast the information provided in the myth to the symbols and images in the work of art.
- To connect to history, students can research Greek society and make connections to the message of social mores as presented in the myths.
Technology Connections

- Helpful websites
  - Encyclopedia Mythica at [www.pantheon.org](http://www.pantheon.org)
  - Mythweb at [www.mythweb.com](http://www.mythweb.com)
  - Greek Mythology Web Quest at [http://home.swbell.net/bobj1/webquestgreek.html](http://home.swbell.net/bobj1/webquestgreek.html)

Accommodations and Modifications

- Students can be placed with a learning buddy to read and study about ancient Greece and Greek mythology. Partners can be assigned by the classroom teacher to provide support for students who may need it and to challenge students who work at that end of the spectrum.
- Journal prompts can be differentiated to meet the diverse needs of students in an English elective.

Applicable 2010 Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts

Standards for Reading Literature:  RL.9-10.1, RL.9-10.2, RL.9-10.3, RL.9-10.6, RL.9-10.7, RL.9-10.10, RL.11-12.1, RL.11-12.2, RL.11-12.3, RL.11-12.6, RL.11-12.7, RL.11-12.10

Standards for Reading Informational Texts:  RI.9-10.1, RI.9-10.2, RI.9-10.6, RI.9-10.110, RI.11-12.1, RI.11-12.2, RI.11-12.6, RI.11-12.10
The Classical Tradition as a Reflection of Society [Benchmark Assessment]
Essay Response: The Significance of Myths in Ancient Times

Writing Prompt

Select any two myths read in class or heard on recordings. Briefly reconstruct the plotline of each. Then, discuss the significance of each to the people of Greece. What did each myth teach or explain? Be as specific and as complete as possible.

Only a small part of this response should be plot summary; the majority of this essay should be a thorough explanation of the significance of each myth and an explanation of the lesson taught or phenomena explained through the myth.
Unit 3: The Hero’s Journey (Pacing – 18 Days)

Why Is This Unit Important?

This unit will introduce students to the work of Joseph Campbell and his theories, so that they will be able to identify and create an epic adventure story utilizing all eight components of the hero’s journey. The big ideas embedded through this unit are:

- The hero’s journey isn’t just a pattern from myth; it’s the pattern of life.
- The hero’s journey is reflected everywhere, from television comedy to great literature to the experiences of our own lives.
- The success or failure of a hero in his or her quest reflects the culture in which his or her story was created.
- Even if the characters aren’t real, the journeys they take and challenges they face reflect real journeys and challenges a reader can learn from.

Enduring Understandings

- The “journey” as a pattern of human experience which has been captured in mythology and in popular entertainment.
- Being able to identify elements of the hero’s journey and explain the apparent success or failure of a hero is a useful tool in self-discovery.
- Archetypal elements in myths point to the universality of the human experience, while the particular elements of quests reflect the values of a specific culture.
- The elements of a myth are always tied to the core values and experiences of its origin.

Essential Questions

- Why study the hero’s journey? What are the eight steps of the hero’s journey?
- How is the hero’s journey similar in ancient myths and popular culture?
- What qualities do all heroes possess? How does the hero reflect the human experience?
- How does a hero and his quest personify the dreams and desires of the society that spawned this hero?
- How does a reader identify the values important to a society when reading a particular epic or story or watching a film?
- How is the hero’s journey similar to the pattern of our own lives? How is the hero’s quest representative of an internal psychological journey as well as an external physical transformation?
Acquired Knowledge (The learner will know…)

- While the story of the journey first manifested itself in ancient myths and legends, the pattern is still prominent in literature today.
- Knowledge of a culture’s hero stories provides insight into its beliefs, many of which can be applied to contemporary society.
- The hero’s journey duplicates the stages of the rite of passage which allows the successful hero to return to his world with all of the respect, rights, and privileges his status implies.
- The *eight steps transformation* is a single process and individual adventure towards growth and transformation.
- When someone refuses the call or fails to complete the hero’s journey, a reader is better able to understand his or her faults and weaknesses, many of which can be applied to the reader him- or herself.
- One’s “voyage” can be outward into a physical unknown or inward to a psychological unknown; the challenge is to meet each test for growth and change.

Acquired Skills (The learner will…)

- Identify common mythic elements in ancient heroic myths and modern adventure films
- Explain the significance of the physical and psychological challenges faced by successful and unsuccessful heroes in relation to the lesson each provides
- Apply Campbell’s idea of archetypes and use it to map out the underlying structures in a hero’s journey or “mono-myth”
- Employ all elements of the hero’s journey when creating an original myth

Major Assessments

- Graphic organizer (i.e. Venn diagram) to compare myths and adventure films or to compare heroes across myths (benchmark)
- Journal responses or reading responses to explore the message/theme of the myths and to make personal connections
- Complete mono-myth maps
- Project: Using knowledge of the eight stages of the hero’s journey, students will create an original storybook for an original hero.

Instructional Materials

- Works of Joseph Campbell
  - “The Hero’s Adventure”
  - “Masks of Eternity”
  - “Love and the Goddess”

- NOTE: Films will be used to supplement reading material and will not be used to replace reading in this course.

**Interdisciplinary Connections**

- To connect to history, students can investigate and chart different ancient civilizations to determine how heroic elements display political, social, and geographic considerations.
- Students can be asked to research common psychological theories in relation to the mono-myth and hero psychology.

**Technology Connections**

- Helpful websites
- Web Question: How Have the Qualities of Heroes Changed over Time? at [http://www.htc.net/~thehuels/heroes.htm](http://www.htc.net/~thehuels/heroes.htm)
- Teacher resource sites such as Web English Teacher ([www.webenglishteacher.com](http://www.webenglishteacher.com)) and Read, Write, Think ([www.readwritethink.org](http://www.readwritethink.org)) have wonderful lesson plans to support this unit of study.
- *The Hero’s Journey: Joseph Campbell on His Life and Works* is available on Google Books.

**Accommodations and Modifications**

- Students can be provided the opportunity to work collaboratively (self-selected or assigned by the teacher) to provide supports for struggling readers while using gifted readers as tutors and group leaders.
- Graphic organizers or classroom activities can be differentiated to meet the varying needs of students in the class.
- The teacher can differentiate by providing tiered activities for students and/or groups.

**Applicable 2010 Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts**

Reading Standards for Literature: RL.9-10.1, RL.9-10.2, RL.9-10.3, RL.9-10.5, RL.9-10.6, RL.9-10.10, RL.11-12.1, RL.11-12.2, RL.11-12.3, RL.11-12.5, RL.11-12.6, RL.11-12.10
Complete the chart below using the information you’ve gathered when reading about the hero’s journey in class. This organizer will be used when responding to an essay question at a later time, so be sure to provide specific examples from the texts to best prepare yourself for the upcoming essay.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Theseus</th>
<th>Perseus</th>
<th>Jason</th>
<th>Hercules</th>
<th>Odysseus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Personal Qualities</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relationship</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Hero and Ruler</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Task and Performance</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assistance of Gods</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and/or Humans</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mates</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What Hero Did After the Task</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other Heroes with Whom He Comes in Contact</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Unit 4: Epic Literature (Pacing – 10 Days)

Why Is This Unit Important?

This unit will introduce students to the structure and purpose of epics in society. As students become familiar with the enduring patterns and motifs found in epics, they will gain a greater appreciation for the continuity and tradition of our literary heritage as a reflection of the collective experiences of humankind. Throughout this unit, students will read and view a variety of excerpts from classic and contemporary epic poems, novels, and film. They will discover how epic heroes illustrate traits, perform deeds, and exemplify certain morals that are valued by the society from which the epic originates, but also share commonalities with epic heroes of other times and places. They will examine similarities in content such as the hero’s code of honor, his/her nearly supernatural ability to overcome great obstacles, elements of myth and folklore, vast landscapes, and frequent speeches (which are a likely throwback to the oral tradition). They will examine the conventions of the original epic in its poetic form, including epic meter, the use of an invocation, epithets, and formulaic language. They will learn how epics have evolved from poetry to prose narratives, plays, and films. Ultimately, students will write an essay wherein they compare and contrast the features of a classical epic and a contemporary one, citing specific examples from the texts that are examined; they will note connections to their own lives as well. The big ideas embedded through this unit are:

- Epic poetry and sagas follow identifiable patterns and contain common motifs.
- Epics are stories which provide an understanding of the past as well as the world around us.
- Differences between epics stem from cultural traits and traditions.
- The characters and conflicts in epic poetry have evolved over time.
- Situations presented in epics have lasting appeal and influence because they allow for symbolic as well as literal interpretations.
- Mythology is about the human experience; the stories are the dreams of humanity.

Enduring Understandings

- Epics follow specific patterns and contain similar motifs which set them apart from other types of stories.
- Epics are stories meant to entertain and inform.
- Epics provide an insight into the workings of the human mind and have been understood to reveal divine mysteries, primitive science, and justifications for human behavior.
- The epic conventions found in myths (the hero, influence of deities, high adventure, the role of fate, monsters, and the fatal flaw) are used in modern lore, storytelling and fantasy films.
Essential Questions

• What are the common patterns and motifs found in epics?
• What are the similarities and differences in epic poems from around the world?
• What unique cultural traits are revealed in epics?
• How has the formula used in epic poetry set a standard for later literary works and evolved over time?
• Why do authors and filmmakers use recurring themes from ancient literature and what do they offer contemporary readers?

Acquired Knowledge (The learner will know…)

• Epics from all cultures contain common patterns and motifs.
• The purpose of epics is to explain, inform, and amuse.
• Cultures create epics to interpret their origins and express their beliefs.
• Differences in epics reflect the differences in cultures.
• The epic has evolved over time to incorporate both old and new conventions, taboos and viewpoints.

Acquired Skills (The learner will…)

• Identify the structure and purpose of selected epics
• Explain the similarities among epics from varying cultures
• Form theories about why epics differ from culture to culture
• Analyze and present findings of several epics
• Explore the enduring impact and influences of epics in modern literature, film, and art

Major Assessments

• Graphic organizers to chart epic elements
• Tests and quizzes including written responses to open-ended questions
• Epic reader/viewer response scrapbook
• Epic comparison debate
• Epic magazine assignment
• Essay comparing the journey of Odysseus to one’s personal journey (benchmark)
• Formal oral report comparing, contrasting, and exploring the influence of epics in modern literature, film, or art

Instructional Materials

• *The Illustrated Bullfinch’s Mythology: The Age of Fable* (Macmillan, 1997)
• *World Mythology: An Anthology of Great Myths and Epics* by Donna Rosenberg
• *The Five Minute Iliad and Other Instant Classics* by Guy Nagan
Interdisciplinary Connections

- Students can connect to history by creating a timeline highlighting cultural details from prehistoric, early Greek culture, the Dark Ages, the Archaic Period, the Classical Age, and Hellenistic Periods to identify and analyze epic conventions.
- Students can create illustrated maps based on epic adventures and locations.

Technology Connections


Accommodations or Modifications

- Independent study opportunities can be provided for students, which can be differentiated based upon reading level or student interest.
- Open-ended activities can be provided, and choice of activity can be permitted.
- Students can explore or investigate based upon student interest.

Applicable 2010 Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts

Reading Standards for Literature:  RL.9-10.1, RL.9-10.2, RL.9-10.3, RL.9-10.5, RL.9-10.6, RL.9-10.10, RL.11-12.1, RL.11-12.2, RL.11-12.3, RL.11-12.5, RL.11-12.6, RL.11-12.10

Writing Standards:  WS.9-10.4, WS.9-10.9a; WS.11-12.4, WS.11-12.9a
Epic Literature [Benchmark Assessment]
Odyssey of Life: A Reflective Essay

Project Description

Like many of us, Odysseus undertook a sometimes exciting, sometimes treacherous journey over a long period of time. But because the story of Odysseus was so long ago, we sometimes have to look a little closer at the story to make those important connections.

Writing Prompt

Using what you have learned during this unit, write a 2-3 page reflective essay connecting the journey of Odysseus to your own personal journey or experience. Use your essay to answer the following questions:

• In what ways is the story of *The Odyssey* like a journey of life?
• How are some of the challenges, obstacles, and/or choices encountered by Odysseus similar to ones you have faced or expect to face in the future? How are they different?
• What part of Homer’s epic is the most important for us to understand today? Why? How does this connect to your personal journey?

When writing your essay, you must make direct connections to specific evidence from the text.
Unit 5: Comparative Mythology (Pacing – 12 Days)

Why Is This Unit Important?

This unit will give students a chance to explore mythology beyond the basics they may have had in the past and give them a multi-faceted view of world mythology as seen today. By looking at mythology comparatively, students will be encouraged to consider topics such as the repercussions of war, vanity and greed, the workings of fate, the nature of love, the roles of women in society, revenge and forgiveness, the meaning of life, and national identity and to discuss the implications that each theme has on a specific culture and across cultures. While mythology has traditionally been considered a narration of events that could not be explained by ancient man, recent research suggests this narrow definition no longer holds true. Recent literary experts argue that myths can encompass the goodness that people are expected to show; they can demonstrate the virtues and values that are important in a culture. The big ideas embedded in this unit include:

- Myths are stories which seek to explain the natural world and the nature of man.
- Most cultures have their own mythologies which show a sensitivity to geological, societal, and human concerns.
- Myths often express a culture’s attitude towards power, love, and life in general.
- Through the study of creation, fertility, and/or hero myths, common threads of values across cultures and geographic locations become apparent.
- A culture’s myths may serve as cautionary tales about human behavior and what will happen in the afterlife; they may also provide insight into the virtues and values important to a people.

Enduring Understandings

- Most cultures have a unique set of stories which serve to preserve their principles and values.
- Each culture has searched to explain the unexplainable through mythological stories.
- Human beings are remarkably alike, regardless of their geographic location or the time in which they lived.

Essential Questions

- What characteristics are found in different types of myths?
- What natural phenomena, supernatural phenomena, and afterlife phenomena do myths explain?
- What differences in cultures’ mythic explanations can be attributed to geographical, historic, societal or other factors?
What universal values can be derived from comparing different cultures’ mythologies?
How are concerns related to power, love, and life addressed in a variety of myths?

**Acquired Knowledge** (The learner will know…)

- Most cultures have their own mythologies which show a sensitivity to geological, societal and human concerns.
- Myths from many different cultures share commonalities (i.e. common themes such as the repercussions of war, vanity and greed, the workings of fate, the nature of love, the roles of women in society, revenge and forgiveness, the meaning of life, and national identity).
- The function of myths has traditionally been to explain the unexplainable, but recent literature argues that myths can communicate the goodness and virtue important to a culture.

**Acquired Skills** (The learner will…)

- Categorize myths according to various functions
- Read, analyze and evaluate a variety of mythology/folklore of literary merit from civilizations and countries around the world, and explain its cultural significance.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between a culture, its mythology, and the individual
- Read, discuss, and comprehend the explanatory myths, morality myths, and hero/journey myths
- Compare myths from cultures, expanding beyond Greece and Rome
- Use print, electronic databases, and online resources to access information, organize ideas and develop writing
- Work cooperatively with group members, distributing labor equally among all members

**Major Assessments**

- Journal writing or responsive writing after reading a work
- Graphic organizer (i.e. Venn diagram, comparison chart) to compare and contrast myths across cultures (benchmark)
- Compare themes from myths to personal experiences or contemporary issues (benchmark)
- Create a board game to help high school students understand mythology, specifically focusing on myths across cultures (benchmark)
- Write an original myth representing a specific culture during a specific period in time.
Instructional Materials

- *Learning Works Enrichment Series: Mythology, Archaeology, Architecture* by Diane Sylvester and Mary Wieman
- *Learning Works Enrichment Series: Egyptians, Maya and Minoans* by Susan Matthics
- *World Mythology: An Anthology of the Great Myths and Epics* by Donna Rosenberg

Interdisciplinary Connections

- Students can incorporate math skills by creating an Aztec calendar.
- Like the ancient Egyptians, the Mayan wrote in hieroglyphics, small pictures that stood for words or ideas. Students can use their art or technology skills to design hieroglyphics to symbolize what is important to them.

Technology Connections

- Electronic texts are available at [http://www.pitt.edu/~dash/folktexts.html](http://www.pitt.edu/~dash/folktexts.html)
- Helpful websites

Accommodations or Modifications

- Student groups can be assigned for group investigations; groupings can be mixed-ability or interest groups.
- Differentiated graphic organizers can be provided to support students when reading and as a prewriting tool before writing.
- Mini-lessons can be planned to meet the needs of the diverse student group. Whole group mini-lessons can meet the curricular needs of all students, but small group mini-lessons would allow the teacher to differentiate instruction based upon need. Mini-lessons can be presented to several different groups, some who struggle and others who need advanced lessons to push them beyond the basic curriculum.

Applicable 2010 Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts

**Reading Standards for Literature:** RL.9-10.1, RL.9-10.2, RL.9-10.3, RL.9-10.6, RL.9-10.10, RL.11-12.1, RL.11-12.2, RL.11-12.3, RL.11-12.6, RL.11-12.10

**Reading Standards for Informational Texts:** RI.9-10.1, RI.9-10.2, RI.9-10.6, RI.9-10.10, RI.11-12.1, RI.11-12.2, RI.11-12.6, RI.11-12.10

**Writing Standards:** WS.9-10.4, WS.9-10.9a; WS.11-12.4, WS.11-12.9a
### Comparative Mythology [Benchmark Assessment]

**DIRECTIONS:** Choose either the Creation Myth Comparison (below) or the Animal Myth Comparison (next page) and complete both Part A and Part B activities.

#### Creation Myth Comparison

**Part A:** Complete the following comparison chart using information gathered through your in-class reading and through research.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Myth #1</th>
<th>Myth #2</th>
<th>Myth #3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Characters</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obstacles</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Obstacles** (forces or issues that had to be overcome for creation to take place)

**Part B:** In a well-written, multi-paragraph response, explain what each myth says about the culture from whence it came. Then, explain the commonalities shared among the three cultures as evidenced by the similarities among the myths.
Animal Myth Comparison

**Part A:** Complete the following comparison chart using information gathered through your in-class reading and through research.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Myth #1</th>
<th>Myth #2</th>
<th>Myth #3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Country</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Characters</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Summary</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Obstacles</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(forces or issues that had to be overcome for creation to take place)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outcome</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(What did animals gain? What did humans gain?)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Part B:** In a well-written, multi-paragraph response, explain what each myth says about the culture from whence it came. Then, explain the commonalities shared among the three cultures as evidenced by the similarities among the myths.
Unit 6: Mythology Applied: The Art of Allusion (Pacing – 18 Days)

Why Is This Unit Important?

This unit on mythological allusions will help students understand references that are otherwise only read about in their respective mythological texts. As students read their assigned selections, they will not only focus on the stories themselves, but they will also learn how the references are used in each selection, how references affect meaning, and how such references help a reader to understand the nuances provided by additional information. The unit will also introduce students to popular myths that are still commonplace in modern times as part of aesthetic language, each of which relies heavily on the assumption that people know what the reference is about and should know the intended meaning.

Myths are not only a part of the past but also an integral part of everyday modern life and of our cultural heritage. Today, allusions to myths are found in ordinary conversations, in songs, sermons, ads, and brand names. Thus, knowledge of ancient mythology will enhance everyday life. Myths are exciting to learn on their own merits and have the power to help us understand ourselves and how we relate to the world around us. The big ideas embedded in this unit include:

- When a person borrows a word or a phrase from another work of literature, history, religion, art, or other events, factual or fictitious, an allusion or reference is made to an ancient story or myth.
- Writers or speakers use brief references to enhance the meaning of an expression or to provide depth to a character or plot.
- With just a word or two, an individual can create expanded descriptions or images, provided the reader knows what is being referred to in the text.
- Mythological allusions can be found in literature, art, advertising, and other fields of study.

Enduring Understandings

- Allusions are stylistic devices used by authors and artists to provide an additional level of meaning.
- Allusion is used to explain or clarify a complex idea through a brief reference.
- Though myths may not seem to have a place in contemporary society, mythological allusions and clichés permeate our everyday language.
- The inferences gleaned from mythological allusions affect thoughts, actions, emotions, and even decisions in life.
Essential Questions

- Why do authors, artists, and others use allusions to mythology? What is the benefit of such references?
- How does knowledge of mythological allusions enhance the meaning of a literary work or abstract concept?
- To what extent do people still use classical clichés, proverbial expressions, and conversational phrases that have their origins in classical mythology?
- What other fields use mythological references?

Acquired Knowledge (The learner will know…)

- Authors use allusions to convey multiple meanings to the reader.
- Mythological allusions are used in modern society to help an audience clarify and expand meaning.
- Allusions appear in poetry, advertising, film, and everyday conversation.
- The fields of science and psychology also rely heavily upon mythological allusions.

Acquired Skills (The learner will…)

- Recognize allusions as stylistic devices
- Identify the origin of common mythological allusions in the arts and sciences
- Interpret mythological references in a variety of sources
- Use mythological allusions in writing and speaking

Benchmark or Major Assessments

- Match mythological references to modern interpretations
- Write a formal essay in defense of the use of allusion by an individual
- Design a skit using words and allusions from classical mythology
- Create a new product based around a mythic allusion (benchmark)
- Research and report upon mythic allusions in poetry, modern song lyrics, art, science, and advertising

Instructional Materials

- “Conclusion: Other Applications of Mythology” from Myths and Their Meaning by Max J. Herzberg
- Film: Creatures Fantastic: Man Beasts (Dorling Kindersley)
  - NOTE: Films will be used to supplement reading material and will not be used to replace reading in this course.
Interdisciplinary Connections

- To connect to science, students can research the mythic origin of constellations and select a group of stars and devise a myth to account for its presence.
- Students can research the use of myths and mythical allusions used by musical composers.

Technology Connections

- Greek Mythology Today and the Myth of the Month at [http://thanasis.com/myth.htm](http://thanasis.com/myth.htm)
- Interactive activities for teachers to print or for students to complete online are available at [http://www.adifferentplace.org/mythology.htm](http://www.adifferentplace.org/mythology.htm).
- The Art of Allusion at [www.artencyclopedia.com](http://www.artencyclopedia.com)

Accommodations or Modifications

- Students can think-pair-share and the teacher can monitor for readiness.
- Open-ended activities can be assigned by interest or by student reading level.
- The teacher can jigsaw activities to hold all students accountable for reading but to differentiate by assigning only sections of a full text.
- Games and tournaments allow all students to become involved while allowing the teacher to assign roles or differentiate questions to assess student knowledge.

Applicable 2010 Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts

Reading Standards for Literature: RL.9-10.1, RL.9-10.2, RL.9-10.3, RL.9-10.4, RL.9-10.6, RL.9-10.7, RL.9-10.10, RL.11-12.1, RL.11-12.2, RL.11-12.3, RL.11-12.4, RL.11-12.6, RL.11-12.7, RL.11-12.10
Mythological Allusions

THE ART OF ALLUSION

Mythology has been an inexhaustible source of artistic inspiration since the stories comprised therein were first told. Even in ancient Greece, the gods provided the perfect subject for a sculpture or a pottery painting.

For this section, you may work with a partner.

Log onto a computer and visit
http://www.artencyclopedia.com

Using the ARTWORKS BY TITLE button, search for a painting depicting a scene from Greek or Roman mythology

TIPS: Enter the name of a character you remember quite a bit about. Also remember that many of the great artistic masters referred to the gods by their Latin names.

Some of the links may be broken since the encyclopedia searches outside databases such as museums and galleries.

Don’t just choose the first piece of artwork you find. Look for one that you think is interesting.

When you have chosen your painting, print out two copies: one for you and one for your partner.

WRITE at least half a paragraph about this painting. If it references a specific scene from mythology, describe the scene. If you chose a painting, discuss the colors in the picture. Discuss the artist’s interpretation of the character. (Example: Does Venus looks different than you imagined her?) Explain why you picked this piece of artwork. Hypothesize why the artist chose this scene as the subject for a piece of artwork. Explain how you would have created it differently. Make sure you include the artist’s name and the title of the artwork.

When you have finished your paragraph, attach the printed copy of the painting to the back and turn it in.

Source: It's Only an Allusion (www.mythologyteacher.com)
Appendix A: General Databases for English Classroom Use

Gale Literary Resource Center

- biographical information, overviews, full-text literary criticism and reviews on more than 130,000 writers in all disciplines
- all time periods and literature from around the world included

Literature Resources from Gale

- research authors and their works, literary movements and genres
- user can search across several major literature databases to find the full text of literary works, journal articles, literary criticism, reviews, biographical information and overviews

LitFinder for Schools

- spans history and geography to offer nearly 150,000 poems, short stories, essays, speeches and plays representing the work of more than 80,000 authors
- more than 660 nationalities are represented

ProQuest Language and Learning

- biographical information, overviews, full-text literary criticism and reviews of authors and their works
- literary movements and genres are included as well

E-Books: These electronic books are located in the Gale Virtual Reference Library link within the Gale databases:

- Art and Humanities Through the Eras
- Feminism in Literature: A Gale Critical Companion
- Gothic Literature: A Gale Critical Companion
- Family in Society: Essential Primary Sources
- Gender Issues and Sexuality: Essential Primary Sources
- Government, Politics, and Protest: Essential Primary Sources
- Human and Civil Rights: Essential Primary Sources
- American History Through Literature, 1820-1920
- Encyclopedia of Clothing and Fashion
- Europe 1789-1914 Encyclopedia of the Age of Industry and Empire
- Europe Since 1914: Encyclopedia of the Age of War and Reconstruction
- Historic Events for Students: The Great Depression
- St. James Encyclopedia of Popular Culture
- UXL American Decades