Unit 1: Greek Mythology, Gods, & Creation

Content Area: **World Languages**
Course(s):
Time Period: **September**
Length: **5 Blocks**
Status: **Published**

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?

Content

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.

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.

Latin Vocabulary For Unit 1:

- deus-god
- dea-goddess
- titanus- titan
- fabula- story
- mons- mountain
- vis- divine power
- fas- divine right
- Gaea- Mother Earth
- terra-earth
- Uranus- Father Sky
- caelum- sky
- Saturnus- Father of all the gods
- pater- father
- Rhea- Mother of all the gods
- mater- mother
- filius- son
- filia- daughter
- Iupiter- Zeus (king of the gods)
- aquila- eagle
- fulmen- lightning
- Iuno- Hera (queen of the gods)
- pavo-peacock
- Minerva- Athena (goddess of widsdom & war)
- bubo- owl
- bellum- war
- Mars- Ares (god of war)
- Proserpina- Persephone (queen of the underworld)
- malagranata- pomegranate
- Tartarus- underworld
- regina- queen
- Pluto- Hades (king of the underworld)
- rex- king
- Ceres- Demeter (goddess of agriculture)
- tempus- time/season
- Neptune- Poseidon (god of the sea)
- mare-sea
- Bacchus- Dionysus (god of wine)

- vinum-wine
- Vesta- Hestia (goddess of the hearth)
- ignis- fire
- Mercury- Hermes (messenger god)
- nuntius- messenger
- alis- wings
- Venus- Aphrodite (goddess of love & beauty)
- amor- love
- forma- beauty
- Apollo- god of music, medicine, and the sun
- sol- sun
- musica- music
- medicinus- medicine
- Diana- Artemis (goddess of the hunt)
- virgo- maiden
- arcus- bow
- sagitta- arrow
- luna- moon
- Vulcan- Hephaestus (god of the forge)
- volcanus- volcano
- arma- weapons

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.

Resources

Reaching Olympus: The Greek Myths, Heroes, Beasts, and Monsters **by Zachary Hamby**

Reaching Olympus, The Greek Myths: Tales of Titans, Gods, and Mortals **by Zachary Hamby**

Reaching Olympus: The Roman Myths, Including the Aeneid **by Zachary Hamby**

Interdisciplinary Standards

Reading Standards for Literature: RL.9-10.1, RL.9-10.2, RL.9-10.3, RL.9-10.5, RL.910.6, 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. 1112.10

Writing Standards: WS.9-10.3a, WS.9-10.3b, WS.9-10.30, 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

12.30, WS. 11-12.3d, WS. 11-12.3e, WS. 11-12.4, WS. 11-12.5, WS. 11-12.9a, WS. 1112.10

WL.7.1.NM.A.C	Cultural
WL.7.1.NM.A.C.2	Observing and participating in culturally authentic activities contribute to familiarization with cultural products and practices. (Topics and activities that assist in the development of this understanding should include, but are not limited to: authentic celebrations, songs, and dances.)
WL.7.1.NM.A.C.6	Maps, graphs, and other graphic organizers facilitate understanding of information on a wide range of topics related to the world and global issues. They make complex concepts more accessible to second - language learners w ho have limited proficiency in the language. (Content areas that assist in the development of this understanding should include, but are not limited to: history, economics, science, and geography.)
WL.7.1.NM.A.C.7	Learning about age - and developmentally appropriate content that is of high interest to students and has a direct connection to the cultural contexts of the target language cultivates an awareness of the shared human experience. (Content that assists in the development of this understanding should include, but is not limited to: all content areas and popular culture.)
WL.7.1.NM.B.C.2	Observing and participating in culturally authentic activities contribute to familiarization with cultural products and practices. (Topics and activities that assist in the development of this understanding should include, but are not limited to: authentic celebrations, songs, and dances.)