The Gods, Myths, and Humankind

Content Area: **English Language Arts**
Course(s):
Time Period: **Marking Period 1**
Length: **5-6 Weeks**
Status: **Published**

Brief Summary of Unit

Focus: "Myths are the universal and timelss stories that reflect and shape our lives - they explore our desires, our fears, our longings, and provide narraties that remind us what it means to be human." Karen Armstro*ng*, *A Short History of Myth*

The study of Greek, Roman, and Norse mythology develops students' cultural literacy by connecting them to the political, philosophical, and social roots of modern culture. Because the mythological stories serve as the inspiration for literature, art, and music, the study of ancient gods and myths will improve the students' ability to recognize and understand their references when they appear in modern culture. Additionally, students will understand that human beings are distinguished by their ability to ponder ideas that go beyond their everyday experiences.

This unit is designed to be part of a developmental progression across grade levels and make interdisciplinary connections across content areas including physical and social sciences, technology, career readiness, cultural awareness, and global citizenship.

During this course, students are provided with opportunities to develop skills that pertain to a variety of careers. When completing this course, students can make informed choices and pursue electives that further their study and contribute toward the formation of career interest.

Standards

The identified standards reflect a developmental progression across grades/ levels and make interdisciplinary connections across content areas including social sciences, technology, career readiness, cultural awareness and global citizenship. The standards that follow are relevant to this course in addition to the associated content-based standards listed below.

Standard 9.4 Life Literacies and Key Skills: This standard outline key literacies and technical skills such as critical thinking, global and cultural awareness, and technology literacy that are critical for students to develop

to live and work in an interconnected global economy.

New Jersey Diversity and Inclusion Law:

In accordance with New Jersey's Chapter 32 Diversity and Inclusion Law, this unit includes instructional materials that highlight and promote diversity, including: economic diversity, equity, inclusion, tolerance, and belonging in connection with gender and sexual orientation, race and ethnicity, disabilities, and religious tolerance.

Information Literacy:

This unit challenges students to locate, evaluate, and use information effectively. Information literacy includes, but is not limited to, digital, visual, media, textual, and technological literacy. Lessons may include the research process and how information is created and produced; critical thinking and using information resources; research methods, including the difference between primary and secondary sources; the difference between facts, points of view, and opinions, accessing peer-reviewed print and digital library resources; the economic, legal, social, and ethical issues surrounding the use of information.

LA.RL.9-10.1	Cite strong and thorough textual evidence and make relevant connections to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferentially, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.
LA.RL.9-10.2	Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details and provide an objective summary of the text.
LA.RL.9-10.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language evokes a sense of time and place; how it sets a formal or informal tone).
LA.RL.9-10.6	Analyze a particular point of view or cultural experience reflected in a work of literature from outside the United States, drawing on a wide reading of world literature.
LA.RL.9-10.7	Analyze the representation of a subject or a key scene in two different artistic mediums, including what is emphasized or absent in each work (e.g., Auden's "Musée des Beaux Arts" and Breughel's Landscape with the Fall of Icarus).
LA.RL.9-10.10a	By the end of grade 9, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems at grade level text-complexity or above with scaffolding as needed.
LA.RI.9-10.1	Accurately cite strong and thorough textual evidence, (e.g., via discussion, written response, etc.) and make relevant connections, to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferentially, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.
LA.RI.9-10.2	Determine a central idea of a text and analyze how it is developed and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.
LA.RI.9-10.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language of a court opinion differs from that of a newspaper).

LA.RI.9-10.5	Analyze in detail how an author's ideas or claims are developed and refined by particular sentences, paragraphs, or larger portions of a text (e.g., a section or chapter).
LA.RI.9-10.9	Analyze and reflect on (e.g., practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) documents of historical and literary significance, (e.g., Washington's Farewell Address the Gettysburg Address, Roosevelt's Four Freedoms speech, King's "Letter from Birmingham Jail", Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen, U.N. Universal Declaration of Human Rights, etc.), including how they relate in terms of themes and significant concepts.
LA.W.9-10	Writing
LA.W.9-10.1.B	Develop claim(s) and counterclaims avoiding common logical fallacies, propaganda devices, and using sound reasoning, supplying evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level and concerns.
LA.W.9-10.1.C	Use transitions (e.g., words, phrases, clauses) to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.
LA.W.9-10.1.D	Establish and maintain a style and tone appropriate to the audience and purpose (e.g., formal and objective for academic writing) while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.
LA.W.9-10.2.B	Develop the topic with well-chosen, relevant, and sufficient facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic.
LA.W.9-10.2.C	Use appropriate and varied transitions to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts.
LA.W.9-10.2.D	Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to manage the complexity of the topic.
LA.W.9-10.2.E	Establish and maintain a style and tone appropriate to the audience and purpose (e.g., formal and objective for academic writing) while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.
LA.W.9-10.2.F	Provide a concluding paragraph or section that supports the information or explanation presented (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic).
LA.W.9-10.3.D	Use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters.
LA.W.9-10.3.E	Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on what is experienced, observed, or resolved over the course of the narrative.
LA.W.9-10.4	Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)
LA.W.9-10.5	Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, trying a new approach, or consulting a style manual (such as MLA or APA Style), focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.
LA.W.9-10.6	Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, share, and update individual or shared writing products, taking advantage of technology's capacity to link to other information and to display information flexibly and dynamically.
LA.W.9-10.9.A	Apply grades 9–10 Reading standards to literature (e.g., "Analyze how an author draws on and transforms source material in a specific work [e.g., how Shakespeare treats a theme or topic from Ovid mythology or the Bible or how a later author draws on a play by Shakespeare]").
LA.W.9-10.9.B	Apply grades 9–10 Reading standards to nonfiction informational (e.g., "Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is

	valid and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; identify false statements and fallacious reasoning").
LA.SL.9-10.1	Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with peers on grades 9–10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
LA.SL.9-10.1.A	Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas.
LA.SL.9-10.1.C	Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that relate the current discussion to broader themes or larger ideas; actively incorporate others into the discussion; and clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions.
LA.SL.9-10.1.D	Respond thoughtfully to various perspectives, summarize points of agreement and disagreement, and justify own views. Make new connections in light of the evidence and reasoning presented.
LA.SL.9-10.4	Present information, findings, and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically. The content, organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
LA.L.9-10.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
LA.9-10.W.9-10.1	Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence. Introduce precise claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that establishes clear relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.

Essential Questions

- What is a myth?
- Why study the ancient Greek, Roman, and Norse myths?
- What purpose did myths serve in ancient Greece?
- What purpose do myths serve in the 21st century?
- What is the Greek creation myth?
- How do the Greek myths explain the creation of the world, the gods, and mankind?
- How did the ancient Greeks feel about their gods?
- Who are the twelve gods of Mt. Olympus and what is their legacy in modern culture?
- What cultural values are explored and illustrated by the Greek myths?
- How does understanding the myths and legends of the past lead to understanding ourselves?
- How are ancient myths represented in modern literature, poetry, and art?
- How do ancient myths recur in modern stories?
- What political, social, and cultural understandings from ancient myths have modern relevance?

Students Will Know/Be Skilled At

- How the world and the gods were created by Greek, Roman, and Norse storytellers.
- The names, domains, and symbols of the twelve Olympians.

- The names, domains and symbols of the twelve Roman divinities.
- The names and domains of the nine Norse gods.
- The various creation stories of ancient cultures.
- How myths, gods, goddess, muses, nymphs, satyrs, and mythological creatures inform the moden language and culture.

- identifying the literal and metaphorical themes of the works.
- pronouncing the Greek characters and places.
- identifying the mythological allusions.
- identifying the modern renditions of Greek stories.
- identifying the modern use of the Greek gods/goddesses.
- reading complex texts for deep understanding.
- utilizing appropriate terminology to distinguish myth from fable.
- discerning a writer's purpose and audience.
- developing claims and supporting evidence in writing.
- integrating quotations and paraphrases from sources into written responses.
- distinguishing the names and domains among the ancient Greek, Roman, and Norse gods and goddesses.
- recognizing the similarities and differences in the creation story among the Greek, Roman, and Norse gods.
- citing textual evidence to support a claim.

Evidence/Performance Tasks

Developmental progression across years in both reading and writing is evidenced by multiple benchmark assessment screeners, administered three times per year. Follow up diagnostic assessments are used to target skill remediation. Student proficiency allows for additional or alternative assessment based on demonstration or absence of skill.

Students demonstrate differentiated proficiency through both formative and summative assessments in the classroom. Based on individual student readiness and performance, assessments can be implemented as formative and/or summative.

The performance tasks listed below are examples of the types of assessments teachers may use in the classroom and the data collected by the district to track student progress.

Formative:

- Teacher Observations
- Accountable Talk, Socratic Seminars/Fish Bowls
- Analysis of multimodal text sets

- Analysis of critical commentary, literary criticism
- Writers Notebook (quick writes/drafts/prewrites), emphasizing author's craft
- Close reading analysis of text using evidence as substantiation
- Conferences: Individual and small group, accompanying conference notes
- Reflective exercises and assessments
- Oral Reading and Interpretation
- Peer and self-evaluations of learning
- Entrance and Exit Tickets
- Open-Ended Responses in Journal

Summative, including Alternative Assessments:

- On-demand Writing Assessments, timed and untimed
- Researched Presentations
- Performance Assessments
- Project-based Learning
- Problem-based Learning
- Personalized Learning
- Visual Literacy Prompts
- Digital Portfolios
- Online Discussion Forums

Benchmark:

- Benchmark reading and writing assessments, scored using rubrics, district-created and standards-aligned; based on NJSLA, reported twice per year
- Engage in text set analysis using visual literacy and close reading analysis strategies to compose a claim and use evidence as support
- Grade-level Standards-based Rubrics
- Common Lit Reading Benchmark Assessments, three times per year (grades 9-11)
- New Jersey Student Learning Assessment
- Midterm and Final Exams

Learning Plan

Instructional time for reading will be divided into thirds; one-third of the time will be dedicated to whole class text instruction; one-third will include literature circles; one-third, independent reading. The intent is for student-readers to have clear modeling through whole-class instruction. These strategies are practiced through literature circles in a group setting of peers and through independent practice monitored through teacher conferencing with students. An emphasis will be based on the transfer of skills instruction, teaching the reader, not merely the content of the text. The text complexity and rigor of reading will be appropriate for grade 9; materials selection for whole-class and literature circles will be from the book list approved by the Board of Education. Classrooms will house rich and diverse independent reading libraries of both contemporary and canonical works.

The reading of text during the ninth grade targets not only comprehension, but also analysis. Students will read both long-and short-form, excerpted and full-length, print and electronic, fiction and nonfiction texts. Study will include the analysis of visual texts including film clips, art, infographic, maps, charts, graphs, cartoons, graphic novel. Technique and terminology specific to a genre of reading is examined. Research tasks are embedded throughout the year and a minimum of one task is completed during each unit. Vocabulary instruction will be chosen from the reading material.

Students write in all modes of rhetoric including narration/description, argument/persuasion, and exposition. Various forms of writing including digital writing are emphasized as well. Grammar instruction is embedded in writing instruction through mini-lessons, holding students accountable for skills taught and practiced; modeling is done through mentor texts, both published and student-crafted. Teachers focus on process in addition to product with an emphasis on synthesizing texts with nuanced understanding; teacher-created multi-modal text sets will be used as materials. High-and low-stakes, timed and untimed pieces are all important.

Teachers may personalize instruction during this unit and address the distinct learning needs, interests, aspirations, or cultural backgrounds of individual students.

Students will be taught how to speak and listen in addition to being assessed on these skills.

This unit of study focuses on "The Gods, Myths, and Humankind" and is centered on the quotation by Karen Armstrong: “Myths are timeless and universal stories that reflect and shape our lives. They explore our desires, our fears, our longings, and provide narratives that remind us of what it means to be human.” This unit is designed to examine how mythology informs both the ancient world and the modern world. We will discuss how ancient stories have modern relevance, and where we see recurring narratives in our modern-day lives and zeitgeist. The goal of the unit is for students to connect the major themes and ideas in these works to the contemporary world today. As students read whole class texts, they may also explore texts on their own based on their interests in certain topics.

For this particular unit, teachers should . . .

- Build a text set for discussion, writing, and synthesis
- Select common reading and literature circle texts
- Prepare for conferences with students
- Generate a list of skills students will master throughout the unit (focusing specifically on a few in each area)
- Create a summative assessment (backward design)

Materials

The materials used in this course integrate a variety of leveled instructional, enrichment, and intervention materials that support student learners at all levels in the school and home environments. Associated web content and media sources are infused into the unit as applicable and available.

Teachers must refer to the district-approved Core Book List while selecting whole-class or small-group leveled resources.

Instructional Materials

Instructional Text

- *Mythology*, Edith Hamilton
- *Mythos*, Stephen Fry

Poetry

- "Iphigenia," Alfred Lord Tennyson

Fictional Text

- *The Penelopiad* by Margaret Atwood, excerpted
- *Circe* by Madeline Miller, excerpted

Non-Fiction Text

- "Dazzlers: Ancients Reborn Bright Array" by Christopher Reed, *Harvard Magazine*, November - December 2007. https://harvardmagazine.com/2007/11/dazzlers-html

Visual Text (Art, Photography, Infographic, Film)

- https://www.guggenheim.org/collection-online/ The online Guggenheim Museum, NYC
- https://www.metmuseum.org/ Metropolitan Museum of Art, NYC
- https://www.themorgan.org/ The Morgan Museum, NYC
- https://chs.harvard.edu/ Center for Hellenic Studies

Research:

- Using the sources below, locate and explain the tableaus and sculpture that illustrate one or more of the gods, goddesses, myths, nyphs, muses, graces, etc. and creatures of ancient Greek, Roman, and Norse myghology
- https://chs.harvard.edu/ Center for Hellenic Studies
- https://www.metmuseum.org/ Metropolitan Museum of Art, NYC

Research:

- Journal Storage (JStor)
- Evaluation of sources used in classroom discussions
- Cranford Public Media Center Online Subscription Databases: http://cranford.com/library/
- Ebsco Host
- Facts on File
- Follet Fiction Ebooks
- Gale Reference Ebooks
- *New York Times*
- Goodreads
- Reading Rants
- History Channel
- MLA Format online: https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/08/
- Purdue Owl:https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/

Additional Resources:

- Chromebooks/laptops
- SORA
- Digital Theatre+
- Swank Streaming
- Newsela
- Common Lit
- Google Classroom or other LMS
- Writing Portfolios
- Writer's Notebook/Journal
- Google Suite
- Audible
- Padlet
- Jamboard
- Socrative.com
- Remind.com
- YouTube

Teacher Resources

- *Mythology: Eyewitness Companion,* Philip Wilkinson and Neil Philip
- *A Short History of Myth,* Karen Armstrong
- *Mythology*: A Teaching Unit, Aileen M. Carroll
- *100 Characters from Classical Mythology,* Malcolm Day
- https://chs.harvard.edu Center for Hellenic Studies

Strategies for Accommodation and Modification

Content specific accommodations and modifications as well as Career Ready Practices are listed here for all students, including: Special Education, English Language Learners, At Risk of School Failure, Gifted and Talented, Students with 504.

Possible accommodations include:

- Access speech-to-text function on computer
- Use visual presentations of all materials to include organizers, charts
- Allow students to set individual goals for writing/reading
- Offer graphic organizaers, note-taking models, strategies for summarizing, and questioning techniques
- Offer oral assessments
- Supply study guide questions and access to class notes
- Work in partnerships
- Give responses in a form (verbal or written) that is easier for the student
- Take additional time to compete a task or project
- Scaffold by chunking material and texts
- Individualize reading choices based on ability and level
- Take frequent breaks
- Use an alarm to help with time management
- Small group and one on one assessment
- Mark text with a highlighter or other manipulative such as a post-it
- Receive help coordinating assignments
- Answering fewer questions or completing shorter tasks
- Modify the length and quantity of assignments to fit individual
- Differentiate roles in discussion groups
- Use digital technology, eBooks,, audio version of printed text
- Create alternate assignments or homework
- Provide distinct steps in a process; elminate unnecessary steps, as needed
- Use art, music, and film to convey alternate interpretation of literature and assessment
- Manage executive function by scaffolding process and amending deadlines

Adhere to all modifications and accommodations as prescribed in IEP and 504 plan