

## CLASSICAL MYTHOLOGY

From Narcissus's self-love to Arachne's dangerous boasting, the stories of the Greeks and Romans have had a pervasive and profound influence on all areas of our Western culture. This semester course introduces students to the origins and meanings of myths, and explores the ways that myth answers mankind's most basic questions about himself and his place in the universe. Primarily concentrating upon the classical Greek and Roman gods and goddesses, the course will focus on stories about transformations (from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*) and, the most famous of all myths, the Trojan War. Students will explore in multi-disciplinary fashion the many ways that these stories have affected and continue to affect modern culture, from movies to literature and poetry to sculpture and painting. The course will also provide valuable experience in the core skills of reading, writing and research.

As a result of this course, students will have identified some of mankind's deepest questions about his psychological, moral and physical place in the universe, and will understand how these questions have been answered -- now as in the past -- by myth. In addition, they will know and be able to recognize modern references to the major Roman and Greek gods, goddesses and heroes as well as the major myths (including the Trojan War) in which they play a starring role.

Credit: 0.5

Pre-requisites: None

## UNIT I: In the Beginning

### Objectives

Students will read a variety of texts for information and pleasure, enhancing their knowledge of ancient cultures and the human experience. Students will apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. Students will research, plan, draft, revise, edit and deliver information on a variety of topics, using a variety of delivery methods.

### Essential Questions

*How do we define myth?*

*Why does every culture have some kind of creation myth?*

*How does a creation myth reflect the specific culture which generated it as well as universal human values and needs?*

*How have ancient creation myths influenced modern culture?*

Standard	Grade Level Expectations	Evidence of Learning
W.9-10.9	Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research (Read Hesiod's "Ode to the Muses;" research ancient muses and their attributes; compare to modern theories of creativity. Write and illustrate a greeting card featuring one of the Muses.)	Muse greeting card
RL.9-10.9	Analyze how an author draws on and transforms source material in a specific work (Read and respond to William Blake's "To the Muses," and May Sarton's "---";)	Analysis and personal response in journal
RL.9-10.6	Analyze a particular point of view or cultural experience reflected in a work of literature, drawing on a wide reading of world literature (Read and analyze myths from Greece and Rome and from the Bible on the creation of the world (e.g., Gaia and Ouranus, Hesiod's Theogony, the Bible), on the creation of man, monsters and gods (the Titans and the Olympians, Prometheus, the Bible); on the flood (Deucalion and Pyrrha, Noah's Ark, Sumerian myths), and mankind's descent into the present age (Hesiod's The Four Ages of Man, Prometheus and Pandora, and the Garden of Eden).)	Quizzes Venn Diagrams Journal summaries and responses
RL.11-12.2	Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text (Identify characteristic/essential elements of creation myths; identify how the myths reflect their particular culture but also speak to universal themes.)	Class Discussion Class notes
W.9-10.10	Write routinely for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences (Write and illustrate a creation myth incorporating at least three of the essential elements.)	Illustrated children's book

## UNIT II: The Olympians

### Objectives

Students will read a variety of texts for information and pleasure, enhancing their knowledge of ancient cultures and the human experience. Students will research, plan, draft, revise, edit and deliver information on a variety of topics, using a variety of delivery methods.

### Essential Questions

*How do human beings relate to and experience their culture's god(s)?*

*What role or purpose does religion or spirituality serve in a culture?*

*How do belief systems reflect a particular culture or society, and how are they reflected and represented in a society's literature and art?*

Standard	Grade Level Expectations	Evidence of Learning
W.9-10.7	Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question or solve a problem (Research a Roman god/goddess including name(s), domains, key relationships, attributes and assorted symbols, and important mythological events. Use the information to (1) write a resume for the god/goddess and (2) create a display poster.)	Class Notes Quizzes Resume Presentation poster
W.9-10.8	Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources (Meet research requirements for print as well as online sources used in research for the resume and poster.)	Summary and journal response to myth; daily worksheets
RL.9-10.9	Analyze how an author draws on and transforms source material in a specific work (Research and respond to one ancient and one modern artistic representations of god/goddess.)	Journal responses Compare/contrast essay
W.9-10.10	Write routinely for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences (Write a summary and creative reworking of a major myth involving a god/goddess. Write text for and illustrate a set of four gamecards detailing the domain, attributes, symbols and myth. Create and produce a class handout with M/C and fill-in-the-blank questions for use during presentation; create a homework assignment that reviews and extends main ideas in presentation.)	Summary of myth and creative reworking Set of game cards and game reference sheet Handout and homework
SL.9-10.1	SL.9-10.1 Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (Prepare and deliver presentation on Roman god/goddess; respond accurately to audience questions; actively listen during class presentations and devise follow-up questions.)	Oral presentation Class notes & responses Unit test

## UNIT III: The Early Heroes

### Objectives

Students will read a variety of texts for information and pleasure, enhancing their knowledge of ancient cultures and the human experience. Students will research, plan, draft, revise, edit and deliver information on a variety of topics, using a variety of delivery methods.

### Essential Questions

*What is a hero, and what are the stages of a hero's journey?*  
*How do human beings relate to and experience their culture's heroes?*  
*How do heroes reflect the specific culture which celebrated them?*  
*How do heroes reflect universal human values and needs?*  
*How have ancient hero myths influenced modern culture?*

Standard	Grade Level Expectations	Evidence of Learning
SL.9-10.1	SL.9-10.1 Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (Participate in class discussions on heroes and stages of a hero's journey. Work within a group to allocate tasks, conduct research and create multi-author materials on an ancient hero.)	Participation rubrics
W.9-10.7	Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question or solve a problem (Research and analyze accomplishments of Jason, Theseus, Perseus, Hercules, Bellerophon, Achilles, or Odysseus; identify and analyze the stages of their journey.)	Summaries and journal responses Facebook/Twitter posts Quiz
RL.9-10.9	Analyze how an author draws on and transforms source material in a specific work (Find and respond to ancient and modern artistic representations of the hero. Compare the ancient account of Hercules to the modern Disney film.)	Class discussion Graphic organizers Compare/contrast essays
W.9-10.10	Write routinely for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences (Write text for and illustrate a Candy-land style gameboard based on the hero's accomplishments, gamecards, and a game reference sheet about the hero and his journey.)	Gameboard, game cards and game reference sheet

## UNIT IV: The Trojan War

### Objectives

Students will read a variety of texts for information and pleasure, enhancing their knowledge of ancient cultures and the human experience.

Students will apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts.

Students will research, plan, draft, revise, edit and deliver information on a variety of topics, using a variety of delivery methods.

### Essential Questions

*What were the major events in the Trojan War, and who were its main protagonists?*

*How does the story of the Trojan War reflect ancient Greek culture?*

*How does the myth of the Trojan War reflect universal human values and needs?*

*How has the myth of the Trojan War influenced modern culture?*

Standard	Grade Level Expectations	Evidence of Learning
W.9-10.9	Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research (Read an overview of the Trojan War, and identify the chronology, major characters and events in the Trojan War.)	Class notes Article notes & outlining Graphic organizer Quiz
W.9-10.10	Write routinely for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences (Edit/rewrite a script for a scene of a major event in the Trojan War: The judgment of Paris; Agamemnon's taking of Briseis; the wrath of Achilles; the death of Patroclus; the death of Hector; or the Trojan Horse and the fall of Troy. Write an analysis of the motivations and goals of a main character in the scene.)	Journal entries Character analysis essay Scene script
SL.9-10.1	Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (Work within a group to allocate production tasks and create multi-author materials. Practice and perform a scene from the Trojan War using puppets. Interface with other groups to write transitional materials to unify scenes.)	Puppet production
SL.9-10.5	Make strategic use of digital media in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence, and to add interest. (Create and edit a video of the puppet production.)	Internet posting of video

## RESOURCES

- Classical Mythology & More: A Reader Workbook, Marianthe Colakis and Mary Joan Masello
- Mythology, Greek and Roman, Robert J. Gula and Thomas H. Carpenter
- Reaching Olympus: Teaching Mythology through Reader's Theater Plays, Zachary Hamby
- Videos: Hercules, Clash of the Titans
- Teacher-selected materials

## PACING GUIDE

Unit	1st Quarter	2nd Quarter
Unit I: In the Beginning	X	
Unit II: The Olympians	X	
Unit III: The Early Heroes		X
Unit IV: The Trojan War		X