

Unit Guide

21st Century Mythmaking: Reading and Writing Culturally Responsive Mythology through a Scientific Lens in the ELL Classroom

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This four to six week, 90 minute block-scheduled curriculum unit leads 9th grade high school English language learners (ELLs) through a hands-on study of mythology that explores the scientific and cultural facets of a genre well known for its fantastical stories. This unit aims to dispel common misconceptions about mythology and implements close reading strategies that aid students in analyzing the complex systems of beliefs and traditional knowledge within each myth. Students will build research skills by investigating Indigenous uses of native plants in Delaware before applying their newly learned skills to a research project about a culturally significant plant in their own cultures. These research projects will also serve as a foundation for students' original myths that explain the origin and/or importance of a culturally significant plant. Additionally, students will compare and contrast archetypes in literature around the world before implementing their understanding of the hero's journey archetype in their own writing. Upon the conclusion of this unit, students will not only have a better understanding of mythology as a genre, but also a deeper understanding of traditional knowledge and its impact on culture and ecology.

