

Commonalities of Creation Myths

Wendy S. Giris

Introduction

I will be writing a blended curriculum unit that focuses on the commonalities of creation myths from various cultures. In the past I have only used Greek myths, but there are so many other cultures and beliefs that my students can be exposed to, like the Native American, Hindu, and African myths. Students will also research how these various cultures have affected our modern-day life. I currently teach third grade. Third grade students enjoy reading about the heroes and battles in myths. They have been exposed to Greek myths through literature like the Percy Jackson chapter books, Wonder Woman movies, Norse myths through the Thor movies, and computer games. Using technology in this unit will help my students to become more proficient as 21st century learners.

Background

The students in my class come from many different backgrounds. There are approximately 600 K-5 students in my school. We service students from a low socioeconomic status, and 100% of them receive free breakfast and lunch. As a third-grade teacher, I have approximately 23 students in my class, and approximately half are English Language Learners (ELL) students. Third graders are ages 8 and 9.

My students are very computer literate. They are familiar with Schoology, our LMS (Learning Management System), Google Drive, and Google Read/Write to help them with text-to-speech, vocabulary and note taking. My students work well collaboratively with each other most of the time. My goal for this unit is to have my students improve upon their knowledge of various cultures as they learn about various traditional creation myths. This unit will also fit into a broader context of learning, which is to facilitate my students' learning to assist them in becoming 21st century learners and problem solvers. Today's students need to be critical thinkers, problem solvers, communicators, and collaborators. My classroom is moving from a teacher centered classroom to a student centered one. This shift in pedagogy has me prioritizing student interaction, communication, and collaboration in my classroom. Blended units do this by combining face-to-face discussions, as well as delivery of digital content to give my students a chance to practice 21st century skills required for future success. Blended learning is a model that uses online and face-to-face learning practices. Students are taught a concept in a traditional class setting. Students then work independently or in pairs or groups to complete an online component to the unit. "Incorporating blended learning, schools and teachers are forced to change the ways in which they have historically instructed and interacted with students." ¹

Rationale

In my twenty-two years of teaching, I have noticed that students spend more time on their digital devices than they do with a book, yet we are asking them to delve deeper into literature. With the implementation of Common Core State Standards, there is more focus on delving deeper into literature. Questions are more rigorous, and students are required to think more deeply to answer them. With that said, reading deeply is difficult for third graders. The expectations for reading in third grade are a lot more rigorous than second grade's expectations. In third grade, students move from Learning to Read, to Reading to Learn. This is a difficult transition for some students. Once students leave second grade, we are asking students more rigorous, open ended questions that require an answer of more than five words. I have noticed that most of my students will read and write more when given a chance to use computers, so this will be a blended unit with the final product completed in Google Drive. To get students hooked on this myth project, it will also include virtual reality trips to the sites of these ancient cultures, slides, videos, as well as written works.

This year, my focus will be on creating more discerning readers. Third graders need to be interested in the subject matter to delve deeply into it. We know that people identify themselves by how they live, what they believe, what they wear, and the ways in which they express themselves. Cultures have identities, too. The world's great cultures each have their own unique beliefs, literature, architecture, art, entertainment, and other forms of expression. Great civilizations are always inspired by the cultural achievements of those that came before them. Many aspects of our culture show the influence of ancient cultures. Student work will be focused on five essential questions. 1)How can I use patterns to recount a creation myth? 2)What effects have these cultures have on modern civilization?", "How do I use technology to plan a narrative presentation?", "How do I add visual displays to help my audience understand?", and "How do I convey my ideas orally?"

Many of these cultures explain their identities through myth. Students will be introduced to creation myths; what they are, why they were written, and patterns found in myths using a power point presentation. Students will use creation myths from various cultures to find the patterns in the myths. These patterns are good vs. evil, non-human characters with special powers, mortal vs. immortal, victory of order over the forces of chaos, how things got to be the way they are, and G-d vs. Human conflict. Students will also compare the reasons each myth was written. Students will focus on the similarities rather than the differences of each culture. As brought up in seminar by Dr. Fox, "Creation myths are always stories that explain the basic elements of (historically determined) human experience."

Learning Objectives

The goal of this unit is to have my students delve into creation myths of various cultures around the world. Students will investigate the archetypes or patterns embedded in these creation myths, such as birth, supreme beings, and chaos and order, as well as the heroic journey. They will also research how each of these cultures' creation stories have influenced our modern lives. Students will work in pairs and individually, using a blended learning model, to produce a narrative presentation to convey their understanding of creation myths and the structure of the myths.

Concepts

Myths have been around since the beginning of human culture “A simple definition of a myth is ‘a story handed down through history, often through oral tradition, that explains or gives value to the unknown’”.² Carl Jung believed that, “Myths and dreams were expressions of the collective unconscious. They express core ideas that are part of the human species and could explain why myths from different areas of the world are similar.”³ Myths are about gods and goddesses, beings with special powers, animals that have human qualities, and how the world came to be. They explain natural phenomena, disasters, and they teach moral units. Myths helped ancient society understand the world around them. “They are the truth to the people who believe in them and live by them. They give the people guidance and spiritual strength.”⁴ Most religions have used sacrifices, prayers, ceremonies and music to placate the gods that were created through myth. These shared rituals helped communities to develop their specific identities and to allow its residents to feel as if they belong. Even today, shared rituals give us a sense of closeness. They give us a way of feeling as if we are part of a group and belong to something bigger than ourselves. These were ties that would bind a group of people to their family and to its gods and were the strongest known to primitive man.

Creation Myths by religion/culture

“An ethnic or primitive religion is one which belongs to people of one blood and language, people who increased and developed together with the beliefs of every sort which belong to them.”⁵ Creation myths are part of each religion or culture. They tell how the world was created and how man came to be. Without science, man needed answers to his questions. These myths were created to help man make sense of the world around them. The creation myths that I will focus on are African, Hindu, and the Americas First Peoples myths. I have chosen these myths because my students will be able to make a cultural connection to them.

Patterns in the Myths/ commonalities

Human beings have always been curious about the unknown. This curiosity has caused them to search for answers to their questions. Myths evolved from this curiosity. The desire to explain why things happen or exist. "Creation myths are pervaded with a sense of the doom that is continually recalling all created shapes to the imperishable out of which they first emerged."⁶ Although each cultural group had developed their own myths, each one contains similar elements. Many of these similarities include natural elements, animals, colors, circles, creation, heroes, repeating numbers, the journey, and humans.

Creation myths all begin with the birth of the world we live in. In seminar, we talked about the creation of the world and how in each creation story, order was brought to disorder. There are different types of creation myths. In each myth, life begins in different ways. In Seminar, we discussed the Creation from Chaos myths. In these stories, the gods have disagreements causing chaos, and from these disagreements the gods take chaos and create order "by giving it a structure, forms, and norms,"⁷ and from that creation occurs. There are also Earth-diver myths. In these types of myths, the world is covered with water. Mud or earth from under this water is retrieved by an animal and land begins to form. In Emergence myths, humans arrive from elsewhere. Out of nothing myths, which are also known as ex nihilo myths, are those that have the world created from nothing. It just appears due to "a supreme deity, existing alone in a pre-creation emptiness or void, who consciously creates an organized universe on his own."⁸ World Parent myths are those that deal with a male and female figure who are usually portrayed as Earth and Sky. They procreate, and from them all life begins.

Most myths begin with the first period of creation where everything is peaceful, and the deities get along. In the second period, there is violence. It is this violence that leads to creation.

The Lenape Tribe of Delaware, the Huron of the St. Lawrence Valley, and the Maidu of California have similar creation myths. They fall into the Earth-Diver category. The world starts as a watery place. From this watery place, life as we know it is created. The second, is an Above and Below myth, where the creator comes from heaven to create life. The Yoruba creation myth from West Africa is an Above and Below myth. The myth's main deity lives in the world above earth. From this world, he can look at the earth below, see the emptiness, and begin to create life. There are many different creation myths in the Hindu religion. These myths are "Out of Nothingness" myths. The deities weren't aware of their own presence until time came into existence.

Each creation myth includes a supreme being. In the Lenape myths, the supreme beings are either a beautiful woman from heaven, or a tortoise living in the water. They are the ones who are the catalyst for creation. In the Huron Myth, the Divine Woman is the supreme being. In the Maidu myth, the supreme being is the Earth Starter. He creates dry earth with the help of the turtle. In the Yoruba creation story, Olorun owns the sky.

He is the creator. The chief of the deities in this myth is called the Great God who helps to create the Earth at Olorun's direction. In the Hindu religion, "there is a trinity of main Hindu deities—Brahma, the creator of the universe, Vishnu the preserver, and Shiva the destroyer."⁹ These deities are part of the Hindu creation cycle.

Creation myths usually begin with the creation of animals before the creation of humans. In the Lenapi, Huron and Maidu stories, the world was only water. In Lenape myth, there lived a tortoise. The Huron myth, a turtle, beaver, and toad were the main animals. In the Maidu myth, a turtle, as well as other animals like Coyote, Rattlesnake, and Deer. From these animal's dry land and human life was created. The Yoruba myth had spiders, pigeons, hens, and a Chameleon. These animals assisted with the creation. In Hindu myths, many of the gods have features that resemble animals. Vishnu has been shown with a head of a fish, turtle, and boar. Ganesh is depicted with the head of an elephant. The gods have been portrayed like this because that is how they have been seen in visions and represented in stories and legends.

Native American Myths

Many Native American myths describe a world before the one we live in today. The people who occupied that first world were considered the first people and were different from us. "Those people were very numerous, so numerous that if a count could be made of all the stars in the sky, all the feathers on birds, all the hairs and fur on animals, all the hairs on our own heads, they would not be as numerous as the first people."¹⁰ People are born of the earth. These people are the benefactors of all who come after.

Native Americans believe that myths were given to them by the first people. The Iroquois believe that the creation myth was given to an ancient chief in the middle of a deep forest. The myth was told to this chief through a voice that emanated from beneath a stone. The Weitspekan of California believe their creation myth was told to them by the sacred tree. Native American beliefs are tied to the world before this one. They have many questions about the world they lived in. The questions ranged from, "Where did trees come from?" to "Where did Salmon come from?". Through these questions, creation myths emerged.

In the Native American creation myth of the Lenape, Huron, and Maidu tribes we find the Earth-Diver myth. In the Earth-Diver myths, water is a symbol of chaos. In the Lenape myth, the creator of all, He-Who-Creates-Us-By-Thought created the world, but only animals inhabited it. It was a watery world and the animals were tired of living in the water. They decided to bring up mud from the bottom. The animals dove down into the water. The muskrat dove deeper than any of the other animals and came up with mud from the bottom with mud on his paw. He-Who-Creates-Us-By-Thought put the mud from the muskrat's paw onto the back of the turtle. The mud started to grow and became land. The animals then had dry land to live on. One day a tree grew on the turtle's back

and sprouted man. From that same tree a shoot sprouted woman. These first people are the ancestors of all people on earth.

The Hurons have a very similar creation myth. In this myth, it was a divine woman who fell from the sky. The woman almost drowned and was saved by a snapping turtle. The animals decided that she needed dry land to live on. Animals dove down into the water to retrieve some mud. Some of the animals perished in the attempt. The toad, though could bring up earth. It was put on the turtles back and that was the start of the earth. Since then, the turtle has held up the earth.

Another Earth-Diver myth is the Maidu myth. In this myth, Turtle and Pehe-ipe (Father-of-the-Secret-Society) were in a raft. Earth Starter climbed down from heaven and climbed into the raft. The turtle asked for dry land and people. The Earth Starter tied a rope around the leg of the turtle, who dove down to get mud from the bottom of the water. It took 6 years, but he came up with a small amount of earth. The Earth Starter rolled the earth into a small ball and placed it on the back of the raft. The earth finally dried, and it was as large as the whole world. Then the Earth Starter created the sun, the moon and the stars, as well as the trees. Animals were created and finally people were created. Earth Starter took care of them. Finally, one day we went away and returned to the heavens.

West African Yoruba

Yoruba believe that Olodumare is the Great God, and Olorun is known as the creator or the owner of heaven. They believe that their gods have the same characteristics as a human being. Nature figures in the Yoruba religion. The Yoruba personify earth, rock, trees, and other natural forces.

In the Yoruba myth, Olorun was the Owner of the Sky. He lived in the sky with all the other spirits. Sometimes the gods came down to play in the marsh on Earth. There wasn't any solid land around at all. There were also no human beings on Earth. Olorun wanted dry land so he asked the Great God to make some. He then gave him a shell with a small amount of earth, a hen, and a pigeon in it. The Great God went down below and spread the earth. He then put the hen and pigeon in it and they scratched until the earth covered the marsh. Olorun sent Chameleon down to check on the land. After two trips, Chameleon reported that the land was dry. Olorun named the place Ife. A house was then created, and all other houses came from that one. It took four days to create the earth. On the fifth day, Great God was worshipped as the Maker.

Olorun then sent Great God back down to create trees to feed the people when they arrived. Olorun sent humans from heaven to live on the earth. Great God molded the people's body parts, like their bodies and heads, out of the earth. Olorun brought these people to life. Great God was jealous of Olorun because he brought people to life. He

never figured out how Olorun did it. The Great God still makes the bodies and head, but he leaves his mark on them to show how unhappy he is, by becoming intoxicated and created humans with deformities.

Hindu

Unlike the Native American creation myths, some of the Hindu creation stories do not have a reference to a world before, or as the Native Americans call it, the First World. The Hindu religion has many different creation stories. Creation happened during sporadic cycles. "A 3,000-year-old text, written by Brahman priests summed it up, "In the beginning was neither existence nor non-existence."¹¹ The Hindu religion is the only religion that believes that there are many births and deaths during creation cycle. Many Hindus believe in the cycle of four ages. The first age was 4,800 divine years of peace. The second age lasted 3,600 divine years. This period is of a lesser virtue. The third age was a combination of virtue and corruption that lasted for a period of 2,400 divine years. Finally, the last period is the one we are in. This period is a period of increasing evil lasting 1,200 divine years. At the end of this period, "All is to be annihilated in a cataclysm of fire and flood, and thereby reduced to the primordial state of the original, timeless ocean, to remain of a period equal to that of the whole length of the four ages. The world's great ages then begin anew."¹²

One of the earliest references to a deity in the Vedas was Purusha, who had a thousand heads, eyes and feet. He could enclose the earth in his hand. The other gods sacrificed him. Not only was his body transformed into three other gods, animals, and elements but the parts of his body also became the various social classes or castes. Later on, new deities developed. They were Brahma, Shiva, and Vishnu. These deities represent the cycle of creation from birth to death in the forms of the creator, destroyer and preserver of the world.

In one version of the Hindu myth, Vishnu was asleep curled up in a cobra upon a dark ocean. Vishnu was asleep, unaware and undisturbed by the motion of the ocean or any dreams. Vishnu was awakened by the sound of Om. From Vishnu's navel grew a lotus. In the middle, sat Brahma. Vishnu commanded Brahma to create the world. Vishnu vanished but Brahma stayed behind in the lotus flower. He split the flower into three parts. One part became the heavens, one part the earth, and one part the skies. Brahma then created grass, trees, flowers and plants. He gave these creations feelings. Next, he created animals and insects. Brahma created birds and fish. He gave them the five senses. A demon then appeared and stole all that Brahma made. Vishnu destroyed the demon and changed himself into an animal to save the world. Brahma finished creating the world and all living things. One day though, Shiva will destroy the world when he get angry enough with the evil in the world. At this time, nothing will exist but Brahma.

Another version of this myth is like the one above. There was a tiny golden egg which lay around for one year. Inside the egg, the essence of Vishnu slept. When Vishnu started to stir, he turned into Brahma the creator. Brahma became eager to create others to keep him company. He wanted to know himself, so he split himself in half. From each half, he created the earth, and the heavens. Other aspects of life were also created now, including life and death.

In one account of the Hindu creation myth, Brahma had many children who were known as the sages. He then divided himself and became Vishnu again. When it gets to the end of time, Brahma will become Shiva the destroyer at which time Vishnu will return to the egg and the creation process will begin again.

In the Hindu myth Indra and Vritra. “Vritra was a demon in the form of a dragon with sharp claws, large fangs, scales, and a deadly tail the size of the biggest trees.”¹³ and steals all the water on the Earth. Since all the water is gone, life on Earth is in danger. Indra is the only one who can save the world. He goes to Vritra’s fortress and battles the monster. Finally, Indra slays Vritra, cutting him open. As he cuts him open, all the water flows from the body. Indra is then known as the King of the World.

Cultural Influence on Modern life

Each one of these cultures, whose creation myths my students have researched, have had an impact on our modern-day life. We can’t go through a day without being affected by one of these cultures. It is important for students to understand the impact each of these cultures have had on us.

Native American Influence

According to the U.S. Census, there are approximately 6 million Native American Indians and Alaskan Natives in the U.S. In 2015, they made up 2.0 percent of the population of the United States. These indigenous people have influenced our life through their ideas on conservation, foods, language, and art.

Native Americans have always respected “Mother Earth.” “They have always strived to live in harmony with the seasons and the land, to take only what was needed, and to thank every plant, animal, or thing that was used.”¹⁴ They were America’s first conservationists.

Native tribes also gave us some of the foods we find on our tables. Many of these foods were shared with the early European settlers. Some of these foods include beans, squash, and corn, also known to Native Americans as the Three Sisters. Today, many people around the world use American Indian agricultural methods for growing corn and potatoes. This equates to about 60% of the world’s food supply.

Many words we use today began with the Native Americans. Some of these are skunk, toboggan, and kayak. Towns like Oneida, Manhattan, and Seneca Lake are Native American names.

Native American art and design has also had an impact on our everyday life. Native American beadwork and jewelry are popular with many people. Native music has been integrated with today's popular music. Some aspects of Native American music is the use of nonsense syllables, called vocables in the music. Scat singing is an example of a song that uses vocables

Yoruba Cultural Influences

There are 40 million people in the world who practice the religion called Yoruba. Most of those are from Nigeria in western Africa. Western Africa has influenced American life through its music, food, and language. These influences were brought to the United States during the time of slavery.

Western African music has had an impact on our modern-day music. The rhythmic pattern has been used in jazz, blues, and swing. "One of the most prominent of these shared characteristics is the A-B-A-B-C-C lyric pattern that originated in the work songs of enslaved Africans. Initially this lyric pattern helped to coordinate and synchronize movements of enslaved Africans while collectively working."¹⁵

The slaves from western Africa influenced American eating habits also. Some of the most common foods and dishes that came from western Africa through the slave trade were rice, okra, and jambalaya, a dish of rice, meat, and vegetables.

Today, the Yoruba pray to Olorun. "Olorun (Sky God) is the high god, the Creator. One may call also on him with prayers or by pouring water on kola nuts on the ground."¹⁶ The modern-day Yoruba have festivals to celebrate their deities.

Hindu Influence

The population of India in 2001 was 1,028,610,328. Eighty percent of those people were Hindu. By 2017, the population of India grew to 1,066,175,249. The percentage of those practicing the Hindu religion stayed the same. India has had a big influence on the United States. Some of these influences are yoga, food, and non-violence.

There are many food dishes that have become popular in the United States. "Although Indian food makes up less than 2% of food market in US, it is the fastest growing food market in US."¹⁷

Non-violence is part of the Hindu faith.” Like most religions Hinduism includes both teachings that condemn violence and war, and teachings that promote it as a moral duty.”¹⁸ Dr. Martin Luther King was inspired by this philosophy.

Strategies

The strategies that I will be using will be a graphic organizer, cooperative learning and effective questioning.

The graphic organizer will be used to compare each of the myths. The students will fill in the title of the myth, type of myth, deities, other characters (human, animals), how these myths influenced our modern world, and good vs. evil.

Cooperative learning will also be used, since students will be paired up to do this research. An example of a pairing strategy is as follows. Pair students either by same reading ability or by high level readers with low level readers. Use the following steps to pair high-level readers with low-level readers. First, list the students in order from highest to lowest according to reading ability. Next, divide the list in half. Then place the top student in the first list with the top student in the second list. Continue until all students have been partnered. Remember to be sensitive to pairings of students with special needs, including learning or emotional needs. You can adjust pairings as necessary.

I will also use effective questioning. Higher order thinking questions help students with critical thinking skills. Students need these skills as they prepare for the future. I will focus on reasoning and analyzing.

Classroom Activities

My unit will include three lessons. The lessons will range from 1-5 days, with the unit taking a total of 2 weeks to complete. The lesson will be delivered using the blended learning model. The blended learning model requires the teacher to deliver the introductory content to the students. Once the content is delivered, the online component can be completed in the classroom or in another location such as home. As students are working on their online lessons, they will be checking in with the teacher to update their progress, ask questions, or ask for help. Once the online component is completed, students will be responsible to complete a product to showcase their learning.

Students will be paired up for this unit. An example of a pairing strategy is as follows. Pair students either by same reading ability or by high level readers with low level readers. Use the following steps to pair high-level readers with low-level readers. First, list the students in order from highest to lowest according to reading ability. Next, divide the list in half. Then place the top student in the first list with the top student in the second list. Continue until all students have been partnered. Remember to be sensitive to

pairings of students with special needs, including learning or emotional needs. You can adjust pairings as necessary.

The reader from the first list should read first while the reader from the second list listens and follows along. Then the second reader should pick up where the first reader stops. If additional practice is needed, the second reader can reread what the first reader read. Encourage pairs to ask each other about what was read. Some examples are "What was your page about? What was your favorite part?".¹⁹

Lesson One: – Introducing Myths

Day 1

On the first day of the lesson, students will be introduced to the myth Indra and Vritra. They will use this myth to investigate the elements, or patterns found in all myths. Students will use a graphic organizer to keep track of all the elements found in the myths they will be reading in order to identify the patterns / archetypes. The organizer will have headings for each of the elements on top. The headings will be "Type of Myth," "Chaos," "Order," "Supreme Being," "Good vs. Evil," "The Journey," and "Animals". Students will write the title of the myth on the left. Once all the myths are read, and the graphic organizer is completed, students will be able to compare the elements in the myths and identify the patterns / archetypes.

Before reading the story, students will be asked the following questions: "What is a myth?" and "Why were they developed?" Students will turn and talk and then share out after each question is asked. Give students about 30 seconds to discuss the answer, then have them share out. As they share out, keep a list of their answers. This list will be revisited at the end of the unit.

After the students have discussed the questions, you will introduce the patterns / archetypes that are found in all myths. This introduction to the patterns / archetypes in myth can be presented in many ways; a power point presentation, a Nearpod, or Prezi. Students will learn that myths have common elements. The birth of the world is found in each creation myth. It explains how the world came to be. Students will be introduced to three of those ways. The first type of myth students will be introduced to is the Earth Diver myth in which the world is covered with water. From this watery place, life as we know it is created. The next type is the Above and Below myth. In this myth, the creator comes from heaven to create life. Finally, there is the Out of Nothingness myth, in which deities aren't aware of their own presence until time comes into existence. Once aware of their own presence, creation occurs.

Students will also be introduced to other archetypes. In many creation myths, the world is in chaos before order is restored. The chaos originates when gods and goddesses

have disagreements. Out of these disagreements, order is restored through the creation of the earth.

The next archetype students will be introduced to is the supreme being. Each myth contains a supreme being. This being is the one that helps to begin creation. This creation usually begins with the creation of animals, which would be another element of myth that will be introduced to students. Animals found in creation myths assist the supreme being with the creation of the earth and the people who inhabit it.

Hand out the graphic organizer. The organizer will be used for students to fill out so that they can keep track of all the elements of the myth Indra and Vritra. You can either read the myth to students in whole or small group, or you can have the students read the myth independently.

Once the myth is read, have students turn and talk to summarize the myth. After about a minute, have students share out. Once they share out, students will work together in whole group to fill in their graphic organizer. For each element, discuss if it is found in the myth Indra and Vritra. Students should be able to point out that this myth is a Water Diver myth because the myth centers around water and life's need for it. There is Chaos in the world when Vritra takes all the earth's water, a drought ensues, and life is in danger. Order is restored when Indra kills Vritra and the water is returned, and the earth and life is saved. There is an animal figure in the myth. Vritra is a monster in the form of a serpent. The supreme being in this is Indra. He is able to destroy Vritra and return all of the water to the earth. The journey represented when Indra looks for Vritra to destroy her.

Lesson 2 – Exploration of Creation Myths

For this lesson, students will focus on exploring creation myths from three different cultures. They will read creation myths from the Native American Lenape tribe, the Yoruba religion from West Africa, and the Hindu religion. These myths all have common elements

Day 1

The first day of this lesson will focus on the Native American creation myth from the Lenape tribe. Students will use Schoology, our Learning Management System, to access the myth. You can also print out the myth or find the myth in any number of books about the Lenape tribe. Students will read the myth independently or using Google Read / Write, will listen to the myth. Once they are done, they will turn and talk to summarize the myth.

After students summarize the myth, they will work together to fill in their graphic organizer. Once all pairs have completed their organizer, review the answers in whole group, and discuss the information.

Day 2

Students will read the Yoruba creation myth on the second day. They will read the myth independently and then with their partner, they will summarize the myth. Once they summarize the myth, each pair will work on filling out their graphic organizer.

In whole group, students will discuss the information they filled in on the graphic organizer and we will talk about the elements that the Yoruba creation myth has.

Day 3

On day 3, students will read a Hindu Cosmic Egg myth. This one is a different one from the Indra and Vritra myth read at the beginning of this unit. Once students finish reading the myth, they will work together to summarize the myth, and then fill in their graphic organizers.

In whole group, students will discuss the information they filled in on the graphic organizer and we will talk about the elements that the Hindu creation myth has.

Once the graphic organizer is reviewed, students will work together to find the patterns or archetypes in the myths. Students should understand that even though the myths may be varied in how the world was created, and from different cultures, they each have a supreme being, animal figures, chaos and order.

Day 4

On day 4, students will begin to explore each of the cultures whose creation myths they read. They will begin to gather information on where the Lenape of Delaware, Yoruba of West India, and the Hindu of India live. Students will be introduced to archeology and learn that archeologists look for clues that help them understand a culture and that culture's beliefs.

Students will watch the video "Solving Mysteries with Archaeologists." Explain that this is how scientists learn about the past and about each culture. They look for artifacts to help them understand a people or culture.

After students watch the video, they will take a virtual tour of each of the cultural area so that they can understand the geography and the people. Student will fill out an "I

Notice / I Wonder” graphic organizer. Students will use Google Earth to visit Native American, Hindu, and Yoruba sites of religious significance.

The class will come together to discuss the virtual tours and what they noticed about each area they visited. After we talked about the “Notices”, the class will then talk about their wonders.

Day 5

On day 5, students will begin to explore the contributions that each of these cultures have made to the world. Students will use Schoology, the Learning Management System, to access information on-line encyclopedias and websites. They can also use books to gather information on the contributions made by each culture.

As students read, they will take notes on the information gathered. Once all information is obtained, students will sit with their partners and compare their notes.

Lesson 3 – Demonstration of Knowledge

During this lesson, students will produce a product to demonstrate their understanding of creation myths. The product can be created using Google Slides, Google Docs, or video. The product will include the common archetypes found in each of the three creation myths. Students will also include information about the geographical areas where the cultural groups live, and how these cultures have influenced present day life.

Introduce students to Google Slides and Google Docs if they are not familiar with either of these programs. You may need to show students how to take video if they decide to do a video project. Students will need to use their graphic organizers and their notes to work on their projects.

Day 1

Students will share with their partners what they learned about creation myths. Once students have shared what they know with their partner, call on students to share out with the class. Tell students that today they will begin to work individually on their projects. Explain to students that they will create either a Google Slide, Google Doc, or a video to show what they learned. Remind students that their project should include commonalities among creation myths, information about the geographical area of each culture, and how these cultures have influenced present day life.

Day 2-5

Student will continue to work on their project. The teacher will check in with the students to make sure all components of the project are being completed.

Day 6-7

For the next two days, students will present their projects. Before the presentations review with students what a good presentation should look like. Students should speak in complete sentences with a clear, loud voice. They should also speak at an appropriate pace so that the audience can understand them. Once they present their project, students in the audience can ask questions to get clarification of facts.

Appendix

Reading myths from various cultures will help students to meet literacy standards. Doing this will address **Common Core State Standard for Literature RL3.2** *Recount stories, including fables, folktales, and myths from diverse cultures; determine the central message, unit, or moral and explain how it is conveyed through key details in the text.* Students will read three creation myths from three different cultures and explain the common patterns between them through the key details of each myth.

Reading myths from various cultures will expose students to different types text structures. Reading these myths will address two standards **Common Core State Standard for Literature RL3.4** *Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, distinguishing literal from nonliteral language.* **Common Core State Standard L5a** *Distinguish between literal and non-literal meanings of words and phrases in context.* Students will analyze how the words shape the meaning and the tone of the text. Students will focus on the literal and figurative language in the text.

Students need to be skilled at sharing their knowledge. Sharing their knowledge will address **Common Core State Standard for Speaking and Listening SL4** *Report on a topic or text, tell a story, or recount an experience with appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details, speaking clearly at an understandable pace.* Students will prepare presentations using information they have learned about the commonalities of myths and present them to the class.

Student need to be skilled at preparing presentations that are engaging to their audience. Creating an engaging presentation will address **Common Core State Standard for Speaking and Listening SL5** *Create engaging audio recordings of stories or poems that demonstrate fluid reading at an understandable pace; add visual displays when appropriate to emphasize or enhance certain facts or details.* When preparing their projects, students will insert visual aids, photos, illustrations, and video, into their work to draw the audience's attention to it and make their presentation more interesting.

Students need to learn to communicate appropriately. Their presentations will help them meet **Common Core State Standard for Speaking and Listening SL6** *Speak in complete sentences when appropriate to task and situation in order to provide requested detail or clarification.* Students will present their presentations using appropriate speaking skills. Once the presentation is over, students will answer questions asked from the teacher and other students.

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