

Sixth Grade Unit 2

Theme Overview:

"Myths, Legends, and Heroes " was selected for an eight-week interdisciplinary study of how emerging civilizations explained and organized their world through myths and legends. The goal of this unit is for students to understand and recognize that people have endeavored to explain and organize the world around him since ancient times. Analysis, investigation, and research of the myths, legends, and heroes of this unit will provide insight into the history, values, attitudes, ethics, and religious beliefs of a variety of ancient civilizations. The thematic unit will incorporate language arts, science, and social studies standards. Students will be able to work as individuals, on teams, and in small groups.

Driving Questions:

- **What meanings did myths about gods, goddesses, and heroes have for the ancient societies? What meanings do the myths have for us today?**
- **What effect did mythology have on the development of the arts, sciences, language, and society?**
- **How do events and supporting details of myths support the development of hero characteristics and qualities of a hero and how have these qualities changed over time?**
- **How did ancient civilizations explain natural phenomena through their myths and legends?**
- **How did the actions of ancient military leaders reflect their era's ideal of a hero?**
- **How did ancient governments impact modern Western governments?**

New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards specific to this unit:

Language Arts Teachers:

When the setting of a novel is relevant to its plot, it is appropriate and meaningful to address the geographical location using maps, charts, and other resources. For students, this will provide reinforcement for similar topics in social studies.

Social Studies Standards

*Note that geography is now embedded across all grade levels and units. It should be addressed within the topic of study rather than in isolation. The geography standards are highlighted, but mapping the location of any standard when appropriate enhances learning for students. *

- 6.2.8.A.3.a. Determine the role of political institutions on land ownership, social status and economic development in ancient civilizations in different geographic areas.
- 6.2.8.A.3.b. Relate the establishment of a more formalized law code to meeting the growing needs of communities.
- 6.2.8.B.3.a. Explain the benefits and challenges facing ancient civilizations established near major rivers or other large bodies of water.
- 6.2.8.B.3.b. Determine the role of geography and climate patterns on the development of trade networks, inventions and the spread of disease and their relationship to a civilization's survival.
- 6.2.8.C.3.a. Explain the relationship of food surpluses to economic specialization, trade and social stratification in agrarian communities.
- 6.2.8.C.3.b. Explain how tool and weaponry advancements led to the creation of new jobs and the development of a class system.
- 6.2.8.C.3.c. Determine the significance of changing from a barter economy to a money economy.
- 6.2.8.D.3.e. Determine how mathematics and science were used by ancient civilizations to better understand the world and explain their impact on subsequent civilizations.
- 6.2.8.A.4.a. Analyze the different forms of ancient Greek government and determine the extent of their influence on future civilizations.
- 6.2.8.A.4.b. Compare and contrast the city-states and identify the factors that promoted both unification and conflict.
- 6.2.8.A.4.c. Evaluate the impact that military leaders and conflicts had on the people and society in this era.
- 6.2.8.B.4.a. Explain how geography and availability of resources contributed to the establishment of the city-state system and the expansion of Greek civilization.
- 6.2.8.B.4.b. Relate the focus on commercial agriculture to how and where people chose to live.
- 6.2.8.C.4.a. Relate the expansion of land and sea routes to trade and the transmission of culture and new ideas.
- 6.2.8.C.4.b. Determine how slavery affected the economic system and technology development.
- 6.2.8.D.4.a. Compare and contrast the roles and responsibilities of citizens in a democratic city-state to those in a military aristocracy.
- 6.2.8.D.4.b. Speculate why the rights and responsibilities of citizenship differed for free men and women, slaves and foreigners in this era.
- 6.2.8.D.4.c. Relate the role of religion in government to daily life in ancient Greece and determine the impact on another civilization.
- 6.2.8.D.4.d. Determine how philosophy and religion were used to explain natural phenomena based on examining literary works from this time period.
- 6.2.8.D.4.e. Explain how drama reflected the Greek culture and determine its influence on present day drama.
- 6.2.8.A.5.a. Analyze the government of Ancient Rome and determine its impact on the creation of western government.
- 6.2.8.A.5.b. Analyze how the actions of powerful leaders affected the expansion of Rome, the nature of government, the economy and society.
- 6.2.8.A.5.c. Explain how Pax Romana impacted the economic, cultural and political systems of the time.
- 6.2.8.B.5.a. Determine how geography and different regional cultures influenced the development of Roman political, economic and social systems.
- 6.2.8.C.5.a. Explain how the development of a uniform system of money affected trade in this era.

- 6.2.8.C.5.b. Determine the impact of urban engineering on how people lived and its impact on future civilizations.
- 6.2.8.C.5.c. Relate the growth of Roman trade to the growing unity of the Latin peoples.
- 6.2.8.D.5.a. Judge the influence of Greek culture on Roman arts, sciences and religion and their enduring impact on present day culture.
- 6.2.8.D.5.b. Explain the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and the role of social status in government.
- 6.2.8.D.5.c. Compare and contrast the nature of the slavery system that developed under the Roman government with another ancient civilization.
- 6.2.8.D.5.d. Trace the origin of the legal system that was developed during this time period and relate to the current system used in the United States.

Science

5.7.6A- Motion and Forces

- Recognize that an object at rest will remain at rest and an object moving in a straight line at a steady speed will continue to move in a straight line at a steady speed unless a net (unbalanced) force acts on it.
- Recognize that motion can be retarded by forces such as friction and air resistance.
- Recognize that everything on or near the earth is pulled toward the earth's center by gravitational force.

5.7.6 B- Energy Transformations

- Recognize that heat flows through materials or across space from warmer objects to cooler ones.
- Show that vibrations in materials can generate waves that can transfer energy from one place to another.
- Design an electric circuit to investigate the behavior of a system.

5.9.8 A- Earth, Moon, Sun Systems

- Investigate the earth, moon, and sun as a system and explain how the motion of these bodies results in the phases of the moon and eclipses.
- Explain how the regular and predictable motions of the earth and moon produce tides.
- Explain how the tilt, rotation, and predictable motions of the earth relative to the sun produce seasons and weather patterns.

5.9.8 B- Solar Systems

- Describe the physical characteristics of the planets and other objects within the solar system and compare earth to the rest of the planets.

5.9.8 C- Stars

- Understand that the sun is a star and that it shares characteristics with other stars.

5.9.8 D- Galaxies and Universe

- Know that the universe consists of many billions of galaxies, each including billions of stars.

Materials

Possible Core novels and/or authentic readings:

Atticus of Rome by Barry Denenberg (**C**)

Greek Myths by Olivia Coolidge (**A+**)

The Lightning Thief by Rick Riordan (**A**)

The Hero's Trail a Guide for a Heroic Life by T. A. Barron (**A+**)

Holes by Louis Sachar (E)

Call It Courage by Armstrong Sperry (C)

Social Studies Textbook Ch. 9-12; 13-16 ; pgs. 138-142; 258-261

Science Textbooks: *Astronomy, Forces, Motion and Energy; Weather and Climate*

Guided Reading:

ILA Anthology (Prentice Hall): "Orpheus", pgs. 408-411; "The Gorgon's Head", pgs. 797-803; "Arachne", pgs. 822-825; "The Tiger Who Would Be King", pg. 302; "The Lion and the Bulls", pg. 303; "Why the Tortoise's Shell Is Not Smooth", pg. 442; "The Emperor's New Clothes", pg. 775; "Why Monkeys' Live in Trees", pg. 820; "A Crippled Boy", pg. 826; "The Three Wishes", pg. 828; "Loo-Wit the Fire Keeper", pg. 833; "He Lion, Bruh Bear, and Bruh Rabbit", pg. 785; "Senor Coyote and the Tricked Trickster", pg. 789; "How Coyote Stole Fire", pg. 804; "From Xena: Warrior Princess", pg. 808; "The Ant and the Dove", pg. 784.

Expository Text- Articles from *Encarta* and/or *Grolier*, *Newsweek*, *Time*
National Geographic -Reading Expeditions

Flush by Carl Hiaasen (E)

Graphic Greek Myths and Legends by Nick Saunders (E)

The Children of the Lamp The Akhenaton Adventure by PB Kerr (A)

Sea of Monsters by Rick Riordan (E)

Peak by Roland Smith (A)

The Incredible Journey by Sheila Burnford (C)

Independent Reading/Research:

American Reading Company leveled readers – Ancient Civilizations collection

Scott Foresman leveled readers:

Title	F&P Level	DRA	Lexile
<i>Where Did They Come From? Where Did They Go?</i>	V	44+	980
<i>Mysteries of the Ancient Americas</i>	W	44+	1100
<i>The Early Americas' Unsolved Mysteries</i>	Y	44+	1170
<i>Buildings in Greece and Rome</i>	V	44+	940

<i>Building Ancient Greece and Rome</i>	W	44+	1050
<i>Greek and Roman Architecture</i>	Y	44+	1090

Teacher Resources:

www.mythfolklore.net/aesopica

Aesop's Fables Online

www.mythweb.com

Learn about heroes, gods, and monsters of Greek mythology.

www.artsmia.org/world-myths

Artists have been inspired by the myths. Explore that on this site!

<http://falcon.jmu.edu/~ramseyil/greekmyths.htm>

Greek Mythology page. You will find Internet materials on Greek mythology, history of Greece, the Ancient Olympics and related topics.

http://www.internet-at-work.com/hos_mcgrane/egypt/egyptintro.html

<http://carlos.emory.edu/ODYSSEY/GREECE/homepg.html>

Interactive websites with many resources and activities:

http://www.pbs.org/mythsandheroes/myths_four_jason.html

Jason and the Argonauts

http://www.pbs.org/mythsandheroes/tguide_jason.html

Jason and the Golden Fleece

<http://www.webenglishteacher.com/classmyth.html>

Short summaries of Greek myths for kids

<http://www.historyforkids.org/noads/noads/learn/greeks/religion/myths/perseus.htm>

<http://www.abc.net.au/arts/wingedsandals/>

The Lightning Thief:

www.rickriordan.com

A teacher's guide to *The Lightning Thief*. Includes pre-writing activities, chapter by chapter questions and discussion topics, end of unit activities, etc.

http://teacher.scholastic.com/clubs/lit_circle_pdfs/lightningthief_t.pdf
Questions at various levels of Bloom's taxonomy, along with activities.

<http://suzyred.com/2006lightningthief.html>
Great links to research sites, readers' theater, interactive games, etc...

Children of the Lamp The Akhenaton Adventure
<http://www.pbkerr.com/flash/flash.swf>
Author' site include study guide and interview.

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Sites for Ancient Civilizations:

http://cybersleuth-kids.com/sleuth/History/Ancient_Civilizations/index.htm

<http://www.kathimitchell.com/ancivil.html>

http://www.ancientcivilizations.co.uk/home_set.html

<http://www.socialstudiesforkids.com/subjects/ancientcivilizations.htm>

Science Textbooks: *Astronomy, Forces, Motion, and Energy*
World Book Encyclopedia, Brain Pop, Encyclopedia Britannica, Facts on file
Expository Text – Articles from *Encarta* and/or *Grolier*
National Geographic-Reading Expedition
Turning Points in World History ABCNews Interactive Glencoe
Multi-educator World History until 1400 Lab Pack

Audio-Visual

Movies (clips)

Hercules (Walt Disney)

The Clash of the Titans

Star Wars IV A New World

UnitedStreaming Video Clip Library
<http://streaming.discoveryeducation.com/home/aboutus.cfm>

National Geographic Video Clip Library
<http://www.youtube.com/user/NationalGeographic>

Graphic Organizers

Suggested Student Activities

Theme introduction activities:

Introduce the lesson with a journal entry "What is a Hero?"

List characteristics of a hero on the board.

Divide the class into groups and give each a group a myth to read and summarize.

Generate characteristics common to all myths: hero, quest, good vs. evil etc...

Core text activities:

1. Predict critical vocabulary and build a mythology word wall.
2. Listen to daily read alouds and discuss vocabulary words.
3. Predict possible outcomes of the character's action.
4. Critique and appraise decisions made by characters, citing specific examples from the text.
5. Make inferences using textual information and providing supporting evidence.
6. Adjust the original prediction.

Short-term projects that could result in a long-term PBL of a "Mythological World":

1. Read various myths for background knowledge.
2. List characteristics from the worlds of these myths.
3. Create a concept map of the mythical world.
4. Take a component of the concept map and write supporting details.
5. Design street, housing, transportation, waterways, recreation, etc...
6. Create mythical characteristics gods, goddesses, mortals and creatures.

Short-term projects that could result in a long-term PBL of students creating their own myth:

1. Read various myths for background knowledge.
2. List characteristics common to myths.
3. Create your own myth including characteristics:
 - Develop characters: protagonists and antagonists
 - Plot development and dialogue
4. Illustrate your myth.
5. Compile class myths into a class anthology.

Short-term projects that could result in a long-term PBL of a mythology game:

1. Create a board game based on the famous adventures of mythical gods and goddesses.
2. Choose their favorite myth and develop a game based on it.
3. Write a rulebook.
4. Design the board, pieces, and game cards.
5. Play each other's games and complete an evaluation form.

Short-term projects that could result in a long-term PBL:

1. Divide students into exploratory teams of a least 6 members. As a team, they set out to investigate 3 recently discovered ancient civilizations: the Aztecs, Mayans, or Incas.
2. Assign members the following roles as investigators: the mathematician, the historian, the

anthropologist, the archeologist, the ecologist, biologist, and an editor-in chief. Some members may have two roles.

3. Enter your civilizations and collect information, stories, myths, oral and written legends, artifacts, pictures, drawings, etc. Look for items that answer or provide support to these keys items:

- a. Myths and legends that help organize or explain the society
- b. Scientific and technological advances
- c. Mathematical calculations that support its calendar, physical structures, city plans
- d. Religious beliefs and ceremonies to explain the human world

3. Organize your findings in a multimedia presentation to share with the whole class (i.e., a web site or PowerPoint presentation). Or students might choose to:

- a. Create a physical replica of the civilization's capital city that includes structures, city plan, etc to use as a visual aide in explaining what you found.
- b. Depict the civilization through its art.
- c. Design a solar system based on the civilization's knowledge of the universe.

Other long-term projects:

1. Research a Greek hero and a hero from the 20th century.
 - a. Analyze the qualities they have in common and qualities that are unique to each.
 - b. Record information on a graphic organizer.
2. Describe the basic plots and themes of three myths:
 - a. Stories about heroes,
 - b. Stories about "how it came to be", and
 - c. Stories about the consequences of unwise behavior.
3. Create a comic book.
4. Write a play based on a myth.

- a. Read myths; write a script
 - b. Write dialogue, stage directions, etc...
4. Create a Puppet Theater based on a study of mythology.
 5. Identify a personal hero and conduct research.
 - a. Write an essay or narrative. Include illustrations or pictures.
 - b. Upload your story into the My Hero: Create program (www.myhero.com/create/) to create your own web page.

Assessments

- Informal daily observations
- Writing Conferences
- Anecdotal Notes (Guided Reading and Guided Writing)
- Rubrics:

Writing Rubric
Speaking Rubric
Oral Presentation-Dramatization
Open-Ended Scoring Rubric
Final Project: Mythological World Rubric