



Looking into Myth to See Culture

A Brief Investigation
of the Relationship
Between Myth and
Culture in America

A Unit for Grades 7-8

by Nichole Hollingsworth

August 4, 2019



Introduction

Rationale

Differentiation

- Dimensions
- Features
- Intended Population

Rationale:

This unit is designed to explore American myth—the shared beliefs about ourselves, others, and the way the world works that influence our actions. These myths, whether conscious or subliminal, pervade our media and perpetuate themselves through continued retelling. By noticing and naming the ways in which these myths shape our culture, we can better decide when/how to change, abandon, or pass on those myths and become ore critical consumers of myth.

Myth is an enormous concept and even focusing on American myth still leaves a lot of material ripe for discussion. This unit focuses on hero myth and American culture to further narrow the focus and to capitalize on the popularity of heroes at the box office. Since heroes exist at a next point of many areas of American myth, they are an ideal vehicle for investigation of this concept.

Several figures in myth are based in real people or groups, such as the self-made man, the cowboy, etc., but have grown and been exaggerated, even caricaturized, into something far larger than any one individual could embody. These myths are larger than life and they reveal our hopes (control over our destiny, freedom from restriction, upward mobility) and our fears (the savage other, communists, etc.) and our identity. With much of media either perpetuating or challenging these myths, society is revising and editing mythology as culture changes. But that process isn't spontaneous. That process is driven by individuals, both leaders/creators and consumers, who choose which myth and how to communicate that myth through culture.

While the term myth may bring to mind falsehoods or lies, this concept doesn't require truth to wield extraordinary power in culture. True or not, all a myth needs to be powerful is to be believed and that is where the transmission, creation, and propagation of myth through culture is key. Therefore the only way to truly destroy harmful or negative myth is to change what is transmitted through culture which requires an awareness of that myth. As people are beginning to discuss becoming "woke" to the world around them, they must also become "woke" to the structure of myth they are ensnared in and participate in as a member of a culture in order to realize their true power as individuals and as part of a collective.

In order to begin the work of delving into the concepts of myth and culture, students must hone their analytical skills and practice analysis of other culture to prepare for analyzing their own culture. Analyzing one's own culture can be tricky—it can be hard to become objective and see the broader trends and the revelations can be uncomfortable. It can be too personal if students aren't well prepared but if done well, analysis of one's own culture is important to deciding how to make one's mark on the world.

Throughout this unit, students will practice a variety of skills including:

- critical analysis—particularly of art and literature

- literary analysis
- abstract thinking
- synthesizing
- collaborative discussions
- making inferences
- drawing conclusions and noticing trends or patterns
- comparing and contrasting—especially of myth and culture

In many ways, this unit operates in between literary analysis and social sciences like anthropology and psychology because of the media analysis and cultural analysis. The skills of both of those disciplines will be useful to students in this unit.

As students delve into this unit they will analyze myth and culture by analyzing media, literature and art, in order to see how the literature and art of a culture spread its myth and how that myth reveals the culture. To start with something familiar, students will begin with some Greek mythology and will observe trends and draw conclusions about gender roles, heroes and villains, and the values of Greek culture as revealed in its myth. This segues into a similar analysis of American culture through literature and art in order to locate the myth and understand what that myth reveals about culture. In addition to creating their own analyses of myth and culture, students will critique the analyses of others which is a critical skill. Students should be wary and investigative when it comes to the opinions/analyses of others and avoid accepting interpretations as fact, especially without doing their own research and thinking. In essence, one of the goals of this level of analysis is to help students foster the habits of mind that prevent them from blindly following others and believing everything they see or hear and help them make deliberate choices about what and whom to believe. In addition, the focus on broad and abstract thinking helps students see beyond their personal experience, become aware of their biases, and see the larger forces at play—the man behind the curtain so to speak. Ideally, this awareness and critical thinking will help students throughout their lives as they make choices that affect themselves and others.

This unit is highly discussion oriented which fosters an environment where students can push back on the text and others' interpretations in a respectful way. This discussion is also key in collaboration as students are encouraged to build upon each other's comments and create an understanding that makes connections between multiple student comments. True collaborative discussion involves listening to understand, not just listening for the other person to stop talking so you can take your turn. This shift is key because many students understand how to take turns but true listening is a subtle and underappreciated art that is crucial for synthesizing information and making connections between one's own ideas and those of others. As students have multiple opportunities for discussion, most notably in a Socratic Seminar, they have multiple opportunities to practice this skill. Depending on how much support students need in listening to understand and not just

listening to speak, there are also several opportunities for reflection that could either be added or expanded upon if needed.

The content used in this lesson varies from familiar myths to more recent interpretations of myth and culture. Most students will have some familiarity with Greek mythology which will provide an anchor point and later a point of comparison. Students will read a few Greek myths as well as myths from other cultures to build a broader understanding of myth and culture.

The analytical interpretations of myth and culture are taken from periodicals like The Atlantic and The Guardian, both of which are periodicals known for their high reading level articles and cultural commentary. The Guardian, as a British source, provides a look at American culture and myth from an outsider's perspective whereas The Atlantic is an American source. The Huffington Post has several relevant opinion pieces that relate to the concepts of the unit. These sources and the resources included in the Unit Resources section come from authentic sources and are not dumbed down or adapted for children. Any adaptation of materials in the unit is for the sake of brevity and relevancy in order to give students the opportunity to read authentic texts in an environment where the teacher can scaffold if necessary and students can experience a productive level of struggle as they grapple with these texts and the ideas and content contained within.

Differentiation

As this unit is intended for gifted students, this unit has been designed with gifted learners in mind and incorporate differentiation in multiple ways.

Dimensions:

- **Content**—The texts included in this unit range in approximate Lexile level from 900L to 1300L which is mostly within the middle school range but a few texts are into the high school Lexile range which provides more of a challenge for students. The artwork students analyze contains allusions to mythology that require students to have a broad base of content knowledge.
- **Process**—Several lessons, particularly the Visual Thinking Strategies lesson and the Socratic Seminar, are very open ended and require students to support their answers and opinions with evidence from the text. Other lessons require thinking at a high level of abstraction and analyzing from a very broad viewpoint. This also requires students to be able to see the “bigger picture” in ways that are not typical in a standard classroom which focuses on analysis inside a text rather than between texts. In some instances, students will have to practice mental flexibility in analyzing from multiple perspectives, some planned in the unit and others likely to occur as a result of student created questions in discussions.

- **Product**—At several points throughout the unit, students create products, whether minor products like questions for discussion or major products like their sales pitch for a hero, that ask them to go beyond traditional classroom expectations and think at a higher level. The student created questions require students to create products (questions) comparable to those that would be produced by a highly trained adult (teacher). This challenge forces students to think very critically.
- **Learning Environment**--Several lessons, particularly the Visual Thinking Strategies lesson and the Socratic Seminar, are very student directed which creates a learning environment in which students must exercise their leadership and cooperation skills in order to maintain the learning environment.

Features:

- **Complexity**—This unit requires abstract thinking at several points and requires students to analyze the relationships between concepts across texts. This is highly complex thinking requiring evaluation and synthesis thinking processes. Making inferences and drawing conclusions are the backbone of this unit as students analyze stories, art, and interpretive articles. In addition, several of the texts are highly complex in terms of writing and organization, particularly The Myth of the Cowboy for Lesson Plan 4.
- **Challenge**—As with many other features of differentiation, part of what makes this unit challenging is the unit materials and the high reading level and high level of analysis within those readings. Another layer of challenge in this unit is the way that unit requires skills from both English/literature and the social sciences. While students are analyzing literature and employing literary analysis they are also using that literature as a cultural artifact and employing the analytical skills of an anthropologist or sociologist in order to analyze their own culture and past/other cultures.
- **Depth**—As students analyze the concept of myth across multiple cultures and texts, students have the opportunity to investigate deeply into the concepts and the content. While this unit still leaves many avenues for further exploration, the lesson activities are designed to probe students to expand their understanding of myth beyond folktales, urban legends, or mythology and see the structures of shared belief that are woven throughout culture. In addition, myth is usually discussed with ancient or dead cultures and by revealing that concept's relevance to modern culture and disentangling it from religion, the unit pushes students to analyze and reflect on the world around them which will ultimately help them make more deliberate decisions as they interact with their culture.
- **Creativity**—Other than the creativity of different perspectives and observations on the material, the main outlet for creativity for students in this unit is in the

performance task. Students are tasked with creating a sales pitch and that is the only parameter in terms of medium they must abide by. Students may choose to create a digital sales pitch using computer animation, Google Slides/Powerpoint, etc. or an analog sales pitch with hand drawn, verbal, or written information. Students could even be encouraged to write or outline a backstory/episodes for their character or even a theme song. The absence of restrictions does not necessarily guarantee gifted students will produce creative results but if the teacher encourages students to be creative and supports students in brainstorming ways to showcase their talents.

- **Acceleration**—This unit is based on the expectation that students will be able to move through lower level tasks quickly or skip them entirely and focuses its attention on higher level learning goals. By avoiding wasting time on unnecessary scaffolding, this unit is suitable for a learner requiring acceleration. In addition, teachers can decrease the time given to certain aspects of tasks to help meet the needs of students who require acceleration. Traditional classroom instruction according to Common Core State Standards frequently focuses on focused analysis of a text in a very “zoomed in” manner. By assuming students can do such analysis and not wasting instructional time teaching that skill, the unit accelerates to analysis that notices trends and draws conclusions by analyzing text in a “zoomed out” manner.



Goals and Outcomes

Content

Process

Concept



LEO XII PONT MAX
ANN III

Goals and Outcomes

Content Goal: To develop an understanding of key elements and figures in myth.

Students will be able to:

- A. Describe common traits of heroes within multiple cultures, noting that not all heroes will fit the mold completely and that there may be multiple molds within a culture.
- B. Describe the ways in which myth is communicated within culture including oral tradition, written texts, art, and other forms of media.
- C. Describe elements of myth including stereotypes and common figures/archetypes.
- D. Analyze heroes as a representation of a culture's desired traits and norms.
- E. Analyze the depictions of gender roles and social norms in myth.

Process Goal: To develop analytical and critical thinking skills related to cultural analysis.

Students will be able to:

- A. Observe trends and patterns across myth within a culture and across multiple cultures.
- B. Make inferences and draw conclusions about myth and culture.
- C. Support inferences and conclusions with multiple pieces of evidence and sound reasoning.
- D. Make connections between texts and analyze points of convergence and divergence.
- E. Analyze cultural representations of myth by analyzing within a culture and comparing and contrasting across cultures.

Concept Goal: To understand the concept of myth and its relationship with culture.

Students will be able to:

- A. Define myth and culture
- B. Distinguish myth from mythology and religion.
- C. Describe how myth influences behavior.
- D. Analyze the ways in which myth is communicated through a culture.
- E. Analyze the impacts of myth on a culture and its people.

A low-angle, close-up photograph of the Statue of Liberty's head and crown, showing the intricate details of the face and the sharp points of the crown against a clear sky. The image is partially overlaid by a teal-colored rectangular area on the right side.

Assessment Plan

Evidence of Student
Understanding

Formative
Assessments

Summative
Assessment

IV Assessment Plan

Formative Assessments:

Assessing background knowledge is key to helping students connect their prior knowledge with the concepts. Asking them to generate individual, group, or class lists of myths they are familiar with (currently as an extension activity in Lesson 3 but could easily be moved earlier in the unit) and then discussing the trends about the myths (gender stereotypes, myth about outsiders/others, myths that control or limit groups, etc.). Sometimes students will mention very local myths and others will mention myths that are more widespread.

One of the more impactful moments for student understanding occurred during an activity created after reflecting on formative assessment results. Students had been speaking about myth and culture in very vague terms, almost just repeating what the teacher said with little evidence of student engagement with these concepts. I then began the third lesson with the following activator designed to connect historical and current myth and culture about heroes to help students begin to compare and contrast.

After reflecting on your discussions and reading your work from the past two days, many of you are noticing how heroes (because they are the supposed ideal for a culture) show what a culture sees as important and not important.

- What are some of the traits you've noticed that seem to be ideal in Greek myths?
- What are some of the traits you've noticed that seem to be ideal in American heroes?
- What are the similarities and differences in the ideal heroes of these two cultures?

This activator had the intended result, however student work artifacts were not captured for this activity.

Reviewing student created questions for the Socratic Seminar and the Questioning lessons are both excellent opportunities for assessing how critically students are engaging with the text and what level or depth of thinking they are using or asking for. The amount of instruction devoted to writing good/high level questions is dependent on the amount of experience students have with this skill. Providing a handout with question stems, creating a few examples, etc. are all ways to provide scaffolding if needed.

Helping students write questions that are more conceptual as opposed to text-dependent was difficult with the Questioning lesson because of student familiarity with text-dependent questions (EOG style) and lack of familiarity with writing broad/conceptual questions where multiple texts could be used as evidence. This reveals many students are familiar with focused, "zoomed in" questions but are unused to seeing the bigger picture and thinking at a more abstract or conceptual level.

One of the richest opportunities for formative assessment was in the multiple student-led discussions. The effectiveness and the insights generated within a Socratic Seminar are unpredictable because it depends on what the students bring to the table—their perspectives, experiences, prior knowledge, etc. Taking notes, recording/taking, or other forms of record keeping are highly encouraged.

During the Socratic Seminar I took notes and these notes are as near a transcription of particularly insightful comments as I could make. Overall, students focused on the disconnect between myth (they often interpreted this to include fairy tales and pop culture) and reality and express frustrations with American society's focus on heroes and hero myth.

"All of those stories we read as kids shape who we are. We hold stories close to us. It must affect us some way."

"They [fairy tales/stories] used to apply but now they don't."

"Do we look for heroes in places we shouldn't because we want to see them? We overdramatize small things.[as heroic]"

"Harry would do something stupid and Hermione would clean it up. But I don't have a Hermione."

"Our lives suck because they're not as cool as stories."

Throughout the unit, students were asked to reflect on the relationship between myth in culture, most frequently by being asked "How does myth reveal culture?" but sometimes additional probing questions were used to support student engagement with that essential question. As students began to discuss these concepts, the discussions reflected a more recursive or bidirectional relationship between these concepts than the unit focused on. Unfortunately, most of this was during discussion so there is little artifact of this understanding but some written responses reflect a more nuanced understanding of these concepts. Student work, both weak and strong, is included below in order to show the ways in which some students more readily engaged with the concepts than others:

"Myth influences people and people define culture. You don't see reality or the truth."

"Myth and culture are different because myth is what people believe, but it might not be true. Culture is how a group of people might act, how they dress, what they eat, ect [sic]...They are both similar to because culture can be based around myth and myth can also be based around culture."

"The relationship between myth & culture is that if culture or myth is believed the culture or myth is impacted."

What you don't see when you look at the world through myth is, you don't know the whole story, or if it's true.

Myth affects how you interact with the world by being cautious of others/objects & people's way of life.

I now know that myth & culture are in close relation."

"Myth directly affects culture, because when people believe things they act on them, whether it's embroidering gods into towels or slaughtering innocents portrayed as savages.

When you look at the world through myth, you're constantly biased in ways that aren't your own. You don't see individuals as they are, only as their ethnicity/gender/sexuality is portrayed." [This student's comment about "savages" is a reference to the Socratic Seminar discussion that discussed the portrayal of Native Americans in Pocahontas and in the discussion about the myth of the cowboy. In both discussions students noticed how the Native Americans were labeled as "savage" but concluded their ways were no more or less savage than those of American settlers and the term "savages" is used to shape perceptions of Native Americans.]

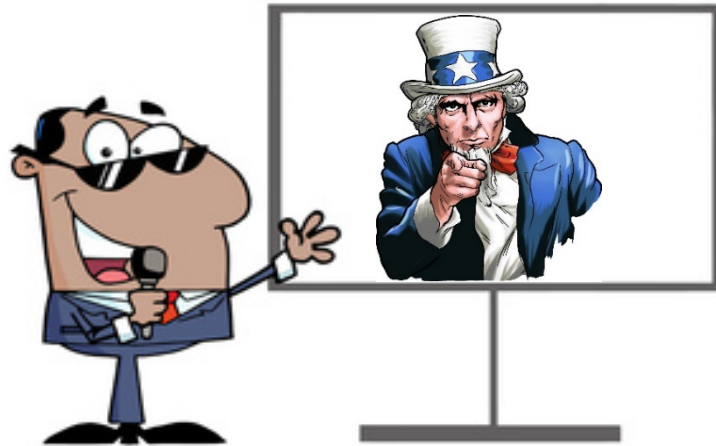
"Culture warps myth to fit its own ideals and by doing such it impacts itself. We live through biases and stereotypes and subconscious thoughts and myth can control those."

Summative Assessment: Performance Task

The performance task is designed to give the students the opportunity to exercise their creativity in their character design while also engaging with the concepts of culture and myth. For so many people, superheroes (particularly the Marvel Creative Universe super heroes like Ironman, Captain America, Thor, and Black Widow) are a new type of myth. These characters communicate beliefs about America and the way the world works that influence people's behavior. Captain America, in particular, is rife with opportunities for analysis from the way he is able to wield Thor's hammer (which magically can not be wielded by anyone who is not "worthy") to his origin story during World War II fighting Nazis (and the organization Hydra that hid behind the Nazis).

Students are well familiar with these characters and were excited about creating their own characters. The difficult piece was helping students connect their character to American culture and myth and not getting wrapped up in the character design.

Sales Pitch: We Need a New Hero!



Since many of their current characters were created decades ago and reflect the culture of that time period, Marvel is concerned that they may be losing relevance. In order to continue their success and broaden their market, the Marvel executives have asked you, their newest Creative Director, to create a sales pitch for a new heroic character that reflects present day American culture and its myth(s). As this character may appear in many formats including (but not limited to) graphic novel series and movie franchises, this character must be complex enough to support multiple stories.

Your sales pitch will need to include a physical description of your proposed heroic character, a description of their backstory, personality (both positive and negative), heroic traits, and actions. Your sales pitch will be delivered as a presentation so be sure to include visual/audio elements as needed to support your work. Be sure to make clear in your sales pitch the ways in which your heroic character is reflective of modern American culture.

Student Work Samples of Performance Task:

These samples are actual student work that have not been edited or corrected. Most are good sales pitches that showcase a student's creativity but they are overall weak on the connection to American culture and how their hero represents (or even critiques) American myth. Be sure to make this expectation clear and monitor students to ensure they think in this way to make the conceptual connection clearer.

Boardmeister (Google Slides Presentation)



The Name Is Boardmeister

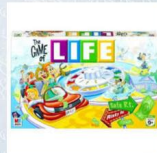
So this is the new face of marvel. Yes, you saw it right here folks: The new face of marvel. Perfect for American Culture, because Monopoly is American. Well, First of all, I will get into his abilities in the next few slides. But first, let's look at

This awesome photo of him that I did not get from Stock image on the internet, but actually took a photo Of him:



Backstory:

Families all over America play Monopoly. But hardly of them ever finish it. The game just takes too dang long! So Uncle Pennybags decided to rename himself to the Boardmeister and fight crime while he waits for the game to finish. His friends such as Uno, Jenga, and many more decided to join him, giving him superpowers.



What Are you looking at? Its down there ↓

Superpowers, Starting with the signature move:



PLEASE

THE UNO REVERSE CARD

The Boardmeister's signature move is the Uno Reverse Card. If any villain does anything harmful To the Boardmeister, then he can hold up the Uno Reverse Card, and whatever they do to him will Happen to themselves instead.



The Jenga Tumble

A move that you must have good aim For, is the Jenga tower tumble. This Causes a jenga tower in jumbo size to Fall on where the Boardmeister says. (hopefully the enemy)



SUED! For \$____,____,____

If the Boardmeister is just mildly Ticked off at someone, he can sue Them for whatever amount he Chooses. This ability comes the board Game: Life.



An Actual Defensive Move! WOW!

If the Boardmeister is hurt, then he can eat a candy From Candyland, which will heal him up, so he can Get back into the battle. Or, he can ride one of The shortcuts on the board up to a vantage point.



How does he relate to American Culture?

So, the Boardmeister doesn't only relate to American Culture by Monopoly being American. For one, all of the games involved Are American. Even Unl Also, The Boardmeister is so ~~trick~~ with all of the issues with America, that he can't really schedule any appointments with, for say, China. So he strives to just help with the states.

Character Traits!

- Very polite in an old-timey way
- Not greedy towards money
- Gets mad at Rude people
- Appreciates mustaches
- Favorite food is Cheese
- His favorite pet is a Hamster
- Who even cares lol

For the following presentation, the student had a beautiful pencil sketch of her hero that she taped onto the whiteboard where her Google Slides were projected. This pencil sketch does not translate well to pictures and is therefore not included.

Her verbal presentation went far beyond the written information in her slides and she discussed that part of her character's connection to American culture and myth was with her character's family's desire for the character to join the military and with her character's boredom (the student sees Americans as bored) as well as with her character's thirst for knowledge (here she explained a connection to the many American innovators and their curiosity).

This is Logan Quippit

--->

Now I hope I put the picture in the right spot (q-q)

Logan Quippit (General Info)

Age: 23

Gender: Nonbinary

Sexuality: Pansexual

Ethnicity: Hispanic

Personality: Friendly

Motivation: Boredom

Backstory

- Family wanted her to be a military human (She rebelled, wanted to be a historian)
- Little sister died in car accident, which motivated parents to kick out Logan even though they (referring to Logan) weren't involved
- They moved to city, became archivist
- Was bored, made some friends, got involved in stuff
- Basically has a network so they know about anything that happens in the city
- Was bored again, became vigilante/hero (Doesn't kill or anything)
- Currently is (secretly) vigilante and archivist.

More in Depth Info

Traits: Strong, courageous, quick, good at hand-to-hand combat, kind, smart, good instincts, always wants more knowledge, always bored

Flaws: Proud, stubborn, rash (sometimes), petty, "smart mouthed" (not a flaw btw)

I'm still hoping I put the picture in the right place oof

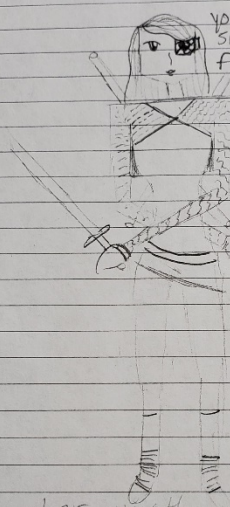
Okay Eva time to take down picture so they can read Back Story

Why they should be a new hero


Logan is a unique, colorful individual with a good personality and valid, interesting flaws. They represent LGBTQ+, and shows that ethnicities aren't just black or white. They represent different struggles, and is awesome, and that is why they should be the new Marvel Superhero.

Also being an archivist is totally cool so yeah

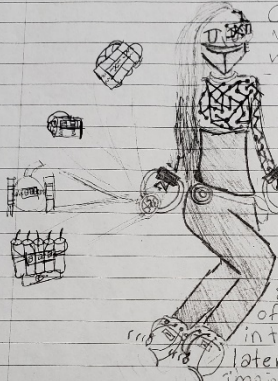
The following examples are from a student who discussed that her connection to American myth and culture was fighting against the myth that girls are not good at STEM. Her characters were the S.T.E.M. girls with each character representing a letter of the acronym. This student also discussed the lack of portrayal of female heroes and how that perpetuate the myth that only men are heroes.



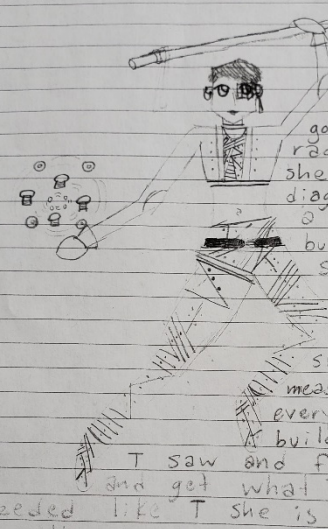
This is Mya while she is the youngest she is the smartest she comes from a poor family and she has high metabolism and with 5 brothers who don't support her she can see someone and in her mind see what they supposed to do and how to fight with angle recovery time and how many broken bones or injury there surgeries and can think up how much times and how to fight and sense her mother and father were in the army they train her every day she knows good destructions and can lead them through fights
I am M

Colors:  Age: 14

Talko1# S.T.E.M



Audrey Clara Jackson before she was born her mother Clara Avery Jackson was in an explosion while she was pregnant with Audrey her mother died and when they got to the hospital they thought the baby was dead but it was alive so they had a c-section and delivered her but she absorbed some of the nuclear reaction into her brain years later she started getting images of bombs in her head and she could look around and see what to use to make it she was a weapon being used by the bombers but with her friends she can get help and face the men who push her down including the people in her school (I am T) and



This is Alex she has been diagnosed for a while now with brain cancer and has been going through radiation after she was first diagnosed they had a big surgery but after she could see the materials and boards and screws in the building she saw the measurements and everything she could build in a flash when T saw and find the materials and get what T said she needed like T she is pushed down by others especially men and This is E she is being taught by her mother to stay cool and be calm even though she has anger issues I am E.

Another student, who missed the first day of camp and ran out of time to create a visual (because they were so absorbed in writing their character's story), created a character whose connection to American culture was the character's undocumented immigrant status and the character's desire for the American dream. In addition, the character was struggling with poverty due to his immigration status which connected to current American issues. This character was designed to critique American immigration policy and myths about immigrants as well as highlight how the American Dream does not work for everyone according to the student. The student's handwriting is difficult to read and their verbal presentation went far beyond this but their work is included below.

Latino, Immigrant

Misunderstood as a child so he's short and very scrawny and even now that he's in America he still doesn't have a good diet due to his financial situation.

They have less most of the time but sometimes he can afford to eat on his own. He has enough income to get a one room apartment with the other people and they during one of those times the people that he's living with consist of a hispanic man and his wife. The wife often mistreated him, stole his food, called him slurs, degraded him, and she got the best of him. He did become very close to one of his neighbors who was a hispanic man and never stood up for him but he understood why and never mistreated him. He stands by because he understood the high.

He got his powers from working at a factory and underneath it illegal ~~people~~ experiments where things were done. During the explosion his brain became ~~so~~ so powerful so he can see more through an average person he can remember things that he sees and he can manipulate reality.

He goes through the personal struggle of being able to hide his identity and his feelings and his negative and likes his happy and things ~~and~~ lived that and for a while he kept his powers for good and to instead ~~he~~ he was scared of him until his best friend gets his powers by a ~~very~~ good



Lesson Plans

1. Analysis of Heroes in Art--Visual Thinking Strategies
2. Heroes in Literature--Questioning
3. The Hero's Journey--Socratic Seminar
4. The Cowboy Myth + American Culture--Taba Concept Development

TEACHER NAME		Lesson #
Nichole Hollingsworth		1
MODEL	CONTENT AREA	GRADE LEVEL
Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS)	ELA/SS	7 th /8 th
CONCEPTUAL LENS		LESSON TOPIC
Myth		Analysis of Representations of Heroes/Heroism in Art
LEARNING OBJECTIVES <i>(from State/Local Curriculum)</i>		
<p>7.C.1 Understand how cultural values influence relationships between individuals, groups and political entities in modern societies and regions.</p> <p>7.C.1.1 Explain how culture unites and divides modern societies and regions (e.g. enslavement of various peoples, caste system, religious conflict and Social Darwinism).</p> <p>7.C.1.2 Explain how cultural expressions (e.g. art, literature, architecture and music) influence modern society.</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.8.1-Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.8.1-Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 8 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.8.1.A-Come to discussions prepared, having read or researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.8.1.B-Follow rules for collegial discussions and decision-making, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.8.1.C-Pose questions that connect the ideas of several speakers and respond to others' questions and comments with relevant evidence, observations, and ideas.</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.8.1.D-Acknowledge new information expressed by others, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views in light of the evidence presented.</p> <p>7.V.1 Use the language of visual arts to communicate effectively.</p> <p>7.V.1.1 Use art vocabulary to analyze art.</p> <p>7.V.1.3 Identify themes in art.</p> <p>7.V.1.4 Understand the relationship between the Elements of Art and the Principles of Design.</p>		
THE ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDING <i>(What is the overarching idea students will understand as a result of this lesson?)</i>		THE ESSENTIAL QUESTION <i>(What question will be asked to lead students to "uncover" the Essential Understanding)</i>
Myth reveals culture		How does myth reveal culture?
CONTENT KNOWLEDGE <i>(What factual information will students learn in this lesson?)</i>		PROCESS SKILLS <i>(What will students be able to do as a result of this lesson?)</i>
<p>Hero/ine figures are an important part of a culture's myth.</p> <p>Heroes are figures idealized by a particular culture therefore they represent mostly desirable traits for that culture.</p>		<p>Students will be able to analyze.</p> <p>Students will be able to infer.</p> <p>Students will be able to make meaning from visual representations.</p>

<p>Heroes are often depicted in struggle against a negative or evil force. That struggle isn't necessarily martial but is frequently martial.</p> <p>Art is influenced by the culture and era it is produced during.</p> <p>When art is produced by one culture and the subject is another culture, the art communicates the perspective of its own culture, not the subject culture. (For example, European Renaissance Art depicting Ancient Greece doesn't reveal Ancient Greek culture, it reveals the European perspective on Ancient Greece.)</p> <p>Visual art, just like literature or oral tradition, is a means for communicating and creating myth within a culture.</p> <p>Artists use techniques to draw attention to certain aspects or figures within a work including use of light/shading, composition, and color.</p>	<p>Students will be able to synthesize.</p> <p>Students will be able to evaluate.</p> <p>Students will be able work collaboratively.</p>
---	--

GUIDING QUESTIONS

What questions will be asked to support instruction?

Include both "lesson plan level" questions as well as questions designed to guide students to the essential understanding

Pre-Lesson Questions:	During Lesson Questions:	Post Lesson Questions:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are some of your favorite myths or myths you are most familiar with? 2. When I say "myth" what do you think of? 3. What is the purpose of myth? 4. What is culture? 5. What do you notice about the relationship between myth and culture? 6. What is the relationship between visual art and culture? 7. Why is that relationship significant? 8. How do artists communicate meaning? 9. How does communicating meaning through art impact culture? 10. How does communicating meaning through art impact myth? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What do you see in this image? 2. What do you see that makes you say that? 3. What else do you see? 4. How does this image represent myth? 5. Which figure or figures is the hero? 6. How can you tell? 7. What do you notice about them? 8. What can you tell about their relationship to other figures in the artwork? 9. What traits do the heroes seem to represent? 10. How do these heroes relate to the concept of myth? 11. What can you infer about the hero or their culture? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What do you see in this image? 2. What do you see that makes you say that? 3. What else do you see? 4. How does this image represent myth? 5. Which figure or figures is the hero? 6. How can you tell? 7. What do you notice about them? 8. What can you tell about their relationship to other figures in the artwork? 9. What traits do the heroes seem to represent? 10. How do these heroes relate to the concept of myth? 11. What can you infer about the hero or their culture? 12. How does myth reveal culture?

DIFFERENTIATION

(Describe how the planned learning experience has been modified to meet the needs of gifted learners. Note: Modifications may be in one or more of the areas below. Only provide details for the area(s) that have been differentiated for this lesson.)

Content	Process	Product	Learning Environment
The artwork chosen for this lesson contains allusions to hero stories they may be familiar with but the art is sophisticated.	This lesson is a very student driven, open ended process which gives students the opportunity to share their perspectives and may force students to think for themselves without confirmation from the teacher. Students are also asked to support their answers/positions repeatedly which forces them to be sure of their answer and connect their answer with evidence. Additionally, students are unlikely to have been exposed to a lot of art analysis and will have to learn the mental skills/thought processes involved.		This is a student led lesson in which students are creating meaning with each other and a text.

PLANNED LEARNING EXPERIENCES

(What will the teacher input? What will the students be asked to do? For clarity, please provide detailed instructions)

Engage and Connect - This phase focuses on piquing students' interest and helping them access prior knowledge. This is the introduction to the lesson that motivates or hooks the students.

(I want to have some sort of slide show playing or pictures hanging around the room, but I don't know what I want to focus on...)

Day 1—Need to do an icebreaker of sorts—get to know the students and establish baseline understanding of concepts.

1. What are some of your favorite myths or myths you are most familiar with?

Students jot down their answers on paper in their folders—3-5 minutes

Discuss with partner—5 minutes

Present their partner and their partner's favorite myths to class (15-20 minutes)

OR

Present their own myths but ask partners to explain what was similar about their favorite myths?

Ask students:

2. When I say "myth" what do you think of?

***(This could be a concept mapping activity. If so, allow 10-15 minutes.)

We will share out and discuss answers, I will try to keep my contribution minimal and allow students to grapple unless they need correcting. I will use these answers to assess any misunderstandings and assess exactly how much will need to be cleared up before moving on.

Discuss definition of myth we will be using. If needed, rephrase, explain, etc. this definition to make sure students have a good handle on it. I will need to make sure that students see that myth is the big picture idea/belief and that myths/stories contribute to that larger concept. We may begin with the definition of myth below and refine/discuss from there.

Definition: Myth is a symbolic narrative, usually of unknown origin and at least partly traditional, that ostensibly relates actual events and that is especially associated with religious belief. (Encyclopedia Britannica)

Remind students that this is a huge idea—like years of college classes maybe even a doctorate. We only have time to dip our toes in this concept but if they're interested, there is definitely room to continue exploring this concept.

Ask follow-up question—(chart paper to list answers)

3. What is the purpose of myth?

(Myth is created by humans. It doesn't exist in nature like plants or weather so humans must have created myth for some reason. There may be multiple reasons depending on the aspect of myth but there is some sort of reason. It doesn't just happen even if people aren't consciously thinking about myth.)

Culture--

4. What is culture?

(Should I concept map this one too or not? I feel like it's a little more straightforward and familiar to students than myth but I don't want to give it short shrift.)

Definition: Culture is the way of life of a particular people, esp. as shown in their ordinary behavior and habits, their attitudes toward each other, and their moral and religious beliefs (Cambridge Dictionary)
(Maybe do a little work giving examples, situations, etc. instead of concept mapping since this is likely to be more familiar.)

Tie concepts together!

Discuss--

5. What do you notice about the relationship between myth and culture?

Segue

6. What is the relationship between visual art and culture?
7. Why is that relationship significant?
8. How do artists communicate meaning?
9. How does communicating meaning through art impact culture?
10. How does communicating meaning through art impact myth?

After discussion, ask students to take 5 minutes to summarize their thoughts on this discussion in their folders.

Explore - In this phase, the students have experiences with the concepts and ideas of the lesson. Students are encouraged to work together without direct instruction from the teacher. The teacher acts as a facilitator. Students observe, question, and investigate the concepts to develop fundamental awareness of the nature of the materials and ideas.

(Begin VTS Lesson)

Direct student attention to the Smartboard/projector. (will also have copies in file folders on the tables)

Display image of Warriors Fighting a Wolf and a Giant Snake

<https://artsandculture.google.com/asset/warriors-fight-a-wolf-and-giant-snake/jgGBZ0yhTkEn-w>

Instruct students to look at the image in silence for 3 minutes-no writing. Just looking and thinking.

Then ask:

1. What do you see in this image?
2. What do you see that makes you say that?

(Try to gather as many student responses as possible. Do not offer confirmation or correction or critique. Acknowledge student answers by restating answers.)

After discussion of first two questions wanes (and after allowing the initial quiet to hopefully give way to a second wave of student answers/discussion), then ask:

3. What else do you see?
4. What do you see that makes you say that?

After this initial and thorough observation has occurred, I will pose the following question to help students probe the image further and connect it to the concepts.

5. How does this image represent myth?
6. How does this image represent culture?

Explain - *Students communicate what they have learned so far and figure out what it means. This phase also provides an opportunity for teachers to directly introduce a concept, process, or skill to guide students toward a deeper understanding.*

Once students have finished responding to the prompting question, I will ask the following questions to probe their analysis.

1. Which figure or figures is the hero?
2. How can you tell?
3. What do you notice about them?
4. What can you tell about their relationship to other figures in the artwork?
5. What traits do the heroes seem to represent?
6. How do these heroes relate to the concept of myth?
7. What can you infer about the hero or their culture?

Elaborate —*Allow students to use their new knowledge and continue to explore its implications. At this stage students expand on the concepts they have learned, make connections to other related concepts, and apply their understandings to the world around them in new ways*

Students will be assigned to small groups and will complete a VTS analysis of a new image in small groups.

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Erasmus_Quellinus_\(II\)-_Jason_with_the_Golden_Fleece,_1630.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Erasmus_Quellinus_(II)-_Jason_with_the_Golden_Fleece,_1630.jpg)

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/8/8c/Perseus_Confronting_Phineus_with_the_Head_of_Medusa_by_Sebastiano_Ricci%2C_c._1705-10.JPG

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/b/bd/Queen_Boudica_by_John_Opie.jpg

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cultural_depictions_of_Joan_of_Arc#/media/File:Scherrer_jeanne_enters_orlean.jpg

<https://www.collinsart.org/art-prints/harriet-tubmans-underground-railroad-2>

Students will observe their image for 3 images in silence before beginning their group discussion.

1. What do you see in this image?
2. What do you see that makes you say that?
3. What else do you see?

After plenty of time to thoroughly notice and make observations about the image, the teacher will ask the small groups to discuss the same follow-up questions from earlier.

4. Which figure or figures is the hero?
5. How can you tell?
6. What do you notice about them?
7. What can you tell about their relationship to other figures in the artwork?
8. What traits do the heroes seem to represent?
9. How do these heroes relate to the concept of myth?
10. What can you infer about the hero or their culture?

Evaluate: *This phase assesses both learning and teaching and can use a wide variety of informal and formal assessment strategies.*

Groups will present their images to other groups.

In their presentations, groups will discuss their main observations and how this image relates to myth and culture in a 5-7 minute informal summary.

**Based on your discussions and observations today, respond to the essential question:
How does myth reveal culture?**

Students will be expected to record their thoughts in a clearly written paragraph. Students should make sure to draw conclusions based on the collection of images presented in this lesson.

Introduce Performance Task—

You signed up for this class because you like heroes and wanted the chance to create your own hero. You may already have some ideas in mind or perhaps today's session triggered some new ideas too. We will work on this a little each day but I just wanted to give you a little teaser so you can come to camp tomorrow ready to go.

Whole class VTS Image:



Small Group VTS Images:



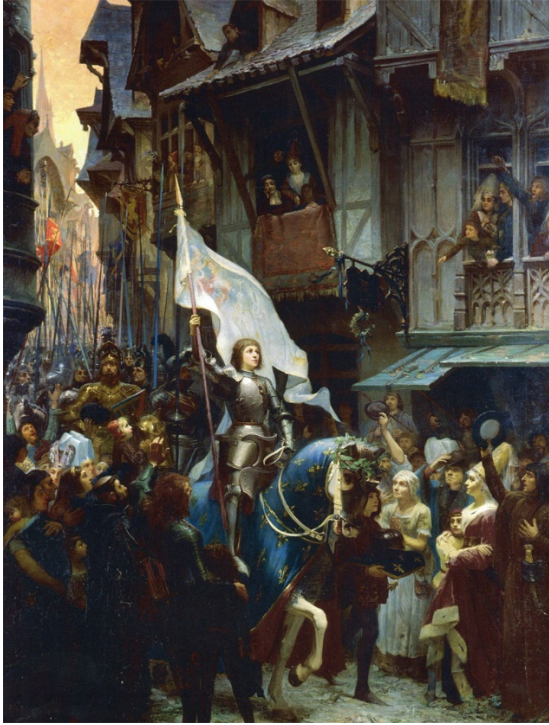
Perseus Confronting Phineas with the Head of Medusa by Sebastiano Ricci



Jason with the Golden Fleece by Erasmus Quellinus



Queen Boadicea by John Opie



Jean-Jacques Scherrer: *Entree de Jeanne d'Arc à Orléans* (1887)



Harriet Tubman's Underground Railroad by Paul Collins

TEACHER NAME		Lesson #
Nichole Hollingsworth		2
MODEL	CONTENT AREA	GRADE LEVEL
Questioning	ELA	Middle Grades (7-8)
CONCEPTUAL LENS		LESSON TOPIC
Myth		Heroes in Literature
LEARNING OBJECTIVES (from State/Local Curriculum)		
<p>Social Studies Standards:</p> <p>6.C.1 Explain how the behaviors and practices of individuals and groups influenced societies, civilizations and regions.</p> <p>6.C.1.1 Analyze how cultural expressions reflected the values of civilizations, societies and regions (e.g., oral traditions, art, dance, music, literature, and architecture).</p> <p>6.C.1.2 Explain how religion transformed various societies, civilizations and regions (e.g., beliefs, practices and spread of Buddhism, Christianity, Confucianism, Hinduism, Islam and Judaism).</p> <p>7.C.1 Understand how cultural values influence relationships between individuals, groups and political entities in modern societies and regions.</p> <p>7.C.1.1 Explain how culture unites and divides modern societies and regions (e.g. enslavement of various peoples, caste system, religious conflict and Social Darwinism).</p> <p>7.C.1.2 Explain how cultural expressions (e.g. art, literature, architecture and music) influence modern society.</p> <p>8.C.1 Understand how different cultures influenced North Carolina and the United States.</p> <p>8.C.1.1 Explain how influences from Africa, Europe, and the Americas impacted North Carolina and the United States (e.g. Columbian Exchange, slavery and the decline of the American Indian populations).</p> <p>8.C.1.2 Summarize the origin of beliefs, practices, and traditions that represent various groups within North Carolina and the United States (e.g. Moravians, Scots-Irish, Highland Scots, Latinos, Hmong, Africans, and American Indians)</p> <p>8.C.1.3 Summarize the contributions of particular groups to the development of North Carolina and the United States (e.g. women, religious groups, and ethnic sectors such as American Indians, African Americans, and European immigrants).</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.8.1-Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.8.2-Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.8.3-Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.8.4-Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.8.9-Analyze how a modern work of fiction draws on themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths, traditional stories, or religious works such as the Bible, including describing how the material is rendered new.</p>		
THE ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDING		THE ESSENTIAL QUESTION
<i>(What is the overarching idea students will understand as a result of this lesson?)</i>		<i>(What question will be asked to lead students to "uncover" the Essential Understanding)</i>

Myth reveals culture.	How does myth reveal culture?	
CONTENT KNOWLEDGE <i>(What factual information will students learn in this lesson?)</i>	PROCESS SKILLS <i>(What will students be able to do as a result of this lesson?)</i>	
<p>Definition: Myth is a symbolic narrative, usually of unknown origin and at least partly traditional, that ostensibly relates actual events and that is especially associated with religious belief. (Encyclopedia Britannica). Myth is a shared belief (as opposed to fact).</p> <p>Definition: Culture is the way of life of a particular people, esp. as shown in their ordinary behavior and habits, their attitudes toward each other, and their moral and religious beliefs (Cambridge Dictionary)</p> <p>Myth can be communicated through various means/mediums—art, music, literature, stories, oral tradition.</p> <p>Hero figures are not the same across all cultures and time periods but some characteristics are commonly repeated. (ex. Bravery, strength, intelligence, honesty, determined, etc.)</p> <p>The traits that are desirable for a particular culture are evident in their heroes. This reveals that culture’s values and beliefs.</p> <p>Heroes can also reinforce gender roles/stereotypes as characteristics of female and male heroes may vary across culture but will vary less within a culture.</p> <p>Not all heroes will have all heroic traits—instead each hero will exhibit a combination of positive and negative character traits.</p>	<p>Students will be able to analyze culture and media.</p> <p>Students will be able to critique representations in culture and media.</p> <p>Students will be able to evaluate culture and media.</p> <p>Students will be able to work collaboratively to draw conclusions about culture and media</p> <p>Students will be able to compare and contrast myth across culture and across time.</p>	
GUIDING QUESTIONS <i>What questions will be asked to support instruction?</i> <i>Include both “lesson plan level” questions as well as questions designed to guide students to the essential understanding</i>		
Pre-Lesson Questions:	During Lesson Questions:	Post Lesson Questions:

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is the relationship between myth and culture? 2. Who are some common heroes you can think of? 3. What myth(s) do those heroes communicate in their culture? 4. What the relationship between heroes and culture? 5. How might heroes be viewed through myth? 6. How might heroes be viewed as culture? 7. What is the relationship between heroes and myth and culture? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How does the hero of this story live up to your expectations? 2. How does the hero of this story fall short of your expectations? 3. What does this (your expectations and reaction to these heroes) reveal about you? 4. What does your reaction reveal about your culture? 5. What does your reaction reveal about the culture of the story? 6. What are the flaws or problems with the ideal or archetypical hero? 7. What do those flaws reveal about culture? 8. How do heroes accomplish heroic deeds? What does this reveal about the hero and their culture? 9. What do these heroes seem to be saying about gender and gender roles? What does this reveal? How might this impact a culture or its people? 10. What is the relationship between heroes and laws or morals? What does that relationship reveal about culture? 11. What motivates a hero? What does this motivation reveal about culture? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What trends have you observed with the heroes in the stories in this lesson and overall? 2. What conclusion can you draw about culture overall after analyzing these hero stories? 3. How do hero stories (real or fictional) impact culture? 4. Why did ancient cultures have heroes? How is that similar or different to modern culture? 5. How does myth (whether related to heroes or not) reveal culture?
---	---	---

DIFFERENTIATION

(Describe how the planned learning experience has been modified to meet the needs of gifted learners. Note: Modifications may be in one or more of the areas below. Only provide details for the area(s) that have been differentiated for this lesson.)

Content	Process	Product	Learning Environment
<p>More advanced reading material—myths and folklores at a higher reading level.</p>	<p>Questioning at a higher level of abstraction requiring synthesis across materials introduced in class.</p>		

PLANNED LEARNING EXPERIENCES

(What will the teacher input? What will the students be asked to do? For clarity, please provide detailed instructions)

Engage and Connect - *This phase focuses on piquing students' interest and helping them access prior knowledge. This is the introduction to the lesson that motivates or hooks the students.*

Slideshow in the background of hero pictures—some classical art, some historical figures/portraits, some movie/book characters. Warm-up discussion to get kids excited and primed for delving in- Who do you recognize? What do you know about them? How are all these figures alike? How are they different? (Ideally students will say something about how all these people are heroes but will discuss how these heroes are all a little different in terms of culture, myth, etc.)

Students will write their answers to the questions below before sharing out in a whole class discussion. This allows students a chance to formulate their own thoughts rather than copying or being intimidated by the thoughts of others. In addition, it creates accountability for all students, not just the most vocal participants.)

I will ask questions one at a time with questions displayed on GoogleSlides/powerpoint behind me.

1. What is the relationship between myth and culture?
2. Who are some common heroes you can think of?
3. What myth(s) do those heroes communicate in their culture?
4. What the relationship between heroes and culture?
5. How might heroes be viewed through myth?
6. How might heroes be viewed as culture?
7. What is the relationship between heroes and myth and culture?

We will share out and discuss answers, I will try to keep my contribution minimal and allow students to grapple unless they need correcting. I will use these answers to assess any misunderstandings and assess exactly how much will need to be cleared up before moving on.

Explore - *In this phase, the students have experiences with the concepts and ideas of the lesson. Students are encouraged to work together without direct instruction from the teacher. The teacher acts as a facilitator. Students observe, question, and investigate the concepts to develop fundamental awareness of the nature of the materials and ideas.*

Mini-Lesson on Costa's House/Bloom's Taxonomy

Ask—What types of questions have you been asked to write? What are some of the do/don'ts your teachers established?

What types of questions create good discussion?

Present Costa's house with question stems handout. Ask students what they notice and ask if they have any questions about how to use this handout.

Acknowledge—Bloom's taxonomy is probably the most famous way teachers (and students) categorize levels of knowledge. Costa's house and Bloom's work well together but Costa's simplifies it a little bit.

In groups, students will read their story and create five Costa's questions. Questions must be Level Two and Level Three. Questions must be open ended. Remind students that these shouldn't be the types of reading comprehension questions but should be more discussion questions that could be answered no matter what short story your group read. Students will record their questions on index cards. I will circulate and provide assistance (as/if needed) on crafting questions and monitor student thinking and progress for timing.

I will then present a variety of short stories/texts featuring a variety of heroes including Robin Hood, Prometheus, Kayvan the Brave, Theseus and the Minotaur, Baba Yaga. Groups will pick 1 or 2 (depends on time!) stories out of the packet.

Kayvan the Brave from Commonlit: https://commonlit.s3.us-west-2.amazonaws.com/texts/student_pdfs/000/001/360/original/commonlit_kayvan-the-brave_student.pdf?X-Amz-Algorithm=AWS4-HMAC-SHA256&X-Amz-Credential=AKIAVWVGJUDZMAQL46QJ%2F20190807%2Fus-west-

[2%2Fs3%2Faws4_request&X-Amz-Date=20190807T003203Z&X-Amz-Expires=30&X-Amz-SignedHeaders=host&X-Amz-Signature=8371c8af596c3dc82b318867668b168dd9ca08fa3f2abee794ea0dca08fe303a](https://s3.amazonaws.com/texts/student_pdfs/000/000/586/original/commonlit_theseus-and-the-minotaur_student.pdf?X-Amz-Algorithm=AWS4-HMAC-SHA256&X-Amz-Credential=AKIAVWWGJUDZMAQL46QJ%2F20190807%2Fus-west-2%2Fs3%2Faws4_request&X-Amz-Date=20190807T182044Z&X-Amz-Expires=30&X-Amz-SignedHeaders=host&X-Amz-Signature=8371c8af596c3dc82b318867668b168dd9ca08fa3f2abee794ea0dca08fe303a)

Theseus and the Minotaur from Commonlit: https://commonlit.s3.us-west-2.amazonaws.com/texts/student_pdfs/000/000/586/original/commonlit_theseus-and-the-minotaur_student.pdf?X-Amz-Algorithm=AWS4-HMAC-SHA256&X-Amz-Credential=AKIAVWWGJUDZMAQL46QJ%2F20190807%2Fus-west-2%2Fs3%2Faws4_request&X-Amz-Date=20190807T182044Z&X-Amz-Expires=30&X-Amz-SignedHeaders=host&X-Amz-Signature=c4b24431c6fb6bbcc3ba7261d5813f343285754511bedb4b11c3466d0140bd70

Prometheus from Commonlit: https://commonlit.s3.us-west-2.amazonaws.com/texts/student_pdfs/000/000/565/original/commonlit_the-story-of-prometheus-and-pandora-s-box_student_%281%29.pdf?X-Amz-Algorithm=AWS4-HMAC-SHA256&X-Amz-Credential=AKIAVWWGJUDZMAQL46QJ%2F20190807%2Fus-west-2%2Fs3%2Faws4_request&X-Amz-Date=20190807T182127Z&X-Amz-Expires=30&X-Amz-SignedHeaders=host&X-Amz-Signature=a6cf556a70451f7dc0721faa3bf8d5585b717ff0e1c1984cfee4ec8aa7f4040f

Robin Hood: http://lib.oup.com.au/secondary/english/Stalking_the_Story/2/00_BAI_STS2_TXT_trad_SPREADS.pdf

Baba Yaga include after the lesson plan.

Students will read these stories in groups (the reading doesn't have the be aloud although it can be—but the work must be done in groups.) While and after they read, groups will create their Costa's questions.

Explain - *Students communicate what they have learned so far and figure out what it means. This phase also provides an opportunity for teachers to directly introduce a concept, process, or skill to guide students toward a deeper understanding.*

Students will now be jigsawed and groups will be rearranged. In their newly formed groups, students will have equal membership representing the previous round of groups. Students will pose the questions from their first group to their new group and discuss, providing evidence from their own stories.

Elaborate —*Allow students to use their new knowledge and continue to explore its implications. At this stage students expand on the concepts they have learned, make connections to other related concepts, and apply their understandings to the world around them in new ways*

Groups will select the best 1-2 questions. They will bring those cards to me and these will be added to (or even replace) my during lesson questions. I will look over their questions and then give them back to the students so they can facilitate the discussion for their questions. This will help me see if their questions are close enough to my questions that I should cross out my question in favor of theirs.

Whole group discussion. My job is to facilitate—students must talk to each other and make meaning together. I direct traffic by asking questions or probing students to explain more but this is their discussion. (remind students, this is a discussion so it's about multiple ideas, not one right idea. Also, just because you weren't thinking what I was thinking doesn't mean you were thinking something wrong. It's all about different perspectives.)

Teacher-Created Whole group questions:

1. How does the hero of this story live up to your expectations?
2. How does the hero of this story fall short of your expectations?
3. What does this (your expectations and reaction to these heroes) reveal about you?
4. What does your reaction reveal about your culture?

5. What does your reaction reveal about the culture of the story?
6. What are the flaws or problems with the ideal or archetypical hero?
7. What do those flaws reveal about culture?
8. How do heroes accomplish heroic deeds? What does this reveal about the hero and their culture?
9. What do these heroes seem to be saying about gender and gender roles? What does this reveal? How might this impact a culture or its people?
10. What is the relationship between heroes and laws or morals? What does that relationship reveal about culture?
11. What motivates a hero? What does this motivation reveal about culture?

Add student created questions---

Evaluate: *This phase assesses both learning and teaching and can use a wide variety of informal and formal assessment strategies.*

Brain Dump: Use these questions to record everything you are thinking about heroes and myth and culture right now. Discuss amongst your neighbors as needed as you are organizing your thoughts. After students have all had an opportunity to record their thoughts, move on to essential question.

1. What trends have you observed with the heroes in the stories in this lesson and overall?
2. What conclusion can you draw about culture overall after analyzing these hero stories?
3. How do hero stories (real or fictional) impact culture?
4. Why did ancient cultures have heroes? How is that similar or different to modern culture?
5. How does myth (whether related to heroes or not) reveal culture?

****Allow for workshop time for Performance Task!!**

BABA YAGA



SOMEWHERE, I cannot tell you exactly where, but certainly in vast Russia, there lived a peasant with his wife and they had twins — a son and daughter. One day the wife died and the husband mourned over her very sincerely for a long time. One year passed, and two years, and even longer. But there is no order in a house without a woman, and a day came when the man thought, "If I marry again possibly it would turn out all right." And so he did, and had children by his second wife.

The stepmother was envious of the stepson and daughter and began to use them hardly. She scolded them without any reason, sent them away from home as often as she wished, and gave them scarcely enough to eat. Finally she wanted to get rid of them altogether. Do you know what it means to allow a wicked thought to enter one's heart? The wicked thought grows all the time like a poisonous plant and slowly kills the good thoughts. A wicked feeling was growing in the stepmother's heart, and she determined to send the children to the witch, thinking sure enough that they would never return.

"Dear children," she said to the orphans, "go to my grandmother who lives in the forest in a hut on hen's feet. You will do everything she wants you to, and she will give you sweet things to eat and you will be happy."

The orphans started out. But instead of going to the witch, the sister, a bright little girl, took her brother by the hand and ran to their own old, old grandmother and told her all about their going to the forest.

"Oh, my poor darlings!" said the good old grandmother, pitying the children, "my heart aches for you, but it is not in my power to help you. You have to go not to a loving grandmother, but to a wicked witch. Now listen to me, my darlings," she continued; "I will give you a hint: Be kind and good to everyone; do not speak ill words to any one; do not despise helping the weakest, and always hope that for you, too, there will be the needed help."

The good old grandmother gave the children some delicious fresh milk to drink and to each a big slice of ham. She also gave them some cookies—there are cookies everywhere—and when the children departed she stood looking after them a long, long time.

The obedient children arrived at the forest and, oh, wonder! there stood a hut, and what a curious one! It stood on tiny hen's feet, and at the top was a rooster's head. With their shrill, childish voices they called out loud:

"Izboushka, Izboushka! turn thy back to the forest and thy front to us!"

The hut did as they commanded. The two orphans looked inside and saw the witch resting there, her head near the threshold, one foot in one corner, the other foot in another corner, and her knees quite close to the ridge pole.

"Fou, Fou, Fou!" exclaimed the witch; "I feel the Russian spirit."

The children were afraid, and stood close, very close together, but in spite of their fear they said very politely:

"Ho, grandmother, our stepmother sent us to thee to serve thee."

"All right; I am not opposed to keeping you, children. If you satisfy all my wishes I shall reward you; if not, I shall eat you up."

Without any delay the witch ordered the girl to spin the thread, and the boy, her brother, to carry water in a sieve to fill a big tub. The poor orphan girl wept at her spinning-wheel and wiped away her bitter tears. At once all around her appeared small mice squeaking and saying:

"Sweet girl, do not cry. Give us cookies and we will help thee."

The little girl willingly did so.

"Now," gratefully squeaked the mice, "go and find the black cat. He is very hungry; give him a slice of ham and he will help thee."

The girl speedily went in search of the cat and saw her brother in great distress about the tub, so many times he had filled the sieve, yet the tub was still dry. The little birds passed, flying near by, and chirped to the children:

"Kind-hearted little children, give us some crumbs and we will advise you."

The orphans gave the birds some crumbs and the grateful birds chirped again:

"Some clay and water, children dear!"

Then away they flew through the air.

The children understood the hint, spat in the sieve, plastered it up with clay and rilled the tub in a very short time. Then they both returned to the hut and on the threshold met the black cat. They generously gave him some of the good ham which their good grandmother had given them, petted him and asked:

"Dear Kitty-cat, black and pretty, tell us what to do in order to get away from thy mistress, the witch?"

"Well," very seriously answered the cat, "I will give you a towel and a comb and then you must run away. When you hear the witch running after you, drop the towel behind your back and a large river will appear in place of the towel. If you hear her once more, throw down the comb and in place of the comb there will appear a dark wood. This wood will protect you from the wicked witch, my mistress."

Baba Yaga came home just then.

"Is it not wonderful?" she thought; "everything is exactly right."

"Well," she said to the children, "today you were brave and smart; let us see to-morrow. Your work will be more difficult and I hope I shall eat you up."

The poor orphans went to bed, not to a warm bed prepared by loving hands, but on the straw in a cold corner. Nearly scared to death from fear, they lay there, afraid to talk, afraid even to breathe. The next morning the witch ordered all the linen to be woven and a large supply of firewood to be brought from the forest.

The children took the towel and comb and ran away as fast as their feet could possibly carry them. The dogs were after them, but they threw them the cookies that were left; the gates did not open themselves, but the children smoothed them with oil; the birch tree near the path almost scratched their eyes out, but the gentle girl fastened a pretty ribbon to it. So they went farther and farther and ran out of the dark forest into the wide, sunny fields.

The cat sat down by the loom and tore the thread to pieces, doing it with delight. Baba Yaga returned.

"Where are the children?" she shouted, and began to beat the cat. "Why hast thou let them go, thou treacherous cat? Why hast thou not scratched their faces?"

The cat answered: "Well, it was because I have served thee so many years and thou hast never given me a bite, while the dear children gave me some good ham."

The witch scolded the dogs, the gates, and the birch tree near the path.

"Well," barked the dogs, "thou certainly art our mistress, but thou hast never done us a favor, and the orphans were kind to us."

The gates replied:

"We were always ready to obey thee, but thou didst neglect us, and the dear children smoothed us with oil."



"The children ran away as fast as their feet could possibly carry them"

The birch tree lisped with its leaves, "Thou hast never put a simple thread over my branches and the little darlings adorned them with a pretty ribbon."

Baba Yaga understood that there was no help and started to follow the children herself. In her great hurry she forgot to look for the towel and the comb, but jumped astride a broom and was off. The children heard her coming and threw the towel behind them. At once a river, wide and blue, appeared and watered the field. Baba Yaga hopped along the shore until she finally found a shallow place and crossed it.

Again the children heard her hurry after them and so they threw down the comb. This time a forest appeared, a dark and dusky forest in which the roots were interwoven, the branches matted together, and the tree-tops touching each other. The witch tried very hard to pass through, but in vain, and so, very, very angry, she returned home.

The orphans rushed to their father, told him all about their great distress, and thus concluded their pitiful story:

"Ah, father dear, why dost thou love us less than our brothers and sisters?"

The father was touched and became angry. He sent the wicked stepmother away and lived a new life with his good children. From that time he watched over their happiness and never neglected them any more.

How do I know this story is true? Why, one was there who told me about it.

TEACHER NAME		Lesson #
Nichole Hollingsworth		3
MODEL	CONTENT AREA	GRADE LEVEL
Socratic Seminar	Practicum--ELA	7 th -8 th
CONCEPTUAL LENS		LESSON TOPIC
Myth		Hero's Journey
LEARNING OBJECTIVES <i>(from State/Local Curriculum)</i>		
<p>7.C.1 Understand how cultural values influence relationships between individuals, groups and political entities in modern societies and regions.</p> <p>7.C.1.1 Explain how culture unites and divides modern societies and regions (e.g. enslavement of various peoples, caste system, religious conflict and Social Darwinism).</p> <p>7.C.1.2 Explain how cultural expressions (e.g. art, literature, architecture and music) influence modern society.</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.8.1-Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.8.2-Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to supporting ideas; provide an objective summary of the text.</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.8.3-Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events (e.g., through comparisons, analogies, or categories).</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.8.4-Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.8.5-Analyze in detail the structure of a specific paragraph in a text, including the role of particular sentences in developing and refining a key concept.</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.8.6-Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author acknowledges and responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints.</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.8.8-Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; recognize when irrelevant evidence is introduced.</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.8.9-Analyze a case in which two or more texts provide conflicting information on the same topic and identify where the texts disagree on matters of fact or interpretation.</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.8.1-Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 8 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.8.1.A-Come to discussions prepared, having read or researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.8.1.B-Follow rules for collegial discussions and decision-making, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.8.1.C-Pose questions that connect the ideas of several speakers and respond to others' questions and comments with relevant evidence, observations, and ideas.</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.8.1.D-Acknowledge new information expressed by others, and, when warranted, qualify or</p>		

justify their own views in light of the evidence presented.

THE ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDING
(What is the overarching idea students will understand as a result of this lesson?)

THE ESSENTIAL QUESTION
(What question will be asked to lead students to “uncover” the Essential Understanding)

Myth reveals culture

How does myth reveal culture?

CONTENT KNOWLEDGE
(What factual information will students learn in this lesson?)

PROCESS SKILLS
(What will students be able to do as a result of this lesson?)

Debate and dialogue are different. They follow different processes and reach different goals.

Close reading involves annotation for understanding of the text and questioning the text, not just summarizing or accepting the text wholeheartedly.

Myth featuring similar character types and plot elements occurs across time and across cultures. Cultures frequently retell and adapt myth from other time periods or other cultures.

Within myth, one common character type is a hero and some plot events are similar to those described in the hero’s journey framework.

The protagonists or heroes are not always representative of desirable traits, particularly when looking at the heroes from another culture or time period’s myth. This reveals there is not a universal agreed upon set of heroic traits and that heroes have flaws or negative traits.

Campbell’s model of the Hero’s Journey is a framework for analyzing myth in which a hero follows a series of steps on their path to becoming a hero. Campbell and others see both historical myth and modern media as following this model.

Scholars question Campbell’s model, especially with respect to gender and oversimplification.

Students will be able to analyze.

Students will be able to critique analyses.

Students will be able write higher-level questions.

Students will be able to work collaboratively.

GUIDING QUESTIONS
What questions will be asked to support instruction?
Include both “lesson plan level” questions as well as questions designed to guide students to the essential understanding

Pre-Lesson Questions:	During Lesson Questions:	Post Lesson Questions:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are some myths that you are familiar with? 2. Thinking of favorite or familiar myths, what common character types do you notice? 3. Thinking of favorite or familiar myths, what common events or plot elements do you notice? 4. Where or when is that particular myth from? 5. Why might that story be remembered in this time and 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What do you know about the Hero’s Journey? 2. Now that you have watched the video, what do you think about the model/theory of the Hero’s Journey? 3. How do we use this framework of a hero’s journey in our discussion of real people and events? 4. How many of you have participated in a Socratic Seminar? 5. What do you remember about how it was different from a regular discussion? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What were some of the key points or key ideas of the seminar? 2. How did this seminar influence your thinking about heroes, myth, or culture? If particular comments were influential, make sure to include them. 3. How does a hero or protagonist, for that matter, represent or reflect culture?

<p>culture?</p> <p>6. What myths can you think of that have been retold or adapted across time or across cultures?</p> <p>7. Why might that myth have been adapted or retold?</p> <p>8. What does that adaptation or retelling reveal about culture?</p>	<p>6. What did you do differently?</p> <p>7. What did the teacher do differently?</p> <p>8. Which one (dialogue or debate) are we trying to have?</p> <p>9. What do we need to make sure we do or don't do?</p> <p>10. What does close reading look like or involve? Why do we do close reading?</p> <p>Launching Question:</p> <p>11. How does myth reveal culture?</p> <p>Potential prompting questions:</p> <p>12. What does the author mean by "The public is starved for myth"? What does that reveal about our relationship to myth?</p> <p>13. What is the role of hero in myth?</p> <p>14. What's the harm in heroes in our myth?</p> <p>15. Why do you think heroes are so popular in the US compare to other places, as Chalquist states? What might that reveal about our culture?</p> <p>16. What do those myths with heroes who are not "good guys" (the article mentions Gilgamesh, Herakles, Cuchulainn, etc) reveal about culture?</p> <p>17. How do you respond to the author's question "What in the end does the Hero's Journey offer people who are not Heroes?" How is that related to myth or culture?</p> <p>18. Are we, as the adage states, the heroes of our own journeys? What does that reveal about myth and culture?</p> <p>19. What does the author mean by "We never see clearly what we overidentify with"? What does this suggest about his beliefs about myth and culture?</p>	<p>4. Why do myths reveal culture?</p> <p>5. How does myth reveal culture?</p>
--	---	--

DIFFERENTIATION

(Describe how the planned learning experience has been modified to meet the needs of gifted learners. Note: Modifications may be in one or more of the areas below. Only provide details for the area(s) that have been differentiated for this lesson.

Content	Process	Product	Learning Environment
<p>Article used in text is dealing with a high level of abstraction.</p>	<p>Socratic seminar process is very student-driven and student based which allows students to push their own thinking and develop leadership and discussion skills by thinking through open-ended high level questions and supporting their comments with reasoning or evidence.</p>		

PLANNED LEARNING EXPERIENCES

(What will the teacher input? What will the students be asked to do? For clarity, please provide detailed instructions)

Engage and Connect - *This phase focuses on piquing students' interest and helping them access prior knowledge. This is the introduction to the lesson that motivates or hooks the students.*

(Added after reflection on student (mis)understanding of concept/work from previous classes as an additional activator before continuing with the three pieces of chart paper and questions about character types.)

After reflecting on your discussions and reading your work from the past two days, many of you are noticing how heroes (because they are the supposed ideal for a culture) show what a culture sees as important and not important.

- What are some of the traits you've noticed that seem to be ideal in Greek myths?
- What are some of the traits you've noticed that seem to be ideal in American heroes?
- What are the similarities and differences in the ideal heroes of these two cultures?

(Now back to regularly scheduled activator)

Have Question 1 on chart paper in the room in 3 different spots (so students can all write without being crowded and to see if any common trends crop up.)

1. What are some myths/folk tales/etc that you are familiar with?--- Give students one minute (and multiple markers so they can jot as many answers as possible. Maybe reward groups with the most answers and the most unique answers (it might be different) with candy?)

2. Thinking of favorite or familiar myths, what common character types do you notice? (2nd piece of blank chart paper. Allow students to group their character types (ex. heroes, villains, tricksters, sidekicks, etc...)

3. Thinking of favorite or familiar myths, what common events or plot elements do you notice? (3rd piece of chart paper.)

Review myths, character types, and plot elements students mentioned by using the following questions.

4. Where or when is that particular myth from?
5. Why might that story be remembered in this time and culture?
6. What myths can you think of that have been retold or adapted across time or across cultures?
7. Why might that myth have been adapted or retold?
8. What does that adaptation or retelling reveal about culture?

Explore - *In this phase, the students have experiences with the concepts and ideas of the lesson. Students are encouraged to work together without direct instruction from the teacher. The teacher acts as a facilitator. Students observe, question, and investigate the concepts to develop fundamental awareness of the nature of the materials and ideas.*

Introduce the Hero's Journey. Remind students that some myths are a narrative form with characters and events. One way scholars have analyzed these characters is by comparing them to this idea of the Hero's Journey. Ask students if they have heard this term and what they already know about it. Ask them to brainstorm a handful of heroes before watching the video.

Video- TED Ed What Makes a Hero?

<https://ed.ted.com/lessons/what-makes-a-hero-matthew-winkler#watch>

Brief, post-video discussion:

Now that you have watched the video, what do you think about the model/theory of the Hero's Journey? How do we use this framework of a hero's journey in our discussion of myth and culture?

The Hero's Journey is one way to look at myth and culture. But it is not the only way, nor is it free from criticisms. We will read an article that is a critique of Campbell's Hero's Journey framework. We will discuss this article in a Socratic Seminar.

Ask: How many of you have participated in a Socratic Seminar? What do you remember about how it was different from a regular discussion? What did you do differently? What did the teacher do differently?

(If every student I have has done a Socratic seminar before, I will make my prepwork very short. I will still go over the rule and expectations so we are all on the same page but will spend less time on it because they are already familiar with it.)

Socratic Seminar Guidelines:

1. Discuss and elaborate on the difference between a dialogue and a debate. Which one are we trying to have? What do we need to make sure we do or don't do?
2. Prepwork—Close Reading. Quickly ask students what this means to them to see how familiar students are with this idea. What does close reading look like or involve? Why do we do close reading? Then make sure students focus on generating questions while they read. Display and review examples of close reading (analyze the first 3-4 paragraphs of the Chalquist article to model as needed.)
3. Questioning—Discuss the difference between open ended discussion type questions and those questions with only one answer. If this seems to be a struggling point, have brief passage prepared and model this process. If this seems familiar, do a quick sorting activity and rank some sample questions.

Introduce article. Remind students that this article, like the concept of the hero's journey, is one person's way of looking at myth and culture. It is not an incontrovertible fact. (The version I hand to students will omit the ending myth about Manawydan both for shortening the article and for saving that story for later. I will also omit the author's proposed model of the Journey of Reenchantment because I think it goes too far on a tangent from my focus and would take too much time to ponder.)

Article: "Why I Seldom Teach The Hero's Journey and What I Teach Instead" by Craig Chalquist, Ph. D. (Edited to remove the references to drunkenness or rape given the age group.)

<https://www.huffingtonpost.com/craig-chalquist-phd/why-i-seldom-teach-the-hero-journey/article>

Allow students 15-20 minutes to close read this article and generate a list of questions for discussion. (Hint—they can use their Bloom's/Costa's handout from yesterday to give them question stems and ideas. Again, advise students to stick to levels 2 and 3.)

Explain - Students communicate what they have learned so far and figure out what it means. This phase also provides an opportunity for teachers to directly introduce a concept, process, or skill to guide students toward a deeper understanding.

Students have individually completed their close reading. At this point, students will work with partners to review their questions, choosing their best 2-3. In addition, partners should offer suggestions if needed to improve the wording of questions.

Elaborate —Allow students to use their new knowledge and continue to explore its implications. At this stage students expand on the concepts they have learned, make connections to other related concepts, and apply their understandings to the world around them in new ways

Socratic Seminar:

Launching question: How does myth reveal culture?

Potential prompting questions if discussion starts to stumble:

- What does the author mean by "The public is starved for myth"? What does that reveal about our relationship to myth?

- What is the role of hero in myth?
- What's the harm in heroes in our myth?
- Why do you think heroes are so popular in the US compare to other places, as Chalquist states? What might that reveal about our culture?
- What do those myths with heroes who are not "good guys" (the article mentions Gilgamesh, Herakles, Cuchulainn, etc) reveal about culture?
- How do you respond to the author's question "What in the end does the Hero's Journey offer people who are not Heroes?" How is that related to myth or culture?
- Are we, as the adage states, the heroes of our own journeys? What does that reveal about myth and culture?
- What does the author mean by "We never see clearly what we overidentify with"? What does this suggest about his beliefs about myth and culture?

As facilitator/observer, I will be making sure students are staying on task and following the expectations of a Socratic seminar, making sure the conversation is dialogic, not competitive or argumentative. I will also make sure students are participating respectfully and staying focused in the text/discussion by redirecting as necessary.

Evaluate: *This phase assesses both learning and teaching and can use a wide variety of informal and formal assessment strategies.*

Reflective/Summarization discussion about Socratic Seminar:

1. What were some of the key points or key ideas of the seminar?
2. How did this seminar influence your thinking about heroes, myth, or culture? If particular comments were influential, make sure to include them.

Class-wrap up and connection back to essential question. Remind students that everything they are doing goes back to that essential question so we need to take some time and answer it again with insights from today's class.

3. How does a hero or protagonist, for that matter, represent or reflect culture?
4. Why do myths reveal culture?
5. How does myth reveal culture?

Students will answer this in a brief exit ticket type paragraph.

Feel free to incorporate details from the class today as well as your own thoughts and perspectives.

Extension—Tie-in to Myth Concept

Brainstorm as many stereotypes or expectations as you can. They could be about racial groups, cultural groups, places, time periods, etc. Let's see if we can connect some of these back to myth.

Ex-- Ideas:

Gender Roles/Expectations-- Boys don't cry. Girls need help/saving.

Nostalgia-- Everything used to be better in the "good old days"

Self-determination/ Self-Made Man/American Dream-- Your actions, and not external forces, control your destiny.

Work hard enough and you will be successful. If you're not successful, it's because you didn't work hard enough.

Meritocracy-- Those who are the best will be recognized and rewarded therefore those who are recognized/rewarded are the best.

America as a Melting Pot-- Immigrants to America are equally valued and their differences are combined to make America what it is.

Model Minority myth--Asian Americans assimilate quickly to American society (values, behavior, language), achieve at high levels with little to no assistance, and are unlikely to be involved in crime.

British people are polite and reserved-- "stiff upper lip" + Keep Calm

Workshop time for performance task:

Remind students that one aspect they need to include in their sales pitch is a back story/origin story. With the Hero's Journey in mind, remind students they can follow that pattern or challenge that pattern but making that decision might help them in their planning.

In addition, remind students that they need to make sure they are planning for how their hero will connect to American culture.

THE BLOG

02/24/2015 03:56 pm ET Updated Dec 06, 2017

Why I Seldom Teach The Hero's Journey Anymore — And What I Teach Instead

By [Craig Chalquist, Ph.D.](#)



Back when I was in grad school myth was seldom spoken of in public without a sneer. *Kid stuff!* Only recently had Joseph Campbell and Bill Moyers opened the discussion with their influential television series *The Power of Myth*.

Today, you hear about myth everywhere: in sales (for the ancient Greeks Nike was a goddess and Atlas a god), marketing strategy guides, motivational presentations in corporate boardrooms. *Game of Thrones*, *Once Upon a Time*, *Star Wars*, *The Avengers*, *Maleficent*, and the list goes on and on. The public is starved for myth, as philologist JRR Tolkien learned when he published *The Hobbit* and then *The Lord of the Rings*. NASA's new shuttle is named Orion.

In *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* Campbell writes,

It has always been the prime function of mythology and rite to supply the symbols that carry the human spirit forward, in counteraction to those other constant human fantasies that tend to tie it back. In fact, it may well be that the very high incidence of neuroticism among ourselves follows from the decline among us of such effective spiritual aid.

We need adequate stories that bring magic and make meaning. Without them we swallow isms, fads, slogans, gadgets, violent fundamentalisms, and we are lucky if the worst we get is emotional indigestion.

Campbell believed that all myths the world over told one story. Borrowing a word from James Joyce, he called this one story the *Monomyth*. The Monomyth is the Hero's Journey.

A hero ventures forth from the world of common day into a region of supernatural wonder: fabulous forces are there encountered and a decisive victory is won: the hero comes back from this mysterious adventure with the power to bestow boons on his fellow man.

The great spiritual teachers, culture bringers, warriors, and saints: these are examples of Heroes who obey a Call to Adventure to descend into the depths of the time and of themselves, fight the dragon (whatever its form), obtain the great treasure it guards, and bring it back to the dayworld. This heroic Monomyth fleshes out the archetype of Initiation:

Separation > Initiation > Return

It is a dangerous path. Heroes can die or go mad walking it. They do it under compulsion, for they bring new ways of seeing and being that nourish their cultures of origin and, through story, humanity as a whole.

It's easy to see why the Hero's Journey is so popular in the States. We eat, sleep, and breathe the ideals of the Hero, at least in vulgar form. Every other movie poster shows a man holding a gun. Everyone who does a simple decent thing by returning a lost wallet or pulling a [someone] from out in front of a bus is nominated a Hero by the press. *Star Wars* rode the Journey to success despite such poor writing that the actors complained about their childish Flash Gordonesque lines. The Superbowl is nothing more (nor less) than a clashing competition of well-paid helmeted Heroes.

Campbell himself set the stage for this dilution of the Hero. A young man going off to war is a Hero, he told Moyers. A woman giving birth is a Hero. The baby is a Hero for coming out intact. Do something tough that involves an inner change and you too can be a Hero.

The more mythology I've read and taught over the years, starting with teaching the Hero's Journey to men who'd done time for violent crimes, the less happy I've been with this presentation of the Hero.

First of all, the Hero isn't always a good guy. Gilgamesh, the first great Hero figure in Western lore, hacked down a forest, gave the goddess Ishtar the brush-off, and [assaulted] his women subjects. Herakles destroyed his own family. Cuchulainn got into

such battle frenzies that he had to be plunged into nine vats of water just to cool off after a fight. He died as reckless as he had always been.

Nor does the archetype Hero fit everyone who attains to it. Through many myths it carries quite specific features, including impulsivity that needs tempering, eloquence that wants training, lethally assertive cunning, large appetites, and an attraction to danger. ("Risk is our business" says James Kirk.) The Hero also tends to swing between loyalty and cynicism, Lancelot providing a characteristic hot-cold example.

The Hero of myth may or may not undergo transformation. In Asian cultures he tends not to. Peach Boy is pretty much the same after his adventures as before. But Campbell's Hero suffers inner change as a model to his entire society. That is true of Thor and Odysseus, but not of Beowulf or Fionn mac Cumhail.

Furthermore, the Hero always constellates the monster. In a sense he is the monster. When one appears, the other soon follows.

Where are the Heroines in all this? In her book *The Heroine's Journey* Maureen Murdock tells of putting that question to Campbell. His reply was that women don't have a Hero's Journey because they are a goal of the Journey. They are the Prize. Myths say otherwise in figures like Brunhild, Antigone, Miao-shan, Atalanta, Empress Jingu, Maid Marion, Princess Bari, and Oonagh, who saved her husband Fionn from a giant he wouldn't face...

That, in brief, is the Hero as myth sees him, not as Campbell does. We never see clearly what we overidentify with.

We Americans have a troubling history of overidentification with this archetype. We don't have it: it has us. Psychological possession...

What in the end does the Hero's Journey offer people who are not Heroes? A way to understand them, perhaps, but certainly not a path open to everyone.

Because of these objections I've stopped teaching the Hero's Journey except to those who naturally resonate with Hero figures. I continue to appreciate Campbell's work and his enthusiasm and love for myth even while recognizing limitations.

TEACHER NAME		Lesson #
Nichole Hollingsworth		4
MODEL	CONTENT AREA	GRADE LEVEL
Taba Concept Development	English/Social Studies	7-8
CONCEPTUAL LENS		LESSON TOPIC
Myth		The Cowboy Myth and American Culture
LEARNING OBJECTIVES <i>(from State/Local Curriculum)</i>		
<p>Social Studies Standards:</p> <p>6.C.1 Explain how the behaviors and practices of individuals and groups influenced societies, civilizations and regions.</p> <p>6.C.1.1 Analyze how cultural expressions reflected the values of civilizations, societies and regions (e.g., oral traditions, art, dance, music, literature, and architecture).</p> <p>7.C.1 Understand how cultural values influence relationships between individuals, groups and political entities in modern societies and regions.</p> <p>7.C.1.1 Explain how culture unites and divides modern societies and regions (e.g. enslavement of various peoples, caste system, religious conflict and Social Darwinism).</p> <p>7.C.1.2 Explain how cultural expressions (e.g. art, literature, architecture and music) influence modern society.</p> <p>8.C.1 Understand how different cultures influenced North Carolina and the United States.</p> <p>8.C.1.1 Explain how influences from Africa, Europe, and the Americas impacted North Carolina and the United States (e.g. Columbian Exchange, slavery and the decline of the American Indian populations).</p> <p>8.C.1.2 Summarize the origin of beliefs, practices, and traditions that represent various groups within North Carolina and the United States (e.g. Moravians, Scots-Irish, Highland Scots, Latinos, Hmong, Africans, and American Indians)</p> <p>8.C.1.3 Summarize the contributions of particular groups to the development of North Carolina and the United States (e.g. women, religious groups, and ethnic sectors such as American Indians, African Americans, and European immigrants).</p> <p>ELA Standards:</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.8.1-Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.8.2-Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to supporting ideas; provide an objective summary of the text.</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.8.3-Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events (e.g., through comparisons, analogies, or categories).</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.8.1-Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 8 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.8.1.A-Come to discussions prepared, having read or researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.8.1.B-Follow rules for collegial discussions and decision-making, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.8.1.C-Pose questions that connect the ideas of several speakers and respond to others' questions and comments with relevant evidence, observations, and ideas.</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.8.1.D-Acknowledge new information expressed by others, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views in light of the evidence presented.</p>		
<p>THE ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDING <i>(What is the overarching idea students will understand as a result of this lesson?)</i></p>		<p>THE ESSENTIAL QUESTION <i>(What question will be asked to lead students to "uncover" the Essential Understanding)</i></p>

Myth reveals culture		How does myth reveal culture?
CONTENT KNOWLEDGE (What factual information will students learn in this lesson?)		PROCESS SKILLS (What will students be able to do as a result of this lesson?)
<p>Myth is a shared belief system that communicates a culture's beliefs and values to its members.</p> <p>Myth is deliberately used or referenced in art, advertising, and other forms of media in order to reference particular ideas or influence certain groups.</p> <p>The creation, revision, and propagation of myth are key components of how culture is produced and transmitted.</p> <p>The myth of the cowboy is an idealized image of freedom and self-determination unique to American culture. This myth is largely connected to the white male identity and has been invoked by politicians and businesses to appeal to American audiences. This myth is connected to factual details but is not factual itself.</p>		<p>Students will be able to analyze relationships in and between text and concepts.</p> <p>Students will be able to make connections between ideas and concepts.</p> <p>Students will be able to draw conclusions and create generalizations.</p> <p>Students will be able to work collaboratively in groups.</p>
GUIDING QUESTIONS		
<i>What questions will be asked to support instruction?</i> <i>Include both "lesson plan level" questions as well as questions designed to guide students to the essential understanding</i>		
Pre-Lesson Questions:	During Lesson Questions:	Post Lesson Questions:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What do these images have in common? 2. How might these images relate to one or both of our concepts of myth and culture? 3. In what ways is culture transmitted? 4. How do those ways change (or not) over time? 5. What are some of the "myths" about American culture? 6. In what ways are those myths true? 7. In what ways are those myths false or incomplete? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What culture is this article focused on? 2. What is the myth in this article? 3. Who or what does this myth relate to? 4. Which words/phrases go together as they relate to some aspect of the concept "myth"? 5. Which words/phrases about myth might be related or go together? 6. Which groups could you subsume or combine? 7. What labels or names accurately represent the relationship between your groups and the concept of myth? 8. What is a generalization you could make after reading this article that relates to the relationship between myth and culture? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is the relationship between myth and culture? 2. How do we know that the cowboy myth affects culture? 3. What is the role or purpose of myth? 4. How can myth be positive? 5. How can myth be negative? 6. How does myth reveal culture?

DIFFERENTIATION

(Describe how the planned learning experience has been modified to meet the needs of gifted learners. Note: Modifications may be in one or more of the areas below. Only provide details for the area(s) that have been differentiated for this lesson.)

Content	Process	Product	Learning Environment
The article in this lesson plan is very abstract, analytical, and of high reading level. This article uses sophisticated vocabulary and references.	Students must analyze critically and deal with a high level of abstraction to analyze the concept of myth. In addition, the grouping and regrouping process require analytical thought and flexibility to see things in different ways.		

PLANNED LEARNING EXPERIENCES

(What will the teacher input? What will the students be asked to do? For clarity, please provide detailed instructions)

Engage and Connect - This phase focuses on piquing students' interest and helping them access prior knowledge. This is the introduction to the lesson that motivates or hooks the students.

To pique student interest, instead of superheroes or other typical representation of myth/culture I will have images both current and historical of the West (natural scenery, wildlife, horses, cowboys, Native Americans). I will ask students what they think all of the images relate to and ask how these images might relate to our concept(s) to see what ideas they already have. Students will share out their responses and we will have a brief (10-15 minutes) discussion.

1. What do these images have in common?
2. How might these images relate to one or both of our concepts of myth and culture?
3. In what ways is culture transmitted?
4. How do those ways change (or not) over time?
5. What are some of the "myths" about American culture?
6. In what ways are those myths true?
7. In what ways are those myths false or incomplete?

Explore - In this phase, the students have experiences with the concepts and ideas of the lesson. Students are encouraged to work together without direct instruction from the teacher. The teacher acts as a facilitator. Students observe, question, and investigate the concepts to develop fundamental awareness of the nature of the materials and ideas.

1. Listing:

Students will read the article "The myth of the cowboy" by Eric Hobsbawm from The Guardian which describes the symbolic meaning of the cowboy for American culture and explains how that myth is based on partly true details but is romanticized and exaggerated to create a certain effect on our culture. In addition, he traces this idea through time a little and makes comparisons with European culture. As students read, they will be asked to list/highlight words and phrases that have to do with myth. (20-30 minutes—I'm not sure how quickly they will read).

Article is slightly abridged from the original for clarity and a little bit more brevity. (Approximately 2.5 paragraphs omitted so not a huge change.) Original text available at:

<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2013/mar/20/myth-of-the-cowboy>

Students will share out their lists. Teacher will make a comprehensive/compiled list on the whiteboard or chart paper. (Maybe even sentence strips to make more manipulatable? That way students could have me group/display their groups to the class—A document camera would also serve this purpose to allow students to show their groups to the rest of the class.) (10 minutes)

Explain - Students communicate what they have learned so far and figure out what it means. This phase also provides an opportunity for teachers to directly introduce a concept, process, or skill to guide students toward a deeper understanding.

2. Grouping and Labeling

Students will work in groups (approximately 3-4 students depending on numbers) and select about 20 words/phrases (or perhaps the whole list if it is close to 20 items.) As a group, students will create groups of words/phrases from the comprehensive list based on the question “Which words/phrases go together as they relate to some aspect of the concept “myth”?”

Guidelines: 1) Students must create at least 4 groups
2) Each group must have at least 3 words/phrases
3) No word/phrase can be used twice.

I will monitor and assist as needed, but my assistance should be minimal since students are supposed to reach their own conclusions and interpretations. I will also prompt students to label their groups/clusters in a way that make the relationship between each cluster and the concept clear (this isn’t the time to just make up nonsense names, cluster names should be meaningful). I will probe students to explain their reasoning for their clusters and names for their clusters.

Students will present their clusters to the class and explain their reasoning/grouping.

Elaborate —*Allow students to use their new knowledge and continue to explore its implications. At this stage students expand on the concepts they have learned, make connections to other related concepts, and apply their understandings to the world around them in new ways*

3. Subsuming, Regrouping, and Renaming

Groups will now be challenged to regroup/recluster words and phrases in NEW ways with new labels that describe the relationship between these cluster and the concept “myth.”

The guidelines will change and will now be:

Guidelines: 1) Items CAN now be used in more than one category

- 2) Students must create at least 3 groups.
- 3) Groups must have at least 3 items
- 4) New categories must still be based on the concept “myth”

As before, I will monitor as before and prompt but otherwise I will stay out of the way of student thinking and conversation. This is their time to make meaning.

Before asking students to share, I will probe students to think about subsuming by asking:

Double check each of your items and ask yourself:

- What other groups could this item go into?—(This may mean you have groups that could be combined. Check to be sure each group is distinct.)
- Which groups could fit inside another group? (If groups need to be combined, think about it now.)

After students are finished regrouping, I will ask groups to share their new clusters and new labels.

Evaluate: *This phase assesses both learning and teaching and can use a wide variety of informal and formal assessment strategies.*

4. Generalizing

Students will be asked to create a statement (generalization) that represents the relationship between the concept “myth” and the concept “culture”. This generalization should be related to or inspired by the work they have done with the article and clusters.

Students will then write a paragraph about how myth reveals culture and support it with examples from the text as well as their own analysis/perspective.

What do you now understand about myth, culture, and their relationship with each other. Please explain your thinking using examples or details from this week as well as any other examples you can think of.

Bonus questions:

What don't you see when you look at the world through myth?

How does myth (whether it's the myth of the hero or stereotypes or the myth of the cowboy or other myth), affect how you see and interact with the world around you?

EXTENSION—Discussion (Just in case students finish early or do not resonate with the cowboy article or want other examples of myth.)

The cowboy is an archetypal (literary stereotype) hero and we all know that stereotypes are incomplete or problematic but they can also be unconscious and difficult to unravel.

What does the cowboy represent? To whom does the stereotype appeal and why?

What are some of the problems with this stereotype? What groups does it leave out?

What negative stereotypes are connected to the cowboy stereotype?

Further reading for discussion, perhaps even a jigsaw activity:

Model Minority Myth—NBC News

<https://www.nbcnews.com/news/asian-america/behind-model-minority-myth-why-studious-asian-stereotype-hurts-n792926>

Changing Our Cultural Myths—The Atlantic

<https://www.theatlantic.com/national/archive/2010/04/changing-our-cultural-myths/39537/>

Myth of “I’m Bad at Math”—The Atlantic

<https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2013/10/the-myth-of-im-bad-at-math/280914/>

Generic questions that would go with each/all articles:

- What is the myth (and/or stereotype)? To whom does it apply and how does it affect them?
- How was this myth created? How is it spread?
- What does this myth reveal about the culture of where it originated?
- How does this myth shape the culture where it originated?

Final Presentation Time for Performance Task!

Allow students time to finalize their sales pitch, visual/audio materials, and hero. I will circulate in order to guide students in checking to make sure their hero meets all criteria, especially the connection to American culture component

Students will deliver their sales pitches for their new character.

The myth of the cowboy

How did the lone cowboy hero become such a potent figure in American culture? In an extract from his final book *Fractured Times*, the late Eric Hobsbawm follows a trail from cheap novels and B-westerns to Ronald Reagan

Eric Hobsbawm

Wed 20 Mar 2013 14.00 EDT



The lone cowboy hero is far removed from the reality of the west. Photograph: Konrad Wothe/Minden Pictures

Today, populations of wild horse-riders and herdsmen exist in a large number of regions all round the world. Some of them are strictly analogous to cowboys, such as gauchos on the plains of the southern cone of Latin America; the *llaneros* on the plains of Colombia and Venezuela; possibly the *vaqueiros* of the Brazilian north-east; certainly the Mexican *vaqueros* from whom indeed, as everyone knows, both the costume of the modern cowboy myth and most of the vocabulary of the cowboy's trade are directly derived: mustang, lasso, lariat, sombrero, chaps (*chaparro*), a cinch, bronco. There are similar populations in Europe, such as the *csikos* on the Hungarian plain, or *puszta*, the Andalusian horsemen in the cattle-raising zone whose flamboyant behaviour probably gave the earliest meaning of the word "flamenco", and the various Cossack communities of the south Russian and Ukrainian plains.

In the 16th century there were the exact equivalents of [the Chisholm trail](#) leading from the Hungarian plains to the market cities of Augsburg, Nuremberg or Venice. And I do not have to tell you about the great Australian outback, which is essentially ranching country, though for sheep more than cattle.

There is thus no shortage of potential cowboy myths in the western world. And, in fact, practically all the groups I have mentioned have generated macho and heroic semi-barbarian myths of one kind or another in their own countries and sometimes even beyond. But none of them has generated a myth with serious international popularity, let alone one that can compare, even faintly, with the fortunes of the North American cowboy. Why?

Our starting point is the fact that, in and outside Europe, the "western" in its modern sense – that is, the myth of the cowboy – is a late variant of a very early and deep-rooted image: that of the wild west in general...

The original image of the wild west, I suggest, contains two elements: the confrontation of nature and civilisation, and of freedom with social constraint. Civilisation is what threatens nature; and their move from bondage or constraint into independence, which constitutes the essence of America as a radical European ideal in the 18th and early 19th centuries, is actually what brings civilisation into the wild west and so destroys it. The plough that broke the plains is the end of the buffalo and the Indian.

It is clear that many white protagonists of the original wild west epic are in some sense misfits in, or refugees from, "civilisation", but that is not, I think, the main essence of their situation. Basically they are of two types: explorers or visitors seeking something that cannot be found elsewhere – and money is the very last thing they seek; and men who have established a symbiosis with nature, as it exists in its human and non-human shape, in these wilds.

In terms of literary pedigree, the invented cowboy was a late romantic creation. But in terms of social content, he had a double function: he represented the ideal of individualist freedom pushed into a sort of inescapable jail by the closing of the frontier and the coming of the big corporations. As a reviewer said of [Frederic Remington's](#) articles, illustrated by himself in 1895, the cowboy roamed "where the American may still revel in the great red-shirted freedom which has been pushed so far to the mountain wall that it threatens soon to expire somewhere near the top". In hindsight, the west could seem thus, as it seemed to that sentimentalist and first great star of movie westerns [William S Hart](#), for whom the cattle and mining frontier "to this country ... means the very essence of national life ... It is but a generation or so since virtually all this country was frontier. Consequently its spirit is bound up in American citizenship." As a quantitative statement this is absurd, but its significance is symbolic. And the invented tradition of the west is entirely symbolic, inasmuch as it generalises the experience of a comparative handful of marginal people. Who, after all, cares that the total number of deaths by gunshot in all the major cattle towns put together between 1870 and 1885 – in Wichita plus Abilene plus Dodge City plus Ellsworth – was 45, or an average of 1.5 per cattle-trading season, or that local western newspapers were not filled with stories about bar-room fights, but about property values and business opportunities?



The strong, silent type ... John Wayne in *The Searchers*. Photograph: AP Photo/Warner Bros

But the cowboy also represented a more dangerous ideal: the defence of the native Waspish American ways against the millions of encroaching immigrants from lower races. Hence the quiet dropping of the Mexican, Indian and black elements, which still appear in the original non-ideological westerns – for instance, Buffalo Bill's show. It is at this stage and in this manner that the cowboy becomes the lanky, tall Aryan. In other words, the invented cowboy tradition is part of the rise of both segregation and anti-immigrant racism; this is a dangerous heritage. The Aryan cowboy is not, of course, entirely mythical. Probably the percentage of Mexicans, Indians and black people did diminish as the wild west ceased to be essentially a south-western, even a Texan, phenomenon, and at the peak of the boom it extended into areas like Montana, Wyoming and the Dakotas. In the later periods of the cattle boom the cowboys were also joined by a fair number of European dudes, mainly Englishmen, with eastern-bred college-men following them.

The new cowboy tradition made its way into the wider world by two routes: the western movie and the much underrated western novel or sub-novel, which was to many foreigners what the private eye thriller was to become in our own times. As for the movies, we know that the genre of the western was firmly established by about 1909. Show business for a mass public being what it is, it will surprise nobody that the celluloid cowboy tended to develop two subspecies: the romantic, strong, shy, silent man of action exemplified by WS Hart, Gary Cooper and John Wayne, and the cowboy entertainer of the Buffalo Bill type – heroic, no doubt, but essentially showing off his tricks and, as such, usually associated with a particular horse. Tom Mix was no doubt the prototype and much the most successful of these.



Channelling the cowboy myth ... President Ronald Reagan. Photograph: Michael Evans/Zuma Press/Corbis

The cowboy tradition was reinvented in our times as the established myth of Reagan's America. This is really very recent. For instance, cowboys did not become a serious medium for selling things until the 1960s, surprising though this seems: Marlboro country really revealed the enormous potential in American male identification with cow-punchers, who, of course, are increasingly seen not as riding herd but as gunslingers. Who said: "I've always acted alone like the cowboy ... the cowboy entering the village or city alone on his horse ... He acts, that's all"? Henry Kissinger to Oriana Fallaci in 1972, that's who. Let me quote you the *reductio ad absurdum* of this myth, which dates back to 1979: "The West. It's not just stage-coaches and sagebrush. It's an image of men who are real and proud. Of the freedom and independence we all would

like to feel. Now Ralph Lauren has expressed all this in Chaps, his new men's cologne. Chaps is a cologne a man can put on as naturally as a worn leather jacket or a pair of jeans. Chaps. It's the West. The West you would like to feel inside yourself."

The real invented tradition of the west, as a mass phenomenon that dominates American policy, is the product of the eras of Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon and Reagan. And of course, Reagan, the first president since Teddy Roosevelt whose image is deliberately western and on horseback, knew what he was doing.

Is this Reaganite myth of the west an international tradition? I think not. In the first place because the major American medium by which the invented west was propagated has died out. The western novel, as I have suggested, is no longer an international phenomenon. The private eye has killed the Virginian. Larry McMurtry and his like, whatever their place in American literature, are virtually unknown outside their native country. As for the western movie, it was killed by TV; and the western TV series, which was probably the last genuinely international mass triumph of the invented west, became a mere adjunct to children's hour, and in turn it has faded away. Where are Hopalong Cassidy, The Lone Ranger, Roy Rogers, Laramie, Gunsmoke and the rest on which the kids of the 1950s thrived? The real western movie became deliberately highbrow, a carrier of social, moral and political significance in the 1950s, until it in turn collapsed under their weight as well as the advancing age of the makers and stars – of Ford and Wayne and Cooper. I'm not criticising them. On the contrary, practically all the westerns that any of us would wish to see again date from after Stagecoach (which was released in 1939). But what carried the west into the hearts and homes of five continents was not movies that aimed at winning Oscars or critical applause. What is more, once the late western movie had itself become infected by Reaganism – or by John Wayne as an ideologist – it became so American that most of the rest of the world didn't get the point, or, if it did, didn't like it...



Clayton Moore, star of The Lone Ranger – once popular TV westerns became children's television. Photograph: ABC via Getty Images

There is, in fact, a European backlash against the John Wayne image of the west, and that is the revived genre of the western movie. Whatever the spaghetti westerns mean, they certainly were deeply critical of the US western myth, and in being so, paradoxically, they showed how much demand there still was among adults in both Europe and the US for the old gunslingers. The western was revived via Sergio Leone, or

for that matter via Kurosawa – that is, via non-American intellectuals steeped in the lore and the films of the west, but sceptical of the American invented tradition...

What was so special about cowboys? First, clearly, that they occurred in a country that was universally visible and central to the 19th-century world, of which it constituted, as it were, the utopian dimension: the living dream. Anything that happened in America seemed bigger, more extreme, more dramatic and unlimited, even when it wasn't – and of course often it was, though not in the case of the cowboys. Second, because the purely local vogue for western myth was magnified and internationalised by means of the global influence of American popular culture, the most original and creative in the industrial and urban world, and the mass media that carried it and which the US dominated. And let me observe in passing that it made its way in the world not only directly, but also indirectly, via the European intellectuals it attracted to the US, or at a distance.

This would certainly explain why cowboys are better known than *vaqueros* or *gauchos*, but not, I think, the full range of the international vibrations they set up, or used to set up. This, I suggest, is due to the in-built anarchism of American capitalism. I mean not only the anarchism of the market, but the ideal of an individual uncontrolled by any constraints of state authority. In many ways the 19th-century US was a stateless society. Compare the myths of the American and the Canadian west: the one is a myth of a Hobbesian state of nature mitigated only by individual and collective self-help: licensed or unlicensed gunmen, posses of vigilantes and occasional cavalry charges. The other is the myth of the imposition of government and public order as symbolised by the uniforms of the Canadian version of the horseman-hero, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

Individualist anarchism had two faces. For the rich and powerful it represents the superiority of profit over law and state. Not just because law and the state can be bought, but because even when they can't, they have no moral legitimacy compared to selfishness and profit. For those who have neither wealth nor power, it represents independence, and the little man's right to make himself respected and show what he can do. I don't think it was an accident that the ideal-typical cowboy hero of the classic invented west was a *loner*, not beholden to anyone; nor, I think, that money was *not* important for him. As Tom Mix put it: "I ride into a place owning my own horse, saddle and bridle. It isn't my quarrel, but I get into trouble doing the right thing for somebody else. When it's all ironed out, I never get any money reward."

In a way the loner lent himself to imaginary self-identification just because he was a loner. To be Gary Cooper at high noon or Sam Spade, you just have to imagine you are one man, whereas to be Don Corleone or Rico, let alone Hitler, you have to imagine a collective of people who follow and obey you, which is less plausible. I suggest that the cowboy, just because he was a myth of an ultra-individualist society, the only society of the bourgeois era without real pre-bourgeois roots, was an unusually effective vehicle for dreaming – which is all that most of us get in the way of unlimited opportunities. To ride alone is less implausible than to wait until that marshal's baton in your knapsack becomes reality.

A low-angle photograph of a marble statue of a woman, likely a personification of a virtue or deity, wearing a wreath of grapevines and leaves. The statue is set against a clear, light blue sky. The image is split vertically: the left side shows the statue, and the right side is a dark grey rectangle containing the text.

Unit Resources

VI Unit Resources

Provide a listing of books, Web sites, videos, and/or other instructional materials that are intended to supplement the unit. Include resources intended for both teacher and student use. Be sure to use APA style for books/articles and provide a brief (1-2 sentence) annotation for Web sites and instructional materials.

Books:

Allison, S. T., & Goethals, G. R. (2011). *Heroes: What they do & why we need them*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bulfinch, T. (1913). *Bulfinch's mythology; The age of fable; the age of chivalry; Legends of Charlemagne*. New York: Grosset & Dunlap.

DAulaire, I., & DAulaire, E. P. (2003). *Ingri and Edgar Parin DAulaires book of Greek myths*. New York: Delacorte Press.

Gaiman, N. (2018). *Norse mythology*. London: Bloomsbury.

Hamilton, E. (2011). *Mythology: Timeless tales of gods and heroes*. New York: Grand Central.

McCoy, D. (2016). *The Viking spirit: An introduction to Norse mythology and religion*. North Charleston, SC: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform.

Lévi-Strauss, C., & OFlaherty, W. D. (1995). *Myth and meaning*. New York: Schocken Books.

Reesman, J. C. (2001). *Trickster lives: Culture and myth in American fiction*. Athens: University of Georgia Press.

Digital Resources:

Note: Especially for the Socratic Seminar, it is key to select a text that is appropriately challenging and interesting to your students. If the article in the lesson plan doesn't seem like it would suit your students, selecting a different article may be a good idea. While one of the articles in resource list may be a good choice, these are not the only relevant choices.

Digital resources have been clustered around topics and subtopics to aid resource selection and retrieval.

Myth

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/myth-the-mind/201705/its-not-just-myth>

This article analyses the impact of myth on an individual and how myth and mythology are important to people.

<https://aeon.co/essays/why-is-pop-culture-obsessed-with-battles-between-good-and-evil>

This rather length article discusses the changes in storytelling and its focus from early folktales and fairy tales to modern pop culture. Excerpts might be engaging to students but the article is thorough for teachers.

Myth + American Culture

<https://www.theatlantic.com/national/archive/2010/04/changing-our-cultural-myths/39537/>

This article is an excellent and thorough discussion of how media (culture) creates myth that may or may not be based in fact and shapes our perceptions. In addition, this article discusses how to change myth in order to influence culture.

“The problem is -- just as in the case of Prince Charming -- that world, which never really existed to begin with, has now receded beyond the limits of even our suspended disbelief.”

<https://theadventurethief.wordpress.com/2014/07/25/the-myth-of-the-good-old-days/>

While this article isn't from a vetted source it could probably be fact checked and that research could provide some interesting discussion. Like the article about the American family, this article pokes at the myth of American life and the good old days of the 1950s that pervades American culture and media.

<https://americanart.si.edu/exhibitions/levinthal>

This article discusses an artist's work and his use of myth and American culture in his art.

<https://www.livescience.com/47681-normal-american-family-a-myth.html>

This article is a little more succinct about the changes in family structure over the past century. The myth is the nuclear family—two parents, children, no divorce etc and that myth is perpetuated through media but has not been changing/evolving.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2013/11/26/health/families.html>

This article is VERY long but there are some excerpts that could be useful and it does give a lot of information. This would be great for teacher background information and could be useful if the unit were adapted for an older audience.

<https://www.nbcnews.com/news/asian-america/behind-model-minority-myth-why-studio-asian-stereotype-hurts-n792926>

Racial stereotypes are a tricky aspect of myth but they are a shared belief that influences behavior. These myths are evident in media and culture and are perpetuated through media and culture. Before tackling sensitive issues like race, it is important to know your students well and have build a classroom community that handles sensitive topics with respect.

<https://www.vox.com/identities/2017/1/5/14175116/acting-white-myth-black-kids-academics-school-achievement-gap-debunked>

This article deals with the sensitive issue of race but it does point out how myths can be damaging because they affect how we treat each other. The myths that intelligence looks a certain way or that

black people act a certain way are very pervasive myths in American society that contemporary discussions of racism are addressing. This article would be interesting to use to address examples of how culture perpetuates myth.

<https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2017/07/internalizing-the-myth-of-meritocracy/535035/>

This article deals with the myth of meritocracy (related to the American Dream) and discusses how such myths can be harmful when they aren't real but are still believed in.

<https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2013/10/the-myth-of-im-bad-at-math/280914/>

This article also deals with a harmful myth but a less racially charged myth than the article discussing the meritocracy. This myth is also likely to be very immediate and relatable to so many of the students and may bring up other myths related to education.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/five-myths/five-myths-about-american-indians/2017/11/21/41081cb6-ce4f-11e7-a1a3-0d1e45a6de3d_story.html?utm_term=.debe695824dc

This article debunks common/popular myths about Native Americans and opens the discussion about myths about cultural/ethnic groups. In addition, by mentioning Thanksgiving, the article could be used to segue into a discussion about myth related to holidays and how that connects to culture.

<https://www.huckmag.com/art-and-culture/photography-2/myth-mystery-american-south/>

This article doesn't have a lot of meat but there are a few wonderful quotes worth considering that could be analyzed in conjunction with other articles or media. Including:

“Photographer Morgan Ashcom, a native of Free Union, Virginia, understands this underlying truth: our stories have just as much (if not more) influence on our identity than the facts themselves. Like Faulkner, Ashcom understands that the South is not so much a “geographical place” as it is an “emotional idea,””

“That projection can be maintained by those inside as well as out and then projected into the world through the mainstream media, popular culture, and the rewriting of history until people take fiction for fact itself.”

<https://www.mcclatchydc.com/news/nation-world/national/article24694813.html>

This article does get a little political, but it also does a good job of discussing the sentimentality associated with small town America and how the facts relate to those myths.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-18731576>

This article does an excellent job of connecting media (and therefore culture) with myth in its discussion of Mayberry and how the Andy Griffith show contributed to the myth of small-town America.

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/sex-drugs-and-boredom/200908/american-mythology>

This article addresses the issue of American myth, particularly perfectionism, that pervades media and how that myth is used in marketing. It's a little cynical but there is something worth analyzing there.

Myth + Other Countries

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/may/26/britain-politeness-english-speakers-gratitude>

This article examines the relationship between expressions of gratitude and national identity in Britain and explored the myth of British people being polite.

<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/arts-culture/a-wwii-propaganda-campaign-popularized-the-myth-that-carrots-help-you-see-in-the-dark-28812484/>

This article examples how a myth about carrots was spread through propaganda. This a good article for discussing how myths are spread through media. In addition, since the myth is about carrots/nutrition it is not as charged as some other myths.

Heroes (Real, Literary, and Comic Book)

<http://blogs.reuters.com/great-debate/2015/05/22/why-imperator-furiosa-not-mad-max-is-the-hero-for-our-age/>

This article discusses a shift in perception from the traditional hero (aka the lead male) to a broader understanding of hero (not tied to gender but tied to actions)

<https://blog.richmond.edu/heroes/>

This blog, written by Scott T. Allison and George R. Goethals, both professors at University of Richmond, focuses on analyzing heroes in a variety of media with an emphasis on psychology.