

Name:

Introduction to Mythology

What are myths?

- The word myth comes from the Greek word _____ which means _____.
- 2000 years ago, _____ created the word mythology to describe stories with made up characters.
- These stories are _____ by nature and often contain _____ or other divine beings with _____ powers.

Why did ancient societies write myths?

- People created these myths to explain the _____.
- They needed to understand how the _____ worked, how the world came to be, where _____ came from—they did not have _____, so they created myths.
- Cultures created _____ to explain how the earth was created, how _____ was formed, why it rained or the river flooded, why the sun set each day, why it was cold in the winter and warm in the summer, etc..

What is the difference between myth and religion?

- Religion can be defined as an _____
- One is not necessarily true or more right than the other—religion is your set of _____; myths are _____—if the myths come from your religion, they are true to you.
- Religion and myths share many common characteristics:
 - _____—for example, prayer, communion, baptism, and sacrifice
 - Belief in a _____ or gods
 - Sacred stories or _____—like the Bible, Koran, Bhagavad-Gita, Popol Vuh, or Torah—these books collect the _____ sacred to each religion

Are myths historically real?

- No, yes, maybe? While most of the stories cannot be proven through _____ or _____, a few have presented enough evidence for speculation.
- The famed city of _____ from Homer's _____ was long thought to be fictional. However, in 1871, amateur _____ Heinrich Schliemann and his wife discovered the _____ city of _____. They actually found _____ different cities of Troy, each layer built on top of the _____ of the one before it.
- _____, famous British king, whose story is still well-known today, was most likely based on a real _____, but the details of his heroic _____ do not have much _____ behind them. Arthur was probably based on a tribal _____ in _____ or even earlier in Celtic _____. He is also later mentioned as a military chieftain fighting against the _____ and Norse _____—all of these people living possibly hundreds of years apart. While he may have started out a real person, the Arthur of the round table so familiar to today's readers is a much calmer, _____, _____ version compared to the _____ tribal chief and warlord.

What is the difference between myths, legends, fables, folk tales, and fairy tales?

- _____—sacred stories to explain events in nature
- **Legend**—story about _____ times that have been handed down throughout generations; while the main character of the story is probably _____, the details of the story have likely been fictionalized/_____ as time has gone on
- **Fable**—simple, short _____ story meant to teach a lesson
- _____—fictional story passed down that is meant to entertain and tell of the customs superstitions and beliefs of _____ people
- **Fairy Tale**—fictional story with _____ creatures—elves, fairies, dragons, witches, etc.

Why do myths from different cultures share similarities?

- Many different cultures feature _____ characteristics or _____, like the battle between _____ and evil or _____ fighting their parents for _____ of the throne.
- These patterns found in literature across cultures and generations are called _____.

- The term archetype was created by Swiss psychoanalyst _____ in the early 1900s.
- Jung believed all _____ shared ideas they were not even aware of that were _____, passed down through every _____.

Popular Myths from Different Cultures

- _____—Osiris and Isis
- Mesopotamia—_____
- Greece—*The Labors of* _____, the *Iliad*, the _____, *Metamorphoses*
- Northern Europe—_____
- The _____ Isles—_____ and _____
- _____ Europe—The _____
- The Far East—_____
- Africa—_____

What is Epic Literature?

- Epic literature is a genre that describes _____, religious tales, and _____ legends. Epic literature was most often in the form of oral _____ and passed down through generations through _____.
- The main purposes of epic literature were to _____ the heroic deeds of _____, _____ society on the _____ held high by that culture, and offer _____ to the nobles and ruling class. The stories were often told or sung by professional _____ or the _____ themselves.
- The ancient _____ first made use of the epic with poems by _____ and _____, but other cultures from ancient civilizations all over the world have epics of their own.

Characteristics of Epic Literature?

- The _____ of epic literature is often born of a _____ parent and an immortal parent, thus rendering the hero some _____ abilities or gifts.
- The stories also often contain _____ elements, appearance of and _____ from the _____ (both as _____ and hindrances), magical beasts or _____ that the hero must fight, and sometimes _____ that enable the hero to succeed.

- The hero in the epic usually goes on a _____ or journey to _____ someone, _____ himself, fight a battle, or achieve _____. The stories do not always end _____ for the hero, and it is often the _____ of the hero that causes his _____.

Impact of Mythology on Modern Society

- _____ and _____ mythology is still taught in schools today.
- _____ from around the world always make money at the box office—movies such as the Percy Jackson series, _____, Clash of the Titans, _____, and Hercules.
- _____ from ancient civilizations are still around and used everyday—mathematics, _____, _____, philosophy, the _____, the sailboat, _____, _____, agriculture, _____, and the 365 day _____.
- Ancient mythologies have influenced _____ religions—_____ and _____ may have been influenced by the Egyptians, Mesopotamians, and Greeks.
- Some mythologies are still prevalent in religions today—_____ and _____ have both been practiced since _____ and are still widely practiced across the world.
- _____ is also credited with beginning _____, an exercise very popular in gyms all over the world.
- _____ to ancient gods are still very popular—places such as _____, Greece, _____, China, _____, and Japan have _____, statues, and _____ built for the _____ that are visited by millions of tourists each year.
- The _____, once a collection of _____ played as a _____ to the gods, are held every two years at locations on six continents and have only gained popularity since their reinstatement in _____.