



K I R K W O O D  
S C H O O L D I S T R I C T

## MYTHOLOGY

### **Course Description:**

Students will explore and examine the myths of many cultures from around the world. Through analysis and comparison, students will gain an understanding and appreciation of the importance of myths throughout various places and times.

**Grade Level:** 7th and 8th grades

### **Unit Scope and Sequence**

**Unit:** What is mythology?

**Unit 2:** Creation myths

**Unit 3:** The archetype of a hero

### **Course Enduring Understandings:**

- Students will understand the thread of ancient mythology in modern culture.
- Students will understand the interconnected nature of cultures through the universality of mythology.

### **Course Essential Questions:**

- What does mythology tell us about human existence and the human experience?
- What universal truths does mythology teach?

## MYTHOLOGY 7-8

### UNIT 1: WHAT IS MYTHOLOGY?

*In this unit, students will learn the definition and nature of the myth. Myths are a collection of stories that explain a worldview. Myths exist in cultures around the world, and they often offer explanations for physical occurrences in the world, the origins of people and the history of a people. While nature can seem chaotic, myths hold the power to bring order to the world. These myths often contain the beliefs and values of a culture.*

<b>Unit Essential Learning Targets</b>	
<b>Enduring Understandings</b>	<b>Essential Questions</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Students will understand the role of myth in the past in the modern narrative.</li> <li>● Myths whether oral or written typically follow patterns that have similar motifs.</li> <li>● Mythology, by its nature, serves as a way to explain, inform or entertain.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● What is mythology?</li> <li>● Why study mythology?</li> <li>● What unique cultural traits are revealed in myths?</li> <li>● How does spirituality affect mythology and storytelling?</li> <li>● What common patterns and motifs are found in myths?</li> </ul>
<b>Students must know:</b>	<b>Students must be able to:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Myths from all cultures contain similar patterns.</li> <li>● Myths are created for a variety of reasons</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Identify the structure and purpose of selected myths</li> <li>● Explain the similarities between myths from different geographic locations</li> <li>● Form theories about myths from discussions</li> </ul>

<b>Missouri Learning Standards</b>
<p><b>Draw conclusions, infer and analyze by citing the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text (8.RL.1.A).</b></p>
<p><b>Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings using context, affixes, or reference materials (8.RL.1.B).</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Explain how the central ideas of text reflect historical and/or cultural contexts (8.RI.3.C).</li> <li>● Read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas and poems, independently and proficiently (8.RL.3.D).</li> </ul>

## MYTHOLOGY 7-8

### UNIT 2: CREATION MYTHS

*In this unit, students will read about the different ways that cultures have perceived the origins of the world. Students will consider why understanding beginnings is so important to a people. Students will investigate as well as compare and contrast a variety of creation myths.*

<b>Unit Essential Learning Targets</b>	
<b><i>Enduring Understandings</i></b>	<b><i>Essential Questions</i></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Creation myths provide an insight into the workings of the human mind and have been understood to reveal divine mysteries, primitive science, and justifications for human behavior.</li> <li>● Creation myths provide a framework for communities to determine how they fit into the larger world.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How do different cultures explain the beginning of the world, the origin of man, or natural phenomenon? How is it explained that each continues to function?</li> <li>● How do different peoples explain how man was created?</li> <li>● What are the similarities and differences in creation myths from around the world?</li> </ul>
<b><i>Students must know:</i></b>	<b><i>Students must be able to:</i></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Differences in creation myths reflect the uniqueness of the geographic location of each culture.</li> <li>● Cultures create stories to interpret their origins.</li> <li>● Creation myths illustrate humanity's close relationship with nature</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Read and interpret myths from various cultures.</li> <li>● Explain how creation myths give cultures purpose and belonging</li> <li>● Identify cultural values and systems of organization using the creation stories</li> </ul>

<b>Missouri Learning Standards</b>
<p><b>Read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas and poems, independently and proficiently (8.RL.3.D).</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Explain how themes reflect historical and/or cultural contexts (8.RL.3.C)..</li> <li>● Draw conclusions, infer and analyze by citing the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text (8.RI.1.A).</li> <li>● Explain how the central ideas of text reflect historical and/or cultural contexts (8.RI.3.C).</li> </ul>

## MYTHOLOGY 7-8

### UNIT 3: THE ARCHETYPE OF A HERO

*The hero's journey is rooted in the past. Its themes have inspired humanity, acted as a cautionary tale, built civilizations and informed religions for millennia. In the classical archetype, heroes seem to appear ordinary, yet they have some remarkable quality that sets them apart. They are called to adventure and while their challenge may be an outward battle or an internal struggle, ultimately they must make sacrifices to achieve a goal. Though seemingly great, they typically act with hubris and must learn in order to succeed. These heroes display the values of a culture. Their human frailty makes them relatable even in the present day. This unit will focus upon the many versions of these journeys and their heroes including: classic, everyman, superhero, tragic and epic.*

#### Unit Essential Learning Targets

<b>Enduring Understandings</b>	<b>Essential Questions</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The hero's journey is a pattern that exists in mythology and in entertainment today.</li> <li>• The elements of the hero's journey are useful in self-discovery.</li> <li>• Archetypal elements in myths illustrate the universality of the human experience.</li> <li>• Mythology and articular quests often reflect the values of a specific culture.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why study the hero's journey? What are the steps of the hero's journey?</li> <li>• What qualities do heroes possess?</li> <li>• How does the hero reflect the human experience?</li> <li>• How is the hero's journey similar to or represent our own journey in life?</li> </ul>
<b>Students must know:</b>	<b>Students must be able to:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• While the story of the journey first occurred in ancient myths, it is still a significant pattern in the modern day.</li> <li>• The journey of a hero can be physical or internal, but the challenge is to meet the test and achieve growth or change</li> <li>• Knowledge of a culture's hero provides insight into the society's beliefs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify the values that are important to a society through the reading of a myth</li> <li>• Note common mythic elements in the ancient heroic myths and modern day stories</li> <li>• Explain the significance of the physical and psychological challenges faced by successful and unsuccessful heroes.</li> <li>• Mapping the the structure of the hero's journey or monomyth.</li> </ul>

#### Missouri Learning Standards

**Explain how contemporary texts make use of archetypal characters or universal themes from older or traditional texts (8.RL.3.B).**

- Draw conclusions, infer and analyze by citing the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text (8.RI.1.A)..
- Explain how the central ideas of text reflect historical and/or cultural contexts (8.RI.3.C)..

**MYTHOLOGY 7-8**  
**UNIT 3: THE ARCHETYPE OF A HERO**

- Read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas and poems, independently and proficiently (8.RL.3.D).

