

## **Ohio Standards Connections**

### **Reading Applications: Literary Text**

#### **Benchmark E**

Demonstrate comprehension by inferring themes, patterns and symbols.

(Grades 4 - 7)

#### **Indicator 5**

Identify recurring themes, patterns and symbols found in literature from different eras and cultures.

(Grade 6)

### **Lesson Summary:**

*Students will read a variety of myths and determine common themes found in myths from around the world.*

**Estimated Duration:** 120 minutes broken into instructionally appropriate sessions.

### **Commentary:**

Many graded courses of study in English language arts devote some instructional time at the intermediate level to the reading and studying of myths. Generally speaking, students at this grade level enjoy reading fictional works that have the fascinating, powerful and intriguing natures of characters and their stories that myths provide. For this reason, teaching the concept of theme within this genre can be an effective and enjoyable way to explore a concept students may not immediately grasp.

This lesson was a part of a pilot conducted by The Ohio Department of Education. One of the educators who participated in the pilot noted that teachers using this lesson should be confident in their content knowledge of mythology. Many mythological characters, for instance, have very complicated relationships with one another that may generate questions from students for which teachers need to be prepared. Another educator noted that even though the lesson was written for use in the sixth grade, it could readily be applied across grade levels with a minimal amount of modification to suit students' ability levels.

This lesson was submitted by an Ohio educator and writer of model lessons. The writer feels there is great value in creating a bibliography for teacher and student use. This useful tool can facilitate the instructional process and encourage students to extend their knowledge by reading mythology beyond required reading.

### **Pre-Assessment:**

Provide students with a myth and ask them to determine a theme and to provide textual support for their response.

### **Scoring Guidelines:**

3 = Appropriate theme is identified and well supported.

2 = Theme is identified and some support is provided.

1 = Theme is alluded to but has little or no support.

0 = Off task or off topic.

### **Post-Assessment:**

Have students select two myths that have similar themes and write an essay supporting that common theme with support from the myths.

**Scoring Guidelines:**

3 = Appropriate theme is identified and well supported with evidence from both myths.

2 = Theme is identified with support provided for one myth and, little support provided for the other myth.

1 = Theme is alluded to but has little or no support with evidence from either myth.

0 = Off task or off topic.

**Instructional Procedures:**

1. Divide students into small groups and provide each group with a different myth.
2. Ask groups to create a script to be presented to the class.
3. Allow time for groups to practice their scripts.
4. Read a myth to the class. Model how to complete the four-column graphic organizer (Blackline Master 1) and how to identify important information from the myth. The columns should be labeled "Title of Myth," "Place of Origin," "Cultural Values," and "Natural Phenomenon."
5. Distribute a copy of the graphic organizer (Blackline Master 1) to students and tell them that they are to complete the chart as their classmates present their myths to the class.
6. Have each group conduct its presentation of its myth.
7. After each presentation, review the information that has been recorded on the graphic organizer.
8. When all groups have completed their presentations, have a class discussion about common themes found in the myths. These might include the following:
  - Relationships between humans and supernatural beings
  - Cultures, attitudes and values
  - Explanation of natural phenomenon

**Differentiated Instructional Support:**

Instruction is differentiated according to learner needs, to help all learners either meet the intent of the specified indicator(s) or, if the indicator is already met, to advance beyond the specified indicator(s).

- Match complexity of reading material to student reading levels.
- Read the myths aloud to the class and have them identify themes orally.
- Provide students with the scripts to perform.
- Have students write original myths incorporating some of the themes discussed as characteristic of this type of literature. This is good for students who enjoy writing.
- Have the students examine myths/legends from a variety of cultures, comparing and contrasting them for theme, patterns and symbols, and have the students draw conclusions about the reasons for the similarities and

differences.

- Have the students create a mythology bibliography.

### **Materials/Resources Needed:**

*For the teacher:* Variety of myths from different countries and an overhead of Blackline Master 1

*For the students:* Copy of one myth for each group and a graphic organizer for myths (Blackline Master 1)

### **Key Vocabulary:**

- myth
- theme

### **Attachments:**

- Mythology Chart (Blackline Master 1)