

World Myths and Folktales: *The Stories of Human Kind***Unit 1 Introduction*****Literary Significance***

- Myths and folktales are the world’s oldest stories, passed on by word of mouth from generation to generation.
- Stories have always played a significant role since the dawning of humankind.
- Myths and folktales remain vital to modern readers because they reveal common _____, _____, and _____ that are familiar to all ages and cultures.
- Myths explain the _____:
 - Who we are
 - Where we came from
 - What we believe in

“...myths and folktales are in some ways even ‘truer’ than history.” -Joseph Campbell

- Why do you think Joseph Campbell believes that myths and folktales are “truer” than history?

What is a Myth?

- An _____, _____ story that explains a _____, _____, or mysterious _____.

Functions of Myths:

- To explain the _____ of the world and universe.
- To explain the _____: how and why people were created, why they are flawed, why there is suffering in the world, why people must eventually die, and what happens to people after death.
- To explain _____—i.e. phases of the moon.
- To explain the nature of _____ and _____ and how these deities and human beings interact.
- To explain the meanings behind _____ rituals, customs, and beliefs.
- To explain _____ events.
- To teach _____ lessons.

***Myths were created out of a human need to make sense of the universe
and explain how the world and its inhabitants came to be.***

Name: _____ Block: _____

Date: _____

The Differences Between Myths and Folktales

- As myths were retold and retold over generations, they transformed.
- One of the storytelling forms that arose from the myth was the folktale.

What is a folktale?

- A story created by the “folk”—the _____—and passed along _____ from generation to generation.
- Folktales include _____, _____, _____, _____, and _____.

Functions of Folktales:

- Folktales, unlike myths, are _____, or nonreligious.
- Folktales were created as much for their _____ value as for the teaching of _____ or _____ values.
- Folktales feature more _____, transformations, and enchantments, like myths; however, gods and goddesses are _____ usually the central characters in the story.
- Folktale heroes tend to be _____, everyday folk who don’t have _____, unlike the heroes of myths, who are the _____ offspring of gods or goddesses and human parents.
- Folktales are _____ associated with religious rituals.

***Folktales are entertaining stories about ordinary people who survive by luck,
by using their own wits, and by relying on their own natural goodness.***

What’s the difference?

- The most important difference between a myth and a folktale concerns the _____ of each storytelling form. Myths are a direct expression of a culture’s _____: folktales are not. However, both myths and folktales explain the important _____ about life.