

Myths from Around the World

An ADE Language Arts Lesson

Week 1

Author	ADE Content Specialists
Grade Level	6 th grade
Duration	Five sessions

Aligns To

Reading:

Strand 1: Reading Process

Concept 4: Vocabulary

PO 1. Determine the effect of affixes on root words.

PO 3. Use context to identify the meaning of words with multiple meanings (e.g., definition, example, restatement, or contrast).

Concept 6: Comprehension Strategies

PO 7. Use reading strategies (e.g., drawing conclusions, determining cause and effect, making inferences, sequencing) to comprehend text.

Strand 2: Comprehending Literary Text

Concept 1: Elements of Literature

PO 8. Identify various genres of fiction (e.g., mysteries, science fiction, historical fiction, adventures, fantasies, fables, myths) based upon their characteristics.

Concept 2: Historical and Cultural Aspects of Literature

PO 2. Identify common structures and stylistic elements in literature, folklore, and myths from a variety of cultures.

Strand 3: Comprehending Informational Text

Concept 1: Expository Text

PO 7. Interpret graphic features (e.g., charts, maps, diagrams, illustrations, tables, timelines, graphs) of expository text.

Writing:

Strand 1: Writing Process

Concept 1: Prewriting

Concept 2: Drafting

Concept 3: Revising

Concept 4: Editing

Concept 5: Publishing

Connects To

Social Studies:

Strand 2: World History

Concept 2: Early Civilizations

PO 5. Describe the Mayan, Aztec, and Incan/Inkan civilizations:

- b. achievements (e.g., mathematics, astronomy, architecture, government, social structure, arts and crafts)

PO 8. Describe scientific and cultural advancements (e.g., networks of roads, aqueducts, art and architecture, literature and theatre, mathematics, philosophy) in ancient civilizations.

Strand 4: Geography

Concept 1: The World in Spatial Terms

PO 4. Locate physical and human features (e.g., significant waterways, mountain ranges, cities, countries) in the United States and in regions of the world on a map.

Concept 2: Places and Regions

PO 1. Identify regions studied in Strand 2 using a variety of criteria (e.g., climate, landforms, culture, vegetation).

Strand 2: Writing Components

Concept 4: Word Choice

PO 1. Use accurate, specific, powerful words that effectively convey the intended message.

PO 2. Use words and phrases that consistently support style and type or writing.

PO 3. Use vocabulary that is original, varied, and natural.

PO 4. Use **literal** and **figurative language** where appropriate to purpose.

Concept 6: Conventions

PO 12. Use the following parts of speech correctly in simple sentences:

- d. adjectives

Strand 3: Writing Applications

Concept 1: Expressive

PO 2. Write in a variety of expressive forms (e.g., poetry, skit) that, according to mode, employ:

- a. **figurative language**
- c. **dialogue**
- d. **characterization**
- e. **plot**
- f. appropriate format

Overview

The oral tradition of storytelling is a part of every culture. Through a study of myths, you can learn about a civilization's history and culture and can make connections between groups of people around the world.

Purpose

In these five sessions, you will use myths from three civilizations around the world and expository passages on Greek geography and ancient art to support comprehension of literary and expository text, vocabulary development, and to practice writing a myth.

Materials

- Three myths reading passages
- *Geography of Greece* reading passage
- *Myths in Ancient Art* reading passage
- Worksheets for the daily sessions
- Proofreading chart
- Paper

Objectives

Students will:

- Read three different myths.
- Read expository passages about geography and art.
- Apply the skill of compare and contrast while reading.
- Write a compare and contrast paragraph.
- Use context to understand multiple-meaning words.
- Apply knowledge of suffixes *-ion* and *-ation*.
- Write a myth emphasizing the element of Word Choice.

Lesson Components

Prerequisite skills: The 5 Steps of the Writing Process have been used since Grade 1. Writing Elements have been used since Kindergarten. You should be familiar with these processes. All reading and grammar skills should have been introduced in prior grades and are reintroduced in the sessions and practiced. You should have knowledge of the physical landform *peninsula*.

Session 1: Reading Comprehension and Writing

1. Review story and genre vocabulary prior to reading.
2. As a strategy to use during reading, review the skill of comparing and contrasting. This skill is applied while reading the myth, *Prometheus and the Story of Fire*.
3. After reading the myth, check your comprehension by answering questions about the text.
4. Read a short expository passage on the geography of Greece and answer questions about it.
5. Begin Step 1 of the writing process in prewriting for a myth, emphasizing the element Word Choice.

Session 2: Reading Comprehension, Vocabulary and Writing

1. Review story vocabulary prior to reading.
2. Compare and contrast as you read a second myth from Egypt titled, *The Gifts of Osiris*.
3. After reading the myth, check your comprehension by answering questions about the text.
4. Increase your vocabulary through a word study of multiple-meaning words by identifying the meaning of multiple-meaning words from the myth you read.
5. Continue writing a draft of your myth.

Session 3: Reading Comprehension, Phonics/Decoding and Writing

1. Review story vocabulary prior to reading.
2. Compare and contrast as you read a third myth from Mexico titled, *Quetzalcoatl and the Discovery of Corn*.
3. After reading the myth, check your comprehension by answering questions about the text.
4. Strengthen your reading skills by examining the use of the suffixes *-ion* and *-ation* in words and how this applies to your reading comprehension.
5. Revise your myth, considering the use of Word Choice.

Session 4: Grammar and Writing

1. Review adjectives that compare.
2. Write a compare and contrast paragraph comparing two or all of the myths you have read this week. Use the graphic organizers created in Sessions 2 and 3 and include at least two comparative adjectives.
3. Proofread your myth.

Session 5: Reading Comprehension and Writing

1. Review story vocabulary prior to reading an expository passage titled, *Myths in Ancient Art*.
2. After reading the passage, check your comprehension by answering questions about the text.
3. Record an event from your myth through art.
4. Create a final copy of your myth. Practice reading it and present it to a family member.

Assessment

There is one assessment for each session that will help you check your understanding before moving on to the next session.

Session 1 – Reading Comprehension and Writing Myths

Vocabulary: Please review these words before you read the myth. These words will help you understand of elements of myths and comprehend the myth you will be reading.

myth – a story that is part of the tradition of a society. They often use unusual plots and characters such as heroes or monsters to explain how the world began, why nature is the way it is or why people behave the way they do

mythology – a collection of myths

ancient – of or relating to times long ago

characteristics – qualities of a person, group, or thing

hero – in myths, it is a person who is brave, good, strong and often looked up to by others

extraordinary – very unusual

nature – the physical world and living things in their natural state

Titans – in Greek mythology, giant godlike beings who were eventually defeated and replaced by the Olympian gods

Mount Olympus – a mountain in northern Greece, believed in ancient times to be where Greek gods and goddesses lived

stalk – the main stem of a plant

reed – any of a variety of tall marsh grasses

This week you will be reading three **myths**. Myths are stories that usually have been handed down from ancient times. They have been told over and over through the generations and have changed as they have been retold. Many different accounts of a myth may now exist. There are certain characteristics or features of myths that you should look for as you read.

- Myths often explain why something in nature happens or how it first came about.
- Characters in myths may include gods, goddesses and monsters as well as humans.
- Human characters in myths may have superhuman strength or other abilities.
- Myths may have extraordinary events.
- Myths can show what an ancient group of people believed.

Skill to use while reading: **Compare and Contrast**

- To **compare** means to show how things are alike (similar).
- To **contrast** means to show how things are different.

As you read each myth, compare and contrast information to help organize and understand what you are reading. After reading all three myths, compare and contrast the information from each to better understand the genre of myths.

Myths

From the earliest times, people around the world have used myths to explain how things came to be and why things are the way they are. You will read myths from three different civilizations around the world. The three myths you will read explain how a god in the culture gave something special to the people. As you read the three myths, think about ways in which the myths are similar and ways they differ.

The first myth is from Greece. Greek mythology is the stories from Ancient Greece telling of their gods and heroes. The myths explain the nature of the world and were a part of religion in Ancient Greece. In this myth, Prometheus wishes to help humans by making their lives more comfortable.

Prometheus and the Story of Fire

Many, centuries ago there lived two brothers. Their names were Prometheus and Epimetheus. They were not like other men; they were the sons of Titans. Zeus, the king of the gods, instructed Epimetheus to create all the animals in the world. Then he asked Prometheus to make human beings to live in the world. He shaped them out of lumps of clay and breathed life into them.

Prometheus did not care for the idle life among the gods on Mount Olympus. Instead he preferred to spend his time on the earth, helping men to find easier and better ways of living. The people of earth were very poor and miserable, living in caves and ditches and dying of starvation and cold. They had no fire and little food; hunted by wild beasts and by one another.

Prometheus thought of a way to help the people. He decided that fire would be a valuable gift. "If they had fire," Prometheus said to himself, "they would be able to cook their food, have light at night, warm themselves and frighten away the wild beasts that hunt them." But fire belonged to the gods and Prometheus knew they would not share this power with the humans. So he decided he would have to steal it.

Prometheus found a reed that was hollow and that would burn slowly. He could use this to carry fire down to the people of earth. Immediately, taking the long stalk in his hands, he set out for the dwelling of the gods on Olympus. He quietly entered Olympus and went to the sacred hearth where fire was burning. Lighting his reed, he hurried back to earth, carefully protecting the precious spark that was hidden in the hollow stalk.

When he returned to earth, he showed the people how to build fire for themselves. They warmed themselves and soon learned to cook. Eventually they learned to plant the fields to grow food and to build homes of wood and stone. Prometheus was pleased to see the people happy and living a better life.

Check your understanding of the myth, *Prometheus and the Story of Fire*. You may look back at the story. Answer in complete sentences.

1. The myth does not describe Prometheus' life on earth before he brought fire to humans. What can you infer about the way he lived? Did he live like the humans? Describe the way you think he might have lived.

2. What extraordinary or supernatural powers did Prometheus possess?

3. Use the compare-and-contrast chart to record similarities and differences in the lives of characters in the story. Place a check mark in the boxes that match what you read in the story.

	Lived or spent time on Mount Olympus	Lived or spent time on earth	Had fire	Had supernatural powers
Prometheus				
Zeus				
humans				

4. The story of Prometheus explains how something in nature came to be. However there are other events mentioned in the myth. What other events are explained in this myth?

Geography of Greece

The ancient civilization of Greece was located where the modern country of Greece is found. It is a country on the continent of Europe. Locate Greece on the map below. It is in the southeastern corner. (North is to the top.)



Map courtesy of the Central Intelligence Agency

You can see that Greece is a peninsula with many islands around it. The peninsula is very mountainous. Both the mountains and islands were very important to the history of Ancient Greece. The mountains made travel between city-states very difficult and so the different communities developed their own ways of life. Many Greeks lived on islands and so they sailed the Aegean and Mediterranean Seas spreading the Greek Culture throughout this area.

Mount Olympus, the mythical home of the gods, is an actual mountain in Greece. Reaching over 9,500 feet high, it is the highest mountain in Greece. It is located near the Aegean Sea in northern Greece, about 60 miles from Thessaloniki, Greece's second largest city. Find Thessaloniki on the map above. In ancient times, Thessaloniki was not part of Greece.



Courtesy NASA.gov

The image above is a NASA photograph of Mount Olympus from space. Look closely and you can see the snow-capped Mount Olympus. Can you see that it is located near a bay in the Aegean Sea? Using the geographic features you see here, match the location of the NASA image on the map of Europe above. You should be able to locate the bay in the Aegean Sea.



http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Olympus_Litochoro.JPG

The photo on the left shows Mount Olympus, rising over 9,500 feet from sea level. Notice how rugged the mountains are and how travel across them would have been very difficult.

In ancient times, the city-states of Athens and Sparta were located in the southern part of Greece. You can find the modern city of Athens, the capital of Greece on the map above. Ancient Greeks also lived on the islands in the Aegean Sea. Do you think snow-capped Mount Olympus, rising high in the mountains to the north, would have seemed a proper home for their gods and goddesses?

Check your understanding of Greek geography by answering the questions below. You may look back at the passage *Geography of Greece*.

1. What part did the mountains and sea play in ancient Greek history?

2. Circle the following locations on the map of Europe: Greece; Aegean Sea, Mediterranean Sea.

3. Describe a peninsula as a physical feature.

4. Greece is a peninsula. Use the map of Europe to locate another peninsula. Circle it and write the name of the country or countries that occupy the peninsula below.

5. Locate the following physical features on the NASA image.
 - a. Put an X on the bay.
 - b. Circle Mount Olympus
 - c. Circle the small peninsula
 - d. Draw a box around a lake

6. Why do you think snow-capped Mount Olympus, rising high in the mountains to the north, would have seemed like the home of their gods and goddesses to Ancient Greeks?

Writing Activity

Now that you have read a myth, you will write one of your own. Over the next five sessions, you will work through the steps of writing a myth. You will focus on the writing component **Word Choice**.

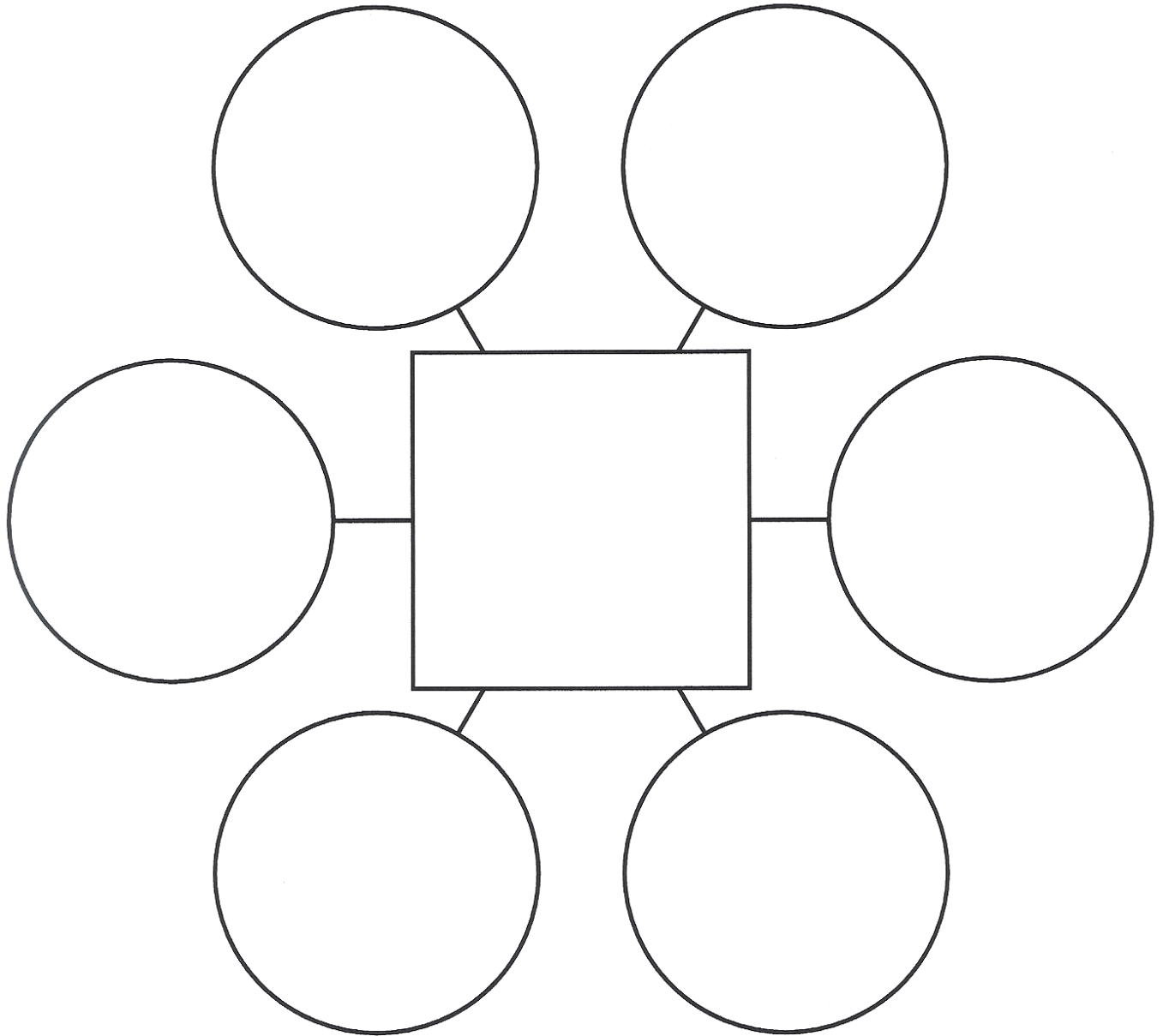
Step 1: Prewriting – Start planning your myth. It must have all of the characteristics of a myth.

- A main character who could be a god or goddess or a human with superhuman strength or ability.
- A setting. Where will your character live and the story take place?
- A problem. What problem will your hero/heroine solve with their godly or superhuman qualities? A myth often explains why something in nature happens or why it first came about.

Use the following chart to help you organize your ideas for writing a myth.

In the next session, you will put your ideas together into a draft myth.

Write your character's name in the center box. Write details about them in the bubbles connected to it. Also add details about the setting and the problem.



Session 2 – Comprehension, Vocabulary and Writing

Vocabulary: Please review these words before you read the myth. These words will help you comprehend the myth you will be reading.

pharaoh – the title of each of the kings of Ancient Egypt

upright – right, honest, and just in actions or morals

serene – free from trouble; calm

savage – fierce; cruel

brutal – cruel

barley – a plant that is like grass and whose grains are used for food

Nile River – the longest river in the world; It flows north from Uganda in East Africa through Sudan and Egypt into the Mediterranean Sea.

harvest – the gathering of ripe crops

persuasion – the ability to convince someone to believe something or do something

As you read, remember that there are certain characteristics or features of myths that you should look for as you read.

- Myths often explain why something in nature happens or how it first came about
- Characters in myths may include gods, goddesses and monsters as well as humans
- Human characters in myths may have superhuman strength or other abilities
- Myths may have extraordinary events
- Myths can show what an ancient group of people believed

Also remember to use the **Compare and Contrast** skill while reading:

- To **compare** means to show how things are alike (similar).
- To **contrast** means to show how things are different.

As you read today's myth, compare and contrast it to the Greek myth you read yesterday. Reread the Greek myth if you need to.

The second myth is from Egypt. Religion was important to the lives of Ancient Egyptians. Their life centered on the worship of the Egyptian gods. Stories of the gods would explain aspects of nature or how things came to be. This next myth tells how the god Osiris helped the people of Egypt.

The Gifts of Osiris

In the beginning of time the god Osiris was king over Egypt. Osiris was the son of the sky goddess Nut and the earth god Geb. Osiris was the first pharaoh and Isis was his queen. He is known as a just and upright ruler, much loved by his people.

But when Osiris first came to the throne, Egypt was not a serene, farming civilization. At this time the Egyptians were cruel and uncivilized. They wandered around in tribes, hunting wild animals. They fought with one another. Among the savage acts they committed was that they killed and ate each other. Osiris saw this and was greatly disturbed. He realized he must help his people and so he went out among them and began teaching them how to worship the gods. Osiris also gave them laws to end their brutal behavior.

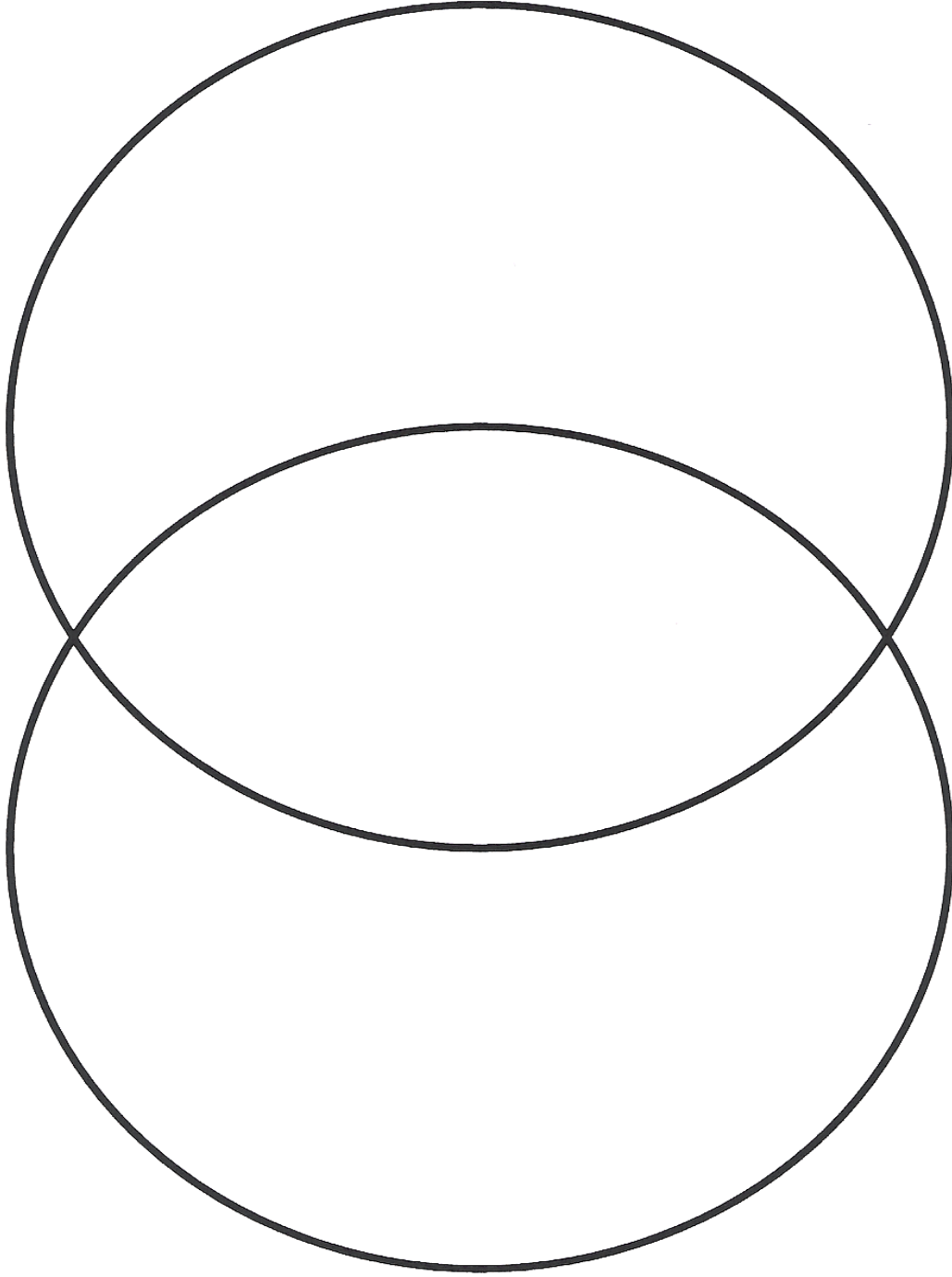
However the greatest gift of Osiris to the people of Egypt was that he taught them what to eat. He gave them the gift of agriculture. This is how he did it. Isis, the wife of Osiris, discovered wheat and barley grasses growing wild in the fields near the Nile River. When she showed the wild grains to Osiris, he walked among them and noticed how some of the ripened grains fell to the ground. He realized that those seeds would grow again the next year, while seeds that blew away in the wind would not. So he taught his people how to gather the ripened grains, how to plant them in the ground and tend to them. In this way his people would have food that would grow in the same place from year to year. No longer would they have to kill one another for food.

It is said that Osiris also taught his people to gather fruit from the trees, to train vine plants to grow on poles, to harvest grapes and then tramp on them to create juice. All this he did because he cared for his people and wanted them to live better lives. He is known as Egypt's greatest king who ruled through kindness and persuasion.

Check your understanding of the myth, *The Gifts of Osiris*. You may look back at the story. Answer in complete sentences.

1. Myths often have gods or goddesses as characters. Is Osiris a god? Explain why you believe he is or is not.
2. Describe why Osiris was disturbed by the actions of his people when he first came to the throne.
3. What was Osiris' greatest gift to his people?
4. What other gifts did he give his people? (4 answers)
5. You were asked to compare and contrast this myth with the Greek myth you read yesterday. One tool used to show comparisons and contrasts is a graphic organizer called a Venn diagram.

Use the Venn diagram below to list ways in which the two myths are similar and different. Write Prometheus next to one circle and Osiris next to the other. Write ways in which the myths are different in the areas that do not overlap. Write ways in which the myths are similar in the area where the circles overlap.



Vocabulary

Multiple-meaning words

Many words have more than one meaning. They are called multiple-meaning words.

An example is: *match*.

- *Match* can be a noun meaning a small piece of wood with a tip that catches fire.
- *Match* can also be a noun meaning a contest or a game.
- *Match* can also have other meanings.

A **dictionary** can show you all of the different meanings of a word.

The **context** of the word is used in to help you understand multiple-meaning words.

For example, read these two sentences.

Mom used a match to light the campfire.

Bill was ready to play the tennis match.

In these sentences, the word match has different meanings, but you can use **context** to figure out what they mean.

- In the first sentence, Mom started a campfire, so match must mean a small piece of wood with a tip that catches fire.
- In the second sentence, Bill is playing, so match must mean a contest or a game.

Multiple-meaning Word Practice

Below are five sentences from the myth of Osiris. They all have an underlined multiple-meaning word (one sentence has two words). Use context to decide which dictionary entry of the word is used in the sentence. **Write the correct definition in the space.** Use the **context** the word is used in to help you understand its meaning. You may go back and reread the myth if you wish.

1. He is known as a just and upright ruler, much loved by his people.

just (just) *adj.* 1. fair and honest 2. having a fair and honest character 3. deserved or earned *adv.* 1. a very short time ago 2. only 3. by a very small margin; barely 4. exactly

2. Among the savage acts they committed was that they killed and ate each other.

act (akt) *n. pl. acts* 1. a thing that is done; a deed 2. an action 3. a law 4. pretending to be or to feel something that is not true 5. one of the main parts of a play or opera *v.* **acted, acting, acts** 1. to do something with purpose or energy 2. to be a performer in plays or movies 3. to pretend to be

3. So he taught his people how to gather the ripened grains, how to plant them in the ground and tend to them.

tend (tend) *v.* 1. to care for or watch over; look after 2. to give one's attention to 3. to be likely; usually do

4. It is said that Osiris also taught his people to gather fruit from the trees, to train vine plants to grow on poles, to harvest grapes and then tramp on them to create juice.

train (trān) *n.* 1. a connected series of railroad cars 2. a long, moving line of persons, animals, or vehicles 3. a series of things or ideas 4. the long part of a gown or robe that trails behind the person wearing it *v.* 1. to teach skills or actions. 2. to instruct 3. to make fit through a program of exercise and diet 4. to prepare oneself to be in an athletic contest

tramp (tramp) *v.* 1. to walk with heavy steps 2. to step on with force on or upon 3. to walk with steady, even steps; march; hike *n.* 1. a heavy step, or the sound made by a heavy step 2. a long walk at a steady pace; a march; a hike 3. a person who travels on foot from town to town and who lives by begging or doing odd jobs

Now select two different definitions for each multiple-meaning word and write sentences using the word with each of those definitions.

5. just

6. just

7. acts

8. acts

9. tend

10. tend

11. train

12. train

13. tramp

14. tramp

Presenting – Read the sentence from the myth and your two sentences for each multiple-meaning word to a family member. Explain to them how the context of the sentence helps you to understand which definition of the word is being used.

Writing Activity

In Session 1 you planned for writing a myth. You created a chart to help you plan your main character, the setting, and a problem for your character to solve. You may have also added extraordinary events to occur while solving the problem.

You will work on **Word Choice** in this writing activity. You want to give a feeling of power and wonder suitable for a myth. You may want to include dialogue or figurative language to add interest to your story.

Step 2: Drafting – Use the steps below to draft your myth:

1. Introduce the character in an interesting way. Remember that they are a larger-than-life character. Use words that describe them suitably!
2. In the following paragraphs, tell about the problem and how your character solves it in an extraordinary way. Make it interesting to the reader.

When writing a draft, don't worry too much about spelling, punctuation or grammar. You can make corrections later. It's more important to get all of your thoughts and ideas down in the way you want to say them. Use pencil so that you can make changes as you write.

Write your draft on a sheet of paper.

Session 3 – Comprehension, Phonics/Decoding and Writing

Vocabulary: Please review these words before you read the myth. These words will help you comprehend the myth you will be reading.

Aztec – an Indian people who had an advanced civilization in central Mexico before Spain conquered it in 1519

creation – the act of creating or of causing something to exist

serpent – a snake

sustenance – nourishment; food

Remember that there are certain characteristics or features of myths that you should look for as you read.

- Myths often explain why something in nature happens or how it first came about.
- Characters in myths may include gods, goddesses, and monsters as well as humans.
- Human characters in myths may have superhuman strength or other abilities.
- Myths may have extraordinary events.
- Myths can show what an ancient group of people believed.

Also remember to use the **Compare and Contrast** skill while reading:

To **compare** means to show how things are alike (similar).

To **contrast** means to show how things are different.

As you read today's myth, compare and contrast it to both the Greek and the Egyptian myths you have already read. Reread those myths if you need to.

This myth is from the Aztec civilization of Mexico. In this story based on the Legend of the Suns, the Aztec age of the Fifth Sun has just begun. However, a problem exists for the humans and fortunately Quetzalcoatl (ket sahl koh AHT l) is there to help.

Quetzalcoatl and the Discovery of Corn

According to Aztec legend, there were four destroyed worlds that existed before the creation of the Fifth Sun (this world and time). The earth and sky had been created in the Fifth Sun and humans had been brought to life by the gods. Quetzalcoatl, the feathered serpent god, had helped create the new world and the humans. When the work of creation was finished, the gods looked upon the beautiful green earth, the bright blue sky, the shimmering seas and the newly-formed humans. As they gazed at the humans, they noticed how weak they seemed and realized that their work was not done. The humans needed food to keep them alive.

The gods decided that they must look for food for the humans to eat, but what should they look for? As they all thought about this, Quetzalcoatl looked down and saw a small, red ant that was carrying a kernel of corn in its mouth. He asked, "Where did you get this corn?" The ant did not answer, but continued walking. So, Quetzalcoatl turned himself into a black ant and followed her.

At last they came to the bottom of a large mountain called the Mountain of Sustenance. The small red ant, not knowing the black ant was Quetzalcoatl, went inside this mountain. Quetzalcoatl followed, and found inside many things that were good to eat. He quickly gathered some corn and returned to the world of the gods. The gods chewed on the corn to make a paste and Quetzalcoatl placed it on the lips of the humans, who were weak with hunger. The humans became stronger and honored the gods who had saved them.

Next the gods thought about what to do with the Mountain of Sustenance and all that was inside it. Quetzalcoatl wanted to give the food inside to the people so that they would worship the gods. At first, Quetzalcoatl tried to drag the mountain to the home of the gods, but the mountain would not move. Next, the gods broke it open with a stick and took the corn, beans, and everything else good to eat from inside. This is how Quetzalcoatl gave humans food to plant and to live.

Check your understanding of the myth, *Quetzalcoatl and the Discovery of Corn*. You may look back at the story. Answer in complete sentences.

1. What event or events in nature are explained in this myth?

2. How did Quetzalcoatl help humans?

3. What method did Quetzalcoatl use to get what he wanted from the ant?

4. Compare and contrast the three myths. Use the compare-and-contrast chart to record similarities and differences in the three myths. Place a check mark in the boxes that match what you read in each myth.

	Main character was a god or goddess	Explained why something in nature happened or first occurred	Humans were miserable and wild before being helped	Main character used super-natural powers to help humans	Human had super-human strength or ability	Myth shows what an ancient group of people believed
Prometheus and the Gift of Fire						
The Gifts of Osiris						
Quetzalcoatl and the Discovery of Corn						

Suffixes

When reading, you will come across words that contain **suffixes**. Suffixes are word parts added to the end of base words. Sometimes the suffix changes the way the word is used. You will be a better reader if you recognize suffixes and understand how they change the meaning and pronunciation of a base word.

Read this sentence.

Fire became a possession of humans after Prometheus stole it from the gods.

- Notice the suffix *-ion* in the underlined word possession. (possession)
- The suffix *-ion* can mean “state or condition” or “action or process.”
- The base word of possession is *possess*. Possess means “to own or to have.”
- When you add the suffix *-ion* to the base word, the new word possession means “the state of having.”
- *Possess* is a verb; *possession* is a noun. The suffix *-ion* is called a noun suffix because it often changes a verb to a noun.
- The suffix *-ation* is another noun suffix that can mean the same as *-ion*. Example: *tax* and *taxation*
- There may be spelling changes in the verb before the suffix is added. For example a final *-e* may be dropped when you change *congratulate* to *congratulation*.

Practice with these sentences from the myths you read.

Read each sentence. Circle the suffix in each underlined word. Write the meaning of the underlined word under the sentence.

“The people of earth were very poor and miserable, living in caves and ditches and dying of starvation and cold.”

“According to Aztec legend, there were four destroyed worlds that existed before the creation of the Fifth Sun (this world and time).”

Why is it important to know about suffixes? When you read and see a word you don’t know, look at the word parts. Look for a suffix. If it has the suffix *-ion* or *-ation*, you know it is used to make a noun from a verb. Look at the base word. Try to pronounce it. Was there a spelling change made when the suffix was added? Was a silent *-e* dropped? Read the word in the sentence. Does the new noun make sense in the sentence?

Practice with this sentence:

The humans showed their appreciation to Osiris by living the way he wanted them to.

Were you able to pronounce the word with the suffix? Explain your thinking to a family member.

Suffix Practice

Read each sentence and circle the suffix *-ion* or *-ation* in the underlined words. Then use the underlined word in a sentence of your own.

1. Migration of the Monarch butterflies in North America occurs every year.
2. The Earth's rotation takes 24 hours, or one day.
3. A period of relaxation was very refreshing for the hikers.
4. Concentration was extremely important if Bill was going to finish the test on time.
5. Scientists were looking for signs of pollution in the city's water source.

Writing Activity

Step 3: Revising – Today you will revise your draft myth. Read it over to be sure you have followed the two steps from Session 2. Think about how you can make your myth more interesting to the reader. Try reading it aloud to see how it will sound to your audience. You want them to be interested in what you are saying and entertained by the story. Remember that you are focusing on **Word Choice**. Use words that would be suitable for characters and events in a myth. Make changes in your draft.

Session 4 – Grammar and Writing

Adjectives That Compare

Review adjectives:

- Adjectives are words that describe or change a noun (a person or thing) in a sentence.
- The articles - *a*, *an*, and *the* - are adjectives.
- An adjective usually comes right before the noun it is describing.

Examples: The adjectives are underlined.

the tall student

the happy baby

Adjectives can also be used to **compare** things. When you use adjectives to compare, remember these rules:

- When you compare two things, add *-er* to most adjectives. Use the word *more* with longer adjectives. This is the **comparative** form.
- When you compare three or more things, add *-est* to most adjectives. Use the word *most* with longer adjectives. This is the **superlative** form.

For example:

This month is hot.

This month is hotter than last month.

This month is the hottest month we have had all year.

- Some adjectives have special forms for comparing. (bad, worse, worst)

Adjective Practice

Write the correct form of the adjective in parentheses.

1. The mountains are (high) than the hills.
2. This is the (good) hamburger I have ever had!
3. I am the (tall) person in my family.
4. The librarians at the public library were the (helpful) people of all.
5. Maria was (busy) than she had been since school had started.

Compare and contrast paragraph

In the space below, write a paragraph comparing two or all three of the myths you have read this week.

- Use your Venn diagram chart from Session 2 or the comparison chart from Session 3 to help you.
- In your topic sentence, state which myths you will be comparing.
- Write details that compare and details that contrast in your supporting sentences.
- Group the details together by those that compare and those that contrast.
- **Use at least two comparative adjectives in your paragraph.**

After you write your paragraph, read it over and think about what you wrote. Make any changes in content or grammar, spelling and usage that you think are needed. Remember to use the correct form of adjectives when you compare.



Writing Activity

Step 4: Proofreading – Today you will check your myth for errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation, and usage of words.

Here are some suggestions as you proofread:

- Check for only one type of error each time you read your myth.
 - For example, check only for capital letter mistakes the first time you read it.
 - Then check for punctuation mistakes the next time.
 - Then check for spelling errors.
 - Last of all, check your usage of words.
 - If you concentrate on looking only for one kind of error, it will be easier to find them.
- When you have finished, wait for a while and then read it aloud again with fresh eyes to see how it sounds.
- Remember to apply what you have learned this week about **multiple meaning words**, **suffixes**, and **comparative adjectives**.
- Use the proofreading marks that you have been taught in your classes. A chart is available for you to use as you proofread. Make all changes in your draft.

Session 5– Reading Comprehension and Writing Myths in Ancient Art

Vocabulary: Please review these words before you read the passage on ancient art.

images – pictures or some other likeness of a person or thing

scene – a particular view in a painting or photograph

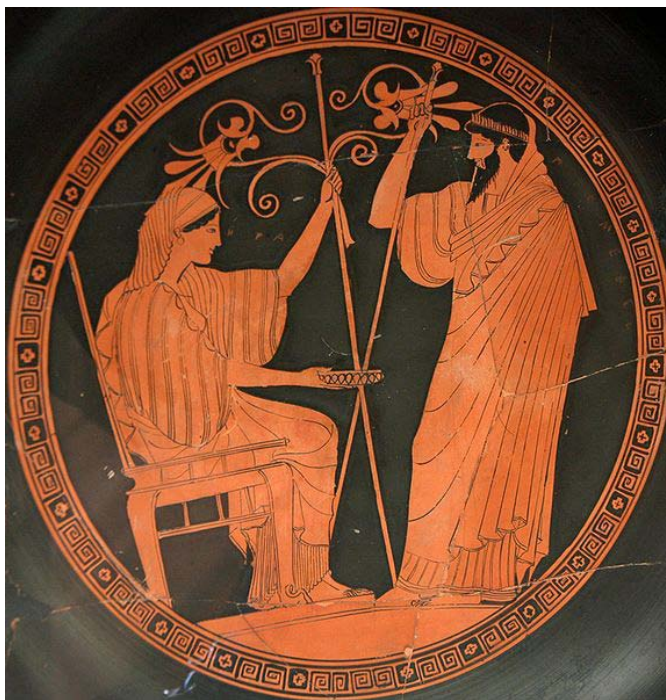
manuscript – a handwritten text

pictorial – made of pictures

famine – a great lack of food over a wide area

This week you read three myths. As you know, myths are stories that usually have been handed down from ancient times. They have been told over and over through the generations. However, myths were not only passed down through oral tradition. They were also remembered through the art of the culture.

The first myth you read was from Ancient Greece. In that myth, Prometheus helped humans by giving them the gift of fire. Images of Greek gods and goddesses often decorated the pottery of the Greeks. Larger vases often had scenes from Greek myths painted on them. Many examples of the pottery have survived. Below is an example of a plate showing a painting of Prometheus with Hera, the wife of Zeus. Do you recall who Zeus was from your reading?



<http://commons.wikimedia.org>

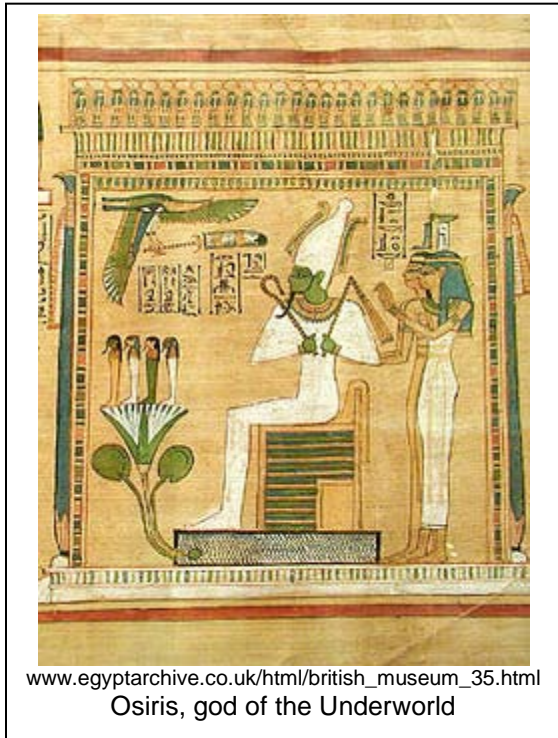
Prometheus and Hera, the wife of Zeus (5th-century plate)

With the help of Prometheus, the people of Greece learned to plant fields and grow food for themselves. This idea is shown in the scene painted on the vase in the next picture. In it, olives are being gathered from trees. According to Greek myth, humans learned growing plants and harvesting from Prometheus.



<http://worldimages.sjsu.edu/>
Gathering Olives

The second myth you read was from Egypt. Religion was important to the lives of Ancient Egyptians. Their life centered on the worship of the Egyptian gods. Stories of the gods explained features of nature or how things came to be. You read a myth about the god Osiris.



www.egyptarchive.co.uk/html/british_museum_35.html
Osiris, god of the Underworld

To the left is a painting of the Egyptian god Osiris. After his death, he became the god of the underworld. He was always pictured with a green body. The painting is a part of a page from an Egyptian manuscript known as the *Book of the Dead*. This was a collection of prayers and spells that guided a person into the next life. Below you can see the entire page from the book.



www.egyptarchive.co.uk/html/british_museum_35.html

The myth you read told how the god Osiris helped the people of Egypt by giving them the gift of agriculture. The importance of agriculture to the Egyptians is shown in the painting below.



<http://worldimages.sjsu.edu/>

Tomb of Sennadjem: Harvest scene

The harvest scene shown above was painted in a tomb in Egypt over 3000 years ago. Most of the art that survives from Ancient Egypt is from tombs and pyramids, so it often deals with life after death. Having a painting of a grain harvest shows this is something important to have in the afterlife.

Egyptian art usually shows people's faces from the side or profile. Do you see this in both of the paintings above? Sometimes the body is not shown from the side, even when the head is. Can you find an example of this in one of the paintings?

The third myth you read was from the Aztec civilization of Mexico. In that story based on the Legend of the Suns, a problem exists for the newly-formed humans. As with the other ancient civilizations, Aztec gods were shown through art.

The Aztec created pictorial manuscripts called *codices*. One of these manuscripts is called a *codex*. Some were created before the Spanish arrived in the Americas and some after. Those made before the Spanish arrived are called pre-Columbian. Those after the arrival of the Spanish are called colonial. They were all created by the Aztec.

A codex was usually made on a long strip of paper called *amatl*, made from the bark of a tree. Pictures were the text of the book. They told of religion, calendars, wars, times of famine or disease and other events in Aztec life.



You read about the god Aztec god Quetzalcoatl. To the left is a painting of Quetzalcoatl from the *Codex Telleriano-Remensis*. A codex was often given its name from the person who discovered it or later owned it in Europe. Remember that Quetzalcoatl was the feathered serpent god. Does he look that way in the painting?

In the myth, Quetzalcoatl helped the newly-formed humans by first giving them corn to eat and then other plants to grow so they could live. Below on the left is another painting of Quetzalcoatl from another codex. In this painting, Quetzalcoatl is on the left with two corn plants in the center. Look at Quetzalcoatl and compare him to the painting in the *Codex Telleriano-Remensis*. Can you see similarities in the two?

Next to the picture below you can see the page in the codex the painting came from. It is the bottom right image on the page.

<http://commons.wikimedia.org>
The Aztec god Quetzalcoatl as shown in the *Codex Telleriano-Remensis*



© Foundation for the Advancement of Mesoamerican Studies, Inc., www.famsi.org.
Picture from the *Codex Borgia*, page 53

Check your understanding of the passage, *Myths in Ancient Art*. You may look back at the story. Answer in complete sentences.

1. How does the scene shown on the Greek vase connect to the myth of Prometheus that you read?
2. How do we know that the Ancient Greeks painted their gods, goddesses and scenes from myths on their pottery?
3. Why do you think most of the Egyptian art that survives today was from tombs or burial pyramids?
4. What is unusual about the way humans are shown in Egyptian art?
5. Explain what an Aztec Codex is.
6. State two similarities among the paintings of Quetzalcoatl from the two codices above.
7. This week you wrote a myth. Think of how you would show your main character or an event from your myth through art. Would it be in the style of an ancient civilization? Would it be a picture on a vase or drawn on a wall or paper?

On another sheet of paper, record your myth through art as the ancient peoples did.

Writing Activity

Step 5: Publishing – Write your myth in its final form. Remember to write legibly. When you have it copied, read it over to be sure you have it the way you want it to be. Be sure to give it a title.

Presenting – Practice reading your myth and then share it with a family member. They will enjoy hearing your work. Be sure to show them the art work you drew to go with your myth!

Extensions

- Do you have a mental map of the world? Draw an outline map of the world and mark the locations of the three myths you read.
- Where does your myth take place? Add it to your map. To check your locations, a political map of the world is available at http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/world_maps/txu-oclc-264266980-world_pol_2008-2.jpg
- Read myths from other civilizations or other myths from these same cultures. Many are available at local libraries.

Sources

Codex Borgia image courtesy of Foundation for the Advancement of Mesoamerican Studies, Inc. www.famsi.org

Frazer, James George, Sir. *The Golden Bough*. New York: Macmillan, 1922; Bartleby.com, 2000. www.bartleby.com/196/.

Maps courtesy of Arizona Geographic Alliance <http://alliance.la.asu.edu/azqa/> and Central Intelligence Agency

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