

World Mythology

Mr. Webb, Instructor

I. Introduction to the Class

Myths and legends of the world provide a connective thread among all cultures, no matter how different they may seem. Each society has an age-old creation myth and flood myth, for example. By analyzing these ancient tales, which illuminate and form the basis of modern philosophy, culture, and religious beliefs, students will discover perennial themes and stories that unite and explain the peoples of the world. We will thematically explore myths and legends from the ancient Mediterranean, North European, African, Asian, Mesopotamian, Oceanic and Native American cultures.

II. Introduction to the Instructor

Your instructor is Mr. Matthew Webb. Students and parents may contact Mr. Webb in these ways:

telephone: (301) 249-5000 ext. 454

electronic mail: mwebb@queenanne.org

website: <http://www.magisterwebb.com>

Check the website often, as information about projects, field trips, and homework will be posted.

III. Textbooks

We will use three different textbooks. Ordinarily students will not be assigned all three textbooks at once. Rather, they will bring home a specific text each night based upon that evening's reading assignment. The three texts are:

Ferguson, Diana. Hamlyn History: Myths Retold. Hamlyn. London. 1998.

Philip, Neil. The Illustrated Book of Myths. Dorling Kindersley. New York. 1995

Rosenberg, Donna. World Mythology: An Anthology of the Great Myths and Epics.

Econoclad. 1994.

IV. Grading Policy

Grades will be calculated as follows:

Class Participation	=	20%
Homework, divided into:		
Quizzes	=	15%
Other Assignments	=	15%
Tests	=	25%
Projects	=	25%

On homework:

Homework will most often take the form of reading assignments in one of the three assigned textbooks (see above). This type of homework will be checked for completion every day in the form of a brief quiz. Non-reading homework assignments will also be checked for completion each day.

Honesty is valued highly in this class. A student who is asked if he has completed his homework and does not respond honestly will lose 10 points (instead of 5) from the homework category.

On class participation:

Each student begins each quarter with 100 class participation points, 50 of which are allocated to classwork, discussions, and preparedness, and 50 of which are allocated to classroom behavior.

If a student does not participate in class for the day by not completing assigned work, joining in discussions, etc, that student will lose 5 points from the class participation category. Failure to come to class prepared to learn and work will also result in a loss of 5 points.

If a student misbehaves in class (see below for more on classroom rules and procedures), that student will lose 5 points from the class participation category.

On quizzes and tests:

Students can expect to receive a quiz on reading assignments and other materials approximately every day. See “on homework” for more about the daily quizzes. Quizzes may NOT be re-taken. Tests will be administered at the conclusion of every one or two units except for the introductory unit. Therefore, students can expect approximately four tests during the semester. Tests may NOT be re-taken. The instructor reserves the right to administer a final examination or project at the conclusion of the semester.

On extra credit:

Occasionally, special extra credit opportunities will arise. These opportunities generally take the form of lectures, concerts, operas, plays, re-enactments, or museum exhibitions somehow related to world mythology. More details about extra credit opportunities will be distributed to students as appropriate. A complete, quality extra credit assignment will count as a 100% grade in either the homework or class participation category. This 100% grade will be factored in with the other grades in that category (that is, it does not replace a low grade).

V. Rules and Procedures

On behavior:

Proper behavior in class should be a common sense matter. Nothing should keep the students from learning, and nothing should keep the teacher from teaching. Any student who does not allow the idea in that simple statement to take place is misbehaving. Most importantly, your instructor and your classmates deserve respect at all times. Students must raise their hands and wait to be called on

before speaking. Only one student may talk at a time, and students may not interrupt the instructor or another student.

Students who misbehave will earn one warning per class. If they continue to misbehave after the warning, they will lose 5 points from the class participation category. Students who continue to misbehave will earn demerits.

On tardiness:

Students must be on time to class each day. Late students must have a pass or they will earn a warning. Students who are late after their first warning will earn a demerit, and will continue to earn demerits for each instance of tardiness thereafter. This rule applies to first period also – class starts at 8:05 am!

On using the restroom:

Students have ample time during break to use the restroom. Therefore, no student will be able to use the restroom during class time unless it is an emergency. An emergency means that you are sick.

On eating and drinking:

Brain research shows that middle school students work and learn better when they drink lots of water (which helps keep the brain cells from dehydrating). Thus, students will be allowed to drink water and juice (only) during class time, provided that all trash is cleaned up from the floor.

On cheating:

Cheating is an extremely grievous offense. It is a breach of trust. Students found to be cheating will earn an immediate grade of “zero” on the assignment. All work on which the student places his name must be the student’s own work! Talking during quizzes and tests is unacceptable. Students may lose points if they talk during assessments.

VI. Things Especially Likely to Get You into Trouble

1. Disrespecting Mr. Webb, other teachers, or your fellow classmates. This particularly includes interrupting Mr. Webb when he is speaking.
2. Touching things that do not belong to you, especially those things that belong to Mr. Webb.
3. Saying the phrase “not fair.”
4. Not pushing in your chair. Leaving the classroom dirty.
5. Becoming fussy and unsportsmanlike during the games we play in class.
6. Cheating.
7. Lying about whether or not you cheated. Teachers are smart. We know.

VII. What to Bring to Class

Every day, please come to class prepared with the following items:

- *textbook(s)
- *pencil or pen
- *loose-leaf paper
- *your notebook, with an organized World Mythology section

I have read this handout in full and understand its contents.

Signature of Student

Date

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date