



## WORLD MYTHOLOGY

### Flood Unit Study Questions

#### Utnapishtim – Mesopotamian (handout)

1. In the very beginning, what does Gilgamesh ask Utnapishtim?
2. Why do the gods agree to exterminate the humans?
3. What does Ea encourage Utnapishtim to do?
4. Describe Utnapishtim's boat.
5. Describe the flood.
6. How does Ishtar react to the flood?
7. For how long does the flood last? Does this have any Biblical parallels?
8. How does Utnapishtim try to determine where land is? How long does it take him to do this?
9. How does Enlil react when he discovers that Utnapishtim has survived? What gift does he give to Utnapishtim?

#### The Flood Cycle – Greek (R20-25)

1. Why does Zeus come to earth?
2. Why and how does Lycaon test Zeus? How does Zeus react to this test?
3. Why is it appropriate that Lycaon was changed into a wolf?



4. Why and how does Zeus determine to destroy the human race?
5. Who is Prometheus? Who does he alert about the flood? Compare this to the Mesopotamian and Biblical flood myths.
6. Who are Deucalion and Pyrrha? What sort of humans are they? What adjectives would you use to describe them?
7. How did Deucalion and Pyrrha repopulate the earth? What is the significance of the objects they made the new humans from?
8. What do you think is the moral of this story?

#### Yoruba (African) Flood (R402-407)

1. Why and by whom was solid land created?
2. The process of creating dry land is quite complicated. Describe it, including all the objects needed to create it.
3. The myth is by the Yoruba people of Africa – what are they asserting in this myth?
4. Who is Obatala and what is her role in this story?
5. Are the sacrifices Eshu demands in character with how the interactions between humans and gods are presented in the rest of the story? Why or why not?
6. What is the significance of the fact that the gods often visit Ife?
7. What is Olokun's final challenge to Olorun, and how does it turn out?



### The Emergence – Navajo (R497-503)

1. Describe the five worlds and the inhabitants of each.
2. What types of people live in the yellow world? Who does each type suggest should lead the entire group, and why?
3. Who do the people finally decide on as their leader? Why? What does this say about Native American cultures?
4. How does Coyote offend Water Monster, and what happens as a result of this?
5. How do the humans protect themselves from the flood?
6. Describe the role and importance of Turkey in this myth.

### Popol Vuh – Mayan (R479-483)

1. How was the world and its inhabitants created? How is this similar to Biblical creation?
2. Of what two substances were the first two types of humans created? What are the pros and cons of each type of humans?
3. What is the purpose of the flood of sap? What happens immediately afterward that further accomplishes this purpose?
4. Why is it appropriate that the “perfect” race of humans is made of corn?
5. Why did the creators blow a fog into the eyes of the humans?
6. What two things did the creators give to the first humans? Why is this important?