

Mythology Scavenger Hunt

We use science to help us learn about the world around us. But in ancient cultures, people created myths to help them understand why things happened. Learn more about mythology on the World Book Web and then find the answers to the following questions!

Find It!

1. What is the difference between a myth and a folktale or legend?
2. Would Thor, the Norse god of thunder and lightning, be an example of a creation myth or an explanatory myth?
3. What is a theriomorphic being?
4. What are two animals the Egyptians considered divine?
5. Which was the most powerful group of Greek divinities?
6. Who was one of the only Greek divinities to not side with the Greeks in the Trojan War?
7. Why is it that there are so many similarities between Greek and Roman mythological figures?
8. Why would something be “taboo” in Pacific Island myth?
9. What is Teutonic mythology?
10. Why was Aztec mythology so complicated?

Did You Know?

- ◆ Fire was an important part of most ancient mythologies. Ancient people considered fire a gift from the gods and created myths that explained how fire was first discovered in their culture.
- ◆ Sphinx is a Greek word meaning an imaginary evil monster. They used this word to describe the large half man, half animal statues they saw when they visited Egypt. Both cultures included sphinxes in their mythology that served to guard sacred places.
- ◆ Joseph Campbell was a famous authority on mythology. He found that almost every ancient culture had a myth about a mortal man who enters the supernatural world, then returns to the mortal world with new knowledge and power. Campbell called this common myth the “monomyth” of the hero.

Learn More!

- ◆ Watch this short video about the Venus de Milo – a famous statue of the Greek goddess Aphrodite.
<http://www.worldbookonline.com/wb/Media?id=vd000088&st=mythology>
- ◆ Learn more about Homer, the Greek poet who wrote the epics *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*.
<http://www.worldbookonline.com/wb/article?id=ar260640>
- ◆ The Trojan War was a major part of Greek mythology. Learn more about this conflict.
<http://www.worldbookonline.com/wb/Article?id=ar567720>
- ◆ King Arthur is one of the most famous characters from Welsh myths. Learn more about his story.
<http://www.worldbookonline.com/wb/article?id=ar032260>

Answer Key

1. Myths usually have a religious significance and people generally considered them to be completely true. Folktales and legends were told more for amusement and people may not have believed they actually happened.
2. Explanatory myth
3. A theriomorphic being is a god or goddess that resembles an animal.
4. The cat and the crocodile
5. The Olympians
6. Aphrodite
7. The Greeks and Romans share a common Indo-European heritage. In addition, they came into contact during the 700's BC after which Roman figures took on similarities with Greek figures.
8. Some people, animals, or objects had so much mana, or supernatural force, that touching them would be dangerous. Taboo came to mean "not to be touched".
9. Teutonic mythology, often called Norse mythology, consists of the myths of Germany and Scandinavia.
10. The Aztec's mythology consisted of gods from their earlier ancestors, ones they created themselves, and the gods of tribes they conquered.