



Young Audiences of Massachusetts

Educational Materials

Please forward to teachers

ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE:

Lindsay Flothers and Anthony Cascio: *MythMasters*

Grade levels: 6-12

Myths are dramatic tales that help us understand and face the unknown. In this imaginative program, Lindsay Flothers and Anthony Cascio blow the dust off centuries of stories from ancient Greece, bringing the power, majesty, and magic of Mount Olympus to life. Through a skillful blend of theatrical techniques (mime, comedy, drama, puppets, masks, costumes, music, reverence, irreverence, etc.) and audience participation, these seasoned actors breathe life into the gods and goddesses, heroes and heroines, villains, monsters and maidens of Greek mythology.

LEARNING GOALS:

1. To gain experience with some of the most famous Greek myths, as well as many of the Greek gods and goddesses.
2. To explore how myths change and evolve over time.
3. To demonstrate an array of theatrical techniques, such as mime, comedy, drama, puppets, and more.

PRE-ACTIVITY SUMMARY: *The Making of Myths*

Tell the class a myth. Have a volunteer retell the myth. Was it retold exactly? There are many versions of myths because people orally transmitted them for years. Have students write and share their own myths. Then, have their classmates try to retell them.

POST-ACTIVITY SUMMARY: *Multicultural Myths*

Myths exist in many cultures. Read two myths that explain the same belief from different cultures. Discuss the similarities and differences. Think of other things from culture to culture that are the same but different!

CURRICULUM LINKS:

English Language Arts, Health/Phys. Ed., Multicultural Studies, History and Social Science, and Theater

PRE-ACTIVITY: THE MAKING OF MYTHS

LEARNING GOAL:

To familiarize students with myths.

MATERIALS/PREPARATION:
a myth

TIME:
one hour

TIPS FOR THE TEACHER:

* When brainstorming about myths, it is helpful to create a bubble chart.

STEP 1:

Have students brainstorm about myths.

STEP 2:

Tell the class a myth. Do not read it directly from a book, as myths traditionally are passed orally from generation to generation.

STEP 3:

Have various students retell the myth. Since they probably cannot retell it exactly, this will demonstrate how myths can change as they are orally passed.

STEP 4:

Discuss the basic components of the myth, including the plot, setting, characters and the belief it tries to explain. Discuss how the words may not be exactly the same from version to version, but the content remains the same.

STEP 5:

Have students write their own myths.

STEP 6:

Have students tell their myths to the class. Ask other students to retell the myths. Have other students identify the major components.

EXTENSIONS:

- 1) **Keep** a running list of English words that have Greek roots. What are some expressions that originate from Greek myths?
- 2) **Examine**, draw and build models of Greek buildings. Look for pictures of architecture in the United States that were influenced by the Greeks.
- 3) **Explore** the symbols that are associated with each of the major Greek gods. Begin by referring to constellations.



POST-ACTIVITY: MULTICULTURAL MYTHS

LEARNING GOAL:

To explore how myths differ from culture to culture.

MATERIALS/PREPARATION:

enclosed myths

TIME:

Two 45 minute classes

STEP 1:

Discuss myths. Remind students that myths help explain beliefs. Discuss culture. Make sure students realize that literature is part of culture. Tell students that each culture has its own myths that explain similar beliefs and natural phenomenon.

STEP 2:

Have students think of myths. What cultures are these myths from? Read two versions of the same myth from different cultures.

STEP 3:

Create "story maps" for each myth, including the characters, setting, problem, conclusion and explained belief. The explained belief for each myth should be the same.

Step 4:

Discuss the components of each version of the myth, including the similarities, and differences. Tell students which culture created each myth.

Step 5:

Discuss how the "belief" is the same in each version, but the other elements vary from culture to culture. Have students think of other elements from culture to culture that are the same but different.

EXTENSIONS:

1) **Discuss** if the "modernizing" of the myths made them *more* or *less* enjoyable (e.g., "keys" to the chariot in *Phaeton*, "shoelaces untied" in *Orpheus*).

2) **Make** a list of modern "beliefs" around which myths could be created (e.g., "flat earth" belief, the "big bang" theory, the origin of the human species, the existence of life on other planets, etc.).



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RESOURCES:

Birch, Cyril. Chinese Myths and Fantasies. Oxford University Press, 1993.

Bruchac, Joseph. Native American Stories. Fulcrum Publishing, 1991.

Daly, Kathleen. Greek & Roman Mythology A to Z: A Young Reader's Companion. Facts on File, Inc., 1992.

D'Aulaires Book of Greek Myths. New York: Doubleday, 1962.

ABOUT THE PERFORMERS:

Mythmasters Too created by David Zucker and Richard McElvain

Lindsay Flothers and Anthony Cascio

Lindsay and Anthony are both graduates of Fitchburg State College where they both received degrees in English/Theatre. At FSC, Lindsay performed in such roles as Hamlet in Hamlet and Toinette in The Hypochondriac and Anthony performed as Laertes in Hamlet. Both are past recipients of the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival-Irene Ryan acting award for the region and performed at the Kennedy Center. Some of the companies Lindsay and Anthony have worked with include Boston Theatre Works, Shakespeare Now, Theatre Omibus, 11:11 Theatre Company, and Stoneham Theatre. Lindsay and Anthony performed in Scotland at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival; Lindsay in Call of the Wild and Anthony in The Laramie Project. Lindsay was most recently seen in The Women playing Annette Bening's assistant Taylor.

For more information, please consult their web site www.mythmasters.net.

ABOUT YOUNG AUDIENCES:

Young Audiences of Massachusetts (YA) is the oldest, largest and most utilized arts-in-education organization in the state and one of the largest in a national network of 33 chapters. For over 45 years, YA has distinguished itself as the vital link between Massachusetts schoolchildren (K-12) and more than 95 of the region's most accomplished actors, dancers, singers, musicians, and storytellers. Its 36 ensembles offer 57 interactive arts programs that represent a range of cultures, historical periods and artistic disciplines. YA is unique in its flexibility to offer interactive performances, tailor-made residencies, workshops, teacher-training, curriculum planning and multi-year projects. All programs include educational materials and satisfy local, state and/or federal arts education standards.



Young Audiences of Massachusetts

255 Elm Street, Suite 302, Somerville, MA 02144

(617) 629-YAMA (9262)

www.yamass.org

MASSACHUSETTS CURRICULUM FRAMEWORKS CONNECTIONS

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<i>Arts-Theatre 1</i>	Acting...Students will develop acting skills to portray characters who interact in improvised and scripted scenes.
<i>Arts-Theatre 5</i>	Critical Response...Students will describe and analyze their own theatrical work and the work of others using appropriate theater vocabulary.
<i>Arts-Theatre 6</i>	Purposes and Meanings in the Arts...Students will describe the purposes for which works of dance, music, theatre, visual arts, and architecture were and are created, and, when appropriate, interpret their meanings.
<i>Arts-Theatre 10</i>	Interdisciplinary Connections...Students will apply knowledge of the arts to the study of English language arts, foreign languages, health, history, and social science, mathematics, and science and technology / engineering, and scripted scenes.
<i>English Language Arts 9</i>	Students will identify the basic facts and main ideas in a text and use them as the basis for interpretation.
<i>English Language Arts 16</i>	Students will identify, analyze, and apply knowledge of the themes, structure, and elements of myths, traditional narratives, and classical literature and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.
<i>History & Social Science 8</i>	Places and Regions of the World...Students will identify and explain the location and features of places and systems organized over time.

