



# Young Audiences of Massachusetts

## *Educational Materials*

Please forward to teachers

Updated 3/17/10

### **ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE:**

**Lindsay Flathers and Anthony Cascio:** *MythMasters*

*Grade Levels: 3-5*

Myths are dramatic tales that help us understand and face the unknown. In this imaginative program, Lindsay Flathers and Anthony Cascio blow the dust off of 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 bring to life some of the most famous Greek myths.
2. To explore how myths change and evolve over time.
3. To familiarize students with many of the Greek gods and goddesses.

### **PRE-ACTIVITY SUMMARY:** *Uncovering Myths*

Read a myth, fairy tale and legend to the class. Discuss the differences in each type of story. Have the class write a modern-day myth together that explains a belief. Discuss what makes the story a myth.

### **POST-ACTIVITY SUMMARY:** *Illustrating Myths*

Have students illustrate the myth they wrote. Discuss how the performers in MythMasters dramatized their myths. Encourage students to use any medium (painting, singing, drawing, writing, acting, etc.) to make the story come to life.

### **CURRICULUM LINKS:**

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

## PRE-ACTIVITY: UNCOVERING MYTHS

### LEARNING GOAL:

To understand the concept of a myth

### MATERIALS/PREPARATION:

Short myth, legend and fairy tale

### TIME:

One hour

### TIPS FOR THE TEACHER:

\* Myth - a traditional story about historical events that helps to explain a belief or phenomenon.

\* Legend - a story from the past that is regarded as historical but is not verifiable.

\* Fairy Tale - a story involving fantastic beings and events.

### STEP 1:

Read a myth, legend and fairy tale to the class. Discuss the differences in each story. Make sure students understand that myths are stories that help to explain beliefs. Discuss how many myths come from Greece and that the characters are often Greek gods.

### STEP 2:

Have students share other myths, legends, and fairy tales.

### STEP 3:

Have the class write a myth together. Discuss possible beliefs/natural phenomena that the class myth can explain (the "flat earth" belief, origin of the human species, existence of life on other planets, etc.).

### STEP 4:

Choose a belief and solicit story ideas from the class. Write the story on the board or easel paper. Encourage as many students as possible to give input.

### STEP 5:

Ask one student to read the finished story to the class. Discuss why this story is a myth and not a legend or fairy tale.

### EXTENSIONS:

1) Study Greece (culture, climate, geography, food, etc.). What things have changed over the past 2,500 years? Have students draw maps or make models of the country.

2) Study, draw and/or write about Greek monsters.

3) Study astronomy and research stories that relate to Greek mythology. Make classroom models, murals, or playground paintings that show the constellations and planets in the solar system.



## POST-ACTIVITY: ILLUSTRATING MYTHS

**LEARNING GOAL:**

To illustrate a myth

**MATERIALS/PREPARATION:**

A chosen myth, art supplies

**TIME:**

One hour

**STEP 1:**

Reread the myth that the class wrote before the performance, or choose another short myth.

**STEP 2:**

Brainstorm how to illustrate the myth. Discuss how the performers "illustrated" the myths in the MythMasters program (costume, scenery, props, etc.).

**STEP 3:**

Have students illustrate the myth in a format of their own choosing, such as a book, cartoon strip, poster, etc.

**STEP 4:**

Have students share their work with the class. Discuss different illustration methods. Have volunteers discuss how their characters would act, what props they would use, and what the set would look like.

**EXTENSIONS:**

- 1) Discuss whether the modernizing of the myths in the performance of Mythmasters made them *more* or *less* enjoyable (e.g., the keys to the chariot in Phaeton, the untied shoelaces in Orpheus, etc.).
- 2) List the major Greek gods/goddesses, heroes/heroines, monsters, expressions and/or words with Greek roots, Ancient Greek cities and towns, and buildings of Ancient Greece. Devise a game that involves the items on your list. Include pictures, words, objects, scientific and contemporary references.
- 3) Compare how myths from different cultures (e.g., Greek, Nordic, Native American) treat similar subjects.



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**Grade levels: 3-5**

**RESOURCES:**

Blaisdell, Bob. Favorite Greek Myths. Dover Publications, 1995.

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

Vinge, Joan. The Random House Book of Mythology. New York: Random Library, 1998.

Williams, Marcia. Greek Myths for Young Children. Candlewick Press, 1995

**ABOUT THE PERFORMERS:**

*Mythmasters, created by David Zucker and Richard McElvain*

**Lindsay Flathers and Anthony Cascio**

Lindsay and Anthony are both graduates of Fitchburg State College where they both received degrees in English and 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's 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 also 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 major motion picture The Women playing Annette Bening's assistant, Taylor. *For more information please visit [www.mythmasters.net](http://www.mythmasters.net).*

**ABOUT YOUNG AUDIENCES:**

Young Audiences / Arts for Learning (YA), America's largest arts in education nonprofit, transforms the lives and education of our youth through the arts. The organization connects professional artists with schools, libraries, community organizations, and hospitals to provide artistically excellent assembly programs that further develop Creative Learning and Life Skills.

All YA artists are professional artists who have completed a rigorous interview and audition process and are evaluated annually on their work. Through in-school assembly performances, workshops, master classes and artist-in-residence programs, teachers and coordinators integrate the arts in their academic and enrichment programs while directly addressing national and state content standards.

Healing Arts for Kids expands YA's mission to make the arts a part of EVERY child's education. A group of professional artists provide assembly programs, small presentations, and residencies to acutely and chronically ill children, physically and emotionally challenged children, and other special education populations in K-12 schools, hospital schools, hospitals, and homeless shelters.



# Young Audiences of Massachusetts

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## MASSACHUSETTS CURRICULUM FRAMEWORKS CONNECTIONS

**Lindsay Flathers and Anthony Cascio: *MythMasters***

<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 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>Arts-Connections 6-10</i>	Students will investigate the historical and cultural contexts of the arts, learn about the arts in their communities, and use their knowledge of the arts in the study of other disciplines.
<i>English Language Arts 9</i>	Students will identify the basic facts and essential ideas in what they have read, heard, or viewed.
<i>English Language Arts 16</i>	Students will compare and contrast similar myths and narratives from different cultures and geographic regions.
<i>History &amp; 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.