7th grade Lesson 1

Creating an Origin Myth

“Brainstorm”



**Objectives:**

Vocabulary: Recognizing important words for this lesson and for future lessons. Consult general and specialized reference materials.

Reading Literature: Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

Writing: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

Language: Interpret figures of speech (e.g., literary, biblical, and mythological allusions) in context.

Speaking & Listening: Come to discussions prepared having researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.

1. **Vocabulary**: Recognizing important words for this lesson and for future lessons. Have students become familiar with the words below. I usually would give students 3 words a lesson or week, depending on what’s necessary. Students can do a variety of thing or whatever works for you when teaching vocabulary. Students can: look up the definition and write it down or put it in their own words, put the word in a sentence, draw a picture/cartoon, create an antonym or explain what the word is not, and a synonym as well. Do whatever you have time for, but do what works.
   1. Myths
   2. theme
   3. simile

1. **Reading Informational:** Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

Students are being introduced to various myths before they really start to write one.

1. Students need to read the following myth about Pandora.

<http://www.historyforkids.org/learn/greeks/religion/myths/pandora.htm>

1. Students should answer the questions below using evidence from the text to support each of their answers.

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| Questions | |
| 1 | This is an example of an origin myth, because something originated from this story. Explain all of the things that came because of this myth and what was the cause of it all coming? In other words, what character trait did Pandora have that caused her to open the box and what are all of the things that came out of it? Use examples from the text to back up your reasoning. |
| 2 | What is the moral of this story or theme of this piece? Use examples from the text to back up your reasoning. |
| 3 | What do you think the author was trying to do when they were writing this story? What were they trying to teach their audience? Remember these are people that believed and worshipped Greek gods and goddesses. They believed in rituals and sacrifices. Use examples from the text to back up your reasoning. |
| 4 | What can you infer is Zeus’s reasoning for putting that box on the earth? You will most likely need to click on **Prometheus** in order to get a better understanding of this question. Use examples from the text to back up your reasoning. |
| 5 | Write a short summary of the story; make sure to focus on the main details only? Use examples from the text to back up your reasoning. |
| 6 | What is the example of a simile that is put in this story? What impact does it have on the story? How would it affect the audience? How did it affect you? Use examples from the text to back up your reasoning. |
| 7 | Why do you think that Zeus gave the world hope? What can you infer are his reasons behind why he would do that? If necessary, click on **Zeus** to help you answer this question. |
| 8 | What can you imagine, based on this story, the world was like before Pandora’s little box? Use examples from the text to back up your reasoning. |

1. **Writing:**  Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.
2. Students will be creating an **origin myth**.
3. Start by brainstorming with students for an origin myth.
4. Below I have a **short story about a myth created to explain droughts**. Use an LCD projector to show the story and plot chart. Make sure that students pay attention for how the myth came to be, characters, plot, and dialogue. Make sure they Remember the following terms: setting (time/location), conflict (struggles between opposing forces), Climax (most exciting part of the story), complications (problems leading up to climax), Resolution (lose ends tied up). Students will be creating a Plot Chart in another lesson. I have an example of one below as well.

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| --- |
| Drought Myth  I stared out the window as sweat dripped down my face. Summer school was my own personal torture. West Point High School didn’t have the money to turn on the air conditioning during summer classes. I figured they probably wanted to teach us a lesson, so we wouldn’t flunk classes and be forced to burn inside a glass building. I saw Phil wipe his hand across his damp forehead. I smiled slightly, at least I wasn’t alone. Phil had failed English too.  The teacher let us leave for a break. Phil and I headed out through the gym; it was the quickest way outside. I passed Mallory Christenson. She was our student body president and the girl I’d had a crush on since I was five. She’d lived next to me our entire life and I still had a difficult time talking to her. She was sitting on the ground coloring with a large black marker the school emblem when I walked passed her and she looked up. She waved and I attempted to be cool with a head nod and then walked out the doors.  Phil had grabbed the basketball we kept hidden under the bleachers for just these kinds of breaks. We started tossing it back and forth pushing it harder and harder. It was stupid, but we were trying to be tough. I finally kept the ball and dribbled down the court for a layup. Phil didn’t see me moving that fast and I’d made the basket before he even knew it. He stared at me for a minute as he retrieved the ball.  “So Ben, when are you going to ask her out?” he asked nonchalantly.  I flushed, “Who are you talking about?”  “Duh, Mallory,” he said making a face. Was I really that obvious?  “Why would a girl like that go out with a guy like me?” I confessed. Phil shrugged and started playing again. He knew that I didn’t want to talk about it.  It was true, though about me and Mallory. She had straight A’s and was extremely popular. I on the other hand, had to make up English just so I could stay on the basketball team and the team also made up most of my friends. I say most of the team because there was Derrick. Derrick was the thorn of my existence. He was a better basketball player, taller, got better grades, and he also liked Mallory. All of the girls loved him, but thankfully Mallory didn’t give him the time of day despite the fact that he was her vice president.  Just then Derrick stepped out from the gym, speak of the devil and he shall appear. He asked if he could play, so we let him. We all needed the practice. We were all huffing except, for Derrick. His sandy blond hair wasn’t matted to his face like mine and Phil’s and his shirt wasn’t soaking wet. It was so incredibly weird. I remembered that even Mallory’s short brown hair was all frizzy from it being so hot. She still looked good, but it was blistering.  The whole summer had been like this. Utah summers are bad, but this was extreme. Kids were told to stay inside. They called it on the news the worst drought of the century. A couple of homeless people had actually died of dehydration.  I could hear the teacher calling us back in. Derrick continued to play and said he’d put the ball back. He seemed to be getting energy from the heat, while we were completely drained. It was his first year here and he’d moved from Arizona, so maybe he was used to heat. It didn’t seem natural, though. Something was off. I stared at him until he turned around.  “What?” he asked looking confused.  “Why aren’t you all gross like the rest of us?” It was a weird question, but I felt like I had to ask. His expression flickered from angry to innocent.  “I don’t know what you’re talking about,” he said. His light brown eyes darkened, literally darker, and then he turned and started playing again. I knew when I was being lied to and this guy was lying through his teeth. I don’t know how he made his eyes do that, but I could hear the teacher squawking behind me, so I went into the gym.  Back in class I stared out the window and witnessed the sky change colors. It had been blue, but now it was turning brown. I realized that the brown was the same color as Derrick’s eyes had been. Despite the heat, I felt a chill run down my spine. The classroom had a perfect view that led through the gym and out the propped door. I could see Derrick still playing basketball. He was moving faster and faster. The harder he played, the darker the sky got.  Everything seemed to pause as the classroom and school became totally black. I immediately had the urge to go and find Mallory. I planned to ask to be excused, but then Derrick turned and his eyes met mine. The sky matched his eyes again, completely black. He then looked at Mallory. She looked at him and shuddered. Her body started to jerk and then she fell to the ground. I flew out of my seat, but I was too late. Derrick scooped her into his arms and ran out the door.  I kept running. I had been on the track team too, but Derrick was kicking my butt. I could tell that Phil was running behind me too. Just as I got out the door into the same court I’d just been in, I saw Derrick run across a sand pit and disappear into it. I huffed over to the spot where he disappeared. I didn’t think that quick sand existed in Utah.  “Where’d they go?” Phil gasped as he bounced over to my side.  “I don’t know, but I don’t like it,” as I said the words a huge wind started picking up, which whipped my shaggy light brown hair in my face. I looked up just in time to see the sand getting picked up by the wind. A wave of sand formed and started moving towards me and Phil. We ran as fast as we could back towards the building. Sand storm entered my mind, but I knew it was impossible. It was somehow Derrick and he was chasing us through sand.  We slammed the door shut and felt the sand wall crash into the door. Little bits of sand blasted around the cracks stinging our hands.  “What was that?” Phil shouted. The wind outside was almost deafening.  “I think it was Derrick,” I said and even saying it made it truer.  “How is that even possible?” Phil asked, but he sounded confused.  “I think that he can control some of the elements,” I said.  “What, you mean like Zeus?” The only reason he knew who it was came from the fact that we were studying mythology in the makeup class.  “I don’t know, but it’s something not of this world,” I said and realized that this creature had Mallory. “We’ve got to save her!” I screamed and ran away from the door. Phil followed after me.  We climbed the solid metal stairs until I saw the custodial closet. I kicked the door as hard as I could. I’d had to climb to the roof to get a basketball at one point, so I knew how to get there. I pulled my already exhausted body to the roof and dragged the fire hose behind me. The wind whipped furiously around us.  I had grabbed the hose as an afterthought, but I knew that it was the right thing to do. I knew Derrick’s weakness, water. He’d never taken a drink at practice despite running for an hour, he never sweat, and it hadn’t rained once since he’d shown up. This all came to me with adrenalin. The adrenalin had come with the fear that that thing might hurt Mallory.  Phil turned the hose on and we started saturating the sand storm that was surrounding the school. The wind seemed to be howling in pain. I knew that it was working. The sand was mostly soaked except at one point. Suddenly that chunk of sand flew towards the roof. Phil turned the water on full blast and then joined me in holding the hose. I felt like a fire fighter.  The sand slowly dissolved until Derrick’s frame sagged before us. I took the hose away for a minute to see if Mallory was there, but she wasn’t. I was about ready to blast him into oblivion when he raised his hand to make me pause momentarily.  “Why?” he asked hoarsely. “Why couldn’t you just let me have a queen? She would have been perfect for me and I would have left this area and allowed water to return.” I hated him despite how broken he was. He wanted *my* Mallory for his queen.  “What are you and why have you come here?” I hissed.  “I am not called Derrick, but Drought. I am the god of dryness and sand. I have caused your record heat and steady decline in water, but you have found my weakness.” He sagged down to his knees to enunciate the pain.  “Where is she?” I said.  “She is here,” he said and waved his arm. Mallory’s limp form appeared a few feet from him.  “You will never have her and you will leave Utah forever,” I almost screamed.  “I’ll disappear for now, but a god can never fully dissolve,” and then he raised his head and smiled. I knew that something was going to happen, so I made a split decision. I threw the hose to Phil and sprinted for Mallory. Phil blasted him and I dove onto her. I hovered over her body, protecting her from the rain of the hose and the last blast of sand that got rid of Drought, for now.  Mallory came to and looked into my eyes. I felt myself fill with complete and utter happiness when she smiled. She was alright and she was safe.  “What happened?” she said and I pulled her to her feet. She was a little wobbly, so I wrapped my arm around her waist.  “You were attacked, but you’re safe now,” I whispered trying to calm her obvious fear.  “You saved me,” she said and turned towards me. “It was you. I could tell that it was you and that I’d be ok. Oh, thank you,” she gasped and wrapped her arms around my neck. She kissed me on the cheek and I turned twelve shades of red.  “It was nothing,” I muttered.  “Whatever it was nothing and the least I could do in return is take you on a date,” she smiled even wider. I smiled back.  “Well if you really want to,” I said trying to stay cool.  “Sounds like a date then,” she said. I helped her off the roof and back into the real world. I knew several things when I re-entered the building. First, Mallory liked me back, second, I still had class, and third mythology was exactly all it was cracked up to be. |

Plot chart of above story

|  |
| --- |
| **Climax:** Bad guy vs. good guy  -Confession of bad guy  -good guy to start winning  -Others to be affected by bad guy  -Conflict with girl **Resolution:** Good  Guy win and get the girl.  -Bad guy revealed and out there  **-**Intro love interest **Complications**  -Intro conflict  -Intro characters  **Basic Situation: Setting- 2000+, America**  **Conflict- Bad guy vs. good guy, external, people dying**  **Characters- boy, guy friend, girl, bad guy** |

1. Give students some ideas that they could write about, but allow them to create from their imagination their own origin myth: Rainbows, leaves changing color, and rocks of various sizes.
2. Below is a brainstorming Chart that students should fill out to help them start thinking about their short story.

Brainstorming Chart

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Origin myth: |  |  |
| What makes a good story? What are some ideas about conflicts that you could involve in your story? | What are some things in nature that you could use in your story? What could you make up | List some of the gods/goddess/monsters in mythology that you know about and might want to use in your story. |
| 1. |  |  |
| 2. |  |  |
| 3. |  |  |
| 4. |  |  |
| 5. |  |  |

1. **Speaking & Listening**: Come to discussions prepared having researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.
2. Allow students to share their brainstorming chart with a neighbor. Students should ask questions for clarification, talk about the things that they like, and the things that they think should change.
3. **Language**: Interpret figures of speech (e.g., literary, biblical, and mythological allusions) in context.
4. If you have access to a computer lab allow students to check out the following website that shows allusions to mythology. If you don’t have access then, use an LCD projector to explore the website below with students.

<http://www.thanasis.com/modern/>

1. Look through the following topics:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| [Companies & Groups](http://www.thanasis.com/modern/biz.htm) | [Planets & Constellations](http://www.thanasis.com/modern/planet.htm) |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| [Words & Expressions](http://www.thanasis.com/modern/words.htm) | [Literary & Pop Culture](http://www.thanasis.com/modern/pop.htm) |

[American Cities Named From Mythology](http://www.thanasis.com/modern/cities.htm)

1. Students should fill out the chart below based on the above information

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| What did you recognize? | Where have you seen it? | What did you learn about this item that you didn’t know before? | Why do you think that this item or place was named after this mythology piece? |
| Example: Midas | I have heard a commercial that says “That’s the Midas Touch.” It’s from a muffler business. | I learned that Midas was a king with a golden touch. | I’m thinking that the company wanted their product to look good and what better way than to have a product associated with someone that turns everything they touch into gold. |
| 1. |  |  |  |
| 2. |  |  |  |
| 3. |  |  |  |
| 4. |  |  |  |
| 5. |  |  |  |

Rubrics

Writing

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Questions | Yes | No |
| Did they complete their chart? |  |  |
| Did they fill out every section? |  |  |

Reading

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Description | Yes | No |
| Did they fill out the worksheet correctly answering the questions? |  |  |
| Is it obvious that they read/evaluated the text? |  |  |
| Did they use examples from the text to support every answer where applicable? |  |  |

Language

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Description | Yes | No |
| Did they fill out the entire chart? |  |  |
| Did they find at least five? |  |  |
| Did they explain in detail? |  |  |

Speaking and Listening

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Description | Yes | No |
| Did they share their brainstorming chart? |  |  |
| Did they review and critique someone else’s chart? |  |  |
|  |  |  |