[Eng 10]

Teacher Notes

Native American Mythology Introduction Notes

Myth:

Def:

- A traditional or legendary story, usually concerning some being, hero or event
- It may or may not be based on fact or a natural explanation.

The Elements of Myths

1. **Myths grant continuity and stability to a culture.**
   - Contain connections between one another, ancestors, or nature
   - Gives a shared sense of perspectives and values

   (1) continue culture & traditions

2. **Myths present guidelines for living.**
   - Explains society's expectations for our behavior and standards
   - Show various situations and the rewards and consequences for choices we make

   (2) Life lessons Right/wrong

3. **Myths explain a culture's activities.**
   - Explains why we may do what we do
   - Establish customs, rituals, religious tenets, laws, hunting methods, holidays, and so on

4. **Myths give meaning to life.**
   - Help explain personal struggles we're experiencing – possibly with "evil forces"
   - Make connections to ancestors and higher powers

5. **Myths explain the unexplainable.**
    - They reveal our fate after death
    - Reasons for crisis and miracles
    - Explain elements of the natural world we don't understand

6. **Myths offer role models.**
    - Provide encouragement
    - Allows humans to find strength, persistence, and courage