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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
2007 Volume II: Voyages in World History Before 1500

Teaching the Epic of Gilgamesh

Guide for Curriculum Unit 07.02.01
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The ideas of the journey and the epic as well as the hero itself are the basis for this curriculum unit. The unit will begin with basics of the epic, the epic hero, and the epic cycle. Then, we will look at the *Epic of Gilgamesh* and its historical and literary impact. Time spent with the *Epic of Gilgamesh* will also allow students to study Mesopotamia as an early civilization. In the end, the students will not only read and learn about Mesopotamia and Gilgamesh but will also have a chance to write and act out their own epic adventures. Reading *Gilgamesh* allows for discussion of larger issues in literature and life: roles of women, the use and abuse of power, friendship, and the importance of the epic in a particular society or culture.

(Developed for World Literature, grade 12; recommended for World Literature, grades 11-12)

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