



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
2024 Volume I: Myth, Legend, Fairy Tale

Legends, Myths, Folktales - History's Voices and Stories of a People

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Introduction

As teachers, we rarely reflect on who we are as people although it is something that is heard recurrently during professional developments or professional learning community meetings. Having the pleasure of participating in the Yale New Haven Teachers Institute for several years, I decided to approach this introductory statement differently. A simple statement of who I am is easy. However, the truth of the matter is that I am an educator of 30 years and have been shaped and influenced not only by my years of education and experiences, but by the students and families that I have had the pleasure of working with. My most recent years have included teaching Social Studies to sixth, seventh and eighth-grade students for the past five years at two neighborhood school. My current, second, neighborhood school is a K-8 community school gently nestled in one of the heavily populated neighborhoods in the New Haven Public School District located in New Haven, Connecticut. This close-knit K-8 community school has a population of approximately 250 students—many started out in our early elementary program and continue through grade 8. The students live in our surrounding urban community. My background is in instruction with the greater part of my years as a language arts teacher and work experiences in curriculum and instruction and journalism.

A unit that approaches Social Studies through the lenses of stories, fairy tales, legends and myths is a creative and authentic way to deepen the Social Studies curriculum for New Haven Public School students. While this unit will be social studies-focused, it has a strong English Language Arts emphasis as well and would be successful as an integrated or interdisciplinary unit. There are a few ways to look at a unit involving myths, stories, legends and fairy tales. Fairy tales, myths and creation stories are an effective way to introduce the study of a society or set of people. This type of unit of study connects well with my seventh-grade curriculum as we study world history. It would also be possible to develop a robust grade 8 unit based on the stories of the many Indigenous people of United States in comparison to other world cultures—looking at the Indigenous peoples living in the 13 colonies or during the westward expansion. Even more interesting to explore is allowing students to discover the influence of colonialism or politics on people or the stories developed by other people that have somehow been infused into another people's or culture's stories.

The study of folktales ties directly in with my seventh-grade curriculum as we study the Caribbean, Africa, Central and South America, Europe, Asia and other parts of the world. The families and past generations of

New Haven students are from these places. It is not only important for them to be able locate a longitudinal or latitudinal place on a map, but to know the stories of the people they learn about as well as possibly discovering ties to their own history and familial existence. This unit will host connections from myths, legends and fairy tales to modern or contemporary books and films. It is important to find those links so that students can form a connection from the past to the present as well as find themselves represented in that learning or represented in some aspect of historical space, belonging and connection. Through the cohort students will learn how to read, analyze and interpret myths, fairy tales and legends while also examining them as cultural pieces. By the end of this unit, students will have drawn ties from their own familial stories and oral narratives in comparison with the research and study of folktales, myths and lore from around the world.

The research gained from my Teachers Institute cohort's classes led by Marta Figlerowicz and work on this unit will allow educators and students to access familiar and undoubtedly unheard-of information during study of the Caribbean, Africa, Central and South America, Asia and other parts of the world. The basis of society and every culture or set of people that we know about has either a creation story, legends, folktales or myths that are associated with the beginning and chronological existence of its people. There are also stories that explain the rise and fall of a civilization's or a people's great leaders. This reflects the research and learning that can take place as a result of this unit. At times folktales have been used to explain happenings like eclipses, wolf moons, droughts earthquakes, or other natural phenomena. In addition to providing a script to understand planetary occurrences, tales have the ability to be used as a tool to carve and contour the lives of human inhabitants.

Stories may even be used to shape or control a people. A society's creation story is key. It is important to know who created the tale, told the tale, and ensured that the story was passed down. It is often said the one must know the history or beginning of a thing to understand where it is going—and even how it has changed or grown from that course.

Rationale:

"Stories are a communal currency of humanity."— Tahir Shah,

"Those who tell the stories rule the world."— Hopi American Indian proverb

"Stories are memory aids, instruction manuals and moral compasses."— Aleks Krotoski

"The stories we tell literally make the world. If you want to change the world, you need to change your story. This truth applies both to individuals and institutions."— Michael Margolis

"Storytelling is among the oldest forms of communication. Storytelling is the commonality of all human beings, in all places, in all times."— Rives CollinsNorthwestern University Professor (with expertise in Oral Histories and Storytelling)

*"Stories have to be told or they die, and when they die, we can't remember who we are or why we're here."
— Sue Monk Kidd, author of The Secret Life of Bees*

Folktales historically have carried within their words and stories the traditions, beliefs, values as well as a culture's customs. Stories, close-knit to and cherished by us that were passed down through the present or folktales have entertained and enlightened generations have existed for hundreds and thousands of years. Beyond bedtime stories, there is so much that we can learn from folktales.

There is the popular and almost cliché' statement about "the power of the narrative." Not just the narrative, but any story that is repeated to a group of people or even about a group of people has infinite power. Power because actions, facial expressions and tone of voice almost always accompany or are skillfully and purposefully woven in to emit emotions or coerce a desired outcome. The outcome could be for the purposes of entertainment or teach a desired behavior, prohibit behaviors, control results and even spark the formation of a group or a movement. We have a cursory understanding of how stories told over and over move world wide—even via people without using cell phones and computers.

We must not forget that stories, folk tales, legends and myths have the ability to take on a life of its own. As a snowball rolls, it picks up more snow, speed and any other debris or "information" in its path. Once a folktales or story leaves the lips of the sharer or an originator, it can be shaped differently.

Background

Bedtime stories, folktales and even stories about family members that we don't know but have heard about cyclically at annual family gatherings seem to have a life power of their own. These stories form thoughts and even outcomes for our behaviors or choices. In my introduction I mentioned how my students have impacted and influenced my life over the 30 years that I have had the pleasure of guiding them to discoveries and providing instruction. Most importantly, I have been deeply influenced by my family and the stories they told me-- stories that had been unfolded and passed down for as far back as my eldest and most revered family relatives can remember.

While many can remember tales and funny stories told to us by our family members or others who were close to us, some people remember the town historian telling stories about the people, events and customs of our town.

One vivid example a folktale or legend- like oral story relates to the prominent frog statues near the campus of Eastern Connecticut State University in Willimantic, Connecticut. According the website, Connecticuthistory.org the bridge simply known as "The Frog Bridge" was approved for construction in and around the 1990s. While my daughter attended a university in the area and on my drives to visit, prepare a meal for her and her roommate Molly, I would pass those awkwardly posed, 11-foot tall copper frogs on each side of the bridge. On a local history/ human-interest piece by the NBC local channel 30 news, they interviewed the Willimantic town historian who shared how the town gained and paid homage to such interesting-looking creatures.

The full story can be found in "The Battle of the Frogs at Windham 1758," It is even listed in the Library of Congress. Local folks know this as the famous Windham Frog Fight. On a night in June 1754 many of the inhabitants of Connecticut were afraid because of the fact that skirmishes could breakout any time—especially because they acquired Indigenous lands that were not originally their own. In addition, there was the French

and Indian War also known as the Seven Years War, which had started approximately one month earlier. This was a war between Great Britain, the North American colonies and former loyal citizens of Great Britain and France. It is unnecessary to explain further their fears. On that fateful night screeches, screams and other indescribable sounds filled the air. Connecticut History.org says that “diarists, local historians and storytellers thought they heard their names” being screamed—loudly and repeatedly coming from the bottom of the hill, near the east side of town. Some men went to investigate and when they too heard those sounds, they fired their guns. When morning came, they found the answers to all of those sounds. The area at the bottom of the hill was littered with the bloody, slain remains of hundreds of bullfrogs! It sounds amusingly comical. However, it was a harrowing and true experience!

The story has continued for years, a local tale tied accurately to historic happenings during that time. The frogs and the generations of frogs before them remain on Willimantic’s Lilly Pad of celebrated true stories. In doing research I discovered the reason for their odd-looking chairs! When building the bridge, they also honored the city’s ties to textile and thread manufacturing and designed the frogs to rest playfully on spools. There are great pieces of history found in oral traditions, folktale and local lore.

What is a folktale?

The folktale is a literary genre. While not discussed in this section of the unit, a fairytale is a subgenre of the folktale.

For primary teachers, folktales are a staple, because they contain interesting characters with problems that often need a solution. The ease of the read as well as not taking up a lot of time to share during class are benefits that many may find attractive. Some folktales have become classic favorites known to people around the world like the Hungarian folktale called, “Stone Soup” or the African “Anansi” tales. Usually the characters are flat but memorable. According to Atlanta’s August House Publishers, folktales often share a connection with the natural landscapes and settings of the region it represents like forests, fields, bodies of water, mountains, villages, or trails. The key is that these locations would more than likely be a recognizable or familiar part of a culture’s or region’s natural surroundings. In turn, it would make it easier for people to understand the story as a familiar setting. Thus, making the folktale that much more believable.

One characteristic is that repetition of lines or phrases is a common literary characteristic found in folktales. While folktales are very easy to follow with characters that one might consider basic or simple, the audience member of a folktales will be sure to come away with a moral lesson and or a problem that needed to be solved in the folktale. To bring more focus to the moral lesson is the tie that it will have to shared community values and teaching acceptable or expected behaviors.

Myths, Legends and The Like

One commonality between myths and legends is the cultural hero. The cultural hero is usually well known to the locals or the surrounding community. Another common characteristic that myths and legends share is that they're often based on or include historical facts, people or items. An area where they differ is the fact that myths are written or often presented as if they are true! While we now have scientific explanations for events or phenomena, myths helped people understand things that would have been hard to comprehend, according to Smithsonian Magazine's article, "Ten Ancient Stories and the Geological Events That May Have Inspired Them."

Some folklore and creation stories "have roots in real geological events of the past, providing warning of potential dangers and speaking to the awe we hold for the might of the planet," states the Smithsonian article by Sarah Zielinski. The inclusion of ancient beginnings found in many myths is part of the uniqueness of passing down important information. This oral passing of information might long be forgotten if not used as an important and oftentimes sacred responsibility for particular sections of society—or those who held sacred or revered positions like an Indigenous healer. This includes explanations of how particular events happened or how phenomena or physical characteristics in the planet came to be. Also a key characteristic in legends is the inclusion of local or regional surroundings. An example of a folktale used to describe animal behavior would be the Philippines's fable, *The Hawk and the Hen*, about why chickens/hens always peck the ground. We will now take a closer look at myths.

Most importantly, morals are often interwoven into the fibers of myths. Myths and other oral stories have the unique ability to entertain, teach and warn its hearers and narrators at the same time. It is necessary to take an even deeper look at myths and folklore.

In the genre of legends and folklore, Greek poet Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are works that many are familiar with. These works are still studied in high schools and colleges today. These well-known BCE (Before Common Era) stories from were originally passed down by poets orally before being written down and contained to a form and structure. Another example of a popular legend or myth that has been around for hundreds of years is "Bigfoot" -- rumored to live in the woods of the Pacific Northwest and western forests of Canada. Bigfoot has been described as a large hairy-bodied creature covered in brown, reddish-brown, or black hair. Standing upright on two feet and walking like a man—the creature is supposed to tower over humans reportedly as tall as 7 to 15 feet, according to the Britannica Encyclopedia's website. Others may be more familiar with stories about the "Sasquatch" which is an Indigenous name for Bigfoot.

In another part of the world, in Asia's Himalayan Mountains a giant ape-like creature similar in height to "Bigfoot" has been alleged to exist. Known as the "Yeti" or the "Abominable Snowman—or by its Himalayan definition, "that thing there" has been alleged to be covered furry white, gray or brown hair. The Yeti has been reported to have a mouth full of sharp teeth. While the existence of none of the aforementioned giant creatures has been scientifically proven, there have been hundreds of articles written and unverifiable pictures (also many determined to be hoaxes) focused on their reality, according to a CNN article entitled "Science Solves The Mystery of The Elusive Yeti." Scientists made important discoveries after running DNA tests of "Yeti" samples that had been kept as artifacts in collections from all over the world, according to the article. The results were conclusive—the samples proved the existence of rare commonplace creatures; the article also states. Not only are there land animals of great myth and legend—but bodies of water in Europe hold stories that generations have shared.

From Europe, particularly Scotland, there are the many stories of the Loch Ness Monster. The Loch Ness Monster is an oral tradition specifically-- it is a Scottish folklore example. Loch Ness or Nessie has been described as a large, long-necked marine creature or dinosaur with one or more humps. The story of Nessie has been around for more than 1,300 years, according to a June 2024 New York Times article entitled, "The 1300-year search for the Loch Ness Monster: A Timeline."

What is a lore?

Lore is a set traditions and knowledge on a particular subject or practice or held by a particular group. This information is typically passed from person to person orally or by word of mouth. Knowledge about a particular subject passed on or down to other groups of people or generations is what lore is. There can be lore surrounding the healing properties of particular herbs when prepared in a specific and or traditional method. According to Harvard University's Library Research Guide for Folklore and Mythology folklore can serve as a bridge to cultural sensitivity.

What are oral traditions?

Oral traditions include stories, histories and even legends that are kept close within a group of people or a family. The cultural knowledge and information passed down verbally from generation to generation is how non-verbalized but "understood and accepted" practices are kept within a society or group of people. In many cases the oral traditions are unspoken gatekeepers of rules and expectations. Oral traditions have also been known to be a source of history.

Orality

Orality is the verbal communication, usually of a story--communication that does not involve written words or symbols. For thousands of years orality was the only common expression of information. In societies where there was not a written language or regular, accepted use of symbols or pictures, orality was prevalent. Orality, as long as the valued storytellers or story keepers would continue the strict tradition and flow of words ensured that values, beliefs and societal attitudes remained constant and in keeping with the expected community's outcomes for life. Orality ensured intergenerational cultural diffusion by word of mouth. Orality included the use of myths.

Fairy tale - fairy dust, magic, good and evil

Who is Cinderella?

From childhood, many are familiar with watching Disney movies, having our parents read bedtime stories to us – generations are aware of the Disney Princess and the tale of Cinderella. But what many who are great-grandparents, parents or youth don't know is that there are numerous versions that exist beyond what we see on the big screen with Disney. The version of Cinderella that most people revere is the European folktale written by Charles Perrault called Cendrillon. In Europe alone, there are more than 500 versions of this tale. Many would be shocked to discover the history of Cinderella, and then even more surprised to learn that Cinderella was not the original character's name and that has changed over the centuries as well. While characteristics of fairytales often involve magic, magical elements, good and evil and royalty, some stories did not always have a happy ending. The earliest recorded version of Cinderella was thousands of years ago. It was an Egyptian folktale written by Strabo, a Greek geographer. The story was written between 7 BCE and 23 CE.

This version of Cinderella involves a young, enslaved girl, Rhodopis, who gains the attention of the pharaoh after her sandal fell off. An Eagle swoops in and picks up the sandal and drops it in the lap of the pharaoh. He is so interested in the sandal and how it looks that he was determined to find its owner. This story is proof that there are many versions of the Cinderella folktales from around the world and that oral stories remain in rotation for thousands of years.

In Vietnam, The Story of Tấm and Cám, is their version of Cinderella. This story is about two half-sisters— one of whom has a mother who dies. In this folktale the father remarries and then dies. Tam, the beautiful older sister ends up living with her father's new wife and the daughter she had with Tấm's father. Unfortunately, the father had fallen in love with an evil woman. This Vietnamese version sounds very close to a version that most readers and people are familiar with. One of the most popular folktales or fairy tales is the story of Cinderella.

Lesson Ideas

Essential Questions:

- What do fairy tales, legends and other oral stories/narratives teach us about society?
- Who decides what happens in a fairy tale?
- How can fairy tales imitate life?
- Where do fairytales come from?
- How do we know folktales are original?
- What causes oral narratives or folktales to change over generations?
- What influences the creation of a folktale?
- What makes a hero?
- What qualities do heroes have?
- Who benefits from the insertion or use of a hero in stories? How do those benefits change or compare between groups?

- Why do some people need heroes in stories, folktales, legends and the like?
- What do you do when students believe the false narrative? How do you combat the false with personal narratives and experiences or events from other people?
- How are societal behaviors and expectations extracted from folktales, folklore, etc.?
- In a societies heavily dependent upon orality or oral stories who is responsible for the success or moral growth of the community?
- In societies or communities that begin to fail how might folktales, myths and legends, etc. be used?
- How do multiple versions of a folktale come into existence?
- What are the benefits of another set of people adapting or writing folktales about another society or set of people?
- How and why do places change over time?
- What are the benefits and challenges that result from globalization and or colonization?
- What are the cons/negatives of another set of people adapting or writing folktales about another society or set of people?
- How are criterion set or established to characterize or identify oral stories, folktales, etc.?
- How has Norse mythology impacted society in the past or in our current society?
- How has Greek and Roman mythology impacted society in the past or in our current society?
- What reasons might cause individuals or those possibly influenced by groups to write stories about people who live in a specific region or part of the world.

Vocabulary Words

propaganda	Roman mythology
narratives	Norse mythology
Greek mythology	Anime
heroes	fable
orality	parable
lore	folktale
motif	vernacular
progenitors	tall tale
lineage	epic poem
hyperbole	culture
custom	oral tradition
parody	tradition
preliterate	legend
retention	allegory
esoteric vs. exoteric	symbolism
historical	criterion
magic realism	theme
formulaic	mythology
reinterpretation	

Suggested Learning targets / Goal statements

Key: SWBAT = Students will be able to...

- SWBAT identify and analyze the components and characteristics of oral stories
- SWBAT compare and contrast the characteristics of fables, folktales, legends, myths and other oral stories
- SWBAT identify and analyze the characteristics of heroes
- SWBAT tie stories involving heroes to their culture, region, and or political and societal events.
- SWBAT compare and contrast creation stories from various parts of the world
- SWBAT identify and analyze what impacts oral stories
- SWBAT identify and analyze how oral stories, folktales, etc. change over a period time
- SWBAT identify and analyze who causes oral stories, folktales, etc. to change
- SWBAT identify, analyze the purposes of oral stories for the culture that each story represents
- SWBAT research and analyze the original folktales for a region or set of people and determine how those stories influenced the region (socially, economically and politically).

Suggested Activities

Introduction activities

Intro Activity #1

Activity: Whole Class Folktale, Legend, Oral Narrative etc.

Instructional Grouping(s): Individual, whole class, partner and group work

Materials:

Pencils, pens, colored pens

Highlighters

Stickies/Post It notes

Two-Column or T-Style journal

Copies of the folktale, legend, oral story, etc.

Clip boards and wipe boards

Name of the Lesson: Name that moral!

1. Students, on their own, do a close reading of the folktale, legend
2. Next a whole class reading is done. Then students individually and make annotations or document their

questions and “noticings.”

3. Students do a paired/partnered reading of the folktale, legend, etc. and provide analysis
4. Have students discuss and analyze its meanings or morals as well as share what they noticed. These notes should be written on their photocopies of the folktale, legend, oral narrative etc. (Clip boards or a similar item will provide easy organization as student will do close readings of the oral pieces and will also need an item with firm backing while writing.)
5. Students can report out their findings, “noticings,” using mini-erase boards
Note: (Whole class activity, led by the teacher or students may be broken up into small groups, and students will be responsible for helping to guide their own lesson.)

Intro Activity #2

Activity: Legends, Myths and Heroes

Instructional Grouping(s): Whole Class, partner and group work

Materials:

Pencils, pens, colored pens

Highlighters

Stickies/Post It notes

Two-Column or T-Style journal

Excerpts of the entire novel Percy Jackson & The Olympians: The Lightning Thief

*Movie format of the text is suggested

Clip boards

Name of the Lesson: Mythological Archaeology...Percy Jackson & the Olympians: The Lightning Thief

1. Students work in archaeological dig/observation teams to find common:
 - a. Symbols
 - b. Morals
 - c. Messages
 - d. Note the use of magic or mythical creatures or beings
 - e. Suggestions about how to live in that society
2. Student notes will be listed on a teacher created worksheet
3. Students will create a quick poster or chart that lists or shows the interrelationships between symbols, messages, magic, morals etc.
4. Gallery walk of students’ findings
5. Have students create “post-sign” notes (denoting agreement, questions or “aha moments”) written on stickies and placed on posters as they complete the gallery walk

Intro Activity #3

Activity: Matching the Myth / Finding the folktale

Instructional Grouping(s): Whole Class, partner and group work

Materials:

Teacher created cards/index cards with:

- the names of folktales, fairytales, myths, tall tales
 - the other portion of cards contains descriptors, characters, morals, plots from folktales, myths, tall tales, etc.
1. As students enter the room, pass out the cards and have students find their match without talking
 2. At the end of the activity students will stand with their “match” and report out the name of the folktale and the descriptor
 3. Special Note: The instructor should purposely include several versions of familiar or popular folktales in the set of cards.

Suggested Unit Activities:

Activity: Compare and contrast chart

Instructional Grouping(s): Whole Class, partner and group work

Materials:

Chart paper

Poster markers

Laptops or Chromebooks

Name of the Lesson: Folktale Gridlock

1. Students are divided into or choose their own folktales to research.
2. Students will find at least one other version from around the world
3. Student must research, analyze and note/write how those versions impacted the region or part of the world it originated from and or spread to
4. Students will report out their findings

Activity: Game

Instructional Grouping(s): Whole Class, partner and group work

Materials:

mini whiteboards

buzzer / bell that can be physically rung by students

photocopies of the Fable / Myth / Legend or Fairy Tale

Name of the Lesson: Fable / Myth / Legend or Fairy Tale—You name it!!!

1. Contestants listen to 1-2-minute excerpt of a fable, myth, legend or fairy tale
2. Students will have to listen to the characteristics or write down the characteristics they notice on the class whiteboard or on mini whiteboards. Paper can also be used to document student answers or feedback
3. They click a buzzer or raise their hands to call out what they think is the right answer to describe what was read to them or played for them via audio, YouTube, etc.

Activity: Research

Instructional Grouping(s): Partner and group work

Materials:

Laptops or Chromebooks

Note sheets

photocopies of 1 or 2 Grimm fairy tales

Name of the Lesson: The Grim Adventures of the Brothers Grimm

1. Students will read the fairytale/folktale and determine what part of the world the story represents
2. Students will discuss and analyze the purpose of the Grimm fairytale/folktale
3. Students will log how the local community was impacted by the Grimm fairytale/folktale
4. Students will create a technological display of their findings and present to the class

Activity: Students will write/document their own family stories/legend or oral story or history

Instructional Grouping(s): Individual and peer / partner work

Materials:

Computers

Single-subject notebooks / (SPECIAL NOTE: preferably use composition books so that pages are permanently bound and cannot be lost)

Pencils, pens, highlighters

Peer editing sheets and meetings should occur

One-to-one check-ins with the teacher will be needed for all students

Name of the Lesson: I have a story to tell

1. In class students will write a draft of a funny story that one of their family members tells at holidays or family gatherings. The draft should be at least 2 pages in length. This part of the lesson may take 1-2

class periods

- a. Students may also go home and interview family members about a familial story they wish to share.
 - i. Students can have parents share their thoughts as students write the story. Alternative Option: Students may also record their stories on an I-phone or android phone. There are also free online audio tools like Vocaroo.com that students or teachers can use. If several minutes are needed for recordings students can use several Vocaroo.com links and email them to their teacher.
- b. Students will share out the story (as long as it is appropriate).
- c. Students will use the computer to begin their editing and drafting process for their family stories. This may take approximately 2-3 weeks based on peer editing and revisions.

Activities related to Geography Skills:

Activity: Mapping Activity 1 - Students will map out the location and chronological time/appearance of each folktale and their variations.

Activity: Mapping Activity 2 - Place students with a peer or in small groups. Students will map out the location of 3 Cinderella tales and the plausible reasons the Cinderella tale was changed or adapted to impact the local residents

Activity: Mapping Activity 3 - As students begin to study regions of the world have them map and create a flipbook or digital presentation about the mythical creatures that have been alleged to exist. Students should also include how society or groups of people were impacted by those tales. Students should continue to ask themselves as they study each region and its mythological creature or folklore piece, "How did people change the way that they lived because of this story?"

RESOURCES / READINGS:

African Folktales

- *The Annotated African American Folktales (The Annotated Books)* by Henry Louis Gates Jr. (Editor), Maria Tatar (Editor) This book is a collection of approximately 150 African American folktales.
- *A Story, A Story* written and illustrated by Gale E. Hayley. In this African folk tale an explanation of how different stories get told or distributed to children all over the Earth from the Sky God. This is an Anansi the Spider tale.
- *Why the Sky is Far Away: a Nigerian Folktale* by Mary-Joan Gerson; pictures by Carla Golembe. A Nigerian creation story that explains to readers learn that the sun and the sky used to live close to Earth.
- *Favorite African Folktales* by Nelson Mandela (Editor) This book is a collection of 32 tales by famed Nobel Prize winner, Nelson Mandela.
- *African American Folktales: Stories from Black Traditions in the New World* by Roger Abrahams (Author)
- *African Myths & Legends: Tales of Heroes, Gods & Monsters* by J.K. Jackson (Editor), Sola Owonibi (Introduction)
- *Black Folktales* - Illustrated by Julius Lester (Author)

- *African-American Folktales (American Storytelling)* by Richard Young (Author), Judy Dockrey Young (Author)
- *CROWNED: Magical Folk and Fairy Tales from the Diaspora* by Kahran Bethencourt (Author), Regis Bethencourt (Author)

Classics

- *The Classic Fairy Tales: A Norton Critical Edition* (Norton Critical Editions) by Maria Tatar (Editor)

World tales and Popular Mythology

- *Stone Soup* by Marcia Brown (Author)
- *Beneath the Moon: Fairy Tales, Myths, and Divine Stories from Around the World* by Yoshi Yoshitani (Author)
- *Classical Mythology A to Z: An Encyclopedia of Gods & Goddesses, Heroes & Heroines, Nymphs, Spirits, Monsters, and Places* by Annette Giesecke (Author), Jim Tierney (Illustrator)
- *Exploring African Mythology: Unravel the Rich Tapestry of Deities, Legends, and Beliefs that Have Shaped the Continent's Cultures and Traditions* by Ancient Myths (Author)
- *Percy Jackson and the Olympians, Book One the Lightning Thief* by Rick Riordan, (Author). 2006.. Percy Jackson & the Olympians 01. New York, NY: Hyperion.

TEACHER RESOURCES /READING

Weaver, William L. *The Battle of the Frogs, at Windham, 1758: With Various Accounts and Three of the Most Popular Ballads on the Subject.* Willimantic, CT: James Walden, 1857

Websites

<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/ten-ancient-stories-and-geological-events-may-have-inspired-them-180950347/>

Appendix on Implementing District Standards

Standards CT Social Studies Framework:

CIV 6-7.1 Explain specific roles played by citizens (such as voters, jurors, taxpayers, members of the armed forces, petitioners, protesters, and officeholders).

INQ 6-8.10 Construct arguments using claims and evidence from multiple sources, while acknowledging the strengths and limitations of the arguments

HIST 6-8.1 Use questions about historically significant people or events to explain the impact on a region.

HIST 8.4 Explain how and why perspectives of people have changed over time (e.g., American Revolution,

slavery, labor, the role of women).

HIST 8.5 Analyze how people’s perspectives influenced what information is available in the historical sources they created.

Standards, Skills, and Areas of Knowledge

During this unit students will have lessons, discussions and activities that touch the following areas:

Historical Knowledge and Understanding; Historical Thinking: The study of the contributions of all people to the development of our heritage. There is particular attention to cultivation of key inquiry skills through the historical skills strand, with focus on critical thinking, the analysis of primary resources, historical interpretation, and contestability.

Government/Citizenship Rights and Responsibilities: The study of foundational constitutional principles, the concepts of rights and responsibilities, and the importance of civic participation in the democratic process.

Geography: The study of cultures and interactions of peoples with each other and the environment. The well-informed student will be able to apply an understanding of the meaning of the arrangement of things in space as it relates life situations.

Economics: The study of how economic systems provide for the needs of people and how these systems interact with each other, the environment, and changing political and historical thought.

Diversity: The study of individuals and groups to enhance understanding of differences. There is particular attention to how individuals develop an identity responsive to diverse human and group behavior.

NCSS - The 10 Themes of Social Studies

1. Culture.

- Human beings create, learn, share, and adapt to culture.
- Cultures are dynamic and change over time.
- Through experience, observation, and reflection, students will identify elements of culture as well as similarities and differences among cultural groups across time and place.
- In schools, this theme typically appears in units and courses dealing with geography, history, sociology, and anthropology, as well as multicultural topics across the curriculum.

2. Time, Continuity, and Change

- Studying the past makes it possible for us to understand the human story across time.
- Knowledge and understanding of the past enable us to analyze the causes and consequences of events and developments, and to place these in the context of the institutions, values and beliefs of the periods in which they took place.
- Knowing how to read, reconstruct and interpret the past allows us to answer questions
- Through a more formal study of history, students in the middle grades continue to expand their understanding of the past and are increasingly able to apply the research methods associated with historical inquiry.

3. People, Places, and Environments

- The study of people, places, and environments enables us to understand the relationship between human populations and the physical world.
- During their studies, learners develop an understanding of spatial perspectives, and examine

changes in the relationship between peoples, places and environments.

- Today's social, cultural, economic and civic issues demand that students apply knowledge, skills, and understandings as they address questions
- In schools, this theme typically appears in units and courses dealing with geography, regional studies, and world cultures.

4. Individual Development and Identity

- Personal identity is shaped by an individual's culture, by groups, by institutional influences, and by lived experiences shared with people inside and outside the individual's own culture throughout her or his development.
- The study of individual development and identity will help students to describe factors important to the development of personal identity.

5. Individuals, Groups, and Institutions

- Institutions are the formal and informal political, economic, and social organizations that help us carry out, organize, and manage our daily affairs.
- It is important that students know how institutions are formed, what controls and influences them, how they control and influence individuals and culture, and how institutions can be maintained or changed.

6. Power, Authority, and Governance

- The development of civic competence requires an understanding of the foundations of political thought, and the historical development of various structures of power, authority, and governance. It also requires knowledge of the evolving functions of these structures in contemporary U.S. society, as well as in other parts of the world.
- In exploring this theme, students confront questions such as:
 - Under what circumstances is the exercise of political power legitimate?
 - What are the proper scope and limits of authority?
 - How are individual rights protected and challenged within the context of majority rule?
 - What are the rights and responsibilities of citizens in a constitutional democracy?
- Through study of the dynamic relationships between individual rights and responsibilities, the needs of social groups, and concepts of a just society, learners become more effective problem-solvers and decision-makers when addressing the persistent issues and social problems encountered in public life.
- In schools, this theme typically appears in units and courses dealing with government, politics, political science, civics, history, law, and other social sciences.

7. Production, Distribution, and Consumption

- In exploring this theme, students confront such questions as:
 - How does interdependence, brought on by globalization, impact local economies and social systems?
- In schools, this theme typically appears in units and courses dealing with concepts, principles, and issues drawn from the discipline of economics.

8. Global Connections

- Global connections have intensified and accelerated the changes faced at the local, national, and international levels.
- In exploring this theme, students confront questions such as:
 - What are the different types of global connections?
 - What global connections have existed in the past, exist currently, and are likely in the future?

- How do ideas spread between societies in today’s interconnected world? How does this result in change in those societies?
 - What are the other consequences of global connections? What are the benefits and problems associated with global interdependence?
 - How might people in different parts of the world have different perspectives on these benefits and problems?
 - How should people and societies balance global connectedness with local needs?
 - What is needed for life to thrive on an ever changing and increasingly interdependent planet?
- This theme typically appears in units or courses dealing with geography, culture, economics, history, political science, government, and technology but may also draw upon the natural and physical sciences and the humanities, including literature, the arts, and languages.

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