



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute  
1993 Volume III: Twentieth-Century Multicultural Theater

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## Learning and Living Through Mythology

Guide for Curriculum Unit 93.03.02  
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Generally, this is an eighteen-week unit in literature and drama. It is intended as an extension to the already existing curriculum in Greek mythology for fourth grade gifted students. Specifically, it aims to expose students to customs, beliefs and values of African and Latin American cultures. The unit is designed as a course in social learning. The idea is to promote acceptance of cultures other than one's own, so that students are better able to work together in the classroom, and hopefully live together in the larger communities of this society.

Myths and plays from African, Mexican, American Indian and Greek mythology make up the content of this unit. The unit discusses the commonality among various cultures, as shown through the commonality in their myths. Activities included are geared toward social learning. More specifically, they aim at sharing common experiences and building respect for individual and cultural differences among the students. This unit makes use of reading, summarizing analyzing and evaluating myths through writing, role playing and stage production.

The myths that were selected from each culture are those that tell about how man got fire, whose central theme is sacrifice of oneself to help another. The unit engages students in a classroom community theatre group, whose purpose is to present the myths through role play and prepare a reader's theatre production of Aeschylus' play, "Prometheus Bound." Students are also asked to write an original play, which focuses on the lives of the various cultural groups, who make up the classroom community. Additionally, students will research one culture in preparation for a small-scaled cultural festival in culmination of the unit.

(Recommended for Drama, Literature or Social Studies, Grades 4-7)

### **Key Words**

*Ancient Greek Mythology Mexican Native American*

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