



Yale-New Haven  
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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute  
1996 Volume I: Multiculturalism and the Law

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## **Multiculturalism Through African Folktales and Mayan Myths**

Guide for Curriculum Unit 96.01.03  
by Rebecca Brown

This unit is designed for a seventh/eighth grade language arts curriculum with interdisciplinary learning throughout other subject areas including social studies, math, science as well as art.

Through this curriculum, students learn about African folk tales and Mayan myths. By exploring both cultures, they will also truly appreciate and understand their own world and heritage more fully, as well as that of other cultures.

The unit studies African folk tales through specific regions in Africa and Mayan myths. As human beings, we continually search to find where we as individuals fit in the scheme of our planet, and through our “stories,” we struggle to find our place more clearly. These stories require an active use of the students’ imagination. This unit will increase their knowledge of both cultures and add to their enthusiasm of multicultural literature.

Upon successful completion of this unit, students will more fully recognize, define and create the elements and characteristics of folk tales and myths. The experiences of life are powerful and fierce. Respect and knowledge must be nurtured to grow and develop. Students will learn how we are all connected to our heritage and how through myths and folk tales we see ourselves and learn that these questions are universal for us all. Our learning and appreciation of multiculturalism never ends. Thus, our stories are endless.

(Recommended for Reading/Language Arts, grades 7-8)

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