



Mythology: Trickster Tales

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by Joseph O'Keefe

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5000 Years of Mythology

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"All the Time in the World"

Editor, Joseph O'Keefe

Featuring this Millennium's Interview - Epimetheus queried by his brother, Prometheus

Promethues, (Forethought): Mythology is the subject of our 5000 year Review! For the uninitiated, Epimetheus, would you give our reader a brief explanation from your extensive experiences?

Epimetheus, (Afterthought): After all these years and all that has already been written and said about mythology I will try my best to be interesting and informative to your readers, viewers, listeners and callers.

In my view, Mythology is both the literature of origins and the original literature. It is characterized by and with the deeds of the Beautiful and the Beastly and is immensely interesting form of entertainment! Dear Brother, I know you will agree that it is also at times a fanciful family history. YEK the gods!!! The stories of the gods and demigods; goddesses and demigoddesses, be they kind or cruel, have always generated a large following especially among theologians and divinity students who are looking for moral imperatives and ritual antecedents.

I am especially partial to stories dug up by Archeologists who are easy to excite and get worked up about the tales of ordinary men and women whose initial actions over time are exaggerated and overblown. These ordinary beings are frequently elevated into cult heroes, superstars, and occasionally divine status with their depiction in sculpture, painting and all sorts of bric-a-brac and making them famous for more than the 15 minutes allotted to modern man.

I believe modern man looks backward like Janis nostalgically to these early times when the cosmos and cosmology were still young. There seems to be an innocence and naivete to their ancestors' ontological views and their acceptance of the supernatural. Sometimes I long for the pre-scientific milieu myself. You know, brother, it was all much simpler then. Don't you agree?

Prometheus: Brother, you have always had a tendency to generalize. Could you try to be a bit more specific and less subjective tell us more about Mythology and be objective!

Epimetheus: (Seriously) Mythology! Objectively speaking mythology reiterates my initial response: "the literature of origins and the original literary genre dealing with the deeds of the Beastly and Beautiful Gods and Goddesses. Avatars and Devas, Heroes and Heroines and my favorite Tricksters and Trickster. Mythology, objectively speaking, is the original source of demonic and heroic allusion. Mythology is the definitive and the defining pro-scientific expository writing about the creation of the universe and natural cosmology. In sum and substance, Prometheus, myth is the history of the initial relationships between the creator and all creations great and small; e.g. The universe or a parade of ants.

Prometheus: What relevance if any does myth have for the modern man?

Epimetheus: Speaking as a historian and sociologist, I believe you would grant me those credentials, mythology is the diverse record of relationships between god and man, man and man, god and beast, man and beast, beastly god and man and beastly man and god. Mythology is a supernatural starting point for divinity students and religious scholars or more accurately scholars of religion to compare and contrast different cultures and their relationships to their gods.

Prometheus: Much has been written and conjectured about the universal or parallel aspects found in myth and the striking similarities you just alluded to. Could you give some reasons for the parallel aspects of myths?

Epimetheus: Contextually speaking there are many interesting theories for the striking similarities on the universality in myths. J.F. Bierlein's work, *Parallel Myths*, presents some of these theories. They include: biological, physiological, psychological, sociological, theological; including divine intervention and divine inspiration.

Prometheus: Are these theories contradictory or complimentary, compatible or incompatible?

Epimetheus: Yes and Yes! Some of these theories expand and extend understanding of myth and combine quite easily however others are more rigid and doctrinarian and demand exclusive allegiance. If logic and reason are important foundations in your schema of thinking this could present a problem of irreconcilable difficulty. Some mythic scholars, however, have little or no difficulty employing acts of faith to unify apparent opposites or contradictions. Remember dear brother, in ancient Greece there would have been no church and state argument like there is in America today. That mythic Greek scholar W.K.C. Guthrie writes: "religion and patriotism were the same thing." The Gods were worshipped at festivals which were state occasions, and participation in them was part of the ordinary duties and activities of a citizen as such." Perspective or point of view frequently resolve these differences of accident not essence. For further elaboration see structuralism thinking. Especially, Claude Straus.

Prometheus: How unpretentious and scholarly of you to quote noted historians instead of personal recollection.

Epimetheus: Just trying to stay objective.

Prometheus: Do you have a favorite theory for the parallel and common aspects of myths?

Epimetheus: Yes, I consider myself a dilettante diffusionist.

Prometheus: Are you kidding: Dilettante diffusionist?

Epimetheus: Yes and No!

Prometheus: I think I grasp the dilettante part but diffusionist? Diffusionist? Would you elaborate and be serious.

Epimetheus: Certainly, diffusionists attribute the parallel and similarities between myths throughout the world as a result of sharing the same central starting point. This theory originated with an amateur anthropologist and professional exporter, Leo Frobenius (1873-1938)

Epimetheus: Commercial exports and imports. Frobenius believed that parallel myths were the results of cultural exchanges between ancient peoples. Frobenius called his theory "Kulturkreislere" (the study of cultural circles). He believed there was a central myth-producing region that stretched from West Africa to India, thence through Indonesia and Oceania to the America. The famous Norwegian explorer, Thor (interesting first name) Heyerdahl, give validity to the travel aspect of this theory. In his epic 1947 journey recounted in Kon Tiki. (The balsawood raft trip from Peru to Polynesia.)

Prometheus: Could you compare this raft trip to Jason and Argonauts? Or perhaps the sea chest journey of Oedipus? Or Moses and his bassinet of reeds?

Epimetheus: Brother , I would prefer to compare diffusionists to the psychological school of mythical thought.

Prometheus: OK! OK! You're the one doing the real thinking. Go ahead.

Epimetheus: This will be my last formal analysis. There was this analyst and student of Sigmund Freud, (father of psychiatry.) This analyst and heir apparent to the god like father of psychiatry dared to disagree and break away from his famous father figure. (sound familiar?) Reoccurring mythic themes? He broke with the old man, coincidentally his name was Jung. This Carl Gustav Jung came up with a new ball game, a more gentile ball game that is less sexually fixated.

Prometheus: Epimetheus? Great Zeus! You have to stop? Great Kronos! You are making me uncomfortable with these ball game illusions. Please focus on myth not psychoanalysis.

Epimetheus: Where one stops and the other starts is a fine line.

Prometheus: Nevertheless please finish with the Jung character and get back to more cultural stuff.

Epimetheus: To sum up Jung and tie up mythology is very easy. Jung's theory regards and refers to any reoccurring mythic image as an archetype. These archetypes are symbolic representations common in the unconscious mind of all men and women. A similar theory is espoused by Adolph Bastian, who is also discussed in Parallel Myths.

Epimetheus: This gentleman believed that there is a phenomenon known as Elementary Thought - the basic

patterns common to all humans that are possibly centered in the brain and People's Thought - the specific "coloration" of Elementary Thought, by a given ethnic group at a given time.

Epimetheus: (continuing) I find these theories are interesting however the biological/physiological assertions are bunk! Brother remember you and I fashioned man and I don't remember us affixing or appending myth genes in our prototypes. The only mythic genes I recall were affixed to Cowboys and Cattle Wranglers in the Western Hemisphere of North America - Levi Strauss, I'm sure!

Prometheus: Brother, you know I read Bierlein some. Very interesting! Maybe you could comment on his assertion that modern man's social problems are a result of his refusal to listen or to hear the voices of the gods?

Epimetheus: Vox Deus! You know how mercurial the god's are, Brother. You also know first hand of their lustful, vindictive, homicidal, patricidal and infanticide nature. Our forefathers, Yuk! The original Serial Killers-Supernatural Born Killers! (Great title for a movie or not) I think you would agree with me that man's problem in society today cannot be attributed to ignoring those godlike behaviors Bloody deeds, still shout louder for vengeance than pious words.

To be more honest I don't believe god or withhold the answers for humanity but I do still like to hear or read the original stories. I do hope that modern societies' preoccupation with MURDER, SEX and VENGEANCE will prompt serious questing, reviewing and rewriting or our family history. Thanks brother.

Prometheus: Even though there is so little time left would you please summarize and list your favorite trickster tales?

Epimetheus: Only if you end this interview now and start by recounting a few of your favorite tales.

Prometheus: Fair Enough!

Summary of Trickster Tales

Prometheus: The first three stops on our trickster journey around the world will be in Mesoamerica, Australia and India. Our first selection is from the Popol Vuh- The Mayan Book of the Dawn of Life. This story recounts the adventures of the Hero Twins , Hanahpu and Xbalague. These twins are consummate ball players, (Sport being Sacred Ritual) whose constant victories generate jealousy and anger among the gods of the underworld. The gods challenge the brothers to play against them. The brothers' egotism and enthusiasm for the game prompt them to accept even though they recognize the unfair homecourt advantage of the gods.

The Heroic Twins use their intelligence and cleverness to even the odds and avoid the death traps set for them. First the brothers send a mosquito to spy and learn the correct assignment and pronunciation of the deities' names. This knowledge prevents the brothers from offending the god's dignity or committing errors of protocol. The brothers also use their wits to avoid pitfalls in the various houses of horror. They survive freezing to death in the House of Cold by building fires. In the House of Jaguars they appease the beast by feeding them bones. Latter in the House of Bats, Hunahpu is decapitated; his head hangs trophy-like over the ball court during Xbalague's match with the underworld gods. The Twins' luck returns when an errant rabbit distracts the gods' attention long enough for Xbalangué to retrieve his brother's severed head and reunite it

with his body. The brothers' good fortune continues in the next episode when they magically reassemble their bodies' severed parts; they promise to teach this trick to the underworld gods. Needless to say once the gods permit their own dismemberment the brothers renege on their promise and reign victorious. Later the brothers are transformed and reborn as sun and moon. Mayan scholars claim the Heroic Twins' new stature in the cosmos is to remind Mayan Royalty that they too will become fixtures in the heavens after death. It also suggest that the tales of the Heroic Twins like the sun and the moon brighten the gloomy nights and days of man. The Twins also represent the importance of family loyalty, team work and the need to use intelligence and wit along with physical strength to overcome life's challenges. In summary - TWO TRICKSTER HEADS ARE BETTER THAN ONE TAIL!

Our journey continues south on foot until we reach South America. Willis' Mythology is now our guide book. After South America we will travel across the Pacific Ocean via balsa wood raft. @\$:

Willis' book takes readers to and from Peru to Oceania and Australia. In Australia we meet two distinct and diametrically-opposed trickster types; first the Mimi, who are graceful, agile and benign. They appear in Western Arnhem Land, and live in the cracks of cliffs along the Arnhem Land escarpments. They are even tempered but are angered if suddenly surprised by strangers wandering through the bush. To avoid antagonizing the Mimi, people foraging through rock country sing out continually to the tricksters to make them aware of their presence. The Mimi will punish people who appear without warning; however they are credited with teaching man how to hunt , and are usually gregarious and can be heard singing and beating rhythm with clapsticks from the caves they dwell in at night. The other tricksters who dwell in Western Arnhem Land are sinister. They are the Namorodo. These tricksters are composed of skin and bones and held together by sinew. They travel at night by flying and kill their victims with their long razor like claws. The Namorodo are associated with shooting stars and sorcery.

Willis' book Mythology presents colorful pictures and drawings which accompany his fact filled narratives rather than "story" stories. This information can be a "storyhouse" of ideas for young aspiring students, writers and illustrators. The information on the Mimi and the Namorodo Australian tricksters is from this magnificent book. Both Epimetheus and I recommend it for your personal library. Although the reading level is advanced the exciting pictures and illustrations will attract many less fluent readers. This book motivates all Readers!

My favorite trickster tale is a dog tale. This tale takes place long ago and far away in high Himalayas of India. After the war between the rival clans of Pandava and Duryodhana on the sacred field of Kurukshetra where Krishna reveals his multiple incarnations to Arjuna, Yudhisthira, a Pandava assumes the throne of India. He is a just and righteous ruler who brings peace and prosperity to the country. However, he aspires for a higher attainment, spiritual enlightenment. Yudhisthira renounces and abdicates his worldly offices and treks through the highest mountains seeking the abode of heaven. His wife, four brothers and dog accompany him on this pilgrimage. However the wife and brothers die before reaching their destination. Only Yudhisthira is pure and determined enough to merit heaven. He encounters Indra, chief god and gate keeper of the heavenly abode. Indra welcomes Yudhisthira but refuses to admit Yudhisthira's dog. Yudhisthira implores, argues, and pleads for the god to admit his faithful companion. Indra is adamant and rejects all of Yudhisthira's entreaties. Yudhisthira refuses to abandon his dependent dog and faithful companion just to enter heaven. Indra recognizes Yudhisthira's resolve and then reveals this is another karmic test and that the simple dog is actually a manifestation and incarnation of Dharma , Himself. The abode of heaven opens for Yudhisthira and his cosmic dog. Read on in the Bhagavad-Gita and you will be enlightened!

The paradox and irony of Indian trickster tales is that the deities or gods deceive man through the multiple illusions of life but provide man with the opportunities to expand his understanding and climb to higher and higher level of consciousness. Ultimately, it is hoped to divine consciousness! A cosmic thought!

Epimetheus: I'll summarize three of my favorite trickster tales and include what I consider to be the defining element of each story. The Tricksters are Raven from North America; Ananse from Western Africa; and Loki from North Europe.

These tricksters appear respectively in the following books: Raven, by G. McDermott; Story, Story by G. Haily; and The Children of Odin by Padraic Colum.

Raven , a North American Indian myth, tells and illustrates the transformational nature of tricksters. The story begins with darkness. There is no light in the World, only Darkness. Raven decides he will find light and give the gift to mankind. Raven flies from earth, and flies and flies searching the primordial darkness of the cosmos, Raven finally spots a glimmer in the darkness and races toward it. This magical glimmer comes from the window in the house of the gods. Raven intuitively knows the gods are weary of strangers and protective of their possessions. He cautiously perches on pine branch adjacent to the gods' house and watches each day as a young maiden baths in a nearby the lake.

Raven magically transforms form a bird into a pinyon seed. He falls in to the girl's drinking cup and is swallowed. The pinyon seed fertilizes the young maiden, who eventually gives birth to a male child. The elder gods are enchanted by their own offspring. The gods dote on this miraculous child, who is essentially a god, too! The Raven/child god delights his grandparents and all seems perfect in paradise. However, the Raven's nature still exists in the child . The child tricks the gods into revealing where they hide the gift of light. Raven discovers light is concealed in the box. He transforms from the god child back to Raven and flies off carrying the sun and light in his beak. He flies back to earth and places the sun in the sky for all men to see, and see by.

In my opinion the intriguing aspect of the story is that Raven as a child god could remain happily in paradise with his wife/mother and grandparent gods, but elects to fulfill his initial mission as Raven and bestow the light and warmth of the sun upon mankind. A sacred Bird Story - The Raven , Trickster of the Northwest.

Now on to Africa!

Ananse, the diminutive tribesman of Africa, is present in a time before any stories are known or told among humankind. Ananse recognizes the need for and the value of stories. He fashions a spider web, climbs to heaven and bargains with the gods for their stories. The gods are reluctant to part with such a precious commodity and demand an impossible price for this gift.

Ananse uses his intelligence and cunning to obtain the three impossible demands of the skygod. Ananse then reclaims the spider web to the heavens, exchanges the barter items for the gods' stories, and returns to earth. Ananse gives mankind the sacred stories to tell and retell to their children.

In my opinion the defining element is the selfless gift of stories. Interestingly, Ananse ignores the dangers inherit in his quest, capturing the dangerous prey, exchanging them for gifts of the gods, and selflessly gives the stories to mankind. Ananse, a simple man , transforms himself into a godlike gift-giver. The stuff myths are made of: A Story, Story!

My final selection deals with the trickster Loki, the Scandinavian god. Loki is brother to Thor and Son of Odin.

Loki delights in transforming into human, animals or the other godlike forms. In an attempt to help his brother Thor locate his missing magical hammer, Loki transforms into a Raven.

Loki/Raven discovers that Thrym, the evil frost giant, has the sacred hammer. Loki suggests and convinces Thrym to request that the beautiful Freya, a goddess to marry him in exchange for returning the enchanted hammer. Loki is truly mischievous in this story as told by Padria Colum. You can almost hear him laughing as Oden, chief god, demands that Thor dress in a wedding gown and pretend to be Thrym's intended wife. Loki is a true trickster who delights in the discomfort of his fellow gods. His defining element is his mischievous nature, which adds chaos and confusion to the life of both man and god.

APOLOGIA

Yale New Haven Teachers Institute Curriculum Unit:

Mythology and Literacy

The goal of this cross-curriculum Reading Unit is to encourage and enhance student literacy and improve Connecticut Mastery Test scores. The cross-curriculum objectives will include examination and analyses of the diverse peoples, places and plots introduced through World Mythology. The reading content or subject matter, mythology, will introduce students to six trickster tales from six continents and six different cultures.

In addition to the curriculum readings, students will concurrently be exposed and immersed in Cooperative Learning based on the Johnson and Johnson model. The Johnson and Johnson model is well documented in educational research for promoting learning while providing opportunities to practice the responsibilities of good citizenship and communication skills. The Johnson and Johnson prescription for cooperative learning is highly structured and specific in directions and details concerning processes and product. Roles, responsibilities, and expectations for individual students, for teams, and for teachers are definable and specific.

In the Johnson and Johnson formula product and process receive equal emphasis along with group and individual performance. Assessments and evaluations are key components of this instructional model and are taught and practiced daily by students. Assessments include formal and informal procedures. Evaluations are individual and group-centered and consider intra- and inter-group performance. Evaluations require teacher, student, peer, and self -assessments.

All reading class students will be expected to participate and contribute to the proper functioning of this cooperative learning environment. The Johnson and Johnson model identifies and promotes peer tutoring as a paramount goal and objective; however, introductory lessons of this unit will concentrate on traditional teacher-directed group and individual instruction. This teacher-directed instruction will require intra and inter group interdependence. Consulting the Johnson and Johnson monograph on Cooperative learning will provide procedures and guidelines for establishing the desired environment. Daily lesson plans will be structured according to the guidelines and procedures suggested by Johnson and Johnson.

Initially daily mythology lessons will be teacher-directed and focused through Reading Comprehension and Questioning Strategies. These recognized and proven teaching techniques include: Question Answer

Relationships (QAR) Strategies, Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DR-TA) and the Inferential Strategy. These approaches are compatible with and reinforce cooperative learning and curriculum literacy objectives. The following highlights, overviews, and summarizes these strategies which are delineated in Herber's Levels of Comprehension. These strategies demand continuous and intimate student involvement with the textual information and furthermore require and encourage students to use their own prior knowledge and experience. These strategies stress the importance of the student's prior knowledge in understanding and predicting outcomes based on textual information.

These Reading and Questioning strategies are structured step-by-step approaches to improving student reading comprehension. Students are methodically guided through a textual analysis of a reading passage. The teacher poses a series of specific questions that require students to read and reread, think, and evaluate distinct lines and levels of textual meaning.

The first level of comprehension is literal; what do the lines on the page literally mean; and what is the denotation of the words? This is called reading the lines, literally! The next stop or step is Interpretive; reading between the lines! This entails inference: the student must consider the words' connotative meanings and infer the authors' intent. This interpretive attempt is termed reading between the lines; what the author intends and the text implies. The third and final stage of directed reading, thinking, involves a leap beyond the confines of the lines or the space between the lines, a leap further than the page itself. The reader is expected to grasp a more expansive or abstract meaning, a meaning suggested by the interpretive connotations but not constricted or confined by the limitations of the words' denotation. This is termed reading beyond the lines. The reader must be able to synthesize the literal and interpretive meanings and create a new synergistic understanding and product.

Demonstrating this higher level of comprehension could take the form of writing. It has been said that reading makes a person knowledgeable. Knowledge enables and expands a person's thinking but writing, only writing, will make thinking concise. Concise thinking and writing are hallmarks of a literate student; both are objectives of this course and New Haven curriculum guidelines.

In an earnest attempt to improve student writing, the New Haven School Board has endorsed and promoted the John Collins Writing Across the Curriculum program. This structured writing program was initiated three years ago on a system-wide basis. All sixth- grade teachers at Roberto Clemente Middle School have received extensive instruction in this program and have adapted its use across the curriculum. The Collins approach identifies five distinct types of writing and emphasizes Focus Correction Areas. This writing approach will receive a prominent place in this mythology course and reinforce other literacy skills of speaking, listening, reading and thinking. Other strategies designed to improve student communication and comprehension skills include CLOZE activities, SQ3R, note taking and the use of specialized graphic organizers; all will be utilized.

It is hoped that this cross-curriculum collaborative reading unit on mythology will encourage and enable students to be more fluent in literacy and citizenship. The unit emphasizes the structured approaches found in the Johnson and Johnson Cooperative Learning Model, the Collins Cross Curriculum Writing program, and Directed Reading Thinking Activities

The following highlights, overviews, and summarizes the methods, materials, and procedures that will be applied in examining each of the six trickster tales selected from World mythology.

Daily lesson plans: SIX SIMPLE STEPS TO MYTHIC LITERACY!

I. (A) Pre-test, sustained silent reading passage, CLOZE activity.

(B) Self-assessment of CLOZE activity.

II. (A) Oral reading or myth/trickster tale.

(B) Aural listening (CMT skill)

III. (A) Collins writing types one and two.

(B) Use of graphic organizers. Note taking, summarizing.

IV. (A) Speaking, discussing, listening. Individual, team and group.

(B) Blackboard, flipcharts, storyboards.

V. (A) Rereading, rewriting, reviewing.

(B) Improving notes and summaries

VI. (A) Synthesis, Synergy, Recreation!

(B) Type three writing Collins writing; convergent and divergent myth directions.

FIVE GRAPHIC ORGANIZERS FOR SIX TRICKSTER TALES I. Character Analysis

(A) People Graphic Sketch

(B) Character column chart.

II. Period Analysis

(A) Time Period. Time line.

(B) Historical Clock.

III. Plot Analysis

(A) Plot, Storyboard.

(B) Cause/Effect Diagram.

IV. Place Analysis

(A) Places, Geographic Maps.

(B) Political Maps.

V. Perspective Analysis

(A) Perspective, Characters view characters, Readers view characters, Author views characters, Readers view author.

(B) Past and Present.

VI. Six Trickster Tales from Six Continents and Countries

1. Ananse, Western Africa
2. Raven, North America
3. Loki, Northern Europe
4. India, Asia
5. The Twins, Mesoamerica & Quwi, South America
6. Mimi and Namorodo, Australia

LET'S CLOZE IN ON READING

Students must learn to blend semantic (meaning) clues and syntactic (grammatical) clues to determine the appropriate response. Five types of clues are presented in language students at each level can comprehend. They are as follows:

1. Synonym Clues

Instruction:

Synonym clues can help a reader figure out an unknown word or phrase. Synonyms are words that mean the same or nearly the same. Sometimes you may read a word you don't know. There may be another word in that sentence or in a nearby sentence that means nearly the same thing.

2. Definition Clues

Instruction:

There may be a definition of the unknown word or look for these clues to help you.

Ex. Sometimes factories dump their waste into rivers. They pollute the water. The rivers become dirty.

3. Pronoun Reference Clues

Instruction:

Pronouns are the words that take the place of nouns. Sometimes words like I, me, you, it, he, she, they, him, her, them are used instead of a noun the pronoun refers to. You will have to look back at one or two sentences to figure this out. When you find a key word, you will be able to understand the meaning of the sentence.

Ex. The pilgrims were supposed to land in Virginia, which is warm. They were blown off course and they landed at Plymouth Rock. However, they were not prepared for the cold climate.

“However” alerts the reader that an opposite idea follows.

Sequence signals: after, before, during, earlier, later, now, then, while.

Cause Signals: as, because, but, due, for, from, if, in order that, therefore, yet.

Continuing Signals: again, and, another, with, in addition, likewise, secondly, too.

Change Signals: although, but despite, even though, however, instead of, never,
Nevertheless, otherwise, still

4. Clues Before the Missing Word

Instruction:

As you read you may find clues which help you figure out what an unknown word means. Sometimes you can find these clues in the sentence or word that come before the unknown word. Look for the key words that will help you understand the meaning of the passage.
Ex. Eskimos live in the northern part of North America. The land is frozen in this region for most of the year. Eskimos have found ways to live with the cold.

The two sentences before the blank each give hints to help you find the right answer.

5. Clues After the Missing Word

Instruction:

Sometimes there are clues after the missing word that can help you. If you read ahead, you may find a word or group of words that help you understand what the story is about. The clues may be near the missing word or in the sentence that follows. When you look for clues, be sure to read the whole passage before choosing your answer.
Ex. A tortoise has its own special protection. If it senses danger, it can pull its legs into its hard shell. Then it is safe from its enemy.

The information needed to fill in the blank comes after the deleted word.

CLOZE QUIZ

Pre-Test

A STORY-A STORY AN AFRICAN TALE RETOLD AND ILLUSTRATED BY BAIL E. HALEY

Many African ____1____ whether or not they are about Kwaku Ananse the “spider man,” are called, “Spider Stories.” This book is about ____2____ that came to be.

1) a. clothes b. dreams c. stories d. flutes e. novels

2) a. when b. for c. after d. how e. under

The African ___3___ begins: "We do not really mean, we do not really mean what we are about to say is true. A Story, ___4___; let it come, let it go."

3) a. musician b. mechanic c. storyteller d. mortician e. mother

4) a. a story b. a play c. a trick d. a treat e. a plot

And it tells that long, long ___5___ there were no stories on earth for children to hear. All stories belonged to Nyame, the Sky God. Ananse, the ___6___ man, wanted to buy some of these stories, so he spun a web up to the sky and went up to bargain with the ___7___ God. The price the Sky God asked was Osebo, the leopard of-the-terrible-teeth, Mmboro the hornet who-stings-like-fire, and Mmoatia the fairy whom-men-never-see. How Ananse ___8___ the price is told in a graceful and clever text, with forceful., lovely woodcut illustrations.

5) a. ago b. agog c. areas d. apart e. away

6) a. rat b. spider c. repo d. spindle e. raven

7) a. ocean b. earth c. planet d. sky e. ground

8) a. cost b. sold c. paid d. paired e. stole

PRE-TEST SELF ASSESSMENT A STORY- A STORY AN AFRICAN TALE RETOLD AND ILLUSTRATED BY GAIL E. HALEY

Many African stories whether or not they are about Kwaku Ananse the 'spider man,' are called, "Spider Stories." This book is about how that came to be.

The African storyteller begins; "We do not really mean, we do not really mean what we are about to say is

true. A Story, a story; let it come, let it go.”

And it tells that long, long ago there were no stories on earth for children to hear. All stories belonged to Nyame, the Sky God. Ananse, the Spider man, wanted to buy some of these stories, so he spun a web up to the sky and went up to bargain with the Sky God. The price the Sky God asked was Osebo, the leopard-of-the-terrible-teeth, Mmboro the hornet who who-stings-like-fire, and Mmoatia the fairy whom-men-never-see.

How Ananse paid the price is told in a graceful and clever text, with forceful, lovely woodcut illustrations.

CLOZE POST TEST A STORY, A STORY

(An African tale retold and illustrated by Gail E. Haley)

Once, oh ____1____ small children round my knew, there were no stories on earth to hear. All the ____2____ belonged to Nyame, the Sky God. He kept them in a golden ____3____ box next to his royal stool. Ananse, the Spider man, wanted to buy the Sky God’s stories.

So ____4____ spun a web up to the sky. When the ____5____ God heard what Ananse wanted, he laughed: “Twe, twe, twe. The price of my ____6____ is that you bring me hornets who-stings-like-fire, and Mmoatia the fairy whom-men-never-see.”

Ananse bowed and answered: “I shall gladly pay the ____7____.”

“Twe, twe, twe,” chuckled the Sky ____8____. “How can a ____9____ old man like you, so small, so small, so small, pay my price?”

But Ananse merely climbed down to earth to find the things that the Sky God demanded. Ananse ran along the jungle path -yiridi, yiridi, yiridi- till he came to Osebo the leopard-of-the-terrible- ____10____.

1) a. tiny b. gigantic c. huge d. small e. petite

2) a. biographies b. histories c. encyclopedias d. dictionaries e. stories

3) a. car b. cart c. box d. boy e. bushel

4) a. she b. he c. we d. they e. them

5) a. earth b. moon c. star d. sky e. sea

6) a. music b. stories c. comics d. books e. boxes

7) a. price b. god c. man d. woman e. child

8) a. dog b. god c. man d. woman e. child

9) a. strong b. weak c. sick d well e. bad

10) a. gums b. thumbs c. teeth d. tooth e. nail

GO I-A CHARACTER CHART LETTER SKETCH / PICTOGRAMS

HEAD:

TRUNK:

APPENDAGES:

ARMS & LEGS:

GO I-B GO II CHARACTER CHART

Consider how the character is initially portrayed and

How the character changes (dynamic) or remains the same (stereotype)

I PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

(How they look/dress) II PSYCHOLOGICAL PROFILE

(Mental attitude: How they think and feel)

III OVERT BEHAVIOR

(Observable behavior: How they act, What They Do!)

IV VERBAL BEHAVIOR

(How they speak and what they say)

Give quotations and page numbers

V EVALUATION OF CHARACTER BASED ON I-V

Your opinion

GO II - PERIOD ANALYSIS

(A) Time Period, Time Line

(B) HISTORICAL CLOCK - LIST EVENTS OF ERA

GO III - PLOT ANALYSIS

(A) PLOT, STORY BOARD

(B) CAUSE / EFFECT DIAGRAM

GO IV - PLACE ANALYSIS

(A) PLACES, GEOGRAPHIC MAPS

(B) POLITICAL MAPS

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