

Unravelling Myths and Legends: The Craft of Storytelling

Learning objective: To identify the structural features of myths and legends and analyse how these traditional tales convey moral messages and cultural values.

Read each question carefully and provide detailed, thoughtful answers. Use the word bank to help enrich your explanations.

In the world of storytelling, myths and legends serve as the foundation for how societies understand their history and the natural world. Myths often explain the origins of the universe or natural phenomena, while legends are grounded in historical events, though they are often embellished with heroic deeds and extraordinary feats.

Word bank: Protagonist · Supernatural · Moral · Antagonist · Legacy · Anthropomorphism · Mythology · Narrative structure

1. Explain why many ancient myths feature supernatural beings or gods to explain natural phenomena, such as the changing of the seasons. Use evidence from your own knowledge of traditional tales. (3 marks)

2. Compare and contrast a 'myth' and a 'legend'. How does the origin of the story change how we should interpret the facts within it? (4 marks)

3. Max the monkey believes that every hero has a specific 'maths-like' structure to their journey. If you were writing a legend, justify your choice of an antagonist. What qualities must they possess to challenge your hero effectively? (3 marks)

4. Many legends include a 'moral' or a lesson. Why do you think it was important for ancient civilisations to include these lessons in their stories rather than just stating them as rules? (3 marks)

5. What might happen if a legendary hero were transported to the modern day? Explain how their heroic traits might be viewed by society today. (3 marks)

Draw: Imagine a new mythical creature that represents a force of nature (such as a storm, a river, or the sunrise). Draw this creature in its natural habitat and label three 'supernatural' features it possesses.



Extension challenge: Choose a common natural phenomenon (like why the ocean has tides or why mountains are tall). Compose the opening paragraph of an original myth that explains this phenomenon using a protagonist who embodies a specific human virtue, such as courage or patience.