

Myths, Legends & Fairy Tales 2020-2021

**Instructor - Mrs. Catmull: scatmull@asd20.org
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“Far more often [than asking the question 'Is it true?'] they [children] have asked me: 'Was he good? Was he wicked?' That is, they were far more concerned to get the Right side and the Wrong side clear. For that is a question equally important in History and in Faerie.” – J.R.R. Tolkien, “On Faerie Stories”

Main Text: *Fellowship of the Ring* by J.R.R. Tolkien,
Minor Texts: Various fairy tales and creation myths from around the world.

Welcome! We are going to have a fantastic semester as together we examine the importance of myth, legend and fairy tale, both in cultures past and in our own. The class will be a combination of reading various myths, legends and fairy tales from around the world, reading the entirety of Tolkien's *Fellowship of the Ring*, as well as incorporating different writing projects (including writing your OWN myths and fairy tales!). While this is an informal class, I know that you will find the material to be fun and engaging, and our class discussions to be spirited and lively!

Class Objectives and Expectations:

We will address the following questions:

- What is a hero? Why do we have heroes in culture?
- What sort of characteristics or experiences form a hero?
- What is myth? How is myth different from “mere” story? Why does myth exist, in ancient times as well as in modern ones?
- How are fairy tales different from myths? Are they “children’s stories”, or something deeper? What is their purpose?
- What truths do these stories (hero’s journey, myths, fairy tales) reveal about us, both as a culture and as individual? What desires and longings do they uncover?

We will explore the work of Joseph Campbell on the Hero’s journey and the “monomyth” concept and apply those theories independently. We will also explore the work of Carl Jung and his different Archetypes as they apply to literature and other forms of media. You will be using these Archetypes for a creative work that will be due at the end of the semester.

Please be prepared to work effectively and accept responsibility for your

role in and contributions to group discussion and projects as they are assigned.

In-Class Work:

Class will be a combination of in-class reading, working on projects, and discussions. There will be some videos that we will watch sporadically, but these will not be the main focus of the class.

Assessment (subject to change):

Class participation (preparedness, positive contributions) -- 50%

Short Reflection Papers/Creative Assignments -- 30%

Final Project -- 20%

Absences:

Excused absences: If you have an excused absence, you should be prepared with the current and any missed assignments on the day you return.

Absences for illness: For every day you are ill, you will have a day to catch up with work.

Because your grade is heavily weighted toward class participation, excessive absences will negatively affect your grade.

Please sign below, along with a parent, and return by _____ . Doing so counts toward your daily participation grade.

I have read and understand Mrs. Catmull's expectations for Myths, Legends, and Fairy Tales.

Student _____ Date _____

Parent _____ Date _____