



YALE NATIONAL INITIATIVE

to strengthen teaching in public schools®

Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative

2006 Volume IV: Native America: Understanding the Past through Things

Mythology of the Inca and Maya

Curriculum Unit 06.04.08, published September 2006

by Janelle Price

Introduction

What do most high school students know about the Inca and Maya civilizations?

My guess is: human sacrifices, massive amounts of gold and silver, warriors, conquered by Spanish conquistadors, extinct like the dodo bird, and did I mention human sacrifices?

Unfortunately, the above answers are the ones that most students, and a lot of adults, would answer. But did you know that the Inca and Maya had a rich tradition of literature similar, and possibly as old as, the Greeks and Romans? The Inca and Maya golden ages are over 1,000 years apart? And that they probably knew little about each other? Or that the Inca valued cloth above gold and silver and had a unique writing system using "talking knots"?

In addition to correcting many historical misconceptions, I wrote this unit with two goals in mind. The first is to awaken high school students' interest in ancestral literature from Mesoamerica through South America. While the tales and history of many Native American Indian Nations are commonly added into the curriculum, works from Mesoamerica and South America are not. These regions are seldom addressed due to the Euro-centrism that dictates much of the curriculum mandated material leaving little time for anything else. The Maya and Inca dominated these areas and many of their descendents still remain there. More importantly, this huge swath of Central and South America is also increasing the area many new immigrants to the United States come from. Their influx will hopefully allow an inclusion of their literature for a truly American literary canon.

My second goal was to create writing assignments that students will love to engage in. Therefore, the writing assignments are not typical essays, but rather fiction and creative non-fiction works. The pieces should be able to fit into any school system's writing portfolios as students' creative or fiction works.

Rationale

This unit is designed to be flexible; it can be taught as a whole or in sections depending upon your classroom time and needs. I have envisioned pairing the pieces with common high school curriculum works such as *The Odyssey*, *Beowulf*, or *Gilgamesh*.

I love writing and teaching writing; therefore, this unit is heavily dependent on student writing through journals, role play writing, and assessments using only writing. My philosophy of writing aligns with Peter Elbow's in his seminal work, *Writing Without Teachers*, and Wendy Bishop's *Teaching Lives: Essays and Stories*. I especially want to encourage Bishop's belief that students need to see teachers writing, too. Writing along with your students can be difficult since you as a teacher must also provide direction, but it is an excellent way to maintain the skills you are trying to teach and to ensure that assignments are achieving the desired outcome.

Even though I may be an English teacher, I find it necessary to supply the history and geography of the literature I teach. This may be teaching literature from a Historical Criticism Perspective, but it also allows students to collect, collate, and correct all the loose ends of information. This teaching strategy has allowed me to hear from my students that, "Ahh!" of, "Yes, I understand how it all works now." In this vein, I have provided the background on what is a myth and brief histories of the Maya and Inca, as well as, literary analysis of the pieces and writing instruction.

What is a Myth?

Simply stated, myths are good stories. They are stories that allowed primitive man to make sense of a world he could not control, but tried to order. They are stories of humans that become bigger than life and often larger than the history the story was originally intended to tell. They are stories of origin and creation. We think of myths as being centuries old, but myths can be created at any time. Think of the movie "Star Wars," novels and movies of "The Lord of the Rings," the scientific theory of the "Big Bang," and the urban legend of crocodiles living in the sewer system.

The word "myth" is from the Greek word *muthos* or *mythos* which means word or speech. The Greeks used the term for their stories about their gods and any other supernatural tales (Clifton 130). The definition I feel is best for this unit comes from the website Wikipedia.com and specifies: myth "identifies a sacred story or narrative containing supernatural, divine or heroic beings, arranged in a coherent system, passed down orally, and linked to the spiritual or religious life and community. Myths have existed in all cultures since before recorded history. Myths are often set in mythical time, a time before time or history begins, and are intended to explain the universal and local beginnings. . .and anything else for which no simple explanation presents itself." This is the definition the unit will use.

Writing Structure of Myths

This unit will rely on Christopher Vogler's *The Writer's Journey: Mythic Structure for Writers* for all writing assignments as well as serving as the main fulcrum in how the class will interpret the different myths. Looking

at the myths in this manner will enable students to become proficient at deciphering the different archetypes and their variations as well as provide a firm base when they create their own myths. In further drawing out the archetypes as presented by Vogler, I have used movies that the majority of students would be familiar with. Using movies in this unit will also help students visualize the roles and provide them with additional creative ideas.

Vogler's book essentially creates a Hollywood scriptwriter's template for writing myths. His template is based on Joseph Campbell's seminal work on mythology titled, *Hero of a Thousand Faces*. Campbell examined the myths of the West and East using Swiss psychologist Carl G. Jung's archetypes or "ancient patterns of personality that are the shared heritage of the human race" (Vogler 29). Overwhelmingly, Campbell found the world's mythologies have set patterns and characters. Soon after the publication of *Hero of a Thousand Faces*, Vogler created a seven page memo for fellow scriptwriters at the Disney studios titled, "A Practical Guide to *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*" in which Vogler adapted Campbell's academic findings for the layman. (The original memo is available on-line at <http://www.bsu.edu/classes/magrath/205resources/hero.html> or by searching the title in quotes.) Vogler's book, *The Writer's Journey*, written over ten years after his famous memo, goes into much greater detail and is not only an effective writing aid for the classroom, but also a fantastic vehicle for discussing the myths themselves.

Many writers including George Lucas and filmmaker Steven Spielberg have credited Campbell's work as their guiding force in deciding what will work and what will not in a script. Lucas even funded a now famous 1988 PBS interview series hosted by Bill Moyers in which Campbell espouses his ideology on myths. The series is available through most public library systems and excerpts would be appropriate for classroom use.

Vogler's work allows Campbell's theories to be easily incorporated into a classroom writing assignment for students creating their own myths. An added dividend is the classroom exercise in which students trying to see how well popular versus dud movies follow the structure. This exercise is listed in the classroom activity section of this unit.

Characters First

According to Vogler, there is a set of common characters in myths and fairy tales, but one character can incorporate another character's traits. This means a hero can also be a trickster or a mentor can be a mentor and a shadow figure. Remember characters and their traits are drawn from Jung's archetypes and are often referred to as such. The common characters are: hero, mentor (often a wise old person), threshold guardian, herald, shapeshifter, shadow, and trickster (Vogler 32). A breakdown of their traits useful for students in their writing are as follows:

Hero—Greek origin meaning to watch over or protect. A hero, man or woman, should be someone the audience will identify with and is often the character whose eyes the audience sees with. The hero can incorporate traits of the writer/creator. The hero is searching for a complete identity or wholeness. A good hero is unique and not stereotypical—strive for realism and not a cardboard figure. The hero should show growth through their adventure and must be the one who ultimately resolves the major conflict. Heroes can have help, but it must be the hero who finally slays the dragon or discovers the remedy. A hero can be willing or unwilling to take up the cause, but there must be a motivation. The motivation must be strong or even life altering to be believable (Vogler 35-41).

Anti-hero—there are two types and each will appeal to teenagers. The first is the cynical hero: think Han Solo

from *Star Wars*. The second type Vogler terms as tragic and are figures that are not likeable, but the audience is drawn to them. They also never overcome their flaw and are finally destroyed by that flaw or demon that haunts them. I know many of my students (born years after the movie was made) wear t-shirts depicting Al Pacino from the 1983 movie *Scarface*. His character, Tony Montana, becomes king of drug trafficking in Miami, and he has few if any redeeming qualities. Yet, the movie has become a classic in their, and obviously a lot of t-shirt manufacturers', eyes. In an urban area, discussing the traits of an anti-hero would be an especially good exercise. Remind them, though, that to be a true anti-hero they need to have to do something good (Vogler 41-2).

Mentor—the term originated from the character named as such in Homer's *The Odyssey*. Like this character, a mentor is usually cast as an elderly person, who can motivate, guide, inspire, train, advise, and give special gifts to the hero. Note: as far as gift giving goes, the hero must earn it. Gifts are not freely dispensed. The image of the mentor is often thought of as parent-like and they often take on that role when no parent is available to the hero. Good examples are the fairy godmother in *Cinderella* or Obi Wan Kenobi in *Star Wars* (Vogler 47-56).

Threshold Guardian—think of minions such as Ginarrbrik, the White Witch's dwarf henchman in *The Chronicles of Narnia*, the bounty hunter, Boba Fett, in *Star Wars*, and Fluffy, the three-headed dog in *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*. They are not the main villain or antagonist. They can be overcome by strength, smarts, or simply bypassed. Occasionally, they can become allies of the hero. Vogler comments that threshold guardians are often inner demons, "neuroses, emotional scars, vices, dependencies, and self-limitations that hold back our growth and progress in life" (58). They will test the hero and give the true hero new knowledge and strength (Vogler 57-60).

Herald—works like a touchstone in that the herald announces major changes and issues challenges to the hero. Vogler places a herald as the person or thing, good or bad, that upsets the status quo of the hero in some way. The hero has "gotten by" (61) in life and now something occurs that means life can never be the same for them. The hero must make a decision to act on whatever has disrupted life. The herald's role is often combined with the mentor's. The herald's part should be written into Act One of any myth affording cohesion to the story (Vogler 61-64). Good examples of herald roles are the owl delivering Harry Potter's Hogwarts' invitation in *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* and the arrival of Buzz Lightyear in *Toy Story*.

Shapeshifter—often a member of the opposite sex than the hero, the shapeshifter is often thought of as very changeable or two-faced. Thus, they are very flexible characters and adapt with the story. They serve to bring doubt and suspense to the story (Vogler 67). The hero often has to take on the role of a shapeshifter in order to survive. This is true of Captain Jack Sparrow in *Pirates of the Caribbean 2: Dead Man's Chest*. Sparrow appears to be leading the cannibals, when in fact they are allowing him to be their chief as long as he is their main course when they so desire. The shapeshifter can be villainous, good, or a homes or femme fatale. The only signal they may give that they have taken on this role is a change of clothes or hairstyle (Vogler 65-70). Other examples of a shapeshifter are Mr. Potato Head in *Toy Story* and Peter in *The Chronicles of Narnia*.

Shadow—true to its image, the shadow represents the dark side or villain. They make the conflict and challenge the hero. More than any other character, the shadow is a manifestation of what we cannot express, the darkness of our soul, and the polar opposite of the hero. A good shadow displays human qualities that allow the audience to find some redeeming qualities in them. Generally, though, it is best not to allow the shadow to be too human or good so that the audience is not won over to their side. The shadow can be one person like the White Witch in *The Chronicles of Narnia*, an embodiment or force such as the dark side in *Star*

Wars, or part shapeshifter like the beast in *Beauty and the Beast* (Vogler 71-75).

Trickster—essentially the clown or comic sidekick. Tricksters can keep heroes from getting a big head, keep everyone—including the audience—grounded, point out wrongs and follies, lift the tension, make us laugh, and ensure that things do not stay the same. They are also catalyst characters, who will have an effect on others, but do not change themselves. Examples of tricksters are Sebastian in the Disney movie *The Little Mermaid*, C-3PO in *Star Wars*, and Ron Weasley in the Harry Potter series.

Worlds a Hero Will Inhabit

There are two worlds a writer must create in order to successfully write a myth. The first world is the hero's real world or "ordinary world" as Vogler terms it (15). This is the world the hero regularly inhabits and where he often receives the call to action.

The second world is the "special world" (Vogler 18). This is the mythical world or the place where anything can happen. It is important that the audience is given a clear-cut distinction between the two worlds.

Good examples of showing the difference between an ordinary world and a special world can be seen in *The Chronicles of Narnia* and *The Wizard of Oz*. When Lucy steps through the wardrobe in *Narnia* all it takes is stepping from inside, the womb-type experience of the wardrobe to a snowy landscape. *The Wizard of Oz* is much more dramatic as the ordinary world of Kansas is shot in black and white and the special world of Oz is shot in color.

Myth Mapping

The following is a modification of Vogler's myth template (26), which normally has twelve stages, but I have condensed it to five stages to facilitate student success.

First stage, the hero and his ordinary world are introduced. This can be completed in a paragraph or two depending upon the student's writing ability and enthusiasm. Remember in *The Wizard of Oz*, all the audience needs to know is that Dorothy is living on a farm in Kansas with her aunt, uncle, and dog, Toto.

Second stage is the call to action and the hero's reluctance to take action. Whatever calls the hero to action must be powerful—students can think of the end of the world, 911, or saving a forest from being destroyed. The hero's reluctance is the key. The hero must see the need, but act like most people in either being afraid to stand-up or does not want to be bothered. This is a good time for students to introduce the shadow or villain as well.

A good example of a reluctant hero is Spiderman. In the movie, *Spiderman*, Peter Parker does not stop the robber even though he has the power to do so. It is not until after his Uncle Ben is shot by the robber that Peter decides to become a crime fighter. Guilt becomes his call.

Beginning in this stage, the mentor should be introduced as well as the special world. Remember the mentor can be combined with another archetype such as trickster or shapeshifter to add interest or create later developments.

The call to action should appeal to students' imaginations. Length can be slotted from a half-page to two or three pages depending upon if dialogue is used and how complicated students decide to make the action. It is important, though, to not let them burn-out too quickly. Meaning they pour too much energy into the early

stages of the story and then want to just get it over as the end approaches.

Third stage is the testing of the hero. This could entail one test or several tests. Tests could be fighting different monsters such as Hercules does in the Disney animated movie, a combination of mental and physical such as exhibited in Cinderella's ordeal with her wicked step-mother and step-sisters and Luke Skywalker goes through in *Star Wars*. The hero can also be rewarded by receiving special gifts that will enable them to complete his final mission and/or make new friends or allies. More importantly, the hero gathers strength and courage. This stage can be targeted at a half-page to several. Again it depends upon the student's interest and ability.

Note: the third stage can be skipped and the hero can go directly to the major ordeal. Remember in writing there are formulas, but writers should always be encouraged to experiment.

Fourth stage, the hero and the shadow forces meet. This can be a dramatic full-battle conflict such as in *The Chronicles of Narnia* or a one-to-one battle involving might and mind like Luke Skywalker and the Emperor battling in *The Return of the Jedi*. The hero should face death and either escape it (by his own skill is important or they are not a hero) or become a tragic hero and save the whatever, but succumb.

The writing in this stage can take as little as half-page, but should not go beyond two pages. There is nothing worse than a drawn out climax.

Final stage—wrap-up. The hero shows they have been transformed by their experience, receives the reward, and must decide to either return to the ordinary world or stay in the special world. The wrap-up should be quick—almost abrupt. Allow the sweet flavor of victory to be tasted. All endings should not be concluded too neatly or it will turn to a syrupy-sweet ending.

Brief Look at Maya Civilization

The first evidence of the Maya people in the Mesoamerica region begins to appear along the Pacific Coast beginning in 1800 B.C. By 1000 B.C. villages with ceremonial architectural and burial mounds can be found scattered throughout what would become the heartland of the Maya civilization. By 300 A.D. the Maya had begun building the huge urban centers or polities of Copan, Tikal, Palenque, Kalakmul, Dos Pilas, Uaxactun, Altu Ha, Chichen Itza, Coba, Bonampak, and many others, large and small. The polities were each their own small kingdom controlled by a hereditary ruler. The polities often warred against each other and dynastic families intermarried, but seldom was any polity dissolved. The polities were very court-oriented city-states. On the one hand they made war against one another, and on the other, they were arranging marriages between each other. Obviously some of the courts and their surrounding neighborhoods were huge as the Maya are attributed with having the most densely populated civilizations of the time (Wikipedia).

From 300-900 A.D. the Maya reached their golden age. While the polities remained agriculturally based and archeologists have found little evidence of one polity solely specializing in a trade, the Maya contributions to the arts, architecture, mathematics, and astronomy are significant (see individual sections below). The polities were very social among themselves and with others especially in trading goods and exchanging cultural information

Around 900 A.D. the Maya civilization began to collapse. Archaeologists have proposed theories such as the worst drought in 7,000 years, over use of the land as a part of environmental degradation, disease, political uprisings, or a combination of these as the cause. What is sure is that the Maya civilization was in full-stride

and then suddenly on its knees. It is important to realize, though, that while the majority of their polities were abandoned, the people still survived.

The Spanish conquistadors arrived in the area around 1519, but the Maya people, while not as organized in the city-states as they had been, still maintained many of the surrounding villages and cities. It would not be until the mid-sixteenth century that the Spanish would finally be able to say they conquered the Maya, because the polities of the past had left the Maya region with decentralized governments.

The Maya never had a single appointed language, but the most important languages spoken today include Quiche in Guatemala and Yucatec in Yucatan. Today, the majority of the Maya have adopted Roman Catholicism, yet still maintain many of their traditional beliefs and customs. They have survived the mysterious collapse of their empire, diseases brought by the Europeans, and conquest by the Spanish along with the destruction of much of their literature and culture.

Maya Achievements in Architecture

Maya architecture integrated the natural features of the land thus; they did not design their cities in a rigid grid fashion, but the evidence is significant that they carefully planned their urban environments. The city center of a polity consisted of large plazas with the most important government and religious buildings and the residences of the elite grouped there. The next ring of buildings and plazas would be the lesser noble palaces and shrines. Interestingly, this ring had more privacy than the inner ruling center. The next ring housed even lesser nobles along with skilled craftspeople or possibly the beginning of the commoners, whose homes were often not permanent.

The Maya choice in building materials consisted only of stone tools, limestone, and manpower. They did not have the wheel or pulley. Yet, they were able to construct beautifully detailed and enormous palaces and pyramids. They used limestone that had been crushed and burnt to make cement mortar and limestone as their chief building medium. They had learned that limestone can easily be shaped at the quarry site because it remains porous and thus more pliable while still in the ground. Some of the common structures they had in their polities were:

- ceremonial platforms that were close to four meters in height and carved with figures.
- pyramids and temples which could be over 200 feet tall. At the top there were often carvings of the rulers creating an omniscient atmosphere.
- palaces, often referred to as acropolises if they covered more than one story and had many chambers, for the ruling elite. These were highly decorative elements, but function seemed always paramount.
- observatories—The Maya were particularly interested in astronomy and had already plotted the movements of the Moon and Venus. Many observatories had unique features such as celestial alignment of doors and specific carvings.
- ball courts—evidence shows that the Maya loved the game of ulama, too. No matter what size polity, there is always one, if not several, ball courts. The courts are typically I-shaped with giant carved sideways hoops running along the length (Wikipedia).

Mathematics

The ancient Maya can be called "math geeks." Long before Europeans borrowed the idea from India, the Maya had developed the concept of the digit zero. They were able to do complex sums of over hundreds of millions and were extremely accurate in celestial observations using only their eyes.

Finally, they developed a 365-day calendar year, which falls out of alignment with the seasons by one day every four years and a ritual calendar with a cycle of 260 days. The Maya calendars continuously counted days, like the Julian Day Number used by scientists. This allowed them to keep track of their calendars across vast amounts of time and with exceptional accuracy. Their development of the measuring system to do such complex mathematics was far ahead of anything Europe or most other countries for hundreds of years.

Religion and Human Sacrifice

Maize, and its life cycle, is the basis of Maya religious belief. The Maya maize god, characterized as a strong, young man with a flat-top hairdo type head, lots of hair sprouting from his head, and a big nose became the idealized male human form. Yet, while the maize god is central to their belief system, he does not have much control or power (Wikipedia). Also it was a common practice for elite Maya to bill themselves as incarnations of the Maize God and adorn themselves with the items considered the most precious in the society—jade and feathers of the quetzal. The difficulty in carving and preparing Jade for ornamentation tremendously raised its value, but its deep green color added the figurative image of fertility. The quetzal bird's feathers are very rare and even today the bird still does not adapt well to living in captivity. The bird is a poor flyer, but is difficult to find in the rainforest. The only way to collect its feathers is to track a male, capture him without damaging his feathers, pluck the long tail feathers, and then release the bird (Miller and Martin 53).

The Maya had a complex system of calendars—terrestrial and celestial, in which they kept track of rituals and ceremonies. A chief shaman would be in charge of reading the calendars and deciphering when ceremonies would occur, as well as, forecast the future.

They believed the world was rounded, like the back of a turtle, and stretched out infinitely. There were three levels to the world. The levels were the sky, earth, and the underworld. Interestingly, the underworld could be reached by way of caves and ball courts. Perhaps the ability to reach the underworld through ball courts is due to the heavy wagering many of the Maya would place on the games. Losing a wager could mean the end for many. The underworld was home of the gods of death.

The night held a particular fascination for the Maya as all supernatural happenings could be seen in the night sky. The night sky also allowed for the intersection of all the worlds (Wikipedia).

Their chief deities were: Itzamna—the sky deity, Ix Chel—Iltzamna's wife and goddess of weaving, medicine, and childbirth, K'inich Ahaw—the sun god, Jaguar God of the Underworld, Chaak—the storm god as well as the god who takes part in the sacrifices. While the gods' role never changes, their behavior can with a certain back and forth fluidity meaning a god could be good for a while and then turn bad and vice versa. The Canadian Museum of Civilization Website estimates that the Maya had over 166 deities.

The Maya were crazy about blood—literally. Bloodletting was performed by and on the elite and on captives as well. The blood would be collected on bark paper and then burned in order to communicate with the gods. Major ceremonies also included human sacrifices. Some were drowned, others were held and their hearts cut out, or they were decapitated. The victims were generally prisoners, slaves and children, particularly orphans (Canadian Museum).

Burial for ordinary people meant they were buried under the floors of their homes with their mouths stuffed

with food and a jade bead. For the elite class, they were buried in urns and placed in chambered tombs within monumental architecture. A ruler's death often initiated the construction of a new temple or an addition to an existing one for their interment.

Writing and Literature

The Maya had a fully developed written language which was a combination of phonetic symbols and logosyllabic signs, meaning syllabic signs played a significant role. More significantly, the Maya had the only writing system that fully represented their spoken language in the Pre-Columbian New World. The earliest identified Maya script is dated between 200-400 B.C. When it can be properly dated, the Maya writing system could become the oldest Mesoamerican writing system (Wikipedia). Even though the Maya texts had been recovered centuries earlier, it was not until the 1970s that their writing system was fully able to be deciphered.

It is estimated that a little over 10,000 Maya texts survived time and the Spanish conquest of Mesoamerica. The Maya were a prolific people using monuments, lintels, stelae (erect carved stone monument), and ceramic pottery as writing forums. Many such books were burned by Spanish missionaries in the 16th century, but there are three notable Maya texts that have survived intact. They are the Madrid, Dresden, and Paris codices. They were probably painted long after the Maya collapse, but within a century or two of the Spanish invasion. Codices are books manufactured from tree bark that has been flattened and softened with lime paste. The books are folded accordion style.

Just as the Madrid, Dresden, and Paris codices were probably copied from earlier works, so too was the *Popol Vuh*. Around 1702, a Spanish priest, Father Francisco Ximenez, discovered a Quiche text of the *Popol Vuh*. Schooled in the language, he copied the text and added a Spanish translation. Over a hundred and fifty years later, Father Ximenez's work was found in a Guatemalan college library and published (Tedlock 27). The work has stayed in continuous publication since that time (Wikipedia).

Popol Vuh

This unit relies on the Dennis Tedlock translation published by Touchstone Books in 1996. This edition covers background of the Maya and the work, a great glossary of every person and place in the work, wonderful and lengthy footnotes, a summary in the Introduction (pages 30-60) and authentic ink drawings. Therefore, I will only supply supplemental teaching notes.

Another name for Popol Vuh could be "Council Book" or "Book of the Community." When the leaders of a polity needed to make a decision, they often would read over the book and then make their decision (Tedlock 21).

There is no known author of the book. It is considered to be a book of scriptures from the Quiche, which was one of the most powerful polities in the Maya region during the pre-Columbian times.

The characters in *Popol Vuh* have much more dimension than any in the Inca myths. However, only the twin heroes, Hunahpu and Xbalanque, are dynamic characters. They show a development and change that none of the others do. They are also more arrogant and smarter than everyone else in the myth. I would also nominate them as tricksters.

The ordinary world in the story would be earth and the underworld, or Xibalba, is the special world. The shadows would be the gods of Xibalba particularly One and Seven Deaths.

There are many threshold guardians but two in particular are One Monkey and One Artisan.

The grandmother can be seen as a shapeshifter, a herald, and a mentor. While the grandmother has so many roles, the mother or Blood Moon, an active character at the beginning, does little afterwards. However, she can be considered a shapeshifter, too, as she adapts to her pregnancy, outmaneuvers her father and his henchmen, and convinces grandmother that she really is impregnated with her sons' children.

Look for the humor in this work. When grandmother sends the louse to tell her twin grandsons they have been summoned to Xibalba, a mini-story is embedded. In the interests of speed, the louse allows itself to be eaten by a toad. Then a snake tells the toad it can go faster, so the toad acquiesces to being swallowed by the snake. For the same reason, the snake is gobbled by a falcon. The falcon finds the twin heroes and coughs up the snake, which discharges the toad, but the poor toad is unable to cough up the louse. The twins hit the toad causing his rear to be forever flat. This section is reminiscent of "The Little Old Lady Who Swallowed a Fly." Another example is in the beginning, when the gods attempt to create beings to worship them. The gods cannot get it right. First the gods make mud beings who are brainless and do not come out of the rain. Then the gods make the wooden beings, whose own utensils rally against them.

The minor gods in *Popol Vuh* make mistakes, are ill-humored, malicious, stupid, and jealous. Often it seems as if they are meant to portray a specific character trait to the extreme. They are very child-like and not people I would like to honor or associate with.

Brief Look at Inca Civilization 1200-1534 A.D.

The Inca came to the Peruvian area of Cuzco around the 12th century A.D. as a tribe. Before the Inca dominated the Andes, there had been the Moche, Nazca, Wari, and Tiwanaka whose ways the Inca heavily borrowed from. By the mid-1400s the Inca dominated the Andes. Much of the Inca empire building credit goes to Pachacuti Inka (Inka means emperor and all Inca emperors would use the term after their name). Pachacuti Inka, the ninth ruler, called his empire Tahuantinsuyu or "Land of the Four Quarters." Pachacuti Inka designed Tahuantinsuyu in a cross form with Cuzco, the capital city, in the middle.

The National Geographic Website, "The Lost Empire" states that during the height of the empire, Tahuantinsuyu was the largest nation on the earth and even today it still holds the title as the largest native state in the western hemisphere. The geographical dimensions of the empire ran north to south close to 2,500 miles along the Andean mountain range from Colombia to Chile and west to east from the Atacama Desert to the Amazon rain forest. The population of the empire is estimated to have tallied more than ten million people.

Cuzco is believed to have been the richest city in the New World. Pachacuti Inka laid the city out in a grid and built an architecturally brilliant city in the shape of a puma. When the Spanish arrived in Cuzco, they saw incredible wealth in the palaces of the past rulers. (See section titled "Inca Wealth" for more explanation.) Gold and silver, which the Spanish lusted for, were plentiful. However, while the Inca considered gold and silver precious, cloth was a more valuable treasure.

When Francis Pizarro arrived with his small army of 168 men and about 60 horses, he found a civilization that looked impressive in size and wealth, but was actually on the brink of disaster for two reasons. The first was that the smallpox virus had begun decimating the indigenous people. Charles Mann in his book, *1491*, estimates that the population may have been cut in half, if not more (88). The cause of the smallpox virus was the horses and cattle Pizarro or earlier expeditions had brought with them. The indigenous people had never been exposed to horses and cattle and by consequence any of the diseases they carry.

Smallpox incubates for approximately twelve days before symptoms of illness appear. In that time, the unknowing carrier will infect others; who in turn, will infect even more.

The second major advantage for Pizarro was that the Incas had a central ruler. The Inka made the decisions. Pizarro arrived just as the previous Inka had died and two of his sons, Atahualpa and Huascar, had finished fighting a bloody battle for control. Atahualpa eventually won, but when Atahualpa was captured by Pizarro, no one was left to make decisions quickly. This left some of the defeated fraction willing to align itself with the Spanish and rekindled the battle for control among the Inca, thus splintering the kingdom at a time when it needed most to pull together.

The Spanish conquistadors were brutal in their takeover and suppression of the Inca people in their quest for wealth, but it would be the religious zeal of the Catholic priests who would literally destroy the fiber of the society as well as the records and much of the Inca literature.

Inca Wealth

What made the Inca Empire such a great place to conquer? In two words—mummy bundles. Mummy bundles are the bodies of the deceased which have been mummified and positioned with their knees drawn up to their chests, placed in their best four sets of clothes, hats, and jewelry and wrapped in four individual huge pieces of cloth. The bundles were not buried, but kept around the house or palace as if they were still alive. For an Inka, being kept around meant their palaces, retainers, wives, and servants continued on serving a mummy bundle. The Inka's wealth was maintained, so the next Inka had to acquire his own palaces and wealth. Interestingly, the Inka also maintained his voting status. Their voices were channeled through a female medium chosen by his survivors (Mann 88-9).

By the time of Pizarro's arrival, there was almost a dozen previous Inkas. Miguel de Estete, one of Pizarro's men, saw a parade of the dead Inkas and noted, "seated on their thrones and surrounded by pages and women with flywhisks in their hands, who ministered to them with as much respect as if they had been alive" (qtd. in Mann 89). While other civilizations felt that their rulers were immortal, the Inca were the lone ones to believe that immortality had an earthly life and not an unseen divine one.

What constituted as wealth to the Spanish was not the same to the Incas. The Spanish felt that gold, silver,

gems, and more gold were the necessary ingredients for wealth. The Inca valued gold, silver, and gems, but cloth, and lots of it, was the piece de resistance.

The Inca inherited their love of cloth from their Andean predecessors. As John Murra states in, "Cloth and Its Function in the Inca State," "clothes are always important psychologically and ornamentally, but in the Andes the functions of cloth went far beyond such universals. It emerges as the main ceremonial good and, on the personal, the preferred gift, highlighting all crisis points in the life cycle and providing otherwise unavailable insights to the reciprocal relations of kinfolk" (712). The Inca were able to manufacture wool in the highlands using llama, alpaca, and vicuna. Cotton was grown and manufactured in the lowlands. Weaving cloth was a job for men and women and the girl who could weave well was sought after as a bride. The Inca maintained huge warehouses for the stockpiling of food and cloth.

There were many hands available to weave, because of the unique system of government the Incas put into place—a socialist regime. The system worked so well, that the former Soviet Union often paraded it as a shining example of what such systems could obtain (Miller). All land and property was the property of the Inka. The peasant class had mandatory work periods in which they could be assigned to do farming, building, herding, etc. during which the state fed, clothed, and housed them. There were no markets or currency or hunger. As new areas were introduced into the system, the Inca allowed them to keep their dress and customs, but the newcomers needed to use the Inca language of Quechua (KETCH-wa). The Inca also developed a system in which they could marry people from different corners of the empire and transplant them to another section as well as uproot hundreds of people from one area and pluck them down in another. This transplanting practice efficiently worked to keep all sections of the empire hegemonic (Mann 66-73).

Inca Human Sacrifice

This is the topic the students will want to hear about and it is also the one that they will most remember if they have any prior knowledge of the Inca. Mann emphasizes in *1491* that the Inca did not have human sacrifices, but only behaved like their European city counterparts of London and Toledo. He states that the report of the Incas committing human sacrifices or cannibalism are "racist lies" spread by those needing a reason for annihilating the Inca society. Mann states that the Inca only executed criminals and those found guilty of crimes against the empire (120-1). This position is different than the Maya as noted above. However, Mann does not mention the Inca practice of *capac hucha*.

The *capac hucha* or "royal obligation" ceremony is believed to have been practiced to celebrate the maize harvest cycle, the death of an Inka, the crowning of a new Inka, and possibly other occasions. The ceremony began with the selection of children from the four corners of the empire. The children would be picked because of their exceptional beauty. They traveled to the capital, Cuzco, were paired, and symbolically married. The new couple would be outfitted with new clothes and necessary household items all in miniature. The couple along with priests and other companions would immediately begin their journey homeward. The procession would walk in a straight line and single file. Upon reaching home, there would be a celebration in which the married children were purposely induced into a drunken stupor on maize beer called *chicha*. They, and all their household possessions, would be buried at a *huaca* or sacred place in the town. A tube running down to the dead children would pipe *chicha* to them for five days. Archaeologists have found many *capac hucha* sites and it is thought that as many as 1,000 children would be sacrificed at a time (McEwan and Van

Inca Writing System—Khipu—Destruction and Impact on Literature

This is a stay-tuned-for-further developments area as recently khipus have been hypothesized as not just a counting system to the Inca, but also their form of a written language. While other cultures had easy access to paper, the Inca did not; therefore, what better alternative for a people who loved cloth, but to use strands of yarn for recording accounts and stories. If this is proven true, the Inca, who were long thought to be the only advanced civilization without a written form of their language, not only had a form, but the world's only three-dimensional one.

The strands were color-coded and the use of knots placed at different intervals along the length indicating different things. The system is believed to have used a method of binary counting and were made and maintained by khipusamayu or "keepers of the khipus."

Only about 600 khipus are thought to have survived the mass destruction of Inca artifacts by the Spanish as the clergy thought them to be instruments of the devil. (Remember also that anything made of precious metal was melted, molded into bars, and shipped to Spain.) This has resulted in the majority of the Inca literature and history being funneled through the hands of the Spanish (Mann 345). Fortunately, the iconography on pottery and architecture and the myths and legends that have survived among the native people have proven to be independent sources.

Mythology of the Inca—Common Features

The mythology that survives of the Inca concentrates not only on tales of their multiple deities and their interaction with the environment, humans, animals, and plant life, but also with the people's cultural way of life (Bierhorst 8). The tales address creation of the world, night and day, stars, humans, discovery of maize, and how things evolved such as why rabbits and deer have short tails and the fox such a big mouth. The archetypes as outlined by Vogler can be readily seen in the characters as well. The following is an outline of prominent features, characters, and motifs.

One of the most prominent features in Inca mythology is Lake Titicaca (Bierhorst 3). Lake Titicaca is South America's largest and the highest commercially navigable lake in the world. It covers more than 8,200 meters or over 3,000 miles and is situated over 12,000 miles above sea level. Twenty-five rivers plus glacier melt empties into the lake. The lake is where the legendary founder of the Inca Dynasty, Manco Capac, is said to have been brought up from its depths. He is said to have taught the men how to farm and defend themselves.

Some prominent figures besides Manco Capac are: Viracocha (weer-a-CO-cha), sometimes spelled as Wirakocha, the creator of civilization and the most important deity and hero. In some myths he appears as Coniraya, and is also a trickster. Only the priestly elite and Inka could pray to or even mention his name. Viracocha had one son, Inti, and one daughter, Mama Quilla. He is said to have fathered the first eight

humans.

Inti, although Viracocha's son, was more revered. This could be due to the masses being able to call upon him or because Inti was the sun god and patron of Tahuantinsuyu.

Mama Ocllo is deified as a mother and the fertility goddess. She is the sister and wife of Manco Capac and founded Cuzco with him. Legends say she taught the Inca women to spin thread and keep house.

Waka are the smaller deities and are sometimes given names and sometimes just referred to as Waka. Also a waka, often spelled "huaca," can also be a sacred place such as a rock, spring, or mountain.

Some motifs to look for in the myths: light and dark, water, cloth—dress and in the story, the eclipsing of the Inca above all others before them (remember the Inca borrowed heavily from the earlier civilizations), maize, llama herding, youth centric, and the desire not to grow up. Of these themes, John Bierhorst in his collection of Inca myths titled *Black Rainbow*, notes that herding was not a difficult task and left to the young. This, perhaps, left the young to practice storytelling for their age.

An important note for the reader and the writer is that myths are not sentimental. Sad things happen, but they are not dwelled upon. The myth supplies its lesson and the world, while now a little different, goes on (Bierhorst 22).

Inca Myth Choice #One—"The Rod of Gold"

The first Inca myth used in this unit is the Bierhorst translation of "The Rod of Gold" from *Black Rainbow*. Bierhorst terms this myth a legend, because he feels it is a "fantastic interpretation of an historical event" versus a myth which he classifies as a story told for entertainment or moral it teaches (18). To be a legend, the story must have historic fact and "The Rod of Gold" in my view is pure fantasy. Therefore, I label it a myth for this unit.

This story is a good example, because it incorporates many of the myth writing structural elements, as well as, epitomizing the many motifs common in Inca literature. The story is a creation myth meaning it gives an explanation of how the world is the way it is, deals with the theme of birth, and a supreme being that triggers the birth (Murtagh).

Manco Capac and Mama Ocllo are the heroes even though they do not seem to have a period of reluctance in undertaking their journey or a final trial. Their tests are the many times they must thrust the golden rod into the earth until it finally is engulfed. Then they must create a mighty civilization with Manco Capac teaching the men how to provide for a family and Mama Ocllo teaching the women how to weave, clothe their families, and take care of a home. Inti acts as the mentor. The narrator works as the herald. The shapeshifters can be the people who willingly follow the Inca. The shadows can be seen as the people who refuse to follow the Inca. For this story, one difficult item to place according to the hero's journey writing structure is the worlds Manco Capac and Mama Ocllo come from and stay in. It can be argued that they come from the special world and stay in the ordinary one or vice versa. This is something you and your class must decide upon either collectively or maybe never agree on.

The story opens by describing the world before Inti sends his children, Manco Capac and Mama Ocllo to civilize the world. Note that people already inhabit the world, but they are beasts. The children come to the earth by Lake Titicaca. The children, though, brother and sister become husband and wife. The Inka would continue this practice of marrying their sister and allowing only their son to become the next Inka. Later interpretations would use this incestuous relationship as a reason for the Inkas' eventual downfall.

Note also that Inti commands his children to rule wisely, justly, and with pity. Later interpretations would seize upon the idea that the Inkas were cruel, particularly Atahualpa, who was the last Inca ruler. Bierhorst believes the emphasis on Atahualpa as being especially cruel was because he was the one responsible for the loss of the empire to the Spanish. As far as the cruelty of the other Inkas, Bierhorst states that the expansion of the Inca Empire could not have been accomplished without ruthlessness (15).

The golden rod Manco Capac and Mama Ocllo use to put into the ground can be likened to the rod or scepter of gold kings have used as a symbol of their power for thousands of years. The burial of the rod into the ground symbolizes this place—Cuzco, as the seat of the god-appointed king.

The story highlights the fine dress and distinctive look of high level Inca with the passage, "And they saw the pierced earlobes, greatly stretched, that we Incas who are their descendants still have today" (30). Bierhorst notes that the elite would pierce their earlobes and stretch the piercing with huge disc-like ornaments. This piercing gave the Inca a very distinctive look (6). This section also shows the Inca attempting to show that it is they who have made the best of everything in the world. They are effectively stealing the show from all previous civilizations before them and claiming it was they who created it all.

The separation of the Inca society into two was a system of hierarchy employed by them. The halves were not equal as the upper half or hanan were the ruling class and the lower or hurin were the commoners. The division was rigidly adhered to and a hurin could never become a hanan. Yet the hurin had its own elite circle.

The story continues with the people excitedly going off to tell others about the glory of the Inca and how many joined the Inca people for the promises of a good life, too. The piece ends with the warning, though, that those who would not so easily join will be forced into submission. The last lesson Manco Capac teaches the Inca people is how to use weapons, not for defense or peacekeeping, but to gather those into the Inca world who do not come willingly.

Inca Myth Choice #Two—"The Boy Who Rose to the Sky"

Also from Bierhorst's *Black Rainbow*, "The Boy Who Rose to the Sky" has many elements of the hero's journey mixed with a love story. The boy is obviously the hero. The condor is the mentor and herald. The star princess is the shapeshifter. The world is the ordinary world and the sky is the special world. This tale is also about not wanting to grow up, because as the boy ages, he becomes unattractive to his star-bride. Twice he turns old and twice he bathes in the water and becomes young again. He always remains a boy and never a man. Age can be seen as the shadow.

This is also a tale in which the bride escapes back to her people. She talks of her mother and father—the moon and the sun, but all the boy and we see are women just like her. The bride says she wants to return with the boy, but is never able to. She hides the boy, her husband, but grows tired and neglectful of him. She, too,

does not want to grow up. This story parallels another myth called "Coiraya and Cahuillaca," except for the ending.

Bierhorst notes of "The Boy Who Rose to the Sky" that the ending seems to have been altered to a European sentimentality. The narrator laments over the fate of the boy and even says that he has also suffered such a sad affair of the heart. This is not typical of a myth. Bierhorst conjectures that there is a school of thought that Peruvian tales have a melancholy tinge due to unresolved sadness over their conquest and loss of past (22-3). This myth is placed in the chapter Bierhorst terms "Myths That Have Survived." In the introduction, Bierhorst notes that the myths in this section have "an ancient status," but were collected in the twentieth century (18-9). Without a doubt, the myth has been affected by modern times, but the core of the story is harkens back in time.

There are several interesting leaps of faith or unexplained gaps in the story. The first is why the boy on the third night finally sees the princesses from the sky even though like the two times before he falls asleep. The second is after he has captured the princess, her parents do not come as she says they will. Her parents are the powerful sun and moon, but show no emotion. For that matter, does the girl ever show much emotion? And finally how does the boy's mother see the girl even though the boy keeps her hidden in the hut? These unanswered questions need to be addressed to the students for them to see how the narrative skips and what does this mean from a writing standpoint.

The choice of the condor as the bird that helps the boy is due to the belief that the condor is the bird of the upper world or heights. The bird of the middle earth is the hawk and swallows are the bird of the ground and underworld.

Seemingly the boy fails in his mission to retrieve his bride and in his return to earth he will no longer be able to bathe in the waters that made him young again. He returns to his parents, who even though they are old, vow to care for him. Thus, he will remain their child. Remember a child cannot have a wife or a husband, so the boy and the princess maintain their youth.

Inca Myth Choice #3—"Why the Fox Has a Huge Mouth"

This story does not fit the hero's adventure structure, but for two reasons it is important for the unit. The first is to demonstrate that people have always enjoyed humor. The fox is punished for not keeping his word and the reader is left with not only a good story, but several humorous images. Think of the fox with the huaychao or bird's bill stuck on its face, dancing skunks, and the fox's grin and one cannot help but shake his or her head in amusement. This would be a good story to have students illustrate by making cave paintings. Cave paintings are flat and more simply drawn, which will help alleviate the students' "I can't draw" moans. The exercise will also allow them to visualize before writing about a story.

The second reason the story is important for the unit is that it does not fit the hero's writing structure. The story is an animal tale or fable in the tradition of Aesop's Fables. The animals are personified and the tale teaches a moral lesson. Students need to realize that not all myths and stories will fit the structure. This does not diminish the work. They will find, though, that overwhelmingly most stories will have elements of the journey or the archetypes.

"Why the Fox Has a Huge Mouth" is also a tale of justice, and thus, a good social lesson. The fox does not keep his word and is punished for it. What better way to teach children the lessons of keeping one's word and a sense of honor.

Inca Myth Choice #4—"The Mouse Husband"

This story again personifies animals. It is also a story of love and revenge. The gentle mouse husband, the hero, falls in love with a woman. The woman is a shapeshifter. The woman's mother, whose face is like a cat's, is the shadow. The story also brings out another feature of myths by recalling a time when animals were magical. They could change into other things and were closer to humans.

The mouse husband transforms himself into a human for the daughter, but he never allows the mother to see him as he fears her cat-like face. The mouse is kind, loving, and a good provider. These are excellent traits in a husband by Inca and most other cultures' standards. The mouse husband tries to reveal himself as he truly is to his wife, but she cannot see him. Perhaps she does not have the love or need to see him. She only likes his attention and how he provides. When the mother brutally kills the mouse husband and her daughter's baby, she does it like a cat. Clawing and taking the air out of the baby's lungs. The mouse husband first buries his child in a place where he will keep the gravesite alive with his tears and then seeks his revenge. With his mouse companions, he empties the house of the food he has provided and then attacks and eats the mother. There is no mention of what happens to the daughter, but one can image she is abandoned because she failed to love the mouse husband and failed to care for her baby the way a true wife/mother would.

The ordinary world is the world the mouse husband comes from and the special world is the world with the humans. The journey the mouse hero takes is bittersweet. He achieves his ideal of having the woman as his wife only to realize that the prize has too high of a price. The mouse shows more emotion, particularly love, than his wife and the mother together. His revenge is swift and just.

Other Tools Used in This Unit

Journals

Journal writing is used extensively in this unit for several reasons.

- They are fantastic at allowing students of all abilities to gather their thoughts on a subject before discussion.
- Periodically used in the freewrite method as proposed by Peter Elbow, they allow students to once again open up the floodgate of thoughts to paper.
- Allows for a flow of information to go directly from student to teacher and teacher to student.
- Is endorsed by the National Writing Project as a proven way of improving student writing as it allows them to think clearly and express themselves fully (Nagin 73).
- Can be used as an entry and exit slip. For use as an entry slip, students will begin class by writing about

their previous night's reading assignment. For use as an exist slip, students will write about what they learned or did in class that day.

- Reflection writing, which allows a student to record their learning or growth from an assignment, can be accomplished through journal writing.

A final note of importance on journal writing, like all writing in the classroom, it is important for students to see the teacher writing and for the teacher to share her writing as well (Bishop 23-49).

Role Play Writing

Role play writing uses the same format as role play games. This format will allow students to create well-thought-out characters for their myths. I recommend following the format for at least the hero and the mentor. See Appendix A for the format.

Fun Notes/Activities on This Unit

1. If you have extra time, show the class the Disney movie, *The Emperor's New Groove*. The movie has a strong Inca presence. The emperor's name is Kuzco, he is turned into a llama, Pacha (means earth in Quechua) is a llama herder, ChiCha (means maize beer in Quechua) is Pacha's wife, there are jaguars, the architecture of Kuzco's home, and Pacha's home on the mountaintop. These are just a few of the similarities and any class would enjoy finding these similarities and more.
2. Bierhorst's book on Inca myths is called *Black Rainbow*. A black rainbow in many cultures is a bridge to the underworld, which in Inca mythology is Uca Pacha and is headed by a deity named Supay, who is also in charge of a race of demons.

Classroom Activities

Day One

Introduce the themes of the unit—myths with an emphasis on heroes and their journeys. Have students write in their journals about heroes—what do they think makes a hero? They should list characteristics. Discuss their entries. Outline archetypes and hero's journey. If possible show sections of "Joseph Campbell and The Power of Myth" episode one—"The Hero's Journey."

Day Two-Day Four

Begin reading Inca myths. Have students develop character graphs of which character fulfills what archetypes and why they think so. Have students write exit journal entries on work completed.

Day Five

Movie Glory and Dud Day. Have students pre-select movies they feel follow the hero's journey template (cannot use the movies already talked about in class). Have them present their movies and discuss them. Good way to reinforce the archetypes and journey, as well as, provide writing ideas.

Day Six

Writing Day—Have students begin to create their own archetypes to be used in their myths. Students should begin with hero and then think about what problem their hero might have. At the end of class, have students share some of their ideas. Prepare students for the next day's assignment. Note: See Appendix A for character form.

Day Seven

Transition to Maya and *Popol Vuh*. Have students write in their journals about problems they foresee in writing their myths. Discuss. Introduce Maya and *Popol Vuh*.

Day Eight-Day Eleven

Reading of *Popol Vuh*. *Day Nine* students should write a journal entry on what they feel about the work—do they understand it, like it better than the Inca myths or not, and if they are having problems how do they think they can be helped. Try using choral readers—having two or three students read one part or character lines—must try to ham it up. Also can have auditions for storyteller prize. Students prepare the night before and the next day read their section as if they were a storyteller. The best receive a prize. Candy or granola bars with a printed certificate of accomplish work best for even my 12th graders.

Day Ten and Eleven—in the beginning of class, highlight a particular archetype and have the students write about one in their journals. Students can also write an exit entry on what happened in the story that day and what do they think will happen.

Day Twelve

Review myth structure of *Popol Vuh*. Does it fit? Where and where doesn't it work? Students can journal before the class discusses the questions.

Day Thirteen thru Day Sixteen

Students draft, write, and revise their myths. Use *Day Fifteen* as a workshop day. Depending upon class size, the students can either divide into groups of no more than four. One student should be responsible for timing, another for recording of work done by the group, another to keep the group moving, and the last student to make sure all the others are doing their job.

Day Seventeen and Eighteen

Myth presentation. Students will read their myths to the class. They will be allowed to add artwork or bring in any visual aids (as long as they follow school regulations.) At the end of the presentations, have students write a reflection on the assignment and their work.

Finally, I recommend creating a booklet of the class's or classes' myths. This is easily done through Microsoft Publisher and a copy machine especially if all the work is available on the school's URL. Have a contest for the

cover art and use any not chosen art as inside art.

Day Nineteen

Pass the popcorn and watch *The Emperor's New Groove*.

Pennsylvania Academic Standards

The Pittsburgh Public School District uses the Pennsylvania Academic Standards for Reading, Writing, Speaking, and Listening. The standards specifically earmarked for this unit are:

1.1 D Identify, describe, evaluate and synthesize the essential ideas in text. Assess those reading strategies that were most effective in learning from a variety of texts.

1.2 B Produce work in at least one literary areas that follows the conventions of the genre.

1.3 C Analyze the effectiveness in terms of literary quality, of the author's use of literary devices.

- Sound techniques (e.g., rhyme, rhythm, meter, alliteration).
- Figurative language (e.g., personification, simile, metaphor, hyperbole, irony, satire).
- Literary structures (e.g., foreshadowing, flashbacks, progressive and digressive time).

1.3 F Read and respond to nonfiction and fiction including poetry and drama.

1.4 A Write short stories, poems, and plays

- Apply varying organizational methods
- Use relevant illustrations
- Utilize dialogue
- Apply literary conflict
- Include varying characteristics (e.g., from limerick to epic. from whimsical to dramatic).
- Include literary elements
- Use literary devices.

1.5 A Write with a sharp, distinct focus.

1.5 B Write using well-developed content appropriate for the topic.

1.5 C Write with controlled and/or subtle organization.

1.5 D Write with a command of the stylistic aspects of composition.

1.5 E Revise writing to improve style, word choice, sentence variety and subtlety of meaning after rethinking how questions of purpose, audience and genre have been addressed.

1.5 F Edit writing using the conventions of language.

<https://teachers.yale.edu>

©2023 by the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute, Yale University, All Rights Reserved. Yale National Initiative®, Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute®, On Common Ground®, and League of Teachers Institutes® are registered trademarks of Yale University.

For terms of use visit https://teachers.yale.edu/terms_of_use