The Creation Myths

Research Paper Project

English 102H: Honors College Composition 2

Professor Ben Davis Jr.
Guidelines: *The following items will be kept in a two-pocket notebook folder as parts of your (RPAs) Research Paper Activities:

1. You will compose an eight-ten page research paper that includes a minimum of a variety of eight (8) [but no more than twelve (12)] expert, published, primary and secondary scholarly research sources in print, non-print and electronic forms from the college library must be used to validate your comments. In accordance with the Modern Language Association’s documentation format for citing prose, poetry and drama, proper signal phrases (complete, partial, and generic) must be incorporated into the paper and must include various citations (summary, paraphrase, and direct quotations), and subsequent parenthetical references. Below are the required forms and numbers of specific sources and for your works cited:
   
   a. Consult two (2) book sources on your topic—this might include any original works published. [Primary sources]
   b. Two (2) reference book sources (which often include articles or essays) [Secondary sources]
   c. Three (3) scholarly print magazine articles evaluating and explaining the myth and particular concepts in question [Secondary sources]
   d. Two (2) Internet sources on the subject (you may not use more than two!) [Secondary sources]
   e. One (1) newspaper article on the subject, where feasible, and/or anything related to it—published maybe as an interpretation or an expose about the topic itself [Secondary sources]
   f. If available, consult a film or video work done as a critique, review or interpretation of the subject—such as those done on PBS, YouTube, or TV programs, videos or DVDs—avoid popularized forms shown in movie theatres. [Secondary sources]

   NOTE: Compose a complete, appealing introduction paragraph with clearly defined thesis sentence, a properly developed and documented body section, and a conclusion paragraph that presents a well-developed and unifying summation that explains the significance of the research findings on the topic chosen. The final draft must exhibit correct grammar, spelling (especially of author’s names and any literary concepts that will be used), punctuation, sentence structure, organization, and development of the paper’s Body paragraphs, proper document design, and college-level quality to receive full credit for the assignment.

2. All process approach work (the research proposal, preliminary bibliography, bibliography cards, citation cards, photocopies of print magazine and/or book sources, electronic sources and a minimum of two (2) completed, full rough drafts) are required to be handed in on the due date with your final draft. NOTICE: ESSAYS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED OR GRADED WITHOUT THESE ITEMS!
Topic: Comparison of Two (2) Creation Stories/Myths. These are ancient stories depicting how the world was made. Compose a comparative analysis on the points of comparison given:

1. Symbolism,
2. Theme(s),
3. Forms,
4. Language,
5. The specific relevance to the cultural group who originated the myth.

Follow these writing process steps below:

1. Step one: Investigate the selected myths in question—each (published) myth must be at least five (5) pages in length and you should select them from different cultures; for example, you could compare a Near Eastern myth with a European myth. Of course, you must choose a myth not readily found in the course text Literature.

2. Step two: Per the writing process approaches, write a rough draft that addresses similarities and differences between the two myths. Take into consideration the subjects’ five points of comparison: Symbols (the mythic archetypes, distinct characters and events), theme (i.e., the fall of mankind, the division of one into two, the divine creator), form (Represent the story’s dialogue and whether or not it part of the oral tradition or written), language (Describe its original language: Is it formally or informally presented?), and specific relevance to the cultural group who originated the myth (What will the audience learn about the nation or cultural body based on this myth of creation?).

3. Step three: Rough draft submission and revision based on my comments and your further consideration of the paper topic as required for the mandatory conferences on the research paper.

4. Step four: Submission of final draft (also include all rough draft).

Audience: Assume your readers are somewhat familiar with the myths, you should still provide a brief summary of the original story(s) in question. In addition, when you engage in any form of summary it should be in direct support of a claim you are making for the purpose of analysis.

Thesis question: After choosing the two myths, answer the following question:

- How are these myths as creation stories from different regions of the world inter-related?

For this paper, you should advance a leading claim (thesis) about the inter-relatedness of these different creation myths. Your opening paragraph should outline the basic points of comparison you will consider in the paper (not specific details, but general topics like theme, symbolism, etc., per Step Two above). Consider discussions on the purpose and significance of creation myths to assist you in preparing a thesis statement that appropriately determines the path of your comparisons.
Basic Research Principles:

Each research project that you take on is a search for reliable, usable information. To succeed in that search, follow these basic guidelines:

1. Think quality.
2. Be patient and persistent.
3. Know what research technology can and cannot do.
4. Work with experts, especially the college reference librarian.
5. Master keyword searching.
6. Use sources to discover other sources.
7. Keep good, organized notes and records.
8. Evaluate all sources.
9. Work to develop insights.
10. Fit the research to the subject.

II. Exploration:

2. What specific original works will I explore?
3. What critical secondary sources—scholarly articles from books and periodicals—will I explore? Be as specific as possible here with regard to author’s names and titles of the critical sources.

Formulate a preliminary thesis about your subject from a thesis question regarding your topic. Find a specific narrow focus or feature on the chosen myth and formulate an answer to that question.
On-Line Resources:

- Encyclopedia Mythica
- Legends
- Myth and Legend from Ancient Times to the Space Age
- Of Gods and Men: The A-Z of Mythology and Legend
- The San Fernando Valley Folklore Society's Urban Legends Reference Pages

For Further Reading: General Sources

Below are listed a range of authors and works dealing with some aspect of mythology. They are suggestions for research:

- Thomas Bulfinch, *Mythology*
- Joseph Campbell
  - The Hero With a Thousand Faces
  - The Power of Myth
  - The Masks of God
  - The Inner Reaches of Outer Space
- Edward Hallett Carr, *What Is History?*
- Jane Chance, *Medieval Mythology: From Roman North Africa to the School of Chartres*
- Umberto Eco, "The Myth of Superman"
- Sir James George Frazer, *The Golden Bough: The Roots of Religion and Folklore*
- Sigmund Freud
  - Dreams in Folklore
  - Moses and Monotheism
  - Totem and Taboo
- Carlo Ginzberg, *Clues, Myths, and the Historical Method*
- Carl Gustav Jung, *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*
- Friedrich Max Muller, *Comparative Mythology*
- Claude Levi-Strauss
  - "The Structural Study of Myth"
  - Myth and Meaning
- Vladimir Propp
  - "Fairy Tale Transformations"
  - Morphology of the Folktale
- J. R. R. Tolkien, "On Fairy Stories."
- Giambattista Vico, *Scienza Nuova*
- Max Weber
  - The Religions of India: The Sociology of Hinduism and Buddhism
  - The Sociology of Religions
British Isles:

- Bradley, S. A. J., trans. *Anglo-Saxon Poetry*
- Briggs, Katherine, *British Folktales*
- Cross, Tom Peete, and Clark Harris Slover, *Ancient Irish Tales*
- Fisher, D. J. V., *The Anglo-Saxon Age: c. 400-1042*
- Gray, Elizabeth A., ed. *Cath Maige Tuired: The Second Battle of Mag Tuired*
- *The Mabinogion*
- MacCana, Proinsias. *Celtic Mythology*
- Powell, T. G. E., *The Celts*
- Salway, Peter, *Roman Britain*
- Tolkien, J. R. R., trans. *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*

Classical:

- Homer
  - *The Iliad*
  - *The Odyssey*
- Sophocles, *The Theban Plays*
- Virgil, *The Aeneid*

Additional resources on Creation Myths:

- Van Over, Raymond. *Sun Songs: Creation Myths from Around the World*. New
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**Other including Native American books on myth:**

- Battle, Kemp P. Great American Folklore: Legends, Tales, Ballads and Superstitions from all Across America
- Burton, Richard F. Tales from the Arabian Nights
- The Complete Hans Christian Andersen Fairy Tales
- Caduto, Michael J. and Joseph Bruchac. Native American Stories (Myths and Legends)
- ---. and Joseph Bruchac. Keepers of the Animals
- ---. and Joseph Bruchac. Keepers of the Earth
- Erdoes, Richard and Alfonso Ortiz. American Indian Myths and Legends
- Feldmann, Susan The Storytelling Stone: Traditional Native American Myths and Tales
- Mackenzie, Donald A. India. Myths and Legends Series.
- Wolkstein, Diane, and Samuel Noah Kramer. Inanna, Queen of Heaven and Earth: Her Stories and Hymns from Sumer

**Other Helpful Databases to consult:**

- Humanities Abstracts
- MLA International Bibliography
- Annual Bibliography of English Language and Literature
- Ohio Link collection of databases under the subject of English

Check in the American literature section of the library—if the library uses Dewey Decimal system then ask for assistance—the call numbers range from 810.0 to 818 (literature continues on into the 900s) for Modern Critical Reviews.

For Internet sources, consult the Internet Public Library, or Yahoo.com, and others suggested by the reference librarian—NOTE: You are to consult only academic or scholarly websites that reveal criticism and analysis on your subject and not the general/non-academic sites. Ask the college librarian for assistance locating academic Internet sources on your topic.

Research Schedule:
Date assignment was received _____________________

1. Planning: To be completed by (Date):
   a. Start a research log
   b. Choose a suitable topic (via assignment sheet, etc.)
   c. Draft a preliminary thesis
   d. Decide on purpose and audience
   e. Draft a typed proposal
   f. Begin exploration:
      1f. Search for primary sources
      2f. Search for secondary sources
   g. Evaluate sources
   h. Decide on appropriate documentation style
   i. Gather other needed equipment

2. Researching:
   a. Start with a “search strategy”
   b. Decide on types of research:
      1b. Field research?
      2b. Interview?
      3b. Print and/or electronic sources?
   c. Schedule tasks and appointments if 1b or 2b?
   d. Consult Library of Congress Subject Headings per 3b?
      1d. Get library call numbers
      2d. Begin list of headings and key words
   e. Consult reference works
      1e. General reference works
      2e. Specialized
   g. Consult book catalogs on literary works
   h. Consult literary periodicals
   i. Decide on electronic sources: tapes, CD-ROMs, etc.
   j. Decide on using online literary sources
   k. Hand in note cards and preliminary bibliography

3. Compose (write) the research paper:
   a. Draft a preliminary thesis statement; expect to revise it
   b. Prepare a draft for instructor
   c. Prepare a topic sentence outline
   d. Use correct in-text citations
   e. Revise the paper
   f. Prepare for in-class peer-review session
   g. Conference with instructor
   h. Compile a list of works cited

Final draft is due in class on: _________________________________________
Short Research Proposal Guidelines

Read the following directions carefully: For the research paper, create a double space typed proposal written as an organized paragraph of no fewer than two-hundred (250) words that:

1. **States the purpose of the paper first**—use articulates such as “to explain,” “to analyze,” “to argue,” or “to reveal”; next, **introduce** your research topic: i.e., “The subject of this proposal involves a comparison of the Creation myths between the Navajo tribal nation and . . .”

2. **Presents some [brief] background information** on the topic of choice: “The American Navajo lived in . . .”

3. **Identifies both the primary and secondary sources to be used in the paper regarding the author.** Using Modern Language Association documentation format, identify specific titles of primary sources of the subject. If these include poetry, then identify authors and titles. Titles of short poems require quotations: “Simile” by N. Scott Momaday. Also, using MLA format, what specific secondary sources are written about the topic in question? Identify those specific titles. Titles of books, magazines, and newspaper periodicals require underlining: The Dictionary of Literary Biography (reference book), Shakespeare Studies (magazine periodical), or The Village Voice (newspaper periodical). Titles of essays and published interviews, titles of magazine and newspaper articles, or chapters of books and/or chapter articles all require quotations: “Harping on Racism,” (essay), “August Wilson on Drama: Black Experience in America,” (article out of a book chapter), or “Interview with Octavia Estelle Butler on Black Characters and Science Fiction” (published interview). Titles of plays and epic poems may use either underlining or italics: Oedipus the King (play), Dante’s Inferno (play), or Beowulf (epic poetry) or The Epic of Gilgamesh (epic poetry).

   • **NOTE:** Avoid using obscure or unidentifiable sources that do not at least have authors or titles in them; also, do not list a URL (Universal Resource Locator) address (i.e., www.yahoo.com) as this is insufficient and often not identifiable as to specific sources. Include only clearly identifiable Internet sources in this proposal. Websites/pages have titles!

4. **Clarifies your position or assertion as the writer/researcher (advocate? Informer?).** Write out your preliminary thesis (sentence) or opening hypothesis on your research topic that befits the research question.
Checklist for final draft of the research paper.
When you hand in your research paper, please make sure to include the following:

1. Title page (properly formatted in MLA style)  2.5 points
2. Topic sentence outline (properly formatted)  2.5 points
3. Text: Manuscript format in MLA style required:
   Full complete pages: Eight (8) minimum, no more than nine as per
   Introduction paragraph, Body paragraphs, Conclusion Paragraph  85 points
4. Works Cited (properly formatted in MLA style)  5 points
5. All process work (includes rough drafts [(2) minimum], photocopies of research articles,
   hard copies of Internet sources, graded proposal,
   graded bibliography note cards, graded topic
   sentence outline, citation note cards, and graded bibliography)  5 points

Total: NOTE: Points will be deducted if none of these items are handed in with the final draft of the research paper; also, each item receiving points in this list is required to be properly formatted in accordance with Modern Language Association documentation style.  100 points

1. Typed, properly formatted, stapled final draft done in the following order:
   a. An MLA-style cover page.
   b. Outline—use the topic sentence format.
   c. A minimum of eight (8)—no more than nine—full pages of text: The
      Introduction, Body, and Conclusion of the paper—typed double space.
   d. Works Cited.

2. Include the following as process approach work:
   a. Personal notes on the topic
   b. Graded bibliography note cards
   c. Citation note cards
   d. Photocopies of research articles, other pertinent research materials
   e. Preliminary research activities work that was collected and checked earlier
   f. A minimum of two (2) early, handwritten rough drafts, a minimum of two (2) typed drafts—including your draft from peer-review.
   g. The final draft academically-formatted and typed.

Place everything in your two-pocket essay assignment notebook folder for the research paper—no plastic covers please—keep the final draft separate from the process approach work.
3. Points will be deducted if the paper does not meet **all** requirements in this checklist.