

Summer Reading Assignment: Edith Hamilton's *Mythology* Pre-AP English I

All students planning to take Pre-AP English I need to read Edith Hamilton's *Mythology* in its entirety and complete the following assignment prior to the first day of school. Students should expect to turn in assignments the first day of class for a major grade. Students are responsible for an understanding of the material in the book when school begins as we will have class discussions, assignments, and a test the second week of school.

Why read Edith Hamilton's *Mythology*?

Greek Mythology is one of the most alluded to topics in all of literature. In order to have a better understanding of the literature read in high school, students need to have an awareness of Greek stories and characters.

Items needed to complete assignment: notebook paper or white paper if your assignment is typed, a personal copy of Edith Hamilton's *Mythology* to be used for this project and in class for the upcoming school year, and access to research materials either from a library or from internet access.

Assignments:

Part A: Archetype Analysis of Myths from *Mythology* (50 points):

As you read *Mythology*, look for the archetypes listed below. For this part of the assignment you will choose four (4) of the myths told in Edith Hamilton's *Mythology*. For each of the four myths you choose, identify one archetype from each main category (situational, symbolic, and character). Explain in complete sentences and in detail why the myth is an example of each of these archetypes in three analyses that are each about 100 words in length. You should write a title for each of the four and each analysis should be labeled as well.

For example, the title of one of your four reports might be "Archetypes in *Midas*." Then you might label the first section "Situational Archetype—The Fall," the second section "Symbolic Archetype—Light vs. Darkness", and finally the third section "Character Archetype—The Devil Figure." When you have finished writing your three analyses of *Midas*, you will move on to the second, third, and fourth myths you have chosen. Students may not use an archetype more than once in this assignment. This will take some time and planning. (It would be best to make notes as you read the book and to frequently refer to the archetype list while reading.) Please do NOT use this example as one of your four reports.

Situational Archetypes—

1. **The Quest**—describes the search for someone or some talisman which when found and brought back, will restore balance in a community, life to the waste land, or a person's health. The ultimate end.
2. **The Task**—refers to what superhuman feat must be accomplished in order to fulfill the ultimate goal. Specific test of challenging actions.
3. **The Journey**—sends the hero in search for some truth of information necessary to restore life, justice, and/or harmony to the kingdom. The journey includes a series of trials and tribulations the hero/ heroine face along the way. Usually, he/ she descends into a real or psychological hell and is forced to discover the blackest truths, quite often concerning his/ her own faults. Once the hero/ heroine is at this lowest level, he/ she must accept personal responsibility to return to the world of the living.
4. **The Initiation**—refers to a moment, usually psychological, in which an individual comes into maturity. She/ he gains a new awareness into the nature of circumstances and problems and understands his or her responsibility for trying to solve the dilemma. Typically, a her/ heroine receives a calling, a message, or signal that he or she must make sacrifices and become responsible for "getting involved" in the problem.

Often a hero/ heroine will deny and questions the calling and ultimately, in the Initiation, will accept responsibility.

5. **The Fall**—not to be confused with The Initiation, this archetype describes a descent in action from a higher to a lower state of being, an experience which might involve defilement, moral imperfection, and/ or loss of innocence. This fall is often accompanied by expulsion from a kind of paradise as a penalty for disobedience.

6. **Death and Rebirth**—the most common of all situational archetypes grows out of the parallel between the cycle of nature and the cycle of life. It refers to situations in which someone or something, concrete and or abstract dies, yet is accompanied by some sign of birth or rebirth.

7. **Battle between Good and Evil**—forces that represent good and evil battle against each other. Typically, good ultimately triumphs over evil despite great odds.

8. **The Unhealable Wound**—this wound, physical or psychological, cannot be healed fully. This would also indicate a loss of innocence and purity. Often these wounds' pains drive the sufferer to desperate measures of madness.

9. **The Magic Weapon**—sometimes connected with the Task, refers to a skilled individual hero's ability to use a piece of technology in order to combat evil, continue a journey, or to prove his or her identity as a chosen individual.

10. **Supernatural Intervention**—the gods often intervene on the side of the hero/ heroine.

Symbolic Archetypes-

1. **Light vs. Darkness**—Light usually suggests hope, renewal, or intellectual illumination; darkness implies the unknown, ignorance, or despair.

2. **Water vs. Desert**—Because water (rain, river, etc.) is necessary to life and growth, it commonly appears as a birth or rebirth symbol. Water is used in baptism services, which solemnizes spiritual births. Similarly, the appearance of rain in a work can suggest a character's spiritual birth.

3. **Heaven vs. Hell**—Humanity has traditionally associated parts of the universe not accessible to it with dwelling places of evil forces that govern the world. The skies and mountain tops house its gods; below the earth contain diabolic forces that inhabit its universe.

4. **Haven vs. Wilderness**—places of safety contrast sharply against the dangerous wilderness. Heroes are often sheltered for a time to regain health and resources.

5. **Fire vs. Ice**—Fire represents knowledge, light, life, and rebirth while ice like desert represents ignorance, darkness, sterility, and death.

Character Archetypes-

1. **The hero/ heroine**—this character is the one ultimately who may fulfill a necessary task and who will restore fertility, harmony, and/ or justice to a community. This character is the one who typically experiences an initiation, etc.

2. **Young person from the provinces**—this hero/ heroine is taken away as an infant or youth and raised by strangers. S/he later returns home as a stranger and able to recognize new problems and new solutions.

3. **The initiates**—these are young heroes who, prior to the Quest, must endure some training and ritual. They are usually innocent at this stage.

4. **Mentors**—these individuals serve as teachers or counselors to the initiates. Sometimes they work as role models and often serve as mother figures. They teach by example the skills necessary to survive the Journey and the Quest.

5. **Father-Son Conflict**—tension often results from separation during childhood or from an external source when the individuals meet as men and where the mentor often has a higher place in the affections of the hero than the natural parent. Sometimes the conflict is resolved in atonement.

6. **Hunting Group of companions**—These loyal companions are willing to face any number of perils in order to be together.

7. **Loyal Retainers**—these individuals are like the noble sidekicks to the hero. Their duty is to protect the hero. Often the retainer reflects the hero's nobility.

8. **Friendly Beast**—these animals assist the hero and reflect that nature is on their hero's side.

9. **The Devil Figure**—this character represents evil incarnate. She/ he may offer worldly goods, fame, or knowledge to the protagonist in exchange for possession of the soul or integrity. This figure's main aim is to oppose the hero in his or her quest.

10. **The Evil Figure with the Ultimately Good Heart**—this redeemable devil figure, or servant to the devil figure, is saved by the hero's nobility or good heart.

11. **The Outcast**—this figure is banished from a community for some crime (real or imagined). The outcast is usually destined to become a wanderer.

12. **Earth mother**—This character is symbolic of abundance; often spiritual and emotional nourishment to

those she contacts; often depicted in earth colors.

13. **The Temptress**—she is the one whose physical beauty may be the downfall of the hero.

14. **The Damsel in Distress**—this woman must be rescued by the hero. She may also be used as a trap, by the evil figure, to ensnare the hero.

15. **The Star-Crossed Lovers**—these two are engaged in a love affair that is fated to end in tragedy for one or both due to disapproval of society, friends, family, or the gods.

16. **The Creature of Nightmare**—this monster, physical or abstract, is summoned from the deepest parts of the human psyche to threaten the lives of the hero/ heroine. Often it is a desecration of the human body.

Part B: Archetype Analysis with Myths Found Through Research (50 points):

1. Research information about another culture's mythology. For example, you might research African mythology, Egyptian mythology, Hawaiian mythology, Norse mythology etc. Find two myths for that culture, and for each of the myths you find, you will identify one archetype from each category (situational, symbolic, and character).

2. Provide a one paragraph summary of the myth you chose with the name of the myth and the culture from which it comes.

3. In three separate paragraphs, explain why the myth is an example of each of the three archetypes in three analyses that are each about 100 words in length.

4. On the last page of each analysis document cite your source(s) with a properly formatted works cited entry. Use MLA documentation to cite all sources used in your research.

a. **Plagiarism is using others' ideas and words without clearly acknowledging the source of that information.**

b. **PLAGIARISM IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED. A portion of this project involves research, and therefore, you MUST provide documentation. If you do not, you will receive no credit for this assignment.**

Your assignment should be handwritten neatly in ink, or it may be typed if it is doublespaced and is in a plain (Times New Roman or Arial) 12 point font. Do not turn in your work in pencil or on paper torn from a spiral, as it will not be accepted. Refer to the check list on the last page of your assignment to ensure you have everything you need included in your project. Please place your completed assignment in a folder, but please do not submit a binder as they are too bulky for your English teacher to manage.

***Remember your completed assignment must be turned in during the first week of school, and you must bring your copy of *Mythology* to class each day until your teacher gives you different instructions.**

BTW: There will be an objective test covering the material in *Mythology* given at the end of the second week of school. 📖 Read the *whole* book!

Part A: Archetypes in Myths from *Mythology* Checklist

Myth #1

- Situational and explanation _____
- Symbolic and explanation _____
- Character and explanation _____

Myth #2

- Situational and explanation _____
- Symbolic and explanation _____
- Character and explanation _____

Myth #3

- Situational and explanation _____
- Symbolic and explanation _____
- Character and explanation _____

Myth #4

- Situational and explanation _____
- Symbolic and explanation _____
- Character and explanation _____

Part B: Archetypes in Researched Myths Checklist

Other Mythology's origin(s) _____

Myth #1 _____

- Situational and explanation _____
- Symbolic and explanation _____
- Character and explanation _____
- Documentation in MLA _____

Myth #2 _____

- Situational and explanation _____
- Symbolic and explanation _____
- Character and explanation _____
- Documentation MLA _____

Format

- Folder _____
- Written in ink or typed according to instructions _____
- Correct punctuation _____
- Correct grammar _____
- Correct spelling _____