

Elements of Myths



Definition


➤ Myth:

- A story of unknown authorship that people told long ago in an attempt to answer serious questions about how important things began and occurred.
- Stories that explain natural occurrences and express beliefs of right and wrong.

Myth Uses

- To explain natural phenomena or an occurrence.
- To explain the creation of the world.
- To teach people moral lessons.

Myth Uses contd.

- To explain some historical event.
 - To explain some ancient religious practices.
 - To reveal the common hopes and fears of mankind.
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Characteristics of Myths

- Myths usually have a religious sense.
- Myths are early man's desire to explain the universe.
 - Example: Apollo, the son of Zeus, drove the chariot of the sun across the sky.



Characteristics of Myths



- Myths generally involve nature or the adventure of gods/goddesses and heroes.

Gods and Goddesses



- The gods, goddesses, and heroes are super human in nature.
 - Example: Atlas bore the weight of the world and heavens on his shoulders

Gods and Goddesses

➤ Gods sometimes appear in disguised form.

- Examples:
 - Zeus came to Hera as a poor bird caught in a storm.
 - Athena appeared as an old woman and challenged Arachne to a weaving contest.



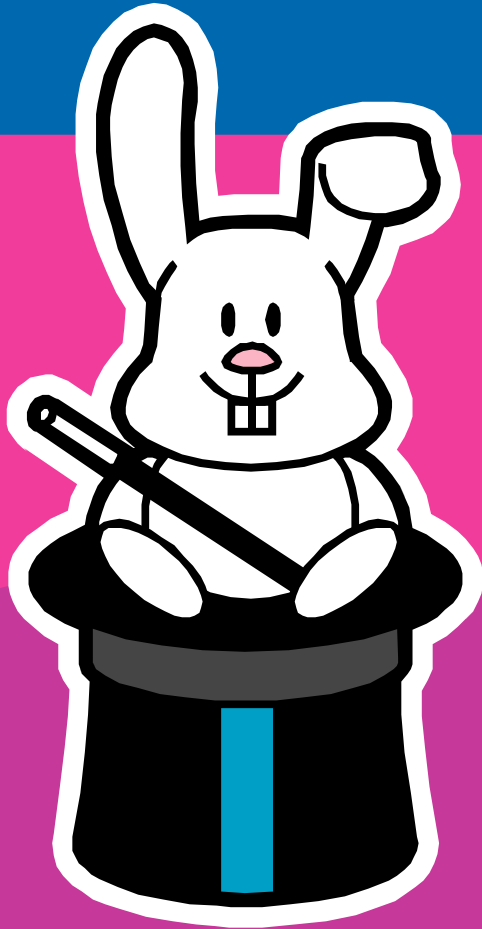
Gods and Goddesses

➤ Human emotions are experienced by the gods.

- Examples:
 - Hera was jealous.
 - Demeter mourned the loss of her daughter when her daughter was abducted.



Characteristics of Myths



- Magic is often present in myths.
 - Ex.: Athena came full-grown out of the forehead of Zeus.

Characteristics of Myths

- A metamorphosis may occur (transformation/change)
 - Example: Smyrna is turned into a myrrh tree.