



## Cultural Influences on Ideas of the Ideal

Lesson Length: Approximately 3 hours

Curriculum Alignment Code		GOAL 1	GOAL 2	GOAL 3	GOAL 4	GOAL 5	GOAL 6
		X	X			X	X
<b>Instructional Purpose</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To develop analytical and interpretive skills in literature</li> <li>To analyze cultural influences on ideas of the ideal</li> <li>To develop skills in comparing and contrasting</li> </ul>						

### Assignment Overview

- Read and discuss folk and fairy tales.
- Complete Literature Webs.
- Explore and write about cultural symbols.
- Have a journal conference.

#### Homework

- If necessary, complete writing about how and why a symbol represents the quest for utopia.
- Continue reading *Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury and working on related activities as assigned.
- Continue work on other ongoing assignments.

#### Extension

- Connect to Social Studies

### Materials

- Student Activity Pages 12A, 12B, 12C, 12D, 12E, and 12F**
- Anthologies of folk and fairy tales from various cultures
- Resources, library access, and/or Internet access for the investigation of the cultural symbols in folk and fairy tales

### Background/Context

Myths, legends, and fairy tales are all types of folk tales, and though they share certain qualities, they differ in their origin and purpose. Legends, for example, are highly embellished tales of historical events, though they may seem hardly distinguishable from the fictions of myth and fairy tales, which typically involve supernatural events and are set in a prehistoric "once upon a time." Myths tend to be concerned with existential truths and the exploits of gods, goddesses, and heroes; whereas fairy tales aim simply to entertain, and their characters are more varied, including royalty and nobility, more homely folk, and animals. Nevertheless, fairy tales tend to be symbolically complex and often represent the quest for some ideal of virtue, beauty, or social harmony.

# 1. Read and Discuss Folk and Fairy Tales

- Distribute anthologies of folk and fairy tales for students to explore. Tell them to select one story that represents the quest for the ideal to investigate in depth.
- Have students turn to **Student Activity Page 12A**. Tell them to complete the Literature Web for the story they selected.
- Invite students to share and discuss their stories and webs either with the whole class or with a small group of students who investigated the same story.
- Divide the class into small groups. Have each group select another folk or fairy tale that represents the quest for the ideal. Tell students to work with their group to complete the Literature Web on **Student Activity Page 12B** for this story.
- Have students turn to **Student Activity Page 12C**. Read and discuss the directions, and give students time to work with their group to complete the chart.
- Invite groups to share and discuss their charts with the class.



## Tip

Be sure that students provide specific responses reflecting major themes rather than minor details of the stories.

# 2. Explore Cultural Symbols

- Have students turn to **Student Activity Page 12D**. Read and discuss the directions. Provide students with resources, library access, and/or Internet access for their investigation of the cultural symbols in folk and fairy tales.
- Invite students to share and discuss their findings with the rest of the class. Focus the discussion on how understanding the cultural symbols involved in a story deepens understanding of the story as a whole.
- Ask students: Now that you know more about the cultures in which these stories originated,

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Activity 12A**

**Literature Web**

**Directions:** Complete the Literature Web for the folk or fairy tale you selected.

<b>Key Words</b> _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	<b>Feelings</b> _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
<b>Ideas</b> _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	<b>Title</b> _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
<b>Images/Symbols</b> _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	
<b>Structure</b> _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	

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**Activity 12B**

**Literature Web**

**Directions:** Complete the Literature Web for the folk or fairy tale your group selected.

<b>Key Words</b> _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	<b>Feelings</b> _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
<b>Ideas</b> _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	<b>Title</b> _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
<b>Images/Symbols</b> _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	
<b>Structure</b> _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	

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**Activity**  
**12C**

**Compare and Contrast Chart**

**Directions:** Complete the chart to compare a folk or fairy tale you read and discussed with the class with one that you recall from when you were younger. Provide specific responses, but be sure that your responses reflect major themes rather than minor details.

<b>How does each story relate to the theme of utopia and changing ideas of the ideal?</b>
<b>Compare the stories. How are they similar? What elements do they share?</b>
<b>Contrast the stories. How are they different? What elements are in contrast?</b>
<b>What do the symbols in each story demonstrate about the culture in which the story originates?</b>

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how would you say that these stories relate to the theme of utopia and changing ideas of the ideal?

### 3. Write About Cultural Symbols

- Have students work with their group to identify and list objects and images in their own culture (either American culture or that of their personal heritage) that symbolize the striving for utopia or ideas of the ideal.
- Have students select one of the symbols and write either an essay explaining how and why it represents the quest for utopia in their culture or a story using the symbol as representative of the quest.



#### Tip

Encourage students who decide to write an essay to use the Hamburger Model on **Student Activity Page 12E** to help them plan their writing.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Activity**  
**12D**

**Cultural Symbols in a Folk or Fairy Tale**

**Directions:** Select two or three of the important objects or images in one of the folk or fairy tales you read. Identify the symbolic meaning of each object or image in the culture from which the folk or fairy tale originated. Describe how the symbolic meaning of each object or image deepens your understanding of the story.

Object or Image	Symbolic Meaning	How the Symbolic Meaning Affects the Meaning of the Story

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**Activity**  
**12E**

**Hamburger Model: Symbols of the Ideal**

**Directions:** Use the Hamburger Model to plan an essay explaining how and why a cultural symbol represents the quest for utopia in your culture. Draft your essay on a separate sheet of paper.

<b>Introduction (State your opinion.)</b>		
<b>Elaboration</b>	<b>Elaboration</b>	<b>Elaboration</b>
<b>Reason</b>	<b>Reason</b>	<b>Reason</b>
<b>Elaboration</b>	<b>Elaboration</b>	<b>Elaboration</b>
<b>Conclusion</b>		

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- After students plan, draft, revise, edit, and complete their pieces, collect them in a class book.

## 4. Have a Journal Conference

- If you have not already done so this week, meet with students individually to discuss their experiences with the independent reading and to evaluate their progress in their journals. Use the Journal Response Rubric in Section 2 under “Assessment” to evaluate students’ work and suggest areas for improvement and exploration.



## Homework

- If necessary, have students complete their writing about how and why a symbol represents the quest for utopia.
- Have students continue reading *Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury and working on related activities as assigned. This independent reading assignment is addressed in Lesson 13.
- Remind students to continue work on their other ongoing assignments: their exploration of literary terms, including preparations to teach two terms (for Lesson 18); the unit research project (for Lesson 21); and completing “Inspecting Our Own Ideas: Student Grammar Study” (for Lesson 23).



## Notes to Teacher

- If possible, invite a guest speaker or panel with expertise on the symbols of the cultures explored to share information with the class and respond to questions.
- Sources of folk and fairy tales include *Global Tales: Stories from Many Cultures*, edited by Michael Marland and *The World Anthology* edited by Robert Goodman and Roger Potter.
- Sources on cultural symbolism and different ways of life include books by Peter Menzel, including *Material World: A Global Family Portrait*, *Women in the Material World*, and *Hungry Planet: What the World Eats*. See [www.menzelphoto.com/books/mw.html](http://www.menzelphoto.com/books/mw.html) for more information.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



### Activity

12F

### Cultural Myths and Realities

**Directions:** Use the chart to organize your findings about cultural myths and historical realities in the United States.

Myth	Historical Reality	Possible Origins or Reasons for the Myth

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## Extensions

Connect to

### Social Studies

- Though visions of future utopias have a strong pull, for many, utopia exists in a mythical past. Have students explore and compare historical realities in the United States with cultural myths about the past. They may investigate cultural myths about society in books such as *The Way We Never Were: American Families and the Nostalgia Trap* by Stephanie Coontz, or they may read the biography of a historical American hero. Tell them to use **Student Activity Page 12F** to organize their findings.

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## Activity 12A

### Literature Web

**Directions:** Complete the Literature Web for the folk or fairy tale you selected.

Key Words	Feelings
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

  

Ideas	Title	Images/Symbols
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

  

Structure
_____
_____
_____
_____

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## Activity 12B

### Literature Web

**Directions:** Complete the Literature Web for the folk or fairy tale your group selected.

Key Words	Feelings
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

  

Ideas	Title	Images/Symbols
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

  

Structure
_____
_____
_____
_____

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## Activity 12C

### Compare and Contrast Chart

**Directions:** Complete the chart to compare a folk or fairy tale you read and discussed with the class with one that you recall from when you were younger. Provide specific responses, but be sure that your responses reflect major themes rather than minor details.

<b>How does each story relate to the theme of utopia and changing ideas of the ideal?</b>
<b>Compare the stories. How are they similar? What elements do they share?</b>
<b>Contrast the stories. How are they different? What elements are in contrast?</b>
<b>What do the symbols in each story demonstrate about the culture in which the story originates?</b>



Activity  
12D

Cultural Symbols in  
a Folk or Fairy Tale

**Directions:** Select two or three of the important objects or images in one of the folk or fairy tales you read. Identify the symbolic meaning of each object or image in the culture from which the folk or fairy tale originated. Describe how the symbolic meaning of each object or image deepens your understanding of the story.

Object or Image	Symbolic Meaning	How the Symbolic Meaning Affects the Meaning of the Story



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Hamburger Model: Symbols of the Ideal



## Activity 12E

**Directions:** Use the Hamburger Model to plan an essay explaining how and why a cultural symbol represents the quest for utopia in your culture. Draft your essay on a separate sheet of paper.

Introduction (State your opinion.)		
<hr/> <hr/>		
<b>Elaboration</b>	<b>Elaboration</b>	<b>Elaboration</b>
<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<b>Reason</b>	<b>Reason</b>	<b>Reason</b>
<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<b>Elaboration</b>	<b>Elaboration</b>	<b>Elaboration</b>
<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<b>Conclusion</b>		
<hr/> <hr/>		



**Activity**  
**12F**

**Cultural Myths and Realities**

**Directions:** Use the chart to organize your findings about cultural myths and historical realities in the United States.

Myth	Historical Reality	Possible Origins or Reasons for the Myth

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