



Myth Making

Activity: Myth Making

Category: Group Activity/Just for Fun!

Series: Scary and Spooky (12 Ancient Mysteries)

Supplies

- *12 Ancient Mysteries*
- The book's 12StoryLibrary.com page: <http://www.12storylibrary.com/non-fiction/scary-and-spooky/12-ancient-mysteries/>
 - The “Ancient Legends and Artifacts” web resource
- Pencils and paper

Prep

Read Chapter 2 of *12 Ancient Mysteries*, which describes the lost city of Atlantis, or have the students read it on their own. Also read the section of the “Ancient Legends and Artifacts” web resource about Atlantis: <http://science.nationalgeographic.com/science/archaeology/atlantis/>

Directions

Choose a volunteer to read the second bullet point of the Fact Sheet on p.28 of *12 Ancient Mysteries*: “Myths and other stories hint at past events. But it is hard to know which parts are true and which were elaborated over time. Other myths are symbolic and deal with aspects of religion or society. They are not meant to tell about real events.”

Then ask the following questions:

- What parts of the story of Atlantis are easiest for you to believe? What parts of the story are harder to believe?
- Do you think that the city of Atlantis existed?
- What theme or moral could be drawn from the story of Atlantis?
- Why do you think people keep telling this story?

Explain that as stories are repeated, people sometimes add new elements to make them more exciting. Write a short story (just a few paragraphs) about something true that happened to your class. Pass this story around the classroom and have each student rewrite a version of the story, changing or adding just one or two details. Read the resulting story out loud to the class and ask the following questions:

- How did our story change as it was repeated?
- How easy would it be for someone who read this final version to figure out what actually happened?
- How does this kind of changing information affect our ability to solve ancient mysteries?

Evaluation

Could the students correctly answer the questions? Did each student create a unique version of the class myth? Did each student's version use correct grammar and punctuation? RL 4.4, W 4.4

Purpose

To help students practice identifying the theme or moral of a story, as well as to examine the varying reliability of historical sources and the way this influences our knowledge of past events.