

Literacy Task 1:

Remind yourself of the features of a myth

Read The Man who nearly became fishpaste annotating as you read.

Fill in the Tell Me Sheet



Ten Characteristics of a Myth

1. A myth is a story that is, or was considered, a true explanation of the natural world and how it came to be.

2. **Characters** are often non-human and are typically gods, goddesses, supernatural beings or mystical “fist people.”

3. **Setting** is typically ancient, or prior to the time when actual records were kept. Myths are typically set in a world very similar to our own, but with supernatural monsters or areas.

4. **The plot** of a myth may take place between a supernatural world and our present day world. Myths do this to highlight the basic human behaviors that are essential in any setting.

5. Myths possess events that bend or break natural laws. This is often done to magnify the “super-naturalness” of the mythical world.

6. Promotes “Social Action”—myths try to tell people how to act and live. Core values such as individualism, family and community are often instilled in mythical heroes.

7. Myths have sense of **mystery, or the unknown**.

8. **Dualities** (or complete opposites such as night/day, good/evil) often play important roles in the plot of a myth.

9. **Myths often have an emphasis on language...** Mythical heroes are often sophisticated storytellers.

10. **Myths are often metaphoric**—that is, myths are created to comment or analyze a real world event. Real world questions that myths often attempt to answer are:

- Why are we here?
- Who are we?
- Why are we living? What is our purpose?





The Man Who Nearly Became Fishpaste

One day in the autumn of the year AD 759 the staff of a certain magistrate's court were taking their ease as they waited for lunch. Two men were sitting out in the courtyard playing chess. They looked up as a servant came in at the gate.

'Well done, Chang Pi,' said one of the two to the servant, and nodded his head in approval of the fish the man had bought for their lunch. It was a splendid fat carp, which Chang Pi carried by a string threaded through its gills. The chess-player turned to his companion and said, 'There'll be three or four pounds apiece out of that fellow!'

The other smiled and nodded. Idly he watched the servant cross the courtyard. Then he said in surprise, 'Do you know, I believe that fish knows what is going to happen to it! Look, there are tears running down from its eyes, and its mouth is moving—perhaps it's praying!'

And he called to those inside the residence to look at the praying fish. One officer was eating peaches from a

bowl and two more were playing a game of dice as they sat in the hall, and they agreed it was a most extraordinary thing that a fish should look for all the world as though it were trying to talk to them. The servant Chang Pi smiled at their nonsense and bore his precious purchase proudly off into the kitchen to deliver to the cook.

Again the officers were distracted from their idle pursuits. This time it was by a long sigh which issued from a small side-room opening off the hall. In this room lay the assistant magistrate Hsüeh Wei. Several weeks previously this man had been stricken by a sudden fever. For seven days he had tossed and turned in delirium. At the end of this time he lay pale and exhausted on his bed, and those who attended him thought that his end had come. There was no real sign of life; and yet there was a little warmth about his heart, and so there could be no question of burying him. For twenty days more he had lain there, watched night and day. And now this sigh had come from him. His colleagues rushed into the room. Tears of joy streamed down their cheeks as they saw him sitting up in bed, to all appearances in the best of health.

'How long have I been away from you?' asked the man who had been so sick.

'More than twenty days,' came the reply.

His next question startled them: 'Have you been eating fishpaste?'

'We were just about to eat some,' they answered. 'But how did you know that?'

'Wait a minute. Did you send the servant Chang Pi to buy the fish?'

More mystified than ever they replied that they had. Hsüeh Wei turned to the servant: 'You went to the fisherman Chao Kan, who had caught a large carp. But he

hid it in the reeds and offered you a small one. Then you searched and found the big carp, which you brought back with you. When you returned to this residence, these two gentlemen here were playing chess, those two gentlemen were playing dice, and that gentleman was eating peaches. You told them how Chao Kan had tried to hide the big carp, and they gave orders that he should be beaten. Then you delivered the carp to the cook, who was delighted with it and killed it. All this is true, is it not?

All agreed that Hsüeh Wei had described exactly what had happened.

'But how did you know all this?' they asked him.

'That carp,' said Hsüeh Wei, 'was me.'

And he proceeded to tell them his story.

'When first I fell ill,' he said, 'I had a raging fever. I felt I would do anything to obtain some relief from the heat. In the end I took my stick and went out for a walk.'

Observing the surprise on the faces of his audience—for he had not left his bed since the illness began—he went on, 'It did not seem like a dream, and yet I suppose it must have been. I left the city and made for the hills, feeling as happy as a bird released from its cage. When I grew tired of walking in the hills I came down again and followed the bank of a river. The water was clear and sparkling in the sunlight. Eventually I came to a pool formed by the widening of the river. Here the water was still and deep, cool and inviting. I could not resist the temptation—in the end I took off my clothes and plunged in. I have not swum since I was a boy, although I was an expert then; but as I glided through the water I realized that this was just what I had been longing for. I began to regret that I was not a fish, so that I could swim with

perfect ease. "If only I could become a fish!" I said to myself.

Immediately a fish which was swimming by said to me, "If that is really what you would like to be, it's quite easy to arrange."

The fish swam off; and before long a strange creature appeared. It had the head of a fish but the body of a man. It was several feet tall, and rode on the back of a giant salamander. Several dozen fish swam in its train. This creature told me of a proclamation by the Lord of the Rivers. He said that creatures of land and water must normally follow different ways. But since I had tired of land and wished to find freedom in the waters, my desire should be granted and I might take the form of a golden carp. But I must be careful neither to cause damage by stirring up the waves and overturning boats, nor to risk my safety by swallowing bait. By doing these things I should bring disgrace on my kind.

I now discovered that I had the form of a handsome golden carp. I shot through the water with ease and grace. I played in and out of the waves, or dived down to the still depths, roaming just as I liked through the rivers and lakes. Only, since I had been given that one particular pool as my home, I must return there every evening.

Suddenly one day I began to feel hungry. I could find nothing to eat. I followed a boat downstream, until at length I saw the fisherman Chao Kan dangling his bait in the water. I caught the scent of it—it was delicious. Although I clearly remembered that I must not take bait, somehow or other I found myself nosing it. Then I said to myself, "I am a man, not a fish. I have only taken on the form of a carp for the time being. I certainly must not allow myself to swallow Chao Kan's bait when I know

perfectly well that there is a hook hidden in the middle of it." And so I swam away a little. But before long I was hungrier than ever. I began to reason with myself: "Look here, you are an official, you're only playing at being a fish. Supposing you do swallow the hook—Chao Kan isn't going to kill you!"

"Confident that Chao Kan would arrange for me to be taken back to this residence, I swam up to the bait again and swallowed it, hook and all. Chao Kan, who is a very clever fisherman indeed, hauled me in to the bank. I called out to him, but he didn't seem to hear me. Instead, he threaded a cord through my gills—that is to say, my cheeks—and tied the other end to a clump of reeds.

Then along came the servant Chang Pi, who said, "The officials would like a fish, and they want a big one."

"I haven't caught any big ones," Chao Kan lied. "You can have a small one of ten pounds or so."

"It has to be a big one—what use is a little one?" said Chang Pi; and he looked in the reeds and found me and lifted me out.

"I am the assistant magistrate," said I to Chang Pi. "I have merely changed myself into a carp for the time being so as to swim about more easily. Why don't you treat me with the respect due to your superior?"

But Chang Pi took not the slightest notice. He began to carry me back here. I shouted and stormed at him but he didn't even look at me. As we entered the courtyard I saw two of you sitting there playing chess. I called out at the top of my voice, but there was no response. Only, one of you turned to the other and said, "There'll be three or four pounds apiece out of that fellow!" Then I saw two more of you playing dice, and another one eating peaches.

and all of you were delighted with the size of me. Chang Pi told you how Chao Kan had tried to hide me and substitute a smaller fish, and you ordered him to be beaten.

In desperation I shouted to you, "Gentlemen, I am your colleague. How can you have the heart to kill me?" I wept and sobbed, but it was all to no avail—you handed me over to the cook. He laid me on his slab and took up his knife, and even as I was pleading with him to spare my life, down came the knife and off rolled my head. I made one dash back to my own body—and here I am.

All remembered how they had noticed the fish's mouth moving—Chao Kan when he had hauled it in, Chang Pi when he had lifted it up, the officials playing chess and dice, the cook in the kitchen; yet none of them had heard a sound.

But not one of them was ever able to touch fishpaste again for the rest of his life.

Context: Tales of China- The Man who Nearly Became Fishpaste

L.I. to be able to compare with narratives from a similar genre



Success Criteria:

- have other texts we have read to refer to
- Use quotes to back up arguments



Likes and dislikes	Features of a myth you noted
Connections in other myths you have read so far	

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Literacy Task 2:
To be able to recognise and use
modal verbs

What is a modal verb?

It is a verb that expresses the need or possibility of something.



Modal Verbs

Pangu and the Egg

Pangu would have
to stay between
the Ying and Yang
to save the world
from itself!

*must, shall, will,
should, would, can,
could, ought, may
and might*



(41) 后羿愤怒极了，大声喝道：“快点滚回去，谁不听劝告，我就射死谁！”“你敢，你敢！你碰掉我们一根毛，我爸爸就要你命！”九个太阳神齐声辱骂着。

The Greatest Archer

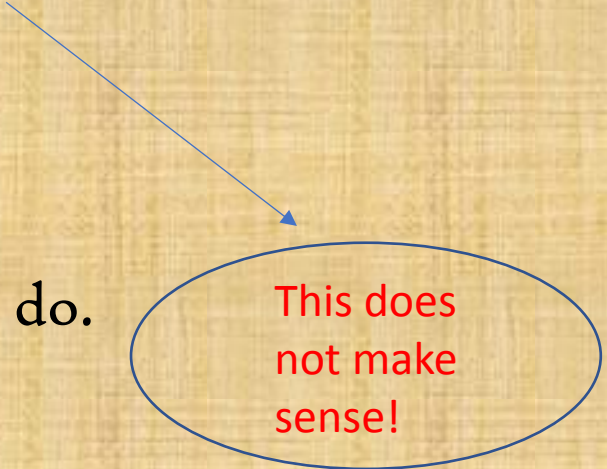
Those foolish
sons ought to have
been more wary of
the skills of the
Greatest Archer.

Modal verbs are helper verbs

Pangu would have to stay between the Ying and Yang to save the world from itself!

Pangu have to stay between the Ying and Yang to save the world from itself!

Would tells us that this would be necessary for Pangu to do.



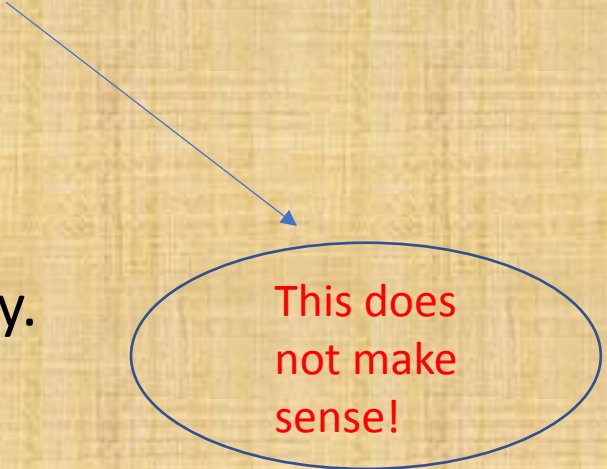
This does
not make
sense!

Modal verbs are helper verbs

Those foolish sons ought to have been more wary of the skills of the Greatest Archer.

Those foolish sons to have been more wary of the skills of the Greatest Archer.

Ought tells us that the sons would be wise to be more wary.



This does
not make
sense!

Modal verbs can't be the only verbs in the sentence

I will do...

You must
go...

They ought
to stay...

- What are the main verbs here?
- Why do we use modal verbs as well here?

Here are some examples of
sentences using the texts we have
been reading

As the sharp arrow flew through the sky, Yi must have known that the last malevolent son would soon be a mere crow like his brothers.

Success Criteria

- Modal verbs
- High level vocabulary
- Clauses
- High level punctuation

Here are some examples of
sentences using the texts we have
been reading

Contrary to Li Ching's beliefs, he should have listened to the old woman and then the village people, who had respected him so much, wouldn't have been left in such dire circumstances.

- Success Criteria
- Modal verbs
 - High level vocabulary
 - Clauses
 - High level punctuation

Now try writing your modal sentences based on The Man Who Nearly Became Fishpaste. Make sure you are using clauses and high level punctuation as well.

Literacy Task 3:
To be able to comment on a
text

Scaffold

Context: The Man Who Nearly Became Fish paste

To be able to comment on a text

We have been reading...

It is about...

The thing that struck me most...

There is no doubt that myths do have messages for us...

Overall I think that...

Success Criteria:

- Comment on The Man Who Nearly Became Fish paste
- Include quotations
- Comment on its message for the world today
- Use Y5 writing targets

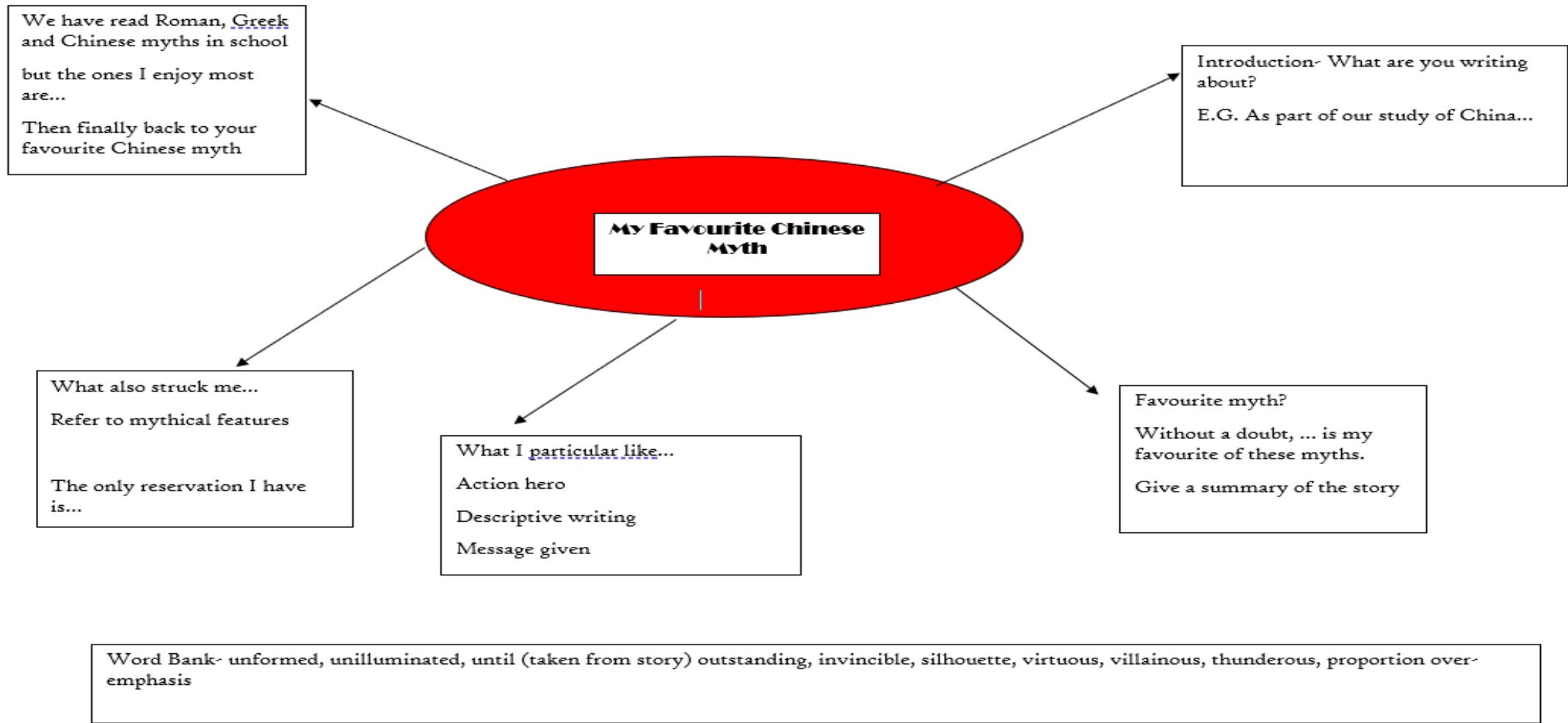


Literacy Task 4:
To be able to plan an
argument on a text



Context: Tales of China

L.I. to be able to plan an argument for which is the best myth





Context: Tales of China

L.I. to be able to plan an argument for which is the best myth

Then finally back to your favourite Chinese myth

Introduction- What are you writing about?

My Favourite Chinese Myth

What also struck me...
Refer to mythical features

The only reservation I have is...

What I particular like...

Favourite myth?

Give a summary of the story

Word Bank-

Literacy Task 5:
To be able to write an
argument on a text

Modelled Argument

As part of our wonderful study of China this term, we have been reading about the exploits of various characters in Chinese Mythology.

Whether it is the wide-standing giant of a man, Yi, Li Chang, who thought he knew better than the rainmaking gods, or the eighteen thousand year sleeping giant Pan Gu or P'an Ku depending on the story you are reading- they are all defending against the villainous nature of humans and gods a like.

Without a doubt, Heaven and Earth and Man is my favourite Chinese myth. The story of the virtuous Pan Gu comes out of the world's chaos and its strength in telling cannot be over-emphasised. For us the unimaginable story of how a man held apart the Ying and the Yang for eighteen thousand year gives us a magnificent creation story.

What I particularly like about the story...

Adverbial phrase

Power of three

Use of hyphenated words

parenthesis

Conjunctions

Ambitious vocabulary

Adverbs for emphasis

Can you get all the writing targets into your writing?

Now it's your turn remember to use
and refer to your plan!

Good luck!