

Functions of the Myths

- Purpose to show beliefs: nature of physical world, social order and appropriate behavior human nature and the problem of good and evil, preservation of spiritual beliefs, blending of science and religion
- Characteristic of NA Myths: Major rules often played by animals people were ordinary animals and places were divine, spiritual outlook based on four directions (North, South, East and West), Early Myths → Native legends, oral stories/songs passed down for many generations
- Cultures oral tradition: Cultures without a written language everything passed down by mouth
- Features of Native language: Stories teach spiritual lessons part of their histories, powerful metaphors, use archetypes→ certain type of character that's used in stories over time
- Common Themes:
 - Fortunate fall→ creation story, movement from a sky world to water world,
 - Earth diver myth usually involving the Earth, theft of fire
 - Emergence of myth: movement of beings from under surface to the surface of the earth.

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