



Myths and Hero Tales: A Cross-Cultural Guide to Literature for Children and Young Adults

Agnes Regan Perkins

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This one-stop cross-cultural selective guide to recent retellings of myths and hero tales for children and young adults will enable teachers and library media specialists to select comparative myths and tales from various, mostly non-European cultures. The focus is on stories from Native America, Asia, Africa, the Middle East, Central and South America, and Oceania. The Guide contains extensively annotated entries on 189 books of retellings of myths and hero tales, both ancient and modern, from around the world published between 1985 and 1996. Represented are 1,455 stories suitable for use with young people from mid-elementary through high school.

The entries, arranged alphabetically by writer, contain complete bibliographic data, age and grade levels, and evaluative annotations. Seven indexes?title, author, illustrator, culture, story type, name, and grade level?make searching easy. The story type index will enable teachers to select comparative myths and tales from different cultures on more than 50 types of myths and hero tales. Among the many myth types cited are origin of human beings and the world, comparative social customs and rituals, natural and heavenly phenomena, animal appearance and behavior, searches and quests, and tricksters. Among the hero tale types are fools and buffoons, kings and queens, warriors, monster slayers, important female figures, magicians, voyagers and adventurers, and spiritual leaders. The Guide concludes with a bibliography of retellings published earlier that have come to be considered standard works.

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