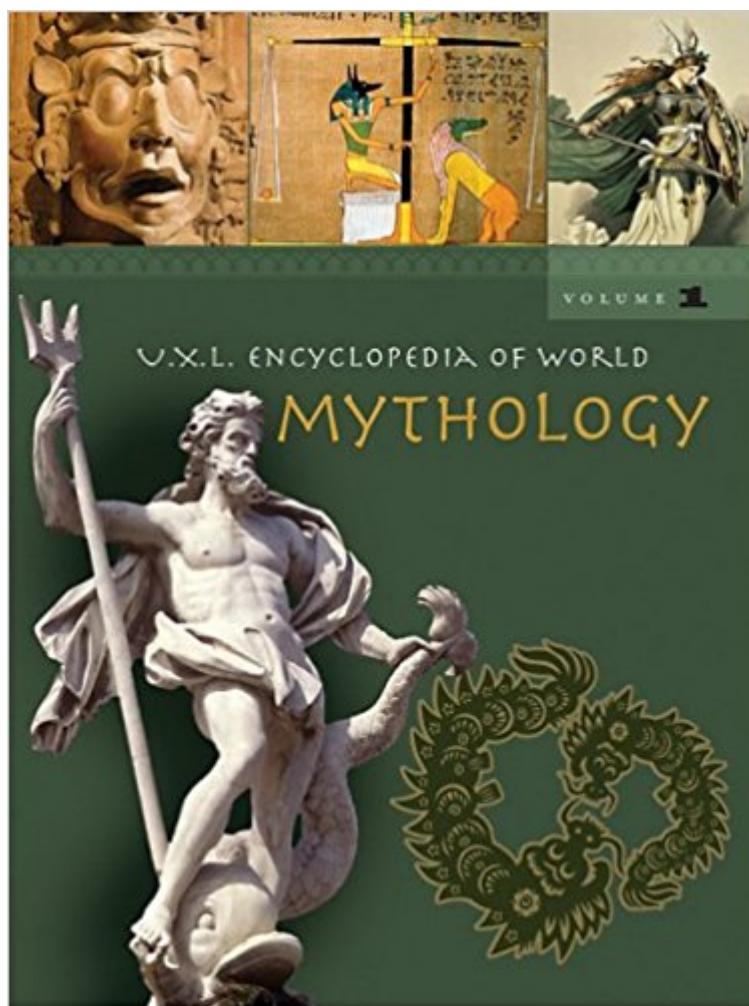


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UXL Encyclopedia Of World Mythology



Synopsis

A culture's mythology is more than just a collection of stories and characters. When students examine myths in classes across the curriculum or when myths and heroes come up in everyday life, they act as a window into the beliefs and values of ancient civilizations. This new five-volume set from U-X-L will help students with the plot points, the historical context, and the mythological allusions they need to fully understand how mythologies not only reflect cultures of old but also remain meaningful in society today.

Book Information

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Age Range: 12 - 17 years

Grade Level: 7 - 12

Customer Reviews

This five-volume set brings clarity out of confusion for the middle and high school student studying world mythology. The 300 A-to-Z entries from 40-plus cultures are grouped into five categories (character, deity, myth, theme, and culture) and come with a reader's guide that explores major themes in world mythology. Written clearly and concisely through the lens of world culture and integrating a multidisciplinary and cross-cultural view, the set has a distinct freshness and succinctness, yet it provides rubrics for comparison across entries. When shaped in the context of culture and societal norms, mythology functions as a mirror, which imitates the world from which it is derived. Therefore, topics covering values, geographic location, natural resources, technological state, and social organization shape the subjects in overarching themes congruent with a worldview.

BOTTOM LINE A wonderful source serving the needs of middle or high schools whether part of a public, school, or general library collection, this work is even more comprehensive than the recently revised Facts On File Encyclopedia of World Mythology and Legend (see the review, p. 100) and more in-depth than UXL's two-volume Junior Worldmark Encyclopedia of World Cultures (1999). [Available electronically via Gale Virtual Reference Library; go to www.gale.com/gvrl for information on ebook pricing.] "Marianne E. Giltrud, Catholic Univ. of America, Washington, DC Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

Like other exemplary UXL encyclopedia publications, each volume in this set exploring world mythology contains the entire set's table of contents and index, making for ease of access. Also standard is a plethora of additional enrichment content such as activities and time lines. In a "Z" format, the set provides more than 300 entries for five content areas: characters, deities, myths, themes, and cultures (for example, Finnish mythology). The entries generally range from three to four pages. Lengthier coverage is given when needed. Each entry (identified by an icon to indicate content type) offers an overview and a discussion that may include a summary of related deities and characters and major myths, followed by sections on cultural context, themes and symbols, and representations in literature and art. Interspersed on pages are sidebars and fact boxes and black-and-white photographs or representative illustrations. Eight pages of color reproductions are bound in the middle of each volume. Boldface words found in the text and see also references direct the inquisitive learner to related entries. Each entry also has a "Read, Write, Think, Discuss" section to jump-start additional discussion or independent investigation. In addition to the alphabetical table of contents, a "Table of Contents by Culture" groups topics into one of 45 civilizations, including Africa, Celtic, and Toltec. A reader's guide provides an overview to facilitate optimal use of references. The "Timeline of World Mythology" spans key dates from 3400 BCE to 1880. A glossary defines key terms, and "Where to Learn More" provides a bibliography of supplemental fiction and nonfiction titles as well as Web sites. What this reviewer found most notable was "Research and Activity Ideas": nine enrichment activities for students and teachers. Activities include creating a "Pageant of Gods" to help characterize deity figures, making an Andean panpipe, and "most unusual" mummifying a chicken. Lists of all materials required for students and teachers are supplied. Recommended for middle- and high-school libraries and school libraries. Grades 7-12. --Cheryl Ward

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