



# HOW TO WRITE... A CREATION MYTH

## Setting

in the past, long, long ago;  
will be set initially in the heavens  
or underworld, and then Earth.

## Characters

a god or goddess with  
special powers;  
sometimes a strange or  
evil beast.

## Problem

a world must be created.



What creation myths do  
you know?

**LO: I am learning to identify the features of a text.**

*Read the different creation stories on the next slides.*

*Your job is to find the elements of a creation myth:*

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Christianity/Judaism/Islam

Genesis, the first book of the Jewish Torah and the Christian Bible, contains two origin stories, both of which are accepted as the creation of the world by today's Jewish, Christian and Islamic faiths.

In the first, God says, "Let there be light," and light appears. In six days, he creates the sky, the land, plants, the sun and moon, animals, and all creatures, including humans. To all he says, "Be fruitful and multiply," which they do. On the seventh day God rests, contemplates his handiwork, and gives himself a good evaluation.

In the second story, God creates the first man, Adam, from the earth. He makes a garden in Eden for Adam, but forbids him to eat fruit from the "Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil." Adam names the animals but remains lonely. God makes Adam sleep and makes one of his ribs into the first woman, Eve. A talking serpent persuades her to eat the forbidden fruit, and she convinces Adam to do likewise. When God finds out, he drives them from the garden and makes man mortal.

### The Greeks and Titans

Out of the chaos of the beginning of time, came the earliest gods/goddesses, including Gaia (mother earth). Gaia created Uranus, the sky, to cover herself.

They produced a bizarre collection of gods and monsters, including monsters with 50 heads and a hundred hands, and the Cyclopes.

Next came the gods known as the Titans, 6 sons and 6 daughters. The youngest son was Cronus. Uranus, despising his monstrous children, imprisoned them in Tartarus, the earth's bowels.

Cronus went on to create the next generation of gods, Zeus and the Olympians.

## Hindu

The Hindu cosmology contains many myths of creation, and the principal players have risen and fallen in importance over the centuries. The earliest tells of a gigantic being, Purusha, possessing a thousand heads, eyes, and feet. He enveloped the earth and extended beyond it. When the gods sacrificed Purusha, his body produced butter, which gave rise to the birds and animals. His body transformed into the world's elements, and the gods Agni, Vayu, and Indra. Also, the four castes of Hindu society were created from his body: the priests, warriors, general population, and the servants.

Another creation story of Hindu's is the trinity of Brahma (the creator), Vishnu (the preserver), and Shiva (the destroyer). Brahma appears in a lotus sprouting from the belly of the sleeping Vishnu. Brahma creates the universe, which lasts for one of his days, or 4.32 billion years. Then Shiva destroys the universe and the cycle restarts.



### China

A cosmic egg floated within the timeless void, containing the opposing forces of yin and yang. After eons of incubation, the first being, Pan-gu emerged. The heavy parts (yin) of the egg drifted downwards, forming the earth. The lighter parts (yang) rose to form the sky. Pan-gu, fearing the parts might re-form, stood upon the earth and held up the sky. He grew 10 feet per day for 18,000 years, until the sky was 30,000 miles high. His work completed, he died. His parts transformed into elements of the universe, whether animals, weather phenomena, or celestial bodies.

Some say the fleas on him became humans, but there is another explanation. The goddess Nuwa was lonely, so she fashioned men out of mud from the Yellow River. These first humans delighted her, but took long to make, so she flung muddy droplets over the earth, each one becoming a new person. These hastily-made people became the commoners, with the earlier ones being the nobles.



### Ancient Egypt

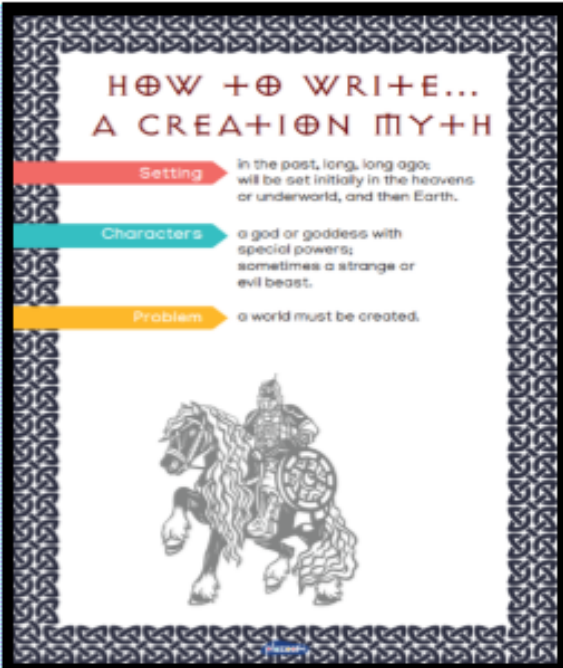
The ancient Egyptians had several creation myths. All begin with the swirling, chaotic waters of Nu (or Nun). Atum willed himself into being, and then created a hill, otherwise there'd be no place for him to stand. Atum possessed an all-seeing eye. Atum spat out a son, Shu, god of the air. Atum then vomited up a daughter, Tefnut, goddess of moisture. These two were charged with the task of creating order out of chaos.

Shu and Tefnut generated Geb, the earth, and Nut, the sky. First they were entwined, but Geb lifted Nut above him. Gradually the world's order formed, but Shu and Tefnut became lost in the remaining darkness.

Atum removed the all-seeing eye and sent it in search of them. When Shu and Tefnut returned, thanks to the eye, Atum wept with joy. Where the tears struck the earth, men sprang up.

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### *Exit Pass*




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*Initial ideas.*

*What might you include  
in your creation story?*

*Where might it be set?*

*What characters will*