

# **STARDUST TO STORYTELLERS: Mythology**

## **UNIT 2: EARTH FORMING**

### Student Workbook

#### **Essential Question:**

Why do so many stories say the earth rose up from the water, and what does that tell us about the people telling them?

## UNIT VOCABULARY

Fill in the table as we learn each word during the unit.

Word	Definition (in my own words)	Picture or Example
Earth		
Submerged		
Emerge		
Plunge		
Terrain		
Traverse		
Sacred		
Landscape		

## LESSON 1 | PREDICTING AND READING

Read "Turtle Dives to the Bottom of the Sea" by Virginia Hamilton before completing these activities.

### BEFORE YOU READ: PREDICT

The title of this myth is "Turtle Dives to the Bottom of the Sea." Before you read, answer these questions:

Who do you think the main character is?

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What do you think this story will be about?

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What do you think Turtle will find at the bottom of the sea?

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### AFTER YOU READ: WERE YOU RIGHT?

Look back at your predictions. What did you get right? What surprised you?

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### REFLECTION

What is one thing from this story that you want to remember or think more about?

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## LESSON 2 | IMPORTANT NOUNS AND VERBS

Re-read "Turtle Dives to the Bottom of the Sea" before completing these activities.

### REVIEW

**A noun is a person, place, thing, or idea.**

**A verb is an action or a state of being.**

### 3 IMPORTANT NOUNS

Find three nouns from the story that you think are really important. Write each one and explain why it matters.

Noun	Why it matters in the story

### 3 IMPORTANT VERBS

Find three verbs from the story that you think are really important. Write each one and explain what it tells us about the action.

Verb	What it tells us

### THINK ABOUT IT

Look at your verb list. Do the verbs in this story feel powerful or gentle? What does that tell you about the kind of story this is?

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## LESSON 3 | STORY STRUCTURE: PROBLEM, ACTION, RESULT

Re-read "Turtle Dives to the Bottom of the Sea" before completing this organizer.

### STORY ORGANIZER

What is the **PROBLEM** at the start of the story?

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What **ACTION** is taken to solve the problem? Who takes it, and what happens?

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What is the **RESULT**? What is the world like at the end of the story?

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### DIGGING DEEPER

Turtle is not the most powerful character in this story, but Turtle does the most important work. Why do you think that is?

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## LESSON 4 | EARTH AS A PROPER NOUN

Re-read "Turtle Dives to the Bottom of the Sea" and pay close attention to how the word "earth" is used.

### COMMON NOUNS vs. PROPER NOUNS

**A common noun names any person, place, thing, or idea. It is not capitalized.**

**A proper noun names a specific person, place, or thing. It is always capitalized.**

### EXAMPLES FROM THE STORY

Look at how Hamilton uses the word "earth" in the story. Sometimes it means the dirt or ground. Sometimes it is part of a name.

Find one example where "earth" means dirt or ground:

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Find one example where "Earth" is used as part of a name or title:

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### FIX THE NOUNS

Each sentence below has a capitalization error with a noun. Find and fix it.

1. "earth starter came down from the sky on a rope of feathers."

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2. "Turtle dove to the bottom of the ocean to find earth."

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3. "coyote watched as earth starter made the first people."

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4. "The creator placed a small piece of Earth on the back of the raft."

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**THINK ABOUT IT**

Why do you think Hamilton capitalizes "Earth Starter" but not always the word "earth"? What is the difference?

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## LESSON 5 | HOW / WHY / WHEN / WHERE

Re-read "Turtle Dives to the Bottom of the Sea" before completing these activities.

### SENTENCE EXPANSION

Start with this kernel sentence: "Turtle brought up the earth."

Now expand it by answering each question. Try to write a complete sentence for each one.

How did Turtle bring up the earth?

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Why did Turtle bring up the earth?

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When did Turtle bring up the earth?

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Where did Turtle find the earth?

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### NOW PUT IT TOGETHER

Use your notes above to write one or two sentences that tell the full story of what Turtle did. Try to answer at least two of the four questions in your sentence.

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## LESSON 6 | MENTAL IMAGES

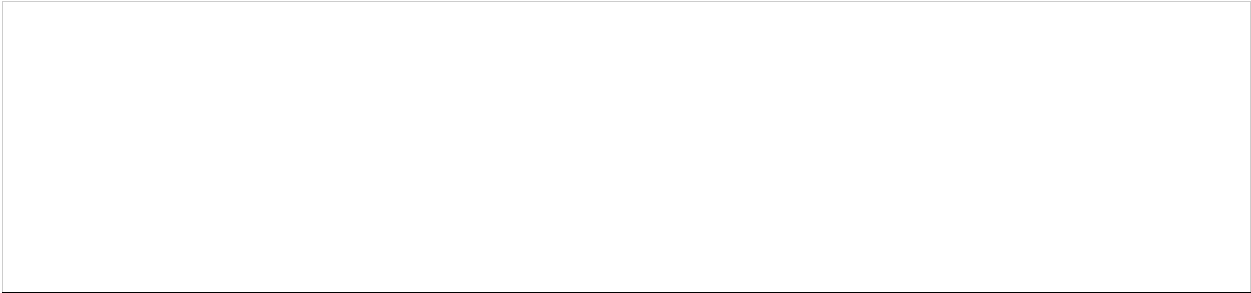
Read "Traveling to Form the World" by Virginia Hamilton before completing these activities.

### WHILE YOU READ

Stop at least twice while reading and sketch or describe what you are picturing in your mind.

#### **Mental Image 1 — Stop after the first paragraph.**

Sketch or describe what you see:



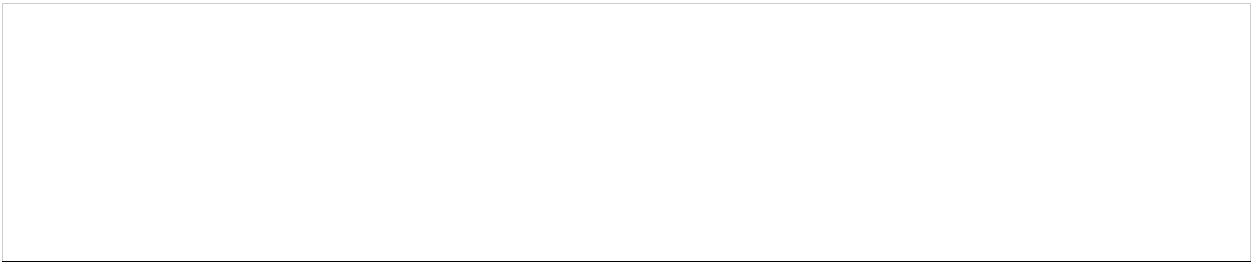
What words from the text helped you picture this?

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#### **Mental Image 2 — Stop when Old Man lies down on the hill.**

Sketch or describe what you see:



What words from the text helped you picture this?

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**AFTER READING**

What did this story look like in your mind overall? Describe the landscape Old Man was walking through.

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## LESSON 7 | STRONG VERBS

Re-read "Traveling to Form the World" and pay close attention to the verbs.

### WHAT IS A STRONG VERB?

A strong verb is specific and vivid. It shows exactly what is happening.

Weak: "He went across the river."

Strong: "He crossed the river."

### OLD MAN'S CREATION VERBS

Find five verbs from the story that describe what Old Man does to create or shape the world.

Verb from the story	What Old Man is doing	Why this verb is strong

### SWAP THE VERB

Replace the weak verb in each sentence with a stronger one.

1. Old Man made mountains as he walked north.

My stronger verb: Old Man \_\_\_\_\_ mountains as he walked north.

2. Old Man put red paint in the soil.

My stronger verb: Old Man \_\_\_\_\_ red paint in the soil.

3. Old Man went across the river.

My stronger verb: Old Man \_\_\_\_\_ across the river.

**THINK ABOUT IT**

How does the verb choice change how you picture Old Man? Does he feel more or less powerful with stronger verbs?

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## DIGGING DEEPER

Pick one moment in the story and rewrite it using a cause-and-effect transition instead of a time-order transition. How does that change what the sentence is saying?

Original:

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Rewritten:

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## LESSON 9 | THE WOMAN AND THE STONE

Re-read the ending of "Traveling to Form the World" before completing these activities.

### WHAT HAPPENS

At the end of the story, Old Man and a woman make a decision about whether people will live forever. Retell what happens in your own words.

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### MY OPINION

Was the woman's choice fair? Circle your position:

**YES, the woman's choice was fair.**

**NO, the woman's choice was not fair.**

### MY REASONS

Give at least two reasons for your position:

Reason 1:

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Reason 2:

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## DIGGING DEEPER

Old Man says "So, you have chosen" after the stone sinks. What does that tell you about how Old Man feels about what just happened? Do you think he wanted this to happen?

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## LESSON 10 | COMPARE THE TWO MYTHS

You will need both "Turtle Dives to the Bottom of the Sea" and "Traveling to Form the World" for this lesson.

### COMPARISON NOTES

	Turtle Dives (Maidu)	Traveling to Form the World (Blackfoot)
How is land created?		
Who does the creating?		
Is there a helper character?		
What does the land feel like at the end?		

### OBSERVATIONS WITH EVIDENCE

Write two observations about how these two stories are different. After each one, include a detail from one of the texts.

Observation 1:

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Evidence from the text:

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Observation 2:

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Evidence from the text:

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**WHAT DO THEY SHARE?**

Even though these stories are very different, what do they have in common?

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## LESSON 11 | READ AND RESPOND: HI'IAKA

Read "Hi'iaka and Wahine-Omao Seek Superheroic Adventure" by Guido A. Sanchez before completing these activities.

### FIRST RESPONSE

What is your first reaction to this story? How is it different from the two Hamilton myths?

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### CHARACTERS AND LANDSCAPE

This story connects its characters deeply to the natural world around them. Find two specific details from the text that show how a character is connected to the landscape.

Detail 1:

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Detail 2:

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### THINK ABOUT IT

In the Hamilton myths, the land is being created. In the Sanchez myth, the land already exists. How does that change the story?

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## LESSON 12 | CHARACTER STUDY: HI'IAKA

Re-read "Hi'iaka and Wahine-Omao Seek Superheroic Adventure" before completing these activities.

### CHARACTER MAP: HI'IAKA

Her powers and gifts	Her quest

Her relationship with Pele	Her relationship with Wahine-Omao

### STRONG VERBS: HI'IAKA EDITION

Find three strong verbs from the Hi'iaka story that describe what she does. Write each one and explain what it tells us about her character.

Verb	What it tells us about Hi'iaka

**THINK ABOUT IT**

Hi'iaka is described as a superhero. Based on what you read, do you think that is a good description? Use a detail from the text to support your answer.

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## LESSON 13 | LOVE AND LANDSCAPE

Re-read the sections of "Hi'iaka and Wahine-Omao" that describe their relationship and the natural world.

### NATURE AND LOVE TRACKER

Moment	What the characters are feeling	What the landscape does
1		
2		
3		

### WRITE ABOUT IT

In this story, Hi'iaka can send her love to Wahine-Omao through the lava and the forest. What does that tell us about how this myth sees the relationship between people and the earth?

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## QUEER MYTHOLOGY: THINK ABOUT IT

Guido A. Sanchez describes Hi'iaka and Wahine-Omao's story as a queer love story. Their relationship, two women who love and trust each other deeply, is at the heart of this ancient Hawaiian myth.

What does it mean that a story this old includes a love like theirs?

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Sanchez writes that their love "transcended space and time" and "was a part of the natural world around them." Do you think the story would feel different if it were a different kind of love story? Why or why not?

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## LESSON 14 | EARTH MYTH COMPARISON CHART

You will use all three myths for this activity.

### COMPARISON CHART: ALL THREE EARTH MYTHS

	Turtle Dives (Maidu)	Traveling to Form the World (Blackfoot)	Hi'iaka (Hawaiian)
How is land created or shaped?			
Who or what does the creating?			
Is there a helper or companion?			
What does the earth mean to the people in the story?			
What does this myth say about humans and the land?			

### WHAT DO YOU NOTICE?

Looking at your completed chart, what do all three myths have in common? What surprised you most?

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## LESSON 15 | ESSENTIAL QUESTION AND THESIS

Essential Question: Why do so many stories say the earth rose up from the water, and what does that tell us about the people telling them?

### WRITE TWO THESIS ATTEMPTS

A good thesis makes a claim that someone could disagree with. Try writing it two different ways, then circle the stronger one.

Thesis Attempt 1:

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Thesis Attempt 2:

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### MY BEST THESIS

Copy your strongest thesis here:


## LESSON 16 | BRAINSTORM: CHOOSE A MYTH TO RETELL

For your writing project, you will retell one of the three myths from a different character's perspective or setting.

### CHOOSE YOUR MYTH

Circle the myth you want to retell:

**Turtle Dives to the Bottom of the Sea    Traveling to Form the World    Hi'iaka and Wahine-Omao**

### CHOOSE YOUR CHARACTER OR ANGLE

Who will tell your retelling? Check one:

A different character from the same story (for example: Pehe-ipe, the woman, Pau-o-Palai)

The same story told from a different time or place

My own idea: \_\_\_\_\_

### BRAINSTORM QUESTIONS

What does your character see, think, and feel that the original story does not tell us?

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What stays the same in your version?

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What changes?

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## LESSON 17 | PLAN THE RETELLING

Use your brainstorm from Lesson 16 to map out your retelling.

### STORY ORGANIZER

**Beginning — What is happening when your story starts? Where is your character?**

**Middle — What is the main event? What does your character do, see, or feel?**

**End — How does your story end? What has changed?**

### STRONG VERBS PLAN

Before you write, brainstorm at least five strong verbs you want to use in your retelling.

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## LESSON 19 | EDITING: STRONG VERBS PASS

Use the checklist below to check and improve your first draft.

### REVISION CHECKLIST

Item to Check	Done
My retelling has a clear beginning, middle, and end.	
My story is clearly told from a specific character's perspective.	
I used at least three strong, specific verbs.	
I used at least two sequence or transition words.	
I included at least one vivid detail about the landscape or setting.	
Every sentence is complete (subject and predicate).	
I checked capitalization, including proper nouns.	
I checked punctuation at the end of each sentence.	

### STRONG VERBS CHECK

Find three verbs in your draft. Write them below. Then decide: are they strong enough, or can you find a better one?

Original verb	Strong enough?	My stronger option
	Yes / No	
	Yes / No	
	Yes / No	

### ONE THING I IMPROVED

What is one thing you changed in your draft, and why did you change it?

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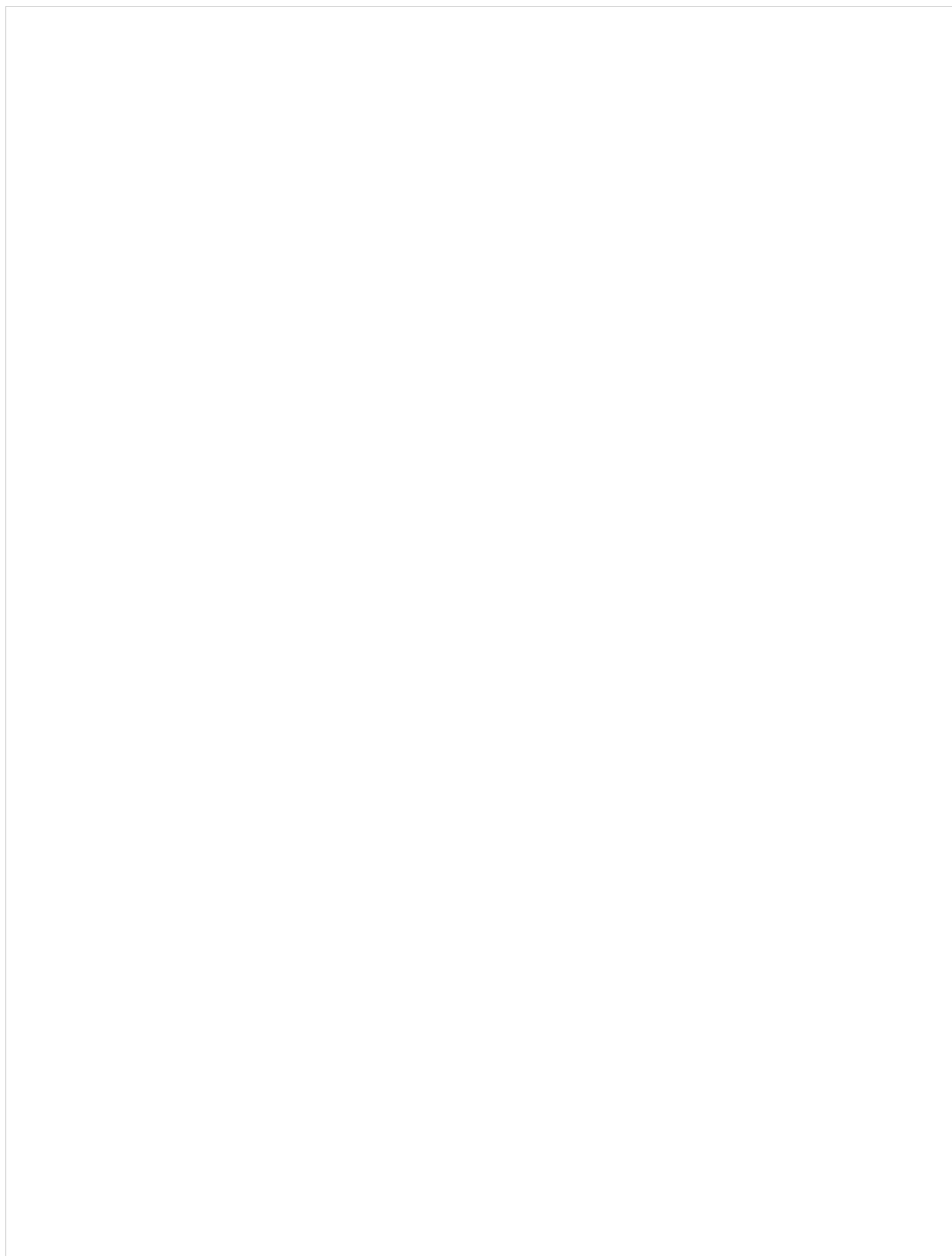
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**ILLUSTRATE YOUR RETELLING (optional)**

Draw a scene from your retelling:



## LOOKING BACK

Which of the three earth myths from this unit was your favorite, and what did it teach you about how people see the land?

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Which character from any of the three myths would you most want to spend a day with, and why?

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