

Well-Trained Mind Academy
Asian Myth & Legend for the Logic Stage

Course Blackboard site: www.wtma.blackboard.com

Course Texts

- McDonald, Kel, ed. *Tamamo the Fox Maiden: And other Asian stories*. ISBN 1945820349
- Fu, Shelley. *Chinese Myths and Legends: The Monkey King and Other Adventures*. ISBN 0804850275
- Hume, Lotta Carswell. *Favorite Children's Stories from China & Tibet*. ISBN 0804850186
- Tran, Phuoc Thi Minh. *Vietnamese Children's Favorite Stories*. ISBN 0804844291
- Kim, So-Un. *Korean Children's Favorite Stories*. ISBN 0804850208
- Yasuda, Yuri. *Japanese Myths, Legends & Folk Tales: Bilingual English and Japanese edition*. ISBN 4805314737
- Martin, Rafe. *Mysterious Tales of Japan*. ISBN 039922677X
 - Purchase via BookFinder.Com
- *Spirited Away* film
 - Available to stream on several providers with subscription

Course Description

This course introduces 5th-8th grade students to the myths, legends, and folklore of East Asia: Japan, China, Korea, Tibet, and Vietnam. Over the course of the summer, we'll ask: What narratives have shaped these cultures? Despite the many similarities, how do the legends of the regions seem to reflect cultural differences between the countries? And in spite of the many differences, how do these imaginative and compelling stories reflect transcendent human values shared by all people?

Students will also learn about the geography of the East Asian region; the basics of Japanese and Korean pronunciation; how to distinguish the Japanese, Korean, Chinese, and Vietnamese written languages at a glance; how to use online resources to correctly pronounce unfamiliar world languages, and the importance of trying to do so; and what the expectations and responsibilities of the online classroom are, including how to take good notes in class.

Course Components

- Attendance (15%)
- Class Participation (20%)
 - A student's participation will be assessed primarily on their respectful discussion of the texts. To receive full credit for participation, students actively pose and answer questions in class and online discussion, and contribute to the analysis and evaluation of peer work. Students must request excused absences in advance; absences without notification will result in a participation grade of zero for the day. Asynchronous students must make extra discussion board responses in place of session attendance; see below.
- Discussion board posts (15%)

- Discussion board engagement (10%)
 - Each week, students post 50-150 word discussion board responses to general prompts. These prompts require students to analyze, critique, and engage the required reading(s) of the week. For example, a critical response could identify an unfamiliar cultural element from the text, theorize how it came about and what its role may be in society, and pose a question of the class. Students should think of discussion board posts as their opportunity to process their thoughts on the reading and to inspire responses from classmates.
 - Along with posting their own discussion board responses, students are expected to engage meaningfully with no fewer than 3 of their classmates' posts. For example, a meaningful response could quote a line from the original post, agree or disagree respectfully, and challenge the original poster with a question or request for clarification. Asynchronous students are expected to engage with no fewer than 6 classmates' posts.
- Reading Comprehension quizzes (20%)
 - To encourage students to keep up with the class reading assignments, online reading comprehension quizzes are assigned each week. The quizzes generally include multiple choice, true/false, and matching questions.
- Tests (10%)
 - In addition to quizzes, midterm and final tests are given. These tests cover not only the reading material but also information covered in the class meetings. To encourage students to practice good note-taking, the tests are open-note.
- Reflective essay (5%)
 - Students will learn the basics of the three-paragraph essay and have the opportunity to write one.
- Final Project (5%)
 - The final project will feature critical analysis and provide the opportunity for creative invention. Students could write a longer argumentative essay about one or more of the course texts. Students could also make an audio or video presentation, or respond to one of the course texts in original poetry or Socratic dialogue. Since this is the culminating work of the semester, students should feel at liberty to develop project ideas as they see fit, as long as they are capable of articulating how and why the project is relevant to the course.

Example schedule

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Week #		Assessments
1	<i>Tamamo the Fox Maiden</i> Geography of Asia	
2	<i>Chinese Myths & Legends</i> Pronunciation of Chinese names; Chinese myths & legends Chinese writing system	
3	Chinese & Tibetan geography	Test 1

	Intro to varieties of Buddhism	
4	<i>Vietnamese Children's Favorite Stories</i> Geography of Vietnam Vietnamese writing system Vietnam-China relations	
5	<i>Korean Children's Favorite Stories</i> Korean pronunciation Korean alphabet and its history Comparative discussion of myths & legends Korean geography Korea-China relations	Reflective Essay
6	<i>Japanese Myths, Legends, & Folk Tales</i> Japanese geography Japanese pronunciation Japanese writing system and its history Japan-China-Korea relations	Test 2
7	Japanese religion & supernatural beliefs Compare Japanese beliefs with other Asian cultures Compare and contrast Chinese folklore with surrounding cultures'	
8	<i>Spirited Away</i> Traditional myth & legend in modern Asian pop culture	Final Project Project Presentations