

INTRODUCTION TO ORIGIN STORIES

Purpose

In this activity, you will become familiar with the idea of an origin story. Cultures around the world have their own origin stories, ways in which they believe and describe how the Universe came to be. It’s important that you understand that all origin stories should be respected, as they often relate to people’s cultures and beliefs. Big History is another one of these origin stories. Specifically, it is what many consider a modern, scientific origin story.

Process

Start by filling in the sections on the Origin Stories Comparison Worksheet using the information from the “Modern Scientific” article. Use the Three Close Reads process if your teacher suggests doing so - this will help you to better understand the article. You’ll fill in the rest of the chart when you get to the rest of the Origin Stories.

	Modern Scientific	Chinese	Judeo-Christian	Iroquois
Source of the world				
Originator of the world				
How the Earth formed				
Age of the Earth				
First life forms				
How humans formed				
Relationship between humans and animals / plants				

	Mayan	Greek	Zulu	Efik
Source of the world				
Originator of the world				
How the Earth formed				
Age of the Earth				
First life forms				
How humans formed				
Relationship between humans and animals / plants				

Article Title: _____

Overall question or idea to think about as you read:

This reading is more of a skim—it should help you get the general idea of the reading.

Pay attention to ...	Questions	Your answers
Title and headings	What is this article going to be about?	
Images, image captions, graphs, tables	How do these add to your idea of what the article is going to be about?	

In this read, you will pay attention to the information that most helps you understand the article.

Pay attention to ...	Questions	Your answers
Vocabulary	Are there words you don't understand or recognize? Underline and write down the words, then follow your teachers directions for how to look up and define those words.	
Major Claim	What is the main idea of this article? This could be a thesis statement or the primary focus of the article.	
Analysis and Evidence	What evidence does the author use that supports or extends the main idea? Provide 2-3 examples.	
Claim Testers	What claim testers did the author use when providing support for the major claim? Name one claim tester (authority, intuition, evidence, logic) and explain how it was used.	

The third reading is really about understanding how the article relates to the unit driving question or other questions and ideas from the course. Your teacher may give you some sentence starters to help you respond to these questions.

Pay attention to ...	Questions	Your answers
Support	What from this article confirmed what you already knew about Big History, the unit driving question, or the question or idea you thought about as you read?	
Extend	In what ways did this article deepen your thinking about Big History, the unit driving question, or the question or idea you thought about as you read?	
Challenge	How did this article change or challenge your thinking Big History, the unit driving question, or the question or idea you thought about as you read.	