

Native American Myths Handout

“The Earth on Turtle’s Back” – Onondaga tribe

1. According to this myth, what existed before this Earth?
2. What does the Sky Woman bring with her from the Sky land? How does it affect the Earth?
3. Identify two things that are lost or sacrificed in the Sky land so there could be life on Earth.
4. Explain how the animals in this myth exhibit human virtues/qualities.

“When Grizzlies Walked Upright” – Modoc tribe

1. This is a creation myth. What does this myth explain (in nature, people, animals, earth)? Provide at least two examples.
2. How do the Modoc view the Sky Spirit? What adjectives describe the Sky Spirit?

3. Find evidence in the legend that suggests that four is a sacred number to the Navajo. Provide at least three examples of textual support.

4. In what ways does this legend differ from “Earth on Turtle’s Back” and “When Grizzlies Walked Upright?”