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Herring

AP Lang & Comp P4

14 September 2024

Analysis of “The Crow Brings the Daylight” by S.E. Schlosser

The myth “Crow Brings the Daylight” originates from the Inuit, a tribe native to the Arctic regions of North America. The Inuit people, living in the harsh, cold environment of the northern polar regions, are known for their deep connection to the natural world, particularly animals like the crow, which is a key figure in many of their myths. This myth reveals characteristics typical of the Inuit, such as their understanding of the cycles of light and darkness, as well as their relationship with the animals that play a pivotal role in their daily survival. Inuit myths, like this one, are often sacred stories passed down through oral traditions, carrying themes that connect directly to their culture, such as survival, adaptation, and the cyclical nature of life in the far north.

The myth embodies several key characteristics of traditional mythology. It is a sacred story that explains a natural phenomenon: the alternation between day and night in the Inuit world, or more specifically, the long periods of light and darkness experienced in the Arctic. This is a common theme in myths, where natural occurrences are explained through the actions of gods, animals, or other supernatural forces. The story has been passed down orally, suggesting collective authorship and reinforcing cultural beliefs. The myth also seeks to explain the origins of a key aspect of Inuit life — the presence of daylight and its cyclical nature. The crow, an important figure in many Native American and Inuit stories, acts as a bridge between the natural

and supernatural realms, and his journey reflects the Inuit's understanding of the world around them. Additionally, the myth may have had religious significance, as it deals with forces beyond human control and evokes gratitude and reverence toward the crow.

The primary purpose of this myth is to explain the natural phenomenon of light and darkness that dominates Inuit life in the Arctic. The people lived in darkness for long periods and longed for daylight, which Crow eventually brought after much pleading. The myth provides a sense of comfort and understanding about the long winters and short summers that the Inuit experience, offering a story that helps them cope with the extreme conditions. Furthermore, it teaches that the light, although essential, must rest, just as the people themselves do. The myth reassures the Inuit that the return of darkness is temporary and that light will always return, mirroring the cyclical nature of their environment. It also reflects on the idea of reciprocity with nature, as the people thank Crow for bringing the daylight, showing their gratitude and respect.

The lessons of this myth are crucial to the Inuit society. It teaches the importance of patience, as the people had to wait for the return of daylight, and perseverance, shown by Crow's long and difficult journey to bring back the light. Another lesson is the need for balance — light and darkness must coexist, much like the balance between harsh winter conditions and the brief summer warmth in the Arctic. These lessons emphasize the Inuit's deep understanding of their environment and the importance of adapting to it. Respect for nature, animals, and the cycles of the world is a recurring theme, reflecting how the Inuit see themselves as part of a larger, interconnected system.

This myth connects to many other traditional stories that emphasize the theme of light and darkness. Similar myths from various indigenous cultures, such as the Haida and the Tlingit, also involve animals or divine beings bringing light to the world, reinforcing the idea that light is

a precious gift. Furthermore, stories from other cultures, such as the Greek myth of Persephone, highlight the cyclical nature of light and darkness, life and death, which are central to human understanding of the world. In all these myths, light is more than just a physical phenomenon; it is a symbol of hope, life, and balance. For the Inuit, Crow's gift of daylight is a reminder that even in the darkest times, light will return, a message that is both practical and spiritual.

EXISTING MYTH ANALYSIS RUBRIC

Assignment Option #2: Write an analysis of an existing Native American Myth

CRITERIA:

Select one of the **myths** from the list provided to you by Ms. Herring (or one from the book that she has.

Ms. Herring has). In a well-organized essay, analyze it for the characteristics of mythology.

Include the following:

1. Identify the **tribe**: (INTRO)
2. Identify the **characteristics particular to that tribe** (INTRO) THESIS
3. Identify **the characteristics of mythology present** (BODY PARAGRAPH #1)
4. Identify the **purpose(s) of the myth** (BODY PARAGRAPH #2)
5. Elaborate on the **lessons taught and WHY they are important** to the society (BODY PARAGRAPH #3)
6. Possible **connections to other stories** that continue to reinforce the lessons (CONC)
7. Proper formatting: Accuracy of required **format** (typed, double-spaced, 1.5-2 pages, 1" margins all around, proper MLA heading).

15 / 15 PTS.

10 / 10 PTS.

10 / 10 PTS.

10 / 10 PTS.

10 / 10 PTS.

5 / 5 PTS.

TOTAL POINTS: 60 / 60

Student (s) Name (s): ADITYA TYAGI

✓
SUPER
WELL DONE