

English 9
Paper Assignment 2

Brinkley
10.01.09

Your next paper assignment has two parts:

1. The first part will require a bit of imagination. Your task is to invent and write a creation myth. Your myth can be in the form of a story (as it is in *Genesis*) or a poem (as it is on pages 134-135 of the Achebe excerpt from *Hopes and Impediments*). A story should be at least two pages. A poem should be at least one page. Use the helpful information that Achebe provides:
 - Creation myths are “supernatural stories which man created to explain the problems and mysteries of life and death—his attempt to make sense of the bewildering complexity of existence” (134).
 - A repeated word or phrase goes to “the very heart” of a myth’s purpose. Such a word or phrase “is shouted like making a long-distance call when the line is faulty or in bad weather. You shout your message and repeat it again and again just to make sure” (135).
 - “Most creation myths would seem to suggest the antecedence of stories—a scenario in which the story was already unfolding in the cosmos before, and even as a result of which, man came into being” (162).
 - Such stories validate “social organizations, political systems, moral attitudes, and religious beliefs, even ... prejudices” or they can “consolidate gains” and “sanction change” (163).
2. The second part of your assignment, which is analytical, should be at least two pages. This will be a comparative “reading” (or *interpretation*) of your creation myth and the one in *Genesis* (focus on chapters 1-3). Again using Achebe as a guide, you should compare and contrast:
 - the “problems and mysteries” they seek to explain
 - the use of repetition
 - the morals, beliefs, political systems, and/or prejudices they validate (or challenge)

Your analysis should have an introduction (with a *thesis*) and a conclusion. We will review what makes a good thesis in class.

For help and more information, refer to the handout, “Creation Myths: Overview, Types, and Themes.” Have a draft ready for my eyes to gaze upon by Tuesday, October 6.

THREE TO FIVE PAGES, TYPED, DOUBLE-SPACED
DUE DATE: THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8TH