

Lesson Name : 11

Lesson Title : Great Serpent and the Great Flood

Course Name : English 2 Part 3 [Honors]

Task Id : 56152037

Course Id : 15021



Essential Instruction



Please read [“Great Serpent and the Great Flood”](#) (author unknown).

Use your digital notebook to keep notes about new vocabulary and definitions that you may need to reference later.

Understanding Myths

For today’s lesson, you read a folktale called “Great Serpent and the Great Flood.” This story comes to us from the Ojibwa tribe of Native Americans, who lived in the area near Lake Superior in America and Canada.

This story is an example of a particular type of folktale: the **myth**. A **myth** usually includes supernatural elements, such as characters who are gods or goddesses. A **myth** also explains something about nature, humanity or the world around us, such as why we have seasons or why we have both night and day.

In Ojibwa **mythology**, the shape-shifting Nanabozho – the main character in the story you read today – is regarded as the creator of the earth. He is the son of a human mother and a spirit father, and he is said to have brought the skills of fishing and writing to the Ojibwa tribe.

This particular story tells of a great flood that cleanses evil (the serpent) from the world. If you know the Judeo-Christian story of Noah’s Ark, you might find the plot familiar. In fact, more than 500 such stories have been recorded from religions and cultures around the globe, including the Babylonian “Epic of Gilgamesh.”

Why do you think stories about a great flood are so universal? As you read a **myth**, always ask yourself what the story is trying to explain about our world. In the tradition of oral storytelling, myths were used to pass an understanding of our world from one generation to the next. “Great Serpent and the Great Flood” describes a battle between good and evil, which probably helped the story’s listeners understand the culture’s religious beliefs.

Similes

Because **mythology** is rooted in the tradition of oral storytelling, it contains **similes** to help audiences understand it better.

A **simile** is a comparison that uses the words *like*, *as* or *as tough*. Here are a few examples:

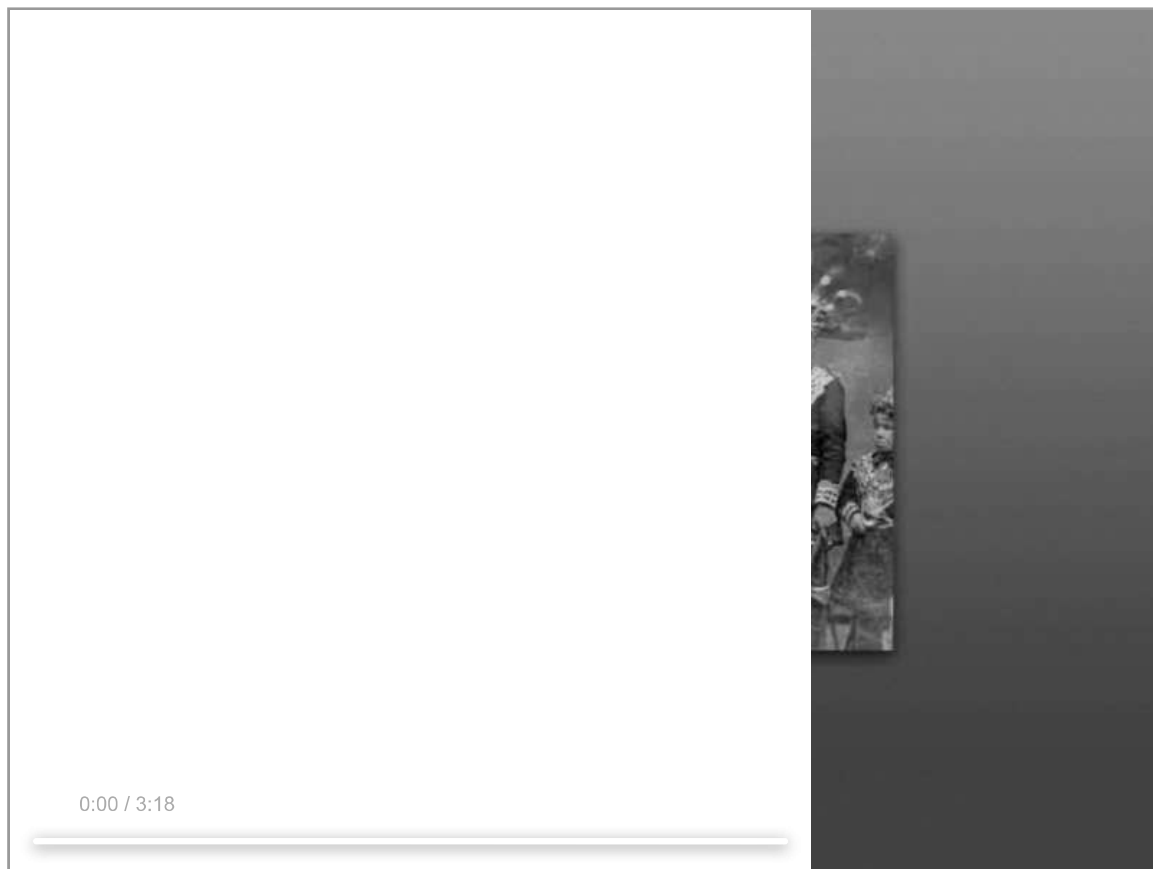
The package was light as a feather.

Eavesdropping on the conversation, Sean felt like a slimy snake.

As a type of **figurative language**, **similes** add rich meaning and imagery to writing. Watch out, however, for inappropriate **similes** that don’t make sense in the context of the work.

For example: The hulking lumberjack felt nimble as a ballerina as he chopped down the trees.

Would a hulking lumberjack really compare himself to a ballerina? Probably not. Instead, you might say he felt nimble “as a deer” – or any other comparison that makes sense within the context of the work.



[Open Video in New Tab](#)

