

## **Planning Framework for Primary/Elementary School Teachers: Employing the Cognitive Tools of Mythic Understanding**

### **1. Locating importance**

*What is emotionally engaging about this topic? How can it evoke wonder? Why should it matter to us?*

### **2. Shaping the lesson or unit**

*Teaching shares some features with news reporting. Just as the reporter's aim is to select and shape events to bring out clearly their meaning and emotional importance for readers or listeners, so your aim as a teacher is to present your topic in a way that engages the emotions and imaginations of your students. To do so, consider which of the following dimensions of your students' emotional and imaginative lives can be used to shape your lesson or unit—all related to the skills the good reporter works with:*

#### **2.1. Finding the story:**

*What's "the story" on the topic? How can you shape the content to reveal its emotional significance?*

#### **2.2. Finding binary opposites:**

*What abstract and affective binary concepts best capture the wonder and emotion of the topic? What are the opposing forces in your "story"?*

#### **2.3. Finding images:**

*What parts of the topic most dramatically embody the binary concepts? What image best captures that dramatic contrast?*

#### **2.4. Employing additional cognitive tools of Mythic understanding:**

*What kinds of activities might employ other tools in your students' cognitive toolkits? Consider the following:*

- **Puzzles and mystery:** *How could students explore some aspects of the mystery attached to the topic? What puzzles might they wonder about?*
- **Metaphor:** *How might students employ metaphor in deepening their understanding of the topic?*
- **Jokes and humor:** *Could students learn – and create their own - jokes about the topic? How might they expand their understanding through play with what is humorous about it?*
- **Rhyme, rhythm, and pattern:** *Are there patterns in the topic students could play with? What activities might draw attention to rhyme, rhythm, and pattern?*
- **Games, drama, and play:** *How can students engage in games, drama, and play in learning about the topic?*
- **Embryonic tools of romantic understanding:** *Consider ways to engage students with the heroic and human dimensions of the topic. What kinds of*

*activities might reveal its extremes? How can these aspects draw students forward in their thinking about the topic?*

**2.5. Drawing on tools of previous kinds of understanding:**

**Somatic understanding** - *How might students use some of the toolkit of Somatic Understanding in learning the topic? How might their senses, emotions, humor, musicality, and so on, be deployed?*

**3. Resources**

*What resources can you use to learn more about the topic and to shape your story? What resources are useful in creating activities?*

**4. Conclusion**

*How does the story end? How can the conflict set up between the binary opposites be resolved in a satisfying way? Alternatively, what new questions emerge as students make sense of these opposing forces? What aspect of the topic might draw students forward in wonder?*

**5. Evaluation**

*How can one know whether the topic has been understood, its importance grasped, and the content learned?*