Mr. Rinkevich/Mythology & Folklore

Urban Legends

Project Purpose
*Show the importance of oral tradition in culture.
*Show the repercussions of media bias.
*Test your ability to evaluate media.
*Differentiate between fact and fiction.
*Citing sources.

An **urban legend**, or **contemporary legend**, is a form of modern folklore consisting of stories usually believed by their tellers to be true. Earlier in the year, we learned about ancient folklore – Greek Mythology.

The purpose of an urban legend varies. They could entertain or inform, but the most popular ones often attempted to teach a moral or lesson through the use of a fear-inducing tale. Regardless of the intent, the story usually incorporates the values and beliefs of a culture/people.

Originally urban legends were passed from town to town by word of mouth. Those that had a universal theme were the tales that survived and were added to as the story passed from person to person. Thus their true origin was often lost to the passage of time.

With the Internet firmly entrenched in our lives and its near instant communication, there are more urban legends appearing than ever before. Many of them disappear quickly, never to be heard from again. However, sometimes, a story will catch on, spread and have staying power. Thanks to modern media, it is possible to trace these tales from their start, retelling and current versions.

This project, like a good urban legend, will involve a little bit of everything – some research, some writing, some imagination and some telling (presenting).

Part 1. Evaluation of Media/Sources
The teacher will give your group **ten tales**, **three photographs and one video** to research.
It will be up to the group to classify each item as a:

> **Myth** – A story so old that it draws from many sources and has been retold numerous times. Its true origin is unknown, and it is not possible to verify whether it is a wholly truthful tale or that it is indeed a hoax.
> **Hoax** – A story that can be traced back to its roots and proven to be conclusively false.
> **True Story** – Stories so fantastic that they are hard to believe, but or are, for the most part, true.

-Be sure to include a paragraph or two giving a brief summary of the legend, any widely told variations, as well as information of how/where the story originated from. Be sure to cite any sources used.

Part 2. Local Folklore
Your group will be required to find:
> **One Local Legend**
-Your town is old, and the valley it sits in is even older. There old plenty of old tales floating around, and you've probably heard several of them. You haven't? Great, put down the cell phone, and spend a few minutes…talking to people face to face….and learn some local folklore. Be sure to cite the person who gives you the story as your source. **You will also need a picture of the location.**

Part 3. Media Creation
You will be required to create three media projects for this section:
- 2 Reenactments of any legend on the chart.
- 1 Faked Video (Of what? You're creative, young and totally hip, so think of something that has a good chance of going viral).

Part 4. Presentation
Once your assignment is turned in, the teacher will make a list of all collected tales. Each group will present its findings while the rest of the class will try to decide whether each tale has some truth to it, or is merely a flat out hoax.

Some Things to Remember:
While many of the best legends are horror related, there are many equally as good that are just about everyday occurrences / things in life. Take your time, do your research well and with a little luck, twenty years from now someone might approach you and ask, "Did you ever hear about that story where…"

* PLEASE SEE THE TEMPLATE ON MY GOOGLE CLASSROOM PAGE FOR INFO ON HOW TO SUBMIT YOUR WORK.*