

MYTH

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- *Myth*: A traditional narrative of anonymous authorship that arises out of a culture's oral tradition.
- *Archetype*: A recurring symbol, character, landscape, or event found in myth and literature across different cultures and eras, one that appears so often that it evokes a universal response.

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- Specimen: “Helen” by H. D. [Hilda Doolittle]
- Specimen: “The World is Too Much with Us” by William Wordsworth
- Specimen: “The Second Coming” by W. B. Yeats
- Specimen: “La Belle Dame sans Merci” by John Keats

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## Checklist: Myth

- Does the poem have a recognizable source in myth or legend?
- What new details has the poet added to the original myth?
- What do these details reveal about the poet's attitude toward the source material?
- Have important elements of the original been discarded? What does their absence suggest about the author's primary focus?
- Does the poem rely heavily on its mythic imagery? Or is myth tangential to the poem's theme?
- How do mythic echoes underscore the poem's meaning?

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## Journal Entry

Reread Anne Sexton's poem, "Cinderella," (Gwynn & Lindner pages 159-162). Like Sexton, write a poem in which you retell a famous myth or fairytale to reflect your personal worldview.