



# Creativity x 2



A presentation by  
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## Encounter Lessons

Encounter Lessons are open-ended lessons that encourage good listening skills, stimulate creativity and higher level thinking, and provide motivation. They are often used at the beginning of a unit of study. Encounter lessons help the teacher to personalize the topic for the students and open up discussion in a non-threatening way. Differentiation in Encounter Lessons comes from the extenders which range in difficulty and can be chosen or assigned according to ability or interest.

Excluding the extenders, Encounter Lessons usually last from 20-30 minutes and are best done in small groups of 5 students per group. Encounter lessons have open-ended questions that ask the student to pretend he or she is an object, a place or a famous person and to respond accordingly.

There are five Leading Questions in an Encounter Lesson. Each follows a certain pattern:

1. This is the description question. In answering this question, the person should describe something.
2. This question asks for a reason and usually begins with the word *Why*.
3. This is the storytelling question. In answering this question, the person should tell a story or relate an imaginary incident that has happened.
4. This is the motto, slogan or message question. The answer to this question should be short – usually 10 words or less.
5. The answer to this question shows some kind of change or transformation. It may be phrased as a *'What would happen if?'* question, an *'imagine'* question, or a question that reflects a new point of view.

Each student in the group answers one question in 'round robin' fashion. The answer to the second question is based upon what was said in answer to the first question. Therefore, Encounter Lessons are excellent for building both creativity and listening skills. Appoint a facilitator for each group to keep the activity focused and moving along. Another way to use the Encounter Lesson is to have each student answer all of the questions. Sometimes this is done in written form first and then shared in pairs or trios.

The key to success in any Encounter Lesson is for the student to think "outside-the-box" using imagination, creativity and original thinking.

An Encounter Lesson has each of the following:

- Boundary Breaker
- Setting the Stage
- Leading Questions
- Standards/Objectives
- Differentiated Extenders

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## **Greek Mythology Encounter Lesson**

**Title:** Mt. Olympus – Home of the Gods

**Boundary Breaker:** Describe the most beautiful scene in nature that you have ever seen.

**Setting the Stage:**

You are Mt. Olympus, home of the Greek gods and goddesses. You've been around since the dawn of time! You wish you could retire and make all of the gods and goddesses go live somewhere else. Your life is pretty hectic with all of them living on you.

**Leading Questions:**

1. Describe what your life was like before you were inhabited by the Greek gods and goddesses.
2. You are famous and eternal! Why would you want to retire anyway?
3. Tell a story about what happened to one of the gods or goddesses who are living on you.
4. If you sold a bumper sticker on the top of Mt. Olympus, what would it say?
5. Imagine the all powerful Zeus granting you, Mt. Olympus, one special wish. This wish could change your life. What would you wish for and why?

**Standards/Objectives:**

1. Gain an understanding of the enormous impact and influence Greek mythology has made on western literature and thought.
2. Read and analyze myths representing diverse backgrounds, traditions and points of view.
3. Understand the literary elements (plot, characterization, setting, mood, point of view) in Greek myths.
4. Organize, write and present ideas.

**Differentiated Extenders for the Greek Mythology Unit:**

1. Design a series of 5 picture postcards from Mt. Olympus. The pictures should show the geography of Mt. Olympus or a story about a god or goddess who lives there. On the other side of each postcard, write a message explaining the picture.
2. Choose a Greek myth. Research sources to find a similar myth from another culture. Write a paper comparing and contrasting the two myths.
3. Choose a Greek god or goddess. Make a chart listing his or her character traits and the character traits of a famous person of today. Include both strengths and weaknesses and give examples for each trait.
4. Update a Greek myth to fit modern times. Rewrite the myth as a one-act play, using the attitudes, language (school-appropriate) and setting of today. Perform for the class. At least 3 people must make this choice and must work together.
5. Select an act of nature. Explain it by writing a myth in the style of a Greek myth.
6. Choose your favorite Greek god or goddess. Create a series of 10 interview questions and write what you think his or her answers would be. Stay in character for the god or goddess.

## Questivities

The Questivities™ (**‘Questioning Activities’**) format consists of an interdisciplinary Project Activity along with a series of Thinking Questions that stimulate creative and critical thinking and give practice in research skills. The questions are starter questions that should be done before students begin the project itself.

Students who answer the Questivities™ Thinking Questions before doing the Project Activity create projects that reflect higher levels of thinking, more creativity and more evidence of research. Questivities™ take students beyond just working on a project to thinking about the project ideas in more depth and greater detail. They can be used both in a regular classroom or a gifted resource setting.

Questivities™ can be used in many ways:

- Do individually, in partners or in groups
- In conjunction with different units of study
- To enhance and extend individual work and research
- As extension activities in a learning center
- Questivities™ also make excellent alternate activities for students who compact out of the regular curriculum.

Questivities™ incorporate Learning Modalities, Learning Styles, Bloom’s Taxonomy and Multiple Intelligences. They are assessed using mini-rubrics or other performance assessment criteria.

Questivities™ are written on a user-friendly one page form. The form has the following elements:

- ▶ Project Activity that provides the focus for the Questivities™
- ▶ Learning Modality/Style
- ▶ Bloom’s Taxonomy level
- ▶ Multiple Intelligences
- ▶ Assessment (Mini-Rubric or Criteria Card) for the Project Activity
- ▶ Project Question (essential question answered by doing the project)
- ▶ Questivities™ Thinking Questions
- ▶ Active Question

Teachers can write their own Questivities™ or teach their students how to write and develop them for their own research project.

### Related Resources from Pieces of Learning:

Questivities™ written into units with standards, questions, projects, activities and assessments

*Australia Questivities™*

*Dinosaur Questivities™*

*Human Body Questivities™*

*Insects Questivities™*

*Japan Questivities™*

*Weather Questivities™*

*Successful Teaching in the Differentiated Classroom* by Carolyn Coil

*Teaching Tools for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* by Carolyn Coil

**To see these and many other excellent resources, visit the Pieces of Learning Exhibit Booth  
or visit us online at [www.piecesoflearning.com](http://www.piecesoflearning.com)**

## Learning Style/Modality

Kinesthetic

## Taxonomy Level

Application

## Multiple Intelligences

Visual/Spatial

Intrapersonal

Bodily/Kinesthetic

## Assessment Mini-Rubric

1. originality of design
2. explanation of design
3. follows Model criteria card
4. foods are appropriate for a Japanese obento

## Project Question

What is an obento, how is it used, and what foods are generally carried in it?

## Questivities™ Thinking Questions

List all the ways to get your lunch to school.

Compare/contrast an obento with a McDonald's® Happy Meal.

What would happen if your school served raw fish, seaweed and rice for lunch?

Would you rather buy an obento or a pizza if you were a tourist visiting Japan?

How would you feel if you sat on the floor at a low table to eat your meals?

Why do Americans consume so much fat, meats, sugar & salt?

How would you advertise obentos you make?

## Active Question

Make a list of questions an obento might ask a school lunchbox.

## Japan - 5

## Project Activity

