**Unit I – Myths, Folktales, and Religious Stories**

-from lesson materials presented by Kristina Ackley

In your review of these notes, be mindful to define any unfamiliar terms as they arise. Key terms for definition have been presented in **bold** and should be defined below.

Additional Reading BACKGROUND:

Native American fictional literature often effectively demonstrates the

relationship Native people have with the world around them. It can reflect the concepts of

Native peoples’ relationship with the land, their spirit, and their place in the world. When

examining these concepts it is important to **juxtaposition** mainstream literature with that of

Native literature:

Mainstream Literature Indigenous Literature

linear cyclical

**monologic** or **dialogic** conversational

**hierarchical** **egalitarian**

ecular **metaphysical**

critique of culture critique of **colonialism**

individual communitarian

The mainstream literary **paradigm** has certain elements rarely found in Native literature; a hero,

clear-cut villains, plot structure, & concluding purpose, to mention just a few. Native literature

is bicultural, the characters move freely in the world, beyond and through stereotypes or cultural

idioms. Much like the traditional **trickster** figures in Native stories, the concept is to see chaos

behind order, an ability to laugh at themselves, to escape conformity for freedom. They help

provide another model that has a structure that allows for equality, helping others to have a good

life.

Vocabulary Notes: