“The Earth on Turtle’s Back” p. 16-18

1. This myth is from oral tradition, so the original author is unknown. Who retells it here?

2. According to this myth, where did people live before Earth existed?

3. What is the significance of the number four in the four white roots of the tree?

4. Why did the Ancient Chief uproot the Great Tree?

5. What did the woman have in her hand as she fell through the hole in Skyland?

6. The animals, seeing her fall, begin to speak to one another. This technique of giving non-humans the characteristics of humans is known as ___________.

7. Often, characters in oral literature are symbolic or archetypal figures that embody important cultural ideas rather than complex personalities. This helps to explain why the animals are called by their generic names rather than specific names. What cultural ideas do these animals represent?

8. According to this myth, how was the Earth created?
9. This myth explains the natural phenomena of the marks on the back of a turtle's shell. According to the myth, why are they there?

“When Grizzlies Walked Upright” p. 19-21

10. Who retells this story?
11. Where did the Chief of the Sky Spirits live before making his home on Earth?
12. Myths sometimes explain natural landmarks such as mountains. How was Mount Shasta created?
13. How did trees begin to grow? How were the animals and birds created?
14. How were the first grizzly bears different from today’s grizzlies?
15. Why was there a volcano?
16. What caused the youngest daughter to disobey her father? What happened as a result?
17. Why did the mother grizzly decide to tell the Spirit Chief where to find his daughter?
18. What curse did the Spirit Chief place on the grizzlies?
19. How were the first Indians created?
20. Why won’t the Mount Shasta Indians kill a grizzly bear? What do they do instead?
From the Navajo Origin Legend – Page 22

1. This is a story about the creation of man & woman. What “elements” were used to make them?

2. On what day did the spirit people was themselves? And what was the purpose of this act?

3. Explain why the people create a circle?

4. Why is the wind considered magical to the Navajo?

5. How is the Navajo creation story different from the story of creation in the bible?

From the Iroquois Constitution – Page 24

1. What is significant about the tree of Great Peace?

2. What characteristics are valued by the five nations? (hint: it is expected that each group have these traits to become part of the confederacy).

3. What is the great fire for?