World Religions
The Power of Myth
With Bill Moyers and Joseph Campbell

Joseph Campbell (March 26, 1904 – October 30, 1987) was an American mythologist, writer and lecturer, best known for his work in comparative mythology and comparative religion. Bill Moyers (June 5, 1934 -) is an American journalist and public commentator. He served as White House Press Secretary in President Lyndon B. Johnson's administration from 1965-1967. He worked as a news commentator on television for ten years. Moyers had an extensive involvement with public television, producing documentaries and news journal programs. These video clips present parts of conversations between Moyers and Campbell that examine the nature of religion and its possible origins. While viewing the video, take notes that will help you paraphrase the ideas with which you are presented.

Segment 1: <u>Masks of Eternity</u>

1. What is Campbell's definition of "god?"

2. What do you think Campbell means by "experience of mystery?" Give an example.

3. What is the main difference in the eastern (oriental) and western (occidental) view of god, according to Campbell?

4. What is religion, according to Campbell?

Segment 2: <u>The First Storytellers</u>

1. What were ancient myths designed to do, according to Campbell?

2. How did the experience of death contribute to the development of myth, according to Campbell?

3. What does Campbell assert is the basic theme of all mythology?

For further thought: Think about aspects of Campbell's viewpoints with which you agree or disagree? Explain why. What aspects were difficult for you to understand?