

## Weekly Concept **Myths**



### Essential Question

Why do people tell and retell myths?



**Go Digital!**





# Telling and Retelling Myths

This performer from the Beijing Opera is portraying a celebrated Chinese general. Audiences never tire of witnessing the larger-than-life exploits of this beloved hero.

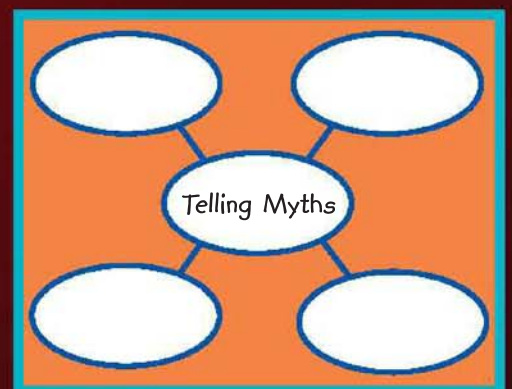
▶ The general's fabled honor and courage are symbolized by the actor's red face paint and the long black beard made of yak hair.

▶ Because he is depicted this way in books and paintings, too, the audience knows exactly who he is the moment he steps on the stage.

The fact that the general's story is such a favorite only adds to people's enjoyment of each performance.

## Talk About It

Write words you have learned about retelling the stories of famous heroes. Then talk with a partner about how the heroic character shown here is portrayed.



# Vocabulary

Use the picture and the sentences to talk with a partner about each word.



## audacity

People who are brave enough to sail on the open sea show great **audacity**.

*Describe a time when someone you know showed audacity.*



## deception

Those tags must be a **deception**, because the "sale" price is no lower than the price for those items at other stores.

*What is a synonym for deception?*



## desolate

No one has lived in that neglected, **desolate** region for many years.

*Describe what might make a place look desolate.*



## exploits

Sharon's athletic **exploits** have earned her many trophies.

*Describe the exploits of someone whose skills you admire.*





## oblivious

Damon relished the oatmeal, **oblivious** to the fact that it was good for him.

*When have you been oblivious to something?*



## somber

Watching the serious documentary put Donna in a **somber** mood.

*What puts you in a somber mood?*



## steadfast

**Steadfast** in her desire to play piano, Karina practiced every day.

*What skill have you pursued in a steadfast way?*



## valiant

The **valiant** firefighter carried the child away from the burning building.

*What is an antonym of valiant?*

## Your Turn

COLLABORATE



Pick three words. Write three questions for your partner to answer.

**Go Digital!** Use the online visual glossary



# THUNDER HELPER



## Essential Question

**Why do people tell and retell myths?**

Read about a Creek boy who gains the ability to help his people.



*The Creek are Native Americans who come from what are now Florida, Alabama, and Georgia. Their myths, passed down from generation to generation, are often about the relationship between people and the natural world.*

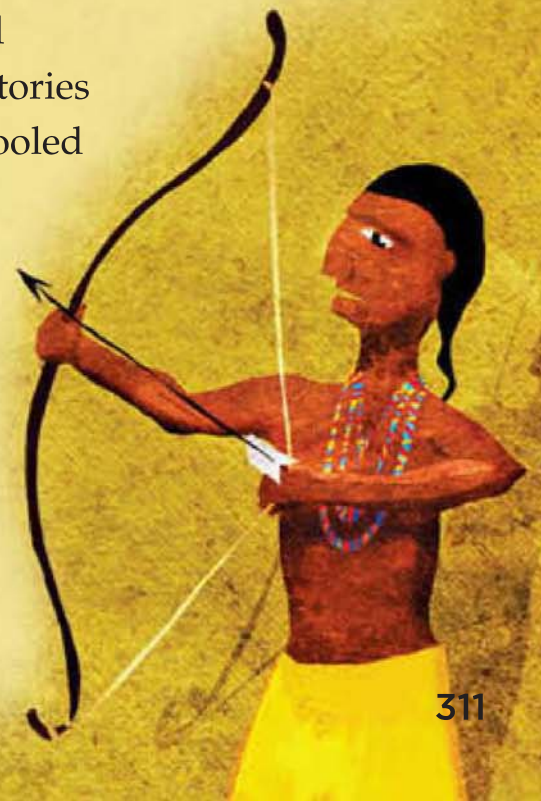
A long time ago, a boy and his three uncles set out from their village to go hunting. As always, the boy looked for ways to be useful to his people, so he set about catching fish in a nearby stream and gathering firewood while his uncles tracked deer. When his uncles returned, he would prepare *sofki*, a corn soup, and add the deer meat to make a mouth-watering stew.

One morning, the boy was walking toward the stream, dreaming of the tasty fish he would catch and listening to the chittering of the birds. All at once, he heard a loud roaring sound. Quickly, and as sly as a fox, he crouched, set an arrow against his bow, and readied himself for whatever might happen.

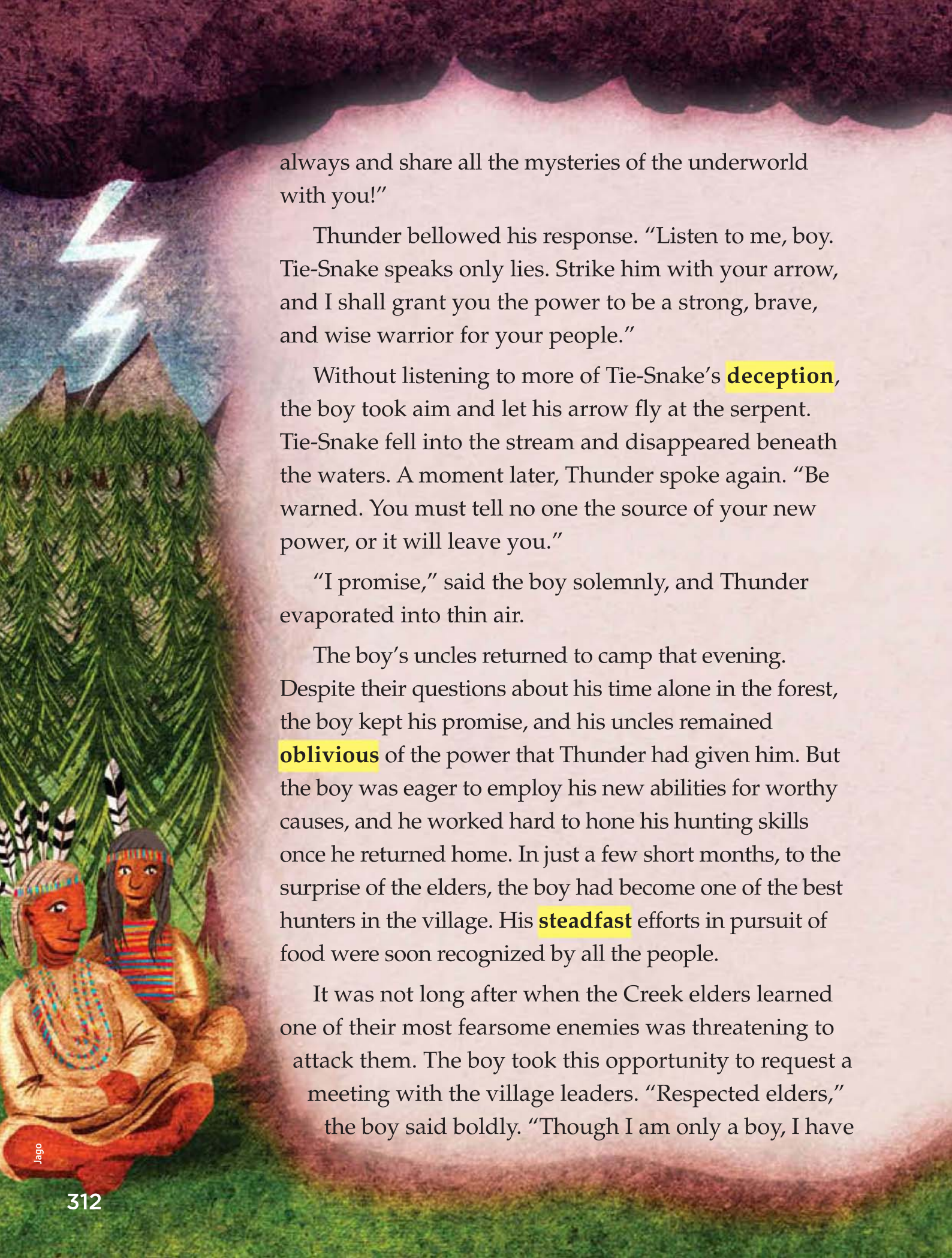
The boy crept slowly toward the eerie rumbling, until he reached the stream. There, towering above the rushing water, he saw two unearthly creatures locked in a terrifying struggle. One was dark and formless, yet seemed to be the source of the booming roar. The other, a long, wiry monster, was tightly coiled around the first.

The boy watched, his mouth agape with wonder. "The giant serpent must be the dreaded Tie-Snake!" he thought, remembering stories his elders told about the trickster that fooled people and drew them down into the murky and **desolate** underworld. "But who is the shapeless one? Could it be Thunder himself?" the boy wondered. In a **valiant** move, he raised his loaded bow and shouted to Tie-Snake, "Let go of him!"

Tie-Snake hissed back, "Boy, if you kill the evil Thunder, I will protect you







always and share all the mysteries of the underworld with you!”

Thunder bellowed his response. “Listen to me, boy. Tie-Snake speaks only lies. Strike him with your arrow, and I shall grant you the power to be a strong, brave, and wise warrior for your people.”

Without listening to more of Tie-Snake’s **deception**, the boy took aim and let his arrow fly at the serpent. Tie-Snake fell into the stream and disappeared beneath the waters. A moment later, Thunder spoke again. “Be warned. You must tell no one the source of your new power, or it will leave you.”

“I promise,” said the boy solemnly, and Thunder evaporated into thin air.

The boy’s uncles returned to camp that evening. Despite their questions about his time alone in the forest, the boy kept his promise, and his uncles remained **oblivious** of the power that Thunder had given him. But the boy was eager to employ his new abilities for worthy causes, and he worked hard to hone his hunting skills once he returned home. In just a few short months, to the surprise of the elders, the boy had become one of the best hunters in the village. His **steadfast** efforts in pursuit of food were soon recognized by all the people.

It was not long after when the Creek elders learned one of their most fearsome enemies was threatening to attack them. The boy took this opportunity to request a meeting with the village leaders. “Respected elders,” the boy said boldly. “Though I am only a boy, I have

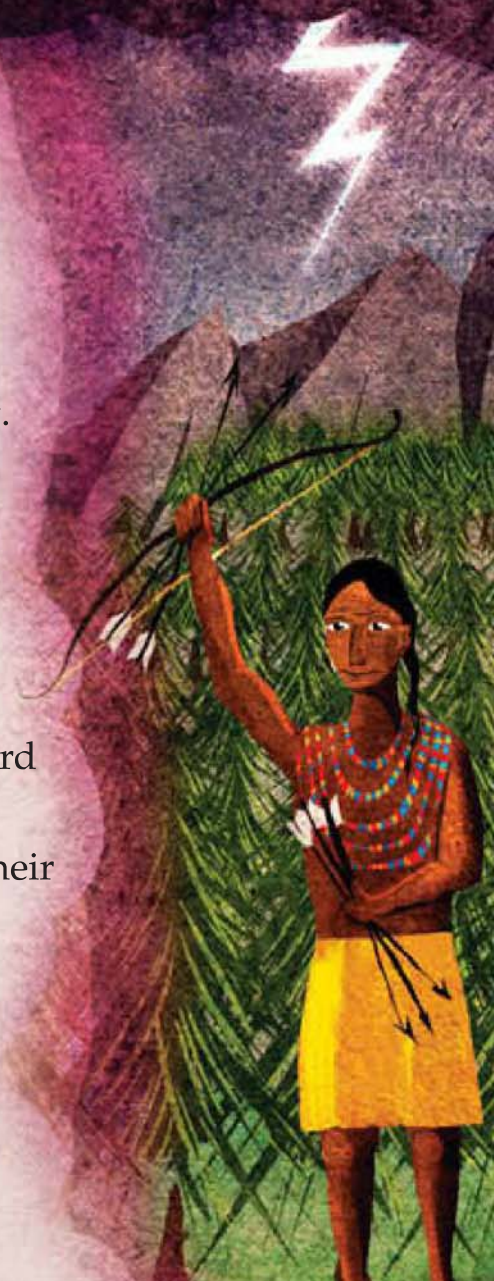


the courage and cunning to fight the enemy. Will you let me perform this deed to save our people?"

The boy's **audacity** impressed the elders. They conferred among themselves and soon nodded their heads in agreement. The chief declared, "You have proven your strength and bravery with your hunting. Now, as you go alone to fight the enemy, you must demonstrate your wisdom." With determination, the boy said, "I will not disappoint my people."

That very evening, the boy set off through the forest to face the enemy. The villagers gathered to await his return, and as the hours passed with no word the Creek fell into a **somber** mood. Then suddenly, a deafening roar of thunder made the villagers cover their ears. Their eyes shot upward as flashes of lightning streaked the sky. Moments later, smoke filtered out through the trees, and the people sensed that the boy had been victorious. They rejoiced that the enemy would no longer threaten their village.

When the boy made his way out of the forest, there was much celebration in honor of his **exploits**. The elders called him *Menewa*, meaning "great warrior." And from that day on, whenever the Creek heard Thunder, they knew that Menewa, his helper, was at work to keep their people safe.



### Make Connections



Talk about why the characters and plot of "Thunder Helper" would appeal to listeners generation after generation? **ESSENTIAL QUESTION**

Tell why a myth or story you know has special meaning to you. **TEXT TO SELF**