THE NEW JERSEY
ITALIAN HERITAGE COMMISSION

Romulus and Remus
Myths and Conflict Resolution

Grade Level: Second and Third Grade

Subjects: Language Art / Character Education / World History

Categories: Arts and Sciences / History and Society

<u>**Standards:**</u>
Please see page 5 of the lesson plan for complete New Jersey Student Learning Standards alignment.

<u>**Objectives:**</u>
Students will be able to:
1. explain the legendary origins of Rome.
2. explore sibling rivalry.
3. define myth as a genre of literature.
4. devise ways to avoid conflict and resolve potential problems.

<u>**Abstract:**</u>
Students will examine the founding myth of ancient Rome. They will see why Roman society developed such as strong "family-centered" culture. Students will contrast stories of sibling rivalry in ancient Greece, ancient Israel, and ancient Ireland, to discover why sibling rivalry can be destructive. They will also examine ways to ease tensions and negotiate settlements.

Romulus and Remus were the sons of the Roman god of war, Mars. As infants, the brothers were abandoned on the banks of the Tiber and left to the elements. Fortunately, they were found by a she-wolf who fed them with her milk.

Later a shepherd found the boys and took them home. The shepherd ended up raising the boys as his own children. The boys grew up to be very strong and clever and they decided to build a new city on the land where the shepherd had resqued them.
Shortly after building the city the brothers quarreled about who should be in charge. Romulus killed Remus in the battle. Romulus, thus, became the first king of this city which he named, Rome, after himself.

<u>**Key Word:**</u>

Myth- A traditional, typically ancient story dealing with supernatural beings, ancestors, or heroes that serves as a fundamental type in the worldview of a people, as by explaining aspects of the natural world or delineating the psychology, customs, or ideals of society:

Materials Required:

Internet access or copies of Internet documents

Background:

Teachers can read a brief account of Romulus & Remus at:
http://www.unrv.com/culture/romulus-and-remus.php

Procedures:

I.   Have students write a quick paragraph explaining the origins of the United States.
   a. Hopefully, they know something about the Revolution or the Forth of July.
   b. Have some of the students explain their answers, whether they are accurate or creative.

II.   Explain to students the word "Myth."
   a. Inform them that they are going to investigate the myth of the origins of the city of Rome.

III.   Explain to students that many cultures have stories to explain their beginnings
   a. Sometimes the stories are mixed with myths & legends and sometime they are more historical.
        i. Even the birth of the American nation is rife with legend and myth.
   b. The ancient Israelites explained the beginning of their people through the stories of the Patriarchs: Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and then Moses' and the Israelites' exodus form Egypt.
   c. Moslems trace their beginnings to Ishmael, son of Abraham.
   d. The ancient Irish told stories of how the Celtic sons of Mil: Emer Donn, Eremon, Ir, and Amergin left the Iberian Peninsula (modern Spain & Portugal) and conquered the island of Ireland.
   e. Although the origins of America has been well documented, the popular story has be pepper with myth and embellishments, such as stories of Molly Pitcher, Betsy Ross, George Washington and the cherry tree, etc.
   f. Explain to students that the mighty Roman Empire also had a story of its origin.
        i. Have students read the story of at:
            1. http://rome.mrdonn.org/romulusandremus.html
            2. https://www.ducksters.com/history/ancient_rome/romulus_and_remus.php
        ii. Pick a student to read the first piece (under the first drawings) aloud, while the class reads along.
            1. Ask students whether this part of the story was mythical, or could it be true.
            This part of the story could have some element of truth. Notice

that two brothers fought, and one killed the other. Point this out to the students. Many times, brothers or fathers and sons fought for power in the ancient world. This is one of the reasons that the Romans began to put a very heavy emphasis on family. They did not want families destroyed by men's ambition. Strong families with tight traditions and responsibilities meant stability.

iii. Pick a student to read the second piece (under the second drawings) aloud, while the class reads along.
1. Ask students whether this part of the story was mythical, or could it be true.
The god of war, Mars, was a part of Rome mythology. He is the perfect father of Rome because the Romans highly prized the art of war. Roman society was a warrior society.

iv. Pick a student to read the third piece (under the third drawings) aloud, while the class reads along.
1. Ask students whether this part of the story was mythical, or could it be true.
The story of saving the boys could have some basis in truth. Point to the story of Moses and how, as a baby, his mother had put him into basket and floated him done the Nile to escape Pharaoh's soldiers.

The story of the boys being saved by a she-wolf is highly unlikely. Nevertheless, it serves the story well. The wolf was the special animal of Mars, the god of war. It symbolized the warrior. Romulus and Remus were the sons of Mars and they were nourished on the milk of a wolf. Perfect warriors would have such origins.

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The story of their reunion with their grandfather could have some basis in fact.

v. Pick a student to read the fourth piece (under the fourth drawings) aloud, while the class reads along.
1. Ask student whether this part of the story was mythical, or could it be true.
Romulus and Remus wracked revenge on their Great Uncle Amulius and killed him. In the ancient world, this type of behavior was common and revenge would be necessary to maintain the family's honor.

vi. Pick a student to read the fifth piece (under the fifth drawings) aloud, while the class reads along.
1. Ask students whether this part of the story was mythical, or could it be true.
The story is probably mythical, but in the early founding of Rome two brothers could have fought to the death. This was common in the ancient world.
1. *Tell students that in the Book of Genesis Cain killed his*

> *brother Abel because Abel had given more pleasing sacrifices to God.*
>
> 2. *In Genesis, Jacob deceived his Father, Isaac, and stole his brother, Esau's birth rite and his blessing.*
> 3. *In a Greek tragedy, the playwright, Sophocles, told in the play Antigone of how the brothers, Eteocles and Polyneices had agreed to share the rule of Thebes. Each brother would rule on alternating years. Eteocles ruled first, but refused to relinquish power after one year. Eventually, the brothers fought over the city, until both were dead.*
> 4. *In ancient Irish mythology, two sons of Mil, Donn Eber and Eremon had defeated the native Tuatha Da Dannon in Ireland. Both brothers were going to fight over the kingship of Ireland. Their brother, Amergin the Bard, decided that Donn Eber's family would receive Eremon's inheritance and Eremon's family would receive Eber's inheritance. This way they would both work to help one another. Instead of adhering to Amergin's decision, the brothers agreed to divide Ireland. Eremon took the north and Donn Eber took the south.*

IV. Explain to students that this type of sibling rivalry is unacceptable today. In the ancient world the birthright and the father's inheritance was everything. There would be one ruler and the other siblings would be subservient.
   a. Tell the students to think of a time when they felt jealous over something their sibling, cousin, or a friend had received or had accomplished.
   b. In a paragraph
      i. Explain the situation.
      ii. Explain how they reacted to the situation.
      iii. Ask them to write a "rule" for themselves.
         1. Whenever they feel jealousy, what will they do to avoid a confrontation or bad feelings between them and their sibling or friend because of jealousy?

Homework:
In a paragraph:
Ask students to write down how they reacted when someone was jealous of them.
   • Ask them to write a "rule" for themselves.
      • to avoid confrontation or bad feelings between them and their sibling or friend?
      • to help them alleviate some of the other person's jealousy?

Assessment:
Have students define "Myth." Have them create a myth demonstrating how two siblings can resolve their jealousies amicably. Assess the myths by using the *New Jersey Registered Holistic Writing Rubric* for scoring. Teachers will also read the students' paragraphs about jealousy. Assess the paragraphs by using the *New Jersey Registered Holistic Writing Rubric* for scoring.

New Jersey Student Learning Standards
English Language Arts

RL.2.2 Recount stories, including fables and folktales from diverse cultures, and determine their central message/theme, lesson, or moral.

RL.2.3 Describe how characters in a story respond to major events and challenges using key details.

RL.3.2 Recount stories, including fables, folktales, and myths from diverse cultures; determine the central message/theme, lesson, or moral and explain how it is revealed through key details in the text.

RL.3.3 Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the plot.

SL.2.2 Recount or describe key ideas or details from a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.

SL.2.3 Ask and answer questions about what a speaker says in order to clarify comprehension, gather additional information, or deepen understanding of a topic or issue.

SL.3.2 Determine the main ideas and supporting details of a text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

SL.3.3 Ask and answer questions about information from a speaker, offering appropriate elaboration and detail.