

Concept Relationship: Stories and Theories of Origins–Key

These are suggested and disputable ideas that may be elicited through guided questioning.

<p>Characteristics of stories of origins:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>There is always a god or gods.</i> ▪ <i>The world usually starts from nothing or is brought into existence.</i> ▪ <i>There are often many different versions of the same story.</i> ▪ <i>The story sounds as though it was meant to be told out loud.</i> ▪ <i>There are different stages in the creation (e.g., light and dark, animals, water and land, male and female, et cetera).</i> ▪ <i>Human beings have a connection to the world of the gods.</i> ▪ <i>Often human beings are considered to be responsible to the gods.</i> 	<p>Characteristics of scientific theory of origins:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>They use a combination of physical evidence and hypotheses related to a theory of origins.</i> ▪ <i>There is no god as a part of the explanation.</i> ▪ <i>Human beings evolve over time through adaptation.</i> ▪ <i>Human beings did not begin from nothing but evolved from previous human forms.</i> ▪ <i>There are competing views on how the events happened.</i> ▪ <i>Scientists present a timeline for each stage of development.</i> ▪ <i>Gaps in the scientific evidence (e.g., missing fossils) are not regarded as an obstacle to accepting the theory as an explanation for the origins of human life.</i>
<p>Purposes of stories of origins:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>To explain the beginnings of humanity and how people came to be the way they are now</i> ▪ <i>To explain the purpose of human existence</i> ▪ <i>To explain the relationship between a physical and non-physical world</i> 	<p>Purposes of scientific theories of origins:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>To explain how human beings came to look like they do, and act and live as they do, in modern times</i> ▪ <i>To explain how the human species survived and changed over time</i> ▪ <i>To understand human life in relation to the natural environment</i>
<p>What do the origin stories tell about culture and worldview:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Humans have a relationship to the gods.</i> ▪ <i>Humans have a purpose.</i> ▪ <i>Gods are much like humans.</i> ▪ <i>Origin stories are often the source of rituals and traditions.</i> ▪ <i>(Other values vary.)</i> 	<p>What does scientific theory tell about modern culture and world view:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Evidence is the basis of understanding, and must pass many tests and be free of bias.</i> ▪ <i>Chronology is important to date materials and evidence.</i> ▪ <i>The natural world exists as it is without needing a purpose.</i> ▪ <i>Understanding the world does not involve belief in a supreme being or intelligence.</i>
<p>How are origin stories and scientific theories of origins the same?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>They both try to explain how human life began and why people in societies behave as they do.</i> ▪ <i>They both are based on belief; origin stories rely upon accepted tradition, while science relies upon evidence to support beliefs.</i> 	
<p>How are origin stories and scientific theories of origins different?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Origin stories are immutable, whereas scientific theories evolve with new evidence.</i> ▪ <i>Origin stories relate to the non-physical or divine world; they may or may not be taken literally.</i> ▪ <i>Scientific theories relate to physical explanations only and are meant to be taken as our present best understanding (revised as additional scientific evidence is gathered and accepted).</i> 	