Every culture in history has had its own myths to help explain the world through the power of story. This engaging book offers a delightful, sweeping view of world mythology—not just the famous stories of the Greeks and Romans, but also the stories of Native Americans and legends from South America, Africa, Scandinavia, Asia, and Australia. Young readers will learn about Zeus and Pandora from Greece, King Arthur from England, Maui-of-a-Thousand-Tricks from Polynesia, the Rainbow Serpent from West Africa, and dozens of other colorful, larger-than-life characters from around the world. Myth-master Neil Philip has taken a thematic approach, organizing the legends around themes such as creation myths, fertility and cultivation, gods and animals, and visions of the end. Within each theme, eight to twelve myths from different cultures are retold, enhanced by abundant full-color illustrations and photographs of related sites or artifacts. At the side of each page are further explanations of characters or situations in the stories. The appendix includes a section called Whos Who in Mythology, with the pronunciation for each name and charts of both the Greek and Norse Pantheons. Philips retellings are clear and powerful, retaining the flavor and message of each story. This fascinating book of myths belongs on every young scholars bookshelf. (Ages 9 to 13)

My Personal Review:
The 57 fabulous myths included in this highly original illustrated children's book truly hail from ancient civilization. Everything Middle Eastern precedes the coming of Christ, and only two Celtic tales (both concerning fertility and cultivation) even marginally address Judeo-Christian traditions.

Here kids can learn about the myths that dominated for centuries, from China and Japan to ancient Greece, Sumeria and Iran (where Zoroastrians worshiped the wise lord Ahura Mazda, whose first fire-priest Gayomart tended his sign—a flame). "All men are born good," the myth recounts, "and the earth is happiest where one of the faithful is standing...and sows..."
corn," spreading the words of Ahura Mazda, who decreed that all men and women are free to choose for themselves between good and evil. This book is truly a smorgasbord of ancient mythical delights, and parents who want to educate and satisfy their children could hardly find a better place to look. A fabulous find, especially for independent, middle school readers.