



Questions for Classroom Discussion

Local Legends

- **What are some common urban legends, myths, and other rumors that people believe?**
 - ⇒ Consider popular legends across the world (Bigfoot, Loch Ness Monster, Atlantis, etc.) and where these legends are located
 - ⇒ Consider local legends, ghost stories, or tall tales from your area... specifically think of places with lots of “history”, because true events are often the origin of these sorts of legends

- **Why do urban legends, myths, and other rumors continue to exist when there is little evidence to support them?**
 - ⇒ Consider how these rumors are kept alive by routine “sightings” and “first-hand encounters”
 - ⇒ Consider the power of mass media in spreading rumors and even creating hysteria around stories or events that are not completely true
 - ⇒ Consider how it is extremely difficult to prove that something is NOT true (rather than having to prove that it is true)
 - ⇒ Consider some of the reasons these rumors may actually seem plausible, thus making them easy to believe

- **Can urban legends, myths, and other rumors be helpful to a community? Can they be harmful?**
 - ⇒ Consider if there is an economic advantage for a community to have strange things in their area (for example, many older cities have “Ghost Tours” on a daily basis that attract tourists)
 - ⇒ Consider how many businesses—such as restaurants, souvenir shops, retail stores—often take advantage of a local “theme”, whether it’s ghosts or Colonial America/Revolutionary War or some other history (both real history and folklore)
 - ⇒ Consider that a legend (such as ghost stories) may start out as fun, but can actually spark a genuine interest for people to learn more about history and the community
 - ⇒ Consider that, when taken too far, folklore can replace the identity of an area and overshadow its true significance and history (consider the Loch Ness Monster, which may be embarrassing for those who live in the area)