The study of Myth, Archetype and Symbol: Why does it matter?

It is through these three that we are able, as everyday people, to talk about the big ________ of _________. All of those big themes are either questions one can easily ask oneself or situations one might find oneself in, because they are so human – so common to people on the planet. That’s why they are useful. It’s like tracking a wild animal. You can see which way it’s going. If you know the _______ of something, then you know how to _______ it. You know which way to _______ in order to go where you need to go. This is why these three persist in human life.

What is a Myth?
A myth is a story which has its roots in the natural world and which explains why the world is the way it is and how humans can _______ successfully in it. It is passed down through _______ ________, and reveals some basic, _______ ________, often through the use of _______ and _______.

What is an Archetype?
Archetypes are the _______ _______ _______ through which the basic characters of the created world act in order to perform the drama of creation. They are like _______ ________ around which specific patterns of personality traits constellate. These primordial (______-______) personalities occur at every stage of human history, because they originate in a time before human history started. We know them, just like all our ancestors before us knew them. We call them the King, the ________, the Thief, the Healer, the ________, the Warrior, the Earth Mother, The ________, the Rebel, the Prostitute, The ________ to name but a few.

What is a Symbol?
An object, person, _______ or _______ that _______ or stands for something else, especially a material object used to represent something_______, or something having ________possible meanings.

Please note: A symbol cannot BE an _________. Rather, a symbol is the thing that _________ to the abstraction. In Poe's "The Raven," death isn't the symbol; the bird is. In Crane's The Red Badge of Courage, courage isn't the symbol; blood is. Symbols are usually objects, but actions can also work as symbols--thus the terms symbolic ________ and symbolic act.

Source: grammar.about.com/od/rs/g/symbolterm.htm

What is Ritual?
Ritual starts with the creation of _______ _______ most often for the purpose of _______ _______. (The Ghost Dance was to bring back the ancestors of Native Americans and to save the existing Natives from the white power structure). This gives the people the ability to have an active role in the _______ _______ of the life of the planet and the _______. This is the participation mystique, whereby the dancer/pray-er/singer/seeker connects to the fundamental powers of life (and death). The ritual is meant to activate a specific _________ within the performer/invoker.

The second function of ritual is to activate the _______. The ritual brings the _______ of the archetype to you, so that you may take on those characteristics (like Lady McBeth asking “Unsex me here!”). That is what the singer is doing in the Hunting Song – he is becoming the blackberry bird that is the friend of the deer. He is asking for that cloaking. That is _________ an archetype.
The Four Functions of Mythology:

1 - Instills Awe - Gives people a sense of a higher power, a sense of greatness beyond humanity in which they may participate through ritual action.

2 - Explains the World – Reveals the origins of specific physical things and phenomena.

3 - Supports Customs – Shows right and wrong (values) - things the people do and don’t do in their everyday lives because of events/behaviors in the story.

4 – Guides Us in Life - The myth must guide people successfully through the life stages, which it does first of all through helping them understand where they are on life’s journey.