ENG 253
Week #1: Weekly Writing
DUE: Thursday, October 1


  “I will tell you something about stories
  They aren’t just entertainment.
  Don’t be fooled.
  They are all we have, you see
  all we have to fight off illness and death.
  You don’t have anything if you don’t have the stories.”
  Leslie Marmon Silko

- **Class Discussion Focus and Weekly Writing choices** (choose one or two)
  1. Before you read our text selections, in a paragraph, tell your “story” of the beginnings of America/American Literature, complete with times, people (nationalities), and place. After your reading, think again about your “story” that you bring to our study. Have these ways of thinking and understanding changed for you over the years and especially after this week’s reading? If so, in what ways? Why?
  2. Note the details of the native myths in our selection (“A Bering Strait Eskimo Creation Myth,” and the Seneca Account). Create your own American origin myth taking into account what you have learned from this reading and your unique 21st century perspective. Finally, explain the ways in which your myth, by contrast with the Native American selections in our text, articulates “your people’s” common values.

  “Oral tradition tells the story of the land. Nobody made the stories up. The land told us. Then we got them into human articulation and the dance as best we could.”
  Paula Allen Gunn

  3. You’ve read accounts of Europeans’ arrival both from the Native perspective (Mayan poem, page 30 and Aztec account, page 27) and from the Europeans’ perspective (Norse, Spanish, Italian, British). The Native account grows out of an oral tradition. Think and write about the distinctions between oral and written cultures (consider all of the following: style, purpose, power).

**Guidelines**
- Word-process
- Write one (and only one) full page single-spaced
- Include a header in the upper left-hand corner: your name
  the date
  ENG253 Weekly Writing #1.