



 Prestwick House

Activity Pack

MYTHOLOGY: TIMELESS TALES OF GODS AND HEROES

BY EDITH HAMILTON



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Item No. 200119

Name: _____

Date: _____

Pre-Reading

Historical Periods

Objective: Researching the historical periods of ancient Greece

Activity

The first evidence of real settlement in Greece comes from about 55,000 B.C.E. At that time, there was only a small population, which did not increase until around 3,000 B.C.E. The development of Greek civilization is divided into three main periods—Stone Age, Bronze Age, and Iron Age—and each of these periods can be broken down into subdivisions.

Put together a class newspaper about the history of Greece. In your group, assign individuals to cover the topics of politics, literature, religion, art and architecture, and social development. Gather information on your topic via the Internet and any other reference material available. Feel free to gather any pictures that may enhance the quality of your work. The group will then combine information to create an article for its assignment and save it. When all the groups have composed an article, the class will combine efforts to create a paper.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapter 5

Theme

Objective: Extracting an intended theme or lesson from a story

Activity

The classical story of Cupid and Psyche deals with the hardships that true love must sometimes endure. Cupid's mother, Venus, is extremely jealous of Psyche, and she orders the mortal princess to complete a series of tasks. Successfully accomplishing the difficult chores, Psyche is once again united with her husband, only now as a goddess.

Every test Psyche undertakes has an ethical theme. Complete the chart on the following page by supplying the virtue or characteristic pertaining to the task. The first one has been done as an example.

Psyche and Venus compete in a battle of wills over Cupid. Write a brief paragraph comparing traits of the two women.

Cupid represents love and Psyche means spirit or soul. Based on these elements, what do you believe is the theme of the story? Support your answer.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapter 6

Group Work, Setting, and Narrator

Objective: Rewriting and critiquing the setting, narration, and conclusion of a story

Activity

Pyramus and Thisbe, the young Babylonian lovers, share a forbidden love that is separated by a wall. While attempting to elope, Pyramus mistakenly thinks Thisbe has been killed and rashly commits suicide; Thisbe, in despair, stabs herself. The climax in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* closely resembles Pyramus and Thisbe: Romeo believes Juliet to be dead and kills himself; Juliet discovers him and takes her own life. Each story consists of the same material, depicting romantic love and tragic destiny.

The theme of "star-crossed lovers" is universal because the story can be told in any time and place. The story of ill-fated lovers from feuding families has been retold countless times, and now it is your turn to tell the tale.

Using third-person narration, rewrite the love story of Pyramus and Thisbe. Choose a setting by deciding when (past, present, or future) and where the story takes place. Be as creative as you wish.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapter 8**Reading for Detail, Rising Action, and Climax**

Objective: Identifying the rising action and climax of a story

Activity

The rising action and climax of a story are components that keep the reader interested, and each of the four adventure stories in Chapter 8 contains these elements. Complete the following chart by filling in the missing information.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapters 9 – 11**Group Work**

Objectives: Reenacting a character's thoughts and actions
Comparing heroic traits from different cultures

Activity

The four great Greek heroes—Perseus, Theseus, Hercules, and Atalanta—are acclaimed for their brave deeds and wondrous abilities. Their magnificent tales continue to be told today in literature, drama, and on television.

Imagine that these heroes are alive today and will be appearing on a talk show.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapters 1 – 26**Epithets and Image**

Throughout this book, Edith Hamilton refers to people and gods through the use of epithets. For example: “implacable Charybdis,” and “Aeolus, the King of the Winds.” List each epithet you can find in the blank next to the name. Across from each one, write the image that is suggested by the word or phrase. We have done the first one for you as an example.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapters 17 – 19**Group Work and Oratory**

Objective: Assessing the great families of mythology to determine which has the most tragic lineage

Activity

Each group must evaluate the great families of Greek mythology—Atreus, Thebes, and Athens—to decide which has the most tragic history and give a speech about your choice. A second possibility for a speech is to determine which one of the families is least or most responsible for its own fate. Compose a convincing speech by using information from the text to support your conclusion. The group will then assign a speaker to present the speech to the class.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapter 22

Group Work, Character Comparison, and Oral Tradition

Objectives: Weighing the traits of Greek and Norse characters
Enacting oral tradition through a revision and continuation of a myth

Activity

The tragic story of Signy shares similar traits with the story of Clytemnestra, as told in chapter seventeen. Complete the comparison chart in order to attain a better understanding of the similarities and differences between the two women.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Wrap-Up

Zodiac Sign

Objective: Identifying zodiac signs

Activity

The night sky is a group of images from a number of different societies, both ancient and modern. Most ancient cultures saw pictures in the stars of the night sky, and the earliest known efforts to catalogue the stars date to cuneiform texts and artifacts roughly 6000 years old. When you check your horoscope, you are following an age-old tradition of reading the planets for predictions of the future. Your horoscope is based upon the position of the stars and planets in relation to one another at the hour of your birth. The zodiac, consisting of twelve constellations, is the basis for the horoscope.

The ancient Greeks have by far contributed the most towards explanations for the Zodiac signs. In the following chart, match the proper myth to its corresponding zodiacal constellation. You may need to use an encyclopedia or the Internet to obtain all the answers.

Zodiac Sign

- ___ 1. Aquarius
- ___ 2. Aries
- ___ 3. Cancer
- ___ 4. Gemini
- ___ 5. Leo
- ___ 6. Libra
- ___ 7. Pisces
- ___ 8. Sagittarius
- ___ 9. Scorpio
- ___ 10. Taurus
- ___ 11. Virgo
- ___ 12. Capricorn

- A. The crab sent to harass Hercules
- B. The archer Chiron; substitute for Prometheus
- C. The water carrier Ganymede; cupbearer for gods
- D. The virgin Astraea; spirit of justice for men
- E. The scorpion responsible for Orion's death
- F. The ram of the Golden Fleece sought by Jason
- G. The Sea Goat; form Bacchus takes on to rescue Jupiter from the giant Typhoeus
- H. The bull-form Jupiter takes on to kidnap Europa
- I. Twin brothers Castor and Pollux; adventurers
- J. The fish; form Venus and Cupid take on to escape the giant Typhoeus
- K. The Nemean lion; killed by Hercules
- L. The scales; the balance of the universe

Design a new constellation and draw a picture of it. Create and write a myth