Mythology: Timeless Tales of Gods and Heroes
Edith Hamilton
(ISBN: 0446574759)

Purpose

Classical mythology is perhaps the most often referenced literary tradition in Western society. For millennia, Christian and non-Christian authors and artists have used the stories and images embedded within the Greco-Roman mythological tradition as sources for their works. Students will be asked to learn and understand the timeless tales contained within these myths in order to engage in broader cultural conversations.

Additionally, classical mythology provides a helpful framework for students to become familiar with the basics of human story-telling. Throughout history, human cultures have preferred to tell stories about recurring themes with particular characters and events. Despite time and place, people tend to tell similar tales about similar events with similar characters. Students will use classical mythology to reflect on the ways they also express their values and beliefs in narratives.

Requirements

Students must read the assigned chapters of Edith Hamilton’s Mythology prior to the first day of school. Not only must each student complete the reading, students will take a test over the assigned reading the first week of school. The idea is to encourage the student to engage the material in a serious manner on his or her own. Consequently, each student must complete the following reading questions listed below on a digital document (e.g., MSWord document). Each student will submit this document upon the beginning of the school year. Students must not collaborate or receive assistance on this assignment; each student will do his or her own work without using Internet or other third-party resources. A student can be confident in his or her preparation when he or she is able to retell the stories to high degree of accuracy.

Reading

The pages may be different based on the version of the book the student owns.

<p>| Introduction | pp. 13-23 |
| Chapter 1    | The Gods pp. 24-47 |
| Chapter 2    | The Two Great Gods of Earth: Demeter (Ceres) Dionysus, also called Bacchus pp. 48-64 |
| Chapter 3    | How the World and Mankind Were Created pp. 65-77 |
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Reading Questions
Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

NOTE: not every assigned chapter has related reading questions.

Introduction: pp. 13-23
1. What is the difference between primitive and classical mythology?
2. How are the Greek gods different from Egyptian or Mesopotamian gods?
3. What is “the miracle of Greek mythology” (17)?
4. What are the “dark spots” referred to by Edith Hamilton (18-19)?
5. How does she define mythology?
6. What is her explanation for differing views of the same gods?


Chapter 1 The Gods pp. 24-47
1. Identify the best-known writers of Greek and Roman mythology.
   a. Ovid--
   b. Homer--
   c. Hesiod--
   d. Pindar--
   e. Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides--
   f. Aristophanes--
   g. Plato--
   h. Virgil--
2. What is the best guide to Greek mythology?
3. Briefly identify the twelve gods of Olympus.
   a. Zeus (Jupiter)--
   b. Hera (Juno)--
   c. Poseidon (Neptune)--
   d. Hades (Pluto)--
   e. Athena (Minerva)--
   f. Phoebus Apollo (Apollo)--
   g. Artemis (Diana)--
   h. Aphrodite (Venus)--
   i. Hermes (Mercury)--
   j. Ares (Mars)--
   k. Hephaestus (Vulcan)--
   l. Hestia (Vesta)--
4. Identify the lesser gods of Olympus.
   a. Eros--
   b. Hebe--
   c. Iris--
   d. The Graces--
   e. The Muses--
5. Identify some of the gods of the Waters.
   a. Poseidon (Neptune)--
b. Ocean--
c. Triton--
d. Proteus--
e. Naiads--

6. Identify some of the gods of the Underworld.
   a. Charon--
   b. Cerberus--
   c. Acheron, Coeytus, Styx--
   d. The Furies--
   e. Sleep and Death--

7. Identify lesser gods of the Earth.
   a. Demeter (Ceres)--
   b. Dionysus (Bacchus)--
   c. Pan (Faunus)--
   d. Castor and Pollux--
   e. The Satyrs--
   f. Nymphs--
   g. Boreas, Notus, Euris, Zephyr--
   h. The Centaurs--
   i. The Gorgons--
   j. The Sirens--
   k. Clotho, Latches, Atropos--

8. Identify two well-known lesser Roman gods.
   a. Saturn--
   b. Janus--

Chapter 2 The Two Great Gods of Earth: Demeter (Ceres) / Dionysus or Bacchus pp. 48-64
1. What do Greeks believe are the two basic gifts that Earth gives to man?
2. How are Dionysus and Demeter different from the Twelve gods of mythology?
3. How does the myth of Demeter explain the seasons of spring and winter?
4. According to myth, how is Dionysus born? How is this related to Dionysus’ association with grapes and wine?
5. What is he known as, and what does he teach humans?
6. What are the two contrasting ideas associated with the worship of Dionysus?
7. Why is Dionysus considered so important to Greeks?
8. How does Dionysus become a symbol of resurrection?
9. What is the connection between Dionysus and the Greek theater?

Chapter 3 How the World and Mankind Were Created pp. 65-77
1. What is Hesiod’s version of the creation of man?
2. Who are Prometheus and Epimetheus?
3. What gifts does Epimetheus give to animals? What does Prometheus give to mankind to make us superior to animals?
4. What is the second version of creation, the five stages of man?
5. What does Prometheus do that angers Zeus?
6. How is Prometheus tortured?
7. Why is Pandora created?
8. Why does Zeus send a flood to earth?
9. Who are the only two survivors?
10. Who are the Stone People?

Part Two: Stories of Love and Adventure

Chapter 5 Cupid and Psyche pp. 96-104
1. How does Psyche compare in beauty with her sisters?
2. What plan does Venus have for Psyche?
3. What happens when Cupid meets Psyche?
4. How does “the mildest of winds” help Psyche?
5. When and why does Cupid appear to Psyche?
6. How do her sisters create doubts about Psyche’s future husband?
7. How does this myth end?

Chapter 6 Eight Brief Tales of Lovers pp. 105-121
1. How does the myth of Pyramus and Thisbe explain the deep red color of the mulberry bush?
2. How does the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice explain the sweetness of the nightingale’s song?
3. How does the myth of Ceyx and Alcyone explain the idea of Halcyon days?
4. How does the myth of Pygmalion and Galatea illustrate the power of love?
   a. Why does Pygmalion decide to remain a bachelor?
   b. Under what circumstances does he fall in love?
   c. How does Pygmalion act after this?
   d. Who helps Pygmalion in his desire to have the woman he loves?
   e. How does this story end?
5. How does the myth of Baucis and Philemon illustrate nature as a symbol of eternal love?
6. Explain the myth of Endymion.
7. How is the myth of Daphne related to the laurel leaf as a symbol of victory?
8. A myth says that Greek flowers emerge from the bottom of a well in Ortygia. If a wooden cup is thrown into the Alpheus in Greece, it will reappear in the Arethusa in Italy. How does the myth of Alpheus and Arethusa explain these beliefs?

Chapter 8 Four Great Adventures pp. 136-145
1. How does the myth of Phaëthon explain the poplar trees that grow along the bank of the river Eridanus?
2. Pegasus and Bellerophon
   a. Why does Bellerophon believe that he can be equal to the gods?
   b. What does Bellerophon forget?
   c. What Greek beliefs does this story of Bellerophon illustrate?
3. How does the myth of Otus and Ephialtes also show the foolishness of trying to rise above the gods?
4. How does the myth of Daedalus explain the expression “flying too close to the sun”?

Part Four: Heroes of the Trojan War
Chapter 13 The Trojan War pp. 185-200
1. What does Edith Hamilton think is “one of the world’s greatest poems”?
2. What causes the Trojan War?
3. How did Helen of Troy become involved in this myth?
4. How does Odysseus (Ulysses) feel about the war?
5. What happens to Achilles?
6. What sacrifice is Agamemnon required to make?
7. What happens at the end of nine years of fighting with neither side victorious?
8. What happens during a pause in the war?
9. What happens to Patroclus?
10. What does Achilles do as a result?
11. What happens to Achilles?

Chapter 14 The Fall of Troy pp. 201-210
1. Who does Achilles kill in battle, called his last battle by Hamilton?
2. Who kills Achilles? How?
3. What made Achilles invulnerable, except for his heel?
4. Who wins Achilles’ armor?
5. Why does the Greek hero Ajax become enraged at Menelaus and Agamemnon?
6. Who causes Ajax to become insane? What does he do?
7. What does Ajax do after he becomes sane again?
8. Who is Helenus?
9. What advice does Helenus give the Greeks?
10. Why was Philoctetes left on the island of Lemnos? What does he have with him?
11. Why does Odysseus bring Philoctetes back to the Greek camp?
12. Who is wounded by Philoctetes in battle?
13. Where is the answer to #12 taken when he is wounded?
14. Why does Oenone refuse to help Paris?
15. What does Diomedes steal from Troy?
16. Whose idea is the creation of the Trojan Horse?
17. Who is inside the Horse?
18. Where does the Greek army go after putting the Horse in front of the Trojan walls?
19. Who is Sinon? What story does he tell Priam and the Trojans?
20. Who is Laocoön? What warning does he give the Trojans?
21. Who else warns the Trojans about the horse?
22. What happens to Laocoôn?
23. What happens when the Greeks enter the city?
24. Who is the only Trojan chieftain to survive the battle inside of Troy?
25. Who does he carry on his shoulders as he leaves the city?
26. What happens to Helen?
27. What happens to Astyanax?
28. Who is sacrificed on Achilles’ grave?
29. What happens to Hecuba and Andromache?

Chapter 16 The Adventures of Aeneas pp. 230-246
1. Why did Virgil write The Aeneid?
2. Who is Aeneas’ mother?
3. Which monsters did the Trojans encounter, monsters that drove them away from the island?
4. Amazingly, who do the Trojans encounter, a person married to Helenus, the Trojan prophet?
5. How did this person escape from the Greeks?
6. What two pieces of advice does Helenus give Aeneas concerning his trip to Hesperia?
7. What monster from The Odyssey do the Trojans encounter when they camp on the southern tip of Sicily?
8. Who saves them from the answer to #7?
9. Why was this person living near the answer to #7?
10. Who causes the storm that assails the Trojans after leaving Sicily?
11. Why does this god hate Aeneas? What prophecies is the god aware of concerning Aeneas?
12. Who causes the storm to stop? Why?
13. Who is the ruler of Carthage?
14. How is the god going to use the answer to #13 to stop Aeneas’ trip?
15. Which goddess decides to thwart Juno’s plan?
16. Who ensures that Dido will fall in love with Aeneas?
17. Who is sent to warn Aeneas to continue to Hesperia? Who sent this being?
18. How does Dido react when confronted with Aeneas’ departure?
19. What is causing the fire that Aeneas sees as his ships leave Carthage?
20. Who does Aeneas go to see as soon as he lands on the coast of Hesperia/Italy?
21. Who does Aeneas need to see in Hades to find out what to do in Hesperia/Italy?
22. What does the Sibyl have Aeneas and Achates look for, an object they have to have to enter Hades?
23. Who does the Sibyl sacrifice to at the mouth of the cavern of Hades?
24. How is Aeneas’ journey different from the Greeks who preceded him?
25. What beings do Aeneas and the Sibyl see as they travel down the road into Hades?
26. What group of beings do Aeneas and the Sibyl see as they come upon the two rivers?
27. What being do they see in a boat?
28. Why does he not admit some to his boat?
29. How do they get past Cerberus?
30. Who do they encounter in the Fields of Mourning?
31. How does this meeting affect Aeneas?
32. What region in Hades is Anchises located in?
33. Who does Anchises point out to Aeneas by the River Lethe?
34. Which two tribes of people opposed the Trojans after they landed?
35. What does Latinius want to give Aeneas?
36. How does Juno cause trouble for the Trojans?
37. Which three things does Alecto do to cause trouble for the Trojans?
38. What religious rite happened at the Gates of Janus?
39. Since Latinius refused to do so, who opened the gates?
40. Who is Mezentius?
41. Who is Camilla?
42. What does Father Tiber have Aeneas do?
43. What is destined to rise on the site of Evander’s poor city?
44. What country was Evander originally from?
45. What group of people did Evander say would help Aeneas?
46. What is an example of the cruelty shown by Mezentius towards his Etruscan people?
47. What do Nisus and Euryalus decide to do?
48. What did Nisus and Euryalus do in the camps of the enemy?
49. How did Euryalus die?
50. How did Nisus avenge him? What happened to Nisus?
51. Who does Aeneas beat in hand-to-hand combat to end *The Aeneid*?