

# Mythology Study Guide

## Student Copy

### Introduction pp. 13-23

1. What is the difference between primitive and classical mythology?
2. How are the Greek gods different from the 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?

## Part One: The Gods, The Creation, and the Earliest Heroes

### Chapter 1 The Gods pp. 24-47

1. Identify the best known writers of Greek and Roman mythology.

Ovid –

Homer –

Hesiod –

Pindar –

Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides –

Aristophanes –

Plato –

Virgil –

2. What is the best guide to Greek mythology?

3. Briefly identify the twelve gods of Olympus.

*Greek names are given. Fill in their Roman names, along with their symbol(s) if applicable.*

Greek Name	Roman Name	Identification / Information / Symbol
Zeus	_____	_____
Hera	_____	_____
Poseidon	_____	_____
Hades	_____	_____
Athena	_____	_____
Phoebus Apollo	_____	_____
Artemis	_____	_____
Aphrodite	_____	_____
Hermes	_____	_____
Ares	_____	_____
Hephaestus	_____	_____
Hestia	_____	_____

4. Identify some of the lesser Gods of Olympus.

*Greek names are given. Fill in their Roman names, along with their symbol(s) if applicable.*

Greek Name	Roman Name	Identification / Information / Symbol
Eros	_____	_____
Hebe	_____	_____
Iris	_____	_____
The Graces	_____	_____
The Muses	_____	_____

5. Identify some of the Gods of the Waters.

*Greek names are given. Fill in their Roman names, along with their symbol(s) if applicable.*

Greek Name	Roman Name	Identification / Information / Symbol
Poseidon	_____	_____
Ocean	_____	_____
Triton	_____	_____
Proteus	_____	_____
Naiads	_____	_____

6. Identify some of the Gods / Beings / Features of the Underworld.

*Greek names are given. Fill in their Roman names, along with their symbol(s) if applicable.*

Greek Name	Roman Name	Identification / Information / Symbol
Charon	_____	_____
Cerberus	_____	_____
Acheron	_____	_____
Cocytus	_____	_____
Styx	_____	_____
The Furies	_____	_____
Sleep and Death	_____	_____

7. Identify some of the Gods and lesser Gods / Creatures / Beings of the Earth.

*Greek names are given. Fill in their Roman names, along with their symbol(s) if applicable.*

Greek Name	Roman Name	Identification / Information / Symbol
Demeter	_____	_____
Dionysus	_____	_____
Pan	_____	_____
Castor and Pollux	_____	_____
The Satyrs	_____	_____
Nymphs	_____	_____
Boreas	_____	_____
Notus	_____	_____
Eurus	_____	_____
Zephyr	_____	_____
The Centaurs	_____	_____
The Gorgons	_____	_____
The Sirens	_____	_____
Clotho	_____	_____
Lachesis	_____	_____
Atropos	_____	_____

8. Who are two well-known lesser Roman gods?

## Chapter 2 The Two Great Gods of Earth: Demeter and Dionysus pp. 48-64

1. What do the Greeks believe are the two basic gifts that the Earth gives to man?
2. How are Dionysus and Demeter different from the twelve Gods of mythology?
3. How does the myth of Demeter, Persephone, and Hades 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 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?



## 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 7 The Quest of the Golden Fleece pp. 122-135

1. What is the Golden Fleece?
2. Who is Pelias? Why is he worried about a "one-sandaled" stranger?
3. Why does Jason seek the Golden Fleece? Who helps him in his quest?
4. What are three adventures he has along the way?
5. How does the King of Colchis treat Jason when he arrives? What tests does he put Jason through?
6. How does Medea figure in these events?
7. What happens to Pelias after Jason returns with the Golden Fleece?
8. What does Jason do to Medea at the end?

## Chapter 8 Four Great Adventures pp. 136-145

1. How does the myth of Phaethon 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 the 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 Three: The Great Heroes Before the Trojan War

### Chapter 9 Perseus pp. 146-154

1. How is Perseus' birth magical?
2. Compare events in Perseus' life to the following elements of the "Cinderella" story:
  - a. Cinderella's fairy godmother gives her a ball gown and a coach.
  - b. Cinderella has certain rules to follow, such as leaving the ball by midnight.
  - c. Cinderella is rescued from a miserable life by her fairy godmother.
  - d. Cinderella gets the prince in the end.

### Chapter 10 Theseus pp. 155-165

1. Before Theseus can go to Athens and claim King Aegeus as his father, what great test of strength is he required to perform?
2. Why is Theseus loved by the Greeks before he ever meets his father?
3. What two things does Theseus do to help the Athenians in their conflict with Minos?
4. What kind of ruler is Theseus when he becomes king of Athens?
5. How does the story of Hippolytus, Theseus' son, and Phedra, his wife, bring about the end of Theseus?

## Chapter 11 Hercules pp. 166-179

1. What are four examples of Hercules' great strength?
2. How could you interpret the following quote: "Intelligence did not figure largely in anything he did and was often conspicuously absent"?
3. What happens to Hercules when Hera sends madness to possess him?
4. Is he considered guilty of his crimes?
5. How does Hercules become involved in battling Death?
6. What happens after Hercules completes the twelve labors?
7. How does he die, and why is he allowed onto Mount Olympus?

## Chapter 12 Atalanta pp. 180-184

1. What are the circumstances of Atalanta's birth?
2. List three adventures Atalanta has.
3. What declaration does Atalanta make about marriage?
4. How does Melanion (Hippomenes) win her as his bride?
5. What becomes of Atalanta and her husband?

## 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 becomes the leader of the Greek efforts after Paris is killed?
2. What famous subterfuge do the Greeks use to overthrow Troy?
3. After the fall of Troy, what mistakes do the Greeks make?

## Chapter 15 The Adventures of Odysseus pp. 211-229

1. What are four great adventures of Odysseus during his twenty years of wandering before he returned home?

One –

Two –

Three –

Four –

2. How are Odysseus and his wife Penelope finally reunited?

## Chapter 16 The Adventures of Aeneas pp. 230-246

1. What is the purpose of this story?
2. How does Aeneas become the founder of the Roman race?

## Part Five: The Great Families of Mythology

### Chapter 17 The House of Atreus pp. 247-265

1. How does Agamemnon die?
2. How does Agamemnon return from the Trojan War?
3. Who are Electra and Orestes?
4. How does the oracle at Delphi affect Orestes?
5. How does he manage to get into his mother's palace?
6. How does Orestes' death differ from that of others in the House of Atreus?

## Chapter 18 The Royal House of Thebes pp. 266-280

1. What are the important circumstances surrounding the birth of Oedipus?
2. How does Oedipus become King of Thebes?
3. What instruction does Apollo give to rid Thebes of a plague that has fallen on the city?
4. What does Oedipus do when he learns the truth of his past? What does Jocasta do?
5. After Oedipus leaves the throne, who becomes king? What happens to Oedipus?
6. What declaration does Creon make after the battle for control of Thebes?
7. What results from this declaration? How does the House of Thebes come to an end?

## Chapter 19 The House of Athens pp. 281-290

1. What does the contest between Athena and Poseidon, judged by Cecrops, indicate about the Greek people?
2. What common practice does the story of Philomela and Procne illustrate?
3. What may these stories tell us about the Greek people?
4. How does the story of Creusa explain Hamilton's claim of the end of Greek mythology?
5. How does this story differ from Apollo's chasing of Daphne or Zeus' pursuit of Europa?

## Part Six: Less Important Myths

### Chapter 20 Midas and Other pp. 292-300

1. In the story of King Midas, how does Bacchus prove that Midas is a man of very little intelligence?
2. What other story shows the foolishness of Midas?

## Chapter 21 Brief Myths Arranged Alphabetically pp. 301-313

1. What curse is put on the Danaids because they killed their husbands?
2. Who are the Amazons?
3. How does the myth of Arachne explain the weaving skill of the spider?
4. How do two well-known constellations come into being, according to the myth of Callisto?
5. What unusual situation exists in the story of Clytie? What is the result?
6. How does the story of Dryope show how much the Greeks believe in the protection of trees?
7. Who is Epimenides?
8. What is the myth of Hero and Leander?
9. What is the source of Melampus as a great soothsayer?
10. How does the constellation Orion come about?
11. Why does Zeus place stars in the heavens?

## Part Seven: The Mythology of the Norsemen

### Introduction pp. 314-316

1. How is fate in Norse mythology different from fate in Greek and Roman mythology?
2. Why is courage so important in Norse mythology?
3. How do the following relate to Norse myths?
  - a. Elder Edda-
  - b. Asgard-
  - c. Valhalla-
  - d. Beowulf-
  - e. Younger Edda-

### Chapter 22 The Stories of Signy and Sigurd pp. 317-321

1. How does the story of Signy show her qualities of great patience and determination?
2. How does the story of Sigurd illustrate the Norse mythology of fate?

### Chapter 23 The Norse Gods pp. 322-330

1. How does Norse mythology explain the creation?
2. How are Norse gods responsible for the names of several of our days of the week?
3. How do Norse gods compare to Greek gods in mythology?
4. What is the function of the gods of Asgard?