



The Basics of Greek Mythology

By: Marquerette Müller

(Note to CRP: For the extended VAKTivity, you will need: Scissors
Paper plates, Green foam sheets or construction paper, Glue.)

A MYTH refers to a traditional story, especially one concerning the early history of a people or explaining a natural or social PHENOMENON (a remarkable thing), and typically involves supernatural beings or events. All the way back in 1955, the poet and scholar ROBERT GRAVES, wrote that myths have two main functions. The first one is to answer awkward questions children ask such as 'Who made the world?' 'Where do souls go after death' and 'Who was the first man?'. The second function is to justify an existing social system and account for traditional rites and customs. Ancient GREECE had stories about gods and goddesses and heroes and monsters that played an important part of everyday life. These stories explain everything from RELIGIOUS rituals to the weather, and they gave meaning to the world people saw around them.

Spell: SUPERNATURAL FUNCTION EXISTING

What word in the paragraph means 'a remarkable thing'? PHENOMENON

What is the name of the poet and scholar mentioned? ROBERT GRAVES

The first function of myths is to answer _____ that children ask. AWKWARD QUESTIONS

The second function is to justify an existing social system and account for _____ and customs. TRADITIONAL RITES

Which civilisation mentioned had stories about gods, goddesses, heroes and monsters? ANCIENT GREECE

Name one thing these stories from Ancient Greece explained. RELIGIOUS RITUALS / WEATHER

Name one of the awkward questions, mentioned, that children ask? WHO MADE THE WORLD / WHERE DO SOULS GO AFTER DEATH / WHO WAS THE FIRST MAN

What is the capital of Greece? ATHENS

What supernatural myth refers to a human that can turn into a wolf at full moon? WEREWOLF

How many functions of myths did he say there are? 2

Question Type Key

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How many years ago did the poet write this? Current year – 1955 = ____ (E.g. 2022 – 1955 = 67)

What are your thoughts on Greek Mythology?

As opposed to the Christian Bible or Hindu VEDAS, Greek mythology has no single original text to introduce all the myths' characters and stories. Instead, the earliest Greek myths were part of an oral tradition that originated in the Bronze Age, and their plots and themes unfolded gradually in the written literature of the ARCHAIC (from or belonging to an ancient period in history) and classical periods.

Spell: INTRODUCE TRADITION EARLIEST

What do we call the religious texts of Hinduism? VEDAS

The Bible is used in which religion? CHRISTIANITY

Some of the earliest Greek myths were part of an _____ tradition? ORAL

In what age did the oral tradition of Greek myths start? BRONZE AGE

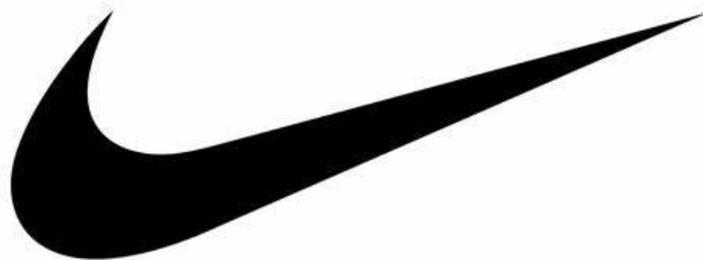
What does the word 'Archaic' mean? FROM OR BELONGING TO AN ANCIENT PERIOD IN HISTORY.

Name one of the periods or ages mentioned in this paragraph. BRONZE AGE / ARCHAIC PERIOD / CLASSICAL PERIOD

What is the central religious text of Islam? QURAN

Before we dive into the mythology ... Did you know that a lot of consumer products get their names from Greek mythology? For example, when we hear the name NIKE, we think of a swoosh symbol with the famous slogan, "Just Do It" that follows. Nike actually stems from the Greek goddess of victory, Nike. In addition to being the goddess of victory, she also had powers of great speed and flight.

Another example is the website AMAZON.com which is named after the race of mythical female warriors, the Amazonians.



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Nike Symbol

Spell: DIVE WEBSITE MYTHICAL

What is the Nike Company's slogan? JUST DO IT

Who is the goddess of victory? NIKE

Which group of mythical female warriors is mentioned? AMAZONIANS

Name one power mentioned, the goddess of victory had. SPEED / FLIGHT

Name another company you know of, similar to Nike, that is famous for their athletic shoes. ADIDAS / PUMA / ASICS

Name another consumer product named after Greek mythology. AJAX / GOLDEN FLEECE / PANDORA / ATLISSIAN / ORION PICTURE / PROMETHEUS ENTERTAINMENT/ MIDAS

If you could change a company's name to a Greek god's name, which company would it be, and to what?

VAKT: Trace the Nike symbol with your finger.

Around 700 BCE, the poet HESIOD wrote a poem, The THEOGONY, that offered the first written COSMOGONY (origin story) of Greek mythology. The Theogony tells the story of the universe's journey from nothingness to being, and gives clarity on the ELABORATE family tree of elements, gods and goddesses who evolved from Chaos and descended from GAIA (Earth), OURANOS (Sky), PONTOS (Sea) and TARTAROS (the Underworld).

Spell: POET WRITTEN DESCENDED

Who is the poet mentioned in this paragraph? HESIOD

What is the name of the poem mentioned? THE THEOGONY

What does the word 'cosmogony' mean? ORIGIN STORY

What does 'Tartaros' mean in English? THE UNDERWORLD

What does The Theogony tell us about? THE STORY OF THE UNIVERSE'S JOURNEY FROM NOTHINGNESS TO BEING.

Name one of the Greek forms mentioned, that gods and goddesses descended from. GAIA / OURANOS / PONTOS / TARTAROS

Name one of the four main elements. EARTH / WATER / AIR / FIRE

Around when did Hesiod write the poem? 700 BCE

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At the centre of Greek mythology is the PANTHEON (the gods of a people) of DEITIES (gods or goddesses), the Olympians. They were named after the highest mountain in Greece, MOUNT OLYMPUS, with a height of 2,917 km, because it was speculated to be their home.

From their PERCH (a prominent position), they ruled every aspect of human life. Olympian gods and goddesses looked like humans, but could transform into animals and other things. Many myths detailed that they were vulnerable to human FOIBLES (a minor flaw or shortcoming in character or behaviour ; weakness) and passions.

Spell: MOUNTAIN TRANSFORM ASPECT

What is the highest mountain in Greece? MOUNT OLYMPUS

Who was named after the highest mountain in Greece? THE OLYMPIANS

What word mentioned in this paragraph means gods or goddesses? DEITIES

What word describes 'a minor flaw or shortcoming in character or behaviour?'
FOIBLES

What does the word 'perch' in this scenario, mean? A PROMINENT POSITION

What does the word 'pantheon' mean? THE GODS OF A PEOPLE

Give one definition mentioned, of the word 'foibles'. A MINOR FLAW OR SHORTCOMING IN CHARACTER OR BEHAVIOUR / WEAKNESS

Name one of the things mentioned, that Olympians were vulnerable to.
HUMAN FOIBLES / HUMAN PASSIONS

What is the highest mountain on Earth? MOUNT EVEREST

How high is Mount Olympus in metres? 2 917 METRES

Mount Everest is 8,849 kilometres high, how high is this in metres? 8 948 METRES

So, you're probably wondering by now, who are the Olympians? The Olympians started their reign after they won a ten-year-long war with the TITANS, called the TITANOMACHY. There are twelve main Olympians, lead by ZEUS, known as the king of all gods (and father to many), and god of weather, law and fate. Before we get to the Olympians, we first need to understand the family dynamics, and that starts with Zeus.

Spell: PROBABLY KING WONDERING

Who is known as the king of all gods? ZEUS

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What was the war with the Titans known as? TITANOMACHY

Name one thing mentioned, Zeus is the god of. WEATHER / LAW / FATE

Give one word that describes a period of 10 years. DECADE

How many main Olympians are there? 12

How long did the war with the TITANS last? 10 YEARS

Zeus was PARADOXICALLY (A statement that seems to contradict itself but may nonetheless be true) the youngest and oldest child of the Titans, CRONUS and RHEA. This was because soon after the Creation of the world, the ruler, Cronus, swallowed Zeus's three sisters and two brothers at birth, because he learned that one of them would overthrow him. Zeus would have had the same fortune, if Rhea hadn't slipped Cronus a stone wrapped in baby clothes in his place, hiding the youngest offspring in a cave on the island of CRETE. Zeus grew up in secret and he then managed to trick his father into REGURGITATING (To cause to pour back, especially to cast up [partially digested food]) all his siblings.

Spell: CONTRADICT FORTUNE DIGESTED

What word describes a statement that seems to contradict itself but may nonetheless be true? PARADOXICALLY

On what island did Rhea hide Zeus from his father? CRETE

Give one word to describe what Cronus did to Zeus's siblings? SWALLOWED

Why did Cronus swallow his children? HE LEARNED THAT ONE OF THEM WOULD OVERTHROW HIM.

What does 'paradoxically' mean? A STATEMENT THAT SEEMS TO CONTRADICT ITSELF BUT MAY NONETHELESS BE TRUE / A CONTRADICTING STATEMENT

Name one of Zeus's parents. CRONUS / RHEA

Give a synonym for the word 'regurgitating'. VOMIT / THROW UP / PUKE / BARF / CHUNDER

How many sisters did Zeus have? 3

How many brothers did Zeus have? 2

How many siblings, in total, did Zeus have? Show your calculations. $3 + 2 = 5$

Cronus and Rhea's firstborn child was HESTIA, the goddess of family, the home, the state and the HEARTH. When the gods APOLLO and POSEIDON became suitors for her hand, she swore to remain an eternal virgin. Zeus then

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bestowed upon her the honour of presiding over all sacrifices. HERA, one of Zeus' sisters, as well as his legal wife, was the goddess of marriage, family, and women. She presided over weddings, blessing every marital union. His other sister, DEMETER, was the goddess of AGRICULTURE and vegetation.

Spell: SUITORS

BESTOWED SACRIFICES

Who was Cronus and Rhea's firstborn child? HESTIA

Which one of Zeus' sisters is also his legal wife? HERA

Demeter was the goddess of agriculture and ___? VEGETATION

Name one of the things mentioned, Hestia was the goddess of. FAMILY / HOME / STATE / HEARTH

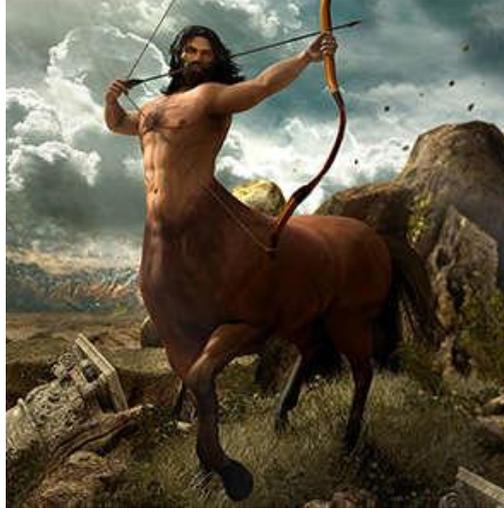
Name one of Hestia's suitors mentioned. APOLLO / POSEIDON

Name one thing mentioned, Hera was goddess of. MARRIAGE / FAMILY / WOMEN

This brings us to Zeus's brothers. The eldest brother, HADES, was the ruler of the Underworld. After the gods defeated Cronus, his sons divided his kingdom among them, and the realm of the dead fell by lot to Hades. He ruled the underworld with his wife, PERSEPHONE, aided by a three-headed dog, the CERBERUS, who guarded the gates of death. Zeus's other brother, Poseidon, ruled over the kingdom of the sea, and was the god of storms and earthquakes. He is often seen as the tamer or father of horses, and famous for having a trident. Zeus also had a half-brother, CHIRON, who was a CENTAUR (a creature with the upper body of a human, and the lower body of a horse). Unlike other centaurs, who were considered violent and savage creatures, Chiron was famous for his wisdom and knowledge of medicine.

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A depiction of a centaur.

Spell: BROTHERS KINGDOM FAMOUS

What was Hades the ruler of? THE UNDERWORLD

Who was Hades's wife? PERSEPHONE

What was the three-headed dog called? CERBERUS

What did the Cerberus guard? THE GATES OF DEATH

What did Poseidon rule over? THE KINGDOM OF THE SEA

Chiron was famous for his wisdom and knowledge of ____? MEDICINE

What was Poseidon also often seen as? TAMER OR FATHER OF HORSES

Name any one of Zeus's brothers mentioned. HADES / POSEIDON / CHIRON

Name one word mentioned, centaurs are usually described as. VIOLENT / SAVAGE

What Greek mythological creature is described as a man with a goat's ears, tails, legs and horns? SATYR

What is Poseidon's Roman name? NEPTUNE

VAKT: Point to the horse part of the centaur.

Zeus, Hera, Demeter, and Poseidon were part of the Olympians. Joining them as well, are Zeus and Hera's children, ARES, the war god, and HEPHAESTUS, the god of BLACKSMITHS (a person who makes and repairs things in iron by hand) and fire. Also part of the Olympians, were Zeus's children with LETO, his lover, APOLLO, the god of the sun and light, and ARTEMIS, goddess of the hunt and moon. Another one of Zeus's sons also part of the Olympians is HERMES, the

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messenger of gods. After learning that his first wife, METIS's next child may overthrow him, Zeus swallowed her, not knowing she was already pregnant. He got terrible headaches and asked Hephaestus to strike him with his axe. ATHENA, the goddess of wisdom and war was then born fully armed.

Spell: HUNT WISDOM HEADACHES

What was Ares the god of? WAR

What do we call a person who makes and repairs things in iron by hand?

BLACKSMITH

Who was the god of blacksmiths and fire? HEPHAESTUS

Who was Apollo and Artemis's mother? LETO

Who was the goddess of the hunt and moon? ARTEMIS

Hermes was the _____ of gods. MESSENGER

Why did Zeus swallow Metis? HE LEARNED THAT METIS'S NEXT CHILD MIGHT OVERTHROW HIM

Name one of Zeus and Hera's children mentioned. ARES / HEPHAESTUS

Name one thing mentioned, Apollo was the god of. SUN / LIGHT

Athens was named after which goddess? ATHENA

Which city is named after Athena? ATHENS

The eleventh Olympian, the goddess of love and beauty is APHRODITE. There are two myths relating to her birth. According to the poet, HOMER, Aphrodite was the daughter of Zeus and the Titaness DIONA. However, HESIOD retells the much more famous myth. According to him, Aphrodite was born when Uranus's genitals fell into the sea after he was castrated by his son Cronus. The goddess of love emerged from the waters on a SCALLOP shell, fully-grown, and more beautiful than anything anyone had ever seen before or since. Hestia and Dionysus are INTERCHANGEABLE the twelfth Olympians.

Spell: DAUGHTER EMERGED ELEVENTH

The first myth says that Aphrodite was the daughter of Zeus and ____? DIONA

Who tells the myth that Aphrodite was born to Zeus and Diona? HOMER

Who wrote about the more famous myth? HESIOD

Name one thing Aphrodite was the goddess of. LOVE / BEAUTY

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Name one of Aphrodite's possible fathers, depending on the myth. ZEUS / URANUS

Name one of the gods / goddesses that are interchangeable the twelfth Olympian? HESTIA / DIONYSUS

What was Dionysus the god of? FERTILITY AND WINE

Which of the gods or goddesses do you find the most interesting, and why?

Creative writing.

Imagine that you were half human, half mythical creature. Describe your appearance, what you will eat, where you will live and just a general day in the life of a

Creative writing:

If you could be a Greek god, what power would you want and why?

Extended Vaktivity: Make a Laurel Head Wreath:



Before you begin:

Real leaves are not required, but may be used if you wish.

You will need:

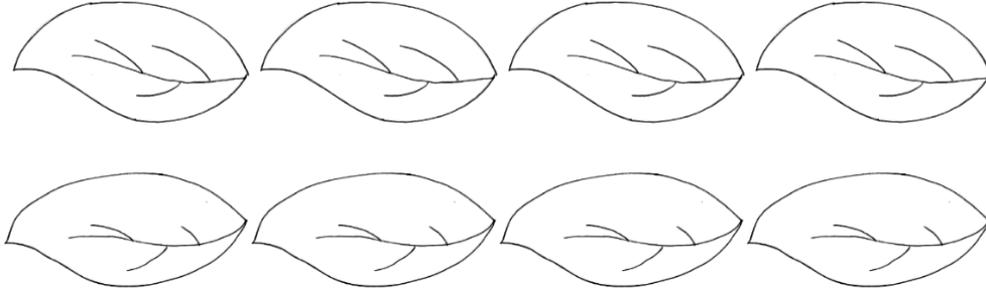
- Scissors
- Paper plates
- Green foam sheets or construction paper
- Glue.

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Steps:

1. If you are not using real leaves, cut out leafy patterns from the green paper. Otherwise, you can print the following onto green paper and cut it out.



2. Cut a wedge from a paper plate
3. Create a wreath that fits the client's head by cutting a large circle from the middle of the plate to create a head wreath
4. Starting at one tip of the wreath, glue the leaves in a v-pattern all the way to the back side of the wreath.
5. Repeat from the other top, gluing leaves toward the back until the two rows of leaves meet.
6. Allow to dry, and then enjoy wearing your leafy green wreaths.



Marquerette Müller is an educator at The Sisu hub, the first centre in South Africa that provides age-appropriate education to nonspeaking, minimally speaking and unreliable speaking autistics. In her free time, Marqueritte loves reading, and binge-watching series, especially about mythical or supernatural

beings.

References:

<https://www.history.com/topics/ancient-history/greek-mythology>

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[The Olympian Family Tree | Holy Olympians \(wordpress.com\)](#)

[Zeus' siblings - Athens and Beyond](#)

[Laurel Head Wreath – Colorations®](#)

[Greek Mythology | GreekMythology.com](#)

Pictures:

[nike symbol - Bing images](#)

[Chiron God - Bing images](#)

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