

**READ! IMAGINE! CREATE! STUDY GUIDE 2023 – 2024**  
***Mythology* by Edith Hamilton**

**Key Terms/ Concepts**

The word **Myth** comes from the Greek word “mythos” meaning “the story of the people.”

**Myths** are stories that were created to explain why something is the way it is. This could include natural phenomenon like the weather, seasons, animals or plants, death or birth, or societal structures such as shared values, morals, or the understanding of humankind’s place in the world.

**Mythology** is the combined stories of a specific culture, religion, or belief system. Mythology often includes many stories of deities, gods, half-god-half-mortal beings, immortals and mortals.

**Polytheism** is the belief in many gods. All told, there were over 3,000 gods in Ancient Greece! Each god had specific tasks or specialties.

**Pantheon** is the word that encompasses all of the gods in a polytheistic society. (Think of how the word “monarchy” encompasses all the members of the royal family.)

**Pre-Reading Questions**

Do you know any ancient or traditional myths? What do they explain?

Can you think of a contemporary myth in our culture today? What does it explain?

Why do you imagine it is important for individuals and societies to create and have myths?

How might myths be useful and productive?

How might myths be dangerous or destructive?

**Essential Questions**

There are many, many myths chronicled in this anthology. Here are some essential questions that can be asked of any of them:

We know that this story is a myth. How else might you describe it?

Adventure? Suspense? Drama? Comedy? Why?

What is the main theme or idea in the myth?

What natural or societal phenomenon is explained in this myth?

Do you think this explanation still holds true today? Why or why not?

What emotions did you feel as you read the myth? How did these emotions help or hinder your understanding of what the myth was trying to explain?

What do you learn about the culture, belief system, day-to-day life, or values of the society that this myth comes from? Cite your examples and explain your reasoning.

Identify the main character of the myth.

What do you think is the most commendable trait or action of the main character of this myth?

What is their most discreditable trait or action? Why?

Does the main character shift, change, grow, or learn something by the end of the myth? How?

Can you relate to the main character in any way? How?

What character in the myth do you sympathize with the most? Why?

### **Young Readers/ Intro to Myths Recommended Stories**

The following is a (small!) selection of stories recommended specifically for young readers, or readers encountering myths for the first time:

#### **Short Cautionary Myths**

**Dryope**, *pgs 414*

**Midas**, *pgs 410 – 412*

#### **Romantic Fantasy Myths**

**Glaucus and Scylla**, *pgs 416 – 419*

**Pyramus and Thisbe**, *pgs 135 – 138*

#### **Adventure/ Hero's Journey Myths**

**The Quest of the Golden Fleece**, *pgs 160 – 180*

**The Adventures of Odysseus**, *pgs 291 – 319*

**Phaeton**, *pgs 181 – 186*

## **IDEAS & SUGGESTIONS FOR PROJECTS**

### **Literary Project Suggestions**

- Write an original myth of your own which explains why the world or society is the way it is, involving one or many supernatural characters.

- Write a poem about a moment in a myth that resonated with you.

- Re-write one of the myths you read from the perspective of one of the minor or supporting characters. How might Odysseus come across if the Cyclops was telling the story? What might the Wall in "Pyramus and Thisbe" have to say about what it witnesses? How would Midas describe his own experiences?

### **Performance Project Suggestions**

- Memorize and recite a passage as a monologue from the perspective of the character.

- Use a passage or some of the imagery to inspire a piece of instrumental music, a song, a rap, or a piece of spoken word poetry.

- Use the images, subjects, and ideas of one of the myths to create a movement or dance piece. Perhaps a dance/movement piece that depicts Phaeton riding and crashing Helios' chariot?

### **Visual Art Project Suggestions**

- Paint, draw, collage an image based on the images, themes, or ideas in one of they myths.

- Create a sculpture or diorama of one of the scenes.

- Draw or create a map of an important place or setting of one of the myths. Perhaps document Jason's travels, notable encounters and landmarks?

- Decorate an item with personal meaning to you with images from the book, or with images from your own life that the book inspires.

### **Media Project Suggestions**

- Create an animation (Computer Generated, Stop Motion, or Hand-Drawn) that incorporates the images, subjects, and themes of one of the myths.

- Build a video game or puzzle game that incorporates the images, subjects, and themes of one of the myths.

- Create a live action film with a passage recited as the background or "soundtrack," or use one or more of the myths to create your own short film.