

English Literature

KS3 A Midsummer Night's Dream

Homework Booklet

Contents

2 Synopsis of the play 'A Midsummer Night's Dream'

3 Athenian Women

4 Amazonian Women

5 RELATED QUESTIONS

Related to 'Kamikaze' by Beatrice Garland:

6 & 7 'THE DIVINE WIND...'

8 RELATED QUESTIONS

9 TITLE OF FOURTH NON FIC

10 RELATED QUESTIONS

Related to 'Exposure' by Wilfred Owen:

11 TITLE OF FIFTH NON FIC

12 RELATED QUESTIONS

13 ESSAY SAMPLE

14 RELATED QUESTIONS

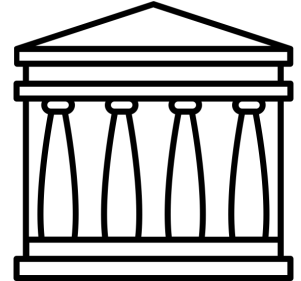
Royal Shakespeare Company - Play synopsis (summary)

The Beginning

<https://cdn2.rsc.org.uk/sitefinity/education-pdfs/school-synopses/edu-amidsummernightsdream-schoolsynopsis.pdf?sfvrsn=4>

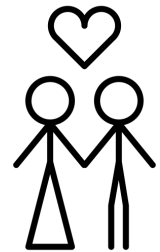
A Midsummer Night's Dream is a play about love and obsession, jealousy and magic.

Egeus wants his daughter Hermia to marry Demetrius. But Hermia loves Lysander. Demetrius is decent enough but she's not interested. Lysander is furious and he reminds Demetrius of how just recently he was in love with someone else, Helena. And how Helena is still in love with Demetrius. Egeus wants to impose the ancient law of Athens on Hermia if she refuses to marry Demetrius. He puts his case to the Duke Theseus: 'As she is mine, I may dispose of her. / Which shall be either to this gentleman Or to her death.'



Created by Lars Meiertobrens
from Noun Project

Lysander shouts:
'You have her father's love, Demetrius / Let me have Hermia's:
Do you marry him.'



Created by Nicola
from Noun Project

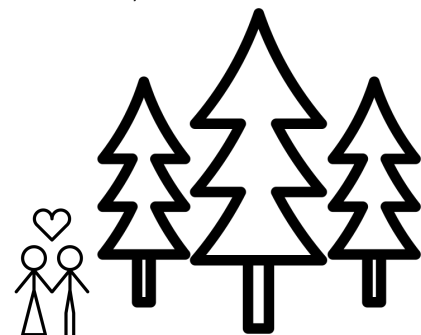
Duke Theseus is about to marry the Amazon Hippolyta and so is feeling generous. He advises Hermia that she should listen to her father.

Hermia is left alone with Lysander and they plan to run away together that night. Hermia's best friend Helena approaches them. She is devastated that Demetrius no longer loves her. Hermia tries to comfort Helena but Helena cannot get over her jealousy that Hermia is now Demetrius' dream girl. Hermia tells Helena of their plan to escape into the woods. She'll no longer be around, she will be out of their lives.



Created by verry poemomo
from Noun Project

Helena decides to tell Demetrius. She thinks this will put her in a good light with him. And if he follows Hermia then she in turn can follow him. She'll do anything to spend time with Demetrius. He runs into the woods to look for Hermia and Lysander. And Helena stalks him. She is desperate although he keeps trying to escape from her. She tells him: 'I am your spaniel.'



Created by Nicola
from Noun Project

Created by endang fimansyah
from Noun Project

Who wants to leave Athens?

Why do they want to leave Athens?

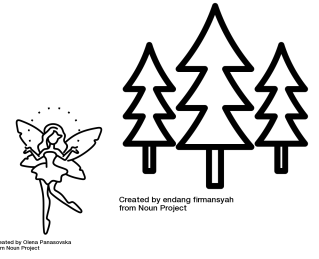
Who is your favourite character so far?

Royal Shakespeare Company - Play synopsis (summary)

The Middle

<https://cdn2.rsc.org.uk/sitefinity/education-pdfs/school-synopses/edu-amidsummernightsdream-schoolsynopsis.pdf?sfvrsn=4>

In the woods are the fairies. Oberon is the king and Titania is his queen but they have quarrelled. Titania has adopted a little changeling boy*. She loved his mother who died giving birth to him. Oberon cannot bear her loving the child. He is consumed with jealousy and demands the changeling from her. But Titania refuses: 'The fairy land buys not the child of me.'



Oberon is incredibly angry but Titania matches his power and storms away from him with her fairies.

Another group who meet in the woods are the Mechanicals. They are local tradesmen who are preparing an amateur performance of Pyramus and Thisbe which they hope to be chosen for the Duke's wedding. Bottom the weaver is a keen actor and wants to play every part, male, female and animal.



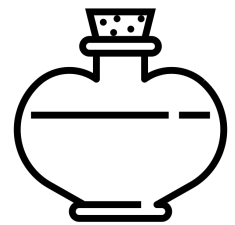
Oberon watches Demetrius and Helena argue. Oberon describes the drug of a certain flower, 'love-in-idleness' to his fairy servant Puck: 'The juice of it on sleeping eye-lids laid / Will make of man or woman madly dote\ Upon the next live creature that it sees.'



Oberon orders Puck to put the love potion onto the eyes of this quarrelling Athenian man so that he will wake to love Helena. Puck mistakenly puts the potion on Lysander's eyes. So that he wakes and falls for Helena. Puck also puts a spell on Bottom so that he will wake up with a donkey's head and his human body. Bottom's friends flee from him, terrified. He thinks they are joking with him.

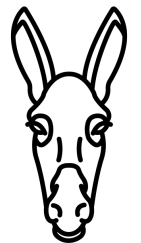
Oberon squeezes the flower's juice into the eyes of the sleeping Titania. And he whispers to her: 'Wake when some vile thing is near.'

Puck now sees a second Athenian man sleeping and so he puts the juice into Demetrius' eyes who wakes to the sight of Helena. So both men love her and are in competition over Helena. They are willing to fight for her. Hermia wakes up, abandoned. She searches for Lysander and finds him fighting with Demetrius over Helena. Hermia thinks they are all playing a joke on her but they're not. Hermia clings to Lysander but he bats her off him as though she were a fly. He calls her a puppet, a dwarf, an acorn. Hermia is enraged. She blames Helena for his change of heart and thinks Helena has been laughing with them about how short or 'low' Hermia is. She threatens Helena: 'How low am I? I am not yet so low But that my nails can reach unto thine eyes.'



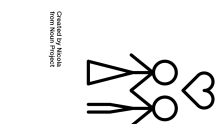
Helena is terrified but the boys protect her, making Hermia even more furious.

Titania wakes and sees Bottom with his big donkey ears and loves him like she has never loved another. She orders her fairies to wait upon him and hangs upon his every word:



'Thou art as wise as thou art beautiful.'

They have a wonderful time together, all flowers and kisses. But Oberon takes off the spell and Titania is horrified at her donkey-man lover. She runs back to Oberon, and becomes his alone. Puck takes off the spell from Bottom who returns to his worried troupe. They have been selected for the Duke's wedding.



The lovers fall asleep again, exhausted after so much fighting and running and Puck sets the spell all right so that Demetrius still loves Helena but Lysander falls back in love with Hermia.

Where does the action take place in this part of the play?

Who causes most of the drama in this section?

Royal Shakespeare Company - Play synopsis (summary)

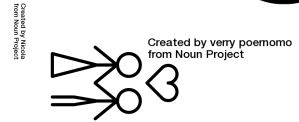
The End

<https://cdn2.rsc.org.uk/sitefinity/education-pdfs/school-synopses/edu-amidsummernightsdream-schoolsynopsis.pdf?sfvrsn=4>

The lovers are found in the woods by Theseus, Hippolyta and Egeus. They all go back to the city, reconciled.



Theseus marries Hippolyta and they all watch the hysterical tragedy that the Mechanicals re-enact.

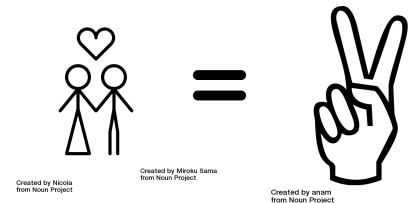


Puck bids goodnight to the audience as dusk falls and it is fairy-time once more: 'If we shadows have offended Think but this, and all is mended, That you have but slumber'd here While these visions did appear.'



Created by Pham Thanh Lộc from Noun Project

All the lovers are together or reconciled and the mortal and fairy world is, for the moment, at peace.



Recap Questions:

- 1) Where does the play begin?
- 2) Which character has the most power at the start of the play?
- 3) How does the relationship between Egeus and Hermia link to the patriarchy (society being governed by men)?
- 4) Where does Shakespeare take set the main body of the play? Why do you think he chooses this setting?
- 5) What are Oberon and Titania arguing over?
- 6) How does Shakespeare resolve the issues the characters face in the play?

Structure of Creative Writing	Planning
Drop <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The 'drop' is the beginning of your story.• In this section, you must create a scene which is dramatic, shocking and original.	
Zoom <ul style="list-style-type: none">• After the initial 'drop', you 'zoom in/out' on specific details.• This is where you provide more information about something that is significant to the plot.	
Flash <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The 'flash' can either be a moment of action, tension, or change in your narrative. It's a pivotal point in the story and should add a sense of excitement.	
Echo <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The 'echo' is the conclusion of your narrative. It's where you provide some sort of closure to the story.• The echo leaves a lasting impression on the reader and ties the piece together.	

Name: _____

Year 7 English Extract Booklet

Term 1: Greek Mythology

Contents:

- 01. Title Page
- 02. Introduction to Greek Myths

Creation

- 03 - 04: The Very Beginning
- 05 - 06: Prometheus

Desire

- 07 - 10: Pandora
- 11 - 12: Daedalus and Icarus

Greed

- 13 - 15: The Great Flood
- 16 - 17: King Midas

Vanity

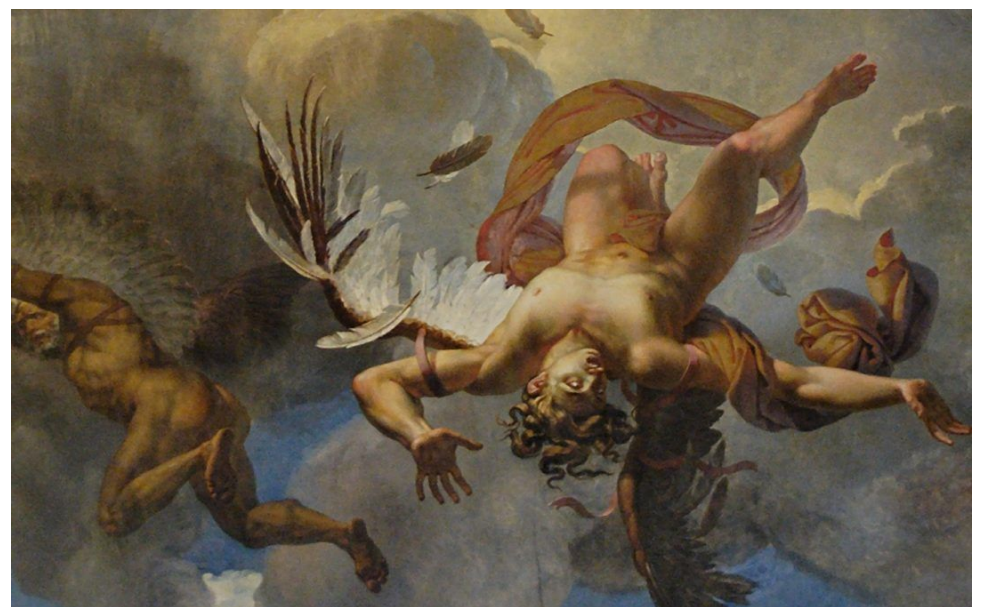
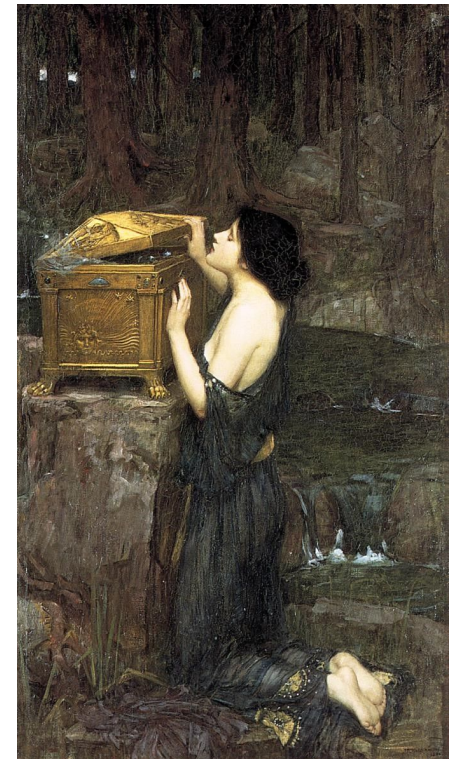
- 18 - 20: Echo and Narcissus
- 21 - 22: Medusa and Athena

Metamorphosis

- 23 - 24: Arachne
- 25 - 26: Cygnus

Further Reading

- 27: Frankenstein as the Modern Prometheus
- 28: Noah and The Great Flood
- 29: The Moral Lesson in 'Aladdin'
- 30: The Origin of "Narcissism"
- 31. The Moral Imagination of 'Beauty and the Beast'



Introduction to Greek Myths

Where have the Greek myths come from?

Myth [noun] – Traditional stories of early history that help to explain the world

In ancient Greece, stories about gods and goddesses were an important part of everyday life. These myths explained everything from religious rituals to the weather, and they gave meaning to the world people saw around them. Around 700 BC, the poet Hesiod Theogony wrote the first Greek story about the beginning of time: it details the universe's journey from having nothing to being full of life. Later Greek writers used the original stories to build their own myths.

How have the Greek myths influenced our world today?

The characters, stories, themes and lessons within the Greek myths have shaped art and literature for thousands of years. Many modern stories and films are inspired by the events within these Greek myths as they essentially teach life lessons.

Greek Gods - Family Tree

The most popular Greek stories are based around the Titans and Olympians (Greek Gods) who were said to live on Mount Olympus – the highest mountain in Greece. From their high perch, they ruled over every aspect of human life.

Who are the gods you will meet in this booklet?

Zeus – God of Sky and King of Gods

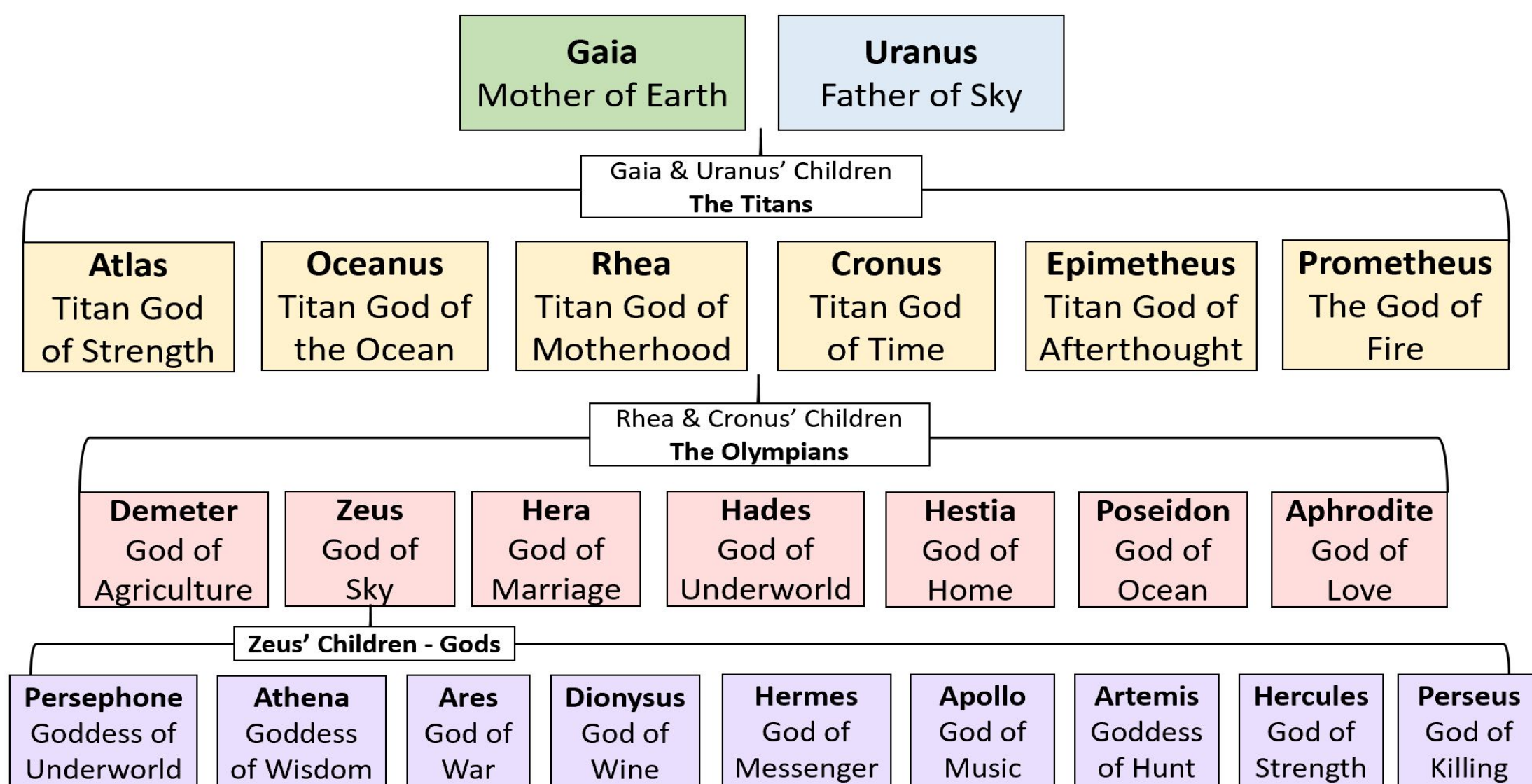
Prometheus – God of Fire and Rebel of Olympus

Dionysus – God of Wine and friend of Silenus

Apollo – God of Music and Punisher of King Midas

Hera – Goddess of Marriage and Punisher of Echo

Athena – Goddess of Wisdom and Punisher of Medusa



Creation: The Very Beginning

In the beginning of time, the gods Uranus and Gaia started creating the children of the earth - the Titans.

When Uranus and Gaia's son, Cronus, is told his children will overthrow him, he decides to eat them all. However, he forgets one: Zeus.

Zeus plots his revenge to get his siblings back and the war against the Titans started.

In the very beginning there was sky and earth. Sky was called Uranus, earth was called Gaia. They were lovers. They lay clasped in one another's arms. Sky pressed tightly against earth, earth holding sky – they were one. Not even a leaf could have passed between them.

Earth had given birth to many children, but she was held so tightly by sky that there was nowhere for her children to go. They couldn't stand to their full height. They had to crouch in cracks and crevices in their mother's body. The children of earth were Titans, strange grey beings, their skin craggy and furrowed like rock that has been worn away by the weather. They longed to be able to stand, to step, to stride across the earth. But they were trapped by the weight of their father pressing down on them.

One of the grey Titans was called Cronus. He knew that he had to separate his parents. He found a hard stone and shaped it into a sickle with a blade as sharp as thought. He crept between his mother's legs. He reached up and sliced into the groin and belly of his father. With a terrible cry of pain the sky broke away from the earth. He rose up and up and up until he was high above the earth. He found the place he still inhabits today – far, far above our heads. And as he rose up, his gaping wound poured blood down upon the body of the earth; it rained and splattered down onto the ground. Wherever the blood of sky landed upon the earth, life appeared: trees and plants, bright-winged insects and feathered birds, scaled fishes and furred animals. The whole lovely, green, living world that we know today came into being at that moment.

And the grey Titans came running out from their cracks and crevices. They stretched, they shouted with joy, they stamped their great feet, they danced with delight. All the Titans danced. All the Titans danced except for one. One of them had other plans. His name was Prometheus, which means 'forethought'. While his brother Cronus had been shaping his sickle, desperately trying to create a better life for his fellow siblings, Prometheus had been fashioning three stone jars.

Now, as the rest of them danced, he carried the jars out into the light. He set them on the ground and began to scoop up handfuls of the blood-soaked soil. He filled the jars with the flesh of his mother and the spilled blood of his father. He packed the jars tight and fitted lids onto them. Then he buried the jars. He buried them deep in the earth. He buried them deep in the body of his mother. This would be a secret between him and her. One day he would return for them. And then he ran and joined hands with his brothers and sisters. He stamped his feet in the joyful circling measure of the Titans' dance.

Creation: The Very Beginning

Years and years passed. Two of the grey Titans, Cronus and Rhea, had children together. But their mother, the earth, warned Cronus that his children would be more powerful than he was, and he should be wary of their rebellion. She warned him that one day his children would overthrow him. Fearful of being challenged by his own offspring, Cronus decided he didn't want that and so he ate his children. He swallowed them whole, one after the other. The youngest of his children was called Zeus. Rhea, his mother, wanted to protect him: she believed there was something special about him. She hid the baby in a cave and then she wrapped soft blankets around a stone. She put the stone in Zeus' cradle. Cronus seized the stone and swallowed it.

Zeus grew up in secret. When he was old enough he appeared in Cronus' hall. Cronus took a liking to the stranger and made him his cup-bearer. One day, Zeus made his father a honey-flavoured drink but mixed it with a poison that made Cronus sick. First, he vomited up the stone; then out of his throat came his other children: Poseidon, Hestia, Hades, Demeter, Hera. Straightaway Zeus and his brothers seized weapons and waged war on Cronus and the grey Titans. For years the terrible war raged, and Cronus met his destiny. The stars were torn from their stations; mountains were levelled; the heat of the earth's heart spat and spouted its red flames across the world. For eons the war raged until at last Zeus was victorious. The grey Titans were bound with chains of adamant and hurled down to Tartarus – deep, deep, deep beneath the bowels of the earth.

Only two of the Titans were spared. Prometheus, whose name means 'forethought', and Epimetheus, who had chosen to turn their backs on war. They were allowed to continue tilling the soil of their green valley. Zeus and his brothers and sisters and their children built their palaces on the high slopes of Mount Olympus. Now that the Titans had been defeated, they ruled over the whole universe as the Olympians. They began to divide it amongst themselves. The three brothers – Zeus, Poseidon and Hades – threw lots into a helmet. Each closed his eyes and reached inside. Zeus plucked out the heavens – they would be his realm now; Poseidon drew out the wide waters of the sea; and Hades chose the underworld, that land far, far below where one day the dead would go. Zeus and his brothers had a name for themselves. They called themselves 'gods'.

Creation: Prometheus

Prometheus is one of the Greek Titans and known as the god of fire.

When Prometheus and his brother Epimetheus are spared imprisonment for not fighting against Zeus and the Olympians, they were given the task of creating man.

Prometheus felt responsible and cared more about mankind than the Olympians. He started to rebel against the powerful god Zeus.

After the great war between the gods and the Titans was over, the victorious gods had thrown all the grey Titans down to Tartarus. Only two had been spared, the two that had not fought against them: Prometheus, whose name means 'forethought', and his brother Epimetheus, whose name means 'afterthought'.

One day, Prometheus left his green valley. He crossed a grassy plain and he came to a cave in the side of a mountain. He entered. There was a pool of water. He dipped his hand into it and drank. And then he heard an overpowering voice: 'Prometheus.'

He peered curiously into the darkness. He saw there were three figures crouching in the shadows, three ancient crones, their skin as white as apple flesh, creased and folded like old leather. The first was spinning a thread. The third was holding a pair of sharp shears carefully in her hands.

'Who are you?' Prometheus asked, slightly tense in his movement towards the figures.

It was the middle sister who answered. 'Prometheus, we are the three Fates. All that will happen in the future is clear to us.'

Prometheus looked them up and down, unsure of their intentions. 'Sisters, if you truly are the Fates, then I have a question for you.'

'Ask us and we will tell you the truth,' the middle sister said smoothly, with almost a hint of reassurance in her voice.

'The new gods and goddesses have divided up the universe. There is a god of the sky, a god of the sea, a god of the underworld, a god of light, a goddess of the moon, a goddess of love, a goddess of wisdom, and yet the world belongs to nobody. Tell me sisters, whose children will inherit the earth?'

The three Fates smiled gap-toothed grins and chuckled. 'Your children, Prometheus. Yours!'

'But I have no children. I don't even have a wife,' Prometheus blurted. 'Tell me more.' But the three Fates were silent. It was as though they had turned to stone.

Creation: Prometheus

As Prometheus lowered his head and made his way out of the cave, he remembered how, in the early days of the world, he had buried three stone jars filled with the flesh of his mother, the earth, and the blood of his father, the sky. He journeyed to the place he had buried them. He dug into the soil with his grey hands and soon his fingers curled around cold stone. He lifted the jars and cradled them in his arms. He carried them to his green valley at the foot of Mount Hymettus. He showed them to his brother, Epimetheus.

Epimetheus edged towards Prometheus, questioning 'What's inside the jars?' Prometheus smiled tenderly. 'My children,' he said. He took them to the edge of a stream, at the foot of a valley. He lifted the lid from one of the jars. He scooped out a handful of the blood-soaked earth. He lifted a handful of clay from the water's edge and he kneaded them together. He had no plan, but it was as though his fingers had a mind of their own. He was making a head, shoulders, arms, a body, legs. He was making something not unlike himself, not unlike the gods, and the thing was becoming warm. It was wriggling with a life of its own. It was suddenly veined with blood, then cloudy with skin. It opened its mouth and gasped for breath. It opened its eyes and looked at him.

With infinite tenderness, Prometheus set it on the ground. It ran away from him and crouched among the bushes. Prometheus made another one and another. He made male ones and female ones. They all ran from him and huddled together. All day he worked, until there was just one handful of earth left in the third jar. He mixed it with clay. He shaped it and set it on the ground.

It ran away from him and then let out a sharp, piercing cry. It fell to the ground, it shuddered and was still. Prometheus, full of worry, went across and lifted it, protectively shielding it from the world. It was cold in his hand, as cold as clay. He dug a hole and buried it.

In the cave of the ancient sisters, the third crone was opening her shears. The first had been spinning threads on her spindle; each thread was a human life. The second had been measuring the length of the threads. The third had just tried her shears for the very first time. She nodded. They were sharp. She smiled at her sisters. 'Everything is ready now.'

Desire: Pandora

The god of fire, Prometheus, had a reputation of being a clever trickster.

Prometheus loved mankind more than the Olympians, so he decided to steal the fire from the gods to give mankind power and comfort.

Zeus creates the first ever woman - Pandora - and sends her down to punish Prometheus and mankind for this rebellious act against the gods.

Prometheus' children, the first people, didn't know what to do at first. They gnawed roots. They ate grubs and leaves and earth and whatever fruits they could find. Prometheus, the grey Titan, and his brother Epimetheus showed them how to make spears and bows and swift arrows. They showed them how to hunt, how to plant seeds and harvest them. They showed them how to build shelters out of branches.

The creatures were quick to learn and to understand but at nights they would huddle together in desperate attempt to keep warm. Sometimes in winter, they would shiver and shake, struggling to settle and keeping each other awake. Sometimes on bitter nights, one of them would turn as cold as clay and be still: frozen. Prometheus would have to bury it in the ground, knowing he failed to protect his creation. The wave of guilt grew and grew; he knew something was wrong.

His creatures seemed to be suffering from something he'd never known, something he could barely understand. Slowly he began to realise: they were suffering from cold. And if they were cold, they would need something he had not got. They would need something only the gods' possessed. They would need the secret weapon of the gods: fire. His creatures needed fire, and he knew that the gods would never let him have it; it was too precious and not something to be shared with man. Once again, Prometheus is reminded of his inferiority in the world. It would have to be stolen from them. And he knew that if the thief was discovered he would be punished, and the punishments of the gods are always terrible. But like any father, he loved his children and knew he had to do something. He couldn't bear to see them suffer.

So one night he climbed the steep slopes of Mount Olympus and stole one smouldering piece of charcoal. As soon as his children had fire, Prometheus' people prospered. Their little settlements spread across the world. Prometheus taught them how to dig terraces on the sides of hills for vineyards and orchards; how to plant wheat and barley; how to keep sheep, goats, pigs and shambling cattle. He would sit and watch his people, and the longer he watched them, the deeper the tenderness he felt for them; he knew he had saved them. He wanted only good for them. Like any father, he wanted them to be happy and safe.

Thinking ahead, he gathered together all the things that might bring them harm and put them into a stone jar. He gathered disease, hatred, jealousy, anger, violence, starvation. All of them he pushed into the jar, feeling a sense of contentment knowing these plagues were locked away. He fitted a lid tightly to the top of it and screwed it tightly shut. He showed the jar to his brother, Epimetheus. 'As long as the lid stays on this jar, all will be well for my children.'

Epimetheus - not acknowledging Prometheus value in this jar - nodded, 'Of course.'

Desire: Pandora

Prometheus leaned the jar against the trunk of a fig tree. And all would have been well with the world had Zeus, the most powerful of the gods, not glanced down and seen the smoke of tens of thousands of fires drifting up into the sky. He rubbed his eyes and looked again in disbelief. He saw Prometheus' creatures comfortably – almost too comfortably – warming their hands, boiling their pots, roasting their meat, lighting up the shadows of their huts with fire: fire, the secret of the gods. Someone must have stolen it. He began to tremble with fury, becoming more and more enraged as time passed by. And then he saw the culprit: Prometheus. He was squatting on the side of a mountain, watching his children with infinite affection, feeling proud he managed to fulfil his duty of protecting them.

'So,' Zeus thought to himself, 'The grey Titan is the thief, and he shall pay for it.' The sky darkened with the god's anger and the air grew thicker. There was a rumble of thunder, a flash of lightning; a drop of rain splashed onto Prometheus' face.

Once again, Prometheus turned to his brother. 'Epimetheus, I feel Zeus' anger. We must be careful. The gods will try to punish us for the theft of fire. Don't accept any gifts from them, least of all from Zeus.'

Epimetheus, again not valuing Prometheus' worry, nodded: 'Of course.'

Zeus had a plan for vengeance. He made his way to the palace of Hephaestus. He found the crippled god of metal-work working at his forge.

'Hephaestus,' he said, 'you are the master of making. I have seen the broaches and necklaces you have fashioned for your wife Aphrodite, the goddess of love. They are dazzlingly beautiful. Would you make something beautiful for me?'

Hephaestus was flattered. He bowed to Zeus. 'What do you want me to make?'

Zeus held out his hand. On it was a lump of clay. 'You have probably looked down at the world and seen the little lumpen creatures the Titan Prometheus has made. Make me something similar. Make me a woman out of this clay but make her as beautiful as Aphrodite.'

Hephaestus was a master craftsman. He took the clay and set to work. In his hands it soon took shape. He made head, shoulders, arms, body, legs. He shaped it to perfection – every inch of this project was flawless. He baked it in his furnace and gave the little figurine to Zeus. Even though it was no more than a statuette, Zeus was charmed. It was just what he'd been hoping for. He blew life into it. The clay woman's eyes flickered. She smiled, tossed the hair from her forehead; she was like a miniature goddess. Zeus summoned all of the divinities to his palace.

'I want each of you to give a gift to this creature of clay,' he commanded.

Each of the immortals in turn came forward. When the last gift had been given, the woman was no longer the same. The clear, uncomplicated beauty that Hephaestus had given her had become clouded by contradiction. She was filled with the contrary promptings of the immortal gods and goddesses. Ultimately, she posed an incredible danger. Her thoughts and feelings were not simple or straightforward any longer. Her flawless nature was now tainted with contradiction. Zeus rubbed his hands together with delight, knowing the danger this would bring to mankind.

Desire: Pandora

'We will call her Pandora, bringer of gifts,' Zeus rejoiced.

Epimetheus was tending his orchards in the valley at the foot of Mount Hymettus. Prometheus was away, helping his people, somewhere far across the world. Hermes, the messenger of the gods, appeared before Epimetheus. The Titan recognised him by his winged sandals.

'What do you want?'

'I've brought someone to meet you,' replied Hermes.

Hermes lifted his fingers to his lips and whistled, and from between two apple trees a woman appeared. She was beautiful, more beautiful by far than any of Prometheus' creatures. She was as beautiful as a goddess.

'Her name is Pandora,' Hermes stated, leading the way for Pandora to be introduced. Obediently, she headed towards Epimetheus, her hands outstretched to his. 'Bringer of gifts,' Pandora muttered softly.

She lifted her face to him and Epimetheus couldn't help himself; he felt like every inch she stepped closer, he couldn't resist. He lowered his great grey head and kissed her. Her lips were soft and sweet. Her skin glistened as the sun touched it. He closed his eyes, thanking his fate for this gift.

'She is a gift from Zeus,' Hermes explained.

When the Titan opened his eyes, coming out of his trance, Hermes had vanished. Without even thinking of Prometheus' warning, Epimetheus loved Pandora, thanking his fate daily for bringing such a gift. He taught her the skills of farming and she was quick to learn. Soon the valley was prospering. Apples, grapes and grain were swelling just as her own belly was swelling with the child she was carrying in her womb; the child that had been fathered by the grey Titan.

Admiringly, Epimetheus loved to watch her swinging her sickle, waist-deep in barley, singing to herself. He had never been so happy. And then one evening as they were eating their supper, Pandora noticed an old stone jar, leaning against the trunk of a fig tree.

She questioned, full of curiosity. 'What's inside the jar?'

She jumped to her feet and ran across to it, excitedly wanting to open this suspicious gift. She was just about to curl her fingers under its lid when Epimetheus shouted, 'No!' She backed away from it, startled, in shock since she had never heard this tone escape his mouth. He stood up and walked across to her. He curled his great grey arm tenderly around her shoulders.

'No, my love,' he said. 'We must leave that jar alone. Prometheus told me that the lid must never be lifted.'

Without a thought of Epimetheus' warning, the next day she went and looked at the jar again, feeling drawn to its temptation. The thought of what was inside sat on Pandora's mind. It squatted at the foot of the fig tree like a mocking affront.

'I wonder what Prometheus keeps inside it, for himself and his precious people,' said Pandora to herself.

Desire: Pandora

Day followed day. The jar, that she had never noticed before, seemed always to be in her sight. The thought of it plagued her: she needed to know what was inside. And then one day Epimetheus was working at the far end of the valley. Pandora was quite alone. She looked at the jar and suddenly there was a flood of voices. It was as though all the gifts of the gods and the goddesses were chattering inside her head, pushing her to open it, making her open it.

There was an Athene voice, whispering, 'It's always better to know.'

A Hermes voice saying, 'Nobody will ever find out.'

An Aphrodite voice was saying, 'If he does find out, one kiss and he'll forgive you.'

And Ares voice was shouting, 'Now! Now! Now!'

She couldn't help herself. The urge was too much. She reached for the lid. She pulled it open. In an instant she was lifted into the air with a blast of wind and thrown back. It was as if a tremendous whirlwind had burst out of the jar. When she opened her eyes she saw a spiralling swarm of seething, buzzing, wheezing, screeching, screaming, shrieking things, flying out into the world. She watched them with horror, eyes peeled on her worst nightmare.

When they all seemed to have disappeared and flown off out of sight, she scrambled to her feet and ran across to the jar. She peered inside. There was something still there. It was a beautiful, shimmering, shining thing quite unlike all the others. She reached down and it climbed onto her fingertip. She lifted it to her lips and blew. It flew away.

Prometheus had hidden it in the bottom of the jar in case the lid was ever lifted. It was called 'Hope'; it was the Titan's last gift to his children.

When Prometheus returned and discovered what had happened, his heart was broken; he knew all was ruined. His children would never be the same again. He climbed up the steep slope of the valley, without once looking over his shoulder, but Zeus was watching and waiting. Everything fell silent.

Suddenly Prometheus felt an iron grip on each shoulder; on either side of him stood a one-eyed Cyclops.

'You are to be punished,' the Cyclops screeched.

Prometheus struggled under its grip. He blurted, 'Why?'

'Because you are a thief, a thief of fire.'

The Cyclops pushed Prometheus to the ground. One held him down while the other bound him with chains of adamant. The chains were fastened to the face of a cliff; there was no escaping. And then the sky darkened. Prometheus looked up. A huge vulture was swooping down towards him. It perched on his chest, satisfied at Prometheus desperation to free himself. With its razor talons it ripped open his belly. It plunged its head into the wound and tore out his liver. With one sickening gulp it lifted its head and swallowed it. Then it opened its wings and flew away. The two Cyclops watched and laughed.

'Every day, thief, your liver will grow back again. And every day the vulture will return, day after day to the end of time.'

Desire: Daedalus and Icarus

Daedalus and his son, Icarus, create a labyrinthine palace for Minos, the king of Crete. However, when they want to return to Crete, Minos will not allow it.

Daedalus comes up with a plan for their escape. He creates wings out of feathers and wings. He warns Icarus not to fly too high, or too low.

At first, it seems the plan is working, but when Icarus flies too close to the heat of the sun, his wings fall away and he plummets to his death.

In the great city of Athens there lived an inventor. His name was Daedalus. He had made many wonderful things. He had changed the course of rivers, harnessed the power of the wind. It was said he could bend nature to his will. Rumours reached Athens of a tremendous fleet of ships crossing the sea. The old men, the old women gossiped about an invasion. Daedalus forgot the stories the moment he heard them. He was preoccupied with something far more important, his son's birthday present.

What to give him?

Icarus was a thoughtful child. He would sit on the flat roof of their little house and watch the birds scything through the air above. Of all of the birds, he loved the hovering hawks the most. The great day came. Daedalus led his son onto the roof and there, before the boy, was a strange feathered thing with a long snake of a tail. 'What is it?'

Daedalus was dimly aware of a commotion in the streets below.

'Let me show you.'

Within moments the thing was swooping and soaring; it was a kite, the very first kite. Daedalus heard a shout. He looked down. The streets were swarming with soldiers. They wore an armour the like of which he had never seen before. Emblazoned across their breastplates was a strange symbol, a two-headed axe. One of them was pointing at the kite; now he was pointing at Daedalus. 'That's him!' They were battering the door of his house. Now they were charging upstairs.

Icarus, frantic: 'We must escape!'

'How?' said Daedalus. 'Fly?'

Now, they were surrounded. The soldiers parted to reveal none other than the king of the island of Crete, Minos. Daedalus, trembling, bowed.

'Your fame has travelled far across the sea, Daedalus. Stories of the wonders you have made have reached my distant home.' He put his hand on Daedalus' shoulder. 'How would you like to help me make a palace, a tremendous palace, that will scrape the sky, that will be so astonishing men and women will tell tales of it for as long as there are people on this earth?'

The very next day, Daedalus and Icarus sailed off in one of Minos' ships. On Crete, they were given a mansion; they were feasted every night. When Minos explained his plan for the palace, Daedalus understood the king had been speaking truth when he'd said tales of this palace would echo down the ages. It was to bristle with spearlike towers, but it was what would be under the palace that was most remarkable – a vast labyrinth of such complexity that no one could escape from it. Daedalus asked the king, what was the purpose of this maze? But Minos would only smile and shrug.

Desire: Daedalus and Icarus

Eventually the palace was complete. It was a frowning fortress that struck terror into the hearts of everyone who beheld it. Daedalus asked for an audience with the king. 'Now my work is over, I would like to return to Athens.'

Minos: 'Oh! You can't leave. I'll pay you more. There are so many wonderful things I would have you make.'

'Thank you for your offer. But I prefer to return to the city of my birth.'

'Offer?' said Minos. 'I made no offer. You cannot leave. You know too much. I can't have you selling secrets to my enemies. So you will stay here until your death.'

When he returned to his mansion, Daedalus looked at the beautiful murals painted on the walls, the fountains in the courtyard, and what he saw was a golden cage. He longed for the little house they had left in Athens. He found his son, on the roof as usual, flying his kite.

In the months that followed, Daedalus became aware that, wherever he went, he was followed by soldiers. The soldiers, for their part, began to wonder if this great inventor had lost his mind: either he was staring at the sky or gathering fallen feathers. Early one morning, Daedalus shook Icarus awake. 'Come with me!' Upstairs they went, under the bright stars. Daedalus lit a candle. Icarus saw four supple saplings covered in feathers. As Daedalus tied one on each of Icarus' arms, he said, 'Minos controls both land and sea but he cannot control the air. You and I will fly to freedom. Follow me! If you fly too high, the heat of the sun will melt the wax that binds feather to bark; if you fly too low, the waves will splash against your wings and their sodden weight will drag you down. Ride the gusts I ride!'

Father and son embraced. They ran to the roof edge and leapt into the darkness. They beat their feathered arms against the air, and they rose, they rose into the cool sky. Every surging gust of wind made Icarus cry out with joy. Very soon they had left Crete far behind. The sweep of the broad sky was above him; the black sea was beneath. He saw a band of red ahead – day was coming. Island after island passed by beneath, some no more than rocks jutting out of the sea, some peopled with farms and fields. One man looked up, saw Icarus, gasped and fell. A ploughman in a field stopped, mid-furrow, and stood stock-still. A fisherman gaped like a carp. Was that a god?

Icarus laughed at the little figures shouting, pointing, far below. A surge of wind lifted him higher. He lurched and a feather fell. He looked up to see the bird that had shed it; but above he saw only the fierce eye of the sun. A shower of feathers was fluttering now. Ahead, Daedalus looked back to check on the progress of Icarus and saw the boy tumbling, flailing, screaming, breaking against the ocean.

Daedalus, cursing his cleverness, buried the boy's body on a rocky island that was named after him. It is called Icaria.

Greed: The Great Flood

When Zeus, the king of the gods, notices mankind acting selfishly and destroying all order, he disguises himself and pays a visit to Lycaon.

When he visits the Arcadian king, he sees a vicious act of greed and is disgusted at mankind's reaction. He decides to give them the ultimate punishment.

Zeus saved Deucalion and Pyrrha and gave them the job of creating a pure humanity.

Imagine a time when greed is god, when compassion has lost her crown and callous cruelty is enthroned in her place. The darkness, the chaos, emboldens evil things. Rage, envy, jealousy, creep from their crannies. Men love only plunder. Mercy is forgotten; son kills brother; daughter mother. The temples are derelict; spiders are the only worshippers. Everywhere the chant is, 'More.'

Up on Olympus, Zeus shook his head, disappointed at what he saw. The smell rising from the earth of sweat and smoke and blood and bile was too much. Such rumours he heard – surely mankind had not stooped so low. He would investigate and put things right.

He craftily disguised himself as a traveller. He flashed down to the palace of an Arcadian king: Lycaon was the king's name. There are laws, customs that must be respected. Strangers should always be welcomed. King Lycaon greeted this traveller with a smirk, immediately thinking about what he can gain from this visit.

He ushered him into the feasting hall. 'Tonight, we will eat in your honour,' he said. He gave the stranger a bowl of wine, made his apologies and slunk into the kitchen. There he prepared a cauldron, poured water, sprinkled herbs, vegetables, stirred them – then, without a thought, butchered one of his own sons and threw the fleshy lumps into the pot.

Lycaon returned to the hall, entertained the traveller with chatter whilst the stew bubbled. Guests gathered. Like a virus, the secret spread from one table to the next. Each greeted the news with a lupine grin. Zeus scanned the faces. He saw the sneers, the whispering. A golden bowl was set before him. He dabbed it gingerly, curious of the floating parts. Out of the broth bobbed a toe. So – the tales were true. These were not men, they were careless and inhumane animals.

A thunderbolt pierced the palace, pierced Lycaon himself, almost slicing him in half. The king's hair stood on end, he howled, fell on all fours, his robes ripped. The guests sank to their knees and yowled in reply. Bristles burst forth from their backs, their bellies, their arms, their legs, their very faces. Knives of bones erupted from their jaws: wolves. They became hungry wolves.

Zeus returned to Olympus. He pondered the bedlam below, thinking carefully about the suitable punishment. Fire? No: too fickle. One wind-borne leaf could turn Olympus into a pyre. Flood? Yes: flood. He called his brother, the king of the tumbling wave, Poseidon. The sea-god donned a helmet of black cloud, wrapped himself in a billowing cloak, lifted his trident and struck the earth.

Greed: The Great Flood

The sky vomited, the world cracked and broke open. Every hidden spring burst forth, leapt to the light. Heaving walls of water crashed into city and town and village. Roads became rivers, fields became lakes. Any home that was not swept away was submerged in silence. The people tried to run – but where? They were ambushed from above and below. They scrambled up mountains, hills, trees, and watched the waters rise relentlessly about them. One by one they gave up their grip on life.

Thinking carefully about how to save the world below, Zeus chose to save only one man and one woman. His name was Deucalion, hers Pyrrha. Their raft was tossed by the deluge, climbed white-crested mountains, sank into deep valleys. Then Poseidon – brother of Zeus and god of the underworld - blew his conch. With one sudden gesture he tore apart the clouds, banished the winds. Clear calm came.

With the light, Deucalion and Pyrrha saw wonders below them. They floated over cities; once-proud towers beneath them now, cloaked in weed; smiling dolphins in apple orchards; flickering fish passing through windows into bedrooms, kitchens. All about them were the corpses of men, women, children, beasts, birds, bobbing lifeless as leaves.

‘Look!’ Pyrrha pointed: two peaks, the glistening summits of Mount Parnassus.

Husband and wife scrambled ashore, gave thanks to mighty Zeus, kissed the rocky slope. The rivers, the streams shrank back to their beds. Mother Earth was healed, pure again. The corruption and greed of humanity had been swept away.

Deucalion and his wife washed off the brine in a stream of fresh water. Once they were clean, they prayed to Zeus: ‘Great cloud-compeller, you saved us. You must have some task in mind for us. Tell us your purpose.’

Zeus’ herald, bright Hermes, appeared before them. They shielded their eyes.

‘Descend the mountain. As you walk, throw the bones of your mother behind you!’ He said. And he was gone.

For a time, the couple stood in horrified silence, before Pyrrha burst out that she was sorry and could never do so wicked a thing as dishonour her mother’s bones. Both of them continued to mull over the words of the goddess in great perplexity.

Greed: The Great Flood

At last, Deucalion said, 'I can't believe that the Oracle would tell us to do anything wicked. I think that by the bones of our mother, the goddess means these stones that lie here – the bones of our great mother Earth.'

Pyrrha was uncertain, but they agreed that there was no harm in at least trying this. Gathering up stones, the two of them did as Themis said, walking away with their heads covered in reverence and casting the stones behind them.

'Our mother's bones are scattered,' said Deucalion. 'Everything, everything we had is lost.'

Pyrrha knelt, pushed her hands into the ground. 'This is our mother,' she said as she pulled out a muddy stone. 'These are her bones.'

As she descended the hill she threw stones over her shoulder and Deucalion behind her saw the damp earth become flesh; the stone, bone. When they stopped and turned, they saw an amazing sight: the fallen stones were changing shape before their eyes. He followed suit. His stones became men, Pyrrha's women. The seams, the streaks of colour in the rock, became veins. Together, they were creating the current race of humanity, a pure humanity.

The earth meanwhile, sodden with moisture and warmed by the emerging sunlight, spontaneously generated new life, some creatures that had existed before and others new. Deucalion thought to himself: this is why we are so strong, why we can dig, carry, toil for so long. We are the children of stones.

Greed: King Midas and the Golden Touch

When King Midas cares and treats the lost Silenus well, he reunites him with his good friend Dionysus - a great god.

When Dionysus is reunited with Silenus, he is immensely grateful to Midas and grants him one wish. King Midas wishes that everything he touches turns to gold.

King Midas learns the ultimately lesson: be careful what you wish for.

Dionysus, the god of drinking and drunkenness, wild music and wild dancing, loved to make great processions across the world with his satyrs, men with hairy legs and horses' hooves, singing and drinking and dancing. And among the satyrs would be Dionysus' old teacher, Silenus, white-haired, pot-bellied, with red wine constantly dribbling from the corners of his mouth, but wise beyond wisdom.

And during one of those great processions across the world, old Silenus was left behind. And he was found by some people, by some mortals, staggering from one side of a road to another, singing to himself. And they caught the satyr; and they bound him with ropes; and they lifted him onto their shoulders; and they carried him to their king.

Now their king was called Midas, King Midas, and he was a worshipper of Dionysus, the god of drinking and drunkenness, and wild music and wild dancing. And when he saw the old satyr bound with ropes, he was furious with his people. He took a knife; he cut the ropes; he sat the old satyr on his own golden throne; and he ordered that a feast be held in honour of Silenus.

And when the feast was finished, King Midas himself led the satyr to Dionysus, the great god. And when Dionysus saw his old teacher, his heart was filled with happiness and he felt eternally grateful to the king. He ran across. He threw his arms round Silenus' neck.

He kissed him on both cheeks and he turned to King Midas and he said, 'I will grant you one wish, one wish and one wish only. What do you want?'

And at that time, King Midas needed gold; that's all he ever wanted. He needed more gold. And he was thinking to himself, 'If I ask for my chests and my coffers to be filled with gold, soon enough the gold will be spent. How could I get more gold than I've ever dreamed of?'

And then, suddenly, an idea sprung into his mind, beautiful in its simplicity.

He said eagerly, 'What I want is this: that everything I touch be turned into shining gold.'

The thought of being forever rich ignited his mind. And the great god Dionysus looked at the king, and he smiled, and he bowed his head, and he vanished into the light.

And King Midas turned to walk home, and, as he turned, he felt a stiffening about himself. And he looked down, and his clothes and his robes had hardened into gold. He crouched down. He touched the tip of a blade of grass. And there it was like a little golden dagger, jutting out of the ground. He ran and plucked an apple from a tree, and it was heavy, yellow gold, cold against the palm of his hand. He touched the trunk of another tree, and there it was, a golden tree stretching high above his head, the leaves no longer whispering and rustling, but clinking and clanking like golden chimes.

Greed: King Midas and the Golden Touch

And King Midas ran this way and that way, touching this and touching that. And when he came to his palace, he stretched out his hands on the doorway of the palace, and there was a golden portal reflecting the light of the sun. He strode inside. He told his servants to prepare a great feast, so that he could celebrate his golden gift and forever wealth. And meat and bread and wine and honey cakes were served; and King Midas sat down, picked up a piece of bread, put it into his mouth and bit. And his teeth scraped across rough gold. He grabbed a cup; he lifted it to his mouth. At the touch of his lips the wine hardened into gold and he was spitting out little golden shards. The shock struck him. Suddenly, he understood his mistake, he understood his terrible and careless mistake.

At that moment his little daughter, whom he loved greatly, came running across the floor of the palace. She threw her arms lovingly around her father's neck, and she clattered onto the ground, the perfect, golden statue of a little girl but cold, cold, dead gold. Heartbroken, Midas knelt beside her, staring deep at his lost daughter, and his golden tears clattered onto her golden face. And he said, 'Dionysus, Dionysus, I have made a terrible mistake. I beg you, take back your gift of gold.'

And on the high slopes of Mount Olympus Dionysus, the god of drinking and drunkenness, wild music, wild dancing, looked down at King Midas, and he felt pity stirring in his heart. King Midas did not deserve this punishment for such a careless wish. And he appeared before the king.

He said, 'Go and wash yourself in the River Pactolus where it bursts out of the side of the mountain, and the gold will be washed from your skin, your heart, your soul, and everything you've turned into gold will be returned to its proper form.'

And Midas leapt to his feet, desperate to put things right, and he ran out of the palace, and he ran, and he ran, and he ran until he came to the place where the River Pactolus burst from the side of the mountain. And he plunged into the water. He washed himself from head to foot. And as he washed himself, the gold was washed from his heart, his skin, his mind, his soul.

And when he climbed out of the water, he hated gold with all the strength of the love that he'd had for it before; and as he climbed out of the water, everything he'd turned into gold was returned to its proper form; and his little daughter leapt to her feet all unknowing and ran into the arms of her nursemaid. And from that day onwards, the water of that river, the River Pactolus, has glimmered golden in the light of the sun. And men and women have panned the mud and the silt of the river bed for hard, little, shining nuggets of gold.

From that day onwards, King Midas hated gold. He hated the danger aspiring for wealth caused. Every day he would wander deep in the forest far from his palace, far from the clink and the chink of golden coins, far from the glimmer and the glitter of golden statues. He would wander deep and deep into the silences of the forest, and appreciate his life and his relationships, as they were his gold now.

Vanity: Echo and Narcissus

When Echo's voice is stolen, she travels to Earth to hide herself from the world. Whilst there, she sees Narcissus - the most handsome man to ever exist - and immediately falls in love with him.

When Echo desperately tries to talk to him, Narcissus rejects her and tells her to leave him alone. Whilst hunting in the forest, Narcissus comes across his reflection and falls in love with himself. Narcissus learns the danger of vanity.

There once lived a man, a prophet, who could see into the future the way you and I remember our pasts. His name was Teiresias. One day a woman came to him. She'd given birth to a child she'd named Narcissus, and Narcissus was so beautiful he broke hearts as he wriggled in his cot. She was afraid one of the gods would envy his beauty and destroy him in fear that he could be more powerful than them.

Tiresias shook his head and said, 'The gods pose him no threat. He will have a long life, unless he learns to know himself.'

Shaking her head in disbelief, the woman walked away.

Years went by and with every passing day Narcissus became more beautiful, and he began to know the power of his beauty. Wherever he went women fell in love with him – they were captured by this handsome hunter's looks and charm. But they never approached him because of his flaw. He wore about himself a glassy pride that kept his suitors at bay, almost fearful that they stand no chance.

Up on Olympus Zeus was about his usual pursuits: chasing, kissing nymphs, goddesses, travelling to the earth in disguise, pursuing women. He barely bothered to hide his misbehaviour and disloyalty from his wife. He'd enlisted the help of a nymph called Echo. If ever Zeus' wife Hera came too close to catching Zeus in the act, Echo was to deceivingly distract her with an endless stream of pointless prattle until Zeus had finished.

They played this trick once too often. Zeus' wife Hera saw through it and despised Echo for helping in the deception.

'Nymph, always you want the last word. From now on you shall have nothing else!' declared Hera, throwing her arms in the air in fury.

Echo, desperate to explain she couldn't disobey Zeus, opened her mouth to answer and out came, 'Nothing else. Nothing else. Nothing else.'

Echo's shoulders dropped. She couldn't talk. With tears in her eyes, she desperately looked to Hera in hope she would realise Echo's helplessness. Hera turned away, satisfied with the punishment she has set.

Undeservingly, Echo was the victim of Hera's bitterness and from then on, she could not speak for herself. She may as well have been changed into a parrot. Echo hid herself in the forest, feeling ashamed and saddened by her loss of expression.

Vanity: Echo and Narcissus

She was condemned to trail behind others, stealing meaning from their last few words, in desperate attempt to regain her lost expression. She went to the earth. By chance, she saw Narcissus. She gazed at the young man who had hair as yellow as gold and eyes as blue as the sky. As she was peeping out shyly from some cave or from behind a great tree, Echo often saw Narcissus, and she admired him very much.

Longing for his attention, she desperately tried to call out his name, yet couldn't. She fell in love with him at one but couldn't tell him. For months she followed him, waiting for the words to come with which she could proclaim her ever growing love. At last, the moment came.

One day Narcissus became separated from his friends, and hearing something rustle among the leaves, he called out, "Who's here?"

"Here," answered Echo, who joyfully stole the word.

"Here I am. Come!" said Narcissus.

"I am come," said Echo; and, as she spoke, she emerged out from among the trees.

She ran to him. Without thinking, she put her arms around him, overwhelmed that finally she felt something else other than loneliness.

Just as she was about to shut her eyes, feeling contentment, he abruptly pushed her away with a powerful shrug. His harsh laugh hurt her more than the shrug, and her shoulders began to sink again.

"Get off me! What are you? I suppose like all the others you love me," said Narcissus boastfully, uncontrollably laughing at her tearful eyes.

Echo, again desperately stealing his words, repeated, "Love me, love me!"

"I would rather die than let you lie with me. Now leave me alone" said Narcissus, not even letting her make another sound.

Echo's body sunk as she heard the words.

Uncontrollably, she grabbed his last word and blurted, "Alone!" Her eyes latched onto him as he walked away unamused. "Alone. Alone!"

After this, Echo never came out and allowed herself to be seen again, and in time she faded away till she became only a voice.

This voice was heard for many, many years in forests and among mountains, particularly in caves. In their solitary walks, hunters often heard it. Sometimes it mocked the barking of their dogs; sometimes it repeated their own last words. It always had a weird and mournful sound and seemed to make lonely places more lonely still.

Vanity: Echo and Narcissus

Poor Echo was a slender thing. Her sorrow made her slighter still. She became spindly, bony, pale, gaunt, feeble, frail. One morning when she tried to stand her sharp bones ruptured through her thin skin. Her body collapsed in on itself. Only her voice survived, hiding in caves, hiding among high hills.

Weary of that stupid nymph, Narcissus went about his day and headed to a pool to drink. It was a perfect pool, as smooth as any mirror. Feeling intrigued and longing to look at his perfected self, he leant over the side and saw a face of such beauty that suddenly he was filled with another kind of craving. Passionately, he leant forward to kiss it but it broke into wrinkles. He gave a cry of anguish and desperation. He lay beside the pool like a fallen statue. He was transfixed by it. Time and again he tried to capture it. He mistook this image for the other person who would complete him. He had fallen in love with himself.

And so the prophecy of Tiresias was fulfilled. Narcissus had learned to know himself, and his awful torture began. No thought of food or drink would take him from the spot. His eyes could never have their fill. Gradually, Narcissus' began to look smaller and smaller: the desire to gaze at his true love – himself – was destroying him.

At last he said, 'You, please, come to me. Lie with me. Love me. When I laugh I see you laugh. When I smile you smile. When I cry you shed tears. You give me every indication that you love me and yet we do not embrace. I think I understand: I am in love with myself. Always we will be together and yet always we will be apart. I have loved you in vain.'

Echo took the words: 'I have loved you in vain. I have loved you in vain.'

Narcissus closed his eyes and lay his head upon the ground. His soul drifted out of his open mouth beneath the crust of earth, down a steep flight of stairs, into the underworld, into the land of many guests, the realm of the dead. As his soul drifted across the River of Forgetfulness it left behind all memory. Even so, some urge too powerful to resist drew it to the edge of the river, where it leant over the side and stared at the greasy smear of a reflection that quivered on the surface of the water. Up on the earth rumours reached a village: lovely Narcissus was dead. So the people searched the forest to burn the corpse with proper honours. But they never found a body. Instead they came upon a delicate flower with white and yellow petals leaning over the edge of a pool as if gazing at its own reflection.

Vanity: Medusa and Athena

When Athena, the god of wisdom and daughter of Zeus, overhears Medusa boasting about her beauty, she is disgusted by the vanity she sees.

Athena punishes Medusa for being consumed in her own beauty by turning her into a hideous monster. Medusa is banished to the ends of the earth to learn her lesson.

Medusa, a beautiful maiden, lived in the city of Athens in a country named Greece and although there were many pretty girls in the city, Medusa was considered the most beautiful: her charm, natural beauty and glowing personality captured the admiring attention of all.

Unfortunately, Medusa was very proud of her beauty and thought or spoke of little else. Each day she boasted of how pretty she was and each day her boasts became more outrageous and uncomfortable to be around. Often times, Medusa would gaze admiringly at her reflection in the mirror, thanking and praising herself for her beauty. She admired herself in her hand mirror for an hour each morning, tossing her naturally long and flawlessly fallen hair from side to side and catching the daylight on her translucent skin. Every night, as she fell into her sheets with grace, she thanked her fate for giving her a frame of perfection.

One day, as Medusa walked through her village surrounded by a blanket of white snow, she caught a glimpse of her appearance in the miller's shop window.

Captured immediately by her sparkling skin, she turned to the miller and bragged. 'Look! The snow makes my skin glisten even more,' Medusa blurted. 'How lucky am I to have skin as gentle, beautiful and flawless as freshly fallen snow!'

Seeing a woman so confident and boastful made the miller gulp in shock. He turned away, feeling uncomfortable at the whole affair, and carried on with his duties. Medusa continued with her walk.

Further on her walk, Medusa was struggling to control the urge to look at her reflection again. Without hesitation, she headed into the cobbler's store and gazed at herself, feeling a wave of satisfaction come over her.

'The weather is so glorious today. Look at how the sun makes my hair grow even brighter', Medusa said, giving no thought or care about the cobbler's silent response.

Once again, without compliment, she continued.

Seeing the garden full of bright flowers ahead, Medusa quickened her pace to surround herself with colour once more. As she entered the garden's gates, everyone turned their eyes away, hoping to avoid her boasts that left them red faced and speechless.

Unfortunately, one old woman was too busy gazing at the snow-covered roses to realise everyone in the public garden had turned away from Medusa. Curious to see the reason, she circled her spot until her eyes landed on Medusa.

'Wow! What a day,' Medusa said, trying to spark conversation with the old woman. As the woman gulped, preparing to reply, Medusa blurted, 'Look at my lips. They are even redder than this rose!'

Vanity: Medusa and Athena

When Medusa saw the sculptures, she confidently whispered to herself that she would have made a much better subject for the sculptor than Athena had. When Medusa saw the artwork, she commented that the artist had done a fine job considering the goddess's thick eyebrows – but imagine how much more wonderful the painting would be if it was of someone as delicate as Medusa.

'She is beautiful, but imagine if it was me,' she admitted.

And when Medusa reached the altar she sighed happily and said, 'My this is a beautiful temple. It is a shame it was wasted on Athena for I am so much prettier than she is – perhaps someday people will build an even grander temple to my beauty.'

Medusa's friends grew pale, gradually moving further and further away. The priestesses who overheard Medusa gasped. Whispers ran through all the people in the temple who quickly began to leave -- for everyone knew that Athena enjoyed watching over the people of Athens and feared what might happen if the goddess had overheard Medusa's rash remarks.

Before long the temple was empty of everyone except Medusa, who was so busy gazing proudly at her reflection in the large bronze doors that she hadn't noticed the swift departure of everyone else. The image she was gazing at wavered and suddenly, instead of her own features, it was the face of Athena reflected back at her.

'Vain and foolish girl,' Athena bellowed, 'You are consumed in yourself to even notice the beauty of life – you shall learn.' Medusa gulped, eyes peeled on Athena.

Medusa tried to point out that her beauty was an inspiration to those around her and that she made their lives better by simply looking so lovely, but Athena silenced her with a frustrated wave.

'Nonsense,' Athena retorted, 'Beauty fades swiftly in all mortals. It does not comfort the sick, teach the unskilled or feed the hungry. And by my powers, your loveliness shall be stripped away completely. Your fate shall serve as a reminder to others to control their pride.'

And with those words Medusa's face changed to that of a hideous sight. Her hair twisted and thickened into horrible hissing snakes that viciously scowled and fought each other atop her head.

'Medusa, for your pride this has been done. Your face is now so terrible to behold that the mere sight of it will turn a man to stone,' proclaimed the goddess, 'Even you, Medusa, should you seek your reflection, shall turn to rock the instant you see your face.'

And with that, Athena sent Medusa with her hair of snakes to live with the blind monsters - the gorgon sisters - at the ends of the earth, so that no innocents would be accidentally turned to stone at the sight of her.

Metamorphosis: Arachne

The goddess Athene, inventor of the art of weaving, hears rumours of Arachne boasting about her looming skills; comparing herself to the immortals.

Angered by Arachne's arrogance, Athene visits Arachne disguised as an old woman. When Arachne claims her skill was earned, rather than a gift, Athene is furious and challenges her to a contest.

When Arachne is declared the winner, Athene is so furious that she transforms her into a spider; condemning Arachne and her descendents to be forever weaving.

A rumour reached the ears of the gods and the goddesses, a rumour that there was a mortal woman named Arachne, who possessed such skill at weaving that her work dazzled the eyes of anyone who looked upon it. It was said that it moved people to laughter and tears in equal measure. Owl-eyed Athene heard the story and she snorted with indignation: some mere mortal, out-weaving her? She who had invented the loom, the spindle, the shuttle and all the women's arts? And had this Arachne ever given thanks for her gift? Had she ever made sacrifices to the goddess? Never!

Athene strapped on her sandals of untarnishing gold. She seized her spear and flashed down out of the sky to the kingdom of Lydia. When her feet struck the ground she changed her shape so that to all the world she looked like an old woman, leaning on a twisted stick. She hobbled to the village of Hypaepa. She made her way through the village until she came to the cottage of Arachne. Through the window she could see the woman working at her loom. She lifted her fist and knocked at the door.

Arachne welcomed the stranger. She fetched a stool so that she could sit in the cool shadows. She fetched a bowl of wine for her to drink. The old woman sipped, looked about herself and said, 'Some things that old age brings should be welcomed: wisdom, for instance. Your gift is great but it is just that – a gift, given you by owl-eyed Athene. If I were you, I would thank her before she decides to turn against you and stop your nimble fingers.'

Arachne shook her head. 'A gift? If only it were so. I have a skill, earned by long years of hard work and tedious effort. Let those who owe Athene give her thanks. As for me, I owe her nothing. Mine is an art won from suffering and sympathy. Let her come. Let her come here and show me that my work is tame and trite compared with hers.'

'She has come.' Suddenly the old woman doubled in size. The wrinkles faded from her face. The twisted staff became a bronze-tipped spear. Arachne sat uncowed, unbowed, and looked at the goddess without blinking. The goddess stared at the woman. The face of the goddess was beautiful, unchangeable as a constellation. The face of the woman was creased and wrinkled with all the joys and sorrows of a lifetime. Athene spoke first: 'We will have a contest of weaving, you and I, and soon enough we will discover who is the giver and who the mere receiver of gifts.'

Arachne nodded. 'Very well.'

Metamorphosis: Arachne

The goddess set up a loom in the corner of the room and when everything had been made ready Arachne asked, 'What is to be our theme?'

The goddess smiled. 'Our theme will be this: the changeless power of the mighty gods and goddesses and the uppity cheek and presumption of you mere mortals.' The woman and the goddess loosened their blouses, they rolled up their sleeves, each of them selected a thread from the rainbow of choices and fitted it to a shuttle. Each of them set to work, passing the shining shuttle from hand to hand across the loom. All the long day they worked, intent in their concentration, without stopping for food or drink. And then, as the shadows of evening lengthened and the light began to fade, they put down their shuttles and stepped back from their looms. Their bright tapestries were finished now.

Each looked at the other's work. On the loom of the goddess was the image of Hephaestus, fashioning the woman Pandora out of clay. There was Artemis watching as Actaeon was torn apart by his own hounds. There was Prometheus bound to his crag with Zeus' vultures devouring his liver. Arachne shuddered. Athena looked at Arachne's loom. There was Orpheus looking over his shoulder, seeing his wife's face fading. There was the boy Phaethon trying to control his father's horses. There was broken Cygnus, transforming into a swan. The tapestry of the goddess was flawless, masterful, perfect. But the tapestry of the woman was human, moving, touching. There was tenderness and suffering. It had been woven with a golden thread of joy and a silver thread of sorrow. It had been woven with the knowledge that life is brief.

The immortal goddess saw that she was beaten. She snarled. She grabbed the shuttle from her tapestry and struck Arachne on the forehead three, four times over. Arachne moaned. She put her hands to her face. Her hair fell out. Her nose and ears fell to the floor. Her head shrank to the size of one black poppy seed, her body to the size of one black peppercorn. Her eight nimble fingers became legs that clung to her sides and she scuttled into the shadows and safety. Owl-eyed Athene ripped the woman's tapestry into bright ribbons. She flew out of the cottage and up to the high slopes of Mount Olympus.

But that night another rumour came drifting into her ears, a rumour from the village of Hypaepa, a rumour of spinning and weaving. The goddess' forehead furrowed into a frown and the next morning, as the dawn took her golden throne, she swooped down out of the sky to the kingdom of Lydia. She made her way to the cottage of Arachne. She peered through the window. The place was empty, and that was as it should be. But then, out of the corner of her eye, she saw something moving under the eaves of the roof. She turned and looked. And there she saw a creature, a tiny eight-legged creature drawing the final thread across a piece of weaving so beautiful, so intricately delicate that the goddess could only gasp in astonishment and admiration. The tiny creature was spinning a gossamer thread from her own belly and making a masterpiece. A spider's web, the very first, and it was hanging with drops of dew in the light of the dawn as though it had been threaded with silver tears.

Metamorphosis: Cygnus

At the beginning of the Greek and Trojan war, a Trojan warrior called Cygnus, son of Poseidon, had skin charmed against the strikes of any weapon.

Achilles, the fiercest Greek warrior, attempts to kill Cygnus but cannot. Realising he is unable to harm him with weapons, he brutally attacks Cygnus with armour instead, eventually virtually decapitating him with helmet straps.

Taking pity on his son, Poseidon transforms Cygnus into a swan.

The great and terrible war between the Greeks and the people of Troy had just begun. A fleet of Greek ships had dropped anchor. Warriors armed to the teeth were wading ashore. The people of Troy knew this army had come to attack their city. The Trojan men sharpened their swords, they harnessed horses to chariots, they seized helmets and shields and strapped on breastplates. The bronze gates of their city were thrown open and the Trojan army poured across the plain with a whirring of wheels, a creaking of chariots, a neighing of horses, a shouting of men and a thundering of hooves and feet.

With a crash of bronze against bronze, the Trojans met the Greeks. And striding among the Trojan soldiers was a warrior called Cygnus. He stood head and shoulders above all other men. His skin was charmed against the striking of all weapons; sword, dagger, spear, arrow and battle axe. He was a son of Poseidon, the god of the sea. He was white skinned, white lipped, white tongued, as white as sea foam. He cut down Greeks with every stroke of his sword, with every thrust of his spear, while the Greeks' swords buckled against his skin and Greek spears glanced from him as if glancing from stone. He left a wake of dead behind himself as he fought.

Among the Greeks was their fiercest warrior: Achilles. As soon as his eyes fastened on Cygnus, he came bounding across the battlefield towards him, as though he was running through long grass. When he drew close to Cygnus, he lifted his spear. 'Know it was Achilles who killed you.' With all the strength of his arm, he hurled his spear. It struck Cygnus' throat and clattered down to the ground at his feet, as though it was a reed that had been thrown by a little boy. Cygnus lifted both his arms and laughed.

'Throw another one my little friend. I know who you are. You're Thetis' son. But I'm no more afraid of you than of a mosquito that I might smear across my arm. From head to foot, I am charmed against the striking of all weapons.' Achilles drew his bronze sword then and attacked Cygnus. He leapt and twisted, cutting and slashing with his sharp-edged blade, until Cygnus' armour hung from his body like a shattered egg-shell. But still the white skin was unscratched and still Cygnus laughed at Achilles. And then he lifted his own spear and he threw it. He threw it with such force that Achilles staggered backwards. The blade had penetrated the gold of his shield. It had penetrated nine layers of hardened ox-hide. But then Achilles caught his balance and smiled grimly, and it was as though in that moment he'd solved a riddle. He curled his lips back from his teeth and screamed. He leapt and smashed his shield into Cygnus' face. He ground the boss of his shield to the left and the right until Cygnus' nose was smeared across his cheek and his teeth were shattered.

Metamorphosis: Cygnus

Cygnus fell backwards and Achilles knelt on his shoulders. 'If weapons won't harm you, what will armour do?' He tore the helmet from Cygnus' head and wrapped the helmet straps around his throat. He tugged and twisted and tightened the tourniquet until Cygnus' head was half torn from his shoulders and every last shudder of life was gone from him. Splattered with blood and shrieking with laughter, Achilles leapt to his feet.

The Trojan army stood and stared at him, appalled. And then a strange thing happened. The twisted, broken neck of Cygnus began to stretch and to curve. His face narrowed. His mouth stretched and hardened into a beak. White feathers pushed through his white skin. His father Poseidon had taken pity on him and had transformed him into a swan. He beat his feathered arms against the air and the shattered eggshell armour fell from his body. He flew up and up and up into the sky, high above the battlefield. Every warrior stared up at him. There was no sound but the sighing and the sougning of his wings. Three times he circled above both armies and then he flew over the white sands, over the masts of the ships, over the blue waves of the sea. And he was gone.

Further Reading: Creation

The subtitle of Mary Shelley's Gothic novel, *Frankenstein*, is 'The Modern Prometheus'. Read through the article below and think carefully about why Mary Shelley links her Gothic novel with this Greek myth.

Frankenstein as the Modern Prometheus: The Greek Myth of Rebellion Continues in Mary Shelley's Gothic Novel

Exploring human nature and what makes someone evil is something that continues to fascinate many writers. Mary Shelley's novel is a pure example of this fascination, where she explores through a Gothic story, how nurture and care is the most vital need.

There have been many adaptations of Mary Shelley's Gothic novel over the years, and movies about the monster are still being made today. And even though the plot often changes: Victor being portrayed as crazy, the monster as just a killing machine, but they are usually returning to the same question – should a human play God?

Mary Shelley pays tribute to the Greek tale of Prometheus through the subtitle: 'The Modern Prometheus'. Clearly, Mary Shelley seeks to delve into the Greek myth of the rebel of Olympus and show how playing with the power of gods only leads to one end.

What does it have to do with Prometheus?

Prometheus is a character from Greek mythology. He is introduced to us as a titan – the gods which ruled before the Olympians overthrew them – and he is given the responsibility to create mankind. Prometheus is punished by Zeus when he steals fire from the gods and gives it to the humans, to give them warmth and comfort. Many view this Greek story as having a bigger meaning: Prometheus doesn't just steal fire, but a ray of power and wisdom.

Prometheus has become a hero in history; he is a rebel who fights tyranny for the good of mankind. He is someone who represents trying to save humanity by sacrificing themselves. However, some believe his decision to steal from the gods was reckless: he knew the consequences and put mankind in danger.

So why is Frankenstein the modern Prometheus?

Knowing the story of Prometheus, you probably can already answer that question. There are two main things which Victor Frankenstein has in common with Prometheus. The first is that they both created life. Prometheus creates humans out of clay, it is more natural creation. Frankenstein creates life in the lab, through the application of science, which is a "modern" way.

The second thing is that they are both work to make human life better but suffer severely from the results of their action. Prometheus stole fire from Zeus and is sentenced to eternal torture because of that. Frankenstein creates a monster and this monster takes away something dear to Victor's heart.

However, there is one big difference between this two. Prometheus' name means forethinker and this name is descriptive to him: Prometheus doesn't act blindly, he knows ahead what is going to happen. So even though he suffers the consequences, he was prepared for that.

Frankenstein, on the other hand, doesn't take even a little time to thought about what he is doing. He is determined to do what he has planned. He works on his creation for 2 years and in this 2 years he never thought of how he would handle the monster once alive. Then, when it becomes alive, Victor is horrified of his creation: he runs away and just goes to sleep. After he sees the creature, which escaped the laboratory and came to him, he just runs away to sleep in another place, in the hope it will go away. Victor shows no care for the monster he created, and simply neglects it.

The question that is often raised in the discussion of this Gothic novel is: should we play God? Should we go beyond the line? This novel is viewed as a lesson that there are things which science shouldn't touch. However, this novel goes deeper than the dangers of science. It teaches us about responsibility and how there are consequences for every action.

Further Reading: The Great Flood

Read through the article below and compare the Noah's Arc tale with The Great Flood. Compare how God acts in the tale of Noah's Arc and how Zeus - the Greek god - acts in The Great Flood myth. Think carefully about the main lessons within each of the tales and what we can learn.

The Story of Noah and the Great Flood—Is It Just a Myth?

The classic Bible's tale of Noah's arc is well known around the world, often being associated with God's lesson that humanity and the earth needs to be cared for and if people choose not to, they will pay the ultimate price. However, many fail to recognise the similarities between Noah's Arc and the classic Greek story of the Great Flood: both stories teach a lesson of caring for the world we live in.

The Bible details that the Flood was a real event. God caused it in order to destroy the wicked people, but he had Noah build an ark to preserve the good people and the animals, to save the life that is needed for reproduction – similar to Zeus's savior of Deucalion and Pyrrha. We can believe that the Flood really happened because it is recorded in Scripture, which “is inspired of God.”—2 Timothy 3:16.

So, is it a fact or fable? The Bible indicates that Noah was a real person and that the Flood was a real event, not a fable or a myth. Bible writers believed that Noah was a real person. The Bible gives specific details about the Flood. The Bible account of the Flood does not begin with anything like “Once upon a time,” as if it were a fairy tale. Rather, the Bible states the year, the month, and the day that events connected with the Flood happened. It also gives the dimensions of the ark that Noah built. These details show that the Bible presents the Flood as a fact, not as a fable.

So, why did the flood happen and is it similar to Ovid's story of the hungry wolves? According to the Bible, before the Flood “man's wickedness was great.” It adds that “the earth had become ruined in the sight of the true God” because it was filled with violence and rebellion. Ultimately, God felt it was his duty to rid society of its plagues, similar to Zeus's disgust in humanity in the Great Flood myth.

God told Noah what would happen and instructed him to build an ark to preserve his family and the animals. Noah warned people of the coming destruction, but they ignored his warnings. The Bible says: “They took no note until the Flood came and swept them all away.”—Matthew 24:37-39. The differences between the Noah's Arc story and the Greek myth of the Great Flood is that Zeus sprung this attack upon humanity, with the attempt to only save few. Whereas, Noah gave people the chance to believe in the power of God, and yet again, they failed in their decision making.

The ark was a large rectangular chest, or box, about 133 meters (437 ft) long, 22 meters (73 ft) wide, and 13 meters (44 ft) high. The ark was made out of resinous wood, and it was covered with tar inside and out. It had three stories, or decks, and a number of compartments. There was a door in the side of the ark and evidently a window along the top. It seems likely that the ark had a roof that peaked in the middle with a slight pitch to allow water to run off.

The lessons in both tales ultimately teach us how powerless humans are in this world. The gods in these tales show how without one quick sweep, humanity can be destroyed. So, from these tales, humanity needs to consider how we care and protect the world we live in, or else we will pay the ultimate price.

Further Reading: Greed

Read through the article below and compare Aladdin with the Greek story of Wishes. Think about how the Greek story of King Midas can be compared with Disney's Aladdin. What do you think both of these stories tries to teach an audience?

The Moral Lesson within Disney's Aladdin: Remembering the True Values in Life

Children films make a great movie for a family movie night, but these movies also have an added bonus that everyone can benefit from. Disney films are from the kind of genre where there is usually some kind of moral lesson attached to its story. Aladdin is one of the Disney films that alludes to a deeper moral message about remaining true to yourself.

Many across the world have seen this Disney's all-time favourite, Aladdin, since its release back in 1992. We all know the story of the peasant boy who lays eyes on a princess and falls in love immediately. Not long after, he discovers a lamp and out pops a 10,000-year-old genie. Since the genie can't make anyone fall in love, Aladdin uses his first wish to be transformed into a prince, in the hope he will win over the beautiful Jasmine.

You probably know how the rest of the story unfolds, so no need for me to narrate any further. The main message is the revealing and uplifting moral of the story. Aladdin falsely believed that Jasmine would never love him if she knew his true identity: that of a common street rat. So he hides behind the guise of a prince. In other words, Aladdin pretended to be someone he wasn't. This led to unforeseen consequences as it allowed Jafar to take hold of the lamp, become a sorcerer, and take over the palace.

We should all use this as a learning example. It is part of our human nature to have ambitions and want to make a good impression on people we meet. However, if that means changing your values and not being true to yourself, you will never form any true relationships as people will never get to know the real you. There is also another lesson in the Disney classic: Aladdin had three wishes, he could have wished for money, good looks, wealth, world peace, or whatever. Aladdin fixated on his wish to become a prince for Princess Jasmine, not knowing that he is changing who he is to win over his love. Aladdin quickly realises the danger of wishes and begins to learn that wealth, presents and coming from a high class is not the key to Jasmine's heart.

Disney's Aladdin delves into the true values in life and the danger of not sticking to these. Think to yourself: if you were given one wish, what would you wish for? Would you wish for a new bike, or the latest iPhone? Or would you wish for happiness for a family member or friend? Think carefully about what truly matters in life. We can all learn from Aladdin's journey into achieving what he desires: stay true to yourself and remember relationships are our gold in life.

Further Reading: Narcissus

Read through the article below about the origin of the word ‘narcissism’. The words we speak today are created, borrowed and changed over time. The Greek myth of Narcissus led to the creation of the word ‘narcissism’ or ‘narcissistic’, where his story of self-love is the definition of the word.

The Origin of the Word “Narcissism”

The word *narcissism* – admiring oneself and being vain – originates from the Greek myth of Narcissus, a handsome young hunter known for his beauty. One day while in the woods he stops to take a drink of cool water from a completely still, silver pond. As he kneels down at the edge he sees his own reflection and falls in love with it. He tells the image, “I love you.” Unable to pull himself away from the beauty of his own image, he disregards eating or drinking. Pining away for the image he has fallen in love with, he dies, eventually turning into the beautiful flower that now bears his name.

The myth of Narcissus does not end with our self-loving hunter. A beautiful woodland nymph named Echo has been punished by a god who has taken away her voice and only lets her repeat what someone else says. One day in the woods she sees handsome Narcissus and is immediately smitten with his beauty. She follows him and hopes he will say something kind and loving that she can then repeat back to him. So when she hears him say to his reflection, “I love you,” she dreams that when he hears her repeat the words he will love her too. She repeats, “I love you,” but to her disappointment he is so absorbed in his own reflection that he cannot hear her... or see her. She is devastated. Try as Echo might, she has no effect on the object of her affection, and Narcissus never loves her. She withers away, waiting for his response, and eventually dies of unrequited love.

The story of Narcissus and Echo reflects the dynamic of today’s narcissistic relationship. Narcissus is too self-absorbed to notice someone trying to love him; Echo keeps trying to be heard, only to be shut out. In another version of the story, Narcissus has so much pride that he is disgusted when someone tries to love him. He does hear Echo but shouts at her to be silent, just as in a modern-day relationship with a narcissist a woman will often provoke her partner’s wrath when she says or does something he disagrees with. As in this mythological story, a person who has narcissistic self-love becomes destructive to himself and to others who try to love him.

Further Reading: Vanity

The prince in Beauty and the Beast is punished by the enchantress for being selfish and uncharitable. Think carefully about how this story links to the Greek myth of Medusa and the moral of both stories.

The Moral Imagination of Disney's 'Beauty and the Beast' - What modern society can learn from Belle's moral imagination.

Like comic-book superheroes, Disney has served to teach us and remind us of long-forgotten myths, fables, parables, and old wives' tales. The tale of Beauty and the Beast is a Disney classic and an all time favourite. Many modern day films and novels have been inspired by the classic tale of valuing what is on the inside, over looks.

Disney bases this story around a beautiful young woman named Belle. She finds the life of her French village too limiting: she wants to read and learn and travel and explore. Somewhere outside of town, an enchantress tricks a local prince by pretending to be a beggar. When he turns her away and denies her charity, she decides to teach him a lesson and turns him into a demonic Beast. To punish him for his greed and vanity, she entraps him and his servants – which are turned into tools – in a castle covered by a crown of thorns. The enchantress gives the Beast a rose: when the last petal has fallen—should he not find true love—he and his servants remain ugly and disfigured forever. When the father is captured by the Beast as a prisoner, Belle takes his place. Soon, Belle realises the goodness that is at the heart of the Beast and falls in love with him.

Whilst watching the new adaptation of Disney's Beauty and the Beast, the classic tale of love, sacrifice and redemption came alive. The Beast is a beast because of his poor choices. When he encounters real love and sacrifice, he understands his own folly and, most importantly, learns to sacrifice himself for others. He is, symbolically and literally, reborn. The only way this prince could overcome his tragedy, was through Belle's moral imagination and ability to see past his flaws.

Despite the many adaptations of this classic story, the focus on the moral imagination of Belle remains the same. Moral imagination – where we have the ability to see the best of people – is a real gift that not many people have. Belle's moral imagination allows her to see past the demonic and ugly form of the Beast, and only this trust and faith on her part allows the Beast to redeem himself and overcome his mistakes.

Disney's Beauty and the Beast is ultimately more than just a children's film. It teaches us one of the main moral lessons in life: valuing people for who they are, rather than what they appear on the outside, allows everyone to unlock their true self.



Year 7: Greek Myths

Contents

1) Introduction to Greek Myths	
.....	Page 1
2) The Greek Story of Creation	
The Very Beginning	
.....	Page 2
Prometheus: The Rebel of Olympus	
.....	Page 5
Pandora's Creation and Prometheus' Punishment	
.....	Page 8
Reading Activities	
.....	Page 13
3) The Greek Story of Greed	
The Great Flood: Lycaon, Deucalion and Pyrrha	
.....	Page 15
Reading Activities	
.....	Page 18
4) The Greek Story of Wishes	
King Midas: The Golden Touch	
.....	Page 20

Reading Activities

.....
Page 23

5) The Greek Story of Judgment

King Midas and Apollo

..... Page 25

Reading Activities

.....
Page 28

6) The Greek Story of Relationships and Vanity

Echo and Narcissus

.....
Page 31

Reading Activities

.....
Page 35

7) The Greek Story of Beauty and Vanity

Medusa and Athena

.....
Page 37

Reading Activities

.....
Page 40

Introduction to Greek Myths

Where have the Greek myths come from?

Myth [noun] – Traditional stories of early history that help to explain the world

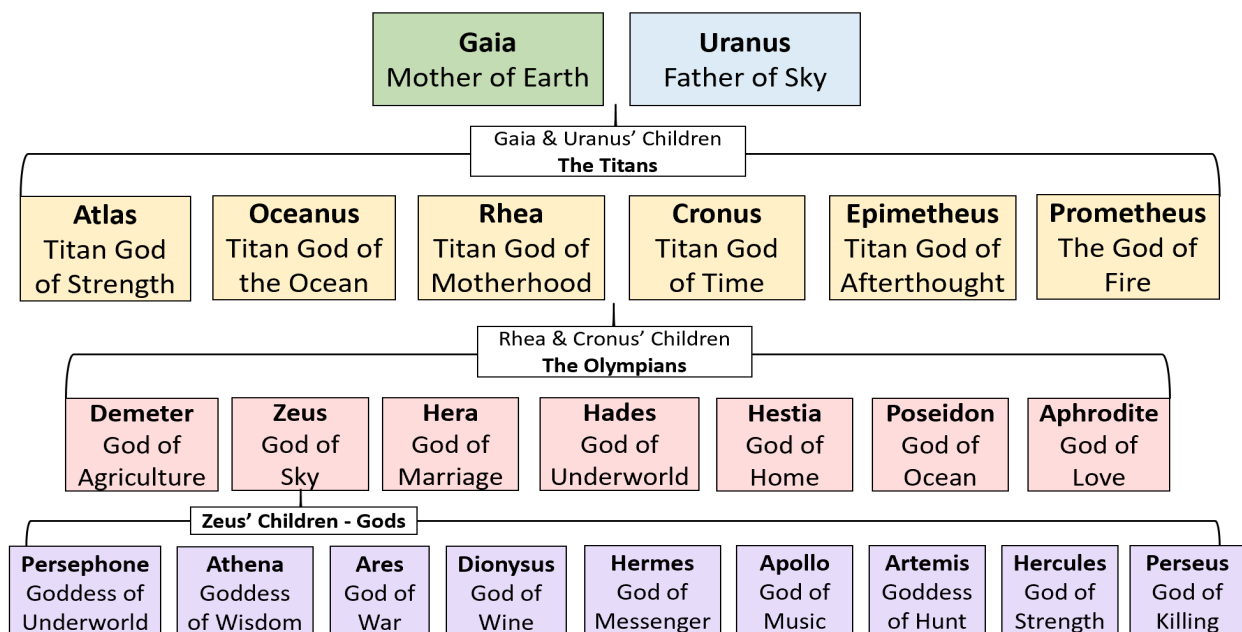
In ancient Greece, stories about gods and goddesses were an important part of everyday life. These myths explained everything from religious rituals to the weather, and they gave meaning to the world people saw around them. Around 700 BC, the poet Hesiod Theogony wrote the first Greek story about the beginning of time: it details the universe's journey from having nothing to being full of life. Later Greek writers used the original stories to build their own myths.

How have the Greek myths influenced our world today?

The characters, stories, themes and lessons within the Greek myths have shaped art and literature for thousands of years. Many modern stories and films are inspired by the events within these Greek myths as they essentially teach life lessons.

Greek Gods - Family Tree

The most popular Greek stories are based around the Titans and Olympians (Greek Gods) who were said to live on Mount Olympus – the highest mountain in Greece. From their high perch, they ruled over every aspect of human life.



Who are the gods you will meet in this booklet?

Zeus – God of Sky and King of Gods

Prometheus – God of Fire and Rebel of Olympus

Dionysus – God of Wine and friend of Silenus

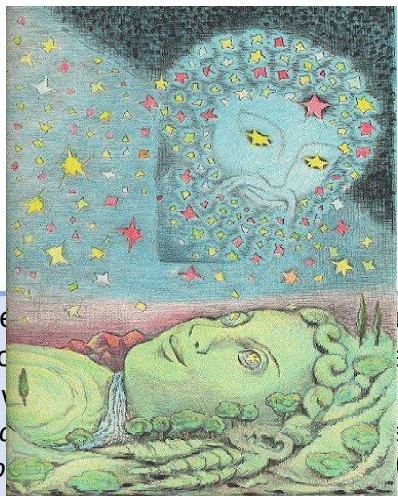
Apollo – God of Music and Punisher of King Midas

Hera – Goddess of Marriage and Punisher of Echo

Athena – Goddess of Wisdom and Punisher of Medusa

The Greek Story of Creation

The Very Beginning

Grad ch Once U creati	<p>In the beginning of time, the gods Uranus and Gaia started creating the children of the earth – the Titans.</p> <p>When Uranus and Gaia's son, Cronus, is told his children will overthrow him, he decides to eat them all. However, he forgets one: Zeus.</p> <p>Zeus plots his revenge to get his siblings back and the war against the Titans started.</p>	 <p>[ve mo po Cro y to un] ement or e <u>conflict</u> his father</p> <p>began to <u>evolve</u>. <u>overthrow</u> him. Cronus; he killed his siblings.</p>
--------------------------------	--	---

The First Creation: The Very Beginning

In the very beginning there was sky and earth. Sky was called Uranus, earth was called Gaia. They were lovers. They lay clasped in one another's arms. Sky pressed tightly against earth, earth holding sky – they were one. Not even a leaf could have passed between them. Earth had given birth to many children, but she was held so tightly by sky that there was nowhere for her children to go. They couldn't stand to their full height. They had to crouch in cracks and crevices in their mother's body. The children of earth were Titans, strange grey beings, their skin craggy and furrowed like rock that has been worn away by the weather. They longed to be able to stand, to step, to stride across the earth. But they were trapped by the weight of their father pressing down on them.

One of the grey Titans was called Cronus. He knew that he had to separate his parents. He found a hard stone and shaped it into a sickle with a blade as sharp as thought. He crept between his mother's legs. He reached up and sliced into the groin and belly of his father. With a terrible cry of pain the sky broke away from the earth. He rose up and up and up until he was high above the earth. He found the place he still inhabits today – far, far above our heads. And as he rose up, his gaping wound poured blood down upon the body of the earth; it rained and splattered down onto the ground. Wherever the blood of sky landed upon the earth, life appeared: trees and plants, bright-winged insects and feathered birds, scaled fishes and furred animals. The whole lovely, green, living world that we know today came into being at that moment.

And the grey Titans came running out from their cracks and crevices. They stretched, they shouted with joy, they stamped their great feet, they danced with delight. All the Titans danced. All the Titans danced except for one. One of them had other plans. His name was Prometheus, which means 'forethought'. While his brother Cronus had been shaping his sickle, desperately trying to create a better life for his fellow siblings, Prometheus had been fashioning three stone jars.

Now, as the rest of them danced, he carried the jars out into the light. He set them on the ground and began to scoop up handfuls of the blood-soaked soil. He filled the jars with the flesh of his mother and the spilled blood of his father. He packed the jars tight and fitted lids


onto them. Then he buried the jars. He buried them deep in the earth. He buried them deep in the body of his mother. This would be a secret between him and her. One day he would return for them. And then he ran and joined hands with his brothers and sisters. He stamped his feet in the joyful circling measure of the Titans' dance.

Years and years passed. Two of the grey Titans, Cronus and Rhea, had children together. But their mother, the earth, warned Cronus that his children would be more powerful than he was, and he should be wary of their rebellion. She warned him that one day his children would overthrow him. Fearful of being challenged by his own offspring, Cronus decided he didn't want that and so he ate his children. He swallowed them whole, one after the other. The youngest of his children was called Zeus. Rhea, his mother, wanted to protect him: she believed there was something special about him. She hid the baby in a cave and then she wrapped soft blankets around a stone. She put the stone in Zeus' cradle. Cronus seized the stone and swallowed it.

Zeus grew up in secret. When he was old enough he appeared in Cronus' hall. Cronus took a liking to the stranger and made him his cup-bearer. One day, Zeus made his father a honey-flavoured drink but mixed it with a poison that made Cronus sick. First, he vomited up the stone; then out of his throat came his other children: Poseidon, Hestia, Hades, Demeter, Hera. Straightaway Zeus and his brothers seized weapons and waged war on Cronus and the grey Titans. For years the terrible war raged, and Cronus met his destiny. The stars were torn from their stations; mountains were levelled; the heat of the earth's heart spat and spouted its red flames across the world. For eons the war raged until at last Zeus was victorious. The grey Titans were bound with chains of adamant and hurled down to Tartarus – deep, deep, deep beneath the bowels of the earth.

Only two of the Titans were spared. Prometheus, whose name means 'forethought', and Epimetheus, who had chosen to turn their backs on war. They were allowed to continue tilling the soil of their green valley. Zeus and his brothers and sisters and their children built their palaces on the high slopes of Mount Olympus. Now that the Titans had been defeated, they ruled over the whole universe as the Olympians. They began to divide it amongst themselves. The three brothers – Zeus, Poseidon and Hades – threw lots into a helmet. Each closed his eyes and reached inside. Zeus plucked out the heavens – they would be his realm now; Poseidon drew out the wide waters of the sea; and Hades chose the underworld, that land far, far below where one day the dead would go. Zeus and his brothers had a name for themselves. They called themselves 'gods'.

The Greek Story of Creation Prometheus – The Rebel of Olympus

<p>Prometheus is one of the Greek Titans and known as the god of fire.</p> <p>When Prometheus and his brother Epimetheus are spared imprisonment for not fighting against Zeus and the Olympians, they were given the task of creating man.</p> <p>Prometheus felt responsible and cared more about mankind than the Olympians. He started to rebel against the powerful god Zeus.</p>		
<p><i>Prometheus is given the responsibility of making mankind.</i></p>	<p><i>Prometheus is intrigued by the purpose of the sisters visit to him.</i></p>	<p><i>The gods have decided Prometheus' fate that he shall create mankind.</i></p>

The Second Creation: Prometheus

After the great war between the gods and the Titans was over, the victorious gods had thrown all the grey Titans down to Tartarus. Only two had been spared, the two that had not fought against them: Prometheus, whose name means 'forethought', and his brother Epimetheus, whose name means 'afterthought'.

One day, Prometheus left his green valley. He crossed a grassy plain and he came to a cave in the side of a mountain. He entered. There was a pool of water. He dipped his hand into it and drank. And then he heard an overpowering voice: 'Prometheus.'

He peered curiously into the darkness. He saw there were three figures crouching in the shadows, three ancient crones, their skin as white as apple flesh, creased and folded like old leather. The first was spinning a thread. The third was holding a pair of sharp shears carefully in her hands.

'Who are you?' Prometheus asked, slightly tense in his movement towards the figures.

It was the middle sister who answered. 'Prometheus, we are the three Fates. All that will happen in the future is clear to us.'

Prometheus looked them up and down, unsure of their intentions. 'Sisters, if you truly are the Fates, then I have a question for you.'

'Ask us and we will tell you the truth,' the middle sister said smoothly, with almost a hint of reassurance in her voice.

'The new gods and goddesses have divided up the universe. There is a god of the sky, a god of the sea, a god of the underworld, a god of light, a goddess of the moon, a goddess of love, a goddess of wisdom, and yet the world belongs to nobody. Tell me sisters, whose children will inherit the earth?'

The three Fates smiled gap-toothed grins and chuckled. 'Your children, Prometheus. Yours!'

'But I have no children. I don't even have a wife,' Prometheus blurted. 'Tell me more.' But the three Fates were silent. It was as though they had turned to stone.

As Prometheus lowered his head and made his way out of the cave, he remembered how, in the early days of the world, he had buried three stone jars filled with the flesh of his mother, the earth, and the blood of his father, the sky. He journeyed to the place he had buried them. He dug into the soil with his grey hands and soon his fingers curled around cold stone. He lifted the jars and cradled them in his arms. He carried them to his green valley at the foot of Mount Hymettus. He showed them to his brother, Epimetheus.

Epimetheus edged towards Prometheus, questioning 'What's inside the jars?'

Prometheus smiled tenderly. 'My children,' he said. He took them to the edge of a stream, at the foot of a valley. He lifted the lid from one of the jars. He scooped out a handful of the blood-soaked earth. He lifted a handful of clay from the water's edge and he kneaded them together. He had no plan, but it was as though his fingers had a mind of their own. He was making a head, shoulders, arms, a body, legs. He was making something not unlike himself, not unlike the gods, and the thing was becoming warm. It was wriggling with a life of its own. It was suddenly veined with blood, then cloudy with skin. It opened its mouth and gasped for breath. It opened its eyes and looked at him.


With infinite tenderness, Prometheus set it on the ground. It ran away from him and crouched among the bushes. Prometheus made another one and another. He made male ones and female ones. They all ran from him and huddled together. All day he worked, until there was just one handful of earth left in the third jar. He mixed it with clay. He shaped it and set it on the ground.

It ran away from him and then let out a sharp, piercing cry. It fell to the ground, it shuddered and was still. Prometheus, full of worry, went across and lifted it, protectively shielding it from the world. It was cold in his hand, as cold as clay. He dug a hole and buried it.

In the cave of the ancient sisters, the third crone was opening her shears. The first had been spinning threads on her spindle; each thread was a human life. The second had been measuring the length of the threads. The third had just tried her shears for the very first time. She nodded. They were sharp. She smiled at her sisters. 'Everything is ready now.'

The Greek Story of Creation

Pandora's Creation and Prometheus' Punishment

<p>The god of fire, Prometheus, had a reputation of being a clever trickster.</p> <p>Prometheus loved mankind more than the Olympians, so he decided to steal the fire from the gods to give mankind power and comfort.</p> <p>Zeus creates the first ever woman – Pandora – and sends her down to punish Prometheus and mankind for this rebellious act against the gods.</p>		
<p>The universe is created and the first people are born. Prometheus gives them fire to keep them warm.</p>	<p>Barbarians [ve... ly ly... ma... thin... ceiv...]</p>	<p>erful eir s</p>
<p><i>when he steals the fire to keep his children warm.</i></p>	<p><i>he can give fire and warmth to his people.</i></p>	<p><i>rebellion, Zeus disempowers Prometheus.</i></p>

The Third Creation: Pandora and the Punishment of Prometheus

Prometheus' children, the first people, didn't know what to do at first. They gnawed roots. They ate grubs and leaves and earth and whatever fruits they could find. Prometheus, the grey Titan, and his brother Epimetheus showed them how to make spears and bows and swift arrows. They showed them how to hunt, how to plant seeds and harvest them. They showed them how to build shelters out of branches.

The creatures were quick to learn and to understand but at nights they would huddle together in desperate attempt to keep warm. Sometimes in winter, they would shiver and shake, struggling to settle and keeping each other awake. Sometimes on bitter nights, one of them would turn as cold as clay and be still: frozen. Prometheus would have to bury it in the ground, knowing he failed to protect his creation. The wave of guilt grew and grew; he knew something was wrong.

His creatures seemed to be suffering from something he'd never known, something he could barely understand. Slowly he began to realise: they were suffering from cold. And if they were cold, they would need something he had not got. They would need something only the gods' possessed. They would need the secret weapon of the gods: fire. His creatures needed fire, and he knew that the gods would never let him have it; it was too precious and not something to be shared with man. Once again, Prometheus is reminded of his inferiority in the world. It would have to be stolen from them. And he knew that if the thief was discovered he would be punished, and the punishments of the gods are always terrible. But like any father, he loved his children and knew he had to do something. He couldn't bear to see them suffer.

So one night he climbed the steep slopes of Mount Olympus and stole one smouldering piece of charcoal. As soon as his children had fire, Prometheus' people prospered. Their little settlements spread across the world. Prometheus taught them how to dig terraces on the sides of hills for vineyards and orchards; how to plant wheat and barley; how to keep sheep, goats, pigs and shambling cattle. He would sit and watch his people, and the longer he watched them, the deeper the tenderness he felt for them; he knew he had saved them. He wanted only good for them. Like any father, he wanted them to be happy and safe.

Thinking ahead, he gathered together all the things that might bring them harm and put them into a stone jar. He gathered disease, hatred, jealousy, anger, violence, starvation. All of them he pushed into the jar, feeling a sense of contentment knowing these plagues were locked away. He fitted a lid tightly to the top of it and screwed it tightly shut. He showed the jar to his brother, Epimetheus. 'As long as the lid stays on this jar, all will be well for my children.'

Epimetheus - not acknowledging Prometheus value in this jar - nodded, 'Of course.'

Prometheus leaned the jar against the trunk of a fig tree. And all would have been well with the world had Zeus, the most powerful of the gods, not glanced down and seen the smoke of tens of thousands of fires drifting up into the sky. He rubbed his eyes and looked again in disbelief. He saw Prometheus' creatures comfortably – almost too comfortably – warming their hands, boiling their pots, roasting their meat, lighting up the shadows of their huts with fire: fire, the secret of the gods. Someone must have stolen it. He began to tremble with fury, becoming more and more enraged as time passed by. And then he saw the culprit: Prometheus. He was squatting on the side of a mountain, watching his children with infinite affection, feeling proud he managed to fulfil his duty of protecting them.

'So,' Zeus thought to himself, 'The grey Titan is the thief, and he shall pay for it.'

The sky darkened with the god's anger and the air grew thicker. There was a rumble of thunder, a flash of lightning; a drop of rain splashed onto Prometheus' face.

Once again, Prometheus turned to his brother. 'Epimetheus, I feel Zeus' anger. We must be careful. The gods will try to punish us for the theft of fire. Don't accept any gifts from them, least of all from Zeus.'

Epimetheus, again not valuing Prometheus' worry, nodded: 'Of course.'

Zeus had a plan for vengeance. He made his way to the palace of Hephaestus. He found the crippled god of metal-work working at his forge.

'Hephaestus,' he said, 'you are the master of making. I have seen the broaches and necklaces you have fashioned for your wife Aphrodite, the goddess of love. They are dazzlingly beautiful. Would you make something beautiful for me?'

Hephaestus was flattered. He bowed to Zeus. 'What do you want me to make?'

Zeus held out his hand. On it was a lump of clay. 'You have probably looked down at the world and seen the little lumpen creatures the Titan Prometheus has made. Make me something similar. Make me a woman out of this clay but make her as beautiful as Aphrodite.'

Hephaestus was a master craftsman. He took the clay and set to work. In his hands it soon took shape. He made head, shoulders, arms, body, legs. He shaped it to perfection – every inch of this project was flawless. He baked it in his furnace and gave the little figurine to Zeus. Even though it was no more than a statuette, Zeus was charmed. It was just what he'd been hoping for. He blew life into it. The clay woman's eyes flickered. She smiled, tossed the hair from her forehead; she was like a miniature goddess.

Zeus summoned all of the divinities to his palace.

'I want each of you to give a gift to this creature of clay,' he commanded.

Each of the immortals in turn came forward. When the last gift had been given, the woman was no longer the same. The clear, uncomplicated beauty that Hephaestus had given her had become clouded by contradiction. She was filled with the contrary promptings of the immortal gods and goddesses. Ultimately, she posed an incredible danger. Her thoughts and feelings were not simple or straightforward any longer. Her flawless nature was now tainted

with contradiction. Zeus rubbed his hands together with delight, knowing the danger this would bring to mankind.

‘We will call her Pandora, bringer of gifts,’ Zeus rejoiced.

Epimetheus was tending his orchards in the valley at the foot of Mount Hymettus.

Prometheus was away, helping his people, somewhere far across the world. Hermes, the messenger of the gods, appeared before Epimetheus. The Titan recognised him by his winged sandals.

‘What do you want?’

‘I’ve brought someone to meet you,’ replied Hermes.

Hermes lifted his fingers to his lips and whistled, and from between two apple trees a woman appeared. She was beautiful, more beautiful by far than any of Prometheus’ creatures. She was as beautiful as a goddess.

‘Her name is Pandora,’ Hermes stated, leading the way for Pandora to be introduced.

Obediently, she headed towards Epimetheus, her hands outstretched to his.

‘Bringer of gifts,’ Pandora muttered softly.

She lifted her face to him and Epimetheus couldn’t help himself; he felt like every inch she stepped closer, he couldn’t resist. He lowered his great grey head and kissed her. Her lips were soft and sweet. Her skin glistened as the sun touched it. He closed his eyes, thanking his fate for this gift.

‘She is a gift from Zeus,’ Hermes explained.

When the Titan opened his eyes, coming out of his trance, Hermes had vanished.

Without even thinking of Prometheus’ warning, Epimetheus loved Pandora, thanking his fate daily for bringing such a gift. He taught her the skills of farming and she was quick to learn. Soon the valley was prospering. Apples, grapes and grain were swelling just as her own belly was swelling with the child she was carrying in her womb; the child that had been fathered by the grey Titan.

Admiringly, Epimetheus loved to watch her swinging her sickle, waist-deep in barley, singing to herself. He had never been so happy. And then one evening as they were eating their supper, Pandora noticed an old stone jar, leaning against the trunk of a fig tree.

She questioned, full of curiosity. ‘What’s inside the jar?’

She jumped to her feet and ran across to it, excitedly wanting to open this suspicious gift.

She was just about to curl her fingers under its lid when Epimetheus shouted, ‘No!’ She backed away from it, startled, in shock since she had never heard this tone escape his mouth. He stood up and walked across to her. He curled his great grey arm tenderly around her shoulders.

‘No, my love,’ he said. ‘We must leave that jar alone. Prometheus told me that the lid must never be lifted.’

Without a thought of Epimetheus’ warning, the next day she went and looked at the jar again, feeling drawn to its temptation. The thought of what was inside sat on Pandora’s mind. It squatted at the foot of the fig tree like a mocking affront.

‘I wonder what Prometheus keeps inside it, for himself and his precious people,’ said Pandora to herself.

Day followed day. The jar, that she had never noticed before, seemed always to be in her sight. The thought of it plagued her: she needed to know what was inside. And then one day Epimetheus was working at the far end of the valley. Pandora was quite alone. She looked at the jar and suddenly there was a flood of voices. It was as though all the gifts of the gods

and the goddesses were chattering inside her head, pushing her to open it, making her open it.

There was an Athene voice, whispering, 'It's always better to know.'

A Hermes voice saying, 'Nobody will ever find out.'

An Aphrodite voice was saying, 'If he does find out, one kiss and he'll forgive you.'

And Ares voice was shouting, 'Now! Now! Now!'

She couldn't help herself. The urge was too much. She reached for the lid. She pulled it open. In an instant she was lifted into the air with a blast of wind and thrown back. It was as if a tremendous whirlwind had burst out of the jar. When she opened her eyes she saw a spiralling swarm of seething, buzzing, wheezing, screeching, screaming, shrieking things, flying out into the world. She watched them with horror, eyes peeled on her worst nightmare.

When they all seemed to have disappeared and flown off out of sight, she scrambled to her feet and ran across to the jar. She peered inside. There was something still there. It was a beautiful, shimmering, shining thing quite unlike all the others. She reached down and it climbed onto her fingertip. She lifted it to her lips and blew. It flew away. Prometheus had hidden it in the bottom of the jar in case the lid was ever lifted. It was called 'Hope'; it was the Titan's last gift to his children.

When Prometheus returned and discovered what had happened, his heart was broken; he knew all was ruined. His children would never be the same again. He climbed up the steep slope of the valley, without once looking over his shoulder, but Zeus was watching and waiting. Everything fell silent.

Suddenly Prometheus felt an iron grip on each shoulder; on either side of him stood a one-eyed Cyclops.

'You are to be punished,' the Cyclops screeched.

Prometheus struggled under its grip. He blurted, 'Why?'

'Because you are a thief, a thief of fire.'

The Cyclops pushed Prometheus to the ground. One held him down while the other bound him with chains of adamant. The chains were fastened to the face of a cliff; there was no escaping. And then the sky darkened. Prometheus looked up. A huge vulture was swooping down towards him. It perched on his chest, satisfied at Prometheus desperation to free himself. With its razor talons it ripped open his belly. It plunged its head into the wound and tore out his liver. With one sickening gulp it lifted its head and swallowed it. Then it opened its wings and flew away. The two Cyclops watched and laughed.

'Every day, thief, your liver will grow back again. And every day the vulture will return, day after day to the end of time.'

The Greek Story of Prometheus and Pandora: **Reading Activities**

☐ What did you find interesting about this Greek story?

Discuss with your partner what you found interesting about this story and the lesson it teaches.

**☐ 'Prometheus deserved to be punished for going against the gods' –
Do you agree or disagree?**

Discuss the statement above with your partner and decide on your reasons for agreeing or disagreeing. Think carefully about Prometheus' character and his intentions.

- 📖 **Read through the article below that compares Prometheus and Victor Frankenstein**
The subtitle of Mary Shelley's Gothic novel, Frankenstein, is 'The Modern Prometheus'. Read through the article below and think carefully about why Mary Shelley links her Gothic novel with this Greek myth.

Article: How does Mary Shelley's novel Frankenstein link to the Greek myth of Prometheus?

Frankenstein as the Modern Prometheus: The Greek Myth of Rebellion Continues in Mary Shelley's Gothic Novel

Exploring human nature and what makes someone evil is something that continues to fascinate many writers. Mary Shelley's novel is a pure example of this fascination, where she explores through a Gothic story, how nurture and care is the most vital need.

There have been many adaptations of Mary Shelley's Gothic novel over the years, and movies about the monster are still being made today. And even though the plot often changes: Victor being portrayed as crazy, the monster as just a killing machine, but they are usually returning to the same question – should a human play God?

Mary Shelley pays tribute to the Greek tale of Prometheus through the subtitle: 'The Modern Prometheus'. Clearly, Mary Shelley seeks to delve into the Greek myth of the rebel of Olympus and show how playing with the power of gods only leads to one end.

What does it have to do with Prometheus?

Prometheus is a character from Greek mythology. He is introduced to us as a titan – the gods which ruled before the Olympians overthrew them – and he is given the responsibility to create mankind. Prometheus is punished by Zeus when he steals fire from the gods and gives it to the humans, to give them warmth and comfort. Many view this Greek story as having a bigger meaning: Prometheus doesn't just steal fire, but a ray of power and wisdom.

Prometheus has become a hero in history; he is a rebel who fights tyranny for the good of mankind. He is someone who represents trying to save humanity by sacrificing themselves. However, some believe his decision to steal from the gods was reckless: he knew the consequences and put mankind in danger.



So why is Frankenstein the modern Prometheus?

Knowing the story of Prometheus, you probably can already answer that question. There are two main things which Victor Frankenstein has in common with Prometheus. The first is that they both created life. Prometheus creates humans out of clay, it is more natural creation. Frankenstein creates life in the lab, through the application of science, which is a “modern” way.

The second thing is that they are both work to make human life better but suffer severely from the results of their action. Prometheus stole fire from Zeus and is sentenced to eternal torture because of that. Frankenstein creates a monster and this monster takes away something dear to Victor’s heart.

However, there is one big difference between this two. Prometheus’ name means forethinker and this name is descriptive to him: Prometheus doesn’t act blindly, he knows ahead what is going to happen. So even though he suffers the consequences, he was prepared for that.

Frankenstein, on the other hand, doesn’t take even a little time to thought about what he is doing. He is determined to do what he has planned. He works on his creation for 2 years and in this 2 years he never thought of how he would handle the monster once alive. Then, when it becomes alive, Victor is horrified of his creation: he runs away and just goes to sleep. After he sees the creature, which escaped the laboratory and came to him, he just runs away to sleep in another place, in the hope it will go away. Victor shows no care for the monster he created, and simply neglects it.

The question that is often raised in the discussion of this Gothic novel is: should we play God? Should we go beyond the line? This novel is viewed as a lesson that there are things which science shouldn’t touch. However, this novel goes deeper than the dangers of science. It teaches us about responsibility and how there are consequences for every action.

The Greek Story of Greed

The Great Flood: Lycaon, Deucalion and Pyrrha

When Zeus, the king of the gods, notices mankind acting selfishly and destroying all order, he disguises himself and pays a visit to Lycaon.

When he visits the Arcadian king, he sees a vicious act of greed and is disgusted at mankind's reaction. He decides to give them the ultimate punishment.

Zeus saved Deucalion and Pyrrha and gave them the job of creating a pure humanity.



A gro
toget
an

Zeus decides to teach humanity a lesson when he witnesses their selfish ways.

Zeus is disgusted w
humanity showing egocentric
behaviour.

makes them see there are
consequences.

The Time of Greed: Lycaon, Deucalion and Pyrrha

Imagine a time when greed is god, when compassion has lost her crown and callous cruelty is enthroned in her place. The darkness, the chaos, emboldens evil things. Rage, envy, jealousy, creep from their crannies. Men love only plunder. Mercy is forgotten; son kills brother; daughter mother. The temples are derelict; spiders are the only worshippers. Everywhere the chant is, 'More.'

Up on Olympus, Zeus shook his head, disappointed at what he saw. The smell rising from the earth of sweat and smoke and blood and bile was too much. Such rumours he heard – surely mankind had not stooped so low. He would investigate and put things right.

He craftily disguised himself as a traveller. He flashed down to the palace of an Arcadian king: Lycaon was the king's name. There are laws, customs that must be respected. Strangers should always be welcomed. King Lycaon greeted this traveller with a smirk, immediately thinking about what he can gain from this visit.

He ushered him into the feasting hall. 'Tonight, we will eat in your honour,' he said.

He gave the stranger a bowl of wine, made his apologies and slunk into the kitchen. There he prepared a cauldron, poured water, sprinkled herbs, vegetables, stirred them – then, without a thought, butchered one of his own sons and threw the fleshy lumps into the pot. Lycaon returned to the hall, entertained the traveller with chatter whilst the stew bubbled. Guests gathered. Like a virus, the secret spread from one table to the next. Each greeted the news with a lupine grin. Zeus scanned the faces. He saw the sneers, the whispering. A golden bowl was set before him. He dabbed it gingerly, curious of the floating parts. Out of the broth bobbed a toe. So – the tales were true. These were not men, they were carless and inhumane animals.

A thunderbolt pierced the palace, pierced Lycaon himself, almost slicing him in half. The king's hair stood on end, he howled, fell on all fours, his robes ripped. The guests sank to their knees and yowled in reply. Bristles burst forth from their backs, their bellies, their

arms, their legs, their very faces. Knives of bones erupted from their jaws: wolves. They became hungry wolves.

Zeus returned to Olympus. He pondered the bedlam below, thinking carefully about the suitable punishment. Fire? No: too fickle. One wind-borne leaf could turn Olympus into a pyre. Flood? Yes: flood. He called his brother, the king of the tumbling wave, Poseidon. The sea-god donned a helmet of black cloud, wrapped himself in a billowing cloak, lifted his trident and struck the earth.

The sky vomited, the world cracked and broke open. Every hidden spring burst forth, leapt to the light. Heaving walls of water crashed into city and town and village. Roads became rivers, fields became lakes. Any home that was not swept away was submerged in silence. The people tried to run – but where? They were ambushed from above and below. They scrambled up mountains, hills, trees, and watched the waters rise relentlessly about them. One by one they gave up their grip on life.

Thinking carefully about how to save the world below, Zeus chose to save only one man and one woman. His name was Deucalion, hers Pyrrha. Their raft was tossed by the deluge, climbed white-crested mountains, sank into deep valleys. Then Poseidon – brother of Zeus and god of the underworld - blew his conch. With one sudden gesture he tore apart the clouds, banished the winds. Clear calm came.

With the light, Deucalion and Pyrrha saw wonders below them. They floated over cities; once-proud towers beneath them now, cloaked in weed; smiling dolphins in apple orchards; flickering fish passing through windows into bedrooms, kitchens. All about them were the corpses of men, women, children, beasts, birds, bobbing lifeless as leaves.

‘Look!’ Pyrrha pointed: two peaks, the glistening summits of Mount Parnassus.

Husband and wife scrambled ashore, gave thanks to mighty Zeus, kissed the rocky slope. The rivers, the streams shrank back to their beds. Mother Earth was healed, pure again. The corruption and greed of humanity had been swept away.

Deucalion and his wife washed off the brine in a stream of fresh water. Once they were clean, they prayed to Zeus: ‘Great cloud-compeller, you saved us. You must have some task in mind for us. Tell us your purpose.’

Zeus’ herald, bright Hermes, appeared before them. They shielded their eyes.

‘Descend the mountain. As you walk, throw the bones of your mother behind you!’ He said. And he was gone.

For a time, the couple stood in horrified silence, before Pyrrha burst out that she was sorry and could never do so wicked a thing as dishonour her mother’s bones. Both of them continued to mull over the words of the goddess in great perplexity.

At last, Deucalion said, ‘I can’t believe that the Oracle would tell us to do anything wicked. I think that by the bones of our mother, the goddess means these stones that lie here – the bones of our great mother Earth.’

Pyrrha was uncertain, but they agreed that there was no harm in at least trying this.

Gathering up stones, the two of them did as Themis said, walking away with their heads covered in reverence and casting the stones behind them.

‘Our mother’s bones are scattered,’ said Deucalion. ‘Everything, everything we had is lost.’ Pyrrha knelt, pushed her hands into the ground. ‘This is our mother,’ she said as she pulled out a muddy stone. ‘These are her bones.’

As she descended the hill she threw stones over her shoulder and Deucalion behind her saw the damp earth become flesh; the stone, bone. When they stopped and turned, they saw an amazing sight: the fallen stones were changing shape before their eyes. He followed suit.

His stones became men, Pyrrha's women. The seams, the streaks of colour in the rock, became veins. Together, they were creating the current race of humanity, a pure humanity. The earth meanwhile, sodden with moisture and warmed by the emerging sunlight, spontaneously generated new life, some creatures that had existed before and others new. Deucalion thought to himself: this is why we are so strong, why we can dig, carry, toil for so long. We are the children of stones.

The Greek Story of Greed: Reading Activities

📄 **What did you find interesting about this Greek story?**

Discuss with your partner what you found interesting about this story and the lesson it teaches.

📄 **Write some interview questions for Zeus, to question why he created the Great Flood.**

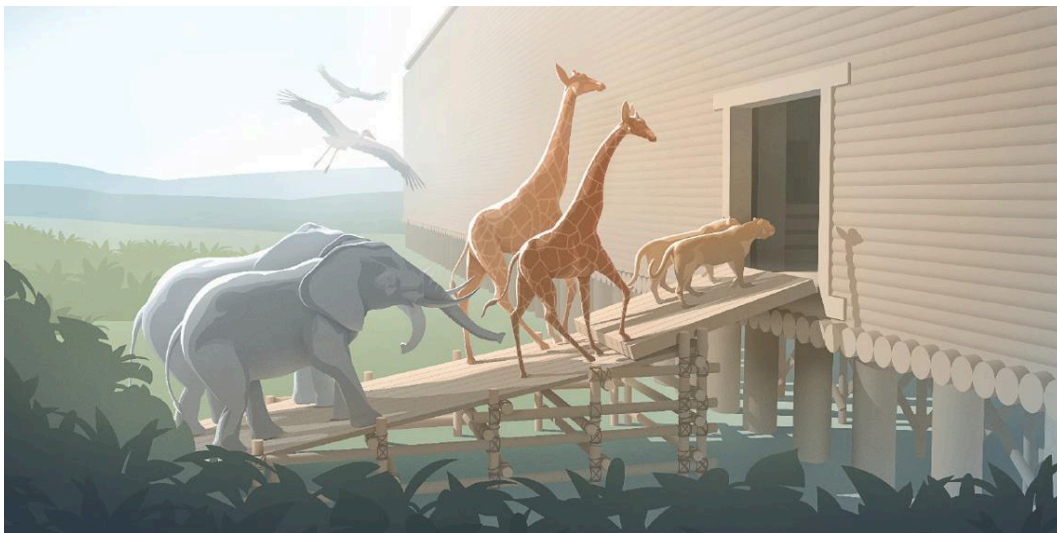
Work with you partner to come up with some interesting questions to ask Zeus – think carefully about what you want to know more about.

📄 **Read through the article below and compare the Noah’s Arc tale with The Great Flood.**

Compare how God acts in the tale of Noah’s Arc and how Zeus – the Greek god – acts in The Great Flood myth. Think carefully about the main lessons within each of the tales and what we can learn.

Article: How is the Greek story of the Great Flood similar to the Bible’s story of Noah’s Arc?

The Story of Noah and the Great Flood—Is It Just a Myth?



The classic Bible’s tale of Noah’s arc is well

known around the world, often being associated with God’s lesson that humanity and the earth needs to be cared for and if people choose not to, they will pay the ultimate price. However, many fail to recognise the similarities between Noah’s Arc and the classic Greek story of the Great Flood: both stories teach a lesson of caring for the world we live in.

The Bible details that the Flood was a real event. God caused it in order to destroy the wicked people, but he had Noah build an ark to preserve the good people and the animals, to save the life that is needed for reproduction – similar to Zeus’s savior of Deucalion and Pyrrha. We can believe that the Flood really happened because it is recorded in Scripture, which “is inspired of God.”—2 Timothy 3:16.

So, is it a fact or fable? The Bible indicates that Noah was a real person and that the Flood was a real event, not a fable or a myth. Bible writers believed that Noah was a real person.

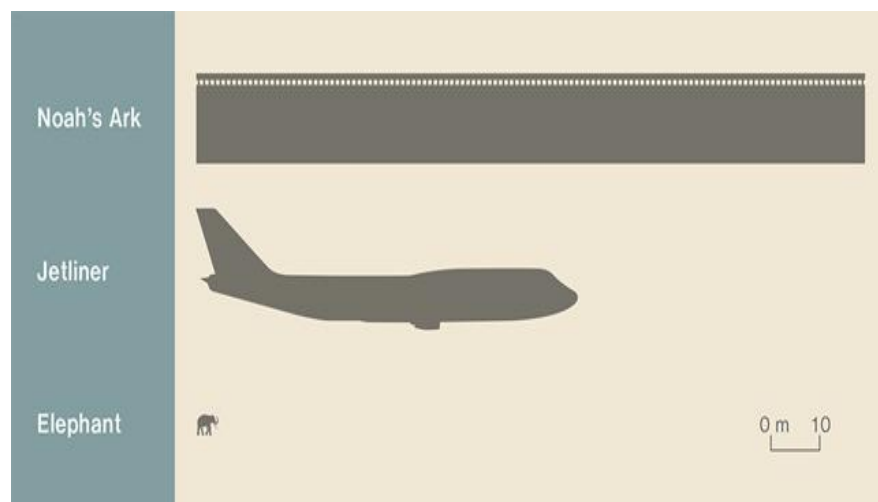
The Bible gives specific details about the Flood. The Bible account of the Flood does not begin with anything like “Once upon a time,” as if it were a fairy tale. Rather, the Bible states the year, the month, and the day that events connected with the Flood happened. It also gives the dimensions of the ark that Noah built. These details show that the Bible presents the Flood as a fact, not as a fable.

So, why did the flood happen and is it similar to Ovid’s story of the hungry wolves? According to the Bible, before the Flood “man’s wickedness was great.” It adds that “the earth had become ruined in the sight of the true God” because it was filled with violence and rebellion. Ultimately, God felt it was his duty to rid society of its plagues, similar to Zeus’s disgust in humanity in the Great Flood myth.

God told Noah what would happen and instructed him to build an ark to preserve his family and the animals. Noah warned people of the coming destruction, but they ignored his warnings. The Bible says: “They took no note until the Flood came and swept them all away.”—Matthew 24:37-39. The differences between the Noah’s Arc story and the Greek myth of the Great Flood is that Zeus sprung this attack upon humanity, with the attempt to only save few. Whereas, Noah gave people the chance to believe in the power of God, and yet again, they failed in their decision making.

The ark was a large rectangular chest, or box, about 133 meters (437 ft) long, 22 meters (73 ft) wide, and 13 meters (44 ft) high. The ark was made out of resinous wood, and it was covered with tar inside and out. It had three stories, or decks, and a number of compartments. There was a door in the side of the ark and evidently a window along the top. It seems likely that the ark had a roof that peaked in the middle with a slight pitch to allow water to run off.

The lessons in both tales ultimately teach us how powerless humans are in this world. The gods in these tales show how without one quick sweep, humanity can be destroyed. So, from these tales, humanity needs to consider how we care and protect the world we live in, or else we will pay the ultimate price.



The Greek Story of Wishes

King Midas: The Golden Touch

When King Midas cares and treats the lost Silenus well, he reunites him with his good friend Dionysus – a great god.

When Dionysus is reunited with Silenus, he is immensely grateful to Midas and grants him one wish. King Midas wishes that everything he touches turns to gold.

King Midas learns the ultimately lesson: be careful what you wish for.



Ma
Being
mon

Ba

a [

a c

cha

ow

n]

ing

int it

ked.

King Midas' materialistic ways lead him into the danger of wishing for the wrong thing.

King Midas' hamartia is his inability to see the danger in what he has wished for.

King Midas' greed and hunger for wealth leads him into destruction.

King Midas: The Golden Touch

Dionysus, the god of drinking and drunkenness, wild music and wild dancing, loved to make great processions across the world with his satyrs, men with hairy legs and horses' hooves, singing and drinking and dancing. And among the satyrs would be Dionysus' old teacher, Silenus, white-haired, pot-bellied, with red wine constantly dribbling from the corners of his mouth, but wise beyond wisdom.

And during one of those great processions across the world, old Silenus was left behind. And he was found by some people, by some mortals, staggering from one side of a road to another, singing to himself. And they caught the satyr; and they bound him with ropes; and they lifted him onto their shoulders; and they carried him to their king.

Now their king was called Midas, King Midas, and he was a worshipper of Dionysus, the god of drinking and drunkenness, and wild music and wild dancing. And when he saw the old satyr bound with ropes, he was furious with his people. He took a knife; he cut the ropes; he sat the old satyr on his own golden throne; and he ordered that a feast be held in honour of Silenus.

And when the feast was finished, King Midas himself led the satyr to Dionysus, the great god. And when Dionysus saw his old teacher, his heart was filled with happiness and he felt eternally grateful to the king. He ran across. He threw his arms round Silenus' neck.

He kissed him on both cheeks and he turned to King Midas and he said, 'I will grant you one wish, one wish and one wish only. What do you want?'

And at that time, King Midas needed gold; that's all he ever wanted. He needed more gold. And he was thinking to himself, 'If I ask for my chests and my coffers to be filled with gold, soon enough the gold will be spent. How could I get more gold than I've ever dreamed of?' And then, suddenly, an idea sprung into his mind, beautiful in its simplicity.

He said eagerly, 'What I want is this: that everything I touch be turned into shining gold.'

The thought of being forever rich ignited his mind. And the great god Dionysus looked at the king, and he smiled, and he bowed his head, and he vanished into the light.

And King Midas turned to walk home, and, as he turned, he felt a stiffening about himself. And he looked down, and his clothes and his robes had hardened into gold. He crouched down. He touched the tip of a blade of grass. And there it was like a little golden dagger, jutting out of the ground. He ran and plucked an apple from a tree, and it was heavy, yellow gold, cold against the palm of his hand. He touched the trunk of another tree, and there it was, a golden tree stretching high above his head, the leaves no longer whispering and rustling, but clinking and clanking like golden chimes.

And King Midas ran this way and that way, touching this and touching that. And when he came to his palace, he stretched out his hands on the doorway of the palace, and there was a golden portal reflecting the light of the sun. He strode inside. He told his servants to prepare a great feast, so that he could celebrate his golden gift and forever wealth. And meat and bread and wine and honey cakes were served; and King Midas sat down, picked up a piece of bread, put it into his mouth and bit. And his teeth scraped across rough gold. He grabbed a cup; he lifted it to his mouth. At the touch of his lips the wine hardened into gold and he was spitting out little golden shards. The shock struck him. Suddenly, he understood his mistake, he understood his terrible and careless mistake.

At that moment his little daughter, whom he loved greatly, came running across the floor of the palace. She threw her arms lovingly around her father's neck, and she clattered onto the ground, the perfect, golden statue of a little girl but cold, cold, dead gold. Heartbroken, Midas knelt beside her, staring deep at his lost daughter, and his golden tears clattered onto her golden face. And he said, 'Dionysus, Dionysus, I have made a terrible mistake. I beg you, take back your gift of gold.'

And on the high slopes of Mount Olympus Dionysus, the god of drinking and drunkenness, wild music, wild dancing, looked down at King Midas, and he felt pity stirring in his heart. King Midas did not deserve this punishment for such a careless wish. And he appeared before the king.

He said, 'Go and wash yourself in the River Pactolus where it bursts out of the side of the mountain, and the gold will be washed from your skin, your heart, your soul, and everything you've turned into gold will be returned to its proper form.'

And Midas leapt to his feet, desperate to put things right, and he ran out of the palace, and he ran, and he ran, and he ran until he came to the place where the River Pactolus burst from the side of the mountain. And he plunged into the water. He washed himself from head to foot. And as he washed himself, the gold was washed from his heart, his skin, his mind, his soul.

And when he climbed out of the water, he hated gold with all the strength of the love that he'd had for it before; and as he climbed out of the water, everything he'd turned into gold was returned to its proper form; and his little daughter leapt to her feet all unknowing and ran into the arms of her nursemaid. And from that day onwards, the water of that river, the River Pactolus, has glimmered golden in the light of the sun. And men and women have panned the mud and the silt of the river bed for hard, little, shining nuggets of gold.

From that day onwards, King Midas hated gold. He hated the danger aspiring for wealth caused. Every day he would wander deep in the forest far from his palace, far from the clink and the chink of golden coins, far from the glimmer and the glitter of golden statues. He would wander deep and deep into the silences of the forest, and appreciate his life and his relationships, as they were his gold now.

The Greek Story of Wishes: Reading Activities

☐ **What did you find interesting about this Greek story?**

Discuss with your partner what you found interesting about this story and the lesson it teaches.

☐ **What would you wish for?**

Imagine you have been given 5 wishes – list what you would wish for and rank them in order of importance to you. Think carefully about the moral of this Greek story and what you can learn from King Midas' mistake.

☐ **Read through the article below and compare Aladdin with the Greek story of Wishes.**

Think about how the Greek story of King Midas can be compared with Disney's Aladdin. What do you think both of these stories tries to teach an audience?

Article: How does Disney's Aladdin teach the same lesson as the Greek myth of King Midas?

The Moral Lesson within Disney's Aladdin: Remembering the True Values in Life

Children films make a great movie for a family movie night, but these movies also have an added bonus that everyone can benefit from. Disney films are from the kind of genre where there is usually some kind of moral lesson attached to its story. Aladdin is one of the Disney films that alludes to a deeper moral message about remaining true to yourself.

Many across the world have seen this Disney's all-time favourite, Aladdin, since its release back in 1992. We all know the story of the peasant boy who lays eyes on a princess and falls in love immediately. Not long after, he discovers a lamp and out pops a 10,000-year-old genie. Since the genie can't make anyone fall in love, Aladdin uses his first wish to be transformed into a prince, in the hope he will win over the beautiful Jasmine.



You probably know how the rest of the story unfolds, so no need for me to narrate any further. The main message is the revealing and uplifting moral of the story. Aladdin falsely believed that Jasmine would never love him if she knew his true identity: that of a common street rat. So he hides behind the guise of a prince. In other words, Aladdin pretended to be someone he wasn't. This led to unforeseen consequences as it allowed Jafar to take hold of the lamp, become a sorcerer, and take over the palace.

We should all use this as a learning example. It is part of our human nature to have ambitions and want to make a good impression on people we meet. However, if that means

changing your values and not being true to yourself, you will never form any true relationships as people will never get to know the real you.

There is also another lesson in the Disney classic: Aladdin had three wishes, he could have wished for money, good looks, wealth, world peace, or whatever. Aladdin fixated on his wish to become a prince for Princess Jasmine, not knowing that he is changing who he is to win over his love. Aladdin quickly realises the danger of wishes and begins to learn that wealth, presents and coming from a high class is not the key to Jasmine's heart.

Disney's Aladdin delves into the true values in life and the danger of not sticking to these. Think to yourself: if you were given one wish, what would you wish for? Would you wish for a new bike, or the latest iPhone? Or would you wish for happiness for a family member or friend? Think carefully about what truly matters in life. We can all learn from Aladdin's journey into achieving what he desires: stay true to yourself and remember relationships are our gold in life.

The Greek Story of Judgment

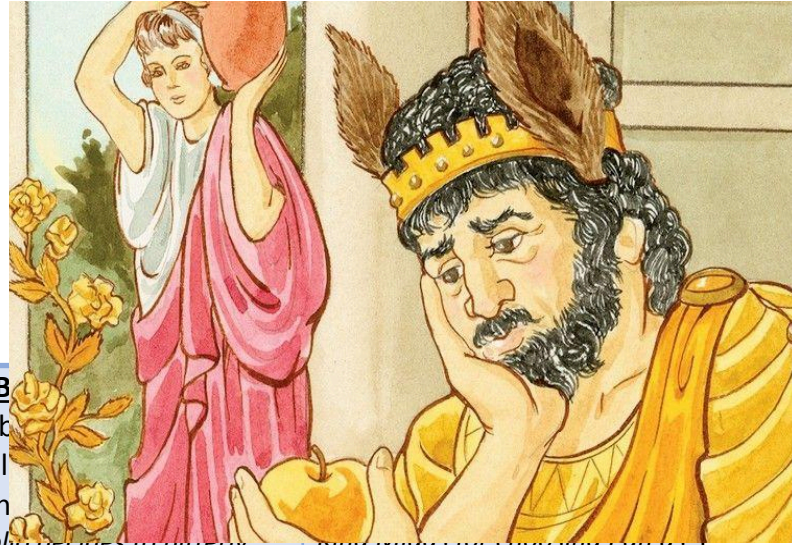
King Midas and Apollo



You would think after King Midas' experience with his wish mistake, he would think more carefully about his decisions. Unfortunately, King Midas earns more bad luck.

When King Midas judges a musical duel between Pan and Apollo, he is the only judge to choose Pan as the winner.

Apollo is furious at King Midas' decision and chooses to teach him a lesson.



B
b
il
on
who decides to bitterly
punish King Midas.

King Midas for choosing Pan as
the better musician.

King Midas and Apollo

One day, as King Midas was wandering, suddenly he heard the sound of music; and he stumbled on a clearing, and there, sitting in the middle of the clearing, was Pan, the god of wild things, the god of wild places and wild animals, Pan with his horns and his goat legs, playing his pipes, his pan-pipes. King Midas crouched among the bushes listening to the music, enchanted and entranced by its blissful sound.

And then Pan lowered his pipes from his lips and he began to boast: 'I'm the finest musician of them all. I'm the finest musician in the world. I'm a finer musician even than golden Apollo, when he plucks his golden lyre.'

Well, nothing is hidden from the eyes and the ears of the mighty gods and goddesses. And golden Apollo, on the high slopes of Mount Olympus, heard the sound of Pan's voice and his forehead furrowed into a frown. And suddenly the golden god was standing in the clearing in front of Pan. And King Midas, 'Eh?' Two gods staring at one another.

And golden Apollo said, 'Pan, we will have a contest of music, you and I, and the judge will be that mountain.'

And he pointed to a great mountain called Tmolus that rose high above the tops of the trees. And as golden Apollo pointed, a strange thing happened. From either side of the mountain two huge, grey, stone ears unfolded. And the first to play was Pan; he lifted his pipes to his lips and he began to blow. And in his music were all the sounds of wild nature: the baying and the belling of stags, the howling of wolves, the thundering of hooves, the creaking and cracking of branches, the crashing of flood water, the bright songs of birds, the humming of bees. It was a music both beautiful and terrifying at the same time. And then Pan lowered his pipe from his lips.

And Apollo lifted his lyre to his shoulder and he began to play. And as he played, it was as though the strings of his lyre were the threads of the loom upon which the whole world was woven. It was as though every note was an element, every melody was a formula. And as the shimmering, cascading music came, the whole world held its breath. And then, when Apollo lowered his lyre from his shoulder and the music stopped, the whole world sighed.

Pan dropped to his knees and lowered his head. The great mountain Tmolus opened his cavernous cave of a mouth and pronounced, 'Apollo is the winner.'
But then, from among the bushes, there came a bold voice: 'No! Why should the victory go to golden Apollo? Why should the victory go to the plinkety plonk of a plucked lyre when Pan's music is the real thing? Pan's music is finer by far.'

It was King Midas.

And golden Apollo turned and looked at him, and he frowned, confused at this foolish interjection. And with the frown of Apollo King Midas felt himself suddenly strangely changed. He reached up, he felt his face with his hands, and his ears had moved. They were no longer growing out of the side of his face; they were growing out of the top of his head. He touched them with his fingers: two grey twitching, bristling donkey's ears. Those ears, that had listened and had not heard, had been turned into the ears of an ass.

He looked around himself, knowing once again he had stupidly fell into another of the gods' traps. Pan had vanished. He crouched down behind the bushes, folding his ears down against the side of his face. And all day he waited till the sun set and the night came and the sky brightened with stars. And then he made his way through the forest and back to his palace. And he found a length of purple cloth and he wrapped it round and around and around and around his head. And he thought, 'Now, nobody need know.'

But a king's hair will grow just as anybody else's hair will grow. And the days and the weeks and the months passed. And soon enough, King Midas knew that he needed a haircut. And so he called a barber to a secret room. And he said to the barber, 'Can you keep a secret?' And the barber said, 'Oh yes, I can keep a secret.'

And King Midas said, 'If you can keep my secret, you have a job for life. Every week you can cut my hair, and every week I'll pay you with a purse full of silver coins.'

And the barber said, 'Then, I can certainly keep your secret.'

So King Midas unwound the cloth, he unwound it and he unwound it, and his hair flopped down over his shoulders; and out of the top of his head two twitching, bristling, grey donkey's ears pointed up at the ceiling. And the barber stared, laughter and horror wrestling in the pit of his belly, but he said nothing. And he took his scissors and his razor, and he shaved and he shaped and he cut and he clipped. And when the hair was done, King Midas took a purse of silver coins and he dropped it into the barber's hand.

Paranoid about this message spreading, King Midas said, 'Remember, not a word to anybody.'

And the barber bowed and he was gone.

King Midas continue to wrap the purple cloth round and around and around his head. And for one day, the barber kept the secret. But it was as though he had a mouse pouched in his cheek. Every time he opened his mouth, he thought the secret was going to jump out. For two days he kept the secret, but every word he spoke seemed to be turning into 'King Midas has donkey's ears'. Every thought seemed to be becoming 'The king has the ears of an ass.' And on the third day he could stand it no longer. He went out into a forest with a trowel. He knelt on the ground, he dug a hole and he whispered into the hole, 'King Midas has donkey's ears; the king has the ears of an ass.'

And he filled up the hole, hoping it will keep his secret and he went home, feeling comfortable at last. But where he'd dug the hole, a cluster of reeds grew. And the wind blew through the reeds, and the reeds began to whisper the secret. And the birds heard the reeds whispering, and they began to sing the secret. And soon enough the whole world knew: King Midas has donkey's ears; the king has the ears of an ass.

The Greek Story of Judgment: Reading Activities

☐ What did you find interesting about this Greek story?

Discuss with your partner what you found interesting about this story and the lesson it teaches.

☐ How could you defend King Midas?

Imagine you are King Midas' lawyer, arguing for the god Apollo to forgive him and give his normal ears back. Work with your partner and list all the different arguments you could use to defend King Midas.

☐ Read through the article below and think about the importance of fighting for what you believe in.

Think about the unfair punishment of King Midas and how free expression should be accepted and celebrated. Discuss with your partner the importance of Eni Aluko's story and football journey.

Article: What can we learn from King Midas standing up for what he believes in and how does this compare to Eni Aluko?

Eni Aluko: 'Standing up for what you believe in is liberating'

Eni Aluko reflects on a 'stressful, negative period' as she gets set to play abroad after leaving Chelsea while looking forward to some World Cup punditry

Eni Aluko says there have been 'lots of tears' since she decided to leave Chelsea but is relishing the chance to sample a new culture and learn a language.

Eni Aluko is wearing a lime-green Hawaiian print shirt and is surprisingly sprightly after a week of celebrations to mark the end of her time as a Chelsea player. There was a champagne party bus home from the game in Bristol where the club won the



title unbeaten, plus festivities that followed her scoring in her final match at Liverpool. Back in London, Aluko cooked paella for 20 friends at her home and David Luiz invited the squad to dine at his new Italian restaurant.

A forward with electrifying pace, Aluko has been one of the outstanding players in Britain for more than 15 years, since joining Birmingham City Ladies aged 15. Marcus Bignot, her coach at the time, called her the "Wayne Rooney of women's football".

Alongside playing she graduated with a first-class honours degree from Brunel University and worked as a lawyer. Aluko is adamant girls should not be forced to choose between a football career and academic studies, calling for clubs to offer the same opportunities as they do to their male counterparts.

"My issue is young, talented players not having to compromise their education. If you look at the men's academy setups, they have partnerships with colleges or universities, whereas we don't really have that with women's football. You don't want an 18-year-old girl who's very

talented thinking: 'I want to play for the first-team but I've got to give up my education to do so.' That has happened a lot in the past.

"Some of big men's clubs like Man City, Chelsea and Arsenal have raised the bar in terms of salaries and professionalism of the women's game. I think there needs to be continued increase in salaries to reflect the attention on the game and its commercial viability. The argument before was that nobody was watching but that's not true nowadays."



The idea that 45,000 fans would attend a women's FA Cup final, as they did this month at Wembley, was scarcely believable when Aluko was cutting her teeth in the Midlands. She has noticed more girls coming up to her in the street or at games but what she finds most heartening is the sight of more young boys at Women's Super League matches.

"That's the biggest change: young boys watching like they're watching a men's game, coming up and asking for my boots just as they would with Eden Hazard. That's not only going to affect their perception of football; it's going to affect their perception of women, so when they grow up to have relationships they're more likely to respect women as equals. They are seeing women in a very positive light and in a strong, competitive environment. Women's sport has become normalised."

Aluko did not set out to become a champion of equality or a spokesperson on problems around discrimination. But she found herself on the front page and in parliament after accusing the former England women's coach Mark Sampson of making racial comments to her and another player. She also alleged the Football Association had failed to investigate properly, as revealed by the Guardian.

Privately Aluko was shunned by some of her former team-mates and was publicly accused of being a liar. An investigation by the barrister Katharine Newton ruled she had told the truth. Sampson later lost his job for an unrelated matter. But after a distinguished 11-year international career during which she won 102 caps, Aluko has been on the England sidelines for two years. Phil Neville has left the door open but she does not know if she will go back.

"But I've moved on from what was a very stressful, negative period in my life. I've dealt with it in the best way I could. Standing up for what you believe in and being honest, telling the truth are all very liberating things. Since that time I've felt very empowered by other people seeing you can stand for what you believe, even in adversity. Success is always the best answer to critics. When you look at some of the greatest people and players in the world they all stand for something outside their working lives."

Aluko will be in Russia working as a pundit on ITV's World Cup coverage. In 2014 she made history as the first female pundit on Match of the Day and believes she has opened the door for other women players to make a move into broadcasting, although she concedes there is still a way to travel for equality.

"To be going to Russia to work on a men's World Cup is incredible. I never thought that would happen and it shows a shift in broadcasting where women are becoming accepted just as part of the team. I think the difference is that if women fail, the consequences are greater."

“There’s a tendency for some male pundits who have done it for years to rock up and take it for granted. I can’t afford to do that so that’s why I have to geek out on all the stats and facts and make sure I am not seen as a token woman but that I’m adding to the conversation.”

The Greek Story of Relationships and Vanity

Echo and Narcissus

When Echo's voice is stolen, she travels to Earth to hide herself from the world. Whilst there, she sees Narcissus – the most handsome man to ever exist – and immediately falls in love with him.

When Echo desperately tries to talk to him, Narcissus rejects her and tells her to leave him alone. Whilst hunting in the forest, Narcissus comes across his reflection and falls in love with himself. Narcissus learns the danger of vanity.



who believes he is above everyone else.

from his reflection; he is consumed by his love for himself.

his death; he becomes obsessed with himself.

Echo and Narcissus

There once lived a man, a prophet, who could see into the future the way you and I remember our pasts. His name was Teiresias. One day a woman came to him. She'd given birth to a child she'd named Narcissus, and Narcissus was so beautiful he broke hearts as he wriggled in his cot. She was afraid one of the gods would envy his beauty and destroy him in fear that he could be more powerful than them.

Tiresias shook his head and said, 'The gods pose him no threat. He will have a long life, unless he learns to know himself.'

Shaking her head in disbelief, the woman walked away.

Years went by and with every passing day Narcissus became more beautiful, and he began to know the power of his beauty. Wherever he went women fell in love with him – they were captured by this handsome hunter's looks and charm. But they never approached him because of his flaw. He wore about himself a glassy pride that kept his suitors at bay, almost fearful that they stand no chance.

Up on Olympus Zeus was about his usual pursuits: chasing, kissing nymphs, goddesses, travelling to the earth in disguise, pursuing women. He barely bothered to hide his misbehaviour and disloyalty from his wife. He'd enlisted the help of a nymph called Echo. If ever Zeus' wife Hera came too close to catching Zeus in the act, Echo was to deceptively distract her with an endless stream of pointless prattle until Zeus had finished.

They played this trick once too often. Zeus' wife Hera saw through it and despised Echo for helping in the deception.

'Nymph, always you want the last word. From now on you shall have nothing else!' declared Hera, throwing her arms in the air in fury.

Echo, desperate to explain she couldn't disobey Zeus, opened her mouth to answer and out came, 'Nothing else. Nothing else. Nothing else.'

Echo's shoulders dropped. She couldn't talk. With tears in her eyes, she desperately looked to Hera in hope she would realise Echo's helplessness. Hera turned away, satisfied with the punishment she has set.

Undeservingly, Echo was the victim of Hera's bitterness and from then on, she could not speak for herself. She may as well have been changed into a parrot. Echo hid herself in the forest, feeling ashamed and saddened by her loss of expression.

She was condemned to trail behind others, stealing meaning from their last few words, in desperate attempt to regain her lost expression. She went to the earth.

By chance, she saw Narcissus. She gazed at the young man who had hair as yellow as gold and eyes as blue as the sky. As she was peeping out shyly from some cave or from behind a great tree, Echo often saw Narcissus, and she admired him very much.

Longing for his attention, she desperately tried to call out his name, yet couldn't. She fell in love with him at one but couldn't tell him. For months she followed him, waiting for the words to come with which she could proclaim her ever growing love. At last, the moment came.

One day Narcissus became separated from his friends, and hearing something rustle among the leaves, he called out, "Who's here?"

"Here," answered Echo, who joyfully stole the word.

"Here I am. Come!" said Narcissus.

"I am come," said Echo; and, as she spoke, she emerged out from among the trees.

She ran to him. Without thinking, she put her arms around him, overwhelmed that finally she felt something else other than loneliness.

Just as she was about to shut her eyes, feeling contentment, he abruptly pushed her away with a powerful shrug. His harsh laugh hurt her more than the shrug, and her shoulders began to sink again.

"Get off me! What are you? I suppose like all the others you love me," said Narcissus boastfully, uncontrollably laughing at her tearful eyes.

Echo, again desperately stealing his words, repeated, "Love me, love me!"

"I would rather die than let you lie with me. Now leave me alone" said Narcissus, not even letting her make another sound.

Echo's body sunk as she heard the words.

Uncontrollably, she grabbed his last word and blurted, "Alone!" Her eyes latched onto him as he walked away unamused. "Alone. Alone!"

After this, Echo never came out and allowed herself to be seen again, and in time she faded away till she became only a voice.

This voice was heard for many, many years in forests and among mountains, particularly in caves. In their solitary walks, hunters often heard it. Sometimes it mocked the barking of their dogs; sometimes it repeated their own last words. It always had a weird and mournful sound and seemed to make lonely places more lonely still.

Poor Echo was a slender thing. Her sorrow made her slighter still. She became spindly, bony, pale, gaunt, feeble, frail. One morning when she tried to stand her sharp bones ruptured through her thin skin. Her body collapsed in on itself. Only her voice survived, hiding in caves, hiding among high hills.

Weary of that stupid nymph, Narcissus went about his day and headed to a pool to drink. It was a perfect pool, as smooth as any mirror. Feeling intrigued and longing to look at his perfected self, he leant over the side and saw a face of such beauty that suddenly he was filled with another kind of craving. Passionately, he leant forward to kiss it but it broke into wrinkles. He gave a cry of anguish and desperation. He lay beside the pool like a fallen statue. He was transfixed by it.

Time and again he tried to capture it. He mistook this image for the other person who would complete him. He had fallen in love with himself.

And so the prophecy of Tiresias was fulfilled. Narcissus had learned to know himself, and his awful torture began. No thought of food or drink would take him from the spot. His eyes could never have their fill. Gradually, Narcissus' began to look smaller and smaller: the desire to gaze at his true love – himself – was destroying him.

At last he said, 'You, please, come to me. Lie with me. Love me. When I laugh I see you laugh. When I smile you smile. When I cry you shed tears. You give me every indication that you love me and yet we do not embrace. I think I understand: I am in love with myself.

Always we will be together and yet always we will be apart. I have loved you in vain.'

Echo took the words: 'I have loved you in vain. I have loved you in vain.'

Narcissus closed his eyes and lay his head upon the ground. His soul drifted out of his open mouth beneath the crust of earth, down a steep flight of stairs, into the underworld, into the land of many guests, the realm of the dead. As his soul drifted across the River of Forgetfulness it left behind all memory. Even so, some urge too powerful to resist drew it to the edge of the river, where it leant over the side and stared at the greasy smear of a reflection that quivered on the surface of the water.

Up on the earth rumours reached a village: lovely Narcissus was dead. So the people searched the forest to burn the corpse with proper honours. But they never found a body. Instead they came upon a delicate flower with white and yellow petals leaning over the edge of a pool as if gazing at its own reflection.

The Greek Story of Relationships and Vanity: Reading Activities

📄 **What did you find interesting about this Greek story?**

Discuss with your partner what you found interesting about this story and the lesson it teaches.

📄 **What could make Narcissus change?**

Imagine you are giving advice to Narcissus to help him change his ways and stop being so vain. Work with your partner to list ideas that would help Narcissus see that there is more to life than himself.

📄 **Read through the article below about the origin of the word ‘narcissism’**

The words we speak today are created, borrowed and changed over time. The Greek myth of Narcissus led to the creation of the word ‘narcissism’ or ‘narcissistic’, where his story of self-love is the definition of the word.

Article: How the Greek story of Narcissus led to the creation of the word ‘narcissism’

The Origin of the Word “Narcissism”



The word *narcissism* – admiring oneself and being vain – originates from the Greek myth of Narcissus, a handsome young hunter known for his beauty. One day while in the woods he stops to take a drink of cool water from a completely still, silver pond. As he kneels down at the edge he sees his own reflection and falls in love with it. He tells the image, “I love you.” Unable to pull himself away from the beauty of his own image, he disregards eating or drinking. Pining away for the image he has fallen in love with, he dies, eventually turning into the beautiful flower that now bears his name.


The myth of Narcissus does not end with our self-loving hunter. A beautiful woodland nymph named Echo has been punished by a god who has taken away her voice and only lets her repeat what someone else says. One day in the woods she sees handsome Narcissus and is

immediately smitten with his beauty. She follows him and hopes he will say something kind and loving that she can then repeat back to him. So when she hears him say to his reflection, "I love you," she dreams that when he hears her repeat the words he will love her too. She repeats, "I love you," but to her disappointment he is so absorbed in his own reflection that he cannot hear her... or see her. She is devastated. Try as Echo might, she has no effect on the object of her affection, and Narcissus never loves her. She withers away, waiting for his response, and eventually dies of unrequited love.

The story of Narcissus and Echo reflects the dynamic of today's narcissistic relationship. Narcissus is too self-absorbed to notice someone trying to love him; Echo keeps trying to be heard, only to be shut out. In another version of the story, Narcissus has so much pride that he is disgusted when someone tries to love him. He does hear Echo but shouts at her to be silent, just as in a modern-day relationship with a narcissist a woman will often provoke her partner's wrath when she says or does something he disagrees with. As in this mythological story, a person who has narcissistic self-love becomes destructive to himself and to others who try to love him.

The Greek Story of Beauty and Vanity

Medusa and Athena

	<p>When Athena, the god of wisdom and daughter of Zeus, overhears Medusa boasting about her beauty, she is disgusted by the vanity she sees.</p> <p>Athena punishes Medusa for being consumed in her own beauty by turning her into a hideous monster. Medusa is banished to the ends of the earth to learn her lesson.</p>	
<p><u>Ego</u> Having acting e</p>	<p>or rb es no is nc</p>	<p>n] ount of tion for ds him to</p>
<p>Narcissu who believes he is above everyone else.</p>	<p>from his reflection; he is consumed by his love for himself.</p>	<p>his death; he becomes obsessed with himself.</p>

Medusa and Athena

Once upon a time, a long time ago there lived a beautiful maiden named Medusa. Medusa lived in the city of Athens in a country named Greece and although there were many pretty girls in the city, Medusa was considered the most beautiful: her charm, natural beauty and glowing personality captured the admiring attention of all.

Unfortunately, Medusa was very proud of her beauty and thought or spoke of little else. Each day she boasted of how pretty she was and each day her boasts became more outrageous and uncomfortable to be around. Often times, Medusa would gaze admiringly at her reflection in the mirror, thanking and praising herself for her beauty. She admired herself in her hand mirror for an hour each morning, tossing her naturally long and flawlessly fallen hair from side to side and catching the daylight on her translucent skin. Every night, as she fell into her sheets with grace, she thanked her fate for giving her a frame of perfection.

One day, as Medusa walked through her village surrounded by a blanket of white snow, she caught a glimpse of her appearance in the miller's shop window. Captured immediately by her sparkling skin, she turned to the miller and bragged.

'Look! The snow makes my skin glisten even more,' Medusa blurted. 'How lucky am I to have skin as gentle, beautiful and flawless as freshly fallen snow!'

Seeing a woman so confident and boastful made the miller gulp in shock. He turned away, feeling uncomfortable at the whole affair, and carried on with his duties. Medusa continued with her walk.

Further on her walk, Medusa was struggling to control the urge to look at her reflection again. Without hesitation, she headed into the cobbler's store and gazed at herself, feeling a wave of satisfaction come over her.

'The weather is so glorious today. Look at how the sun makes my hair grow even brighter', Medusa said, giving no thought or care about the cobbler's silent response.

Once again, without compliment, she continued.

Seeing the garden full of bright flowers ahead, Medusa quickened her pace to surround herself with colour once more. As she entered the garden's gates, everyone turned their eyes away, hoping to avoid her boasts that left them red faced and speechless.

Unfortunately, one old woman was too busy gazing at the snow-covered roses to realise everyone in the public garden had turned away from Medusa. Curious to see the reason, she circled her spot until her eyes landed on Medusa.

'Wow! What a day,' Medusa said, trying to spark conversation with the old woman.

As the woman gulped, preparing to reply, Medusa blurted, 'Look at my lips. They are even redder than this rose!'

When she wasn't busy sharing her thoughts about her beauty with all who passed by, Medusa would gaze lovingly at her reflection in the mirror. She admired herself in her hand mirror for an hour each morning as she brushed her hair. She admired herself in her darkened window for an hour each evening as she got ready for bed. She even stopped to admire herself in the well each afternoon as she drew water for her father's horses – often forgetting to fetch the water in her distraction.

On and on Medusa went about her beauty to anyone and everyone who stopped long enough to hear her – until one day when she made her first visit to the Parthenon with her friends. The Parthenon was the largest temple to the goddess Athena – Zeus' favourite daughter – in all the land. It was decorated with amazing sculptures and paintings. Everyone who entered was awed by the beauty of the place and couldn't help but think of how grateful they were to Athena, goddess of wisdom, for inspiring them and for watching over their city of Athens. Everyone, that is, except Medusa.

When Medusa saw the sculptures, she confidently whispered to herself that she would have made a much better subject for the sculptor than Athena had. When Medusa saw the artwork, she commented that the artist had done a fine job considering the goddess's thick eyebrows – but imagine how much more wonderful the painting would be if it was of someone as delicate as Medusa.

'She is beautiful, but imagine if it was me,' she admitted.

And when Medusa reached the altar she sighed happily and said, 'My this is a beautiful temple. It is a shame it was wasted on Athena for I am so much prettier than she is – perhaps someday people will build an even grander temple to my beauty.'

Medusa's friends grew pale, gradually moving further and further away. The priestesses who overheard Medusa gasped. Whispers ran through all the people in the temple who quickly began to leave -- for everyone knew that Athena enjoyed watching over the people of Athens and feared what might happen if the goddess had overheard Medusa's rash remarks.

Before long the temple was empty of everyone except Medusa, who was so busy gazing proudly at her reflection in the large bronze doors that she hadn't noticed the swift departure of everyone else. The image she was gazing at wavered and suddenly, instead of her own features, it was the face of Athena reflected back at her.

'Vain and foolish girl,' Athena bellowed, 'You are consumed in yourself to even notice the beauty of life -- you shall learn.'

Medusa gulped, eyes peeled on Athena.

Medusa tried to point out that her beauty was an inspiration to those around her and that she made their lives better by simply looking so lovely, but Athena silenced her with a frustrated wave.

'Nonsense,' Athena retorted, 'Beauty fades swiftly in all mortals. It does not comfort the sick, teach the unskilled or feed the hungry. And by my powers, your loveliness shall be stripped away completely. Your fate shall serve as a reminder to others to control their pride.'

And with those words Medusa's face changed to that of a hideous sight. Her hair twisted and thickened into horrible hissing snakes that viciously scowled and fought each other atop her head.

'Medusa, for your pride this has been done. Your face is now so terrible to behold that the mere sight of it will turn a man to stone,' proclaimed the goddess, 'Even you, Medusa, should you seek your reflection, shall turn to rock the instant you see your face.'

And with that, Athena sent Medusa with her hair of snakes to live with the blind monsters - the gorgon sisters - at the ends of the earth, so that no innocents would be accidentally turned to stone at the sight of her.

The Greek Story of Beauty and Vanity: **Reading Activities**

? What did you find interesting about this Greek story?

Discuss with your partner what you found interesting about this story and the lesson it teaches.

? Draw a photo of Medusa before and after Athena's curse

Use the descriptions of Medusa to draw a photo of her before and after Athena changes her into a hideous monster.

▣ **Read through the article below and compare the two stories**

The prince in Beauty and the Beast is punished by the enchantress for being selfish and uncharitable. Think carefully about how this story links to the Greek myth of Medusa and the moral of both stories.

Film Review: How is the moral of *Beauty and the Beast* similar to the myth of *Medusa*?

The Moral Imagination of Disney's 'Beauty and the Beast'

What modern society can learn from Belle's moral imagination.

Like comic-book superheroes, Disney has served to teach us and remind us of long-forgotten myths, fables, parables, and old wives' tales. The tale of *Beauty and the Beast* is a Disney classic and an all time favourite. Many modern day films and novels have been inspired by the classic tale of valuing what is on the inside, over looks.



Disney bases this story around a beautiful young woman named Belle. She finds the life of her French village too limiting: she wants to read and learn and travel and explore. Somewhere outside of town, an enchantress tricks a local prince by pretending to be a beggar. When he turns her away and denies her charity, she decides to teach him a lesson and turns him into a demonic Beast. To punish him for his greed and vanity, she entraps him and his servants – which are turned into tools – in a castle covered by a crown of thorns. The enchantress gives the Beast a rose: when the last petal has fallen—should he not find true love—he and his servants remain ugly and disfigured forever. When the father is captured by the Beast as a prisoner, Belle takes his place. Soon, Belle realises the goodness that is at the heart of the Beast and falls in love with him.

Whilst watching the new adaptation of Disney's *Beauty and the Beast*, the classic tale of love, sacrifice and redemption came alive. The Beast is a beast because of his poor choices. When he encounters real love and sacrifice, he understands his own folly and, most importantly, learns to sacrifice himself for others. He is, symbolically and literally, reborn. The only way this prince could overcome his tragedy, was through Belle's moral imagination and ability to see past his flaws.

Despite the many adaptations of this classic story, the focus on the moral imagination of Belle remains the same. Moral imagination – where we have the ability to see the best of people – is a real gift that not many people have. Belle's moral imagination allows her to see past the demonic and ugly form of the Beast, and only this trust and faith on her part allows the Beast to redeem himself and overcome his mistakes.

Disney's *Beauty and the Beast* is ultimately more than just a children's film. It teaches us one of the main moral lessons in life: valuing people for who they are, rather than what they appear on the outside, allows everyone to unlock their true self.