



National Research & Development Center to Improve
EDUCATION FOR SECONDARY ENGLISH LEARNERS

WestEd 



Unit 1: Mythology: The Human Search
to Explain the Unknown

STUDENT INSTRUCTIONS

Name: _____

Class: _____



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Unit 1: Mythology: The Human Search to Explain the Unknown

Lesson 1: The Myth of Arachne: Arrogance and its Repercussions

STUDENT INSTRUCTIONS



Unit 1: Mythology: The Human Search to Explain the Unknown

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About the Unit

In this unit, you will read about Greek gods and goddesses and consider how the ancient Greeks created myths and stories to explain natural phenomena. For example, why does the sun move across the sky, or why do spiders weave elaborate and beautiful webs? You will also be able to consider the consequences of behaving in certain ways.

About this Lesson

In this lesson, you will read about the goddess Athena—Goddess of war, wisdom, arts, and crafts—and a mortal named Arachne. The ancient Greeks believed gods lived forever as opposed to mortals who died. Let's get started!

Lesson Objectives

In this lesson you will:

- Identify and analyze characters' traits and consider if those traits are beneficial or harmful in life.
- Use metacognitive strategies to read a text.
- Write about past and future actions of the characters.

Lesson Architecture

Preparing Learners

In this first moment of the lesson, students are guided to think deeply about what they already know about the major concepts, themes, language, and ideas of the lesson so they are ready to engage with complex text.

- **Task 1:** Art Reflection
- **Task 2:** Classifying Character Traits

Interacting with Text

This moment of the lesson invites students to analyze complex texts through carefully scaffolded activities that build upon each other as they deconstruct the text, so students can focus on major ideas and then reconnect those ideas to the text as whole.

- **Task 3:** Reading with a Focus
- **Task 4:** Partner Discussion



- **Task 5:** Character Focus
- **Task 6:** Character-Alike Partner Share
- **Task 7:** Reaching a Consensus: Compare and Contrast Matrix
- **Task 8:** Small Group Share and Record
- **Task 9:** Whole Class Discussion
- **Task 10:** Myth Structure Analysis

Extending Understanding

In this final part of the lesson, students participate in tasks that help them synthesize their understanding of the major ideas, concepts, characters, and themes they engaged within the body of the lesson.

- **Task 11:** Collaborative Poster
- **Task 12:** Poster Presentation
- **Task 13:** Lessons Learned (Preparing to Write)
- **Task 14:** Mt. Olympus Talk Show (Optional)
- **Task 15:** Talk Show Presentation (Optional)



Unit 1: Mythology: The Human Search to Explain the Unknown

Lesson 1: The Myth of Arachne: Arrogance and its Repercussions

PREPARING LEARNERS



Task 1: Art Reflection

Let's meet our first goddess, Athena, and her student, Arachne!

Purpose: To examine an image of the two characters you are going to learn about in this lesson.

Process: Look at Task 1 Handout: *Art Reflection*.

Step 1: Silently, on your own, examine the image on page 5 and answer the questions in the matrix on page 6, completing Column 1 on your own: *My Observations*.

Step 2: Take turns to orally share with others in your small group. As each of your peers shares their observations, reflections, and ideas, please add some ideas that were mentioned by them that you may not have included in your own portion of the matrix to Column 2: *My Teammates' Observations*.





Unit 1: Mythology: The Human Search to Explain the Unknown

Lesson 1: The Myth of Arachne: Arrogance and its Repercussions



Task 1 Handout: Art Reflection

Arachne and Athena

This etching illustrates how one artist imagined Athena, a god and a skilled and talented weaver, and Arachne, a mortal.



Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons.





Unit 1: Mythology: The Human Search to Explain the Unknown
Lesson 1: The Myth of Arachne: Arrogance and its Repercussions



Task 1 Handout: Art Reflection Matrix

First, observe the etching on your own and complete the left column of the matrix. After a few minutes, you will share your observations with a partner or in your small group and complete the right column.

Arachne and Athena	Step 1: My observations	Step 2: My teammates' observations
What is in the center of the picture? What is in the background? What is in the foreground or sides of the picture?		
What is distinctive or unique about the clothing the women are wearing?		
What are the two women doing with their hands? What do you notice?		
What do you think or imagine is happening in the picture?		
One question about the drawing or the women:		



Unit 1: Mythology: The Human Search to Explain the Unknown

Lesson 1: The Myth of Arachne: Arrogance and its Repercussions



Task 2: Classifying Character Traits

Purpose: To determine which character traits you think are positive and which you think are negative. In this way, you can better understand the characters in the myth you will read.

Process: On page 8, locate Task 2 Handout: *Character Trait Cards*.

Step 1: With a partner or in a small group, take turns selecting a Character Trait Card and reading aloud the character trait listed.

Step 2: Discuss and reach a consensus as to whether you consider the trait to be positive or negative and why.

Step 3: Once you agree, circle either the plus sign (positive) or circle the minus sign (negative).

Step 4: Continue taking turns until all of the cards have been discussed and labeled as positive or negative.

Keep your copy of the responses on your handout; you will need it later in the lesson.





Unit 1: Mythology: The Human Search to Explain the Unknown

Lesson 1: The Myth of Arachne: Arrogance and its Repercussions



Task 2 Handout: Character Trait Cards

Take turns to select a character trait, read it out loud, and discuss whether it is a positive or negative trait to have.

Circle + for positive or - for negative. Continue until all of the characters traits have been discussed.

+	Ambitious	-
---	------------------	---

+	Prideful	-
---	-----------------	---

+	Confident	-
---	------------------	---

+	Respectful	-
---	-------------------	---

+	Creative	-
---	-----------------	---

+	Passionate	-
---	-------------------	---

+	Arrogant	-
---	-----------------	---

+	Honest	-
---	---------------	---

+	Humble	-
---	---------------	---

+	Bold	-
---	-------------	---



Unit 1: Mythology: The Human Search to Explain the Unknown

Lesson 1: The Myth of Arachne: Arrogance and its Repercussions

INTERACTING WITH TEXT

Now you're ready to read *The Myth of Arachne*. Let's get started!



Task 3: Reading with a Focus, Part 1

Purpose: To read Part 1 of a myth about a goddess, Athena, and a mortal, a young woman named Arachne.

Process: Silently read and annotate Task 3 Text: *The Myth of Arachne, Part 1*. Focus on the following questions as you read:

1. What type of person does Arachne seem to be?
2. How would you describe her?
3. How do you think Athena will respond to Arachne? Why?

Make sure to write your thoughts in the column titled "Notes" on your text. You can also highlight, underline, and circle information in the text that helps you answer the focus questions.





Unit 1: Mythology: The Human Search to Explain the Unknown

Lesson 1: The Myth of Arachne: Arrogance and its Repercussions



Task 4: Partner Discussion

Purpose: When you share your ideas—and hear others explain theirs—you often understand things more deeply because you can either strengthen your point of view or challenge it.

Process: After reading Part 1 of the myth:

Step 1: Take turns sharing with your partner your responses to the three focus questions.

Step 2: Be sure to share your evidence from the text to justify your response.





Unit 1: Mythology: The Human Search to Explain the Unknown

Lesson 1: The Myth of Arachne: Arrogance and its Repercussions



Task 5: Character Focus

Purpose: To see how the two characters in the text have similar characteristics, but because one of them is a goddess and the other is a mortal, their characteristics do not impact them in the same way.

Process: You will now read the rest of the myth (Task 5 Text: *The Myth of Arachne, Parts 2–4*).

Step 1: Decide in your small group which two students will read with a focus on Arachne and which two students will read with a focus on Athena.

Step 2: Silently read the rest of the myth on your own. In the Notes column of the text, continue to write down any character traits you find. Highlight, underline, or circle the evidence in the text that supports your ideas.





Unit 1: Mythology: The Human Search to Explain the Unknown

Lesson 1: The Myth of Arachne: Arrogance and its Repercussions



Task 6: Character-Alike Partner Share

Purpose: By sharing your ideas with a partner, you enrich your own understanding as you hear new ideas that your partner shares.

Process: Share and discuss with your partner the character traits and evidence you found for your assigned character.

Add to your own notes if you like your partner's ideas.





Unit 1: Mythology: The Human Search to Explain the Unknown

Lesson 1: The Myth of Arachne: Arrogance and its Repercussions



Task 7: Reaching a Consensus: Compare and Contrast Matrix

Purpose: To discuss with your partner and agree on your findings before sharing your ideas with the other pair of students in your small group.

Process: Discuss and decide with your partner what specific information to include in your matrix on page 14. Write down your information in the corresponding cell.





Unit 1: Mythology: The Human Search to Explain the Unknown

Lesson 1: The Myth of Arachne: Arrogance and its Repercussions



Task 7 Handout: Compare and Contrast Matrix

Step 1: Circle the character you are going to focus on.

Step 2: With your partner, complete the matrix only for your assigned or chosen character.

	Arachne	Athena
Who is she?		
What are some of her main character traits?		
What is the evidence from the text to support your identified character trait?		





Unit 1: Mythology: The Human Search to Explain the Unknown

Lesson 1: The Myth of Arachne: Arrogance and its Repercussions



Task 8: Small Group Share and Record

Purpose: By explaining who your character is to other members of your small group and by hearing about the other character, you deepen your understanding of the text as a whole.

Process: Share your findings in your small group.

Step 1: Take turns with your partner to share your findings from the reading about your particular character.

Step 2: As each pair in your small group shares out their findings, record the responses of the other pair in the appropriate column of your Task 7 Handout: *Compare and Contrast Matrix* (page 14).





Unit 1: Mythology: The Human Search to Explain the Unknown

Lesson 1: The Myth of Arachne: Arrogance and its Repercussions



Task 9: Whole Class Discussion

Purpose: By participating in a class discussion, you can hear similar or additional ideas from your classmates, thus enriching your understanding of the text.

Process: Your teacher will decide how each dyad or small group will share out their ideas. When you share, be sure to provide textual evidence to support your response.





Unit 1: Mythology: The Human Search to Explain the Unknown

Lesson 1: The Myth of Arachne: Arrogance and its Repercussions



Task 10: Myth Structure Analysis

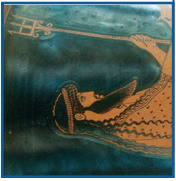
Purpose: To understand how myths are structured so we can understand their purposes and know how to write our own.

Process: Look at the plot diagram on Task 10 Handout: *Myth of Arachne Plot Diagram*.

Work with a partner to agree on each of the parts of the myth and where the information belongs on the diagram.

After your discussion, record your answers in the diagram.

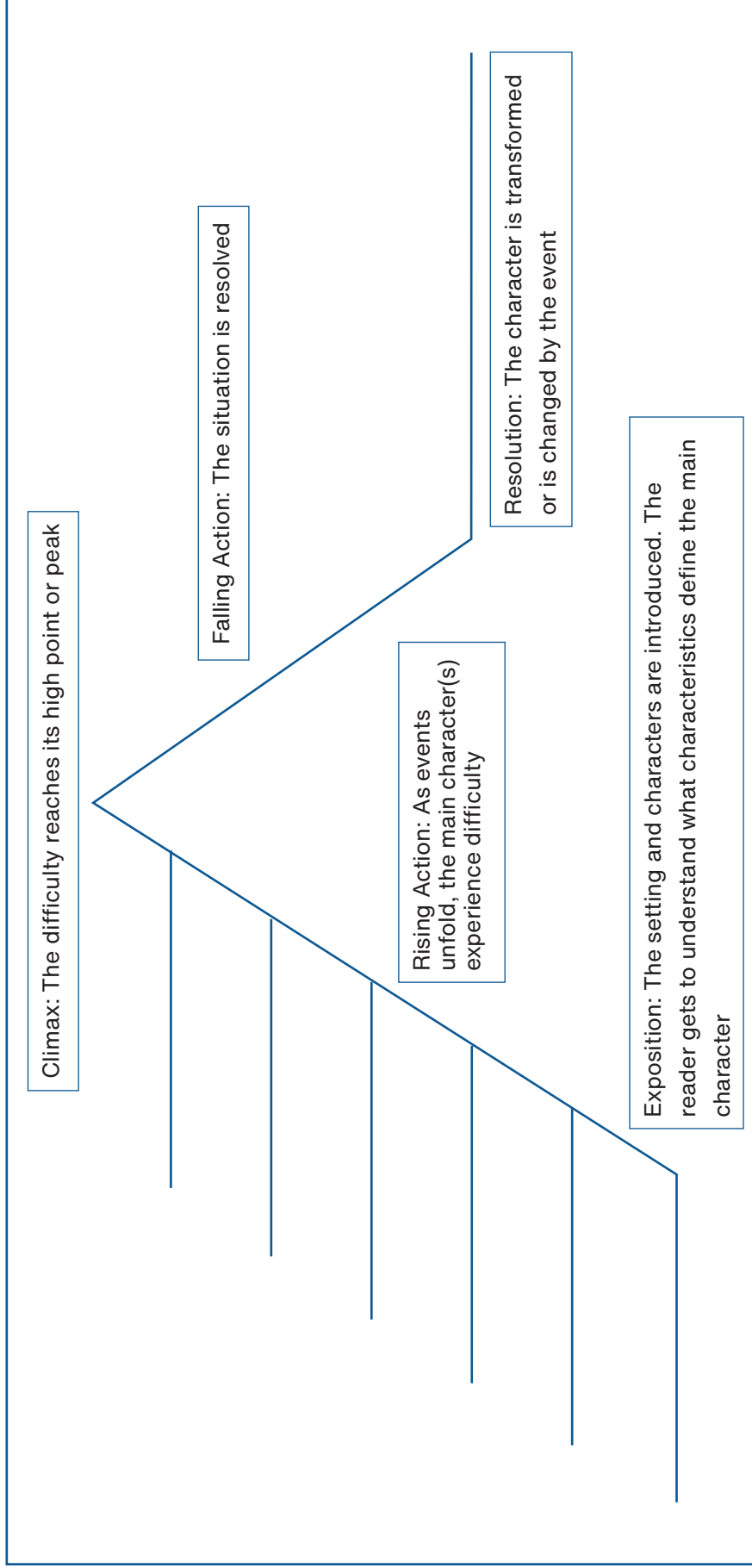




Unit 1: Mythology: The Human Search to Explain the Unknown
Lesson 1: The Myth of Arachne: Arrogance and its Repercussions



Task 10 Handout: Myth of Arachne Plot Diagram





Unit 1: Mythology: The Human Search to Explain the Unknown

Lesson 1: The Myth of Arachne: Arrogance and its Repercussions

EXTENDING UNDERSTANDING



Task 11: Collaborative Poster

Purpose: To think about the big themes and ideas from the myth and represent them both visually and in writing.

Process:

Step 1: Individually, look back at the myth and think about everything you have done in the lesson so far.

Select one line or quote from the text that you find particularly significant, powerful, or impactful. Write the quote down and draw an image that comes to mind that captures the essence or theme of the myth (lesson learned).

Step 2: Share your quote and image in a Round Robin in your small group of four.

Step 3: Work together in groups to collectively agree upon one quote and one image, and then write one original statement (in your own words) that summarizes the key message or idea of the text and the lesson it teaches.

Step 4: Draw your image and write your quote and original statement on a poster. Remember, you may only use your own colored marker and may not trade markers with each other. Make sure to write the title of the myth on the top of the poster and sign the poster at the bottom.





Unit 1: Mythology: The Human Search to Explain the Unknown

Lesson 1: The Myth of Arachne: Arrogance and its Repercussions



Task 12: Poster Presentation

Purpose: To explain your ideas to others and gain insight from hearing other groups' ideas.

Process: Decide who will present which part of your poster.

As you present, make sure to not only describe what is on the poster but also explain why you included what you did. Every student on the team has a presenting role.





Unit 1: Mythology: The Human Search to Explain the Unknown

Lesson 1: The Myth of Arachne: Arrogance and its Repercussions



Task 13: Lessons Learned (Preparing to Write)

Purpose: To begin to brainstorm ideas and think about the characters in the myth and the themes that have emerged. This will help prepare you for the final writing assignment.

Process:

Step 1: Think about life lessons that you think are represented in the Myth of Arachne. What lesson do you think each character learned? Record your ideas in the first column of Task 13 Handout: *Myth Extension Ideas* on page 22.

Step 2: Now think about how Athena or Arachne might react in the future. How do you think they will behave moving forward? What might they do with the lessons they have learned? How might they change? Jot down your ideas in the other column of the handout.

Step 3: Share your ideas with a partner. Make sure to tell your partner what you think and give them ideas to help them.





Unit 1: Mythology: The Human Search to Explain the Unknown
Lesson 1: The Myth of Arachne: Arrogance and its Repercussions



Task 13 Handout: Myth Extension Ideas

Step 1: On your own, write down what lessons Arachne and Athena learned.

Step 2: In the second column, write down how Arachne and Athena might behave in the future, based on what they have learned.

Possible Lessons Learned or Taught in the Myth	Future Actions of the Characters
<p><i>Example: Athena learned to be more compassionate.</i></p>	<p><i>Example: Athena might act in a gentler way in the future. She seemed to regret being so angry with Arachne, and so instead of letting her die, she changed her into a spider so she can weave for the rest of her life.</i></p>



Unit 1: Mythology: The Human Search to Explain the Unknown

Lesson 1: The Myth of Arachne: Arrogance and its Repercussions



Task 14: Mt. Olympus Talk Show (Optional)

Purpose: To better understand lessons learned by the characters and to predict or reflect on their future actions. By imagining how characters might respond to certain questions about their character, their actions, their motives, and their consequences, we can come to have a deeper understanding of characters and of the myth itself.

Process: Imagine you are the host of a talk show, and your invited guests are the characters from the Myth of Arachne. You, in collaboration with your small group, will write both the interview questions and the responses, which are based on your collective reading and interpretation of the Myth of Arachne. Working as a group, you will follow the steps below.

Step 1: Identify the characters (including the main and peripheral characters) for your talk show. Write them down in Task 14 Handout: *Mt. Olympus Talk Show Planner* (page 24).

Step 2: Read the one interview question already posed in the matrix. Do you agree with how Athena answered the question?

Step 3: Write 2–3 additional interview questions; what would inquiring minds want to know?

Step 4: Write responses to each question. Consider the following:

- How the character(s) would respond, based on their personality and/or character traits?
- Which quotes or pieces of the myth you can incorporate into your response?
- What you can add from your own imagination?





Unit 1: Mythology: The Human Search to Explain the Unknown

Lesson 1: The Myth of Arachne: Arrogance and its Repercussions



Task 14 Handout: Mt. Olympus Talk Show Planner

Which Characters will be on the talk show? You can add additional characters below:

- Athena
- Arachne

Interview Questions

Question 1: *Athena, what was the most important lesson you learned from the confrontation you had with Arachne?*

Question 2:

Question 3:

Responses (how would each character respond?)

Athena: I learned that even when I feel disrespected, I should try to remain calm and not seek to punish so quickly. In the end, I did punish Arachne, but by turning her into a spider, she can continue to weave.





Unit 1: Mythology: The Human Search to Explain the Unknown

Lesson 1: The Myth of Arachne: Arrogance and its Repercussions



Task 15: Talk Show Presentation (Optional)

Purpose: As you present and listen to other presentations, you and your classmates will gain new insights about the Myth of Arachne as well as the characters in the myth, why they behave and react the way they do, and what that tells us about human nature.

Process: Decide in your small group who will conduct the interview for the talk show and who will be which character on the panel. You may want to create name tags or have name tents, so your classmates know which character is which. Be sure to practice the interview before presenting it to the class. When your teacher alerts you, you will present your talk show interview. As you listen to other group presentations, consider what is similar to and different from your own group's presentation.





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Unit 1: Mythology: The Human Search to Explain the Unknown

Lesson 1: The Myth of Arachne: Arrogance and its Repercussions

TEXTS



Unit 1: Mythology: The Human Search to Explain the Unknown

Lesson 1: The Myth of Arachne: Arrogance and its Repercussions



Task 3 Text: The Myth of Arachne Part 1

The Myth of Arachne tells the story of Arachne, a mortal or normal human, and the goddess Athena. Athena—daughter of Zeus, King of the Gods—is the goddess of war, arts and crafts, and wisdom in Greek mythology.

Part 1: A proud and talented young woman: Arachne

- *What type of person does Arachne seem to be?*
- *How would you describe her?*
- *How do you think Athena will respond to Arachne? Why?*

1 There once was a talented weaver named Arachne, who made beautiful tapestries, fabrics, and textiles on her loom. Her skills and abilities in the arts of weaving and embroidery were so great that the nymphs—beautiful young nature spirits—would leave their forests where they lived to come and watch her. She could weave tapestries that were very beautiful, and the graceful and confident manner in which she worked, masterfully spinning wool into delicate and intricate patterns, was incredible to see. People who saw her quick and nimble fingers work the loom assumed that Athena, goddess of art and master weaver, had been her teacher.



2 Arachne was very proud and passionately denied that Athena had taught her to weave. In fact, Arachne was so prideful that she did not want to be perceived or seen as a student of anyone, even a student of a goddess such as Athena.

Key Ideas and Questions

3 “Let Athena try her skill against mine—I challenge her to a competition; let her try to win,” she said. The nymphs were shocked at Arachne’s bold statement, as no one ever challenged the talent or power of a god, for to do so could lead to horrible punishment and even death. But Arachne was so arrogant and confident in her own abilities that she boasted openly that she could beat Athena in a weaving contest.



Key Ideas and Questions



Unit 1: Mythology: The Human Search to Explain the Unknown

Lesson 1: The Myth of Arachne: Arrogance and its Repercussions



Task 5 Text: The Myth of Arachne Parts 2–4

Part 2: Athena hears of Arachne's pride and is displeased

- *Why is Athena unhappy with Arachne?*
- *What advice does Athena give Arachne?*

- 1 Athena heard Arachne's challenge and was displeased. She, too, took great pride in her work and was confident that she was the most skilled and passionate weaver to ever exist. She disguised herself as an old woman and went to speak to Arachne with the hope of giving her some advice and encourage her to revoke or take back her request to compete against the powerful goddess.
- 2 Athena found Arachne working at her loom. When the goddess spoke to Arachne, speaking as an old woman would, she said, "I have lived for many years. I have had much experience in this life and know how the gods respond to such disrespect. You have made Athena angry. You can compete with any person, any mortal you wish, but you must not compete with a goddess."
- 3 "I want to give you some advice, some help in this delicate matter," the old woman continued. "You must ask Athena for forgiveness," she added. "She is a good and merciful goddess; she will forgive you, pardon you. All you have to do is ask and you will surely be forgiven."
- 4 Arachne stopped spinning and, gesturing to the beautiful cloth she had woven, responded, "Old woman, save your advice for your daughters and granddaughters! I am the most talented weaver in the land; let Athena try her skill against mine. I will win, and I am not afraid to compete against her."

Part 3: The contest begins

- *How do you think Arachne will respond?*
 - *If there is a weaving competition, who do you think will win?*
- 5 The room was silent. No one could believe that Arachne would dare speak so boldly and refuse to apologize to a goddess, especially one as powerful as Athena. Suddenly, Athena removed her disguise and revealed her true

Key Ideas and Questions

self. The nymphs who had gathered to watch Arachne weave her beautiful tapestries all bowed in respect and did not look Athena in the face; Arachne was stunned!

- 6 “You so boldly challenge me, the goddess of art, to a contest. So be it; let us begin immediately,” said Athena.
- 7 Arachne blushed, and her cheeks turned red. She then grew pale with fear, but nodded her head in agreement and arrogantly prepared her loom. “She may be a goddess, and have great skill and creativity,” thought Arachne, “but I am the most talented weaver in the land. I will prove my worth.”
- 8 Athena and Arachne worked confidently and quietly. They each blended and mixed colorful threads and wove them into beautiful images and scenes in their tapestries. Athena chose to weave images of the gods into her cloth; in each corner of her tapestry she depicted or showed gods who were displeased with humans who had challenged, competed with, or disobeyed them.
- 9 Arachne’s tapestry was also colorful and beautiful. She chose to weave scenes depicting the mistakes, failings, and errors of the gods. Just as the images in Athena’s tapestry were designed to send a silent message to Arachne about her behavior, so were Arachne’s images intended to send a message to Athena. “She may be powerful,” thought Arachne, “but she, too, makes mistakes and should not be so arrogant and prideful.”
- 10 In the end, though both tapestries were stunningly beautiful, even Arachne could not deny that Athena’s work was superior. Athena, still angry at Arachne for her disrespect and rash boldness in challenging a goddess, tore Arachne’s work to shreds. Athena then reached out and gently touched Arachne’s forehead, and with her magic, filled Arachne with guilt, shame, and remorse.

Part 4: Arachne receives her punishment

- *How is Arachne punished?*
- *What becomes of her?*

- 11 Realizing her mistake and feeling great shame for her actions, Arachne tied a rope to make a noose to hang herself as punishment for her pride.
- 12 But Athena took pity on Arachne, feeling sorry for this foolish, proud woman. She wanted her to live and receive her punishment, not to die. Seeing Arachne hanging by the rope gave Athena an idea.

Key Ideas and Questions

- 13 “Live, guilty woman!” she commanded. “Live! But you will remember this lesson. Here is your punishment: For all time, you and all your descendants will continue to hang by a thread, weaving for all your days. You will never be human again.”
- 14 Athena again touched Arachne, and immediately, Arachne’s hair fell away, and her nose and ears fell off. Her head grew smaller, her body shrank, and where her arms and legs used to be grew eight thin legs. And this is how Athena transformed Arachne into a spider for all eternity, destined to continue weaving for the rest of time. Spiders, or arachnids, as they are called by scientists, remind us of the once-proud maiden who angered a powerful goddess.

**Key Ideas and
Questions**



National Research & Development Center to Improve
EDUCATION FOR SECONDARY ENGLISH LEARNERS

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Unit 1: Mythology: The Human Search to Explain the Unknown

Lesson 2: The Myth of Phaeton: The Tragic Consequences of Youth's Stubbornness

STUDENT INSTRUCTIONS



Unit 1: Mythology: The Human Search to Explain the Unknown

Lesson 2: The Myth of Phaeton: The Tragic Consequences of Youth's Stubbornness

About this Lesson

In this lesson, you are going to learn about why people tell myths, and why myths were passed down from generation to generation. Then, you will read a second Greek myth from long ago. This one is about a teenager named Phaeton. Just as you did with the Myth of Arachne, you will learn about interactions between powerful Greek gods and human beings and the character strengths and flaws of both.

Lesson Objectives

By the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

- Narrate personal experiences in which character plays a central role.
- Explain orally, using multimodal texts, how different features of the narrative genre of myths work, using the two myths addressed so far.
- Begin to develop the ability to skim and scan narrative texts to get the main ideas and substance of a text, using genre features as guidance.
- Begin to read metacognitively.
- Begin to explore metacognitively the role of language use in society.

Lesson Architecture

Building the Field

- **Task 1:** Reading with a Clarifying Bookmark I
- **Task 2:** Summarizing and Questioning

Preparing Learners

In this first moment of the lesson, students are guided to think deeply about what they already know about the major concepts, themes, language, and ideas of the lesson so they are ready to engage with complex text.

- **Task 3:** Three-Step Interview
- **Task 4:** Picture Wondering

Interacting with Text

This moment of the lesson invites students to analyze complex texts through carefully scaffolded activities that build upon each other as they deconstruct the text, so students can focus on major ideas and then reconnect those ideas to the text as whole.

- **Task 5:** Clarifying Bookmark II
- **Task 6:** Types of Question/Answer Relationships
- **Task 7:** Reading with a Focus (Phaeton has doubts about his father)
- **Task 8:** Reaching Consensus on the Focus Questions
- **Task 9:** Reading with a Focus
- **Task 10:** Actions and Character Traits
- **Task 11:** Round Robin Prediction and Reflection
- **Task 12:** Myth Structure Analysis

Extending Understanding

In this final part of the lesson, students participate in tasks that help them synthesize their understanding of the major ideas, concepts, characters, and themes they engaged within the body of the lesson.

- **Task 13:** What is Said and What is Meant
- **Task 14:** Partner Discussion
- **Task 15:** Mind Mirror
- **Task 16:** Performance
- **Task 17:** Myth Extension Ideas
- **Task 18:** Writing the Sequel to a Myth



Unit 1: Mythology: The Human Search to Explain the Unknown

Lesson 2: The Myth of Phaeton: The Tragic Consequences of Youth's Stubbornness

BUILDING THE FIELD



Task 1: Reading with a Clarifying Bookmark I (*Why We Read Myths*)

Before reading our next myth, let's learn a little bit about why people told myths in the ancient world. Let's get started!

Purpose: Reading with the Clarifying Bookmark helps you to clarify or summarize your understanding of a text and to help you recognize what you may not yet understand.

Process: You will use two handouts for this task: Task 1 Text: *Why We Read Myths* (on page 34) and Task 1 Handout: *Clarifying Bookmark I* (page 5).

Step 1: Decide who is Partner 1 and who is Partner 2.

Step 2: Partner 1 reads the title of the text and the second paragraph out loud, while Partner 2 follows along silently in the text and listens closely.

Step 3: Next, Partner 1 decides which action may help them understand or clarify what they do not clearly understand and announces to their partner which strategy they will use (Column 1), then they choose one of the formulaic expressions under *What I can do* (Column 2).

Step 4: Partner 2 will respond to what Partner 1 said, using the language in Column 3, *How my partner can respond*, if needed. They may also use their own expressions to discuss the strategy selected.

Step 5: The two of you will switch roles, and Partner 2 will read the next paragraph, decide which strategy to use, tell Partner 1 what the strategy is, and put the strategy into practice. Partner 1 will respond.

Continue like this, going back and forth, until you finish the text.





Unit 1: Mythology: The Human Search to Explain the Unknown

Lesson 2: The Myth of Phaeton: The Tragic Consequences of Youth's Stubbornness



Task 1 Handout: Clarifying Bookmark I

Column 1 What I can do	Column 2 What I can say	Column 3 How my partner can respond
Identify what I understand or don't understand	<i>This part is clear to me. What the text says is...</i> OR <i>I don't understand this part because...</i>	<i>I agree with you, and something else I can add is...</i> <i>I disagree with you because...</i> <i>I understand this part; it means...</i>
Identify questions I have about what I have read	<i>I wonder...</i> OR <i>One question I have is...</i>	<i>I also wonder...</i> <i>A question I have is...</i>





Unit 1: Mythology: The Human Search to Explain the Unknown

Lesson 2: The Myth of Phaeton: The Tragic Consequences of Youth's Stubbornness



Task 2: Summarizing and Questioning

Purpose: To discuss the text with a partner and clarify the main ideas of the text and any questions you may have.

Process:

Step 1: Revisit the reading you just completed, *Why We Read Myths*.

Step 2: Discuss and agree with your partner on one key idea or a question you both have for each of the first five paragraphs in the text. Write them down in the right-hand column of the text. Your teacher may ask you to share with the other pair at your table or facilitate a class discussion about the reading.





Unit 1: Mythology: The Human Search to Explain the Unknown

Lesson 2: The Myth of Phaeton: The Tragic Consequences of Youth's Stubbornness

PREPARING LEARNERS



Task 3: Three-Step Interview

Purpose: To practice asking questions, responding to them, and listening carefully to your partner's answer so that you can share their response accurately.

Process:

Step 1: Look at the interview questions below. As you think about your answers, make sure to jot down some ideas you would like to share with your partner.

Think about a time when you or someone you know did something that was not allowed or was against the rules.

- *Who were the people involved?*
- *What was the situation?*
- *What happened? Were the consequences good or bad?*

With your partner:

Step 2: Ask your partner the questions.

Step 3: Listen carefully as your partner responds, as you will have to share their answers with the others in your group.

Step 4: Your partner asks you the same questions, and you respond.

With your group of four:

Step 5: Take turns in a Round Robin (one at a time with no interruptions) sharing your partner's story.

Step 6: After all of you have shared your stories, take two minutes to discuss how your stories are similar or different, any questions you have about them, or anything your partner may have forgotten to mention.





Unit 1: Mythology: The Human Search to Explain the Unknown

Lesson 2: The Myth of Phaeton: The Tragic Consequences of Youth's Stubbornness



Task 4: Picture Wondering

Purpose: This activity invites you to explore a painting and guess, based on the pictorial evidence, what it may be about.

Process: Examine and interpret the painting, following the steps below:

Step 1: Look at the sketch of *The Fall of Phaeton* by Dutch painter Peter Paul Rubens. Look also at the final version of the painting (pages 37 and 39).

Step 2: Working with a partner, spend three minutes collaboratively describing what you see in the sketch and, after that, the painting. Be sure to discuss:

- Where the scene appears to take place.
- Who seems to be the main character?
- What appears to be happening in the painting? What may be going on?



Unit 1: Mythology: The Human Search to Explain the Unknown

Lesson 2: The Myth of Phaeton: The Tragic Consequences of Youth's Stubbornness

INTERACTING WITH TEXT



Task 5: Reading with a Clarifying Bookmark II (Task 5 Text: The Myth of Phaeton, Paragraphs 1–6)

Purpose: To practice using strategies that good readers use. You will use the Clarifying Bookmark II to begin reading the *Myth of Phaeton*, on page 41.

Process:

Modeling: Your teacher will invite two of you to model using the Clarifying Bookmark II, to remind you of the process, using Paragraphs 1 and 2 of the myth.

You will read Paragraphs 3–6 in the *Myth of Phaeton* with a partner:

- Take turns reading one paragraph to your partner.
- Decide which strategy you want to use, announce it, and then put it into practice using one of the formulaic expressions provided or one of your own to start sharing your ideas.

Stop and Discuss: With your partner, discuss the first two focus questions:

- Who is Phaeton?
- What is his weakness?





Unit 1: Mythology: The Human Search to Explain the Unknown

Lesson 2: The Myth of Phaeton: The Tragic Consequences of Youth's Stubbornness



Task 5 Handout: Clarifying Bookmark II

Column 1 Reading strategies you can use	Column 2 What I can say	Column 3 How my partner can respond
Use text features to support understanding	<i>As I look at the pictures in the text, I think that it is going to be about ...</i> OR <i>I notice the heading is...so I predict...</i>	<i>I agree with you, and another point I can add is...</i> <i>I disagree with you because I think...</i> <i>I can also make a connection...</i>
Make connections using my background knowledge	<i>I know something about this from...</i> OR <i>A question I have about what I've read so far is...</i>	<i>I have a similar question.</i>



Unit 1: Mythology: The Human Search to Explain the Unknown

Lesson 2: The Myth of Phaeton: The Tragic Consequences of Youth's Stubbornness



Task 6: Types of Question/Answer Relationships (Paragraphs 7–11)

Purpose: To practice asking two different types of questions about texts we read:

1. *Right There Questions:* Look for information that is explicitly stated in the paragraph.
2. *On My Own:* The question asks for information that is not present in the text but is related to the theme of the text. For example, something that you wonder about.

Process: You will work with a partner. Before you begin, your teacher will model the process using Paragraph 7.

Step 1: Partner 1 reads the next paragraph aloud (but not too loudly) to their partner.

Step 2: Both partners think of a question, write it down in the “Notes” column of the text, and classify it (which of the two types of questions is it?).

Step 3: Partner 1 shares the type of question they are asking with Partner 2, and then asks the question. Then Partner 2 responds.

Step 4: Partner 2 shares they type of question they are asking with Partner 1, and then asks their question. Partner 1 responds.

Step 5: Continue reading each paragraph through Paragraph 11, writing questions, classifying them, and sharing them with each other.





Unit 1: Mythology: The Human Search to Explain the Unknown

Lesson 2: The Myth of Phaeton: The Tragic Consequences of Youth's Stubbornness



Task 7: Reading with a Focus (Phaeton Has Doubts About His Father; Paragraphs 12–19)

Purpose: To read a section of the text with a particular focus.

Process: The focus of your reading is to understand the relationships between Phaeton and his friends and between Phaeton and his mother, Clymene.

- Who is Epaphos?
- How are Epaphos and Phaeton similar and different?
- Why does Phaeton want proof of his father's identity?
- What does Phaeton's mother tell him to do?
- How does Phaeton react?

Write down your ideas about the focus questions in the “Notes” column on your text.





Unit 1: Mythology: The Human Search to Explain the Unknown

Lesson 2: The Myth of Phaeton: The Tragic Consequences of Youth's Stubbornness



Task 8: Reaching Consensus on the Focus Questions

Purpose: To share your ideas, hear the ideas of your small group members, and then reach a consensus—or agreement—on the answers.

Process: Share in your small groups:

Step 1: Share in a Round Robin; that is, each of the four will have a turn to say everything you think about a character and their relationships. Even if the ideas expressed by others are the ideas you had, acknowledge that this is the case and repeat your impressions.

Step 2: Notice and discuss where you all agree and where you may not agree on your responses.

Step 3: Work together to reach a consensus as to your responses to the focus questions.

- Who is Epaphos? How are Epaphos and Phaeton similar and different?
- Why does Phaeton want proof of his father's identity?
- What does Phaeton's mother tell him to do? How does Phaeton react?





Unit 1: Mythology: The Human Search to Explain the Unknown

Lesson 2: The Myth of Phaeton: The Tragic Consequences of Youth's Stubbornness



Task 9: Reading with a Focus (Phaeton Travels to the Palace of the Sun, paragraphs 20–26)

Purpose: To read and predict character actions.

Process: Read the next section of the myth silently on your own. As you read, focus on the Reading with a Focus Questions:

- How does Phaeton feel as he approaches Apollo's palace?
- How does Apollo receive him?
- How do you think Apollo will respond to Phaeton's request?

Step 1: Write down your ideas in the “Notes” section and underline evidence from the text.

Step 2: With a partner or in your small groups, discuss how you responded to the focus questions.

Step 3: In the margins, add any ideas that you may not have.





Unit 1: Mythology: The Human Search to Explain the Unknown

Lesson 2: The Myth of Phaeton: The Tragic Consequences of Youth's Stubbornness



Task 10: Actions and Character Traits (Apollo Makes a Regrettable Promise and The Sun Must Rise, paragraphs 27–40)

Purpose: To read with a focus and recognize how character traits can be seen through actions.

Process:

Step 1: Read the next two sections, “Apollo makes a regrettable promise,” paragraphs 27–34 and “The Sun Must Rise,” paragraphs 34–40.

As you read, pay attention to what Phaeton asks his father for, and which character traits he exemplifies through his request. Answer the following four focus questions:

- Which character traits does Phaeton have that lead him to make his request of his father?
- Any other character traits you can identify for Phaeton or Apollo.
- What is Apollo’s fear about Phaeton’s request?
- Why does Apollo keep his promise to Phaeton?

Step 2: Circle evidence and write any character trait you find for Phaeton in the margin. For example, if you write that Phaeton is bold, circle or underline anything in the text that is evidence for that character trait.

Step 3: Share your ideas with your partner. You may add to your own notes, if your partner shares something you do not have. Be ready to share out your ideas with the class if asked by your teacher.





Unit 1: Mythology: The Human Search to Explain the Unknown

Lesson 2: The Myth of Phaeton: The Tragic Consequences of Youth's Stubbornness



Task 11: Round Robin Prediction and Reflection (paragraphs 41–48)

Purpose: To predict, based on the actions and characteristics of Apollo and Phaeton, how the myth ends.

Process:

Step 1: Before you continue reading, take one or two minutes in the space provided in the graphic organizer Task 11 Handout: *Prediction Matrix* on page 17 to write down how you think the myth will end. Be sure to explain why you think this and what evidence you are using from the text to justify your answer.

Step 2: In a Round Robin, each person in the small group reads their prediction aloud. Be sure to share your prediction as well as events from the text that support your prediction.

Step 3: Once everyone has shared, finish reading the myth; the focus questions will help guide your reading.





Unit 1: Mythology: The Human Search to Explain the Unknown

Lesson 2: The Myth of Phaeton: The Tragic Consequences of Youth's Stubbornness



Task 12: Myth Structure Analysis

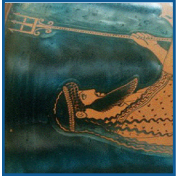
Purpose: To understand how myths are structured so we can understand their purposes and know how to write our own.

Process: Look at the plot diagram on Task 12 Handout: *Phaeton Myth Plot Diagram*.

Together with your partner, agree on each of the parts of the myth and where the information belongs on the plot diagram.

After your discussion, record your answers in the plot diagram.



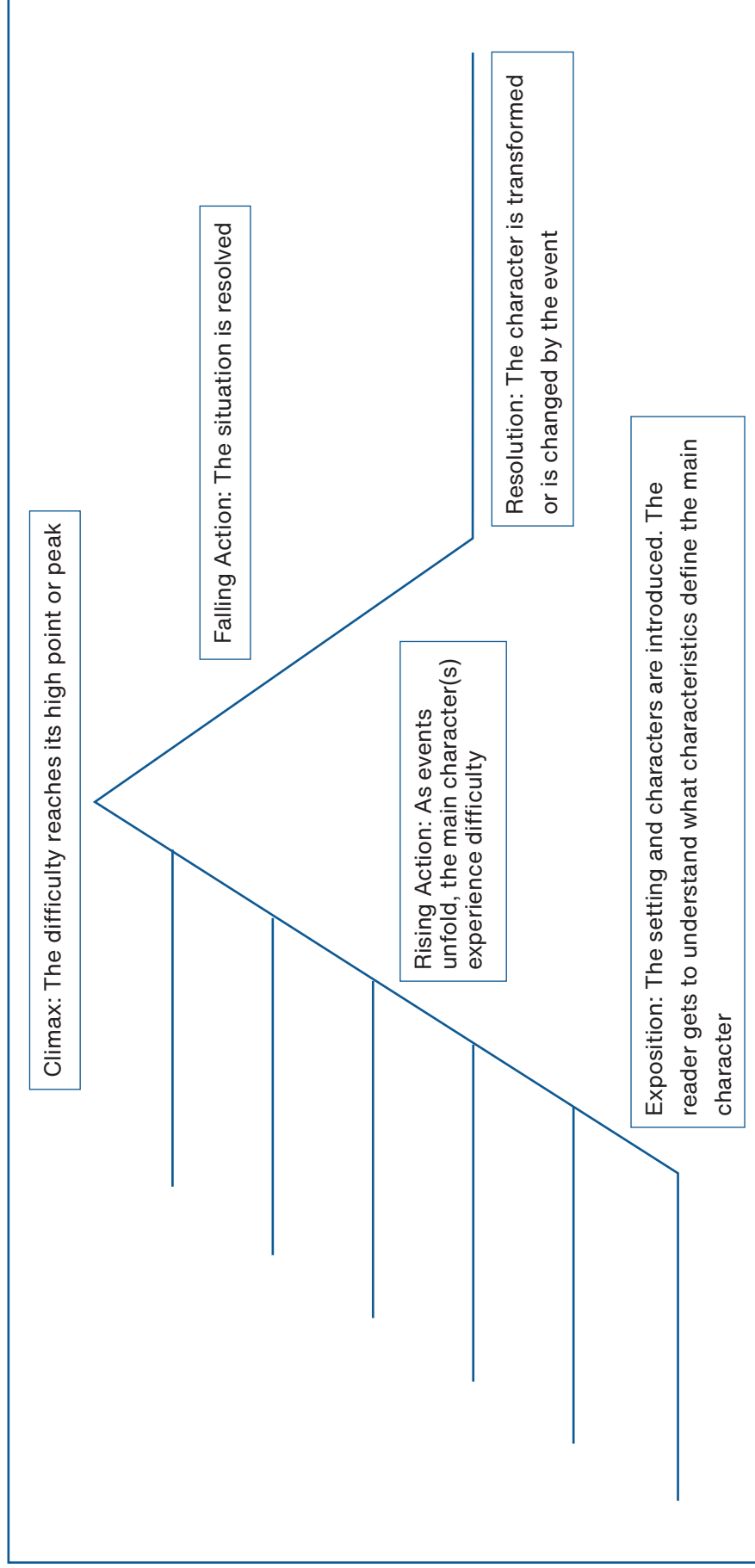


Unit 1: Mythology: The Human Search to Explain the Unknown
Lesson 2: The Myth of Phaeton: The Tragic Consequences of Youth's Stubbornness



Task 12 Handout: Phaeton Myth Plot Diagram

With your partner, discuss and agree on which parts of the myth belong where in the plot diagram.





Unit 1: Mythology: The Human Search to Explain the Unknown

Lesson 2: The Myth of Phaeton: The Tragic Consequences of Youth's Stubbornness



Task 13: Reflecting on What Is Said and What Is Meant

Purpose: As we read narratives, it is important to be aware that:

- What a character says is not necessarily what the character would like to say. That is, people make choices when they speak and how they speak.
- Words have consequences.

Process: Work in groups of four:

Step 1: In your table groups, create two pairs (Pair 1 and Pair 2).

Step 2: As a class, your teacher will guide you through the first examples for Phaeton and Apollo.

Step 3: In your small groups, Pair 1 will take notes from the perspective of Phaeton, and Pair 2 will take notes from the perspective of his father, Apollo.

Step 4: Turn to page 21. Re-read silently and then discuss with your peers the two sections: *Phaeton Travels to the Palace of the Sun* and *Apollo Makes a Regrettable Promise*. Complete your part of the matrix.





Unit 1: Mythology: The Human Search to Explain the Unknown

Lesson 2: The Myth of Phaeton: The Tragic Consequences of Youth's Stubbornness



Task 13 Handout: Reflecting on What Is Said and What Is Meant

Pair 1: Phaeton's Perspective

What Phaeton says (paragraph number)	What does Phaeton really mean?
25 "O, light of the world, Apollo, my father, if you permit me to use that name, I came to ask you if you are indeed my father. If you are, I beg you to give me some proof so those who mock me will recognize me as your son."	
30 "Let me drive the chariot of the sun across the heavens for one day."	
32 "Father, you vowed I could choose anything! And now you change your mind?"	

Pair 2: Apollo's Perspective

What Apollo says (paragraph number)	What does Apollo really mean?
26 "You are indeed my son and have proved yourself worthy to be called so."	
27 "Any proof you desire you shall have."	
31 "I cannot break my promise, but I will dissuade you if I can. I beg you to withdraw your request. It is not safe, my son. You are young and not strong enough to control the chariot."	



Unit 1: Mythology: The Human Search to Explain the Unknown

Lesson 2: The Myth of Phaeton: The Tragic Consequences of Youth's Stubbornness



Task 14: Partner Discussion

Purpose: By sharing and hearing what you each found, both you and your partner have a chance to deepen and solidify your understanding of the character you focused on.

Process: Share with your partner the examples you found for your assigned character. You may add to your matrix if your partner has something you do not, if you choose. Decide what you will share with the other pair of students in your group.





Unit 1: Mythology: The Human Search to Explain the Unknown

Lesson 2: The Myth of Phaeton: The Tragic Consequences of Youth's Stubbornness

EXTENDING UNDERSTANDING



Task 15: Mind Mirror

Purpose: A Mind Mirror is a visual representation of the state of mind a character in a text is going through at a specific point in time in the narrative. It makes it possible to show your understanding of the situation the character is experiencing—their feelings, thoughts, dreams, frustrations, and decisions—using pictorial and textual evidence from the text.

Process: Your teacher will assign each group a key moment from the plot in the development of a character:

- A. Phaeton is playing with his friends, and a dispute emerges (paragraphs 8–14).
- B. Phaeton approaches his mother and requests confirmation about who his father is (paragraphs 15–19).
- C. Phaeton visits Apollo and makes his request (paragraphs 30–38).
- D. Phaeton loses control of the horses and Apollo watches the tragedy unfold (paragraphs 41–43).

Working in groups of four, you will create a picture illustrating the state of mind of the character mentioned first at that moment in time. You will discuss and agree on the answers to these (and other relevant) questions:

- What is going on in the character's head?
- How is he feeling?
- What would he like to do?
- What would he like to say?



To convey all of this, you can use the sketch offered, filling it in with the following requirements:

- 2 quotes, taken directly from the text
- 2 phrases that are original (they are written by you as a group to convey the character's emotions at the moment)
- 2 symbols that represent who Phaeton is, how he is feeling, and what he wants
- 2 drawings that are relevant to the moment you have been assigned

You will have 20 minutes to discuss the composition and get it ready to be displayed to the class. Be creative. For example, you may draw the character's hair with a quote; instead of an eyebrow, write your original phrase, etc.

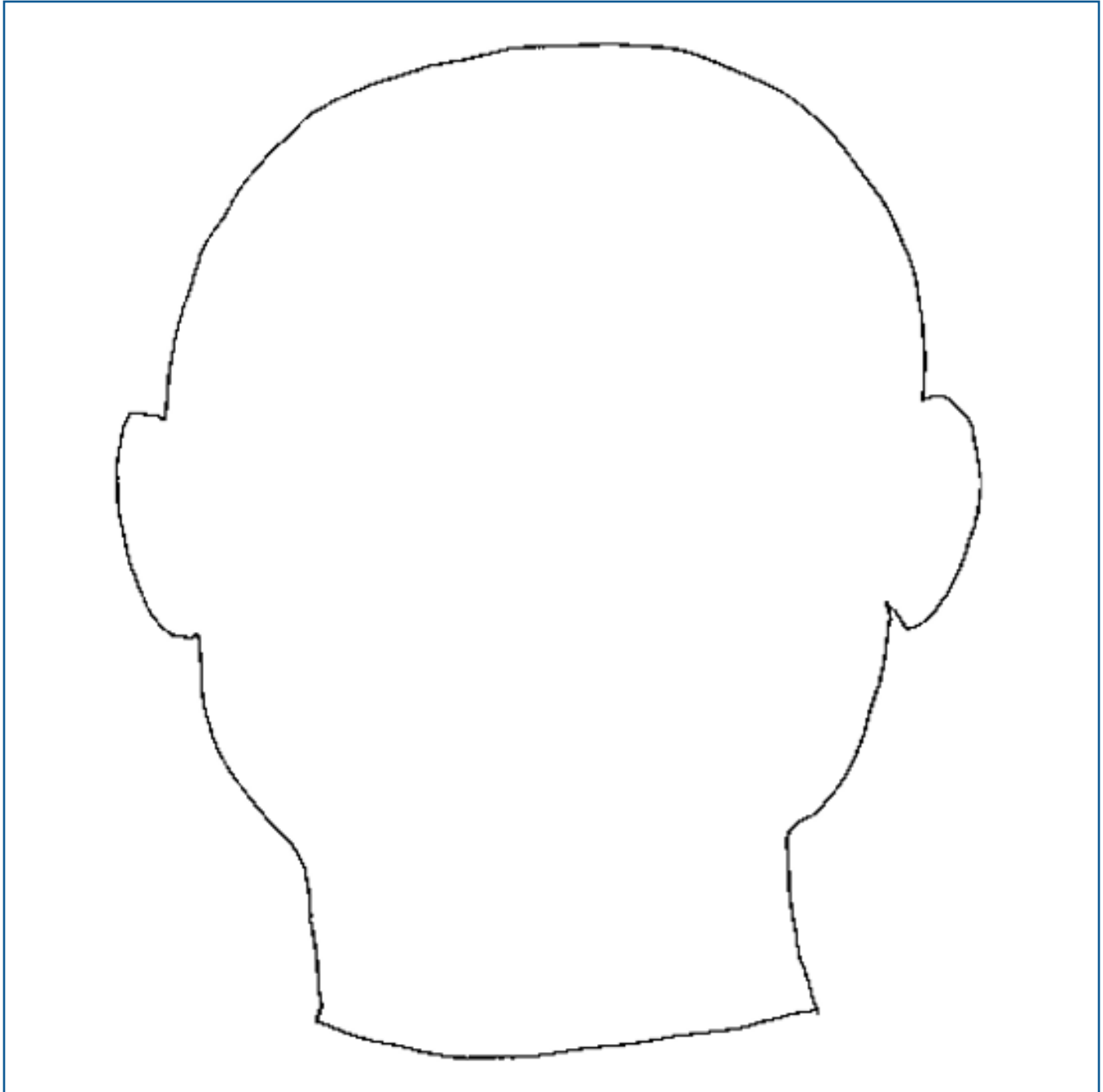


Unit 1: Mythology: The Human Search to Explain the Unknown

Lesson 2: The Myth of Phaeton: The Tragic Consequences of Youth's Stubbornness



Task 15 Handout: Mind Mirror





Unit 1: Mythology: The Human Search to Explain the Unknown

Lesson 2: The Myth of Phaeton: The Tragic Consequences of Youth's Stubbornness



Task 16: Performance

Purpose: This is the time to celebrate what you have accomplished in the lesson. You will have a chance to demonstrate your understanding of the main character and his actions and characteristics.

Process: You will be invited in your teams to explain your Mind Mirror, in order from A to D. All students must have a speaking role.



Unit 1: Mythology: The Human Search to Explain the Unknown

Lesson 2: The Myth of Phaeton: The Tragic Consequences of Youth's Stubbornness



Task 17: Myth Extension Ideas

Purpose: To continue to plan for creating a second part to the myth of your choice, you will add your ideas to the chart below.

Process: Use Handout for Task 15: *Myth Extension Ideas Matrix* to think about how the various characters in the myth might behave or act moving forward.

For example, you might consider: if there were an alternate ending to Phaeton, how might Phaeton or Apollo behave in the future? What lesson would they have learned, and how might it impact their future behavior?



Unit 1: Mythology: The Human Search to Explain the Unknown

Lesson 2: The Myth of Phaeton: The Tragic Consequences of Youth's Stubbornness



Task 17 Handout: Myth Extension Ideas Matrix

Answer the questions and add your ideas to the graphic organizer.

Phaeton What lessons might Phaeton have learned? If he had lived, how might Phaeton behave in the future?	Apollo What lesson might Apollo have learned? How might Apollo behave in the future?
Clymene, Phaeton's mother What lesson might Clymene have learned? How might she behave differently in the future?	A Character of your choice _____





Unit 1: Mythology: The Human Search to Explain the Unknown

Lesson 2: The Myth of Phaeton: The Tragic Consequences of Youth's Stubbornness



Task 18: Writing the Sequel to a Myth

Purpose: To engage in the writing process in such a way that we produce narratives for others to read that teach a lesson, make sense, and are interesting.

Process:

Step 1: Finalize your ideas—now you will make sure you have your ideas organized before you begin to write.

- Select which myth you want to write a second part to or sequel to (*The Myth of Arachne* or *The Myth of Phaeton*).
- Look back at Task #13 from Lesson 1 and Task #17 from Lesson 2, in which you recorded initial ideas about lessons learned and how characters might behave in the future.
- On a sheet of paper, draw a plot diagram like the ones you made for the two myths we analyzed in the unit.
- Organize your ideas using the plot diagram to make sure that your story makes sense and contains all the necessary elements that make up a good narrative.

Step 2: Write a first draft. In this step, you will add more details and language to your ideas and write them as a story. Do not worry if this first attempt is not perfect; this is a draft that can be changed later.

- Now follow the structure of myths from your plot diagram to write your story. Make sure to organize your ideas into paragraphs and include all the elements (characters, setting, dialog, climax, etc.).

Step 3: Peer Feedback—you will now share your ideas with a classmate so you can receive feedback, ideas, and suggestions that can make your writing stronger.

- Now exchange your papers with a classmate. As you read your classmate's story, make sure that you can identify all the elements of a narrative. Use Task 18 Handout: *Writing the Sequel to a Myth: Peer Feedback* to identify that all the elements are present.
- When you are finished reading, fill in the boxes at the bottom of the handout, give your classmates some ideas, and let them know some questions you might have.



- Return the story to its author and look at the feedback you received.
- Go back to your draft and make any changes you might need to make so that your story is clear and easy to read.

Step 4: Publishing the Final Draft—Now you will make a copy of your writing that is clean and neat for others to read.

- Take the latest draft of your story and copy it onto new paper or change the document on the computer so that it can be shared with others.



Unit 1: Mythology: The Human Search to Explain the Unknown

Lesson 2: The Myth of Phaeton: The Tragic Consequences of Youth's Stubbornness



Task 18 Handout: Writing the Sequel to a Myth: Peer Feedback Form

Author:

Reviewer:

Elements of a myth	Evidence I found
Purpose: The lesson the myth teaches	
Setting:	
Main Characters:	
Main actions of the plot: How the characters' actions tell us who they are	
Dialogue: How the characters' words tell us who they are	





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Unit 1: Mythology: The Human Search to Explain the Unknown

Lesson 2: The Myth of Phaeton: The Tragic Consequences of Youth's Stubbornness

TEXTS



Unit 1: Mythology: The Human Search to Explain the Unknown

Lesson 2: The Myth of Phaeton: The Tragic Consequences of Youth's Stubbornness



Task #1 Text: Why We Read Myths

Section 1: What are Myths?

The Purpose of Myths: Why did people tell myths?

- 1 Long ago, before the Internet, cell phones, or modern science existed, people observed the world around them and looked for answers to questions they had about it. Because technology and science had not yet advanced enough to answer all their questions, they began telling stories to explain what they saw in the world and in their own behavior. These stories, called myths, may seem difficult to believe now, but thousands of years ago, people told them as if they were true. They passed them down from generation to generation to explain things that were not easy to understand, like how the world came to be, where fire comes from, or even what makes us fall in love. Myths also served to teach lessons about human behavior, such as why arrogance or pride can be destructive, how selfishness and greed can destroy someone's life, or how important it is to love and protect the family.

The structure of myths: How were myths told or written?

- 2 Much like the narratives (stories) we tell today in books, television, and movies, myths follow a specific structure or way of telling a story. Each myth has its own setting (time and place) that helps the listener or reader understand the story. They also include a variety of characters with very rich descriptions of their personalities, experiences, and reactions to those around them, so those who listen to and read the stories can tell what they are like. As in all good stories, they unfold by telling what happens to these characters through a series of events that culminate in an exciting climax before ending with a moral (a lesson to be learned) or an explanation of something not well understood. Just as we do today when we listen to, read, or watch a good story, people of this time enjoyed hearing the stories and passing them along to friends and family.

The elements of myths: What makes myths different from other narratives?

- 3 What makes myths different from other stories is not only the time in which they were told and the purpose for which they were invented; they also have elements that are very specific. For example, myths include gods and

Key Ideas and Questions

goddesses who have special powers and are immortal (they never die). These gods and goddesses interact with normal, everyday human beings, or mortals. Some of them even have children together! Myths are also a very unique kind of narrative because they were originally intended to be shared orally. Since writing had not been developed yet, myths were told as an oral tradition; families would learn them and tell them to their children. For this reason, many different versions of each myth exist today.

Key Ideas and Questions

Section 2: Greek Mythology

Ancient Greece

- 4 In order to fully understand the texts we will read in this unit, it is important to know a bit about the culture they come from. All the myths we will study are Greek myths, so they come from Greece, which is located in Europe and has a rich history and culture that dates back thousands of years. The myths that we will read come from a time period called Ancient Greece. This time period started around 800 BCE and continued until 400 BCE. That is more than 400 years of stories that were passed down to explain the things the Greeks of long ago could not understand and to teach lessons about life that are still relevant today.



Image source: <https://www.freeworldmaps.net/europe/greece/location.html>

The Ancient Greek Religion: Gods and Goddesses

- 5 The collective of the many gods and goddesses who were part of Greek mythology are referred to as “Pantheon” (in the Greek language, pan = all, and theo = god). The gods lived on top of Mount Olympus, a mountain so high and steep that no man could reach it and see the golden lives these deities lived. However, if people could not reach it, gods and goddesses sometimes descended to earth, oftentimes in their own shapes and sometimes disguised as animals or human beings.

Key Ideas and Questions



Task #4 Image: Sketch of Phaeton



Peter Paul Rubens, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons.





Task #4 Image: Painting of Phaeton



Peter Paul Rubens, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons.





Unit 1: Mythology: The Human Search to Explain the Unknown

Lesson 2: The Myth of Phaeton: The Tragic Consequences of Youth's Stubbornness



Task #4 Text: Myth of Phaeton

- 1 As you know, the ancient Greeks believed in the existence of gods, human beings, and creatures that fell in between those two categories—for example, the Titans. Greek gods and goddesses supposedly lived in Olympus and were immortal. They also possessed similar personal characteristics as human beings, only for them, these features were augmented. If human beings could be intelligent, a god or goddess carried that virtue to its maximum, and they would be the most intelligent beings. If human beings got upset, gods got furious. Humans were mortal; unlike gods and goddesses, they were destined to die.
- 2 Each god or goddess represented the essence of a virtue or gift. For example, Athena, was the goddess of intelligence, and she also represented the arts. Apollo was the god of truth, archery, music, and dance. He was considered to be the most beautiful god and, thus, he represented the ideal of healthy, athletic youth.
- 3 Another interesting feature or characteristic of Greek mythology was that gods could marry human beings and have children with them. Their children were not gods and did not inherit the supernatural powers of their divine parent. We will now read about a mortal teenager challenged by the complex relationships that existed between gods and human beings.



Key Ideas and Questions

Introducing Phaeton: A Teenager

- *Who is Phaeton?*
 - *What is his weakness?*
- 4 There was a Greek teenager named Phaeton who did not have a typical family. His mother, Clymene, was a mortal. But, as Phaeton grew up, pointing to the sky, she would tell him his father was a god. In fact, he was the god Apollo, the Sun God, who lived in the East where the sun rose every morning.



- 5 When Phaeton was with his friends, he loved to boast about his immortal father. Whenever he saw Apollo's golden chariot carrying the sun high through the sky, he became very excited and would take the opportunity to remind his friends about his lineage. "My father is a god, and I, as his son, will be able to do great things, too.
- 6 "Just remember," he would brag, "someday I will perform a great deed, and after that day and forever, men will have to praise me and offer me gifts."
- 7 Even as a mortal youth, Phaeton always had to be first in everything, and most of the time this was easy for him. The truth was that he was stronger, swifter, and more courageous than his friends. But even if he were not the best, Phaeton would always say that he was. He could not tolerate losing, even if it meant recklessly endangering his life. He never thought about the possible consequences his actions may have.

Phaeton Has Doubts About His Father

- *Who is Epaphos? How are Epaphos and Phaeton similar and different?*
 - *Why does Phaeton want proof of his father's identity?*
- 8 One day, as often happened, Epaphos and Phaeton were fighting one another as their friends watched. Epaphos was rumored to be a child of Zeus, the ruler of all gods, and Epaphos was as prideful as Phaeton.
 - 9 "Why don't you fight someone your own size? I'm much bigger and stronger than you," sneered Epaphos, as he punched Phaeton's arm. "Anyway, I have my father's strength."
 - 10 "Oh, yeah?" Phaeton shouted as he hit Epaphos on the nose. "The great Sun God is my father! Can't you tell?"
 - 11 "Really? Who told you that fantasy?" jeered Epaphos, breathing hard.
 - 12 "My mother did," replied Phaeton indignantly. Epaphos's question made Phaeton feel confused and angry, and he noticed that his friends were no longer cheering for him. Instead, they had fallen silent and full of curiosity as they listened closely to the conversation.
 - 13 "And you believed her?" challenged Epaphos. "You're a fool. Do you always believe everything your mother tells you?" Epaphos smiled widely and shook his head.
 - 14 These words stung Phaeton. He was embarrassed by Epaphos's comments and did not know what to do next. Feeling his face burn in shame, Phaeton did not dare look at Epaphos or any of the onlookers, his neighborhood

Key Ideas and Questions

friends. His friends, as confused and dumbfounded as Phaeton was, stood watching, silent and wide-eyed.

- 15 Humiliated, Phaeton went home to Clymene and demanded, "If I really am Apollo's son, the son of a divinity, give me some proof. I need more evidence than just your words. All my friends make fun of me when I talk about my father. They do not believe I am Apollo's son. Please help me, Mother. You must help me prove my claim to immortal blood and this special honor."
- 16 In despair, Clymene extended her hands towards the skies, turned her face upward, and spoke solemnly. "I call to witness the Sun, which looks down upon us, that I have told you the truth. If I am lying, Sun, strike me blind and let this be the last time I see your light."
- 17 Phaeton looked at his mother with skepticism. Clymene's willingness to risk blindness did not convince Phaeton that what she was saying was true.
- 18 Desperate to end her son's disbelief, Clymene then said, "I can do no more, my child, but you can. Go to Apollo's palace in the East, not far from here, and ask him yourself."
- 19 Phaeton's heart leapt with joy. He would now be able to find out the truth. After this trip, he would have the proof he so desperately wanted.

Phaeton Travels to the Palace of the Sun

- *How does Phaeton feel as he approaches Apollo's palace?*
 - *What kind of palace did Apollo have?*
 - *How does Apollo receive him?*
- 20 Phaeton was thrilled but also anxious about meeting his father. Very few human beings ever had the opportunity to visit Apollo's shimmering palace of gold and jewels, and Phaeton was eager to view this fabulous sight. But even more, of course, no one had ever approached the Palace of the Sun on a mission such as Phaeton's. Would his father know him? Would he accept him as his own dear son?
 - 21 As Phaeton climbed the steep and rugged mountain that led to the palace, he began to feel faint. With every step he took, the light became brighter and then brighter still. Several times he had to stop and take a deep breath. And each time he wondered what he would find ahead.

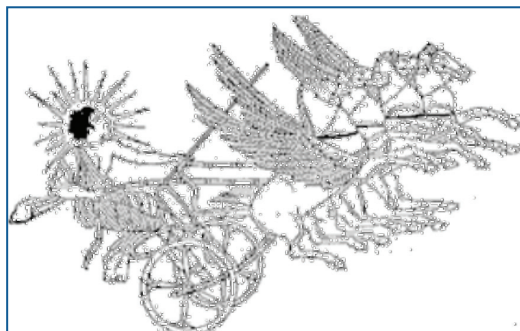
Key Ideas and Questions

- 22 When the palace finally came into view, it shone with such radiance that Phaeton was almost blinded. He stumbled to the massive door and entered the Palace of the Sun. Inside, golden light sparkled and danced against the walls, diamonds and rubies winked brilliantly, and a dazzling golden throne rose up at Phaeton's feet. Apollo, in robes of shining purple, looked down from his throne at the mortal boy.
- 23 Attendants surrounded Apollo's throne, ready to do as he requested. The lovely Spring stood nearest the throne wearing a crown of flowers. Summer, too, was adorned with a crown; hers was fashioned of ripe wheat and corn. Autumn was a cheerful fellow with feet stained purple from crushing the fall grape harvest. Winter shook his stiff white hair, frosty with ice. Other attendants—Day, Month, Year, and the Hours—were also close by, all waiting to see what Apollo would do.
- 24 In a kind voice, Apollo called out to the young man, "Phaeton, what brings you here? Why have you traveled to my palace?"
- 25 Mustering up courage, Phaeton replied, "O, light of the world, Apollo, my father, if you permit me to use that name, I come to ask you if you are indeed my father. If you are, I beg you to give me some proof so those who mock me will recognize me as your son."
- 26 Apollo smiled, pleased with his son's daring and determination. He took off his dazzling crown so Phaeton could look at him, and then stepped down from his throne. He embraced Phaeton and said, "You are indeed my son and have proved yourself worthy to be called so."

Apollo Makes a Regrettable Promise

- *How does Phaeton's pride lead him to ask for too much?*
- *How does Apollo try to dissuade Phaeton from insisting on his request?*

- 27 Apollo looked Phaeton in the eyes and promised, "Any proof you desire, you shall have."
- 28 Phaeton grew dizzy and his heart leapt at the excitement of hearing Apollo's words.
- 29 Indeed, he was the son of a god. Now he truly felt himself to be divine. No longer should he be thought of as a mere



Key Ideas and Questions

mortal. In the past, time and again Phaeton had watched the Sun move across the blue skies, and now here he was before the Sun God himself, and the Sun God had called him son!

- 30 Phaeton looked for a moment at his radiant father, and then he made his request, "Let me drive the chariot of the Sun across the heavens for one day," he asked. Surely, Phaeton thought to himself, if I drive the chariot, then no one can doubt that Apollo is my father.
- 31 Instantly, Apollo realized his mistake. He grew pale and frowned. "I cannot break my promise," he began, "but I will dissuade you if I can. I beg you to withdraw your request. It is not safe, my son. You are young and not strong enough to control the chariot. I am the only one who can master the powerful horses. Not even Zeus, ruler of all gods, has the strength or power to control them. How then can you? Be wise and make some other request."
- 32 "Father," Phaeton persisted, "you vowed I could choose anything! And now you change your mind?" To himself, Phaeton thought, my father is just trying to frighten me. After all, by driving the chariot I will prove to everyone that I have the right to be a god, and then I can live among the gods and have my own palace. Why should I go back to living like a mortal? I will risk everything to be called a god, even my life!
- 33 Apollo could see from the obstinate expression on Phaeton's face that the boy's pride had made him foolish. "Think, Phaeton!" Apollo urged. "In the morning, the first part of the road across the sky is very steep, so steep it is almost vertical. It is very difficult not to fall out of the chariot. The middle of the road is so high in the heavens that even I get dizzy when I look down and see the earth and the sea stretched beneath me. The last part of the road is also dangerous because it descends so rapidly that strong gusts of wind can sweep you away."
- 34 "My son," he continued, "the road is also filled with dangerous beasts. The Bull with its sharp horns, the Lion with its powerful jaws, the Scorpion that stings, and the Crab with its snapping claws—these are only some of the dangers you will encounter."

The Sun Must Rise

- *How could Apollo have saved Phaeton? Why didn't he?*
- *Why does their argument end?*

- 35 "It is not honor, but destruction that you will find, Phaeton," Apollo said sternly. "If what you want is for me to prove that you are my son, just look

Key Ideas and Questions

at how worried I am. See how my breast moves with fear, showing a father's concern. Make any other request and I shall grant it."

- 36 Although Apollo did not want harm to come to Phaeton, he also knew that a god who breaks a promise loses his own immortality. Unwilling to sacrifice the powers of a god, Apollo continued trying to persuade his son to make a different request.
- 37 But as they argued, Apollo finally saw that nothing else would satisfy the boy, and he stopped trying to dissuade him. It is hopeless, he sighed to himself. Besides, there was no time. The dark skies lightened from black to purple, the morning stars grew dim, and the moment for starting the chariot had arrived. A new day was beginning and the sun must rise. When Apollo saw this, he ordered the Hours to bring out the chariot, harness the horses to it, and fasten the reins in their giant mouths.
- 38 Hearing Apollo's command, Phaeton could not resist imagining himself in the golden chariot, his hands triumphantly guiding the wild beasts that even Zeus could not tame. He did not give a thought to any of the dangers Apollo had explained; he felt neither a quiver of fear nor a drop of doubt in his own powers. Instead, he was elated to think that everyone would see him driving the chariot and would finally know the truth.
- 39 Phaeton grinned with delight when he saw the Sun's chariot up close. It was covered completely in gold and was decorated with sparkling diamonds and other precious gems. It was as majestic as the Sun itself, and Phaeton could not wait to begin his adventure.
- 40 Defeated, Apollo quietly gave his son a last bit of advice. "Hold the reins tight and use the whip wisely. Do not go too high, or you will burn the heavens, nor too low, or you will set the earth on fire. Remember, the middle path is the safest and the best. Night has passed; there is no more time. Now, take the reins." Proudly, Phaeton grabbed the reins and jumped into the chariot. He had made his choice, and his fate was decided.

The Horses Take Control

- *How do the horses react when they notice Apollo is not guiding them?*
- *How do Phaeton's feelings about driving the chariot change during his ride?*

- 41 The horses, which were impatiently stamping the ground and filling the air with their loud snorts and hot breath, felt the chariot shift as Phaeton leapt to his place and took hold of the reins. Instantly their feet left the ground,

Key Ideas and Questions

and the chariot flew through the clouds, ahead of the morning breezes. For a few ecstatic seconds, Phaeton felt as though he was King of the Sky. But suddenly, everything changed.

42 When the horses realized that the chariot was lighter than usual and Apollo's strong hands were not controlling them, they started to fly faster and faster. The chariot began to sway and bounce back and forth, wildly out of control. The massive animals rushed on, leaving the road. Phaeton was too frightened and too dizzy to pull on the reins, and he didn't know what path the horses should take. The fiery horses were in control.



43 The horses climbed higher and higher into the heavens. Phaeton screamed when he saw the monsters that his father had warned him about, the Bull, the Lion, and the Crab. Then the Scorpion angrily extended its two great claws toward Phaeton, who trembled with dread. Next, Scorpion flicked its poisonous tail, aiming its venomous stinger directly at the youth. Now crazed with fear, Phaeton shut his eyes, let go of the reins, and clung to the side of the chariot with all his might. Without a master, the horses panicked, plunging toward Earth faster than a falling stone and madly flinging the chariot from side to side.

Mother Earth Cries Out

- Why does Mother Earth cry out to Zeus?
- How was Earth saved from destruction?

44 As the chariot plummeted toward Earth, the heat of the Sun turned the clouds to smoke, and then the Earth itself caught fire. Green meadows burned and were reduced to white ashes. Cities were destroyed in fiery flames. Mountains, fields, trees, and



Key Ideas and Questions

crops were all set ablaze. Rivers steamed and dried to dust. Even the sea shrank back to small pools, until dried fish were left dead on white-hot sands. Everywhere, people and animals died from the fires and from the thick, black smoke.

45 At last, Mother Earth could withstand the heat no longer. “Zeus,” she shouted to the heavens of Mount Olympus, dwelling place of the gods, “I am dying! I will perish if you don’t stop this boy and his chariot! Have pity on us!” she called.

46 Then her voice grew feeble, as heat and thirst overtook her. “Save us from destruction,” she whispered at the last.

47 Zeus heard Mother Earth’s pleas, grabbed a thunderbolt and hurled it at the chariot and the terrified youth who crouched inside, still holding on desperately. The thunderbolt struck Phaeton, setting his hair on fire, and he fell headfirst from the chariot, leaving a trail like a shooting star as he tumbled to his death. The chariot broke apart, and the maddened horses raced snorting back to the stable of their true master, Apollo.

48 The great river Eradinus received Phaeton’s burning body. Phaeton’s grief-stricken mother, Clymene, and Apollo’s daughters—sisters Phaeton had never known—came to the river to bury his body and mourn for him. Over his grave they cried and wept and could not be comforted. At last, the gods took pity on them and turned them into weeping willow trees, which every autumn shed tears of golden leaves in memory of Apollo’s son, Phaeton.



Key Ideas and Questions



National Research & Development Center to Improve
EDUCATION FOR SECONDARY ENGLISH LEARNERS

WestEd 



Unit 1: Mythology: The Human Search to
Explain the Unknown

LET'S PLAY THE TEST GAME!



Unit 1: Mythology: The Human Search to Explain the Unknown



Let's Play the Test Game!

Every year, students around the country take standardized tests. Even though these tests are not always good at capturing all the deep and complex learning that has taken place during a school year, they are a useful tool for teachers to see what students have learned and where they may need additional support. Also, schools, universities, and even some jobs use standardized tests to decide who gets admitted, who can get scholarships to pay for their education, and who can skip certain classes or subjects. When you apply for a driver's license, you will take a standardized test. So, while they might not always be fun to take, it is important that all students do well on these tests and demonstrate what they know and what they have learned.

Standardized tests can be complicated because:

- They isolate facts and information, which is not the best way to understand the overall meaning of a text.
- They present questions and information in confusing ways that often have little to do with real life.
- It might be that students know the information they are being tested on, but test makers ask things in different ways than their teacher. Therefore, they might be confused and provide the wrong answer.
- The way the test is organized and how answer choices are presented can confuse people, causing them to choose incorrect answers even when they know the right ones.

The best way to prepare to take these tests is to practice for them and understand how they are structured and formatted. Tests are like games that students can learn to play successfully and get better at over time. Just as with any game, the first time you play, you are not excellent at it. With practice, you hone your skills, and eventually you can get quite good at it, even when it may not be your favorite game to play.

As you have been going through this first lesson, you have been learning many things. Your knowledge about the topics you have been studying has increased, as has your ability to read, write, analyze, justify, and explain your thinking. Now, all that is left is to “play the test game.” That just means we’ll practice the format of the test and identify the rules of testing so we can show what we know—and win the “game!” Even if you struggle with the game at the beginning, do not give up. With practice, you will get better over time!



Some strategies to help you:

1. Read the directions carefully.
2. Answer the question for yourself first, without looking at the answers.
3. Now read the answer choices. Eliminate the answers you know are wrong.
4. Choose the answer that is closest to your answer, from Step 2.
5. Guess when you aren't sure or don't know.
6. Do not spend too much time considering what you do not know now. Just mark the test question so you can go back if you have time at the end to reconsider an answer.

Let's do the first one together

1. Read the following passage about the myth of Arachne:

“In the myth of Arachne, a mortal weaver (Arachne) challenged the goddess Athena to a weaving competition. Both the tapestries that Arachne and Athena wove were beautiful. Arachne’s tapestry illustrated the flaws of the gods—such as being arrogant—while Athena’s tapestry showed the victories of the gods. Themes chosen for the design communicated both characters’ personalities. However, in ancient Greece, humans and gods were not equal, thus humans needed to show respect. This is why, when Athena heard Arachne’s bold statement about the gods, she became angry and transformed Arachne into a spider, condemning her to weave for eternity. This myth explores themes of pride and the consequences of challenging divine authority.”

Now, answer the following question:

Based on this summary, what is the primary theme or lesson conveyed in the myth of Arachne?

- A. The importance the Ancient Greeks placed on humility and respect for divine authority.
- B. The value of challenging the gods.
- C. The significance of showcasing one’s talents and creativity.
- D. The need to avoid weaving beautiful and complicated tapestries.

Remember the test taking strategies:

- Read the directions carefully.

What does the question ask you to do? Make sure to read both before and after the text. In your own words, what are the directions for question 1?

- Answer the question for yourself first.

Without looking at the answer options, how would you answer the question in your own words? Write your answer below:

- Eliminate the answers you know are wrong.

Look at the answer choices one by one and compare them to your answer. Eliminate the ones that you think are not correct. Draw a line through them.

Answer choices I can eliminate	My reason

- Choose the answer that is closest to your answer.

Now choose the best answer of the remaining choices.
Is it close to your original answer?
Explain why you chose this answer:

- Guess when you aren't sure or don't know.
- Do not spend too much time considering what you do not know now. Just mark the test question so you can go back if you have time at the end to reconsider an answer.

2. Read the following excerpt:

“Mario sat quietly in the corner of the room, his eyes fixated on the book in his lap. He had always been the type of person who loved to learn, and his curiosity about the world grew year after year. Even though his classmates often teased him for being a bookworm, he continued to read and learn, always eager to explore new worlds through the pages of a book.”

Identify two character traits that can be attributed to Mario based on the excerpt. Explain how the text provides evidence for each trait.

Please provide a complete response for each trait and use specific details from the text to support your answer.

3. In the myth of Arachne, what lesson did Arachne learn through her encounter with the goddess Athena? Circle the best answer:
- A. Arachne learned that boasting about her skills would lead to fame and admiration.
 - B. Arachne learned that mortals and gods were equal.
 - C. Arachne learned that she could defeat Athena in a weaving contest.
 - D. Arachne learned that humility and respect for the gods were essential virtues.

Now, let's try with a new story.

When you encounter a long text on a test, it's a good idea to start by reading the questions at the end so you know what to look for as you read.

- Read the questions you find after the text below. In the box, write some notes about important things you should look for and pay attention to as you read.

Important information to look for as I read:

- Now read the text paying close attention to the information you identified. As you find the information mark it in some way, so you remember where it is. You can underline, circle, etc.

The Myth of King Midas and the Golden Touch

- 1 Long ago in a land called Phrygia there lived a prosperous king by the name of Midas who prided himself in being one of the wealthiest men to have ever lived. Anyone who saw King Midas would have thought that he had everything anyone could ever want in life. He lived in a great castle, filled with jewels and luxuries. His shoes were covered with diamonds, and his clothes were adorned with gold and silver buttons. He had a loving wife and a beautiful daughter, whom he adored. And even though he was very wealthy, Midas was greedy and thought that to be truly happy, he must have more and more possessions.
- 2 His greed and avarice blinded him from appreciating all the wonderful things he already had. His only thoughts were about how he could become wealthier. His goal was to become the richest, most powerful king in all the land; he wanted everyone to envy him and his riches. He cared little for the people who lived in his kingdom, focusing instead on his own success and ignoring the struggles of people who were less fortunate than he.
- 3 One day, an old man named Silenus, wandered near King Midas's castle. He had been drinking quite a lot did not know where he was. Some of the poor people in King Midas's kingdom saw him and recognized him as the god Dionysus's teacher. They immediately took him before King Midas to find out what to do with him.
- 4 When the old man came into the King's court, Midas recognized him immediately. Since he knew that his new guest was in good graces with the gods, he decided to let him stay for a few days and show him a good time. Silenus ended up staying in the castle for ten days and nights with parties, feasts, music and dancing each day. On the eleventh day, King Midas returned Silenus to his student, Dionysus.
- 5 Upon seeing his old teacher returned safely, Dionysus was filled with joy and felt very grateful toward the king. He told King Midas that he would give him one wish—anything he wanted in the world would be his. Midas thought for a long time. As his mind fantasized about what could be his, he did not think of world peace, feeding the poor or helping the sick. No! His only thoughts were about himself! What could he wish for that would make him the envy of all other kings? Finally, he made up his mind. "I want everything I touch to turn immediately into gold!" he told Dionysus.
- 6 Dionysus's face turned sad. "Are you sure? You can have anything you want," he told the king.

Key Ideas and Questions

- 7 “Yes, yes. I want gold...more gold!...everything to be gold! Then I will be the richest man on earth!” King Midas almost screamed.
- 8 “Very well, then,” the deity consented. “Everything you touch from now on will turn into gold.”
- 9 With their conversation now over and the wish granted, King Midas turned to begin the journey back home. Almost immediately he decided to try his new powers to see what would happen. As he was walking, he passed a mighty oak tree with long branches that looked like arms reaching into the sky. He closed his eyes and slowly reached for a low hanging branch. As soon as he touched it, the branch immediately turned to gold and fell to the ground as the trunk could no longer hold its weight.
- 10 Midas couldn’t believe his eyes. He ran around like a little boy gleefully picking up objects and watching as they turned to gold - first a stone, then an apple from the apple tree, and even a mound of dirt.
- 11 By the time he arrived back home to his castle, he was overjoyed. “Servants! Come quickly!” he ordered in a loud voice as his servants ran to see what he wanted.
- 12 “Prepare a feast at once for tonight! This is the best day of my life; we must celebrate!”
- 13 The servants hurried quickly to make the preparations for the meal. When the meal was ready, King Midas arrived in the banquet hall with a smile from ear to ear. He had never felt so happy in all his life; he was finally going to be the richest man in history!
- 14 He sat down to eat, his eyes wide with hunger and excitement. He reached out to grab some bread, but it immediately turned to gold. Next, he tried to drink from his wine cup but both the cup and wine inside turned to heavy, pure gold. He put the bread to his lips and almost broke his teeth when he tried to take a bit.
- 15 “What have I done?” he screamed as the servants looked on in horror. “I will surely starve to death. How could I have been so foolish?”
- 16 Suddenly his attitude changed. His wish had become a curse, and he realized how greed had taken him over. He now wished more than anything that he was the poorest man on earth but able to eat and keep on living. In despair, he raised his hands to the gods, and cried out “Dionysus, please hear me! Deliver me from this curse! I no longer want to see anything gold”

Key Ideas and Questions

- 17 Dionysus heard his plea, and quickly arrived by the king's side. "Oh, dear Midas, your selfishness has almost killed you—but don't worry, I will help you. You must go to the river Pactolus and plunge your head into its waters. Then, the water will wash away your fault and its punishment."
- 18 King Midas wasted no time in running down to the river. Without thinking, he plunged his entire head into the cool, running water. When he did, the power of converting objects to gold passed out of him and into the water. Midas looked down at the river and was astonished to see gold sparkling in the water. At the bottom of the river, he saw tiny gold nuggets mixed in with the other rocks just as they remain today. Midas was hopeful that he had returned to normal, leaving the gold behind. Happy, he returned home and promised himself never again to be blinded by greed.
- 19 From that day on, Midas became a better person, generous and grateful for all that he had in his life. He looked toward the sky and said, "I have learned my lesson, Dionysus; I am no longer greedy and am happy with what I have." Midas then became exceedingly generous with the people in his kingdom, sharing his wealth with them. When he died, everyone mourned the loss of their beloved king.

Key Ideas and Questions

Now answer the questions using the information you identified and what you marked in the text.

Remember to use the test taking strategies we practiced before.

1. Read the directions carefully.
2. Answer the question for yourself first, without looking at the answers.
3. Eliminate the answers you know are wrong.
4. Choose the answer that is closest to your answer from Step 2.
5. Guess when you aren't sure or don't know.
6. Do not spend too much time considering what you do not know now. Just mark the test question so you can go back if you have time at the end to reconsider an answer.

King Midas Questions

1. What is the meaning of the word “avarice” as used in the passage in Section 2?
 - A. Generosity and kindness.
 - B. Materialistic and excessive desire for wealth.
 - C. Wisdom and intelligence.
 - D. Gratefulness and contentment.
2. What can be inferred about King Midas’s change in attitude after his encounter with Dionysus?
 - A. He became even more focused on accumulating wealth.
 - B. He regretted his greed and wished for simplicity and generosity.
 - C. He decided to punish the poor people in his kingdom.
 - D. He planned to seek revenge against Dionysus.
3. Which sentence from the passage provides evidence that King Midas was initially focused on accumulating wealth?
 - A. “He had a loving wife and a beautiful daughter, whom he adored.”
 - B. “And even though he was very wealthy, Midas was greedy and thought that to be truly happy, he must have more and more possessions.”
 - C. “Upon seeing his old teacher returned safely, Dionysus was filled with joy and felt very grateful toward the king.”
 - D. “He had never felt so happy in all his life; he was finally going to be the richest man in history.”
4. Describe the impact of King Midas’s wish on his life and how it shapes his character. Use evidence from the passage to support your response.

5. Using evidence from the text, explain how King Midas's attitude changes throughout the story.