



# Hercules

7<sub>A</sub>

## ***Introducing the Read-Aloud***

**10** minutes

### **What Have We Already Learned?**

**Note:** You may wish to continue the Greek Myths Chart from previous lessons, adding the details for the last myth heard, “Daedalus and Icarus,” if you did not already do so during the Pausing Point.

Help students review the Greek gods and goddesses they have learned about so far by using the Greek Gods Posters. Begin with the following questions:

- What is Mount Olympus? (a real mountain in Greece that the ancient Greeks believed was the home of the gods)
- How many gods and goddesses did the ancient Greeks believe lived on Mount Olympus? (twelve)
- What is a myth? (a fictional story with supernatural beings, like gods and goddesses, and/or heroes; a story that tries to explain events in nature or teaches a lesson) What examples can you give of some of these elements from the myths you have already heard? (Answers may vary.)

As you point to each god in each poster, have one or two students share something they have learned about this god or goddess.

Remind students that myths are fictional stories that try to explain events in nature or are meant to teach the listener a moral lesson. Tell students that in some of the myths they have heard so far, the main characters have been gods. You may wish to reference the details on the Greek Myths Chart you created during previous lessons for this information. Remind students that not all Greek myths involve gods and goddesses. Some myths feature courageous heroes and nonhuman characters. Using the Flip Book, review with students heroes from earlier myths, like Theseus.

## Essential Background Information or Terms

---

### *Meet the Characters*

**Note:** You may wish to add to the Character Chart as you introduce the characters in this read-aloud.



← **Show image 7A-5: Theseus inviting Hercules to Athens**

Remind students that they have already heard a story about Theseus. Tell them that he also plays an important role in this story. Tell students that the new character in the image is Hercules. Ask students to look carefully at the two characters in the image and think about the looks on their faces and the way they are standing. Ask students to think of words and phrases that might describe the interaction between Theseus and Hercules. (friendly, happy to see each other, etc.)

## Purpose for Listening

---

Tell students to listen carefully to find out who the hero is in this Greek myth.



## Hercules

### ← Show image 7A-1: Family running away from Hercules

- 1 Who or what do you think Hercules is? Why do you think this family is so scared of Hercules?

“It’s Hercules!” a boy shouted. His father stopped in the middle of plowing their field and ran to get his son. The boy’s mother, terrified at the sight of the large man, stopped her work in the field and dashed to join the rest of her family. They all rushed into their farmhouse and slammed the door.<sup>1</sup>



### ← Show image 7A-2: Hercules’s heroic feats of strength

- 2 Based on the way in which it is used in the sentence, what do you think the word *commotion* means?

The huge, muscular man who had caused all this **commotion** sighed and continued walking past the farm in long, powerful strides.<sup>2</sup> He was used to this sort of thing, although he remembered a time when his appearance would have been a cause for joyous celebration. The man was Hercules, mightiest of heroes and son of Zeus.<sup>3</sup> As a baby, he once subdued, or calmed, two snakes that someone put in his crib, such was his strength. He could carve a new channel<sup>4</sup> in the ground to change the direction of a river or wrestle and defeat fierce beasts or monsters to save people in trouble.<sup>5</sup>

- 3 Who is Zeus?

- 4 or groove

- 5 Does it sound like Hercules used his strength to help people or to hurt people? Why do you think people now fear him?

There was only one thing Hercules could not defeat: himself. That was why everyone now feared him. You see, Hercules had a temper as powerful as his muscles. When he became angry, he would strike out against whatever—or whomever—had angered him. Then he would feel terrible, thinking, “I told myself I would not let that happen again!” But it was always too late for whomever he had hurt.



### ← Show image 7A-3: Hercules in exile

- 6 How would you feel if you were Hercules and heard this from the Greeks you had so long protected?

At last the other Greeks told Hercules, “You have done many great things for us, but now you are a threat to our safety. You may no longer live among us. Furthermore, anyone sheltering you, feeding you, or even speaking with you will also be forced out from among us.”<sup>6</sup> So Hercules, once the most beloved and admired person in the land, was forced to wander, friendless and alone.

7 or extremely nourishing

After a while, he no longer cared about his appearance. His hair and beard grew shaggy; his clothing became torn. If no one else cared, why should he? Food was not a problem, for he was a great hunter, but he no longer took pleasure in a hearty<sup>7</sup> meal. He ate just to survive.

8 *Aimlessly* means without purpose or direction. What do you think it means to have the strength and courage of a lion?

For three long years, Hercules, who had the strength and courage of a lion, wandered **aimlessly**.<sup>8</sup> If he stumbled into a place where some **dreadful**<sup>9</sup> danger threatened the people, he would take care of the problem on his own, although no one had asked him to do so or thanked him at the end. Then he would continue on his way.

9 or terrible



← **Show image 7A-4: Theseus approaching Hercules**

10 or stop

One day, as he sat on a hillside with his back against a tree trunk, Hercules noticed a line of horsemen riding into sight. Their road passed by the foot of his hill, so they came closer. Then, to Hercules's shock, the lead rider held up his hand to halt<sup>10</sup> the others and, turning his horse, started alone up the hill straight toward Hercules. As the rider came closer and closer, Hercules rose to his feet in surprise and alarm. He thought, "Doesn't he know what will happen to him if he approaches me?" The huge man began to wave his arms and shout, "Go back! Go back!" Still, the horseman rode straight toward him.

11 What have you already heard about Theseus, king of Athens? Was he always the king of Athens?

Now Hercules could see the rider's face, and his concern became even greater, for the horseman was another great Grecian hero, Theseus, king of Athens.<sup>11</sup> The two men had become loyal friends ever since Hercules had rescued Theseus from the underworld.<sup>12</sup> Now, as Theseus continued toward him, Hercules again shouted, "Go back!"

12 But that's a story for another time.



← **Show image 7A-5: Theseus inviting Hercules to Athens**

But Theseus rode straight up to Hercules, dismounted, and then took Hercules's huge hand between his own. "I have been looking for you, my friend," Theseus said, and despite everything, in that moment Hercules felt a faint ray of hope. Theseus went on,

13 What does the word *dreadful* mean?

14 or his position as king

15 What advice do you think Apollo will give Hercules? How do you think Hercules can master his temper and strength?

16 What other kinds of adventures do you think Hercules will have?

“I know you did not do those dreadful things on purpose.”<sup>13</sup> Come with me to Athens, where the people care more for true justice.”

By helping Hercules, Theseus was risking his crown<sup>14</sup> and his entire way of life. Fortunately, the Athenians so completely trusted his wisdom and honor that they then welcomed Hercules among them. Still, the huge man felt sad for what he had done. Theseus told him, “You will never be free of the past until you have worked away your guilt and mastered your temper and your great strength. Go ask Apollo, the god of wisdom and truth, how to do these things. And remember always, you have a friend who believes in you.”<sup>15</sup>

“Thank you,” replied Hercules. “You have taught me that there are more kinds of courage than I ever knew. One must be brave to face a monster, but braver still to do what is right when all are against you.”

So Hercules set out once more, never guessing that his most remarkable adventures and his greatest glory still lay before him.<sup>16</sup>

## Discussing the Read-Aloud

15 minutes

### Comprehension Questions

10 minutes

1. *Literal* Who is the hero in this Greek myth? (Hercules; Theseus for being Hercules’s friend) Who is Hercules the son of? (Zeus) [Point to Greek Gods Poster 1 (Zeus).]
2. *Inferential* What kinds of good deeds does Hercules perform as a hero with his great strength? (carves a new path for a river; defeats fierce monsters; saves people in dreadful situations)



← Show image 7A-3: Hercules in exile

3. *Inferential* Why does Hercules sometimes cause a commotion? (People run away from him and no longer want him to live among them because he has a dreadful temper; he is no longer well liked.)
4. *Evaluative* Was it appropriate for Hercules to hurt others just because he was angry with them? (No, that was dreadful.) How should he have dealt with his anger? (Answers may vary.)



5. *Literal* For three years, Hercules wanders aimlessly because he is told that he cannot live with the other Greeks. Who stops his aimless wandering? (King Theseus of Athens)

← **Show image 7A-5: Theseus inviting Hercules to Athens**

6. *Inferential* Why do you think Theseus wants to help Hercules? (He is a true friend.)
7. *Literal* Who does Theseus tell Hercules to see to free himself of his past? (Apollo, the god of wisdom)
8. *Evaluative* What clues did you hear in this myth that help you to know this is a Greek myth? (set in ancient Greece; has the Greek gods Zeus and Apollo; talks about Athens)

[Please continue to model the *Think Pair Share* process for students, as necessary, and scaffold students in their use of the process.]

I am going to ask you a question. I will give you a minute to think about the question, and then I will ask you to turn to your neighbor and discuss the question. Finally, I will call on several of you to share what you discussed with your partner.

9. *Evaluative Think Pair Share:* In the read-aloud, Theseus tells Hercules: “Remember always that you have a friend who believes in you.” Do you have a friend who believes in you, or do you believe in someone? (Answers may vary.)
10. After hearing today’s read-aloud and questions and answers, do you have any remaining questions? [If time permits, you may wish to allow for individual, group, or class research of the text and/or other resources to answer these questions.]

## Word Work: Aimlessly

5 minutes

1. In the read-aloud you heard, “For three long years, Hercules, who had the strength and courage of a lion, wandered *aimlessly*.”
2. Say the word *aimlessly* with me.
3. If you do something aimlessly, you do it without a specific purpose or destination.
4. Fred and his brother walked around their neighborhood aimlessly.
5. Have you ever done anything aimlessly? Try to use the word *aimlessly* when you tell about it. [Ask two or three students. If necessary, guide and/or rephrase the students’ responses: “I \_\_\_\_\_ aimlessly once when . . .”]
6. What’s the word we’ve been talking about?

Use a *Making Choices* activity for follow-up. Directions: I am going to read several scenarios to you. If what I describe is someone doing something aimlessly, say, “That is being done aimlessly.” If what I describe is someone doing something with a specific purpose or destination, say, “That is not being done aimlessly.”

1. doodling all over a piece of paper without a plan (That is being done aimlessly.)
2. writing a letter to a friend (That is not being done aimlessly.)
3. walking to school (That is not being done aimlessly.)
4. wandering around outside (That is being done aimlessly.)
5. running laps in P. E. (That is not being done aimlessly.)



**Complete Remainder of the Lesson Later in the Day**



# Hercules

7  
B

## Extensions

20 minutes

### Greek Myths Journal (Instructional Master 7B-1)

Tell students that they will be continuing their journal to help them remember important information they learn in this domain about the Greek gods and Greek myths. Have students share which characters they heard about in today's read-aloud. (Hercules and Theseus) Ask students if any of these characters were gods or goddesses. (no)

Show students Instructional Master 7B-1. Tell them that for today's journal entry, they should write "Hercules" on the title blank. They should then write two to three sentences about one of the characters to help them remember who he is, what he does in today's myth, and why he might have been important to the ancient Greeks. After writing two to three sentences, students may also draw a picture in the rectangle to illustrate the information.

### Character, Setting, Plot (Instructional Master 7B-2)

Using Instructional Master 7B-2, have students fill in the chart with the characters, setting, and plot they heard about in today's myth. When students are ready to fill in the plot portion of their chart, tell them that they have only heard the beginning of Hercules's story and to only fill in the first plot box. Share with students that as they hear more about Hercules they will be able to fill in the "Middle" and "End" boxes, as well as add new characters and settings to the "Character(s)" and "Setting(s)" boxes.

### Writing a Greek Myth: Plan (Instructional Master 7B-3)

Remind students that they have been listening to Greek myths, a kind of fictional story. Ask students what a myth is. (a fictional story that has supernatural beings and/or heroes as the main characters and tries to explain events in nature and/or teach moral



lessons) Review with students some of the key elements of a fictional story in general and myths in particular: characters (gods and goddesses, supernatural creatures, etc.), settings (Mount Olympus, Underworld, Earth, etc.), and plot (explaining something in nature like the changing seasons, how animals came to be, teaching a lesson, such as that in “Arachne the Weaver,” etc.).

Tell students that it is now time for them to write their own myths. Tell them that they first need to plan their myth by brainstorming ideas. Remind students that planning is the first step in the writing process, and that drafting and editing are the next steps.

Ask students to think about events in nature that they would like to explain in a myth. (why there is lightning, why volcanoes erupt, why olives grow on trees, why the sun rises every morning and sets every evening, etc.). Have students share these ideas with the class. Explain that because this is brainstorming, they should feel free to share any ideas that come to mind. Continue collecting ideas that come to mind until you have several ideas recorded on a piece of chart paper, a chalkboard, or a whiteboard. Have students select one of these ideas as the topic for their own myth.

Using Instructional Master 7B-3, have students decide which Greek gods or goddesses they want to include in their myth. You may wish to use the Greek Gods Posters to help students choose. Tell students they can also choose to include a character other than the Greek gods or goddesses they have heard about. Tell students to write their chosen characters in the “Character(s)” box. Next, ask students to brainstorm possible settings for their myths, such as Sparta, the Parthenon, etc. Have students write their chosen setting in the “Setting(s)” box. Finally, remind students of their plot ideas and what event in nature they are trying to explain. Tell students that this event in nature is the end of their myth and that they should write it in the “End” box.

Ask students what they think should happen first. Tell them to write down what happens first in the “Beginning” box on Instructional Master 7B-3. Then ask students what they think should happen next. Tell them to write this in the “Middle” box. Remind students that many events can happen in the middle of a story. Finally, have students add any additional information in the “End” box.

Depending on your class or individual students' needs, you may wish to work with some students in a small group as you write a myth together, or you may wish to have some students work independently and use Lesson 4 ("Arachne the Weaver") as a model, having students substitute Athena, Arachne, and the spider for different gods/goddesses, human characters, and animals.

Collect students' work and tell them they will begin the draft stage in the next lesson.

## ***Take-Home Material***

---

### **Family Letter**

---

Send home Instructional Master 7B-4.