



Other Adventures of Hercules

8A

Introducing the Read-Aloud

10 minutes

What Have We Already Learned?

Review with students the previous myth about Hercules by having them use the Flip Book to retell the myth. Make sure students share that Theseus suggested Hercules go to Apollo for guidance. You may also wish to have students review by sharing what they have filled out thus far on their Character, Setting, Plot charts (Instructional Master 7B-2).

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.

Ask a student to point to the Greek Gods Poster 9 (Apollo). Remind students that in the last read-aloud, Theseus suggested to Hercules that he go and seek guidance from Apollo. Ask students why they think Apollo may have good advice for Hercules. (He is the god of wisdom and truth.)



← Show image 8A-2: King Eurystheus telling Hercules of the Nemean lion

Tell students that in addition to Theseus and Hercules, they will also hear about King Eurystheus. Ask students to think about what might be happening between Hercules and King Eurystheus in this image based on what they can see of their expressions and movements.

Show Image Card 21 (Atlas). Tell students that they will hear about the Hesperides but they will not see an image of them. Tell students that the Hesperides are the daughters of the giant Atlas, who they will also hear about in this read-aloud.



← **Show image 8A-3: Hercules taking aim at the lion**

Tell students that they will also hear about another mythical beast called the Nemean lion. Ask students if they see any clues in the image about what might happen.

Making Predictions About the Read-Aloud

Reread the last line of the read-aloud in Lesson 7: “So Hercules set out once more, never guessing that his most remarkable adventures and his greatest glory still lay before him.” Then share the title of today’s read-aloud, and ask students to predict what kind of remarkable adventures Hercules might have in the future.

Purpose for Listening

Tell students to listen carefully to find out whether or not their predictions are correct.



Other Adventures of Hercules

← Show image 8A-1: Priestess at Delphi

As Hercules journeyed across Greece, he thought about what his friend Theseus had 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.”

Hercules traveled up into the mountains until he reached Delphi [DEL-fee], where there was a famous temple built to honor the god Apollo. In a cave behind this temple sat a priestess. When someone asked her a question, she would go into a trance, as if she were asleep, and Apollo would speak through her. The words would come from her mouth, with her voice, but the Greeks believed they were really Apollo’s words.

Hercules asked for Apollo’s **guidance**,¹ and the answer came back: “Go to King Eurystheus [yur-*ISS*-thoos] and do as he commands.”

Thus began perhaps the most famous of Hercules’s many adventures. King Eurystheus sent the hero out to perform the most difficult tasks he could think of, twelve in all, and these daring deeds became known as “The Labors of Hercules.”²

← Show image 8A-2: King Eurystheus telling Hercules of the Nemean lion

The first of these labors that King Eurystheus commanded Hercules to complete involved a large and dangerous animal. King Eurystheus was a small man, and he paced nervously back and forth in front of his throne as he spoke to the huge Hercules, who stood listening. “In another part of Greece known as ‘Nemea’ [neh-*ME*-ah],” the king began, “there lives a dangerous lion. You, Hercules, shall subdue the lion so he won’t ever hurt anyone. I am told that the lion’s hide³ is magical. No material known to man,

1 or advice

2 A labor is a job or task. So Hercules has twelve jobs to do. What do you think these labors might be?



3 or skin

4 Do you think Hercules will be able to subdue the lion? How?

5 The word *accurate* means without mistake.

6 Here the word *bow* means a long, thin piece of wood used for shooting arrows. The word *bow* can also mean a knot that is made by tying a ribbon or string into two or more loops.



such as metal, stone, or wood, can cut that lion's skin. You will have to think of another way to stop it."

Bowing, Hercules said, "I do not know how I can do this, but I will try."⁴

However, as he left the throne room, he thought, "Perhaps this story is not **accurate**."⁵ Perhaps the hunters simply have not gotten close enough to shoot their arrows at the lion, but I will bring my own bow and arrows, as well as my heavy stone club."⁶

← **Show image 8A-3: Hercules taking aim at the lion**

Hercules journeyed to Nemea, and, at last, found the fierce animal out in the forest, sleeping in the midday heat. Hercules moved forward until he had a clear view of the beast. Then the hero drew an arrow from his quiver and set the end to the string of his bow. Drawing back the string, he took careful aim, and then let go, but the arrow simply bounced right off the lion! Its hide was indeed magical.

The lion was unhurt, but it still felt the blow. It awoke and leapt to its feet, roaring with rage, and then charged Hercules. Throwing down his bow and arrows, the hero stood waiting, his heavy stone club in his hand.

← **Show image 8A-4: Hercules breaking his club over the lion**



When the lion leaped at him, Hercules simply stepped to the side and let the lion sail right past him. Then Hercules struck with his club, which would have been powerful enough to knock down an elephant, but the Nemean lion, protected by its magical hide, did not suffer terribly from the impact.⁷ It only sank to the ground for a moment, stunned. The club, however, had shattered into a hundred pieces.

7 So was that a strong blow?



← **Show image 8A-5: Hercules wrestling the lion**

Knowing that in a moment the large cat would leap to the attack again, Hercules turned and leaped upon the lion's back. Then Hercules reached forward and grabbed the lion's front paws so

that it could not turn them against Hercules. The furious beast rolled on its back on the ground and tried to shake him off. But Hercules' strength was too much, and he was able to subdue the lion.



← **Show image 8A-6: Hercules making his lion-skin outfit**

Catching his breath, Hercules thought, “The report was true. The lion’s hide protected it from my club and my arrows. If I could wear it, it would provide me protection against swords and arrows. How can I possibly do this?”

After trying many ways to get the hide off the lion, Hercules had a brilliant idea: he lifted one of the lion’s paws from the ground and used the lion’s own claws to cut the hide.

So that is how Hercules slew the Nemean lion and succeeded in completing the first of his twelve labors for King Eurystheus.⁸

8 What do you think some of Hercules’ other labors might be?



← **Show image 8A-7: King Eurystheus telling of the golden apples**

King Eurystheus [yur-*ISS*-thoos] smiled at the large man in the lion skin who stood before his throne. “Hercules,” said the king, “I have another labor for you to attempt, or try.⁹ I want you to bring me three of the golden apples of the Hesperides [heh-*SPARE*-ih-deez].”

9 What is a labor?

This startled even Hercules. “But, Your Majesty, those three magical sisters live beyond any land to which humans have ever traveled. According to stories, in the middle of their garden is a tree from which there grow apples of real gold. The sisters keep the location secret, for otherwise people would constantly **trample**¹⁰ the place just to get the gold. How am I to bring you these apples if no one even knows where they are or if they even exist?”

10 or stomp all over

The king shrugged. “If it were easy, Hercules, I would not need you. Now go.”¹¹

11 Does this labor seem more difficult than Hercules’ first? Do you think he will need to use his muscles or his brain more for this task?



12 or without seeing any results

← **Show image 8A-8: Ship setting sail**

So Hercules, who had traveled throughout the known world, now set sail for the unknown world. He sailed west and after searching in vain¹² for several weeks, he thought, “There must be a better way to find the Hesperides.” Suddenly he grinned. “Wait a moment! I cannot find them myself, but I know where to find someone who might be able to help.”



13 This is how the ancient Greeks explained how and why the sky, the stars, and the moon remained above them. Is there really a person who holds up the sky?

← **Show image 8A-9: Atlas holding up the sky**

You see, the Hesperides were the daughters of the biggest and strongest of all the giants, Atlas. The giants used to rule the world before Zeus became king of the gods. After Zeus became king, he punished Atlas for fighting against him by having him stand and hold the entire sky on his massive shoulders so that it would not fall down upon the earth.¹³

Hercules journeyed until he found a range of enormous mountains. In the middle of them stood Atlas bent beneath the weight of the sky. Hercules shouted, “Hello, Atlas!”

Atlas squinted downward, calling in a deep voice, “Who is there?”

“It is I, Hercules. I have come to ask a favor.” Then Hercules explained his mission to clear his **reputation**¹⁴ as a man of bad temper, ending with his request, “I hoped you might direct me to your daughters and their garden.”

Atlas replied, “I would gladly do so, but my daughters made me promise never to tell anyone where it is. I cannot break a promise—not even for you, Hercules. I would get you the apples myself, but I dare not set down the sky.”

Thinking for a moment, Hercules said, “I am nowhere near your size, Atlas, but you know I am strong. Perhaps I can hold the sky while you go and get the three apples I need.”

14 or the people’s opinion of him



← **Show image 8A-10: Hercules holding up the sky**

Atlas had stood unmoving for so long that now even his ideas moved slowly. Finally he agreed, warning, “Brace yourself, Hercules. Even you have never held a weight such as this one.” Slowly the giant lowered himself to his knees and transferred onto Hercules’ shoulders the weight of the entire sky and everything in it.¹⁵

15 Do you think this will be a great weight or a small weight?

Even Hercules, strong as he was, staggered a bit. Then he found his balance and said, “I have it now. Hurry back, Atlas.” The giant strode away with mile-long steps. For a long time, Hercules stood bent beneath that **immeasurable** load.¹⁶

16 or load that is too heavy to measure



← **Show image 8A-11: Atlas with apples**

At last Atlas returned and showed Hercules the golden apples. But to Hercules’ horror, Atlas told him, “I have held the sky almost from the beginning of time, and until today I could never set it down. Now I know someone else is strong enough to take over the job. I will take the apples to your king.”¹⁷

17 Do you think Atlas will come back if Hercules lets him take the apples to King Eurystheus?

Hercules did not like this idea at all. Knowing how slowly Atlas thought, however, the hero answered, “I did not know I would be holding the sky for so long a time, Atlas, so I was not careful enough when I took it from you. There seems to be a planet rubbing against the back of my neck, and it is starting to hurt. I am afraid I might drop the sky. Before you go, please get the blanket from my pack over there and slip it between my neck and that planet.”



← **Show image 8A-12: Hercules tricking Atlas**

Atlas tried, but his hands were so large that he could not get the blanket out of the pack, so Hercules suggested, “Take back the sky long enough for me to set the blanket in place.” He handed the load back to the giant. As soon as Atlas held the sky once more, Hercules said, “I am sorry, Atlas, but Zeus chose *you* to hold the sky. Thank you for bringing me the apples.”¹⁸

18 Who is Zeus?

Atlas sighed, realizing Hercules had turned his own trick back against him. “I suppose it is only fair. Well, Hercules, come back and visit old Atlas again sometime.” So Hercules took the apples to the king, completing another labor, and Atlas never again set down the sky.



← **Show image 8A-13: Hercules happy again**

Hercules completed all twelve of his labors after defeating the Nemean lion and retrieving the golden apples. Once he did, he was free to leave the service of King Eurystheus. He once again traveled all over Greece completing many heroic deeds—but this time he was always thanked for them.¹⁹

19 How do you think Hercules feels now compared to how he felt at the beginning of his story?

Discussing the Read-Aloud

15 minutes

Comprehension Questions

10 minutes

1. *Evaluative* Were your predictions about Hercules’s adventures correct? (Answers may vary.)
2. *Literal* What new characters were introduced in today’s myth? (the priestess at Delphi; King Eurystheus; the Nemean lion; Atlas)
3. *Literal* What new settings does Hercules travel to? (Delphi in the mountains; Nemea; a forest in Nemea; mountains where Atlas stood) Why does Hercules travel to Delphi? (to visit the temple to receive guidance from Apollo on how to free himself from his past)
4. *Literal* What kind of guidance does Apollo give Hercules? (to go see King Eurystheus and do as he commands)



← **Show image 8A-2: King Eurystheus telling Hercules of the Nemean lion**

5. *Literal* What does King Eurystheus tell Hercules to do? (He makes him do the twelve most difficult tasks he can think of, also known as the Labors of Hercules.)
6. *Literal* What is Hercules’s first labor? (subduing the Nemean lion)
7. *Inferential* How does Hercules first try to subdue the lion? (with an arrow) What does he use next? (his club)

8. *Inferential* Were the Nemeans accurate in saying the lion's hide was magical? (yes) How do you know? (Hercules could not pierce the skin with his arrows, and his club did not hurt the lion.) What does Hercules do with the magical hide of the Nemean lion? (He decides to wear it for protection.)
9. *Inferential* What is Hercules' second labor? (to bring back the golden apples of the Hesperides) Which does Hercules have to use the most to complete this labor: his strength or his brain? (both)
10. *Inferential* Why is this a difficult task? (No one has ever traveled to the land of the Hesperides; the location of the apples is secret so that the place isn't trampled; no one even knows if the apples exist.) Why is Hercules willing to attempt such a difficult task? (He is following the king's commands; he wants to change his reputation.)



← **Show image 8A-11: Atlas with apples**

11. *Inferential* After Atlas returns with the apples, he does not want to take the sky back. Why not? (because he is tired of holding the sky with its immeasurable weight)

[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 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.

12. *Evaluative Think Pair Share* Who does Hercules ask for help in finding the golden apples? (Atlas) Atlas is an immortal giant. What do you think the difference is between a Greek god and a giant? (Answers may vary.)

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: Guidance

5 minutes

1. In the read-aloud you heard, “Hercules asked for Apollo’s *guidance*, and the answer came back: ‘Go to King Eurystheus (yur-*iss*-thoos) and do as he commands.’”
2. Say the word *guidance* with me.
3. If you offer someone guidance, you are giving them advice or helping them to make a decision.
4. Without guidance at the pet store, Joshua felt like he wouldn’t be able to decide which pet to buy.
5. Have you ever given or received guidance? Try to use the word *guidance* when you tell about it. [Ask two or three students. If necessary, guide and/or rephrase the students’ responses: “I received guidance from _____ once when . . .” or “I gave guidance to _____ once when . . .”]
6. What’s the word we’ve been talking about?

Use a *Sharing* activity for follow-up. Directions: Discuss with your partner times you have given or received guidance. What happened during these situations, and what do you think would have happened if you had not given or received this guidance? As you share, make sure you use the word *guidance*.



Complete Remainder of the Lesson Later in the Day



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8B

Extensions

20 minutes

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

Using Instructional Master 7B-2, have students complete their charts with the characters, setting, and plot, based on what they heard in today's myth. When students are ready to fill in the plot portion of their chart, tell them that they have now heard the beginning, middle, and end of Hercules' story. Share with students that they can now fill in the "End" box, as well as add new characters (priestess at Delphi; King Eurystheus; lion at Nemea; Atlas) and settings (Delphi; Nemea; mountain range) to the "Character(s)" and "Setting(s)" boxes. If time allows, you may wish to research with students Hercules' other labors.

Sayings and Phrases: Back to the Drawing Board

5 minutes

Proverbs are short, traditional sayings that have been passed along orally from generation to generation. These sayings usually express general truths based on experiences and observations of everyday life. Although some proverbs do have literal meanings—that is, they mean exactly what they say—many proverbs have a richer meaning beyond the literal level. It is important to help your students understand the difference between the literal meanings of the words and their implied or figurative meanings.

Ask students if they have ever heard the saying "back to the drawing board." Have students repeat the saying. Explain that if someone goes back to the drawing board, it means that they have tried something and their first attempt failed, so they have to start all over again. Remind students that in today's read-aloud, Hercules tries to find the golden apples of the Hesperides. His initial, or first, plan is to ask Atlas for the location of the golden apples, but when Atlas cannot tell him the location of the apples, he has to think of a new plan or has to go back to the drawing

board. The second plan Hercules devises, asking Atlas to get the apples for him, is successful.

Ask students if they have ever had to go back to the drawing board. Ask: “Have you ever tried to do something, failed, and so had to think of another way to do it?” Give students the opportunity to share their experiences, and encourage them to use the saying.

Writing a Greek Myth: Draft (Instructional Masters 7B-3, 8B-1, and 8B-2, optional)

Tell students they are going to work on the draft stage of their myths, which they started to plan in the previous lesson. Remind students that the writing process has three steps—plan, draft, edit—and that they have already completed the planning step.

Give each student a copy of their plan (Instructional Master 7B-3 from the previous lesson) and a copy of Instructional Master 8B-1. Tell students that today they are going to use their words and sentences from the planning step to create a myth. Share with students that their drafts will contain the same information as their planning worksheet, but they will write it in paragraph form.

Note: For students who are not ready to complete this step on their own, Instructional Master 8B-2 may be used to provide assistance and structure.

Tell students that the beginning sentence of their myth should introduce the characters and the setting, specifying where and when the myth takes place. Have students consult their planning template notes for a good beginning sentence or sentences for their myths. Then have students write the middle of their myths using the words and sentences from their Instructional Master 7B-3 for ideas. Encourage students to write in the voice of one or more characters as they are writing. You may wish to assist them in formulating sentences that convey dialogue. Tell students that the ending sentence of the myth should wrap up the myth and let the reader know that the myth is finished. Finally, have students create a title for their myth. Explain that their title is the very first thing someone will read and that it should give the reader an idea of what their myth is about.

Depending on your class and time, students' myths may be a paragraph (five sentences) or several paragraphs. At the end of the extension time, collect students' work and tell them that they will complete the edit step in the next lesson.

Note: Due to time constraints, you may wish to give students extra time later in the day to complete their drafts or assign their drafts as homework.