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PERCY JACKSON'S GREEK GODS

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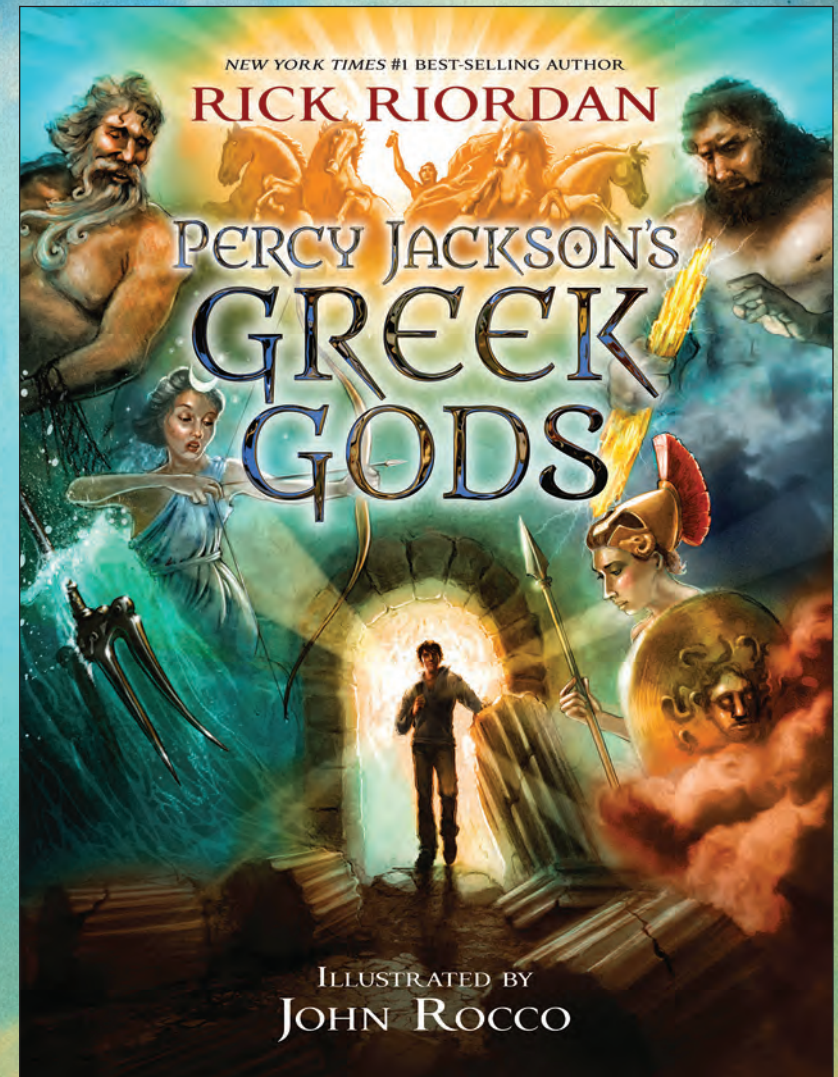
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DISCUSSION GUIDE

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ABOUT THE BOOK

A publisher in New York asked me to write down what I know about the Greek gods, and I was like, Can we do this anonymously? Because I don't need the Olympians mad at me again. But if it helps you to know your Greek gods, and survive an encounter with them if they ever show up in your face, then I guess writing all this down will be my good deed for the week.

So begins *Percy Jackson's Greek Gods*, in which the son of Poseidon adds his own magic—and sarcastic asides—to the classics. He explains how the world was created, then gives readers his personal take on a who's who of ancients, from Apollo to Zeus. Percy does not hold back. “If you like horror shows, blood baths, lying, stealing, backstabbing, and cannibalism, then read on, because it definitely was a Golden Age for all that.”

COMMON CORE ALIGNMENT

This guide is aligned with the College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards (CCR) for Reading in the areas of Literature, Writing, and Language. The broad CCR standards are the foundation for the grade level–specific Common Core State Standards. Each question and activity in this guide includes a reference for a specific grade level strand, domain, and standard. To support instruction, also reference the grade level-specific Common Core State Standards to scaffold the question for your students.



CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

READING, WRITING, AND RESEARCHING

Exploring *Percy Jackson's Greek Gods* Through Extension Activities

In *Percy Jackson's Greek Gods*, the complexities of the Greek deities, their relationships, and the situations in which they find themselves provides students opportunity to dig deep into the Greek myths as they examine and answer one of the following prompts:

- 1 The stories of the major players in *Percy Jackson's Greek Gods* were created in Ancient Greece, but if these characters lived in our time, they would likely use the same social media that is popular in our world. Select a Greek god or goddess of your choice and create a faux Facebook page for that character, being sure to complete all the pertinent information, like education, relationships, groups to follow, pages to like, as well as 2–3 status updates.
- 2 Throughout the course of *Percy Jackson's Greek Gods*, readers are offered insight about the gods from Percy. Assume the role of one of the gods or goddesses and compose a diary entry detailing what you experienced and witnessed. To prepare, create an outline using the five W's (who, what, when, where, and why). Remember to write in first person and give special attention to sensory imagery (what you saw, smelled, heard, etc.).
- 3 Consider the gods and goddesses featured in *Percy Jackson's Greek Gods*; what common characteristics do these deities share? In what ways are their personalities and challenges faced similar to those of people today? Using what you learned, which of the gods or goddesses do you think you are most like? Create a Venn diagram comparing and contrasting yourself with the Greek god or goddess of your choice.
- 4 In small groups, have students select a favorite scene from *Percy Jackson's Greek Gods* and create either a digitally or manually illustrated graphic novel for that scene. Using a digital comic strip creator (<http://www.makebeliefscomix.com/Comix/> or <http://infinitecomic.com/> for example), have students begin by using the strips to create story boards for their selected myth. Have students select original art, images, and graphics. Alternatively, students could assume the roles of two of the characters with each one's personality and voice and have them interact with one another by creating an extension of a scene from the myth. As part of the evaluation component, consider panel size and number of panels, transitions and layouts, artwork, writing, and lettering.

- 5 Ask students to draft a short essay answering the following question. “Should mortals be allowed on Mt. Olympus?” This notable topic was never settled in Ancient Greece. It is up to your students to resolve the issue by developing a persuasive argumentative essay which investigates the role of “hero” in the discussion.
- 6 After asking students to choose their favorite Greek god or goddess featured in *Percy Jackson’s Greek Gods* or others from additional studies on Greek mythology, have them select from the following series of assignments that give students practice in letter writing (both in print format and e-mail):
- Tell students their favorite mythological character has just retired. Zeus, the father of the gods, is now accepting applications for a replacement. Ask your students to write letters of application and a brief resume or biographical sketch.
 - Every aspiring hero or heroine needs to receive the proper instruction and training. Fortunately, there are a few openings at the most distinguished university in ancient Greece. In order for your students to secure a space, they should write for an application, a catalog, and financial aid information. Requests can be sent to: Mount Olympus University, 12 Aphrodite Way, Mount Olympus, Greece, 12345.
 - As the best friend of a mythological character, students can write a letter offering support, encouragement, or guidance for a task or quest they hope to accomplish. Be sure to research the differences between formal and informal letters or e-mails.



- 7 One of the hallmarks of Greek mythology was how the myths were often used to explain natural phenomena. The challenge is to create an original myth to explain some natural phenomenon or land formation. It could be anything from the origin of hurricanes to how a mountain range was created. Use the following points to guide the creation of an original myth using the Greek gods and goddesses featured in *Percy Jackson’s Greek Gods*:
- The story must involve at least two Olympian gods or goddesses, but is not limited to just these two.
 - The original myth must explain a natural phenomenon or a geological feature (a sea, a polar ice cap, a mountain range, etc.).
 - The story should include details about the Greek gods and goddesses you’ve discovered through reading *Percy Jackson’s Greek Gods*. It should show your understanding of their powers, symbols, and personalities.

Correlates to Common Core Standard Reading Literature: Key Ideas and Details: C.C.S.S.E.L.A. Literacy: RL.4.1; RL.4.2; RL.4.3; RL.5.1; RL.5.2; RL.5.3 and Integration of Knowledge and Ideas: C.C.S.S.E.L.A. Literacy: RL.4.7; RL.4.9; RL.5.7; RL.5.9; RL.6.7; RL.6.9.

Utilizing *Percy Jackson’s Greek Gods* for Language Discovery

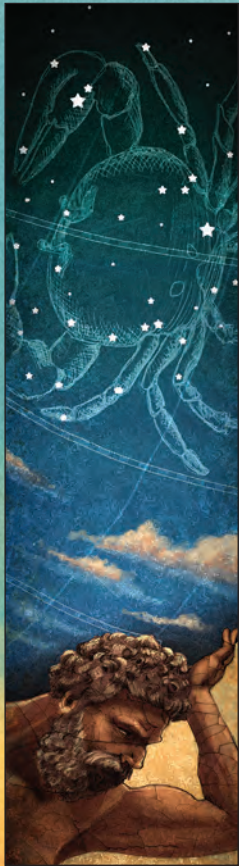
Greek mythology’s influence is evident in our daily language. It’s difficult to imagine reading or writing without drawing upon myth-oriented adjectives or idioms. As part of your everyday curriculum or as part of a separate word-study unit, ask your students to research the histories of words and phrases that come from the Greek myths. For instance, ask them what it means to have an “Achilles heel.” To provide clarity, allow students to research Achilles’s story or share the myth with them. From here, ask them to speculate on the meaning of the following modern-day expressions and determine their Greek mythological connection:

- Labyrinth
- Midas touch
- Atlas
- Panic
- Herculean effort
- Titanic
- Tantalize

Pair students up and challenge them to find as many Greek myth language connections as they can. To extend the activity, have them use the collected words as a bank to create a myth of their creation.

Considering *Percy Jackson's Greek Gods* through Literary Elements Analysis

Use the following activities to allow students to show their understanding of various literary elements in the novel.



Character Trait Silhouette: Working with others, create a character trait silhouette about your favorite or least favorite character in *Percy Jackson's Greek Gods*. Begin by tracing an appropriately sized member of the group onto butcher paper. The silhouette must be "life size." The traced silhouette should reflect physical traits of the character, so modify as you draw. Next, cut out the silhouette and include a list of ten values. These values need to be the *most important* traits of your character. For each trait, a quote that supports the description needs to be included. Inside the silhouette, include symbols which represent your character's interests, personality, beliefs, skills, or profession.

Correlates to Common Core Standard Reading Literature: Key Ideas and Details: C.C.S.S.E.L.A. Literacy: RL.4.1; RL.5.1; RL.6.1.

Character "To Do" List: Remind students that like us, literary characters have tasks they need to complete. Selecting a deity of their choice from *Percy Jackson's Greek Gods*, students are to create a list of the most important tasks at hand for that character with explanations as to why those tasks are so necessary.

Correlates to Common Core Standard Reading Literature: Key Ideas and Details: C.C.S.S.E.L.A. Literacy: RL.4.1; RL.5.1; RL.6.1.

Create a Mythology Biographical Poem: The purpose of this strategy is to help students demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the Greek mythological deities highlighted in *Percy Jackson's Greek Gods* by following written prompts to complete a biographical poem about one of the featured gods or goddesses. Students can be given the prompts to follow on a worksheet or alternatively, students may create an original slideshow using PowerPoint or Movie Maker.

BIOPOEM

Line 1: Greek name _____

Line 2: Three traits that describe the individual _____

Line 3: Relative of _____

Line 4: Lover of _____ (three things)

Line 5: Who feels _____ (three things)

Line 6: Who needs _____ (three things)

Line 7: Who fears _____ (three things)

Line 8: Who gives _____ (three things)

Line 9: Who would like to see _____ (three things)

Line 10: Resident of _____

Line 11: Greek name _____

Correlates to Common Core Standard Reading Literature: Key Ideas and Details: RL.6.1; RL.7.1 and Craft and Structure: RL.6.5; RL.6.6; RL.7.5; RL.7.6.

Advice Column: Ask students to describe one of the problems faced by a character in *Percy Jackson's Greek Gods* and write advice to him/her. Students may choose to be serious or humorous. Use the letter format common to newspaper advice columns, where the person with the problem writes for advice and the advisor writes back. Often the person seeking advice "disguises" his or her name with a descriptive name associated with the problem.

Correlates to Common Core Standard Reading Literature: Key Ideas and Details: C.C.S.S.E.L.A. Literacy: RL.4.1; RL.4.2; RL.4.3; RL.5.1; RL.5.2; RL.5.4; RL.6.1; RL.6.2.

Fortune Cookies: Have students imagine they are dining with three characters from *Percy Jackson's Greek Gods*. Have them create fortune cookie statements for each character, making sure they tell you which character received the fortune and why it is fitting.

Correlates to Common Core Standard Reading Literature: Key Ideas and Details: C.C.S.S.E.L.A. Literacy: RL.4.1; RL.4.2; RL.4.3; RL.5.1; RL.5.2; RL.5.4; RL.6.1; RL.6.2.

Gift Giving: Have students select five or more gifts that would be perfect to give to one of the gods or goddesses in *Percy Jackson's Greek Gods*. While these gifts can be tangible or intangible, they should be things that he/she would really want or need. For each gift, be sure to include an explanation for the gift and why it is appropriate.

Correlates to Common Core Standard Reading Literature: Key Ideas and Details: C.C.S.S.E.L.A. Literacy: RL.4.1; RL.4.2; RL.4.3; RL.5.1; RL.5.2; RL.5.4; RL.6.1; RL.6.2.

If These Walls Could Talk: Ask students to create a conversation between one of the characters in *Percy Jackson's Greek Gods* and some intangible thing (justice, love, goodness, greed, etc.) or his/her conscience. Have them script the conversation for dialogue, making sure they use appropriate punctuation.

Correlates to Common Core Standard Reading Literature: Key Ideas and Details: C.C.S.S.E.L.A. Literacy: RL.4.1; RL.4.2; RL.4.3; RL.5.1; RL.5.2; RL.5.4; RL.6.1; RL.6.2.

Character Report Card: Ask students to examine the ethical nature of a god's or goddess's actions and choices in *Percy Jackson's Greek Gods*. Have them set up a "report card" using a chart and include the following eight categories: respect, responsibility, cooperation, caring, integrity, self-control, honesty, and effort. In addition, include a teacher's comments section. In each category, give the god or goddess a letter grade that you believe he/she deserves based on actions and choices made in the book. In "comments," use two specific pieces of evidence from the novel to explain/support the grade.

Correlates to Common Core Standard Reading Literature: Key Ideas and Details: C.C.S.S.E.L.A. Literacy: RL.4.1; RL.4.2; RL.4.3; RL.5.1; RL.5.2; RL.5.3 and Integration of Knowledge and Ideas: C.C.S.S.E.L.A. Literacy: RL.4.7; RL.4.9; RL.5.7; RL.5.9; RL.6.7; RL.6.9.



The Mighty Twelve (and a Couple of Other Important Players) or — Analyzing Who's Who in *Percy Jackson's Greek Myths*

Using the information gleaned from *Percy Jackson* about the Greek gods, create your own Olympians Chart like the one below. If you are not including in your lessons, you may want to take out the column for the Roman name.

GREEK NAME	ROMAN NAME	REALM	SYMBOL	FACTS/CHARACTERISTICS
Zeus				
Hera				
Poseidon				
Hades				
Athena				
Apollo				
Artemis				
Aprhodite				
Hermes				
Ares				
Hepaestus				
Hestia				
Demeter				
Persephone				

Correlates to Common Core Standard Reading Literature: Key Ideas and Details: C.C.S.S.E.L.A. Literacy: RL.4.1; RL.4.2; RL.4.3; RL.5.1; RL.5.2; RL.5.3 and Integration of Knowledge and Ideas: C.C.S.S.E.L.A. Literacy: RL.4.7; RL.4.9; RL.5.7; RL.5.9; RL.6.7; RL.6.9.

WHO IS YOUR GODLY PARENT'?

RICK RIORDAN'S DEMIGODS OF OLYMPUS APP



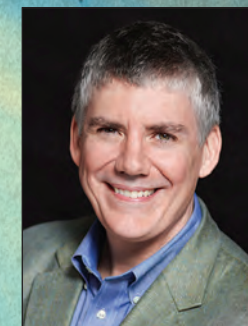
Using a tablet or smart phone, download and visit Rick Riordan's Demigods of Olympus. This new application offers students a chance to read and engage in an original story by Rick Riordan entitled, "My Two-Headed Guidance Counselor." Each student is the star of their own story: a demigod. As they read and work through the story features of the app, they'll discover more about themselves and their personality traits (consider having them keep notes about their answers along the way). With those traits in hand, have them extend this learning experience by completing one of the following activities:

- Now that you know you are a demigod, it's time to create your family tree. Using what you have discovered about yourself from the Demigods of Olympus app and what you learned about the gods and goddesses from *Percy Jackson's Greek Gods*, develop a family tree. Be creative and use all the information you have about the various gods, goddesses, and heroes who have passed through your godly parent's life. Family trees can be digitally designed on Prezi or Animoto or be hand illustrated with pictures. Make sure that either design style is accompanied by short descriptions of each individual's respective importance in the god's life.
- Considering the traits you showed in the Demigods of Olympus app and what you have learned about the gods and goddesses from *Percy Jackson's Greek Gods*, analyze and determine who you think your godly parent is. Write a letter to that god or goddess explaining why you believe you are his/her offspring. Make sure to cite the traits you share with him and her, and include one specific request of a skill or gift you hope to receive from him or her and why you believe you deserve it.

Correlates to Common Core Standard Reading Literature: Key Ideas and Details: RL.6.1; RL.7.1 and Craft and Structure: RL.6.5; RL.6.6; RL.7.5; RL.7.6.

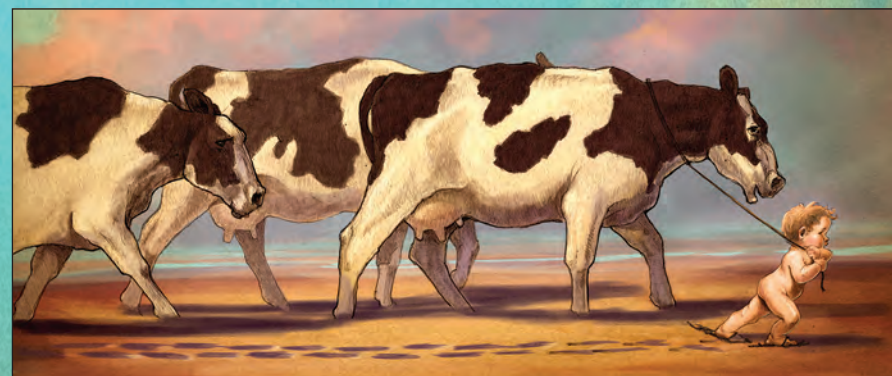
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

RICK RIORDAN (www.rickriordan.com) is the author of the #1 *New York Times* best-selling *The Heroes of Olympus, Book One: The Lost Hero*; *The Heroes of Olympus, Book Two: The Son of Neptune*; *The Heroes of Olympus, Book Three: The Mark of Athena*; *The Heroes of Olympus, Book Four: The House of Hades*; the #1 *New York Times* best-selling *The Kane Chronicles, Book One: The Red Pyramid*; *The Kane Chronicles, Book Two: The Throne of Fire*; *The Kane Chronicles, Book Three: The Serpent's Shadow*; as well as the five books in the #1 *New York Times* best-selling Percy Jackson and the Olympians series. His previous novels for adults include the hugely popular Tres Navarre series, winner of the top three awards in the mystery genre. He lives in Boston, Massachusetts, with his wife and two sons.



ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

JOHN ROCCO (www.roccoart.com) studied illustration at Rhode Island School of Design and The School of Visual Arts. In addition to writing and illustrating four of his own picture books, including the Caldecott Honor-winning and *New York Times* best-selling *Blackout*, he has created all of the cover art for Rick Riordan's best-selling Percy Jackson, Kane Chronicles, and Heroes of Olympus series. He has also illustrated books by Whoopi Goldberg and Katherine Patterson. Before becoming a full-time children's book creator, he worked as an art director on *Shrek* for Dreamworks, and for Disney Imagineering. He lives in Los Angeles with his wife and daughter.



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