

# GREEKING OUT

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Epic Retellings of  
Classic Greek Myths  
AN OFFICIAL PODCAST TIE-IN

# GREEKING OUT

## EDUCATOR'S GUIDE

### About the Book

From the creators of the National Geographic Kids' wildly successful podcast *Greeking Out*, this lively tie-in book delivers a clever tongue-in-cheek retelling of 20 classic Greek myths.

This kid-friendly collection of tales from Greek mythology showcases familiar favorites from the well-loved *Greeking Out* podcast as well as brand-new, never-before-aided stories. Join Persephone on her journey through the mystifying depths of the Underworld. Venture onward with Heracles as he tackles his 12 death-defying labors. And join mythological figures you may not have heard of before, including scheming gods and goddesses, honorable—and not-so-honorable—heroes, and magnificent monsters.



Dynamic, playful illustrations coupled with laugh-out-loud storytelling and real information about ancient Greece—delivered by the all-knowing Oracle of Wi-Fi—make this collection of fabulous fables a fresh addition to any history lover's library.

### About the Authors



**Kenny Curtis** has more than 30 years in children's programming as a performer, writer, and producer. He is one of the creators of National Geographic Kids' *Greeking Out* podcast series, which he hosts and cowrites alongside his daughter, Jillian Hughes. Together, Kenny and Jillian have helped develop a number of well-known kids content offerings for partners and platforms like Pinna, Tinkercast, Kidz Bop, and 8 Pound Gorilla Records. But Kenny may be best known as the human behind the long-running radio program *The Animal Farm* on SiriusXM's original family music channel, Kids Place Live.

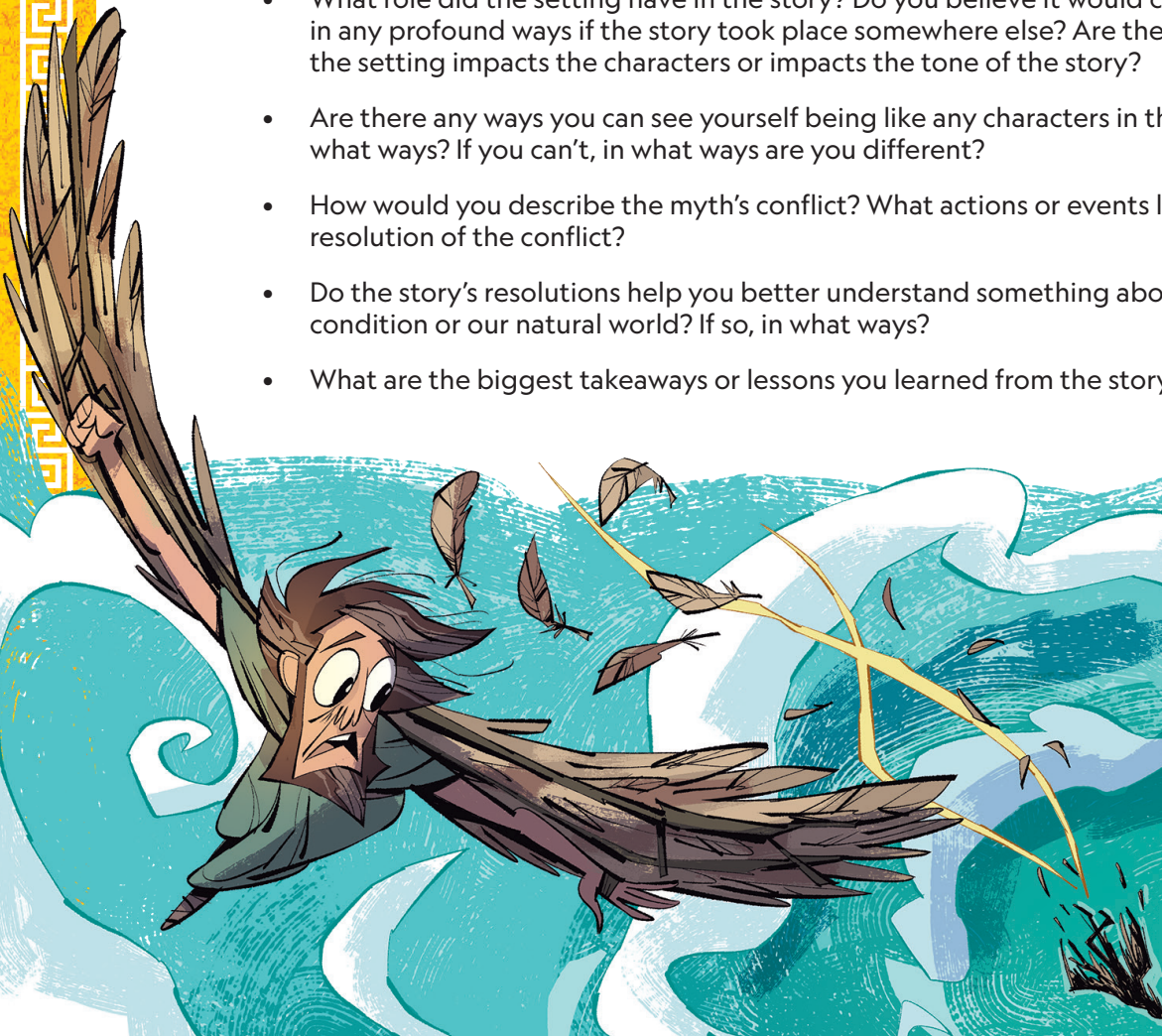


**Jillian Hughes** is a professional writer with her heart in the kids and family industry. She's a writer for National Geographic Kids' *Greeking Out* podcast series and has contributed to other platforms including Pinna, Tinkercast, and iHeart. She also works as a copywriter crafting marketing collateral for numerous industries. While she enjoys working with all her clients, she is especially partial to collaborating with Kenny—who just happens to be her dad.

# Explore *Greeking Out* Through Class Discussions

The following questions may be utilized within the framework of any of the myths offered in *Greeking Out* and may be adapted for further story analysis.

- What are the personality traits of each of the characters in this myth? How do those traits affect them?
- What do these characters desire? Do they struggle in any way, and are there any consequences for their desires?
- How do the characters view themselves? Is this similar to or different from how others see them? If so, in what ways?
- As a reader, what do you think of the choices made by the characters?
- What do you believe motivates these individual characters, and specifically, from your perspective, what is important to them and why?
- What are your takeaways about the relationships between the characters featured in the specific myth you read?
- Given what you've discovered from your reading, what role do objects play for these characters?
- How did the secondary characters in the story help you better understand the main characters?
- What role did the setting have in the story? Do you believe it would change the story in any profound ways if the story took place somewhere else? Are there ways in which the setting impacts the characters or impacts the tone of the story?
- Are there any ways you can see yourself being like any characters in the myth? If so, in what ways? If you can't, in what ways are you different?
- How would you describe the myth's conflict? What actions or events led to a resolution of the conflict?
- Do the story's resolutions help you better understand something about the human condition or our natural world? If so, in what ways?
- What are the biggest takeaways or lessons you learned from the story?



## Extend the Learning: Extension Activities

In *Greeking Out*, the complexities of the Greek deities, their relationships, and the situations in which they find themselves provide students opportunities to dig more deeply into Greek mythology. Use a selection of the following extension activities to support and foster further learning.

### Student Exercise:

#### **Say What? Connect Yourself With Famous Greek Expressions**

Ever wonder where some of our everyday sayings come from? Many of them actually originated in stories from Greek mythology. Ancient Greece may have existed a long time ago, but these expressions are still going strong. Select one of the following sayings featured in *Greeking Out* (examples and explanations provided on pages 24–25):

“Achilles’ heel”

“Open Pandora’s box”

“Caught between a rock and a hard place”

“Herculean task”

After making a selection, share a personal reflection of a time when this Greek-inspired modern everyday saying could be applied to something that’s happened in your personal life or to someone you know, being sure to change the name to safeguard their identity.

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### Teacher-Led Exercise:

#### **Language Scavenger Hunt: Greek Mythology Is EVERYWHERE!**

Remind readers that Greek mythology’s influence is evident in our daily language. Working as a team, ask your readers to research modern words or phrases that come from Greek myths or ancient Greece. For instance, remind them what it means to have an “Achilles’ heel.” The team that finds and collects the most modern terms directly influenced by Greek mythology wins!

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### Student Exercise: What’s in the Moon?

Almost every culture in the world has a myth explaining the origin and purpose of the moon. In “The Moon Falls in Love,” readers discover how the Greeks interpreted the magic and mystery of this shining orb in their sky through the story of Selene. Select another cultural tradition and research that people’s explanation of the origin and purpose of the moon. After your research is complete, use a presentation tool of your choice to showcase the version you discovered. Compare and contrast it with the Greek interpretation.

### Student Exercise: Guide to the Greeks!

This book is filled with lots of names—whether they’re gods, goddesses, monsters, magical creatures, or a bunch of giants—and it’s easy to forget who somebody is (or to have a tough time pronouncing those pesky giants’ names). Page 174 offers a handy-dandy, Oracle of Wi-Fi-approved guide to places, characters, and terms in these tales from Greek mythology.

Using the guide, select a god, goddess, monster, magical creature, or giant and do a research deep dive to discover more about your selected character, being sure to use additional resources to discover the following:

- Physical description
- Relationship to other important characters in Greek mythology
- Details of any significant storylines with other mythological figures
- Any other important information (such as special abilities or powers)

Prepare a digital exhibit with a poster or slideshow designed to inform others about your mythological figure as a means of creating more background knowledge to support readers of *Greeking Out*.

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### Teacher-Led Exercise: Some Gods Are Underdogs!

Though *Greeking Out* highlights a number of important figures of Greek mythology, the history of Greek gods extends beyond Zeus and his family.

Divide your group into pairs and have them research and develop a biographical presentation of a lesser-known deity from Greek mythology.

Have your students identify the basic facts noted below about their chosen deity. Then have them take turns presenting their findings.

1. Name
  2. Origin
  3. Known for
  4. Little-known fact
  5. Related to
- 

### Teacher-Led Exercise: Greek Gods Wanna Connect 2!

Though the stories of the major players in *Greeking Out* have been passed down to us from ancient Greece, if these characters lived in our time, they would likely use the same social media platforms that are popular today. After putting your students in small groups, ask them to select a Greek god or goddess of their choice and create a faux social media page for that character, being sure to complete all the pertinent information, like education, relationships, groups to follow, pages to like, as well as two or three status updates with hashtags.

### Teacher-Led Exercise: Connecting With Comics

Put your students in small groups and have them select a favorite scene from a myth featured in *Greeking Out* and illustrate a comic for that myth. Be sure to provide art supplies like strip paper, markers, and colored pencils. Alternatively, let them use tablets or computers to access a digital comic strip creator like one of these—<https://www.storyboardthat.com/comic-maker>, <https://www.canva.com/create/comic-strips/>—or one of your choosing. After they finish, let them share their stories and display them for other groups.

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### Student Exercise: Gods Gotta Have Friends

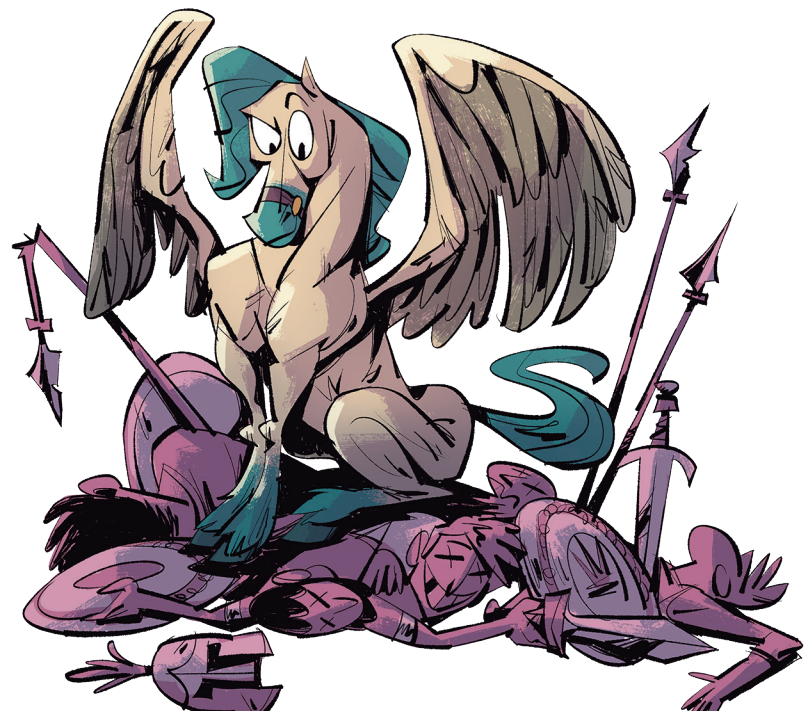
Just like we do in our everyday lives, mythological characters need friends. Imagine yourself as the best friend of a mythological character, and write a letter offering support, encouragement, or guidance for a task or quest they hope to accomplish. Be sure to explain what it is you think they can do, and if you want in on the adventure, include yourself in the plans.

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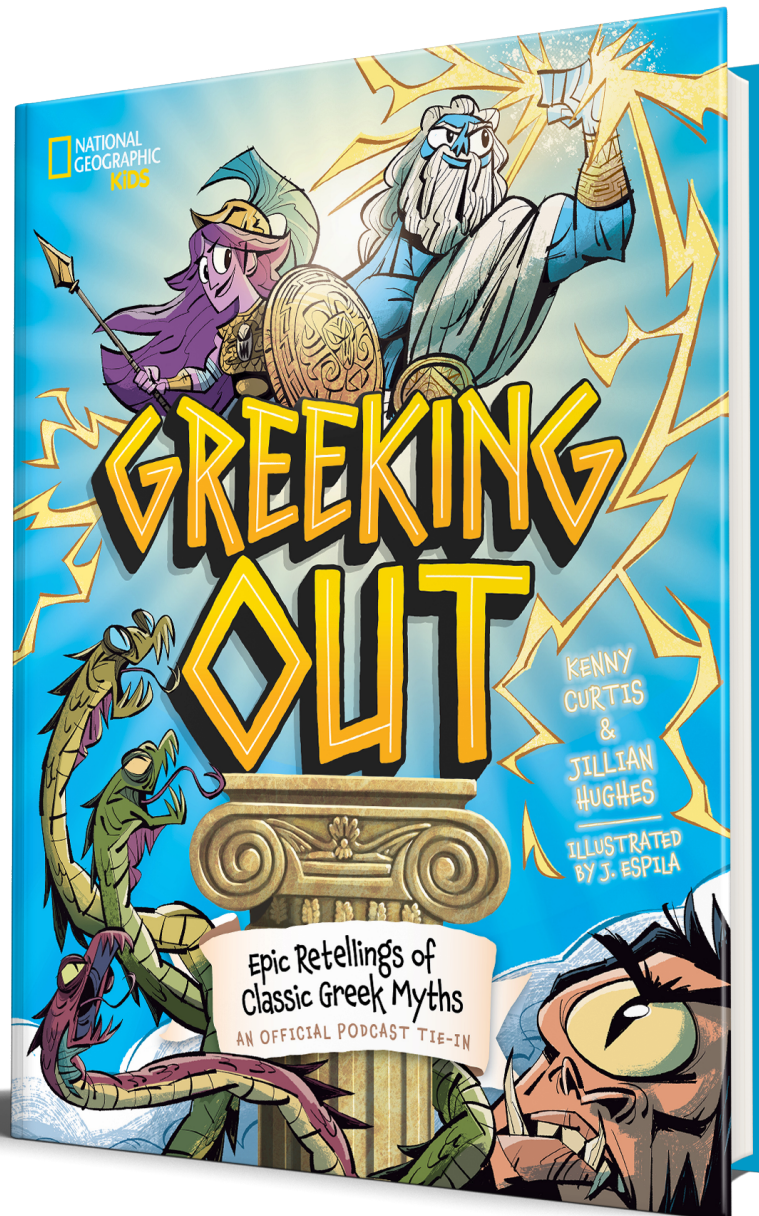
### Teacher-Led Exercise: Craft a Creation Myth

One of the hallmarks of Greek myths is how they were often used to explain natural phenomena. Challenge students 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. Put students in small groups and use the following points to guide the creation of an original myth.

- The story must involve at least two Olympian gods or goddesses.
- The original myth must explain a natural phenomenon or a geological feature (sunrise/sunset, volcanic eruption, polar ice cap, a mountain range, etc.).
- The story should include details about the Greek gods and goddesses and should show students' understanding of their powers, symbols, and personalities.



This guide was created by Dr. Rose Brock, an associate professor in the Department of Library and Science Technology at Sam Houston State University's College of Education. Dr. Brock holds a Ph.D. in library science, specializing in children's and young adult literature.



#### **GREEKING OUT**

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