



Dear Family Member,

Today, your child heard a read-aloud about the twelve Greek gods and goddesses that the ancient Greeks believed lived on Mount Olympus. Over the next several days, your child will review that the ancient Greeks worshipped many gods and goddesses, and that the twelve on Mount Olympus were thought to be the most powerful. S/he will learn the definition of a myth (a fictional story, once thought to be true), and that myths try to explain occurrences in nature, teach moral stories, and entertain listeners. Your child will hear several well-known Greek myths including “Prometheus and Pandora,” “Demeter and Persephone,” and “Arachne the Weaver.”

Below are some suggestions for activities that you may do at home to reinforce what your child is learning about Greek myths.

1. The Twelve Gods of Mount Olympus

Have your child share which twelve gods and goddesses the ancient Greeks thought lived on Mount Olympus and what these gods and goddesses were in charge of. (Zeus, Poseidon, Demeter, Hera, Hephaestus, Aphrodite, Athena, Ares, Apollo, Artemis, Hermes, Dionysus) As your child shares what they know about these twelve Greek gods and goddesses, share with them what you know, including any Greek gods and goddesses that they have not heard about.

2. Prometheus and Pandora

Have your child share what s/he learned about Prometheus. (His name means foresight; the ancient Greeks believed that he created humans; he stole fire to give to man; Zeus punished him.) Have your child share what s/he learned about Pandora. (The Greek gods made her to punish man; they sent her to Earth with a box, which she was not supposed to open; she opened it and let out all the things that cause people pain and suffering.) Talk with your child about the saying, “Pandora’s box” and in what situations one might use it.

3. Demeter and Persephone

Talk with your child about the myth of Demeter and Persephone. Have your child share which characters appeared in this myth and how this myth was a way for ancient Greeks to explain the changing seasons.

4. Sayings and Phrases: Cold Feet

Your child will learn the saying “cold feet” in relation to the Greek myth of Daedalus and Icarus. Before Daedalus and his son Icarus use their wax wings to try to escape from the prison tower, Daedalus hesitates with sudden fear. Talk with your child about other situations where one might use the saying “cold feet.”

5. Words to Use

Below is a list of some of the words that your child will be learning about and using. Try to use these words as they come up in everyday speech with your child.

- myths—Many ancient peoples told myths, fictional stories thought to be true at the time, that tried to explain events in nature.
- mortal—All humans are mortal, which means that they are born and later die.
- immortal—Greek gods and goddesses were believed to be immortal, which means they never die.

6. Read-Aloud Each Day

It is very important that you read to your child each day. The local library has many books on Greek myths and ancient Greek civilization, and a list of books and other resources relevant to this topic is attached to this letter.

Be sure to let your child know how much you enjoy hearing about what s/he has learned at school.

Recommended Trade Books for Greek Myths

Trade Book List

1. *A Child's Introduction to Greek Mythology: The Stories of the Gods, Goddesses, Heroes, Monsters, and Other Mythical Creatures*, by Heather Alexander (Black Dog & Leventhal Publishers, 2011) ISBN 978-1579128678
2. *D'Aulaires' Book of Greek Myths*, by Ingri and Edgar Parin D'Aulaire (Delacorte Press, 1962) ISBN 978-0440406945
3. *Gifts from the Gods: Ancient Words and Wisdom from Greek and Roman Mythology*, by Lise Lunge-Larsen (Houghton Mifflin Books for Children, 2011) ISBN 978-0547152295
4. *The Gods and Goddesses of Olympus*, by Aliki (HarperCollins, 1997) ISBN 978-0064461894
5. *Greek Myths*, by Deborah Lock (DK Publishing, 2008) ISBN 978-0756640156
6. *Greek Myths*, by Marcia Williams (Candlewick, 2011) ISBN 978-0763653842
7. *King Midas: The Golden Touch*, by Demi (Margaret K. McElderry Books, 2002) ISBN 978-0689832970
8. *The McElderry Book of Greek Myths*, retold by Eric A. Kimmel (Margaret K. McElderry Books, 2008) ISBN 978-1416915348
9. *Mythological Creatures: A Classical Bestiary*, by Lynn Curlee (Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2008) ISBN 978-1416914532
10. *Pandora*, by Robert Burleigh (Harcourt, Inc., 2002) ISBN 978-0152021788
11. *Pegasus*, by Marianna Mayer (Morrow Junior Books, 1998) ISBN 978-0688133825

Websites and Other Resources

Student Resources

1. **Greek Coloring Pages**
<http://www.coloring.ws/greek.htm>
2. **Myths Brainstorming Machine**
<http://teacher.scholastic.com/writewit/mff/mythmachine.htm>

Family Resources

3. **Additional Greek Myths**
<http://greece.mrdonn.org/myths.html>
4. **Greek Gods/Twelve Olympians**
<http://greece.mrdonn.org/greekgods/mountolympus.html>
5. **Miscellaneous Activities for Greek Myths**
http://www.activityvillage.co.uk/ancient_greece_for_kids.htm
6. **Mt. Olympus**
<http://travel.nationalgeographic.com/travel/parks/olympus-greece/>