

***Mythology* by Edith Hamilton Omnibus I Summer Reading**

The Book: You will need to read sections 4 through 14 (pages 95-290) of Edith Hamilton's *Mythology*. The purpose of this book is to help you become familiar with the myths and characters of Ancient Greece and Rome. As you read, remember that these are the stories that the people of Ancient Greece and Rome not only knew by heart, but fully believed. Try to imagine a world in which Athena could come to aid you in your troubles, or Zeus could fall in love with you. This is a world in which everything – from the fire in your hearth to the flowers in the field to the mighty roaring sea—was alive and imbued with a spirit.

The Ancients told stories (myths) about what they saw in the world to explain phenomena they couldn't understand. For example, they would explain a storm as an effect of two gods fighting. See how many of these “story explanations” (or myths) you can find throughout your reading.

Annotate: As you read this book you might be a bit overwhelmed by how many gods and goddesses there are, and it might be tricky to keep all of these stories straight. Try some of the following annotation strategies to help you be able to reference the content of the book in future discussions. **(This is not a part of the assignment, but you will be using these techniques in class this year so this is a great time to practice these skills!)**

 **Circle :** Circle any new character you meet and write a brief description of them in the margin

Text Underline: Underline any important plot detail to draw your eye to it later when discussing.

? **Question Mark:** Write a question mark by any material you don't understand, then write a brief question (or the reason you are confused) in the margin so you can ask your teacher about it in class.

 **Box:** Put a box around any words you can't define. Take the time as you go to look these words up in a dictionary and then write an abbreviated definition in the margin.

★ **Star:** Put a star next to any BIG IDEA, theme, or message you think the author is trying to tell you. For example, when a character learns a lesson, solves a problem, or comes to a realization put a star in your text to mark this as an important piece of the text.

+/- **Plus and Minus:** Write a “+” next to ideas you agree with, write a “-“ next to ideas (or actions characters make) you don't agree with.

⇒ **Arrow:** See a connection with another part of the book? Does this story remind you of another story or book you've read? Draw an arrow and summarize your thoughts in the margin.

The Reading Guide: The following assortment of questions are to help guide you through your reading. You may wish to make notes to ensure you have a complete understanding of the book and are ready to discuss it on the first day of class!

Chapter 4 The Earliest Heroes: Who are they and what are their stories?

pp. 95-120

1. Prometheus and Io
2. Europa
3. the Cyclops
4. the Flower myths

Chapter 5 Cupid and Psyche

pp. 121-134

5. How does Psyche compare in beauty with her sisters? What plan does Venus have for Psyche?
6. What happens when Cupid meets Psyche?

Chapter 6 Eight Brief Tales of Lovers

pp. 135-159

7. How does the Pyramus and Thisbe myth explain the deep red color of the mulberry bush?
8. How does the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice explain the sweetness of the nightingale's song?
9. How does the myth of Ceyx and Alcyone explain the idea of Halcyon days?
10. How does the myth of Pygmalion and Galatea illustrate the power of love?
11. How does the myth of Baucis and Philemon illustrate nature as a symbol of eternal love?

Chapter 7 The Quest of the Golden Fleece

pp. 160-180

12. What is the Golden Fleece? Why does Jason seek the Golden Fleece?
13. How does the King of Colchis treat Jason when he arrives? What tests does he put Jason through?
14. How does Medea figure in these events? What does Jason do to Medea at the end?

Chapter 8 Four Great Adventures

pp. 181-195

15. How does the myth of Phaëthon explain the poplar trees that grow along the bank of the river Eridanus?
16. Why does Bellerophon believe that he can be equal to the gods? What does Bellerophon forget?
17. How does the myth of Otus and Ephialtes also show the foolishness of trying to rise above the gods?

Chapter 9 Perseus

pp. 196-207

18. How is Perseus' birth magical?

Chapter 10 Theseus

pp. 208-223

19. Before Theseus can go to Athens and claim King Aegeus as his father, what great test of strength is he required to perform? Why is Theseus loved by the Greeks before he ever meets his father?
20. What kind of ruler is Theseus when he becomes King of Athens?

Chapter 11 Hercules

pp. 224-244

21. What happens to Hercules when Hera sends madness to possess him? Is he considered guilty of his crimes? What happens after Hercules completes the twelve labors?

Chapter 12 Atalanta

pp. 245-252

22. What declaration does Atalanta make about marriage? And how does Melanion (Hippomenes) win her as his bride?

Chapter 13 The Trojan War

pp. 253-290

23. What part does Paris play in the war? What about Achilles? Who was Hector? What is probably the most memorable scene from this section?

7th Grade Summer Reading Guide Summer 2020

Hello future 7th graders!

This summer, as an introduction to Medieval Omnibus, you will be reading *Man of Blessing: A Life of St. Benedict* by Carmen Acevedo Butcher. While you do not need to complete a formal assignment or project over the book this summer, you do need to be reading carefully and thoughtfully, as you will be assessed over the book when you return in August. To that end, we offer the following questions to guide your reading:

- What was the world like when Benedict was alive?
- What miracles does Benedict perform, and what lessons do they teach us?
- Benedict spends time living both in isolation and in community. What are the benefits and problems with each?
- What is humility? How does Benedict demonstrate it?
- What is obedience? How does Benedict demonstrate it?
- What makes Benedict a good Christian leader?

Come to school prepared to discuss these ideas in detail, as they will set the stage for much that we will be reading together this fall. (Also, this is an excellent opportunity to practice your newly acquired annotation skills! Remember that a book which has been annotated with these questions in mind will be an invaluable tool during class discussions our first week back.)

We look forward to seeing you next year!

-7th Grade Teaching Staff

Omnibus III
Incoming 8th grade Summer Reading Assignment

Miguel de Cervantes's *Don Quixote*, Part One (1605).

Many scholars and writers believe *Don Quixote* to be the greatest novel ever written. It is certainly one of the earliest examples of the novel in the Western Canon. For this, and many other reasons, we'll be reading the first published part of Cervantes's novel over the summer.

Read for the story (it's episodic but straightforward). Read for the humor (it's very funny and full of irony). And, as you enjoy the story, take note of moments that seem full of meaning that exceeds the literal.

Let me explain. One of the reasons people think the novel is so important is because they recognize so much potential meaning in the main character, Don Quixote. So, the question you'll be considering this summer, and the question we'll be considering in our first week back, is as follows: What might Don Quixote, the character, mean—in literature, in history, for us, in our lives and in our faith?

For the first day of class, you must complete the following:

1. Be prepared to summarize the general narrative of *Don Quixote, Part One*. Who is Don Quixote? Where does he live? What mistake has he made? What kinds of things does he run about the country-side doing? Who is with him? And so forth.
2. Select three specific passages in *Part One* that you feel “exceed the literal” and seem to need some other form of interpretation. Be prepared to discuss these and other passages on your first day back.

As a help, note the four especially medieval levels or ways of meaning listed below.

1. Literal – the most obvious reading. What is literally happening in the story?

Example: Sancho Panza is hitting his donkey.

2. Allegorical – the actions of the story, the characters and their deeds, represent something else. Can this character be understood as representing an idea or concept?

Example: When Sancho Panza hits his donkey, this represents the will and the intellect. Sancho is the will – or affections. The donkey is intellect. The affections are what motivate the intellect to investigate the world, to get moving.

3. Moral – the ethical principles encouraged by the literal event. What does this passage encourage me to do?

Example: Just like Sancho Panza has to hit his donkey to get it moving, so I have to be made to do things that I do not care to do because they are right. I should also encourage others to do the right thing, even when they may not desire so to do.

4. Anagogical – what the literal events represent in the life of every Christian. What truth is here for every Christian who reads it?

Example: Sancho Panza is hitting his donkey. In a similar way, God's grace, coming to us suddenly, impels us toward belief—the movement of faith.